

**An investigation of the Beatitudes of Matthew:
Between oral tradition and Greek text**

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Dedication

This thesis could not have been written without the support and love of my wife Sanet. All her life she has given sacrificially to the poor. She continues to challenge me in this area and remains my greatest motivator to embrace the poor. From her I have learned to serve with love and to give with quality.

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Introduction

It is a lamentable fact that the words of Jesus have not been handed down to us in the language with which they were originally given. Very few would suggest that the Greek records of his words contained in the canonical gospels are without editing by the evangelists who wrote them down. Yet, it is also true that in many cases care was taken to preserve the original Semitic words of Jesus in a slavishly literal way producing a Greek translation which, at times, reflects very poor Greek but beautifully preserves a Semitism. It seems self-apparent, therefore, that a more accurate understanding of the words of Jesus can be gained by reconstructing them into Hebrew and Aramaic.

One of the basic tenets of this thesis is that just such a situation exists with the Beatitudes in Matthew 5.3-10. Each beatitude will be reconstructed in both Hebrew and Aramaic with a view not only to assess the idioms contained in them but to see how they contribute to the structure of the Beatitudes as a whole.

The reason for offering reconstructions into both Hebrew and Aramaic is the fact that both remain a real possibility for the original words of Jesus. For the most part, idioms that exist in Hebrew also exist in Aramaic and vice versa. Only occasionally does it happen that a phrase exists which could not just as easily be rendered in either language.

It is the Greek text of Matthew 5.3-10 which is canonical. The words and idioms of this text must be what guides our faith and practice, not a supposed Hebrew or Aramaic original. But, one must read these Greek words with an understanding of the Jewish idioms and allusions that are represented. The goal is to take this Jewish understanding of the Greek text and translate it into English “reproducing the closest natural equivalent, first in meaning and secondly in style” (Nida 1959:107). Taking a peek, as it were, under the Greek blanket to see the Hebrew/Aramaic words of Jesus is essential to defining more accurately the significance of the Beatitudes.

In so far as a Hebrew or Aramaic word or idiom can be identified as underlying the Greek text it will be compared with its usage in the Old Testament, Dead Sea Scrolls, Targums, Rabbinic literature, and Syriac texts. The wording, grammar, and syntax of the Beatitudes will be investigated according to the latest knowledge of languages current in first-century Palestine. The rationalization is this: reconstructing the Beatitudes in specifically Jewish Hebrew and Aramaic idioms should lead to a greater understanding of what each beatitude means. Each chapter will deal not only with reconstructing wording which would have given rise to the Greek text but how this affects the meaning of each beatitude.

This process is not cut and dried and is extremely open to abuse. Care must be taken before making assumptions that a Hebrew or Aramaic word used in the Dead Sea Scrolls, for example, would mean exactly the same thing when issued from the mouth of Jesus. “A term may receive a new twist of meaning almost overnight, or have one particular nuance which is singular to a particular geographical area, or even to a particular sub-language within that geographical area” (Hurst 1986:72). Any given word can display regional differences in meaning. For instance, the Talmud (*Ned* 66b) tells of a Babylonian Jew who had communication problems with his Jerusalemite wife, with comical consequences. The man told his wife to take some lamps and break them on the head (lintel) of *the door* [*baba*]. She misunderstands and breaks them, instead, on the renowned Rabbi Babba ben Buta’s head! Thus, it must be accepted that the local dialects of any given language will never overlap perfectly.

This is not the extent of the problem. Supposing that a passage, such as the Beatitudes were preserved in an Aramaic speaking Jewish/Christian church and were written down, the words in literary form would not necessarily match the spoken form. Modern, Western exegetes generally don’t have a frame of reference for a situation where the way one writes is different than how one speaks even if it were the same language. A case can be made both for a scenario where Aramaic speech was written in Hebrew and vice versa. Lapidé (1974:169) notes that the textual discoveries at Murabba’at, Naḥal Heber, and on Maṣada, have shown that in the centuries immediately before and after Jesus

Hebrew was the primary language for recording religious topics. In fact, Safrai (1976:1019) notes that certain *midrash* statements are preserved in earlier collections in Aramaic but in Hebrew in other, later collections, making it unclear which is the original language.

Segal (1927:4-5) mentions the interplay of languages in Rabbinic texts, noting how a text in Aramaic suddenly switches to Hebrew when a parable is recounted, returning to Aramaic afterwards. Young (1986:41) suggests that this is to give the story “color” suggesting that “Aramaic speaking characters are meant to be depicted as simple people (sometimes animals) who are ignorant and do not know Hebrew.” Examples of this occurring in the Babylonian Talmud include *Baba Kama* 60b, *Taanit* 5b, and *Sotah* 40a.

To be more scientific in the approach to reconstructing the Beatitudes into Hebrew and Aramaic a set of criteria is necessary. Casey, in *Aramaic Sources of Mark's Gospel*, established the point that a standardized procedure for finding the Aramaic substrata of such New Testament Greek texts is necessary (Casey 1998:107). Casey (2002:56) understands that the Dead Sea Scrolls offer the best source for the Aramaic vocabulary of Palestine in the first century. The same could be said for Hebrew as well (though the Hebrew of the DSS differs from both Biblical Hebrew and Mishnaic Hebrew at numerous points). Very few of those who tried to reconstruct the Beatitudes into Hebrew or Aramaic in the past had access to the Dead Sea Scrolls. Thus, many were often guilty of the kinds of translation technique Casey opposes.

Obviously, other Jewish and Christian literature need to be consulted and searched for parallel idioms and phrasing but, in instances where competing possibilities exist for a particular reconstruction the weight will be tilted in favour of evidence from Qumran. For the purposes of this investigation the reconstruction of each line of the Beatitudes will be assessed according to a list of criteria which have been adapted from those of Casey.

The chapters in the second half of this thesis dealing with each individual beatitude will put Casey's reasonable admonition into practice. A modified version of his list of criteria

(Casey 2002:60-63) will be employed and the research done on each beatitude will need to answer them:

1. To what degree does the phrasing of this beatitude show signs of having been translated literally from either Hebrew or Aramaic?
2. Are these words attested in the Dead Sea Scrolls? If not, what other evidence is there that will support the reconstruction?
3. Is the reconstruction idiomatic?
4. Interpret the reconstruction from a first-century Jewish perspective.
5. Seek to understand how the ancient translator arrived at his Greek from the reconstructed Hebrew or Aramaic.
6. Establish whether there is evidence of intentional editing.
7. What is the assessment of the research done.

The old adage used in textual criticism that *evidence must be weighed, not counted* is perfectly appropriate when applied to utilizing the reconstructions of earlier researchers.

Part One: The Greek Text of the Beatitudes

Chapter One

Background

The word *beatitude* comes to us from the Latin word *beatus* which means *happy* or to be *blissful* (Viviano 1992:53-54). It is the Latin translation of the Greek word μακάριος. It is this word which stands at the beginning of each verse in Matthew 5.3-11. The translation *blessed* is somewhat inaccurately applied to μακάριος. It is a Greek word meant to represent the Hebrew word אֲשֵׁר. Although μακάριος can mean *blessed*, the word אֲשֵׁר does not. *Blessed* would more properly be applied to the word בָּרַךְ. Therefore μακάριος is more accurately rendered by such English phrases as *O, the happiness of* (Arndt & Gingrich 1957:487) or *You happy man* (Viviano 1992:53). On the other hand, the fact that the happiness in question is the result of God's activity on someone's behalf justifies the continued use of *blessed* in modern, English translations of the Beatitudes.

The use of beatitudes as a literary unit had undergone a number of developments before the first century. By the time of Sirach (c 180 BC) beatitudes were already being brought together in artistically designed groups (e.g., 25.7-10) which were then used as a sort of program for living (Viviano 1992:54). Beatitudes then became, first of all, statements about those to whom God has given his favour. They also encapsulated divine judgements and were thus by their nature eschatological. The jump from being wisdom proclamations to eschatological promises for the end times took place before the Dead Sea Scrolls were written (Viviano 1992:54).

Eschatological beatitudes in Jewish literature always have reference to the future – specifically, *the days of the Messiah* or *the world to come* (Strack & Billerbeck 1926:189-215). The first and last beatitudes of Matthew, which both have an identical αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν, proclaim the kingdom of heaven as a present experience. Though the promises in the beatitudes in between are framed in the future tense the

implication is that now that the kingdom of heaven has been inaugurated these are the things which will happen. Jesus pronounces in the present what should be future verdicts in the after-life (Betz 1995:96). This is not to say that they have no reference to future blessing. Jesus, however, seems to have made the distinction vague.

The use of beatitudes to express blessing for both this age as well as the next seems to have been common. This can be seen in the rabbinic understanding of a beatitude found in Psalm 128.2: *When you eat the labour of your hands, happy are you and good shall come to you.*¹ The tannaitic rabbi, Ben Zoma, is quoted in Aboth 4.1 commenting on this, saying: *Happy are you in this world and good shall come to you in the world to come.*² This same interpretation takes place in Targum Jonathan when it translates Psalm 128.2 as: *When your hand rises you will eat your blessing in this world and good shall come to you in the world to come.*³

The Beatitudes are essential to the structure of the Sermon on the Mount. They are no mere decoration. Neither are they simply an introduction to the rest of the sermon. Betz has correctly stated that “in their present context, the Beatitudes are doctrinal statements; they are intended to be learned by heart and remembered” (1995:95). The Sermon on the Mount is central to the gospel of Matthew’s presentation of Jesus as the new Moses (or more properly, the fulfillment of the prophecy of Dt 18.15 that God will raise up a prophet like Moses; cf, Mt 17.5c). The Beatitudes of Matthew are not promises but are revelations of truth, which may or may not have been known by the hearers, and which demand a decision from the hearers to accept a call to a higher conduct (Betz 1995:96-97).

The fact that Matthew has positioned the Beatitudes at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount shows that they were understood to be the foundation principles of the kingdom of heaven. As such, the next section of the Sermon on the Mount gives practical application to these principles. The promises proclaimed and demonstrated

¹ וְיֵשׁ כִּפְיֶךָ כִּי תֹאכַל אֲשֶׁרֶיךָ וְטוֹב לְךָ

² אֲשֶׁרֶיךָ בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה וְטוֹב לְךָ לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא

³ לַעֲוֹת אִיֶּךָ אֲרוֹם תִּיכּוֹל שׁוֹבֵךְ בְּעֹלָמָא תְרִין וְטָב לְךָ לְעֹלָמָא דְאַחֵי

before the people give compelling motivation to accept the radical requirements of ethical behaviour demanded by the Beatitudes.

The likelihood that the Beatitudes (at least most of them) can be traced back to Jesus is very great. The quest before us, then, is to find out just what Jesus actually said and to ascertain what difference that will make to our understanding of the Beatitudes. The use of passives in the Beatitudes reflects circumlocution for divine activity. For instance, when those who mourn are comforted it is to be understood that it is God who will do the comforting. The use of circumlocution is a characteristic of the *ipissima vox* of Jesus (Jeremias 1971:14). In order to get to the beginning we must first start with the end. Unlike the Lord's Prayer which was quite literally translated into Greek and can thus be easily reconstructed in Hebrew and Aramaic the Beatitudes show signs of going through several stages of redaction. Like an archaeologist uncovering a site, layer by layer, let us examine the Beatitudes at each layer of their literary history. Many scholars have already done the main detective work over the years. This thesis represents a combination of their efforts plus some original research. It seems quite perverse that the contributions of many of the authors cited in this thesis have been noted by so many who have come after them yet without the latter making the obvious conclusions in order to establish the history of the text before us. Hopefully, this thesis will make a necessary contribution to the study of the Beatitudes through, not only acknowledging the efforts of others, but building on them and taking their theories forward towards a greater understanding of the Beatitudes.

Chapter Two

The last stage: The Beatitudes According to the Majority of Greek Manuscripts

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
3. Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.
4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.
5. Blessed are the merciful,
for they will receive mercy.
6. Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God.
8. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

1.2.1. Poetic Structure

Immediately apparent is how neatly this group of verses begins and ends with beatitudes that mention the kingdom of heaven. These eight verses can also be divided into two groups of four beatitudes. Each group may be considered a poetic component called a strophe. Each strophe ends with a beatitude (numbers 4 and 8) containing the word *righteousness*. This constitutes a literary design that deserves investigation (Betz 1995: 105). It is quite possible that the writer of Matthew found this group of eight beatitudes in his source and incorporated them into his Gospel.

1.2.2 Word Count

Di Lella has given additional confirmation of a purposeful, poetic structure in the Beatitudes (Plackal 1988:127). He noticed that a numerical pattern is present in the Greek text of these verses. Each strophe contains a beatitude with six words, one with eight words, one with ten words and one with twelve words.

<i>Words</i>	<i>Text</i>
12	μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.
6	μακάριοι οἱ πενθοῦντες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται.
8	μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς, ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν.
10	μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην, ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται.
6	μακάριοι οἱ ἐλεήμονες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθήσονται.
10	μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται.
8	μακάριοι οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί, ὅτι αὐτοὶ υἱοὶ θεοῦ κληθήσονται.
12	μακάριοι οἱ δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

Puech (1991:96) affirms the importance of this contribution remarking that “*la régularité de ces chiffres, leur répartition et leur symétrie ou correspondance dans chaque strophe ne peuvent être accidentelles.*” All together the eight beatitudes contain seventy-two words. Anyone familiar with biblical numbers will recognize that this must be no coincidence (cf, Luke 10.1, 17). Manipulation of the wording to produce a certain number of words in each beatitude can be demonstrated from the fact that in verse six *righteousness* is written τὴν δικαιοσύνην (with the definite article) and in verse ten it is written δικαιοσύνης (without the definite article). In addition, though the third beatitude seems to be a virtual quotation of the Septuagint version of Psalm 37.11,⁴ a definite article has been added⁵ so as not to upset the word count (Puech 1991:96).

⁴ οἱ δὲ πραεῖς κληρονομήσουσιν γῆν

⁵ thus: τὴν γῆν

I.2.3 Chiastic Pattern

McEleney (1981:12) suggests that deliberate editing occurred at this stage to achieve a chiastic pattern in the ὅτι clauses of the Beatitudes.

Matthew 5.3.	Inclusory formula:	ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.
4.	Divine passive:	ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται.
5.	Future with object:	ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν.
6.	Divine passive:	ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται.
7.	Divine passive:	ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθήσονται.
8.	Future with object:	ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται.
9.	Divine passive:	ὅτι αὐτοὶ υἱοὶ θεοῦ κληθήσονται.
10.	Inclusory formula:	ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

The Beatitudes, in the order in which we find them in most modern versions of the New Testament, represent the last stage of a number of revisions by several editors. Where obvious purposeful editing occurs the question which immediately presents itself is, what was the reading before it was edited?

Chapter Three

The Penultimate stage: Original Greek Matthew

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
3. Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.
2. Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.
5. Blessed are the merciful,
for they will receive mercy.
6. Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God.
8. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

I.3.1 Switching the Order of the Second and Third Beatitudes

The version immediately preceding the version found in critical Greek texts had one major difference. Puech (1991:96) notes that word-count research confirms that the third beatitude would originally have been placed next to the first for reasons of symmetry. Tischendorf's edition of the Greek New Testament puts them in just that order. The critical apparatus of the third edition of the Greek New Testament published by the United Bible Societies gives an impressive array of witnesses that attest to the present order (the most important being \aleph , B, C, W, Syr^{s, p, h, cp}). However, ancient witnesses to the switching of verses four and five are not few and carry significant weight. These are: D, 33, Syr^c, several versions of the Diatessaron, most of the Old Latin manuscripts, and

the majority of the church fathers (including all of the fathers from the East).

It is this stage which should be considered as the original version in the Gospel of Matthew. Hence, the person responsible for this version will be termed *OMatthew* (to distinguish the writer/editor from the name of the Gospel) in this thesis. The person responsible for the final redaction found in most modern bibles will be termed *RMatthew*.

I.3.2 Pi-Alliteration

Michaelis (1968:148) emphasized the fact that each of the subjects of the first strophe of four beatitudes begins with the letter π. This pi-alliteration in the first strophe may go back to the common source of both Matthew and Luke. Luke incorporates three of these four beatitudes in his own list, and though he has brought changes to their wording which remove alliteration as a unifying feature, he gives evidence which indicates that the original wording of the common beatitudes contained pi-alliteration.

Matthew 5

3 μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι
Blessed are the poor in spirit

ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν
 οὐρανῶν
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven

5 μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς,
Blessed are the meek
 ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν.
for they will inherit the earth

4 μακάριοι οἱ πενθοῦντες
Blessed are those who mourn,
 ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται
for they will be comforted.

Luke 6

20 μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ
Blessed are the poor

ὅτι ὑμετέρα ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία
 τοῦ θεοῦ
for yours is the kingdom of God.

21b μακάριοι οἱ κλαίοντες νῦν
Blessed are you how weep now,
 ὅτι γελάσετε
for you will laugh.

6 μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν
δικαιοσύνην

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for
righteousness,*

ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται
for they will be satisfied.

21a μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες νῦν

Blessed are you who hunger now,

ὅτι χορτασθήσεσθε
for you will be satisfied

The first of these common beatitudes is almost exactly the same. The words αὐτῶν ... τῶν οὐρανῶν are, for all practical purposes, synonymous with ὑμετέρα ... τοῦ θεοῦ. The only real difference of substance is the addition in Matthew of τῷ πνεύματι.

In the second common beatitude Luke has κλαίοντες instead of the πειθοῦντες of Matthew. Luke, however shows knowledge of πειθοῦντες being connected to this beatitude because of the presence in the corresponding woe (vs 25) of πειθήσετε (used in combination with κλαύσετε).

All together, *OMatthew* uses six words which begin with the letter π: πτωχοί, πνεύματι, πειθοῦντες, παρακληθήσονται, πράξεις, and πεινῶντες. To this list διψῶντες could be appended also because of the dominant pi-type sound it contains. This would give a total of seven words. Betz criticized this contribution saying that Michaelis “left unclear whether such alliteration is intentional, and what its purpose may be” (1995:109). This is a trifle unfair, for Michaelis does suggest a purpose. She conjectured that the pi-alliteration is present as an attempt to mirror a poetic assonance contained in the original Semitic source (Plackal 1988:25). She gave theoretical reconstructions of a few of the Beatitudes as well as other sayings of Jesus to demonstrate such assonance would have been typical of his way of speaking.

Puech (1991:98) notes, in addition, that the double pi-alliteration of the first stich [πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι] is paralleled by a double delta-alliteration in the last stich [δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης] as well as a pi-alliteration mixed with a double delta-alliteration in the last stich of the first strophe [πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην].

I.3.3 Parallelism

An extremely common feature of ancient Jewish poetry is parallelism (Burney 1925:15). Those who comment on the poetic parallelism present in the Beatitudes consistently mention that the first and the third should be paired together. The switch in position of the third beatitude (*blessed are the meek*) with the second (*blessed are those who mourn*) could also be argued for poetic reasons. Putting the first and third beatitudes together allows the first strophe to be much more poetic.

3. μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, <i>blessed are the poor in spirit</i>	ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν <i>for theirs is the kingdom of heaven</i>
5. μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς, <i>blessed are the meek</i>	ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν <i>for they shall inherit the earth</i>
4. μακάριοι οἱ πενθοῦντες, <i>blessed are those who mourn</i>	ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται <i>for they shall be comforted</i>
6. μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην, <i>blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness sake</i>	ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται <i>for they shall be satisfied</i>

The first pair is not, as Guelich (1976:424) claims, merely redundancy but poetic parallelism of thought. This is made the more clear by the contrast of the first of this pair ending with *heaven* and the other ending with *earth*, which Puech (1991:98) calls “*se répondent logiquement,*” as in Genesis 1.1 or Matthew 6.10.

As an eight-membered group the Beatitudes, at this stage, must have been viewed as four pairs of parallel sayings.

*Blessed are the poor in spirit:
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*Blessed are the meek:
for they shall inherit the earth.*

Blessed are they that mourn:

*Blessed are those who hunger
and thirst for righteousness:*

for they shall be comforted.

for they shall be filled.

*Blessed are the merciful:
for they shall obtain mercy.*

*Blessed are the pure in heart:
for they shall see God.*

*Blessed are the peacemakers:
for they shall be called the children of God.*

*Blessed are those persecuted for
righteousness' sake:
for theirs is the kingdom of
heaven.*

Putting the third beatitude next to the first also affects the structure regarding the word count of each strophe. It allows the first and last beatitudes, which each has twelve words, to be juxtaposed to a beatitude with eight words. It also allows for each beatitude with six words to then be followed by one with ten words.

Parallelism as a feature had obviously been minimized or entirely forgotten when the final editor took the second and third beatitudes and placed them in their present position. Perhaps the displacement of the third from its former place in parallelism with the first to its present position came about because the words τὴν γῆν rhyme with τὴν δικαιοσύνην. An ancient editor may have thought that putting the third and fourth beatitudes together sounded better. The first and last beatitudes, which both end with the words ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν, are juxtaposed to the second and seventh beatitudes which end with the words παρακληθήσονται and κληθήσονται respectively. The words *comforted* and *called* are worlds apart semantically in English. This obscures the forceful impact so noticeable when looking at the Beatitudes in Greek. Certainly, ancient Jewish Christians would have appreciated the poetic harmony and acknowledged a connection, both lexically and theologically. The use of the words παρακληθήσονται and κληθήσονται in the second and penultimate beatitudes is so beautiful that it seems clear this must have been their original position. This leads us to another, deeper layer of tradition.

Chapter Four

Level Three: Seven Beatitudes

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst,
for they will be filled.
5. Blessed are the merciful,
for they will receive mercy.
6. Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God.
8. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

I.4.1 Evidence for the Third Beatitude Being an Addition

Dodd, in his form-critical study of the Beatitudes, concluded that there may originally have only been seven beatitudes (Plackal 1988:21). He suggests that the third beatitude may have been an addition based on the fact that, first of all, it is an almost verbatim rendering of the LXX version of Psalm 37.11, and that the manuscript tradition does not consistently place it in the same position (Plackal 1988:21). Guelich (1976:424-426) also felt that the third beatitude was an addition, put in before the final version of Matthew, but after completion of the tradition Matthew received. As mentioned above, the removal of the third beatitude once more allows the first and last beatitudes, to be juxtaposed to beatitudes which end with the words παρακληθήσονται and κληθήσονται respectively, which seems to have been their natural position.

McEleney supplies evidence which makes this theory even more convincing by noting a pattern in the μακάριοι clauses. If the third beatitude is removed and at the same time the

fourth beatitude is read *blessed are those who hunger and thirst* then an alternating pattern of five and three words in the first member of each beatitude emerges (McEleney 1981:12).

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 3 μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, | (5 words) |
| ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν. | |
| 4 μακάριοι οἱ πειθοῦντες, | (3 words) |
| ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται. | |
| 6 μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες, | (5 words) |
| ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται. | |
| 7 μακάριοι οἱ ἐλεήμονες, | (3 words) |
| ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθήσονται. | |
| 8 μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, | (5 words) |
| ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται. | |
| 9 μακάριοι οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί, | (3 words) |
| ὅτι αὐτοὶ υἱοὶ θεοῦ κληθήσονται. | |
| 10 μακάριοι οἱ δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης, | (5 words) |
| ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν. | |

This indicates that a stage in the formation of the Beatitudes in Greek existed where both the third beatitude of the *meek* and the τὴν δικαιοσύνην of the fourth beatitude had not yet been added. At the same time it indicates that the words τῷ πνεύματι of the first beatitude were present at this stage.

McEleney (1981:11) suggests that this list of seven beatitudes was the original because of Matthew's love of the number seven (e.g., seven petitions in the Lord's Prayer in Mt 6.9-13; seven parables in Mt 13.4-53; seven woes in Mt 23.13-36) and that the eighth (*blessed are the meek*) was added by a post-Matthew redactor. More likely, however, is the possibility that these seven beatitudes existed in a Greek source and that *OMatthew* incorporated them into his Gospel and, on his own, added the third beatitude and τὴν δικαιοσύνην.

I.4.2 Rhyme

One of the characteristics of the Beatitudes at this stage is the deliberate use of rhyme as a poetic feature. It should be seen as no coincidence that all the five middle beatitudes have ὅτι clauses which rhyme with each other. It is not just a matter of each ending with a future passive and therefore rhymes on that account because verse eight is an exception. The word ὄψονται functions as the normal future active indicative of ὀράω. Because it is deponent in its future form it appears like a passive and, conveniently, rhymes with the future passives in verses four, six, seven, and nine. This deliberate structure was later ignored by *OMatthew* who inserted the third beatitude which does not contain this feature.

It must also be noted that the μακάριοι clauses of verses four and six would rhyme with each other if the words τὴν δικαιοσύνην were missing. This also witnesses to the idea that these words were added at a later time. Luke's version of this clause (6.21a) is *blessed are those who hunger now*. It precedes his version of the second beatitude, namely, *blessed are those who weep now for you will laugh*. The addition of the word *now* [νῦν] in each of these beatitudes is not necessary to create a rhyme as both *those who hunger*⁶ and *those who weep*⁷ rhyme already. In any event, the evidence, supported by Luke, that the second beatitude was originally *blessed are those who hunger and thirst* or even just *blessed are those who hunger* is certainly amply encouraged by taking note of the rhyme which ensues as a result.

With all this in mind, why would *OMatthew* add the third beatitude and the words τὴν δικαιοσύνην in the fourth beatitude? One possibility is that by doing so an allusion to Psalm 37 is formed. The former is obviously a reference to Psalm 37.11. The latter allows the fourth beatitude to become a reference to Psalm 37.17-19 which speaks of the *righteous* who, *in days of hunger, will be filled*. Apparently, *OMatthew* thought that the Beatitudes should be interpreted in terms of Psalm 37.

⁶ πεινώτες

⁷ κλαίοντες

This is not the only place that the word *righteousness* has been added by *OMatthew*. Matthew 6.33 says: *But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well* (NIV). The textual apparatus of the fourth edition of the United Bible Societies Greek New Testament gives this present reading a grade of *C*. Among the witnesses which speak only of seeking the kingdom and do not include a reference to *righteousness* are: The Coptic versions (Sahidic and Boharic), the Ethiopic (ro, pp), Georgian B, 119, 245, 482, 1646, 1184, 1187, Justin and Aphraates (:21). The parallel version of Luke (12.31) says: πλὴν ζητεῖτε βασιλείαν αὐτοῦ, καὶ ταῦτα προστεθήσεται ὑμῖν.⁸

Clearly, a poetic structure exists in the Beatitudes which points to deliberate editing and redaction. In order to achieve this a literal rendering of the original beatitudes as given by Jesus would have had to be sacrificed.

⁸ *But seek his kingdom and these things will be given to you as well* (NIV).

Chapter Five

Pre-Matthaen version

Was there ever a Greek version of the Beatitudes which was not so full of the careful poetic editing the last three stages exhibit? The evidence, such as does exist only shows that various traditions of the words of Jesus existed among a wide range of early Christian(?) communities. Thus, as witnesses to a pre-Matthaen version of the Beatitudes these examples are extremely open to criticism, not to mention alternate interpretations.

I.5.1 Blessed are the Poor

We have noted that in each of the previous stages the words τῷ πνεύματι in the first beatitude are necessary for poetic reasons. The question then is, was there a time in the transmission of the Beatitudes in Greek in which these words did not appear. The answer is *yes!* The first, and most important witness is, of course, Luke. His version of the first beatitude says *blessed are the poor for yours is the kingdom of God* [μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ ὅτι ὑμετέρα ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ]. One cannot immediately assume that Luke's version is the correct one. However, it has been noted that in cases like this Luke often preserves a form which is more Palestinian than Matthew (Hurst 1986:75).

I.5.1.1 Evidence from Polycarp

One of the earliest Patristic references to the Beatitudes comes from Polycarp who gives a conflated quotation of two of them:

but remembering what the Lord taught when he said, "Judge not that ye be not judged, forgive and it shall be forgiven unto you, be merciful that ye may obtain mercy, with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again," and, "Blessed are the poor, and they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the Kingdom of God" (Phil 2.3).

Though Polycarp merges the first and eighth beatitudes into one the fact that he uses the term *kingdom of God* rather than *kingdom of heaven* is telling. It shows that *poor* (rather

than *poor in spirit*) is likely the result of the influence of Luke 6.20 and not evidence that he is aware of a pre-Matthean Greek version of the Beatitudes which does not contain the words τῷ πνεύματι.

I.5.1.2 Evidence from the Pseudo-Clementine Literature

Of greater value is the quotation from a Jewish Christian gospel among the Pseudo-Clementine works (*PsClem Rec* 1, 61, 2) which defends the first beatitude while giving a variant reading: μακαρίζων τοὺς πτωχοὺς (Friedrich 1968:914). A bit later (2, 28, 3), Jesus himself is said to have blessed *the poor* (not *poor in spirit*) and promised them *the kingdom of heaven* (Betz 1995:115). These quotes certainly show that, at least in some sectors, τῷ πνεύματι was either not associated with the first beatitude or was considered superfluous for interpretation. That *the poor* are seen in a spiritual, rather than literal sense is affirmed by the fact that in another passage (*Hom* 15, 10, 4) the first beatitude is said not to refer to those who actually are πτωχοί or πένητες but to the πλοιοὶ πένητες (Friedrich 1968:913). Quispel declares that the Judeo-Christians (Ebionites) exalted the poor and therefore “*les Clémentines, en ceci héritiers légitimes de la communauté de Jérusalem, nous transmettent que Jésus a béni les pauvres (non les pauvres d’esprit), puisque à cause de cette pauvreté ils recevront le Royaume des Cieux*” (1975:103). He immediately goes on to say that *c’est donc d’abord avec la tradition et la conception des chrétiens juifs que “Thomas” déclaree: Heureux les pauvres, car à vous est le Royaume des cieux* (Quispel 1975:103).

I.5.1.3 Evidence from the Gospel of Thomas

The *Gospel of Thomas* is not a purely Gnostic, independent Gospel, but a witness of a Jewish-Christian Gospel tradition (Quispel 1975:150). It contains thirteen beatitudes, several of which have parallels in the Sermon on the Mount (Wansbrough 1991:227). Grant and Freedman suggest that Thomas’ *Blessed are the poor for to you is the kingdom of heaven* (54) is another case of combining the readings of Matthew 5.3 with Luke 6.20 (1960:163). Davies and Allison demure, saying that this reading represents an independent tradition (1988:441-42).

The *Gospel of Thomas* contains several points of agreement with the Pseudo-Clementine

writings. For instance, they both suggest the primacy of James as the successor of the Lord (*GTh* 12; *PsClem Rec* 1.43) and both imply that the Pharisees are the legitimate heirs of Moses with regard to Torah interpretation (*GTh* 39; *PsClem Hom* 3.18.3), both of which are aspects of the Jewish-Christian gospel tradition (Quispel 1975:116). It has long been explained that the difference between Matthew's *poor in spirit* and Luke's *poor* is one of emphasis; Matthew emphasizes the spiritual (Jewish) meaning of the word *poor* while Luke emphasizes Jesus' commitment to the physically poor (Young 1995:92). It is therefore suggested that Luke has misinterpreted Jesus. Lindsey, for example, says, "It is obvious that no Jew in the period supposed with the editor of Luke's version that Jesus was talking about the literally poor" (1973:xxiv). This is not necessarily true.

I.5.1.4 Evidence from the Epistle of James

Since it has been shown that the Beatitudes belong to a pre-synoptic tradition and were presumably part of early Christian preaching it would be natural to find direct or indirect allusions to them among other passages from the New Testament. The Epistle of James shows awareness of a beatitude for the poor. James 2.5 says that *God has chosen the poor⁹ in this world to be rich in faith and to inherit a kingdom he promised to those who love him*. The word *poor* is used here in its most literal sense, yet at the same time, it is also used in a spiritual sense. There is no indication that James is aware of the additional words: *in spirit* (see §II.3.1.2.3.c).

Unlike Polycarp, James uses the word *kingdom* only and so does not give a clue as to whether or not he is influenced here by the version used by Matthew or Luke. James, however, is aware of the Beatitudes of Matthew. Compare two other examples:

Matthew	James
5.7 <i>Blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.</i> (NIV)	2.13 <i>because judgement without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgement!</i> (NIV)
5.9 <i>Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the sons of God.</i> (NIV)	3.18 <i>Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.</i> (NIV)

⁹ πτωχούς

In fact, James is very familiar with the entire Sermon on the Mount. He gives so many allusions to it that it is safe to say that his letter is predicated on the notion that those who read it are also familiar with the Sermon on the Mount, though not necessarily the Gospel of Matthew (Davies 1964:403).

It may be thought that as Polycarp conflates the first and eighth beatitudes, James seems, at first, to conflate the first and third by saying that the poor *inherit* the kingdom. The third beatitude is a reference to Psalm 37.11 and may, quite likely, have been added to explain the first beatitude. James, on the other hand, is alluding to Proverbs 8.21. Though the English translations of both Psalm 37.11 and Proverbs 8.21 promise an inheritance, different Hebrew words are used. The former employs שָׂרָף and the latter לָקַח. This, incidentally, gives evidence that the words αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν in the first beatitude represent the original phrasing of Jesus. Somehow these words were understood to convey that the poor in spirit would inherit the kingdom but the vagueness of αὐτῶν ἐστὶν necessitated that an explicit biblical promise of inheritance be joined by way of explanation.

Part Two: The Beatitudes in Hebrew and Aramaic

Chapter One

Theological Background of the Beatitudes

Before attempting to reconstruct the Beatitudes into either Hebrew or Aramaic we must first examine the theological context which produced them.

II.1.1 Jesus and the Kingdom of Heaven

After the temptation, Matthew chapter four tells us that Jesus went to Galilee (vs 12) and began to preach: *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near* (vs 17). Verse 23 mentions that Jesus preached *the good news of the kingdom*. There is every reason to believe that by this expression Matthew means the Sermon on the Mount (Dupont 1958:319).

II.1.1.1 The Influence of Isaiah 61 on the Beatitudes

The key passage for determining the themes of the Beatitudes is Isaiah 61 (particularly verses 1-3). Numerous commentators have noted the influence of this passage on the Beatitudes. Frankemölle went so far as to say that reference to these verses is obvious and suggests that most exegetes would say the same (Plackal 1988:30). Black traces the popularization of this theory to Zahn (1967:157).

That these verses were of central importance to Jesus is emphasized by Luke when he tells of Jesus' sermon at the synagogue in Nazareth. Jesus reads this very passage from the Isaiah scroll in the synagogue and declares that it is fulfilled in their hearing. The poor, those who mourn, the broken-hearted, inheriting the earth, righteousness, and abundance of food all find place in Isaiah 61 in a prophetic picture of God reversing the fortunes of his people (Tuckett & Goulder 1983:209).

One of the reasons Flusser gives for supporting the notion that there were originally seven beatitudes is that there are seven infinitives in Isaiah 61.1-3 (Puech 1991:101). Puech agrees, suggesting that a passage in the Thanksgiving Scroll (1QH23.13-16) with

seven infinitives (by way of reconstruction) was written in imitation of Isaiah 61.1-3 (1991:102-103).

II.1.1.2 The Influence of Daniel 7.14-27 on the Beatitudes

The vocabulary and the imagery of Isaiah 61 are used to give expression to a theological context taken from another passage. That passage is Daniel 7.14-27 which deals with the people of God receiving his kingdom. Because the theme of the *kingdom of heaven* begins and ends the Beatitudes it is more rightly Jesus' understanding of *kingdom* which provides the proper backdrop to the formation of these verses.

In the Beatitudes, Jesus combines allusions to Daniel (particularly 7.14-27) and Isaiah 61.1-3 in a song announcing that the time is fulfilled and *the kingdom* has come. In other words, the Beatitudes comprise a hymn celebrating the arrival of *the kingdom*. The kingdom theology inherently behind the Beatitudes comes from a Jewish understanding of Daniel seven current in the second-temple period. In that chapter the prophet Daniel has a vision wherein he sees four beasts coming up from the sea. At the end of this vision he sees *one like a son of man* led to the presence of the Ancient of Days. In verse 14 this *son of man* is given dominion over all people and nations and this dominion is termed: *a kingdom*. In the interpretation which ensues it is clear that Daniel understands *the son of man* to be a figure which represents the people of God who are referred to as *the saints of the Most High*. Verse 18 states that *the saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever – yes, for ever and ever*. This is reinforced again in verses 22 and 27. Though the *son of man* may originally have been synonymous with *the saints of the Most high* the Septuagint translators were careful to distinguish the two (Meadowcroft 1995:234). Thus, well before the first century a popular understanding of this section was that it spoke of two distinct things: a group referred to as *the holy ones*, and a divine/messianic figure called the *son of man*.

Jesus takes this foundation and builds upon it in the Beatitudes by changing the designation of those who will receive the kingdom from the *saints of the Most High* to the *poor (in spirit)* and *those who are persecuted because of righteousness*. Manson suggested that *poor* had become synonymous, in the two centuries before Christ, with the

Hebrew word קָטִיב [pious], which itself was synonymous with *saint* (Manson 1949:47). These devotees which had accepted the obligations of the kingdom of God were then eligible to inherit the privileges of the kingdom (Manson 1949:47).

The poetic use of κληθήσονται and παρακληθήσονται juxtaposed next to the first and last beatitudes (which mention the kingdom of heaven) respectively also reflects the apocalyptic nature of these sayings. The idea of being *called* by God certainly had eschatological significance for first-century Jews. For instance, in an apocalyptic text found among the Aramaic documents in the Dead Sea Scrolls, *Pseudo-Daniel* (4Q246), the term *called ones* is used synonymously with *holy ones* in the following line (Eisenman & Wise 1992:68). In addition, in the overwhelming majority of instances where God's comforting his people is mentioned the context is eschatological.

The concept of the kingdom of God as an inheritance was part of the popular understanding of Daniel 7 in the time of Jesus. In fact, throughout the ages Jewish interpretation of Daniel 7.18 is unanimous in interpreting the words *and they will possess the kingdom*,¹⁰ as *and they will inherit the kingdom*. Both Sadia Gaon and the *Even Ezra* commentary translate this into Hebrew as: וירשו המלכות. Alternatively, the *Mtzudat David* commentary translates it (presumably as does James) with the words ינחלו המלכותה. Interestingly, since this part of Daniel is in Aramaic already, the Peshitta also translates *and they will possess the kingdom*¹¹ as *and they will inherit the kingdom*.¹² This shows that the tradition was certainly present when the Peshitta version of Daniel was penned.

II.1.1.3 Evidence from the Dead Sea Scrolls

A number of allusions to Isaiah 61 occur in messianic and eschatological contexts among the Dead Sea Scrolls. But what is more interesting is the fact that we have examples where this is done in combination with allusions to Daniel 7.13-27. An excellent case in

¹⁰ וַיִּקְרְבוּ מַלְכוּתָא

¹¹ וַיִּקְרְבוּ מַלְכוּתָא

¹² וַיִּנְחֲלוּ לְמַלְכוּתָא [וַיִּנְחֲלוּ לְמַלְכוּתָא]

point is 4Q521. It is entitled by its editor, *Une Apocalypse Messianique* [A Messianic Apocalypse] (Puech 1992: 475), and is a vision of the messianic future. Consider the following lines from fragment one, column two:

7. יכבד את חסידים על כסא מלכות עד

8. מתיר אסורים פוקח עורים זוק כפופים

12. אז ירפא חללים ומתים יחיה עניים יבשר

(Eisenman & Wise 1992: 21)

7. *He will glorify the pious upon the throne of the eternal Kingdom.*
8. *Setting free the prisoners, opening (the eyes of the) blind, raising up the downtrodden.*
12. *Then he will heal the sick and the dead he will cause to live (and to the) poor he will announce the good news.*

In line seven the Hebrew words מלכות עד¹³ should be taken as a reference to (and translation of) the Aramaic מלכות עלם¹⁴ of Daniel 7.27. The mention of announcing good news to the poor in line twelve is an allusion to Isaiah 61.1. Line eight is recognized as an allusion to Psalm 146.7-8 (Puech 1991:103) but the mention of setting prisoners free and the blind receiving sight are also themes from Isaiah 61.1.

4Q521 is especially useful for illustrating the messianic expectations resident in the background of the Beatitudes. There are several unmistakable parallels to the teachings and life of Jesus. For instance, Jesus claims that his ministry is the fulfillment of messianic prophecy when answering the disciples of John who came to ask him if he was the coming one. His reply was (Mt 11.5-6): *the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor* (NIV). The similarities between these verses and the lines from 4Q521 above are striking. Jesus specifies various things that are healed, where 4Q521 merely says *he will heal the sick* (though opening the eyes of

¹³ *eternal kingdom*

¹⁴ *eternal kingdom*

the blind is mentioned in line eight). Both mention the dead being raised and then follow-up with a reference to Isaiah 61.1 about the poor having the good news preached to them. The likelihood that this is merely coincidence is slim. Rather, both point to a common conflation of messianic prophecies known and accepted by the people of that day.

The publication of 11Q13 gives much greater confirmation that both Isaiah 61 and Daniel 7 played a large roll in the formulation of messianic expectations and theology. It is amidst an allusion to Isaiah 61 that the heavenly figure of Melchizedek appears to establish *a righteous Kingdom* (col 2, line 9). In column 2, line 9, Wise translates as follows: *For this is the time decreed for "the year of Melchiz[edek]'s favor" (Is 61.2 modified), [and] by his might he w[i]ll judge God's holy ones and so establish a righteous ki[n]gdom* (Wise et al 1996:456). The mention of the judgement of God's holy ones should be seen as an allusion to Daniel 7.22 which states: *the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgement in favour of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom* (NIV).

The obvious parallel to Jesus (himself referred to as Melchizedek in Heb 7-8) and his use of Isaiah 61.1-2 in the synagogue at Nazareth (Lk 4.18-21) also makes this scroll extremely valuable for determining the proper understanding of Jesus' gospel of the kingdom. In 11Q13 lines 15-16 the author quotes Isaiah 52.7 in reference to Melchizedek's visitation saying that it proclaims the day of salvation. It goes on to say (lines 18-20a), *"The messenger" is the [An]ointed of the spir[it], of whom Dan[iel] spoke, ["After the sixty-two weeks, an Anointed one shall be cut off" (Da 9.26). The "messenger who brings] good news, who announ[ces salvation"] is the one of whom it is wri[tt]en, ["to proclaim the year of the LORD'S favor, the day of vengeance of our God;] to comfo[rt all who mourn" (Is 61.2)]* (Wise et al 1996:457).

The publication of 4Q521 and 11Q13 establishes that the use and interpretation of a combination of Isaiah 61 and Daniel 7 by Jesus was not unusual (particularly in apocalyptic circles). Furthermore, 11Q13 provides evidence that an integral part of Jesus' greater message concerning the kingdom of God would have been that the

eschatological year of Jubilee had been inaugurated. This he did at the synagogue in Nazareth by quoting Isaiah 61.1-2 and proclaiming that it was fulfilled in their hearing (Luke 4.16-21). With these things in mind one can readily see that the Beatitudes are the announcement of good news by Jesus declaring that the *kingdom of God* had come and that the power and privileges of the age to come were breaking into this world.

It is not only Melchizedek who is linked to Isaiah 52.7 and 61. Moses is described in 4Q377¹⁵ in language reminiscent of these passages. Among other things, he is called *His (the LORD'S) anointed* (2.2.5), *messenger* (2.2.11), and *herald of good tidings* (2.2.11). Moses is never referred to in the Old Testament by these terms (Wise et al 1996: 338). It is obvious that both Isaiah 52.7 and 61.1 are purposely applied to him by this ancient author. It may be that Moses is linked to the Messianic associations of these scriptures by the promise of a prophet, like Moses who was to come (Dt 18.15). One of the favourite sermons of the early church was that Jesus was this prophet like unto Moses (e.g., Acts 3.22; 7.37). Perhaps, because it was already being applied to Moses, Jesus' application of Isaiah 61 towards himself was interpreted as a veiled reference to him being the fulfillment of Deuteronomy 18.15.

II.1.1.4 The Kingdom as an Inheritance

Paul enjoys utilizing allusions to Daniel 7.18 (cf., Co 1.12; Ep 1.18), but not by way of allusion to the Beatitudes. Rather, he presupposes that his readers understand that the promise of the kingdom in Daniel is to be considered an inheritance. He is able to do this because of the common Jewish understanding of this verse in Daniel, which in due course became the heritage of the early church.

It is because there was a general understanding of the *kingdom of God* as something which may be inherited that Jesus is able to use more prosaic vocabulary interchangeably with words like *inherit* or *inheritance*. For instance, in the parable of the wicked tenants (Mt 21.23-44; Mk 12.1-12; Luke 20.9-18) the owner of the vineyard sends his son¹⁶ to collect what was due.

¹⁵ *A Moses Apocryphon*

¹⁶ Both Mark, in 12.8, and Luke, in 20.13, use the more pointed designation, *beloved son*.

When the tenants see the son coming they say, “this is the heir, come, let us kill him and possess his inheritance” (Mt 21.38). Here, the use of the verb *possess* (κατέχω), which is not in Mark or Luke’s version, should be seen as a deliberate hint at the LXX version of Daniel 7.18 and ensures that the audience understands that the inheritance to be possessed is in reality the *kingdom of God*. This is stated directly in the application of the parable (vs 43): *the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation producing its fruits*. Matthew’s version parallels the attempt on the part of the wicked tenants to possess the inheritance by force antithetically with God giving his kingdom to faithful servants.

Because both Matthew and Luke use essentially the same wording in their respective beatitudes for the possession of the kingdom by the poor it seems logical that the wording reflects tradition predating either gospel. That Matthew is incorporating material with a strong tradition behind it is also clear from the fact that this idiom contrasts so much with Matthew’s preference for using words like *enter* [εἰσερχόμαι] or *inherit* [κληρονομέω] to describe participation in the kingdom of heaven (cf, Mt 5.20; 23.14; 25.34). The connection between entering and inheriting goes back to the fact that the two terms are commonly used together in the conquest vocabulary of the Pentateuch (e.g., Dt 1.8; 4.1, 5; 6.17-18; 8.1; 16.20). For instance, Deuteronomy 8.1 says, ... *follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land that the LORD promised ...* (NIV). Note also the parallelism between the terms *live* and *possess* (or *inherit*) *the land*. This is especially pertinent to our discussion here as parallelism exists in the first and third beatitudes between *land* and *kingdom*. In addition, it should also be noted that entering eternal life is used synonymously with inheriting the kingdom of heaven in Matthew 25.34,46.

Earlier Puech’s suggestion was noted that the third beatitude is a virtual quotation of Psalm 37.11 [οἱ δὲ πραεῖς κληρονομήσουσιν γῆν] to which a definite article has been added [thus: τὴν γῆν] so as not to upset the word count (1991:96). It must also be mentioned that the words κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν do appear almost immediately before Isaiah 61.1 in the LXX version of Isaiah 60.21. This verse begins: *All your people will*

be righteous and they will possess the land forever [καὶ λαός σου πᾶς δίκαιος καὶ δι' αἰῶνος κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν]. Isaiah 60.21 is used as a proof text, in Aboth 1.1, to prove that all Israelites will have a portion in the world to come. This does not discount that Matthew 5.5 is a direct reference to Psalm 37.11. But, by the slight change of adding the definite article *OMatthew* has brought Psalm 37.11 into relationship with Isaiah. It should also be remembered that it was *OMatthew* who has added the words τὴν δικαιοσύνην in the fourth beatitude. Perhaps this was also inspired by Isaiah 60.21.

II.1.2 The Kingdom is Both Present and Future

The sole reference for Jesus directly speaking of inheriting the kingdom is found in Matthew 25.34. There, in the parable of the Sheep and the Goats, the sheep are told to inherit a kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world. Because inheriting the kingdom is parallel in this story to entering into eternal life (vs 46) it is clear that the world to come is in view. It seems likely that Jesus' use of inheriting the kingdom reflected the current Jewish understanding of the idiom (cf, Lu 10.25, 18.18). Paul certainly understood that Christians will only inherit the kingdom of God at the resurrection of the dead (1Co 15.50-54; cf, 6.9-10 and Ga 5.21). Yet, in another sense we find Jesus proclaiming that benefits of this inheritance were already freely available. Thus, the early church had a theology of the kingdom of God as an inheritance with benefits which can be experienced not only in the future, but in the here and now. This is emphasized in the way the ancient versions translated the Beatitudes. The Boharic, Coptic version for instance, translates all the Beatitudes in the present tense (Horner [1905] 1969:24).

II.1.2.1 The Analogy of the Parable of the Prodigal Son

The Gospels themselves reflect this dichotomy. In Jesus' parable of the Prodigal Son (Lk 15.11-32) the theme of being able to enjoy a future inheritance in the present, by virtue of being an heir, is emphasized. With regard to this, the connection between inheritance and the feast in this parable is instructive. Contrary to some interpretations of this parable, the lost son is restored to full rights as an heir at the feast held in his honour. This better explains the reaction of the older son who points out that the younger son has already squandered so much of the inheritance.

The Messianic connotations of a feast would certainly not have been missed by the crowds listening to Jesus. In the story of the Prodigal Son the food of the feast being shared amongst friends is contrasted to the “devouring”¹⁷ of the inheritance among prostitutes (vss 29-30). An allusion to food from the Messianic feast would probably have been interpreted, by first-century Jewish-Christians, as an allusion to the benefits from the future time of salvation experienced in the present. The Messianic age was characterized by feasting. Rabbi Akiba (c 120 AD), after speaking of the final judgement says: *everything is prepared for (the) feast (Aboth 3.16)*. *Pesikta Rabbathi* s 41, in explanation of *Israel whom I have called* (from Is 48.12) talks of *he who is called* (i.e., invited) *to the feast*. Jesus himself several times likened the time of salvation to a feast. In Luke 13.28-29 he declares that the Patriarchs are able to be viewed in the kingdom of God and, in addition, people will come from all directions *to recline*¹⁸ *at the feast in the kingdom of God*. The use of the verb, ἀνακλίνω, here and elsewhere in the Gospels (the parallel in Mt 8.11 uses the same word) likely indicates that in these sayings Jesus utilizes a common idiom.

II.1.2.2 The analogy of Hebrews 6.4-5

An analogy for theorizing that the primitive Church likened the benefits of salvation to food from the Messianic feast can be garnered from Hebrews 6.4-6a: *It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance.* (NIV)

Consider, *those who have tasted the heavenly gift*. This is an obvious reference to the heavenly manna which represents the bread of life (cf, Jn 6.32-33). Jesus said that the true heavenly bread/manna was himself (Jn 6.35). This is parallel to the next phrase *have tasted the goodness of the word of God*.

Last, but certainly not least, the phrase, *the powers of the coming age* would be an

¹⁷ Note the use of a word connected to food.

¹⁸ ἀνακλιθήσονται

unmistakable reference to the life to be experienced at the consummation. The kingdom is then, in the words of Dodd (1936:51), “the impact upon this world of the ‘powers of the world to come.’” Seeing the kingdom of God as an inheritance which was to be distributed by those who received it seems to be an implication in such beatitudes as *blessed are the merciful* and *blessed are the peacemakers*.

Judaism, by the first century had come to distinguish between the time of the world to come and the days of the Messiah. Thus, even today, a blessing from the afternoon service for Sabbaths and festivals petitions God that his will be *that we may inherit happiness and blessing in the days of the Messiah and in the life of the world to come*¹⁹ (Singer 1962:235). Thus, though they are connected in apocalyptic thought and are interrelated, the separation of *the world to come* from *the days of the Messiah* would allow the early church to preach that the latter had come to pass even while the former remained a hope for the future.

¹⁹ וְנִירָשׁ טוֹבָה וּבְרָכָה לְשָׁנֵי יָמוֹת הַמָּשִׁיחַ וְלְחַיֵּי הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא

Chapter Two

The Beatitudes in Hebrew and Aramaic

With this background in mind we can now proceed to examine the Beatitudes as they may have appeared in either Hebrew or Aramaic. Numerous Hebrew beatitudes certainly exist. Many appear in the book of Psalms. However, because the Beatitudes in Matthew are apocalyptic in nature, the description in each beatitude of its subjects as *blessed* is influenced not so much by the use of אֲשֶׁרִי in the Psalms but by its use in Daniel 12.12. There, אֲשֶׁרִי is used in reference of those who experience the fulfillment of the vision.

One of the big debates regarding the form of the Beatitudes as Jesus would have spoken them is with respect to the difference between the form in Luke, which addresses the hearers in the second person, versus that in Matthew, which uses the third person. Matthew's form is closer to that of the form of beatitudes in the Old Testament. The form of Luke's beatitudes with corresponding woes parallels the form of many found in Rabbinic literature. For example, *Berachoth* 61b says:

אשריך רבי עקיבא שנתפסת על דברי תור אוי לו לפפוס שנתפס על דברים
 בטלים

Blessed are you, Rabbi Aqiba! For you were seized by the words of the Torah; Woe to Pappus that was seized by vain things.

II.2.1 Poetic Alliteration

As mentioned earlier, Michaelis suggests that the pi-alliteration in the first strophe of four beatitudes attempts to mirror Hebrew poetic alliteration. For instance, she maintains that $\pi\epsilon\nu\theta\omicron\upsilon\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ ²⁰ and $\pi\epsilon\iota\nu\omega\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ ²¹ can be reconstructed as אֲבֵלִים and רַעֲבִים respectively and that this results in poetic assonance.

²⁰ *those who mourn*

²¹ *those who mourn*

Unfortunately an argument from this example is not presented as persuasively as it might have been. Though she is correct that, phonologically, the distinction between א and ע had largely disappeared by this time (Plackal 1988:26) she does not give examples which demonstrate assonance between ל and ר. But, from Japan to South Africa many language groups struggle to distinguish between the phonological values of *r* and *l*. The populace of first-century Palestine also had segments which had the same problem. For instance, where, in Deuteronomy 14.5 Targum Onkelos translates *wild ox* as תורבלא Targum *Yerushalmi* I²² has תור ברא (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1656).

This demonstrates the oral nature of the targums. Obviously, the discrepancy goes back to the fact that these words were pronounced similarly. In Exodus 28.18 Targum *Yerushalmi* II²³ translates *sapphire* as סמפולינא rather than the more correct סמפירינא (Dalman [1905] 1981:101). This phenomenon can also be demonstrated from the way certain Greek words were transliterated into Mishnaic Hebrew. For instance, the word Σίχελος [*Sicilian*] was rendered as סִיקוֹרָה by Palestinian Jews (Jastrow [1903] 1992:986). The word ζωμάριον [*soup-ladle*] was corrupted to זומליסטרון (Jastrow [1903] 1992:387). Conversely, the Aramaic word סרבלא was transliterated into Greek as σαράβαρα (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1022).

The type of alliteration which Michaelis suggests (such as her example of אבלים and רעבים) does not depend on the Beatitudes being in Hebrew. Assonance of this type, as a poetic device, was just as often employed in Aramaic. The Peshitta gives plenty of evidence that ancient translators were quick to recognize instances where the original wording may have employed such wordplay.

²² Targum Pseudo-Jonathan

²³ Fragmentary Targum

For instance, in Mark 4.3 Jesus likens the kingdom of God to a grain of mustard seed, which he says is *the smallest of all seeds that are in the earth*. The Peshitta translates *the smallest of all seeds* as: כּוּמְרִיּוֹן אֲרָמְלָהּ אֲרָמְלָהּ.²⁴ The assonance between כּוּמְרִיּוֹן²⁵ and אֲרָמְלָהּ²⁶ is striking and must go back to deliberate, assonate phrasing.

Black (1967:165) reconstructs the phrase similarly and suggests that the word *earth* is also part of the poetic assonance: *di kadh zeri' be'ar'a ze'er hu' min kullhon zar'in dibe'ar'a*.²⁷ As helpful as this is it must still be pointed out that if alliteration was an important element in the Beatitudes in their Hebrew or Aramaic form it would need more than the examples Michaelis gives to be proved.

II.2.2 Burney's Theory of Three-beat Rhythm

Burney goes so far as to say that the Beatitudes “exhibit clear indications of composition in rhyme, and (in the main) three-stress rhythm” (1925:165-166). His reconstruction of the Beatitudes into Aramaic is instructive. He transliterated the words into Latin characters and conveniently marked the stressed accents. This is helpful at some points and not so helpful at others. As a result, Burney's reconstruction has, in this thesis, will sometimes be retroverted into Hebrew characters to help aid discussion. This reconstruction, good as it is, will receive serious reworking in this thesis, but in the meantime, it makes an excellent point of departure.

Burney's Reconstruction of the Beatitudes into Aramaic (1925:166):

1. *tubehón mískenyayá [beruhá] dedilehón malkutá díšmayyá*
2. *tubehón demít 'abbelín dehinnún mítnahhamín*
3. *tubehón ĩnwánayyá dehinnún yeretún le 'ar 'á*
4. *tubehón dekaphenín wesaháyin [lesidká] dehinnún mitmeláyin*
5. *tubehón rahmánayyá da 'alehón hawayin rahmayyá*

²⁴ זעוריא הי מן כלהון זרעונא

²⁵ זרעונא

²⁶ זעוריא

²⁷ די כד זריע בארעא זער הוא מן כולהון זרעין דבארעא

6. *tubehón didkáyin belibbá dehinnún hamáyin lelahá*
7. *tubehón de 'abedín šelamá deyitkerón benóy delahá*
8. *tubehón dirdiphín begén desidká dedilehón malkutá dišmayyá*

Though issue may be taken with Burney regarding the wording employed in this reconstruction he aptly demonstrated that a three-stress rhythm was present. Dupont (1969:217) was not completely convinced but felt that the merits of the theory required mention. Both Black (1967:143) and Jeremias (1971:20) accepted that Burney was correct in his theory, not only that these, but that many sayings of Jesus exhibit a rhythmical structure when reconstructed into Aramaic. Jeremias disagreed with Burney's reconstruction of the Beatitudes but in his own reconstruction he also employs three-stress rhythm (1971:24). Establishing that a three-beat poetic construction existed in the original beatitudes gives a tremendous help in their reconstruction into Hebrew or Aramaic. In fact, once it is recognized that the Hebrew/Aramaic Beatitudes were originally formed with three-stress lines then any proposed reconstruction must accommodate this rhythm.

Burney's research gives additional confirmation that the words τὴν δικαιοσύνην in the fourth beatitude should be regarded as an addition (1925:167). At the same time, Burney also stated that the words τῷ πνεύματι in the first beatitude were an addition and not originally present, because this would add a fourth stress to the line (1925:167). But, Burney's opinion is based on his reconstruction in which the word *mískenayyá* [*the poor*] receives two stress-accents. A reconstruction which uses a word for *poor* which needs only one stress-accent would leave room open for *in spirit* to be included in the first beatitude.

Burney brought his wealth of knowledge about Semitic poetry into New Testament studies and showed that elements so common to the Writings of the Hebrew Bible are particularly present in the words of Jesus. One key feature to Semitic poetry is the use of a system of rhythmical beats or stressed syllables (Burney 1925:22). The number of unstressed syllables between the stressed ones is irrelevant; the number of stresses a line

receives is the important thing (1925:22). Of the various rhythms (i.e., four-beat, three-beat, *kina* rhythm) present in Semitic poetry Burney suggests that three-beat rhythm is the most important.

Jeremias adds two-beat rhythm to the list of rhythms used by Jesus (1971:20). He maintains that Jesus' use of different rhythms was dictated by the context and audience he was addressing (1971:20). Two-beat rhythm was used to emphasize the central concepts of his message (1971:22). Four-beat rhythm was reserved for material he wanted to teach to his followers (Burney 1925:124). The *kina* rhythm is for such sayings as: warnings, woes, and expressions of strong emotion (Jeremias 1971:27). The three-stress rhythm was employed preferentially by Jesus for proverbs and maxims which needed to be emphasized and is the most frequent rhythm he used (Jeremias 1971:25).

Normally, in Hebrew and Aramaic poetry, each word (excepting monosyllabic particles) receives a stress-accent (Burney 1925:44). Exceptions are governed by complex rules which themselves are riddled with exceptions (Burney 1925:44-62).

Puech (1991:101) emphasizes that the Beatitudes must be studied as units of an ensemble and not as a group of isolated elements of a more or less informal series without order. By comparing the beatitudes in Sirach 14, 4Q525 and Matthew 5.3-10 he discovered that each text not only expresses, in its own manner, the search for divine wisdom but resonates with eschatological purpose (Puech 1991:101). Significantly, Puech has reconstructed a psalm found among the Dead Sea Scrolls (4Q525) which has seven beatitudes (Viviano 1992:66). He suggests that lists of seven beatitudes was not uncommon within Palestinian Judaism at that time. He also demonstrates this from a proposed reconstruction of a series of beatitudes found in the Thanksgiving Scroll (1QH), 6.13-16 (Puech 1991:90)

II.2.3 Common Vocabulary of the Reconstructions

II.2.3.1 μακάριος

The natural antecedent in Hebrew for μακάριος would, of course, be אֲשֶׁר (pl אֲשֶׁרִי). Jastrow ([1903] 1992:130) notes that it only occurs in the plural construct. This is true

even in cases where the subject is singular (e g, *Midrash* to Psalm 84: *Happy am I* [אֲשֶׁר־אֲנִי]). In Aramaic it would be טַרְבְּחָא. Jastrow ([1903] 1992:521) remarks that טַרְבְּחָא is often found in plural construct (e g, טַרְבְּכֵי) to translate אֲשֶׁר־י in the targums. Forms with pronomial suffixes abound, as is typical of Aramaic. For instance, in Psalm 1.1 טַרְבְּוּהֵי [happy is he] is used to translate אֲשֶׁר. The Peshitta does the same, using ,ܬܪܒܚܘܬܐ.²⁸

II.2.3.2 ὅτι

With regard to the reconstruction of ὅτι, there are several possibilities in Hebrew. Generally, Hebrew reconstructions of the Beatitudes consider that ὅτι should be regarded as a translation of כִּי (e g, Lindsey 1973:XXII). This should be discarded. If a reconstruction using a more Mishnaic Hebrew idiom were suggested ὅτι would be translated by ׀. The Mishnah regularly employs ׀ to introduce subordinated clauses (Safrai & Stern 1976, 2:1020). An example of a Hebrew beatitude using ׀ can be seen in Bereshit Rabba s 75:

אשריהם הצדיקים שמתברכים בארץ ומתברכים בשמים

Happy are the righteous, for they are blessed on earth and blessed in heaven.

Perhaps the earliest Hebrew rendering of the Beatitudes which uses ׀ is found in the rendering of Matthew 5.5 in the Leiden manuscript (*ms Heb* 28) of the Shem Tov Hebrew version of Matthew from the middle-ages (all other manuscripts omit this verse): אשרי שפלי רוח שלהם מלכות שמים (Howard 1995:16). All of the Aramaic versions and reconstructions of the Beatitudes use ׀ in place of ὅτι. A reconstruction in Galilean Aramaic would follow suit as it always introduced explanative and causal clauses by ׀ (Odeberg 1939 2:139). The Hebrew and Aramaic reconstructions of each beatitude will therefore consider ὅτι to be a Greek rendering of either ׀ or ׀ respectively.

²⁸ טַרְבְּוּהֵי

A certain amount of evidence for this comes from Polycarp, who in quoting the sixth beatitude (*Phil* 2.3), changes the wording to make it a command to be merciful, employing ἵνα rather than ὅτι: *be merciful that ye may obtain mercy*.²⁹ Both ἵνα and ὅτι are possible Greek renderings of either ܘܢܐ or ܘܢܝ (Black 1967:76).

II.2.3.3 אֲטָוֹן

The word אֲטָוֹן of the first and last beatitudes is generally reconstructed into Aramaic as ܕܝܠܗܘܢ. Aramaic has no true independent possessive pronoun (Dalman [1905] 1981:118). This form goes back to Imperial Aramaic which, as evidenced even in Biblical Aramaic (cf, Dan 2.20), formed possessives by using the relative pronoun ܕܝ followed by the preposition ܠ combined with the pronomial suffix (Johns 1963:17). This way of expressing possession is also found in targums Onkelos and Jonathan (Stevenson [1927] 1962:21). The Old Syriac, the Peshitta, the Harclean and Christian Palestinian versions all use ܕܝܠܗܘܢ. The reconstructions offered by both Burney and Jeremias do so as well. Mitigating against this is the evidence for Galilean Aramaic. Only rarely does *Bereshit Rabba* utilize forms like ܕܝܠܗܘܢ for possessives, preferring instead, ܕܝܕܗܘܢ (Odeberg 1939 2:5). Likewise, ܕܝܕܗܘܢ is commonly employed in Targum *Yerushalmi* I³⁰ and II³¹ (Dalman [1905] 1981:118). In fact, in the Palestinian Talmud and Mishnah this is the preferred form (Stevenson [1927] 1962:21). Dalman suggested that possessive forms such as ܕܝܠܝ [*mine*] comes from ܕܝ + ܝܕܝ [*that which is to my hand*] (Dalman [1905] 1981:118). More modern scholarship understands that the ܠ has become a ܕ through the process of assimilation (Frank 1995:125). Thus, the reconstruction offered for the first and last beatitudes will contain ܕܝܕܗܘܢ.

²⁹ ἐλεᾶτε, ἵνα ἐλεηθῆτε

³⁰ Targum Pseudo-Jonathan

³¹ Fragmentary Targum

Chapter Three

Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5.3: μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.

II.3.1. Reconstructing This Beatitude in Aramaic and Hebrew

II.3.1.1 The Apodosis: An Allusion to Daniel 7.18

Unlike the middle six beatitudes which all contain the common formula ὅτι αὐτοὶ + *verb*, the first and eighth beatitudes have: ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν. There has been much debate as to what this latter clause means. Does it mean that the kingdom of heaven belongs to the *poor/persecuted for righteousness sake* or does it mean that the kingdom is made up of such people. Biven, for instance contemptuously calls *theirs* a “classic mistranslation” and suggests that *of these* is to be preferred because “we cannot possess the Kingdom” (Biven & Blizzard 1984:120). Young agrees, suggesting that αὐτῶν is to be translated as a partitive genitive, thus giving the translation: *for from them is the kingdom of heaven* (Young 1995:92). To this can be added the comments of such scholars as Albright and Mann who state, “the best sense here is ‘the Kingdom will consist of such as these’” (Albright & Mann 1981:46).

The dilemma can be solved quite easily by first of all understanding that based on Daniel 7.18 and 22 the kingdom is inherited. Döve already suggested this, saying: “of the first beatitude the second part of the phrase is: ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν, which corresponds to Daniel 7.18 “ויקבלון מלכותא קדישא עליונין וגו’” (1953:157).

If a direct reference to Daniel 7 was being made should we not expect to see a verb such as παραλαμβάνω or κατέχω (both used in the LXX of Dn 7.18)? A possible alternative is to see the apodosis of this beatitude as a conflation of Daniel 7.27 with Isaiah 61.7.

After mentioning that the people will have a double inheritance in the land Isaiah 61.7 says that שְׂמֵחַת עוֹלָם תְּהִיָּה לָהֶם.³³ The use of αὐτῶν may reflect the Greek version of Daniel 7.27 where its use in relation to the *kingdom and power and greatness* is ambiguous (Meadowcroft 1995:219). The words לְהִיָּה לָהֶם could account for the αὐτῶν ἐστίν of the first and eighth beatitudes. *Everlasting joy* was indirectly linked with *the kingdom of heaven* through their both being synonymous with *salvation* (cf, Baruch 5.29). It is possible that Jesus paraphrased a combination of Isaiah 61.7 and Daniel 7.27, saying something like: מְלָכוּת הַשָּׁמַיִם תְּהִיָּה לָהֶם,³⁴ but this seems forced.

This brings us back to looking at Daniel 7.18 for help. Dupont spends considerable time (30 pages) comparing the first beatitude to statements, reflected in all three of the synoptic Gospels, Jesus made about becoming like a child in order to enter the kingdom.³⁵ (1969:151-181). Though each of the synoptic writers differ in the wording of this pericope each uses the same words to express *for to these belongs the kingdom of God*: τῶν γὰρ τοιούτων ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ.³⁶ The similarity between the words τῶν τοιούτων ἐστὶν and αὐτῶν ἐστὶν (both: genitive pronoun followed by ἐστίν) is enough to suggest that Dupont is right to see a connection between them.

Of importance with regard to the contention above that the first beatitude contains a reference to Daniel 7.18 is the fact that Mark (10.15) suggests that because the kingdom belongs to *such as these* (children) it is requisite to *receive the kingdom* [δέξεται τὴν βασιλείαν] like a child.

³² *And the saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom etc.*

³³ *everlasting joy will be theirs*

³⁴ *The kingdom of heaven will be theirs.*

³⁵ Matthew 19.13-14; Mark 10.13-16; Luke 18.15-17

³⁶ Matthew differs only slightly, saying: ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν [*kingdom of heaven*].

Dupont (1969:172) maintains that this reflects the Hebrew idiom קָבַל עָלָיו מַלְכוּת הַשָּׁמַיִם³⁷). He draws attention to Daniel 7.18 (although both the LXX as well as Theodotian employ παραλαμβάνω rather than δέχομαι for the Aramaic קָבַל in this verse) noting that Hebrew קָבַל can be just as easily translated into Greek by λαμβάνω or αἴρω as by δέχομαι (Dupont 1969:172).

Perhaps the word αὐτῶν has no particular, allusional purpose and only reflects a common way of speaking about such things. In the Damascus Document (CD 3.20) a promise of eternal life is phrased similarly: הַמְחַיִּים בּוֹ לְחַיֵּי נֶצַח וְכָל כְּבוֹד אֲרָם לְהֵם הוּא³⁸ (Lohse 1971:72). As every student soon learns the use of prepositions in Hebrew are extremely prolific, often implying various words or phrases as the context demands. Here, לְ is attached to חַיֵּי נֶצַח, creating an awkward *to eternal life*. The context suggests that a verb such as *receive*, *enter*, or *come* should be added. Perhaps the preceding word בּוֹ is actually a scribal error for בּוֹא. At any rate, it is used synonymously with *theirs* [לְהֵם] further in the line.

Greek ὅτι can be rendered in Hebrew appropriately by the inseparable שֵׁ. Aramaic הֵ can also serve the same purpose. Thus the words ὅτι αὐτῶν in the apodosis of the first and eighth beatitudes will be adequately reconstructed in Hebrew by שֵׁלְהֵם and in Aramaic by הֵהוֹן.

II.3.1.2 The First Hemistich

As mentioned earlier, the first beatitude's promise of the kingdom of heaven reflects an allusion to Daniel 7.18. However, the designation of those who are to receive this kingdom has been changed from *the saints of the Most High* to *the poor in spirit*. This idiom appears several times among the Dead Sea Scrolls and is a synonym for *humble* (Dupont 1973:460). It is this idiom in particular that signals that the Greek text in this

³⁷ receive upon himself the kingdom of heaven

³⁸ Those who grow strong in it [i.e., the house of faith] (come) to eternal life and every human glory is theirs.

beatitude is a translation. For a Greek speaking person, πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι would probably signify *lacking in spirit*.

II.3.1.2.1 The term *Poor in Spirit*

II.3.1.2.1.a πτωχός = אָנָוּ

The LXX uses πτωχός [*poor*] to translate eight different Hebrew words (Plackal 1988:132). All of these words mean, in some sense, *poor* and theoretically any one of them could be behind the use of πτωχός in the first beatitude. But, if we understand that the vocabulary of the Beatitudes is built around Isaiah 61 then the choice is clear: πτωχός refers to אָנָוּ. This word is generally understood to mean *meek* or *humble* (Brown et al [1906] 1999:776). Though אָנָוּ can mean *poor*, in the sense of those who are destitute, this is not its primary meaning.

II.3.1.2.1.b An Allusion to Isaiah 61.1

The reference in Isaiah 61.1 to the anointing *to preach good news to the poor* [MT: לְבַשֵּׁר לְאָנָוּ; LXX: εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς] is what is alluded to here. Ancient Greek speaking Jews seem to have been divided on whether אָנָוּ should be given the meaning *poor* in Isaiah 61.1. For this reason there are manuscripts of the Septuagint (i.e., S and Q) which translate אָנָוּ in this verse by the word ταπεινός rather than by πτωχός. In like manner, the Epistle of Barnabas (14.9) quotes Isaiah 61.1 using ταπεινός.

One must not think that ancient Israelites imposed too large a distinction between the meanings *poor* and *meek*. The difference between the physically poor and those who are humble towards God was blurry even in biblical times. Psalm 37.11, from which the third beatitude is taken, uses the word *meek* [אָנָוּ] in parallel to other character qualities of a righteous person throughout the chapter. Perhaps this was why the LXX used πραῦς rather than πτωχός in its translation of Psalm 37.11.

During the exilic and post-exilic periods the concept of *the poor* evolved into a religious terminology for the *righteous* (Friedrich 1968:39). Examples of this can be clearly seen in such passages as: Psalms 39.17; 69.5; 85.1; 108.22; Amos 8.4; Ezekiel 16.49; 18.12;

22.29. This mirrors the religious usage of words like *mourn*, *hunger* and *thirst* in the following beatitudes (cf, §II.8.2.1.b).

II.3.1.2.1.c *Poor in Spirit Among the Dead Sea Scrolls*

The presence of the idiom *poor in spirit* among the Dead Sea Scrolls is evidence that this was an idiom in use during Second Temple times. For instance, in a passage in the War Scroll (1QM 14.7) we find the people of God called עֲנֵי רוּחַ [*poor in spirit*]. These individuals are referred to in the same column with such designations as *those whose way is perfect*, *your holy people*, *the remnant of your people*, and *Your redeemed*. In the Thanksgiving Scroll (14.3) we again find this term applied to God's people. Typically, the sectarians at Qumran used this as an expression for themselves (Sekki 1989:122). This does not preclude the possibility that this term was also employed as a designation for the disciples of Jesus (Young 1995:87).

Akin to this idiom are other such expressions as: רוּחַ עֲנָה³⁹ (1QS 4.3) and רוּחַ יוֹשֵׁר⁴⁰ (1QS 3.8). In the same way that the שְׂפֵל־רוּחַ,⁴¹ in Isaiah 57.15, are those who have a רוּחַ שְׂפִילִים⁴² so too, עֲנֵי רוּחַ should be understood as those who have a רוּחַ עֲנָה. This idiom also finds its way into the New Testament. Paul seems to have רוּחַ עֲנָה in mind when he speaks of a *spirit of meekness* in Galatians 6.1 [πνεύματι πραΰτητος] and I Corinthians 4.21 [πνεύματί τε πραΰτητος].

It was not only the word רוּחַ which was combined with עֲנָה. In 4Q525, which has its own collection of beatitudes, we find both עֲנוּת נַפְשׁוֹ⁴³ (2.6) and עֲנוּת צְדָקָה⁴⁴ (4.20). There does not seem to be any difference between these terms as the emphasis in each case is on humility rather than spirit, soul, or righteousness.

³⁹ *spirit of humility*

⁴⁰ *an upright and humble spirit*

⁴¹ *lowly in spirit*

⁴² *spirit of the lowly*

⁴³ *humility of his soul*

⁴⁴ *humility of righteousness*

An intriguing combination of the words *poor* and *spirit* can be found in 4Q521, which has already been identified as having direct allusions to Isaiah 61. In fragment one, column two, line six we find the words **ועל עניים רוחו תרחף**.⁴⁵

This seems to represent an allusion to Isaiah 61.1's *the spirit of the LORD is upon me* combined with an allusion to Genesis 1.2, where *the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters*. The Talmud (*Hag* 15a) interprets the use of **רָחַף** in Genesis 1.2 as an indication that the Spirit hovered over the waters *like a dove that hovers over her young* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1468). This interpretation is intriguing for New Testament scholars. It may indicate that the sign of the Spirit descending on Jesus at his baptism in the form of a dove was seen as a fulfillment of a popular understanding of Isaiah 61.1. This is further affirmed by the use of **ἐπ' αὐτόν** in Matthew 3.16, as opposed to Mark's **εἰς αὐτόν** (Mk 1.10), which may have been influenced by the **ἐπ' ἐμέ** (LXX) of Isaiah 61.1a (Robinson 1992:387).

But this does not solve the problem raised in chapter five of the first section (see §I.5.1) of whether Jesus said *blessed are the poor in spirit* or *blessed are the poor*. All it does is prove that the former idiom did exist in Palestine at the time of Jesus. At Qumran the term *poor in spirit* never became a technical term distinguished from *poor*. Both are used for designations of the community as well as in contrast to those who are *proud* (Jeremias 1971:112-113).

II.3.1.2.1.d **עני ונכה־רוח < עני רוח**

It has been suggested that **עני רוח** as found among the Dead Sea Scrolls is an abbreviation of *poor and contrite in spirit* [**עני ונכה־רוח**] found in Isaiah 66.2 (Lindsey 1973:XXIII). For this theory to work it is necessary for the words **עני** and **עני** to be considered interchangeable. There is evidence that they were (Young 1995:93). The only difference, orthographically, between **עני** and **עני** is that the former ends in a *vav* and the latter ends in a *yod*. It might be thought inevitable that there would have been some

confusion between them in the Hebrew manuscript tradition (e.g., Pr 14.21: *kethib* עֲנִיִּים; *qere* עֲנָוִים). Thus both are able to be translated either as *poor* or *humble* (Brown et al [1906] 1999:776). Targum Jonathan uses עֲנִוּתָן to translate both עֲנִי in Isaiah 61.1 and עֲנִי in Isaiah 66.2. This would suggest that Aramaic speakers recognized no difference between the words עֲנִי and עֲנָוִי.

As noted above, רוּחַ עֲנָוָה (noted above as having been found at Qumran) may be reflected in the term *spirit of meekness* in Galatians 6.1 and I Corinthians 4.21. The Peshitta translates this term in both these passages as כְּחַסְיָא חֲסִיָּא.⁴⁶ This suggests that the translator may have been thinking of this as a reference to Isaiah 66.2 where נְכִיחַ רוּחַ is similarly translated as חֲסִיָּא וְחִסְיָא.⁴⁷

Still, this begs the question: what would an allusion to Isaiah 66.2 be doing in a context devoted to Isaiah 61? A possible connection between these two passages can be found in the Thanksgiving Scroll (1QH) where עֲנִיִּים is used in a direct allusion to Isaiah 61.1:

1QH 18.14

לְבִשָׁר עֲנִיִּים לְרֹב רַחֲמֵיכָה

to announce the good news to the poor of the abundance of your mercies.

Unfortunately the next line is not complete but the theme of Isaiah 61 is still in view:

1QH 18.15

[] אֵי רוּחַ וְאֵבְלִים לְשִׂמְחַת עוֹלָם

[] *spirit and those who mourn to everlasting joy*

⁴⁵ *And over the poor will his spirit hover.*

⁴⁶ בְּרוּחָא מְכִיכְתָא

⁴⁷ מְכִיךְ רוּחָא

The gist of this passage seems to be that *those who mourn* as well as the [] *in/of spirit* are going to be given *everlasting joy*. The reference to *everlasting joy* is an allusion to Isaiah 61.7 which, in speaking of God's people, says that *everlasting joy will be theirs*.⁴⁸

It is impossible to be sure of the word preceding *spirit* but a possibility is that this should be restored as נִכְאָר [contrite] (using an alternative spelling not at all unusual at Qumran; cf, 1QM 11.10 which uses this very spelling) and is a reference to Isaiah 66.2. If it can be accepted that conflation of Isaiah 61.1 and 66.2 was not unusual in first-century Judaism, then substituting the words עֲנִי רַחֵם for עֲנִיִּים would not affect the allusion to Isaiah 61.1.

II.3.1.2.1.e Conflation in Jewish Beatitudes

Conflation of two or more biblical texts in a single passage is not uncommon in the New Testament. For example, in Matthew 3.17 the voice of God at the baptism of Jesus says: *This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased* (NIV). This is understood to be a conflation of Psalm 2.7, and Isaiah 42.1 (Jeremias 1971:53). This follows the rabbinic method called *remez*⁴⁹ [hinting] in which whole passages of scripture were brought to mind by the use of significant words or phrases (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1482).

A good illustration of how conflation can be used in a beatitude so that the original allusion is not lost, but is enhanced, can be seen among a collection of beatitudes found at Qumran (4Q525 fr 2, co 2, l 1) which begins with a paraphrase of Psalm 15.2b-3a. Puech restores this to read:

[אשרי דובר אמת] בלב טהור ולוא רגל על לשונו (1991:90).

Blessed is the one who speaks truth with a pure heart and does not slander with his tongue.

Psalm 15.2b-3a in the Masoretic Text reads:

וְדַבֵּר אֱמֶת בְּלִבָּבוֹ לֹא-רָגַל עַל-לְשׁוֹנוֹ

⁴⁸ שמחת עולם תהיה להם

⁴⁹ רמז

who speaks the truth from his heart and has no slander on his tongue (NIV)

The most interesting difference between the two is that the Qumran text says בלב טהור⁵⁰ instead of בלבבו.⁵¹ It shows that conflation (probably with Ps 51.12⁵²) can occur without damaging the original allusion.

That this kind of thing also takes place in the Beatitudes of Matthew only shows that, in style, they are typical examples of the teachings, statements, and aphorisms common in ancient Judaism. This has a direct bearing on the use of עֲנִי רוּחַ in a context where עֲנָוִים would be expected. If indeed עֲנִי רוּחַ stands behind πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι in Matthew 5.3 it is only a Hebrew speaker who would have recognized an allusion to both Isaiah 61.1 and 66.2. A Greek speaking Jew, conversant with the Septuagint, might have made the connection with Isaiah 61.1 but not 66.2. The Septuagint version of Isaiah 66.2 translates עֲנִי וְנִכְהַרְרוּחַ, not as πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, but as τὸν ταπεινὸν καὶ ἡσύχιον. Significantly, the only examples of *poor in spirit* among the Dead Sea Scrolls are in Hebrew and not Aramaic. The Aramaic word ענוותן is used often enough but not in conjunction with the word *spirit*. Only a Hebrew speaker would equate *poor* with *poor in spirit*.

II.3.1.2.1.f Poor > Poor in Spirit

The preponderance of evidence in favour of the first beatitude originally being *blessed are the poor* is too great to ignore. The fact that Isaiah 61.1 is behind the first beatitude is the most important reason. The authors of the Qumran texts, when alluding to Isaiah 61.1, always seem to use עֲנָוִים without complement rather than עֲנִי רוּחַ (Dupont 1969:215).

⁵⁰ *with a pure heart*

⁵¹ *in his heart*

⁵² Psalm 51.12 says: *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me* (NIV). In this case *pure/clean heart* stands for לְבַב טָהוֹר just as in 4Q525. This is not to be confused with Psalm 24.3b-4a which says: *Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart*. In this case the idiom is בְּרִי לִקְבֹּב. See §II.8.2.3.

The New Testament writers themselves seem to only know a version without the addition of the word *in spirit*. Luke certainly does. It seems unlikely that Luke (who emphasizes the role of the Spirit so much) would have changed *poor in spirit* to *poor*. The original wording must have been *blessed are the poor* which gives a clear allusion to Isaiah 61.1.

Ironically, the gospel of Matthew also gives evidence for an original beatitude for the *poor* rather than the *poor in spirit*. As mentioned earlier, in Matthew 11.1-6 the disciples of John come to Jesus asking him (vs 3) if he is *the one who was to come* or not. Jesus' answer to them (Mt 11.4-6) consists of a list of the various kinds of ministry he was doing couched in terminology representing a conflated version of Isaiah 61.1-3. The list concludes with the words εὐαγγελίσασθαι πτωχοῖς [*the poor are evangelized*]. This is not only a reference to Isaiah 61.1 but to the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount: μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοί (Robinson 1992:366). The fact that the expression πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι does not occur in Matthew 11.5, which only employs πτωχός, is possibly a clue that the author (or his source) is uncomfortable with this term as an allusion to Isaiah 61.1. If this idiom is present in the first beatitude as the result of the author's own sensibilities one would expect him to consistently place the same words in another passage which also alludes to Isaiah 61.

In addition to this, the testimony of the *Gospel of Thomas*, Polycarp and the Pseudo-Clementine writings make a very strong case against the words *in spirit* being a part of the original tradition. Yet, these words must have been added before the first beatitude was translated into Greek. This leads to two conclusions: 1.) Jesus originally said *Blessed are the poor*; 2.) *OMatthew* knows a Hebrew version addressed to the *poor in spirit*.

II.3.1.2.2 The First Hemistich in Aramaic

Burney's (1925:166) reconstruction of this beatitude reads: *tubehón miskenayyá dedilehón malkutá dišmayyá*.⁵³ Issue can be taken with the choice of מִסְכְּנִיָּא to represent οἱ πτωχοί [*the poor*]. In this he is merely following the Syriac versions.

Certainly מִסְכְּנִיָּא is a perfectly good word which means *a poor man* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:807). However, the allusion to Isaiah 61.1 demands the use of עֲנוּתְנִיָּא. Other than that his reconstruction is perfectly acceptable. Substituting עֲנוּתְנִיָּא for מִסְכְּנִיָּא in an Aramaic reconstruction results in: טוֹבִיּהוֹן עֲנוּתְנִיָּא דְרֵהוֹן מְלֻכּוּתָא דְשִׁמְיָא.⁵⁴ In accordance with Burney's theory of a three beat poetic pattern this reconstruction also has two stichs with three stresses each.

II.3.1.2.3 The First Hemistich in Hebrew

II.3.1.2.3.a *Blessed are the Poor*

A Hebrew reconstruction patterned on the same idea might read אֲשֶׁרֵי הָעֲנָוִים שְׁלֵהֶם מְלֻכּוּת הַשָּׁמַיִם. This also has the three-beat rhythm Burney proposes.⁵⁵

II.3.1.2.3.b *Blessed are the Poor in Spirit*

Ironically, if the words *in spirit* (patterned after עֲנִי רִיחַ found in 1QM 14.7) were present in a Hebrew version the situation changes. Thus, אֲשֶׁרֵי עֲנִי רִיחַ has only two stresses. In order to allow for the extra needed stress a definite article must be added, resulting in: אֲשֶׁרֵי הָרִיחַ עֲנִי הָרִיחַ. It must be admitted, however, that no form corresponding to עֲנִי הָרִיחַ has been found thus far among the Dead Sea Scrolls. This may be considered only a minor problem. The variety of expressions using both רִיחַ and עֲנִי at Qumran suggests that there was no fixed form of idiom. Having said that, all the forms of this expression which exist, as stated earlier, are in Hebrew. Therefore, the most likely

⁵³ טוביהון מסכניא דרילהון מלכותא דשמיא

⁵⁴ *tubehón inwetánayyá dedilehón malkutá dišmayyá*

⁵⁵ Consideration of הָעֲנָוִים as a word with two stresses is based on the fact that the Rabbinic Bible (as opposed to Biblia Hebraica) gives עֲנָוִים two stresses when an inseparable prefix is added to it (e.g., Ps

scenario is that the version of the first beatitude presented by Matthew represents a Hebrew version as there is, as yet, no analogy for the idiom *poor in spirit* in Aramaic.

II.3.1.2.3.c *Blessed are the Poor of the Earth*

There seems to have been another Hebrew version of the first beatitude competing with *blessed are the poor in spirit*. James is acquainted with it. This can be seen by examining James 2.5:

Ἄκούσατε, ἀδελφοί μου ἀγαπητοί. οὐχ ὁ θεὸς ἐξελέξατο τοὺς πτωχοὺς τῷ κόσμῳ πλουσίους ἐν πίστει καὶ κληρονόμους τῆς βασιλείας ἧς ἐπηγγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν.

Listen, my brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? (NIV)

The allusion to the first beatitude is apparent by the reference to the poor inheriting the kingdom. As mentioned earlier, James is interpreting the possession of the kingdom by way of Proverbs 8.21 (see: §I.5.1.4).

Additionally, by saying that *the poor* are *rich in faith*, James makes an intentional play on the Hebrew words אֲשֶׁר [*blessed*] and עָשִׂיר [*rich*]. This same pun can be found in *Avoth* 4.1 where the tannaitic rabbi, Simon ben Zoma answers the question of who is *rich* [עָשִׂיר] by saying that it is those who are *blessed* [אֲשֶׁר].⁵⁶ Presumably, this pun was common enough that ben Zoma's application of it was not considered unusual.

It must be pointed out that James' use of the same pun is evidence for a Hebrew version of the first beatitude in oral form. The play on words between אֲשֶׁר [*blessed*] and עָשִׂיר

37.11: וְעֲנִיִּים; Pr 3.34: רַלְעֲנִיִּים).

⁵⁶ Ben Zoma gives a series of aphorisms based on word play with scriptures to answer the rhetorical questions of *who is wise*, *who is mighty*, *who is rich* and *who is honoured*. Yet, it is only his answer to the question *who is rich* which also receives an eschatological interpretation. The text reads: אִיזְהוּ עָשִׂיר הַשְּׂמֵחַ אִיזְהוּ עָשִׂיר שְׂמֵחַ בְּחֶלְקוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר וְיָנִיעַ כַּפְּיךָ כִּי תֹאכַל אֲשֶׁרֶךְ וְטוֹב לְךָ אֲשֶׁרֶךְ בְּעוֹלָם תְּהֵא וְטוֹב לְךָ לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא (Singer 1962:264-265) [*Who is rich? He who is happy with his portion, as it is said: You will eat the labour of your hands, happy are you, and (may it be) well with you (Psalm 128.2); happy are you in this world, and it*

[*rich*] could not be made from a written version. It is only because many Jews (particularly in Galilee) in first-century Palestine did not distinguish between the pronunciations of נ and ע (*Erub* 53b) that the pun is possible. But, the difference between the Hebrew beatitude known by Matthew and the one James is acquainted with is revealed by the fact that James speaks not of the *poor in spirit*, but rather the *poor in the world* [πτωχοὶ τῷ κόσμῳ]. This term seems to represent the Hebrew term עֲנֵי אֲרֶץ [poor of the earth] and is a reference to Isaiah 11.4. This same term is found among the Dead Sea Scrolls (in an allusion to Is 11.4) in 1QSb 5.22. Isaiah 11 is filled with important messianic prophecies and would have been very easy to link to Jesus' message of the arrival of the kingdom.

Someone might argue that the Hebrew word אֲרֶץ would rather have been translated into Greek by the word γῆς instead of κόσμος. The legitimacy of suggesting that κόσμος was commonly used as a translation of אֲרֶץ in the early Church can be demonstrated from Romans 4.13:

It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world [κόσμος], but through the righteousness that comes by faith (NIV).

This is an allusion to Genesis 15.7 in which God tells Abraham that he has brought him from Mesopotamia לָתֵת לְךָ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת לְרִשְׁתָּהּ.⁵⁷

Matthew's version of the beatitude for the *poor* has added the word הָרֵיחַ, creating an allusion to Isaiah 66.2. The version James knows has added הָאָרֶץ thus making this an allusion to Isaiah 11.4. His version of the first beatitude reads: אֲשֶׁר־י עֲנֵי הָאָרֶץ שְׁלֵהֶם: מַלְכוּת הַשָּׁמַיִם.⁵⁸

Perhaps Tatian was also aware of a Jewish-Christian tradition linking the first beatitude

will be well with you in the world to come.]

⁵⁷ *to give you this land to take possession of it (NIV)*

⁵⁸ *Blessed are the poor of the earth for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

with Isaiah 11.4. The Diatessaron version, followed by all the Syriac versions, translates the word πτωχοί by ܡܫܝܚܐ.⁵⁹ This word is found in the Peshitta version of Isaiah 11.4, which in turn mirrors the Targum, which uses ܡܫܫܝܚܐ. It must be admitted that in each case the word being translated is the Hebrew word דָּלִים [poor]. Neither the Peshitta nor the Targum translate the word עֲנָוִים in Isaiah 11.4 directly.⁶⁰ The Septuagint has: ταπεινὸς τῆς γῆς [*humble of the earth*], meaning that the allusion in James 2.5 does not come from the Greek speaking Jewish environment.

II.3.1.3 The Original Beatitude

What conclusions may be drawn from this investigation so far? The fact that there were at least two competing Hebrew versions of this beatitude is perhaps an indication that the original beatitude was in Aramaic. As mentioned in the introduction, it was not unusual to take the Aramaic words of a rabbi and remember them in Hebrew. But, it must be admitted that at this point in the investigation the original language of the Beatitudes remains in doubt. The version of the first beatitude in Luke, *blessed are the poor*, could just as easily reflect a Hebrew saying as it could an Aramaic one. Matthew's *poor in spirit* shows a greater likelihood of being a translation from Hebrew but this conclusion is far from certain.

It seems reasonable to think that Luke and Matthew each utilize a different source tradition for their versions of the Beatitudes. Wrege suggested this a generation ago but from the standpoint that they utilized pre-literary traditions (Dupont 1969:15). The evidence from James suggests that there was no written Hebrew version of the beatitudes in the beginning of the second half of the first century. A fluid state of oral tradition for this beatitude accounts for the fact that Luke, Matthew and James each know a version different from one another.

⁵⁹ מִשְׁכָּנָא

⁶⁰ Hebrew: לְעֲנֵוֵי-אֲרֶץ [to the poor of the earth]

Targum: מְחַשְׁרְכֵי עַמָּא דְאֶרְעָא [the needy of the people of the earth]

Peshitta: ܠܒܝܫܝܗ ܕܐܪܥܐ; to the wicked? of the earth]

II.3.1.4 Hebrew and Aramaic Reconstructions

Hebrew

אֲשֶׁרֵי עֲנִי הַרוּחַ שְׁלֵהֶם מְלִכּוּת הַשָּׁמַיִם

Aramaic

טוביהון ענותניא דדהון מלכותא דשמא

II.3.2 The Meaning of this Beatitude

II.3.2.1 *The Poor in Spirit*

Because the term *poor in spirit* is an allusion to Isaiah 66.2 it must be understood as an idiom for *humble*. It would not particularly be distinguished from the word *poor* and could just as easily be applied towards those who were physically destitute. *Poor in spirit* is used with the meaning of *discouraged* in 1QM 14.7.

II.3.2.2 Receiving the Kingdom of Heaven

The word *kingdom* should not be thought of in the sense of a spatial territory, but rather, with the understanding of *rule* or *reign*. The kingdom of God is also to be understood in an active way. At Qumran, the concept of God being king is equated with his acting on behalf of his people. The War Scroll states (1QM 6.6):

ובקדושי עמו יעשה חיל והיתה לאל ישראל המלוכה

And the kingdom will belong to the God of Israel and among the holy ones of his people he will do mighty acts.

Receiving a kingdom, as expressed in the Beatitudes, then implies not just position but authority which is actively put to use. This can be amply illustrated (in a negative way) from Revelation 17.12:

The ten horns you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but who for one hour will receive authority [ἐξουσία] as kings along with the beast (NIV).

In this verse the authority of the beast is not diminished by the fact that the ten horns are also kings. In the same way, the early church understood that each believer has been made a king (and priest) and given kingly authority under the kingship of God. This is

beautifully expressed in Revelation 5.10 where in the midst of a song of praise and glory to the Lamb it is said that *you have made us, to our God, kings and priests and we shall reign upon the earth.*

II.3.2.3 How is this Beatitude to be Understood?

It is quite common to explain this beatitude as addressed to *those who know they are spiritually poor* (TEV). Though this is not untrue the spiritual application of the term *poor in spirit* belongs to its “hidden” meaning. The people being addressed directly are those who are primarily the physically poor and destitute, but also to those who are humble. The term *poor in spirit* is used analogous to the way the word *blind* is used both for those who are physically blind and for those who are spiritually blind (Jesus came to give sight to both). To suggest that the addition of the word *spirit* causes this term to mean *spiritually poor* is to impute to Hebrew speakers concepts more at home in Greek. Jesus and his disciples would have understood the words in a more ambiguous sense; one recognising no dichotomy between *poor* and *humble*.

In so far as people have recognized in this beatitude a call to humble themselves before God then they have (often by instinct) gotten the “hidden” meaning of this beatitude – “for him who has ears to hear.”

Chapter Four

Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted

Matthew 5.4: μακάριοι οἱ πενθοῦντες ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται

II.4.1 Reconstructing this Beatitude into Aramaic and Hebrew

Throughout the research the easiest beatitudes to link with Isaiah 61 have been the first (of the *poor*) and this one. The allusion, here, to Isaiah 61.2 is so obvious that it is unmistakable (Betz 1995:124), because one of the tasks of the anointed one is לְנַחֵם כָּל-אַבְלִים.⁶¹ This is rendered in the Septuagint as: παρακαλέσαι πάντας τοὺς πενθοῦντας. In verse three Isaiah shows he is not generically referring to all who are grieving from personal loss by using the more specific term צִיּוֹן אַבְלֵי.⁶² One must look to Isaiah 61.2 to find not only the vocabulary for this beatitude but also the background for understanding it.

II.4.1.1 The Aramaic Reconstruction

The Aramaic wording for the reconstruction of this beatitude should have been easy to work out. The problem comes with finding a reconstruction which also keeps the three-stress rhythm Burney advocates. His Aramaic solution, *tubehón demít'abbelin dehinnún mītnahhamín*,⁶³ has a problem. No other Aramaic version uses מְחַאֲבְלִין to translate πενθοῦντες. For Matthew 5.4 the Old Syriac and Peshitta use ܐܪܘܘܬܐ;⁶⁴ the Harclean and Christian Palestinian versions use ܐܪܘܬܐ.⁶⁵ These would only receive one stress.

Help comes from Targum Jonathan's version of Isaiah 61.2: לְנַחֵם כָּל אַבְלֵיָא. In this version the Hebrew word אַבְלֵים is translated into Aramaic as אַבְלֵיָא. This word would

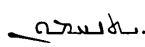
⁶¹ to comfort all who mourn

⁶² mourners of Zion

⁶³ מְחַאֲבְלִין דְּהַנֵּן מְחַנְחָמֵן

⁶⁴ אבילא

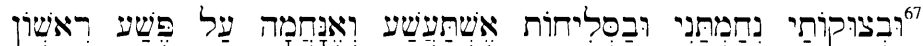
receive the necessary two stresses to be used in a reconstruction keeping to a three-stress rhythm.

The reconstruction of παρακληθήσονται by יתְנַחֲמוּן receives support from the Christian Palestinian version, which has .⁶⁶

II.4.1.2 The Hebrew Reconstruction

The Hebrew word הַאֲבִלִים receives two stresses (i.e., הַאֲבִלִים) and therefore no problems with the poetic rhythm are encountered in the first half of this reconstruction. The second half is a bit more problematic.

The word παρακληθήσονται needs to be reconstructed using a passive form of the verb נָחַם. Three different constructions are used to express a passive meaning with this verb in Mishnaic Hebrew: *Niph'al* (נִחַם), *Hithpa'el* (הִתְנַחֵם), and the *Nithpa'el* (נִתְנַחֵם) (Jastrow [1903] 1992:895).

In the sectarian scrolls found at Qumran it is generally the *Niph'al* of נָחַם which was employed to express *to be comforted*. For instance, in the Thanksgiving Scroll (1QH 17.13) we find: ⁶⁷ (Lohse 1971:146). However, a reconstruction of ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται which reads שֶׁהֵם יִתְחַמוּ would not work well because this wording only contains two beats.

⁶⁵ אבילין

⁶⁶ יתנחמון

⁶⁷ *In my distress You have comforted me, and in forgiveness I delight. I will be comforted over earlier sin.*

The passive use of נָחַם in Biblical Hebrew is not common. When this verb is found in the *Niph'al* or *Hithpa'el* constructions the meaning can just as easily be active or reflexive rather than passive (Brown et al [1906] 1999:636-637).⁶⁸ This verb appears in the *Pu'al* construction (נִחְמָה) only twice in the Masoretic Text (Brown et al [1906] 1999:637). Both of these instances occur in Isaiah (i e, 54.11 and 66.13).

II.4.1.2.1 A Conflation of Allusions to Isaiah 61 and Isaiah 66

The fact that a passive form of נָחַם can be found in Isaiah 66 is intriguing given the fact that appeal has already been made to Isaiah 66.2 in the Hebrew reconstruction of the preceding beatitude. It may be that the translator of the Aramaic Beatitudes into Hebrew desired to couple the allusion to Isaiah 61 with Isaiah 66, not just because of the similarity between עָנָו and עָנִי, but because of the promise in Isaiah 66.13 to those who mourn over Jerusalem: תִּנְחַמְנוּ.⁶⁹

As mentioned in the previous chapter, combining allusions to both Isaiah 61 and 66 was not unusual in apocalyptic circles. An example from the Dead Sea Scrolls analogous to this use of both Isaiah 61 and 66 in the first two beatitudes can be garnered from 4Q434. Frag. 1 Col. 1 line 1 reads: לְהַנְחִימָם עַל אַבְלָה עֲנוּה.⁷⁰ This should be considered an allusion to Isaiah 61.1-3. It is then tied to an allusion to Isaiah 66.13 in the sixth line which says: *as a man whose mother will comfort him, so He will comfort them over Jerusalem.*

As mentioned above, Isaiah 66 uses the verb נָחַם in connection with *those who mourn* [הַמְתַּאֲבְלִים] (66.10). A reconstruction of this beatitude using forms suggested by Isaiah

⁶⁸ One interesting Biblical use of the verb נָחַם in the *Hithpa'el* construction occurs in Psalm 119.52: זָכַרְתִּי וְאֶתְנַחֵם יְהוָה מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ מִעוֹלָם יְהוָה וְאֶתְנַחֵם נָחַם in this *binyan* shifted by New Testament times to mean *be comforted* probably allowed interpreters to read and understand this verse as: *I will remember your ancient judgements (against the unrighteous) LORD and I will be comforted.* This seems to be the understanding of Targum Jonathan which translates this verse as: אֲדַכְרִית דִּינֶיךָ מִן עֲלְמָא יִי וְאֶתְנַחֵמִית. Ancient rabbis concurred. For instance, *Even Ezra* comments that זָכַרְתִּי means כְּמוֹהֶם שְׁעֵשִׂית צוּדִים כְּמוֹהֶם. Similarly, the *Mtzudat David* commentary says: כִּי אֶתְנַחֵם עַל דְּאֵג' הַלְלַת הַזּוּדִים כִּי יִדְעָתִי שִׁקְצֵלוּ גְמוּלָם.

⁶⁹ *you will be comforted*

66, verses 10 and 13 would result in: אֲשֶׁרֵי הַמְתַּאבְּלִים שָׁהֶם יִנְחָמוּ.

In this reconstruction the אַבְּלִים of Isaiah 61.2 has been substituted by the מְתַאבְּלִים of Isaiah 66.10. Making this change poses no threat to the poetic rhythm since the required three beats are still present. The use of the *Pu'al* form: יִנְחָמוּ is suggested by Isaiah 66.13. This last form would be in agreement with Hebrew versions of this beatitude as ancient as Shem Tov's (Howard 1995:16), and as modern as Lindsey's (1973:XXII). This wording brings us back to Burney's original suggestion: מְנַבְּיָהוֹן דְּמְתַאבְּלִין דְּהַנּוֹן דְּמְתַנְחָמוּן. He never mentions the possible conflation of allusions to Isaiah 61 with Isaiah 66 but מְתַאבְּלִין is found in the Targum to Isaiah 66.10 and תְּתַנְחָמוּן is used to render תִּנְחָמוּ in 66.13.

There are two problems with this reconstruction however. Firstly, by rendering of πευθοῦντες by הַמְתַּאבְּלִים the allusion to Isaiah 61.2 is so altered as to be unrecognizable. It seems much more logical to suppose that הַאבְּלִים is the correct reconstruction. There is also a problem with using יִנְחָמוּ in the Hebrew reconstruction of this beatitude. The three-beat rhythm cannot be maintained in the apodosis with שָׁהֶם יִנְחָמוּ, which would only receive two beats.

II.4.1.2.2 Defending the Allusion to Isaiah 66.13

The theory that allusion is being made to Isaiah 66.13 is still viable. There is a variant in the Isaiah Scroll from Qumran (1QIs^a) to the wording of this verse in the Masoretic Text. Instead of the *Pu'al* form, תִּנְחָמוּ, this scroll uses the *Hithpa'el* and reads תִּתְנַחְמוּ. From this it is possible to suggest a Hebrew reconstruction reading: אֲשֶׁרֵי הַאבְּלִים שָׁהֶם יִתְנַחְמוּ. This gives the needed three-beat rhythm in each half.

Any objection that the switch from the second person form in Isaiah 66.13 to the third person in this beatitude would negate the proposed allusion, must be discounted. In each case it is God who comforts and this “bottom line” allows enough flexibility for the

⁷⁰ to be comforted over her mourning; her poverty

allusion to remain unaffected. A comparison between Isaiah 66.13 and the allusion to this verse in 4Q434 1.1.6 mentioned above can illustrate this.

Isaiah 66.13: כָּאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר אִמּוֹ תְנַחֲמֵנּוּ בֶן אִנְכִי אֲנַחֲמֶכֶם וּבִירוּשָׁלַם תְנַחֲמוּ:

As a man whose mother comforts him, thus will I comfort you and over Jerusalem you will be comforted.

4Q434 1.1.6: כָּאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר אִמּוֹ תְנַחֲמֵנּוּ כֵן יִנְחָמֵם בִּירוּשָׁלַם:

As a man whose mother comforts him, thus he will comfort them over Jerusalem.

4Q434 condenses and abbreviates $\text{אֲנַחֲמֶכֶם וּבִירוּשָׁלַם תְנַחֲמוּ}$ ⁷¹ to $\text{יִנְחָמֵם בִּירוּשָׁלַם}$.⁷² The active promise in the first person (אֲנַחֲמֶכֶם) and the passive promise in the second person (תְנַחֲמוּ) are combined in an active promise in the third person and a pronominal suffix (יִנְחָמֵם). This is instructive for it shows that the allusion is guided by the main verb regardless of person if the result is the same.

Employing יִתְנַחֲמוּ rather than יִנְחָמוּ may possibly be more representative of first-century Hebrew phrasing since the Isaiah Scroll (presumably reflecting contemporary style) has the *Hithpa'el* form instead of the *Pu'al* form in Isaiah 66.13. It is also logical that if the original beatitude was formed in Aramaic, using יִתְנַחֲמוּן , it would be natural to render it in Hebrew with יִתְנַחֲמוּ .

II.4.1.3 Aramaic and Hebrew Reconstructions

Aramaic

טוביהוֹן אַבְלִיא דְהַנּוֹן יִתְנַחֲמוּן

Hebrew

⁷¹ *I will comfort you; and over Jerusalem you will be comforted.*

⁷² *He will comfort them over Jerusalem.*

אֲשֶׁרֵי הָאֲבֵלִים שָׂהִם יִתְנַחֲמוּ

II.4.2 What This Beatitude Means

The word *πενθοῦντες* can obviously mean those who mourn from grief over a loved one. Such an understanding of *mourning* is found in the New Testament. In Revelation 21.4 the coming of the New Jerusalem signals that there will be no more death or mourning (cf, 7.17). Mourning went beyond the confines of grief over death and was also viewed as a response to poverty, conditions in Israel, and even the world in general (Betz 1995:120). Combining the themes of *the poor* and *mourning* was not unusual even in the Old Testament (Isaiah 61.1-2 being a case in point). The religious literature of the Second Temple period continued to do this. Two examples from the Dead Sea Scrolls adequately illustrate how effortlessly these themes could be combined in contexts which may or may not recall to mind Isaiah 61.1-3.

4Q434 Frag. 1 Col. 1 line 1: *to be comforted over her mourning; her poverty.*⁷³

4Q417 fragment 1 column 1 line 10: *Do not say,] “For what is more lowly than a poor man?” So do not rejoice when you should mourn, lest you toil pointlessly in your life.*

The first example has already been encountered and its possible connection with Isaiah 61.1-2 mentioned. The second seems not to make any allusion to Isaiah.

The link between the poor and divine comfort can also be illustrated from Jesus’ parable of Lazarus and the rich man (Lu 16.19-31). Lazarus is described as *πτωχός* (vs 20) and the only reason given for his being taken to Abraham’s bosom is the fact that in his lifetime bad things happened to him (vs 25). It is therefore interesting to note that in contrast to his suffering on earth he is now *παρακαλεῖται*.

⁷³ להנחם על אבלה ענוה. The translation follows Wise who preferred to translate ענוה as ענו + 3f pronominal suffix set in apposition to אבלה: *to be comforted over her mourning; her affliction* (Eisenman & Wise 1992:241). Later, in a book of which Wise is a co-author, Cook’s translation is given: *that the poor woman might be comforted in her mourning* (Wise et al 1996: 394).

II.4.2.1 Mourning Over Sin

Mourning is also used in the second beatitude to refer to those who mourn over sin. This interpretation goes back to ancient times. Saint Ephrem, for instance, sums it up nicely in his comments on this beatitude, saying: לְכַתְּבֵי הַחַטָּאִים הַלְלָהּ סְלִמְתָּהּ⁷⁴ (Leloir 1990:56).⁷⁵

Mourning was seen in Jewish thought not only as an act of repentance but as a guard against further sin. For instance, a line in the Jerusalem Talmud (*M Kat* III, 83a), הַסֵּר סוּר, וַיִּכְפֹּה, is interpreted by Jastrow as *let the agent (of sin, the evil inclination) be overpowered (by mourning ceremonies)* ([1903] 1992:658).

It is not only mourning for personal sin at issue here but also mourning for the sin of the nation. The mention immediately after כָּל-אֲבֵלִים in Isaiah 61.2 of צִיּוֹן אֲבֵלִי in the next verse seems to indicate that Isaiah saw this as a promise for those involved in national repentance. By the first century the two references were merged into one and the comfort prophesied was understood as a coming to the mourners of Zion. Sirach 48.24, in speaking of Isaiah, makes reference to an eschatological understanding of Isaiah 61.1-3:

In the power of the spirit he saw the last things, he comforted the mourners of Zion he revealed the future to the end of time, and hidden things long before they happened.

The *mourners of Zion* are identified with the righteous in an apocryphal Psalm discovered in Qumran devoted to Zion (11Q5 22.8) when it says: *How your blameless have mourned you* (Wise et al 1996:451).

II.4.2.2 Isaiah 61 as a Prophecy Concerning the Day of Salvation

This beatitude is predicated on an eschatological understanding of Isaiah 61 in which the

⁷⁴ *Blessed are those who mourn: those lamenting on account of their sins.*

⁷⁵ The word חָגַגְתִּים is the masculine, plural participle of חָגַג, which means *to groan* or *lament*, and should not be confused with the verb נָחַם (meaning: *to rest*) which would have the form: חָגַגְתִּים (McCarthy 1993:108).

preaching of good news and the comforting of mourners are equated with a coming salvation. This interpretation of divine comfort is not unique to Jesus, but was normative amongst Jews of that time. This is reflected in a prayer for consolation which was inserted (according to *Keth* 8b) into the Jewish blessing of Grace after Meals (Jastrow [1903] 1992:195). It calls on God to send Elijah and says concerning him: וַיְבָרֵךְ לָנוּ וַיְבָרֵךְ לָנוּ וַיְבָרֵךְ לָנוּ בְּשׂוֹרֹת טוֹבוֹת יְשׁוּעוֹת וְנִחְמוֹת⁷⁶ (Singer 1962:382).

The proclamation of the year of the Lord's favour in Isaiah 61.2 is not separate from the reversal of fortunes for the poor, mourners, broken-hearted, etc. A direct correlation between them is doubtless what Isaiah intended. The commentaries of Rashi and Kimchi on Isaiah 61.2 probably reflect a popular, Jewish understanding of this verse which predates the time of Christ. Rashi says that the year of the Lord's favour is a *year of comfort and winning favour*.⁷⁷ Similarly, Kimchi also connects the year of favour with God comforting his people, adding: *as it is written, "In my favour I will comfort you"*.⁷⁸

Such an interpretation is also reflected in the Peshitta version of Isaiah 61.2. The Hebrew text follows *the year of the LORD's favour* with יוֹם נְקָם לְאֱלֹהֵינוּ. Targum Jonathan renders this as יוֹם פּוֹרְעֻנְתָּא קְדָם אֱלֹהֵינָא. The Peshitta has ܕܝܘܡܐ ܕܦܘܪܩܢܐ ܕܠܐܠܗܝܢܐ.⁷⁹ The Hebrew idiom יוֹם נְקָם means *day of vengeance* (Brown et al [1906] 1999:668). The wording of the targum, יוֹם פּוֹרְעֻנְתָּא, means *day of retribution* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1148). The difference in meaning between *vengeance* and *retribution* is not great. The Peshitta, on the other hand, employs the Aramaic words ܕܝܘܡܐ ܕܦܘܪܩܢܐ, which means *the day of redemption*.

⁷⁶ *And he will proclaim to us the good news, salvation and comfort.*

⁷⁷ שנת פיוס ורלוי

⁷⁸ שכחוב וברלוי נחמתך

⁷⁹ דיומא דפורקנא לאלהן

Here, the Peshitta shows its dependence on a targumic tradition which stressed the positive promises of Isaiah 61.1-2 and equated *the year of the LORD's favour* with *the day of redemption*. To achieve this it appears as if ancient rabbis took advantage of the fluid state of Aramaic pronunciation during the Imperial period in which the phoneme ק became interchangeable with ע.⁸⁰ Perhaps the Hebrew word כָּנָה was originally given the oral translation פִּרְעָנָה [payment]. This could then have evolved into both the פִּרְעָנָה of Targum Jonathan and the פִּרְקָנָה (ܦܪܩܢܐ) of the Peshitta.

II.4.2.3 Comfort and the Day of Salvation Influenced by Isaiah 52

Evidence for equating the comfort of *those who mourn* with *salvation* can also be found in the New Testament. For instance, Simeon, in Luke 2.25, is honoured as one who was waiting for the παράκλησιν τοῦ Ἰσραήλ [consolation of Israel]. In Luke 2.38, similarly righteous individuals are spoken of as waiting for the λύτρωσιν Ἰερουσαλήμ [redemption of Jerusalem].

Luke uses these terms synonymously, and this is no coincidence. They are paired together in Isaiah 52.9, which says:

כִּי־נָחַם יְהוָה עַמּוֹ נְאֻל יְרוּשָׁלַם

For the LORD has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem.

In turn, these parallel promises are identified with salvation in 52.10: *The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.*

Isaiah 52 plays an important role in understanding the theological background of the Beatitudes. Even as Isaiah 61.1-3 provides the link between the *poor* of the first beatitude and *those who mourn* in the second, so Isaiah 52 provides the link between the *kingdom* and *comfort*.

⁸⁰ Jeremiah 10.11 is in Aramaic and, oddly, employs two spellings of the word *land*: אַרְעָא and אַרְעָא [= Heb אֶרֶץ].

This will, incidentally, give additional confirmation that the Beatitudes were originally given in Aramaic because the association of *kingdom* with *salvation* comes from the Targum to Isaiah 52.7.

Isaiah 52.7 reads: *How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"* (NIV). In Hebrew, the last clause is: מְלִיכָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ. This is rendered in Targum Jonathan by: אִיתְגַּלִּיאת מְלִכּוּתָא דְאֱלֹהֵיךָ.⁸¹ Thus, the mention in Matthew 4.23 that Jesus was κηρύσσω τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας should be understood as an allusion to Isaiah 52.7. As should be clear by now, the allusion of *the kingdom of heaven* comes from Daniel 7⁸². The reading of Isaiah 52.7 in the Targum allows this metaphor of *the kingdom* to become *the good news*. As this verse extols even the feet of the messenger *on the mountains*, perhaps this is yet another reason that Jesus is pictured delivering this *good news of the kingdom* on a mountain (Mt 5.1).

Isaiah 52 ends with a section (52.13-15) on *the servant of the LORD*. It is worth noting that where verse 13 says עַבְדִּי [my servant] the Targum says, עַבְדִּי מְשִׁיחָא [my servant, the Messiah (Anointed One)]. This then leads into Isaiah 53, well known for its application to Jesus (even by Christ himself; e.g. verse 12 in Lk 22.37).

The Melchizedek Scroll (11Q13) equates the coming of Melchizedek in an eschatological year of Jubilee with the *day of salvation*. In column two, lines 17 through 20 the prophecy of Isaiah 52.7 is interpreted according to 61.1-2 and Daniel 9.26:

This scripture's interpretation: "the mounta[ins] are the prophet[s], they w[ho] were sent to proclaim God's truth and to] proph[esy] to all I[srael]. "The messenger" is the [An]ointed of the spir[it], of whom Dan[iel] spoke, ["After the sixty-two weeks, an Anointed one shall be cut off" (Dan. 9.26). The "messenger who brings] good news, who announ[ces salvation"] is the one of whom it is wri[tt]en, ["to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, the day of vengeance of our

⁸¹ *The kingdom of your God is revealed*

⁸² The terms *kingdom of God* and *kingdom of heaven* both have the same meaning, as *heaven* in this case is a paraphrase for *God* (Jeremias 1971:97).

God;] to comfort all who mourn” (Isa. 61:2). . .] (Wise et al 1996:457)

This passage gives a valuable look at the way apocalyptic circles combined and conflated texts. As here, so with the Beatitudes, the messianic prophecies of Isaiah 52 are used to interpret Isaiah 61. To paraphrase: the one who *announces the good news of the kingdom of heaven to the poor* is also the one who *proclaims comfort for all who mourn*. This messenger is *the Messiah*. This has a great bearing on the meaning of the second beatitude.⁸³ In the same way that the *good news for the poor* is that the *kingdom of heaven is delivered to them*, so the *comfort for those who mourn* is the announcement that the *day of salvation* has come.

In the Thanksgiving Scroll, column 27 (4Q427 fr 7, col 2), lines five and six is a reference to the coming time when:

mourning [has ended] and grief flees. Peace is manifest, fear ceases, a fountain for [eternal] blessing opens, and healing for all the eternal ages. Iniquity is ended, agony ceases as there is no sickness] (Wise et al 1996:113).

II.4.2.4 Interpreting Comfort as Salvation elsewhere in Isaiah

Other verses in Isaiah which also speak of comfort were also fused into a general understanding of divine comfort which became identified with salvation. For instance, Isaiah 40.1-2 equates the comfort of God with the forgiveness of sins and peace:

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak gently to Jerusalem and call to her that her warfare is fulfilled and her sin is forgiven; that she took from the hand of the LORD double for all her sins.

Among the Dead Sea Scrolls these verses were combined with numerous other quotations (e g, Is 41.8-9; 49.7, 13-17; 43.1-6; 51.1-3, 22-2; 54.4-19; et al) in 4Q176 to foretell of a coming time of salvation (Wise et al 1996:232-233). In fact, this series of quotations is introduced with the words: *And from the book of Isaiah, words of comfort:* (Wise et al

⁸³ Though 11Q13 is written in Hebrew there is evidence that it is a translation from an Aramaic document (e g, in this section, the *servant* of Isaiah 52.13 is identified with the *Messiah*). At any rate, it reflects a targumic interpretation of Isaiah.

1996:232).

II.4.2.5 Jesus and Fasting as a Sign of Mourning

Mourning, whether for personal or national sin, was also accompanied by fasting (cf, Ju 20.26, Jl 2.12, Ezr 10.1, 6, Es 4.3). The Sermon on the Mount presupposes that fasting was part of the lifestyle of believers and therefore includes instructions on how to fast (Mt 6.16-18). In contrast to this, fasting was not a part of the lifestyle of Jesus and his disciples during his earthly ministry. In Matthew 9.14-15, Jesus is asked why his disciples do not fast as do the disciples of John and the Pharisees. He answers by saying: *How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is still with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast* (NIV). Jesus' emphasis on the arrival of the kingdom was demonstrated by a lack of fasting and in celebration dinners which were symbolic of the messianic banquet to come (Jeremias 1971:116). That this went against religious sensibilities of the time is illustrated by the accusation against Jesus for his eating and drinking (Mt 11.19): *behold a glutton and a drunkard; a friend of tax collectors and sinners* (NIV).

The accusation against Jesus as a glutton and a drunkard is contrasted in Matthew 11.18 to the fasting of John the Baptist. John's characteristic emphasis on fasting led to the accusation that he had a demon. This may be a clue to understanding the earlier comment of Jesus to the people concerning John (Mt 11.7b): *What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind?* (NIV). This is likely a reference to sayings of ridicule which were actually leveled at John by his enemies. Ephrem, in his commentary on the Diatessaron, indicates that *reed* in this passage is used as a metaphor because it is hollow, saying: $\text{רָחֵם אֱלֹהִים מְחַיֵּה הַמֵּתִים לֹא יִהְיֶה כִּיָּרֵךְ}^{84}$ (Leloir 1990:128).

John's ascetic lifestyle of self-deprivation and fasting probably made it easy to caricature him as a kind of hollow reed. Reeds grow beside rivers. John's preaching out by the river Jordan may have been parodied as the sound made by hollow reeds by the side of a river when the wind blows on them. The Hebrew word for *wind*, רוּחַ , can also mean

⁸⁴ *For he was not like a hollow reed.*

spirit as well as *demon*. This same is true of Aramaic ܣܘܪܝܢ. The later comment by Jesus, that there were those who said that John had a demon, may be a play on the word ܣܘܪܝܢ/ܣܘܪܝܢܐ. The Diatessaron's rendering (as quoted by Ephrem in his commentary) of κάλαμον ὑπὸ ἀνέμου σαλευόμενον is ܣܘܪܝܢܐ ܕܘܢܐܘܠܐܘܢܐ⁸⁵ (Leloir 1990:130).

The use of ܣܘܪܝܢܐ (from the verb ܣܘܪܝܢ) gives another clue that the reference to *a reed shaken by the wind* may be a pun related to the accusation that John was demon possessed. The verb ܣܘܪܝܢ corresponds to the Jewish Aramaic ܣܘܪܝܢܐ which means not only *shake* but *be frightened* as well. The word ܣܘܪܝܢܐܐ (Pa'el participle), meaning *frightening demons*, is used in Targum *Yerushalmi* at Numbers 6.24 (Jastrow [1903] 1992:388). Thus, the fact that this verb is routinely used to describe the behaviour of demons may suggest that the depiction of John as a *reed shaken by the wind* is a reference to the way that John's detractors would mock him as some sort of demon possessed ascetic.

II.4.2.6 *OMatthew's Understanding of This Beatitude*

In the Hebrew reconstruction the vocabulary seems tailored to produce an allusion not only to Isaiah 61.2 but to Isaiah 66 as well. It appears that the original sermon of Jesus which used Isaiah 61.1-3 as a springboard (cf, Lu 4.18-27) was deliberately amended to promote other allusions, even at the expense of the former (as in the first beatitude).⁸⁶ The question was asked at the end of the previous chapter, why, if there was already a Hebrew beatitude for *the poor of the earth* (an allusion to Is 11.4) would *OMatthew* change this to *the poor in spirit* (an allusion to Is 66.2)? By the same token, why has *OMatthew* also framed the second beatitude as an allusion to Isaiah 66? The answer that makes the most sense is this: Jerusalem has been destroyed.

The reason why allusions to promises that *God dwells with the humble and contrite in spirit* (Is 66.2) and that *those who mourn over Jerusalem* (Is 66.10) *will be comforted* (Is 66.13) is because the Temple and the Holy City lie in ruins. Part of the purpose of the

⁸⁵ The Peshitta uses the word ܣܘܪܝܢܐܐ. This may indicate that Tatian is making use of a more Jewish-Christian tradition as ܣܘܪܝܢܐ represents a more Palestinian dialect of Aramaic. An example of ܣܘܪܝܢܐܐ in Targum Jonathan can be seen in Proverbs 17.12.

⁸⁶ Having said that, scholars involved with Q research affirm the centrality which Isaiah 61.1-2 plays as a proof text here (Robinson 1992:387).

Gospel of Matthew is to evangelize Jews. *OMatthew* has reframed the first and second beatitudes after Isaiah 66 to allow the *gospel of the kingdom* to be relevant to the new circumstances. The idea that Jesus opened a new dispensation which eliminated the need for Temple sacrifice had been around since the time of Stephen (Acts 6.14, 7.48-50). *OMatthew* has used the allusion Stephen gives (Is 66.1-2), to proclaim that the *bad news* is in fact *good news*. God does not need a temple to dwell with men. With the destruction of Jerusalem the understanding of Isaiah's צִיּוֹן אֲבֵלִי took on an even greater significance (Strack & Billerbeck 1926:195). To this day the ninth of *Ab* (the date of the destruction of the Temple) is a day of mourning. No longer did this term signify those who *mourned over sin*, awaiting the *day of salvation*. It now became a term designating those who *mourned Israel's fate*; grieving over the inability to offer sacrifices and anticipating the day that the Temple would be rebuilt (Strack & Billerbeck 1926:195).

The Hebrew version of the Beatitudes *OMatthew* presents is the one used by the Jewish-Christian community post 70 AD and was part of their witness to their brethren. If *OMatthew* changed those addressed from הָאֲבֵלִים to הַמְתַּאֲבְלִים, as mentioned earlier, the allusion to Isaiah 61.2 would be hurt at the expense of an allusion to Isaiah 66.10. Yet, after 70 AD Isaiah 66.10 became a very important verse in rabbinical teaching (e.g., *tSota* 15.11, *B Bath* 60b, *Gitt* 57a, *Pesq Rab* 34; see Strack & Billerbeck 1926: 196-197). The reason for the command to *rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her all who love her* (NIV) in Isaiah 66.10 is because of the eschatological promise of *comfort* in 66.13. Strack and Billerbeck (1926:195) point out that one of the names for the Messiah is מְנַחֵם [comforter] (*San* 98b; *yBer* 3.5a). That *OMatthew* is pointing to Jesus as the one who brings comfort to *those who mourn* can be seen in such passages as Matthew 11.28-30 and 23.37-39 (cf, 24.31).

II.4.3 How Should We Understand this Beatitude?

II.4.3.1 Mourning Relates to Any Personal Tragedy

The second beatitude is often used as a text at funerals and is popularly understood as a promise to those who are experiencing personal crisis. As with the first beatitude this one has a very direct dependence on an allusion to Isaiah 61.1-3. In Isaiah *those who mourn* are synonymous with the *poor*. The passage is focused on all who are in misery.

Therefore it is possible to take the words in their literal sense. The fact that *OMatthew* has lent this beatitude to apply it towards those who have experienced national misery and mourning may mean that, providentially, those who apply this beatitude to personal tragedy are not really in error.

II.4.3.2 *Mourning Relates to Repentance of Sin*

From an ancient Jewish eschatological perspective, the term אָבֵלִי צִיּוֹן (from Is 61.3) seems to have been a technical term before 70 AD (Sir 48.24), probably associated with those *mourning the sins of Israel* waiting for the *comfort of Israel* (Lk 2.25). *Mourning* as relating to Isaiah 61.2-3 was then understood as *mourning over sin*, whether personal sin or national sin (cf, 1QH 18.15). Thus, Strack and Billerbeck (1926:195) state that those who understood both, their unworthiness before God and the nearness of the *kingdom of heaven* were perceived to be *those who mourn* [*Bußtrauer*].

The concept that this beatitude is addressed to those who recognize their need for repentance is not a new one. This was how the Church Fathers understood it (Dupont 1973:548). For example, Clement of Alexandria, in referring to this beatitude, substitutes the word πενθοῦντες with the word μετανοῦντες [*those who repent*] (Strom 4.6.36). In fact, until the twentieth century this was the primary view (Dupont 1973:548).

II.4.3.3 *Mourning Relates to Sorrow for this World*

One of the things about this beatitude which has bothered some is that it calls *those who mourn: Blessed*. Thus, a growing number of exegetes⁸⁷ came to the conclusion that the interpretation which makes the most sense is that *those who mourn* do so because they have made a break with this world and long for the *kingdom of heaven* to replace *the kingdom of this world* (Rv 12.10). It must be admitted that this certainly fits well with the greater Christian message of citizenship in a heavenly kingdom. However, it does less than justice to the concept of *mourning* in its Jewish sense.

⁸⁷ Dupont (1973:550-551) lists: Zahn, Klostermann, Keulers, Soiron, Schneider, Strecker, Hoffmann, Bultmann, Brouwer, Schniewind, Michaelis, Lohmeyer, Trilling et al.

II.4.3.4 *Mourning Relates to All Three Interpretations*

All these competing interpretations can engender too much caution. Newman and Stine (1988:113), for instance, acknowledge that this beatitude is based on an allusion to Isaiah 61.2 and mention that the Septuagint uses the verb *πενθέω* for *mourning* for the dead as well as for sin. Yet, they state, “no reason for mourning is given, nor should it be in the translation” (Newman & Stine 1988:113). Though such ambivalence in translation may be justified, it does not mean that Jesus had no particular view in mind.

For Jesus, putting the proclamation of the *kingdom of heaven* into language alluding to Isaiah 61.1-3 was purposeful on two levels. Jesus certainly wanted those who were *poor, dispossessed, in misery and mourning* to know that God was involving himself in their plight. This is one reason why Jesus raises the dead. He is meeting the need of *those who mourn*. Yet, Jesus also uses the term *those who mourn* as a metaphor for repentance in a way not dissimilar to that of contemporary Jewish teachers.

The lack of dichotomy, for Jesus, between spiritual usage of terms like *poor* and *those who mourn* and as terms for those experiencing real physical problems can best be illustrated by the story of Lazarus and the Rich Man (Lk 16.19-31). Lazarus is described as the poorest of the poor (16.20-21). As mentioned earlier, nothing is said about any deed of righteousness done by him. Yet, when he dies he goes to Abraham’s bosom (16.22). In fact, his *comfort* is said to be in response to the evil he experienced on earth (16.25). This last point also gives strength to an interpretation of this beatitude which suggests that *mourning* over personal misery is rewarded with *comfort*.

Thus, in asking what does this beatitude mean when it uses the term *those who mourn*, three answers must be given at the same time. Jesus is ostensibly addressing those who are physically and socially in misery. He is also calling people to mourn over the sin in their lives and in the world around them. By having both an ‘open’ and a ‘hidden’ meaning for this beatitude Jesus is calling his disciples to a life which rejects the values of this world. He does this by calling blessed those who would otherwise be despised (or at least, in this case, unenvied).

Chapter Five

Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth

Matthew 5.5: μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν

II.5.1 Aramaic and Hebrew Reconstructions

II.5.1.1 The Hebrew Reconstruction

It has already been shown that the addition of this beatitude to the present corpus happened long after the Beatitudes were translated into Greek. This brings up the question of why it would be necessary to reconstruct this beatitude into Hebrew and Aramaic at all. The logic stems from the fact that it was only added later does not mean that it did not exist in either a Hebrew or an Aramaic form and that the Greek text which came afterwards is based on that.

Reconstructing the words of this beatitude is especially easy since it is a virtual quotation from the Septuagint translation of Psalm 37.11a:

Psalm 37.11a: οἱ δὲ πραεῖς κληρονομήσουσιν γῆν

Matthew 5.5: μακάριοι οἱ πραεῖς ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν

It is therefore natural to suggest that the Hebrew reconstruction should mostly follow the Masoretic Text of Psalm 37.11a: **וְעֲנִיִּים יִרְשׁוּ אֲרֶץ**. Others before have arrived at the same conclusion. Therefore, though it is unintentional, it comes as no surprise that the wording of the Hebrew reconstruction is exactly the same as that found in the ancient Shem Tov Hebrew Matthew (though this version has no vowel points) found in the *Even Bohan* (Howard 1995:16): **אֲשֶׁרֵי הָעֲנִיִּים שָׁהֶם יִרְשׁוּ אֲרֶץ**. Only slightly different is the reconstruction offered by Lindsey (1973:XXII) matched by the translation of Delitzsch: **אֲשֶׁרֵי הָעֲנִיִּים כִּי הָפֹה יִרְשׁוּ אֲרֶץ**. Similarly, the Salkinson/Ginsburg Hebrew New Testament has: **אֲשֶׁרֵי הָעֲנִיִּים כִּי־הֶם יִרְשׁוּ־אֲרֶץ**.

The poetic rhythm of each reconstruction holds to the three-beat pattern Burney suggests.

II.5.1.2 The Aramaic Reconstruction

Burney's reconstruction of this beatitude was: *tubehón inwánayyá dehinnún yeretún le'ar'a*⁸⁸ (Burney 1925:166). This is more or less in agreement with (and probably influenced by) the Christian Palestinian version which reads: ܠܒܚܘܬܐ ܕܚܝܘܢܐ ܕܗܝܢܢܘܢ ܝܪܥܘܬܐ ܕܠܥܪܐ.⁸⁹ The use of the word ܥܢܢܝܐ in the Aramaic reconstruction of this beatitude is not automatic. Another option is available. Instead of ܥܢܢܝܐ Targum Jonathan to Psalm 37.11a uses ܥܢܢܝܢ.

It is actually unclear as to whether or not ܥܢܢܝܐ can be considered a more Palestinian form than ܥܢܢܝܢ. The Christian Palestinian version which employs ܘܚܘܪܐ (as opposed to the Old Syriac, Peshitta and Harclean versions, which all use ܘܚܘܪܐ) is, however, a primary source for our knowledge of Palestinian Aramaic (Black 1967:18).

What is the evidence from the Targums? It would be difficult to say precisely. For instance, in Psalms 37.11 Targum Jonathan uses ܥܢܢܝܢ; and in Isaiah 61.1: ܥܢܢܝܐ; but in Proverbs 3.34: ܥܢܢ. Consider the treatment of the word ܥܢܝ in Numbers 12.3:

<i>Targum Onkelos:</i>	ܥܢܢܝܢ
<i>Targum Neofiti:</i>	ܥܢܢܝܐ ⁹⁰ (Diez Macho 1974 4:113)
<i>Targum Pseudo-Jonathan:</i>	ܥܢܢܝܢ (Ginsburger 1903:248)

Targum Onkelos is by all accounts much more influenced by Babylonian Aramaic than the other targumim. On the other hand, Targum Neofiti is considered by some to be the most representative of the Palestinian targum tradition (Black 1967:19). However, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan is also a Palestinian targum so the results must be declared inconclusive.

⁸⁸ טוביהון ענוניא דהנון ירתון לארעא

⁸⁹ טוביהון ענוניא דהנון ירתון יתה לארעא

An appeal to the Aramaic of the Jerusalem Talmud is also unable to resolve the issue. For instance, when, in Kilayim 9.32b, Rabbi (Judah *haNasi*) is praised as *being very meek*, some manuscripts read: רַבִּי הוּדָה עֲנוּתָן סְגִי; while others have: רַבִּי הוּדָה עֲנוּן סְגִי (Dalman 1927:28).

Dalman (1927:64) understood these words to be practically interchangeable. Jastrow ([1903] 1992:1092) gives עֲנוּן as an equivalent to both עֲנוּתָן and עֲנוּתָן. This doesn't answer the question, but only relates to the fact that they may be translated the same. Beyer strictly delineates עֲנוּן as belonging to Galilean Aramaic and עֲנוּתָן as Babylonian Aramaic (1984:662). Although עֲנוּתָן also found its way into rabbinic Hebrew and is found in numerous talmudic passages (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1092) the scale is tipped just enough in favour of עֲנוּן to use it in the Aramaic reconstruction of this beatitude.

II.5.1.3 Aramaic and Hebrew Reconstructions

Aramaic

טוב־יהוֹן עֲנוּתָנָא דִּהֲנוּן יִדְתָּן אֲרֵעָא

Hebrew

אֲשֶׁרֵי הָעֲנוּיִם שָׁהֵם יוֹרְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ

The words in these reconstructions are almost all found in the Dead Sea Scrolls. The only exception is the Aramaic word עֲנוּן. The question, however is not whether it is part of ancient Jewish vocabulary in the first century, but, is it to be preferred to עֲנוּתָן. The evidence is not so strong that use of עֲנוּתָן must be ruled out. Thus, it must be conceded that an Aramaic reconstruction of this beatitude could be just as credible using עֲנוּתָנָא instead of עֲנוּנָא. In either case, the meaning would be unaffected.

⁹⁰ This may be regarded as another spelling for עֲנוּן (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1092).

Since the reconstructions are patterned after the Hebrew and Aramaic versions of Psalm 37.11a they are certainly idiomatic enough to serve as legitimate possibilities for an original Hebrew or Aramaic beatitude, if indeed, especially in this instance, there ever was one.

Because the wording of this beatitude is so close to the Septuagint version of Psalm 37.11a it would be difficult to suggest that there is a Hebrew or Aramaic original behind it were it not for a couple of important facts. Firstly, the original position of this beatitude in Greek was immediately following the first and together the two are a good example of poetic parallelism. Secondly, though the first beatitude is addressed to οἱ πτωχοί, and this one to οἱ πραεῖς, they each allude to verses which, in Hebrew used עָנִי (specifically: Is 61.1 and Ps 37.11). The natural association of *the poor* in the first beatitude with *the meek* in Psalm 37.11 would only happen with those who were familiar with the Hebrew bible and a Hebrew (or possibly Aramaic) version of the Beatitudes.

The evidence, which suggests that this beatitude was an addition to the group of Greek beatitudes incorporated into Matthew, is too strong to allow that it was a part of the original beatitudes of Jesus. Yet, the ease with which it can be reconstructed into Aramaic and Hebrew, keeping to the three-beat rhythm noted by Burney gives pause. Perhaps the reason the first beatitude has been changed from *poor* to *poor in spirit* was to accommodate a Hebrew version which balked at having two beatitudes addressed to הָעֲנָוִים. It is then possible that when this version was translated into Greek the third beatitude was dropped but *RMatthew* who reincorporated it knew the tradition. An interesting side note to this theory is that this suggests, once more, that the Hebrew reconstruction is secondary, but at the same time the basis for the Greek text as we know it.

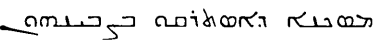
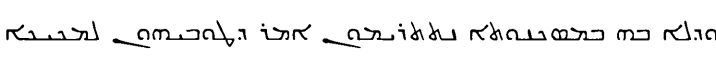
II.5.2 The Purpose of a Beatitude Alluding to Psalm 37.11

If this beatitude had been in the pre-synoptic corpus of beatitudes it would have occasioned, as Dupont suggests, a sort of doublet (1958:252). But, it is not likely that Jesus would have said אֲשֶׁרֵי הָעֲנָוִים (or טוֹבֵי הַלֵּב עֲנָוִים) twice. What is more probable is that the word עָנִי in the first beatitude, which was an allusion to Isaiah 61.1, brought to

mind another scripture, Psalm 37.11, which was easily applied to the kingdom of heaven being given to the saints. Thus, in oral tradition, Psalm 37.11 was linked to the first beatitude to give greater explanation to it; in effect saying: *Blessed are the poor for theirs is the kingdom of heaven; as it is written: The poor shall inherit the earth.* Such a preaching tradition may be the inspiration behind Didache 3.7, which has wording similar to but different enough from this beatitude to suggest that it is not a direct quotation (Betz 1995:126): ἴσθι δὲ πρᾶύς ἐπεὶ πρᾶεῖς κληρονομήσουσι τὴν γῆν.⁹¹

At any rate, it appears that Psalm 37.11 was used to interpret the first beatitude before it was translated into Greek. This tradition continued in the Greek speaking church. It was convenient for the purpose of the editor who later inserted it that the Septuagint used another word in Psalm 37.11 for נָנִי, namely, πρᾶύς. This allowed him to add a beatitude with the right amount of words and continue his poetic motif concentrating on words beginning with the letter π.

It must have been felt that the implication of the kingdom of heaven as an inheritance in the first beatitude was not explicit enough. Therefore it was deemed necessary to link it with scriptures which spoke of inheritance. Thus, segments of the early Jewish-Christian church handed the first beatitude on with a tradition interpreting it by way of Psalm 37.11. Similarly, as noted earlier, James combines a reference to the first beatitude with an allusion to Proverbs 8.21, in order to make plain that the kingdom is inherited.

The idea that this beatitude exists to help explain the first beatitude is at least as old as Ephrem who in commenting on the first beatitude says:  ⁹²(Leloir 1990:56).

It is also possible that the flexibility of the word נָנִי to mean *poor* as well as *humble* needed a certain amount of comment in order not to be misunderstood. Betz, who accepts that this beatitude is a commentary on the first (1995:126), yet states that “it

⁹¹ *But be thou meek, for “the meek shall inherit the earth.”*

⁹² *The poor are those who have divested themselves voluntarily. And, that they not become proud in this*

would be a mistaken conclusion to take the MT of Psalm 37.11 using the term עֲנָוִים and interpret the Greek equivalent on the basis of the Hebrew instead of the Greek” (1995:125). He further cautions against supposing that rabbinic theology can be read into the Sermon on the Mount (Betz 1995:125). That notwithstanding, he lists literary parallels from the Apocrypha, Dead Sea Scrolls, apocalyptic and also rabbinic literature (Betz 1995:126). It should have seemed self-evident that the use of עֲנָוִים (or an Aramaic equivalent) in these sources would have more value for understanding this beatitude than an examination (which he gives) of the usages of πραότης⁹³ in pagan Greek literature (Betz 1995:126).

Jesus refers to himself as πραῦς and ταπεινὸς τῆ καρδία in Matthew 11.29. If Jesus is making an allusion here it must be to Isaiah 66.2. It appears to be a free translation of עָנִי וְנִכְחָרָהּ.⁹⁴ The Septuagint translates these words as: τὸν ταπεινὸν καὶ ἡσύχιον.⁹⁵ As noted in chapter three, in manuscripts S and Q of the Septuagint the word עֲנָוִים in Isaiah 61.1 is also translated as ταπεινός. The Peshitta uses the word ܡܚܒܝܢ⁹⁶ to translate both ταπεινός in Matthew 11.29 and πραῦς in Matthew 5.5. Ephrem also employs Isaiah 66.2 in his discussion of the first beatitude in his commentary on the Diatessaron, saying: ܡܚܒܝܢ ܕܥܢܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ ܕܥܠܝܘܬܐ⁹⁷ (Leloir 1990:56).

The words πραῦς and ταπεινός are linked together elsewhere. For instance, they occur in the Septuagint version of Isaiah 26.6 as translations of עָנִי and לַיָּלֵד, respectively. Πραῦς and ταπεινός are found together several times in First Clement. For example, Clement states that ἐπιείκεια καὶ ταπεινοφροσύνη καὶ πραύτης παρὰ τοῖς ἠύλογημένοις ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ⁹⁸ (1Cl 30.8).

poverty, he said: “blessed are the meek.”

⁹³ *mildness, gentleness, or meekness*

⁹⁴ *poor and crushed in spirit*

⁹⁵ *the humble and peaceable*

⁹⁶ ܡܚܒܝܢ

⁹⁷ *And with whom will I tarry and dwell but among the humble of spirit.*

Though he uses the participle εὐλογημένος rather than μακάριος, one wonders whether it is possible that Clement had the Beatitudes in mind. It would, however, be too presumptuous to assume so. He admonishes believers to be ταπεινοφρονοῦντες [*humble minded*] because Isaiah 66.2 says: ἐπὶ τίνα ἐπιβλέψω, ἀλλ' ἢ ἐπὶ τὸν πραῦν καὶ ἡσύχιον καὶ τρέμοντά μου τὰ λόγια⁹⁹ (1Cl 13.4).¹⁰⁰

The explanation of the word *poor* by Ephrem, mentioned above, as *those who have divested themselves voluntarily*, deserves additional comment. For in a similar way, the Shepherd of Hermas combines not only πραῦς and ταπεινός, but πτωχός as well, suggesting that if the Spirit is truly on a man he will make himself meek, humble and poor:

πρῶτον μὲν ὁ ἔχων τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἄνωθεν πραῦς ἐστι καὶ ἡσύχιος καὶ ταπεινόφρων καὶ ἀπεχόμενος ἀπὸ πάσης πονηρίας καὶ ἐπιθυμίας ματαίας τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου καὶ ἑαυτὸν ἐνδεέστερον ποιεῖ πάντων τῶν ἀνθρώπων. (Hm 11.8a)
But first of all, the one who has the spirit from above is meek and peaceable and humble and keeps himself from all evil and wicked desires of this age and makes himself poorer than all men.

II.5.3 The Use of נָצַח as an Allusion to Numbers 12.3

The best biblical example of the meekness implied in the third beatitude would have to be Moses. Numbers 12.3 says: מִשָּׁה עָנָה מְאֹד מִכָּל הָאָדָם רָשָׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ מֹשֶׁה.¹⁰¹ It is translated into the Septuagint thus: καὶ ἄνθρωπος μωϋσῆς πραῦς σφόδρα παρὰ πάντας τοὺς ὄντας ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

⁹⁸ *Those who are mild and humble-minded and meek are those who are blessed by God.*

⁹⁹ *On whom shall I look but on the meek and gentle and him who trembles at my words.*

¹⁰⁰ It is significant that the quotation from Isaiah 66.2 differs with one word. Where First Clement has πραῦς, the Septuagint reads ταπεινός. Clement's point would have been better made with a quotation containing the standard Septuagint reading. Perhaps this reflects a corruption in the text of First Clement in which the original which did agree with the Septuagint's reading was changed to agree with another reading then current in the church.

¹⁰¹ *And the man Moses was very humble, more than all men on the face of the earth.*

Similarly, עָנָו is also connected to Abraham. *Berachot* 6b states that it will be said of those who designate a regular place of prayer (as Abraham did), when they die: אִי עָנָו. ¹⁰⁶ Thus, those who emulate Abraham are termed עָנָו. ¹⁰⁷ *Pirque Avoth* (5.22) describes the disciples of Abraham as possessing three qualities: עֵין טוֹבָה וְרוּחַ נְמוּקָה וְנֶפֶשׁ שְׂפֵלָה ¹⁰⁸ (Singer 1962:274). The last two are both terms synonymous with עָנָו. In speaking of the various trials Abraham went through, Jubilees 17.17 states that *in everything wherein he (God) had tried him, he was found faithful and his soul was not impatient* (Bowker 1969:229). Impatience is the opposite of עָנָו (see below).

A quality attributed to both Moses and Abraham is *faithfulness*. The Hebrew word for *faithfulness* is אֱמוּנָה. This corresponds to the Greek word πίστις. In Sirach 45.4 πίστις is paired with πραύς to describe Moses, saying: ἐν πίστει καὶ πραύτητι αὐτὸν ἠγάσεν, ἐξελέξατο αὐτὸν ἐκ πάσης σαρκός. ¹⁰⁹ This is an allusion not only to Numbers 12.3 but also to 12.7b, which says: *He (Moses) is faithful in all my house.* ¹¹⁰

In the New Testament, the *faithfulness* of Moses in Numbers 12.7 is alluded to in Hebrews 3.2 and 5. There, the πίστις of Moses is contrasted with the ἀπιστία of the Israelites which caused them not to enter into God's rest (He 3.19). In the context of Moses and the Israelites the *rest* referred to is the *Promised Land*. The writer of Hebrews reinterprets this as *salvation*. In 4.1 he calls entering the rest of God a *promise*. He leaves Moses as a subject but returns to him in 11.24-28.

¹⁰⁶ *Woe (for the death of) the humble one, woe for the pious one; one of the disciples of Abraham our father.*

¹⁰⁷ עָנָו is frequently found as the *qere* for the *kethib* עָנָו (Davidson 1970:606).

¹⁰⁸ *a good eye (generosity), humble spirit and a lowly soul (humble minded)*

¹⁰⁹ *For his faithfulness and meekness he sanctified him, choosing him out of all flesh.*

¹¹⁰ בְּכָל-בֵּיתִי נֶאֱמָן הוּא

Among the things mentioned of Moses (He 11.27b) is that *he endured as seeing him who is unseen*.¹¹¹ This is a return to the allusion to Moses in Numbers 12. The mention of *seeing him who is unseen* is a reference to Numbers 12.8: *With him (Moses) I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles; he sees the form of the LORD. . .* (NIV). It seems likely that *he endured* alludes to 12.3 because of the fact that עָנָה can also mean *patient* or *forbearing*¹¹² (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1094).

The Aramaic equivalent of עָנָה is, as noted above, עֲנִיּוּתָא (Allison 1993:72), yet it also found its way into the Hebrew vocabulary of Rabbinic literature. Allison (1993:71-72) quotes a story found in the Babylonian Talmud (Shabb 30b-31a), employing עֲנִיּוּתָא, which he suggests emphasizes Hillel's *humility*. Yet, it is clear that it is Hillel's *patience* and *forbearance* which the term intends to convey as it is expressly contrasted with the קִפְדָּנוּתָא¹¹³ of Shammai.¹¹⁴ In the story, two men bet as to whether one of them can cause Hillel to get angry and attempts to do so by coming to him at inopportune times with silly questions. Hillel, of course, never does get angry and even congratulates the man each time on his good questions.¹¹⁵ Though a case can be made that Hillel's *gentleness* is being demonstrated by his soft answers it is more a case of his *patience* being exhibited.

The concept of *patience* and *forbearance* attached to עָנָה and its synonyms may have a bearing on Hebrews 6.12, where Abraham, and those who would be like him, are said to *inherit the promises* by means of πίστις and μακροθυμία. This would indicate that even here Numbers 12.3, 7 is in the back of the writer's mind and that he was familiar with the tradition of attributing the Mosaic character quality of עָנָה to Abraham. Similarly, other instances of biblical heroes (such as the prophets and Job in James 5.10-11) being hailed

¹¹¹ τὸν γὰρ ἀόρατον ὡς ὁρώων ἑκατέρησεν.

¹¹² Jastrow does not include the word *forbearing* among his definitions of עָנָה but does so in defining the synonym, עֲנִיּוּתָא.

¹¹³ *impatience*

¹¹⁴ It is interesting, with regard to Shammai being linked, almost proverbially with קִפְדָּנוּתָא (cf, *Avoth d'Rabbi Nathan II*, ch 29: קִפְדָּנוּתָא שְׂמַאי) that Hillel is quoted in *Pirque Avoth* 2.6 as saying that *an impatient man cannot teach* [וְלֹא הַקְפָּדָן מְלַמֵּד] (Singer 1962:255).

¹¹⁵ Each answer is prefaced by the statement *my son you have asked a great question* [שאלה גדולה שאלת] [בני].

for their μακροθυμία could be based on a desire to promote the idea that the righteous shared in the עֲנֵן not only of Moses, but of Jesus, the New Moses.

In rabbinic literature Hillel is cast as a figure who could be compared to Moses (Allison 1993:71). For instance, in *Sanhedrin* 11a it is clear to other rabbis present that Hillel is indicated when a voice from Heaven [בת קול] announces that *there is one among you who is worthy that the Shekinah should rest on him as it did on Moses, but his generation did not merit it*. עֲנֵן associated with Hillel was used to confirm his role as a Moses-type figure (Allison 1993:71). In fact, this quality engendered a beatitude-like blessing to be pronounced over him, which says: עֲנֵנוּתֵן הַלֵּל יִנּוּחוּ לְךָ בְּרִכּוֹת עַל רֹאשְׁךָ.¹¹⁶ With עֲנֵנוּתֵן/עֲנֵן being associated with Hillel, Moses and Abraham it may then come as no surprise that all three are used as positive examples, one right after the other, in the same chapter of *Avoth* (5.20-22).

II.5.4 Inheriting the Land

The allusion to Psalm 37 should not be seen solely in terms of a reference to verse eleven. It is to the entirety of the Psalm that attention is being drawn. A quick reading of Psalm 37 shows that the promise of inheriting the land is not only to *the meek* (vs 11).

This is a recurring theme throughout the Psalm. Not only *the meek* are mentioned as heirs but also *those who hope in the LORD* (vs 9), *His blessed* (vs 22), and *the righteous* (vs 29). In each of these instances the same words (יִיְיָ־שֵׁנ־אֶרְיִן) are used as a formula. In addition, *the blameless* are told (vs 19) that their *inheritance will endure forever*.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ *Patient Hillel, may blessings rest upon your head.*

¹¹⁷ וְנַחֲלָתָם לְעוֹלָם חֲדָרָהּ

Lastly, (vs 34) those who wait for the LORD and keep his way are told that God will exalt them *to inherit the land*.¹¹⁸ This is mentioned because of the fact that first-century discussion on this Psalm is at our disposal that suggests that at that time this Psalm was given an eschatological interpretation. Amongst the Dead Sea Scrolls is a running commentary on Psalm 37 entitled 4Qp Ps37 (also known as 4Q171). In this scroll the interpretation of those who will inherit the earth is, in each case, those of the Qumran community. Interestingly, the word *meek* [עָנָוִים] of verse eleven is interpreted by the word those in Qumran loved to use as a designation of their own community: *the poor* [הַאֲבִיוֹנִים] (col 2, line 9).

II.5.4.1 The Eschatological Understanding of Inheriting the Earth

The word γῆ in the third beatitude represents the Hebrew word אֶרֶץ. It is γῆ which is most often used to translate אֶרֶץ in the Septuagint. However, אֶרֶץ can also be rendered in Greek by the word κόσμος. For instance, it has been suggested previously that in James 2.5 κόσμος is used to render אֶרֶץ. Κόσμος more exactly corresponds to the Hebrew word תְּבֵל rather than אֶרֶץ but, before the first century, תְּבֵל began to be used as a synonym for אֶרֶץ. The focal point for this seems to have been Rabbinic interpretation of Proverbs 8.26: עֲדֵלָא עָשָׂה אֶרֶץ וְחִוּצוֹת וְרֹאשׁ עֲפְרוֹת תְּבֵל.¹¹⁹

With reference to Proverbs 8.26, *Sifré Deuteronomy* 37 says that תְּבֵל זוֹ אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל¹²⁰ (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1644). Similarly, *Yalkut Proverbs* 943 also refers to Proverbs 8.26 when it states that תְּבֵל זוֹ אֶרְצוֹ¹²¹ (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1644). Though these citations come from literature compiled much later than the first century the correlation between the words תְּבֵל and אֶרֶץ goes back, at least, to the time of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Consider the interpretation of Psalm 37.22 in 4Qp Ps37:

¹¹⁸ לְרֵשֶׁת אֶרֶץ

¹¹⁹ ... before he made the earth or its fields or any of the dust of the world (NIV).

¹²⁰ *tebel* this is the land of Israel

¹²¹ *tebel* this is his land

Psalm 37.22

כִּי מְבֹרָכִיו יִירְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ וּמְקַלְלָיו יִכָּרְתוּ

Those the LORD blesses will inherit the land, but those he curses will be cut off.

4Qp Ps37 3.10-11 (Lohse 1971:274)

10. פְּשָׁרוֹ עַל עֵדֶת הָאֲבִיוֹנִים הַ [] אִם נִחְלַת כּוֹל הַ [תּוֹב] ל []

11. יִרְשׁוּ אֶת הַר מְרוֹם יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבְ[] קוֹדְשׁוֹ יִתְעַנְּגוּ

10. *The interpretation is about the congregation of the poor which [] the inheritance of all the world.*

11. *They will inherit the exalted mountain of Israel and in his holy (place) they will enjoy themselves.*

The sectarian writer interprets the words יִירְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ by the parallel expressions: הַ [תּוֹב] ל and הַר מְרוֹם יִשְׂרָאֵל.¹²² This shows not only that *inheriting the land* was seen as *inheriting the world* but that *inheriting the land* was also interpreted as *inheriting a spiritual temple*.

Paul shows that he is familiar with this תּוֹב/אֶרֶץ correlation in Romans 4.13. He is discussing Genesis 15.7 in which the Lord promises to give Abraham הַזֹּאת לְרִשְׁתָּהּ. Strictly speaking, the promise was with regard to the land of Canaan, but Paul reinterprets the verse to say that Abraham is promised *the world* [κόσμος] as an inheritance, which itself is spiritually interpreted to mean the benefits of salvation.

It is remotely possible that Paul has the third beatitude in mind since in the middle of his allusion to Genesis 15.5-7 he speaks of salvation as a μακαρισμός and goes on to quote two beatitudes of David (Ro 4.6-8; referring to Ps 32.1-2). Mitigating against this is the fact that in this chapter he doesn't mention the words πτωχός or πρᾶύς.

¹²² *inheritance of all the world*

¹²³ *They will inherit the exalted mountain of Israel.*

Associating salvation with the inheritance or possession of the world is carried into other early Christian literature. The Odes of Solomon are considered to be writings produced by the first-century Christian community (Platt 1927:120). In Ode 33.10 the redeemed are promised that *they shall possess the new world that is incorrupt* (Platt 1927:136). Similar terms are used in Ode 40.8, where God is praised for the fact that *His inheritance is immortal life, and those who participate in it are incorrupt*.

II.5.4.2 Connecting Psalm 37.11 to Isaiah 61

Since the focal point of the beatitudes is its allusion to Isaiah 61 the question must be asked: does an allusion to Psalm 37.11 have any bearing or connection with Isaiah 61? The answer is that this is certainly possible. Where the Septuagint version of Psalm 37.11 has κληρονομήσουσιν γῆν this beatitude has κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν. The addition of the almost superfluous word τὴν must not be glossed over for it may indicate that the allusion to Psalm 37.11 has been modified, not only to affect the word count, but to bring it into line with Isaiah 60.21 which has καὶ δι' αἰῶνος κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν, or Isaiah 61.7 which has οὕτως ἐκ δευτέρας κληρονομήσουσιν τὴν γῆν. The former may be preferable to the latter.¹²⁵

It is also important to notice that at Qumran the words יִירְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ of Psalm 37 also seem to be interpreted in the light of prophecies from the latter part of Isaiah. Seeing in the promise to inherit the land a reference to possessing the temple mount (4Qp Ps37 3.10) was likely inspired by such passages as these:

Isaiah 57.13b: וְהִחֹסָה בִּי יִנְחַל-אֶרֶץ וַיִּירְשׁ הָהָר קְדָשִׁי¹²⁶

Isaiah 63.18a: לְמִצְעָר יְרֵשׁוּ עַם-קְדְּשֶׁךָ¹²⁷

¹²⁴ *this land to inherit*

¹²⁵ Though the idea that an allusion is being made to a verse in Isaiah 61 is attractive, it only works in Greek. In Hebrew, Isaiah 60.21, like Psalm 37.11 has יִירְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ, but Isaiah 61.7 has instead בְּאֶרְצָם כְּשֵׁנָה [in their land they will inherit double]. Since the author of this beatitude certainly knew Hebrew it seems more likely that if an allusion to Isaiah is being made at all it is more probable that this is to Isaiah 60.21 (which in fairness is only one verse away from chapter 61).

¹²⁶ *But the man who makes me his refuge will inherit the land and possess my holy mountain.*

¹²⁷ *For a little while your people possessed your holy place (NIV).*

Isaiah 65.9b: וְיָמִיהֶנּוּדָה יִרְשׁ הָרִי וְיִרְשׁוּהָ בְּחִירֵי וְעַבְדֵי יִשְׁכְּנוּ-שָׂמָּה¹²⁸

Even in Isaiah 61.7, which equates inheriting the land with *everlasting joy*, the connection with the temple is close at hand for in the preceding verse the people of God *will be called priests of the Lord*. Thus, a beatitude containing a reference to inheriting the land is certainly compatible with a general allusion to the eschatological prophecy of Isaiah 61.

II.5.5 What is the Meaning of this Beatitude?

II.5.5.1 The Original Meaning

The understanding of this beatitude held by those who first heard it (had it been in Hebrew or Aramaic) would have been that it is those who are humble, meek and patient who are to receive the eschatological blessings of the Kingdom of God. The words *inherit the earth*, whether in reference to Psalm 37.11, Genesis 15.7 or Isaiah 60.21, would have received an interpretation dominated by the influence of Daniel 7.13-27. This would have included an understanding of messianic promises for national Israel (cf, Ac 1.6). But as the early Church developed a spiritual inheritance theology apart from concepts associated with political liberation the focus became squarely on the benefits of salvation.

II.5.5.2 How is This Beatitude to be Understood?

Ironically, this beatitude is the easiest to understand, and at the same time the most misunderstood. The fact that originally those addressed were *the poor* is completely lost as it now stands. The word *πραῦς* seems solely to have been used as a positive character quality (Arndt & Gingrich 1957:705). It retains the positive way that עָנָו and עֲנִיּוֹתָן were used (i e, *humility* for Moses and *patience* for Hillel) but misses the way these words were used to describe those living in poverty (i e, *afflicted*; Ps 9.13, 69.33).

It is only when οἱ *πραεῖς* is translated into English that another issue comes up. Modern usage of the word *meek* as *shy* or *timid* has turned this wonderful character quality into

¹²⁸ *And, from Judah (I will bring forth) those who will possess my mountains; my chosen people will inherit*

something unattractive. Thus, Arndt and Gingrich (1957:705) translate *πραῦς* as *meek* then, as a disclaimer, say, *in the older favourable sense*. Trites (1992:186) admits that the word *meek* “appears offensive to many, including some Christians.”

In so far as *meek* is “offensive” because it brings to mind those who are helpless and powerless then, again ironically, it means that this beatitude has come full-circle. Defining *meek* as a positive, quiet strength of character is correct, yet at the same time it does a disservice to the original meaning of the beatitude. For, though the word is identified with figures such as Abraham, Hillel and (especially) Moses, the message that one should be *meek* in order to emulate such heroes and thereby receive God’s blessings belongs to the ‘hidden’ meaning. By virtue of the fact that, in English, *meek* has taken on the more “offensive” characteristics Hebrew speakers once associated with עֲנִי, this beatitude is able to retain its dual meaning.

them, and there will my servants live (NIV).

Chapter Six

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness sake for they shall be satisfied

Matthew 5.6: μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τῆν δικαιοσύνην, ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται

II.6.1 The Fourth Beatitude: An Allusion to . . .

With each of the preceding beatitudes a relatively clear case can be made for allusion to Isaiah 61. The first (and the third) alludes to the עֲנִיִּים of Isaiah 61.1. The second beatitude alludes to the אֲבָלִים of Isaiah 61.2. Black makes the point that the only place in Isaiah 61 which has relevance for the hungry is in verse 6b: ¹²⁹חֵיל גּוֹיִם תֹּאכְלוּ (Black 1967:157). It would certainly be possible for an allusion to *eating* to produce a beatitude addressed both to those *hungering* and *thirsting* (cf, Jn 6.35, where the bread of life means an end to hungering and thirsting), but this seems forced. Yet, part of the investigation of this beatitude is to examine whether it is truly addressed to *those who hunger and thirst* (as per Matthew) or simply to *those who hunger* (as per Luke). In any event, it seems unlikely that this beatitude has been inspired by Isaiah 61.6. If this beatitude is not drawn from Isaiah 61 then from whence was it inspired?

II.6.1.1 An Allusion to Isaiah 65

Lohmeyer sees in this beatitude an allusion to the eschatological time mentioned in Isaiah 49.10 and 65.13, saying, “*wie beides die Not der Armen ist, so ist auch die Sättigung ihre eschatologische Hoffnung*” (Lohmeyer 1967:87). Let us examine Isaiah 65.1 first. This verse is consistent with the theme of reversal of fortunes present in Isaiah 61 to which the beatitudes subscribe. It says:

לְכֵן כֹּה-אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה הִנֵּה עֲבָדֵי יֹאכְלוּ וְאַתֶּם תִּרְעָבוּ הִנֵּה עֲבָדֵי יִשְׁחָרוּ וְאַתֶּם תִּצְמָחוּ הִנֵּה עֲבָדֵי יִשְׁמְחוּ וְאַתֶּם תִּבְשְׁוּ

¹²⁹ You will eat the wealth of nations.

Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: “My servants will eat, but you will go hungry; my servants will drink, but you will go thirsty; my servants will rejoice but you will be put to shame.” (NIV)

The version of Isaiah 65.13 in the Peshitta reads as follows:

תכלא מנא מנא ארזי מנא ארזא מנא ארזא, נאכלא האכלא אכפא מנא אכפא,
 130 נאכלא האכלא אכפא מנא אכפא, נאכלא האכלא אכפא

In this verse, both Targum Jonathan and the Peshitta follow a similar targumic tradition. This has been altered in the Peshitta only where the language needed to be changed to accommodate the Syriac dialect. Targum Jonathan also adds extra interpretive elements in this verse while the Peshitta stays with the more literal translation.¹³¹

A comparison of the most important verbs in the versions is instructive.

Hebrew	Targum	Peshitta	LXX
יאכלו	יכלון	נאכלון [נאכלון]	φάγονται
ישתו	ישתון	נאכלון [נשתון]	πίονται
תרעבו	תכפנון	אכפא [תכפנון]	πεινάσετε
תצמאו	תצהון	אכפא [תצהון]	διψήσετε
ישמחו	יחרון	נאכלון [נחרון]	εὐφρανθήσονται
תבשו	תבהתון	אכפא [תבכוון]	αἰσχυθήσεσθε

In every case the Peshitta uses the same vocabulary to translate the Hebrew verbs as does Targum Jonathan, with one exception.

¹³⁰ מטל הנא הכנא אמר מריא אלהא הא עבדי נאכלון ואנתון תכפנון הא עבדי נשתון ואנתון תצהון הא עבדי נאכלון נאכלון ואנתון תבכוון

¹³¹ Targum Jonathan renders Isaiah 65.13 as: בכו כדנן אמר יי אלהים הא עבדי צדיקיא וכלון ואנתון רשיעיא תכפנון הא עבדי צדיקיא ושתון ואנתון רשיעיא תצהון הא עבדי צדיקיא וחרון ואנתון רשיעיא תבהתון

The last verb, תִּבְשֹׁן,¹³² is translated in Targum Jonathan as תִּבְהִתּוֹן,¹³³ but the Peshitta uses the Syriac equivalent of תִּבְכּוֹן.¹³⁴ In this instance the Peshitta has given a very loose translation while Targum Jonathan has given a much more literal one. There is no influence here from the Septuagint, whose ἀλσχυθησθε is a very close translation of the Hebrew word תִּבְשֹׁן. Thus, in contrast to the Hebrew, Septuagint and Targum Jonathan, which all read that the ungodly will *hunger, thirst, and be ashamed*, the Peshitta says that they will *hunger, thirst, and weep*.

This may help explain the presence of *blessed are those who weep for they shall laugh* in Luke's version of the Beatitudes. Perhaps it is not an alternate version of Matthew 5.4, as some have supposed (Dupont 1969:267-268; Kilpatrick 1946:15; Lachs 1987:73; *et al*), but, together with *blessed are those who hunger now for they shall be satisfied*, Luke is giving a double allusion to a (Peshitta like) targumic rendering of Isaiah 65.13. This is not actually a new theory, but an ancient one. Tertullian (*Adv Marc* 4.15) appeals to Isaiah 65.13 when discussing the text of Luke 6.21 (Dupont 1969:267) suggesting that the latter is an allusion to the former.

Circumstantial encouragement for thinking that Luke has given an allusion to Isaiah 65 can be garnered from the fact that Luke pairs his beatitudes with a corresponding list of woes. Isaiah 61.1-2 merely gives promise of a positive reversal of fortunes for God's people. Isaiah 65.13-14, on the other hand, contrasts the blessings promised to God's servants with the judgement which is coming on those who would not obey God's call (Is 65.12). It is possible that Matthew also intended an allusion to Isaiah 65.13. In that case Matthew has created a double allusion by addressing his beatitude to those who *hunger and thirst*, while Luke speaks of those who *hunger and weep*.

II.6.1.2 An Allusion to Isaiah 49

Are there any readings among the Dead Sea Scrolls which link Isaiah 61 with Isaiah 65? The evidence does not really suggest this. However, the allusion to Isaiah 61.1 in 4Q521

¹³² *You will be put to shame.*

¹³³ *You will be ashamed.*

is linked with a promise to those who are *hungry*. As mentioned earlier (see §II.1.1.3), this scroll gives valuable proof that in apocalyptic circles the words of Isaiah 61 were combined with various other prophecies (such as Da 7) in the formulation of messianic expectation.

Lines 12 and 13 of 4Q521 fragment 1, column 2 (as reconstructed by Puech; 1992:475) appear as follows:

12. אז ירפא חללים ומתים יחיה עניים יבשר

13. [] ש [] קד[ושים ינהל ורעב [ב]ם יעשה

12. *then he will heal the sick and the dead he will resurrect; (to) the poor he will preach good news.*

13. *[ho]ly ones he will lead and the hungry among them he will do*

Added to the list of things inspired by Isaiah 61.1-2 which the Messiah will do is to care for the *hungry*. The fragment breaks off at this point and therefore it is impossible to be absolutely sure to which scripture these words are an allusion. However, it is unlikely that this is an allusion to Isaiah 65.13. Rather, the use of the verb נהל in juxtaposition with the word רעב brings to mind Lohmeyer's other suggested allusion, that this refers to Isaiah 49.10. This verse reads:

לא ירעבו ולא יצמאו ולא יכבשם ושרב ושמש פירמרחמם ינהגם ועל־מבועי מים ינהלם

They will neither hunger nor thirst, nor will the desert heat or the sun beat upon them. He who has compassion on them will guide them and lead them beside springs of water (NIV).

The obvious reason why Isaiah 61 would be linked with Isaiah 49 is that, in addition to the fact that both refer to the people of God as עֲנָוִים (Is 49.13, 61.1), they both concern the eschatological year of Jubilee. Where Isaiah 61.2 refers to יהוה שְׁנַת־רִצּוֹן, Isaiah

¹³⁴ *You will weep.*

49.8 speaks of the *עַתְּ רְצוֹן*. The *עַתְּ רְצוֹן* was understood to be a time where God is positively disposed to act on behalf of his people. Even to this day Jewish people pray that their prayers will be considered by God to be in the *עַתְּ רְצוֹן* (Singer 1962:235), knowing that at such time God will intervene in power.

II.6.1.2.1 Isaiah 49 as a Focal Point of Messianic Expectation

The *עַתְּ רְצוֹן* of Isaiah 49.8 as well as other terminology from the same chapter was greatly influential in the formulation of first-century messianic expectation. Elsewhere among the Dead Sea Scrolls, the synonymous term *רְצוֹן מוֹעֵד* can be found. 1QH 15.15 says: *You alone created the righteous and from his mother's womb you prepared him for the time of favour* [*רְצוֹן מוֹעֵד*]. This is an allusion not only to Isaiah 49.8 but 49.5 as well.

Pesiqta Rabbathi s 31 gives evidence of a rabbinic tradition which understood the Servant-song of Isaiah 49.8ff as a prophecy of the Messiah (Jastrow [1903] 1992:962). This passage also had great messianic importance for apocalyptic circles. Attributes accorded to the Servant in Isaiah 49 were used to describe the eschatological Son of man of Daniel 7. Thus, the Ethiopic book Enoch describes him as *the light of the nations* (48.4; cf, Is 49.6); *named before the Lord of spirits* (48.3; cf, Is 49.1); *hidden before him (God)* (48.6; cf, Is 49.2); kings and mighty ones are to rise up and bow down to him (46.4ff; 62.1ff; cf, Is 49.7) (Jeremias 1971:272). Similarly, IV Ezra 13.26 alludes to Isaiah 49.2 when it says, concerning the Son of man, that he will be preserved; six verses later 49.3 is alluded to when God calls him *my servant* (Jeremias 1971:272).

Jesus also used Isaiah 49 as a springboard for teaching. For instance, his maxim about dispossessing the strong man (Mt 12.29) is an allusion to Isaiah 49.24. It is evident that he saw his ministry of casting out demons as a fulfillment of God's promise to take back captives and save the children of Israel (Is 49.25).

Isaiah 49 also has prominence among the writings of the New Testament. The Apostle Paul declares that the prophecy of the *עַתְּ רְצוֹן* has been fulfilled through Christ (2Co

6.2). Simeon, upon seeing baby Jesus, inserts the words $\phi\omega\varsigma \epsilon\iota\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\pi\omicron\kappa\acute{\alpha}\lambda\upsilon\psi\iota\nu \acute{\epsilon}\theta\nu\omega\nu$ (LXX: Is 49.6) into a song filled with allusions to Isaiah (Lu 2.29-32). Paul and Barnabas also quote Isaiah 49.6 in Acts 13.47. Paul alludes to Isaiah 49.7 in 1 Corinthians 1.9. There are a couple of instances of allusion to Isaiah 49 in the book of Revelation (Rev 7.16-17 = Is 49.10; Rev 16.6 = Is 49.26).

Some modern interpreters see the description of the Servant in Isaiah 49 (particularly vss 5-6 and 8-12) as a type of Moses (Davies 1964:117). This is especially interesting in light of the discussion in the previous chapter over Jesus as the new Moses.

Isaiah 49 was used in combination with Isaiah 61 to form a prophetic picture of the messianic future. The Epistle of Barnabas, for instance, joins Isaiah 49.6-7 with Isaiah 61.1-2 as prophecies concerning Christ. Thus, a beatitude alluding to Isaiah 49 does not discount the idea that, at heart, the Beatitudes are an allusion to Isaiah 61. Yet, the importance of this contribution goes far beyond showing that the Beatitudes allude to a Isaiah 61 conflated by verses from Isaiah 49. Tying the fourth beatitude specifically to the prophecy of Isaiah 49.10 has implications for understanding what its meaning would originally have been.

II.6.1.2.2 Isaiah 49.10: A Prophecy for Living Water

By New Testament times, Isaiah 49.10 was understood as a prophecy for an outpouring of the waters of everlasting life. In Revelation 7.16-17 saints who have come out of the great tribulation are promised:

Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes (NIV).

The final phrase is a free translation from Isaiah 25.8:

כָּל־פָּנִים וּמָחָה אֶרְנֵי יְהוָה דְּמָעָה מִעַל

And the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from every face.

The rest is from Isaiah 49.10. A comparison of the two passages gives interesting insights.

Isaiah 49.10	LXX Isaiah 49.10	Revelation 7.16-17
לֹא יִרְעֲבוּ	οὐ πεινάσουσιν	οὐ πεινάσουσιν ἔτι
וְלֹא יִצְמָאוּ	οὐδὲ διψήσουσιν	οὐδὲ διψήσουσιν ἔτι
וְלֹא יִכָּסוּ שָׁרָב	οὐδὲ πατάξει αὐτοὺς καύσμων	οὐδὲ μὴ πέση ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ὁ ἥλιος
וְשָׁמַשׁ	οὐδὲ ὁ ἥλιος	οὐδὲ πᾶν καῦμα
כִּי־מִרְחָמִים	ἀλλὰ ὁ ἑλεῶν	ὅτι τὸ ἀνά μέσον τοῦ θρόνου
יְנַהֵג	αὐτοὺς παρακαλέσει	ποιμανεῖ αὐτοὺς
וְעַל־מַבּוּעֵי מַיִם	καὶ διὰ πηγμῶν ὑδάτων	καὶ ὀδηγήσει αὐτοὺς
יְנַהֵלם	ἄξει αὐτούς	ἐπὶ ζωῆς πηγμᾶς ὑδάτων

The Septuagint seems to have read the Hebrew word יְנַהֵג¹³⁵ as יְנַחֵם¹³⁶ and this alone shows that the writer of Revelation is quoting from either the Hebrew text or a targum. The verb נָהַג is routinely used for driving livestock as a shepherd (e.g., Ge 31.18; Ex 3.1) and יְנַהֵג has been paraphrased in Revelation as ποιμανεῖ in order to bring out the paradox of the shepherd being a lamb. The slight, but significant, change of *springs of water* to *springs of living water* allows for a theological metaphor based on the fact that *living water* is an idiom for *running water* (Gesenius [1847] 1979:272).

The use of *living water* as a physical symbol of a spiritual truth was embraced in ancient Judaism and incorporated into the regulations regarding baptism and ritual immersion. Thus, in the New Testament we find baptism normally being done at a river.

¹³⁵ *He will guide them.*

¹³⁶ *He will comfort them.*

Jewish *mikvoth* had to have *living water* (which could include rain water), in contrast to stagnant water (Siegel et al 1973:169).¹³⁷ *Living water* was necessary for purification to be effective.

A good illustration of the connection between the *living water* used in the *mikvoth* and the spiritual life that comes from God himself can be seen in the comments of Rabbi Akiba over Jeremiah 17.13. In the beginning of this verse God is called *מִקְוֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל*.¹³⁸ The fact that God is also called *מִקְוֵה מַיִם חַיִּים*¹³⁹ later in this verse made it natural for Rabbi Akiba to make a play on the word *מִקְוֵה*, pronouncing it *מִקְוֵה*, which allowed him to use the *mikveh* as a simile for God: *מִזֶּה הַמִּקְוֵה מִטְהַר אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם אֶף הַקָּרוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ* *מִזֶּה הַמִּקְוֵה מִטְהַר אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל*¹⁴⁰ (*mYoma* 8.9). God is thus the purifier of Israel because he is the source of *living waters*.

Peter is evidently thinking in Aramaic when he states (1Pt 3.20-21) that the water by which Noah and his family were saved *symbolizes baptism that now saves you* (NIV). In Aramaic, the verb $\sigma\omega\zeta\omega$ is rendered by the verb *חֲיָה*. In other words, the *מַיִם חַיִּים* of baptism now *חַיִּים אֶתְוִן*. Thus, *living water* was understood to be synonymous with salvation. In so far as the fourth beatitude is pointing back to the eschatological promise of Isaiah 49.10 it is promising the release of *living water/salvation* in the messianic, eschatological year of Jubilee.

The early church absorbed this Jewish understanding of *living water* into their regulations for Christian baptism. Thus, in the Didache (7.1) baptism is commanded to be done $\epsilon\upsilon\ \upsilon\delta\alpha\tau\iota\ \zeta\omega\upsilon\tau\iota$ [*in living water*]. Perhaps the word play or the idiom itself was not well

¹³⁷ The Mishnaic requirements for *mikvoth* were also incorporated into the regulations at Qumran. Water acceptable for ritual immersion was rendered unacceptable if there was not enough to cause a ripple (CD 10.11). This is in agreement with the mishnaic requirement of 40 *seahs* (c 480 litres) of water for *mikvoth* (*mMikv* 7.1). This can be seen in 1QS 3.4-5, which equates the rivers and oceans with ritual immersion baths, saying that those who reject the *Yahad*: *לֹא יִתְקַדַּשׁ בְּנַיִם וּבְהָרוֹת וְלֹא יִטְהַר בְּכוֹל מִי רְחֵץ* [*He will not be sanctified by seas or rivers, nor cleansed by any water of purification*].

¹³⁸ *the Hope of Israel*

¹³⁹ *A fountain of living water*

¹⁴⁰ *As the mikvah purifies sins, so the Holy One, blessed be He, purifies Israel.*

understood by Gentiles, because the next verse (7.2) states:

ἐὰν δὲ μὴ ἔχης ὕδωρ ζῶν, εἰς ἄλλο ὕδωρ βάπτισον· εἰ δ' οὐ δύνασαι ἐν ψυχρῷ,
ἐν θερμῷ.

But if you do not have living water (running water), baptise in other water; and if you are unable to use cold (water), then in warm (water).

This does not constitute two separate commands but two versions of the same command in synonymous parallelism. Because *living water* is *running water* it is generally cold water. Warm water is, presumably, *standing water* which was not normally acceptable for baptism or *mikvoth*. The writer here acknowledges the symbolism of being baptised in *running/living water* but feels that it is not an overriding consideration which would preclude baptism if it were unavailable.

II.6.2 Reconstruction of This Beatitude

Getting the form this beatitude would have had in either Hebrew or Aramaic is not easy. As has been demonstrated, the words τὴν δικαιοσύνην probably reflect the later editorial work of *RMatthew*. The question is, is this beatitude addressed to *those who hunger* or to *those who hunger and thirst*? Luke's *blessed are those who hunger now* is regarded by many to better reflect the original beatitude. Lachs (1987:74) suggests that there is sufficient data to support this.

The question must be asked: Will reconstructing these possibilities in Hebrew and Aramaic help solve the issue? In order to answer this an attempt to reconstruct each of the possibilities will be necessary. Only reconstructions which can maintain the three-beat rhythm already shown to be valid will be considered.

II.6.2.1 *Blessed are those who hunger*

Let us first explore the possibility of the short form: *Blessed are those who hunger*. Luke gives this as: μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες νῦν, ὅτι χορτασθήσεσθε.¹⁴¹ There are two witnesses to the shorter address from among the *Nag Hammadi* writings.

¹⁴¹ *Blessed are those who hunger now for you will be satisfied.*

The Gnostic text, *The Exegesis on the Soul* (135.16-18), has a version of this beatitude much like that found in Luke. It is paired with an unusual version of the beatitude for *those who mourn*:

The Saviour said: 'Blessed are those who mourn, for it is they who will be pitied; blessed, those who are hungry, for it is they who will be filled.' (Tuckett 1986:52)

The first of these beatitudes may be a conflation of Matthew 5.4 and 5.7 or it could be purely a deviation from 5.4 by the tractate's author (Tuckett 1986:54). The second is evidence not only that the words *for righteousness* were not original but that the words *and thirst* were added later as well. On the other hand, this could be a conflation of readings from both Matthew and Luke. The fact that the beatitudes for *those who mourn* and *those who hunger* are joined here also indicates that there was a time when the two were paired together (i.e., the third beatitude has either switched places with the second or was unknown by this community).

The *Gospel of Thomas* (69) also gives evidence that this beatitude was addressed only to *those who hunger*: Fascinatingly, Thomas has a completely unique version, which says: *Blessed are those who hunger, so the stomach of the one in want may be filled.*¹⁴²

The fact that neither of these *Nag Hammadi* versions adds the word *now* to their rendition of this beatitude indicates that the *now* has only been included in the Greek text of Luke for emphasis and does not go back to the original saying source. The version contained in *The Exegesis of the Soul* looks too suspiciously like a conflation of readings from Matthew and Luke. It may represent an independent tradition, but it would be foolish to assume that it does. The situation is slightly different with the *Gospel of Thomas*. Unfortunately the text extant is probably not in the original language, but is only a Coptic translation. This Coptic text of the *Gospel of Thomas* represents a version which has been translated from a lost Greek source written in the early second century (Howard 1995:205).

Fieger maintains that a connection exists between the *Gospel of Thomas*, as a whole, and

¹⁴² 2ΠΗΛΑΚΑΡΙΟΣ ΗΕΤ2ΚΑΕΙΤ ΨΗΛΑ ΕΥΗΛΑΤΙΟ ΠΘ2Η ΗΠΕΤΟΥΨΨ

the Sahidic Coptic version of the Gospels, saying: “*Der innerkoptische Vergleich wird zeigen, daß das koptische ThEv eine überraschende Vertrautheit mit der sahidischen Evangelienübersetzung verrät*” (Fieger 1991:7). However, the text of logion 69, shows virtually no influence from the Coptic versions of the New Testament. Firstly, Thomas begins his beatitude with the word ϩⲏⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟϥ. This represents the Greek word μακάριος, absorbed directly as a loan word into the Coptic of Thomas.¹⁴³ This is in contrast to the Sahidic Coptic version of the New Testament which uses ⲙⲁⲗⲁⲧⲟϥ in Matthew 5.6, and ⲙⲁⲗⲁⲧⲧⲏⲏⲧⲓⲛⲓ in Luke 6.21 (Fieger 1991:200), as well as the Boharic Coptic version, which has ⲱⲟϥ ⲛⲁⲧⲟϥ (Horner [1905] 1969:24).

Scholars are divided as to whether the original language of this collection of sayings was Greek, Aramaic or Syriac (Howard 1995:205). Fieger (1991:200) considers that Thomas is providing *eine freie Kombination aus Mt 5,6 und Lk 6,21 dar*. In agreement with Luke the beatitude is addressed only to *those who hunger*; in agreement with Matthew the verb in the apodosis is in the third person plural. Yet, the Coptic text of logion 69 also gives evidence that the Greek source of the *Gospel of Thomas* is unacquainted with Matthew 5.6 or Luke 6.21 and goes back to an independent Aramaic tradition. In place of ⲁⲉ, by which the Coptic New Testament renders ὅτι (Fieger 1991:200), Thomas has ⲱⲙⲓⲁ, which indicates an underlying Greek text which read: μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες ἵνα αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται. This reminds one of Polycarp’s version of the fifth beatitude: ἐλεᾶτε, ἵνα ἐλεηθῆτε (*Phil* 2.3; see also §II.2.3.2). A ὅτι clause would not be changed lightly into a ἵνα clause. It makes more sense to suppose that the Greek text standing behind Thomas has been translated from Aramaic, since ⲧ can be translated either by ὅτι or ἵνα.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴³ Thomas employs ⲟⲩⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟϥ with a singular subject in logion 7, 18, and 19; ϩⲏⲙⲁⲕⲁⲣⲓⲟϥ with a plural subject in logion 49, 54, 68 and 69.

¹⁴⁴ Similarly, mistranslation of ⲧ was suggested by Burney to account for the difference between the macarism in Matthew 13.16, ὑμῶν δὲ μακάριοι οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ ὅτι βλέπουσιν [*blessed are your eyes because they see*], and μακάριοι οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ οἱ βλέποντες ἃ βλέπετε [*blessed are the eyes that see what you see*] in Luke 10.23 (Burney 1925:145).

Actually, this same evidence could be used to show that the Greek text of Thomas was translated from Hebrew since ⲱ can also be translated either by ὅτι or ἵνα. Both Aramaic ⲧ and Hebrew ⲱ are ambiguous and both can be translated (among other things) either as a relative pronoun or a conjunction (Jastrow [1903] 1992:275;1505). An interesting example of this phenomenon, coming from the other direction, can be found in Matthew 6.5, where the Arabic version of the Diatessaron uses a relative pronoun to translate

For vocabulary, the only real contender for reconstructing $\pi\epsilon\iota\upsilon\omega\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$ into Hebrew is the verb רָעַב ; in Aramaic it is the verb ܕܦܢ .

II.6.2.1.1 The Hebrew Reconstruction of *Blessed are Those Who Hunger*

The Hebrew reconstruction can go more than one way. In a Hebrew reconstruction it is not difficult to find a way to get the necessary three beats even when it is addressed only to *those who hunger*. Using Psalm 146.7 as a guide, where לְרַעְבִּים receives two stresses (Davidson 1970:453) one way to reconstruct this beatitude in Hebrew is: $\text{אַשְׁרֵי הַרְעֵבִים}$.

In actual fact, a case can certainly be made that the Greek plural form, $\pi\epsilon\iota\upsilon\omega\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$, does not necessarily represent a Hebrew plural form. In Isaiah 29.8 the word הַרְעֵב , which also receives two beats,¹⁴⁵ is translated in the Septuagint with a plural form.¹⁴⁶ Thus, אַשְׁרֵי הַרְעֵב could also be correct.

II.6.2.1.2 The Aramaic Reconstruction of *Blessed are Those Who Hunger*

Burney used *dekaphenín*¹⁴⁷ for his Aramaic reconstruction of $\pi\epsilon\iota\upsilon\omega\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$. This is in agreement with the all the Syriac versions of this beatitude as well as the Christian Palestinian version which have ܕܦܢܝܢ . The Aramaic versions prefer, in this case, to place ܕ before the participle, resulting in ܕܦܢܝܢ , though, when Targum Jonathan translates the Hebrew participles רָעַב and רַעֲבִים it does so without the relative pronoun.

Syriac ܕܦܢܝܢ , which was used to translate the ὅτι of the Greek text (Black 1967:71). Thus, it is possible to translate both ܕܦܢܝܢ and ܕܦܢܝܢ as *in order that they (those in want) may be filled*. The fact that the words ܕܦܢܝܢ [the stomach of the one in want] come at the end of logion 69 is an indication that they were added later in order to clarify who it is who will be filled. Thomas is noted for inserting secondary elements into earlier material (Klijn 1992:50).

¹⁴⁵ רָעַב (Davidson 1970:221)

¹⁴⁶ The LXX, incorrectly, has $\pi\lambda\upsilon\sigma\tau\epsilon\varsigma$. It seems obvious that this is a mistake for $\pi\epsilon\iota\upsilon\omega\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma$.

¹⁴⁷ ܕܦܢܝܢ

It is unlikely that οἱ περιώντες represents a plural emphatic form. Jastrow gives no indication that there ever would be a form like כְּפִינָא ([1903] 1992:659, 660). If, however, one were to decide to use a singular emphatic form then examples are available. Targum Jonathan uses כְּפִנָּא in Isaiah 29.8 and 58.7 as well as כְּפִינָא in Psalm 107.9.¹⁴⁸

It should be noted that Targum Jonathan translates רְעֵבִים, not by כְּפִנָּא, but by כְּפִינָא (e.g., Ps 146.7). The closest one can come to כְּפִנָּא in the targums appears to be the interesting textual variant among manuscripts of Targum Jonathan in Psalm 107.5. Though many manuscripts read כְּפִינָא, there are manuscripts which use כְּפִינָא and even some with כְּפִנָּא (Jastrow [1903] 1992:659).

Unlike the Hebrew words הָרְעֵבִים and הָרְעֵב, the Aramaic word כְּפִנָּא would not, alone, receive two beats and there is no plural emphatic form. The relative pronoun in Palestinian Aramaic is דְּ (Stevenson 1962.21) and a form such as דְּכְפִינָא would only have one accent. Therefore, there are basically three ways to reconstruct *blessed are those who hunger* as a three-beat, Aramaic hemistich.

The first is to add the full relative pronoun, resulting in: דְּכְפִינָא. This form reflects Biblical Aramaic (cf, Dn 7.18). The Job Targum found at Qumran utilizes דְּ as a relative pronoun exclusively (Sokoloff 1974:22). The Genesis Apocryphon mostly uses דְּ ; דְּ attached to the next word occurs about ten percent of the time (Sokoloff 1974:22). Throughout the Aramaic portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls it is דְּ which is normally used (Sokoloff 1974:22) but this may merely reflect good Imperial Aramaic and not the spoken form even of those who wrote these texts. Even if this does not represent the popular speech of first-century Jews in Palestine it would still be possible for such a phrase to be uttered by Jesus.

The Beatitudes, as opposed to general speech and ordinary discussion were meant to have

¹⁴⁸ An emphatic feminine singular participle, כְּפִנָּה, does appear in a Galilean Aramaic text on a silver amulet but this dates from the seventh century AD (Beyer 1984:372).

a more austere quality and to be remembered as theological pronouncements (Betz 1995:94). To achieve this a more formal Aramaic might have seemed fitting.

The second way is to suggest that οἱ πεινωότες represents an emphatic plural form such as כְּפִנְיָא. Though examples of an emphatic singular form, such as כְּפִנְיָא, can be seen, no examples of a plural emphatic form have surfaced. The fact that no examples of כְּפִנְיָא have been found does not mean this form did not exist. By way of example, while researching the possibilities for an Aramaic reconstruction of the eighth beatitude a need was seen to find a passive form of the verb כְּרַךְ. The Peshitta of Matthew 5.10 uses the passive form כְּרַךְ. ¹⁴⁹ Because Jastrow ([1903] 1992:1453) gives no examples of Jewish Aramaic using either the 'Ithpe'al or the 'Ithpa'el constructions for the verb כְּרַךְ it would have been possible to conjecture that the Peshitta is using a form which would not have been used in Palestine. But, Jastrow (as invaluable a tool as his dictionary is) is not enough by which to form a definitive conclusion, as the form יתְרַךְ can be seen among the Dead Sea Scrolls (4Q521 1.3.1). Thus, כְּפִנְיָא טוֹבִיחוֹן is a possibility, though not a good one.

The third, and best possibility is that a compound tense has been formed using הִתְהַוָּה. Thus, כְּפִנְיָא טוֹבִיחוֹן הִתְהַוָּה has the required three beats. An analogous occurrence of a compound tense in biblical Aramaic can be seen in Daniel 5.19. The perfect of הִתְהַוָּה joined to a participle can be used to express a prolonged state (Stevenson 1962:57). The use of the perfect compound tense occurs occasionally in Old Testament Aramaic. It is characteristic of the Palestinian Talmud and *Midrashim* of the period, though not of targumic Aramaic (Stevenson 1962:57). It is also characteristic of Christian Palestinian Aramaic (Schulthess 1924:88) as well as Palmyrene (Rowley 1929:98). An example of the compound tense being used specifically with *hunger* can be seen in Rabbi Rabba's comments concerning David and Bath Sheba (*San* 107a). The idiom he uses for David to describe his lust is: לִיצְרֵי הוּהּ כִּיפִינָא. ¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ אתְרַדְפוּ

¹⁵⁰ *My inclination hungers.*

Therefore, it is possible to reconstruct a beatitude addressed only to *those who hunger*, having three beats, in either Hebrew or Aramaic. This leads to the conclusion that the *blessed are those who hunger* of Luke and Thomas may have been based on an Aramaic or Hebrew source.

II.6.2.2 *Blessed are Those Who Hunger and Thirst*

The pairing of *hunger* and *thirst* is not uncommon in the New Testament (e.g., Mt 25.35-44; Ro 12.20; 1Co 4.11; Rev 7.16).

II.6.2.2.1 *The Aramaic Reconstruction of Blessed are Those Who Hunger and Thirst*

Burney defends the inclusion of the words *καὶ διψῶντες* from the standpoint that it is necessary for the first hemistich to have three beats. He suggests that the reconstruction of this beatitude into Aramaic should be: *tubehón dekaphenín wesaháyin dehinnún mitmeláyin*¹⁵¹ (Burney 1925:166). Lohmeyer agrees, noting that *wesaháyin* is necessary “*oder dreihebigen Rhythmus wie den Gleichklang zwischen wesaháyin und mitmeláyin*” (Lohmeyer 1967:86).

If the reconstruction were *טוביהון דקפנין וצמאין* the advantage would be that it fits the rhythmic pattern and that it matches the wording of this beatitude in Matthew.

II.6.2.2.2 *The Hebrew Reconstruction of Blessed are Those Who Hunger and Thirst*

In order to suggest a three-beat Hebrew reconstruction for a hemistich addressed to both *those who hunger* and *those who thirst* the forms must be indefinite. Both plural and singular forms can be employed. Thus, both *אֲשֶׁרִי רָעִבִים וְצָמְאִים* or *אֲשֶׁרִי רָעֵב וְצָמְאָה* are possible reconstructions. If we use 4Q521, which uses *רָעֵב* in its allusion to Isaiah 49.10, as a guide, then the former reconstruction which is neither plural nor definite is best. On the other hand, the plural form *צָמְאִים* is used in 1QSb 1.6 to speak of those who thirst for *living water*.¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ טוביהון דקפנין וצמאין

¹⁵² According to Barthélemy and Milik's reconstruction of the text: *עולם ולוא נ[עצור מים חיים ל]צמאים*

The interpretation of this beatitude, in the *Gospel of Thomas* (log 69)¹⁵³ which addresses those who voluntarily allow themselves to be hungry (i e, *fasting*) in order for others to have food must stem from a preaching tradition going back to the primitive Christian church. This same theme is found in another early Christian work: the *Shepherd of Hermas*. In a discussion on fasting, Hermas is told by Jesus that when he fasts, the amount of money he has saved on food should be distributed to the poor (Sim 5.3.7). There is certainly a similarity between Thomas and Hermas here which seems to indicate some sort of indirect connection. Therefore, it is likely that Hermas is passing on teaching in this passage which has a common ancestry with logion 69 in the *Gospel of Thomas*.

Though Thomas doesn't mention *those who thirst*, the interpretation he gives may, indirectly, be evidence for the inclusion of these words in a Hebrew reconstruction. A Hebrew version could easily have existed which read: אֲשֶׁרֵי רָעַב וְצָמָא. Someone might have hit upon the idea of changing the Hebrew צָמָא to צָמָא in order to read it as: *blessed are those who hunger and fast*. This then would naturally have led to the teaching present in logion 69 and Hermas. Unfortunately, there is no corroborating textual evidence that such a reading ever existed.

II.6.2.3 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness

The history of the Greek text of the Beatitudes reviewed in the first portion of this thesis showed that the words τῆν δικαιοσύνην were only added to the fourth beatitude later by *RMatthew*. For reasons of rhythm Burney (1925:166) rejected the inclusion of these words in his Aramaic reconstruction. There is no way to include the word *righteousness* and still keep to the three-beat rhythm he suggested. Yet, it is this mention of *righteousness* that caused Black to continue to see an allusion to Isaiah 61 (Black 1967:157). For example, *righteousness* features prominently in Isaiah 61.3, where the אֵילֵי הַצֶּדֶק will be called אֵילֵי צִיּוֹן.¹⁵⁴

[. תְּקוּרָה]

¹⁵³ *Blessed are those who hunger, so the stomach of the one in want may be filled.*

¹⁵⁴ cf, Targum: אֵילֵי צִיּוֹן קוֹשְׁטָא; Syriac: ܐܝܠܝ ܕܥܝܘܢܝܢ; LXX: γενεὰ δικαιοσύνης

It is certainly possible that *RMatthew* was restoring a word which was already associated with this beatitude in Aramaic. A version quoted by Clement of Alexandria (*Strom* 5.70.1) may reflect the influence of an Aramaic *Vorlage*, as the first strophe seems to have read: μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν ἀλήθειαν [*blessed are those who hunger and thirst after truth*]. The reason for suggesting that this reading stems from an Aramaic version is the mention of *truth* rather than *righteousness*. This variant reading can be accounted for by positing that Clement is translating the Aramaic word קושטא, which can mean both *truth* and *righteousness*. In fact, Targum Jonathan translates דְּצִדִּיק in Isaiah 61.3, not with צְדִיקָא, (which, for example, he uses in 11.5) but with קושטא. This may only represent an Aramaic translation of the existing Greek text of Matthew. In Aramaic, Matthew 5.6 could have been translated: טוביהון דְּכַפִּינִין וְדִצְחִין לְקוּשְׁטָא.¹⁵⁵

Lindsey (1973:XXII) reconstructs the first hemistich of this beatitude into Hebrew as: אֲשֶׁרֵי רָעֲבֵי צָדִיקָה. In so doing he is acknowledging the shorter address of Luke as representing the more authentic beatitude and that Matthew (as in 5.3 with the addition *in spirit*) has again given a spiritualizing addition. Lindsey's reconstruction of this hemistich, incidentally, has the three beats sought for the rhythmical pattern. This leads to the possibility that the original hemistich was *blessed are those who hunger* which was then expanded in different segments of the church to both *blessed are those who hunger and thirst* and *blessed are those who hunger for righteousness*. Perhaps *RMatthew* was conflating the Greek text in order to restore a reading known from a Hebrew or Aramaic version current in other sections of the Jewish-Christian church.

The result of this investigation proves nothing absolutely. The best that can be said is that some possibilities are better than others. Based on the fact that it is more likely that Jesus delivered the Beatitudes in Aramaic rather than Hebrew and that Luke often best represents the original wording (which are both highly debatable points) the Aramaic reconstruction offered for the first hemistich will have the shorter address. The Greek

¹⁵⁵ It well may be that Clement of Alexandria is indeed quoting from an Aramaic source but that this source itself was only a translation of the Greek text of Matthew as we know it.

text of *OMatthew* did not include the words τὴν δικαιοσύνην and did contain the words καὶ διψῶντες. The evidence up to now has suggested that Matthew's version of the Beatitudes preserves a Greek translation of a Hebrew version. Therefore, the Hebrew reconstruction of the first hemistich will be in accordance with the longer address.

II.6.2.4 Reconstructing the Apodosis

II.6.2.4.1 Burney's Theory: *For They will be Satisfied with Good*

In Burney's reconstruction the second hemistich is too short, comprising only two beats. He therefore suggested that the word *tāb*¹⁵⁶ (based on Is 55.2) be inserted after *mitmeláyin* which would then make this line read: *for they will be satisfied with good* (Burney 1925:168). This is certainly possible. One of the eighteen benedictions, which goes back to New Testament times, petitions God to *satisfy us with your good(ness)*¹⁵⁷ (Singer 1962:50). This theme also appears among the Dead Sea Scrolls in 4Q418, fragment 81, line 19, which says: תמלא ושבעתה ברוב טוב ומחכמת ידיכה.¹⁵⁸ The Hebrew word טוב corresponds to the Greek word ἀγαθός, which is used as a substantive in just this sense later in the Sermon on the Mount when Jesus declares that ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς δώσει ἀγαθὰ τοῖς αἰτοῦσιν αὐτόν¹⁵⁹ (Mt 7.11). Unfortunately there are no variants which introduce a form of the word ἀγαθός into this beatitude.

On the other hand, in Mary's *Magnificat* (Lu 1.46-55) one can see a parallel to this beatitude which does contain the substantive ἀγαθός. In Luke 1.53 Mary sings that πεινῶντας ἐνέπλησεν ἀγαθῶν πλουτοῦντας ἔξαπέστειλε κενούς.¹⁶⁰ It must not be missed that this line occurs in a beatitude-like list of reasons why future generations μακαριοῦσι¹⁶¹ Mary (vs 48).

¹⁵⁶ טוב

¹⁵⁷ ושבעתה ברוב טוב

¹⁵⁸ *You will be filled and satisfied in the abundance of good(ness) and the wisdom of your hands.*

¹⁵⁹ *Your Father in heaven will give good things to those who ask him..*

¹⁶⁰ *He has filled the hungry with good (things); the rich he has sent away empty.*

¹⁶¹ *will call blessed*

The antithetic parallelism which contrasts God's treatment of the hungry with his treatment of the rich brings to mind Luke's beatitude of the *hungry* (6.21), balanced by his woe to *those who are full* (6.25; cf, vs 24). Perhaps an allusion is being made to Psalm 107.9 which says: וַיִּפֶּשׂ יְרֵבָה מִלֵּא-טוֹב.¹⁶²

A possible witness for *good* being part of this beatitude can be found in the paraphrase of this beatitude offered in the Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions (II 28.5) which promises that those who hunger and thirst for *aeternis bonis justitiae*¹⁶³ will be filled. Dupont mentions the possibility that this goes back to a reading in the Gospel of the Hebrews (Dupont 1973:377; He credits Descamps with the theory but is not convinced of it himself) whose version of this beatitude contained the word *good*. This cannot be used as positive proof of an original beatitude with the word *good* (particularly as it seems to have been a part of the first hemistich rather than the second) but it certainly makes the idea very credible.

II.6.2.4.2 The Clementine Model: *For They will be Satisfied with Food*

There were obviously those who felt that the beatitude as it stands is too ambiguous and therefore added an indirect object to alleviate this. The full text of *Stromata* 5.70.1, mentioned earlier, reads:

Εἰ τοίνυν λογικὸν ἡμῖν βρῶμα ἢ γνῶσις εἶναι συμπεφώνηται, μακάριοι τῷ ὄντι κατὰ τὴν Γραφήν οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν ἀλήθειαν· ὅτι πλησθήσονται τροφῆς αἰδίου.

If then it is agreed among us that knowledge is the food of reason, 'blessed truly are they,' according to the scripture, 'who hunger and thirst after truth, for they shall be filled with everlasting food.' (Tuckett 1986:55).

In Aramaic this version of the fourth beatitude would probably be rendered something like: טַבִּיחָהוֹן כְּפִינִין וְצַהִין לְקוֹשָׁטָא דְהַנּוֹן יִתְמַלִּין לְחַם עֲלָם. This departs from a three-beat rhythm by adding words which give a four-beat rhythm to each half.

¹⁶² *And the hungry He fills with good things.*

¹⁶³ *the eternal good of righteousness*

Were one feeling the need to add the word *food* to this beatitude, a better idea would be to look in the targum to Psalm 132.15 for an analogy. The targum changes the אֲבִיוֹנִיָּהּ אֲשָׁבִיעַ לֶחֶם¹⁶⁴ of the Hebrew text to וְחָשִׁיקָהּ וְסָבְעוֹן לֶחֶם.¹⁶⁵ This would suggest the possibility of: דְּהִנּוּן וְסָבְעוֹן לֶחֶם.

II.6.2.4.3 Without Addition: *For They will be Satisfied*

When faced with the question of whether or not Jesus would have ever said *they will be satisfied* without adding an indirect object to the statement the answer is definitely, yes. In fact, for an analogy one only needs to look ahead in the Sermon on the Mount to Matthew 7.7 which says: *ask and it shall be given to you* (NIV). Therefore there is no reason to conclude that Jesus could not have said *they will be satisfied* (and not added some sort of direct object).

Burney's use of מְתַמְלִין to translate χορτασθήσονται is a minor problem. The likelihood is that the verb מְלִי would cause a Greek translator to use the verb πληρώ rather than χορτάζω. There is the possibility that Burney is correct and χορτασθήσονται has been used to translate an original מְתַמְלִין, but there is no compelling reason to abandon the verb סָבַע. All the Syriac versions attest [נסבעון] ܢܫܒܥܘܢ and the Christian Palestinian version has [יסבעון] ܝܫܒܥܘܢ. The latter leads to what should (but cannot for reasons of rhythm) be a preferred reconstruction of χορτασθήσονται, namely: יִסְבְּעוּן. That having been said, the form χορτασθήσονται appears in the Septuagint to the Hebrew Bible only in Psalm 36 (37).19 where it translates the Hebrew word יִשְׁבְּעוּ. In turn, יִשְׁבְּעוּ is rendered by Targum Jonathan not by יִסְבְּעוּן, but rather by סָבְעוּן.

II.6.2.4.3.a Reconstructing *For They will be Satisfied* in Aramaic

The plural participle, סָבְעוּן, used in the targum of Psalm 37.19 is the key to solving the problem of how to have three beats in the apodosis of the Aramaic reconstruction of this beatitude. Participles are often used in Targum Onkelos and Targum Jonathan to render

¹⁶⁴ *The poor I will satisfy with bread.*

the Hebrew imperfect tense, particularly when the word denotes a continuous state in either the past or the future (Stevenson 1962:56). What the targums generally do not do is use a compound tense with the participle, though such was normal Aramaic usage (Stevenson 1962:57).

A relative clause must contain “a compound tense when there is a compound tense in the associated principal clause” (Stevenson 1962:59); but not vice-versa. Consider the way the relative clause **אֲנִי הָיִיתִי אֲנִי** in Daniel 5.19 governs the clauses which follow it. The use of compound tenses can be found in the Aramaic portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls. For example, in the Genesis Apocryphon 20.8 Abraham narrates his journey, saying: **וְהָיִיתִי אֵל לְדְרוֹמָא**.¹⁶⁶

More to the point, analogous use of an imperfect form of **הָיָה** with a participle also occurs. 4Q541 6.2 says: **וְלֹא תִהְיֶה חַיִּיב**.¹⁶⁷ 4Q435 1, as reconstructed by Wise, contains **יְהוּוּן מְרַמֵּשׁ**¹⁶⁸ (Eisenman & Wise 1992:35). Numerous other examples can also be found throughout the Dead Sea Scrolls as well as in material found at Wadi Murabba'at (Beyer 1984:561). Since it has already been suggested that the Aramaic reconstruction of the first hemistich needs a compound tense, using a compound tense in the apodosis may give the beatitude a good balance.

It must also be mentioned that another possibility for rendering the apodosis is to add the word **עָתִיד** before the participle. Expressing the future with the word **עָתִיד** was not uncommon and examples can be seen among the Dead Sea Scrolls (Beyer 1984:666). An example from biblical Aramaic can be seen in Daniel 3.15.

Generally the construction is **עָתִיד + ל + infinitive**, but **עָתִיד** with imperfects and participles can also be found (Stevenson 1962:51; Jastrow [1903] 1992:1129) An

¹⁶⁵ *The poor He will satisfy with bread.*

¹⁶⁶ *And I traveled south.*

¹⁶⁷ *And you will not be guilty*

¹⁶⁸ *they will be darkened*

example of עתיד + *participle* can be seen in an inscription found at a fourth-century Galilean synagogue: כל מן דעבד מצותה בהרן אתרה קדישה ודעתיד מעבד מצותה יהי שלמה על (Beyer 1984:386).¹⁶⁹ An interesting example from Targum Jonathan (Hab 2.1) reverses the usual syntax and has עתיד קאים אנא as the translation for אתינצבא of the Hebrew. This would then suggest an Aramaic reconstruction such as: עתיד סבעין ידהנון.

Though the use of עתיד is certainly a possibility for the Aramaic reconstruction of the apodosis the more prolific use of the compound tense with the participle seems to favour using that construction. Therefore, the apodosis will be rendered: ידהנון יהוון סבעין. The use of יהוון in this reconstruction is based on the form יהוון found in 4Q435 1, vocalized in accordance with Targums *Yerushalmi* I and II which both employ יהוון in Genesis 3.15.¹⁷⁰

II.6.2.4.3.b Reconstructing *For They will be Satisfied* in Hebrew

There remains the problem of the Hebrew reconstruction of the apodosis. How can the Hebrew arrive at a three-beat rhythm? A reconstruction such as ישבעו שקה has the advantage of using a biblical form but, alas, does not have three beats.

All along it has been conjectured that Matthew's source has had access to a Hebrew version of the Beatitudes which was based on an original Aramaic version and that the Hebrew translator changed and even added words to be able to retain the three-beat

¹⁶⁹ *Peace be on all of those who made contributions in this holy place and (on) those who will make contributions.*

¹⁷⁰ The Aramaic, Imperfect, 3rd person, plural form of היה is difficult to nail down for this reconstruction. The Old Testament Aramaic form is להוה (e.g., Ezr 6.10). A short form, יהוון, appears in Targum manuscripts published by Kahle (Stevenson 1962:74). Kahle's suggested that this vocalization, based on Yeminite manuscripts with supralinear pointing, retains "the original preformative vowel;" Stevenson (1962:13) suggests that this may merely be an alternative way to represent vocal *shewa*. Thus, it might better be rendered as יהוון, as found in Targum Onkelos (e.g., Ge 49.11). In Genesis 3.15 the Venedig edition of *Yerushalmi* II published in 1511 has יהוון (Dalman 1927:6). *Bereshith Rabba* has both יהוון and יהוון (Odeberg 1939 2:39). Other possibilities from Rabbinic literature include יהוון, and להוה, (Frank 1975:98). Though speakers of Aramaic in Palestine used forms with a ל prefix it seems better to use one with a י prefix (which is normally used in the targums) as the former more properly represents Babylonian

rhythm. Thus, a reconstruction of the fourth beatitude that does not keep to the rhythmic pattern of the others must be disallowed.

As in Aramaic, in Mishnaic Hebrew the future tense was also often rendered by the use of עָתִיד plus ל prefixed to an infinitive (Frank 1975:11). This would allow for an apodosis reading: שָׁהֵם עָתִיד לְשַׁבַּע.¹⁷¹ This reconstruction has the severe disadvantage of not being identifiable as a direct allusion to anything in the Bible. On the other hand, use of this way of speaking is routinely found in contexts speaking of the days of the Messiah or the hereafter (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1129). In fact, the idiom לְעָתִיד לְבֹא, with the Messianic future in mind, is so common that it often appears abbreviated as לַעֲיִל. In so far as this beatitude was associated with *righteousness* the words of Rabbi Tarphon seem appropriate in this context: וְדַע שֶׁמִּתֵּן שְׂכָרָם שֶׁל צְדִיקִים לְעָתִיד לְבֹא¹⁷² (*Ab* 2.21). Though the use of עָתִיד is a tempting solution to the problem it is even less attractive in a Hebrew reconstruction than in an Aramaic one. The fact that it depends on an idiom not associated with the Hebrew Bible (particularly of Isaiah) is a significant weakness. A Hebrew version of this beatitude from the first century would probably mirror the Aramaic version above (particularly if it was translated from Aramaic).

There does happen to be an analogous occurrence of a compound tense pairing the participle of שָׁבַע with an imperfect of הָיָה in Rashi's commentary to *Sanhedrin* 107a. Explaining Rabbi Jehudah's comment that David changed his night couch into a day couch Rashi says: שְׁהִיא מִשְׁמַשׁ מִנּוּמָה יוֹם כְּדִי שִׁיחָא שָׁבַע מִתְּשַׁמֵּשׁ וְלֹא יִהְיֶה אַחַר אִשָּׁה כֹּל הַיּוֹם.¹⁷³ Though Rashi is writing a thousand years after Jesus the idiom שָׁבַע שְׁיָחָא can still be considered acceptable – albeit with great misgivings. Applying this to the fourth beatitude the apodosis would read: שָׁהֵם יְהוּ שָׁבַעִים.

Aramaic (Frank 1975:28).

¹⁷¹ An example using the *Hiph'il* construction of שָׁבַע can be found in Numbers *Rabba* s 14, which says (ref to Pr 14.14): אוֹתוֹ הַלֵּב שֶׁהוּא מִלֵּא סִיג עָתִיד לְהִשְׁחַבֵּעַ מִדְּרָכָיו: [*This self same heart, because it is full of refuse will be satiated (i e, sick) from its own ways.*].

¹⁷² *And know that the gift of reward of the righteous will take place in the future to come.*

¹⁷³ *He was performing his sexual relations in the day(time) in order that he would be satisfied from sex and not think on women all day long.*

II.6.2.5 Aramaic and Hebrew Reconstructions:

Aramaic

טוביהוּן דְּהוּוּ כְּפִינִין דְּהַנּוּן וְהוּוּן סְבָעִין

Hebrew

אֲשֶׁר־יִרְעָבוּ וְצִמְאוּ שָׁמָּה יִהְיוּ שְׂבֻעִים

II.6.3 The Meaning of this Beatitude

The Beatitudes proclaim the arrival of the Kingdom of God, the beginning of the eschatological Year of Jubilee and the revealing of God's Messiah. One should not make too fine a distinction between the activities of God and his Messiah. Jesus may have intended that *those who hunger (and thirst) were to be satisfied* by him.

In John 15.7 Jesus uses the divine passive to express that the petitions of his disciples will be answered, saying: ὁ ἐὰν θέλητε αἰτήσασθε καὶ γενήσεται ὑμῖν.¹⁷⁴ For Jesus there was no distinction between himself and the Father answering requests. Thus, in John 14.12, 14 Jesus says it is he who will do whatever is asked, while in John 16.23 it is the Father who will give whatever is asked.

Whether addressed to *those who hunger* or *those who hunger and thirst* the fourth beatitude alludes to Isaiah 49.10 in the context of Isaiah 61.1-2. The prophecy for the end of hungering and thirsting in Isaiah 49.10 was, in Second-Temple times, understood to be the result of the arrival of the Messiah who gives living water. The switch from God to the Messiah being the giver of living water was not unique to Jesus but was part of first-century messianic expectation.

¹⁷⁴ *Ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you* (NIV).

At Qumran, the theme of springs of water in the desert was extended in the Thanksgiving Scroll (1QH). In column 16 the psalmist praises God who has made him a source of living water. Throughout this column imagery from various messianic/eschatological prophecies are used freely. He is a נִצַּר¹⁷⁵ (line 6; Is 11.2) planted in an אֲרֵץ צִיָּה¹⁷⁶ (line 4; Is 53.2) which becomes a מִטְעַת עוֹלָם¹⁷⁷ (line 6; Is 60.21, 61.3). Tapping into the מַיִם חַיִּים (line 7) the tree becomes a מְקוֹר עוֹלָם (line 8; later called מְקוֹר חַיִּים; cf, Ps 36.10). This tree is hidden and not נִחְשָׁב¹⁷⁸ (line 11; Is 53.3). Thus, the tree becomes a מְבוּעַ מַיִם חַיִּים (line 16; Is 49.10). In a similar vein, Revelation 22.1-2 refers to the ποταμὸν ὕδατος ζωῆς from which the tree of life is nourished.

Perhaps this theological milieu of the Messiah being a source of *living water* is what prompted Jesus to declare καθὼς εἶπεν ἡ γραφή, ποταμοὶ ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας αὐτοῦ ρεῦσουσιν ὕδατος ζωῆς¹⁷⁹ (Jn 7.38). John interprets this to be a reference to the Spirit (v 39). John may be seeing here a reference to Isaiah 44.3: *I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.*

The promise of the apodosis of this beatitude, that *they will be satisfied*, was probably understood by those in the early church as referring to *eternal life*. The only other instance of χορτασθήσονται in the Septuagint outside of Psalm 36 (37).19 occurs in Tobit 12.9b. Manuscript S reads: οἱ ποιῶντες ἐλεημοσύνην χορτασθήσονται ζωῆς.¹⁸⁰

Connecting the verb χορτάζω to ἐλεημοσύνη may have been suggested by the linking of *alms giving* to *fasting* in verse 8. It would not be too difficult to think that from these words a doctrine of fasting in order to give to the poor could be derived. The Archangel Raphael declares to Tobit and his son that such a person will *be satisfied* (by God) *with*

¹⁷⁵ shoot

¹⁷⁶ dry ground

¹⁷⁷ eternal planting

¹⁷⁸ esteemed

¹⁷⁹ *As the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from him* (NIV).

(eternal) *life*. From the perspective of the Gospel of John, if Jesus were to satisfy *those who hunger and thirst* with anything it would most likely be with *life* (Jn 4.10, 14; 6.27, 35, 51-58; 7.37-38; 10.10).

II.6.3.1 The Fourth Beatitude and Fasting

Goulder (1974:275) sees in the fourth beatitude's two-fold address of *hungering* and *thirsting* a reference to *prayer* and *fasting*. This is based on the theory that Matthew 6.5-18 is commentary on the fourth beatitude (Goulder 1974:262f, 275). Goulder has the right idea that the portion of the Sermon on the Mount following the Beatitudes is commentary on the last four of them but has incorrectly understood that commentary on the first four beatitudes is contained in Matthew chapter six. Nonetheless, he is probably correct to see a connection between the fourth beatitude and fasting.

Rabbi Tanchum bar Hanilai (*Sanh* 100a) lauds those who make themselves to go hungry in pursuit of Torah, saying:

כל המרעיב עצמו לחורה בעולם הזה הקבה ישבעו בעולם הבא

All who make themselves hungry for the sake of Torah in this world will be satisfied in the world to come.

Such sentiments must have been around in the days of Jesus as he seems to acknowledge this when, in John 5.39, he says:

ἐραυνᾶτε τὰς γραφάς, ὅτι ὑμεῖς δοκεῖτε ἐν αὐταῖς ζωὴν αἰώνιον ἔχειν.

You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life (NIV).

He goes on to say that he is the source of *life*. Jesus also spoke of his words as both *spirit and life* (Jn 6.63) and equates his teaching with the Law of Moses (Jn 7.16-19).¹⁸¹

¹⁸⁰ *Those who give alms will be satisfied with life.*

¹⁸¹ In the Babylonian Talmud (*Chag* 3a) some disciples express their dependence on their rabbi's teaching by exclaiming: *בנימך אני שוחין*, and *Sanhedrin* 107a suggests that when David writes: *Even my close friend, . . . who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me* (Ps 41.9), he is speaking of Ahithophel and that *bread* in this context means teaching.

II.6.3.2 Reinstating the word *Righteousness*

Though the word *righteousness* was not originally a part of this beatitude it was later joined to it for a reason. What needs to be answered is:

1. Why was *righteousness* associated with this beatitude?
2. What is meant by *righteousness*?

The answer to the first question may have to do with the way the promise that *they will be satisfied* was associated with a certain kind of *righteousness*.

Going back to Tobit 12.9, in which the word χορτασθήσονται appears, the connection of this promise to those who give to the poor may be the clue to unlocking this puzzle. Tobit 12.9 is slightly different in manuscripts B and A than in S: οἱ ποιῶντες ἐλεημοσύνας καὶ δικαιοσύνας πλησθήσονται ζωῆς.¹⁸² It is not being suggested that when *RMatthew* added the word *righteousness* to this beatitude he was wanting to create an allusion to Tobit. Rather, the intention was (as well as by adding the third beatitude) to create an allusion to Psalm 37. Psalm 37.19 promises that the righteous *will be satisfied* in the day of *hunger*. 37.21 says that *the righteous give generously* (NIV). In 37.26 they are described as *always generous*. Both Rashi and the *Mtzudat David* commentaries in the Rabbinic Bible have the same comment on this: *they are generous to the poor*. In each case the word translated as *generous* is רַחֲמִים. The root of this word is רַחַם, which means *mercy*. Perhaps the use of the verbs ἐλέεω and χορτάζω in Tobit 12.9-10 also indicates an allusion to Psalm 37.

In any event, what can be determined is that the association of the fourth beatitude with *righteousness* is linked to an interpretation of this beatitude which encouraged fasting and giving food to the poor. Certainly, the *Gospel of Thomas* understood it to be this way.

Righteousness is often used as a synonym for almsgiving (cf, the use of δικαιοσύνης and ἐλεημοσύνης in both Tobit 12.9 and Mt 6.1-2). Giving food to the poor is an action which is specifically associated with the righteous in Rabbinic literature. Consider, for

example, the rabbinic treatment of Psalm 118.19, which states: פתחו־לי שַׁעֲרֵי־צְדָק אֲבֹתֵינוּ. ¹⁸³ These gates came to be identified as gates for righteous people.

Both the Rashi and Eben Ezra commentaries in the Rabbinic Bible are only giving an interpretation that reaches back to much more ancient times when they specify that those who enter these gates are the righteous.¹⁸⁴ Therefore, when the *Midrash Tillim* to this verse says that *זה השער של מאכיל רעב*,¹⁸⁵ it is affirming that *the righteous are those who feed the hungry*.

Divine reward for those who feed the hungry and poor are themes present in Isaiah 58.7-10. In fact, Isaiah 58.8 says that as a result of doing this: וְהָלַךְ לְפָנַי צְדִיקָה.¹⁸⁶ Targum Jonathan translates צְדִיקָה as זְכוּתָהּ. The word זְכוּתָהּ (from the root זָכַן, *to be pure or clear*) is a term which grew from meaning *innocent* or *righteous* through theological usage to mean, *good deeds*; from that to mean *merit*; from that to mean *merit which engendered divine favour* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:402). Thus, *your righteousness will go before you* was, in the targum tradition, taken to mean: *your merit will cause divine favour to go before you*.

It is therefore not unlikely that in a Jewish-Christian context, *those who hunger and thirst for righteousness* would be taken to mean *those who seek right standing with God*. Dupont quotes from an article by Coggan suggesting that the difference between the meaning of this beatitude in Aramaic and in Greek is that the former would mean “Blessed are those who earnestly desire God’s vindication, God’s deliverance;” the latter would mean “Blessed are those who earnestly desire to be righteous” (Dupont 1973:357). Coggan’s notion of an Aramaic understanding of *righteousness* would normally fit such an eschatological context but not here.

¹⁸² *Those who give alms and charity [righteousness] will be filled with life.*

¹⁸³ *Open for me the gates of righteousness; I will enter and give thanks to the LORD (NIV).*

¹⁸⁴ Rashi: הנדיקים נאים בהם [The righteous come through them]; Eben Ezra: זה הוא הצדק [And this is he (who is referred to): the righteous].

¹⁸⁵ *This is the gate of the one feeding the hungry.*

¹⁸⁶ *Your righteousness will go before you.*

Attempts to see in this the more Pauline sense to the word *righteousness* (i.e., *imputed righteousness*) are somewhat counterproductive.¹⁸⁷ The emphasis is on doing things which bring one *right standing with God*.

Such an understanding seems to have been present among early Jewish-Christians. This can be seen in the way this beatitude appears in the *Gospel of Thomas*. The important point to notice about Thomas' version is that the subject is no longer one who is in need but one who is living a life of voluntary self-sacrifice. The changing of this beatitude from a promise of reward to *those who hunger* into an exhortation to fast in order to bless the needy with food could not have come from the Greek text of Matthew 5.6.

II.6.3.3 The Original Meaning

Jesus seems to have meant this beatitude to be understood on three levels. Firstly, as with the previous beatitudes, Jesus is proclaiming divine favour for those who are poor, dispossessed and hurting. Those who literally hunger and thirst are addressed but it goes much deeper than that. This goes to the heart of Jesus' ministry. Every physical action had spiritual significance. The feeding of the multitudes¹⁸⁸ was not merely to show that Jesus had power to perform miracles (cf, Lk 23.8). He was literally satisfying the hungry. This is why, in each of these passages the verb χορτάζω¹⁸⁹ is used (Mt 14.20; 15.33, 37; Mk 6.42; 8.4, 8; Lk 9.17; Jn 6.26). At the same time he was also sending a message *for them with ears to hear* that he is the bread of life.

Other passages using χορτάζω [i.e., Matthew 7.27 (the Syro-Phoenician Woman), Luke 15.16 (the Prodigal Son) and Luke 16.21 (the Rich Man and Lazarus)] affirm the importance of this theme in Jesus' teaching, and may possibly be allusions by Jesus to the fourth beatitude. Analogous to this is his opening the eyes of the blind man as a physical act which sent a spiritual message. After this miracle Jesus proclaims that he came not

¹⁸⁷ Dupont (1973:358) lists, among others, Weiss (B), Weiss (J), Zahn and Billerbeck.

¹⁸⁸ Mt 14.13-21; 15.32-39; Mk 6.30-44; 8.1-10; Lk 9.10-17; Jn 6.1-14

¹⁸⁹ This as opposed to the more common verb πίμπλημι [used around 150 times in the Greek Bible (Dupont 1973:46)] or ἐπίπλημι (John does use this word in 6.12) or even κορενύμαι (which Luke, for example, is certainly acquainted with; cf, Ac 27.38).

only to make blind eyes see but seeing eyes blind. Pharisees listening to this understand that he is speaking metaphorically of spiritual blindness. And so, with a wink and a nudge, they ask: *Are we also blind?*

In the fourth beatitude Jesus is not only addressing the poor who have no food, he is sending a message to those who are not hungry and thirsty. The message is that in their search for the Kingdom of God they need to emulate those who are hungry and thirsty. This is directly in line with the way Jesus told his disciples that they needed to become like children to enter into the Kingdom of God. Seen in this light the beatitude could be paraphrased as: *Allow the hungry and thirsty to come unto me for such will be satisfied in the Kingdom of God. Unless you humble yourselves and become hungry and thirsty you shall never be satisfied.*

II.6.3.3.4 How is This Beatitude to be Understood?

As with the three former beatitudes the original ‘open’ meaning has been obscured or lost. However, the spiritual addition of *righteousness* should not cause interpreters to ignore this beatitude as a promise to those who are physically *hungry*, signifying how God loves and cares for them. Even as Christians seek an understanding of what it means to *hunger and thirst after righteousness* the interpretation of this beatitude seen in the *Gospel of Thomas* should be kept in mind. To paraphrase by way of James 2.14-19:

What good is it my brothers, if a man claims to hunger after righteousness and has no deeds? Can such righteousness save him? Suppose a brother is without daily food. If your hungering after righteousness doesn't cause you to meet that need what good is it? Allow your hungering after righteousness to motivate you even to go hungry yourself so that the stomach of the one in need may be filled. Then, truly, God will satisfy your hunger.

The words *hunger and thirst* are very graphic and therefore quite effective for giving a word-picture of seeking God. Trites (1992:187) is typical in pressing the metaphor to say, “one of the authentic marks of a developing Christian is a perennial hunger and thirst to know more of God personally.”

Related to this is the desire to see *righteousness* established in this world. The fact that this is a legitimate way to interpret the second beatitude indicates that imposing such a meaning on this one can not be criticized too harshly.

Chapter Seven

Blessed are the merciful for they will receive mercy

Matthew 5.7: μακάριοι οἱ ἐλεήμονες ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθήσονται

II.7.1 The Fifth Beatitude: Beginning of a Change in Focus

As suggested at the end of the last chapter, a noticeable change takes place with this beatitude. The former beatitudes address the *dispossessed*, *rejected* and *oppressed*, promising them that God has come to intervene in their circumstances. Yet, at the same time the former beatitudes challenge those who are not in this class to become like such people and that in the Kingdom of God human values and priorities are reversed. In short, the message of the first four beatitudes is that the blessings of God belong to the *poor, humble, penitent, hungry ones* and – to those who humble themselves to become like them.

Now, a deliberate change of focus occurs. In this beatitude the one addressed is the one in a position to give mercy, not *the poor*, who are in need of such mercy. What had been an understated implication in the previous beatitudes becomes the primary directive. Instead of addressing those in circumstances beyond their control the final four beatitudes are promises to those who (as shall be seen) actively participate in the Kingdom/Year of Jubilee.

II.7.2 Allusion to Isaiah 49

It is not that the *poor* have been forgotten with this beatitude. The opposite is the case. The allusion to Isaiah 49.10 in the fourth beatitude becomes, with the fifth, a double allusion. The lifting up of the *poor* as role models inherent in the previous beatitudes leads directly to a beatitude for those to whom God wants to bestow *mercy*. This is because it is to the *poor* (they *who hunger and thirst*) that God intends to give *mercy*.

Isaiah 49.10 suggests that the reason *they will no longer hunger and thirst* is that God is *מְרַחֵם*.¹⁹⁰ That *the poor* are to receive this *mercy* is made all the more plain in Isaiah 49.13b: *כִּי־נַחַם יְהוָה עִמּוֹ וְעֵינָיו יִרְחַם*.¹⁹¹

Those who first heard this beatitude would have had no problem recognizing the natural progression taking place. The Dead Sea Scrolls demonstrate that the creation of sacred hymns emerging from the conflation of Isaiah 49.10, 13 and 61.1-7 was not uncommon. For example, the conflation of these scriptures [Flusser does not suggest Is 49.10 but does add Is 52.7 and 66.2 (Dupont 1969:98)] seems to be behind two lines of praise to God in the Thanksgiving Scroll (1QH 18.14-15):

14 [] כְּאַמְתָּקָה מִבְּשָׂר [] טוֹבָכָה לְבָשָׂר עֲנוּיִם לְרֹב רַחֲמֶיךָ

15 [] ע מִמְקוֹר [] לְנִדְבָאֵי רוּחַ וְאַבְלִים לְשִׁמְחַת עוֹלָם

14: [...] according to Your truth, preaching good news [...] of your goodness to preach good news to the poor for the abundance of Your compassion,

15: [...] from the fountain [...] for the trou]bled of spirit, and mourning into eternal rejoicing.

Similarly, in 4Q434 1.2.3 we find:

ברוב רחמיו חנן ענוים ויפקח עיניהם לראות את דרכיו

In the abundance of his mercy he comforted the poor and opened their eyes to see his ways

II.7.3 Hebrew and Aramaic Reconstruction of this Beatitude

II.7.3.1 The First Hemistich

The terminology for the reconstruction is more complicated than one might think. The adjective *ἐλεήων* is used in the Gospels only here. Just how should the plural, *ἐλεήμονες*, be reconstructed? Several possibilities present themselves.

¹⁹⁰ *he who pities them*

¹⁹¹ *For the LORD comforts his people and will have compassion on his afflicted ones* (NIV).

II.7.3.1.1 Aramaic Reconstructions of the First Hemistich

II.7.3.1.1.a ἐλεήμονες = מְרַחֵמֵי

The Old Syriac and Peshitta versions agree that this beatitude should read: ܠܘܨܡܝܠܐ ܠܚܝܘܢܐ ܕܘܪܘܨܝܢܐ. ¹⁹² The Harclean Syriac translates the first hemistich similarly: ܠܚܝܘܢܐ ܠܘܨܡܝܠܐ. ¹⁹³ Each of these Syriac versions utilizes the word ܠܚܝܘܢܐ to render the Greek participle ἐλεήμονες. This corresponds to the Aramaic word מְרַחֵמֵי ¹⁹⁴ the plural form of which is מְרַחֵמֵי. An example of the latter form can be found in Esther 1.2 of *Targum Shenii* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:841). ¹⁹⁵

In Exodus 34.6 God proclaims himself, among other things, *merciful* and *gracious*, using the words: ܪܚܘܡ ܘܚܢוּן. ¹⁹⁶ This is quoted in Psalm 103.8 and alluded to in Psalm 111.4. The Peshitta in each of these references, employs ܠܚܝܘܢܐ. ¹⁹⁷ James, who alludes to so many of the beatitudes also alludes to Exodus 34.6 when he says (5.11c): ὅτι πολὺσπλαγχνὸς ἐστὶν ὁ κύριος καὶ οἰκτίρμων. ¹⁹⁸ James is not quoting the Septuagint, which there reads that the Lord is: οἰκτίρμων καὶ ἐλεήμων.

To reconstruct the first hemistich patterned after the Harclean Syriac (i.e., without the direct object indicator) produces: ܠܚܝܘܢܐ ܠܘܨܡܝܠܐ. This is not the most likely reconstruction but certainly a possibility.

¹⁹² טוביהוּן למרחמנא דעליהוּן נהוּן רחמא

¹⁹³ טוביהוּן מרחמנא

¹⁹⁴ *merciful* or *compassionate*

¹⁹⁵ de Lagarde gives this word as מרחמוני ([1873] 1967:235).

¹⁹⁶ The full quotation of what he calls himself in verse six is: יהוה יהוה אל רחום וחנוּן ארך אפים ורב־חסד [The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and abounding in love and faithfulness (NIV)].

¹⁹⁷ מרחמנא; The Peshitta is inconsistent, sometimes it seems to use this word to translate רחום and sometimes to translate חנוּן (cf, Ex 22.26b כִּי־חַנוּן אָנִי = ܠܚܝܘܢܐ ܠܘܨܡܝܠܐ). Psalm 111.4 reverses the order, saying: ܠܚܝܘܢܐ ܘܚܢוּן. There, the Peshitta has: ܠܚܝܘܢܐ ܘܚܢוּן.

¹⁹⁸ For, the Lord is full of compassion and mercy. The Peshitta seems to recognize this as an allusion to Psalm 111.4 and uses virtually the same words in its translation: ܠܚܝܘܢܐ ܠܘܨܡܝܠܐ ܠܚܝܘܢܐ ܘܚܢוּן.

II.7.3.1.1.b ἐλεήμονες = רַחֲמֵינָא

Burney and Jeremias both render the first hemistich of this beatitude as: *tubehón rahmánayyá*.¹⁹⁹ Similarly, Dalman's reconstruction is: *tubehon derahmanajja* (1922:203).²⁰⁰ The word רַחֲמֵינָא is the emphatic plural form of the masculine adjective רַחֲמַן used as a substantive. God is frequently called רַחֲמַן in both Hebrew and Aramaic rabbinic texts (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1468). The singular emphatic form, רַחֲמֵינָא, can be found in the targum to Psalm 103.8 and 111.4 (both alluding to Ex 34.6). Burney, Dalman and Jeremias are influenced, by the Christian Palestinian version which renders ἐλεήμονες as: רַחֲמֵינָא.²⁰¹

Luke doesn't have a beatitude for the *merciful* but Luke 6.36 says: γίνεσθε οἰκτίρμονες καθὼς καὶ ὁ πατὴρ ὑμῶν οἰκτίρμων ἐστίν.²⁰² Betz suggests that Luke has changed the fifth beatitude into this "maxim" (1995:133). Perhaps this is so, but McNamara (1978:135-137) has shown that these words of Jesus are probably a quotation from the Palestinian Targum. In Leviticus 22.28, in which God commands that animals and their offspring may not be sacrificed on the same day, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan contains an addition which says:

כַּמָּא דַּאֲנָא רַחֲמַן בְּשַׁמְיָא כַּךְ תְּהוּוֹן רַחֲמֵינָא בְּאַרְעָא (McNamara 1978:135)²⁰³

As I am merciful in heaven so be merciful on earth.

The London manuscript of this targum²⁰⁴ is only slightly different:

עַמֵּי בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הֵיכַמָּא דַּאֲנָא רַחֲמַן בְּשַׁמְיָא כֵּן תְּהוּוֹן רַחֲמֵינָא בְּאַרְעָא

(McNamara 1978:137)

My people, sons of Israel, as I am merciful in heaven so be merciful on earth.

¹⁹⁹ טוביהון רַחֲמֵינָא

²⁰⁰ טוביהון רַחֲמֵינָא

²⁰¹ רַחֲמֵינָא

²⁰² *Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.*

²⁰³ This same reading is also quoted in *jBer* 5,3,9c and *jMeg* 4,9,75c.

²⁰⁴ BM ms Add. 27031

The Polyglot text is different still, changing the one speaking from God to Moses:

עמי בני ישראל היכמה דאבונן רחמן בשמיא כן תהוון רחמין בארעא
 (McNamara 1978:137)

My people, sons of Israel, as our Father is merciful in heaven so be merciful on earth.

This latter quotation has too much in common with the words of Jesus to be coincidental. It is self-evident that this can help in establishing the Aramaic reconstruction of the fifth beatitude.²⁰⁵

II.7.3.1.1.c ἐλεήμονες = מְרַחֲמִין

Another possibility for reconstructing ἐλεήμονες would be a plural form of the Aramaic *Pa'el* participle of רַחַם: מְרַחֲמִין. This participle is never given an emphatic form. The singular participle occurs in the reconstruction of *Ahiqar* 16(59).2 given by Kottsieper (1990:14). When used as a determined substantive it appears as דְּמְרַחֲמִין (e.g., *Keth* 105b). A reconstruction utilizing this word would result in: טוֹבִיחוּן דְּמְרַחֲמִין. This reconstruction would meet the three-beat criterion but דְּמְרַחֲמִין doesn't have the support of an impressive pedigree of use in Aramaic religious texts.

II.7.3.1.1.d Making a Choice for ἐλεήμονες

Each of these possibilities have their appeal and making a choice for one over another is not easy. The weight of targumic and rabbinic evidence for an Aramaic reconstruction are in favour of one using רַחֲמֵן. However, this does not mean that the reconstructions of Dalman, Burney and Jeremias, using רַחֲמַנִיא are necessarily correct. Though the Christian Palestinian version of this beatitude gives certain grounds for using this form Jastrow ([1903] 1992:1468) gives no indication that the form רַחֲמַנִיא was ever used in rabbinic literature.

²⁰⁵ Matthew is aware of this saying and incorporates the truth of it in the parable of the unforgiving servant where (Mt 18.33) the king says to the servant: *shouldst not thou also have had mercy [ἐλέησαι] on thy fellowservant, even as I had mercy [ἔλεησα] on thee?* Like Luke 6.36 and the fifth beatitude, this verse also clearly demands that the listener be merciful toward others in the same way that God is merciful to us.

Neither is the emphatic form found among the Aramaic of the Dead Sea Scrolls. In fact, the oldest example of an emphatic form of the singular word **רַחֲמָן** is only attested in an inscription in a Jewish synagogue dated to the fifth century after Christ (Beyer 1984:364).

The strength of the testimony from the Palestinian targums is also a powerful influence towards using **רַחֲמָנִין**. Because the words of Jesus in Luke 6.36 almost perfectly match the Palestinian targums to Leviticus 22.28 it is probable that the form **רַחֲמָנִין** represents the Aramaic Jesus would also have used. Dalman is probably correct to add the relative pronoun prefix to the substantive. Thus, the reconstruction of the first hemistich in Aramaic will be: **טוביהוון רַחֲמָנִין**.

II.7.3.1.2 Hebrew Reconstruction of the First Hemistich

Though God is often called **רַחֲמָן** in Hebrew literature, he is also called **הַמְּרַחֵם**.²⁰⁶ Sometimes both designations appear in apposition to one another. Thus, a prayer from the Jewish Morning Prayer Service addresses God as: **אָבִינוּ הָאֵל הַרַחֲמָן הַמְּרַחֵם** (Singer 1962:41).²⁰⁷

In the *Amidah*, another ancient prayer that goes back to Second-temple times, God is addressed as **הַמְּרַחֵם** in the seventeenth Benediction (Singer 1962:53). Finding **הַמְּרַחֵם** as a designation for God elsewhere in the Jewish Authorized Daily Prayer Book is not difficult (e g, Singer 1962:17, 108, 158, 217). Though references to God as **הַמְּרַחֵם** are not as plentiful as those addressing him as **רַחֲמָן**, a call to be **מְרַחֵמִין**²⁰⁸ would have had the same impact as a call to be **רַחֲמָנִין**. The fact that God is specifically designated as **מְרַחֵם** in Isaiah 49.10 gives greater impetus to the suggestion that this would have been the word in a Hebrew beatitude making allusion to that verse.

²⁰⁶ This word is normally spelled with no *dagesh* in the **מ**.

²⁰⁷ Compare this with the way Tar *Yer* I Lv 22.28 and Luke 6.36 bring together the designations of God as both *Father* and *Merciful One*.

In actual fact, there is Hebrew phrasing similar to the words in the Palestinian targum to Leviticus 22.28 (i.e., using רַחֲמָן). The Tosefta (*B Kam* 9.30)²⁰⁹ says: כל זמן שאחה רחמן הרחמן ירחם עליך.²¹⁰ On the other hand, a Hebrew text (*Shab* 151b) having this same theme, using the participles מְרַחֵם and מְרַחֲמִין states it this way: עליו מן השמים.²¹¹ This passage is of particular help for establishing the Hebrew vocabulary for this reconstruction as it gives an example of the participle מְרַחֵם used substantively of a person (rather than God). The definite, plural participle would be הַמְרַחֲמִין.

A first-century Jewish Christian translating the Aramaic words טוביהון דרַחֲמָנִין into Hebrew might easily have said: אֲשֶׁרֵי הַרַחֲמָנִים. But, someone wanting to make a more pointed allusion to Isaiah 49.10 would rather say: אֲשֶׁרֵי הַמְרַחֲמִין. Though it could be argued either way, the Hebrew reconstruction offered here will be: אֲשֶׁרֵי הַמְרַחֲמִין.

II.7.3.2 Reconstructing the Apodosis

II.7.3.2.1 Aramaic Reconstruction of the Apodosis

II.7.3.2.1.a The Syriac Model

With regard to the second hemistich, The Old Syriac and Peshitta versions uniformly have: ܩܘܪܒܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ.²¹² This can be translated as: *for mercies will be upon them*. A somewhat analogous example of this type of phrasing can be found in the *Kaddish*,²¹³ which says: ܕܥܠܝܗܘܢ ܩܪܒܢܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ.²¹⁴ (Singer 1962:16). A more Palestinian reconstruction of the apodosis, based on the Syriac model, would be: ܕܥܠܝܗܘܢ ܩܪܒܢܐ.

²⁰⁸ In Mishnaic Hebrew ׀ was the preferred masculine plural termination rather than ים (Frank 1975:7).

²⁰⁹ In reference to Deuteronomy 13.18

²¹⁰ *Each time that you are merciful the Merciful One will have mercy on you.*

²¹¹ *All who are merciful to mankind will receive mercy from heaven.*

²¹² ܕܥܠܝܗܘܢ ܩܪܒܢܐ

²¹³ An ancient Jewish prayer which goes back at least to the time of Jesus (Jeremias 1971:102).

²¹⁴ *Let there be to them and to you . . . mercy . . . from the Father in heaven.*

II.7.3.2.1.b Burney's Reconstruction

Burney reconstructs the apodosis as: *da'alehón hawayin rahmayyá* (1925:166).²¹⁵ Instead of using the imperfect, יִהְיֶה, Burney uses the participle הָיִיךְ. This is in line with his consistent rendering of the Greek future tense forms in the Beatitudes by Aramaic participles. In this he is once again taking a cue from the Christian Palestinian version (Burney 1925:168), which reads: ܘܗܝܘܢ ܡܫܚܘܢ.²¹⁶

The Syriac ܘܝܫܘܢ and the Christian Palestinian ܘܫܘܢ represent emphatic, plural forms of the Aramaic noun ܪܚܡܢܐ. The use of ܪܚܡܢܐ rather than ܪܚܡܝܢ is supported by the fact that the emphatic form ܪܚܡܝܢܐ appears in a targum of Exodus (1.5m) found in Egypt, written in Galilean Aramaic (Beyer 1984:332).²¹⁷

The positive thing about the Syriac and Christian Palestinian versions is that they have the three-beat rhythm wanted in a reconstruction. The negative thing is that it is unlikely that a Greek translator would take the construction: *relative pronoun + preposition + dative pronoun + (future) to-be form + accusative, definite noun* and translate it with *relative pronoun + nominative pronoun + future passive verb*.

II.7.3.2.1.c The Targum Jonathan Model

Targum Jonathan renders the מְרַחֵם²¹⁸ of Isaiah 49.10 as: ܕܥܘܬܝܕ ܠܪܚܡܢܐ ܥܠܝܗܘܢ.²¹⁹ These exact words, though with a different meaning, could be used to make an Aramaic reconstruction. It would have three beats and also give an unmistakable allusion to Isaiah 49.10.

²¹⁵ ܕܥܠܝܗܘܢ ܫܘܢܐ ܪܚܡܢܐ

²¹⁶ ܘܕܥܠܝܗܘܢ ܫܘܢܐ ܪܚܡܢܐ; Thus CP mss A and C; ms B, discovered in 1892, has ܝܗܘܢ (Lewis & Gibson [1899] 1971:62).

²¹⁷ Though it is dated to between the fourth and fifth centuries after Christ, it is the oldest known Galilean-targum text (Beyer 1984:331).

²¹⁸ *the one who has mercy on them*

²¹⁹ Similarly, Targum Jonathan renders מְרַחֵם in Isaiah 54.10 as: ܕܥܘܬܝܕ ܠܪܚܡܢܐ ܥܠܝܗܘܢ.

II.7.3.2.1.d Dalman's Reconstruction

Dalman suggests: *dejihwon merahhemin'alehon* (1922:203).²²⁰ Instead of the noun **רַחֲמִים**, Dalman uses a compound tense with the *Pa'el* participle **מְרַחֲמִין** in his reconstruction. Since it has been conjectured that the apodosis of the preceding beatitude contains a compound tense added to the fact that these two beatitudes are already linked together to form a double allusion to Isaiah 49 this proposed reconstruction is quite tempting.

Dalman's reconstruction works by giving a passive sense to what should be an active verb. This is because the same forms (in both Hebrew and Aramaic texts) were sometimes used interchangeably to have either active or passive meanings as the context demands.

For example, the Hebrew text in *Shabbat* 151b using both singular and plural, active, *Pi'el* participles states: **כל המרחם על הבריות מרחמין עליו מן השמים**.²²¹ The words **מְרַחֲמִין עָלָיו** in this passage could be translated as: *they (will) show mercy on him*. Jastrow ([1903] 1992:1467) correctly translates them as: *(he) will be shown mercy*.

II.7.3.2.1.e Jeremias' Reconstruction

The reconstruction offered by Jeremias is: *dehinnón yítrahamún*²²² (Jeremias 1971:24). It must be admitted that reconstructing the apodosis as **יְתַרְחַמּוּן יְהִנּוּן** could be an excellent way to account for the Greek wording. Both this reconstruction and the Greek text have: *relative pronoun + nominative pronoun + future passive verb*.

²²⁰ **יְהִנּוּן מְרַחֲמִין עֲלֵיהוּן**

²²¹ *All who are merciful to mankind will receive mercy from heaven.*

²²² **יְהִנּוּן יְתַרְחַמּוּן**; Jeremias prefers the pronunciation of the pronoun to be **יְהִנּוּן**, rather than **יְהִנּוּן**. The latter is given by Stevenson (1962:15) as the pronunciation in Palestinian Talmudic texts, as does Jastrow ([1903] 1992:348).

In Christian Palestinian Aramaic the verb ܘܡܫܚ has the passive meaning, *receive mercy*, in the *'Ithpa'el* construction (Schulthess 1924:144). But, in rabbinic literature and the targums, the *'Ithpa'el* of ܘܡܫܚ can have either an active sense or passive sense. An example from Palestinian Aramaic in which this form is used actively can be seen in *yTaananith* 2.65b. The men of Ninevah protest that if they won't receive mercy (from God) they will not be merciful to the animals, saying: $\text{ܘܠܝܢܢ ܠܝܢܢ ܡܪܚܡܝܢ ܥܠܝܗܘܢ}$: $\text{ܘܠܝܢܢ ܠܝܢܢ ܡܪܚܡܝܢ ܥܠܝܗܘܢ}$.²²³ The passive use can be demonstrated from *Targum Yerushalmi* I (Pseudo-Jonathan), Exodus 33.19, where the Hebrew words וְרַחֲמֵי אֲת־אֲשֶׁר ܘܡܫܚ ²²⁴ are translated as: $\text{ܠܝܗ ܠܡܚܪܡܢܐ ܡܢܢ ܕܚܡܝ}$.²²⁵

The words ܘܠܝܢܢ ܠܝܢܢ ܡܪܚܡܝܢ not only have three-beats, but they enable the continuation of the pattern of introducing the apodosis of each beatitude with the word ܕܚܡܝܢ . Yet, in order to be acceptable as part of the Aramaic reconstruction this reconstruction needs to overcome two objections.

The first objection is that an *'Ithpa'el* form of the verb ܘܡܫܚ never appears among the Aramaic portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls. *'Ithpa'el* forms do appear in the Jerusalem Talmud, but not in the imperfect tense (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1467). It isn't as if *'Ithpa'el* forms only appear in later Aramaic. The imperfect, first person plural form, ܘܡܫܚܢ , has been found in an Aramaic inscription discovered at Sifré (1B42), although the context it is used in is uncertain (Jean & Hoftijzer 1965:277). The problem with this example is that this inscription dates to over seven centuries before Christ (Beyer 1984:25). However, there is no need to insist that the Aramaic imperfect tense is needed just because the Greek text employs the future tense. In the Aramaic of the Palestinian Talmud and *Midrashim* the future function of the imperfect tense is usually supplied by the participle (Stevenson 1962:56). Thus, perhaps ܘܠܝܢܢ ܠܝܢܢ ܡܪܚܡܝܢ would be better.

²²³ *They say, "if there will not be mercy upon us, we will not have mercy upon them."*

²²⁴ *And I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy.*

The second objection to Jeremias' reconstruction comes from the fact that על is generally accompanied by the preposition על . Jastrow seems to suggest that when used as a passive in the *'Ithpa'el* (or *'Ithpe'al*) construction it is always accompanied by על (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1467; cf, Schulthess 1924:144). However, the *Yerushalmi* targum version of Exodus 33.19 mentioned above does not use על in conjunction with על .

All things considered, Jeremias' reconstruction of the apodosis seems the most reasonable and will therefore be incorporated (substituting the participle for the imperfect form) into the reconstruction offered here.

II.7.3.2.2 The Original Language: Aramaic

A question which must be answered is whether or not there are any indications or signs that this beatitude was first communicated in Aramaic, as opposed to Hebrew. The key to seeing that the original saying of Jesus was in Aramaic and that Luke (or his source) was acquainted with it comes from examining Luke 6.27-36. Luke prefers to use the verb οἰκτεῖρω rather than ἐλεέω but this is not a problem. The Greek words οἰκτίρμονες and ἐλεήμονες are virtually interchangeable (Dupont 1973:617; cf, Ro 9.15²²⁶). This passage is wrapped up in verse 35 saying it is necessary *to love, do good and lend* (to one's enemies) and that God himself is *kind* (and therefore the example to follow). This verse leads into verse 36 which commands: *Be merciful as your Father is merciful*. This, as has been seen, is probably a quotation from a Palestinian targum.

Although the call to *be merciful* just as God is has both Hebrew and Aramaic parallels in rabbinic literature, the reason Jesus is able to teach that *loving others, doing good, lending, being kind* and *merciful* are implied in the command to be merciful as the Father is merciful is because they all come under the semantic range of the Aramaic verb על . Thus, aside from the evidence that Jesus may be quoting from a Palestinian targum, it is clear that Jesus is teaching here in Aramaic.

²²⁵ *To him will be shown mercy by Him who sees.* Ginsburger's edition of Targum Pseudo-Jonathan reads: $\text{ואירחם על מאן דחמי ליה למתרחמא}$ (Ginsburger 1903:160).

II.7.3.2.2.a Mercy and the Undeserving

The parallel passage in Matthew (Mt 5.43-48) adds something not present in Luke. Where Luke 6.35 notes that God is *χρηστός* to the undeserving Matthew 6.45 says that God both causes the sun to rise on them and sends rain on them as well. These are no idle analogies, but ones very appropriate for word-plays reminding a Jewish audience of the mercy of God.

Jesus does not say that God causes the sun to *shine* on undeserving people. Rather, he causes the sun to *rise* on them. In Luke 1.78, Zacharias brings together *mercy* with the *rising sun* when he explains salvation through forgiveness of sins, saying that it is: *διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους θεοῦ ἡμῶν, ἐν οἷς ἐπισκέπεται ἡμᾶς ἀνατολή ἐξ ὕψους.*²²⁷ Such a statement reflects a Jewish theology which linked *mercy* with the *sunrise*.

Where does this connection come from? It seems to stem from (or at least was influenced by) Psalm 110.3b, which says: *מִרְחֵם מִשְׁחָר לֵךְ טַל יִלְדֹתֶיךָ.*²²⁸ In Psalm 110.3 the word *רָחַם*²²⁹ is meant in a literal sense. Yet, its proximity to the following word allowed rabbis to use this word to speak of the *dawn*. In fact, in the *Yalkuth* on Psalms (869) the word *רָחַם* in this verse is taken to mean *dawn* and the word *מִשְׁחָר* (which actually does refer to the *dawn*) is taken as a *Pi'el* participle of the verb *שָׁחַר* resulting in the interpretation: *from the womb (sunrise, east) of the world did I choose thee for me* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1467).²³⁰ The Targum to Psalm 110.3 interprets the words *לֵךְ מִשְׁחָר מִרְחֵם* as *לֵךְ יִסְתַּרְהֲבֹן דְּאֵלֵהּ אֶרְחֵם.*²³¹

²²⁶ This is a quotation from the LXX of Ex 33.19b: *וַיִּנְחַמְנִי אֱתֵי-אֲשֶׁר אָחַז וַרְחַמְתִּי אֶת-אֲשֶׁר אֲרַחֵם.*

²²⁷ ... because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven (NIV).

²²⁸ *from the womb, from the dawn of your earliest days* (JB)

²²⁹ *womb*

²³⁰ *מִרְחֵמוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם שֶׁחֲרָתִּיךְ לִי.*

²³¹ *The mercies of God will be hastened for you* (perhaps reading *מִשְׁחָר* as *מִמְהָר*).

Psalm 110 is not long (only seven verses) but provided an important messianic proof text that the Messiah would fulfill the functions of both king (vs 1) and priest (vs 4; cf, He 5.6²³²). That Jesus routinely used references to this Psalm in his teachings is perhaps suggested by his use of the first verse in Matthew 22.44.²³³

The statement that God causes the rain to fall on both the righteous and the unrighteous also has a connection to the word *mercy*. The Talmud occasionally uses *mercy* as a euphemism for *rain* (e g, *Hull* 63a). The link between *rain* and *mercy* (other than the fact that people living in an arid climate would certainly see rain as a blessing) may have suggested itself from the fact that the Aramaic word מִטְרַיִן [*rains*] is phonetically similar to the word מִטְרַיִן [*womb*].²³⁴

מִטְרַיִן, in turn is synonymous with another word for *womb*: רַחֲמָא. The word, רַחֲמָא, can mean both *womb* and *mercy* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1467). Metaphorical interpretations of *womb* were thus near at hand. A case in point is how the word רַחֲמָא was interpreted as רַחֲמַיִן in the Targum to Psalm 110.3 mentioned above.

II.7.3.2.2.b Allusion to Leviticus

Though it would be possible to conjecture that these word-plays took place in Mishnaic Hebrew they would be much more natural in Aramaic. Matthew has also linked the command to love one's enemies (Lk 6.27) to the command to *love your neighbour* (Mt 5.43). This is a (half) quotation of Leviticus 19.18, which says: וְאָהַבְתָּ לְרֵעֶךָ כָּמוֹךָ.

Though the Hebrew verb אָהַב can mean *love* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1467), a Hebrew speaker would not use this verb when making reference to a scripture which employed the verb אָהַב. For instance, in *Pirge Avoth*, which gives quotes from rabbis near to the time of Jesus, possible allusions to Leviticus 19.18 occur in 1.12 and 6.1; in each instance

²³² The writer of Hebrews combines Jesus' role as Son with his role as priest by juxtaposing Ps 110.4 with Ps 2.7.

²³³ In Mt 26.64 Jesus seems to be conflating Ps 110.1 with Da 7.13.

²³⁴ A Greek loan-word from μήτρα (Arndt & Gingrich 1957:522).

the verb used is אָהַב, while the root רָחַם is only used in reference to *mercy* (e.g., Av 2.18). Conversely, the Aramaic targum tradition would have allowed teaching featuring the verb רָחַם to form an allusion to Leviticus 19.18 because it translates לְרַעְיָךְ לְאָהֲבָתָּהּ as: וְתִרְחַמְיָהּ לְחֻבְרָךְ.²³⁵

Once it is accepted that Luke's use of both ἀγαπάω and οἰκτίρω in 6.27-36 ultimately goes back to Aramaic רָחַם it becomes clear that the teaching of Jesus in this passage is commentary on the fifth beatitude.

In fact, it is possible that Luke has given a hint that he is aware of this beatitude in Luke 6.32a. The Greek text reads: καὶ εἰ ἀγαπᾶτε τοὺς ἀγαπῶντας ὑμᾶς, ποία ὑμῖν χάρις ἐστίν.²³⁶ The Christian Palestinian version (ms B), translates ποία ὑμῖν χάρις ἐστίν by ܡܐ ܬܘܒܝ ܠܚܒܝ²³⁷ (Lewis & Gibson [1899] 1971:101).²³⁸

The word ܠܚܒܝ corresponds to the Aramaic word ܬܘܒܝ (from the word ܬܘܒܢܐ, used in each of the Aramaic reconstructions with the 3rd person, plural pronominal suffix, thus: ܬܘܒܝܗܘܢ). This word obviously can be used to mean *blessed* but it is also flexible enough to mean *grace*. For instance, ܬܘܒܢܐ is used to translate חֶסֶד in Psalm 33.22.²³⁹ The Christian Palestinian version seems to have recognized, by the use of ܬܘܒܢܐ, that this verse may contain a play on words based on the fifth beatitude. Consider how natural Luke 6.32a sounds in Aramaic next to the reconstructed beatitude:

Matthew 5.7: ܬܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܕܪַחֲמֵינִין ܕܗֵנּוּן ܡִתְרַחֲמֵינִין

Blessed are the merciful for they shall receive mercy.

²³⁵ Thus, Onkelos and Pseudo-Jonathan; Targum Neofiti: וְתִרְחַמְיָהּ לְחֻבְרָךְ.

²³⁶ *If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you?*

²³⁷ ܡܐ ܬܘܒܝ ܠܚܒܝ

²³⁸ Manuscripts A and C translate χάρις by ܐܘܢܝܐ (Lewis & Gibson [1899] 1971:101). Lewis suggests that B has substituted μακαρισμός for χάρις.

Luke 6.32a: וְאִן רַחֲמִין עֲלֵיהוֹן דְּרַחֲמִין עֲלֵיכוֹן מָא טוֹבִי לְכוֹן

And if you give mercy upon those that give mercy to you what credit is that to you.

The former promises a blessing to those who are *merciful*; the latter says that there is no such blessing to those who merely fulfill this beatitude by loving those who love them back. It is easy to see that Luke 6.32a becomes much more powerful if understood as predicated on the fifth beatitude.

II.7.3.2.3 The Language of Matthew's Source: Hebrew

The parallel to Luke 6.32a in Matthew 5.46 has, instead of ποία ὑμῖν χάρις ἐστίν, the words: τίνα μισθὸν ἔχετε.²⁴⁰ This may be another indication that the source of *OMatthew* was a Hebrew translation from an Aramaic collection of the words of Jesus. A Hebrew speaker faced with translating the word טוֹבָא would naturally have translated it as טוֹבָה. Aside from meaning *good* or *goodness* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:521), טוֹבָה can also mean *the benefit from good deeds*. This meaning is sometimes synonymous with *divine blessing* or *reward*.

This is true even in biblical Hebrew. For example, in 1 Samuel 24.20 Saul pronounces a blessing upon David, saying: וַיְהִי וְיִשְׁלַמְךָ טוֹבָה תַּחַת הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ לִּי.²⁴¹

The later biblical use of טוֹבָה as a reward can be seen in Nehemiah 5.19: עֲלֵהֶם הַזֶּה עֲזָרָה לִּי אֱלֹהֵי לְטוֹבָה כָּל אֲשֶׁר-עָשִׂיתִי זְכָרָה-לִּי אֱלֹהֵי לְטוֹבָה.²⁴² Nehemiah closes his book with a shortened form of this same petition for divine reward in 13.31, saying: זְכָרָה-לִּי אֱלֹהֵי לְטוֹבָה.

²³⁹ The LXX translates הַכָּר in this verse with ἔλεος.

²⁴⁰ *What reward do you have?*

²⁴¹ *So may the LORD reward you with good for what you have done to me this day* (RSV).

²⁴² *Remember to me for good, O my God, all that I have done for this people.*

Kiddushin 40b quotes Ecclesiastes 9.18b: וְחֹטֵא אֶחָד יֵאַבֵּד טוֹבָה הַרְבֵּה.²⁴³ The context of this quotation is a passage contrasting divine judgement between the righteous and the unrighteous and thus, *losing much good* was taken to mean losing *divine good* or *reward* (which in this context includes *eternal life*) for good deeds done. It goes on to say: חָטָא יְחִידִי שְׁחָטָא אוֹבֵד מִמְּנוּ טוֹבוֹת הַרְבֵּה.²⁴⁴ Thus, there is a good possibility that Matthew's use of *μισθόν* goes back to the Hebrew word טוֹבָה which itself was a translation of טוֹבָא.²⁴⁵

II.7.3.2.4 Reconstructing the Hebrew version of the Apodosis

Unlike the Aramaic, *'Ithpe 'al* and *'Ithpa 'el* forms (which can have either an active or passive meaning), the Hebrew *Hithpa 'el* form, הִתְרַחַם (not found in Biblical Hebrew), seems to have had neither a passive nor reflexive meaning but only the active meaning: *to pity* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1467). This basically rules out the use of this *binyan* in forming a Hebrew reconstruction of the apodosis of this beatitude.

Biblical Hebrew employed the *Pu 'al* to express the passive meaning *receive mercy* [e.g., יִרְחַם in Hosea 14.4 (translated in Targum Jonathan by אִתְרַחַם; by ἐλεήσει in the LXX)]. Jastrow gives no examples of any *Pu 'al* form of רַחַם in Mishnaic Hebrew ([1903] 1992:1467). However, a *Pu 'al* plural participle is contained in a Jewish prayer associated with the *Musaf* service for *Rosh ha-Shanah*:

כִּי חֲנוּנִיךָ יי אֱלוֹהֵינוּ הִמָּה חֲנוּנִים וּמְרוּחַמֶיךָ הִמָּה מְרוּחַמִּים כִּמָּה שִׂידַעְנוּ
 אֱלוֹהֵינוּ אַתְּ אֲשֶׁר תַּחֲוֹן יוֹחֵן וְאַתְּ אֲשֶׁר תִּרְחַם יִרְחַם (Ben Yehuda 1951
 13:6537)²⁴⁶

²⁴³ *But one sinner destroys much good* (NIV).

²⁴⁴ *A single sinner that sins loses for himself many good (rewards).*

²⁴⁵ Cognizance is taken of the fact that a much more common word for *reward* (and *divine reward* in particular) would have been שָׂכָר (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1576). For example, in *Avoth* 2.19 Rabbi Eleazar is quoted as saying, with reference to God: שְׂשָׁלֵם לְךָ שָׂכָר פְּעֻלָּתְךָ (Singer 1962:258) [*That he will pay to you the reward of your works*].

²⁴⁶ Ben Yehuda quotes from אִמְתָּה וְאִמְוִנָה; Not in Singer's section on the *Musaf* service for *Rosh ha-Shanah* (1962:335-345).

For those who have received compassion from you, O' LORD, our God, they receive compassion and those who have been given mercy from you receive mercy as you made known to us, O' our God, he that you will have compassion on will receive compassion and whom you will have mercy on will receive mercy.

The words, **את אשר תחון ירחן ואת אשר תרחם ירחם**, are an allusion to Exodus 33.19.²⁴⁷ This prayer seems not only to be tied to this verse but also patterned on the Palestinian interpretation of it (see §II.7.3.2.1.5). The fact that **מְרוּחָמִים** is not used in conjunction with the preposition **עַל** may be considered significant. Perhaps the passive use of **רחם** was so rare that, whether in Hebrew or Aramaic, use of it (particularly as a divine passive without **עַל**) was considered an allusion to Exodus 33.19.

II.7.3.3 Aramaic and Hebrew Reconstructions

Aramaic

טוביהון דרחמנין דהגון מתרחמין

Hebrew

אשרי המרחמין שהם מרוחמים

II.7.4 What this Beatitude Means

The passage in Luke's Sermon on the Plain (6.27-42), in which Jesus commands his followers to love their enemies and not to judge others, more than likely represents Jesus' own commentary on how he wanted this beatitude to be primarily understood. Because the word **רחם** encompasses the broad meanings of both *mercy* and *love* this beatitude was able to be illustrated in numerous ways. Luke has not quoted this beatitude but neither has he mentioned that the command to love one's enemies came from Jesus expanding the command in Leviticus 19.18 to love one's neighbour. James 2.8-13 confirms that Matthew is correct in prefixing this quotation before the command to love your enemies.

²⁴⁷ MT: ותחני את אשר אתן ורחמתי את אשר ארחם

II.7.4.1 Matthew 5.11-48: Commentary on the Beatitudes

II.7.4.1.1 Assigning Passages as Commentary on Specific Beatitudes

Before going further it is important to establish how Matthew 5.11-48 relates to the Beatitudes as a whole. Goulder suggests that having given the Beatitudes, Jesus expounds on them in reverse order (1974:250-252).²⁴⁸ Thus, the outline is:

<i>Beatitude</i>	<i>Exposition</i>
8. The Persecuted	5.11-20
7. The Peacemakers	5.21-26
6. The Pure in Heart	5.27-32
5. The Merciful	5.33-48

This theory makes a lot of sense and it may be accepted that the original Aramaic Sermon on the Mount was arranged somewhat like this. However, *OMatthew* has taken the contents of verses eleven and twelve as two extra beatitudes (bringing the total to ten) which serves his purpose for portraying Jesus as the New Moses (Betz 1995:109). Betz credits the modern theory of ten original beatitudes to Delitzsch, and goes on to say: “Most scholars have rejected this idea as fanciful, but one must still explain why there are ten beatitudes” (1995:109). The problem is solved if one sees that the original Sermon has been manipulated by *OMatthew* to produce ten beatitudes. Whether this is his own doing or reflects the Hebrew Sermon on the Mount is difficult to say. At any rate there seems to have been a different outline among those in the Hebrew speaking Church.

<i>Beatitude</i>	<i>Exposition</i>
5. The Merciful	5.13-26
6. The Pure in Heart	5.27-37
7 & 8. The Peacemakers and the Persecuted	5.38-48

Because this is a much more awkward outline *OMatthew* has smoothed some of the rougher edges. For example, to accommodate the teaching on loving one’s enemies to the eighth beatitude, the word δλωκόντων (representing רודפים) has been injected into 5.44. The seventh beatitude is brought in by the mention of words connected with שלום.

²⁴⁸ In this he is following A M Farrer, whom he cites. Evidently Goulder studied under Farrer or was in some way mentored by him as he dedicates his book to him.

Thus, 5.47 (not paralleled in Luke 6.27-36) applies the command to love to greeting others (שׂוֹאֵל בְּשָׁלוֹם). The admonition to *be merciful as your Father is merciful* (Lk 6.36) is now changed, in 5.48, to: *Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect* (NIV). Here, τέλειος represents the passive participle מְוַשְׁלֵם, which means *perfect* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1585).

The way the narrower, Hebrew understanding of רַחֲמִים (i.e., as *mercy* in a stricter sense) was understood shows itself in how the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount are applied by *OMatthew* to this beatitude.

II.7.4.1.2 *Midrash on the Sixth Commandment*

The opposite of *mercy* is *judgement*. The Rabbis took Exodus 34.6-7 (the passage in which God proclaims himself as he passes in front of Moses) and from it they formulated 13 divine attributes, or *middoth* (Ned 32a). The two most notable, and at the same time diametrically opposed, are the מִדַּת הַרַחֲמִים²⁴⁹ and the מִדַּת הַדִּין²⁵⁰ (Jastrow [1903] 1992:732). One did not talk of divine mercy without also thinking of divine judgement, or vice-versa. Therefore, it was natural for Matthew to apply Jesus' comments on that which engenders judgement to this beatitude. The *midrash* on the sixth commandment in Matthew 5.21-26 (*Thou shalt not murder*) is used by Matthew as a commentary on the beatitude for *the merciful*.

II.7.4.1.2.a *Mercy Applied to Matthew 5.21-22*

Though several sins are condemned in Matthew 5.21-48 the only place where *judgement* is mentioned is in this section on the sixth commandment. There is a three-fold progression of penalties in this passage: *judgement* (5.21,22), *the Sanhedrin* (5.22) and *gehenna of fire* (5.22). This passage has a beautiful poetic balance. Two vastly different offenses (in human terms) are equated: both *murder* and *anger* will result in *judgement*. Next, two equal offenses have vastly different penalties.

²⁴⁹ *attribute of mercy*

²⁵⁰ *attribute of judgement*

This is not to suggest that Jesus is saying that calling someone ‘Ρακά²⁵¹ is less of an offense than calling someone a *fool*. The passage may be paraphrased this way:

We all know that anyone who is guilty of murder will be judged by God. But, being guilty of anger is actually just as bad. We all know that calling someone a good-for-nothing can get you called up before the religious authorities but the truth is far more serious; disrespecting others will send you to hell.

Perhaps one of the reasons *OMatthew* felt justified in applying this section to the beatitude for the *merciful* was because of the popular understanding that the antidote to anger is *mercy* (*Ber 7a*). God’s holy anger is tempered by his *mercy* (*Hab 3.2*). Perhaps the link between *mercy* and how it affects God’s anger was just the natural development of the attributes he proclaimed to Moses in Exodus 34.6 juxtaposing being יְחַנּוּן יְרַחוּם²⁵² with being אִפְסַח אַרְרָא.²⁵³ The point then of Matthew 5.21-22, in the context of this beatitude is that those who would be like God must be *merciful* rather than angry.

That James is familiar with this ‘Hebrew outline’ can be seen by his comments in chapter two of that book. James 2.1-7 addresses the treatment of the poor (verse five of which alludes to the first beatitude). James’ comments in 2.8-13 are undoubtedly inspired by the Sermon on the Mount (as he knew it), and the Beatitudes in particular. James calls the command to *love your neighbour as yourself* a νόμον βασιλικόν²⁵⁴ (2.8). The fact that Leviticus 19.18 is connected to the Beatitudes, which concern living in the Kingdom of God, must have been enough to prompt this appellation. But it is important to note that *OMatthew* has applied this commandment to the eighth (and the seventh) beatitude, which mentions that αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.²⁵⁵

²⁵¹ The use of *Raka* in Matthew 5.22 must not be seen as proof that the source for the Sermon on the Mount comes from an Aramaic source rather than a Hebrew one. The term corresponds to אִפְסַח (meaning *good for nothing*), and was commonly used by both Hebrew and Aramaic speakers alike (Strack & Billerbeck 1925:278; Jastrow [1903] 1992:1476). It was also employed by Greek speakers in Palestine, for a papyrus from Lachish (dated 257 BC) castigates a certain Antiochus (Epiphanes?), calling him: Ἀντίοχον τὸν ῥαχᾶν (Goulder 1974:257).

²⁵² *merciful and gracious*

²⁵³ *slow to anger*

²⁵⁴ *royal law*

²⁵⁵ *theirs is the kingdom of heaven*

James' appeal to the sixth and seventh Commandments make little sense in the context except that they go back to the Sermon on the Mount (cf, Mt 5.21-30). His specific charge that dishonouring the poor amounts to murder conforms precisely with the application made of the sixth commandment to the beatitude of the *merciful*.²⁵⁶ He crowns this passage with a negative version of the fifth beatitude: κρίσις ἀνέλεος τῶ μὴ ποιήσαντι ἔλεος.²⁵⁷ This fits so well with the understanding of the sixth commandment in Matthew 5.21-26 that it must mean James is familiar with this application.

II.7.4.1.2.b *Mercy Applied to Matthew 5.23-24.*

The comments concerning being reconciled with one's brother in Matthew 5.23-24 must (as Goulder suggests²⁵⁸) have originally been applied to the seventh beatitude. Not only because brotherly reconciliation is part of what *peacemakers* do but also because of the mention that this is more important than one's gift brought to the altar. This hints at a play on words, for the gift, in this context, is a *peace-offering*, called in Hebrew: שְׁלָמִים.²⁵⁹

The original application would have been that human reconciliation takes precedence over religious fervor, and, even more importantly, that *peace* with God is dependant on first being reconciled with others. By applying these words to the fifth beatitude the meaning is almost unaffected and becomes a warning that one will not receive *mercy* from God if personal conflicts have been left unresolved.

²⁵⁶ There are also rabbinic statements that equate the dishonouring of individuals with killing them (e.g., *B Mets* 112a).

²⁵⁷ *Judgement without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful* (NIV).

²⁵⁸ Goulder 1974:256

²⁵⁹ The word *gift* in this context goes back to the word שְׁלָמִים (Arndt & Gingrich 1957:210). This is a generic word used both for free-will offerings and obligatory ones. Flusser has suggested that Jesus is speaking of the *sin offering*.

In the Didache, chapters 14 and 15 are predicated on Matthew 5.21-24. Fascinatingly, it seems that the author is aware that this is commentary on the seventh beatitude. Didache 14 concerns Sunday worship and holding the Eucharist in particular. The second verse reads: *but let none who has a quarrel with his fellow join in your meeting until they be reconciled, that your sacrifice be not defiled* (Lake 1970:331). This is the logical application of Matthew 5.23-24.²⁶⁰ In 15.3 the author admonishes that they should not reprove others in ὀργή [*anger*] (alluding to Mt 5.22), but in εἰρήνῃ [*peace*]. He concludes this verse with the words: ὡς ἔχετε ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ [*as you have (it) in the Gospel*]. The author is not giving an allusion to the seventh beatitude but to Matthew 5.21-26 explained in light of that beatitude.²⁶¹

II.7.4.1.2.c *Mercy Applied to Matthew 5.25-26*

Clement of Rome (mis)quotes this beatitude in a proactive sense as: ἐλεᾶτε, ἵνα ἐλεηθῆτε²⁶² (1Clem 13.2). The same reading is given by Polycarp (*Phil* 2.3), and Clement of Alexandria (Strom II, 92, 2). All of these have a connection with the Jewish-Christian Church. It appears that they understood that by being merciful to people God would ensure that one would receive mercy from others (cf, Clement's ὡς ποιεῖτε, οὕτω ποιηθήσεται ὑμῖν in 1 Cl 13.2). Perhaps this stems from a tradition associating Jesus' comments on reconciling with one's adversary (Mt 5.25-26) as commentary on the fifth beatitude. Perhaps it was the use of ἔχει τι κατὰ σοῦ in the previous illustration which prompted bringing in an example involving litigation. The Christian Palestinian version (codex A) correctly renders these words as: *כלום בלתי*²⁶³ (Lewis & Gibson [1899] 1971:63). This becomes, in Hebrew, judicial terminology for having a claim against someone. Thus *Sanhedrin* 105a speaks of one having a claim against another using the idiom: *כלום בלתי* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:640).

²⁶⁰ In this context it is difficult to see whether the sacrifice in Matthew 5.23 is understood as a *sin offering* or a *peace offering*. Christ was portrayed in the early church as both (e.g., Heb 9.28; Eph 2.14).

²⁶¹ *Mercy* is also present. The next verse, 15.4, says: *But your prayers and alms* [ἐλεημοσύνας] *and all your acts perform as ye find in the Gospel of our Lord* (Lake 1970:331). This appears to allude to Matthew 6.1-8.

²⁶² *Be merciful that you may receive mercy.*

²⁶³ *עליך כלום*

Jeremias suggests that this passage has been added from another context (1972:96). He is likely correct to see that this saying was originally framed as a parable warning of imminent crisis (Jeremias 1972:42).²⁶⁴ This passage may have been originally given as a metaphor for asking mercy from God before the final judgement. The parallel in Luke 12.57-59 certainly can be understood that way. As it stands, the admonition to be reconciled with an adversary is to be understood as advice that will allow an individual to receive mercy rather than judgement. The words about being thrown into prison until *you have paid the last penny* (NIV) seem to indicate that a debt is involved. Rather than understand the words ἴσθι εὐνοῶν to be a command,²⁶⁵ it makes better sense to see them as representing a Hebrew compound tense used to express a usual practice (cf, the common Mishnaic הָיָה אָמַר = *he used to say*). A Hebrew speaker would recognize that הָיָה מְשַׁתְּדֵל²⁶⁶ means *you would be making friends (with your adversary)*. Thus, this passage was included, not to give advice for reconciliation with adversaries but to be an illustration to teach that mercy is not automatic at the judgement. One must acknowledge his debt to God and the seriousness of his need for divine mercy.

The examples given in Matthew 5.21-26 illustrate the main two ways mercy was used (in a human context) in Hebrew: judicial leniency (*yKeth* 9.2) and debt remission. These are each then to be regarded as metaphorical for how God gives mercy and how, even apart from Matthew 5.21-26, this beatitude would have been understood and applied.

II.7.4.2 Mercy = Forgiveness of Sins

There are especially two categories of individuals associated with dispensing mercy. The first are those who sit in judgement. Whether judges, kings, or anyone else that was in a position to be able to judge, the hope of those coming before them was to receive mercy.

²⁶⁴ The use of the formula ἀμήν λέγω σοι in verse 26 marks the end of a parable elsewhere. Cf, Mt 21.31 (Jeremias 1972:80).

²⁶⁵ ἴσθι is an imperfect of εἰμί, and εὐνοῶν is a participle. This looks suspiciously like it represents the Hebrew compound tense (perfect of הָיָה + participle).

²⁶⁶ The use of the verb לְהַשְׁתַּדֵּל helps reconcile the difference between Luke and Matthew's versions of this parable. Where Matthew has ἴσθι εὐνοῶν, Luke 12.58 has δὸς ἐργασίαν ἀπηλλάχθαι ἀπ' αὐτοῦ [*give effort to be free from him*]. The idiom δὸς ἐργασίαν has rightly been recognized as a Latinism (Arndt & Gingrich 1957:193) and means *strive*. לְהַשְׁתַּדֵּל can mean both *strive* and *be on good terms with* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1525).

The use of the imagery of a king or a judge for God was common in Judaism (Ps 58.11; 1Sa 12.12) and frequently used by Jesus (e.g., Lk 18.1-6; Mt 18.23-34).

Receiving mercy, as expressed in the apodosis of this beatitude, would first of all be understood as a reference to receiving forgiveness of sins. This understanding was well established in Old Testament times. For instance, Isaiah 55.7 uses *mercy* and *forgiveness* in parallelism:

יָעֹזב רָשָׁע דַּרְכּוֹ וְאִישׁ אֶן מִחֲשָׁבֹתָיו וְיָשָׁב אֶל־יְהוָה וְיִרְחַמֵּהוּ וְאֶל־אֱלֹהֵינוּ
 כִּי־יִרְבֶּה לְסִלּוֹחַ

Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon (NIV).

This in turn, by inter-testamental times, was equated with salvation. This is readily demonstrated in Sirach 2.11, which says:

διότι οἰκτιρῶν καὶ ἐλεήμων ὁ κύριος καὶ ἀφίησιν ἁμαρτίας καὶ σώζει ἐν καιρῷ
 θλίψεως.²⁶⁷

For the Lord is compassionate and merciful, he forgives sins, and saves in the time of trouble.

II.7.4.3 Mercy = Forgiving Debts

This beatitude shares what is probably a deliberate resemblance to the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer which says: καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφίεμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν.²⁶⁸ That petition contains a well known play on words stemming from the fact that the Aramaic word for *sin* (ܐܘܒܝܬܐ) also means *debt*.²⁶⁹

²⁶⁷ καιρῷ θλίψεως = עַתָּה זְרָתְמָה. Cf, One of the roles of the Messiah mentioned in 4Q436 was: בַּעַת זְרָתְמָה לְנַחֵם דְּלִים [to comfort the poor in their time of trouble].

²⁶⁸ forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors.

²⁶⁹ Jesus regularly employed the word אִיבָּא in his preaching and enjoyed utilizing its several meanings to illustrate God's forgiveness of sin through parables and examples of monetary debts being cancelled (e.g., Mt 18.23-35). Jesus' penchant for this metaphor was not unique. The first-century Rabbi, Yosi the Priest,

An instance of the Greek verb ἐλεέω with this meaning can be seen in a letter (BGU IV. 1079) written to a man who is unable to pay a debt (dated 41 AD). The writer advises the man to ask his creditor daily out of the chance that *he might have pity on you* [σε ἐλεῆσαι] (Moulton & Milligan 1930:202). It is instructive that the verb continues with this meaning in Modern Greek (Moulton & Milligan 1930:203).

The concept of sin as a debt was established even before New Testament times. This was true, not only for Aramaic speakers, but for Hebrew and Greek speaking Jews as well. A Hebrew example from the Dead Sea Scrolls can be found in 11Q13 (col 2, line 6) where Melchizedek appears to *release them from the debt of all their sins*. A good example in Greek can be found in the Apocrypha. Wisdom 1.4 reads, *No, Wisdom will never make its way into a crafty soul nor stay in a body that is in debt to sin* (JB).

Like the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer this beatitude suggests that having mercy on others is a prerequisite for receiving the same from God. This would not have been regarded as revolutionary, it was also already a widespread theological concept by the time of Jesus. This can be illustrated from the book of Sirach (28.2): *Forgive your neighbor's injustice; then, when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven.*²⁷⁰

II.7.4.3.1 The law of canceling debts

The backdrop to the petition for forgiveness in the Lord's Prayer as well as the beatitude for the *merciful* is the law for the year of Jubilee (Lv 25). The year of Jubilee, which encompasses the law of canceling debts, goes far beyond that and speaks of greater restoration. This law was given an eschatological sense even before Second Temple times. The fact that the Beatitudes are formed with Isaiah 61 in mind suggests that Jesus, as part of his gospel of *the kingdom*, was proclaiming an inaugurated, eschatological year of Jubilee. Jesus makes this very thing clear in his sermon at Nazareth where after

told a parable (*R Hash* 17b) in which the pardon of a loan of money to one's fellow is compared to forgiveness of sins.

²⁷⁰ Various passages from Jewish literature quoting Rabbis who lived within a generation or two of Christ also echo the reciprocity expressed in this beatitude, showing that such an idea was widespread. In *Yoma* 8.9 Rabbi Eleazer ben Azariah declared that the Day of Atonement does not atone for trespasses between a man and his fellow unless he pardons his fellow. Other such references include *Shabbat* 151b, and *Pesiqta Rabbati* 38, 164b. A later Rabbi named Raba (*R Hash* 17b), in reference to Micah 7.18, asks: על פשע למוי שגובר [Whose iniquity is forgiven? That of him who pardons (another's) sin].

reading Isaiah 61.1-2a, which speaks of the year of Jubilee, he declares that the prophecy is fulfilled. In the same way, in this beatitude the fulfillment of Isaiah 49.10, 13, specifically, is being proclaimed. Just as, in the Jubilee, the debtor's debts are forgiven, even so that man must also forgive his debtors. The *merciful* one has come, and he is bestowing *mercy*. Those who have received *mercy* are obligated to give *mercy*.

II.7.4.3.1.2 The Contribution of 11Q13

11Q13 provides evidence that the inauguration of the eschatological year of Jubilee would have been an integral part of Jesus' greater message concerning the Kingdom of God. Though it has been shown that the concept of *sin* as a *debt* was current in Second Temple times the understanding of forgiving others simultaneously with receiving the forgiveness of God is the product of the Jubilee having been proclaimed. This goes beyond the Jewish theological thought of the time, whose prayers for forgiveness of sin were focused on the world to come. It proclaims access to the privileges of the coming age in this lifetime as well as the ability and authority to pass these gifts on to others (Jeremias 1971:201).

Frequent allusion to Isaiah 61.1-2 occurs in messianic and eschatological contexts among the Dead Sea Scrolls (e.g., 4Q521, frag 2, col 2). In 11Q13, amidst an allusion to this passage in Isaiah, the heavenly figure of Melchizedek appears to establish *a righteous kingdom* (col 2, line 9). His appearance coincides with the year of Jubilee. In column 2, lines 2-6, Wise translates as follows:

And concerning what Scripture says, "In [this] year of jubilee [you shall return, every one of you, to your property]" (Lv 25.13) and what is also written, "And this is the [ma]nner of [the remission]: every creditor shall remit the claim that is held [against a neighbor, not exacting it of a neighbor who is a member of the community, because God's] remission [has been proclaimed]" (Deuteronomy 15.2):] [the interpretation] is that it applies [to the L]ast Days and concerns the captives, just as [Isaiah said: "To proclaim the jubilee to the captives" (Isa. 61.1). . . just] as [. . .] and from the inheritance of Melchizedek, f[or . . . Melchize]dek, who will return them to what is rightfully theirs. He will proclaim to them the jubilee, thereby releasing th[em from the debt of a]ll their sins (Wise et al 1996: 456).

If this reconstruction is correct, then, in this passage, sins are referred to as debts which will be released automatically (for members of the community) at the proclamation of Jubilee by Melchizedek. This suggests that forgiveness of sins belongs to the time of Salvation. The obvious parallel to Jesus (himself referred to as Melchizedek in Heb 7-8) and his use of Isaiah 61.1-2 in the synagogue at Nazareth (Lk 4.18-21) makes this scroll extremely valuable for determining the understanding of Matthew 6.12.

With these things in mind one can readily see that this petition is another example of Jesus declaring that the kingdom of God had come and that the power and privileges of the age to come were breaking into this world. When taken in the light of the year of Jubilee, the context of God forgiving believers their debts while they, simultaneously, are forgiving others becomes clear.

This background also helps explain a problem in Luke's version of the Lord's Prayer. Luke 11.4 calls on God to forgive *our sins* [τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν] as we forgive *our debtors* [παντὶ ὀφείλοντι ἡμῖν]. This seems to be a confusion of Greek translations of נָפְתָה (*sin/debt*). By mixing ἀμαρτίας [*sins*] with ὀφείλοντι [*debtors*] Luke is expressing the holistic understanding of concrete and abstract debts being released; so, there is then no dichotomy between sins and debts (whether literal or figurative). This is mirrored by the way the fifth beatitude was understood by Matthew. *Mercy* is necessary for sins to be forgiven as well as for debts owed to adversaries to be forgiven.

II.7.4.4 Mercy = Almsgiving

Something generally not discussed by those commenting on this beatitude is the use of the words *to have mercy* or *to be merciful* with reference to almsgiving. Yet, in Greek this was often employed to refer to giving to the poor. The noun *mercy* [ἐλεημοσύνη] is used for almsgiving elsewhere in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 6.2,3,4). It is here that a difference exists between the Semitic use of *mercy* and the Greek.

Though צדקה (Hebrew) and צדקה (Aramaic) are often used with the idea of giving money to people, almsgiving is usually referred to in Jewish writings by the word *righteousness*²⁷¹ (cf, 2Co 9.9-10).²⁷² Thus, when Sirach 3.30 says: πῦρ φλογιζόμενον ἀποσβέσει ὕδωρ, καὶ ἐλεημοσύνη ἐξιλάσεται ἁμαρτίαν,²⁷³ it comes as no surprise that ἐλεημοσύνη in this verse translates the Hebrew word צדקה.²⁷⁴

II.7.4.5 How is This Beatitude to be Understood?

Davies and Allison (1988:466) have said, “The beatitudes are first of all blessings, not requirements.” This statement is only partly true, even with regard to the first four beatitudes. The beatitudes of the *poor*, *mourners* and *meeke* are ostensibly blessings for those in difficult circumstances. The ‘hidden’ meaning is a call to humble oneself and become as such in order to receive these blessings. A noticeable shift which occurs with this beatitude. It is the first of the second group of four beatitudes. This latter group (particularly beatitudes 5-7) is characterized by the fact that they are demands for a standard of discipleship. Though framed as blessings they are indeed requirements for a life pleasing to God. No longer is this application hidden. It is blatant.

Those, such as Herrmann, Bultmann and Dibelius who understood the Beatitudes (as well as the Sermon on the Mount as a whole) as promoting an impossible ideal (Trites 1992:193) could not have been more mistaken as to the intention of Jesus. Goulder’s insight, that Matthew 5.11-48 is practical commentary on the meaning of each of the last four beatitudes, giving examples of how to apply them in real situations, is a true breakthrough (see §II.7.4.1.1).

This beatitude is difficult not to understand, at least on the surface. The expositions on this beatitude offered by Jesus, *OMatthew* and James require a greater level of personal

²⁷¹ Heb צדקה; Aram צדקה

²⁷² Paul’s use of OT passages speaking of *righteousness* as a basis for teaching on *giving* is probably a product of his rabbinical training. For instance, this same technique can be seen in the way *B Bath* 10b uses Proverbs 14.34: *Righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach to any people* (NIV). This was interpreted to mean: *Benevolence is a sin offering for Israel as well as the gentiles* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:447).

²⁷³ *Water quenches a blazing fire, almsgiving atones for sins.*

application. Applying this beatitude to forgiveness seems obvious. Trites (1992:188) is typical, suggesting that the best “commentary on the meaning of this passage is provided later in Matthew’s Gospel in the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant (Mt 18.21-35).”

If anything, the real contribution of this chapter for understanding this beatitude comes from seeing that its interpretation must be broad enough to take in the fact that Aramaic ܕܚܘܒ is used for both *mercy* and *love*. To truly understand what this beatitude means requires the teaching Jesus gives on *love* to be applied to it. Thus, for Jesus, *mercy* includes loving one’s enemies. It also requires that one understand the antithesis of *mercy* which is *judgement*. Forms of judgement include anger and insults. Therefore, for James, *mercy* includes regard for the human dignity of the poor.

Obviously the teachings this chapter has proposed were applied to this beatitude are available to give guidance in life even not being considered as commentary on what it means to be *merciful*. The difference that this makes is that it allows the Beatitudes to be foundational statements Jesus and the early church built their theology on rather than mere proverbs, just as easily ignored as put into practice.

²⁷⁴ The full verse reads: אִשׁ לֹוֹהֵטֶת יִכְבוּ נֵימִים כִּן צְדִיקָה תִּכְפֹּר הַטְּחָא.

Chapter Eight

Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.

Matthew 5.8: μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται.

II.8.1 Finding an Allusion to Isaiah 61: *Pure in Heart* = *Broken-hearted*

Something interesting which has come from the research done for this thesis is that the only ones suggesting that an allusion exists between this beatitude and Isaiah 61 are those who have tried to reconstruct it into either Hebrew or Aramaic. This is surprising since so many commentators consider that there is an “obvious” connection with the first and second beatitudes (Plackal 1988:30). One would think that the term *pure in heart* in a passage already having allusions to Isaiah 61 would immediately suggest some sort of link with Isaiah’s mention of the *broken-hearted*. The fact that all the other beatitudes preceding this one can be linked (even if indirectly) to Isaiah 61 gives greater impetus to look there for background.

II.8.1.1 Lachs’ Theory: Hebrew Haplography

Lachs, who advocates a Hebrew original, suggests that μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ is a Greek translation of אֲשֶׁרֵי בְּרֵי לֵב (Schwarz 1985:303). He proposes, however, that the original beatitude was a direct allusion to Isaiah 61.1: אֲשֶׁרֵי הַנְּשֻׁבְרֵי לֵב²⁷⁵ (Schwarz 1985:303). He theorizes that at some point, through haplography, נְשֻׁבְרֵי לֵב was changed to בְּרֵי לֵב (Schwarz 1985:303). Lachs goes so far as to say that this is proof of a Hebrew original (Schwarz 1985:303).

II.8.1.2 Schwarz’s Theory: Aramaic Haplography

Schwarz, however, shows that this same phenomenon could have happened with an original Aramaic beatitude. He notes that the Isaiah Targum translates לְנִשְׁבְּרֵי לֵב by לְחִבְרֵי לְבָא and, like Lachs, blames scribal error for the substitution of an original טוֹבִיחוֹן בְּרִירֵי לְבָא with טוֹבִיחוֹן חִבְרֵי לְבָא (Schwarz 1985:304).

II.8.1.3 Black's Theory: Aramaic Haplography

Similarly, Black suggests that καθαροὶ τῆ καρδίᾳ would be a Greek rendering of an Aramaic לב דְּכִי לֵב, which in turn was theoretically derived from לב דְּכִי לֵב – itself an Aramaic translation of נְשִׁבְרֵי לֵב in Isaiah 61.1 (1967:158).

The similarity between these Hebrew and Aramaic words for *pure* and *broken* make a compelling case for each theory. But, attributing the change of *broken* > *pure* to scribal inaccuracy seems to be solely for scholarly convenience as it alleviates the need to show how *the pure in heart* would be recognized as an allusion to Isaiah 61.1. It implies, of course, that Jesus never gave a beatitude for the *pure in heart*. This supposition is also based on the idea that there was a written document which was miscopied. Haplography, as a solution to the problem, doesn't apply when the situation involves an oral tradition. But, in the case of the Sermon on the Mount it seems that what it is we are dealing with is oral tradition.

With all due respect to the scholars who have put forward or supported theories which depended on haplography the judgement is that they have failed to be convincing. Therefore additional criteria will be added, for this beatitude, by which any reconstruction proposed will need to meet. Aside from the three-beat rhythmic criterion, it must:

- 1.) show a relationship to *the broken-hearted* of Isaiah 61.1.
- 2.) be able to reasonably explain how this beatitude came to be for *the pure in heart*.

²⁷⁵ *Blessed are the broken-hearted.*

II.8.2 Hebrew and Aramaic Reconstruction of this Beatitude

II.8.2.1 Aramaic Reconstruction of the First Hemistich

The Old Syriac, Peshitta and Christian Palestinian versions all use ܕܗܘܘܢ ²⁷⁶ to render $\kappa\alpha\theta\alpha\rho\acute{\alpha}$ in this beatitude. This would correspond to the relative pronoun ܕ added to the plural *Pe'al* participle ܕܚܝܢ . The unanimity between the ancient Aramaic versions suggests that Black may have been on the right track.

Burney's reconstruction of the first hemistich was *tubehón didkáyin belibbá*²⁷⁷ (1925:166). Burney's reconstruction, however, seems a bit awkward. It gives the required three beat rhythm and it has the benefit of being close to the tradition preserved in the ancient Aramaic speaking Christian community (which evidence must never be summarily discounted).

That notwithstanding, Jeremias' more compact *tubehón dideké libbá*²⁷⁸ (1971:24) seems to better reflect Jewish Aramaic. An interesting thing about the form ܕܚܝܢ ܠܒܐ is that it can represent either a singular or a plural form (Stevenson 1962:29). This is more or less the same reading proposed by Black (see §II.8.1.3). The term for *pure in heart* suggested by Black and Jeremias, ܕܚܝܢ ܠܒܐ , occurs in the Targum to Proverbs 22.11.

An alternate version of the same term, ܠܒܒ ܕܚܐ , occurs in an Aramaic Scroll (4Q542 1.10) from Qumran. The inversion of terms and idioms was a common literary technique among ancient Jews. For example, in Qumran the terms ܕܚܐ ܕܚܐ (1QM 14.7) and ܕܚܐ ܕܚܐ (1QS 4.3) seem to be synonymous.

²⁷⁶ ܕܚܝܢ

²⁷⁷ ܫܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܕܚܝܢ ܠܒܐ

²⁷⁸ ܫܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܕܚܝܢ ܠܒܐ

Even in biblical times, this technique was used for poetic reasons. For example, consider how both *וּשְׁפַל־רוּחַ*²⁷⁹ and *רוּחַ שְׁפָלִים*²⁸⁰ are used in Isaiah 57.15. Cook recognizes *דָּכָא* *לִבָּב* as synonymous with *דְּכִי לְבָא* and translates it as *pure in heart* (Wise et al 1996:433). A couple of lines earlier (1.8) in this scroll we find the plural form, *דְּכִין*, in the admonition: *וְהוּא קְדִישִׁין וּדְכִין*.²⁸¹ In fact, a good Hebrew example of the same parallel use of *דָּכָא* *לִבָּב* and *דְּכִין* in 4Q542 1.9-10 also occurs in Isaiah 57.15, where *דְּכָא* and *לִבָּב נְדָאִים* are used in synonymous parallelism (see §II.8.2.1.1.2).

II.8.2.1.1 Broken-hearted > Crushed in Heart

What is the proof that the term *pure of heart* was a deliberate alteration of the *broken-hearted* of Isaiah 61.1? The answer starts with the language of the Isaiah Targum. Where the Hebrew text says that one of the roles of God's anointed is *to heal the broken-hearted*,²⁸² the Targum says, *to strengthen the broken-hearted*.²⁸³

II.8.2.1.1.1 4Q436 1.1: A Paraphrase of Isaiah 61.1-2

The concept of God strengthening someone's heart is also found in 4Q436. In fragment 1, line 1 are words which reflect a loose Hebrew paraphrase of Isaiah 61.1-2.

בִּינָה לַחֲזֹק לֵב נִדְכָּה וְלִנְצַח לְרוּחַ בָּה לְנַחֵם דְּלִים בְּעַת צָרָתָמָה וְיָדֵי נֹפְלִים
 . . . *understanding; to strengthen the crushed heart and to overcome the spirit in it;*
to comfort (the) poor in the time of their trouble and the fallen hands. . .

This line can be directly compared to Isaiah 61.1-2 at three points:

<i>4Q436</i>	<i>Isaiah 61.1</i>
1. לַחֲזֹק לֵב נִדְכָּה	לְחַבֵּשׁ לְנִשְׁבָּרֵי־לֵב
2. לְנַחֵם דְּלִים	לְנַחֵם כָּל־אֲבָלִים
3. עַת צָרָתָמָה	שָׁנַת רָצוֹן

²⁷⁹ *lowly of spirit*

²⁸⁰ *spirit of the lowly*

²⁸¹ *be holy and pure*

²⁸² לְחַבֵּשׁ לְנִשְׁבָּרֵי־לֵב

Thus we see in the first comparison that *to strengthen the crushed heart* paraphrases *to heal the broken heart*. A correlation (if one were needed) between *broken* and *crushed* is provided by Psalms 34.19 (18): *The LORD is close to the broken-hearted* [לְנִשְׁבְּרֵי־לֵב] *and saves those who are crushed in spirit* [וְדִבְּאֵי־רוּחַ] (NIV).

In the second comparison, the phrase *to comfort the poor* is used as a paraphrase of *comfort all who mourn*.²⁸⁴

In the third comparison *time of their trouble* paraphrases *year of favour*.²⁸⁵ A correlation between *the year of the Lord's favour* and *the time of trouble* can be seen in the דו"ד מצודת commentary found in the margins of the Rabbinic Bible for Isaiah 49.8. The Targum has translated בְּעֵת רְצוֹן²⁸⁶ as: בְּעֵידוֹן דְּאִתּוֹן עֲבָדִין רְעוּתִי,²⁸⁷ an eschatological slant is given to this targumic interpretation, saying that this means: זַעֲזוֹר הַנְּרָה הַנְּזָה²⁸⁸ This theme is also taken up in beatitude form in *Kethuboth* 66: יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּזִמְנָא שְׁעוֹשִׁין רְצוֹנָא שֶׁל מְקוּמָא אִין כּל אֹמְרָא וּלְשׁוֹן שׁוֹלְטַת בְּהֵם אֲשֶׁר־יִכְבְּשׁוּ.²⁸⁹

²⁸³ לְתַקְפָּא לְחַבְרֵי לְבָא

²⁸⁴ Note that דְּלִים is also synonymous with עֲנָוִים.

²⁸⁵ cf, עַת רְצוֹן in Isaiah 49.8.

²⁸⁶ *time of favour* (i e, *the Year of Jubilee*)

²⁸⁷ *in the time that you are doing my will*

²⁸⁸ *In the time that you will do my will I will answer you in your crying, because of the coming trouble.*

²⁸⁹ *Happy are you, Israel (for) in the time that you are doing the will of God there is not any people or tongue which will rule over them.*

II.8.2.1.1.b 4Q436 1.1: A Paraphrase of a Conflation of Isaiah 61.1-2 and 57.15.

Let us return to the idea that 4Q436's *לב נדכה לחזק*²⁹⁰ is a paraphrase of Isaiah's *לב נשבר*²⁹¹. If the author had wanted to allude to the *לב נשבר* of Isaiah 61.1 wouldn't he have used that term? If so, then, why does he use *לב נדכה*?

The answer is that Isaiah 61.1-2 is not the only passage in Isaiah to which allusion is being made. The author has conflated Isaiah 61.1-2 with Isaiah 57.15. The latter reads:

כִּי כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה וְנִשְׂאָה שֹׁכֵן עַד וְקָדוֹשׁ שְׁמוֹ מְרוֹם וְקָדוֹשׁ אֲשֶׁכֹּן וְאֶת־דַּכָּא וְשִׁפְלֵי־רוּחַ לְהַחְיֹת רוּחַ שְׁפִלִים וּלְהַחְיֹת לֵב נִדְכָּאִים

For this is what the high and lofty One says - he who lives forever, whose name is holy: "I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite" (NIV).

That the author of 4Q436 is making allusions to both Isaiah 61.1-2 and 57.15 can be seen quite clearly in the following comparison of the three passages:

<i>4Q436</i>	<i>Isaiah 57.15</i>	<i>Isaiah 61.1</i>
1. לחזק		לחבש
2. לב נדכה	לב נדכאים	(נשברי־לב)
3. לנצח	להחיות	
4. לרוח בה	רוח שפלים	
5. לנחם דלים		לנחם כל־אבלים
6. עת צרתמה		שנת רצון

²⁹⁰ to strengthen the crushed heart

²⁹¹ to heal the broken heart

In the first comparison the word לחזק²⁹² is best considered a paraphrase of לחבש²⁹³ from Isaiah 61. As mentioned earlier, the targumist has rendered לחבש in the Isaiah Targum by לתקפא,²⁹⁴ which precisely corresponds with לחזק.²⁹⁵

It is the use of לב נדכה, corresponding so well with לב נדכאים, in the second comparison which most establishes that Isaiah 57.15 is also in the mind of the author of 4Q436. This does not mean that any reference to the נשבר־לב of Isaiah 61.1 has been discarded and replaced by one to the לב נדכאים. It means that to the writer of 4Q436, the *broken-hearted* of Isaiah 61.1 are equated with the *crushed in heart* of Isaiah 57.15. This same understanding is held by Targum Jonathan. When Isaiah 57.15 says that God is with those who are דכא,²⁹⁶ the Targum says that he has promised to deliver the לבא תבירי.²⁹⁷ This is the same translation it gives to נשבר־לב in Isaiah 61.1.²⁹⁸ Once it is clear that the term *broken-hearted* was linked in apocalyptic thought to *crushed in heart* it helps pave the way for solving the link between *broken-hearted* and *pure in heart*.

II.8.2.1.2 Crushed in Heart > Pure in Heart

The word *crushed* (coming from the root דכך or דוך) is found in a variety of other forms (e.g. מדוכך, נידוך, מדוכך, נדוך, מדוכא) in Rabbinic literature. Yet, one such form, דך, deserves special attention. Well before the first century this term became a common designation for the poor.

²⁹² *to strengthen*

²⁹³ *to heal*

²⁹⁴ *to strengthen*

²⁹⁵ Where Isaiah 57.15 says להחיות [to revive], the Targum gives, not one, but three renderings: למפרק [to redeem], לקניא [to save], and למסעד [to help]. Of these, only לקניא could possibly be construed in a way which conforms to לחזק, but not very well.

²⁹⁶ *contrite*

²⁹⁷ *broken-hearted*

²⁹⁸ Interestingly, the Septuagint's version of Isaiah 57.15 changes שפל־רוח to *broken-hearted* [τοῖς συστρατημένους τῆν καρδίαν] using the same vocabulary as it does in Isaiah 61.1. The Septuagint, instead of saying *contrite and lowly in spirit*, says *discouraged and broken-hearted*.

Thus, in the Hebrew version of Sirach 4.2 (ms A) we find: **אל תחמור מעי דך**.²⁹⁹ Apparently use of this term became so prosaic that its derivation from **דכך** was all but forgotten. Thus, the *midrash* to Proverbs 22 provides the answer to the question of why the poor happened to be called **דך** saying that it is because they are **מדוכך**.³⁰⁰ (Jastrow [1903] 1992:306).

An interesting correlation between **דך** and the verb **דכי**³⁰¹ is made in *Leviticus Rabba* s 34 from the standpoint that by giving to the poor a man receives divine approval. Thus, the beggar then says: **זכי בי או דכי בי**.³⁰² Eventually the use of **דך** purely as a designation of the poor started to change, even before the time of Christ, to also become a positive character quality. When the translators of the Septuagint came to Psalm 34 (33).19 they chose to translate **דכאי־רוח**³⁰³ as *ταπεινους τῷ πνεύματι*.³⁰⁴ *Ταπεινός*, incidentally, is the word which the epistle of Barnabas and certain manuscripts of the Septuagint use to translate **ענו** in Isaiah 61.1. The plural of **דך** is **דכים** and this is used in *Sanhedrin* 104a as a character trait on the same level as *righteous*: **דכים הם כנים הם צדיקים הם**.³⁰⁵

Those who are *crushed in heart* and those who are *pure in heart* could both be designated in unvocalized writing as **דכילב**. The difference is that the former would be pronounced **דכי־לבא** and the latter as **דכי־לבא**. If, as Lachs, Schwarz and Black suggest, words of Jesus were contained in some sort of written document then a mispronunciation of **דכילב** could have produced the change from *broken (crushed) hearted* to *pure in heart*. This still leaves the problem that Jesus never intended that the sixth beatitude be addressed to the *pure in heart*.

²⁹⁹ *Don't add to the weights (burdens) of the poor.*

³⁰⁰ *crushed*

³⁰¹ *to be pure*

³⁰² *Be benefited through me or be made pure through me.*

³⁰³ *crushed in spirit*

³⁰⁴ *humble in spirit*

A much better solution is to suggest that Jesus did address the *pure in heart* and that in the context of announcing the fulfillment of Isaiah 61, mention of דְּכִי־לֵבָא was recognized as a play on words with דְּכִי־לֵבָא – itself synonymous with *broken-hearted*.

An analogous play on words occurs in the *Yalkut* to Psalms (848) regarding Psalm 93.3. The last line of this verse reads: יִשְׂאוּ נְהָרוֹת דְּכָנִים.³⁰⁶ The word דְּכָנִים is said to stand for דְּכָנִים אָנוּ.³⁰⁷ A similar play on words also referring to Psalm 93.3 occurs in *Bereshith Rabba* s 5 which takes דְּכָנִים to be a combination of דָּךְ and יָמָא allowing for the play on words: לְהַדָּךְ יָמָא.³⁰⁸ The Aramaic reconstruction of the first hemistich will therefore be: טוֹבִיחוּן דְּכִי־לֵבָא.

In order to appreciate the theory that this beatitude contains a play on the words between דְּכִי־לֵבָא and דְּכִי־לֵבָא one must remember that the Beatitudes are flowing within the stream of Jewish apocalyptic thought. The eschatological year of Jubilee seems to have been understood, even by Isaiah, to be the time that God reverses the misfortunes of his people and brings judgement on the oppressors. This is brought out in Isaiah 61.2 which equates the *year of the LORD's favour* with *the day of vengeance of our God*, which in turn is linked to the comfort of those who mourn. The same theme reappears in Daniel chapter seven. The saints of the Most High only receive the kingdom after having been oppressed by the horn which *had eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth that spoke boastfully*. The saints were defeated by this horn *until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgement in favour of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom* (7.22).

The Apostle Paul makes an oblique, eschatological reference to the *holy ones* of Daniel chapter seven in a prayer in 1Thessalonians 3.13, saying: *May he strengthen your hearts*

³⁰⁵ *They are poor (humble?); they are upright; they are righteous.*

³⁰⁶ *The seas have lifted up their pounding waves* (NIV).

³⁰⁷ *we are crushed*

³⁰⁸ *to that sea there*

so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones (NIV).

This verse is extremely helpful for the discussion of how the *crushed/broken in heart* are able to become *the pure in heart*. Paul understood that the result of the heart being strengthened is to be *blameless* [ἀμέμπτos] in holiness. It is improbable that Paul is making an allusion to the sixth beatitude. It is much more reasonable to think that Paul is making a reference to a commonly held understanding of Daniel 7 and Isaiah 61 which (among other things) understood that in the Jubilee God would *strengthen the broken-hearted* and that the result would be that they would be *pure in heart*.

II.8.2.2 Reconstructing the Apodosis in Aramaic

II.8.2.2.1 ܠܚܝܘܢܝܐ or ܠܚܝܘܢܝܐ

All of the Aramaic versions use the verb ܠܚܝܘܢܝܐ to render the Greek verb ὁράω. This is especially interesting from the Syriac point of view for it seems to reflect a primitive Jewish Christian tradition. The most common Aramaic verb for *to see* is ܠܚܝܘܢܝܐ. It is often used to render Hebrew ܠܚܝܘܢܝܐ (Gesenius [1847] 1979:268). ܠܚܝܘܢܝܐ is a very common word in Eastern Aramaic (e.g., Syriac, Babylonian Aramaic, Imperial Aramaic) even showing up in biblical Aramaic (i.e., Dn 2.34, 41, 43; 3.19, 25; 5.5, 23; Ezr 4.14). Palestinian Aramaic would rather employ the verb ܠܚܝܘܢܝܐ (for instance, Targum *Yerushalmi* [Cairo Genizah Fragment] uses ܠܚܝܘܢܝܐ in Genesis 1.4 where Targum Onkelos uses ܠܚܝܘܢܝܐ). An Aramaic passage in *Bereshit Rabba* (14.8), in the context of seeing God, also uses ܠܚܝܘܢܝܐ: ܠܚܝܘܢܝܐ ܠܥܠܡܢܐ ܕܐܬܝ ܠܥܠܡܢܐ³⁰⁹ (Odeberg 1939 1:18).

³⁰⁹ *You will see his face in the world to come.*

The question of whether or not *Bereshit Rabba* also employs ܐܦܝܢ in similar contexts is unsettled. In 35.2 Odeberg reads: ܐܦܝܢ ܠܡܚܡܝ ܫܒܪ ܐܦܝܢ³¹⁰ (1939 1:38). Jastrow quotes this passage as reading ܐܦܝܢ ܠܡܚܡܝ ܫܒܪ ܐܦܝܢ ([1903] 1992:99). He does, however, quote a similar line in *VeYikra Rabba* as saying: ܐܦܝܢ ܠܡܚܡܝ ܫܒܪ ܐܦܝܢ ܘܟܝܠ ܡܢ ܝܚܝܠ³¹¹ (Jastrow [1903] 1992:952).

Aramaic portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls (e.g., 4Q196³¹² 1.11; 4Q552 1.2.3; 4Qproto Esther (d) 3.3; 4Q213-214³¹³ A.1.2.18, 4.1.10, 4.2.3; 4Q541 6.4), on the other hand, uniformly use ܐܦܝܢ. Rather than disproving that ܐܦܝܢ reflects the more Palestinian vocabulary this only affirms that not all documents originating in Palestine were written in a Palestinian dialect of Aramaic. Obviously, Babylonian Aramaic could be employed there for literary purposes (Kutscher 1976:4).

Burney's reconstruction of the apodosis is: *dehinnún hamáyin lelahá*.³¹⁴ By using the present participle, ܦܚܡܝܢ to render ὁψονταί, Burney differs from Jeremias and Schwarz³¹⁵ who both use the imperfect (as do the ancient Aramaic versions, which all have ܦܚܡܝܢ³¹⁶) to reconstruct the future tense ὁψονταί. This is acceptable in the circumstances.³¹⁷ Therefore, the Aramaic reconstruction suggested here will also employ the participle.

³¹⁰ *to see my face*

³¹¹ *Who can ever see the face of Abba Judan?*

³¹² Aramaic Tobit

³¹³ Testament of Levi

³¹⁴ ܦܚܡܝܢ ܫܒܪ ܐܦܝܢ ܠܐܠܗܐ

³¹⁵ Schwarz suggests that ὁψονταί should be reconstructed as ܦܚܡܝܢ. Jeremias also includes an anticipatory pronominal suffix. His suggestion is: *yahmunéh* (= ܦܚܡܝܢܝܗ).

³¹⁶ ܦܚܡܝܢ; Thus, Syr^{s, c, p, cp}

³¹⁷ When translating Greek texts Aramaic translators regularly prefer to use the imperfect tense to render the Greek future tense. The testimony of the various Syriac versions is tainted by the desire to accurately reflect the Greek text. The use of the participle to express what can only be rendered in English by the future tense seems to have been common in Palestine. The example from *Bereshit Rabba* 14.8 already given serves to illustrate this: *you will see his face in the world to come* [ܦܚܡܝܢ ܠܥܠܡܐ ܕܐܚܝܢ] (Odeberg 1939 1:18).

This quotation from *Bereshit Rabba* 14.8 also brings up another feature which must be assessed. The form חַמּוּי is a singular, masculine *Pe'al* participle with an anticipative pronominal suffix. In Aramaic, when a verb governs a definite accusative an anticipative pronominal suffix is often joined (Stevenson 1962:84). This is not as common in the targums and other Palestinian texts as it is in Syriac (Stevenson 1962:84). Thus, it is tempting not to include such a suffix in the reconstruction offered here. Mitigating against this is the presence of the anticipative pronominal suffix in this text from *Bereshit Rabba* which also speaks of *seeing God*. Therefore, out of deference to the sensibilities of this unknown scribe the Aramaic reconstruction of the apodosis will be: חַמּוּי לְאַלְהָא דְהַנִּין.

II.8.2.3 Hebrew Reconstruction

The Hebrew rendering of the first hemistich of this beatitude in Shem Tov's Hebrew Matthew is אֲשֶׁרִי זָכִי הַלֵּב (Howard 1995:16). This most likely has been influenced by a Syriac version or another Aramaic tradition much like (or the same as) that which has been proposed here. It probably does not reflect how *OMatthew* knew it. In fact, it is clear that both he and James know the first hemistich of this beatitude in Hebrew, as: אֲשֶׁרִי בָרִי לֵלֵב.³¹⁸ This is because both Matthew and James give a certain amount of evidence that this beatitude was associated with Psalm 24.4.

One of the features of this beatitude which has troubled scholars is the link between the *pure in heart* and the promise that *they will see God*. Finding in this beatitude a direct allusion to any Old Testament passage has proven elusive. A number of exegetes (see Dupont 1973:558 for a list) have seen here a reference to Psalm 24.3-4:

מִי־יַעֲלֶה בְהַר־יְהוָה וּמִי־יִקּוּם בְּמִקְוֵם קִדְשׁוֹ נָקִי כַפַּיִם וּבַר־לֵבָב אֲשֶׁר לֹא־נִשְׁאַ
 לְשׁוֹא נַפְשִׁי וְלֹא נִשְׁבַּע לְמַרְמָה .

Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false (NIV).

It is possible that *OMatthew* and James have also understood this beatitude to refer to Psalm 24.4. A case has already been made that James is aware of a Hebrew version of the Beatitudes. He makes an allusion to Psalm 24.4 in combination with an allusion to the Beatitudes, saying (Ja 4.8-9):

ἐγγίσατε τῷ θεῷ, καὶ ἐγγιεῖ ὑμῖν. καθαρῖσατε χεῖρας, ἁμαρτολοί, καὶ ἀγνῖσατε καρδίας δίψυχοι. ταλαιπωρήσατε καὶ πενήθησατε καὶ κλαύσατε. ὁ γέλως ὑμῶν εἰς πένθος μετατραπήτω καὶ ἡ χαρὰ εἰς κατήφειαν

Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom (NIV).

The reciprocal use of ἐγγίζω³¹⁹ for both God and the believer is reminiscent of the way the word קָרַב is used in temple language (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1410), making an allusion to Psalm 24.3-4 all the more likely. That James associates Psalm 24.3-4 with the Beatitudes can be gleaned by examining the next verse (4.9), which has a striking similarity to the third woe from Luke's Sermon on the Plain (Lk 6.25b): οὐαὶ, οἱ γελῶντες νῦν, ὅτι πενήθησετε καὶ κλαύσετε.³²⁰ This woe has its counterpart in Luke's third beatitude (6.21b), *blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh* (NIV). The likelihood is that the reason Psalm 24.3-4 comes to his mind is that it shares the idiom בְּרִיבָב with the sixth beatitude.

A good case can be made that *OMatthew* had a Hebrew version before him which employed בְּרִיבָב simply from the fact that it appears as if the Greek text of Matthew 5.8 is deliberately trying to allude to Psalm 24.4 (Gundry 1982:71); the LXX renders בְּרִיבָב by καθαρὸς τῇ καρδίᾳ. Other evidence is admittedly quite slim. The comments of Jesus concerning oaths (Mt 5.33-37) forms part of the section devoted to commentary on the sixth beatitude (Goulder 1974:273, 292; see §II.7.4.1.1). That this section was originally part of the Sermon on the Mount is shown by the fact that James quotes from it (Ja 5.12). Psalm 24 was very familiar to Jews in the Second Temple period because it

³¹⁸ cf, Lach's theory in §II.8.1.1

³¹⁹ *to come near*

was recited in the Temple by the Levites on the first day of each week (*R Hash* 31a; *Tam* 7.4). Even to this day Judaism gives Psalm 24 greater attention than most other Psalms; it is found in the Authorised Daily Prayer Book four times (Singer 1962: 73, 84, 133, 209). Therefore, it makes sense that the first scripture Hebrew speaking people would think of in terms of being *pure in heart* would have been Psalm 24.4.

The Epistle of Barnabas (15.6-7) may be alluding to a traditional connection between this beatitude and Psalm 24.4 held by the early church when, in speaking of the Sabbath, he says: “*Thou shalt sanctify it with clean hands and a pure heart.*” *If, then, anyone has at present the power to keep holy the day which God made holy, by being pure in heart, we are altogether deceived.* Without getting into the doctrinal aspect of these words it is clear that Barnabas associates Matthew 5.8 with Psalm 24.4.

Also part of the commentary on the sixth beatitude is the section on adultery (Mt 5.27-30). A possible play on words with בָּר takes place in 5.30, where Jesus says *it is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.* The Christian Palestinian version translates τὼν μελῶν σου³²¹ as אַבְרָא³²² (Lewis & Gibson [1899] 1971:63). The word אַבְרָא, meaning *limb*, then gives a pun, suggesting that one needs to be willing to lose an אַבְרָא in order to be בָּרֵךְ לְכָבֵד. The idea that this word has been deliberately injected into this section to create such a pun is affirmed by the fact that the word μελός is not present in the two parallel passages (Mt 18.8-9 and Mk 9.43-47).³²³

³²⁰ *Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep* (NIV).

³²¹ *your limb*

³²² אַבְרָא

³²³ In fact another possible Hebrew play on words occurs in Matthew 23.26 which utilizes the fact that the word בָּר can mean both *clean* and *outside* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:188). Jesus uses the ceremonial cleansing of cups (cf, Mk 7.4) as a metaphor to condemn the *greed and self-indulgence* (NIV) of the Pharisees. They are told (Mt 23.25) that if they cleanse the inside of the cup, *then the outside also will be clean* (NIV). This last line, in Mishnaic Hebrew might be: בְּשֵׁהֶבֶר יִהְיֶה בֵּית.

The scribes at Qumran never speak of the לֵב בָּרִי לֵב but they do speak of a *pure heart*. To express this in Hebrew they use the words לֵב טָהוֹר (4Q525 2.2.1; 4Q436 1.1.10). The term לֵב טָהוֹר occurs in the Old Testament in Psalm 51.12 which says: לֵב טָהוֹר בְּקִרְבִּי.³²⁴ None of the examples from Qumran give any reason to suggest that the first hemistich of this beatitude should include the words לֵב טָהוֹר since they only speak about *a heart that is pure* rather than the *pure in heart*.

The reconstruction of the apodosis of this beatitude into Hebrew is rather straight forward. Though the Greek verb ὁράω can be reconstructed using תָּזַה,³²⁵ Delitzsch preferred to reconstruct the apodosis as: כִּי־הֵם יִרְאוּ אֶת אֱלֹהִים. Aside from the use of כִּי־הֵם to express ὅτι αὐτοί (which has in this thesis been rejected in favour of שֶׁהֵם) it is much easier to believe that over-all this is the correct reconstruction and that ὁράω stands for רָאָה rather than תָּזַה. Therefore the reconstruction of the apodosis here will be: שֶׁהֵם יִרְאוּ אֶת אֱלֹהִים.

II.8.2.4 Hebrew and Aramaic Reconstructions

Aramaic

טוביהוֹן דְּדְכִי־לֵבָא דְהַנּוֹן חַמוּי לְאַלְהָא

Hebrew

אֲשֶׁר־י בְּרִי לֵבָב שֶׁהֵם יִרְאוּ אֶת אֱלֹהִים

II.8.3 The Meaning of This Beatitude

II.8.3.1 Seeing God = Being in the Presence of God

The meaning this beatitude would have had for the hearers may best be addressed starting with the apodosis. *Seeing God* was understood in ancient Judaism both figuratively and literally. This can best be illustrated by the fact that in Second Temple times a blind

³²⁴ Ps 51.10: *Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me* (NIV).

³²⁵ The Hebrew New Testament of Salkinson and Ginsburg gives the second half of this beatitude as: כִּי־הֵם יִחְזוּ אֶת־אֱלֹהִים. Similarly, Lachs has: כִּי הִמָּה יִחְזוּ אֱלֹהִים (Schwarz 1985:303).

person was exempt from going to the temple because he would not be able to *see God* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1435). Perhaps this has some bearing on Jesus' words in John 9.41 where after having just healed a blind man, in answer to the Pharisees over whether or not they are also blind, he says: *If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains* (NIV).

Seeing God implies that God is willing to act on one's behalf. A link between *the pure in heart* and God's acting on their behalf was already made in Old Testament times. For instance, Psalm 73.1 says that God is good to the *pure in heart*.³²⁶

The duality of God both *seeing* and *being seen* is reflected in 4Q434 (2.2-3) which not only says that God has *opened his eyes*³²⁷ to the *downtrodden*³²⁸ but has, because of his abundant mercies, *comforted the poor and opened their eyes to see his ways*.³²⁹ This seems to be an allusion to Isaiah 61. The Hebrew text of Isaiah 61.1, which contains: *וְלֹאֲסוּרִים פָּקַחְתִּים*,³³⁰ is changed in the Septuagint to read: *τυφλοῖς ἀνάβλεψιν*.³³¹ The Septuagint's translation of this clause may reflect an ancient understanding of the Hebrew which is shared by 4Q434. Jesus takes up this theme of the blind seeing elsewhere, connecting lack of sight with impurity of heart. In Matthew 15.1-20 Jesus deals with criticism from the Pharisees. In reference to them he quotes (Mt 15.8) from Isaiah 29.13: *These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me*. He then goes on to call the Pharisees blind guides (Mt 15.14).

A pure heart is often connected with worshipping before God's face. In Odes of Solomon 20.3 we find: *The sacrifice of the Lord is righteousness, and purity of heart and lips* (Platt 1927:130). This is echoed in the book of 2 Enoch (44.1-3) which says: *Whoever hastens to make offering before the Lord's face, the Lord for his part will hasten*

³²⁶ טוב לישראל אלהים לקרי לקב

³²⁷ פקח עיניו

³²⁸ דל

³²⁹ חנן עניים ויפקח עיניהם לראות את דרכיו

³³⁰ *and (to proclaim) release from darkness [lit.: the opening of limits(?)] for the prisoners* (NIV)

³³¹ *The blind will see.*

that offering by granting of his work...When the Lord demands bread, or candles, or flesh, or any other sacrifice, then that is nothing; but God demands pure hearts, and with all that only tests the heart of man (Platt: 1927:97).

A link between being *pure in heart* and *seeing God* is also demonstrated in a passage from the Mount Athos manuscript of the Words of Levi in the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs: *Purify my heart, O Lord, from all impurity, that I myself may be lifted up to You. Do not hide Your face from the son of Your servant Jacob* (Wise et al 1996:252). Seeing the face of God means being in his presence. This sort of language was very common in relation to Temple worship. For instance, Exodus 23.17 says that three times a year all males are to *appear* [יראה] before the Lord. *Sanhedrin* 4b expands on this suggesting that these letters can be pronounced either as יִרְאֶה³³² or יִרְאֶה³³³ because כִּדְרֵךְ שְׂבֵא לְרֵאוֹת כִּךְ בֵּא לִירְאוֹת³³⁴.

II.8.3.2 Pure in Heart = Priests of God

Dupont (1973:559) points out the priestly imagery resident in the background of this beatitude by referring to Leviticus 9.5. After having given elaborate instructions for the ordination of priests Moses instructs Aaron to make sacrifices for himself and Israel, saying: הַיּוֹם יִהְיֶה נִרְאָה אֵלֵיכֶם (Lv 9.4).³³⁵ In 9.6 Moses suggests that these sacrifices are necessary for the glory of God to appear: זֶה הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּה יְהוָה תַּעֲשׂוּ וַיִּרָא אֵלֵיכֶם כְּבוֹד יְהוָה³³⁶. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan has an interesting addition to this verse: וַאֲמַר מֹשֶׁה דִּין פִּתְגָמָא דְּפִקִּיד ה' תַּעֲבִדוּן אַעֲבִרוּ ית יִצְרָא בִישָׂא מִן לִבְכוּן וּמִן יד וְתַגְלִי לְכוּן אִיקַר שְׂכִינְתָא דֵּה'³³⁷ (Ginsburger 1903:186).

³³² *He shall see* (the Lord).

³³³ *He shall be seen* (by the Lord).

³³⁴ *As He comes to see, so does He come to be seen.*

³³⁵ *Today the LORD will appear to you* (NIV).

³³⁶ *This is what the LORD has commanded you to do, so that the glory of the LORD may appear to you.*

³³⁷ *And Moses said this is the word which the LORD commanded that you should do: do away with evil inclination from your heart and by that he will reveal to you the glory of the Shekinah of the LORD.*

This indicates that there was a Palestinian Targum tradition which understood that *purification plus radicale est nécessaire. . . Pour être admis à voir la gloire de Dieu, il faut se purifier le cœur*³³⁸ (Dupont 1973:559).

In 2 Enoch 42.6 the first of a series of nine beatitudes is given which says: *Happy is the person who reverences the name of the LORD, and who serves in front of his face always* (Betz 1995:102). Priests were such people who served before the Lord and as such Malachi (2.7) likens the priests to מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה-צְבָאוֹת.³³⁹ Malachi's understanding that priests are like unto angels is the key to understanding the logical link between being *pure in heart* and *seeing God*. The Sifre on Numbers juxtaposes Malachi 2.7 with Isaiah 61.6 (which says that the Israelites will be called priests of the Lord) saying: *beloved are the Israelites which he calls priests; beloved are the priests for they are compared to the angels of the presence*. The Qumran community understood the angels of the presence to be a type of the priests and their functions (e.g., IQSb 4,25-26, IQH 6.13; cf., 4Q418 frag 81) (Dupont 1973:561).³⁴⁰

II.8.3.3 Connecting the Apodosis to Isaiah 61

Seeing God implies being in God's presence. Coming *before God* was expressed in Hebrew as coming לְפָנֵי אֱלֹהִים.³⁴¹ The Hebrew word לְפָנֵי, in turn, was routinely translated in the targums by the Aramaic word קִדְמֵי.³⁴² Being received by God and seeing his face is thus expressed in Aramaic as being *before* the Lord. This religious usage of קִדְמֵי indicating being in God's presence is seen in the targum of Isaiah 61.2 where *the year of the LORD's favour* is translated as *the year of favour before the LORD*.

³³⁸ *A more radical purification is necessary . . . In order to be allowed to see the glory of God he must purify his heart.*

³³⁹ *the angel of the Lord of hosts*

³⁴⁰ As mentioned earlier, the term עֲנוּי רֹחַ was used by the sectarians at Qumran for themselves. This is used parallel to a reference to those who are *purified* [מְזוּקְקִים]; an allusion to Malachi 3.3 which speaks of God purifying the Levitical priesthood (which theme also finds its way into IQH 5.16 and 4Q511 35.2) (Sekki 1989:122).

³⁴¹ *to the face of God*

³⁴² *before*

This indicates that the reversal of fortunes the poor, broken-hearted, mourners, etc. receive in the year of Jubilee was understood by the targumist to be a result of favour in the presence of the Lord. Dupont states that in the context of Isaiah 61.1-3 the attitude of these people is to be that of *gens qui se savent “vides devant Dieu” et ont tout à recevoir de lui*³⁴³ (1969, 3:548). The apodosis of this beatitude may be a paraphrase of this understanding of *the year of the LORD's favour* which entailed seeing God by virtue of being in his presence. [cf, the language of court seen in 2Ki 25.19, where מְרֵאֵי פְנֵי-הַמֶּלֶךְ³⁴⁴ indicates *royal counsellors* (de Vaux 1960:196-197).]

The idea that those who are *pure in heart* would have favour with God finds testimony in the Targum to Proverbs. Proverbs 22.11 says: אֱהָב טְהוֹרֵ-לֵב חֵן שְׁפָתָיו רַעְהוּ מֶלֶךְ.³⁴⁵ The targumist transforms this to say that רַחֵם אֱלֹהֵא דְכִי לְבָא וּבְחַסְדָּא דְשִׁפּוּתֵיהּ . יִתְחַבֵּר לַמֶּלֶךְ.³⁴⁶

The use of the verb רַחֵם in connection with the דְכִי לְבָא is especially pertinent to this discussion considering the fact that the Aramaic reconstruction of the previous beatitude employs the verb רַחֵם twice. The significance of this beatitude following that of *the merciful*, which has overtones of giving to the poor, gives one reason to remember the cry of the beggar in Leviticus *Rabba* s 34: דְכִי בִי.³⁴⁷ By being merciful (i.e., giving to the poor) one is made pure. This gives confirmation to the idea that the original beatitudes were to be understood as a series in an ascending order (Betz 1995:108).

II.8.3.4 *Midrash on Adultery: Commentary on the Sixth Beatitude*

That Jesus' teaching on adultery (Mt 5.27-32) formed part of his commentary on this beatitude was suggested in the previous chapter, both in Goulder's outline (which in this thesis is suggested to have been a part of the original Aramaic Sermon on the Mount) and

³⁴³ *people who know that they are “living before God” and that they will be received by him.*

³⁴⁴ *those who see the face of the king*

³⁴⁵ *He who loves a pure heart and whose speech is gracious will have the king for his friend.*

³⁴⁶ *God loves the pure in heart and by the graciousness of his lips he will associate with the king.*

³⁴⁷ *Be made pure through me.*

in the revised outline used with the Hebrew translation of the Sermon on the Mount as well as earlier in this chapter. As if to confirm this, the only place in Matthew 5.11-48 that mentions the word heart is here (Mt 5.28).

With this in mind it is easy to see that there is a deliberate contrast being made in 5.28 between *seeing God* and *seeing a woman*. The homiletical application is obvious. To paraphrase:

Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. What are you seeing? That which you see is an indication of the condition of your heart. Thus, if a man looks lustfully at a woman he has already committed adultery in his heart and shows that his heart is not pure but full of evil.

This is directly in line with the addition to Leviticus 9.6 in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan. There, the admonition to the people: אַעֲבְרוּ ית יִצְרָא בִישָׁא מִן לִבְכוּ³⁴⁸ can be construed to indicate coming away from sexual sin.

The Hebrew equivalent of יִצְרָא בִישָׁא would be יִצְרָה הָרַע. Jastrow translates יִצְרָה הָרַע as *sensual passion* ([1903] 1992:590) when it appears in *Avoth* 2.16, along with עֵין הָרַע³⁴⁹ and וְשִׁנְאָת הַבְּרִיּוֹת³⁵⁰ as the characteristics Rabbi Joshua lists which can lead to death (Singer 1962:258). יִצְרָה or יִצְרָה can exist on its own in this way. For example, the word יִצְרָה by itself, as an expression for sexual lust, appears in *Sanhedrin* 107a, where David describes his lust, saying: לִיצְרֵי הוּוּ כִּיפִינָא³⁵¹ (see §II.6.2.1.2).

It is not that Jesus is alluding to Leviticus 9.5 necessarily, but to the thought expressed in the Palestinian Targum tradition there which influenced even how ancient Jews understood Isaiah 57.

³⁴⁸ *rid yourselves of the evil inclination*

³⁴⁹ *evil eye*

³⁵⁰ *hatred of fellow men*

³⁵¹ *my inclination hungers*

Consider the command in Isaiah 57.14: *הָרִימוּ מִכְשׁוֹל מִדֶּרֶךְ עַמִּי*,³⁵² which is given in preparation for the coming of God to *the pure in heart*. This was interpreted in the Talmud as a command to remove *וַיִּצַר הָרָע*³⁵³ (*Succ 52a*).

The emphasis on *seeing* is what prompts the admonition to pluck out an eye if it causes you to sin (Mt 5.29). It is interesting that though the section on adultery is teamed together with that on divorce as commentary on the beatitude for the *pure in heart*, it is only the sin of adultery which is said to be done in one's heart. Divorce in the heart is not condemned in so many words, though there was an idiom for it in ancient Judaism. The term *גְּרוּשַׁת הַלֵּב* occurs in *Nedarim 20b*, interpreted by Jastrow to mean *one whom her husband is determined to divorce* ([1903] 1992:267).

For James, having a *pure heart* means ridding your heart of *ζῆλον πικρόν*³⁵⁴ and *ἐριθείαν*³⁵⁵ (Ja 3.14). He contrasts such *earthly wisdom* in 3.17 with the *wisdom that comes from above* (NIV), which is *first of all pure* (NIV).³⁵⁶ This section (Ja 3.13-18) leads into a section (4.1-12) exhorting Christians to be humble, at peace with one another and to submit to God. Here, as in 2.11 he alludes to the commandments provided as commentary on the Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount. He once again accuses the readers of being guilty of murder (4.2), saying, *φονεύετε καὶ ζηλοῦτε*,³⁵⁷ which he parallels with *μάχεσθε καὶ πολεμεῖτε*.³⁵⁸ Once again he is taking Jesus' application of the commandment not to kill with regard to the fifth beatitude. James then explains why the prayers of these people are not answered: *αἰτεῖτε καὶ οὐ λαμβάνετε, διότι κακῶς αἰτεῖσθε, ἵνα ἐν ταῖς ἡδοναῖς ὑμῶν δαπανήσητε*.³⁵⁹

³⁵² *Remove the obstacles out of the way of my people* (NIV).

³⁵³ *sensual passion*

³⁵⁴ *bitter envy* (NIV)

³⁵⁵ *selfish ambition* (NIV)

³⁵⁶ James also alludes to the seventh beatitude by adding that this wisdom is *ἔπειτα εἰρηνικὴ* [*peace-loving* (NIV)], and the fifth beatitude by adding that it is *μεστὴ ἐλέους* [*full of mercy* (NIV)].

³⁵⁷ *you kill and covet*

³⁵⁸ *you quarrel and fight*

³⁵⁹ *When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures* (NIV).

The Peshitta renders ἐν ταῖς ἡδοναῖς ὑμῶν δαπανήσητε as ܩܘܢܘܢܐܐ ܩܘܢܘܢܐܐ.³⁶⁰ It is tempting to read this as a variation of דַּתְתַּרְסוּן רְנִינְתְּכוֹן. In Rabbinic literature the verb אַרַס means *to betroth*³⁶¹ (Jastrow [1903] 1992:124). This could be translated as *because you would be betrothed to your desire*. Perhaps Jesus' remarks about divorce and remarriage form the context for what James is condemning. This prompts him to call them μοιχαλίδες (4.4). Whatever it was they were praying about, James is saying that they have impure hearts and that according to the Sermon on the Mount such people are, by Jesus' reckoning, *adulterers*.

II.8.3.5 *Midrash on Oaths: Commentary on the Sixth Beatitude*

In addition to the *midrash* on adultery and divorce Jesus adds to the commentary on the sixth beatitude a section on oaths. As suggested earlier, it was easy for a Hebrew speaker to connect this with Psalm 24.4 because of the translation of לְבַא דְרַבִּי as בְּרִי־לִבָּב. Jesus' admonition, in 5.37, to ἔστω δὲ ὁ λόγος ὑμῶν ναὶ ναί, οὐ οὐ³⁶² may have been a common saying. An extremely similar saying appears in the Talmud. In *Baba Metsia* 49a: הן שלך צדק ולא שלך צדק.³⁶³ It is hardly likely that this saying reflects the influence of Jesus. Rather, it shows that there was also within rabbinic circles a distaste for the type of swearing Jesus is speaking out against (Birnbaum 1967:143).

The question is what was the original purpose of bringing in this topic? Part of the answer lies in the fact that this section makes allusion to Isaiah 66.1. Jesus is not content to allude in his teaching to Isaiah 49, 57 and 61. He also wants to bring in Isaiah 66. This, the last chapter in Isaiah, is one of the most apocalyptic of the whole book.

³⁶⁰ דַּתְתַּרְסוּן רְנִינְתְּכוֹן

³⁶¹ אַרַס: *to be betrothed*

³⁶² *Let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No' (NIV).*

³⁶³ *Let your Yes be true and your No be true (cf, Mekh Yithro s 4: על לאו לאו ועל הן הן).*

Allusions to this chapter have already been identified for the first and second beatitudes. In the admonition against oaths in Matthew 5.33-37 a descending list of things not to swear by are given (i.e., Heaven, Earth, Jerusalem and one's head). Three of them are mentioned in Isaiah 66 (Heaven and Earth, 66.1; Jerusalem, 66.10). References to Isaiah 66 carried with them the reminder that God was coming and his glory and his judgement would be seen (66.18).³⁶⁴ This may be one reason this scripture is alluded to in a section commenting on a beatitude that promises that *they will see God*.

The apocalyptic nature of this beatitude only really becomes clear when one understands that it is paired with the following beatitude for the *peacemakers*. In the same way that the first and third beatitudes both allude to Isaiah 66, and the same way that the fourth and fifth beatitudes both allude to Isaiah 49, so the sixth and seventh beatitudes allude to Isaiah 57.

II.8.3.6 How is this Beatitude to be Understood?

As stated in the beginning of this chapter, the only commentators who have suggested a link between this beatitude and Isaiah 61 are those who actually feel that the wording is a mistake and that Jesus actually said: *Blessed are the broken-hearted*. If nothing else one of the more important contributions of this thesis is the way an honest effort has been made to link *the broken-hearted* with *the pure in heart*. The idea that the term *pure in heart* is a play on words with *crushed in heart* also has tremendous implications for exegesis.

As mentioned above, even in ancient times this beatitude was understood in terms of Psalm 24. Thus, modern interpreters and commentaries [e.g., Trites (1992:188), Betz (1995:135), Newman & Stine (1988:116)] would not be entirely wrong in doing the same thing. An important thing to realize, however, is that in interpretations which seek allusions to Jewish Temple purity rites and liturgies (Dupont 1973:557-566), which early Christians must also have done since the Hebrew version lends itself so naturally to this (Ja 4.8-9), the emphasis is placed on purifying one's own heart. Alternatively, seeing this beatitude as an allusion to Isaiah 61.1 (by way of Is 57.15) engenders an interpretation on

³⁶⁴ cf, Stephen's use of Isaiah 66.1 in his sermon in Acts 7.49-50.

how God uses trial and tribulation to purify his people.

As with the Church Fathers, who gave a mystical interpretation to the words *they shall see God* (Betz 1995:108), so modern interpreters have difficulty with this idiom except in so far as it relates to the hereafter (e.g., Newman and Stine 1988:116). It is possible that the Hebrew speaking church also gave this beatitude such an emphasis. Betz (1995:137) suggests that *seeing God* is implied later in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 7.21-23) in terms of the Final Judgement.

The understanding of trial and hardship as a road to purification, with *seeing God* as a term for vindication is found in Job 19.25-27. Giving this beatitude its (rightful?) 'Aramaic' interpretation means connecting *the pure in heart* with *the crushed/broken-hearted* and understanding that God stands ready to vindicate their cause.

Chapter Nine

Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the sons of God.

Matthew 5.9: μακάριοι οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί, ὅτι αὐτοὶ υἱοὶ θεοῦ κληθήσονται

II.9.1 The Seventh Beatitude: An Allusion to Targum Isaiah 57.19

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the seventh beatitude also alludes to Isaiah 57. To be specific, it is an allusion to Isaiah 57.19b. In Hebrew this half of the verse says: *שְׁלוֹם שְׁלוֹם לְרָחוֹק וְלִקְרוֹב אָמַר יְהוָה וּרְפָאתַי*³⁶⁵ This is rendered somewhat differently in the Isaiah Targum: *וְשִׁלְמָא יתְעַבֵּיד לְצַדִּיקָא דְנִטְרוּ אֲוֵרֵיתִי מִלְקַדְמִין*³⁶⁶ *וְשִׁלְמָא יתְעַבֵּד לְחַבְיָא דְחָבוּ לְאֲוֵרֵיתָא קְרִיב*

The allusion to this verse in the seventh beatitude stems from the idiom *to make peace*, used of God, found in the Targum to this verse, not in the Hebrew version. Where the Hebrew text proclaims *peace*, in the Targum God is said to *make peace*.

II.9.1.1 Isaiah 57 in Apocalyptic Thought

A look at the full text of the Targum to Isaiah 57.19 will be helpful:

דְּבַרָּא מִמְלַל סִפּוֹן בְּפוּם כָּל אַנְשָׂא אָמַר נְבִיא שְׁלָמָא יתְעַבֵּיד לְצַדִּיקָא דְנִטְרוּ
 מִלְקַדְמִין וְשִׁלְמָא יתְעַבֵּד לְחַבְיָא דְחָבוּ לְאֲוֵרֵיתָא קְרִיב אָמַר יי וְאַשְׁבוּק
 לְהוֹן אֲוֵרֵיתִי

He that created speech for the lips of the mouth of all men has said: Prophecy, peace will be made for the righteous that have observed my Law from the past and peace will be made for the repentant one who has returned to the Law recently. The LORD has said: I will forgive them.

³⁶⁵ “Peace, peace, to those far and near,” says the LORD. “And I will heal them.”

³⁶⁶ Peace will be made for the righteous that have observed my Law from the past and peace will be made for the repentant one who has returned to the Law recently.

Peace in the targum tradition of Isaiah 57.19 is synonymous with *forgiveness of sin*. Where the Hebrew text says, in this verse, וְרָפְאֵתָיו,³⁶⁷ the Targum says: וְאִשְׁבוֹק לְהוֹן.³⁶⁸ Secondly, *peace* is made for those who have submitted themselves to God and walk in his laws. This entails being in covenant relationship with God, which allows him to act on their behalf. Thirdly, the prophet himself becomes a *peacemaker* by proclaiming the message of *peace* God has spoken. This is not just a prophecy for future events but a call to repentance.

By noting that it is to the Targum tradition and not the Masoretic Text to which this beatitude points, the evidence is once again suggesting that Jesus originally delivered the Beatitudes in Aramaic and that only later were they translated into Hebrew. Of course, the supposition that the Targum of Isaiah 57.19b forms the pivotal allusion for this beatitude cannot simply be assumed. What other basis is there for thinking that this beatitude was formed from an allusion to the version of Isaiah 57.19 found in Targum Jonathan?

The biggest confirmation comes from the fact that the early Church incorporated the targumic interpretation of Isaiah 57.19 in its theology. This can be seen in the way Paul appeals to this verse in Ephesians 2.13-18:

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to you who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit (NIV).

³⁶⁷ *I will heal him.*

³⁶⁸ *I will forgive them.*

Paul is using the Hebrew text but he shows his familiarity with the Targum by his use of such words and idioms as: ποιῶν εἰρήνην³⁶⁹ (15), εὐηγγελίσατο εἰρήνην³⁷⁰ (17), τὸν νόμον³⁷¹ (15).

That Paul relates Isaiah 57.19 to the seventh beatitude (or at least to a theology which it engendered) is quite likely since his whole point is that by *making peace* Jesus has given both Jews and Gentiles *access to the Father* (i.e., they become *sons of God*). Here Paul uses the antithesis resident in the words *near* and *far off* to describe Jews and Gentiles. In a parallel passage in Colossians 1.20 he refers to Christ *making peace* and applies the *near* and *far off* categories from Isaiah 57.19 to *things in heaven* and *things on earth*.³⁷²

II.9.1.2 Making Peace > Peacemaker: Evidence from 4Q246

In the targumic interpretation it is God who will *make peace*. How does mention of God making peace become a call for men to become *peacemakers*, and how does this, in turn, lead to them being called *sons of God*? The answer to this question starts with the manner in which (especially) Isaiah 57, 61, 66 and Daniel 7 were conflated in Jewish apocalyptic thinking. God *makes peace* for those who come to him in repentance and submit to him (Targ Is 57.19). This occurs in the time when God intervenes in the lives of the oppressed (Is 61.1-3). It will be both a Jubilee and a day of judgement (Is 61.2), as God defeats his (and their) enemies and delivers an eternal kingdom to the saints (Dn 7.13-27). The people of God are represented by an eschatological figure who is both Son of Man (Dn 7.13, 27) and Son of God. Those who benefit in this visitation of God then participate with him in reconciling all things – people (Is 66.19) as well as creation (Is 66.22).

³⁶⁹ *making peace*; cf, שְׁלָמָא יַחְעֲבִיד

³⁷⁰ *preached peace*; cf, נְבִיא שְׁלָמָא

³⁷¹ *the Law*; cf, אֲוִרְתָא

³⁷² The vocabulary of several of the Beatitudes (as well as the Lord's Prayer) is present in Colossians chapter one. Paul refers to the *inheritance of the saints* (a reference to Daniel 7.27) as *the kingdom of his (God's) beloved Son* in verses 12-13. He then proceeds to describe Jesus' activity in creation (showing that he associates Jesus with the Jewish conception of the *Memra* of the Lord). It is clear in this passage that Paul equates Jesus' role as peacemaker with his position as the Son of God who has authority over creation.

This can be amply illustrated from an Aramaic text among the Dead Sea Scrolls known as *The Son of God Text* or 4Q246. This work consists of fragments of two columns of text. It is in the pseudo-Daniel tradition (Eisenman & Wise 1992:68) and describes a vision which has great affinity to Daniel 7.13-28. The mention in this scroll of a messianic figure who is termed *the son of God* has received considerable attention since a portion was published in 1974 (Wise et al 1996:268).

Column two, line one states: ברה די אל יתאמר ובר עליון יקרונה.³⁷³ It must be said that this does not necessarily refer to a Jewish Messiah. Some have understood this line to refer to be an earthly king (such as Antiochus Epiphanes) who garners to himself divine appellations (Wise et al 1992:269). Cook goes so far as to say that a careful reading of the text “confirms the ‘Antichrist’ option” (Wise et al 1996:269). However, with all due respect to his abilities as a scholar (as well as to any others who are so like minded), this view should be considered erroneous.

4Q246 column 2 is given by Eisenman and Wise (1992:69; translation mine) as:

- | | |
|------------------------------------------|---|
| ברה די אל יתאמר ובר עליון יקרונה כזיקיא | 1 |
| די חזיתא כן מלכותהן תהוא שנין] ימלכון על | 2 |
| ארעא וכלא ידשון עם לעם ידוש מדינה למדינה | 3 |
| עד יקום עם אל וכלא יניח מן חרב | 4 |
| מלכותה מלכות עלם וכול ארחתה בקשוט יד[ון] | 5 |
| ארעא בקשוט וכלא יעבד שלם חרב מן ארעא יסף | 6 |
| וכל מדינתא לה יסגדון אל רבא באילה | 7 |
| הוא יעבד לה קרב עממין ינתן בידה כלהן | 8 |
| ירמה קדמוהי שלטנה שלטן עלם וכל תהומי | 9 |

1. *He will be said to be the son of God and the son of the Most High he will be called. As the shooting star*
2. *which you saw, so will their kingdom be. Years will they reign upon*

³⁷³ *He will be said (to be) the son of God and they will call him the son of the most high.*

3. *the earth and everyone will be trampling (one another) – people against people and country will trample country.*
4. *Until the people of God rise up. Then everyone will rest from the sword.*
5. *His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and all his ways are in righteousness. He will ju[dge]*
6. *the Earth in righteousness and all will make peace and the sword will cease from the earth*
7. *and every city will bow down to him. The great God, with his help,*
8. *he will wage war for him. Peoples will be given into his hand. All of them*
9. *he will cast away before him. His sovereignty is an eternal sovereignty and all the depths of*

The idea that the figure mentioned is villainous stems from the fact that the first column (1.4) mentions that *עַל אֲרֻעָא עֵקָה תְּהָא*,³⁷⁴ and the figure called *the son of God* appears to be connected to that. The fragmentary nature of the scroll makes it impossible to be sure. Column two (2.4) speaks of continued violence and conflict *עַד יְקוּם עִם אֱלֹהִים*.³⁷⁵ This is a clear reference to the eschatological victory of God and his people over their enemies.

The next line (2.5) speaks not of *their kingdom* but, rather, *his kingdom*³⁷⁶ being an *everlasting kingdom*.³⁷⁷ Is this then the kingdom of the son of God figure or the people of God? Cook flouts the clearly written text and translates *מַלְכוּתָהּ* as *their kingdom* (Wise et al 1996:270). “A careful reading of the text” should have caused Cook to recognize that the author is making an allusion to Daniel 7.27:

Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will obey him (NIV).

³⁷⁴ *Oppression will be on the earth.*

³⁷⁵ *... until the people of God rise up and everyone will rest from the sword.*

³⁷⁶ *מַלְכוּתָהּ*

This verse from Daniel appears to use the word *his* in reference to *the Most High* (i.e., God), but apparently there were those in ancient times (such as the author of 4Q246) who understood it in reference to the figure of the son of man in verse thirteen.³⁷⁸

The terms *God* and *Most High* are routinely used together in Jewish Apocalyptic literature. For example, in the book of Jubilees (12.19) Abraham uses the terms *God* and *Most High* in apposition to one another in a prayer concerning the kingdom of God: *My God, the Most High God, you alone are God to me. And you created everything and everything which is was the work of your hands, and you and your kingdom I have chosen* (Jubilees 12.19). Among the Dead Sea Scrolls: 1QS 4.20-22; 10.11-12; 11.15; 1QH 4.31; 6.33.

In short, these fragments show:

1. A figure (whether *Messiah* or *Anti-Christ*) who is called *the son of God*³⁷⁹ (2.1)
2. His *kingdom is an everlasting kingdom*³⁸⁰ (2.5).
3. This *everlasting kingdom* is established when *the people of God rise up and everyone will rest from the sword*³⁸¹ (2.4).

³⁷⁷ מלכות עלם

³⁷⁸ That the term *son of man*, in its messianic sense, was equated in the first century with the term *son of God* is easily established by referring to Matthew 26.63-64, Mark 14.61-62 and Luke 22.67-70. There in his trial before the Jewish leaders the terms *Christ*, *son of man* and *son of God* (Mark uses the term *son of the blessed one*) are equated. That Jesus is referred to (albeit by demons) as both son of God (Mt 8.29) and son of the Most High (Mk 5.7) is noteworthy. An interesting passage from the Odes of Solomon (36.3) seems to indicate that there was a correlation between the *son of man* in Daniel and the Messiah (anointed one of the Spirit), called the *Son of God: The Spirit brought me forth before the face of the Lord: and, although a son of man, I was named the Illuminate, the Son of God* (Platt 1927:137). The last verse in this Ode (vs 8) says: *And my access to Him was in peace; and I was established by the Spirit of His government. Hallelujah* (Platt 1927:137).

³⁷⁹ ברה די אל יתאמר

³⁸⁰ מלכותה מלכות עלם

³⁸¹ יכום עם אל וכלא יניח מן הרב

4. When the *kingdom* is established it states that *all will make peace and the sword will cease from the earth*³⁸² (2.6) and *all the nations will bow down to him*³⁸³ (2.7).

What is important for the investigation of this beatitude is the way in which vocabulary common to 4Q246 and Matthew 5.9 is understood. How is the one called *the son of God* linked with *making peace*?

In line six, *everyone will make peace* is parallel to *the sword will cease from the earth*. Observe these phrases side by side:

וכלא יעבד שלם
חרב מן ארעא יסף

Line four, in a similar way, states both that *the people of God will rise up* and *everyone will rest from the sword*.

עד יקום עם אל
וכלא יניח מן חרב

Resting from the sword is certainly synonymous with the sword ceasing. The people of God are involved in bringing about an end to warfare. Therefore, it would not be unfair to say that *the people of God* can also be termed *those who make peace* or *peacemakers*. It would then follow that because the making of peace is a prelude to the nations bowing down in worship that *peacemakers*, can be thought of as those who cause the ungodly to worship God.

II.9.1.3 4Q246 and Isaiah 57.19b

Men become *peacemakers* by the אֵל³⁸⁴ of the God who *makes peace*. אֵל is not an especially common word so its presence in 4Q246 2.7 must be noted. אֵל comes at the end of line seven and relates to line eight.

7. וכל מדינתא לה יסגרון אל רבא באילה

³⁸² וכלא יעבד שלם חרב מן ארעא יסף

³⁸³ וכל מדינתא לה יסגרון

³⁸⁴ *patronage, help*

8. הוא יעבד לה קרב עממין ינתן בידה כלהן

7. *and every city will bow down to him. The great God, with his help,*

8. *he will wage war for him. Peoples will be given into his hand. All of them*

It is with God's *help* that *the son of God* can *make war*. It is highly ironic (perhaps intentionally so) that *making war* and *making peace* are, in effect, used synonymously in this text. Both result in people coming under the rule of God. Both require the אֱלֹהֵי of God. The need for the אֱלֹהֵי of God in order to *make war* is amply illustrated here; for *making peace* one can easily find a reference in the *Midrash Tehillim* to Psalm 88.5. This Psalm is the only place in the Bible in which אֱלֹהֵי appears.³⁸⁵ The *Midrash* comments on the psalmist's lament that (Ps 88.5b) *I was as a man without אֱלֹהֵי*³⁸⁶ and adds (referring specifically to Isaiah 57.19) אֵילֹהֵי אֲנִיְלוּ שָׁלֵהּ *were it not for the peacemaking help of the LORD* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:48). To paraphrase: *I would have been a man without help were it not for the fact that God makes peace for the righteous*. Thus, as in 4Q246 the אֱלֹהֵי of God is used to subdue the enemy on behalf of those who belong to God.

II.9.1.4 4Q246 and Isaiah 61

4Q246 2.1 can also be tied to Isaiah 61. The verbs אָמַר and קָרָא are used in verse six of the Isaiah Targum analogously to the way they are used in 4Q246.

Targum Isaiah 61.6	4Q246 2.1
אתון כהניא דיי תתקרן	ברא די אל יתאמר
דמשמשין קדם אלהנא יתאמר	ובר עליון יקרונה

In the same way that *son of God* and *son of the most high* are used synonymously in 4Q246 so *priests* and *ministers before God* (Heb.: *ministers of God*) are used in Isaiah 61.6. In addition, the subjugation of the nations (such as that which 4Q246 describes) by

³⁸⁵ אֱלֹהֵי is a loan word from Aramaic (Brown et al [1906] 1999:33).

³⁸⁶ הייתי כנבד אֵין־אֵיל

God is assumed in Isaiah 61.6 when it says that *you will feed on the wealth of nations and in their riches you will boast* (NIV).

The comparison above between the parallel lines in 4Q246 and Isaiah 61.6 is apt. Whether or not there is an allusion to Isaiah 61.6, the way the words *named* and *called* are used helps to establish certain points in apocalyptic thinking. Those who participate in God's consummation will be called with a new name or designation (cf, Is 62.2, 12).

The fact that the previous beatitude had overtones of serving God in a priestly way is of pertinence here. In Isaiah 61.6 the context suggests that being called a *priest of the LORD* is not for the purpose of representing men before God, but rather, to represent God before the defeated peoples.

This is the key to understanding the vocabulary of the seventh beatitude. *Peacemakers* are those who participate in bringing about God's rule over others. That they are called *sons of God* is symptomatic of the way those who are part of God's kingdom are given a name which suggests they are representatives of God to men (cf, Rev 2.17; 1QM 4.1-17). On another level, Gesenius makes the observation that *to be called* something is often another way of saying what something *is* (e.g., saying that Jerusalem shall be *called* the city of righteous [Is 1.26] is another way of saying that Jerusalem *is* righteous) ([1847] 1979:740). Therefore, the words *they shall be called the sons of God* should be understood as *they will be sons of God*. This suggests not only submission to God but authority and privilege from God.

II.9.2 Reconstruction of this Beatitude into Aramaic and Hebrew

II.9.2.1 Reconstructing εἰρηνοποιός

The word εἰρηνοποιός is a verbal adjective, typical in Hellenistic Greek (Betz 1995:137). This word is especially associated with royal appellations (Betz 1995:138). For instance, Εἰρηνοποιός τῆς οἰκουμένης³⁸⁷ (Dio Cassius 72.15.5) is a royal title. Interestingly, it finds its way into the writings of Philo as a designation for God (*Spec leg* 2.192).

Strack and Billerbeck (1926:215) suggest several idioms as possible antecedents for the Greek word εἰρηνοποιός: עושה שלום, מטיל שלום or משים שלום. It is the first option which is the most natural and which must be used in a reconstruction.

The fact that very early Christian literature shied away from using εἰρηνοποιός (Betz 1995:137) is telling. Perhaps Jewish Christians whose first language was either Hebrew or Aramaic preferred wording closer to the idiom they were used to. Thus, though the verb εἰρηνοποιέω is found in Colossians 1.20, the verbal composite ποιεῖν εἰρήνην could just as easily be employed (e.g., Ja 3.18; Ep 2.15). Thus, in both Matthew 5.9, James 3.18 and Ephesians 2.15 *making peace* represents the Hebrew idiom עָשָׂה שְׁלוֹם; in Aramaic, עֵבֵד שְׁלָמָא. As if to confirm this, we find the verb εἰρηνοποιέω in the Greek versions of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion in Isaiah 27.5 (Arndt & Gingrich 1952:227) as a translation of the Hebrew idiom עָשָׂה שְׁלוֹם.

The plural form εἰρηνοποιοί should be seen as synonymous with the ποιουσιν εἰρήνην of James 3.18. In turn, it should be understood that James is referring to the seventh beatitude. At the same time, it is apparent that James is unacquainted with this beatitude in Greek and so chooses to use the words ποιουσιν εἰρήνην as a direct translation of עוֹשֵׂי שְׁלוֹם.

II.9.2.2 Reconstructing κληθήσονται

The term *called* is most likely to be reconstructed, in both Hebrew and Aramaic, using the root קָרָא. Burney (1925:166) reconstructed κληθήσονται into Aramaic as *yitkerón*.³⁸⁸

The idiom *to be called* (from קָרָא), in Aramaic, is conveyed in rabbinic literature only by the *Ithpe'al* construction (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1418).

Hebrew has several options for rendering *being called*: The *Pu'al*, the *Niph'al* and *Qal* passive of the verb קָרָא, are all used, even in Mishnaic Hebrew, to express *called*

³⁸⁷ ruler of the inhabitable world

³⁸⁸ יתקרין

(Jastrow [1903] 1992:1417-1418). The choice for the reconstruction of this beatitude in Hebrew is based on the analogy (and possible allusion to) Isaiah 61.6, in which one can find the second person, *Niph'al*, imperfect form: תִּקְרָאוּ.

The *Niph'al* used in the context of people being called *sons of God* occurs in a beatitude-like saying attributed to Rabbi Akiba in *Avoth* 3.18: יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁנִּקְרָאוּ בָּנִים לְמִקְוָם (Singer 1962:262-263). This passage goes on to suggest that the origin of the people of God being called *sons of God* goes back to Deuteronomy 14.1a, which reads: בָּנִים אַתֶּם לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם.³⁸⁹ Other verses indicating that the Israelites are God's children include: Dt 32.5, 20; Is 1.2, 4; 30.1, 9; Ps 82.6; Je 3.14, 22; 4.22; 31.20 Ho 2.1.³⁹⁰

There is a problem reconstructing the apodosis into Hebrew in terms of the three-beat rhythm criterion. If, as with all the former beatitudes having an apodosis with ὅτι αὐτοί, the reconstruction begins with שְׂהֵם, then the term *sons of God* needs to be reconstructed in an idiom which only has one beat. It seems to be impossible to get a term in Hebrew for *sons of God* meeting this one-beat imperative. The biblical designations all have at least two beats: בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים (Ps 29.1, 89.7), בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים (Jb 38.7), בְּנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים (Ge 6.4, Jb 1.6, 2.1), בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים (Ps 29.1, 89.7), בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים (Ho 2.1), בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים (Ps 82.6). The only way out of the situation is to forego using שְׂהֵם in the reconstruction. Using the analogy of Rabbi Akiba's words in *Avoth* 3.18 the Hebrew reconstruction of the apodosis will read: שִׁיקְרָאוּ בְּנֵי־אֱלֹהִים.

³⁸⁹ *You are the children of the LORD your God.*

³⁹⁰ Hosea 2.1 (English: 1.9) speaks of בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים [*sons of the living God* (NIV)] as a future designation for Israel. It also shows that a possible antecedent for κληθήσονται in Aramaic could be יִתְאָמַר. Where the Hebrew text says: יִתְאָמַר לָהֶם בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים [*it will be said of them: sons of the living God*], the Septuagint has κληθήσονται υἱοὶ θεοῦ ζῶντος. The Hebrew words לָהֶם יִתְאָמַר are, of course a possibility in a Hebrew reconstruction but a Mishnaic Hebrew speaker may have found them too awkward to use. [Later Hebrew speakers preferred to use the plural participle קוֹרְאִים. Thus, in the Rabbinic Bible, *Eben Ezra* interprets the words לָהֶם יִתְאָמַר from Hosea 2.1 as קוֹרְאִים עֲנַמֶּס (cf. the way קוֹרְאִים לִי is employed in Modern Hebrew to mean *my name is*). Targum Jonathan translates with יִתְאָמַר לְהוֹן. The way this mirrors the use of יִתְאָמַר in 4Q246 2.1 gives a certain amount of room for this as a possibility.

The same problem is also felt in Aramaic. The translator of the Christian Palestinian version tries to balance the beatitude by adding a word in the first hemistich to give each hemistich four beats: $\text{ܠܗܘܝܬܘܢ ܡܠܝܢ ܕܥܒܕܝ ܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ}$ ³⁹¹ (Lewis & Gibson [1899] 1971:62). Burney's reconstruction of the apodosis is *deyitkerón benóy delahá*.³⁹² It may be possible in Aramaic to find an idiom meaning *sons of God* having only one beat but to avoid inventing an idiom that has no analogies Burney's reconstruction will be accepted.³⁹³ All the ancient Aramaic versions agree on using the relative pronoun, expressing the genitive, before the word *God* (thus, ܕܥܠܡܐ ³⁹⁴). The Old Syriac and Peshitta agree on adding the anticipative pronominal suffix to the word *sons* (thus, ܘܒܢܝܗܘܢ ³⁹⁵). That, stylistically, an anticipative pronominal suffix before the word *God* sounded better to Aramaic speakers in the first century one need only look again at ܕܝ ܐܠ ܒܪܗܝܢ in 4Q246 2.1.³⁹⁶

II.9.2.3 Hebrew and Aramaic Reconstructions

Aramaic

$\text{ܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܗܝܝܢ ܕܥܒܕܝܢ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ}$

Hebrew

$\text{אשרי עושי שלום שיקראו בני־אלהים}$

³⁹¹ $\text{ܘܒܝܗܘܢ ܗܝܝܢ ܕܥܒܕܝܢ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ}$

³⁹² $\text{ܕܝܬܩܪܘܢ ܒܢܘܝ ܕܥܠܡܐ}$

³⁹³ Biblical Aramaic is too scanty to help much. However, in Ezra 6.16 we find ܒܢܝܗܘܢ ܕܥܠܡܐ having only one beat.

³⁹⁴ ܕܥܠܡܐ

³⁹⁵ [ܕܒܢܘܝܗܘܢ] ܘܒܢܝܗܘܢ ; The Peshitta actually reads: ܘܒܢܝܗܘܢ .

³⁹⁶ In opposition to this stands ܕܝ ܐܠ ܒܪܗܝܢ in Daniel 3.25.

II.9.3 What Does This Beatitude Mean?

II.9.3.1 Being a Peacemaker

The fact that εἰρηνοποιός goes back to the words עוֹשֵׂי שְׁלוֹם or עֲבָדֵינִי שְׁלָמָא does not limit the use of other idioms for *producing peace* from giving guidance on how to understand this beatitude. For instance, consider the different ways *Berachot* 64a uses to express *imparting peace*. One can bless another with *peace* by saying: שְׁלוֹם רָב לְ, שְׁלוֹם, וְהִי-שְׁלוֹם, אֲדַבְּרָה-נָא שְׁלוֹם בָּךְ, and יִי יִבְרַךְ אֶת-עַמּוֹ בְּשְׁלוֹם. Those employing these blessings on others *increase peace*³⁹⁷ in this world.

That God *makes peace* is certainly a part of ancient Jewish tradition. Numbers *Rabba* 13.16 declares that God עוֹשֶׂה שְׁנֵי שְׁלוֹמוֹת³⁹⁸ *peace above and peace below* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1579). This ancient understanding is confirmed in the *Kaddish* (a Jewish prayer in Hebrew and Aramaic which goes back to the time of Jesus (Jeremias 1971:198). It closes in Hebrew with the words עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו הוּא בְּרַחֲמָיו יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל-כָּל-יִשְׂרָאֵל³⁹⁹ (Singer 1962:16). This background may be what allows Paul to stretch his allusion to Isaiah 57.19 in Colossians 1.20 and assert that God was dwelling in Christ: δι' ἀποκαταλλάξαι τὰ πάντα εἰς αὐτόν, εἰρηνοποιήσας διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ σταυροῦ, δι' αὐτοῦ εἴτε τὰ ἐπὶ γῆς εἴτε τὰ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.⁴⁰⁰

II.9.3.1.1 Midrash on Love: A Commentary on this Beatitude in Hebrew

Matthew 5.43-48 originally formed part of Jesus' comments on the beatitude for the *merciful*. *OMatthew* has edited these verses so that it provides commentary on the beatitudes for the *peacemakers* and *the persecuted* (see §II.7.4.1.1). He has understood Jesus' comments interpreting the *lex talionis* and loving one's enemies as a practical application of this beatitude. This includes prayer. Thus, those who love their enemies and pray for those who persecute them *will be sons of their Father in heaven* (Mt 5.45).

³⁹⁷ מְרַבִּים שְׁלוֹם

³⁹⁸ *makes two (types of) peace*

³⁹⁹ *The one making peace in his heights, he in his mercies will make peace upon us and upon all Israel.*

II.9.3.1.2 *Midrash on Murder: A Commentary on this Beatitude in Aramaic*

OMatthew interpreted the term peacemaker in a moral sense, not an apocalyptic sense. The original Aramaic beatitude was given a much different interpretation than the Hebrew one. The original application Jesus made to this beatitude is to be gleaned out of the *midrash* on Murder in Matthew 5.21-26. Reconciliation is given an urgency based on the threat of Hell (which was only used in this section of the commentary).⁴⁰¹

The example Jesus gives of leaving one's gifts (in this context: *peace offerings*) by the altar in order first to be reconciled with a brother may be based on ancient teaching on making *peace offerings*. The *Sifra VaYikra* (par 13, ch 16) makes a pun on שְׁלָמִים,⁴⁰² saying: מִי שֶׁהוּא שָׁלֵם מְבִיא שְׁלָמִים.⁴⁰³ This *wholeness* is in contrast to being אֹנֵן [Jastrow: *mourner* ([1903] 1992:85, 1586)]. Thus, the אֹנֵן was prohibited from coming to offer *peace offerings*. The word אֹנֵן was not only used for someone *mourning the death of someone* but also for someone who felt wronged by another. It is this person Jesus has in mind when he speaks of ὁ ἀδελφός σου ἔχει τι κατὰ σοῦ.⁴⁰⁴ Certainly, such a person could take another to court for redress of payment in the manner Matthew 5.25-26 describes (yB *Mets* 4.9d).⁴⁰⁵

To paraphrase: *If you are busy making a peace offering at the Temple and remember that your brother feels wronged by you, leave your gifts by the altar. Go and make peace with him first. This will allow him to be whole (at peace) and then also come and offer a peace offering and you will have truly been a peace maker.*

Rabbi Eliezer ben Jose the Galilean (c 150) described Aaron as one who *loved peace, pursued peace and made peace between a man and his fellow* (tSan 1.2). The

⁴⁰⁰ *through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross* (NIV).

⁴⁰¹ Mt 5.29-30 has been added, taken from 18.8-9.

⁴⁰² *peace offerings*

⁴⁰³ *He who is whole may bring peace offerings.*

⁴⁰⁴ *your brother who has something against you*

⁴⁰⁵ It may be that Mt 5.25-26 has been injected into this passage from another context; see §II.7.4.1.b.3.

understanding of *making peace* as reconciliation is quite common in Talmudic literature. Paul, as already quoted, equates peacemaking with reconciliation to God. But, he also understands the horizontal nature of reconciliation and seeks to establish that the basis for the unity of the Church (both Jewish and Gentile) comes from the reconciling work of the cross. He combines the reconciliation of man to man as well as man to God in Christ's role as peacemaker who removes the *dividing wall of hostility* in Ephesians 2.11-22. In verses 17-18 he says, *He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit* (NIV). Though he does not refer to believers as peacemakers he certainly suggests that their role is one of reconciling men to God.

II.9.3.2 What it Means to be a Son of God

The words of Rabbi Akiba in *Avoth* 3.18, mentioned earlier, give evidence that being *sons of God* entailed being greatly loved by God. He first says: חֲבִיבִים יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁנִּקְרְאוּ בְּנֵי לְמִקְוֶם⁴⁰⁶ (Singer 1962:262-263). He then reiterates this again saying: חֲבִיבֵי הַחֵן יִתְרָה נִדְרְעַת לָהֶם שֶׁנִּקְרְאוּ בְּנֵי לְמִקְוֶם⁴⁰⁷ (Singer 1962:263).

The use of the term *sons of God*, as a designation won for themselves by righteous people during their sojourn on earth is striking in the Apocrypha. Wisdom 2.10-20 is an interesting passage in which the wicked reason about oppressing the *righteous man who is poor*.⁴⁰⁸ Verse thirteen says that *a son of the Lord he calls himself*.⁴⁰⁹ The Peshitta, significantly, has instead: *he says in himself that I am a son of God*.⁴¹⁰

⁴⁰⁶ *Beloved are Israel because they are called sons of God* (The use of the word מִקְוֶם [place] is a common rabbinic circumlocution for God.).

⁴⁰⁷ *Through an extraordinary love it was made known to them that they were called sons of God.*

⁴⁰⁸ πένητα δίκαιον

⁴⁰⁹ παῖδα κυρίου ἑαυτὸν ὀνομάζει

⁴¹⁰ אָמַר בְּלִבּוֹ שֶׁאֲנִי בֶן לַיהוָה

Wisdom 2.16 goes on to make the beatitude-like statement that *he declares blessed the end of the righteous and boasts of having God for his father*.⁴¹¹ Most instructive is the conclusion the wicked draw in verse eighteen: *if the virtuous man is God's son, God will take his part and rescue him from the clutches of his enemies* (JB).⁴¹² This suggests that part of the point of the peacemakers being called sons of God is that there is an inherent promise that God will manifest his power on their behalf. Similarly, when recounting the exodus from Egypt, Wisdom 18.13 says that divine intervention on Israel's behalf caused the Egyptians to acknowledge Israel to be God's son.

The book of Wisdom also equates the righteous *sons of God* with the saints. In chapter five the unrighteous face the final judgement whereupon they see the righteous man with God. In surprise, they ask (vs 5): *how is he counted among the sons of God and (how) is his inheritance among the saints?*⁴¹³ This immediately brings to mind the inheritance the saints of the Most High will receive in Daniel 7.18, 27 and, indeed, it is not unlikely that Daniel's words were at least in the back of the writer's mind here.

II.9.3.3 James 3.18: Commentary on the Seventh Beatitude

James 3.18 is likely an allusion to this beatitude. As stated earlier, the words ποιούσιν εἰρήνην seem to suggest that James does not know this beatitude in Greek and is translating from a Hebrew beatitude. Examining James 3.18 as a reference to the seventh beatitude may mean that the understanding of this verse, as reflected in various Bible translations, must be revised. Observe:

καρπὸς δὲ τῆς δικαιοσύνης ἐν εἰρήνῃ σπείρεται τοῖς ποιούσιν εἰρήνην.

KJV: *And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.*

NIV: *Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.*

The dative, neuter participle τοῖς ποιούσιν can be understood several ways. The NIV and the KJV understand the case here in an instrumental sense. If one were to see this as a reference to the seventh beatitude then the translation would be more like: *But the*

⁴¹¹ μακαρίζει ἐσχάτα δικαίων καὶ ἀλαζονεύεται πατέρα θεόν.

⁴¹² εἰ γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ δίκαιος υἱὸς θεοῦ, ἀντιλήμψεται αὐτοῦ καὶ ῥύσεται αὐτὸν ἐκ χειρὸς ἀνθεστηκότων.

⁴¹³ πῶς κατελογίσθη ἐν υἱοῖς θεοῦ καὶ ἐν ἀγίοις ὁ κληρὸς αὐτοῦ ἐστίν.

harvest (fruit) of righteousness in peace is sown for the peacemakers. The idiom καρπὸς δικαιοσύνης is a reference to salvation and was likely influenced by Proverbs 11.30 which likens *the fruit of the righteous* to a *tree of life*. This line comes at the end of a passage in which James is contrasting the wisdom that is earthly with that which is heavenly. By ending this way James is, in effect, saying that those who follow the heavenly wisdom are the peacemakers of the seventh beatitude since they will be emulating God's attributes (thus, proving to be sons of God) and will inherit the kingdom of heaven (cf, Ph 1.11).

The addition to καρπὸς δικαιοσύνης of the words ἐν εἰρήνῃ should not be understood to mean that the sowing is *in peace* but that the harvest of righteousness is *in peace*. This would correspond well with the idiom καρπὸς εἰρηνικὸς δικαιοσύνης⁴¹⁴ found in Hebrews 12.11:

πάσα δὲ παιδεία πρὸς μὲν τὸ παρὸν οὐ δοκεῖ χαρᾶς εἶναι, ἀλλὰ λύπης· ὕστερον δὲ καρπὸν εἰρηνικὸν τοῖς δι' αὐτῆς γεγυμνασμένοις ἀποδίδωσιν δικαιοσύνης.

No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it (NIV).

Just as the καρπὸς of James 3.18 is related to the ποιῶντα εἰρήνην by the dative case, so the καρπὸς of Hebrews 12.11 is related to the γεγυμνασμένοι by the dative case. In each instance the dative case should be understood as indicating its noun as a recipient of the καρπός.

II.9.3.4 Hebrews 12.11: Commentary on the Seventh Beatitude

Hebrews 12.11 may also have the seventh beatitude in mind. It caps a section on how God treats those who are his sons. The *peaceful harvest of righteousness* is said to be *awarded* to these sons of God. This brings up an aspect of *being called sons of God* not previously mentioned. The use of this idiom in 4Q246 2.1 confirms that the name one receives is, in some measure, a name which has been won. Indeed, this is the basis that the writer of the book of Hebrews uses to show that the name of Jesus is superior to the

names of angels (He 1.2-4). Therefore, it would not be out of line to say that by being *peacemakers*, by participating in bringing this world into submission to God, the people of God win for themselves the right to be considered *sons of God* (cf, Re 1.15-18; 12.11).

II.9.3.5 How is this Beatitude to be Understood?

The question has been asked (Newman & Stine 1988:116): *Who are the peacemakers spoken of in this verse? Are they people who make peace between man and God or between man and man?* The research in this thesis indicates that both answers are true. The application Jesus gave to this beatitude of making peace with a brother before offering a sacrifice may be stretched to include both interpretations. As mentioned above, only those who were כָּלֵךְ [whole] could offer sacrifice before the Lord. By *making peace* with the estranged brother he then becomes *whole* and is able to *make peace* with God as well.

To impose on being *called sons of God* a christological meaning is to obscure the more natural emphasis which was on being the people or the *saints* of God. Though this certainly had eternal implications there would have been an implicit understanding that God is ready to intervene in the lives of men on earth. It is not only for the next life that *peacemakers* are to be called *sons of God*.

⁴¹⁴ *the peaceful fruit of righteousness*

Chapter Ten

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven

Matthew 5.10: μακάριοι οἱ δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν

II.10.1 Reconstructing this Beatitude in Aramaic and Hebrew

The good news about this beatitude is that half of the job of reconstructing it is already done for us. The fact that both the first and the eighth beatitudes end with the same apodosis confirms that they are meant to enclose the corpus (Goulder 1974:186). It also means that the same reconstructions given for the words in the first beatitude will also be used here.

Hebrew

שְׁלֵהֶם מְלִכּוּת הַשָּׁמַיִם

Aramaic

דְּדִהוֹן מְלִכּוּתָא דְּשָׁמַיָא

II.10.1.1 Reconstructing ἕνεκεν

Burney's reconstruction of the first hemistich is *tubehón dirdiphín begén desidka*⁴¹⁵ (1925:166). His use of בְּגִין to represent ἕνεκεν is not matched by any of the Syriac versions (which all use ܠܘܥܘܩܐ⁴¹⁶) or the Christian Palestinian version which uses ܠܒܕܝܠ⁴¹⁷. His choice may possibly represent a more Palestinian word than that of the Christian Palestinian version.

⁴¹⁵ טוביהון דרדפין בגין דצדקא

⁴¹⁶ מטל

⁴¹⁷ לבדיל

To illustrate, in Genesis 12.13 the Hebrew word לְמַעַן is translated in Targum Onkelos (representing a more Babylonian tradition) as בְּדִיל and by (the more Palestinian) Targum Pseudo-Jonathan as בְּגִין.

The biggest problem with all of these options is that to maintain the three-beat rhythm there is no room for a hemistich with four words, each one receiving one beat. Burney, of course, sees the problem and addresses it: “It is only when we reach no. 8 that we are faced by a somewhat unwieldy line of four stresses; and the possibility suggests itself that this may originally have run *tubehón deradphín lesidká dedilehón malkutá dišmayyá*” (1925:168). The suggestion that ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης goes back to לְצַדִּיקָא seems, in light of the rhythmic pattern so far proved consistent, to be a much better suggestion. Burney suggests that the original beatitude was addressed to those *who pursue righteousness* and that the לְ prefix was “misunderstood in the sense ‘for,’” causing the active participle לְרַדְפִּין [*pursue*] to be understood as רַדְפִּין⁴¹⁸ (1925:168). This begs the question: how likely is it that native Aramaic speakers would misunderstand Aramaic grammar?

II.10.1.1.1 A Case of Misunderstanding לְ

The answer to the question above is that such things do occur. An excellent case in point was uncovered while doing research for this thesis. It began with the search for a Hebrew equivalent of ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης. In Isaiah 42.21 the term לְמַעַן צְדָקוֹ [*for his righteousness’ sake*] occurs. This verse is first paraphrased and then quoted by the tannaitic rabbi, Chananya son of Akashya, in *Avoth* 1.18. Examining this passage brought an interesting case of “misunderstanding” to light. Here is the quotation:

רָצָה הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְזָכוֹת אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל לְפִיכָךְ הִרְבָּה לָהֶם תּוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת
 רַדְפִּין (Singer 1962:254).

The Holy One, blessed be he, was pleased to purify Israel. Therefore, he increased the Torah and the commandments to them, as it is said: the LORD, for his righteousness’ sake, delighted to magnify and glorify the Torah.

⁴¹⁸ *pursued, persecuted*

The quotation is exactly as the verse appears in the Masoretic Text, except for the stylistic change of the Tetragrammaton to יי. The Targum translates Isaiah 42.21 as:

יִי רְעִי בְּדִיל לְזַכְּאוֹתֶיהָ וְיִשְׂרָאֵל וְרַבֵּי לְעֲבָדֵי אֲוִרְיָתֶיהָ וְיַחֲקִיף וְיַתְהוֹן

The LORD was pleased on account of justifying Israel and he magnified the servants of his Law and he will strengthen them.

A quick comparison of the vocabulary of the Hebrew verse with the Targum and the Hebrew paraphrase of Rabbi Chananya reveals a journey of misinterpretation and reapplication of Isaiah 42.21.

Hebrew	Targum	Chananya
חֲפִיז	רְעִי	רְצָה ⁴¹⁹
לְמַעַן	בְּדִיל	
צָדִיק	לְזַכְּאוֹתֶיהָ	לְזִכּוֹת
	וְיִשְׂרָאֵל	אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל
		לְפִיכָף
וְיַגְדִּיל	רַבֵּי	הַרְבֵּה
	לְעֲבָדֵי	לְהֵם
תּוֹרָה	אֲוִרְיָתֶיהָ	תּוֹרָה וּמִצְוֹת
וְיַאֲדִיר	וְיַחֲקִיף	
	וְיַתְהוֹן	

It is clear that though Chananya's words are preserved in Hebrew, either he was thinking in Aramaic or these words have been translated from Aramaic, for his interpretation of Isaiah 42.21 is according to a modified version of what appears in the Targum. The Targum itself represents the second stage (at least) of Aramaic rendering of the Hebrew text. What is unclear is whether or not the changes made were based on misunderstanding or deliberate theological reinterpretation.

⁴¹⁹ This is also in line with *Mtzudat Tzion* commentary in the margin of the Rabbinic Bible which comments that [חֲפִיז עֵינֵי רַצוֹן] חֲפִיז עֵינֵי רַצוֹן.

Rabbi Chananya's paraphrase is notable for the way it uses לְזַכּוֹת אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל to paraphrase צְדָקָן. Let us examine this phrase in more detail. As it stands Rabbi Chananya's paraphrase doesn't seem to be saying the same thing as Isaiah 42.21. As an interpretation of that verse it only really makes sense when one sees it next to Targum Jonathan's translation: לְזַכּוֹתֵיהָ יִשְׂרָאֵל.

It seems clear what has happened. The words לְפִשְׁעוֹ צְדָקָן⁴²⁰ were translated into Aramaic as בְּדִיל לְזַכּוֹתֵיהָ.⁴²¹ The form זַכּוֹתֵיהָ can also mean *justifying him*.⁴²² It was a short jump to take the word *his* to be in reference to Israel rather than to God. At this point the possessive pronominal suffix was taken to be an anticipative pronominal suffix and, for clarification, יִשְׂרָאֵל⁴²³ [*Israel*] was subsequently added.

Codex Reuchlinianus gives evidence for what happened next. Its reading of this verse has בְּדִיל זְכוּתֵיהָ דִישְׂרָאֵל [*on account of Israel's merit*] (Stenning 149:165). Through mistranscription לְזַכּוֹתֵיהָ became: לְזְכוּתֵיהָ.⁴²⁴

The form זְכוּתֵיהָ in Codex Reuchlinianus is missing the לְ prefix used to introduce the direct accusative. Perhaps one of the reasons this change was made was in reaction to those who read לְזְכוּתֵיהָ as לְזַכּוֹתֵיהָ,⁴²⁵ seeing the לְ prefix as a preposition introducing an infinitive of זָכַי.⁴²⁶

⁴²⁰ *for his righteousness' sake*

⁴²¹ *on account of his justifying*

⁴²² This form can mean *justifying himself* as well. The Targum to Job (32.2) uses זַכּוֹתֵיהָ with reference to Job's *justifying himself*. (Heb: צְדָקָן).

⁴²³ BM Or. 2211 reads: דִישְׂרָאֵל (Stenning 1949:143).

⁴²⁴ Stenning (1949:xxi) understands the process to be the other way around, that זְכוּתֵיהָ has, through mistranscription become לְזַכּוֹתֵיהָ.

⁴²⁵ *to justify, purify*

⁴²⁶ This was a natural mistake as infinitive forms ending in מ in the targums are often used with suffixes (Stevenson 1962:53).

Perhaps בְּדִיל was considered to be misplaced, referring to אֲרִיִּתִּיהָ instead of לְזִכְאוֹתֶיהָ. This appears to be the interpretation that the community Rabbi Chananya belonged to must have had. Their targum tradition would have been: לְאֲרִיִּתָּא וּפִיקוּדָיָא לְהוֹן לְזִכְאוֹתֶיהָ יִשְׂרָאֵל וּבְדִיל רַבִּי.⁴²⁷ All of this does not prove Burney's theory correct. It only means that it is viable and must be kept in mind.

II.10.1.1.2 ἔνεκεν = ל: The Witness of the Hebrew Matthew of Shem Tov

The Hebrew version of Matthew known to Shem Tov has used ל in just the way Burney suggests for an Aramaic reconstruction. Its reading of the eighth beatitude is: אֲשֶׁר־הַנְּדַרְפִּים לְצַדֵּק שְׁלֵהֶם מַלְכוּת שָׁמַיִם. Though Howard suggests (1995:178) that the origin of this version of Matthew ultimately goes back to the early church (certainly he does prove that it goes back hundreds of years earlier than Shem Tov), it is best to view the use of ל here as a legitimate recognition by a Jewish scribe of how ἔνεκεν should be rendered in a Hebrew version of this beatitude.

Whether Shem Tov's version represents excellent guesswork or reflects access to an ancient Hebrew Matthew tradition the reading he gives (with one minor change) will be used in this thesis as the basis for the Hebrew reconstruction of this beatitude. The only change is to substitute צַדִּיקָה for צַדִּיק. The motivation for this will be given later.

II.10.1.2 Reconstructing δικαιοσύνης

As Shem Tov suggests, a Hebrew version would use צַדִּיק or צַדִּיקָה. This brings up the question, just what Aramaic word stands behind δικαιοσύνης? A variety of possibilities is attested by those who would put this beatitude into Aramaic, both in ancient and in modern times.

⁴²⁷ *The LORD was pleased to justify Israel. And therefore, he increased the Law and the commandments to them.*

Burney's reconstruction employs the word used in the Christian Palestinian version of this beatitude, צִדְקָא. The Jewish Aramaic equivalent of the Old Syriac and Harclean versions⁴²⁸ would be צִדְקוּתָא. The Peshitta uses כַּחֲמִיל,⁴²⁹ which corresponds to the Jewish Aramaic כִּיּוֹנָתָא. To this list should also be added זְכָאוּתָא from the Targum to Isaiah 42.21.

None of these versions reflect what is probably the correct word to use in an Aramaic reconstruction: קוּשְׁטָא. The Targum to Isaiah clearly prefers to use the word קוּשְׁטָא⁴³⁰ to either צִדְקָא or צִדְקוּתָא when translating the Hebrew word צִדְקָה. כִּיּוֹנָתָא is never used to translate צִדְקָה. Though the Targum uses זְכָאוּתָא to translate צִדְקָה in verse 42 of Isaiah 42, it uses קוּשְׁטָא in verse six.

Why is this important? It is because the word קוּשְׁטָא means not only *righteousness* but it also means *truth* (see §II.6.2.3). In the same way that Jesus exploits the way the Aramaic כַּחֲמִיל has a broad enough semantic range to take in the meanings of both Hebrew צִדְקָה and אֱמֶת, so he uses the fact that קוּשְׁטָא can take in the meanings of both Hebrew צִדְקָה and אֱמֶת when he gives application to this beatitude (see §II.10.2).

The dual use of this word can be demonstrated, appropriately enough, from the Targum to Isaiah 61. The word קוּשְׁטָא is used (to translate צִדְקָה) in verse three. In verse eight, the similar קוּשְׁטָא is found as a translation of אֱמֶת [*truth*].

⁴²⁸ יוּסְטִיָּא

⁴²⁹ כַּחֲמִיל

⁴³⁰ This can also be written קוּשְׁטָא; Jastrow considers this to be two spellings of the same word ([1903] 1992:1429).

II.10.1.3 Reconstructing δεδιωγμένοι

One thing all the ancient Aramaic versions agree on is that the word δεδιωγμένοι should be rendered in Aramaic using the verb ܕܕܝܗܝܢ. The Old Syriac, Harclean and Christian Palestinian versions use the passive participle ܕܕܝܗܝܢܐ.⁴³¹ The Peshitta uses the passive form ܕܕܝܗܝܢܐ.⁴³² Similarly, Shem Tov chooses to use the Hebrew equivalent ܕܕܝܗܝܢ.⁴³³ Therefore, for both Hebrew and Aramaic the reconstruction of δεδιωγμένοι will employ the root ܕܕܝܗܝܢ.

A quick look at the Brown, Driver Briggs Hebrew Lexicon under the root ܕܕܝܗܝܢ is instructive ([1906] 1999:922-923). It reveals that there are several scriptures that combine the word *righteousness* with this verb. The two most important ones will be examined here.

II.10.1.3.1 An Allusion to Deuteronomy 16.20

The first is Deuteronomy 16.20. It reads:

צַדִּיק צַדִּיק תִּדְרֹךְ לְמַעַן תַּחְיֶה וְנִרְשַׁתְּ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ נֹתֵן לָךְ
Righteousness, righteousness, you must pursue, thereby you will live and possess the land the LORD your God is giving you.

The themes found in Deuteronomy 16.20 fit in well with the Beatitudes. If it were suggested that the command to *pursue righteousness* were changed to the statement *you will be persecuted because of righteousness*, the altering of the wording would bring out an eschatological interpretation very useful for a community experiencing persecution.⁴³⁴

It would indicate that those formerly commanded to *pursue righteousness* are now in the

⁴³¹ ܕܕܝܗܝܢ; Two out of the three Christian Palestinian witnesses use the form ܕܕܝܗܝܢܐ (Lewis & Gibson [1899] 1971:62).

⁴³² ܕܕܝܗܝܢܐ; Jastrow gives no examples of Jewish Aramaic using either the 'Ithpe 'al or the 'Ithpa 'el constructions for the verb ܕܕܝܗܝܢ ([1903] 1992:1453), but ܕܕܝܗܝܢܐ can be seen among the Dead Sea Scrolls (4Q521 1.3.1).]

⁴³³ It appears as a *Niph 'al* plural participle, construct form: ܕܕܝܗܝܢܐ.

present dispensation *persecuted (pursued) because of righteousness* and by staying true they thereby win the reward of *eternal life*; they *inherit*, not the land, but *the kingdom of heaven*.

The lack of direct allusion to the Pentateuch mitigates against Deuteronomy 16.20 being the sole inspiration of this beatitude. All along the allusions in the Beatitudes have either come from Isaiah 61 or another scripture from Isaiah used in conflation with Isaiah 61. So, the question is: is it possible to find an allusion from Isaiah that both fits this beatitude and could also be considered an allusion to Deuteronomy 16.20? This is a tough enough problem but to this must be added the criterion that such an allusion must also show that it has in some way been joined or linked with Isaiah 61 in ancient times.

II.10.1.3.2 An Allusion to Isaiah 51.1

A possible candidate which meets the criteria above is Isaiah 51.1. This verse reads:

שִׁמְעוּ אֵלַי רְדָפֵי צְדָק מִבְּקוּשֵׁי יְהוָה הַבִּיטוּ אֶל-צוּר חֲצֵבְתֶם וְאֶל-מִקְבַּת בּוֹר
נִקְרְתֶם

Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness and seek the LORD: Look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn (NIV).

It is possible that the use of רְדָפֵי צְדָק by Isaiah is an allusion to Deuteronomy 16.20, but there is nothing in the context to prove it. Nonetheless, Deuteronomy 16.20 may have ‘hovered’ over this idiom in the minds of first-century Jews, thus allowing an allusion to Isaiah 51.1 to also be an allusion to Deuteronomy 16.20.

Aside from an allusion to Deuteronomy 16.20, is there evidence that this chapter (particularly the mention of the רְדָפֵי צְדָק in verse one) was linked by ancient Judaism with Isaiah 61? Like Isaiah 61, chapter 51 concerns the final consummation in which the salvation and judgement of God are both revealed.

⁴³⁴ That this beatitude was created for a community going through such crisis has been suggested (e.g.,

II.10.1.3.2.a Evidence from 4Q298

Among the Dead Sea Scrolls, a definite allusion to Isaiah 51.1 can be seen in 4Q298. The text begins in a normal Hebrew script but after the address⁴³⁵ changes to a cryptic script (Eisenman & Wise 1992:165). The allusion to Isaiah 51.1 comes at the start of this cryptic script. It amounts to an enlargement and expansion of the first half of this verse.

4Q298 1.1b-2

הַאֲזִינֵנוּ לִי כִּי אֲנֹכִי לֵבב 1

2 [וְרוּן] דְּפִי צְדָקָה חַבִּי[נָו] בְּמַלְי וּמְבַקְשֵׁי אֱמוּנָה [שׁ]מְעָן לְמַלְי

1. *Listen to me all men of heart,*
2. *and those who pursue righteousness: understand my words! And those who seek Faith: hear my words!*

That speaking of the צְדָקָה דְּפִי may also have brought to mind Deuteronomy 16.20 can be concluded by the fact that later in this text those termed אֲנָשִׁי אֱמוּנָה⁴³⁶ are told, רַדְפוּ צְדָקָה⁴³⁷ (4Q298 3.7). In addition, the third line on the first column (which is so fragmentary that very few whole words are found at all) has an admonition to *obtain a long life* (Eisenman & Wise 1992:164),⁴³⁸ which fits nicely with Deuteronomy's *you will live*.

Finding an allusion to Isaiah 61 as well is not so easy. The remains of this text are extremely fragmentary, with very few complete lines. Yet, various words are found which might have been inspired by the vocabulary of Isaiah 61.⁴³⁹ Scholars have also found in this text indirect allusions to Isaiah 40.1-3 (Eisenman & Wise 1992:164) as well as Micah 6.8 (Wise et al 1999:295).

Derrett 1978:195).

⁴³⁵ The first words of line one are: *The words of the Maskil (Teacher) that he spoke to all the sons of Dawn* (Eisenman & Wise 1992:165).

⁴³⁶ *men of truth*

⁴³⁷ *pursue righteousness*

⁴³⁸ The reconstruction of these words presented by Eisenman & Wise is: (1992:164). הַיְיָ [אֲדַרְךָ] הַיְיָ

⁴³⁹ e.g., עָנָו [poor] (3.8 cf, Is 61.1); מִשְׁפַּט [justice] (3.8, cf, Is 61.8); עָפָר [dust] (2.4, cf, Is 61.3 [אֶפֶר: ashes]).

II.10.1.3.2.b Other Evidence from Qumran

One of the most important texts from among the Dead Sea Scrolls for comparison with the words of Jesus with regard to allusion to Isaiah 61 is 4Q521. This work has been mentioned several times in this thesis. Yet again there may be help for seeing what other scriptures were joined to or conflated with Isaiah 61. In fragment 1, column 3, line 1 appear the words: וְאֵת חוֹק יִתְרַדֵּף אַתָּה אוֹתָם.⁴⁴⁰ There is no way to prove this is an allusion to either Deuteronomy 16.20 or Isaiah 55.1.

Aramaic portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls seem to have also used Isaiah 55.1. In 4Q541 fragment 2, column 2, line eight are the words רַדֵּף לָהּ וּבְעֵי לָהּ (Eisenman & Wise 1992:144).⁴⁴¹

II.10.1.4 רַדֵּיפִי קוֹשָׁטָא = רַדֵּיפִי צְדָקָא

Knowing that there is precedent for the use of רַדֵּיפִי צְדָקָא as an allusion to Isaiah 55.1 allows a certain amount of confidence to proceed. Targum Jonathan translates Isaiah 51.1's רַדֵּיפִי צְדָקָא as רַדֵּיפִי קוֹשָׁטָא. In this Jonathan is being consistent with the targumic tradition surrounding Deuteronomy 16.20. Observe:

Deuteronomy 16.20a:

Hebrew: צְדָקָא צְדָקָא תְּרַדֵּף

Onkelos: קוֹשָׁטָא קוֹשָׁטָא תְּרַדֵּף

Neofiti: קוֹשָׁטָא קוֹשָׁטָא תְּרַדֵּף

Pseudo-Jonathan: דִּין קָשׁוּט וּדִין שְׁלָם בְּקָשׁוּט תְּהִי רַדֵּיפִי⁴⁴²

Thus, at no time do any of the targums suggest that it is צְדָקָא which must be *pursued*; it is consistently קוֹשָׁטָא, and this becomes the basis for the reconstruction of this beatitude.

⁴⁴⁰ ... and Law will be pursued. I will release them.

⁴⁴¹ Pursue her and seek her. The object pursued may be *righteousness* or it may be *wisdom* (which has been mentioned in the previous line).

⁴⁴² A judgement of righteousness (or: a true judgement) and a judgement of peace (or: a perfect judgement) in righteousness you will pursue.

In line with what Burney has suggested, the words קִרְפֵי קוֹשֶׁטָא, forming an allusion to Targum Isaiah 51.1 have been changed into קִרְפֵי לְקוֹשֶׁטָא.⁴⁴³ His supposition that a misunderstanding of the wording has resulted in a different message being given reminds one of the way Lachs, Schwarz and Black appealed to haplography to explain their theories of a change from *broken-hearted* to *the pure in heart* (see §II.8.1).

If one were committed to the idea that this beatitude arose from misinterpretation a likely enough possibility exists without having to resort to mispronunciations or haplography. For instance, theoretically it would have been possible to take the words קִרְפֵי לְקוֹשֶׁטָא טוֹבֵיהוֹן and interpret them to mean *Blessed are those whom they pursue because of righteousness*. In this context the active participle is better translated as a passive much like the word מְרַחֲמִין was used in *Shabbat* 151b (see §II.7.3.2.1.4).

With all these possibilities in mind it still makes more sense to believe that a deliberate play on words has taken place. Stretching a word or allusion's meaning to its limits was something Jewish theologians were very fond of doing.

An example of this very kind of method can be seen in Paul's statement that κατεπόθη ὁ θάνατος εἰς νίκος [*death is swallowed up in victory*] (1Co 15.54). The verse he is quoting, Isaiah 25.8, actually says: בִּלְעַתְּ הַמָּוֶת לְנֶצַח.⁴⁴⁴ Paul, incidentally, is not being arbitrary in giving this active verb a passive meaning. The Targum translates בִּלְעַתְּ as יִתְחַשֵּׁן.⁴⁴⁵ Theodotion reads בִּלְעַתְּ as κατεπόθη, the same as Paul does. The rather unique point about Paul's reading is the way the Hebrew word נֶצַח [*forever*] has been understood in an Aramaic sense (i e, *victory*).⁴⁴⁶

II.10.1.5 נִרְדְּפִים לְצַדִּיקָה = קִרְפֵי לְקוֹשֶׁטָא

⁴⁴³ Burney, of course, does not appeal to the wording in the Targum.

⁴⁴⁴ *He will swallow up death forever* (NIV).

⁴⁴⁵ *will be forgotten*

As mentioned earlier, when this beatitude was translated into Hebrew the word chosen to convey the meaning *righteousness* was צְדָקָה, as opposed to צֶדֶק. This can be demonstrated by the way *OMatthew* has exploited the fact that of these two Hebrew words for *righteousness*, only צְדָקָה also means *almsgiving* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1263). Commentary on a beatitude mentioning *righteousness* is then used by *OMatthew* as a segue into a discourse on *almsgiving* (Mt 6.1-4). Matthew 6.1a says:

προσέχετε τὴν δικαιοσύνην ὑμῶν μὴ ποιεῖν ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

Be careful not to do your acts of righteousness before men (NIV).

The transition from Matthew chapter five to chapter six is less abrupt when it is realized that *OMatthew* is not changing the subject by presenting teaching on giving. Rather, this is a continuation of Jesus' comments on the eighth beatitude, and concerns an aspect of *righteousness*, or, more specifically, צְדָקָה.

By choosing to use the word צְדָקָה rather than צֶדֶק the Hebrew version of the Beatitudes has lost its connection with the allusion to Isaiah 55.1 or Deuteronomy 16.20. It appears that the Hebrew speaking Church linked this beatitude to a different allusion: Proverbs 21.21. This verse says: רִדְף צְדָקָה וְחֹסֶד יִמְצָא חַיִּים צְדָקָה וְכִבוֹד.⁴⁴⁷

II.10.1.6 Aramaic and Hebrew Reconstructions

Aramaic

טוביהון הרדיפין לקושטא דדהון מלכותא דשמיא

Hebrew

אשרי נרדפים לצדקה שלהם מלכות השמים

⁴⁴⁶ Properly speaking, the Aramaic word for *victory* is נִצְחָן.

II.10.2 The Meaning of This Beatitude

II.10.2.1 An Allusion to David

The concept of *pursuing those who are righteous* was often connected to the story of Saul and David. David asks Saul (1Sa 24.15): אַחֲרַי מִי אֶתָּה רֹדֵף.⁴⁴⁸ Saul also confesses to David (1Sa 24.18): צִדִּיק אֶתָּה מִמֶּנִּי.⁴⁴⁹ Combining both themes, *Midrash Tehillim* to Psalm 58 quotes David as asking Saul and his men: בַּעֲדֶךָ רָדַפְתָּם אַחֲרַי.⁴⁵⁰ Thus, David was considered to be an example of one who was *persecuted for righteousness' sake*.

Ancient Judaism recognized that God cares for those who are persecuted. Perhaps it was the experience of persecution David received from Saul which prompted Ecclesiastes to say (Ec 3.15): יִבְקֹשׁ אֶת־נִרְדָּף.⁴⁵¹ Commenting on this verse, *Leviticus Rabba* s 27 says that the Lord always demands the blood *of the persecuted from (the hands of) the persecutors*.⁴⁵² Similarly, *Sanhedrin* 72b suggests that God will save the life (blood) of the persecuted at the expense of the persecutor (Jastrow [1903] 1992:312).

With these references in mind it would not be out of line to say that it was common in ancient Judaism to use references to *the persecuted* to speak of both the *persecuted* as well as *the persecutors* (and vice-versa). Mention of one brought to mind the other. Therefore it is not necessary to think that a beatitude alluding to Deuteronomy 16.20 (by way of Isaiah 55.1) needed to have an active participle. The scriptural sensibilities of the people were already programmed, in this case, to think of *pursuing/persecuting* at the mention of *pursued/persecuted*.

⁴⁴⁷ He who pursues righteousness and love finds life, prosperity and honour (NIV).

⁴⁴⁸ *against whom are you pursuing/persecuting*; This comes out in the story of the conversion of Paul. Jesus appears to him as he is on his way to Damascus and says: *Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?* When Paul asks him who he is, he replies: *I am Jesus whom you are persecuting*. In this last line Jesus appears to be quoting 1Sa 24.15.

⁴⁴⁹ *you are more righteous than I am*

⁴⁵⁰ *In righteousness did you persecute me?*

⁴⁵¹ *God cares for the persecuted* (JB).

⁴⁵² הנרדפין מן הרודפין

The promise of *the kingdom of heaven* is given to those who are *persecuted for the sake of righteousness* just as it was for *the poor in spirit*. This is not merely for literary style. Each beatitude has a promise in its apodosis which has been suggested by a certain logic. Perhaps the story of David and Saul has suggested this apodosis. 1 Samuel 24.21 says: **לִישָׂאֵל כִּי מֶלֶךְ תִּמְלֹךְ וְקָמָה בְיָדְךָ מִמְּלֶכֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל**.⁴⁵³ In this way the eighth beatitude has brought together the imagery of the saints receiving a kingdom in Daniel 7 and identified them with David. Jesus uses David as a type in his teaching on life, privilege and authority in the kingdom of heaven in Matthew 12.3-4.⁴⁵⁴

II.10.2.2 Jesus' Commentary on the Eighth Beatitude.

Goulder is undoubtedly correct in supposing that what have been thought by some (Betz 1995:109) to be two extra beatitudes (i.e., Mt 5.11-12) are, in reality, part of the explanation Jesus gives to the eighth beatitude (1974:280). Being *persecuted* ἔνεκεν δικαιοσύνης⁴⁵⁵ is equated with being *persecuted*, and *lied about* ἔνεκεν ἔμοῦ.⁴⁵⁶ Jesus speaks, not of David, but of τοὺς προφήτας τοὺς πρὸ ὑμῶν.⁴⁵⁷ One reason for this may be to cause the disciples to infer that their commitment to Jesus may have come at the price of martyrdom. As opposed to David, who was not persecuted to death, some of the prophets were killed by their persecutors. Not the least of these was Isaiah who was popularly believed to have been sawn in half by Manasseh while he hid in a tree (cf, He 11.37).

That Jesus has addressed those who are **לְקוֹשְׁטָא לְדַדְּפִין** rather than **לְצַדִּיקָא לְדַדְּפִין** is demonstrated by the fact that (as mentioned earlier) **קוֹשְׁטָא** can mean either *righteousness* or *truth* (Jastrow [1903] 1992:1429). Thus, we see in the comments on this beatitude in Matthew 5.11-12 that the persecution to be expected includes people speaking *falsely*. The contrast is not only between δικαιοσύνη and πονηρός, but between δικαιοσύνη and ψευδόμενος. This brings out the dual meaning of **קוֹשְׁטָא**. Luke, in the

⁴⁵³ For you will surely be king and the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hands.

⁴⁵⁴ In this passage Jesus is referring to David and his companions eating the shew-bread in 1Sa 21.1-6.

⁴⁵⁵ for the sake of righteousness

⁴⁵⁶ for my sake

parallel passage (6.22-23, 26) contrasts the treatment given to the προφήται as opposed to the ψευδοπροφήται.

Jesus' comments about salt and light (Mt 5.13-16) are also applied to the *persecuted*. The first (Mt 5.13) is an admonition to faithfulness despite the persecutions involved. The idea that those who fall away will not be able to be readmitted into the kingdom is suggested by the question asked, rhetorically: how will salt which has lost its flavour become salty again? Salt losing its saltiness is a figure known from other rabbinic passages. Thus, *Bechoroth* 8b says: מִלְחָה כִּי סָרְיָא בְּמַאי מִלְחֵי לָהּ [when salt becomes unsavoury, wherewith do they salt it?] (Jastrow [1903] 1992:788).

In 5.14 Jesus speaks to those who want to be secret disciples. The illogic of such a situation is brought out by the similes of a city on a hill being unable to be hidden (Mt 5.14) and the uselessness of a lamp put under a basket (Mt 5.15). Jesus ends by commanding them to *let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven* (NIV). This last clause, καὶ δοξάσωσιν τὸν πατέρα ὑμῶν τὸν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς,⁴⁵⁸ is a euphemism for *they will repent* (cf, Re 11.13). It represents the Hebrew idiom לְיְהוָה לְיִשְׂרָאֵל כְּבוֹד found, for example, in Joshua 7.19, in which Joshua tells Achin to repent and confess his sin. This idiom is found throughout Jewish literature. Thus, for example, even in the Testament of Naphtali (8.1) we find: *Do what is good, my children. Then men and angels will praise you and God will be honored among the heathen* (Newman & Stine 1988:125).

A possible reference to the story of David and Saul may be lurking in the background here. This possibility should not be pressed too heavily but in I Samuel 26 David again spares Saul's life, stealing his spear and water jug instead. When presented with this evidence of David's *good deeds* Saul repents, saying, *I have sinned*.

II.10.2.3 *OMatthew's commentary on the Eighth Beatitude*

For *OMatthew* the commentary Jesus gave on this beatitude found in 5.11-12 is more

⁴⁵⁷ *the prophets who were persecuted before you* (NIV)

useful for another purpose. He has framed these verses to appear as beatitudes. Thus, 5.11 begins with μακάριοι and 5.12 has an apodosis beginning with ὅτι. This helps *OMatthew* achieve his goal of presenting Jesus as the New Moses by having him give his own Ten Words on a mountain.

The verses *OMatthew* employs as commentary on this beatitude are Matthew 5.38-48. At the same time he uses this section as commentary on the seventh beatitude as well.

II.10.2.3.1 Allusion to Psalm 34.15

Why has *OMatthew* combined the seventh and eighth beatitudes together when he applies Jesus' midrashic statements concerning various commandments to each of the last four beatitudes? Commentary 'assigned' to the beatitude for the *merciful* is separate from that 'assigned' to the beatitude for the *pure in heart*. Why are the beatitudes for the *peacemakers* and the *persecuted* combined? The answer begins with the recognition that *righteousness* is not the only thing the Old Testament commands to *pursue*. In Psalm 34.15 David says: בְּקֶשׁ שְׁלוֹם וְרָדְפֶהוּ [seek peace and pursue it]. The imagery resident in the word *pursue* was (and is) striking and appears to have suggested to ancient people that they join the admonitions to *pursue righteousness* (Isaiah 51.1) with the command to *pursue peace* (Ps 34.15). An example of this can be seen in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan's interesting variation of Deuteronomy 16.20a: דִּין קְשׁוּט וְדִין שְׁלָם בְּקְשׁוּט תְּהִי רְדִיף.⁴⁵⁹ This reflects the fact that in popular preaching it was natural to conflate the command to *pursue righteousness* with the command to *pursue peace*.

In the same way, Shem Tov's Hebrew Matthew cannot resist the opportunity for wordplay between the seventh and eighth beatitudes and therefore has given *blessed are the peacemakers* as אֲשֶׁר יִרְדְּפוּ שְׁלוֹם, producing:

9 אֲשֶׁר יִרְדְּפוּ שְׁלוֹם

10 אֲשֶׁר יִנְרָדְפוּ לְצַדִּיק

⁴⁵⁸ Lit.: *Glorify your Father in heaven.*

⁴⁵⁹ *A judgement of righteousness and a judgement of peace in righteousness you will pursue.*

This forms the background of why *OMatthew* has tailored Jesus' *midrash* on the command to love one's enemies in Matthew 5.43-48 (originally given to provide commentary on the fifth beatitude; see §II.7.4.1.a) to become commentary on both the seventh and eighth beatitudes together. For example, to make this *midrash* more applicable to the eighth beatitude *OMatthew* has inserted the words *pray for those who persecute you after love your enemies*.

II.10.2.2.2 Allusion to Proverbs 21.21

As mentioned earlier, the use of צַדִּיקָה in the Hebrew version of this beatitude brought to mind Proverbs 21.21: רַדְדָה צַדִּיקָה וְחֶסֶד וּמִצָּא חַיִּים צַדִּיקָה וְכָבוֹד.⁴⁶⁰ By alluding to Proverbs 21.21, the Hebrew version of this beatitude is able to have חֶסֶד [mercy] resonating in the background. This allows the application of this beatitude in terms of Jesus' *midrash* on the *lex talionis* (5.38-42) and the commandment to love one's neighbour (5.43-48) to make much more sense. Going the extra mile and doing good to your persecutors is, for *OMatthew*, a product of חֶסֶד.

It is also this allusion to Proverbs 21.21 that has prompted Jesus' teaching on giving to be joined to the commentary on this beatitude. Observe: Matthew 6.1 speaks of *doing righteousness* and 6.2 speaks of *doing mercies*. The former refers to the Hebrew word, צַדִּיקָה. The latter does not refer to the Hebrew word for mercy used in the fifth beatitude, רַחֲמִים. Instead, it refers to חֶסֶד. Both צַדִּיקָה and חֶסֶד are commonly employed as idioms for *almsgiving*. The two idioms are almost (but not quite) synonymous. That Matthew 6.1-2 goes back to a Hebrew *Urtext* rather than an Aramaic one is brought out by the fact that all of the ancient Aramaic versions⁴⁶¹ have trouble translating the Greek with two separate idioms. Observe:

Greek	Syr ^s	Syr ^c	Syr ^p	Syr ^h	CP
6.1 δικαιοσύνην	ܘܘܠܘܫܘܬܐܘܢ	ܘܠܘܫܘܬܐܘܢ	ܘܘܠܘܫܘܬܐܘܢ	ܘܠܘܫܘܬܐܘܢ	ܘܘܠܘܫܘܬܐܘܢ
6.2 ἐλεημοσύνην	ܘܘܠܘܫܘܬܐܘܢ	ܘܘܠܘܫܘܬܐܘܢ	ܘܘܠܘܫܘܬܐܘܢ	ܘܠܘܫܘܬܐܘܢ	ܘܘܠܘܫܘܬܐܘܢ

⁴⁶⁰ *He who pursues righteousness and love finds life, prosperity and honour* (NIV).

⁴⁶¹ The Sinaitic Old Syriac (Syr^s), the Curetonian Syriac (Syr^c), the Peshitta (Syr^p), the Harclean Syriac (Syr^h), and the Christian Palestinian (CP).

The difference between *doing righteousness* (in the sense of *almsgiving*) and *doing mercy* is one of inner motivation. The latter springs from the heart. This is well illustrated by a statement in *Succoth* 49b: אין צדקה נשכר לפי חסד שבה⁴⁶²

Proverbs 21.21 speaks of two qualities but promises three rewards. In like manner, Matthew 6.1-3 uses two idioms for giving but promises rewards three times. One of the rewards promised in Proverbs 21.21 is *honour* [כְּבוֹד]. This one in particular is alluded to in Matthew 6.2 as Jesus condemns the actions of hypocrites who give publicly *to be honoured by men*⁴⁶³ (NIV). That they are said to have received their reward means that they will not be honoured by God.

II.10.2.3 How is This Beatitude to be Understood?

This is one of the beatitudes which is not so much misunderstood as not fully understood. The lack of acquaintance with the allusions involved (particularly Dt 16.20) causes a failure to appreciate that being *persecuted for righteousness' sake* is the result of *pursuing righteousness*. This goes beyond translations, such as Today's English Version, where *for righteousness' sake* is translated as *because they do what God requires*. This translation has correctly emphasized that in this context *righteousness* is related to right actions and godly living. But, a better grasp of the inherent play on words would be given by a translation such as: *for their pursuit of what God requires*.

To see in *are persecuted* a reference to suffering in general (Newman & Stine 1988:117) is to do a disservice to this beatitude. Because Jesus, in his comments on this beatitude equates being persecuted *for righteousness' sake* with being persecuted *for his name's sake* it is incumbent to stress the obvious meaning that the suffering involved is specifically in relation to obedience to Christ.

⁴⁶² *righteousness (almsgiving) is only rewarded according to the mercy in it.*

⁴⁶³ ὅπως δοξασθῶσιν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀνθρώπων

Chapter Eleven

Conclusion

There is very little in this thesis that can be said to be ‘proved’ one way or the other. For instance, though each beatitude has been able to be reconstructed in a form which exhibits the three-beat rhythm Burney advocated, it can not be said that his theory has been proven. The best that can be said is that it has been proven to be feasible.

In terms of the contributions this thesis can make in the field of Synoptic Studies the most important is that a good case can be made for the idea that Jesus gave the Beatitudes (as well as the rest of the Sermon on the Mount) in Aramaic and that these words were translated into Hebrew. The Hebrew tradition was an oral one. The pun James makes (Ja 2.5) between אֲשֶׁרִי [*happy*] and עֲשִׂיר [*rich*] only works in an oral environment.

II.11.1 The Original Beatitudes

The Beatitudes as they have been reconstructed in this thesis into Aramaic appear like this:

Aramaic Reconstruction:

1. טוביהון עֲנוּתְנָיָא דְדָהוֹן מְלִכּוּתָא דְשָׁמְיָא
2. טוביהון אַבְלָיָא דְהַנּוֹן יִתְנַחֲמוּן
4. טוביהון דְהוּוּ כְפִינִין דְהַנּוֹן יְהוּוּן סְבָעִין
5. טוביהון דְרַחֲמָנִין דְהַנּוֹן מִתְרַחֲמוּן
6. טוביהון דְדְכִילְבָּא דְהַנּוֹן חֲמוּי לְאַלְהָא
7. טוביהון עֲבָדִין שְׁלָמָא דִּיתְקָרוּן בְּנוּהִי דְאַלְהָא
8. טוביהון דְרַדְפִין לְקוּשְׁטָא דְדָלָהוֹן מְלִכּוּתָא דְשָׁמְיָא

The reasons for conjecturing that the original Beatitudes were in Aramaic are these:

1. The allusion to Isaiah is to the version of the Targum, not the Masoretic text.

2. The *midrash* of Jesus on loving one's enemies was certainly commentary on the fifth beatitude (*the merciful*). It makes the most sense to suppose that both the beatitude and the *midrash* were in Aramaic because of the way ܡܪܡܝܢ can be used, both for *mercy* and for *love*.
3. The commentary on the eighth beatitude, which speaks of others speaking falsely works best as an antithesis to קוֹשֵׁטִים, because of the fact that it can mean both *righteousness* and *truth*. In addition, the Hebrew version appears more as a translation from Aramaic rather than having been created in Hebrew, based on the use of צַדִּיקָה rather than צַדִּיק.

II.11.1.1 Parallelism in the Original Beatitudes

Commentators have often attempted to understand and explain the Beatitudes through parallelism. This works fine when the third beatitude (*the meek*) is switched with the second and is then considered as a parallel beatitude with the first, because of the fact that both can be connected to the word עָנָו. Yet, it makes more sense to conjecture that the third beatitude was not a part of the original group. This would mean there were only seven original beatitudes. Though having an odd number parallelism was a feature all along.

The pairings are obvious. Beatitudes one and two are both allusions to Isaiah 61.1-2. Beatitudes four and five are both allusions to Isaiah 49.10. They both rhyme as well. Beatitudes six and seven both end with the word *God*. Both have allusions to priestly functions and connotations. In addition, it should be noted how לְאֵלֵהָא also functionally rhymes with בְּנוֹהֵי הָאֱלֹהִים. The last beatitude is also to be seen in parallelism with the first, as they both have the same apodosis.

This study does not preclude the idea that further research will show that this was not the first stage but only a development of a previous one. In the meantime this will be considered the basic group and wording from which all other stages of development derived.

II.11.2 Stage Two: The Hebrew Translation of the Beatitudes

For the benefit of a Jewish Church in Jerusalem (and later, elsewhere) the Sermon on the Mount was translated into Hebrew. The translation of the Beatitudes into Hebrew had a very significant impact on the way these words were understood. Though Hebrew (and Mishnaic Hebrew in particular) is very close to Jewish Palestinian Aramaic they do not overlap exactly. Though in truth, the only really major shift in meaning occurs with the fifth beatitude, the change in vocabulary does make a difference in the way the Beatitudes were seen as allusions.

The emphasis on Isaiah 61 is more subdued in the Hebrew version of the Beatitudes. Perhaps this reflects not so much the language as the culture of the church in which they were used. In their original setting they are a song of celebration, filled with apocalyptic expectation and imagery. As such, they find lots of analogous parallels among the Dead Sea Scrolls. In Hebrew they resemble more the wisdom sayings of the rabbinic schools, and, not surprisingly, they find lots of parallels among rabbinic literature. It may be thought that this is how James knew them.

Hebrew Reconstruction:

1. אֲשֶׁרֵי עֲנֵי הָאָרֶץ שְׁלֵהֶם מְלִכּוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם
2. אֲשֶׁרֵי הָאֲבָלִים שֶׁהֶם יִתְנַחֲמוּ
4. אֲשֶׁרֵי רְעֵבִים וְצִמְאִים שֶׁהֶם יְהוּ שְׂבָעִים
5. אֲשֶׁרֵי הַמְרַחֲמִין שֶׁהֶם מְרוֹחֲמִים
6. אֲשֶׁרֵי בְרִי לֵבָב שֶׁהֶם יִרְאוּ אֶת אֱלֹהִים
7. אֲשֶׁרֵי עוֹשֵׂי שְׁלוֹם שִׁקְרָאוּ בְּנֵי־אֱלֹהִים
8. אֲשֶׁרֵי נִרְדָּפִים לְצַדִּיקָה שְׁלֵהֶם מְלִכּוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם

James has changed the first beatitude from being addressed to the *poor* to the *poor of the earth*. This is an allusion to Isaiah 11.4. It reflects James' commitment to the 'am ha-'aretz. The addition of the word *earth* is important because it gives a poetic balance to the word *heaven* at the end of the second hemistich. This, in turn, frees the first beatitude from its relationship in parallelism with the second beatitude. Thus, the second can now

be joined in parallelism with the fourth, the fifth with the sixth and the seventh with the eighth.

The original allusions are no longer considered so important. Of greater importance is the application to the Beatitudes of the midrashic statements on the Law that Jesus made.

It was at this point that the Beatitudes were translated into Greek. James incorporates the Greek version of the first beatitude in chapter two, verse five.

Reconstruction of the translation of the Hebrew Beatitudes into Greek:

1. μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ κόσμῳ, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.
2. μακάριοι οἱ πενθοῦντες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ παρακληθήσονται.
4. μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ χορτασθήσονται.
5. μακάριοι οἱ ἐλεήμονες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἐλεηθήσονται.
6. μακάριοι οἱ καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, ὅτι αὐτοὶ τὸν θεὸν ὄψονται.
7. μακάριοι οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί, ὅτι αὐτοὶ υἱοὶ θεοῦ κληθήσονται.
8. μακάριοι οἱ δεδιωγμένοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης, ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν

As McEleny surmised (see §I.4.1), the Greek version of the Beatitudes incorporated into the Gospel of Matthew had a version of the fourth beatitude with the double address: *those who hunger and thirst*. The likelihood is that this reflects the *Urtext* beneath the Greek.

II.11.3 The Third Stage: The Hebrew Beatitudes of *OMatthew*

OMatthew is aware of the Hebrew version, but knows it either in a modified form or has himself modified that of James. When he is putting the Gospel of Matthew together he incorporates the Greek version of the Beatitudes which was already in use but modifies it according to the Hebrew version he has been using. Thus, he substitutes πνεύματι for κόσμῳ. This might explain why the first beatitude reads οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι instead of οἱ πτωχοὶ τοῦ πνεύματος. The latter would make a better rendering of the Hebrew idiom עניים ברוח.

Hebrew Reconstruction:

1. אֲשֶׁר עֵינָיו הָרוּחַ שְׁלֵהֶם מְלֻכּוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם
2. אֲשֶׁר הָאֲבֵלִים שְׁהֶם יִתְנַחֲמוּ
3. אֲשֶׁר הָעֵנָוִים שְׁהֶם יִרְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ
4. אֲשֶׁר רְעֵבִים וְצִמְאִים שְׁהֶם יְהוּ שְׁבָעִים
5. אֲשֶׁר הַמְרַחֲמִין שְׁהֶם מְרוֹחֲמִים
6. אֲשֶׁר בָּרִי לִבָּב שְׁהֶם יֵרְאוּ אֶת אֱלֹהִים
7. אֲשֶׁר עוֹשֵׂי שְׁלוֹם שִׁקְרָאוּ בְּנֵי-אֱלֹהִים
8. אֲשֶׁר נִרְדָּפִים לְצַדִּיקָה שְׁלֵהֶם מְלֻכּוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם

A certain amount of editing in this Hebrew version has taken place. The third beatitude is now added and the address in the first beatitude is now changed to the poor in spirit. At this stage a full-scale attempt to modify the commentary on the beatitudes appears to have taken place. In doing so, certain ‘agendas’ were imposed. One of the most important was to present Jesus as the fulfillment of the prophecy of Deuteronomy 18.15, the New Moses. The third beatitude has less to do with either Isaiah 61.1 or Psalm 37.11 as it has to do with the fact that the word עֵנִי is connected to Moses.

OMatthew’s version of the first beatitude is different from that of James. A couple of possibilities present themselves as to why. First, that the Hebrew oral tradition was somewhat fluid. James is alluding to Isaiah 11.4 while *OMatthew* is alluding to Isaiah 66.2. Neither destroys the meaning of the original, but each changes (or at least expands) the allusion to Isaiah 61.1. Another possibility is that by adding the third beatitude, which ends with earth, the balance to heaven no longer needed be part of the first hemistich. In addition, the new circumstances following 70 AD may have dictated the change. In any event, the initial Greek translation is without the third beatitude, which was only included later by *RMatthew*.

II.11.4 The Last Word

As to the question: what difference does all this research make? In actual fact, the wording of the Beatitudes has gone through especially drastic changes. The conclusions drawn in this thesis could mostly have been gained even in the Greek text. The real value of the research leading to the reconstruction of this text into both Aramaic and Hebrew has been to see, first of all, how they originally made allusion to Isaiah 61. Here, this thesis has offered some new and exciting theories. Secondly, by connecting Jesus' *midrash* on the Law to the Beatitudes, this research has been able to offer a valuable insight into the way the Beatitudes were meant to be understood used by Jesus and the way the Hebrew speaking church understood and used them as well.

Whenever the words of Jesus are reconstructed into Aramaic or Hebrew the chances are that the conclusions will be carried beyond the confines of the Greek text. To a minimal degree that can be said for the research presented here. However, one of the more subtle truths not fully explored in this thesis is the fact that the words of Jesus were not kept in a perfect state but could be given minor expansions and even bent towards other issues by the Apostles and Gospel writers. In so far as the Greek text represents the teaching of the Apostles and not that of Jesus then it is the former which must remain authoritative for the Church. It is one of the paradoxes of Church history that the early Church, through the office of the Bishop, felt the tremendous need to guard, not Jesus', but the Apostles' teachings. Thus, the differences between the Gospels in how they presented the words of Jesus were not so problematic that they could not resist what must have been a strong temptation to harmonize each of the Gospel records.

By coming closer to what would have been the original words and teachings of Jesus the hope is that a greater appreciation and insight for those words will be attained. Since none of the research in this thesis has resulted in conclusions which would nullify the existing text or give rise to doctrines not found elsewhere in scripture there should be no problem accepting the conclusions and interpretations offered.

The research and time spent with the Beatitudes each day has proven to be a great spiritual help. It would be impossible to do this research without one's life being

affected. Perhaps the most prominent of all the truths gained was greater insight into God's heart for the poor. Interestingly, when this research began, one of the first books used was a copy of Plackal's thesis (Plackal 1988). He dedicates this to the poor of this world. The Beatitudes were meant to be good news for the poor, as well as a challenge for Christians to humble themselves and become like them in order for the kingdom of heaven to operate in their lives. Hopefully nothing in this thesis detracts from that central message. To paraphrase Jesus:

*Blessed are those who read, study and live the Beatitudes,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

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Synopsis

An investigation of the Beatitudes of Matthew: Between oral tradition and Greek text investigates the Beatitudes in the Gospel of Matthew. It starts with the Greek text as it is known today and works backwards to uncover the different stages of tradition. Each beatitude is reconstructed in both Hebrew and Aramaic in order to ascertain the oral tradition which gave rise to the Greek text and, ultimately, to suggest a theoretical rendering of the original words of Jesus. The results indicate that the original Beatitudes were given in Aramaic. They were subsequently translated into Hebrew and it is this Hebrew version which is the antecedent for the Greek text (which itself underwent successive modifications) known today. The value of the results of this investigation is a more accurate understanding of the words of Jesus, having obvious implications for Bible translations and commentaries. The results further give a glimpse into how the Beatitudes were understood at the different stages of tradition and assess their modern interpretation in the light of their history.

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New Testament

Palestine

Qumran

Rabbis

Reconstructions

Redaction

Rhyme

Rhythm

Septuagint

Stich

Syriac

Targum