

CLARIFYING
BAFFLING
BIBLICAL PASSAGES

CHAPTER TWENTY EIGHT

A REAPPRAISAL OF THE
“PEARLS”
IN MATTHEW 7:6

Thomas F. McDaniel, Ph.D.

©

2007

All Rights Reserved

XXVIII

A REAPPRAISAL OF THE “PEARLS” IN MATTHEW 7:6

I. INTRODUCTION

The aphorism “like a gold nose-ring in a wild pig’s snout is a pretty woman who lacks good manners” (Prov 11:12) has influenced many interpretations of Matt 7:6. Given the fact that Jewish sentiment about swine could be summed up in the saying **בית כסא מטולטל הוה חזירא**, “a pig is a moving privy,” Prov 11:12 obviously contains a ridiculously unreal image of a bejeweled pig to address the ridiculous reality of uncouth beauty. Similarly, it has been argued that Jesus, in stating “do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls to pigs,” utilized obviously unrealistic activities as a way of calling for proper discrimination in making judgements,² or proscribing the evangelizing of Gentiles,³ particularly the Romans,⁴ or the Samaritans,⁵ or anyone indisposed or unprepared for the gospel.⁶

The enigmas of Matt 7:6 are not in the prohibitions per se, since the ban against the disciples’ going to the Gentiles and the Samaritans is clearly given in Matt 10:6, “do not travel the road of the Gentiles, and enter not the towns of the Samaritans.”⁷ The difficulties are threefold: (1) the artificiality of the imagery, (2) the imbalance of two elements in the parallelism (“the holy” in parallel with “pearls”), and (3) the variations of the saying found in the Coptic *Gospel of Thomas*⁸ and the 14th century Hebrew text of Matthew in Shem Tob’s *Even Bohan*.⁹

Perles,¹⁰ followed by Jeremias,¹¹ Schwarz,¹² and others,¹³ suggested that τὸ ἄγιον renders an original Aramaic קְדִישָׁא “ear-ring, nose-ring.” Their proposals provide suitable parallels and complete synonymous parallelism: “Give not a (precious) ring to dogs, and cast not your pearls before swine” and “Hang not (precious) rings on dogs, and adorn not the snout of swine.”

While these retroversions of 7:6a do justice to poetic balance and parallelism, they are themselves problematic. They produce prohibitions against behavior which common sense precluded. They lack any literal significance and have no clear metaphorical meaning or relationship to the violence insinuated in 7:6b, “lest they rend you.” However, when retroversion of all words in 7:6 are explored, more apparent parallels become evident and explicit non-enigmatic prohibitions emerge which resolve the differences found in the Greek text, the *Gospel of Thomas*, and the Shem Tob text of Matthew.

One cannot be dogmatic about particular lexical possibilities or even the priority of Hebrew or Aramaic as the language of preference.¹⁴ A strong case has been made for a Hebrew substratum for the Gospel of Matthew,¹⁵ and a particularly good case can be made for Matt 7:6, since an aphorism pertaining to תורה “Torah” might well be have been given in the language of the Torah, even though the vernacular was Aramaic.

The retroversion of μαργαρίτας in the second prohibition to Hebrew תורה or תורות provides the key to understanding Matt 7:6, rather than the retroversion of τὸ ἄγιον to the Aramaic קדשא “ring.” If טהור “pure, holy,” stands behind τὸ ἄγιον, as argued below, תורה or תורות provides alliteration

and an attractive wordplay. By contrast, the Aramaic אִוְרְיָא “instruction, the Law” would provide alliteration but no word-play.¹⁶

In the discussion which follows Aramaic and Hebrew retroversions are provided and lexical support is drawn from Semitic cognates where appropriate. Immediately beneath the section headings II–V, below, appear the RSV translation and the Nestle-Aland Greek text, followed by a retroversion into consonantal Hebrew and Aramaic. These are followed by vocalized Hebrew and Aramaic retroversions (which remove all ambiguities in the consonantal text) and my translation of the retroversions.

II.

“Do not give what is holy to the dogs.”

μη δῶτε τὸ ἅγιον τοῖς κυσίοις

אל תתנו הטהור לכלבים

אל תוהב קדושא לכלביא

אַל תִּתְּנוּ הַטְּהוֹר לְכָלְבִּים

אַל תוּהַב קְדוּשָׁא לְכָלְבִּיָא

“Do not give the holy (word) to the dog-keepers.”

“what is holy” or “the holy (word)”

Michel¹⁷ cited the biblical and rabbinic evidence for understanding τὸ ἅγιον in Matt 7:6 as a reference to sacrificial meat which was not to be used for dog food (Ex 29:33; Lev 2:3, 22:10–16; Num 18:8–19; and Deut 12:15).¹⁸

The Septuagint translators used ἅγιος to translate twenty-one words, sixteen of which are unrelated to the stem קדש. For example, in Lev 10:14 the Septuagint reads ἐν τόπῳ ἁγίῳ “in (any) holy place” for MT בְּמָקוֹם טָהוֹר. Hebrew טָהוֹר “holy, pure” is an attractive option for a retroversion of τὸ ἅγιον in Matt 7:6. The rabbinic restriction אֵין מְשַׁלְחִין בְּיַד עַם הָאָרֶץ, “you must not send what is pure by the hand of a commoner,”¹⁹ is similar enough to Jesus’ prohibition that τὸ ἅγιον could well have rendered טָהוֹר. The connotation of טָהוֹר in Ps 12:7 provides an attractive parallel:

אֲמָרוֹת יְהוָה אֲמָרוֹת טָהוֹרוֹת

“The commands of Yahweh (are) holy commands.”

τὰ λόγια κυρίου λόγια ἁγνά (LXX 11:7).

In Ps 19:8–10 we have similarly,

תּוֹרַת יְהוָה תְּמִימָה מִרְאֵת יְהוָה טָהוֹרָה

“The Torah of Yahweh is perfect . . .

the command²⁰ of Yahweh is holy.”

The use of טָהוֹר in Ps 12:7 and Ps 19:8–10 is analogous to these texts which have קדש:

“his holy word” (Ps 105:42) דְּבַר קִדְשׁוֹ

“his holy words” (Jer 23:9) דְּבָרַי קִדְשׁוֹ

“I swore by my holiness” (Ps 89:36) נִשְׁבַּעַתִּי בְּקִדְשִׁי

“he spoke by his holiness” (Ps 60:8; 108:8) דִּבֶּר בְּקִדְשׁוֹ

A similar usage of ἄγιων νόμων and ἀγίαν γυνώσις is reflected in II Macc 6:28–30, “I leave to the young a noble example of how to die . . . for the reverend and holy laws (τῶν σεμνῶν καὶ ἀγίων νόμων) . . . it is clear to the Lord in his holy knowledge (ἀγίαν γυνώσις) . . . that I am glad to suffer these things.” Thus, the תּוֹרָה, אֲמָרָה, מִצְוָה and דְּבַר of Yahweh are טְהוֹרָה in the same way that the γυνώσις and νόμος are ἄγιος. Any or all of these words, used in the singular, the plural, or as a collective could be rendered by the neuter collective τὸ ἄγιον.²¹

Consequently, even though τὸ ἄγιον in Matt 7:6 could mean sacrificial meat or ceremonially pure food, it is more likely an ellipsis for “the holy word of Yahweh,” like the ἱερὰ γράμματα (2 Tim 3:15), the Aramaic אֲוִיִּתָא, and the English “Scripture”—all meaning “sacred writings.” Lachs²² arrived at a similar conclusion (but differed with his retaining μαργαρίτας as a metaphor), stating: “The meaning is, do not teach Torah, i. e., that which is holy to the non-Jew . . . Do not present that which is holy, i.e., the biblical passages or any nuggets of ‘wisdom’.” Additional support for the first part of Lach’s conclusion is offered below in section III.²³

“to the dogs” or “to the dog-keepers”

In Babylonian myth dogs functioned as agents of the gods and in Greek mythology κύων was a term used for the servants, agents, or watchers of the gods—like Pan who was the κύων of Cybele. A similar positive role given to dogs is encountered in Jewish tradition. According to Tobit 5:17 (MSS BA), 6:1 (MS S), and 11:5, a dog accompanied the angel Raphael on his mission to heal Tobit’s blindness, to

bind the demon Asmodeus, and to be a “match-maker” for Sarah and Tobias. In Jewish lore golden dogs kept watch over the coffin of Joseph, and two brazen dogs were stationed at the temple gate to prevent the misuse of the Ineffable Name.²⁴

However, κύων in the Greek world²⁵ and כָּלֵב in the Semitic world were frequently terms of disparagement. The self-deprecating words of Hazael to the prophet Elisha, “what is your servant the dog . . .” (II Kings 7:13) are like those in Lachish Letter II, “to my lord . . . who is thy servant (but) a dog that my lord hath remembered his servant?”²⁶ Such expressions parallel self-effacing Akkadian confessions (e.g., “I am the dog of the king,” “your slave, your dog, your subject,” and “I used to be a poor man, a dead dog”)²⁷ and Akkadian invectives and pejoratives like *minum sun[uma] ka-al-bu* “What are they? [Nothing] but dogs!”²⁸

There is more than a hint of the pejorative in Jesus’ reply to the Syro-Phoenician woman (Matt 15:26–27), “I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. . . . It is not fair to take the children’s bread and throw it to the ‘little dogs’ (κυνάρσιος).”²⁹ The type of food fit for the κυνάριον (both literally and metaphorically) can be found in Ex 22:30 of Targum Neophyti I: “you [Israelites] shall not eat flesh torn from a wild beast, killed in the field; you shall throw [תטלקון] it to the dog, or you shall throw it to the gentile stranger [נכרייה בר עממי] who is likened to a dog [דהוא מדמי],” which is an expansion of the MT, “you shall not eat any flesh torn [by beasts] in the field, (but) you shall throw it to the dog.”³⁰

In Isa 56:10–11, Phil 3:2, and Rev 22:15 “dogs” refer to the wicked in general, while in Psa 22:17 and in Psa 59:7 they refer to the enemy, and in Enoch 89:41–50 they indicate the

Philistines in particular. But the pejorative use of כָּלֵב was not restricted to strangers and gentiles in general.³¹ A sexual nuance is evidenced in Arabic كَلْتَبَان (*kaltabân*) “pimp” and كَلْب (*kaliba*) “to function as a pimp.”³² In Deut 23:18–19, “dog” and “prostitute” are equated with the קְדֵשׁ and the קְדֵשָׁה, the male or female hierodule involved in cultic sexual activity.

The pejorative “dog” was used by Rabbi Yannai who said to an effusive dinner guest unable to answer questions on Scripture and Talmud, “a dog has eaten Yannai’s bread!”³³ In a dialogue between Rabbi Akiba and his disciples, Rabbi Akiba recalled, “when I was an עַם הָאָרֶץ [a commoner] I said, ‘I would that I had a scholar [before me], and I would maul him like an ass.’” To this his disciples replied, “Rabbi, say ‘like a dog’.”³⁴ Although neither Akiba nor his disciples equated the עַם הָאָרֶץ with a dog, the עַמֵי הָאָרֶץ could well have been called dogs since they were elsewhere equated with vermin and beasts:

Let him not marry a daughter to the עַם הָאָרֶץ, because they are detestable and their wives are vermin, and of the daughters it is said, “Cursed be he that lieth with any manner of beast” (Deut 27:21).³⁵

The following Talmudic prohibition approximates a ban on entrusting the holy word to the עַמֵי הָאָרֶץ who, as noted, were called dogs:

We do not commit testimony to them [i.e., to the עַמֵי הָאָרֶץ]; we do not accept testimony from them; we do not reveal a secret to them; we do not appoint them as guardians for orphans; we do not appoint them stewards

over charity funds; and we must not join their company on the road. Some say, “We do not proclaim their losses too.”³⁶

If human testimony could not be entrusted to the עמי הארץ, how much more so sacred tradition needed to be protected from profanation. Jesus’ prohibitions in Matt 7:6a were apparently addressing this issue of protecting sacred texts and traditions—making the prohibitions more than a Halakic expansion on Ex 22:31, which deals simply with meat, or Ex 29:33, which deals with consecrated food. Jesus’ prohibitions can be understood as a fence around the טהורה (= תורה/תורות), keeping it/them safe from undesirables like the עמי הארץ.

However, these prohibitions of Jesus may not have used the word meaning “dogs,” either literally or figuratively. The Greek κυσίον of Matt 7:6 may reflect a misreading of the כלבים or כלביא in the Hebrew or Aramaic *Vorlage*. While כלבים or כלביא could mean “dogs,” they could just as well be *qattal* noun forms used for a vocation or profession, like Syriac כלבא (*kallābā*) “dog-keeper” and the Arabic كلاب (*kallāb*) “dog trainer” (in contrast to كالب [*kālib*] “owner of dogs”).³⁷ If the original כלבים or כלביא in the *written* tradition stood for פְּלִבְיָא or פְּלִבְיָא “dog-keepers,” rather than פְּלִבְיָא or פְּלִבְיָא “dogs,” the Greek text should have read τοῖς ἔγκυστοις αὐτοῦ instead of τοῖς κυσίοις.

The retroversion and translation offered here, “do not give the holy (word) to dog-keepers,” assumes the tradition intended פְּלִבְיָא or פְּלִבְיָא, and this interpretation restores an explicit literal prohibition to safeguard sacred tradition. The

restoration accords well with a Talmudic comparison which equated dog owners with swine herders: “the one who breeds dogs (המגדל כלבים) is like one who breeds swine (המגדל חזירים).”³⁸ Such breeders or owners were unfit to handle the תורה (see below, notes 49–53).

III.

“nor throw your pearls before swine”

μηδὲ βάλητε τοὺς μαργαρίτας ὑμῶν
ἐμπροσθεν τῶν χοίρων

ואל תורו תורתכם לפני החזירים

ולא תאורון אורייתא דילכון קדם חזריא

ואל תורו תורתכם לפני החזירים

ולא תאורון אורייתא דילכון קדם חזריא

“and do not teach your *tora*

in the presence of swine-herders”

“do not throw” or “do not teach”

In the Septuagint βάλλειν was used to translate twenty different Hebrew words, most of which could be used in a retroversion here. Even though אל תשימו appears in the Shem Tob text and **אל תשימו** [welâ tarmûn] appears in the Syriac, the verb of choice is יָרָה if one anticipates a wordplay and alliteration.³⁹ Hebrew יָרָה has a wide semantic range including “to throw, to teach, to rain, to shoot” and the following varied derivatives: תורה “instruction,” מורה “teacher,” מורה “archer,” and יורה “rain.” The negative

imperative, אל תורו, could mean “do not teach,” or “do not throw,” or “do not shoot.” The choice depends upon the object of the verb, which in this case would most likely have been a synonym of, or a parallel to, τὸ ἄγιον.

“your pearls” (תּוֹרֹתֵיכֶם) or “your Torah” (תּוֹרַתְכֶם)

Even though a tradition emerged that the temple candelabrum had 183 pearls and 200 precious stones, μαργαρίτας “pearls” is not a synonym of, or a parallel to, τὸ ἄγιον the holy.⁴⁰ In addition to the Greek loanword מְרַגְלִיטִים or מְרַגְלִית, other Hebrew words for “pearl” are פְּנִינִים⁴¹ and דּוֹר or תּוֹר. The latter noun is cognate to the masculine and feminine nouns in Arabic, در (*durr*), درر (*durar*), درّة (*durrat*), درات (*durrât*), all meaning “a (large) pearl.”⁴²

Hebrew דָּר was used in Esther 1:6 in the description of the courtyard of the Susa palace: “[there was] . . . a mosaic pavement of porphyry, marble, mother-of-pearl [דָּר], and precious stones.” The variant תּוֹר appears in Cant 1:10, “how beautiful are your cheeks with pearls, your neck with beads!”⁴³ The interchange of ד and ת is well attested in other words.⁴⁴ Interestingly, the interchange occurs with the homographs and homophones דּוֹר / תּוֹר “generation” in I Chron 17:17 (“you have shown me future generations”) and its parallel account in II Sam 7:19, where תּוֹר הָאֲדָם and תּוֹרַת הָאֲדָם appear in these two texts instead of the anticipated דּוֹר הָאֲדָם. These texts illustrate well not only the interchange of ד and ת but also a gender shift in parallel texts.⁴⁵

The Hebrew or Aramaic *Vorlage* behind the τὸς μαργαρίτας ὑμῶν of Matt 7:6 must have contained the Hebrew or Aramaic homograph תּוֹרַתְכֶם / תּוֹרַתְכֶן (sg.) or תּוֹרוֹתֵיכֶם /

תורתֵיכוֹן (pl.), which could mean either “your teaching(s), your *torah*” or “your pearl/pearls.”⁴⁶ The retroversion of 7:6a to

אֵל תִּתְּנוּ הַטְּהוֹרוֹת . . . אֵל תִּתְּנוּ הַטְּהוֹרוֹת . . .
וְאַל תִּלְמְדוּן תּוֹרוֹתֵיכֶם . . . וְאַל תִּלְמְדוּן תּוֹרוֹתֵיכֶם . . .

restores a very understandable prohibition and provides the desiderated parallel to τὸ ἄγιστον.

Once כלבים and חזירים in the *Vorlage* were understood to mean “dogs” and “swine,” rather than “dog-keepers” and “swine-herders” (see below), it is not surprising that תורה/תורות was read as “pearl/pearls” rather than as “Torah” or “teachings.” Any prohibition against teaching Torah to an animal, particularly to dogs and pigs, would have been considered inane.

The plural תורות, if original, could be a reference to the law and the prophets (as in Matt 5:17) or to the (a) תורה שבכתב and (b) תורה שבעל פה, i.e., the written and oral Torahs,⁴⁷ or to the Torah and the Halakah.⁴⁸ Either way, singular or plural, the prohibitions of Matt 7:6 were apparently concerned with the issue of protecting the Torah and Halakah, an issue which was frequently addressed in later Talmudic tradition, including:

(a) Wine reveals the secrets of God and men to foreigners (just as I revealed the commands of God and the secrets of my father Jacob to the Canaanite woman Bathshua); and God told us not to reveal them [the secrets] to them [the foreigners].⁴⁹

(b) The teachings of the Torah are not to be transmitted to an idolater (גוי), for it is said: “He hath not dealt so with

any nation; and as for his ordinances, they have not known them” (Ps 147:20).⁵⁰

(c) Whoever studies (engages in) the Torah in front of an עַם הָאָרֶץ is as though he cohabited with his betrothed in his [the עַם הָאָרֶץ] presence.⁵¹

(d) Just as this treasure (סִימָה) is not revealed to everyone, so you have no right to devote yourself [to the exposition of the] words of Torah except before suitable people.⁵²

(e) [R. Johanan said] “a heathen (גּוֹי) who studies Torah deserves to die, for it is written, ‘Moses commanded us a law for an inheritance’ (Deut 33:4); it is our inheritance, not theirs.”⁵³

“to the pigs” or “before the swineherders”

References to dogs and pigs as a fixed-pair appear frequently in Semitic texts. Similar to English “fight like cats and dogs” is an Akkadian text which reads, “if dogs and pigs fight each other . . .”⁵⁴ This fixed-pair appears in Isa 66:3, “who breaks a dog’s neck . . . who offers swine’s blood,” and in Tractate Sabbath 155b, “none is more poor than a dog, none is richer than a swine.”⁵⁵

The uncertainty in knowing if כֶּלֶב is to be read כְּלָב “dog” or כְּלָב “dog keeper” is also encountered with consonantal חֲזַר, which can be either חֲזָר (*scriptio defectiva*) or חֲזָר.⁵⁶ Even though מַגְדֵּל חֲזִירִין and רֵעָה חֲזִירִין were used for the “pig breeder” and “swine herder,” Aramaic חֲזִירָא is also attested. One cannot preclude, therefore, the likelihood that Hebrew חֲזִירִים would be חֲזִירִים “swine herders.”⁵⁷

Talmudic discussion about rearing dogs in towns bordering on Israel paired dog-breeders and swineherds: “he who breeds dogs [מגדל חזירין] is like someone who breeds swine [רעה חזירין].” Both breeders could be referred to by the pejorative עַם הָאָרֶץ or ὄχλος, in a manner similar to that found in Jn 7:49, ὁ ὄχλος οὗτος ὁ μὴ γινώσκων τὸν νόμον ἐπάρατοί εἰσιν, “this mob which does not know the Torah is accursed.”

The extent to which precaution was made to keep swine herders away from the sacred traditions is reflected in a mid-rash telling of Diocletian’s unhappy experiences when, in his youth, he came near the academy of Rabbi Judah.⁵⁸

Diocletian the emperor used to be a רעי חזירין “swineherd” near Tiberias and whenever he came near Rabbi’s school [סדריה דרבי] students would come out and hassle him [מחיים ליה].

When Diocletian became emperor, and these students were adults, they were summoned before him and admitted their harassment, “Diocletian the swineherd we did indeed insult [קילינן] but to Diocletian the emperor we are loyal subjects.”

Jesus’ refusal (Matt 8:28–34; Mk 5:1–20; Lk 8:26–39) to let the Gadarene demoniac become a disciple may also reflect his putting a “fence” around Torah and Halakah. It was one thing for Jesus, while in the vicinity of swine herds and swineherds, to heal the Gadarene and to instruct him, Ὑπαγε εἰς τὸν οἶκόν σου πρὸς τοὺς σοὺς καὶ ἀπάγγειλον αὐτοῖς ὅσα ὁ κύριός σοι, “go home to your friends, and tell how much the Lord has done for you!” But it was another matter to accept a תלמיד “disciple” from a community renowned for its pig farms. In this respect swine herders were

treated differently than fishermen. It was not a matter of Jesus' withholding the "gospel" from the Gadarenes or the Gerasenes, but one of disinterest in having a תלמיד learning and discussing Torah and (his) Halakah from a community of swine herders.⁵⁹ To have responded otherwise to the Gaderene would have surely created insurmountable problems of credibility in the Judean community in which Jesus also ministered.

IV.

"lest they trample them under foot"

μήποτε καταπατήσουσιν αὐτοὺς

ἐν τοῖς ποσσὶν αὐτῶν

פּוֹן מַטְרִיפִים אוֹתָהּ בְּרַגְלֵיהֶם

דִּי לְמַא מַטְרִיפִין יְתָה בְּרַגְלֵיהוֹן

פּוֹן מַטְרִיפִים אוֹתָהּ בְּרַגְלֵיהֶם

דִּי לְמַא מַטְרִיפִין יְתָה בְּרַגְלֵיהוֹן

"lest, blaspheming it with their slander"

The second half of the aphorism reflects not so much a misreading of an original Hebrew or Aramaic *Vorlage*, but a literal rendering of metaphors. The imagery of the Greek text simply creates a picture of the senseless loss of pearls, with no hint of the desecration of sacred traditions. Consequently, the Semitic metaphor behind the "trampling under foot," has gone unrecognized.

The Septuagint καταπατεῖν translates sixteen Hebrew words meaning "to tread, to trample," and these do not exhaust the lexical possibilities for reconstructing the *Vorlage*.

Burney’s retroversion, following the Syriac text, has **דָּוַם** “to tread under foot, to transgress or violate” as in **ܪܘܚܘܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܘܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܘܬܐ ܕܥܘܠܘܬܐ** (*’ettedišû qannûne’*) “the canons were violated, set at nought.”⁶⁰ But **בוּס** “to trample, to despise” and its by-forms, or even **דָּרַס** could also be used.⁶¹ Were **דָּרַס** “to tread, to attack with paws or claws” the word of choice, an implicit wordplay with **דָּרַשׁ** “to interpret, to expound” would be introduced: swineherds and dog-keepers would more than likely **דָּרַס** the Torah, rather than **דָּרַשׁ** it.

The verb **טָרַף**, chosen for the retroversion here, is supported *indirectly* by (1) the Coptic **κοπρία** of the Gospel of Thomas (“do not give what is holy to dogs, lest they throw them on the dung-heap [**κοπρία**]”) and (2) the **יכרסמנו** “they chew it” of the Shem Tob text.⁶² At first glance it is somewhat difficult to relate **יכרסמנו אותה לעיניכם** “they chew it to your eyes” to **καταπατήσουσιν αὐτοὺς ἐν τοῖς ποσὶν αὐτῶν** “to trample them with their feet.” The verb **כרסם** “to bite, to nibble, to destroy” reflects the influence of Psa 80:14, “the boar (**חֲזִיר**) from the forest chews on it (**יִכְרֹס־מִנָּה**).”⁶³ If the Shem Tob text were a translation from the Greek, it would require a *Vorlage* having some form of **καταπέσσω**, **καταπίνω**, **καταπυέω**, or **κατάποσις** “to gulp, to swallow, to digest,” or the like. But the Shem Tob text **יכרסמנו** is better explained by variations in a Hebrew or Aramaic substratum than by conjectured variants in the Greek tradition.

It is possible to account for the variations in Matt 7:6 in the Greek, Hebrew, and Coptic text traditions by a retroversion of **καταπατήσουσιν** to the root **טרף/תרף** stem I (with the interchange of **ט** and **ת** like **תָּעָה** and **טָּעָה** “to wander, to err”).⁶⁴ Aramaic **תרף/טרף**, stem I, means “to blaspheme, to

deviate from the right, to use obscene language,” with the Aramaic תּוֹרְפָא meaning “pudenda.”⁶⁵ In Hebrew the root appears in תְּרִפוּת “foulness, obscenity, debauchery.” By contrast, תָּרַף / תָּרַף stem II (normally with a ט), means “to move with vehemence, to knock down, to prey, to strike or tear, to eat or devour.”⁶⁶

Although תָּרַף / תָּרַף (stem I) “to blaspheme” was intended in the Hebrew or Aramaic *Vorlage* of Matt 7:6, Greek translators, followed by Syriac and Latin translators, opted for תָּרַף / תָּרַף (stem II) “to trample.” This was a logical choice once חֲזֵרִים was read as “swine” rather than “swineherds.” By contrast, Shem Tob or his predecessors resolved the ambiguity of תָּרַף / תָּרַף stems I, II, and III (see below) by substituting כְּרִסִּים, a synonym of תָּרַף / תָּרַף stem II, collocated with the חֲזִיר “boar” in Ps 80:14 (noted above).

Similarly, the κοπρία “dunghill” in the Coptic Gospel reflects a *Vorlage* with תָּרַף / תָּרַף (stem I), a synonym of צוֹאָה “excrement, filth.” Although תְּרִפְיוֹן “laxative” is found in post-Biblical Hebrew, מִטְרַף “dunghill” (= מְדַמֵּן and מְדַמְנָה “dunghill” in Jer 48:2 and Isa 25:10) is *not* found in Biblical Hebrew. However, the causative participle מִטְרִיף / מִטְרִיף “blaspheming” could have been understood as a noun with the locative מַ preformative, “a place of filth,” i.e., a dunghill.

Moreover, the לעיניכם, which displaced ברגלהם in all but one manuscript of the Shem Tob Matthew, can be traced to the stem תָּרַף stem III. Widely attested in Arabic are طَرَفَ (*tarafa*) “to eye, to wink, to move the eyelids” and (تَرْف) “eye” (= تَرْف = عَيْن).⁶⁷ The עיניכם “your eyes” in the Shem Tob text is a *false* correction of the מִטְרִפִּיכֶם / מִטְרִפִּיכֶם “your blasphemies” in the primitive Hebrew Matthew. Thus, the

לעיניכם and יכרסמו in the Shem Tob text can be viewed as a doublet for the original מטריפים (or variant יטרפו), with the ל and כם of לעיניכם being secondary additions in the Shem Tob tradition.

Consequently, the canonical καταπατήσουσιν “they trample,” the Coptic κοπρία “dunghill,” as well as the Shem Tob יכרסמו “they eat” and לעיניכם “to your eyes,” can be accounted for by recognition of the stem תַרַךְ / תַרַךְ in a Hebrew or Aramaic *Vorlage* of Matthew. Therefore, the conclusion of Perles and Lachs that μήποτε καταπατήσουσιν “lest they trample” was *not* part of the Jesus’ original saying (since it presupposes the mistranslation of Hebrew תִּזְרוּ וְאַל as μηδέ βάλῃτε “nor throw”) cannot really be sustained.⁶⁸

“under their feet” or “with their slander”

The Hebrew רָגַל “to slander” (which is a denominative of רֶגֶל “foot”) is very helpful in understanding ἐν τοῖς ποσὶν αὐτῶν. The verb רָגַל appears in the MT of II Sam 19:28, “he has slandered [רָגַל] your servant to my lord, the king,” and in Psa 15:3 “who does not slander [לֹא רָגַל] with his tongue.” The Shapel of Syriac ܪܓܐܠ (*rēgal*) means “to ensnare,” and the Arabic رجل (*riḡl*) is a synonym of قاذورة (*qāḏūrat*) “a man of foul language and evil disposition who cares not what he says or does.”⁶⁹

Even though the original ברגליהם “with their slanderings” survives in only one Shem Tob manuscript, there is sufficient support from the Greek text tradition for its being in a Hebrew or Aramaic *Vorlage* of Matthew. To be sure, the phrase “with

their feet” is an anomaly with the verb כרסם “to chew.” However, רגל is a very appropriate modifier of תָּרַף / תָּרַף, stem I, “to blaspheme,” once רגל is recognized as רָגַל “to slander” rather than רָגַל “foot.”

V.

“and turning they rend you”

καὶ στραφέντες ῥήξουσιν ὑμᾶς

וְחֹזְרִים יִקְרְעוּ אֶתְכֶם

וְחֹזְרִין יִקְרְעוּן יְתַכּוּן

וְחֹזְרִים יִקְרְעוּ אֶתְכֶם

וְחֹזְרִין יִקְרְעוּן יְתַכּוּן

“and disavowing it, they malign you”

“turning” = “changing one’s mind” = “disavowing (it)”

The imagery in Matt 7:6, as interpreted here, is more than a literal about-face of frightened dogs and scared pigs turning to attack those who throw gems at them or put nose-rings on them. In the Septuagint στραφέντες “to turn” translates גלל, גרר, גר, פנה, שבב, שוב, and שית. But στραφέντες in Matt 7:6 was probably a translation of Hebrew/Aramaic תָּזַר “to go round, to return, to revoke,” which appears in the Shem Tob text. Opting for תָּזַר “to change” provides a nice wordplay with תָּזַר “swine herder.”⁷⁰ The nouns תָּזַרָה and תָּזַרְתָּה and the verb תָּזַר, may indicate someone’s making an about-face, having a change of heart, or making a retraction or a reversal of judgment.⁷¹ In Matt 7:6 the change of heart would be analogous to the “about-face” mentioned in *Pesahim* 49b: “he who has

studied and then abandoned the Torah hates the teacher more than any עם הארץ [“commoner”] hates the teacher.”⁷²

The Shem Tob manuscripts BCH, in contrast with manuscripts ADEFG, have אותה following the verb חזר. Thus, there is some uncertainty whether the idea expressed was originally “changing [their minds] they malign you” (following the participle and aorist of the Greek text) or “they disavow *it* [3fs = the Torah] to malign you” (following the imperfect and sequential infinitive of Shem Tob).

In the Septuagint ῥήγνυμι “to shatter, to rend” translates בקע, הרס, פתח, and קרע. Of these verbs, קרע (which appears in the Shem Tob text) was used literally and figuratively in Biblical texts. Examples include Hosea 13:8, “I will tear open their breast . . . I will maul them like a lion,” and Psa 35:15b–16a, “smiters gather about me, and they whom I did not know ‘tore me to pieces’ [קָרְעוּ] and did not desist from slandering me [בְּחַנְפֵי, for MT בְּחַנְפֵי], my encircling mockers gnashed their teeth at me.”⁷³

In the retroversion of Matt 7:6, the literal meaning of קרע “to maul” would make sense if the subjects of the verbs were literally “dogs” and “swine.” But the metaphor קָרַע “to malign, to slander” is required if κῶσις and χοίρων are themselves metaphors, or (as proposed above) go back to a *Vorlage* with כְּלָבִים “dog-keepers” and חֲזָרִים “swine herders.”

VI.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The prohibitions in Matt 7:6, if they were spoken by Jesus in Hebrew, could have been written in a consonantal text as

אל תתנו הטהור לכלבים ואל תרו תורתכם לפני החזרים
פן מטריפים אותה ברגליהם וחזרים אתוה יקרעו אתכם.

Were they given in Aramaic, they could have been

אל תוהב קדשא לכלביא ולא תאורון אורייתא דלכך קדם
חזריא די למא מטריפין יתה ברגליהון וחזירין יקרעון יתכון.

There are *unintentional* ambiguities in these consonantal reconstructions, even though *scriptio plena* has been used. Several of the words can have more than one meaning, depending on the vocalization. If these reconstructions approximate the *Vorlage*, the translators of the Greek text read the כלבים and חזרים in the *Vorlage* as כלבים and חזירים “dogs” and “pigs.” But כלבים and חזרים could just as readily have been read כלבים and חזרים “dog-keepers” and “swineherds.” With the exception of Aramaic אורייתא “Torah,” the unpointed retroversions can be translated into *koine* Greek precisely as Matt 7:6 appears in the Greek text, recognizing that singular/plural differences could simply reflect *scriptio defectiva/scriptio plena* variations.

If these retroversion into Hebrew and Aramaic prove reasonable, the following vocalizations warrant serious consideration. The Hebrew reconstruction can be vocalized as

אל תתנו הטהור לכלבים ואל תורו תורתכם לפני החזרים
פן מטריפים אותה ברגליהם וחזרים יקרעו אתכם.

The Aramaic reconstruction, with the same meaning, can be

אל תוהב קדושא לכלביא ולא תאורון אורייתא דילכון קדם
תזריא די למא מטריפין יתה ברגליהון וחזירין יקרעון יתכון.

These pointed retroversions can be translated:

Do not give the Holy (Word) to dog-keepers,
and do not teach your *Torah* before swine-herders,
lest, blaspheming it with their slander
and disavowing it, they malign you.

If the כלבים and חזירים are “dog-keepers” and “swine-herders,” the meaning of the prohibition is straightforward. According to Talmudic tradition, reciting the *Shema*^c in the proximity of dung was prohibited.⁷⁴ Consequently, prohibiting those who worked with offal and filth from handling τὸ ἅγιον, i.e., הַתּוֹרָה הַקְּדוֹשָׁה “the holy *Torah*,” appears quite reasonable. Even though the keepers of dogs and swine contributed indirectly to the production of Torah scrolls (since canine and porcine excrement was used in the process of tanning the leather for the scrolls),⁷⁵ they were not to deal with the text of the Torah or its interpretation.

Like the healed Gaderene demoniac (who was told, “go home to your kinfolk and declare to them how much the Lord has done for you”), the כָּלֵב and the חֲזִיר was able to become a אֲפֹסְטוֹלוֹס / אֲפֹסְטוֹלוֹס, an “apostle,”⁷⁶ witnessing to one’s personal experience of God’s grace, as in Mk 5:19, “Υπαγε . . . καὶ ἀπάγγειλον “go . . . and declare.” But dog-keepers and swine-herders could not become תַּלְמִידִים or διδάσκαλοι “disciples” studying Torah and Halakah.

The prohibitions in Matt 7:6 are similar to the following ones in the Manual of Discipline:⁷⁷

Do not admonish or dispute with the “men of the pit”⁷⁸
[אנשי השחת], conceal the counsel of the Torah in the

midst of the “men of perversity” [אנשי העול], but admonish with true knowledge and righteous law those who chose the way Now these are the rules of the way for the wise man in these times, with regard to his love as well as his hate. Let there be eternal hatred toward the “men of the pit” [אנשי השחת] in the spirit of secrecy. (DSD ix. 17)

Josephus recorded that an Essene swore to communicate to no one the doctrines of the sect except in the manner in which they were received, even on pain of death.⁷⁹ Thus, Jesus’ virtual silence before Pilate (Matt 27:11–14; Mk 15:2–5; Lk 23:2–5) was consistent with his putting a fence around the Torah and (his) Halakah when he was in Pilate’s court in the presence of כלבים and חזירים—figuratively speaking—whose intentions were to impugn and malign him.

It seems highly doubtful, therefore, that the prohibitions of Matt 7:6 were intended as (1) riddles couched in the imagery of bejeweled animals or (2) humorous figures of speech permitting one to proscribe, as one pleased, the proselytizing of Gentiles, giving the Eucharist to the those who were not baptized (*Didache* 9:5), or keeping “nuggets of wisdom” from the Samaritans or the Romans.

This “reappraisal of the pearls” leads to the conclusion that the pearls in Matt 7:6 originated in a misunderstanding in the Matthean tradition of תורה “Torah” as דורה / תורה “pearl or mother of pearl.” The shift *from* “pearls” *to* “Torah” restores Jesus’ prohibitions as an explicit ban on activities that could compromise the Torah and Halakah. This is precisely the kind of tradition one might expect Matthew to have included in his gospel given his agenda and his initial readers—who would

have appreciated Jesus’ assertion, “think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them” (Matt 5:17).

NOTES

1. Schwab (1969: 38) translated, “a pig which is a moving uncleanness.” Note also Simon and Epstein (1960: 25a), where it is stated, *פי חזיר כצות עוברת* “the mouth of the swine is like moving filth.”
2. Bruce 1983: 86–87.
3. Albright and Mann 1978: 84.
4. Gnilka 1986: 258. It should be noted with Krause (1914, 5: 15) that “there is reason to believe that this [symbolization of Rome as a pig in rabbinic literature] came into prominence only since the time of Hadrian and the fall of Betar (135 C.E.) since, in order to insult the Jews, the image of the pig was attached to the south gate of Jerusalem which had been transformed into the Roman colony, Aelia Capitolina” (cited by Braverman 1978: 94). Epstein (1885: 33) called attention to Rome’s worship of deities associated with Mars, which was depicted as a swine. Ginzberg (1925, 5: 294, n. 162) noted that the association of the Romans and pigs is rooted in the Roman legions’ emblem of the wild boar.
5. Lachs (1987:139) identified the “dogs” as the Samaritans and the “swine” as the Romans. If Lachs were correct, it would be difficult to account for the affirmative Samaritan stories (like the Samaritan woman at the well [John 4:4–30] and the parable of the good Samaritan [Luke 10:29–37]), as well as the influential role of Stephen, who, according to Spiro (1967: 285–300), was a Samaritan.

6. Sabourin 1982: 427.

7. Beare (1981: 342) thinks Matt 15:26, “It is not fair to take the children’s bread and throw it to the dogs,” is a retrojection into the life of Jesus of attitudes held by zealous members of the Jewish Christian community in the apostolic age. In this respect, Beare differs with Michel (1966: 1102–1004) and Bultmann (1961: 107) who regard Matt 7:6 as one of the “*profanen Meshalim die wohl erst durch die Tradition zu Jesuworten gemacht sind.*”

8. Guillaumont (1956: 48–49); Robinson (1977: 128). Logia 93 reads, “do not give what is holy to dogs, lest they throw them on the dung-heap (κοπρία).”

9. Howard (1995: 28–29). Matt 7:6 reads (with variants appearing in brackets)

אל תתנו בשר קדש לכלבים
 ואל תסימו פניכם [פנינכם, פניניכם]
 לפני חזיר [חזירים, החזירים]
 פן יכרסמנו [יכרסמנה] אותה [אותם] לעיניכם [ברגלהם]
 ויחזרו אותה לקרע אתכם.

This was translated by Howard as follows (with “you” and “yours” being masculine plurals):

Do not give holy flesh to dogs
 nor place your (pearls) before swine
 lest (they) chew (them) before you and turn to rend you.

Howard’s translation is a good example of making the Shem Tob text follow the canonical Greek text. A literal translation, including variants in brackets, is “do not give holy flesh to dogs nor place your face [your pearl, your pearls] before a pig [pigs, the pigs] lest they chew it [them] to your eyes [with their feet] and they turn it to rend you.” (See also note 49.)

10. Perles (1926: 163–164) following the Syriac of Gen 24: 47, he translated, “*Hängt den Hunden keine Ringe an und legt nicht eure Perlen am Rüssel der Schweine,*” from the retroversion:

לא תתלון קדשא לכלביא ולא תרמון מרגניתכון באפי חזיריא .

11. Jeremias 1963: 271–275 and 1966: 83–87. His retroversion was

לא תהבון קדישא לכלביא

ולא תרמון מרגלייתא דילכון באפי חזיריא

“Legt den Hunden keinen Ring an

und hängt eure Perlen (schnüre) nicht an die Rüssel

der Schweine.”

Jeremias rejected the earlier proposal of Zolli (1938: 154f) that the $\mu\alpha\gamma\alpha\rho\iota\tau\alpha\varsigma$ reflects an Aramaic חרוזיא “beads” (after חרוזים in Canticles 1:10) in a wordplay with חזיריא. Nevertheless, as argued below, Canticles 1:10 provides the clue for the interpretation of $\mu\alpha\gamma\alpha\rho\iota\tau\alpha\varsigma$ in Matt 7:6.

12. Schwarz 1972: 18–25. He proposed, “*Legt eure Ringe nicht den Hunden an; Und hängt eure Perlen nicht den Schweinen um,*” based upon the Aramaic retroversion:

לא תהבון קדישיכון לכלביא ולא תרמון מרגליכון לחזיריא .

13. Fitzmyer (1979: 14–15) considered the קדשא retroversion plausible in light of 11QtgJob 38:8, “they gave him each one a lamb and a ring (קדש) of gold.” Note the reservations of Black (1967: 200–201).

14. See Grintz 1960: 32–47, and Fitzmyer (1979: 7, 22, 45–46) who asserted,

As for the language that Jesus would have used, the evidence seems to point mainly to Aramaic. There is little cogency in the thesis of Harris Birkeland and others who maintain that it

was normally Hebrew . . . Presumably, Jesus used Hebrew on occasion. (22 n. 36)

Hurst (1986: 71) noted, “One of the most important results of recent research into Aramaic close to the time of Jesus is the knowledge that we still know so little of the language spoken by Jesus.” One must question the assumption that Jesus was monolingual. If he was multilingual it could still be asserted we know so little of the *languages* spoken by Jesus.

15. See Howard 1986: 49–63, which deals with the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew by Jean du Tillet, and 1987: 155–160. (See above, note 9, for a summary of the evidence supporting a Hebrew substratum for Matthew. With reference to the Shem Tob text of Matthew, Howard (1987: 180) noted:

The evidence as a whole presupposes a Hebrew text of Matthew that existed from ancient times and was used among the Jews for polemical purposes against Christians. Through centuries of use this text went through a process of evolution which included stylistic modifications and changes designed to bring the text into closer harmony with the canonical text used by Christians.

16. See Howard 1987: 194–201; 1995: 184–190 for a list of puns, word connections, and alliteration in the Shem Tob text of Matthew.

17. Michel 1966, 3: 1102.

18. Even though *בשר קדש* appears in the Shem Tob text, *τὸ ἄγιον* need not be understood simply as “sacrificial flesh.”

19. *Tosefta D’Mai* II:20 (Zuckerman 1963: 48).

20. Following Dahood (1966: 123–124) who attached the final *ם* of the preceding *עניי* to *יהוה* to read *מראת יהוה*. He cited

the Ugaritic *mr*² (see Gordon 1965: 437, #1543) (cited as *UT*) and Aramaic ܠܡܪܐ “to command.”

21. See GKC §123^b. On the collective in Greek, see Robertson 1914: 404 and 1310.

22. 1987: 138–139.

23. See Goulder 1974: 278. His conclusion, “to a Christian his fellows are ἄγιοι; to utter a false report of them . . . would be like casting them to the dogs,” reflects the difficulty in making sense out of the aphorism when viewed as a metaphor.

24. Braude and Kapstein 1975: 211; and Ginzberg 1925, 5: 15–16. According to the Jerusalem Talmud (*Terumot* 46a [8:7]), Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Joshua ben Levi debated whether the friend and helper alluded to in Prov 16:7 was the dog or the snake (see Avery-Peck 1988: 392–393). Note the discussion and bibliography on the significance of dogs from Mesopotamian to Greece in Thompson 1970: 83–87.

25. See Liddell and Scott 1966: 1015, sub II; and on the use of ὕς “wild pig” as a pejorative, see 1904. Note also Scholz 1937: 7ff, (cited by Nussbaum 1986: 414, 510). Margalith (1981: 491–495) argued that “. . . it may be assumed that *kalbu* [in Mesopotamian texts] was not a metaphorical self-abasing use of the quadruped’s name, but simply a synonym of ‘slave.’ It is thus that we find the word used in the Old Testament. . . .” See also Firmage 1992, 6: 1130–1135 (“Dogs”) and 1143–1144 (“Pigs”).

26. Pritchard 1955, 322.

27. Gelb 1959–1971, 8: 69–70. (Cited as *CAD*.)

28. *CAD* 8: 72. See also Thomas 1960: 410–427; Paul 1993: 242–244.

29. Like the servant of Lachish Letter II, the woman accepted the pejorative and deprecated herself in order to receive favorable attention. However, it is surprising that the non-pejorative diminutive $\kappa\upsilon\tau\alpha\rho\iota\omicron\nu$ was used rather than $\kappa\upsilon\omega\nu$. This may reflect a misreading of כליב (= פְּלִיב) “mad dog, importune beggar” as the diminutive כליב (= פְּלִיב) “little dog” in the “primitive” Hebrew Matthew. On the diminutive, see GKC, §86^e; Fitzmyer 1965: 361; and Fitzmyer and D. J. Harrington 1978: 184. For the Arabic cognate of פְּלִיב “dog, beggar,” see Lane 1885: 2626c. The woman was indeed a פְּלִיבָה “a mad dog = persistent beggar,” as well as a פְּלִיבָה “a dog = gentile.” Her reply, “even ‘beggars’ eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table,” recalls the beggar Lazarus’ waiting for crumbs from Dives’ table (Matt 15:27; Luke 16:20). Although $\kappa\upsilon\tau\alpha\rho\iota\omicron\nu$ “little dog” seemingly has its counterpart in $\tau\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\nu\omicron\varsigma$ “little children” (see Michel 3: 1104), the semantic range of $\tau\acute{\epsilon}\kappa\nu\omicron\varsigma$ in the New Testament precludes certainty that in Matt 15:26 it means “children” rather than “disciples” or “the children (of Israel).”

30. See Díez Macho 1970: 147, 474.

31. See Abrahams 1929: 195–196, on the midrash on Ps 4:8, “if it be thus with dogs . . . and the nations of this world are to be compared to dogs, as is said, ‘yea, the dogs are greedy’ (Isa 56:11).”

32. Lane, 1885: 2627b and 2625a. In Greek $\kappa\upsilon\omega\nu$, $\chi\omicron\iota\rho\omicron\varsigma$, and $\delta\iota\varsigma$ were used with double meaning in obscene humor for male/female genitalia (see Henderson 1975: 127, 131–133).

33. *Leviticus Rabbah* 9: 3 (Freedman and Simon 1951: 108–109).

34. *Pesaḥim* 49b (Epstein 1935: 237 (cited as Soncino ed.).

35. *Pesaḥim* 49a, Soncino ed., 236.

36. Pesahim 49b, Soncino ed., 238.

37. These nouns are comparable to Aramaic תַּוּרָא “ox-driver, cattle-dealer,” Hebrew פָּרָשׁ (**parraš*) “horseman” and דִּיג “fisherman,” Arabic جمال (*jammâl*) “an owner or attendant of camels,” and Ugaritic *hazzar* “swine herder.” On the *qattal* form, see Moscati 1964: 78. For the lexical items, see Jastrow 1656 ; BDB 832; *UT* 402; and Lane, 1865: 461b.

38. Kirzner and Epstein 1964: 83a.

39. See Lachs’ statement (1987: 139) “The Semitic original of Gr. *ballō* is *toru* from the root *yaro* [sic], which means ‘to teach’ and also ‘to throw’.”

40. Ginzberg 1968, 4: 321. On the pearls of the gates of Jerusalem (Isa 54:12 and Rev 21:21), see Dalman 1971: 76.

41. This appears in one manuscript of the Shem Tob text as פני. The missing נ appears to have been erroneously included in the suffix of the verb יכרסמנו (see above, note. 9).

42. Lane, 1867: 863c; BDB 204. On the interchange of medial ד and ת, note the stems בדל and בתל “to separate.”

43. The תוּרִים and תְּרוּזִים in Cant 1:10 have been discussed by Pope (1977: 343–344) who appealed to Arabic خرز (*ḥaraz*) “neck ornament of beads strung together” to explain the Hebrew תְּרוּזִים. He did not relate תוּר to Arabic درر (*durar*) “pearl,” but opted for “bangles” from תוּר “to turn.” His citation of midrashic exegesis which identified the תוּרִים with the Written Law and the Oral Law, is noteworthy.

44. See, for example, Mendenhall 1975: 163–166, who was followed by Mc Daniel 1983: 108–109; 2003: 74–75.

45. See Curtis 1910: 231 for a summary of the problems with this text. Compare Myers 1965: 128–129 and references cited there.
46. It is of interest that five manuscripts of the Shem Tob text have אֹתָהּ, i.e., the particle אֶת with the feminine singular suffix; only one manuscript has אֹתָם with the masculine plural suffix (see above n. 9).
47. *Shabbath* 31a, Soncino ed., 139. For a discussion of the oral law at this time see, Neusner 1987.
48. The repeated *feminine* אֹתָהּ (“it” = “pearl/face”) in Shem Tob is noteworthy in support of an original singular noun here. The singular אֹתָהּ’s are unexpected in light of the plural τούτων μαργαρίτων. They may reflect an original singular element in the primitive Matthean tradition. Shem Tob MSS E and F omit אֹתָהּ but have a 3fs suffix on the verb (יִכְרַסְמֶנָּה), whereas MS H, with אֹתָם, reflects the Greek plural.
49. The Testament of Judah 16:4. See Sparks 1984: 546; Kee 1983: 799; and Charles 1913, 1: 320–321.
50. *Hagigah* 13a; Soncino ed., 75.
51. *Pesahim* 49b, Soncino ed., 237.
52. Jerusalem *Abodah Zarah* 2:7, cited from Neusner 1986, 33:93.
53. *Sanhedrin* 59a, Soncino edition, 400. Rabbi Meir’s objection is noteworthy, “whence do we know that even a heathen who studies the Torah is a High Priest? From the verse, ‘which if man do, he shall live in them’ [Lev 18:5].” See also *Abodah Zarah* 3a, Soncino edition, 5.
54. *CAD*, Vol. 8, 70. Akkadian *hanziru* and *haziru* are from the roots עִזַּר and חִזַּר “to help,” unrelated to חִזִּיר “swine.” The Akkadian *humsiru* is a synonym of the Sumerian loanword *šahû*.

55. Soncino ed., 796; note also, “food may be placed before a dog but not before a swine,” 795.

56. In Ugaritic *h̄zr*, in contrast with *h̄nzr* “pig,” refers to either the “swine” (χοῖρος) or the “swine herder” (συφορβός). The Ugaritic text 1091: 6 lists the *h̄zr*[*m*] in parallel to a guild designating some type of personnel. Similarly, *h̄zr* appears as a collective noun in Ugaritic text 1024: rev 4, *ṭmn . h̄zr w . arb^c . hršm*, “eight swineherds and four craftsmen.” See *UT* 401, # 948 and 403, #977, and compare Dahood (1968: 259) who views the Ugaritic *h̄zr*, as a metaphor. On *h̄nzr*, see Lane, 1865: 732a. Hebrew/Aramaic קזיר (which could be a diminutive [see above, note 28]) was used for Greek χοῖρος “young pig” and δέλφαιξ “mature pig.”

57. See above, note 37.

58. *Midrash Rabbah*, Genesis 63:8 (Freedman and Simon 1951: 563–564, and Edleman 1891: 148–149). The verb מחי can be stem I, “to interfere, to protest, to try to prevent, to forewarn” or stem II, “to smite, to strike, to slap” (Jastrow, 759). Compare Avery-Peck (1988, 6: 421) who translates the parallel in the Jerusalem Talmud, “Diocles the swineherd—the students of R. Judah the patriarch would make fun of him (מהונייה).”

59. On the הלכה and גמרא, see Jeremias 1971: 204–214; and Davies 1964: 392 and 396, n. 1.

60. Burney 1925: 169. Note also R. Payne Smith 1878, 1: 859; J. Payne Smith 1903: 88; and Jastrow, 290.

61. The by-forms are בסא, בזא, בזא and בוז. Aramaic דרס means “to trample” and “to treat harshly” (Jastrow 324b; *CAD* 3, 110); the Arabic cognate carries the meaning “to efface, to obliterate” (Lane 1867: 870).

62. See notes 8 and 9.

63. For Hebrew כרסם and Aramaic קרסם “to cut, to trim, to bite, to nibble,” see BDB 493 and Jastrow 1424.

64. Note the Aramaic interchange of ת and ט in the following: טִרְפָּא “a document conferring the right of seizure of a debtor’s property,” and תוֹרָרָה “that which makes a debt collectable” (Jastrow, 535 and 1658). The following interchanges are very similar: Arabic ترفة (*turfat*), طريف (*tatrîf*) and ترفة (*turfat*) all mean “a rare and pleasing present or food,” and the Hebrew שקט (*šāqat*) is related to the Arabic سكت (*sakata*), “to be silent, to be at rest, to be tranquil,” with the ת / ט and ק / כ interchanges (see Lane 1863: 304a; 1874: 1844c, 1845a; 1872: 1389–1390, respectively).

65. BDB 382–383 and Jastrow 555–557, 1658, 1702. This stem with the ט appears in the Wisdom of Ahiqar:

אשתמר פמך אל יהוה טרפי [ם]

guard your mouth,

let it not be (for) obscenities/ blasphemies.

Compare Cowley (1923: 215) “keep watch over your mouth, let it not be [thy] destruction [ך] טרפי (?)”; and Lindenberger (1983, 73–74, 235 n. 160 and 1985, 2: 500) “But keep watch over your mouth, lest it bring you to grief!” For the Arabic cognate, see Lane 1863: 304.

66. BDB, 382; note the Shem Tob text of Matt 7:15, זאבים טורפים, “tearing wolves.”

67. Lane, 1874: 1842. For additional examples of resolving long-standing cruces in the Biblical text, see McDaniel 1983: 262–264.

68. Lachs 1987: 140. Perles (1926: 164) stated,

Der Schluss des Verses μήποτε . . . ὑμῶς hat wohl nicht im Aramäischen gestanden, sondern ist erst eine erklärende Glosse zu dem auffälligen griechischen Text, nach welchem man die Perlen den Schweinen nicht vorwerfen soll.

69. Lane 1867: 1045a and 1885: 2498c; J. Payne-Smith, 528.

70. The verb is transitive in the Shem Tob text, followed by אֹתָהּ.

71. Jastrow, 444, 446.

72. Soncino ed., 237, which is here paraphrased because of its terseness. For στραφέντες, see Arndt and Gingrich 1957: 779.

73. Following Dahood 1966: 209, 214. On Ps 35:15, see BDB, 902b “to malign.” Arabic قَرَعَ (*qara‘a*) means “to impugn the character of someone, to censor, to abuse, to despise, to repel, to reject, to speak against” (Lane, 1893: 2987).

74. *Babylonian Talmud*: Berakoth 25a; see above, n. 1.

75. *Babylonian Talmud*: Berakoth, 25a:

וְלֹא יִקְרָא אָדָם קִשׁוֹן כִּנְגַד צוֹאת אָדָם וְלֹא כִנְגַד צוֹאת חֲזִירִים
וְלֹא כִנְגַד צוֹאת כְּלָבִים בְּזִמְנֵן שְׁנֵתֵן עוֹרוֹר לְתוֹכָן .

For other references, see Ginzberg 1935, 3: 6.

76. For the “solemn technical sense” of ἀπόστολος, see Agnew 1986: 75–96.

77. Burrows 1951, 2: 21ff.

78. Arabic سَخَطَ (*sahat*) “to be displeased, to be angered, to show discontent or hatred” (Lane, 1872: 1324c) suggests a wordplay. Note Shem Tob’s reference to religious adversaries in similar language, “In this way glory will come to the Jew who debates with

them [the נוצרים “Christians”] whenever he captures them in their own pit (בשוחתן) (Howard 1987: 177).

79. *Jewish Wars* II. 8. 7:

A candidate to join their sect . . . [must swear] to be ever a lover of truth and to expose liars; . . . to conceal nothing from members of the sect and to report none of their secrets to others, even though tortured to death He swears, moreover, to transmit their rules exactly as he himself received them . . . and in like manner to carefully preserve the books of the sect.

Cited from Thackery 1926–1965: 376–377. See Leaney 1966: 231.

ADDENDUM

The sixth codex of the Nag Hammadi texts, entitled *The Acts of Peter and the Twelve Apostles*, contains a story about Jesus and his disciples which seemingly utilized a wordplay upon תורה “Torah” and תורה / דורה “pearl.” This wordplay lends support to the retroversion of μαργαρίτης to תורה “Torah,” as argued in this chapter. According to the story (Tractate 1, 1–12, 22), the resurrected Jesus appeared to the disciples disguised as a pearl merchant named Lithargoel, meaning “glistening gazelle-stone [of God]”).

The Hebrew roots underlying this name reflect a wordplay on the name Penuel/Peniel, which was taken to mean “pearl of God,” as though the פני / פנו here was the equivalent of פני in the *Kethib* of Prov 3:15 and 8:11, “(Wisdom) is more precious than pearls (פניים / פנינים). (The variant spellings of פנינים in the Shem Tob text are פנינים and פניכם [Howard 1995: 45–46]). Krause (1972: 51) stated,

“Er wird zwar (S. 5,18) mit ‘der leichte Gazellenstein’ übersetzt, jedoch ist diese Übersetzung falsch. Lithargœl bedeutet ‘der Gott (‘ēl) des hellglänzenden (ἀργός) Steines (λίθος)’ und das ist der Gott der Perle.”

In disagreement with Krause, Parrot (1979: 214) responded, “Krause takes Lithargoel to be a god’s name. However, names construed in a similar fashion tend to be those of angels . . . and in later usage Lithargoel was an angel.”

Although Lithargoel had no pearls, he went about the port-city on the island crying, “Margarites! Margarites!” (with the Coptic text having the Greek μαργαρίτης in col. 2: 32 and 3: 12). When the disciples obeyed Lithargoel and made their way to his city (named “Nine Gates”) to receive a pearl at no cost (col. 4: 12), Lithargoel offered them not μαργαρίτης “pearls” (i.e., תורות/דורות) but more תורות “teachings/*Torah*, stating

Continue in endurance as you teach . . . give to the poor of the city [of “Habitation”] what they need in order to live, until I give them what is better, which I told you that I will give for nothing (col. 10: 4–12). . . . Do you not understand that my name, which you teach, surpasses all riches, and the wisdom of God surpasses gold and silver, and precious stone(s)? (col. 10: 24–30).

This story, obviously, was not about intentional deception by a “pearl” merchant who had no pearls. It was a didactic drama based on a *double entendre*. This Greek tale which was translated into Coptic was apparently derived from a Hebrew original in which there was a wordplay on תורות “pearls” (which were *not* offered by Lithargoel) and תורות “teachings” which were freely given.

However, while the author of the *Acts of Peter and the Twelve* appears to have used an intentional Hebrew wordplay with תורה/דורה (= תורה = פנינים = μαργαρίτης), the “pearls” in Matt 7:6 (“do not cast your pearls before swine . . .”) originated from an unintentional misreading of תורה “Torah” in the “primitive” Matthean Hebrew tradition as תורה/דורה “pearl, mother of pearl.” A translation shift from “pearls” to “teaching” (= *Torah*) would restore Jesus’ prohibitions in Matt 7:6 from being at best an

ambiguous metaphor to an explicit ban on activities that could compromise the sacredness of the Torah and his own teachings and halakah. This is precisely the kind of tradition one might expect Matthew to have included in his gospel given his agenda and his initial readership (as noted above 272–273).