

## Introduction

### An Aramaic Approach Thirty Years Later

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The first edition of Matthew Black's *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* appeared in 1946. The second edition appeared in 1954; the third in 1967; and a German translation appeared in 1982.<sup>1</sup> Given the limited amount of Aramaic material available to the wider scholarly community in the 1940s through the 1960s, Black's study represents the highwater mark in the older dictional and philological analysis and comparison of Aramaic sources with the New Testament Gospels and Acts. His work laid the groundwork for subsequent research.

Black's work represents a continuation of the investigation of Aramaic and its relevance for understanding Jesus and the Gospels and perhaps for recovering the *verba Jesu*. In this work he was preceded by Gustav Dalman<sup>2</sup> and Joachim Jeremias.<sup>3</sup> Black's more cautious method and conclusions served as a corrective to the ultimately unpersuasive claims of C. F. Burney<sup>4</sup> and C. C. Torrey,<sup>5</sup> who

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<sup>1</sup> Each edition grew by some 50 pages. The German edition was translated by Günther Schwarz and entitled *Jesu Muttersprache* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1982).

<sup>2</sup> G. H. Dalman, *Grammatik des jüdisch-palästinischen Aramäisch* (2d ed.; 1905; repr., Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1960); idem, *Die Worte Jesu: Mit Berücksichtigung des nachkanonischen jüdischen Schrifttums und der aramäischen Sprache erörtert* (1898; rev. ed., 1930; repr., Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1965); Eng. trans. *The Words of Jesus* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902); idem, *Jesus-Jeschua*. (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1922); Eng. trans. *Jesus-Jeshua: Studies in the Gospels* (1929; repr., New York: Ktav, 1971).

<sup>3</sup> J. Jeremias, *Die Abendmahlsworte Jesu* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1935; 4th ed.; 1967); Eng. trans. *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1966); idem, *Abba: Studien zur neutestamentlichen Theologie und Zeitgeschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966), and idem, *Das Vater-Unser im Lichte der neueren Forschung* (3d ed.; Calwer Hefte 50; Stuttgart: Calwer, 1965); Eng. trans. *The Prayers of Jesus* (Studies in Biblical Theology 6; London: SCM Press, 1967).

<sup>4</sup> C. F. Burney, *The Aramaic Original of the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1922); idem, *The Poetry of Our Lord* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1925).

<sup>5</sup> C. C. Torrey, "The Translations Made from the Original Aramaic Gospels," in *Studies in the History of Religions, Presented to Crawford Howell*

had argued that our Greek Gospels are translations of Aramaic originals.

Black began his work with the assumption that “At the basis of the Greek Gospels . . . there must lie a Palestinian Aramaic tradition, at any rate of the sayings and teaching of Jesus, and this tradition must at one time have been translated from Aramaic into Greek” (p. 16). Taking a “linguistic approach” Black reviewed grammatical features (syntax, grammar, and vocabulary), poetic features (parallelism, alliteration), and various indicators of translation of Aramaic. He hoped to clarify difficult passages and in many cases contribute to the exegetical task. He concluded that the evidence points decidedly to an “Aramaic origin” of the Gospels and Acts. Although, “whether that source was written or oral, it is not possible from the evidence to decide” (p. 271).

### *Scholarly Assessment of Black’s Aramaic Approach*

Scholarly response to Black’s work has been mixed, with the sharpest criticism coming from Joseph Fitzmyer.<sup>6</sup> Most express appreciation for the work. Sebastian Brock calls it “something of a classic” that “remains both a very useful and an exciting work.”<sup>7</sup> Even Fitzmyer, who faults the book at many points, begins his review by describing Black’s work as “an invaluable *instrument de*

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Toy by Pupils, Colleagues and Friends (ed. D. G. Lyon and G. F. Moore; New York: Macmillan, 1912), 269–17; idem, *The Four Gospels: A New Translation* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1933); idem, *Our Translated Gospels* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1936); idem, *Documents of the Primitive Church* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1941).

<sup>6</sup> J. A. Fitzmyer, in *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 30 (1968): 417–28. See too S. Brock, in *Journal of Theological Studies* 20 (1969): 274–78; J. C. Greenfield, in *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 31 (1972): 58–61; A. M. Hunter, *Scottish Journal of Theology* 21 (1968): 237–38; J. Jeremias, in *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 94 (1969): 915; G. D. Kilpatrick, “Language and Text in the Gospels and Acts,” *Vigiliae christianae* 24 (1970): 161–71 (on Black’s work, see pp. 161–64); M. Smith, in *Journal of Biblical Literature* 90 (1971): 247–48; and N. Turner, “The Language of Jesus,” *Expository Times* 79 (1968): 282–83. Smith’s review is quite derivative, being hardly more than a summary of Fitzmyer’s review. The German edition was reviewed (negatively) by P.-R. Berger, *Theologische Revue* 82 (1986): 1–16, with a response by Black (on pp. 17–22). For a recent and very helpful contextualization of the debate, see L. T. Stuckenbruck, “An Approach to the New Testament through Aramaic Sources: The Recent Methodological Debate,” *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 8 (1991): 3–29.

<sup>7</sup> From Brock’s review, 274, 278.

*travail* for the study of the Gospels and Acts” and concludes his review with these words: “I certainly learned much from the earlier editions of [*An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*]. I shall surely continue to be stimulated by it despite the criticisms which I have expressed against the third edition.”<sup>8</sup> Hendrickson Publisher’s decision to reprint this important work will afford another generation of scholars the opportunity to learn from and be stimulated by it.

The major problem for Black was his reliance on Aramaic that for the most part derived some centuries after the time of the New Testament. Fitzmyer and others have shown that the Aramaic of the Targumim is different at many points from the Aramaic that is attested from the New Testament period.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, the “closest parallels to the sort of Aramaic in which the non-Qumran targums are written are found in the inscriptions from synagogues and tombs of the Byzantine period in Palestine (roughly from the third to the sixth centuries), and often enough in the literary texts of rabbinical literature and classical Syriac.”<sup>10</sup> Fitzmyer adds: “The only reasons that are ever given for the first-century dating of the so-called Palestinian targums are philological, based on the assumption that we can identify their language with the spoken, popular form of first-century Palestinian Aramaic.”<sup>11</sup>

Fitzmyer’s criticism is justified, at least in reference to Black and others at that time. Usage of the non-Qumran Targumim is problematic, particularly for philological and dictional analysis, the very sort of analysis that predominates Black’s work. But at the time of his work, Black believed that these Targumim offered the best, indeed almost the only, material for his comparative work: “The most significant new discovery in recent years in the field of Palestinian

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<sup>8</sup> From Fitzmyer’s review, 417–18, 428.

<sup>9</sup> See J. A. Fitzmyer, *A Wandering Aramean: Collected Aramaic Essays* (Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series 25; Missoula: Scholars, 1979), 57–84. Fitzmyer does not agree with P. Kahle (“Das palästinische Pentateuchtargum und das zur Zeit Jesu gesprochene Aramäisch,” *Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche* 49 [1958]: 100–16; idem, *Cairo Geniza* [2d ed., Oxford: Blackwell, 1959], esp. 205–208), A. Díez Macho (“The Recently Discovered Palestinian Targum: Its Antiquity and Relationship with the Other Targums,” in *Congress Volume, Oxford 1959* [Supplements to *Vetus Testamentum* 7; Leiden: Brill, 1960], 224–45, esp. 236), Black (*Aramaic Approach*, 22), and others who have contended that the Palestinian Targumim, in particular Neofiti I, reflect the language of first-century Aramaic.

<sup>10</sup>Fitzmyer, *A Wandering Aramean*, 74, 84 nn. 118–19.

<sup>11</sup>Fitzmyer, *A Wandering Aramean*, 74.

Aramaic is Codex Neofiti I to which attention was first drawn by Professor Alejandro Díez Macho . . . ” (p. 35).<sup>12</sup> Black said this, even after the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. With respect to the Scrolls, he says: “In comparison with the extensive Hebrew discoveries, only a small number of Aramaic texts have so far come to light at Qumrân. They consist, for the most part, of small fragments, miscellaneous ‘bits and pieces’, some containing no more than one word or even just a single letter, and only occasionally extending to several lines of text . . . ” (p. 39).

Black’s dismissive assessment of the Aramaic Scrolls reflected the limited accessibility of the materials in the 1950s and 1960s. He would not have said this had he had access to all of the Aramaic material from the region of the Dead Sea. A little over a decade after the appearance of the third edition of *An Aramaic Approach* Joseph Fitzmyer and Daniel Harrington published a collection of some 150 items, including sixty-four texts from the Dead Sea caves and a great number of inscriptions, many from ossuaries.<sup>13</sup> As extensive as this collection is, it is not complete; for not all of the Scrolls were available in the late 1970s.

Many of the Aramaic texts in the Fitzmyer-Harrington collection are “bits and pieces,” to be sure, but the Job Targum from cave 11

<sup>12</sup>Black is referring to A. Díez Macho, *Neophyti I: Targum palestinese Ms de la Biblioteca Vaticana* (6 vols., Barcelona and Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1968–77). This work did not appear until after the publication of the third edition of Black’s *Aramaic Approach*.

<sup>13</sup>J. A. Fitzmyer and D. J. Harrington, *A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts (Second Century B.C. – Second Century A. D.)* (Biblica et orientalia 34; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978). There are more than 250 pages of Aramaic text and facing English translation in this collection. See also R. Duensing, *Christlich-palästinisch-aramäische Texte und Fragmente* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1906); J. Naveh, *On Stone and Mosaic: Aramaic and Hebrew Inscriptions from Ancient Synagogues* (Jerusalem: Karta, 1978); K. Beyer, *Die aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984). For collections of older texts, see A. E. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1923); A. Dupont-Sommer, “Un papyrus araméen d’époque saïte découvert à Saqqarah,” *Semitica* 1 (1948): 43–68; G. R. Driver, *Aramaic Documents of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1957); I. Rabinowitz, “Aramaic Inscriptions of the Fifth Century B.C.E. from a North-Arab Shrine in Egypt,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 15 (1956): 1–9; “Another Aramaic Record of the North-Arabian goddess Han-’llat,” *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 18 (1959): 154–55; P. Grelot, *Documents araméens d’Égypte* (Paris: Gabalda, 1972); J. M. Lindenberger, *Ancient Aramaic and Hebrew Letters* (Society of Biblical Literature Writings from the Ancient World 4; Atlanta: Scholars, 1994).

preserves thirty-eight columns of text, with the Genesis Apocryphon from cave 1 preserving another fifteen columns of text; and these columns are quite broad. The New Jerusalem text from cave 5 (5Q15) adds two more columns, while the Enoch fragments are not insignificant. The much debated 4Q246, which speaks of a figure called the “son of God” and offers several striking parallels to the angelic annunciation (Luke 1:32–35), preserves two columns of text.

This Aramaic material, which dates to the New Testament period and somewhat earlier, must be accorded primary status for all future philological work. It is at this point especially that Black’s work is in urgent need of updating. The recent and ongoing publication of the tools and studies that are discussed below will make this updating possible.

### *Recent Relevant Tools and Studies*

Lexical tools have appeared that have aided ongoing research. Michael Sokoloff’s *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic* immediately comes to mind.<sup>14</sup> The Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon Project that is under way at Hebrew Union College and Jewish Institute of Religion is sure to make important contributions.<sup>15</sup> Shirley Lund and Julia Foster have assembled targumic variants within Neofiti I,<sup>16</sup> while David Golomb has published a study of the grammar of Neofiti I.<sup>17</sup> Some Aramaic concordances are now available.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>M. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic* (Ramat-Gan: Bar Ilan University Press, 1990).

<sup>15</sup>All Aramaic material is being concorded and tagged lexically.

<sup>16</sup>S. Lund and J. A. Foster, *Variant Versions of Targumic Traditions within Codex Neofiti 1* (Society of Biblical Literature Aramaic Studies 2; Missoula: Scholars, 1977). Lund studied under Matthew Black.

<sup>17</sup>D. M. Golomb, *A Grammar of Targum Neofiti* (Harvard Semitic Monographs 34; Chico: Scholars, 1985).

<sup>18</sup>See E. Brederick, *Konkordanz zum Targum Onkelos* (Giessen: Töpelmann, 1906); J. B. van Zyl, *A Concordance to the Targum of Isaiah* (Society of Biblical Literature Aramaic Studies 3; Missoula: Scholars, 1979); B. Grossfeld, *Concordance of the First Targum to the Book of Esther* (Society of Biblical Literature Aramaic Studies 5; Chico: Scholars, 1984); E. G. Clarke, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan of the Pentateuch: Text and Concordance* (Hoboken: Ktav, 1984). The Aramaic project of Hebrew Union College will eventually make it possible to complete the task of concordancing the data. Fitzmyer and Harrington (*A Manual of Palestinian Aramaic Texts*, 307–53) provide a glossary of the Aramaic vocabulary of the texts presented. See also the multi-volume series edited by J. C. de Moor and others, entitled *A Bilingual Concordance to the Targum of the Prophets*, of which 17 volumes to date have appeared (Leiden: Brill, 1995–98), covering Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.

Other useful contributions include John Bowker's comparison of the interpretive traditions in the Targumim and rabbinic literature. Although introductory in nature, his study usefully illustrates how the Aramaic tradition forms a part of Jewish exegesis in general.<sup>19</sup> Bruce Chilton has laid the groundwork for the critical sifting that is necessary in order to identify significant stages in the interpretive development of Targumim.<sup>20</sup> His work, moreover, establishes a firmer foundation on which New Testament studies that make use of the Targumim may rest. (Examples of the positive results that may be had from his method will be reviewed below.) A collection of studies edited by Beattie and McNamara, and one in honor of McNamara, enrich the secondary literature in the field.<sup>21</sup> The Michael Glazier Aramaic Bible project, in which English translations of the Targumim, with departures from the Hebrew indicated by italicized font, has had the positive effect of making the relevance of the Targumim more widely known and more readily appreciated, especially by nonspecialists.<sup>22</sup>

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Much of the primary material may soon be available in electronic form, complete with grammatical tagging (as is already available for the Masoretic Text, the Septuagint, the Greek New Testament, and, soon, the Dead Sea Scrolls). Rapid and exhaustive verbal and grammatical searches will greatly assist students.

<sup>19</sup>J. Bowker, *The Targums and Rabbinic Literature: An Introduction to Jewish Interpretations of Scripture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969).

<sup>20</sup>B. D. Chilton, *The Glory of Israel: The Theology and Provenience of the Isaiah Targum* (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 23; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1982).

<sup>21</sup>D. R. G. Beattie and M. J. McNamara, eds., *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in their Historical Context* (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 166; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994); K. J. Cathcart and M. Maher, eds., *Targumic and Cognate Studies: Essays in Honour of Martin McNamara* (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 230; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996). See also E. Lipiński, *Studies in Aramaic Inscriptions and Onomastics* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 1; Leuven: Peeters and Leuven University Press, 1974); idem, *Studies in Aramaic Inscriptions and Onomastics*, (vol. 2; Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 57; Leuven: Peeters and Leuven University Press, 1994).

<sup>22</sup>In the "canonical order": M. McNamara, *Targum Neofiti 1: Genesis* (The Aramaic Bible 1A; Collegeville: Liturgical, 1992); M. Maher, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Genesis* (The Aramaic Bible 1B; Collegeville: Liturgical, 1992); M. McNamara, M. Maher, and R. Hayward, *Targum Neofiti 1: Exodus and Pseudo-Jonathan: Exodus* (The Aramaic Bible 2; Collegeville: Liturgical, 1994); M. McNamara, M. Maher, and R. Hayward, *Targum Neofiti 1: Leviticus and Pseudo-Jonathan: Leviticus* (The Aramaic Bible 3; Collegeville:

Several critical studies have advanced the study of Aramaic and the Targumim since the appearance of Black's *Aramaic Approach*: Fitzmyer's work on Aramaic in the New Testament era is of direct relevance to many of the issues addressed by Black.<sup>23</sup> J. T. Forestell's index of New Testament passages studied in the light of the Targumim is an invaluable tool, though it needs to be updated.<sup>24</sup> Illustrative studies by Martin McNamara and Roger Le Deaut, among others, have made it quite clear that the Targumim can in many instances shed light on the world of the New Testament and on

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Liturgical, 1994); M. McNamara and E. G. Clarke, *Targum Neofiti 1: Numbers and Pseudo-Jonathan: Numbers* (The Aramaic Bible 4; Collegeville: Liturgical, 1995); M. McNamara, *Targum Neofiti 1: Deuteronomy* (The Aramaic Bible 5A; Collegeville: Liturgical, 1997); E. G. Clarke, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Deuteronomy* (The Aramaic Bible 5B; Collegeville: Liturgical, 1998); B. Grossfeld, *Targum Onqelos to Genesis* (The Aramaic Bible 6; Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1988); B. Grossfeld, *Targum Onqelos to Exodus* (The Aramaic Bible 7; Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1988); B. Grossfeld, *Targum Onqelos to Leviticus and Numbers* (The Aramaic Bible 8; Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1988); B. Grossfeld, *Targum Onqelos to Deuteronomy* (The Aramaic Bible 9; Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1988); D. J. Harrington and A. J. Saldarini, *Targum Jonathan of the Former Prophets* (The Aramaic Bible 10; Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1987); B. D. Chilton, *The Isaiah Targum* (The Aramaic Bible 11; Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1987); R. Hayward, *The Targum of Jeremiah* (The Aramaic Bible 12; Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1987); S. H. Levey, *The Targum of Ezekiel* (The Aramaic Bible 13; Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1987); K. J. Cathcart and R. P. Gordon, *The Targum of the Minor Prophets* (The Aramaic Bible 14; Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1989); C. Mangan, J. F. Healey, and P. S. Knobel, *The Targum of Job, The Targum of Proverbs, The Targum of Qohelet* (The Aramaic Bible 15; Collegeville: Liturgical, 1991); B. Grossfeld, *The Two Targums of Esther* (The Aramaic Bible 18; Collegeville: Liturgical, 1991); and D. R. G. Beattie and J. S. McIvor, *The Targum of Ruth and The Targum of Chronicles* (The Aramaic Bible 19; Collegeville: Liturgical, 1994). Canticles, Lamentations, and (the difficult) Psalms Targumim are in various stages of production.

<sup>23</sup>J. A. Fitzmyer, "The Languages of Palestine in the First Century A.D.," in Fitzmyer, *A Wandering Aramean*, 29–56. See also C. Rabin, "Hebrew and Aramaic in the First Century," in *The Jewish People in the First Century* (ed. S. Safrai and M. Stern; Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum 1.2; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), 1007–39.

<sup>24</sup>J. T. Forestell, *Targumic Traditions and the New Testament* (Society of Biblical Literature Aramaic Studies 4; Chico: Scholars, 1979). Forestell's bibliography updates P. Nickels, *Targum and New Testament: A Bibliography together with a New Testament Index* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1967). For a sample of studies treating the New Testament and Aramaic tradition, published since the appearance of the third edition of Black's *Aramaic Approach*, see bibliography below.

specific passages, even if the language of these Targumim come from a later period.

### *Improved Criteria*

The problem that has plagued appeals to the Targumim for interpretation of New Testament writings has been the absence of carefully constructed criteria. Bruce Chilton's articulation of dictional coherence and thematic coherence commends itself and goes a long way in providing the criteria necessary for such comparative work, if it is to be judged critically compelling.<sup>25</sup>

Chilton looks for evidence of dictional and thematic coherence between the Targumim and the sayings of Jesus.<sup>26</sup> By "dictional coherence" Chilton has in mind instances of verbal agreement. For instance, does Jesus' wording agree with the wording of the Targumim (in contrast to the wording of the Hebrew or the Greek)? By "thematic coherence" Chilton is thinking of instances where Jesus' understanding of a given passage of Scripture apparently agrees with the interpretive paraphrase found in the Targumim. Both types of coherence between the sayings of Jesus and targumic tradition have been identified. The cumulative effect supports the validity of the method.

The thematic element might be subdivided into thematic and exegetical, as I have tried to show elsewhere.<sup>27</sup> By "exegetical coherence" I have in mind points of agreement between Jesus' or the evangelist's understanding of a passage and the way it is understood by the meturgeman—the Aramaic translator/interpreter. The agreement lies not so much in theme but in a particular point of interpre-

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<sup>25</sup>B. Chilton, *A Galilean Rabbi and His Bible: Jesus' Use of the Interpreted Scripture of His Time* (Good News Studies 8; Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1984) esp. 57–147. Although not with precision seen in Chilton's study, these criteria are adumbrated in the older studies of McNamara and Le Deaut.

<sup>26</sup>Chilton (*A Galilean Rabbi*, 89–90) comments that "the citations of the Targum to Isaiah in the New Testament record of Jesus' words make better sense as traditional elements in the dominical sayings than as redactional innovations."

<sup>27</sup>C. A. Evans, *Word and Glory: On the Exegetical and Theological Background of John's Prologue* (Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 89; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 13–46; idem, " 'Do This and You Will Live': Targumic Coherence in Luke 10:25–28," in *Jesus in Context: Temple, Purity, and Restoration* (B. Chilton and C. A. Evans; Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums 39; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 377–93.

tation. A few examples of these three types of coherence should make these criteria clear.

*Dictional Coherence.* Chilton's approach to dictional coherence resembles Black's linguistic approach, but it is more carefully controlled. The paraphrase of Isa 6:9–10, concluding with "and it be forgiven them" (Mark 4:12), coheres with the wording of *Tg. Isa.* 6:10.<sup>28</sup> Only the Targum—not the LXX or the Hebrew—reads "forgive," as Black rightly observed (pp. 211–16).<sup>29</sup>

Chilton identifies Matt 26:52 as another example of dictional coherence, this time with *Tg. Isa.* 50:11, which has introduced the very language distinctive of Jesus' saying.<sup>30</sup> Jesus' allusion to Isa 66:24, which serves to describe "Gehenna" (Mark 9:47–48), in all probability is another example of dictional coherence with the Isaiah Targum, which has introduced this word into the verse in question.<sup>31</sup> A final example is seen in *Tg. Ps.-J.* Lev 22:28, which adds the following to the passage: "My people, children of Israel, as our Father is merciful in heaven, so shall you be merciful on earth." Chilton and others are correct to suggest that this interpretive expansion is in some way reflected in Jesus' utterance preserved in Q: "Be merciful, even as your Father [in heaven] is merciful" (Luke 6:36 = Matt 5:48).<sup>32</sup>

<sup>28</sup>Chilton, *A Galilean Rabbi*, 90–98; C. A. Evans, *To See and Not Perceive: Isaiah 6.9–10 in Early Jewish and Christian Interpretation* (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 64; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), 69–76, 92; Black, *Aramaic Approach*, 211–16, esp. 212.

<sup>29</sup>Moreover, when the Targum inserts the relative ׀ ("who") into Isa 6:9 ("speak to this people who hear indeed . . ."), thus implying that the prophetic word of judgment is to be directed only against the obdurate (i.e. those *who* refuse to listen and observe), the dominical saying's distinction between insiders and outsiders (cf. Mark 4:11) may offer an instance of *thematic* coherence as well. Evans, *To See and Not Perceive*, 105.

<sup>30</sup>As seen in the parallelism involving "grasp" and "sword"; Chilton, *A Galilean Rabbi*, 98–101.

<sup>31</sup>Chilton, *A Galilean Rabbi*, 101–107.

<sup>32</sup>Chilton, *A Galilean Rabbi*, 44; cf. M. McNamara, *The New Testament and the Palestinian Targum to the Pentateuch* (AnBib 27; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1966), 133–38; idem, *Targum and Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 118–19; Black, *Aramaic Approach*, 181; R. H. Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel* (Supplements to Novum Testamentum 18; Leiden: Brill, 1967), 74; R. Le Déaut, *The Message of the New Testament and the Aramaic Bible* (trans. S. Miletic; Subsidia biblica 5; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1982), 31; idem, "Targumic Literature and New Testament Interpretation," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 4 (1974): 243–89, esp. 246. Black's suggestion that *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* has in this instance quoted Jesus is problematic.

The Johannine Gospel yields several suggestive examples. One immediately thinks of the coherence between the opening words, “In the beginning was the Word [*logos*], and the Word was with God . . . all things came into being through it” (1:1, 3), and those of *Tg. Neof. Gen* 1:1, “From the beginning with wisdom the Word [*memra*] created and perfected the heavens and the earth.” Or again, when the evangelist declares that Isaiah spoke “because he saw (the Lord’s) glory” (12:41), we have coherence with Isa 6:1 in the Targum (“I saw the glory of the Lord”), not with the Greek or the Hebrew (“I saw the Lord”).<sup>33</sup>

*Thematic Coherence.* Chilton also offers an important example of thematic coherence between the Isaiah Targum and Jesus’ Parable of the Tenant Farmers (Mark 12:1–9). Whereas the Hebrew and LXX versions of Isa 5:1–7 direct a general word of judgment against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem, the Isaiah Targum gives the passage a narrower and distinctively cultic cast. Among other things, the Targum introduces “sanctuary” and “altar” (evidently in place of “tower” and “wine vat,” respectively; cf. *t. Me’ila* 1:16; *t. Sukka* 3:15); these are what specifically will be destroyed. Because Jesus’ parable, which is based on Isa 5:1–7, is directed against the temple establishment and not against the general populace, the “possibility does seem strong,” to quote Chilton, that it “reflects the specifically cultic context of Isaiah 5:1–7 in the Targum.”<sup>34</sup> He is surely correct.<sup>35</sup> Other examples of thematic coherence may include charges of disrespect for the prophets (compare *Tg. Isa* 28:11 with Matt 5:12 = Luke 6:23; Matt 23:37 = Luke 13:34) and what appears to be a dominical emphasis on private revelation (compare *Tg. Isa* 48:6 with Matt 13:17 = Luke 10:24).<sup>36</sup>

Jesus’ proclamation of the kingdom and his predilection for the language and imagery of Second Isaiah once again suggest thematic coherence with the Aramaic tradition. Jesus’ use of the word “gospel” (εὐαγγέλιον) is drawn from this prophetic book (e.g. Isa 40:9;

<sup>33</sup>For further discussion of these and other examples, see Evans, *Word and Glory*, 114–34.

<sup>34</sup>Chilton, *A Galilean Rabbi*, 113. For Chilton’s fuller discussion, see pp. 111–14. See also C. A. Evans, “On the Vineyard Parables of Isaiah 5 and Mark 12,” *Biblische Zeitschrift* 28 (1984): 82–86.

<sup>35</sup>4Q500 appears also to interpret Isa 5:1–7 in a cultic manner, thus probably offering corroboration for the antiquity of the Aramaic and rabbinic interpretation of Isaiah’s Song of the Vineyard. See G. J. Brooke, “4Q500 1 and the Use of Scripture in the Parable of the Vineyard,” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 2 (1995): 268–94.

<sup>36</sup>Chilton, *A Galilean Rabbi*, 133–36.

52:7; 61:1).<sup>37</sup> But whereas in the Hebrew the proclamation of the gospel is summed up as “Your God reigns!” (Isa 52:7), in the Aramaic it is summed up as “The kingdom of God is revealed!” This closely approximates the Markan summary: “. . . proclaiming the gospel . . . ‘The kingdom of God is at hand!’ ”<sup>38</sup>

Perhaps another example of thematic coherence is seen in Jesus’ allusion to Hos 6:2 (“After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him”) in his prediction of resurrection following the passion (Mark 8:31 etc.). Whereas Hosea in the Hebrew (and Greek) speaks of national renewal and restoration, in the Aramaic the prophet speaks of being raised up in the day of resurrection: “He will give us life in the days of consolations that will come; on the day of the resurrection of the dead he will raise us up and we shall live before him.”<sup>39</sup>

*Exegetical Coherence.* When an expert in the Mosaic law answered his own question, “What should I do to inherit eternal life?” (Luke 10:25), by reciting what commentators often call the “double commandment” (Luke 10:27; cf. Deut 6:5; Lev 19:18), Jesus is said to have replied, “Do this, and you will live” (Luke 10:28). Although this reply may echo Deut 6:24 (“so that we might be kept alive”),<sup>40</sup> most commentators suspect that it alludes to Lev 18:5 (“doing them a man will live”).<sup>41</sup> Fitzmyer cautiously agrees, admitting only that ζήση

<sup>37</sup>For a recent affirmation of the influence of Second Isaiah in Jesus’ proclamation, see O. Betz, “Jesus’ Gospel of the Kingdom,” in *The Gospel and the Gospels* (P. Stuhlmacher, ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991) 53–74.

<sup>38</sup>For more on this matter, see B. Chilton, “Regnum Dei Deus Est,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 31 (1978): 261–70; idem, “The Kingdom of God in Recent Discussion,” in *Studying the Historical Jesus: Evaluations of the State of Current Research* (B. Chilton and C. A. Evans, eds.; New Testament Tools and Studies 19; Leiden: Brill, 1994), 255–80; C. A. Evans, “From Gospel to Gospel: The Function of Isaiah in the New Testament,” in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition* (C. C. Broyles and C. A. Evans, eds.; 2 vols.; Supplements to Vetus Testamentum 70; Formation and Interpretation of Old Testament Literature 1; Leiden: Brill, 1997), 2.651–91, esp. 664–74.

<sup>39</sup>Cathcart and Gordon, *The Targum of the Minor Prophets*, 41.

<sup>40</sup>So J. Nolland, *Luke 9:21–18:34* (Word Biblical Commentary 35B; Dallas: Word, 1993), 581–82.

<sup>41</sup>F. W. Farrar, *The Gospel according to St. Luke in Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), 253; A. Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to S. Luke* (International Critical Commentary; 5th ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1922), 285; J. M. Creed, *The Gospel according to St. Luke* (London: Macmillan, 1930), 152; H. K. Luce, *The Gospel according to S. Luke* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

“may allude” to this Old Testament passage.<sup>42</sup> I suspect, however, that the whole statement (τοῦτο ποίει καὶ ζήσῃ) constitutes a conscious paraphrase of יִחַי . . . אֶתְּחִיבָהּ.

The promise of Lev 18 has nothing to do with eternal life. Neither the Hebrew nor the LXX gives any indication that anything more than life in this world is in view. If the commandments are obeyed, the people of Israel can expect to live. In the Lukan context the question is not “What must I do to live in this world?” but “What must I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus’ answer, “Do this and you will live,” implies that the man will “inherit eternal life.” Why then do we have the allusion to Lev 18:5, which according to the Hebrew and Greek versions speaks only of temporal life?

Jesus’ allusion to Leviticus may have been conditioned by the Aramaic paraphrase as it had come to expression in the synagogue,<sup>43</sup> for two of the Pentateuch Targumim extend the idea of life in this world to include life in the world to come. *Onqelos* reads “he shall live by them in eternal life,” while the later and more embellished *Pseudo-Jonathan* reads “he shall live by them in eternal life and shall be assigned a portion with the righteous” (cf. *Tg. Ezek* 20:11, 13, 21). This Aramaic tradition coheres with Tannaitic exegesis: “‘. . . shall live’—in the world to come. And should you wish to claim that the reference is to this world, is not the fact that in the end one dies? Lo, how am I to explain, ‘. . . shall live’? It is with reference to the world to come” (*Sipra Lev.* §193 [on Lev 18:1–30]). Once again the antiquity of the Aramaic tradition is attested at Qumran, where we hear the words of Lev 18:5: “The desires of His will, ‘which a man should do and so have life in them.’ . . . Those who hold firm to it shall receive everlasting life and all the glory of Adam will be theirs” (*Damascus Document* 3.15–16, 20). Although the exegesis here is

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1936), 205; E. E. Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke* (New Century Bible; rev. ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 161; I. H. Marshall, *Commentary on Luke* (New International Greek Testament Commentary; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 444; M. D. Goulder, *Luke: A New Paradigm* (Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series 20; 2 vols.; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), 2.487; C. F. Evans, *Saint Luke* (Philadelphia: Trinity, 1990), 465; R. H. Stein, *Luke* (New American Commentary 24; Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 316.

<sup>42</sup>Joseph Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke* (Anchor Bible 28–28A; Garden City: Doubleday, 1981–1985), 2.881.

<sup>43</sup>One of the few to make this observation is W. R. Stegner, “The Parable of the Good Samaritan and Leviticus 18:5,” in *The Living Text: Essays in Honor of Ernest W. Saunders* (D. E. Groh and R. Jewett, eds.; Lanham: University Press of America, 1985), 27–38, esp. 31–32.

not explicit, as it is in targumic and midrashic tradition, it is presupposed, as it also seems to be in Luke 10.

Another example of exegetical coherence between targumic tradition and the Gospels may be seen in Jesus' pronouncement on the permanence of marriage: "What therefore God has joined together, let no one tear apart" (Mark 10:9). The idea that it is God who joins a man and a woman is not stated in the passages cited from Genesis (cf. Gen 1:27 and 2:24 quoted in Mark 10:6–8), but it is expressed in *Tg. Ps.-J.* Deut 34:6: "[God] taught us to *join* grooms and brides because of his having united Eve with Adam"<sup>44</sup> (emphasis added). The Targum's ܕܝܘܢܝܢ ("join") appears to be the equivalent of Mark's συνέζευξεν.<sup>45</sup>

Criteria such as these are needed as a supplement to Black's linguistic and textual approach. Of course, for his approach to be as efficacious as it might be, it will be necessary to treat as primary and to make full use of the Aramaic materials that date to the approximate time of Jesus and the early church. Nonetheless, whatever its shortcomings, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* will remain the point of departure for study in this field and it will remain as such until someone with the acumen of the late Principal Black replaces it with a full and up-to-date treatment of the phenomena.

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<sup>44</sup>Clarke, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan: Deuteronomy*, 105.

<sup>45</sup>See D. Daube, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* (London: Athlone, 1956; repr.; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 368.

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