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Reproof and Reconciliation in the Q community
A study of the tradition-history of Mt 18,15–17,21–22/Lk 17,3–4

The presence of Q material in Mt 18,15.21–22/Lk 17,3–4 is often and quite rightly inferred from the sequence of sayings, agreed by both evangelists, in which the tradition about scandals (Mt 18,7/Lk 17,1) shortly precedes this tradition about disrupted relationships within the community.¹ While there has been a powerful trend towards finding in Lk 17,3–4 the closer approximation to the original Q wording, there has also been a striking variety of view about the origin of Mt 18, 15–17. Three main suggestions have been put forward: 1. That it is an independent M variant of the Q tradition preserved by Lk.² 2. That it is a MtR expansion of the first part of the Q tradition, Lk 17,3.³ 3. That it is a post-Q but pre-Mt expansion of that first part of the Q tradition,⁴ and thus an argument for supposing that two different recensions of Q came into the hands of Mt and Lk. The third of these suggestions has attracted a good deal of support in recent years, but the purpose of this present article is to propose another possibility: 4. That Mt 18,15–17 (minus v. 16b) belonged to Q, and was both known to and truncated by Lk.

A reasonably uncontroversial start to the discussion of Mt 18 can be made with an assembling of the arguments for separating vv. 15–17 from vv. 18.19–20 and for regarding vv. 15.16a.17 as pre-Mt. (1) V. 18 is probably dependent on MtR not only for its present position but also for its minimal deviations in content from the earlier 'binding and loosing' saying in 16,19. Some writers accept that the position but not

¹ *J. Schmid*, *Matthäus und Lukas* (BSt, 23/2–3), Freiburg 1930, 309; *F. Hauck*, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (THK NT, 3), Leipzig 1934, 211.

² *B. H. Streeter*, *The Four Gospels*, London 1961, 257.281; *W. Grundmann*, *Das Evangelium nach Lukas* (THK NT, 3), Berlin ²1961, 331; *T. W. Manson*, *The Sayings of Jesus*, London 1971, 139.

³ *Schmid*, *Mt und Lk*, 309; *G. D. Kilpatrick*, *The Origins of the Gospel according to St. Matthew*, Oxford 1946, 38; *R. H. Gundry*, *Matthew. A Commentary on his Literary and Theological Art*, Grand Rapids 1982, 367–370.

⁴ *W. Trilling*, *Das wahre Israel* (StANT, 10), München ³1964, 113–116; *W. Pesch*, *Matthäus als Seelsorger* (SBS, 2), Stuttgart 1966, 38; *D. Lührmann*, *Die Redaktion der Logienquelle* (WMANT, 33), Neukirchen - Vluyn 1969, 106; *G. Bornkamm*, *The Authority to 'Bind' and 'Loose' in the Church in Matthew's Gospel*, in: *D. G. Buttrick* (ed.), *Jesus and Man's Hope*, I, Pittsburgh 1970, 37–50, 38–40; *D. Zeller*, *Die weisheitlichen Mahnsprüche bei den Synoptikern* (FzB, 17), Würzburg 1977, 61.

the content is MtR;⁵ others accept its secondariness in relation to 16,19 but regard it as a pre-Mt addition to vv. 15–17;⁶ still others regard it as an older version of 16,19.⁷ But the arguments for the total responsibility of MtR are surely persuasive. Firstly, there is the change from singular (vv. 15–17) to plural (v. 18) forms.⁸ Secondly, those features of v. 18 which distinguish it from 16,19 are all characteristic of MtR, i. e., the addition of ἀμῆν λέγω ὑμῖν,⁹ the movement from ὁ ἕαν to ὅσα ἕαν,¹⁰ the preference for the singular form ἐν οὐρανῷ rather than the plural form ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς as part of a contrast with the necessarily singular γῆ.¹¹ Thirdly, the relationship between vv. 15–21 and 16,17–19 is readily explicable in terms of deliberate reminiscence – thus, the common combination of Peter, the church, and the power to bind and loose – and balanced complementariness – thus, the power to bind and loose refers in the one to the teaching *magisterium* and in the other to the disciplinary process, a combination which is thoroughly appropriate.¹² Fourthly, the parallels for v. 18 and 16,19 are in rabbinic texts which lack any counterpart for vv. 15–17,¹³ while the parallels for vv. 15–17 in TGad 6, 1QS 5–6 and CD 9 lack any counterpart for v. 18. This indicates two discrete schemes. Overall, therefore, it is overwhelmingly probable that the remodelling of 16,19 in v. 18 and its positioning after vv. 15–17 should be attributed to MtR. (2) It has frequently been observed that v. 16b is in some tension with its context. The passage quoted, Deut 19,15 (cf. Num 35,30; Deut 17,6; 2 Cor 13,1), refers to formal prosecution testimony rather than an intensification of pressure on the accused to accept his fault and bring the complaint to an end (cf. 1QS 6,1; CD 9,3). The quotation of this passage in v. 16b presupposes v. 17a, the next stage in the process which, at the stage of v. 16a, is still hoped to be unnecessary. The insertion of such an explicit quotation is readily attributable to

⁵ G. Strecker, *Der Weg der Gerechtigkeit* (FRLANT, 82), Göttingen 1966, 223.

⁶ Lührmann, *Redaktion*, 113.

⁷ E. Klostermann, *Das Matthäusevangelium* (HNT, 4), Tübingen 1927, 150; Pesch, *Seelsorger*, 41,42.

⁸ Pesch, *Seelsorger*, 41: „Die Naht ist am Wechsel der Anrede auch noch äußerlich erkennbar“.

⁹ Cf. 5,18 / Lk 16,17; 17,20 diff Lk 17,6; 19,23 diff Mk 10,23; 24,2 diff Mk 13,2; 25,12 diff Lk 13,25.

¹⁰ Cf. 7,12 diff Lk 6,31; 22,9 diff Lk 14,21; 23,3.

¹¹ Cf. 5,18 / Lk 16,17; 5,34 (Jas 5,12); 6,10 diff Lk 11,2; 11,25 / Lk 10,21; 24,35 / Mk 13,31; 28,18.

¹² Lührmann, *Redaktion*, 113.

¹³ Strack-Billerbeck, I, 787; J. Gnülka, *Die Kirche des Matthäus und die Gemeinde von Qumran*, in: *BZ* 7 (1963), 43–63, 55: „Das disziplinäre Vorgehen gegen den Sünder in der Kirche des Mt besitzt keine Parallele im rabbinischen Judentum“.

MtR, but the corollary of the resultant dislocation is that the adjacent material is pre-Mt. (3) The use of the word ἐκκλησία for the local assembly in v. 17a is clearly less developed than its use for the community unrestricted by time or space in 16,18. The latter is Christian (μου ἡ ἐκκλησία), the former is not. The latter is clearly the one in which Mt has invested theologically, in view of his careful presentation in 16,13–20 as a whole, so that the former is most naturally regarded as pre-Mt. (4) For all that the Matthaean community belonged within the flow of traditional Judaism the presence within this gospel of 9,9–13 and 21,43; 28,16–20 implies that its members included Gentiles and tax-collectors. That is not the implication of v. 17b¹⁴ which therefore also looks like being pre-Mt. Adding all the above arguments together we can conclude that vv. 15.16a.17 as a whole are pre-Mt.

The next stage in the discussion is more form-critical and involves a schematic comparison of Mt 18,15.16a.17.21.22 and Lk 17,3.4 with Testament of Gad 6,1–7, IQS 5,25–6, 1 and CD 9,2–8. For convenience and clarity these texts are set out in full.

Testament of Gad 6

1. And now, my children, I exhort you, love ye each one his brother, and put away hatred from
3. your hearts, love one another in deed, and in word, and in the inclination of the soul . . . Love ye one another from the heart; and if a man sin against thee, speak peaceably to him, and in
4. thy soul hold not guile; and if he repent and confess, forgive him. But if he deny it, do not get into a passion with him, lest catching the poison from thee he take to swearing and then sin
6. doubly . . . And though he deny it and yet have a sense of shame when reprov'd, give over reprov'ing him. For he who denieth may repent so as not again to wrong thee; yea, he may
7. also honour thee, and be at peace with thee. And if he be shameless and persist in his wrongdoing, even so forgive him from the heart, and leave God to do the avenging.¹⁵

IQS 5–6

25. They shall reprove each other in truth and humility and loving charity one towards the
26. other. Let no man speak to his (brother) with anger or ill-temper, / or disrespect, or impatience, or a spirit of wickedness. And let no man hate him (in the pervers) si (ty) of his heart; he
1. shall be reprov'd on the very same day. And thus a man/ shall not bear a fault because of him. Also let no cause be brought before the Many, by one man against another, unless reproof has been made before witnesses.¹⁶

¹⁴ Pesch, Seelsorger, 41; Lübrmann, Redaktion, 112.

¹⁵ Translation as in R. H. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, II, Oxford 1913, 341.342.

¹⁶ Translation as in A. Dupont-Sommer, *The Essene Writings from Qumran*, Oxford 1961, 84.85.

CD 9

2. And concerning that which He said, 'Thou shalt take no revenge and shalt bear no malice
3. against the sons of thy people', any man from among the members / of the Covenant who
4. brings an action against his fellow without having reproofed him before witnesses, / or brings this action in the heat of anger, or tells (the matter) to his elders to dishonour him, is a man
5. who takes revenge and bears malice; / whereas it is written (that) only 'he (God) takes ven-
6. geance on his adversaries and bears malice against his enemies'. / If he has kept silence toward his fellow from one day to another (without reproofing him), or has spoken against
7. him in the heat of his anger, it is in an action liable to (punishment by) death / that he will have witnessed against himself, since he has not fulfilled the commandment of God which
8. has said to him, 'Thou shalt / rebuke thy neighbour and thou shalt not bear a sin because of him'.¹⁷

All these texts are reflective of the principle set out in Lev 19,17 and a comparative analysis of their determining features yields the following table:

	<i>Mt</i>	<i>Lk</i>	<i>TGad</i>	<i>IQS</i>	<i>CD</i>
A. The brother's sin	15a	3a	3		
B. Direct personal reproof	15a	3a	3	25	6(?)
C. Approach with love and without hate			1	25.26	4.6
D. Receptivity of reproof	15b	3b	3		
E. Possible denial by offender	16a		4.6		
F. Further reproof before witnesses	16ab		(6)	1	3
G. Submission to assembly	17a			1	3
H. Rejection of assembly decision	17b				
I. Reliance on divine judgment			7		
J. Further sin by offender	21	4	7		
K. Further forgiveness by offended party	21.22	4	7		

This table exhibits a number of important realities about the family of texts, the first of which is the surprising lack of parallel in the Christian texts for the Jewish texts' preoccupation with the spirit in which reproof is undertaken (C). Lev 19,17.18 probably underlies all versions (explicitly so in TGad, 6,1.3) but the Jewish texts exhibit its influence much more clearly. In the case of TGad the preoccupation with the attitude of the reproofing party is mainly responsible for the omission of any reproof beyond the first (F); in the case of IQS and CD it leads to the total omission of any comment on how the reproofed person responds. In the Christian texts it is notable that the only point at which reference is made to the personal attitude of the reprover is Mt 18,17b ἔστω σοι ὡσερ ὁ ἔθνικὸς καὶ ὁ τελώνης.

¹⁷ Dupont-Sommer, *Essene Writings*, 148.149.

Secondly, Lk and TGad both envisage a process only to the extent of including the initial element of personal reproof (B), whereas Mt and IQS/CD envisage a three-stage process of personal reproof + reproof before witness + presentation to the assembly (B, F, G). Of the relationship between Lk and TGad several things can be said: (1) Lk does not positively *exclude* further action beyond the initial reproof in the way that TGad does, and therefore Lk represents something of a middle term between TGad and the Mt/IQS/CD scheme. (2) A comparison between Lk and TGad makes plain the artificiality of the present form of Lk 17,4. TGad closes in 6,7 with a reference to protracted and deliberate sinning by the unresponsive offender. To this corresponds Lk's phrase *καὶ ἂν ἐπτάκις τῆς ἡμέρας ἀμαρτήσῃ εἰς σε* as parallels demonstrate. A sevenfold repetition gives an action firmness and completeness in Josh 6,15; 1 Kings 18,43.44; 2 Kings 5,10.14. Prov. 24,16 in affirming that 'a righteous man falls seven times and rises again' means to say that whenever and however often he falls he will recover. Most significantly, when Ps 119,164 declares that 'seven times a day (LXX: *ἐπτάκις τῆς ἡμέρας*) will I praise you for all your righteous ordinances' it means that this will happen constantly and without ceasing; it will be a firm and settled behaviour pattern. Now this is what Lk 17,4a is about, but as it stands it is coloured (or, to be more precise, discoloured) by the following phrase in Lk 17,4b *καὶ ἐπτάκις ἐπιστρέψῃ πρὸς σε λέγων· μετανοῶ*. That phrase has no parallel in TGad 6,7; it has no parallel in Mt; it is out of line with Lk 17,3 where the initiative taken by the offended person is shown to be the real subject of concern, whereas 17,4 speaks of a quite extraordinary and spontaneous initiative by the offender; it is extremely artificial, in that a determined and settled pattern of sinning does not square with the repeated claim to repent unless lying or hypocrisy is involved, which we have no reason to suppose. So that whole phrase is secondary, a modification caused by lack of comprehension of the phrase *ἐπτάκις τῆς ἡμέρας*, and in view of the typical Lukan interest in the theme of repentance, I kR. The corollary is that we can neither adopt the suggestion of S. Schulz¹⁸ that an underlying *ἂν μετανοήσῃ* should be envisaged (to bring the *Vorlage* of 17,4 into line with 17,3), nor follow the counter-argument of D. Zeller¹⁹ and H. Merklein²⁰ that while the *Vorlage* did not contain such a phrase it did presume repentance. On the contrary, repentance is not presumed and indeed is excluded. (3) The movement in TGad from element D to element J serves to show the awkwardness of a parallel movement from D to J in Lk, particularly when the pre-Lk form of Lk 17,4 is taken

¹⁸ S. Schulz, *Q. Die Spruchquelle der Evangelisten*, Zürich 1972, 321.

¹⁹ Zeller, *Mahnsprüche*, 61.

²⁰ H. Merklein, *Die Gottesherrschaft als Handlungsprinzip* (FzB, 34), Würzburg 1978, 248.

into account. In the two sequences a statement about conditional forgiveness, which is a response to repentance (D), is followed by a statement about totally unconditional forgiveness in a setting from which repentance is absent (K). But TGad at least builds a bridge from one to the other by discussing an ascending scale of reactions by the offender (vv. 3b.6.7) and in the process depicting how the desired situation of peace and respect may by varying means be achieved. Lk 17, by contrast, builds no bridge and reads awkwardly and abruptly, and the expectation that something is needed to provide an intervening transition is disappointed. Yet that thoroughly justified expectation remains.

Thirdly, of the relationship between Mt and IQS/CD several things can be said: (1) The most strikingly distinctive feature in Mt is the offender's rejection of the decision of the assembly, something which at Qumran would be unthinkable. In Mt 18,17 indeed we have not only the individual's freedom to ignore the community's decision but also the community's lack of response to such a flouting — note that all terms in v. 17b are not plural but singular, and it is only in the MtR addition in v. 18 that an excommunication is envisaged. The situation in Mt seems therefore to resemble that in TGad: the procedure (long or short) is above all concerned for the maintenance of peace and the achievement of reconciliation, and not with the definition of the boundary between those inside and those outside. (2) A further distinctive feature in Mt is the concluding statement about repetitive sinning and unconditional forgiveness (J,K). This follows on from H and is also a thematic link with TGad 6,7. But artificiality is again detectable since v. 21 presumes a previous reference to a process of sinning, which is supplied neither by vv. 16,17, when these describe the negative reaction of the offender, nor by v. 15, where his positive reaction rules it out. The Petrine intervention which shapes the present form of the saying is, however, widely accepted as MtR,²¹ and therefore we can conclude, firstly, that it has been necessitated by the insertion of other material (minimally vv. 18.19–20) and, secondly, that Mt, like Lk, has observed the original sense of the concluding saying even though his 7/77 scheme certainly underscores the demand for unrestricted forgiveness of offences.

The implications of all that has been discovered thus far can now be drawn out. Since Mt 18,15–16a.17 has been shown to be pre-Mt, and since Lk 17,4 points to the need for something to intervene between Lk 17,3 and its pre-Lk *Vorlage*, and since *all* the other texts either describe (IQS/CD) or implicitly recognize as a possi-

²¹ A. Harnack, *The Sayings of Jesus* 1908, 95; Kilpatrick, *Origins*, 38; E. Linne-mann, *Parables of Jesus*, London 1966, 107; Schulz, *Spruchquelle*, 321; Zeller, *Mahnprüche*, 62; Merklein, *Gottesherrschaft*, 247.

bility (TGad) some action following an initial, unsuccessful reproof, the possibility that Mt 18,16a.17 figured in Q must now be seriously considered. To this we now turn.

Two small considerations can be cleared away quickly. First, the argument of E. Linnemann²² that Lk 17,4 is inconceivable after Mt 18,15–17 can be dismissed once the pre-Lk version of 17,4 is brought into focus and the above form-critical data included. Second, the observation of D. Zeller²³ that Jesus could not have voiced vv. 16,17 because of the Qumran parallels and because of the attitude to Gentiles and tax-collectors in v. 17 is entirely right, but that does not affect the issue as to whether v. 17 should be included in some particular post-Jesus layer of tradition – for there are plenty of inauthentic Q sayings!

The issue effectively turns on the requirement ἔστω σοι ὡσπερ ὁ ἐθνικός καὶ ὁ τελώνης, and the claim can now be made that the attitude to Gentiles and tax-collectors in v. 17b is exactly the attitude of Q.²⁴

(1) The ἐθνικός + τελώνης combination occurs elsewhere in the gospel tradition only at Mt 5,46.47 diff Lk 6,32.33. It is widely agreed that Mt here reproduces Q and that Lk's ἀμαρτωλοί is an editorial generalisation carried out with Gentile readers in mind.²⁵ Slight reserve is registered by H. Schürmann²⁶ in view of the absence of the term ἀμαρτωλός from Acts and uncertainty about its occurrence in LkR material in the gospel. The point is, however, secured by LkR formulations in 15,1.2 (cf. Lk 5.27–32 / Mk 2,13–17) and 24,7 (diff Mk 16,6). So Mt 5,46.47 in this respect reproduces Q. Those two sayings, moreover, look like being a secondary editorial amplification of the demand for love of enemies which is quite securely and sufficiently completed by the promise of heavenly/eschatological sonship (Mt 5,44.45 / Lk 6,35). The rejection of a 'reciprocity ethic' in the saying about tax-collectors and Gentiles is commentary bringing in a quite different pattern of argument. If then Mt 5,46.47 derives from Q editorial work, we ought to notice also that it figures in material in which the principle of Lev 19,18 is being expanded and, moreover, that in Q it was very probably closely followed by the tradition dealing with the same idea of reproof of the brother with which we have been occupied (Mt 7,1–2.3–5 / Lk 6,37–38.41–43). These several correspondences with Mt 18,15–17 can scarcely be coincidental. Indeed, it becomes difficult to accept, with

²² Linnemann, Parables, 174.

²³ Zeller, Mahnsprüche, 112.

²⁴ Contra Zeller, Mahnsprüche, 112.

²⁵ Hamack, Sayings, 62.63; Schulz, Spruchquelle, 129; Merklein, Gottesherrschaft, 226.

²⁶ H. Schürmann, Das Lukasevangelium (HTK NT, 3/1), Freiburg 1969, 353.

W. Trilling,²⁷ that 5,46.47 and 18,17 belong to the same level of tradition, and then forbear to attribute 18,17 to Q.

(2) Two further adverse references to Gentiles support the suggestion of Q editorial work. In Mt 6,32a / Lk 12,30a an appeal for a higher standard of behaviour than that of Gentiles not only recalls Mt 5,47 but also interrupts a discernible and smooth underlying sequence of thought. Not only is the pattern of behaviour in the earlier pre-Q *Vorlage* of Mt 6,25–33 grounded in quite different argumentation, but also Mt 6,32a as an argument is positionally wrong in the post-argument concluding summary (6,31.32b). Q editorial work is the natural explanation.²⁸ In Mt 6,7 the βατταλογεῖν of the ἔθνηκοί is attacked, and a higher attitude in prayer recommended in those to whom the Lord's Prayer is immediately afterwards presented (6,9–13). Although Mt 6,7 has no exact Lukan parallel it does represent an interruption in a section carefully constructed by MtR as in part an attack upon quite different persons, the Pharisees, and is therefore likely to be pre-Mt. Moreover, the overlap between the βατταλογεῖν theme in the material immediately preceding the Lord's Prayer in Mt, and the similar theme in the material immediately following the Lord's Prayer in Lk (11,5–9), suggests an association of ideas in Q. But since the connection between 6,7.8 and 6,9–13 cannot be original, and since it corresponds in content so closely to 5,47 and 6,32a the possibility of Q editorial work again becomes attractive.²⁹

(3) The term ἀδελφός occurs in Q only at Mt 7,3–5 / Lk 6,41–43 and Mt 18,15 / Lk 17,3. Both passages, fascinatingly enough, treat the reproof idea and clearly derive this 'brother' terminology from Lev 19,17a, where the term stands in parallel with 'the neighbour' and 'one of the sons of your own people'. Against the affirmation of R. Hummel that 'diese urchristlichen Gemeineregeln stellen eine Verchristlichung spätjüdischer Überlieferung dar',³⁰ or W. Schenk's suggested rendering of ἀδελφός as 'Mitchrist',³¹ it is necessary to insist that the context presupposed is not specifically the Christian church nor, for that matter, a precisely delimited circle of disciples, but rather a community which is, or believes itself to be, the community of

²⁷ Trilling, *Israel*, 115.

²⁸ D. Catchpole, *The ravens, the lilies and the Q hypothesis. A form-critical perspective on the source-critical problem*, in: SNTU 6–7 (1981–82) 77–87, 81.

²⁹ For fuller argumentation, see D. Catchpole, Q and 'The Friend at Midnight' (Luke 11.5–8/9), in: JTS 34 (1983) 407–424.

³⁰ R. Hummel, *Die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Kirche und Judentum im Matthäusevangelium*, München 1963, 58.

³¹ W. Schenk, *Synopse zur Redenquelle der Evangelien*, Düsseldorf 1981, 31.

Israel.³² And if that is so, the community awareness behind the term ἀδελφός in v. 15 is exactly the same as that behind v. 17b — a strong religious, and not merely national, consciousness of separateness not simply from Gentiles but also from those who 'make themselves Gentiles'.³³ The coherence of v. 17b and v. 15, and the traditional Jewish outlook articulated in both, is a further strong reason for attributing v. 17b to Q.

(4) What is the significance of ἔστω σοι ὡσπερ ὁ ἐθνικὸς καὶ ὁ τελώνης in itself and in context?

Firstly, the singular σοι implies that v. 17b is describing a personal and not a community stance. There can therefore be no question of formal exclusion from the community, in spite of recurrent affirmations to this effect.³⁴ Against this trend P. Bonnard wrote perceptively, 'La lettre du texte n'impose pas l'idée d'une expulsion de l'Eglise, mais plutôt celle d'une mise en quarantaine dans l'Eglise; le texte ne dit pas 'qu'il soit pour l'Eglise... ' mais 'pour toi (σοι)'.³⁵ That was an important protest against a strong but misleading interpretative tendency, though even the notion of ecclesiastical quarantine may go too far. For the community is, as already seen, not a Christian one but a Jewish one, and the offender remains a member of the Jewish community of ἀδελφοί. He has not forfeited his Jewishness, nor could he do so. We note also the absence of any clear definition of his offence, which is here described in exceedingly general terms (ἐὰν ἀμαρτήση, v. 15) and might be anywhere between the criminally serious and the comparatively trivial. Exclusion from the community could scarcely be envisaged without precise definition of the offence. Hence the ultimate situation envisaged by v. 17b has nothing to do with what he *is* and everything to do with how he is *regarded*, and that not by the community but by the individual offended person.

Secondly, similar formulations elsewhere can be brought in to reinforce this understanding. Sir 33,30.31 reads:

If you have a servant, let him be as yourself,
because you have bought him with blood.
If you have a servant, treat him as a brother,
for as your own soul you will need him.

³² Rightly, Zeller, Mahnsprüche, 62.

³³ See Trilling, Israel, 115.116.

³⁴ Thus, Manson, Sayings, 209: "He is to be considered no longer a member of the church". Similarly, Trilling, Israel, 115–120; Streckler, Weg, 224; Gnülka, Kirche, 54; E. Schweizer, The Good News according to Matthew, London 1976, 371.

³⁵ P. Bonnard, L'évangile selon Saint Matthieu, Neuchâtel 1970, 275.

Here the servant does not cease 'really' to be a servant, but because of certain specified considerations his owner's personal attitude is to be defined quite otherwise, i. e. an unreal 'as if' element comes in, so that the new attitude is in line with attitudes to oneself or one's brother which the servant 'really' is not. Similarly in b. Shabb. 105b:

R. Simeon b. Eleazar said in the name of Halfa b. Agra in R. Johanan b. Nuri's name: He who rends his garments in his anger, he who breaks his vessels in his anger, and he who scatters his money in his anger, regard him as an idolater, because such are the wiles of the Tempter: Today he says to him 'Do this'; tomorrow he tells him, 'Do that', until he bids him, 'Go and serve idols', and he goes and serves them.³⁶

Again, none of the actions described have changed the status of the person concerned: It is just that he is now *regarded* in a new way. In Mt 18,17b, therefore, there is set out a new personal attitude and no more, an attitude conforming to a presumed known attitude to Gentiles and tax-collectors.

Thirdly, it is noticeable that the two terms 'Gentile' and 'tax-collector' are each bracketed elsewhere with the term 'sinner' (Mk 2,15.16; Mt 11,19 / Lk 7,34; Gal 2,15). And in v. 15 the offending person's actions have been defined by the phrase ἐάν . . . ἀμαρτήσῃ. Hence, the position described in v. 17b represents nothing new, but only a making firm or establishing of the position which is implicit in his actions.

Fourthly, we can in this light paraphrase v. 17b as follows: "Let your personal attitude to him be the same as that which you adopt to those outside your community, the Gentiles or those who make themselves like Gentiles". And the attitude which is adopted in Q to such persons is easy to determine and to recognize as harmonious with the tradition in Mt 18,15–17 + Lk 17,4. From Mt 5,46.47 and 6,32a it is evident that these are persons whose example is not to be followed; certain characteristic attitudes and actions are exhibited, and these are not to be emulated. In specific terms, they only love or do good to those who love or do good to them. i. e. they adhere strictly to a reciprocity ethic, and if someone treats them badly they do not respond by treating that someone well. Hence, on the Q level v. 17b is a demand for something different, an attitude of love towards the offender, an attitude which will not permit the relationship to be defined permanently by his offence. The corollary is that v. 17b shows itself to be component C in the scheme set out above.

Fifthly, it can now be seen that v. 17b leads directly and without strain into the pre-Lk version of Lk 17,4. The only attitude which will not permit the relationship between the two persons concerned to be determined by a deliberate and reiterated offence is an attitude of forgiveness, cf. TGad 6,7: "Forgive him from the heart and

³⁶ Strack-Billerbeck, I, 792.

leave God to do the judging“. So strong is the concern for peace within the community to be, that forgiveness has to be shown to be not merely contingent but also, if necessary, unconditional. The 'if' with which the tradition began has been shown by the way it ends to be not an 'only if'. On such a basis it becomes possible to speak, as S. Schulz does, of 'die schrankenlose Unbegrenztheit der brüderlichen Vergebungspflicht'.³⁷

(5) Finally, if vv. 16a.17 belonged to Q it is readily understandable that Lk should have dropped them. Well might W. Trilling exclaim, "Man stelle sich das Wort bei Lk vor!"³⁸ The notion of a community which is religiously defined in such exclusive and traditional Jewish terms is not a Lukan notion. When faced with the *τελῶναι* + *ἔθνικοί* of Mt 5,46.47 / Lk 6,32.33 he changed both to *ἁμαρτωλοί*, but that was scarcely possible here, so the only feasible alternative was to drop the sayings altogether.

The reconstruction of the original Q wording of this tradition has been in part carried out already in the course of the above argumentation. A small number of further Mt/Lk variations have to be assessed if the task is to be completed,³⁹ but none of them involves major differences in content, and with a reasonable degree of assurance the Q text emerges somewhat as follows:

ἐὰν ἁμαρτήσῃ ὁ ἀδελφός σου, ὕπαγε ἔλεγξον αὐτόν.
 ἐὰν σου ἀκούσῃ, ἄφες αὐτόν.
 ἐὰν δὲ μὴ ἀκούσῃ, παράλαβε μετὰ σοῦ ἓτι ἓνα ἢ δύο.
 ἐὰν δὲ παρακούσῃ αὐτῶν, εἰπὸν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ·
 ἐὰν δὲ καὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας παρακούσῃ, ἔστω σοι ὡσπερ ὁ
 ἐθνικὸς καὶ ὁ τελῶνης.
 καὶ ἐὰν ἐπτάκις τῆς ἡμέρας ἁμαρτήσῃ εἰς σε, ἀφήσεις αὐτόν.

³⁷ Schulz, Spruchquelle, 322.

³⁸ Trilling, Israel, 116.

³⁹ (1) *προσέχετε ἑαυτοῖς* is likely to be LkR in view of 12,1; 21,34; Acts 5,35; 20,28. (2) *ὕπαγε* is uncertain in terms of word-statistics but likely to be Q as a counterpart of *παράλαβε*, Mt 18,16a. (3) *ἔλεγξον* diff *ἐπιτίμησον* is likely to be Q in view of its presence in the basic text, Lev 19,17; moreover, *ἐπιτιμάω* is LkR at 4,39 diff Mk 1,31 and 23,40 diff Mk 15,32. (4) *μεταξὺ σοῦ καὶ αὐτοῦ μόνου* could be a later MtR clarification, though this is not sure. (5) *ἀκούσῃ* diff *μετανοήσῃ*: LkR is probably involved in view of Lk's interest in the theme of repentance, cf. 15,7.10; 16,30; 17,4, though it is shown by TGad 6,3 to be not inappropriate to the context. (6) *ἐκέρθησας τὸν ἀδελφόν σου* uses language which occurs most similarly in Jas 5,19.20: the often cited parallels in 1 Cor 9,19–22 are less adjacent. But *ἀφιέναι* is attested in this context, Mt 18,21 / Lk 17,4 as well as in TGad 6,3, and is therefore probably from Q. (7) The variations in Mt 18,21.22 / Lk 17,4 are covered by the argument in the text.

This tradition can be seen from a literary- and form-critical angle to be entirely unified. The old suggestion of R. Bultmann⁴⁰ that Lk 17,4 was a secondary expansion of 17,3 had not made much headway⁴¹ and now becomes irrelevant in the context of this new reconstruction of the underlying Q source material. The tradition reads smoothly, consisting of six *ἐὰν*-clauses, followed in each case by an imperative demand. The six form an ascending progression, detailing increasingly adverse actions and reactions by the offending brother, and being held together by the two demands for forgiveness. There is a total lack of distinctively Christian colouring and a total conformity to Jewish texts. Given this parallelism, and given the combination of the unity of the tradition and the derivation of v. 17b from Q redaction, it becomes almost impossible to defend the authenticity of any part of the tradition⁴² and highly likely that it is *in toto* the product of Q redaction. This would cohere well with the impression conveyed by Mt 5,25.26 / Lk 12,58.59 and Mt 7,1.3–5 / Lk 6,37.38.41–43 that this whole theme of reproof and reconciliation was of immense concern to the Q community. Within this community, with its entirely and unequivocally Jewish horizon, the process of reflexion on how the principles of Lev 19,17.18 should be implemented laid the emphasis above all on the *pax ecclesiae*, the restoration of relationships, the refusal to be defeated even if the ultimate attempt to change the mind of the offender should fail. Even in this worst case evil was to be overcome with good, and sin met with forgiveness.

⁴⁰ R. Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, Oxford 1963, 86.

⁴¹ See Schulz, *Spruchquelle*, 322.

⁴² H. Braun, *Spätjüdisch-häretischer und frühchristlicher Radikalismus*, II (BHTh, 24), Tübingen ²1969, 84; Zeller, *Mahnsprüche*, 62.