

Check-in

Follow-up on last week:

- ✱ “Aha moments”
- ✱ Questions *[AMA]*
- ✱ Comments
- ✱ Reflections

What Did Jesus Really Say & Do —“According to” *Matthew*?

- * March 12 - April 16, 2019
- * 10:00am - 11:30am
- * ~4 chapters/week

Gospel *According to* Matthew (Chapter 11)

- Editorial decision - present Jesus' teachings in five distinct sections to parallel Jesus and Moses
- Second set from five total blocks of Jesus' teachings.
- Matthew 11:1: "When Jesus had *finished instructing* his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and proclaim his message in their cities."
- Signals that the second large set of Jesus' teachings in Matthew's Gospel ended last week at the conclusion of Matthew 10.

Gospel *According to* Matthew (Chapter 11)

3. Matthew 13:53, “When Jesus had *finished these parables*, he left that place”
4. Matthew 19:1, “When Jesus had *finished saying* these things, he left Galilee...”;
5. Matthew 26:1, “When Jesus had *finished saying* all these things, he said to his disciples....”

Wisdom is Vindicated by Her Deeds (Matthew 11)

- **16** "But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,
- **17** "We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we wailed, and you did not mourn.'
- **18** For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, "He has a demon';
- **19** the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, "Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!" Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."

International Q Project Version

- To what do I compare this generation and what is it like?
- It is like children seated in the market places, who, addressing the others, say:
 - “We fluted for you, but you would not dance; we sang a dirge, but you would not cry.”
 - For John came, neither eating nor drinking, and you say: “He has a demon!”
 - The son of humanity came eating and drinking, and you say: “Look! A person [who is] a glutton and drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.”
- **But Sophia is vindicated by [all] her children.**



the

EARLIEST GOSPEL

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ORIGINAL
STORIES AND SAYINGS OF JESUS

JOHN S. KLOPPENBORG

The Critical Edition of Q

Synopsis

including the Gospels of
Matthew and Luke, Mark and Thomas
with English, German, and French Translations of Q and Thomas

Edited by

James M. Robinson, Paul Hoffmann
and John S. Kloppenborg

Managing Editor
Milton C. Moreland

FEETERS
2000

Proverbs 8

- 22 God created me [**Wisdom/Sophia**] at the beginning of God's work, the first of God's acts of long ago. 23 Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth.
- 24 When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. 25 Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth — 26 when God had not yet made earth and fields, or the world's first bits of soil.
- 27 When God established the heavens, I was there, when God drew a circle on the face of the deep, 28 when God made firm the skies above, when God established the fountains of the deep, 29 when God assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress God's command, when God marked out the foundations of the earth,
- 30 then I was beside God, like a master worker; and I was daily God's delight, rejoicing before God always, 31 rejoicing in God's inhabited world and delighting in the human race. 32 "And now, my children, listen to me: happy are those who keep my ways.

Proverbs 8 // John 1

- “1 In the beginning was the Word [*Logos*], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 2 He was in the beginning with God.
- 3 All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being.”
- But in Proverbs that Greek word *Sophia* is a translation of the Hebrew word *hokmah*, which is feminine.

Proverbs 9:1-6

also personified female Wisdom/*Sophia*

- 1 Wisdom has built her house, she has hewn her seven pillars.
- 2 She has slaughtered her animals, she has mixed her wine, she has also set her table.
- 3 She has sent out her servant-girls, she calls from the highest places in the town,
- 4 "You that are simple, turn in here!" To those without sense she says,
- 5 "Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine I have mixed.
- 6 Lay aside immaturity, and live, and walk in the way of insight.
- Eucharistic: 1 Corinthians 1:22-24, "Christ the Power of God and the Wisdom [*Sophia*] of God." [*Christ isn't Jesus' last name*]

Asherah: ancient Canaanite Mother Goddess

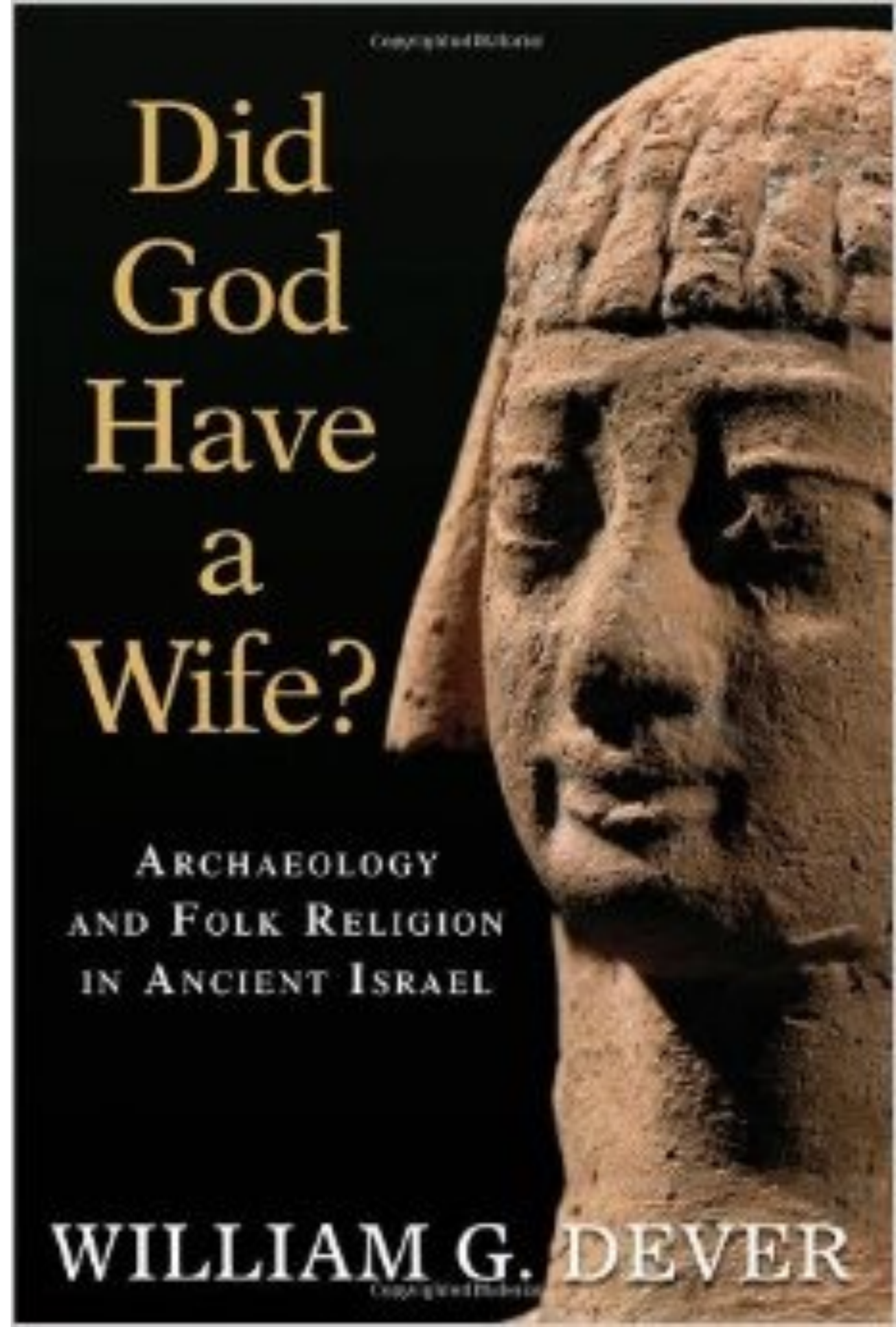
- 1 Kings 15:13, “He also removed his mother Maacah from being queen mother, because she had made an abominable image for Asherah; Asa cut down her image and burned it....” (*There is a parallel passage in 2 Chronicles 15:16.*) **Who is this “Asherah” that the queen mother is willing to risk getting in so much trouble for worshipping?**
- 1 Kings 18:19, “Have all Israel assemble for me at Mount Carmel, with the four hundred fifty prophets of Ba’al and the four hundred prophets of Asherah....” **only the prophets of Ba’al are killed. The prophets of Asherah “were probably spared [because] her cult was widely tolerated, despite the misgivings of some purists”**
- 2 Kings 21:7, “The carved image of Asherah that he had made he set in the house of which the Lord said to David and to his son Solomon, “In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put my name forever.” **An image of Asherah is being put in the Jerusalem Temple?**

Asherah: ancient Canaanite Mother Goddess

- 2 Kings 23:4, “The king commanded the high priest...to bring out of the temple of the Lord all the vessels made for Ba’al, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven; he burned them outside Jerusalem.”
- 2 Kings 23:6, “He brought out the image of Asherah from the house of the Lord, outside Jerusalem...burned it...beat it to dust and threw the dust of it upon the graves of the common people.”
Asherah remains are cast precisely on the graves of common people, who we will see were the ones maintaining Asherah devotion.
- 2 Kings 23:7, “He broke down the houses of the male temple prostitutes that were in the house of the Lord, where the women did weaving for Asherah.”

Who Writes History?

- Text: after-the-fact, highly selective, idealistic version of Israel's history that is written down by the literary and priestly elites into the final version of the Hebrew Bible that we have inherited
- History: much messier and more diverse reality on the ground of how religion was actually practiced by most common folk, which included devotion to the goddess Asherah



Henotheism

(prior to Babylonian Exile of 587 BCE)

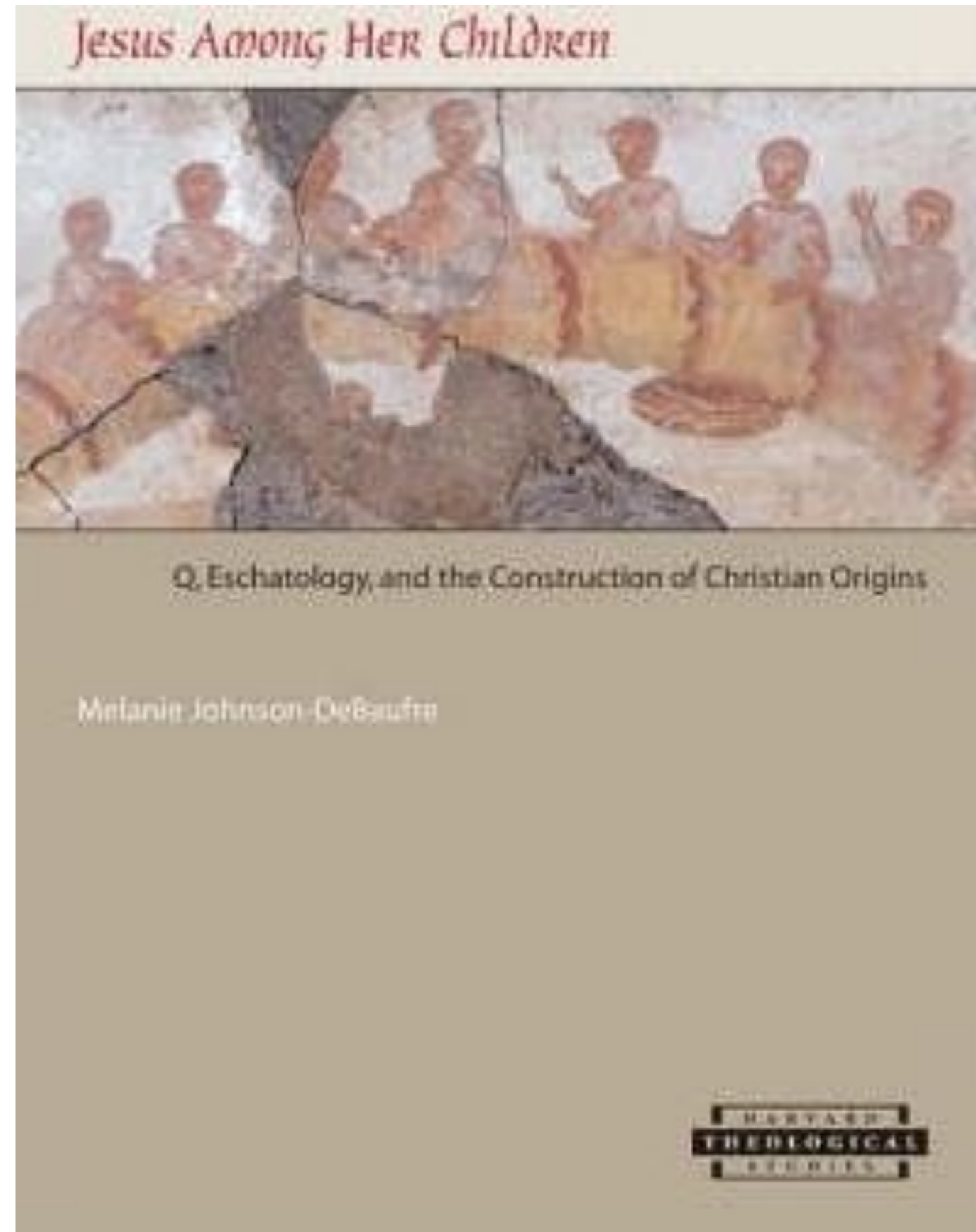
- Exodus 20:3 has God telling the Israelites, newly freed from slavery in Egypt, “you shall have **no other gods before me.**” (not a denial that other gods exist, merely a prohibition from putting them as more important than Yahweh)
- Deuteronomy 32:8-9, “8 When the Most High apportioned the nations, when he divided humankind, he **fixed the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the gods;** 9 the Lord’s own portion was his people, Jacob his allotted share.” (existence of other gods is clear)
- Joshua 24:15, “choose this day whom you will serve, whether **the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living;** but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”

Antiphonal: least generous interpretation of opponent...acting like petulant children)

- Group A: We fluted (+) and you did not dance (-)
- Group B: We sang a dirge (-) and you did not mourn (+)
- Group A: For John came not
eating and drinking (-) and you say he has a demon (-)
- Group B: The son of humanity came
eating and drinking (+) and you say he is a glutton
and a drunkard (-)

“Sophia is vindicated
by [all] her children.”

- Less confidence: spoken by historical Jesus
- Greater confidence: how this saying may have functioned in the community of Jesus followers for whom Q was originally compiled.
- In the wake of Jesus’ death, we all need to find a way to work together despite our diversity.



“wisdom is vindicated
by her **children/deeds.**”

- Some want to dance when others want to mourn.
- Some preferred the apocalyptic, ascetic way of John the Baptizer —others Jesus’ style of eating and drinking with everyone, whether friends, strangers, or enemies.
- But we all need to work together to build the Beloved Community



“This is the great new problem of mankind. We have inherited a large house, a great ‘world house’ in which we have to live together– black and white, Easterner and Westerner, Gentile and Jew, Catholic and Protestant, Muslim and Hindu– a family unduly separated in ideas, culture and interest, who, because we can never again live apart, must learn somehow to live with each other in peace.”

~ MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

There Is No Unforgivable Sin (Matthew 12)

- People will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy,
 - but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.
- Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven,
 - but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven,
 - either in this age or in the age to come.

Looking *backward* in Mt, first parts “sound more like Jesus” (Matthew 5’s “hard sayings”):

Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.... Love your enemies.

There Is No Unforgivable Sin (Matthew 12)

People will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

Looking *forward* in Mt, first parts (Matthew 18:21-21) of Peter's question to Jesus:

“If another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive?” Before Jesus can even respond, Peter tries to ingratiate himself to Jesus by suggesting what seems to him an extraordinarily generous number, “As many as seven times?” But Jesus' reply is gracious beyond his disciples' comprehension: “Jesus said to him, ‘Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.’”.

There Is No Unforgivable Sin (Matthew 12)

People will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

Comparison to Luke 23:34, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing”

There Is No Unforgivable Sin (Matthew 12)

People will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

Perhaps, the original hard saying of Jesus teaching was preserved—but a qualification later appended to each sentence.

shall speak well of
their fathers to the
27 ¶ But I say unto
Love your enemies,
which hate you,
28 Bless them that
pray for them



Case Study in Wrestling with Jesus's Hard Sayings

- Remember “Jesus’ Standard Operating Procedure” from Matthew 10: *Proclaim the good news, “The kingdom of heaven has come near... You received without payment; give without payment. Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve their food.”*
- Didache (“Teachings”) - written perhaps not long after Matthew by the some of those householders on whose doors those itinerant Jesus were following

Didache:

Case Study in Wrestling with Jesus's Hard Sayings

- “How to Baptize” (outdoors in cold running water, if possible);
- “How to Fast” (Wednesday and Friday — not Mondays and Thursday, to differentiate the Christian fast days from the Jewish fast days);
- “How to Pray” (The Lord’s Prayer, three times daily);
- “How to Celebrate the Eucharist” (including sample prayers over cup, then over the bread — which is the reverse of the order to which we are accustomed),
- “How to Treat Itinerant Followers of Jesus’ Way” (many of whom were living at the considerable expense of the communities they visited).

Didache 11:

Notice the “buts”

- “Welcome the teacher when he comes to instruct you in all that has been said,
 - **but** if he turns and trains you in another tradition to the destruction of this teaching, do not listen....
- Let every apostle who comes to you be received as the Lord,
 - **but** he must not remain more than one day, or two, if there's a need. If he stays three days, he is a false prophet.
- And when the apostle goes away,
 - let him take nothing **but** bread to last him until his next night of lodging.
 - If he asks for money, he is a false prophet.

Didache 11:

Notice the “buts”

- “In addition, if any prophet speaks in the Spirit, you shall not try or judge him;
 - for every sin will be forgiven, but this sin cannot be forgiven.
 - **But** not everyone who speaks in the Spirit is a prophet; only he is a prophet who has the ways of the Lord about him.
- By their ways will the false prophet and the prophet be known.
- Any prophet who orders a meal in the Spirit does not eat it; if he does, he is indeed a false prophet.

Didache 11:

Notice the “buts”

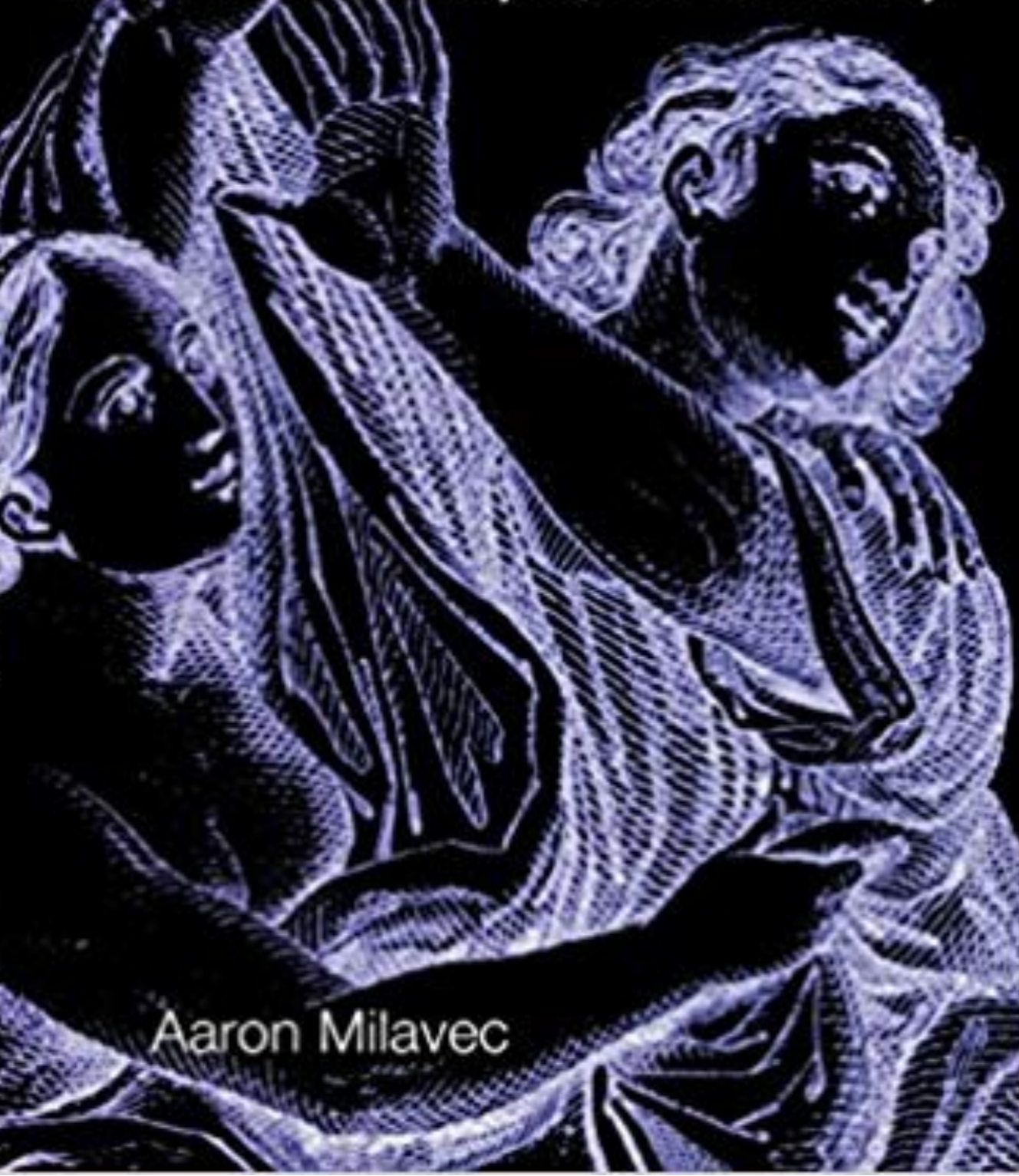
- And any prophet who teaches the truth, **but** does not do what he teaches, is a false prophet.
- When a prophet, proved true, works for the mystery of the church in the world
 - **but** does not teach others to do what he himself does, he will not be judged among you, for his judgment is already before God. The ancient prophets acted in this way, also.
 - **But** whoever says in the Spirit, "Give me money," or something else like this, you must not listen to him.
- But if he tells you to give for the sake of others who are in need, let no one judge him.

Buts, caveats, & qualifications, oh my!

- One reconstruction:
People will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy. Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven.
(Radical Grace)
- Didache in Context:
Hard won piece of wisdom,
resulting from freeloaders,
who sought to exploit Jesus' teachings about grace for their own material gain.
(Defending against "Cheap Grace")

The Didache

Text, Translation, Analysis, and Commentary



Aaron Milavec

THE DIDACHE



FAITH, HOPE, & LIFE

OF THE EARLIEST CHRISTIAN
COMMUNITIES, 50-70 C.E.

AARON MILAVEC

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According to Matthew, Jesus Said Some Strange Things (Matthew 13)

- *10* Then the disciples came and asked him, "**Why do you speak to them in parables?**" *11* He answered, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.
- *12* For to those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. *13* The reason I speak to them in parables is that "seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand.'
- *14* With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says: "You will indeed listen, but never understand, and you will indeed look, but never perceive. *15* For this people's heart has grown dull, and their ears are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes; so that they might not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and understand with their heart and turn — and I would heal them.'
- *16* But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. *17* Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.

According to Matthew, Jesus Said Some Strange Things (Matthew 13)

- B-I-B-L-E: “Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth”? (relatively straight forward instructional manual for life?)
- Or: sometimes stranger, harder-to-explain, unrulier, bumpier, disparate?
- High points, low points, and everywhere in between.

TEXTS OF TERROR

Literary-Feminist Readings
of Biblical Narratives

Phyllis Trible



OVERTURES TO BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

LAYING DOWN THE SWORD

—
WHY WE
CAN'T IGNORE
THE BIBLE'S
VIOLENT VERSES
—

PHILIP JENKINS

AUTHOR OF THE LOST HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY



According to Matthew, Jesus Said Some Strange Things (Matthew 13)

• *10* Then the disciples came and asked him, "**Why do you speak to them in parables?**" *[answers we might expect]*

- Stories are easier to remember than lists of teachings.
- Parables keep people engaged by using their imagination
- Parables help people see the world through new eyes and in unexpected ways without raising some of the normal defense mechanisms that come up in arguments.

According to Matthew, Jesus Said Some Strange Things (Matthew 13)

- *10* Then the disciples came and asked him, "**Why do you speak to them in parables?**"
- “To you [disciples] it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.” [*elitist/gnostic*]
- “For to those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.” [*“Capitalist, Ayn Rand” — the sort of language that emperors, kleptocrats, and robber barons would love to put in Jesus’s mouth*]

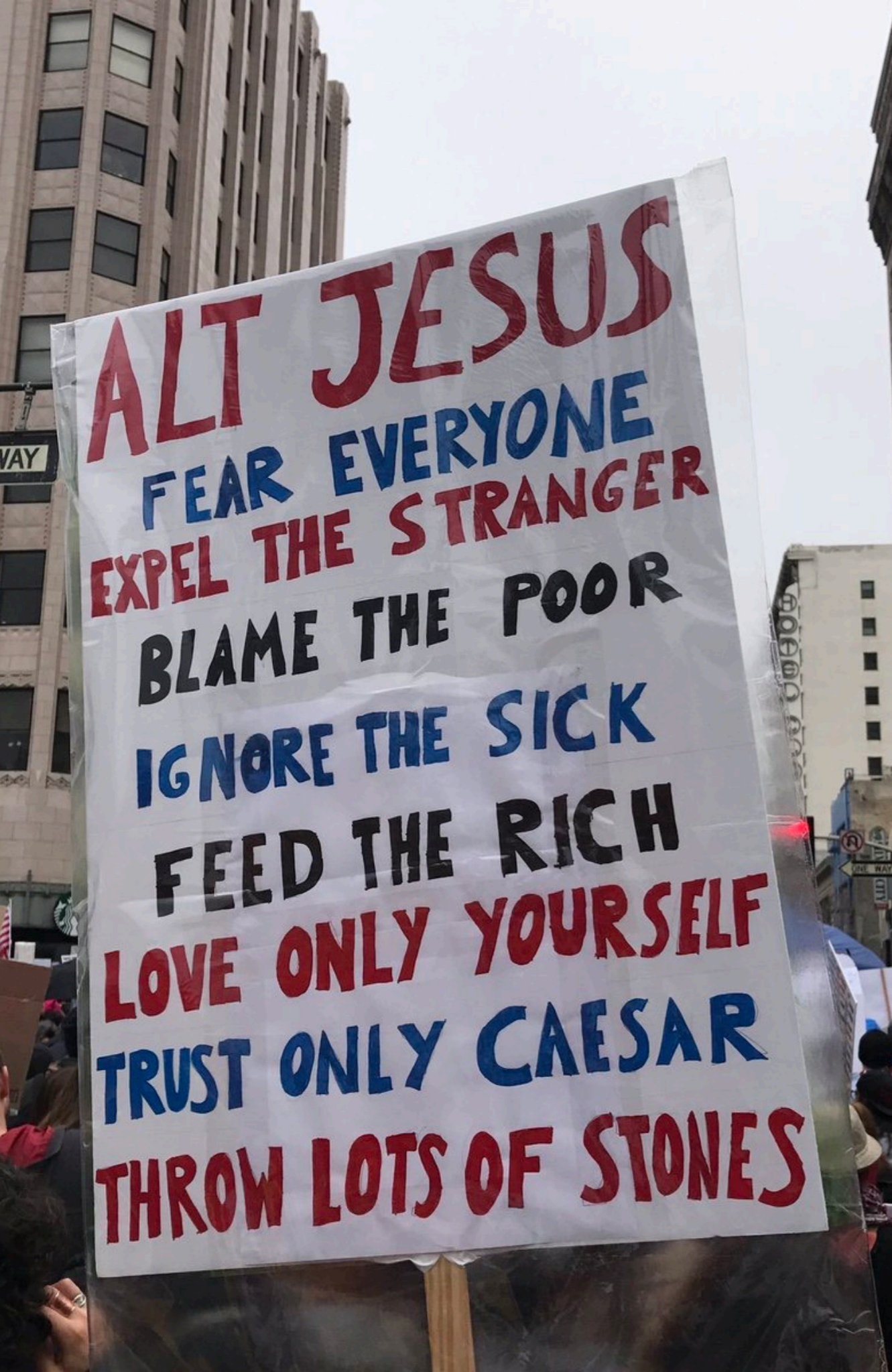
- How have millions of American Christians come to measure spiritual progress in terms of their financial status and physical well-being? H
-
- First book to fully explore the origins, unifying themes, and major figures of a burgeoning movement that now claims millions of followers in America.
 - Traces the roots of the prosperity gospel: from the touring mesmerists, metaphysical sages, pentecostal healers, business oracles, and princely prophets of the early 20th century;
 - through mid-century positive thinkers like Norman Vincent Peale and revivalists like Oral Roberts and Kenneth Hagin;
 - to today's hugely successful prosperity preachers.

BLESSED



A History of the American Prosperity Gospel

KATE BOWLER



ALT JESUS
FEAR EVERYONE
EXPEL THE STRANGER
BLAME THE POOR
IGNORE THE SICK
FEED THE RICH
LOVE ONLY YOURSELF
TRUST ONLY CAESAR
THROW LOTS OF STONES

And Jesus said unto the theologians,
"Who do you say that I am?"

They replied, "You are the
eschatological manifestation of the
ground of our being, the kerygma of
which we find the ultimate meaning in
our interpersonal relationships."

And Jesus said "...What?"



According to Matthew, Jesus Said Some Strange Things (Matthew 13)

- Verse 13: “The reason I speak to them in parables is that ‘seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand.’”

[could charitably interpret Jesus as saying that he tells parables to help the people who seem not be getting the message through other means]

- Verse 14 *[appears to double-down on a harsher interpretation]*: “With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says: ‘You will indeed listen, but never understand, and you will indeed look, but never perceive. For this people's heart has grown dull, and their ears are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes; so that they might not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and understand with their heart and turn — and I would heal them.’”

- Similar version of this claim in Mark 4:10-13; John 12:37-41; and Acts of the Apostles 28:25-27 (sequel to Luke).



According to Matthew, Jesus Said Some Strange Things (Matthew 13)

- Do the closed heart/ears/eyes come from God or individual humans in question?
- Exodus: God “hardening Pharaoh's heart” (Ex 4:21 and //s).
- Verse 16-17: “But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.”

According to Matthew, Jesus Said Some Strange Things (Matthew 13)

- Note proximity of this teaching to events at end of this chapter:
- “When Jesus had finished these parables, he left that place.
- He came to his hometown and began to teach the people in their synagogue, so that they were astounded and said,
- “Where did this man get this wisdom and these deeds of power? Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all this?”
And they took offense at him.
- But Jesus said to them, “Prophets are not without honor except in their own country and in their own house.” And he did not do many deeds of power there, because of their unbelief.”

According to Matthew, Jesus Said Some Strange Things (Matthew 13)

- Verse 16-17: “But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.”
- As seers/hearer of Matthew’s text question raised for us:
 - Am I on the inside or outside?
 - Am I seeing, hearing, speaking, *doing*?!



We are the ones we've
been waiting for.

June Jordan

“ quote fancy

poets.org/poetsorg/poem/poem-south-african-women

Everything's a Miracle (Matthew 14)

- **14** When [Jesus] went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick.
- **15** When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves."
- **16** Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat."
- **17** They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish."
- **18** And he said, "Bring them here to me."

Everything's a Miracle (Matthew 14)

- **19** Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.
- **20** And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. **21** And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.
- **22** Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. **23** And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone,
- **24** but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them.

Everything's a Miracle (Matthew 14)

- **25** And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. **26** But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear.
- **27** But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid."
- **28** Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water."
- **29** He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus.
- **30** But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!"

Everything's a Miracle (Matthew 14)

- **31** Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"
- **32** When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. **33** And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."
- **34** When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret.
- **35** After the people of that place recognized him, they sent word throughout the region and brought all who were sick to him,
- **36** and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

Everything's a Miracle (Matthew 14)

Three miracle stories

1. Feeding of more than five thousand people with, at first, only five loaves and two fish.
2. Jesus and Peter walking on water.
3. Many people being healing by touching even the fringe of Jesus' cloak.

Case Study #1: Feed of the Multitude (Matthew 14)

- Jesus doesn't allow the disciples to pass the buck.
- Disciples: “send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.”
- Jesus: “They need not go away; you give them something to eat.”
- Hard to hear after a long day's work:
 - “*You* give them something to eat,”
 - especially in a “deserted place, and the hour is now late.”

Case Study #1: Feed of the Multitude (Matthew 14)

- Problem: can at first find only “five loaves and two fish”
- Not enough to feed “five thousand men” (much less additional “women and children”)
- Divine Intervention: supernatural disruption of 1st Law of Thermodynamics (*energy is neither created nor destroyed*) that magically multiplied the five loaves & two fish such that everyone was fed with twelve baskets full leftover.
- Inspired Generosity: **disciples’ act of sharing their five loaves and two fishes created “domino effect”**: **members of the crowd begin sharing** the food they had brought (instead of hiding/hoarding it)—and it turns out that there was more than enough for all to eat and end up with leftovers



"There's enough
on this planet
for everyone's needs
but not for
everyone's greed."

- Gandhi -

Case Study #2: Walking on Water (Matthew 14)

- Divine Intervention: Suspend “Law of Gravity”
- History of Religions Analysis: “What *parallels* are there for this story in the history of the world’s religions?”

2 Kings 6:

- Some men with Elisha were cutting down trees near a body of water, and one of the ax heads slipped off the handle into the water
- Servant distressed: tool ruined & owner would want it back.
- Elisha: made the iron ax head rise from the bottom of the water and *float* until the man could retrieve it.
- [One of many parallels between Elisha & Jesus.]

Case Study #2: Walking on Water (Matthew 14)

- Job 9:8: God “trampled the waves of the Sea”
- Habakuk 3:15, God “trampled the sea with your horses, churning the mighty waters.”
- Psalm 77:19, “Your [God’s] way was through the sea, your path, through the mighty waters; yet your footprints were unseen.”
- Papyrus fragment [*P. Berol* 1.120], “demon with the power to tread upon rivers and seas.”
- Lucian of Samosata, (2nd c. CE Greek rhetorician and satirist) wrote a the *Philopseudes* (literally, “Lover of Lies”) which contains the original version of the story of “The Sorcerer’s Apprentice” (Disney’s *Fantasia*) - original version refers to a magician who was “imagined by people to march on the sea.”

Case Study #2: Walking on Water (Matthew 14)

- Collection of ancient texts known as the *Papyri Graecae Magicae* (“Greek Magical Papyruses”), which date anywhere from the second-century B.C.E. to the fifth-century C.E., contain instructions on “how to pass over water without assistance.”
- *Jataka* 190 (Buddhist text from ~300 **BCE**) - tells the tale of a disciple who walked upon the water when he meditated upon the Buddha and who sank when he did not.”
- Sayings of the Christian Desert Fathers and Mothers (5th c.) - story of a certain hermit Bessarion “crossing [a river] on foot.”
- Writings of the Sabbateans (17th c.) - followers of a Jewish rabbi named Sabbatai Zevi, when thought to be drowning, “rose from the sea; and on another occasion he calmed a sea storm.”

Case Study #2: Walking on Water (Matthew 14)

- Divine Intervention: Suspend “Law of Gravity”
- History of Religions Analysis: “What *parallels* are there for this story in the history of the world’s religions?”
 - How do miracle stories come to be told, repeated and recapitulated, recast and re-mythologized?
 - How do they influence one another? (If you think your founder had an impressive story of walking on water, wait until you hear what I heard happened with my religion’s founder!)

Case Study #3:

Healed by touching fringe of Jesus' cloak (Mt 14)

John Dominic Crossan:

Department of Medical Records

or

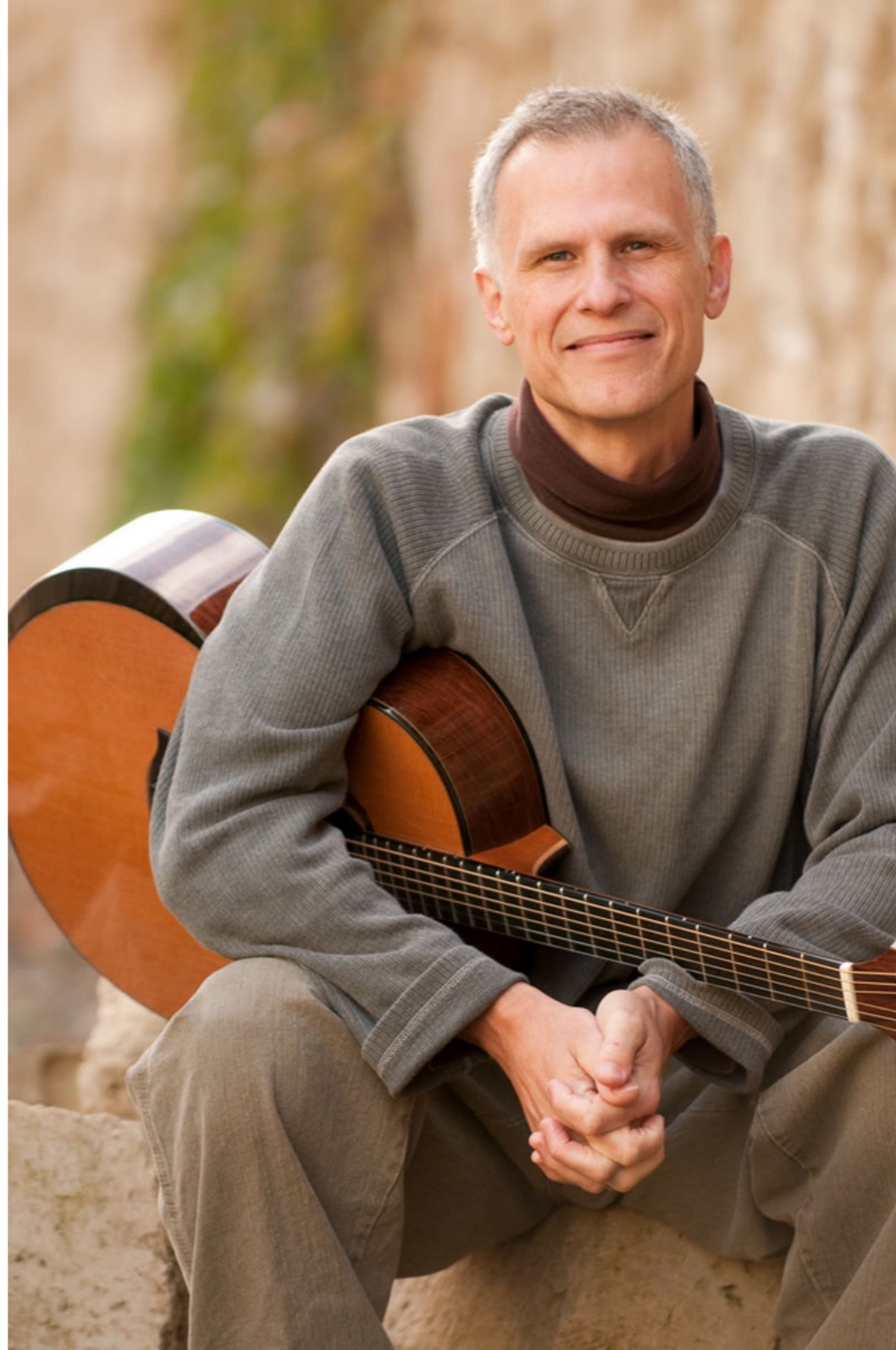
Department of Public Relations

What precisely is mean by “healing”?

(all who touched even the fringe of Jesus' cloak were healed)

Case Study #2: Walking on Water (Matthew 14)

- Divine Intervention: Physical healing (*beyond what medical science can current quantify*) [Flatland]
- Social Healing: compassion presence and acceptance to those typically ostracized
- Annie Dillard: “It is a weakening and discoloring idea that rustic people knew God personally once upon a time but that it is too late for us. There never was a more holy age than ours, and never a less. There is no whit less enlightenment under the tree by your street than there was under the Buddha's bo tree.”



Peter Mayer, “Holy Now”

[youtube.com/watch?v=KiypaURysz4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KiypaURysz4)