

**The  
Gospel of Matthew  
according to a  
Primitive Hebrew Text**

by

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*The Gospel of Matthew  
according to a Primitive Hebrew Text*

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To Tere  
*my wife*

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University of Georgia  
29 July 1987

*George Howard*

# Introduction

A complete Hebrew text of Matthew appeared in the body of a fourteenth-century Jewish polemical treatise entitled *Even Bohan* (אבן בוחן, ‘‘The Touchstone’’). The author, Shem-Tob ben-Isaac ben-Shaprut (sometimes called Ibn Shaprut), was born in Tudela in Castile in the middle of the fourteenth century. He later settled in Tarazona in Aragon where as a physician he practiced medicine. There he completed the *Even Bohan* about 1380, although he revised it several times—in 1385, around 1400, and even later by adding another five to the original twelve books or sections.<sup>1</sup> Of the original books the first deals with the principles of the Jewish faith, the next nine deal with various passages in the Bible that were disputed by Jews and Christians, the eleventh discusses certain haggadic sections in the Talmud used by Christians or proselytes to Christianity, and the twelfth contains the entire Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew along with polemical comments by Shem-Tob interspersed throughout the text.

Part one of the present volume is a publication of the Hebrew text of Matthew as found in Shem-Tob’s work. A critical apparatus noting manuscript variation accompanies the text, and an English translation appears on facing pages. The polemical comments of Shem-Tob have been eliminated so that the gospel text may run continuously from beginning to end without interruption.

Part two discusses the place of Shem-Tob’s Hebrew Matthew within the Hebrew-Matthew tradition as a whole. In addition it gives a literary and textual profile of the Hebrew Matthew contained in the *Even Bohan*.

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<sup>1</sup>For a discussion of these later additions see Alexander Marx, ‘‘The Polemical Manuscripts in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America,’’ in *Studies in Jewish Bibliography and Related Subjects in Memory of Abraham Solomon Freidus (1867–1923)* (New York: The Alexander Kohut Memorial Foundation, 1929) 247-78, esp. 265-70; W. Horbury, ‘‘The Revision of Shem Tob Ibn Shaprut’s *Eben Bohan*,’’ *Sefarad* 43 (1983): 221-37.

### Witnesses Used in This Edition<sup>2</sup>

- Ms. Add. no. 26964. British Library, London. (Serves as the printed text for 1:1–23:22.)
- A Ms. Heb. 28. Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Leiden.
- B Ms. Mich. 119. Bodleian Library, Oxford.
- C Ms. Opp. Add. 4° 72. Bodleian Library, Oxford.
- D Ms. 2426 (Marx 16). Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York. (Serves as the printed text for 23:23–end.)
- E Ms. 2279 (Marx 18). Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York.
- F Ms. 2209 (Marx 19). Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York.
- G Ms. 2234 (Marx 15). Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York.
- H Ms. Mich. 137. Bodleian Library, Oxford.

All the manuscripts date between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries and are written in various types of rabbinic script. By far the best manuscript of the lot (ms C is an exception; see below) is from the British Library, catalogued Add. 26964. Although 26964 is incomplete, covering Matthew 1:1–23:22, the excellent quality of the text demands that it be printed. A second manuscript of good quality, from the library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America catalogued as #2426 (noted as #16 by Marx in “The Polemical Manuscripts in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America,” 252), serves as the basic text for Matthew 23:23–28:20. In the apparatus up to 23:23 it is noted as ms D. Ms A from Leiden is of fair quality, but has received considerable revision in regard to improvements in grammar. Moreover, its text has been greatly assimilated to the Greek and Latin. Ms B from the Bodleian Library is of good quality, but because of the type of pen and ink used by the scribe, the letters often run together and are difficult to distinguish. Ms C is an almost exact replica of the British Library manuscript including breaking off at 23:22. It is written, however, in very small letters and is sometimes difficult to read. Mss E and F are almost identical and are of mediocre quality. Ms G is the poorest in quality of all the texts, written in a sloppy hand

by a scribe who omitted and added at will. Ms H is fragmentary and contains only 1:18b-19; 2:1, 13, 16-18; 3:16; 4:1; 5:27, 28, 31-34, 38-40, 43-44; 6:5, 19-20; 7:6, 24-28; 9:10-13, 32-38; 11:11-15, 25-28; 12:1, 15-18, 22-29, 31-32, 46-47; 13:53-57; 14:28; 15:1-6, 10b-11, 20b; 16:13-20; 17:1-3; 19:16-18; 21:1-2, 18-19, 23-27; 22:23-24, 29-33; 23:16-18; 24:20, 27-28, 34-35; 26:1, 26-27, 31, 36-37; 27:15; 28:18.

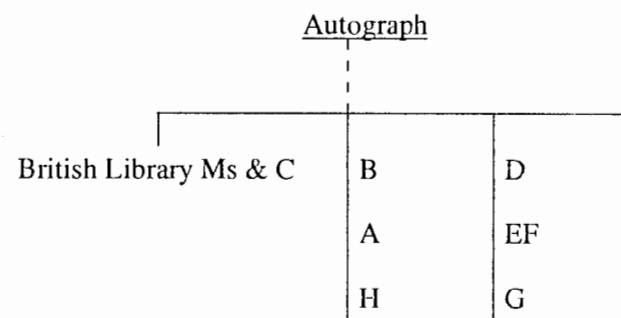
### Interrelationships among the Witnesses

The manuscripts divide themselves into three groups. Group I is made up of the British Library manuscript and C. With a few exceptions the two are virtually identical. Both are carefully copied and show a minimal tendency toward scribal error and assimilation to the Greek and Latin.

Group II consists of A B H. Although they possess individual differences they clearly belong to the same family. They are characterized by careful copying with few scribal errors. They also have a definite tendency for assimilation to the Greek and Latin. B is the best of the group showing less tendency for assimilation than A. H is only fragmentary (see above).

Group III is made up of D E F G. Mss E and F are virtually identical, with D and G often reading with them. The latter two also have many individual differences. The group is characterized by some scribal error and some assimilation to the Greek and Latin. They are, however, less assimilated to the Greek and Latin than group II. D is by far the best of its group and G by far the worst.

The following stemma illustrates the broad lines of the manuscript tradition.



<sup>2</sup>For a more complete list of manuscripts see Pinchas E. Lapide, “Der ‘Prüfstein’ aus Spanien,” *Sefarad* 34 (1974): 230.

## Text and Apparatus

The present edition does not aim at producing an eclectic text. Until a more complete evaluation of the Shem-Tob Hebrew Matthew is available, plus an accumulation of more manuscripts, the printing of individual manuscripts will serve for a working text. The printed text preserves the British Library manuscript and D in their relevant sections along with their errors and inconsistencies in spelling and grammar. Periods and question marks have been added editorially to the printed Hebrew. In a few instances where the base text has a lacuna, the text of another manuscript is printed within parentheses (for example, 3:10a; 18:2b-5a).

Variants to the printed manuscripts are noted in a critical apparatus. Except for plenary and nonplenary vocalization and a few illegible scribbles the notation of all variants is complete. The limited number of manuscripts in the apparatus, of course, gives only a sampling of the kinds of variation that occur in the manuscript tradition as a whole.

## The Translation

The translation attempts to be faithful to the Hebrew without being slavishly literal. Occasionally its sense is unclear (15:5; 16:21; 17:3) because of the Hebrew. Proper names are usually given their common English spellings except where the pronunciation is clearly indicated by the Hebrew. Example: Petros 18:15 / Peter 19:27. In a number of instances a variant reading, noted in the critical apparatus, has been translated rather than the printed text. This occurs primarily when it appears necessary for the sense of the text. All such renderings are placed within parentheses. In many instances, however, the printed text is translated, in spite of difficulties, so as to preserve a disparity between the Hebrew and the Greek. In no sense is the translation a thoroughgoing eclectic rendering of the manuscript tradition.

## Abbreviations and Notations

- ( ) 1. Notes an occasional reading in the printed text supplied from another manuscript because of a lacuna.
- 2. Notes a variant reading in the translation where the variant is a substitution or an addition. Omissions such as in 9:18 and 10:8 are not so noted.
- [ ] Notes an editorial addition in the translation.

# Text and Translation

## Part Two

# Analysis and Commentary

Part two is devoted to a discussion of the Hebrew Matthew contained in Shem-Tob's *Even Bohan*. In this part we seek first to determine the place of Shem-Tob's Matthew within the Hebrew Matthean tradition spoken of by Papias and other early Gentile Christian writers and alluded to or quoted by early Jewish and anti-Christian authors. The conclusion will be that a primitive form of the Hebrew Matthew contained in the *Even Bohan* was known to Jews and perhaps Jewish Christians in the early medieval period, but not to Gentile Christians. Also in this part a profile is given of the Hebrew Matthew in Shem-Tob in order to demonstrate that an old substratum to the Hebrew represents composition, not translation, and to clarify the relationship between the old substratum and the canonical Greek text.

according to a Primitive Hebrew Text

# The Place of Shem-Tob's Matthew within the Hebrew-Matthean Tradition

## Papias and Other Early Gentile Christian Writers

Papias (ca. 60-130 CE), bishop of Hierapolis in Asia Minor, wrote early in the second century that "Matthew collected the oracles in the Hebrew language, and each interpreted them as best he could" (Ματθαῖος μὲν οὖν Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ τὰ λόγια συνετάξατο, ἡρμήνευσεν δ' αὐτὰ ὡς ἦν δυνατὸς ἕκαστος).<sup>1</sup> Since the time of Widmanstadt,<sup>2</sup> it has

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<sup>1</sup>Eusebius *H.E.* 3.39.16. The text and translation are taken from *The Ecclesiastical History*, ed. and trans. Kirsopp Lake and J. E. L. Oulton, 2 vols., Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1926-1932) 1:296-97. Kürzinger's attempt to prove that Papias was speaking only of Matthew's style of writing, not the language in which he wrote, is not totally convincing. See Josef Kürzinger, "Das Papiaszeugnis und die Erstgestalt des Matthäusevangeliums," *Biblische Zeitschrift* 4 (1960): 19-38; "Irenäus und sein Zeugnis zur Sprache des Matthäusevangeliums," *NTS* 10 (1963): 108-15; "Die Aussage des Papias von Hierapolis zur literarischen Form des Markusevangeliums," *Biblische Zeitschrift* 21 (1977): 245-64; "Papias von Hierapolis: Zu Titel und Art Seines Werkes," *Biblische Zeitschrift* 23 (1979): 172-86; *Papias von Hierapolis und die Evangelien des Neuen Testaments* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1983). Kürzinger's argument, based on the assumption that Papias was using ancient rhetorical terminology, may ascribe more erudition to Papias than he actually had. Eusebius said that it is obvious that Papias was a man of "very little intelligence" (Eusebius *H.E.* 3.39.13). It is also possible that Papias is quoting the "Presbyter" in regard to Matthew as he is in regard to Mark. The rhetorical abilities of the Presbyter are totally unknown. Papias, on the other hand, may not have been referring to the Hebrew Matthean tradition reflected by Shem-Tob's treatise, but to some apocryphal Semitic Gospel.

<sup>2</sup>Johann Albert Widmanstadt, *Liber Sacrosancti Evangelii de Jesu Christo Domino & Deo Nostro . . . characteribus & lingua Syra, Jesu Christo vernacula, Divino ipsius ore consecrata & a Joh. Evangelista Hebraica dicta, Scriptorio Prelo diligenter Expressa* (Wien:



become commonplace to suppose that by "Hebrew" Papias meant "Aramaic." This supposition was due primarily to the belief that Hebrew in the days of Jesus was no longer in use in Palestine but had been replaced by Aramaic. The subsequent discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, many of which are Hebrew compositions, as well as of other Hebrew documents from Palestine from the general time period of Jesus, now show Hebrew to have been alive and well in the first century.<sup>3</sup> There is, therefore, no reason to assume a priori that Papias meant Aramaic.

Whether Papias's "oracles" is a reference to our canonical Matthew or to some other document has been vigorously debated. Kümmel, who surveys the issue, concludes that Papias meant our canonical Matthew but believes that Papias had never actually seen Matthew in a Semitic language and in fact was wrong about the whole matter. "We must concede," he writes, "that the report that Mt was written by Matthew 'in the Hebrew language' is utterly false, however it may have arisen."<sup>4</sup> Whatever the case, the early church writings after the time of Papias are replete with references to an *original Hebrew* Matthew. The following are typical cases.

Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 3.1.1

Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome and laying the foundations of the Church.<sup>5</sup>

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M. Cymbermann, 1555). This reference was taken from Jean Carmignac, "Hebrew Translations of the Lord's Prayer: An Historical Survey," in *Biblical and Near Eastern Studies. Essays in Honor of William Sanford LaSor*, ed. Gary A. Tuttle (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1978) 71n5.

<sup>3</sup>For an up-to-date discussion of the languages of Palestine see especially Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (Missoula MT: Scholars Press, 1979) 29-56. See also Pinchas Lapide, "Insights from Qumran into the Language of Jesus," *Revue de Qumran* 32 (1975): 483-501; James Barr, "Which Language Did Jesus Speak?—Some Remarks of a Semitist," *BJRL* 53 (1970): 9-29; W. Chomsky, "What Was the Jewish Vernacular During the Second Commonwealth?" *JQR* 42 (1951-1952): 193-212; J. A. Emerton, "Did Jesus Speak Hebrew?" *JTS* 12 (1961): 189-202; "The Problem of Vernacular Hebrew in the First Century A.D. and the Language of Jesus," *JTS* 24 (1973): 1-23; Harris Birkeland, *The Language of Jesus* (Oslo: I. Kommissjon Hos Jacob Dybwad, 1954); Jean Carmignac, "Studies in the Hebrew Background of the Synoptic Gospels," *ASTI* 7 (1970): 64-93.

<sup>4</sup>W. G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament*, rev. ed., trans. Howard Clark Kee (Nashville: Abingdon, 1975) 49, 120-21.

<sup>5</sup>Translation taken from *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (reprint: Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1985) 1:414.

Origen as quoted by Eusebius, *H.E.* 6.25.4

As having learnt by tradition concerning the four Gospels, which alone are unquestionable in the Church of God under heaven, that first was written that according to Matthew, who was once a tax collector but afterwards an apostle of Jesus Christ, who published it for those who from Judaism came to believe, composed as it was in the Hebrew language.<sup>6</sup>

Eusebius, *H.E.* 3.24.6

Matthew had first preached to Hebrews, and when he was on the point of going to others he transmitted in writing in his native language the Gospel according to himself, and thus supplied by writing the lack of his own presence to those from whom he was sent.<sup>7</sup>

There are other such references but these are sufficient to demonstrate an early belief in the Hebrew originality of Matthew.

In addition to such statements, there are others that refer either to Matthew or to an apocryphal gospel in Hebrew sometimes identified or confused with Matthew. Epiphanius (ca. 315-403 CE), bishop of Salamis, in his *Panarion* (30.13.1-30.22.4; also cited as *Haereses*) speaks of a gospel used by the Ebionites. Elsewhere he says the Ebionites use the Gospel of Matthew and call it "According to the Hebrews" (κατὰ Ἑβραίου; *Panarion* 30.3.7). Epiphanius explains this as an appropriate name since Matthew issued his gospel in Hebrew and with Hebrew letters (Ἑβραϊστὶ καὶ Ἑβραϊκοῖς γράμμασιν; *Panarion* 30.3.7). In another context he again mentions the Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew and says it is preserved in Hebrew letters (*Panarion* 29.9.4). Epiphanius further says it is "incomplete, corrupt, and mutilated" (*Panarion* 30.13.2).

Epiphanius also gives seven quotations from this gospel in his *Panarion* (30.13.2-3, 30.13.4-5, 30.13.6, 30.13.7-8, 30.14.5, 30.16.5, 30.22.4). A recent study of these quotations shows that they do not come from Matthew but from a harmonized account made primarily from the canonical gospels and based on the Greek text of these gospels.<sup>8</sup> Most important for our purposes is the fact that they do not touch base with Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. Whatever the origin of the document used by the Ebionites, it has no particular relationship to our Hebrew Matthew.

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<sup>6</sup>Translation from the LCL edition, 2:75.

<sup>7</sup>Translation from the LCL edition, 1:251.

<sup>8</sup>See Daniel A. Bertrand, "L'évangile des ébionites: une harmonie évangélique antérieure au Diatessaron," *NTS* 26 (1980): 548-63.

Jerome makes reference to a Hebrew Matthew and to a Gospel according to the Hebrews in such a way as to be unclear as to whether these are one and the same. In *Epist.* 20.5 he writes: "Finally, Matthew, who wrote the Gospel in the Hebrew language, put it in the following way: Osianna barrama, which means ossana in excelsis." The reference is to Matt 21:9 which in the form quoted by Jerome has no particular relationship to the text of Shem-Tob. In *Epist.* 120.8, Jerome writes: "But in the gospel which is written in Hebrew letters we read that not the curtain of the temple but the upper threshold of the temple, being of marvelous size, fell down." It is unclear whether this is the same gospel as the one mentioned above; but, if so, this form of the text has no parallel in Matthew in either the Greek text or that of Shem-Tob. Again, in *Matth.* 12.13, Jerome writes: "In the Gospel which the Nazoraeans and the Ebionites use which we translated recently from Hebrew to Greek and which is called the authentic text of Matthew by a good many, it is written that the man with the withered hand is a mason, praying for help with words of this kind: 'I was a mason earning my living with my hands, I pray you, Jesus, to restore my health lest I must beg shamefully for my food.' " There is no exact parallel to this in Matthew in either the Greek or Hebrew texts. In *adv. Pelag.* 3.2 Jerome writes: "In the Gospel according to the Hebrews which was written in the Chaldaic and Syriac language but with Hebrew letters, and is used up to the present day by the Nazoraeans, I mean that according to the Apostles, or, as many maintain, according to Matthew. . . ." In the quotations that follow there is no particular relationship to Shem-Tob.

There are many other such references in Jerome and elsewhere but further citation of these would be of little benefit. The fact is that the quotations from the so-called Hebrew Matthew, the Gospel of the Hebrews, the Gospel of the Nazoraeans, the Gospel of the Ebionites, or the Gospel of the Twelve Apostles<sup>10</sup> mentioned in early church writings, yield little evi-

<sup>10</sup>The above quotations from Epiphanius and Jerome have been taken from A. F. J. Klijn and G. J. Reinink, *Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects* (Leiden: Brill, 1973).

<sup>11</sup>For a discussion of these see Edgar Hennecke, *The New Testament Apocrypha*, ed. W. Schneemelcher, trans. R. McL. Wilson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1959) 1:118-65. In addition to the bibliography already cited above, see A. S. Barnes, "The Gospel according to the Hebrews," *JTS* 6 (1905): 356-71; M. E. Boismard, "Évangile des ébionites et problème synoptique (Mc, I, 2-6 ET Par.)," *Revue Biblique* 73 (1966): 321-52; Oscar Cullmann, "Ebioniten-evangelium," *RGK*. Zweiter Band, 298; Jean Daniélou, *The Theology of Jewish Christianity*, trans. J. A. Baker (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd,

dence of any relationship to Shem-Tob's Matthew. This is true with two possible exceptions:

### 1. Jerome in *Matth.* 2.5

And they said to him: "In Bethlehem of Juda." Here there is an error on the part of the copyist: for we believe that the evangelist in his first edition wrote, as we read in the original Hebrew: "Juda" and not "Judca" (Iudae, non Iudaeae).<sup>11</sup>

This corresponds to the reading of Shem-Tob (according to mss BDEF G) at Matt 2:5, כְּיָדָא.

### 2. Jerome in *Isaiah* 11.2

And it came to pass, when the Lord had come up from the water, the entire

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1964) 55-64; Martin Dibelius, *Geschichte der urchristlichen Literatur* (Berlin/Leipzig: Walter de Gruyter, 1926); E. Fabbri, "El bautismo de Jesús en el Evangelio de los Hebreos y en de los Ebionitas," *Revista de Teología* 6 (1956): 36-55; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Qumran Scrolls, the Ebionites, and Their Literature," *TS* 16 (1955): 335-72 (reprinted in Fitzmyer's *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* [Missoula MT: Scholars Press, 1974] 435-80); Rudolf Handmann, *Das Hebräer-Evangelium. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte und Kritik des hebräischen Matthäus* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1888); Adolf Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literature bis Eusebius*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1958) 205-209; Harris Hirschberg, "Simon Bariona and the Ebionites," *JBL* 61 (1942) 171-91; M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924) 8-10; A. F. J. Klijn, "The Question of the Rich Young Man in a Jewish-Christian Gospel," *Novum Testamentum* 8 (1966): 149-55; M. J. Lagrange, "L'Évangile selon les Hébreux," *Revue Biblique* 31 (1922): 161-81, 321-49; Adolf Hilgenfeld, *Evangeliorum secundum Hebraeos*, etc. (Lipsiae: T. O. Weigel, 1866, 1884); Allan Menzies, "Gospel according to the Hebrews," in *A Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. James Hastings (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1904) 5:338-43; W. G. Most, "Gospel of the Ebionites," in *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Religion*, ed. P. K. Meagher et al. (Washington DC: Corpus Publications, 1979) A-E:215; J. Munck, "Jewish Christianity in Post Apostolic Times," *NTS* 6 (1959-1960): 103-16; Johannes Quasten, *Patrology* (Utrecht-Antwerp: Spectrum, 1964) 1:113-14; A. Schlunidtke, *Neue Fragmente zu den judenchristlichen Evangelien*, TU 37 (Leipzig, 1911); "Zum Hebräerevangelium," *ZNW* 35 (1936): 24-44; H. J. Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1949); *Jewish Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1969); G. Strecker, *Das Judenchristentum in den Pseudoklementinen*, TU 70 (1958) D:117-36; J. L. Teicher, "The Dead Sea Scrolls—Documents of the Jewish-Christian Sect of Ebionites," *JJS* 2 (1951): 67-99; H. Waitz, "Das Evangelium des zwölf Apostel," *ZNW* 14 (1913): 48ff.; "Neue Untersuchungen über die sogenannten judenchristlichen Evangelien," *ZNW* 36 (1937): 60-81; L. St. Alban Wells, "Gospels (Apocrypha)," in *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings (New York: Scribner's, 1928) 5:347-48; B. F. Westcott, *An Introduction to the Study of the Gospels* (London: Macmillan, 1895) 471-73; Theodor von Zahn, *Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons* (Erlangen: A. Deichert, 1888-1892).

<sup>11</sup>Klijn and Reinink, *Patristic Evidence*, 214-15.

fountain of the Holy Spirit descended and *rested* upon him (et requievit super eum) and said to him.<sup>12</sup>

This reference is to Matt 3:16, where the word “rested,” contrary to the Greek ἐσχόμενον, agrees with Shem-Tob’ ושרתה “and dwelt” and Sy<sup>s,c</sup> וקוית “and abode.”

The question is, do these minor readings establish a relationship between Shem-Tob’s Matthew and the Hebrew Matthew or apocryphal Hebrew gospels referred to in early Gentile Christian literature? It seems they do not. The overlaps are too few and insignificant to establish such a relationship. The evidence strongly suggests that none of the gospels referred to in early Gentile Christian literature relates in any particular way to the Hebrew Matthew in Shem-Tob. This text stands apart from all others.

### Du Tillet, Münster, and Allusions to and Quotations from Matthew in Early Jewish and Anti-Christian Writings

Although the Hebrew Matthew of Shem-Tob is the earliest complete Hebrew text of the Gospel known, earlier Jewish and anti-Christian writings quote Matthew in Hebrew suggesting the possibility of an earlier date for a Hebrew text than the fourteenth century. Four of the most important of these writings to which we will refer are: (1) the Book of Nestor (perhaps between the sixth and ninth centuries);<sup>13</sup> (2) the Milhamot HaShem by Jacob ben Reuben (1170);<sup>14</sup> (3) Sefher Joseph Hamekane by Rabbi Joseph ben Nathan Official (thirteenth century);<sup>15</sup> and (4) the Nizzahon Ve-

<sup>12</sup>Taken from Edward Byron Nicholson, *The Gospel according to the Hebrews* (London: C. Kegan Paul, 1879) 43.

<sup>13</sup>This is according to Pinchas E. Lapide, *Hebrew in the Church*, trans. E. F. Rhodes (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1984) 23. The text may be found in J. D. Eisenstein, *מלחמות השם* (ישראל, 1969) 310-15. The editor there (310) dates it in the ninth century.

<sup>14</sup>ישראל: מוסד הרב קוק (יהודה רוזנטאל, יעקב בן ראובן. מלחמות השם. viii. See also Judah Rosenthal, *תרגום של הבשורה על-פי מתי ליעקב בן ראובן*, *Tarbiz* 32 (1962): 48-66.

<sup>15</sup>Judah Rosenthal, *ספר יוסף המקנה* (Jerusalem, 1970) 17. Ms. Or. #53 of the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Rome includes material quite close to the Paris manuscript of Sefher Joseph Hamekane. See E. E. Urback, “Études sur la littérature polémique au moyen-âge,” *Revue des études juives* C (1935): 49-77. Judah Rosenthal published the material on the gospels in Ms. Or. Rome #53 in *המאה מן החדשה של הברית החדשה מן המאה ה-13* in *Studies in Jewish Bibliography, History, and Literature in Honor of I. Edward Kiev*, ed. Charles Berlin (New York: KTAV, 1971) 123-39.

tus (latter part of the thirteenth century).<sup>16</sup> A comparison of the quotations from Matthew in these writings with the text of Shem-Tob reveals an occasional unique textual link between them. Examples of this will be given below. For now it may be stated with some certainty that at least some portions of the Hebrew Matthew contained in Shem-Tob’s *Even Bohan* pre-date the fourteenth century, being reflected sporadically in these earlier anti-Christian writings.

Considerable confusion exists between the Hebrew Matthew contained in Shem-Tob’s *Even Bohan* and the Hebrew versions of Matthew published by Sebastian Münster and Jean du Tillet. Münster’s versions appeared in 1537 under the title *תורת המשיח* (The Torah of the Messiah).<sup>17</sup> Published in a folio volume, it was dedicated to King Henry VIII of England. In the letter of dedication Münster reported he had received the Hebrew Matthew from the Jews in defective form with many lacunae and had, from necessity, restored what was lacking in the manuscript. Münster failed, however, to mark the passages he had restored so that now, unfortunately, his work is of limited value.

Du Tillet’s version of Matthew in Hebrew appeared in print in 1555. Accompanied by the Latin translation of Jean Mercier, it was published in Paris by the firm of Martin Le Jeune. The letter of dedication to the Cardinal of Lorraine, Charles de Guise, explains that the basis for the text is a manuscript that du Tillet found among the Jews in Italy in 1553. The manuscript now resides in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris catalogued under Hebrew Mss. No. 132.<sup>18</sup>

As early as 1690 Richard Simon mistakenly identified the text of Matthew in Shem-Tob with the versions of Münster and du Tillet.<sup>19</sup> This confusion has persisted since the time of Simon. In 1879 Adolf Herbst issued a new printing of du Tillet’s text accompanied by an introduction and vari-

<sup>16</sup>David Berger, *The Jewish-Christian Debate in the High Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1979) 33.

<sup>17</sup>Sebastian Münster, *Evangelium secundum Matthaewm in lingua Hebraica, cum versione latina atque succinctis annotationibus* (Basiliae, 1537).

<sup>18</sup>For more information on this version, including my assessment of it, see George Howard, “The Textual Nature of an Old Hebrew Version of Matthew,” *JBL* 105 (1986): 49-63. For an English translation see Hugh J. Schonfield, *An Old Hebrew Text of St. Matthew’s Gospel* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1927).

<sup>19</sup>Richard Simon, *Histoire Critique des Versions du Nouveau Testament* (Rotterdam: R. Leers, 1690) 231.

ants from Münster's text in a volume entitled *Des Schemtob ben Schaphrut hebraeische Übersetzung des Evangeliums Matthaei nach den Drucken des S. Münster und J. du Tillet-Mercier*.<sup>20</sup> The title gives away the author's belief that the texts of Münster and du Tillet are basically reproductions of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. Herbst also stated his conviction that the source for the Hebrew text was the Latin Vulgate.<sup>21</sup> His conclusions were not drawn from his own extensive research into the textual nature of the Hebrew but from earlier scholars whom he cited at length. He excused himself from making an extensive study into the variants because of his lack of materials and opportunity for doing so.<sup>22</sup> As late as 1967 Herbst's confusion of these texts was followed by Matthew Black who says in regard to du Tillet's version that "the author of the Hebrew Matthew was probably a certain Shem-Tob ben Shaprut, a famous Jewish polemical writer who flourished in Spain in the fourteenth century."<sup>23</sup>

The present edition of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew should forever dispel any belief in its identity with the texts of Münster and du Tillet. Shem-Tob's independent nature was, of course, already proven in 1929 by Alexander Marx in his comparison of texts in a few passages.<sup>24</sup> A comparison now of all the texts will support his previous conclusion. An extensive comparison, however, will reveal something in addition: despite their vast differences in vocabulary and style, a large number of unique or almost

<sup>20</sup>Göttingen: Dieterichsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1879.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 16.

<sup>22</sup>"Die Quelle der Übersetzung ist, wie schon einige theologische Einleitungen bemerkt haben, die Vulgata. Es ist mir nicht möglich, mich auf eine genauere Durchforschung der Varianten einzulassen, welche die von mir edierte Übersetzung darbietet. Einmal nicht, weil mir die nöthigen Hülfsmittel oder doch die Musse und Gelegenheit sie aufzusehen und zu benutzen fehlt, sodann nicht, weil eine erschöpfende Behandlung des Gegenstandes zu umfänglich werden würde. Ich beschränke mich daher auf einige wenige Bemerkungen, welche irgend welche Ansprüche nicht machen." Ibid., 16.

<sup>23</sup>Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967) 295. Cf. Robert L. Lindsey, *A Hebrew Translation of the Gospel of Mark* (Jerusalem: Dugith Publishers, n.d.) 67, who identifies S. Münster's edition as a version of "Ibn Shaprut's translation."

<sup>24</sup>Marx, "The Polemical Manuscripts in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America," 270-73. Cf. Lapidé, *Hebrew in the Church*, 55: "And yet with even the most superficial comparison of the two works the radical differences between their vocabulary, style, and diction would have demonstrated the impossibility of a common origin."

unique readings exists between Shem-Tob and du Tillet (and occasionally Münster). These are sufficiently important to justify the following sampling of passages.<sup>25</sup>

#### MATT 2:12

Greek	VOID
Shem-Tob	מהמלאך by the angel
du Tillet	המלאך the angel
Protev. Jacobi	ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀγγέλου by the angel
Geo <sup>B</sup>	ab angelo

#### MATT 2:22

Greek	εἰς τὰ μέρη τῆς Γαλιλαίας into the region of Galilee
Shem-Tob	אל ארץ הגלגל unto the land of Gilgal
du Tillet	אל ארץ הגליל unto the land of Galilee
Münster	אל ארץ גליל unto the land of Galilee

#### MATT 3:11

Greek	αὐτὸς ὑμᾶς Βαπτίσει ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ πυρὶ he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire
Shem-Tob	והוא יטביל אתכם באש רוח הקודש he will baptize you with the fire of the Holy Spirit
du Tillet	והוא יטבל אתכם באש ריח הקודש he will baptize you with the fire of the Holy Spirit

#### MATT 6:16

Greek	ἄπέχουσιν τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν they have received their reward
Shem-Tob	שכבר קבלו שכרם they have already received their reward
du Tillet	כבר קבלו שכרם they have already received their reward

<sup>25</sup>For Münster I have relied on the apparatus in Herbst's edition of du Tillet.

## MATT 8:21

Greek	ἕτερος δὲ τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ another of his disciples
Shem-Tob	ואחד מתלמידי one of his disciples
du Tillet/ Münster Joseph/ Ms Or Rome #53	ואחד מתלמידי one of his disciples

## MATT 9:2

Greek	θάρασει τέκνον courage child
Shem-Tob	בני תחזק בני courage my son
du Tillet/ Münster	בני בטח בני trust my son

## MATT 10:2-3

Greek	James and John . . . Philip and Bartholomew
Shem-Tob	Philip and Bartholomew . . . James and John
du Tillet/ Münster	Philip and Bartholomew . . . James and John

## MATT 10:5

Greek	καὶ εἰς πόλιν Σαμαρειτῶν μὴ εἰσέλθητε and do not enter into the city of the Samaritans
Shem-Tob	ובערי השמרונים אל תבואו and do not enter into the cities of the Samaritans
du Tillet/ Münster	ואל ערי השמרונים לא תבואו and do not enter into the cities of the Samaritans

## MATT 14:21

Greek	οἱ δὲ ἐσθίοντες ἦσαν ἄνδρες ὡσεὶ πεντακισχίλιοι those who ate were about 5,000 men
Shem-Tob	ויהי מספר האוכלים חמשת אלפים אנשים the number of those who ate was 5,000 men
du Tillet/ Münster	ומספר האוכלים היה חמשת אלפי איש the number of those who ate was 5,000 men

Such agreements can hardly be the result of coincidence. This list of readings, which could easily be expanded to include scores of other examples, establishes a textual link between Shem-Tob, du Tillet, and occasionally Münster. The situation suggests that the texts of du Tillet and Münster rest on an earlier literary Hebrew tradition, reflected to some de-

gree by Shem-Tob. Generally speaking, however, these texts as a whole have undergone extensive modification and revision away from the older base primarily in two ways: (1) stylistic modification and (2) revision designed to bring the Hebrew into closer harmony with the current Greek and Latin texts. Most stylistic modification consists of improvements in grammar and the substitution of synonymous words and phrases. Revisions designed to bring the Hebrew into closer harmony with the Greek and Latin were apparently for the purpose of establishing a common textual base for discussion and debate between Jews and Christians.

These changes are best understood when they are placed in a chronological sequence beginning with Hebrew quotations from Matthew in early Jewish and anti-Christian writings, continuing through Shem-Tob, and ending with readings from du Tillet. When these texts are placed together in this order a gradual evolution in the Hebrew tradition becomes evident including both stylistic changes and changes that bring the Hebrew into closer harmony with the current Greek and Latin. Logic would suggest that each successive stage in the chronological sequence would produce a text closer to the Greek and Latin and further from the dissident primitive Hebrew. Although this is generally true, the stages of development do not always arrange themselves quite so neatly, thus indicating that individual manuscripts of our documents are not themselves related directly to each other but rather reflect a complicated literary Hebrew tradition. The following examples are typical cases. In each instance two things will be evident: (1) a textual relationship running throughout all or part of the Hebrew tradition; and (2) a textual evolution (generally based on chronological sequence of documents) in the direction of the Greek/Latin tradition.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup>Some clarification is needed at this point. Although these examples are typical and represent a sampling of a larger whole, it is not the case that each Hebrew quotation from Matthew in medieval Jewish documents shows a relationship to the Shem-Tob Matthean tradition. In many instances the quotations appear to be ad hoc translations of the Greek or Latin texts freshly prepared for the occasion. It is in fact the tendency to translate directly from the Greek or Latin that eventually contaminated the primitive Hebrew Matthean tradition when it too was subjected to the influence of the canonical text through the process of revision.

## Sequential Evolution in the Literary Hebrew Tradition

MATT 3:5

Greek (= Vg)	καὶ πᾶσα ἡ περιχώρος τοῦ Ἰορδάνου and all the region about the Jordan
Joseph	וממלכות על הירדן and the kingdom by the Jordan
Ms Or Rome #53 <sup>27</sup>	וכל הממלכות עד הירדן and all the kingdom unto the Jordan
Nizzahon Vetus #160	וכל המלכות עד הירדן and all the kingdom unto the Jordan
Shem-Tob	ומכל המלכות סביבות הירדן and from all the kingdom about the Jordan
du Tillet	וכל מחוז הירדן and all the district of the Jordan

The unusual textual link running throughout the Hebrew tradition (with the exception of du Tillet) is the reading of **הממלכות ממלכות** in Joseph and Ms Or Rome # 53 and **המלכות** in Nizzahon Vetus and Shem-Tob. Modification toward the Greek and Latin appears in the reading of **וכל** or **מכל** in Ms Or Rome #53, Nizzahon Vetus, Shem-Tob, and du Tillet in agreement with **πᾶσα**. Shem-Tob further reads **סביבות** in correspondence with **περιχώρος**. Finally, du Tillet abandoning the unique **מלכות ממלכות** and reading the Medieval **מחוז** (= **περιχώρος**) converges with the Greek and Latin.

MATT 4:1

Greek (= Vg)	τότε ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀνήχθη εἰς τὴν ἔρημον ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος περιπασθῆναι ὑπὸ τοῦ διαβόλου then Jesus was led up into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil
Nestor	ישו היה בורח מן השטן Jesus was fleeing from Satan
ben Reuben	או נוהג אל המדבר ברות שטן להתנסות then he was led unto the wilderness by the spirit of Satan to be tempted

<sup>27</sup>See n. 15 above.

Nizzahon Vetus #162	שהובא ישו במדבר וניסהו השטן Jesus was led into the wilderness that Satan might tempt him
Shem-Tob	או לוקח ישו ברות הקדוש למדבר להתנסות מהשטן then Jesus was taken by the Holy Spirit to the wilderness to be tempted by Satan
du Tillet	או הובא ישו במדבר יהודה על ידי רוח למען ינסה מהשטן then Jesus was led into the wilderness of Judea by the Spirit to be tempted by Satan

An element of continuity in the Hebrew tradition is the reading of “Satan” rather than “devil.” This agrees with the parallel in Mark 1:13 and may represent an early harmonistic tendency in the Hebrew or a primitive form in the gospel tradition reflected by these two independent compositions. Another element of continuity in the Hebrew is the peculiar reading of **בורח** (“fleeing”) in Nestor and the visually similar **ברוח** (“by the Spirit”) in ben Reuben and Shem-Tob. The difference represents only a metathesis of letters that brings the latter two into harmony with the Greek **ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος**. The similarity of Nestor’s reading with the theoretical Hebrew substratum to the Greek, reflected by ben Reuben and Shem-Tob, suggests the existence of variant forms based on a visual similarity of letters in the earliest period of the synoptic tradition. Revision toward the Greek and Latin is evidenced by various elements in the Hebrew. **או** in ben Reuben, Shem-Tob, and du Tillet corresponds to **τότε**. All Hebrew texts except Nestor have a correspondent for **ἀνήχθη**: **ניהג**, **לוקח**, and **הובא**. All Hebrew texts except Nestor have correspondents for **πειρασθῆναι** and **εἰς τὴν ἔρημον** by reading some form of **נסה** (“to tempt”) and **מדבר** (“wilderness”). The revisions, however, are gradual. After Nestor, ben Reuben is farthest from the Greek and Latin by lacking “Jesus,” and in reading “by the spirit of Satan.” Nizzahon Vetus is next in distance by lacking “by the Spirit,” and by reading the active “Satan tempted him.” Although Shem-Tob and du Tillet are close to the Greek and Latin, the former reads “Holy” and the latter “Judah” against the canonical text. Du Tillet is slightly the closer of the two by containing the order “wilderness . . . Spirit” in agreement with the Greek and Latin against Shem-Tob’s “Spirit . . . wilderness.”

## MATT 5:17-18a

Greek (= Vg)	μη νομίσητε ὅτι ἦλθον καταλῦσαι τὸν νόμον ἢ τοῦς προφήτας· οὐκ ἦλθον καταλῦσαι ἀλλὰ πληρῶσαι. ἀμὴν γὰρ λέγω ὑμῖν Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. For, truly, I say to you
b. Shabb. 116	אנא לא למיפחת מן אורייתא דמשה אתיתי ולא לאוספו על אורייתא דמשה אתיתי I am not come to take away from the Law of Moses and I am not come to add to the Law of Moses.
Nestor	אני לא באתי לסתור ולא להחסיר דבר מתורת משה והנביאים כי אם באתי להשלים בדברי אמת I have not come to cancel or to subtract from the Law of Moses and the prophets but I have come to fulfil the words of truth.
Ms. Or Rome #53	אל תחשבו שבאתי לעקור התורה והנביאים לא באתי כ"א לקיים אמת. אני אומר לכם Do not think that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have not come except to fulfil truth. I say to you
Nizzahon Vetus # 157	לא באתי לחסור על תורת משה I have not come to diminish the Law of Moses
Nizzahon Vetus #71	לא באתי לבטל תורת משה ודברי הנביאים אלא להשלימם I have not come to abolish the Law of Moses or the words of the prophets but to fulfil them
Nizzahon Vetus #221	שלא בא לעקור תורת משה ולא דברי הנביאים I have not come to remove the Law of Moses of the words of the prophets
Shem-Tob	אל תחשבו שבאתי להפר תורה אלא להשלים באמת אני אומר לכם Do not think that I have come to annul the law but to fulfil. Truly I say to you
Shem-Tob (Comment after 6:1)	אין בכל אלו המאמרים להוסיף דבר על דברי תורה ולא להסר in all these words not to add a word to the words of the law nor to subtract any
du Tillet	אל תחשבו שבאתי לבטל את התורה או את הנביאים לא באתי לבטל אלא למלא אמן אני אומר לכם Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have not come to abolish but to fulfil. Truly I say to you

The Aramaic statement found in b. Shabb. 116<sup>b</sup> is among the few such quotations or allusions to the New Testament in the Babylonian Gemara.<sup>28</sup> It says: "I am not come to take away from the Law of Moses and I am not come to add to the Law of Moses." It appears within an anecdote about a judge, probably a Jewish Christian, who refers to the gospel in his decisions. That his quotation is actually from Matt 5:17 is doubtful since an earlier "gospel" quotation from him, that is, "A son and a daughter shall inherit alike," is not from Matthew or any of the canonical gospels, and since the present quotation is said to come at the end of the book. Herford suggests the saying may have come from a logia source in which various sayings of Jesus were collected.<sup>29</sup> Whatever the case, the saying is close enough to Matt 5:17 to suggest a connection to it. There are three major elements of continuity between the Aramaic and the Hebrew. The first is the name "Moses," which appears in the Gemara reading as well as in Nestor and Nizzahon Vetus. It is lacking in Ms Or Rome #53, Shem-Tob, and du Tillet. The second is the Gemara reading of למיפחת, "to take away," and the reading of להחסיר in Nestor, לחסור in Nizzahon Vetus # 157, and להסר in Shem-Tob's comment, all of which have the same basic meaning. The third is the similarity between the Gemara reading and the allusion to it in Shem-Tob's comment after 6:1. In his comment Shem-Tob says that the intention of Jesus was "in all these words not to add a word to the words of the law nor to subtract any." This, of course, differs from Shem-Tob's reading in 5:17 in the biblical sequence, but in all probability reflects his original text. It was common for scribes to revise a lemma citation of a biblical text in ancient documents without bothering to revise in a corresponding way subsequent comments that repeat the quotation or parts of it or, at least, allude to it.<sup>30</sup> The evidence, therefore, suggests that Shem-Tob knew this passage in its Gemara form (though with some variation, as, for example, the transposition of the order of "add . . . subtract") and

<sup>28</sup>For a discussion of these see R. Travers Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash* (Clifton NJ: Reference Book, 1966).

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 151.

<sup>30</sup>A good example of this is to be found in mss UF and sometimes L of Philo. See Peter Katz, *Philo's Bible. The Aberrant Text of Bible Quotations in Some Philonic Writings and Its Place in the Textual History of the Greek Bible* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1950). For some corrective to Katz see George Howard, "The 'Aberrant' Text of Philo's Quotations Reconsidered," *HUCA* 44 (1973): 197-209.

that the reading, as it stands in his text at Matt 5:17, is due to scribal alteration designed to make it correspond more closely to the Greek/Latin.

Modification toward the Greek and Latin is evidenced in the sequence of Hebrew readings. All the documents except Shem-Tob's comment after 6:1 read the following: (1) some form of "abolish" (that is, לעקור, לסתור, להפיר, לבטל) in agreement with καταλῦσας, (2) "prophets" (mss A and D only in Shem-Tob's revised text) in agreement with προφήτας, (3) "fulfil" (that is, להשלים, לקיים, להשלים, למלא) in agreement with πληρῶσαι. A further revisionary element appearing in some Hebrew readings seems to be אמת in Nestor and Ms Or Rome #53, באמת in Shem-Tob's revised text, and אמן in du Tillet—all in some way or other corresponding to ἀμήν in 5:18. Of all the texts cited, du Tillet is the closest to the Greek and Latin and apparently represents the end result of a long revisionary process.

The relationship between the various texts involved—the Aramaic, Hebrew, and Greek/Latin—is an interesting one. The most important difference between the Greek/Latin and Hebrew (including Shem-Tob's revised text), on the one hand, and the Aramaic and the reading in Shem-Tob's comment, on the other, is that the former read both a negative and a positive statement in regard to the purpose of Jesus' coming. The Greek/Latin, for example, says that Jesus came not "to abolish" but "to fulfil." All the Hebrew documents follow suit (Nizzahon Vetus #157 and #221 lack the second element, but #71 contains it), reading both the negative and the positive. The Aramaic and the reading in Shem-Tob's comment contain only a double negative statement, that is, Jesus came not "to subtract or to add." The positive element apparently belongs to the Greek/Latin tradition only, and the correspondence to it in the Hebrew readings represent textual accommodation to the Greek/Latin. Accommodation, however, came gradually. Nestor, the earliest Hebrew witness, reads, "I have not come to cancel (= καταλῦσαι) or to subtract (= Aramaic למיפחת). All other Hebrew witnesses, except Shem-Tob's comment, read "cancel/abolish/remove/annul" but not "subtract." The element "to subtract" in most readings thus was eliminated in the revisionary process reflected in most readings in the Hebrew tradition. It is not possible to explain all the factors involved in the separation of the Greek and Aramaic forms, but conceivably an original Aramaic לאוספי ("to add") was misread for לאספי ("to end") and this gave rise to the Greek καταλῦσαι ("to abolish").<sup>31</sup>

## MATT 5:39

Greek (not = Vg)	ἀλλ' ὅστις σε ῥαπίζει εἰς τὴν δεξιὰν σιαγόνα σου, στρέψον αὐτῷ καὶ τὴν ἄλλην But whoever strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also
Nestor	אם יכך אדם בצד ימין התר לו את שמאלך להכות בו If a man should strike you on the right side permit him to strike your left
ben Reuben	אם יכך אדם על לחיך נטה לו האחרת If a man should strike you on your cheek turn to him the other
Nizzahon Vetus #232	אם יכך יהודי בלחי נטה לו לחי האחרת If a Jew should strike you on the cheek turn to him the other cheek
Shem-Tob	אבל המכה בלחיך הימין הכן לו השמאל But whoever strikes your right cheek provide for him the left
du Tillet	אלא אם יהיה שייךך על הלחי הימנית תטה אליו האחרת But if there shall be one who strikes you on the right cheek turn to him the other

Nestor's text differs from the Greek in several respects. Primary for our purpose is his reading of (1) אם ("if") for ἀλλ' ὅστις ("but whoever"), (2) צד (ב) ("side") for σιαγόνα ("cheek"), (3) התר ("permit") for στρέψον ("turn"), and (4) שמאלך ("your left") for ἄλλην ("other"). Nestor's text is in basic agreement (though not exactly) with certain Old Latin manuscripts and even less with Vg which read, *Sed si quis te percusserit in dexteram maxillam tuam, praebe illi et sinistram*. In addition, Nestor agrees with Marcion's reading at Luke 6:29: ἐὰν τίς σε ῥαπίση εἰς. (Cf. Did. 1:4: ἐὰν τίς σοι δῶ ῥαπισμα).

Continuity in the Hebrew tradition is in the readings of אם (Nestor, ben Reuben, Nizzahon Vetus, du Tillet), אדם (Nestor, ben Reuben), and שמאלך (Nestor, Shem-Tob).

Various elements of revision appear in the Hebrew readings. לחי ("cheek") in agreement with σιαγόνα appears in ben Reuben, Nizzahon Vetus, Shem-Tob, and du Tillet. נטה ("turn") in agreement with στρέψον appears in ben Reuben, Nizzahon Vetus, and du Tillet. האחרת ("the

<sup>31</sup>A similar confusion of the Hebrew roots סוף ("to end") and יסף ("to add") appears in Amos 3:15: MT ויספו is rendered by LXX καὶ προσετέθησονται = ונוספו.



other'') in agreement with *την ἄλλην* appears in ben Reuben, Nizzahon Vetus, and du Tillet. *אבל המכה* in agreement with *ἀλλ' ὅστις* appears in Shem-Tob and *אלא = ἀλλ'* in du Tillet.

## MATT 8:4

Greek (= Vg)	ὁ προσέταξεν Μωϋσῆς εἰς μαρτύριον αὐτοῖς which Moses commanded for a witness to them
Nestor	כאשר ציה ה' את משה as the LORD commanded Moses
Joseph	כאשר ציה משה בתורתו as Moses commanded in his law
Ms Or Rome #53	כאשר צוה משה בתורתו as Moses commanded in his law
Nizzahon Vetus #166	כאשר ציוה משה בתורתו as Moses commanded in his law
Shem-Tob	כאשר צוה משה בתורתכם as Moses commanded in your law
du Tillet	כאשר ציה משה להם לעדות as Moses commanded them for a witness

A continuity in the Hebrew tradition is seen in the reading *כאשר* ("as") in agreement with *καθώς* in the Lukan parallel (Luke 5:14) and in disagreement with *ὅ* ("which") in Matthew. Continuity is again seen in the Hebrew tradition, with the exception of Nestor (who simply breaks off after *משה* leaving us in doubt whether his text read further at this point or not) and du Tillet, in the unique reading of "in his/your law" in disagreement with the Greek and Latin "for a witness to them." Du Tillet's *להם לעדות* is clearly a revision toward the Greek and Latin.

The first difference between the Greek and Hebrew may be explained by a confusion in an early Hebrew tradition based on *אשר* ("which"), reflected in Matthew's *ὅ*, and *כאשר* ("as"), reflected in Luke's *καθώς* and the Hebrew quotations listed above. The second difference may be explained as a confusion in an early Hebrew tradition of the roots *תורה* ("law") and *תעודה* ("witness"). The difference in these words is the additional *ayin* in "witness" and the reading of *daleth* instead of *resh*. The latter two letters are often confused in ancient manuscripts.

## MATT 12:30, 32

Greek (= Vg)	<sup>30</sup> καὶ ὁ μὴ συνάγων μετ' ἐμοῦ σκορπίζει . . . <sup>32</sup> καὶ ὅς ἐὰν εἴπῃ λόγον κατὰ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀφεθήσεται αὐτῷ <sup>30</sup> and he who does not gather with me scatters . . . <sup>32</sup> And whoever says a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven
Nestor	אשר קלל את האב והבן ורוח הקדש . . . המקלל את האב והתחרט האב יכפר לו Nestor who has cursed the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit . . . he who curses the Son and repents, the Father will make atonement for him
ben Reuben	<sup>30</sup> ומי שאינו מאסף עמי הוא מפזר <sup>32</sup> ומי שילעיג מהבן יכופר עליו ben Reuben <sup>30</sup> whoever does not gather with me scatters <sup>32</sup> And whoever mocks the Son will be forgiven for it
Joseph (ט)	החוטא באב ובבן יש לו מחילה Joseph (ט) He who sins against the Father and the Son has forgiveness
Joseph (מא)	החוטא באב יתכפר לו וכן החוטא בבן Joseph (מא) He who sins against the Father will be forgiven; so also he who sins against the Son
Ms Or Rome #53	מי שחטא נגד האב יש לו כפרה אם ישוב בתשובה . . . מי שחטא נגד הבן יש לו מחילה Ms Or Rome #53 Whoever sins against the Father has forgiveness if he repents. . . . Whoever sins against the Son has forgiveness
Shem-Tob	(מי) שלא יתחבר עמי יכפור (בי) וכל האומר דבר נגד בן האדם ימחל לו Shem-Tob <sup>30</sup> Whoever does not join with me denies me <sup>32</sup> And everyone who says a word against the Son of Man it will be forgiven him
Shem-Tob (Comment after 12:37)	הנה האב והבן ימחלו לו אבל הרוח לא ימחול לו Shem-Tob (Comment after 12:37) Behold the Father and the Son will forgive him but the Spirit will not forgive him
du Tillet	ומי שלא יאסוף עמי הוא יפזר וכל איש שיאמר דבר על בן אדם יסלח לו du Tillet <sup>30</sup> And whoever does not gather with me scatters <sup>32</sup> And every man who says a word against the Son of Man it shall be forgiven him

Gospel of Thomas 44 | Whoever blasphemes against the Father will be forgiven, and whoever blasphemes against the Son will be forgiven.<sup>32</sup>

Unfortunately, verse 30 is lacking in Nestor, Joseph, and Ms Or Rome #53. Nevertheless their reading of “Father” in verse 32, along with the text reflected in Shem-Tob’s comment, shows a continuity running throughout this part of the Hebrew tradition. As stated before,<sup>33</sup> the reading reflected in Shem-Tob’s comment is to be preferred to that in his biblical text since the latter apparently represents scribal revision toward the Greek and Latin. The antiquity of the reading “Father” is supported by its appearance in the Coptic Gospel of Thomas.

Another possible continuity in the Hebrew tradition is the unique reading in Shem-Tob of יכפור (“denies”) and the root כפר meaning “to forgive” that appears in Nestor, ben Reuben, Joseph (מא) and Ms Or Rome #53. Allowing for scribal alteration in the transmission of the Hebrew tradition, it is conceivable that a word connection based on the root כפר stood in the original text. A possible reconstruction of the Hebrew is:

He who does not join me denies (יכפור) me . . .  
He who blasphemes the Father and the Son will be forgiven (יכפר).

A final continuity in the Hebrew tradition is the concept of ‘repentance’ mentioned in Nestor and Ms Or Rome #53.

Revision toward the Greek and Latin is found (1) in the absence of ‘repentance’ in all documents other than Nestor and Ms Or Rome #53, (2) in the absence of “Father” in ben Reuben, Shem-Tob’s revised text, and du Tillet, and (3) in the reading פזר (“scatters”) in ben Reuben and du Tillet. Again du Tillet is closest of the Hebrew texts to the Greek and Latin and apparently represents the end result of a long evolutionary process.

<sup>32</sup>Translation by Thomas O. Lambdin in *The Nag Hammadi Library*, ed. James M. Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1977) 123.

<sup>33</sup>See on Matt 5:17-18a above and n. 30.

## MATT 13:57

Greek (= Vg)	οὐκ ἔστιν προφήτης ἄτιμος εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ πατρίδι καὶ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ A prophet is not without honor except in his homeland and in his own house.
Mark 6:4	οὐκ ἔστιν προφήτης ἄτιμος εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τοῖς συγγενεῦσιν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν τῇ οἰκίᾳ αὐτοῦ A prophet is not without honor except in his own homeland and among his own kin and in his own house.
Luke 4:24	οὐδεὶς προφήτης δεκτός ἐστιν ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ No prophet is acceptable in his own homeland.
Nestor	הנביא אינו מתקלל כי אם במדינתו No prophet is cursed except in his own city/land.
Nizzahon Vetus #167	אין נביא בלא כבוד אלא בעירו ובביתו No prophet is without honor except in his own city and in his own house.
Nizzahon Vetus #207	לא יהיה נביא מבזוה ולא יתחרף כי אם במדינתו ובקום שמכיריו אותו A prophet is not held in contempt or abused save in his own city/land and in a place where he is recognized.
Shem-Tob	אין נביא שאין לו כבוד כ"א בארצו ועירו וביתו No prophet is without honor except in his own land and in his own city and in his own house.
du Tillet	אין נביא בלא כבוד אלא במקום מולדתו ובביתו No prophet is without honor except in the place of his homeland and in his own house.

The synoptic gospels reflect a variegated tradition in regard to the locality of a prophet’s dishonor: (1) Luke says “homeland”; (2) Matthew, “homeland and house”; and (3) Mark, “homeland, kin, and house.” There is some ambiguity in the word πατρίς which can mean “homeland” or “hometown.” Usually, however, the reference is broader than “town” and is best understood as “homeland.” A similar ambiguity exists in Nestor’s במדינתו which can mean “in his land” or “in his city.” This reading is preserved in Nizzahon Vetus #207 which, however, is only a rough paraphrase of our passage. Elsewhere the Nizzahon Vetus (#167) reads בעירו which clearly means “in his city.” Shem-Tob reads בארצו ועירו, “in his land and in his city,” a doublet apparently based on the ambiguity

of במדינתו. Du Tillet returns to the concept of “homeland,” reading מולדתו. Thus we see an interconnection running throughout the Hebrew tradition oscillating between the ideas “homeland,” “city,” and combinations of them.

One may argue that the earliest form of the tradition was the ambiguous πατρις (“homeland/hometown”) or מדינה (“land/city”) which eventually gave rise to the doublet בארצו ועירו in Shem-Tob. This may not be the case, however, in view of the parallel in the Gospel of Thomas 31 which reads, “No prophet is acceptable in his village; no physician works cures on those who know him.” The reading of “acceptable” in Thomas corresponds to Luke. The reading of “village” corresponds to Nizzahon Vetus #167 and Shem-Tob. We cannot know the original (whether Greek or Syriac) that stands in the background of Thomas in order to judge the specificity of the word “village” (time). Thomas 32, however, reads, “Jesus said: A city (πόλις) that is built on a high mountain (and) fortified cannot fall nor can it remain hidden.” A catchword connection appears to exist between the two sayings in Thomas based on the idea “village/city.” The order of sayings in Thomas, then, suggests that a very early form of Matt. 13:57, perhaps the original, read “city” rather than “homeland.” In view of this the following development in the tradition is suggested:

1. עיר stands as an original Hebrew base (Nizzahon Vetus #167).
  2. עיר gave rise to the ambiguous synonym מדינה “city/land” (Nestor).
  3. מדינה gave rise to Greek πατρις “homeland/hometown” and in Hebrew to the doublet בארצו ועירו “in his land and his city” (Shem-Tob).
- Finally, it is clear that du Tillet of all the Hebrew texts is the closest to the Greek and Latin of Matthew and again appears to represent a revision.

These examples show that in some way the First Gospel in Shem-Tob fits into a process of textual evolution that began in primitive times and culminated in du Tillet in the sixteenth century, or possible later if our survey should include subsequent Hebrew texts of Matthew. The suggestion made here is that the gospel text incorporated into the *Even Bohan* was not a freshly made translation of the First Gospel by Shem-Tob, but was a reproduction, possibly with some revision by Shem-Tob himself, of an already existing literary Hebrew tradition that had been in the process of evolution for some time.

## The Evidence from Shem-Tob Himself

Two comments made by Shem-Tob himself further suggest that his Hebrew text of Matthew was not a freshly made translation but one that was already in existence. The first comment comes from his brief introduction to section twelve (in the British Library ms) of the *Even Bohan*.<sup>34</sup>

אמר המחבר שם טוב בן יצחק בן שפרוט ראיתי להשלים  
חבורי זה אשר (קראתי) אב"ן בוח"ן להעתיק ספרי  
האוונג'ייליון עם היותם שהספרים היות אסורים לנו  
לקרוא בהם פן יבואו התלמידים שלא שמשו כל צרכם וישתו  
מהמים ההם, עם כל זה ראיתי להעתיקם לשתי סיבות ה"א  
להשיב מתוכם לנוצרים ובפרט למומרים שמדברים בעניין  
אמונתם ואינם יודעים דבר אמונה ומפרשים פסוקי תורתנו  
הקדושה בעניין זה הפך האמת והפך אמונתם ובוה יגיע שבה  
ליהודי לאותו המתווכח עמהם כאשר ילכדם בשוחתם

ח"ב להראות לבעלי אמונתם (הרמה) חסרון הספרים ההם  
והשגיאות הנופלות בתוכם ובוה ידעו ויבינו יתרון  
ומעלת אמונתנו על שאר האמונות, לפי שלא יודע גודל מעלת  
הדבר כי אם בבחינת הפכו, ואני נשען בשית (באל ית') שלא  
יצא מזה רק טוב כמו שכוונתי לטובה, ואכתוב בכל פרק ופרק  
ההשגות אשר יראו לי בתוכן, והנני משביע לכל מעתיק בחי  
העולם לבל (יעתיק) ספרי האוונג'ייליוס אם לא (יכתוב)  
בכל מקום ההשגות אשר כתבתי כפי אשר סדרתים וכתבתים הנה

The author, Shem-Tob ben-Isaac ben-Shaprut, says: I have chosen to complete this my treatise which (I have called) *Even Bohan* by transcribing (להעתיק) the books of the gospel in spite of the fact that the books are forbidden for us to read, lest the disciples should come without having sufficient practice and should drink from those waters. Nevertheless, I have chosen to transcribe them (להעתיקם) for two reasons: The first is to answer the Christians from them and especially proselytes who speak in regard to their faith but do not know the word of faith and explain the Scriptures of our holy law in regard to that which is contrary to the truth and contrary to their faith. In this way glory will come to the Jew who debates with them whenever he captures them in their own pit.

The second is to show to the faithful the degree of defect in these books and the errors that occur in them. By this they will know and understand the superiority and virtue of our faith to the other religions. Since the greatness of the virtue of the word is not known except by an examination

<sup>34</sup>The words in parentheses come from ms A; otherwise the text is from the British Library ms.

of that which is contrary to it, I depend on God, blessed be he, that there come from this nothing but good since I have aimed at that which is good. I have written section by section all the objections that appear to me to be in them. I adjure by God every copyist (מעתיק) that he not copy (יעתיק) the books of the gospel unless (he write) in every place the objections that I have written just as I have arranged them and written them here.

The root translated “transcribe” or “copy” above is עתק which can mean either “to transcribe/copy” or “to translate.”<sup>35</sup> In its first two occurrences modern scholars ordinarily have taken it to mean “to translate,” with the result that Shem-Tob is reputed to be the first rabbi to produce a complete translation of a gospel into Hebrew.<sup>36</sup>

Since the context is not completely clear, the following need to be considered. (1) Shem-Tob says he has chosen to complete the *Even Bohan* by transcribing/translating the books of the gospel. If he meant to “transcribe” rather than to “translate,” this might presuppose the existence of more than one gospel in Hebrew by the fourteenth century (although as a matter of fact Shem-Tob reproduced Matthew only). Epiphanius in the fourth century speaks of a Hebrew translation of John and Acts as well as the original Hebrew Matthew.<sup>37</sup> From the gospel quotations from the *Pugio Fidei* by Raymund Martini, written about 1278 and based on Hebrew manuscripts confiscated earlier from the Jews in Aragon, Alexander Marx concludes: “we learn that a Hebrew translation of the Gospels already existed in thirteenth-century Spain.”<sup>38</sup> The existence of Hebrew gospels in the fourteenth century is thus a probability. On the other hand, it is possible that ספרי האורנגיילין refers to the various sections of Matthew, rather than to the four canonical gospels. In this case Shem-Tob had only the Gospel of Matthew in mind.

(2) In the last paragraph of Shem-Tob’s introduction the root עתק appears twice more but here it seems to require the meaning of “copy” with no ambiguity at all. He writes: “I adjure by God every copyist (מעתיק)

<sup>35</sup>Kutscher pointed out that Maimonides used the word to mean “transmit,” an Arabism. See E. Y. Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language* (Leiden: Brill, 1982) 165.

<sup>36</sup>Lapide, *Hebrew in the Church*, 46. Cf. Black *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, 295; Lindsey, *A Hebrew Translation of the Gospel of Mark*, 67.

<sup>37</sup>*Panarion* 30.3.6.

<sup>38</sup>Marx, “The Polemical Manuscripts in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America,” 271. See also Rosenthal, *תרגום של הבשורה על-פי מתי ליעקב בן ראובן*, 49.

that he not copy (יעתיק) the books of the gospel unless” he include the objections as well. That Shem-Tob envisioned his work to be “translated” into other languages is hardly likely. He wrote in Hebrew in the first place in order to prepare the Jewish people to defend their faith against Christian antagonists. The root עתק can hardly be understood in this context other than with reference to Jews who may copy Shem-Tob’s work. But lest he be hopelessly confusing, Shem-Tob must also use עתק in the beginning of his introduction to mean “copy.”<sup>39</sup>

The preponderant weight of evidence, therefore, suggests that Shem-Tob only copied, not translated, his Matthew and that his Matthew was already in Hebrew when he got it.

The second comment by Shem-Tob that suggests his Hebrew text of Matthew was not a freshly made translation comes in a section after Matt 21:9. He writes:

הנה יוחנן פרק כ"ח כתב שישו עצמו לקח האתון שאמר הכתוב  
אל תראי בת ציון הנה מלכך יבא לך יושב על עיר בן אתונות  
גיואן (ומטיב) שנו הכתוב ולא הסכימו בשנוי כי הכתוב  
אומר עני ורוכב על חמור ועל עיר בן אתונות

Here John perek 28 wrote that Jesus himself took the ass (האתון) because that which is written says: do not fear, daughter of Zion, behold, your king comes to you sitting upon a colt (עיר) the foal of asses (אתונות). John (and) Matthew have changed the Scripture and do not agree in the change because the Scripture says: humble and riding upon an ass (חמור) and upon the colt (עיר) the foal of asses.

Shem-Tob’s objection to John and Matthew is not totally clear. It is clear, however, that he accuses them of reading אתון instead of the Masoretic Text of Zech 9:9 which reads חמור.<sup>40</sup> But since he criticizes the gospel reading at this point, the reading must not have been made by Shem-Tob. The conclusion is inescapable: this section of Matthew was not translated into Hebrew by Shem-Tob.

<sup>39</sup>It is interesting to note that Lapide is inconsistent in translating the root עתק. For the initial מעתיקם he renders “Übersetzung” (“translation”), but for the following יעתיק and יעתיק he renders “Abschreiber” (“copyist”) and “zu kopieren” (“to copy”) respectively. See Pinchas E. Lapide, “Der ‘Prüfstein’ aus Spanien,” *Sefarad* 34 (1974): 231-32.

<sup>40</sup>Since both אתון and חמור are legitimate Hebrew correspondents for the Greek ὄνον (f. m.), his objection to אתון is not that it mistranslates the Greek; his objection is that it varies from the Hebrew of the Masoretic Text.

From the above we may draw the following conclusions:

1. The text of the Hebrew Matthew in Shem-Tob is not the same as the Hebrew Matthean texts in du Tillet and Münster. There are, however, textual links between them that suggest the latter two evolved from a text base that was similar to Shem-Tob.
2. The text of Shem-Tob is not a freshly made translation by Shem-Tob. When compared to Hebrew and Aramaic quotations of Matthew from earlier Jewish and anti-Christian writings, it appears to have been based on a primitive Hebrew literary tradition. Comments by Shem-Tob himself further suggest that he made use of an already existing Hebrew Matthew.
3. The evidence as a whole presupposes a Hebrew text of Matthew that existed from ancient times and was used among the Jews for polemical purposes against Christians. Through centuries of use this text went through a process of evolution which included stylistic modification and changes designed to bring the text into closer harmony with the canonical text used by Christians. The latter changes were presumably for the purpose of facilitating discussion and debate.

## Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew: A Literary and Textual Profile

In this section<sup>1</sup> a literary and textual profile of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew will be presented in order to clarify, as much as possible, its relationship to the Greek Matthew. Three basic possibilities for this relationship exist: 1. The Hebrew text is a translation of the Greek (or one of its versions such as the Latin). 2. The Greek is a translation of the Hebrew. 3. Both the Hebrew and the Greek represent original compositions in their own respective languages with one serving as a literary model for the other. The discussion will conclude that number 3 is to be preferred without, however, determining which—the Greek or the Hebrew—served as a model for the other. In addition the discussion will make it clear that the Hebrew

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<sup>1</sup>The article by Pinchas E. Lapide ("Der 'Prüfstein' aus Spanien," *Sefarad* 34 (1974): 227-72) should be consulted at this point. It is a detailed analysis of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew. Of particular importance is the discussion (on pp. 246-49) of "Romanismen" which reflect late revisions. Unfortunately Lapide believes the Hebrew Matthew is a translation of the Latin Vulgate, perhaps partly because he used the Neofiti ms which shows considerable assimilation to the Vulgate in places where other mss do not. (See for examples 2:1 Magi, Neofiti מאגוס, Brit Lib ms BCDEFGH void [all reading simply חוֹזִים בכוכבים]; 3:9 filios Abrahæ, Neofiti בנים לאברהם, Brit Lib ms ABCDEFG כנו אברהם; 4:21 Zebedæus, Neofiti זבדיאוש, D זבדאדא, BC זבדאדא, EF זבאדא; 6:28 lilia agri, Neofiti לירי, Brit Lib ms גילון, BC גיליין, DG גילין; 15:2 traditionem seniorum, Neofiti תקנות הראשונים, AH תקנות הראשונות, BCDEFG תקנות הראשונות; 16:18 tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo, Neofiti אתה אבן ועל זאת האבן אבנה, Brit Lib ms CDEFG על טיבך ואני אבנה עליך, 24:47 super omnia bona sua, Neofiti על טובו, D שעל טפיו.) Lapide himself notes many differences in Shem-Tob and the Vulgate without, however, recognizing the true nature of the oldest layer of the Hebrew text. Other problems with the article are: (1) It fails to note Shem-Tob's relationship to the Old Syriac and the Diatessaron against the Latin tradition, and to the Old Latin against the Vulgate (see below). (2) It shows no recognition of Shem-Tob's relationship to the Coptic Gospel of Thomas. (3) It fails to note most of the puns, word connections, and alliterations that are so characteristic of Shem-Tob's Matthew. (4) It lacks a discussion of the abbreviation/circumlocution for the divine name. (5) Finally, a general misunderstanding of the nature of Shem-Tob's Matthew, even in specific contexts (e.g., 12:28—see below), characterizes the article. Nevertheless, in spite of these difficulties, Lapide's study can be read with profit.

text of our manuscripts has been corrupted by a series of revisions and modifications designed to present the Hebrew in a more grammatically acceptable form and to make it conform more closely to the Greek and Latin texts of Matthew. It will be argued that despite the revisions and modifications by medieval scribes, an old substratum to the Matthean text reflects Hebrew composition, not translation.

The discussion will include: (1) linguistic characteristics of the Hebrew text; (2) late revisions to the Hebrew text; (3) textual relationships of Shem-Tob's Matthew; (4) puns, word connections, and alliteration; (5) the Divine Name; (6) theological tendencies in Shem-Tob's Matthew; (7) different interpretations in Shem-Tob's Matthew; (8) passages suggesting a variant Hebrew substratum for the Greek; (9) Shem-Tob's text and synoptic variation; and (10) other interesting readings in Shem-Tob's Matthew.

### Linguistic Characteristics of the Hebrew Text

It is difficult to assess the language of the text of Matthew in Shem-Tob since it is a Christian writing preserved in a Jewish polemical treatise. The question is, would a Jewish polemist of the fourteenth century translate a Christian document from Greek or Latin and render it into standard biblical Hebrew (BH) with a mixture of Mishnaic Hebrew (MH) and even late medieval vocabulary. If it were a matter of an original Jewish composition in the late Middle Ages one would expect BH or even archaic BH to play a dominant role, as is the case with most texts written during this time.<sup>2</sup>

But the fact is what we have is a Christian text in Hebrew appearing in a Jewish polemical treatise designed specifically to point out its errors and the general fallacious nature of Christianity. Yet the linguistic nature of the gospel text is basically BH with a healthy mixture of MH and later rabbinic vocabulary and idiom.

In many ways the linguistic situation of Shem-Tob's Matthew is analogous to the Masada fragments of Ben Sira<sup>3</sup> when compared to the late fragments of the same document from the Cairo Geniza.<sup>4</sup> Kutscher ex-

<sup>2</sup>See Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, 88.

<sup>3</sup>See Y. Yadin, *The Ben Sira Scroll from Masada* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1965).

<sup>4</sup>These were published in Israel Lévi, *The Hebrew Text of the Book of Ecclesiasticus* (Leiden: Brill, 1904). See also A. A. di Lella, *The Hebrew Text of Sirach* (The Hague, 1966).

plains the original Ben Sira as written primarily in BH without escaping, however, the influence of MH, an occasional parallel to the Dead Sea Scrolls, and contemporary Aramaic. The medieval fragments from the Cairo Geniza, in addition to this, show numerous changes due to the corrections of medieval scribes designed to bring the text into a more contemporary form in regard to spelling, vocabulary, and other linguistic phenomena.<sup>5</sup>

The Hebrew Matthew of Shem-Tob is similar. We already have demonstrated that the basic text predates the fourteenth century, in some instances going back to very early times. Our evidence for this is its connection with quotations of Matthew in early Jewish polemical treatises and in one case in the Talmud. Assuming that the basic text of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is a primitive Hebrew text, we have in this case what one might expect, a writing composed primarily in BH with a mixture of MH elements, but which has undergone scribal modification designed to bring it more into harmony with later linguistic forms. In addition, the text reflects considerable revision designed to make it conform more closely to the standard Greek and Latin texts of the Gospel during the Middle Ages.

This means that Shem-Tob's Matthew, as printed above, does not preserve the original Hebrew in a pure form. It has been contaminated by Jewish scribes during the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, enough of the original text is left intact to observe its primitive nature. It is clear to see that its base is biblical and Mishnaic Hebrew and that it is written in unpolished style. It is filled with ungrammatical constructions and Aramaized forms and idioms. Some of these points will be demonstrated in the following discussion.

### The Verb

The most pronounced difference in BH and MH is the virtual disappearance of the consecutive tenses in MH.<sup>6</sup> The earliest possible date assignable to Shem-Tob's Matthean text is the first century CE, a time when BH had ceased to be spoken and MH had become dominant. In accordance

<sup>5</sup>Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, 87-93. See also the cautious remarks of Isaac Rabinowitz, "The Qumran Hebrew Original of Ben Sira's Concluding Acrostic on Wisdom," *HUCA* 42 (1971): 173-74.

<sup>6</sup>M. H. Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927, 1958) 72. Cf. E. Y. Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll (1 QIsa<sup>a</sup>)* (Leiden: Brill, 1974) 41-42.

with this, Shem-Tob's text appears to be an imitation of BH in regard to tense. The consecutive tense system, for example, dominates the language throughout. The following are typical cases.

- 1:24 ויקץ יוסף . . . ויעש  
 2:4 ויקבוץ כל גדוליו ויבקש  
 3:15 ויען ישו ויאמר  
 4:18 וילך ישו . . . וירא  
 8:16 ויהי לעת הערב ויבאו  
 14:12 ויבאו תלמידי יוחנן וישאו  
 19:5 יעזוב איש . . . ודבק באשתו  
 20:24 וישמעו העשרה ויחר בעיניהם

Although BH is clearly being written, lapses in the consecutive tenses show that the writer and/or later scribes of Shem-Tob's Matthew were not completely at ease with this usage. Occasional examples exist of nonconsecutive tenses where the *waw* is merely a connective:

- 1:21 ותלד בן ותקרא שמו ישוע  
 14:35 שלחו בכל אותם המלכות והביאו לו  
 15:36 ולקח השבעה ככרות וישברם ונתנם  
 15:39 נכנס ישו בספינה ובא לארץ  
 24:7 ויקום גוי על גוי . . . ויהיו מהומות רבות  
 25:17 הלך קנה ומכר והרויח חמשה אחרים

Another difference between BH and MH occurs in the use of the infinitive with the prepositions **ב** and **כ**. The construction appears in BH while MH uses **כש** with the finite verb as **כאשר** in BH.<sup>7</sup> All forms appear in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew: (1) infinitive plus preposition: 1:20 ובחשבו 6:6 בהתפללך, 14:30 ובראותו, 15:29 בעומדו, 17:14 בכבואו; (2) **כש**: 14:14 היו אתם 5:48, ויהי כאשר ראו 2:10 כאשר, 6:2 תמיהים כאשר וכאשר ראוהו תלמידיו 14:26, כאשר תעשו צדקה 6:2.

The infinitive absolute is not used at all in MH<sup>8</sup> and may appear once in Shem-Tob, at 22:24 (although the form is possibly an imperative here).

An interesting form of the infinitive construct plus **לא**, used for prohibition, appears at 23:23, **ולא לשכוח אותם**. It occurs in late BH and the Dead Sea Scrolls but rarely if ever in standard BH. Kutscher says it "is all the more interesting since it crops up in the languages spoken in Jerusalem

<sup>7</sup>Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, 165.

<sup>8</sup>Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll*, 41.

at the time, as we see from Aramaic and Greek inscriptions of Jerusalem (and also in Punic, that is, late Canaanite of North Africa)."<sup>9</sup>

### Pronouns

In the first person singular **אני** is dominant in MH while both **אני** and **אנכי** are found in BH.<sup>10</sup> The form **אני** is dominant in Shem-Tob with **אנכי** occurring in 18:20. In regard to the plural, MH always uses **אנו** while BH uses **אנחנו** except for the *k<sup>at</sup>ib* at Jer 42:6.<sup>11</sup> The short form is used in Shem-Tob, although **אנחנו** appears occasionally (see 6:12). Of the two forms **הם** and **המה**, the latter is found only in biblical quotations in MH.<sup>12</sup> Both occur in Shem-Tob: (1) **המה**: 2:13, 5:8, 11:7; (2) **הם**: 13:13, 38, 39, 23:23.

The plural demonstrative pronoun **אלה**, standard for BH, becomes **אלו** in MH. Both forms occur in Shem-Tob: (1) **אלה**: 10:2, 5, 15:20, 24:8; (2) **אלו**: 7:24, 28, 23:23.

The possessive is regularly expressed in MH by the combination of **ש** plus the preposition **ל**. Although in older texts it is attached to the noun it governs, it eventually came to exist as a separate particle, **של**.<sup>13</sup> Though rare, **של** occurs in Shem-Tob at 10:20, 12:39, 26:17, and 27:15. (Cf. **שלכם** at 12:27, **שלך** at 25:25, **שלי** at 25:27, and **שלקץ** at 27:63.)

### Vocabulary

The vocabulary in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew<sup>14</sup> comes from various levels of the history of the language including BH, MH, and later rabbinic Hebrew. (1) Typical words occurring in BH and Shem-Tob but not in MH are: **אולי** 11:23, 27:64; **אז** 9:1, 6, 14, 37, 10:1, 11:20, 12:13, 14, 22, 44, 45, 13:36, 43; **רק** 9:6, 10:28, 11:30; **אמנם** 25:21, 26:56; **אכן** 8:17, 10:22; **בעד** 2:8, 5:11, 6:2, 6, 10:18, 11:10; **למען** 5:45; **פן** 6:1, 8:4, 25, 9:16, 30, 13:15, 29; **אשר** 8:27, 9:36, 10:4, 11:4, 12:18; **כי** 9:2, 13, 11:18, 26, 12:41; **גם** 8:29. (2) Typical words occurring in MH and Shem-Tob but not in BH are: **מיד** 21:41; **כתיב** 22:44; **מוכן** 22:8, 25:33; **רבן** 23:7; **זהוב** 18:24; **מִתָּר** 12:10, 19:3; **מעוט** 14:31, 17:20; **כריתה** 19:7; **זון** 13:25; **חרדל**

<sup>9</sup>Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language*, 99.

<sup>10</sup>Segal, *A Grammar of Mishnaic Hebrew*, 39.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 39-40.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 40.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 43-44.

<sup>14</sup>Cf. *ibid.*, 46-57.

13:31; ממון 13:44; נים 17:3; בשביל 17:13. (3) Typical words occurring only in later rabbinic writings and Shem-Tob are: מאסר 4:12; תמידית 6:11; טבעי 15:17, 16:9-12; הנהגה (= behavior) 16:9-12; שתי וערב (= cross) 16:24; עולמית 18:8, 25:41; שום דבר 21:3, 24:17, 27:12; סוף דבר 21:37; חנפן 22:18; רשום (= impression) 22:20.

### Late Revisions to the Hebrew Text

There are clear examples of late revisions in the Hebrew Matthew of Shem-Tob such as explanatory additions in other languages and alterations designed to clarify or bring the Hebrew into harmony with the standard Greek and Latin texts. One example is 1:23 where the following redundancy occurs: ותקרת שמו עמנואל שר"ל עמנו אלקים "and you will call his name Emmanuel, that is, God with us." It is the Greek and Latin that need explanation for Emmanuel, not the Hebrew. Another example is 27:33 which reads: ובאו למקום נקרא גולגוטה הוא הר קאלווארי "then they came to a place called Golguta, that is, Mount Calvary." "Calvariae" is read by the OL and Vg. A host of revisions in individual manuscripts may be gleaned from the critical apparatus. Examples are: 12:39 א הנוביא + יונה = Greek and Vg; 21:12 א ויוצא [וימצא] = Greek and Vg; 24:6 [תהבלו] G = Greek and Vg; 24:43 א אדון הבית + יודע = Greek; 27:40 אשר [אפשר] BEF = Greek and Vg.

Other examples of revision are interpolated explanations of names and places usually following לעז (ב) "in another language," transliterated into Hebrew from Greek, Latin, and other languages. A list of these follows.

2:11 מירא	9:9 מאטיו
3:7 פאריואי	11:21 טיראו דיטיר או סדומה, בורוואים
4:10 שאטאנאס	12:4 פאן סאגרה
4:13 מאריטמה	12:42 ריוזנה די אישטדיאה
4:21 זכאדאו וואבאדה	13:25 ברייאגה
4:23 מאוונגיליו	16:13 פיליבוס, סוריאה
5:31 ליבי"ל ריפודיו	16:16 קריסטו, פייטרוס
6:2 איפוקראטיס	17:1 גאימי
6:28 גיליון	23:5 פיבליאוס
6:30 פינן	24:14 אוונגילי
8:6 פיראלשויה	26:13 אוגיל
8:28 גארגיזאני	27:33 קאלווארי
9:2 פאראלטיקו	

From the distribution of these transliterations throughout the gospel it appears the interpolator's interest in the task waned substantially after six-

teen chapters. Only five occur after that part of the text. The secondary nature of these readings is shown by an occasional disruption they make in the syntax. An example is 24:14 which reads: בשורה לעז אוונגילי זאת. The words זאת . . . בשורה which go together are separated by לעז and a transliteration of the Greek or Latin word for "gospel."

### Textual Relationships of Shem-Tob's Hebrew

It is also difficult to assess the relationship of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew to already known textual traditions. In many respects it is different from all known traditions in that it contains many unique readings. In the absence of a thorough comparison of Shem-Tob with other texts, which would involve far more research than this preliminary report, it can be stated that a clear relationship exists between Shem-Tob and the Latin and Syriac traditions, the latter including the Diatessaron of Tatian. Thus Shem-Tob contains many readings in common with the Old Latin (OL) in company with the Vulgate (Vg) and with the Old Syriac (OS or Sy<sup>s,c</sup>) in company with the Peshitta (Sy<sup>p</sup>). Of particular interest is a moderate number of readings in which Shem-Tob agrees only with the OL or OS without joint agreement with Vg or Sy<sup>p</sup>. The following lists contain typical examples of these readings.

Shem-Tob = OL ≠ Vg<sup>15</sup>

5:39	Greek	τὴν ἄλλην (the other)
	Shem-Tob abg <sup>1</sup>	השמאל (the left) sinistram (the left)
10:39	Greek	ὁ εὐρών (who finds)
	Shem-Tob ff <sup>1</sup>	האוהב (who loves) qui amat (who loves)
16:21	Greek	καὶ γραμματέων (and scribes)
	Shem-Tob a	VOID VOID

<sup>15</sup>For the Old Latin the following have been consulted: Adolf Jülicher, *Itala. Das Neue Testament in Altlateinischer Überlieferung. I Matthäus-Evangelium*, ed. W. Matzkow and K. Aland, 2nd ed. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1972); S. C. E. Legg, *Novum Testamentum Graece . . . Evangelium Secundum Matthaeum* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940).



27:21	Greek	ὁ ἡγεμών (the governor)
	Shem-Tob	פִּילָטוֹס (Pilate)
	aur f	Pilatus (Pilate)
Shem-Tob = OS ≠ Sy <sup>p16</sup>		
3:9	Greek	καὶ μὴ δόξητε λέγειν (and do not think to say)
	Shem-Tob	וְאַל תֹּאמְרוּ (and do not say)
	Sy <sup>s-c</sup>	וְאַל תֹּאמְרוּ (and do not say)
4:18	Greek	παρὰ τὴν θάλασσαν (by the sea)
	Shem-Tob	עַל שַׁפַּת הַיָּם (by the shore of the sea)
	Sy <sup>s</sup>	עַל גַּנְבַּ סַפְתַּה דִּימָא (by the shore of the sea)
5:12	Greek	τοὺς προφήτας τοὺς πρὸ ὑμῶν (the prophets who were before you)
	Shem-Tob	הַנְּבִיאִים (the prophets)
	Sy <sup>s</sup>	לְנַבִּיאַ (the prophets)
12:45	Greek	ἑπτὰ ἕτερα πνεύματα (seven other spirits)
	Shem-Tob	שִׁבְעָה רוּחוֹת (seven spirits)
	Sy <sup>s</sup>	שִׁבְעַ רוּחָא (seven spirits)
16:17	Greek	ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν αὐτῷ (Jesus answered and said to him)
	Shem-Tob	וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו יֵשׁוּעַ (Jesus said to him)
	Sy <sup>c</sup>	אָמַר לֵה יֵשׁוּעַ (Jesus said to him)
20:14	Greek	θέλω (I wish)
	Shem-Tob	אִם אֲנִי רוֹצֵה (If I wish)
	Sy <sup>s</sup>	אִן צָבִיא (If I wish)
	Sy <sup>c</sup>	וְאִן צָבָא אָנָא (And if I wish)

Shem-Tob = the Diatessaron of Tatian

There are a number of readings in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew that correspond to Tatian's Diatessaron. As is well known, Tatian, a native of Assyria, came to Rome in the middle of the second century and became a disciple of Justin Martyr. About 172 he left Rome for the Euphrates Valley and is said to have founded the sect of Encratites. He died a few years later. Sometime either shortly before leaving Rome or after returning to Mesopotamia, he constructed a harmony of the gospels in which the texts

<sup>16</sup>For Sy<sup>s-c</sup> the following have been used: Agnes Smith Lewis, *The Old Syriac Gospels or Evangelion Da-Mepharreshe* (London, 1910); F. C. Burkitt, *Evangelion Da-Mepharreshe*, vol. 1: *Text* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1904).

of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were woven together into a continuous narrative. This was called the Diatessaron of Tatian.

It is notoriously difficult to identify true Diatessaric readings due to the fact that no copy of the original has ever been discovered.<sup>17</sup> The surest witness to its text is Ephraem's commentary on the Diatessaron (EC). About three-fifths of the original Syriac of this work was published in 1963 by Dom Louis Leloir.<sup>18</sup> An Armenian version of this same work also exists (vEC) and will be cited where necessary below.<sup>19</sup> Other witnesses to the text of the Diatessaron are problematic since they suffer from defects which impair their value for reconstructing the original text of the Diatessaron.<sup>20</sup> In the matter of sequence, however, as opposed to the actual wording of

<sup>17</sup>The original language of the Diatessaron has been the subject of endless debate. If Tatian made his composition after his departure from Rome (ca. 172) he probably made it in Syriac, although Kraeling argues that it was composed in Greek even if it was written in Mesopotamia. See Carl H. Kraeling, *A Greek Fragment of Tatian's Diatessaron from Dura* (London, 1935) 15-18. If Tatian wrote it while he was in Rome he could have made it in Greek, Syriac, or Latin. For the latter see F. C. Burkitt, "The Dura Fragment of Tatian," *JTS* 36 (1935): 257-58. Many hold that it was written in Greek and was soon translated into Syriac. Among others see Adolf von Harnack, "Tatian's Diatessaron and Marcion's Commentar zum Evangelium bei Ephraem Syrus," *ZKG* 4 (1881): 494-95; *Chronologie der altchristlichen Literatur* (Leipzig, 1897) 1.289; H. J. Vogels, *Die Harmonistik von Evangelientext des Codex Cantabrigiensis*, TU 36 (Leipzig, 1910): 45-46; M.-J. Lagrange, "L'ancienne version Syriaque des Évangiles," *RB* 29 (1920): 326; Adolf Jülicher, "Der echte Tatiantext," *JBL* 43 (1924): 166. Others think the evidence points to a Syriac original. Notable among these are A. Baumstark, "Das griechische Diatessaronfragment von Dura Europos," *OrChr* 32 (1935): 250; Arthur Vööbus, *Studies in the History of the Gospel Text in Syriac* (Louvain, 1951) 12; G. A. Weir, "Tatian's Diatessaron and the Old Syriac Gospels. The Evidence of MS Chester Beatty 709" (Ph.D. diss., University of Edinburgh, 1969) xiv-xv.

<sup>18</sup>Louis Leloir, *Saint Ephrem, Commentaire de l'Évangile Concordant, Texte Syriaque (Manuscript Chester Beatty 709)* (Dublin, 1963).

<sup>19</sup>Louis Leloir, *Saint Ephrem, Commentaire de l'Évangile Concordant, Version Arménienne*, CSCO 137, *Scriptores Armeniaci 1* (Louvain, 1953); Latin trans. 145, *Scriptores Armeniaci 2* (Louvain, 1964). An English translation is by J. Hamlyn Hill, *A Dissertation on the Gospel Commentary of S. Ephraem the Syrian* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1896).

<sup>20</sup>See esp. ch. 3 in Vööbus, *Studies in the History of the Gospel Text in Syriac*, 25-45. The great collection of quotations of early Syriac fathers and the attempted reconstruction of the Diatessaron by Urbina must be viewed with caution since it uses early Syriac sources without sufficient discrimination. Ignatius Ortiz de Urbina, *Vetus Evangelium Syrorum, et exinde excerptum Diatessaron Tatiani*, *Biblia Polyglotta Matritensia*, Series 6 (Madrid, 1967). Cf. the critical review of this work by Robert Murray, "Reconstructing the Diatessaron," *HeyJ* 10 (1969): 43-49.

the text, the Arabic Diatessaron is generally considered reliable<sup>21</sup> as well as when it agrees with the Syriac tradition against the canonical Greek. In several examples below where these criteria are met an English translation of the Arabic will be cited as a witness.<sup>22</sup>

The first two examples will consist of Tatianic readings (that is, readings involving the actual wording of the Diatessaron) in the Hebrew text of Shem-Tob.

5:14	Greek	οὐ δύναται πόλις κρυβῆναι ἐπάνω ὄρους κειμένη (A city <i>set</i> on a hill cannot be hidden.)
	Shem-Tob	עיר בנויה על ההר לא תוכל להסתר (A city <i>built</i> on a hill cannot be hidden.)

Evidence for “built” being a Diatessaric reading is: (1) Sy<sup>s.c.p</sup> read “built” (בניא). (2) The Coptic Gospel of Thomas (32), which often shares readings with Tatian’s Diatessaron,<sup>23</sup> reads “A city being *built* on a high mountain and fortified cannot fall, nor can it be hidden.”<sup>24</sup> A Greek counterpart to this is Pap. *Oxyrhynch.* 1.7: πόλις οἰκοδομημένη ἐπ’ ἄκρον [ὄ] ὑψηλοῦς καὶ ἐστηρικμένη οὔτε πε[σ]εῖν δύναται οὐδὲ κρυβ[η]ῖναι. (3) Arabic Diatessaron 8.41: “It is impossible that a city *built* on a mountain should be hid.”

5:30	Greek	ἡ δεξιὰ σου χεῖρ	(your right hand)
	Shem-Tob	ידך	(your hand)
		vEC <sup>25</sup>	(your hand)

In addition to these readings there are several lengthy passages involving order and mixture of synoptic parallels rather than wording that correspond to the Diatessaron. The following is a sampling.

<sup>21</sup>See Bruce M. Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977) 10-36.

<sup>22</sup>The translation is that of Hope W. Hogg, “The Diatessaron of Tatian” in *The Antenicene Fathers*, vol. 10, 5th ed., ed. Allan Menzies (reprint: Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1965) 35-138.

<sup>23</sup>T. Baarda, *Early Transmission of the Words of Jesus: Thomas, Tatian, and the Text of the New Testament*, ed. J. Helderma and S. J. Noorda (Amsterdam: VU Boekhandel/ Uitgeverij, 1983) 38. For a discussion of the relationship between the two and further bibliography see Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament*, 29-30.

<sup>24</sup>Translation by Lambdin in *The Nag Hammadi Library*, 122.

<sup>25</sup>See Hill, *Gospel Commentary of S. Ephraem*, 84n5.

Shem-Tob

(Matt 12:1) and his disciples being hungry began to pluck the ears  
(Luke 6:1) and to crush them between their hands  
(Matt 12:1) and to eat them

Arabic Diatessaron 7.37-38

his disciples  
hungered. And they were rubbing the ears

with their hands,  
and eating

vEC

began to pluck the ears,  
to rub and to eat

The Diatessaron at this point appears to have been a combination of Matthean and Lukan readings. The major differences in the two synoptics are: (1) Matthew reads “hungered” (ἐπεινασαν) and “began” (ἤρξαντο). Neither of these elements appears in the majority text of Luke. (2) Luke reads “to crush them between their hands.” These words are lacking in the majority text of Matthew. A comparison of the Arabic Diatessaron<sup>26</sup> and Ephraem’s Armenian commentary on the Diatessaron demonstrates that at least parts of these three elements occurred in Tatian’s harmony. The reading in Shem-Tob concurs with Tatian since it too includes all three elements.

Shem-Tob (Ms A)

(Matt 5:3) Blessed are the humble of spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
(Matt 5:5) Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.  
(Matt 5:4) Blessed are those who wait for they shall be comforted.

Sy<sup>c</sup>

(Matt 5:3) Happy is it for the poor in their spirit, that theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
(Matt 5:5) Happy is it for the lowly, that they shall inherit the earth.  
(Matt 5:4) Happy is it for the mourners, that they shall be comforted. (Burkitt translation)

In this particular instance Sy<sup>c</sup>, accompanied by Shem-Tob, appears to follow the order of the Diatessaron of 5:3, 5:5, and 5:4. Hill argues that Ephraem and Aphraates did the same: “Ephraem quotes this beatitude [5:5—GH] before the preceding one, as if his Diatessaron had it in the or-

<sup>26</sup>The Arabic has not been revised toward the Peshitta in this instance. The latter reads according to the majority Greek text of Matthew.

der of the Curetonian Syriac and Aphraates.<sup>27</sup> The Arabic Diatessaron follows the Greek order and probably represents an accommodation to it.

#### Shem-Tob

(Matt 3:10) Already the axe has reached the root of the tree; the one which does not produce good fruit will be cut down and burned in the fire (Luke 3:10-15) The crowds asked him: if so what shall we do. John answered them: he who has two shirts let him give one to him who has none.

So they came to be baptized. Many asked him: what shall we do, and he answered them: be anxious for no man.

and do not chastise them and be pleased with your lot. And all the people were thinking and reckoning in their circumcised heart, John is Jesus.

(Luke 3:16) John answered all of them: (Matt 3:11) behold I truly baptize you in the days of repentance, but afterwards another comes mightier than I (Luke 3:16) the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to unfasten

#### Arabic Diatessaron 4.18-25

Behold, the axe hath been laid at the roots of the trees, and so every tree that beareth not good fruit shall be taken and cast into the fire. And the multitudes were asking him and saying, What shall we do? He answered and said unto them, He that hath two tunics shall give to him that hath not; and he that hath food shall do likewise. And the publicans also came to be baptized, and they said unto him, Teacher, what shall we do? He said unto them, Seek no more than what ye are commanded to seek. And the servants of the guard asked him and said, And we also, what shall we do? He said unto them, Do not violence to any man, nor wrong him; and let your allowances satisfy you. And when the people were conjecturing about John, and all of them thinking in their hearts whether he were haply the Messiah, John answered and said unto them,

I baptize you with water

there cometh one after me who is stronger than I the latches of whose shoes I am not worthy to loosen;

(Matt 3:11 || Luke 3:16) He will baptize you with the fire of the Holy Spirit.

he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

#### Shem-Tob

(Matt 8:29) They cried out to him saying: what is between you and us, Jesus Son of God. Have you come before the time to grieve us and to destroy us? (Mark 5:8 || Luke 8:29) Then Jesus said to them: come out from there evil host. . . . (Matt 8:31) So the demons entreated him: since we have to go out from here, grant us authority to go into these swine. (Matt 8:32a) Then he said to them: go, (Luke 8:33) and the demons went out from the men and entered the swine (Matt 8:33b) and all the herd went in sudden haste, slipped off into the sea

and died in the water.

#### Arabic Diatessaron 11.44-50

and cried out with a loud voice and said, What have we to do with thee, Jesus Son of the most high God. I adjure thee by God torment me not. And Jesus commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. . . . and those devils besought him to give them leave to enter the swine; and he gave them leave. And the devils went out of the man and entered into the swine. And that herd hastened to the summit and fell down into the midst of the sea, about two thousand, and they were choked in the water.

Two other very lengthy examples will be lumped together here without reproducing their texts. The first is the account of the transfiguration in Matt 17:1-5. Both in Shem-Tob and the Arabic Diatessaron (24.2-12) the account is a mixture of Matthew and Luke 9:28-35. The overlaps between Tatian's harmony and the text of Shem-Tob are striking. The second is Matt 17:17 and 19 between which is sandwiched Mark 9:20-28. This is also the case for the Arabic Diatessaron (24.35-46).

The relationship between Shem-Tob and Tatian is not entirely clear. Although it is similar to that between the Old Syriac and the Diatessaron, and between the Old Latin and the Diatessaron, it differs sometimes from them by containing very lengthy insertions from parallel accounts in agreement with Tatian. The relationship of Shem-Tob to Tatian goes beyond the numerous short Tatianic readings in the Syriac and Latin. In some passages it appears to be an actual reproduction of the Tatianic text itself.

<sup>27</sup>Hill, *Gospel Commentary of S. Ephraem* 83n4. For a translation of Aphraates see F. C. Burkitt, *Evangelion Da-Mepharreshe*, vol. 2: *Introduction and Notes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1904) 181.

These passages are, of course, limited in number and are quite sporadic, involving perhaps only ten percent of the entire text or less.

Two explanations are apropos to this situation. First, in some cases it is possible that the Old Latin, the Old Syriac, and the text of Shem-Tob reflect an ancient form of the separate gospels in which the synoptic texts were closer together in wording than they appear in the modern editions of the Greek New Testament.<sup>28</sup> Second, it is hard to escape the conclusion that several lengthy passages in Shem-Tob corresponding to parallel synoptic accounts and in agreement with the Diatessaron are due to the direct influence of the Diatessaron on the transmission of the text of Shem-Tob. If the Hebrew Matthew contained in the *Even Bohan* predates Shem-Tob and was used by Jews in anti-Christian polemics, as the evidence suggests, it may be that some Tatianic readings, especially the longer passages, were interpolated into the Hebrew text at an early time in order to provide a basis for debate for Jews who lived in areas where the Diatessaron was in use. The fact that they were inserted sporadically points to the selectiveness with which the contestants chose scripture for purposes of debate. If this is the case, the text of Shem-Tob in the relevant passages becomes a valuable Hebrew witness to the Diatessaron.

### Puns, Word Connections, and Alliteration

A major characteristic of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is the use of puns, word connections, and alliteration. Readings portraying these literary devices are numerous and belong to the very structure of the Matthean Gospel. Sometimes such elements can be reproduced in translation but only with great difficulty and usually only by one who is interested in preserving or enhancing the integrity and literary beauty of the base text. There are two reasons to suspect these literary elements here belong to the old substratum to Shem-Tob's Matthew and are the product of an original Hebrew composition, not a translation: (1) The text is so saturated with them (far beyond what appears in the Greek) it does not seem reasonable that any translator, regardless of his motives, would have created them. (2) The polemical nature of the *Even Bohan* proscribes any reasonable suspicion that a fourteenth-century rabbi would have gone out of his way to

<sup>28</sup>George Howard, "Harmonistic Readings in the Old Syriac Gospels," *HTR* 73 (1980): 485.

beautify and otherwise enhance the text of the Gospel of Matthew. The following are examples from each of the three categories listed above.

#### Puns

Many of the sayings of Jesus and even narratives about him according to Shem-Tob are constructed around puns and wordplays. Matt 7:6 reads: "do not throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under foot and turn to attack you." In Shem-Tob the words for "swine" and "turn" are alike, being *hazir* (חזיר) and *yahzor* (יחזר) respectively. Matt 10:25 reads: "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul." In Shem-Tob "master of the house" and "Beelzebul" are *baal habayit* (בעל הבית) and *baal z'vuv* (בעל זכוב) respectively. Matt 10:36 reads: "and a man's foes will be those of his own household." In place of this, Shem-Tob reads: "The enemy will be loved ones," which makes a wordplay on "the enemy" *ha'oyvim* (האויבים) and "loved ones" *'ahuvim* (אהובים). In Matt 17:22 the text in part reads: "The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men." For "Son of Man" Shem-Tob reads *ben ha'adam* (בן האדם) and for "men" *b'ne ha'adam* (בני האדם). Matt 18:27 reads: "And out of pity for him the lord of that servant released him and forgave him the debt." In place of this, Shem-Tob reads the pithy saying: "Then his master had pity on him and forgave him everything." This is a play on the words "to pity" from the root *hamal* (חמל) and "to forgive" from the root *mahal* (מחל). Matt 21:19 reads: "And seeing a fig tree by the wayside he went to it and found nothing on it but leaves only. And he said to it, 'May no fruit ever come from you again'." Shem-Tob in part reads: "he found nothing on it except leaves . . . may fruit not come forth from you for ever." Two wordplays in Hebrew form the structure of this statement as the following diagram shows:

מצא בה רק העלים  
יצא ממך פרי לעולם

The wordplays are made by the combination of *matsa'* (מצא) "found" / *yetse'* (יצא) "come forth" and *ha'alim* (העלים) "leaves" / *l'olam* (לעולם) "for ever." Matt 23:27-28 reads in part: "<sup>27</sup>for you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. <sup>28</sup>So you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but within you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity." The saying in Shem-Tob contains a play on the words "tombs" from the root *qever* (קבר) and "within" (vs. 28) from the root *qerev* (קרב). Matt 23:29, 31

reads in part: “<sup>29</sup>for you build the tombs of the prophets . . . <sup>31</sup>Thus you witness against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.” For “build” Shem-Tob reads the root *banah* (בנה) and for “sons” the root *ben* (בן).

A rather lengthy passage involving a pun is Matt 16:9-11. It reads: “<sup>9</sup>Do you not yet perceive? Do you not remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? <sup>10</sup>Or the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets you gathered? <sup>11</sup>How is it that you fail to perceive that I did not speak about bread? Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” Shem-Tob’s text is much shorter, lacking all of vs. 10, and contains a different wording. Of primary importance is the fact that in vs. 9 it reads “were left over” *nišru* (נשאר) in place of the Greek “gathered” (ἐλάβετε). This is similar to the word “beware” (vs. 11) which according to the reading of mss ABDEFG of Shem-Tob is *išmru* (תשמרו). At this point the British Library ms, accompanied by ms C, reads תשארן which appears to be a visual mistake for the similarly looking reading in the majority text of Shem-Tob. This mistake was perhaps made by a scribe whose eye jumped prematurely to the next word *šor* (שאר) “leaven” which though lacking in Shem-Tob’s text is represented in Greek by ζύμη<sup>29</sup> and appears to have been a part of the original pericope. We conjecture, then, that a pun on the words שאר “left over,” שמר “beware,” and שאר “leaven” stood in the original discourse and that the last word was lost in Hebrew during transmission of the text.

The most famous pun in Greek Matthew occurs at 16:18 where the text reads: “You are Peter (Πέτρος) and on this rock (πέτρος) I will build my church.” Because of the wordplay in Greek August Dell argued that this saying originally circulated in Greek and originated not in Jesus but in the Greek-speaking segment of the church.<sup>30</sup> Although Dell’s argument has some logic, another pun exists in the Hebrew text of Shem-Tob that militates against his conclusion. The Hebrew reads: “You are a stone (אבן) and upon you I will build (אבנה) my house of prayer.” The pun, *even* (“stone”)—*evneh* (“I will build”), forms the very structure of the saying

<sup>29</sup>Shem-Tob uses שאר opposite ζύμη in Matt 13:13.

<sup>30</sup>August Dell, “Matthäus 16, 17-19,” *ZNW* 15 (1914): 1-49; “Zur Erklärung von Matthäus 16:17-19,” *ZNW* 17 (1916): 27-32 See Klijn’s objections in A. F. J. Klijn, “die Wörter ‘Stein’ und ‘Felsen’ in der syrischen Übersetzung des Neuen Testaments,” *ZNW* 50 (1959): 99-105.

in Shem-Tob. The authenticity of the Hebrew wordplay is suggested by the appearance of the same words in Matt 21:42 which is a quotation of messianic flavor from Ps 118:22: “The very *stone* which the *builders* rejected has become the head of the corner.” Shem-Tob’s text, which equals the Masoretic Text of Ps 118:22, again includes the בנהאבן combination.

#### Word Connections

The text of Shem-Tob is replete with word connections that give structure to individual sayings and pericopes and that tie separate sayings and pericopes together. An interesting case is Matt 4:21-23 which in the Hebrew text unites the pericopes on the calling of James and John and the early preaching of Jesus in Galilee. According to the Greek, the brothers, James and John, are sons of Zebedee (Ζεβεδάϊος). Beyond the mention of this fact the name “Zebedee” plays no further role in the immediate context. In the Hebrew text the matter is different. Matt 4:21 reads: “He turned from there and saw two other brothers, James and John, brothers who were sons of Zebedeel (זבדיאל).” The name “Zebedeel” (made up of זבדי and אל) means “gifts of God.”

The next pericope begins with vs. 23. In Hebrew it reads: “Then Jesus went around the land of Galilee teaching their assemblies and was preaching to them the good gift (זבד) . . . of the kingdom of heaven.” The connection is clear. The two pericopes, that is, the calling of James and John and the early preaching of Jesus in Galilee, are held together by the catchword “gift.” The catchword fails to appear in the Greek or Latin although the name Zebedee (= זבדי), meaning “my gift(s),” represents a remnant of the situation.

The sequence of the Matthean pericopes is thus clearly built upon the catchword situation of זבד “gift” although it appears only in the Hebrew. It is highly unlikely that a Jewish polemist of the fourteenth century (or any century), trying to disprove the validity of the Gospel of Matthew, would have created this word connection *ex nihilo*. This means that in all probability the sequence of these pericopes goes back to a Hebrew, not to a Greek or Latin, *Vorlage*.

The following is a list of similar connections that occur in the Hebrew text but *not* in the Greek or Latin. The Hebrew words/roots involved will be placed at the end of each example.

- 5:9-10 <sup>9</sup>Blessed are those who *pursue* (רודפי) peace for they shall be called the sons of God.  
<sup>10</sup>Blessed are those who are *persecuted* (הנרדפים) for righteousness for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
 רדף "to pursue" / רדף "to persecute"
- 5:14-15 <sup>14</sup>A city built upon a hill cannot be *hidden* (להסתר).  
<sup>15</sup>They do not light a lamp to place it in a *hidden* (נסתר) place.  
 סתר "to hide"
- 8:28, 31 <sup>28</sup>There *met him* (ויפגעו בו) two demon-possessed men.  
<sup>31</sup>Then the demons *entreated him* (ויפגעו בו).  
 פגע "to meet" / פגע "to entreat"
- 10:36, 37, 39 <sup>36</sup>The enemy will be *loved ones* (אהובים).  
<sup>37</sup>He who *loves* (האווהב) his father and mother more than me . . .  
<sup>38</sup>[omitted in Shem-Tob]  
<sup>39</sup>He who *loves* (האווהב) his life will lose it.  
 אהב "to love"
- 11:8, 10 <sup>8</sup>Those who wear noble garments are in the houses of *kings* (המלכים).  
<sup>10</sup>This is he about whom it is written: behold, I am sending *my messenger* (מלאכי).  
 מלך "king" / מלאך "messenger"
- 12:13, 15 <sup>13</sup>Then he said to the man: *stretch out* (נטה) your hand and he *stretched out* (ויט) his hand and it returned as the other.  
<sup>15</sup>It came to pass after this Jesus knew and *turned aside* (ויט) from there.  
 נטה "to stretch out" / נטה "to turn aside"
- 14:35, 36 <sup>35</sup>They brought to him all those who were *sick* (החולים) with various kinds of diseases.  
<sup>36</sup>*They implored* (וחלו) him. . . .  
 חלה "to be sick" / חלה "to implore"
- 15:34-37 <sup>34</sup>They answered: *seven* (שבעה) and a few fish.  
<sup>35</sup>So Jesus commanded the people to sit upon the grass.  
<sup>36</sup>Then he took the *seven* (השבעה) loaves and broke them and gave them to his disciples and they gave to the people.  
<sup>37</sup>All of them ate and were *satisfied* (וישבעו) and from that which was remaining they filled *seven* (שבעה) seahs.  
 שבעה "seven" / שבע "to be satisfied"
- 18:16 <sup>16</sup>If he does not listen to you, reprove him before another; if by every oath he does not listen to you add *still* (עוד) one or two in order that your words might be before two or three *witnesses* (עדים) because by two or three *witnesses* (עדים) a word will be established.  
 עוד "still" / עד "witness"

- 18:23-35 <sup>23</sup>At that time Jesus said to his disciples: the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who sat to make a reckoning with his servants and ministers.  
<sup>24</sup>As he began to reckon, one came who owed about ten thousand pieces of gold.  
<sup>25</sup>But he had nothing to give and his master commanded to sell him and his children and all that was his *to repay* (לשלם) the value.  
<sup>26</sup>The servant fell before his master and implored him to have pity on him and to be patient with him because he would *repay* (ישלם) everything.  
<sup>27</sup>Then his master had pity on him and forgave him everything.  
<sup>28</sup>But that servant went out and found one of his comrades who owed him a hundred pieces of money and he grasped him and struck him saying. . . .  
<sup>29</sup>Trust me and be patient with me and I will *repay* (אשלם) everything.  
<sup>30</sup>But he was not willing to listen to him; so they brought him to the prison until he *repaid* (שלם) him everything.  
<sup>31</sup>The servants of the king saw that which he did and were very angry and went and told their master.  
<sup>32</sup>Then his master called him and said to him: cursed servant, did I not forgive you all your (debt) when you placated me.  
<sup>33</sup>So why did you not forgive your servant when he supplicated you as I forgive you?  
<sup>34</sup>His master was angry with him and commanded to afflict him until he should *repay* (ישלם) him all the debt.  
<sup>35</sup>Thus will my Father who is in heaven do to you if you do not forgive each man his brother with a *perfect* (שלם) heart.  
 שלם "to repay" / שלם "perfect"
- 19:9, 13 <sup>9</sup>He who takes her who has been *divorced* (הגרושה) commits adultery.  
<sup>13</sup>Then they brought children to him that he might lay his hand on them and pray for them, but his disciples were *driving* (מגרישים) them away.  
 גרש "to divorce" / גרש "to drive away"
- 21:37-38, 46 <sup>37</sup>Finally, he sent them his son saying: perhaps they will *honor* (יראו) my son.  
<sup>38</sup>The workers *saw* (ויראו) his son and said to one another: this is the heir. Come, let us kill him and we will inherit his estate.  
<sup>46</sup>Then they sought to kill him but they *feared* (ויראו) the crowds to whom he was a prophet.  
 ירא "to honor/fear" / ראה "to see"

- 26:9-11 <sup>9</sup>It would have been possible to have sold it for a great price and to have given it to the *poor* (לעניים).  
<sup>10</sup>But Jesus who knows everything in regard to any *matter* (ענין) done, said to them: . . .  
<sup>11</sup>Because the *poor* (העניים) will be with you always.  
 עני "poor" / ענין "matter"
- 26:28, 34-36 <sup>28</sup>This is my blood of the new covenant which was poured out for many for the *atonement* (לכפרת) of sins.  
<sup>34</sup>Jesus said: truly I say to you, this night before the cock-crow you will *deny* (תכפור) me three times.  
<sup>35</sup>Peter said to him: if it is possible for me to die with you, I will not *deny* (אכפור) you. . . .  
<sup>36</sup>Then Jesus came with them to the *village* (לכפר) of Geshemonim and said: sit now until I go there and pray.  
 כפרה "atonement" / כפר "to deny" / כפר "village"

### Alliteration

In the following passages alliteration of various kinds occurs. The relevant words in Hebrew will be placed in parentheses, pointed, and transliterated.

- 4:12 It came to pass in those days Jesus heard that John had been delivered up (נִמְסָר, *nimsar*) into prison (בְּמַאֲסָר, *b'ma'asar*).  
 He turned from there and saw two  
 4:21 other brothers (אֲחִים אֲחֵרִים, *'ahim 'aherim*).  
 5:23 If you should offer your gift (תִּקְרִיב קָרְבָּנְךָ, *taqriv qarbankha*) at the altar and remember that you have a quarrel with your companion (חֲבֵרְךָ, *h'verkha*).<sup>31</sup>  
 7:2 With what judgment you judge and with what measure you measure it will be measured to you (בְּאֵיזֶה דִּין תִּדְוֹנוּ וּבְאֵיזֶה מִדָּה תִּמּוּדוּ יִמּוּדוּ לָכֶם, *b'ezeḥ din tidonu uv'eze midah tamodu y'moded lakhem*).  
 9:8 The crowds saw (וַיִּרְאוּ, *vayir'u*) and feared (וַיִּירָאוּ, *vayir'u*).<sup>32</sup>  
 11:6 Blessed is the one who (וְאֲשֶׁר־יִאֲשֶׁר, *v'ašre'ašer*).  
 11:29 Take my yoke upon you (עוּלֵי עָלֵיכֶם, *'uli 'alekhem*) and learn of me and know that I am meek (עֲנִי אֲנִי, *'ani 'ani*).

<sup>31</sup>See also 8:4. Cf. Jean Carmignac, "Studies in the Hebrew Background of the Synoptic Gospels," *AS71* 7 (1970): 72.

<sup>32</sup>Carmignac spotted this wordplay without benefit of the Shem-Tob text. See *ibid*.

- 12:15 Many sick (חולים, *holim*) followed him and he healed all of them (כולם, *kulam*).  
 12:24 This one does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub (בְּבַעַל זְבוּב, *b'va'al zivuv*) the lord of demons (בַּעַל הַשְּׂדִים, *ba'al hašedim*).  
 14:32 When they went up into a boat the wind settled down (נָחוּ הַרְיָחַ, *nah haruah*).  
 18:9 If your eye causes you to stumble (תִּכְשִׁילֶךָ, *takhšilekha*) . . . cast (תִּשְׁלִיכֶהָ, *tašlikheha*) it from you.

### The Divine Name

A set of interesting readings in the Hebrew Matthew of Shem-Tob is a series of passages incorporating the Divine Name symbolized by ה' (apparently a circumlocution for הַשֵּׁם, "The Name"). This occurs some nineteen times. (Fully written הַשֵּׁם occurs at 28:9 and is included in the nineteen.) Usually the Divine Name appears where the Greek reads κύριος, twice (21:12 mss, 22:31) where the Greek reads θεός, and twice where it occurs alone (22:32; 27:9). (1) It regularly appears in quotations from the Hebrew Bible where the MT contains the Tetragrammaton. (2) It occurs in introductions to quotations as, for example, at 1:22, "All this was to complete what was written by the prophet according to the LORD"; and at 22:31, "Have you not read concerning the resurrection of the dead that the LORD spoke to you saying." (3) In narratives apart from quotations it occurs in such phrases as "angel of the LORD" or "house of the LORD." Thus, 2:13, "As they were going, behold, the angel of the LORD appeared unto Joseph saying"; 2:19, "It came to pass when King Herod died the angel of the LORD appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt"; 21:12, "Then Jesus entered the house of the LORD"; 28:2, "Then the earth was shaken because the angel of the LORD descended from heaven to the tomb, overturned the stone, and stood still."

The reading of the Divine Name in a Christian document quoted by a Jewish polemist is remarkable. If this were a Hebrew translation of a Greek or Latin Christian document, one would expect to find *adonai* in the text, not a symbol for the ineffable divine name YHWH. Furthermore, for Shem-Tob the Gospel of Matthew was an object of attack, a heretical writing that needed to be exposed for its fallacies. For him to have added the ineffable name is inexplicable. The evidence strongly suggests that Shem-Tob received his Matthew with the Divine Name already within the text and that

he probably preserved it rather than run the risk of being guilty of removing it.<sup>33</sup>

The evidence from Shem-Tob's Matthew coincides with the present writer's earlier stated conclusions about the use of the Tetragrammaton in the Septuagint and the Greek New Testament.<sup>34</sup> The extant pre-Christian copies of the Septuagint that include passages incorporating the Divine Name preserve the Divine Name in the Greek text. These are (1) P. Fuad 266 (= Rahlfs 848), 50 BCE, contains the Tetragrammaton in Aramaic letters;<sup>35</sup> (2) a fragmentary scroll of the Twelve Prophets in Greek from Wadi Khabra (= W. Khabra XII καί(γ)ε), 50 BCE–50 CE, contains the Tetragrammaton in paleo-Hebrew letters;<sup>36</sup> (3) 4QLXX<sup>Levb</sup> (= Rahlfs 802), first century BCE, contains the Tetragrammaton in the form of ΙΑΩ.<sup>37</sup> From these examples it may be concluded that the New Testament writers had access to copies of LXX that contained the Hebrew Divine Name. Those who used such copies of LXX for their quotations of the Old Testament probably

<sup>33</sup>Cf. the famous rabbinic passage, t. Šabb. 13.5: "The margins and books of the minim do not save." The debate that follows about what is to be done with heretical books concerns the issue of the divine names, אֱלֹהִים, in them. R. José suggests the divine name should be cut out and the rest of the document burned. R. Tarphon and R. Ishmael say the books in their entirety, including the divine name, should be destroyed. See Herford, *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash*, 155–57. By incorporating the Hebrew Matthew into his *Even Bohan*, Shem-Tob apparently felt compelled to preserve the Divine Name along with the rest of the text. "ה" in Shem-Tob's Matthew should not be viewed as a symbol for both Adonai and the Tetragrammaton as was customary for Hebrew documents copied during the Middle Ages. The author of the Hebrew Matthew uses Adonai and "ה" discriminately. He uses Adonai in reference to Jesus and "ה" only in reference to God. Since אֱלֹהִים (often itself abbreviated as אֲדֹנָי) refers to Jesus, not God, throughout the text, the author's use of "ה" is a symbol only for the Tetragrammaton and in all probability stands for the circumlocution הַשֵּׁם הַגָּדוֹל, "The Name."

<sup>34</sup>See George Howard, "The Tetragram and the New Testament," *JBL* 96 (1977): 63–83; idem, "The Name of God in the New Testament," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 4 (1978): 12–14, 56.

<sup>35</sup>Françoise Dunand, *Etudes de Papyrologie* (Cairo, 1971). W. G. Waddell, "The Tetragrammaton in the LXX," *JTS* 45 (1944): 158–61. George Howard, "The Oldest Greek Text of Deuteronomy," *HUCA* 42 (1971): 125–31.

<sup>36</sup>D. Barthélemy, "Redécouverte d'un chaînon manquant de l'histoire de la Septante," *Revue Biblique* 60 (1953): 18–29; idem, *Les devanciers d'Aquila: Première publication intégrale du text des fragments du Dodecaprophéton*, VTSup 10 (Leiden: Brill, 1963).

<sup>37</sup>P. W. Skehan, "The Qumran Manuscripts and Textual Criticism," *Volume du Congrès, Strasbourg 1956*, VTSup 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1957) 148–60.

preserved the Tetragrammaton in the quotations incorporated into their texts.<sup>38</sup>

Although written in Hebrew, Shem-Tob's Matthew further testifies to the use of the Divine Name in the New Testament. Its conservative use of the Divine Name, which occurs only in quotations from the Hebrew Bible, introductions to the quotations, or in biblical phrases such as "angel of the LORD," and "house of the LORD," corresponds closely to the use of the Tetragrammaton in the Hebrew documents from among the Dead Sea Scrolls. As was concluded in 1977, "In the Hebrew documents from the Judean Desert the Tetragram appears in copies of the Bible, in quotations of the Bible, and in biblical-type passages such as *florilegia* and biblical paraphrases. Occasionally, it appears in non-biblical material; but this is not often and the material is Bible-like in nature."<sup>39</sup>

### Theological Tendencies in Shem-Tob's Matthew

In some instances the Hebrew Matthew of Shem-Tob shows theological tendencies not found in the Greek. It is unlikely these variances were introduced by a medieval Jewish translator, especially someone who was engaged in polemical disputation with Christians, because they either portray Christianity more, not less, attractively or fail to enhance the Jewish polemic against Christianity. Instead, they appear to belong to a more primitive form of the Matthean tradition than the Greek Matthew. During the early Christian centuries the disparity between Judaism and Christianity gradually increased. But the theological variances in Shem-Tob's Hebrew text often reflect a lesser disparity between the two religions than does the Greek text. An example is Jesus' attitude toward the law, a subject treated in Matthew 5. Matt 5:17–19 gives Jesus' statement about the durability of the law:

Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all

<sup>38</sup>See further Patrick W. Skehan, "The Divine Name at Qumran, in the Masada Scroll, and in the Septuagint," *BIOSSCS* 13 (1980): 14–44; A. Pietersma, "Kyrios or Tetragram: A Renewed Quest for the Original Septuagint," in *De Septuaginta. Studies in Honour of John William Wevers on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. A. Pietersma and C. Cox (Toronto: Benben Publications, 1984) 85–101.

<sup>39</sup>Howard, "The Tetragram and the New Testament," 71.



is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

There follows in Matt 5:21-48 the so-called antitheses.<sup>40</sup> Each antithesis first quotes from the law (except the last one) and then gives Jesus' extension or comment on the law. The form is basically the same in each antithesis: "You have heard that it was said. . . . But I say to you. . . ." The subjects are killing, adultery, divorce, false swearing, the *lex talionis*, and hating your enemies.

In the Greek text of Matthew, Jesus' comment on some of the antitheses—like killing and adultery—seems to radicalize and internalize the law without, however, revoking it. In other antitheses—divorce and false swearing—Jesus' comment seems to revoke and annul the letter of the law. At least this is true in the Greek Matthew. But in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew that is not the case with respect to divorce and false swearing. Instead, in these instances, Jesus' comment in the antitheses suggests he is radicalizing and internalizing the law but not revoking it. It may well be that here the Greek Matthew represents a later corrective to the more ancient statements in the Hebrew, made only after the disparity between Church and Synagogue grew. Compare the Greek Matthew and Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew on divorce and false swearing:

#### Divorce (Matt 5:31-32)

[Greek]

It was also said, "Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce." But I say to you that every one who divorces his wife, except on the ground of unchastity, makes her an adulteress. . . .

(RSV)

[Hebrew]

Again Jesus said to his disciples: "You have heard what was said to those of long ago that everyone who leaves his wife and divorces [her] is to give her a bill of divorce. . . . And I say to you that everyone who leaves his wife *is to give her a bill of divorce*. But concerning adultery, he is the one who commits adultery. . . ."

#### False Swearing (Matt 5:33-37)

[Greek]

Again you have heard that it was said to the men of old, "You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn." But I say to you, do not swear *at all*, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God.

. . .

(RSV)

[Hebrew]

Again you have heard what was said to those of long ago: you shall not swear *by my name* falsely, but you shall return to the Lord your oath. But I say to you not to swear *in vain by anything*, either by heaven because it is the throne of God. . . .

The differences between the Greek and Hebrew are striking. In the Greek Jesus seems to revoke the law. In the Hebrew, he internalizes and radicalizes it, but does not revoke it.

Another difference between the Greek and Hebrew Matthew is in the character of John the Baptist. We know from other sources that there was a John the Baptist sect that existed from early times and continued perhaps for centuries.<sup>41</sup> In Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew John the Baptist emerges as a much more important figure than in the Greek Matthew. The Greek Matthew may well represent a later corrective to the more primitive statements made about John the Baptist in Hebrew Matthew before the followers of John the Baptist were seen as a threat to trunkline Christianity. Here are some of the differences between the Hebrew and Greek texts in the portrayal of John the Baptist.

#### Matthew 11:11

[Greek]

Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has risen no one greater than John the Baptist: *yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he*.

(RSV)

[Hebrew]

Truly I say to you, among all those born of women none has arisen greater than John the Baptizer.

[The last phrase in Greek is lacking in Shem-Tob's Hebrew text.]

#### Matthew 11:13

[Greek]

For all the prophets and the law prophesied *until* John.

(RSV)

[Hebrew]

For all the prophets and the law spoke *concerning* John.

<sup>40</sup>For an excellent discussion of the issue see John P. Meier, *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1976).

<sup>41</sup>Cf. Acts 18:5-19:7; Justin, *Trypho* 80; *Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions* 1.54.60. Cf. C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St. John* (London: S.P.C.K., 1962) 142; Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John*, Anchor Bible 29A, 29B (Garden City NY: Doubleday, 1966) A:lxvii-lxx.

## Matthew 17:11

[Greek] Elijah does come, and he is to <i>restore all things</i> . [Vs 13 tells us that "the disciples understood that (Jesus) was speaking to them of John the Baptist." (RSV)]	[Hebrew] Indeed Elijah will come and <i>will save all the world</i> . (RSV)
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In Matt 21:31-32 Jesus speaks harsh words to those who failed to heed the warnings of John the Baptist: "Truly, I say to you, the tax collectors and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the harlots believed him; and even when you saw it, you did not afterward repent and believe him" (RSV). In the Greek Matthew these harsh words are said to the chief priests and the elders of the people (vs 23), but in Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew these harsh words are spoken to Jesus' own disciples (vs 28) and the following comment, lacking in the Greek text, appears: "He who has ears to hear let him hear in disgrace."

This series of readings can hardly be taken lightly. They point to an ancient tradition in which John the Baptist was even more important than the portrayal of him given in the Greek text of Matthew.

### Different Interpretations in Shem-Tob's Matthew

There are several passages in the Hebrew Matthew that differ in meaning from the Greek Matthew. Occasionally the Hebrew appears to be more primitive than the Greek. A few instances will be noted.

In the Beelzebul (Hebrew: Beelzebub) controversy, recorded in Matt 12:24-28, the Greek version reads as follows:

<sup>24</sup>But when the Pharisees heard it they said, "It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons." <sup>25</sup>Knowing their thoughts, he said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand; <sup>26</sup>and if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? <sup>27</sup>And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judge. <sup>28</sup>But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." (RSV)

A common understanding of this passage is: (1) Jesus rejects the Beelzebul charge as totally inappropriate.<sup>42</sup> (2) Verse 27 is taken to refer to Jewish exorcisms with the meaning that if Jesus casts out demons by the power of Satan the same is true of the Pharisees' own disciples, an argument designed to turn the tables against the opponents.<sup>43</sup> (3) Verse 28 concludes that if Jesus casts out demons by the Spirit of God, in some sense the kingdom of God has already come.

In the Hebrew text the matter is different. Most of the wording is basically the same with two exceptions: (1) Verse 27 reads: "If I cast out demons by Beelzebub why do your sons *not* cast them out?" This is the opposite of what is implied by the Greek, namely, that Jewish exorcists are casting out demons.<sup>44</sup> (2) In verse 28, instead of "then the kingdom of God has come upon you," the Hebrew reads "truly the end of the [his—G.H.] kingdom has come." In regard to the Hebrew text the following points should be made. First, although the case is different with him, Jesus does not reject as inappropriate the exorcising of demons by the power of Satan. He even queries why the sons of the Pharisees do not avail themselves of this means of bringing Satan's kingdom to an end. After all, a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand, so the turning of Satan against himself is a sure way of destroying Satan. Second, the fact is Jesus casts out demons, not by Beelzebub, but by the Spirit of God. This elicits the conclusion "truly the end of the kingdom is come." The reading in the Hebrew Matthew of "the kingdom" instead of the Greek "the kingdom of God" appears to refer to the kingdom of Satan rather than to the kingdom of God with the meaning that if Jesus casts out demons not by Beelzebub, which

<sup>42</sup>Cf. H. B. Green, *The Gospel according to Matthew* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975) 127: "If Jesus' exorcisms show him to be in league with the devil, he is using Satan's power against Satan's own agents, and this is a situation that cannot continue."

<sup>43</sup>Cf. David Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew* (London: Oliphants, 1972) 216: "The sons of the Pharisees (i.e., their disciples or pupils) would be the first to condemn the intransigent attitude shown to Jesus because it implied that they were in league with Satan."

<sup>44</sup>This reading may be related to the targumic device of converse translation. See Michael L. Klein, "Converse Translations: A Targumic Technique," *Biblica* 57 (1976): 515-37. Here, so as not to prejudice the case, it should be understood as a converse construction, and not a converse translation. For other examples see εἰ at Mark 8:12 and parallels, εἰ μὴ at Mark 8:14 and parallels, ὄπισθεν/ἔμπροσθεν at Matt 15:23, οὐκ (Codex B) at Matt 12:32, and the absence of οὐκ in P<sup>66</sup> at John 9:27. For further examples in Shem-Tob vis-à-vis the Greek see 10:17 and 19:22.

itself would bring Satan's kingdom to an end, so much the more will he destroy Satan's kingdom by casting out demons by the Spirit of God.

There appears to be a progression of thought here. The Hebrew text portrays Jesus as deeming appropriate the exorcising of demons by the power of Beelzebub, even though he himself performs exorcisms by a more effective means, the power of the Holy Spirit. The Greek, on the other hand, rejects with revulsion the very idea of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub. Should we not regard the Greek's rejection of any amicable relationship between Jesus and Satan, even to the extent of Jesus using Satan to destroy Satan, as a later reflection of an increasing disparity between Judaism and the new Christian religion in which Christ was accused of being possessed by demons?

The pericope on the Canaanite woman, found in Matt 15:21-38, presents the reader with two difficulties. The most notable is the harshness with which Jesus addresses the desperate mother who pleads for mercy for her demon-possessed daughter. Verse 26 records his answer: "It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." Beare remarks: "The harshness of the saying of Jesus . . . still puzzles the Christian reader, who finds it impossible to imagine Jesus addressing a distraught mother in such terms. . . . Dare we see in all this a reflection of the reluctance with which the primitive Church embarked upon the Gentile mission?"<sup>45</sup>

A second problem is the inappropriateness of Jesus' answer to his disciples who ask him to send the woman away. Jesus responds: "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (vs. 24). But this is a reason for sending her away, not for allowing her to stay. It thus fails to explain his actions.

In the Hebrew text the inappropriateness of this answer disappears because the question of the disciples is different. According to the Hebrew, verse 23 reads: "Our master, why do you leave this woman alone who is crying out after us?" The implication appears to be: Why do you not deal with this woman by healing her daughter? After all, she is crying out for help. Jesus' answer in verse 24 is now appropriate: "they did not send me except to the lost sheep from the house of Israel." The meaning is that Jesus does not wish to heal this woman's daughter because she does not belong to Israel.

<sup>45</sup>Francis W. Beare, *The Earliest Records of Jesus* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962) 132-33.

The first problem regarding the harshness of Jesus' response to the woman, however, remains in the Hebrew text. Some attempt has been made to soften Jesus' words by combining several verses in Matthew in such a way as to show a progression of thought. Matt 15:24, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," is combined with Matt 10:5-6, "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," in order to show that during his earthly ministry Jesus confined his efforts to Israel alone. These passages are then contrasted with the conclusion of the Gospel, Matt 28:19-20, which reads "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. . . ." Here the risen Christ is shown to extend his ministry to include all nations. This contrast suggests that Matthew's Gospel presents a kind of salvation-history schema wherein Jesus' restricted earthly ministry is expanded in the postresurrection period to include the Gentiles. Meier writes: "This same Jesus who, during his earthly ministry, forbids the Twelve a mission among the Gentiles and Samaritans is also the Jesus who, as the exalted Son of Man, commands the Eleven to make disciples of *panta ta ethnē*."<sup>46</sup>

This solution is impossible from the standpoint of the Hebrew text. Although Matt 10:5-6 and 15:24 in Hebrew correspond in meaning to the Greek, Matt 28:19-20 does not. In Hebrew these last two verses read simply: "Go and teach them to carry out all the things that I have commanded you forever." No mention is made of Gentiles or all nations and no salvation-history schema is possible.

Again a progression of thought is apparent. The Hebrew Matthew portrays Jesus the Jew holding to the very end the traditional position of Israel's supremacy. The Greek Matthew, without rejecting the idea of Israel's supremacy for Jesus during his lifetime, redeems the situation by having the risen Christ extend his power to include all nations into the kingdom of God.

There are a number of such passages in the Hebrew Matthew that differ from the Greek. A listing of several other examples follows.

<sup>46</sup>Meier, *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel*, 27.

19:6	Greek	What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.
	Hebrew	Whatever the creator has joined together man is <i>unable</i> to separate.
19:22	Greek	When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions.
	Hebrew	It came to pass when the young man heard he went away (angry) because he did <i>not</i> have much property.
19:29	Greek	And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or fathers or mothers or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.
	Hebrew	Everyone who leaves his house (and his brothers), also his sisters, his father, his mother, <i>his wife</i> , and his children for my name will receive (a hundred) like them and will inherit the kingdom of heaven.
26:13	Greek	Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.
	Hebrew	Truly, I say to you, everywhere this gospel . . . is proclaimed in all the world, that which this one has done will be said in reference to <i>my</i> memory.
28:6	Greek	Come, see the place where he lay.
	Hebrew	Come, therefore, and see the place where the Lord <i>arose</i> .

### Passages Suggesting a Variant Hebrew Substratum for the Greek

Assuming that Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew represents Hebrew composition (even though corrupted by medieval Jewish scribes), it is interesting to note that some differences between the Hebrew and Greek Matthew are similar to those between the Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Bible and the Greek translation of it. The following discussion demonstrates this point.

A number of differences in the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Jewish Bible go back to different vocalizations of Hebrew words or to similar-looking Hebrew words. Here are some typical examples:

Amos 1:6	MT	גלות שלמה	entire exile
	LXX	αἰχμαλωσίαν τοῦ Σαλωμων	captivity of Solomon

The Greek apparently stands for *שלמה*, a different vocalization for the same consonantal text as read by MT.

Amos 3:15	MT	וספו	and will come to an end
	LXX	καὶ προστεθήσονται	and will be added

The Greek text apparently stands for *ונוספו*, a form close in appearance to MT, and may represent a variant Hebrew *Vorlage* which LXX translated. We, of course, do not possess a Hebrew text of Amos that reads *ונוספו*, so in this case the theory of a variant *Vorlage* cannot be tested. The next example, however, provides us the data needed to test the theory.

Ex 3:6	MT	אבִּיךָ	your father
	SamPent	אבתִּיךָ	your fathers
	Acts 7:32	τῶν πατέρων σου	your fathers

The statement in Acts is a quotation from Exodus 3:6 that according to MT reads the singular for "father." Since Acts reads the plural one could argue that it reflects a variant Hebrew *Vorlage* which contained the plural form *אבתִּיךָ*. The certainty of this can be demonstrated by the fact that the Samaritan Pentateuch reads this exact form. The difference in the two Hebrew forms is, of course, an addition of only one letter.

Variations like these often form the difference between Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew and the Greek Matthew. An example is Matt 8:21. Here the Greek reads "Another (ἕτερος) of his disciples"; the Hebrew reads "One (אחד) of his disciples." Although we are without data to prove what word actually stood in a theoretical Hebrew substratum to the Greek, a strong case can be made for the word *אחר* which is often rendered by *ἕτερος* in LXX (cf. Gen 4:25, 8:10, and so forth). Furthermore, confusion between *ר* and *ד* is one of the most common causes for variation in ancient Hebrew documents due to the fact that these letters are so similar in appearance. It could be conjectured, then, that the difference in Shem-Tob's text and the Greek go back to different Hebrew texts which read *אחד* and *אחר* respectively.

Another example is Matt 11:5. The Greek reads "and the poor have the *good news preached* (εὐαγγελίζονται) to them." The Hebrew reads "and the poor are *acquitted* (מתפשרים)." In LXX the word *εὐαγγελίζεν* consistently stands for the root *בשר* (cf. 1 Kings 31:9, 2 Kings 1:20, 18:31, and so forth). One can argue, then, that this root stood here in a Hebrew substratum to the Greek text. If so, the appropriate form would be *מתפשרים* which is similar in appearance to *מתפשרים*. It is interesting that mss EF of Shem-Tob actually read the conjectural form, and in all prob-

ability represent a later revision designed to bring the Hebrew into correspondence with the canonical Greek/Latin text.<sup>47</sup>

We append here a list of several other examples.

- 3:11 I baptize you *with water* (ἐν ὕδατι) unto repentance.  
I baptize you *in the days of* (בימי) repentance.  
Greek: with water = במים  
Shem-Tob: in the days of = בימי
- 5:4 Blessed are those who *mourn* (οἱ πενθοῦντες).  
Blessed are those who *wait* (החוכים).  
Greek: mourn = הבוכים<sup>48</sup>  
Shem-Tob: wait = החוכים
- 7:4 *Allow* (ἄφες) me to cast the mote out.  
*Wait* (כתר) for me . . . and I will cast the straw out.  
Greek: allow = התר  
Shem-Tob: wait = כתר
- 7:6 Do not give *that which is holy* (τὸ ἅγιον) to the dogs.  
Do not give *holy flesh* (בשר קדש) to the dogs.  
Greek: that which is holy = אשר קדש  
Shem-Tob: holy flesh = בשר קדש
- 7:11 If you being evil *know* (οἴδατε) to give good gifts.  
If you being evil *come* (תבואו) to give good gifts.  
Greek: know = תבינו  
Shem-Tob: come = תבואו<sup>49</sup>
- 7:29 For he was teaching them as one having authority  
and not *as* (ὡς) their scribes.  
For he was preaching to them with great power,  
not *as the rest* (כשאר) of the sages.  
Greek: as = כאשר  
Shem-Tob: as the rest = כשאר
- 8:26 Why are you *fearful* (δευλοί)?  
Why do you *look* (תראו)?  
Greek: fearful = תיראו  
Shem-Tob: look = תראו

<sup>47</sup>Lachs conjectured that the original Hebrew read "the poor are made rich" (מתעשרים). See Samuel Tobias Lachs, "Hebrew Elements in the Gospels and Acts," *JQR* 71 (1980): 38-39.

<sup>48</sup>For πενθεῖν = בכח see Gen 23:2.

<sup>49</sup>Mss DE read תביאו.

- 9:34 By the *prince* (ἄρχοντι) of demons he cast out demons.  
By the *name of* (בשם) demons he cast out demons.  
Greek: by the prince = בשר  
Shem-Tob: by the name of = בשם
- 11:8 What did you go out to see?  
A man clothed in *soft* (μαλακοῖς) clothing?  
What did you go out to see?  
. . . a man clothed in *noble* (רבים) garments?  
Greek: soft = רכים  
Shem-Tob: noble = רבים<sup>50</sup>
- 13:48 When it was full, they drew it up *on the shore* (ἐπὶ τὸν αἰγιαλόν).  
When it is full they draw it *out* (לחוצ).  
Greek: on the shore = לחוף  
Shem-Tob: out = לחוצ
- 18:30 But going he *cast* (ἔβαλεν) him into prison.  
So he *brought him* (ויוליכהו), mss ABDEFG) to prison.  
Greek: cast him = וישליכהו  
Shem-Tob: brought him = ויוליכהו
- 21:23 The chief priests *and the elders of the people* (καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τοῦ λαοῦ).  
The priests *and the rulers of the people* (וקציני העם).  
Greek: and the elders of the people = וקני העם  
Shem-Tob: and the rulers of the people = וקציני העם
- 22:23 On that day the Sadducees *came to* (προσηλθον) him.  
On that day the Sadducees *met* (קראו) him.  
Greek: came to = קרבו  
Shem-Tob: met = קראו
- 23:37 Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets  
and *stones* (λιθοβολούσα) those sent to her.  
Jerusalem, who kills the prophets  
and *removes* (ומסלקת) those who are sent.  
Greek: stones = ומסקלת  
Shem-Tob: removes = ומסקלת
- 24:6 See that you are not *alarmed* (θροεῖσθε).  
Beware lest you become *foolish* (תהבלו).  
Greek: alarmed = תהבלו  
Shem-Tob: foolish = תהבלו

<sup>50</sup>See Luke 7:25: ἐνδόξω = רבים (?).

- 26:23 He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me *will betray me* (με παραδώσει).  
He who dips his hand with me in the dish *will sell me* (ימכרני).  
Greek: will betray me = ימסרני  
Shem-Tob: will sell me = ימכרני
- 26:30 *And they sang a hymn* (καὶ ὑμνήσαντες) and went out to the Mount of Olives.  
*And they returned* (וישבו), mss AB EF and went out to the Mount of Olives.  
Greek: and they sang a hymn = וישרו  
Shem-Tob: and they returned = וישבו
- 26:53 Do you think that I am not able to entreat my Father (παρακαλέσαι τὸν πατέρα μου)?  
Do you not understand that I am able to meet my enemies (לפגוע באויבי)?  
Greek: to entreat my father = לפגוע באבי  
Shem-Tob: to meet my enemies = לפגוע באויבי
- 28:6 Come see the place where the Lord lay (ἔκειτο).  
Come, therefore, and see the place where the Lord arose (עמד).  
Greek: lay = למצד<sup>51</sup>  
Shem-Tob: arose = עמד

### Shem-Tob's Text and Synoptic Variation

Assuming that Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew represents Hebrew composition (even though corrupted by medieval Jewish scribes) it is interesting to note that sometimes it provides suggestions for the cause of variation in parallel passages in the Greek synoptic gospels. In these instances it resembles the Masoretic Text (MT) which explains differences in parallel passages in the Septuagint. Two examples from the Hebrew Bible will be followed by several examples from Matthew.

1 Kings 8:16	שבטי ישראל ]	σκήπτρω Ἰσραήλ
2 Chronicles 6:5	שבטי ישראל ]	φυλῶν Ἰσραήλ

In this set of synoptic passages שבטי is translated "scepter" by LXX in 1 Kings and "tribes" in 2 Chronicles. The word שבט is a polysemous word which can mean either. The synoptic variation, therefore, simply reflects different renditions of the same Hebrew *Vorlage*.

<sup>51</sup>In Jer 24:1 κειμένους renders מועדים.

2 Samuel 10:8	πύλης ]	השער
1 Chronicles 19:9	πόλεως ]	העיר

This set of synoptic parallels presents an example of variation due to different though similar-appearing *Vorlagen*. It is well known that the author of Chronicles used a copy of Samuel that sometimes varied from the MT of Samuel.<sup>52</sup> In the present case MT of Samuel reads השער "the gate" while the copy of Samuel used by the Chronicler apparently read העיר "the city." In each instance LXX gives the appropriate translation.

Similarly, the text of Shem-Tob provides clues to some variant readings in the synoptic gospel parallels. It either reads one word with two or more meanings (often based on differing vocalizations), each of which is now reflected in Greek synoptic parallels, or one word that is visually similar to another that theoretically stood in a variant Hebrew substratum to a synoptic parallel. An example of a single Hebrew word differently vocalized may be the following.

Matt 12:50	μου ἀδελφός
Mark 3:35	ἀδελφός μου
Luke 8:21	ἀδελφοί μου
Shem-Tob	אחי

The Greek texts of Matthew and Mark read "my brother." Luke differs by reading "my brothers." The text of Shem-Tob can be either singular or plural depending on its vocalization, whether אחי "my brother" or אחים "my brothers." It thus suggests the possibility that the synoptic variants were caused by different vocalizations of the same Hebrew word.

The next example of synoptic variation may have been caused by one Hebrew consonantal text that theoretically can reflect different Hebrew roots.

Matt 23:31	ὅτι υἱοί ἐστε
Luke 11:48	ὕμεις δὲ οἰκοδομεῖτε
Shem-Tob	שבנים אתם

These Greek phrases occupy corresponding parts in a saying against the scribes and Pharisees. According to Black (following Torrey) υἱοί ἐστε

<sup>52</sup>A number of students of Frank Cross have written on this subject. Among them see J. D. Shenkel, "A Comparative Study of the Synoptic Parallels in I Paralipomena and II Reigns," *HTR* 62 (1969): 63-85; Eugene C. Ulrich, Jr., *The Qumran Text of Samuel and Josephus* (Missoula MT: Scholars Press, 1978).

(“you are sons”) and *ὁμοδομεῖτε* (“you build”) may go back to Aramaic *אתון בנין אתון* (understanding *בְּנִין* and *בְּנִין* respectively).<sup>53</sup> A similar explanation based on a Hebrew substratum is supplied by the reading in Shem-Tob: *אתם בנים אתם* “you are sons.” If the text is vocalized *אתם בנים* the translation is “you build.”<sup>54</sup> The word *בְּנִים* is plural of *בן* “son”; *בְּנִים* is plural masculine participle of *בנה* “to build.”

It is noteworthy that these two roots alternate elsewhere in Hebrew literature. A Midrash (Bab. Tal. Berakot 64 a) based on Isaiah 54:13 containing an *'al tigre*<sup>55</sup> reading is:

The disciples of the wise increase peace in the world, as it says, “And all your children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of your children.” Read not “your children” (*בניך*) but “your builders” (*בוניך*).

The antiquity of this particular alternation of words is demonstrated by the appearance of both in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> 54:13.

The remaining examples consist of readings in Shem-Tob containing a word or a phrase similar in appearance to another word or phrase that theoretically could have served as a Hebrew substratum to a Greek synoptic parallel.

Matt 15:17	ἐκβάλλεται
Mark 7:19	ἐκπορεύεται
Shem-Tob	הולך

Matthew reads “is cast out”; Mark reads “goes out.” Some Markan witnesses read variously *ἐκβάλλεται*, *ἐξέρχεται*, or *χωρεῖ*, but these appear to be secondary. The difference in “cast out” and “goes out” may be explained by Shem-Tob’s *הולך*, qal participle of *הלך* “to go,” and the similar-appearing *הושלך* or *מושלך*, hophal perfect (with *waw* consecutive

<sup>53</sup>Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, 12-13; C. C. Torrey, *Our Translated Gospels* (New York: Harper, 1936) 104.

<sup>54</sup>For the pronoun following the participle see 18:10, 23, etc.

<sup>55</sup>See *אל תקרי* in *Encyclopedia Talmudica*, ed. Meyer Berlin and Shlomo J. Zevin (Jerusalem: Talmudic Encyclopedia Institute, 1974) 2:258-60; I. L. Seeligmann, “Voraussetzungen der Midraschexegese,” in *Congress Volume Copenhagen*, SVT 1 (Leiden: Brill 1953) 160; S. Talmon, “Aspects of the Textual Transmission of the Bible in the Light of Qumran Manuscripts,” *Textus* 4 (1964): 125-32 (also published in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text*, ed. F. M. Cross and S. Talmon [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975] 256-63).

understood) or hophal participle, both from *שלך* “to cast.” In LXX *ἐκβάλλειν* translates *שלך* in a number of instances: Lev 1:16, 14:40, Deut 29:38, Ecc. 3:6, Isa 2:20, Jer 22:28. In the last instance the hophal *הושלכו* is rendered by *ἐξεβλήθη*. Similarly Shem-Tob at times reads *שלך* where the Greek Matthew employs *ἐκβάλλειν*: 8:12<sup>ms</sup>, 22:13, 25:30. The theoretical Hebrew variants behind these readings thus may have been:

הולך Shem-Tob, Mark  
הושלך Matthew.

Matt 18:6	καταποντισθῆ
Mark 9:42	βέβληται
Luke 17:2	ἔρριπται
Shem-Tob	ויוטל

Matthew reads “sunk”; Mark and Luke read “cast.” Shem-Tob reads *יוטל* (hophal imperfect of *טול*) “thrown” in basic agreement with Mark and Luke against Matthew. The Matthean variant *καταποντισθῆ* possibly goes back to the Hebrew root *טבל* “to dip/sink” which in the hophal imperfect would be *יוטבל*, a word differing from Shem-Tob’s reading only by the addition of one letter. The theoretical Hebrew variants behind the synoptic readings may be diagrammed as:

ויוטל Shem-Tob, Mark, Luke  
ויוטבל Matthew.

Matt 8:28	ἐκ τῶν μνημείων
Mark 5:2	ἐκ τῶν μνημείων
Luke 8:27	ἐκ τῆς πόλεως
Shem-Tob	מהקברים

In the pericope on the Gerasene/Gadarene demoniac(s) Matthew and Mark read “from the tombs” where Luke reads “from the city.” An explanation for the variation is suggested by the reading of Shem-Tob, *מהקברים*, which corresponds to the Greek of Matthew. “From the city,” on the other hand, reflects *מהקרייה*, a word that closely resembles the text of Shem-Tob.

Matt 20:32	ἐφώνησεν αὐτοῦς
Mark 10:49	φωνήσατε αὐτόν
Luke 18:40	ἀχθῆναι πρὸς αὐτόν
Shem-Tob	ויקראם

In the pericope on the healing of the blind man Bartimaeus (named only in Mark) or, in Matthew in the pericope on the healing of two blind men,

Matthew reads “and Jesus having arisen *called them*.” This is supported by Mark’s text: “and Jesus having arisen said *call him*.” Luke, on the other hand, says “and Jesus having arisen commanded him *to be brought to him*.” The difference in the accounts “called” versus “brought” can be traced to the Hebrew root קרא “to call” read by Shem-Tob and the similar root קרב “to bring.”

Matt 21:12	ἐξέβαλεν
Mark 11:15	ἐκβάλλειν
Luke 19:45	ἐκβάλλειν
John 2:14-15	εὔρεν . . . ἐξέβαλεν
Shem-Tob	וימצא

These gospel parallels come from the pericope on cleansing the temple. The three synoptics read “cast out,” Shem-Tob reads “found,” while John reads both “found” and “cast out,” giving the appearance of conflation. The variant forms can be explained on the basis of similar Hebrew words. Several times ἐκβάλλειν in LXX translates the hiphil of מצא: 2 Chron 23:14, 29:5, 16. In Shem-Tob the hiphil of this root frequently occurs where ἐκβάλλειν appears in the Greek text: at 7:4, 5, 22, 9:25, and so forth. Thus the variants may go back to:

וימצא	“found”	Shem-Tob, John <sup>a</sup>
ויוצא	“cast out”	Matt, Mark, Luke, John <sup>b</sup> . <sup>56</sup>

Matt 7:14	οἱ εὐρίσκοντες αὐτήν
Luke 13:24	ισχύσουσιν
Shem-Tob	המוצאים אותה

In the saying on the two ways Matthew reads “few are those who *find* it.” Luke reads “many will seek to enter and will not *be strong/prevail/be able*.” The primary meaning of the verb ισχύω is “to be strong/to prevail” and only by extension does it come to mean “to be able.” Several times in LXX ισχύω is used to render אמן “to be strong” (cf. Deut 31:6, 7, 23; Josh 10:25; 1 Chron 22:13). One can explain the variation in Matthew and Luke, then, on the basis of different Hebrew substrata, one of which reads the root מצא “to find,” now reflected in Shem-Tob and Greek Matthew, and the other of which reads the similar-appearing root אמן “to be strong,” reflected by ισχύω in Luke.

<sup>a</sup>For the apocopated hiphil form, ויצא, see Gen 15:5; Deut 4:20.

These forms are confused elsewhere in the Bible. In Amos 2:16 LXX<sup>b</sup> reads καὶ ὁ κραταῖος οὐ μὴ εὐρήσει τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ “and the strong will not find his heart.” This stands for ואמיץ לבו “and the strong of heart” in MT. The Greek apparently equals לבו (את) ולא ימצא אמיץ (את), a doublet based on the similarity of מצא and אמיץ. The reading in ms W, καὶ εὐρήσει τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ equals לבו (את) ומצא; that in OC<sup>c</sup>, καὶ εὐρήθη ἡ καρδία αὐτοῦ equals לבו ומצא; and that in V, καὶ ὁ κραταῖος εὐρήσει τὴν καρδίαν αὐτοῦ equals לבו (את) ומצא אמיץ. These variants reflect visually similar readings in Hebrew and may be diagrammed as:

	ומצא (את)
	לבו
	ויאמיץ <sup>57</sup>
Matt 25:24	θερίζων ὅπου οὐκ ἔσπειρας
Luke 19:21	θερίζεις ὃ οὐκ ἔσπεις
Shem-Tob	תקצור אשר לא זרעת

In the parable of the talents Matthew reads “reaping *where* (ὅπου) you did not sow.” Luke reads “you reap *what* (ὃ) you did not sow.” The difference in these passages may be explained by Shem-Tob’s אשר which can mean “which/what” or in the form of באשר or שם . . . אשר can mean “where.”

Matt 7:11	δόματα ἀγαθὰ . . . ἀγαθὰ
Luke 11:13	δόματα ἀγαθὰ . . . πνεῦμα ἅγιον
Shem-Tob	מתנות טובות . . . רוחו הטוב

The Greek text of Matthew reads “If, therefore, you being evil know how to give *good gifts* (δόματα ἀγαθὰ) to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give *good things* (ἀγαθὰ) to those who ask him.” Luke and Shem-Tob read basically the same except in the second

<sup>57</sup>The variants in Matt 7:14 and Luke 13:24 may also be explained on the basis of the Aramaic root שכח which means both “to find” and “to be able.” It has been argued that this root means “to find” but not “to be able” in Palestinian Aramaic. See Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, 133-34. The word, however, has now been found with the meaning “to be able” in Palestinian Aramaic, i.e., in 1QapGen 21, 13, and is noted by Fitzmyer and Harrington in their collection of Palestinian Aramaic texts. See Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Daniel J. Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978) 339. For a discussion and bibliography see J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Genesis Apocryphon of Qumran Cave 1. A Commentary*, 2nd ed. (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1971) 150.



position Luke (according to the majority reading) has “Holy Spirit” and Shem-Tob has “his good spirit.” At this point several variants occur in Luke. The Western text, represented by D it, reads “good gift” (ἀγαθὸν δόμα) followed by Θ’s plural (δόματα ἀγαθά). P<sup>45</sup> L<sup>pc</sup> aur vg read “good spirit” (πνεῦμα ἀγαθόν) and Sy<sup>s</sup> arm read “good things” (= ἀγαθά). Two basic forms appear to be represented: (1) δόμα(τα) ἀγαθόν(-ά) (ἀγαθά being an abbreviation of this); and (2) πνεῦμα ἀγαθόν (πνεῦμα ἄγιον being a secondary modification into more common terminology). These forms may be explained by variant Hebrew phrases, one represented by Shem-Tob, the other by a misreading of the phrase, thus: Shem-Tob = רוחו הטוב and the misreading = מתן הטוב. מתן הטוב, itself an incorrect grammatical form (not unusual in Shem-Tob),<sup>58</sup> may have occurred by a compression of *resh* and *waw* in the Herodian script and a confusion of *heth/tav* and *waw/final-nun*. In the Herodian script when *resh* is immediately joined by the short stroke of the *waw* the result is remarkably similar in appearance to *mem*.<sup>59</sup> *Heth/tav* and *waw/final-nun* are naturally close in appearance and require no special explanation for their confusion.

### Other Interesting Readings in Shem-Tob’s Matthew

For a conclusion to this profile of Shem-Tob’s text of Matthew there is appended here a number of other interesting readings. These, contrasted with the Greek, will give further indication of the differences that exist between the two text forms.

3:11	Greek Shem-Tob	He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He will baptize you with <i>the fire of the Holy Spirit</i> .
8:20	Greek Shem-Tob	And Jesus said to him: Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. Jesus answered him: the foxes have holes and the birds have nests; but the Son of Man, <i>the Son of the virgin</i> , has no place to enter his head.

<sup>58</sup>Cf. 7:18 וְעַיִן הַטּוֹב; 12:41 זֶה הַדּוֹר; 13:38 וּפְרֵי הַטּוֹב; 15:15 וְזֹאת הַחֲדָה.

<sup>59</sup>See F. M. Cross, Jr., “The Development of Jewish Scripts,” in *The Bible and the Ancient Near East*, ed. G. E. Wright (Garden City NY: Doubleday, 1961). On pp. 138-39 several examples of Herodian script are presented.

13:23	Shem-Tob	[At the end of the parable of the sower the following plus reading appears.] As for the hundred, this is the one purified of heart and sanctified of body. As for the sixty, this is the one separated from women. As for the thirty, this is the one sanctified in matrimony, in body, and in heart.
19:12	Greek Shem-Tob	For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Because there are eunuchs from their birth; <i>these are those who have not sinned</i> . There are eunuchs made by man and there are self-made eunuchs <i>who subdue their desire</i> for the sake of the kingdom of heaven; <i>these are those who enter into great prominence</i> .
23:33	Greek Shem-Tob	You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to Gehenna? Serpents, seed of vipers, how will you escape the judgment of Gehenna <i>if you do not turn in repentance?</i>
24:40	Greek Shem-Tob	Then two men will be in the field; one is taken and one is left. Then if there shall be two ploughing in a field, <i>one righteous and the other evil</i> , the one will be taken and the other left.
24:41	Shem-Tob	[At the end of this verse the following plus reading appears.] This is because the angels at the end of the world will remove the stumbling blocks from the world and will separate the good from the evil.
25:13	Greek [Mss] Shem-Tob	Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man comes. Be careful, therefore, because you do not know the day or the hour when the <i>bridegroom</i> will come.
26:23	Greek Shem-Tob	He answered, “He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me, will betray me.” He answered them: “He who dips his hand with me in the dish will sell me.” All of them were eating from one dish. Therefore, they did not recognize him; because if they had recognized him they would have destroyed him.

# Summary and Conclusion

A remarkable Hebrew text of the Gospel of Matthew appears in the fourteenth-century Jewish polemical treatise entitled *Even Bohan*, authored by Shem-Tob ben-Isaac ben-Shaprut. An investigation into this text leads to the conclusion that an old substratum to the Hebrew Matthew in Shem-Tob is a prior composition, not a translation. The old substratum, however, has been exposed to a series of revisions so that the present text of Shem-Tob represents the original only in an impure form. A pre-fourteenth-century date for the old substratum is established by its unique textual links with a number of earlier anti-Christian quotations of Matthew in Hebrew. An interesting scenario emerges when these quotations are arranged in chronological sequence and followed by the corresponding readings from Shem-Tob and du Tillet. When these texts are so arranged it becomes clear that a gradual evolution in the Hebrew tradition has taken place beginning with the earliest quotations, running through Shem-Tob's Matthew, and ending with du Tillet. The evolution involves two kinds of changes: (1) stylistic modification consisting primarily of improvements in grammar and the substitution of synonymous words and phrases; and (2) revisions designed to bring the Hebrew into closer harmony with the Greek and Latin texts. A conjecture for these latter revisions is that they were for the purpose of establishing a common textual base for discussion and debate between Jews and Christians in the Middle Ages. Two of Shem-Tob's comments on the text also imply he is transcribing an already existing Hebrew Matthew for his polemical treatise, not creating a fresh translation.

Finally, the compositional nature of the old substratum to Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is supported by a literary profile of the text. It is replete with literary devices characteristic of composition, such as puns, word connections, and alliteration, and with passages that reflect variant Hebrew substrata to the Greek or that give a Hebrew basis for synoptic variation. The text also is written in a kind of Hebrew one would expect for a document composed in the first century but preserved in late rabbinic manuscripts. It is basically composed in biblical Hebrew with a healthy

mixture of Mishnaic Hebrew and later rabbinic vocabulary and idiom. In this respect it is analogous to the Masada Scroll of Ben Sira when compared to the late fragments of this same document from the Cairo Geniza. Ben Sira was clearly written in biblical Hebrew, influenced by Mishnaic Hebrew and contemporary Aramaic. The medieval fragments from the Cairo Geniza, like the late manuscripts of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew, show numerous changes due to the corrections of medieval scribes designed to bring the text into a more contemporary form in regard to spelling, vocabulary, and other linguistic phenomena.

Once the revisionary nature of the present text of Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is recognized one is able to recapture much of the old unrevised substratum by comparing the manuscripts of Shem-Tob with each other and with the Greek and Latin texts of Matthew. Those Hebrew readings that are farthest from the Greek and Latin and less polished in style should be considered as belonging to the oldest layer of the text. Those that are closest to the Greek and Latin and are polished in style, especially when portraying a later rabbinic hand, should be considered as later revisions.

Other points of interest in regard to Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew are:

1. The Hebrew text of Matthew in the *Even Bohan* is not to be equated with those printed in the later revisions of Münster and du Tillet. Previous neglect of Shem-Tob's text is probably due to its mistaken identity with these other texts. Although the texts of Münster and du Tillet have an occasional link with Shem-Tob they in fact represent late revisions of the Shem-Tob-type text, corrected more or less consistently in order to conform more closely to the medieval Greek and Latin texts of the First Gospel. They are the end result of an evolutionary process of the Hebrew Matthew that began in primitive times and underwent a series of stylistic and textual changes throughout the early and late medieval periods.

2. The relationship between Shem-Tob's Matthew and other textual traditions is difficult to assess due to the fact that Shem-Tob basically represents a unique text type. Nevertheless, some affinity exists between Shem-Tob, the Old Latin, the Old Syriac, and the Diatessaron of Tatian. Of considerable interest is Shem-Tob's several readings that agree with the Coptic Gospel of Thomas.

3. The evidence for a relationship between Shem-Tob's Matthew and the Hebrew gospels referred to by early Gentile Christian writers is almost totally negative. With a few minor exceptions none of the quotations from the Hebrew gospels quoted in early Gentile Christian literature corre-

sponds to Shem-Tob. It may be concluded with considerable finality that Shem-Tob's Hebrew Matthew is unrelated to the various apocryphal Hebrew gospels alluded to by early Gentile Christians. Shem-Tob's Matthew was preserved by Jews and perhaps by Jewish Christians, but not by Gentile Christians, and was only quoted sporadically by Jewish writers until it reemerged *in toto* in the *Even Bohan*.

If the conclusion to this study is correct, namely, that the old substratum to the Hebrew Matthew found in the *Even Bohan* is an original Hebrew composition, the question of the relationship of this old Hebrew substratum to the canonical Greek text is of great importance. As stated before, three basic possibilities exist: (1) The old substratum to Shem-Tob's text is a translation of the Greek Matthew. The conclusion stated above, in the judgment of this writer, rules out this possibility. (2) The Greek Matthew is a translation of the old Hebrew substratum. This likewise does not appear to be a possibility. Although the two texts are accounts of the same events basically in the same order, careful analysis of their lexical and grammatical correspondences fails to support the Greek as a translation. (3) Both the old Hebrew substratum and the Greek Matthew represent compositions in their own respective languages. This latter appears to be the best explanation of the evidence. It implies that the two texts are two editions in different languages of the same traditional material with neither being a translation of the other.

There is evidence from ancient times that this sometimes occurred. Josephus tells us that his work, *The Jewish War* (75-79 CE), was first written in Aramaic or Hebrew and then translated into Greek (Josephus, *War* 1.3). The evidence suggests, however, that Josephus did not actually translate, in a literal sense, the Semitic original but in fact virtually rewrote the whole account.<sup>1</sup> The Aramaic/Hebrew original apparently served only as a model for the Greek version to follow.

In regard to the Hebrew and Greek Matthew, their similarity in arrangement and wording suggests that one, as in the case with Josephus, served as a model for the other. It might appear from the linguistic and sociological background to early Christianity and the nature of some theological tendencies in Shem-Tob's Matthew that the Hebrew text served as a model for the Greek. The present writer is, in fact, inclined to that po-

<sup>1</sup>See H. St. J. Thackeray, *The Jewish War I-III*, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961) ix-xi.

sition. The relationship of the Greek Matthew, however, to the other two synoptics strongly suggests an interaction among them on a Greek level. This brings forth the synoptic problem with all its complexities, a problem the present study does not propose to address. In view of this, any conclusion in regard to the priority of the Hebrew Matthew vis-à-vis the Greek, or vice versa, must not be hastily drawn. Which one came first will be determined conclusively only after much further study and accumulation of evidence.

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