

אש מן-השמים
the heavenly fire

Matthew
מתתיהו



David Colo

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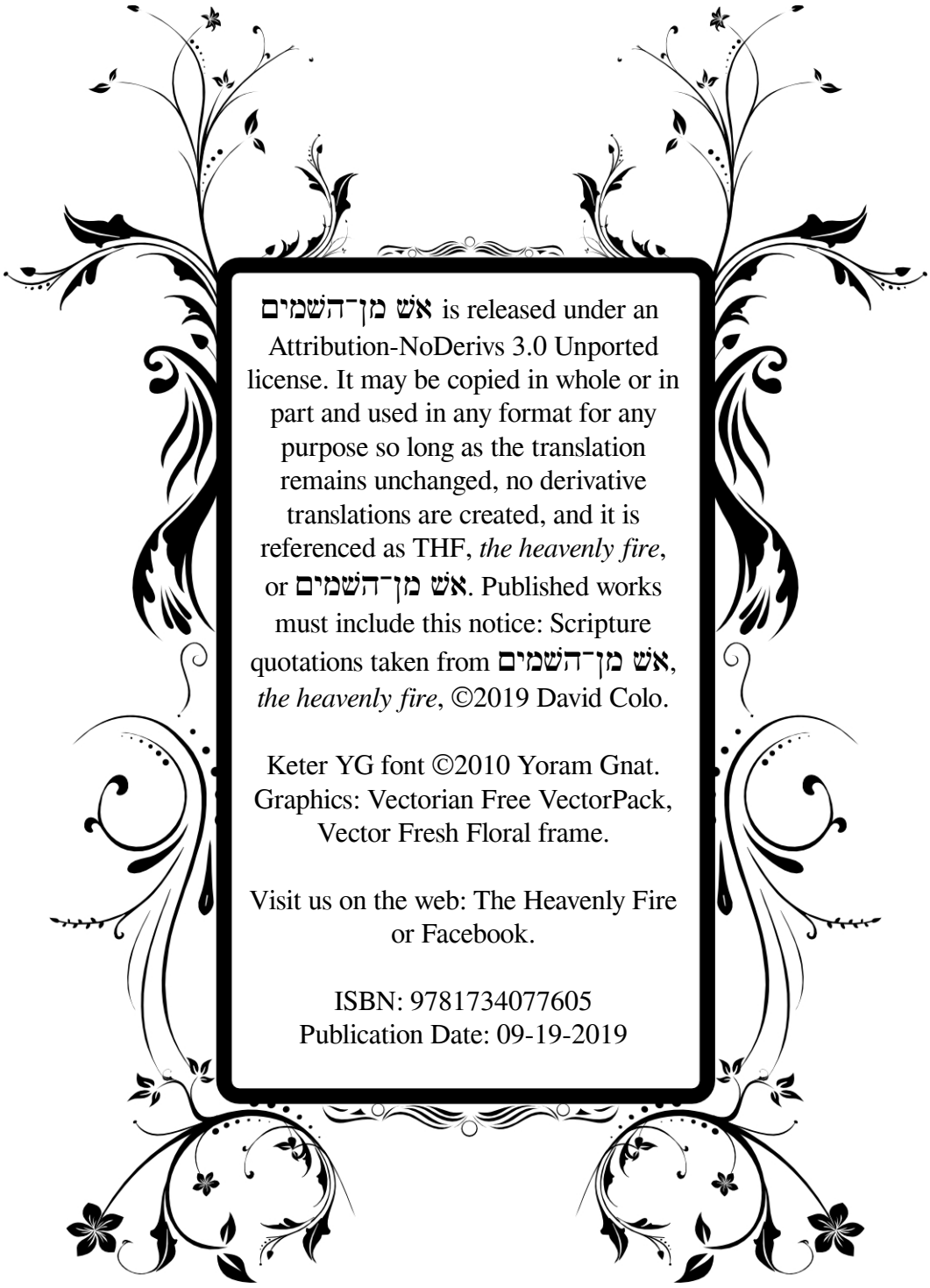
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ר' יהודה אומר המתרגם פסוק כצורתו הרי זה בדאי
והמוסיף עליו הרי זה מחרף ומגדף

Rabbi Judah says: “The one who translates a verse equivalent to its form—
that person is a liar. But the one who adds to it—
that person is a reviler and defiler.”

—*b. Kiddushin 49a*



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Sigla and Abbreviations

GENERAL

√	Verbal root
Ⲑ	Septuagint: Old Greek
Ⲑ ^B	Septuagint: Codex Vaticanus
ⲙ ^L	Masoretic Text: Leningrad Codex (AD 1008)
BH	Biblical Hebrew
DT	Jean du Tillet's Hebrew Manuscript of Matthew (Paris MS 132)
HB	Hebrew Bible
MH	Mishnaic Hebrew
OS ^C	Old Syriac – Cureton manuscript, transcription/translation by Burkitt
OS ^S	Old Syriac – Sinai Palimpsest, transcription/translation by Burkitt

REFERENCE

HALOT	Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner's <i>Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
Jastrow	Marcus Jastrow's <i>Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Bavli, Talmud Yerushalmi and Midrashic Literature</i>
NA27	Nestle-Aland's Novum Testamentum Graece, 27 th edition
RPM	Robinson-Pierpont's Majority Text
TCNT	Metzger's <i>A Textual Commentary on the New Testament</i> , 2 nd Edition

TRANSLATIONS

NAB	New American Bible (3 rd Edition)
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version

Preface

XXX XXX XXX

Introduction

A translation is just that. We do not presume to replace the original text with our own. Yet we do not believe the original so lofty or sacrosanct that it cannot be represented vividly and accurately in another language. If the biblical texts are to be believed, YHWH both *spoke* and *wrote*—the purpose of which must surely be *understanding*. The Rabbis, without anticipating its greater application, left us a saying that illustrates this well: דְּבַר־הַתּוֹרָה כְּלָשׁוֹן בְּנֵי אָדָם, “Scripture speaks in human language.” What follows, therefore, is a discussion of human language and its comprehension. We begin with a look at the various names and terms that are most pertinent.

(A) Names and Terminology

1. Of the Translation

אֵשׁ מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם (*’ēš min-haššāmayim*) means “the fire from heaven,” or, more simply, *the heavenly fire* (THF). Such language is drawn from theophanic imagery, which likens the presence of YHWH to various manifestations of fire, and from an ancient Jewish conception of YHWH’s word as fire. Early Rabbinic tradition equated the fire that fell from heaven on Sinai with scripture itself. This can be seen, for instance, in the following midrash, which uses word-play to phonetically link “Torah” (תּוֹרָה) with “its flame” (אֵשׁ): “Because YHWH descended upon it in fire (Exod 19:18). This shows that the Torah [is] fire, was given from fire, and is comparable to fire. . . . One can do nothing but warm himself [with] its flame” (*Mek. Bahodesh* 4).

2. Of the Messiah

The person identified as the Messiah in this text is commonly referred to as “Jesus” in western English culture. That name arose through the influence of Greek (Ἰησοῦς) and German (where /y/ shifts into /j/). The name had both long and short forms (much like modern English) in biblical times. The longer form was יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, commonly translated “Joshua.” The shorter was יֵשׁוּעַ, commonly translated “Yeshua.” Since the shorter form was typical in New Testament times and is the form that appears in the Hebrew text used by this translation (יֵשׁוּעַ), we follow its common rendering.

3. Within Matthew

A number of specialized words or phrases occur in Matthew, which warrant initial comment. They are provided below with their English rendering as used herein and a discussion of their respective meanings.

TERMS	DESCRIPTION
יהוה	XXX — XXX
יהוה	XXX — XXX

יהוה XXX — XXX

יהוה XXX — XXX

(B) The Gospel of Matthew in Hebrew

It sometimes comes as a shock when people learn of the memory in the ancient Christian church, passed on by the so-called “Fathers,” that the gospel of Matthew was originally written in a Semitic language (either Hebrew or Aramaic) and that the Greek text may be a secondary translation. The possibility threatens to run afoul of that common religious sentiment that stakes itself upon a certainty of the Greek text's authority or status. It also breaks with current scholastic theory, which, much like Wellhausen's Documentary Hypothesis, proposes that today's text of Matthew was assembled from a previous (Greek) document as well as from portions of the (Greek) Gospel of Mark. Willoughby Allen's statements are typical of the scholastic perspective: “he [the author] certainly composed his work in Greek, not in Hebrew Our first Gospel was not originally written in Hebrew.”ⁱ Yet the “Fathers,” who are closer to the past and its evidence, are consistent in their claim. Perhaps the fullest account of the origin of Matthew's gospel comes from Jerome, who provides the following statement in his catalog of the “Lives of Illustrious Men” (*De Viris Illustribus*):

Matthew, also called Levi, apostle and aforesaid publican, composed a gospel of Christ at first published in Judea in Hebrew for the sake of those of the circumcision who believed, but this was afterwards translated into Greek though by what author is uncertain. The Hebrew itself has been preserved until the present day in the library at Caesarea which Pamphilus so diligently gathered.ⁱⁱ

As fascinating as the question of the gospel's origin is—whether originally written in Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek or whether a patchwork of sources—such is beyond the purview of this analysis. What is needed first is an examination of the evidence. That, however, is a difficult task since so little evidence remains, much of it has not been fully examined, and few are willing to give the evidence a fair trial. Since many of the Hebrew versions of Matthew were used polemically by Jews in order to discredit Christianity (either by appending arguments against the gospel to the end of the manuscript or by inserting them within the text itself), those prejudiced against the prospect of a Hebrew gospel are quick to call them “anti-gospels.” But judging the veracity of a manuscript on the basis of its use by an offender is nothing more than guilt by association. As noted by Schonfield, the simple fact that some versions “are accompanied by objections against the Gospel [cannot] be shown to prove anything.”ⁱⁱⁱ On the other hand, those who favor the prospect of a Hebrew gospel often leap, uncritically, in support of a document that may bolster their agendas. Some have purposely translated New Testament texts from Greek into Hebrew to convert Jews. Others have “back-translated” gospels from Greek into Hebrew in

i Willoughby C. Allen, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Matthew*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907, p. lxxx.

ii Philip Schaff and Henry Wallace, *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church. Second Series. Translated into English with Prolegomena and Explanatory Notes. Vol III: Theodoret, Jerome, Gennadius, Rufinus; Historical Writings, etc.* New York: Park & Company, 1892, p. 362.

iii Hugh J. Schonfield, *An Old Hebrew Text of St. Matthew's Gospel: Translated, with an Introduction Notes and Appendices*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1927, p. 11.

order to reconstruct what a Hebrew original might have looked like. Just as one must not be quick to reject a possible Hebrew source for the Greek, one must not be quick to find one.

The purpose of THF, therefore, is one than analysis, comprehension, presentation, and description. From among the oldest Hebrew versions of Matthew that survive to the present day, the one acquired by Jean du Tillet (**DT**) was chosen for this process. That selection was made in part because “the du Tillet MS. remains in undisputed possession of the field as the oldest and most complete Hebrew version of any part of the New Testament at present known.”^{iv} It was also made because, much like a new frontier, DT presents a fascinating vista with many unexplored regions and numerous details in its rich landscape that have yet to be mapped. One final thing made DT an interesting study-piece: when Jerome mentions specifics about the Hebrew gospel, such specifics conform precisely with DT. Jerome's account in *De Viris Illustribus* continues:

I have also had the opportunity of having the volume described to me by the Nazarenes of Beroea, a city of Syria, who use it. In this it is to be noted that wherever the Evangelist, whether on his own account or in the person of our Lord the Saviour quotes the testimony of the Old Testament he does not follow the authority of the translators of the Septuagint but the Hebrew. Wherefore these two forms exist "Out of Egypt have I called my son," and "for he shall be called a Nazarene."^v

(C) The Du Tillet Manuscript

1. Background

The origin of du Tillet's manuscript is shrouded in mystery. It was first published in 1555 as *Euangelium Hebraicum Matthaei, recens è Iudaerum penetralibus erutum, cum interpretatione Latina, ad vulgatam quoad fieri potuit, accommodata* (The Hebrew Gospel of Matthew, Newly Risen, Plucked from the Bowels of the Jews, with a Latin Rendering, According to the Common [Reading] so Far as It Could be Accommodated). The Hebrew text, entitled **בשורת מתי עד היום הזה כמוסה עם היהודים ונחבאה במערתם ועתה באחרונה מתוך חדריהם ומחושך מוצאת לאור... (The News [Spread by] Matt, Till Today Stored [Away] Among the Jews and Hidden in their Caves, But Now, At Last, Brought out into the Light from the Midst of their Dark Cellars...),** was printed from one end to the center and John Mercier's Latin translation, *Evangelium Matthaei ex Hebraeo fideliter redditum* (The Gospel of Matthew, Faithfully Restored from Hebrew), from the other end to its center. But where did Jean du Tillet and John Mercier get their manuscript? The titles indicate that it was forcefully removed from Jewish possession. Or, according to Mercier's Latin preface, “recently wrested from the Roman Jews.” But how was that accomplished? Schonfield thought it happened after Pope Julius III signed his bull in 1553 to seize every Talmud in Italy.^{vi} The end of Mercier's Latin translation, however, contains publishing information dated 1552. Whatever the case, the Roman Inquisition was in full swing and there can be little doubt that the manuscript was confiscated by means of it. To gain a better understanding of DT's background, one must examine the manuscript itself.

iv Schonfield, *An Old Hebrew Text of St. Matthew's Gospel*, p. 13.

v Philip Schaff, *A Select Library*, p. 362.

vi Schonfield, *An Old Hebrew Text of St. Matthew's Gospel*, p. 4.

Other than the fact that DT is written in Hebrew, two major things distinguish it from the Greek. First, DT uses the divine name (represented by three dots). The Greek never uses the divine name. Second, DT uses the Masoretic Text when quoting Old Testament texts. The Greek uses the Septuagint or other Greek sources instead. From this, it may be concluded that the author of DT was a Jew. He or she followed traditional Jewish scribal practices and used the traditional Hebrew scriptures. He or she must have been a devout Jew and/or one who held the Matthew text in high regard since it would have been acceptable to write “Adonai” (אֲדֹנָי), which technically means “my lord,” but was mostly used as the title “Lord,” instead of the divine name in all the places where the Greek said “Lord.” To use dots for the divine name shows reverence—something that would not be done by a person who considered Matthew either pagan or anti-Jewish. If the source of Matthew was Greek, the author of DT could have altered it to align with those traditions. It is also possible, however, that the source of DT was a Hebrew or Aramaic text and that the author of the Greek eliminated the divine name and used Old Testament texts (Greek) more suited for a gentile and/or diaspora audience.

Appended to the Hebrew gospel was a list, in Hebrew, of 23 questions—each beginning “Ask” and then addressed to a Christian group (“you [all]”) in order to refute the things they said based on that gospel. It may be inferred that Jews living in Rome considered this Hebrew manuscript (not a Greek or Latin manuscript) either authentic or authoritative enough to use as the basis of their argumentation and defense. And that would imply that DT was not a fabrication done by Jews in order to discredit Christianity. Otherwise, the Christian opponent could always claim that the Jewish argument was null and void since it based on a faulty manuscript. But is it authentic? The answer to that question may be beyond our ability to say with any certainty. If a manuscript were authentic, it would have to share a high level of similarity with the Greek while, at the same time, being unique in its own right. Anything that was an exact duplicate of the Greek would give itself away as nothing more than a copy, while anything too dissimilar would give itself away as nothing more than a novelty.

2. The Controversy

What then is this text? The dominant claim is that it is a translation. But if so, a translation of what? Several scholars have insisted that it is a translation from Latin (and, thus, a translation of a translation). Such was the assertion of Herbst (*Des Schemtob ben Schaphrut hebraeische Uebersetzung des Evangeliums Mattaei*), who claimed the Vulgate as its source. Such a claim did not go uncontested. Summarizing the results of his research, Schonfeld stated, “the present writer is not satisfied that in the du Tillet MS. of Matthew's Gospel we have merely a Hebrew version of the Vulgate made by a mediaeval translator. There are many early traditional elements in the text which cannot be accounted for in this way.”^{vii} Howard, who compared DT with the Greek, Old Syriac, Old Latin, and Vulgate (*The Textual Nature of an Old Hebrew Version of Matthew*), also rebuffed the claim that DT was a translation from Latin. Instead, he asserted that DT was either a translation from Greek or a revision of an earlier Hebrew gospel meant to align it with the Greek. He based this argument on what he called “general observation and impression,” by word order, and because there were a number of transliterated Greek words. Howard's conclusion is accepted by most people today. Ultimately, “the true origin of the Hebrew Matthew must largely be decided on the results obtained by an examination of the variant readings found

vii *Ibid.*, p. 17.

in the text.”^{viii} Therefore, in the following paragraphs, we lay out evidence from the first chapter of DT which show that Howard's conclusion cannot be sustained and that, in fact, the evidence points the other way: DT cannot be explained as a translation from a Greek text or as an attempt to align an earlier Hebrew text with the Greek. In some cases, it will be shown that the Greek is better explained as a translation of a Hebrew text like DT.^{ix} None of this, of course, will prove that DT is authentic. But it will suggest that DT deserves to be considered alongside the Greek as, at least, an equally important witness of the ancient gospel text.

The first piece of evidence comes from the genealogical lists contained in Matt 1:1-16. The Greek characteristically links every person who is the subject of the verb “to father” with those who preceded him by means of a conjunction. This begins with the phrase “And Isaac fathered Jacob” (middle of v. 2) and ends with “And Josiah fathered Jeconiah” (start of v. 11). Skipping “Jeconiah fathered Shealtiel,” it begins again (end of v. 12) and continues through “And Jacob fathered Joseph” (start of v. 16). In this manner, every occurrence of the pattern “Person fathered Person” contains a conjunction except in the very first phrase at the start of a genealogical string. The total conjunction count equals 37. DT, however, contains a conjunction in only 7 places: “Then Ram fathered” (v. 4), “And Obed fathered” (v. 5), “And David fathered” (v. 6), “Then Solomon fathered” (v. 7), “And Abijam fathered” (v. 7), “Then Asa fathered” (v. 8), and “And Amnon fathered” (v. 14). Although the conjunction only appears in instances where a person is the subject of the verb “to father,” there is no consistency in its occurrence. It appears at random throughout the genealogy—when at all. Yet there are too many to suppose that a scribe wanted to eliminate them. It is, therefore, impossible to explain the presence and absence of DT's conjunctions on the basis of a Greek source text. It is a well-known fact, however, that those who made Greek translations of Hebrew scriptures often added conjunctions in order to harmonize the text or create a more consistent reading. The Septuagint does this. It occurs so frequently in one group of Greek translations that it even has its own name—the *kaige* (the “and-also”) recension. Therefore, there is every reason to suspect that a Greek text, which used a Hebrew one as its source, would have smoothed out irregular occurrences of the conjunction by adding them throughout. The more consistent the structural pattern, the more consistent the addition of the conjunction. The result would be exactly what we see in the Greek. In other words, the use of the conjunction in the Greek text is explainable as a translation of a Hebrew text like DT, but not vice versa.

In the genealogy of the Greek gospel, a name appears that even the most comprehensive commentaries skip over because there is virtually nothing to be said about it. It appears in a single verse and vanishes without a trace—a name with attestation in no other Greek text outside the bible. It is the name “Achim” (Αχιμ) in Matt 1:14. Davies (ICC) has only this to say of it: “Αχιμ is unattested.”^x The closest parallel comes from 1 Chron 11:35, where the Old Greek renders אַחִיָּא (Achiam) as Αχειμ. As evidenced by the rendering for אַחִיָּא in 2 Sam 23:33 (Αχιαν), even though dialectical differences allow for the last consonant to be pronounced either /n/ or /m/, the length of the name remains unchanged. Thus, the similarity between Αχιμ and Αχειμ/Αχιαν is merely graphic. No relationship can be shown to exist between them. The Anchor Bible Dictionary suggests that, since Achim is the son of Zadok in

viii *Ibid.*, p. 19.

ix So Schonfield: “In many instances the readings of the Hebrew are a distinct improvement on the Received Text” (p. 16).

x W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew: Vol 1: Introduction and Commentary on Matthew I-VII*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, p. 181.

Matthew's genealogy, there may be an attempt to associate him with the lineage of the high priest Zadok. That high priest had a son whose name was Ahimaaz (Αχιμααζ). Thus, "Achim" could be a shortened form of "Ahimaaz."^{xi} Such an explanation rests upon an association with a group of people who are not mentioned by Matthew, assumes a relationship between the names Achim and Ahimaaz, which has no evidence to support it, and makes no sense of any other name in that genealogical line. Because of the dearth of evidence, those who seek to explain the strangeness of "Achim" depend on it being a shortened form of other names like Ahimaaz, Achiam, Jehoiakim (Ιωακίμ), or Jaqim (Ιακίμ).

All the random, unrelated suggestions betray the problem: "Achim" doesn't look like a real name. If, however, "Achim" was transliterated from Hebrew, two options present themselves: **אחים** or **אבים**. In the first, *chi* stands for *het* as in the name Ahaz/אחז/Αχαζ from v. 9. In the second, *chi* stands for *kaf*, as in the name Jeconiah/יכניה/Ιεχονιαν in v. 11. **אחים** is a common Hebrew word meaning "brothers/relatives/fellows." As a name, however, it makes no sense, which leaves **אבים**. Notice the similarity between **אבים** and **אבים**. In the Aramaic (or square) script, *bet* and *kaf* are routinely confused. An explanation suddenly presents itself for the origin of this bizarre and unattested name. While working from a Hebrew manuscript, a scribe's eye fell on a previous point in the text where **אבים** (Abijam) was written (v. 7), but mistook it as **אחים** (Achim). Familiar with the repetition of the pattern "Person fathered Person, Person fathered Person," the scribe duplicated the error: "Zadok fathered Achim. Achim fathered." In such a manner, a new name was created and the name that originally appeared in the list (DT has either "Amon" or "Amnon") fell out. This explanation accounts for the Greek with nothing more than two extremely common scribal errors, whereas it would require feats virtually incomprehensible to explain how a scribe working from a Greek text with "Achim" came up with "Amon" (or "Amnon") as in DT. It is highly probable, therefore, that the Greek is a corrupt copy of an original Hebrew text.

The first verse of Matthew in DT begins "These [are] the ancestors/descendants" (אלה תולדות). That phrase follows the typical idiom used throughout the Hebrew Bible (Gen 2:4; 6:9; 10:1, 32; 11:10; etc) not only for genealogical lists, but also for the introduction or conclusion to family "stories." The Greek of Matthew, however, says "The book of the ancestry," which, in Hebrew, would be ספר תולדות. That phrase occurs only once in the Hebrew (Gen 5:1) and twice in the Greek (2:4; 5:1). In those places, the Hebrew expression begins "This [is] the book." Even the Greek uses a demonstrative: αὕτη ἡ βιβλος (*This [is] the book*). The Greek of Matthew, therefore, is quite specific in picking one particular, minority expression and dropping the demonstrative that is present even in the early, popular, semi-authoritative Greek translation. The opening of DT, therefore, shows a clear and distinct divergence from the Greek of Matthew that cannot be explained as an attempt to render the Greek of Matthew or of the Septuagint into Hebrew. Neither can it be explained as an attempt to align an earlier Hebrew gospel with the Greek of Matthew. Hypothetically, it could be possible that DT was based on a Greek manuscript, but altered it to conform with the more common and traditional Hebrew idiom. If so, however, that would be a deliberate translation *away from* the Greek of Matthew. In either case, the evidence in DT points to a lack of basis upon or revision toward the Greek of Matthew.

The first verse of DT also differs from the Greek of Matthew in that it does not call Yeshua "the Messiah." Since Yeshua is clearly called "The Messiah" elsewhere in both the Greek of Matthew and DT

xi Mark J. Fretz, "Achim," *n.p.*, *ABD on CD-ROM*. Version 2.0c. 1995, 1996.

(see, for instance, 1:16 and 1:17), it would make no sense for a scribe to purposely leave it out only in this place. Considering the use of the messianic title “son of David/Davidic scion” in v. 1, it would be pointless to drop “Messiah” in order to counter the claim of Yeshua's messianic status. There is, therefore, no justifiable reason for a scribe who was writing DT to leave out this word if it was originally present in the version of Matthew that served as the basis for DT. It makes more sense to add “The Messiah” to this verse since it also appears in vv. 16 and 17 and, thereby, harmonize the text, which is exactly what we find in the Greek of Matthew. Therefore, it is likely that the Hebrew of DT is more original than the Greek of Matthew.

General readers and scholars alike have long noted the unique structure created by Mat 1:2-17. Fourteen generations are listed between Abraham and David. Fourteen are listed between David and the Babylonian captivity. And, according to v. 17, fourteen generations exist between the Babylonian captivity and Jesus. What has long perplexed people, however, is how that structure falls apart in the final genealogical triad—no Greek version of Matthew contains 14 genealogical strata. Numerous theories have been advanced to explain the discrepancy. Most involve the shifting of names so that the same name is counted twice or one or more names are uncounted. Ultimately, all such complex acts of numerical manipulation are unpersuasive. The structure is simple and its referents clear. One is left either to accept that the numbers do not add up or to leave open the possibility that a genealogical line has gone missing. Such is the state of the Greek version of Matthew.

The 13th verse of DT, however, contains a genealogical line unique to all other manuscripts: “Abihud fathered Abner. Abner fathered Eliakim.” The inclusion of this line provides an even fourteen: (1) Shealtiel, (2) Zerubbabel, (3) Abihud, (4) Abner, (5) Eliakim, (6) Azzur, (7) Zadok, (8) Amnon, (9) Elihud, (10) Eleazar, (11) Mattan, (12) Jacob, (13) Joseph, and (14) Yeshua. From what source did DT acquire “Abner”? Hypothetically, one could postulate that such a genealogical line was invented in order to solve the problem of 13 genealogical strata. But why insert it between Abihud and Eliakim? To that, there is no answer. A better hypothetical was postulated by Schonfield. He noted that the Old Syriac has “Abior” in place of “Abihud.” So also, the *plene* (full) spelling of אבנר (Abner), as seen in 1 Sam 14:50-51, is אבניר (Abiner). Thus, if an original Hebrew text read “Abiur fathered Abiner,” it would look like this: אבניר הוליד את אבניר. The difference between *nun* and *waw* is slight. It would be easy for a scribe's eye to skip over אבניר (Abiner) thinking it was אבניר (Abior), or accidentally read both names the same and then purposely drop the second under the assumption that it was a duplicate. In either case, the “Abiner/Abner” line would be lost.^{xii}

There is another possibility that doesn't depend on a form of the name “Abiner” in two Syriac MSS. The name “Yehud” can be written either fully (יהוד) or defectively (יהד). “Abihud,” which probably means either “my father [is] Yehud” or “father of Yehud,” could thus be spelled אביהוד or אביהד. If the name was spoken with a light /h/ sound, it could be heard as אביוד instead of אביהוד and copied down like this: אביוד הוליד את אבניר (Abiud fathered Abiner). Again, the graphic difference between *nun* and *waw* is slight. So is the difference between *dalet* and *resh*, which are routinely switched in biblical texts. It would not be improbable for a scribe to mistake אבניר for אביוד and skip over the name entirely, erroneously thinking it to be a case of duplication. The fact that the Greek of

xii Schonfield, *An Old Hebrew Text of St. Matthew's Gospel*, pp. 22-3.

Matthew renders Abihud as Αβιουδ (Abiud) is certainly due to the fact that Greek had no equivalent for *heh* except as an aspiration at the start of words. But it is also possible that it accurately reflects a real error introduced in an original Hebrew text: אַבִּיּוּד (Abiud). Both our proposal and Schonfield's are able to explain, through extremely common scribal and transmission processes, how “Abiner/Abner” fell out of the textual tradition from an original Hebrew text, whereas there is no possible process for how it could be added to a later Hebrew text based on an original Greek text in which it was absent and toward which the later Hebrew text was purposely revised.

If DT was a translation from a Greek version of Matthew, then one should, theoretically, be able to trace it to a particular Greek textual tradition. This is certainly true if DT comes from a late source, since, as time went on, divergences between texts were greatly reduced as copies showed greater conformity to their sources. The evidence, however, shows that DT does not follow any textual tradition and, in fact, does not conform to any extant Greek manuscript. This can be shown by first isolating the differences between text-types and attempting to locate DT among them. In v. 6, for instance, DT says “Jesse fathered David the King. And David fathered Solomon...” Among the Greek textual traditions, there are some that repeat “the King” after the second occurrence of “David.” Those texts include \mathfrak{M} , C, L, W, and 33. \mathfrak{M} refers to the Byzantine text-type. The readings in the first chapter of Matthew in W (Washingtonianus), C (Ephraemi Rescriptus), L (Regius), and minuscule 33 follow that text-type. Texts that do not repeat “the King” and, therefore, serve as a possible witness of DT, include \mathfrak{P}^1 , \aleph (Sinaiticus), B (Vaticanus), and 579. The first three are extremely early witnesses. All of them belong to the Alexandrian text-type. In this instance, therefore, DT is clearly **Alexandrian**. The next verse of DT mentions “Asa.” That reading is supported by \mathfrak{M} , L, W, and 33. The Alexandrian text-type, represented by \mathfrak{P}^1 , \aleph , and B, reads “Asaph” instead. In other words, in that particular instance, DT is clearly **Byzantine**. In v. 10, DT reads “Amon,” which is supported by \mathfrak{M} , L, and W. The Alexandrian text-type, represented by \aleph , B, and C, says “Amos.” In that verse, therefore, DT is clearly **Byzantine**. In v. 18, DT uses *toledot* to refer to how Yeshua “came into being.” That meaning is closest to γενεσις (origin/genesis), represented by the earliest witnesses of the Alexandrian text-type: \mathfrak{P}^1 , \aleph , B, and C. The Byzantine reading in \mathfrak{M} , L, and 33 is γεννησις, which strictly means “to give birth/engender.” In that verse, therefore, DT is **Alexandrian**. A fascinating conclusion begins to emerge when, in the first chapter of Matthew at least, DT is analyzed against the distinctive readings of both Alexandrian and Byzantine texts: DT is beholden to neither. When the data from Matthew 1 is expanded to include the many readings in DT that have no basis in *any* Greek manuscript (see chart below), the conclusion is inescapable: if DT is a translation of a Greek text of Matthew or a revision of a Hebrew text meant to align it with the Greek of Matthew, such a text of Matthew does not exist.

Verse	Reading in DT	Reading in Greek	Comments
1	These [are] the ancestors	Book of the ancestry	DT = Typical Hebrew idiom.
1	Yeshua ———	Jesus Christ	Gk = Probable harmonization.
6	the wife of Uriah	she [who was] of Uriah	Gk = Euphemism?

7	Abijam	Abijah	DT = Spelling in Kings. Gk = Spelling in Chronicles.
12	——	After the Babylonian exile	DT = Accidental Deletion? Gk = Accidental Duplication?
13	Abihud fathered Abner, Abner	——	DT = Possible original? Gk = Accidental Omission?
14	Amon (possibly Amnon)	Achim	Gk = Transmission error? Misread of אֲבִיָּם (Abijam)?
17	——	And from David till the Babylonian exile were fourteen generations.	DT = Scribal error. Gk = Correct text.
18	Yeshu[a] the Messiah	Jesus Christ	DT = Early: “Christ” as title. Gk = Late: “Christ” as name.
18	pregnant	having in the belly	DT = Typical Hebrew expression. Gk = Typical Greek idiom.
19	was a righteous man	being righteous	DT = Verb with noun phrase. Gk = Verb phrase only.
19	he did not want	he was not wanting	DT = Perfect verbal form. Gk = Present participle.
19	to hand her over to death	——	DT = Mosaic Law (Lev 20:10).
19	to expose her	to publicly disgrace her	Gk = Textual explication?
19	Nevertheless	——	DT = Logically and grammatically appropriate in the Hebrew. Gk = Logically and grammatically unnecessary in the Greek.
19	it was on his mind	he was inclined	DT = Verb with noun phrase. Gk = Verb phrase only.
19	to leave	to release/send away (i.e., divorce)	DT = Joseph would still support her, but he wouldn't be around anymore. Makes him out to be a better guy. Gk = Joseph would actually divorce her, but try to do so quietly. Works against his “good guy” status.
20	Look!	——	DT = Hebrew idiom.
20	from the Holy Spirit [is] he	——	

20	Yes, from the Holy Spirit [is] she pregnant	——	
21	and look”	——	
21	all	——	
22	through his instrument/ by his power	——	
22	Isaiah	——	

Considering the *voluminous* textual witnesses for the gospel of Matthew in Greek, to argue that DT is a translation of a Greek text for which there is no evidence simply begs the question. This is certainly true in light of the evidence above that shows more support for a Hebrew reading than a Greek one. Indeed, even more evidence could be brought forward to show the uniquely *Semitic* character of the text—such as the use of the genealogical formula “Person-Y **אֶת הוֹלִיד** Person-X” as seen, for example, in Ruth 4:18-22. Such a Hebraic formula is does not appear in Luke's genealogy. Notably absent from DT are renderings that recreate idioms used by the Greek texts. DT does not, for instance, take the phrase *ἐν γαστρὶ ἐχουσα* (having in the belly) found in v. 18 and recreate it in Hebrew. The recreation of such idioms would be powerful, if not certain evidence of DT's Greek origin. The fact that DT diverges so often from the Greek with uniquely Semitic renderings would seem to be powerful evidence of DT's Hebrew origin.

3. Language & Script

The type of Hebrew preserved in DT is clearly Mishnaic, but with strong Biblical influences. Like MH, DT makes extensive use of *matres*. Such, however, is not always the case. The spelling of “David,” for instance, is defective (**דָּוִד**) in vv. 1 and 6 even though the fuller spelling (**דָּוִיד**) would be preferred in later Hebrew. MH is known for word-final elision (the shortening or dropping of the last consonant) in personal names—something that can be seen at times with the name “Yeshua” (spelled “Yeshu” in vv. 1 and 18) or “Abraham” (spelled “Abrah” in v. 17). Just like MH, DT uses the relative **-שֶׁ** to the almost utter exclusion of **אֲשֶׁר**. It also makes plentiful use of particle clustering, a phenomenon almost entirely limited to post-biblical Hebrew. The biggest evidence, however, comes from its grammar and vocabulary. DT uses a lot of words that only appear in MH.

provide examples

(D) The Translation

1. Source Text(s)

The source text utilized by this translation is the Hebrew text published by du Tillet and Mercier in *Euangelium Hebraicum Matthaei* with comparison against Hegg's typed copy *The Du Tillet Matthew with parallel Greek, 1st draft*. When and where necessary, we have gone back to PDF scans of the original

the heavenly fire

MS for study and analysis.^{xiii} The accuracy of this translation, therefore, will depend in some part on the work of Hegg and du Tillet/Mercier.

2. XXXXX

xiii PDFs of the MS are made freely available through Torah Resource, an online educational portal. The first nine pages can be accessed at this link: <http://www.torahresource.com/DuTillet/Pages1-9.pdf>. To shift to the next ten pages, simply change the page numbers in the address bar to 10-19, 20-29, etc. The final pages of the MS are 70-74.

Background

Meaning

XXX

Historical Stuff

XXX

Form & Genre

XXX

Matthew

Chapter 1

8

¹ These [are] the originators of Yeshu[a], the Davidic scion, the Abrahamic heir:

² Abraham fathered Isaac.

Isaac fathered Jacob.

Jacob fathered Judah and his brothers.

³ Judah fathered Perez and Zerah from Tamar.

Perez fathered Hezron.

Hezron fathered Ram.

⁴ Then Ram fathered Amminadab.

Amminadab fathered Nahshon.

Nahshon fathered Salmon.

⁵ Salmon fathered Boaz from Rahab.

Boaz fathered Obed from Ruth.

And Obed fathered Jesse.

⁶ Jesse fathered David the King.

And David fathered Solomon

from the wife of Uriah.

⁷ Then Solomon fathered Rehoboam.

Rehoboam fathered Abijam.

And Abijam fathered Asa.

⁸ Then Asa fathered Jehoshaphat.

Jehoshaphat fathered Jehoram.

Jehoram fathered Uzziah.

⁹ Uzziah fathered Jotham.

Jotham fathered Ahaz.

Ahaz fathered Hezekiah.

¹⁰ Hezekiah fathered Manasseh.

Manasseh fathered Amon.

Amon fathered Josiah.

¹¹ Josiah fathered Jeconiah and his brothers in the Babylonian exile.

¹² Jeconiah fathered Shealtiel.

Shealtiel fathered Zerubbabel.

¹³ Zerubbabel fathered Abihud.

Abihud fathered Abner.

Abner fathered Eliakim.

Eliakim fathered Azzur.

¹⁴ Azzur fathered Zadok.

Zadok fathered Amnon.

And Amnon fathered Elihud.

¹⁵ Elihud fathered Eleazar.

Eleazar fathered Mattan.

Mattan fathered Jacob.

¹⁶ Jacob fathered Joseph, the husband of Mariam, she from whom was born Yeshua, who is called “Messiah.”

¹⁷ So all the generations from Abraham till David [were] fourteen generations. [And from David till the Babylonian exile were fourteen generations.] And from the Babylonian exile till the Messiah [were] fourteen generations.

¹⁸ Now, the origin of Yeshu[a] the Messiah was [like] this: after his mother, Mariam, was contractually bound to Joseph, [but] before he came to her, she was discovered pregnant by influence of the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Yet Joseph, her husband, was a righteous man and he did not want to hand her over to death nor to expose her. Nevertheless, it was on his mind to secretly leave her.

²⁰ Then, while he was thinking about this, the messenger [of YHWH] appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mariam, your wife, because he whom is born from her—from the Holy Spirit [is] he. Yes, by influence of the Holy Spirit [is] she pregnant. ²¹ And, look, she will bear a son and call him ‘Savior’ because he will save his people from all their sins.” ²² (Now, all this [happened] in order to fulfill what was spoken by YHWH through his instrument, the prophet Isaiah, saying, ²³ “*Look [at] the young woman, pregnant and about to birth a son. She will call his name With-Us-[Is]-El [Immanuel].*”)

²⁴ When Joseph awoke from his sleep, he did just as the messenger of YHWH commanded him and took her as a wife. ²⁵ But he did not have intercourse [with] her until she bore her son, the firstborn, whom he named “Yeshua.”

Chapter 2

ב

¹ Now, after Yeshua was born in Bethlehem—in a city of Judah—during the reign of Herod the King, look, some magicians came from the east of Jerusalem, asking, ² “Where [is] he who was born king over the Judeans? For we saw his star in the east and came to pay him homage.”

³ But when Herod heard, rage suffused him and the whole of Jerusalem with him. ⁴ So he gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people and demanded of them, “In what place will Messiah be born?”

⁵ Then they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judah. For so it was said by the prophet's mouth:

⁶ *'And now, Bethlehem-Ephrathah,
not [so] small
to be among Judah's tribes,
from you, one of mine will set out
to be a ruler among my people Israel.'*

⁷ Then Herod summoned the magicians...

⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said to them

¹⁰ And when they saw the star, they rejoiced [with] a joy overwhelmingly great.

Chapter 3

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⁹ But do not say among yourselves “Abraham himself [is] our ancestor” because I, myself, say to you that there is one—the One True God—who is able, by means of me, to make flocks (banim) of Abraham rise from these rocks (abanim).”

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Chapter 4

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Chapter 5

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44 “I say to you ‘Love your enemies, treat well those who hate you, and supplicate on behalf of your pursuers and your oppressor.’”

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Chapter 6

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⁹ But you should pray thus: ‘Our Father who [is] in heaven, may your name be kept consecrated.

¹⁰ May your reign enter in. May your acceptance be accomplished—as in heaven, so on earth. ¹¹ Give to us today our continual food ¹² and pardon us [from] our debts just as we are remitting owners of their debts. ¹³ And do not bring us in to the grip of

testing, but rescue us from every evil. For the dominion and the might and splendor belong to you forever and ever and ever to come. Indeed!"

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Chapter 7 ז

Chapter 8 ח

Chapter 9 ט

Chapter 10 י

Chapter 11 יא

Chapter 12 יב

Chapter 13 יג

Chapter 14 יד

Chapter 15 יה

Chapter 16 יו

Chapter 17 יז

Chapter 18 יח

Chapter 19 יט

Chapter 20 כ

Chapter 21 כא

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44 Now, whomever falls upon this rock
will be broken

and over whomever it falls,
it will break him.

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Chapter 22 כב

Chapter 23 כג

Chapter 24 כד

Chapter 25 כה

Chapter 26 כו

Chapter 27 כז

Chapter 28 כח

19 Therefore, [as for] you, go out, teach all the gentiles, and dip them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

20 Teach them to keep everything that I have commanded you and [that] I am here with you every day until the world ends.

the heavenly fire

Notes



- 1:1 **These [are] the originators** — Or “These [are] the ancestors/descendants.” Note that תולדות functions differently here than in 1:18 and that a completely different word is used in 1:17. See notes below. אלה תולדות is a typical idiom in the HB used to introduce or conclude either a genealogical list or a catalog of family stories/records (Gen 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; etc). NA27 and RPM, however, say “The book of the ancestry” (ספר תולדות), a phrase that occurs only in Gen 5:1. In that place, however, the expression begins “This [is].” In both Gen 2:4 and 5:4, even ⚡ uses a demonstrative: αὕτη ἡ βιβλος (This [is] the book).
- Yeshu[a]** — To shorten the name, the *ayin* was dropped, which we reinsert. The Greek of NA27 and RPM have “Christ” (the equivalent of “Messiah”) after the name. The Old Syriac has “Messiah” as well. That title is not present in this verse in DT (note, however, vv. 16-18).
- the Davidic scion** — Or “the son/descendant of David.” Even though what is introduced and what follows are genealogical lines, this particular phrase is a royal title. The point is not merely to say that Yeshua is descended from David, but to insist that he is the true Davidic King.
- the Abrahamic heir** — Or “the son/descendant of Abraham.” Even though what is introduced and what follows are genealogical lines, this particular phrase is a covenantal title. The point is not merely to say that Yeshua is descended from Abraham, but to insist that he is the unique “son” through whom the Abrahamic blessing/promise/covenant finds fulfillment.
- 1:2 **fathered** — Instead of the verb “to beget,” which is no longer used in English, we use “to father.” The phrase “Person-Y אִתּוֹ הוֹלִיד Person-X” is a typical Hebrew genealogical pattern as seen, for instance, in Ruth's genealogy (4:18-22).
- 1:3 **Judah** — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
- Perez** — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
- Hezron** — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
- 1:4 **Then Ram** — Note the conjunction here. We interpret it as subordinating (then). The Old Syriac does not have a conjunction.
- Amminadab** — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
- Nahshon** — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
- 1:5 **Salmon** — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
- Boaz** — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
- And Obed** — Note the conjunction here. We interpret it as coordinative (and). The Old Syriac does not have a conjunction.
- 1:6 **Jessie** — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
- And David fathered Solomon** — There is a conjunction here. We interpret it as coordinative (and). The Old Syriac does not have a conjunction. Along with NA27, DT says only “David.” RPM and the Old Syriac has “David the King.”
- from the wife of Uriah** — Both NA27 and RPM say “from she [who was] of Uriah” (ἐκ τῆς τοῦ οὐρίου). The word “wife” only appears in the Hebrew. The Greek may have avoided specifying this woman as Uriah's “wife” in order to soften the transgression of David and, thus, the implication that Yeshua's lineage is tainted by sinful coupling.
- 1:2-6 Exactly 14 different ancestors are listed: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Judah, Perez, Hezron, Ram, Amminadab, Nahshon, Salmon, Boaz, Obed, Jesse, David.

- 1:7 **Then Solomon** — There is a conjunction here. We interpret it as subordinating (then). The Old Syriac does not have a conjunction.
Rehoboam — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
And Abijam — There is a conjunction here. We interpret it as coordinative (and). The Old Syriac does not have a conjunction. The spelling of the name represented here occurs in 1 Kings. NA27 and RPM favor the spelling of the Chronicler (Abijah).
Asa — RPM has “Asa.” NA27, however, has “Asaph.” According to TCNT, “Asaph” is not only the earliest representative of the Greek text, but also a scribal error. Later textual witnesses would then have corrected it to “Asa.” It is impossible to know whether our text was similarly corrected or whether it faithfully preserved the original reading. The Old Syriac reads “Asa.”
- 1:8 **Then Asa** — There is a conjunction here. We interpret it as subordinating (then). The Old Syriac does not have a conjunction. RPM has “Asa.” NA27, however, has “Asaph.” According to TCNT, “Asaph” is not only the earliest representative of the Greek text, but also a scribal error. Later textual witnesses corrected it to “Asa.” It is impossible to know whether our text was similarly corrected or whether it faithfully preserved the original reading. The Old Syriac reads “Asa.” At this point in the MS, there is a slight scribal error—the *heh* at the start of “fathered” was accidentally duplicated. No change in meaning occurs.
Jehoshaphat — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
Jehoram — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one. Instead of “Jehoram foathered Uzziah,” OS^c includes several more genealogical lines: “Jehoram *fathered* Ahazia. Ahazia *fathered* Joash. Joash *fathered* Amozia. Amozia *fathered* Uzia.”
- 1:9 **Uzziah** — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
Jotham — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
Ahaz — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
- 1:10 **Hezekiah** — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
Manasseh — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
Amon — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one. RPM has “Amon.” NA27, however, has “Amos.” According to TCNT, “Amos” is, like “Asaph,” the earliest representative of the Greek text, but also a scribal error. Later textual witnesses corrected it to “Asa.” It is impossible to know whether our text was similarly corrected or whether it faithfully preserved the original reading.
- 1:11 **Josiah** — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
the Babylonian exile — Literally, “the exile of Babel.”
- 1:7-11 Exactly 14 different ancestors: Solomon, Rehoboam, Abijam, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Amon, Josiah, Jeconiah.
- 1:12 **Jeconiah fathered Shealtiel** — NA27, RPM, and the Old Syriac begin this verse “After the Babylonian exile.” That phrase is not present in DT. Note that there is no conjunction here. NA27 and RPM agree. The Old Syriac, however, includes one. The name “Salathiel” in both NA27 and RPM is a typical Greek rendering for “Shealtiel.”
Shealtiel — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
- 1:13 **Zerubbabel** — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.
Abihud fathered Abner. Abner fathered Eliakim. — There is no conjunction connected to

“Abihud.” Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one. NA27 and RPM further differ from DT at this point. Both say Abihud fathered Eliakim, skipping over Abner. If the line of Abner is not original, then the question is where the author of the Hebrew text got his information. See the discussion in the Introduction.

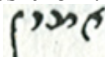
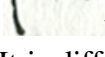
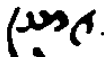
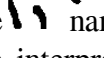
Eliakim — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.

Azzur — This spelling can be seen in Neh 10:18. There, **Ⲗ** spelled it αζουρ (**Ⲗ**^B has αδουρ).

Both NA27 and RPM, however, spell it αζωρ. The differences are merely orthographic.

1:14 **Azzur** — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.

Zadok — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.

And Amon — Or “And Amnon.” Mercier (*Euangelium Hebraicum Matthaei*) read it as the former (אֲמֹן). Hegg (*The Du Tillet Matthew with parallel Greek, 1st draft*) read it as the later (אֲמֹנִי). In the script of DT, the difference between *nun* and *waw* is slight. Only the curvature of the downward stroke differentiates them. Previously in the manuscript, the name “Amon” was clear and verified by the Greek: . Here, however, things are different. Not only is the name different in Greek, but  what might be *waw* is far curvier: . Is that accidental or does it represent *nun*? It is difficult to say, but we think the same  name was intended. Note that there is a conjunction here. NA27 and RPM agree. We interpret it as coordinative (and). The Old Syriac lacks a conjunction. Instead of “Amon” or “Amnon,” the Greek says “Achim,” which is probably a transmission error (see the introduction). The Old Syriac follows the Greek (Achin).

1:15 **Elihud** — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.

Eleazar — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.

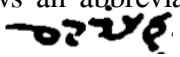
Mattan — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.

1:16 **Jacob** — There is no conjunction. Both NA27 and RPM, however, represent one.

the husband of Mariam, she from whom was born Yeshua — According to TCNT, there are three variants for these phrases. Several Greek and Old Latin witnesses say “Joseph, to whom being betrothed, the virgin Mary bore Jesus.” Another says, “Joseph, to whom was betrothed Mary the virgin, begot Jesus” (see OS^S). DT represents a third reading, which is supported widely by most textual families and witnesses. The Hebrew, like the Greek, is very clear that it was “from her” (מִמֶּנָּה) that Yeshua was born. In other words, unlike all those who came before, Joseph did not “father” Yeshua. The Hebrew uses a Niphal to express the passive “he was born.” This agrees with the Greek (aorist indicative passive). Note that DT does not call her “the virgin.” NA27 and RPM also do not call her “the virgin.” Since Mary's virginity is clearly spelled out in v. 18, that phrase appears to be an obvious (and totally unnecessary) expansion.

1:12- Exactly 14 different ancestors: Shealtiel, Zerubbabel, Abihud, Abner, Eliakim, Azzur, Zadok,
16 Amnon, Elihud, Eleazar, Mattan, Jacob, Joseph, Yeshua. The presence of Abner makes this list a complete 14 alongside the other two lists. NA27 and RPM only have 13 in their final list, making them incomplete.

1:17 **So** — We view this conjunction as consecutive (so/then/consequently).

Abraham — Though the transcription of Mercier shows an abbreviated version of the name (אַבְרָהָם), the manuscript clearly shows a final *mem*: .

David — Mercier read the text as “David.” Hegg read the text as “Ram.” The confusion is caused by the *dalet* being written too close to the *waw*: **דו**. Clearly, however, the text is a defective form of “David,” which is usually written this way: **דוד**.

the Babylonian exile — Literally, “the exile of Babel.”

[And from David till the Babylonian exile were fourteen generations.] — Though this line does not appear in DT, it is clearly part of the original text. Therefore, we include it. A copier's eye probably jumped from the first instance of “fourteen generations” to the second instance in the manuscript from which he was copying, thereby eliminating the phrase between—a scribal error called “homoioteleuton.”

1:18 Now — With this conjunction, the text shifts from genealogy to story. We interpret it, therefore, as an introductory particle in the same sense as **עַתָּה** (Now).

origin — Even though the same word is used here as in 1:1 (**תולדת**), the meaning is different. In 1:1, **תולדת** was a plural noun referring to a list of “descendants” (as evidenced by the plural demonstrative “these”). Here, it is an abstract singular noun referring to the story of how Yeshua came into being. The use of the same word with different semantic nuances is called “antanaclasis.” To capture both the similarity in sound and difference in meaning, we render the first “originators” and the second “origin.” In this place, NA27 has γενεσις, whereas RPM has γεννησις. The first means “origin,” “source,” or “lineage,” whereas the second refers more specifically to “engendering” or “producing,” and, thus, “birth.”

Yeshu[a] the Messiah — To shorten the name, the *ayin* was dropped, which we reinsert. Unlike the Greek, the Hebrew contains a definite article, which is why we render it “Yeshua the Messiah” instead of “Yeshua Messiah” (the equivalent of “Jesus Christ”). The Old Latin and the Old Syriac lack the name “Yeshua.”

was [like] this — More literally, “thusly it happened.” Just like the Greek (οὕτως ην), the verb (to happen/occur/become/be) follows the adverb (thus/in such a way).

was contractually bound — In the ancient world, unlike today, one did not simply ask someone to marry them—they paid money, goods, and/or services in exchange for their spouse. The way to marriage was initiated through legally binding, contractual procedures. Thus, we do not think it appropriate to render the verb “betrothed,” “engaged,” or “promised.” Note the difference in word-order between DT and the Greek. The Greek says “contractually bound was his mother Mariam to Joseph,” whereas DT says “his mother Mariam was contractually bound to Joseph.” Since the subject is changing from Yeshua to Mariam, the Hebrew has fronted the new subject before the verb—a typical maneuver in Hebrew syntax.

he went to her — The verb **בוא** + **אל** is a euphemism for sexual intercourse. But it is, precisely, a *euphemism*. It is not saying that he went “in to” her as in he “penetrated” her; rather, it signifies that he went to where she was. This euphemism is reflected by the Greek, which says “they gathered/came together.”

pregnant — Both NA27 and RPM say “having in the belly,” the typical Greek idiom for the Hebrew **הרה** (pregnant) as seen, for example, in Gen 16:11, Gen 38:24-5, and Isa 7:14. Thus, Davies (ICC) says, “ἐν γαστρὶ + ἔχειν (= ‘to be pregnant’) is a fixed expression occurring in Herodotus (3.32), in medical writers after Hippocrates, and commonly in the papyri; it is also

frequent in the LXX for *hārâ* or *hāreh*.” The difference, therefore, is one of language, not of semantic meaning.

by influence of — Or “by cause of.” The *min* signals origination or agency.

1:19 **Yet** — We interpret the conjunction as adversative.

was a righteous man — Or “was a just man.” The Hebrew verb is perfect (was), which, if taken from a Greek text, would represent the aorist (simple past) verbal form. The Greek, however, is a present participle (being). Second, the Hebrew says “a righteous man,” placing the adjectival modifier after the noun it modifies in agreement with typical Hebrew syntax. The Greek, however, lacks a noun (there is no “man/person”). Thus, the Hebrew differs substantially from the Greek.

he did not want — The Hebrew is a perfect (he did not want). The Greek is a present participle (he was not wanting).

to hand her over to death — **לְמַסֹּר אוֹתָהּ לְמִיתָה**. The verb **מָסַר** comes from MH. It means “to hand over/deliver/surrender/transmit” (Jastrow). It is, perhaps, best known for its use at the start of *m. Avot*: “Moshe received Torah from Sinai and *handed it over* (**מָסַרָהּ**) to Joshua, then Joshua to the elders, the elders to the prophets, and the prophets *handed it over* (**מָסַרָהּ**) to the members of the Great Assembly.” The noun **מִיתָה**, referring either to natural death or the penalty of death (Jastrow), is clearly Mishnaic (Biblical Hebrew would use **מוֹת**). NA27 and RPM do not have this phrase. Neither does it occur in the Old Syriac. Howard sees in it a correspondence with the Gnostic Gospel of James. But one need not look to Gnostic texts to find correspondence. One only need to look to Torah. According to Lev 20:10, if a man has intercourse with another man's wife, both must be put to death (see also Deut 22:22). Before the messenger appeared to Joseph, it is likely that, discovering his wife pregnant before he “went to her,” Joseph would have presumed she had intercourse with another man. If he lacked mercy and love for Mariam, he could easily have delivered her to the authorities with the deadly charge of adultery.

nor to expose her — Or “nor to reveal her.” NA27 has “to publicly disgrace” (**δειγματισσαι**).

RPM has an additional preposition, but retains the idea of public disgrace (**παραδειγματισσαι**).

Nevertheless — The Hebrew includes a contrastive particle, which is not present in the Greek.

it was on his mind — Here we find the Hebrew noun **לֵב**, which is traditionally translated “heart,” but refers more appropriately to one's “being” or “self” and to one's mental processes. Thus, something like “mind” is more appropriate here. Instead of using a noun phrase with **καρδια** (heart), the Greek uses a verbal phrase (he was inclined).

to leave her — Both NA27 and RPM say “to release/send away,” meaning “to divorce.” The Hebrew actually makes more sense than the Greek because Joseph could probably not divorce her secretly (divorce was a legal, public act).

secretly — Literally, “in secret.” Since, however, the noun functions as an adverbial accusative, we render it “secretly.”

1:20 **about this** — Literally, “on” this. Both NA27 and RPM have **αὐτοῦ** after “this,” which represents the presentative particle **הִנֵּה** (look!). That particle, however, does not appear in DT.

the messenger [of YHWH] — The divine name is missing here. Though DT actually uses the divine name (unlike the NT manuscripts), it does not write out the name itself. Instead, it writes a sign consisting of three dots: . It is possible that space was originally left for the name, but was accidentally skipped over in the transmission process.

from the Holy Spirit [is] he — The syntax of this phrase is uniquely Hebrew. The phrase does not occur this way in NA27 or RPM.

Yes, from the Holy Spirit [is] she pregnant. — We interpret the second כִּי as asseverative (yes/ indeed). The entire sentence does not occur in NA27 or RPM.

1:21 **And, look,** — This phrase, which would be καὶ ἰδοὺ in Greek, does not occur in NA27 or RPM.

and call — וְהִקְרָא could mean either “she will call” or “you (masculine) will call.” Since Mariam is the subject to begin with and there is no identification elsewhere of a change in subject, we have stuck with “she will call,” which is typical of annunciation oracles anyway. The verb in both NA27 and RPM is second-person (you)—most likely an instance of harmonization with v. 25, which says “he” (Joseph) called him Yeshua.

him — Literally, “his name.”

Savior — Literally, “Yeshua.” Instead of giving the name, however, we have made this into a title in order to mimic the intended word-play between *yeshua* and *yoshia* (he will save). Such word-play is common in the Hebrew scriptures—especially when it comes to the naming of important figures—but does not work in Greek. Such a word-play indicates that the information being conveyed here was not originally in Greek.

all their sins — “All” is not present in NA27 or RPM.

1:22 **Now, all this [happened] in order to fulfill** — NA27 and RPM have the verb “took place/ happened/ came about” instead of a verbless clause, but the meaning remains the same.

through his instrument — Literally, “according his hand” (referring to Isaiah). Alternatively, “by his power” (referring to YHWH). This is not present in NA27 or RPM.

the prophet Isaiah — Though neither NA27 nor RPM say “Isaiah,” the name of the prophet is mentioned in Codex Bezae as well as numerous papyri and versions. In those cases, however, it is “Isaiah, the prophet,” whereas here it is “the prophet Isaiah.”

1:23 This quotation is from Isa 7:14 in the Masoretic Text (not ❸). NA27 and RPM explain the name at the end: ο εστιν μεθερμηνευομενον Μεθ' ημων ο θεος (which is translated ‘God [is] with us.’). That explanation is not present in DT.

Look [at] the young woman — עַלְמָה means “young woman.” ❸ rendered this *parthenos*, which usually means “virgin,” but is used by ❸ for a married woman (Isa 62:5). Thus, even the Greek did not understand this as a reference to virginity, but to social and marital status. The use of a definite article means that this person was known to the hearer. The particle הִנֵּה points to a current situation. The following participle (next note) signals a person and event in present time.

about to birth — A present participle, indicating concurrent action.

She will call — קָרְאֵת means either “she will call” or “you (woman) will call,” which is typical for annunciation oracles (see Gen 16:11). ❹ and ❸ have a second-person form. 1QIsa^a,

however, has קרא—either a Qal “one will call his name” or Pual “his name will be called.”

With-Us-[Is]-El [Immanuel] — Since the meaning of the name is significant, we have made that primary and then spelled out the name in brackets.

1:24 **took her as a wife** — The Greek is slightly different. NA27 and RPM say “took the wife of his.”

1:25 **have intercourse [with] her** — That is “know” her. A classic Hebrew idiom.

her son — “Her son” occurs in RPM. NA27 simply says “a son.”

the firstborn — “The firstborn” does not occur in RPM or NA27.

whom he named — Literally, “he called his name.”

2:1 **during the reign** — Literally, “in the days.” And idiom. It does not mean “while Herod lived,” but “during Herod's reign.”

Herod — The Hebrew is a transcription of his Greek name: הורודוס (Horodos).

2:2 **pay him homage** — Literally, “to bow down/worship him.” This verb does not refer to the veneration of a deity, but to the paying of honor and respect to a person.

2:3 **suffused** — Or “filled.”

2:4

2:5 **For so it was said by the prophet's mouth** — Both NA27 and RPM say something different: “for it was written by the prophet.”

2:6 This quotation is from Mic 5:1 from the Masoretic Text (not 5).

not [so] small — DT has לא צעיר (not small). This is supported by both NA27 and RPM. The Masoretic Text, however, has only צעיר (small).

my people — DT has עמי (my people). This is supported by both NA27 and RPM. The Masoretic Text does not have it.

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5:44 **to you** — Plural.*the heavenly fire*

- 6:9 **be kept consecrated** — Hithpael Imperfect. See Ezek 38:23 for an example.
- 6:10 **May your acceptance** — In Leviticus, when someone brings an ascension sacrifice to YHWH, it is said to be “for his acceptance.”
- 6:11
- 6:12 **first** — מִחֹל means to “blot out/cancel/annul/remit/forgive” debt. See Jastrow. A masculine plural participle.
- 6:13 **grip** — Literally, “hands.”
- testing** — See *m. Avot* 5:4, 7 or Sirach 4:17; 6:7.
- but** — “If not/except/but/only.” See Jastrow.
- the dominion and the might** — “Strength” appears in a pair with מַלְכוּת in 1 Chr 29:30 when referencing King David: “his dominion and his might.”
- Indeed!** — Most manuscripts, including the extremely early Didache, include the last part of this verse, but some important manuscripts do not. Modern translations usually do not include it.

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