

IN DEFENSE OF MATTHEW & LUKE, #1

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I have seen the need for, and have taken upon myself, the defense of historians and Biblical personages of an anointed nature, for all Truth is Anointed. I have taken up the cause of such personalities as Herodotus, Josephus and Eusebius as historians and am now in the process of defending the veracity of the apostle Paul. Most of the deliberation on the apostle Paul I have turned over to my good friend William Finck for his discernment is excellent in that area.

In addition to Paul, it will be necessary to also defend Luke, the writer of both Luke and Acts in our New Testament. With Luke, it will also be necessary to defend the genealogy of Christ recorded by the apostle Matthew. Peter wrote that there would be false teachers come among us with heresies, but the word heresy is not necessarily a bad word, for Paul said at Acts 24:14:

“But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they [the “Jews”] call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets ...”

But Peter, at 2 Peter 2:1, speaks about heresy in a different vein:

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Sovereign that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”

Now “damnable heresies” is quite another thing! It is my opinion that there are more “damnable heresies” floating around today than at any other time in history! And that includes many who profess to teach Israel Identity! Not that the doctrine of Israel Identity is a “damnable heresy”, but there are those within the movement who latch onto some particular passage of Scripture and attempt to twist it entirely out-of-context to suit their own egotism. These people usually consider they are doing God a favor, but the scheme they are promoting is only a product of their own pride! Once they set their compass in an erroneous direction, they will discredit every Scripture that agrees not with their play-pretty-premise.

I will now cite an example of just what I mean: There are a couple of men struggling to prove that Christ, our Redeemer, is of the Tribe of Ephraim rather than the Tribe of Judah. The first is Eugene (Buddy) Johnson, P.O. Box 2284, New Tazewell, TN 37824; the other is Russell Walker. Walker resided at Madisonville, VA in 2003 when he sent me a thesis the two had written up together entitled *In Search Of The Missing Birthright*. I had met both of these men in Loudon, Tennessee at the Piney

Ruritan Community Center for the Feast of Tabernacles starting October 4, 1996. At that gathering, one speaker was thrust upon us by the name of Scott Vaught who was teaching this same doctrine. I had just purchased a new computer, and when I got home from that meeting I started writing one of my first articles which I entitled *The Lies Of Scott Vaught*. At the time, I had no idea that Johnson and Walker had fallen for Vaught's lies. In the spring of 2003, I received their composition named above from Walker, who wanted to know what I thought of it. I wasted no time in answering him: "Your article is one damn lie right after another." The date of that mailing was 3-6-03.

By taking such a position, they contrive to make both **Matthew** and **Luke** liars. I will cite a few lines in their article to show how they do this. Walker, in a note in the first paragraph ahead of their thesis stated this: "... The basic premise is that the Birthright includes the scepter and that Christ, Abraham, David etc. all descended from Joseph." I don't know how Joseph became the father of Abraham, but that is what Walker said and Johnson evidently agreed. On page 9, lacking writing skill, they say: "So they said to him, 'In Bethlehem, in the land of Judah [misquoted by the scribes [sic needs "."] Should be Ephrata!] Are not the least among the rulers of Judah ..." Actually, it's Johnson and Walker who are misquoting Matthew at 2:6, and the brackets and contents belong to them, not me. Here they accuse Matthew of misquoting Old Testament prophecy at Micah 5:2. Inasmuch as Bethlehem was a newer name for the geographic area formerly known as Ephrath, Matthew did not misquote Micah, for Bethlehem is the same identical place as Ephrath; it has nothing to do with the Tribe of Ephraim! Nor did John take Micah 5:2 out of context at 7:42: "**Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?**"

Now we have to add the Book of John to Johnson's and Walker's list of alleged liars! Will it never end? Also, on page 9 of Johnson's and Walker's composition they say: "... Jacobs [sic] prophecy in Gen. 49:24 given to Joseph was the promised seed [Christ] would come through the house of Joseph Ephraim Claiming [sic no capitalization] the birthright!"

On page 15 of their 21 page article they make the statement: "You only have to know one thing here to see the deception of the lying pens of the Scribes [sic] THAT IS THE FACT THAT THIS IS NOT REVEALED IN THE GENEGOLY [sic], Salmon, Boaz, Jessie, and David and Christ were all Ephramites!" (Whatever "GENEGOLY" is.) On pages 15 & 16 Johnson and Walker once again quote Matt. 2:6 from some uncertain translation, saying: "So they said to him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea for thus it is written by the prophet: 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah misquoted by the scribes Should be Ephrata] Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel'" (sic brackets, capitalization & quotation marks incorrect). Again, they make liars out of Matthew, Luke & John!

Again on pages 17 & 18 Johnson and Walker repeat: "CLEARLY CHRIST IS THE SEED AND OFFSPRING OF DAVID WHO, IT HAS BEEN SHOWN WAS OF THE HOUSE OF EPHRAIM ... REMEMBER THE WARNING OF CHRIST! BE WARE OF THE scribes PHARISEES You will know Them by Their Fruits" (sic capitalization, punctuation, erratic grammar & emphasis theirs, not mine). Question: Where do Johnson and Walker get their proof that Matthew, Luke and John were the designated "scribes" and "Pharisees" that Christ said "to beware of"! What other scribes were there? Come on now, cite some evidence! Would Christ Himself have picked Matthew as an apostle, who wrote one of

the genealogies designating His lineage as Judah, only to write lies? That would make Christ an **accessory-before-the-fact!**

On page 20, Johnson and Walker say in part: "... to help you understand the complexity of the deception of the scribes as they have changed the location of the birthright territory in Bethlehem Ephratha to Bethlehem Judah. We have exposed this error and deception to help you overcome the lion of Judah, just as the true Greek reads in Revelation 5:5 Christ says: 'behold the lamb have overcome the lion of Judah to open the seals thereof'" (again capitalization and punctuation errors). Notice: This is not at all what the Greek says at Revelation 5:5! William Finck, an ardent Greek student, demonstrated in detail that Johnson's and Walker's statement here is inaccurate, and a downright falsehood (See *The Ephraim-Scepter Heresy, #5.*) To make the statement "overcome the lion of Judah" is downright blasphemy, but I'm sure the bad-fig "Jews" would approve, for that is also their agenda! Now that we are informed by Johnson and Walker that Matthew, Luke and John are all liars, let's examine what kind of a man this man known as Luke was! There is one thing sure about it: either Johnson and Walker are liars, or Matthew, Luke and John are liars! And, by their criteria, that would leave us only Mark in which to trust!

The reader will have to forgive me if I get somewhat distraught, because this thesis of Johnson and Walker is but one giant blasphemy against the Almighty Yahweh! Here the books of Matthew, Luke and John are being accused of "misquoting" Scripture. One must remember that Matthew and John were selected by our Savior Himself to be among the twelve disciples, and only one, Judas, proved to be a traitor. I will now paraphrase Spiros Zodhiates from his *The Complete Word Study New Testament* at the heading of the Book of Matthew, page 1: 'Matthew, whose name means 'gift of Yahweh', left his occupation of gathering taxes (Matt. 9:9-13) in order to follow Yahshua. In Luke 5:27-32, Matthew gave a banquet for Yahshua before becoming one of the Twelve Apostles (Matt. 10:3). He was an eyewitness of Yahshua's entire ministry.'" Are we to believe, as both Johnson and Walker insist, that our Redeemer would pick Matthew as an apostle, knowing that Matthew would deliberately misquote Christ's genealogy? If such a thing were true, and it surely isn't, then that would have made Christ an accessory-before-the-fact to Matthew's supposed lies. Although Luke's story is somewhat different, the same situation applies for him. Now if you, the reader, or myself sit idly by without countermending Johnson and Walker, we become an accessory to their lie. It is simply something that we cannot be silent about. It would be unChristian to do otherwise! How dare anyone accuse Matthew of lying, who has the approval of Yahshua Christ Himself! Therefore, the reason I'm putting all this effort forward is because I don't want anyone to ever point a finger at me and accuse me of approving Vaught's, Johnson's or Walker's lies.

THE TRUE STORY OF LUKE

To take up Luke's defense, I will now paraphrase Spiros Zodhiates from his *The Complete Word Study New Testament* at the heading of the Book of Luke, page 185: 'There is little doubt that the author of this book is Luke, 'the beloved physician' (Col. 4:14). He was a Gentile [an *ethnos (of the Israel nations)*] who is thought to have been a native of Antioch. He accompanied the Apostle Paul from Troas on his second missionary journey but remained in Philippi until Paul returned there on his last known missionary expedition (Acts 20:6). They

seem to have been close companions up until Paul's death (2 Tim. 4:11). Paul referred to him as his 'fellow-worker' in Philemon 1:24. The introductory remarks (Luke 1:1-4) indicate that there were other written accounts of the events surrounding Jesus' [Yahshua's] life, death, and resurrection that existed at the time this book was written. Apparently, as Luke gathered a wealth of information from 'eyewitnesses' that he had come in contact with while traveling with Paul, the Holy Spirit burdened his heart with the need to compose another narrative. [my brackets]

“Indeed, Luke does provide a more complete history than the other Gospels. He records twenty miracles of Jesus [Yahshua], more than any other Gospel, as well as twenty-three parables, eighteen of which appear only in his account.

“The Book of Luke also gives special attention to prayer. The combined Gospels record that Christ prayed a total of fifteen different times. Luke records eleven of these instances (each of the other Gospels include four or less [some of the prayers are repeated]) as well as a significant portion of Christ's teaching on prayer that is not recorded in the other Gospels.

“The book is thought to have been written sometime between the years A.D. 58 and 60. It is generally agreed that Luke intended his Gospel to be available to the public, particularly the Greek public ... The information that is included and the way that the material is presented indicates that Luke was appealing to the Greek mindset. The vocabulary and style are so refined that Luke's Gospel has been compared to various writings of Classical Greek ...”

And this only scratches the surface on the subject of Luke! Some say Luke was of Antioch of Asia Minor, and a good many in that period in Asia Minor were lost Israelites. There were two cities by the name Antioch, one in Pisidia and one in Syria. Others favor Philippi, a city in eastern Macedonia as Luke's home. Importantly, Luke was a Greek, a fact that is unquestionable, and thus a so-called “Gentile.” A careful perusal of Colossians 4:11, 14 will reveal that Luke was not of the circumcision, and therefore rather of the *ethnos* (*nations of lost Israel*), **and could not have been equated with the “scribes and Pharisees”** as Johnson and Walker so foolishly insinuate.

To give the reader an idea of just what an immense intellect this man Luke had, I will now quote from *The Interpreter's Bible*, volume 8 (of a 12 volume set) at the introduction of Luke, on pages 3-4:

“The Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts together represent a little more than one quarter of the New Testament and form its largest block. They constitute a unit larger than the Pauline corpus of thirteen letters and almost as large as those letters plus the Epistle to the Hebrews. Even if there were nothing else, their sheer bulk would give Luke and Acts a major claim on the interest of the New Testament student.

“I. The Unity of Luke-Acts: A Common Authorship.— The common authorship of Luke and Acts is obvious and is universally recognized. The second volume claims (Acts 1:1) to be by the same author as the first. The earliest direct references to the books in Christian literature assert their common authorship. Irenaeus in *Against Heresies*, written about A.D. 185, ascribed both books to Luke; and so also, according to the witness of the Muratorian canon, did the church of Rome at the end of the second century. Linguistic evidence supports the claims of preface and tradition. Nearly twice as many words are peculiar in the New Testament to Luke and Acts as to the other two Synoptic Gospels and Acts, and words and phrases characteristic of Luke are found in Acts at a ratio much higher than is true of words and phrases that are characteristic of Matthew or of Mark. The case for identifying the author of Luke with the author of Acts is therefore a strong one.

“*B. Style.*— Like the rest of the New Testament, Luke and Acts were written in the popular, nonliterary Greek that served as the international language of the day. In no sense was the author of Luke-Acts a classicist. Yet he had a sense of Greek style and of rhetorical sentence structure which gives him rank next in the New Testament to the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews as a writer ... Luke knew the rules of good Greek grammar and syntax and was accustomed to observe them. This is most evident in the balanced periodic sentence with which the Gospel begins, but is also to be observed in sufficient measure elsewhere to justify Jerome’s comment that Luke ‘of all the evangelists was the most polished in his use of the Greek language.’

‘Some of the distinctive features of Luke’s style can be noted in connection with the omissions, changes, and improvements he made in the material he took over from Mark. In such instances we can be certain, as rarely we can be elsewhere, that the phrasing is Luke’s rather than that of his source. In accordance with good Hellenistic literary practice he omits Semitic and Latin ‘barbarisms’ wherever possible. ‘Boanerges,’ ‘Iscariot,’ ‘abba,’ ‘hosanna,’ ‘Gethsemane,’ and ‘Golgotha’ are not used, and the phrases ‘Talitha cumi’ and ‘Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani’ are missing. The Greek *hekatontarches* is substituted for the Latin ‘centurion,’ and the Latin *quadrans* (Mark 12:42) is not reproduced. The Marcan ‘amen’ is frequently omitted and occasionally changed to ‘truly.’ ‘Rabbi’ is replaced with ‘master’ or ‘Lord.’ ‘Satan’ is retained in Luke 11:18 (Mark 3:26) but is dropped in favor of ‘devil’ in Luke 4:2 (Mark 1:13) and Luke 8:12 (Mark 4:15). ‘Simon the Cananaean’ is translated ‘Simon ... the Zealot.’ Even those words of foreign origin that are retained are frequently qualified by a participle or other expression meaning ‘named’ or ‘called’— for example, ‘a city called Bethsaida’ and ‘the feast of Unleavened Bread ... which is called the Passover.’ ‘Straightway,’ ‘again,’ and ‘much,’ among Mark’s favorite adverbs, are used infrequently or not at all. Of the 151 instances in Mark of the use of the historical present only one survives (Luke 8:49 = Mark 5:35). Mark’s faulty use of the Greek imperfect to introduce a single and definite saying is often corrected to the aorist. Compound verbs are consistently preferred to Mark’s simple forms. Mark’s monotonous use of coordinate clauses connected by ‘and’ is varied by the employment of another conjunction or of a participial or similar complex construction. Periphrastic introductions (‘and it came to pass that’— omitted by the RSV as redundant) are frequently prefixed to Marcan passages. Again and again Luke purges Mark’s repetitious style as in the following instances:

‘Mark 1:32: ‘And at even, when the sun did set....’

‘Luke 4:40: ‘Now when the sun was setting.’

‘Mark 12:44: ‘All that she had, even all her living.’

‘Luke 21:3: ‘All the living that she had.’

‘He regularly smoothes Mark’s involved constructions, as in the following passage:

‘Mark 3:7-8: ‘And a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumaea, and from beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.’

‘Luke 6:17: ‘And a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him ...’

‘With all his excellent command of Greek, Luke has incorporated material, chiefly in the birth and infancy narratives and in the first half of the book of Acts, that is replete with Hebraisms. This may be the result of a deliberate attempt on Luke’s part to give his narrative an archaic flavor at these points by modeling it on the Septuagint ...

“The extent to which Luke used sources for the material peculiar to his Gospel is discussed elsewhere ... That such passages as the story of the penitent sinner, the parable of the good Samaritan, the story of Martha and Mary, the parable of the prodigal son, and the story of the walk to Emmaus, are not entirely Luke’s own free composition may be taken for granted. But their exquisite style is Luke’s ...”

These early parts of Luke & Acts, replete with Hebraisms, were surely written accounts given him by eyewitnesses, as he himself attests, which he evidently kept intact to retain their credibility and authenticity. While Luke was skillful in the Greek language, he was not incompetent in the Hebrew, thus capable of making a proper translation without corrupting the testimony.

Oh what fools we make of ourselves! (Proverbs 21:16): “The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead (of the Cainite-Rephaim-Jew, Gen. 15:20).”