

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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1 'Cut in Two', Part 2:

2 Reconsidering the Redaction of Q 12:42-46

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6 7 **Abstract**

8 In his influential 1987 monograph, Kloppenborg identified
9 three layers in the Sayings Gospel Q: the 'formative stratum' (or
10 Q¹), the 'main redaction' (or Q²), and the 'final recension' (or
11 Q³). He ascribed the cluster of sayings in Q 12:39-59 to the main
12 redaction. Within this cluster appears the parable of the loyal
13 and wise slave (Q 12:42-46). In my view, some portions of this
14 parable actually originate with the formative stratum. The aim
15 of the current article is to reconsider the redactional make-up of
16 this parable by appealing to Kloppenborg's own criteria for
17 distinguishing between Q¹ and Q², including those of
18 'characteristic forms', 'characteristic motifs' and 'implied
19 audience'.
20

21 **Introduction**

22 In his influential 1987 monograph, Kloppenborg identified three layers in the
23 Sayings Gospel Q: the 'formative stratum' (or Q¹), the 'main redaction' (or Q²), and
24 the 'final recension' (or Q³). Out of these, only the first two are relevant to the current
25 discussion. In his analysis, Kloppenborg (1987:148-154) ascribed the cluster of
26 sayings in Q 12:39-59 to the main redaction. Within this cluster appears the parable
27 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 Q¹ and Q², 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 12:39-59¹ 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.

53

¹ 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).² 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

² 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, 33-34.³ 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

³ 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 Q¹ 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.⁴ In general, the formative stratum is heavily
371 concerned with people's basic needs, like food, clothing and housing.⁵ 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.⁶ 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

⁴ 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 Q¹, 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.

⁵ 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 Q¹, in my view).

⁶ 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 Q² 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 Q² (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 Q² (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 Q¹, but
420 not of Q²' (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*.⁷ 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

⁷ 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 Q¹, the content and message of Q¹ 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 Q¹ and Q² 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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