Pretexts of the second table of the Decalogue and early Christian intertexts*

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ABSTRACT
The early Christian writings of Romans, James, Matthew, Mark, Luke and the Didache all refer to the second table of the Decalogue. One is, however, immediately confronted with the variety of existing pretexts from the Hebrew and Septuagint traditions in both the Exodus and Deuteronomy accounts when trying to trace the pretext(s) which they might have used. This paper compares the potential existing pretexts—as represented in the LXX uncial—as used by these early Christian writers and attempts to establish which of these might have been used by a specific author. It also attempts to see how these early Christian writers, as ancient readers, understood their pretexts during the process of their text production.

1 INTRODUCTION
The Decalogue was well known by every pious Jew. It was taught in the Jewish schools and children knew it by heart from a very young age. It formed part of the laws which Yahweh commanded them to keep ‘...in their heart; to repeat them to their sons, and to speak of them indoors and out of doors, when they lie down and when they rise.’ They had to ‘...bind them as a sign on the hand and wear them as a phylactery on the forehead; to write them up on the door-posts of their houses and on their gates’ (Dt 6:6-9). Signs of the seriousness with which this was taken can still be witnessed today in the practices of orthodox Jews.

It is no wonder, with this importance being given to the Decalogue in Judaism, that early Christianity, which grew from the roots of Judaism, had to relate to and had to reinterpret the Decalogue to suit its own philosophy. This was done according to the gospel writers (cf Mt 5-7), by Jesus himself. During the process of creating their texts, these early Christian writers were faced with several versions (pretexts) of the Decalogue which circulated. As 'Intertextuality is concerned with the relationship between texts' (Vorster 1989:18), this paper will attempt to bring some order in the variety of

Decalogue pretexts which were available to them, focusing only on the LXX uncial A and B (Codex Alexandrinus and Codex Vaticaus). It will also try to establish which of these might have been used then by a specific author. Being aware of the proximity to Redaktionsgeschichte, a serious attempt will also be made to see how these early Christian writers as ancient readers understood their pretexts during their process of text production. A synopsis of some of these pretexts, as they are known today in the uncials at our disposal, will first be presented. The focus will then be moved to the early Christian intertexts with a brief interpretation ('reading') by them of these Decalogue pretexts from the second table.

2 PRETEXTS

2.1 LXX-A = Codex Alexandrinus (LXX) (ca 5th cent AD)

Ex 20:13-15 (LXX-A)  
Dt 5:17-20 (LXX-A)

ou φανεύσης  ↔  ou φανεύσης
ou μοιχεύσης  ↔  ou μοιχεύσης
ou κλέψης  ↔  ou κλέψης
ou ψευδομαρτυρήσης  ↔  ou ψευδομαρτυρήσης

2.2 LXX-B = Codex Vaticanus (LXX) (ca 4th cent AD)

Ex 20:13-15 (LXX-B)  
Dt 5:17-20 (LXX-B)

ou μοιχεύσης  ↔  ou μοιχεύσης
ou κλέψης  ↔  ou κλέψης
ou φανεύσης  ↔  ou φανεύσης
ou ψευδομαρτυρήσης  ↔  ou ψευδομαρτυρήσης

2.3 MT = Masoretic-text

Ex 20:13-16 (MT)  
Dt 5:17-20 (MT)

לَا תרץת  ↔  לא תרץת
לَا תבצק  ↔  ולא תבצק
לَا תגעב  ↔  ולא תגעב
לَا תעה ברכה עד שקר  ↔  ולא תעה ברכה עד שקר

It is clear that there are different versions to be found here:

• The Decalogue is found in both Ex 20 and Dt 5.
• The available LXX readings in Ex 20 and Dt 5 differ from each other.
• Some of the LXX readings differ again from the Hebrew versions.

The readings of Codex Alexandrinus are identical in both the Exodus and the Deuteronomy texts. This also applies to the Hebrew readings. The prob-
lem, however, is to be found in the versions of Codex Vaticanus—which changed the order of the commandments.

3 EARLY CHRISTIAN INTERTEXTS

Growing from a solid Jewish background, it makes good sense that there are many existing early Christian texts which contain traces, be those references or quotations, of the Decalogue. It formed the heartbeat of the Jewish religion. Early Christianity was thus faced with it and had to reinterpret not only the Torah but also, in particular, the Decalogue. Paul addresses this issue in his Letters to the Galatians and to the Romans. Those who love each other are fulfilling the entire law in Paul’s opinion (Rm 13:8). James is of a similar opinion. Those who transgress a single commandment transgress all (Ja 2:10). Matthew, in his turn, describes how Jesus himself reinterpreted the Decalogue during the sermon on the mount (Mt 5–7). The Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke mention that Jesus pointed out how fulfilment of these laws remain insufficient in order to gain eternal life. According to Mt 19:21, Mk 10:21 and Lk 18:22 the rich young man must therefore choose between his possessions and Jesus in order to gain eternal life—even if he does obey these laws in all their detail. What Jesus requires in his interpretation of these commandments, is a dedicated love to fellow humans. The gospel writers state clearly that not even the perfect obedience of these laws from a young age guarantees eternal life. Such faultlessness is worthless if Jesus’ interpretation is rejected. A high frequency of references and quotations from the Decalogue is to be found with the early Christian writers. Attention will be paid to Romans 13:9, Mark 10:19, Luke 18:20, Matthew 19:18–19, James 2:11 and Didache 2:2–3 where some of the commandments from the second table of the Decalogue are explicitly quoted.

3.1 Pauline literature (ca 50–55 AD)

Romans 13:9

οὐ μοιχεύσῃς
οὐ φονεύσῃς
οὐ κλέψῃς
οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις
ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον σου ως σεαυτόν

3.1.1 Textual criticism

Insertion of οὐ ψευδομαρτυρήσεις between κλέψεις and οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις by Codex Η (P) 048. 81. 104. 365. 1506. pm a b vgcl (syh) bo. Metzger (1975:529) is
of the opinion that this insertion by the witnesses quoted, is probably due to the influence of Ex 20:15–17 and Dt 5:19–21 (also Cranfield 1982:677 and Ziesler 1989:317). The text as copied in the synopsis above, is supported by $\text{P}^{46}$ A B D F G L Y 6. 33. 630. 1175. 1241. 1739. 1881 $\text{pm}$ vg $\text{sa}$ sy $\text{Ambst.}$

3.1.2 Analysis and early Christian ‘reading’

The order and grammatical form of the commandments as listed by Paul in Rm 13:9 correspond with Dt 5:17 in its Codex Vaticanus version.\(^1\) According to Koch, there is no doubt that this is Paul’s original reading, as Codex Alexandrinus and the other witnesses which read differently here, did so in order to agree with the Hebrew text form.\(^2\)

Paul quotes the 7th, 6th, 8th and 10th commandments. According to him, these commandments of the second table of the Decalogue are ‘summed up’ (ἀνακεφαλαιοῦσθαι) in the commandment to love one’s neighbour as oneself (Lev 19:18; see also Cranfield 1982:677; Reicke 1985:240). Judaism already knew the idea that the Law could be summed up in a few commandments, or even in one commandment.\(^3\) However, scholars have drawn attention to the fact that Paul does not combine it here (nor in Gl 5:14) with the love of God as a summary for the first table of the Decalogue. This casts doubt, according to them, on whether Paul was familiar with the version as found in the gospel tradition. On the other hand, the gospel tradition also does not have it everywhere.

Especially the καὶ εἰς τις εἰτέρα ἐντολή confirms that the four commandments which are quoted here, are merely representative of the larger number. This representative method of quotation is confirmed when it is observed that the ninth commandment of Dt 5:20 is omitted. Koch indicated that this was done ad hoc by Paul himself, rather than being due to the textual tradition known to him.\(^4\)

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\(^2\) ‘Dagegen besteht keine Übereinstimmung zwischen Röm 13,9a und den beiden wichtigsten Lesarten von Ex 20,13–15\(^{\text{LXX}}\) (that being the Exodus Codex Vaticanus and the Exodus Codex Alexandrinus; Koch 1986:34).

\(^3\) Cf Rabbi Hillel b Shab 31a; Ziesler 1989:317.

A connection with Lev 19:18 is made by Paul. This is also made by Matthew (19:19) when these four commandments are quoted, as well as by James (2:8) when the first two commandments are listed. Lev 19:13, in turn, is probably connected with Mk 10:19. These connections with Lev 19 could be explained best by keeping in mind that these commandments were widely used in early Christianity, even before Paul's time. In fact, the Leviticus quotation is added as if it were almost part of the same list. The connection between the commandments in the second table of the Decalogue and Lev 19:18 must have taken place during the early beginnings of Christianity in order to combine the commandments of the Decalogue with the interpretation of the Jesus tradition. Paul uses it in his argument as an appeal to δουλεύειν διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης (Rm 13:8) as well as to clarify the relation between the Decalogue, the law in its totality, and ἀγάπη (Koch 1986:296).

3.2 Synoptic Gospels (ca 50–70 AD)

3.2.1 Textual criticism

3.2.1.1 Mt 19:18–19

There are no differences with regard to the text amongst any of the witnesses. One should also bear in mind that the first 26 pages of Codex Alexandrinus in the New Testament are missing and that it only starts at Mt 25:6. The reading contained in the Alexandrinus version is thus unknown.

3.2.1.2 Mk 10:19

(a) Changed order of the first two commandments:

- μὴ μοιχεύσης, μὴ φονεύσης: Supported by A W Θ f13 M lat syh; Cl.

3.2.1.3 Luke 18:20
Substitution of the first three commandments with the following: ὀ δὲ εἶτεν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς· τὸ ὦ ποιεῖσθαι, ὦ θονεύσεις. Omit κλέψεις and ἰνδυμαχτυρήσεις. Supported by D (a e).

3.2.2 Analysis and early Christian ‘reading’
Attention has been drawn in scholarship to two outstanding features with regard to the quoted texts above: their ‘almost insoluble textual problems’ (Gundry 1975:17) and their ‘catechetical use’ (Thomas 1978:89).

Mark’s order is the same as that of the Hebrew versions and the versions of Codex Alexandrinus (LXX), but he replaces the future indicative forms of Codex Alexandrinus (LXX) with aorist subjunctive forms. This seems to be strange as Mark is usually in close adherence to the LXX when using formal quotations from his Jewish scrolls. Another interesting feature is the fact that Mark, in its Codex Vaticanus version (a 4th cent AD manuscript), contains the word order of the LXX Exodus and Deuteronomy versions of Codex Alexandrinus (a 5th cent AD manuscript). The same is also true of the Markan Codex Alexandrinus which follows (against its own OT order) the order as found in the Deuteronomy version of Codex Vaticanus.

Reference was earlier made to the connection of Lev 19:13 to Mk 10:19. This probably relates to the prohibition μὴ ἀποστερήσῃς which probably does not refer to Ex 21:10 or to Dt 24:14, but to Lev 19:13, because it only appears there as a general principle (Gundry 1975:18). Its inclusion by Mark could have been intended as a summary of the ninth and tenth commandments (cf Bolkesteen 1977:229).

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6 Contrary to Schweizer (1975:211) who said that these are quoted ‘...in a carefree manner and in random order’.
7 Based on the latter, Gundry finds proof for the Mk-A as the original (1975:17).
It is clear that the order of the commandments in Matthew's reading corresponds with that of Mark, as well as with both the Exodus and Deuteronomy versions of Codex Alexandrinus (LXX), and with the Masoretic text. If it is assumed that Matthew and Luke made use of Mark for this part, then one would expect greater similarities between their versions and that of Mark at this point. It is interesting, however, that Matthew agrees with Mark only regarding the order of the commandments (6–7–8–9–5) but differs with regard to the grammatical form (οὐ+fut ind). He probably changed the grammatical tense to correspond with the Hebrew versions and to that found in the version of Codex Alexandrinus (LXX).8

Reference was also made to Matthew's connection of these commandments to Lev 19:18. This specific interpretation of Jesus receives special emphasis in Matthew's gospel (cf Mt 5:20–48; 9:13; 12:7). The commandments which are quoted must also serve this purpose. They must point to the conduct which is required toward fellow humans and are therefore chosen by Jesus 'with a view to his telling the interlocutor to sell his possessions and give to the poor' (Gundry 1982:386).

The Lukan reading is mixed with regard to the grammatical form and the order in which the commandments are presented. Luke, on the one hand, agrees with the grammatical form (μη+aor subj) as found in Mark, but differs, on the other hand, with regard to the order of the commandments (7–6–8–9–5). It corresponds in order with the Deuteronomy reading of Codex Vaticanus (LXX). When focusing on the Lukan reading, we are faced with a few possibilities:

* One possibility might be that Luke did not have access to this particular section in Mark's gospel and that he used the Greek translation of Deuteronomy, which is close to that which we have today in the version of Codex Vaticanus (Dt LXX). This might explain the similarity in the order of the commandments. But what about the difference in grammatical tense and mood?

* Another possibility, then, is that Luke indeed had access to this section in Mark's gospel. He might have chosen then to change the order—probably to agree with his knowledge of the order in the particular LXX version which was best known to him, and which agrees with that which is found in the Dt 5 reading of Codex Vaticanus. The grammatical tense and mood, however, could then have been copied from Mark.

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8 Cf Stendahl (1968:147): 'If the quotations in Mark are compared with the form they have in Matthew, a greater measure of agreement with the LXX may be observed in certain cases in Matthew'. Mt 19:18 is listed.
Yet another possibility might be that Luke quoted here from memory and this incidentally agreed with the order as found in the Codex Vaticanus version of Deuteronomy. However, this would only make sense if this particular version was best known to Luke. If not, then one has to explain the same order which is also to be found in Romans.

The second possibility seems to be the most likely. One of the possible explanations for these differences between Matthew and Luke, on the one hand, and Mark, on the other hand, is that there were different versions of the Greek translation of Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 in circulation at different places. These different versions might have influenced Matthew and Luke when they used Mark. This could be due to the version with which they grew up and which they knew from memory, or it could be due to a version which they had at their disposal in their local synagogue. Fact is, the different versions which are found represented in the LXX editions of Codex Alexandrinus and Codex Vaticanus, serve as evidence for this possibility.

All these quoted accounts of the Decalogue are to be found in the narrative of the rich young man. Direct reference is made to the commandments of the second table of the Decalogue which he was supposed to have known (τὰς ἐντολὰς οἶδας; Mk 10:19; Lk 18:20). The synoptic gospel writers read these commandments in the light of Jesus' interpretation that love for one's neighbour is both its essence and its fulfilment. Jesus refers this rich young man therefore to the specific commandments which are quoted. With this he probably wants to show how highly he esteemed the law as containing the norm of conduct (Taylor 1953:427). The function of quoting these commandments is to make the rich man aware of the importance of human relationships. It leads to Jesus' interpretation which is attached to these commandments: you should love your neighbour. Thomas is therefore right in his summary of how this quotation is used by the synoptics. He says that 'This exhortation of Jesus in relation to the commandments serves to broaden and open up their implications by seeing them in a new context.' The synoptic writers read and used these commandments in a manner where 'Jesus does not try to interpret directly the meaning and implications of these commandments, but he asks the man to do something which challenges him to consider the implications of the commandments in relation to his present life (and thus to eternal life). There is no abrogating nor superseding of the commandments, but an opening up of their extent and application as they are placed alongside the motives and actions of a person’s life' (Thomas 1978:89).

9 ‘The Lord cites only the commandments which regulate man’s duty to his neighbour, probably because they admit of a relatively simple application to the conduct of life’ (Swete 1956:224).
3.3 General Epistles (ca 80–90)

James 2:11

\( \mu \eta \mu \omega \chi \varepsilon \upsilon \varsigma \) \\
\( \mu \eta \phi \omega \nu \varepsilon \upsilon \varsigma \)

3.3.1 Textual criticism

(a) The order \( \mu \omega \chi \varepsilon \upsilon \varsigma \) — \( \phi \omega \nu \varepsilon \upsilon \varsigma \) is changed to \( \phi \omega \nu \varepsilon \upsilon \varsigma \) — \( \mu \omega \chi \varepsilon \upsilon \varsigma \) by C 614. 630. 945. 1241. 1505. 1739. 1852. 2464. 2495 al sed.

(b) \( \mu \eta \phi \omega \nu \varepsilon \upsilon \varsigma \) is changed to \( \nu \phi \omega \nu \varepsilon \varsigma \) by \( \Psi \) 614. 630. 1505. 2464. 2495 al.

3.3.2 Analysis and early Christian 'reading'

The authorship and date of the letter of James have remained in dispute since the times of Eusebius (HE 2.23.4 and 3.25.3) and Luther. Some scholars\(^{10}\) have chosen an earlier date (40–60 AD) whilst others\(^{11}\) are convinced that a later date (80–90 AD) is more appropriate.\(^{12}\) The debate is only important for this study as far as it concerns the pretexts available to James. This paper assumes the later date as relevant.

The version of James makes use of the construction \( \mu \eta + \text{aorist subjunctive} \), as is the case with Lk 18:20. The order of the only two commandments which are explicitly quoted, corresponds with that of Dt 5:17 of Codex Vaticanus. It is the same order which is found in Rm 13:9 and Lk 18:20.

Although only two of the commandments are explicitly referred to in James' account, it is clear that the Jewish doctrine of the complete unity of the law is implied in Ja 2:8–11.\(^{13}\) There might be some implied knowledge of Mt 5:21 and 5:27 where these two commandments are quoted (Moffatt 1963:36), also in this order. These two in James are also linked to Lev 19:18—as is the case with Rm 13:9 and Mt 19:18. The sentences which follow, indicate that to James 'the Law was the embodiment of the divine will summed up in the supreme ethical principle of love to one's neighbour' (Moffatt 1963:36).

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\(^{10}\) Gundry (1970:345); Geyser (1975:25–33); Guthrie (1981:761); Carson, Moo & Morris (1992:414).


\(^{12}\) Others date it even later, in the second quarter of the second century AD.

\(^{13}\) Martin (1982:28). Cf also Smelik (1963:50): 'Wie heel de wet houdt, maar op een schijnbaar periferisch punt er tegenaan botst, staat schuldig tegenover 't geheel. Het is onmogelijk zulk een zonde te isoleren'.
3.4 THE DIDACHE (ca 80-120)

Didache 2.2–3

Didame

3.4.1 Analysis and early Christian ‘reading’

Both the order of the commandments as well as their grammatical form correspond with those of Ex 20 and Dt 5 of Codex Alexandrinus (LXX), with the Hebrew, with Mt 19:18–19 and with the order of Mk 10:19—that is when one sets aside the added commandments for a moment.

Chapters 1 and 2 are part of the so-called ‘two ways’, and an exposition of ‘the way of life’. The latter part of Ch 1, the part that immediately precedes the list of commandments, deals with the issue of alms-giving. This connection is interesting when one refers back to the story of the rich young man in the synoptics, as well as to the connection with Lev 19:18 by Rm 13:9 and Mt 19:19 and Ja 2:8. Didache 2:7 ends in a similar way:

The writers of the Didache must have read and understood the commandments of the second table of the Decalogue in the (by then) well established early Christian interpretation of love that goes beyond the selfish needs of an individual. In this Christian teaching, however, a further development also took place by the time of the Didache. Sodomy, fornication, magic, sorcery, abortion, infanticide, covetousness, perjury, et cetera had all been added to the list in the mean time. Where James followed the route of quoting only two commandments, the writers of the Didache opted to be as explanatory as possible.
4 CONCLUSION

Any attempt to try and get clarity examining all these existing intertexts which contain traces of a Decalogue pretext will always run the risk of insufficient proof of textual interdependence. This is especially due to the fact that these commandments were known by heart and, when they were needed to be quoted, could have been cited verbally without consulting the written text. One should expect thus that all early Christian intertextual occurrences should be in relative close agreement with each other. But this is not the case at all. Some striking differences are to be found—both in the order of the commandments as well as in the grammatical form in which they are quoted.

The order of the commandments as they are quoted in Romans, Luke, Mark (in the Codex Alexandrinus version) and James, agrees with that as found in the Codex Vaticanus version of Dt 5 (LXX), with the Nash Papyrus and with Philo’s De Decalogo (51, 121, 168, 170) amongst others. But Matthew, the Codex Vaticanus version of Mark, and the Didache have a different order, resembling that of Ex 20 and Dt 5 in Codex Alexandrinus (LXX) as well as the order as found in the Masoretic text.

Apart from the differences in the order of the quoted commandments, there is also a difference in the grammatical form in which the commandments are quoted. The versions of James, Luke and the Codex Vaticanus version of Mark made use of the construction μη aorist subjunctive, while the rest of them used ob+the future indicative.

The most probable explanation (especially in the light of a text theory which supports the diversity of texts) is that there were indeed different variations of the Greek translations in circulation. Due to a lack of text-critical evidence and primary textual witnesses (known to us today), one can also not exclude the possibility that the Lukan reading, for instance, might have identically agreed with older recensions such as the Kaige (UR-Theodotion), or Proto-Lucian. The mere fact that the Roman reading agrees identically with Codex Vaticanus (Dt LXX), points to a strong possibility that a writer such as Luke indeed could have made use of this reading, but that he chose to change to the construction μη aorist subjunctive—which he probably got via Mark. The million dollar question then is where Mark got this grammatical form from. This is particularly strange in the context of Mark’s closeness to his LXX readings. Was it a certain stylistic preference due to the context of a specific Greek regional dialect? Or was it a certain

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14 Dibelius (1964:182) also compares it with the following: Philo De spec leg 3.8; Theophilus Ad Autol 2.34, 3.9; Clement of Alexandria Stromata 6.146.3, 147.2; Barnabas 20.1; Justin Dial 93.
text form which circulated and which is unknown to scholarship today? Or could it even be Mark’s own translation from his Hebrew texts? These questions need more attention in future studies.

Fact of the matter is, it is striking that the early Christian writers quoted the order of the commandments probably not as randomly as was previously thought. The closeness in order and form of the commandments corresponds with either the Ex 20/Dt 5 (LXX-A) route, or with the Dt 5 (LXX-B) route. This does not necessarily mean that they used written textual accounts during the process of their text production. It could also be due to their knowledge of these commandments with which they probably grew up themselves. What is interesting, however, is that their versions all fit into either the first or the second option.

With which specific intertextual form are we dealing here then? If it is kept in mind that these are direct references to the Decalogue and that the references probably served as introductory formulae (Steyn 1995:26-28) after which the commandments were explicitly cited, then this must be taken as a formal explicit quotation (Koch 1986:21-22, 25-26). It is also clear that this is done by the method of representative quotation—only a few commandments are cited, but the rest are implied.

The parting of ways between Judaism and early Christianity becomes clearer when one notices how the interpretation of Lev 19:18 became a closely connected and essential element in the understanding of these commandments. According to the synoptics, not even the literal fulfilment of every single commandment in the Decalogue will be of help in gaining eternal life. The law can only be fulfilled in all its detail if its summary, love of one’s neighbour, is taken seriously. It was necessary to refer to this important issue and to proclaim this message as an important new Christian teaching. The commandments are therefore quoted explicitly, at least in such a representative manner that there could be no doubt about its new interpretation.
APPENDIX 1: Scenario of intertextual relationships

Mk 10:19 (A) subjunctive

Lk 18:20 (A + B) subjunctive

Rm 13:9 (A + B)

Ex 20:13 LXX-B

Dt 5:17 LXX-B

Ja 2:11 (A + B) subjunctive

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