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Who will Come from East and West?

Observations on Matt.8.11-12 - Luke 13. 28-29

Dale C. Allison, Jr.

In his influential study, Jesus' Promise to the Nations, Joachim Jeremias drew two major conclusions. / He claimed (i) that Jesus limited his own preaching to Israel and forbade his disciples to preach to non-Jews and (ii) that Jesus promised the Gentiles a share in salvation because he looked forward to their eschatological pilgrimage to Zion. In making this second and crucial point, Jeremias placed great weight upon Matt.8.11-12, which reads: "I tell you, many will come from the east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness." /2 These words were taken to be authentic and to envisage the rejection of the Jews (= "the sons of the kingdom") on the one hand and the acceptance of the Gentiles ("many from east and west") on the other. /3

Jeremias' interpretation of Matt.8.11-12 and its Lukan parallel has become a commonplace of contemporary scholarship. Whether NT exegetes are discussing Jesus or Q, Matthew or Luke, they almost always understand those coming from east and west to be Gentiles while the sons of the kingdom are accordingly identified with Jews. /4 These equations, however, are not in fact necessary or even obvious, and some scholars have had other ideas. A.H. McNeile, in his commentary on the First Gospel, contended that "in the Lord's mouth the words [sons of the kingdom] can mean 'all Jews who trust in their Judaism,' in contrast not necessarily with Gentiles, as Mt. understands it....but with Jews whose character truly fitted them for the Kingdom....." /5 More recently, N.Q. King has argued that, in its Lukan context, Luke 13.28-29 has to do with saved and unsaved Jews; /6 and E.P. Sanders has acknowledged the possibility that, on Jesus' lips, Matt.8.11-12 par. was about the ingathering of the Jewish diaspora, not the pilgrimage of the Gentiles. /7

Given the importance of Matt.8.11-12 par. in recent discussion of Jesus' thought about the Gentiles, it is rather disconcerting to learn that Jeremias and others have not established that the "many" are really non-Jews. Jeremias asserted that this follows from the contrast with "the sons of the kingdom" and from OT prophecies about Gentiles. /8 But neither alleged reason is, as we shall see, very forceful. Furthermore, there are a number of signs which point in precisely the opposite direction. My own conclusion, which I hope to uphold in this essay, is that when Jesus referred to people coming from east and west he was probably thinking about the diaspora. If this is indeed the case, the passage has nothing at all to do with the vexed issue of Jesus and the Gentiles.

(1) The first observation to be made about the text is that, in both its Matthaean and Lukan forms, it does not explicitly mention either Jews or Gentiles. In Matthew, neither the "many" nor the "sons of the kingdom" are identified. The same is true of the subjects in Luke, "they" and "you." That most scholars nonetheless think in terms of a Jew/Gentile antithesis is undoubtedly due to the Matthean context. As it stands, Matt.8.11-12 belongs to the story of the healing of the Roman centurion's servant or son (Matt.8.5-13); and the saying immediately follows Jesus' remark, "Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." Most readers understand Matt.8.11-12 in the light of this statement about faith, or rather its lack, in Israel. So those who will come from east and west and sit with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob at the messianic banquet are naturally taken to be people like the centurion, which means Gentiles. It must be stressed, however, that Luke 7.1-10, which is Luke's version of the story in Matt.8.5-13, contains no counterpart to Matt.8.11-12, and, further, that the Lukan parallel to the latter appears in Luke 13.23-30, a short collection of originally independent sayings. Thus it is usual for Matt.8.11-12 = Luke 13.29-30 to be assigned to Q and for its Matthean context to be regarded as secondary.

/9.

(2) There are some pronounced differences between Matt.8.11-12 and Luke 13.28-29. Fortunately, most of these are not significant for our purposes. One difference, however, cannot be ignored. Matthew refers to many coming "from east and west", Luke to those who come "from east and west and north and south." Whose wording is original? Here the critics differ, and there is no room for certainty. Whereas Luke (or a transmitter of Q^{Lk}) might have added "and north and south" in order to stress the theme of universalism /10 or in order to gain an allusion to Ps.107.3 (see below), Matthew, in accordance with his tendency to abbreviate, might have omitted the words as superfluous. /11

Because the status of Luke's "and north and south" remains in doubt, it is incumbent to investigate the background of both phrases, "from east and west" and "from east and west and north and south." To take the latter first, if it stood in Q, it was, as the commentators generally recognize, almost certainly intended to allude to Ps. 107.3, which in the RSV reads: "and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and the south." Unhappily, there is some doubt as to whether this is a correct translation. The Hebrew and the LXX both have "from the east and from the west, from the north and from overseas" (ûmiyyâm; kai thalassēs). The RSV Committee, it seems, inferred that the MT is corrupt. Their English presupposes a Hebrew text with ûmiyyāmîn (= "and from the south"). Are they to be followed? Although one always hesitates to emend without manuscript authority, the ûmiyyām of the Masoretic text seems redundant; for "from the sea" is naturally understood to signify "from the west" (= from the Mediterranean) and "from the west" has already been used. It is therefore, possible that, through corruption, ûmiyyāmîn became ûmiyyām, and that Ps.107.3 originally had "from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south." Indeed, perhaps a Hebrew or Greek text with this reading was known to Luke or to

his tradition. Another possibility is that ūmiyyām is original but referred not to the Mediterranean but to "the southern seas" (cf. the targum), that is, the Gulf of Aqabah (cf. 2 Chr.8.17), /12 In any event, the link between Luke 13.28-29 and Ps.107.3 seems firm.

How does that affect the exegesis of Luke 13.28-29? Here are the first three verses of Ps. 107

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures for ever! ²Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble³ and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south(ern sea).

These words introduce a Psalm of thanksgiving. Whether, as many have supposed, vv2-3 are a secondary interpolation the Psalm as it stands refers to Jewish pilgrims or immigrants coming to Palestine: those who gather from the four points of the compass are God's scattered people. /13 Gentiles are not in the picture at all. What follows? Whoever catches the scriptural allusion in Luke 13.28-29 and knows Ps.107.3 in its OT context will immediately see in the mind's eye an image of Jewish exiles returning to their land. One must ask: Does not Luke 13.28-29 allude to Ps.107.3 because someone wanted to turn thoughts towards the ingathering of the Jewish dispersion?

(3)We must next raise the possibility that Matthew's wording, not Luke's, preserves Q. How should one interpret "from the east and from the west"? The two directions commonly occur in Jewish texts in connexion with the return of Jews to their land. Consider the following:

Isa.43.5: "Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you."

Zech 8.7: "Thus says the Lord of hosts: Behold, I will save my people from the east country and from the west country."

Bar.4.37: "Behold, your sons are coming, whom you sent away; they are coming, gathered from east and west, at the

word of the Holy One, rejoicing in the glory of God." Bar.5.5: "Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height and look toward the east, and see your children gathered from west and east, at the word of the Holy one, rejoicing that God has remembered them."

Ps. Solomon, 11.2: "Stand on a high place, O Jerusalem, and look at your children, from the east and west assembled together by the Lord."

1 Enoch 57.1: "And it happened afterward that I had another vision of a whole array of chariots loaded with people; and they were advancing upon the air from the east and from the west until midday."

Also notable is Deut.30.4 LXX: "Though your diaspora be from one border of the heaven to the other, from thence the Lord your God shall deliver you."

On the other hand - and this must be emphatically stressed - , "east and west" is not, as far as I have been able to determine, even once associated with the eschatological incursion of the Gentiles. /14

That "east and west" should be used with reference to the Jewish dispersion is understandable. The phrase itself calls to mind the diaspora. This is because, in the biblical tradition, with its Palestinian perspective, "east" often denotes Assyria or Babylon (as in Isa.46.11; Sib.Or. 5.113; Assumption of Moses. 3.1, 13-14) and "Egypt" can be used as the antithesis of "East," thus functioning as the equivalent of "west" (e.g. 1 Kings 4.30; Sibylline Oracles, 5.112-113) /15 This matters so much because there was a concentration of exiled Jews in the east in Babylon and in the west in Egypt.

Confirmation of the point I am making can be found in those passages in which the exiled return not from "east" and "west" but from "Assyria and Egypt." In Isa.27.13 there is this: "And in that day a great trumpet will be blown, and those who were lost in the land of Assyria and those who were driven out to the land of Egypt will come and worship the Lord on the holy mountain at Jerusalem " (cf.11.11). Comparable are Hosea 11.11 ("they shall come trembling like birds from the land of Assyria.") and Zechariah 10.,10 ("I will

bring them home from the land of Egypt and gather them from Assyria"). It is plain that, in connexion with the hope for dispersed Jews, "east and west" and "Assyria and Egypt" were interchangeable expressions. The implications for Matt.8.11-12 are obvious.

(4)The next consideration which causes one to wonder about the common interpretation of Matt.8.11-12 par. is this: the pilgrimage of the nations is never in the OT, conceived as a judgment upon Israel or those in the land. On the contrary, the coming of the Gentiles always serves, as D. Zeller has seen, to exalt Zion. /16 So the interpretation of Jeremias et alii requires that Jesus turned a traditional motif on its head and employed the pilgrimage theme in order to deny Jewish hopes rather than confirm them. But how likely is this? Jesus himself, if we trust the synoptic testimony, looked forward to the fulfilment of God's promises to Israel. /17

(5) Notwithstanding the tradition of a Gentile pilgrimage to Zion and the optimistic prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah and Jeremiah, one can hardly assume that Jesus' hearers would have taken for granted the eschatological salvation of the nations. In Ezekial; Sirach.36; the War Scroll (1QM); the Rule of the Congregation (1 QSa); Jubilees.20; 4 Ezra 13; and Mekilta on Exod.21.30 (R. Ishmael), the nations are destroyed or lost. In 1 Enoch 90.30 only some repent. There was, therefore, no Jewish opinion on the ultimate fate of non-Jews. This raises a question. Would it have been natural for Jesus' hearers to have understood a prediction about people coming from east and west and banqueting with the patriarchs to refer to redeemed Gentiles? If Jesus frequently addressed himself to the topic and made plain his own opinion one might be able to return an affirmative response. But where else in the synoptics does Jesus speak of Gentiles streaming into the land? /18 What in Jesus' message would have encouraged his audience to construe the "many" as non-Jews? And how could Jesus have expected people steeped in the OT to equate those "from the east and west" (and from north and south)" with Gentiles

instead of Jews of the diaspora?

(6) Jewish expectation, as already indicated, looked forward not only to the eschatological pilgrimage of the Gentiles but also to the eschatological gathering of Israel. [See already Isa.35.10; 49.6; and Ezekial 34.37; also the passages cited above under observation (3)]. For later texts which prophesy or assume that the lost ten tribes (cf. 2 Kings 17.1-6; Josephus, Antiquities 11. 131-133) will someday return to Palestine [see 2 Macc. 1. 27-28; 2.18; Sirach 36;48.10; IQM 2.1-3; 4QpIsa line 7; 11QTemple 18.14-16; 57.5-6; Ps. Solomon 8.28;17/44; Philo, De Praem. 117; 165-172; 4 Ezra 13.32-50; 2 Baruch 77.17-87; T.Jos. 19.2-12 (Armenian); m. Sanhedrin.10.3; t.Sanh. 13.10; and b.Sanh. 110b] There may even have existed a Jewish apocalypse which described the life of the hidden lost tribes and foretold their coming to the land of Judah. /19 Clearly the hope for a renewed Israel was a very real aspect of Jewish hope. /20 Jesus' adoption of the widespread expectation may be indicated by his calling of the twelve disciples, symbolizing the eschatological restoration of the twelve tribes (so recently Sanders), as well as by the probability that he spoke of his closest followers "judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (see n.17). This opens up the possibility of interpreting Matt.8.10-12 as a statement about the end restoration of Jews to their homeland.

(7) G.R. Beasley-Murray has written: "There are.... many passages in the OT that speak of the nations making their way to Zion at the end of the age to pay homage to Yahweh and to Israel (e.g., Isa 2.1ff), but in none of these is mention made of the nations sharing in the feast of the kingdom of God. On the other hand, Isaiah 25.6ff., which provides the classic description of the feast for the nations given by God, makes no mention of the peoples streaming from all parts of the world to Zion...." /21 Beyond these facts, in Ps. 107; Isa. 25-27; and Ezek 37-39 the motif of the pilgrimage of the diaspora Jews is brought into connexion with the messianic feats. Which is to say: while the Gentile

pilgrimage and the eschatological feast are not linked in the Tanak, the ingathering of scattered Israel and the eschatological feast are. Once again, therefore, the usual interpretation of Matt.8.10-12 is not what comes to mind to one steeped in the Bible. The festal imagery rather points to the theme of Israel's restoration.

(8) According to Jeremias, the "many" must be Gentiles because they are set over against the "sons of the kingdom." /22 This is scarcely compelling argument. Neither the "many" nor the "sons of the kingdom" appears in Luke's version of our logion, and they may not have belonged to the original. No less importantly even if the "sons of the kingdom" be reckoned an expression of Jesus, is it credible that he intended the words to refer to the Jews as a whole and thus, at least hyperbolically, consigned all Israel to hell? Jesus' disciples were Jews. He directed his mission to Jews (as Matt 10.5-6 and 15.24, whatever their origin, rightly presume; cf. Rom.15,8). And the gospels contain eschatological sayings which take for granted the presence of Jews in the kingdom (e.g. Matt.5.3 - the "poor" in Israel; 8.11 - Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; 10.23 - Jewish-Christian missionaries; 19.28 - the twelve Jewish disciples and the twelve tribes of Israel). Jesus, like Paul after him (cf. Rom.11), may well have hoped for the final redemption of "all Israel" (which is not to say the salvation of every single Jew; cf. m. Sanh. 10.1). However that may be, Matt.8.11-12, if dominical, can scarcely be about the damnation of all Jews. Jeremias' interpretation, according to which the saying is "devoid of hope for Israel," /23 can only be correct if one holds that it is a community product. /24

What is the alternative? Jesus, in all probability, intended to draw a stark contrast not between unbelieving Jews and believing Gentiles but between saved and unsaved Jews. Jesus believed that those who rejected him and his message would suffer judgement on the last day. /25 In particular, he delivered warnings to some of the Jewish leaders, including the Pharisees. When to this one adds that he evidently thought of such people as being wise and

pious in their own eyes (cf. Matt.23), might he not have ironically labelled them "sons of the kingdom" (if the phrase is original) and warned them of judgement? If Matt.8.11-12 par. was originally addressed to the Pharisees or to the Jerusalem establishment or to some other group of powerful religious Jews which Jesus perceived to be opposed to him, the text can be understood as yet one more example of the conviction that the first will be last, the last first (cf. Luke 6.20-26). The "sons of the kingdom" had not responded to Jesus and his preaching. They had remained complacent. Recall Matt.11.25-26 = Luke 10.21-22, according to which only the "babes" had received eschatological revelation while the "wise" rejected it. Interpreting Matt.8.11-12 par. in this light, the saying makes a tragic contrast between privileged and unprivileged Jews (cf. Luke 16.19-31). The "many" from east and west, that is, Jews who have not had the benefit of encountering Jesus, will find eschatological salvation while those who have heard the Messiah will not. The privileged will have their places taken by the under-privileged. "Many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness."

(9) Such an understanding of Matt.8.11-12 par. is consistent with other materials in the Jesus tradition. For example, if the logion is really about the eschatological ingathering of Jewish exiles, it harmonizes well with Jesus' attitude towards Eretz Israel. W.D. Davies shows that as far as we can gather, [Jesus] paid little attention to the relationship between Yahweh, Israel and the land." /26 In other words, Jesus apparently did not emphasize at all the role of the land in his teaching. Matt.8.11-12 par. accords with Davies' conclusions. While the saying does assume that geographical Israel will be the focus or center of certain eschatological events, it simultaneously negates any advantage which might be thought to accrue to dwelling in Palestine. /27 The "sons of the kingdom", although in the land, will nonetheless be cast out. Their living in Palestine will not, any more than their descent from Abraham (cf Matt.

3.9 par.), bring them sufficient merit. Quite the contrary. It is precisely those inside the borders of Israel, those who have been blessed with the Messiah's presence, who will face the more dire consequences.

Another point. It is easy to imagine Jesus drawing an ironic contrast between the dismal fate of his prestigious Palestinian opponents and the good fortune of unknown multitudes outside the land, who were no doubt thought by many to be inferior Jews (cf. m. Qidd.1.9-10; b.sota 14a; b.Ketub.111a). In Luke 14.15-24, the parable of the great banquet, those first invited turn down the invitations, after which the poor, the maimed, the blind, the lame and invalid come. Here those who should participate in the messianic feast lose their places to unlikely characters. This eschatological reversal, this overturning of the expected, runs throughout the Jesus tradition. It would hardly surprise to learn that Jesus, with the exaggerated rhetoric of prophetic antithesis, foretold a bright future for those in the diaspora, including the hidden lost tribes, while holding out damnation for the "righteous" (cf. Mark 2.17 par.), Jews or their leaders in the land who were confident that they would be the focus of God's end-time blessings.

In conclusion, Matt. 8.11-12 = Luke 13.28-29 was originally a prophecy about the eschatological ingathering of dispersed Jews. It took up this stock theme in order to threaten certain Jews in Israel with judgement. The saying had nothing at all to do with Gentiles. Passed down without a context, it was susceptible of being reinterpreted against the original sense. This unfortunately happened when the author of Matthew placed the logion in the middle of a pericope which contained a Jew/Gentile contrast. The new context suggested the identification of those from east and west with Gentiles. Whether this is in truth how the First Evangelist understood Matt.8.11-12 is not as certain as many have supposed. He may have inserted the verses simply because they pronounce a judgement upon the faithless within Israel. /28 But that issue aside, Matt.8.11-12 = Luke 13.28-29 can hardly be the key to unlocking the problem of what Jesus the Jew thought about Gentiles. /29

Notes

1. J. Jeremias, Jesus' Promise to the Nations (Philadelphia: Fortress 1982)
2. From Q. Compare Luke 13.28-29: "There you will weep and gnash your teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God and you yourselves will be cast out. And men will come from east and west, and from north and south and sit at table in the kingdom of God."
3. Promise, pp.55-63.
4. See the commentaries on Matthew and Luke. In church history the passage has usually been understood in either one of two ways. Many have thought the prophecy to symbolize the evangelization of the Gentiles, that is, the building up of the church throughout the world; so e.g. Ps.-Clem. Hom.8.4 and Bernard of Clairvaux, Serm.super Cant.cant. 77.7. But others have maintained an eschatological and more literal interpretation; so e.g. Justin, Dial. 140; Ambrose, De bono mort. 12.53-54; Patrick, Ep. 18. Both interpretations equate the "many" with Gentiles.
5. A.H. McNeile, The Gospel according to St. Matthew (London: Macmillan, 1915), p.105
6. N.Q.. King, "The 'Universalism' of the Third Gospel," in Studia Evangelica, Vol.1. ed. K. Aland et alii (TU 73; Berlin: Akademie Verlag 1959), pp.202-203
7. E.P. Sanders, Jesus and Judaism (Philadelphia: Fortress 1985), pp.119-120.
8. Promise, p.56, n.3, pp. 62-63.
9. U. Wegner, Der Hauptmann von Kafarnaum (WUNT 2/14; Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck] 1985, pp3-5.
10. Cf. Acts 2.9-11. When universalism is in mind, "north and south and east and west" is more common than just "east and west." Recall the play upon Adam's name in Sib.Or. 3.24-26 and 2 Enoch. 30.13 (in Greek the four letters of Adam's name are taken to represent the four cardinal directions). Note also Gen.28.14; 1 Kings 7.25; Isa.43.5-6; and b.Sabb. 118b.
11. Also, to mention another possibility, if the First Evangelist detected an allusion to Ps.107.3, knew that Ps.107.3 is about Jews, yet wanted Matt.8.11-12 to say something about Gentiles, he could have struck "from north and south" to eliminate the scriptural reference.
12. So M. Dahood, Psalms III. 101-150 (AB 17a; NYork, Doubleday 1970) p.81
13. This interpretation is perhaps assumed in Psalms of Solomon 11.3-4: "Stand up, O Jerusalem, on high, and see your children who are all being gathered together from the east and from the west by the Lord; and from the north they are coming to the joy of their God, and from the distant islands God has gathered them." Note also the eschatological interpretation of Ps.107.3 in Midrash of the Psalms on 107.2-3; and that in Isa 43.5-6 the

Jewish diaspora lies in four directions, north, south, east and west (cf. Ezek.37.9).

14. J. Schlosser, Le règne de Dieu dans les dits de Jésus (2 vols.; EBib; Paris, J. Gabalda 1980), 2.621, writes: "Dans L'AT l'expression 'du levant et du couchant' se rencontre principalement en des textes annonçant le rassemblement des dispersés d'Israël, et en des textes protéant sur la reconnaissance universelle de Jahvé." For the first point, he cites Isa.43.5; Zech.8.7; Ps.107(106).3; Baruch 4.37;5.5; Isa. 49.12; Jer.13.20;16.15; Psalms of Solomon 11.2-3; 1Enoch 57.1; and for the second point Isa 25.6;59.19; Mal. 1.11; Ps.50(49).1; 113(112).3 for the second. The statement conceals the fact that the phrase is never used of Gentiles coming to the holy land. Also, none of the texts in the second group ever uses both "east" and "west."
15. In the Babylon Talmud "west" is used for Palestine; but that is a late development and represents a non-Palestinian perspective.
16. D. Zeller, "Das Logion Mt 8,11f/Lk 13.28f und das Motiv der 'Völkerwallfahrt,'" BZ 15 (1971), pp.222-37; 16(1972), pp. 84-93.
17. See esp. Sanders, Jesus, pp.77-119, 222-241. Both Matthew and Luke understood Matt.19.28 = Luke 22.30 to refer to the disciples ruling over Israel, and this interpretation also holds for Q; see D.C. Allison, "Gnilka on Matthew," Bib (forthcoming). Moreover, Sanders is probably correct in tracing the logion to Jesus, although many have thought otherwise
17. According to Jeremias, Promise, p63, "The Conception of the pilgrimage of the Gentiles is not confined to Matt.8.11 in the gospels, but finds frequent expression in the sayings of Jesus." His evidence consists of Matt.25.31-32 (but the reference here to "all the nations" is redactional; see J. Friedrich, Gott im Bräuder? [CTM 7; Stuttgart: Calwer 1977], pp. 249-57); John 10.16 and 11.51-52 (can the mention of "other sheep not of this fold" and of "the children of God scattered abroad really be assigned to the historical Jesus?); Mark 11.17 (recent commentators tend to regard the mixed citation of Isa.56.7 [which reproduces the LXX] and Jer.7.11 (which also depends on the LXX) as a Markan insertion and doubt authenticity; see J. Gnilka, Das Evangelium nach Markus [2 vols.; EKKNT II; Zürich and Neukirchen-Vluyn: Benziger and Neukirchener 1978,1979]. 2.127; even if the saying is dominical, it need not be linked with the eschatological pilgrimage of the Gentiles); Matt.5.14 (Jeremias adopts Von Rad's suggestion that the city set on a hill is the new Jerusalem and then ties this into Jewish texts in which the light from the city of God brings the Gentiles to Jerusalem; but see W.D. Davies and D.C. Allison, Jr., A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew] 3 vols.; ICC Edinburgh, T&T Clark 1988ff.); John 7.37-38 (Jeremias links Jesus' saying about the living water with Rev.22.2, where the river of water of life is associated with the healing of the nations; but the association is made only in Revelation, and does John 7.37-38 preserve words of Jesus?); Mark 4.32 par. (Here Jeremias may be right: the nesting birds could be an allusion to Gentiles, and the parable goes back to Jesus); Mark 14.9 par. (Jeremias' attempt to interpret this in terms of an eschatological angelic summons to the

nations [cf. Mk 13.27; Rev. 14.6-7] fails because of the iterative sense of hopou eay and the attributing to Jesus of what is redactional; So Gnilka, Markus, 2: 225-226); and Mt 5.35 (one can hardly argue from the simple use of "the city of the great king" anything about Jesus' eschatological expectations, and in any case Matt.5.35 would appear to be a secondary addition to the core in 5.(33a) + 34a + 37;) see Davies and Allison, Matthew, 1.533. It needs not be denied that Jesus looked forward to the eschatological ingathering of the nations, for this is foretold in some OT texts, Mk 4.32 may assume such a belief, and the gospels contain no indication that Jesus expected the destruction of the Gentiles. But Jeremias' assertion about "frequent expression" holds neither for properly dominical materials or for the gospels as they stand.

19. See J.H. Charlesworth, The Pseudepigrapha and Modern Research, (SCS 7, Missoula; Scholars Press 1976), pp.147-49.
20. Cf. W.D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism (rev.ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress 1980), pp.78-82.
21. G.R. Beasley-Murray, Jesus and the Kingdom of God (London: Paternoster 1986), p.170
22. No conclusion can be drawn from the simple use of "many." For while polloi is used in the LXX of Gentiles (e.g. Isa.2.3), there are also texts which stress how "many" Jews are in the diaspora and how "many" will return to the land (e.g. Zech.10.8-12; 1 Enoch 57.1; 4 Ezra 13.39; 2 Baruch 77-87).
23. Promise, p.51.
24. Cf. J. Klausner, Jesus of Nazareth (London: Macmillan 1925), pp. 367-68
25. For a review of the issue see D.C. Allison, Jr., "Jesus and the Covenant," JSNT 29 (1987), pp.57-78)
26. W.D. Davies, The Gospel and the Land: Early Christianity and Jewish Territorial Doctrine (Berkeley, University of California 1974), p.365.
27. Contrast the type of thinking found in 2 Baruch 29.2; 71.1; 4 Ezra 9.7-8; and b. Ketub. 111a. In these places the land will protect the saints from the dangers of the latter days.
28. See Davies and Allison, Matthew, Vol.2, ad loc.
29. I should like to thank W.D. Davies for his critical comments on an earlier form of this essay.