

developements than between the older and the newer. The local uses had the same origin as the Roman use, they had developed upon their own lines but had been brought back into general conformity with it, and had then been violently wrenched out of the natural line of developement. The Roman breviary was a more authentic representative of tradition, even of local tradition, than were the existing local breviaries.¹

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JUSTIN MARTYR AND JEREMIAH xi 19

DR LUKYN WILLIAMS in his excellent annotated translation of Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho* remarks on p. 152: 'It is curious that Justin says (*Dial.* § 72) that this passage, Jeremiah xi 19, had been deleted, for it is found in all the MSS, as it seems, both Greek and Hebrew.' A fresh examination has convinced me that more errors than are generally recognized have been made about this curious text, both in ancient and in modern times.

(a) The passage in Jeremiah runs in R.V. (capitals mine):—

But I was like a gentle lamb that is led to the slaughter; and I knew not that they had devised devices against me, *saying*, Let us DESTROY THE TREE WITH THE FRUIT THEREOF, and let us cut him off from the land of the living.

Here, in accordance with the laws of Hebrew parallelism, 'destroy (the) tree with its fruit' must have the same general purport as 'cut him off from the land of the living', but when we try to get a more exact meaning we get into difficulties. If the text be correct it must be a proverbial expression for 'destroy root and branch', but the expression does not occur elsewhere. The Hebrew is עץ בלחמו נשחיתת, lit. 'let us destroy tree in its bread'. This is about as awkward in Hebrew as in English. 'Bread' can possibly be made to mean the 'fruit' of a tree, but not naturally: besides if the 'bread' be referred to the tree it should

since the Benedictine breviary, which has a different arrangement of the psalter, is certainly Roman in general type, though its exact relation to the secular office is historically obscure.

¹ This was not the case with the Roman ceremonial which was introduced at the same time. It must always be remembered that ceremonial, though the most noticeable, is the least important element in any rite and that continuity of ceremonial does not necessarily imply continuity of rite nor *vice versa*. The local ceremonial had continued comparatively unchanged when the liturgical texts were altered in the eighteenth century; in many respects it was probably older than the current Roman use which was introduced in its place. Only in two places has the old local ceremonial survived in France—in the cathedrals of Bayeux and Lyons.

mean the nourishment of the tree, not the nourishment which the tree gives. For this reason Hitzig long ago proposed to read בלחו 'in its sap' for בלחמו. This is rather attractive at first sight, for 'a tree in its sap' might mean 'a tree in its prime', whereas the ordinary reading (if taken to mean 'a tree *with* its fruit') has the wrong preposition. Instead of ב we should expect עם or על: no other parallel is given in Hebrew Lexicons for this sense of ב. But even with Hitzig's ingenious emendation there remains the difficulty of the sudden introduction of the tree-metaphor, supposed to be obvious, but (as we shall see) quite obscure to early interpreters.

(b) The present Hebrew is supported by the Peshitta, which has 'we will destroy wood in his (or, its) bread', whatever that may mean. Symmachus is quoted as having 'we will destroy in (or, with) wood his bread'. Aquila, most remarkably, is not quoted for this part of Jerem. xi 19 at all, a fact which suggests that his rendering agreed with the LXX, to which we must now turn.

The significant part is

λέγοντες Δεῦτε καὶ ἐμβάλωμεν ξύλον εἰς τὸν ἄρτον αὐτοῦ.

If we retranslate into Hebrew, the last part agrees with the Masoretic text. Further, λέγοντες may be merely thrown in, as we throw in inverted commas. But in so generally literal a rendering the Δεῦτε καὶ does suggest that לבו, 'come', was prefixed to the verb, in accordance with a well-known Hebrew locution.¹ Ἐμβάλωμεν (corresponding with נשחיתה but certainly not translating it) might be almost any word for to place or put. Hitzig and his followers suggest נשליכה, i.e., 'throw', by which they understand 'cut down' or 'fell'. But I venture to think it might just as well be נשיתה (= 'put').

In any case the Greek of Jerem. xi 19 was meaningless as it stood, but it contained the words 'wood' and 'bread', and so the Christians, including Justin and Cyprian and Lactantius, thought that the 'wood' must mean the Cross and the 'bread' the body of Christ.

(c) What did the Jews make of Jerem. xi 19? As I remarked just now, it is significant that in this verse Aquila is not quoted, and Symmachus merely seems to flounder. The surprising thing is that the Targum practically agrees with the LXX, for it has

אמרין איתו נירמי סמא דמותא במיכליה

Saying, Come let us put poison of death in his food.

Here the λέγοντες and the Δεῦτε are represented. רמי is 'put' as

¹ If the LXX and Samaritan addition in Gen. iv 8 (נלכה השרה) be regarded as secondary because it has no לכה prefixed (so Dillmann), surely it is reasonable here to conclude that the Greek is translating word for word.

indeed βάλλειν is. The γυ-ξύλον is interpreted as poison-wood, and ἄρτος as food in general, while the suffix is referred quite naturally, as by the Christians, to 'him', not toξύλον. There is no reason at all to suspect Greek or Christian influence on the Targum here: it seems to me that we have here the traditional Synagogue exegesis of the passage.

Justin (*Dial.* § 72) tells us that the 'Christian' form of this text is still to be found among the Jews 'in some copies'. May not this really indicate that quite recently, in Justin's day, an emendation of the text had been made? This emendation will have been to read נשחיתה in place of לכו ונשיתה, possibly on the authority of some old MS. But as the text of the Targum actually presupposes the same text as the Greek, it is likely that Justin is correct in asserting that (Hebrew) MSS agreeing with the Greek were still to be found among Jews in his day, or rather that there was some justification for the statement in the Christian source from which Justin derived his information.

(d) Must we accept Hitzig's emendation and explanation of the original words of Jeremiah? I should like to suggest that the traditional text which here underlies Targum and LXX may be better translated if we merely divide the words differently. As I have suggested, this text is

לכו ונשיתה עין בלחמו

I further suggest that final ף was wrongly written and that we should read

לכו ונשיתה עצב לחמו

'Come and let us make trouble his food'.

This sentence fits the parallelism and the context. The progress of the corruption then would be (1) a wrong division of misunderstood words, probably when being transcribed into an early form of the 'square' character; (2) literal translation of this meaningless phrase into Greek, and the establishment of a non-natural paraphrase of it in the traditional Synagogue explanation; (3) an ingenious emendation, by the insertion of a ך, in the process of which the otiose ו לכו fell out and left us with the present Masoretic text. It should be added that שיה elsewhere takes a double accusative, e.g. Psalm lxxxviii 9, cx 1, and the combination of 'bread' with 'worry' occurs in לחם העצבים 'the bread of carefulness', Psalm cxxvii 2.

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