

The conclusions Hummel arrives at are sometimes based on what seem to me unwarranted assumptions or faulty logic. Thus Ezekiel cannot have used contemporary cultural idioms in communication because this would mean that the prophet was influenced by paganism. Really? His dumbness and confinement cannot be the result of rejection because this would attribute too much to the audience. Really? Sometimes such prejudice prevents important questions being asked. Thus, in discussing the second vision, Hummel rightly asks why the seer had not realised in the first vision that the living creatures were cherubim but then he fails to ask why, having realised what the creatures were, the author still did not identify them as cherubim in chapter 1. This reflects a failure to consider fully the function of the book as distinct from the experience of the prophet. From other comments one may conclude that Hummel believes that the prophet took notes during his visions and copied these notes into a book pretty much unchanged. While Hummel recognises that the writing of the book required decisions about arrangement, allowing for groupings of prophecies of similar subject matter (e.g., 12:21-14:11, which are, not unusually but wrongly I believe, perceived to be a unit), but he does not make much of a methodological distinction between Ezekiel the preacher by word and 'sacrament' and Ezekiel the writer.

In sum, conservative Lutheran pastors may well reap great benefit from this commentary and others may find help with understanding the book of Ezekiel because Hummel is a careful reader of the Hebrew text. But both Hummel's grasp of Ezekiel scholarship and his theological reasoning are too weak to engage those who hold views different to his. Most pastors who want to interact with a detailed study of the text will be better served by Block, and pastors who

need something shorter with a focus on application will likely find I. M. Duguid, *Ezekiel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999) more beneficial.

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The Gospel of Matthew's Dependence on the Didache

Alan J. P. Garrow

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The *Didache*, an intriguing early Christian writing roughly the length of a shorter Pauline letter, was rediscovered in the late nineteenth century. It is variously dated by scholars between about 50 and 150 AD. It is generally agreed to have a specially close relationship with the Gospel of Matthew, and scholars have divided as to whether it shows direct literary dependence on Matthew or whether both depend on common traditions. Alan Garrow now weighs in with the novel proposal that there is indeed a direct literary dependence, but that it goes the other way: Matthew depended on the *Didache*.

Like Garrow's earlier study on Revelation, the thesis is nothing if not bold. It is worked out with the meticulous care of a doctoral thesis (though with a surprisingly brief list of authors cited, presumably representing the paucity of *Didache* scholarship yet available), and presented in as accessible a format as such an esoteric argument allows, including a full printing of the text of the *Didache* in both Greek (with a few misprints) and English. But it is not for the non-specialist reader. The detailed comparison of texts and discussion of

possible literary links is reminiscent of the verse-by-verse analysis of the Synoptic Problem, but with the added complication (and fascination) that one of the texts under discussion is much less familiar to most readers.

The argument proceeds in two stages. The first, and longer, part sets out a suggested 'compositional history of the *Didache*'. Everyone agrees that it is a composite text involving a variety of sources and stages of redaction, but there is little agreement on the details. Garrow proposes five layers or stages of composition (summarised on page 11 and set out in an excellent visual form on page 155). The first (or 'base') layer already consisted of a collection of originally independent units of tradition. Then came an editor who inserted three chunks of material relating to prophecy, then a 'modifying teacher' who inserted a variety of separate elements (including the famous *Didache* version of the Lord's Prayer). Finally, or almost finally, three short comments were added all of which refer to 'the Gospel' as an authority; and there is one brief verse of eschatological modification (16:7) even later than that.

All this feels like the old literary analyses of the Pentateuch into independent sources with several stages of redaction which used to keep scholars happy in the middle of the last century. Like them, it seems to assume a predominantly literary process of composition, with little allowance for oral influences. Every perceived 'unevenness' in the text becomes a basis for proposing a literary insertion or another layer of tradition. (The unkind reader might suppose from the fact that page 156 is a slightly modified repeat of page 153 that a 'modifying teacher' has been at work on this book too!) Like all such analyses, it can be shown to be possible, but there is a big step from there to showing that it is what actually happened, and here the

specialists on the *Didache* (of whom I am not one) must judge. It is clear from Garrow's references to other views that his analysis is unlikely to be generally agreed.

But even a non-specialist is likely to notice the claim that the only passages where there is direct reference to 'the Gospel' (which everyone, Garrow included, assumes to be Matthew) turn out to belong to (and indeed to be the only elements in) the latest redactional layer. So it is possible for Matthew to have 'used' the *Didache* in its penultimate form and still for the final form of the *Didache* to refer to an already written Matthew. How convenient! Garrow acknowledges this unworthy suspicion on the part of his critics (page 250), but his principal response to it is hardly convincing. It depends on the assertion that since the 'Gospel' reference in 8:2b is followed by a version of the Lord's Prayer which is different from that of Matthew, the Lord's Prayer must come from an earlier source not dependent on Matthew. But the differences (except for the doxology, see below) are very minor, and to my mind fall well within the scope of stylistic or liturgical variation which would not be perceived as a different version of the prayer, and so would not need to be corrected to Matthew's text.

The second part then works through the points of contact between the *Didache* and Matthew, arguing in each case that Matthew's dependence on the *Didache* is possible, and in some cases that it is the more probable explanation. To the natural objection that Matthew says he is recording the teaching of Jesus, Garrow replies that he was conned (my word, not his) by the heading of the *Didache*, 'The teaching of the Lord, by the twelve apostles'. One strong point is the observation that the overlaps between the *Didache* and Matthew are largely confined to those parts of Matthew which are not shared with Mark or

where Matthew differs from Mark; Garrow therefore sees Matthew as conflating the *Didache* and Mark. He also finds some influence of the *Didache* on Luke; the argument becomes almost surreal when he discusses at length how Matthew and Luke 'agree against the *Didache*' (224-236).

Again, the argument can only be tested by detailed text-by-text response which a short review does not allow. Garrow often speaks, rightly, of the tendency of arguments for literary dependence to be 'reversible'; Synoptic Problem specialists know this well. The judgment which direction of dependence is more likely often boils down to a matter of taste, usually determined by the overall thesis being proposed. But to take just one example, again from the Lord's Prayer, I find it hard to understand Matthew, if he depended on the *Didache* version, omitting the final doxology, whereas for the *Didache* to add it to the Matthean version on the basis of subsequent liturgical usage seems entirely natural.

The whole book is a demanding but stimulating read, and to see the traditional methods of NT source-criticism applied to a non-NT text provokes salutary reflections on the way they have been employed in the more familiar territory of Synoptic studies. It is good to be reminded how much is subjective, and how much can be made to turn on small differences of wording which the original writers might have been surprised to see taken so seriously. I am grateful for a widening of my literary horizons, but not convinced. And to read such a book makes me the more glad that theological undergraduates are no longer subjected to the sort of nit-picking textual analysis combined with speculative literary theories which passed as study of the gospels when I was first introduced to the subject.

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Studies in Matthew

Ulrich Luz

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Ulrich Luz, recently retired New Testament professor at Bern, has worked for more than thirty years on Matthew's Gospel. His four-volume German commentary appeared between 1989 and 2002; then he promptly revised the first volume. Most of this commentary is now available in English, but many of the essays and articles in which Luz worked out his ideas were never translated. This collection rectifies the omission. Here are eighteen pieces, dating from 1971 to 2003. Two were already published in English, and two are brand-new. Thirteen were only previously available in German, in a scattering of books and journals, and one in French.

These are much more than extended footnotes to the commentary. Some of the essays bring big ideas to a very compact and concise focus, while others explore important theological themes more directly than the commentary format could allow. Others again look outward from the precise work of historical study, and consider the role of scripture and its interpretation in the life of the church.

If you have a couple of hours to get hold of Luz's main themes, read the first two chapters. Matthew writes in and for a Jewish Christian community, after AD70. He tells the story of Jesus in a transparent manner, so that his readers can see the story of their own church in and through it. Thus they will come to terms with the breakdown of their own relationship to wider Judaism, and start to think in new ways about Gentile mission. Matthew's method is generally conservative, in that he values the material handed down to him. Yet he is

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