

The "Q/q" Hypothesis

A. Matthew and Luke's Common Material

1. "Q/q" = about 230 verses in common between Matt and Luke

2. The exact statistics:¹

- Matthew has 4,290 words that have Lukan parallels that are not in Mark.
- Luke has 3,559 words that have Matthean parallels that are not in Mark.

3. What accounts for the similarities?

II. Did Matthew Use Luke?



If Matthew copied from Luke, that would explain the similarities.

But, if Matthew copied from Luke, why did he leave out Luke's "L" material? This is the "L" material Matthew omitted:

Luke 1-2:

- John and Jesus' birth narratives
- Mary's Song (Magnificat)
- Zechariah's Song (Benedictus)
- The dating of Jesus' birth
- Jesus in the Temple at age twelve

Luke 9-19:

- Parable of the Good Samaritan
- Parable of the Prodigal Son
- Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus

Luke 24:

- Unique resurrection material
- Jesus' post-resurrection talk with two disciples on the road to Emmaus
- Jesus' post-resurrection teaching on the OT

The Book of Acts

¹The statistics are from Robert Stein, *The Synoptic Problem* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987), 89.

III. Did Luke Use Matthew?



If Luke copied from Matthew, that would explain the similarities. However, that raises some very difficult questions (see below).

A. Why would Luke omit the “M” material?

Examples of “M” material:

Matthew 1-2

- Unique genealogy
- Wise men visit the infant Jesus
- Joseph and Mary's flight to Egypt
- Herod's massacre of innocent children

Matthew 27-28

- Unique resurrection material
- Story of the guards at the tomb
- Story of the guards' report to the chief priest

B. Luke lacks Matthew's additions to triple tradition

1. What is triple tradition?
2. We find that Matthew has added some verses to Mark's material
 - And Luke never includes Matthew's additions
 - This suggests that Luke did not know Matthew
3. For example:
 - # T14: Sick Healed at Evening (Mt 8:16-17; Mk 1:32:34; Lk 4:40-41)
 - # T91: Reason for Speaking in Parables (Mt 13:10-17; Mk 4:10-12; Lk 8:9-10)

C. Luke's puts Q/q material in a different context than Matthew

Matthew arranges the Q/q material into five blocks of material.

- Chapters 5-7, 10, 13, 18, 23-25.
- Each section ends with, “And when Jesus finished these sayings” (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1)
- Some suggest Matthew may have been trying to compose a “New Torah” of five books

Luke arranges Q/q material into two different blocks of material

- Luke 6:20 - 8:3 and Luke 9:51 - 18:14.
- Luke's arrangement of Q material is not as deliberate as Matthew's
- If Luke used Matthew, why did Luke scattered the Sermon on the Mount—considered one of the most carefully crafted sections of Matthew—all over?²

D. Conclusion

²See the chart in Stein, *The Synoptic Problem*, 96.

IV. Was Q/q a written source?

A. Exact Verbal Agreement

The exactness of wording for the Q/q-material suggests that Luke and Matthew borrowed from the same written source.

Class Exercise: Check the wording and order in the following:

- # T2: John's Preaching of Repentance (Mt 3:7-10; Lk 3:7-9)
- # T34: On Serving Two Masters (Matt 6:24; Lk 16:13)

B. Similar Verbal Agreement

Not all of the Q/q-material is exact, yet very similar.

Class Exercise: Check the working and order in the following:

- # T38 (A70): God's Answering Prayer (Matt 7:7-11; Lk 11:9-13)
- # T26 (A58): Non-retaliation (Mt 5:38; Lk 6:29-30).
- # T30 (A62): Lord's Prayer (Mt 6:9-13; Lk 2-4).

C. Order of the Material

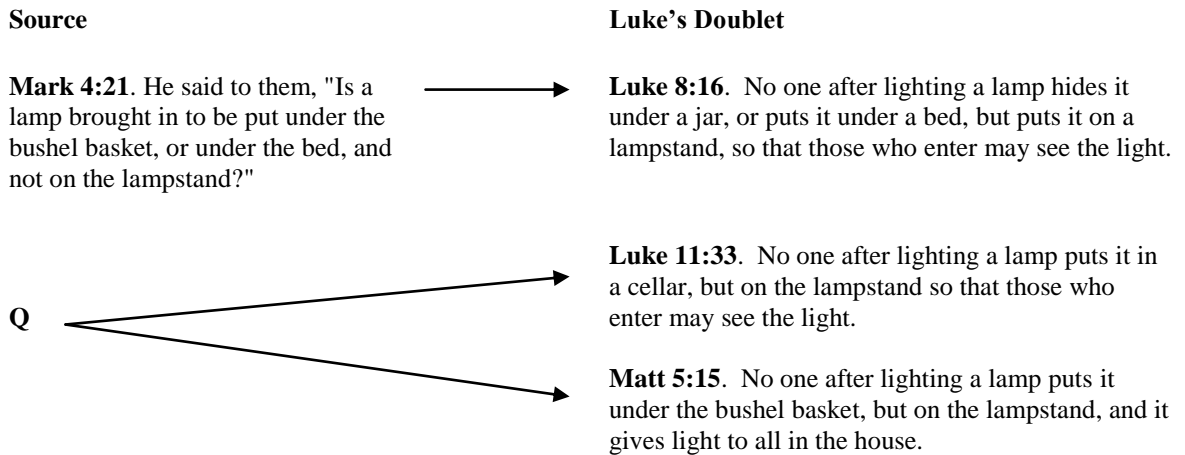
Table 1

	Luke		Matthew	
1	3:7-9, 16f.	John the Baptist's Preaching	3:7-12	1
2	4:2-13	Temptation of Jesus	4:2-11	2
3	6:20-23, 27-30 32-36	Sermon on the Plain I	5:3-6, 11f., 39-42, 45-48	3
4	6:37f., 41-49	Sermon on the Plain II	7:1-5, 16-21 24-27	7
5	7:1-10	Centurion from Capernaum	8:5-13	9
6	7:18-35	John the Baptist's Sayings	11:2-19	13
7	9:57-60	Sayings on Discipleship	8:19-22	10
8	10:1-12	Missions Discourse	9:37-10:15	11
9	10:13-15, 21f.	Woes and Joys	11:21-23, 25f.	14
10	11:1-4	Lord's Prayer	6:9-13	5
11	11:9-13	On Prayer	7:7-11	8
12	11:14-23	Beelzebul Controversy	12:22-30	15
13	11:24-26	Saying on Backsliding	12:43-45	17
14	11:29-32	Against Request for Miracles	12:38-42	16
15	11:33-35	Sayings on Light	5:15; 6:22f.	4
16	11:39-52	Against the Pharisees	23:4, 23-25, 29-36	19
17	12:2-10	Summons to Confession	10:26-33	12
18	12:22-34	Cares and Treasures	6:19-21, 25-33	6
19	12:39-46	Watchfulness	24:43-51	22
20	13:18-21	Mustard Seed and Leaven	13:31-33	18
21	13:34f.	Predictions Concerning Jerusalem	23:37-39	20
22	17:22-37	Discourse on the Parousia	24:26-28, 37-41	21
23	19:11-27	Parable of the Talents	25:14-30	23

Table 2

	Luke	Matthew
1	6:40	(10:24f.)
2	10:2	9:37f.
3	10:3–12	10:9–16
4	10:16	(10:40)
5	12:2f.	10:26f.
6	12:4–7	10:28–31
7	12:8f.	10:32f.
8	12:11f.	(10:19f.)
9	12:51–53	10:34–36
10	14:26f.	10:37f.
11	17:33	10:39

D. “Doublets” in Matthew and Luke



E. Common Vocabulary and Style

VI. The Contents of Q/q

A. Jesus Sayings (“sayings source”)

1. Q primarily contains sayings attributed to Jesus
2. Q is a collection of sayings of Jesus without narrative
3. Q has three types or layers of sayings material
 - Q¹ Earliest sapiential (wisdom) layer
 - Q² Prophetic redactional layer
 - Q³ Apocalyptic redactional layer

B. Wisdom Sayings — Q¹

<u>The Earliest Layer of Q</u>
Lk 6:20-b-23 (Mt 5:3-12)
Lk 6:27-30 (Mt 5: 39b-40, 42, 44)
Lk 6:31 (Mt 7:12)
Lk 6:32-33, 35b-36 (Mt 5:45-48)
Lk 6:37-38 (Mt 7:1-2)
Lk 6:39-40 (Mt 15:14; 10:24-25)
Lk 6:41-42 (Mt 7:3-5)
Lk 6:43-45 (Mt 7:16-20; 12:33-35)
Lk 6:46-49 (7:21, 24-27)

C. Prophecies — Q²

T# 139: Woes Pronounced on Galilean Cities (Lk 10:13-15; Mt 11:21-24)	
<p>Matt 11:21-24.</p> <p>Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I tell you, on the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? No, you will be brought down to Hades. For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I tell you that on the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom than for you.</p>	<p>Luke 10:13-15.</p> <p>Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But at the judgment it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? No, you will be brought down to Hades.</p>

D. Apocalyptic Sayings — Q³

T# 184: The Parable of the Flood (Lk 17:26-27; Mt 24:37-39)	
<p>Matt 24:37-39</p> <p>For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so too will be the coming of the Son of Man.</p>	<p>Luke 17:26-27</p> <p>Just as it was in the days of Noah, so too it will be in the days of the Son of Man. They were eating and drinking, and marrying and being given in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed all of them.</p>

E. Was there a Q community?

VI. Some second thoughts about Q?

A. Eta Linneman's rejection of Q

1. Eta Linnemann argues that "There is no convincing evidence for the alleged Q in Matthew and Luke."³
2. Linnemann's argument is:
 - There are no extant manuscripts of Q
 - The early church fathers never mention such a document
 - She says, "The differences in order, and the percentages of identical wording, argue against literary dependence, since the differences are much higher than the similarities."⁴
3. She bases her conclusions on findings concerning exact agreements. Of 65 Q parallels, word-for-word agreement is as follows:
 - 7 out of 65 (11%) have 75-100% identical words
 - 15 out of 65 (22%) have 50-74.9% identical words
 - 26 out of 65 (41%) have 25-49.9% identical words
 - 17 out of 65 (26%) have 0-24.9% identical words
4. First response:

Linnemann's analysis actually supports Q
Even 25% agreement in identical words suggest copying!
By Linnemann's count, 74% of Q-material has 25% word agreement or more.
5. Second response:

The problem with Linnemann's analysis is that it is based on "identical words"
In my mind, dependence can exist even if "identical words" are not found;
Material showing fairly close content and order suggests literary dependence.

B. Mark Goodacre's *Case Against Q* (2002) and *Questioning Q* (2004)

1. Goodacre offers ten reasons for rejecting Q (<http://www.ntgateway.com/Q/ten.htm>).
2. Goodacre's position is not convincing

C. The existence of Q raises theological and historical concerns

1. Q/q leaves out important accounts and theological motifs
2. Q suggests early Christianity was pluriform
3. Q does not nullify Paul

³Eta Linnemann, "Is There a Gospel of Q," *Bible Review*, Vol XI, No. 4 (August 1995): 18-23, 42-43; esp. 23.

⁴Eta Linnemann, "Is There a Gospel of Q," 23.

4. Q does not overshadow other (oral) tradition

VII. Should we affirm a Q document?

“Yes” if we accept Markan priority and the five arguments for Q as a written source.

VIII. Gospel of Thomas and Q

1. The Gospel of Thomas is a “sayings source”

2. Dating of *Gospel of Thomas*

- Discovered in 1945 at Nag Hammadi, Egypt
- First published in 1959
- Didymos Judas Thomas originally wrote Thomas in Coptic
- The oldest extant manuscript of the Gospel (Codex II) is dated to about 400 A.D
- Dispute about its earliest date: mid-2nd century? or mid-1st century?

3. Comparing Thomas and Q

The Gospel of Thomas

Th 3

Th 6 (Q6:31)

Th 13 (no precedent in synoptics)

Th 22 (no precedent in synoptics)

Th 26 (Q 6:41-42)

Th 34 (Q6:39)

Th 43 (Q6:43)

Th 54 (Q6:20)

Th 58

Th 59b

Th 68

Th 78 (Q7:24-25)

Th 92, 94 (Q 11:9-10)

Th 95 (Q:34a)

Th 108

Th 113