

Codex Bezae (D05) in Light of P.Oxy. 4968 (P¹²⁷): A Reassessment of “Anti-Judaic Tendencies” in Acts 10–17

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1. Introduction

Eldon Jay Epp’s classic monograph, *The Theological Tendency of Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis in the Acts*, marked a watershed moment in contemporary text-critical scholarship. Epp attempted to chart a coherent picture of the theological tendencies in Codex Bezae (D05) through a systematic treatment of the D-variants.¹⁾ He argues that underpinning the distinctive variants of the D-text (or the “Western” text)²⁾ are the scribal tendencies of a Gentile Christian perspective that portray the Jews, and their leaders, as responsible for the death of Jesus, and hostile toward His apostles. Epp’s study has generated both positive and negative reactions in the field of New Testament textual criticism.³⁾

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- 1) E. J. Epp, *The Theological Tendency of Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis in Acts*, SNTS 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966); “The ‘Ignorance Motif’ in Acts and Anti-Judaic Tendencies in Codex Bezae”, *HTR* 55 (1962), 51-62. Also see Epp’s recent reassessment of his own thesis in E. J. Epp, “Anti-Judaic Tendencies in the D-text of Acts: Forty Years of Conversation”, E. J. Epp, ed., *Perspectives on New Testament Textual Criticism: Collected Essays, 1962-2004*, SNT 116 (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 699-739. For the text of Codex Bezae (D05), consult F. H. Scrivener, *Bezae Codex Cantabrigiensis*, repr. (Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1978) and D. C. Parker, *Codex Bezae: An Early Christian Manuscript* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
- 2) As Epp correctly mentions, the so-called “Western” text is a misnomer. The “D-text” is a more appropriate designation for witnesses that have close affinity with Codex Bezae (D05). E. J. Epp, “Anti-Judaic Tendencies”, 700, n. 3.
- 3) R. P. C. Hanson’s acerbic criticism of Epp’s thesis is representative of this kind. See R. P. C. Hanson, “The Ideology of Codex Bezae in Acts”, *NTS* 14 (1967-1968), 283-284, and G. D.

One of the serious objections pertains to whether “anti-Judaic tendencies” detected in the D-text variants of Acts constitute more than occasional, if not incidental, scribal elaborations.⁴⁾ A more poignant criticism relates to an alternative hypothesis that states that D05 manifests an ideological perspective of a Jewish scribe.⁵⁾ The issues raised by Epp’s Theological Tendency remain yet unresolved; however, several recent studies require a reappraisal of his thesis.

First, a relatively late publication of Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 4968 (P¹²⁷) in 2009, dubbed “the most significant new addition to the Greek evidence” since the publication of P³⁸ in 1927 and Coptic G⁶⁷ in 1991, provides valuable insight on the nature of the peculiar textual accretions and deletions observed in the D-text of Acts.⁶⁾ The discovery of P¹²⁷ is critical to the reexamination of the characteristics of D-text, since Epp’s research in the 1960s focused on G⁶⁷. A comparative analysis of P¹²⁷ and D05 reveals many noteworthy features, including singular additions and omissions.⁷⁾ Georg Gäbel, in his careful evaluation of the texts of P¹²⁷, D05, and the allied variants, concludes that:

...Similarities between variants are such that they can only be explained

Kilpatrick, “Language and Text in the Gospels and Acts”, *VC* 24 (1970), 166-167. See a more fuller bibliography of the positive and negative reviews in E. J. Epp, “Anti-Judaic Tendencies”, 735, n. 145 and n. 146.

- 4) See, for example, in C. K. Barrett, “Is There a Theological Tendency in Codex Bezae?”, Ernest Best and R. McL. Wilson, eds., *Text and Interpretation: Studies in the New Testament Presented to Matthew Black* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 15-27. According to Epp, much of the criticism leveled against his notion of “anti-Judaic tendencies” as “mere enhancement” (à la Barrett) has been vitiated by Ehrman’s recent discussion of the Lucan writer’s socio-religious context. B. D. Ehrman, *Studies in the Textual Criticism of the New Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 103-104.
- 5) J. Heimerdinger, “Barnabas in Acts: A Study of His Role in the Text of Codex Bezae”, *JSNT* 72 (1998), 23-66; “Unintentional Sins in Peter’s Speech: Acts 3:12-26”, *RCT* 20 (1995), 269-276.
- 6) D. C. Parker and S. R. Pickering, eds., “4968: *Acta Apostolorum* 10-12, 15-17”, *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri Volume LXXIV* (London: The Egypt Exploration Society, 2009), 1-45. See H. A. Sanders, “A Papyrus Fragment of Acts in the Michigan Collection”, *HTR* 20 (1927), 1-19; H.-M. Schenke, ed., *Apostelgeschichte 1,1-15,3 im mittelägyptischen Dialekt des Koptischen (Codex Glazier)*, TU 137 (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1991); G. Gäbel, “The Text of P¹²⁷ (P.Oxy. 4968) and Its Relationship with the Text of Codex Bezae”, *NovT* 53 (2011), 107-152.
- 7) The most lucid definition of the term “singular readings” is given by Epp: “A ‘singular reading’ is a ‘reading’ found in one NT but with the support of no other; it is a unique reading as far as our knowledge of NT MSS extends.” See E. J. Epp, “Toward the Clarification of the Term ‘Textual Variant’”, E. J. Epp and G. D. Fee, eds., *Studies in the Theory and Method of New Testament Textual Criticism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 59.

as the result of one main redaction, which was the common basis for variants shared by \mathfrak{P}^{127} , D05, d5 and Syriac text forms...⁸⁾

The fragmentary nature of the textual data in \mathfrak{P}^{127} notwithstanding, the striking correspondences of these singular variants may serve as evidence of an ideological leaning of the D-texts. In his recent analysis of D05 with \mathfrak{P}^{127} , nonetheless, Gäbel does not fully engage with Epp's key arguments regarding the notion of an anti-Jewish bias in D05.⁹⁾

Second, J. Ruis-Camps and J. Read-Heimerdinger's four-volume commentary on the Bezan text of Acts¹⁰⁾ *vis-à-vis* the Alexandrian tradition challenges Epp's core claim. The authors assert that the D05 is primarily narrated from a "Jewish perspective":

Despite the ready conclusion that such an attack [or a hostile stance] on the Jews is the work of a Gentile Christian who altered the text so as to intensify the hostility of the Jews reported in Acts, the way the crisis situations are addressed in the Bezan text is, in fact, typically Jewish...¹¹⁾

Epp, in his most recent reassessment of *Theological Tendency*, reviews Read-Heimerdinger's earlier contention about the Jewish standpoint underlying D05 and criticizes her conclusion as "rash" and devoid of a thorough text-critical examination of other significant D-text witnesses.¹²⁾ Despite their cogent contention regarding the prevalence of the Jewish interests in the D-text, Ruis-Camps and Read-Heimerdinger do not sufficiently treat Epp's critical evaluations of the D-text in Acts.

In this article, I will address this deficit by reconsidering Epp's thesis in light of the Gäbel's discussion of D05 and \mathfrak{P}^{127} , and Ruis-Camps and Read-Heimerdinger's claim regarding the Jewish outlook of D05. The selected texts in D05 are limited to Acts 10-17, given that the surviving texts of \mathfrak{P}^{127} preserve only partial fragments of these chapters. In particular, I will survey the events

8) G. Gäbel, "The Text of \mathfrak{P}^{127} ", 150.

9) *Ibid.*, 115.

10) J. Ruis-Camps and J. Read-Heimerdinger, *The Message of Acts in Codex Bezae: A Comparison with the Alexandrian Tradition*, 4 vols. (London: T&T Clark, 2004-2009).

11) *Ibid.*, vol. 2, 2-3.

12) E. J. Epp, "Anti-Judaic Tendencies," 734.

leading up to the verdict of the apostolic decree and to its delivery by the apostles. The aim of this inquiry is to determine to what extent these texts share “anti-Judaic sentiment.” Special attention will be given to the degree to which the selected texts exhibit a Jewish or a Gentile-Christian perspective. More specifically, I will examine the peculiar addition of the negative golden rule in the D-text decree and assess the validity of Epp’s hypothesis that the decree is essentially a Christian concession to Judaizing. Since the Jews’ attack on Paul and Silas (Act 16:16-17:5) contains critical literary features, it will also be considered. In doing so, I attempt to provide a synchronic evaluation of the rhetorical trajectory underlying the unique D-text extrapolations in Acts 10-17.

2. Paradoxical Duality of Omission and Expansion: Text-critical Implication of P¹²⁷ in the Reading of Acts

Parker and Pickering’s adulatory assessment of P¹²⁷, as one of the most important Greek manuscript discoveries in the past few centuries, is justified.¹³⁾ This fifth-century papyrus discovered in Oxyrhynchus (modern el-Bahnasa), Egypt, features some striking textual variations that would contribute to the present understanding of the reception history the text of Acts. The current fragments of the papyrus preserve a text of Acts 10:32-35, 40-45; 11:2-5, 30; 12:1-3, 5, 7-9; 15:29-31, 34-36, (37), 38-41; 16:1-4, 13-40; 17:1-10.¹⁴⁾ In their critical editions, Parker and Pickering provide an array of insightful observations on some of the textual characteristics peculiar to P¹²⁷. The distinctive features of P¹²⁷ are 1) that the papyrus has great proclivity for abbreviation and even omission despite its general tendency to expand and 2) that it often changes the word order.¹⁵⁾ Parker and Pickering also list some notable readings that are entirely new from P¹²⁷ in Acts.¹⁶⁾ As Parker and Pickering keenly observe, scholarship has traditionally characterized Codex Bezae (D05) as a product of a “free recasting” of the received text base in contrast to Codex Vaticanus (B03), which is considered relatively

13) D. C. Parker and S. R. Pickering, “4968: *Acta Apostolorum*”, 1.

14) Ibid.

15) Ibid., 8-14.

16) Ibid., 13-14.

more conservative than its “Western” counterpart. Based on the number of common readings found in \mathfrak{P}^{127} and D05 against B03, Parker and Pickering conclude that both \mathfrak{P}^{127} and D05 are “descended from a similar form of text.”¹⁷⁾

Recently, a more thoroughgoing analysis of the characteristics of \mathfrak{P}^{127} in relation to the D-text and its allies has been presented by Georg Gäbel. His analysis reveals several astounding aspects of both witnesses that have profound implications for the textual study of Acts. Most importantly, the distinctive readings in D05—the majority of which included what are known as “singulars”—have remarkable correspondences with those found in \mathfrak{P}^{127} that it is no longer appropriate to assign them as solely distinctive to the text of D05. The evaluation of the text of \mathfrak{P}^{127} divulges highly intriguing phenomena which Gäbel summarizes as follows:

- (1) In many places, [the text of \mathfrak{P}^{127}] is considerably longer. (2) In many places, it is considerably shorter. (3) It contains a remarkable number of verses which have been rewritten consistently and extensively... (4) \mathfrak{P}^{127} contains a high number of singular variants. (5) \mathfrak{P}^{127} contains a high number of variants (or subvariants) which are closely related to variants in D05. There is no other single ms with which it shares as many variants.¹⁸⁾

More specifically, Gäbel’s thorough textual analysis of these unique variants in D05 and \mathfrak{P}^{127} reveals noteworthy scribal traits characteristic to \mathfrak{P}^{127} . He remarks:

... singular additions occurred in verses which underwent considerable rewriting in D05 (and sometimes in other witnesses), too, and they must be seen in this context. Making these additions, then, the text of \mathfrak{P}^{127} goes further than that of D05 (and others), but in so doing, it pursues the same tendency, generally improving the text and increasing syntactical and narrative coherence.¹⁹⁾

17) Ibid., 11.

18) G. Gäbel, “The Text of \mathfrak{P}^{127} ”, 145.

19) Ibid., 136.

Provided that P¹²⁷ and D05 share a text base akin to that of the “proto-D text,” the question rises as to the nature of textual agreements between P¹²⁷ and the D-text. To what extent does it coincide with or deviate from the perceptible ideological outlook inherent in the peculiar readings of D05? A comparison of the most relevant texts of P¹²⁷ and those of D05 along Epp’s line of argument may be helpful in assessing ideological coherence of the distinct variants in the D-text. Below are the selected passages from Acts that exemplify Epp’s thesis regarding the anti-Jewish bias traceable in the D-text, namely, from Peter’s encounter with Cornelius (Act 10) to the Jews’ persecution of Paul and Silas (Act 17).

2.1. Peter and Cornelius: Acts 10:32-35

Acts 10:32-35

P¹²⁷

[εξαυτης] ουν [επεμψα] προ[ς] [σε] [παρα]καλ[ων] [ελθειν] προ[ς] [ημας]
[και] συ κα[λως] [εποι]ησα[ς] [εν] [ταχει] [†] και ν[υν] [ιδου] παν[τες]
[ημεις] ενω[πιον] [σου] ακου[σα]! τα [προσ]τετα[γμ]ενα σο[ι] απο τ[ου] ·θυ

D05

εξαυτης [D*: ου/ D^{C1}: ουν] επεμψα προς σε [D*: παρακαλων ελθειν προς
ημας/ D^{C1}: παρακαλων ελθειν σε προς ημας] συ δε καλως εποιησας εν ταχει
παραγενομενος νυν [D*: δου / D^{C1a}: ιδου/ D^{C1b}: ουν] παντες ημεις [D*:
ενωπιον σου/ D^C: ενωπιον του θεου παρεσμεν] ακουσαι [D*: βουλομενοι
παρα σου τα προστεταγμενα σοι/ D^C: παρα σου τα προστεταγμενα σοι]
απο του θεου

20) The texts of P¹²⁷ and D05 in this paper rely on the online critical edition provided by the Institut für neutestamentliche Textforschung: <http://intf.uni-muenster.de/p127> (30 June 2017). The following signs/emphases are used to mark distinctive readings based on my analysis of the comparative work by Gäbel and Parker & Pickering: [†]= omission against D05; D*, DC, Dc1, Dc2, etc = scribal corrections; boldfaced words = notable “singular” attestation/s (i.e., uniquely shared by P¹²⁷ and D05 against other Greek manuscripts); underlined words = notable variation/s. One of the primary references consulted in the collation of the D-text variants is R. J. Swanson, ed., *New Testament Greek Manuscripts, The Acts of the Apostles: Variant Readings Arranged in Horizontal Lines Against Codex Vaticanus* (Pasadena: W. Carey International University Press, 1995).

Epp demonstrates that the D-text shows a marked tendency to elevate the status of the apostles, notably Peter and Paul, whose leadership roles in Acts express “the new faith over against the Jewish leaders.”²¹⁾ In fact, Paul figures so much more prominently in Acts than Peter that “the D-text heightens Peter in order more nearly to balance these two great figures... [And they] represent the strong, united church over against the stubborn and hostile Jewish leaders.”²²⁾ Although his interpretation of Peter’s elevation in Acts is somewhat debatable, Epp persuasively claims that the variants of the D-text in Acts consistently ascribe greater authority to the figure of Peter than the B-text and its close allies. The singular readings of D05 in Acts 10:33 are nearly matched by \mathfrak{P}^{127} and these shared variants suggest that \mathfrak{P}^{127} adheres to the thematic emphasis of D05. A case in point is Cornelius’ invitation of Peter in Acts 10, which features the centurion’s decisive conversion into Christianity and God’s affirmation of the church’s mission to the Jews and the Gentiles. In Acts 10:33a, D05 depicts Cornelius as anticipating eagerly the arrival of Peter through the inclusion of the phrases “urging you to come to us” (D* παρακαλων ελθειν προς ημας; \mathfrak{P}^{127} παρακαλων [ελθειν] προς [ημας]) and “with speed” (D εν ταχει; \mathfrak{P}^{127} [εν ταχει]). This literary arrangement highlights that Cornelius, not Peter, is the one earnestly exhorting the visit, and connects the incident to the Lucan account of a centurion who initially requests that Jesus visit his ailing servant (cf. Luk 7:3).²³⁾ The literary allusion reinforces Peter’s role in the narrative of Acts as divinely sanctioned: just as Jesus graciously dealt with the devout centurion, so does Peter with Cornelius.

The expression “*wishing* to hear from you” (D*: ακουσαι βουλομενοι παρα σου) in the Bezan text of Acts 10:33b likewise underscores Cornelius’ docile attitude in reverence of Peter. Moreover, Peter’s apostolic status is intensified through the literary juxtaposition of Peter and God in these texts. The phrase “before you” (D* ενωπιον σου; cf. NA²⁸ ενωπιον του θεου) referring to Peter in D05—which replaces the B-text’s reading of “God”—uniquely parallels the phrase “before you” (i.e., Peter) in \mathfrak{P}^{127} (ενω[πιον σου]).²⁴⁾ As Ruis-Camps and

21) E. J. Epp, *Theological Tendency*, 163.

22) Ibid.

23) Ruis-Camps and Read-Heimerdinger note that in the Bezan text, Cornelius is portrayed as more urgent than the centurion in Luke. J. Ruis-Camps and J. Read-Heimerdinger, *The Message of Acts*, vol. 2, 268.

24) In Act 10:33, \mathfrak{P}^{127} follows the original reading of the Bezan text (D*) more closely.

Read-Heimerdinger note, the attestation of “commanded by God” (⁷⁴ P¹²⁷ 05 020 18 81^C 424 1241 1505 θεου) rather than “commanded by the Lord” (NA²⁸ κυριου) indicates a deliberate choice of the divine title:

“The avoidance of the term ‘Lord’ in the mouth of a Gentile in the Bezan text is typical..., this being a designation of God that is reserved either for Yahweh when referred to by Jews or for Jesus when referred to by believers.”²⁵⁾

The tetragrammaton, expressed in Greek as “the Lord” (κυριου), is to be invoked by a Jew, not by a Gentile like Cornelius. P¹²⁷ coheres with the D-text variants on this point, faithfully preserving the designation of theological import, especially in the Jewish context. Hence, the word choice of “God” points to an interpolator of the D-text who was familiar with Jewish scribal tradition.²⁶⁾

Epp’s observation in Acts 10 is justified in that the D-text upholds Peter’s leadership role. But the contrast between “the strong, united church” and “the stubborn and hostile Jewish leaders” does not occupy the central point of the chapter. The emphasis on Peter’s authority and Cornelius’ reverence for the apostle creates a literary allusion to Luke’s centurion (Luk 7:3, 4) in the Bezan text of Acts 10:33.²⁷⁾ This prepares for the full inclusion of the Gentile proselytes in Acts 11-12. Peter, who will divulge God’s will regarding these proselytes, is honored by Cornelius in the D-text.

2.2. Peter and the Jerusalem Church: Acts 11:2-5

Acts 11:2

P¹²⁷

lac... [ποιουμενο]ς [δια] [των] [χωρ]ων [διδασκων] [α]υτους [ος] [και]
[κατηντ]η[σεν] [εις][ιερ]οσο[λυμα][και][απη]γ [γειλεν][αυτ]οις[την][χαριν]
[τ]ου[θυ] [οι] [εκ] [περιτ]ο[μης] [οντες][αδ]ελ[φοι] [διεκρινο]ν[το] προς
[αυτο]ν

25) J. Ruis-Camps and J. Read-Heimerdinger, *The Message of Acts*, vol. 2, 268.

26) Ibid.

27) Ibid., See footnote 195.

D05

ο μὲν οὖν πέτρος δια ἰκανοῦ χρόνου ἠθέλησεν πορευθῆναι εἰς ἱεροσόλυμα
καὶ προσφώνησας τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς καὶ ἐπιστηρίξας αὐτοὺς πολὺν λόγον
ποιούμενος δια τῶν χωρῶν διδασκῶν αὐτοὺς ὡς καὶ κατηντήσεν αὐτοὺς καὶ
ἀπηγγείλεν αὐτοῖς τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ οἱ δε ἐκ περιτομῆς ἀδελφοὶ διεκρίνοντο
πρὸς αὐτὸν

Epp maintains that the seemingly redundant elaboration of D05 in Acts 11:2 reflects the scribe’s deliberate attempt to separate the events of 11:1 and those of 11:2-3.²⁸⁾ In the B-text, the adverbial connector “when” (ὅτε δὲ ἀνεβῆ Πέτρος εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ, D05 and \mathfrak{P}^{127} omit), in contrast to “after some time” (δια ἰκανοῦ χρόνου) in D05, connects 11:1 and 11:2 together as a connected event: Peter is portrayed as hastening his journey back to Jerusalem to vindicate his ministry for the Gentiles before “those of the circumcision” (οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς). In D05, Peter is seen as prolonging his journey as he attends to other ministerial duties before deciding to journey back to Jerusalem to deal with the issue of the Gentile mission. The reconstruction of Acts 11:2-3 in \mathfrak{P}^{127} closely follows Bezae’s singular reading aside from its missing part due to the poor condition of the papyrus. The interpolation in D05, Epp asserts, serves to “minimize the significance of the Judaizing problem as well as any urgent concern about it on the part of both the Jerusalem church and Peter himself.”²⁹⁾ The cumulative impact of the Bezan reading, according to Epp, is that the divine workings among the Gentiles “overshadow” any dispute over the table fellowship with the Gentile converts.

On the other hand, B. M. Metzger and J. Crehan point out that the extraneous report on Peter’s itinerary before giving his account of Cornelius’ conversion at the Jerusalem church has several interpretative ramifications.³⁰⁾ The scribal addition in Acts 11:2 serves to elevate the status of Peter *vis-à-vis* that of Paul and confirms Peter’s unwillingness to yield to the “control” of the “brothers of

28) E. J. Epp, *Theological Tendency*, 106.

29) *Ibid.*

30) J. Ruis-Camps and J. Read-Heimerdinger, *The Message of Acts*, vol. 2, 293, n. 236. See also B. M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1970), 337-338; J. Crehan, “Peter According to the D-text of Acts”, *TS* 18 (1957), 596-603.

circumcision” (Act 11:3).³¹⁾ In addition, Ruis-Camps and Read-Heimerdinger point out Luke’s intentional allusion to Jesus’ prediction of Peter’s three-fold denial and his subsequent restoration in the D-text (Luk 22:31-32). The key concepts linking the two pericopes are “but you must turn and” (D05 δε επιστρεψον και) and “strengthen your brothers” (NA²⁸ στηρισον τους αδελφους σου). Affirming “Jesus’ prophecy,” the Bezan text describes Peter as *turning* from his misunderstanding about God’s will for the Gentiles and *strengthening the brothers* with his exhortation and teaching.³²⁾ In this way, the parallel is drawn in D05 between Peter’s three-fold denial of Christ (Luk 22:34) and Peter’s three-fold refusal to eat unclean animals (Act 10:16).³³⁾ The thematic juxtaposition highlights theological significance of Peter’s visit to Cornelius. Peter’s acceptance of Cornelius is akin to Christ’s acceptance of Peter; hence, the rejection of God’s will for the Gentiles is tantamount to the denial of Christ. This notion is also bolstered by “the brothers of circumcision” in the D-text (Act 11:2b, D05 οι δε εκ περιτομης αδελφοι; P¹²⁷ [οι] [εκ] [περιτ]ο[μης] [οντες] [αδ]ελ[φοι]), instead “those of circumcision” (NA²⁸ οι εκ περιτομης) in the B-text.³⁴⁾ The difference indicates that the D-text interpolation in Acts 11:2 focuses on Gentile proselytes which already began in Acts 10, with the conversion of Cornelius. Epp’s assertion that the Bezan scribe attempted to depreciate the weight of the Gentile issue through the explicatory insertion is peripheral in view of the literary arrangement of the pericopes.

2.3. The Martyrdom of James and the Imprisonment of Peter: Acts 12:1-3

Acts 12:3

P¹²⁷
[και] ιδω[ν] [οτι] [αρε]στο[ν] [τοις] [ιου]δαιο[ις] [η] [επιχει]ρησ[ις] [αυτου]
επι τ[ου]ς πιστους ηθε[λησ]εν και τον [πε]τρον προσ[λ]αβεσθαι ησαν [δ]ε
ημερα! ... lac

31) J. Ruis-Camps and J. Read-Heimerdinger, *The Message of Acts*, vol. 2, 293.

32) Ibid.

33) See also *ibid.*, 365-368.

34) *Ibid.*, 294.

D05

και ιδων οτι αρεστον εστιν τοις ιουδαιοις **η επιχειρησεις αυτου επι τους πιστους** προσεθετο συνλαβειν και πετρον ησαν δε αι ημεραι των αζυμων

According to Epp, the D-text underscores the apostles' association with Jerusalem, not only as the place of origin of Christianity but also as the “centre of Judaism.”³⁵⁾ In Acts 12:1, the D-text inserts the phrase “in Judea” (D05 614 εν τη Ιουδαια) after the clause “Herod the king laid his hands to mistreat some of those who belonged to the church” (επεβαλεν Ηρωδης ο βασιλευς τας χειρας κακωσαι τινας των απο της εκκλησιας). \mathfrak{P}^{127} retains the theologically motivated insertion in the same order ([εν τη] ιουδαια). The addition clarifies that Herod's persecution spread beyond Jerusalem and reached the believers in “the church in Judea” (cf. Acts 11:29), the region within his jurisdiction, to cater to the demands of the Jews in Jerusalem.³⁶⁾ Ruis-Camps and Read-Heimerdinger convincingly claim that the use of the verb “mistreat” (κακωσαι) in Acts 12:1 (NA²⁸) echoes the oppression of Pharaoh mentioned in Stephen's sermon in Acts 7 (vv. 16, 19), which casts Herod as the type of “new Pharaoh” against God's chosen people, the believing Jews.³⁷⁾ In this way, the tension between believing Jews and non-believing Jews implicit in the narrative layer is heightened by the D-text insertion.

Similarly conspicuous is the singular interpolation of “his attack on the faithful” (D05 η επιχειρησις αυτου επι τους πιστους) after “when he saw that it was pleasing to the Jews” (ιδων δε οτι αρεστον εστιν τοις Ιουδαιοις) in Acts 12:3. Peter (3:16), Stephen (6:5), and Barnabas (11:24) were full of “faith” (πιστις) and “the faithful” in the Bezan text of Acts 12:3 points to the church of Jewish believers. By specifying that it was the act of “his laying hands upon the faithful” that pleased the Jews, D05 betrays an anti-Judaic thought by contrasting “the faithful” against “the Jews.” \mathfrak{P}^{127} shares the singular reading of D05, paralleling the “anti-Judaic” sentiment manifest in Acts 12:3 with the identical addition ([η] [επιχει]ρησις [ις] [αυτου] επι τ[ου]ς πιστους).

35) E. J. Epp, *Theological Tendency*, 128.

36) See B. M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary*, 345; J. Ruis-Camps and J. Read-Heimerdinger, *The Message of Acts*, vol. 2, 334.

37) J. Ruis-Camps and J. Read-Heimerdinger, *The Message of Acts*, vol. 2, 337, 368-373.

2.4. The Joint Mission of Paul and Silas (Act 16:16-40; 17:1-5)

Acts 17:5

P¹²⁷

οι δε απειθουντες ιουδαιο[ι] [συν]στρεψαντες τ[ι]νας ανδρ[α]ς τ[ων]
αγοραιω[ν] [πολ]λους εθο[ρ]υβο[υν] την πολιν και επισταντες τη οικ[ια]
ιασονος εξ[η]τη[ρον] [αυτ]ου[ς] [εξαγαγειν] [εις] [τον] [δημον]

D05

οι δε απειθουντες ιουδαιοι **συνστρεψαντες** τινας ανδρας των αγοραιων
πονηρους εθορυβουσαν την πολιν [D*: και επιστα[2]³⁸αντες/ D^{C1}: και
επισταντες] τη οικια ιασονος εξητηουν αυτους **εξαγαγειν** εις τον δημον

In Acts 17:5, the Bezan text attests to the singular reading of “But the Jews who were not persuaded gathered together” (D05 οι δε απειθουντες ιουδαιοι συνστρεψαντες; cf. conflated readings in 20 08 18 424) as opposed to “But the Jews, being jealous, and by taking...” (NA²⁸ Ζηλωσαντες δε οι Ιουδαιοι και προσλαβομενοι...; D05 and P¹²⁷ omit και οχλοποιησαντες) of the B-text. The B-text, through the expression “jealous” (ζηλωσαντες), alludes to Stephen’s mention of Joseph’s jealous brothers in Acts 7:9. In fact, the B-text consistently portrays the Jewish religious leaders being “filled with jealousy” (cf. Act 5:17, 13:45) when persecuting the apostles. Alternatively, Bezae’s portrayal (closely followed by P¹²⁷) of the “unpersuaded” or “unbelieving” Jews sharply contrasts those Jews who were “persuaded” (και τινες εξ αυτων επεισθησαν) by Paul’s preaching in the synagogue in the previous verse (Act 17:4). The Bezan text accentuates the “unbelieving” rather than the “jealous” Jews as instigating an opposition, continuing the previous idea of Herod’s attack on “the faithful” to appease the Jewish leaders (Act 12:3). In D05, a contrast is drawn between the believing, “faithful” Jews who are “filled with faith” (Act 12:3; 3:16; 6:5; 11:24) and the “unbelieving” Jews who persecute the faithful along with Herod (Act 17:5). The literary effect is more than incidental. The Jews who persecute are not seen as Joseph’s “jealous” brothers but as those who “conspire with” Herod, one of “the kings and rulers of the earth” (Psa 2). This literary association gains firm support from the fact that the entire section on the imprisonment of Paul

38) A lacuna of two letter-spaces.

and Silas in Acts 16:16-40 in the D-text is intricately linked to Psalm 2, on both linguistic and thematic grounds.³⁹⁾

In Acts 17:5, the reconstructed \mathfrak{P}^{127} closely follows the singular reading of D05, but it deviates slightly by featuring a singular occurrence of “many” men ([πολ]λους) in place of “wicked” men (πονηρους). Gäbel asserts that \mathfrak{P}^{127} “neutralized” the Bezan reference to “wicked men” through the employment of the term “many men.”⁴⁰⁾ Nevertheless, since the tendency of \mathfrak{P}^{127} is to add or omit to improve the coherence of the narrative while closely reflecting the singular readings of D05, it is not clear why \mathfrak{P}^{127} would have replaced the word to dilute the force of the rhetoric in D05. As it appears, the substitution of “wicked” with “many” shifts the blame onto the Jews than onto the marketplace rabble-rousers—the “unbelieving” Jews are to be blamed for the disturbance.

2.5. The Jerusalem Council (Act 15:29-31, 38-41) and the Delivery of the Decree (16:1-5)

Acts 15:29-30

\mathfrak{P}^{127}

15:29 Ιαc δ̄ [ιατηρουν]τες [εαυτους] [ευ] πρα[ξετε] †

15:30 [εν] [ο]λιγαις [δε] [ημε]ραις ο [7-9] δε [9-11] εις αν[τιοχειαν] και συν [αγαγον]τες το [πληθος] [επ]εδωκ [αν] [τα][γραμ]ματα

D05

15:29 απεχεσθαι ειδωλοθυτων και αιματος και πορνειας [D*: και οσα μη θελετε εαυτοις γινεσθαι ετερω μη ποιειν/ D^{C2}: και οσα μη θελετε εαυτοις γινεσθαι ετερω μη ποιειτε] αφ ων διατηρουντες εαυτους ευ πραξατε φερομενοι εν τω αγιω πνευματι ερρωσθε

15:30 [D*: οι μεν ουν απολυθεντες εν ημεραις ολιγαις κατηλθον/ D^{C1}: οι μεν ουν απολυθεντες κατηλθον] εις αντιοχειαν και [D*: συναγοντες/ D^{C1}: συναγαγοντες] το πληθος επεδωκαν την επιστολην

In Epp’s view, the uniquely attested reference to the Holy Spirit at the end of

39) See Ruis-Camps and Read-Heimerdinger’s detailed comparison between Act 16:16-40 and Psa 2 in J. Ruis-Camps and J. Read-Heimerdinger, *The Message of Acts*, vol. 3, 302-303.

40) G. Gäbel, “The Text of \mathfrak{P}^{127} ”, 125.

the decree, “being led by the Holy Spirit” (D05 φερομενοι εν τω αγιω πνευματι), in Acts 15:29 has not received its due attention. Following the arguments of A. von Harnack and P. H. Menoud, Epp holds that the Holy Spirit is the essential divine gift, without which the golden rule cannot be practiced.⁴¹⁾ He also argues that the possession of the Spirit distinguishes Christianity from Judaism. Accordingly, the Bezan phrase “being led by the Holy Spirit” (Act 15:29) functions to “counteract any legalistic overtones which might accompany the apostolic letter as a result of the Judaizing controversy.”⁴²⁾ Epp’s argument on this point seemingly finds support in the harmonizing interpolation of Acts 15:32, where Judas and Silas—the messengers of the decree to the Gentile believers in Antioch—are uniquely rendered as being “full of the Holy Spirit” (D05 πληρεις πνευματος αγιου).

The reconstructed text of P¹²⁷, unlike the Bezan text, lacks the “Christianizing addition” in Acts 15:29. Neither does the extant text of P¹²⁷ tell us whether it contained the negative golden rule. Yet the negative golden rule in D05 is not a singular case as the variant form is attested in other D-texts and versional witnesses (323 614 945 1739 1891 / 1178 it^{ar, (d), dem, l, p, ph} vg^{ms} cop^{sa} (eth) Irenaeus^{lat} Cyprian, etc). This points to the great probability of the negative golden rule’s existence in P¹²⁷. If the Christianizing addition of D05 in Acts 15:29 (“being led by the Holy Spirit”) serves to “counteract any legalistic overtones” that the decree might convey, what does its absence in P¹²⁷ imply? At this point, it is significant to consider that P¹²⁷ occasionally omits redundant singular readings to improve the flow of narrative, as Gäbel’s informative analysis demonstrates. He argues that:

P¹²⁷ shows a remarkable tendency to abbreviate the text, as noted by Parker and Pickering... the majority of the singular omissions in P¹²⁷ shows common characteristics. They omit information which may seem redundant or which readers could deduce from the context, or information about local or temporal circumstances which, while not strictly necessary, helps to make a smooth transition from one episode to another (cf. 15:36; 17:1).⁴³⁾

41) E. J. Epp, *Theological Tendency*, 110-111.

42) *Ibid.*, 111.

43) G. Gäbel, “The Text of P¹²⁷”, 138.

Although Gäbel does not include Acts 15:29 in his discussion, the Christianizing addition in the verse shares the focus on the Holy Spirit: “for it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us” (NA²⁸ D05 εδοξεν γαρ τω πνευματι τω αγιω και ημιν) in 15:28 and “full of the Holy Spirit” (D05 πληρεις πνευματος αγιου) in 15:32. These factors indicate that the modifying phrase, “being led by the Holy Spirit” at the end of the decree (Act 15:29), would have likely been deleted to avoid redundancy in \mathfrak{P}^{127} . It also maintains the thematic consistency with James’ articulation of the decree in Acts 15:20. This textual feature in turn illuminates the literary significance of the superfluous Christianizing addition in D05—that the singular reading of “being led by the Holy Spirit” in the Bezan text is most probably a deliberate device charged with theological rhetoric.

The claim that the decree of the D-text transformed from a ritual decree to an ethical one may be unfounded. Epp argues that the scribe of the D-text made an ethical version of the decree in Acts 15:29 to distance it from the Judaizing, ritualistic version in the B-text.⁴⁴⁾ Still, it is not convincing how the addition of the negative golden rule to the ritual version of the decree imparts a distinctively “Christian emphasis over against Judaism”⁴⁵⁾ and negates the legalistic force of the ritual decree. The negative golden rule is not “an invention” of the Bezan scribe who reformulated the positive form found in Jesus’ teaching in the Gospels of Matthew 7:12 and Luke 6:31.⁴⁶⁾ Citing Hillel’s formulation of the negative golden rule, J. Neusner notes that it is an encapsulation of the legal essence of the Torah in early Judaism.⁴⁷⁾ However, this does not mean that the D-text decree in Acts underlies solely a Jewish perspective.

The interpolations of the D-text attest to frequent allusions to both Testaments and contrast believing Jews and Gentiles with unbelieving Jews and Gentiles. Not surprisingly, the D-text decree, with its negative golden rule, foregrounds some biblical texts. As G. B. King’s persuasive article reveals, the negative golden rule did not begin with Hillel.⁴⁸⁾ In fact, a detailed look at the interpretive

44) E. J. Epp, *Theological Tendency*, 110.

45) *Ibid.*, 111.

46) J. Ruis-Camps and J. Read-Heimerdinger, *The Message of Acts*, vol. 3, 190.

47) Jacob Neusner, “The Golden Rule in Classical Judaism”, *RRJ* 11:2 (2008), 292-315.

48) G. B. King, “The ‘Negative’ Golden Rule”, *JR* 8 (1928), 274-275. That the negative golden rule was established in early Judaism is well-attested in the literature of the Second Temple period. See *b. Shabbat* 31a; *Tobit* 4:15; Philo’s *Hypothetica* 7.6; Eusebius’s *Praeparatio*

tradition before and after Hillel suggests that *both* positive and negative golden rule ultimately derives from Leviticus 19:18.⁴⁹⁾ King’s observation is significant in that many scholars, including T. Callan, have posited Leviticus 17 and 18 as the scriptural background for the B-text decree.⁵⁰⁾ Callan’s thesis has largely been criticized for the difficulty associated with the command to abstain “from whatever has been strangled” (του πνικτου), since none of the texts in Leviticus 17:10, 13, and 15 directly support the prohibition.⁵¹⁾ The D-text decree, which does not feature the ban on the “strangled meat,” has the negative golden law instead. Without the mention of the “strangled meat,” the D-text decree in Acts more likely alludes to Leviticus 17-19 because each component of the decree echoes thematic highlights of these chapters: Leviticus 17 (laws on blood manipulation in ritual and non-ritual setting), 18 (prohibited sexual relations), and 19 (further laws based on the Decalogue, which has vertical/God-human and horizontal/human-human dimensions).⁵²⁾

More specifically, the decree’s reference, in the D-text, to the negative golden rule, mirrors Moses’ address to the Israelites regarding the native Israelites (cf. Lev 19:18, “...you shall love your neighbor as yourself”) and the resident aliens (cf. Lev 19:34, “...you shall love the alien as yourself”) in Leviticus 19. These

Evangelica 8.7. C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, 2 vols., ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994, 1998), vol. 2, 736. For a fuller bibliography also see D. C. Allison, *Constructing Jesus: Memory, Imagination, and History* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 358, n. 150.

49) G. B. King, “The ‘Negative’ Golden Rule”, 274.

50) T. Callan has attempted to revive the notion that the apostolic decree in the B-text of Acts assumes essentially, but not exclusively, the ritual laws found in Lev 17-18, in which the Israelites and the resident aliens (*gēr*) are both addressed. T. Callan, “The Background of the Apostolic Decree (Act 15:20, 29; 21:25)”, *CBQ* 55 (1993), 284-297. See a fuller bibliography prior to T. Callan’s article in W. A. Strange, *The Problem of the Text of Acts*, SNTS 71 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 96, n. 129.

51) See, for example, Emmanuelle Steffek, “Some Observations on the Apostolic Decree in Acts 15.20, 29 (and 21.25)”, M. Tait and P. Oakes, eds., *Torah in the New Testament: Papers Delivered at the Manchester-Lausanne Seminar of June 2008*, LNTS 401 (London: T&T Clark, 2009), 133-140. A more exhaustive treatment of the “original” form of the decree is found in W. A. Strange, *The Problem of the Text*, 87-106.

52) See Weinfeld’s claim that Lev 19 expands the Decalogue, as the midrashic tradition attests: “Why was this chapter (*kedoshim*) spoken at the Assembly? Because most of the principal elements of the Torah depend upon it. Rabbi Levi says, because the Ten Commandments are included in it” (*Leviticus Rabbah* 24.5). M. Weinfeld, “The Uniqueness of the Decalogue”, B. Z. Segal, ed., *The Ten Commandments in History and Tradition* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1990), 11-15.

laws are epitomized in Jesus’ affirmation of the two greatest commandments for gaining eternal life (Luk 10:25-28; cf. Lev 18:5)—with an extended illustration that the true neighbor is none but a Samaritan whom Jews did not associate with (Luk 10:30-36). In this regard, the D-text interpolation of the negative golden rule does not necessarily render the decree more *ethical* (contra Epp), or *Jewish* (contra Ruis-Camps and Read-Heimerdinger), but rather underlines the concept that the Jewish converts as well as the Gentile Christians are, in the Holy Spirit, identified with the “restored Israel.”⁵³⁾ Thus, the four-membered decree of the D-text, including the ban on idol sacrifices, consuming blood, illicit sexual relations, along with the negative golden rule, is a unique witness to the early reception of the legal requirements in Leviticus 17 (blood manipulation in proper worship)⁵⁴⁾, 18 (sexual chastity), and 19 (an exposition of the Decalogue with focus on “loving non-Israelites”) in a Christian formulation. This minimal prescription is likewise reminiscent of Jesus’ proclamation of the greatest commandments in the book of Matthew: “Love the Lord your God” (no spiritual or physical unfaithfulness in Mat 22:36-38; cf. Luk 10:27a) and “Love your neighbor as yourself” (an extension of God’s love to Gentiles; Mat 22:39; cf. Luk 10:27b).

Acts 16:4-5

ⲑ¹²⁷

16:4 [δι]ερχομ[ενοι] [δε] τας πο[λεις] [εκη]ρυσ[σον] τ [μετα] παρ[ρησιας] [τον] κν [ιν] [χν] [αμα] [πα]ρ[α]διδοντες [και] τας εντολας των [αποστολων] και π[ρε]σβυτερων ΙαϷ

D05

16:4 [D*: διερχομενοι δε τας πολεις **εκηρυσσον** και παρεδιδσαν αυτοις **μετα πασης παρρησιας τον κυριον ιησουν χριστον αμα παραδιδοντες** και τας εντολας/ D^{C2}: διερχομενοι δε τας πολεις εκηρυσσον και παρεδιδσαν αυτοις **μετα πασης παρρησιας τον κυριον ιησουν χριστον αμα παραδιδοντες**

53) Callan asserted that the Christian Church in Lucan perspective constitutes the Jewish converts and Gentile Christians who are associated with the “restored Israel.” T. Callan, “The Background”, 297.

54) In the ancient context, ritual slaughtering was usually an essential part of worship rites. It is reasonable to consider the first and second element of the decree together to allude to Lev 17.

και τας εντολας των] αποστολων και πρεσβυτερων των εν ιεροσολυμοις
16:5 αι μεν ουν εκκλησiai εστερεουντο και επερισσευον τω αριθμω καθ
ημεραν

Epp further examines the D-variant in Acts 16:4 and draws attention to the Bezan outlook on the delivery of the decree. Based on his reading of the D-text witnesses such as sy^{hmg} (cf. Ephr^(p428n¹)), Epp adduces that D’s reading of “they proclaimed and delivered to them” (εκηρυσσαν και παρεδιδουσαν αυτοις) is an instance of conflation where “delivered to them” (παρεδιδουσαν αυτοις) must have been taken from the B-text by a later scribe. So in the original D-text the “churches were strengthened” (Act 16:5, εκκλησiai εστερεουντο) as a result of the preaching, and the delivery of the “commands” (εντολαι, cf. B’s “decisions,” τα δογματα) is followed by a qualifying adverb “at the same time” (αμα), which is “placed in a participial phrase as an appendix.”⁵⁵) It should also be noted that in Acts 14:5 the D-text omits “in the faith” (τη πιστει) after the passive verb “were strengthened” (εστερεουντο) to obviate the causal link between the delivery of the decree and the strengthening of the churches in the faith. The reading of P¹²⁷ in Acts 16:4 is striking in that it closely agrees with Bezae’s singular reading (both omit κερκιμενα υπο).

In Epp’s view, this syntactical arrangement renders the delivery of the decrees “clearly secondary to the preaching” and displays “a devaluation of the significance both of the ‘decree’ and of the disputation which occasioned it.”⁵⁶) Epp contends that D05 evinces a rhetoric against the decree which is a compromise to the Judaizing of the Christian church. Epp is right in seeing that the addition of Christ-centered evangelistic outreach in D05 (Act 16:4, “with all courage the Lord Jesus, the Messiah...”) deflects the possible misunderstanding associated with the delivery of the decree issued from Jerusalem. However, it does not do justice to the context of Acts 15 to characterize the decree as the church’s concession to Judaizing. What is more relevant is the decree’s view regarding the Gentile inclusion in the church and Bezae’s elucidation of Timothy’s involvement in Paul’s ministry (Act 16:1-4). The decree of the D-text, as epitomized by the negative golden rule regarding the Gentile proselytes (e.g., Lev 19:18, 34), affirms that both Jews and Gentiles are to come

55) E. J. Epp, *Theological Tendency*, 114.

56) *Ibid.*

together under “the Lord Jesus, the Messiah” to strengthen the church (Act 16:5).

3. Conclusion

The analysis of the so-called “singular readings” in D05 and \mathfrak{P}^{127} regarding an anti-Jewish bias divulges the textual convergences between the two witnesses. This study confirms the notion that Bezae’s distinctive readings, many of which are shared by \mathfrak{P}^{127} , are not a mere “free recasting” of tradition but evidence for the “common textual basis.”⁵⁷⁾ In particular, the foregoing analysis of \mathfrak{P}^{127} confirms that the theologically induced additions in the Bezan text of Acts are faithfully preserved by \mathfrak{P}^{127} , with relatively conservative and minimal variants.⁵⁸⁾ The texts of \mathfrak{P}^{127} , which retain some of the distinctive readings of D05, were selected to evaluate supposed “anti-Judaic tendencies”: Cornelius’ earnest invitation of Peter’s visitation (Act 10:32-35), Peter’s prolonged journey among the brothers before reporting at the Jerusalem church (Act 11:2-5), Herod’s imprisonment of Peter (Act 12:1-3), the Jews’ persecution of Paul and Silas (Act 16:16-40; 17:1-5), the apostolic decree with the negative golden rule and the pneumatic reference (Act 15:29-31), and the delivery of the decree by Paul and Timothy (16:1-4). The survey of these pericopes reveals that \mathfrak{P}^{127} evinces conservative preservation of D-text variants with theological implications even in its editorial enhancements (e.g., Act 17:5).

Frequently, as Epp noted, the D-text insertions elevate the status of the apostles (Act 10:32-35; 11:2-5) and embody rhetoric against the menacing, unbelieving Jews (Act 12:1-3; 17:1-5). Yet it would not do justice to the literary shape of the D-text, which incorporates theologically charged extrapolations, to argue that the distinctive readings of the Bezan text primarily function to cast the Jews and their leaders in a hostile light. Far less convincing is Epp’s contention that behind D-text is a Gentile Christian who attributed divine authority to the apostles, or intentionally mediated the tradition to predominantly Gentile Christians who did not share Jewish interests. Quite the contrary, the scribe

57) G. Gäbel, “The Text of \mathfrak{P}^{127} ”, 135, 151.

58) Gäbel, with B. Aland, attributes the similarity between D05 and \mathfrak{P}^{127} to the “main redaction of the ‘Western’ text” (e.g., 614) that preceded these manuscripts. *Ibid.*, 149.

behind these additions appears to be fully conversant with the Jewish worldview (Act 15:29), scribal norms (Act 10:33), and Jesus’ sayings (Mat 7:12; Luk 6:31; 7:3; 10:25-37; 22:31-32). He seems to have had both Jewish and Gentile Christian audiences in mind (Act 16:1-4), especially in the ways in which both Testaments were alluded to articulate an overarching theological point.

The literary allusions to both Testaments, as Ruis-Camps and Read-Heimerdinger analyzed, were particularly conspicuous in most of the D-text interpolations. For example, Cornelius’ sincere plea for Peter’s visitation (Act 10:32-35) drew parallels to the centurion’s request of Jesus’ healing (Luk 7:3). Peter’s delayed journey for the “strengthening” of the brothers (Act 11:2-5) was reminiscent of Jesus’ prophecy regarding Peter’s denial and rehabilitation (Luk 22:31-32, 34). The literary connection between Peter’s three-fold denial and his three-fold rejection of unclean animals (Act 10:16) thus highlighted the theological significance of Peter’s acceptance of Cornelius and subsequently the church’s affirmation of the Gentile inclusion. Herod’s murderous threat to the disciples (Act 12:1-3) alluded to the Israelites’ oppression by Pharaoh, as mentioned in Stephen’s final sermon (Act 7:16, 19). I argue that the D-text interpolation “unbelieving” regarding Jews who persecuted Paul (Act 17:5) also connects them to Herod, and consequently to the rebellious “kings and rulers” of Psalm 2 (cf. Act 16:16-40). This is a theologically motivated correction to the B-text, which refers to the Jews as “jealous” (only attested in 17:5 and 7:9 in Act), comparing them to Joseph’s brothers.

Epp views Bezae’s incorporation of the negative golden rule in the decree as a Christian concession to the Judaizing requirements (i.e., blood manipulation and sexual prohibitions) and a movement away from ritual laws to the ethical laws. Ruis-Camps and Read-Heimerdinger consider it an embodiment of the Jewish laws. Based on the literary associations in the D-text interpolations, however, I claim that the negative golden rule in the D05 apostolic decree evinces a literary allusion to Leviticus 19 (vv. 18, 34), with prime emphasis on the inclusion of the Gentile converts in the “restored Israel.” In this regard, the decree of the D-text clarifies that the essence of the covenantal requirements—loving God and loving one’s neighbor, including aliens, as oneself—as Leviticus 17 (blood manipulation in sacrifices), 18 (sexual purity), and 19 (exposition on the Decalogue) encompass embracing of Gentile converts. The enactment of this

legal provision, with an emphatic pneumatic reference, is a possible enterprise endorsed by the Holy Spirit. This notion is also traceable in the D-text rendering of the apostles' delivery of the decree in Acts 16:1-4, which depicts the ministry of Paul, and of Timothy, a Hellenistic Gentile convert.

<Keywords>

D-text, Bezae, P.Oxy. 4968, P127, Apostolic Decree, Anti-Judaic Tendencies, Acts 15, Lev 19.

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<Abstract>

**Codex Bezae (D05) in Light of P.Oxy. 4968 (P¹²⁷):
A Reassessment of “Anti-Judaic Tendencies” in Acts 10–17**

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Since the publication of E. J. Epp’s 1966 landmark study, *The Theological Tendency of Codex Bezae Cantabrigiensis in Acts*, it has elicited varied reactions among New Testament textual critics. A recent publication of Oxyrhynchus Papyrus 4986 (P¹²⁷), not considered in Epp’s original work, and J. Ruis-Camps and J. Read-Heimerdinger’s fresh analysis on the Bezan text of Acts require a synchronic reappraisal of Epp’s thesis. Based on G. Gäbel’s finding that both Codex Bezae (D05) and P¹²⁷ descend from a similar textual base, this article evaluates instances of “singular” readings in D05 and P¹²⁷ in light of Epp’s proposition that the distinctive D-variants have “anti-Judaic tendencies.” A comparison of the most representative cases in Acts 10–17 indicates that P¹²⁷ closely adheres to the ideological emphases in the D05, with only minor variations. This partially confirms Epp’s notion about a theologically motivated emphasis running through the D-variants. However, a careful examination of the D-texts reveals that the ideological orientation of the textual accretion of Acts 10–17 cannot be strictly categorized as either “Gentile Christian” (Epp) or “Jewish” (Ruis-Camps and Read-Heimerdinger). Literary allusions to both Testaments, especially relating to Gentile inclusion, point to a D-text scribe, familiar with Jewish and Christian canons, whose ideal was the “restored Israel” in which Jewish converts embraced Gentile believers in one faith. This article claims that the apostolic decree in the D-text, with the negative golden rule, preserves one of the early literary allusions to Leviticus 17, 18, and 19, focusing on Gentile converts (Lev 19:18, 34).