

Sage Rhetoric and Majority World Readings of Miracle Narratives in Matthew

As I have learned, no commentator can treat every valuable subject in detail. Some have felt that my commentary's emphasis on Matthew's ancient context, where I felt I could offer the greatest service of new material for other scholars,ⁱ left me inadequate space to highlight more important literary and theological issues. In response, I endeavored to be more thorough in my more recently written commentary on Acts, with the consequence that the original publisher, on finally receiving the manuscript, felt unable to publish its 7000 pages. Fortunately another publisher accepted it, but with the gentle warning: "Do not ever do that again." Thoroughly chastened, I am back to trying to limit my approach, without intending any disrespect for other valuable and important approaches.

I am grateful for the invitation to present a paper on the subject of the future of Matthean research. At the same time, lacking skills in predicting the future, I do not want to try to predict what will emerge as the trends of the future. Some current approaches are essential and will surely continue to generate interest in the future, such as observing narrative connections within Matthew's work. This approach is particularly fruitful and one that our students can learn to master. Thus, for example, one may note the three approaches to the question of Jesus' value at the beginning of the passion narrative, highlighting the woman who anointed him (vs. the male disciples; 26:6-16);ⁱⁱ and the women versus the guards as models for the witness of the church in the resurrection narrative (28:1-20).ⁱⁱⁱ But such observations, though the most critical, are not novel.

Because I believe that others can chart future trends better than I, I will simply note two possible directions among others where further research can be done. Of these two, the first (rhetoric) includes two possible approaches. Application of principles from Greco-Roman handbooks is a fairly new approach, but I believe that it offers only limited promise; study of Jewish sage rhetoric, by contrast, may be an old approach, but with work offers renewed promise. The second major direction I would suggest as offering promise involves reading the Gospels' healing and exorcism narratives from a different social location, namely that of cultures where such experiences are more widely considered than in the west. I believe that this approach may supply a variety of new insights over time.

I. Rhetoric and Matthew

All persuasion is, of course, rhetorical in a general sense, and one can use Greco-Roman rhetorical categories to classify or evaluate much persuasion. But not all texts seem equally well designed for such categories, as will be clear from critical patristic comments, offered after the rise of the Second Sophistic, about biblical rhetoric. Styles of Greco-Roman argumentation and many rhetorical devices pervaded public speech, whether in assemblies or on street corners, in hellenized and Romanized cities; they thus shaped the character of argumentation in such settings. Nevertheless, many areas also retained elements of indigenous cultures or traditional rhetorics, and we could expect a confluence of approaches, or even a dominance of traditional approaches, in these areas.

1. Greco-Roman rhetoric

While Matthew's Gospel is clearly (in my opinion) Jewish, this conclusion need not entail the a priori irrelevance of Greco-Roman rhetoric. If Matthew writes among Jewish followers of Jesus in urban Syria, perhaps Antioch, he could write for a somewhat hellenized Jewish subculture; not only the Greek language in which he likely wrote but his adoption or adaptation of the Greek genre of biography, following Mark and probably other writers, allows for Greek influence.^{iv} (It should go without saying that ancient biography is not identical to modern biography, although the latter ultimately developed from the former.)^v We have numerous examples of surviving biographies from within a few decades after the Gospels,^{vi} and others^{vii} much earlier.

Examining the literary techniques of rhetorically-trained writers of histories and biographies could therefore provide useful insights into Matthew's own writing style,^{viii} and I sought to provide numerous such comparisons in my commentary on Matthew.^{ix} Most ancient biographies, like Matthew, tended to be arranged more topically than chronologically.^x Like the Gospels, biographers frequently sought to teach moral lessons from their stories;^{xi} one might in a sense learn from great teachers of the past by proxy, as students of their recorded teachings.^{xii} Theological perspectives, too, drove ancient works of these kinds.^{xiii} Some narrative techniques, like suspense, appear in a variety of ancient narrative genres.^{xiv}

These comparisons do not imply that we should think that Matthew had rhetorical training or necessarily even consciously imitated the elite biographers and historians whose works remain extant. They simply provide a concrete criterion for evaluation that is more culturally relevant than purely modern speculations about how ancients should have written. Thus one could compare with Greco-Roman rhetoric various examples in Matthew's Gospel:

- After an introduction, speeches of praise could ideally address a person's genealogy (cf. 1:2-16)^{xv}
- Respectable ancestry was praiseworthy hence could be used in introducing a person's life^{xvi}
- Birth was often the first subject in an encomium, though one would elaborate on only the most important points (cf. 1:18-25);^{xvii} after praising a king's country and family, a rhetorician would turn to praising his birth^{xviii}
- Praising the virtue of Joseph and Mary fits ancient rhetorical emphasis on praiseworthy ancestry;^{xix} "upbringing" was a conventional element in praising a person's background^{xx}
- 2:1-12 is comparable to rhetorical *synkrisis*, or comparison, of the new characters; although evident even in many OT narratives, rhetoricians made deliberate and considered use of this technique^{xxi}
- As Matt 6:1 offers a thesis illustrated by three examples (6:2-18), ancient rhetoricians often liked having three examples to support a rhetorical thesis^{xxii} (though skilled rhetoricians complained about those who always managed to fit everything into three points)^{xxiii}

- The threefold repetition of *sou*, “your,” at the end of successive clauses in 6:9-10 fits rhetorical antistrophe, or epiphora^{xxiv}
- Witty repartee was a valued skill,^{xxv} and (as in the Gospels) could incur the enmity of the interlocutors at whose expense the wit succeeded^{xxvi}
- In 12:43-45, Jesus essentially returns with interest his opponents’ demonization charge. Returning charges was conventional in forensic rhetoric^{xxvii}
- Vice lists (15:19) are common among rhetoricians^{xxviii}—though also in Jewish sources,^{xxix} among Stoics,^{xxx} and in other philosophers^{xxxi}
- Rhetoricians could appreciate as rhetorical antithesis^{xxxii} the contrast between the one exalting oneself being humbled and the one humbling oneself being exalted (23:12)^{xxxiii}—though the basic idea appears in Jewish sources before significant influence from Greco-Roman rhetorical forms^{xxxiv}
- “Never before” (24:21) was suitable evocative hyperbole, sometimes found in historians and speeches^{xxxv}
- The repetition of “not pass away” in 24:35 appears comparable to rhetorical *antistrophe*^{xxxvi}

Nevertheless, the heavy dominance of traditional materials in Matthew means that many of the forms we find there, such as story parables and Jesus’ sayings as a sage, do not fit ordinary rhetoric. Certainly forms found in Greco-Roman rhetoric can offer a context for the sorts of forms in which traditions were passed on,^{xxxvii} including, for example, the ways that narrators felt free to elaborate, expand and condense their materials.^{xxxviii} My point, however, is that Jesus’ speeches in Matthew do not resemble Greco-Roman speeches. Modern scholars may try to force them into rhetorical outlines, but a simple comparison with the Diaspora speeches in Acts will illustrate how poorly Matthew’s speeches fit this pattern.^{xxxix} Paul’s letters abound with Greco-Roman rhetorical devices, but those we find in Jesus’ speech in Matthew also appear in traditional Jewish texts, with far fewer examples of distinctively Greek forms of argumentation.

I was asked to add an excursus on rhetoric to the re-release of my Matthew commentary.^{xl} I came to this project after working through Acts and some of Paul’s letters in light of Greco-Roman rhetoric;^{xli} while I found abundant connections with rhetoric in the works of Luke and Paul, I found the approach much less fruitful for Matthew. I do not by this observation mean to discourage scholars from pursuing what fruit they may find here; I only would urge caution informed by a wider range of comparisons than rhetorical handbooks or Gentile speeches would offer.

2. Jewish Sage Rhetoric

Examining Matthew’s Jewish context is hardly new, but in view of the current interest in rhetorical studies, placing the teachings of Matthew’s Jesus in the context of the teachings of Jewish sages’ rhetoric is a topic that might yield interesting fruit. Unfortunately, we lack Jewish rhetorical handbooks comparable to Greek and Roman ones; one is hard-pressed to locate even collections of Jewish speeches per se.

We do, however, have many collections of Palestinian Jewish teachings, from Proverbs to Sirach to the later rabbis. Scholars wishing to compile extensive observations about Jewish sages' rhetorical techniques (at least some of which will be comparable to Greek and Roman analogues) may thus start there, providing a service to those who wish to use such observations. Even the earliest rabbinic literature is of course later than our period (just as Sirach is earlier), but where scholars may observe matters of continuity between Sirach and later rabbis, or even between Jesus (who did not significantly influence later rabbinic rhetoric) and the rabbis, we may infer some patterns of discourse that remained. Scholars are in an increasingly better position to identify the antiquity of some rabbinic traditions today through the continuing work of David Instone-Brewer, who is applying the most refined and developed form of Jacob Neusner's approach to evaluate the development of rabbinic traditions.^{xliii} Rhetoric, of course, often reflects the period of redactors rather than traditions, so the issue of continuity with earlier sources is an important one.

Here I wish to merely list several examples to suggest ways that the examination of Jewish rhetoric may be helpful.

- Although beatitudes (e.g., 5:3-12) appear elsewhere in the Mediterranean world,^{xliii} they were more common in Jewish rhetoric, both in Scripture^{xliv} and subsequently^{xlv}
- Jewish teachers regularly distinguished “light” and “heavy” commandments (Matt 23:23; cf. 5:19)^{xlvi}
- Early Jewish rhetoric often includes phrases similar to, “You have heard it said,” often, “what was said” or “as it is said” (cf. 5:21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43)^{xlvii}
- lust hyperbolically constituting adultery (Matt 5:28)^{xlviii}
- the warning that it would be “measured” to one as one measured to others (Matt 7:2; Lk 6:38)^{xlix}
- removing the beam from one's eye before trying to remove the chip from another's (Matt 7:3-5//Lk 6:41-42)^l
- the phrase, “to what shall I/we compare?” (Matt 11:16//Lk 7:31) was common in Jewish rhetoric, especially to introduce parables^{li}
- the phrase, “So-and-so is like” (Matt 11:16; 13:24; 25:1; cf. also Mk 4:26, 31; 13:34; Lk 6:48-49) is common in Jewish rhetoric^{lii}
- like many of Jesus' parables in the Gospels, early Jewish parables usually have interpretations^{liii}
- More generally, proverbs and riddles continued among sages of Jesus' day^{liv} (although these are not uniquely Jewish or eastern)^{lv}
- Jewish teachers typically employed the rhetorical techniques of hyperbole and rhetorical overstatement,^{lvi} though again these were by no means limited to them^{lvii}
- Matthew's periphrastic “kingdom of heaven” appears in some other early Jewish sources^{lviii}
- The first half of the “Lord's Prayer” closely echoes the Kaddish (as well as the language of other early Jewish prayers).^{lix}
- “Mysteries of the kingdom” (13:11) may echo language from Dan 2:44-47^{lx}
- The Pharisees' divorce question reflects a debate among Pharisaic schools from Jesus' day (even more clearly in Matthew than in Mark)^{lxi}
- “Son of Man” (in all the Gospels) is a specifically Semitic construction^{lxii}

- “moving mountains” may have been a Jewish metaphor for accomplishing what was difficult or virtually impossible (though rabbis, who preserve it, apply it especially to labor in Torah)^{lxiii}
- Jewish teachers debated among themselves which commandment was the “greatest” (22:36)^{lxiv}
- Jesus links the two “greatest” commandments on the basis of the common opening word *we’ahavta* (“You shall love”),^{lxv} this reflects a common Jewish interpretive technique^{lxvi}
- Later Babylonian Jewish teachers, not likely influenced by Jesus, could depict what was impossible or close to impossible as “an elephant passing through a needle’s eye”,^{lxvii} in Palestine, where the largest animal was a camel,^{lxviii} this expression seems more logical^{lxix}
- Current Pharisaic debates about purity with respect to the inside or outside of cups^{lxx}

One could go on at much greater length, but these examples should illustrate the particularly Jewish setting of Matthew’s tradition, and sometimes his redaction. After centuries of hellenization, even Palestinian Jewish works could reflect Greek influences; purely gentile Greek sources, however, do not reflect such Jewish motifs. Those attending to Matthew’s rhetoric, therefore, must look beyond Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks to the rhetoric of Jewish sages. This rhetoric is not available in ancient handbooks, and interpreters must compile such works or immerse themselves in ancient Jewish sources.

II. Cross-Cultural Comparisons for Healings and Exorcisms

The extent to which scholars are interested in readings from various social locations differs according to the primary focus of the scholars. Even where a scholar’s interest is largely in reconstructing the most obvious readings of Matthew in its first-century context (as mine often is), readings from diverse social locations help identify blind spots and lacunae in our reasoning. Like reception history, readings from various social locations can raise issues that our own cultural assumptions tend to neglect. (Much of what follows here is taken from my forthcoming book on this global reading of miracle narratives.)^{lxxi}

Although Matthew clearly applies Jesus’ healings in symbolic theological ways,^{lxxii} and I as well as others recognize this symbolism,^{lxxiii} he does not downplay miracles as some scholars have argued.^{lxxiv} To strip expectations of special divine action from the miracle stories is likely to neglect one central element of the theology the first audiences would heard, preferring allegorization to understanding what the narratives meant in their earliest contexts.^{lxxv} We do not play down the physical dimensions of healing claims with regard to shrines of Asclepius, for example; rather we recognize their propagandistic invitation to trust Asclepius for more healings. Is it not possible that the Gospel writers (perhaps some more than others) offered the same sort of invitation, given the emphasis on prayers in faith (e.g., Matt 7:7-11; 17:20; 21:21) and texts suggesting that Jesus modeled miracle-working for at least some members in his movement (9:35—10:1;

14:28-31)? We may illustrate this recognition by the characteristic interpretations of these narratives in sayings least shaped by western perspectives.

Some (including myself) have also examined some early Christian healing narratives in light of ancient views of sickness and medicine, though most commonly with respect to Luke-Acts.^{lxxvi} Although the audiences of the Gospels were undoubtedly not literate in ancient medical sources, reading these ancient sources can bring us closer to how first-century audiences understood many of these ailments and their symptoms, as opposed to the ways that we intuitively read these texts. More generally, however, the currently burgeoning field of medical anthropology can expand our cultural horizons in reading healing texts in the Gospels and Acts, as John Pilch and others have emphasized.^{lxxvii} Some other disciplines have been more quick to appropriate the benefits of medical anthropology. Indeed, some physicians now partner with some “spiritual healers” due to the observed effectiveness of some of the latter, regardless of views of the causes.^{lxxviii} My use of examples here and below is not meant to pass judgment on the causes of such experiences, but simply to note that they are part of human experience in most cultures, as they appear to have been part of human experience in first-century Palestine. Readings that allow for this experience will be more sympathetic than those revolted by it.

1. Others’ cross-cultural readings

Culture affects how we read ancient miracle claims. Whereas western critics have sometimes explained away or neglected accounts of paranormal healings,^{lxxix} most Christians in the Majority World, less shaped by the modern western tradition of the radical Enlightenment, find stories of miraculous phenomena far less objectionable.^{lxxx} These other cultures offer a check on traditional western assumptions; as Lamin Sanneh, professor of missions and history at Yale Divinity School, points out, it is here that western culture “can encounter ... the gospel as it is being embraced by societies that had not been shaped by the Enlightenment,” hence are closer to the milieu of earliest Christianity.^{lxxxi} Even various western scholars are increasingly challenging the hegemony of the traditional western approach of demythologizing, in light of the very different hermeneutical approach of African readers.^{lxxxii}

When Ramsay MacMullen compares with Christian claims in the Roman Empire the healings of Simon Kimbangu (1889-1951) from 1921 in the Belgian Congo, he warns against extrapolating from anthropological parallels. Nevertheless, he believes that Kimbangu’s “story might alert us to points in the evidence from antiquity which deserve special attention.”^{lxxxiii} Kimbangu’s followers affirmed that he “raised the dead, caused the paralyzed to stand upright, gave sight to the blind, cleansed lepers, and healed all the sick in the name of the Lord Jesus.”^{lxxxiv} (Not unlike Jesus, he also ran afoul of the colonial elite who were anxious about the political potential of prophetic movements.)^{lxxxv}

Rapidly expanding movements like Kimbangu’s^{lxxxvi} (although the movement’s current form differs from its original impetus)^{lxxxvii} and William Wadé Harris’s healing ministry

in West Africa (1913-1915)^{lxxxviii} can be helpful in expanding the conceptual parameters of western readers unaccustomed to think in terms of such phenomena. Others have compared the documented curing successes of the “‘mad monk’ Rasputin,” which affected the course of Russian history and thus cannot be omitted from historical inquiry.^{lxxxix} Still others have compared Don Pedrito Jaramillo, a Mexican folk saint active from 1881 till 1907, who achieved more notoriety than other healers of his era.^{xc} Other scholars have noted how quickly western commentators have tended to pass over early Christian signs claims, often in embarrassment.^{xcii} (Anthropologists reading the New Testament are not always so reticent.)^{xcii} One critic of this embarrassed silence in western New Testament scholarship has compared literature about shamans from around the world.^{xciii}

One need not look far for such claims; one could take for example the global Pentecostal and charismatic movement, which has achieved phenomenal growth in one century. Although some more conservative estimates may be closer to the mark, most observers today estimate at least half a billion Pentecostals and charismatic Christians in the world today.^{xciv} Emphasizing Pentecostalism’s growth in the Global South, where it is especially flourishing and culturally relevant,^{xcv} historian Robert Bruce Mullin observes that already by the end of the twentieth century there were “more Pentecostals worldwide” than mainline Protestants.^{xcvi}

The Pew Forum conducted a 10-country survey of Pentecostals and charismatics and in October 2006 issued a 231-page report.^{xcvii} In these ten countries alone, and for Pentecostals and charismatics in these countries alone, the estimated total of people claiming to have “witnessed divine healings” comes out to somewhere around 202,141,082, i.e., about 200 million. What may be more interesting in this survey, however, is the category of “other Christians,” with somewhere around 39% in these countries claiming to have “witnessed divine healings.” That is, over one-third of Christians worldwide who do *not* identify themselves as Pentecostal or charismatic claim to have “witnessed divine healings.” Nor are paranormal claims by any means restricted to Christian movements. Most nonwestern worldviews accept a variety of suprahuman phenomena.^{xcviii} John Pilch suggests that ninety percent of the world today accepts both “ordinary reality and non-ordinary reality,” the latter including God and spirits.^{xcix}

Gerd Theissen and Annette Merz rightly warn that, against most twentieth-century academic expectations, many cultures today offer a range of miracle claims.^c Justo González complains that those scholars who deny that modern people believe in miracles work with an extremely culturally constricted understanding of the “modern world.”^{cci} As the center of world Christianity has shifted to the global South, the dominant Christian perspectives in the world have shifted with it.^{cii} Readings of Scripture in the global South often contrast starkly with modern western critics’ readings.^{ciii} These readings from other social locations often shock westerners not only because others believe the early Christian miracle narratives to be plausible; they astonish many westerners because these readers also often take these narratives as a *model* for ministry. Thus western scholar of global Christianity Philip Jenkins notes that in general Christianity in the global South is

quite interested in “the immediate workings of the supernatural, through prophecy, visions, ecstatic utterances, and healing.”^{civ}

Such an approach, closer to the early Christian worldview than modern western culture is, appeals to many traditional nonwestern cultures.^{cv} Hwa Yung, bishop of the Methodist church in Malaysia, notes that the charismatic character of most Majority World churches reflects not so much direct influence by Pentecostals or charismatics as simply the worldview of the majority of humanity. They have simply never embraced the western, mechanistic, naturalistic Enlightenment worldview that rejects the supernatural.^{cvi} African psychologist Regina Eya warns that all claims to paranormal healing are dismissed by many western scholars, the credible along with the spurious, because of the inappropriate application of traditional western scientific paradigms to matters for which they were not designed.^{cvii}

2. Examples from interviews in the Republic of Congo

I offer hundreds of examples of global healing claims from various sources in my forthcoming study on the subject, but here I will simply whet your appetite by noting some healing claims from within the family of my wife, a historian from Congo-Brazzaville, or among close friends of the family.

My father-in-law, Jacques Moussounga, a retired railroad worker and mainline Protestant deacon in Congo, shared with me that he had painful mouth abscesses for over 20 years. After he had joined a small prayer group in Brazzaville, the leader, Suzanne Makounou, dreamed that he was having terrible pain from mouth abscesses, and consequently reproved him for not having requested prayer. About a month and a half after she prayed for him, he noticed that the abscesses were gone, and they never returned.^{cviii} He and his wife, Antoinette Malombe, also shared with me how their baby daughter was dying of meningitis; Barthélémy Boubanga, a hospital administrator, warned that the baby would not live through that night. Papa Jacques prayed by the bed all night, and in the morning the French doctor and nurse who entered were surprised that the baby was recovering, attributing the recovery to God. The child, Gracia, is now in her 30s.^{cix} My wife and others have told me how they recovered instantly from fevers or other conditions when Papa Jacques prayed for them.^{cx}

While such recoveries will not surprise most western readers, other reports are more likely to shock us. For example, the family’s eldest daughter, Thérèse Magnouha, at the age of two, cried out that a snake had bitten her, when the father was away on business in another town. She stopped breathing, and no medical care was available anywhere nearby. My mother-in-law said that she strapped the child to her back and ran as best as she could to a nearby village to ask Coco (“Grandfather”) Ngoma Moïse, an evangelist friend of theirs, to pray. When he prayed, the child began to breathe, and had recovered fully by the next day. When I asked how long the child was not breathing, Mme. Jacques (as my mother-in-law is locally known) calculated how long it would have taken her to reach Coco Moïse, and unpretentiously explained that it would have been about three hours.^{cx} Thérèse recently finished her master’s degree at a seminary in Cameroon.

A close friend of the family, Jeanne Mabiála, a deacon in the same denomination, shared with me a number of stories, including three resuscitations of persons believed dead; in some cases I was able to talk with witnesses who corroborated these events.^{cxii} One of these cases involves a woman named Marie, from Passi-Passi, a village outside Dolisie. Marie was suffering from malaria and was severely anemic, and Mama Jeanne was told that she not eaten, drunk, or opened her eyes for three weeks. The family lacked money for the hospital yet brought her into Dolisie anyway, but at this time, she died, so far as all witnesses present believed. Having heard about the prayer meetings at Mama Jeanne's home, they brought her there and laid her on a mat. As Mama Jeanne began to pray, Marie began to slowly stir, and within a short period of time was even able to walk; they got care for her illness in the hospital, where she recovered fully.

In the book I am writing, I am collecting many more claims (both from written sources and interviews) from various parts of the world. Whatever one makes of these claims (which is not the point here), they reflect a worldview quite different from, and more amenable to appreciating the wholistic, physical value of biblical miracle claims, than that of most western scholars. Reading Matthew's miracle claims from a Majority World context offers an opportunity to hear these texts with greater sympathy, closer to the way the first audiences of the Gospels and Acts would have heard them.

3. Cross-cultural readings of possession accounts^{cxiii}

An increasing number of scholars have used cross-cultural studies of possession and exorcism to place early Christian accounts in a broader context.^{cxiv} One danger of this approach is that scholars could ignore significant differences among how various cultures conceptualize or classify the phenomena grouped together under these labels. A significant benefit, however, is that they take us beyond our modern western assumptions that obstruct us from sympathetically hearing the ancient texts we are studying.

Despite various interpretations assigned to it, no anthropologist today denies possession trances and the like.^{cxv} Possession experience is not limited to either the New Testament or the ancient eastern Mediterranean world. One specialist, Erika Bourguignon, has observed that spirit-possession beliefs are geographically and culturally pervasive, "As any reader of ethnographies knows."^{cxvi} After sampling 488 societies, she found spirit possession beliefs in 74% of them (i.e., 360 societies), with particularly high ranges in the islands of the Pacific (88%), and 77% around the Mediterranean.^{cxvii} Among these, the forms of "possession" vary. Thus 16% percent of these 360 societies have possession trance only; 22% have other forms of possession; and 35% have both.^{cxviii} The overall evidence suggests some sort of common experience in conjunction with more specific cultural patterning.

Transcultural elements in fact include a biological element that cannot be reduced to (though may be patterned according to) cultural models. Studies reveal "an altered neurophysiology" during many possession states.^{cxix} In a diverse sampling of societies, possession produces major personality changes, with notable, abrupt alterations in

“behavior, timbre and pitch of voice.”^{cxx} Those leaving the “possession” state often have no recollection of how they acted while “possessed.”^{cxxi} Thus Raymond Firth notes that field experience has confronted social anthropologists with

dramatic changes of personality in men or women they were studying—startling yet evidently accustomed alterations of behaviour, with trembling, sweating, groaning, speaking with strange voices, assumption of a different identity, purporting to be a spirit not a human being, giving commands or foretelling the future in a new authoritative way. Sometimes it has been hard for the anthropologist to persuade himself that it is really the same person as before whom he is watching or confronting, so marked is the personality change.^{cxxii} Sometimes the possessed act like the spirits that are believed to possess them.^{cxxiii}

Nevertheless, possession behavior often conforms to patterns particular to the cultures where it appears,^{cxxiv} and some possessed persons respond in stereotyped manners.^{cxxv} Thus, for example, Somali possession cults do not emphasize different spirits with distinct behaviors (in contrast to related Sudanese cults); although the possessed dance, they speak little (in contrast to, say, Comoro island possession).^{cxxvi} In traditional Ghana, possession often begins with a stupor, then becomes frenzied;^{cxxvii} a spirit may possess an established diviner to provide information as to what deity is possessing another person.^{cxxviii} Among traditional Valley Korekore, mediums through whom spirits speak are fairly rare and typically must remain in the area belonging to the spirit possessing them; by contrast, possession more generally is common there, and cult groups dance it out.^{cxxix} Reviewing such diversity of experience, Bourguignon remarks that despite transcultural constants stemming from “its psychobiological substrate,” possession behavior “is subject to learning and by this means, it is amenable to cultural patterning. As such, it takes on a striking variety of forms.”^{cxxx}

Beyond psychosocial theories, diverse cultures offer a vast range of interpretations for possession trance.^{cxxxi} Societies diverge, for example, as to whether they prefer naturalistic or supernaturalistic explanations.^{cxxxii} (Not unexpectedly, naturalistic expectations predominate in the west,^{cxxxiii} though they sometimes appear elsewhere.)^{cxxxiv} The dominant supernaturalist or mystical explanations include soul absence or the presence of a spirit.^{cxxxv} Cultures vary as to whether they treat trance behavior as positive or negative;^{cxxxvi} these and other interpretations influence how people in trance states behave.^{cxxxvii}

One could explore these questions in substantially more detail, but I introduce them as one area where Gospels scholars have so far done only limited research, yet where I believe that further research could expand our culturally-conditioned range of interpretive options.

Conclusion

I have not tried to predict the future of Matthean studies or even to focus on what I believe are the most important trends. I have simply attempted to explore, albeit in

merely a cursory and preliminary way, some interpretive approaches that may invite further academic interest today.

Regarding rhetoric, I suggested that the form of rhetoric we find in Greco-Roman handbooks, while worth exploring, will probably yield more limited benefits to Matthean studies than it has in Pauline or Lukan studies. The exception is comparison with rhetorical techniques in other ancient biographies, an area where much work remains to be done (in part because the biographic genre of Matthew has emerged as a dominant view only in recent decades). By contrast, further exploration of Jewish sage rhetoric, while already used in Matthean studies to some degree, is likely to bring us closer to Matthew's picture of Jesus.

Regarding readings from various social locations, I believe that many Majority World readings of Matthew can help us to appreciate the very sorts of stories that seem most alien to us in the west: stories of paranormal healings and exorcisms of hostile spirits. While we are not obligated to embrace all alternative explanations of these passages, we are obligated to consider the stories these other readers offer and welcome their voices into the dialogue.

ⁱCraig S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999); elsewhere, e.g., "'Brood of Vipers' (Mt. 3.7; 12.34; 23.33)," *JSNT* 28 (1, Sept. 2005): 3-11.

ⁱⁱE.g., Keener, *Matthew*, 607, 617-18 (contrasting the woman's extravagant sacrifice, the "disciples" objection, and Judas' greed).

ⁱⁱⁱE.g., Keener, *Matthew*, 699. On Matt 28:18-20 refracting major themes of Matthew's Gospel, see e.g., *ibid.*, 716-21; *idem*, "Matthew's Missiology: Making Disciples of the Nations (Matt 28:19-20)," *AJPS* forthcoming.

^{iv}For the Gospels as ancient biography, see e.g., "Gospels (literary forms)," 5:947-949 in *Brill's New Pauly*, 948; Charles H. Talbert, *What Is a Gospel? The Genre of the Canonical Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977); Philip L. Shuler, *A Genre for the Gospels: The Biographical Character of Matthew* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982); Richard A. Burridge, *What Are the Gospels? A Comparison with Graeco-Roman Biography* (SNTSMS 70; Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1992), 191-219; *idem*, "About People, by People, for People: Gospel Genre and Audiences," 113-46 in *The Gospels for All Christians: Rethinking the Gospel Audiences* (ed. Richard Bauckham; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 121-22; *idem*, "Biography, Ancient," 167-70 in *DNTB*; David E. Aune, *The New Testament in its Literary Environment* (LEC 8; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987), 46-76; *idem*, *The Westminster Dictionary of New Testament & Early Christian Literature & Rhetoric* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 204; Graham N. Stanton, *Jesus of Nazareth in New Testament Preaching* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1974), 117-36; Vernon K. Robbins, *Jesus the Teacher: A Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation of Mark* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1992), 10; Anthony R. Cross, "Genres of the New Testament," 402-11 in *DNTB*, 402-4; Dirk Frickenschmidt, *Evangelium als Biographie. Die vier Evangelien im Rahmen antiker Erzählkunst* (TANZ 22; Tübingen: Francke, 1997); Maria Ytterbrink, *The Third Gospel for the First Time: Luke within the Context of Ancient Biography* (Lund: Lund University—Centrum för teologi och religionsvetenskap, 2004) (for Luke); PHEME PERKINS, *Introduction to the Synoptic Gospels* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 2-11; James D. G. Dunn, "The Tradition," 167-84 in *The Historical Jesus in Recent Research* (ed. James D. G. Dunn and Scot McKnight; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 173-74; cf. David L. Barr and Judith L. Wentling, "The Conventions of Classical Biography and the Genre of Luke-Acts: A Preliminary Study," 63-88 in *Luke-Acts: New Perspectives from the Society of Biblical Literature Seminar* (ed. Charles H. Talbert; New York: Crossroad, 1984); Walter Berschin, "Biography: Late Antiquity," 2:653-55 in *Brill's New Pauly*, 653; and so forth; for aretological biography, see Lawrence M. Wills, *The Quest of the Historical Gospel. Mark, John, and the origins of the gospel genre* (London: Routledge, 1997). Some of these writers (e.g., Graham N. Stanton, *The Gospels and Jesus* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989], 19) reverse an earlier skepticism toward the biographical proposal (see Stanton, *A Gospel for a New*

People: Studies in Matthew [Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1992], 64, frankly; idem, “The Gospel Traditions and Early Christological Reflection,” 543-52 in *The Historical Jesus in Recent Research*, 544-49).

^vTalbert, *Gospel*, 2-3, observes that Strauss, Bultmann (see Rudolf Bultmann, *The History of the Synoptic Tradition* [2d ed.; trans. John Marsh; Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1968], 372; idem, “The Message of Jesus and the Problem of Mythology,” 531-42 in *The Historical Jesus in Recent Research*, 547) and their followers rejected the biographical category because they confused ancient with modern biography.

^{vi}Such as those of Plutarch, Tacitus and Suetonius, and Josephus’ autobiography. Plutarch and Suetonius are normally cited as the most obvious examples from this era (George A. Kennedy, “Classical and Christian Source Criticism,” 125-55 in *The Relationships Among the Gospels: An Interdisciplinary Dialogue* [ed. William O. Walker, Jr.; San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1978], 139).

^{vii}Such as Cornelius Nepos in the late second century BCE.

^{viii}For insights from rhetorical history for Acts (where it is much more directly relevant than in Matthew), see Clare K. Rothschild, *Luke-Acts and the Rhetoric of History: An Investigation of Early Christian Historiography* (WUNT 2 Reihe, 175; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004); for exploratory approaches to Greco-Roman rhetoric in some gospel materials, see e.g., Burton L. Mack and Vernon K. Robbins, *Patterns of Persuasion in the Gospels* (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge, 1989).

^{ix}E.g., in ancient biography, over 150 citations from Diogenes Laertius; nearly 80 from the pre-Christian writer Cornelius Nepos; roughly 50 from Plutarch’s lives; over 60 from Arrian’s life of Alexander; nearly 40 from Suetonius; in historiography, nearly 200 from Diodorus Siculus; nearly 170 from Dionysius of Halicarnassus; etc. Among comparisons with rhetorically sophisticated writers, the index of my original Matthew commentary lists roughly 80 citations of Cicero, 37 of Theon, over 20 of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, nearly 50 of Quintilian, over 50 of Isocrates, over 60 of Demosthenes, and so forth. Admittedly, these references involve content as well as technique, hence are not all rhetorical or literary observations per se (many are more social).

^xE.g., Suet. *Aug.* 9; *Calig.* 22.1; *Nero* 19.3; Herwig Görgemanns, “Biography: Greek,” 2:648-51 in *Brill’s New Pauly*; cf. e.g., the accidental repetition in Plut. *Alex.* 37.4; 56.1. This contrasts with the more chronological practice of historians (e.g., Thucyd. 2.1.1; 5.26.1); when interested in chronology, Suetonius cites not biographers but historians (*Calig.* 8.3).

^{xi}Corn. Nep. 16 (Pelopidas), 1.1; Tac. *Agr.* 1 (on Tacitus cf. Clifford H. Moore, “Introduction: Life and Works of Tacitus,” 1:vii-xiii in Tacitus *The Histories* [2 vols.; trans. C. H. Moore; LCL; London: Heinemann; Cambridge: Harvard, 1937, 1948], xiii); Burrige, *Gospels*, 68-69, 150; cf. Albrecht Dihle, “The Gospels and Greek Biography,” 361-86 in *The Gospel and the Gospels* (ed. Peter Stuhlmacher; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 367-74. Still, “good” biographers were not supposed to risk falsifying events by flattery (Lucian *Hist.* 12). For emphasis on moral lessons in ancient historiography more generally, see e.g., Polyb. 1.1.1; Dion. Hal. *Ant. rom.* 1.2.1; Val. Max. 2.pref.; Lucian *Hist.* 59; Charles William Fornara, *The Nature of History in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 113-16; Daniel Marguerat, *La Première Histoire du Christianisme (Les Actes des apôtres)* (LD 180; Paris, Genève: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1999), 28-29. For moralizing asides, see e.g., Polyb. 1.35.1-10; Diod. Sic. 31.10.2; Dion. Hal. *Ant. rom.* 7.65.2; Tac. *Ann.* 4.33; Dio Cass. 1.5.4; Arrian *Alex.* 4.10.8; Corn. Nep. 16 (Pelopidas), 3.1; see further in Steven M. Sheeley, *Narrative Asides in Luke-Acts* (JSNTSup 72; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 56-93.

^{xii}Robbins, *Teacher*, 110-11.

^{xiii}E.g., Xen. *Anab.* 5.2.24; Dion. Hal. *Ant. rom.* 8.56.1; cf. Klaus Meister, “Herodotus,” 6:265-271 in *Brill’s New Pauly*, 269; especially John T. Squires, *The Plan of God in Luke-Acts* (SNTSMS 76; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 15-20; idem, “The Plan of God,” 19-39 in *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts* (ed. I. Howard Marshall and David Peterson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 38 (citing Diod. Sic. 1.1.3).

^{xiv}Not only novels (e.g., Heliod. *Eth.* 1.1 [opening in the middle of a scene the background of which does not appear until 5:28-33]; 2.11; 2.25—4.21), but also other genres (e.g., Polyb. Bk. 3 [end]; Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.5.10-11).

^{xv}*Rhet. Alex.* 35, 1440b.23-24; see e.g., Tacitus *Agricola* 4. One starts with pedigree both for people and animals (1440b.24-29). One’s background was an important element in biography; see e.g., Suetonius *Aug.* 1-2; Louis H. Feldman, “Philo’s View of Moses’ Birth and Upbringing,” *CBQ* 64 (2, 2002): 258-81. Some

Jewish traditions may have differed by region (cf. R. Kalmin, “Genealogy and Polemics in Rabbinic Literature of Late Antiquity,” *HUCA* 67 [1996]: 77-94).

^{xvi}E.g., Xenophon *Ages*. 1.2; Eunapius *Lives* 498; Gorgias *Hel.* 3. Ancients inspected pure lineage for participation in priesthoods (e.g., Hermogenes *Issues* 65.4-6; David Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt: Assimilation and Resistance* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University, 1998], 199) and other public honors (cf. even Indian philosophers in Philostratus *Vit. Apoll.* 2.30).

^{xvii}Hermogenes *Issues* 46.14-17. Others, though, might start with one’s city (Menander Rhetor 2.1-2, 369.18—370.8) before discussing one’s family background (370.9-28), birth (370.28—371.17), rearing (371.17-23), and education (371.23—372.2). For “origin and birth” in ancient encomia, see Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, *Portraits of Paul: An Archaeology of Ancient Personality* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 24-26.

^{xviii}Menander Rhetor 2.1-2, 371.3-4.

^{xix}E.g., Gorgias *Hel.* 3.

^{xx}E.g., Menander Rhetor 2.1-2, 371.17-23 (for the emperor); on nurture and training in encomia, see further Malina and Neyrey, *Portraits*, 27-28. Parentage could also be used to deride one (e.g., Ps.-Cicero *Invective Against Sallust* 5.13).

^{xxi}See comments on the technique in Aune, *Dictionary of Rhetoric*, 110; R. Dean Anderson, Jr., *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms Connected to Methods of Argumentation, Figures and Tropes from Anaximenes to Quintilian* (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 110-11; Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (2 vols.; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 916-17, 1183-84, with documentation. See e.g., Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Dem.* 33; especially Plutarch’s parallel lives, e.g., *Comparison of Lucullus and Cimon*.

^{xxii}Quintilian *Inst.* 4.5.3; Pliny *Ep.* 2.20.9; cf. Cicero *Pro Murena* 5.11. Some also detect a common triple pattern in oral traditions (James D. G. Dunn, *A New Perspective on Jesus: What the Quest for the Historical Jesus Missed* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005], 115).

^{xxiii}Cicero *Quinct.* 10.35.

^{xxiv}See e.g., Galen O. Rowe, “Style,” 121-57 in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period 330 B.C.-A.D. 400* (ed. Stanley E. Porter; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 131; R. Dean Anderson, Jr., *Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul* (rev. ed.; Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology, 18; Leuven: Peeters, 1999), 163.

^{xxv}For short narratives climaxing in the protagonist’s incisive quip, see e.g., Plutarch *Ages*. 21.4-5.

^{xxvi}E.g., Philostratus *Hrk.* 33.8-9.

^{xxvii}See e.g., *Rhet. Alex.* 36, 1442b.6-9; Cicero *Or. Brut.* 40.137; *De or.* 3.204 (also metastasis in Anderson, *Glossary*, 72-73); for examples, Thucydides 3.61.1; 3.70.3-4; Xenophon *Hell.* 2.3.37; Lysias *Or.* 3.1, §96; Aeschines *Fals. leg.* 3; *Ctes.* 113, 156, 259; Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Lys.* 24; Cicero *Sest.* 37.80; *Cael.* 13.31; 24.60; *Quinct.* 3.11—9.33; further discussion in Craig S. Keener, “Some Rhetorical Techniques in Acts 24:2-21,” 221-51 in *Paul’s World* (ed. Stanley E. Porter; PAST 4; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2008), 244-46; idem, *John*, 752-53.

^{xxviii}E.g., *Rhet. Alex.* 36, 1442a.13-14; Cicero *Pis.* 27.66; *Cat.* 2.4.7; 2.5.10; 2.10.22, 25; *Cael.* 22.55; *Phil.* 3.11.28; 8.5.16; *Mur.* 6.14 (negated); Ps.-Cicero *Invect. Sall.* 6.18; Dio Chrysostom *Or.* 1.13; 3.53; 4.126; 8.8; 32.28, 91; 33.23, 55; 34.19; Fronto *Nep. Am.* 2.8; Lucian *Posts* 4; *Charon* 11, 15; *Tim.* 28; *Nigr.* 17; Maximus of Tyre 5.7; 36.2.

^{xxix}E.g., Jer 7:9; Ezek 18:6-8, 11-13; Hos 4:2; 4Q477 frg. 2, col. 2, line 4; Wisd 14:22-27 (esp. 14:25-26); Philo *Posterity* 52. Cf. also eschatological vice lists (1QS 4.9-11; *Sib. Or.* 2.255-82; *Test. Levi* 17:11; 2 Tim 3:1-5; for Gentile equivalents, Hesiod *W.D.* 181-201; Lucian *Men.* 11-12).

^{xxx}E.g., Seneca *Dial.* 9.2.10-12; Epictetus *Diatr.* 2.8.23; Arius Didymus *Epit.* 2.7.5b, pp. 12-13.2-12; 2.7.10b, pp. 58-59.32—60-61.1; 2.7.10b, pp. 60-61.1-7; 2.7.10e, pp. 62-63.14-19; 2.7.11e, pp. 68-69.17-20; Diogenes Laertius 2.93.

^{xxxi}E.g., Plato *Law* 1.649D; Aristotle *E.E.* 2.3.4, 1220b-1221a; Ps.-Aristotle *V.V.* 1249a-1251b; Diogenes *Ep.* 36; Philostratus *Ep. Apoll.* 43; Iamblichus *Vit. Pyth.* 17.78.

^{xxxii}See *Rhet. Alex.* 26, 1435b.25-39; Rowe, “Style,” 142; Michael R. Cosby, “Paul’s Persuasive Language in Romans 5,” 209-26 in *Persuasive Artistry: Studies in New Testament Rhetoric in Honor of George A. Kennedy* (ed. Duane F. Watson; JSNTSup 50; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 216-17 (citing Aristotle *Rhet.* 3.9.7-8; Quintilian *Inst.* 9.3.81); D. M. MacDowell, “Introduction,” 9-19 to Gorgias *Hel.* (Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1982), 18-19. Note especially reasoning by contraries in *Rhet. Her.* 4.18.25.

^{xxxiii} Even the specific idea appears occasionally; see Xenophon *Anab.* 6.3.18; cf. Seneca *Ep. Lucil.* 94.73-74; Josephus *Ant.* 19.296.

^{xxxiv} See e.g., Ps 18:27; Is 2:11-12, 17; 5:15; 13:11; Ezek 21:26; Dan 4:37; antithesis more generally characterizes much Jewish wisdom, e.g., in Proverbs.

^{xxxv} Cf. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Thuc.* 19; Thucydides 2.94.1; 8.96.1; Cicero *Verr.* 2.5.72.189; Philostratus *Hrk.* 24.2; cf. “never again” in Silius Italicus 9.183; Thucydides on the “greatest” war in Thucydides 1.1.1-2; 1.21.2; 1.23.1-2.

^{xxxvi} C. Clifton Black, “An Oration at Olivet: Some Rhetorical Dimensions of Mark 13,” 66-92 in *Persuasive Artistry*, 86; Rowe, “Style,” 131; John A. L. Lee, “Translations of the Old Testament, I. Greek,” 775-83 in *Handbook of Rhetoric*, 779.

^{xxxvii} See Mack and Robbins, *Patterns*.

^{xxxviii} E.g., Theon *Progymn.* 3.224-40; 4.37-42, 80-82; cf. Longinus *On the Sublime* 11.1; Hermog. *Progymn.* 3. On Chreia, 7; Aphthonius *Progymn.* 3. On Chreia, 23S, 4R.

^{xxxix} I have also changed my earlier position in light of recent scholarship and doubt that one can outline Paul’s letters like speeches; see now discussion in e.g., Anderson, *Rhetorical Theory*, 114-27, 280-81; Carl Joachim Classen, *Rhetorical Criticism of the New Testament* (Boston, Leiden: Brill, 2002), 6, 23; Jeffrey T. Reed, “The Epistle,” 171-93 in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period 330 B.C.-A.D. 400* (ed. Stanley E. Porter; Leiden: Brill, 1997); Stanley E. Porter, “Paul of Tarsus and his Letters,” 533-85 in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric*, 541-61 (esp. 562-67); Michael F. Bird, “Reassessing a Rhetorical Approach to Paul’s Letters,” *ExpTim* 119 (9, 2008): 374-79.

^{xl} *The Gospel of Matthew: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), viii-x, xxv-l.

^{xli} In Craig S. Keener, *1 & 2 Corinthians* (NCamBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); idem, “Some Rhetorical Techniques in Acts 24:2-21,” 221-51 in *Paul’s World* (ed. Stanley E. Porter; PAST 4; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2008); idem, *Romans* (NCCS; Wipf & Stock, 2009); idem, *Acts* (3 vols.; Peabody: Hendrickson, forthcoming).

^{xlii} David Instone-Brewer, *Traditions of the Rabbis from the Era of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004-).

^{xliii} E.g., *Contest of Homer and Hesiod* 322; *Homeric Hymn* 25.4-5; Pindar *Threnoi* fr. 137 (in Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 3.3.17, using *oblios*); Polyb. 26.1.13 (using *makarios*); Mus. Ruf. frg. 35, p. 134; *Apoll. K. Tyre* 31; Babr. 103.20-21; Philost. *Hrk.* 4.11; Porph. *Marc.* 16.276-77. For *makarios* in Stoic and Christian literature, see Willem S. Vorster, “Stoics and Early Christians on Blessedness,” 38-51 in *Greeks, Romans, and Christians: Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe* (ed. David L. Balch, Everett Ferguson, and Wayne A. Meeks; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990).

^{xliiv} See e.g., Ps 40:4; 41:1; 65:4; 84:4-5, 12; 94:12; 112:1; 119:1-2; 128:1; Is 56:2; Jer 17:7; Dan 12:12; Bar 4:4; with a different term, Jdt 13:18; 14:7; 15:10. The term *makarios* appears 66 times in the LXX, including 25 times in the Psalms (including 1:1; 2:12; 31:1-2=32:1-2), 11 times in Sirach (14:1-2, 20; 25:8-9; 26:1; 28:19; 31:8; 34:15; 48:11; 50:28) and 4 times in Proverbs (Prov 3:13; 8:34; 20:7; 28:14).

^{xliiv} E.g., *1 En.* 99:10; *2 En.* 42.6-14; 44:5; *Ps. Sol.* 4:23; 5:16; 6:1; 10:1; 17:44; 18:6; *4 Macc* 7:15, 22; 10:15; 17:18; 18:9; *Jos. Asen.* 16:14/7; 19:8, MSS; *Sipra VDDeho.* par. 5.44.1.1; *b. Ber.* 61b; *Hag.* 14b; *Hor.* 10b, bar. At Qumran, see 4Q525 (see Benedict T. Viviano, “Beatitudes Found Among Dead Sea Scrolls,” *BAR* 18 [6, 1992]: 53-55, 66; idem, “Eight Beatitudes from Qumran,” *BibT* 31 [4, 1993]: 219-24; idem, “Eight Beatitudes at Qumran and in Matthew? A New Publication from Cave Four,” *SEÅ* 58 [1993]: 71-84). In early Christianity, *makarios* appears about 50 times in the NT and 40 times in the Apostolic Fathers; this includes Lk 1:45; 6:20-22; 7:23; 10:23; 11:27-28; 12:37-38; 43; 14:14-15; 23:29; in Acts, only here and 26:2 (Luke-Acts comprises 34% of NT uses).

^{xliiv} E.g., *Sipra VDDeho.* par. 1.34.1.3; 12.65.1.3; Gustaf Dalman, *Jesus-Jeshua: Studies in the Gospels* (New York: Macmillan, 1929), 64; David Flusser, *Judaism and the Origins of Christianity* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, Hebrew University, 1988), 496.

^{xliiv} Cf. e.g., 1QpHab 6.2; 1QM 11.5-6; CD 4.13, 19-20; 6.13; 7.8, 14; 8.9, 14; 9.7-9; 10.16; *m. Ab.* 1:18; 2:13; *Mek. Pisha* 1.70-71; *Ab. R. Nat.* 36 A. Cf. “they do X, but Moses said Y” (CD 5.18).

^{xliiv} See *Test. Iss.* 7:2; *Reub.* 4:8; *b. Nid.* 13b, bar.; *Shab.* 64ab; *p. Hallah* 2:1, §10; *Lev. Rab.* 23:12; *Pesiq. Rab.* 24:2; further, Craig Keener, *...And Marries Another: Divorce and Remarriage in the Teaching of the New Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991), 16-17. Jesus may read Ex 20:14 in light of Ex 20:17.

^{xlix} Many compare the Jewish maxim: “By the measure by which a man metes it is measured to him” (judgment in the present era in *m. Sot.* 1:7; *b. Sot.* 8b; *Pesiq. Rab.* 39:2; more fully, Morton Smith,

Tannaitic Parallels to the Gospels [Philadelphia: Society of Biblical Literature, 1951], 135; Dalman, *Jesus-Jeshua*, 225; W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, Jr., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Saint Matthew* [ICC; 3 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988-1997], 1:670; David Bivin, "A Measure of Humility," *JerPersp* 4 [1991]: 13-14). Perhaps only one stream of Jewish tradition applied it to the day of judgment as Jesus does (cf. Hans Peter Rüger, "Mit welchem Mass ihr messt, wird Ruch gemessen werden," *ZNW* 60 [1969]: 174-82), but it is at least implied elsewhere: a person judged mercifully by another ("with the scale weighted in my favor") prayed that God would also judge the other mercifully at the judgment (*Ab. R. Nat.* 8A).

ⁱPossibly a figure of speech; attested in *b. 'Arakin* 16b; *b. B.B.* 15b (Geza Vermes, *The Religion of Jesus the Jew* [Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1993], 80; other texts in Samuel Tobias Lachs, *A Rabbinic Commentary on the New Testament: The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke* [Hoboken, NJ: KTAV; New York: Anti-Defamation League of B'Nai B'Rith, 1987], 137), if it is not a polemical distortion of Jesus' teaching.

ⁱⁱSee *m. Ab.* 3:17; *Suk.* 2:10; *tos. Ber.* 1:11; 6:18; *B.K.* 7:2-4; *Hag.* 2:5; *Sanh.* 1:2; 8:9; *Sipra Shemini Mekhilta deMiluim* 99.2.5; *Behuq.* pq. 2.262.1.9; *Sipre Num.* 84.2.1; 93.1.3; *Sipre Deut.* 1.9.2; 1.10.1; 308.2.1; 308.3.1; 309.1.1; 309.2.1; *ARN* 1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 11, 14, 16, 19, 23, 24, 27, 28, 31A; 2, §10; 4, §14; 8, §24; 9, §24; 12, §29; 13, §§30, 32; 18, §§39-40; 30, §63; 32, §§69, 70B; 35, §77; *b. Sanh.* 107a; *Pesiq. Rab Kah.* 1:2; 3:8; 14:5; 27:6; *Pesiq. Rab Kah.* Sup. 1:11; 3:2; 7:3; cf. Bultmann, *Tradition*, 179; Robert M. Johnston, "Parabolic Interpretations Attributed to Tannaim" (Ph.D. dissertation, Hartford Seminary Foundation, 1977), 531, 630.

ⁱⁱⁱSee *tos. Suk.* 2:6; *Sipra Shemini Mekhilta deMiluim* 99.2.2; *Behuq.* pq.3.263.1.5, 8; *Sipre Num.* 84.1.1; 86.1.1; 89.4.2; *Sipre Deut.* 3.1.1; 11.1.2; 26.3.1; 28.1.1; 29.4.1; 36.4.5; 40.6.1; 43.8.1; 43.16.1; 45.1.2; 48.1.3; 53.1.3; 306.4.1; 306.7.1; 309.5.1; 312.1.1; 313.1.1; 343.1.2; 343.5.2; *p. Taan.* 2:1, §11; *Lev. Rab.* 27:8; cf. Johnston, "Parabolic Interpretations," 531; Vermes, *Religion*, 92; Smith, *Tannaitic Parallels*, 179; Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus* (2nd rev. ed.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972), 101.

ⁱⁱⁱⁱSee David Stern, *Parables in Midrash: Narrative and Exegesis in Rabbinic Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 24; Johnston, "Parabolic Interpretations," 561-62, 565-67, 637-38; Vermes, *Religion*, 92-99; earlier, cf. *Judg* 9:16-20; 2 *Sam* 12:7-9.

^{lv}Cf. Isaac B. Gottlieb, "Pirque Abot and biblical wisdom," *VT* 40 (2, 1990): 152-64. For many of Jesus' sayings as proverbial, see e.g., Gregor Damschen, "Proverbs. III. Classical Antiquity," 12:80-81 in *Brill's New Pauly*, 81.

^{lvi}E.g., riddles also appear in classical sources (Hans Armin Gärtner, "Riddles. III. Classical Antiquity," 12:589-91 in *Brill's New Pauly*).

^{lvii}E.g., *m. Ab.* 2:8; *ARN* 36 A.

^{lviii}Greek and Roman audiences were also comfortable with these figures of speech (cf. *Rhet. Alex.* 11, 1430b.16-19; *Rhet. Her.* 4.33.44; Cicero *Orator* 40.139; Quint. *Inst.* 8.6.73-76; Arist. *Rhet.* 3.11.15; Demetrius *Style* 2.124-27; 3.161; further Anderson, *Glossary*, 122-24), though this rhetoric may have been disseminated more commonly in the marketplace (cf. e.g., *PGM* 36.69, 134, 211-12, 320) than in deliberative speeches. For examples of hyperbole, see e.g., Dion. Hal. *Demosth.* 18 with *Isaeus* 20; Philost. *V.A.* 8.7; Philost. *Hrk.* 48.11.

^{lix}E.g., *Sipra Qed.* pq. 9.207.2.13; *p. Kid.* 1:2, §24; Matt passim. This is commonly pointed out, both by scholars of Judaism (e.g., A. Marmorstein, *The Old Rabbinic Doctrine of God: The Names and Attributes of God* [New York: KTAV, 1968; reprint of 1927 ed.], 93; George Foot Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era* [2 vols.; New York: Schocken Books, 1971; reprint from Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927], 1:119; Joseph Bonsirven, *Palestinian Judaism in the Time of Jesus Christ* [New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1964], 7) and by NT scholars (e.g., Leonhard Goppelt, *Theology of the New Testament* [2 vols.; trans. John E. Alsup; ed. Jürgen Roloff; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981-1982], 1:44).

^{lx}For the Kaddish, see Bonsirven, *Judaism*, 133; Joachim Jeremias, *The Prayers of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964), 98; idem, *New Testament Theology* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), 21; Moore, *Judaism*, 2:213; Smith, *Tannaitic Parallels*, 136; David Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew* (New Century Bible; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1972), 136-37; Norman Perrin, *Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom: Symbol and Metaphor in New Testament Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), 28-29; Geza Vermes, *Jesus and the World of Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984; London: SCM, 1983), 43; Davies and Allison, *Matthew*, 1:595; Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 1-7: A Commentary*

(trans. Wilhelm C. Linss; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989), 371; for the Eighteen Benedictions, see David Bivin, "Prayers for Emergencies," *JerPersp* 5 (1992): 16-17.

^{lx}Cf. Paul Niskanen, "Kingdoms, Dominions, and the Reign of God," *BibT* 42 (6, 2004): 343-48; Ben Witherington, III, *The Christology of Jesus* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1990), 242; Craig A. Evans, "Defeating Satan and Liberating Israel: Jesus and Daniel's Visions," *JSHJ* 1 (2, 2003): 161-70. For the "revealing" of "mysteries" in Qumran texts, see e.g., 1QpHab 7.4-5, 13-14; 1QH 2.13-14; 9.23-24; 11.9-10, 16-17; 12.11-13; 1QS 8.1-2, 12; 9.13, 17-19; 4Q418; cf. 1QS 5.11-12; 11.3-5; 1QM 3.9; 17.9; more fully, see Raymond E. Brown, *The Semitic Background of the Term "Mystery" in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968).

^{lxi}Cf. (esp. with reference to Matthew) e.g., Ernst von Dobschütz, "Matthew as Rabbi and Catechist (1928)," 27-38 in *The Interpretation of Matthew* (2nd ed.; ed. Graham Stanton; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1995), 33; Floyd V. Filson, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Matthew* (New York: Harper & Row, 1960), 206; A. W. Argyle, *The Gospel According to Matthew* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 51-52; Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on his Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 377; Tal Ilan, *Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Palestine* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996), 142; John Andrew Overman, *Church and Community in Crisis: The Gospel According to Matthew* (NTIC; Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1996), 82, 279. For the Pharisaic debate, see *m. Git.* 9:10; *Sipre Deut.* 269.1.1. The more liberal interpretation appears in *Jos. Ant.* 4.253 (relevant for a hellenistic audience).

^{lxii}With e.g., Jeremias, *Theology*, 260-62 (this is true regardless of the other debates surrounding its meaning).

^{lxiii}E.g., *Ab. R. Nat.* 6A; 12, §29B; *b. Ber.* 63b; *Sanh.* 24a. So also D. E. Nineham, *Saint Mark* (Philadelphia: Westminster; London: SCM, 1977), 305; Jeremias, *Theology*, 161; cf. *Test. Sol.* 23:1, possibly derivative.

^{lxiv}Later rabbis often discussed the question of the "greatest" commandment; see e.g., Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew* (WBC 33AB; Dallas: Word, 1993-1995), 646. Akiba valued love of neighbor as the greatest (*Sipra Qed.* pp. 4.200.3.7; *Gen. Rab.* 24:7).

^{lxv}With Walter Diezinger, "Zum Liebesgebot Mk xii,28-34 und Parr," *NovT* 20 (1978): 81-83; Flusser, *Judaism*, 479.

^{lxvi}*Gezerah sheva* (perhaps borrowed from hellenism, but notably common in Jewish interpretation; e.g., *Mek. Nez.* 10.15-16, 26, 38; 17.17; *Pisha* 5.103; cf. CD 7.15-20; Keener, *John*, 305, 1184, for further sources).

^{lxvii}I. Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels* (2nd ser.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924), 2:208; Dalman, *Jesus-Jeshua*, 230; Jeremias, *Parables*, 195; Kenneth Ewing Bailey, *Through Peasant Eyes: More Lucan Parables, Their Culture and Style* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 166, citing *b. Ber.* 55b; *B.M.* 38b.

^{lxviii}Cf. *b. Ket.* 67a.

^{lxix}The expression persists as late as Qur'an 7.40, though this reference (involving eternal life) might evoke the tradition of Jesus' usage.

^{lxx}Jacob Neusner, "'First Cleanse the Inside,'" *NTS* 22 (1976): 486-95 (here 492-94); Martin McNamara, *Palestinian Judaism and the New Testament* (GNS 4; Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1983), 197 (citing *m. Kel.* 25:1-9; *Par.* 12:8; *Toh.* 8:7; see also *m. Ber.* 8:2; the houses material in *b. Shab.* 14b, bar.)

^{lxxi}Craig S. Keener, *Miracles: The Plausibility of Healing Accounts in the Gospels and Acts* (Peabody: Hendrickson, est. 2010).

^{lxxii}See e.g., the Christological emphasis in Heinz Joachim Held, "Matthew as Interpreter of the Miracle Stories," 165-299 in Günther Bornkamm, Gerhard Barth and Heinz Joachim Held, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* (London: SCM, 1963).

^{lxxiii}E.g., Keener, *Matthew*, 273, 290, 298, 380-81.

^{lxxiv}See the correct critique in John Paul Heil, "Significant Aspects of the Healing Miracles in Matthew," *CBQ* 41 (1979): 274-87 (e.g., 276).

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cxiii I treat this material in substantially more detail in an article accepted for publication in the *Bulletin for
Biblical Research* (estimated publication 2010).
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