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The Sermon on the Mount and Spiritual Exercises

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M.Div., Harvard Divinity School, 2004

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An abstract of
a dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University
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Abstract

The Sermon on the Mount and Spiritual Exercises
By George B. Branch–Trevathan

This dissertation poses a general question in ethics—How do people become able to realize ethical ideals?—and examines one early Christian text—the Gospel of Matthew—to address it. To describe how Matthew imagines people attain moral ideals, I take as a starting point the evangelist's depiction of regimented practices and, more specifically, his depiction of the function of the sayings collection that constitutes chapters 5-7 of his composition, the Sermon on the Mount.

Following an introductory chapter that surveys the scholarship on regimented practices and on the Gospel of Matthew on which I build, in chapter two I present the evidence that leads many scholars of antiquity to conclude that some ancient sayings collections formed the basis for practices intended to transform practitioners into particular ethical ideals, for what the historian of philosophy Pierre Hadot calls "spiritual exercises." Chapters three, four, and five argue that comparable evidence exists for Matt 5-7 and that therefore it is reasonable to conclude that Matthew portrays the Sermon on the Mount as the basis for spiritual exercises intended to transform practitioners into the moral ideal articulated in Matthew's gospel.

This conclusion about Matthew's depiction of chapters 5-7 has implications for our understanding of Matthew's ethics in its ancient contexts, the history of self-transformation in antiquity, and the study of ethics generally. As I explain in the concluding chapter, it implies that Matthew views the attainment of moral ideals as a long travail characterized by spiritual exercises, that the prevailing periodization of the history of spiritual exercises must be abandoned because it claims that a first-century Christian author like Matthew should not feature such exercises in his ethical theory—the opposite of what this dissertation shows—, and that the approach this dissertation takes, its focus on spiritual exercises, can be useful for discerning how other authors portray moral transformation and thus valuable in addressing the general question this dissertation seeks to address.

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For Becky and Ben, with love

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Abbreviations

The abbreviations used in this study are from Alexander, Patrick H., John F. Kutsko, James D. Ernest, Shirley Decker-Lucke, and David L. Petersen, eds. *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999), with the following exceptions:

BNJ	Worthington, Ian, ed. *Brill's New Jacoby*. Brill, 2006. http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/brill-s-new-jacoby.
CAF	Kock, Theodor, ed. *Comicorum Atticorum Fragmenta*. 3 vols. Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1880.
CPG	Leutsch, Ernst von, and Friedrich Wilhelm Schneidewin, eds. *Corpus paroemiographorum Graecorum*. 3 vols. Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1958.
DGE	Adrados, Francisco Rodríguez, and Elvira Gangutia Elícegui, eds. *Diccionario griego-español*. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Instituto "Antonio de Nebrija," 1986.
PCG	Austin, Colin, and Rudolf Kassel, eds. *Poetae Comici Graeci*. 8 vols. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1983.
TrGF	Snell, Bruno, Richard Kannicht, and S. L. Radt, eds. *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*. 5 vols. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971.

All references to New Testament texts are to NA[28] (Eberhard Nestle, Erwin Nestle, Barbara Aland, Kurt Aland, Holger Strutwolf, and Universität Münster. Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung, eds., *Novum Testamentum Graece* [28th ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012]). Unless otherwise indicated, all references to Israel's scriptures are to the LXX (Alfred Rahlfs, *Septuaginta* [2 vols.; 9th ed.; Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1979]) and all translations are my own.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The Question and the Starting Point

How do people attain moral ideals? How do communities, especially those that resist or reject conventional ways of thinking and living, expect their adherents to achieve their ethical goals? One could ask these questions of any number of ancient groups, including ancient Jewish communities like the one that produced much of the literature in the Dead Sea Scrolls, Hellenistic and Roman philosophers, and early Christians. Indeed, a comparative study might reveal intriguing continuities as well as meaningful differences among groups that the modern historiography of antiquity often deems disparate. What sort of existence did each group idealize and how distinct in form or meaning were their means of achieving that existence? In this dissertation, however, I ask these questions of only one early Christian text: the Gospel of Matthew. What type of existence does the First Gospel portray as normative and, according to this writing, how does one realize such a life? What, in Matthew's view, should the human being become and how does he or she transform into that ethical ideal? This dissertation takes up these questions. It is a descriptive study of Matthean ethics, with ethics in this case meaning both an ideal form of human existence and the means of realizing it. The description of Matthew consumes the study and I intend it as a contribution to scholarship on the First Gospel. The conclusion suggests though some implications for our understanding of self-transformation in antiquity and the study of self-transformation more generally.

It is a commonplace in antiquity that natural ability, relevant knowledge, and/or practice determine one's ability to make progress in any area, ethics included.[1] Philo of Alexandria, for example, portrays nature, learning, and exercise as three paths to virtue and takes the biblical patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to represent each respectively.[2] One could therefore begin a study of Matthew's ethics with any one of these areas. Provisionally, with respect to nature, one might start by examining the passages in which the Matthean Jesus labels the Jewish leaders "offspring of vipers" (3:7; 12:34; 23:33) and the parable of the weeds, in which he refers to the "sons of the evil one" (13:38), because these designations imply, ostensibly at least, that the people in view are intrinsically and immutably evil.[3] With respect to knowledge, one might start with Matthew's abundant references to knowing (e.g., γινίσκω: 6:3; 7:23; 9:30; 10:26; 12:7, 33; 13:11; 16:3, 8; 21:45; 22:18; 24:32, 33, 39, 43, 50; 25:24; 26:10) and understanding (συνιήμι: 13:13, 14, 15, 19, 23, 51; 15:10; 16:12; 17:13) or to seeing (βλέπω: 5:28; 6:4, 6, 18; 7:3; 11:4; 12:22; 13:13, 14, 16, 17; 14:30; 15:31; 18:10; 22:16; 24:2, 4) and hearing (ἀκούω: 5:21, 27, 33, 38, 43; 7:24, 26; 8:10; 10:14, 27; 11:2, 4, 5, 15; 12:19, 24, 42; 13:9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 43; 14:1, 13; 15:10, 12; 17:5, 6;

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[1] Paul Shorey, "Φύσις, Μελέτη, Ἐπιστήμη," *TAPA* 40 (1909): 185–201.

[2] *Congr.* 35-6; *Somn.* 1.167-8; *Abr.* 52-3; Michael L. Satlow, "Philo on Human Perfection," *JTS* 59 (2008): 500–519; Ellen Birnbaum, "Exegetical Building Blocks in Philo's Interpretation of the Patriarchs," in *From Judaism to Christianity: Tradition and Transition: A* Festschrift *for Thomas H. Tobin, S.J., on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Patricia Walters, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 136 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 69–92.

[3] See W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 3 vols., International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments 26 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988), 1:304, on 3:7.

18:15, 16; 19:22, 25; 20:24, 30; 21:16, 33, 45; 22:22, 33, 34; 24:6; 26:65; 27:13, 47; 28:14) or

with the fact that the gospel features a prodigious amount of systematically organized

teaching material, which, more than any other feature, has prompted numerous interpreters

to conclude that the writing as a whole has a didactic purpose, that it compiles the

knowledge necessary for catechesis broadly defined[4] and/or offers practical instructions for

church leaders specifically.[5] With respect to practice, one might begin by examining Jesus'

insistence that his followers fast (6:16-18; 9:14-15), pray (5:44; 6:5-14; 7:7-11; cf. 8:25, 26:41;

et al), sing hymns (26:30), forgive (6:14-15; 18:21-2, 23-35; cf. 9:2), and suffer persecution

(5:10-12; 10:16-23; 16:24-6; 24:9-13), or with particular literary forms within the gospel

(e.g., formula quotations) and the practices their existence implies (e.g., "study and

instruction").[6] Because I believe that Pierre Hadot's studies of the fundamental role of

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[4] Ernst von Dobschütz, "Matthew as Rabbi and Catechist," in *The Interpretation of Matthew*, ed. Graham Stanton, Issues in Religion and Theology 1 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 19–29; C. F. Evans, "The New Testament in the Making," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible: From the Beginnings to Jerome*, ed. Peter R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 272; Francis Wright Beare, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1981), 5; Graham Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People: Studies in Matthew* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1992), 43; Dale C. Allison, *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 139; Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation*, Rev. ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 187, 190; Carl R. Holladay, *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Message and Meaning of Jesus Christ*, Expanded CD-ROM Version. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005), 199.

[5] George Dunbar Kilpatrick, *The Origins of the Gospel According to St. Matthew* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946), 78–80; Günther Bornkamm, "The Authority to 'Bind' and 'Loose' in the Church in Matthew's Gospel," in *The Interpretation of Matthew*, ed. Graham Stanton, Issues in Religion and Theology 1 (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 101–14; Paul S. Minear, *Matthew, the Teacher's Gospel* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1982).

[6] Krister Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew and Its Use of the Old Testament* (Ramsey, NJ: Sigler, 1991), 29.

practices, or, as he calls them, "spiritual exercises," in ethical formation enable us to describe the role of practices in Matthew's ethical vision with greater specificity than current scholarship typically does and thereby shed new light on the evangelist's ethics as a whole, this study takes practices as its starting point. To study practices in Matthew's gospel, I will focus on one specific literary form, the gnomic collection in chs. 5–7, and the exercises that form often facilitates. Relevant matters of nature and knowledge will be covered in due course.

Prior Research

The Justification for this Study

Modern scholarship makes Matthew seem an ideal early Christian text to query about practices and the realization of moral ideals because it typically portrays Matthew as reflecting or facilitating, resulting from or making possible morally formative practices. Ernst von Dobschütz, for instance, deems Matthew's repetitiveness and use of stock formulas evidence that the evangelist was a converted rabbi who employed the catechetical conventions of rabbinic Judaism to train followers of Jesus.[7] Krister Stendahl argues that the literary form of the gospel—in his view, a manual for church teaching and administration— implies the existence of a school that cultivated ecclesial leaders.[8] Thanks in part to these and similar claims, it is now common for biblical scholars to say that Matthew aimed and/or his

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[7] von Dobschütz, "Matthew as Rabbi and Catechist."

[8] Stendahl, *School of St. Matthew*, esp. 29–33.

gospel served to train disciples in some sense.[9] And yet it is equally common to remain vague about the details of that training. For instance, Richard Hays, in a chapter of his *Moral Vision of the New Testament* entitled "The Gospel of Matthew: Training for the Kingdom of Heaven," states that "[t]he formation and discipling of the church occurs through the instruction offered by this Gospel."[10] But he says very little about how Matthew imagines such instruction forms one, apart from mandating membership in an intentional and disciplined community. Warren Carter stresses that Matthew has a "formational rather than informational function"[11] and, in what is perhaps the most detailed account available of how this gospel is formative, shows how the specific discourses about Jesus, his followers, their opponents, and the world that the gospel deploys as well as the rituals and organizational structures it sanctions shape and sustain a novel group identity.[12] Although he sketches a vivid portrait of how the First Gospel "shape[s] and legitimate[s] the marginal identity and lifestyle of a community of disciples," Carter nonetheless leaves room for a thicker description of how that lifestyle forms individuals, how the practices authorized by the text

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[9] Carter writes, "The gospel seeks to shape a community of disciples…. This formational rather than informational function and communal orientation have been a constant focus in studies of the gospel over the last half century. Most scholars understand the gospel to have some sort of teaching and pastoral function" (*Matthew and the Margins: A Sociopolitical and Religious Reading* [Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2000], 8). For a summary of relevant scholarship, see Alexander Sand, *Das Matthäus-Evangelium*, Erträge der Forschung 275 (Darmstadt: Wiss. Buchgesellschaft, 1991), 107–110, 160–167.

[10] Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996), 96–7.

[11] Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 8.

[12] Ibid., 1–2, 9–11.

render one consistently capable of the resistance to Roman imperial structures that, on his account, characterizes the Matthean way of life.[13] From the perspective of one who wants to know how according to Matthew's gospel someone attains the ethical ideal, by what processes one becomes moral, the existing scholarship remains vague. The shortcoming of the myriad accounts of how Matthew results from, records, or facilitates formative practices is their generality.

Theological commitments may help explain why some scholars have not explored formation in Matthew with greater specificity. Protestants have often seen right actions and moral selves as the results not of formative practices but of divine grace.[14] The Matthean ideal, on this view, would be formed not by striving, not by *askesis*, but by divine reformation apart from human action. Some Protestants have thus reversed Augustine's and others' understanding of the role of religious practice, seeing practices as resulting from moral change, not producing it.[15] This theological starting point would explain why these

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[13] The quoted phrase is from ibid., 11. For this description of the Matthean way of life, see ibid, 1.

[14] Compare, for instance, John Calvin's interpretation of Matt 25:31-46 with that of Juan de Maldonado or Cornelius à Lapide. See John Calvin, *Commentaries*, ed. David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance, 12 vols. (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1959), *ad loc*; John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), 3.18.1–3; Juan de Maldonado, *A Commentary on the Holy Gospels*, ed. George J. Davie, trans. George John Davie, 2 vols., Catholic Standard Library (London: J. Hodges, 1888), 2:503; Cornelius à Lapide, *The Great Commentary*, trans. Thomas W. Mossman, 3 vols., 3d ed. (London: Hodges, 1887), 3:464.

[15] Margaret R. Miles, "'The Rope Breaks When It Is Tightest': Luther on the Body, Consciousness, and the Word," *HTR* 77 (1984): 239–58; see also Gilbert Meilaender, *The Theory and Practice of Virtue* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), 100–26; Sarah Coakley, *Powers and Submissions: Spirituality, Philosophy and Gender* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002),

Protestants have had little need or desire to ask how—through what processes—the ideal

Matthean self arises. It does not address why others have not pursued the question in greater

detail.

Regardless of why scholarship on this topic currently lacks specificity, a more specific

account of Matthew's understanding of moral formation seems possible or, at minimum, the

possibility of offering one merits investigation, given the abundant evidence for and the

recent detailed studies of moral formation in Matthew's historical contexts, that is, in the

ancient Mediterranean world.[16] The scholar whose work has done the most in the last half

century to highlight and describe moral formation in antiquity is the historian and theorist of

philosophy Pierre Hadot.[17] A brief account of his characterization of ancient philosophy will

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136–9. The notion that practices can facilitate the transformation of the self is nonetheless also found among the Protestant reformers; see John Kelsay, "Prayer and Ethics: Reflections on Calvin and Barth," *HTR* 82 (1989): 169–84; George Lindbeck, "Martin Luther and the Rabbinic Mind," in *Understanding the Rabbinic Mind: Essays on the Hermeneutic of Max Kadushin*, ed. Peter Ochs, South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism 14 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 141–64; Martha Ellen Stortz, "Practicing Christians: Prayer as Formation," in *The Promise of Lutheran Ethics*, ed. Karen L. Bloomquist and John R. Stumme (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 55–74; Derek Nelson, "Finding Torah Hidden in Law: Blind Spots in Seeing a Rabbinical Luther" (presented at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Francisco, Calif., 2011).

[16] Most scholars date Matthew to the late first century C.E. and locate its composition in Antioch of Syria. See Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:127–47; David C. Sim, *The Gospel of Matthew and Christian Judaism: The History and Social Setting of the Matthean Community*, Studies of the New Testament and its World (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998), 31–62.

[17] In his inaugural lecture at the Collège de France in 1983, Hadot names history and theory as his primary and intertwined concerns:

"We have just given a very brief outline of the main paths of the history of the philosophical schools of antiquity. But as a history of ancient *philosophia*, our history of Hellenistic and Roman thought is less focused on studying the doctrinal diversities and particularities of these different schools than it is on attempting to describe the very essence of the phenomenon of *philosophia* and finding the traits shared by the 'philosopher' or by 'philosophizing' in

alert us to the general importance of formative practices as well as to some of the specific practices undertaken in antiquity.

On Hadot's account, philosophy originally was—and the ancients understood it as—the pursuit of a new and better way of being in the world, of a way of life radically different from that of most people, in contrast with what philosophy typically is today, the search for

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antiquity. We must try to recognize in some way the strangeness of this phenomenon, in order then to try to understand better the strangeness of its permanence throughout the whole history of Western thought" ("Forms of Life and Forms of Discourse in Ancient Philosophy," in *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson, trans. Michael Chase [Oxford: Blackwell, 1995], 56).

Earlier in his career, Hadot was a noted scholar of Latin Patristics. See, for example, Marius Victorinus, *Traités théologiques sur la Trinité*, ed. Paul Henry and Pierre Hadot, Sources chrétiennes 68 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1960); Pierre Hadot, *Porphyre et Victorinus*, 2 vols. (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1968); Saint Ambrose, *Apologie de David*, ed. Pierre Hadot, trans. Marius Cordier, Sources chrétiennes 239 (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1977). On his intellectual itinerary, see Pierre Hadot, "Postscript: An Interview with Pierre Hadot," in *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 279–81.

Michel Foucault has also drawn attention to antiquity's systems of human formation. I focus instead on Hadot because his work inspired much of the relevant material in Foucault's corpus. On Hadot's influence on Foucault, see Arnold I. Davidson, "Spiritual Exercises and Ancient Philosophy: An Introduction to Pierre Hadot," *Critical Inquiry* (1990): 480–2. On their differences, see Pierre Hadot, "Reflections on the Idea of the 'Cultivation of the Self,'" in *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 206–14. In as much as one accepts Hadot's claim that Foucault focuses so exclusively on individuals fashioning themselves into their own aesthetical ideals that he overlooks the worldviews, the understandings of the cosmos, that, in the minds of such individuals, sanctioned their self-fashioning, Hadot's work is also more pertinent to a text like Matthew that stresses the causal connection between cosmos and ethos. Davidson, however, argues persuasively that Hadot overstates the degree of difference between himself and Foucault ("Ethics as Ascetics: Foucault, the History of Ethics, and Ancient Thought," in *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault*, ed. Gary Gutting, 2d ed. [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005], 121–5).

an abstract account of reality from which a way of living might eventually follow.[18] "[I]n all ancient philosophy, philosophy consists in the movement by which the individual transcends himself toward something which lies beyond him," Hadot writes.[19] It is "an attempt at spiritual progress and a means of inner transformation."[20] In this attempt, philosophical teachers and students fashioned specific beliefs, forms of community, and, most importantly, practices that would enable them to achieve their moral ideals. The major philosophical schools of antiquity elaborated sophisticated accounts of the universe (physics), of knowledge (logic), of morality (ethics), and more but these beliefs or doctrines did not constitute their philosophies. Rather, they justified and clarified the ways of life the schools advocated and

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[18] See, *inter alia*, Pierre Hadot, "Spiritual Exercises," in *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 107. This definition of philosophy and this contrast between what philosophy was and what it is runs throughout Hadot's work. His interest in intellectual exercises and the transformation of the self appears in his early study of Plotinus (*Plotinus, Or, the Simplicity of Vision*, trans. Michael Chase [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993], 48: "Knowledge, for Plotinus, is always experience, or rather it is an inner metamorphosis") and as early as his "Rapport sur l'exercice" for the 1971 *Annuaire des sciences religieuses* of the *École pratique des hautes études*, he defines philosophy as self-transformation through intentional practices: "dans l'Antiquité, au moins tardive, la philosophie se ramène à des exercices spirituels (méditation, préméditation, examen de conscience) destinés à provoquer une transformation radicale de l'être du philosophe" (Pierre Hadot, "Théologies et Mystiques de La Grèce Hellénistique et de La Fin de l'Antiquité," in *École Pratique Des Hautes études, 5e Section, Sciences Religieuses. Annuaire. Tomes 80-81, Fascicule III. Comptes Rendus Des Conférences 1971-1972 et 1972-1973*, ed. École pratique des hautes études [Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1971], 277). For an overview of Hadot's characterizations of philosophy, see Arnold I. Davidson, "Introduction: Pierre Hadot and the Spiritual Phenomenon of Ancient Philosophy," in *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 19–36.

[19] Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, 63.

[20] Hadot, "Forms of Life and Forms of Discourse in Ancient Philosophy," 60–1; Hadot, "Spiritual Exercises," 83; Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, 79, 149.

their study and production facilitated progress in this new life.[21] They developed social

arrangements and modes of personal relationship centered on moral or spiritual guidance—

shaping, leading, and exhorting one another's conscience.[22] Most importantly, they adopted

practices intended to transform their thoughts, desires, and dispositions. Some of these

practices were bodily. The Stoic Musonius Rufus, for instance, recommended acclimating

oneself to physical discomfort ("to the cold, to heat, to hunger, to frugal nourishment, to

hard beds") in order to desensitize the body to pain and thereby render the soul more

courageous and temperate.[23] But most of the practices were mental: studying mathematics

and the natural world,[24] engaging in dialogue and debate,[25] meditating on doctrinal

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[21] Hadot, "Spiritual Exercises," 86–8, 104; Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, 3–5, 118, 175–6, 253. See also his "Postscript: An Interview with Pierre Hadot," 281: "Originally, then, philosophy is above all the choice of a way of life, to which philosophical discourse then gives justifications and theoretical foundations." Cynicism and Skepticism are exceptions in that they suppressed theoretical speech (*What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, 101, 109–113, 142–145). Michael Frede argues that Hadot's description of the relationship between philosophy as a way of life and philosophy as abstract discourse could be more nuanced and historically specific because it is more true of the Hellenistic and Roman Imperial schools than it is of Socrates and Plato ("The Philosopher," in *Greek Thought: A Guide to Classical Knowledge*, ed. Jacques Brunschwig, G. E. R. Lloyd, and Pierre Pellegrin, Harvard University Press Reference Library [Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2000], 3–19). John Cooper claims that Hadot is mistaken in seeing spiritual exercises and not philosophical discourse as the center of gravity in ancient philosophies (*Pursuits of Wisdom: Six Ways of Life in Ancient Philosophy from Socrates to Plotinus* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012], 17–23).

[22] Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, 3, 56–60, 123–125, 156–157, 211–220, 247, *passim*; cf. 277.

[23] Ibid., 188–9. Hadot quotes from Musonius' Sixth Discourse. See also his discussions of the practices of Cynics (ibid., 108–11) and of Porphyry (ibid., 159), *inter alia*.

[24] Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, 61–5.

[25] Ibid., 55, 62.

maxims,[26] monitoring one's inner discourse,[27] and composing and commenting on texts.[28] These practices aimed at such a total reformation—no, transformation—of the person from the inside out that Hadot terms them "spiritual exercises."[29] He believes no other term can capture the scope of their impact, as he explains in the 1974 *Annuaire* of the *École pratique des hautes études*:

> « Exercices spirituels » . L'expression déroute un peu le lecteur contemporain. Tout d'abord il n'est plus de très bon ton, aujourd'hui, d'employer le mot « spirituel ». Mais il faut bien se résigner à employer ce terme, parce que les autres adjectifs ou qualificatifs possibles : « psychique », « moral », « éthique », « intellectuel », « de pensée », « de l'âme » ne recouvrent pas tous les aspects de la réalité que nous voulons décrire. On pourrait évidemment parler d'exercices de pensée, puisque, dans ces exercices, la pensée se prend en quelque sorte pour matière et cherche à se modifier elle-même. Mais le mot « pensée » n'indique pas d'une manière suffisamment claire que l'imagination et la sensibilité interviennent d'une manière très importante dans ces exercices. Pour les mêmes raisons, on ne peut se contenter d'« exercices intellectuels », bien que les aspects intellectuels (définition, division, raisonnement, lecture, recherche, amplification rhétorique) y jouent un grand rôle. « Exercices éthiques » serait une expression assez séduisante, puisque, nous le verrons, les exercices en question contribuent puissamment à la thérapeutique des passions et se rapportent à la conduite de la vie. Pourtant ce serait là encore une vue trop limitée. En fait, ces exercices — nous l'entrevoyons par le texte de G. Friedmann — correspondent à une transformation de la vision du monde et à une métamorphose de la personnalité. Le mot « spirituel » permet bien de faire entendre que ces exercices sont l'oeuvre, non seulement de la pensée, mais de tout le psychisme de l'individu et surtout il révèle les

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[26] Hadot, "Forms of Life and Forms of Discourse in Ancient Philosophy," 58–60; Hadot, "Spiritual Exercises," 85–7; Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, 84, 106, 113, 135, 156.

[27] Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, 113, 135.

[28] Ibid., 73 (Plato's "dialogues were written not to 'inform' people but to 'form' them"), 87, 153–55. See also Hadot's list of philosophical practices, taken from Philo, *Her.* 253; *Leg.* 3.18 (*Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson [Oxford: Blackwell, 1995], 84).

[29] On the totality of their impact, see Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, 6, 176–180, 190, 277.

vraies dimensions de ces exercices : grâce à eux, l'individu s'élève à la vie de l'Esprit objectif, c'est-à-dire se replace dans la perspective du Tout (« S'éterniser en se dépassant »).[30]

These exercises are "intended to carry out a radical change in our being,"[31] "a transformation of the self" that renders one more capable of the life sought, that allows one to attain a moral ideal.[32] What most modern people have mistaken for philosophy, philosophical discourse, is merely a byproduct of philosophy and not the thing itself, at least not originally. Philosophy itself is originally the attempt to fashion oneself into a particular ideal and regimented practices, or spiritual exercises, are its formative instruments.

Given that this study aims to elucidate the Gospel of Matthew, which engages extensively with Jewish texts and traditions and so seems to emerge from a Jewish intellectual if not social milieu distinct in important ways from the Greek and Roman philosophies on

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[30] Pierre Hadot, "Exercices spirituels," in *École pratique des hautes études, Section des sciences religieuses. Annuaire. Tome 84, 1975-1976*, ed. École pratique des hautes études (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1974), 25–6; English translation in Hadot, "Spiritual Exercises," 81–2; see also Pierre Hadot, "Ancient Spiritual Exercises and 'Christian Philosophy,'" in *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson, trans. Michael Chase (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 127; Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, 6, 176–180, 190, 277; Davidson, "Introduction: Pierre Hadot and the Spiritual Phenomenon of Ancient Philosophy," 23–31. In comparing the practices of ancient philosophical schools to Ignatian exercises, Hadot follows Paul Rabbow (*Seelenführung; Methodik der Exerzitien in der Antike* [Munich: Kösel-Verlag, 1954]) and accepts the critique, made by George Luck ("Review of Paul Rabbow, *Seelenführung: Methodik Der Exerzitien in Der Antike*," *Gnomon* 28 [1956]: 268–71) and others, that Rabbow focused too narrowly on rhetorical practices; see "Ancient Spiritual Exercises and 'Christian Philosophy,'" 127. For a brief survey of the study of Greek philosophical exercises before Hadot, see the editor's note in Michel Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1981-82*, ed. Frédéric Gros, trans. Burchell, Graham (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 61n6.

[31] Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, 176.

[32] Ibid., 179–80. See also Ibid., 6, 62, 65, 190, 277.

which Hadot focuses, it is worth noting at this point that, according to Hadot, spiritual

exercises are not exclusive to ancient philosophical schools, at least as those schools are

traditionally delineated (i.e., Platonists, Aristotelians, Stoics, Epicureans, Skeptics, and

Cynics). They figure also in ancient Judaism (which might in this and other respects be

considered a philosophical school).[33] In an essay intended "not merely to draw attention to

the existence of spiritual exercises in Greco-Latin antiquity, but above all to delimit the scope

and importance of this phenomenon," Hadot maintains that "spiritual exercises can be best

observed in the context of Hellenistic and Roman schools of philosophy," not that they can

only be observed in such schools.[34] In fact, Hadot finds the most complete catalogues of

spiritual exercises in two passages of the first century Jewish scriptural interpreter Philo (*Leg.*

3.18; *Her.* 253). To be sure, Philo participates in the philosophical currents of the ancient

Mediterranean and Hadot describes him as naming Platonic and Stoic exercises, as Philo

Alexandrinus. But these catalogues appear within Philo's interpretation of the Mosaic law,[35]

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[33] On the great similarities of Judaism and philosophy in the first century, see Luke Timothy Johnson, "The New Testament's Anti-Jewish Slander and the Conventions of Ancient Polemic," *JBL* 108 (1989): 428–30; Michael L. Satlow, "'And on the Earth You Shall Sleep': 'Talmud Torah' and Rabbinic Asceticism," *JR* 83 (2003): esp. 224.

[34] Hadot, "Spiritual Exercises," 82.

[35] Both passages specify the forms of practice or training (ἡ ἄσκησις) that Jacob undertakes in order to acquire virtue. This characterization of Jacob as the trained one, as a spiritual athlete, is inspired by the story of him wrestling the angel in Gen 32:25-9 and appears also in *Sobr.* 65; *Fug.* 14; *Mut.* 88; *Somn.* 1.126-7; *Ios.* 26. For discussion, see Hans Svebakken, *Philo of Alexandria's Exposition of the Tenth Commandment*, Studia Philonica Monographs 6 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 98–108.

for he is also Philo Judaeus,[36] and they thus prove that morally transformative exercises feature not only in the philosophical schools as customarily conceived but also in some forms of ancient Judaism. Hadot later makes this point implicitly when he claims that Philo's portrayal of Judaism as a philosophy replete with philosophical exercises inspires Christians' presentation of Christianity as a philosophy.[37]

In keeping with his focus on the traditional philosophical schools, of spiritual exercises in Judaism Hadot mentions only Philo's two catalogues. But the phenomenon he identifies, the phenomenon of spiritual exercises, or regimented practices that transform a person into a particular ethical ideal, appears in other ancient Jewish sources as well. The biblical book of Sirach, for instance, constitutes, according to Daniel Harrington, "a handbook for personal and spiritual formation" that enables one to undertake meditative exercises like those Hadot discerns in the Greek and Roman philosophical schools.[38] The

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[36] For Alexandrinus and Judaeus as epithets denoting in modern scholarship Philo's Hellenic and Jewish contexts, respectively, see Valentin Nikiprowetzky, *Le commentaire de l'écriture chez Philon d'Alexandrie: son caractère et sa portée, observations philologiques*, Arbeiten zur Literatur und Geschichte des hellenistischen Judentums 11 (Leiden: Brill, 1977), 12–49; Earle Hilgert, "Philo Judaeus et Alexandrinus," in *The School of Moses: Studies in Philo and Hellenistic Religion in Memory of Horst R. Moehring*, ed. John Peter Kenney, Brown Judaic Studies 304 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 1–15. For the use of these and other titles for Philo in antiquity, see David T. Runia, "Philonic Nomenclature," in *Philo and the Church Fathers: A Collection of Papers*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 32 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 25–53.

[37] Hadot, "Ancient Spiritual Exercises and 'Christian Philosophy,'" 129; Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, 237.

[38] Daniel J. Harrington, *Jesus Ben Sira of Jerusalem: A Biblical Guide to Living Wisely* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2005), 101. Harrington explicitly refers to Hadot's description of philosophy.

Qumran *Hodayot* provide, on Carol Newsom's reading, "models for oral performances"[39] that create in the performers "dispositions, desires, motivations, and behaviors" that enable them to be proper members of the sect.[40] In other words, they facilitate transformative exercises. Jonathan Schofer has shown that the rabbinic work *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan* portrays rabbinic activity in general as the pursuit of self-transformation, just as Hadot portrays philosophy in general, and also forms the basis for some of the specific intellectual exercises Hadot finds within philosophical schools.[41] The content of the exercises that Sirach, the *Hodayot,* and *Rabbi Nathan* facilitate and the moral ideals those exercises support differ from those of the philosophical schools and from each other, just as the contents and particular goals of spiritual exercises differ among the philosophical schools. Nonetheless, these three examples show that the phenomenon Hadot describes in the schools and in Philo extends beyond them, specifically into other varieties of Judaism, and so forms part of the ancient Mediterranean world that is Matthew's context, generally speaking, however we might characterize the evangelist's context more specifically. Though he analyzes only those writings where he finds the phenomenon most prominent, Hadot would not be surprised nor would he object to this claim that spiritual exercises appear elsewhere since he does not delimit the phenomenon to the traditional schools and even implies that,

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[39] Carol A. Newsom, *The Self as Symbolic Space: Constructing Identity and Community at Qumran* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 203.

[40] Ibid., 194.

[41] Jonathan Wyn Schofer, *The Making of a Sage: A Study in Rabbinic Ethics* (Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 163–5. Schofer too cites Hadot's work.

while it has a history, it is a perennial feature of human life, a phenomenon "going back to immemorial times."[42]

Hadot's characterization of ancient philosophy thus reveals the prominence of transformative exercises in antiquity and the specificity with which one can describe their dynamics and thereby suggests that a thicker description of Matthew's portrayal of ethical exercise might be both possible and fruitful. Nevertheless, though he allows for the existence of spiritual exercises outside of philosophies, Hadot does claim that early Christianity did not feature such exercises before the mid-second century, at which point Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria unexpectedly assimilated this apocalyptic brand of Judaism to a Greco-Roman philosophy by, among other changes, introducing "philosophical spiritual exercises into" it.[43] If Matt 5-7 does indeed form the basis for a practice that conforms to Hadot's definition of a spiritual exercise, then Hadot's periodization is not only inconsistent but mistaken and the presence of spiritual exercises characterizes Christianity from at least the time of Matthew's composition. Since Hadot's account of the dissemination of formative practices has proven influential, this investigation has implications then for the historiography of moral formation in the early Roman period.[44]

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[42] Hadot, "Spiritual Exercises," 89.

[43] Hadot, "Ancient Spiritual Exercises and 'Christian Philosophy,'" 129; see also Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, 237.

[44] For examples of the influence of Hadot's periodization, see Michel Foucault, *The Care of the Self* (New York: Vintage Books, 1988), 43–5; Foucault, *Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 30, 81–4; Jeremy Driscoll, *Evagrius Ponticus: Ad Monachos*, Ancient Christian Writers 59 (New York: Newman Press, 2003), 208. For this periodization prior to Hadot, see, for example, Endré von Ivanka, "ΚΕΦΑΛΑΙΑ: Eine byzantinische Literaturform und ihre antike Wurzeln," *ByzZ* (1954): 285–91.

Hadot's work not only highlights the pervasiveness of transformative exercises in antiquity but also suggests a specific starting point for investigating Matthew's portrayal of such practices. The most fundamental of these exercises, Hadot says, are meditating on key principles expressed briefly and memorably, that is, in gnomic sayings or simply "gnomes," and policing one's inner life.[45] By meditation Hadot means "a purely rational, imaginative, or intuitive exercise than can take extremely varied forms" but which essentially entails "the memorization and assimilation of the fundamental dogmas and rules of life of the school."[46] In this exercise, one assimilates a way of life's core tenets, or fundamental dogmas and rules, by memorizing them so that they are always present in one's mind and by imagining their application to varied situations so that one can discern their import when confronted with shocking or surprising circumstances.[47] Such meditation makes possible the other fundamental exercise: "attention," or "self-control," in which one continually scrutinizes and disciplines one's thoughts, desires, and emotions so that they conform to the core tenets one

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[45] Hadot, "Forms of Life and Forms of Discourse in Ancient Philosophy," 58: "But above all every school practices exercises designed to ensure spiritual progress towards the ideal state of wisdom, exercises of reason that will be, for the soul, analogous to the athlete's training or to the application of a medical cure. Generally, they consist, above all, of self-control and meditation. Self-control is fundamentally being attentive to oneself"; Hadot, "Spiritual Exercises," 84–5.

[46] Hadot, "Forms of Life and Forms of Discourse in Ancient Philosophy," 59; see also Robert J. Newman, "*Cotidie meditare*: Theory and Practice of the *Meditatio* in Imperial Stoicism," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der romischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung (Principat, Philosophie, Wissenschaften Technik, Philosophie)*, vol. 2.36.3 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1989), 1483–4.

[47] Hadot, "Forms of Life and Forms of Discourse in Ancient Philosophy," 61–2; Hadot, "Spiritual Exercises," 85.

has espoused.[48] Through this process of assimilation and self-monitoring, one comes to be

and act in accordance with the school's ideals.[49] One realizes its way of life.

To facilitate meditation and, in turn, attention to oneself, schools stated their dogmas

in pithy, striking, and hence memorable forms—in gnomic sayings—and compiled

collections of those sayings.[50] According to Hadot, so central were these practices and so vital

the need to supply fuel for them that the very existence of a sayings collection can constitute

evidence of them. "The abundance of collections of Epicurean aphorisms," for instance, "is a

response to the demands of the spiritual exercise of meditation."[51] As I will explain below,

Matt 5-7, the so-called Sermon on the Mount (henceforth SM), is a collection of gnomic

sayings. Given the prominence of spiritual exercises in antiquity and the fact that such

collections are often intended to facilitate spiritual exercises, is the SM then, at least in the

narrative world of the gospel, regardless of how these chapters may have functioned or

Matthew may have intended them to function in his or others' communities, an instrument

for rendering people capable of attaining the evangelist's ethical ideal? Does Matthew present

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[48] Hadot, "Forms of Life and Forms of Discourse in Ancient Philosophy," 59–60; Hadot, "Spiritual Exercises," 84–5.

[49] Hadot, "Forms of Life and Forms of Discourse in Ancient Philosophy," 60; Hadot, "Spiritual Exercises," 84–6; Hadot, "Ancient Spiritual Exercises and 'Christian Philosophy,'" 133.

[50] Hadot, "Forms of Life and Forms of Discourse in Ancient Philosophy," 64: "To ensure that these dogmas have a great spiritual effectiveness, they must be presented in the form of short, striking formulae, as in Epicurus' *Principal Doctrines*"; Hadot, "Spiritual Exercises," 84.

[51] Hadot, "Spiritual Exercises," 87; see also Michael Erler, "Einübung und Anverwandlung. Reflexe mündlicher Meditationstechnik in philosophischer Literatur der Kaiserzeit," in *Gattungen wissenschaftlicher Literatur in der Antike*, ed. Wolfgang Kullmann, Jochen Althoff, and Markus Asper, Script Oralia 95 (Tübingen: Narr, 1998), 364–5.

the SM as the basis for the sort of transformative work on the self that Hadot calls a spiritual exercise? Hadot's studies of philosophical exercises, which, in Arnold Davidson's words, "open up dimensions of ancient philosophy we have typically overlooked or forgotten,"[52] suggest these questions are worth pursuing and that answering them may lead us to a more precise description of at least one way in which the First Gospel imagines the realization of a right life, may reveal dimensions of Matthew currently overlooked or forgotten. Therefore, as a way of describing Matthew's ethics, this study will focus on the gnomic collection found in chs. 5-7 and will discern the extent to which the gospel presents it as the basis of a spiritual exercise that transforms one into Matthew's ideal.

In preparation for assessing whether Matt 5-7, as a gnomic collection, facilitates exercises, I will, in the remainder of this introduction, establish that it is indeed a gnomic collection and explain how, in studying it as a formative collection of sayings, I build on previous readings of these chapters by Augustine and Hans Dieter Betz. I will conclude by outlining how the investigation will unfold in subsequent chapters.

<div align="center">The Gnomic Contents of the Sermon on the Mount</div>

The claim that Matt 5-7 consists primarily of brief, sententious sayings, or gnomes, figures prominently in the history of interpretation of these chapters, though the nature and meaning of that claim vary. In antiquity, explicit reflection on the gnomic character of Matt 5-7 does not occur through writers designating these chapters as γνῶμαι, παροιμίαι, or

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[52] Davidson, "Spiritual Exercises and Ancient Philosophy," 482.

sententiae, the most prominent labels in Greek and Roman literatures for pithy, sententious forms. Some early Christian writers do refer to the contents of the SM as such, but they do not typically mean these appellations as technical terms for brief sayings. Gregory of Nyssa, for instance, knows the terms γνώμη and παροιμία as generic categories: he explains in *Contra Eunomium* that Eunomius has misunderstood Prov 8:22 because he has misidentified its genre; he has failed to recognize that Solomon entitled his collection of sayings (λόγους) "not gnomes (or possibly "opinions," γνώμας), or instructions (συμβουλὰς), or clear teaching (διδασκαλίαν σαφῆ), but proverbs (παροιμίας; *Contr. Eun.* 3.1.24.4-6)," which, "in their scriptural sense" (ἐν τῇ γραφικῇ, 3.1.23.2), Gregory takes to mean "riddles" (αἰνίγματα, 3.1.22.5; cf. Prov 1:6 LXX), "opaque words" (ἀσαφεῖς ῥήσεις, 3.1.23.5; cf. Prov 1:6 LXX) with "some hidden meaning" (τινος κεκρυμμένης … διανοίας, 3.1.23.3-4).[53] In his sermons on the Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer though, he does not employ γνώμη or παροιμία to classify those verses. He uses γνώμη instead in the general sense of "opinion" or "doctrine" (e.g., PG 44.1252.59) and never uses παροιμία. In his sermons on Matthew, John Chrysostom likewise uses γνώμη to mean "opinion" or "intention" (e.g., *Hom. Matt.* 27 [PG 57.424.14]), referring to Jesus' and John's common "intent"), not "pithy expression," and

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[53] Gregory alludes to the prologue to Proverbs (αἰνίγματα, ῥήσεις 1:6) and also invokes a tradition that the Hebrew scriptures feature riddles. On the history of this notion, see Claude Mondésert, *Clément d'Alexandrie: Introduction à l'étude de sa pensée religieuse à partir de l'écriture*, Théologie 4 (Paris: Montaigne, 1944), 81–90; Guy G. Stroumsa, "Moses' Riddles: Esoteric Trends in Patristic Hermeneutics," in *Interpretation in Religion*, ed. Shlomo Biderman and Ben-Ami Scharfstein, Philosophy and Religion 2 (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 229–48; Guy G. Stroumsa, "Cultural Memory in Early Christianity: Clement of Alexandria and the History of Religions," in *Axial Civilizations and World History*, ed. Jóhann P. Árnason, S. N. Eisenstadt, and Björn Wittrock, Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture 4 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 314.

while he does refer several times to παροιμίαι (*Hom. Matt.* 73 [PG 678.38, 51]; *Hom. Matt.* 83 [PG 58.748.55]), he never designates any contents of the SM as such. Jerome in his commentary on Matthew uses *sententia* not as a technical term but as a general word for a (possibly but not necessarily sententious) "statement" (e.g., *Comm. Matt.* 1.527, referring to Matt 5.27; 1.766, referring to Matt 6:10; 1.983, referring to 1 Cor 12:3) or "opinion" (1.524; 1.1144; 2.570)[54] or to refer to eschatological "judgment" (1.380; 2.570). Augustine in his treatment of the SM refers to the following brief utterances as *sententiae*: Matt 5:3-10 (*Serm. Dom.* 1.10-13); 5:17 (1.20); 5:19 (1.21), 5:22 a, b, and c (1.25), 5:23 (1.26), Matt 5:27-37 (1.55), 6:1 (2.80), 6:9-13 (2.27; 2.39), 6:33 (2.53), 7:6 (2.70), 7:12 (2.74, 75), and 7:21 (2.83), as well as 1 Cor 10:13 (2.34). It is not clear though that he uses *sententia* to mean pithy expression and not simply "statement" or "a passage of text," the sense in which his beloved Cicero uses it when exegeting a composition (*Phil.* 13.10.22).[55] That early Christian authors seldom if ever employ these terms as genre descriptions for the sayings in Matt 5-7 does not mean, however, that they would consider them ill fitting. It simply means that these generic classifications did not serve their purposes. Christian exegetes have different interests in genre analysis than do modern critics. Gregory's classifying in *Contra Eunomium*, for example,

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[54] For these meanings of *sententia*, see Lewis and Short, s.v., II, B, 1; Martin Grabmann, *Die Geschichte der scholastischen Methode: nach den gedruckten und ungedruckten Quellen*, 2 vols. (Graz: Akademische Druck-und Verlagsanstalt, 1957), 2:21–3.

[55] Elsewhere Augustine uses *sententia* as a synonym of *sensus* ("meaning;" e.g., *Doctr. Chr.* 1.36.40; 2.12.18; 3.27.38; *Enarrat. Ps.*71.2). For Augustine's appreciation of Cicero, see Maurice Testard, *Saint Augustin et Cicéron* (Paris: Etudes augustiniennes, 1958); Harald Hagendahl, *Augustine and the Latin Classics*, Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia 20 (Göteborg: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1967), 35–169.

seems prompted not by an abiding fascination with formal categories for the study of literature, not by any disinterested aestheticism,[56] but by an urgent need to combat what he sees as heresy.

Rather than through the terms γνῶμαι, παροιμίαι, or *sententiae*, explicit identification of the SM's contents as gnomic occurs when Justin, introducing a topically-organized collection of Jesus' moral sayings (*1 Apol.* 15-17), many of the components of which appear in Matt 5-7,[57] describes Jesus' "sayings" (λόγοι) as "brief and concise" (βραχεῖς δὲ καὶ σύντομοι, *1 Apol.* 14.5.1; see also *Dial.* 18.1)[58] and, more thoroughly, when interpreters label the sayings παραγγέλματα or *praecepta*, meaning gnomic "commandments," "instructions," or "rules for living."[59] Justin may designate the entire SM as such, when, in *Dialogue with Trypho*, Trypho claims to have read carefully "the

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[56] I borrow the phrase "disinterested aestheticism" from Yun Lee Too, who highlights the very politically "interested" nature of ancient and modern literary criticism (*The Idea of Ancient Literary Criticism* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999], 282).

[57] Whether Justin knew these sayings directly from Matthew's gospel remains debated and is not relevant to the point at hand; in whatever form he knew them, Justin considered them gnomic.

[58] Iamblichus uses the same adjective (βραχύς) to describe the brevity of Pythagoras' inspired sayings (*Vit. Pyth.* 161).

[59] On these terms, see Otto Schmitz, "παραγγέλλω, παραγγελία," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 5, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964), 761–65; Abraham J. Malherbe, "Paraenesis in the Epistle to Titus," in *Light from the Gentiles: Hellenistic Philosophy and Early Christianity: Collected Essays, 1959-2012*, ed. John T. Fitzgerald, Gregory E. Sterling, and James Thompson, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 150 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 410; Abraham J. Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 32B (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 222–3; Hans Armin Gärtner, "Gnome," ed. Hubert Cancik et al., *Brill's New Pauly Online* (Brill, 2005); Andrew Cain, *Jerome and the Monastic Clergy: A Commentary on Letter 52 to Nepotian, with an Introduction, Text, and Translation*, Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 119 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 61.

commandments in the so-called Gospel" (τὰ ἐν τῷ λεγομένῳ εὐαγγελίῳ παραγγέλματα; 10.2.3-6) and found them "so wonderful and great that no one can keep them." That he characterizes these commands as unkeepable perhaps indicates he has in mind the sayings of the SM above all but one cannot be sure.[60] Chrysostom labels at least portions of Matt 5-7 παραγγέλματα, maintaining that in 5:21-48 Jesus "legislates commandments" (νομοθετεῖν παραγγελμάτων) comparable but superior to those of Moses (*Hom. Matt.* 16 [PG 57.239.7]) and describing Matt 7:1 as further legislation: "having ordained (ἀνελὼν) all these things through this excellent legislation (νομοθεσίας), he added still another commandment (ἕτερον παράγγελμα; *Hom. Matt.* 23 [PG 57.310.57])."[61] Hilary of Poiters though clearly portrays the entirety of Matt 5-7 as a collection of *praecepta*. Commenting on the narrative introduction to the SM, he writes, "When a great crowd had assembled together, he then climbed up and taught them from the mountain. In other words, having situated himself on the height of the Father's majesty, he laid down the commandments of heavenly life" (*caelestis uitae praecepta*, *Comm. Matt.* 4.1.2, trans. Williams). Commenting on the Sermon's conclusion, he reiterates this genre designation: "In the entire discourse above, the Lord delivered the commandments of faith" (*Toto igitur superiore sermone Dominus fidei*

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[60] Allison and Luz see references to the Sermon. See Dale C. Allison, "Reading Matthew through the Church Fathers," in *Studies in Matthew: Interpretation Past and Present* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2005), 127; Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 1-7: A Commentary*, trans. James E. Crouch (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 179n40.

[61] On the notion that at least some of the SM consists of commandments, cf. Irenaeus *Adv. Haer.* 4.12-16; Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.* 4.14-17.

praecepta tradiderat, 7.1.8, trans. Williams).[62] In between, he singles out the Lord's Prayer

and Matt 6:25 as *praecepta* (4.19.7; 5.6.12). These references to the SM's contents as

παραγγέλματα or *praecepta* show an awareness among early Christians that the SM consists

of gnomes. Employing these designations rather than γνῶμαι, παροιμίαι, or *sententiae*

furthermore allows some early Christians to emphasize that the SM's sayings are often

imperatival in form and always, from their perspective, normative in force and, particularly

in the case of Chrysostom, to identify them with divine law.

In addition to explicit identification of the contents of the SM as gnomic, that is,

identification that occurs using technical terms for brief sayings, antiquity also features

implicit identification of Matt 5-7 as gnomic, identification that occurs when an author

analogizes its contents to wise sayings in circulation, often by contextualizing the former

among the latter. Clement of Alexandria offers an example. In *Strom.* 4.2.4-5, claiming that

his mode of composition—"constantly switching from one topic to another" (ἀπ' ἄλλου εἰς

ἄλλο συνεχὲς μετιόντα, 4.2.4.1) and speaking allusively (καὶ ἕτερον μέν τι κατὰ τὸν εἱρμὸν

τῶν λόγων μηνύοντα, ἐνδεικνύμενα δὲ ἄλλο τι, 4.2.4.1-2)—forces the reader to exercise

reason (ζητεῖν μετὰ λόγου, 4.2.5.3-4) and thereby make spiritual progress,[63] he expounds his

argument with a litany of quotations:

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[62] For Matt 5-7 as a *sermo*, see also *Comm. Matt.* 5.6.4

[63] See also 1.2.21.1 ; 6.1.2.1-3. For discussion, see Mondésert, *Clément d'Alexandrie: Introduction à l'étude de sa pensée religieuse à partir de l'écriture*, 47–62; André Méhat, *Étude sur les "Stromates" de Clément d'Alexandrie*, Patristica Sorbonensia 7 (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1966), 106–112, 492–99; John Ferguson, *Clement of Alexandria*, Twayne's World Authors 289 (New York: Twayne, 1974), 133. Pierre Hadot claims that Clement's emphasis on the labored search for truth,

As, they say, when a certain slave once asked at the oracle what he should do to please his master, the Pythian priestess replied, "You will find if you seek" (εὑρήσεις ἐὰν ζητήσῃς).[64] It is truly a difficult matter, then, as turns out, to discover hidden good, since

> "Before virtue is placed exertion,
> And long and steep is the way to it,
> And rough at first; but when the summit is reached,
> Then is it easy, though difficult [before]." (Hesiod, *Op.* 289-92)[65]

For "narrow," in truth, "and straight is the way" of the Lord (Matt 7:14) and "it is to the violent that the kingdom of God belongs" (Matt 11:12). Hence, "Seek," he says, "and you will find" (ζήτει … καὶ εὑρήσεις, Matt 7:7) by holding on by the truly royal road, and not deviating. As we might expect, then, the generative power of the seeds of the doctrines comprehended in this treatise is great in small space, "like the grass of the earth," as Scripture says (Job 5:25). Thus the *Miscellanies* of notes have their proper title, wonderfully like that ancient oblation culled from all sorts of things of which Sophocles writes:

> "For there was a sheep's fleece, and there was a vine,
> And a libation, and grapes well stored;
> And there was mixed with it fruit of all kinds,

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among other features, makes him "one of the best witnesses for the ancient tradition of spiritual exercises" (*Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 124).

[64] Only Clement attributes this saying to the Delphic oracle and it is the only one of her responses directed to a slave (H. W. Parke and D. E. W. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle*, 2 vols. [Oxford: Blackwell, 1956], 1:413; 2:225; Joseph Fontenrose, *The Delphic Oracle* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978], 411, L 175). Annewies Van den Hoek argues that Clement takes the phrase from Plato's *Meno* (81d, 84b-d, 86b-c) but attributes it to the oracle in order to avoid entangling himself in the philosophical debates that attend Plato's text ("'You Will Find If You Seek'. Did Clement of Alexandria Find This at Delphi (*Str.* IV 5, 1)?," in *Studia Patristica*, ed. Elizabeth Livingstone, 33 [Leuven: Peeters, 1997], 546–53).

[65] On the wide renown of this saying, see C. F. Georg Heinrici, *Die Bergpredigt (Matth. 5-7, Luk. 6, 20-49): Begriffsgeschichtlich Untersucht*, Beiträge zur Geschichte und Erklärung des Neuen Testaments 3.1 (Leipzig: Dürr, 1905), 2:89; Heber Michel Hays, *Notes on the Works and Days of Hesiod* (Chicago: University of Chicago Libraries, 1918), 122. This claim that the road to perfection is long and arduous coheres with Clement's theology of spiritual progress generally; see most recently Piotr Ashwin-Siejkowski, *Clement of Alexandria: A Project of Christian Perfection* (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 147–188.

> And the fat of the olive, and the most curious
> Wax-formed work of the yellow Bee." (fr. 398 *TrGF*)[66]

Just so our *Stromata*, in the words of the comic poet Timocles' farmer, produce

> "figs, olives, dried figs, honey,"

as though they were from an entirely fruitful field. On account of this fruitfulness he adds:

> "You talk of harvest wreaths, not farming" (*PCG* 7:780).[67]

For the Athenians were wont to cry:

> "The harvest-wreath bears figs and fat loaves,
> And honey in a cup, and olive oil to anoint you" (a ritual song reported by
> Plutarch, *Thes.*, 22.7.2; Pausanius, *Collection of Attic Words*, s.v.,
> εἰρεσιώνη).[68]

> We must then often, as in winnowing sieves, shake and toss up this the great mixture
> of seeds, in order to separate the wheat (allusion to Matt 3:12; 13:30).
> (trans. ANF 2:141, modified)

Clement selects and organizes these quotations so as to claim that one will find wisdom in his composition if she seeks it (the quotation of the Delphic oracle; Matt 7:7), that is, if she persistently exerts herself (the quotation of Hesiod) in single-minded pursuit of it (Matt 7:14), sustaining the determination ("violence," Matt 11:12) necessary to overcome obstacles (e.g., the "rough" road to which Hesiod refers). His work is replete with fecund ideas, like a field is

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[66] This quotation is attested only here and in Porphyry, *De Abst.* 2.19.10.

[67] This quotation, otherwise unknown, contrasts the imagined productivity of a farm—figs, olives, honey (for this ideal, see Philemon, *apud* Stobaeus, *Anth.* 4.15a.15.4 = fr. 105 *CAF*)—with the reality of agricultural production: "you are describing a cornucopia, not a farm."

[68] On Clement's knowledge of Plutarch, see John Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy* (London: A. and C. Black, 1892), 139; Ferguson, *Clement of Alexandria*, 19.

replete with grass (Job 5:25), like oblations and harvest wreaths are replete with delightful produce (the quotations of Sophocles, Timocles, and the Athenians), but, as in farming, one must labor harvesting and winnowing it to obtain what is most valuable (quotations of Timocles and the closing allusion to Matt 3:12 and 13:30). This gnomic collection includes three sayings of Jesus, two of them from the SM (7:7, 14), and Clement places versions of the same gnome (seek and you will find) on the oracle's and Jesus' lips.[69] By contextualizing sayings from the SM among gnomic quotations and even highlighting their near verbatim similarity, Clement portrays them all as in some important sense generically equivalent.[70] He implies that Jesus' brief sayings express wisdom like the Delphic oracles' or Sophocles' and vice versa.[71]

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[69] Eric Osborn claims that Clement refers to the Gospel of Matthew much more than to any other biblical writing, some 700 times, in comparison to some 400 to John and to Luke, the second most referenced books ("La Bible inspiratrice d'une morale chrétienne d'après Clément d'Alexandrie," in *Le Monde grec ancien et la Bible*, ed. Claude Mondésert, Bible de tous les temps 1 [Paris: Editions Beauchesne, 1984], 144). Volume four of Stählin's edition collects Clement's biblical citations (*Clemens Alexandrinus*, ed. Otto Stählin, Ursula Treu, and Ludwig Früchtel, 4 vols., Die Griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten Jahrhunderte 12, 15, 17, 39 [Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1960]).

[70] For contextualization as one of Clement's primary interpretive strategies, see David Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 10–11. For another example of analogizing Jesus' sayings to circulating gnomes, see 5.5.31.2.2, where Clement compares Matt 7:13-14 to Pythagorean sayings. Clement's method here does not correspond neatly to any of the techniques of quotation van den Hoek identifies in Clement; see her "Techniques of Quotation in Clement of Alexandria: A View of Ancient Literary Working Methods," *Vigiliae Christianae* 50 (1996): 223–43.

[71] The conviction that enables Clement to combine Hebrew, Greek, and Roman quotations as he does is the conviction that all wisdom derives ultimately from the divine *logos* (*Strom.* 1.5.28-9) and that therefore any fragment of wisdom can lead one to the *logos* (*Strom.* 5.3.18; cf. Seneca, *Ep.* 16.7); see Osborn, "La Bible," 144; Dawson, *Allegorical Readers*, 222; Eric Osborn, "Arguments for Faith in Clement of Alexandria," *Vigiliae Christianae* 48 (1994): 2–4; Ashwin-Siejkowski, *Clement of Alexandria*, 100–9.

The *Sentences of Sextus* offer another example. The author of this late-second or early-third century gnomologium seems to have perceived a generic affinity between what we know as the contents of Matt 5-7 and his principle sources: the Pythagorean sayings collections *Sententiae Pythagoreorum* and the *Clitarchi sententiae*.[72] Into these Pythagorean gnomologia, the author introduces some twenty biblical allusions, nine of which derive from the SM (Matt 5:29-30 [*Sent. Sextus* 12-13]; 5:26 [39]; 6:20 [77]; 7:12 [89; 210b]; 5:44 [213]; 5:28 [233]; 6:1-2 [341-2]), making it by far his preferred scriptural fount.[73] One must be nuanced in claiming that the author analogized the sayings in the SM and Pythagorean gnomologia because, while he does commingle biblical and Pythagorean gnomes, he treats the two differently, typically paraphrasing the former while quoting the latter verbatim.[74]

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[72] On Sextus' use of these gnomologia, see Walter T. Wilson, *The Sentences of Sextus*, Wisdom Literature from the Ancient World (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 21–4. He revises Chadwick's thesis concerning Sextus' sources by showing that Sextus depends on versions of these Pythagorean collections that are no longer extant; see also Martha Lee Turner, *The Gospel According to Philip: The Sources and Coherence of an Early Christian Collection*, Nag Hammadi and Manichaean studies 38 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 113. For Chadwick's claims, see Henry Chadwick, *The Sentences of Sextus: A Contribution to the History of Early Christian Ethics*, Texts and Studies. Contributions to Biblical and Patristic Literature, New Series 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 148; cf. 158.

[73] Wilson, *Sextus*, 25–6; see also Chadwick, *The Sentences of Sextus*, 139–40; Gerhard Delling, "Zur Hellenisierung Des Christentums in Den 'Spruchen Des Sextus,'" in *Studien Zum Neuen Testament Und Zur Patristik: Erich Klostermann Zum 90. Geburtstag Dargebracht*, ed. Deutsche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin. Kommission für Spätantike Religionsgeschichte, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur 77 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1961), 237–8; Daniele Pevarello, *The Sentences of Sextus and the Origins of Christian Asceticism*, Studien und Texte zu Antike und Christentum 78 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 48. I omit the references Wilson considers vaguer allusions.

[74] Wilson, *Sextus*, 26–7. Since it does not reproduce Matthew verbatim, some scholars—Betz for example (*The Sermon on the Mount: A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, Including the Sermon on the Plain (Matthew 5:3-7:27 and Luke 6:20-49)*, Hermeneia [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995], 228, 239)—remain uncertain that the author of the Sentences quotes from the written text of

Nonetheless, the author treats the sayings of the SM like gnomes and his predilection for them is likely due not only to their popularity in early Christianity but to similarities in content (ethical matters) and form (gnomic) he perceived between these sayings and his prized Pythagorean ones.[75]

In the modern period, the notion that the SM is predominantly gnomic has proven a hallmark of scholarship on these chapters and features in all manner of approaches to them. It is fundamental to the scholarship of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that amasses ancient parallels in order to illuminate the language of the New Testament. As parallels to Matt 7:13-14, for instance, Cornelius à Lapide cites sententious sayings from Hesiod,

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the gospel. Pevarello concludes, "Sextus' direct knowledge of the gospel of Matthew can neither be demonstrated, nor convincingly ruled out" (*Sentences of Sextus*, 118); see also Delling, "Hellenisierung," 238; Wolf-Dietrich Köhler, *Die Rezeption des Matthäusevangeliums in der Zeit vor Irenäus*, vol. 24, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1987), 508. Wilson seems to maintain that Sextus knew Matthew directly (e.g., *Sextus*, 100-01; 147-8), as does Hommel (*Sebasmata: Studien zur antiken Religionsgeschichte und zum frühen Christentum*, vol. 31–32, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament [Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1983], 2:58). Given its probable date and provenance (late second or early third century Alexandria), direct knowledge is the most likely explanation for the work's use of the First Gospel; see Karlmann Beyschlag, "Zur Geschichte Der Bergpredigt in Der Alten Kirche," *Zeitschrift Für Theologie Und Kirche* 74 (1977): 320. On the date and provenance of Sextus' *Sentences*, see Wilson, *Sextus*, 11: "The fact that Origen is the first author to demonstrate an acquaintance with the text raises the possibility that its originating provenance was Egyptian, a possibility that perhaps becomes a probability when we take into account the very large number of parallels between the *Sentences* and the writings of Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150-ca. 215 C.E.)" and the fact that a copy of the text was found at Nag Hammadi. On the similarities between the *Sentences* and Clement's writings, see Chadwick, *The Sentences of Sextus*, 160–2; Eric Osborn, *Ethical Patterns in Early Christian Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 80–3; Wilson, *Sextus*, 27, 43, 50–3, 59, 71, 81–2, 84–5, *passim*.

[75] On the popularity of the SM in early Christianity, see Warren S. Kissinger, *The Sermon on the Mount: A History of Interpretation and Bibliography*, ATLA Bibliography Series 3 (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1975), 6.

Simonides, and Pythagoras;[76] Hudo Grotius from Hesiod, Silius, the *Anthologia Latina*,

Pythagoras, Plutarch, Aristotle, Psalms, Philo, and Ulpian's *scholia* to Demosthenes;[77] John

Price from Plutarch, Diodorus, Seneca, Sirach, *Anthologia Latina*, Apuleius, Vergil, Servius,

Psalms, Plato, Philo, Maximus of Tyre, Aelius, *Tablet of Cebes*, and Aristophanes;[78] and

Johann Jakob Wettstein from Eustathius' commentary on the *Iliad*, Galen, Athenaeus,

Thucydides, Philo, Vergil, Livy, Lucian, Cicero, *Tablet of Cebes*, Maximus of Tyre, Sirach,

Psalms, and Proverbs.[79]

Beginning in the late eighteenth century, this notion appears in studies that take

diverse views on the origins and outline of the SM. It figures in scholarship that portrays

Matt 5-7 as reproducing wholly or substantially, in letter or spirit, an actual speech of the

historical Jesus. Johann Jakob Hess, for example, maintains that Jesus gave this lecture to

provide his followers "religious and moral teaching in small, easy containers, arranged under

certain main rubrics in pithy sayings and aphorisms" (*Religions- und Sittenlehre in leicht*

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[76] Lapide, *The Great Commentary*, 303–4. À Lapide acknowledges taking his references to Hesiod and Simonides from Clement.

[77] Hugo Grotius, *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum*, 10 vols. (Groningen, 1641), 1:257–8.

[78] John Price, *Commentarii in Varios Novi Testamenti Libros* (London, 1660), 53–4.

[79] Johann Jakob Wettstein, *Novum Testamentum Graecum*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam, 1751), 1:342–3. The conclusion to Wettstein's work explains some of the motives of this mode of scholarship (ibid., 2:875–8; partial English translation in Werner Georg Kümmel, *The New Testament: The History of the Investigation of Its Problems* [Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972], 49–50), though the other scholars I have cited, especially à Lapide, would likely explain themselves differently.

behältlichen, unter gewisse Hauptrubriken gebrachter Kern- und Sinnsprüchen).[80] August

Tholuck insists that the SM consists of "maxims," "proverbial expressions," and "sententious

sayings"[81] that present Jesus' authentic speech.[82] It features as well in works that portray the

SM as a redactional composition of the evangelist[83] or someone prior to him.[84] It likewise

appears alongside the thesis that Matt 5-7 exhibits minimal structure[85] and the thesis that it is

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[80] 1.328-29, as quoted in Betz, 19.

[81] August Tholuck, *Exposition, Doctrinal and Philological, of Christ's Sermon on the Mount, According to the Gospel of Matthew*, trans. Robert Menzies, 2 vols., The Biblical Cabinet 6, 20 (Edinburgh: T. Clark, 1834), 21–4; see also August Tholuck, *Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount*, trans. R. Lundin Brown, Clark's Foreign Theological Library 3.7 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1874), 19.

[82] Tholuck, *Exposition*, 30–1; Tholuck, *Commentary*, 17–33. For discussion of Tholuck on the SM, see Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 22, who concludes, "Although he admitted that Matthew's SM is as much a redactional product as is Luke's SP, Tholuck insisted on treating the SM as if it were Jesus' original speech." Other studies that depict the SM as a gnomic speech of the historical Jesus include James Hastings et al., eds., "Sermon on the Mount," *A Dictionary of the Bible* (New York: Scribner's, 1912 1898); Henry E. Savage, *The Gospel of the Kingdom: Or, The Sermon on the Mount, Considered in the Light of Contemporary Jewish Thought and Ideals* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1910), 38–9, 249.

[83] See, for example, F. D. E. Schleiermacher, "Ueber die Zeugnisse des Papias von unsern beiden ersten Evangelien," *TSK* 5 (1832): 746, who calls the SM a "Gnomologie"; Ernest Findlay Scott, *The Literature of the New Testament*, Records of Civilization, Sources and Studies 15 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1932), 69.

[84] See, for example, Heinrici, *Die Bergpredigt: Begriffsgeschichtlich Untersucht*.

[85] David Julius Pott, *Dissertatio de natura atque indole orationis montanae* (Helmstad, 1788); Erik Peterson, "Bergpredigt," in *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Handwörterbuch für Theologie und Religionswissenschaft*, ed. Hermann Gunkel and Leopold Zscharnack, vol. 1, 5 vols., 2d ed. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1927), 907–10.

artfully arranged.[86] The notion then is rather ubiquitous in scholarship and not the product of particular hypothesis about the Sermons' prehistory or compositional plan.

Since the rise of form criticism, contemporary scholarship has classified most verses of the SM as one of a variety of brief, memorable sayings. Bultmann, for instance, claims that Matt 5-7 consists almost entirely of traditional sayings that he divides, based on their content, into three types: wisdom sayings, which he further subdivides based on form into principles (indicative sayings), exhortations (imperatival sayings, or admonitions), questions (interrogative sayings), and "longer passages" (unified compositions consisting of more than two principles, exhortations, or questions); prophetic and apocalyptic sayings, which he further subdivides based on content into sayings that preach salvation, minatory sayings, and admonitions; and legal sayings and church rules. "'I'-sayings," in which "the person of Jesus plays a substantial," not an incidental role and similitudes, which are especially detailed comparisons can, by virtue of their content, belong, he says, to any of these three categories.[87] Using this taxonomy, he analyzes the SM as follows:

5:3–12	prophetic and apocalyptic sayings that preach salvation
5:13	wisdom question
5:14	wisdom principle
5:15	wisdom question

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[86] Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*. Some exegetes have perceived a structure in ch. 5 and 6:1-18 but not thereafter; for this view, see, *inter alia*, Martin Dibelius, *The Sermon on the Mount* (New York: C. Scribner's sons, 1940), 16–24; Amos Wilder, "The Sermon on the Mount," in *The Interpreter's Bible*, ed. George A. Buttrick, vol. 7, 12 vols. (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1951), 157.

[87] Rudolf Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, trans. John Marsh, Rev. ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 69–205; see esp. the overview on p. 69. The quotation appears on p. 152.

5:17–19	legal sayings and church rules
5:21–48	legal sayings and church rules
5:21–2	legal sayings and church rules
5:23–4	legal sayings and church rules
5:25–6	similitude
5:27–8	legal sayings and church rules
5:29–30	wisdom exhortation
5:31–2	legal sayings and church rules
5:32	legal sayings and church rules
5:33–7	legal sayings and church rules
5:38–41	legal sayings and church rules
5:39b–42	"longer passage" of wisdom sayings
5:43–48	legal sayings and church rules
6:2–18	legal sayings and church rules
6:19–21	wisdom exhortation
6:22–3	wisdom principle
6:24	wisdom principle
6:25–33	"longer passage" of wisdom sayings
6:27–28a	wisdom question
6:34a	wisdom exhortation
6:34b	wisdom principle
7:1–5	"longer passage" of wisdom sayings
7:6	wisdom exhortation
7:7–11	"longer passage" of wisdom sayings
7:12a	wisdom exhortation
7:13–14	wisdom exhortation
7:15	prophetic and apocalyptic admonition
7:16–20	wisdom principle
7:21	prophetic and apocalyptic minatory saying
7:22–3	prophetic and apocalyptic minatory sayings
7:24–7	similitude (unspecified type)

Thus, the only portions of the Matt 5-7 that Bultmann does not consider traditional sayings material are 5:14a, 16, 20; 6:1; and 7:12b, all of which he deems redactional interpretations of an adjacent traditional saying or sayings. Four of these interpretations render the adjacent sayings catechetical:[88] 5:14a, 16 apply the sayings in vv. 14b-15 to the disciples,[89] while 5:20

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[88] Ibid., 149, see also 356–7.

and 6:1 transform subsequent polemical passages into community regulations.[90] The

remaining addition, 7:12b, portrays the preceding saying in 7:12 as an expression of

Matthew's theology.[91]

To cite a more recent example, David Aune, attempting to improve on Bultmann's

efforts by offering a taxonomy based more purely on formal criteria,[92] classifies the majority

of the SM as aphorisms, by which he means "concise autonomous sayings which give pithy

expression to an insight about life (i.e., a general truth), the validity of which is generally

recognized and approved."[93] He divides these pithy, common truths into eight categories:[94]

1. Beatitudes
2. Aphorisms that begin with "whoever" or "the one who"
3. Conditional sayings ("if… then")
4. Aphorisms in synonymous couplets
5. Aphorisms in antithetical or paradoxical couplets
6. Wisdom admonitions (imperatival sayings)
7. Aphoristic sentences (indicatival or interrogative sayings)
8. Statements of reciprocity (statements about proportional justice, often expressed in conditional forms)

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[89] Ibid., 91–2. 96.

[90] Ibid., 149–50.

[91] Ibid., 90–1.

[92] David E. Aune, "Oral Tradition and the Aphorisms of Jesus," in *Jesus and the Oral Gospel Tradition*, ed. Henry Wansbrough, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 64 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 216. In addition to Bultmann's, Aune builds on Crossan's and Küchler's studies of Jesus' sayings.

[93] Ibid., 215. He cites Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1394b in support of this definition.

[94] Ibid., 227–36.

Aune highlights these eight categories because he believes they characterize the sayings attributed to Jesus in early Christian literature,[95] but notes, nonetheless, that, properly speaking, some of them are subsets of others. "Whoever" or "the one who" sayings are types of aphoristic sentences and such sentences commonly appear in couplets, be they synonomous or otherwise.[96] Statements of reciprocity are types of conditional sentences (e.g., Matt 6:14-15).[97] Thus, at the heart of his eight-fold taxonomy lie four forms:

> Beatitudes
> Conditional sayings
> Wisdom admonitions
> Aphoristic sentences

In his inventory of aphorisms attributed to Jesus in early Christian literature, Aune therefore designates the great majority of the SM as one of these four forms:[98]

5:3–12	beatitude
5:13	aphoristic question
5:14b	aphoristic sentence
5:15	aphoristic sentence
5:25–6	wisdom admonition
5:29	wisdom admonition with supporting clause
5:30	wisdom admonition with supporting clause
5:36b	aphoristic sentence
5:37	wisdom admonition with supporting clause
5:39b	wisdom admonition
5:40	wisdom admonition
5:42	wisdom admonition

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[95] Ibid., 227.

[96] Ibid., 233.

[97] Ibid., 234–5.

[98] Ibid., 242–58.

5:44	wisdom admonitions
6:3	wisdom admonition
6:14–15	two conditional sentences
6:19–21	wisdom admonition with aphoristic sentence as supporting clause
6:22	aphoristic sentence
6:24a	aphoristic sentence
6:25	wisdom admonition with supporting rhetorical question
6:27	aphoristic question
6:34a	wisdom admonition with supporting clause
6:34b	wisdom admonition
7:1–2	wisdom admonition with supporting clauses
7:3–5	two questions followed by wisdom admonition with supporting clause
7:6a	wisdom admonition
7:6b	wisdom admonition
7:7–8	three wisdom admonitions with three supporting clauses
7:9–11	two rhetorical questions
7:12	wisdom admonition with supporting clause
7:13–14	wisdom admonition
7:16a, 20	aphoristic sentence
7:16b	aphoristic question
7:17	aphoristic sentence
7:18	aphoristic sentence
7:19	aphoristic sentence

He considers only the following verses non-aphoristic: 5:14a, 16, 17-20, 21-4, 27-8, 31–36a, 38–39a, 41, 43, 45-48; 6:1-2, 4-13, 16-18, 23, 24b, 26, 28–33; 7:2b, 15, 24-7. Because he sketches an expansive landscape (all dominical aphorisms, canonical and non-) on a small canvas (an article, not a monograph), Aune does not delineate why he excludes these particular verses, some of which do contain pithy sayings (e.g., 6:1: "Be on guard not to do your righteousness in front of people in order to be seen by them"). But given that he defines aphorisms as general, pithy truths, one might infer that these verses either address the disciples too specifically to qualify—the first five antitheses, for instance, are not aphorisms then because they enjoin the disciples in particular ("But I say to *you*," 5:21-4, 27-8, 31–36a, 38–39a, 43), though they may be justified or elaborated by aphorisms (e.g., 5:25-6; 5:29–30,

36b, 37, 39b, 40), and 6:23 and 7:15 are not because they render the meaning of preceding (6:22) or ensuing (7:16) aphorisms particular to the disciples—or clearly belong to another genre (7:24-7, a similitude or parable) and that the aphoristic material in the SM buttresses the exhortations to the disciples in these chapters by giving those exhortations the authority of generally acknowledged truth. If particularity is indeed the principal difference between aphoristic and non-aphoristic sayings, then, while the exclusion of the verses just mentioned is readily intelligible, the exclusion of others is not. In what way is the sixth antithesis ("Love *your* enemies and pray for those who persecute *you*," 5:44) less particular than the other antitheses? Why are 6:19 ("Do not stockpile *for yourselves* treasures on earth"), 6:25 ("Therefore, I tell *you*, do not worry about *your* life, what *you* will eat or what *you* will drink, or about *your* body, what *you* will wear"), and 6:27 ("And can any of *you* by worrying add a single hour to *your* span of life?) general enough to be aphoristic but 6:1 and 6:26 are not? Regardless, however, of the strengths and weaknesses of Aune's or Bultmann's analysis, together they and other analyses like them show that in contemporary scholarship, the SM is typically seen as consisting above all of brief, sententious sayings.[99] It is considered gnomic.

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[99] For other lists of brief sayings in Matt 5-7 and the rest of the synoptic gospels, see Max Küchler, *Frühjüdische Weisheitstraditionen: Zum Fortgang weisheitlichen Denkens im Bereich des frühjüdischen Jahweglaubens*, Orbis biblicus et orientalis 26 (Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1979), 587–92; John Dominic Crossan, *In Fragments: The Aphorisms of Jesus* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983), 330–41; John Dominic Crossan, *Sayings Parallels: A Workbook for the Jesus Tradition*, Foundations and Facets (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 22–130.

Recognition that the SM is in some sense a collection of sayings thus abides across a variety of interpretive contexts from antiquity to the present and therefore, in comparing this the Sermon to ancient saying collections, this study builds on a venerable observation. I have thus far proceeded though without defining what I mean by a "saying." Chapter one will address the utility of distinguishing among types of sayings, that is, of taxonomies such as Bultmann's or Aune's. At this point, for the purposes of introducing and justifying the investigation, it suffices to specify the feature of the SM that interests us and the feature of the collections that interest Hadot—to define what we and he mean by a "sayings" collection—as the prominence of brief and memorable sentences, be they indicatival, interrogative, or imperatival, that distill fundamental principles and whose import is therefore underdetermined, or general, enough that they pertain to multiple concrete situations in life, even if they are addressed to a very particular audience. I will refer to such sayings as gnomes.[100] Furthermore, for the purpose of this study, that is, in order to assess whether Matt

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[100] My definition of a gnome agrees in all but one respect with Piper's definition of an "aphoristic saying" (*Wisdom in the Q-Tradition: The Aphoristic Teaching of Jesus*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 61 [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989], 4–5). Whereas Piper, like Aune, insists that such sayings must be general enough not only to apply to multiple situations but also to be "true to aspects of the collective experience of man [*sic*]," I do not insist on such universality. I maintain that a gnome is general only in the sense that it is underdetermined enough to apply to multiple situations. I believe my definition better describes the sayings in the collections to which Hadot refers as well as those in the gospels since many of the latter—take the Beatitudes for example—hardly express ideas most people experience as true. My definition of a gnome concurs with Wilson's description of the form, from which I adopt the term "underdetermined" (*The Mysteries of Righteousness: The Literary Composition and Genre of the Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides*, Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 40 [Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1994], 190; see also Walter T. Wilson, *Love Without Pretense: Romans 12.9-21 and Hellenistic-Jewish Wisdom Literature*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/46 [Tübingen: Mohr, 1991], 11–24).

5-7 facilitates transformative exercises like those ancient gnomologia often do, whether we classify nearly all of the Sermon as gnomic, as Bultmann does, or simply most of it, as Aune does, is not decisive since ancient sayings collections rarely consist entirely of pithy sayings; they typically supplement gnomes with, for example, epilogues that state the reason, or motive, for the gnome or illustrate its meaning.[101] They may also include a prologue and/or epilogue to the collection or headings within it that indicate the gnomes' meaning for or intended use by the audience. As a result, "sayings collections" may include a substantial quantity of non-sayings material. For our purposes then, it is sufficient merely to observe that the predominant literary form of these chapters is the gnome.

Bultmann's and Aune's analyses, despite their differences, show the gnome's statistical predominance; gnomes constitute the great majority of the contents of Matt 5-7. The predominance is also structural; what heads literary units within the Sermon, what gives these chapters their structure, are brief, memorable, and underdetermined sayings. As I analyze these chapters, after a prologue composed of nine beatitudes (5:3-12), each of which is gnomic and supplemented by a clause indicating how the addressee is blessed, and of three indicatival gnomes that declare the disciples' special status followed by exhortations, indicatival and imperatival, to preserve it (5:13-16), presumably despite the persecution mentioned in the last Beatitude, the SM presents its body (5:17-7:12) in three parts: the first (5:17-48) is introduced by a programmatic paragraph on righteousness that casts the whole

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[101] See Wilson, *Love Without Pretense*, 40–51. Wilson makes this point with respect to sayings used outside of collections, e.g., in epistolary contexts (41), but it applies to gnomes found in collections as well, as his own examples from collections such as *Pseudo-Phocylides* show.

body as a description of the righteousness required of the audience (5:17-20) and consists thereafter of six antithetical statements (5:21-22a, 27-28, 31-32, 33-34a, 38-39a, 43-44), the second and authoritative half of which, in all but the third antithesis, features either an indicative gnome with imperatival force (5:22a, 28)[102] or an imperatival gnome (5:34a, 39a, 44) supplemented by statements and commands—many of them gnomes with or without motive clauses justifying them (with: 5:25-26, 29, 30, 37; without: 5:39b, 40, 41, 42)—that underscore the importance and extremity (5:22b-26; 29-30, 34b-37), illustrate the application (5:39b-42), or declare the *raison d'etre* (i.e., the motive, 5:45-8) of that second half. (The third antithesis [5:31-2] does not feature a gnome because it addresses a specific example of the second [5:27-30]; hence it is introduced by an abbreviated version of the formula that begins the other antitheses [5:31a]). The second (6:1-18) consists of a gnomic admonition regarding piety (6:1), which is in turn elaborated in three paragraphs (6:2-4, 5-6 + 7-15, 16-18), each of which contains a negative gnomic admonition (6:2a, 5a, 16a) followed by an example (6:2b, 5b, 16b) and a gnomic admonition with a motive clause (6:3-4, 6, 17-18) and the second of which is expanded through the addition of a second negative gnomic admonition (6:7a) and example (6:7b) plus another negative admonition with motive clause (6:8), a positive admonition (6:9a), a model prayer comprised of gnomic petitions (6:9b-13), and a gnomic motive clause for the positive admonition (6:14-15). The third contains a pair of gnomes about "treasures" in antithetical parallelism (6:19a, 20a) with parallel motives

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[102] On indicatival sayings that convey admonitions, see Alan Kirk, *The Composition of the Sayings Source: Genre, Synchrony, and Wisdom Redaction in Q* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 92.

clauses (6:19b, 20b) and another motive clause concluding the pair (6:21), which are then elaborated by three blocks of gnomic material: one (6:22-34) treats material treasures and consists of an indicatival gnome about the eye (6:22a) with an example (6:22b-23a) and an exhortation of the audience (6:23b), another indicatival gnome about slavery (6:24a) with a motive clause (6:24b-c) and a personalizing exhortation (6:24d), and a gnomic prohibition of anxiety accompanied by an interrogative and gnomic motive clause (6:25) as well as multiple illustrations (6:26-33) and a concluding negative gnomic admonition (6:34a) with two gnomic motive clauses (6:34b-c); two (7:1-6) treats social "treasures" and consists of a gnomic prohibition of judging others (7:1) supplemented by two gnomic motive clauses (7:2), three illustrations (7:3, 4, 5), and two metaphorical gnomic prohibitions, which are about judging (7:6a, b) and which are accompanied by motive clauses (7:6c-d); and three affirms God's provision and consists of three gnomic admonitions (7:7) followed by three corresponding motive clauses (7:8) and a multi-part illustration (7:9-11). Concluding the third part of the body as well as the body *in toto* is a gnomic admonition and motive clause (7:12) that forms an *inclusio* with 5:17-20. Finally, the SM's epilogue (7:13-27) is composed of a gnomic admonition (7:13a) that is supplemented with two parallel and antithetic motive clauses (7:13b-14) and that metaphorically exhorts readers to cultivate the righteousness described in the SM plus two passages illustrating that admonition. One (7:15-23) features a gnomic admonition (7:15) supported by a depiction of the eschatological judgment (7:16-23) that stars a quartet of indicatival gnomes (7:16b, 17, 18, 19). The other contains a parable (7:24-7). The following outlines summarizes this analysis:

I.   5:3-16   Prologue
    a. 5:3-12   nine beatitudes (gnomes) with supplementary clauses
    b. 5:13-16   three indicatival gnomes with supplementary clauses

       i. 5:13a   indicatival gnome

           1. 5:13b   interrogative gnome supplementing 5:13a

           2. 5:13c   indicatival gnome supplementing 5:13b

      ii. 5:14   two indicatival gnomes

           1. 5:15   indicatival gnome supplementing 5:14

           2. 5:16   imperatival gnome with motive clause, all of which supplements 5:14

II.   5:17–48   Part 1 of the Body

    a. 5:17–20   programmatic paragraph on righteousness

    b. 5:21–26   antithesis

       i. 5:21   introductory formula ("You have heard that it was said") + legal principle(s)

      ii. 5:22a   introductory formula ("But I say to you") + indicatival gnome with imperatival force

           1. 5:22b–c   clauses supplementing 5:22a

           2. 5:23-4   imperatival gnome supplementing 5:22a

           3. 5:25-6   imperatival gnome with supplementary clauses, all of which supplements 5:22a

    c. 5:27–30   antithesis

       i. 5:27   introductory formula ("You have heard that it was said") + legal principle(s)

      ii. 5:28   introductory formula ("But I say to you") + indicatival gnome with imperatival force

           1. 5:29   imperatival gnome with motive clause, all of which supplements 5:28

           2. 5:30   imperatival gnome with motive clause, all of which supplements 5:28

    d. 5:31-2   antithesis

       i. 5:31   abbreviated introductory formula ("it was said") + legal principle(s)

      ii. 5:32   introductory formula ("But I say to you") + clauses supplementing 5:28

    e. 5:33-7   antithesis

       i. 5:33   introductory formula ("You have heard that it was said") + legal principle(s)

      ii. 5:34a   introductory formula ("But I say to you") + negative imperatival gnome

           1. 5:34b–36   clauses supplementing 5:34a

           2. 5:37   imperatival gnome with motive clause, all of which supplements 5:34a

f. 5:38–42 antithesis
    i. 5:38 introductory formula ("You have heard that it was said") + legal principle(s)
    ii. 5:39a introductory formula ("But I say to you") + negative imperatival gnome
        1. 5:39b imperatival gnome that supplements 5:39a
        2. 5:40 imperatival gnome that supplements 5:39a
        3. 5:41 imperatival gnome that supplements 5:39a
        4. 5:42 imperatival gnome that supplements 5:39a
g. 5:43–48 antithesis
    i. 5:43 introductory formula ("You have heard that it was said") + legal principle(s)
    ii. 5:44 introductory formula ("But I say to you") + affirmative imperatival gnome
        1. 5:45 motive clause for 5:44
        2. 5:46 motive clause for 5:44
        3. 5:47 motive clause for 5:44
        4. 5:48 imperatival, gnomic motive clause for 5:44

III. 6:1–18 Part 2 of Body
a. 6:1 gnomic admonition regarding piety
b. 6:2–4 instruction on almsgiving
    i. 6:2a negative imperatival gnome
        1. 6:2b–d clauses supplementing 6:2a
    ii. 6:3 negative imperatival gnome
        1. 6:4 motive clause for 6:3
c. 6:5–15 instruction on prayer
    i. 6:5a negative imperatival gnome
        1. 6:5b–d clauses supplementing 6:5a
    ii. 6:6a affirmative imperatival gnome
        1. 6:6b motive clause for 6:6a
    iii. 6:7a negative imperatival gnome
        1. 6:7b–8 clauses supplementing 6:7a
    iv. 6:9–13 model prayer
        1. 6:9a imperatival introduction
        2. 6:9b–c imperatival gnome
        3. 6:10a imperatival gnome
        4. 6:10b–c imperatival gnome with supplementary clause
        5. 6:11 imperatival gnome
        6. 6:12 imperatival gnome with

			supplementary clause
	7.	6:13a	imperatival gnome
	8.	6:13b	imperatival gnome
	v.	6:14–15	motive clause for 6:9a
d.	6:16–18		instruction on almsgiving
	i.	6:16a	negative imperatival gnome
	1.	6:16b–c	clauses supplementing 6:16a
	ii.	6:17	affirmative imperatival gnome
	1.	6:18	motive clause for 6:17

IV.   6:19–7:12   Part 3 of Body

- a. 6:19–21   gnomic admonitions regarding treasures
  - i. 6:19a   negative imperatival gnome
    1. 6:19b   motive clause for 6:19a
  - ii. 6:20a   affirmative imperatival gnome
    1. 6:20b   motive clause for 6:20a
  - iii. 6:21   motive clause for 6:19a, 6:20a.
- b. 6:22–34   instruction on material treasures
  - i. 6:22a   indicatival gnome
    1. 6:22b–23a   clauses supplementing 6:22a
    2. 6:23b   clause supplementing 6:22a
  - ii. 6:24a   indicatival gnome
    1. 6:24b–c   motive clause for 6:24a
    2. 6:24d   clause supplementing 6:24a
  - iii. 6:25a–c   negative imperatival gnome
    1. 6:25d   interrogative gnomic motive clause for 6:25a–c
    2. 6:26–33   clauses supplementing 6:25a–c
    3. 6:34   negative imperatival gnome with two indicatival gnomic motive clauses, all of which supplements 6:25a–c
- c. 7:1–6   instruction on social treasures
  - i. 7:1   negative imperatival gnome
    1. 7:2a   gnomic motive clause for 7:1
    2. 7:2b   gnomic motive clause for 7:1
    3. 7:3–5   clauses supplementing 7:1
    4. 7:6   two negative imperatival gnomes with motive clauses, all of which supplements 7:1
- d. 7:7–11   affirmation of God's provision
  - i. 7:7   three imperatival gnomes
    1. 7:8   three motive clauses for 7:7
    2. 7:9–11   clauses supplementing 7:7
- e. 7:12   imperatival gnome with motive clause that concludes the body

V.   7:13–27   Epilogue

    a. 7:13a   imperatival gnome

        i. 7:13b   motive clause for 7:13a

        ii. 7:14   motive clause for 7:13a

    b. 7:15   imperatival gnome

        i. 7:16a   statement about the eschatological judgment

            1. 7:16b   interrogative gnome that supplements 7:16a

            2. 7:17   indicatival gnome that supplements 7:16a

            3. 7:18   indicatival gnome that supplements 7:16a

            4. 7:19   indicatival gnome that supplements 7:16a

            5. 7:20   restatement of 7:16a

        ii. 7:21-23   depiction of the eschatological judgment

    c. 7:24-7   parable about the eschatological judgment

Finally, while gnomes do occur elsewhere in Matthew, the SM is, from a formal perspective, distinctive within the First Gospel. Gnomes frequently appear as elements within other forms. For example, gnomes culminate brief narratives, constituting the climactic part of what contemporary biblical scholars call apophthegmata, chreiai, anecdotes, or pronouncement stories.[103] Single gnomes play this role (3:10b; 8:22; 9:37; 12:50; 13:52; 13:57; 15:11; 15:26; 18:3; 19:26; 19:30; 21:22; 22:21;), as do pairs (9:12, 13b; 12:7, 8; 15:13, 14b; 19:12a, b; 20:26b-7) and small collections of sayings (9:15a, b, 16, 17; 12:25a, 25b, 29, 30a,

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[103] On sayings that culminate brief narratives, see Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 11–68; Vincent Taylor, *The Formation of the Gospel Tradition* (London: Macmillan, 1933), 63–87; Robert C. Tannehill, "Introduction: The Pronouncement Story and Its Types," *Semeia* 20 (1981): 1–13; Robert C. Tannehill, "Varieties of Synoptic Pronouncement Stories," *Semeia* 20 (1981): 101–19; Vernon K. Robbins, "A Rhetorical Typology for Classifying and Analyzing Pronouncement Stories," in *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers*, ed. Richards, Kent H. (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1984), 93–122; Vernon K. Robbins, "The Chreia," in *Greco-Roman Literature and the New Testament: Selected Forms and Genres*, ed. David E. Aune, Sources for Biblical Study 21 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 1–24; Vernon K. Robbins, *Ancient Quotes & Anecdotes: From Crib to Crypt*, Foundations & Facets Reference Series (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge Press, 1989).

30b, 33b, 34b, 35, 36-7).[104] In one instance, gnomes form both the occasion (19:23, 24) and the climax, or pronouncement (19:26), of a pronouncement story. In Jesus' discourses, gnomes appear as exhortations or declarations at the beginning (exhortations: 10:16b; declarations: 13:12; 23:3b), within (exhortations: 10:8b; 24:13; declarations: 10:10b; 11:8b; 11:16-17), or at the conclusion (exhortations: 10:22b; 23:8-10, 11, 12; declarations: 11:19b; 24:28) of distinct literary units and, within several discourses, gnomes and introductions to or elaborations of them wholly constitute distinct units (10:24-25; 26-33; 40-3; 11:25-30; 18:6-9). Within parables, gnomes contribute to dialogue (25:24b, 24c, 26b, 26c) or function as conclusions (20:16; 22:14) and within narratives, gnomes also form part of Jesus' speech (26:41b; 26:52b). Apart from contributing to other forms, gnomes and their supplements comprise one very brief discourse of Jesus (16:24-8) and the extensive discourse in chs. 5-7, the Sermon on the Mount. Formally then, the SM stands out from the rest of the gospel. It is the only extended, independent collection of gnomic sayings in Matthew. We are therefore justified, at least provisionally, in examining its function apart from that or those of other gnomes in the First Gospel.

Augustine and Hans Dieter Betz on the SM's Gnomic Contents

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[104] In this paragraph, the description of the roles gnomes play outside the SM in Matthew is my own, though my observations, particularly about pronouncement stories, are quite standard. The identification of gnomes in Matthew follows Aune, "Oral Tradition and the Aphorisms of Jesus." To Aune's list, I have added only Matt 12:7. On the synoptic gospels' tendency to agglomerate sayings in the climactic position of pronouncement stories, see Burton L. Mack and Vernon K. Robbins, *Patterns of Persuasion in the Gospels*, Foundations & Facets. Literary Facets (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge, 1989).

In examining whether the gnomic form of Matt 5-7 suggests that it may be intended

to help one attain an ethical ideal, I will build on Augustine's and Hans Dieter Betz'
readings

of the Sermon. Although, like Hilary, Augustine labels Matt 5-7 a "discourse" or "sermon"

(*sermo*; *Serm. Dom.* 1.1.3)—*sermo* being a genre compatible with gnomic contents, as

Augustine's own *sermones* show[105]—unlike Hillary, he interprets these chapters as a gnomic

collection that forms the basis for a transformative exercise. At the very beginning of his *De*

sermone Domini in monte,[106] he claims that the conclusion of the sermon indicates that it is

a complete moral compendium, a collection of *praecepta* that form one into a Christian:[107]

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[105] For Augustine's use of gnomes in his sermons, see, for example, his quotation (in Latin translation) of the Epictetan maxim "patience and self-restraint" or "bear and forbear" (ἀνέχου καὶ ἀπέχου; Fr. 10.34 Schenkl, *apud* Aulus Gellius, *Noct. att.* 17.19.6 [ἀνέχου *et* ἀπέχου]; see also Epictetus, *Diatr.* 4.8.20; Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* 5.33.1.13; cf. 2 Pet 1:6) in sermons 20 (*continere et sustinere*, 41.261.75) and 38 (*continere et sustinere*, 41.476.2). For an overview of Augustine's quotations of classical authors, many of them gnomic, see Sabine MacCormack, "Classical Authors," ed. Allan Fitzgerald, *Augustine Through the Ages: An Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1999). On his interactions with Stoicism more broadly, see Marcia L. Colish, *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages*, 2 vols., Studies in the History of Christian Thought 34-35 (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 2:142–238.

[106] One of Augustine's earliest works, *De sermone Domini in monte* is uncontroversially dated to the period of his priesthood, 391-396 C.E.; see, *inter alia*, Frederick van Fleteren, "Sermone Domini in Monte, De," ed. Allan Fitzgerald, *Augustine Through the Ages: An Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1999). On the work's title, see Brigitta Stoll, *De virtute in virtutem: zur Auslegungs- und Wirkungsgeschichte der Bergpredigt in Kommentaren, Predigten und hagiographischer Literatur von der Merowingerzeit bis um 1200*, Beiträge zur Geschichte der biblischen Exegese 30 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1988), 38–9. Betz stresses that Augustine treats the SM "as a *compendium*" (*The Sermon on the Mount*, 71).

[107] Describing *praecepta* as formative aids, Augustine employs the term in the sense of "moral rules;" see the parallel use of the phrase *praecepta vivendi* ("rules for living"): Cicero, *Fin.* 5.4.11; *Off.* 3.5; Lactantius, *Inst.* 3.8.8; 4.27.7; Paulinus of Nola, *Ep.* 50.4; Jerome, *Ep.* 52.4.3; 123.10.1; *Comm. Isa.* 15.56.4-5 ll. 11-12; John Cassian, *Inst.* 4.10; 7.9.1; *Coll.* 14.7.2; 16.1; 17.3; 18.2.1; 19.8.2; 20.1.1; 20.2.2 (all cited in Cain, *Jerome and the Monastic Clergy*, 61). Cf. *uiuendi regulas* in *Serm. Dom.* 1.49.1159.

If anyone will piously and soberly consider the sermon which our Lord Jesus Christ spoke on the mount, as we read it in the Gospel according to Matthew, I think that he will find in it, with regard to the highest morals, the perfect Christian way of life. And this we do not rashly venture to promise, but gather it from the very words of the Lord himself. For the conclusion of the sermon is so phrased as to make it apparent that in it are all the instructions (*praecepta*) that pertain to forming such a life. For thus he speaks: "Therefore, whoever hears these words of mine, and does them, I will compare him to a wise man, who built his house on a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on a rock. And every one that hears these words of mine, and does not do them, I compare him to a foolish man, who built his house on the sand; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was its fall" (Matt 7:24-7). Since, therefore, He has not simply said, "Whoever hears my words," but has made an addition, saying, "Whoever hears these words of mine," he has sufficiently indicated, I think, that these sayings that he uttered on the mount so perfectly guide the life of those who may be willing to live according to them that they may justly be compared to one building on a rock. I have said this merely that it may be clear that the sermon before us is perfect in all the instructions (*omnibus praeceptis*) by which the Christian life is formed. (trans. NPNF, modified).

He reiterates this claim that the sermon consists of *praecepta* at the conclusion of the commentary (2.87.1990, 2007; see also 1.2.32-4, 44; 1.49.1156; 2.45.986) and in the body, he highlights the brief imperatives in each section of the text, explicitly labelling them *praecepta* (1.21.457-8, 463 [on Matt 5:22]; 1.33.773 [on Matt 5:28]; 1.39.929 [on Matt 5:32] 1.55.1354 [on 5:38-48]; 1.57.1401-12 and 1.58.1482 [on Matt 5:39]; 1.59.1491 and 2.28.595 [on Matt 5:40]; 1.61.1537, 1542 [on Matt 5:39b-41]; 1.68.1697 [on Matt 5:42]; 1.71.1731, 1742, 1.79.1952, and 2.29.629 [on Matt 5:44]; 2.7.137 [on Matt 6:2]; 2.15.298-314 [on Matt 6:9]; 2.40.879 [on Matt 6:16]; 2.42. 920-936 [on Matt 6:17]; 2.44.963 [on Matt 6:19]; 2.50.1089 [on 6:25]; 2.57.1302 [on Matt 6:26-8]; 2.54.1172 [on Matt 6:33]; 2.57.1267 and 2.58.1319-20 [on Matt 6:34]; 2.68.1527 [on Matt 7:6]; 2.75.1717 [on Matt 7:12]).

Commenting on the fourth petition of the Lord's Prayer ("give us today our daily bread," Matt 6:11), Augustine explains that these imperatives should facilitate personal

formation: "we should understand the daily bread as spiritual, that is, as divine precepts (*praecepta scilicet diuina*) that we must meditate on and practice (*meditari et operari)* daily" (2.27.556-7). By "divine precepts," Augustine could arguably mean the full range of scriptural commands; he uses *praecepta* to mean such in another early work (*Ver. rel.* 7.23; 17.28). But the phrase "meditate on and practice," which appears only here in his corpus, more likely alludes to the command in Matt 7:24 to "hear" and "do" Jesus' words ("*audit*" and "*facit*" in Augustine's quotation; 2.87.1976), though Augustine does not make the connection explicit. If so, then the "divine precepts" on which one should meditate are principally the imperatives of Jesus in Matt 5-7.[108] These precepts can represent daily bread, he maintains, because just as the body must be "restored/refreshed" (*reficiatur*) daily by food, so must the soul (*animus*)[109] be "restored" (or "reformed;" *reficiatur)*[110] by "the food of the commandments" (*praeceptorum cibo*), as its vacillating desires (*temporalibus affectibus*) distract it from concentrating on God (*dispendium ab intentione dei patitur*, 2.27.566-7).[111] Since, according to Augustine in this commentary, passing from the typical human state to

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[108] Cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Protr.* 10.108.5, where Clement quotes several sayings from the SM as examples of "holy sayings that have been written on people's hearts" (ἅγιοι λόγοι ἐν αὐταῖς ἐγγραφόμενοι ταῖς καρδίαις).

[109] On Augustine's understanding of the soul, see Gerard J. P. O'Daly, *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind* (London: Duckworth, 1987), 7–80.

[110] Cf. Augustine's use of *reficio* to refer to moral reformation in *En. Ps.* 45.14.

[111] On Augustine's use of *intentio*, see Luigi Alici, "Intentio," ed. Cornelius Mayer, *Augustinus-Lexikon* (Basel: Schwabe, 1986); O'Daly, *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind*, 44, 84–7; Dominique Doucet, *Augustin: l'expérience du verbe*, Bibliothèque des philosophies (Paris: J. Vrin, 2004), 71–9.

perfection entails disentangling the soul from earthly interests so that it concentrates solely and tranquilly on the divine (1.10) and so that one's deeds are, as a consequence, necessarily good (2.45.995-1020),[112] this daily meditation on precepts, by repeatedly reorienting the soul towards God (see also 2.11.248-9), facilitates spiritual progress. It is a transformative exercise that, the comparison of the precepts to food implies, involves digesting—internalizing—these sayings delineating Christian perfection.[113] In Augustine's estimation, then, the SM is a set of

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[112] See also *Trin.* 14.17.20; *Civ.* 15.22.33. Augustine later gives up on the notion that one can purify one's *intentio*, as his corrections of *De Sermone* show (e.g., *Retr.* 1.19.1-2). For his statements on human nature and spiritual progress, see further Margaret R. Miles, *Fullness of Life: Historical Foundations for a New Asceticism* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981), 62–78; John M. Rist, *Augustine: Ancient Thought Baptized* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 148–202; Frederick van Fleteren, "Ascent of the Soul," ed. Allan Fitzgerald, *Augustine Through the Ages: An Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1999); Aaron Stalnaker, *Overcoming Our Evil: Human Nature and Spiritual Exercises in Xunzi and Augustine*, Moral Traditions (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2006), 197–245.

[113] Cf. Augustine's later remark that the commands to love God and neighbor "must always be pondered, meditated on, retained, practiced, and fulfilled" (*haec semper cogitanda, haec meditanda, haec retinenda, haec agenda, haec implenda sunt*; *Tract. Ev. Jo.* 17.8.9). In many respects, the meditation Augustine prescribes resembles Stoic meditation of the Roman period. Seneca too advises "daily meditation" (*cotidiana meditatio*, *Ep.* 16.1; cf. Cicero, *Tusc.* 2.27.66), meaning carrying "an idea within himself for a time in order to imbue himself with it" (Paul Veyne, *Seneca: The Life of a Stoic*, trans. David Sullivan [New York: Routledge, 2003], 75; Foucault, *Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 355–62). And the objects of Stoic meditation were often gnomes because, as brief distillations of an idea, they could be easily remembered and held in the mind (Newman, "Cotidie meditare"). For example, in his account in *De Ira* 3.36-7 of his nightly self-examination, Seneca reports repeating to himself many gnomic admonitions. For both Stoics and Augustine, it seems, *meditatio* is a mental exercise that aims at appropriating central tenets. Hadot argues, in fact, that late antique Christian authors like Augustine imported spiritual exercises directly from philosophies like Stoicism and into Christianity (*Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 126–44). Scripture may also have influenced Augustine's understanding of meditation, of course. Scriptural justifications for the language of "meditation" include Ps. 1:2; 119:70, 77. Whatever the sources of his practices, as a late antique commentator on a gnomologium who emphasizes that the work facilitates self-transformation, Augustine resembles philosophers such as Simplicius and Hierocles. For further discussion of Augustine's portrayal of meditation, see Sarah Catherine Byers, *Perception, Sensibility, and Moral Motivation in Augustine: A Stoic-Platonic Synthesis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 151–71. On Augustine and spiritual exercises generally, see also Stalnaker, *Overcoming Our Evil*, 197–245. He argues that "[i]t would not

gnomic imperatives that form the basis for self-cultivation. It is much like the creed, which, while not imperatival, is a curated collection of brief statements (*Symb.* 1.10; *Serm.* 214) to be held in the mind (*Symb.* 1.4-5, 12 [*tenere quod credit*]; *Serm.* 58.10.12-58.11.13; 214) and in the heart (*in corde scribite*, *Symb.* 1.1) in order to make one a Christian.[114]

Building on Augustine's work, Hans Dieter Betz claims that the SM is a gnomic epitome, a carefully culled collection of sententious sayings intended, like other such collections in antiquity, as the basis for transformative exercise.[115] He observes that the SM consists of "sayings" (λόγοι, 7:24) and argues that 7:24-7 reveals the intended response to these sayings: "hearing and doing," which together mean acquiring through reflection and practice an insightful and even critical understanding of the sayings and implementing it by thinking creatively about their application to concrete situations.[116] The Sermon even facilitates that response by exhorting the reader to "pay attention" (προσέχετε, 6:1, 7:15) and

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be overstating the case to say that Augustine views the Christian life, in lay, clerical, and monastic forms, as consisting essentially of the practice of spiritual exercises" (198) and that Augustine "sees Christian practices and experiences primarily as means of purification and reformation of the soul, all in order to become actually rather than merely potentially capable of cleaving to God in beatitude after the resurrection, and to a limited extent in this life" (233).

[114] For the use of collections of brief precepts, meant to be internalized, for formation in North Africa, see also the prefaces to books 1 and 3 of Cyprian's *Ad Quirinum*; cf. Augustine's often sententious *Speculum*. Augustine's prescription for the use of SM also parallels the use of brief sayings in contemporaneous monastic practice, on which see Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 133–5; Driscoll, *Evagrius Ponticus*, 172–214.

[115] Hans Dieter Betz, "The Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:3-7:27): Its Literary Genre and Function," in *Essays on the Sermon on the Mount* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 11–6; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 1, 44. For Betz' acknowledgment of indebtedness to Augustine, see Ibid., 45–7.

[116] Betz, "Literary Genre and Function," 3–7, 15–16; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 44, 560–63.

"observe, notice, learn" (καταμάθετε, 6:28) and by its "thoroughgoing rhetorical structure …

with its constant flow of rhetorical questions, reminders, juxtapositions, and provocative

images" that prompt reflection.[117] As a collection of sayings that enables one to acquire the

ability to reason and hence act like the sage to whom the sayings are attributed, the SM

belongs to the genre, Betz argues, of a philosophical epitome, other examples of which

include Epicurus' *Kyriai Doxai* and Epictetus' *Encheiridion*.[118]

Betz links his claims about the SM's form and function—its genre—to claims about its

origins, claims that most contemporary scholars reject. Unlike the vast majority of exegetes

today, Betz does not believe that the SM results from Matthew's redaction of Q. Matthew, he

argues, could not have composed the sermon because its Christology, eschatology, and

attitude toward the Gentile mission conflict with the theology of Matt 1-4 and 8-28.[119]

Whoever did compose the SM did so by crafting dominical sentences into a rhetorically

effective epitome, a work that presented Jesus' teaching succinctly and memorably so that

Jewish-Christian neophytes could exercise themselves with it and come to reason like Jesus.

Similarities with the SP indicate that the creator of that work did the same for a Gentile-

Christian audience[120] while the differences between the two works imply that neither author

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[117] Betz, "Literary Genre and Function," 4–6. The quoted section appears on p. 6.

[118] Ibid., 7–15.

[119] On what he sees as differences in Christology, see Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 145, 147, 153, 160; eschatology, 128, 528; the Gentile mission, 320, 566–7.

[120] Ibid., 2.

composed by altering a shared Q source.[121] Each epitome was eventually incorporated into a

version of Q—Q[Matt] or Q[Luke]—and then, unchanged, into their host gospels.[122] According to

Betz, the SM is only formative, however, in its pre-Matthean setting or settings. Once

incorporated into Matthew's gospel, the SM ceases to be the basis for a spiritual exercise and

becomes a speech.[123]

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[121] Betz writes:

"The more one goes into the details, the more it should become clear how different the two sermons really are despite the material that they share. How can the differences as well as the similarities be accounted for? This reviewer confesses to be highly skeptical of this question's being answered convincingly by textual operations on the part of the gospel writers, such as their adding this and omitting that, inserting something here and rewriting whole sections there. The puzzle-game method, presently popular among scholars, is as confusing to the specialist as it must be baffling to the non-specialist. It does not consider other options and loses sight of the composition of the texts as we now have them." ("Review of Jan Lambrecht, S.J., *The Sermon on the Mount: Proclamation and Exhortation,*" *JBL* 106 [1987]: 542).

Commenting on Matt 7:15-20, for example, he adds, "One cannot explain the differences between the SP [Sermon on the Plain] and the SM [Sermon on the Mount] versions as redactional changes made by the evangelist Matthew who had before him Q/Luke 6:43-45. Instead all related texts have drawn their material from earlier versions of Q containing different elaborations of it. The passage under examination shows, therefore, quite clearly that the SM does not depend on the same Q-version that the SP depends on" (*The Sermon on the Mount*, 533; see also 43–44, 70, 300, 559).

[122] Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 43–4.

[123] Hans Dieter Betz, "The Beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:3-12): Observations on Their Literary Form and Theological Significance," in *Essays on the Sermon on the Mount* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 18; Hans Dieter Betz, "The Sermon on the Mount: In Defense of a Hypothesis," *BR* 36 (1991): 74–80; Hans Dieter Betz, "The Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's Interpretation," in *The Future of Early Christianity: Essays in Honor of Helmut Koester*, ed. Birger A. Pearson (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 258–75.

Few scholars find the scenario Betz imagines plausible for some combination of the

following four reasons:[124] one, on a *prima facie* basis, some doubt that Matthew would reuse

a source without modification, given how meticulously the evangelist edits Mark.[125] Two,

most modern scholars find in the Sermon vocabulary, compositional techniques, and

emphases characteristic of the First Gospel and conclude that Matthew gave the SM its

current shape by editing Q, which, given the shared content of the SM and the SP and the

common wording and sequence of that content, they believe contained the *Vorlage* of both

passages.[126] Three, many question whether the theology of the SM, even when read in

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[124] Brown calls Betz's claims about the origins of Matt 5-7 "unconventional" (*An Introduction to the New Testament*, Anchor Bible Reference Library [New York: Doubleday, 1997], 178). Viviano, who considers himself a "centrist in the Davies-Allison mold," terms them "eccentric," "odd," and "ultimately useless" and wonders if Betz even intends them to be taken seriously or whether they are simply intellectual provocations ("The Sermon on the Mount in Recent Study," in *Matthew and His World: The Gospel of the Open Jewish Christians*, Novum Testamentum et orbis antiquus, Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments 61 [Fribourg: Academic Press, 2007], 56–7). Stanton claims that Betz' source theory "either challenges or ignores almost all other current scholarly work on the Sermon" (*A Gospel for a New People*, 310).

[125] Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 294–5; Paul Hoffmann, "Betz and Q," trans. Thomas Hieke, *ZNW* 88 (1997): 202–3; Robert H. Gundry, "The Sermon on the Mount according to H.D. Betz," in *The Old Is Better: New Testament Essays in Support of Traditional Interpretations*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 178 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 130; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 176n22; Viviano, "The Sermon on the Mount in Recent Study," 59; cf. E. P. Sanders, "Review of Hans Dieter Betz, *Essays on the Sermon on the Mount*," *JR* 67 (1987): 87–89.

[126] Dale C. Allison, "Review of Hans Dieter Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount: A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, Including the Sermon on the Plain (Matthew 5:3-7:27 and Luke 6:20-49)*," *JBL* 117 (1998): 136–37; Charles E. Carlston, "Betz on the Sermon on the Mount - A Critique," *CBQ* 50 (1988): 56; Klyne Snodgrass, "A Response to Hans Dieter Betz on the Sermon on the Mount," *BR* 36 (1991): 89–90; Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 287–88, 294, 314–316; Hoffmann, "Betz and Q," 200, 205; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 176n22; cf. Sanders, "Review of Hans Dieter Betz, *Essays on the Sermon on the Mount*"; Kari Syreeni, *The Making of the Sermon on the Mount: A Procedural Analysis of Matthew's Redactoral Activity*, Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae. Dissertationes humanarum litterarum 44 (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia, 1987), 160–1.

isolation, really differs significantly from that of the First Gospel.[127] Four, even if it does, for a

majority of scholars such differences need not indicate the incorporation of a source. As Dale

Allison remarks, "[M]any portions of the Gospel fail to contain important christological ideas

or themes found elsewhere."[128] Not every section of the evangelist's work need trumpet the

same theological themes.

Though Betz' claims about the SM's history have been dismissed, many scholars

have, nonetheless, embraced his claims about its genre, separating the question of origins

from that of form and functions. To be sure, a chorus of voices have objected that the

differences between the Jewish SM and Greek *epitomae* overwhelm any similarities,[129] but an

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[127] See Allison, "Review of Hans Dieter Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount: A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, Including the Sermon on the Plain (Matthew 5:3-7:27 and Luke 6:20-49),*" 138; Carlston, "Betz on the Sermon on the Mount - A Critique," 44–5; Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 318–22; Hoffmann, "Betz and Q," 204–8; Gundry, "The Sermon on the Mount according to H.D. Betz," 132–48; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 176n22. Betz himself identifies correspondences between the theology of the SM and that of Matthew (e.g., *The Sermon on the Mount*, 44).

[128] Allison, "Review of Hans Dieter Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount: A Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, Including the Sermon on the Plain (Matthew 5:3-7:27 and Luke 6:20-49),*" 137; see also Sanders, "Review of Hans Dieter Betz, *Essays on the Sermon on the Mount,*" 89; Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 317–8; Snodgrass, "A Response to Hans Dieter Betz on the Sermon on the Mount," 90–1; Gundry, "The Sermon on the Mount according to H.D. Betz," 130–1.

[129] Carlston, "Betz on the Sermon on the Mount - A Critique," 49–51; James G. Williams, "Paraenesis, Excess, and Ethics: Matthew's Rhetoric in the Sermon on the Mount," *Semeia* 50 (1990): 165–6; Ernest W. Saunders, "A Response to H. D. Betz on the Sermon on the Mount," *BR* 36 (1991): 82; Snodgrass, "A Response to Hans Dieter Betz on the Sermon on the Mount," 88; Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 295, 310–1; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 174n10; 391 (The SM "is not teaching in the philosophical sense" and "[f]or that reason alone it is not an epitome in the ancient sense"); Viviano, "The Sermon on the Mount in Recent Study," 57, 60. Williams, however, seems to misunderstand Betz. He insists the SM is not an epitome because it "presupposes and alludes to the whole rather than summarizing it." But Betz describes the epitome as presupposing and alluding to a whole system and thereby summarizing it. What else would summarizing be? Stanton also seems to mischaracterize what Betz means by "epitome"; see John Yueh-Han Yieh, *One Teacher: Jesus' Teaching Role in Matthew's*

equally numerous and growing chorus has endorsed his claim that the SM resembles an

ancient philosophical epitome.[130] His proposal has gained enough acceptance, in fact, that, in

the study of the genre of the SM, it is a center of gravity, a force that—like Davies and

Allison's claim that Matt 5-7 is an interpretation of a dictum that *m. 'Abot* 1:2 attributes to

the Maccabean-era teacher Simeon the Just, a claim that constitutes the major alternative to

Betz in current scholarship on the Sermon's genre—interpreters must either overcome or be

drawn into.[131] However, because the scholars who have accepted Betz' claims about genre

but not his claims about origins have left unclarified the role of this epitome in Matthew's

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Gospel Report, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche 124 (Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 2004), 33–4n93.

[130] See Abraham J Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation: A Greco-Roman Sourcebook*, Library of Early Christianity 4 (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986), 85 (The SM is "in the nature of epitomes"), who does not explicitly refer but surely alludes to Betz's work; Helmut Koester, *Ancient Christian Gospels: Their History and Development* (London : Philadelphia: SCM Press, Trinity Press International, 1990), 65, 137, 167–71; Pheme Perkins, *Jesus as Teacher* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 76; Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 185 (provisionally); Wesley H. Wachob, *The Voice of Jesus in the Social Rhetoric of James* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 39, 126–27, 199; Yieh, *One Teacher*, 33–34, 91, 186, 251, 305; Gregory E. Sterling, "Hellenistic Moral Philosophy and the New Testament," in *Dictionary of Biblical Criticism and Interpretation*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (London: Routledge, 2007), 154.

[131] For Davies' and Allison's claim, see W. D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), 303–15; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:63–4, 133–8; 2:177; 3:698–99; Dale C. Allison, "The Configuration of the Sermon on the Mount and Its Meaning," in *Studies in Matthew: Interpretation Past and Present* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2005), 206–15. For assessments of their position, see Georg Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit: Untersuchung zur Theologie des Matthäus*, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 82 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962), 257–67; Stendahl, *School of St. Matthew*, xii–xiii; Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 307–9; M. Eugene Boring, "The Gospel of Matthew," in *The New Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 8, 12 vols. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994), 172; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 423; Charles H. Talbert, *Reading the Sermon on the Mount: Character Formation and Decision Making in Matthew 5-7* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2004), 23; Walter T. Wilson, "A Third Form of Righteousness: The Theme and Contribution of Matthew 6.19-7.12 in the Sermon on the Mount," *NTS* 53 (2007): 305–6.

narrative, an explanation of the relationship between the formative nature of Matt 5-7 and

the ethics of Matthew as a whole remains a desideratum, one this study attempts to fill.[132]

To further our understanding of how, according to Matthew, the ideal self arises, I

will build on Augustine's and Betz' claim that the SM's gnomic form and its epilogue (7:24-

7) imply that it facilitates ethical formation. Because, as I will show in the next chapter,

sayings collections may have functions other than ethical formation, it is necessary to clarify

how we can ascertain that a particular collection fuels spiritual exercises and therefore, like

Betz (and Hadot), I will take Epicurus' *Kyriai Doxai* and Epictetus' *Encheiridion* as

paradigms of the formative sayings collection, extracting from them the characteristic

indicators that a sayings collection facilitates ethical exercise, the indicators for which I will

look in Matthew. But whereas Augustine interprets the SM largely in isolation from the rest

of Matthew's gospel and Betz deems his thesis dependent on viewing the Sermon as a pre-

Matthean composition, I will read Matt 5-7 in its Matthean context and, while I am

persuaded by those who portray Matt 5-7 as the evangelist's redaction of Q, my thesis will

not depend on an account of the origins of these chapters. Regardless of the extent to which

the SM is Matthew's creation or inheritance, it surely appears as it does in the First Gospel for

discernable reasons and contributes to Matthew's depiction of ethical formation in

recognizable ways. I thus separate Betz' claims about the passage's genre from his claims

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[132] Yieh offers the most substantial account of the role of an epitome within Matthew when he claims that by attributing an epitome to Jesus, Matthew casts him as a philosophical teacher (*One Teacher*, 33–4, 91; cf. 251, 305n153).

about its history and, by examining the role of the SM as a gnomic composition in Matthew's ethics, I also seek to meet a desideratum in Matthean studies.

This investigation will not result in a complete description of the First Gospel's ethics. Because I follow Augustine and Betz in focusing on sayings and therefore attend only to the role the evangelist assigns gnomic forms in cultivating his moral norm, missing from my description will be any roles he assigns other literary forms such as parables (apart from the parable in 7:24-7), miracle stories, pronouncement stories, and the passion narrative. But by focusing on the role the evangelist assigns the SM, this study will investigate a fundamental element in this gospel's portrayal of the nature and genesis of the moral life, for Matt 5-7, since Matthew presents it as Jesus' customary teaching and proclamation of the "gospel of the kingdom" (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας, 4:23),[133] since it is Jesus' first major discourse and thereby colors or exercises a primacy effect on the rest of the narrative,[134] and since its contents are repeatedly echoed in the rest of the narrative,[135] occupies a programmatic place in the narrative. Thus, while not exhaustive, this investigation will address concerns central, not peripheral to the evangelist.

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[133] John S. Kloppenborg, *Excavating Q: The History and Setting of the Sayings Gospel* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 405.

[134] On "primacy effects" in narratives, see Meir Sternberg, *Expositional Modes and Temporal Ordering in Fiction* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978), 93–8; Menakhem Perry, "Literary Dynamics: How the Order of a Text Creates Its Meanings [With an Analysis of Faulkner's 'A Rose for Emily']," *Poetics Today* 1 (1979): 53–8.

[135] Among the many connections commentators routinely observe between the SM and the rest of Matthew's narrative are 5:27-32 // 19:3-9; 5:21, 27, 33, 43 // 19:18-19; 5:43 // 22:39.

The Plan of This Study

I will argue that the form of Matt 5-7, the fact that it consists of pithy sayings, or gnomes, allows for a more descriptive answer to the question of how, according to Matthew, one is to realize the gospel's ethical ideal. My thesis is that by featuring prominently within his gospel a sayings collection, the epilogue of which exhorts the reader to internalize the sayings and thereby acquire a new character (7:24-7) consonant with the moral ideal found throughout the gospel, Matthew implies that one can become the self his gospel idealizes through using these sayings in transformative exercises, in what Hadot calls "spiritual exercises." I thus endorse Betz's proposal about SM's genre but maintain that the case for it is strengthened, not diminished when the SM is read as a part of Matthew's gospel. The argument unfolds in four chapters.

Chapter two describes the forms and functions of ancient sayings collections and highlights in particular the evidence that some collections were employed to form particular varieties of character. Because Betz chooses them as comparanda and because, as I will show in that chapter, the notion that they facilitate exercises is a rather assured result of scholarship in classics and ancient philosophy, I study Epicurus' *Kyriai Doxai* and Epictetus' *Encheiridion* to discern how one might know that a particular gnomic work is an instrument intended for use in transformative work on oneself. I offer an account of Epicurus' ideal self and then show that his *Kyriai Doxai* restates that ideal in gnomic form and that further evidence internal to the work and external to it (e.g., Epicurus' other writings as well as *testimonia* about the *Kyriai Doxai*) indicates that it facilitates a spiritual exercise that enables one to become that idealized self. I show the same for Epictetus and the *Encheiridion*.

Like Betz, I consider the *Kyriai Doxai* and the *Encheiridion* to be *comparanda* from within Matthew's historical contexts. These gnomic collections not only provide clear examples of the use of sayings collections in spiritual exercises; they provide clear examples of such formative use in the same language and roughly the same historical period (Greco-Roman antiquity, c. 300 B.C.E. to c. 300 C.E.) and geographical area (the Mediterranean world) as the SM. Similarities in function between them and the Sermon likely imply then not a genetic relationship, as Hadot would have it, but the adoption of a convention—the use of sayings collections in ethical formation—prevalent in this context.[136] Studying the SM in light of those conventions clarifies its function within Matthew's narrative. In this way the existence of these sayings collections within Matthew's environment makes my argument more plausible and the collections thus have some evidentiary value, though the argument rests primarily on evidence internal to Matthew.

But for readers who consider Greek sayings collections outside of or marginal to Matthew's milieu, I believe these *comparanda* still have value as analogies to the SM. Recent scholarship typically stresses Matthew's indebtedness to or participation in particularly Jewish conventions and fruitfully so.[137] Some of my own interpretations of Matthean passages in

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[136] Cf. Kloppenborg's justification for comparing Q to non-Jewish compositions: "[T]he very fact that Q was composed in Greek, not Hebrew or Aramaic, makes it *a priori* likely that resonances with Greek wisdom or sentence collections will be found" (*The Formation of Q: Trajectories in Ancient Wisdom Collections*, Studies in Antiquity and Christianity [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1987], 263).

[137] For an indication of how much recent studies have dwelt on the gospel's relationship(s) to Jewish traditions and groups, see the following surveys of scholarship: Graham Stanton, "The Origin and Purpose of Matthew's Gospel. Matthean Scholarship from 1945 to 1980," in *ANRW II* (Berlin:

later chapters stress the gospel's interactions with Jewish traditions. In light of the insights

gained by adducing Jewish *comparanda*, one might understandably deem Greek and Roman

materials irrelevant or at least of secondary value, in as much as Jewish traditions are not also

Greek and/or Roman. Benedict Viviano, for example, considers non-Jewish Greek sources of

"tertiary or quaternary" importance to the interpretation of the SM.[138] If one adopts this view,

then the Greek works I study in this chapter provide potential analogues to the SM from an

unrelated or minimally related context. They are remote and not proximate *comparanda*. As

such, they are valuable in that generate questions and hypotheses that the interpreter can pose

to and test within the Gospel of Matthew itself. They are of little to no evidentiary value to

my thesis about the First Gospel, except in as much as they show that human beings

generally tend to utilize collections of wise sayings in self-transformation. The argument

depends entirely on evidence internal to Matthew, as understood within a strictly Jewish

context.[139] As I have said, I do not view these comparisons thusly; like the collections I discuss

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Walter de Gruyter, 1985), 1889–1951; Boris Repschinski, *The Controversy Stories in the Gospel of Matthew: Their Redaction, Form and Relevance for the Relationship Between the Matthean Community and Formative Judaism*, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 189 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 13–61; Paul Foster, *Community, Law, and Mission in Matthew's Gospel*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/177 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 22–79. Betz' insistence on privileging Greek and Roman *comparanda* to Matthew is, in the context of contemporary scholarship, exceptional.

[138] Viviano, "The Sermon on the Mount in Recent Study," 59–61; the quoted words appear on p. 60; see also John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2005), 329n465. For a critique of such views, see Erin Roberts, "Anger, Emotion, and Desire in the Gospel of Matthew" (Ph.D. diss., Brown University, 2010), 24–7, 73–98.

[139] On the utility of analogical or distant comparisons, see Bernard S. Jackson, "From *Dharma* to Law," in *Between Jerusalem and Benares: Comparative Studies in Judaism and Hinduism*, ed.

therein, chapter one has an intended hermeneutic. Readers, however, may utilize it in multiple ways.

In chapters three through five, I argue that most of the characteristics that indicate that the *Kyriai Doxai* and the *Encheiridion* are formative exist for Matthew's SM by following the same analytical procedure carried out on the former gnomologia in ch. 1. In chapters three and four, I describe Matthew's character ethic, or ideal self, using primarily what biblical scholars call narrative criticism, that is, through a close, synchronic reading of the text, but incorporating insights from redaction criticism, from diachronic reading, as well. Chapter two traces this gospel's use of the metaphor of trees and their fruits for the source of conduct and conduct itself and shows that particular inward traits and states make right actions possible and that right intentions must accompany those actions. Chapter three finds the same convictions in Matthew's treatment of purity in 15:1-20, eschatological preparation and judgment in chs. 24-5, and hypocrisy throughout the gospel. These chapters reveal that Matthew idealizes a self humble enough to repent in response to John's and Jesus' preaching and become Jesus' disciple, one who maintains the emotional and mental stability necessary to persist in doing the good deeds God demands despite such threats as persecution, the lure of wealth and status, and the unpredictability of the eschaton—to endure

Hananya Goodman (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 181: "For it is indeed the function of the comparative approach to ask questions and suggest hypotheses; answers and proof can only be provided by internal evidence"; David M. Freidenreich, "Comparisons Compared: A Methodological Survey of Comparisons of Religion from 'A Magic Dwells' to *A Magic Still Dwells*," *MTSR* 16 (2004): 91–4; see also William E. Paden, *Religious Worlds: The Comparative Study of Religion* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994); William E. Paden, "Universals Revisited: Human Behaviors and Cultural Variations," *Numen* 48 (2001): 285–8.

in discipleship—, and one who safeguards the intentions that ensure those deeds are good. As I explain in ch. 2, my description of Matthew's moral ideal differs from other recent scholarly accounts only in its emphasis: whereas several prominent studies of late, in reaction to prior scholarship that portrayed Matthew as prioritizing dispositions and intentions, have stressed that the evangelist demands proper conduct, I emphasize that Matthew depicts certain internal states as the necessary pre- or co-requisites of that conduct. Chapter five then identifies evidence internal and external to the SM—evidence comparable to that presented for the *Kyriai Doxai* and the *Encheiridion*—that Matthew portrays it as the basis for an exercise that enables one to become that self.

Finally, a conclusion summarizes the results of chapters one through four and presents the study's implications for our understanding of Matthew's ethics, the history of self-transformation in antiquity, and the study of ethics more generally. We begin in the next chapter by surveying gnomic forms and the functions of gnomic collections.

CHAPTER TWO: SAYINGS COLLECTIONS AND SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

In preparation for studying the role the sayings collection in Matt 5-7 plays in the First Gospel's ethics, this chapter describes the range of roles sayings collections played in antiquity and shows how we can identify collections that fueled spiritual exercises, using Epicurus' *Kyriai Doxai* and Epictetus' *Encheiridion* as paradigmatic examples. Because taxonomies of sayings have figured so prominently in the study of gnomic literature, I first assess the utility for this investigation of distinguishing between types of gnomic sayings before delineating the functions of gnomologia and and the distinguishing characteristics of formative collections. In the subsequent three chapters, I find those distinguishing characteristics in the Gospel of Matthew.

The Contents of Sayings Collections

Ancient sayings collections consist of brief, memorable expressions of wisdom—sayings. Modern scholars of Greek, Latin, and Semitic literatures, as well as folklorists and linguists, have labored to identify and describe types of wise sayings, to define and distinguish maxims, aphorisms, proverbs, proverbial expressions, epigrams, precepts, and so

forth.[1] As some studies of sayings collections depend on such taxonomies, before I describe

the collections that facilitated spiritual exercises, I will examine the distinctions regularly

made in the study of sententious expressions and assess their relevance for this investigation.

Many scholars have searched for a clear classificatory schema for sayings in ancient

literary theory and practice. They have often assumed that ancient writers had in mind fixed

generic laws and knew when and why they observed and broke them and they have

sometimes reasoned that ancient literary theorists articulated these laws. "In other words, the

key to understanding the literature is to be found in the study of its genres" and the key to

understanding genres may be found in the study of critics such as Aristotle.[2] That assumption

and that reasoning holds some truth for some ancient literature, in particular for early Greek

lyric poetry.[3] But the search for classifications, whether based on content or form, that

predictably governed the production and hence illuminate the meaning of brief forms like

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[1] On this enterprise, see Wilson, *Love Without Pretense*, 9; Gary Saul Morson, "Aphoristic Style: The Rhetoric of the Aphorism," in *A Companion to Rhetoric and Rhetorical Criticism*, ed. Walter Jost and Wendy Olmsted, Blackwell Companions to Literature and Culture 22 (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2004), 248; Wolfgang Mieder, *Proverbs: A Handbook*, Greenwood Folklore Handbooks (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2004), xii–xiii, 1–9, 13–15 and the literature cited therein.

[2] D. A. Russell, *Criticism in Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 148. For differing assessments of the importance of ancient literary theory for modern scholarship, compare Malcolm Heath, *Interpreting Classical Texts*, Duckworth Classical Essays (London: Duckworth, 2002); and Denis Feeney, "Criticism Ancient and Modern," in *Oxford Readings in Ancient Literary Criticism*, ed. Andrew Laird, Oxford Readings in Classical Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 440–54. On the question of whether the ancients shared our modern conceptions of genre, see Thomas G. Rosenmeyer, "Ancient Literary Genres: A Mirage?," in *Oxford Readings in Ancient Literary Criticism*, ed. Andrew Laird, Oxford Readings in Classical Studies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 421–39.

[3] Russell, *Criticism in Antiquity*, 148, 157–8.

sayings has proven notoriously frustrating, in large part because ancient theorists offer variegated definitions, as an examination of the ways Aristotle and Quintilian,[4] the two ancient critics most cited in the modern study of sententious sayings, categorize such sayings illustrates, and in part because popular practice is likewise fluid.

For Aristotle, the most important form of moral or wise saying is the γνώμη, usually rendered in English as *maxim*, *gnomic saying*, or simply *gnome*, a general statement of moral truth that represents a deductive argument in a speech. In the *Rhetoric*, he first defines a gnome as follows:

> A gnome is an assertion, not, however, about particulars, as, for instance, what sort of a man Iphicrates was, but a general assertion, and not about everything, as is, for instance, the assertion that the straight is the opposite of the crooked, but about actions and what actions should be chosen and avoided. (2.21.2)[5]

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[4] For an overview of other ancient theorists of brief forms, see Johann Christian Gottlieb Ernesti, *Lexicon Technologiae Graecorum Rhetoricae* (Leipzig: Fritsch, 1795), 63–4; Bartlett J. Whiting, "The Nature of the Proverb," *Harvard Studies and Notes on Philology and Literature* 14 (1932): 273–307; R. Dean Anderson, Jr., *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms*, Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 24 (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 30–2; Vayos J. Liapis, *Menandrou Gnomai Monostichoi: Eisagôgê, Metaphrasê, Scholia*, Vivliothēkē archaiōn syngrapheōn 32 (Athens: Stigmi Publications, 2002), 85–95.

[5] I translate from Rudolf Kassel's Greek text (*Aristotelis Ars Rhetorica*, ed. Rudolf Kassel [Berlin: de Gruyter, 1976]). On the text of the *Rhetoric* and on Kassel's edition in particular, see Martha C. Nussbaum, "Review of *Rudolf Kassel's Der Text Der Aristotelischen Rhetorik: Prolegomena Zu E. Krit.*, and *Aristotelis Ars Rhetorica. Text Griech*, Edited by Rudolfus Kassel," *AGR* 63 (1981): 346–51.

Aristotle elsewhere distinguishes between general statements and universal statements and his insistence here that the gnome is general but is not "about everything" (οὐ περὶ πάντων) implies then that the gnome is a moral declaration true in many but not necessarily all cases.[6]

The most important function of gnomes for Aristotle is as components of deductive arguments or as arguments themselves. Immediately following the definition quoted above, he states:

> Therefore, since the enthymeme is, roughly speaking, the deductive argument about such things, when the deductive argument is removed, the conclusions and premises of enthymemes are gnomes. (2.21.2)[7]

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[6] Andre Pierre M. H. Lardinois, "Wisdom in Context: The Use of Gnomic Statements in Archaic Greek Poetry" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1995), 809; see also Pascale Derron, ed., *Pseudo-Phocylide: Sentences*, Budé (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1986), viii: "Aristote définit la γνώμη comme une affirmation de valeur générale destinée à régler le comportement moral de l'homme." Lardinois points out that though Aristotle claims that gnomes direct actions (" a gnome is … a general statement … about … what actions should be chosen and avoided"), "[s]ome of Aristotle's own examples [of gnomes] are mere statements of fact which one cannot do anything about" ("Wisdom in Context," 9; see also Jan Stenger, "Apophthegma, Gnome und Chrie: zum Verhältnis dreier literarischer Kleinformen," *Philologus* 150 [2006]: 207–8). In certain contexts, indicative statements can, however, have normative force, as Lardinois recognizes ("Wisdom in Context," 9, 78–9). He insists nonetheless that some of the gnomes Aristotle quotes, such as "There is no one who is really free" (1394b4) are merely descriptive. I am unconvinced.

[7] Kassel's text reads as follows: ὥστ᾽ ἐπεὶ τὸ ἐνθύμημα ὁ περὶ τοιούτων συλλογισμός ἐστι σχεδὸν, τὰ συμπεράσματα τῶν ἐνθυμημάτων καὶ αἱ ἀρχαὶ ἀφαιρεθέντος τοῦ συλλογισμοῦ γνῶμαί εἰσιν. W. D. Ross' text differs in that it puts a comma before σχεδὸν ("generally" or "roughly speaking," "more or less"), so that the term modifies not what precedes it, as in my translation, but what follows (*Ars Rhetorica*, ed. W. D. Ross, Oxford Classical Texts [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959]). On this issue, see William M. A. Grimaldi, *Aristotle,* Rhetoric*: A Commentary*, 2 vols. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1980), 2:262.

Though it transliterates into English as "syllogism," the Greek term συλλογισμός in Aristotle's corpus seldom means what the English term "syllogism" usually means, namely one of the highly specific tripartite forms of deductive argument described in the *Prior Analytics*. Jonathan Barnes translates "deduction" and glosses the term as "valid deductive argument" (*Posterior Analytics*, 2d ed., Clarendon Aristotle [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994], 82–3). Christof Rapp translates "Deduktion" (e.g., *Rhetorik*, 2 vols., Aristoteles Werke in deutscher Übersetzung 4 [Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2002], 1:108). See further Edward M. Cope, *An Introduction to Aristotle's Rhetoric* (London:

Understanding this claim about gnomes requires first understanding what Aristotle means by enthymeme and deductive argument.[8] An "enthymeme," Aristotle explains earlier in the *Rhetoric*, is the form of deductive argument employed in rhetorical speeches. Speakers can persuade their audiences, he maintains, either by arguing inductively, piling up particular examples (παράδειγμα) that amount to a proof (πίστις), or deductively, stating a set of premises and a conclusion that follows from them, that is, using enthymemes. The enthymeme resembles its counterpart in dialectic, or philosophical investigation: the

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Macmillan, 1867), 166–7; Friedrich Solmsen, *Die Entwicklung der Aristotelischen Logik und Rhetorik*, Neue philologische Untersuchungen 4 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1929), 41–2; Jonathan Barnes, "Proof and the Syllogism," in *Aristotle on Science: The "Posterior Analytics,"* ed. Enrico Berti, Studia Aristotelica 9 (Padua: Antenore, 1981), 21–7; Jonathan Barnes, *Logical Matters: Essays in Ancient Philosophy II* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2012), 366; André Wartelle, *Lexique de La "Rhétorique" d'Aristote*, Collection d'études anciennes (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1982), 396; Miles Burnyeat, "Enthymeme: Aristotle on the Rationality of Rhetoric," in *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric*, ed. Amélie Rorty, Philosophical Traditions 6 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 96; Robin Smith, Topics*, Books I and VIII*, Clarendon Aristotle (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 42; David E. Aune, "The Use and Abuse of the Enthymeme in New Testament Scholarship," *NTS* 49 (2003): 303; David E. Aune, "Enthymeme," ed. David E. Aune, *The Westminster Dictionary of New Testament and Early Christian Literature and Rhetoric* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 151; Christof Rapp, "Aristotle's Rhetoric," ed. Edward N. Zalta, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2010, http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2010/entries/aristotle-rhetoric/: "nor does the word 'sullogismos' necessarily refer to deductions with exactly two premises." Gisela Striker preserves the translation "syllogism" but notes that "[i]t is, of course, true that the Greek word does not mean what it tends to mean in current English—namely an argument in one of the specific forms Aristotle goes on to discuss" in the *Prior Analytics* (*Prior Analytics. Book 1*, Clarendon Aristotle [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2009], 78–9). For an attempt to account for the differences in Aristotle's usage in terms of diachronic development, see Solmsen, *Die Entwicklung der Aristotelischen Logik und Rhetorik*, 13–27; Barnes, "Proof and the Syllogism," esp. 51–2; Miles Burnyeat, *Explorations in Ancient and Modern Philosophy*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1:180–1; Burnyeat, "Enthymeme," 96.

[8] Scholars remain divided as to how to integrate Aristotle's various characterizations of these forms; see Thomas M. Conley, "The Enthymeme in Perspective," *QJS* 70 (1984): 168–9; Aune, "Use and Abuse," 302; Aune, "Enthymeme," 150–1. The account that follows relies heavily on Burnyeat, "Enthymeme."

"deductive argument" or simply "deduction" (1.2.8; 2.20.1, 9).[9] Like a deduction, an

enthymeme takes its premises not from necessary and intrinsically true axioms, as is the case

with the special type of "deduction" required for scientific understanding, the

"demonstration" (ἀποδείξις),[10] but from the views reputable among one's interlocutors in

dialectic or one's audience in the case of rhetoric (ἔνδοξα).[11] And yet a deductive argument

in rhetoric remains distinct from one in dialectic—they are only "roughly" equal Aristotle

states above—because of the particular nature of rhetoric. Rhetoric, he explains in 1.2.12-13

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[9] See also 1.1.3, where Aristotle labels the enthymeme "the body," or principal part, "of a proof," (σῶμα τῆς πίστεως, 1.1.3), 1.1.11, where he deems it the rhetor's most appropriate and effective means of producing belief (πίστις) in his claims, and 2.20.9; cf. *An. Pr.* 1.1.24; *An. Post.* 1.1; *Top.* 8.14; and the later Peripatetic work *Probl.* 18.3. For further discussion, see William M. A Grimaldi, *Studies in the Philosophy of Aristotle's Rhetoric*, Hermes Einzelschriften 25 (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1972), 57–64. On the definition of dialectic, especially in contrast to rhetoric, see, *inter alia*, Grimaldi, *Commentary*, 1:1; Rapp, *Rhetorik*, 1:244–50.

Aristotle's association of enthymeme with deductive argumentation may be novel. As he does not define the term when he introduces it, he seems to assume his audience knows it and the extant evidence from antecedent and contemporaneous Greek literature suggests that the term referred to the ideas a speech expresses, in distinction from how it expresses them (Burnyeat, "Enthymeme," 92–3), or to witty phrases (Conley, "The Enthymeme in Perspective," 172–4; Rapp, "Aristotle's Rhetoric"). Grimaldi maintains that Aristotle makes this association, novel or not, to reject the Platonic understanding of rhetoric present in *Gorgias* 465d-466a and to insist, on the contrary, that rhetoric involves rational argumentation ("The Enthymeme in Aristotle" [Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1953], 55–6; *Commentary*, 1:2–3).

[10] See *Top.* 1.1 100a27-30: ἀπόδειξις μὲν οὖν ἐστιν, ὅταν ἐξ ἀληθῶν καὶ πρώτων ὁ συλλογισμὸς ᾖ, ἢ ἐκ τοιούτων ἃ διά τινων πρώτων καὶ ἀληθῶν τῆς περὶ αὐτὰ γνώσεως τὴν ἀρχὴν εἴληφεν, δια λεκτικὸς δὲ συλλογισμὸς ὁ ἐξ ἐνδόξων συλλογιζόμενος; Grimaldi, "The Enthymeme in Aristotle," 56–7; Burnyeat, "Enthymeme," 95.

[11] Burnyeat, "Enthymeme," 94–5; Christopher Lyle Johnstone, "Enthymeme," ed. Thomas O. Sloane, *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 248. On "reputable views" (ἔνδοξα), see *Top.* 1.1; see also *Eth. Nic.* 7.1.11; *Rhet.* 1.1; cf. Plato, *Rep.* 348b; see Burnyeat, *Explorations in Ancient and Modern Philosophy*, 184–5; Robin Smith, "Aristotle's Logic," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Spring 2012., 2012, http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2012/entries/aristotle-logic/; cf. Jonathan Barnes, *Method and Metaphysics: Essays in Ancient Philosophy I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 183.

(see also 2.22.2-3), addresses changeable situations about which we lack rules or expert

guidance (τέχνη) and does so for an audience that cannot understand long arguments (οὐ

δύνανται διὰ πολλῶν συνορᾶν οὐδὲ λογίζεσθαι πόρρωθεν) or a judge who is a simpleton

(ἁπλοῦς). Therefore its deductive arguments must address mutable realities, not the stable

abstractions that dialectical arguments address. And they must be rhetorically compact,

limiting themselves to fewer components (ἐξ ὀλίγων) than deductions by speaking

elliptically wherever possible.[12] The phrasing of Aristotle's definition of enthymemes in

1.2.10 suggests, furthermore, that they may even differ in validity from deductions. In the

Topics, Refutations, and *Prior Analytics* Aristotle consistently defines a deduction as an

argument in which the posited premises necessitate the conclusion:

> *Prior Analytics* 1.1 24b18-20:
> A deduction (συλλογισμὸς) is an argument in which, when certain things are
> posited, something else <u>necessarily</u> (ἐξ ἀνάγκης) comes about because they are so.

> *Topics* 1.1 100a25-7:
> A deduction (συλλογισμὸς) is an argument in which, when certain things are
> posited, something else <u>necessarily</u> (ἐξ ἀνάγκης) comes about through them.

> *Sophistical Refutations* 1.1 164b27-165a2:

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[12] Grimaldi, "The Enthymeme in Aristotle," 54; Burnyeat, "Enthymeme," 99–100; Johnstone, "Enthymeme," 248. See also 3.10.4; *Top.* 105 a 16-19; 157a18-20. Most interpreters (e.g., Burnyeat, "Enthymeme," 100) take ἐξ ὀλίγων to mean that the enthymeme contains fewer premises than the deduction. But Aristotle's term for premises (αἱ ἀρχαὶ) does not appear in this phrase or its literary context and it seems, given, for instance, 2.21.2 1394a26-8 (quoted above), that Aristotle can imagine the conclusion of a deductive argument being omitted. I therefore translate "components." On the (post-Aristotelian) notion that an enthymeme is a truncated syllogism, see Sir William Hamilton, *Discussions on Philosophy and Literature, Education and University Reform*, 3d ed. (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1866), 151–55; Grimaldi, *Studies*, 57–8; Conley, "The Enthymeme in Perspective," 169; Burnyeat, *Explorations in Ancient and Modern Philosophy*, 1:152–204; Burnyeat, "Enthymeme," 91–3; Aune, "Use and Abuse," 303–05; Aune, "Enthymeme," 151–2; cf. Cope, *Introduction*, 102–5.

> For a deduction (συλλογισμὸς) arises from certain things being posited so as <u>necessarily</u> (ἐξ ἀνάγκης) to argue something else through them.

In the *Rhetoric*, however, Aristotle states that the conclusion of deduction or an enthymeme follows from its premises not necessarily but only "generally or usually:"[13]

> *Rhetoric* 1.2.10 1356b17-19:
> When certain things are the case and because they are so something else distinct from them comes about on account of them <u>generally or usually</u> (ἢ καθόλου ἢ ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ), there [in dialectic] it is called a deduction (συλλογισμὸς), here [in rhetoric] an enthymeme (ἐνθύμημα).

He alters his definition of "deduction" by relaxing its logical standards in order to define the enthymeme. As Burnyeat explains, in the *Rhetoric*'s definition of a deductive argument "[t]here must still be a conclusion distinct from the premises …, and it must result by virtue of these premises (*tōi tauta einai…*). But the connection that provides the justification may not be absolutely exceptionless. It may hold for the most part, but not universally."[14] Enthymemes are valid to a lesser extent than deductions. Rhetoric's deductive arguments are generally valid, not always true but true sufficiently often to make them persuasive.[15]

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[13] Burnyeat, "Enthymeme," 99; see also Eugene E. Ryan, *Aristotle's Theory of Rhetorical Argumentation*, Collection Noêsis (Montreal: Bellarmin, 1984), 92–3; cf. Conley, "The Enthymeme in Perspective," 170.

[14] Burnyeat, "Enthymeme," 99; see also Manfred Kraus, "Theories and Practice of the Enthymeme," in *Rhetorical Argumentation in Biblical Texts*, ed. Anders Eriksson, Thomas H. Olbricht, and Walter G. Übelacker, Emory Studies in Early Christianity (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity, 2002), 108. Aristotle likewise relaxes the definition of a logical induction to include the rhetorical example (Burnyeat, "Enthymeme," 97–8).

[15] Burnyeat, "Enthymeme," 104–5; cf. Ryan, *Aristotle's Theory of Rhetorical Argumentation*, 61, 69–76. Cf. *An. Pr.* 2.27 = *Rhet.* 1.2.14.

To return to gnomes, when he states, "therefore… when the deductive argument is removed, the conclusions and premises of enthymemes are gnomes," Aristotle means that when the form of the deduction (premises followed by a conclusion) is foregone (ἀφαιρεθέντος τοῦ συλλογισμοῦ), as we have seen it often is in rhetoric, where brevity is frequently a virtue essential to persuasion,[16] the components of the implied deduction—the premises and conclusion—are, on their own, generally true assertions and therefore (ὥστ'), when they deal with moral matters, gnomes.[17] When the deductive form is present, when general assertions are organized into premises and conclusions, done in rhetoric by stating the "cause or the reason" (τῆς αἰτίας καὶ τοῦ διὰ τί, 2.21.2) behind the assertion, the rhetor's deductive argument, the enthymeme, arises, but when it is absent, the assertions—the gnomes if the subject matter is ethics—can nonetheless be argumentative. They can imply the unstated components of the argument (2.21.3-6).[18] Thus, for Aristotle gnomes are general moral claims and also often implicit arguments.

As general moral claims, the rhetor's use of gnomes helps establish his ethos. The use of gnomes, Aristotle claims, conveys sophistication, since knowledge of general moral truths is the product of experience and education. They are therefore appropriate only in the mouths of the aged and urban(e) (2.21.9). They befit only "those who have a right to be

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[16] In addition to the passages cited above, see 2.21.6; Cope, *Introduction*, 259.

[17] Ibid., 257; Edward Meredith Cope, *The Rhetoric of Aristotle*, ed. John Edwin Sandys, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1877), 2:206; Grimaldi, "The Enthymeme in Aristotle," 165–70.

[18] Cope, *Rhetoric*, 2:209.

authoritative."[19] Rhetors who use them then portray themselves as having that right and thus attribute to themselves a compelling character.[20] Though they may invent gnomes *de novo*, rhetors should repeat or refute gnomes in current circulation—sayings such as "Foolish is he who, having slain the father, suffers the children to live" (νήπιος ὃς πατέρα κτείνας παῖδας καταλείπει, 2.21.11) or "Know thyself" (γνῶθι σαυτὸν, 2.21.13)—when they are useful (χρῆσθαι δὲ δεῖ καὶ ταῖς τεθρυλημέναις καὶ κοιναῖς γνώμαις, ἐὰν ὦσι χρήσιμοι, 2.21.11; δεῖ δὲ τὰς γνώμας λέγειν καὶ παρὰ τὰ δεδημοσιευμένα, 2.21.13). By repeating popular wisdom, the speaker can win easy acceptance of his claims (2.21.11) and make him and his words appear moral (ἂν χρησταὶ ὦσιν αἱ γνῶμαι, καὶ χρηστοήθη φαίνεσθαι ποιοῦσι τὸν λέγοντα, 2.21.16). By contradicting it, he can appear to occupy an intellectually and morally superior position (2.21.13-14). Which tactic will persuade depends on the audience and so the rhetor must discern his audience's preconceived opinions and "hunt" (θηρεύειν) for maxims that will gain their logical and emotional assent (2.21.15-16).[21]

Finally, according to Aristotle, gnomes need not be particularly brief—some of his own examples run to two metrical lines[22]—but they are more persuasive when they are. At

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[19] Joseph Russo, "Prose Genres for the Performance of Traditional Wisdom in Ancient Greece: Proverb, Maxim, Apothegm," in *Poet, Public, and Performance in Ancient Greece*, ed. Lowell Edmunds and Robert W. Wallace (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 56; see also Patrick Sinclair, *Tacitus the Sententious Historian: A Sociology of Rhetoric in Annales 1-6* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 44.

[20] On *ethos* and persuasion, see 1356a1-20 and 1.2.4.

[21] See Sinclair, *Tacitus the Sententious Historian*, 47–8. On the pathetic as well as logical dimensions of gnomes, see Grimaldi, "The Enthymeme in Aristotle," 165–71.

[22] Lardinois, "Wisdom in Context," 14n46.

the beginning of his discussion of how to write compelling prose (3.10-12),[23] Aristotle asks

what makes an expression graceful and therefore popular (τὰ ἀστεῖα καὶ τὰ εὐδοκιμοῦντα).[24]

The answer is that it instructs the audience quickly and easily (3.10.2-6).[25] Refined, esteemed

expressions spark "rapid insight"[26] because they contain enthymemes that are readily

understandable but not so obvious as to be superficial, feature metaphors whose meaning is

intelligible but, again, not obvious,[27] and employ phrasing that is antithetical, graphic (εἰ πρὸ

ὀμμάτων ποιεῖ, 3.10.6), and economical. Similes, he claims, are less pleasurable (ἡδύ) than

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[23] I am interested here in Aristotle's overall portrayal of wisdom sayings and so the question of the relationship of book III to books I and II of the *Rhetoric*, the question of the work's unity, is of little import. On the question, see Grimaldi, *Studies*, 18–52, esp. 29: : "To argue for unity is neither to deny development in Aristotle's thought nor the possibility of contradictory statements in the text"; George A. Kennedy, "The Composition and Influence of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*," in *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric*, ed. Amélie Rorty, Philosophical Traditions 6 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 416–24; Rapp, *Rhetorik*, 314–9.

[24] Aristotle seems to draw no distinction between τὰ ἀστεῖα (graceful, elegant, tasteful, refined, often witty sayings) and τὰ εὐδοκιμοῦντα (popular, highly esteemed, successful sayings). They are one type of expression in his analysis and their popularity seems, by implication, to follow from their elegance. See Dirk M. Schenkeveld, "*Ta Asteia* in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*: The Disappearance of a Category," in *Peripatetic Rhetoric After Aristotle*, ed. William W. Fortenbaugh and David C. Mirhady, Rutgers University Studies in Classical Humanities 6 (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1994), 1; John Walt Burkett, "Aristotle, *Rhetoric* III: A Commentary" (Ph.D. diss., Texas Christian University, 2011), 232. On the social dimensions of the term ἀστεῖα, see Edwin S. Ramage, *Urbanitas: Ancient Sophistication and Refinement*, [1st ed.]., Cincinnati Classical Studies 3 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), 10–11; Schenkeveld, "*Ta Asteia* in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*," 3.

[25] Cf. Cope, *Introduction*, 316; Schenkeveld, "*Ta Asteia* in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*," 1; Burkett, "*Rhetoric* III," 233–4. On the popularity of learning in Aristotle's estimation, see also *Poet.* 1448b12-17; *Metaph.* 980a; Jacques Derrida, "White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy," trans. F. C. T. Moore, *New Literary History* 6 (1974): 39–40.

[26] The phrase is Grimaldi's (*Studies*, 98).

[27] On Aristotle's understanding of metaphor as an argumentative form, see Derrida, "White Mythology," 40n35; Burkett, "*Rhetoric* III," 237–40.

metaphors because they are longer (ὅτι μακροτέρως, 3.10.3). The more concise and antithetical an expression, the greater its esteem, for antithesis aids and terseness hastens apprehension (ἡ μάθησις διὰ μὲν τὸ ἀντικεῖσθαι μᾶλλον, διὰ δὲ τὸ ἐν ὀλίγῳ θᾶττον γίνεται, 3.11.9).

The other prominent type of saying Aristotle describes is the παροιμία, traditionally translated "proverb." His fullest description appears not in the *Rhetoric* but, if it is authentic, in a fragment from a lost work preserved in Synesius of Cyrene:

> Now if the proverb (παροιμία) is a wise thing—and how can it not be wise? Aristotle says of proverbs that they are the remnants of ancient philosophy lost in the great destruction of humankind, which were saved because of their succinctness and adroitness (διὰ συντομίαν καὶ δεξιότητα)—…[28]

According to this fragment, proverbs preserve archaic wisdom and endure, when presumably other expressions of wisdom have not, because of their aesthetic qualities; their concision and cleverness (συντομίαν καὶ δεξιότητα) make them striking and memorable.[29] They are

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[28] Synesius, *Encom. Calv.*, 22.1-4. My English translation is based on Lardinois' ("Wisdom in Context," 14). Most scholars attribute the fragment to *On Philosophy*, though it could also come from a lost work on proverbs mentioned by Diogenes Laertius (*Vit. Soph.* 5.26; see also Athenaeus, *Deipn.* 2.56 60d-e). If it is authentic, certainty on its work of origin is impossible (Jan Fredrik Kindstrand, "The Greek Concept of Proverbs," *Eranos* 76 [1978]: 74–5). Aristotle's unwillingness elsewhere to designate the thought of ages past as *philosophy* (Michael Frede, "Aristotle's Account of the Origins of Philosophy," *Rhizai* 1 [2004]: 9–44; Håkan Tell, *Plato's Counterfeit Sophists*, Hellenic Studies 44 [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2011], 2–6), suggests, however, that the fragment is spurious.

[29] Kindstrand, "The Greek Concept of Proverbs," 75: "Both these terms [συντομίαν καὶ δεξιότητα] probably refer to the stylistic interpretation of proverbs. They are short, pointed and concise, with clever and witty turns of phrase"; see also Joseph Russo, "The Poetics of the Ancient Greek Proverb," *Journal of Folklore Research* 20 (1983): 122; cf. 125. Cf. Plato's claim that "a certain laconic terseness" characterized the philosophy of the ancients (*Prot.* 343b3-5). On the antiquity of proverbs in Greek thought, see further Kindstrand, "The Greek Concept of Proverbs," 73.

popularly transmitted, witty, and poetically laconic parcels of insight and truth. The

Rhetoric, on the other hand, simply defines proverbs as metaphors (καὶ αἱ παροιμίαι δὲ

μεταφοραὶ ἀπ᾽ εἴδους ἐπ᾽ εἶδος εἰσίν; 3.11.14).[30] For example, one who procures something

seemingly good that unexpectedly harms him might utter the proverb, "As the Carpathian

says of the hare," identifying his plight with that of a resident of Carpathus, which, it seems,

brought in hares and suffered for it.[31]

The gnome and the proverb are not, however, distinct. While claiming that rhetors

should repeat popular gnomes, Aristotle maintains that some proverbs are such gnomes (ἔνιαι

τῶν παροιμιῶν καὶ γνῶμαί εἰσιν, 2.21.12). He insists that proverbs, however metaphorical

they may be, can be used as general moral declarations and components of deductive

argument and that some achieved wide distribution in these roles.[32] Thus, in theory gnomes

are general declarations while proverbs are metaphors but in practice, this "difference

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[30] For Aristotle's understanding of metaphor, see further *Rhet.* 3.10.4; *Poet.* 21.

[31] Aristotle cites proverbs throughout his writings; see Hermann Bonner's "Index Aristotelicus" in Immanuel Bekker, ed., *Aristotelis opera*, 5 vols. (Berlin: George Reimerum, 1831), 5:569–70; Werner W. Jaeger, *Aristotle: Fundamentals of the History of His Development*, 2d ed. (Oxford,: Clarendon, 1948), 130–1. And he cites as proverbs some sayings that are not metaphorical, despite his own definition. His characterization of proverbs as metaphorical seems to be a general, not a universal statement; see Lardinois, "Wisdom in Context," 15–17.

[32] Cope, *Introduction*, 260; Cope, *Rhetoric*, 2:216. Lardinois argues that Aristotle means not that proverbs could become gnomes, as I argue, but the opposite, that gnomes could become proverbs: "Aristotle realized that some gnomes could develop into common sayings and, conversely, he must have concluded that some *paroimiai* were originally *gnomai*" (16). While one of us likely has the better reading of Aristotle, most modern paroemiologists would say we are both correct about the relationship between popular sayings, what modern scholars often call proverbs, and newly-coined rhetorical declarations of moral truth, what modern scholars often call maxims or gnomes. Proverbs in this sense can become gnomes and vice-versa; see Wilson, *Love Without Pretense*, 12–13.

amounts to very little, since the degree of metaphor may be ambiguous and both types of wisdom statement" function similarly, as Joseph Russo explains:

> Proverbs instruct or comment by using one topic or activity metaphorically to represent another (English, 'all that glitters is not gold'; Greek, 'the elephant doesn't catch a mouse,' *CPG* 1.74), whereas maxims [gnomes] do the same by using a truism to imply coverage of all particular instances that may fall under the general heading (English, 'everything comes to him who waits'; Greek, 'nothing to excess')."[33]

These two forms overlap. Aristotle does not offer a precise taxonomy of sayings.

Neither does Quintilian.[34] The sayings form he analyzes in greatest depth is the *sententia*, which has no precise equivalent in English or Greek and which, to avoid false connotations, I leave untranslated.[35] His most robust analysis of that form, found in 8.5 of *Institutio oratoria*,[36] presents not so much a definition as a "loose typology that distinguishes between traditional (3-11), new (12-14), and 'even newer types' (*magis nova genera*, 15-24)"[37] and, in the end, characterizes the *sententia* as comprising a wide variety of sayings.

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[33] Russo, "Proverb, Maxim, Apothegm," 56; see also Joseph Russo, "La «grécité» des proverbes grecs: un nouveau regard sur un genre ancien," in *Les fondements de la tradition classique: en hommage à Didier Pralon*, ed. Anne Balansard, Gilles Dorival, and Mireille Loubet, Textes et documents de la Méditerranée antique et médiévale (Aix-en-Provence: Publications de l'Université de Provence, 2009), 165–66.

[34] See also Roderich Kirchner's highlighting of the limitations of Quintilian's account of wisdom forms for the study of literary style (*Sentenzen im Werk des Tacitus*, Palingenesia 74 [Stuttgart: Steiner, 2001], 33–41).

[35] On the particularity of the meaning of *sententia*, see Lewis A. Sussman, *The Elder Seneca*, Mnemosyne 51 (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 35; Kirchner, *Sentenzen im Werk des Tacitus*, 40–1.

[36] For an overview of all Quintilian's uses of *sententia*, see Eduard Bonnell, *Lexicon Quintilianeum*, 6 vols. (Leipzig: Vogelii, 1834), s.v., *sententia*.

[37] Paul A. Holloway, "Paul's Pointed Prose: The *Sententia* in Roman Rhetoric and Paul," *NovT* 40 (1998): 36–7; cf. the outlines of Fernand Delarue, "La Sententia Chez Quintilien," *La*

When used as a technical term, the proper meaning of *sententia*, Quintilian claims, is the ancient one: a universal statement (*vox universalis*), what the Greeks mean by *gnome* (1.3; see also 1.9.3). This vintage variety may form part of an enthymeme or other deductive argument (4) or any other type of artful phrase (*per omnes enim figuras tractari potest*, 5). By classifying even the "traditional" *sententia* as a component of an artful phrase (*figura*),[38] Quintilian makes clear that the *sententia* is not a general moral statement like Aristotle's gnome. It *is* properly a general statement but general statements and the enthymemes they help form are primarily verbal embellishments, "highlights" (*lumina*, 2),[39] the implements of style, not argument.[40] (Hence Quintilian treats them in a section of the *Institutio* devoted to elocution: 8.1-11.1).[41] As embellishments, they should be made as forceful (*vim*), penetrating (*acrius*), and aggressive (*vehementius*, 6) as possible[42] and be deployed sparingly (*ne*

Licorne 3 (1979): 97–124; D. M. Kriel, "The Forms of the Sententia in Quintilian VIII.v.3-24," *AClass* 4 (1961): 155; Kirchner, *Sentenzen im Werk des Tacitus*, 21–33.

[38] On this meaning of *figura*, see 9.1.13; Erich Auerbach, *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature*, Theory and History of Literature 9 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 25–7; Kathy Eden, "Hermeneutics and the Ancient Rhetorical Tradition," *Rhetorica* 5 (1987): 141–2.

[39] I adopt this translation of *lumina* from Sinclair, *Tacitus the Sententious Historian*, 155.

[40] Kriel, "The Forms of the Sententia in Quintilian VIII.v.3-24," 85; Sinclair, *Tacitus the Sententious Historian*, 156, 234n39; cf. 213n31; Ian H. Henderson, *Jesus, Rhetoric, and Law*, Biblical Interpretation 20 (New York: Brill, 1996), 128; Holloway, "Paul's Pointed Prose," 34; Kirchner, *Sentenzen im Werk des Tacitus*, 33. See also 8.5.10 ("*ad ornatum*").

[41] On the outline of the work, see 1.Pr.21-2; Donald A. Russell, ed., *The Orator's Education*, 5 vols., Loeb Classical Library 124-27, 494 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001), 1:12–18.

[42] All of these adjectives connote violence. See also 12.9.1-5, where Quintilian compares *sententiae* to missiles (*missilibus*). That the adversarial courtroom is the primary setting for the rhetoric Quintilian prescribes partially explains why his diction implies verbal combat. But his diction also

crebrae… ne passim),[43] only when applicable to the topic (*ne palam falsae*, 7), and only in the mouths of those with *auctoritas* (7-8).[44]

The new rhetorical embellishments (*a novis*, 12) include the *noema*, a phrase that implies rather than states its meaning and that, to judge from the example given, is often curt and ironic[45] as well as the *clausula*, meaning either a succinct conclusion to a thought or a striking flourish at its end. The former type of *clausula* is proper, the latter ostentatious and trendy. Quintilian mocks contemporary orators' indulgence in this latter type, finishing his derision with a *sententia* that is both an apt conclusion *and* a forceful flourish and thus modeling proper practice while asserting his own *auctoritas*:

> "But now they want… every separate topic, every sentence at the end of a development to strike the ear. Indeed, they think it shameful, almost criminal, to take a breath at a place that does not draw applause. The result is that our discourses today

reflects the interrelated rhetorical and political conditions of the day, on which see, *inter alia*, Sinclair, *Tacitus the Sententious Historian*, 33–6. and the works cited in n. 49 below.

[43] Henderson points out that for Quintilian *sententiae* must be forms of embellishment and not argument because "if *sententia* were really one of a few basic, compulsory argumentation forms, overuse could hardly be a modern vice and avoidance could hardly be a sign of honourable, if old-fashioned, austerity" (*Jesus, Rhetoric, and Law*, 128).

[44] On the call here for *auctoritas*, see further Sinclair, *Tacitus the Sententious Historian*, 157–8; Henderson, *Jesus, Rhetoric, and Law*, 130.

[45] Holloway, "Paul's Pointed Prose," 38. The *noema* stands somewhere between the transparent speech Quintilian claims to prefer (*perspicuitas*, 8.2.22) and the double-speak he claims to abhor (8.2.20-1) but deems appropriate at times, especially when politically expedient (9.2.65-7). On Quintilian's appraisal of innuendo and on its centrality to the oratory of his time, see Frederick Ahl, "The Art of Safe Criticism in Greece and Rome," *AJP* 105 (1984): 174–208; Elaine Fantham, "Latin Criticism of the Early Empire," in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, 9 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 1:288, who sees Quintilian as participating in "the new cult of irony, innuendo, and suggestion" that marked his age; Shadi Bartsch, *Actors in the Audience: Theatricality and Doublespeak from Nero to Hadrian*, Revealing Antiquity 6 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), 67–9, 93–7; Sinclair, *Tacitus the Sententious Historian*, 160–3.

are strewn with tiny, affected, and far-fetched ditties. For there simply cannot be as many good *sententiae* as there must be *clausulae*." (13-4)[46]

The even newer types (*magis nova genera*, 15) feature shocking shifts of traditional perspective (15), allusions (16), double-entendres (17), parallel constructions (18-19), word play (20-22), and wit (23-5), some appropriately (*bonae*, 20), some in a bad (*malae*, 20), depraved (*vitiosae,* 20; *vitiosissimum*, 21), and corrupt (*corruptorum,* 25) fashion.[47]

Quintilian concludes by charting a third way between prioritizing and rejecting these novel varieties of *sententiae* (26-30). He first notes the dangers of excess. If every sentence is a highlight, none truly stands out (26, 29) and none connects to another (27-8), leaving the speech without development or unity. Moreover, the orator who relentlessly seeks highlights finds many "trifling, vapid, and impertinent" expressions (*leves, frigidas, ineptas*, 30, trans. Watson) that he cannot distinguish them from genuine flourishes, from real *sententiae*. Again asserting his own rhetorical virtuosity, Quintilian concludes, "Most [orators] do not deliver many *sententiae*, but they deliver everything as if it were a *sententia*" (*nec multas plerique sententias dicunt, sed omnia tanquam sententias*, 31). He then notes the cost of renouncing such figures altogether. Doing so would mean foregoing an opportunity

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[46] The translation is Holloway's ("Paul's Pointed Prose," 38). Quintilian argues in 12.9.1-4 that seeking applause is dangerous and futile. On the oratory to which he refers, see Eduard Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa*, 2 vols., 5th ed. (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1958), 1:280–5; Sussman, *The Elder Seneca*, 127–9; Janet Fairweather, *Seneca the Elder*, Cambridge Classical Studies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 200–14. Sinclair argues that collections such as Valerius Maximus' *Facta et dicta memorabilia* aimed to supply a *sententia* for every *clausula* (*Tacitus the Sententious Historian*, 159–60).

[47] "Depraved" and "corrupt" imply moral decline (Janet Fairweather, "The Elder Seneca and Declamation," *ANRW* 2.32.1 [1984]: 536–7). On other Latin terms denoting poor taste, see Fairweather, *Seneca the Elder*, 214–27.

to strike the judge, establish one's authority (32), and imitate the styles of Demosthenes and Cicero (33). He advocates a middle course (*media quaedam via*, 34), one of measured elegance.[48] "Quintilen n'est point partisan des excès."[49]

For Quintilian then *sententia* means a pithy, pointed turn of phrase that adorns a speech, moving the audience and establishing the speaker's authority.[50] This category can accommodate virtually any brief form,[51] as Quintilian's examples demonstrate. Some of the *sententiae* he cites in 8.5 are general statements, what he and Aristotle deem gnomes, but most are not.[52] Many fit the description Quintilian gives in 1.9.4 of another type of saying, the *chria*: a *sententia*, retort, or tersely-reported and surprising action attributed to a person. For example, the quote ascribed to Domitius Afer, which Quintilian calls a proper *sententia* (3), is also by his standards a *chria* because it is the saying of someone and not an authorless declaration. Likewise the *sententiae* of Medea (6), Vibius Crispus (15), Africanus (15), Crispus (17), Nero (18), Trachalus (19), and the anonymous father of a troubled son (23), among others, are *chriai*. Like Aristotle's, Quintilian's formal categories overlap.

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[48] See also 12.10.48.

[49] Jean Cousin, *Études sur Quintilien*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: P. Schippers, 1967), 1:435.

[50] It resembles the English *zinger*. Kriel reaches a similar conclusion ("The Forms of the Sententia in Quintilian VIII.v.3-24," 89). On the terseness of *sententiae*, see further 12.10.48; Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa*, 1:283–4; Fairweather, *Seneca the Elder*, 31.

[51] Walter Wilson writes, "Quintilian's use of the technical term *sententiae* is also very broad, referring to virtually any sort of short saying, including the *chreia*" (*Love Without Pretense*, 18). See also Sussman, *The Elder Seneca*, 35; Crossan, *In Fragments*, 232.

[52] Kriel concludes that of the twenty-nine examples of *sententiae* in 8.5.3-24 only nine are general statements ("The Forms of the Sententia in Quintilian VIII.v.3-24," 89).

A full study of ancient theories of sayings would also examine the *Rhetoric to Alexander*, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, and the *Progymnasmata*, among many other works.[53] But this survey of Aristotle and Quintilian is sufficient to establish the point that ancient theorists did not distinguish clearly and consistently between varieties of wise sayings. Moreover, they leave a variety of potentially sententious forms undertheorized, forms such as αἶνοι (sayings, proverbs, or riddles), ἀφορισμοί (retorts, apophthegms), ὑποθῆκαι (advice, instructions), παραγγέλματα (precepts, often gnomic utterances of oracles), αἰνίγματα (riddles), ἐπιγράμματα (epigrams), κεφάλαια (summations or key sayings), ὅμοια or ὁμοιώματα (analogies), ῥήματα (phrases), *flosculi* (mottos) and *praecepta* (precepts), not to mention Hebrew משלם (parables).[54]

Such imprecision and selectivity are not surprising. The ancients did not intend to offer what the modern formalist critic desires. To use Aristotle once more as an example, whether he intends to prescribe a more rational and ethical and therefore politically positive

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[53] Henderson remarks that "[N]o aspect of rhetoric is more universally attested in both practice and theory than gnome-use" (*Jesus, Rhetoric, and Law*, 2).

[54] This list expands upon the one in Christos Tsagalis, *Inscribing Sorrow: Fourth-Century Attic Funerary Epigrams*, Trends in Classics Supplementary Volumes 1 (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2008), 9. On the variety of wisdom forms, see also Wilhelm Gemoll, *Das Apophthegma: Literarhistorische Studien* (Vienna: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1924); André Jolles, *Einfache Formen: Legende, Sage, Mythe, Rätsel, Spruch, Kasus, Memorabile, Märchen, Witz.*, 2d ed. (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 1958); Kindstrand, "The Greek Concept of Proverbs"; Küchler, *Weisheitstraditionen*, 157–67; Lardinois, "Wisdom in Context," 13–32; Russo, "Proverb, Maxim, Apothegm"; Francisco Rodríguez Adrados, *History of the Graeco-Latin Fable*, trans. Leslie A. Ray, 3 vols., Mnemosyne, bibliotheca classica Batava Supplementum 201, 207, 236 (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 1:5–8; Rosa Ma Mariño Sánchez-Elvira and Fernando García Romero, eds., *Proverbios Griegos. Sentencias*, Biblioteca Clásica Gredos 272 (Madrid: Gredos, 1999), 339–56; Liapis, *Menandrou Gnomai Monostichoi: Eisagôgê, Metaphrasê, Scholia*, 29–107; Gregor Damschen, "Paroimia," ed. Hubert Cancik et al., *Brill's New Pauly Online* (Brill, 2005), 1.I.B.1; Gärtner, "Gnome"; Stenger, "Apophthegma, Gnome und Chrie."

rhetoric than that advocated in the existing rhetorical handbooks or simply to survey the

prevailing means of persuasion, Aristotle does not aim primarily to provide an inventory of

discrete wisdom forms.[55] Quintilian, as his polemic in *Inst.* 8.5 reveals, writes to combat what

he deems a disturbing decline in the integrity, indeed the morality, of public speaking.[56]

They select and shape their categories for their purposes, not ours.[57]

The variability of ancient genre theories is matched by that of ancient generic

practice. Even the most well-theorized forms do not always function in practice as they do in

theory, of course, and the ancient theory often "seems oblivious of major historical features of

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[55] For an overview of scholarship on the purpose of the *Rhetoric*, see Arthur E. Walzer, Michael Tiffany, and Alan G. Gross, "Aristotle's *Rhetoric*: A Guide to the Scholarship," in *Rereading Aristotle's Rhetoric*, ed. Alan G. Gross and Arthur E. Walzer (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000), 105–206; Rapp, *Rhetorik*, 257–60, 371–4.

[56] On Quintilian's conservatism, see Michael Winterbottom, "Quintilian and the *Vir Bonus*," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 54 (1964): 90–97; Sinclair, *Tacitus the Sententious Historian*, 157, 162–3. Andrew Laird calls attention to Quintilian's particular interests thusly: "Quintilian's judgements on writers from Homer to Seneca display a set of priorities which are not only alien to a modern perspective—they also seem inappropriate to the original purposes of the authors he considers (he remarks for instance that Livy's own style is no good for effecting a prosecution)" ("The Value of Ancient Literary Criticism," in *Oxford Readings in Ancient Literary Criticism*, ed. Andrew Laird, Oxford Readings in Classical Studies [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006], 16).

[57] Cf. Joseph Russo, who argues that, given the importance of wise sayings in Greek cultures, it is not only unsurprising but "inevitable that Greek speakers over time should develop multiple terminology with overlapping meanings, as well as multiple meanings for a single term. We do the same thing when in English we use the four terms *adage*, *proverb*, *maxim*, and *saying* loosely to denote more or less the same form of traditional speech; the French are similarly redundant with *dicton*, *proverbe*, *sentence*, and *maxime*, and the Italians with *proverbio*, *detto*, *motto*, *sentenza*, and *massima* ("Proverb, Maxim, Apothegm," 63; see also Morson, "Aphoristic Style: The Rhetoric of the Aphorism," 248).

the literatures."[58] But practice is itself fluid; the terms for the same short sayings can shift from one work to the next. For example, a very similar collection of sayings circulates as the *Gnomes of Sextus*, the *Gnomes of the Pythagoreans*, and the *Chreiai* of Cleitarchus.[59] So, whether we look at literary criticism or literature itself, antiquity bequeaths us no ready-made definitions to guide our study.

In the absence of precise and consistent guidelines from antiquity, the modern critic who prioritizes distinctions between types of sayings is left with several options for classifying them. One, she can adopt heuristically or dogmatically one ancient critic's categories. This approach is the most common and is exemplified by Georg Heinrici, who declares Aristotle's *Rhetoric* fundamental for his study of the literary character of the New Testament because he believes the *Rhetoric* was extraordinarily influential in antiquity.[60]

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[58] George A. Kennedy, "Ancient Antecedents of Modern Literary Theory," *AJP* 110 (1989): 493; see also Jan Fredrik Kindstrand, "Diogenes Laertius and the 'Chreia' Tradition," *Elenchos* 1 (1986): 221; Feeney, "Criticism Ancient and Modern," 440–2.

[59] Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q*, 291. See also Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation*, 109–10; Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 16n1; Stenger, "Apophthegma, Gnome und Chrie," 211; Hanna Boeke, *The Value of Victory in Pindar's Odes: Gnomai, Cosmology and the Role of the Poet*, Mnemosyne 285 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 12: "In both ancient and modern literature the Greek term γνώμη is often used as an umbrella term for various forms of wisdom sayings, indicating the difficulty of forming watertight definitions." For a possible, limited counter example, cf. Lorenzo Miletti, "'Ippoclide Non Se Ne Cura!': Erodoto Storico Delle Forme Brevi," in *ΠΑΡΟΙΜΙΑΚΩΣ: Il Proverbio in Grecia E a Roma*, ed. Emanuele Lelli, 3 vols., Philologia antiqua 2-4 (Rome: Fabrizio Serra, 2009), 1:137–44.

[60] C. F. Georg Heinrici, *Der litterarische Charakter der neutestamentlichen Schriften* (Leipzig: Dürr, 1908), 104: "Aristoteles in seiner Rhetorik ist auch für diese Untersuchungen grundlegend. Seine Stilanalysen und seine Begriffsbestimmungen geben den Nachfolgern die Richtung." The extent of the Rhetoric's influence in antiquity is debated, not least because the text of the work was seldom available. For the argument that it had little impact, see Aune, "Use and Abuse," 306–7. For the argument that it was enormously influential, see Richard von Volkmann, *Die Rhetorik Der Griechen Und Römer*, 2d ed. (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1885), 1–15; Friedrich Solmsen, "The

Because, as we have seen, ancient critics' categories are indistinct, this option may require

one to tidy up after his theorist, to forge stricter categories that meet the investigator's needs,

as indeed Heinrici does.[61]

Two, he can read ancient theorists at a level of abstraction sufficient to render them

harmonious. In his commentary on the *Carmen Aureum,* Johan Thom, elsewhere outspoken

about the need to read every ancient author in his or her original context,[62] portrays ancient

understandings of sententious sayings as uniform in order to focus on the macro-genre of the

sayings collection.[63] Likewise, in its efforts at synthesis, one of the standard reference works

on classical rhetoric, Lausberg's *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, minimizes the diversity of

gnomic forms.[64] Similarly, Denis Searby, while claiming to follow ancient usage of the terms

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Aristotelian Tradition in Ancient Rhetoric," *AJP* 62 (1941): 35–50, 169–90; Rapp, "Aristotle's Rhetoric." Laurent Pernot concedes the limited availability of the writing but argues that "[t]he doctrine of the Rhetoric, however, spread widely, in the absence of the text itself, thanks to the teaching of the master and the writings of his disciples. So the ideas of Aristotle reverberated in the schools of philosophy and rhetoric; some almost achieved the status of dogmas" (*Rhetoric in Antiquity*, trans. W. E. Higgins [Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2005], 44; similarly, George A. Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* [Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994], 62–3).

[61] See, e.g., *Der litterarische Charakter der neutestamentlichen Schriften*, 115–16.

[62] See Johan C. Thom, "Cleanthes' *Hymn to Zeus* and Early Christian Literature," in *Antiquity and Humanity: Essays on Ancient Religion and Philosophy Presented to Hans Dieter Betz on His 70th Birthday*, ed. Adela Yarbro Collins and Margaret Mary Mitchell (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 477–99.

[63] Johan C. Thom, *The Pythagorean Golden Verses: With Introduction and Commentary*, Religion in the Graeco-Roman World 123 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 69–75. Erasmus too portrays ancient understandings of wise sayings as fundamentally identical (*Collected Works of Erasmus*, ed. Richard J. Schoeck and Beatrice Corrigan [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974], 31:3).

[64] Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric: A Foundation for Literary Study*, trans. Matthew T. Bliss (Leiden: Brill, 1998), § 872–9, 1121. For the argument that Lausberg treats antiquity

gnome, apophthegm, and *chreia*, actually construes them more narrowly and consistently before employing them as analytical categories in his *Aristotle in Greek Gnomological Tradition*.[65] This approach trades historical accuracy for classificatory power.[66]

Three, whether as a conscious response to the inadequacies of ancient categories or not, she can employ explicitly modern categories forged more or less from and for the study of the relevant corpora. Many scholars of biblical literature, for instance, have thought it useful to distinguish "proverbs" from "maxims." The distinction in modern scholarship is not typically one of metaphoricity, as in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, but one of origin and voice. Proverbs supposedly derive from oral, popular culture and speak with the voice of tradition and collective authority offering empirical conclusions. Maxims are supposedly the more artistic products of literate wisdom schools and speak with the didactic voice of the individual sage offering distinctive insight. The German terms for these forms better express this

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too synchronically, see R. Dean Anderson, "The Use and Abuse of Lausberg in Biblical Studies," in *Rhetorical Argumentation in Biblical Texts*, ed. Anders Eriksson, Thomas H Olbricht, and Walter G. Übelacker, Emory Studies in Early Christianity (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity, 2002), 66–76.

[65] Denis Michael Searby, *Aristotle in the Greek Gnomological Tradition*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Studia Graeca Upsaliensia 19 (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, 1998). Barbara Graziosi makes this point in her review of Searby's monograph; see her "A Modern Gnomology," *The Classical Review* 49 (1999): 437–39.

[66] The phrase "classificatory power" is Andrew Ford's. He argues that formal definitions always reflect the critic's needs more than the author's practice; they "downplay historical change and social nuance for gains in objective descriptiveness and classificatory power" (*The Origins of Criticism: Literary Culture and Poetic Theory in Classical Greece* [Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2002], 12).

distinction between *das Volkssprichwort* and *der Weisheitsspruch*.[67] Biblical scholars have

also thought it important to distinguish wisdom sentences (*Sprüche* or *Aussagen*) from

wisdom admonitions (*Mahnsprüche*), the difference being the degree of explicit normativity.

Wisdom sentences state a conclusion based on observations of reality. Any didactic or

normative force they bear derives from their literary context, from being surrounded by

imperatives. Wisdom admonitions are explicitly imperatival. They demand obedience, not

reflection. In sayings collections, wisdom sentences frequently follow and furnish the

rationale for wisdom admonitions.[68] Bultmann's and Aune's taxonomies of sayings in the

synoptic tradition, which the introduction surveyed, make use of these distinctions, whether

as primary categories or as subcategories. For all their theoretical clarity, these categories

often turn out to be difficult to apply. It is problematic in practice to identify sayings that

speak with the voice of the *Volk*, especially since the most artistic of maxims might be a

literary restyling of a popular proverb and the truly popular saying might have originated

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[67] See Roland E. Murphy, "Form Criticism and Wisdom Literature," *CBQ* 31 (1969): 477–8; Carole Fontaine, *Traditional Sayings in the Old Testament: A Contextual Study*, Bible and Literature 5 (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1982), 1–27; Wilson, *Love Without Pretense*, 12–15; John J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age*, Old Testament Library (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 4–9. Classicists sometimes make similar distinctions; see Karl Rupprecht, "παροιμία," *PW*, 1949; Damschen, "Paroimia."

[68] See Walther Zimmerli, "Zur Struktur Der Alttestamentlichen Weisheit," *ZAW* 51 (1933): 177–204; Wolfgang Richter, *Recht und Ethos: Versuch einer Ortung des weisheitlichen Mahnspruches*, Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 15 (Munich: Kösel-Verlag, 1966); Murphy, "Form Criticism and Wisdom Literature," 478–81; James L. Crenshaw, "Wisdom," in *Old Testament Form Criticism*, ed. John H. Hayes, Trinity University Monograph Series in Religion 2 (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1977), 231–6; Dieter Zeller, *Die weisheitlichen Mahnsprüche bei den Synoptikern*, Forschung zur Bibel 17 (Würzburg: Echter-Verlag, 1977), 1–32; Klaus Berger, *Formgeschichte des Neuen Testaments* (Heidelberg: Quelle & Meyer, 1984), 157; Henderson, *Jesus, Rhetoric, and Law*, 161–77.

and/or might be associated in popular imagination with a particular sage.[69] It is likewise difficult to parse descriptive from prescriptive normativity.[70] But for our purposes, the more important point is that these categories are formed from and for the study of particular corpora in order to meet particular needs of particular modern investigators. The distinctions just named, for instance, exist to enable scholars to trace the prehistory of a gnomic composition by pinpointing the origins of its contents (proverbs or maxims) or its compositional plan by describing how the author has arranged those contents (sentences and admonitions). They may have less utility if the investigator asks different questions. If one has other needs, one may need other categories.

This study selects none of these options. Since I am interested in the ways sayings collections were used in self-cultivation, it matters not how one classifies any particular saying therein micro-generically. Like Thom, I will focus on the macro-genre of the sayings collection, but acknowledge that the contents of the collections I describe are diverse with respect to the micro-genres of their contents. For convenience's sake, I will use *gnome* to refer to any sententious saying, without intending to exclude what Aristotle would term a proverb or Quintilian a *sententia* or *chria*.

The formative gnomologia I examine below are, furthermore, diverse with respect to their compositional plans. As the quotations from them will show, Epictetus' *Encheiridion* features more extensive elaborations of its gnomes than does the *Kyriai Doxai* (or the SM)

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[69] Fontaine, *Traditional Sayings*, 72–6, 242; Wilson, *Love Without Pretense*, 13–14.

[70] Thom, *The Pythagorean Golden Verses*, 70.

and this difference in form does imply a difference in how the sayings are appropriated: s/he

who employs the *Encheiridion* in a spiritual exercise enjoys and is constrained by more

determination of the sayings' meanings than s/he who employs the *Kyriai Doxai*. But despite

that difference in users' experiences, both these sayings collections facilitate transformative

exercises and so I consider them together. This work participates then in its own way in a

recent trend of studies of sententious expressions and especially of sententious collections that

often elides taxonomy of contents and focuses on macro-level considerations such as the

work that short, memorable sayings do culturally and personally.[71]

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[71] Tsagalis writes, "A significant change of scope has been made in the late 20th century as cultural anthropology, ethno- and sociolinguistics have shaped our understanding of the function and role of wisdom literature in Greek antiquity. Thus, the emphasis now is not on taxonomy and classification but on performance and context, not on parallels but on cultural variants" (*Inscribing Sorrow*, 9; see also 14, 36). Unlike biblical scholars, for whom sententious collections are a central genre of study, classicists in the twentieth century paid little attention to sayings collections, preferring to study wise sayings found within other literary contexts (Nikolaos Lazaridis, *Wisdom in Loose Form: The Language of Egyptian and Greek Proverbs in Collections of the Hellenistic and Roman Periods*, Mnemosyne, bibliotheca classica Batava Supplementum 287 [Leiden: Brill, 2007], 14; see further Wilson, *Love Without Pretense*, 10–39; Henderson, *Jesus, Rhetoric, and Law*, 153–55, 177–8), perhaps because classicists so often preferred to base their investigations on ancient genre designations and theories and there is no ancient genre designation for a gnomic collection—γνωμολογία typically refers in antiquity to a gnome-laden style of speech (e.g., Plato, *Phaedr.*, 267c; Philostratus, *Vit. Soph.* 1.15.4), not a collection—and no theoretical reflection on the sententious anthology in the way that Aristotle theorizes, say, tragedy (see Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q*, 295n110). Collections are thus ancillary genres in the classical canon and classical scholarship (see also Wilson, *Love Without Pretense*, 70). Recently, however, there has been a resurgence of interest among classicists in sayings collections, driven partly by a desire to understand the relationship between high philosophy and popular morality. On this trend, see Teresa Morgan, "Review of J. Gerlach, *Gnomica Democritea in Studien zur gnomologischen Überlieferung der Ethik Demokrits und zum Corpus Parisinum*," *JHS* 130 (2010): 284–85; Stefano Martinelli Tempesta, "Review of Denis Searby, *The Corpus Parisinum. A Critical Edition of the Greek Text with Commentary and English Translation*," *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* (2010), http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2010/2010-02-02.html. For an overview of earlier scholarship on sayings collections, see Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Wisdom Literature in Arabic Translation: A Study of the Graeco-Arabic Gnomologia*, American Oriental Series 60 (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1975), 1–35.

The Functions of Sayings Collections

In antiquity, gnomes flavor a wide variety of genres but characterize just a few and, as comparands to the gnomic SM, I will focus on works defined by the fact that they consist predominantly of pithy, wise sayings. Walter Wilson identifies four such genres: chreiae collections, gnomic poetry, gnomic anthologies, and wisdom instructions.[72] In this taxonomy, the SM most resembles a gnomic anthology. Its sayings are not each embedded in a brief narrative and are not in verse. So, the SM is neither a chreia collection nor gnomic poetry. One could perhaps classify it as a wisdom instruction;[73] it features imperatival sayings organized, as I show in ch. 4, under programmatic headings that provide a coherent structure to the composition as a whole—a trait of some wisdom instructions.[74] But that trait belongs to some gnomic anthologies too, as the discussion below of the literary structure of Epictetus' *Encheiridion* shows,[75] and the characteristic of gnomic compositions most important to this

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[72] Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 15–41.

[73] So Daniel Harrington: *Wisdom Texts from Qumran*, Literature of the Dead Sea Scrolls (London: Routledge, 1996), 89; *Jesus and Virtue Ethics: Building Bridges Between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology* (Lanham, Md.: Sheed & Ward, 2002), 65; *Jesus Ben Sira*, 25–6.

[74] On the morphology of wisdom instructions, see William McKane, *Proverbs: A New Approach*, Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1970), 51–150; Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q*, 264–72, 276–82, 317–8; Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 33–9.

[75] See further Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q*, 298–99, 319, who cites Pseudo-Phocylides as an example of a Graecophone gnomologium exhibiting a consistent structure; cf. Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 25–33, 181. Some scholars consider a lack of structure characteristic of Greek gnomologia. Max Küchler, for instances, writes, "Eine Gesamtstruktur ist <u>nirgends</u> zu finden, sodass mit völligem Recht die Strukturlosigkeit solcher Sammlungen als Wesensmerkmal der Gattung selbst behauptet werden kann" (*Weisheitstraditionen*, 260–1, underlining his). With Betz (*The*

study—the fact that the sayings are meant to be internalized by the audience—is a trait both of many wisdom instructions[76] and many gnomic anthologies. The two genres in fact often defy neat distinction.[77] I will focus on gnomic compositions that Wilson considers anthologies, or, gnomologia. But, as with individual gnomic sayings, my argument does not rely on formal distinctions among gnomic genres; what comparison with gnomologia highlights about the SM's formative function, comparison with wisdom instructions might also reveal.

The cultural and personal work that collections of short, memorable sayings do is diverse, as would be expected of a genre that flourished from classical Athens through late antiquity. The impulse to anthologize, especially to collect pieces of wisdom, is likely universal. The historical origin of Greek and Roman sayings collections, however, seems to lie in fifth-century B.C.E. Athens. Perhaps the earliest Greek anthology of wise sayings of which we have record is the work of the sophist Hippias, to whom Athenaeus attributes a work entitled *Collection* (Συναγωγή; *Deipn.* 13 608 F = *BNJ* 6 F 3), a novel designation in Hippias' day.[78] Clement of Alexandria, in support of his argument in book six of the

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Sermon on the Mount, 78–9), I suspect rather and recent studies of gnomologia suggest that the structure of many gnomic collections awaits discovery. Examples of recent studies that have discerned compositional plans hithero unseen, see Hadot, *Interior Citadel*; Thom, Golden Verses.

[76] See McKane, *Proverbs: A New Approach*, 59–61; Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q*, 284–7; Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 38.

[77] Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 39.

[78] Marek Węcowski, "Hippias of Elis(6)," *Brill's New Jacoby* (online, 2006). "We do not hear of such titles in earlier Greek literature, but later on it is *de rigueur* for various archival collections, antiquarian compilations, and doxographical compendia, esp. in the Peripatetic tradition, e.g.

Miscellanies that Greeks are wont to plagiarize and so stole the best of their thought from the Christian scriptures, quotes what seems, given the use of the future tense (τὸν λόγον ποιήσομαι), to be the proem of that work:[79]

> Some of these things have probably been said by Orpheus, others by Musaeus briefly in different places, yet others by Hesiod and Homer, others by the other poets, others in the prose writings of Greeks and non-Greeks alike. But I will make this account new and varied by putting together the most important and related sayings (τὰ μέγιστα καὶ ὁμόφυλα) from all of them. (*Strom.* 6.2.15 = *BNJ* 6 F 4)[80]

This prologue indicates that Hippias has excerpted and assembled a wide range of wise utterances. The reference to "related sayings" (ὁμόφυλα) as well as Athenaeus' *testimonium* (*Deipn.* 13 608 F; cf. Plato, *Hipp. min.* 281a) suggests that he has organized these utterances thematically.[81]

Theophrastos' doxographical compendia (D.L. 5.43; 5.44; 5.47; cf. 5.47 and 5.45), Demetrios' of Phaleron *Collection of Aesop's fables* (D.L. 5.80) and Apollodoros' of Athens *Collection of Doctrines* (D.L. 7.181); on the other hand e.g. Krateros' of Makedon *Collection of Athenian Decrees* (*BNJ* 342 F 1-8) and Istros' the Callimachean *Collection of Atthides* (*BNJ* 334); cf. already Aristotle's mention of the usefulness of 'collections of laws and constitutions' (*Ethica Nicomachea* 1181b 8; cf. also D.L. 5.24 and 25)." On Hippias' *Collection* as a generic experiment, see further Vivienne Gray, *The Framing of Socrates: The Literary Interpretation of Xenophon's* Memorabilia, Hermes Einzelschriften 79 (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1998), 163–5; Leslie Kurke, *Aesopic Conversations: Popular Tradition, Cultural Dialogue, and the Invention of Greek Prose*, Martin Classical Lectures (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2011), 267.

[79] The phrase "having collected" (συνθείς) suggests the quotation hails from the *Collection* (Węcowski, "Hippias of Elis(6)"; Andreas Patzer, *Der Sophist Hippias: als Philosophiehistoriker* [Freiburg: K. Alber, 1986], 97–99).

[80] I follow the translation in Tell, *Plato's Counterfeit Sophists*, 4.

[81] Bruno Snell, "Die Nachrichten über Die Lehren Des Thales Und Die Anfänge Der Griechischen Philosophie- Und Literaturgeschichte," in *Sophistik*, ed. C. J. Classen, Wege der Forschung 187 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1976), 119–28; Patzer, *Der Sophist Hippias*, 32–42; Węcowski, "Hippias of Elis(6)"; Tell, *Plato's Counterfeit Sophists*, 4.

Hippias' *Collection* constitutes early evidence of a practice that was common from the fourth century B.C.E. through late antiquity: collecting valuable and memorable wisdom, often by copying and re-assembling extracts of what one read or heard. Other evidence for this practice includes Aristophanes' *Frogs* 1113-4, which may refer to a pamphlet of quotations selected from the archaic poets that aided the play's audience in following the battle of quotations taking place on stage[82] and Xenophon's *Memorabilia* 1.6.14 (see also 1.2.56), where Socrates clearly refers to copying excerpts as one read: "The treasures of the wise men of old, those which they left written in books, I open (ἀνελίττων) and go through in detail (διέρχομαι) with friends. And if we notice something good, we excerpt it (ἐκλεγόμεθα)." Similarly, according to Aristotle, intellectual training entails selecting from handbooks of written arguments and organizing those selections for oneself under headings like "On Good" (περὶ ἀγαθοῦ; *Top.* 1.14).[83] The author of *Ad Demonicum* maintains that just as a bee settles on every flower, taking the best from each, so too those who wish to be educated should gather (συλλέγειν) the best passages from every source

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[82] So Eric A. Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, History of the Greek Mind 1 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), 55–6; Eric A. Havelock, *The Literate Revolution in Greece and Its Cultural Consequences* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1982), 302, 312; Andrew Ford, "From Letters to Literature: Reading the 'Song Culture' of Ancient Greece," in *Written Texts and the Rise of Literate Culture in Ancient Greece*, ed. Harvey Yunis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 29–30. Leonard Woodbury, *inter alia*, argues to the contrary that Aristophanes merely refers to the audience's level of literate education, not to their touting books ("Aristophanes' *Frogs* and Athenian Literacy: *Ran.* 52-53, 1114," *TAPA* 106 [1976]: 351–3).

[83] For discussion, see Jaap Mansfeld, "Doxography and Dialectic: The *Sitz Im Leben* of the 'Placita,'" *ANRW II* 36.4 (1990): 3056–3229; Jaap Mansfeld, "Sources," in *The Cambridge Companion to Early Greek Philosophy*, ed. A. A. Long, Cambridge Companions to Philosophy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 28–30.

(*Demon.* 51-2).[84] Martial claims that his readers made excerpts of his works and carried them in their pockets to feasts and plays (2.6). The younger Pliny reports that his uncle never read without making excerpts (*nihil enim legit quod non excerperet*) and that he inherited 160 papyrus rolls of those excerpts (*Ep.* 3.5.10, 17).[85] The papyri offer abundant examples of anthologizing brief quotations,[86] as do the collections of sayings by sages such as Hippocrates, Epicurus, Epictetus, and Pythagoras.[87] Compositions that feature a string of brief sayings or quotations such as *Ad Demonicum*, Adeimantus's speeches in book 2 of Plato's *Republic* (363B), Plutarch's *De tranquillitate animi* (*Mor.* 464F), Theophilus of Antioch's *Ad Autolycum* (e.g., 2.8), Athenagoras' *Legatio pro Christianis*, or Clement of Alexandria's *Stromateis*, may have employed anthologies of extracts, gnomologia, as compositional aids and so reflect the existence of the practice,[88] which reaches its zenith in the monumental anthology of Stobaeus.[89]

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[84] On this bee simile referring to the making of extracts, see John Barns, "A New Gnomologium: With Some Remarks on Gnomic Anthologies (I)," *CQ* 44 (1950): 126–37.

[85] For discussion of Pliny's reading practice, see Tiziano Dorandi, "Den Autoren über die Schulter geschaut: Arbeitsweise und Autographie bei den antiken Schriftstellern," *ZPE* 87 (1991): 14–15.

[86] See, e.g., Barns, "A New Gnomologium (I)"; John Barns, "A New Gnomologium: With Some Remarks on Gnomic Anthologies, II," *CQ* 1 (1951): 1–19; David Konstan, "Excerpting as a Reading Practice," in *Thinking Through Excerpts: Studies on Stobaeus*, ed. Gretchen J. Reydams-Schils, Monothéismes et philosophie (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 15–8.

[87] On the varieties of collections of sage's sayings, see Pascale Derron, *Pseudo-Phocylide*, xiii.

[88] On *Ad Demonicum*'s use of a gnomologium, see Paul Wendland, *Anaximenes von Lampsakos: Studien zur ältesten Geschichte der Rhetorik* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1905), 84–101; Pascale Derron, *Pseudo-Phocylide*, xii–xiii; Rosa Maria Piccione, "La struttura dell'*Ad Demonicum* pseudo-isocrateo (e tipologie di tradizione sentenziosa)," in *L'éducation au gouvernement et à la vie: La*

tradition des "règles de vie" de l'Antiquité au Moyen Âge, ed. Paolo Odorico, Autour de Byzance 1 (Paris: École des hautes études en sciences sociales, Centre d'études byzantines, néo-helléniques et sud-est européennes, 2009), 23–44; cf. Troels Engberg-Pedersen, "The Concept of Paraenesis," in *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context*, ed. Troels Engberg-Pedersen and James M. Starr, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche 125 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 50. On the *Republic*'s, see Ford, *The Origins of Criticism*, 215, whose account of the history of gnomologia I follow closely. On Theophilus', see Anton Elter, *De Gnomologiorum Graecorum historia atque origine commentatio*, 8 vols. (Bonn: E.C. Georgi, 1894), 139; Robert M. Grant, "The Problem of Theophilus," *HTR* 43 (1950): 179–85; Robert M. Grant, "Early Christianity and Greek Comic Poetry," *CP* 60 (1965): 159–60; Robert M. Grant, *Greek Apologists of the Second Century* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1988), 148–56; Henry Chadwick, "Some Ancient Anthologies and Florilegia, Pagan and Christian," in *Studies on Ancient Christianity*, Variorum Collected Studies Series 832 (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2006), XIX, 7. On Athenagoras', see Hermann Diels, *Doxographi Graeci* (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1879), 4–5; Bernard Pouderon, *Athénagore d'Athènes: Philosophe Chrétien*, Théologie historique 82 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1989), 325–33; Jaap Mansfeld and David T. Runia, *Aëtiana: The Method and Intellectual Context of a Doxographer*, 3 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 312–4. On Clement's, see Elter, *De Gnomologiorum Graecorum*; Grant, "Early Christianity and Greek Comic Poetry," 161–3; Ferguson, *Clement of Alexandria*, 17–20. Henry Chadwick maintains that Epictetus' repeated citations of Diogenes also derive from an anthology ("Some Ancient Anthologies and Florilegia," XIX, 4).

[89] For further evidence and discussion, see Gian Franco Nieddu, *La scrittura "madre delle muse": agli esordi di un nuovo modello di comunicazione culturale*, Supplementi di Lexis 9 (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 2004), 151–8; Chadwick, "Some Ancient Anthologies and Florilegia." For the evidence of anthologizing in Jewish texts in particular, see Harold Attridge, "Fragments of Pseudo-Greek Poets," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, 2 vols. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983), 2:821–30; Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135)*, ed. Géza Vermès et al., 3 vols. (Edinburgh: Clark, 1973), 3.1:656–71; Christopher D. Stanley, "The Importance of 4QTanhumim (4Q176)," *RevQ* 15 (1992): 569–82; Emanuel Tov, "Excerpted and Abbreviated Biblical Texts from Qumran," *RevQ* 16 (1995): 581–600; Annette Steudel, "Testimonia," ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam, *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Lutz Doering, "Excerpted Texts in Second Temple Judaism. A Survey of the Evidence," in *Selecta Colligere*, ed. Rosa Maria Piccione and Matthias Perkams, 2 vols., Hellenica 11, 18 (Alessandria, Italy: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2003), 1–38; James L. Kugel, "Wisdom and the Anthological Temper," in *The Anthology in Jewish Literature*, ed. David Stern (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 32–52; Brent A. Strawn, "Excerpted 'Non-Biblical' Scrolls at Qumran? Background, Analogies, Function," in *Qumran Studies: New Approaches, New Questions*, ed. Michael T. Davis and Brent A. Strawn (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2007), 65–123. For the evidence in Christian texts, in addition to the works cited above, see Martin C. Albl, *"And Scripture Cannot Be Broken:" The Form and Function of the Early Christian* Testimonia *Collections*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 96 (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

Though diverse, the work that collections of short, memorable sayings do can for present purposes be profitably organized according to the intended effect on, or appropriation by the audience, that is, by the intended hermeneutic.[90] While some compilations of sayings were crafted, no doubt, for personal pleasure and/or private study,[91] far more were crafted to educate the young, in the technical sense by training them to write and read, in the social sense by inculcating in them elite social values, and/or in the moral sense by shaping their hearts and minds. In these ways, anthologies were mechanisms of enculturation. Hippias' collection may have been intended to make one sufficiently wise to advance socially and economically in classical Greece, though his motives are ambiguous.[92] Stobaeus created his anthology, the contents of which are certainly not all gnomic but which he nonetheless described as "excerpts, sayings, and advice" (ἐκλογῶν, ἀποφθεγμάτων,

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[90] Wilson remarks that "[t]he subject matter, provenance, and intended audience of the gnomological genre, like its morphology, is wanting for consistency. A number of largely overlapping functions may be identified" (*Love Without Pretense*, 77; Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 31; see also, 28). For his overview of uses, see *Love Without Pretense*, 77–81. See also Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q*, 263–316.

[91] See Plutarch, *Rect. rat. aud.*. 8; Barns, "A New Gnomologium (I)," 134–5; Searby, *Aristotle in the Greek Gnomological Tradition*, 28–9; Pierre Hadot, *The Inner Citadel: The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 31–4; Chadwick, "Some Ancient Anthologies and Florilegia," XIX, 2; Konstan, "Excerpting."

[92] We can only infer the purpose of such a compilation. Węcowski casts Hippais as a sage self-consciously collecting wisdom to teach the young: "Hippias's antiquarian studies seem not a disinterested antiquarianism, but were closely related to his concept of encyclopedic knowledge as a means to acquire true wisdom and practical success" ("Hippias of Elis(6)"). Along with Bruno Snell and Andreas Patzer, she also portrays him as a historian of ideas, the first doxographer, writing to show that contemporary intellectual developments have ancient precursors, to object to Xenophanes', Hecataeus', and Heraclitus' disparaging of the past as inferior (Snell, "Die Nachrichten über Die Lehren Des Thales Und Die Anfänge Der Griechischen Philosophie- Und Literaturgeschichte"; Patzer, *Der Sophist Hippias*, esp. 110–12; Węcowski, "Hippias of Elis(6)").

ὑποθηκῶν, *Bibliotheca* cod. 167; see also 112a20-1) and "the proclamations and quotations

of the ancients" (τὰς τῶν παλαιῶν … χρήσεις καὶ χρείας, 112a29), to educate his son, if we

accept Photius' account of its preface.[93] Firmer evidence comes from Plato, who, while

describing how the Athenians teach poetry, states that some teachers require students to

memorize copious quantities of verse while others extract "from all the poets the key sayings

(κεφάλαια) and whole speeches (ὅλας ῥήσεις) that had to be learned by heart (ἐκμανθάνειν)

if one is to become good and wise (ἀγαθὸς … καὶ σοφὸς, *Leg.* 810e–811a)."[94] The latter

offer "education by select passages, the selection being made from an ethical point of view"[95]

and the education making students moral. As Aeschines later explains, "In our childhood we

commit to memory the gnomes (γνώμας) of the poets, that when we are men we may make

use of them" (*Ctes.* 3.134-35) as ethical guidelines.[96] In the Hellenistic and Roman periods,

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[93] For other interpretations of Stobaeus' intentions, see Rosa Maria Piccione, "Encyclopedisme et Enkyklios Paidiea," *Philosophie Antique* 2 (2002): 168–97; Denis Michael Searby, "The Intertitles in Stobaeus: Condensing Culture," in *Thinking Through Excerpts: Studies on Stobaeus*, ed. Gretchen J. Reydams-Schils, Monothéismes et philosophie (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 54–5; Konstan, "Excerpting," 21–2.

[94] The translation is Ford's (*The Origins of Criticism*, 195).

[95] Barns, "A New Gnomologium II," 5; see also 7.

[96] Poetry, with its abundance of pithy, striking sayings, was generally seen as a means of forming the morals of the young, especially in classical Athens; in addition to Plato and Aeschines, see Aristophanes, *Ran.* 1008-12, 1036; Isocrates, *Paneg.* 4.159; Isocrates, *Nic.* 42-4; Plato, *Prot.* 325e–326a; Xenophon, *Symp.* 4.3.3; Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.1.35; Seneca, *Ep.* 33.7; Libanius, *Progymnasmata* 8; Maximus of Tyre, *Or.* 4, 17, 37; Gustav A. Gerhard, *Phoinix von Kolophon: Texte und Untersuchungen* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1909), 228–84; Malcolm Heath, *The Poetics of Greek Tragedy* (London: Duckworth, 1987), 39–42; Penelope Murray, ed., *Plato on Poetry*, Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 20–1: "Knowledge of Homer's poetry could impart technical expertise, but it was also essential for the cultivated man since it provided him with the moral and ethical examples on which he should model his own behavior"; Ford, *The Origins of Criticism*, 199–200.

handwriting exercises were derived from anthologies like those Plato mentions. According to

Raffaella Cribiore, approximately one half of the extant exercises from Greco-Roman Egypt

consist of gnomes culled primarily from the poets,[97] suggesting that teachers and students

were copying from anthologies of "key sayings" to train their hands, shape their social values,

and mold their character. By copying esteemed sayings, students were expected to memorize

and internalize them and, in turn, to "identify with powerful and high-status Greek or

Roman social-cultural groups" pedestalized in them[98] and to become "good and wise," as

Plato says, so that, as adults, they could act in accordance with the values the sayings were

held to reference.[99] Authors such as Pindar and Menander, for example, featured prominently

in ancient curricula because they offered compact and memorable sayings that preserved and

distilled classical, that is, elite, language and values.[100]

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[97] Raffaella Cribiore, *Writing, Teachers, and Students in Graeco-Roman Egypt*, American Studies in Papyrology 36 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 44–5; see also 133. On the use of gnomologia in schools at an early period, see as well Lucio Del Corso, *La lettura nel mondo ellenistico*, Biblioteca universale Laterza 574 (Rome: Laterza, 2005), 17–20.

[98] Teresa Morgan, *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 150.

[99] Cribiore, *Writing, Teachers, and Students*, 45; see also Henri I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1956), 150–9, 234–5; Wilson, *Love Without Pretense*, 77; Barns, "A New Gnomologium (I)," 135–7; Raffaella Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005), 178–80, 199–208.

[100] See Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 201–2. Paul quotes a saying attributed to Euripides and Menander (1 Cor 15:33), just as one would expect someone who had been through the ancient curriculum to do, though Paul could have known it as a popular expression; for discussion, see Bruce W. Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth: The Influence of Secular Ethics and Social Change* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000), 98–100; see also Acts 26:14.

Some compilations helped the enculturated impress socially by quoting poetic lines to display their erudition. That goal explains why Martial's readers cribbed his best lines and smuggled them into social gatherings. Andrew Ford argues that the gnomologion arose in fact out of an obsession with "sophistication" (δεξιότης, literally "dexterity" with learning) among Athens' post-Persian-war elite. The ability to deploy poetry dexterously, especially at symposia, became a favorite marker of social difference for and among an aristocracy whose political influence was declining in an increasingly democratic world.[101] From the elite, this obsession spread to the masses, in large part through the theatre, which represented sophisticated speech to a wide audience.[102] A rise in demand for conspicuous learning necessitated the invention of a new educational technology: the anthology of "key sayings" to which Plato refers and which makes one seem "good and "wise," meaning, in Ford's interpretation, sophisticated. For Ford, Hippias' *Collection* represents such a technology and it is to such a technology that Aristophanes (*Ran.* 1113-4) and Xenophon (*Mem.* 1.6.14) refer.[103] His history is plausible,[104] but however we understand the origins of the sayings

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[101] Ford, *The Origins of Criticism*, 188–94; see also Barns, "A New Gnomologium II," 9.

[102] Ford, *The Origins of Criticism*, 194–5. If Ford is correct, the Panhellenic games were surely also an important site of distribution; see Tell, *Plato's Counterfeit Sophists*, 113–34.

[103] *The Origins of Criticism*, 194–7; cf. Morgan, *Literate Education*, 60, 121.

[104] See also Pascale Derron, *Pseudo-Phocylide*, xiii; cf. Elter, *De Gnomologiorum Graecorum*, 2:67–70, who credits Chrysippus with the invention of the gnomologium; Wendland, *Anaximenes von Lampsakos*, 84–7; Morgan, *Literate Education*, 120–51, who dates the rise of gnomologia to the Hellenistic age, acknowledging but minimizing the evidence of Plato's *Laws*; Engberg-Pedersen, "The Concept of Paraenesis," 50n6, who, with Wendland, credits the Peripatetics with having created the form.

collection and read each individual piece of evidence, it is clear that some anthologizing was indeed aimed at social advancement.

Other compilations helped the enculturated compose and did so in at least three ways. One, they stored one's own research. At the most rudimentary level, anthologies were means of stockpiling essential information to use in future writing. The excerpts Pliny the Elder bequeathed to his nephew, for instance, were surely the groundwork of his *Natural History*.[105] Plutarch claims he composed his *De tranquillitate animi* by "gathering together from my note-books those observations on tranquility of mind which I happened to have made for my own use" (*Mor.* 464F). And Theon recommends that rhetorical students assemble their own anthologies of quotations from historians and orators to have those quotes ready to deploy (137.18-21).[106] Two, having learned to write by copying sayings from anthologies, rhetorical students learned to compose by exegeting and elaborating many of the same collected sayings[107] and three, speakers and writers used anthologies produced by others as sources of material. Epicharmus indicates in the prologue that his anthology contains ammunition for the orator:

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[105] Dorandi, "Den Autoren"; van den Hoek, "Techniques of Quotation in Clement of Alexandria: A View of Ancient Literary Working Methods," 225–6, 235; Turner, *The Gospel According to Philip*, 64. See also Aulus Gellius, who reports that he assembled his *Attic Nights* from excerpts he made while reading (*Noct. att.* Praef. 2-12). Barns claims Chrysippus too organized his research into anthologies ("A New Gnomologium II," 10).

[106] For discusson, see Barns, "A New Gnomologium II," 11–12; Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 231.

[107] See Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.9; Konstantin Horna, "Gnome, Gnomendichtung, Gnomologien," *PWSup 6*, 1935, 79; Barns, "A New Gnomologium II," 11–13.

> many and manifold advices for you to use
> towards a friend or foe, while speaking in the courts, or the assembly,
> towards the rogue or the gentleman, towards the stranger,
> towards the quarrelsome, the drunkard, and the vulgar, or any other
> plagues that you may find—for them too there's a sting within my book.
> Within it too are maxims wise (γνῶμαι σοφαὶ); obey them,
> and you will be a cleverer and better man for all events.
> You need no lengthy speech, only a single one of these sayings;
> bring round to your subject whichever one of them is apt. (c 1-9 [trans. LCL])[108]

Polybius praises the historian Ephoros' skillful use of a gnomologium to stylize his composition (δεινότατός ἐστιν ἐν ταῖς παρεκβάσεσι καὶ ταῖς ἀφ' αὑτοῦ γνωμολογίαις, 12.28.10) and seems to have borrowed the maxims that pepper his prose from an anthology.[109] Chrysippus' prose was ridiculed for containing too many quotations, for, it seems, making excessive use of the anthology.[110] Finally, as stated above, works that feature a string of gnomes likely withdrew those gnomes from banks of extracts.

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[108] I borrow the citation of Epicharmus and the munitions metaphor from Wilson, *Love Without Pretense*, 78. See also Horna, "Gnome, Gnomendichtung, Gnomologien," 75, 79; Barns, "A New Gnomologium (I)," 9–14; Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 200.

[109] See Carl Wunderer: "Aber ein so trockener Stilist hat das Bedürfnis, hie und da seinen Worten grösseren Schwung zu geben und dazu benutzt er ausser den Citaten und Gleichnissen auch Sprichwörter. Wie man es bei Kriegern zuweilen findet, ist Polybius ein Freund der Spruchweisheit" (*Polybios-Forschungen: Beiträge zur Sprach- und Kulturgeschichte*, 3 vols. [Leipzig: Dieterich, 1898], 1:43; see also 1:12, 16, 22, 30, 55, 57-8, 117-8). See also Elter, *De Gnomologiorum Graecorum*, 6:96; F. W. Walbank, *Polybius*, Sather Classical Lectures 42 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 32. Dionysius of Halicarnassus nonetheless censured his prose style as coarse (*Comp.* 4). Polybius elsewhere professes to value factual accuracy over witty writing (16.20).

[110] Sextus Empiricus, *Math.* 13.270-6; Galen, *De Plac.* 2.213-14, 2.220-2; 3.300-2; Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. Soph.* 7.180-81; 10.26-7; see also Quintilian, *Inst. Or.* 12.2.25-6. For discussion, see Elter, *De Gnomologiorum Graecorum*, 1:13, 67–70; Horna, "Gnome, Gnomendichtung, Gnomologien," 80–1; Barns, "A New Gnomologium II," 10; Gutas, *Greek Wisdom Literature in Arabic Translation*, 452–3; Cribiore, *Writing, Teachers, and Students*, 44–5.

But other gnomic anthologies help form counter-cultural selves. As I have shown, when anthologies are employed in education, they help students not only to acquire skills in reading and writing but also to become particular sorts of people. If Hippias' motive was educational, his *Collection* was an instrument for making one sufficiently "wise" to prosper within the dominant social and economic structures of his age. Aeschines and Plato refer to the formative function of the sayings collection when they speak of young students memorizing sayings from the poets not because those sayings offer straightforward moral guidance but because internalizing those sayings makes one "good and wise," renders one capable of making moral choices, moral being identified with prevailing norms. Xenophon refers to this function as well in the passage discussed above. What his Socrates reports doing with friends—"opening" (ἀνελίττων) the writings of venerable sages and "going through them in detail" (διέρχομαι)—is exegesis. The term *open* (ἀνελίσσω) is a double entendre, referring to "unrolling" a scroll and "interpreting" a saying.[111] The anthologizing that followed such communal study—"and if we notice something good, we excerpt it (ἐκλεγόμεθα)"—likely facilitated reflection on and appropriation of these key sayings. And the reason the author of *Ad Demonicum* recommends gathering sayings is that one must fill one's mind with wise utterances (ἀκουσμάτων) in order to progress towards virtue (13); his gnome-laden discourse in fact supplies such sayings. The sorts of people these gnomologia help produce are people authorized by the norms of the dominant culture. The friends of Xenophon's Socrates, for example, become fit to enter politics (*Mem.* 1.6.10) and the author

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[111] Ford, *The Origins of Criticism*, 196; LSJ, s.v ἀνελίσσω.

of *Ad Demonicum* equips his student to advance socially (36). Other gnomologia, however, did not enculturate people but rather helped them resist enculturation. They facilitated the formation of social and moral sensibilities not widely authorized in the prevailing culture through their use in transformative practices—spiritual exercises.[112] This function becomes most legible in the philosophical schools of the Hellenistic and Roman periods and the next section describes two clarion examples: Epicurus' *Kyriai Doxai* and Epictetus' *Encheiridion.*[113]

Sayings Collections and Spiritual Exercises

That gnomologia facilitated spiritual exercises intended to transform practitioners into particular moral ideals in the Hellenistic and Roman periods is clear. In this section, I show how this is so by sketching Epicurus' moral ideal and then presenting the evidence internal and external to the *Kyriai Doxai*, a collection of his sayings, that indicates that it supports practices intended to form one into that ideal. I then follow the same procedure for Epictetus and the *Encheiridion.*

Epicurus' Ideal Self

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[112] On the formation of counter-dominant selves, see further Richard Valantasis, "Constructions of Power in Asceticism," *JAAR* 63 (1995): 775–821; Richard Valantasis, *The Gospel of Thomas*, New Testament Readings (London: Routledge, 1997), 22; Richard Valantasis, *The New Q: A Fresh Translation with Commentary* (New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 4–5; Richard Valantasis, *The Making of the Self: Ancient and Modern Asceticism* (Eugene, Or.: Cascade, 2008), 101–2.

[113] Another clear example of this function is the *Carmen Aureum*, which Iamblichus says Pythagorean neophytes memorized (*Vit. Pyth.* 80-7; cf. 157-62, 247).

Epicurus is an Athenian philosopher of the late fourth and early third centuries (341–

270) B.C.E. who founded a philosophical school that survived him, spread, and became of

the major philosophical movements of the Hellenistic and Roman eras.[114] In his moral vision,

the absence of mental and emotional distress and bodily pain—a condition he classifies as

"pleasure" (ἡδονὴν, *Ep. Men.* 128; *KD* 3; fr. 7; Cicero, *Fin.* 1.37-8, 41-2; 2.16-32; cf. *Ep.*

Men. 132)—characterizes the ideal life.[115] Mistaken beliefs, he claims, especially about

divinity, death, and desire, exile individuals from such pleasure. They cause needless anxieties

and insatiable or superfluous urges and thereby create a "storm" within the human being (ὁ

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[114] For introductions to Epicurus' life, oeuvre, and influence, see Richard Goulet, "Épicure de Samos," ed. Richard Goulet, *Dictionnaire des philosophes antiques* (Paris: Editions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1989); Hans-Josef Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: A Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 385–400.

[115] Epicurus names peace in one's body and one's soul together as ideals in *Ep. Men.* 128 (τὴν τοῦ σώματος ὑγίειαν καὶ τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀταραξίαν…. μήτε ἀλγῶμεν μήτε ταρβῶμεν) and fr. 7 (ἀταραξία καὶ <ἡ> ἀπονία). For freedom from physical pain (ἀπονία), see further *Sent. Vat.* 33. For freedom from psychic pain (ἀταραξία), see further *Ep. Herod.* 82.1; *Ep. Pyth.* 85.10; 96.3; *Ep. Men.* 128.2; cf. *Ep. Pyth.* 87.2 (ἀθορύβως). On these freedoms as Epicurus' ethical ideals, see, *inter alia*, Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics*, Martin Classical Lectures 2 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994), 104–5; Michael Erler and Malcolm Schofield, "Epicurean Ethics," in *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy*, ed. Keimpe Algra et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 644. On the relationship between these freedoms and "happiness" (εὐδαιμονία), see Gisela Striker, "*Ataraxia*: Happiness as Tranquility," in *Essays on Hellenistic Epistemology and Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 183–95. On Epicurus' treatment of pleasure, see Gisela Striker, "Epicurean Hedonism," in *Essays on Hellenistic Epistemology and Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 196–208; cf. John Cooper, "Pleasure and Desire in Epicurus," in *Reason and Emotion: Essays on Ancient Moral Psychology and Ethical Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 485–514; Raphael Woolf, "What Kind of Hedonist Was Epicurus?," *Phronesis* 49 (2004): 303–22. According to Diogenes Laertius, "Epicurus holds the pains of the mind to be the worse" and mental pleasures to be superior to physical ones (*Vit. Soph.* 10.137, trans. Hicks).

τῆς ψυχῆς χειμών, *Ep. Men.* 128.5-6).[116] People wrongly worry that the gods will punish

them (*Ep. Men.* 124) and mistakenly fear death (*Ep. Men.* 125). They crave things they

cannot have, such as immortality (Epicurus calls such desires "empty" [κενός]: *Ep. Pyth.* 87.1;

Ep. Men. 127.8; 130.9; *KD* 15; cf. *Ep. Herod.* 37.9-10; *Sent. Vat.* 59 [δόξα ψευδὴς]), or do

not need, such as luxury foods (Epicurus labels these natural but unnecessary or "merely

natural" [φυσικαὶ μόνον] desires: *Ep. Men.* 127.8-9; see also *KD* 26, 29, 30).[117] And mistaken

beliefs, while they do not cause all physical pain, do cause people to miscalculate what

choices will minimize pain in the long run (*Ep. Men.* 129-30) and do provoke unnecessary

anxiety about physical suffering, for people wrongly imagine that pain can be both abiding

and extreme, when, in fact, it can be only one of those things (*Ep. Men.* 133; *KD* 4; *Sent.

Vat.* 4).

When he offers newborn humans and animals—unsocialized and thus uncorrupted

beings—as examples of beings with proper desires (Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. Soph.* 10.137;

Cicero, *Fin.* 1.29-30; Sextus Empiricus, *Math* 11.96; *Pyr.* 3.194-5), Epicurus implies that the

proximate cause of these false beliefs and consequently misguided desires is socialization.[118]

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[116] On the background of Epicurus' anthropological storm metaphor, see Malte Hossenfelder, "Epicurus—hedonist malgré lui," in *The Norms of Nature: Studies in Hellenistic Ethics*, ed. Malcolm Schofield and Gisela Striker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 246.

[117] Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire*, 105–112; Bernard Frischer, *The Sculpted Word: Epicureanism and Philosophical Recruitment in Ancient Greece* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 73.

[118] Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire*, 106–11; Pierre-Marie Morel, *Épicure: la nature et la raison*, Bibliothèque des philosophies (Paris: Librairie philosophique J. Vrin, 2009), 185–6; Cooper, *Pursuits of Wisdom*, 230–1. On Epicurus' use of "the cradle argument," see further David Sedley, "The Inferential Foundations of Epicurean Ethics," in *Ethics*, ed. Stephen Everson, Companions to

Therefore, to put the soul at peace, one must undo one's enculturation, replacing common but mistaken notions with Epicurus' insights so that one becomes able to reason like Epicurus and discern the path to a pacific life (*Ep. Men.* 127-31; *KD* 20; *Sent. Vat.* 21; fr. 34.25.22-9).[119] Epicurus' *Epistle to Menoeceus*, which summarizes his ethical doctrines, exemplifies this process. According to this letter, one must practice believing (πρᾶττε καὶ μελέτα… νομίζων) about the gods only what accords with their "immortality and blessedness" (ζῷον ἄφθαρτον καὶ μακάριον, 123), rejecting the common but false notion that they reward and punish humans (124), activities that do not cohere with immortality and blessedness. One must develop the habit of believing (συνέθιζε δὲ ἐν τῷ νομίζειν) that "death is nothing to us" (μηδὲν πρὸς ἡμᾶς εἶναι τὸν θάνατον) since the deceased feel no pain (124), rejecting the popular fear of dying (125). One must distinguish between desires that she or he must fulfill in order to attain mental and physical tranquility and desires that she or he can and therefore should deny (127). And one must calculate how to maximize tranquility over the long run (128-9), remembering that what one needs for peaceful existence is easily obtainable (130-1, 133) and that intense pain is necessarily ephemeral (133) and rejecting the popular practice of responding to all desires and pursuing all pleasures (131-2). These cognitive reforms will

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Ancient Thought 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 129–50; cf. Jacques Brunschwig, "The Cradle Argument in Epicureanism and Stoicism," in *The Norms of Nature*, ed. Malcolm Schofield and Gisela Striker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 113–44.

[119] Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire*, 114; Geert Roskam, *A Commentary on Plutarch's* De Latenter Vivendo (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2007), 19. Too often overlooked is the important role Epicurus assigns laughter in the process of purging popular opinions; see *Ep. Men.* 133; *Sent. Vat.* 41; Jean Salem, *Tel un dieu parmi les hommes: l'éthique d'Épicure*, Bibliothèque d'histoire de la philosophie (Paris: Librairie philosophique J. Vrin, 1989), 167–74.

dissipate one's anxieties and transform one's desires and thereby enable one to transcend the typically human state of "disturbance" (διαταραχθήσῃ, 135).[120]

Epicurus' ideal self is thus one who has refuted false beliefs and internalized right ones. This person, tranquilized by new knowledge, alone has inner peace. This person alone lives—enjoys—the Epicurean life.

<div align="center">Epicurus' Kyriai Doxai</div>

Evidence internal and external to the *Kyriai Doxai* (Κύριαι Δόξαι), or "Master Sayings"[121] indicates that the composition forms the basis for a spiritual exercise among Epicureans. The composition is preserved in the tenth book of Diogenes Laertius' *Vitae Philosophorum* but the partial overlap in content and the order of the sayings between the collection found there and the collections of Epicurus' sayings preserved in the *Gnomologium Vaticanum* and in the inscription of Diogenes of Oenoanda implies either that the *Kyriai Doxai* circulated in multiple versions or that Epicurus' sayings circulated in multiple compositions.[122] Internally, as the work appears in Diogenes Laertius, it reiterates

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[120] Jean Salem, "Commentaire De La Lettre D'épicure a Ménécée," *Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger* 183 (1993): 547.

[121] For this translation, see Diskin Clay, *Paradosis and Survival: Three Chapters in the History of Epicurean Philosophy* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 23–4. On Epicurus' use of the adjective "master" (κύριος), see further Norman W. DeWitt, *Epicurus and His Philosophy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1954), 111. On the variety of titles under which the *Kyriai Doxai* circulated in antiquity, see Pamela Gordon, *Epicurus in Lycia: The Second-Century World of Diogenes of Oenoanda* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 60.

[122] See Gordon, *Epicurus in Lycia*, 59–65; Diskin Clay, "A Lost Epicurean Community," *GRBS* 30 (1989): 322.

the ethic Epicurus articulates elsewhere. Its first four sayings or groups of sayings, the so-called fourfold medicine (τετραφάρμακος),[123] restate in even more condensed form the same the four theses in the same order as the summarial *Epistle to Menoeceus* 123-32, 133: 1) immortal and blessed beings—gods—have no feelings about human affairs; if they did, they would not be immortal and blessed; 2) "Death is nothing to us;" 3) pleasure is the absence of physical and psychic pain (and so readily obtainable); and 4) pain is ephemeral (and so easily endured and unworthy of fear; *KD* 1-4).[124] In other words, they summarize the summary of Epicurus' ethics. By featuring this epitome of Epicurus' ethical teaching as its beginning, the gnomologium presents these four sayings as thesis statements and the rest of the collection, though it addresses a range of other topics (e.g., friendship, laughter, and justice), as elaborations of these fundamental principles.[125] Thus, the *Kyriai Doxai*'s moral ideal is Epicurus' moral ideal.

By offering this ideal in pithy, memorable form, the *Kyriai Doxai* makes it possible for one to use it in a spiritual exercise. Gnomic distillations of Epicurean doctrine such as "The blessed and immortal neither has trouble itself nor troubles another" (Τὸ μακάριον καὶ

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[123] I say "so called" because no form of the term τετραφάρμακος appears in an extant writing or fragment attributed to Epicurus.

[124] Salem, "Commentaire," 514n3. These four principles appear also in Philodemus, P.Herc. 1005, 4.9-14; cf. *Ep. Herod.* 81-2; Cicero, *Fin.* 1.40-1. Sedley aptly refers to this sequence as the "canonical order" of the "main Epicurean articles of faith" ("The Inferential Foundations of Epicurean Ethics," 134).

[125] Betz, "Literary Genre and Function," 5; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 78. Betz' claim that the structure of the *Kyriai Doxai* awaits further investigation remains true (ibid., 78–9). For an insightful but tentative proposal, see Victor Goldschmidt, *La doctrine d'Épicure et le droit*, Bibliothèque d'histoire de la philosophie (Paris: J. Vrin, 1977), 251–86.

ἄφθαρτον οὔτε αὐτὸ πράγματα ἔχει οὔτε ἄλλῳ παρέχει, *KD* 1), "Death is nothing to us"

(Ὁ θάνατος οὐδὲν πρὸς ἡμᾶς, *KD* 2), and "The height of pleasure is the removal of all pain"

(Ὅρος τοῦ μεγέθους τῶν ἡδονῶν ἡ παντὸς τοῦ ἀλγοῦντος ὑπεξαίρεσις, *KD* 3) are easily

tattooed on the mind, rendering them perpetually present as mental lenses through which

one can practice critiquing and reimagining the world. Moreover, such gnomes are

"paradigmatic and underdetermined," which means that while their general import is

evident, their precise application is not, prompting one, again, to practice seeing life through

them, to envision their relevance to particular circumstances—to exercise oneself.[126] The

gnomic form of the collection is itself evidence of its intended hermeneutic.

Externally, the work's literary context as well as *testimonia* reveal its formative

function. While it may have circulated in multiple versions, the *Kyriai Doxai* as scholars

typically conceive of it is extant only in the tenth book of Diogenes Laertius' *Lives of the

Philosophers*, where it follows three letters of Epicurus, the beginnings and endings of which

make clear that the reader is to memorize and assimilate, or internalize, their contents, that is,

render them stable parts of one's consciousness so that one can view the world through them.

These letters, to Herodotus, Pythocles, and Menoeceus, epitomize, respectively, Epicurus'

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[126] I borrow the phrase "paradigmatic and underdetermined" from Wilson, who uses it to characterize gnomic sayings in general (*The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 190; see also Wilson, *Love Without Pretense*, 11–24). I follow him as well in claiming that this trait makes gnomes ideal for training the mental and moral faculties. He writes, "Generally speaking, gnomic sayings are to a significant degree paradigmatic and underdetermined, and so they place certain demands upon the rational abilities of the reader to interpret and apply them in various ethical situations beyond those that are ordinarily associated with obeying specific orders or legal injunctions" (*The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 190–1). See also Goldschmidt, *La doctrine d'Épicure et le droit*, 253; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 562.

teachings on physics, celestial phenomena, and ethics, the three parts of his philosophy according to Diogenes Laertius (*Vit. Phil.* 10.29).[127] The *Epistle to Herodotus* opens by explaining that it presents in short compass Epicurus' physics so that his followers can "preserve in the memory enough of the principal doctrines" (εἰς τὸ κατασχεῖν τῶν ὁλοσχερωτάτων δοξῶν τὴν μνήμην ἱκανῶς, 35.3-4, trans. Hicks), "memorize" them (μνημονεύειν, 35.9; see also 36.5), and "fix them in their minds" (ἐν <δὲ> τῇ μνήμῃ τὸ τοσοῦτο ποιητέον, 36.2, trans. Bailey). It closes by underscoring the value of fixing this work in the mind: the person who does so will become "incomparably stronger" (ἁδρότητα λήψεσθαι, 83.4-5), that is, better equipped to challenge the false beliefs about the nature of the universe and the causes of natural phenomena that inevitably produce anxieties and phobias and thereby prevent one from attaining the inner tranquility (ἀταραξία) that Epicurus idealized and that was the goal of his philosophy (see also 37.3).[128] In Wolfgang Schmid's gnomic summary, "Ohne Physiologia keine Ataraxia."[129] "The summary itself, placed in the mind (ἐν μνήμῃ τιθέμενα), will continually help him" (83.7) in that, at any moment, "as quick as thought" (ἅμα νοήματι), he can "tour the doctrines that lead to a calm state" (περίοδον τῶν κυριωτάτων πρὸς γαληνισμὸν ποιοῦνται, 83.12-13).[130]

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[127] Epicurus himself refers to his letter to Herodotus as an *epitome* (ἐπιτομὴν, *Ep. Herod.* 35.3; ἐπιτετμημένα, 82.11; cf. Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. Phil.* 27.10; 28.30).

[128] Cyril Bailey, *Epicurus: The Extant Remains* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926), 257; Wolfgang Schmid, "Epikur," *RAC*, 1961, 690.

[129] Schmid, "Epikur," 690.

[130] On the term "tour" (περίοδον), see DeWitt, *Epicurus*, 110–1. On "calm state" (γαληνισμὸς), see Ibid., 226.

The *Epistle to Pythocles* begins by describing itself as an *aide-mémoire*.[131] Pythocles cannot "recall the arguments which make for a happy life" (μνημονεύειν τῶν εἰς μακάριον βίον συντεινόντων διαλογισμῶν, 84.3-4).[132] Epicurus offers this "abridged and concise argument" (σύντομον καὶ εὐπερίγραφον διαλογισμὸν, 84.5) about meteorological phenomena so that Pythocles can easily remember his principles (ἵνα ῥᾳδίως μνημονεύῃς, 84.6) and, in turn, internalize them and achieve tranquility. It ends by commanding Pythocles to "remember" (μνημόνευσον) the letter's contents so that he can "escape from myth"—that is, so that he can release himself from the incorrect beliefs that exile most people from happiness—and grasp how its reasoning applies to similar, non-meteorological phenomena (καὶ τὰ ὁμογενῆ τούτοις συνορᾶν δυνήσῃ, 116.4-5).

The *Epistle to Menoeceus* starts by announcing that "we must exercise ourselves in the things which bring happiness" (μελετᾶν οὖν χρὴ τὰ ποιοῦντα τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν, 122.9-10, trans. Hicks), "the things" being Epicurus' precepts (123.1-2), particularly those in the letter at hand. It ends with the same call to exercise oneself by meditating on Epicurus' words and, like the *Epistle to Herodotus* and the *Epistle to Pythocles*, with a declaration of the benefits of so doing: "Exercise yourself (μελέτα πρὸς σεαυτὸν) in these and kindred precepts day and night, both by yourself and with someone like you; then never, either while awake

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[131] On the debate over the letter's integrity and authenticity, see Jean Bollack and André Laks, *Epicure à Pythoclès: Sur la cosmologie et les phénomènes météorologiques*, Cahiers de philologie 3 (Lille: Publications de l'Université de Lille III, 1978), 45–55.

[132] In translating διαλογισμοί, I follow the meaning suggested by Arrighetti's translation: "ragionamenti filosofici" (*Epicuro: Opere*, Biblioteca di cultura filosofica 41 [Torino: Geinaudi, 1973], 427); cf. Schmid, "Epikur," 204.

or dreaming, will you be disturbed (διαταραχθήσῃ), but will live as a god among men" (135.5-7 trans. Hicks, modified; cf. *Sent. Vat..* 41). Epicurus' sayings should prompt unending "exercise" in the form of memorizing and reflecting on them until they transform one's consciousness and disposition.[133] This is the path to the ideal Epicurean life, to liberation from suffering, to transcendence.

These programmatically placed announcements of the letters' intended hermeneutic reveal that these epistolary epitomae form the basis for a transformative exercise.[134] Those who meditate on them so that they come to reason and feel as Epicurus does can then avoid inner disturbance and achieve tranquility. As Jean Bollack and André Laks explain,

> L'abrégé, l'<<epitome>> que composent les épicuriens, n'est pas un résumé; il y a erreur sur le genre. La condensation ne se contente pas de reproduire en petit une rédaction déjà élaborée, elle est animée d'un mouvement propre qui se veut comme le modèle d'un exercice de maîtrise de la matière dans l'application des principes, producteur d'autres présentations semblables qui pourront s'affranchir de lui…. l'abrégé fournit le paradigme d'une pratique.[135]

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[133] For this meaning of "exercise" (μελετάω) in the *Epistle to Menoeceus*, see Ilsetraut Hadot, *Seneca und die griechisch-römische Tradition der Seelenleitung*, Quellen und Studien zur Geschichte der Philosophie 13 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1969), 53; Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire*, 129–34; Jan Erik Hessler, *Epikur: Brief an Menoikeus*, Schwabe Epicurea 4 (Basel: Schwabe Verlag, 2014), 160n54; see further Michael Erler, "Übung," ed. Joachim Ritter, Karlfried Gründer, and Gottfried Gabriel, *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2001). Salem translates μελέτα as "médite-les" ("Commentaire," 520). Hessler defines μελετᾶν as "trainieren" and "geistige Training" (*Epikur: Brief an Menoikeus*, 129, 160).

[134] Betz calls it a "carefully designed learning process" (*Essays on the Sermon on the Mount* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984], 14). For a similar reading of the three letters, see Jean Salem, *Tel un dieu parmi les hommes: l'éthique d'Épicure*, Bibliothèque d'histoire de la philosophie (Paris: Librairie philosophique J. Vrin, 1989), 39–43.

[135] Bollack and Laks, *Epicure à Pythoclès*, 18; see also Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q*, 304; Hadot, "Forms of Life and Forms of Discourse in Ancient Philosophy," 60; Clay, *Paradosis and Survival*, 24; Francesco Verde, *Epicuro*, Pensatori 36 (Rome: Carocci, 2013), 37–41; Hessler, *Epikur: Brief an Menoikeus*, 23–5; cf. DeWitt, *Epicurus*, 111–3. On the practice of memorization and

Scholars have typically discerned the function of the *Kyriai Doxai* by analogizing it

to the letters to Herodotus, Pythocles, and Menoeceus. The label "catechism" is therefore

commonly applied to the work[136] and its formative function is one of the more assured results

of recent research in classics and ancient philosophy. Scholars seldom note though that this or

any description of its function is inferred. Michael Erler's and Malcolm Schofield's

highlighting of this fact is rare:

> We would have guessed that the *Key Doctrines* were designed to be memorized and
> absorbed into the intellectual and emotional bloodstream. The guess is confirmed by
> the specific instructions given at the beginning and end of each of Epicurus'
> surviving letters, enjoining the addressees to learn by heart the compendia of
> doctrines they contain, so as to achieve *ataraxia*.[137]

Nonetheless, the inference is warranted. Of the four complete works of Epicurus that

conclude Diogenes Laertius' tenth book, three—the three epistles—are explicitly intended by

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meditation in Epicurus' school, see further Rabbow, *Seelenführung; Methodik der Exerzitien in der Antike*, 336–8; Schmid, "Epikur," 203–4; Ilsetraut Hadot, *Seneca und die griechisch-römische Tradition der Seelenleitung* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1969), 48–53; Salem, *Tel un dieu parmi les hommes*, 39–43; Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire*, 129–33; Hadot, "Spiritual Exercises," 87; Richard Fletcher, "Epicurus's *Mistresses*: Pleasure, Authority, and Gender in the Reception of the *Kuriai Doxai* in the Second Sophistic," in *Dynamic Reading: Studies in the Reception of Epicureanism*, ed. Brooke Holmes and W. H. Shearin, Classical Presences (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 60. On the genre of the epitome, see further Betz, *Essays on the Sermon on the Mount*, 12–15; Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 178–200; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 80–90.

[136] See, for example, Adolph Brieger, *Epikurs Brief an Herodot 68-83* (Halle: J. Fricke & F. Beyer, 1882), 23; Schmid, "Epikur," 695; Michael Erler, "Philologia medicans. Wie die Epikureer die Schriften ihres Meisters lasen," in *Vermittlung und Tradierung von Wissen in der griechischen Kultur*, ed. Wolfgang Kullmann and Jochen Althoff, Script Oralia 61 (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1993), 281; Jaap Mansfeld, "Some Aspects of Epicurean Theology," *Mnemosyne* 46 (1993): 177; Clay, *Paradosis and Survival*, 24; Mansfeld, "Sources," 5; Michael Erler, "Epicurus," ed. Hubert Cancik et al., *Brill's New Pauly Online* (Brill, 2005).

[137] Erler and Schofield, "Epicurean Ethics," 670. See also Betz, *Essays on the Sermon on the Mount*, 12.

Epicurus to be stored in the mind to transform the self. It is reasonable to conclude that the fourth, the *Kyriai Doxai*, is as well, especially since works of its genre, gnomologia, are standard instruments of formation.

Testimonia reveal that the *Kyriai Doxai* did in fact facilitate spiritual exercises among some later Epicureans. Cicero states that Epicurus' followers learn his *Kyriai Doxai* by heart (*Fin.* 2.7.20; see also *Nat. d.* 1.40.113). Lucian remarks that the gnomologium summarizes Epicurus' dogmas and brings "peace, tranquility, and freedom" to those who use it (*Alex.* 47).[138] These *testimonia* are first and foremost evidence of the function of the *Kyriai Doxai* in the centuries after Epicurus but, given that they cohere with the impression that Diogenes Laertius creates, they also corroborate the inference that Epicurus prescribed a gnomologium for use in formative exercises.

<div align="center">Epictetus' Ideal Self</div>

Epictetus is a philosopher of the late first and early second centuries C.E. (c. 50-c. 120-130), active in Rome, who taught a form of Stoicism, another major philosophical movement of the Hellenistic and Roman periods.[139] For Epictetus, one's life should be based on the conviction that only what one can control, namely one's inner state, truly matters. Phenomena such as health, wealth, and reputation are not in one's control and so are not

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[138] Usener collects the *testimonia* concerning the *Kyriai Doxai* (Hermann Usener, *Epicurea* [Leipzig: Teubner, 1887], 68–70).

[139] For introductions to Epicurus' influences, life, and oeuvre, see Pedro Pablo Fuentes González, "Épictète," ed. Richard Goulet, *Dictionnaire des philosophes antiques* (Paris: Editions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1989); Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity*, 335–8, 346–76.

truly good, evil, or even important. All that one can control and all that ultimately matters is the meaning one gives to one's experiences (*Diatr.* 1.1.7; 1.4.27; 1.22.9; 2.2.2-6, 9-13; 2.5.4 ; 2.13.1-2; 3.8.2-4; 3.24.112; 4.1.100-01; 4.4.29; 4.5.7; *Ench.* 1.1; 5.1; 29.7, *inter alia*).[140]

To live by such a principle is, Epictetus emphasizes, challenging and requires more than simply noetic understanding of or commitment to this fundamental principle. He repeatedly highlights that he and students of his philosophy learn its tenets but nonetheless live lives that reflect other values. They have learned that death, exile, pain, and ignominy are not bad things, are not "evils" (κακοί), because they are not within one's control, because one has no choice (προαίρεσις) about such matters.[141] They respond to such matters, however, as

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[140] See Théodore Colardeau, *Étude sur Épictète* (Paris: Thorin & Fils, 1903), 117; Giovanni Reale, *A History of Ancient Philosophy*, trans. John R Catan, 4 vols. (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1985), 4:76; Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, 83: In Ench. 1.1 "we can glimpse one of the Stoics' most fundamental attitudes: the delimitation of our own sphere of liberty as an impregnable islet of autonomy, in the midst of the vast river of events and of Destiny. What depends on us are thus the acts of our soul, because we can freely choose them"; Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, 127: "There is thus a radical opposition between what depends on us and can therefore be either good or bad, since it is the object of our decision, and what depends not on us"; Geert Roskam, *On the Path to Virtue: The Stoic Doctrine of Moral Progress and Its Reception in (Middle-)Platonism*, Ancient and Medieval Philosophy 1 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2005), 106: "This is the refrain found on each page of the *Discourses*"; William O. Stephens, *Stoic Ethics: Epictetus and Happiness as Freedom*, Continuum Studies in Ancient Philosophy (London: Continuum, 2007), 21–32; Michael B. Trapp, *Philosophy in the Roman Empire: Ethics, Politics and Society*, Ashgate Ancient Philosophy Series (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2007), 84.

[141] On Epictetus' use of "choice" (προαίρεσις), see Charles H. Kahn, "Discovering the Will: From Aristotle to Augustine," in *The Question of "Eclecticism": Studies in Later Greek Philosophy*, ed. John M. Dillon and A. A. Long, Hellenistic Culture and Society 3 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 251–5; Robert F. Dobbin, "The Sense of Self in Epictetus: *Prohairesis* and *prosopon*" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1989), 1–97; Robert F. Dobbin, "Προαίρεσις in Epictetus," *Ancient Philosophy* 11 (1991): 111–35; Elizabeth Asmis, "Choice in Epictetus' Philosophy," in *Antiquity and Humanity: Essays on Ancient Religion and Philosophy Presented to Hans Dieter Betz on His 70th Birthday*, ed. Adela Yarbro Collins and Margaret Mary Mitchell (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 385–412; Stephens, *Stoic Ethics*, 26–36.

if they were evils (*Diatr.* 2.1.4-11). Even among Stoics, Epictetus laments, "Where there is death, exile, pain, or ignominy, there is the tendency to flee and to become agitated" (ὅπου δὲ θάνατος ἢ φυγὴ ἢ πόνος ἢ ἀδοξία, ἐκεῖ τὸ ἀναχωρητικόν, ἐκεῖ τὸ σεσοβημένον, *Diatr.* 2.1.10; see also 2.9.13-19; 2.19.19). "Stoics…. talk of one thing and do another" (*Diatr.* 3.7.17; see also 1.1.14-17; 1.30.5; 2.1.30-33, 38; 2.6.14; 2.13.4; 2.16.2-3, 15; 3.24.41; frg. 10).[142] While Epictetus does not state this point explicitly, he would likely say that the reason non-Stoic values persist in the Stoic is that the dominant values of one's society prove terribly difficult to dislodge.[143] Socialization forms one into a certain type of human being; Stoicism reforms one.

To live by the notion that only what we can control matters, one must, on Epictetus' account, develop particular new capabilities, which he outlines in his tripartite synopsis of moral formation. "There are three areas (τόποι), he claims in *Diatr.* 3.2.1, "in which the person who is going to virtuous and good (καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθόν) must be trained (ἀσκηθῆναι)."[144]

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[142] See B. L. Hijmans, *Askesis: Notes on Epictetus' Educational System*, Wijsgerige teksten en studies 2 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1959), 98–101; Betz, *Essays on the Sermon on the Mount*, 8; Roskam, *On the Path to Virtue*, 120–1; Trapp, *Philosophy in the Roman Empire*, 85–6.

[143] Epictetus intimates this point in *Diatr.* 3.19. For this interpretation, see further Colish, *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages*, 1:42; Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire*, 327; Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, 162–3, 179–8089; Christopher Gill, *The Structured Self in Hellenistic and Roman Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 389.

[144] The phrase "virtuous and good" alludes to the Stoic motto "only virtue is truly good" (μόνον τὸ καλὸν ἀγαθόν), for which see Chrysippus, *apud* Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. Soph.* 7.101 (= *SVF* 3.30); Posidonius, *apud* Cicero, *Tusc.* 2.61 (= Edelstein-Kidd, T 38); Philo, *Det.* 9; Roskam, *On the Path to Virtue*, 16n5. The division of ethical formation into three types appears though throughout Epictetus writings (e.g., *Diatr.* 1.4.11; 2.8.29; 2.17.15-18, 28-34; 2.19.29; 3.12.1-17;

First, she must discipline herself so that she has only the sorts of "desires and aversions" or "inclinations and disinclinations" (τὰς ὀρέξεις καὶ τὰς ἐκκλίσεις) that cannot be frustrated (*Diatr.* 3.2.1).[145] When one is inclined to or away from things that are not truly under one's control, things like health and wealth or illness and ignominy, then she will inevitably fail to obtain what she wants or avoid what she does not want; her passions (τὰ πάθη) will be inflamed; and she will be miserable (*Diatr.* 3.2.3).[146] On the contrary, when the objects of one's desire and aversion are in her control, when she desires and dislikes only particular states of her soul, then she will never be frustrated.[147]

4.10.1-7, 13; 4.4.16; frg. 28). I focus here on Epictetus' fullest presentation of the three "areas:" *Diatr.* 3.2. On the three areas as modes of self-cultivation, see *Diatr.* 1.4; 2.19.29; Brad Inwood, *Ethics and Human Action in Early Stoicism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 116–19; Reale, *A History of Ancient Philosophy*, 4:78–9; Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, 89–93; Robert F. Dobbin, *Epictetus: Discourses. Book I*, Clarendon Later Ancient Philosophers (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 92–3. Most scholars conclude that this division of formation into three areas is one of Epictetus' contributions to Stoicism; see Adolf F. Bonhöffer, *The Ethics of the Stoic Epictetus: An English Translation*, trans. William O. Stephens, vol. 2, Revisioning Philosophy (New York: Peter Lang, 1996), 32; Dobbin, "Sense of Self," xvii; Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, 83; cf. Seneca' similar tripartite division of ethics in Ep. 75.8–18; 89.14–15; Jonathan Barnes, *Logic and the Imperial Stoa* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 34–5; Keith H. Seddon, "Epictetus," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2005, http://www.iep.utm.edu/epictetu/. Whether it originates with him or not, it is distinctive of his philosophy. Cf. Epictetus' threefold division of philosophical instruction (3.21.19; 3.23.33; A. A Long, *Epictetus: A Stoic and Socratic Guide to Life* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002], 61–5; Gerard Boter, "Epictetus 3.23.33 and the Three Modes of Philosophical Instruction," *Philologus* 153 [2009]: 135–48).

[145] Ἡ ὄρεξις is a technical term in Stoic philosophy for an attraction to what seems morally good (*Diatr.* 1.41.), ἔκκλισις a technical term for an inhibition toward the ethically bad (Inwood, *Ethics and Human Action in Early Stoicism*, 116).

[146] See also Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. Soph.* 7.102.

[147] Bonhöffer, *Ethics*, 2:30–6; Inwood, *Ethics and Human Action in Early Stoicism*, 116; Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, 87, 91. On desires and aversions, see further *Diatr.* 2.1.31; 2.2.6; 2.23.42; 3.9.22; 3.12.8; 3.13.21; Long, *Epictetus*, 113; Brad Inwood, "Epictetus [2]," ed. Hubert Cancik et al., *Brill's New Pauly Online* (Brill, 2005).

Second, he must have only the sorts of impulses (τὰς ὁρμὰς καὶ ἀφορμὰς) that propel him toward appropriate objectives (τὸ καθῆκον), that is towards cultivating appropriate relationships with the divine and others (3.2.2). He should not be dispassionate "in the same sense as a statue is" (ἀπαθῆ ὡς ἀνδριάντα)—immobile in relationships; rather, his dispassion should include impulses that allow him to "preserve the natural and acquired relations—as a pious person, as a son, as a brother, as a father, as a citizen" (3.2.4, trans. Higginson).[148]

Third, she must accurately and deliberately evaluate whether her mental activities agree with her decision to value only what is within her control. In Epictetus' words, the third area concerns "freedom from deception and hastiness and generally assents" (ὁ περὶ τὴν ἀνεξαπατησίαν καὶ ἀνεικαιότητα καὶ ὅλως ὁ περὶ τὰς συγκαταθέσεις, *Diatr.* 3.2.2).[149] By "assents," Epictetus, in keeping with Stoic tradition, means how one responds to the flow of perceptions and thoughts—the Stoics term this flow "appearances" (φαντασίαι)—continually presenting itself to "the commanding part" of the soul (τὸ ἡγεμονικόν), which functions for

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[148] On the second area, see Bonhöffer, *Ethics*, 2:82–158; Inwood, *Ethics and Human Action in Early Stoicism*, 116; Ilsetraut Hadot, *Simplicius: Commentaire sur le Manuel d'Epictète*, Philosophia Antiqua 66 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 149; Long, *Epictetus*, 232; Inwood, "Epictetus"; Brian E. Johnson, *The Role Ethics of Epictetus: Stoicism in Ordinary Life* (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2014), 65–6, 81.; Jean-Baptiste Gourinat, "La sagesse et les exercises philosophiques" in Jean-Baptiste Gourinat, Jonathan Barnes (ed.), *Lire les stoïciens* (Philosophie ancienne). For dispassion (ἀπάθεια) as one of Epictetus' ideals, see *Ench.* 29.7; Bonhöffer, *Ethics*, 2:77. For a helpful account of how a Stoic could prioritize interiority and still value actions, see Thomas Bénatouïl, *Faire Usage: La Pratique du Stoïcisme* (Paris: Vrin, 2006).

[149] Ἀνεξαπατησίαν is a *hapax legomenon* in Greek and so likely a neologism of Epictetus. Ἀνεικαιότητα appears first in Chrysippus and so is likely his neologism, to which Epictetus alludes. Diogenes Laertius defines the latter term as "strong-mindedness against the probable (or plausible), so as not to give in to it" (ἰσχυρὸν λόγον πρὸς τὸ εἰκός, ὥστε μὴ ἐνδιδόναι αὐτῷ, 7.46 [A. A Long, *Stoic Studies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 92].). *DGE*, s.v. ἀνεικαιότης, repeats Diogenes' definition: *equilibrio, ponderación al emitir un juicio.*

Stoics much like the mind does in contemporary thought.[150] "Appearances" arrive at "the

commanding part" colored by one's beliefs. As John Sellars explains, "Once an impression has

been received it is then turned into a proposition," the nature of which is determined by

one's concepts.[151] The problem for Stoics is that beliefs are typically laden with value-

judgments incompatible with the Stoic conviction that only what one can control matters

(*Diatr.* 2.22.6-8; 3.3.18-19; *Ench.* 45).[152] "Where there is death, exile, pain, or ignominy,

there is the tendency to flee and to become agitated" because there persists the tendency to

believe—even if one has learned and practiced Stoic teaching—that these events harm oneself

(*Diatr.* 1.28.10-33).[153] For the Stoic's life to conform to her principle, she must monitor her

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[150] On φαντασίαι, see Reale, *A History of Ancient Philosophy*, 3:221–2; Long, *Stoic Studies*, who claims that "phantasia, 'representation,' encompasses the entire life of the mind" (266) and equates φαντασίαι with "the fleeting contents of the mind" and "anything at all that 'appears' to us, anything that constitutes an instance of our awareness" (274; see also 271-2, with references); Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, 93. On Stoics' understanding of human's interior structure, see Scott Rubarth, "Stoic Philosophy of Mind," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2005, 2d, http://www.iep.utm.edu/stoicmind/.

[151] John Sellars, *Stoicism*, Ancient Philosophies 1 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 65 see also 67. See also Long, *Stoic Studies*, 273: "[H]ow things appear to a rational animal will necessarily depend … on the kind of concepts that it has. Or, to put it in Stoics terms, for every rational representation, there is a *lekton*, a 'sayable', which will articulate the representation in propositional form: S is P"; Inwood, *Ethics and Human Action in Early Stoicism*, 106–7; Julia Annas, *Hellenistic Philosophy of Mind* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1992), 81–2; Nussbaum, *The Therapy of Desire*, 327; Rubarth, "Stoic Philosophy of Mind," 3a; Shadi Bartsch, "'Wait a Moment, Phantasia': Ekphrastic Interference in Seneca and Epictetus," *CP* 102 (2007): 88.

[152] Long, *Stoic Studies*, 273; John Sellars, *The Art of Living: The Stoics on the Nature and Function of Philosophy*, Ashgate New Critical Thinking in Philosophy (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2003), 142; Sellars, *Stoicism*, 67–8.

[153] Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, 84, 93.

mind and exercise her ability to reject perceptions and thoughts.[154] Before she accepts an

appearance, before she "assents" to it, she must test whether it is compatible with the notion

that only what we can control can be good, bad, or valuable (*Diatr.* 3.8.1-2).[155] Epictetus

stresses this need to interrogate perceptions and thoughts in *Ench.* 1:

> Therefore, right away start practicing (μελέτα) responding to every harsh
> appearance,[156] "You are an appearance and not at all what you appear to be." Then
> scrutinize and test it with these standards you have: first and foremost, whether it has
> to do with the things that up to us or whether it has to do with the things that are
> not up to us. And if it has to do with the things that are not up to us, have on hand
> (πρόχειρον) the explanation, "It does not concern me." (*Ench.* 1.5; see also *Diatr.*
> 1.20.7; 2.1.14; 2.18.24; 2.22.5; 3.2.8; 3.3.14-15; 3.12.15; 3.24.108; 4.3.7; *Ench.* 18; 20;
> 34)

When one faces ignominy, for example, and it "appears" to one's mind that public disgrace is

a bad thing to experience—an evil—one must accurately (ἀνεξαπατησίαν) and deliberately

(ἀνεικαιότητα) judge that thought and, finding it does not agree with the Stoic first

principle, withhold assent. Over time, as one internalizes Stoic teaching, one's beliefs and

consequently the appearances one's mind receives become more accurate.[157] Nonetheless,

even a "virtuous and good person" (καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθόν, 3.2.8) must continually police his

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[154] Long, *Stoic Studies*, 273–4.

[155] Ibid.; Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, 85–6, 111; Trapp, *Philosophy in the Roman Empire*, 84–6.

[156] On "harsh appearances," see Allan B. Girdwood, "Innovation and Development in the Psychology and Epistemology of Epictetus" (D.Phil. Thesis, Oxford University, 1998), 170–71.

[157] See Dobbin, *Discourses*, 68–9, commenting on *Diatr.* 1.1.1-6. See also Margaret Graver, "Epictetus," ed. Edward N. Zalta, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2013, http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2013/entries/epictetus/: "As the habit of screening impressions becomes established, correct responses will begin to come automatically. Yet constant vigilance is still required, to guard against backsliding (4.3). One can never rely solely on habituation."

mind so that he does not "assent" to an impression that violates his values, even when he is in a vulnerable state like sleep, drunkenness, or melancholy (ἐν ὕπνοις … μηδ᾽ ἐν οἰνώσει μηδὲ μελαγχολῶντος, 3.2.5; see also 4.3).[158] The way of life Epictetus advocates requires the acquisition of these internal qualities and capacities. It requires a transformation of the self.

In *Diatr.* 3.2 and elsewhere (2.17.29-34; 3.2.5; 3.26.14; 4.10.13), Epictetus portrays these three areas of formation as consecutive "phases of spiritual progress," the disciplining of assents occupying those who have made progress in disciplining their desires and impulses.[159] Numbering them first, second, and third implies an itinerary and Epictetus even declares that "the third area is the one incumbent upon those making progress" in the first two (τρίτος ἐστὶν ὁ ἤδη τοῖς προκόπτουσιν ἐπιβάλλων, 3.2.5; see also *Diatr.* 3.2.5; 3.26.14; 4.10.13) and secures that progress (ὁ περὶ τὴν αὐτῶν τούτων ἀσφάλειαν, 3.2.5; see also 4.10.13). In other places he lists the three areas in a different order and sometimes places assents first (1.7.22; 4.4.14-15; 4.6.26) because, for most Stoics, on a practical level, the disciplining of assents must actually precede, not follow, that of desires and impulses since how one responds to "appearances" determines what desires and impulses one has. As Tad Brennan explains, "Assent is the linchpin of the Stoic system. Assent is the fundamental psychological activity—more fundamental even than believing something or desiring something…. Assent is also the

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[158] Epictetus here alludes to and disagrees with Chrysippus as to whether drunkenness and melancholy vanquish virtue; see Diogenes Laertius, 7.127; for discussion, see Bénatouïl, *Faire Usage*, 166–7. On the difficulty of monitoring the mind when one is particularly vulnerable, see Aelius Gellius, *Noct. att.* 19.1.1-21; Augustine, *Civ.* 9.4.2; Sellars, *Stoicism*, 65–6.

[159] Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, 93.

key to the difference between virtuous people and vicious people. In fact, every difference

that there can be between one person's psychology and another person's psychology can be

accounted for entirely in terms of the patterns of assents that they each make."[160] For one

trying to live the Stoic life, surveilling one's interior discourse is the foundational practice

that enables the other two.[161] But in *Diatr.* 3.2, Epictetus places "assents" third because he is

addressing the areas not only from the perspective of the philosophical life but also from the

perspective of philosophical study. Study of assents involves formal logic, which does help

one judge "appearances" more accurately and therefore furthers stability (ἀσφάλειαν, 3.2.5)

in the other two areas but which is, from the perspective of the philosophical life, nonetheless

the least pressing element of philosophy and should not be undertaken until one has

cultivated himself in the first two areas (τὰς ἄλλας ἐκπεπόνηκας, 3.2.8) and become

"virtuous and good" (τὸν καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθόν, 3.2.8).[162] "Contemporary philosophers,

however" (οἱ δὲ νῦν φιλόσοφοι, 3.2.6), though they have yet to transform their own desires

and impulses, abandon the first and second areas and devote themselves to theoretical

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[160] Tad Brennan, *The Stoic Life: Emotions, Duties, and Fate* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 52.

[161] See further Bonhöffer, *Ethics*, 2:32; Dobbin, "Sense of Self," 44; Long, *Stoic Studies*, 273, 277; Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, 93; Gretchen J. Reydams-Schils, *The Roman Stoics: Self, Responsibility, and Affection* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 26–7; Stephens, *Stoic Ethics*, 24–6; Graver, "Epictetus": "The actual process of self-improvement is initially a matter of consciously slowing down one's thought processes to allow for reflection prior to assent"; cf. Reale, *A History of Ancient Philosophy*, 4:80. Epictetus' *Discourses* and *Encheiridion* therefore begin with the admonition to choose how one uses "appearances" (*Diatr.* 1.1.7; *Ench.* 1).

[162] Hadot, *Commentaire*, 149–50; Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, 80, 90. See also *Diatr.* 4.10.13. For discussion of Epictetus' assessment of logic, Bonhöffer, *Ethics*, 2:158–61; Barnes, *Logic and the Imperial Stoa*, 24–125.

reflection on the third, to "changing arguments, arguments which conclude by way of questioning, hypothetical arguments, lying arguments" (3.2.6).[163] The third area stands then at the beginning and end of moral development and so can serve as a synecdoche of the entire process of becoming able to live out one's convictions. It is for this reason that Epictetus so often represents the entire Stoic life as "making right use of impressions" (e.g., *Diatr.* 1.1.7; 1.20.5; 1.20.16; 1.28.12; 1.30.4; 2.19.32; 2.22.29; 3.22.21; 3.22.103; 3.24.69; *Ench.* 6.1.5; frg. 4).[164]

Confirmation that Epictetus sees these three areas of training as enabling one to live a Stoic life comes from the fact that he measures moral progress by mastery of these areas. Epictetus describes the person who is making moral progress, the προκόπτων, in three passages.[165] In the first, such a person's actions conform to the fundamental Stoic principle that we should concern ourselves only with what we can control:

> Where then is progress (προκοπή)? If any of you, withdrawing himself from externals, turns to his own choice to exercise it and to improve it by labour, so as to make it conform to nature, elevated, free, unrestrained, unimpeded, faithful, modest; and if he has learned that he who desires or avoids the things which are not in his

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[163] The translation is Barnes' (*Logic and the Imperial Stoa*, 34).

[164] Dobbin, "Sense of Self," 44; Dobbin, *Discourses*, 73: "The need of man to test impressions is the dominant theme in Epictetus' philosophy"; Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, 93; Trapp, *Philosophy in the Roman Empire*, 85. On the notion of "making use" in Stoicism generally, see Bénatouïl, *Faire Usage*.

[165] Roskam observes that while Epictetus typically refers to moral progress as προκοπή and the one progressing as a προκόπτων, he sometimes refers to the same entities periphrastically: "he who would be wise and good" (τὸν ἐσόμενον καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθόν, *Diatr.* 3.2.1); "to advance to perfection" (ἐλθεῖν ἐπὶ τὸ τέλειον, *Diatr.* 2.23.40); "we contribute to virtue and goodness" (ἐπιδίδομεν εἰς καλοκἀγαθίαν) (Roskam, *On the Path to Virtue*, 114n530). The account that follows depends heavily on Ibid., 103–24.

power can neither be faithful nor free, but of necessity he must change with them and be tossed about with them as in a tempest, and of necessity must subject himself to others who have the power to procure or prevent what he desires or would avoid; finally, when he rises in the morning, if he lives by and keeps these rules, bathes as a man of fidelity, eats as a modest man; in like manner, if in every matter that occurs he works out his chief principles as the runner does with reference to running, and the trainer of the voice with reference to the voice—this is the man who is truly making progress (ὁ προκόπτων), and this is the man who has not travelled in vain. (*Diatr.* 1.4.18-21, trans. LCL, modified)

According to this passage, the one who is progressing acts in every situation in accordance with his chief principles, with the Stoic tenets he has learned, just like masters of other arts, such as a runner who trains himself to run with proper form or a singer who embodies the principles of musicality.[166] Because the one making progress, the one who is being transformed, already exhibits conformity between his principles and his actions, it is unclear what distinguishes her from the one who has been transformed. Epictetus does not explain in this instance what separates the trainee and the trained.[167]

The second passage insists that enactment of Stoic principles distinguishes the two:

Men are disturbed not by things, but by the views which they take of things. Thus death is nothing terrible, else it would have appeared so to Socrates. But the terror consists in our notion of death, that it is terrible. When, therefore, we are hindered, or disturbed, or grieved, let us never impute it to others, but to ourselves; that is, to our own views. It is the action of an uninstructed person (ἀπαιδεύτου) to reproach others for his own misfortunes; of one entering upon instruction (ἠργμένου παιδεύεσθαι), to reproach himself; and of one who has been instructed (πεπαιδευμένου), to reproach neither others nor himself. (*Ench.* 5, trans. Higginson)

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[166] On philosophy as an art, see below.

[167] Roskam, *On the Path to Virtue*, 117–8.

In this chapter of the *Encheiridion*, Epictetus maintains that someone uninstructed in Stoic doctrines (ἀπαιδεύτου) blames others when he is distraught because he (falsely) believes that events and not his perception of them cause distress. In contrast, the one being educated (ἠργμένου παιδεύεσθαι) in Stoicism knows that one's perceptions or beliefs (τὰ περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων δόγματα) alone determine one's state and that therefore he has only himself to blame when false beliefs determine his responses to events and he finds himself emotionally disturbed. Someone who has completed her education (πεπαιδευμένου), someone trained, likewise recognizes herself as the sole source of her distress or freed therefrom but blames no one for her suffering because, unlike the one undergoing training, she never suffers. She always responds to events in accordance with proper beliefs. Knowledge separates the one making moral progress from the average person and, unlike in *Diatr.* 1.4, enacting that knowledge separates the trained, or instructed, from those making progress.

But, in the third passage, it is the *regular* enactment of Stoic principles and the completion of training in all three areas that distinguishes the learned from the learner:

> The condition and characteristic of an uninstructed person (ἰδιώτου) is this: he never expects from himself profit nor harm, but from externals. The condition and characteristic of a philosopher is this: he expects all advantage and all harm from himself. The signs of one who is making progress (προκόπτοντος) are these: he censures no man, he praises no man, he blames no man, he accuses no man, he says nothing about himself as if he were somebody or knew something; when he is impeded at all or hindered, he blames himself: if a man praises him, he ridicules the praiser to himself: if a man censures him, he makes no defence: he goes about like weak persons, being cautious not to disturb any of the things that are established, before they are firmly fixed: he has removed all desire from himself, and he has transferred aversion to those things only of the things within our power which are contrary to nature: he employs a moderate movement towards everything: whether he is considered foolish or ignorant, he cares not: and in a word he watches himself as if he were an enemy and lying in ambush. (*Ench.* 48, trans. LCL, modified)

As in *Ench.* 5, in this passage the one ignorant of Stoic principles attributes his wellbeing or suffering to external circumstances while someone who is fully trained, the philosopher, knows that he determines his experience of the world. This passage then offers a more robust description of the one making progress (προκόπτοντος). He refuses to censure or praise, blame or accuse others—behavior that *Ench.* 45 explains as the refusal to attach potentially false value judgments to the appearances one receives. He foregoes boasting and ostentation—talking "as if he were somebody or knew something"—, as *Ench.* 46 says Socrates did and as *Ench.* 47 commands.[168] He takes responsibility for his misfortunes, for when he is "impeded or hindered," like the educated Stoic in *Ench.* 5. He discounts praise and accepts censure, a practice that *Diatr.* 3.18 depicts as a form of following the Stoic first principle that only what is within our powers matters since others' opinions of us lie outside our control (see also *Ench.* 33.9; cf. *Diatr.* 2.16.43). In thus conforming his life to his principles, the learner is again indistinguishable from the philosopher. The remainder of the passage, however, highlights how he differs. The learner is weak in that he remains "cautious not to disturb any of the things that are established, before they are firmly fixed (πρὶν πῆξιν λαβεῖν)." The phrase "firmly fixed" alludes to Chrysippus' claim that someone who progresses morally (προκόπτων) "to the furthest point" performs appropriate actions (τὰ καθήκοντα) but does not achieve happiness (εὐδαιμονία) until he performs them habitually (ἑκτικόν) and they "acquire their own particular fixity" or permanence (ἰδίαν πῆξιν τινὰ

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[168] The references to doing things for the world and embracing statues (cf. Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. Soph.* 6.23) indicate that *Ench.* 47 addresses ostentation.

λάβωσιν, *apud* Stobaeus, *Anth.* 4.39.22 = *SVF* 3.510).[169] Epictetus implies then that the

learner, unlike the philosopher, acts timidly because he knows that the correspondence

between his principles and his life is like wet concrete, still becoming permanent.[170]

The learner, furthermore, has acquired only the first of the three capabilities required

to live a Stoic life. He "*has* removed (ἦρκεν) desire from himself" and "*has* transferred"

(μετατέθεικεν) his sense of repulsion to appropriate objects, the perfect tense verbs indicating

completion of the first area of training described in *Diatr.* 3.22. But he currently "*is*

employing (χρῆται) a moderate impulse (ὁρμῇ) towards everything," cultivating proper

social relationships instead of a good reputation, the present tense verb indicating that

training in this the second area is ongoing. And he "*is* watching himself" (ἑαυτὸν

παραφυλάσσει), striving to monitor his assents, undertaking the third area of training. The

shift from perfect to present tenses, like the reference to "fixity," suggests that the trainee

differs from the trained in constancy. He may be frequently indistinguishable from the

trained but nonetheless remains prone to error in his relationships and his judgements. His

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[169] For discussion of this Chrysippean passage, see Roskam, *On the Path to Virtue*, 27–30; P. A Brunt, *Studies in Stoicism*, ed. Miriam Griffin and Alison Samuels (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 17–8. For the understanding of moral progress in the Old Stoa, see also the quotations of Zeno in *SVF* 1:234; 3: 530-43 (cf. 1:216, 226-29; 3:544-688) and the discussion in Colish, *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages*, 1:42–5.

[170] Similarly, Pierre Hadot, *Arrien: Manuel d'Epictète*, Les Classiques de la Philosophie (Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 2000), 131–2.

virtue is not cemented.[171] The three areas of training define the path from learning Stoic

principles to living them. In turn, they define Epictetus' ideal self.

Epictetus' *Encheiridion*

How exactly does Epictetus expect one to transform oneself, to "become trained" in

the three areas and able to live a Stoic life? Epictetus likely intends everything he states,

commands, and models to contribute in some way to this transformation. Hadot's studies of

ancient philosophy show how all activities of a philosophical school serve ultimately to

produce their ideal subject. The activity of greatest relevance to the present investigation

though is the production of a gnomic work, the *Encheiridion*, the internal characteristics of

which suggest the text facilitates a spiritual exercise intended to produce the self Epictetus

idealizes. I will briefly describe the *Encheiridion*, the internal evidence that it is a formative

instrument, and the evidence from elsewhere in the Epictetan corpus that supports my

reading of the internal evidence.

The literary remains of Epictetus' school consist of the *Discourses,* didactic dialogues

purportedly taken down by his student Arrian;[172] various fragments, many of which likely

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[171] See also Roskam, *On the Path to Virtue*, 119–20. On stability, see further *Diatr.* 2.8.24; 2.15.1; 3.16.9.

[172] The stylistic differences between Arrian's other compositions and his edition of Epictetus' discourses may suggest that the *Discourses* speak not with Arrian's but with Epictetus' voice and so are indeed based on notes (ὑπομνήματα) he took as Epictetus taught, as Arrian claims in his preface to the *Discourses*. On his practice of notetaking, see Foucault, *Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 367–8. The extent of Arrian's influence on the *Discourses* remains debated; see Fuentes González, "Épictète," 121–3; Dobbin, *Discourses*, xx–xxiii. The best extant manuscript calls the work "Diatribes" (Διατρίβαι) but

derive from lost portions of the *Discourses*; and the *Encheiridion*, a gnomic collection.[173]

According to the sixth-century Neoplatonist Simplicius, author of the first and most

influential commentary on the *Encheiridion*, Arrian, in a lost letter to a Massalinus,[174] claims

to have created the *Encheiridion* "by selecting from Epictetus' speeches (λόγων)," from the

Discourses, "the parts most important, necessary to philosophy, and stimulating to the soul"

(τὰ καιριώτατα καὶ ἀναγκαιότατα ἐν φιλοσοφίᾳ καὶ κινητικώτατα τῶν ψυχῶν, 1.8-16

Dübner; Praef. 4-11 Hadot). Arrian presents this vital and animating content in the form of

pithy, pointed sayings, Simplicius claims, describing the contents of the *Encheiridion* as

"short (κομματικοί) and gnomic (γνωμονικοί) like those called 'instructions' (ὑποθηκῶν) by

the Pythagoreans" and as "key sayings" (κεφάλαια, 2.15-19 Dübner; Praef. 48-51 Hadot).[175]

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it circulated in antiquity under other titles as well; see Photius, *Bibl.* 58; Heinrich Schenkl, ed., *Epicteti: Dissertationes ab Arriano digestae* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1898), ii–xv, xxxiii–xxxv; Colardeau, *Étude sur Épictète*, 20–3; Joseph Souilhé, *Epictetus: Entretiens*, 4 vols., 2d ed., Budé (Paris: Société d'édition "Les Belles lettres," 1963), 1:xi–xix. On the literary form of the *Discourses*, see Rudolf Hirzel, *Der Dialog: ein literarhistorischer Versuch*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1895), 2:245–50; Souilhé, *Epictetus: Entretiens*, 1:xxii–xxx; Barnes, *Logic and the Imperial Stoa*, 26; Pierre Hadot, *Arrien: Manuel d'Épictète*, 35.

[173] On Epictetus' corpus, see further Fuentes González, "Épictète," 118–20; Inwood, "Epictetus."

[174] Recent scholars amend "Massalinus" (Μασσαληνός) to Messalinus and identify the addressee as C. Prastina Pacatus Messalinus, the consul of 147; see Colardeau, *Étude sur Épictète*, 24; Ronald Syme, "The Career of Arrian," *HSCP* 86 (1982): 209; Hadot, *Commentaire*, 152n1.

[175] The similarities with the gnomic works attributed to Pythagoras would have been of particular importance to Simplicius. For an overview of the role of Pythagoreanism or Pythagoras to the so-called Neoplatonists, see Michael Trapp, "Neopythagoreans," in *Greek and Roman Philosophy, 100 BC-200 AD*, ed. R. W. Sharples and Richard Sorabji, vol. 2, 2 vols., Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies Supplement 94 (London: Institute of Classical Studies, University of London, 2007), 347–63. It is remarkable then that Simplicius chooses to interpret the *Encheiridion* for his students and not the Pythagorean *Carmen Aureum*, as Hierocles does. Tad Brennan and Charles Brittain make this observation and then hypothesize that Simplicius selects Epictetus' work for its "concision and

Modern scholars invariably echo this description of the *Encheiridion* as a gnomic epitome of the *Discourses*[176] and reasonably so; gnomes figure prominently in the composition and while a thorough description of the literary relationship between the *Discourses* and the *Encheiridion* remains a *desideratum*, and perhaps an impossibility since four of the original eight books of the *Discourses* are lost, approximately one half of the *Encheiridion*'s content is paralleled in the *Discourses*, which makes the notion that the former work condenses the latter plausible.[177] The unparalleled content presumably derives from the four lost books of the *Discourses*.

Internally, the identity between the *Encheiridion*'s contents and Epictetus' three areas of training suggest that this gnomologium helps render one capable of living as a Stoic. Few studies of the work's compositional plan exist but those few agree that it is organized according to Epictetus' three areas of training.[178] Ilsetraut Hadot, for example, following Max

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emotional power"—because it is gnomic (*Simplicius: On Epictetus Handbook 27-53* [London: Duckworth, 2002], 4–10; the quotation is from p. 10). That description, however, applies equally well to the *Carmen Aureum*.

[176] See, for example, Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, 61: "The *Manual* is a selection of passages taken from the Sayings of Epictetus. It is a kind of anthology of striking maxims"; Long, *Epictetus*, 3: "'In the *Manual*, Arrian presents Epictetus" teaching in a more accessible and memorable form.".

[177] Calculations of the extent of the parallels vary. Barnes claims that one-half to two-thirds of the *Enchridion* is paralleled in the *Discourses* (*Logic and the Imperial Stoa*, 24). Brennan and Brittain put the figure at less than half (*Simplicius: On Epictetus Handbook 27-53*, 32). Both Schenkl's and Boter's editions identify the parallels. There are few extensive verbatim agreements between the two works. Boter therefore considers the most extensive example (Diatr. 3.15.1-13 // Ench. 29) an interpolation (*The Encheiridion of Epictetus and Its Three Christian Adaptations*, Philosophia Antiqua 82 [Leiden: Brill, 1999], 127).

[178] Cf. Simplicius' account of the work's structure, on which see Hadot, *Commentaire*, 145–51; Brennan and Brittain, *Simplicius: On Epictetus Handbook 27-53*, 6–7.

Pohlenz,[179] argues that after a brief, programmatic introduction that stresses the fundamental

distinction between what we can and cannot control (1), Arrian presents Epictetus' thought

as follows:

2-29	A section on desires and aversions (the first area of training)
30-47	A section on our behavior toward and among others (the second)
48-51	A kind of epilogue
52	A section on assents (the third)
53	Concluding sayings

The third area receives little attention but that should not surprise us, Hadot claims, since

Epictetus says in *Diatr.* 4.10.13 that it must follow lengthy training in the first two.[180]

Jean-Baptiste Gourinat likewise sees the three areas of training as the foundation of

the *Encheiridion*'s structure but he groups the sayings differently:

1	Introduction: what depends on us and what does not
2-29	I. Precepts about conforming one's desires to nature and eradicating the passions (the first area of training)
30-41	II. Precepts about action and duties to others (the second area)
42-53	III. Precepts about testing representations (the third area)[181]

He stresses that some of the same topics recur in each section—family relations, and material

goods, for example—but are treated differently in those sections. For instance, section I treats

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[179] M. Pohlenz, *Die Stoa: Geschichte einer geistigen Bewegung*, 2 vols., 4th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1970), 2:162; cf. 1:328.

[180] Hadot, *Commentaire*, 145–51. The division of the text into 53 sections is a modern convention; see Sellars, *The Art of Living*, 133n22.

[181] Jean-Baptiste Gourinat, *Premières leçons sur le Manuel d'Epictète* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1998), 45–8.

social relationships and wealth as objects of desire while section II deals with how one should act with respect to such "goods."[182]

John Sellars expands upon Gourinat's analysis.[183] According to Sellars, the opening saying declares that only our 1) opinion (ὑπόληψις), 2) impulse (ὁρμή), and 3) desire and aversion (ὄρεξις καὶ ἔκκλισις) are within our control. It thus names the three areas of training Epictetus deems necessary to live a Stoic life and introduces the central themes of the *Enchridion*.[184] Stressing the correlation between these three areas and the three areas of Stoic discourse identified by Diogenes Laertius—physics, ethics, and logic (*Vit. Soph.* 7.39)[185]—Sellars proposes the following outline for the rest of the text (136-44):

2-29	Physical Exercises (the first area of training)
30-41	Ethical Exercises (the second)
42-45	Logical Exercises (the third)
46-52	The Philosophical Life
53	Concluding Sayings

The sayings in 2-29 are the basis for exercises that transform one's desires and aversions so that one desires and dislikes only what is within one's control—one's interior

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[182] Ibid., 50.

[183] He argues though that where one subdivides the text is of little importance; the critical point is that the *Encheiridion*'s contents are determined by Epictetus' three areas of training (Sellars, *The Art of Living*, 133n2; see also Hadot, *Commentaire*, 150: "On peut dire que le Manuel suit *grosso modo* cette division.").

[184] Sellars, *The Art of Living*, 134–5. Betz also considers the first saying of the *Encheiridion* a statement of Epictetus' most important principles and maintains that, in this respect, Arrian mimics the introduction to Epicurus' *Kyriai Doxai* (*The Sermon on the Mount*, 78).

[185] On this possible correlation, see Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, 94; Long, *Epictetus*, 117–18; cf. Barnes, *Logic and the Imperial Stoa*, 34–5.

states—and accepts all external events as the will of nature, so much so that one comes to desire them. The saying that begins ch. 8 summarizes this embrace of what one is beyond one's control: "Demand not that events should happen as you desire; but desire them to happen as they do happen, and you will go on well" (μὴ ζήτει τὰ γινόμενα γίνεσθαι ὡς θέλεις, ἀλλὰ θέλε τὰ γινόμενα ὡς γίνεται καὶ εὐροήσεις, trans. Higginson, modified). These exercises correlate with the Stoic discourse on physics, Sellars maintains, not primarily because this metamorphosis of desire is clarified and justified by the Stoics' detailed accounts of the nature of the physical world, accounts that describe the cosmos as a chain of causes and, consequently, every event as destined.[186] Rather, they correlate with physics because these exercises are how one assimilates the Stoic account of the world "so that it will transform one's behaviour."[187]

The sayings in 30-41 are the basis for exercises that transform one's impulses so that one engages in actions that are appropriate (καθήκοντα) to "one's own nature, one's place in society, or the particular situation in which one may find oneself." Epictetus specifies three types of action—social (30), religious (31-2), and personal (33-5)—and explains what behaviors in these spheres are appropriate to a philosopher. These exercises enact Stoics'

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[186] Sellars, *The Art of Living*, 137. For an overview of the Stoics on physics, see Reale, *A History of Ancient Philosophy*, 3:235–58.

[187] Sellars, *The Art of Living*, 139.

ethical theory so that the student "will be able not merely to *say* how the sage should act but also to *act* as the sage should act."[188]

The sayings in 42-5 form the basis for exercises that transform the way one judges "appearances," giving assent only to those not supplemented by an unwarranted value judgment. The exercises correlate with logic because they involve "using logical analysis of what is true, what is false, and what is doubtful, in relation to one's judgements and the beliefs based on those judgements"—the sort of use of logic Epictetus endorsed (*Diatr.* 4.4.13).[189]

The sayings in 46-52 are a more motley mix that generally addresses what it means to live as a philosopher. The opening saying in this section compares digesting philosophical principles to sheep digesting food (46). Subsequent sayings address how a philosopher should act and train himself and the difference between a layperson (ἰδιώτης) and someone who is making moral progress (προκοπή). These sayings emphasize the formative function of the *Encheiridion* "by focusing on the idea that the product of philosophy is constituted by actions (ἔργα) rather than words (λόγοι)."[190]

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[188] Ibid., 141.

[189] Ibid., 142. On logic's potential irrelevance to daily life, see *Diatr.* 1.7.1; 4.4.13; Barnes, *Logic and the Imperial Stoa*, 38–42, 62–70.

[190] Sellars, *The Art of Living*, 143.

Finally, ch. 53 features four brief quotations. The first two, from Cleanthes and Euripides respectively, restate the Stoic ideal of living in harmony with nature.[191] The last two are attributed to Socrates and restate the work's opening admonition to value only what we can control.[192] On Sellars' reading, that introductory admonition alludes to Socrates' exhortation in Plato's *Apology* for the Athenians to care for their souls alone (*Apol.* 29d–30b) and so the *Encheiridion* begins and ends with references to Socrates. Given that the concluding reference follows a group of sayings about living as a philosopher, this inclusion implies that Socrates both mandates and models the life that the *Encheiridion* enables. His life embodies the consequences of having assimilated the contents of this gnomologium, a point Epictetus makes explicitly in the body of the work (*Ench.* 46.1; 51.3).[193]

According to Sellars, the *Encheiridion* is thus "a text devoted to three types of spiritual exercise, each of which is concerned with the digestion and assimilation of one of the three types of philosophical discourse." The first three sections of the text address three areas of training, or "spiritual exercise," while the last two emphasize the practical function of the gnomologium.[194]

These studies of the text's structure differ in their details but agree in broad outline. They form a consensus that the organizing principle of Epictetus' *Encheiridion* is the three

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[191] For the quotation of Cleanthes, see *SVF* 1.527; of Euripides, frg. 965 Nauck (*pace* ibid., 144n70).

[192] Sellars traces these quotations to Plato, *Crito* 43d and *Apol.* 30c (ibid., 144n72).

[193] Ibid., 144.

[194] Ibid., 136.

areas of self transformation that the *Discourses* deem necessary for one's life to reflect Stoic convictions.[195] That the *Encheiridion* is organized according to those areas suggests that it idealizes the same self as the *Discourses.*

By casting this ideal in gnomic form, the *Encheiridion* facilitates its use in transformative work on the self. Concise declarations and instructions from Epictetus, such as, "People get upset not by what happens but by their opinions on what happens" (ταράσσει τοὺς ἀνθρώπους οὐ τὰ πράγματα, ἀλλὰ τὰ περὶ τῶν πραγμάτων δόγματα, *Ench.* 5.1 trans. Boter 282), "Demand not that events should happen as you desire; but desire them to happen as they do happen, and you will go on well" (μὴ ζήτει τὰ γινόμενα γίνεσθαι ὡς θέλεις, ἀλλὰ θέλε τὰ γινόμενα ὡς γίνεται καὶ εὐροήσεις, *Ench.* 8), or "Never call yourself a philosopher" (μηδαμοῦ σεαυτὸν εἴπῃς φιλόσοφον, *Ench.* 46.1), lodge themselves easily within, allowing them to be perpetually available for reflection and guidance. Moreover, like the gnomes in the *Kyriai Doxai*, those in the *Encheiridion* are sufficiently general that discerning how they guide one in any specific situation requires practice— requires exercise. The form of the *Encheiridion* is evidence of its intended function.

The title of the work further suggests its contents are meant to be internalized through a spiritual exercise. It is an internal indicator of the collection's purpose. The word *encheiridion* (ἐγχειρίδιον) has as its root the word *hand* (χείρ) and has the fundamental

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[195] Phillip De Lacy finds this same structure in the *Discourses* ("The Logical Structure of the Ethics of Epictetus," *CP* 38 [1943]: 112–25). Pierre Hadot and John Sellars argue that it also underlies Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* (Pierre Hadot, "Une clé des Pensées de Marc Aurèle: les trois *topoi* philosophiques selon Épictète," *Les Études philosophiques* 1 [1978]: 65–83; John Sellars, "Marcus Aurelius," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* [2005], http://www.iep.utm.edu/marcus/).

meaning of any tool that one holds in the hand and keeps handy, such as a sword or a handbook.[196] It shares that root with the term "on hand" (πρόχειρος) and, in this case, alludes to the phrase "to have on hand" (ἔχειν πρόχειρος), a technical expression in Stoicism for stocking the mind with philosophical truths and repeatedly imagining their applications to daily life (e.g., *Ench.* 1.5; *Diatr.* 1.1.21; cf. 2.1.29).[197] Arrian highlights the allusion by placing the phrase right at the beginning of the *Encheiridion* (1.5). The allusion implies that this epitome provides a way to have Epictetus' teachings "on hand" physically in the sense that the work is brief and mentally in that the concision of its contents facilitates memorization and meditation on the teachings' meanings and applications to novel situations, meditation that would lead to the sayings governing one's perceptions and judgments, that would assimilate them into one's "commanding part," that would internalize them. The common translation of *Encheiridion* into English as "Handbook" or into French as "Manuel" is thus both literal and illustrative.[198] Simplicius observes the allusion and seizes upon the fact that *Encheiridion* can also mean sword to explain it:

> It is called a hand tool (Ἐγχειρίδιον) because those who want to live well must always have it on hand (πρόχειρον) and ready. Likewise the soldier's hand tool (ἐγχειρίδιον) is a sword, bound to be always on hand (πρόχειρον). (1.26-9)

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[196] LSJ, s.v. ἐγχειρίδιον.

[197] Hadot, *The Inner Citadel*, 61; Sellars, *The Art of Living*, 130. On the term "on hand," see further Hadot, *Seneca und die griechisch-römische Tradition der Seelenleitung*, 58; Ilsetraut Hadot, "Préface," in *Consolations*, trans. Colette Lazam (Paris: Éditions Rivages, 1992), 18–19; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 85.

[198] Rufinus of Aquileia similarly likewise terms *Sentences of Sextus* an *encheiridion* because its sayings are so concise that one can keep them "on hand" (*Praef.* 13-15).

Externally, Epictetus' understanding of moral progress in the *Discourses* supports the notion that he or one of his followers would prescribe the use of his sayings in exercises. First, his diction suggests that the journey from learning Stoic tenets to leading a Stoic life entails an extended period of practice. We have seen above that the typical student of Epictetus' school knows Epictetus' teaching but does not enact it. In order to enact it consistently, one must be "trained" (ἀσκηθῆναι) in three areas. Epictetus' use of the verb "to train" (ἀσκέω) in *Diatr.* 3.2 suggests a prolonged and rigorous process of transformative exercise.[199] He furthermore defines philosophy as a τέχνη, a practical art or skill that requires training. In a passage that Sellars considers Epictetus' only explicit definition of philosophy, Epictetus makes this comparison:

> When someone consulted him, how he might persuade his brother to stop being angry with him, Epictetus answered, "Philosophy does not promise to obtain any outward good for a person; otherwise it would work with something that is not its material. For as the material of a carpenter is wood and the material of a sculptor is brass, so the material of the skill of living (τῆς περὶ βίον τέχνης) is each individual's life. (*Diatr.* 1.15.1–2)

In reminding his interlocutor that philosophy works with one's own self, not with others (see also *Diatr.* 4.12.7-8), Epictetus analogizes philosophy to a skilled trade (τέχνης), something that entails the acquisition of particular knowledge as well as a period of training in how to

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[199] On ἀσκέω's implication of ardor, see Vincent L. Wimbush, *Paul, the Worldly Ascetic: Response to the World and Self-Understanding According to 1 Corinthians 7* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1987); Michel Foucault, *Fearless Speech*, ed. Joseph Pearson (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2001), 143–4. See also Epictetus' use of γυμνάζω, μελατάω (e.g., *Diatr.* 1.26, 31), μάχομαι (e.g., *Diatr.* 4.9.1: μαχέσθητι σαυτῷ, "fight yourself"), and the places where Epictetus compares philosophical training to athletic training: *Diatr.* 1.4.13; 1.24.1-4 ; 1.28.21-3; 1.29.36, 38; 3.10.6-7; 3.15.1-8. For discussion, see further Colardeau, *Étude sur Épictète*, 132.

use that knowledge (see also *Diatr.* 1.4.20-1). Carpenters must learn about carpentry and practice it; the Stoic must learn about nature and practice conforming her life to it; she must learn that she can control only her interior and how to live in light of that truth (see also *Diatr.* 3.21.4).[200] The discourse concludes by stressing that acquiring such a skill takes considerable time. Epictetus compares moral development to the growth of fruit: "Nothing great, said Epictetus, is produced suddenly, since not even the grape or the fig is" (οὐδέν, ἔφη, τῶν μεγάλων ἄφνω γίνεται, ὅπου γε οὐδ' ὁ βότρυς οὐδὲ σῦκον, 1.15.7, trans. LCL; see also *Diatr.* 1.2.32; 1.11.40; 3.9.11; 3.13.22; 4.8.36, 40; 4.12.19).[201] If philosophy requires extended practice, then surely Epictetus prescribed practices.

Second, the *Discourses* conspicuously and repeatedly stress the need for exercise. Take the work's programmatic first discourse, for example. Sections 1-6 of the discourse explain that humans can choose how they respond to what they perceive and sections 7-17 insist that this power is the only thing truly within humanity's control. Sections 18-32 describe historical figures who kept this distinction between what is within human control and what is not "on hand" (πρόχειρον, 1.1.21) in order to respond to events accordingly.[202] Near the middle of this biographical unit, Epictetus states that philosophers ought to

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[200] Sellars, *The Art of Living*, x–xi, 64–74; Sellars, *Stoicism*, 47–9. See also Musonius Rufus 52.7-25 (Lutz). On this analogy, see further Roswitha Alpers-Gölz, *Der Begriff* Skopos *in der Stoa und seine Vorgeschichte*, Spudasmata (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1976); Gisela Striker, *Essays on Hellenistic Epistemology and Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 298–315.

[201] See also Roskam, *On the Path to Virtue*, 122. For Epictetus' rejection of the notion of sudden transformation, see *Diatr.* 1.8.11; 1.19.17-22; cf. Long, *Epictetus*, 252–3.

[202] Dobbin discerns a similar structure (*Discourses*, 68).

"practice" (ἔδει μελατᾶν), "write daily" (καθ' ἡμέραν γράφειν), and "exercise"

(γυμνάζεσθαι) using the principle that they can control only their internal states (1.1.25).

This list of moral *exempla* concludes, "this is what it means to have practiced what one ought

to practice" (τοῦτ' ἔστι μεμελετηκέναι ἃ δεῖ μελετᾶν, 1.1.31); the examples given are

examples of the results of mentally rehearsing Epictetus' teaching. The *Discourses* thus begin

by stressing that Epictetus intends his core principle to form the basis of a practice or exercise

so that it is always determines one's reactions to external phenomena.

Discourse 2.19 is another example. This discourse highlights the difference between

using ideas as emblems of intellect and erudition and using them as principles by which to

live. Epictetus says he can recount the history of Stoic opinions on "the master argument" (ὁ

κυριεύων λόγος)—three propositions on fate and free will, only two of which can be true

simultaneously (2.19.4)—and could "astound" (καταπλήσομαι) a dinner party with his

knowledge (2.19.8-9). But because he does not live by (τηρεῖς, 2.19.5) any opinion on the

matter (2.19.4-8), such a display of knowledge would be "empty" (κενός, 2.19.8).[203] Likewise,

on ethical topics people quote Homer but do not strive to implement his views in their daily

conduct (2.19.13-4). Likewise, Epictetus' students have learned in the lecture hall (ἐν τῇ

σχολῇ καθήμενος, 2.19.19) that only moral matters really matter, that internal virtue alone is

important. They express interest, he claims, in tracing the intellectual history of such a

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[203] Epictetus here repeats the criticism, found often among ancient philosophers, of
philosophical erudition and/or discourse that remains divorced from transformative exercises; see
Pierre Hadot, "La Philosophie Antique: Une éthique Ou Une Pratique?," in *Problèmes de La Morale
Antique*, ed. Paul Demont (Amiens: Université de Picardie-Jules Verne, 1993), 11–14; Davidson,
"Introduction: Pierre Hadot and the Spiritual Phenomenon of Ancient Philosophy," 26–8.

notion: was it Chrysippus or Cleanthes who argued that? Epictetus responds, "What difference does it make?" (τί γὰρ διαφέρει, 2.19.14). For him the consequential question is "Have you tested what you have learned and made the dogma yours?" (One might also translate, "made the dogma part of you"; βεβασάνικας οὖν τι αὐτῶν καὶ δόγμα σεαυτοῦ πεποίησαι, 2.19.14). If they have made the dogma their own, then when they are on board a ship and a storm threatens to sink it, they will not respond emotionally as if perishing in a shipwreck is truly an evil. If they have made the principle that only internal states matter part of them, then when they are hauled before Caesar to answer an accusation, they will not tremble as if exile or death is truly something to fear (2.19.15-19). They will rather respond to any situation on the basis of their core tenet. To do otherwise would mean they are, like Epictetus with respect to the master argument, empty. The purpose of Epictetus' school is therefore for one to learn and to fill oneself with Stoic convictions. "You are here to learn and practice these things" (ὑμεῖς δὲ ταῦτα μαθησόμενοι καὶ μελετήσοντες πάρεστε, 2.19.29), he reminds them. It is logical to infer that the way one fills oneself, the way one "practices" Epictetus' ideas and makes his dogma one's own—even part of oneself—is by rehearsing his words in one's mind, memorizing them, pondering their meaning, and practicing applying them so that they come to determine one's habits and dispositions, one's seemingly spontaneous and automatic reactions to external events. Such training makes ideas that would otherwise be mere emblems into life principles. It renders them part of the structure of oneself. It internalizes them. It is also logical to conclude that the individual and/or school that defined philosophy as a practical art that requires training and produces and/or preserves a discourse like 1.1 or 2.19, with its emphasis on the necessity of training for

moral progress, would prescribe the sort of transformative exercises that the *Encheiridion*

makes possible.[204]

Epictetus can be read, however, as sometimes claiming that ideas on their own,

knowledge of what makes for virtue, are sufficient to determine a person's life, making

spiritual exercise unnecessary. In *Discourses* 3.9.2-4, for instance, he advises a man going to

Rome to pursue a lawsuit that his views will determine his experience there:

> If you have right opinions (δόγματα), you will fare well; if they are false, you will
> fare ill. For to every man the cause of his acting is opinion. For what is the reason
> why you desired to be elected governor of the Cnossians? Your opinion. What is the
> reason that you are now going up to Rome? Your opinion. And going in winter, and
> with danger and expense.—I must go.—What tells you this? Your opinion. Then if
> opinions are the causes of all actions, and a man has bad opinions, such as the cause
> may be, such also is the effect. (trans. LCL)

If opinions cause actions, as this passage seems to claim, and if this passage is seen as

representing Epictetus' understanding of moral progress, then moral progress would seem

entirely a matter of changing opinions, a purely intellectualist program.[205] John Mouracade,

in fact, argues that Epictetus, like Plato in the *Republic*, offers two distinct accounts of how

one progresses towards a Stoic life: one, an intellectualist account, and the other, an account

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[204] See also *Diatr.* 1.2.35-7, with Dobbin's commentary *ad loc*; 2.16; 2.9.13; *Ench.* 46; James M. Starr, "Was Paraenesis for Beginners?," in *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context*, ed. Troels Engberg-Pedersen and James M. Starr, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche 125 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 102–3; Luke Timothy Johnson, *Among the Gentiles: Greco-Roman Religion and Christianity*, Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 73–5.

[205] See also *Diatr.* 3.1.14; 4.6.23; 4.11.8.

based on exercises.[206] But given the way Epictetus defines philosophy and the ubiquity of passages that stress the necessity of training, passages such as *Discourses* 3.9.2-4 must be read in light of other passages that mandate training. When read in that light, the phrase "if you have right opinions" (εἰ μὲν ὀρθὰ δόγματα ἔχεις) quoted above means "if you have learned the correct views and made them your own." In the context of Epictetus' whole corpus, or at least its extant portions, passages like the one above cohere with the notion that moral progress requires training.[207] Moreover, even when read only in their immediate literary context, Epictetus' words, at least in *Diatr*. 3.9, need not be taken in a strictly intellectualist sense. In this discourse, Epictetus addresses someone who is not his student, someone who merely asks his advice (3.9.10). He advises that person to change his opinions; he urges him to take the first step towards a philosophical life. The message for Epictetus' students hearing or reading this discourse is that the ideal life begins with the reformation of opinions, not that it ends there.

Conclusion

This chapter has found that for the study of self-cultivation distinctions between types of wise sayings, distinctions that are problematic and yet central to some studies of sayings collections, are of little use and it has shown that sayings collections are frequently

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[206] John Mouracade, "Review of John Sellars' *The Art of Living: The Stoics on the Nature and Function of Philosophy*," *Ancient Philosophy* 26 (2006): 216–20.

[207] Sellars, *The Art of Living*, x–xi.

instruments for the crafting of selves in antiquity. Their pithy, memorable, paradigmatic, and underdetermined contents make them perfectly suited for this role. Just as this chapter has described Epicurus' and Epictetus' ideal selves and then presented the evidence that collections of their sayings facilitate the attainment of those ideals, so will the next two chapters describe Matthew's moral ideal, before examining the evidence that Matthew's sayings collection, the Sermon on the Mount, helps one become it.

CHAPTER THREE: MATTHEW'S MORAL IDEAL, PART I: THE FRUITS

METAPHOR

The previous chapter presented the evidence that one can offer to show that a given

gnomologium forms the basis for transformation into a particular ethical ideal. Taking

Epicurus' *Kyriai Doxai* as an example, I described the ethical ideal featured in Epicurus' other

writings, showed that the *Kyriai Doxai* enshrines the same norm in gnomic form, and then,

in the absence of a definitive internal indicator of purpose, presented the external evidence

that this collection, like other works of Epicurus, was intended to be memorized and

appropriated so as to render Epicurus' ethical ideal. Taking Epictetus' *Encheiridion* as

another example, I likewise described the human being idealized in Epictetus' writings,

showed that the *Encheiridion* features the same ethic, identified the *Encheiridion*'s internal

indicators of its purpose, and then collected the supporting external evidence that Epictetus

might plausibly prescribe spiritual exercises.

This chapter and the next two show that the same evidence that indicates that the

Kyriai Doxai and the *Encheiridion* facilitate the formation of their ideal selves exists for the

Matt 5-7, the SM. I identify in this chapter the moral ideal that Matthew communicates

through his deployment of fruit as a metaphor for conduct and fruit trees as a metaphor for

the source of conduct. I show in the next how that same ideal appears in Matthean passages

that do not feature these metaphors, before presenting in chapter four the internal and

external evidence that Matthew casts the SM as a gnomologium that enables the attainment of human perfection as his gospel describes it.

My description of Matthew's moral ideal builds on prevailing scholarship, especially on several recent and prominent studies of the eschatological judgment in this gospel that have stressed the tremendous importance Matthew places on right actions. In his landmark study of Matthew's portrayal of the final judgment, Daniel Marguerat emphasizes that the evangelist deems proper deeds soteriologically necessary. These deeds are manifestations of inner qualities, he says, but the qualities themselves are ultimately worthless unless they manifest themselves in good deeds: "*Au jugement, Dieu examinera le faire.* Pour Mt, conformément à la pensée juive, la destinée de l'homme se détermine sur la manifestation concrète de sa 'justice', non sur ses qualités intrinsèques."[1] The evangelist's use of the fruits metaphor, according to Marguerat, conveys precisely this point that faith must result in works by insisting that good trees must produce good fruit.[2] Conversely, Marguerat claims, Matthew portrays good deeds as expressions of the ideal intrinsic qualities: "C'est dire que la pensée de l'évangéliste ne se laisse pas enfermer dans la dichotomie classique entre la piété intérieure et les actes extérieurs; la condition chrétienne est définie par Mt à partir de sa manifestation concrète, de la vie."[3] Marguerat is reacting to a then established view in

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[1] Daniel Marguerat, *Le Jugement dans l'Évangile de Matthieu*, 2d ed., Le Monde de la Bible 6 (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1995), 192, italics his.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Ibid.

Matthean studies and in interpretations of Matt 5-7 in particular that maintained that

Matthew and/or the SM values proper intentions, attitudes, and dispositions above all else.

Actions in this view are largely or wholly irrelevant, a point that, according to some scholars,

the Sermon underscores by making impossible demands.[4] This reading is largely forgotten in

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[4] Classic articulations of this position include Wilhelm Herrmann, *Ethik*, 2d ed. (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1901), 127, 131–133, 154–55; Wilhelm Herrmann, *Faith and Morals*, trans. Donald Matheson and Robert W. Stewart, Crown Theological Library 6 (New York: Putnam, 1904); Wilhelm Herrmann, *Die Sittlichen Weisungen Jesu: Ihr Missbrauch und ihr richtiger Gebrauch* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1904), 25, 38, *passim*; Dibelius, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 57, 58 (Jesus "proclaims … a new attitude"), 68, 72–73, 77, 131, 136, 137 (the Sermon "does not demand of us that we *do something* but that we *be something*" [italics Dibelius']). See also Ulrich Zwingli, "Annotationes in Evangelium Matthaei," in *Opera*, ed. Johann Melchior Schuler and Johannes Schulthess, vol. 6.1, 8 vols. (Zurich: Schulthess, 1828), 218–9; Ferdinand Christian Baur, *The Church History of the First Three Centuries*, trans. Allan Menzies, 2 vols., 3d ed. (London: Williams and Norgate, 1878), 1.26–30, esp. 30: Matthew portrays "disposition as that which alone confers any moral value on a man's acts"; Wilhelm Bousset, "Bergpredigt," ed. Friedrich Michael Schiele et al., *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Handwörterbuch in gemeinverständlicher Darstellung* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1908); Heinrich Julius Holtzmann, *Lehrbuch Der Neutestamentlichen Theologie*, ed. Adolf Jülicher and Walter Bauer, 2 vols., 2d ed. (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1911), 241, 246, cf. 231–32; Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, Routledge Sociology Classics (London: Routledge, 1991), 119–21; Otto Baumgarten, *Bergpredigt und Kultur der Gegenwart* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1921), 15–16, 34–5, 118, *passim*; Ernest Findlay Scott, *The Ethical Teaching of Jesus* (New York: Macmillan, 1924), 19, *passim*; L. H. Marshall, *The Challenge of New Testament Ethics* (London: Macmillan, 1947). Cf. the similar positions of Carl Stange, "Zur Ethik Der Bergpredigt," *ZST* 2 (1924): 41–44; George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence of the Future*, Rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1974), 292–302; Robert H. Stein, *The Method and Message of Jesus' Teachings*, Rev. ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 101–3. By describing Jesus' commandments in Matt 5-7 as neither binding nor exhaustive but exemplary and intended to shape the inner self, this interpretation drew heavily on Kant's ethics of intention. Furthermore, this reading of the SM is all too often wed to antijudaism; see, e.g., Baur, *Church History*, 1:30; Baumgarten, *Bergpredigt und Kultur der Gegenwart*, 35; Dibelius, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 67–9. The nuptial is unneccesary (Thomas W. Manson, *Ethics and the Gospel* [New York: Scribner, 1960], 63–4). For discussion of this view, see Thaddaeus Soiron, *Die Bergpredigt Jesu: Formgeschichtliche, Exegetische Und Theologische Erklärung* (Frieburg: Herder & Co., 1941), 4–90; Harvey K. McArthur, *Understanding the Sermon on the Mount* (New York: Harper, 1960), 111–4, 142–4; James M. Gustafson, *Christ and the Moral Life* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 130–6, 195–204; Kissinger, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 44–5; Georg Strecker, *The Sermon on the Mount: An Exegetical Commentary* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988), 18–19; Clarence Bauman, *The Sermon on the Mount: The Modern Quest for Its Meaning* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1985), 37–51; Stein, *The Method and Message of Jesus' Teachings*, 96–7;

or irrelevant to contemporary discussion because the distinctions on which it supposedly

relies, distinctions between doing and being, came to be seen as anachronistic, integral to

post-Kantian philosophy and theology but foreign to first-century Judaism; apologetic,

meeting the demands of theological interpretation to make the gospels relevant to the

reigning *Zeitgeist* at the expense of historical accuracy; and exegetically one-sided,

emphasizing the Sermon's interest in motives and in interior states such as poverty of spirit,

anger, and lust to the complete exclusion of its interest in deeds such as divorce (5:31-2) and

its concluding call to action (7:13-27).[5] Marguerat's position has replaced it. Thus Ulrich Luz,

for instance, in his monumental commentary on Matthew, echoes Marguerat's depiction of

deeds, claiming with reference to 3:7-10 that for Matthew "[h]uman deeds are the criterion

in judgment…. That is why the catchword 'fruit' plays such a large role in his Gospel"[6] and

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Dale C. Allison, *The Sermon on the Mount: Inspiring the Moral Imagination* (New York: Crossroad Pub, 1999), 6–7.

[5] Hans Windisch's critique was foundational (*The Meaning of the Sermon on the Mount: A Contribution to the Historical Understanding of the Gospels and to the Problem of Their True Exegesis*, trans. S. Maclean Gilmour [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1951], 44–123). In his words, behind the pedestalizing of intentions lies the assumption "that Jesus of Nazareth by intuition must have consciously implied, intended, and believed all that has come to be recognized as the loftiest and the only true expression of revelation, of life, of 'being,' and of attitude since Kant, Nietzsche, and Herrmann, or even since some more recent guide in our quest for true spiritual freedom. Jesus cannot have taught something that is no longer understood or accepted in Heidelberg or Marburg" (55-6). "The interpretation that was rejected by Herrmann and many other theologians," that the SM is a collection of commands to be obeyed, is, Windisch argues, "the opinion of the Evangelist, and the interpretation they impose upon the Sermon is actually a sharp and destructive criticism of it" (65). See also Wilder, "The Sermon on the Mount," 7:161–3; Allison, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 6–7. Luz states that outside of the most specialized discussions, the memory of this interpretation has "completely faded" (*Matthew 1-7*, 181).

[6] Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 137.

in an excursus on "The Understanding of Judgment in the Gospel of Matthew" that "[d]ecisive for successfully passing judgment are people's works," and hence "[w]hat is decisive in judgment … is not the quality of the tree but the fruit it bears," for "[i]f a person's works are not right, then according to Matthew nothing is right."[7] In accord with Marguerat, he also claims that actions result from interior conditions. "Adultery begins in the heart; sin begins in one's thoughts," he writes about 5:27-30 and "[p]urity is *primarily* a purity of heart, and it expresses itself in words and deeds," he concludes regarding 15:1-20.[8]

Like Marguerat and Luz, I too maintain that the First Gospel deems deeds requisite to salvation and thus morally ideal and that it portrays deeds, good or evil, as the organic result of intrinsic qualities. I extend and modify their analysis, however, in two ways: 1) I see the relationship between intrinsic qualities and manifest deeds in Matthew as more complex. The First Gospel, as I will show, does not simply demand that faith or other internal conditions be enacted, that they produce good deeds as opposed to not manifesting themselves at all. Rather, it portrays specific internal traits and states as the necessary conditions for right deeds and even for faith, if by that we mean a particular response to Jesus' words and actions, to

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[7] Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 21-28: A Commentary*, trans. James E. Crouch, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 289. See also Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 379; Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 8-20: A Commentary*, trans. James E. Crouch, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 210; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 282. Other adherents of this view that deeds are soteriologically decisive for Matthew include Udo Schnelle, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. M. Eugene Boring (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2009), 234; Meghan Henning, *Educating Early Christians Through the Rhetoric of Hell: "Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth" as Paideia in Matthew and the Early Church*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/382 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 167–8.

[8] On 3:7-10, see Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 245; on 15:1-20, Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 334, italics his. See also Ibid., 210.

emerge. 2) I emphasize more than they that for Matthew right actions, though they should be expressions of proper inner qualities, often are not, in which case seemingly good deeds are eschatologically worthless. In other words, in judging actions, God in Matthew assesses not only conduct but its sources and therefore intrinsic qualities that do in part determine "la destinée de l'homme." Put still another way, Marguerat and Luz understate how nightmarish Matthew finds hypocrisy. On my reading then, inner traits are pre- and co-requisites of right actions and so Matthew's moral ideal, which he often equates to doing God's will, both requires and entails particular qualities of the self. As we will see in this chapter, the fruits metaphor communicates both these convictions.

We begin our description of the First Gospel's ethic with the metaphor of fruits and trees not because it is the only moral metaphor Matthew employs; oil and wedding garments are metaphors that make similar moral claims in this composition.[9] Rather, we begin with the fruits metaphor because it is the most sustained and profound of Matthew's moral metaphors and therefore a convenient and effective way to identify this gospel's view of normative human existence. As the table below shows, Matthew finds this metaphor in Q and Mark and amplifies it by using Q 3:7-9 and 6:43-45 twice. He also increases the number of references

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[9] Karl Paul Donfried, "The Allegory of the Ten Virgins (Matt 25:1-13) as a Summary of Matthean Theology," *JBL* 93 (1974): 424; Krister Stendahl, "Matthew," in *Peake's Commentary on the Bible*, ed. Matthew Black and H. H. Rowley (London: Nelson, 1962), 791; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 289.

to fruits (καρποί) in the parable of the wicked tenants from one to four (Mark 12:1-12 //

Matt 21:33-46).[10]

Table 1: The Sources of the Fruits Metaphor in Matthew

Matthean Passage	Source of Fruit Metaphor
Matt 3:7–10	Q 3:7–9
Matt 7:15–23	Q 6:43–45 Q 3:7–9
Matt 12:33–37	Q 6:43–45
Matt 13:1–9, 18–23	Mark 4:1–9, 13–20
Matt 13:24–30	Redactional but suggested by Mark 4:1–9 and perhaps Mark 4:26–9
Matt 21:18-22	Mark 11:12–14

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[10] It is typical of Matthew to amplify ideas and phrases found in his sources. As M. Eugene Boring observes, "A phrase from Q [or Mark] becomes a favorite 'Matthean' phrase, used repeatedly in non-Q [and other Q] passages" ("The Gospel of Matthew," 8:96. Matthew's "own redactional language is traditional" (Ulrich Luz, "Matthew the Evangelist: A Jewish Christian at the Crossroads," in *Studies in Matthew*, trans. Rosemary Selle [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eedrmans, 2005], 5). See also John C. Hawkins, *Horae Synopticae; Contributions to the Study of the Synoptic Problem*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1909), 170–173; Willoughby C. Allen, "The Book of Sayings Used by the Editor of the First Gospel," in *Studies in the Synoptic Problem by Members of the University of Oxford*, ed. W. Sanday (Oxford: Clarendon, 1911), 284–86; Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 344; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 41.

Following the so-called "two-source hypothesis," which can actually accommodate a great number of sources, I consider Mark and Q to be Matthew's principal sources. On the present status of the two-source hypothesis, see Christopher M. Tuckett, "The Current State of the Synoptic Problem," in *New Studies in the Synoptic Problem: Oxford Conference, April 2008: Essays in Honour of Christopher M. Tuckett*, ed. Paul Foster et al., Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium 239 (Leuven: Peeters, 2011). For alternative theories, see most recently Mark S. Goodacre, *The Case Against Q: Studies in Markan Priority and Synoptic Problem* (Harrisburg, Pa: Trinity Press International, 2001).

Matt 21:33-46	Mark 12:1-12

The metaphor's prominence is thus redactional, the evangelist's own shaping of the traditions he receives, and, as will be shown, reveals Matthew's particular interest in portraying certain states and traits as the roots and guarantors of right actions.[11]

As Marguerat and Luz observe, according to this metaphor, people are ultimately judged on their "fruits," meaning their deeds and/or words.[12] In Matthew 3:7-10 and 7:16-20, those who fail to produce good fruits are trees that will be felled and burned. In 12:22-37, "idle" words are bad fruits for which one must ultimately pay. The parable of the sower (13:1-9) and its interpretation (13:18-23) contrast those who understand Jesus' words and produce fruit with those who do not, while the parable of the wheat and weeds (13:24-30)

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[11] In Matthew's usage, this arboreal metaphor develops the biblical image of Israel as vegetation (Marius Reiser, *Jesus and Judgment: The Eschatological Proclamation in Its Jewish Context*, trans. Linda M. Maloney [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997], 173–76; Christfried Böttrich, "Jesus und der Feigenbaum: Mk 11:12-14,20-25 in der Diskussion," *NovT* 39 [1997]: 351), but its origins and resonances surely extend beyond the biblical tradition. Many ancient authors use fruit as a metaphor to relate character and conduct. Ancient parallels include not only Ps 1:1-3, Isa 3:10-11, Hos 10:12-13, and Sir 27:6 but also Philo, *Somn.* 1:58, 2:64-5; Seneca, *Ep.* 87.25; Epictetus, *Diatr.* 1.15.7; 2.20.18-9; 3.22.5.2; 4.1.102.2; Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 66.5.10; Aesop, *Sent.* 20; Marcus Aurelius, *Med.* 4.6.1; 8.15; 8.46; 10.8.6; 12.16.2; Diogenianus 5.15 (CPG 1:252); Gal 5:13-24. See also the rabbinic parallels cited by Friedrich Hauck, "καρπός," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 3, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964), 614–16; and the additional Roman and the Egyptian parallels cited by Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 530. Rudolf Bultmann calls the sayings about fruit-bearing "secular wisdom" (*The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 104). and James Dunn writes that "'[f]ruit' (Matt 3:8/Luke 3:8) as an image of appropriate conduct is fairly universal" ("John the Baptist's Use of Scripture," in *The Christ and the Spirit: Collected Essays of James D.G. Dunn*, vol. 2, 2 vols. [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998], 124).

[12] Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 192; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:176; see also 1:305, 3:180; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 137; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 23; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 282.

stresses that the latter will be condemned. Jesus' cursing of a fig tree in 21:18-19 reiterates the notion that what is unfruitful will be destroyed and in 21:33-46, the Kingdom of God is taken from those who fail to produce fruits and given to those who do.

But, as Marguerat and Luz also argue, according to this metaphor, one's deeds and words are sometimes inseparable from one's intrinsic qualities. Indeed by choosing this particular metaphor, by comparing actions to fruits of a tree, Matthew implies an interest in more than simply actions. The very imagery of fruit and trees stresses the organic connection between the character of the actor (a tree) and her actions (fruits).[13] And, as I will show first in this chapter, three of the seven times Matthew employs the fruits metaphor he does so to emphasize precisely that connection. Of those three uses, two explain why the Jewish leaders fail to respond properly to John the Baptist and then to Jesus (12:33-7; 21:33-44). The remaining use, that of the parable of the sower and its interpretation (13:1-9, 18-23), addresses the situation of those who do respond properly and specifies the traits they must acquire or maintain if they are to produce the deeds and words—the fruits—required at the eschaton. The metaphor stresses then not only that one must produce good deeds and words in order to pass the eschatological judgment but also how one must be in order to yield those expressions.

Nonetheless, as I will show next, the other four times the evangelist deploys the fruits metaphor (3:7-12; 7:15-23; 13:24-30, 36-43; 21:18-22), he does so to insist that proper deeds

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[13] Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News According to Matthew*, trans. David E. Green (Atlanta: John Knox, 1975), 186.

are not always inseparable from one's intrinsic qualities. They are not invariably the products of one's character nor necessarily organically related to one's internal conditions. Of these four uses, two indict the Jewish leaders for acting so as to create the appearance that they do God's will when, in fact, they inwardly resist it, for, in other words, moral duplicity. The other two uses address the disciples and mandate that, in contrast to the Jewish leaders, they must do right deeds because they have particular characteristics. Their right actions must not be merely performed, Matthew insists. If they are, they are not actually right actions. They are not good fruit. "[F]ruit is what 'grows' out of a fundamental disposition of the heart; it is not something that can simply be 'done.'"[14] So, rather than insisting that "[i]f a person's works are not right, then … nothing is right," the evangelist claims that no matter how much one's words and works may appear to conform to the divine will, if the roots of those expressions are not right, they thwart it. They constitute, in Matthew's words, "lawlessness."

The Roots of Right Actions

12:33-37

In Matt 12:33-37, the fruit metaphor appears as part of Jesus' reply (12:25-37) to the Pharisees' accusation about the source of his healing powers (12:24), an accusation occasioned by Jesus' healing of a blind and mute demoniac in 12:22. If, as seems likely, Luke 11:14 better preserves the Q form of the miracle, then in Matthew's source the exorcism of a dumb demoniac was followed by some witnesses marveling and some attributing Jesus'

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[14] Ibid., 49.

powers to demonic forces.[15] In Matthew, by contrast, the demoniac is not only mute but

blind too, which foregrounds the issue of perception, of who fails to see Jesus properly and

why.[16] And the crowds who witness the healing not only marvel but also wonder if Jesus

wields such power because he is the Davidic Messiah, while the Pharisees accuse him of

colluding with evil.[17] Verse 25a's claim that Jesus knew the Pharisees' thoughts (τὰς

ἐνθυμήσεις; cf. 9:4) suggests an etiology for their complaint: the disease originates in their

interior monologue (cf. 3:7-10). In vv. 25b-32, Jesus responds in two ways to the Pharisee's

accusation. First, he argues that demons cannot be the source of his power since his

exorcisms threaten Satan's kingdom (vv. 25-26), or dominion over the world, and that since

they threaten Satan's kingdom, they must, by implication, come from God (vv. 27-9).[18]

Second, he claims that those who deny the true source of his power commit the unforgivable

sin of blaspheming the holy source of that power (30-32).

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[15] Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q*, 121; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:334.

[16] Davies and Allison consider the suggestion that Matthew has made the demoniac blind to emphasize the Pharisees' lack of sight "perhaps a bit over-subtle" (*Matthew*, 2:334). But the Q passage is already about perception and sight stands for perception in the next pericope (Matt 12:38) and elsewhere in Matthew (7:3-5; cf. 5:16). So, if the blindness is redactional, Matthew's rendering of a glaring theme in a narrative detail is elegant but hardly subtle, given its prominence in his source and elsewhere in his composition. Luz believes Matthew introduces blindness in part to disguise the fact that he has already used this Q miracle in 9:32-34 (*Matthew 8-20*, 199n19). But why would Matthew need to disguise that fact?

[17] Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 199.

[18] Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Sacra Pagina (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1991), 185.

The fruits metaphor in v. 33—Jesus tells the Pharisees, "Either consider the tree good, and its fruit good; or consider the tree bad, and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit"—, continues the polemic of vv. 25-32.[19] On the one hand, it epitomizes Jesus' argument in vv. 25b-29 about the source of his deeds. Having argued that unless one condemns all exorcisms, including those performed by the Pharisees themselves (v. 27), Jesus' exorcisms prove he is not in league with evil (see also 11:19b), the Matthean Jesus now recapitulates that reasoning by claiming that fruit reveals the condition of a tree and thereby implying that actions likewise index one's true nature. If Jesus' deeds, in this case his exorcisms, are good, then he must be good. If he is evil or empowered by evil, he cannot do the good deeds he does.[20] Logically, then, the Pharisees must either "consider [ποιήσατε][21] the tree good and its fruit good or the tree bad and its fruit bad."

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[19] Matt 12:22-37 is a pastiche of sources: vv. 22-24 derive from Q 11:14-15; vv. 25–30 combine Mark 3:24-27 with Q 11:17-23; vv. 31-32 combine Mark 3:28-29 and Q 12:10; vv. 33–35 reproduces Q 6:43-45; vv. 36-7 are unique to Matthew and likely redactional. An argumentative structure similar to that which Matthew has forged from his sources appears in *Gos. Thom.* 43-45: discussion of Jesus' identity and criticism of Jews who love the fruit but hate the tree or vice versa (43), the pronouncement that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven (44), and the claim that just as good produce comes only from proper plants, so does right speech (about Jesus) depend on the heart (45). This similarity in order suggests either that Matthew has influenced the arrangement of this cluster of sayings in the extant version of Thomas (on such a possibility generally, see Stephen J. Patterson, "Understanding the *Gospel of Thomas* Today," in *The Fifth Gospel: The Gospel of Thomas Comes of Age*, ed. Stephen J. Patterson and James M. Robinson [Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity, 1998], 66–7) or that this logic is traditional and Matthew and Thomas know it independently, perhaps in oral form. Petri Luomanen argues that this extended parallel indicates *Gos. Thom.* 43-4 depends on the synoptic gospels ("Tuomaan Evankeliumi—itsenäinen Vai Ei?: Mt:n Ja Lk:n Suhde Tuom. Ev:n Lauselmiin 32-33, 43-45, (92-94, 65-66)," *Teologinen Aikakauskirja* 100 [1995]: 118–36); so also Simon Gathercole, *The Gospel of Thomas: Introduction and Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 393.

[20] Jerome rightly labels the saying in v. 33 a *syllogismo* or ἄφυκτον (*Comm. Matt.* [PL] 26.81). John Chrysostom claims that to "shame" them, Jesus points out that their charges are nonsensical, contradictory, and inconsistent (*Hom. Matt.* 42).

On the other hand, the fruits metaphor introduces vv. 34-7, which elaborate v. 25a's claim that Pharisees' accusation originates in their thoughts and reiterate vv. 30-32's warning about eschatological condemnation. The epithet "offspring of vipers" (γεννήματα ἐχιδνῶν) in v. 34a expresses *in nuce* the impending charge that the Pharisees are evil and contrasts that charge with their appearance. It alleges that they resemble snakes in that however beautiful or, in their case, estimable they may seem—the epithet anticipates ch. 23's claim that the Jewish leaders concern themselves with appearances—they carry poison within.[22] The ensuing rhetorical question deems these Jewish leaders incapable of good speech (ἀγαθὰ λαλεῖν), meaning in this context incapable of voicing proper recognition of Jesus as the "Son of David" (v. 23) and the one in and through whom the kingdom of God approaches (vv. 24, 28), because they are venomous, because they are "evil" (πονηροὶ ὄντες, v. 34a). The reason

[21] On ποιέω with the meaning "assume," "consider," or "judge" see LSJ, s.v., A VI; Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer, *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Gospel of Matthew*, trans. Peter Christie, Frederick Crombie, and William Stewart, Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1890), 243–44; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 198. The verb regularly has this meaning in John: 5:18; 8:53; 10:33; 19:7, 12. The more literal meaning of ποιέω — "make the tree good"—, favored by Calvin (*Commentaries, ad loc*); Gundry (*Matthew: A Commentary on His Handbook for a Mixed Church Under Persecution*, 2d ed. [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1994], 239); and Davies and Allison (*Matthew*, 2:349), among others, would turn the saying into a denunciation of hypocrisy: become either good or bad instead of feigning righteousness and remaining inwardly corrupt. While Matthew would endorse the sentiment and it may be present as a secondary meaning, especially since Jesus calls the Pharisees "vipers' offspring" in the next verse, it fits less well into the argument of 12:22-37.

[22] The *Opus Imperfectum in Matthaeum, ad* 3:7-10 maintains that "viper" is an apt epithet for hypocrites because vipers are beautiful on the outside and poisonous within. On "vipers" as a character designation, see also Origen, *Hom. Luc.* 22.6; Alfred Plummer, *An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910), 28; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:304; Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*, 2d ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 19; Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 55; Christopher M. Tuckett, *Q and the History of Early Christianity: Studies on Q* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996), 114; BDAG, s.v., ἔχιδνα.

those who are evil cannot acknowledge Jesus' identity is specified in v. 34b, which states

what Matthew considers a general moral truth—it is a gnomic saying—with a specific

application to this passage. According to v. 34b, speech is one's heart, or the locus of one's

thinking, wanting, and feeling,[23] overflowing into one's mouth and thus, the Pharisees,

being evil, inevitably articulate such accusations. Verse 35, another gnomic saying applied to

the Jewish leaders, reiterates this point using treasure instead of heart as a metaphor for the

center of one's being, for one's real self: out of their corrupt treasures, or selves, the Pharisees

"expel" (ἐκβάλλει) hostility towards God's servant (12:18). The redactional use of "expel" (cf.

13:52) in this verse creates wordplay with the preceding uses of the term to mean "exorcise"

(vv. 24, 26-8) and thereby contrasts the activities and selves of the Pharisees with those of

Jesus. The Pharisees' cast out (ἐκβάλλει) blasphemy from their evil storehouses, or hearts,

while Jesus casts out (ἐκβάλλει) demons from his good treasure.[24] Finally, this language of

trees and fruits, deceptively beautiful vipers, overflowing hearts, and expelled treasure reveals

that Matthew analyzes human behavior in terms of generative fundaments that, in as much as

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[23] On Matthew's understanding of the heart, see Johannes Behm and Friedrich Baumgartel, "καρδία, κτλ.," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 3, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964), 612, who state that in the NT writings generally "καρδία comes to stand for the whole of the inner being of man in contrast to his external side, the πρόσωπον" (e.g., Matt 15:8) and that "the heart is supremely the one centre in man to which God turns, in which the religious life is rooted, which determines moral conduct" (e.g., Matt 5:8; 11:29; 13:9, 15; 18:35). See also Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:456; Jaime Clark-Soles, *Death and the Afterlife in the New Testament* (New York: T & T Clark, 2006), 160–1; Walter T. Wilson, *Healing in the Gospel of Matthew: Reflections on Method and Ministry* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014), 252–3.

[24] Vernon K. Robbins, "Rhetorical Composition & the Beelzebul Controversy," in *Patterns of Persuasion in the Gospels*, Foundations & Facets. Literary Facets (Sonoma, Calif.: Polebridge, 1989), 183–4.

hearts and treasures typically remain hidden from human sight, are inward, unseen, and constitute the person's essence or identity and manifestations of those fundaments that are outward, visible, and revelatory of one's true self. In other words, the evangelist, adopting an ancient commonplace, examines morality in terms of both interior states and corresponding exterior actions.[25]

This claim then that the Pharisees' slander of Jesus represents some internal corruption outwardly manifesting itself follows from the fruits metaphor in v. 33 by expressing its converse: if a tree is known by its fruit, that is, if actions betray more fundamental traits, then, conversely, the quality of the tree must determine the quality of the fruit; the fundamental aspects of people must determine their deeds, or, in this case, words. Matthew thus utilizes fruits and trees as metaphors for observable words or deeds and their sources in such a way that the metaphor encodes the general proposition that one's visible or audible expressions are indivisible from and therefore expose their otherwise unobservable origins within one as well as the more particular proposition that one's observable response to the God of Israel's activity in the world reveals what is most fundamental to one's identity, one's true self.

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[25] For ancient parallels, see Wettstein, *Novum Testamentum Graecum*, *ad* Matt 23:25–8, to which add *b. Ber.* 28a; *b. Yoma* 72b. For discussion, see Lawrence M. Wills, *Not God's People: Insiders and Outsiders in the Biblical World*, Religion in the Modern World (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008), 114–6; Joshua Levinson, "From Narrative Practice to Cultural Poetics: Literary Anthropology and the Rabbinic Sense of Self," in *Homer and the Bible in the Eyes of Ancient Interpreters*, ed. Maren Niehoff, Jerusalem Studies in Religion and Culture 16 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 345–67.

The passage culminates (vv. 36-7) by warning the Pharisees ("I say to you") that those who utter an "idle word" (ῥῆμα ἀργὸν) will recompense (ἀποδώσουσιν) God with an accounting of it (περὶ αὐτοῦ λόγον) of it at the eschatological judgment (v. 36),[26] where one's words will vindicate or condemn one (v. 37). Some exegetes maintain that by an "idle" word, Matthew means speech that does not produce action and so believe the evangelist concludes this passage with a call to enact, not merely profess faith. On this reading, words unaccompanied by acts of love will condemn one.[27] While Matthew, like many early Christian writers (e.g., Gal 5:22; Col 1:10; Jas 3:17-18; 2 Pet 1:8), does elsewhere insist that convictions must produce deeds (e.g., 13:1-23; chs. 24-5), in this context, as the conclusion to a passage denouncing the Pharisees' denunciation of Jesus' healings, "idle words" more plausibly means the blasphemous speech decried in vv. 31-2.[28] Given that the Matthean Jesus has just characterized such speech as the revealer and result of moral corruption, this conclusion declares then that words vindicate or condemn one—that words, like deeds, are judged at the eschaton—not because they are in and of themselves decisive but because they are the observable coefficients of a more radical reality, the indicators of the state of one's self.

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[26] In 6:4, 6, 18; 16:27, *inter alia*, Matthew also describes as the eschatological judgment as a settling of accounts.

[27] Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 211; R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2007), 275.

[28] Schweizer, *Matthew*, 289.

Words, particularly those about Jesus, disclose whether one is truly responsive to the deity. Fruit exposes the tree's condition.[29] Therefore, it will be judged.

Finally, the verbal forms in the concluding warning (vv. 36-7) render it not only a denunciation of the Pharisees but also an exhortation to Matthew's reader. Verse 36 features a general admonition—"people" (οἱ ἄνθρωποι) will account for their words—aimed at the Pharisees ("I say to you [plural]"). But verse 37 addresses a singular audience ("by your [singular] words, you [singular] will be vindicated and by your [singular] words, you [singular] will be condemned"). Hosea's description of the eschaton similarly alternates between speaking of Israel in the third person and speaking to Israelites in the second person singular (2:16-23) and so, given Matthew's interest in this prophetic writing (Matt 2:15 quotes Hos 11:1 and Matt 9:13 quotes Hos 6:6), he likely follows the same convention and does not, by changing verbal forms, intend to change audiences; both v. 36 and v. 37 censure the Pharisees. Nonetheless, the singular forms in v. 37 do expand the audience to include the individual reader.[30] The verse then also presents to an imagined audience the criteria employed at the judgment, thereby exhorting the reader to examine her or his speech and, by extension, the heart from whence it overflows.

Thus, the fruits metaphor in 12:33-7 explains why the Jewish leaders respond to Jesus with hostility: they are, appearances notwithstanding, "evil," utterly opposed to the divine.

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[29] See Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 351: "Because words come from the heart, the judgment of an individual will be according to his or her words"; Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 131.

[30] Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 210–11.

Producing good fruit would require not additional action or speech but rather that they

become something different, that they transform their hearts and storehouses—their very

selves. Matthew's moral ideal involves then a certain inner condition, one that allows people

to respond rightly to Jesus' interventions in the world, to produce "fruit."

21:33-44

Matthew again deploys the fruits metaphor to characterize the Jewish leaders'

response to Jesus in the parable of the wicked tenants (21:33-44). This parable is the second

of three parables that form part of Jesus' response to the Jewish leaders (v. 23: "the chief

priests and elders of the people;" cf. 21:45: "the chief priests and the Pharisees;" 22:15: "the

Pharisees") when they ask him by what authority he does "these things" (ταῦτα, v. 23),

meaning his disruption of and healings within the temple the prior day (21:12-14).[31] The

parable itself is a juridical one, meaning one told, in this case by Jesus, to others, in this case

the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem, in order to lead them to indict themselves for some offense,

in this case failing to hail John the Baptist and Jesus as God's emissaries (21:23-7).[32] As a

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[31] On the formal features and common content that unite these three parables, see Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 20; John S. Kloppenborg, *The Tenants in the Vineyard: Ideology, Economics, and Agrarian Conflict in Jewish Palestine*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 195 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 174–5. These parables take the place of the dominical logion that normally concludes a pronouncement story; cf. Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 26.

[32] On the literary form, see Gale A. Yee, "A Form-Critical Study of Isaiah 5:1-7 as a Song and a Juridical Parable," *CBQ* 43 (1981): 30–40. Isaiah 5:1-7, to which Matthew's parable alludes, is also a juridical parable. On Matthew's use of that parable, see Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 342–4; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 39–41. The preceding parable of the two sons (21:28-32) is also juridical and the form of both follows logically from Jesus' refusal in 12:27 to speak clearly. Cf. Davies

parable told against the Jewish leaders in a veiled fashion—in 21:27, Jesus refuses to speak to them directly—and like all juridical parables to some extent, this passage is allegorical: the vineyard represents God's territory, variously designated as Israel (v. 33), Jerusalem (v. 39), and the Kingdom of God (v. 43); the landowner represents God, the tenant farmers Israel's leaders, the landowner's slaves the prophets, his son Jesus, and fruits what those leading or possessing the vineyard Israel must produce (v. 43).[33] Thus, this brief narrative of tenant farmers refusing to repay the vineyard owner and instead beating, killing, and stoning the owner's slaves and son repeats a Deuteronomistic view of Israel's history in which God repeatedly sends prophets to summon Israel, or in this case Israel's leaders, to repentance and Israel repeatedly rejects or kills those emissaries (cf. 5:12; 13:57; 23:34, 37).[34] The son's, Jesus', execution represents then the climax of Israel's resistance to the deity's overtures.[35]

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and Allison's suggestion that 21:33-46 "corresponds to an old form of synagogue address" (*Matthew*, 3:174–5).

[33] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:176.

[34] Kloppenborg, *The Tenants in the Vineyard*, 181, who further notes that Matthew heightens the identification of the slaves with the prophets found in Mark's version of the parable by "converting Mark's individual slaves into two *groups* of slaves"; so also Schweizer, *Matthew*, 413. Davies and Allison also note that ancient Jewish literature often calls the prophets "slaves" or "servants" of God (*Matthew*, 3:176, with citations). On this Deuteronomistic view of Israel's history, see Odil Hannes Steck, *Israel und das gewaltsame Geschick der Propheten: Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung des deuteronomistischen Geschichtsbildes im Alten Testament, Spätjudentum und Urchristentum*, Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 23 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1967); with the corrective comments of Richard A. Horsley, "Israelite Traditions in Q," in *Whoever Hears You Hears Me: Prophets, Performance, and Tradition in Q* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1999), 108–13.

[35] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:176–77.

The vast majority of scholarship on this passage probes the parable's origins or

debates its portrayal of salvation history.[36] But with respect to Matthew's moral ideal and the

fruits metaphor, the more pertinent questions are why, instead of giving produce to the

vineyard owner, do the tenants brutally murder the owner's emissaries and why, according

to v. 43, do they fail even to produce fruit because answering these questions reveals that

Matthew again uses the fruits metaphor to characterize the Jewish leaders' hostility to Jesus as

the organic result of a fundamental and comprehensive moral deformity. The interpreters

that have shown interest in the first of these questions, why the tenants in Matthew's version

of the parable commit homicide, have labeled the tenants greedy,[37] an understandable

inference if they seek the son's inheritance and one that explains their violence because

ancient ethical thought regularly portrays murder as the nearly inevitable outcome of lusting

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[36] On the parables' origins, see the array of opinions in Adolf Jülicher, *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Mohr Siebeck, 1899), 2:402–6; C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, 3d ed. (New York: Scribner's, 1936), 93–8; Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, trans. S. H. Hooke (New York: Scribner, 1955), 70–7; Michel Hubaut, *La parabole des vignerons homicides*, Cahiers de la Revue biblique 16 (Paris: Gabalda, 1976); Martin Hengel, "Das Gleichnis von den Weingärtnern Mc 12:1-12 im Lichte der Zenonpapyri und der rabbinischen Gleichnisse," *ZNW* 59 (1968): 1–39; Crossan, *In Fragments*, 92–5; Klyne Snodgrass, *The Parable of the Wicked Tenants: An Inquiry into Parable Interpretation*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 27 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1983), 72–110; John S. Kloppenborg, "Isaiah 5:1-7, the Parable of the Tenants, and Vineyard Leases on Papyrus," in *Text and Artifact in the Religions of Mediterranean Antiquity: Essays in Honour of Peter Richardson*, ed. Michel R. Desjardins and Stephen Wilson, Studies in Christianity and Judaism/Études sur le christianisme et le judaïsme 9 (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2000), 111–34; Kloppenborg, *The Tenants in the Vineyard*, esp. 278–348. Regarding salvation history, the main question has been who the passage condemns, all Israel or only its (corrupt) leaders; see Amy-Jill Levine, *The Social and Ethnic Dimensions of Matthean Salvation History*, Studies in the Bible and early Christianity 14 (Lewiston, N.Y.: Mellen, 1988), 206–11; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:188–190; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 38–9.

[37] Zwingli, "Annotationes in Evangelium Matthaei," 6.1:363; Hengel, "Das Gleichnis von den Weingärtnern," 31; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 428, who sees greed as one of several connections between this parable and the temple incident.

after wealth.[38] Envy is another possible cause and one the evangelist more clearly intimates. In v. 38 Matthew preserves from Mark two literary techniques that he elsewhere favors: reporting the inner dialogue of Jesus' opponents (cf. 3:7-10) and casting them as notorious biblical figures (cf. 11:20-24). What the tenants say to one themselves[39] when the landowner's son arrives repeats what Joseph's brothers say when Joseph appears in Dothan: "Come on, let's kill him" (δεῦτε ἀποκτείνωμεν αὐτόν, v. 38 // Gen 37:20). In Gen 37 and even more clearly in second-temple interpretations of that text, Joseph's brothers say this because they are jealous of him.[40] The presence of envy would also explain why the tenants

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[38] The popularity of this *topos* is shown by the fact that it appears in a wide array of sources, including Plato, *Phaedr.* 66C ("all wars arise for the sake of gaining money"); Lysias, *Or.* 12.5-7; Xenophon, *Hell.* 2.3.16 (Critias to Theramenes: "It is impossible for those who want to satisfy their greed to avoid getting rid of those people who are most likely to form an opposition"); 2.3.21; Musonius Rufus, *Fr.* 14 (Lutz 92.17-25); Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 17.6-10; Ps.-Lucian, *Cyn.* 8; Josephus, *B.J.* 7.256; *A. J.* 18.6-10; Ps.-Phoc. 42-47 (money leads to "fights and robberies and murders"); *Sib. Or.* 2.109-18; Rev 18:1-19:10; John Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt* 62.4; 80.3; 90.4; *Hom. 1 Tim.* 17.6 (if avarice were eliminated, wars and strife would cease). For further discussion and references, see J. Roger Dunkle, "The Greek Tyrant and Roman Political Invective of the Late Republic," *TAPA* 98 (1967): 151–71; Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 87–8; Walter T. Wilson, *The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides*, Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), 108–9; David A. Holgate, *Prodigality, Liberality and Meanness in the Parable of the Prodigal Son: A Greco-Roman Perspective on Luke 15.11-32* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 117, 138; Richard Newhauser, *The Early History of Greed: The Sin of Avarice in Early Medieval Thought and Literature*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature 41 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). Inheritances were considered especially likely to arouse greed and consequently strife, though typically the discord was intrafamilial; see Luke 12:13-21; Plutarch, *Frat. amor.* 483D; Ps.-Phoc. 204; Libanius, *Or.* 6.2.

[39] The phrase εἶπον ἐν ἑαυτοῖς always refers in Matthew to Jesus' adversaries or to the otherwise wicked (Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:183): see 21:25; 9:6; 16:7, 8; 24:48. These interior deliberations produce evil actions.

[40] Claus Westermann aptly describes the role of envy in the biblical account: "Every act of murder seeks not only to eliminate a human being, but also some sort of impediment in the murderer's path, and most murder motives tend to be based on jealousy or covetousness. Joseph stands between the brothers and their father's undivided love" (*Joseph: Studies of the Joseph Stories in Genesis*, trans.

in Matthew's parable turn violent, since in the story of Joseph and among Greek and Roman

moralists generally, murder is envy's offspring.[41] While one has more textual support, these

solutions are not mutually exclusive. Greed and envy are related in that both are the desire

for what another has, be it material or social goods like status and power.[42] Thus, whether

they covet the vineyard's fruits or envy the son his inheritance, what the tenants ultimately

desire is to possess (σχῶμεν, v. 38)—to control—the vineyard and that desire leads them to

resist submission to the landowner's will.

The evangelist classifies this resistance as "evil," deeming the tenants "evil people"

(κακοὺς, v. 41), a comprehensive moral designation that he has added to his Markan source

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Omar Kaste [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996], 13). In the LXX, Joseph's brothers "hate" (ἐμίσησαν, 37:4) and "envy" (ἐζήλωσαν, 37:11) him and therefore want him dead (37:28). While some post-biblical interpretations omit the brothers' jealousy (*Jub.* 39:1-2; *L.A.B.* 8:9), most emphasize it as their motive: Artapanus, *Fr.* 2, *apud* Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 9.23.1; Josephus, *A.J.* 2.10, 13, 18, 27; Philo, *Ios.* 5, 12, 17; *Test. Gad* 3:3; 4:5-6; 5:1; *Test. Jos.* 1:3-4; *Test. Sim.* 2:6-7, 11, 14; 3:2-3; 4:4-9; Acts 7:9; *1 Clem* 4:9; Basil, *Hom.* 11.4. On envy and the Joseph story, see Luke Timothy Johnson, "James 3:13-4:10 and the Topos περὶ φθόνου," *NovT* 25 (1983): 327–47. For a thorough examination of the uses of Joseph in the Hellenistic era, see Erich S. Gruen, *Heritage and Hellenism: The Reinvention of Jewish Tradition*, Hellenistic Culture and Society 30 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 73–109.

[41] On the causal relationship between envy and violence, even murder, see Johnson, "James 3:13-4:10 and the Topos περὶ φθόνου"; Marinus de Jonge and Harm W. Hollander, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Commentary*, Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha 8 (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 109–10. Pseudo-Phocylides stresses the converse, that the absence of envy produces social harmony (Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 100–1). See also Matthew's passion narrative, where the Jewish leaders oppose Jesus because they envy him (διὰ φθόνον, 27:18). John Chrysostom states that the tenants "did not exercise self-control" (οὐκ ἐσωφρονίζοντο, *Hom. Matt.* 68.1), which could mean that they did not restrain envy, among other vices. For an example of σωφροσύνη as the control of envy, see Ps.-Phoc. 76-96; Wilson, *Love Without Pretense*, 112–9; Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 100.

[42] See Plutarch, *Inv. od.* 537A: "people envy only those who seem prosperous" (φθονοῦσι δ' ἁπλῶς τοῖς εὖ πράττειν δοκοῦσιν); 538B: "no one envies the unfortunate" (φθονεῖ δ' οὐδεὶς τῷ δυστυχοῦντι).

(cf. Mark 12:9). The juridical parable reaches its *telos* in v. 41 when the Jewish leaders, asked by Jesus how "the Lord of the vineyard" (ὁ κύριος τοῦ ἀμπελῶνος, v. 40) will respond to the tenants' violence, reply, "Evil people—in an evil way he will destroy them and lease the vineyard to other farmers who will repay him the fruits in their seasons" [43] and thereby characterize their refusal to welcome the prophets, the Baptist, and Jesus as God's emissaries, which the tenants' actions represent in this Deuteronomistic allegory, as expressions of an essentially evil nature, inadvertently indicting their actions and their selves and reiterating a Matthean thesis. As in 12:33-7, Matthew portrays their hostility towards Jesus as the manifestation of their moral corruption.

The wording of the Jewish leaders' self-indictment further suggests that by calling the Jewish leaders "evil people," Matthew is generically describing not just their opposition to God's emissaries but what he sees as their thoroughgoing resistance to God's will. Unlike in Mark, in Matthew their climactic declaration includes the phrase "who will repay him the fruits in their seasons" (οἵτινες ἀποδώσουσιν αὐτῷ τοὺς καρποὺς ἐν τοῖς καιροῖς αὐτῶν, v. 41), which alludes to Ps 1:3, where a similar phrase ("the tree … that gives its fruit in its season" [τὸ ξύλον … ὃ τὸν καρπὸν αὐτοῦ δώσει ἐν καιρῷ αὐτοῦ]) describes the "blessed" or morally ideal man (μακάριος ἀνήρ, v. 1). In the psalm, the blessed man is like a well watered and therefore productive tree in that he reveres and "meditates (μελετήσει) day and night" on God's "law" (τῷ νόμῳ κυρίου, 1:2) and therefore selects the "way of the righteous"

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[43] For the notion that the pursuit of earthly gain will result in loss, see also 16:25; 19:23-4, 30; 20:16; 23:12.

(ὁδὸν δικαίων, v. 6). Matthew seems to intend to evoke this context of the phrase he cites and to take "law" as a reference to scripture, since the Matthean Jesus responds to their declaration with a rhetorical question that insists they have not understood "the scriptures" (ταῖς γραφαῖς). In vv. 41-2, Matthew implies then that, unlike the tenants to whom they say God will entrust the vineyard, the Jewish leaders have failed to revere and meditate on the scriptural writings and, in turn failed to choose the righteous path (cf. 21:32), in their case by not believing John (21:25) and by questioning (21:32) and rejecting (v. 42) Jesus. The allusion thus casts the Jewish leaders as moral anti-ideals. They are unwilling to heed the divine law, or will, and hence are evil. To answer the first pertinent question, the passage thus portrays the tenants' violence and, correspondingly, the Jewish leaders' opposition to Jesus as the result of their evil nature.

The second of the pertinent questions arises in the passage's conclusion, when Matthew deploys the fruits metaphor in describing the condemnation that will befall the Jewish leaders for their evil condition and their concomitant deeds. "On account of this (διὰ τοῦτο)," Jesus declares, "this" being the rejection of himself referred to in v. 42, "the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a people who produce (ποιοῦντι) its fruits" (v. 43). This declaration stands in some tension with the preceding parable itself because it implies that the addressees do not produce fruit, whereas in the parable, the tenants that represent them indeed produce it but fail to recompense the landowner his due. But the declaration coheres with Matthew's interpretation of the parable. Whereas the parable itself

either does not specify exactly what words or deeds "fruits" represent in the allegory or defines them through its allusions to Isa 5, where the fruits of the vineyard are "justice" (κρίσιν) and "righteousness" (δικαιοσύνην, Isa 5:7),[44] the evangelist, by following Mark in presenting the parable as part of Jesus' response to the Jewish leaders questioning his authority, and by placing this redactional verse immediately following vv. 41-2, which, as we have seen, associate righteousness with responding approvingly to John and Jesus, defines fruits as the reverential embrace of God's emissaries. In that sense, the Jewish leaders of Matthew's narrative do not produce fruit and, according to the conclusion, because they do not, the kingdom will be taken from them. Instead of ultimately possessing, or entering, the kingdom, the Jewish leaders will be crushed by it (v. 44).[45] The future tense of this forfeiture, the fact that in the parable the tenants are destroyed, and the fact that the subsequent parable of the wedding banquet (22:1-14) describes the eschaton, together suggest that by the removal of the kingdom, Matthew means the loss of eschatological salvation.[46] The Jewish leaders' fate at the final judgment thus depends on their fruitfulness, or, their response to John and Jesus. As we have seen, in the parable of the tenants that response is symptomatic of their disposition towards the divine, which Matthew equates with their fundamental nature.

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[44] Kloppenborg, *The Tenants in the Vineyard*, 181, notes the import of the allusions to Isaiah 5 in this respect.

[45] Some manuscripts do not include v. 44; see the discussion in Ibid., 194–5.

[46] Bornkamm, Marguerat, and Luz also maintain that Matthew here refers to the eschatological judgment; see Günther Bornkamm, "End-Expectation and the Church in Matthew," in *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, trans. Percy Scott, The New Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963), 43; Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 316–9; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 42; cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:186.

Because they seek possession not submission, because they disregard God's will—because

they are evil—the Jewish leaders do not produce "fruit." As in 12:33-7, judgment is according

to words and deeds, specifically with respect to Jesus, because they reveal one's submission or

opposition to God, one's true self. The fruits metaphor provides Matthew an apt way to

conclude this passage with a distillation of its moral analysis because the imagery of fruit

stresses the organic connection between it and its source, between, in the metaphor, one's

actions and one's self.[47] It allows him once more to describe the etiology of the Jewish

leaders' hostility toward God's eschatological agents.

13:1-9, 18-23

The fruits metaphor appear three times in the parables discourse of ch. 13, two times

in the parable of the sower and its explanation (vv. 1-9, 18-23), which I will examine here,

and one in the parable of the wheat and weeds (vv. 24-30), which I will examine later when I

discuss moral duplicity. As in 12:33-7 and 21:33-44, in 13:1-9, 18-23, the fruits metaphor

describes Jesus' reception but whereas in those passages the metaphor describes why the

Jewish leaders oppose Jesus, in the parable of the sower, which directly follows Jesus'

statement that those who do God' will comprise his family (12:49-50), it describes what a

proper response, one that does God's will, requires.

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[47] Schweizer, *Matthew*, 186.

The parable of the sower (vv. 1-9) describes the fate of seeds scattered onto four different types of ground. Only the seeds that fell on "good soil" produced "fruit" (καρπόν).[48] In Jesus' interpretation of the parable (vv. 18-23), the seeds represent Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom's imminence and consequent need to repent and each type of ground stands for a particular internal condition that determines how one responds to this "word of the kingdom" (v. 19).[49] The road stands for someone who lacks understanding, who begins to grasp ("hears") the proclamation but does not acknowledge it as the decisive word of the Messiah (v. 19).[50] The various points of connection between 13:19 and 13:10-17, most of them redactional, imply that Matthew means for vv. 19-23 to be read in light of what immediately precedes it (vv. 10-17).[51] The οὖν that Matthew adds to v. 18, whether it is

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[48] NA[26] and the SBL Greek New Testament print καρπόν, Heinrich-Greeven καρπούς. While most commentators read the singular καρπόν, Davies and Allison read καρπούς but note that neither NA[26] nor Heinrich-Greeven print an apparatus (*Matthew*, 2:384). There is no substantial difference in meaning.

[49] John, Jesus', and the disciples' all announce the Kingdom's coming in Matthew (3:2; 4:17; 10:7-8) but the redactional title that Matthew gives this parable, "the parable of the [singular] sower" (13:18), suggests that for the evangelist the parable is about Jesus' reception. Sowing is a typical metaphor for teaching; see Hans-Josef Klauck, *Allegorie und Allegorese in synoptischen Gleichnistexten*, 2d ed., Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen 13 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1986), 192–4; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 247–8; Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 243–5.

[50] Recall the responses of "this [childish] generation" and of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum in ch. 11 and of the Jewish leaders in ch. 12.

[51] This remains true even if vv. 14-17 are a later interpolation and not what Matthew wrote, as some allege: Joachim Gnilka, *Die Verstockung Israels: Isaias 6,9-10 in der Theologie der Synoptiker*, Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 3 (Munich: Kösel-Verlag, 1961), 103–5; Stendahl, *School of St. Matthew*, 129–31; Jack Dean Kingsbury, *The Parables of Jesus in Matthew 13: A Study in Redaction-Criticism* (Richmond: John Knox, 1969), 38–9; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:294; for the contrary opinion, see Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 237; Nolland, *Matthew*, 535–6. The connections between v. 19 and vv. 10-13 are sufficient to establish that Matthew links the

resumptive ("then") or, as is usual in Matthew, illative ("therefore"),[52] marks vv. 10-17 as an illustrative interjection between the parable and its interpretation. Reference to hearing connects v. 19 with vv. 15-17 and, to strengthen that bond, Matthew inserts two other key terms from vv. 10-17 into v. 19: heart (καρδία, v. 15 [2x]) and the verb "to understand" (συνίημι, vv. 13, 14; cf. v. 11). The preceding passage clarifies then the cause of the road-person's incomprehension: obstinance. He has thickened his heart, closed his ears, and shut his eyes (13:13-15).[53] And v.19 enacts the script of v. 12: whereas those whose pliable hearts enable them to understand receive greater knowledge—even "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven"—the hard-hearted are left to the violent attacks (ἁρπάζει)[54] of evil that strip what little they have "heard" and taken to "heart" (vv. 11, 19).

The rocky ground (vv. 20-1) represents the unstable person. Though he initially responds to the word with joy, he has no "root in himself" (ῥίζαν ἐν ἑαυτῷ). "Root" is a

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interpretation of the parable with the apology for parabolic speech and regardless of whether Matthew quotes Isa 6:9-10, he certainly alludes to it v. 13 and so it serves as a commentary, elliptical or explicit, on the parable and its interpretation.

[52] BDAG, s.v., considers the illative use more common in early Jewish and Christian literature and in Matthew; see also Gundry, *Matthew*, 258.

[53] Gerhard Barth, "Matthew's Understanding of the Law," in *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, trans. Percy Scott, The New Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963), 110: "The opposite of it [συνιέναι] is obduracy. It is an opening of the heart"; see also Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 421n35; Pierre Bonnard, *Anamnesis: recherches sur le Nouveau Testament*, vol. 3, Cahiers de la Revue de théologie et de philosophie (Geneva: Revue de théologie et de philosophie, 1980), 107.

[54] Elsewhere in Matthew, ἁρπαζει is what the violent do (11:12; 12:29).

metaphor for internal stability[55] and depth of character (cf. 3:10). Lacking it makes this person shallow (v. 5) and therefore fickle (πρόσκαιρος, v. 21). Once his embrace of the proclamation brings him personal hardship, he abandons it—a common response in Matthew to persecution (e.g., 24:9-10).

The soil dominated by thorns (v. 22) represents someone who is in some sense fertile ground. Her internal condition allows her to respond to the word. But her values are nonetheless marred and her focus misdirected. She worries about this age (ἡ μέριμνα τοῦ αἰῶνος) instead of the coming one. She is deceived by wealth (ἡ ἀπάτη τοῦ πλούτου),[56] which, in light of ch. 13's parables on the inestimable value of the Kingdom (13:44-45), means she is wrongly persuaded about its relative value.[57] As we will see when we examine the SM, the proper perspective on worldly cares and wealth is a central component of Matthew's ethic (e.g., 6:19-7:12). Because she lacks that perspective, she becomes "fruitless" (ἄκαρπος), unable to do the will of God.[58]

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[55] Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 197, who cites Col 2:7; Eph 3:17. Cf. also Philo, *Virt.* 1:158.

[56] Ἡ ἀπάτη can also mean "lust" and Luke takes it in this sense, as he replaces the term with ἡδοναὶ του βίου (8:14; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 249n143). As both deception of and lust for wealth denote a misperception of value, either meaning fits my reading. The background of Matthew's view of wealth is the association of possessions and the pursuit thereof with sin (e.g., Prov 15:16-17; Sir 20:21).

[57] Lapide, *The Great Commentary*, 2:136.

[58] On sin as being ἄκαρπος, fruitless, see Hans Dieter Betz, Peter A. Dirkse, and Edgar W. Smith, Jr., "De sera numinis vindicta (Moralia 548A-568A)," in *Plutarch's Theological Writings and Early Christian Literature*, ed. Hans Dieter Betz, Studia ad Corpus Hellenisticum Novi Testamenti 3 (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 208.

Finally, the good soil is the ideal disciple, one who hears the word and has the openness to respond to it and then the stability in the face of affliction or persecution and the perspective on worldly goods necessary to do God's will, to produce "fruit" (v. 23). In the passages examined above, the Jewish leaders' evilness, meaning their utter opposition to the divine, caused them to respond hostilely to Jesus; here contrary traits allow one to respond properly, to persist in discipleship, and to reach its *telos*. The metaphor of trees and fruit in 12:33-7 and 21:33-44 and the metaphor of soil and fruit in 13:1-23 thus portray the relationship between one's internal characteristics and whether one does the divine will as one of natural consequence. The quality of one as a tree or the quality of one's soil, or self, determines whether one responds to God's initiatives and enacts God's will. More specifically, particular qualities of the self such as pliability, or humility, ability to endure persecution, and attitude of disregard for worldly goods like social status and wealth enable one to respond appropriately to Jesus' activities; they are the soil out of which proper discipleship grows.

Moral Duplicity

Thus far our analysis of the fruits metaphor has shown that in Matthew the ideal person responds positively, or submissively, to God's activities in the world because s/he is neither evil, meaning utterly opposed to the divine, nor obstinate, and responds productively to Jesus' proclamation in particular because s/he possesses the qualities requisite to such a response. Thus far, words and actions, specifically with respect to Jesus, follow from and therefore indicate one's internal condition. The remaining instances of the fruits metaphor, two of which concern the Jewish leaders (3:7-12; 21:18-22) and two of which concern the

disciples (7:15-23; 13:24-30, 26-43), focus on the potential, indeed the regular, disconnection between one's actions and the state of one's self. They highlight the possibility that someone could perform proper actions despite lacking the seemingly prerequisite qualities—despite being immoral inwardly—and in 7:15-23, Matthew insists that, ultimately, such performed actions are worthless. Doing God's will entails particular inner states. Even actions the evangelist commends are condemnable if matched with the wrong personal conditions. As in the previous section, we will examine the passages concerning the Jewish leaders first and those concerning the disciples thereafter.

3:7-12

The fruits metaphor appears for the very first time in this narrative in the account of the Baptist's preaching (3:1-12), where Matthew uses it in the context of denouncing the Jewish leaders for simulating a penitent response to John, that is, for feigning repentance. In 3:1-6, which establishes the context for the Baptist's encounter with the Jewish leaders in vv. 7-12, John arrives (cf. 3:13) in the Judean wilderness (v. 1) near the Jordan River (v. 6), eating the diet of a wilderness dweller (v. 4b) and dressed like the prophet Elijah (v. 4a; cf. 2 Kgs 1:8; Matt 17:10-13), who, according to Jewish tradition, disappeared near the Jordan (2 Kgs 2:1-12) and whom God would send back (ἀποστέλλω, Mal 3:22; cf. Mal 3:1; Matt 21:25) to "restore the hearts" (ἀποκαταστήσει καρδίαν, Mal 3:23; cf. Sir 48:11: καταστῆσαι φυλὰς Ιακωβ; Matt 17:11: ἀποκαταστήσει πάντα) or "turn the hearts" (ἐπιστρέψαι

καρδίαν, Sir 48:10) of the Israelites, that is, to provoke repentance, so that they might escape God's eschatological wrath (Mal 3:23; Sir 48:10).[59] In keeping with his casting as an Elijianic figure, John proclaims that Israel must "repent (μετανοεῖτε), for the kingdom of heaven," and hence divine wrath (v. 7), "has come near" (v. 2). He thereby prepares the people for the advent of "the Lord" (κυρίου, v. 3), meaning, in this case, Jesus (vv. 11-12). All the residents of Jerusalem, Judea, and the Jordan region respond to his preaching—they repent—, Matthew claims, by being baptized by John while "professing" (ἐξομολογούμενοι) their sins (v. 6).

In 3:7-12, the Pharisees and Sadducees stand out from this totality in that when John sees them "coming for baptism" (ἐρχομένους ἐπὶ τὸ βάπτισμα, v. 7), he rebukes them for presenting themselves as repentant (by seeking baptism) without actually possessing the dispositions and self-understanding—the restored or turned hearts—associated with repentance, that is, without being repentant. Because Matthew throughout his gospel associates these Jewish leaders with hypocrisy, with conduct that creates a false impression of their motives (15:7: 22:18; 23:13-15, 28), their very mention signals that the passage will likely focus on the contrast between their outward appearance and inward reality and,

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[59] On the Baptist's diet, see James A. Kelhoffer, *The Diet of John the Baptist: "Locusts and Wild Honey" in Synoptic and Patristic Interpretation*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 176 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 124–8; on his attire, Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:295–6. For Jewish understandings of Elijah's eschatological function, see Richard A. Horsley and John S. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets, and Messiahs: Popular Movements in the Time of Jesus* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1985), 149, 160–189; Richard Bauckham, "The Restoration of Israel in Luke-Acts," in *The Jewish World around the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2010), 329–334.

indeed, John's first words to them raise that topic:[60] he labels them "offspring of vipers" (γεννήματα ἐχιδνῶν, v. 7a), an epithet that not only anticipates their appeal to Abrahamic paternity (v. 9) but also asserts that, regardless of how responsive to John's proclamation coming for baptism may make them appear, they are innately evil and, as such, incapable of responding properly, for Matthew places that epithet in apposition to "being evil" (πονηροὶ ὄντες) and therefore unable to act—in that case, speak—properly in 12:34, as we have seen, and blames such offspring for the murder of divine emissaries in 23:33.[61] To explain John's instantaneous condemnation, some commentators rightly note that the preceding phrase, often translated "when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for (ἐπί) baptism," can also be rendered "when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming against (ἐπί) baptism"

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[60] Cf. Luke 3:7, where the Baptist addresses the crowds. It is impossible to reconstruct with certainty what addressee appeared in Q and therefore difficult to discern whether Matthew has redacted 3:7. Matthew does frequently insert the Pharisees and Sadduccees into his sources. According to John S. Kloppenborg, the Pharisees are redactional in Matt 5:20; 15:12; 16:11, 21; 21:45; 22:34, 41; 23:2, 13, 15, 27; 26:62; perhaps in 9:32 and 12:24, and surely, in his judgment, in 3:7 (*The Formation of Q*, 121n92). But Luke's ὄχλοι is also at times redactional (e.g., 4:42; 5:29; 6:17,19; 7:9) and Q could plausibly have read "Pharisees," as it sometimes indicts them (Tuckett, *Q and the History of Early Christianity*, 109–116). Richard Horsley therefore concludes that "[a]ccording to the usual criteria of reconstruction, we cannot determine how Q 3:7b-9 was introduced…. For Q 3:7b-9, in fact, the Matthean 'Pharisees and Sadducees' or a variation on it would fit better than Luke's 'crowds'" ("The Kingdom of God as the Renewal of Israel," in *Whoever Hears You Hears Me: Prophets, Performance, and Tradition in Q* [Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 1999], 261n1). Nonetheless, most interpreters concur with Adolf von Harnack that "Pharisees and Sadducees cannot have stood in Q because they are characteristic of Matthew" (*The Sayings of Jesus: The Second Source of St. Matthew and St. Luke*, trans. J. R. Wilkinson [London: Williams & Norgate, 1908], 40; see also Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 130n155). Matt 12:22-37 offers a parallel phenomenon; in that passage Matthew attributes the Beelzebub accusation not to the crowds, as in Luke, but to the Pharisees. If "Pharisees and Sadducees" are redactional, then Matthew has framed the passage so as to make hypocrisy a conspicuous theme. Finally, Warren Carter notes that the narrative has not yet referred to the Jewish leaders as hypocrites (*Matthew and the Margins*, 96). My reading adopts the perspective of the author or knowledgeable reader who is already familiar with this gospel's depiction of these groups.

[61] Nolland, *Matthew*, 143.

(v. 7) and claim the Jewish leaders come not to receive ("for") but to protest ("against") John's baptizing.[62] Both readings are valid. In the context of a speech against dissimulation, v. 7's ἐπί, which is perhaps redactional,[63] is a double entendre: because they are insincere, the Jewish leaders come "for" baptism visibly but are disposed "against" it inwardly. The heteroglossia of the preposition reflects the multiple levels on which Matthew analyzes their behavior. The multivalence becomes, in the evangelist's hands, a fitting indication of hypocrisy and hence of the reason for John's rebuke: the Jewish leaders appear to come for baptism though, being evil, they refuse the repentant state of the heart it represents. John in this gospel highlights and censures the dichotomy between the Jewish leaders' external appearance and internal condition.

John then elaborates the label "vipers' offspring" with a rhetorical question that further characterizes the sight of the Pharisees and Sadducees presenting themselves for baptism as incongruous, given their supposedly evil nature ("Who warned *you* to flee from the coming wrath?", v. 7b), and a rhetorical imperative: the Baptist demands these leaders do something of which he has just declared them incapable, namely "produce fruit befitting repentance" (v. 8), which, in this context, seems to mean that they must demonstrate ("produce fruit") that they indeed believe that God's kingdom has indeed approached (v. 2) and with it a divine wrath from which they must flee (v. 7). The immediate context suggests one way they might demonstrate this conviction: by professing their sins and thereby their

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[62] Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 96–7; see also Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:304.

[63] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:304.

need for forgiveness that will assuage wrath, just as the multitudes before them have done (v. 6). The next chapter implies another: by becoming John's disciples, just as Peter, Andrew, James, and John become Jesus' disciples (4:18-22) when Jesus reiterates John's call to repentance (4:17). Whatever the specific type(s) of demonstration envisioned, Matthew deploys fruit in this passage as a metaphor for particular deeds one should do in response to John's proclamation and, moreover, insists that the Jewish leaders cannot do such deeds because they are snakes—because they are evil. They present themselves otherwise when they come for baptism and therein lies their hypocrisy, which John's demand for fruit aims to expose.

Verse 9 further identifies the form of the Jewish leaders' evil; it specifies what makes them vipers' offspring, disposed against baptism, and incapable of responding rightly to John's proclamation. They cannot produce the fruit of repentance, the Baptist argues, because they tell themselves (λέγειν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς) that descent from Abraham will insulate them from divine judgment, because they are self-assured.[64] John implies that unlike the

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[64] Given Matthew's interest in inner states (5:17-30; 5:21-2, 27-8; 6:21; 12:34; 15:11, 18-19; 22:37) and internal deliberation (12:25; 24:48) as well as the biblical use of the expression "to say in one's heart" to mean to hold erroneous beliefs (e.g., Ps 13:1; John Barton, *Ethics in Ancient Israel* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014], 165), λέγειν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς (cf. 9:3) means "'[t]o say in yourselves,' … 'to think'" (Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:307) and not "to say to one another." As Meyer observes, 3:9 is concerned with "the language of the mind" (*Handbook to the Gospel of Matthew*, 80). For concurring opinions, see C. G. Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels*, 2 vols., 2d ed. (London: Macmillan, 1927), 2:25; Willoughby C. Allen, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to S. Matthew*, 2d ed., International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments 26 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1907), 25; Nolland, *Matthew*, 132; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 96. For a contrary view, see Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew*, 2 vols., Word Biblical Commentary 33 (Dallas: Word, 1993), 1:50. For ancient parallels, see Sir 5:4-7, where repentance involves a change in one's interior dialogue, and the works discussed in

crowds, they do not imagine that the kingdom's advance threatens them and so they profess their eschatological safety to themselves, not their sins to all. In order to respond rightly to his proclamation, in order to yield "fruit befitting repentance," the Pharisees and Sadducees would have to *be* repentant, which in this passage, means they would have to reform their interior dialogues and admit their vulnerability. They would have to become humble, the opposite, it seems, of evil.

Verse 10, the first of the three verses threatening judgment (vv. 10-12), asserts then that those who lack the humility necessary to respond properly—repentantly—to the kingdom of heaven's approach, those trees too evil, meaning self-assured, or, arrogant, to produce good fruit, will fail the eschatological judgment. Matthew thus utilizes the fruits metaphor in 3:7-12 to stress that God requires right actions in the end, specifically a penitent response to the proclamation of the Kingdom's advent, and that such actions require particular inner qualities or states of the self, in this case, a lack of self-assurance, or, humility. In that respect, Matthew here deploys the fruits metaphor to make the same point as in the passages examined above: one must produce "fruit," meaning thus far a particular response to the eschatological ministries of John and Jesus, in order to pass the final judgment, and producing fruit requires particular conditions. Moreover, Matthew makes generally the same claim in his other references to repentance. While a digression, a brief examination of those passages will make even clearer the ways in which 3:1-12 initiate a Matthean moral theme.

Michal Beth Dinkler, "'The Thoughts of Many Hearts Shall Be Revealed': Listening in on Lukan Interior Monologues," *JBL* 134 (2015): 373–99.

The digression will leave us better positioned to appreciate how this passage's use of the fruits metaphor distinguishes it not only from the uses of that metaphor examined above but within the narrative more broadly.

Repentance, as referenced by use of the roots μεταν- or μεταμελ-, is only a minor theme in this gospel, at least from a redactional and comparative perspective. Matthew introduces μετανοέω or μετάνοια only in 11:20, his introduction to Q 10:13, and he uses these terms far less frequently than Luke, who regularly introduces them into Mark (e.g., Mark 2:17 // Luke 5:32) and whose special material stresses repentance (e.g., 16:19-31).[65] As the table below indicates, though, the evangelist likely preserves all of Q's uses of these terms. (The terms do also appear in the Lukan versions of Q 15:7, 10; 17:3-4 but their presence there is probably redactional, given Luke's particular interest in repentance). Furthermore, of the three instances of μετανοέω or μετάνοια in Mark, Matthew preserves the two associated with Jesus' preaching, only eliminating repentance from the disciple's message (10:7-8).[66] Moreover, Matthew is the only canonical gospel to feature forms of μεταμέλομαι (Matt 21:29, 32; 27:3), a synonym of μετανοέω in the LXX and elsewhere.[67] Thus, if minor, repentance is nonetheless a significant theme and one that Matthew hardly minimizes. An

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[65] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:388. On the importance of repentance to Luke as compared to the other synoptic evangelists, see Guy D. Nave, *The Role and Function of Repentance in Luke-Acts*, Academia Biblica 4 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002), 3, 29–38.

[66] Some posit only a Q source for Matt 10:7-8 but the passage shares more vocabulary with Mark 6:12-13 than with Q 10:9. Matthew has likely composed 10:7-8 based primarily on Mark 6:12-13 and secondarily on Q 10:9. See Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 71.

[67] On the relationship of μετανοέω and μεταμέλομαι, both of which translators of the LXX used to render נחם, see Nave, *Repentance*, 52, 54–7, 112–113.

analysis of the evangelist's treatment of this theme in 11:20-4; 12:38-42; 21:28-32; and 27:3-10 will show that the evangelist develops the notion consistently, using it elsewhere as he does in 3:1-12 to refer to recognition of John's or Jesus' eschatological importance, recognition that humility makes possible.

Table 2: Μετανοέω and Μετάνοια in Matthew's Sources and in Mattthew

μετανοέω and μετάνοια in Matthew's sources	μετανοέω and μετάνοια in Matthew
Mark 1:8	3:11
Mark 1:15	3:2 4:17
Mark 6:12	
Q 3:8	3:8
Q 10:13	11:20-21 (2x)
Q 11:32	12:41

In 11:20-4, Jesus upbraids the three Galilean cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum for not repenting (οὐ μετενόησαν, v. 20) in response to Jesus' miraculous deeds (δυνάμεις). The literary context makes clear what not repenting entails, what these cities have failed to do: acknowledge Jesus as a messianic figure. The passage belongs to a larger section, chs. 11-12, whose principal theme, announced by 11:6's macarism ("Blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me" [cf. 13:16]), is the response to Jesus' words and deeds in chs. 5-9, the embrace of or hostility to the eschatological significance of the Christ and his actions.[68] To Matthew, miracles signal that Jesus is an eschatological figure (11:2-6; see also 12:28; 14:2), the kingdom has approached (3:2, 4:17), the messianic age has begun, and

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[68] On this theme within chs. 11-12, see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:265, 2:269; cf. Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 129, who maintains that ch. 11 lacks a clear theme.

repentance is in order. As Harrington states, "The theological assumption of Matt 11:2-24 is that Jesus' miracles were not intended merely as displays but rather demanded the response of repentance in the face of the coming Kingdom of God."[69] The Galilean cities in 11:20-24, like "this generation" in the preceding pericope (11:16-19), fail to recognize what these miracles mean[70] and, in turn, they fail to repent (vv. 20-1), to respond in deed to the Messiah. The comparison of these cities to Tyre and Sidon indicates what form their response should take. According to v. 21, had Tyre and Sidon witnessed the wonders that Chorazin and Bethsaida have, they would have donned "sackcloth and ashes," biblical symbols of contrition and remorse (e.g., Esth 4:3; Isa 58:5; Jer 6:26; Dan 9:3; Jonah 3:5-6), visible expressions of a humbled heart, the implication being that Chorazin and Bethsaida must, in response to Jesus' wonders, express their repentance similarly, just as the Jewish leaders in 3:1-12 must profess their sins as the people of the region have done.

References to Israel's scriptures further imply why these cities fail to acknowledge Jesus and to respond to his dynamic deeds with repentance. Matthew 11:21 compares

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[69] Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 165. See also Dale C. Allison, "The Eschatology of Jesus," in *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*, ed. Bernard McGinn, John J. Collins, and Stephen J. Stein, vol. 1, 3 vols. (New York: Continuum, 1998), 298; cf. Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 153.

[70] See also 12:38-40 and 16:1-4, where, in spite of Jesus' miraculous deeds, the Jewish leaders request a "sign." How common or idiosyncratic Matthew's correlation of δυνάμεις and τὸ ἔσχατον is remains difficult to discern but there is little evidence that many Jews expected the Messiah to work miracles, though 2 Bar 29.6 and 4Q521 do suggest as much (Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2.245; Allison, "The Eschatology of Jesus," 1:298; Lidija Novakovic, "4Q521: The Works of the Messiah or the Signs of the Messianic Time?," in *Qumran Studies: New Approaches, New Questions*, ed. Michael T. Davis and Brent A Strawn [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eedrmans, 2007], 208–31).

Chorazin and Bethsaida to Tyre and Sidon, cities that the biblical prophets repeatedly depict

as the arrogant enemies of Israel.[71] These comparands are not chosen at random but, in

Daniel Marguerat's words, because "[c]e couple des grandes cites phéniciennes…. figure dans

les oracles prophétiques du jugement comme le symbole de la prétention orgueilleuse et du

refus de Yahveh."[72] Just as pride put Tyre and Sidon at odds with God, so, Matthew implies,

Chorazin and Bethsaida's pretension renders them indifferent to Jesus. Chorazin and

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[71] Isaiah 23:1-12 decries the cities' pride and rejoices in the idea of God "shaming" (ἀτιμάσαι) them (23:9). In Ezek 26-28, God judges Tyre and Sydon (26:3-14) for gloating over a fallen Jerusalem (26:2) and Tyre, deeming itself an aesthetic paragon (27:3), has a proud "heart" (καρδία, 28:2, 17) and claims to be divine (28:2). See also Jer 25:22; Joel 4:4; Amos 1:9-10; Zech 9:1-4.

[72] *Le Jugement*, 260. See also Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:267–9; Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 165; Burton L. Mack, *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q & Christian Origins* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993), 135; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 438. On the suggestive or elliptical nature of Matthew's biblical allusions, see Ulrich Luz, "Intertexts in the Gospel of Matthew," *HTR* 97 (2004): 128:

"The Gospel of Matthew is full of the names of biblical persons and places that would have been well known to its audience. These names function as abbreviations which call to mind various biblical texts, so that readers can enlarge upon Matthew's terse mentions by drawing on their knowledge of the Bible. Examples include Abraham (3:8); Solomon (6:29); Tyre and Sidon, and Sodom and Gomorrah (11:21-24); the Ninevites and the queen of the South (12:41-42); and Abel and Zechariah (23:35)."

In this way, Matthew is typical of ancient biblical interpretation, which Kugel characterizes as follows:

"Even the most innocent-sounding remark about this or that biblical person or law or prophecy is likely to contain some element of interpretation. Quite often, that interpretation is found in fuller form elsewhere, in the vast corpus of Second Temple Jewish (and later Christian) writings that have reached us via various routes. Thus this literature as a whole, and the scriptural interpretations contained within it, must be the starting point for reckoning with any single text from within it, since any single text is likely to evoke, if only in an offhand manner, interpretive motifs known from elsewhere" ("Some Instances of Biblical Interpretation in the Hymns and Wisdom Writings of Qumran," in *Studies in Ancient Midrash*, ed. James L. Kugel [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2001], 169).

Bethsaida's "hard-heartedness towards miracles,"[73] is, on Matthew's account, the result of arrogance.[74] Matthew 11:23 reiterates to Capernaum the taunt that the restored exiles utter to the pretentious King of Babylon in Isa 14:13-15: "will you be exalted as high as heaven? As low as Hades you will descend." Apart from any intertext, these words by themselves accuse Capernaum of megalomania ("will you be exalted as high as heaven?"). But as an allusion to Isa 14, a text that Jews in antiquity often applied, as here, to perceived opponents,[75] they align Capernaum with a pompous (Isa 14:11) nemesis of Israel who thinks to himself (Isa 14:13; cf. Matt 3:7) that he will rule the divine court but who instead suffers an ignominious end. The comparison mocks Capernaum's alleged self-image. As with the Jewish leaders in ch. 3,[76] so again with the cities in ch. 11: arrogance causes indifference to eschatological events. It is the root of moral failure.

Moreover, if Chorazin and Bethsaida remain intransigent in the face of eschatological marvels, they will be punished and the description of their fate in v. 22 confirms that the etiology of their failure is arrogance because it indicates that their punishment is intended not

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[73] I take the quoted phrase from Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:270.

[74] Luz admits that Israel's scriptures cast Tyre and Sidon as arrogant but rejects the view that the scriptural allusions indicate why Chorazin and Bethsaida do not respond to Jesus' miracles (*Matthew 8-20*, 153.).

[75] See Dale C. Allison, *The Intertextual Jesus: Scripture in Q* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Trinity Press International, 2000), 114–115, with citations.

[76] Erasmus imagines that these cities have the same internal dialogue as the Jewish leaders in Matt 3:7-10: because of Abrahamic descent and moral and religious excellence, their eschatological fate is already determined. Therefore, they disregard Jesus (*Paraphrase on Matthew*, ed. Robert D Sider, trans. Dean Simpson, Collected Works of Erasmus 45 [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008], 188).

just to achieve justice[77] but also to humiliate the pretentious.[78] Jesus' pronouncement that

such exemplars of arrogant opposition to the God of Israel as Tyre and Sidon will be judged

less severely than these Israelite cities shames them for their extravagant haughtiness and

forces a humble position, in effect, on those who refuse humility. In Matt 11:20-24, those

who lack the humility necessary to respond properly to Jesus' miracles and who refuse

sackcloth and ashes will ultimately be humbled. The fate of these cities enacts a principle

Matthew later states: "All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble

themselves will be exalted" (23:12; cf. 18:4).[79]

In 12:38-42, a reference to repentance appears, again, in the context of a

condemnation of those who have not responded properly to Jesus' words and deeds. Jesus

chastises the scribes and Pharisees for requesting a sign (σημεῖον) that will authorize his

activities. Unmoved by his miracles deeds (11:20), they ask for some greater act that will

sanction his teaching and confirm that his miracles are not enabled by evil, as they have just

alleged (12:24). Their request in and of itself is not problematic. Israel's scriptures

countenance and even praise requests for confirmatory signs.[80] The problem with this request

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[77] Matthew lacks the saying "to whom much is given, much is demanded" (Luke 12:48) but 11:20-24 makes a similar point.

[78] Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 260; see also Kloppenborg, *Excavating Q*, 148, who argues that Q frequently shames its opponents. Matthew continues the practice.

[79] This phrase may allude to the description of "the day of the Lord" in Isa 2.

[80] Calvin, *Commentaries, ad loc*, collects the examples; see also Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 276–77.

is that it is an expression of obstinacy.[81] Jesus has already worked numerous wonders and declared that his miracles are signs, that his deeds indicate his identity and legitimate his words (11:2-6, 22-4).[82] He therefore treats their petition as further evidence of their intransigent opposition to God's interventions in the world, declaring that after such thaumaturgy only "an evil and adulterous generation asks for a sign" (v. 39).

The biblical references in vv. 41-2 indicate that instead of obstinately requesting a sign, these Jewish leaders should have repented—which, in this context, would mean accepting rather than demanding further evidence that he is God's eschatological agent—and suggest why they did not. Verse 41 compares the scribes and Pharisees to the Ninevites, who, as synecdoches of the Assyrian Empire, are renowned in the Hebrew Bible for their blasphemous pretension. Zephaniah 2:15 labels the city itself arrogant and numerous biblical as well as extrabiblical sources portray the city's leaders[83] or Assyria[84] as haughty. The book of Jonah, from which Matthew takes his reference to the Assyrian capital (v. 40), lacks such depictions but among first century audiences, the mention of Nineveh or the Ninevites would have brought them to mind,[85] as the *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* shows. In

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[81] Calvin, *Commentaries*, *ad loc.*

[82] Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 277.

[83] Isa 10:5-19; 2 Kings 18:28; Sir 48:18; Jdt 3:8; 6:19; 9:9; cf. 1:11; 6:2; 11:7; 3 Macc 6:5.

[84] Zech 10:11; see also Jer 50:17-32, where the Assyrian and Babylonian empires are aligned and then Babylon is declared arrogant.

[85] The same is true for the original audience of Jonah, about which Leslie Allen writes, "In the mind of the listening circle, Nineveh stood for the essence of human self-exaltation and anti-God

retelling Gen 10, the author of that work makes Nimrod, the purported founder of Nineveh, arrogant (*superbus*, 4:7), reading other biblical descriptions of the city into Genesis.[86] To be fair, it would have been difficult for Matthew to select as a comparand a biblical city not known for arrogance. Biblical pronouncements of judgment on Israel's enemies almost stereotypically portray those enemies as pretentious; haughtiness is the motive regularly divined for political or military opposition to Israel.[87] But that observation merely underscores the point. Matthew compares Jesus' indifferent audiences to biblical enemies of Israel because those enemies provide easily recognizable emblems of insolence. The

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power" (*The Books of Joel, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1976], 203).

[86] This interpretive practice is characteristic of the writing; see Howard Jacobson, *A Commentary on Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum, with Latin Text and English Translation*, 2 vols., Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums 31 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 224–240; Howard Jacobson, "Biblical Interpretation in Pseudo-Philo's Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum," in *A Companion to Biblical Interpretation in Early Judaism*, ed. Matthias Henze (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eedrmans, 2011), 180–202. It is possible that the *L.A.B.* also deems him arrogant because it is participating in a tradition of post-biblical interpretation that portrays Nimrod as rebellious against the divine and, simultaneously, in a tradition of the Bible that, as I note below, equates such rebelliousness with arrogance. On Nimrod as rebellious, see Pieter W. van der Horst, "Nimrod After the Bible," in *Essays on the Jewish World of Early Christianity*, Novum Testamentum et orbis antiquus 14 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 220–32. Whatever the origins of the *L.A.B.*'s depiction of Nimrod, that depiction is evidence that some readers roughly contemporaneous with Matthew would have understood references to Nineveh or its inhabitants as references to the arrogant. It may also be significant that the story of the comically arrogant Tobit is set in Nineveh and not some other diasporic location. On Tobit's arrogance and humiliation, see Erich S. Gruen, *Diaspora: Jews Amidst Greeks and Romans* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002), 151–57.

[87] Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah and the Assyrian Crisis*, Studies in Biblical Theology 2/3 (London: S.C.M. Press, 1967), 88–90. Ironically, this stereotype originates with First Isaiah's appropriation of actual Assyrian propaganda claiming that one could not legitimately oppose the Assyrian king; see Peter Machinist, "Assyria and Its Image in the First Isaiah," *JAOS* 103 (1983): 719–37; Shawn Z. Aster, "The Image of Assyria in Isaiah 2:5-22: The Campaign Motif Reversed," *JAOS* 127 (2007): 265.

comparison is, for the scribes and Pharisees, unfavorable. At the final judgment, Jesus states,

the Ninevites will condemn then, for the Ninevites repented when Jonah preached, though

he offered no signs or miracles. "This generation," however, is witnessing "something"

greater than Jonah—Jesus, who does miraculous deeds (δυνάμεις, v. 41)—and yet it fails to

repent.[88] As in ch. 11, Israel's and, by extension, God's, traditional enemies judge leaders of

God's traditional people for their hard-heartedness, a reversal that implies that these leaders

surpass even the Ninevites in arrogance and that therein lies their "evil," the root of their

obstinance towards Jesus.

Verse 42 compares the scribes and Pharisees to the "Queen of the South," who may

also model arrogance. Some manuscripts of the *Testament of Solomon*, a text that, like (and

likely under the influence of)[89] Matthew, uses "Queen of the South" (19.3; 21.1) to refer to

the character 1 Kgs 10:1-13 and 2 Chr 9:1-12 call the "Queen of Sheba," describe her as a

witch (γοής)[90] who approaches Solomon "πολλῇ τῇ φρονήσει" or "ἐν πολλῇ φρονήσει"

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[88] The contrast between Jonah not performing miracles and Jesus performing many is stressed in the *Opus Imperfectum*, *ad loc.*

[89] The phrase βασίλισσα νότου (Queen of the South) is almost never used in antiquity except as a quotation of or allusion to Matt 12:42 // Luke 11:31. Besides the *Testament of Solomon*, the only possible pre-Eusebian use that does not overtly reference the synoptic tradition is in the *Selecta in Psalmos* attributed to Origen (PG 12.1524.44) and that work elsewhere does reference the synoptic tradition. The most likely explanation for this data is that the *Testament of Solomon* borrows this phrase from Matthew. On the other Christian elements in *T. Sol.*, see Chester C. McCown, *The Testament of Solomon*, Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 9 (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1922), 68–70; Sarah L Schwarz, "Building a Book of Spells: The so-Called 'Testament of Solomon' Reconsidered" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2005), 52–6.

[90] In labeling her a witch, is *T. Sol.* interpreting the Septuagint's claim that she came with a δυνάμει: ἦλθεν εἰς Ιερουσαλημ ἐν δυνάμει βαρείᾳ σφόδρα (I Kgs 10:2 = 2 Chr 9:1)?

(19.3), which some translators render as "with great arrogance."[91] However, while φρονήσις

can mean "pride" or "arrogance," it far more often means "purpose" or "practical wisdom,"

that is, "prudence."[92] In a retelling of the foreign queen's visit to Solomon, "prudence" is the

more likely meaning since in the LXX, φρονήσις or its potential synonym σοφία (wisdom)

is what the queen celebrates about Solomon (1 Kgs 10:4, 6, 8; 2 Chr 9:3, 5, 7). The

Testament of Solomon would then not malign the Queen of the South but would validate

her appraisal of Solomon; being wise, she can recognize wisdom. The literary context of the

passage might suggest a different meaning but it is difficult to determine on that basis which

sense of φρονήσις better fits here because the *Testament of Solomon*'s references to the

Queen of the South are poorly integrated into their literary settings.[93] Moreover, both the

extant forms and the sources of the *Testament of Solomon* resist secure dating,[94] making it

hard to know if the interpretative traditions it evidences—whatever their meaning—are

contemporaneous with Matthew. For these reasons, it is more likely that in Matthew the

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[91] Dennis C. Duling, "Testament of Solomon," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983), 982; Schwarz, "Building a Book of Spells," 65. Neither Duling nor Schwarz explains the reasoning behind their translation. For a partial synopsis of the manuscripts of this passage, see ibid., 85.

[92] LSJ, s.v. φρονήσις. So F.C.Conybeare's translation: "the queen of the south, being a witch, came in great concern [φρονήσει]" ("The Testament of Solomon," *JQR* 11 [1898]: § 109).

[93] Duling, "Testament of Solomon," 1:982: "The introduction of the Queen of Sheeba at this point seems strange"; Schwarz, "Building a Book of Spells," 63–5; Sarah L. Schwarz, "Reconsidering the Testament of Solomon," *JSP* 16 (2007): 228.

[94] Schwarz, "Building a Book of Spells"; Schwarz, "Reconsidering the Testament of Solomon." Cf. the more optimistic assessment of Dennis C. Duling, "The Testament of Solomon: Retrospect and Prospect," *JSP* 1 (1988): 87–112.

"Queen of the South" models humility. She is willing to travel to a foreign kingdom in search of wisdom and to acknowledge wisdom when it stands before her. The comparison then is, once more, unfavorable for the Jewish leaders. Matthew offers the Queen of the South, like the Ninevites, as an example "which condemn[s] by exhibiting more appreciative response to far inferior opportunity."[95] She too will censure the Jewish leaders because she traveled "from the ends of the earth" to receive Solomon's wisdom, while they have Jesus among them and call him "teacher" (διδάσκαλε, v. 38) and yet do not listen to him (v. 42). They fail to do so, the comparison implies, because they lack the humility that made her and would make them receptive.[96]

Because they are "evil" in this way, because they are arrogant and, in turn, unresponsive to Jesus' ministry, the scribes and Pharisees will receive not the sign they request but "the sign of Jonah" (v. 39), by which Matthew means Jesus' resurrection.[97] Just as

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[95] Benjamin W. Bacon, "The Redaction of Matthew 12," *JBL* 46 (1927): 41.

[96] Calvin, *Commentaries*, *ad loc.*

[97] Most interpreters claim that the "sign of Jonah" has a quite different meaning in the Q source for this Matthean pericope, that it refers in Q to Jesus' preaching of judgment (so Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q*, 132–34; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:351–52). But it is plausible that Q, like Matthew, uses the phrase to refer to Jesus' resurrection, in which case it would be Q's clearest allusion to that event. The references in the same passage to the resurrection of the Queen of the South (ἐγερθήσεται, Matt 12:42 // Luke 11:31) and the Ninevites (ἀναστήσονται, Matt 12:41 // Luke 11:32) suggest that the "sign" may likewise refer to resurrection (N. T. Wright, "Resurrection in Q," in *Christology, Controversy, and Community: New Testament Essays in Honour of David R. Catchpole*, ed. David R. Catchpole, David G. Horrell, and Tuckett, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 99 [Leiden: Brill, 2000], 93–6). Perhaps Matthew sensed that connection in his source and heightened it by introducing 12:40. Q may also allude to the resurrection in 7:22 and 11:31 and for Q the resurrection is probably what validates Jesus' words and one's faith in them, even if it is peripheral to Q's presentation of its theology; see Heinz Eduard Tödt, *The Son of Man in the Synoptic Tradition*, trans. Dorothea M. Barton, New Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster

Jonah emerged from the fish after three days, so will Jesus from the earth (v. 40).[98] Rather

than inspire faith, this sign will signal doom because when it appears the general resurrection

and the final judgment will take place (vv. 41-2) and instead of judging the nations, as some

Jewish traditions would lead them to expect, the Jewish leaders will themselves be judged

and, indeed, by such foreign figures as the Ninevites and the Queen of the South.[99] As in

3:1-12 and 11:20-24, in 12:38-45 arrogance impedes the repentance, meaning the positive

response to God's emissaries, necessary for one to pass the final judgment.

The parable of the two sons (21:28-32) too invokes repentance in the context of

denouncing particular responses to Jesus' activities, although it employs a different verb to

refer to repentance, μεταμέλομαι and not μετανοέω, which 11:20-24 and 12:38-45 utilize.

Press, 1965), 249–53; Schnelle, *Theology of the New Testament*, 389–91; cf. Daniel A. Smith, *The Post-Mortem Vindication of Jesus in the Sayings Gospel Q*, Library of New Testament Studies 338 (New York: T. & T. Clark, 2006). The fact that Q seldom refers to the resurrection should not be taken to mean that Q can never refer to it (cf. Kloppenborg: "It is doubly unlikely that the resurrection (or the manifestation of the Resurrected One) is intended by the phrase 'Sign of Jonah' since Q never explicitly refers to the resurrection" [*The Formation of Q*, 132]). On the multiplicity of meanings post-biblical interpreters have given "the sign of Jonah," see A. K. M. Adam, "The Sign of Jonah: A Fish-Eye View," *Semeia* 51 (1990): 177–91. Finally, both Kloppenborg and Luz appeal to ancient Jewish interpretation to limit the meaning of this "sign," Kloppenborg maintaining that it emphasized Jonah's "extraordinary success as a preacher of repentance and judgment" (*The Formation of Q*, 132), Luz his deliverance from the fish (*Matthew 8-20*, 218). But, as Repschinski shows, there really is no consistent emphasis on any one aspect of the Jonah story in Jewish exegesis (*Controversy Stories*, 217). Some rabbinic traditions stress his preaching but Josephus relates Jonah's story without mentioning it (*A.J.* 9.10.2.204-14). The fish episode is central to 3 Macc 6:8 but minimized in *The Lives of the Prophets*.

[98] I take v. 40 to be part of Matthew's composition and not a later interpolation, as Krister Stendahl argues (School of St. Matthew, 132–33). For a persuasive response to Stendahl, see Repschinski, Controversy Stories, 136–7.

[99] The intellectual background of vv. 41-2 is Israel's belief that it will ultimately judge the nations; see, e.g., Dan 7. On this reversal of expectations, see Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 260.

Unique to this gospel, the parable is the first of three parables of judgment with which the Matthean Jesus responds indirectly to the Jewish leaders' inquiry about his authority in 21:23, the second, the parable of the tenants, having been examined above. This context, in which Jesus speaks covertly (21:27), in juridical parables, explains why the evangelist utilizes, whether redactionally or by preserving tradition, the more general and hence ambiguous term μεταμέλομαι ("to change one's mind," "to regret") and not the more technical theological term for "repentance," μετανοέω.

In the parable, a son who initially refuses to do what his father asks later "changes his mind" (μεταμεληθεὶς)—he repents—and complies, whereas the other son initially agrees and even offers his affirmative response with the utmost deference, addressing his father as "Lord," a form of address Septuagint translators and other Graecophone Jews use for God,[100] but then fails to obey. The parable is extant in several versions, the two best attested of which differ in the verbal response the father receives first, a "no" or a "yes," but Jesus' concluding question in v. 31 makes clear that, for Matthew, what matters is not the order in which they speak but the contrast between the sons' ultimate responses.[101] One did "the will of the father" (τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πατρός); one did not. When the Jewish leaders claim that the son who changed his mind is the one who in fact did his father's will, Jesus polemically replies

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[100] See Martin Rösel, "The Reading and Translation of the Divine Name in the Masoretic Tradition and the Greek Pentateuch," *JSOT* 31 (2007): 411–28.

[101] Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 30; cf. 25. For discussion of the textual tradition of this parable, see Paul Foster, "A Tale of Two Sons: But Which One Did the Far, Far Better Thing? A Study of Matt 21.28-32," *NTS* 47 (2001): 26–37.

that "the tax collectors and the prostitutes are preceding you into the kingdom of God" (v. 31) because (γὰρ) they "trusted" or "put faith in" (ἐπίστευσαν) John the Baptist, whereas the Jewish leaders did not, even after seeing tax collectors and prostitutes—indeed the whole region (3:5-6)—do so (v. 32). His rejoinder reveals that the parable is allegorical and juridical, its story of two sons' responses to the father representing two paradigmatic responses to God, that of the Jewish leaders, which they themselves have just unwittingly deemed contrary to the divine will, and that of those they deem at odds with the deity, a group epitomized by "the tax collectors and the prostitutes." The latter group says "no" to the divine summons but later, in response to John's ministry, repents, meaning, as we have seen in 3:1-12, that they accept John's pronouncements about the imminent judgment and their need for forgiveness, and thereby do God's will. The claim that this group initially says "no" to God cannot refer to their initial reactions to John, as some commentators claim,[102] since in this gospel as soon as John "appears" (παραγίνεται, 3:1), he is welcomed by all but the Jewish leaders. Their nay-saying alludes to some earlier refusal to do God's bidding, likely a refusal to keep the Mosaic law, and perhaps also then to the notion, which will become a motif in rabbinic literature, that God originally offered the Torah to both the Gentile nations and to Israel but the Gentiles rejected it,[103] in which case Jews included among the "tax collectors and

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[102] See, e.g., Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 27, 31.

[103] For this notion, see the texts cited and/or discussed in Jacob Neusner, *Rabbinic Judaism: The Theological System* (Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002), 39–45, 53–83; Joel S. Kaminsky, "Israel's Election and the Other in Biblical, Second Temple, and Rabbinic Thought," in *The "Other" in Second Temple Judaism: Essays in Honor of John J. Collins*, ed. Daniel C. Harlow et al. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2011), 25–7. Cf. the idea of the law's continuing availability to Gentiles,

prostitutes" would be likened to God-spurning Gentiles.[104] The Jewish leaders, by contrast,

accept, or say "yes" to, the Torah, call the God of Israel "Lord," and thus purport to do God's

will but, according to the parable, by rejecting the preaching of God's emissaries and John

and Jesus in particular, actually fail to do it. Because of that failure, even the most seemingly

law disobedient participate more in the divine plan for the world than they, even the "tax

collectors and prostitutes the tax collectors and the prostitutes are preceding" them "into the

kingdom of God."[105] Thus, as in the evangelist's other treatments of repentance, in the

parable of the two sons repentance entails responding penitently to the Baptist and the Christ

and one's eschatological fate depends on it.

The parable further specifies why the Jewish leaders do not repent. Whereas the text

indicates that the son who says "no" to God later changes his mind, it never states the son

who says "yes," the son who represents the Jewish leaders, changes his mind. The implication

of this difference is that the yay-sayer and the Jewish leaders never intend to obey.[106] Though

they craft the appearance of being deferentially devoted, they are fundamentally opposed to

God. They are, in the sense that 12:33-7 uses the term, evil.

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surveyed in Stanley K. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 113–15.

[104] On the Jewish identity of the "tax collectors and prostitutes," see Levine, *The Social and Ethnic Dimensions of Matthean Salvation History*, 204–06.

[105] On the phrase "entering into" or "preceding into the kingdom," see Joel Marcus, "Entering into the Kingly Power of God," *JBL* 107 (1988): 663–75.

[106] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:168.

The use of the theme of repentance to characterize John's and Jesus' detractors

culminates in 27:3-10, a passage unique to Matthew in which Judas, having facilitated Jesus'

arrest by the Jewish authorities in exchange for thirty pieces of silver (26:14-16, 47-50),

"changes his mind" or "feels regret" (μεταμεληθεὶς), that is, repents (v. 3), the use of

μεταμέλομαι emphasizing in this case the sorrow that forms part of his repentance.[107] Just as

the people of Judea and the Jordan region in 3:1-12 demonstrate the sincerity of their

repentance by professing their sins and submitting to John's baptism, so Judas shows the

sincerity of his by professing to the Jewish leaders, "I have sinned" (ἥμαρτον, v. 4), by

returning their bribe (v. 3), and by hanging himself (v. 5).[108] His repentance highlights their

lack thereof. After witnessing his profession of guilt and demonstration of remorse, they

remain unmoved, rhetorically (and ironically) declaring, "What does that have to do with

us?" (τί πρὸς ἡμᾶς, v. 4, cf. 21:32). "Unlike Judas, they … totally deny their own guilt."[109]

That the remainder of the passage dwells on the Jewish leaders' actions underscores that they

and not Judas are its true focus. Matthew stresses that as in 3:7-12; 12:38-45; and 21:28-32,

and like the Galilean cities of 11:20-4, the Jewish leaders refuse repentance. The

consequences of and reasons for that refusal he has already made clear. Here the evangelist

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[107] David Daube, *The Deed and the Doer in the Bible*, ed. Calum Carmichael, David Daube's Gifford Lectures 1 (West Conshohocken, Pa.: Templeton Foundation Press, 2008), 224; Gundry, *Matthew*, 554; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1040.

[108] Daube, *The Deed and the Doer in the Bible*, 225; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:561–3; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 470–1.

[109] Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 471. See also Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:563.

shows that they remain obstinate to the end and thereby cements his portrayal of them as absolutely opposed to God, as evil.

To return to 3:7-12, it is clear now that Matthew's account of the Baptist' initial confrontation with the Jewish leaders anticipates not only his deployments of the fruits metaphor in 12:33-7; 13:1-9, 18-23; and 21:33-44 but also of the theme of repentance in that it portrays one's eschatological fate as dependent on one's response to God's overtures and one's response as dependent, in turn, on one's humility or arrogance, on a fundamental quality of oneself. In this respect, it initiates a major Matthean moral theme. But it also qualifies that theme. What distinguishes this passage from the appearances of the fruits metaphor examined above and from Matthew' portrayal of repentance elsewhere is that Matthew here emphasizes not the organic connection between one's nature and one's response to God's eschatological emissaries but their disconnection in the case of the Jewish leaders. As we have seen, those leaders' arrival at the Jordan appears to signify repentance and thus faith in John's words but, in fact, does not. The theme of 3:7-12 is hypocrisy. Thus, from the beginning, Matthew allows that the deeds demanded at the final judgment, that the doing of God's will, can be feigned and therefore insists that the requisite deeds befit states of the heart. Good fruits do not necessarily grow on good trees but, he insists, they should.

<center>21:18-22</center>

With respect to the Jewish leaders, the evangelist's concern with the potential discrepancy between moral appearance and moral reality surfaces again in 21:18-22, the cursing of the fig tree. Jesus, hungry, approaches a fig tree but on it finds only leaves and so curses it: "May fruit (καρπός) never come from you again" (v. 19). In Matthew's source for

this story, Mark 11:12-14, fig leaves are not supposed to indicate the presence of figs because

"it was not fig season" (ὁ γὰρ καιρὸς οὐκ ἦν σύκων, 11:13). Mark's narrative calls out for a

metaphorical reading because Jesus' cursing of a fig tree for not producing out of season

seems *prima facie* capricious and unjust. In Mark then, the tree's lack of figs represents the

Jewish leader's inadequate response to Jesus and that is was not the season for figs means that,

being before his suffering, death, and resurrection, it was not yet time for him to be

recognized as the Messiah, despite the leaves, which symbolize the crowd's laudation.[110] In

nature, fig leaves should evidence fruit, at least according to most biblical scholars, because

on fig trees the fruit precedes the leaves, though that fruit may not be ripe or even edible by

the time leaves appear.[111] Matthew removes from Mark any doubt as to whether the fig tree

should have fruit, amending "he went to see if he might find something on it" (ἦλθεν εἰ

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[110] So Collins, *Mark*, 526. For different, but equally metaphorical interpretations, see William Telford, *The Barren Temple and the Withered Tree: A Redaction-Critical Analysis of the Cursing of the Fig-Tree Pericope in Mark's Gospel and Its Relation to the Cleansing of the Temple Tradition*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 1 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1980), 195–6; Joel Marcus, *Mark: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, 2 vols., Anchor Bible 27-27A (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 2:790; Dennis R. MacDonald, *The Homeric Epics and the Gospel of Mark* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 107–8; see also Morna Dorothy Hooker, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Mark*, Black's New Testament Commentaries (London: Black, 1991), 267; cf. Wendy J. Cotter, "For It Was Not the Season for Figs," *CBQ* 48 (1986): 62–66; Böttrich, "Jesus und der Feigenbaum: Mk 11:12-14,20-25 in der Diskussion," 340–1. Luke does not contain this miracle story has a parable of a barren fig tree in 13:6-9. On this difference, see Telford, *The Barren Temple and the Withered Tree*, 229–33; Brent R. Kinman, "Lucan Eschatology and the Missing Fig Tree," *JBL* 113 (1994): 672–8.

[111] Meyer, *Handbook to the Gospel of Matthew*, 366; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:151; Douglas E. Oakman, "Cursing Fig Trees and Robbers' Dens: Pronouncement Stories Within Social-Systemic Perspective: Mark 11:12-25 and Parallels.," *Semeia* 64 (1994): 257–8; Böttrich, "Jesus und der Feigenbaum: Mk 11:12-14,20-25 in der Diskussion," 337–40; Nolland, *Matthew*, 851; cf. Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Eerdmans, 2009), 504. Pliny, *Nat.* 16:49 states that leaves should evidence figs because on fig trees the leaves follow, not precede, the fruit but cf. *t. Seb* 4.20 (Marcus, *Mark*, 2:915).

ἄρα τι εὑρήσει ἐν αὐτῇ) to "he went to it" (ἦλθεν ἐπ' αὐτήν) and deleting "it was not fig season."[112] And he removes any indication that it actually does have fruit, changing Mark's "he found nothing but leaves" (οὐδὲν εὗρεν εἰ μὴ φύλλα) to "he found nothing on it but leaves only" (οὐδὲν εὗρεν ἐν αὐτῇ εἰ μὴ φύλλα μόνον) in order to clarify that the tree did not even have buds. In Matthew, the fig tree's leaves unambiguously signal fruit and the tree absolutely lacks it. The tree's appearance is therefore deceptive.[113] Jesus condemns it, not only for failing to produce fruit but for its duplicity. It looks like a productive or good tree but it does not do what good or productive trees do.

Fruit is, as we have seen, a Matthean metaphor for words and deeds that conform to God's will and withered trees are biblical symbols of judgment.[114] The placement of this miracle between the chief priests and scribes growing angry at Jesus in the temple for doing marvelous deeds (τὰ θαυμάσια) that bring acclamation (21:14-16) and the chief priests and the elders questioning by what power he does these wonders (ταῦτα, 21:24) implies that those who fail to produce fruit are the Jewish leaders and the specific fruit they fail to produce is the welcoming of Jesus as the Messiah. The leaders purport to do God's bidding but, by rejecting God's envoys, fail to do so, a point the ensuing parable of two sons

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[112] Gundry, *Matthew*, 146; Böttrich, "Jesus und der Feigenbaum: Mk 11:12-14,20-25 in der Diskussion," 355.

[113] Origen, *Comm. Matt.* 16.27; *Opus Imperfectum, ad loc*; Calvin, *Commentaries, ad loc*; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:151.

[114] See Isa 34:4; 40:24; Jer 8:13; 24:1-10; Hos 2:12; 9:16; Ps 105:33. See also Tacitus, *Ann.* 13:58 and Pliny, *Nat.* 15.20 on the withering of the fig tree that sheltered Romulus and Remus.

reiterates (21:28-32), and, moreover, violently oppose it, as the subsequent parables of the tenants (21:33-44) and the wedding banquet (22:1-14) illustrate. The claim that these leaders bear leaves but not fruit—that they are duplicitous—also recalls their presumption of righteousness in 3:7-12 and anticipates ch. 23, where Jesus will accuse the scribes and Pharisees of cultivating public identities inconsistent with their inner selves.[115]

Finally, in keeping with his other uses of the fruits metaphor, Matthew attributes the Jewish leaders' failure to produce good fruit to their internal characteristics, in this case, to their lack of faith. The cursing of the fig tree becomes in vv. 20-22 a lesson on the power of πίστις. When Jesus curses the tree, it withers "immediately" (παραχρῆμα, v. 19), prompting the disciples to ask how it could diminish so quickly (v. 20). Jesus explains that if the disciples "have faith and do not doubt" (ἐὰν ἔχητε πίστιν καὶ μὴ διακριθῆτε, v. 21), they will do even greater miracles, the implication being that Jesus' own miracles result from faith. This reference to Jesus' faith then not only answers for the disciples the question about Jesus' power or authority that the Jewish leaders will pose in the next pericope (cf. 13:11). It also provides a telling contrast to the Jewish leaders, suggesting that their hostility to Jesus results from a lack of faith, from rejection of rather than trust in the divine plan.

Together with that of 3:7-12, this passage's use of the fruits metaphor to describe the Jewish leaders' moral duplicity provides context for the evangelist's insistence, also conveyed through the fruits metaphor, that Jesus' disciples assiduously eschew duplicity. Through their integrity, the disciples must surpass the scribes and Pharisees in righteousness (5:20).

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[115] Boring, "The Gospel of Matthew," 8:408; Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 505.

7:15-23

Matthew's first and most profound use of the fruit metaphor to address duplicity among the disciples appears in 7:15-23, the second of three units (7:13-14; 15-23; 24-7) that comprise the epilogue to the Sermon on the Mount (chs. 5-7).[116] The passage consists of a warning against false prophets (7:15) and a judgment scene in which their duplicity is exposed (7:16-23), all under the heading of the two-ways motif announced in 7:13-4. On the two-source hypothesis, Matthew creates the introductory warning (7:15) and bases the subsequent verses on Q 6:43-5 (=Matt 7:16-20), 6:46 (=Matt 7:21), and 13:25-7 (=Matt 7:22-3), all of which he redacts thoroughly.[117] Some interpreters question whether the gospel writer intends vv. 15-20 and vv. 21-3 to be read together as one coherent unit,[118] often because v. 20 forms an inclusion with v. 16a ("by their fruits you shall know them"), seemingly separating these verses from those that follow, and because vv. 16-20 derive from

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[116] The majority of scholars today divide the SM into a tripartite body that addresses righteousness in relation to others (5.17-48), righteousness in relation to God (6.1-18), and a third topic (6:19-7:12), the identify of which remains debated, surrounded by an introduction (5:3-16) and an epilogue (7:13-27). See, for instance, Allison, "The Configuration of the Sermon on the Mount and Its Meaning"; Wilson, "A Third Form of Righteousness," 305.

[117] Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 74, 95; Benjamin W. Bacon, *Studies in Matthew* (New York: H. Holt, 1930), 184–5; Robert A. Guelich, *The Sermon on the Mount: A Foundation for Understanding* (Waco: Word Books, 1982), 393–4; Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q*, 185; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:694; Piper, *Wisdom in the Q-Tradition*, 45–6, 145; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 369, 375–6. In the case of Matt 7:22-3 // Luke 13:25-7, the evangelists agree so minimally that a common source is challenging to identify and reconstruct; see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:706–7; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 375–6.

[118] Strecker and Betz, for instance, treat them as separate pericopes; see Strecker, *Der Weg*, 137–8; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 530.

a different Q passage than vv. 21-3. But the two sections share key vocabulary—terms for prophesying (ψευδοπροφητῶν: v. 15; ἐπροφητεύσαμεν: v. 22), coming (ἔρχονται: v. 15; εἰσελεύσεται: v. 21), doing (ποιεῖ: 2x in v. 17; ποιεῖν: 2x in v. 18; ποιοῦν: v. 19; ποιῶν: v. 21; ἐποιήσαμεν: v. 22), and knowing (ἐπιγνώσεσθε: v. 16, 20; ἔγνων: v. 23) appear in both—and those shared terms contribute to the common topics of proper actions and the eschatological judgment.[119] Moreover, classifying 7:15-23 as a single unit has the additional benefit of leaving the SM's epilogue with three component sections (7:13-14; 15-23; 24-7) and thus a triadic structure in keeping with Matthew's compositional practices in the Sermon and elsewhere.[120] Matthew 7:15-23 constitutes then a sustained exploration of what will matter in the end.

The warning against false prophets in v. 15 establishes the theme of the passage and, like 3:7-12 and 21:18-22, maintains that one's appearance and one's inner reality may differ radically.[121] The false prophets resemble sheep outwardly, that is, they look like Jesus' followers,[122] but "inwardly they are plundering wolves" (ἔσωθεν δέ εἰσιν λύκοι ἅρπαγες),

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[119] Jean Zumstein, *La condition du croyant dans l'évangile selon Matthieu*, Orbis biblicus et orientalis 16 (Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires, 1977), 185; Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 172; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:693–4; Boring, "The Gospel of Matthew," 8:217; David E. Garland, *Reading Matthew: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the First Gospel*, Reading the New Testament (Macon, Ga.: Smyth & Helwys, 2001), 87; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 369.

[120] On Matthew's affection for triads, see Allison, "The Configuration of the Sermon on the Mount and Its Meaning," 198–205; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 5–6.

[121] Davies and Allison observe that "the contrast between inward intention and outward appearance … holds together 7.15-23" (*Matthew*, 1:704).

[122] See 2:6; 10:16; 25:31-46; cf. Sir 13:7.

those who, in Matthew's gospel, persecute sheep (10:16-23).[123] The warning is likely

redactional since it is does not appear in the Lukan parallel, its imagery of sheep and wolves

differs from the subsequent agricultural imagery in vv. 16-20, and its vocabulary is

characteristically Matthean.[124] In introducing this verse into the passage then, Matthew

includes within it allusions to other passages in the gospel, allusions that characterize the false

prophets.[125] First, the admonition to "be on guard" (προσέχετε) recalls 6:1, which introduces

a section (6:1-18) that exhorts (προσέχετε) readers to be unlike "the hypocrites" (οἱ

ὑποκριταὶ), whose visible deeds also belie their inner selves because they perform pious acts

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[123] Augustine, *Serm. Dom.* 80; Barth, "Matthew's Understanding of the Law," 73; Günther Bornkamm, "λύκος," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 4, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964), 310; Zumstein, *La condition du croyant*, 179, 181; Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 186; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 188–9; cf. Meyer, *Handbook to the Gospel of Matthew*, 166–7; Plummer, *Matthew*, 116. Most scholarship on this passage has dwelt on the social and theological identity of false prophets; see Zumstein, *La condition du croyant*, 179–80; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:701; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 528–9, 534; Petri Luomanen, *Entering the Kingdom of Heaven: A Study on the Structure of Matthew's View of Salvation*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 101 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 97; cf. Strecker, *Der Weg*, 137–8n4.

[124] See Bacon, *Studies*, 185; Paul S. Minear, "False Prophecy and Hypocrisy in the Gospel of Matthew," in *Neues Testament und Kirche: Für Rudolf Schnackenburg*, ed. Joachim Gnilka (Freiburg: Herder, 1974), 80; Zumstein, *La condition du croyant*, 181; Joachim Gnilka, *Das Matthäusevangelium*, 2 vols., Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 1 (Freiburg: Herder, 1986), 1:272; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:705; Piper, *Wisdom in the Q-Tradition*, 45–6; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 401. Cf. Helmut Koester, *Synoptische Überlieferung bei den apostolischen Vätern*, Texte und Untersuchungen zur altchristlichen Literatur 65 (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1957), 183–4.

[125] For brief overviews of Matthew's use of intratextual references, see Ulrich Luz, *The Theology of the Gospel of Matthew*, New Testament Theology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 5; Nolland, *Matthew*, 27; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 8. A more substantial study of this phenomenon, focused on the passion narrative, is Dale C. Allison, "Foreshadowing the Passion," in *Studies in Matthew: Interpretation Past and Present* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2005), 217–36.

not to win praise from the deity, which, according to Matthew, is the motive piety should signify, but rather to win praise from other people, not to glorify God but rather themselves.[126] Second, although "plundering" (ἅρπαξ) is a somewhat common epithet for wolves,[127] here the description of the false prophets as inwardly plundering (ἔσωθεν … ἅρπαγες) references Jesus' denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees as "hypocrites" in 23:25 for cultivating pristine appearances ("you clean the outside of the cup") by performing pious and lawful acts (e.g., vv. 5, 23, 29) even though "inwardly they are full of plundering and weakness of character" (ἔσωθεν δὲ γέμουσιν ἐξ ἁρπαγῆς καὶ ἀκρασίας). These two allusions suggest that the false prophets are like the hypocrites of 6:1–18 and 23:25 in that they perform right actions out of vanity and not moral integrity. In turn, then, the false prophets must resemble disciples, must be dressed like sheep, in that they appear to do good deeds, specifically the "good deeds" (5:16) outlined in the preceding SM. Furthermore, since in Matthew the verb "to plunder" (ἁρπάζω) denotes attacks on God's or Satan's respective kingdoms (11:12; 12:28–9; 13:19),[128] by characterizing the false prophets as inwardly plundering, the evangelist implies that in acting out of selfish motives, in rapaciously pursuing others' esteem, they align themselves against God in an ongoing cosmic war. Like

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[126] Augustine too connects the warning against false prophets with 6:1–18 (*Serm. Dom.* 80), as do Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:708; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 192; and France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 290.

[127] Bornkamm, "λύκος," 4:308.

[128] See Werner Foerster, "ἁρπάζω," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 1, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964), 472–74. Cf. 1QM XII, 7–11.

the designation "wolves," this description marks them as God's enemies and consequently as a danger to God's people.[129]

Verses 16-20 declare that the eschatological judgment will reveal that the seemingly good deeds the false prophets do are not truly good. Most interpreters argue that these verses provide Matthew's readers a criterion they can employ to distinguish false from true prophets and thereby guard against the former. On this view, v. 16 indicates that one can identify false prophets by observing their "fruits," or, "deeds" and vv. 17-18 explain why this method works: just as desirable fruits like grapes and figs grow only on particular plants and just as good fruits emerge exclusively and invariably from good trees, so only a true prophet can do good deeds. A false prophet is not even capable of such (οὐ δύναται, v. 18) and will therefore be destroyed in the final judgment (v. 19). "Consequently" (ἄρα γε), states v. 20, reiterating v. 16, "you will," meaning "you can" in the present, "recognize them by their fruits."[130] But this interpretation puts vv. 16-20 at odds with the redactional thesis of v. 15. It takes vv. 16-20 to insist that one's deeds necessarily correspond to one's interior, though the problem with the false prophets of v. 15—what makes them "false"—is precisely the discrepancy between their exterior and their interior. What the image of wolves in sheep's clothing captures this

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[129] On "wolves" as a designation for the divine's opponents, see Ezek 22:27; Zeph 3:3; Plummer, *Matthew*, 116; Zumstein, *La condition du croyant*, 182; Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 187.

[130] See Augustine, *Serm. Dom.* 78, 80; Heinrici, *Die Bergpredigt: Begriffsgeschichtlich Untersucht*, 92; Minear, "False Prophecy and Hypocrisy in the Gospel of Matthew," 81; Zumstein, *La condition du croyant*, 182; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:706, 709; Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 184–90; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 529, 536; Nolland, *Matthew*, 337; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 378–9; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 271. See also Philo, *Spec.* 4.51.

reading of vv. 16-20 deems impossible.[131] Moreover, the future tense verbs in vv. 16a and 20, which are the verses taken to designate the fruits sayings in vv. 16b-18 a criterion, as well as the redactional judgment saying in v. 19 (// Matt 3:10b), the subsequent judgment scene in vv. 21-3, and the placement of vv. 15-23 between references to the eschaton (vv. 13-14, 24–7) imply that vv. 16-20 offer not a test for the time being but a pronouncement about the final test.[132] These verses declare then that at the eschatological judgment Jesus' audience "will recognize" the false prophets "by their fruits" (ἀπὸ τῶν καρπῶν αὐτῶν ἐπιγνώσεσθε αὐτούς, vv. 16a, 20), meaning that the discrepancy between their visible deeds and invisible realities and the consequent worthlessness of those deeds will be made apparent when their deeds, or "fruits" are condemned because they do not emerge from a good self, or "tree" (v. 19). Only a good tree can produce good fruit, Jesus declares (16b-18), and since inwardly the false prophets are not sheep, are not disciples but rather plundering wolves, the good deeds they do are not actually good. They produce fruits that are to the human eye (but not to the divine) visually indistinguishable from what good trees produce but because they are not good trees, the fruits they produce are worthless (πονηροὺς, vv. 17, 18).[133] Having failed to produce the fruits required at the final judgment, the false prophets are "cut down and thrown into the fire" (v. 19)—condemned. Verse 20 makes clear that it is the felling and

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[131] Some exegetes acknowledge this tension but nonetheless portray vv. 16-20 as providing a rule for discerning duplicity; see, for example, Bornkamm, "λύκος," 4:310; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 188–9.

[132] My claim that 7:16-20 describes an eschatological scene builds on Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 394–7, 409.

[133] Ibid., 408.

incineration described in v. 19 that will enable the audience to perceive the false prophets as false: "consequently (ἄρα) you will surely (γε) recognize them by their fruits."[134]

Verses 21-3 continue the description of the judgment begun in vv. 16-20 and reiterate that right actions are condemnable unless they correlate with the appropriate states and traits. Verse 21 insists that responding rightly to God's eschatological emissaries by making the proper Christological confession (calling Jesus "Lord, Lord") will not by itself enable one to enter the kingdom of heaven.[135] One must also do the will of Jesus' heavenly father, which, in light of vv. 15-20, means that one must produce the good fruit of a good tree, must exhibit right actions done for the right reasons, done to win divine and not human praise. Verse 22 reports that "on that day" of judgment, "many" (πολλοὶ) who have been denied entrance into the kingdom will appeal to Jesus and will adduce thaumaturgy as evidence that they have indeed done God's will: "Lord, Lord, in your name did we not prophecy and in your name cast out demons and in your name do many mighty deeds?" The deeds they will cite are, on their face, unambiguously good because they are all actions the Matthean Jesus elsewhere commends. Prophecy (23:34), exorcisms (10:1, 8; 17:16-19), and mighty deeds (10:1, 8; 11:20-3; 13:54-8; 14:2) "constituent les signes normaux de la mission

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[134] As Betz notes, "the conjunction ἄρα γε ("consequently then") is meant to be emphatic" (*The Sermon on the Mount*, 538).

[135] For "Lord" as a proper profession of faith, see 8:2, 6, 8; 8:25; 9:28; 14:28; 15:22, 25, 27; 16:22; 17:4; 17:15; 18:21; 20:30; Bornkamm, "End-Expectation and the Church in Matthew," 41–3; Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 398–9; R. T. France, *Matthew: Evangelist and Teacher* (Eugene, Or.: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004), 287–9; cf. Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Matthew: Structure, Christology, Kingdom* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 103–13. For illustrations of the insufficiency of this confession, see 25:11-2; cf. 21:28-32.

mt," as Marguerat observes.[136] They are therefore evidence that in addition to having

acknowledged Jesus' messianic status, the appellants have obeyed Jesus' commands, at least

ostensibly. And yet, in v. 23, Jesus states that, as the eschatological judge (see also 19:28;

25:31-46),[137] he will respond to their appeal by swearing (ὁμολογήσω)[138] that he did not

know them, that is, by renouncing them;[139] by banishing them from his kingdom

(ἀποχωρεῖτε ἀπ᾽ ἐμοῦ); and, to justify the renunciation and banishment, by labelling their

actions "lawlessness" (τὴν ἀνομίαν), that is, by claiming they have opposed, not done the will

of God (v. 23).[140] He denies their appeal not because they fail to enact the faith they

profess[141]—they do miraculous deeds "in Jesus' name," or, by means of faith in him (see

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[136] Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 198; see also Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:188.

[137] Schweizer, *Matthew*, 188; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:712–3; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:188; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 379. Betz argues to the contrary that Jesus is here portrayed as the eschatological representative of and advocate for the disciples, in contrast to other Matthean passages ("An Episode in the Last Judgment (Matt. 7:21-23)," in *Essays on the Sermon on the Mount* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984], 127–9, 142–3, 151–2; *The Sermon on the Mount*, 548–9).

[138] Cf. 10:32, where ὁμολογέω also has a forensic sense, and 14:7, where it means "to swear."

[139] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:717.

[140] On Matthew's understanding of lawlessness as everything contrary to the will of God, see Davies, *The Setting*, 202–6; Kingsbury, *Matthew*, 151; Zumstein, *La condition du croyant*, 171–3; John P. Meier, *The Vision of Matthew: Christ, Church, and Morality in the First Gospel*, Theological Inquiries (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 161; Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 200; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 295.

[141] So Plummer, *Matthew*, 117–8; Christoph Burchard, "Versuch, das Thema der Bergpredigt in der Bergpredigt zu finden," in *Studien zur Theologie, Sprache und Umwelt des Neuen Testaments*, ed. Dieter Sänger, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 107 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 48.

17:14-20)[142]—and not because they select the wrong actions, erroneously expressing their faith by working wonders rather than doing other deeds that God prefers, or "wills;"[143] though the preceding discourse does not mandate charismatic acts, "[n]otre évangile ne manifeste aucune prévention principielle contre les charismes"[144] Rather, he denies it for the reason stated in v. 21: they fail to do the will of the heavenly father, which, as I have shown, this passage defines as bearing the good fruit of a good tree, doing the proper actions because one has the proper motivations. The wondrous deeds of the many visibly resemble the proper and characteristic actions of a disciple but, Matthew implies, do not befit the proper self of a disciple. They are thus, as many interpreters claim, sheep's clothing rather than truly good deeds and therefore condemnable.[145]

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[142] Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 399; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:713; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 190.

[143] So Barth, "Matthew's Understanding of the Law," 162–3; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:188; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 541; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 191–2.

[144] Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 198; cf. 200. See also Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 401; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 380.

[145] See Plummer, *Matthew*, 117; Bornkamm, "λύκος," 4:310; Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 395, 401; Dan O. Via, *Self-Deception and Wholeness in Paul and Matthew* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 77: the false prophets "practice an ethic of external obedience"; Boring, "The Gospel of Matthew," 8:217: "[T]he correct deeds alone are not adequate—they must represent the inward nature of the person doing them, otherwise they are hypocritical (6:1-18; 23:25-8)"; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 191–2; Garland, *Reading Matthew*, 88: the deeds in 7:22-3 "are the very garb that the wolves use to beguile the sheep…. Fruit is produced naturally and spontaneously because that is the very nature of a fruit tree. If there is a continuity between the being of the person and the external works, it is good fruit. If there is no such continuity, it is sham spirituality"; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 377, 379; Stanley K. Stowers, "Jesus the Teacher and Stoic Ethics in the Gospel of Matthew," in *Stoicism in Early Christianity*, ed. Tuomas Rasimus, Troels Engberg-Pedersen, and Ismo Dunderberg (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2010), 62–4: "What God requires for righteousness is not simply the performance of actions that in themselves are generally accepted as morally good, but rather that such actions be done with the right moral disposition that is the equivalent of doing God's will" (63).

Whether the "many" represent the false prophets of vv. 15-20 or those they deceive remains ambiguous.[146] Verse 22's statement that the many "prophesied" (ἐπροφητεύσαμεν) may identify them with the false prophets or may indicate that the false prophets have instructed or inspired numerous others to prophecy. Jesus' warnings in 24:4-5 ("Beware [βλέπετε μή] that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ!' and they will lead many astray"), 11 ("And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray"), and 24 ("For false Christs and false prophets will arise and offer up great signs and wonders and lead astray, if possible, even the elect") can likewise support either identification since these verses describe both the false prophets and those they mislead with the adjective "many" and, again, since the prophets do marvelous deeds (v. 11) and surely lead others to do them also, if these prophets are indeed so influential that readers must guard against them (v. 15).[147] Whatever the identity of the "many," the moral criterion reiterated in vv. 21-3 remains the same: entering the kingdom of heaven requires doing the will of the heavenly father by performing good deeds for good reasons, that is, out of a good heart. If the "many" are the false prophets, readers must guard against being deceived by them. If the "many" are their victims, then readers must guard against being deceived like them. Either

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[146] Most interpreters consider them the false prophets; see Meyer, *Handbook to the Gospel of Matthew*, 167–8; Barth, "Matthew's Understanding of the Law," 162; Minear, "False Prophecy and Hypocrisy in the Gospel of Matthew," 82; Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 398; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:714; Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 193; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 379. Plummer, *Matthew*, 116–7; Betz, "Last Judgment," 127, 155–6; and Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 540–1, however, identify them as the false prophets' victims, those they mislead.

[147] Cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:714.

way, vv. 15-23 as a whole exhort Matthew's audience to beware the notion that the mere

performance of right deeds is eschatologically efficacious. Calling those who hold this

dangerous notion the "many" associates them with the "many" (πολλοί) of 7:13 who walk

the wide path to perdition. Readers are to take a narrower, less popular path (7:14) entering

the kingdom of heaven requires doing the will of the heavenly father by performing good

deeds for good reasons, that is, out of a good heart.

Thus, whereas in 12:33-7; 13:1-9, 18-23; and 21:33-44, Matthew deploys the fruits

metaphor to stress that deeds correspond with because they result from one's most

fundamental characteristics, in 7:15-23, he deploys it to highlight that good deeds can

conceal rather than reveal such characteristics, in which case those deeds are not truly good.

Good deeds should emerge only from good motives, Matthew claims, but when they do in

fact emerge from improper ones, otherwise commendable deeds are condemnable. Bad trees,

however much their fruit is phenomenologically identical to good fruit, by definition cannot

produce good fruit. Good actions must emerge from proper traits and states for one to do the

will of the heavenly father (v. 21). The moral quality of an act depends on the moral quality

of the actor.[148]

13:24–30, 36–43

[148] Joshua Levinson perceives a similar ethic in rabbinic Judaism, at least some nascent forms
of which circulated in Matthew's environment. He concludes, "[T]he Rabbis demand a certain
interiority for legal acts to be valid…. In both the legal and imaginative discourses of the Rabbis, we
see again and again that a person's thoughts and emotions determine the religious significance of his
actions" ("From Narrative Practice to Cultural Poetics: Literary Anthropology and the Rabbinic Sense
of Self," 359).

Matthew's other use of the fruit metaphor to address duplicity among the disciples appears in a parable unique to this gospel,[149] the parable of the weeds of the field (13:24-30; cf. 13:36). The parable compares the kingdom of heaven to the experience of a person (ἀνθρώπῳ) whose field features two types of vegetation: wheat (σῖτος), which he planted (v. 24) and which yields valuable produce, or good fruit (καρπὸν, v. 26), and weeds (ζιζάνια), which his enemy (αὐτοῦ ὁ ἐχθρὸς, v. 25) furtively planted and which yield no such fruit. When the landowner's slaves realize that noxious plants are growing alongside the good ones, they ask the landowner if he wants them to gather (συλλέξωμεν) the weeds (vv. 26-9). He does not, he replies, since removing the weeds would risk uprooting (ἐκριζώσητε) the wheat (v. 29), presumably because the two plants remain difficult to distinguish and/or their roots are now intertwined.[150] He will let the two plants grow together until the harvest, at which time reapers will collect both, incinerate the weeds, and safeguard the wheat (v. 30).

According to Jesus' interpretation of the parable in 13:36-43, it is an allegory. The planter represents the Son of Man, Jesus; the field the world (ὁ κόσμος); the wheat "the children of the kingdom;" the weeds "the children of the evil one" (οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ πονηροῦ); the landowner's enemy "the devil" (ὁ διάβολος); the harvest a "consummation of the age"

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[149] Some exegetes, such as Luz (*Matthew 8-20*, 254), consider the parable a radical revision of and/or replacement for Mark 4:26-9 because the two parables share vocabulary related to the growing and harvesting of wheat. Cf. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom*, 183; Kingsbury, *Parables*, 64–5.

[150] Arland J. Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000), 296; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 525–6. The narrative may in this aspect reflect agricultural reality; see Jerome, *Commentary on Matthew*, Fathers of the Church 117 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2008), 162; Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, 81–5; David Instone-Brewer, *Traditions of the Rabbis from the Era of the New Testament*, 6 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2004), 1:196–8.

(συντέλεια αἰῶνός); the reapers angels (vv. 36-9). The reapers' collection and incineration of

the weeds at the harvest stands then for Jesus' eschatological differentiation and

condemnation of the evil one's offspring (vv. 40-2), who are redescribed in v. 41 as "the

causes of sin and the workers of lawlessness" (τὰ σκάνδαλα καὶ τοὺς ποιοῦντας τὴν

ἀνομίαν). One prominent line of interpretation today takes this allegory to narrate the plight

of Jesus' proclamation, his sowing of the word, worldwide and to explain why only some

have responded appropriately to it, why alongside the repentant (the wheat) stand the

recalcitrant (the weeds sown by evil). On this reading, the parable continues the focus of chs.

11-12 on the unrepentant in Israel.[151] But another prominent line of interpretation, one that I

find more persuasive, maintains that the vocabulary of the parable and its interpretation

suggests that for Matthew the parable addresses not the plight of the proclamation in the

world at large but the plight of the proclamation among Jesus' followers. Verse 41 refers to

the condemned as "causes of sin" (τὰ σκάνδαλα), an appellation Matthew frequently uses for

disciples who lead others astray and/or impede the divine plan,[152] and "workers of

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[151] For this view, see, *inter alia*, Gnilka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 1:502; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:430–1; Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 208–9; Hagner, *Matthew*, 1:393; Luomanen, *Entering the Kingdom of Heaven*, 135–42. Luomanen claims that most modern exegetes advocate this reading ("*Corpus Mixtum*—An Appropriate Description of Matthew's Community?," *JBL* 117 [1998]: 471).

[152] Gundry offers the following analysis: "Elsewhere in Matthew this noun [τὰ σκάνδαλα] and its verbal cognate σκάνδαλιζει occur by far most often for causes of sin in and among the professing disciples of Jesus (5,29.30; 13,21; 16,23; 26,31.33; 24,10; 26, 31.33) for a total of fifteen occurrences; outside the community of disciples in 11,6; 13,57; 15,12 for a total of only three occurrences. A third to one half of the occurrences for stumbling blocks in and among professing disciples are distinctive to Matthew, almost always by way of insertion into paralleled material" ("In Defense of the Church in Matthew as a *Corpus Mixtum*," *ZNW* 91 [2000]: 161–2). From such data,

lawlessness" (τοὺς ποιοῦντας τὴν ἀνομίαν), a designation given in 7:23 to disciples who fail

to do God's will and are therefore condemned.[153] The parable's reference to "gathering" the

weeds (συλλέγω, 3x in vv. 28-30; cf. "bring together the wheat" [τὸν δὲ σῖτον

συναγάγετε], v. 30) may allude then not only to the sorting of fish, the "gathering"

(συνέλεξαν, 13:48) of the beautiful out from among the putrid in the coming parable of the

dragnet (13:47-50), but also to 7:16's rejection of the idea that good fruits can be "gathered"

(συλλέγουσιν) from bad sources, that inwardly rotten disciples can do God's will, for this

particular verb for "gathering" (σύλλεγω) appears only in these three passages. The

condemned weeds of this parable are not then the unrepentant but followers of Jesus who,

having repented, subsequently fail to produce fruit, meaning to do the divine will, and

therefore fail the eschatological judgment. The parable addresses the presence of evil not

within the world at large but among the disciples, that is, within the church. Critics of this

second view stress that Jesus equates the field in which the wheat and weeds grow with the

world, not the church (v. 38).[154] But this equation need not imply that the weeds and wheat

represent all of humanity. It can simply refer to the kingdom of heaven's extension, in the

form of the church's proclamation, throughout the earth, a feature of the kingdom that the

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Luz concludes that the use of τὰ σκάνδαλα here "shows how much Matthew is implicitly thinking of the church and the dangers to which it is exposed" (*Matthew 8-20*, 269).

[153] For this interpretation, see, *inter alia*, Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 443–4; Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus*, 299; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 269; Gundry, "In Defense of the Church in Matthew as a *Corpus Mixtum*," 161.

[154] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:428; Luomanen, "*Corpus Mixtum*—An Appropriate Description of Matthew's Community?," 471; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 533.

two parables (13:21-3; 13:33) intercalated between and thus implicated with the parable of the weeds and its interpretation emphasize and that Matthew elsewhere highlights (5:13-16; 24:14; 26:13; 28:19).[155] Within the expanding church grow weeds and wheat, condemnable disciples lacking fruit and ideal disciples producing it.

Since the problem that the characters within the parable face is the difficulty of distinguishing and separating weeds from wheat, then, as an allegory in which the weeds and wheat represent two types of disciples, the problem the parable addresses is the difficulty of distinguishing and separating disciples who truly do God's will from those who merely seem to, from those who, despite appearances to the contrary, practice and lead others to practice "lawlessness." Jesus' sowing, or proclamation, has produced wheat, or disciples, who yield fruit, that is, who do God's will, and so will be preserved at the harvest, or eschaton, but alongside them grow "children of the evil one," whose presence in the field, or church, results not from Jesus' activity but from that of "the devil" and who, because they produce not the desired fruit but lawlessness, will be destroyed when the harvest comes (see also 15:13). Like weeds and wheat in a field, Jesus' disciples and the evil one's offspring are different enough in appearance for one to realize that the church contains both species but similar enough in appearance that one cannot reliably distinguish them and sufficiently intertwined that, even where an accurate distinction can be made, a clean separation cannot. Attempting to uproot, to remove, the children of the evil one, the false disciples, from the

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[155] See Schweizer, *Matthew*, 311; Daniel Marguerat, "L'eglise et le monde en Matthieu 13,36-43," *RTP* 110 (1978): 116; Gundry, "In Defense of the Church in Matthew as a *Corpus Mixtum*."

church would inevitably result in excommunicating "the children of the kingdom," the true

followers of Jesus—an unacceptable side effect for an evangelist who puts such emphasis on

the communal dimension of discipleship (e.g., 18:19-20).

The parable of the weeds then restates the problem of moral duplicity identified in

other uses of the fruits metaphor and the claim, made in 7:15-23, that this problem must

remain unsolved in this age. For Matthew, this problem of the inseparability of true and false

disciples exists, because, as our examination of 3:7-12; 21:18-22; and 7:15-23 has shown, the

production of fruit, the doing of God's will, can be feigned. According to the evangelist, it is

simply impossible for humans to discern consistently who does and does not do the divine

will because that will entails an interior and hence typically imperceptible component (3:7-

12; 7:15-23). Humans cannot regularly perceive whether what appears to be a right deed

results from the proper inner conditions, whether it is properly motivated; God alone sees the

heart.[156] Matthew 7:15-23 therefore insists that though wolves threaten the sheep, only at the

final judgment, when God incinerates the condemned, will humans learn who is a sheep and

who is a wolf costumed as one, sheep and wolves being metaphors for disciples who do

God's will and disciples who do not. The parable of the weeds, which Matthew associates

with 7:15-23 through the use of the distinctive vocabulary mentioned above ("fruit"

[καρπός], "gather" [συλλέγω], "lawlessness," ἀνομία) as well as a description of judgment

by "fire" (πῦρ, 7:19; 13:40, 42), makes the same essential point: though the weeds threaten

the wheat when they "cause [other disciples to] sin," only at the eschaton, when angels

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[156] Via, *Self-Deception and Wholeness in Paul and Matthew*, 80.

isolate and incinerate the condemned, will people be able to perceive clearly who belongs to God's kingdom and who to the evil one. Only then will the truly righteous "shine like the sun" (τότε οἱ δίκαιοι ἐκλάμψουσιν ὡς ὁ ἥλιος, v. 43), as the concluding verse of the parable's interpretation declares, employing a common description of the eschatological state of the righteous to stress their ultimate differentiation from all simulacra.[157] Until then, the landowner's advice to his slaves represents the Matthean God's advice to Matthew's readers. They are not to attempt to cleave weeds from wheat, the fruit-bearing from the barren, false disciples from true ones. That responsibility belongs to the only ones capable of it: the divine and its agents.

The parable of the weeds anticipates then the parable of the dragnet (13:47–50) and the parable of the wedding banquet (22:1-14), which also describe portray the church as a mixture of false and true disciples and place the separation of these two groups at the eschaton.[158] Moreover, it builds not on chs. 11–12 but on the immediately preceding parable of the four soils (13:1-23), to which it is connected by the catchwords "sowing" (σπείρω, vv. 3, 4, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 37, 39), "root" (ῥίζαν, v. 21; ἐκριζώσητε, v. 29), "the evil one" (ὁ πονηρὸς, vv. 19, 38), and "fruit" (καρπόν, vv. 8, 26; ἄκαρπος, v. 26).[159] That parable, as

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[157] Jewish parallels to this description of the righteous' eschatological luminescence include 2 Esd 7:97; 2 Bar 51:10; Wis 3:7; 4 Macc 17:5; *1 En.* 104:2; *L.A.B.* 33:5. For the ability to distinguish the "righteous" from the "lawless" as a feature of the eschaton, see Mal 3:18.

[158] On the ecclesiology common to these three parables, see Gundry, "In Defense of the Church in Matthew as a *Corpus Mixtum.*"

[159] Cf. Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 252.

we have seen, specifies the internal qualities needed for one to respond appropriately to Jesus'

ministry and endure in discipleship so that one does God's will. This parable addresses a

subsequent ecclesial concern and, for Matthew, a moral nightmare: how is one to understand

and respond to the reality that some people possess those internal qualities and so produce the

divinely-willed deeds but do those deeds for the wrong reasons and thus do not truly obey

the deity? The answers it offers are that such mimicry of true discipleship is the work of Jesus'

enemy, though the false disciples will nonetheless be held responsible for having themselves

caused sin and done lawlessness,[160] and the church, while it gradually permeates the world,

must wait for God to separate the counterfeit from the genuine disciples at the eschaton.

Conclusion

Building on Marguerat's and Luz's studies of the eschatological judgment in

Matthew, this chapter has examined the evangelist's uses of the fruits metaphor in order to

discern his moral ideal. We have seen that Matthew's moral norm includes certain inner

conditions such as humility, pliability, stability amidst persecution, and a devaluing of wealth

and other worldly concerns that enable people to respond rightly to God's interventions in

the world and to persist as disciples as well as other inner conditions, namely proper motives,

that ensure that one's perceptible acts of repentance and other deeds are indeed truly good.

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[160] On the importance of both cosmic forces and individual agency in Matthew's understanding of moral failure, see John K. Riches, *Conflicting Mythologies: Identity Formation in the Gospels of Mark and Matthew*, Studies of the New Testament and its World (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 240–3; Wilson, *Healing in the Gospel of Matthew*, 158.

Right actions do matter, as Marguerat and Luz correctly highlight, but only in as much as they result from particular states and traits of the self, for false prophets and counterfeit disciples are phenomenologically indistinguishable from the righteous and nonetheless condemned.

If the fruits metaphor were the only evidence for this moral ideal in Matthew, it would be sufficient to prove the point because the metaphor is redactional and located at prominent junctures in the narrative, such as chs. 3, 7, 13, and 21. But the next chapter will show that the fruits metaphor is not the only evidence. These ethical principles also animate passages far removed from the fruits metaphor.

CHAPTER FOUR: MATTHEW'S MORAL IDEAL, PART II: OTHER EVIDENCE

This chapter examines one passage (15:1-20), one extended discourse (chs. 24-5), and one theme (hypocrisy) to show that they express the same moral ideals expressed in the fruits metaphor. The previous chapter argued that Matthew develops a metaphor he finds in his sources, in which fruits and trees represent conduct and internal characteristics, for two purposes: 1) to explain why the Jewish leaders fail to respond properly to John the Baptist and to Jesus (it is because they are, despite outward appearances, fundamentally resistant to divine power; 12:33-7; 21:33-44), why others do respond properly (because they are humble, not obstinate; 13:1-9, 18-23), and what traits those who respond properly must possess if they are to go on to do God's will and thereby receive approbation at the eschatological judgment (inner stability when facing persecution and a disregard for concerns like status and wealth; 13:1-9, 18-23); and 2) to insist that to do God's will, one's perceptible response to God's emissaries and one's subsequent good deeds must correspond to the appropriate imperceptible states and traits, namely a repentant disposition (3:7-12) and the intention to win divine, not human praise (7:15-23), such correspondence being necessary because, prior to the eschaton, appearances can deceive and doing the divine will can be feigned (3:7-12; 7:15-23; 13:24-30, 26-43; 21:18-22). This chapter argues that the same principles—that words and deeds do or should correspond to appropriate inward characteristics—appears not

only in that metaphor but throughout Matthew and offers the controversy story in 15:1-20, the eschatological discourse (chs. 24-5), and the theme of hypocrisy as evidence.

15:1–20

In 15:1-20, Matthew claims that the Pharisees reject Jesus' words and deeds because their hearts are defiled, meaning they are essentially opposed to God, the same point the evangelist encodes in the fruits metaphor in 12:33-7 and 21:33-46. The passage easily divides into two or three pericopae: one concerning the traditions of the elders (vv. 1-9) and another concerning purity (vv. 10-20)[1] or a controversy story proper with the Jewish leaders (vv. 1-9) followed by the instruction of the crowds (vv. 10-11) and the disciples (vv. 12-20).[2] But Matthew has united these subunits by introducing v. 20b to form an *inclusio* with v. 2. They constitute one sustained, if not transparently deductive, discussion occasioned by the Jewish leaders' ("Pharisees and scribes" from Jerusalem, v. 1) objections that Jesus' disciples "break the tradition of the elders" (παραβαίνουσιν τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων) by not washing their hands before meals (v. 2).

Because modern scholarship on Matthew has obsessed over the relationship of Matthew and his community to the Jewish traditions and groups of his day,[3] interpreters

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[1] Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 325.

[2] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:516; Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 154.

[3] The bibliography on this topic is vast and threatens to encompass all of the most influential recent historical-critical and social-scientific work on the gospel. For surveys of scholarship, see Stanton, "The Origin and Purpose of Matthew's Gospel"; Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 13–61;

since the mid nineteenth century have typically sought in this passage Matthew's exposition

of his views on the law.[4] According to Luz, "[t]he *main question* that our section poses is

what understanding of law and the Pharisaic tradition underlies the Matthean treatment."[5]

Whatever the text says or does not say about the law—and at least one prominent critic

thinks Matthew, eschewing controversy, avoids a clear position[6]—it also presents an etiology

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Foster, *Community, Law, and Mission in Matthew's Gospel*, 22–79. The influence of Davies, *The Setting* on the agendas of Matthean studies since 1964 is difficult to overstate. Matthew undoubtedly displays numerous and weighty points of contact with ancient Judaism and those points may have important ethical and theological implications. Nonetheless, it is neither self-evident why nor necessary that the question of Matthew's precise theological or social location vis-à-vis the variegated phenomenon of Judaism has so thoroughly dominated modern studies of the gospel. Biblical and religious studies would benefit from a cultural history, a tracing of the subtexts and stakes, of the question of "Matthew and Judaism," from a work that does for Matthean studies what Georgi did for accounts of Jesus' life ("The Interest in Life of Jesus Theology as a Paradigm for the Social History of Biblical Criticism," *HTR* 85 [1992]: 51–83), Arnal has done for recent studies of Jesus' Jewishness (*The Symbolic Jesus: Historical Scholarship, Judaism, and the Construction of Contemporary Identity*, Religion in Culture [London: Equinox, 2005]), Johnson-DeBaufre has done for studies of Q (*Jesus Among Her Children: Q, Eschatology, and the Construction of Christian Origins*, Harvard Theological Studies 55 [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005]), or Blanton has done for the premises of some contemporary New Testament scholarship (*Displacing Christian Origins: Philosophy, Secularity, and the New Testament*, Religion and Postmodernism [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007]).

[4] For a taxonomy of findings, see Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 327–28. Luz contends that Matthew's general understanding of the Jewish law remains elusive because on this topic Matthew is irresolvably self-contradictory: "Every individual interpretation of our text is determined by a general understanding of the law in Matthew. There is no such general understanding that would not have difficulties with individual Matthean texts" (ibid., 328).

[5] Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 327, emphasis his, cf. 335; see also the works cited (and critiqued) in Guy G. Stroumsa, "Purification and Its Discontents: Mani's Rejection of Baptism," in *Transformations of the Inner Self in Ancient Religions*, ed. Jan Assmann and Guy G Stroumsa (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 413–17; = Guy G. Stroumsa, *Barbarian Philosophy: The Religious Revolution of Early Christianity*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 112 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 274–78.

[6] Anthony J. Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community*, Chicago Studies in the History of Judaism (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 138–9.

of moral failure in the form of a polemic against the Jewish leaders. And there are indications that Matthew sees the etiological and polemical dimensions as the most important, that he sees this story less as an abstract discussion of law or a defense of his community's *halakhah*[7] than as an indictment: before Jesus can elaborate on the meaning or implications of the saying in v. 11, Matthew has the disciples report that the Pharisees "took offense" at it (ἐσκανδαλίσθησαν, v. 12), meaning that they reject the words and the speaker.[8] Matthew then highlights the causes and consequence of that rejection by adding to Mark 7:1-23 the condemnation of the Pharisees in vv. 13-14. "The author's main interest is in sharpening the conflict with the Pharisees."[9] Matt 15:1-20 is thus a controversy story, prompted, like others

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[7] So, e.g., J. Andrew Overman, *Church and Community in Crisis: The Gospel According to Matthew* (Valley Forge, Pa.: Trinity, 1996), 226–27.

[8] In Matthew, σκανδαλίζω means to lead or, in the passive, to be led astray (5:29, 30; 11:6; 13:21, 41, 57; 15:12; 16:23; 17:27; 18:6-9; 24:10; 26:31; 26:33); cf. Sir 9:5. Here, as in 11:6 and 13:57 and perhaps 17:27, it characterizes those who reject Jesus' message. See Zumstein, *La condition du croyant*, 177–8; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:352; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 318: "To be scandalized is to not recognize from his words and work that he is God's agent"; Louise Joy Lawrence, *An Ethnography of the Gospel of Matthew: A Critical Assessment of the Use of the Honour and Shame Model in New Testament Studies*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/165 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 164. Boring and Luz understand the term to mean simply "to grow angry" (Boring, "The Gospel of Matthew," 8:333; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 325, 333). But while anger may be a component of the Jewish leaders' response, the form of the passage—it is a controversy story—suggests that the term has the same, broader meaning here that it has elsewhere in Matthew.

[9] Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community*, 137; on the centrality of conflict to Matthew's narrative, see also Ulrich Luz, "The Miracle Stories of Matthew 8-9," in *Studies in Matthew*, trans. Rosemary Selle (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eedrmans, 2005), 233–4. On the aims of Matthew's redaction of this passage, see also Barth, "Matthew's Understanding of the Law," 86–9; Boring, "The Gospel of Matthew," 8:332; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 326–7; cf. Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 154–66.

in Matthew, by Jesus' miraculous deeds (14:34-6).[10] Characterizing and censuring Jesus'

opponents is its aim.[11]

In vv. 1-9, Jesus characterizes the Jewish leaders as outwardly and inwardly opposed

to the divine. Pharisees and scribes ask Jesus why his disciples routinely (ὅταν)[12] "break the

tradition of the elders" (παραβαίνουσιν τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων) by not washing

their hands before eating (v. 2). "The tradition of the elders" does not mean biblical

tradition—it is difficult to find in Israel's scriptures a law requiring hand washing before

meals[13]—but rather practices that the Pharisees championed.[14] In fact, the similar use of the

term "tradition" (παράδοσις) in other, independent sources referring to the Pharisees implies

that it was a technical term for supposedly ancestral customs not written in the law of Moses

that the Pharisees advocated and some Jews, including the Sadduccees, rejected.[15] The extents

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[10] Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 153; Nolland, *Matthew*, 622. For the argument that 15:1-20 is unrelated to what precedes it, see O. Lamar Cope, *Matthew, a Scribe Trained for the Kingdom of Heaven*, Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series 5 (Washington, D.C.: Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1976), 53; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2.517.

[11] Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 320: "Throughout his gospel Matthew uses the controversy stories to develop a narrative contrast between Jesus' powerful deeds and teaching and the reaction of his opponents to them…. This contrast [begins in ch. 9 and] comes to a head with the ultimate judgment on the Jewish leaders in ch. 23 as a direct result of their opposition to Jesus."

[12] For ὅταν, "whenever," referring to a regular practice, see Matt 6:6.

[13] Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 232; Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community*, 134–6; Repschinski, *Controversy Stories*, 158. The practice might derive from Exod 30:17-21, which requires priests to wash their hands and feet before entering the tent of meeting or approaching the altar.

[14] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:520; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 330.

[15] Albert I. Baumgarten, "The Pharisaic Paradosis," *HTR* 80 (1987): 66, *passim*; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:520. The Graecophone sources are Mark 7:1-23; Matt 15:1-20; Josephus, *A.J.*

to which Pharisees and other first-century Jews washed their hands to ensure ritual purity before eating ordinary food (as opposed to the sanctified food of second tithes, sacrifices, and heave offerings) as well as the contents of the Pharasaic "tradition" generally remain difficult to reconstruct.[16] But whatever the historical reality, Matthew portrays Jesus' opponents in this passage as advocating such a practice, deeming it ancestral tradition, and citing it as a boundary marker between themselves and the disciples.[17]

13.297; Gal 1:14; cf. the use of the term in Pauline works to refer to Christian tradition (1 Cor 11:2; 2 Thess 2:15; 3:6). Baumgarten collects the possible Hebrew sources. Whether the practices really were ancestral remains debated (Martin Goodman, "A Note on Josephus, the Pharisees and Ancestral Tradition," in *Judaism in the Roman World: Collected Essays*, Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums 66 [Leiden: Brill, 2007], 117–21). According to Baumgarten, it was in antiquity as well ("The Pharisaic Paradosis," 72–3). Matthew may reiterate common criticisms of the Pharisees by avoiding affirming the antiquity and thus the validity of their practices, referring to them not as "the traditions of the elders" but as "your traditions" (v. 3).

[16] Handwashing before meals may have been the supererogatory practice of a few, even among Pharisees. Matthew could have in mind the group later rabbinic literature calls the חברים, who did require such washing (*m. Dem.* 2:3; *t. Dem.* 2:20-2; *t. Dem 2:2*), but it is not clear that that group existed in the first-century; see E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985), 185–6; Roger P. Booth, *Jesus and the Laws of Purity: Tradition History and Legal History in Mark 7*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 13 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1986), 189–203; E. P. Sanders, *Jewish Law from Jesus to the Mishnah: Five Studies* (London: SCM Press, 1990), 39–40; Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 232. Hannah K. Harrington considers the synoptic gospels "the most compelling evidence" that the Pharisees did mandate handwashing ("Did the Pharisees Eat Ordinary Food in a State of Ritual Purity?," *JSJ* 26 [1995]: 53); see also Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:521–2. But Matthew's account of the Jewish leaders in this chapter is tendentious and scathing. As Saldarini remarks, "Because of his polemical broadside against both his opponents' teaching and their integrity, Matthew's account of their views is unreliable" (*Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community*, 156; see also Sanders, *Jewish Law*, 56–7). On the contents of Pharisees' παράδοσις, see Baumgarten, "The Pharisaic Paradosis"; cf. Goodman, "A Note on Josephus"; Lawrence H. Schiffman, "The Judean Scrolls and the History of Judaism," in *The Dead Sea Scrolls Fifty Years After Their Discovery: Proceedings of the Jerusalem Congress, July 20-25, 1997*, ed. Lawrence H. Schiffman, Emanuel Tov, and James C. VanderKam (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society in cooperation with The Shrine of the Book, Israel Museum, 2000), 542–47.

[17] On purity regulations as boundary markers in Second-Temple Judaism, see Albert I. Baumgarten, *The Flourishing of Jewish Sects in the Maccabean Era: An Interpretation* (Leiden: Brill,

Jesus responds to the Pharisees' and scribes' question by asking them why they break

God's commandment (v. 3). In order to argue that the Pharisees' traditions permit one to

transgress the Torah, he cites what he says is the Pharasaic practice of "offering," in which

one declares an asset an "offering" (δῶρον, v. 5)[18] to God and thereby, Jesus claims, evades

the biblical requirements to honor, that is, to financially support,[19] one's parents and not to

repudiate (κακολογῶν) them (v. 4).[20] He may imply that Pharisees who follow this practice

use the wealth, despite its dedication, for their own benefit.[21] Or he may imply that they

allow a spiteful child to use a vow as a pretext for withholding support, in which case the son

would not profit from declaring his assets an "offering," but neither would his parents.[22] In

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1997), 76, 81–112; see also 6–7, 59; Charlotte E. Fonrobert, "Purification: Purification in Judaism," ed. Lindsay Jones, *Encyclopedia of Religion* (Detroit: Macmillan Reference, 2005), 11:7514.

[18] Mark uses the Hebrew loanword, κορβᾶν, and, like Josephus (*A.J.* 4.4.4.73) and the translators of the LXX, equates it with the Greek term δῶρον. Matthew uses only the Greek term.

[19] On this component of the fifth commandment, see Sir 3:3, 8, 12-16; Philo, *Decal.*, 113-8; *b. Qidd.* 31b; Klaus Berger, *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu: ihr historischer Hintergrund im Judentum und im Alten Testament*, Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 40 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1972), 288.

[20] Some interpreters (e.g., Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:523) hold that v. 4b, a quotation of Exod 21:17, merely underscores the seriousness of the commandment to honor one's parents. But it also restates that commandment. Repudiating, including, the context suggests, withholding financial support, is a form of dishonoring. See Patrick D. Miller, "The Place of the Decalogue in the Old Testament and Its Law," *Int* 43 (1989): 236.

[21] Rabbinic literature discusses such a possibility: *m. Ned.* 3.11; 5.6; 9.1; *b. Sabb.* 127b; *b. Ned.* 33b-35a. Davies and Allison state, "The Mishnah plainly reveals how common it was, at least at the time of its composition, to pronounce a *qorbān* vow for the purpose of not sharing property with others" (*Matthew*, 2:524).

[22] So Sanders, *Jewish Law*, 56. Interpreting the parallel story in Mark, Richard Horsley argues that Jesus portrays the practice of "offering" in this sense as economically exploitative: "he sharply condemns the scribal-Pharasaic representatives of the Temple for predatory practices whereby they

either case, Jesus here critiques the Jewish leaders' conduct, deeming it unlawful and unjust, disobedient to God and harmful to others.

Luz therefore finds in this passage another indication that actions above all else matter to Matthew. "As always," he writes, "for Matthew everything is decided by praxis."[23] The evangelist does indeed condemn the actions the Pharisees' and scribes' tradition supposedly allows. But he is also concerned to explain the cause of their behavior. Some interpreters see them as acting out of principled adherence to the Torah's requirement that one keep a vow (e.g., Num 30 and Deut 23:21-23).[24] On this reading, the Pharisees and scribes reason that one should not make a vow that requires oneself to break a commandment or otherwise act immorally but if one does, nonetheless, vow an inappropriate vow, that vow is binding.[25]

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induce the poor to render up their scarce economic resources for maintenance of the Temple establishment" (*Hearing the Whole Story: The Politics of Plot in Mark's Gospel* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001], 109; see also xiv, 49, 170, 184).

[23] Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 329.

[24] The biblical texts on vows were the subject of much discussion in the Second-Temple period. On their reception at Qumran, for instance, see Lawrence H. Schiffman, "The Law of Vows and Oaths (Num 30, 3-16) in the Zadokite Fragments and the Temple Scroll," *RevQ* 15 (1991): 199–214; Cecilia Wassen, *Women in the Damascus Document*, Academia Biblica 21 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 90–3. Note also the allusion to Num 30 in 1QS V, 9 (Michael A. Knibb, *The Qumran Community*, Cambridge Commentaries on Writings of the Jewish and Christian World, 200 B.C. to A.D. 200 2 [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987], 109). For the importance of honoring vows in the biblical writings, see also Lev 4:5 and Judg 11:29-40.

[25] No ancient Jewish source condones making a vow that requires one to break a commandment. On the contrary, a variety of legal traditions forbid such a vow: Deut 23:18 (money obtained by immoral means cannot be used to fulfill a vow); CD XVI, 14-15; Josephus, *A.J.*, 5.169; *m. Ned.* 9.1; 11.11. On vows in ancient Judaism, see Saul Lieberman, *Greek in Jewish Palestine: Studies in the Life and Manners of Jewish Palestine in the II-IV Centuries C. E.* (New York: The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1942), 115–43; Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community*, 151–6; Jon Nelson Bailey, "Vowing Away the Fifth Commandment: Matthew 15:3-6//Mark 7:9-13," *RQ* 42 (2000): 193–209. On vows in the ancient Mediterranean more broadly, see Nathaniel

(The mechanisms later Jewish tradition offers for releasing people from such vows are not yet in place). The toleration of "offering" is merely deference to biblical teaching on vows. And on this view, the Matthean Jesus, on the other hand, maintains that an immoral vow is inherently invalid.[26] The problem with this interpretation is that the text of Matthew lacks any indication that the Jewish leaders stand on principle. Matthew instead identifies vainglory as the cause of their behavior. Verse 6 declares that they "abrogate the word of God" (ἠκυρώσατε τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ), "for the sake of" their "tradition" (διὰ τὴν παράδοσιν, v. 6; see also v. 3), v. 7 that they are "hypocrites" in the sense that the subsequent quotation from Isaiah describes: they represent themselves as devoted to God ("This people honors me with their lips," v. 8a; cf. v. 2) when they teach their tradition and interrogate Jesus for allowing his disciples to disregard it but in reality harbor another intention ("their hearts are far from me," v. 8b). The fact that their self-representations are public (v. 10 implies that crowds are nearby) or at least interpersonal (they ask Jesus a question) combined with the fact that Matthew elsewhere represents the Pharisees and scribes as seeking acclaim (e.g., 23:5-7) suggest that the intention they harbor is to aggrandize their "tradition" and by extension themselves (vv. 3, 6). Comparison with Matthew's source for 15:1-9 underscores Matthew's emphasis on the Jewish leaders' vain motives. In Mark 7:1-13, Jesus' accusation of

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Desrosiers, "The Establishment of Proper Mental Disposition and Practice: The Origin, Meaning, and Social Purpose of the Prohibition of Oaths in Matthew" (Ph.D. diss., Brown University, 2007), 37–70.

[26] For this interpretation, see Samuel Belkin, "Dissolution of Vows and the Problem of Anti-Social Oaths in the Gospels and Contemporary Jewish Literature," *JBL* 55 (1936): 227–34; Solomon Zeitlin, "Korban," *JQR* 53 (1962): 160–63; Albert I. Baumgarten, "Korban and the Pharisaic Paradosis," *JANES* 16-17 (1984): 16.

hypocrisy and quotation from Isaiah appear immediately after the scribes' and Pharisees'

question about handwashing (vv. 5-7), with the effect that these elements comment on the

Jewish leaders' lauding of "ancestral tradition." The Markan story in other words examines

the value of human tradition, exemplified by the practice of handwashing, in comparison to

Torah. But Matthew delays the accusation and the quotation so that they comment on the

scribes' and Pharisees' alleged transgression of the Torah's commandment to honor one's

parents. The Matthean story addresses the impious and unjust practices the Jewish leaders

develop in order to enhance their social status.[27] The Pharisees and scribes, on Matthew's

account, have improper aims—God-fleeing hearts—and therefore fail to act properly.[28]

Inwardly and outwardly, they defy the deity. Moreover, it is because of their improper

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[27] Cf. Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 329.

[28] Matthew's assessment of the scribes' and Pharisees' tradition of "offering" then resembles Philo's analysis of vows in *Spec.* 2.12-17, where the Alexandrian not only insists that vows that lead one to commit injustice should not be fulfilled but also claims that some people of bad character use vows to justify mistreating others, including by withholding financial assistance:

But there are some who, either because through excessive misanthropy (μισανθρωπία) their nature has lost the sense of companionship and fellow-feeling or because they are constrained by anger which rules them like a stern mistress, confirm the cruelty (ἀγριότης) of their character (ἦθος) with an oath. They declare that they will not admit such and such a person to their table or under their roof, or again, that they will not provide assistance (ὠφέλεια) to so and so or accept anything from him till his life's end. Sometimes they carry on their vindictiveness after that end has come and leave directions in their wills against even granting the customary rites to his corpse. (LCL, modified)

The evangelist does not in ch. 15 attribute to the Jewish leaders the same malice that Philo here describes but, like Philo, he does characterize vows that forbid one from assisting another as the results of bad character.

motives as well as their malevolence (12:14) that Jesus refuses to answer their initial question directly. It does not deserve an earnest response because it is not a sincere inquiry.

In vv. 10-11, Jesus, speaking now to the crowds, finally addresses the Jewish leaders' question and declares that defilement is a matter not of what goes into but of what emerges from oneself: "It is not what goes into the mouth that defiles (κοινοῖ) a person," he says, "but what comes out of the mouth, this is what that defiles a person" (v. 11). As Jesus' use of the term "defilement" highlights, with their question about handwashing, the Pharisees and scribes question the disciples' commitment to ritual purity, to avoiding "defilement," and hence to God. By declaring that defilement is a matter not of what enters the mouth, that is, of food-related practices, but rather what leaves it, that is, of speech, Jesus replies that moral purity is of greater concern. At face value, the gnomic saying in v. 11 reads like an explicit rejection of any concern for ritual purity but in Matthew, as in Mark, a "not… but…" construction can indicate relative, not absolute value.[29] Like so many other ancient Jews then, the Matthean Jesus prioritizes moral over ritual purity, without necessarily disavowing the latter.[30] In doing so, he implies that his disciples' neglect of handwashing is inconsequential

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[29] Note Matt 9:13b: "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." Surely Jesus does not here mean that he excludes *all* righteous people from his ministry, since he elsewhere requires disciples to be righteous (5:20); see also 9:13; 12:7. See, on the Markan parallel to Matt 15:11, Stephen Westerholm, *Jesus and Scribal Authority*, Coniectanea Biblica. New Testament Series 10 (Lund: Gleerup, 1978), 83; James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus, Paul, and the Law: Studies in Mark and Galatians* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1990), 51; on Matthew, Jonathan Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 147. On the "not… but…" form more generally, see Arnulf Kuschke, "Das Idiom Der 'Relativen Negation' Im NT," *ZNW* 43 (1950); Heinz Kruse, "Die 'Dialektische Negation' Als Semitisches Idiom," *VT* 4 (1954): 385–400.

[30] Bacon, *Studies*, 352–3; Barth, "Matthew's Understanding of the Law," 85–9; Gnilka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 2:26–7; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:529–31; Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-*

since they demonstrate their reverence for God in other, more crucial ways, in particular by their speech.

After the Pharisees overhear Jesus' reply and reject it and him (ἐσκανδαλίσθησαν, v. 12), Jesus in vv. 13-14 explains to the disciples why they do so and further characterizes them as fundamentally hostile to the divine. He describes them as plants not planted by God, which, in light of the use of that description in the parable of the weeds, implies they are, despite the appearance of piety they cultivate, allied not with God but with Satan and therefore oppose him, God's representative. Consequently, they are threats to be avoided; in contrast to how Jesus' followers are to treat the weed-like false disciples of 13:24-30, the disciples here are to "leave" the Jewish leaders "alone" (ἄφετε αὐτούς, v. 14), as Jesus himself has already done by refusing to respond to their question directly and then ceasing to speak with them altogether, for the Pharisees are "blind guides" leading others to destruction (v. 14) both by teaching them to violate the Torah (v. 3) and by influencing others to challenge the Christ.

In vv. 17-20, at Peter's request (v. 16), Jesus explicates his saying in v. 11 and thereby further depicts the Jewish leaders as fundamentally opposed to God and therefore opposed to

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Jewish Community, 138; Sim, *The Gospel of Matthew and Christian Judaism*, 133–5; Klawans, *Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism*, 147–50; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 332–4; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 127–29. Parallels include Hos 6:6; 2 Chr 30:18-20; *Let. Aris.* 234; 1QS III, 6-9; Ps.-Phoc. 228; Philo, *Spec.* 1.269; 3.208-9; *Cher.* 95-6; see also Matt 5:21-8; 23:16-26. Klawans shows that for Matthew, as for the Qumran community, ritual and moral impurity are related; a discussion of one leads to a discussion of the other. He hypothesizes that the Pharisees to whom Mark and Matthew refer, like the early rabbinic sages, did compartmentalize ritual and moral impurity. Sin and the state of ritual uncleanness are not related in their minds as they are for Mark and Matthew. For the view that Matthew does rejects the ritual laws altogether, see Strecker, *Der Weg*, 30–2; Schweizer, *Matthew*, 327; Berger, *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu*, 504–6.

Jesus. He reiterates in vv. 17-18 the point he made in v. 11—that what leaves one's mouth (a matter of moral purity) is of greater concern than what enters it (a matter of ritual purity)—but introduces a reason for that relative ranking: what leaves one's mouth "emerges from the heart" (ἐκ τῆς καρδίας ἐξέρχεται), from the center of the self, and therefore better indicates whether one is disposed against the deity, whether one is "defiled." True defilement, he claims, is a matter less of the hands than of the heart, less of ritual practices than of one's very being. By virtue of being placed at this point in the passage, this claim not only reiterates his defense of the disciples' food-related practices; it also comments on that defense and on the Pharisees' preceding repudiation of him. Since defilement is a matter of the most fundamental traits of oneself, the fact that, according to v. 11, what emerges from the disciples' mouths—by which, in light of the reference to rejecting Jesus in v. 12, Matthew presumably means their confession of Jesus as "Lord"—does not defile them indicates that their hearts are not "far from God," (cf. v. 8), are not, to employ the passage's purity language, "defiled." By contrast, the rejection of Jesus that emerges from the Pharisees' mouths in v. 12 is, Jesus implies, evidence that their hearts are unclean, that, as the evangelist states elsewhere, they are evil. Conversely, just as their improper intentions lead them to transgress a Decalogal commandment, so does the impurity of their hearts, meaning their intrinsic and holistic deviation from the divine will, compel them to dismiss Jesus.

In v. 19, Jesus then offers a list of offenses that result from and so reveal real defilement, a list that Matthew has carefully shaped so as to contribute to his characterization of the Pharisees in this passage. The source of Matthew's vice list in 15:19 is Mark 7:21-2. Mark's list consists of six vices in the plural, all but one of which—the very general and concluding "wicked actions" (πονηρίαι) is the exception—are offenses against one's neighbor

forbidden by the Decalogue,[31] followed by six in the singular, most of which are more abstract or internal, all introduced by the heading "evil intentions" (οἱ διαλογισμοὶ οἱ κακοί).[32] The plural vices are further ordered into two repetitive groups of three consisting of a sexual offense (πορνεῖαι, μοιχεῖαι) followed by an offense related to property (κλοπαί, πλεονεξίαι), and, if, based on this pattern, we are to take "wicked acts" (πονηρίαι, v. 22) as a restatement of "murders" (φόνοι, v. 21), one involving physical violence.[33]

Matthew reshapes Mark's vice list, preserving only those deeds that are named in the Decalogue (φόνοι, μοιχεῖαι, κλοπαί) or are variations thereon (πορνεῖαι, βλασφημίαι), replacing "deceit" (δόλος) with the more Decalogal "acts of false witness" (ψευδομαρτυρίαι), and repositioning "acts of sexual immorality" (πορνεῖαι) and "robberies" (κλοπαί). The following table summarizes Matthew's redaction:

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[31] Cf. the vice list in Hos 4:2, whether in the MT (five vices) or the LXX (four vices: ψεῦδος καὶ φόνος καὶ κλοπὴ καὶ μοιχεία), which, unlike the other vice list in the Bible, Jer 7:9, consists only of crimes against one's neighbor (Hans Walter Wolff, *Hosea: A Commentary on the Book of the Prophet Hosea*, trans. Gary Stansell, Hermeneia [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974], 67).

[32] On this structure, see Henry Barclay Swete, *The Gospel According to St. Mark: The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes and Indices* (London: Macmillan, 1902), 153: "The plural indicate successive acts of sin, as they emerge from the inner source of human corruption; the more subtle tendencies to evil which follow are in the singular"; Rudolf Pesch, *Das Markusevangelium*, Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 2 (Freiburg: Herder, 1976), 1:382; Marcus, *Mark*, 1:459–60; Camille Focant, *L'évangile Selon Marc*, Commentaire biblique: Nouveau Testament 2 (Paris: Cerf, 2004), 273; M. Eugene Boring, *Mark: A Commentary*, New Testament Library (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 205.

[33] On the equivalency of πορνεῖαι to μοιχεῖαι and κλοπαί to πλεονεξίαι, I follow Pesch, *Markusevangelium*, 1:382; Collins, *Mark*, 359. The suggestion that φόνοι and πονηρίαι are then also equivalent is my own, though William Loader's observations are similar (*The Septuagint, Sexuality, and the New Testament: Case Studies on the Impact of the LXX in Philo and the New Testament* [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2004], 17). In the secondary literature on Mark, there seems to be no prominent proposal for the structure of the six vices in the singular.

Table 3: Matthew's Redaction of Mark 7:21-2

Matt 15:19	Mark 7:21-2 in ℵ, B (NA²⁶)
διαλογισμοὶ πονηροί	οἱ διαλογισμοὶ οἱ κακοὶ
	πορνεῖαι
	κλοπαί
φόνοι	φόνοι
μοιχεῖαι	μοιχεῖαι
πορνεῖαι	πλεονεξίαι
κλοπαί	πονηρίαι
ψευδομαρτυρίαι	δόλος
	ἀσέλγεια
	ὀφθαλμὸς πονηρός
βλασφημίαι	βλασφημία
	ὑπερηφανία
	ἀφροσύνη

The resulting list consists of six offenses introduced by "evil intentions" (διαλογισμοὶ πονηροί) and based on the sixth through ninth commandments of the Decalogue as found in the MT. Exodus 20 and Deut 5 MT forbid 6) murder, 7) adultery, 8) theft, and 9) false witness. Matthew's list condemns 6) murder, 7) adultery and sexual immorality, 8) theft, and 9) false witness and blasphemy. It contains then two panels of three actions, the first featuring

murder and two sexual offenses, the second featuring theft and two offenses related to speech.[34]

Jews in the Roman period typically understood the portion of the Decalogue that Matthew deploys, the second half, as addressing one's responsibilities to other people, the first half having addressed one's responsibility to God.[35] This list consists then of acts of injustice. Matthew does not explicitly mention the tenth commandment, the prohibition of coveting, because it is equivalent to the heading of his list, "evil intentions," and would therefore be superfluous. Already in the biblical text, the last commandment acknowledges that wrong actions emerge from wrong dispositions.[36] That this understanding of the last commandment existed in the Second Temple period is shown by Philo's comment that it "cuts off desire, the

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[34] For πορνεῖαι and βλασφημίαι as extensions of the immediately preceding vices, see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:536; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 586.

[35] Philo, *Decal.* 50-1; 106; 168; *Her.* 168; cf. Exod 32:15; 34:1; *Let. Aris.* 169; *L.A.B.* 12.10; Josephus, *A.J.* 3.101; *m. Yoma* 8:9; *Pesiq. Rab.* 21; Epiphanius, *Pan.* 33.5.3; for discussion, see James L. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible: A Guide to the Bible as It Was at the Start of the Common Era* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 643–4; Dale C. Allison, *Resurrecting Jesus: The Earliest Christian Tradition and Its Interpreters* (New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 151–60. This division is reflected in the tendency to summarize the requirements of the Decalogue as the love of God and love of neighbor (ibid., 154–7). This two-fold schema of morality, often designated by the combination of εὐσεβεία or ὁσιότης with δικαιοσύνη (e.g., Plato, *Euthyphr.* 12E), figures prominently in non-Jewish sources and popular morality too; see Albrecht Dihle, *Der Kanon der zwei Tugenden*, (Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Forschung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, Reihe: Geisteswissenschaften 44 (Cologne: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1968); Hans Dieter Betz, "Christianity as Religion: Paul's Attempt at Definition in Romans," *JR* 71 (1991): 339–41; Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 70; Wilson, *Sentences*, 75; Abraham J. Malherbe, "Godliness, Self-Sufficiency, Greed, and the Enjoyment of Wealth 1 Timothy 6:3-19 Part I," *NovT* 52 (2010): 402–3.

[36] Miller, "The Place of the Decalogue in the Old Testament and Its Law," 242: "Already in the commandment against coveting, the connection between internal feelings and external acts, between private attitudes and public deeds, is explicitly recognized. The point is clear." He describes the Matthean Jesus' focus on dispositions as a logical outgrowth of the end of the Decalogue.

fountain of all iniquity, from which flow all the most unlawful actions" (*De Decal.* 173,

Yonge) and by his and others' treatments of "desire" (ἐπιθυμία) more generally.[37] As I will

discuss next, the first entry in Matthew's vice list makes a similar point and so whereas the

Decalogue concludes with a warning against the sort interior state that leads to injustice

towards a neighbor, Matthew begins thusly. In sum, the evangelist fashions a more concise

and recognizable rendition of the second table of the Decalogue out of Mark's more

extensive list.[38]

Thus, Matthew does not merely repeat his source but comes to author this catalog. It

is therefore significant that he chooses to preserve the first item in Mark's list: "evil

intentions." The effect of beginning with such a heading is to make the list consequential, to

imply that the six vicious actions originate from a vicious inward condition.[39] As Matthew

earlier implies that anger is a step towards murder (5:21-22) and desire a step towards

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[37] On desire (ἐπιθυμία) as the origin of sin in Philo's corpus, see *QG* 1.47; *Dec.* 142, 151–53, *Spec.* 4.79-95; *Virt.* 100; Harry A. Wolfson, *Philo: Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1947), 2:229–31; Joel Marcus, "The Evil Inclination in the Epistle of James," *CBQ* 44 (1982): 613–15; Walter T. Wilson, "Sin as Sex and Sex with Sin: The Anthropology of James 1:12–15," *HTR* 95 (2002): 151–2. Cf. James 1:15; 4:1-2, 4; Gal 5:17-24; Berger, *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu*, 346–9.

[38] The differences in the lists cannot be attributed to Hellenistic (Mark's) versus Jewish (Matthew's) milieus, as some commentators suggest (e.g., Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 327). Klawans shows that Mark's list is thoroughly at home in the Judaism of the land of Israel (*Impurity and Sin in Ancient Judaism*, 148–9).

[39] Calvin, *Commentaries, ad loc.*; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:536; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 320; Garland, *Reading Matthew*, 164: "'Evil thoughts' heads the list followed by six actions that stem from evil thoughts"; Hooker, *Mark*, 180; Marcus, *Mark*, 459; Collins, *Mark*, 357. John Wesley seems to have made the same observation: "First evil thoughts - then murders - and the rest" (*Wesley's Notes on the New Testament, ad loc.*).

adultery (5:27-8), so he makes "evil intentions" the etiology of all the offenses named in v.

19.[40] That "evil intentions" themselves originate in the heart suggests that, for the evangelist,

one's fundamental moral condition—whether one is defiled or pure, good or evil—

determines one intentions, which, in turn, determine one's actions.

Matthew deploys this anthropological statement not, however, to offer an abstract

account of the structure of the self, but to conclude this passage's indictment of the Jewish

leaders.[41] Two features of Matthew's list enable it to culminate his characterization here of

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[40] This construction reflects the proposition that typically underlies vice lists in Jewish and Christian literature. While they can serve manifold purposes, vice lists in Israel's scriptures, the Dead Sea Scrolls, *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, and the New Testament frequently stress the organic relationship between dispositions and deeds. See Siegfried Wibbing, *Die Tugend- und Lasterkataloge im Neuen Testament und ihre Traditionsgeschichte unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Qumran-Texte*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche 25 (Berlin: A. Töpelmann, 1959), 33, 108; Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation*, 38; Collins, *Mark*, 357. For further examples and discussions of vice-lists, see Ernst von Dobschütz, *Die urchristlichen Gemeinden: sittengeschichtliche Bilder* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1902), 282–4; Hans Lietzmann, *Einführung in Die Textgeschichte Der Paulusbriefe: An Die Römer*, 2d ed. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1919), 34–6; Burton Scott Easton, "New Testament Ethical Lists," *JBL* 51 (1932): 1–12; Anton Vögtle, *Die Tugend- Und Lasterkataloge Im Neuen Testament: Exegetisch, Religions- Und Formgeschichtlich Untersucht*, Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen 16/4-5 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1936); Ehrhard Kamlah, *Die Form Der Katalogischen Paränese Im Neuen Testament*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 7 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1964); Hans Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians*, trans. James W. Leitch, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), 100–01; Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 281–3; David E. Aune, "Lists, Ethical," in *NIDB*, vol. 2, 2006, 637–38. As Betz points out, "vice" is an imprecise adjective for such lists in as much as it can imply an anthropology from Greek ethics, one that may not underlie lists of offenses in the Hebrew Bible, 1QS, or Gal 5:19-23. I use the conventional and convenient designation "vice-list" here with that proviso in mind (*Galatians*, 282, 286).

[41] This characterizing function of the list is also typical. Vice lists as well as virtue lists were above all instruments of characterization. See Seneca, *Ep.* 95.65-7; Vögtle, *Die Tugend- Und Lasterkataloge*, 101–02; Martin J. Buss, *The Prophetic Word of Hosea: A Morphological Study*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 11 (Berlin: Verlag Alfred Töpelmann, 1969), 101; Klaus Berger, "Hellenistische Gattungen Im Neuen Testament," *ANRW II* 25.2 (1984):

the Pharisees and scribes. One, in keeping with this passage's polemic, Matthew's list consists

entirely of offenses that he elsewhere attributes to Israel's leaders and to other opponents of

Jesus. As David Garland observes, "The opponents of Jesus are guilty of nearly all these things

in Matthew's story: evil thoughts (9:4); murder (12:7; 21:35-39; 22:6; 23:29-36; 26:27);

adultery (12:38; 16:4, 'an evil and adulterous generation'); false witness (26:60-61 [cf. the

charges of hypocrisy]); and slander [blasphemy] (9:34; 11:18-19; 12:24; 26:60-1, 64-5;

28:13)."[42] Garland does not connect "robberies" (κλοπαί) with Jesus' opponents but in Matt

21:12-13, Jesus, using a different Greek term, accuses the Jewish leaders of making the

Temple a "den of thieves" (σπήλαιον λῃστῶν) and in 23:25, he insists they are "full of

plundering" (γέμουσιν ἐξ ἁρπαγῆς).[43] The correspondence between this list and its host

narrative is thus complete. As vice-lists can repeat stereotypical offenses, it is sometimes

difficult to discern how much an author intends each particular vice, as opposed to the

general impression the list creates, to relate to her or his larger points.[44] In the vice list in 1

Cor 6:9-11, for example, while some of the vices listed correlate perfectly to the disputes in

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1089; Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation*, 138. Other examples include Gal 5:19-23; 1 Tim 1:8-10; James 3:13-18; 1 Tim 1:9-10; 6:3-5; 2 Tim 3:2-5; *As. Mos.* 7:3-10.

[42] Garland, *Reading Matthew*, 164; see also Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 320; similarly Keener, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 414.

[43] Cf. the chief priests' and Pharisees' accusation that the disciples may intend robbery (and deceit; 27:61-6).

[44] John M. G. Barclay, *Obeying the Truth: A Study of Paul's Ethics in Galatians*, Studies of the New Testament and its World (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988), 150–55.

Corinth, others have no obvious relation thereto.[45] But Matthew's catalog, as we have seen,

corresponds so thoroughly to his depiction of Jesus' detractors that it is surely a conscious

commentary on the narrative. With its heading of "evil intentions" and its claim that such

intentions emerge from the heart, it stresses that the immoral actions seen throughout the

work, actions that the narrative portrays as characteristic of Jesus' opponents, result ultimately

from an unseen but totalizing hostility to God. They are not unlawful actions as much as

they are indications that the actor is unlawful.

Two, even though Matthew's list is carefully tailored to his narrative, as a vice list and

a restatement of the second half of the Decalogue, it is synecdochical. Ethical lists epitomize a

moral world; they do not inventory its entire contents.[46] In ancient Jewish and Christian

writings, restatements and summaries of the Ten Commandments are a convenient and

relatively common way of indicating the whole range of one's religious and moral

responsibilities.[47] They can serve that function because the Decalogue itself provides a

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[45] Judith M. Gundry Volf, *Paul and Perseverance: Staying in and Falling Away*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 2/37 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1990), 133. About the customization of vice-lists, she writes, "Because vice lists varied significantly in their content, an author's choice of certain terms over others, despite their being conventional, could reveal that author's special interests;" see also Victor Paul Furnish, *Theology and Ethics in Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968), 84–6.

[46] Betz, *Galatians*, 282.

[47] David Daube, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism*, Jordon Lectures in Comparative Religion 2 (London: Athlone Press, 1956), 106–40; Berger, *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu*, 258–77; Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr, *Gesetz und Paränese: Katechismusartige Weisungsreihen in der frühjüdischen Literatur* (Tübingen: JCB Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1987), 15–20; Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 66; Walter T. Wilson, *The Hope of Glory: Education and Exhortation in the Epistle to the Colossians*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 88 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 123; Wilson, *Sentences*, 75; Allison, *Resurrecting Jesus*, 151–60; see also E. P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief,*

summary of the entire law. Already in the Hebrew Bible the position of the Decalogue at the

head of the Pentateuch's legislation as well as the numerous points of correspondence

between the first ten laws and those that follow suggest that the Decalogue sums up all the

commandments.[48] Philo, adopting an interpretive convention common in his day and

perhaps inspired by the position of these ten commandments in the Pentateuch, portrays the

"ten words" as summaries of proper human life (*Decal.* 19-20; 154; 175; see also 50-1; 106-

10; 121; 168; *Spec.* 1.1; 2.1, 63, 242; 4.132; *Praem.* 1-3) and explains that they are "generic

rules, comprehending nearly all offenses whatever, and to one of these rules each particular

and special action is naturally referable" (*Her.* 1:173; see also *Decal.* 1.51; *Spec.* 2.13).[49] He

structures his exoteric commentary series, the Exposition of the Law, so that the review of

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63 BCE-66 CE (Philadelphia: Trinity, 1992), 192–3. On summaries of the Decalogue in the Hebrew Bible, see Miller, "The Place of the Decalogue in the Old Testament and Its Law," 234–5. For other attempts within Judaism to summarize moral obligations, see George Foot Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era: The Age of the Tannaim*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927), 2:83–88.

[48] Miller, "The Place of the Decalogue in the Old Testament and Its Law," 231–3; Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*, 680: "The positioning of the Decalogue as an introduction to the ensuing laws of the covenant serves a special canonical function as a theological summary of the entire Sinai tradition. All the detailed legislation which follows is subordinated to, and interpreted by, the heart of the law found in the Ten Commandments."

[49] Cf. *Num. Rab.* 13:15-16. On the question of the origin of Philo's portrayal of the Decalogue, see Naomi G. Cohen, *Philo Judaeus: His Universe of Discourse*, Beiträge zur Erforschung des Alten Testaments und des antiken Judentums 24 (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1995), 72–85; Peder Borgen, *Philo of Alexandria: An Exegete for His Time*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 86 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 61–2; cf. Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 679–80. For most interpreters, this question is part of the larger issue of the relationship of Philo's exegesis to exegetical currents in Alexandria and Palestine in the Roman period. On that question, see the surveys of research in Earle Hilgert, "Central Issues in Contemporary Philo Studies," *BR* 23 (1978): 15–25; Burton L. Mack, "Philo Judaeus and Exegetical Traditions in Alexandria," *ANRW* II.21.1 (1984): 227–71; Peder Borgen, "Philo of Alexandria: A Critical and Synthetical Survey of Research since World War II," *ANRW II* 21.1 (1984): 124–6; Borgen, *Philo*, 1–13.

the Mosaic constitution begins with the general laws, or principles—the Decalogue (*De decalogo*)—, and then proceeds to the particular enactments of those principles, the special laws (*De specialibus legibus*).[50] The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides and the *Sentences of the Syriac Menander* each begin with the naming of the purported author followed by a summary of the Decalogue that previews or summarizes the subsequent contents of the work (Ps.-Phoc. 3-8; *Syr. Men.* 3-19), a schema that, given the epitomizing aims of at least one of these works,[51] implies that the Decalogue is synecdochical for the full spectrum of ethical concerns.[52]

The plasticity of restatements of the Ten Commandments is further evidence that such summaries do not isolate special forms of right and wrong but represent the range of human successes and failures. Across versions and citations of Israel's scriptures, the form of the Decalogue itself varies, particularly in the order of the sixth, seventh, and eighth

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[50] See further Valentin Nikiprowetzky, ed., *De Decalogo* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1965), 1–34. On the classification of Philo's commentaries into series, see Nikiprowetzky, *Le commentaire de l'écriture chez Philon d'Alexandrie*, 192–202. On the structure of the Exposition of the Law in particular, see the overview in Walter T. Wilson, *Philo of Alexandria: On Virtues*, Philo of Alexandria Commentary Series 3 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 1–4.

[51] Wilson argues that the Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides "is a gnomic poem that epitomizes those ethical teachings deemed essential for the Jewish way of life, particularly as it is experienced in a fully Hellenistic milieu" (*The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 196). Scholarship on the purpose of the *Sentences of Syriac Menander* is a desideratum but, on analogy with Pseudo-Phocylides, one might tentatively suppose it to be summarial as well.

[52] Ibid., 71–4; Wilson, *Sentences*, 76–8. Other possible examples of the Decalogue as a summary of religious and ethical requirements include Mark 12:28-31 (on whose relationship to the Decalogue see Loader, *The Septuagint, Sexuality, and the New Testament*, 17; Allison, *Resurrecting Jesus*, 153–160); Rom 13:8-9; *Tg. Ps.-J.* (Exod 24:12); *Cant. Rab.* 14:2; cf. *Did.* 2:2-3.

commandments.[53] Renderings of the Decalogue in which the list of offenses is condensed or expanded, as in Mark 7:21-2 and Matt 15:19, feature considerable diversity with respect to content and arrangement. The textual witnesses to Mark 7:21-2 are one example:

Table 4: The Textual Witnesses to Mark 7:21-2

Mark 7:21-2 in ℵ, B, L, δ	Mark 7:21-2 in TR, Latin and Syriac versions
οἱ διαλογισμοὶ οἱ κακοὶ	οἱ διαλογισμοὶ οἱ κακοὶ
πορνεῖαι	μοιχεῖαι
κλοπαί	πορνεῖαι
φόνοι	φόνοι
μοιχεῖαι	κλοπαί
πλεονεξίαι	πλεονεξίαι
πονηρίαι	πονηρίαι
δόλος	δόλος
ἀσέλγεια	ἀσέλγεια
ὀφθαλμὸς πονηρός	ὀφθαλμὸς πονηρός

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[53] The order *murder, adultery, theft* appears in Deut 5 MT; 4QDeut[n] ; some old Greek manuscripts of Deut 5; Matt 19:18; Mark 10:19. The order *adultery, murder, theft* appears in old Greek manuscripts B and V of Deut 5; the Nash Papyrus; Luke 18:20; Rom 13:9; James 2:11; Philo, *Spec.* 3:8; *Her.* 1:173. The order *adultery, theft, murder* appears in old Greek manuscripts of Exod 20 and still other variations exist. See Berger, *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu*, 275–6; Niebuhr, *Gesetz und Paränese*, 15–6; John William Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Exodus*, Septuagint and Cognate Studies Series 30 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 314; Innocent Himbaza, *Le Decalogue et l'histoire du texte: Etudes des formes textuelles du Decalogue et leurs implications dans l'histoire du texte de l'Ancien Testament*, Orbis biblicus et orientalis 207 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2004); J. Andrew Dearman, *The Book of Hosea*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2010), 151.

βλασφημία	βλασφημία
ὑπερηφανία	ὑπερηφανία
ἀφροσύνη	ἀφροσύνη

These two readings, in which the order of the first six vices varies, represent two different ways of summarizing the Decalogue. Hosea 4:1-2; Jer 7:9; 1 Tim 1:9-10; Ps.-Phoc 3-8; *Did.* 2:2-3; *T. Isa* 7:2-4; *T. Gad* 5:1; and *T. Reub.* 3:2-7 are other examples. This diversity proves Philo's point; a summary of the Decalogue can contain many combinations of specific failings since the Decalogue takes in "nearly all offenses" (*Her.* 1:173). As early as Hosea and continuing into the Roman period, the Ten Commandments are a flexible framework for organizing and presenting the full spectrum of moral concerns.

Finally, Matthew's frequent indulgence in summaries lends additional support to the notion that the vices in v. 19 are representative. In 7:12, the Golden Rule summarizes the law and prophets. In 19:18-19, the commandments are condensed into the second half of the Decalogue, which is itself then summarized by Lev 19:18 (see also 22:34-40). In 23:23, "justice, mercy, and faithfulness" represent "the weightier matters of the law." And the whole Sermon on the Mount may also sum up the law and prophets and/or Jesus' teaching.[54]

Through these two features of v. 19, the evangelist's vice list portrays the Jewish leaders as intrinsically set against God. By portraying immoral actions as indications of

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[54] Dale C. Allison, *Studies in Matthew: Interpretation Past and Present* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2005), 209–10; see also Bornkamm, "End-Expectation and the Church in Matthew," 26–7.

holistic hostility to the deity and as a synechdoche that roots all actions contrary to God's will, not just those catalogued in v. 19, in evil intentions and evil hearts, Matthew's vice list casts the Pharisees' and scribes' practice of "offering" as not only a violation of "God's commandment" (v. 3) but as also the visible coefficient of their essential antagonism to God. Their teaching reveals not only their "evil intentions"—their vainglory—but also their evil hearts, or, nature. Likewise, the synechdochal list classifies their rejection of Jesus and his words not as one act of evil among others but as evidence that the Jewish leaders are evil *per se*, that they are fundamentally and inveterately at odds with the divine. Matthew 15:1-20 thus reiterates one claim the evangelist also makes through the fruits metaphor, the claim found in 12:33-7 and 21:33-44 that the Jewish leaders actions and especially their response to Jesus express their real disposition towards the God of Israel, their real nature.

Chs. 24-5

As the climax of Jesus' teaching in Matthew, chs. 24-5 deserve pride of place in any determination of Matthean values.[55] On Luz's account, these chapters represent the strongest evidence for the claim that Matthew's ethics prioritize conduct. According to him, in these chapters, as throughout Matthew, the outcome of the final judgment "is based solely on how one's works are judged"[56] But such analysis stops short of a full understanding of Matthew's ethics because here, as in the parable of the four soils, praiseworthy deeds are made possible

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[55] Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 264; see also Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 210.

[56] *Matthew 21-28*, 179; see also Bornkamm, "End-Expectation and the Church in Matthew," 15–51.

by certain inner conditions: in the case of the parable, humility, stability in suffering, and a

proper perspective on wealth and status; in the case of chs. 24-5, humility, a similar stability,

and constant policing of one's thoughts and emotions. These chapters repeatedly exhort

disciples to maintain the interior states necessary to act lovingly and, in turn, pass the final

judgment. In so doing, it reiterates a principle encoded in the fruits metaphor.

This fifth and final discourse of Jesus in Matthew consist of three main sections. After

the introductory scene in which Jesus' predicts the temple's destruction (24:1-2), there

follows a description of the events preceding the eschaton framed by exhortations against

being deceived about such events and ceasing to love (24:3-35), a collection of parables

introduced by imperatives that exhort readers to remain prepared for the eschatological

judgment by continuing to love (24:36-25:30), and a scene from the final judgment that

outlines the criteria used therein (25:31-46).[57] Its placement just before the passion narrative

and its exhortative function follow the placement and function of the eschatological

discourse in Mark.[58]

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[57] Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 178–9. This structure is commonly accepted. Whether this discourse actually begins in ch. 23 or whether ch. 23 belongs to its narrative introduction remains debated because whereas the conclusions to Matthew's five discourses are sharply defined—some variation on the formula καὶ ἐγένετο ὅτε ἐτέλεσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοὺς λόγους τούτους appears in 7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; and 26:1—the beginnings are less so (Terence J. Keegan, "Introductory Formulae for Matthean Discourses," *CBQ* 44 [1982]: 415–30). The issue cannot be resolved with certainty and Matthew may wish "to have it both ways," as Kari Syreeni claims (*The Making of the Sermon on the Mount*, 94). For a review of the debate, replete with bibliography on all positions, see Jason Hood, "Matthew 23-25: The Extent of Jesus' Fifth Discourse," *JBL* 128 (2009): 527–43; see also Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 479–80. I consider only chs. 24-5 here and address ch. 23 later in my discussion of hypocrisy.

[58] The Markan Jesus exhorts the disciples to beware (βλέπετε, 13:5b, 9, 33) and to remain alert (ἀγρυπνεῖτε, v. 33) and awake (γρηγορεῖτε, vv. 35, 37). Matthew preserves nearly all of these admonitions. On the aim of Mark 13, see Marcus, *Mark*, 2:866–7. For a summary of the ways in

24:3-35

The description of eschatological events in the first section is occasioned by the disciples' question about the timing of the end: when will "these things"—the destruction of the temple and Jesus' return—take place and what will signal his arrival at the consummation of the age (v. 3)? Jesus' response includes some information relevant to their question. Verses 6-8 list some general historical events (wars, reports of wars, famines, and earthquakes) that mark the beginning of the end. Verses 9-14 note the persecution (v. 9; see 10:17-21, 28; 21:35; 22:6; 23:34, 37), internal division and failures (vv. 10-12) and, nonetheless, mission (v. 14)[59] that must characterize the church before the end comes. And verses 15-22 describe calamities in Judea that will precede the eschaton: the profaning of the temple that Daniel foretold, the hurried and anguishing flight of Jesus' followers to the mountains (cf. 10:9-10, 23), and their subsequent suffering.

But Jesus offers no specifics that would enable one to predict the end accurately, which seems to be what the disciples request.[60] This discrepancy between their question and

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which Matthew makes his discourse even more exhortative than Mark's, see Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 495–7. On the different nature of Q's collection of eschatological sayings, which Matthew also incorporates, see Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q*, 165–6.

[59] "Note that it is precisely those who persecute the church who are the object of its mission (28:19)" (Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:342). Jesus predicts that the church, despite widespread moral shortcomings (v. 12), will exemplify the love of enemies and in particular of persecutors he commands (5:44). On the importance of these verses to Matthew's portrayal of mission, see Vicky Balabanski, "Mission in Matthew against the Horizon of Matthew 24," *NTS* 54 (2008): 161–75.

[60] Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 203: "The disciples' questions about time and the signs are not answered in a way that would permit apocalyptic speculation of any kind."

his answer arises in part because, as vv. 26-8 will suggest (see also vv. 37-41), their question is misguided. It assumes that Jesus' return could be missed. But Jesus compares his return to a lightning bolt, an unambiguous and unmistakable phenomenon, and claims, to use Luz's paraphrase, that "[p]eople will be able to miss the parousia no more than the vultures overlook a dead animal."[61] But, more importantly, it arises because the principal aim of his response is not to inform them of a timetable but to instruct them how to live as the end approaches.[62] Two warnings against being "led astray" (πλανάω, vv. 4, 23-6) bracket the description of events. "Led astray" denotes in this instance deception, specifically about

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[61] Ibid., 199; see also Gnilka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 2:326; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:355–6; Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 338. While Luz speaks of "vultures," v. 28 technically refers to eagles (ἀετοί), not vultures (γύπες), which is, as he points out, curious since vultures were more often thought in antiquity to encircle corpses and appear more often in gnomic sayings that, like v. 28, portray birds flocking to carrion; see the evidence collected in Arnold A. T. Ehrhardt, "Greek Proverbs in the Gospels," *HTR* 46 (1953): 68–72; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:335; Warren Carter, "Are There Imperial Texts in the Class? Intertextual Eagles and Matthean Eschatology as 'Lights Out' Time for Imperial Rome (Matthew 24:27-31)," *JBL* 122 (2003): 469–72. But the immediate context (vv. 26-8) makes Matthew's primary point—the end will be obvious—clear and the language may be too figurative to reduce entirely to a realistic observation about the natural world (Gail R. O'Day, "'There the ? Will Gather Together' (Luke 17:37): Bird-Watching as Exegetical Activity," in *Literary Encounters with the Reign of God*, ed. Sharon H. Ringe and H. C. Paul Kim [New York: T & T Clark, 2004], 288–303). Carter, following Sim (*Apocalyptic Eschatology in the Gospel of Matthew*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 88 [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996], 103–8; see now also "Rome in Matthew's Eschatology," in *The Gospel of Matthew in Its Roman Imperial Context*, ed. John Kenneth Riches and David C. Sim [London: T & T Clark, 2005]), insists that "eagles" refers to Roman standards and vv. 27-8 then to the eschatological defeat of imperial powers, not the visible nature of Jesus' return; see Carter, "Imperial Texts." By considering vv. 27-31 a section (in the title and *passim*), he divorces vv. 27-8 from v. 26's mention of Jesus reappearing privately, which, in my view, governs their meaning (note the γάρ in v. 27).

[62] Similarly, Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:337: "But in Matthew, the question 'when' does not elicit a date but help to maintain the disciples' faith."

eschatological figures and events[63] and its use in other passages suggests it connotes departure from the divine and a possible forfeiture of salvation (18:12-14; 22:29).[64] And v. 6 counsels the disciples not to "be troubled" (μὴ θροεῖσθε), meaning not to become mentally or emotionally disturbed,[65] when they hear of wars. These warnings establish the theme of the passage: the proper mental and emotional perspective on the eschaton.

The warnings are necessary, in Matthew's view, because messianic pretenders and false prophets will deceive (vv. 5, 11, 24) and "wars and reports of wars" (v. 6) will disturb many and, ultimately, because the deceived and disturbed will, according to vv. 12-13, cease to do acts of love—cease to do God's will—and will therefore not "be saved." They will instead be condemned at the final judgment. In v. 12, Matthew sums up the persecutions, defections, betrayals, hatreds, and deceptions that vv. 9-11 predict for Jesus' followers with the word "lawlessness" (ἀνομία),[66] his term for all that falls outside of God's will.[67] The

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[63] Ibid., 3:338–9.

[64] Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 443; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 191; cf. Zumstein, *La condition du croyant*, 174–5.

[65] Davies and Allison translates θροεῖσθαι as "shaken in mind or excited" (*Matthew*, 3:340), Luz as "alarmed" (*Matthew 21-28*, 180). BDAG, s.v. offers the translation "to be inwardly aroused." The TDNT lacks an entry for the term. Abraham Malherbe, commenting on 2 Thess 2:2, translates it as "to be emotionally wrought up" (*The Letters to the Thessalonians*, 415). In biblical literature, the term appears only in the synoptics' eschatological discourse (Mt 24:6 // Mark 13:7), in 2 Thess 2:2, and in Song 5:4 LXX ("And my feelings [κοιλία, literally "my belly" or "my bowels"] were aroused [ἐθροήθη] for him"). See also *Test. Dan* 7.4.5, where θροεῖσθαι refers to the inward response to loss that triggers anger and the desire for transitory things and where it appears parallel to grief (μὴ λυπεῖσθε, 7.4.6); Gregory Nazianzus, *Christus Patiens* 2060, 2128, where it parallels fear (φόβος).

[66] Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 472.

consequence of this growing lawlessness (διὰ τὸ πληθυνθῆναι τὴν ἀνομίαν), he states in the

same verse, is that "most people's love will grow cold." What sort of love does Matthew have

in mind? He has recently referred to the command to love both God and neighbor (22:37-

40) and the immediate context of 24:12 lists failures of both forms of love, being

"scandalized" (σκανδαλισθήσονται, v. 10) representing the failure to love God;

denunciations (παραδώσουσιν ὑμᾶς, v. 9), tortures (θλῖψιν, v. 9), killings (ἀποκτενοῦσιν

ὑμᾶς, v. 9), and hatreds (ἔσεσθε μισούμενοι, v. 9; μισήσουσιν ἀλλήλους, v. 10) representing

the failure to love others; and being "led astray" (πλανήσουσιν πολλούς, v. 11) representing

both. Two types of love are likely in view here. But, given that most of the failures listed are

interpersonal and given that this passage prepares the way for a judgment scene in which

people are evaluated on their treatment of others (25:31-46), Matthew's primary concern

seems to be that followers of Jesus will cease to care for one another and outsiders (see also

5:43-6; 19:19, *inter alia*).[68] All the varieties of "lawlessness," all the physical and emotional

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[67] Davies, *The Setting*, 202–6; cf. Zumstein, *La condition du croyant*, 171–3. The notion that unrighteousness will increase as the eschaton approaches is common in Jewish and Christian texts; see, e.g., 4 Ezra 5:2, 10; *1 En.* 91.7; 2 Thess 2:3; 2 Tim 3:1.

[68] This concern is central to the eschatological discourse as a whole, as Karl Donfried argues: "One factor involved in Matthew's composition of this discourse was to deal with the fact that this coming of the end had been delayed (24:34, 48; 25:5), and consequently to urge the Christians in his congregation not to lessen their performance of good deeds. The real danger in Matthew's situation is that 'most men's love will grow cold' (Matt 24:12); one central point in the exhortation is that 'he who endures to the end (in the performance of love) will be saved' (Matt 24:13)" ("Allegory of the Ten Virgins," 421).

batterings of the eschatological age contribute to that cessation[69] but by placing the reference to false prophets deceiving believers immediately prior to v. 12—Matthew is responsible for the shape and location of vv. 10-12[70]—and by beginning and ending this section with admonitions not to be deceived or disturbed, Matthew implies that being deceived or disturbed, acquiring the wrong mental and emotional perspective on the end, plays the most consequential role in refrigerating love.

The very next verse, v. 13, declares that to "be saved," one must "endure to the end."[71] Following the reference to love waning, to "endure" (ὑπομείνω) means to persist in acts of love. The chilling of love, on the other hand, threatens salvation. And if deception and

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[69] Lapide, *The Great Commentary*, 3:65; Meyer, *Handbook to the Gospel of Matthew*, 411: the "predominance of evil within the Christian community will have the effect of cooling the brotherly love of the majority of its members."

[70] Because these verses are paralleled in *Did.* 16, Koester (*Synoptische Überlieferung bei den apostolischen Vätern*, 173–90); Kloppenborg ("Didache 16:6-8 and Special Matthaean Tradition," *Zeitschrift Für Die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft Und Die Kunde Der älteren Kirche* 70 [1979]: 54–67); and Davies and Allison (*Matthew*, 3:327–8) find in them a source shared by Matthew and the Didachist. Most scholars, however, find them explainable in terms of Matthew's interests and therefore consider them Matthew's creations; see Christopher M. Tuckett, "Synoptic Tradition in the *Didache*," in *The* Didache *in Modern Research*, ed. Jonathan A Draper, Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums 37 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 92–128 and the literature cited therein; Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 164; Vicky Balabanski, *Eschatology in the Making: Mark, Matthew, and the Didache*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 97 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 183–6. On the methodological issues involved in determining the sources of Matt 24:10-12, see Ian H. Henderson, "Style-Switching in the *Didache*: Fingerprint or Argument?," in *The Didache in Context: Essays on Its Text, History, and Transmission*, ed. Clayton N. Jefford, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 77 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 177–212; Balabanski, *Eschatology in the Making*, 183–6. Both views are compatible with the claim that Matthew is responsible for the final wording and placement of these verses since, even when using a source, the evangelist controls the diction and location of the passage, as his perspicacious editing of Mark shows.

[71] The call to endure is common in apocalyptic texts (e.g., Dan 12:12); see Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 194.

disturbance chill love, then to keep it warm, one must safeguard a certain imperturbability, a state of being neither mislead or alarmed. Verses 3-28 stress the need to maintain, despite all the historical and ecclesial events Jesus outlines, an interior condition that will enable one to endure, to continue loving.[72]

Finally, the conclusion to this section, the account of the Son of Man's arrival in vv. 29-31 and the example of the fig tree in vv. 32-5, primarily provides the proper intellectual and perspective on the eschaton so that readers are neither mislead or alarmed. It thereby helps those exhorted to endure. The arrival of the Son of Man assures them that their sufferings will not be interminable; the Son of Man will indeed appear to end this age (v. 30). In fact, the whole historical review in vv. 6-22 functions in part as consolation, assuring the disciples that calamities and sufferings are part of the divine's benevolent plan. It also assures them that if they endure, they will, as the elect, be gathered to God in the end (v. 31; cf. 23:37). Verses 32-5 underscore the nearness of the eschaton and, consequently, the brevity of the period of endurance. Just as soft branches and growing leaves reliably indicate summer's approach, so do "all these things" (πάντα ταῦτα), that is, all the events outlined in 24:4-31,

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[72] My outline of 24:3-28 is similar to that of Davies and Allison (*Matthew*, 3.326) in that I see Matthew as having organized the events described in vv. 3-22 into those that happen worldwide (vv. 3-8), to and in the church (vv. 9-14), and in Judea (vv. 15-22). But unlike them I consider vv. 23-8 a return to the theme announced in v. 4, "do not be deceived" and not a continuation of vv. 15-22. Balabanski and Luz argue that vv. 6-14 and vv. 15-28 repeat the same events, first from the perspective of world (vv. 6-8) or Judean (vv. 15-22) history, second from the perspective of the church (vv. 9-14, 23-8); see Balabanski, *Eschatology in the Making*, 153–62; Luz, *Matthew 21–28*, 181–2, 196. I do not believe vv. 23-8 parallel vv. 9-14 because although both sections focus on the church's experiences, the admonitions in vv. 23-8 more closely parallel the admonition in v. 4.

indicate the comforting proximity of the end (vv. 32-3).[73] As surely as Jesus speaks

authoritatively ("Truly I tell you"), the end is so near as to be within the lifetime of "this

generation" (vv. 34-5).[74]

Secondarily, the conclusion idealizes a favorite internal state of Matthew's: humility.

Like 16:18, where Matthew adds to Mark 8:27-33 a reference to the "gates of hades" opening

to release the forces of evil to attack (cf. 11:12),[75] these verses envision a final cosmic battle.[76]

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[73] Θέρος, "summer," can also mean "summer fruit" or "harvest." Cf. then Matthew's use of harvesting as a metaphor for judgment (e.g., 3:12; 13:37-43 cf. 9:37); Amos 8:1-3 MT, where summer fruit indicates the nearness of judgment; and Matt 6:26, 28-30, where examples from nature prove God's providence and care.

[74] In 10:26, Matthew also offers divine revelation as a comfort to the persecuted (10:16-25). Consolation through revelation is a feature Matt 24-5, arguably an eschatological testament by genre (Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:326), shares with many Jewish apocalypses. As John Collins writes, "The intention of an apocalypse then is to provide a view of the world that will be a source of consolation in the face of distress and a support and authorization for whatever course of action is recommended, and to invest this worldview with the status of a supernatural revelation" (*Daniel: With an Introduction to Apocalyptic Literature* [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1984], 22; see also John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to the Jewish Matrix of Christianity*, 2d ed. [New York: Crossroad, 1998], 41-2; David Hellholm, "The Problem of Apocalyptic Genre and the Apocalypses of John," *Semeia* 36 [1986]: 27. But the idea that the necessary ephemerality of suffering provides some consolation to the sufferer appears in other milieus as well, for example in Epicureanism. Epicurus comforted his students with the notion that if suffering was severe, it was typically brief: *Ep. Men.* 133; *KD* 4; *Sent. Vat.* 4; cf. Philodemus, *Adv. Soph.* 4.10-14, all cited by Paul Holloway as parallels to 1 Peter 1:6's consolation that its audience's current trials will last only "a little while" (ὀλίγον; *Coping with Prejudice: 1 Peter in Social-Psychological Perspective* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 150).

[75] Joel Marcus, "The Gates of Hades and the Keys of the Kingdom (Matt 16:18-19)," *CBQ* 50 (1988): 443-55; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:643-4; Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 100-08; Sim, "Rome in Matthew's Eschatology," 95.

[76] The notion that the end of the age involves a terrible conflict is common in ancient Jewish eschatologies: Dan 11:40-5; *1 En.* 56:5-7; 90:10-19; 91:11; *Sib. Or.* 3.63-74; 4.137-52; 5.93-109; 214-27, 361-74. In Matthew, the notion of a violent end is also suggested by the Baptist's insistence that an axe is ready at the tree's roots (3:10; cf. 7:19), Jesus causing the fig tree to wither (21:19), the declaration that the rejected stone will crush the Jewish leaders (21:42-5), and the comparison of the coming of the Son of Man to the flood (24:37-9) and to a burglary (24:34).

Although Jesus has said that "this generation" will receive no sign but his resurrection (12:39-40), a "sign" does precede his arrival in v. 30 and given the juxtaposition of the sign with the trumpet call and the angelic retinue in v. 31, this sign is a military standard. The standard and the trumpet appear together in prophetic references to God using military force against God's enemies (Isa 18:3; Jer 4:21; 6:5; 51:27) and in the War Scroll from Qumran (1 QM II, 15-IV, 17). The trumpet call signals the angels, who, according to 26:53, constitute an army, complete with legions.[77] The redactional reference to the "tribes of the earth" mourning (κόψονται, v. 30; cf. Mark 13:26) may explain why, despite portraying Jesus as a military leader who will direct the final confrontation, Matthew does not narrate a battle; Jesus' opponents' mourn because they have surrendered.[78] The reference to mourning further reveals that those who have not responded to Jesus, which, as we have seen, is on Matthew's account due typically to arrogance, will ultimately develop something like the humble disposition that this gospel deems proper. As I argued in the previous chapter, Matthew's development of the theme of repentance idealizes humility and 11:20-24 prescribes "sackcloth and ashes," expressions of contrition, as the necessary remedy for the arrogant.[79] Most interpreters maintain that the mourning in 24:30 is actually not a sign of repentance

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[77] Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 104–5. Chrysostom (*Hom. Matt.* 76.3) and Davies and Allison (*Matthew*, 3:359–61), imagine that the military standard is, in Jesus' case, a cross.

[78] Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 105–6.

[79] Note also Matt 5:4.

but only of defeat.[80] But, as these interpreters acknowledge, in Matthew's source for v. 30,

Zech 12:10-14 (κόψονται … κόψεται ἡ γῆ κατὰ φυλὰς … πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ), the tribes'

mourning is certainly repentant. Zech 12:10-14 depicts God compassionately transforming

the dispositions of Israel's leaders so that they mourn "the one they have pierced."[81] Zech 11-

13 as a whole envisions a minority community rejected, like the prophets before them, by

Israel's leaders (ch. 11) and yet ultimately established as God's people (13:9) after God

vindicates them in eschatological battle and their opponents "sorrow for their sin against

them" (12:10-14).[82] In 12:2-9, all external threats against Judah and Jerusalem are removed

and 12:10-14 declares that in the future age so too will be internal threats, those posed by

leaders who fail to listen to God's word as presented by the prophetic conscience of the

nation. On that day, "[a]ll those who have done violence to God's word (by assaulting

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[80] R. T France, *Jesus and the Old Testament: His Application of Old Testament Passages to Himself and His Mission* (London: Tyndale, 1971), 218; Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 106: "they [the Romans (see p. 104)] mourn because of the ensuing judgment they face as confederates of the antichrist"; Nolland, *Matthew*, 984. Davies and Allison maintain that the meaning of the mourning in Matthew is "not stated" (*Matthew*, 3:361); see also Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 478.

[81] The identity of the one "pierced," or, "stabbed," is, Eric and Carol Meyers write, "surely one of the major interpretive cruxes in second Zechariah, if not in all of prophecy" (*Zechariah 9-14: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 25C [New York: Doubleday, 1993], 337). They maintain they Zechariah refers to no historical event but admit we know precious little about Judean history in the fifth century (ibid., 334). David Petersen speculates that the reference may be to a child sacrificed during the military event referred to in 12:9-10 (*Zechariah 9-14 and Malachi: A Commentary*, Old Testament Library [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995], 121). According to R. T. France, "[I]n the overall pattern of Zech 9-14, this 'one they have pierced' is usually interpreted as a rejected messianic figure, who appears also as the rejected shepherd in Zech 11:4-14 and the shepherd killed by the sword in Zech 13:7-9," passages that Matthew applies to Jesus' death (26:31; 27:9-10; *The Gospel of Matthew*, 925).

[82] Paul D. Hanson, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and Sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology*, Rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 366.

prophets) will now feel positive ('with favor') toward prophetic figures, will ask forgiveness ('supplication') and will greatly mourn all the evil they have done in failing to heed God's spokespersons and in attempting to suppress them."[83] Their mourning is effective: it cleanses them (13:1) and makes them fit to rule again.[84] The parallels between the persecuted minority of Zech 11-13 and the church depicted throughout Matthew are abundant and, moreover, so many of the concerns particular to Matt 24 are paralleled in Zech 11-13—the last eruption of external and internal violence before the final age of peace, the problem of false prophets and the judgment on the majority that opposes God's representatives[85]—that it is reasonable to conclude that the allusion to Zechariah means that Matthew imagines that Jesus' opponents, indeed that everyone, will, in the end, repent, will be(come) humble(d), especially since Matthew elsewhere invokes the broader contexts of passages that he cites or to which he alludes.[86] The evangelist does, of course, change the meaning of certain aspects of Zechariah's text: "the tribes of the earth" in v. 30 represent more than just the tribes of

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[83] Ibid., 341.

[84] Ibid., 399. For a different reading of Second Zechariah, see Eibert J. C Tigchelaar, *Prophets of Old and the Day of the End: Zechariah, the Book of Watchers, and Apocalyptic*, Oudtestamentische studiën 35 (New York: Brill, 1995), 123–27.

[85] On these elements, see Meyers and Meyers, *Zechariah 9-14*, 335–40.

[86] Luz, "Intertexts," esp. 128; Allison, "Reading Matthew through the Church Fathers," 118–9. Paul Foster claims that 24:30 is only an allusion to Zechariah "in a secondary sense" because Matt took it not from the Bible but from a source he shared with Rev 1:7, where, as in Matt 24:30-1, an allusion to Zech 12:10-14 is joined to one of Dan 7:13-14 ("The Use of Zechariah in Matthew's Gospel," in *The Book of Zechariah and Its Influence*, ed. Christopher Mark Tuckett [Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2003], 66, 70–1). Whatever the immediate origins of the allusion to mourning, the extent of the parallels between Zech 11-13 and Matt 24 make it plausible that Matthew intends to evoke the literary context of the Zechariah passage.

Israel or their leaders, the meaning of the phrase in Zech 12:10-14,[87] and the tribes will not

regain power, as in Zech 13:1, because after the resurrection, all authority belongs to Jesus

(28:18; see also 6:10; cf. 16:19; 18:18). But nothing in Matthew suggests that he has changed

the penitent disposition associated with the tribes' mourning. By casting humility as the

ineludible disposition toward Jesus, vv. 30-1, like vv. 3-29, highlight an ethical ideal that

disciples are, along with the proper emotional and mental perspective on the end, also to

maintain.

<center>24:36-25:30</center>

Like the first section of the eschatological discourse, the second (24:32-25:30) calls for

the cultivation of a particular inner state, in this case, "watchfulness." Matthew 24:36-44

introduces the section and announces this theme of vigilance. Verses 36-42 stress the

eschaton's unpredictability. No one knows the day or hour of Jesus' return (v. 36); people

will carry on as normal, dining, marrying, working the fields, and preparing food, until the

end suddenly and violently interrupts (vv. 38-41).[88] One must, therefore, "watch" (v. 42).

Verses 43-4, on the other hand, stress its relative predictability. Unlike a homeowner who

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[87] Thomas Walter Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus, as Recorded in the Gospels According to St. Matthew and St. Luke, Arranged with Introduction and Commentary* (London: SCM Press, 1949), 242; Nolland, *Matthew*, 984; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 201. France argues that the allusion to Zechariah implies that by "tribes of the earth" (αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς) Matthew means the tribes of the land of Israel, not all nations of the inhabited world, just as he does in 19:28 (*Jesus and the Old Testament*, 237; *The Gospel of Matthew*, 925).

[88] The comparison to the time just before the flood suggests they should, instead, be repenting; see Philo, *QG* 1.91; 2.1; Josephus, *A. J.* 1.74; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 214.

cannot know when a thief will come and is therefore robbed, Jesus' audience is sufficiently informed about the timing of the end to know that it is imminent and they must therefore "be ready" or "get ready" (γίνεσθε ἕτοιμοι).[89] The nearness of the parousia (24:32-5, 43-4), like the uncertainty of its precise timing (vv. 36-41), should lead to constant vigilance (γρηγορεῖτε, v. 42; v. 44), constant ensuring that one is prepared.[90] As in the first section, Matthew depicts the end as generally though not specifically predictable but subordinates teaching about the timing of the eschaton to teaching about how to live beforehand.

Matthew 24:45-25:13 features three parables that illustrate what preparedness entails.[91] The first, the parable of the faithful and wise servant (24:45-51), uses the example of

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[89] Like most exegetes, Luz argues that the parable exhorts the disciples to develop the watchfulness that the householder lacked (ibid., 216). But he contends, further, that the parable and its application are in tension: "Of course, it remains logically difficult that the owner could not watch because he did not know the hour, while the readers are to watch because they do not know the hour" (ibid., 220). On my reading, readers are rather to watch because they know the end is rapidly approaching. Luz, justifiably, connects the parable to what immediately precedes it, while I see it is a restatement of 24:32-5.

[90] Similarly, Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 213. The verb "stay awake" or "be vigilant" (γρηγορέω) appears 6x in Matthew, all of them between here and 26:41, 6x in Mark, and only once in Luke; cf. ἀγρυπνέω, Mark 13:33. Luz claims that Christians pioneered the absolute, intransitive use of this verb to refer to a disposition (ibid., 219). But such a use may have biblical roots (Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, 2 vols. [Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1981], 2:987), and appears already in *Pss. Sol.* 3:2, assuming the psalm predates Christian influence. There the term refers to watching one's interiority so that proper praise can arise and is synonymous with "looking out" (ἀποσκοπεύει) for salvation (3:5) and "searching (ἐπισκέπτεται) one's house to remove injustice" (3:7). Constant wakefulness and mental tension are also enjoined by *Let. Aris.* 189 and form part of the Stoic exercise of living in the present moment (Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, 88) and part of Epicurean practice, for Seneca quotes Epicurus as saying "Do everything as if Epicurus were watching you" (*Ep.* 24.4-5). Thus, the verb γρηγορέω becomes a technical term for proper eschatological expectation in early Christianity but the practice of policing oneself to which it refers is not *sui generis*. Finally, Matthew's use of "be vigilant" in this section resembles the use of "be on guard" (προσέχετε) in 6:1-18.

[91] Bornkamm, "End-Expectation and the Church in Matthew," 23.

a head slave to compare prudent and wicked selves. When the master is away, a "faithful and prudent slave" (πιστὸς δοῦλος καὶ φρόνιμος) cares for his fellow slaves by feeding them, as the slaveowner commanded (vv. 45-6).[92] His actions exemplify generally the enduring love of neighbor declared essential in 24:12-13 and specifically the feeding of the hungry called for in 25:34-5. A slave who is wicked (κακός), by contrast, beats his fellow slaves and eats and drinks to excess (v. 48-9), engorging himself instead of feeding others. Matthew attributes the difference between the two slaves to their inner conditions: a wicked slave "says in his heart" that he will not be judged,[93] that his master tarries (v. 48). He acquires the wrong perspective on his lord's return, fails to "watch" himself, and his love for neighbors cools, leaving him surprised by and unprepared for the master's inevitable return (vv. 50-1). This parable thus defines preparedness as monitoring one's interiority in order to foster loving actions and in so doing reiterates the principle that one's inner conditions facilitate actions, which are then judged. By introducing the parable with a question, "Who is the faithful and wise slave?," Matthew prompts self-examination. "The interrogative form…. asks who will identify himself with the subject."[94] The parable facilitates for readers the vigilance it (negatively) illustrates.

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[92] On the practice of leaving a slave in charge of an estate and its other slaves, see the description of the *vilicus* in Cato, *Agr.* 143; Columella, *Rust.* 12.1; 12.39; cf. Xenophon, *Oec.* 12-14; Dominic Rathbone, "Vilicus," ed. Hubert Cancik et al., *Brill's New Pauly Online* (Brill, 2005).

[93] Davies and Allison maintain that "says in his heart" is a semitizing idiom meaning "he deceives himself" (*Matthew*, 388).

[94] Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 171.

The second parable, that of the ten young women (25:1-13), contrasts prudence not with wickedness, as in the previous parable, but with foolishness. The prudent and the foolish travel to meet the bridegroom (v. 1, 6) and both bring lamps or torches,[95] but only the prudent bring "oil in their vessels" (ἔλαιον ἐν τοῖς ἀγγείοις, vv. 3-4). When the bridegroom tarries, all the women fall asleep (v. 5). When he finally arrives in the middle of the night, the torches of the foolish are fading for lack of oil, which they cannot procure in time to arrive at the wedding banquet before the door shuts (vv. 6-12).[96] As it stands in Matthew, the parable is an allegory for the eschatological arrival of Jesus, the bridegroom.[97] In light of 5:16, the other Matthean passage that employs illumination as a key image (λαμψάτω, 5:16; λαμπάδας, 25:1ff.), the torches represent good deeds. Several interpreters contend instead that oil represents good deeds, reasoning that good deeds (τὰ καλὰ ἔργα) produce light in

[95] Many interpreters render λαμπάδες as "oil lamps." Contra LSJ and BDAG, *inter alia*, Luz contends that λαμπάς never means an oil lamp or lantern. The Greek term for oil lamp is λύχνος, for lantern λαμπτήρ or, later, φανός. Λαμπάδες are torches that, unlike oil lamps, provided outdoor illumination and burned for a much shorter time (*Matthew 21-28*, 229). The exegetical consequences for Luz are that if the story has any realism—he calls the picture most exegetes paint, of ten "otherwise well protected" girls sleeping on the roadside by small burning oil lamps "impossible" and "absurb"— then v. 1 must be its title and not part of the story and, consequently, the women sleep in the bridegroom's house and light their torches for the first times when he arrives (ibid., 230–1).

[96] On the wise women's refusal to share their oil, see Garland, *Reading Matthew*, 240; Marianne Blickenstaff, *While the Bridegroom Is with Them: Marriage, Family, and Violence in the Gospel of Matthew* (London: T&T Clark International, 2005), 102–3.

[97] Ibid., 119; Donfried, "Allegory of the Ten Virgins," 418: the parable is allegorical because "the various elements in Matt 25:1-13 cohere not with each other but, in some detail, with a theological framework which appears to be outside the story itself;" Zumstein, *La condition du croyant*, 272: "La quasi totalité des exégètes s'accorde à voir dans la version mt de la parabole des dix vierges une allégorie de la venue du Fils de l'homme" (emphasis omitted); Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:392.

5:16 just as oil produces light in this parable.[98] But in 5:14-16, good deeds do not produce

light; they *are* the light—they are what humanity sees (5:16), as one of these same exegetes

argues[99]—or, if not the light itself, at least what the light makes visible,[100] its effect, not its

cause. And, in 25:1-13, torches, not oil, produce light. Therefore, torches, not oil, stand for

good deeds and, since the preceding parable and the preceding and subsequent sections of

this discourse stress love of neighbor, deeds of loving kindness are likely the specific actions

intended.[101] Oil then represents inner conditions that fuel such deeds, as the description of

the oil being in their "vessels" (ἀγγείοις), or "bodies" or "selves,"[102] underscores.[103] The

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[98] Donfried, "Allegory of the Ten Virgins," 422–4; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 235.

[99] Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 207.

[100] Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 163.

[101] Chrysostom claims that the parables in Matthew's eschatological discourse all make the same general exhortation: "in different ways admonishing us about the same things, I mean about diligence in almsgiving, and about helping our neighbor by all means which we are able to use, since it is not possible to be saved in another way" (*Hom. Matt.* 78.1).

[102] For this meaning of τὸ ἀγγεῖον, see Jer 18:1-10; Sir 12:14; Plato, *Prot.* 314a-b; Marcus Aurelius, *Med.* 3.3; cf. the use of *vas* in Horace, *Ep.* 1.2.54, 67-70; Cicero, *Tusc.* 1.22.52; Seneca, *Marc.* 11.2-3; Lucretius, *Nat.* 3.434-5, 440-3, 554-5, 793, 935-42; cf. 2 Cor 4:7.

[103] Both positions just discussed have lengthy histories and patristic roots. The position that equates oil with deeds Luz calls the *"classic Catholic interpretation"* (*Matthew 21-28*, 240, emphasis his). According to him, most Western interpreters since Jerome have identified the women's lamps with some part of the Christian self, usually the soul, and the oil with good works. The wise, on this view, have both inward faith and outward deeds; the foolish profess faith—they proclaim "Lord, Lord"—but fail to act. The position I advocate, which identifies torches with proper actions and oil with the inner states that should enable them, Luz calls the "*Augustinian type.*" For Augustine, oil signifies "joy" (*laetitia*) specifically, for later Augustinians "conscience." Good deeds created by other states, deeds done to please others or promote oneself, are done "without oil" and so do not create light (ibid., 241–2). While Augustine's equation of oil specifically with joy is debatable, inspired though it is by the image of the wedding banquet and by 25:21-3, his reading pays more attention than Jerome's to the parable's immediate context—Jesus has just indicted the Jewish leaders for improper motives in

young women represent the Christian community. That the foolish and prudent alike go out
to greet the bridegroom recalls the parable of the weeds (13:24-30) and other passages that
imply that the commendable and condemnable followers of Jesus will not be separated until
the eschaton. Here, as elsewhere in Matthew, "The church is a *corpus permixtum*."[104] But at
the eschaton, which the bridegroom's startling arrival signifies (v. 6; cf. Mt 24:42-44), the
wise, those who are prepared (αἱ ἕτοιμοι, v. 10) with oil (proper interior conditions) that
produces light (good deeds), enter the wedding banquet, the Kingdom of heaven (v. 1). The
foolish are excluded because they lack light. As it does throughout Matthew, the judgment
depends on one's deeds, which, in turn, depend on one's inner conditions. In light then of

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ch. 23—and, as I argue in the previous chapter and below, to Matthew's notions of human perfection.
Nevertheless, these two readings are, as Luz observes, similar in that both identify an inner condition
that should correlate with particular actions (ibid., 243). Calvin provides another example of an
Augustinian reading, equating oil with constancy:

> "Some people give themselves a good deal of uneasiness about *the lamps, the vessels, and the
> oil;* but the plain and natural meaning of the whole is, that it is not enough to have ardent zeal for a
> short time, if we have not also a constancy that never tires. And Christ employs a very appropriate
> parable to express this. A little before, he had exhorted the disciples, that as they had a journey to
> perform through dark and dreary places, they should provide themselves with *lamps;* but as the wick
> of the lamp, if it be not supplied with oil, gradually dries up, and loses its brightness, Christ now says,
> that believers need to have incessant supplies of courage, to support the flame which is kindled in their
> hearts, otherwise their zeal will fail ere they have completed the journey." (*Commentaries, ad loc,*
> emphasis his).

On the history of interpreting oil and lamps allegorically, see also Blickenstaff, *While the
Bridegroom Is with Them*, 94–6.

[104] Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 235. See also 7:15-23; 13:36-43, 47-50; 18:6-14; 22:11-14; 24:9-14;
25:31-46. For further discussion, see Strecker, *Der Weg*, 214–19; Barth, "Matthew's Understanding of
the Law," 58–62; Bornkamm, "End-Expectation and the Church in Matthew"; Zumstein, *La
condition du croyant*, 276; Gundry, "In Defense of the Church in Matthew as a *Corpus Mixtum*"; cf.
Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:408–9; Luomanen, "*Corpus Mixtum*—An Appropriate Description of
Matthew's Community?"

the unpredictability of the end and given the criteria utilized at the judgment, one must "keep watch" (γρηγορεῖτε) over one's actions and oneself (v. 12).

Like the first section of this discourse (esp. 24:29-35) and the next pericope (25:14-30), this parable combines exhortation with comfort. Because the prudent do it, "sleep" in this passage (ἐνύσταξαν πᾶσαι καὶ ἐκάθευδον, v. 5) seems to represent the absence not of vigilance, as in 24:43-4, but of anxiety.[105] Those unprepared should get ready (24:44), but those prepared, those who have "oil" (proper interiority) that produces "light" (good deeds) need not be anxious or disturbed; they can "sleep." Moreover, in light of the emphasis on imperturbability in 24:3-28, "sleep" is necessary for love.

Being prepared for the end, then, means persisting in loving deeds by maintaining the requisite interiority and avoiding anxiety. The command to be vigilant insists that Jesus' followers monitor their internal states so as to persist in loving others.

The third parable, that of the talents, further (25:14-30) advocates an anxiety-free— and therefore productive—disposition toward the coming judgment.[106] The "for" (γάρ) in v. 14, likely redactional,[107] marks the parable as an illustration of v.13's call to vigilance and the

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[105] See also 8:24; Gundry, *Matthew*, 502: "It would be wrong to think that the exhortation to watch contradicts the sleeping of the wise as well as the foolish virgins. For by the time the bridegroom arrived all had awakened. And more to the point, Matthew wants to teach that watching means preparedness through doing good works"; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 234: "Those who have oil have nothing to worry about. It is all right for the wise women to sleep, for they can be ready at a moment's notice"; cf. Donfried, "Allegory of the Ten Virgins," 424, who identifies sleep with death. For various moral interpretations from the history of interpretation, see Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 236n69.

[106] Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 255.

[107] The origins of the parable remain elusive. Matthew 25:14-30 and Luke 19:12-27 feature the same basic story and enough verbal agreements to imply a common *urtext* but divergences so

slaves in the parable represent different ways of being as the end, represented by the settling

of accounts (συναίρει λόγον, v. 19), approaches.[108] With the five talents the master gives

him,[109] the first slave earned five more and likewise (ὡσαύτως, v. 17) the second slave turns

two talents into four. Such a high return may suggest speculative, even unjust dealings,[110]

especially since v. 27 implies that they used more lucrative financial instruments than

traditional banking and since the master they aim to please (and from whom, presumably,

they have learned) is "harsh" (σκληρός) in his business dealings, reaping and gathering

unscrupulously (vv. 24, 26).[111] Whatever the morality of their efforts, the master praises them

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numerous and significant that it is difficult to explain them as the results of Matthew and Luke editing the same written source. Fitzmyer and Davies and Allison maintain that Q^Matt and Q^Luke may have already contained distinctive versions of the parable (Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 2:1230; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 2:376). Luz on the other hand holds that each evangelist knew a similar oral tradition (Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 248). Whatever the case, Matthew's version contains enough typically Matthean vocabulary, vocabulary that Matthew regularly introduces into his sources, that it is clear he has shaped the passage, likely even by introducing the γάρ that makes the 25:14-30 illustrative of 25:13; see ibid., 248n14.

[108] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:405; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 256. "Settling accounts" is a metaphor for judgment in 18:23 and in a variety of other ancient Jewish texts (ibid., 254, 256; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 471n28). The parable is therefore about the eschaton, not human life generally.

[109] The institution referred to here is the Roman *peculium*, in which a master gives a subordinate money to invest (Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 251).

[110] Luz speaks of "unscrupulous and cutthroat practices" (ibid., 251–2). If the parable is exhortative, if readers are to imitate the first two slaves, then Matthew has deployed an image of questionable morality to describe the ideal disciple, as he does in 4:19 with the image "fishers of men." On the negative connotations of that phrase, see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:398.

[111] "Reaping where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered" (vv. 24, 26) is a proverbial expression for gaining unjustly (Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 247; Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke* [Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2006], 291). In Plato, *Leg.* 913C, the expression describes one who flouts ancestral conventions for personal gain. In Josephus, *C. Ap.* 2:216, it is listed as a crime. "The phrase therefore suggests one who is so 'hard' that he ignores conventional piety in his quest for power and possessions" (ibid., 291). In Israel's scriptures, catastrophe often

when he returns to settle accounts and rewards them with more responsibility (ἐπὶ πολλῶν

σε καταστήσω)[112] and entry "into the joy" of their master (εἰς τὴν χαρὰν τοῦ κυρίου σου,

vv. 21, 23), a reference to admission to the wedding banquet, the subject of the previous

parable.[113] The third slave, by contrast, buries the one talent entrusted to him[114] and the

master condemns him for not having at least earned interest (τόκῳ) on the money (v. 27).

Each slave's fate in the judgment depends on the profit he has turned, profit representing the

fruit, or, good deeds, disciples must produce (5:14-16; 7:15-20; 13:18-23).[115] The slaves who

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prevents one from reaping what he himself sows (Duet 20:6, 28:30; Job 31:8; Mic 6:15; Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John*, 2 vols., Anchor Bible 29-29A [Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966], 1:182). In light of this background, the master looks opportunistic, taking advantage of others' misfortunes; see also Philo, *Leg.* 3.227. For further Greek parallels, see BDAG and LSJ, s.v. σπείρω; θερίζω; J. D. M. Derrett, "Law in the New Testament: the Parables of the Talents and Two Logia," *ZNW* 56 (1965): 191n30. The terms reaping and gathering are agricultural and so, unlike the fiscal terms in the Lukan parallel (19:21), suggest agricultural activities and, indeed, commodities trading and land speculation were the quickest ways to wealth in antiquity (Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 252; Ramsay MacMullen, *Roman Social Relations, 50 B.C. to A.D. 284* [New Haven: Yale, 1974]).

[112] Responsibility—power—is what is gained by "doing" in this parable. The text never says any slave profits financially himself; even v. 28 does not say the slave receives the money of the other as a possession (Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 251n41; *pace* Derrett, "Talents"). As in 24:45-51, power is an eschatological gift, the coming counterpoint to the present emphasis on humility; see also 19:28. Cf. the Lukan parallel (Luke 19:12-27), where the third slave is not condemned, as in Matthew, but denied power; he is "merely excluded from political rule" (Johnson, *Gospel of Luke*, 291).

[113] Armand Puig I Tàrrech, "La parabole des talents (Mt 25,14-30) ou des mines (Lc 19,11-28)," *RCT* 10 (1985): 277; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 257.

[114] Rabbinic sources portray burying money as an effective way to safeguard it (Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 252). Matthew elsewhere portrays the practice as insecure (13:44). But, as the profit turned represents good deeds, the more relevant Matthean intertext is the instruction not to bury lamps, or, good deeds, under bowls (5:14-16).

[115] Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels*, 2:319; Tàrrech, "La parabole des talents (Mt 25,14-30) ou des mines (Lc 19,11-28)," 275–6; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 247.

"watch" (25:13) for the master's return by working (ἠργάσατο, v. 16) receive approval,[116] the one who is inactive rejection (v. 30).

But the parable does not simply mandate good deeds. Its longest section focuses on *why* the third slave does not produce (vv. 26-30).[117] Matthew again explores the causes of moral failure. The third slave claims he hid his talent because he feared the master's reputation for harsh dealings: "Master, I knew that you were a harsh man (σκληρός), reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed and so I was afraid and went and hid your talent in the ground" (vv. 24-5).[118] The master responds, "You wicked and timid slave," (πονηρὲ δοῦλε καὶ ὀκνηρέ, v. 26).

The meaning of this dialogue is debated because the Greek term translated above as "timid" (ὀκνηρέ) can, according to some interpreters, also mean "lazy." Western interpreters,

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[116] According to the *Opus Imperfectum, ad loc.* and others (e.g., Luz, *Matthew 21–28*, 260), that the two receive the same reward shows that their intention and not the quantity of their yield matters.

[117] A lengthy speech also concludes parables in 13:29-30; 20:13-15; Luke 14:23-4; 16:8-13 (ibid., 247).

[118] The slave's fear is stereotypical. The harsh ruler, or tyrant, was an ancient *topos*; see Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.80; Plato, *Rep.* 8.566d-567c; Xen, *Oec.* 4.8; Tacitus, *Ann.* 6.6.2; Seneca, *Contr.* 1.7; 2.5; 3.6; 4.7; 5.8; 7.6; 9.4; Lucian, *Bis. acc.* 32; Philostratus, *Vit. soph.* 481; *Let. Aris.* 289 (kings are "inhuman and harsh" [σκληρός]); Dunkle, "The Greek Tyrant and Roman Political Invective of the Late Republic." According to this *topos*, such rule was often intended to diminish subjects' inclination to act (Aristotle, *Pol.* 1314a25-29). Intended or not, the third slave reports it had that effect. Cf. the Lukan parallel (19:21), which reads not σκληρός but αὐστηρός, "severe." Lane McGaughy argues that the third slave reiterates Israel's postexilic depictions of a bitter God ("The Fear of Yahweh and the Mission of Judaism: A Postexilic Maxim and Its Early Christian Expansion in the Parable of the Talents," *JBL* 94 [1975]: 235–45). The slave's characterization, however, does not fit the God Matthew's narrative portrays (Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 257). Cf. Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels*, 2:320: "[H]e ought not to have been afraid. Even if his master was hard and avaricious, he would have done better for that very reason to have taken the trouble to increase the money allotted to him."

frequently following the Vulgate' rendering of ὀκνηρός as *piger*, have often held that the

master labels the slave slothful and, valuing the master's assessment over the slave's, have

deemed the slave's claim to have been afraid a pretext. A master who demands only ordinary

interest is not "harsh," they reason, and a slave who, having no reason to fear, cannot even

deposit funds in the bank must be "lazy."[119] The slave may then represent hypocrisy, so gross

is his mischaracterization of the one he calls "lord" (v. 24).[120] Some recent commentators

affirm this interpretation.[121] Other commentators object, however, that the term can only

mean "timid." Peter Fiedler, for example, writes,

> The widespread translation of *oknēros* with "lazy" is wrong (in spite of Bauer–Aland,
> s.v.); *oknein* means "to hesitate," "to dither." Therefore, the dictionary of Liddell &
> Scott, correctly renders the adjective with "shrinking, timid." The slave is thus
> inhibited by anxiety; to be lazy would have been perilous with a hard master.[122]

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[119] See, e.g., Jerome, *Comm. Matt.*, *ad loc*; Calvin, *Commentaries*, *ad loc*; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 260.

[120] Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 257.

[121] See, for instance, Meyer, *Handbook to the Gospel of Matthew*, 442: "The entire excuse is a false pretext invented by moral indolence,—a pretext which is reduced *ad absurdum* in vv. 26-7"; Johannes Weiss, "Die Drei älteren Evangelien," in *Die Schriften Des Neuen Testaments: Neu übersetzt Und Für Die Gegenwart Erklärt*, ed. Johannes Weiss, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1906), 357; Tàrrech, "La parabole des talents (Mt 25,14-30) ou des mines (Lc 19,11-28)," 277; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:407–10; Hagner, *Matthew*, 2:732, 36.

[122] *Das Matthäusevangelium*, Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 1 (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 2006), 375n127, translation mine; see also Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 252. Cf. Weiss: "It would heighten the point of the parable if the master were egoistic and keen on money. For then the fidelity of the good servants in making money for him is all the greater; all the worse the laziness of the bad servant" ("Die Drei älteren Evangelien," 1:357; translated and quoted in Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels*, 2:320).

On this reading, the master's reproach seconds the slave's self-diagnosis (v. 26). The slave represents fearful and anxious persons paralyzingly concerned for their own security. He is too timid even to do the minimum necessary (deposit money in a bank) to receive a minimal return. "From fear of failure he did not even try to succeed."[123]

The term can undoubtedly mean "timid," "shrinking," or "hesitant"—reluctant to act. Aristotle uses it to refer to someone who lacks the self-assurance necessary to claim the goods to which he is entitled (*Nic. Eth.* 1125a19-30).[124] Epicurus contrasts the ὀκνηροί with the overly eager (τοὺς προχείρους, *Sent. Vat.* 28).[125] Moulton and Milligan, s.v. ὀκνηρός cite P. Oxy IV 743.39 (2nd century B.C.E.): καὶ ἀνόκνως ποήσω, "and I will do it without hesitation."[126] Under ὀκνέω, they cite PSI VI.621.6 (3rd century B.C.E): σὺ δὲ καλῶς ποιήσεις μὴ ὀκνῶν γράφειν πρὸς ἡμᾶς, "you will do well to write to us without hesitating."[127] In these two examples, the meaning "lazy" would not make sense.

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[123] John P. Meier, *Matthew*, New Testament Message 3 (Wilmington, Delaware: MGlazier, 1980), 300. See also Tàrrech, "La parabole des talents (Mt 25,14-30) ou des mines (Lc 19,11-28)," 303–9; Dan O. Via, "Ethical Responsibility and Human Wholeness in Matthew 25:31-46," *HTR* 80 (1987): 87. Cf. Matt 6:25-34; 16:25; and the lack of concern for oneself prescribed by 10:8b-10.

[124] See the discussion in Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Aristotle's Theory of Moral Insight* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 77.

[125] See also Philo, *Virt.* 83.2; Rom 12:11. Luz cites Pollux, *Onom.* 1.179; 5.124 as examples of this meaning (*Matthew 21-28*, 352).

[126] The text appears in Stanislaw Witowski, *Epistulae Privatae Graecae*, 2d ed. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1911), 130. See also the text and English translation in John L. White, *Light from Ancient Letters*, Foundations and Facets (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 71.

[127] James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament: Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1952). On ὀκν- with γράφειν, see BDAG, s.v. ὀκνηρός and cf. Phil 3:1.

But in other instances the term can mean "lazy." LSJ recognize this meaning but they

may adduce the wrong evidence for it. As evidence of the meaning "lazy," LSJ cite

Philogelos, a late antique jokebook attributed to the otherwise unknown Hierocles and

Philagrios.[128] It is difficult to know what ὀκνηρός means in any individual joke in this

collection because the jokes involving the term are humorous either way. Joke 211 is one

example:

> Whilst two sluggards [or "cowards"][129] (ὀκνηρῶν) were in bed together, a thief came
> in and started to make off with the blanket. One of them saw what was going on and
> said to the other, "Stop him, he's stealing the blanket." "Never mind," yawned the
> other, "Let's wait until he comes back for the mattress; then we'll get him." (trans.
> Baldwin)

Baldwin translates ὀκνηρός as "lazy" in this instance though the work's compositional plan

may imply that the term means "timid" or "cowardly." The over 260 jokes in the collection

are grouped according to the stock figures they mock; some of the extant manuscripts even

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[128] Baldwin dates the extant redaction to between 248 and 391 C.E. (*The Philogelos, Or, Laughter-Lover*, London Studies in Classical Philology 10 [Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1983], vi–vii). Some of its contents, however, are surely older since they appear in earlier authors; see the list in L. L. Welborn, *Paul, the Fool of Christ: A Study of 1 Corinthians 1-4 in the Comic-Philosophic Tradition*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 293 (London: T & T Clark, 2005), 45n76. On the genre of the work, see Martin Dibelius, *From Tradition to Gospel*, trans. Bertram Lee Woolf, Library of Theological Translations (Cambridge: James Clarke, 1971), 155, 305; Andreas Thierfelder, *Philogelos: Der Lachfreund* (Munich: Heimeran, 1968), 6–26; Baldwin, *Philogelos*, ix–xi. On the various Hierocles in the Roman period, see J. R. Martindale, J. Morris, and A. H. M. Jones, *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 2:559–60.

[129] Thierfelder translate "faule" (*Philogelos: Der Lachfreund*, 265). Both he and Baldwin understand the term to mean "lazy" but neither bases that understanding on the work's structure and neither cites many ancient parallels. Baldwin says jokes on lazyness are infrequent in antiquity and offers only Pliny, *Nat.* 35.137 for comparison (*Philogelos*, 102). Thierfelder mentions only parallels from much later German works such as Grimm's tales (*Philogelos: Der Lachfreund*, 265).

use the subjects of the jokes as chapter headings. Jokes 1-113, for instance, poke fun at the σχολαστικός, a fairly well educated person whose hobby is obscure learning.[130] And, while the pattern is not inviolable, similar subjects sometimes appear next to each other, especially in the second half of the composition; jokes about λιμόξηροι ("gluttons," 219-226) are followed by jokes about μέθυσοι ("drunkards," 227-230) and ὀζόστομοι ("people with bad breath," 231-242) to create a section of jokes about people's relationships to food and drink. The jokes that lampoon the ὀκνηροί, the "timid" or the "lazy" (211-13), lie between jokes about the δειλοί ("fearful," 206-10) and jokes about the φθονεροί ("the jealous," 214-18), suggesting that the editor has created a section about deformed interiors, in which case, ὀκνηρός likely mean "timid."

Clearer evidence for ὀκνηρός meaning "lazy" is *Anth. pal.* 11.276, where the participle ὀκνῶν characterizes an "idle" person (ὁ ἀργός; cf. 11.276, 311). More pertinent to Matthew in this case, however, is the evidence of the LXX, where, in the wisdom literature, ὀκνηρός translates עצל and "depicts the slothful man who lacks the resolve to get to work (Prov 6:6, 9)."[131]

Ultimately, however, it is both difficult and of limited value for this investigation to parse one meaning of ὀκνηρός from another, since both "timid" and "lazy" essentially mean

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[130] Baldwin translates "egghead" (*Philogelos*, 52).

[131] Friedrich Hauck, "ὀκνηρός," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 5, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964), 167.

"inactive due to some interior condition." The term generally "denotes one who for various reasons or difficulties does not have the resolution to act."[132]

In turn, whether one accepts or reject's the slave's claim to have feared, Matthew's account of the roots of moral failure and his ethics barely change: according to this parable, internal states lead to action or inaction and because the judgment depends on producing good deeds—on not being "unprofitable" (ἀχρεῖον, v. 30)—, one must not allow fear of the coming judgment or any other internal difficulty to cause inaction. One will be judged—and soon—but, as Matthew stresses throughout this discourse, one must "watch" (v. 13) by maintaining the imperturbability necessary to do acts of love in the meantime.[133]

25:31-46

The third section and the culmination of the eschatological discourse and of Matthew's presentation of Jesus' teaching, the parable of the sheep and goats, deserves priority in any determination of Matthean values by virtue of its literary placement.[134] As with any synoptic passage, a mountain of scholarship debates the passage's origins[135] and, as

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[132] Ibid., 5:166.

[133] As Luz notes, "Everything in this parable is told for the sake of its *parenetic dimension.* One speaks of the future judgment for the sake of the present" (*Matthew 21-28*, 258, emphasis his).

[134] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:418; Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 210; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 265.

[135] The parable has no synoptic parallel, which has enabled some scholars to maintain that Matthew has created it *in toto* (O. Lamar Cope, "Matthew XXV: 31-46: 'The Sheep and the Goats' Reinterpreted," *NovT* 11 [1969]: 32–44; Gnilka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 2:367–70; Jan Lambrecht, S.J., *Out of the Treasure: The Parables in the Gospel of Matthew*, Louvain Theological & Pastoral

with any synoptic parable, an abundance of exegesis dwells on its referents.[136] The parable's

origins are of little relevance to the question at hand; whatever its history, the evangelist is

responsible for its final shape and its emphatic location in his gospel. The identification of the

parable's referents—whom do the nations and Jesus' least brothers and sister represent?—has

often been thought, however, to illuminate Matthew's ethics.[137]

Monographs 10 [Louvain: Peeters, 1992], 273–75; Gundry, *Matthew*, 511–16). But most argue that the presence of many Mattheanisms in the introduction—note, for instance, the repetition in v. 31b of the redactional verse 19:28 (cf. Luke 22:29, 30b) and the verbal connections between vv. 31-32a and 13:40-43, 49-50; 16:27; 24:30-1—and of fewer in vv. 32b-46 suggest that Matthew has redacted a source (Ingo Broer, "Das Gericht Des Menschensohnes über Die Völker," *BibLeb* 11 [1970]: 273–95; Zumstein, *La condition du croyant*, 327–35, esp. 331–2; George Raymond Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Kingdom of God* [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eedrmans, 1986], 307–8; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:417–8; Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 118, 124–27; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 264–66). On the passage's pre-Matthean history, see Johannes Friedrich, *Gott Im Bruder? Eine Methodenkritische Untersuchung von Redaktion, Überlieferung Und Traditionen in Mt 25,31-46*, Calwer theologische Monographien A7 (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1977); Egon Brandenburger, *Das Recht des Weltenrichters: Untersuchung zu Matthäus 25,31-46*, Stuttgarter Bibelstudien 99 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1980); Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 119–123; cf. Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, 124; J. A. T. Robinson, "The 'Parable' of the Sheep and the Goats," *NTS* 2 (1955): 225–37.

[136] Though the classification "parable" is debated (see, e.g., Gnilka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 2:367), I retain it here for the reasons Donahue articulates; see John R. Donahue, S.J., "The 'Parable' of the Sheep and Goats: A Challenge to Christian Ethics," *TS* 47 (1986): 9–10. As it portrays the eschatological judgment, the passage is also generically similar to apocalypses; see Adela Yarbro Collins, "The Early Christian Apocalypses," *Semeia* 14 (1979): 96–7; Berger, *Formgeschichte des Neuen Testaments*, 303–4; Donahue, S.J., "Sheep and Goats," 10–11; Via, "Ethical Responsibility and Human Wholeness in Matthew 25:31-46," 80–2; Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 209; Sim, *Apocalyptic Eschatology*, 123–4.

[137] The taxonomy of interpretations that follows depends on Stendahl, "Matthew," 794; Donahue, S.J., "Sheep and Goats," 5–8; Via, "Ethical Responsibility and Human Wholeness in Matthew 25:31-46," 90–4; Sherman W. Gray, *The Least of My Brothers: Matthew 25: 31-46: A History of Interpretation*, Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series 114 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989); Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 209; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:422–3; and esp. Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 267–74.

In this parable, the Son of Man judges a group called πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, separating them from one another like a shepherd separates sheep from goats (v. 32). The Son of Man, now called the "king,"[138] then blesses those who cared for him by caring for "one of the least of these my brothers and sisters" (ἑνὶ τούτων τῶν ἀδελφῶν μου τῶν ἐλαχίστων, v. 40) and condemns those who failed to do so (vv. 45-6).

On the most common interpretation in the history of exegesis, πάντα τὰ ἔθνη means "all the nations" or often just all Christians and "brothers and sisters" refers to Christians alone or some perfect subset of them.[139] The Son of Man judges the world or his followers then by how they have treated the(ir) poor and needy Christian brothers and sisters. This reading construes the passage as continuing the fifth discourse's exhortations to love but frequently narrows the intended beneficiaries of that love to one's co-religionists. In support of it are Matthew's admonitions to care for other Christians (18:5, 10-14). Against it is its incongruity with Matthew's emphasis on morally excellent deeds as instruments of mission and with Matthew's calls for universal love.[140]

On another reading, popular since the nineteenth century, πάντα τὰ ἔθνη means "Gentiles," by which Matthew means non-Christians (18:17), and the lowly brothers and

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[138] The change of terms may be inspired by Dan 7:13-14, where the Son of Man receives a kingdom (Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:420n13; cf. Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 492–4; Zumstein, *La condition du croyant*, 333–4).

[139] So Origen, Mani, Chrysostom, and Augustine, *inter alia*; see Gray, *The Least of My Brothers*, 25–70; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 271.

[140] Weiss, "Die Drei älteren Evangelien," 1:388; Gnilka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 2:375.

sisters are Jesus' followers.[141] The criterion of judgment remains loving deeds but for an

audience of Christians the parable reiterates not the fifth discourse's exhortations to love but

its messages of comfort. It reassures the beleaguered and persecuted that some form of justice

will accompany the end: Jesus' opponents will be judged according to how they treated his

fictive family. "[T]he non-Christian nations (among whom Israel may or may not be

included) will be judged on the basis of their acceptance or rejection of Christians (or a

particular group within Christian communities, such as missionaries or apostles)."[142]

Philological evidence makes this reading possible: in Graecophone Jewish literature ἔθνη

typically does mean "Gentiles," though it can mean "nations" in the LXX,[143] and in Matthew

it nowhere (else) refers to non-Christians and Christians together. "It is always used to refer

to Gentiles, over against Christians or Jews," including in this discourse (24:9, 19).[144] Other

Matthean passages make this reading plausible: the hardships that the lowliest brothers and

sisters endure—hunger, thirst, foreignness, nakedness, illness, and imprisonment (vv. 35-6)—

resemble those that the disciples suffer when Jesus sends them on mission in ch. 10.

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[141] Gray, *The Least of My Brothers*, 241–52; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 273–4. Stanton, the most prominent recent advocate for this reading, notes that this comforting function is that of many apocalyptic writings (*A Gospel for a New People*, 208).

[142] Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 208. The fifth discourse would then assume a two-stage judgment: a judgment of the church, implied in 24:45-25:30, followed by a judgment of non-Christians, described in 25:31-46. This two-stage schema corresponds to the portrayal of the judgment in *T. Benj.* 10:8-9 (first Israel; then the nations) and, according Stanton (ibid., 213), to *1 En.* 90, 91; Luke 21:20-8; *4 Ezra* 13:33-50.

[143] Hultgren, *The Parables of Jesus*, 313.

[144] Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 210. The full Greek phrase appears elsewhere in Matt in 24:9, 14; 28:19.

Missionaries face hunger, thirst, and nakedness when rejected by the audiences on whom

they depend for sustenance (10:9-14, 42). As itinerants, they are often foreign (10:11). They

are inevitably harassed by civil authorities, who can imprison and/or kill them (10:16-18,

28).[145] Furthermore, Matt 10:40 identifies Jesus with missionaries just as this passage identifies

him with the lowliest and 10:15 prescribes harsh judgment, like that prescribed in 25:41, for

those who reject missionaries.[146] But the literary context of the passage discourages this

interpretation. Throughout this discourse, Jesus has instructed the disciples about the

judgment that awaits them. The "entire paraenesis of 24:32-25:30 would be in vain if it did

not end in a portrayal of judgment that includes the church."[147]

On the most popular interpretation today, πάντα τὰ ἔθνη means "all the nations" and

"brothers and sisters" refers to all the world's needy. Arguably of recent vintage,[148] this

reading construes the passage as continuing the fifth discourse's exhortations to love both

those within the community of Jesus' followers and without (e.g., 24:12). In Stendahl's

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[145] Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 280. Davies and Allison reject any identification with 25:35-6 and the hardships noted in ch. 10 (*Matthew*, 2:435–6). Paul's *peristasis* catalogues also portray missionaries as hungry, thirsty, naked, and imprisoned (1 Cor 4:11-12; 2 Cor 6:4-5; 11:23-7) and Paul claims, outside of such a catalogue, to have been ill (2 Cor 12:7-9). See also *Acts Thom.* 145. On these parallels, see J. Ramsey Michaels, "Apostolic Hardships and Righteous Gentiles: A Study of Matthew 25:31-46," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 84 (1965): 27–37; Donahue, S.J., "Sheep and Goats," 27; John T. Fitzgerald, *Cracks in an Earthen Vessel: An Examination of the Catalogues of Hardships in the Corinthian Correspondence* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 207; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 280.

[146] Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 274; see also Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 214–18.

[147] Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 275; see also Via, "Ethical Responsibility and Human Wholeness in Matthew 25:31-46," 90; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:422–3, 428–9.

[148] Gray claims it arises in patristic period but Luz maintains that it was seldom held before the nineteenth century (Gray, *The Least of My Brothers*, 225–7; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 270–1).

words, "[T]he function of this parable is totally within the framework of what has preceded it, viz. instruction to the disciples about the demands on them while waiting with the church for the Parousia."[149]

I find the last reading the most persuasive but for my present purposes, the parable's referents do not determine the passage's ethics. Regardless of whom the nations and the brothers and sisters represent, the standard by which people are judged in this passage and therefore the ethical norm the passage proposes is charitable actions—right deeds.[150] As John Donahue observes, "[T]he parable of the Sheep and the Goats reveals the actions which should have been normative in the world" and because of this focus on ethics, the parable, though it depicts the judgment, gives few details about that event: "by his double repetition of the deeds done or not done, he [Matthew] calls attention to the norms by which people will be judged rather than to detailed descriptions of the judgment."[151] In this passage, as throughout Matthew, the moral ideal involves proper actions.

Proper actions, however, seem to be, again, the products of particular selves, for that causal connection, unarticulated in this passage but well established, as we have seen, in the preceding narrative, underlies and helps explain the central feature of the parable: the fact

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[149] "Matthew," 794; see also Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 208.

[150] Cf. Stanton, who states several times that in Matt 25 people are judged according to their "attitudes" to those in need (*A Gospel for a New People*, 208, 209). He does not elaborate on what he means and elsewhere says people are judged on the basis of their "concern and care" (ibid., 208).

[151] Donahue, S.J., "Sheep and Goats," 24; see also Marguerat, *Le Jugement*; Hays, *Moral Vision*, 107; Kathleen Weber, "The Image of Sheep and Goats in Matthew 25:31-46," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 59 (1997): 674.

that those who cared for Jesus did so unknowingly. On one hand, this ignorance motif enables the evangelist to stress a Christological point, namely that Jesus is so meek that the suffering represent him in the world (v. 40).[152] On the other, the motif is the logical result of Matthew's conception of moral actions. Richard Hays observes that the evangelist "thinks of actions as growing organically out of character." Actions are "the outward manifestations of what is in the heart. Presumably that explains why, in Jesus' great parable of the final judgment, the 'sheep' who inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world did not even know that their actions were serving Jesus: they were simply, to mix the metaphor, bearing fruit, giving expression to the goodness of their character."[153] More particularly, by placing this passage at the end of this discourse, Matthew suggests that it is by keeping vigil over themselves so as to safeguard the proper perspective on the end and the humility required to persist in love that those praised at the judgment have so unwittingly kept their love warm.

The fifth discourse thus repeatedly exhorts disciples to maintain the interior states necessary to act lovingly and, in turn, pass the final judgment. In so doing, it reiterates a principle encoded in the fruits metaphor: humility and stability are requisite to doing God's will.

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[152] Bornkamm, "End-Expectation and the Church in Matthew," 37; Donahue, S.J., "Sheep and Goats," 17.

[153] Hays, *Moral Vision*, 99; see also Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:427; similarly, Sigurd Grindheim, "Ignorance Is Bliss: Attitudinal Aspects of the Judgment according to Works in Matthew 25:31-46," *NovT* 50 (2008): 313–31.

Hypocrisy

The passages examined above, 15:1-20 and chs. 24-5, cohere primarily with one claim Matthew makes using the fruits metaphor: right deeds typically emerge from right inner conditions, wrong deeds from wrong ones. The theme I will examine now, the theme of hypocrisy, coheres with the other: right deeds do not always emerge from right traits and states; they can be performed by people with improper motives and evil hearts, in which case these otherwise commendable deeds merit condemnation. Deeds should index the heart. The visible realm of behavior should represent the invisible world of the inner self. The fact that the visible may lie—the possibility of hypocrisy—constitutes Matthew's moral nightmare.

Matthew inherits denunciations of hypocrisy in Mark 7:6 and 12:15, Q 6:42, and the special source on cultic practice he introduces to or finds within the SM (Matt 6:1-6, 16-18). He preserves all of them, which indicates the importance of the theme to his composition. If Luke 12:56 stands in Q and if, like the Lukan version, it mentions hypocrisy, then Matthew has relocated the mention to Q 12:46 (// Matt 24:51) because he finds Q 12:56's equation of hypocrisy with ignorance of God's imminent judgment to differ from his preferred use of the terminology and therefore to distract from the claim he wishes to make. If not, then Matthew also introduces hypocrisy into Q 12:46, just as he presumably inserts it into Q 11:39-52,[154] amplifying the theme found in his sources. As a result of his editorial work, six

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[154] While the similarities between Matt 23:13-36 and Luke 11:39-52 are sufficient to indicate a common source, they are insufficient to establish the precise wording of that source; see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:283; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 3:113. The claim that Matthew's uses of the term in ch.

passages of the gospel feature references to hypocrisy: 6:1-6, 16-18; 7:1-5; 15:1-20; 22:15-22; 23:1-26; 24:45-51.

The first five of these passages highlight and repudiate differences between appearance and reality. In 6:1-6, 16-18, as I explain in more detail in the next chapter, the "hypocrites" perform acts of piety (almsgiving, prayer, and fasting) "in order to be seen" by people (πρὸς τὸ θεαθῆναι, v. 1), "so that they may be glorified by people" (ὅπως δοξασθῶσιν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων , v. 2), and "so that they may be seen by people" (ὅπως φανῶσιν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, vv. 5, 16)—in other words, to receive an earthly, social reward (μισθόν, vv. 2, 5, 16). Their pious act should, according to ch. 6, result from and therefore signify a desire to glorify God or win God's praise or recompense (v. 4, 6, 18). They actually signify a desire to be glorified, to win's people praise. Their hypocrisy lies in misrepresenting their inner state.[155]

In 7:1-5, as, again, I show in further detail in the next chapter, Jesus forbids judgment (μὴ κρίνετε) of others generally (vv. 1-2) and of fellow community members ("brothers," vv. 3-5) specifically and casts as a "hypocrite" the person intent on correcting a minor fault in another (a "splinter" in his brother's eye) while ignoring the major fault in himself (the

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23 are redactional is a supposition based on the evangelist's fascination with it elsewhere. For a survey of other source theories of ch. 23 and for an alternate proposal, see Kenneth G. C. Newport, *The Sources and Sitz Im Leben of Matthew 23*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 117 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995).

[155] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:575: "Right deeds must be accompanied by right intention;" 581; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 103; Stowers, "Jesus the Teacher and Stoic Ethics in the Gospel of Matthew," 68–9. See also Sir 34:31-35:5, which commends almsgiving, prayer, and fasting but stresses that they should be accompanied by right moral dispositions.

"beam" in his own eye). The health of one's eye represents one's fitness to assess others and this ocular metaphor builds upon a preceding passage's claim that the eye represents one's interior condition (6:22-3). Thus, someone with a beam in his eye is unfit to judge another because he is inwardly deformed and occluded. Someone who judges his brother nonetheless acts as if he is in a position to do so; he represents himself as having cultivated the proper inner state, when, in fact, he has not. That discrepancy between his visible presentation and invisible reality makes him a "hypocrite."

In 15:1-20, as discussed above, Jesus labels the Pharisees and scribes "hypocrites" because they present themselves in a manner inconsistent with their true intentions. And in 22:15-22, Jesus again labels the Pharisees hypocrites when they feign deference and sincerity towards him (vv. 16-17) while actually plotting to "entrap" (παγιδεύσωσιν) him. Their visible behaviors obscure rather than reflect their internal evil (πονηρίαν, v. 18). "[K]ind words disguise ill intent."[156]

The woes against the scribes and Pharisees in 23:13-36 label those Jewish leaders "hypocrites" and repeatedly contrast the way they represent themselves with the way they truly are.[157] They present themselves as deeply and thoroughly devoted to the divine but,

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[156] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:215.

[157] Almost exclusive to ancient Christian and Jewish literature (though see Epictetus, *Diatr.*, 3.19.1 [οὐαί μοι]), woes (οὐαί) can express grief (1 Kgs 13:30; Tob 10:5; Amos 5:16; Matt 24:19 and parallels) or give grief (Num 21:29; Jdt 6:17; Eccl 10:16; Sir 2:12-14; 41:8; Hos 7:13; *Did.* 1:5). The latter, condemnatory sense, is obviously intended here. Other collections of judgment woes are found in Isa 5:8-14; 10:1-11; Hab 2:6-20; *1 En.* 94.6-9; 95.5-7; 96.4-8; 98.9-99.2; 99.11-15. Cf. Richard Valantasis' translation: "Damn you" (*The New Q*, 28).

according to Matthew, they remain inwardly corrupt in that they do pious acts for the wrong reason. Matthew 23:1-12, which introduces and governs the woes, declares that the Pharisees seek only others' admiration and are therefore negative examples for Matthew's audience. In their capacities as religious authorities (v. 2),[158] they issue imperatives—even some correct ones (v. 3a)[159]—that they do not truly fulfill (οὐ ποιοῦσιν, v. 3b-4) in that they do even their good deeds with adulterated intent and therefore those deeds are not truly good. They pursue not righteousness but public acclaim: "they do all their deeds (ἔργα) in

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[158] The description of the Jewish leaders as sitting on Moses' seat is a metaphorical indication of their teaching authority; see Meyer, *Handbook to the Gospel of Matthew*, 389; Boring, "The Gospel of Matthew," 8:431; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:268–9; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 99; Shaye J. D. Cohen, "'Were Pharisees and Rabbis the Leaders of Communal Prayer and Torah Study in Antiquity? The Evidence of the New Testament, Josephus, and the Early Church Fathers," in *The Significance of Yavneh and Other Essays in Jewish Hellenism*, Texte und Studien zum antiken Judentum 136 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 270–2. It may also imply that they consider themselves capable of passing eschatological judgment on others; cf. 25:31-46 and 27:19, where the Son of Man and Pilate, respectively, judge from seats or thrones; Ps 122:3-5; Dan 7:9-27; Rev 20:4. For this view, see *Opus Imperfectum, ad loc*; Hans-Jürgen Becker, *Auf der Kathedra des Mose: Rabbinisch-theologisches Denken und antirabbinische Polemik in Matthäus 23, 1-12*, Arbeiten zur neutestamentlichen Theologie und Zeitgeschichte 4 (Berlin: Institut Kirche und Judentum, 1990), 35–6, 85–105.

[159] I follow Davies and Allison, *inter alia*, in seeing v. 3a as hyperbole that stresses that the Jewish leaders' way of life does not result from ignorance; it cannot be an earnest call for Jesus' followers to obey the scribes' and Pharisees' teaching since the Matthean Jesus elsewhere denounces their teaching (e.g., 15:1-20; 16:6, 12); see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:269–70; cf. Mark Allan Powell, "Do and Keep What Moses Says (Matthew 23:2-7)," *JBL* 114 (1995): 425.

order to be seen by people" (v. 5; see also 6:1-6, 16-18).[160] The seven woes in 23:13-36 explicate this thesis.[161]

First, because they seek acclaim, they use their authority to "lock people out of the kingdom of heaven" (v. 13). Whether their mode of obstruction is burdening people with teaching that privileges external over internal purity (see 15:1-20) and so impedes the acquisition of true righteousness[162] or persecuting Jesus' followers (see 5:10-12; 10:17-21, 28; 21:35; 22:6; 23:34, 37; 24:9), who would open the kingdom (16:18-19; 18:18),[163] their motive, according to v. 1-12, is self-aggrandizement. As in 15:1-20 and as in 6:1-18, if they are among the "hypocrites" addressed there, they command and condemn others in order to bolster their own status, "to be seen" and revered.

Second, because of their vainglory, they traverse the whole world "to make a single proselyte" (ποιῆσαι ἕνα προσήλυτον, v. 15). Whether Matthew imagines them converting Gentiles to Judaism[164] or Jews to Pharisaism,[165] they do so, the evangelist insists, "to be seen"

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[160] On v. 3b, see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:271. The reference in v. 4b to not lifting a finger to move a burden is most plausibly taken as a restatement of v. 3b: the scribes and Pharisees command, or "burden" others, but do not make the least effort to keep those commandments, to "move" those burdens themselves (Meyer, *Handbook to the Gospel of Matthew*, 390; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 102–3; cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:272).

[161] On the relationship of vv. 1-12 to vv. 13-39, see Schweizer, *Matthew*, 323–4.

[162] So Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 116–7.

[163] So Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:286.

[164] So ibid., 3:288; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 118.

as pious. He then emphasizes the futility of their actions with respect to a proper goal. Since they lack the integrity necessary to enter God's kingdom (e.g., 5:8, 20), the proselytes they "form" (ποιῆσαι) will too and will therefore fail the final judgement (v. 15).

The third woe deems the Jewish leaders "blind guides" instead of hypocrites but indicts them nonetheless for vainglory, charging them with failing to recognize the divine authority that authorizes the law and preferring instead their self-exulting legal traditions (vv. 16-22; cf. 15:1-20).[166] The fourth returns to the epithet "hypocrites" and maintains in v. 23 that, in their pursuit of social status, they scrupulously observe minor legal requirements such as tithing herbs, presumably creating the appearance of the sort of profound devotion that engenders respect and authority, but transgress the more important and personal, or "heavier" (βαρύτερα), stipulations of the Torah such as justice (κρίσιν, cf. 15:1-20), mercy (τὸ ἔλεος, cf. 12:1-8; 25:35-44), and trust (πίστιν) in, or submission to, the divine plan for salvation (cf. Mic 6:8), which would include accepting God's emissaries (cf. 23:34-7).[167] They are too blinded (cf. 7:1-5) by their vanity to recognize that while they shun tiny

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[165] So Martin Goodman, "Jewish Proselytizing in the First Century," in *Judaism in the Roman World: Collected Essays*, Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums 66 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 99–102.

[166] Similarly Schweizer, *Matthew*, 324–5.

[167] On the meaning of "faith" in Matthew, see Ulrich Luz, "The Disciples in the Gospel according to Matthew," in *Studies in Matthew*, trans. Rosemary Selle (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eedrmans, 2005), 123–4.

transgressions of the law, described proverbially as filtering out a gnat, they embrace massive ones, described as swallowing a camel (v. 24; see also v. 26).[168]

The fifth woe reiterates the fourth's accusation that the scribes and Pharisees observe the law only in as much as doing so attracts others' admiration. Comparing them to dinnerware and using purity language to recall 15:1-20, Matthew declares they have "cleansed" (καθαρίζετε) their exteriors but not their interiors, which, according to 15:17-20, represent the true loci of purity. Inside they remain "full of plundering and weakness of character" (γέμουσιν ἐξ ἁρπαγῆς καὶ ἀκρασίας, v. 25).[169] Though they make themselves appear pure and righteous, they are inwardly defiled and deformed.[170]

The sixth woe reiterates the fifth's explicit contrast between the scribes' and Pharisees' visible appearance and invisible reality. It condemns the Jewish leaders for resembling

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[168] On the practice of filtering wine to which this proverbial expression alludes, see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:295–6.

[169] The term ἀκρασία refers in this instance to the inability to act properly because some internal factor besides one's knowledge of the right thing to do (e.g., pleasure, pain, fear, sexual desire) directs one (Plato, *Prot.* 352b7-e2; GailAnn Rickert, "Akrasia and Euripides' Medea," *HSCP* 91 [1987]: 91–117). I therefore translate "weakness of character." In Matthew 23, the internal factor that directs the Pharisees is vainglory. For another Jewish accusation of hypocrisy in the sense that one feigns righteousness to impress others but is acratic, see *Pss. Sol.* 4. The term ἀκρασία does not appear in the LXX but similar concepts do; see Sir 18:30-19:3; see also *Let. Aris.* 277-8. For the notion that the law should create the opposite of ἀκρασία, see 4 Macc 5:22-3; cf. Rom 7. On the textual variants for ἀκρασίας in 23:25, see Meyer, *Handbook to the Gospel of Matthew*, 388; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:297n83.

[170] Boring, "The Gospel of Matthew," 8:436.

"whitewashed tombs" (τάφοις κεκονιαμένοις):[171] seemingly beautiful on the outside (ἔξωθεν μὲν φαίνονται), or, in the Jewish leaders' case, righteous (δίκαιοι), but polluted within (vv. 27-8).[172] Given the immediate literary context, their apparent beautification consists in performing minor but conspicuous acts of Torah to create a false but socially advantageous image of their true selves. In that cultivation of a false impression, whether it is intentional or inadvertent, lies their hypocrisy.

The seventh woe claims that the Jewish leaders present themselves as pious, in this case by honoring deceased prophets and righteous individuals and disavowing their murders by the Jewish leaders of ages past, their "fathers" (τῶν πατέρων, vv. 29-31), though they are equally evil, though they are "snakes" and "the offspring of vipers" (ὄφεις γεννήματα ἐχιδνῶν, cf. 3:7-10; 12:34), as their violent opposition to Jesus and his followers proves (v. 34).

The sixth and final mention of hypocrisy does not highlight the potential discrepancy between the visible and invisible but rather assumes the gospel's prior descriptions of hypocrisy and emphatically declares God's ultimate condemnation of it. The wicked slave in this parable will be placed "with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (v. 51; cf. 23:33-6), that is, where those denied entrance to God's kingdom are located

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[171] On the Jewish practice referred to here as whitewashing, see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 3:300; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 130. Cf. Deut 27:2, 4 LXX. The term κονιάω (whitewash) is used in a similarly figurative way in Dio Chrysostom, *In cont.* 48.14; cf. CD VIII, 12; IXX, 24-5.

[172] On the strangeness of calling whitewashed tombs "beautiful" (ὡραῖοι), see Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 130; cf. Samuel Tobias Lachs, "On Matthew 23:27-28," *HTR* 68 (1975): 385–88.

(8:11-12; 13:41-2, 49-50; 22:11-14; 25:30). Since, as I argue above, the parable illustrates for

Matthew's readers what preparedness for the eschaton entails, this mention of hypocrisy

reminds the audience that even Jesus' followers will be excluded if their visible and invisible

selves are dichotomized (cf. καὶ διχοτομήσει αὐτὸν, 24:51; cf. 7:21-3).

Thus, whereas Matt 15:1-20 and chs. 24-5 insist that actions result from or require

inner states and traits, the theme of hypocrisy stresses that they may not, that appearances

may deceive. Powell aptly summarizes Matthew's portrayal of hypocrisy:

> Matthew's gospel does not present hypocrisy as a discrepancy between word and
> deed but rather as a discrepancy between the inward nature observed by God and the
> outward appearance observed by others (23:25-28). Words (22:15-18) and deeds (6:2)
> alike may present this false image, which may apparently be the product either of
> conscious pretense or unwitting self-deception. Thus, a hypocrite may be one who
> does ostensibly good things with wrong motives (6:2, 5, 16), or who worships with
> lips but not with the heart (15:7-8), or who does good in trivial matters while
> neglecting important ones (23:23), or who presumes to minister to others without
> first correcting one's own failings (7:4-5; 23:13-15, 29-30).[173]

Matthew 15:1-20 and chs. 24-5 make then the same points about human perfection that

Matthew makes using the fruits metaphor in 12:22-37; 21:33-46; and 13:1-9, 18-23

respectively, while the theme of hypocrisy makes the same point as 3:7-12; 7:15-23; 13:24-

30, 36-43; and 21:18-22, namely that right actions do not always result from the right

interior states but must if they are to prove eschatologically valuable. Any discrepancy

between one's visible actions and the internal state from which they should emerge and

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[173] Powell, "Do and Keep What Moses Says (Matthew 23:2-7)," 423. In support of this
definition, he cites Sjef van Tilborg, *The Jewish Leaders in Matthew* (Leiden: Brill, 1972), 8–26;
David E. Garland, *The Intention of Matthew 23*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 52 (Leiden:
Brill, 1979), 92–123; Via, *Self-Deception and Wholeness in Paul and Matthew*, 92–8.

which they should represent renders those actions worthless, no matter how good they are *prima facie*. Commendable deeds done without proper inner conditions are condemnable.

Conclusion

In this chapter and the last, I have argued that in this gospel, the ideal self in Matthew's narrative does good deeds because she or he has particular qualities that enable those deeds and guarantee they are good. Proper inner conditions, whether those be humility or tranquility or some other state in particular, should produce proper deeds. Matthew is not, of course, an ethical treatise. The evangelist has composed a narrative about Jesus and incorporated diverse sources in doing so. He has not written primarily to sketch a portrait of the ideal self. But his narrative of Jesus and Jesus' followers nonetheless features a coherent understanding of what sort of human existence is normative. These chapters describe that understanding.

We have described the variety of moral claims Matthew makes using the fruits metaphor, in 15:1-20, in chs. 24-5, and in his depiction of hypocrisy, claims regarding why the Jewish leaders fail to respond reverently to John and Jesus, why the disciples do, what qualities are necessary for disciples to persist in following Jesus and to do God's will, and the possibility and moral value of feigning the enactment of that will. I have summarized these claims in the preceding paragraph but to perceive their coherence, it is also illustrative to describe them using a general category that encompasses them in their variety. Matthew's convictions about the ideal self are best summarized, I submit, by saying that Matthew demands proper interiority, meaning that the evangelist idealizes someone who has particular intellectual, affective, and volitional characteristics that manifest themselves in, make possible,

or accompany right responses to God and treatment of others. "Good character" would also provide an apt summation of Matthew's ideal if by "character" we, like many current ethicists, mean perceptions, intentions, and dispositions (i.e., affective, cognitive, and volitional traits) that incline one towards particular patterns of action.[174] But the evangelist's incessant references to what is "within" (ἐν ἑαυτοῖς: 3:9; 9:3; 16:7-8; 21:25, 38; ἔσωθεν: 7:15), to the heart (καρδία, 5:8, 28; 6:21; 9:4; 11:29; 12:34; 13:15, 19; 15:8, 18-19, 35; 22:37; 24:48), and to the potential discrepancies between people's appearance and what truly matters about them (i.e., the theme of duplicity, or, hypocrisy) make "interiority" more fitting. This category is sufficiently general to include Matthew's diverse expressions and sufficiently precise to describe them in their particularity.[175]

This idealization of proper interiority may have its historical roots in a need to account for most Jews' rejection of Jesus' followers' message. Matthew's emphasis on interiority as the root of action may be, as Davies and Allison argue, "the product[s] of his conviction that the Jewish rejection of Jesus was not an honest error or innocent mistake but

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[174] For this definition of character, see Bruce C. Birch and Larry L. Rasmussen, *Bible and Ethics in the Christian Life* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1976), 74–81; Brown, William P., "Preface," in *Character and Scripture: Moral Formation, Community, and Biblical Interpretation*, ed. William P. Brown (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2002), xii; see also Stanley Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), 39; Alasdair C MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2d ed. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), 46; Stanley Hauerwas, *Character and the Christian Life: A Study in Theological Ethics*, Trinity University Monograph Series in Religion 3 (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1985), 203; Joel D. Biermann, *A Case for Character: Towards a Lutheran Virtue Ethics* (Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2014), 13–14.

[175] My thinking on the use of theoretical categories in descriptive ethics is indebted to Jonathan Wyn Schofer, "Self, Subject, and Chosen Subjection: Rabbinic Ethics and Comparative Possibilities," *JRE* 33 (2005): esp. 260–1.

instead the consequence of a spiritual blindness, *an inner defect*, a moral failing, an inclination to disobey God's will."[176] If deeds arise from within, then the rejection of a message about Jesus does not indicate that the messengers or the divine plan have failed; it indicates that "this generation" and the Jewish leaders are too corrupt to respond adequately to God. Hard-heartedness, hypocrisy, and an evil nature become totalizing explanations of behavior and the ultimate causes of conflict with Jesus' followers. Paul Hoffmann, among others, argues that Q speaks with the voice of a community whose message has been rejected in Israel and that has therefore turned vitriolic against its perceived opponents.[177] Accepting these claims, Luz maintains that Matthew in part preserves part of Q's judgment on "this generation" and the Jewish leaders[178] and in part redirects these pronouncements "'inwards,' that is, towards Jesus' own community,"[179] turning them into exhortations to expunge the

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[176] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:581, emphasis mine.

[177] Paul Hoffmann, "The Redaction of Q and the Son of Man: A Preliminary Sketch," in *The Gospel Behind the Gospels: Current Studies on Q*, ed. Ronald A. Piper, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 75 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 159–98.

[178] Davies and Allison argue that Matthew's references to the synagogue as the site of Jesus' preaching, a site of hostility to Jesus and his followers, and the home of hypocrisy reflect the experience of Jesus' followers in mission to Israel, suffering rejection by Israel, and polemicizing against Israel's leaders and many in its population (*Matthew*, 1:413–4). Their claim is consistent with the hypothesis that socially and theologically Matthew stands in continuity with Q.

[179] Ulrich Luz, "Matthew and Q," in *Studies in Matthew*, trans. Rosemary Selle (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eedrmans, 2005), 52; see also Bornkamm, "End-Expectation and the Church in Matthew."

inner defects that define their morally inferior nemeses.[180] In other words, the notion that interiority produces action may have begun as historical explanation, become a component of polemic, and stands now though as a general ethical principle. And as it stands, it is a totalized and perfected principle in the sense that exceptions to it are censured. Actions that are not the results of interiority, however good they may be, are denounced.

Since Matthew directs this principle not only at outsiders but at Jesus' followers too, the question that arises regarding disciples is how they are to ensure they have the requisite interiority that will produce good deeds and/or correspond to one's right actions. The next chapter takes up that question.

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[180] On the ways in which the demand for inward righteousness might have helped legitimate and sustain a minority community at odds with more powerful Jewish groups, see Saldarini, *Matthew's Christian-Jewish Community*, 52.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT AS THE BASIS OF A SPIRITUAL

EXERCISE

> "Whoever then desires to be reckoned among the disciples, must labor to devote himself, sincerely and honestly, to the exercises of a new life."
> — Calvin, *Commentaries* on Matt 7:21

Chapter two of this study claimed that in antiquity some collections of brief, or gnomic, sayings formed the basis for counter-cultural transformative work on the self—for spiritual exercises—and offered two examples of this phenomenon: Epicurus' *Kyriai Doxai* and Epictetus' *Encheiridion*. To show that these particular gnomologia functioned as formative implements, I first described Epicurus' and Epicteteus' respective moral paragons, or ideal selves, as articulated in their other works, second showed that each gnomologium reiterates that respective ideal, and third highlighted other internal as well as external evidence that further suggests that the gnomologia were intended to help one transform into that idealized self. I then set about showing that the same evidence that indicates these collections of Epicurus' and Epictetus' sayings aided self-cultivation exists also for the collection of Jesus' sayings in Matt 5-7, the Sermon on the Mount (SM). Chapters three and four completed the first step; they described Matthew's moral ideal, the self idealized in the evangelist's narrative. This chapter will complete steps two and three; it will show that the SM features an ethic consonant with the rest of Matthew's gospel and it will present other

internal as well as external evidence that the SM, read in the context of Matthew's whole composition, resembles the basis for a spiritual exercise: internally, 7:24-7 commands disciples to "do" the preceding sayings, which, given their nature, would prompt exercises of meditation and attention to oneself; externally, Matthew's characterization of moral progress and of Jesus as Wisdom cohere with the notion that the evangelist depicts disciples as exercising themselves with a collection of Jesus' sayings. In other words, the previous two chapters established Matthew's ethical ideal and this chapter will establish how, according to Matthew, one is to become it.

Internal Evidence that the SM Resembles the Basis of a Spiritual Exercise

The Moral Ideal of Matt 5-7

The first piece of internal evidence that the SM is portrayed as enabling one to attain the Gospel of Matthew's ethical ideal is that the Sermon presents that ideal succinctly and memorably, that is, gnomically. What the rest of the gospel communicates in longer and more diverse ways—through the fruits metaphor and other moral metaphors, the controversy over purity in ch. 15, the instructions for the eschatological age in chs. 24-5, and the condemnation of hypocrisy—, chs. 5-7 declares in pithy sayings that one can easily hold in one's mind for reflection and guidance. The ethic of the SM is the ethic of First Gospel—in gnomic form. As my reading of chs. 5-7 will show, the SM insists that the moral self is "righteous" in three areas or ways: one, in personal relationships and two, in piety in that s/he acts rightly toward other people and toward God out of right motives and, third, with respect to social and material goods in that s/he preserves the proper, deprecatory perspective, or attitude, thereon. It thus restates claims about discipleship that we identified in the

preceding two chapters: disciples must maintain the mental and emotional perspectives, particularly on worldly concerns and wealth (13:22; the SM's third area of righteousness), necessary to persist in doing good deeds, that is, to persist in loving God and others (chs. 24-5; the SM's first two areas of righteosness), and the motives necessary for ostensibly good deeds to be truly good (7:15-23; 13:24-30, 36-43; the SM's first two areas of righteousness).

By virtue of its placement within his narrative, Matthew presents chs. 5-7 as instruction for the repentant. Introducing these chapters are Jesus' proclamation of repentance (4:17), which marks a new phase in the story;[1] the response—the repentance—of Simon, Andrew, James, and John (4:18-22); a summary of Jesus' activities in Galilee (4:23-5); and a narrative introduction to the Sermon itself, which designates the repentant disciples as the audience for the ensuing moral teaching (5:1-2). Framed thusly, the SM constitutes teaching regarding the post-repentant life.

The SM itself features a bipartite introduction (5:3-12, 13-16), the first part of which portrays as moral ideals the humility that has led to the disciples' repentance and the persecution that will result from it. Matthew 5:3-12 consists of nine beatitudes, the first eight of which, unlike the Beatitudes that introduce Jesus' inaugural sermon in Q, appear in the third person and thereby emulate the beatitudes of the biblical wisdom literature (e.g., Ps 1) in presenting moral types that God will bless and readers should therefore imitate.[2] These

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[1] Burchard, "Versuch, das Thema der Bergpredigt in der Bergpredigt zu finden," 30.

[2] See, *inter alia*, Windisch, *The Meaning of the Sermon on the Mount*, 26–7, 87–8; Jacques Dupont, *Les Béatitudes.*, 3 vols., Etudes bibliques (Bruges: Abbaye de Saint-André, 1958), 1:254–8; C. H. Dodd, "The Beatitudes: A Form-Critical Study," in *More New Testament Studies* (Grand Rapids,

eight beatitudes are organized into two panels of four followed by a ninth beatitude that, as will be shown, elaborates the eighth. Repetition of the phrase "because the kingdom of heaven is theirs" (ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν) in the first and eighth beatitudes (vv. 3, 10) creates an inclusion that marks the first eight as a set and the use of "righteousness" in the fourth and eighth (δικαιοσύνη, vv. 6, 10) creates another inclusion that divides the set into two panels of four. Rhetorical features reinforce this division: the beatitudes of the first panel unite in alliterating the letter *p*—those declared blessed are the πτωχοὶ (v. 3), the πενθοῦντες (v. 4), the πραεῖς (v. 5), and the πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες (v. 6)—; both panels alliterate *d* in their final beatitudes (διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην, v. 6;

Mich.: Eerdmans, 1968), 7–8; Strecker, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 27–47; Stanton, *A Gospel for a New People*, 299; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 94; David E. Aune, "Beatitude," ed. David E. Aune, *The Westminster Dictionary of New Testament and Early Christian Literature and Rhetoric* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 75–8; John S. Kloppenborg, "Poverty and Piety in Matthew, James, and the Didache," in *Matthew, James, and Didache: Three Related Documents in Their Jewish and Christian Settings*, ed. Huub van de Sandt and Jürgen Zangenberg, Symposium Series (Society of Biblical Literature) 45 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 222–5; cf., to the contrary, Robert A. Guelich, "The Matthean Beatitudes: 'Entrance-Requirements' or Eschatological Blessings," *JBL* 95 (1976): 415–34; Ingo Broer, *Die Seligpreisungen der Bergpredigt: Studien zu ihrer Überlieferung und Interpretation*, Bonner biblische Beiträge 61 (Bonn: Peter Hanstein Verlag, 1986), 52; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:439–40: "5.3-12 serves firstly to bless the faithful as they are now"; Mark Allan Powell, "Matthew's Beatitudes: Reversals and Rewards of the Kingdom," *CBQ* 58 (1996): 460–79. Though certainty is elusive, Matthew himself has likely ethicized the Q Beatitudes; attributing the Matthean beatitudes' particularities in whole or part to a recension of Q unknown to Luke (Q[Matt]) is unnecessary; see Dupont, *Les Béatitudes.*, vol. 1; Christopher M. Tuckett, "The Beatitudes: A Source-Critical Study," *NovT* 25 (1983): 193–207; cf. Georg Strecker, "Die Makarismen der Bergpredigt," in *Eschaton und Historie : Aufsätze* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1979), 108–31; Guelich, "The Matthean Beatitudes: 'Entrance-Requirements' or Eschatological Blessings"; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 434–42.

δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης, v. 10); and both contain exactly thirty six words in Greek.[3]

Each panel serves two different functions. By portraying the disciples as beleagured, the first four beatitudes anticipate the final two (vv. 10-12), which culminate the series by blessing the persecuted. These beatitudes (vv. 3-6) allude to Isa 61 and thereby cast Jesus, their speaker, as God's christened eschatological herald (ἔχρισέν, Isa 61:1), and the disciples, their audience, the "poor" and "meek," meaning humbled and despairing (οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, Matt 5:3; πτωχοῖς … τοὺς συντετριμμένους τῇ καρδίᾳ Isa 61:1; οἱ πραεῖς, Matt 5:5), as well as "mourning" (οἱ πενθοῦντες, Matt 5:4; πενθοῦντας … πενθοῦσιν; Isa 61:2-3) community to whom the herald promises comfort (παρακληθήσονται, Matt 5:2; παρακαλέσαι … κληθήσονται, Isa 61:2-3), inheritance of the land (κληρονομήσουσι τὴν γῆν, Matt 5:5; κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν, Isa 61:7), and righteousness (δικαιοσύνην, Matt 5:6; Isa 61:3, 8, 11), meaning in this instance, as in Isa 61, divinely established justice.[4] Moreover, the third beatitude (v. 5), while it repeats Isa 61:7's reference to inheriting, also quotes Ps 36:11: "the meek shall inherit land" (οἱ δὲ πραεῖς κληρονομήσουσιν γῆν; cf. Ps

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[3] Christine Michaelis, "Die Π-Alliteration der Subjektsworte der ersten 4 Seligpreisungen in Mt 5:3-6 und ihre Bedeutung für den Aufbau der Seligpreisungen bei Mt., Lk. und in Q," *NovT* 10 (1968): 148–61; Powell, "Matthew's Beatitudes," 462; Talbert, *Reading the Sermon on the Mount*, 49.

[4] For Matt 5:3-6 as alluding to Isa 61, see Guelich, "The Matthean Beatitudes: 'Entrance-Requirements' or Eschatological Blessings"; Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 74; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:436–9. For this meaning of righteousness in 5:6, see Schweizer, *Matthew*, 91–2; Meier, *Matthew*, 40–1; Gundry, *Matthew*, 70; Powell, "Matthew's Beatitudes," 466–8; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 134; Pierre Bonnard, *L'évangile selon saint Matthieu*, 3d ed., Commentaire du Nouveau Testament 1 (Geneva: Labor et fides, 2002), 57; Nolland, *Matthew*, 202–3; cf. Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:452–3.

36:9). Because the meek in Ps 36 are those who forsake anger (v. 8a) at the evildoers who persecute them even though they are "righteous" (τὸν δίκαιον, v. 12; cf. Matt 5:20), "poor" (πτωχὸν, v. 14; cf. Matt 5:3), and "upright in heart" (τοὺς εὐθεῖς τῇ καρδίᾳ, v. 14; cf. Matt 5:8), this quotation further depicts the disciples as persecuted and promises them an eschatological reversal of circumstance.

The first panel also idealizes the penitent. The community addressed in Isa 61 despairs not only because of its exile and captivity (vv. 1, 4) but also because it regrets the rebelliousness against God that led thereto. Hence it is depicted in ashes (v. 3; cf Isa 58:5), mourning its sins.[5] The "poor in spirit" (οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι) then are not only those humbled by external conditions but also those humbled in repentance, those who feel an existential lack or need in the very essence of their being, in their spirit (cf. 26:41; 27:50).[6] By blessing the "poor in spirit" and the similarly humble mourners and meek, the first three beatitudes idealize the disposition that enables and accompanies repentance (5:3-5) and promise the penitent current participation in God's kingdom and future reversal of their

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[5] For "mourning" (πενθέω) sin, see also *T. Reu.* 1.10.

[6] Cf. *Pss. Sol.* 18.2. See Theodor Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Matthäus* (Leipzig: Diechert, 1903), 183; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:442–4; Blaine Charette, *Restoring Presence: The Spirit in Matthew's Gospel*, Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series 18 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 117; Nolland, *Matthew*, 198; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 190–2; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 165. Cf. those who argue that Matthew means the economically poor: Hagner, *Matthew*, 91); Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 131; and the criticism of that position by Kloppenborg, "Poverty and Piety in Matthew, James, and the Didache," 224–5. Elsewhere in Matthew, the spirit is the part of the self that desires to do the will of God (26:41) and in that sense it is synonymous with the heart as Matthew characterizes the heart in 9:4; 13:15; 15:8, 19; 18:35; 22:37. Matthew likely uses "spirit" here because it adds one more instance of alliteration to the beatitudes (πτωχοὶ … πνεύματι, v. 3) and for poetic variation; he uses "heart" in a subsequent beatitude.

condition. From this perspective, by blessing "those who hunger and thirst for righteousness," the fourth in turn idealizes those who yearn to do God's will (cf. 5:20) and receive God's approbation and assures them they will be able to.[7]

The second panel twice idealizes non-judgmental and non-violent treatment of others. The fifth beatitude praises "those who show mercy" (οἱ ἐλεήμονες, v. 7) and, since mercy elsewhere in Matthew means loving treatment, including financial support of (ἐλεημοσύνην, 6:2-4), fellowship with (9:13), refusal to condemn (12:7; 18:33), and even healing of others (9:27; 15:22; 17:15; 20:30-1) regardless of their potential transgressions against God (9:13, 27; 15:22; 12:7; 17:15; 18:33; 20:30-1),[8] anticipates Jesus' injunctions in the body of the sermon not to combat or shun but to show humility and lend money to evildoers (5:38-42) and to love enemies and persecutors (5:43-8).[9] It then promises the merciful that God will treat them with the same love despite their own transgressions (cf. 6:12, 14-15; 18:23-34). The seventh beatitude praises "the peacemakers" (εἰρηνοποιοί) and declares "they will be called children of God" (αὐτοὶ υἱοὶ θεοῦ κληθήσονται, v. 9). The notion of making peace generally and the language of becoming God's children specifically

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[7] Adolf von Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus: seine Sprache, seine Ziel, seine Selbstständigkeit: ein Kommentar zum ersten Evangelium*, 3d ed. (Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1948), 137. For the language of hungering and thirsting to attain an ethical ideal, see also Philo, *Fug.* 139-41; Sir 24:19-21. On the dual meaning of righteousness in 5:6 then as both something God creates and God's people create, see Riches, *Conflicting Mythologies*, 194–7.

[8] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:454–55; Powell, "Matthew's Beatitudes," 470–2. For other passages that Matthew may intend as examples of mercy, though they do not use the term, see Gundry, *Matthew*, 71.

[9] Strecker, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 39.

tie this beatitude to the second of the two passages that the fifth beatitude anticipates: 5:43-8, where becoming "children of your father in heaven (υἱοὶ τοῦ πατρὸς ὑμῶν τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς, 5:45) requires renouncing hostility and imitating God's radically indiscriminate love.[10] In light of the culminating beatitude of this panel, which blesses the persecuted (v. 10), the fifth and seventh beatitudes intimate how disciples are to respond to persecution: with mercy and peace, that is, with love. In this context, the sixth beatitude, which praises the "pure in heart" (v. 8), idealizes those who eschew hostility and hate and remain disposed to show mercy to and make peace with persecutors.

The second panel also anticipates the ethic of the SM generally. The sixth beatitude's blessing of the "pure in heart" not only echoes the dispositions towards persecutors called for in the surrounding beatitudes but also epitomizes the proper intentions towards others and towards God demanded, as we will see, in 5:17-48 and 6:1-18, respectively, and the proper attitude towards "treasures" demanded in 6:19-7:12.[11] Its conclusion also summarizes that of the SM. The beatitude ends by declaring that the pure in heart "will see God," just as the SM's conclusion promises those who exemplify its moral ideal will survive the final judgment, whereas, as will be shown, those who merely conform to that ideal outwardly but not inwardly, not in their hearts, will be banished from God's sight (ἀποχωρεῖτε ἀπ᾽ ἐμοῦ,

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[10] Foster, *Community, Law, and Mission in Matthew's Gospel*, 135; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 198.

[11] Strecker, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 39; Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 79: "'pure in heart' characterizes people of integrity whose moral uprighteousness extends to their inmost being and whose actions and intentions correspond"; Nolland, *Matthew*, 205.

7:23). By virtue of the sixth beatitude's generality, then, the treatment of persecutors idealized in the second panel of beatitudes becomes one example of proper discipleship.

The ninth beatitude elaborates on the eighth's reference to persecution by specifying the type of persecution idealized in the preceding beatitudes and why it is ideal. The eighth declares blessed "those who are persecuted on account of righteousness" (οἱ δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης, v. 10), or speech and action in accord with God's will, and the ninth blesses the audience of disciples ("you") when they are persecuted "on account of me" (ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ), that is, because of the righteous words and acts that constitute following Jesus (v. 11). It is Jesus' disciples' experience of persecution that the beatitudes declare blessed. They do so not only because God will comfort and recompense the righteous and persecuted at the eschaton but, as the example of the prophets in v. 12b states, because persecution is the burden of all the truly righteous and therefore an indication that one is enacting God's will.

Thus, the beatitudes idealize the persecuted and the penitent—those humbled by circumstance and self—and then those who genuinely treat their persecutors with love. The evocation of penitent humility recalls the disciples' repentance, the account of which introduces the SM. The beatitudes then laud their audience for possessing the inner conditions necessary to respond rightly to divine initatives. In 5:11–12 and elsewhere in Matthew's narrative, persecution inevitable attends discipleship (10:23 ["when (ὅταν) they persecute you," not if]; cf. 23:34). The beatitudes then portray the hardships that follow repentance, the suffering that the disciples will soon experience, as an ideal state because it is a sign that one is doing God's will, a sign of blessedness and, furthermore, exhort disciples to respond to that painful but ideal state ideally, that is, with love. By referencing repentance, or, the beginning of discipleship; persecution, a subsequent step in discipleship (note the

same progression in 13:20-1); and eschatological comfort and recompense, the *telos* of discipleship, the beatitudes summarize the moral life and provide a narrative frame, or context, for the SM's instruction. Its admonitions will shape life post-repentance, pre-beatification, and in the midst of persecution.

Viewing the beatitudes as a narrative frame clarifies then one otherwise peculiar feature of them: while all the beatitudes have a bipartite structure—the first clause declares a particular group "blessed" and the second states the reason for their blessedness—,[12] the first and eighth alone state the reason in the present and not the future tense: "because the kingdom of heaven is theirs." The first declares blessed for this reason "the poor in spirit" (οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι), meaning, as have seen, the humble. It declares the kingdom theirs because, as ch. 3 argued, the evangelist believes that only the humble—those that, like the "poor in spirit," lack self-assurance and obstinance—respond to John's and Jesus' call for repentance and that by repenting, the disciples, like the prostitutes and tax collectors who respond rightly to John who currently "are entering" (προάγουσιν, 21:28-22), already participate in the kingdom.[13] The eighth declares blessed "those who are persecuted on account of righteousness" (οἱ δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης, v. 10) and likewise declares the kingdom theirs because they are experiencing the consequences of participation in a reign that evil actively opposes. The second elements of the other beatitudes declare the

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[12] Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 110–11.

[13] France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 165.

eschatological benefits that are accruing and will belong to those who participate properly in God's contested rule.

The second portion of the SM's introduction consists of a set of sayings (5:13, 14-16) that describes the persecuted disciples[14] as "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" (vv. 13-14), that is as indispensable to life in this age,[15] and exhorts them to remain so. As salt, they are not to "become foolish" (μωρανθῇ, v. 13), which, in keeping with the saline metaphor, must mean they are not to "become tasteless" but which, given the biblical uses of the term "fool," implies that the disciples are not to begin acting contrary to God's will (cf. 7:24-7).[16] As light, they are not to be hidden (vv. 14-15) but rather to "shine" by doing "good deeds" (τὰ καλὰ ἔργα) in sight of "people" (ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ὅπως ἴδωσιν) because such visible deeds move others to esteem the disciples' "father," who, by virtue of being "in the heavens" (ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς), is otherwise unseen (v. 16; cf. 4:16). Thus, the disciples are salt and light in that they do deeds that God's will. To become insipid or hidden—and therefore useless (v. 14, 15)—would be to cease to do such works.

The designation of the disciples as the salt "of the earth" and the light "of the world" as well as the diction of v. 16 imply that in doing God's will, the disciples carry out a

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[14] The addressee of v. 13 ("you") is also that of v. 12; see Augustine, *Serm. Dom.* 1.16; Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 120; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:472; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 155; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 205.

[15] See Pliny the Elder, *Nat.* 31.102; Zumstein, *La condition du croyant*, 426; Strecker, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 49; Roland Deines, *Die Gerechtigkeit der Tora im Reich des Messias : Mt 5,13-20 als Schlüsseltext der matthäischen Theologie*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 177 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 188–233.

[16] Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 138.

worldwide mission. By describing them as impacting "people" with their good deeds in v. 16, the evangelist invites the reader view this verse in connection with 4:19, where Jesus says he will make the disciples "fisher of people" (ἁλιεῖς ἀνθρώπων). This verbal connection suggests that good deeds are the bait with which the disciples fish for human beings, the way in which they conduct their mission to move people to glorify God.[17]

The implied relationship between 5:13-16 and 5:3-12 is concessive. Even though the disciples are persecuted, they must not cease to do good works,[18] the same exhortation Matthew makes in 13:21 and chs. 24-5. Their persistence in doing good deeds, their mission, is, like salt and light, essential to the world's wellbeing. The introduction does not specify how Jesus' followers are to be salt and light, what good deeds exactly they must exhibit.[19] But by prefacing the body of the SM with this demand for good deeds, Matthew implies that the body will specify, that it describes the good deeds that consistute the disciples' mission. In sum, then, the bipartite introduction to the SM casts it as the way repentant, persecuted disciples carry out their divinely sanctioned mission to the world.

The body of the sermon will offer a representative overview of the good deeds disciples must do, not a finite list because each of its three sections is presented as synechdochal; that is, the Sermon casts the sayings in each of portion of the body as

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[17] Deines, *Die Gerechtigkeit*, 250.

[18] M. D. Goulder, *Midrash and Lection in Matthew* (Eugene, Ore.: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004), 255.

[19] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:471–2, 479; Hubert Frankemölle, *Matthäus Kommentar*, 2 vols. (Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1997), 1:216; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 205.

illustrative examples of righteousness in a particular sphere of life (relationships with other

people, relationship with God, relationship with social status and material wealth), not as

exhaustive inventories of what righteousness in each sphere entails. References to the law and

the prophets in 5:17 and 7:12 delineate the body of the sermon. Thematic headings delineate

the body's three parts.

5:17-48

The first part of the body (5:17-48) focuses on the Decalogue in order to illustrate

righteousness toward others. Matthew 5:17-20, the thematic heading for this section, serves a

negative and a positive function. Negatively, it warns against misinterpretation of 5:21-48 as

opposing Israel's scriptures, a concern raised not only by the ensuing distinctions between

biblical commandments ("You have heard…") and Jesus' teaching ("But I say to you…") but

also by the preceding description of the audience as salt and light, descriptions often

associated with the law and prophets.[20] Positively, it announces the theme of the body of the

sermon: righteousness—proper interiority and conduct—that exceeds that of the Jewish

leaders and enables one to enter the kingdom of heaven.[21]

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[20] Roland Deines, "Not the Law but the Messiah: Law and Righteousness in the Gospel of Matthew—An Ongoing Debate," in *Built Upon the Rock: Studies in the Gospel of Matthew*, ed. Daniel M. Gurtner and John Nolland (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2008), 74.

[21] Otto Betz, "Bergpredigt und Sinaitradition," in *Jesus, der Messias Israels: Aufsätze zur biblischen Theologie*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 42 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987), 336, 383; Allison, *The Sermon on the Mount*: "5:20 announces what 5:21-48 is really all about—the greater righteousness, a righteousness that goes beyond that of the scribes and Pharisees. This is indeed the clue to right interpretation"; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 177. Allison compares

The six paragraphs that follow 5:17-20, that is 5:21-48, constitute the first section of the Sermon's body and illustrate such superior righteousness by stating antithetically ("But I say to you…")—hence the modern title "antitheses" for these passages—the proper fulfillment (5:17) of six biblical laws or clusters of laws, the great majority of which, as I will show, appear in the second half of the Ten Commandments, the half devoted to one's

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the function of 5:17-20 to that of the rabbinic כלל, "a summary rule or declaration that heads a section consisting of particular cases or instances, *peratot*" (Allison, "The Configuration of the Sermon on the Mount and Its Meaning," 181n21; see also Daube, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism*, 63–6; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:93; Ulrich Luz, "The Fulfillment of the Law in Matthew (Matt. 5:17-20)," in *Studies in Matthew*, trans. Rosemary Selle [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eedrmans, 2005], 197; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 6). On this form in rabbinic literature, see Max Kadushin, *Worship and Ethics: A Study in Rabbinic Judaism* (New York: Bloch, 1963), 31–7; Birger Gerhardsson, *Memory and Manuscript: Oral Tradition and Written Transmission in Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity with Tradition and Transmission in Early Christianity*, trans. Eric J. Sharpe (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1998), 136–41, who stresses its pedagogical value. Cf. Deines, *Die Gerechtigkeit*, 425–8, who sees 5:20 as primarily not the introduction to 5:21ff., but a summary of 5:3-19.

On righteousness as proper character and conduct, not a condition that God imputes, see Strecker, *Der Weg*, 153; John P. Meier, *Law and History in Matthew's Gospel: A Redactional Study of Mt.5:17-48*, Analecta biblica 71 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1976), 77; Benno Przybylski, *Righteousness in Matthew and His World of Thought*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 41 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 80–7; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:499–500; J. Andrew Overman, *Matthew's Gospel and Formative Judaism: A Study of the Social World of the Matthean Community* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 93–4; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 190; Dale C. Allison, "Structure, Biographical Impulse, and the *Imitatio Christi*," in *Studies in Matthew: Interpretation Past and Present* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2005), 152; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 142–3, 237–8; Johan C. Thom, "Justice in the Sermon on the Mount: An Aristotelian Reading," *NovT* 51 (2009): 325; cf. Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus*, 137; Peter Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes bei Paulus*, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 87 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965), 188–21; Heinz Giesen, *Christliches Handeln: Eine redaktionskritische Untersuchung Zum δικαιοσύνη-Begriff in Matthäus-Evangelium*, Europäische Hochschulschriften. Reihe XXIII, Theologie 181 (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1982); Betz, "Bergpredigt und Sinaitradition," 338–40; Deines, *Die Gerechtigkeit*, 148–54, 424–8, 434–46; Nolland, *Matthew*, 203. For an overview of moral terms in early Christian literature, the best resource remains Ernst von Dobschütz, *Christian Life in the Primitive Church*, ed. William Douglas Morrison, trans. George Bremmer, Theological Translation Library 18 (London: Williams & Norgate, 1904), 399–409.

responsibilities to others. Since, as I showed in ch. 4, representing that half is in this period a standard way of representing the full range of one's interpersonal obligations, 5:21-48 is a synecdoche; it uses illustrative examples of righteousness toward others to represent the phenomenon *in toto*.

The first two antitheses (5:21-26, 27-30) cite the Decalogue's prohibitions on murder and adultery (Exod 20:13-14 MT; Deut 5:17-18 MT) and forbid not only these acts but their interior antecedents: "becoming angry" (ὀργιζόμενος) and "gazing in order to covet" (βλέπων … πρὸς τὸ ἐπιθυμῆσαι, 5:28), or "committing adultery in the heart" (ἐμοίχευσεν αὐτὴν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ, 5:28), respectively.[22] The designation of adultery's antecedent as "coveting" (πρὸς τὸ ἐπιθυμῆσαι) adds another Decalogal reference, this one to the tenth commandment (οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις τὴν γυναῖκα τοῦ πλησίον σου, Exod 20:17; Deut 5:21), and underscores with respect to murder and adultery the claim that the tenth commandment and ancient interpretations of it make with respect to wrong actions generally: they result from wrong dispositions.[23] By forbidding interior precursors to wrongs, these antitheses

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[22] For anger as the precursor to or equivalent of murder, see Gen 4:5-7; Prov 6:34; Sir 22:24; 1 John 3:15; *Test. Lev.* 4:6; *Der. Er. Rab.* 10; cf. Ps 4:4; Eph 4:26; Col 3:8; Jas 1:19-20; *T. Benj.* 8:2. For desire as the precursor of or equivalent to adultery, see 1QpHab V, 7; *Apoc. Mos.* 19:3; *T. Iss.* 7:2; *Lev. Rab.* 23:12. On the prohibition of internal antecedents to offenses in ancient Judaism, see further Bernard S. Jackson, "Liability for Mere Intention in Early Jewish Law," *HUCA* 42 (1971): 197–225; Levinson, "From Narrative Practice to Cultural Poetics: Literary Anthropology and the Rabbinic Sense of Self"; Alex P. Jassen, *Scripture and Law in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 131–171. For the interpretive convention that accounts for the addition of 5:21c ("whoever murders will be liable to the court") to the Decalogue's prohibition of murder, see Serge Ruzer, "The Technique of Composite Citation in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:21-22, 33-37)," *RB* 103 (1996): 66–7.

[23] On the tenth commandment, see Miller, "The Place of the Decalogue in the Old Testament and Its Law," 242: "Already in the commandment against coveting, the connection between internal

stress, as I have shown the First Gospel does elsewhere, that merely performing seemingly right actions, or, in this case, avoiding wrong ones is morally insufficient. One must also acquire the inner conditions, here the absence of anger and appetite for someone else's spouse, that proper actions like refraining from murder and adultery should represent, even if that acquisition entails excising part of oneself (5:29-30).[24] Otherwise such actions are duplicitious, hypocritical.

The third antithesis (5:31-2) alludes to the Pentateuch's only statement on divorce,[25] Deut 24:1-4, which forbids a man to remarry his ex-wife if she has had a subsequent husband because sanctioning such a reunion would be tantamount to sanctioning adultery (cf. Jer 3:1).[26] Deuteronomy claims in effect that laws regulating divorce and remarriage, which

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feelings and external acts, between private attitudes and public deeds, is explicitly recognized. The point is clear." He describes the Matthean Jesus' focus on dispositions as a logical outgrowth of the end of the Decalogue. For ancient interpretations of this commandment, where the point is even clearer, see Philo, *Decal.* 173; see also *QG* 1.47; *Decal.* 142, 151–53, *Spec.* 4.79-95; *Virt.* 100; Wolfson, *Philo: Foundations of Religious Philosophy in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*, 2:229–31; Marcus, "The Evil Inclination," 613–15; Wilson, "Sin as Sex and Sex with Sin," 151–2. Cf. Matt 15:19; Jas 1:15; 4:1-2; 4; Gal 5:17-24; Berger, *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu*, 346–9.

[24] Daniel Patte, *The Gospel According to Matthew: A Structural Commentary on Matthew's Faith* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 78: "In other words, overabundant righteousness is not limited to the realm of overt actions but also applies to the realm of feelings, inner dispositions, evil inclinations (evil *yetzer*)." For a different reading of the relationship between interiority and action in the first two antitheses, one that aligns Matthew with the Stoics, see Roberts, "Anger, Emotion, and Desire," 98–122.

[25] On 5:31 as an allusion, not a quotation, see Stendahl, *School of St. Matthew*, 137–8.

[26] For this interpretation of Deut 24:1-4, see Philo, *Spec.* 3.30-1; *Tg. Neof.* Deut 24:4; Samuel R. Driver, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy*, International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (New York: Scribner's, 1895), 271; Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1976), 305; Carolyn Pressler, *The View of Women Found in the Deuteronomic Family Laws*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche

generally allow a married person to switch sexual partners without committing the offense known as adultery, do not always shield one from that offense. Particular remarriages constitute adultery and are therefore forbidden. Jesus then prohibits divorce, except in cases of sexual immorality (πορνεία),[27] because divorce results in remarriage, which he claims always equates to adultery. He maintains that laws regulating divorce and remarriage never shield one from committing that offense. All remarriages constitute adultery and are

Wissenschaft 216 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1993), 60–1. Philo is ambivalent about the passage; on the one hand he maintains that a divorced woman may legally remarry, arguing that the woman in question in Deut 24:1-4 is free, after the death of her second husband, to "be united to any man in the world" other than her first husband, while on the other hand he portrays remarriage as adultery, arguing that in marrying a second time the woman "violated and forgot her former ties and chose new allurements in the place of the old ones" (*Spec.* 3:30 trans. Yonge, modified).

[27] The best explanation for this exception clause may be that Matthew, like many ancient people, believes that "sexual immorality" in the form of a spouse or betrothed having consensual or forced intercourse with someone other than her spouse or betrothed (i.e., adultery construed broadly and without regard to consent) necessitates divorce. Markus Bockmuehl has recently and influentially articulated this explanation (*Jewish Law in Gentile Churches: Halakhah and the Beginning of Christian Public Ethics* [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000], 17–22), but it predates him (e.g., Stendahl, "Matthew," 777). For evidence of this view in ancient Judaism, which arguably includes Matt 1:18-19, see Bockmuehl, *Jewish Law in Gentile Churches*, 17–22; Aharon Shemesh, "4Q271.3: A Key to Sectarian Matrimonial Law," *JJS* 49 (1998): 244–63; David Rothstein, "Sexual Union and Sexual Offences in Jubilees," *JSJ* 35 (2004): 363–84; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 255; William R. G. Loader, *The New Testament on Sexuality* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2012), 6–9; William R. G. Loader, "Did Adultery Mandate Divorce? A Reassessment of Jesus' Divorce Logia," *NTS* 61 (2015): 67–78. Broader evidence includes the *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis*, instituted by Augustus in 17 B.C.E., which required husbands to divorce adulterous wives because adultery was "sacrilege and treason" (Tacitus, *Ann.* 3.24). Husbands who refused could face charges of "pandering" (*lenocinium*; cf. Philo's interpretation of Deut 24:1-4 in *Spec.* 3:31). On this law, see Amy Richlin, "Approaches to the Sources on Adultery at Rome," *Women's Studies* 8 (1981): 225–50; Susan Treggiari, *Roman Marriage: Iusti Coniuges from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 60–80, 277–98; Thomas A. J. McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 140–215. For a survey of other interpretations of this exception clause, see Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 204–11; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:529–31; Dale C. Allison, "Divorce, Celibacy, and Joseph (Matt 1:18-25)," in *Studies in Matthew: Interpretation Past and Present* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2005), 163–72.

therefore forbidden. The third antithesis, then, though it begins by mentioning divorce, continues the second's reflection on the Decalogue's commandment against adultery by addressing a common(ly accepted) example of that offense.[28] The SM in fact emphasizes the continuity by providing the third antithesis with a comparatively brief introduction.[29] Together the two antitheses insist that one must not only avoid the act of adultery as it is commonly understood; one must also avoid coveting another's spouse, even if a venerable legal fiction has declared that person one's own spouse and because the avoidance of adultery must correspond to the appropriate inner condition, from a non-covetous, humble disposition towards others.

The two teachings Jesus cites in the fourth antithesis (5:33-7)—"[1] You shall not break an oath (or swear an oath you do not intend to keep [hence the common translation "swear falsely"], οὐκ ἐπιορκήσεις),[30] but [2] shall keep (lit. "pay back") your oaths to the Lord" (ἀποδώσεις δὲ τῷ κυρίῳ τοὺς ὅρκους σου, v. 33)—quote no specific portion of scripture verbatim and therefore to what, if any, biblical passage each principally alludes remains debated. Some scholars maintain that the first teaching, the prohibition against oath-

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[28] Stendahl, "Matthew," 776–7; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:527; Reginald H. Fuller, "The Decalogue in the New Testament," *Interpretation* 43 (1989): 247; Nolland, *Matthew*, 242–3; Loader, *The New Testament on Sexuality*, 241.

[29] Gundry, *Matthew*, 89; Nolland, *Matthew*, 242–3.

[30] Stendahl, "Matthew," 777: "Gr. *epikorkeō* means both 'commit perjury' and 'break an oath.'" See also J. Schneider, "ἐπιορκέω," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 5, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964), 466–67; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 264; Kurt Niederwimmer, *The Didache: A Commentary*, trans. Linda M. Maloney, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 90.

breaking and/or perjury alludes to the Decalogue's third commandment, the commandment against using the divine name irreverently or pointlessly (οὐ λήμψῃ τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ σου ἐπὶ ματαίῳ, Exod 20:7; Deut 5:11), as one would do in failing to keep an oath sworn in God's name or in swearing deceitfully.[31] Others argue that it alludes rather to the Decalogue's ninth commandment, the prohibition of false testimony (οὐ ψευδομαρτυρήσεις κατὰ τοῦ πλησίον σου μαρτυρίαν ψευδῆ, Exod 20:16; Deut 5:20), since Jesus goes on to mandate honest speech (v. 37).[32] Still others consider it an allusion to Lev 19:12, "You shall not swear by my name unjustly and you shall not profane the name of your God" (οὐκ ὀμεῖσθε τῷ ὀνόματί μου ἐπ' ἀδίκῳ καὶ οὐ βεβηλώσετε τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ ὑμῶν)," a call for avoiding improper use of the divine name by avoiding improper oaths.[33] Since identifying each antithesis' referent(s) is important for understanding how 5:21-48 functions as a whole, I will examine these proposals and comment on this antithesis at greater length than the preceding ones.

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[31] Calvin, *Commentaries, ad loc*; Lapide, *The Great Commentary*, 1:229–30; Maldonado, *A Commentary on the Holy Gospels*, 1:171; Meyer, *Handbook to the Gospel of Matthew*, 133; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 265; Desrosiers, "Proper Mental Disposition and Practice," 75–6.

[32] John Chrysostom *Hom. Matt.* 17 (PG 57.260.31-20); Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels*, 2:68; Stendahl, "Matthew," 777; Goulder, *Midrash and Lection in Matthew*, 271; Fuller, "The Decalogue in the New Testament," 247.

[33] Hermann L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*, 6 vols. (Munich: Beck, 1924), 1:325; Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 212; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:533–4; Gundry, *Matthew*, 91; Garland, *Reading Matthew*, 62–3; Foster, *Community, Law, and Mission in Matthew's Gospel*, 116; Allison, "The Configuration of the Sermon on the Mount and Its Meaning," 184; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 215; Charles H. Talbert, *Matthew* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2010), 84. Cf. Zech 5:4; Isa 48:1.

On one hand, distinguishing among these three referents is misleading because in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, these three passages were often read as mutually implicating. Philo, for example, construes the Decalogue's third and ninth commandments as examples of each other. In his Exposition of the Law, he maintains that the commandment concerning God's name addresses oaths and false testimony: "For an oath (ὅρκος) is the calling of God to give his testimony (μαρτυρία) concerning the matters which are in doubt; and it is a most impious thing to invoke God to be witness to a lie" (*Decal.* 86; see also *Spec.* 2.2, 10).[34] Swearing an oath, in other words, hazards asking God to break the Decalogue's penultimate commandment, "saying to God, if not with your mouth and tongue, still at all events with your conscience: Bear false witness for me" (τὰ ψευδῆ μοι μαρτύρει, *Decal.* 91, Yonge; see also *Spec.* 2.11-12; cf. Exod 20:16 // Deut 5:20: οὐ ψευδομαρτυρήσεις κατὰ τοῦ πλησίον σου μαρτυρίαν ψευδῆ). Keeping the third commandment entails keeping the ninth. He likewise maintains that the commandment that condemns false testimony forbids such forms of deceptive speech as oath-breaking (*Decal*. 141) and "irreverent" or "foolish" (μάταιος) discourse (*Spec.* 4.59-60; see also *QE* 2.9), the sort of discourse the third commandment prohibits when it concerns God's name (Exod 20:7; Deut 5:11: οὐ λήμψῃ τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ σου ἐπὶ ματαίῳ). Keeping the ninth commandment involves keeping the third. Philo also construes Lev 19:12 as a restatement of the Decalogue's ninth commandment. In an effort to explain why the Decalogue follows the prohibition of theft with the prohibition

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[34] For this definition of an oath, see also *Spec.* 3.205; *Sacr.* 91; *Plant.* 82; *Rhet. Alex.* 1432a33-4; Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1377a7-b11; Cicero, *Off.* 3.104; Quintilian, *Inst.* 5.1.2; 5.6.1-6; 5.10.87; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 261–2. Cf. the oaths in Gen 31:50; 1 Sam 20:12; Jer 42:5.

of false witness, he quotes and then interprets Lev 19:11-12, arguing that this series of laws describes a crime and its concealment: theft (11a) leads to lying in order to hide one's guilt (11b) and then to accusing another of the crime (11c), to supporting that accusation with the only evidence a liar can offer—an oath (12a)—, and thereby to defiling the divine name (12b; *Spec.* 4.39-40). The Decalogue's eighth and ninth commandments, he implies, epitomize the same narrative, the eighth commandment representing Lev 19:11a and the ninth Lev 19:11b-12. And Philo is just one of many ancient interpreters who portray Lev 19 as the Decalogue's equivalent. Pseudo-Phocylides, for example, begins his poem with a summary of the Ten Commandments (3-8), followed by a longer section based primarily on Lev 19 (8-41), implying by this compositional plan that Lev 19 is the obvious counterpart to or restatement of the Decalogue.[35] Thus, in the SM's day, a reference to any one of these texts may call the others to mind too. Allusions in this instance are not unireferential.[36]

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[35] Jacob Bernays, "Über das phokylideische Gedicht: Ein Beitrag zur hellenistischen Literatur," in *Gesammelte Abhandlungen*, ed. Hermann Usener, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Berlin: Hertz, 1885), 228: Lev 19 "in neuen wie in alten Zeiten mit Recht für das Gegenstück des Dekalogs angesehen wird"; P. W. van der Horst, *The Sentences of Pseudo-Phocylides*, Studia in Veteris Testamenti pseudepigrapha 4 (Leiden: Brill, 1978), 66. Other examples include Matt 19:18-19; Rom 13:9; Gal 5:14; Jas 2:1-11; *Test. Ash.* 10.2; *Lev. Rab.* 24. For further discussion, see Strack and Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*, 1:353–68; Berger, *Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu*, 1:80–2; Luke Timothy Johnson, "The Use of Leviticus 19 in the Letter of James," *JBL* 101 (1982): 391–401; Kugel, *Traditions of the Bible*, 768–70; Allison, *Resurrecting Jesus*, 156–60; Gregory E. Sterling, "Was There a Common Ethic in Second Temple Judaism?," in *Sapiential Perspectives: Wisdom Literature in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Proceedings of the Sixth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature, 20-22 May, 2001*, ed. John J. Collins, Gregory E. Sterling, and Ruth A. Clements, Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 51 (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 186; Gregory E. Sterling, "The Place of Philo of Alexandria in the Study of Christian Origins," in *Philo und das Neue Testament, Wechselseitige Wahrnehmungen. I. Internationales Symposium zum Corpus Judaeo-Hellenisticum, 1.-4. Mai 2003, Eisenach/Jena*, ed. Roland Deines and Karl-Wilhelm Niebuhr (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 38–9. On the extensive parallels between Lev 19 and the Ten Commandments, see

On the other hand, Matt 5:33 alludes primarily to the Decalogue's commandment against false testimony, even if that commandment is intertwined with others. Since the previous antitheses reference commandments from the second table of the Decalogue, this one likely does too.[37] Furthermore, the closest verbal parallel to Matt 5:33a (οὐκ ἐπιορκήσεις), Ps.-Phoc. 16 (μὴ ἐπιορκήσεις), restates the penultimate of the Ten Commandments,[38] which suggests the SM may as well. The line forms part of a ring composition (Ps.-Phoc. 9-21), in which it corresponds to v. 12, "shun false testimony; make just decisions" (μαρτυρίην ψευδῆ φεύγειν· τὰ δίκαια βραβεύειν), a line extends the Decalogue's commandment against giving false testimony to include receiving it as well.[39] Together the two verses insist that one should neither accept (12) nor give (16) perjured

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further Baruch A. Levine, *Leviticus*, JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 204–5; Jacob Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22*, Anchor Bible (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 1600–02; Dale C. Allison, *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination, and History* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2010), 352–3. Modern scholarship often portrays Lev 19 as a secondary reformulation of the Decalogue; see, e.g., Sigmund Mowinckel, "Zur Geschichte der Decaloge," *ZAW* 55 (1937): 218–35; Milgrom, *Leviticus 17-22*, 1600.

[36] On this phenomenon in ancient Jewish literature generally, see Kugel, "Some Instances of Biblical Interpretation in the Hymns and Wisdom Writings of Qumran," esp. 169.

[37] Stendahl, "Matthew," 777; Fuller, "The Decalogue in the New Testament," 247: "Antithesis 4, the prohibition of oaths, is usually taken as an application of commandment 3, against taking the divine name in vain. Yet it may be an application of commandment 9, the prohibition of false witness, for both commandment 9 and antithesis 4 enjoin absolute truth. This view has the attraction of preserving the canonical order of the Decalogue (6, 7, 9) and confining the antitheses to the second table."

[38] Cf. Johnson, "The Use of Leviticus 19," 125, who claims that it alludes to Lev 19:12.

[39] I follow the translation in Wilson, *Mysteries*, 78; *Sentences*, 88. Philo makes the same extension in *Spec.* 4.59-61 and, like Pseudo-Phocylides, does so in the context of describing the ideal judge.

testimony.[40] Verse 16 also corresponds then to v. 7, the portion of the poem's heading that restates the ninth commandment.[41]

Matthew 5:33a also alludes, however, to the eighth commandment, which prohibits theft. The close parallel in Ps.-Phoc. 16 (μὴ ἐπιορκήσεις) belongs to a literary unit on justice (δικαιοσύνη) in commerce and law[42] and the term by which Pseudo Phocylides and Matthew (5:33a) refer to dishonest speech, ἐπιορκέω (to commit perjury or violate an oath), appears as well in Philo's discussion of false testimony in fiscal matters (*Spec.* 1.235.7, discussing Lev 6:1) and in *Test. Ash.* 2.5-6, where it populates a vice list along with stealing (κλέπτει), treating unjustly (ἀδικεῖ), plundering (ἁρπάζει), and defrauding (or coveting, πλεονεκτεῖ). Additionally, Philo, as we have seen, believes that the Decalogue and Lev 19:11-12 portray oath-taking as a form of false testimony used to conceal theft (*Spec.* 4.39-40).[43] In these roughly contemporaneous Jewish writings, avoiding perjury (ἐπιορκέω), the

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[40] On the structure of Ps.-Phoc. 9-12, see Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 81–82 and cf. his interpretation of its significance for v. 16: "Both verses 12 and 16 (D and D') advise against dishonest speech, with the injunction against perjury (whether it be done unknowingly or deliberately) in verse 16 perhaps entailing an intensification of the charge to flee false witness and choose just things in verse 12." In his later commentary on the poem, Wilson shifts his viewpoint, saying nothing about the ring composition in this section and identifying v. 16 with the commandment concerning God's name (*Sentences*, 93). Cf. Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 265: "Hellenistic Judaism firmly connected the prohibition of perjury with the third commandment of the Decalogue."

[41] Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 71–2; Wilson, *Sentences*, 76–7.

[42] Pascale Derron, *Pseudo-Phocylide*, xxvi; Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 81–2; Wilson, *Sentences*, 91.

[43] For the idea that oaths cover up larceny, see also Ps 30:9; Origen, *Or.* 29.5.8; *Sipra Qidd.* 2:5; *t. B. Qam* 10:15.

varieties of which include deceptive and unkept oaths, is part of treating others justly in financial and legal dealings, part of avoiding theft. Therefore, the SM's reference to avoiding perjury likely has economic connotations and, in light of the citations of the Decalogue in the preceding three antitheses, alludes to the Decalogue's ban on stealing.[44] The fourth antithesis then, by ostensibly addressing oath-taking, addresses the interrelated issues of deceptive speech and economic injustice; it references principally the ninth and eighth of the Ten Commandments. The first four antitheses thus quote or allude to the sixth through ninth of the Ten Commandments, offering Jesus' teaching on murder, adultery, theft, and false testimony.

The second teaching cited in the fourth antithesis (5:33b) supplements the first by citing any or all of the Bible's exhortations to fulfill one's vows (e.g., Num 30:1–15; Pss 21:26; 49:14; 55:13; 60:9; 64:2; 65:13; 115:9; Prov 7:14; Eccl 5:3, 5; Isa 19:21; Jonah 2:10; Nah 2:1; Zech 8:17). Psalm 49:14 provides the closest verbal parallel and so perhaps the primary allusion (ἀπόδος τῷ ὑψίστῳ τὰς εὐχάς σου; cf. Matt 5:33b: ἀποδώσεις δὲ τῷ κυρίῳ τοὺς ὅρκους σου), though every passage cited above except Num 30:1–15 and Zech 8:17 also uses the language of "repaying" (ἀποδοῦναι) one's vows to God.[45] This second teaching declares

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[44] John Chrysostom also takes the fourth antithesis to refer to both the eighth and ninth commandments (*Hom. Matt.* 17).

[45] Cf. the use of שׁלם ("make complete;" "make restitution") for the fulfilling of vows in the MT (Deut 23:22; Pss 50:14; 61:8; 65:2; 66:13; 76:11; 116:14, 18; Prov 7:14; Eccl 5:5; Isa 19:21; Jon 2:9; Nah 2:1); 4QPs^f X, 9; 11QT^a LIII, 11. The language of recompense will appear again in the sixth antithesis (5:46) and will dominate the second section of the Sermon's body (ἀποδίδωμι: 6:4, 6, 18). When Matthew speaks of recompense, he typically speaks of God repaying humans (see the overview in Nathan Eubank, *Wages of Cross-Bearing and Debt of Sin: The Economy of Heaven in Matthew's*

how one is to avoid oath breaking and/or perjury: by keeping one's vows so that one will never have given false testimony.

Jesus mandates a different way of avoiding false testimony: by forswearing oaths (5:34a; cf. Deut 23:23) in favor of invariably guileless speech. One must avoid, he insists, even those oaths that, in an attempt to avoid using God's name improperly, substitute for it "heaven," "earth," "Jerusalem," or "my head" (5:34b-36), not only because such circumlocutions fail to eliminate the risk of having implored God to vouch for a falsehood—since God enjoys universal authority, heaven being his throne, earth his footstool, Jerusalem his city, and one's head his sphere of influence, all oaths ultimately invoke God as witness[46]—but also because the form of the oath is inconsequential.[47] Jesus rejects the very presupposition on which all oath-taking rests, the presupposition that one sometimes lies and therefore only one's sworn speech is consistently trustworthy, when he demands that one's "yes" indeed mean "yes" and one's "no," no and attributes any requirement of additional

Gospel, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche 196 [Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013], 68–9), but for another reference to humans' obligations to repay God, see 12:36.

[46] Maldonado, *A Commentary on the Holy Gospels*, 1:174; Tholuck, *Commentary*, 262–3; Meyer, *Handbook to the Gospel of Matthew*, 135; Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels*, 2:68; Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 215; Gundry, *Matthew*, 93; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 215; Desrosiers, "Proper Mental Disposition and Practice," 191–2. For the practice of using safer substitute oaths, see Philo, *Spec.* 2.4-5. For the argument that Matthew's Jesus does not actually forbid oaths *tout court*, see Tholuck, *Commentary*, 252–55; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:535–6.

[47] Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 268.

assurance of honesty to "the evil one" (ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ, 5:37; cf. Sir. 23:11).[48] According to

this antithesis, the way to avoid false testimony and any concomitant theft is not by swearing

sincerely and honoring one's oaths; it is by rejecting deceit altogether, by speaking artlessly.

In as much as deceit is a matter of intent, the SM here requires that a particular motive direct

one's tongue. One must intend to treat others justly by speaking honestly. True speech

should not result from an oath; it should result from an innocent interiority.[49]

The fifth antithesis (5:38-42) cites the Pentateuch's mandate that one who has

wronged another shall be forced by the legal authorities to make equivalent recompense,

giving "an eye for an eye [taken] and a tooth for a tooth [destroyed]" (v. 38; cf. Exod 21:24;

Lev 24:20; Deut 19:21)[50] and mandates instead that Jesus' hearers not seek such proportional

justice, not "resist an evildoer" (μὴ ἀντιστῆναι τῷ πονηρῷ).[51] By "resist," Matthew means

primarily "oppose in court," since v. 40 refers to a legal battle (see also 5:25), the Pentateuchal

passages cited in v. 38 prescribe legal procedures—Deut 19:18 even uses the same verb

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[48] Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus*, 181; Paul S. Minear, "Yes or No: The Demand for Honesty in the Early Church," *NovT* 13 (1971): 4; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:533; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 264.

[49] Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 274.

[50] Philo too discusses the *lex talionis* by mentioning the portions that refer to eyes and teeth, though the Pentateuch mentions also "life for life," and "foot for foot" (*Spec.* 3.181-204; see also *B. Qam.* 83b) These two elements of the longer formula seen to have become by Matthew's day a kind of shorthand for the principle (Nolland, *Matthew*, 255).

[51] As the following verses (39b-42) describe evildoers and not evil in abstract sense, τῷ πονηρῷ is best read as a masculine phrase (evildoer) and not a neuter one (evil) (Grotius, *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum*, 1:179; Meyer, *Handbook to the Gospel of Matthew*, 137; Allen, *Matthew*, 54; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 281).

(ἀνθίστημι)—, and Matthew has made this antithesis repeatedly allude to Isa 50:4-9, where

that verb means "to testify against in a legal proceeding."[52] He may also mean "oppose

physically," since v. 39b describes a physical altercation and the term "resist" frequently has

this meaning in the LXX and other Greek literature (e.g., Lev 26:37; Deut 9:2; Josh 7:13;

Wis 11:3; 1 Macc 6:4; Sir 46:6-7; Josephus, *B.J.* 2.357, *inter alia*),[53] though in reference to

national, not personal interactions.[54] In forbidding such legal and perhaps physical

confrontations, he surely means to forbid as well violent and vengeful impulses towards

them, since the first antithesis prohibits anger.[55] As Davies and Allison explain, Jesus calls "for

an unselfish temperament, for naked humility and a will to suffer the loss of one's personal

rights…. Personal vengeance, pride, and anger (cf. 5:21-6) must be cut out of the heart."[56]

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[52] On the allusions to Isa 50:4-9, which Matthew found in Q and augmented, see Schweizer, *Matthew*, 129; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:544; Gundry, *Matthew*, 94–5; Allison, "Foreshadowing the Passion," 219–220. On this meaning of ἀνθίστημι, see further Allen, *Matthew*, 54; Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus*, 186–7; Stuart D. Currie, "Matthew 5:39a––Resistance or Protest?," *HTR* 57 (1964): 140–45; Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 219–20; Gundry, *Matthew*, 94; Richard A. Horsley, "Ethics and Exegesis: 'Love Your Enemies' and the Doctrine of Non-Violence," *JAAR* 54 (1986): 14; cf. Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 275.

[53] On this meaning of ἀνθίστημι, see Walter Wink, "Beyond Just War and Pacifism: Jesus' Nonviolent Way," *RevExp* 89 (1992): 192: "The term is used in the LXX primarily for armed resistance in military encounters (44 out of 71 times). Josephus uses *anthistemi* for violent struggle 15 out of 17 times, Philo 4 out of 10"; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 151–2.

[54] According to Lidija Novakovic, "[N]one of the examples of the use of ἀνθίστημι in the existing literature point to a situation of personal retaliation" ("Turning the Other Cheek to a Perpetrator: Denunciation or Upholding of Justice?" [presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature, Washington, D.C., 2006], 8n22).

[55] Cf. *Let. Aris.* 167-8.

[56] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:541; see also 1:546; Jerome, *Comm. Matt* 1.663; Calvin, *Commentaries*, *ad loc*; Lapide, *The Great Commentary*, 1:234–5; Meyer, *Handbook to the Gospel of Matthew*, 136; Montefiore, *The Synoptic Gospels*, 2:71; cf. Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 284.

The Matthean Jesus forbids not only legal redress and commensurate violence but their interior predicates.

The sixth antithesis (5:43-8) cites Lev 19:18's command to "love your neighbor" (ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου)[57] and adds to it "and hate your enemy" (καὶ μισήσεις τὸν ἐχθρόν σου),[58] thereby establishing a contrast between an ethic that demands that one love only one's fellow group members, as Lev 19:18 does by placing "neighbor" parallel to "the children of your people" (τοῖς υἱοῖς τοῦ λαοῦ σου),[59] and an ethic that demands one also love those outside one's group, even the group's enemies and oppressors, as Jesus goes on to do (v. 44-7; cf. 10:36; 13:25-8).[60] Such unpartisan love, he argues, surpasses ordinary human love (vv. 46-7) and imitates God's love (v. 45).[61] Such a disposition therefore characterizes moral

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[57] Unlike Matt 19:19 and 22:39, 5:43 omits "as yourself" (ὡς σεαυτόν) from its quotation of Lev 19:18, likely in order to enhance the parallelism between "love your neighbor" and "hate your enemy" (Victor Paul Furnish, *The Love Command in the New Testament* [Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972], 50–1; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:549; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 284; cf. Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 202–03).

[58] On the two-source hypothesis, Matthew crafts his addition out of vocabulary ("hate," "enemy") found in Q 6:22, 27 (Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:550; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 284). Though not in Lev 19, exhortations to hate one's enemy do appear elsewhere in the Bible (e.g., Deut 20:1-18; Ps 139:21-22; see also 1QS I, 10-11; Josephus, *B.J.* 2.139), as do exhortations to do good to one's enemy (Exod 23:4-5; Prov 25:21-2; cf. 1 Sam 24:19).

[59] See further Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 301–9; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 154; cf. CD VI, 20-VII, 1.

[60] So many interpreters, including Augustine, *Serm.* 1.21.69; Tholuck, *Exposition*, 2:73–4; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:550–1; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 154; Foster, *Community, Law, and Mission in Matthew's Gospel*, 129–31; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 304.

[61] Lev 19:18, following its exhortation to love one's neighbor, reads, "I am the Lord." "This statement, although not cited in the SM, may be responsible for the centrality of the concept of the imitation of God in SM/Matt 5:43-48 and, indeed, the SM as a whole" (Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 302).

perfection (vv. 48). Jesus enjoins his audience not only to forego anger, lawsuits, and violence—to abandon hate—but to develop the divine's disposition—and love and hate, though they may become more, are originally dispositions—towards all people.[62]

Given that the first four antitheses cite the Decalogue, it is plausible that the sixth intends Lev 19:18 as the equivalent of the tenth commandment. Matthew elsewhere identifies the two. In 19:17-19, Jesus quotes the fourth through ninth commandments and concludes not with the tenth commandment as found in Exod 20 or Deut 5 but with Lev 19:18, as if were the positive form of the prohibition against coveting.[63] That Matt 19:19's quotation of Lev 19:18 is redactional strengthens the case that Matthew sees Leviticus' positive command as the appropriate conclusion to the Decalogue. If the SM is Matthew's source, it inspired his substitution in ch. 19. If it is his creation, the parallel in ch. 19 illuminates his intent. The identification appears as well in at least one other ancient source: *Lev. Rab.* 24:5, where r. Levi, explaining how each of the Ten Commandments appears in Lev 19, equates "do not covet" and "love your neighbor."[64]

Even if Lev 19:18 does not restate the conclusion of the Decalogue in this instance, the antitheses clearly represent and interpret the latter five of the Ten Commandments. The following table summarizes the discussion of allusions above:

Table 5: The Principal Allusions of the Antitheses

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[62] Allen, *Matthew*, 55–6; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:565.

[63] Goulder, *Midrash and Lection in Matthew*, 271–2.

[64] Cf. Augustine, *Ver. Rel.*, 89.

Matthean Text	Principal Biblical Texts Addressed
5:21–6	Exod 20:13 // Deut 5:17
5:27–30	Exod 20:14 // Deut 5:18
5:31–2	Exod 20:14 // Deut 5:18
5:33–7	Exod 20:16 // Deut 5:20
	Exod 20:15 // Deut 5:19
5:38–42	Exod 21:24; Lev 24:20; Deut 19:21
5:43–8	Lev 19:18; (Exod 20:17 // Deut 5:21)

As it shows, certainly four (1, 2, 3, 4) and perhaps five (1, 2, 3, 4, 6) of the six antitheses

address the Decalogue. The other(s) allude(s) to Lev 19 (6), the Decalogue's counterpart, or,

in the case of the fifth antithesis, to Exodus 21, part of the law code (Exod 20:19-23:23) that

immediately follows the Decalogue; to Lev 24, part of the same unit of moral exhortation

(Lev 17-26) as Lev 19; and to Deut 19, which lies near Deut 22, the portion of moral

teaching, apart from the Decalogue and Lev 19, most often cited in the Second Temple

period.[65] Matt 5:21-48 thus represents the half of the Decalogue devoted to one

responsibilities to other people, combining a summarial portion of its commandments with

other similar, adjacent, and/or conspicuous moral teaching from the Pentateuch.[66] Such

handling of the Decalogue's second table is, as I showed in ch. 4, a conventional means of

summarizing the entire law or at least its commandments regarding treating others

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[65] On the relative popularity of portions of scripture in the Second Temple period, see Sterling, "Was There a Common Ethic in Second Temple Judaism?," 186, 193; Sterling, "The Place of Philo of Alexandria in the Study of Christian Origins," 36–9.

[66] Betz arrives at a similar conclusion: all these offenses can be "understood to be, either explicitly or implicitly, contained in the Decalogue" (*The Sermon on the Mount*, 201). Cf. Francois Vouga's claim that the first three antitheses refer to the Decalogue, the latter three to Lev 19 (*Jésus et la Loi selon la Tradition synoptique* [Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1988], 196–99).

ethically.[67] Leviticus 19:18 is, moreover, a fitting conclusion to such a summary because it can by itself summarize the second half of the Decalogue;[68] the antitheses' summary of the Decalogue concludes with an even more concise summary of the Decalogue. As a representation of one's moral responsibilities to others, the six antitheses then are synechdoches of righteousness in personal relationships.[69] They do not name everything such righteousness requires but rather present six illustrative cases and argue repeatedly that merely refraining from offensive deeds does not constitute the righteousness necessary for entrance into the kingdom of heaven (5:20). One must combine right actions with right emotions, appetites, motives, and dispositions, with what Matt 5:8 calls "purity of heart." From these cases and the logic expressed thereby, the reader may extrapolate to gain a panoramic understanding of righteousness in human relationships.

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[67] Cf. Carrington, who sees two offenses from the Decalogue and four from the Holiness Code and concludes, "This is fully in accordance with rabbinic custom" (*The Primitive Christian Catechism: A Study in the Epistles* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940], 94); see also Stendahl, *School of St. Matthew*, 136–8.

[68] See Matt 22:37-40; Rom 13:8-10; Gal 5:14; Dale C. Allison, "Mark 12:28-31 and the Decalogue," in *The Gospels and the Scriptures of Israel*, ed. Craig A. Evans and William R. Stegner, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 104 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994); Huub van de Sandt and David Flusser, *The Didache: Its Jewish Sources and Its Place in Early Judaism and Christianity*, Compendia rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum 3.5 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 162–5.

[69] Betz too maintains that the antitheses address interpersonal righteousness: "[A]ll instances in the antitheses discuss *broken* relationships. The first antithesis (5:21-26) concerns the broken relationships between 'brothers,' the second (5:27-30) and third (5:31-32), women. The second group focuses on broken friendship relations: perjury (5:33-7), retaliation (5:38-42), and the enemy (5:43-48).… all antitheses of the SM are exemplifications of the love-command in Lev 19:18" (*The Sermon on the Mount*, 205). Despite portraying the antitheses as a rendition of the Decalogue, Betz later claims that "the six antitheses represent a closed list, not open to variation or expansion" (ibid., 201, 203). He offers, however, no evidence to support this claim. For another view of the antitheses as exemplary, see Deines, *Die Gerechtigkeit*, 429–34.

6:1-18

The second part of the Sermon's body (6:1-18) focuses not on Judaism's central moral text, like the first part, but on three of its and nascent Christianity's central religious practices—almsgiving, prayer, and fasting[70]—in order to illustrate righteousness towards God. It parallels the first part in structure. Both 5:17-48 and 6:1-18 feature a general heading that identifies righteousness that will enable one to pass the final judgment as the section's theme, followed by triads of specific examples of such righteousness, each introduced by repeated formulae ("it was said" in ch. 5; "whenever you" in ch. 6) and presented antithetically.[71] "The only significant structural difference between 5:17-48 and 6:1-18 is that whereas the former has six (= 3 x 2) examples, the latter has only three."[72] These parallels in structure imply that the second section is intended to parallel the first in content too, each employing synecdoches to present a different facet of superior righteousness (5:20).[73] Just as the first section presents Jesus' understanding of interpersonal righteousness, the second presents his vision of righteousness in religious practice.

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[70] On these practices, see Tob 12:8-10; Sir 34:31-35:5; *m. Taʻan* 1.3-2.2; *b. Ber.* 6b.; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 337–8; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 299; Gary A. Anderson, *Charity: The Place of the Poor in the Biblical Tradition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), 136–48; cf. Acts 10:2, 4, 31.

[71] Erich Klostermann, "Zum Verständnis von Mt 6.2," *ZNW* 47 (1956): 280–1; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:578; Allison, "The Configuration of the Sermon on the Mount and Its Meaning," 185.

[72] Allison, "The Configuration of the Sermon on the Mount and Its Meaning," 185.

[73] Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 300–02; Walter T. Wilson, "Seen in Secret: Inconspicuous Piety and Alternative Subjectivity in Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18," *CBQ* 72 (2010): 476.

Verse 1 provides the thematic heading for this section: "Be on guard (προσέχετε) not to do your righteousness in front of people in order to be seen by them; for then you have no reward with your Father in heaven." By beginning the section with this general principle and connecting it with the subsequent instructions using an illative particle ("therefore," οὖν, 6:2), the SM casts Jesus' teachings on fasting, prayer, and almsgiving as among the specific inferences that follow from a generic rule.[74] In Wilson's words, 6:1 "serves to broaden the scope of the section's relevance. The admonitions that follow are to be taken as illustrative cases of a basic principle, one that pertains not only to this particular set of cultic observances but to the praxis of righteousness in general."[75] That basic principle states that acting righteously earns a reward from God if and only if one acts with the proper audience in mind and therefore one must monitor one's motives ("be on guard") to ensure one does not

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[74] Matthew 6:1 is likely redactional, a heading added by an editor, perhaps the author of the First Gospel, to explain the significance of the material that follows; see Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 274–5; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:93. Manuscripts L, W, Z, and θ read "almsgiving" (ἐλεημοσύνη) instead of "righteousness" (δικαιοσύνη), in which case, 6:1 does not function as broad heading. The copyists of these manuscripts seem to have understood 6:1 to introduce only 6:1-4.

[75] Wilson, "Seen in Secret," 475. For similar interpretations of 6:1, see Calvin, *Commentaries*, *ad loc*; John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament* (New York: Lane and Tippett, 1847), *ad loc*; Tholuck, *Exposition*, 2:98; Allen, *Matthew*, 57; Zeller, *Die weisheitlichen Mahnsprüche*, 71; Syreeni, *The Making of the Sermon on the Mount*, 164; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:577–8; Gundry, *Matthew*, 101; Boring, "The Gospel of Matthew," 8:200; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 349–50; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 299: "The Matthean opening verse is a summarizing title…. it generalizes. Almsgiving, praying, and fasting are exemplary possibilities of the right relationship to God." As they do with 5:17-20, several interpreters compare the function of 6:1 to that of the כלל in rabbinic literature (Daube, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism*, 63–6; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:93; Luz, "The Fulfillment of the Law in Matthew (Matt. 5:17-20)," 197; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 6). The first saying of Epictetus' *Encheiridion* and the first four of Epicurus' *Kyriai Doxai* play a similar, generalizing role in those compositions.

intend to impress other people with one's piety.[76] Given that the previous section of the Sermon concluded with exhortation to love neighbors and enemies and that 6:5 refers to "love" (φιλοῦσιν) of receiving attention, this section may construe seeking others praise as the opposite of loving them.[77] But by focusing on ways of relating to the divine (almsgiving, prayer, fasting), it emphasizes not the righteousness towards others but the righteousness towards God required to earn a reward. That the reward remains "with the Father" (παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ; see also 5:12; 6:19-21) implies that it will be disbursed in the future, presumably at

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[76] Matthew assumes that rather than explains why righteous deeds earn rewards from God. For that belief in ancient Judaism, see Moore, *Judaism*, 2:89–97; Paul S. Minear, *And Great Shall Be Your Reward: The Origins of Christian Views of Salvation* (Eugene, Or.: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2005), 1–17; Morton Smith, *Tannaitic Parallels to the Gospels*, Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series 6 (Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature, 1951), 49–73; H. Preisker and E. Würthwein, "μισθός," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 4, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964), 695–728; E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), 117–47; Almut Hintze, "Treasure in Heaven. A Theme in Comparative Religion," in *Irano-Judaica. Studies Relating to Jewish Contacts with Persian Culture Throughout the Ages*, ed. Shaul Shaked and Amnon Netzer, vol. 4 (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute for the Study of Jewish Communities in the East, 2008), 9–36; Gary A. Anderson, *Sin: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Tzvi Novick, "Wages from God: The Dynamics of a Biblical Metaphor," *CBQ* 73 (2011): 708–22; Eubank, *Wages of Cross-Bearing*, 25–52. Matthew's language of God rewarding righteousness and storing the rewards in heaven has rather close parallels in the Palestinian Targums; see Martin McNamara, *Targum and New Testament: Collected Essays*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 279 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 266–8. Greek religion also imagines that the gods (should) recompense piety, though it defines the scope of the divine's concern more narrowly than do most Jews and than does Matthew; see Harvey Yunis, *A New Creed: Fundamental Religious Beliefs in the Athenian Polis and Euripidean Drama* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988), 101–11; Robert Parker, "Pleasing Thighs: Reciprocity in Greek Religion," in *Reciprocity in Ancient Greece*, ed. Christopher Gill, Norman Postlethwaite, and Richard Seaford (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 105–26. On προσέχετε as "connoting constant vigilance," see Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 275.

[77] See Betz' comments on 6:5 (*The Sermon on the Mount*, 361–2); and Davies' and Allison's on 6:16-18 (*Matthew*, 1:617).

the eschaton.[78] As in 5:17-20, so in 6:1 the SM declares a particular form of righteousness necessary to pass the final judgment and enter the kingdom of heaven. Moreover, according to 6:1, as one awaits that last day, one must keep vigil over oneself to ensure that one is maintaining the motives required to earn rewards, to ensure that one is prepared for the final reckoning. In this respect, 6:1 anticipates the exhortation to remain vigilant in 24:32-25:30.[79]

Verses 2-4, 5-6, and 16-18 employ a common structure to characterize proper piety: using highly figurative language, each states first that "the hypocrites" perform a particular act of religious devotion for the wrong audience and hence for the wrong reasons and that "they have been paid their reward" (ἀπέχουσιν τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν) in the form of the public acclaim they seek.[80] Second, each paragraph declares that the audience should perform such acts "in secret" (ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ), that is, for God alone—with the proper intent—and that their "Father who sees in secret will compensate" (ἀποδώσει) them for such righteousness.

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[78] Most English translations render παρὰ τῷ πατρὶ as "from the Father." On the translation "with the Father," see Eubank, *Wages of Cross-Bearing*, 78–9; Nathan Eubank, "Storing up Treasure with God in the Heavens: Celestial Investments in Matthew 6:1-21," *CBQ* 76 (2014): 77–92. For the reward as eschatological, see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:557; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 349–50.

[79] The practice 6:1 enjoins also closely resembles the Stoic practice of "attention" (προσοχή), in which, as Hadot describes it, the practitioner "seeks to purify and rectify his intentions at every instant. He is constantly on the lookout for signs within himself of any motive for action other than the will to do good. Such self-consciousness is not, however, merely a moral conscience; it is also a cosmic consciousness. The 'attentive' person lives constantly in the presence of God and is constantly remembering God …and he sees all things with the eyes of God himself" ("Ancient Spiritual Exercises and 'Christian Philosophy,'" 130).

[80] Ἀπέχω can be a technical term for accepting a receipt indicating payment and, given the persistent fiscal vocabulary of 6:1-18, that meaning is likely in view (Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 279; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:582). I therefore translate ἀπέχουσιν here as "they have been paid."

In vv. 2-4, the hypocrites give alms ostentatiously, expressed here figuratively as blowing a trumpet to announce one's giving,[81] "so that they will be glorified by people" (ὅπως δοξασθῶσιν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων). Such almsgiving constitutes hypocrisy because it involves a discrepancy between what, according to the SM, the visible action should signify (desire to glorify God or win God's praise) and what it actually signifies (desire to be glorified, to win people's praise), because it misrepresents one's interior state (see also 23:23-8).[82] Readers, by contrast (σοῦ δὲ), should not let one hand know when the other is giving alms, meaning, figuratively, they should obscure their actions from even a part of themselves. Just as one must not give alms in front of others to win their praise, so also must one not give them in front of oneself to win one's own admiration.[83] God alone is the proper audience and esteemer of one's piety.[84] In other words, almsgiving must occur "in secret," where only God

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[81] Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 19; Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 278, 302; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:579.

[82] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:575: "Right deeds must be accompanied by right intention;" 581; Luz, *Matthew 21-28*, 103. See also Sir 34:31-35:5, which commends almsgiving, prayer, and fasting but stresses that they should be accompanied by right moral dispositions. Davies and Allison compare Matthew on this point to "the rabbinic [emphasis on] *kawwana*," or intention; see further *b. Meg.* 20a; Hyman G. Enelow, "Kawwana: The Struggle for Inwardness in Judaism," in *Studies in Jewish Literature, Issued in Honor of Professor Kaufmann Kohler*, ed. David Philipson, David Neumark, and Julian Morgenstern (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1913), 82–707; Howard Eilberg-Schwartz, *The Human Will in Judaism: The Mishnah's Philosophy of Intention*, Brown Judaic Studies 103 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1986).

[83] Chrysostom, *Hom. Matt.* 19; Wesley, *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament, ad loc*; Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 280, 302–3; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:582.

[84] Calvin, *Commentaries, ad loc*: "Let not thy left hand know. By this expression he means, that we ought to be satisfied with having God for our only witness, and to be so earnestly desirous to obey him, that we shall not be carried away by any vanity. It frequently happens, that men sacrifice to themselves rather than to God. Christ therefore wishes, that we should not be distracted by indirect thoughts, but go straight to this object, that we may serve God with a pure conscience."

sees and to produce only divine approbation. Only then, only when religious practices result from proper motives, do they earn eschatological rewards.

In vv. 5-6, likewise, the hypocrites pray ostentatiously, that is, in conspicuous postures and locations, in order to attract attention. Readers, by contrast, should pray behind closed doors. Given its position subordinate to v. 1, parallel to v. 3's highly metaphorical precept, and immediately following v. 5's condemnation of particular motives ("so that they may be seen by others"), the command to "go into your room and shut the door and pray" offers instruction not primarily on the physical location where but on the intent with which one prays.[85] "Go into your room and shut the door" means to venture inward for self-examination so that one can shut out improper motives. It restates metaphorically v. 1's instruction to "be on guard" against doing righteous acts for the wrong reasons.

In vv. 16-18, the hypocrites, again, fast for show by cultivating a downcast (σκυθρωποί) and afflicted (ἀφανίζουσιν … τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν) appearance that will signal to others they are fasting and intensely devoted to the divine.[86] Readers, by contrast, must anoint their heads and wash their faces when fasting; that is, they must groom themselves as normal so that their fasting has no visible coefficient and is discernable by God

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[85] See, *inter alia*, Augustine, *Serm. Dom.* 2.3.11; Wilson, "Seen in Secret," 477–8. As examples of "inner room" (ταμεῖον) used as an anthropological metaphor, Wilson cites Prov 20:27; 26:22; Qoh 10:20; Philo, *Det.* 68; *Deus* 42; Epictetus, *Diatr.* 4.5.12; Plutarch, *Lib. ed.* 9E; *Tranq. an.* 473B; *An. corp.* 500D; cf. *2 Bar.* 83:3; Matt 12:34-35. Davies and Allison reject the equation of the "inner room" and human interiority (*Matthew*, 1:586–7), though they agree that "the central theme" of Matt 6:1-6, 16-18 is the contrast "between what is inward and what is outward, between the heart and that which is external" (ibid., 1:576).

[86] On the cultural connections between appearance and fasting here referenced, see Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 420–1; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 303.

alone.[87] Like the commands to keep one hand ignorant of the other and to enter one's room, the commands to anoint and wash oneself are principally metaphorical, exhorting the reader not only to specific hygienic practices but generally to practice piety so as *not* to draw attention and acclaim from others or oneself, to practice piety so as to attract only God's favor.[88]

Into this repetitive structure, vv. 7-15 intrude. Linked to vv. 5-6 by the topic of prayer, these verses feature the same antithetical structure as vv. 2-4, 5-6, and 16-18: verses 7-8 forbid an improper form of prayer and vv. 9-13 mandate a proper form. But the negative exemplars of piety are now "the Gentiles" (οἱ ἐθνικοί), not the hypocrites and what constitutes malpractice is anxiety, not vainglory. The Gentiles "babble on" (βατταλογήσητε) in prayer, meaning they utter an abundance of words (πολυλογίᾳ), in order to ensure God hears their requests (v. 7). That they imagine that God's attentiveness depends on their loquaciousness indicates that they harbor disquiet about their standing with the divine.[89] Readers, by contrast, should realize that "your Father knows what you need before you ask him" and therefore have the confidence to pray succinctly (v. 8), following the model of brief

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[87] Wesley, *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*, *ad loc*; Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 300, 305; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:619.

[88] Nolland, *Matthew*, 274; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 303; Wilson, "Seen in Secret," 478.

[89] Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 283; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:588. For some "Gentiles'" understanding of the relationship between a prayer's length and its effectiveness, see Frances V. Hickson, *Roman Prayer Language: Livy and the Aneid of Vergil*, Beiträge zur Altertumskunde 30 (Stuttgart: Teubner, 1993), 8–9; cf. Luke Timothy Johnson, *Among the Gentiles: Greco-Roman Religion and Christianity*, Anchor Bible Reference Library (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 101–7. Cf. 6:31-2, where anxiety again characterizes the Gentiles.

prayer in vv. 9–13, a model that makes statements about divinity and divine–human relations that expand the theological scope of 6:1-18. Because vv. 7-8 focus on a different interior state that accompanies piety and 9-13 introduce new foci, these verses do not develop the portion of 6:1's thesis statement that forbids doing righteous acts "so as to be seen" by people. They intrude.

Nonetheless, vv. 7-15 do develop the portion of 6:1 that commands vigilance over one's motives. They condemn not lengthy prayers *per se* but rather prayers whose length and presumably other qualities, given the consistently general and figurative nature of the language in this section, are determined by one's fear that God will not listen. They therefore exhort readers to examine whether fear or faith determines their prayers. In this sense, these verses only partially intrude.

Verses 14-15, which conclude the partial intrusion in 6:7-15, further underscore the importance of monitoring one's inner state. Many interpreters take these verses merely to restate the fifth petition of the model prayer and reiterate the conviction, traditional in early Christian literature, that to be effective, prayer must be accompanied by forgiveness of others, that proper piety towards God requires just and harmonious relations with others.[90] It is probable, however, that vv. 14-15 also justify the imperative ("pray") in v. 9 because, though an intrusion into 6:1-18, vv. 7-15 are, as I have just shown, structured in the image of their surroundings and the paragraphs on almsgiving, prayer, and fasting each conclude by

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[90] Krister Stendahl, "Prayer and Forgiveness," in *Meanings: The Bible as Document and as Guide* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 152–59; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:616–7; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 252; cf. Sir 28:2-4.

stating in the future tense the motive for the mode of piety they mandate (4b; 6b; 18b). Just as one must enter one's room to pray so that "your Father who sees in secret will compensate you" (v. 6b), for example, so must one "pray thusly" (v. 9a), that is, briefly, "for (γάρ) if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you (v. 14). Verses 14-15 justify v. 9's imperative then in two related senses. First, they explain why one can, with confidence, pray succinctly as Jesus models. Verse 8 has offered one rationale for laconic prayer: disciples should pray tersely because God already knows what they need (v. 8). To this reason, vv. 14-15 add another: because if readers forgive others, God will forgive them (vv. 14-15). The logic connecting these two justifications, the implication of their juxtaposition, is that what the audience needs is God's forgiveness and since, according to vv. 14-15, that forgiveness depends on forgiving others, it does not depend on imploring God at length. Because the satisfaction of one's ultimate needs does not necessitate a particular form of prayer, one can pray tersely without fear. Verses 14-15 diminish anxiety and promote trust. Second, they explain why one should pray at all or, at least, using these particular(ly succinct) words: praying thusly renders one more likely to forgive. By declaring God's sovereignty (vv. 9b-10) and one's fundamental dependence on the divine (vv. 11-13), one cultivates a humble subjectivity, a subjectivity that is then inclined to forgive and love others.[91] The point of prayer according to 6:7-15 then is not to make one's needs known to

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[91] For arrogance as the cause of refusing to forgive others (and hence humility as a state that produces forgiveness), see Sir 10:6-7.

God but rather to shape's one's dispositions and foster the interiority for which one must watch (προσέχετε, 6:1).

Thus, the second section of the Sermon's body claims that the proper practice of almsgiving, prayer, and fasting requires proper interiority. One must perform these practices for God alone, meaning in order glorify God and not oneself, whether in one's own eyes or in the eyes of others. By focusing on three fundamental practices in Jewish and early Christian piety and by presenting them as illustrative examples of acting righteously, the SM portrays its teachings on these three acts of devotion as synecdochal. The instructions for performing them properly are instructions for performing all pious acts properly. One must do such acts but one must do them with the pure and proper motive in order to earn God's eschatological recompense.

6:19-7:12

The topic of the third section (6:19-7:12) remains disputed but given that the first two sections feature a heading specifying the longitude of righteousness the subsequent examples will illustrate, the first unit of this section (6:19-21), which, like 5:17–20 and 6:1, is redactional, likely does too.[92] Continuing the second section's distinction between receiving

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[92] Allison remarks, "The disparity among scholars attempting to fathom the structure and theme of 6:19-7:12 is considerable" ("The Configuration of the Sermon on the Mount and Its Meaning," 187), and Betz calls Matt 6:19–7:12 "the most difficult passage of the SM" (*The Sermon on the Mount*, 48). Some scholars despair of discerning the section's arrangement at all; see Calvin, *Commentaries*, *ad* 6:22; C. F. Georg Heinrici, *Die Bergpredigt (Matth. 5-7. Luk. 6, 20-49): die quellenkritische Untersuchung der Bergpredigt* (Leipzig: Alexander Edelmann, 1899), 68; Dibelius, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 16–24; Wilder, "The Sermon on the Mount," 7:157; Stendahl, "Matthew,"

rewards on earth and amassing them in heaven (6:1), this unit exhorts listeners to stockpile

"treasures," or goods (θησαυρίζετε ὑμῖν θησαυροὺς), in heaven rather than on earth and

while vv. 19-20 contrast the security of the heavenly vault with the violability of earthly

storage in order to underscore the futility of hoarding worldly possessions,[93] v. 21, the

conclusion of the unit, states the true principle behind this general rule: "for where your

treasure is, there your heart will be too" (ὅπου γάρ ἐστιν ὁ θησαυρός σου, ἐκεῖ ἔσται καὶ ἡ

καρδία σου), meaning that how one relates to goods determines the location of one's

allegiance, or, the condition of one's very self. Given this heading, the third section of the

sermon is about the state of the heart, meaning one's fundamental disposition towards the

divine. It warns readers that valuing earthly treasures leads one's heart, leads one's self, away

from God. As in the parable sower, the proper perspective on what most people value, the

ability to forswear "the concern of this age and the deceit of wealth" (13:22), is necessary for

one to persist in allegiance to God and to do good deeds. Conversely, it maintains that how

one treats treasures reveals the one's inner state.

In 6:19-34, the treasures discussed are material goods. The heading (6:19-21) refers to

a moth (σὴς) and a grasshopper or locust (βρῶσις) destroying (ἀφανίζει; see also 6:16)

"treasures," implying that the goods in view are clothing, which the larvae of moths consume

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779; Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 104. For some prominent proposals see Bornkamm, "Der Aufbau Der Bergpredigt," 427–30; Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 356, 377; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:625–7. My reading follows Wilson, "A Third Form of Righteousness."

[93] Wilson, "A Third Form of Righteousness," 311.

(Isa 51:8; Sir 42:13; Jas 5:2; cf. Matt 6:28-30), and food, which insects devour (Mal 3:11 [βρῶσις]; cf. Matt 6:26).

Verses 22-3 describe generosity with physical resources—almsgiving—as the visible coefficient of a proper heart (see also 5:42; 6:2-4). Recycling the images of lamps and lights from 5:14, v. 22 labels the eye the lamp of the body, which, in as much as lamps produce their own light, might imply that the eye shines light into the body, rather than conveying external light into or internal light out of it. Verse 23b, however, portrays the body as having its own light (τὸ φῶς τὸ ἐν σοί), which means that the eye, in Matthew's understanding, must conduct that light outward and thereby serve as the body's "lamp."[94] Such a notion is in keeping with ancient beliefs that the eye "expressed the innermost dispositions, feelings, and desires of the heart."[95] The contrast in these verses between the "single" or "generous eye" (ὁ ὀφθαλμός … ἁπλοῦς) and the "evil eye" (ὁ ὀφθαλμός … πονηρὸς) illuminates this relationship between the body's "light," which is internal and unseen, and "the eye," which is external and visible. To refer to one's eye as "evil" is a standard way in antiquity, especially in

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[94] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:638; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 450. Betz believes that the redactor of the SM here consciously rejects a theory of vision in which the eye produces light in favor of one in which its conveys the body's or the self's own light. Luz argues similarly (*Matthew 1-7*, 333).

[95] John H. Elliott, "The Evil Eye and the Sermon on the Mount: Contours of a Pervasive Belief in Social Scientific Perspective," *BibInt* 2 (1994): 54; see also Conny Edlund, *Das Auge der Einfalt: eine Untersuchung zu Matth. 6, 22-23 und Luk. 11, 34-35*, Acta Seminarii Neotestamentici Upsaliensis 19 (Copenhagen: Munksgaard, 1952), 23–7, 70–9. For the general principle that the eyes reveal one's interiority, see also Cicero, *De or.* 3.216—223; *Tusc.* 1.20.46; Apuleius, *Metam.* 5.22; Sextus Empiricus, *Math.* 7.130; Antón Alvar Nuño, "Ocular Pathologies and the Evil Eye in the Early Roman Principate," *Numen* 59 (2012): 295–321. Moss rightly observes that Matthew repeatedly portrays the senses as indicators of the heart's condition ("Blurred Vision and Ethical Confusion: The Rhetorical Function of Matthew 6:22-23," *CBQ* 73 [2011]: 771–773).

Jewish literature, of describing someone as greedy, stingy, or resentful of another's material possessions and therefore unwilling to act generously (e.g., Matt 20:15).[96] The word I have translated as "generous" (ἁπλοῦς) literally means "single" and also typically refers to an internal state that leads predictably to particular actions. It and its cognate noun and adverb (ἁπλότης, ἁπλῶς) denote pure, simple, "singular" motives[97] and they appear often in references to managing economic resources, where they designate the act of directing those resources for others' benefit (e.g. Rom 12:8)[98] or donating them "generously, with sincere, single-minded concern for the recipients: … [the terms mean] to give with inward integrity."[99] Because ἁπλοῦς is here opposed to stinginess and subordinate to a heading

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[96] The MT expresses this idea using the idiom רע עין, which the LXX renders with a form of the root βασκαν- (Deut 28:54-7; Prov 28:21-2; cf. Sir 14:3, 6, 8; Tob 4:7) or πονηρ- (Deut 15:9; cf. Sir 14:8, 10). See also Plutarch, *Quaest. conv.* 680c-683b; P.Oxy. 2.292.12; P.Oxy 6.930.23 and the passages in Strack and Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*, 1:833–5. For discussion, see further Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:638; Rivka Ulmer, *The Evil Eye in the Bible and in Rabbinic Literature* (Hoboken, N.J.: Ktav, 1994); Elliott, "The Evil Eye and the Sermon on the Mount"; Moss, "Blurred Vision and Ethical Confusion," 761–2.

[97] 2 Sam 15:11; Wis 1:1; Job 1:1 Aquila; Ps.-Phoc. 50; *T. Iss.* 3:4 (ἁπλότης ὀφθαλμῶν); 2 Cor 1:12; 11:3; Xenophon, *Cyr.* 1.4.3; Otto Bauernfeind, "ἁπλοῦς," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 1, 10 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964), 386–87; Joseph Amstutz, *Ἁπλότης: eine begriffsgeschichtliche Studie zum jüdisch-christlichen Griechisch*, Theophaneia 19 (Bonn: P. Hanstein, 1968), 42, 49–50; Wilson, *Sentences*, 111.

[98] See Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1980), 342, who argues that the phrase in question addresses the task of distributing community funds.

[99] Margaret E. Thrall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 2 vols., International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1994), 2:524. Examples of this meaning include Josephus, *Ant.* 7.332; *T. Iss.* 3:8; Rom 12:8; 2 Cor 8:2; 9:11; Jas 1:5; cf. Prov 22:9, in which "one with a good eye" (MT) is rendered in the LXX as "he that pities the poor" (Henry J. Cadbury, "The Single Eye," *HTR* 47 [1954]: 71; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:638n12); 1 Cor 13:3. For discussion, see also Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*,

about handling goods out of the proper disposition of the heart (6:19-21), it surely bears this particular fiscal meaning of genuinely generous. These two types of eyes then represent two different courses of action with respect to possessions and each course of action represents a different causal interior state of illumination, the designation "full of light" (φωτεινὸν) echoing biblical descriptions of the righteous as light.[100] The statements "if your eye is generous, your whole body will be full of light" (ἐὰν οὖν ᾖ ὁ ὀφθαλμός σου ἁπλοῦς, ὅλον τὸ σῶμά σου φωτεινὸν ἔσται) and "if your eye is stingy, your whole body will be full of darkness" (ἐὰν δὲ ὁ ὀφθαλμός σου πονηρὸς ᾖ, ὅλον τὸ σῶμά σου σκοτεινὸν ἔσται) are therefore not the typical sort of conditional sentences in which the realization of the "if" clause, the protasis, results in the realization of the other clause, the apodosis. In these sentences, the relationship is reversed: the realization of the protasis results from or indicates the realization of the apodosis: "if your eye is generous/stingy, [it indicates that] your whole

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International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments 34 (New York: Scribner, 1915), 234; Cadbury, "The Single Eye," 70; Susan R. Garrett, "'Lest the Light in You Be Darkness': Luke 11:33-36 and the Question of Commitment," *JBL* 110 (1991): 97: "the emphasis may be less on the amount of the gift given and more on the purity or generosity *of motives behind it*" (emphasis hers); Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Letter of James*, Anchor Bible 37a (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 76, 163–4; Eubank, *Wages of Cross-Bearing*, 83. Since ἁπλοῦς and πονηρὸς both describe a body part, one might suspect that their primary meaning is physiological ("healthy," "unhealthy"), but these terms are very seldom used in a medical sense (Garrett, "Lest the Light in You Be Darkness," 93; *pace* Nolland, *Matthew*, 301).

[100] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:639–40; Stephen C. Barton, "Money Matters: Economic Relations and the Transformation of Value in Early Christianity," in *Engaging Economics: New Testament Scenarios and Early Christian Reception*, ed. Bruce W. Longenecker and Kelly D. Liebengood (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2009), 43–4. A close parallel to these Matthean verses is Sir 13:25-14:19, in which a reflection on the relationship between dispositions and the use of money includes the claim that one's external appearance (τὸ πρόσωπον; 13:26) indicates unseen characteristics (Harrington, *Jesus Ben Sira*, 39–40).

body will be full of light/darkness."[101] By means then of these conditional sentences, the passage restates the oppositions of the preceding one (6:19-21), the thesis statement of this third section of the Sermon's body. The person with a stingy eye hoards earthly treasures, whereas the one with a generous eye accumulates treasures in heaven by giving earthly treasures away.[102] Both ways of handling goods result from and reveal the place or state of one's heart. By concluding v. 23 with an interrogative ("How great is the darkness?"; τὸ σκότος πόσον), Matthew prompts the reader to examine the location of her treasure, the state of her heart.[103]

Verse 24 continues the opposition between sharing and hoarding wealth found in vv. 19-21 and 22-3. Its dichotomy between serving God and serving the rival lord, Mammon replicates the opposition between accumulating treasure in heaven and on earth (vv. 19-21) and the opposition between the generous and the stingy eye (vv. 22-3) so that to serve God

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[101] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:637–41. As other examples of such conditional sentences, they cite Matt 12:26, 28; Num 16:29; 1 Kings 22:28; Prov 24:10 MT; John 9:41; Rom 7:20; 8:9b; 14:15. Cf. Matt 6:21.

[102] Augustine, *Op. Mon.* 26.34. On this notion that one accumulates value in heaven through almsgiving, see Prov 19:17; Tob 4:7-16; Anderson, *Sin*, 164–88; Anderson, *Charity*, 123–48; Gary A. Anderson, "How Does Almsgiving Purge Sins?," in *Hebrew in the Second Temple Period: The Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and of Other Contemporary Sources: Proceedings of the Twelfth International Symposium of the Orion Center for the Study of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Associated Literature and the Fifth International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira, Jointly Sponsored by the Eliezer Ben-Yehuda Center for the Study of the History of the Hebrew Language, 29-31 December, 2008*, ed. Steven E. Fassberg, Moshe Bar-Asher, and Ruth A. Clements, Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah 108 (Boston: Brill, 2013), 7–9; Eubank, *Wages of Cross-Bearing*, 25–52.

[103] Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:640; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 453; Moss, "Blurred Vision and Ethical Confusion," 772–3.

means in this instance to give material resources to other people and to serve Mammon means to withhold them.[104] And, in as much as it implies, given the literary context, that the dispositions it names—love (ἀγαπήσει) of God and hatred (μισήσει) of Mammon and the reverse, devotion (ἀνθέξεται) to God and contempt (καταφρονήσει) of Mammon—produce generosity and its opposite, v. 24 also reiterates the preceding verses insistence that how one handles money corresponds neatly to the place of one's heart and the illumination of one's interior.

Verses 25-34 urge listeners not to worry about the material goods of food (v. 25-6, 31), drink (v. 31), and clothing (v. 25, 28-31) but to strive first for "righteousness" (v. 33), likely meaning in this context righteousness with respect to material goods such as these.[105] The passage may offer some reassurance to its audience that for those who abandon striving (ἐπιζητοῦσιν, v. 32; ζητεῖτε, v. 33) after security in the form of possessions, for those who store their treasures in heaven and serve God, not Mammon, God will provide. Just as the deity feeds the birds and adorns the grass with beautiful lilies, so will he feed and adorn his children (vv. 26, 28-30). But the passage's principle function seems to be exhortation since it is replete with imperatives (25-6, 28, 31, 33-4) and, in as much as this reassurance is

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[104] Martin Hengel argues that to portray wealth as a deity, this saying uses the Hebrew loanword μαμωνᾷ (*Property and Riches in the Early Church: Aspects of a Social History of Early Christianity*, trans. John Bowden [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974], 24). The notion that one could amass wealth and nonetheless act justly may be the sort of notion Matthew rejects in 13:22 when he claims that the "deceit of wealth" (ἡ ἀπάτη τοῦ πλούτου) impedes the production of fruit.

[105] Wilson, "A Third Form of Righteousness," 321: "The interpolation of καὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην in 6.33 not only names a central theme for 6.19–7.11, it also represents a (rather intrusive) Matthean attempt to link the passage with the first two parts of the SM, where righteousness is also thematized (5.20; 6.1)."

understood to be necessary because the audience is or might become destitute,[106] since the

SM, not to mention the rest of Matthew's gospel, portrays its audience as relatively

prosperous, as giving loans and alms, not receiving them (5:42; 6:2-4) and here as possessing

surplus to store (v. 26) and desiring to be more regally attired (v. 29).[107] It urges listeners to

develop the inner conditions, the lack of anxiety, necessary to store treasures in heaven and

not on earth, and to serve only God (διὰ τοῦτο, v. 25). These verses repeatedly focus on

anxiety about one's earthly future— note the future verbs in vv. 25 and 31 and the redactional

conclusion not to worry about tomorrow (εἰς τὴν αὔριον, v. 36; cf. Luke 12:31)— and stress

that not only is such anxiety futile, as the heading declared it (v. 19b), since the future eludes

human control (vv. 27, 34), but it characterizes "the Gentiles" (τὰ ἔθνη), those who, by

striving for wealth (ἐπιζητοῦσιν, v. 32), serve Mammon.[108] As anxiety about the future leads

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[106] Though they elsewhere note that Matthew's imagined audience includes the relatively wealthy, Davies and Allison maintain that this passage offers first and foremost comfort and answers the objection "How can I eat and clothe myself if I whole-heartedly serve God and am relatively indifferent to mammon?" (*Matthew*, 1:646; see also 1:626–7). Piper, Nolland, and France likewise argue that these concerns for food and clothing are concerns for basic necessities and not luxury items; see Piper, *Wisdom in the Q-Tradition*, 25; Nolland, *Matthew*, 308; France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 267.

[107] See George E. Nickelsburg, "Riches, the Rich, and God's Judgment in 1 Enoch 92-105 and the Gospel According to Luke," *NTS* 25 (1979): 336, on the Q source for this passage; Wilson, "A Third Form of Righteousness," 311–12. On the socioeconomic standing of Matthew's imagined audience, see Jack D. Kingsbury, "The Verb *Akolouthein* ('To Follow') as an Index of Matthew's View of His Community," *JBL* 97 (1978): 67–8; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:405, 578; Kloppenborg, "Poverty and Piety in Matthew, James, and the Didache," 224.

[108] As Bultmann observes, "anxiety" in this passage (μεριμνάω) is "self-concern relative to the future" ("μεριμνάω, κτλ.," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 4, 10 vols. [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964], 590). Wilson notes the verbal similarity of "anxiety" (μεριμνάω) and Mammon (μαμωνᾷ) that connects vv. 24-5 ("A Third Form of Righteousness," 311).

many to amass treasures, the audience is exhorted to cultivate the imperturbable trust—the opposite of "little faith" (ὀλιγόπιστοι, v. 30)—in God's care that leads to amassing righteousness by sharing possessions (see also 6:11-12).[109]

In 7:1-12, the goods are social.[110] Verses 1-2 generically prohibit "judging" (μὴ κρίνετε), which in this case means eschatologically "condemning" others, given the divine future passive verbs referring to the eschaton in v. 2.[111] Verses 3-5 present a specific example of the condemnation the Sermon forbids: damning correction of a fellow community member, a "brother." The motive for this prohibition is human fallibility. In vv. 1-2, the statement that one should not judge because one will be held to the same standard or "measure" (μέτρῳ) one uses to judge others (vv. 1-2) implies that one will inevitably fall short of even one's own moral benchmarks. To admonish others for not measuring up to one's ideal is to condemn oneself and therefore foolish. In vv. 3-4, the statement that he who wants to correct a splinter, or minor fault, in his brother's eye but does not consider (κατανοεῖς) the beam, or major fault, in his own eye cannot see well enough to remove the splinter capitalizes on 6:22-3's claim that the eye indicates one's interior condition in order to declare

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[109] Wilson argues similarly when he claims that 6:19-34 "stipulates what is expected of those who would free themselves of the anxieties attendant on enslavement to mammon" ("A Third Form of Righteousness," 311).

[110] Matthew may have found this connection between material and social goods, between giving to others and not judging others, in Q 6:37-8, if Matthew indeed composed the SM and if 6:38a stood in Q (ibid., 313; see also Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:667).

[111] Tholuck, *Exposition*, 2:262–3; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:669; Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 151; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 351. Matthew also discountenances condemnation in 9:13; 12:7; 13:24–30.

that the person intent on "judging" others suffers from a dark and deformed interiority.[112] He has forgotten that he too is a debtor in need of forgiveness (6:12; see also 6:14-15).[113] He has abandoned the humility that enabled him to repent. He casts himself as morally superior when in fact he is inwardly corrupt, which renders him a hypocrite (v. 5).[114] He is evil (v. 11). Verse 5 nonetheless sanctions fraternal correction. It states that if one first excises the beam from his own eye, "then he will see clearly (τότε διαβλέψεις) to remove the splinter from his brother's eye." Since sight continues in this passage to represent one's inner state, this restoration of the eye to health signifies a change in disposition, presumably in this context involving the extirpation of the inclination to condemn. If one first transforms himself, he can address his fellow community member's peccadilloes. The correction that v. 5 imagines coheres then with the admonition not to judge in 7:1 because it is not an act of condemnation but of friendship, of love.[115] As elsewhere in Matthew, the moral quality of the action depends on the moral quality of the actor.

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[112] Tholuck, *Exposition*, 2:66: "The bodily eye is here, as at c. vi., representative of the spiritual."

[113] *Opus Imperfectum*, *ad* 7:3-5; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 352.

[114] "The self-deluded censurer is called hypocrite, and even when he does not mean to appear better than he is, still, by the conduct he pursues, he makes himself in fact appear what he is not—to wit, spotless" (Tholuck, *Exposition*, 2:268).

[115] For fraternal correction as a component of friendship, see Philo, *Her.* 5.19, 21; Plutarch, *Adul. amic.* 74D; Philodemus, *Lib;* Clarence Glad, "Frank Speech, Flattery, and Friendship in Philodemus," in *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech*, ed. John T. Fitzgerald, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 82 (New York: Brill, 1995), 21–60; Clarence E. Glad, *Paul and Philodemus: Adaptability in Epicurean and Early Christian Psychagogy*, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 81 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 161–74; Foucault, *Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 386–92.

Matthew 7:6 further elaborates on the topic of judging others, joined as it is to vv. 1–5 by juxtaposition, similar openings (μὴ κρίνετε, 7:1; μὴ δῶτε, 7:6), and catchwords (ἔκβαλε, ἐκβαλεῖν, 7:5; βάλητε, 7:6).[116] It warns listeners not to give "what is holy to dogs," nor pearls to pigs. Ancient moralists regularly portrayed correction as a valuable commodity since it enables moral progress.[117] "Dogs" and "pigs" may, like "Gentiles" in 6:32, refer to those whose definition of value differs from that of Jesus' followers (cf. Matt 18:17). The verse admonishes listeners not to offer correction, portrayed here not as condemnation but as precious insight, to those ill-suited to receive it. Even when offered in a non-judgmental spirit, correction may not be properly appraised and accepted. In sum, vv. 1-6 maintain that the urge to condemn others for their moral failures should be overcome by self-examination and the urge to correct them tempered by examination of the potential recipient's readiness to receive correction.[118]

As part of the third section of the SM, 7:1-6 warns one not to use one's personal and moral authority, what we might call one's social capital, to maximize one's earthly standing. In condemning or correcting others, unless the correction is properly understood by a fellow community member as a loving deed, one inevitably casts oneself as morally and socially

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[116] Wilson, "A Third Form of Righteousness," 314.

[117] Zeller, *Die weisheitlichen Mahnsprüche*, 138; Wilson, "A Third Form of Righteousness," 314–5. Wilson cites as examples Prov 1:30; 9:7-8; 15.12; 23.9; *Syr. Men.* 328–32; *T. Gad* 6.7; Ps.-Phoc. *Sent.* 141; *Instr. Ankh.* 7.4–5; 1QS IX, 16–18; *Did.* 2.7; Plutarch, *Lib. ed.* 12F. See also Seneca, *De Ira* 3.36.4.

[118] Carter, *Matthew and the Margins*, 182; Wilson, "A Third Form of Righteousness," 315.

superior. Such actions would seem attractive then to anyone intent on elevating his social standing, on accumulating the earthly treasure of status.[119] Plutarch highlights this dynamic, observing that people tend to believe that self-interest (φιλαυτία) motivates moral correction of another (*Adul. amic.* 66E).[120] One should rather seek to maximize one's standing in heaven (6:33), presumably by forgiving (6:12, 14-15) wrongs rather than condemning or inopportunely correcting them.

Matthew 7:7-11 concludes the third section of the SM by portraying the audience as children dependent on their "father in heaven" (7:11; see also 5:9, 16, 45; 6:9) for treasures and admonishing readers to "ask," "seek," and "knock" (v. 7) in order to receive "goods" (ἀγαθὰ, 7:11) from God, goods that God invariably provides: "For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, it will be opened" (7:8).[121] By portraying readers as dependent on God for goods, the passage implies they cannot secure true treasures by themselves. It underscores the futility and foolishness of seeking earthly wealth and status instead of God's kingdom. By portraying God as a predictable provider, the passage implies that readers can calmly and confidently refuse to

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[119] Wilson, "A Third Form of Righteousness," 314.

[120] For analysis of the place of social status in Plutarch's understanding of correction, see Troels Engberg-Pedersen, "Plutarch to Prince Philopappus on How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend," in *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech*, ed. John T. Fitzgerald, Supplements to Novum Testamentum 82 (New York: Brill, 1995), esp. 76–7.

[121] Wilson, "A Third Form of Righteousness," 315.

amass the financial and social markers of importance. It facilitates the formation of a disposition that enables one to store treasures in heaven alone.

Given the generality of this concluding admonition—what exactly the readers are to seek, ask for, and knock on is not specified, nor are the "goods" God provides—and the fact that the first two sections of the Sermon are synechdochal, it seems that the third section is synechdochal too. It urges righteousness with respect to goods generally, using material goods such as food and clothing and social goods such as status as illustrative examples of a general class, not a finite list of areas in which righteousness must be demonstrated.

Matthew 7:12 concludes the Sermon's body, its mention of "the law and the prophets" forming an inclusion with the use of the same phrase in 5:17, the beginning of the Sermon's body. By summarizing the intervening exhortations as a call to "do to others as you would have them do to you," v. 12 recalls the introduction to the Sermon, which casts the subsequent material as instruction regarding the "good deeds" that disciples do to inspire others' praise of God (5:3-16).[122] By labeling the Sermon's body as "the law and the prophets," Matthew declares that it, like the scriptural writings, expresses God's will.[123]

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[122] Cf. Meier's attempt to discern how 7:12 summarizes the contents of the Sermon's body: "the Golden Rule … sums up neither all the material in Matthew's Sermon on the Mount nor, *a fortiori*, all the material that the Matthean Jesus teaches throughout the Gospel" (*A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, 4 vols., The Anchor Bible Reference Library [New York: Doubleday, 1991], 4:626).

[123] For the golden rule as a summary of the law, see *Let. Aris.* 168-9; *L.A.B.* 11.10-13; Talbert, *Reading the Sermon on the Mount*, 135–6.

All three sections of the body of the SM then partially describe a different facet of righteousness. The first represents righteousness in interpersonal relations, defined as treating others justly for the right reasons; the second righteousness in relationship with God, defined as practicing piety with proper motivations; and the third righteousness in relation to material and social treasures, defined as acting without concern for wealth and status. Together they offer an impression of what it means to be salt and light and to do good deeds (5:13-16) that benefit others (7:12) by causing them to glorify God (5:16). Each section is synechdochal, the first because it summarizes the Decalogue, the second because of its generalizing introduction, the third because of its generalizing conclusion. Moreover, as Walter Wilson shows, when considered together, the three domains of others, God, and goods are a conventional way of summarizing an entire way of life.[124] In other words, this organizational schema is itself synechdochal; the three domains do not delimit the areas in which one must exhibit righteousness but rather represent the totality of morality's—righteousness'—concern. In a Jewish milieu, considered together these three domains may also be synechdochal for the repentant way of life. According to Moore and Sanders, biblical and post-biblical Jewish traditions typically portray repentance as comprising three domains: achieving right relations with others, achieving right relations with God, and endeavoring to maintain right relations in those domains.[125] If so, then after presenting chs 5-7 as instruction

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[124] Wilson, "A Third Form of Righteousness," 321–4. He cites as examples *T. Iss.* 5:2; Philo, *Prob.* 75-91; CD IV, 12b-VII, 9a; *'Abot R. Nat.* B 30; Seneca, *Ep.* 95.45-54.

[125] Moore, *Judaism*, 1:117; Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 175.

for the repentant and describing the disciples as penitent (5:3-12), Matthew adopts this conventional summary of repentance as a compositional plan—he mandates that disciples relate rightly to others and to God and that they safeguard the inner conditions required to maintain right relationships therewith—in order to portray 5:17-7:12 as exemplifying not only how disciples conduct their mission to the world but how, having followed Jesus (4:18-22), they further enact their repentance (4:17). Thus, by virtue of each section of its body being synechdochal and by virtue of its structure, with respect to all spheres of life, the SM insists that to exhibit the superior righteousness needed to pass the eschatological judgment (5:20), one must do God's will out of right motives and one must preserve the proper deprecatory attitude towards those things that the current age treasures, just as the rest of Matthew's gospel insists. The SM articulates in gnomic form an ideal that the other chapters of the First Gospel share. By offering this ideal in pithy, memorable form, the SM makes it possible for one to utilize it in a spiritual exercise.

The SM's Declaration of Purpose (7:24-7)

The second feature of the SM that suggests it enables one to become an idealized self is its own declaration of its intended hermeneutic, which the SM states in its parabolic conclusion:[126]

> [24] "Everyone then (οὖν) who hears (ἀκούει) these sayings (τοὺς λόγους τούτους) of mine and does (ποιεῖ) them will be like a prudent man (ἀνδρὶ φρονίμῳ) who built

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[126] Four of Matthew's five major discourses end with parables (7:24-7; 13:52; 18:21-35; 25:31-46), the first and last of them eschatological.

his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and fell on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶ And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man (ἀνδρὶ μωρῷ) who built his house on the sand. ²⁷ The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and fell on that house, and it fell. And its fall was great!"

The parable contrasts two types of responses to the preceding sayings or rather two types of respondents: the person who "hears" and "does" the sayings, "who will resemble a prudent man" (ὁμοιωθήσεται ἀνδρὶ φρονίμῳ), and who constructs a house on a foundation stable enough to weather rain, floods, and wind and the person who "hears" but fails to "do" them, "who will resemble a foolish man" (ὁμοιωθήσεται ἀνδρὶ μωρῷ), and who constructed a house on a foundation too unstable to endure the tempestuous trio.[127] The use of the future tense—the ones who hear and do or fail to do "will be like" (ὁμοιωθήσεται) the prudent or foolish man—, the depiction of the storm as a singular and not a repeated event, the location of this passage immediately following a depiction of the eschatological judgment (7:21-3), and the frequent use of storms to represent the eschatological trials in Jewish literature all suggest that the storms here represent the eschaton.[128] The parable therefore asserts that only

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[127] Cf. the trio in Ezek 13:11-16. On antithetical parallelism as a feature of the SM, see further Heinrici, *Die Bergpredigt: quellenkritische Untersuchung*, 19–25; Klostermann, "Zum Verständnis von Mt 6.2," 280–1; Eduard Lohse, "Ich aber sage euch," in *Die Einheit des Neuen Testaments: Exegetische Studien zur Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973), 83–4; Allison, "The Configuration of the Sermon on the Mount and Its Meaning," 179–80.

[128] Lapide, *The Great Commentary*, 1:314; Maldonado, *A Commentary on the Holy Gospels*, 1:253; Tholuck, *Commentary*, 433; Meyer, *Handbook to the Gospel of Matthew*, 169; Schweizer, *Matthew*, 191; Gnilka, *Matthäusevangelium*, 1:282; Strecker, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 171–2; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:721–2, who list the Jewish parallels; Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 204–5; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 453. Augustine (*Serm. Dom.* 2.24.87) and John Chrysostom (*Hom. Matt.* 24) identify the storms instead with the vicissitudes of daily life. Betz thinks the storms refer to both this- and other-worldly afflictions (*The Sermon on the Mount*, 566).

the person who makes proper use of "these sayings" by hearing and doing them and coming

to resemble a "prudent" person will survive the final judgment. The phrase "these sayings"

(τοὺς λόγους τούτους), the demonstrative adjective of which, if Luke 6:47 preserves the

wording of his Q source for this verse, Matthew has added, refers to 5:3-7:23 or 5:17-7:23,

making 7:24-7 in either case conclude the sayings collection as a whole. The inferential

particle οὖν ("then" or "therefore"), also redactional, then also marks the parable as the

collection's conclusion.[129] By these two additions, Matthew has fashioned this parable, a form

of which on the two-document hypothesis also concluded the Q sermon, into a prescription

for the proper response to, or use of, chs. 5-7.

"Doing" the sayings of the SM distinguishes then those who will survive the final

judgment, but, given the nature of the sayings, what does it mean to "do" them? As we have

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[129] For τοὺς λόγους τούτους as referring to the SM as a whole, see Augustine, *Serm. Dom.* 2.87.1975-6; Jülicher, *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu*, 2:260–1; Minear, "False Prophecy and Hypocrisy in the Gospel of Matthew," 84; Schweizer, *Matthew*, 190; Guelich, *Sermon on the Mount*, 403–4; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:720; Boring, "The Gospel of Matthew," 8:213; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 561; Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 207; Frankemölle, *Matthäus Kommentar*, 1:278; Nolland, *Matthew*, 342–3; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 1:386. Some interprters take the phrase to mean "the gospel" *in toto*; see, e.g., Calvin, *Commentaries*, *ad loc*; Maldonado, *A Commentary on the Holy Gospels*, 1:252. Codex Vaticanus (B*), the minuscule codex 1424, and several Latin and Coptic versions of Matthew lack τούτους, likely because they represent interpretations that, like Calvin's and Maldonado's, take λόγους to refer to all of Jesus' words in the gospels and so omit what they see as a misleading demonstrative. For a different understanding of the textual variants, see Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 560n23. On οὖν as signaling a conclusion, see J. D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles*, 2d ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), 426; Herbert Weir Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, Rev. by Gordon M. Messing. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1984), § 2964; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 560. Cf. Rom 12:1; Gal 5:1. The reasons for considering οὖν and τούτους redactional include 1) it is more likely that Matthew has introduced these editorial transitions into his Q source than that Luke has omitted them and 2) they are characteristically Matthean terms: οὖν appears 57x in Matthew but only 5x in Mark and 31 in Luke; τούτους appears 6x in Matthew but only 1x in Mark and 5x in Luke; see Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:78–9, 720; cf. Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 33. On Matthew's redaction in 7:24-7, see further Schweizer, *Matthew*, 190; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:720, 723; Marguerat, *Le Jugement*, 203; Luz, *Matthew 1-7*, 385.

seen, the principal sayings of Matt 5-7 are paradigmatic and underdetermined—gnomic; while the general import of gnomes such as "beware of practicing your piety before others in order to be seen by them" (6:1) and "do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth" (6:19) may be clear, how exactly one enacts or "does" them is not because their potential applications are legion. They may apply in manifold ways to multiple concrete situations. The sayings that elaborate these headings and that structure 5:17-48 are, furthermore, synechdochal; they are illustrative examples of general, underdetermined ideals. The SM does not enumerate everything that righteousness entails and so does not provide a finite list of what one must "do" to survive the eschatological storm. To "do" Jesus' words in 7:24-7 therefore cannot mean simply to enact the actions and attitudes specified in the Sermon as opposed to ignoring them.

In light of these features of the SM, to "do" its sayings requires first discerning their relevance to and proper application in specific situations, which requires reflecting on the meaning of particular sayings in order extrapolate from them to the whole they represent and then entails imagining the congruity between that holistic account of righteousness and a particular circumstance. The sayings' succinct and memorable form aids this process of reflection and application because it enables one to hold the key principles that the sayings express in one's mind, thus rendering them perpetually available for reflection thereon and application thereof. This process of implementing the sayings in Matt 5-7 by holding them within and pondering their meaning and potential applications amounts to the practice Hadots calls meditation. As we saw in ch. 1, according to Hadot, one of the two most ubiquitous transformative exercises in the ancient world was a reflective and imaginative one in which practicioners came to discern the relevance of the essential tenets of a way of life,

distilled into gnomes, to their actual lives so that they could enact those tenets.[130] By exhorting readers to "do" the SM's sayings, 7:24-7 prescribes essentially the same practice. The evangelist thereby depicts the SM as the basis for a spiritual exercise that enables one to conform to Jesus' teaching and do God's will, to realize in oneself the ethic idealized in the Sermon and throughout the gospel.

Given the nature of the SM's mandates, "doing" them entails, moreover, a second exercise. Because the sayings command one to monitor not only one's actions but also one's dispositions towards others when treating them justly (5:17-48) and to surveil one's intentions when practicing piety (6:1-18) and one's perspectives on wordly concerns (6:19-7:12), "doing" them means not only discerning what good deeds they might specify in a particular circumstance but also policing one's inner life. Such vigilance over one's interiority resembles the other of Hadot's most ubiquitous exercises, the exercise of "attention" or "self-control," in which one incessantly scrutinizes and disciplines one's thoughts, desires, and emotions so that they conform to the tenets on which s/he meditates.[131] For the Matthean Jesus' disciples, this exercise purifies their dispositions and intentions so that their good deeds are indeed good fruit and, by cementing a deprecatory perspective on worldly goods, forges the inner stability that enables one to persist in doing good deeds. The conclusion to the SM

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[130] Hadot, "Forms of Life and Forms of Discourse in Ancient Philosophy," 61–2; Hadot, "Spiritual Exercises," 85.

[131] Hadot, "Forms of Life and Forms of Discourse in Ancient Philosophy," 59–60; Hadot, "Spiritual Exercises," 84–5.

thus exhorts its audience to undertake two exercises that facilitate the formation of Matthew's ideal self and portray Jesus' sayings in chs. 5-7 as the basis for these exercises.

Matthew's description of one who hears and does as "prudent" (φρονίμος) befits both exercises. The outcome of the first exercise, meditation, is moral insight, which is a common meaning of the Greek term I render as prudence. According to Annas and to Betz, prudence typically has this meaning in Greek philosophy.[132] The meaning appears also in Prov 1:1-7, which directs the reader to learn to discern the proper application of "sayings regarding prudence" (λόγους φρονήσεως, v. 1) so that he develops the insight necessary for a proper life, and in the writings of Philo, who calls repentance a change "from foolishness to prudence" (ἐξ ἀφροσύνης εἰς φρόνησιν, *Virt.* 180; see also 177) and says that prudence gives the intellect "sight" (ὄψις … διανοίας, *Abr.* 58; see also *Virt.* 11; *QG* 1.11), enabling it to distinguish virtue from vice (*Opif.* 154; *Somn.* 2.24; *QG* 1.11) and thereby act properly in particular situations. It enabled Joseph, for example, to achieve "evenness of conduct" in "the indescribable variety of circumstances that attended the whole of his life … regularity among things that were irregular, and harmony among things that were discordant" (*Jos.* 268-9, trans. Yonge), evenness, regularity, and harmony being characteristics of the divine realm (*Jos.* 24). It indicates how to persuade a judge to act justly (*Mos.* 2.236), what oaths to take (*Spec.* 2.12), how to face hardships such as illness or poverty (*Virt.* 5), and how soldiers should act in peacetime (*Virt.* 11; 14) and wartime (*Virt.* 32). In sum, it clarifies "what is to be

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[132] Julia Annas, *The Morality of Happiness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 73; Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 562n35.

done" (περὶ τὰ ποιητέα, *Leg.* 1.65; see also 1.74; *Mut.* 153.1; 1.325) and "regulates human life" (φρόνησις δὲ πρὸς ἀνθρωπίνου βίου διοίκησιν, *Praem.* 81) in accord with God's will.[133]

The outcome of the second, attention, is the acquisition or preservation of the traits requisite to right actions and Matthew elsewhere uses prudence to designate such. In 10:16, prudence names a trait or state missionaries should cultivate in the face of persecution: "See, I am sending you like sheep in the midst of wolves," Jesus says. "So be prudent (γίνεσθε οὖν φρόνιμοι) like serpents and single-minded (ἀκέραιοι) like doves."[134] As prudent and single-minded followers, the disciples are to "be on guard against people" (προσέχετε δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, 10:17a), for people will persecute them (10:17b-18, 21-22a), yet, despite the

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[133] See Peder Borgen, ""Yes', 'No', 'How Far?': The Participation of Jews and Christians in Pagan Cults," in *Early Christianity and Hellenistic Judaism* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 29–30; David T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria: On the Creation of the Cosmos According to Moses*, Philo of Alexandria Commentary Series 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 368; Per Jarle Bekken, *The Word Is Near You: A Study of Deuteronomy 30:12-14 in Paul's Letter to the Romans in a Jewish Context*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche 144 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 144; Albert C. Geljon and David T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria: On Cultivation*, Philo of Alexandria Commentary Series 4 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 99.

[134] Ἀκέραιος has the root meaning of "pure," "unmixed" and, like its synonym ἁπλοῦς, often comes by extension to mean "purely focused," "single-minded." See Epictetus, *Diatr.* 3.23; *Apoc. Paul* 29; Wettstein, *Novum Testamentum Graecum*, 1:371; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 181; Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 88. D reads ἁπλούστατοι instead of ἀκέραιοι. Davies and Allison consider D's reading "good interpretation" (*Matthew*, 1:181). The zoological comparisons in v. 16 both allude to the Bible. "Prudent like serpents" (φρόνιμοι ὡς οἱ ὄφεις) clearly recalls Gen 3:1 (ὁ δὲ ὄφις ἦν φρονιμώτατος). "Single-minded like doves" more vaguely alludes to Hos 7:11-12, where the dove is so pertinacious that it does not heed predators (for discussion, see Dearman, *The Book of Hosea*, 210). Perceiving the first allusion as negative, commentators have struggled to understand why the evangelist would make such a comparison (e.g., Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 85, 88). The evangelist, however, is not averse to negative images of discipleship; he compares disciples to "fishers of men," which can imply entrapment of people (Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:398), as well as recall biblical images of judgment (Hab 1:14-15; Jer 16:16; Amos 4:2; Ezek 29:4).

certainty of physical emotional and agony, are to eschew anxiety (μὴ μεριμνήσητε, 10:19; cf. μὴ φοβηθῆτε, 10:26, 28, 31) because "everyone who endures to end will be saved" (10:22b; cf. 24:13). As in chs. 24-5, imperturbability amidst hardship enables one to persist in discipleship, meaning, given the sense of endurance in 24:13, which repeats 10:22b, to persist in loving "people." Prudence is a matter of safeguarding an emotional state conducive to the actions required for salvation. In 24:45-51, "faithful and prudent" (πιστὸς δοῦλος καὶ φρόνιμος) describes a slave who maintains a proper life of discipleship, continuing to keep his master's commandment to feed his fellow slaves. In contrast to a wicked (κακός) slave, he keeps in mind that his master may return at any moment and judge his work and lets that knowledge direct his actions. Prudence is, again, a matter of preserving the inner conditions necessary for good deeds. Likewise, in 25:1-13, as I showed in ch. 4, the prudent distinguish themselves from the foolish (αἱ μωραὶ) by monitoring their interiority so that they maintain the dispositions necessary to persist in loving deeds despite the eschaton's delay. In all three passages, the prudent manage (themselves so as) to continue to love others despite adverse circumstances.

The person who hears and does Jesus words in Matt 5-7 represents then someone who employs them in exercises so that s/he becomes prudent and thereby able to embody the ethic summarized therein, while the person who only hears these sayings represents someone who fails to exercise himself with his Lord's words and consequently to refashion his intentions and values. Presumably, he does not come to perceive the sayings' applications to his own life in all its quotidian detail and eschatological trial and/or distractions such as the pummelings of persecution (5:10-12, 44; cf. 6:14-15) or anxiety over prestige (6:1, 5, 16, 25, 27-8, 31, 34; 7:1, 3) prevent him from taking the sayings to heart (cf. 5:8). He therefore lacks

the interior dimension that would make his righteousness surpass that of the Jewish leaders (5:20), fails to do God's will (7:15-23), and is condemned at the final judgment (7:24-7). This contrast between one who merely hears what is taught and one who comes to live by the teaching has abundant ancient parallels, among them Epictetus' distinction between those who learn Stoic ideas and those who "learn and practice" (μαθησόμενοι καὶ μελετήσοντες) them so that the ideas become part of them and they can invariably perceive and enact the right response to any situation (*Diatr.* 2.19; see also 1.1.14-17; 1.30.5; 2.1.30-33, 38; 2.6.14; 2.13.4; 2.16.2-3, 15; 3.7.17; 3.24.41; frg. 10).

The difference between these two respondents will be imperceptible until the eschaton, just as the sheep and wolves of the preceding passage will remain indistinguishable to the end and the weeds and wheat of 13:24-30, 36-43 will remain inseparable. While Matthew does not make this point explicitly, given his fascination with duplicity and hypocrisy, it is likely that he he imagines that the foundations of the houses, or lives, these two moral types construct are unseen and the two houses therefore indistinguishable until the tempest arrives.[135] Only at the judgment can one differentiate moral appearance from

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[135] Michael P. Knowles, "'Everyone Who Hears These Words of Mine': Parables on Discipleship (Matt 7:24–27//Luke 6:47–49; Luke 14:28–33; Luke 17:7–10; Matt 20:1-16)," in *The Challenge of Jesus' Parables*, ed. Richard N. Longenecker, McMaster New Testament Studies 4 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000), 289–90. Ancient parallels to the architectural metaphor in 7:24-7 include Prov 3:19-20; 9:1-3; 24:3-4; Sir 22:16-8; Philo, *Leg.* 1.48-9; 2.6; *Cher.* 101-2, which, like Matthew, complements an architectural metaphor with an arboreal one (cf. *Opif.* 41); *Sacr.* 81; *Gig.* 30; *Deus* 94.2; *Agr.* 169-71; *Conf.* 87; *Fug.* 175; *Mut.* 211; *Spec.* 2.110; *Contempl.* 34. For discussion of the biblical texts, see Leong Cheng Michael Phua, "Architectural Imagery," ed. Tremper Longman and Peter Enns, *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry & Writings* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP Academic, 2008); Raymond C. Van Leeuwen, "Cosmos, Temple, House: Building and Wisdom in Ancient Mesopotamia and Israel," in *From the Foundations to the Crenellations:*

moral reality. Only then can one distinguish a false foundation, here meaning improper motivations for one's seemingly good deeds, from a true one.

But while the difference may be presently imperceptible to humans, it is for Matthew, nonetheless, critical. The difference between those who do the exercises necessary for their deeds to be truly good and for them to persist in discipleship and those who merely perform right actions without the appropriate interior correlates or are deceived into pursuing earthly treasures rather than doing the divine will, is, in light of the preceding passage and the parable of the weeds, the difference between being God's child and the evil one's and, in light of 5:13-16, the difference between carrying out a mission that will induce others to glorify God and becoming useless. In the ongoing cosmic battle and on earthly terrain, the difference, however occluded now, is of ultimate significance. For Matthew, spiritual exercises make all the difference in the worlds.

External Evidence that the SM Resembles the Basis of a Spiritual Exercise

The external evidence for the function of the SM is not a separate work or works attributed to the same author, as was the case with Epicurus' and Epictetus' gnomologia, but the narrative that hosts it, Matt 1-4 and 8-28. The SM's integration into a narrative, indeed a biographical narrative, does not render it anomalous among ancient sayings collections. The collections in Tob 4:3-20, 12:6-10, in the biographical *Vita Aesopi* 109-10, and in *Ahikar*,

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which has influenced the gnomic and narrative portions of both Tobit and the *Vita Aesopi*,

form integral parts of the narratives in which they are extant.[136] The impression that the SM's

conclusion creates, that it facilitates a spiritual exercise through which one realizes Matthew's

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[136] On the close relationship between the sayings collections and the host narrative in Tobit, see Carey A. Moore, *Tobit: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 40A (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 176, 270; Lawrence M. Wills, *The Jewish Novel in the Ancient World*, Myth and Poetics (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), 88–90, who maintains that the sayings in the shorter version of ch. 4 comment on the narrative while those in the longer version introduce topics related to the social world of Tobit's author but not to the narrative; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Tobit*, Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2003), 291, 293; Robert J. Littman, *Tobit: The Book of Tobit in Codex Sinaiticus*, Septuagint Commentary Series (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 87: Tobit's sayings in ch. 4 "contain the central themes of the book"; Francis M. Macatangay, *The Wisdom Instructions in the Book of Tobit*, Deuterocanonical and cognate literature studies 12 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 115–78. On the relationship in *Vita Aesopi*, see Ioannes M. Konstantakos, *Akicharos: hē diēgēsē tou Achikar stēn archaia Hellada*, 3 vols. (Athens: Stigmi Publications, 2008), 3:496–540; cf. James M. Lindenberger, *The Aramaic Proverbs of Ahiqar*, The Johns Hopkins Near Eastern Studies (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 481. *Ahikar* features one or more collections of sayings within its narrative in its Aramaic, Syriac, Greek (= *Vita Aesopi*), Slavonic, Armenian, and Arabic versions (the Ethiopic version contains only an incipit and sayings), though the location of the sayings in the Aramaic version is disputed; while Lindenberger, among others, places the sayings collection after the narrative (*The Aramaic Proverbs of Ahiqar*), Michael Haslam, Ingo Kottsieper, and John Strugnell argue that it originally appeared within the story; see Michael Haslam, "3720. *Life of Aesop* (Addendum to 3331)," in *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, ed. Michael Haslam, vol. 53, 1986, 150; Ingo Kottsieper, *Die Sprache der Aḥiqarsprüche*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 194 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1990); John Strugnell, "Problems in the Development of the Aḥîqar Tale," *ErIsr* 26 (1999): 209–10. On the nonetheless integral connection between the sayings and the narrative in Aramaic *Ahikar*, see Küchler, *Weisheitstraditionen*, 330; Jonas C. Greenfield, "The Wisdom of Ahiqar," in *'Al Kanfei Yonah: Collected Studies of Jonas C. Greenfield on Semitic Philology*, ed. Shalom M. Paul, Michael E. Stone, and Avital Pinnick (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 47, 49–50; Michael Weigl, *Die aramäischen Achikar-Sprüche aus Elephantine und die alttestamentliche Weisheitsliteratur*, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 399 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 696; cf. Lindenberger, *The Aramaic Proverbs of Ahiqar*, 17–9, 136–7, who portrays the sayings as a loosely related appendix. Cf. compositions such as the *Instruction of Ankhsheshonq* and the *Vita Secundi Philosophi* (cf. *Let. Aris.* 189-294), in which a narrative prologue establishes the *ethos* of a saying collection's putative speaker; on such works, see Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q*, 266–7, 274–80, 298, 307–9, 325–8. For a succinct overview of the use of gnomic collections within non-gnomic genres, see Wilson, *The Mysteries of Righteousness*, 40–1. On the two-source hypothesis, Matthew's source for the SM, Jesus' inaugural sermon in Q, itself appears within a proto-biographical writing; see Kloppenborg, *The Formation of Q*, 325–8.

ethical ideal, coheres with and is supported by several features of the surrounding narrative. We will focus on two: the evangelist's portrayal of moral progress, specifically in his references to forgiveness, and of Jesus, specifically his identification of Jesus with Wisdom, a figure whose words were to be taken to heart.

The First Gospel's repeated exhortations for disciples to reconcile with and forgive other disciples (5:21-6; 6:12, 14; 18:15-35) and to seek forgiveness for themselves regularly (6:12) imply that Matthew imagines that in living out their repentance disciples will inevitably continue to mistreat others and need their forgiveness and will act with wrong intentions and need God's forgiveness. Discipleship, or moral progress, is a prolonged process it seems of acquiring, re-acquiring, and maintaining the inner states necessary for right deeds. This understanding of the moral life as a long and repetitive travail does not require but does cohere with the notion that Matthew would depict the SM as the basis for a regimented practice. Disciples must reacquire and maintain proper interiority. The SM provides a means by which to do so.

Moreover, this gospel implicitly presents Jesus, particularly with respect to his teaching of God's will, as Wisdom incarnate.[137] This identification is pertinent to the question of whether passages outside of chs. 5-7 support the notion that the evangelist depicts the SM as the basis for a transformative exercise because among the fund of

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[137] Celia Deutsch, "Wisdom in Matthew: Transformation of a Symbol," *NovT* 32 (1990): 36–8. On Matthew's wisdom Christology, see further James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation*, 2d ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1996), 197–205. The relevant passages include 11:19, 28-30; 23:34-6, 37-9.

characterizations of Wisdom is the claim that her words are to be internalized, that is, are to facilitate a meditative practice.[138] The root texts for this notion are Prov 3:1-10, which commands the reader to store wisdom's words in his heart (τηρείτω σὴ καρδία, v. 1b; see also v. 3 MT) so that they replace his own "wisdom" (σοφία, v. 5b; see also v. 7), and 7:1-3, which orders the reader to "guard" wisdom's sayings (φύλασσε ἐμοὺς λόγους) by "hiding" (κρύψον) them within himself (παρὰ σεαυτῷ, v. 1) and to "write them on the tablet of the heart" (ἐπίγραψον δὲ ἐπὶ τὸ πλάτος τῆς καρδίας, v. 3b). Other manifestations of this mythologoumenon include Prov 2:1-11; Ps 119:11; Sir 14:20-24; 16:24-5; 11Q5 XVIII, 1–16; 2 Bar 51.3. Matthew does not explicitly refer to this notion but it may explain how the intended hermeneutic of the SM relates to his Christology and so support the notion that disciples are to meditate on Jesus' words.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the ethical ideal of the SM and its concluding declaration of its intended hermeneutic suggest that, in Matthew's portrayal, the SM forms the basis for a spiritual exercise that transforms Jesus' followers inwardly so that they do God's will and that such a suggestion coheres with Matthew's portrayal of moral progress and of Jesus as Wisdom. It has thereby completed the presentation of the argument that the evidence that

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[138] On the varying depictions of Wisdom in antiquity, see Burton L. Mack, *Logos und Sophia: Untersuchungen zur Weisheitstheologie im hellenistischen Judentum*, Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments 10 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973), 34–62; Deutsch, "Wisdom in Matthew," 17–31; Walter T. Wilson, "Works of Wisdom (Matt 9, 9–17; 11, 16–19)," *ZNW* 106 (2015): 8.

indicates that *Kyriai Doxai* and the *Encheiridion* facilitate spiritual exercises exists also for the SM. The next chapter concludes this study by comparing the evidence for the formative function of these sayings collections and outlining the implications of seeing Matt 5–7 as facilitating moral transformation.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

This study began by posing a very general question: how do people become able to realize ethical ideals? How do they transform themselves morally? It then quickly narrowed its focus to one particular text and asked how the Gospel of Matthew depicts self-transformation. This conclusion presents the results of the preceding investigation and its implications for our understanding of Matthew's ethics in its ancient contexts, the history of self-transformation in antiquity, and the study of ethics generally.

To describe how Matthew imagines disciples attain moral ideals, I selected as a starting point Matthew's depiction of regimented practices and then observed that Matt 5-7, the Sermon on the Mount, is a sayings collection, a literary form that in antiquity often forms the basis for particular regimented practices, namely transformative exercises of meditation and attention, which Pierre Hadot insightfully characterizes as forms of "spiritual exercises." That some collections facilitate such exercises does not mean, of course, that the SM does. It was therefore necessary to clarify how one can discern whether any particular gnomic work is intended for such use. Chapter two offered such clarification. After arguing that ancient and modern distinctions between types of sayings offer little help in identifying gnomologia designed to make possible spiritual exercises and that gnomic collections play a range of roles in antiquity, among them helping people to acquire new ways of thinking, feeling, and acting—to transform themselves morally—, I presented the evidence that

Epicurus' *Kyriai Doxai* and Epictetus' *Encheiridion*—two gnomic works that scholars routinely describe as facilitating moral transformation—form the basis for transformative practices. For Epicurus, that evidence consists of the fact that the *Kyriai Doxai* presents his moral ideal, as found throughout the works attributed to him, in a pithy form easily held in the mind for reflection and guidance, the fact that, in the works surrounding the *Kyriai Doxai*, he depicts moral progress as requiring one to memorize his words and employ them in exercises, and the fact that *testimonia* reveal that later Epicureans did indeed use this gnomic collection in spiritual exercises. For Epictetus, the evidence consists of the fact that the *Encheiridion* likewise epitomizes Epictetus' moral ideal, as found throughout the works attributed to him, in a gnomic and thus easily remembered form, that the *Encheiridion's* internal indicators of purpose (its title and introduction) characterize it as a way to stock the mind with Epictetus' teachings, and that Epictetus' understanding of moral progress supports the notion that he or one of his followers would prescribe exercises based on his sayings.

Chapters three through five showed that most of the types of internal and external evidence that indicate that the *Kyriai Doxai* and the *Encheiridion* facilitate spiritual exercises exist for Matthew's SM. Chapters three and four presented Matthew's moral ideal, meaning the self idealized in the evangelist's narrative, ch. 3 by tracing Matthew's use of the metaphor of trees and their fruits for the source of conduct and conduct itself, ch. 4 by examining Matthew's treatment of purity in 15:1-20, eschatological preparation and judgment in chs. 24-5, and hypocrisy throughout the gospel. Chapter three showed that Matthew uses the fruits metaphor to contrast the Jewish leaders and Jesus' disciples with respect to their actions and the roots thereof, with respect to whether they holistically—genuinely—do God's will. In 12:33-7 and 21:33-46, the evangelist maintains that the Jewish leaders resist John's and Jesus'

calls to repent and then oppose Jesus because they are arrogant and obstinate, because they

elect to rebel against rather than submit to the divine plan, even though they purport to do

God's will (3:7-12; 21:18-22). Their refusal to repent is the evil fruit of their pride, of what

Matthew considers their fundamental opposition to God, their evil nature. In 7:15-23; 13:1-

9, 18-23, 24-30, 36-43, he insists that those who repent and become Jesus' followers must

also produce "fruit," meaning the good deeds God demands, which requires not only the

understanding of and receptivity to the divine plan that humility affords but also inner

stability in the face of persecution and the proper perspective on worldly goods, and,

moreover, they must do those good deeds out of proper intentions if they are to enter the

kingdom of heaven. They must maintain the traits and states that make right actions possible

and their right actions must be the fruits of good trees, for in this gospel following Jesus and

doing right actions for the right reasons are what it means genuinely to do God's will. They

define Matthew's ideal self.

Chapter four showed that these same ideals animate passages where the fruits

metaphor does not appear. In 15:1-20, Matthew claims that the Pharisees reject Jesus' words

and deeds because they have defiled hearts, meaning they are fundamentally evil, or hostile to

God, and therefore harbor wrong intentions, from which all manner of evil deeds result—the

same general points that Matthew makes using the fruits metaphor in 12:33-7; and 21:33-46.

In chs. 24-5, the evangelist repeatedly exhorts disciples to surveil themselves so as to

maintain, despite personal hardship, the particular intellectual and emotional traits,

specifically the understanding that Jesus will return and the imperturbability (24:3-35; 24:36-

25:30), that will enable them to produce the love of God and others—the good deeds—

required at the eschatological judgement (25:31-46), just as 13:1-9, 18-23 claims that

producing fruit requires understanding of God's actions as well as inner stability. Through

his development of the theme of hypocrisy, Matthew contends that right actions must result

from right intentions if they are to prove eschatologically valuable, the point the fruits

metaphor conveys in 3:7-12; 7:15-23; 13:24-30, 36-43; and 21:18-22. Together chs. 3-4

showed that Matthew's narrative idealizes the person who is humble enough to repent and,

in turn, become Jesus' disciple and who maintains the imperturbability and perspective

necessary to persist in doing the good deeds God wills and will repay and the right intentions

required to make those deeds truly good. They showed that Matthew idealizes proper

interiority.

With the evangelist's moral ideal established, chapter five then presented the evidence

internal and external to the SM that Matthew portrays it as the basis for an exercise that helps

one achieve that moral ideal. I demonstrated first that Matt 5-7 presents in gnomic form the

moral norm featured throughout the gospel, the demand for proper interiority. After an

introduction that casts the Sermon as the way in which the repentant, persecuted, and

eschatologically blessed community of disciples carries out its divinely sanctioned mission to

the world, the SM features representative admonitions that illustrate righteousness in three

moral spheres: relations with others, God, and goods, a trio that together forms a

synechdoche for the moral life, for righteousness *in toto*. The first and second parts of the

Sermon's body (5:17-48; 6:1-18) exhort readers to do right actions towards other people and

God out of right dispositions and motives, out of what Matt 5:8 calls purity of heart, while

the third (6:19-7:12) calls for the preservation of the proper perspective on monetary and

social goods, on what the parable of the sower terms "the anxiety of this age and the deceit of

wealth" (13:22). Matthew 5:17-7:24 thus epitomize righteousness and equate it with the

gospel's two main claims about the ideal disciple: s/he has the perspectives and attitudes necessary to persist in going good deeds and the motives necessary for ostensibly good deeds to be truly good.

Second, ch. 4 argued that the SM's conclusion indicates its intended function. Matthew 7:24-7 calls for the reader to "do"—to implement—the preceding teaching, which, given the nature of that teaching, would require two related exercises. One, because the contents of the SM are paradigmatic and underdetermined—gnomic—and organized into synecdochal units, to "do" them, one must discern their relevance to and proper application in specific situations by reflecting on them—a task their succinct and memorable form aids— and by extrapolating from the particular sayings to the whole they represent. In so doing, in so exercising oneself, one necessarily furthers one's understanding of the divine will, of what it means and takes to love God and neighbor. One develops moral insight. Two, because the sayings exhort one to maintain a constant vigil over not only one's actions but also one's dispositions towards others when treating them justly (5:17-48) and one's intentions when practicing piety (6:1-18) and over one's perspectives on material and social goods (6:19-7:12), implementing them has the effect of purifying one's dispositions and intentions so that one's deeds are good fruit and forging the inner stability and the perspective on worldly goods that enable one to persist in doing good deeds. The exercise of policing one's inner states that the sayings of the SM mandate and, by lodging themselves easily in the mind, facilitate helps create and perpetuate the ideal Matthean self. The conclusion to Matt 5-7 thus calls for the reader to use the sayings that constitute the SM in spiritual exercises that foster insight into and the acquisition and maintenance of the inward traits and states requisite to right actions, which are required at the eschatological judgment.

Third, ch, 4 maintained that the notion that Matthew would present the SM as the basis for transformative work on the self coheres with the evangelist's depiction of moral progress and of Jesus. The First Gospel's repeated exhortations for disciples to reconcile with and forgive other disciples (5:21-6; 6:12, 14; 18:15-35) and to seek forgiveness for themselves continually (6:12; cf. 7:5) as well as surveil themselves (chs. 5-7, 24-5) imply that Matthew imagines that the ideal self endures a prolonged and fraught process of acquiring, re-acquiring, and maintaining the inner states necessary for right deeds. While that portrayal does not necessarily mean that discipleship need entail exercising oneself with Jesus' sayings, the notion that Matthew portrays the SM as the basis for exercises is consonant with it. Furthermore, this gospel presents Jesus as a wisdom teacher—indeed as Wisdom itself—that is, as a figure whose words merit internalization.

Thus, this study has demonstrated that internally, like the *Kyriai Doxai* and the *Encheiridion*, the SM epitomizes the ethic that its author articulates elsewhere—in Matthew's case, the ethic found in chs. 1-4 and 8-28 of his gospel—and presents that ethic in gnomic form, allowing its essential tenets to be held easily in the mind and so perpetually on hand for exercises. And like the *Encheiridion*, it features an internal declaration of its intended hermeneutic, of its intended use in morally transformative exercises, the *Encheiridion* at its beginning, the SM at its conclusion. Externally, like Epictetus, Matthew portrays progress towards his moral ideal in a way consonant with the notion that those making progress would employ a gnomic collection in exercises. And, just as the *Kyriai Doxai* is extant alongside writings that exhort the reader to use them in transformative exercises, so the SM is extant within a biography that portrays its speaker as divine Wisdom, as a figure whose words must be used to transform oneself. There exist no *testimonia* describing the SM's use

comparable to those describing the *Kyriai Doxai*'s, though, as I showed in the introduction, Augustine at least does argue that the collection forms the basis for transformative work on the self. The table below summarizes the similarities between the two gnomic collections most commonly described as the bases for exercises and the SM:

Table 6: Evidence that the *Kyriai Doxia*, the *Encheiridion*, and Matt 5-7 Facilitate Spiritual Exercises

	Kyriai Doxai	*Encheiridion*	Matt 5-7
Internal Evidence	The *Kyriai Doxai* epitomizes in gnomic form the ethic Epicurus articulates throughout his corpus.	The *Encheiridion* epitomizes in gnomic form the ethic that Epictetus articulates throughout his corpus.	The SM epitomizes in gnomic form the ethic Matthew articulates throughout his gospel.
		The title and introduction imply that its contents are meant to facilitate a spiritual exercise.	The epilogue's conclusion (7:24-7) declares that the SM's contents are to be "done," which would entail a spiritual exercise.
External evidence		Epictetus' understanding of moral progress in the Discourses supports the notion that he or one of his followers would prescribe the use of his sayings in exercises.	Matthew's portrayal of discipleship supports the notion that the SM forms the basis for an exercise.
	Other writings by Epicurus mandate that his words be used in exercises.		Other sections of Matthew portray Jesus as Wisdom, a figure whose words should be used in exercises.
	Testimonia reveal that Epicureans did employ the *Kyriai Doxai* in spiritual exercises		

Of course, even where the SM resembles these collections, it differs from them.

While both Epictetus' and Matthew's portrayal of moral progress support the use of a gnomic

collection in spiritual exercises, Epictetus' corpus features more general and explicit exhortations to transformative practices. Whereas Matthew simply advises readers to surveil their volitional and emotional states so that they can do the requisite good deeds, Epictetus describes moral development generically as training, exercising, practicing, and acquiring a skill or trade. While both Epicurus and Matthew attribute their gnomic collections to speakers whose words should be utilized in exercises, only Epicurus explicitly calls for readers to memorize and exercise themselves with the speaker's words. Because of their greater explicitness, the external evidence that the *Encheiridion* and the *Kyriai Doxai* enable exercises is stronger than the external evidence for the SM. Moreover, the motives for spiritual exercises differ between the philosophers and the evangelist. Epicurus and Epictetus concur that moral progress requires exercises because it entails the painstaking work of replacing mistaken but inveterate opinions. Matthew, on the other hand, implies that discipleship entails exercise because persecution, worldly cares, the delay of the Parousia, and human frailty in general incessantly threaten to dissipate one's ability to persist in loving others and God. Epictetus and Epicurus emphasize effecting transformation, Matthew maintaining it. Nonetheless, the same kinds of evidence that lead scholars to believe that the *Kyriai Doxai* and the *Encheiridion* facilitate spiritual exercises exist for the SM and in sufficiently comparable quality that in as much as one accepts that the *Kyriai Doxai* and the *Encheiridion* are gnomic epitomae whose literary surroundings insist that the words of the figure to whom the sayings are attributed should be employed in exercises and/or whose understandings of moral progress support such use and one therefore concludes that their authors have presented these collections as the bases for spiritual exercises that enable one to achieve a particular moral ideal, then one must conclude that Matthew presents the SM as the

basis for a spiritual exercise that helps one achieve the ethical ideal enshrined in his gospel. If the *Kyrai Doxai* and the *Encheiridion* facilitate moral transformation, so does Matt 5-7.

Finally, to clarify what this study claims, it is instructive to note what it does not. One, I have neither suggested nor argued that Matthew presents all gnomes in his gospel as objects of meditation. I have maintained only that the evangelist presents the gnomes in chs. 5-7 thusly. I consider it likely that Matthew deploys sayings in other chapters to other ends, at least primarily, but proving that point and the delineating those ends would require additional investigation. If, however, the evangelist does present other gnomes secondarily or even primarily as additional fuel for transformative exercises, he surely does so in large part through the primacy effect created by making Jesus' first extended discourse a formative gnomologium.[1] In other words, if other sayings in this gospel are formative instruments, they are so largely because the SM, so programmatically placed at the beginning of Jesus' teaching ministry, leads readers to expect they will be. This study has not prosecuted a global thesis about the functions of gnomes in Matthew but, by studying fundamental chapters, it has laid the groundwork for a larger investigation.

Two, this study has made no claims about "the Matthean community." One cannot be certain that the evangelist, his church, or his readers actually employed the sayings of the SM in transformative exercises because one cannot be certain to what degree the narrative world Matthew constructs corresponds to actual practices; the possible relationships between

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[1] On "primacy effects" in narratives, see Sternberg, *Expositional Modes and Temporal Ordering in Fiction*, 93–8; Perry, "Literary Dynamics," 53–8.

literary and lived reality are always multiple.[2] It is certainly possible that Matthew presents the gnomes in Matt 5-7 as he does because he belongs to a community, meaning a highly coherent and uniform social group, that employs Jesus' sayings in spiritual exercises and/or in order to prescribe such a practice to a specific community or communities.[3] But it is also possible that the evangelist composes as he does for other reasons, such as to portray Jesus as a philosophical sage, for example, and for other audiences, such as a motley mix of other highly literate consumers and producers of religious texts.[4] That the evangelist writes from or for a "community" cannot be assumed nor can any simple correspondence between aspects of the evangelist's literary composition and his or her social setting. Either claim must be argued and I have argued neither. I have maintained only that Matthew's gospel portrays the SM as the basis for a spiritual exercise and a means by which Jesus' followers are to attain his moral ideal. This study's claims are strictly literary. These literary claims do have implications though for our understanding of the place of Matthew's ethics in the ancient world and of the history of self-cultivation and for the study of ethics generally.

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[2] See, *inter alia*, Luke Timothy Johnson, "On Finding the Lukan Community: A Cautious Cautionary Essay," in *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1979), 87–100.

[3] I take this definition of a community as a highly coherent and uniform social group from Stanley K. Stowers, "The Concept of 'Community' and the History of Early Christianity," *MTSR* 23 (2011): 238–56.

[4] On the problems associated with claiming that early Christian writings arise from and for specific communities, see, *inter alia*, Abraham J. Malherbe, *Social Aspects of Early Christianity* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), 13; Stowers, "The Concept of 'Community' and the History of Early Christianity."

Implications of this Study

This study implies that we should view the evangelist as, among other things, one of a host of ancient moralists who choose to portray the moral life as a prolonged travail. Already in this conclusion we have observed one difference between Matthew on the one hand and Epicurus and Epictetus on the other: for Matthew much more than Epicurus or Epictetus, spiritual exercises preserve rather than just create a transformed self. Nonetheless, Matthew's characterization of moral progress as a matter of extended and arduous exercise, whether to attain or maintain transformation, aligns him with Epicurus and Epictetus, among others. It distinguishes him at the same time from someone like the second-century orator Maximus of Tyre, who, by listing vices and virtues and exhorting his audience to select between them, portrays moral transformation as the instantaneous result of choosing it (*Or.* 36.4).[5] This distinction is noteworthy because it reveals that Matthew's ethics, while far from idiosyncratic in this respect, are particular; they are neither universal nor inevitable in antiquity.

This study also insists that Hadot's history of spiritual exercises be forsworn. As we saw in the introduction, Hadot claims that spiritual exercises rise to prominence in Greek and Roman philosophies and only enter Christianity in the second century C.E. when Christians self-consciously borrow them from the philosophical schools. If, as I have argued, Matthew portrays the SM as the basis for a spiritual exercise, then the notion that discipleship to Jesus

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[5] I thank Abraham Malherbe for suggesting Maximus of Tyre to me as a stark contrast to Matthew. See the introduction to and translation of *Or.* 36 in his *Moral Exhortation*, 72–9.

entails such exercises appears earlier than Hadot would have us believe. It appears already in the first century and so rather than being imported into a maturing religious phenomenon, spiritual exercises shape Christianity's infancy. Moreover, while the lineage Hadot imagines, in which philosophical schools birth spiritual exercises and philosophically educated Christians adopt them, is possible and is made more plausible recently by several studies that argue that Matthew is directly indebted to Stoicism in other ways,[6] since Epictetus' *Encheiridion* and Matt 5-7 are roughly contemporaneous—in fact, the SM is older—the more likely relationship is that with respect to transformative exercises both the Stoics and Matthew are symptomatic of their age, manifestations of a common *mentalité*. In that case, the task of historical scholarship is not to trace a genealogy of spiritual exercises but to outline the extent of and the factors that lead to their appearance in multiple phenomena in the early Imperial period. "The question is not 'which is first?', but rather 'why both, at more or less the same time?'"[7]

Finally, despite undermining Hadot's periodization, this study provides support to the claim, made by a range of recent scholars, that Hadot's concept of spiritual exercises, though framed as primarily a theory of ancient philosophy, constitutes a general theory of ethical

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[6] Stowers, "Jesus the Teacher and Stoic Ethics in the Gospel of Matthew"; Roberts, "Anger, Emotion, and Desire."

[7] Jonathan Z. Smith, *Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity*, Jordan Lectures in Comparative Religion 14 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 114. Smith makes this point about the comparison of early Christianities and ancient religions with respect to dying and rising cult figures. Satlow argues that rabbinic portrayals of Torah study derive from the same "*mentalité*" of self-cultivation found in Greco-Roman philosophical schools ("And on the Earth You Shall Sleep").

formation and, in turn, a powerful analytical tool for describing and comparing other ethics.

Hadot's ultimate goal was not a general theory of human transformation or ethical

development.[8] In theorizing ancient philosophy, he hoped rather to retrieve a viable

spirituality for the present. He began his scholarly career as a priest and formed part of a

movement of clerical scholars who focused their studies on the religious dimensions of

ancient philosophy and who, seeking existential meaning independent of modernist

foundations and rejecting Neothomist attempts at the same, found in ancient philosophy a

supplement to or substitution for Western Catholicism.[9] By showing that Plotinus'

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[8] Jonathan Schofer claims that in conceptualizing spiritual exercises, Hadot "aims to develop a category that can be used in comparative and theoretical reflection" (*Making of a Sage*, 163). Schofer would be correct if he meant reflection on the history of Western philosophy, such as comparisons between Plotinus and Wittgenstein or theories of philosophy in particular periods, all of which Hadot produced. But it is inaccurate to claim that Hadot aimed to facilitate cross-cultural comparison or comparisons between philosophy and some other human enterprise, with the possible exception of religion or spirituality. Until late in his career, Hadot aptly described himself as "hostile to comparative philosophy" because he believed "it could cause confusions and arbitrary connections" (*What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, 278). Later he warmed to the idea and welcomed, indeed celebrated the widespread, interdisciplinary use of his work; see Hadot, "Exercices spirituels," 233; Davidson, "Spiritual Exercises and Ancient Philosophy," 482.

[9] Wayne J. Hankey, "One Hundred Years of Neoplatonism in France: A Brief Philosophical History," in *Levinas and the Greek Heritage*, Studies in Philosophical Theology 32 (Leuven: Peeters, 2006), esp. 27–28. See also Wayne J. Hankey, "Philosophy as Way of Life for Christians?: Iamblichan and Porphyrian Reflections on Religion, Virtue, and Philosophy in Thomas Aquinas," *Laval Théologique et Philosophique* 59 (2003). Hadot is Hankey's chief example of this trend. Other examples include André-Jean Festugière, Jean Trouillard, Henry Duméry, Joseph Combès, Henri-Dominique Saffrey, Édouard Jeauneau, and Stanislas Breton, whose comments are illustrative: "Christian reflection [on the Passion and the Cross] frequently dovetailed with my preoccupation with Greek and Neoplatonic thought" (in an interview with Richard Kearney: "Stanislas Breton: Being, God, and the Poetics of Relation," in *Debates in Continental Philosophy Conversations with Contemporary Thinkers*, Perspectives in Continental Philosophy 37 [New York: Fordham University Press, 2004], 138; see also Stanislas Breton, "Actualité du néoplatonisme," in *Études néoplatoniciennes. (Conférences de) Jean Trouillard, Pierre Hadot, Heinrich Dörrie, Fernand Brunner, Maurice de Gandillac, Stanislas Breton*, ed. Jean Trouillard [Neuchâtel: Éditions de la Baconnière, 1973], 110–26). Maria Antonaccio attributes Hadot's conception of philosophy to his studies of existentialist

metaphysical system charts a path of spiritual progress, Hadot intended "to make the Plotinian spiritual itinerarium accessible to the general public."[10] When he decided that Plotinus' mystical experiences were unattainable, he turned to the Neoplatonist's predecessors: "As I grow older, Plotinus speaks to me less and less…. I have become considerably detached from him. From 1970 on, I have felt very strongly that it was Epicureanism and Stoicism which could nourish the spiritual life of men and women of our times, as well as my own. That was how I came to write my book on spiritual exercises."[11] Hadot thus casts the spirituality of philosophy in its original and ancient form as a contemporary alternative to the spirituality offered by religions and sees his scholarship as disseminating the former. He limns the past in a search of a present existential alternative, not a portable analytical tool.

Nevertheless, Hadot's account of philosophy as a system of exercises that foster an idealized existence does suggest a way of and provide a vocabulary for studying ethical

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philosophy at the Sorbonne ("Contemporary Forms of *Askesis* and the Return of Spiritual Exercises," *Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics* 18 [1998]: 77). Our interpretations are not mutually exclusive but I would argue that Hadot's comments suggest that those studies, like his studies of ancient philosophy and ancient Christianity, emerge from his own religious quest.

[10] Hankey, "One Hundred Years of Neoplatonism in France," 31.

[11] Hadot, "Postscript: An Interview with Pierre Hadot," 280–1. See also Hadot, "Reflections on the Idea of the 'Cultivation of the Self,'" 211: "I think modern man can practice the spiritual exercises of antiquity, at the same time separating them from the philosophical or mythic discourse which came along with them. It is therefore not necessary, in order to practice these exercises, to believe in the Stoics' nature or universal reason. Rather, as one practices them, one lives concretely according to reason"; Davidson, "Introduction: Pierre Hadot and the Spiritual Phenomenon of Ancient Philosophy," 2: "Hadot has also been increasingly preoccupied with the pertinence of ancient thought for philosophy today, recognizing that ancient experience raises questions that *we* cannot and should not overlook or ignore."

systems in diverse contexts and, as we saw in the introduction, he allows for such a use of his characterization. His work implies that regimented practices exist to form people into an ethical ideal or, to state the matter in the other direction, people pursuing an ethical ideal tend to organize their activities so as to progress towards that ideal. They develop formative regimens, "spiritual exercises." Therefore, just as Hadot examines each ancient philosophical school in terms of its desired way of life and shows how its beliefs, social structures, and exercises constitute mechanisms for realizing that way of life, so could one examine any individual or community that aims, implicitly or explicitly, to realize a vision of what the human being should become. And so scholars have done. Jeremy Driscoll, for instance, in his commentary on Evagrius' *Ad Monachos* employs Hadot's concept of spiritual exercises as an analytic tool, a theoretical frame for describing how Evagrius' writings relate to Evagrius' vision of the human being's *telos*,[12] and thereby "open[s] up dimensions of ancient" Christianity "we have typically overlooked or forgotten."[13] Jonathan Schofer uses Hadot's description of philosophical exercises as both a theoretical lens for describing and a point of comparison to the rabbinic work *The Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan*.[14] And Aaron

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[12] Driscoll, *Evagrius Ponticus*, 200–14.

[13] Davidson, "Spiritual Exercises and Ancient Philosophy," 482. Davidson writes that Hadot's work "open[s] up dimensions of ancient philosophy we have typically overlooked or forgotten."

[14] Schofer, *Making of a Sage*, 163–5.

Stalnaker utilizes Hadot's theory as a "theoretical tool" and a "bridge concept" for describing

and comparing the ethics of Augustine and Xunxi.[15]

Hadot's theory of ethical formation is not idiosyncratic. The questions it addresses

(How do people become who they are? How do people transform who they are?) and the

answers it offers (by regimented practices, which are authorized by particular worldviews)

also figure prominently in a range of other contemporary theorizations, such as theories of

subject formation[16] and asceticism,[17] as well as in philosophical virtue ethics[18] and, as just

discussed, in certain approaches to descriptive and comparative religious ethics.[19] As Hadot

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[15] Stalnaker, *Overcoming Our Evil*, esp, 39–44.

[16] See, for example, Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1997).

[17] See Valantasis, "Constructions of Power," 38; *The Gospel of Thomas*, 22: "I understand asceticism to include all the actions, called performances, that are required to build a new identity, called a subjectivity.... At the heart of asceticism is the desire to create a new person as a minority person within a larger religious culture"; *The New Q*, 4–5: "The point of asceticism and of ascetical formation revolves around doing things … intended to create a new identity subversive of the identity promulgated by the dominant culture in which the ascetic lives." Valantasis' theory of asceticism appears in an earlier form in "A Theory of the Social Functions of Asceticism," in *The Making of the Self: Ancient and Modern Asceticism* (Eugene, Or.: Cascade, 2008), 3–13; and *in nuce* in his dissertation: Richard Valantasis, *Spiritual Guides of the Third Century: A Semiotic Study of the Guide-Disciple Relationship in Christianity, Neoplatonism, Hermetism, and Gnosticism*, Harvard Dissertations in Religion 27 (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 3. See also Elizabeth A. Clark, *Reading Renunciation: Asceticism and Scripture in Early Christianity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 17: "[e]arly Christian ascetics assumed that humans were transformable: the human person could be improved by ascetic practice…. ascetic practitioners believed that attention to the body's discipline could improve 'the self.'… Men and women are not slaves to the habitual, but can cultivate extraordinary forms of human existence"; Foucault, *Hermeneutics of the Subject*, 398.

[18] MacIntyre, *After Virtue*. Cf. Michel Foucault, *The Use of Pleasure* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985), 25–32.

[19] Antonaccio, "Contemporary Forms of *Askesis* and the Return of Spiritual Exercises," 70–4; Schofer, *Making of a Sage*; Stalnaker, *Overcoming Our Evil*.

himself sees, his interests exemplify larger trends in the humanities and he has rightly deemed

the intersection of his and so many other intellectual itineraries "a sign of the times."[20] But his

articulation of a way of describing how people attain moral ideals is particularly lucid and,

others have argued, particularly useful for understanding the ethics of such figures as Rabbi

Nathan, Evagrius, Augustine, and Xunxi. It is particularly useful for understanding

Matthew's ethics as well and therefore likely of manifold utility to a host of other ethical

investigations and especially to anyone seeking to address the general question with which

this study began: how do people attain moral ideals?

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[20] Pierre Hadot, *Exercices spirituels et philosophie antique*, 2d ed. (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1987), 233, as quoted and translated in Davidson, "Spiritual Exercises and Ancient Philosophy," 482.

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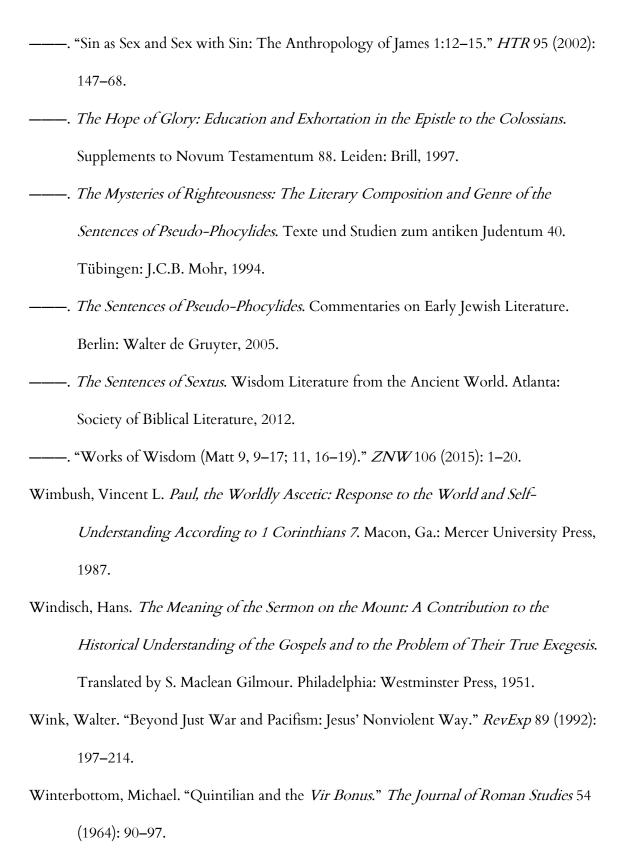
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