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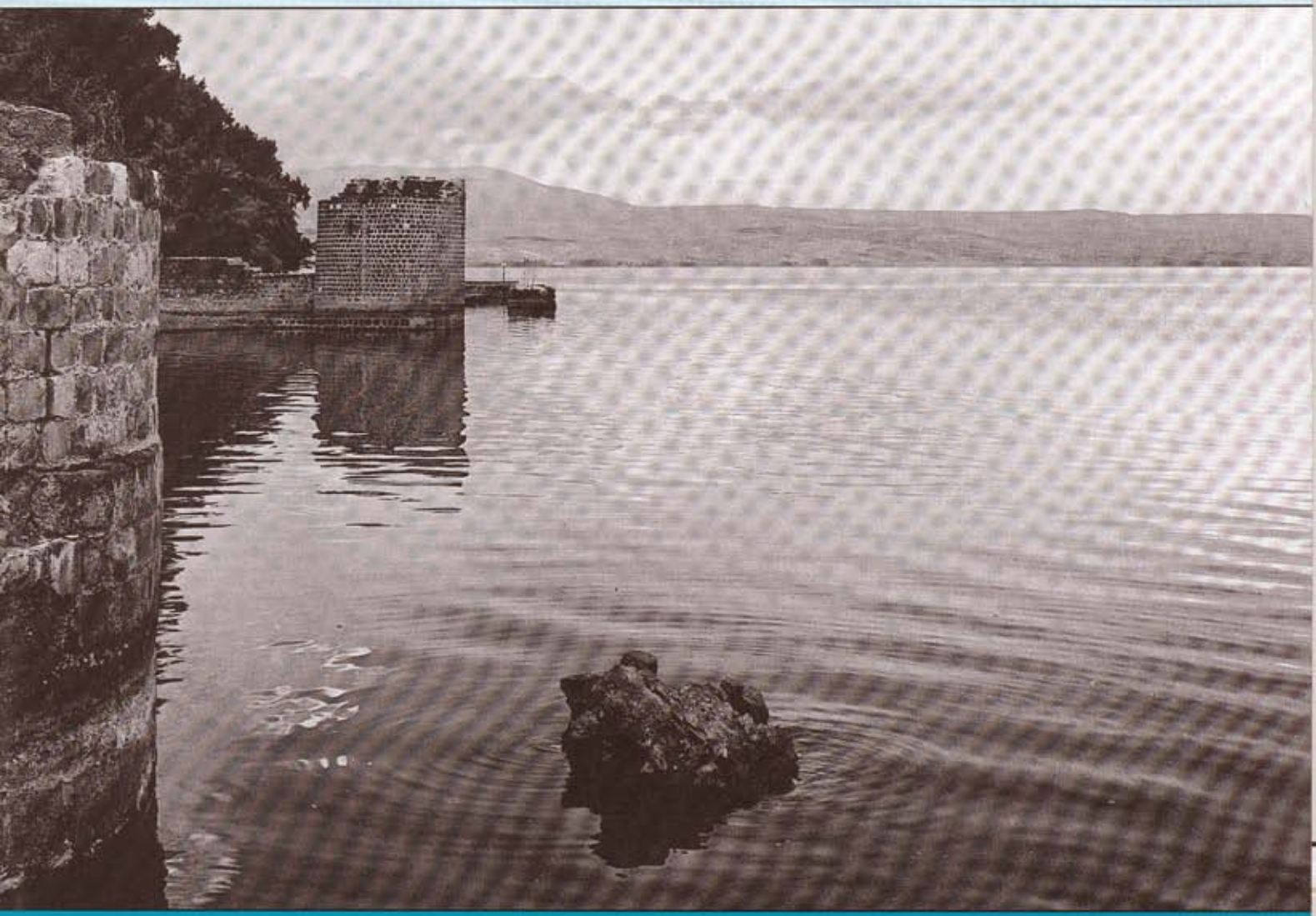
Jerusalem Perspective

Exploring the Jewish Background to the Life and Words of Jesus



Special Triple Issue:

Shmuel Safrai **Jesus and the Hasidim**

David Bivin **More on the Rich Young Ruler**

Perspective on This Issue

In this issue we are proud to present Professor Shmuel Safrai's article, "Jesus and the Hasidim." Here, for the first time, Safrai deals extensively with Jesus and his relationship to Hasidism.

In the nineteenth century many scholars identified the Hasidim with the Essenes. Early in this century Adolf Büchler proved that this identification was erroneous (*Types of Jewish-Palestinian Piety from 70 B.C.E. to 70 C.E.* [London, 1922]); however, Büchler believed that the Hasidim were just sages who differed from other Pharisaic sages only by being more pious. Safrai has shown that, though the Hasidim were similar to the Pharisees in many ways and the name "Hasid" does mean "pious," the Hasidim were not identical with the Pharisees. They formed a distinct stream of thought in ancient Judaism that was characterized by its emphasis on the practice of Torah rather than its study. The Hasidim had a literary tradition and their own unique halachic practices. (These ancient Hasidim are not to be connected with members of the Jewish mystical sect founded in the southeast of Poland-Lithuania about 1750 A.D.)

Safrai has produced a detailed description of the Hasidim, and identified from among rabbinic literary works those that originated in Hasidic circles. His research enabled him gradually to sketch a composite portrait of the Hasidim. When he was finished, he discovered that this portrait was very much like the portrait of Jesus found in the Gospels.

This insight will revolutionize the study of Jesus and allow scholars to reexamine the New Testament texts from a new perspective. Safrai's discovery may help explain, for instance, why there was considerable tension between Jesus and the Pharisees.

We are also pleased to present in this issue two articles that supplement the Rich Young Ruler commentary recently published in JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE. (See "*Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary* Preview: The Rich Young Ruler Story," *Jerusalem Perspective* 38 & 39 [May/Aug. 1993].) The first article, "Counting the Cost of Discipleship: Lindsey's Reconstruction of the Rich Young Ruler Complex," is a commentary on the two passages that Robert Lindsey feels complete the Rich Young Ruler story. The second article, "A Hebraic Nuance of *legō*: Key to Understanding Luke 18:18–19," is a detailed analysis of the first two verses of the rich man story.

Still to come in JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE: additional supplements to the Rich Young Ruler commentary, such as "The *Petros-Petra* Wordplay" and articles on various aspects of discipleship in the first century. **– Ed.**

Cover photo:
A tranquil scene along the west shore of the Sea of Galilee.
(Courtesy of the Israel Government Press Office)

Jerusalem Perspective

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Jesus and the Hasidim

How do we define Jesus within first-century Jewish society? To which of the various Jewish sects did he belong? Was he a Pharisee, an Essene? After years of research, Shmuel Safrai has identified a new stream within the Judaism of Jesus' time: the Hasidic movement. This may be a major breakthrough in New Testament studies as well, because the picture Safrai paints of the Hasidim is amazingly similar to what we know about Jesus.

Shmuel Safrai is professor of Jewish History of the Mishnaic and Talmudic Period at the Hebrew University.

by Shmuel Safrai

Josephus relates that there were three schools of thought among the people of Israel: Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes.[1] The Dead Sea sect likewise divided Israel into these three groups.[2] Rabbinic literature, however, mentions only Pharisees and Sadducees, referring obliquely at best to the existence of the Essenes.[3]

Jesus was closer to the world of the Pharisees than to that of the Sadducees or Essenes. He certainly did not share beliefs, religious outlook or social views with the Sadducees, and he would have had little in common with the isolationist views of the Essenes and their overt hostility toward anyone who did not accept their stringent views on ritual purity. Even if one accepts the premises of certain modern scholars regarding similarities between various sayings in the Synoptic Gospels and the literature of the Dead Sea sect, there is an enormous distance between Jesus and the Essenes. Jesus made this clear with his statement that the "sons of this world" are superior to the "sons of light" (Lk. 16:8).

Jesus and the Pharisees

Jesus' education and understanding of Torah was in agreement with the Pharisees' norms, based on both the Written and Oral Torah (Lk. 2:41–47). He even taught his disciples and followers: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in the seat of Moses, so be careful to observe everything they tell you" (Mt. 23:2–3). The expression "seat of Moses" is also found in midrashic literature[4] and such seats have actually been found in ancient synagogues.[5] Jesus, however, warned the people not to behave like the Pharisees, because "they say, but do not do" (Mt. 23:3).

Jesus contributed the required annual half-shekel for the Temple, an innovation of the Pharisees or their predecessors. This innovation was accepted by neither Sadducees nor Essenes.[6] Jesus expressed his opinion that "the sons are free [of taxes]," that is, he and the people were exempt from this payment, but in the end he contributed for both himself and Peter. When the tax collectors asked Peter whether his master would give the half-shekel, Peter's reply was quite simple: "Yes."[7]

It is not known whether the Sadducees took part in synagogue services, nor whether the Essenes frequented the synagogue. Jesus, however, customarily went to the synagogue on the Sabbath, to read from the Torah and the Prophets and afterwards to teach from them.[8] All of this is in keeping with halachah and the practice described in tannaic literature.[9]

Jesus' method of public instruction was also in keeping with Pharisaic practice. He employed educational techniques such as the parable that were common only in Pharisaic teaching, and some of the basic themes in his teaching such as "kingdom of heaven" and "repentance," are found only in the teaching of the sages.[10] The prayers of Jesus and the motifs they contain are likewise similar to those of the sages.[11]

However, the world of the Pharisees was not monolithic. The many differences between the house of Hillel and the house of Shammai pertained not only to specific details in halachah, but also to the basic underlying principles of halachah and religious and social thought. There is much that needs to be clarified regarding the place of Jesus and his teachings in relation to this Pharisaic world.

In the present study we shall examine the relationship of Jesus to the Hasidim,

who, if they did not actually belong to the Pharisaic movement, were quite close to it. I have shown in previous studies that a Hasidic movement existed from the first century B.C.E. until the end of the tannaic period and beginning of the amoraic period when it was largely absorbed into the world of the sages.[12] The Hasidic world of ethics and religious values was similar to that of the Pharisees, and they learned Torah from them. Yet the Hasidim developed their own religious and social outlook on life. In many instances, the Hasidim had halachic traditions that were not in keeping with the accepted halachah of the time and in some cases even opposed to it. They also had customs and modes of behavior which were not always identical with those of the sages.

There is relatively little material available on the Hasidim since only a small amount of literature in rabbinic sources can be identified as Hasidic.[13] The main sources of information are Hasidic tales,[14] a small number of aggadic[15] and halachic teachings cited in their name, and anti-Hasidic stories found in rabbinic literature.[16] However, this material is sufficient to give us a basic understanding of their unique world and the differences in outlook and beliefs between them and the sages.

Judea and Galilee

All the references to Hasidim in the Second Temple period relate to Galilee.[17] However, the commonly accepted belief that Galilee was on a lower Jewish cultural level than Judea is without basis. There are a number of pejorative statements in rabbinic literature regarding Galileans, but similar statements are found regarding other regions such as the "South" (i.e., Judea), and Nehardea in Babylonia. Both the "South" and Nehardea were great Torah centers in spite of the occasional derogatory remark in rabbinic literature.[18]

Gedaliahu Alon was among the first to point out the true nature of cultural and religious life in Galilee in the first century C.E., and particularly in the period immediately after the destruction of the Temple.[19] Alon convincingly showed that there were sages in Galilee at this time, and that the Torah was taught there in public. In fact, according to Alon, the religious and moral behavior of the Galileans was in many respects on a higher level than that of the Judeans. The Galileans observed both the Torah and the teachings of the sages. The anti-Galilean statements mentioned above simply represent a degree of popular sentiment in Judea that sometimes looked down on Galilee.

However, even Alon accepted the Torah hierarchy established in Avot de-Rabbi Natan, Version A, Chpt. 27 (ed. Schechter, p. 85):[20] "At first they used to say grain in Judea, straw in Galilee and chaff in Peraea [Transjordan]. Later on they determined that there is no grain in Judea, but only straw, no straw in Galilee, but only chaff, and there is neither in Peraea." This saying refers to the cultural level of these various regions and would seem to indicate that Judea ranked first.

If this saying included Jerusalem in Judea, then certainly Judea did supersede Galilee and Transjordan because of the religious institutions in Jerusalem such as the Sanhedrin, and because of the many Torah scholars and scribes who lived or resided temporarily in Jerusalem, many of whom came from Galilee. If, however, Jerusalem is removed from this cultural equation—and Jerusalem did have its own independent cultural and religious existence—then it is beyond doubt that the cultural and religious level in Galilee was higher than that in Judea.

The references in rabbinic literature to Galilean sages teaching in their academies (literally, houses of study) and in the open air in Galilee, exhorting the people to higher moral standards, stressing observance of Torah and seeking to strengthen ties to Jerusalem and the Temple, are many times more frequent than the references to such activities by their counterparts in Judea. Wherever life in Galilee is compared to that in Judea, whether explicitly or not, it is clear that Galilee came before Judea in terms of Torah, Jewish life and the entire complex of Jewish culture.[21]

Thus, the existence of the Hasidic movement in Galilee in the late Second Temple period and at the beginning of the tannaic period does not reflect a low level of Torah life in Galilee nor a minimal amount of Pharisaic influence there, but rather the existence of a fruitful, creative and committed Jewish existence both in the intellectual sphere and in the more practical aspects of life. Jesus, who was quite close to the Hasidim and perhaps even involved with some of them, does not therefore reflect Galilean boorishness or ignorance, but rather the dynamism and ongoing creativity of Jewish life in Galilee.

Facing page: One of the many beauty spots in Galilee: the Gennesaret Plain at the Sea of Galilee's northwest shore. Above the plain (on the left) towers the Arbel cliffs. For a different view of the plain and cliffs, see the cover of issue 23 (Nov./Dec. 1989). *(Courtesy of the Israel Government Press Office)*

Father-Son Relationship

All the Gospels present Jesus' relationship to God as that of a son to his father. One finds in Jesus' teachings dozens of references to God in phrases such as "your father," "our father," "our father in heaven," "your father in heaven," "my father," "my father in heaven" or just "father."[22] These occur repeatedly, whether in direct conversation between Jesus and God or in Jesus' words to disciples or the public.[23]

These phrases are especially prevalent in Matthew, Luke and John, but somewhat rarer in Mark. Once, however, in the Gospel of Mark, Jesus even uses the phrase *abba* ("father" in both Hebrew and Aramaic): "And he said, '*Abba*, father'" (ἀββὰ ὁ πατήρ, *abba ho patēr*).[24] This concept also appears in the Epistle to the Romans 8:15: "For you received a spirit of adoption by which we cry, '*Abba*, father'" (ἀββὰ ὁ πατήρ, *abba ho patēr*). Similarly in the Epistle to the Galatians 4:6: "Because you are sons, God sent the spirit of his son into our hearts crying '*Abba*, father'" (ἀββὰ ὁ πατήρ, *abba ho patēr*).

Those scholars who claim that the dual usage of *abba* and father is not simply a later editorial clarification of Mark but rather Mark's original version are undoubtedly right, since this is the version that also appears in the Epistle to the Romans and in the Epistle to the Galatians.[25] The Hebrew might be reconstructed as "*abba ha-av*" (father, the [O!] father) or "*abba avi*" (father, my father). Then *abba* would be interpreted as a proper noun referring to God with "father" modifying it. The concept that Israel is the "son" of God is quite common in rabbinic literature, especially in prayers, and the phrase "our father" referring to God is often employed to refer to the relationship between the people of Israel and God.[26] However, the use of the intimate "my father in heaven" is found only once in a rabbinic text and that text belongs to Hasidic literature.

The phrase "my father in heaven" in any form does not appear in the Mishnah, Tosefta or either of the two Talmuds, and it is rarely found in aggadic midrashim. It does appear twice in halachic midrashim, but not as direct address or supplication to God. In Mechilta, Rabbi Natan describes the martyrdom of the people of Israel during the period of the Hadrianic decrees (fourth decade of the second century C.E.), and states: "These plagues have caused my father in heaven to love me even more."[27]

The second halachic midrash in which the phrase appears is given in the name of Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah:

> ...one should not say, "I could never wear *sha'atnez* [clothing of wool and linen woven together], eat pork, or engage in illicit sexual acts." Rather, one should say, "It is possible, but I will not do these things since my father in heaven has forbidden them."[28]

These are the only rabbinic uses of the phrase "my father in heaven." On the other hand, the phrase appears no fewer than seventeen times in Seder Eliyahu, and almost always in direct address: "My father in heaven, remember your mercy," "May it be your will, my father in heaven,"[29] and the like.[30]

Seder Eliyahu is unique in terms of its content and dates to quite an early period.[31] More importantly, it reflects what remains of Hasidic literature embedded within the greater corpus of rabbinic literature.[32] Only in this Hasidic work does one find "my father" used in direct address between a "son" and his heavenly father. In the rest of rabbinic literature one finds only the more neutral "our father in heaven" or "our father, our king," with the plural possessive pronoun.

A more explicit example of how the Hasidim saw themselves and how the sages saw them—as sons of their heavenly father—is found in one of the earliest references to the Hasidim, the story of Honi the Circle Drawer (first century B.C.E.) and the people's request that he pray for rain. Honi prays to God and says: "Your sons turned to me because I am like a member [lit., 'son'] of your household." Shim'on ben Shetah, who was not very happy with the manner in which Honi addressed God, sent him a message:

> If you were not Honi, I would have decreed a ban against you. But what can I do with you? You are impertinent in making demands of God, but he does what you want. You are just like a son who wheedles and cajoles his father and gets his way. Regarding you the verse states, "May your father and mother be glad, and may she who gave you birth rejoice" [Proverbs 23:25].[33]

The people of Israel are quite often referred to collectively as the "sons" of God; however, hardly ever is anyone, sage or otherwise, referred to as "son" when the father is clearly God.

Regarding Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa, a resident of the Galilean settlement of Araba and one of the central figures in the Hasidic movement at the end of the Second Temple period (first cent. C.E.), the Babylonian sage Rav said:

> Every day a heavenly voice goes forth from Mount Horev and proclaims, "The whole world is provided with food on account of my son Hanina, while my son Hanina is satisfied with a *kav* of carobs from one Sabbath eve to another."[34]

It is likewise related that when Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai asked Hanina ben Dosa to pray for the recovery of his sick son, his wife turned to him and said: "And is Hanina greater than you?" Rabban Yohanan answered, "No, but he is like a slave of his master the king, and I am like a minister of the king."[35] In tannaic literature a slave is not someone who works in the fields of his master's farm, but rather one who serves his master in a very intimate relationship. The minister of a king is an important figure in the kingdom, but must maintain a proper distance from the king. In this saying, Rabban Yohanan admits that Hanina has a more intimate and privileged relationship with God than he.

The Babylonian Talmud contains a series of stories about Hasidic charismatics who could cause rain to fall. Ta'anit 23[b] tells of one such Hasid, Hanan Ha-Nehba, the son of Honi's daughter. During periods of drought young children were sent to him and they would tug on the folds of his garment and beg, "*Abba*, *abba*, give us rain." Then Hanan would pray, "Master of the Universe, do this for these who are unable to distinguish between a father who can give rain and one who cannot."

It appears from the above passages that the Hasidim and those associated with them, including Jesus, considered their relationship with God to be one of extreme familiarity. It is true that already in the Bible the people of Israel are referred to as sons or children of God: "You are the sons of the LORD your God" (Deut. 14:1). Likewise, in rabbinic teaching Israel is called "sons" of God: "Beloved are Israel for they were called sons of God; still greater was the love in that it was made known to them that they were called sons of God."[36] One sage stated that even when Israel sins, they still are sons of the LORD their God."[37] However, in Hasidic circles the relationship of a Hasid to God was not just one of "child of God," but of a son who can brazenly make requests of his father that someone else cannot make. The Hasid addressed God as "*abba*," "my father," or "my father in heaven," and the LORD responded the way he responded to "Hanina, my son."

Miracle Workers

Most of the passages pertaining to Hasidim refer to their causing rain to fall, healing the sick or exorcising demons that caused the people much fear. The first literary reference to the Hasidic movement is the reference to Honi the Circle Drawer in the Mishnah, Ta'anit 3:8: "Pray for rain to fall."[38] The Gemara to this mishnah, in both Talmuds, expands upon the rain theme and the Hasidim who were called upon to bring down rain.[39] For instance, it is stated, "If you see a generation over whom the heavens are rust-colored[40] like copper so that neither dew nor rain falls...go to the Hasid of that generation that he may intercede abundantly."[41] In a story about Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa it is stated that "he used to pray for the sick."[42] Further stories tell of exorcism of evil spirits by Hanina ben Dosa and other Hasidim.[43]

It should be stressed that all the stories indicate that people turned to the Hasidim and to no other group to effect cures or exorcise evil spirits. People may occasionally have turned to more mainstream sages to pray for rain within the framework of the ceremonies connected with drought, but they went only to Hasidim to cure illness or chase away spirits.

Even in the case of rain, there is a difference between the Hasidim and the sages. The sage prayed for rain as part of a public prayer ritual—sometimes his prayers were answered and sometimes they were not.[44] The Hasid prayed privately and as a son beseeching his father. Thus, for example, Honi the Circle Drawer was in Jerusalem not far from the Temple when he was asked to pray for rain, but he did not choose to pray in the Temple. Rather he sought solitude to beseech his father in heaven. Abba Hilkiyah, the grandson of Honi, or "the Hasid of the village of Umi" as he is known in a different version of the story, did not pray for rain in public or in the course of a public ceremony as did Rabbi Akiva and other sages, but went to the second floor of his house and there, together with his wife, prayed for rain.[45] Hanan Ha-Nehba, another grandson of Honi, used to pray in a similar manner when the little children grabbed the folds of his garment and begged him to

bring rain.[46] Unlike the sages, though, the prayers of the Hasidim were always answered.

Tannaic halachah does not formulate demands based on the presupposition that miracles will occur. The Halachah in some cases demands the sacrifice of one's life to avoid committing a transgression,[47] and makes no promise of relief or salvation through a miracle. The sages taught that when danger threatens, a person engaged in prayer should remove himself from the danger.[48] A person who prays for rain or healing receives no assurance that his prayers will be answered on the spot. Furthermore, according to tannaic halachah in both Mishnah and *baraita*, if non-Jews threaten to destroy a Jewish city unless a certain Jew is handed over to them, the residents of the city should hand over the person and not depend on a miracle to save the city.[49]

The behavior and actions of the Hasidim show their opposition to this realistic view of the sages. The Hasidic perspective on miracles is found as early as the days of Honi and continues until the end of the tannaic period and beginning of the amoraic period. Thus, for instance, Honi not only begged God, like a little child begs his father, to bring down rain, but was so confident of the results of his prayer that he told those who had asked him to pray for rain: "Go bring in your Passover ovens [made of clay] so that they will not be softened by the rain."[50] The Hasid of the village of Umi went up to the roof with his wife to pray for rain, sure of success. Out of a sense of modesty, he did discuss with his wife the possibility that it might not rain, but it was obvious to him that his prayer would be answered.[51]

The same confidence is also apparent in the actions of Hanina ben Dosa. The fifth chapter of Mishnah tractate Berachot is a reservoir of Hasidic teaching. It contains very little halachah, primarily describing the deeds of the "first Hasidim" and the Hasid Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa.[52] The first mishnah in chapter five states that one should not stop in the middle of reciting the Eighteen Benedictions: "Even if the king asks after his health he should not respond, nor even if a snake winds itself around his leg." This halachah is not in keeping with the normative view that at any time or in any situation, if there is doubt concerning danger to human life, one should act to preserve life, even if it means violating commandments of the Torah. Unquestionably, it is permissible to interrupt one's prayer or move out of danger if one's life is endangered.

The two Talmuds try to interpret this mishnah so that it will not conflict with normative halachah. Thus, both Talmuds explain that one does not respond to the greeting of a king of Israel during the reciting of the Eighteen Benedictions—a Jewish king would undoubtedly understand—but "in the case of a Gentile king, one always responds to his greeting."[53] One does not interrupt the "Eighteen" if a snake winds itself around one's leg, but one can do so, according to the Talmuds, in the case of a scorpion.[54] However, the plain meaning of the mishnah is that one does not interrupt the Eighteen Benedictions even in the case of mortal danger. A "king" in rabbinic literature is usually a Gentile king, and the danger posed by poisonous snakes was well-known.

There are midrashic accounts[55] as well as stories in the Talmuds[56] about Hasidim who stood and prayed beside a road or in an open field and did not interrupt their prayer to return the greeting of a passing official or when a snake approached. Not only were they not harmed, the snake that bit one of them actually died. The Midrash compares the king and the snake and finds them quite similar: "Just as the snake hisses and kills, so also the kingdom hisses at a man and kills him."[57] The snake is dangerous and kills just as the "kingdom," that is, the Roman Empire, kills.

The central idea of Mishnah Tractate Berachot's fifth chapter is that one should *never* interrupt the "Eighteen," even when one's life is threatened. The Hasidim, who acted in accordance with this dictum, were always saved from danger. Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa took the snake that died after biting him, put it on his shoulder and went to the house of study. When he arrived, he exclaimed: "See, my children, the viper does not kill; it is sin that kills!"[58]

In the Mishnah, Berachot 5:5, we find the following account:

> They used to remark about Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa that he would pray for the sick and say, "This one will live and this one will die." They said to him, "How do you know?" He said, "If the prayer comes out of my mouth fluently, I know that it is granted; but if not, I know that it is rejected."

Both Talmuds tell of Hanina ben Dosa's prayers for the son of Rabban Gamaliel and for the son of Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai.[59] The Jerusalem Talmud relates the story about Rabban Gamaliel's son:

A "seat of Moses" carved from basalt found in the ruins of the third–fourth-century C.E. synagogue at Chorazin. *(Courtesy of the Israel Museum, Jerusalem)*

> It happened that the son of Rabban Gamaliel became ill and he sent two disciples to Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa. He [Hanina] said to them, "Wait while I go to my upper room," and he went upstairs. When he came down, he said, "I am certain that Rabban Gamaliel's son is much better now." At that very moment, Rabban Gamaliel's son asked for something to eat.

The version in the Babylonian Talmud is similar. In other words, Rabbi Hanina prayed and was certain that his prayer was answered.

Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa, as well as other Hasidim, also exorcised demons found near springs, and evil spirits that had entered the bodies of people.[60] There are, however, no accounts of the sages exorcising evil spirits. This was apparently an activity that was peculiar to the Hasidim.

An interesting story, although somewhat later than the ones mentioned above, is that of Ulla bar Kosher.[61] It is related that the Roman authorities tried to arrest him and that he fled to Lod. Soldiers surrounded the city and gave an ultimatum: unless Ulla were handed over to them, they would destroy the entire city. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi, convinced Ulla to surrender himself, and the city was saved. However, the prophet Elijah, who used to appear to Rabbi Yehoshua on a regular basis, ceased at this point to appear to him.[62] When Elijah finally did appear to him again, after Rabbi Yehoshua had fasted many times, Rabbi Yehoshua asked him why he had stopped coming to him. Elijah answered: "Do I appear to informers?" Rabbi Yehoshua responded by saying that he had acted in accordance with halachah and with the mishnah which state that if non-Jews demand that a specific person be handed over, "he should be handed over in order that they [the rest] not be killed."[63] The prophet Elijah, however, was angered by this view and said: "Is this the teaching (literally, 'mishnah') of the Hasidim?" According to the teaching of the Hasidim,

the residents of the city would not have been harmed had they refused to hand Ulla over to the authorities. Elijah blamed Rabbi Yehoshua for not trusting in God's intervention.

Miracles were an integral part of Jesus' ministry and the ministry of his followers. The Synoptic Gospels and the Gospel of John contain many references to the healing of the sick, lepers and paralyzed, the casting out of demons and the raising of the dead. The Gospels mention that Jesus went from synagogue to synagogue in Galilee in order to cast out demons.[64] It is related a number of times that Jesus healed the sick on the Sabbath, resulting in discussions about the relationship between man and the Sabbath.[65] Jesus' acts of healing caused non-Jews to seek him out, and he expressed his views regarding them.[66] Jesus even came in contact with Samaritans in the course of his healing ministry, and he compared the different responses of a Samaritan leper and some Jewish lepers he had healed.[67]

Jesus stressed that curative and miraculous power comes from faith.[68] Thus, for example, his disciples did not succeed in healing a young boy possessed by a demon because they lacked sufficient faith; only Jesus, through his faith, was able to heal him.[69] When Jesus sent out his twelve disciples to spread his teachings and foster his mission, he commanded them, "Proclaim: 'The kingdom of heaven is here!' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers and cast out demons."[70] The Gospels even mention one man who was not Jesus' disciple who was casting out demons through the name of Jesus.[71] In the passage appended to the end of the Gospel of Mark,[72] Jesus appears after his crucifixion and states, "In my name they will cast out demons...they will pick up snakes, and if they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them. They will lay hands on the sick and they will recover."[73]

Jesus' miracles are much more numerous than those described in the literature of the Hasidim, or in stories about Hasidim found in rabbinic literature. However it is important to remember that rabbinic literature was not written for the purpose of transmitting the biographies and histories of Hasidim. Stories about the deeds and sayings of Hasidim are only a small part of rabbinic literature. The sages were not interested as such in the Hasidim, and most of the stories about them have survived because of an interest in the response of a sage to the saying or deed of a Hasid. For example, the story about Honi the Circle Drawer and his prayer for rain was included in rabbinic literature to give Shim'on ben Shetah's response. The healings of Hanina ben Dosa were preserved to show the reactions of Rabban Gamaliel and Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai.

Yet, even this small corpus of Hasidic material enables one to see many similarities in language and detail between the miracles of Jesus and those of the Hasidim. In the story of Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa's exorcism of an evil spirit, Hanina spoke to the spirit: "Why do you torment a daughter of Abraham our father?"[74] Jesus responded in a similar manner when the head of the synagogue in Capernaum asked him why he was healing on the Sabbath: "Shouldn't this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound for eighteen years, be loosed on the Sabbath from what bound her?"[75]

In the story of the centurion's slave (Mt. 8:5–13; Lk. 7:1–10), it is reported that Jesus healed the slave without going to the house where he was lying. In the slightly different version of the story found in John 4:43–53, it is added that Jesus informed the man that his son would live, and upon returning home the man discovered that his son had indeed been healed at one o'clock, the exact time Jesus had told him this. In almost identical language the Jerusalem Talmud describes the healing (mentioned above) of Rabban Gamaliel's son by Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa. The version of the story that appears in the Babylonian Talmud is quite similar, except that there it is stated: "At that very moment his fever broke and he asked us for water to drink."[76]

There are two interesting expressions found in the addendum to the Gospel of Mark (16:9–20) that can be understood quite well in light of what we know about the Hasidim. Jesus promised his disciples that they would "pick up snakes,"[77] and should they drink deadly poison, it would not hurt them. Jesus' promise about handling snakes is reminiscent of the story about Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa.[78] When he was bitten by a reptile, he was not harmed; rather the reptile died. Jesus promised his disciples that when they were sent in his name on preaching and healing missions, snakes would not be able to harm them.[79]

Jesus' statement about drinking poison can also be understood against the background of Hasidic practice and beliefs. The halachah states that it is forbidden to drink water or other beverages that have been left in an open container, since a snake may

have drunk from it and left its venom in the liquid. This ruling is repeated a number of times in rabbinic literature.[80]

There is plentiful evidence that the people did refrain from drinking beverages that had been left uncovered, and that observance of this halachah was widespread.[81] A passage in the Jerusalem Talmud[82] mentions a certain Hasid who used to ridicule[83] those who were careful not to drink liquids that had been sitting in an open container. However, the Hasid "came down with a high fever and was seen sitting and teaching on the Day of Atonement with a bowl of water in his hand." The story is anti-Hasidic and was given in rabbinic literature to show the consequences of disregarding the rulings of the sages. This particular Hasid was apparently also a sage and he taught in public on the Day of Atonement. He was forced to drink water (ordinarily a violation of the fast) to keep his fever down, thus suffering public embarrassment for his presumption, and proving that no one, not even a Hasid, could violate this prohibition with impunity.

It is inconceivable that this Hasid was irresponsible or that he made light of the sages' view out of disrespect for the commandments. Undoubtedly, he was certain that "the snake does not kill," and, like Hanina ben Dosa who would not interrupt his prayer because of a snake, felt that being careful not to drink uncovered water was an unnecessary hindrance to his religious activities. Notice that Jesus gave his disciples authority over the forces of nature;[84] in effect, he assured them that, when on a mission for him, they would be able to drink from stagnant pools of water along the road without suffering harm.

Poverty & Wealth

All historical, literary and archaeological sources testify that the economic situation of the Jews in the Land of Israel was good at the end of the Second Temple Period, and following the destruction of the Temple. Although the country lacked mineral resources and did not play a role in international commerce, intensive farming enabled the

Plastered cisterns, ritual immersion pools and storerooms uncovered in the excavation of the Essene settlement at Qumran.
(Courtesy of the Israel Government Press Office)

residents of the land to earn an adequate living. As Josephus states: "We do not reside along a seacoast and we do not enjoy commercial trade...but rather our cities are far from the sea and we labor cultivating our fertile land."[85]

This is also the general picture provided by rabbinic literature and the New Testament. Poverty occurred only at such specific times as the period immediately following the destruction of the Temple, the period after the Bar-Kochva Revolt, and the period of anarchy in the third century. There does not seem to have been general economic suffering at other times, and stories about the sages do not mention their poverty except during these difficult periods.

There are various traditions, such as those about Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus[86] and the Babylonian traditions about Hillel,[87] which mention the poverty of the sages while they were disciples when they had left their parents' homes to devote all their time to studying Torah. One also thinks of the disciples to whom Peter referred when he said, "Behold, we have left our homes and followed you" (Lk. 18:28). However, these sages had no difficulty supporting themselves when they were older, and there were many who were affluent and had considerable possessions. Overall, poverty did not characterize the world of the sages during either the Second Temple period (see Glossary, p. 44) or the Yavneh period (70-132 C.E.).

The sages did not see personal wealth as evil, but taught that one ought not acquire it unjustly nor use it to persecute the poor.[88] Wealth should not exempt one from communal responsibilities and from the study of Torah, or from behaving with humility.[89]

Among the sages there were those who were well-to-do, and some who were quite wealthy. Hillel was comfortably well off, and after the Second Temple period there were wealthy sages such as Rabbi Eleazar ben Harsom,[90] Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah[91] and Rabbi Tarfon.[92] That is not to say that there were not poor sages such as Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hananiah,[93] Rabbi Yohanan ben Nuri[94] and others. There was, however, no ill feeling toward the wealthy sages, and we find positive sentiments expressed about Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah, for instance, even by Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hananiah.[95]

It should be pointed out that prestige was not a function of economic status, at least at this time. Although it was later stated that "Rabbi [Yehudah ha-Nasi] honors the wealthy,"[96] in the official decisions of the Usha period (140 C.E.ff.), and even earlier during the Yavneh period of Rabban Gamaliel, it was explicitly stated that one should not give away to the needy more than a fifth of one's possessions.[97] Both Talmuds relate regarding Rabbi Yesheveav, a Yavneh period sage, that "he went and distributed all his possessions to the needy," and the sages protested that his action went counter to their teaching that one should give no more than a fifth of one's possessions to the poor.[98]

Rabbi Yesheveav, generally referred to as "Rabbi Yesheveav the scribe," was one of the ten martyrs who were put to death in the period of religious persecution after the Bar-Kochva Revolt.[99] In Song of Songs Rabbah he is described in the following manner:

> The tenth [martyr] was Rabbi Yesheveav from among the last of the Hasidim. When Rabbi[100] saw him, he recited over him the following verse: "Help LORD, for the godly man [Hebrew: חָסִיד, *ha-SID*] is no more" [Ps. 12:2].[101]

If this late midrash actually preserves an earlier tradition reflecting the tannaic period, and Rabbi Yesheveav is in fact a Hasid ("among the last of the Hasidim"), then his actions in distributing all his possessions would be quite understandable.

In Hasidic thought, penury is considered the ideal state that leads to all the other positive and praiseworthy qualities of character. Moreover, the stories about Hasidim usually stress their poverty. Rabbinic sources, on the other hand, generally mention the poverty of sages only during especially difficult times economically.

In discussing the ideology of poverty in Hasidic thought, it is worthwhile to examine a teaching of Hillel the Elder during whose time (end of first century B.C.E.–beginning of first century C.E.) there was already a degree of tension between the sages and the Hasidim.[102] It is stated in the Babylonian Talmud, Hagigah 9[b]:

> Elijah said to Bar He He, and others say, to Rabbi Eleazar, "What is the meaning of the verse [Isaiah 48:10], 'Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver [literally, "and not with silver," which could be understood, "because you have no money]; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction [the word for "affliction" can also mean "poverty"]'? This teaches us that the Holy One, blessed is He, examined every good quality and found none better for Israel than poverty."[103]

The notion that the ideal quality for Israel

is poverty was not the commonly accepted view among the sages, but was certainly prevalent in Hasidic thought. As I have shown elsewhere,[104] the early midrashic works Seder Eliyahu Rabbah and Seder Eliyahu Zuta (together known as Seder Eliyahu) represent some of the most important remnants of Hasidic thinking. These works do not really purport to speak in the name of Elijah, and nowhere in these works is it stated or even hinted that Elijah himself authored the statements. Although the Babylonian Talmud ascribes these works to Elijah,[105] the author of Seder Eliyahu makes no such claim.[106] In the discussion found in two places in Seder Eliyahu pertaining to the tribe to which Elijah belonged,[107] this question is presented in the same manner in which it is discussed in Genesis Rabbah.[108] The sages discuss the matter among themselves and then Elijah appears before them and states, "I am from the seed of Rachel." Another passage in Seder Eliyahu deals with Elijah in the third person in the same way that the work discusses other biblical figures.[109] In these examples, Elijah appears and speaks, but is not the author of the work.

In Seder Eliyahu Zuta,[110] there is a teaching on the value of poverty which is based on Isaiah 48:10 quoted above, but this time it is not Elijah who speaks. The teaching is simply a continuation of the midrashic discussion on the poor and wealthy; and although the two sources apparently are not dependent upon each other for this teaching, their language is almost identical.

The Babylonian Talmud does occasionally cite from Seder Eliyahu in the name of *Tanna d've Eliyahu* ("a teaching of the school of Eliyahu") or *Tannu Rabbanan* ("our rabbis taught"), or even without ascribing authorship.[111] The Hasidic teaching referred to above in the Babylonian Talmud (Hagigah 9b) is cited in the name of Elijah; however, in the fifth chapter of Seder Eliyahu Zuta, this same teaching appears without reference to Elijah within the framework of a detailed discussion on the value of poverty, and continues:

> Because of poverty they fear the LORD... one becomes a doer of good deeds only because of poverty; one becomes a giver of charity only because of poverty; one becomes a doer of charitable deeds only because of poverty; one becomes a fearer of God only because of poverty.

The idea is repeated once more in another passage in this midrash, in a teaching about the behavior of man:

> A person becomes a Hasid to suffer all things. He is given an angel who treats him in the manner of the Hasidim...and says, "You save the afflicted [the word for 'afflicted' can also mean 'poor'], but your eyes are on the haughty ['the rich,' in this context] to humble them" [2 Samuel 22:28]. "You save the afflicted"—[this refers to a] people for whom poverty is becoming.[112]

Seder Eliyahu Rabbah and Seder Eliyahu Zuta are Hasidic works and date from the Second Temple period, not the First Temple period. Although the Babylonian Talmud states that Elijah is the author of Seder Eliyahu, and some of the sayings in the Babylonian Talmud such as Elijah's statement to Bar He He in Hagigah 9b are attributed to Elijah, nowhere in Seder Eliyahu itself is it claimed that Elijah is the author of the work.

I have shown elsewhere that the small compilation known as Derech Eretz Zuta is one of the most marked expressions of the Hasidic movement and served as the basis for both Seder Eliyahu Rabbah and Zuta.[113] At the beginning of this work, in all versions of the text, there is a description of the characteristics of the sage: "he is humble...a fearer of sin, judges a man according to his deeds, and says, 'I have no need of anything found in this world.'" These are basically the characteristics of the Hasid as found in Avot 5:10 in the Mishnah: "What is mine is yours and what is yours is yours—[this is the attitude of] a Hasid."

There are many references to the poverty of the Hasidim. One of the first descriptions of Hasidic poverty is the beautiful and detailed story about the Hasid of the village of Umi.[114] This story is recorded in the Babylonian Talmud and the Jerusalem Talmud. In both versions the story's contents are very similar;[115] however, in the Jerusalem Talmud, the episode concerns a Hasid from Umi while in the Babylonian Talmud the story refers to Abba Hilkiyah, a grandson of Honi the Circle Drawer. The Hasid's poverty is stressed throughout the entire account: he was a day laborer; the *tallith* (mantle) he was so careful about was not his own, but was borrowed so that he might be able to pray;[116] to protect his sandals and keep them from wearing out, he did not wear them unless it was absolutely necessary; there was not much food in his house.

There are also many references to the poverty of Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa, the most prominent of the Hasidic personalities. Under pressure from his wife, he petitioned Heaven and was given the golden leg of a table. Later, however, he asked that it be taken back since he was afraid that this wealth might take away from his portion in the world to come,[117] that is, he feared that he would have a two-legged table in the World to Come—in Hanina's time, tables had three legs. The vast wealth of Eleazar ben Azariah, of Rabbi Tarfon, and of other sages did not seem to cause them concern that their heavenly reward would be reduced.

At the beginning of both Song of Songs Rabbah and Ecclesiastes Rabbah it is related that once Rabbi Hanina was not able to join the residents of his town in bringing sacrifices to Jerusalem. The author of the account relates that Hanina was too poor to take a votive offering up to Jerusalem, and therefore took "a stone from the wilderness of his town," dressed it and took it to Jerusalem.[118] Most likely, this stone was for King Herod's Temple Mount construction project, which continued even after the death of Herod until close to the Great Revolt which began in 66 C.E.

Tractate Ta'anit 24^{b}–25^{a} of the Babylonian Talmud gives a number of stories about the poverty of Hanina and the miraculous ways in which God delivered him out of his distress. The Babylonian Talmud records several times the saying of Rav:

> Every day a heavenly voice goes forth from Mount Horev and proclaims, "The whole world is provided with food on account of my son Hanina, while my son Hanina is satisfied with a *kav*[119] of carobs from one Sabbath eve to another."[120]

Another poverty stricken Hasid was Abba Tahnah. Ecclesiastes Rabbah 9:7 relates that once on the Sabbath eve when Abba Tahnah was returning home carrying a load of sticks, he was accosted by a man afflicted with boils lying at the side of the road who begged him to help him into the city. Although for a moment he hesitated, he put down his load and got the stricken person into the city. Afterwards, he returned for his sticks and entered the city at dusk, very close to the beginning of the Sabbath, causing some people to question his piety.[121] Abba Tahnah himself was afraid that he might have desecrated the Sabbath, "but at that very moment God made the sun shine," giving Abba Tahnah additional time before the beginning of Sabbath. Abba Tahnah had only hesitated to help the afflicted man because that would have meant leaving the sticks he had gathered and possible losing them. He had thought to himself: "If this should happen, how will I support myself and my family?" Collecting firewood to support oneself is a classic indication of a poor person in the literature of the period. Abba Hilkiyah also supported himself in this manner, and so did Rabbi Akiva before he became famous,[122] as did Hillel, according to the text of the Babylonian Talmud.[123]

Midrashim composed in the land of Israel preserve the following saying of Rabbi Akiva: "Poverty becomes Israel like a red strap across the breast of a white horse."[124] The thrust of this saying is that poverty, like other afflictions, leads Israel to repentance. Although poverty might have some positive results, Rabbi Akiva considered it an evil that one should not seek. For the Hasidim, however, poverty was intrinsically beneficial and they strove to be poor.

The idea that poverty brings one closer to God and his kingdom is found explicitly in the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew 6:24 we read: "No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money." This sentiment is echoed in Luke 16:13, and in Matthew it is found within the context of verses 25–34 which stress that one should not worry about not having food or clothing, indicating the futility of praying for such things.

In 1976 David Flusser and I published an article on Matthew 6:24, in which we argued that this verse corresponds to certain aspects of rabbinic thought, and we attributed the negative attitude toward wealth to the influence of Essene teachings.[125] Now, however, it would seem that this negative attitude derives more from the similarity of Jesus' world view to that of the Hasidim. The life style of Jesus, his attitude to society and to both the Written and Oral Law, the domain of the sages, his manner of teaching and his association with his disciples were much more similar to the Hasidim than to the Essenes. In fact, Jesus really had very little in common with the Essenes.

Jesus' position regarding wealth can also be seen quite clearly in the story of the wealthy young man found in Matthew

Facing page:
The west side of Jerusalem's Old City (photographed from the south). Clearly discernable is the rectangular platform, all that remains of the Second Temple, constructed by King Herod the Great's builders. For a view of the same area from the north, see page 3 of issue 37 (Mar./Apr. 1992).
(Courtesy of the Israel Government Press Office)

19:16–22, Mark 10:17–22 and Luke 18:18–23. Each of the Gospels differs slightly in its version of the conversation between the rich man and Jesus, but they all agree on one thing: Jesus made the acceptance of the young man into the kingdom of heaven conditional upon his giving away his money and possessions to the poor. All three Gospels also include Jesus' admonition that it is very difficult for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.

What Jesus demanded of the wealthy young man is exactly what Rabbi Yesheveav did when he distributed all his possessions among the needy, to the chagrin of Rabban Gamaliel and the other sages, as mentioned above.[126]

One may conclude that it was generally accepted within the rabbinic world that a person ought not give away all his money to the poor and thereby become poor himself, and a burden to society. Poverty was not an ideal that one should strive to attain, and the sages did not see any necessary ethical or spiritual value in being poor. One finds in Hasidic teaching, however, that poverty was an ideal and that the poverty which characterized the Hasidim was a deliberate choice. But the Hasidim were not impoverished simply because their devotion to the performance of good deeds prevented them from working enough to support themselves. Rather, they were happy with little and even emphasized the value of poverty as a virtue and means of spiritual attainment.

Torah Study

Jewish literature throughout the entire Second Temple period stressed the meaning and importance of the study of Torah. This emphasis is seen in several Psalms which date from the beginning of the Second Temple period, and especially in the writings of such Jewish authors as Philo and Josephus. The study of Torah in a variety of forms—in private, in a group together with a sage and his disciples, by disciples alone, or public study—is described by numerous authors of the Second Temple period.

Torah study was particularly important to the Pharisees and to those groups associated with them. Most of the sayings or deeds described in the Mishnah Tractate Avot reflect the importance of studying Torah,[127] and it is an important motif in a number of works of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, such as IV Ezra and Baruch, which reflect an outlook similar to that of the sages. The Dead Sea sect also emphasized the importance of Torah study, although not to the extent that the sages did.

Unlike the sages,[128] however, the Hasidim did not seek a balance between "study" and "deed," but maintained that the deed is to be preferred even at the expense of Torah study.[129] When they mentioned the saying in the Mishnah that refers to the fruits of certain deeds that are enjoyed in the world to come, they deleted the saying's conclusion which states that "the study of Torah is equal to them all."[130]

Similarly, in the teaching and deeds of Jesus there is no reference to the study of Torah. Jesus does deal with various aspects of everyday life, and in addition to the many teachings of Jesus on repentance, salvation and the expectation of the kingdom of heaven, there are also stories about Jesus' behavior and his requests and demands of those who followed him. Jesus sometimes rebuked those of little faith or those who did not believe in the future redemption or who were immodest, and the like. Yet, according to the Gospels, Jesus never raised the issue of Torah study.

The lack of references to the study of Torah in the teaching of Jesus does not derive from his estrangement from Torah or from his ignorance of it. Everything attributed to Jesus testifies to his rich cultural background and wide knowledge, and many of his sayings, parables and deeds suggest considerable sophistication. The content of his teaching also illustrates a wide knowledge of ancient literary sources, whether of Bible, biblical interpretation or Midrash.

Jesus' apparent neglect of the topic of Torah study should be understood in light of the importance that he, like the Hasidim, gave to living out one's values. By not speaking of the study of Torah he gave more emphasis to the importance of the deed in the life of man and his quest for the kingdom of heaven.

The accounts of the actions and responses of Jesus are perhaps more consistent and even more extreme regarding the dichotomy between study and deed than is apparent in the limited amount of Hasidic literature. Jesus does not try to prove that the deed is preferable to study, but by his speech and behavior he exemplifies the importance of man's deeds and wholly ignores the significance of the study of Torah.

Conclusion

I do not claim that Jesus was actually a Hasid or a member in any form or fashion

of the basically Galilean Hasidic movement of his time. I have, however, endeavored to show the similarity and affinity between Jesus and the Hasidim in teaching, lifestyle, behavior and relationship with the sages.

The stories about Jesus do not mention that anyone ever approached him with the request that he pray for rain. Perhaps there were no droughts during Jesus' brief ministry, but more likely the very nature of the request to a Hasid to bring rain precluded Jesus' involvement in such a matter. The Hasidim were usually approached by the establishment or by sages who often sent young children to arouse their feelings of compassion. It took years for a Hasid to become so well-known that the establishment would turn to him in an emergency, and it appears from the Gospel records that Jesus' public career was so short that he may not yet have come to the attention of the establishment as a miracle worker.

The healing of the sick was a different matter. In such cases the afflicted person himself, his mother, father or master sought out Jesus. Thus, his healing and his exorcism of demons did not take place in the framework of communal prayer or in the synagogue, but were the result of personal requests directed towards someone who was thought capable of such miracles.

The accounts of Jesus' healings and exorcisms are far more numerous than those of Hanina ben Dosa, Honi or other such charismatics. It is important to remember, however, that while the Gospels intended to relate Jesus' entire history from before his birth to his crucifixion, rabbinic literature had no intention of presenting the history of the Hasidim. The stories about the Hasidim are generally cited in rabbinic literature to portray the response of the sages to their actions. Thus, we have very few "*halachot* [rulings] of the Hasidim"[131] (= "*mishnah* of the Hasidim").[132]

For example, the story about the rain Honi caused to fall was not related to recount his success, but rather as support for the ruling that the shofar is not sounded and a public fast is not declared in the case of "excessive rainfall."[133] Likewise, the healing by Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa was not related for the greater glory of this sage; but, it seems, to point out the difference between a "member of the king's household" and a "minister of the king."[134]

It is also necessary to remember that the entire corpus of material pertaining to the lives and activities of the Hasidim deals almost exclusively with miracles wrought by them. There is a relatively small amount of material pertaining to Hasidim themselves, and no halachic statements at all are given in their names. Even such a famous Hasid as Hanina ben Dosa, who is referred to quite often in the Talmuds and the Midrash, has only a few aggadic sayings cited in his name in Avot,[135] and these are cited to emphasize his saintliness. Similarly, there are just a few aggadic sayings of Rabbi Pinhas ben Yair, and these are given only to illustrate the teaching of the Hasidim.[136]

Basically, we have only veiled references to Hasidic teachings in a literature that is close in spirit but not identical to theirs. This is enough, however, to show us how similar Jesus was to this first-century Galilean group. For the most part, his deeds were in keeping with the tenets of that group. JP

1. Josephus, *War* 2:119–166; *Antiq.* 18:11–22.

2. See David Flusser, "Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes in Pesher Nahum," *Alon Memorial Volume* (Tel Aviv, 1970), pp. 133–168 (Hebrew).

3. See Zeev Safrai, "*Bene-Rechav*, the Essenes and the Concept of Going to the Desert in the Teachings of the Sages," *Annual of Bar Ilan University* 16/17 (1979), 37–58 (Hebrew).

4. The expression קָתֶדְרָא דְמֹשֶׁה (*ka·ted·RA' de·mo·SHEH*, the seat of Moses) is mentioned in the teaching of Rav Aha in Pesikta de-Rav Kahana 1 (ed. Mandelbaum, p. 12). The first scholar to point this out was W. Bacher, "*Le siege de Moise*," *REJ* 34 (1897), 299.

5. E. L. Sukenik, "*Kathedra De Moshe* in Ancient Synagogues," *Tarbiz* 1 (1930), 145–151 (Hebrew). See the comments of J. N. Epstein *ad loc.*, p. 152.

6. On the opposition of the Sadducees to this levy, see Megillat Ta'anit itself (beginning), and also its scholium (ed. H. Lichtenstein, *Hebrew Union College Annual* 8–9 [1931–32], pp. 318, 323). On the view of the Essenes, see J. Liver, "The Half-Shekel in the Dead Sea Scrolls," *Tarbiz* 31 (1962), 18–22 (Hebrew), and David Flusser, "The Half-Shekel in the Gospels and in the Teaching of the Dead Sea Sect," *Tarbiz* 31 (1962), 150–156 (Hebrew). For a new source pertaining to this subject, see the Temple Scroll, XXXIX, 7–10. For proof of the view that the half-shekel tax as we know it from the last few generations of the Second Temple period was an innovation of the Pharisees or their spiritual ancestors, see J. Liver, "The Half-Shekel,"

Kaufmann Jubilee Volume (Jerusalem, 1961), pp. 54–67 (Hebrew).

7. Mt. 17:24–27, and see David Flusser's article cited in note 6.

8. Mt. 4:23; Mark 1:39. It is especially important to note Lk. 4:16ff., which mentions Jesus' reading of the Torah and Prophets, and afterwards, his *derashah* (sermon).

9. The tannaic and amoraic sources that mention the functions of the synagogue emphasize mainly the reading and teaching of Torah. Whenever the synagogue is mentioned in the Gospels or in Acts, it is within the context of reading or studying of the Torah and not in relation to prayer, which is the same general picture found in tannaic literature. For our purposes it is sufficient to cite the *baraita* in Tosefta (= T), Megillah 2:18 (parallels in the Babylonian Talmud [= BT] and the Jerusalem Talmud [= JT]:

> Synagogues—one does not treat them frivolously. One should not enter them when the sun beats down to get out of the sun, nor when it is cold to get out of the cold, nor when it is raining to get out of the rain. One does not eat in them, nor does one drink in them. And one should not sleep in them, nor promenade in them, nor adorn oneself there. Rather, in them one reads [the Torah], studies, preaches and gives public eulogies.

The *baraita* in listing the functions of the synagogue—reading the Torah, studying, preaching and eulogizing—does not mention prayer. There certainly was prayer in the synagogue, but clearly its major function, as demonstrated by rabbinic literature and the Gospels, was to facilitate the public reading of the Torah, study and preaching. For additional sources, see Shmuel Safrai, "Gathering in the Synagogue on the Sabbath and on Weekdays," *Ancient Synagogues in Israel*, BAR International Series 499 (1989), pp. 7-15.

10. *Although there were Hasidic sages too, in this article Prof. Safrai usually uses "sages" as a synonym for "Pharisees," and as the opposite of "Hasidim." –Ed.*

11. See Bradford Young, *The Jewish Background to the Lord's Prayer* (Dayton, OH: Center for Judaic–Christian Studies, 1984).

12. Shmuel Safrai, "Teaching of Pietists in Mishnaic Literature," *The Journal of Jewish Studies* 16 (1956), 15–33. A somewhat expanded version of this article was published in *Eretz Israel and Its Sages in the Period of the Mishnah and Talmud* (Tel Aviv, 1983), pp. 144–160 (Hebrew). See also my "Hasidim and Men of Deeds," *Zion* 50 (1985), 133–154 (Hebrew).

13. Such as chapter five of Tractate Berachot in the Mishnah (= M), and several chapters of Derech Eretz Zuta. See *Eretz Israel and Its Sages*, pp. 152–155, and "Hasidim and Men of Deeds," 149–151.

14. The earliest Hasidic story is that of Honi the Circle Drawer in M Ta'anit 3:8, and the collections of Hasidic stories in the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds, Tractate Ta'anit. See Safrai, "Hasidim and Men of Deeds," 141–143.

15. Such as the saying of Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa in M Avot 3:9, and the *baraita* attributed to Rabbi Pinhas ben Yair (see note 129) that is found in a number of sources composed in the land of Israel, as well as in Babylonian sources. See Safrai, "Hasidim and Men of Deeds," 148.

16. Such as the story about Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hananiah who was sent by Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai to Ramat Bene Anat and there had occasion to admonish a priestly Hasid who was seemingly ignorant of a number of laws of ritual purity mentioned explicitly in the Torah (Avot de-Rabbi Natan, Version A, Chpt. 12 [ed. Schechter, p. 56]; Version B, Chpt. 27 [pp. 56–57]). Similarly, see the statement of Hillel: "The *am ha-aretz* [a person who is not knowledgeable in the commandments] cannot be a Hasid" (M Avot 2:5). See also the rather sharp statement of Rabbi Shim'on ben Yochai in Pirka de-Rabbenu Ha-Kadosh, *Bava de-Arba* (ed. Schenblum, p. 21^{b}).

17. See Safrai, "Hasidim and Men of Deeds," 134–138.

18. Gedaliahu Alon (*The History of the Jews in the Land of Israel in the Period of the Mishnah and Talmud* [Tel Aviv, 1952], 1:320 [Hebrew]) gives an example from JT Pesahim V, 32^{a}. In this passage Rabbi Yohanan (thus in the parallel in BT Pesahim 62^{b}) states that he has received a tradition from his predecessors "not to teach aggadah to Babylonians or Southerners because they are vulgar and have inadequate knowledge of Torah." One could add to this the saying found in JT Sanhedrin I, 18^{d}: "Why is the calendrical year not intercalated in Lod [a town located in the 'South,' i.e., Judea]? Because they [the residents of Lod] are vulgar and have inadequate knowledge of Torah." See also Shmuel Safrai, "The Places for the Sanctification of the New Moon and the Intercalation of the Year after the Destruction of the Temple," *Tarbiz* 35 (1966), 27–38 (Hebrew).

19. Alon, pp. 318–323.

20. Ibid., p. 320, n. 150.

21. For a detailed discussion of this subject, see Shmuel Safrai, "The Jewish Cultural Nature of Galilee in the First Century," *Immanuel* 24/25 (1990), 147–186.

22. "Your [singular] father" appears in Mt. 6:4; 6:6; 6:18; 13:43, *et al.* "Your [plural] father" appears in Mt. 6:8; 6:15; Lk. 6:36; 12:32, *et al.* "Our father" or "Our father in heaven" appears in Mt. 6:1; 6:9; Mk. 11:25, *et al.*

23. Lk. 10:21–22; Lk. 22:42; Jn. 2:16; 17:1, *et al.*

24. Mk. 14:36, but in Mt. 26:39 we find πάτερ μου (*pater mou*, my father), and in Lk. 22:42 only πάτερ (*pater*, father).

25. See the commentary of Vincent Taylor (*The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 2nd ed. [London, 1966], p. 553), and others. However, according to Robert Lindsey, *abba ho patēr* (*Abba*, father) is a typical Markan "pickup," that is, a rare word or phrase that Mark knew and used as a synonym opposite Luke's more original wording. *Abba* appears only three times in the New Testament, once in Mark and twice in Paul's letters, always in the phrase *abba ho patēr*. Paul used *abba*, perhaps adding *ho patēr* as an explanation for his Greek readers. Mark, in his midrashic way, picked up the whole phrase and substituted it opposite Luke's *pater*, an acceptable Greek translation of אַבָּא (*abba*). Matthew agrees with Luke against Mark in using *pater* (father); Matthew's *pater mou* (my father) in 26:39 may preserve אַבִּי (*ʾa·VI*).

26. See Alon Goshen-Gottstein, *God and Israel as Father and Son in Tannaitic Literature*, unpublished doctoral dissertation, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1987 (Hebrew).

27. Mechilta, *De-Va-Hodesh*, *Yitro* 6 (ed. Horovitz-Rabin, p. 227, lines 6–10). This saying is also found in Leviticus Rabbah 32:1 (ed. Margulies, pp. 735–736) and in Midrash Psalms 12 (ed. Buber, p. 109). It likewise appears in Midrash Tannaim (ed. Hoffmann, p. 164), though apparently the author of Midrash Tannaim, like the author of Midrash Ha-Gadol (ed. Margulies, p. 570), copied it from Mechilta or from Leviticus Rabbah. The saying is also found in Sefer Ve-Hizhir on Exodus, p. 25^{b}, and in Lekah Tov on Exodus 20:6 (ed. Buber, p. 136).

28. Sifra, *Kedoshim* (ed. Weiss, p. 93^{d}).

29. Seder Eliyahu Rabbah 18 (p. 112); 20 (p. 121).

30. The other places in Seder Eliyahu where God is addressed as "my father in heaven" are Seder Eliyahu Rabbah 10 (p. 51); 11 (p. 63); 17 (p. 83); 18 (pp. 89, 106); 19 (pp. 110, 111, 112 [four times], 119); 24 (p. 134); 28 (p. 149); 29 (pp. 157, 163).

31. Seder Eliyahu is much earlier than supposed by many scholars and probably dates to around the third century C.E.

32. See Safrai, "Hasidim and Men of Deeds," 150–151.

33. M Ta'anit 3:8, and T Ta'anit 3:1.

34. BT Berachot 17^{b}; Ta'anit 24^{b}; Hullin 86^{a}. God is also said to have called Rabbi Eleazar ben Pedat and Rabbi Eleazar ben Hyrcanus "Eleazar my son" (BT Ta'anit 25^{a}; Tanhuma, *Hukat* 8 [ed. Wilna, p. 565]), and Rabbi Meir "Meir my son" (BT Hagigah 15^{b}). In these instances, however, the expression "my son" is not used with the same sense of intimacy as in the stories of Hasidim.

35. BT Berachot 34^{b}.

36. M Avot 3:14. Cf. Avot de-Rabbi Natan, Version A, Chpt. 39 (ed. Schechter, p. 118) and Version B, Chpt. 44 (p. 124).

37. This was the opinion of Rabbi Meir (Sifre Deuteronomy 96 [ed. Finkelstein, p. 157]). Cf. BT Yoma 22^{b}. See the commentary of Rabbenu Hillel and the comments of Finkelstein *ad loc.*

38. The same language is used in T Ta'anit 3:1: "It once happened that they requested of a Hasid, 'Pray for rain to fall.'"

39. BT Ta'anit 23^{a}-25^{b}; JT Ta'anit I, 64^{a-b}.

40. משתומכין (*mish·to·KIN*). See *Aruch Completum* 8:183, s.v. שתך, meaning "to become rusted."

41. BT Ta'anit 8^{a}.

42. M Berachot 5:5. See the similar tradition in JT Berachot V, 9^{d}.

43. In *Yihusei Tannaim ve-Amoraim* (ed. Maimon, Jerusalem, 1963), Rabbi Yehudah ben Kalonymus ben Meir of Speyer cites two traditions of unknown origin regarding forces controlled by Rabbi Hanina (p. 438). The first tells of winds which were under his power and the second of an evil spirit which used to disturb a woman neighbor of his. Rabbi Hanina said to the evil spirit: "Why do you torment a daughter of Abraham our father?" In Leviticus Rabbah 24:3 (ed. Margulies, p. 553) there is a story about Abba Yose ben Yohanan of Tsaytur who overcame an evil spirit. In Tanhuma, *Kedoshim* 9 (in both versions of the text: ed. Buber, p. 77; ed. Wilna, p. 443), it is related about the same sage: "A Hasid by the name of Rabbi Yose of

Tsaytur was there." The Babylonian Talmud preserves the story of Rabbi Hanina ben Dosa's confrontation with Igrath the daughter of Mahalath, the queen of demons. Hanina commanded her to stay out of settled areas, but when she pleaded with him to "leave her a little room," he allowed her freedom to enter on Wednesday nights and the eve of Sabbaths (Pesahim 112^b). See also, Tanhuma, *Va-Yigash* 3 (ed. Wilna, p. 134), which relates how Rabbi Hanina made a lion swear never to appear again in the land of Israel.

44. See the stories about Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Akiva in BT Ta'anit 25^b, and those about Rabbi Hanina and Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi in JT Ta'anit III, 66^c.

45. JT Ta'anit I, 64^{b-c}; BT Ta'anit 23^{a-b}.

46. BT Ta'anit 23^{a-b}. The Babylonian Talmud exhibits a tendency to connect persons who perform similar deeds to the same family. The Hasid from Umi and Hanan Ha-Nehba successfully prayed for rain; thus, they are identified in the Babylonian Talmud as the grandsons of Honi the Circle Drawer. See Shmuel Safrai, "Tales of the Sages in Palestinian Tradition and the Babylonian Talmud," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 22 (1971), 229–232.

47. BT Sanhedrin 74^a; JP Sanhedrin III, 21^b; Shevi'it IV, 35^b; Sifra *Ahare Mot* 13 (ed. Weiss, p. 86^b).

48. JT Berachot V, 9^a; BT Berachot 33^a.

49. See especially JT Terumot VIII, 46^b.

50. M Ta'anit 3:8.

51. JT Ta'anit I, 64^{b-c}; BT Ta'anit 23^a.

52. See Safrai, "Teaching of Pietists in Mishnaic Literature," pp. 28–31.

53. JT Berachot V, 9^a; BT Berachot 32^b–33^a.

54. Both Talmuds give these same explanations, although they are cited in the names of different Amoraim: in the Jerusalem Talmud, in the names of Rabbi Aha and Rabbi Yose; in the Babylonian Talmud, in the names of Rabbi Yosef and Rav Sheshet.

55. Tanhuma, *Va-Era* 4 (ed. Wilna, p. 187); Exodus Rabbah 9 (ed. Shinan, p. 209); Midrash Yelamdenu, published in J. Mann, *The Bible as Read and Preached in the Old Synagogue* (New York, 1971), 1:98.

56. See the sources cited in note 53.

57. Translated from the version found in Midrash Yelamdenu (ed. Mann), but there are a number of parallels to this saying in midrashic literature.

58. BT Berachot 32^b–33^a. See David Flusser, "It Is Not a Serpent That Kills," *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (Jerusalem, 1988), pp. 543-551.

59. JT Berachot V, 9^d; BT Berachot 34^b. See notes 35 and 42.

60. See note 43.

61. JT Terumot VIII, 46^b; Genesis Rabbah 94 (ed. Theodor-Albeck, p. 1184–1185). The reading of Ms. Leiden of the Jerusalem Talmud is "Koshev." However, in Ms. Vatican 133, in the first printed edition and in the Yemenite ms., the reading is "Kosher." This is also the form of the name in Genesis Rabbah, and in the citation of the Jerusalem Talmud in the commentary of Rabbi Moses Halua (ed. Jerusalem, 1964, p. 63) on BT Pesahim 25^b. "Kosher" is a wordplay based on the root קשר (*k·sh·r*), meaning "to plot," here, to plot against the Roman authorities. This form of the name would fit the continuation of the story. See B. Rattner's *Ahavat Zion Virushalayim* on Pesahim (p. 69), and see Theodor's comments on Genesis Rabbah 94.

62. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi numbered among the sages and headed the academy at Lod. However, he also was a Hasid and God performed miracles for him. According to a number of sources, he entered the Garden of Eden without having tasted death (BT Sanhedrin 98^a; Makkot 11^a; Ketubot 77^b; Derech Eretz Zuta 1 [end], *et al.*).

63. This statement (found in JT Terumot VIII, 46^b and T Terumot 7:20) is not really a mishnah, but rather a *baraita* that explains a mishnah.

64. Mk. 1:39. Cf. Mt. 4:23.

65. Mt. 12:9–14; Mk. 3:1–6; Lk. 6:6–11; 13:10–17; 14:1–5; Jn. 5:1–18.

66. Mt. 15:21–28; Mk. 7:24–30.

67. Lk. 17:11–19.

68. Mt. 8:23–27; Mk. 4:35–41; Lk. 8:22–25; Mt. 8:5–13; Lk. 7:1–10, *et al.*

69. Mt. 17:14–21; Mk. 9:14–29; Lk. 9:37–43.

70. Mt. 10:1–15; Mk. 6:7–13; Lk. 9:1–6.

71. Mk. 9:38–41; Lk. 9:49–50.

72. This passage, Mk. 16:9–20, is not found in many of the best manuscripts, but some early sources allude to it. See the comments of Vincent Taylor, *The Gospel According to St. Mark*, 2nd ed. (London, 1966), p. 610.

73. Mk. 16:17–18.

74. See note 43.

75. Lk. 13:16.

76. BT Berachot 34^b.

77. The text reads, ὄφεις ἀροῦσιν (*opheis arousin*, they will pick up snakes). A number of

manuscripts precede "they will pick up snakes" with καὶ ἐν ταῖς χερσίν (*kai en tais chersin*, and in the [i.e., their] hands).

78. T Berachot 3:20; JT Berachot V, 9[a]; BT Berachot 33[a]; Tanhuma, *Va-Era* 4 (ed. Wilna, p. 187); Midrash Yelamdenu (ed. Mann, 1:98); Exodus Rabbah 3 (p. 135, in an abbreviated form).

79. Lk. 10:19. Cf. Acts 28:3–6.

80. M Terumot 8:4–6; T Terumot 7:12–17; JT Terumot VIII, 45[c]–46[a]; Avodah Zarah II, 41[a–b]; BT Bava Kamma 115[b]–116[a]; Hullin 49[b], *et al.*

81. See Josephus, *Against Apion* 1:165, and S. Lieberman, *Ha-Yerushalmi Kifshuto* (Jerusalem, 1935), p. 49. Shmuel Klein (*The Land of Galilee*, 2nd ed. [Jerusalem, 1967], p. 140 [Hebrew]) states that the prohibition against the drinking of uncovered beverages was unknown in Galilee and was introduced there only after the destruction of the Temple; however, this is a mistake. See the comments of H. Albeck in his notes on M Terumot in *Shishah Sidrei Mishnah: Zera'im* [The Six Orders of the Mishnah: *Zera'im*] (Jerusalem-Tel Aviv, 1957), p. 390.

82. See the references to JT Terumot and Avodah Zarah cited in note 80.

83. The Hebrew is מגלגל (*me·gal·GEL*), which in this context means "to ridicule," and is the equivalent of מלגלג (*me·lag·LEG*). The reading מגלגל appears in Ms. Leiden and in Ms. Vatican 133, and גלגו, a related form, appears in Leviticus Rabbah 26:2 (ed. Margulies, p. 593). See *Aruch Completum* 2:288, s.v. גלגל.

84. Cf. Lk. 10:19.

85. *Against Apion* 1:60.

86. Avot de-Rabbi Natan, Version A, Chpt. 6 (ed. Schechter, pp. 30–31); Version B, Chpt. 13 (pp. 30–32); Genesis Rabbah 42 (ed. Theodor-Albeck, pp. 397–398); Tanhuma, *Lech Lecha* 10 (ed. Buber, pp. 67–68); Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer 1–2.

87. BT Yoma 35[b]. In works originating in the land of Israel, there is no hint that Hillel was once poor. These sources witness that Hillel was the son of an aristocratic family, that he immigrated from Babylonia, and that he gave large contributions to the poor.

88. BT Temurah 16[a]; Exodus Rabbah 31.

89. BT Yoma 35[b], Tanhuma, *Mishpatim* 9.

90. BT Yoma 35[b]; Kiddushin 49[b]; JT Ta'anit IV, 69[a].

91. BT Berachot 18[a]; Shabbat 54[a]; Kiddushin 49[b].

92. JT Shevi'it IV, 35[b], *et al.*

93. JT Berachot IV, 7[d]; BT Berachot 28[a]; Horayot 10[a].

94. See JT Peah VIII, 20[d], *et al.*

95. T Sotah 7:12, and the parallels in both Talmuds.

96. BT Eruvin 86[a].

97. JT Peah I, 15[b]; BT Ketubot 50[a]; 67[b]; Arachin 28[a].

98. See the sources cited in the preceding note. In the Jerusalem Talmud it was Rabban Gamaliel who sent for the sage, while in the Babylonian Talmud it was Rabbi Akiva. The problem with viewing Rabbi Yesheveav as a Hasid is that there are no Hasidic *halachot* in rabbinic sources, none given by anonymous Hasidim, and none by Hasidim who are named. There are, however, halachic traditions preserved in the name of Rabbi Yesheveav. See M Hullin 2:4; BT Yevamot 49[a], and parallels.

99. Rabbi Yesheveav appears in all versions of the list of the ten martyrs. See Lamentations Rabbah 2 (ed. Buber, p. 100), *et al.*

100. Apparently, the name of this sage has been lost.

101. Song of Songs Rabbah (ed. Greenhut, p. 7[a]).

102. This tension can be seen in the saying of Hillel: "The ignorant man cannot be a fearer of sin, and the *am ha-aretz* [see note 16] cannot be a Hasid" (Avot 2:5). Hillel is reacting to the teaching of the Hasidim that deeds are more important than study. One should not think, Hillel says, that one can be a true Hasid without having a thorough knowledge of Torah. See Safrai, "Hasidim and Men of Deeds," 152–154.

103. This ("and found none better for Israel than poverty") is the reading of Ms. Munich and other major textual traditions. Ms. Vatican 134 should be added to the list of sources mentioned in Dikduke Soferim, *ad loc.*

104. See Safrai, "Hasidim and Men of Deeds," 150–151.

105. BT Ketubot 106[a]. See the responsa of the Gaon in S. Assaf, *The Responsa of the Geonim in the Genizah* (Jerusalem, 1929), p. 176 (Hebrew), and Assaf's comments in the Introduction, p. 153. There is absolutely no justification for the claim that rabbinic sources occasionally cite from an original or earlier Seder Eliyahu. The few differences between the work itself as it now stands and rabbinic citations of the work do not necessitate the creation of a new work.

106. See the comments of H. Albeck in his Hebrew translation (titled, *The Sermons of*

Israel [Jerusalem, 1947], pp. 55–57 [Hebrew]) of Leopold Zunz, *Die gottesdienstlichen Vortraege der Juden historisch entwickelt*.

107. Seder Eliyahu Rabbah 18 (p. 97); Seder Eliyahu Zuta 15 (p. 199).

108. Genesis Rabbah 71 (ed. Theodor-Albeck, pp. 834–835).

109. Seder Eliyahu Rabbah 17 (pp. 86–88): "In the days of Joshua son of Nun.... In the days of the prophet Samuel.... In the days of the prophet Elijah.... In the days of Hezekiah king of Judah...." See also Seder Eliyahu Zuta 15 (p. 197).

110. Seder Eliyahu Zuta 5 (p. 181).

111. See the Introduction in M. Friedmann's edition of Seder Eliyahu, pp. 44–59.

112. Seder Eliyahu Zuta 3 (p. 176).

113. Safrai, "Hasidim and Men of Deeds," 149–150.

114 In light of the discussion in the Jerusalem Talmud pertaining to the identification of the site (Megillah I, 70^a), Umi is Yama or Javneel (Josh. 19:33) in the tribal allotment of Naphtali. See Klein, *The Land of Galilee*, pp. 114, 146; Michael Avi-Yonah, *Historical Geography of Palestine* (Jerusalem, 1962), p. 139 (Hebrew); *Sefer Ha-Yishuv*, ed. Shmuel Klein (Jerusalem, 1939), pp. 91–93 (Hebrew).

115. JT Ta'anit III, 64^{a-c}; BT Ta'anit 23^{a-b}.

116. The Hasid did not need the *tallith* to cover his head while praying as is the custom today. Rather, the *tallith*, one's outer garment, was needed to go out in public. In the first century, it was considered immodest to appear in public without being dressed in a *tallith*.

117. BT Ta'anit 25^a.

118. Also according to the explanation in Matnot Kehunah, *ad loc*.

119. A unit of liquid and dry measure equal to the space occupied by the contents of 24 eggs.

120. BT Berachot 17^b; Ta'anit 24^b; Hullin 86^a.

121. The Hasidim were especially strict regarding the Sabbath laws. See BT Shabbat 19^a; Shabbat 121^b; JT Shabbat I, 4^a; IX, 15^a; Leviticus Rabbah 34 (ed. Margulies, p. 815), *et al*.

122. Avot de-Rabbi Natan, Version A, Chpt. 6 (ed. Schechter, p. 29); Version B, Chpt. 12 (p. 30).

123. BT Yoma 35^b. Works composed in the land of Israel contain no references to Hillel's supposed beginnings as a poor laborer.

124. Leviticus Rabbah 13 (ed. Margulies, p. 281); 35 (p. 824); Pesikta de-Rav Kahana 14 (ed. Mandelbaum, pp. 241-242). According to one source from outside the land, this saying was uttered by Rabbi Aha. In BT Hagigah 9^b, it is a folk saying ("as people say").

125. David Flusser and Shmuel Safrai, "The Slave of Two Masters," *Immanuel* 6 (1976), 30–33, and reprinted in Flusser, *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (Jerusalem, 1988), pp. 169–172.

126. See notes 97 and 98.

127. Especially if we include in our discussion the sixth chapter of Avot, known as *Kinyan Torah* (The Acquisition of Torah). This chapter is certainly not part of the original tractate; however, it can serve to illustrate the importance that the study of Torah had for the sages.

128. On the desire of the sages to establish a balance between "study" and "deed," see Sifre Deuteronomy 41 (ed. Finkelstein, pp. 85–86), and the parallels in the Talmuds and midrashim. Cf. the statement of Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai in Avot de-Rabbi Natan, Version A, Chpt. 22 (ed. Schechter, pp. 74–75), *et al*. See also Safrai, "Hasidim and Men of Deeds," 144–147.

129. In a baraita of the Hasid Rabbi Pinhas ben Yair, which lists the qualities of character that one should seek, Rabbi Pinhas concludes that the supreme quality is חֲסִידוּת (*ha·si·DUT*, saintliness). See JT Shekalim III, 47^c (and parallels); BT Avodah Zarah 20^a. The study of Torah is not mentioned and was added only in printed editions of the Babylonian Talmud. See Safrai, "Hasidim and Men of Deeds," 148.

130. M Peah 1:1 lists those commandments "whose interest one enjoys in this world, and whose principal remains for him in the world to come." The saying's conclusion is: "But the study of Torah is equal to them all." Seder Eliyahu Zuta, which reflects the spirit and teaching of the Hasidim, preserves this saying in similar language and form, but omits its conclusion on the importance of study. (See Chpt. 2, p. 172.)

131. See Avot de-Rabbi Natan, Version B, Chpt. 27 (ed. Schechter, p. 55).

132. JT Terumot VIII, 46^b.

133. M Ta'anit 3:8, and similarly, T Ta'anit 3:1.

134. JT Berachot V, 9^d; BT Berachot 34^b.

135. M Avot 3:9–10.

136. The sayings can be found in B. Z. Bacher, *Aggadot of the Tannaim* (Tel Aviv, 1928), II, 2, pp. 158–161 (Hebrew).

Counting the Cost of Discipleship: Lindsey's Reconstruction of the Rich Young Ruler Complex

Robert L. Lindsey has suggested that the so-called "Rich Young Ruler" story is only one part of a much longer story. He assumes that two other Gospel passages once belonged to the story. In the following article we discuss Lindsey's suggestion and supply a short commentary on the two missing passages.

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by David Bivin

In a special double issue (May/Aug. 1993), JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE presented a preview of the *Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary*. This preview highlighted the so-called "Rich Young Ruler" story. However, the story of a rich man who declined Jesus' invitation to become one of his disciples (Lk. 18:18–30, and parallels) is perhaps only one segment of a much longer story.

Robert Lindsey believes that the rich man story was continued by two additional passages: Matthew 13:44–46 and Luke 14:25–33.[1] If Lindsey's supposition is correct, the "Rich Young Ruler" episode is the opening incident in a story that originally included the Hidden Treasure and Valuable Pearl parables, and the Tower Builder and King Going to War similes. This conjectured longer story should properly be named, "Counting he Cost of Discipleship" or "The Cost of Being Jesus' Disciple."

"Jesus Blesses the Children" and "The Rich Young Ruler"

Although all three Synoptists precede the "Rich Young Ruler" story with the account of Jesus blessing the children (Luke 18:15-17, and parallels), the two stories probably were not linked in the first biography of Jesus. The juxtaposition of these two stories has created the mistaken impression that Jesus' saying, "Whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child will not enter it," elicited the rich man's question, "What good deed can I do to inherit eternal life?" It is more likely, however, that the two incidents took place on different occasions and were placed together in a later redaction because both stories included the phrase "enter the Kingdom of God."

Original Context of "Rich Young Ruler" Story

There are strong indications that, as Lindsey suggests, the Rich Man incident, the Hidden Treasure and Valuable Pearl parables (Mt. 13:44–46) and the Cost of Discipleship discourse (Lk. 14:25–33) were once part of the same story. A common theme—the value of the Kingdom of Heaven—connects the Rich Man passage with the twin parables. (Note that the theme of both parables is selling everything to obtain the one thing of supreme value, which is likened to the Kingdom of Heaven.) A second theme—the importance of counting the cost of discipleship—connects the Rich Man passage with Luke 14:25-33.

Common Motifs

"The Treasure Hidden in a Field" and "The Pearl of Great Value" (Matthew 13:44-46) are strong candidates for the pair of parables that seem usually to accompany one of Jesus' fully developed teachings. In these parables, the treasure and the pearl are likened to the Kingdom of Heaven, a term that is mentioned three times in the story of the rich man (Luke 18:24, 25 and 29).

There are other words and phrases suggesting a connection between the Hidden

Pages 24–25: ***Rembrandt's* The Hundred Guilder Print, *an etching completed in 1649, portrays the Rich Young Ruler (seated in dejection with hand over mouth). A woman holding a baby stands before Jesus. Peter, with head raised, is beside Jesus. The arguing scribes are shown on the left in brilliant white light, while the lame and sick make their way to Christ from the half-darkness. Rembrandt did not forget to add the camel (at the far right) mentioned in the rich man story.***

Treasure and Valuable Pearl parables and the Rich Man incident. Notice that to buy the field where the treasure is located, the man sells "all that he has" (Matthew 13:44). In the second parable, the man who buys the pearl of great value sells "all that he has" (Matthew 13:46). The phrase "all that he has" (πάντα ὅσα ἔχει, *panta hosa echei*), which occurs in these parables, is the same phrase that occurs in Luke 18:22.[2] The theme of *giving up everything one has* recurs in the Luke 14:25–33 passage: "Any of you who will not give up all his possessions cannot be my disciple" (Lk. 14:33).

The selling mentioned in both parables recalls Jesus' demand of the rich man to "sell all you have"; and the buying in the parables suggests the rabbinic expression "*buy* [i.e., obtain] eternal life,"[3] which is synonymous with the phrase "inherit eternal life" found in Luke 18:18.

Another possible verbal connection between the first and second passages is the word "treasure," which appears in the Hidden Treasure parable (Mt. 13:44) and in the phrase "treasure in heaven" in the Rich Man passage (Mt. 19:21; Mk. 10:21; Lk. 18:22).

If we can assume that the two parables belong to the same context as the Rich Man incident, then it is possible that Jesus intentionally used a parable that mentions the word "good" (מַרְגָּלִיּוֹת טוֹבוֹת [*mar·ga·li·YOT to·VOT*, good pearls] is probably the equivalent of καλοὺς μαργαρίτας [*kalous margaritas*], literally "beautiful pearls[4]), thus hinting at the rich man's use of "good." Although this hint is very sophisticated literarily, such sophistication was not uncommon in the teaching of Jewish sages.

Luke 14:25–33 also complements the Rich Man passage in several ways. For example, Jesus' statement that a disciple must be willing to "say farewell to all his possessions" (Luke 14:33) directly corresponds to the episode of the rich man who was unwilling to part with all his possessions to become a disciple. In addition, Jesus' statement in Luke 14:26 that a disciple must "hate" (i.e., prefer less; put in second place) his father, mother, wife, children, brothers and sisters, seems to be an amplification of Peter's statement and Jesus' response in Luke 18:28–29 (and parallels) about "leaving house" (i.e., family) for the sake of the Kingdom of God. One finds similar stern demands in the Luke 14 passage: a disciple must hate his own soul (vs. 26) and carry his own cross (vs. 27). In first-century Jewish society, these expressions emphasized the necessity of giving priority to one's teacher.[5] Other key phrases from the Luke 14 passage that fit the substance of the Rich Man account are "comes to me" (vs. 26), "comes after me" (vs. 27), and "be my disciple" (vs. 27).

The Rich Man passage contains very little of the instruction normally given by Jesus in such situations. Luke 14:25–33 would supply the teaching discourse one might expect this incident to have elicited from Jesus. The Luke 14 passage also contains two illustrations (vss. 28–30 and 31–32) opening with "Which of you..." that are so typical of Jesus' teaching, and that may usually have appeared in an extended teaching discourse.

The concluding sentence of the Luke 14:25–33 passage, "Any of you who will not give up all his possessions cannot be my disciple," argues that the passage was connected to the Rich Man incident. This passage begins by speaking of the sacrifices required of a disciple (vss. 26–27), and one would expect Jesus to conclude in the same way—by speaking in general about such sacrifices. Instead, Jesus concludes the passage by referring to one particular sacrifice a disciple must be willing to make—giving up his possessions (Lk. 14:33). This makes sense if Jesus is speaking within the context of the Rich Man episode, which is about a would-be disciple who *refused* to give up all his possessions.

The Continuation of the "Rich Young Ruler" Story

Following are Greek and Hebrew reconstructions of the second and third passages supposed by Lindsey to make up the "Cost of Being Jesus' Disciple" story complex:[6]

The Two Parables

Greek Reconstruction

Ὁμοία ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν θησαυρῷ κεκρυμμένῳ ἐν τῷ ἀγρῷ, ὃν εὑρὼν ἄνθρωπος ἔκρυψεν, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς χαρᾶς αὐτοῦ ὑπάγει καὶ πωλεῖ πάντα ὅσα ἔχει καὶ ἀγοράζει τὸν ἀγρὸν ἐκεῖνον.

Ὁμοία ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν ἀνθρώπῳ ἐμπόρῳ ζητοῦντι καλοὺς μαργαρίτας· εὑρὼν δὲ ἕνα πολύτιμον μαργαρίτην ἀπελθὼν πέπρακεν πάντα ὅσα εἶχεν καὶ ἠγόρασεν αὐτόν.

Literal Translation of Greek Reconstruction

Like is the kingdom of the heavens to treasure having been hidden in the field, which finding a man hid, and from the joy of him goes and sells all things he has and buys field that.

Like is the kingdom of the heavens to a merchant seeking beautiful pearls; and finding one very valuable pearl, going away he sold all things he had and bought it.

Comments on the Greek Reconstruction

In his story outline, Matthew placed the Hidden Treasure and Valuable Pearl parables after the Interpretation of the Wheat and Weeds Parable (Mt. 13:36–43). Perhaps the connection for him was the word "field," which appears in Mt. 13:36, 38 and Mt. 13:44. There are no parallels in Mark and Luke to the Hidden Treasure and Valuable Pearl parables found in Matthew.

Matthew 13:45

Again. The Greek word πάλιν (*palin*, again) at the beginning of the second parable (Mt. 13:45) may reflect the Hebrew שׁוּב (*shuv*, again)[7] or its Aramaic equivalent, תּוּב (*tuv*, again), which are often used to introduce a second illustration or proof. However, *palin* is apparently a Greek editorial word, added here by Matthew.[8] Therefore, we have omitted *palin* from our Greek reconstruction. Note that Matthew uses *palin* again in 13:47 to introduce the Good and Bad Fish parable.

A Greek reader of Jesus' words faced a dilemma that a Hebrew-speaker would not appreciate. For a Greek-speaker, the second of twin parables seemed an additional illustration that contributed nothing essential or indispensable. A Greek translator of a Hebrew text containing twin parables, or an editor of a Greek text translated from Hebrew, felt the need to add a word such as *palin* to indicate that the second parable was an alternate illustration.

However, for a Hebrew-speaker, the doubling of parables was a significant part of the beauty and art of Jesus' teaching. Parallelism, that is, saying the same thing twice in different words, is a common feature of the Hebrew language, and double parables are one form of Hebrew parallelism. Therefore, a Hebrew-speaker would not feel the second parable to be superfluous; but would see it, together with the first parable, as part of one illustration, repeated twice for literary beauty. There was no need in Hebrew to begin the second parable with a word such as "again."

Modern English-speakers feel the same need as ancient Greek-speakers for a bridge between the first parable and second parable: an "or" at the beginning of the second parable is almost demanded.

It is likely that the original Greek translation of these parables, since it seems to have been extremely literal, did not have a bridging word. The author of Matthew probably added the word *palin*.

Hebrew Reconstruction

מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם דּוֹמָה לְאוֹצָר טָמוּן בַּשָּׂדֶה שֶׁמְּצָאוֹ
אָדָם וְהִטְמִינוֹ וּמִשִּׂמְחָתוֹ הָלַךְ וּמָכַר כָּל מַה שֶׁהָיָה לוֹ
וְקָנָה אֶת הַשָּׂדֶה הַהוּא.
מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם דּוֹמָה לְתַגָּר הַמְחַפֵּשׂ מַרְגָּלִיּוֹת טוֹבוֹת,
וּמְשֶׁמְּצָא מַרְגָּלִית אַחַת יְקָרָה, הָלַךְ וּמָכַר כָּל מַה
שֶׁהָיָה לוֹ וְקָנָה אוֹתָהּ.

Literal Translation of Hebrew Reconstruction

Kingdom of heavens [is] similar to a treasure hidden in the field that found it a man and hid it and from his joy went and sold all that there was to him and bought field that.

Kingdom of heavens [is] similar to a merchant searching for pearls good; and when he found pearl one valuable, he went and sold all that there was to him and bought it.

Idiomatic Translation of Hebrew Reconstruction

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid, and in his joy went and sold everything he had to buy that field.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant looking for pearls of fine quality. When he found a priceless pearl, he went and sold everything he had to buy it.

Dynamic Translation of Hebrew Reconstruction

One could illustrate the worth of belonging to my band of disciples by comparing it to a man who stumbles upon buried treasure in a field. What does he do? He reburies it, and in his excitement goes and sells everything he owns to get enough money to buy

the field and obtain the treasure.

Or, one could illustrate its worth by analogy to a man who has spent his life buying and selling rare pearls. One day he comes upon the perfect pearl. What does he do? He goes and sells everything he owns to get enough money to buy it.

Comments on the Hebrew Reconstruction

Matthew 13:44

treasure hidden. In his book on the parables of Jesus, Brad Young comments: "Josephus already noted that valuables were often hidden in order to prevent them from being taken during periods of political instability which characterized Jewish Palestine in the first century (*War* 7:112–114; cf. Matthew 25:25). The Dead Sea Scrolls, the treasured holy writ of the Qumran sect, were stored away secretly in this way and the Copper Scroll provides a lucid example of the practice."[9]

There is a rabbinic parable that has an amazing resemblance to Jesus' Hidden Treasure parable. It is part of an interpretation of Exodus 14:5.

> Another interpretation of "What have we done?" [Ex. 14:5]: Rabbi Shim'on ben Yochai [mid-second century A.D.] says: "Here is an interpretation in the form of a parable: A man received an inheritance of a residence in a far off country and he sold it for a pittance. The buyer, however, went and dug and found in it treasures of silver and gold, of precious stones and pearls. [Upon seeing this,] the seller began to choke [with grief]. This is exactly what the Egyptians did when they let [Israel] go without realizing what they had done, as it is written: "And they said: 'What have we done? We have let the Israelites go...'" [Ex. 14:5].[10]

In this rabbinic parable we have the selling of a property to a buyer who digs and finds treasure, including pearls.

in a field. The addition of the definite article "the" before the word "field" appears to be a Semitism, perhaps evidence of a literal translation from Hebrew to Greek. Hebrew-speakers, for instance, often add the definite article when no immediately identifiable person or thing is intended. The phrase ἐν τῷ ἀγρῷ (*en tō agrō*, in the field) is probably the translation of בַּשָּׂדֶה (*ba·sa·DEH*, in the field). The definite article "the" should be omitted from English translations. It is obvious that in this context no particular or specific field is indicated.

hid. A rabbinic interpretation of Proverbs 2:4 provides another significant parallel to Jesus' Hidden Treasure parable:

> Rabbi Pinhas ben Yair[11] opened his exposition with the text, "If you seek for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure" [Prov. 2:4]. [He explained this text as follows:] "If you search for words of Torah as for hidden treasure, the Holy One, blessed be He, will not withhold your reward. This could be compared to a man who loses a coin, even a small coin, in his house. What does he do? He lights lamp after lamp and wick after wick until he finds it. If for the transitory things of this world a man will light so many lamps and wicks until he finds them, how much more ought you to search, as for hidden treasure, for the words of Torah, which are life in this world and life in the world to come."[12]

In his Hidden Treasure and Valuable Pearl parables, Jesus emphasizes that being among his disciples (being in the Kingdom of Heaven) and having the opportunity to learn Torah at his feet is a great treasure. Using slightly different words, Pinhas ben Yair is making the same point: since the words of Torah give life in this world and life in the world to come, one should search for them as one searches for hidden treasure. Like ben Yair, Jesus taught that the words of Torah are life in this world and life in the world to come. As Jesus' puts it in Luke 18:29–30, those who have left home to study Torah with him will receive "much more [life] in this world and eternal life in the world to come."

Jesus does not refer explicitly to searching for words of Torah in the Counting the Cost context; however, in another context (about worry), Jesus teaches:

> Do not be worried, asking, "What are we going to eat and drink, or what are we going to wear?" [Do not be like the heathen] for the heathen chase after these things—your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things—but above all else, search for the Kingdom of Heaven [my band of disciples, that is, your highest goal should be to become my disciple and learn Torah] and God's salvation, and all these things will be yours as well [i.e., you will receive "much more in this world" (Lk. 18:30)].[13]

went...sold...bought. There is an abrupt

change from past tense to present tense in this sentence: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid, and in his joy *goes* and *sells* all that he *has* and *buys* that field." Greek, like English, would tend to use present tense verbs in such a parable, and Lindsey supposes that these present tense forms—ὑπάγει (*hupagei*, goes), πωλεῖ (*pōlei*, sells), ἔχει (*echei*, has), and ἀγοράζει (*agorazei*, buys)—are the replacements of a Greek editor for Hebrew past tense forms (private communication).

Lindsey's supposition is supported by the fact that in the Valuable Pearl parable the corresponding verbs—πέπρακεν (*pepraken*, sold), εἶχεν (*eichen*, had), and ἠγόρασεν (*ēgorasen*, bought)—are in the past tense (Mt. 13:46). The structurally similar Parables of the Mustard Seed (Lk. 13:18–19) and Yeast (Lk. 13:20–21 = Mt. 13:33) provide additional support. The verbs of these parables are also past tense: "It is like a mustard seed that a man took and tossed in his garden, and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches.... It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into three measures of flour until it was all leavened" (Luke 13:18–21).

to buy that field. The text reads, literally, "and bought that field." We have translated this phrase "to buy that field," because we assume that the Greek καί (*kai*, and) is a translation of the Hebrew –וְ (*ve*, and). In Hebrew, "and" often indicates purpose; therefore, "and bought that field" can mean "in order to buy that field. We also have translated "and bought it" (Mt. 13:46), the corresponding phrase in the second parable, in the same way (i.e., "to buy it").

Matthew 13:45

pearls of fine quality. In biblical Hebrew, the word for pearls is פְּנִינִים (*pe·ni·NIM*). It was replaced by מַרְגָּלִיּוֹת (*mar·ga·li·YOT*; singular: מַרְגָּלִית, *mar·ga·LIT*) in rabbinic Hebrew.[14] The Greek expression found here, καλοὺς μαργαρίτας (*kalous margaritas*, beautiful pearls), apparently represents the rabbinic expression מַרְגָּלִיּוֹת טוֹבוֹת (*mar·ga·li·YOT to·VOT*, good pearls),[15] that is, pearls of fine quality.

Pearls were the most valuable of all gems until the early nineteenth century when diamonds exceeded them in value.[16] Pearl mania reached its height in ancient Rome. The historian Pliny the Elder (23–79 A.D.) wrote that in his time pearls were first in value among all precious things.[17]

Matthew 13:46

a priceless pearl. The Greek reads, "one very valuable pearl." Perhaps in Hebrew this was מַרְגָּלִית אַחַת יְקָרָה (*mar·ga·LIT 'a·HAT ye·ka·RAH*, one valuable pearl).

In the Hebrew language there are no degrees of comparison of the adjective. There is no way to distinguish between the positive, comparative and superlative forms of the adjective. Therefore, πολύτιμον (*polytimon*, very valuable) probably is just a dynamic translation of יְקָרָה (*ye·ka·RAH*), which can be translated "valuable," "more valuable," and "the most valuable." In this context, we must assume that the adjective *ye·ka·RAH* is the superlative, and means "the most valuable," that is, "a priceless pearl." Since *ye·ka·RAH* can mean "the most valuable," in reconstructing the Hebrew, one need not add the adverb מְאֹד (*me·'OD*, very) to the adjective יְקָרָה, as one does in modern Hebrew.

sold everything he had. Note this rabbinic parallel: "Our teachers taught, 'Let a man always sell everything he has and marry the daughter of a scholar.'"[18]

Literary Analysis

In the first parable, the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a valuable object, treasure hidden in a field. Therefore, one expects the Kingdom of Heaven to be compared to the "pearl of great price," the valuable object of the second parable. Instead, it is compared to a pearl merchant. Perhaps this is the original form of the second parable, and this difference is not significant. However, the second parable may have been altered by a later editor. If so, the parable may originally have been: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a pearl of rare beauty, which a pearl merchant found and went and sold everything he had to buy it."

The Teaching Discourse

The teaching discourse that probably originally followed the Rich Man incident and the Hidden Treasure and Valuable Pearl parables is found in Luke 14:25–33. Matthew has preserved two verses of the discourse (Mt. 10:37–38, parallel to Lk. 14:26–27), although his version is inferior to Luke's both linguistically and in content.

Greek Reconstruction

Εἴ τις ἔρχεται πρός με καὶ οὐ μισεῖ τὸν πατέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὴν μητέρα καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ τὰ τέκνα καὶ τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς

καὶ τὰς ἀδελφάς, ἔτι δὲ καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἑαυτοῦ, οὐ δύναται εἶναί μου μαθητής. ὅστις οὐ βαστάζει τὸν σταυρὸν ἑαυτοῦ καὶ ἔρχεται ὀπίσω μου, οὐ δύναται εἶναί μου μαθητής.

Τίς γὰρ ἐξ ὑμῶν θέλων πύργον οἰκοδομῆσαι οὐχὶ πρῶτον καθίσας ψηφίζει τὴν δαπάνην, εἰ ἔχει εἰς ἀπαρτισμόν; ἵνα μήποτε θέντος αὐτοῦ θεμέλιον καὶ μὴ ἰσχύοντος ἐκτελέσαι πάντες οἱ θεωροῦντες ἄρξωνται αὐτῷ ἐμπαίζειν λέγοντες ὅτι οὗτος ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἤρξατο οἰκοδομεῖν καὶ οὐκ ἴσχυσεν ἐκτελέσαι.

Ἢ τίς βασιλεὺς πορευόμενος ἑτέρῳ βασιλεῖ συμβαλεῖν εἰς πόλεμον οὐχὶ καθίσας πρῶτον βουλεύσεται εἰ δυνατός ἐστιν ἐν δέκα χιλιάσιν ὑπαντῆσαι τῷ μετὰ εἴκοσι χιλιάδων ἐρχομένῳ ἐπ' αὐτόν; εἰ δὲ μή γε, ἔτι αὐτοῦ πόρρω ὄντος πρεσβείαν ἀποστείλας ἐρωτᾷ τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην.

Οὕτως οὖν πᾶς ἐξ ὑμῶν ὃς οὐκ ἀποτάσσεται πᾶσιν τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ ὑπάρχουσιν οὐ δύναται εἶναί μου μαθητής.

Literal Translation of Greek Reconstruction

If someone comes to me and does not hate the father of him and the mother and the wife and the children and the brothers and the sisters, and besides also the soul of himself, he cannot to be of me a disciple. Anyone who does not bear the cross of himself and come after me, he cannot to be of me a disciple.

For who of you wishing a tower to build does not first sitting count the cost, if he has for completion? Else when laying him a foundation and not being able to finish all the [ones] seeing begin him to mock, saying, "This man began to build and was not able to finish."

Or what king going another king to attack in war not sitting first will consult if able he is with ten thousands to meet the [one] with twenty thousands coming against him? Otherwise, still him distant being a delegation sending he asks the things for peace.

So therefore, any of you who does not say goodbye to all the of himself possessions cannot to be of me a disciple.

Comments on the Greek Reconstruction

Luke 14:25

This verse has been omitted from the Greek reconstruction because it does not seem to reflect a Hebrew undertext. The verse was apparently composed in Greek, probably by Luke or the author of the First Reconstruction, to provide a setting for Jesus' teaching in verses 26–33.

Luke 14:31

Or. The Greek word for "or" may have been added to the second illustration, the King Going to War, for the same reason that "again" was prefixed to the Valuable Pearl parable. (See "Again" in "Comments on the Greek Reconstruction" under the heading "Matthew 13:45.") However, it is also possible that the Hebrew behind ה (*ē*, or) was –ו (*ve*, and), which is sometimes used in the sense of "or." I have assumed the second possibility.

delegation. The word πρεσβείαν (*presbeian*, delegation) has been retained in the Greek reconstruction, though it does not seem likely that this word was included in the first Greek translation of the Hebrew story. If the Greek translator rendered Jesus' words freely, there is a possibility that *presbeian* was used; however, it is more probably that this Greek element is the work of the First Reconstructor. There are several "non-translation" Greek words (words that seem to have originated in Greek rather than in Hebrew) in Luke 14:31–33—συμβαλεῖν (*symbalein*, to attack), ὑπαντῆσαι (*hypantēsai*, to meet), πρεσβείαν (*presbeian*, delegation), ἀποτάσσεται (*apotassetai*, say goodbye), and the phrase ἐρωτᾷ τὰ πρὸς εἰρήνην (*erōta ta pros eirēnēn*, he asks the things for peace)—and, though the sense of Jesus' words is clear, it is not possible to reconstruct the Hebrew of these verses with confidence.

Because one cannot readily find a Hebrew equivalent for *presbeian*—the word מִשְׁלַחַת (*mish·LA·ḥat*) in the sense of "delegation" is found only in modern Hebrew—it is likely that the word was added by a Greek editor; therefore, in the Hebrew reconstruction below, no equivalent for *presbeian* has been given.

Hebrew Reconstruction

הַבָּא אֵלַי וְאֵינוֹ שׂוֹנֵא אֶת אָבִיו וְאִמּוֹ וְאֶת אִשְׁתּוֹ וּבָנָיו
וְאֶת אֶחָיו וְאַחְיוֹתָיו, וְעוֹד אֶת נַפְשׁוֹ, אֵינוֹ יָכוֹל לִהְיוֹת
תַּלְמִידִי. מִי שֶׁאֵינוֹ נוֹשֵׂא אֶת צְלָבוֹ וּבָא אַחֲרַי, אֵינוֹ יָכוֹל
לִהְיוֹת תַּלְמִידִי.

אֵיזֶה מִכֶּם הָרוֹצֶה לִבְנוֹת מִגְדָּל לֹא יֵשֵׁב תְּחִלָּה
וְיַחְשֹׁב אֶת הַמְּחִיר, אִם יֵשׁ לוֹ לִגְמֹר? שֶׁמָּא יָנִיחַ יְסוֹדוֹ
וְלֹא יוּכַל לְסַיֵּם, וְכָל רוֹאָיו יָחֵלּוּ לָלְעֹג לוֹ, לוֹמַר,
„הָאָדָם הַזֶּה הֵחֵל לִבְנוֹת וְלֹא יָכוֹל לְסַיֵּם."

וְאֵיזֶה מֶלֶךְ יֵצֵא לְמִלְחָמָה בְּמֶלֶךְ אַחֵר וְלֹא יֵשֵׁב
תְּחִלָּה וְיִתְיָעֵץ אִם יוּכַל בַּעֲשָׂרֶת אֲלָפִים לִפְגֹּשׁ אֶת הַבָּא
נֶגְדּוֹ בְּעֶשְׂרִים אֶלֶף? וְאִם לֹא, בְּעוֹדֶנּוּ רָחוֹק, יִשְׁלַח
וִיבַקֵּשׁ שָׁלוֹם.

לְפִיכָךְ, כָּל אֶחָד מִכֶּם שֶׁלֹּא יִוַּתֵּר עַל כָּל נְכָסָיו
אֵינוֹ יָכוֹל לִהְיוֹת תַּלְמִידִי.

Literal Translation of Hebrew Reconstruction

The one coming to me and he does not hate his father and his mother and his wife and his sons and his brothers and his sisters and also his soul, not is able to be my disciple. Who that does not carry his cross and come after me, not is able to be my disciple.

Which of you that wants to build a tower not will sit first and will calculate the price if there is to him to finish? Else, he will lay his foundation and not will be able to complete, and all its seers will begin to mock him, saying, "Man this began to build and not was able to complete."

And which king will go out to war against king another and not will sit first and will consult if he will be able with ten thousand to meet the one coming against him with twenty thousand? And if not, while still he is distant, he will send and will ask peace.

Therefore, each one of you that not will part with all his possessions, not is able to be my disciple.

Idiomatic Translation of Hebrew Reconstruction

He who comes to me and does not hate his parents, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and also his own self, cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.

Which of you wanting to build a tower would not first sit down and estimate the cost [to determine] whether he had enough to finish? Else, he lay the foundation and not be able to complete [the structure] and all who see it begin to make fun of him, saying, "This man began to build but was not able to complete [what he began]."

And what king would go to war against another king without first sitting down and deliberating whether he would be able with ten thousand men to engage the other who is coming against him with twenty thousand? If not, while the other was still far away, he would send and ask for peace.

Therefore, any of you who will not give up all his possessions cannot be my disciple.

Dynamic Translation of Hebrew Reconstruction

Don't become my disciple until you count the cost. My disciple must put me before family ties and affections, as well as before self. If he isn't willing to make that sacrifice, he cannot be my disciple.

Who would begin construction of a watchtower without first working out the cost to see if he had enough money to complete the job? Otherwise, he might only get the foundation in before running out of money. Then all those who saw it would ridicule him. "Look," they would say, "he couldn't finish what he started."

Or, what king with an army of ten thousand men would launch a campaign against another king with an army of twenty thousand without first sitting down with his staff and discussing whether he could defeat the enemy? If the consensus was that he could not, while the enemy was still at a good distance, wouldn't he send a truce team to see what peace terms he could get?

In the same way, if you are not ready to give up everything you possess, you cannot be my disciple.

Comments on the Hebrew Reconstruction

Luke 14:26

hate. In this context the word "hate" does not carry its normal meaning, but seems to be used in a special sense. In Hebrew, "hate" can also mean "love less" or "put in second place." For example, Genesis 29:31 states that Leah was "hated," but the context indicates that Leah was not unloved, but rather *loved less* than Jacob's other wife Rachel. Note that the preceding verse specifically says that Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah.

A second illustration of this particular Hebraic shade of meaning of the word "hate" is found in Deuteronomy 21:15: "If a man has two wives, one loved and the other hated...." Here too, the context shows that the "hated" wife is only second in affection and not really hated.[19]

In this context, Jesus did not employ "hate" in its absolute sense. Rather, he meant to teach that whoever did not love him *more* than his own family, or even his own self, could not be his disciple. Observe the way Matthew puts it: "He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me."

One other Hebraic meaning of "hate" is "leave, give up, put aside, distance oneself from, renounce." Shmuel Safrai has suggested that "hate" is used in this sense in Luke 14:26.[20] Safrai gives two examples of this usage from rabbinic literature: "Love labor and hate mastery,"[21] and "Love the 'What if?' and hate the 'What of it?'"[22]

These two rabbinic sayings are exhortations to prefer one thing and flee another. The second saying, for instance, enjoins that we should prefer the "What if?" that is, weigh or consider carefully our actions, but flee the "What of it?" that is, avoid the attitude that our actions do not matter.

This sense of "hate," according to Safrai, can include the nuance "leave or give up something one loves." The thing we forgo or forfeit—for example, the protective environment of home—is often more comfortable or convenient than the thing to which we choose to adhere; however, we choose the latter in the realization that it is much more important, real, or moral than the thing we are forfeiting. We renounce the one and cling to the other.

If, in Luke 14:26, Jesus uses "hate" in the sense that Safrai suggests, it is one more reason to connect Luke 14:25–33 and the Rich Young Ruler incident. In the Rich Young Ruler incident, Jesus says to his disciple Peter, "There is no one who has left house..." (Lk 18:29), while in the Luke 14 passage, he tells his disciples to hate "father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters" [i.e., family]. Since in Hebrew "house" can mean "family," and "hate" may sometimes be a synonym for "leave," both passages may be dealing with the same theme.

father. A special relationship developed between teacher and disciple in which the teacher became like a father. In fact, the teacher was more than a father, and a disciple was to honor his teacher above his father, as this passage from the Mishnah indicates:

> When one is searching for the lost property both of his father and of his teacher, his teacher's loss takes precedence over that of his father since his father brought him only into the life of this world, whereas his teacher, who taught him wisdom [i.e., Torah], has brought him into the life of the world to come. But if his father is no less a scholar than his teacher, then his father's loss takes precedence....
>
> If his father and his teacher are in captivity, he must first ransom his teacher, and only afterwards his father—unless his father is himself a scholar, and then he must first ransom his father. (Bava Metsi'a 2:11)

If it seems shocking that anyone could ransom his teacher before his own father, it is only because we do not understand the tremendous love and respect which disciples, and the community at large, had for their teachers.

wife. Another hardship a disciple could face was being away from his wife. Disciples commonly were single, but since marriage took place at a relatively early age (usually by eighteen according to Mishnah tractate Avot 5:21), many disciples had a wife and children. For example, the mother-in-law of one of Jesus' disciples is mentioned in Luke 4:38. If married, a man needed the permission of his wife to leave home for longer than thirty days to study with a sage (Mishnah, Ketubot 5:6).

and even his soul. The Hebrew word נֶפֶשׁ (*NE·fesh*, soul) can mean "self"[23] and "life."[24] Since "hate his soul" seems to be parallel to "carry his cross" (i.e., "lay down his life") in the next verse, here "soul" probably means "life." However, "soul" in this context could also mean "self," and then Jesus' intent would be that the disciple must put himself (his interests, concerns, comforts) second to serving Jesus as a disciple.[25]

There is a rabbinic interpretation of Deuteronomy 6:5 that is extremely relevant to Jesus' use of "soul":

> "And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might".... "With all your soul"—that means, "Even if he [God] takes away your soul [i.e., life]." "With all your strength"—that means, "With all your wealth."[26]

This rabbinic interpretation may also help us connect the Rich Man incident and the Luke 14 passage: According to the above interpretation, "heart," "soul" [i.e., "life], and "strength" are synonyms. Therefore, "with all your soul" is equivalent to "with all your wealth," which is what Jesus required of the rich man. Jesus may have subtly hinted at Deuteronomy 6:5 by requiring the rich man to give up all his possessions. The rich man, who was probably familiar with the above interpretation, heard Jesus say, "If you want to love God with all your heart, you must love him with all your wealth."

Luke 14:27

carry his cross. "Carry his cross" is a very strong image. By using it, Jesus hinted at the very difficult life that awaited those who chose to accompany him. The call to be a sage's disciple often meant traveling the country under austere conditions. Jesus warned one would-be disciple what he would face if he decided to accompany him: "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."[27] The burden Jesus' disciples had to bear was a heavy one, but it was similar to what other sages demanded of their disciples and would not have been considered extreme by the standards of first-century Jewish society.

It also meant total commitment. A prospective disciple first had to be sure his priorities were in order. Consider the words of the man who said to Jesus, "I will follow you, Lord, but first let me say good-bye to my family."[28] Jesus' reply shows that only those who were prepared to totally commit themselves to him would be welcome: "No one who puts his hand to the plow and then looks back is fit for the Kingdom of God." This is emphasized in Jesus' response to another man who offered to follow him, but only after burying his father. "Let the dead bury their dead," Jesus told him.[29]

It may seem cruel that Jesus would not allow a prospective disciple to attend the funeral of his father before setting out to follow him. However, it would have seemed quite reasonable and normal to Jesus' first-century contemporaries. It would have been perfectly clear to them what Jesus meant when he said, "No one can be my disciple who does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, and his own self."

A Complete Story?

To test how well the parts of the conjectured "Cost of Being Jesus' Disciple" story fit together, try reading the whole story from beginning to end without pause.

"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.

"One could illustrate the worth of belonging to my band of disciples by comparing it to a man who stumbles upon buried treasure in a field. What does he do? He reburies it, and in his excitement goes and sells everything he owns to get enough money to buy the field and obtain the treasure.

"Or, one could illustrate its worth by analogy to a man who has spent his life buying and selling rare pearls. One day he comes upon the perfect pearl. What does he do? He goes and sells everything he owns to get enough money to buy it.

"Don't become my disciple until you count the cost. My disciple must put me before family ties and affections, as well as before self. If he isn't willing to make that sacrifice, he cannot be my disciple.

"Who would begin construction of a watchtower without first working out the cost to see if he had enough money to complete the job? Otherwise, he might only get the foundation in before running out of money. Then all those who saw it would ridicule him. 'Look,' they would say, 'he couldn't finish what he started.'

"Or, what king with an army of ten thousand men would launch a campaign against another king with an army of twenty thousand without first sitting down with his staff and discussing whether he could defeat the enemy? If the consensus was that he could not, while the enemy was still at a good distance, wouldn't he send a truce team to see what peace terms he could get?

"In the same way, if you are not ready to give up everything you possess, you cannot be my disciple."

Exposition

There is good reason to suppose, as Robert Lindsey has suggested, that the following passages were once part of the "Cost of Being Jesus' Disciple" story:

a. Rich Young Ruler (Mt. 19:16b; Lk. 18:19–25, 28–30)
b. Hidden Treasure parable (Mt. 13:44)
c. Valuable Pearl parable (Mt. 13:45–46)
d. Cost of Discipleship (Lk. 14:26–27)[30]
e. Tower Builder simile (Lk. 14:28–30)
f. King Going to War simile (Lk. 14:31–33)

The rich man episode was apparently included in Jesus' biography not because the man, in contrast to Jesus' other disciples, was wealthy; but because the episode provided an example of those who were invited to join Jesus' Kingdom of Heaven and declined.[31] Wealth was only one of an infinite number of potential hindrances to following Jesus, and Jesus took advantage of the rich man incident to drive home the point that nothing is as important as being part of Jesus' movement. This is also the point of the partner parables, "The Treasure Hidden in a Field" and "The Pearl of Great Value."

Jesus did not demand of every disciple that he give up all his possessions—we hear of no such demand made of Levi,[32] or Zacchaeus,[33] even though Zacchaeus gave only half of his possessions to the poor—however, Jesus did demand that every disciple put the Kingdom of Heaven first in his life. For the rich man, that meant giving up his riches. For another disciple, it might mean giving up something else.

Notice that the well-to-do pearl merchant, like the man who stumbled onto buried treasure (probably a day laborer engaged in plowing a field), had to sell everything he owned. Jesus subtly hints that whether rich or poor, one must be willing to give up anything and everything to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Nothing may get in the way: neither money, not family, nor even love of oneself (i.e., one's comfort). Everything in a disciple's life has to be secondary to studying Torah with Jesus.

The Tower Builder and King Going to War similes illustrate the point Jesus makes in Luke 14:26–27: *following me will be extremely difficult*.[34] Before joining my band of disciples, consider well whether you are willing to pay the price. Do you have what it takes, the resolve, the perseverance, to be my disciple?

It is very likely that in the Hidden Treasure and Valuable Pearl parables, just as in the Rich Man episode, Jesus used the term "Kingdom of Heaven" to refer to his school of full-time apprenticed disciples.[35] If Luke 14:25–33 belongs to the same story complex, the expressions "come to me" (vs. 26), "come after me" (vs. 27) and "be my disciple" (vss. 26, 27 and 33) are synonyms that also refer to the Kingdom of Heaven, Jesus' traveling school.[36] The price of admittance to this elite group of disciples, the cross to be carried, was having to leave father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, one's home and possessions. **JP**

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1. Robert L. Lindsey, *Jesus Rabbi & Lord: The Hebrew Story of Jesus Behind Our Gospels* (Oak Creek, WI: Cornerstone Publishing, 1990), p. 80. Elsewhere in this article, where credit is attributed to Lindsey but there is no reference to a published work, the reader can assume that the information was communicated to me privately.

2. It is natural for a speaker, as he develops a teaching theme, to repeat an expression he used earlier, and it was the phrase "all that he has" that caused Lindsey to conclude that originally the two parables were the direct continuation of the Rich Man story.

3. Mechilta, *Yitro* 2; to Exodus 18:27 (ed. Horovitz-Rabin, p. 201, line 18). Cf. Mishnah, Avot 2:7 and Derech Eretz Zuta 4:3 (ed. Higger, pp. 99–100, lines 11–12).

4. In the Septuagint, the adjective καλός (*kalos*, beautiful) is three times more often the translation of טוֹב (*tov*, good) than of יָפֶה (*ya·FEH*, beautiful)—99 times compared to 33 times.

5. Rigorous demands of a disciple by his sage, such as the demand that a disciple honor his teacher above his father, would not have been considered extreme or unusual by first-century Jews living in the land of Israel. For instance, the Mishnah rules:

> When one is searching for the lost property both of his father and of his teacher, his teacher's loss takes precedence over that of his father.... If his father and his teacher are each carrying a burden, he must first help his teacher put down his burden, and then help his father.... If his father and his teacher are in captivity, he must first ransom his teacher, and only afterwards his father.... (Bava Metsi'a 2:11)

A disciple was expected to put Torah, and his teacher, from whom he learned Torah, before his family. Apparently, it was this attitude to Torah that characterized Levi. Moses blessed Levi with

these words, "He [Levi] said of his father and mother, 'I have no regard for them.' He did not recognize his brothers or acknowledge his own children, but he watched over your word and guarded your covenant" (Deut. 33:9).

6. In 1985, Lindsey provided preliminary Greek and Hebrew reconstructions of these two passages (with English translation of the Hebrew) and a number of comments justifying his reconstructions. I have not always followed Lindsey's suggestions, and am responsible for any errors in the following Greek and Hebrew reconstructions, English translations and commentary.

7. Cf. Babylonian Talmud, Ta'anit 25^b, line 19.

8. Matthew used *palin* sixteen times in his Gospel. Nine times there are (Synoptic) parallels in Luke, Mark, or both, to Matthew's *palin* (seven times there are no parallels), but only five times (always in Mark) does the parallel contain the word *palin* (Mt. 19:24 = Mk. 10:24; Mt. 21:36 = Mk. 12:4; Mt. 26:42 = Mk. 14:39; Mt. 26:43 = Mk. 14:40; Mt. 26:72 = Mk. 14:70). Apparently, in these five cases Matthew copied *palin* from Mark. Matthew and Luke never agree on the use of *palin*.

9. Brad H. Young, *Jesus and His Jewish Parables: Rediscovering the Roots of Jesus' Teaching* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1989), p. 213.

10. Mechilta, *Beshallah* 1; to Exodus 14:5 (ed. Horovitz-Rabin, p. 88, lines 3–7). Note also the story of the rich man in Antioch who was very liberal in giving, but lost his wealth. When sages came from Israel requesting donations for the poor in Israel, he was embarrassed. However, his wife reminded him that he still had one asset, a field, and that he should sell half of it and give the proceeds to the sages. This he did. Later, while plowing the remaining half of his field, he found a treasure and became richer than before (Jerusalem Talmud, Horayot 48^a, chpt. 3, halachah 7).

11. Pinhas ben Yair was active in the second half of the second century A.D. He was the son-in-law of Shim'on ben Yochai, with whom he studied.

12. Song of Songs Rabbah 1:1, §9; to 1:1.

13. Matthew 6:31–33; Luke 12:29–31.

14. Cf. Mishnah, Avot 6:9.

15. Tosefta, Kiddushin 5:17; Babylonian Talmud, Hagigah 3^a; Bava Batra 123^b.

16. "The Pearl," *National Geographic* (Aug. 1985), p. 209.

17. *Naturalis Historia* 13:42.

18. Babylonian Talmud, Pesahim 49^b.

19. Another illustration of the nuance "to hate" in the sense of "to put in an inferior position in terms of affection" is found in Jesus' own words: "No servant can serve two masters...he will hate the one and love the other...." (Lk. 16:13; Mt. 6:24). The point of this teaching is that any attempt to be God's slave and at the same time be a slave to money will fail. It is not that in such a situation a person actually hates God, but that he tries to love both God and money. Inevitably, a conflict of interest will arise in which the person will sometimes prefer money to God.

20. Private communication.

21. Mishnah, Avot 1:10.

22. Derech Eretz Zuta 1:11 (ed. Higger, p. 63).

23. Cf. Luke 12:19, "I will say to myself [literally, 'to my soul']: 'Self [literally, "Soul"],....'"

24. Cf. Luke 12:20, "Tonight you will die" [literally, 'your soul will be demanded from you'].

25. Cf. John 12:25, "The person who loves his life [ψυχήν, *psychēn*, soul] will lose it, but the person who hates his life [ψυχήν, *psychēn*, soul] in this world will keep it for eternal life."

26. Mishnah, Berachot 9:5.

27. Luke 9:57-58.

28. Luke 9:61.

29. Luke 9:60; Matthew 8:22.

30. Please note a correction to page 6 of the last issue of *Jerusalem Perspective* (Nov./Dec. 1993). In "Jesus' Parables and Their Contexts," the Hidden Treasure and Valuable Pearl parables were inadvertently placed after instead of before Luke 14:26–27.

31. For examples of prospective disciples who accepted Jesus' call, see Luke 5:1–11 and 27–32 (cf. Mt. 9:9–13; Mk. 2:13–17).

32. Luke 5:27–32, and parallels.

33. Luke 19:1–10.

34. If the double parables came before Luke 14:25–33, Jesus first said, "It is worth it," before he warned, "It will be difficult."

35. Jesus also used the term "Kingdom of Heaven" in this special sense in his teaching about worry: "More than anything else, desire the Kingdom of Heaven and his [God's] salvation" (Matthew 6:33).

36. The teaching discourse (Lk. 18:29–30; Mt. 13:44–46; Lk. 14:26–33) in the "Cost of Being Jesus' Disciple" complex was probably directed toward Jesus' full-time disciples. The Hidden Treasure and Valuable Pearl parables seem even more clearly to be directed toward full-time disciples since these parables emphasize that despite the tremendous personal sacrifice full-time discipleship entails, being part of Jesus' Kingdom is so precious that it is worth "selling all that one has" to obtain it.

A Hebraic Nuance of *legō*: Key to Understanding Luke 18:18–19

In the *Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary* preview recently published in JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE (May/Aug. 1993), we argued that the Greek verb *legō* (say) in Luke 18:19 has the meaning "interpret," promising a fuller explanation in a forthcoming issue. Here is that explanation.

by David Bivin

An understanding of the nuances of אוֹמֵר (*ʾo·MER*, say), the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek verb λέγω (*legō*, say),[1] is perhaps the key to understanding Luke 18:18–19, a passage from the Rich Young Ruler story. At issue is whether Mark and Luke's, "Good teacher, what can I do...?" or Matthew's, "Teacher, what good can I do...?" best preserves the original text.

Some scholars are convinced that the Markan-Lukan version of the rich man's question and Jesus' answer (Mk. 10:17–18; Lk. 18:18–19) makes better sense than Matthew's version.[2] They feel that Jesus must have been addressed, "Good teacher," and responded, "Why do you call me good?" and that the εἷς (*heis*, one) in Luke 18:19 (= Mk. 10:18) refers to God.

Scholars often consider "Good teacher" original because of Jesus' answer.[3] However, it is more probable that Jesus' answer was corrupted and the rich man's question was then modified to bring it into agreement with the corrupted form of Jesus' answer. David Flusser and Robert Lindsey hold the latter view.[4] They believe that the earliest Greek version read, "What good can I do...?"; Jesus responded, "Why do you say 'good'?"; and that *heis* (one) in Luke 18:19 originally referred to Torah.

Here are the reasons why I have accepted Flusser and Lindsey's view:

The Rich Man's Question

It is true that in ancient Jewish literature persons—Moses for instance—are sometimes *called* "good";[5] however, no one is ever *addressed*, "Good man," "Good sir," "Good teacher," or the like.[6] That was Greek, not Jewish practice.[7] Therefore, the Markan-Lukan suggestion that the rich man addressed Jesus as "Good teacher" seems not only unusual, but without precedent.

Jesus' Response

Logically, if the rich man did not address Jesus as "good teacher," then Jesus would not have asked, "Why do you call me good?" However, there is another major difficulty with the Markan-Lukan version of Jesus' response.

In the time of Jesus, apparently neither the Greek verb λέγω (*legō*, recount, tell; say) nor its Hebrew equivalent אוֹמֵר (*ʾo·MER*, say) had the meaning "call" in the sense of "to speak of or address by a specified name." If this is so, then it is certain that Mark and Luke's "Why do you call me good?" is not original.[8]

It is probable that Jesus was not questioning the rich man about what he meant when he used the word "good."[9] Jesus knew what he meant,[10] but criticized him for the way he used "good." In this context, "Why do you *say* 'good'?" must mean, "Why do you *use* 'good' *in this way*?" The use of אָמַר (*ʾa·MAR*, to say) in the sense of "interpret" is common in rabbinic literature.[11]

"None Good but One"

The continuation of Jesus' response to the rich man, "No one is good except one—God. You know the commandments...." (Luke 18:19bff.; Mk. 10:18bff.), also confirms in two ways that Jesus was not called "good."

First, although both Mark and Luke have the explanatory ὁ θεός (*ho theos*, the god; God),[12] the continuation of the Markan-Lukan version, "You know the commandments...," strongly suggests that the Hebrew underneath οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς (*oudeis agathos ei mē heis*, No one is good

Facing page:
A group of students stands on the summit of the Arbel and gazes down at the Plain of Gennesaret and the north end of the Sea of Galilee. (For a view of the Arbel from the west, see the photograph on page 5.)
(Photo: JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE)

except one)[13] originally referred to the Torah and not to God. Out of context, it might be plausible to assume that the word εἷς (*heis*, one) refers to God, for God is called "good" in Scripture,[14] and references to God such as הַטּוֹב וְהַמֵּטִיב (*ha·TOV ve·ha·me·TIV*, the Good and the Doer of Good) occur frequently in ancient Jewish prayers and blessings.[15] In this context, however, it is almost impossible to suppose that the reference is to God, for Jesus immediately goes on to mention the commandments *of Torah*.

Second, the word εἷς (*heis*, one) appears within the framework of the declaration οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς (*oudeis agathos ei mē heis*, There is no one good except one), whose structure is so strikingly similar to the rabbinic saying אֵין מוֹב אֶלָּא תּוֹרָה (*ʾen tov ʾe·LAʾ to·RAH*, There is no good except Torah)[16] that it is difficult to imagine that here *heis* (one) could refer to anything but Torah.

Good Deeds

Jesus strongly opposed the rich man's suggestion that eternal life could be procured by performing a good deed. Jesus agreed with other contemporary Jewish teachers that there exists a statement in Scripture that is so comprehensive that it summarizes all the commandments;[17] however, he opposed the idea that there are levels or grades of mitzvoth. Jesus, like many contemporary sages, taught that "light" commandments are as important as "heavy" commandments (Mt. 5:19).[18] In his view, care must be taken to observe even the most insignificant of God's commandments. Therefore, there cannot be one commandment, one "good deed," that opens the door to eternal life.

The doing of good deeds to obtain a reward was opposed not just by Jesus, but by most sages. The Midrash expounds it this way:

> David said, "Some trust in their fair and upright deeds, and some in the works of their fathers, but I trust in you. Although I have no good works, yet because I call upon you, you answer me."[19]

The Pharisees criticized those of their number who continually asked, "What good deed may I do?"—they caricatured themselves by speaking of seven types of Pharisees. The fifth type was the "Calculating Pharisee" who was always saying, "Tell me what good deed I can do to offset a bad deed."[20]

One should also compare such rabbinic sayings as the following:

> "Blessed is the man that delights greatly in His commandments" [Psalm 112:1]—in His commandments, not in the reward of His commandments.[21]

> Do not be like slaves who serve their master to receive a reward; rather, be like slaves who do not serve their master to receive a reward.[22]

Does the doing of a good deed "buy" for a person a heavenly advocate? Does the performance of mitzvoth cover one's sins and obtain for him or her a reward from God? Yes, provided that the good deeds are accompanied by repentance. Notice that the following teaching by Rabbi Eliezer ben Ya'akov[23] is balanced by the inclusion of "repentance":

> He who performs one commandment obtains for himself one [heavenly] advocate; but he who breaks one commandment obtains for himself one [heavenly] accuser. Repentance and good deeds act as a shield against punishment.[24]

However, even if a person performs many good deeds, these will not atone for the nonperformance of just one of the Torah's positive commandments or the breaking of just one of its negative commandments. Unless one feels sorrow for the sin and resolves to change his or her behavior, the good deeds will not be efficacious. As Rabbi Eleazar of Modi'in said,

> He who publicly embarrasses someone...even though he has to his credit many good deeds, has no portion in the World to Come.[25]

According to Jesus, when one has performed all the mitzvoth, one has done no more than one's duty and is still just an undeserving slave, not having earned any reward:

> Would any of you, if you had a slave plowing or tending the sheep, say to him when he comes in from the field, "Come in and recline to eat"? No, you would say to him, "Prepare something for me to eat, then change your clothes and serve me until I have finished eating; after that, you may eat." So you too, when you have done all the things you are commanded, say, "We are unworthy slaves. We have only done what it was our duty to do."[26]

This is the same view expressed in the midrash about David quoted above, and the view of Hillel and Shammai, which was

transmitted by Yohanan ben Zakkai:

> If you have performed many mitzvoth [literally, If you have done much Torah], do not think that you have any merit [i.e., that you are entitled to a reward]. This is the purpose for which you have been created![27]

Torah-centered Living

Jesus apparently reprimanded the rich man because the man did not interpret "good" as referring to Torah, that is, referring to a Torah-centered life of good deeds and repentance, based on a rabbinic interpretation of Proverbs 4:2, "For I give you good teaching; do not forsake my Torah."[28] Rather, it seems the rich man interpreted "good" as referring to a "good deed," a mitzvah, based on a popular misunderstanding of a rabbinic interpretation of Micah 6:8.

It can be conjectured that "What good can I do to inherit internal life?" was a question that was asked in first-century Israel. The question contains a clear reference to a question implied in Micah 6:8, "He has told you, O man, what [is] good, and what the LORD requires of you...." Although there is no confirmation in rabbinic sources, we may assume that there were sages who abbreviated Micah 6:8 and turned it into a question: "What good does the LORD require of you?" Apparently, there were others, like the rich man, who held a misguided, popular understanding of this shortened form of Micah 6:8, and asked, "What mitzvah can I do to obtain eternal life?"[29]

A Key to Reconstruction

The Greek word λέγεις (*legeis*, you say) seems to have been the primary source of confusion in the first two verses of the rich man pericope. The word can be confidently

The southwest corner of the Sea of Galilee, viewed from the slopes above and just south of Tiberias. In the distance, beyond the Sea, are the hills of Gilead.
(Photo: JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE)

reconstructed in Hebrew as אַתָּה אוֹמֵר (*ʾa·TAH ʾo·MER*, you say); but in the sentence, Τί λέγεις ἀγαθόν (*Tí legeis agathon*, Why do you say good?), *legeis* is so unidiomatic that the authors of Matthew, Mark, Luke and the First Reconstruction would probably not have understood its meaning. The word has a wholly Hebraic sense, and this Hebraism seems to have caused all the alterations of the Greek text.

I suggest that the Greek text of Luke 18:18-19 was progressively corrupted as follows:

1. When the present tense of the verb אָמַר (*ʾa·MAR*, to say) was translated literally as λέγεις (*legeis*, you say), the sentence in which *legeis* appeared ("Why do you say good?") made little sense. (Note the attempt by Matthew to substitute something that makes sense: "Why do you ask me about the good?")

2. The author of the First Reconstruction added μέ (*me*, me) to give the sentence some meaning (i.e., "Why do you say me good?").

3. With the addition of μέ (*me*, me), the sentence seemed to mean, "Why are you calling me 'good'?" If Jesus reprimanded the rich man for calling him "good," it appeared that the rich man must have addressed Jesus as "good." Therefore, the author of the First Reconstruction (or Luke) added the modifier ἀγαθέ (*agathe*, good) to διδάσκαλε (*didaskale*, teacher) in the rich man's question.

4. The final stage in the text's corruption was the addition of ὁ θεός (*ho theos*, God) to οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς (*oudeis agathos ei mē heis*, No one is good except one). A Greek editor probably added *ho theos* because he was misled by the mistranslation of the Hebrew word for "one."[30] "God," therefore, is a later addition intended to clarify the meaning of "one."

Conclusion

This interpretation of a short segment of the Rich Man story illustrates how it is sometimes possible to reconstruct the Hebrew original even when the Greek original is not perfectly preserved by any of the Synoptic Gospels.

Rabbinic sources help to confirm that Matthew's parallel to Luke 18:18-19 preserves a great deal of the original text. Matthew has "What good," a hint at a common rabbinic discussion that arose from Micah 6:8. Matthew does not have "good teacher," something rabbinically impossible, nor does Matthew have "God."

Apparently, it was the author of the First Reconstruction who added "God"—a Greek editor might easily have assumed that the one good was God. However, it was Torah, not God, that Jesus intended. This is made clear by the continuation of Jesus' response: "You know the commandments...." (Luke 18:20). Matthew's "One there is who is good" is his modification of "No one is good except one," which we may assume Matthew saw in the Anthology.

One of the reasons why some scholars have favored the Markan-Lukan version of the exchange between the rich man and Jesus is because they have seen that Jesus does not immediately answer the rich man's question, but first reprimands the man for calling him "good." However, the reference to "good" in Jesus' answer does not necessarily indicate that originally "teacher" was modified by the adjective "good." It is equally possible that "good" (i.e., "good thing") served as a noun and followed "What," as suggested by Matthew's text.[31]

The differences in the Markan-Lukan version of the first two verses of this story vis–à–vis Matthew can be explained as the changes introduced by a Greek editor or editors who did not understand the Hebraisms in the passage. However, the differences in the Matthean version of the two verses vis–à–vis Mark-Luke cannot be explained. A Greek editor could not have changed a text like Mark and Luke's and ended up with a text like Matthew's, which is at points Hebraically and rabbinically sophisticated.[32]

In the rich man story, Jesus strongly emphasizes the importance of the mitzvoth.[33] However, Jesus expected his disciples to do good deeds out of love for God[34] and a desire to please him, not to gain a reward—even the reward of eternal life. In addition, he demanded that his disciples love the LORD "with all their might,"[35] and continually ask themselves, "Do I love anything more than the LORD?" This love of God expressed itself in the doing of good deeds and in the study of Torah.

To learn Torah, a disciple indentured himself to a sage, a unique form of education.[36] As a sage's student, a disciple had to put his master's demands above all else, above, for instance, his wealth and his family.[37] Jesus promised his disciples that if they put him first, they would receive "much more" from this life, as well as "life" in the world to come.

In the Rich Young Ruler story, we glimpse Jesus translating his approach to Torah into reality for a prospective disciple: Jesus asked this man, who happened to be rich, to give up his wealth to join Jesus' band of itinerating disciples. JP

1. The form of λέγω (*legō*) used in Luke 18:19 is λέγεις (*legeis*, you say [masculine or feminine singular]). The Hebrew equivalent of *legeis* in this context is אַתָּה אוֹמֵר (*ʾa·TAH ʾo·MER*, you [masculine, singular] say), two words in Hebrew.

2. Including Shmuel Safrai of the Jerusalem School of Synoptic Research.

3. It was Israel Abrahams' view that, "Unless the epithet 'good' had been applied to Jesus in the question, it is difficult to explain the answer of Jesus in Matthew: εἷς ἐστιν ὁ ἀγαθός [*heis estin ho agathos*, one is the good]" (I. Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels*, 2 vols. [Cambridge University Press, 1917, 1924; repr. in one volume by Ktav Publishing House, New York, 1967], 2:186).

4. 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. 221–224. Robert Lindsey's opinion was communicated orally during the Rich Young Ruler seminars conducted by the Jerusalem School in 1986–1987, and in an unpublished background paper prepared for the seminar participants.

5. Cf. Babylonian Talmud, Menachot 53^{b} (quoted by Abrahams, loc. cit.), יבוא טוב ויקבל טוב ממטיב למטיבים (*ya·VOʾ tov vi·ka·BEL tov mi·TOV le·to·VIM*, "Let the good come and receive the good from the good for the good," that is, "Let Moses come and receive the Torah from God [given] for Israel.").

The Testament of Simeon 4:4 says that "Joseph was a good man"; similarly, in the Testament of Dan 1:4, "...Joseph, a man who was true and good." In the New Testament, Joseph of Arimathea is called "a good and righteous man" (Lk. 23:50), and Barnabas is called "a good man" (Acts 11:24).

Cf. also, Proverbs 12:2, "A good man obtains favor from the LORD"; Proverbs 14:14, "The faithless will be fully repaid for their ways, and the good man rewarded for his"; Ecclesiastes 9:2, "As it is with the good man, so with the sinner"; Testament of Asher 4:1, "Persons who are good...are righteous before God." Jesus refers to persons as "good" in Matthew 5:45, "For he [your father who is in heaven] makes his sun shine on evil persons and good persons"; Matthew 12:35 (parallel to Luke 6:45), "The good man from the good treasure brings forth good." In Romans 5:7, Paul says that some might dare to die on behalf of "a good man."

6. In the Parable of the Talents, the master says to his slave, "Well done, good and faithful slave" (Mt. 25:21, 23), or in the Lukan parallel to Matthew 25:21, "Well done, good slave" (Lk. 19:17). This might be considered an example of a person addressed as "good"; however, the way the slave is addressed, Εὖ, δοῦλε ἀγαθὲ καὶ πιστέ (*Eu, doule agathe kai piste*) in Matthew, and Εὖ γε, ἀγαθὲ δοῦλε (*Eu ye, agathe doule*) in Luke, seems un-Hebraic. Robert Lindsey assumes that the original Hebrew was probably simply, עַבְדִּי (*ʿav·DI*, my slave). The first Greek translator probably added the more dynamic Εὖ (*eu*, Well done!), as well as ἀγαθέ (*agathe*, good), and dropped the Hebrew pronominal suffix ("my"), which in idiomatic Hebrew would have been attached to the word "slave." Since Matthew and Luke agree on these three sentence elements, we may assume they copied them from their shared source. The second adjective in Matthew's text, πιστέ (*piste*, faithful), probably was added by Matthew under the influence of πιστὸς (*pistos*, faithful, in the phrase, "faithful over a little") that immediately follows. The word γε (*ge*, an enclitic Greek particle serving to emphasize the word to which it is appended) in Luke's text probably was added by Luke since Luke adds *ge* in other places.

Abrahams (loc. cit.) says that the Aramaic example quoted by Dalman (*Words of Jesus*, p. 337) is "a quite clear instance" of a person being addressed as good. Abrahams is referring to a statement of Rabbi Eleazar. Rabba (3rd generation Babylonian Amora, died 339 A.D.) once decreed a fast for the residents of a city near Nehardea in Babylonia. When no rain fell, he commanded the people to continue their fast overnight. The next morning he asked if anyone had had a dream. Rabbi Eleazar replied: "To me in my dream the following was said: 'Good greetings to the *good teacher* from the good Lord who from His bounty dispenseth good to His people" (Babylonian Talmud, Ta'anit 24^{b}; English translation by J. Rabbinowitz [Soncino], italics mine). If the greeting was addressed to Eleazar, then this would be an example of "good" used in addressing a teacher. However, as Abrahams notes, it is not clear from the context whether the term "good teacher" refers to Eleazar or Rabba. Was the anonymous messenger who spoke to Eleazar in a dream greeting Eleazar, or

was the messenger, through Eleazar, sending greetings to Rabba, and thus referring to Rabba in the third person (i.e., "Greet the good teacher for me")?

7. Flusser, op. cit., p. 221.

8. Robert Lindsey finds it strange that καλέω (*kaleō*, call) is not found in Jesus' reply if it is to be translated, as it usually is, "Why do you call me good?" (Cf. Acts 14:12; Rom. 9:25; Heb. 2:11; 1 Pet. 3:6.) Furthermore, if λέγω (*legō*, say) is here to have the meaning, "call," Lindsey argues, then one would expect the sentence structure, Τί με λέγεις ἀγαθὸν εἶναι (*Ti me legeis agathon einai*, Why do you say that I am good?).

It is also very significant, as David Flusser has pointed out (private communication), that the text of Luke 10:25b is identical with the text of Luke 18:18b except for the omission of "good." Luke apparently replaced the original version of the lawyer's question, "Teacher, what is the greatest commandment in the Torah?" (Mt. 22:36), with the rich man's question, "Teacher, what can I do to inherit eternal life?" (I conjecture that the conclusion of the Lawyer's Question story, "Do this and you will *live*" [Lk. 10:28], prompted Luke to substitute the rich man's question, which included the phrase, "inherit eternal *life*.") Luke's substitution indicates that Luke knew the version of the rich man's question without "good" that Matthew knew. This leads one to conclude that Luke added "good" to his text at Lk 18:18b, or that he copied it from the First Reconstruction.

9. My assertion contradicts Robert Lindsey's opinion, which was first expressed in an unpublished background paper prepared for the Jerusalem School's Rich Young Ruler seminars that began in February 1986. Lindsey wrote: "In Hebrew the verb *ʾa·MAR* sometimes means 'to intend' (cf. Exod. 2:14; 1 Kgs. 5:5; 2 Chr. 13:8). Thus, [Jesus said], 'What do you mean by "good"?'"

10. Jesus' reply, "Why do you say 'good'?.... You know the commandments...," indicates that he knew the rich man was hinting at Micah 6:8.

It was Robert Lindsey who noticed that "what good" in the rich man's question hints at Micah 6:8, "He has told you, O man, what [is] good, and what the LORD requires of you; only to...." David Flusser's insistence that "Teacher, what good can I do...." (in Matthew) is more original than "Good teacher, what can I do...." (in Mark and Luke) caused Lindsey to reexamine Matthew's version of the Rich Young Ruler story and discover the allusion to Micah 6:8.

11. Especially when two sages disagree about the interpretation of a passage of Scripture: הוּא אוֹמר... וַאֲנִי אוֹמר.... (*huʾ ʾo·MER...va·ʾa·NI ʾo·MER....*, "He says...and I say...," that is, "He interprets [as follows]...but my interpretation is...") (Tosefta, Sotah 6:6–11; Sifre Deuteronomy 31; to 6:4 [ed. Finkelstein, pp. 49–51]; Rosh ha-Shanah 18^{b}, line 29). Compare the words of Jesus: "You have heard that it was said...but I say...." (Mt. 5:21–22, 27–28, 33–34, 38–39, 43–44), that is, "You have heard such and such an interpretation of Scripture...but I differ with that interpretation. My interpretation is...."

12. Probably added by the author of the First Reconstruction, or by Luke himself.

13. A mistranslation in Greek of the conjectured Hebrew original, אֵין טוֹב אֶלָּא אֶחָד, (*ʾen tov ʾe·LAʾ ʾe·HAD*, There is no good except one). See "*Nothing is good except one*" in "Comments on the Hebrew Reconstruction" under the the heading "Matthew 19:17 = Mark 10:18 = Luke 18:19," "*Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary* Preview: The Rich Young Ruler Story," *Jerusalem Perspective* 38 & 39 (May/Aug. 1993), 17–18.

14. Ps. 136:1. Cf. Ps. 145:9.

15. For example, Mishnah, Berachot 9:2.

16. Mishnah, Avot 6:3; Babylonian Talmud, Berachot 5^{a}. This saying is a midrash based on Proverbs 4:2 in which "good teaching" is synonymous with "Torah": כִּי לֶקַח טוֹב נָתַתִּי לָכֶם תּוֹרָתִי אַל תַּעֲזֹבוּ (*ki LE·kah tov na·TA·ti la·KEM, to·ra·TI ʾal ta·ʿa·ZO·vu*, For I give you *good teaching*; do not forsake my *Torah*). From this verse, the sages learned that "good" means "Torah," and therefore they coined the saying, "There is no good except Torah." As already noticed by David Flusser (op. cit., p. 222), Jesus' reply to the rich man reflects this rabbinic midrash on Proverbs 4:2. Note that Paul also states that the Torah is good (1 Tim. 1:8; Rom. 7:12, 16).

17. The sages referred to a comprehensive summary of Scripture as כְּלָל גָּדוֹל בַּתּוֹרָה (*ke·LAL ga·DOL ba·to·RAH*, a great rule of Torah). Rabbi Akiva said that the most important summary statement in Scripture is, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Sifra, *Kedoshim*; to Lev. 19:18 [ed. Weiss, p. 89^{b}]). Compare Lk. 10:27, and parallels.

18. This approach is known by its abbreviation, קַלָּה כַּחֲמוּרָה (*ka·LAH ka·ḥa·mu·RAH*, light as heavy, i.e., a light [commandment is as important] as a heavy [commandment]). According to this approach, the less serious commandments are no less significant than the serious commandments. (Cf. Mishnah, Avot 2:1, "Be as

careful of a 'light' commandment as of a 'heavy' commandment, because you do not know the reward of each commandment.")

19. Midrash Psalms 141 (ed. Buber, pp. 530–531).

20. Jerusalem Talmud, Berachot IX, 14^b; Babylonian Talmud, Sotah 22^b; Avot de-Rabbi Natan, Version A, Chpt. 37 (ed. Schechter, p. 109); Version B, Chpt. 45 (p. 124).

21. Babylonian Talmud, Avodah Zarah 19^a.

22. In other words, we should serve God out of love. This saying, preserved in the Mishnah (Avot 1:3), was transmitted by Antigonus of Socho, a sage who lived at the beginning of the second century B.C. To the saying of Antigonus, compare the phrase found in Derech Eretz Rabbah 2:13 (ed. Higger, p. 284): עוֹשִׂין מֵאַהֲבָה (*ʿo·SIN me·ʾa·ha·VAH*, those who do [i.e., perform good deeds] out of love).

23. This is either the Eliezer who was a disciple of Akiva, or the Eliezer mentioned in Middot 1:2 who survived the destruction of the Temple.

24. Mishnah, Avot 4:11.

25. Mishnah, Avot 3:11. Eleazar of Modi'in was active at the end of the first and beginning of the second century A.D.

26. Lk. 17:7–8, 10.

27. Avot de-Rabbi Natan, Version B, Chpt. 31 (ed. Schechter, p. 66). Note the expression "to do Torah." For this expression, 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." In the New Testament, compare ποιητὴς νόμου (*poiētēs nomou*, an observer [literally, a doer] of law) in James 4:11, and ποιεῖ τὸν νόμον (*poiei ton vomon*, observes [literally, does] the law) in John 7:19.

Shmuel Safrai has provided me with the following additional examples of the expression "do Torah" (private communication):

a. Before Mattathias died, he commanded his sons to "rally about you all who observe [literally, 'do'] the Torah" (1 Macc. 2:67).

b. Mattathias' son, Simon, the Maccabean military leader and high priest, after capturing the city of Gezer, resettled it with "men who observed [literally, 'did'] the Torah" (1 Macc. 13:48).

c. In a prayer that is added to the Eighteen Benedictions and to the Grace after Meals during the holiday of Hanukkah, these words of praise appear:

> In the time of the Hasmonean High Priest Mattathias ben Yohanan and his sons, when the evil power of Greece arose against your people Israel...you handed over the strong to the weak, the many to the few, the impure to the pure, the wicked to the righteous, and the arrogant to those who observe [literally, 'do'] your Torah...." (The Jewish Prayer Book, Seligman Isaac Baer edition, *Avodat Yisrael*, pp. 101; or, Joseph H. Hertz edition, *The Authorised Daily Prayer Book*, pp. 152, 288, 969)

d. In a number of rabbinic sources, we find the following saying of Rabbi Meir:

> How do we know that even a Gentile who keeps the commandments [literally, "does Torah"] is equal [in status] to the High Priest? From the verse, "...which if a man does them he will live by them" [Lev 18:5]. It does not say "priests, Levites and Israelites," but "a man," which shows that even a Gentile who keeps the commandments is equal [in status] to the High Priest. (Babylonian Talmud, Bava Kamma 38^a. Cf. Sifra, *Ahare Mot*; to Lev. 18:5 (ed. Weiss, p. 86^b); Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 59^a; Avodah Zarah 3^a)

In post-biblical Hebrew, "to do" replaced "to guard," as the verb that usually accompanied "commandments." (See "*All of these I have done*" in "Comments on the Hebrew Reconstruction" under the the heading "Matthew 19:20 = Mark 10:20 = Luke 18:21," "*Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary* Preview: The Rich Young Ruler Story," *Jerusalem Perspective* 38 & 39 (May/Aug. 1993), 18; notes 46, 47.) Apparently, in the time of Jesus, the expression "do Torah" was a synonym for "do commandments." If so, we can conclude that "Torah" was a synonym for "commandments." This insight enables us to better understand Jesus' abrupt switch from "Torah" to "commandments" in his reply to the rich man: "There is no good except one [i.e., Torah]. You know the commandments...."

28. See note 16.

29. The verb "to do" in the rich man's question (Lk. 18:18; Mk. 10:17) may indicate that the man was thinking of a specific act, a commandment (good deed) as opposed to a whole way of life: in the Hebrew of that time, "to do commandments" was the usual way one spoke of keeping the commandments (see note 27). Compare, for example, the rabbinic saying, "Anyone who performs [literally, 'does'] even a single commandment will be blessed, have length of days and inherit the land" (Mishnah, Kiddushin 1:10).

30. The Greek word εἷς (*heis*, one) is apparently an overly literal translation of the Hebrew אֶחָד (*ʾe·HAD*, one). For an explanation, see "*God*" in

Glossary

aggadah (also **haggadah**) – the ethical sayings and scriptural exposition of the sages, in contrast to their halachic statements; the non-legal part of rabbinic literature in contrast to halachah. **aggadic** (ə·gäd′ik) – pertaining to aggadah.

amoraic – pertaining to the Amoraim (אֲמוֹרָאִים, *ʾa·mo·ra·ʾIM*), the sages of the talmudic period, as distinguished from the earlier Tannaim (תַּנָּאִים, *ta·na·ʾIM*), the sages of the mishnaic period. Roughly speaking, the Tannaim are the sages quoted in the Mishnah and contemporary rabbinic works, while the Amoraim are the sages mentioned in the Talmuds. Singular: אָמוֹרָא (*ʾa·mo·RAʾ*, Amora).

Aramaic (ar·ə·mā′ik) – a northwest Semitic language closely related to Hebrew. The earliest Aramaic inscriptions date from the 10th–9th centuries B.C. Its square script replaced the Hebrew archaic script, and by the time of Jesus was the normal script for writing in Hebrew.

baraita – (literally, "outside"; plural: *beraitot*) a tannaic saying excluded from the Mishnah of Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi, that is, teachings that predate 230 A.D. These sayings were incorporated in later rabbinic works such as the Talmud.

B.C.E. – abbreviation of "Before Common Era," corresponding to B.C. in Christian terminology. JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE uses B.C.E. and C.E. in articles by Jewish scholars.

C.E. – abbreviation of "Common Era," corresponding to A.D. in Christian terminology.

Derech Eretz Zuta — later the basis for Seder Eliyahu, this work, according to Shmuel Safrai, is a reposit of Hasidic teaching.

"Eighteen" – (שְׁמוֹנֶה עֶשְׂרֵה, *she·mo·NEH ʿes·REH*) the central prayer in Jewish life and liturgy. It is also known as עֲמִידָה (*ʿa·mi·DAH*, Standing), because it is said standing; or simply תְּפִלָּה (*te·fi·LAH*, Prayer), the prayer *par excellence*. The prayer originally consisted of eighteen benedictions, and thus the name "Eighteen." Its final version dates from around 90–100 A.D. when a nineteenth benediction was added. Every Jew is religiously obligated to pray the "Eighteen" daily; however, in times of emergency this obligation may be fulfilled by saying an abbreviated form of the prayer.

geonic (gə·ōn′ik) – pertaining to the Geonim (גְּאוֹנִים, *ge·ʾo·NIM*), heads of the talmudic academies in Babylonia from the 7th to 11th centuries A.D. Singular: גָּאוֹן (*ga·ʾON*, Gaon).

halachah – (הֲלָכָה, *ha·la·KAH*; plural: הֲלָכוֹת, *ha·la·KOT*, halachot) law, regulation; the legal ruling on a particular issue; the body of Jewish law, especially the legal part of rabbinic literature. **halachic** (hä·läk′ik) – pertaining to halachah.

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

Hasmonean – pertaining to a family of Jewish priests who led a successful revolt which began in 168 B.C. against the Hellenized Selucid rulers in Syria. The Hasmoneans, nicknamed the Maccabees, ruled the land of Israel from 142 to 63 B.C.

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

Mishnah — (מִשְׁנָה, *mish·NAH*) the collection of Oral Torah committed to writing around 200 A.D. by Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi. In its narrow sense, "mishnah" (not capitalized) refers to an individual saying or ruling found in the Mishnah. In its wider sense, "Mishnah" refers to the work composed by Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi.

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."

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.

Seder Eliyahu — also known as Tanna d've Eliyahu, this work is composed of Seder Eliyahu Rabbah and Seder Eliyahu Zuta.

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

Talmud — (תַּלְמוּד, *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.

tannaic (tə·nā′ik) — pertaining to the Tannaim (תַּנָּאִים, *ta·na·ʾIM*), sages from Hillel (died c. 10 B.C.) to those of the generation (c. 230 A.D.) after Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi, the compiler of the Mishnah. Singular: תַּנָּא (*ta·NAʾ*, Tanna).

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 — (תּוֹסֶפְתָּא, *to·sef·TAʾ*, 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 translated from Hebrew.

"Comments on the Greek Reconstruction" under the heading "Matthew 19:17 = Mark 10:18 = Luke 18:19," "*Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary* Preview: The Rich Young Ruler Story," *Jerusalem Perspective* 38 & 39 (May/Aug. 1993), 7.

31. Why did Luke copy Lk. 18:18–19 from the redacted First Reconstruction rather than from the source he shared with Matthew, the Hebraically superior Anthology? The answer is that Luke was not usually eclectic, that is, he did not consider at each word or phrase whether to copy his first or second source. Instead, for each of his story units, he chose either the Anthology's version in its entirety or the First Reconstruction's version in its entirety. For the Rich Man story he chose the First Reconstruction's version. This source included "Good teacher" and other secondary readings; however, it also included many readings that were superior to Matthew's, especially beginning with verse 20.

Mark followed Luke, making minor midrashic changes in Luke's text. Whenever Mark provided a parallel to the Anthology, Matthew had two versions from which to chose: Mark's version and the Anthology's. Unlike Luke, however, Matthew often wove his two sources together. Thus, apparently in an attempt to harmonize Mark's Τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν (*Tí me legeis agathon*, Why me you say good?) with the conjectured reading of the Anthology, τί ἀγαθὸν ποιήσας/ποιήσω.... (*Tí agathon poiēsas/poiēsō*, What good doing/am I to do...?), Matthew wrote Τί με ἐρωτᾷς περὶ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ; (*Tí me erōtas peri tou agathou*, Why do you ask me about the good?). Fortunately, Matthew chose the Anthology's version of the rich man's question rather than Mark's version, thus alone of the Synoptic writers preserving the original Greek version of the question.

32. Matthew's version of these two verses is quite different from Mark's, and this is a good indication that Matthew is using a source other than Mark. Here, Matthew mostly followed his second source, the very Hebraic Anthology, even though, like Mark and Luke, he is unable to recognize its Hebraisms. Compare, for instance, Matthew's misunderstanding of Jesus' use of "house" in the sense of home or family (Mt. 10:12-13; Lk. 10:5ff.).

33. This emphasis can also be seen in Matthew 5:17–19 where Jesus says that he has "come" (i.e., intends) לְקַיֵּם אֶת הַתּוֹרָה (*le·ka·YEM et ha·to·RAH*, to establish the Torah; correctly interpret the Torah) through his approach to Torah, which holds that all the commandments are of equal importance (see note 18).

34. See note 22.

35. Note that one rabbinic interpretation of "with all your might" (Deut. 6:5) is "with all your wealth" (Mishnah, Berachot 9:5). Jesus required this kind of devotion from the rich young ruler.

36. The expression "like slaves who serve their master [*rav*]" (see note 22) speaks of a person's relationship to God, but the language ("serving a *rav*") is taken from the realm of sages and disciples. Since a disciple was like a slave, the same word (*rav*) was used for the master of a disciple and for the master of a slave.

37. As shown by the "Cost of Being Jesus' Disciple" story. See "Counting the Cost of Discipleship: Lindsey's Reconstruction of the Rich Young Ruler Complex" in this issue.

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

Diphthongs

אי – ai
אי – oi
אי – ui

Greek

Transliterations are based on the Society of Biblical Literature system.

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JP Index 1987–1993

Monthly Issues

No. 1 – Oct. 1987: "Fresh Insight into Jesus' Words"; Rabbinic Parallels: "The Harvest: Matthew 9:37–38"; "A Gospel in Hebrew?"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 1: "Jesus' Hebrew Name (Part 1)"; "A Jewish Bachelor?"

No. 2 – Nov. 1987: "Semitic Background to the Nain Story" [Lk. 7:11–17]; "Jesus in Judea"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 2: "Jesus' Hebrew Name (Part 2)"; "'Prophet' as a Messianic Title."

No. 3 – Dec. 1987: "Amen: Introduction or Response?"; "Translating the Gospels to Hebrew"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 3: "Jesus' Hebrew Name (Part 3)"; "Written and Oral Torah."

No. 4 – Jan. 1988: "Did Jesus Observe the Oral Torah? — Blessing"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 4: "Jesus' Hebrew Name (Part 4)"; "Jesus' Use of 'Amen.'"

No. 5 – Feb. 1988: "Jesus and the Oral Torah: The Unutterable Name of God"; "The Syndicated Donkey" [Lk. 19:33]; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 5: "Abba (Part 1)"; "The Jerusalem School."

No. 6 – Mar. 1988: "Preview of the *Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary*: 'Destroy' the Law" [Mt. 5:17]; "Jesus and the Oral Torah: Tithing"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 6: "Abba (Part 2)."

No. 7 – Apr. 1988: "Jesus and the Oral Torah: 'The Hem of His Garment'" [Mt. 9:20–21]; "Hebraic Heritage: The Beginning of the Jerusalem School"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 7: "Abba (Part 3)"; "The Queen of Teman" [Lk. 11:31].

No. 8 – May 1988: "Principles of Rabbinic Interpretation (Part 1)"; "Jesus and the Oral Torah: Tefillin"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 8: "Abba (Part 4)"; "How Long Was Jesus in the Tomb?" [Mt. 28:1].

No. 9 – Jun. 1988: "Was Jesus a Rabbi?"; "'Salted with Fire'" [Mk. 9:49]; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 9: "Hallelujah (Part 1)"; "Principles of Rabbinic Interpretation (Part 2)."

No. 10 – Jul. 1988: "The Lord's Prayer: 'Our Father Who Art in Heaven'"; "The Traveling Rabbi"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 10: "Hallelujah (Part 2)"; "Jerusalem School Objectives."

No. 11 – Aug. 1988: "At the Feet of a Rabbi"; "The Lord's Prayer: 'Hallowed Be Thy Name'"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 11: "Hallelujah (Part 3)"; "Discovering Longer Gospel Stories"; "Conjectured Process of Gospel Transmission."

No. 12 – Sept. 1988: "The Mary & Martha Story"; "The Lord's Prayer: 'Thy Kingdom Come' (Part 1)"; "Gospel Translation"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 12: "Menorah (Part 1)."

No. 13 – Oct. 1988: "First-century Discipleship"; "The Lord's Prayer: 'Thy Kingdom Come' (Part 2)"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 13: "Menorah (Part 2)"; "Who Was Jesus?"

No. 14 – Nov. 1988: "Jesus' Education (Part 1)"; "The Lord's Prayer: 'Thy Will Be Done'"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 14: "Menorah (Part 3)."

No. 15 – Dec. 1988: "Jesus' Education (Part 2)"; "The Lord's Prayer: 'Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread'"; "Scholarly Assumptions;" Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 15: "Shalom (Part 1)."

No. 16 – Jan. 1989: "Sources for the Gospels"; "The Lord's Prayer: 'Forgive Us Our Debts'"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 16: "Shalom (Part 2)."

No. 17 – Feb. 1989: "A Priest of the Division of Abijah"; "Early Gospel Texts"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 17: "*Vav* (Part 1)"; "The Lord's Prayer: 'Lead Us Not Into Temptation.'"

No. 18 – Mar. 1989: "Zechariah's Prestigious Task"; "How the Gospel Writers Worked"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 18: "*Vav* (Part 2)"; "Hebrew Reconstruction of the Lord's Prayer."

No. 19 – Apr. 1989: "The Synoptic Problem: Laying the Groundwork"; "John the Nazirite"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 19: "Israel (Part 1)."

No. 20 – May 1989: "Naming John the Baptist"; "The Synoptic Problem: Gospel Similarities"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 20: "Israel (Part 2)."

Bimonthly Issues

No. 21 – Jul./Aug. 1989: "Which Bible Translation?"; "The Role of Women in the Temple"; "'By the Finger of God'" [Lk. 11:20]; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 21: "Israel (Part 3)"; "Understanding Parables"; Book Review: *Jesus and His Jewish Parables*; "No Longer Hidden."

No. 22 – Sept./Oct. 1989: Readers' Perspective: "Why leave out the Gospel of John?"; "Pilgrimage in the Time of Jesus"; "Pilgrim's Graffito"; "Synagogue Guest House for First-century Pilgrims"; "Hebrew Idioms in the Gospels"; "Fish and the Sea of Galilee"; "The Markan Cross-Factor"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 22: "Israel (Part 4)"; Book Review: *Our Father Abraham: Jewish Roots of the Christian Faith*.

No. 23 – Nov./Dec. 1989: Readers' Perspective: "Do scholars of the Jerusalem School agree with Bultmann?"; "The Kingdom of Heaven Is Like a Seine"; "A Life on the Kinneret"; "The Sons of His Will" [Lk. 2:14]; "Synagogue and Sabbath";

Hebrew Nuggets: "Transliteration System [used in JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE]"; "'Binding' and 'Loosing'" [Mt. 16:19].

No. 24 – Jan./Feb. 1990: Readers' Perspective: 1) "What is the Jerusalem School's reaction to the Jesus Seminar?"; 2) "Did Jews of the first century know their tribal affiliation?"; "The Centurion and the Synagogue"; "The Kingdom of God: God's Power Among Believers"; "Your Money or Your Life" [Lk. 20:25]; "'Let Down Your Nets'" [Lk. 5:4].

No. 25 – Mar./Apr. 1990: Readers' Perspective: 1) "Why does JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE avoid the term 'Old Testament'?"; 2) "Why did Jesus say, 'Pray that your flight will not be on the Sabbath' [Mt. 24:20]?"; "Fish, Storms and a Boat"; "A Friend of Tax Collectors"; "Who Questioned Jesus?" [Lk. 22:66]; "Jesus' Most Important Title."

No. 26 – May/Jun. 1990: "Jesus and the Essenes (Part 1)"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 23: "Messiah (Part 1)"; "What Kind of Blessing Is That?" [Lk. 2:34–35]; "Views of the Jerusalem School"; Book Review: *The Gospels and Rabbinic Judaism: A Study Guide*; Gospel Postcard: "The Sea of Galilee."

No. 27 – Jul./Aug. 1990: Readers' Perspective: "How trustworthy is Jerome's claim that he saw a Hebrew gospel?"; "Sabbath Breakers?" [Lk. 6:1–5]; "Jesus and the Essenes (Part 2)"; "Who Were the Essenes?"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 24: "Messiah (Part 2)"; Book Review: *The Spiritual History of the Dead Sea Sect*; Gospel Postcard: "*Kefar Nahum* [Capernaum]."

No. 28 – Sept./Oct. 1990: Readers' Perspective: "Were the first Christians Saturday- or Sunday-keepers?"; "The New Testament in Modern Hebrew"; "Who Is a Jew in the Gospels?"; "The Library at Qumran"; "Matthew's Aramaic Glue"; Book Review: *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period*; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 25: "*Tanak* [the Jewish Bible] (Part 1)"; Rabbinic Parallels: "Parables & Foundations" [Mt. 7:24–27].

No. 29 – Nov./Dec. 1990: Readers' Perspective: "Is God male or female?"; "Master and Disciple"; "The Decalogue and the New Testament"; "*Sefer Pitron Torah*"; "The Holy Spirit in the Hebrew New Testament"; "The Intricacies of Hebrew Gender"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 26: "*Tanak* (Part 2)."

No. 30 – Jan./Feb. 1991: Readers' Perspective: "Why does JERUSALEM PERSPECTIVE use the Greek name 'Jesus' instead of the Hebrew 'Yeshua'?"; "Spoken Languages in the Time of Jesus"; "The Bar Kochva Letters"; "What Is the Priest Doing?" [Lk. 1:21–22]; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 27: "*Tanak* (Part 3)."

No. 31 – Mar./Apr. 1991: Readers' Perspective: 1) "What did Jesus mean when he said, 'Call no man your father on earth [Mt. 23:9]'?"; 2) "Why can't 'Messiah' be used in New Testament translations instead of 'Christ'?"; "Literary Languages in the Time of Jesus"; "The Divine Name in the Hebrew New Testament"; "'And' or 'But' — So What?"

No. 32 – May/Jun. 1991 (The work of Robert Lindsey): "Perspective on Robert Lindsey"; "A New Solution to the Synoptic Problem"; "Unearthing Literary Strata"; "Pursuing Righteousness" [Mt. 5:10]; Book Review: *Jesus Rabbi & Lord: The Hebrew Story of Jesus Behind Our Gospels*; Book Review: *The Jesus Sources: Understanding the Gospels*.

No. 33 & 34 – Jul./Oct. 1991 (Caiaphas tomb discovery): "Discovery of the Caiaphas Family Tomb"; "A Sadducee Who Believed in an Afterlife?"; "Ossuary Inscriptions from the Caiaphas Tomb"; "Jewish Burial Customs in the First Century"; "...To Bury Caiaphas, Not to Praise Him."

No. 35 – Nov./Dec. 1991: "'He Shall Be Called a Nazarene'" [Mt. 2:23]; "'Jehovah' — A Christian Misunderstanding"; "The Fallacy of Sacred Name Bibles"; "No Room in the Inn?" [Lk. 2:7]; "The *Shema* in Early Jewish Teaching"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 28: "Grace (Part 1)"; Rabbinic Parallels: "A Measure of Humility" [Lk. 14:11].

No. 36 – Jan./Feb. 1992: "Inspiration, History and Bible Translation"; "Reconstructing the Words of Jesus"; "Scribal Errors"; "New Testament Canon"; "Did Jesus Wear a *Kippah*?"; "The Sweetness of Learning"; Hebrew Nuggets, Lesson 29: "Grace (Part 2)."

No. 37 – Mar./Apr. 1992: Readers' Perspective: "Where the Eagles Gather" [Lk. 17:37]; "The Wealth of Herod the Great"; "The Miraculous Catch" [Lk. 5:1–11]; "Jewish Laws of Purity in Jesus' Day"; "Trees of Life" [Did first-century Torah scrolls have wooden handles, 'trees of life'?]; "Prayers for Emergencies."

No. 38 & 39 – May/Aug. 1993: "*Jerusalem Synoptic Commentary* Preview: The Rich Young Ruler Story."

No. 40 – Sept./Oct. 1993: "The Place of Women in First-century Synagogues"; "That Small-fry Herod Antipas, or When a Fox Is Not a Fox" [Lk. 13:32]; "Jesus' Jewish Parents"; "Pieces to the Synoptic Puzzle: Papias and Luke 1:1–4."

No. 41 – Nov./Dec. 1993: Readers' Perspective: "Robert Lindsey's Response to Lindsey Issue"; "Jesus' Twin Parables"; "Lindsey's Assumptions"; "Jesus' Parables and Their Contexts"; "John's Targumic Allusions" [Jn. 1:1–18]; "Scholarly Attitudes to John"; "The Appearance of Jesus: Hairstyles and Beards in Bible Times"; "Rabbinic Literature: A Spiritual Treasure."

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The Jerusalem School

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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.