BRIEF NOTES

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

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

1. The Old Wine

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


Codex B

37. καὶ οὐδεὶς βαλλεῖ οὖν νεὸν εἰς ἀσκοὺς παλαιοὺς εἰ δὲ μηγες ρηξεῖ ο οὖνος ο νεὸς τοὺς ἀσκοὺς καὶ αὐτὸς εκχυθησεται καὶ οἱ ἀσκοὶ ἀπολοῦνται

38. ἀλλὰ οὖν νεὸν εἰς ἀσκοὺς καὶ νοὸς βλητευν

39. οὐδεὶς πῶς παλαιὸν θελεῖ νεὸν λεγεί γαρ ὁ παλαιὸς χρήστος εστὶν

37. “And no one places new wine into old wineskins lest the new wine will burst the skins and will be poured out and the wineskins destroyed.

38. But new wine must be placed into new wineskins.

39. No one drinking old wine wishes new for he says the old is better.”

Codex D

37. καὶ οὐδεὶς βαλλεῖ οὖν νεὸν εἰς ἀσκοὺς παλαιοὺς εἰ δὲ μηγες ρηξεῖ ο οὖνος ο νεὸς τοὺς ἀσκοὺς τοὺς παλαιοὺς καὶ αὐτὸς εκχυθησεται καὶ οἱ ἀσκοὶ ἀπολοῦνται

38. ἀλλὰ οὖν νεὸν εἰς ἀσκοὺς καὶ νοὸς βαλλονων καὶ αμφότεροι τηροῦνται

37. “And no one places new wine into old wineskins lest the new wine will burst the old skins and will be poured out and the wineskins destroyed.

38. But they place new wine into new wineskins and both are preserved.”

v. 37 + τοὺς παλαιοὺς post ἀσκοὺς, D cop sa, bo

v. 38 ἐλπτευον | βαλλονων, Ν * D syP cop sa, bo Marcion
+ καὶ αμφότεροι τηροῦνται post ἐλπτευον, D a e r

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

Jesus’ parable on the patched garment and the wineskins is found in Matthew and Mark, as well as in Luke. However, the concluding statement at Luke 5:39 on the quality of the old wine is found in neither Matthew
nor Mark. It is generally agreed that the old wine in this verse is a symbol of Judaism and the new is a symbol of Christianity.²

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

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


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

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

Luke 11:38, 39

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codex B</th>
<th>Codex D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38. o de fapeiasaios id66n ebaamasev oti ou prouton ebaapioseh pro tou arisoutou</td>
<td>38. o de fapeiasaios npe6a6ato diakev6onexo en eaut66 legew dia ti ou prouton ebaapioseh pro tou arisoutou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. epev de o ke6 pro6 auton vevn ypevi oi fapeiasaioi . . . .</td>
<td>39. epev de o ke6 pro6 auton vevn ypevi oi fapeiasaioi upokritai . . . .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“And the Pharisee when he saw it marveled because he did not wash first before taking of the meal.</td>
<td>38. “And the Pharisee taking issue within himself began to say why does he not wash first before taking of the meal?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. And Jesus said to him, Now you Pharisees . . . .”</td>
<td>39. And Jesus said to him, Now you Pharisees hypocrites . . . .”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In vs. 38 the Western text intensifies the reaction to Jesus’ unconcern for ritual purity by having the Pharisee take issue “within himself” against Jesus, rather than just marvel because Jesus did not wash first. Furthermore, Jesus’ rebuke of the Pharisee is intensified in D and b by Jesus calling his host a hypocrite. The intensified narrative results in a clear statement as to how the efforts of the Pharisees for ritual purity are viewed by the
scribes of D and b. Also, by this intensified dialog between Jesus and his host, the stage is dramatically set for the scathing rebukes that immediately follow in this passage.

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

Luke 11:42

**Codex B**

αλλα ουαί υμων τοις
φαρισαίοις οτι αποδεκα-
toτε το ηδυοσμον και
το πηγανον και παν
λαχανον και παρερχεοθε
tην κρισιν και την
αγαπην ταυτα
dε εδει ποιησαι κακεωνa
μη παρεωαι

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

**Codex D**

αλλα ουαί υμων τοις
φαρισαίοις οτι αποδεκα-
toτε το ηδυοσμον και
το πηγανον και παν
λαχανον και παρερχεοθαι
tην κρισιν και την
αγαπην τον θν

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

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

6Metzger, p. 159.
any reading with which he is acquainted that fits his bias, whether it is found in Matthew or Mark, Marcion or Tatian. He even uses his own creations, as the addition of the man found working on the Sabbath at Luke 6:4 testifies.7

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

Luke 4:16

Codex B

\[\text{καὶ ἐλθὼν εἰς ναζαρα ὦν τῷ τεθραμμένῳ καὶ εἰσηλθέν}
\]
\[\text{kata to eiswos autw en tē}
\]
\[\text{ἡμερα τῶν σαββάτων εἰς τὴν}
\]
\[\text{συναγωγὴν καὶ ἀνεστή αναγωγὼνai}
\]

“And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and entered the synagogue on the Sabbath according to his custom

and stood up to read.”

Codex D

\[\text{εἶλθων δὲ εἰς ναζαρεῖον ὦν τῷ τεθραμμένῳ}
\]
\[\text{kata to eiswos en tē}
\]
\[\text{ἡμερα τῶν σαββάτων εἰς τὴν}
\]
\[\text{συναγωγὴν καὶ ἀνεστή αναγωγὸνai}
\]

“And when he had come to Nazareth, where,

according to the custom, he was in the synagogue on the Sabbath, he also stood up to read.”

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

7Speculations as to the origin of this unique reading are numerous. However, when the variants in the next two verses to be considered in our study (Luke 4:16; 23:56), as well as D’s anti-Judaic bias, are taken into consideration, the origin of this reading should not be a mystery. D wishes to teach his community that the “Jewish Sabbath” is no longer binding. The variants at 4:16 and 23:56 show Jesus and his followers as being freed from Jewish law and customs regarding the Sabbath. The addition at 6:4 supports D’s position. It would be much simpler to see this reading as a creation of D, reflecting what happened historically in the Christian church, i.e., the “Jewish Sabbath” was abandoned for the Christian “Lord’s Day.”
where I have shown that D is not adverse to Jesus’ being brought up in Nazareth.\(^8\) Therefore, it seems that D used this so-called “Marcionite reading” for a reason other than removing a statement about Jesus’ earlier residence in Nazareth.

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

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

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

Luke 23:56

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ὑποστρέψασαι δὲ τοὺς μαθητὰς καὶ μνα καὶ τὸ μὲν σάββατον ἱσχασαν κατὰ τὴν εὐνολὴν</td>
<td>ὑποστρέψασαι δὲ τοὺς μαθητὰς καὶ μνα καὶ τὸ μὲν σάββατον ἱσχασαν</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“And they returned and prepared spices and ointments, and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment.”</td>
<td>“And they returned and prepared spices and ointments, and rested the Sabbath day.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By omitting the phrase κατὰ τὴν ἐντολὴν ("according to the command-
ment"), D again changes Luke’s textual tradition. Luke endeavored to
maintain the Sabbath as a Christian institution by saying, among other
things, that it was Jesus’ personal custom not only to attend worship ser-
vices on the Sabbath but also to participate in them when the opportunity
was presented (4:16), and by having his followers rest according to the
commandment contained in the Decalogue. D, on the other hand, presents
Jesus and his followers as free from the law and Jewish traditional restric-
tions. The significance of the Sabbath as a Christian institution is lessened,
if not destroyed.

3. Conclusion

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

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