

# Cover Page

## Article Title

'Cut in Two', Part 2: Reconsidering the Redaction of Q 12:42-46

## Significance of Work

Building on the groundwork of the first article in this series of two, the current article considers and elaborates on Kloppenborg's highly influential theory of the stratification of Q by challenging his attribution of Q 12:42-46 in its entirety to the main redaction. Taken as a unit, these two articles are potentially significant for our understanding of: (1) the stratification of the Sayings Gospel Q; (2) the redaction of the Sayings Gospel Q; (3) the unity and flow of the formative stratum in Q; (4) the usage of parables in Q; (5) the pericope behind Q 12:42-46; (6) the historical Jesus.

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# 'Cut in Two', Part 2:

## Reconsidering the Redaction of Q 12:42-46

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### Abstract

In his influential 1987 monograph, Kloppenborg identified three layers in the Sayings Gospel Q: the 'formative stratum' (or Q<sup>1</sup>), the 'main redaction' (or Q<sup>2</sup>), and the 'final recension' (or Q<sup>3</sup>). He ascribed the cluster of sayings in Q 12:39-59 to the main redaction. Within this cluster appears the parable of the loyal and wise slave (Q 12:42-46). In my view, some portions of this parable actually originate with the formative stratum. The aim of the current article is to reconsider the redactional make-up of this parable by appealing to Kloppenborg's own criteria for distinguishing between Q<sup>1</sup> and Q<sup>2</sup>, including those of 'characteristic forms', 'characteristic motifs' and 'implied audience'.

### Introduction

In his influential 1987 monograph, Kloppenborg identified three layers in the Sayings Gospel Q: the 'formative stratum' (or Q<sup>1</sup>), the 'main redaction' (or Q<sup>2</sup>), and the 'final recension' (or Q<sup>3</sup>). Out of these, only the first two are relevant to the current discussion. In his analysis, Kloppenborg (1987:148-154) ascribed the cluster of sayings in Q 12:39-59 to the main redaction. Within this cluster appears the parable of the loyal and wise slave (Q 12:42-46). In my view, some portions of this parable

28 actually originate with the formative stratum. The aim of the current article is to  
29 reconsider the redactional make-up of this parable by appealing to Kloppenborg's  
30 own criteria for distinguishing between Q<sup>1</sup> and Q<sup>2</sup>, namely those of 'characteristic  
31 forms', 'characteristic motifs' and 'implied audience'.

32

33 As the previous statement reveals, this article accepts the influential stratigraphy of  
34 Q proposed by Kloppenborg in 1987, thereby using it as a basis for further study. A  
35 number of other scholars have done the same (e.g. Vaage 1994:7, 107; Cotter  
36 1995:117; Arnal 2001:5). The present author has defended his acceptance and  
37 approval of Kloppenborg's stratigraphy of Q at length elsewhere (see Howes  
38 2012:79-105, 167). This does not mean that every aspect and argument of  
39 Kloppenborg's stratigraphy is simply taken over without question. In fact, the  
40 current article functions as an example of how one may accept Kloppenborg's  
41 stratigraphy in principle, but still question and critically re-examine some of the  
42 more specific arguments and conclusions that pertain to particular texts.

43

44 Kloppenborg (1987:148-154) treats the cluster of sayings in Q 12:39-59<sup>1</sup> together,  
45 claiming that '[t]he threat of apocalyptic judgment recurs as the formative literary  
46 and theological motif'. He distinguishes this cluster from the foregoing material (Q  
47 12:22-34) on grounds of general tone and basic motif: 'Whereas 12:22-34 is hortatory  
48 in character and sapiential in its idiom and mode of argumentation, 12:39-59 is  
49 aggressive and threatening in tone, and marked by warnings of judgment'  
50 (Kloppenborg 1987:149). He further argues that the foregoing material is aimed at  
51 the Q people, while Q 12:39-59 breaches the boundaries of the Q people, threatening  
52 everyone with apocalyptic judgment.

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<sup>1</sup> That is, Q 12:39-40, 42-46, 49, 51-53, (54-56), 57-59.

54 Regarding the parable in Q 12:42-46, Kloppenborg (1987:150) rightly claims that it  
55 'gains its explicit connection with the coming Son of Man through its attachment to  
56 12:39-40' (cf. Kirk 1998:233). According to Kloppenborg (1987:150), the parable  
57 originally addressed the delay of the parousia, and functioned as a warning for  
58 leaders of the Jesus movement to be faithful and trustworthy stewards during the  
59 interim. In the context of Q, however, the parable of the loyal and wise slave has  
60 been attached to Q 12:40, thereby highlighting not only the unexpectedness and  
61 suddenness of the impending parousia, but also the catastrophic consequences that  
62 will accompany it (cf. Kloppenborg 2000:118). As such, the whole composition of Q  
63 12:39-46 acts as a warning to be prepared for the Son of Man and his devastating  
64 parousia (cf. Allison 1997:27; Fleddermann 2005:635).

65

66 The first article in this series of two argued for the existence of a redactional seam  
67 between verses 44 and 45, with the second half of the parable (Q 12:45-46)  
68 representing redactional elaboration. In what follows, it will be argued that Q 12:42-  
69 44 belongs to the formative stratum, and that Q 12:45-46 was added by the main  
70 redactor to redirect the message and intent of the whole pericope. The discussion is  
71 arranged according to Kloppenborg's three main criteria.

72

### 73 **Characteristic Forms**

74 In its final form, Q 12:42-46 is clearly a parable (Bock 1996:1172), as defined by Scott  
75 (1989:7-62). It is a *mashal* (or proverb) with a short narrative fiction that is in some  
76 way symbolic of God's kingdom. It contains all three of the elements deemed by  
77 Crossan (1979:20; 2012:1-10) to be essential for a narrative to be generally classified  
78 under the genre 'parable': narrative form, metaphorical process and appropriate  
79 qualifier. Luz (2005:221) is technically correct when he points out that Q 12:42-46  
80 only presupposes a narrative, and does therefore not formally qualify as a narrative.  
81 Even so, the text's clear presupposition of a narrative qualifies it as a parable.

82 Notwithstanding the definitions offered by Scott and Crossan, not all the parables of  
83 Jesus feature, or even presuppose, a narrative (cf. Dodd 1958:18; see Hunter 1971:11;  
84 Donahue 1988:5).<sup>2</sup> In this regard, it is perhaps more significant that Q 12:42-46  
85 coheres to Dodd's (1958:16) classical definition of a parable as a

86

87           metaphor or simile drawn from nature or common life,  
88           arresting the hearer by its vividness or strangeness, and leaving  
89           the mind in sufficient doubt about its precise application to  
90           tease it into active thought.

91

92 Notably, parable scholars all tend to include this text in their respective lists of  
93 parables (e.g. Dodd 1958:158-160; Hunter 1964:121-122; Jeremias 1966:189-191;  
94 Donahue 1988:234-235; Scott 1989:207-212; Blomberg 1990:190-193; Etchells 1998:107-  
95 112).

96

97 Despite its designation as a parable, Q 12:42-46 is itself made up of a series of small  
98 forms. Each of the first three verses qualify technically as a separate literary small  
99 form, with verse 42 being a rhetorical question, verse 43 being a macarism or  
100 beatitude, and verse 44 being an amen saying. Significantly, these are all sapiential  
101 small forms, commonly used in wisdom literature (cf. Scott 1989:211). More  
102 specifically, these micro genres are all typical of instructional wisdom, and function  
103 deliberately to identify each individual verse as a piece of instruction. This taxonomy  
104 is substantiated by the deliberate use of the words 'wise' (φρόνιμος) and 'loyal' or  
105 'faithful' (πιστός) to describe the slave in verse 42 (Edwards 1976:66). The first three  
106 verses address two classical themes of traditional wisdom. Firstly, they address the

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<sup>2</sup> In a former article (Howes 2014), I took the technical lack of a surface narrative as an indication that Q 12:39 should not be classified as a parable. In that specific case, however, it was not only this deficiency that convinced me, but also the likelihood that the saying is not at all about the kingdom of God, as well as its apparent function as a supporting logion in the overall sapiential structure of the formative layer.

107 sapiential theme of how to distinguish between wise and foolish slaves (Kirk  
108 1998:234). Secondly, they address the theme of trusty and wise household  
109 management (Kirk 1998:230; cf. Prov 31).

110

111 In addition, Q 12:42-44 lacks all the formal features of prophetic or apocalyptic small  
112 forms, including prophetic introductory formulas, a threatening tone, and the  
113 features of the so-called 'eschatological' or 'prophetic correlative' (cf. Edwards  
114 1976:41, 114). One could point to the future tense verb 'will appoint' (καταστήσει) in  
115 verse 44 as an indication of apocalyptic or eschatological intent, but this singular  
116 literary feature is wholly overshadowed by the evidence that Q 12:42-44 is  
117 intrinsically sapiential. In any case, the appearance of a verb in the future tense is not  
118 necessarily an indication that the author has an eschatological or apocalyptic future  
119 specifically in mind.

120

121 On the other side of the coin, Q 12:45-46 features no small forms. In other words,  
122 there are no textual indicators that would qualify either verse as a micro genre of  
123 some kind. On the one hand, these verses are not marked by textual markers as  
124 sapiential small forms. On the other hand, they are not clearly marked as prophetic  
125 or apocalyptic small forms either. For instance, Q 12:45-46 lacks not only prophetic  
126 introductory formulas, but also the textual features of the so-called 'eschatological'  
127 or 'prophetic correlative' (cf. Edwards 1976:41, 114; Schmidt 1977:517-522). It follows  
128 that Q 12:45-46 does not *formally* function as either a prophetic or an apocalyptic  
129 warning. On the interpretive level, however, verse 46 does indeed seem reminiscent  
130 of a prophetic warning (Jeremias 1966:45; cf. Jacobson 1994:104 n. 32). It is certainly  
131 worth noting that verse 46 features no less than three future tense verbs, namely  
132 'will come' (ἔξει), 'will cut in two' (διχοτομήσει) and 'will give' (θήσει). As with verse  
133 44, these verbs are not necessarily indications that an apocalyptic or eschatological  
134 future is intended. The single aspect of verse 46 that is most telling in the current  
135 discussion is its unmistakable threatening tone (Blomberg 1990:191). In fact, the final

136 verse is not merely threatening in tone, but in essence. Irrespective of its precise  
137 interpretation, the content of verse 46 can easily and without much controversy be  
138 classified as a threat.

139

## 140 **Characteristic Motifs**

### 141 Verses 42-44

142 As a whole, the parable has traditionally been interpreted as highlighting some  
143 aspect of the apocalyptic event, whether it be its unexpectedness, severity or delay.  
144 Yet, these interpretations are exclusively dependent on verses 45-46. Other  
145 interpretations are made possible if verses 42-44 are considered on their own. If I am  
146 correct that Q 12:42-44 represents an earlier version of the parable, none of the  
147 traditional interpretations would apply to this earlier version, since these  
148 interpretations were all dependent on the content of verses 45-46. Put differently, it  
149 seems highly unlikely that Q 12:42-44, if considered in isolation, is about the  
150 unexpectedness, severity or delay of some or other future event. In order to  
151 extrapolate the motifs of Q 12:42-44, an interpretation of this earlier version of the  
152 parable must be proposed.

153

154 On the level of the formative stratum, it seems probable to me that the master in the  
155 parable represents God, the appointed slave represents Jewish leadership, and the  
156 other slaves represent the Jewish populace (cf. Etchells 1998:109). By associating the  
157 slaves in Q 12:42-44 with Israel, the slave manager with Jewish leadership, and the  
158 slave-owner with God, the current study follows in the footsteps of a number of  
159 noteworthy parable scholars, including for example Dodd (1958:160), Hunter  
160 (1964:79), Jeremias (1963:58, 166), Donahue (1988:99), Etchells (1998:109) and Nolland  
161 (2005:997). It seems appropriate to classify Q 12:42-44 as a 'parable', since these three  
162 verses, considered in isolation, fulfil the same criteria discussed above in relation to  
163 the whole text. Even though these verses are made up of three separate small forms,

164 their thematic content is deliberately obscured and inherently parabolic (cf. Marshall  
165 1978:532; Crossan 1979:34; see Funk 2006:29-31). If Q 12:42-44 is read in the way  
166 proposed here, the message is that the socio-economic and politico-religious leaders  
167 of Palestinian society were primarily appointed by God to take care of the physical  
168 and nutritional needs of the Jewish masses (cf. Dodd 1958:160; Jeremias 1963:57-58,  
169 166; 1966:44-45, 131; Hunter 1964:78, 79; Donahue 1988:99; Etchells 1998:109; Allison  
170 2004:440).

171

172 By expecting Jewish leaders to feed their subjects, the parable promotes general  
173 reciprocity at all levels of society (cf. Oakman 2008:97). I would define 'general  
174 reciprocity' as barter and other (economic) exchanges that are characterised by the  
175 unilateral giving or receiving of something without any expectations and/or  
176 obligations of repayment, in the spirit of grace or benefaction (Oakman 1986:151-152;  
177 2008:95, 105, 138; cf. Luke 11:11). This form of reciprocity was usually in antiquity  
178 reserved for exchanges between family members. In ancient society, especially in  
179 rural villages, the more usual type of economic exchange was 'balanced reciprocity',  
180 which can be defined as barter and other (economic) exchanges that are  
181 characterised by expectations and/or obligations of equal return, in the spirit of  
182 fairness or justice (Oakman 1986:66; Horsley 1995a:204).

183

184 In a word, the parable of the loyal and wise slave calls upon socio-economic and  
185 politico-religious leaders at all levels of Jewish society to provide for the bare  
186 necessities of those under their leadership, without expecting anything in return. To  
187 the extent that contemporary leaders were failing in this most important task, the  
188 parable advertises a vacancy and encourages ordinary Jews to apply. All you need to  
189 do to qualify is to find a way to feed those around you. This is how leaders are born,  
190 and the kingdom of God is established (cf. Oakman 2008:105, 264, 271-272). Space  
191 does not allow for a comprehensive defence and discussion of the interpretation  
192 proposed here. I do intend to elaborate on the precise meaning and intent of this



193 message in a separate publication, but for the purpose of the current work, I want to  
194 focus rather on the overlap between this message and the rest of Q. In the remainder  
195 of this section, Q 12:42-44 will therefore be considered on its own, with its intended  
196 message assumed to be the one recounted here.

197

198 The current exposition will firstly consider the syntagmatic literary context of Q  
199 12:42-44. If, as I have argued elsewhere (see Howes 2014:54-75), the Son of Man  
200 saying in Q 12:40 were indeed a later addition, it would follow that verse 42 was  
201 preceded in the formative stratum by the robber saying in verse 39. As it happens,  
202 there are a number of formal and thematic agreements between the robber saying  
203 and Q 12:42-44 (see Howes 2014:61-62): (1) both feature the catchwords 'know'  
204 (γινώσκω) and 'come' (ἔρχομαι); (2) both feature a householder; (3) both take place in  
205 a domestic setting; (4) both deal specifically with the householder's possessions; and  
206 (5) in both cases a representative of the upper class crosses paths with a  
207 representative of the lower class. What is more, some measure of narrative  
208 progression is implied between the robber logion and the introduction to the  
209 parable. Whereas Q 12:39 makes mention of a burglary, Q 12:42 could be taken as an  
210 attempt to ascertain culpability or determine potential negligence on the part of the  
211 loyal and wise slave. Linking verses 39 and 42 in this way might have been the  
212 original purpose of the illative particle 'then' (ἄρα), before it received a different  
213 function in the main redaction (cf. Marshall 1978:540; Zeller 1994:119; Kloppenborg  
214 1995:239; 2000:126). It is only when the sentence in verse 42 finishes with the clause  
215 'to give [them] food on time' (τοῦ δο[ῦ]ναι [αὐτοῖς] ἐν καιρῷ τὴν τροφήν) that the  
216 audience is forced to make a mental shift, and reassess the question itself.

217

218 In the Sayings Gospel, the complex of material in Q 12:39-40, 42-46 is preceded by  
219 the two passages in Q 12:22-31, 33-34.<sup>3</sup> In my view, the original sequence of these  
220 two passages in Q is correctly featured by both Matthew and Luke, meaning that Q  
221 12:22-31 preceded Q 12:33-34 in the Sayings Gospel. Q 12:22-31 follows effortlessly  
222 onto Q 12:11-12, seeing as both advise against anxiety. Q 12:33-34, on the other hand,  
223 follows well onto the conclusion of Q 12:22-31, since the process of seeking God's  
224 kingdom enables one to disregard earthly treasures and to gather heavenly  
225 treasures. There is also a natural and logical progression from the bare necessities of  
226 Q 12:22-31 (like foodstuff and clothing) to the more valuable earthly 'treasures'  
227 (θησαυροί) of Q 12:33-34. Finally, the burglary of Q 12:39 follows very well after the  
228 mentioning of hoarding and potential robbery in Q 12:33-34.

229

230 Both Q 12:22-31 and Q 12:42-46 are about the kingdom of God (Marshall 1978:532;  
231 Bock 1996:1170; cf. Oakman 2008:105). To the extent that Q 12:42-44 can be labelled a  
232 parable (see above), it is a metaphor or symbol for God's kingdom (see Scott 1989:51-  
233 62, 211; cf. Dodd 1958:33; Hunter 1971:10; Crossan 1979:20, 31; 2012:111; Nolland  
234 2005:997; Funk 2006:59, 158; Oakman 2008:266). Q 12:31, on the other hand,  
235 encourages its audience to actively seek God's kingdom, which in this context means  
236 to firstly consider and survey the natural world for clues about God's rule, and to  
237 secondly implement these discoveries in their daily lives. This coheres with  
238 Crenshaw's (2010:16) estimation of wisdom's general intent: 'wisdom is the reasoned  
239 search for specific ways to assure wellbeing and the implementation of those  
240 discoveries in daily existence.' It is something of a truism that ancient wisdom  
241 tended to draw its inspiration and evidence from, above all else, both nature and  
242 human conduct (Howes 2012:246). The same is true of the parables of Jesus (Dodd

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<sup>3</sup> Kirk (1998:227-235) argues that the *Sondergut* material in Luke 12:35-38 derives from Q, where it featured between Q 12:34 and Q 12:39 (cf. Schürmann 1994:87-88; see Marshall 1978:533; Jacobson 1992:193-196). Given the absence of this text in Matthew, it is safer to follow the International Q Project and conclude that it was not part of Q.

243 1958:22; Hunter 1971:10; Funk 2006:43, 48; cf. Jacobson 1994:104). Whereas Q 12:22-31  
244 looks at nature to learn about the kingdom of God, Q 12:42-44 looks at human  
245 behaviour within a specific socio-economic institution. Whereas Q 12:22-31 asks  
246 what we can learn about God's rule from ravens and lilies, Q 12:42-44 asks what we  
247 can learn about God's rule from agricultural slaves.

248

249 The passage in Q 12:22-31 advises against anxiety over basic necessities. It is  
250 important to mention that this passage teaches neither against an obsession with  
251 earthly possessions, nor against work in general, as is sometimes claimed (e.g.  
252 Allison 2000:173-174), but rather against *anxiety* in the face of a perceived inability to  
253 procure food, clothing and the like (Piper 1989:33-34; Arnal 2001:185; cf.  
254 Kloppenborg 1995:303-304). The instruction not to be anxious is buttressed by the  
255 promise that God will feed and clothe his children (Piper 1989:30). Q 12:42-44 hooks  
256 onto this key theme by offering one specific example of how God provides for his  
257 children (cf. Oakman 2008:105). In his kingdom, God nurtures and nourishes his  
258 people through socio-economic and politico-religious leaders and institutions (cf.  
259 Fleddermann 2005:635). God appoints leaders and establishes institutions for the  
260 material benefit of the poor. The parable's (subversive) message is that the main task  
261 of the well-to-do is to feed and nurture the poor (cf. Crossan 1974:44; 2012:63; Hays  
262 2012:49). God provides for his children by allowing some of them to prosper and  
263 feed the rest. To a certain degree, this thematic overlap extends further to Q 11:2-4, 9-  
264 13. Ultimately, both Q 12:22-31 and Q 12:42-44 centre around the relationship  
265 between material support and the kingdom of God (cf. Hays 2012:51-52).

266

267 Q 12:33-34, 39 then continues to warn against the gathering of perishable and  
268 transient worldly treasures in neglect of imperishable and enduring heavenly  
269 treasures (cf. Q 16:13). At first, the content of Q 12:42-44 might seem to contradict the  
270 derision of earthly possessions encountered in Q 12:33-34. This is particularly true of  
271 verse 44, where appointment over more possessions acts as a reward. In truth,

272 however, Q 12:33-34, 39 is not against possessions *per se*, but against the ‘gathering’  
273 or ‘hoarding’ (θησαυρίζω in Matthew) of possessions. This motif is wholly  
274 reconcilable with Q 12:42-44. If the two texts are read together, they advocate that  
275 those who are in a position to help should not be stingy with their possessions, but  
276 should provide for the basic needs of those around them (cf. Hays 2012:49). In the  
277 parable of Q 12:42-44, the reward of being appointed over even more possessions (v.  
278 44) is a blessing not only because of the slave’s increased honour (cf. Kloppenborg  
279 1995:294), but also because it places that slave in a position to address the needs of  
280 even more slaves (cf. Allison 2004:440). The distinction in Q 12:33-34, 39 between  
281 ‘earthly’ and ‘heavenly’ treasures relates well to the distinction in Q 12:42-44  
282 between the slave’s initial and ultimate appointment, especially if the latter is  
283 somehow representative of a ‘heavenly reward’ (cf. Hays 2012:49, 51). Whereas the  
284 passage in Q 12:22-31 relates to the fellow slaves in Q 12:42-44, the passage in Q  
285 12:33-34, 39 relates to the appointed slave. As such, Q 12:42-44 is thematically linked  
286 to both preceding Q<sup>1</sup> pericopes.

287

288 Besides its immediate literary context, Q 12:42-44 has thematically most in common  
289 with the first few lines of the inaugural sermon (Q 6:20-35) (cf. Allison 2004:441; Luz  
290 2005:225). The beatitudes that launch the sermon maintain that the poor, hungry,  
291 mournful and persecuted are blessed. The maxim about the robber (Q 12:39) and the  
292 passage against anxiety (Q 12:22-31) both have this in common with the beatitudes  
293 (Howes 2014:67-68). The same goes for Q 12:42-44. Both Q 6:20-23 and Q 12:43 make  
294 use of beatitudes to address the ruling socio-economic situation (Hays 2012:50).  
295 According to the inaugural sermon, the poor are blessed because they will eat  
296 anyway (Q 6:20-23). This initial claim is clarified by the remainder of the Sayings  
297 Gospel, which explains that God provides for the poor in a variety of ways,  
298 sometimes in rather unexpected ways (Q 12:31, 42). They are further blessed because  
299 they are free, not only from the stress (Q 12:22-31, 33-34, 39), but also from the

300 responsibility and accountability (Q 12:42-44), that comes with having a lot (cf.  
301 Hunter 1964:120; Allison 2004:440).

302

303 Q 6:27-28 instructs its audience to love their enemies and to pray for their  
304 persecutors. Elsewhere in Q, these persecutors and enemies are pertinently  
305 identified as the Jewish elite (cf. Q 11:39, 41-44, 46-48, 52; 12:11-12). Some scholars  
306 have argued that the Jewish elite constitute the Q people's main out-group, called  
307 'this generation' in the Sayings Gospel (e.g. Horsley 1992:191, 1995b:49, 1999:299; cf.  
308 Jacobson 1992:169). Like Q 6:27-28, Q 12:42-44 encourages the lower classes to foster  
309 a positive attitude towards the Jewish elite (cf. Crossan 1983:60). The latter text  
310 explicitly calls these leaders 'blessed' (μακάριος), and even imagines the possibility of  
311 them receiving a significant promotion (Etchells 1998:110; Donahue 1988:98; Taylor  
312 1989:143).

313

314 The sermon then becomes more practical, offering some examples of what to do in  
315 certain circumstances (Q 6:29-30; [Matt 5:41]; Piper 1989:111; Kirk 1998:159-160).  
316 These include turning the other cheek if someone slaps you, giving someone two  
317 pieces of clothing if s/he demands only one, giving to someone who asks without  
318 expecting anything in return, and (possibly) walking a second mile if you are  
319 conscripted to walk only one. The last example certainly implies an unequal  
320 relationship between the two parties, and promotes voluntary submission to  
321 authority, but the presence of this instruction in Q is disputed, seeing as it only  
322 appears in Matthew (5:41). The other three examples could apply to either equal or  
323 unequal relationships. If they refer to unequal relationships, the ones in Matthew [Q]  
324 5:41 and Q 6:29 address the inferior partaker, while the ones in Q 6:30 address the  
325 superior partaker. In this regard, the attitude of deliberate submission by inferiors to  
326 superiors is promoted explicitly by Q 6:29 (and Matthew [Q] 5:41), but only  
327 implicitly by Q 12:42-44, through the acquiescence and passivity of the other slaves.

328

329 Conversely, the attitude of generosity and supportiveness by superiors to inferiors is  
330 advocated explicitly by both Q 6:30 and Q 12:42-44. The expectation in Q 12:42-44  
331 that the appointed slave should feed his fellow slaves corresponds to the instruction  
332 in the sermon that one should give without reservation or the prospect of return (cf.  
333 Hays 2012:49, 50). Both of these texts seem to promote general reciprocity (cf.  
334 Oakman 2008:95). If Q 6:29-30 addresses equal relationships, Q 12:42-44 could be  
335 taken to promote the exact same behaviour, especially if it is considered that the  
336 appointed slave in Q 12:42 is just another slave, who could lose his privileged  
337 position at any time. Whatever the case, both of these texts literally advocate going  
338 the extra mile for your inferiors, fellows and superiors.

339

340 Some scholars have taken the golden rule in Q 6:31 to contradict the general intent of  
341 the rest of the inaugural sermon (e.g. Furnish 1973:57; see Kirk 1998:153-158).  
342 Specifically, the inaugural sermon seems to promote general reciprocity, whereas the  
343 golden rule, according to them, promotes balanced reciprocity. At face value, the  
344 golden rule might seem to advocate a general *quid pro quo* type of attitude (Piper  
345 1989:80). However, the saying does not address the aspect of return in reciprocal  
346 dealings, but general behaviour in all types of dealings (cf. Piper 1989:80). As such,  
347 the saying endorses everything that has gone before in Q 6:27-28, 35, 29-30. By not  
348 identifying the acting subject, the recipient or the specific action, this traditional  
349 saying renders itself relevant to many literary contexts, which is probably why it  
350 circulated independently (cf. Kloppenborg 1987:176). In this context, it substantiates  
351 and advocates general reciprocity. As such, the golden rule relates well to Q 12:42-  
352 44.

353

354 General reciprocity is also the central theme of the four rhetorical questions in Q  
355 6:32, 34. These verses obviously imagine a closed system; one that does not include  
356 gentiles (Piper 1989:84-85; cf. Catchpole 1993:107, 115). Similarly, within the  
357 narrative world of Q 12:42-44, all the events occur within the closed system of the

358 'household of slaves' (οικετεία). In both the inaugural sermon and the parable, the  
359 undeclared closed system probably points to the nation of Israel, and to Jewish  
360 society in general (Dodd 1958:160; Etchells 1998:109). According to Q 6:32, you  
361 should love everyone in this closed system, without discrimination. According to Q  
362 6:34, you should give to everyone within this closed system, regardless of whether or  
363 not they will be able to repay you. As we have seen, Q 12:42-44 endorses the very  
364 same ideals. The appointed slave should love his fellow slaves indiscriminately, and  
365 should feed them despite their inability to repay the favour. Essentially, much of the  
366 inaugural sermon (Q 6:27-28, 30, 29-32, 34) explicitly promotes general reciprocity,  
367 which is also the central theme of the parable in Q 12:42-44 (cf. Oakman 2008:105).

368

369 Finally, like Q 12:42-44, the procurement of subsistence and sustenance is a central  
370 theme of the formative stratum.<sup>4</sup> In general, the formative stratum is heavily  
371 concerned with people's basic needs, like food, clothing and housing.<sup>5</sup> In these texts,  
372 the focus is on physical survival, and basic needs are mentioned for their own sake,  
373 as the means whereby survival is attained. By contrast, when food, clothing or  
374 housing is mentioned in the main redaction (and final recension), they unfailingly  
375 serve some larger rhetorical purpose.<sup>6</sup> On the level of the main redaction, it is  
376 difficult to understand, for example, the thematic link between Q 12:39-59, with its  
377 threatening images of trespassing, severe punishment, fire, family division, celestial  
378 warnings and imprisonment, on the one hand, and the parables of the mustard seed  
379 and leaven in Q 13:18-21, with its positive images of growth and spectacle, on the

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<sup>4</sup> E.g. Q 6:21; 10:2, 7-8 (in my view, this text is not symbolic of missionaries); 11:3, 11-13; 12:22-31; 13:26; 14:16-19, 21, 23 (it is my opinion that the latter parable is part of Q<sup>1</sup>, and that the references to dinner are more than merely symbolic); 15:4-5, 7. On one or two occasions, references to food appear not to represent subsistence as such, but to symbolise something else: Q 13:18-19, 20-21.

<sup>5</sup> For examples of texts about food, see the previous footnote. Clothing: Q 6:29; 12:22-31. Housing: Q 6:47-49 (in my view, this text is not merely symbolic); 9:58; 13:24-27 (the latter parable belongs to Q<sup>1</sup>, in my view).

<sup>6</sup> E.g. Q 3:8-9, 16-17; (4:3-4); 7:25, 33-34; 11:17, 42, 51; 13:28-29, 35; 17:27, 35.

380 other (Kloppenborg 1995:309). On the level of the formative stratum, however, Q  
381 13:18-21 follows directly after Q 12:22-31, 39, 42-44, and similarly revolves around  
382 the relationship between food and the kingdom of God (cf. Oakman 2008:105). It is  
383 important to note in closing that many of the thematic links identified in this section  
384 would remain valid even if my interpretation of the parable missed the mark  
385 completely. In particular, the concern over food and other basic needs in the  
386 formative stratum coheres well with the slave's task to feed his fellow slaves in Q  
387 12:42-44.

388

### 389 Verses 45-46

390 Past and present scholars have justly noticed a great degree of thematic overlap  
391 between Q 12:46 and other texts in the main redaction that similarly prophesy about  
392 the apocalyptic end (e.g. Jacobson 1994:114). Kloppenborg (1987:150-151), for  
393 example, lists the following texts: Q 3:9, 17; 11:24-26, 34-36; 13:26-27, 28-29; 17:26-27,  
394 30. Such thematic overlap is both obvious and inescapable if Q 12:46 is read in light  
395 of Q 12:40, as it should be on the Q<sup>2</sup> level. The idea that the apocalyptic event will  
396 occur abruptly and unexpectedly is a central theme of the main redaction (cf. Q  
397 17:23-24, 26-27, 30, 34-35). The appeal for preparedness, sometimes in the form of  
398 repentance, is also a central motif for Q<sup>2</sup> (cf. Q 3:8; 10:13; 17:26-27, 30). The harsh and  
399 unforgiving images with which the parable describes apocalyptic punishment fit  
400 very well with similar imagery in the rest of Q<sup>2</sup> (Q 3:9, 17; 10:12, 14-15; 13:28; 17:24,  
401 26-27, 30, 34-35, 37).

402

### 403 **Implied audience**

#### 404 Verses 42-44

405 That Q 12:42-44 is neither directly nor indirectly aimed at an out-group is confirmed  
406 by four factors. Firstly, there is no explicit or implicit mention of 'this generation',  
407 either in the parable itself or in its immediate literary context (Q 12). Secondly, it was



408 mentioned above that Q 12:42-44 operates within the closed system of the  
409 'household of slaves' (οικεταία). The parable does not feature any other characters in  
410 addition to the master, the appointed slave, and his fellow slaves. What is more,  
411 within the narrative world of the parable in Q 12:42-44, the master only features  
412 when he is within the closed system. His existence is only relevant in as far as it  
413 relates to the 'household of slaves' (cf. Dodd 1958:159; Funk 1974:68). We do not  
414 follow him when he leaves this space. The reason for his departure is not even  
415 mentioned, being entirely irrelevant to the story, which operates within the confines  
416 of a closed system (cf. Dodd 1958:159). It is hard to imagine how a spatial depiction  
417 such as this could be intended for outsiders, whether directly or indirectly. Thirdly,  
418 the sapiential aim of Q 12:42-44 to direct behaviour is reminiscent of wisdom for  
419 insiders. In general, 'motivating positive action is an identifiable feature of Q<sup>1</sup>, but  
420 not of Q<sup>2</sup>' (Howes 2013:318). In our pericope, the intention to motivate positive  
421 action is particularly indicated by the opening clause, which introduces the parable  
422 as pertaining to the 'loyal' or 'faithful' (πιστός) and 'wise' (φρόνιμος) slave (cf.  
423 Oakman 2008:271-272; *pace* Crossan 1983:60). It is highly unlikely that Q would  
424 introduce a text aimed at the despised out-group with these epithets (cf. Jacobson  
425 1992:197). Lastly, the master in the parable instructs the appointed slave to feed  
426 *fellow slaves*.<sup>7</sup> From this, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that, on both the levels of  
427 interpretation and application, certain individuals are invited to perform the desired  
428 conduct, whatever it might be, upon *fellow members of the same group* (Allison  
429 2004:440). Given the nature of the task to tend to the physical needs of others, it is all  
430 the more likely that Q 12:42-44 is aimed at the in-group. Conversely, it is extremely  
431 unlikely that this text would have hostile outsiders, like 'this generation', in mind as

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<sup>7</sup> Luke exchanged this phrase for "the male and female slaves" (τοὺς παῖδας καὶ τὰς παιδίσκας) (Nolland 2005:999; cf. Scott 1989:209; Taylor 1989:140), probably to specify the socio-economic context more clearly (Luz 2005:221), and to render the text inclusive of both genders. Fleddermann (2005:628) argues in favour of the Lukan phrase for Q. Regardless, on a semantic level the Lukan text also features fellow slaves of the same household (Luz 2005:221).

432 either the givers or the receivers of such kindness (cf. Scott 1989:210; *pace*  
433 Kloppenborg 2000:141).

434

435 If not directed at an out-group, who were the recipients of Q 12:42-44? In my view,  
436 the 'in-group' at which this text is directed is the Jewish people, to be distinguished  
437 from gentiles as the 'out-group'. I disagree with Kloppenborg and others that  
438 sectarian boundary demarcation is already to some extent visible in the formative  
439 stratum. The more I deal with the formative stratum, the more I suspect that the  
440 wisdom it contains was directed at the Jewish people in general, as opposed to some  
441 sectarian group within it, otherwise known as the 'Q community' or 'Q people'.  
442 Rather, the formative stratum's 'out-group' seems to be gentiles. If this were true, it  
443 would follow that the main redaction represents the emergence of the 'Q people' as a  
444 sectarian group vis-à-vis contemporary Judaism. The latter would to my mind  
445 support or even strengthen Kloppenborg's proposal for the stratification of Q. As  
446 greater Israel increasingly rejected the message of the early followers of Jesus, their  
447 boundaries increasingly shrunk, eventually giving rise to the sectarian attitude  
448 encountered in the main redaction. To the extent that the message of Jesus was  
449 perpetuated by his followers, it remains valid to speak of a 'Q people', but this does  
450 not change the likelihood that this message was aimed at Israel *in toto*, and not just  
451 the Q people. In other words, although a limited group of 'Q people' preached and  
452 penned Q<sup>1</sup>, the content and message of Q<sup>1</sup> was nonetheless aimed at Israel *in toto*.

453

#### 454 Verses 45-46

455 Even a cursory glance reveals that verse 45 centres around accusation, while verse 46  
456 revolves around threat. The positive, constructive aims of Q 12:42-44 are moved to  
457 the background in order to make room for the caricatured characterisation of verse  
458 45, and the threatened condemnation of verse 46 (cf. Dodd 1958:160; Crossan  
459 1983:60). Whatever the metaphorical function of the accusations in verse 45, the

460 content clearly accuses the implied audience of gross misconduct, and does so by  
461 caricaturing them (Dodd 1958:160). Such rhetoric is certainly reminiscent of socio-  
462 religious discrimination and demarcation. Jacobson (1992:197) points out that the  
463 beating of fellow slaves calls to mind the violence meted out by 'this generation'  
464 against God's prophets and sages in Q 11:49-51. The debauchery of the disloyal slave  
465 is further comparable to the actions of 'this generation' in Q 17:27 (Jacobson  
466 1992:197). What is more, both the slave's internal dialogue and his revelry point to a  
467 careless disregard for Q's message about the Son of Man's unexpected return  
468 (Kloppenborg 1987:150; cf. Bock 1996:1182; Luz 2005:223; see Fleddermann 2005:637).  
469 Conversely, it seems extremely unlikely that the author of Q would feature  
470 descriptions of violent and licentious behaviour to depict the conduct and general  
471 attitude of the in-group (Jacobson 1992:197).

472

473 If the two forms of punishment in Q 12:46 are considered together, they seem like  
474 purposeful attempts at socio-religious segregation (cf. Kloppenborg 1987:150-151).  
475 The probability of such intentionality is enhanced if verse 46 is read with the Son of  
476 Man saying in verse 40, as intended by the main redactor. However one interprets  
477 verse 46, it clearly foresees the *implied* audience receiving severe punishment for  
478 their misdeeds (Donahue 1988:99). In my view, it is safe to conclude from the  
479 discussion up to this point that the implied audience of verses 45-46 is mainstream  
480 Jewish leadership, who at this juncture comprises one of the movement's out-groups  
481 (cf. Kloppenborg 2000:141). If the abovementioned suggestions that verses 45-46  
482 refer to 'this generation' are on the money, it would add support to Horsley's  
483 (1992:191; 1995b:49; 1999:299) case that the Q people used the term 'this generation'  
484 in reference to the Jewish elite (cf. Jacobson 1992:169).

485

486 **Findings**

487 This article reconsidered the redactional make-up of the parable in Q 12:42-46. The  
488 criteria used by Kloppenborg to delineate between Q<sup>1</sup> and Q<sup>2</sup> were reapplied  
489 specifically to this text. In the process, the parable of the loyal and wise slave was  
490 'cut in two', with each half considered separately. On the one hand, it was argued  
491 that verses 42-44 properly belongs to Q's formative layer. On the other, it was  
492 argued that verses 45-46 were added by the main redactor in order to adjust the  
493 meaning of the parable as a whole, thereby aligning it with the overall message of  
494 the main redaction. Q 12:42-46 is but one example of how, in the Sayings Gospel Q,  
495 the parables of Jesus were 'co-opted to serve the compositional ends of the document  
496 [and] to embellish and dramatize the destabilizing [*sic*] of the cosmos by the Day of  
497 the Son of Man' (Kloppenborg 1995:289). Matthew and Luke took this editorial  
498 process further, each in its own direction (see Jeremias 1963:56-57, 104; 1966:44;  
499 Donahue 1988:96-101; Scott 1989:209; Taylor 1989:138-150; Blomberg 1990:123-124,  
500 190-193; Funk & Hoover 1993:253; Etchells 1998:107-109; Allison 2004:439-442; Luz  
501 2005:225; Nolland 2005:996-1001; Hays 2012:45-53).

502

503 Paradoxically, even though this study has challenged Kloppenborg's diachronic  
504 analysis of one particular text in Q, it has simultaneously reinforced and  
505 strengthened his overall proposal for the stratification of Q. The redactional  
506 evolution of Q 12:42-46 is a microcosm of Q's overall literary development. In the  
507 case of both, material was added by an ancient editor in order to shift the focus from  
508 subversive wisdom to apocalyptic prophecy, and from the betterment of the in-  
509 group, whether it be Israel or the Q people, to the wholesale condemnation of one or  
510 more out-groups.

511

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