

The Epistle of Jude from the Travancore-Cochin, India
Manuscript of the Rabbinical-Hebrew New Testament:
Compared to the Peshitta of Walton's Polyglot

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MS heb. Oo.1.32, ff. 160a–b.

Compared to Walton's polyglot:
Brian Walton, ed., *Biblia sacra polyglotta*, vol. 6 (London: 1657), 928, 930, 932.

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Preface

This is a translation of the Epistle of Jude from the Travancore-Cochin, India manuscript of the rabbinical-Hebrew New Testament, the final text which the 19th-century philologist Franz Delitzsch claimed was translated by Ezekiel Raḥabi from the Syriac Peshitta (specifically from Walton's polyglot).¹ My last translation of the manuscript covered the complete text of Matthew and demonstrated that, while some Syriac influence exists in that text, evidence for translation from the Peshitta is equivocal at best and extensively problematic on a variety of fronts.² This translation of the Hebrew text of Jude adds a parallel translation of the Syriac Peshitta (from Walton's polyglot) and shows that (at least) this portion of the manuscript is not from the Peshitta (being a radically different type of text) and bears no evidence of Syriac influence.

The texts have been set side-by-side and provided with accompanying English translations. A simple color scheme has been used to show where the greatest differences between the texts occur. Blue has been used for material which is in the Peshitta but which is not meaningfully paralleled in the Travancore-Cochin text, while red has been used for material in the Travancore-Cochin which is not accordingly paralleled in the Peshitta. Minor semantic differences and variations in syntax have not be highlighted for the sake of charitability in argument, though it should be noted that the syntax is quite different all throughout. Any reading of these texts in parallel will

¹ Delitzsch proposed that Raḥabi translated Matthew through Jude from the Peshitta of Walton's polyglot (1657), based on his study of the manuscript and specifically the text of Romans. See F. Delitzsch, *Paulus des Apostels Brief an die Römer aus griechischen Urtext auf Grund des Sinai-Codex in das Hebräische übersetzt und aus Talmud und Midrasch erläutert* (Leipzig: Dörffling und Franke, 1870): 105–106.

² These include issues of language, dialect, history circumstance, doctrine, and textual affinity.

show them to have little in common other than some basic vocabulary and themes throughout. Notice how the titles of each work are different. Notice how different the beginnings³ and endings of each translation are. Then, look through the body of the text and see how the blue and red highlights have no correspondence within the other text.

Notably, evidence for Syriac influence is absent from the text of Jude. The added abbreviations ("𐤀𐤍") for the Tetragrammaton (i.e. "the LORD") in a number of verses where they do not correspond to the Syriac's standard substitution (ܡܠܟܐ) is out of character with a polemically motivated anti-Christian translation by a Jewish author.⁴ Conversely, a few instances where the Syriac could be expected to have corresponding Hebrew abbreviations are lacking.⁵ Two Syriac personal names (which are essentially Hebrew) have been changed into Latinate-language forms: Yehuda ⇒ Yudas (Judas), and Ya'qub ⇒ Yaqobus (Jacobus). Verses 13, 16, 22, and 23 have virtually nothing in common between their versions: verse 16 becomes an unprecedented quotation of Psalm 5:9 from the Hebrew bible, and verse 23 teaches the Ebionitic doctrine of "good works" making atonement.⁶ Curiously, the only verse which does seem to include much of the same language is the introduction and beginning to the quotation from 1 Enoch 1:9 in verse 14. Overt anti-Christian sentiment, or "scorn" (such as Delitzsch found in Romans), is absent from the text: the Hebrew may even be considered an improvement over the canonical. In sum, the texts are so different that it cannot with any honesty be claimed that one is the translation of the other.

³ Notice how the Hebrew of verse 1 lacks the Syriac's address to "the nations."

⁴ See verses 1, 2, 4, 5, and 21.

⁵ See verses 9 and 14.

⁶ Robert Eisenman takes the doctrine of "justification by works" as the primitive thesis of the ancient Ebionites (the "poor" heterodox Jewish-Christians) against whom Pauline Christianity antithetically emerged to become a new and hostile movement: see R. Eisenman, *James the Brother of Jesus*, (New York: Penguin, 1996), 247–49, 355, 663.

Wherever the Travancore-Cochin translation of Jude came from, it did not come from the Syriac of the Peshitta. Combined with my previous work on the text of Matthew,⁷ there is ample evidence for the dubiousness of Delitzsch's generalization that Matthew through Jude was a translation from the Peshitta of Walton's polyglot. More philological research needs to be done before further pronouncements are made. For too long, scholars have relied on second-hand claims regarding the text, repeated for two centuries without substantiation. Only a serious and concerted scholarly effort toward reassessment of the books of the Travancore-Cochin manuscript can suffice going forward. Short of this, the unrigorous standards of the past will self-perpetuate and a potentially important witness to the Semitic-language transmission of the New Testament will be lost. Hopefully others will follow up on this most interesting subject and provide the proper critical study which it so much deserves.

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⁷ J. Gebhardt-Klein, *The Travancore-Cochin, India Manuscript of Ezekiel Rahabi's Rabbinical-Hebrew Matthew: Text and Translation* (Reno, NV: self-published, 2022).

Texts and Translations

Key:

Blue = material in the Peshitta but not semantically paralleled in the Travancore-Cochin

Red = material in the Travancore-Cochin but not semantically paralleled in the Peshitta

*N.b.: Only clear differences in the readings are highlighted accordingly. Minor semantic differences and variations in syntax have not been highlighted for the sake of charitability in argument, though the syntax is notably quite different throughout.

אֲבִיחָא [p. 928] הַמְסֵבָא אֲמַמְסִי הַנְּבִסָּב	The Letter of Yehuda the brother of Ya'qub (Chapter 1)	שׁוֹב אִיגְרָת [f. 160a] שְׁלַח יוֹדָס	Another letter Yudas sent (Chapter 1)
הַמְסֵבָא חֲבֵרָא הַנְּבִסָּב מְסִיחָא הֵן הַנְּבִסָּב לְחִתְרָא סָתָא הַכֹּלָלָא אֲכָא וְנִסְתָּב: אֲבִיחָא מְסִיחָא לְחִתְרָא:	¹ Yehuda, the servant of Yeshua the Messiah, but the brother of Ya'qub: to the nations called who by God the Father are beloved , and by Yeshua the Messiah are guarded .	יֹדָס עֶבֶד מִישׁוֹ הַמְּשִׁיחַ אֲבִלְ אַח אֶחָד מִן יַאקֻבּוֹס הַשְּׁלִיחַ הַמְּקוֹדְשִׁים בְּהָ"ה אֲבִי וְנִסְתָּרִים בִּישׁוֹ הַמְּשִׁיחַ:	Yudas, a servant of Yeshu the Messiah, but one brother of Yaqobus the apostle : those sanctified by the LORD the Father and hidden by Yeshu the Messiah.
וְנִסְתָּב: חֵן חֵלָא אֲמַמְסִי נִסְתָּב לְחֵן.	² May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you.	הָ"ה יִתֵּן לָכֶם הַרְבֵּה אַהֲבָה וְחֶסֶד וְשָׁלוֹם וְרַחֲמִים:	² May the LORD give you much love and kindness and peace and mercy.
מִיִּיחָא חֵן חֵלָא לְחֵן לְחֵן: חֵן סָתָא הֵן הַכֹּלָלָא: אֲמַמְסִי אֲמַלְלָא	³ My beloved, while I make all diligence to write to you about our own common life , it is necessary for me to	אֲחֵים אֲהוּבִים אַחֵר שְׂרָצִיתִי לְכַתּוּב לָכֶם מִקְדוּשָׁתִינוּ מִצְאָתִי לְצוּרָה לְחֻכִּיחָא לָכֶם	³ Beloved brothers , after having wanted to write to you about our sanctification , I found it necessary to

לכתוב לך. כה
 מפיס את האלה
 לטובת של
 שבעה. אלה
 הנה וכן אלה
 לטובת

4⁴ For some people have
 obtained entrance, those
 who from the beginning
 were formerly proscribed
 with this condemnation;
 wicked people who turn
 the grace of God to
 defilement, and deny him
 who is alone the Lord
 God, and our Lord Yeshua
 the Messiah.

5⁵ For your reminder then
 I wish, while you all know,
 that God, when one time
 he redeemed the people
 from Egypt, has twice
 destroyed those who did
 not believe,
 אלה.

6⁶ and to the angels who
 did not guard their
 primacy, but left their
 dwelling, for the judgment
 of the great day in chains
 לטובת

בכתבים שתחזקו
 אתכם באמונה
 שנותן לקדושים:
 in the faith that is
 given to the saints.

4⁴ For some human
 beings enter among
 them from those who
 were already
 proscribed for this
 punishment; and they
 are wicked, and delay
 the mercy of the LORD
 licentiously, and
 without believing in the
 LORD and in his Messiah.

5⁵ But I wish to make
 known to you that the
 LORD, who brought out
 his people from Egypt,
 has killed two times
 those who did not
 believe,

6⁶ and also the angels
 who sinned, but having
 been thrust down from
 above, they are hidden
 in darkness until the
 היום הדין העתיד:

הנמכר זכר unknown, he keeps under
כאשעתא לזנתא obscurity.
השגה בחלוקה נלז.

[930]

77Just like Sodom and
7אכחכא הסהסר Gomorrah and the cities
אבמחזא אמתעלא around them, whereby in
הגדושת. הכח likeness they fornicated
בהמחלל המלך ות and went after another
אמול, כאז חפא flesh, are placed beneath
אשתא: שנתח השגה fire for eternity while
הנזא הלחל: חזסטת להנא. condemned to the
judgment,

88in likeness are even they
8כח בהמחלל אפ מלך החלמא who imagine in dreaming,
מחלל חלמא defiling the flesh but
לכפא חז חלופ. despising authority, and
מחלל חז חלופ. blaspheme glory.
חללחמחלל

99But Mikha'el, the chief of
9מחכאל חז the angels who makes
זמחלל חז judgment with the
הכח אכחלל חז Accuser, when
מחלל חז: contending about the
חלל חז body of Mushe, did not
המחלל חז dare to bring against him
המחלל חז the judgment of
המחלל חז blasphemy, but rather
המחלל חז said, "The LORD shall

day of the future
judgment.

77And also the places of
7אגם המקומות Sodom and Gomorrah
סדום ועמורה even likewise come for
וכדומה לזה באים an example and suffer
למשל וסובלים forever fire of
לעד אש של גיהנם: Gehinnom,

88and likewise those
8וכדומה לזה אילו who degrade the
שמבזים השררות rulership and curse
ומקללים למלכות: the kingdom.

99But the angel Mikha'el
9אבל המלאך מיכאל בשעה in the hour that he
שחולק עם השטן disputed with Satan
בשביל הקבר של because of the tomb
משה אפילו הכי לא of Mosheh, even thus
קלל אותו רק אמר did not curse him, but
לו האדון יענוש only said to him, "The
אותך: Lord shall punish you."

rebuke you.”

¹⁰מלך ה' כאלה ¹⁰But these ones
ה' נהגם מלך-פס. blaspheme things which
כאלה ה' הנסאם they do not know, but by
אפי מתהא מנאם like beasts persuaded,
מפסם: כאלה being corrupted by them.
מלסלם.

¹¹למ' הכאמ' ¹¹Woe to them! For on the
הסאם אול' אכאז way of Qayen they went,
לחמ' הכלח and after the error of
כאזא אעזאם Bel'am they were
אכמ'סאם הסאמ' immoderate for gain, and
אכאם in the rebellion of Qorah
they perished.

¹²מל' אטמ' ¹²They are those who, in
אל' הכסאמ' their leisure while making
ח' מלחמ' defilement, puff up
מל'פ'פ' ח' ה' without fear, feeding
הסאם נפס' themselves: clouds
ח' ח' without rain, by which the
מל'ז' המ' ר' winds wander about;
פ'ס' אטל' האמ' trees whose fruit has
אכמ'סאם expired; for they are
ה' פאד' without fruit, having died
אמ'סאם אטל'ס' twice, even uplifted from
ח' ח' their roots;

¹³ח' ח' ¹³forceful waves of the
הכ' ז'ח' sea, which by means of
מס' כמ'סאם their foaming manifest

¹⁰אבל אילו ¹⁰But these ones curse
מקללים ולא and do not know
יודעים שום דבר anything, and even
ואף מה שיודעים what they do know
המה מבזים: they degrade.

¹¹ואוי להם כי המה ¹¹And woe to them! For
הולכים על הדרך they go on the way of
של קין ונפלים Qayin, and fall by the
בנסיון של בלעם trial of Bil'am because
בשביל איזה of some gains, and are
רווחים ונהרגים killed because of the
בשביל המחלוקת controversy of Qorah.
של קרח:

¹²והמה בעלי גיאות ¹²And they are
עם מתנותיכם possessors of
והמה כעננים בלי haughtiness with your
מים שהולכים gifts, and they are like
ברוח ואילנות clouds without water
שאינם נושאים that go with the wind,
פירות: and trees that do not
bear fruit;

¹³וכמו גלי הים ¹³and like the waves of
שזורקים לחוץ the sea which throw
רפשוטיט: out mud and clay.

חַתְּכָם מִחֵתְכָם. their shame; stars
 מִלֵּךְ הַבְּחֵלָה straying, for which the
 הַשְּׁמָמָה הַלְּחֵלַם blackness of darkness
 לְעַד בְּלֵי. forever is reserved.

14There was prophesied
 אֵלֶיךָ, אֵלֶיךָ, אֵלֶיךָ: 14
 מִן הָאָדָם, מִן הָאָדָם, also regarding them—he
 הַזֶּכֶּר מִן הָאָדָם who was the seventh
 מֵאָדָם. חָנוֹךְ—וְהָאָדָם from Adam, Hanokh—while
 אֵלֶיךָ מֵאָדָם saying, “Lo, the LORD
 בָּרִבְבוֹת הַקְּדוֹשִׁים: comes with myriads of
 the saints,

15that he will make
 חֵן. אֵלֶיךָ לְחֵן judgment over all, and to
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: convict all the wicked
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: because of all the deeds
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: they wickedly did, and
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: because of all harsh
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: words that wicked sinners
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: have spoken.” (1 Enoch
 1:9)

16They are those who
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: murmur and complain
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: about every matter, while
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: walking according to their
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: own lusts, and their
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: mouth speaks terrible
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: things, even praising
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: persons for the sake of
 gain.

14And also concerning
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: this Henokh the
 מֵאָדָם וְאָמַר רָאָה seventh from Adam
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: prophesied and said,
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: “Look, the Lord shall
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: come with thousands
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: of thousands, myriads
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: of saints,

15to make judgment
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: 15
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: against the wicked
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: because of their
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: wicked deeds.” (1
 Enoch 1:9)

16“For there is nothing
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: 16
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: correct in their
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: mouth, within them is a
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: chasm, an open grave
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: is their throat, (with)
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: their tongue they
 חֵן: חֵן: חֵן: make division.” (Ps 5:9)

17 **אבל אתם אחים** 17 But you, beloved
אחובים וזכרו **brothers**, also must
בהדיבור שנאמר remember **the speech**
מהתחילה that was spoken **from**
מהשלוחים **the beginning** by the
מאדונינו ישו apostles of our Lord
המשיח: Yeshu the Messiah,

18 **שֶׁאָמְרוּ לָכֶם כִּי** 18 **for they told you**
בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים **that in the last days**
יְהִי אִתְּכֶם **there would be with**
לְצַנִּים שְׂהוּלִים **you scoffers who go**
אַחֲרֵי תַאוֹתֵיהֶם: **after their own lusts.**

19 **וְאֵילּוּ הֵמָּה בְּבָשָׂר** 19 **And they are those**
וְלֹא בְּרוּחַ: **in the flesh and** not in
the Spirit.

20 **אבל אתם אחים** 20But you, beloved
אחובים חזקו אתכם **brothers**, strengthen
באמונתכם ע'י yourselves in your
הרוח הקודש: faith by means of the
Holy Spirit.

21 **ותעמדו באהבת ה' ותצפים על** 21And you shall stand in
הרחמים מאדונינו the love of **the LORD**
ישו לחיים [160b] and wait upon the
לעד: Yeshu for eternal life.

וְגַם אַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ ²²22And even you shall be

נזיק סלף. them from the fire.
 23 ²³But when they repent,
 [932] רחמיהם עלם. have compassion on them,
 בהלוא. בה שני with fear while you hate
 אטלף אף even the shirt that by
 לחלואי הני means of the flesh is
 כחלואי הני contaminated.
 24 ²⁴But to the one who is
 הניחם הלא able to guard you without
 צחלואי הלא fault and without scar,
 חלואי. אטלף and to establish you
 הלא חמל without blemish by
 חלואי. himself.
 25 ²⁵God saved us by means
 צחלואי חלואי of Yeshua the Messiah,
 חלואי חלואי our Lord, before his glory
 חלואי חלואי with joy, to him belong
 חלואי חלואי glory, and dominion, and
 חלואי חלואי honor, and magnitude,
 חלואי חלואי even now and throughout
 חלואי חלואי all ages. Amen.

רחמים: merciful.
 23 ²³But some of you by
 רחמים טובים good works even shall
 ותרצו מן be washed from the
 החטאים: sins.
 24 ²⁴But this one who is
 לשמור אתכם בלי able to guard you
 ספק ולעמוד אתכם without doubt and to
 לפני האדון בלי stand you up before
 שום חטא: the Lord is without any
 sin.
 25 ²⁵To this one shall
 ותפארת ומלכות belong honor and glory
 מעולם ועד עולם and kingdom from
 אמן: eternity and to
 סוף מהאגרות eternity. Amen.
 ששלח יודס End of the letters (sic)
 that Yudas sent.

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