

# A way out trilogy,

A WAY OUT OF OUR RELIGIOUS,  
POLITICAL AND PERSONAL PREDICAMENTS,

# and a way back,

TAKING BACK OUR RELIGIO-NATIONAL  
HERITAGE - ALSO - OUR PERSONAL SPACE

H. D. KAILIN

## **PART I - THE NAZARENE WAY OUT**

(Volume I) Beyond reach of Jerusalem, Rome, Geneva, stood the Orientalist

(Volume II) Beyond the canonical gospels exists a Nazarene narrative gospel

## **PART II - AMERICA'S WAY OUT**

Three men with power: Washington, Jefferson, and Franklin

Three women of valor: Tubman, Winnemucca, and Liliuokalani

## **PART III - MY OWN WAY OUT**

Gullible's Travels: 50 years a Zionist, now seeking to make amends

WE HAVE A SURE, PROPHETIC WORD  
BY INSPIRATION OF THE LORD;  
AND THO' ASSAILED ON EV'RY HAND,  
JEHOVAH'S WORD SHALL EVER STAND.

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VOLUME I: THE NAZARENE WAY OUT

# The Orientalist

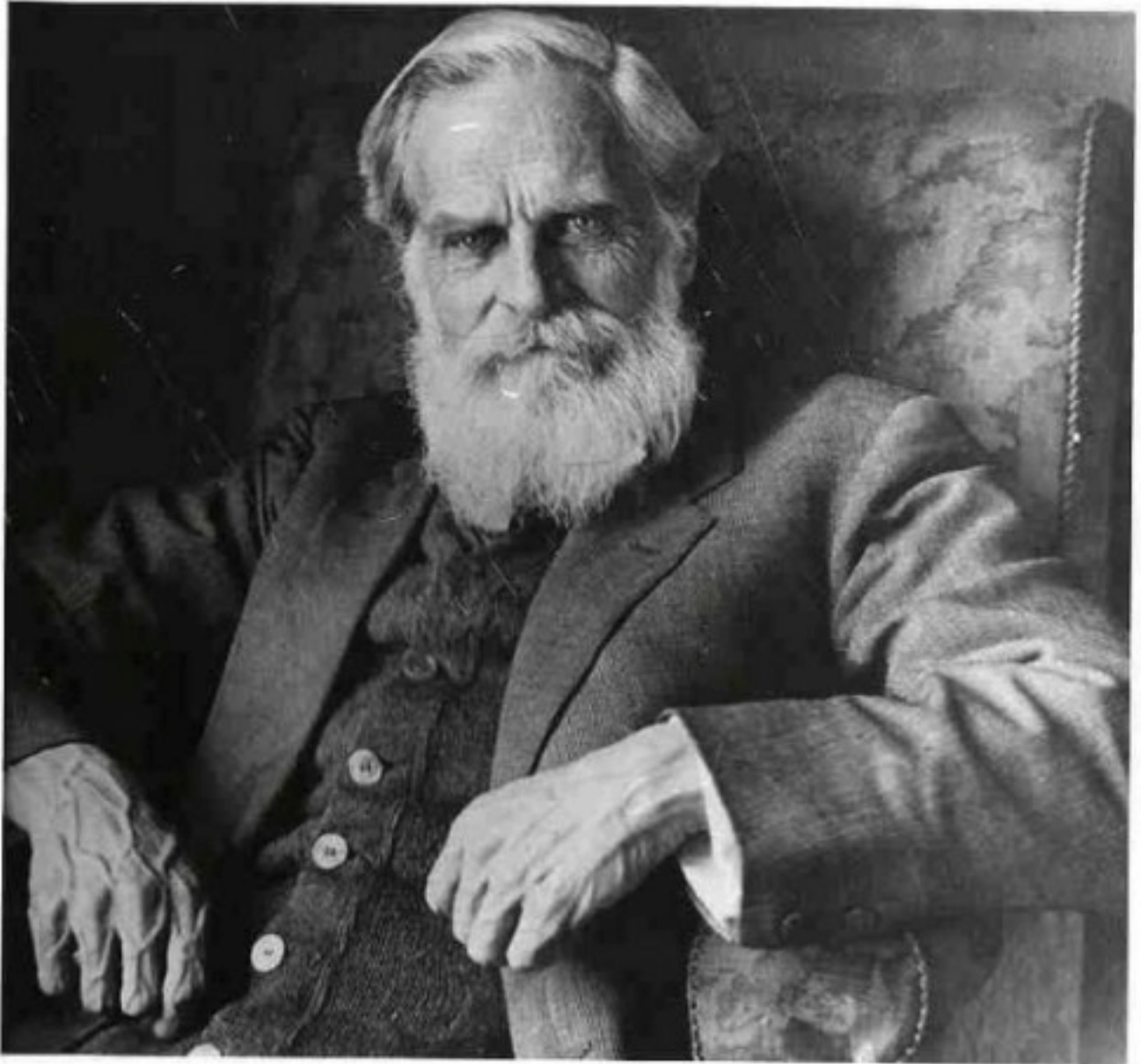
Gentlemen, go to the rising sun of the East, not to the setting sun of the West, if you wish to see Christ in the plenitude of his glory and in the fullness and freshness of his divine life. Behold he comes to us in his loose flowing garments, his dress and features altogether oriental, a perfect Asiatic in everything.

(Keshub Chandra Sen. *Who Is Jesus Christ?* Calcutta, 1919)

Again, looking to the East, what do we see? That after 2000 year, as never before, the very land where believers were first called “Christian” is under attack. Not even in the days of the Mongol invasion was it so but the Wicked Witch of the West and the drone Abominator have whistled up Benghazi thugs whom they have bankrolled and armed with AK 47s. As Aleppo burns, the evangelical churches hardly takes notice.

(H. D. Kailin, 2013)

"Give us this day, Lord, our daily discovery."



J. Rendel Harris (1852-1941)

"I do not think the central figure of Christianity or its central doctrine will be obscured by a careful restoration of the broken and almost lost fabric of its earliest literature."

(J. Rendel Harris)

## DISCOVERER OF ANCIENT TEXTS

Besides producing scholarship of a very high order, James Rendel Harris had an uncanny knack for discovering long-lost, Christian texts, including the *Odes of Solomon*; also, a Syriac version of the *Apology of Aristides*. In his essay: "Methods of Research in Eastern Libraries," he tells us how he did it, that being the old fashioned way by properly earning the trust of his Middle Eastern hosts. Other Westerners, contemptuous of their technically less advanced brethren in the East, had a way of running roughshod over them and none more so than Count von Tishendorf who, a generation before, had justified his purloining the Codex Sinaiticus from the monastic library at Mt. Sinai on the grounds that his hosts couldn't be trusted to value or preserve it, this despite their having preserved it for at least a 1200 years. Although the monastery's head librarian had specially loaned it to him, von Tishendorf claimed that he had rescued it out of a waste bin. Wrote Harris:

Now a person who is going to work in Eastern libraries must undergo a certain amount of preliminary training. He must have a few ideas about his work, and the people he is to work with, a reasonable amount of currency, some knowledge of modern Greek and a superfluity of good manners. As I am usually weak on the first two heads and not a colossus in Greek, I endeavour to make up in courtesy what I want in linguistics, or in backsheesh! It is a delusion to suppose that you are going amongst a degraded set of people when you visit a Greek monastery. Dr Schaff, who visited the Sinai convent, speaks of them in one of his books as a set of dirty monks who could not read the documents which they possessed. It would probably be equally true that the party to which Dr Schaff belonged were a set of dirty tourists; certainly as regards knowledge, the monks are not to be derided, for they still take a pleasure in showing their visitor's book in which Dr Schaff has transcribed incorrectly the Nicene Creed. The great question of like is not whether we have used Pears' Soap this morning, but whether we have said our credo rightly and whether we have washed our hands in innocency. And as for the question of knowledge, my own experience is that I frequently tested the librarian at [Mount] Sinai on the matter of dates of Greek MSS and seldom found him at fault; yet he had never read any treatise on palaeography, and he could not have stolen his knowledge from Gardthausen's Catalogues of the MSS, for he had confessed to me somewhat sadly, Prof. Gardthausen, who had enjoyed the hospitality of the Convent for several months, did not send them a copy of the Catalogue.

## HUMANITARIAN

A humanitarian of the first water, Harris, when not ferreting out lost biblical texts, teaching, researching, or writing, was actively involved in missionary relief work, particularly in conjunction with the Society of Friends. Beginning in 1896, his efforts were focused on the plight of the Armenians, to whom he and his beloved wife, Helen, made repeated, extended visits, helping them rebuild their devastated communities.

On November 16<sup>th</sup>, 1916, at the height of WWI, Harris departed by steamship from Liverpool bound for India. Ten days later, off of Malta, his ship was sent to the bottom, torpedoed by a U-boat. Rescued some hours later by a passing ship, he ended up in Alexandria, Egypt where he commenced finding ancient, two thousand-year-old papyri offered for sale by local farmers who had dug them up in the course of their labors. This valuable collection ended up eventually at the Rylands Library in Manchester. Again, April, 1917, Harris shipped out for Marseilles, France but, again, his ship was sent to the bottom by a U-boat. This time he was four grueling days at sea in a lifeboat. Sharing the raft with him, among others, was his friend, fellow traveler, and distinguished scholar, James Hope Moulton, who, alas, tragically succumbed. On coming ashore in Corsica, Harris was greeted by the local priest who exclaimed: "It is the orientalist!" Harris's reputation had preceded him.

#### **THE LIBERAL/CONSERVATIVE DICHOTOMY**

Not one easily pigeon-holed, Harris stood apart from a Protestant fundamentalism which too often mistakes credulity for belief and therefore rejects scholarship. As well, he stood apart from Christian modernism, which too often mistakes scepticism for critical thinking that requires disbelief. The secret of Harris' success was his combining the best of scholarship with Faith in God. As he wrote:

As we learn to live the life of dependence upon the Lord, we must be not surprised if a great deal of our early theology drops off. . . . I am amazed to find how much of true religion may be resolved into that one word 'dependence.'

With regard to his literalistically-minded, fundamentalist critics, Harris wrote:

. . . they cannot steal from us the truth of immediate Revelation and direct communication with God, which was before the Scripture, and was the cause of them. We have been told in these meetings [the Manchester Conference of 1895 a meeting of liberal and conservative religious factions] that the Scriptures are the ultimate test of truth; if that un-Quakerly proposition be true, the criticism of them is a gross impertinence; but the internal discords of all Scriptures, ought to be enough to convince us that we have no infallibility in the house, not a drop. [But] while we have no infallibility, we have some splendid probabilities, and one of them in particular is of such high order that we call it "The certainty of love, which sets our hearts at rest."

Regarding Harris's manner of teaching, Rufus Jones wrote:

His method of teaching was unique and peculiar to himself. The student never knew in advance with what the next lecture would deal, and the marvelous man carried them on wings as eagles from one peak of truth to another across continents and athwart the centuries as though he were at home in all ages and in all lands.



The oracle says that God will not hide from the man dear to Him a mystery that is hidden and secret to many, but will reveal it to him.

(Eusebius)

# ORACLES and TESTIMONIA

“This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.” (Luke 4:21)

**or'a'cles**, *n.; pl.* [L. *oraculum*, to speak] **1.** The utterances of God, particularly as found in Holy Writ, often having prophetic, messianic import.

**tes'ti'mo'ni'a**, *n.; pl.* [L. *testimonium*, witness] **1.** An extract or collection of the Oracles of God. **2.** The argument from prophecy that Jesus is the Messiah.

Jesus wanted his disciples to have faith informed by truth; thus, in the interval between his resurrection and ascension, he conducted, as it were, a six-week, non-vocational Bible course in which he revealed to his listeners oracles in the Scripture pertaining to himself, which oracles Matthew record and which the Nazarenes then circulated as *Testimonia*.

## LOGION

In Greek, the word for “word” is *logos*. A related word is “*logion*.” Whereas “*logos*” could be speech either human or divine, “*logion*” is reserved for divine speech and is always, exclusively God speaking to man. Thus do we find it in the *Septuagint* (the Greek Bible) and thus do we find it more generally in classical Greek. But whether occurring in a dream, a vision, or spoken aloud, *logion* is heavenly-derived knowledge. Depending on context, subsumed under *logion* is God’s Covenant, His Law, His prophecies, and/or His judgments.

If any man speak, let him speak as oracles [*logion*] of God. (*I Peter 4:11*)

Peter and the other apostles, albeit unlearned fishermen, boldly expressed their Faith to the world. The boldness came from the Spirit, but the learnedness came from Jesus who opened their eyes to those things in Scripture pertaining to himself.

The Christian patriarch, Papias, who flourished before 140 AD, made reference to Matthew’s “*Exposition of Dominical Oracles*.” Scholars widely assumed that this was a reference to Jesus’ sayings but, beginning in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, certain scholars began to see this as applying not to saying *by* Jesus, but, rather, as applying to sayings *about* Jesus.

... for while the citation of the oracles is sometimes definite, it is sometimes indefinite, as in John 7<sup>38</sup> “as the scripture saith,” and sometimes, again, where there is no mark of citation at all, they are assumed. They had been under my attention for many years before the conclusion was forced upon me that I was dealing with *Logia*, oracles of the selfsame sort as those which Papius (about 120 A.D.) says were collected by Matthew in Hebrew. I then saw that by “dominical oracles” Papias meant oracles about the Lord Christ ... and not, as nearly all writers have hitherto supposed, sayings by the Lord Jesus. (Edward Selwyn)

Four instances exist of the use of the word “oracles” [*logion*] in the *New Testament*. Said Stephen’s to his captors just before they stoned him to death:

And he [Moses] received living oracles [*logion*] to pass on to you. (*Acts 7:38*)

Paul also spoke of the oracles:

What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit is there in circumcision? Much every way: chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles [*logion*] of God. (*Romans 5:1-2*)

As well, the author of *Hebrews* spoke of the oracles:

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, that ye have need one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles [*logion*] of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. (*Hebrews 5:12*)

## DEEDS, WORDS, PROPHECY

"Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?"  
(Luke 24:18)

The question above, asked with evident astonishment, carries with it the barely veiled implication that one would have to be quite out of the loop not to know about recently transpired events. The inquirer was Cleopas and this was the third day since his promising nephew, Jesus, had died, seemingly ignominiously, by impalement. Now unsettling reports were cropping up that certain individuals had seen him alive. After observing that Jesus had shown himself "a prophet mighty in deed and word," Cleopas then confessed his disappointment, saying: "but we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel."

Though Jesus's messiahship was more demonstrated than announced, Cleopas treated it as a matter of public record. From this we gather that the phenomenon of Jesus' fame rested on more than words and deeds, no matter how mighty. Perhaps some other dynamic was at work which had brought him to prominence, namely, the prophetic Scriptures. People wanted to know, was Jesus actually fulfilling those prophecies indicating that he was the Messiah, the hope of Israel or not? The messianic question was the burning issue of the day.

Suddenly the tables were turned and Cleopas found himself on the hot seat. "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all the prophets have spoken," gravely intoned the stranger, who then proceeded to ask: "ought not Messiah to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the prophets, the stranger expounded unto them in all the Scriptures things concerning the Messiah, which things he expected Cleopas to know and was disappointed to find out that he did not.

What we now know, as confirmed by the Dead Sea Scrolls, is that prophetic texts, called "Oracles," had been bundled together by the scribes to form "Testimony Books." Organized by subject heading, they helped make clear what otherwise might have remained obscure regarding the time and place of messianic visitation, also of the nature of the Messiah himself, thus materially contributing to the quickening tempo of national messianic consciousness.

The common folk heard Jesus gladly, not because they were Bible scholars but because the *Testimonia* had been circulated widely throughout the land, and thus they were awake to the possibilities. Our contention is that Jesus, knowing this, had self-consciously gone about doing those things as would meet the common folk's scripturally-justified expectations.

As for the visitation itself, in various respects it went quite badly in that Jesus was roundly rejected by the religious leadership, then impaled. But with his resurrection, Jesus' followers were emboldened to give their oral witness, which they then buttressed with written accounts.

But antecedent to the apostles speaking or writing, the *Testimonia* had already done the work of heralding the good news of Jesus and God's Kingdom, for *Testimonia* and *Gospel* are but two sides of the same coin. In symbiotic relationship, they are mutually reinforcing.

Unlike the Book of Mormon, the Nazarene gospels did not drop down from the heavens, afterward to be transcribed with the help of the angel Moroni. Rather, they had been worked up from previous documentary material, allowing the evangelists to trace the trajectory of Jesus' life from Bethlehem to Calvary by a meticulously worked-out, scriptural framework. By reason of his multi-faceted life and ministry, many hands and eyes were required to record Jesus' transit through this world. As well, many hands and eyes were required to develop the *Testimonia*, to capture the broad scope of it.

Although appearing to be irretrievably lost, the *Testimonia* was substantially recovered in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by some of the century's most distinguished and accomplished scholars. Not many years later, with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, in the late 1940's and 50's their bold deduction was largely vindicated, as well, another bold deduction of J. Rendel Harris's, that there had once existed a sayings gospel, for just before the Dead Sea Scrolls came to the light of day, so also did the *Nag Hammadi* texts. Though these were mostly of a Gnostic character, they also include the *Gospel of Thomas* which contains precious original saying of Jesus. With amazing foresight, J. Rendel Harris in 1916 wrote:

It has been my habit for some time past, to warn my students that the Christian literature does not necessarily begin with the New Testament, and certainly not with the Gospels; that there are traces of previous documentary matter on which the accepted and canonical New Testament depends; and that, until we have learnt to recognize and isolate these primitive deposits, we shall constantly be making mistakes in our interpretation of the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers.

And, in particular I tell them that there are two lost documents of the early Christian propaganda, occurring in various forms, sufficiently alike to constitute a cycle or type, the traces of which are to be found constantly in the first period of the literature of the Church. . . . Of these the first is the Collection of the Sayings of Jesus, the second is the Book of Testimonies from the Old Testament. The first of these underlies the Gospels, and is especially an instrument for the conversion of the Gentiles: the second is an instrument for the refutation of the Jews. . . . when we have reduced our prejudices in favor of the antiquity of the Gospels to more sober limits, we shall ultimately agree well enough as to the Book of Sayings and its antiquity and value.

(J. Rendel Harris, *Testimonies*, vol. 1, 1916)

## PROPHECY AND FULFILMENT

A careful examination of the Gospels shows that they contain much 'submerged testimony matter.

(B. P. W. Stather Hunt, *Primitive Gospel Sources*)

From the discovery of *Testimonia* literature amongst the Dead Sea Scrolls, we know that this genre was no Nazarene invention but a cycle of literature fostering messianic consciousness which, in due course, served as a kind of midwife to the Nazarene movement. Beginning first with John the Baptist (also called "the Forerunner"), then with Jesus, the Nazarenes added to the *Testimonia* their fulfilments. Thus did a new genre emerge, first called "gospel," (insofar as we know) by Justin Martyr. Note: the *Testimonia* were not written to confirm the gospels; rather, the gospels were written to confirm the *Testimonia*.

Testimonies, in the early Christian sense of the word, are, on one side, very nearly equivalent to quotations; but from another point of view, the term involves the idea of the person testifying as well as the thing witnessed; they are not only extracts from a book, they are the utterances of the person who is the author of the book. Thus the formula "it is written in the law" is impersonal and denotes strictly a quotation, but "Moses in the law saith" is a testimony, and Moses himself is the witness.

Our thesis is, that in very early times collections of such classified Testimonies were in use amongst the Christians, and that they were used polemically, either in attacking a Jewish position or in defending a Christian one; the witnesses are brought into court by the protagonists in a dispute: they are arranged in groups, and ordered in sequences; when they have said their say, it is assumed that something will have been settled. Hence arises the importance of the work of marshaling the Testimony on any particular question in debate.

From the Christian point of view they are a series of *Argumenta ad hominem*, the man being the Jew on the other side who is committed in advance by his belief in the Scriptures to the acceptance of the word of the witnesses, provided they are rightly heard and not misinterpreted. Thus the long title of such collections is that of "Testimonies against the Jews." There are, properly speaking, no Testimonies against the Gentiles, for the Gentiles and the Primitive Gentile Christians do not recognize the same court of appeal as the Jews and the Judaeo-Christians; their court of appeal is something quite different, it is the soul itself, the 'naturally Christian soul' of which Tertullian speaks, which knows truth by truth's own testimony.

How then, do we establish the existence of such collections as those which are here suggested? Three ways, at least, may be followed which lead to the result: the first consists in observing that different authors (say in the New Testament) quote the Old Testament in similar or closely-coincident sequences, and apparently without any mutual dependence upon one another for the form of the quotation. The suggestion is that they have used the same handbook.

The second method is by observing that from the second century onward there is a succession of actually preserved books of Biblical Testimonies, arranged under headings to prove definite points; and these

collections have so much common matter that we are obliged to assume a primitive nucleus around which, and out of which, they have been evolved.

The third method turns on the occurrence in Patristic writers of Biblical quotations in such peculiar settings that one is obliged to admit that they were not taken directly from the Scriptures, but that there is some intervening link between the writers in question and the ultimate Biblical source of their citations.

(Oberlin Lecture, J. Rendel Harris)

#### JOHN THE BAPTIST AND THE TESTIMONIA

When John the Baptist, apparently in a time of some spiritual discouragement, such as is natural to prison walls, and prison diet, sends disciples to enquire of Jesus, they are told to ask whether he is "the Coming One," or whether we are to look elsewhere, or elsewhen. Jesus relies in the terms of the thirty-fifth of Isaiah, performing certain miracles and translating them into corresponding language of Testimony: "Tell John . . . that blind men are recovering sight, lame men are walking, lepers are cleansed, deaf men are hearing, dead men are coming back to life, and *there is good news for the poor.*" The language of Jesus is that of a written Testimony, to which language his acts correspond: it says clearly that "I am the Messiah." The importance of this Biblical recognition lies in the fact that there must have been a pre-Christian Book of Testimonies in which the Jews had recorded their own ideas and expectations of what Messiah would be like when he came. (J. R. H.)

#### THE MEEK ONE

On the accession of Herod the great to the throne of Judaea, there was much discontent over the assumption of the kingship by a foreigner, and this discontent became permanent, and was always more or less in evidence. Let us see what the Slavonic text [of Josephus] says on the matter: —

At that time the priests mourned and grieved together in secret. They durst not do so openly for fear of Herod and his friends. For (one Jonathan) spoke: "The law bids us have no foreigner for king. Yet we wait for *the Anointed, the meek one, of David's line.* But of Herod we know that he is an Arabian, uncircumcised. *The Anointed will be called meek,* but this (is) he who has filled the whole land with bloodshed. Under the *Anointed* it was ordained *for the lame to walk, and the blind to see, and the poor to become rich.* But under this man the hale have become lame, the seeing are blinded, the rich have become beggars, etc."

Here Jonathan the priest is giving a series of Biblical Testimonies, which apply to the Messiah, the Anointed, and do not find verification in Herod. They are substantially the same Testimonies which Jesus sent back to John the Baptist; even the description of the "evangelization of the poor" is not wanting (ΠΤΩΧΟΙ Εὐαγγελίζονται). We infer, then that at the time of the accession of Herod there was in existence a series of collected *Testimonies concerning the Anointed*, and that there is some overlapping between this collection and the first Christian *Book of Testimonies*.

We have shown that outside of the Gospels, and in a definitely Jewish tradition, the newly-found Russian

text of Josephus describes the priestly party in Jerusalem at the accession of Herod, as altogether non-resistant and pacifist. The Messiah who they expect is to be *the Meek One*. He will not shed blood as Herod has been shedding. He will enrich the poor, instead of pauperising the rich. And the statements made by Jonathan the priest under this head have the force of oracles, their descriptions are based on prophetic authority. Even if the Law forbids an alien king, they will not lift a finger against him. That applies both to Herod and the Romans. If the Jewish pre-Christian Testimonies describe in this way a Pacifist Messiah, and if Jesus assumes the role of that Messiah, and endorses his prophetic description, perhaps even deducing from it his own statement as to being "meek and lowly in heart," then we have the strongest case possible for the Christian statement concerning Christ as non-resistant.

We have seen that the pre-Christian description of the Messiah, disclosed by the Jews at the time of the accession of Herod, included amongst other titles that of the *Meek One* who was to come; and it may perhaps be asked what was the oracle of the Old Testament which was being quoted and acted upon by the Jewish leaders. I must surely have seen the prophecy of Zechariah (ix. 9) "Thy King cometh to thee; he is just and having salvation; he is meek and rides upon an ass." This is certainly interpreted by the Jewish Priests in a pacifist, or at least an anti-zealot, sense; and it is in this sense that it must have been taken over in the Christian *Testimonies*. This is, however, the oracles of the Triumphal Entry: from which we are entitled to affirm that this *Entry* was a quietist Demonstration and not an incitement to Revolt against Rome.

It is surprising in view of these parallelisms and coincidences, to find that there are people who still believe that Jesus never affirmed himself to be the Messiah. It would be nearer the truth to say that he never affirmed himself to be anything else. (J. Rendel Harris, *Josephus*)

#### HOW THE OLD TESTAMENT INFLUENCED THE NEW

The general problem of the influence of the Old Testament on the New has been the subject of a multitude of investigations, undertaken from different points of view, and dating from the earliest days of the Christian Church. Such studies were both natural and necessary, if the dictum of the Church that the Holy Ghost spoke by the Prophets was to acquire creedal value. Our concern here, however, is with but one aspect of the subject, namely, some quotations from the Old which are embodied in the New. In modern Greek Testaments, the presence of such quotations in the text is usually indicated by a change of type, leading the reader at once to the Hebrew original, or, more commonly, to the related text of the Septuagint. If, on the other hand, we were in possession of a copy of Marcion's New Testament, we should not find any variety of type, or marginal references suggestive of other sources. Quotations from the Old Testament, or any reference to it as an authority would have been fatal to Marcion's theological theory, so he simplified matters by omitting such dogmatic references from his version of the gospel. Some, indeed, slipped in, in spite of him (he would have been very lynx-eyed to detect them all), and these became arrows, for use against him, by Tertullian and other controversialists. Perhaps, then, the actual practice of making marginal references had, in the first instance, a controversial intention. However that may be, it would be

easy to show that there is, of necessity much theology involved in these O. T. texts and their associated marginal references. Often, too, they serve to correct the text of the N.T. itself from transcriptional or other errors.

There is one direction in which it seems probable that results of definite theological value may be obtained from the quotations and the marginalia. We may raise the question of particular books, and the evidence for particular themes. The subject of Isaiah's influence on N.T. writers comes under the one head; that of the Suffering Servant under the other. If we treat them together, we must do so under the title 'What Christ and His disciples thought of Isaiah, and what in particular, was the use that they made of the 53<sup>rd</sup> chapter.' The study might yield some valuable results. One reason for making such a statement lies in the fact that the student will soon be able to verify (what might indeed have been assumed that the treatment of the O. T. in the N. T. is unequal. There are large sections of its text from which nothing has been borrowed, and there are others which have been the subject of special attention, the reason of which we are sometimes able to divine.

For example, there are two adjacent chapters in Deuteronomy, containing respectively what are called the *Song of Moses* and the *Blessing of Moses*. Of these two chapters the former is credited by Dr. Hort with four times as many quotations in the N. T. as the latter. Admit that the former is a good deal longer than the other, there is still a disproportion in the number of quotations which sets us on the search for its cause. Why should the one be more used than the other as a source of authoritative appeal? When we examine the *Song* by the side of the *Blessing*, the difference between them stands out clearly. The *Song* is almost the opposite of blessing: it is 'near to cursing'; for it contains a catalogue of the aberrations of the chosen people, and adjusts Divine judgments to them; misfortunes are read in the light of misdeeds; infidelities and their consequences are described in detail. In this fact we find the answer to our question. The plenitude of quotations from the *Song* is due to the material it furnishes for an arraignment of the Jewish people; it is a natural treasury for *Tesitimonia adversus Judæos*.

We can verify this hypothesis in a number of ways. Suppose we turn to Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*, and examine whether he makes any use of the *Song* or of the *Blessing*: the *index locorum* will show us at once that he quotes the *Song* on nine occasions, involving the following verses <sup>4.7-9, 15. 16-23. 30</sup> (four times), and <sup>43</sup>; on the other hand, the *Blessing* is only twice referred to, and the quotation covers some three verses. This shows that the same preference for quotation from the *Song* prevails in the *Dialogue* as in the New Testament generally. In the case of the former, of course, we are definitely concerned with anti-Judaic propaganda and the exigencies of anti-Judaic controversy. It seems natural, therefore, to infer that when the *Song* is quoted in the N. T., the probability is in favour of the belief that the quotation is used anti-Judaically.

Now let us see how this passage is used by the early Christian Apologists. Aphrahat the Persian, in his eleventh homily entitled *On Circumcision*, says that Moses, in that *Hymn of Testimony*, points out the people of the Gentiles, and says, 'I will provoke you to jealousy by a people that is not a people.' Here we notice not only the use of the quotation in an anti-Judaic sense, but the description of the whole as a *Song of Testimony*. There can be no doubt about this; for in the previous sentences Aphrahat says, 'Moses, their leader, testified against them. . . .' In the



*Hymn of Testimony* he said again, 'Your vine is from the vine of Sodom, etc' (Dt 32<sup>32</sup>). Clearly Aphrahat regards the *Song of Moses* as a storehouse of anti-Judaic arguments. The quotation is repeated in his 16<sup>th</sup> homily, which is a demonstration that 'the peoples' have been substituted for 'the People'; here again he says, 'In the *Song of Testimony* (Moses) says to the people: I will provoke you to jealousy, etc.' (*Dem.* 16, l.).

The student of testimonies will find frequent use made of these Deuteronomic passages in Justin, in Greg. Nyss., in Bar Salibi, etc. As the last-named writer's work is not yet published, we give one quotation from his *Testimonies against the Jews*: 'Listen to Moses how he said: Israel hath grown fat and got prominent eyes: he waxed fat and grew strong and he obtained riches and he forgot God who made him. I also will make him jealous with not-my-people, and with a foolish people I will provoke him to anger.' Perhaps enough has now been said to show the strength of the influence of the *Ode* or *Song of Moses* on the N. T.

How far back is this anti-Judaic use of O. T. passages traceable? The question is an important one. Two opposed opinions prevail at present; one inclined to regard the definite massing and ordering of such polemical matter, as little, if at all, earlier than the days of Cyprian; the other which affirms that these texts formed part of the earliest Christian propaganda, that this use of them is reflected in the N. T. literature, and may, with reason, be credited to the Apostles themselves; perhaps, even to their Master.

In the particular case we have been considering, that of the *Song of Moses*, the evidence certainly points to its early polemical use, but was it used earlier than by St. Paul? Is there any trace of it in the Gospels in the language of Jesus?

Here is an interesting case which has recently attracted the attention of the textual critics. In Lk 9<sup>41</sup> the Lord addresses the crowd which had gathered round Him on His descent from the Mount of Transfiguration as a 'faithless and perverse generation.' This is not very remote from the 'crooked and perverse (διεστραμμένη) generation' of Dt 32<sup>5</sup>. At this point two of the oldest Western MSS omit the words 'and perverse.' Professor Burkitt, reviewing Streeter's new book in the *Journal of Theological Studies* for April 1925, suggests that the Western omission is right, and that the added words have been introduced by parallelization from Dt 32<sup>5</sup>. 'The geographically Western text is right,' according to Burkitt. He has, however, overlooked the fact that there is a closer reference in the *Song* than the one which he quotes. In v.<sup>20</sup> the Jews are described as 'a perverse generation, children in whom is no faith': γενεὰ διεστραμμένη ἐστίν· νιοί οἱς οὐκ ἔστιν πίστις ἐν αὐτοῖς.

This is much nearer to the language of Jesus than the 'crooked and perverse generation,' and therefore if the text of the Gospel has been discoloured from the *Song*, this is the passage to refer to. But in that case it does not look like a scribe's variation taken from the LXX, but a free quotation. In other words, it is the original text of the Gospel, and is a formula of Jesus Himself. So we have one more suggestion of His polemical use of the O. T.

The discovery that Aphrahat the Persian employs extracts from Dt 32 in an anti-Judaic manner, saying that they are taken from a *Song of Testimony* would, of itself, be almost sufficient to prove that he had access, not only to the text of Deuteronomy, but also to some tabulated extracts from the same source.

We can, however, carry our investigation a step further, for the very expression, 'Song of Testimony,' is taken from the previous chapter of Deuteronomy. Here we find Moses himself saying, 'Write this song . . . that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel' (Dt 31<sup>19</sup>); and again, 'This song shall testify against them for a witness' (Dt 31<sup>21</sup>).

The origin, then, of the expression *Testimonia adversus Judæos* is not to be looked for in Cyprian, or in any other of the sub-Apostolic fathers; it comes from the Scripture itself. It is a Mosaic creation. The formation of a collection of Testimonies began with the 32<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Deuteronomy, and may very well have opened with 'Moses says.' The anti-Judaists had Scripture on their side and the Jewish legislator himself for their inspiration.

(J. R. Harris *A Factor of Old Testament Influence in the New Testament* (abridged), 1925)

**"THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS IS THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY." (REVELATION 19:10)**

Surely the Lord YHWH will do nothing but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets. (*Amos 3:7*)

Though credited with transmitting the Nazarene *Testimonia*, no one is suggesting that Matthew invented this tradition. For that one must look to the Master and to the prophets before him. But what of the *Testimonia*? Was it just a set of predictions which Jesus fulfilled? As we shall have occasion to see, it was more comprehensive than a mere list of attributes or predictions, but addressed a worldview. As it is written:

The law shall not perish from the priest, nor council from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. (*Jeremiah 18:18*)

Law, wisdom, prophecy: these three categories Jesus embodied and the *Testimonia* encompassed them as well. In support of the broad mandate that was his, Jesus said:

"All things must be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning me." (*Luke 24:44*)

Regarding the first category, just as Moses went up the mountain to receive the Law, then came down to tell the people, so did Jesus go up the mountain to renew the Law, then also came down to tell the people. Not only did Jesus fulfil prophecy, he fulfilled the Law, meaning the Law's eternal purpose, for when he laid hands on Moses' legacy, he transformed it, that it might serve not just national Israel but the entire believing world. Thus was there continuity of purpose throughout.

We know that accurate prediction is an aid to faith, even as the Lord said: "Now I have told you before it comes to pass, that when it comes to pass, you may believe." (*John 14:29*). As well, accurate prediction is an aid to good behavior: "Since all these things are to be, ... what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness?" (*II Peter 3:11*).

The foretelling of events is just one aspect of prophecy.

“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up.” (*John 3:14*)

There is no prophecy here at all but a supernatural patterning whereby the history of Israel is reflected in the history of our Lord. But it goes even beyond that. There are signs, symbols, types and antitypes, allegories, foreshadowings and prefigurements.

“I [YHVH] will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee [Moses], . . .”

(*Deuteronomy 18:18*)

Thus we see that Moses fasted forty days, so did our Lord; at Marah, Moses turned bitter water to sweet while at Cana, Jesus turned water not meant for drinking into wine which was; just as Moses fed the people in the wilderness with manna from heaven, so did Jesus feed the five thousand in the wilderness through the multiplication of loaves and fishes. Just as Moses struck the rock and water came forth so did Jesus who is THE ROCK provide living water. Moses parted the waters; Jesus walked on water. Moses’ face shone with glory; so also Jesus’ on the mount of transfiguration. Moses set up 70 (72?) elders to rule Israel; so also did Jesus chose 70 (72?) disciples to do the same. Moses sent forth twelve to spy out the land; Jesus sent forth the Twelve to arouse Israel to repentance. Moses led the chosen people out of Egyptian bondage; Jesus leads all of humanity who would have it out of spiritual bondage, across the Red Sea and into the Promised Land. As no man saw the death of Moses, so none saw the resurrection of Jesus. Moses was the type, Jesus the anti-type.

Just before he was impaled, Jesus said to Pilate:

“To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.”

(*John 18:37*)

Obviously not comprehending, Pilate asked Jesus:

“What is truth?”

(*John 18:38*)

What said Jesus earlier to his Father in this regard in the hearing of his disciples?

“I have given them thy word. . . . Thy word O Lord is truth.”

The gospels, albeit containing biographical material, are not biographical in intent nor do they purport to be. Their purpose, rather, is to feature Jesus as the meaning behind the meaning, as the key that unlocks understanding of the Scriptures. To miss that is to miss how he saw his role as that of transforming the Bible for Truth’s sake, for:

Jesus was in the Scriptures concealed; and by him the Scriptures are revealed.

OBERLIN LECTURE ON THE TESTIMONIA, 1910 (ABRIDGED)

J; Rendel Harris

Composite quotations were the thing that arrested Dr Hatch's attention: and our analysis has shown that with such composite quotations the scribes have a tendency to go wrong (as in Isaiah for *Balaam* or *Moses*, where only the latter part was really Isaiah). The moment we make the suggestion of composite quotations whose ascription has become confused, we are reminded of the textual difficulty in the opening verses of Mark. Ought we to read,

As it is written in the prophets:

"Behold! I sent my messenger before thy face,

Who shall prepare thy way:

The voice of one crying in the wilderness,

Prepare the way of the Lord,

Make his paths straight";

or should it be,

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "Behold! etc."

The textual critics insist rightly that "Isaiah" is the true reading, whether it makes Mark look inaccurate or not. Suppose, then, for a moment that Mark had taken this proof of Christ's coming out of a prophetic Testimony book; such a book ought to have had on the margin the two names

*Malachi*: "Behold I send etc."

*Isaiah*: "The voice of one crying etc."

We have shown, in an exactly parallel case, how easy it is for one title to be neglected, and for the other to govern the whole of a composite quotation.

The suggestion is a startling one, and will need confirmation; for Mark is our earliest Gospel, and to put the *Book of Testimonies* behind all the Gospels is a bold step. Perhaps some one will object at once and say that Mark is not the evangelist who bases his argument on the fulfillment of prophecy, which is rather the characteristic of the Gospel according to Matthew. No doubt there is some force in the objection: but I should like to draw attention to a chapter in which Mark affirms the argument from prophecy. If we turn to the close of Mark's seventh chapter, in which the miracle of the Ephphatha healing is recorded, the incident is summed up with the words, "He hath done all things well: he makes both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak." Here the word "well" means "appropriately," "as he should have done," "in accordance with prophecy." [Cf. Mark 7.6 ("Well did Isaiah prophecy") and the similar language in Acts 28.25.]

Thus the people recognize, in Mark, the fulfillment of prophecy: and Mark, himself, under such circumstances, could not miss it. What was the prophecy that they recognized as fulfilled? The answer is, the 35th chapter of Isaiah; and that Mark has this very chapter in mind is betrayed by the fact he calls the subject of the miracle κωφός

and μογιλάλος, "deaf" and "speaking with difficulty." The rare word μογιλάλος, is, in itself, sufficient to show that Isaiah 35 is in the mind of the evangelist, even if that passage had not been intimated by the closing words of the section about the making of deaf people to hear and speechless folk to talk. But this passage of Isaiah is, as we have seen, a leading proof-text in the *Book of Testimonies*. We may almost say that Mark wrote his seventh chapter to be read along with the *Book of Testimonies*. And certainly his interest in the verification of prophecy by Christ is betrayed in the chapter to which we have referred. There is no difficulty in making Mark into a student of prophecy. [Cf. Mark 7.6 ("Well did Isaiah prophecy") and the similar language in Acts 28:25].

But if this is correct, we shall expect verification of our hypothesis, from other parts of the New Testament. Suppose we ask the question whether there are any other places in the Gospels in which the suggestion of a misplaced title for a prophecy would be at home. We at once think of that much disputed passage in Matthew (Matt. 27.9), concerning the purchase of the potter's field: here we read -

Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying "And I took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the valued one whom they priced of the children of Israel, and I gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

You know the trouble over this passage: the quotation is from Zechariah 11:13: but the textual critics (those at least who deal in honest wares), will not allow you to alter "Jeremy the prophet." On the other hand the coincidence with Zechariah is far from being exact. My suggestion is that Matthew has used a Testimony book in which a quotation from Zechariah was preceded or followed by one from Jeremiah, and that he has not accurately defined the limits of his quotations. For instance if we turn to Gregory of Nyssa's collection of *Testimonies against the Jews*, we shall find under the proof-texts for the Passion of Jesus, [Zacagni p. 309] the following sequence:

*Jeremiah*: "But I as an innocent lamb was led to the slaughter; I did not know,"  
and again: "Come and let us put wood on his bread and let us erase his name from the living, and let his name be remembered no more."

*Zecharias*: "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the valued one, whom they priced of the children of Israel, and they gave them for the field of the potter, as the Lord commanded me."

Here the passage from Zechariah is quoted just as in Matthew, but I do not think it has been emended from the canonized Gospel. It looks as if it were the original from which Matthew worked: and in any case the sequence of Nyssen's quotations suggests directly the blunder in the reference to Jeremiah.

Some such explanation, arising out of a collection of proof-texts of the kind indicated, would clear up the difficulty which has long been perplexing the students of the Gospel.

The significance of the finding above is the indication that the Testimony Book predated the oldest Gospel and was used in its writing. (See the Appendix for the complete text.)

### THE 3<sup>RD</sup> VERSION OF TESTIMONIA, THE CHURCH'S

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, the Church arose as a rival to the Nazarenes. Whereas the Nazarenes were steeped in Scripture, as were religious Jews generally, the Church as a Gentile institution was reaching out to those having little or no biblical training. Then did use of the original *Testimonia* fall into abeyance, except, in revised form as the Church advanced fierce intermural and intramural disputes – running battles, really – with Marcionites, Docetics, Encratites, Montanists, Valentinians, Arians, etc., in pursuit of the ideological high ground. On dusting off one of its copies of the Nazarene *Testimonia*, however, the Church would update it to make it relevant to the issues of its day, such as those having to do with the Trinity, the New Covenant, cessation of Sabbath observance, the practice of Sacraments, etc., which concerns the original Nazarenes could not have imagined, much less have entertained. It's not that the original *Testimony Book* was done away so much as augmented with extraneous 2<sup>nd</sup>- and 3<sup>rd</sup>- century theological disputes such that its original purpose was lost sight of. That is where 20<sup>th</sup> century reconstructive scholarship came into play.

The existence in the early Church of collections of testimonies, extracted from the Old Testament for use against the Jews, has for a long time been a matter of suspicion. It was in the highest degree probable that such collections should arise, and their value for controversial purposes was so obvious that they would readily pass into the form of written books, and be subject to the correction, amplification, or excision of editors in such a way as to constitute in themselves a cycle of patristic literature, the main lines of whose development can easily be traced and the variations of whose development from one period of Church life to another can often be detected. They arose out of the exigency of controversy, and therefore covered the wide ground of canonical Jewish literature; but they were, at the same time, subject, to the exigency of the controversialist, who, traveling from place to place, could not carry a whole library with him. It was, therefore, a priori, probable that they would be little books of wide range. The parallel which suggests itself to one's mind is that of the little handbook known as the Soldier's Pocket Bible, which was carried by the Ironsides of Cromwell, and was composed of a series of Biblical extracts, chiefly from the Old Testament, defining the duty of the Puritan soldier in the various circumstances in which he found himself, and arranged under the headings of questions appropriate to the situation. . .

We are not limited to a search in the pages of early Christian polemicists, such as Justin or Irenaeus, though," as we shall show presently, there is abundance of fragmentary matter in their writings which can best be explained by the use of a book of Testimonies, and, indeed, in such a case as that of Justin, whose largest and most important work is a debate, real or imaginary, with a Jewish Rabbi, it would be strange indeed if Justin did not use the method of Testimonies, while the rest of the Church used them freely. It is not, however, a question of isolating quotations and reconstructing the books from which they were taken. There are a number of such books actually extant, which, when read side by side, show, from their common matter and method, and from their curious and minute agreements, that they constitute the very cycle of literature which we have been speaking of

under the name of Testimonies; that is, they are definite books of polemic, closely connected one with in; the others, and bearing marks of derivation from a common original. In the case of a writer who uses Testimonies freely we may find ourselves in a difficulty as to whether he should be classed with Patristic writers, like Justin, who use Testimonies, but only in the course of an argument, or whether he should be grouped with Cyprian and others, to whom the Testimonies are the argument itself and not mere incidents in the course of it. But this is only a question of degree. All writers who can be convicted of the use of a Testimony book will be in evidence for the reconstruction of that book, in one or other of the phases of its evolution. We have already alluded to the case of Cyprian, and from the distinction drawn above, if it could be maintained, between those who quote and those who merely edit or transcribe such books, we should be led to say that there are, from that point of view, two Cyprians ; one who uses a book of Testimonies like Justin, for incidental polemic, and the other who makes, on his own account, an edition of the book with expansions and changes from his own editorial hand. The first may conveniently be neglected, at all events for the present. The second is one of our prime authorities. Cyprian's Testimonies contain an earlier collection of Testimonies against the Jews. A reference to the complete works of Cyprian will show a work in three books, addressed to a certain Quirinus, and headed with the title *Testimonia*. Of these the third book is concerned with Christian ethics and is clearly a later addition to the other two. But the first two books have a common preface in which Cyprian explains to Quirinus that he has put together two little tracts, one to show that the Jews, according to prophecy, have lost the Divine favour and that the Christians have stepped into their place ; and the other to show that Christ was and is, what the Scripture foretold Him to be. And the direct attack upon the Jews in the first book, followed by the appeal to them which is involved in the prophecies (from the Old Testament) of the second book, is sufficient to permit us to re-write the title of Cyprian's book from the simple form *Testimonia* into the form *Testimonia adversus Judaeos*; or, at all events, to regard the longer title as latent in the shorter. We shall have to refer constantly to these two books in the course of our investigation, both to the actual quotations made, and to the heads under which they are grouped. No one will doubt that we have rightly described the books if he will read the capitulations, beginning with the statement that The Jews have gravely offended God, and concluding with the affirmation that The Gentiles who believe are more than the Jews, and that The Jews can only obtain forgiveness by admission to the Christian Church. There can be no doubt that in Cyprian's writings we have preserved a book of Testimonies against the Jews. Tertullian against the Jews is a mass of Quotations, probably from an early Book of Testimonies. A somewhat similar case will be the tract ascribed to Tertullian, which goes under the name of *Tertullian adversus Judaeos*. . . . The case of Tertullian against the Jews . . . follows closely the lines of the collectors of *Testimonia*. And it will be sufficient here to state that it will be found very useful in determining the contents and defining the antiquity of the early *Testimonia*. Gregory of Nyssa is credited with a Book of Testimonies against the Jews. . . . We shall find many features in the work which are certainly of high antiquity and can be paralleled from the fathers of the first three centuries. Hippolytus and Others. A fourth work to which we may refer is a Demonstration against the Jews . . . which is current under the name of Hippolytus, and was published by Lagarde amongst the works of that father. A fifth work would be the tract against the Jews in the writings of Cyprian. And many other early Patristic writers will be found to be

more or less occupied in a similar use of material collected from the Old Testament. Bar Salibi Against the Jews. And last of all we come to the treatise of Bar Salibi Against the Jews, to which we referred in a recent issue of the Expositor, which, though late in date, contains many relics of the earlier controversies, and probably whole sections, slightly disguised in their transference into Syriac, of the lost book that we are in quest of. We have no need to apologize for Bar Salibi's late date, relatively to such writers as Tertullian, Cyprian or Hippolytus. It is recognized that the writings of Bar Salibi contain a great deal of early matter. . . . Bar Salibi must have had an excellent library of early fathers at his disposal, and it is very likely that more will yet be found of lost Christian authors in his pages. This new tract, then, of Bar Salibi can easily be proved to belong to the same cycle as the other books of which we have been speaking. We will now show how the conjecture of the critics, and the evidence of the extant literature as to the existence of early books of Testimonies can be confirmed by the internal evidence of the books referred to, including, of course, Bar Salibi himself. (*The Use of the Testimonies in the Early Church*, J. Rendel Harris, 1906)

We recall to our minds the steps by which we were able to establish the existence of the early Christian *Book of Testimonies*, which we have now tracked back from the ages of Cyprian and Lactantius, through the quotations of Tertullian, Irenaeus, and Justin, to a form in which we can still recognize the primitive document, very little changed in form or content. It was Messianic in character, and for the most part occupied in defining the marks by which the Messiah could be recognized. For instance, one of its leading sections was the proof that the Messiah "when he came," would "heal all diseases and raise the dead," the actual text being taken from the thirty-fifth chapter of Isaiah. The "coming of the Deliverer" was implied in the words, "Your God shall come . . . *He will come* and Save you. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, etc." Christian Fathers who refer to this Testimony commonly prefix the words, ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ αὐτοῦ "at His coming," and it was the detection of this prefixed explanation by Irenaeus and Justin that opened our eyes to the fact that these two writers were not quoting Isaiah directly but only a Testimony from Isaiah.

From the study which has preceded we are entitled to make the following general statements: —

1. If we wish to understand the Gospels, we must get behind the Gospels.
2. If we wish to get behind the Gospels, we must study the first collection of Christian *Testimonies* concerning the Messiah.
3. If we wish to understand the early Christian *Testimonies*, we must get behind them; i.e.
4. We must study the Jewish collection of Messianic prophecies from which they are, in part at least, derived.

(J. Rendel Harris, *Nichodemus* (abridged), 1932)

#### THE GREAT O'S

Unbeknownst to itself, the Anglican Church has preserved the titles of Matthew's *Testimonia* in its Advent services. Called the "great O's for short," i.e., the Advent "O Antiphons" are intoned with solemnity every year before and after the reading of Mary's *Magnificat*:



O Sapientia / O Wisdom.

O Adonai / O Lord.

O Radix Jesse / O Root of Jesse.

O Caudus David / O Key of David.

O Oriens splendor / O Radiant dawn.

O Rex gentium / O King of the nations.

O Emmanuel rex et legifer noster / O God-with-us, Our King and Lawgiver.

Of this Rendel Harris wrote:

It is interesting to observe further the scriptural language in which the Divine Wisdom is described; she comes forth from the Mouth of the Most High; this is Sirach, c. xxiv. 3, and is one of the proof-tests in Cyprian's Testimonies; that is followed by a statement that Wisdom extends from marge to marge radiantly, and that she administers graciously; this is from the Wisdom of Solomon viii. 1. The prayer is made that Wisdom will come and teach us the way of prudence. It appears that in the great O's Christ is defined as Wisdom in the terms of the Sapiential books, much in the same way as we found in our study of Testimonies. The impression produced is that these Advent antiphons are of great antiquity. This impression is confirmed when we look at the other members of the group, which follow the appeal to Wisdom. They are pro-ethnic in a remarkable degree. Christ is the root of Jesse, who stands for an ensign of the peoples, the one to whom the Gentiles appeal. He is the King of the Gentiles, the Desire of the Gentiles, the Expectation of the Gentiles and their Savior. The term "King of the Gentiles" is interesting; it is the correct reading in Apoc. xv. 4. . . . Then we notice also that Christ is appealed to as the Stone, the Cornerstone, and we have shown abundantly how characteristic such a term is of the early years of Christianity. On the whole we conclude that the "O Sapientia" of the Calendar in the English Prayer-book is a bit of early ritual, broken away from its primitive setting, and with its meaning so obscured by the rust and dust of time that there is probably not an Anglican living who knows the interpretation of the vocative vocable in his Church Calendar. Even if he knew the story of the Great O's, he would not be able to tell why the Church said "O" in the first instance, nor why she said "O" to wisdom.

#### **THOUGH FEW, THE LABORERS ARE WORTHY**

Long in advance of the Nazarene movement, faithful Jews were helping fulfil the national mission by organizing and collating scripturally-based collections of prophecies regarding the expected Messiah. While based on what we currently see, we do not think of Judaism as Messianic, it was markedly so 2000 years ago, a fact made irrefutable by the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Meanwhile, the Israel of God yet works to fulfil the mission.

The individual whose name is most associated with the testimony concept is J. Rendel

Harris but he was not without antecedents. For instance, he credits Edwin Hatch of Oxford for originally erecting the testimony hypothesis, for, as early as 1889, Dr. Edwin Hatch, in his book, *Essays in Biblical Greek*, wrote as follows:

It may naturally be supposed that a race which laid stress on moral progress, whose religious services had variable elements of both prayer and praise, and which was carrying on an active propaganda, would have, among other books, manuals of morals, of devotion and of controversy. ... the existence of composite quotations in the New Testament . . . suggest the hypothesis that we have in these relics of such manuals . . . [as] consist of extracts from the Old Testament.”

In 1894, with the anonymous publication of a book titled “*The Oracles ascribed to Matthew by Papias of Hierapolis*,” a new era in biblical research should have begun, only it didn’t. Somehow this highly-researched book at the time of its publication escaped attention of scholars and the general public alike. Though its immediate impact was slight, eventually its findings were recognized for what they were, truly revolutionary. Its author since has been identified as John Burslim Gregory. From its prologue:

The following monograph is a contribution to the criticism of the New Testament. The views put forward in it shortly are these. That the famous work by Papias of Hierapolis, about which so much has been written, was upon the interpretation of messianic prophecies and that the work referred to in it, and attributed to Matthew, consisted of a collection of Messianic prophecies in Hebrew, extracted from the Old Testament, and perhaps from other books. I was led to conclusions which so differ so much from those put forward from most critics, in the following way. After reading the argument in the work entitled ‘Supernatural Religion,’ upon the gospel quotations in Justin Martyr, I was desirous of testing the matter by examining the quotations as they stood in the text of that father. After examining a considerable number of these quotations, I came to the conclusion that while there were many short passages, which considered by themselves, might well be supposed to have been quoted from the canonical gospels, it was not reasonable to suppose that any of Justin’s long quotations came from the canonical gospels. All of them that I have examined exhibit the following peculiarities. They consist of phrases, resembling sometimes one and sometimes another of the canonical gospels, and of other phrases not found in any of them, woven together, so as in each case to form a perfectly coherent whole. No quotation ever follows any one of the canonical gospels consecutively for more than a line or two. There is nothing about the quotations that in the least suggest that they are paraphrased or quoted merely from memory. Between them and the canonical gospels must be interposed the labor of someone who has deliberately cut a text to pieces and rearranged it. It is impossible to suppose that Justin, merely quoting from the canonical gospels would have made this mosaic. After examining a considerable number of gospel quotations, I determined to test Justin’s habits of quotation by comparing some of his Old Testament quotations with the LXX. I readily found long quotations which followed the LXX verbatim, sometimes with a various reading or two, through whole

chapters. On the other hand, there were short quotations which were very different from the LXX. These latter I noticed to consist of passages explained as Messianic prophecies, some but not all of which were quoted to a great extent in the same words in Matthew. I hence drew the conclusion that Justin got the Old Testament quotations which did not come from the LXX out of his gospel, and I accounted for those which are not found in any of the canonical gospels, by supposing that his gospel cited more Messianic prophecies than the present canonical gospels do. . . . the explanation suggested itself to me of a work in Aramaic, upon the interpretation of Messianic prophecy, which had been part of the materials out of which the canonical gospels had been compiled. Now I had already formed the conclusion that the books attributed by Papias to Matthew and Mark were rather materials out of which the canonical gospels had been partly compiled, than any of those gospels. The consideration, therefore, suggested itself whether this book on Messianic prophecy could be the book written in Hebrew which was attributed by Papias to Matthew.

With regard to the close relationship between Paul's and Peter's quotations of *Isaiah 28:16* (the Stone), Sanday and Hedlem, in 1895, wrote:

This may have arisen from St Peter's acquaintance with Romans; but another hypothesis may be suggested: which will perhaps account for the facts more naturally. We know that to prove from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ was the constant practice of the early Christians. Is it not possible that even as early as this there may have been collections of Old Testament texts used for controversial purposes arranged according to their subject, as were the latter *Testimonia* of Cyprian?

In 1906, F. Crawford Burkitt published a book titled *The Gospel History and its Transmission* in which he stated:

Now as we have seen, the evidence does not point to the direct use of a Hebrew MS of the Old Testament [by Matthew]: we must look rather to a collection of *Testimonia* as the immediate source of our Evangelist's quotations. The collection must have been made from the Hebrew, but the names of the several Prophets or Psalmists do not seem to have been attached to the quotations, . . . To collect and apply the Oracles of the Old Testament in the light of the New Dispensation was the first literary task of the Christian Church. Several such collections survive, and one of them *Testimonia* edited by Cyprian, is the source from which a whole series of Latin writers quote Scripture.

We may go on to conjecture that the original collection of Messianic proof-texts was made by Matthew the Publican in Hebrew, and it is the use of this document by our Evangelist which gives his work the right to be called the Gospel according to Matthew. This collection of texts, in a word, may have been the famous Λόγια, of which Papias speaks (Euseb. *HE* iii 39), which each one interpreted as he could.

Thus the answer to the first question we asked, as to the knowledge and methods of the First and Third, is that S. Luke uses the Greek Bible, but the First Evangelist draws his proof-texts direct from the Hebrew), although he too occasionally uses the ordinary Greek translation.

One of the first scholars to enter into the work of recovering the *Testimonia* was Edward Carus Selwyn whose book *Oracles in the New Testament* appeared in 1911. He wrote:

To pronounce the words Jesus Christ is to assert a coincidence, a coincidence which is by no means accidental but providential, in accordance with the will of God, and inseparable from the belief in that purpose. The expectation of the Christ was held by a considerable body of opinion in the first century B. C., and may be described as faith or trust or belief: when Jesus came He was pronounced to fulfil many terms of that expectation. A coincidence was discovered between the facts of His life and the ideas of the previous faith. Jesus was identified with the Christ, the Man was found to correspond with the Opinion, the Life to fulfill the Faith.

The four Gospels contain a hundred passages of Old Testament which are treated as fulfilled in the events which they relate. Fifty of these are introduced by expressions which show that the evangelists considered them to be fulfillments. They write, "then was fulfilled what was written," "as it is written," or something similar. Fulfillment cannot fail to imply the recognition of a coincidence, whatever else and whatever more it means.

The present work is an attempt to discover the use of the Old Testament by the writers of the New. The oracles are precious words, and the words in the New Testament which were precious to the writers are words of the Old Testament. They were precious because they proved the great fact that Jesus was the Christ. The proof is known generally as the Argument from Prophecy.

The prophet spoke according to the rules clearly set forth by St. Paul in I Cor. 14<sup>23-33</sup>. He spoke *Logia* in combination with other *Logia* or with recent events, His "revelations" were similar in kind, in *genus* but not in *species*, to the Revelation of St. John the Divine. Here it need only be said that in a passage of any length in the New Testament dealing with the work of the Christian prophets we are likely to find something said concerning *interpretation* or *discrimination*, and accordingly in I Cor. 14<sup>27f</sup> we have the order "let one (only) be interpreter (διερμηνευέτω means as *between the two* speakers with tongues, or at the most three who speak in turn), and if there be no interpreter, the person is to be silent in church, speaking only to himself and to God. And as to prophets, let two or three (only) be speaking (in turn), and let the other (prophets) *discriminate*." The *Logia* required this discrimination, a disentanglement of various trains of thought being very necessary when all contexts were apt to be disregarded and prophecies from different authors combined together.

Any Messianic passage of the Old Testament was a *Logion*, and, further, any passage might become a Messianic passage if duly submitted by a prophet speaking in ecstasy according to rule and submitting his revelation to the verdict of the umpires who were also prophets, and receiving their sanction. Gradually this rule was relaxed. It is not hazardous to say that the texts of the Old Testament in St. Peter's speeches, Acts 1-4, were among the earliest *Logia*; likewise Mark 1<sup>2</sup>, 11<sup>9</sup> and 12<sup>10</sup>. There would be the rudiments,

the alphabet of *Logia*. But they were the alphabet of a copious language. For it has been demonstrated above, for instance, that not merely several expressions, but substantially every word except “Mary” and except the dreams in the story of the Magi, is from the Old Testament in Greek. But this story would certainly be an example of most advanced study of oracles and it could not have been composed till after the disparagement of dreams had ceased, and after the time when every oracle had to be submitted by a prophet in ecstasy to the discrimination of the other prophets. (Edward Selwyn)

1906 marked the year J. Rendel Harris first published in the *Expositor* on this subject. In 1910 he delivered a lecture at Oberlin College titled “The Book of Testimonies” His *Magnus Opus* appeared in two volumes published in 1916 and 1920, titled *Testimonies I* and *II*. In 1917 appeared his magisterial book about *John’s* prologue. Afterward, he published several more articles of a substantial nature, the last appearing in 1934.

In 1934, the same Dutch scholar as had done much pioneering work on the *Diatessaron*, Daniel Plooij, also published an important book, this connecting the Testimonies to Aramaic Targums, another major insight as to their source.

Following is an extract drawn from Daniel Plooij’s 1934 *Studies in the Testimony Book*. Inasmuch as he illustrates his points mainly from the *Epistle to the Hebrews* which would take us too far afield, I reproduce only his conclusions:

The writings preserved in our New Testament, though they are the oldest extant witnesses of early Christian literature, are not its first stage. . . . We ought not to forget that our New Testament is the record of *Hellenic* Christianity, whilst the earliest Church was that of Palestine, ‘salvation being from the Jews’. Of the literature of this primitive Church, which used Aramaic as its mother-tongue, only very scanty remains survive in the original, though we may be sure that a good deal has been preserved in Greek, submerged and unnoticed in its Hellenic form. It was however the Mother-Church of the great Apostle to the Gentiles: when he prays he does so in its language, saying *Abba*, only in the second place adding in Greek: *Our Father*. In Hellenic Christianity the most enthusiastic longing for the coming of the King was uttered in the “Maranatha” of the primitive Church), translated in the liturgical ending of the Apocalypse: *Amen, come O Lord Jesus*, in which, even so, the Aramaic *Amen* betrays its origin.

The early Christian dogma, especially its conception regarding Christ, the New Tempe, the New Circumcision and so on are not based upon Hellenistic speculations, but find their origin in the primitive Christian Church, where the Bible was read with its Targumic rendering and interpretation, The Logos for instance of the early Christian Church is not to be derived primarily from Stoic teaching, but from the Targumic tradition, and so on. I wish to repeat: This does not exclude the obvious fact that on Hellenistic soil the early Christian dogma had to become acclimatized; but the real explanation comes from Palestine and from the Jewish traditions. And we shall have to re-study the whole material from this point of view.

I may now come back to the question whether this early Palestinian Testimony Book was in script from the beginning. The parallel with the Jewish halacha shows that this is not so self-evident as we, in modern times, should be inclined to assume. It may be that the tradition was in the beginning merely oral. We might even be inclined to believe it to have seen so for Paul also, when we examine the expressions used by him in 1 Cor. iv. 17, though it seems unlikely. The impression we certainly get from the way in which Paul quotes his Testimony collection is that he had it in script already. But whatever the answer to this question may be, there is no doubt that a solid basis of fixed tradition must be assumed and that a great personality of the primitive Church in Palestine is its 'author', even if we cannot attach to it a definite Christian name. The starting point, as we remarked, is in Jesus himself. But one great disciple with a highly spiritual mind and a deep insight into the fundamental truths of the Gospel, has developed Jesus' suggestions

In 1952, a book appeared, titled, *Primitive Gospel Sources* by Stather Hunt. One area of his expertise has to do with a specialized study of "the Dialogues," these being a form of literature originally involving disputation between Jews and Nazarene Jews. The origin of this genre Stather Hunt dates to the 1<sup>st</sup> century. These dialogues, of which several have survived, are thought to contain much primitive Testimony Book material. As Hunt wrote:

At a comparatively early period the Testimony Book was issued in a popular form as a Dialogue. There seems to be evidence that the earliest Dialogue goes back to the first century, and there are reasons for supposing that it originated in Apostolic times. The Dialogues are all of the same character, and deal with the same problems, which are always the Christological problems which would confront the Jewish 'enquirer'.

The earliest book of the testimony type of which we have direct knowledge is the Dialogue of Jason and Papiscus, in its original form the proto-type of many other apologetical works of this kind. The dialogues are one of the most interesting of the by-ways of patristic literature, and contain a very considerable amount of primitive material. The method was adopted by St. Paul in the Epistle to the Romans, but as this was primarily a letter the Apostle takes the parts of both Christian and Jew, the two classes of disputants in most of the dialogue, upon himself. The dialogue is a popular rather than a literary production, and like most popular productions, tends to be Conservative in its mode of expression, even when the meaning of those expressions has been forgotten. <sup>1</sup>

The editor who reviews a popular writing will keep its ancient form as far as possible; and just as it is the simple hymns and the children's fairy tales which seem to have the most enduring qualities, so this popular form of testimony writing is repeatedly revived for the use of untheologically-minded people until a more sophisticated age abandoned it on the ground that it was only fitted for children. <sup>2</sup> I believe that the original dialogue was composed in Apostolic times from the primitive Testimony Book, in order to provide a popular text-book which would appeal to simple-minded people as something that they could readily understand, and that all the ancient dialogues are based upon this original.

In 1966 a scholarly full-length biography of Justin Martyr was published, the first such treatment of him since 1923. As its author, L. W. Barnard, in the preface, explained:

Justin Martyr was the most important of the second-century Greek apologists, yet he has usually been regarded as but one of a larger group of writers who reflected, in their presentation of Christianity, the intellectual currents of their age. This treatment is reflected in the paucity of books specifically concerned with Justin. This fact has done Justin a real injustice, for he was a pioneer Apologist and the others, such as Tatian and Athenagoras, were heavily indebted to him. It is not without justice that the doyen of German patristic scholars, Baron von Campenhausen, has said that nearly all the Greek fathers of the Church were, consciously or unconsciously, his imitators. . . . Justin, whatever his faults and the incompleteness of his theology, was a man with a mission. His Christian philosophy was no neat academic amalgam of Plato and Christianity. For him Christianity was philosophic truth itself and to its service he devoted his life with unswerving courage, honesty, and audacity. What more could be asked of any Christian?

*Testimonia* was a distinguishing feature of Justin's writings. As he wrote:

For Christ is proclaimed as King and Priest and God and Lord and Angel and Man and Chief Captain and Stone and Child Born, and liable to suffering at first, then, as going up to heaven and coming again with glory and having his Kingdom for ever, as I prove from all the scripture. (Dial. Xxxiv. 2)

He is also termed both Wisdom and Day and Dayspring and Sword and stone and od and Jacob and Israel in this fashion or in that, in the words of the prophets . . . (Dial. C. 4)

In 1973, as part of his doctoral requirement, Klyne Ryland Snodgrass wrote a 790-page dissertation titled: *The Christological stone testimonia in the New Testament*. Four texts he considers central to the New Testament witness regarding stone *testimonia* are: *Isaiah 8:14*, *Isaiah 28:16*, *Psalms 118:22*, and *Daniel 2:34, 44-45*. Stone *testimonia* had their origin in the *verba Christi*, *Mark 12:10-11*, *Matthew 21:42*, *Luke 20:7*. As Jesus said:

"Have ye not read even this scripture; the stone which the builders rejected, the same was made the cornerstone: this was from the Lord, and it was marvelous in our eyes."

In 1987, Oskar Skarsaune published a most significant study, titled: *The Proof From Prophecy: a study of Justin Martyr's Proof text tradition*. In it he demonstrates a pattern in Justin Martyr's scriptural quotations: that long passages were drawn from the Septuagint but short passages were drawn from the *testimonia*.

A rising star in the firmament of *Testimonia* scholars is Mark Swanson whose essay *Beyond Proof-texting: the use of the Bible in early Arabic Christian Apologies*, appeared in 2007

in a volume titled: *The Bible in Arab Christianity*, a book which well-illustrates the centrality of the Bible in Arab Christian experience. A few excerpts from Mark Swanson's article:

I will focus on the early Melkite literature's use of the ancient Christian literary genre of *testimonia*, that is of collections of old Testament 'prophecies' of or 'witnesses' to the life of Christ and Christian doctrines and practices. The Old Testament texts are often referred to as 'proof-texts,' but I will argue that , in our literature they function in ways that move far beyond 'proof-texting.'

An excellent starting point for this study is the anonymous Melkite apology found in Sinai Arabic MS 154. . . .

The first scholarly article concerning the *Apology* was written by J. Rendel Harris . . . in 1901. . . . it was Harris who in a number of ways paved the way for the four visits to Sinai by the scholarly widows and twin sisters, Margaret Dunlap Gibson and Agnes Smith Lewis; it was during their fourth visit to the Monastery of St. Catherine in 1897 that Mrs Gibson photographed our treatise, allowing for its inclusion in her 1899 publication – and for Harris' review in 1903.

When Harris looked at the testimonies gathered together in the Arabic *Apology*, he immediately saw the early patristic parallels, or, in his own words, the *disiecta membra* of Justin and Ariston, of Irenaeus, Tertullian and Cyprian . . .”

In one passage from the *Apology's* chapter on Redemption, the author presents the cries of the prophets . . . :

“Lord bow the heaven and come down to us.” “[You who are] seated on the cheribum, manifest yourself to us. Stir up your power and come to save us.” “Not an intercessor, not an angel, but the Lord will come and save us.” “God sent his Word, and healed us from all our toil and saved us.” “He shall come openly and not tarry.” David the prophet prophesied and said: “Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. O Lord our God, save us.” He also said: “God shall come and not be silent. Fire shall devour before him and break out round about him.”

The manuscript breaks off in mid sentence, and we do not know how much of the text might be missing. It would be possible to imagine more chapters of testimonies; having had one on baptism, for example, one might expect to see a chapter on the eucharist. On the other hand, the text as we have it breaks off during a discussion of Christ's return on the Day of Resurrection (carrying his cross as a 'sign'), which could be a fitting climax to the treatise as a whole.

If the original extent of the treatise is something of a mystery, the date of its composition is also somewhat mysterious, although the text itself gives us some tantalizing clues when it states that the Christian religion had been established 746 years.

I would argue, the testimonies play a major role in laying out and commending a *worldview*. For an understanding of the term 'worldview', I draw on an analysis by the New Testament scholar N. T. Wright, for



whom worldviews have four characteristic functions. First, they provide stories through which human beings understand their existence; one can go further and say that in compelling worldviews these stories fall within a kind of Big Story, an overarching 'meta-narrative'. Second, worldviews provide the questions that are fundamental to our understanding of human existence: 'who are we, where are we, what is wrong, and what is the solution?' Third, these stories are expressed in *rituals* and *symbols*. And fourth, they set forth particular *actions*, providing a guide for life in this world.

The *Apology* is a powerful presentation of a Christian worldview, and its use of scripture is integral to that presentation. It is the Christian scriptures that provide an overarching meta-narrative, from the creation of the world . . . to Christ's return on the Day of Resurrection (which is the topic when the text breaks off). Within this Big Story, the first part of the apology presents a series of individual narratives from the history of salvation, from humanity's fall (which addresses the 'What is Wrong?' question) to the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus (which answers the question, 'what is the solution?'). The testimonies in the second part then bear witness that the scriptural narrative is internally coherent, with Old Testament prophecies matching New Testament events in such a way as to move the receptive reader to wonder.

Several times the author of the *Apology* nearly gets carried away with aesthetic delight: 'Look how beautiful is the correspondence of the acts of Christ to the prophecies of the prophets!'

The all-encompassing scope and beautifully-wrought coherence of the scriptures, then, provide for a worldview that is, if I may put it this way, inhabitable. The rituals and symbols are not neglected by the *Apology*, as may be seen from its final two chapters: Christians enter the reality described by this scriptural narrative through the ritual of *baptism*; within it, their great symbol is the cross. And throughout the *Apology* there are indications of the sort of actions that are suitable for life within this worldview, actions characterized as freedom from the Devil, obedience to God, and the imitation of Christ.

Also appearing in 2007 was a large volume titled: *Commentary of the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* by G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson. Unlike most standard brand Protestant Christian commentaries, this one embraces the *Testimonia* concept:

There is evidence for a written collection of *testimonia* of the early Christians that focused on "stone" texts and was used in five traditions in the NT: (1) the interpretation of Jesus as the rejected cornerstone (Matt. 21:33-46; Mark 12:1-11; Luke 20:9-19; (2) the portraits of Jesus and the stone *testimonia* in the Gospels (Mark 14:58, 15:29, John 2:19-21; Acts 6:14); (3) the metaphor of the stumbling stone set in Zion (Rom. 9:33; 1 Pet. 2:6-8; ); (4) the stone metaphor for the Christian community and the temple (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1; Eph. 2:20-22; (5) the designation of Peter as the rock and foundation stone (Matt. 16:18).

Such then have been some of the major figures who entered into the work of recovering

the *Testimonia* which formed the foundation of Nazarene witness. Though often reviled or ignored in their day, these worthy scholars stand vindicated in ours.

#### DEAD SEA SCROLL TESTIMONIA

4QT shows that the stringing together of Old Testament texts from various books was a pre-Christian literary procedure, which may well have been imitated in the early stage of the formation of the New Testament. It resembles so strongly the composite citations of the New Testament writers that it is difficult not to admit that *testimonia* influenced certain parts of the New Testament. (Joseph Fitzmyer)

When J. Rendel Harris made the case for *Testimonia* in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, he had not so much as a single scrap of parchment evidence with which to convince his critics. His amazing command of the literature of the ancient world, as well, his linguistic abilities in multiple tongues: Hebrew, Aramaic, Latin, Greek, etc. plus a powerful logic helped him make his case. Initially he seemed to meet with little overt opposition yet, the scholarly establishment never truly came around to embracing his viewpoint. To diffident modernists, this scholar/saint was too believably devout. To dyed-in-the-wool fundamentalists, Harris was entirely too questioning; they could not countenance one who saw their beloved New Testament as being a late, churchly production, or who invited people to look through it to an earlier, Nazarene deposition. Thus it was that neither the liberal nor the conservative camp cared to entertain his *Testimonia* hypothesis.

It should be otherwise, for, in 1952, 2000 year-old copies of the very *Testimonia* Harris had postulated as once having existed in biblical times emerged from out of the bowels of the earth, brought forth to the light of day by Bedouin goat herders who that year located Dead Sea Scroll cave number 4. Containing a virtual treasure trove, cave 4 yielded 15,000 fragments from 574 separate texts. But then schemers (one shudders at the thought of calling them “scholars,”) immediately re-buried them, this time, however, in the bowels of Jerusalem’s Rockefeller Museum, where they moldered away another 40 years and might yet be hidden away, except for heroic measures taken by certain scholars.

This then was the sequence of events: in February, 1947, the first of eleven Dead Sea Scroll caves was discovered. In 1948 G. L. Harding, Britain’s director of antiquities for Jordan, authorized a Dead Sea manuscript hunt, the next year appointing Dominican Father, Roland de Vaux of *l'Ecole Biblique* to survey and excavate Cave 1 where the first seven scrolls had been found. In 1953, Harding assembled an international team of eight scholars to work in the Rockefeller Museum’s “scrollery,” placing Father de Vaux over this effort as project director. In 1956 the 11<sup>th</sup> and last cave was found.

Generally speaking, the work proceeded expeditiously with the results being published in

a timely manner: for instance, Cave 1's findings were released between 1950 and 1956; while those from 8 different caves were released in a single volume in 1963; publication of the Psalms Scroll from Cave 11 occurred in 1965 with translations soon following. A glaring exception: by 1985 less than half of cave 4's documents had been published. Odd because de Vaux's team of scholars had completed the reconstruction and photographing of Cave 4's scrolls in 1956 and the process of transcription was completed in 1960, after which the workshop in which they had been examined was dismantled and the scrolls themselves secured for safekeeping under lock and key. Yet it would be another thirty plus years before access to them was granted, but only after a bruising, knock-down, drag-out battle.

In August, 1966, *Harpers Magazine* published an article titled "The Untold Story of the Dead Sea Scrolls." Written by John Allegro, one of the International team's original eight members, his article asked rhetorically:

Why does the main message of the Scrolls still remain hidden nearly twenty years after their discovery?  
Who is afraid of what they reveal?

Answering his own question, he identified a key obstructionist:

The editor-in-chief, who actually took no part in the editing of the new cache, was Father De Vaux, the Dominican archaeologist of the French School in Jerusalem. He laid it down as a general rule that we should restrict prior publication of our documents to no more than one per year. Apart from this, all the material would find its first presentation in the definitive series of publications to appear under the auspices of the Jordanian Department of Antiquities, the French Biblical School, and the Palestine Archaeological Museum, and to be called *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert of Jordan*. Fourteen years after the discovery of the Wounded Partridge cave [i.e., Cave 4] not a single volume dealing with this material has appeared. Were it not for our limited preliminary publications, the scholarly world would still know next to nothing about the contents of the four hundred or so documents that we have painstakingly put together from the fragments.

Regarding the Scrolls' significance, Allegro wrote:

Only recently two important American scholars, W. F. Albright and David Noel Freedman, had occasion to complain of a "partial boycott of the Dead Sea Scrolls on the part of New Testament scholars". They went on to say, "... in the Scrolls we have for the first time a direct Jewish background of the New Testament. Hitherto we have been partly dependent upon intertestamental literature (Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha) and partly on early rabbinic literature, which is, unfortunately, a century or two later than the deeds and words of Christ and the Apostles. Thanks to the Dead Sea Scrolls, we now have direct evidence that is of the greatest significance and which bears on all our New Testament books" ['The Continuing Revolution in Biblical Research', *Journal of Bible and Religion*, 31 April 1963]. It was Professor Albright who much earlier had described the new evidence of the beliefs and practices of the Jewish sectarians offered by the Scrolls as

bidding fair “to revolutionize our approach to the beginnings of Christianity” [Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, Supplementary Studies Nos. 10-12, 1951.]

Based on Allegro’s charges, Jordan nationalized the Rockefeller Archaeological Museum which action, however, was short-lived, for it was soon to be nullified by tanks and guns when, in June, 1967, Zionist invaders took East Jerusalem. Since then, the museum has been jointly managed by the Israel Museum and the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums (later renamed Israel Antiquities Authority).

After de Vaux’s death in 1971, he was replaced by Fr. Pierre Benoit of Dominican *Ecole Biblique*. Leaders changed but the gag order remained. That is why pointing the blame at one individual misses the point entirely. The cover-up was not about a lone obstructionist. Nor was it solely conducted at the behest of Dominicans for the policy continued unabated for decades under successive project directors, one of whom, James Strugnell was Protestant and the last of whom, Emanuel Tov, was Jewish.

It’s not necessarily that any one document was perceived by these controllers of the manuscripts as being a “smoking gun” but the weight of them all in their totality, apparently, was too much for their ingrained biases and so they metered them out slowly or withheld them entirely until aroused public interest had safely waned.

The idea that Jesus’ teachings had deep Jewish antecedents was not a congenial thought to either Synagogue or Church. It creates a problem for both parties to acknowledge Jesus’ intellectual and spiritual indebtedness to developments occurring in the time span they call “inter-testamental,” their unspoken fear being that this might blur their cherished doctrine of discontinuity between Testaments “Old” and “New” or, worse yet, it might belie there even having been a bifurcation of Testaments “Old” and “New.”

Just as the Pharisees and the Sadducees, normally adversaries, joined forces 2000 years ago in order to gang up on Jesus and his band of followers, so also in our day, Christians and Jews, normally adversaries, have joined forces against the *Testimonia* being interpreted as pointing too directly toward Jesus.

Oxford Don, Geza Vermes, who had been involved with the Dead Sea Scrolls from the beginning, and whose 1962 first edition, *Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, became the standard in that line of research, in 1977 described the publishing ban as “the academic scandal *par excellence* of the 20th century.” Finally, in 1989, the conspiracy began unraveling for it was then that Harvard’s Strugnell, one of the original eight scholars, was made chief editor. Most undiplomatic, his mistake was crossing swords with Robert Eisenman, who, whatever one thinks of his theories, was – and is – a very formidable personality. When Strugnell denied

Eisenman access on the grounds of the latter's unfitness, Eisenman fought back using a range of tactics, on a range of fronts, and with such fury that the cover-up was blown to Kingdom come. Perhaps, by sheer force of personality, Eisenman got an as yet unnamed Israeli with access to the scrolls to break loose unauthorized photos. With the help of Hershel Shanks, *Biblical Archeological Review's* editor, Eisenman had a platform or, if you will, a megaphone, allowing him to amplify his complaint. Before long the popular press picked up on the dispute, with the upshot being that Strugnell found himself pilloried worldwide. Never one to do his own cause any good, Strugnell later, rather incautiously, characterized outsiders wanting access to the Dead Sea Scrolls as "a bunch of fleas who are in the business of annoying us." Finally, thoroughly discredited, in December, 1990, Strugnell stepped down from his leadership position, only to be replaced by another obstructionist, Emanuel Tov of The Hebrew University. Though Tov did his best to extend the cover-up, as circumstance would have it, one of his former students figured out a way to circumvent it.

In 1991, Tov denied Ben Zion Wacholder of Hebrew Union College access to certain Dead Sea Scroll photographs necessary to his research. Wacholder's assistant, Martin Abegg, however, had access to Strugnell's unpublished Dead Sea Scroll concordance and from which, with great ingenuity, he reconstructed various, unpublished Dead Sea Scroll texts. Abegg, who formerly, had been Emanuel Tov's student/protégé at Jerusalem's Hebrew University happened to meet Tov at a conference where Tov greeted Abegg cryptically, saying "*banim giddalti v'romamti*," i.e., "I reared children and brought them up." At a loss for words, Abegg gave him an uncertain "thank-you." That evening, in Isaiah, chapter 1, he located the rest of the verse: "*v'hem pash'u bi*," "but they have rebelled against me."

Icing the cake was William Moffett of the Huntington Library. The Huntington Library had on microfilm the unpublished text which had been deposited with this institution as a security measure should the originals be lost. Since the Huntington Library had never signed a secrecy agreement, Moffat made the decision to go ahead and release its copy of the unpublished scrolls. This act, headlined in *The New York Times*, September 21, 1991, made news around the world.

With the cat out of the bag, one might have thought that the Israeli department of Antiquities at this point would have pulled in its horns but, no, ungracious to the end, on October 22, it announced its intention to grant permission only to approved scholars to access its official photos of the scrolls and then only if they agreed not to publish their findings! Trumping that decision, Hershal Shanks, November 20<sup>th</sup>, published Eisenman's photos in *A Facsimile Edition of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, co-edited by James M. Robinson. Finally, winding up 40 years of obstructionism, Emanuel Tov conceded defeat, November 25<sup>th</sup>, at annual

meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in Kansas City, MO, where he announced the lifting of all publication restrictions. The Society of Biblical Literature itself passed a resolution upholding the principle that all scholars should be afforded access to facsimile reproductions of all ancient manuscripts and with no restrictions on publication. None of these fine declarations, however, stopped Shanks and the Huntington Library from being sued for a 100,000 shekels. At least the scholastic logjam dating back to 1952 had been broken. And so concluded a tawdry tale.

Now that Dead Sea Scroll *Testimonia* is in the public domain, we can start to do comparisons, for instance, comparing 4Q525 (Cave 4, fragment 525) with Matthew 5:3-11. Readily apparent is how the language of this scroll corresponds to that of the Beatitudes:

Blessed the man who has attained Wisdom and walks in the law of the Most High/. . . [Blessed is he who speaks truth] with a pure heart and who does not slander with his tongue/. . . Blessed is he who seeks (Wisdom) with pure hands and who does not go after her with a deceitful heart . . .

Other examples of messianic passages from texts from cave 4, followed by an in-depth look at 4Q175, otherwise known as 4Q*Testimonia*:

***Isaiah Peshet*** [commentary] (4Q161)

The interpretation of the word [as in Isaiah 11:1-5] concerns the Shoot of David which will sprout in the final days, since with the breath of his lips he will execute his enemies, and God will support him with the spirit of courage . . . He will rule over all the peoples and Magog.

***Messianic Florilegium*** (4Q174)

He is the Branch of David who shall arise with the Interpreter of the Law [to rule] in Zion [at the end] of time. As it is written, I will raise up the tent of David that is fallen [Amos 9:11]. That is to say, the Fallen Tent of David is he who shall arise to save Israel.

***Messianic Anthology*** (4Q175)

I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren. I will put my words in his mouth and he shall tell them all that I command him. A Star [prophetic teacher] shall come out of Jacob and a Scepter [messianic King] shall rise out of Israel.

***Aramaic Apocalypse or Daniel Apocalypse*** (4Q246)

. . . he will be a great [king] over the [whole] earth . . . [all mankind] will serve [him]. The son of God he will be proclaimed and the son of the Most High they will call him. Like the sparks of the vision, so will be their kingdom. They will reign for years on the earth and they will trample all. People will trample people and one province another province until the people

of God will arise and all will rest from the sword. Their kingdom will be an eternal kingdom and all their path will be in truth. They will jud[ge] the earth in truth and all will make peace. The sword will cease from the earth, and all the provinces will pay homage to them. The Great God is their helper. He will wage war for them. He will give peoples into their hands and all of them (the peoples) He will cast before them. Their dominion will be an eternal dominion and all the boundaries of... (Geza Vermes, *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*.)

**Genesis Pesher** [commentary] (4Q252) [On *Genesis 49:10*]

A sovereign shall not be removed from the tribe of Judah.  
While Israel has the dominion, there will not lack someone who sits on  
the throne of David.  
For the staff is the covenant of royalty, the thousands of Israel are the feet ...  
Until the Messiah of Righteousness comes, the Branch of David.  
For to him and to his descendants has been given the covenant of royalty  
over his people for all everlasting generations. . . .

**4QWar Scroll** (4Q285)

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse [. . .] the Branch of David and they  
will enter into judgment with [. . .] the Prince of the Congregation, the Br[anch of David] will  
kill him.

**Prayer of Enosh** (4Q369)

You have made clear to him your good judgments . . . in eternal light.  
And you made him a First-born Son to you . . .  
like him for a Prince and Ruler in your earthly land.  
. . . the crown of the heavens and the glory of the clouds [you] have set on him . . .

**Messianic Apocalypse** (Resurrection Text) (4Q521)

. . . [the hea]vens and the earth will listen to His Messiah, and none therein will stray from the  
commandments of the holy ones. Seekers of the Lord, strengthen yourselves in His service!  
All you hopeful in your heart, will you not find the Lord in this? For the Lord will consider  
the pious and call the righteous by name. Over the poor His spirit will hover and will renew  
the faithful with His power. And He will glorify the pious on the throne of the eternal Kingdom.  
He who liberates the captives, restores sight to the blind, straightens the b[ent]. And f[or]  
ever I will clea[ve to the h]opeful and in His mercy...And the fr[uit...] will not be delayed for  
anyone. And the Lord will accomplish glorious things which have never been as. . . For He  
will heal the wounded, and revive the dead and bring good news to the poor.

***Elect of God*** (4Q534 or 4QMess ar)

He is the Elect One of God. His birth and the exhalation of his breath [are from God].  
... his plans will last for ever.

***Aaronic Text*** (or Words or Testament of Levi) (4Q541)

He will atone for all the children of his generation,  
and he will be sent to all the children of his people.  
His word is like the word of the heavens,  
and his teaching, according to the will of God.  
His eternal sun will shine  
and his fire will burn in all the ends of the earth;  
above the darkness his sun will shine.  
Then darkness will vanish from the earth, and gloom from the globe.

*In further consideration of 4Q175:*

A well-preserved manuscript, 4Q175 consists of a single page only, missing, however, a small portion of the lower, bottom, right-hand corner. It contains four biblical quotes, each one set off from the other by spaces and hook-shaped symbols.

I: *Deuteronomy 18:18-19*

II: *Numbers 24:15-17;*

III: *Deuteronomy 33:8-11*

IV: *Joshua 6:26* accompanied by a brief commentary.

1. The eschatological prophet:

I YHVH will raise up for them a prophet like you [Moses] from among their kinsmen,  
and will put my words into his mouth; he shall tell them all that I command him.

2. "a star from Jacob," i.e., the eschatological king:

Then Balaam gave voice to his oracle: The utterance of Balaam, son of Beor, the utterance of the man whose eye is true, the utterance of one who hears what God says, and knows what the Most High knows, of one who sees what the Almighty sees, enraptured and with eyes unveiled. I see him, though not now; I behold him, though not near: A star shall advance from Jacob, and a staff shall rise from Israel, that shall smite the brows of Moab, and the skulls of all the Shuthites,

3. The eschatological high priest:



And of Levi he said, "Your Thummim and Urim belong to the man you favored. You tested him at Massah; you contended with him at the waters of Meribah. He said of his father and mother, 'I have no regard for them.' He did not recognize his brothers or acknowledge his own children, but he watched over your word and guarded your covenant. He teaches your precepts to Jacob and your law to Israel. He offers incense before you and whole burnt offerings on your altar. Bless all his skills, O YHWH, and be pleased with the work of his hands. Smite the loins of those who rise up against him; strike his foes till they rise no more."

4. A savior figure, an eschatological Joshua, the messiah who makes war:

At the moment when Joshua finished praising and giving thanks with his psalms, he said "Cursed be the man who rebuilds this city! Upon his first-born will he found it, and upon his benjamin will he erect its gates! [Joshua 6:26]. And now an accursed man, one of Belial, has arisen to be a fowler's trap for his people and ruin for all his neighbors . . . will arise, to be the two instruments of violence. And they will build [. . . er] in Israel, and a horror in Ephraim and Judah. . . . wi]ll commit a profanation in the land and a great blasphemy among the sons of ... [... blood like water upon the ramparts of the daughter of Zion and in the precincts of Jerusalem.

(F. Garcia Martinez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated*, 1994)

Compare this then to the four craftsmen of *Zechariah*, chapter 1:

And YHWH shewed me four carpenters. Then said I, What come these to do?  
And he spake, saying, ... these are come ... to cast out the horns of the Gentiles,  
which lifted up their horn over the land of Judah to scatter it.

Various answers regarding the identity of the four craftsmen (or, as it were, carpenters) appear in Judaism, as for example, in *Pesiqta Rabbati 15:14-15*:

R. Isaac said, "It is written: And the Lord showed me four craftsmen (Zech 2:3).  
These are they Elijah, the king Messiah, Melchizadek and the War Messiah.

Another variant, as found in *Suk 52b*, *Seder Eliyahu Rabbah 96*, and *Yalqut Shim'oni*:

And the Lord showed me four craftsmen (Zech 2:3). Who are these four craftsmen?  
Rav Hana bar Bizna said in the name of Rav Shimon Hasida: "Messiah ben David,  
Messiah ben Joseph, Elijah, and the Righteous Priest."

One point of observation: long ago Judaism assigned an eschatological meaning to the verse about the four craftsmen. Another point of interest has to do with Joshua's role as "savior" and messianic prefigurement. Pursuing the latter point further, let us consult Robert

Kraft, a scholar whose monograph on the subject, originally published in 1962, but updated in 1992, titled "Ioudaios," remains as an authoritative statement on the subject. From it, I quote:

I would like to summarize for you here the tentative results of a rather long and involved search that I embarked upon over three decades ago, with special focus not only on the specific items of data but also on the complex methodological issues involved. The question that intrigued me is indicated by the title of this presentation: was there a pre-Christian Jewish expectation of a "messiah-Joshua" figure? The methodological conundrum presented by such a query should be fairly obvious: once we have Christians proclaiming that their Joshua/Jesus is Messiah and defending the claim in part with reference to Jewish traditions it is difficult to determine from the data that has survived by means of the Christian transmission filters whether such a picture of a Joshua/Jesus Messiah is a Christian creation or not. And most of the data has come to us by means of the Christian filtering process. Thus many of the clearest pieces of evidence are among the most suspect.

The pre-Christian data that relate, or might be made to relate, to this picture are of both a general and a specific sort, and include:

- - evidence of a relatively old depiction of Joshua/Jesus as the expected successor and "prophet like Moses" (Dt 18.15); ..... in the Book of the Exodus, it was similarly proclaimed through Moses and we have understood that the name of God himself was also "IHSOUS", which it says had not been revealed either to Abraham or to Jacob. And thus it is said: "The Lord said to Moses, tell this people `Behold I am sending my "ANGEL" before you, to guard you in the way that he might lead you into the land which I have prepared for you [Ex 23.20f.]. Heed him and obey him, don't disobey him, for he won't forsake you, for my "NAME" is on him.'
- - evidence that Joshua/Jesus somehow fits into the developing pattern or patterns of "two messiahs," one a military (later royal) savior and the other priestly, like Moses and Aaron. A Samaritan tradition designates Joshua/Jesus as the "scepter" that "arises" and the priest Phineas as the "star" in the "star and scepter" dyad of Balaam's oracle in Num 24.17. This material is complicated all the more by the appearance later in Jewish biblical tradition (Zech 1-6) of a high priestly Joshua/Jesus, side by side with a royal "messianic" counterpart (Zech 4.14), opposed by Satan (3.1) and somehow connected or identified with the figure of one called "branch" or (in Greek) "rising" = "NATOLH" (3.8, 6.12); . . .
- - evidence of connections between the Joshua/Jesus conflict with Amalek and the development of the idea of a dying Messiah son of Ephraim and/or Joseph, where in the last days God's agent finally and completely overcomes Amalek/Satan and then dies. Note that the Joshua/Jesus who first confronted Amalek in the pentateuchal tradition is described as an Ephraimite (Nm 13.8), and the Joshua/Jesus of Zechariah's

vision(s) is introduced as in conflict with Satan; - - evidence of apocalyptic associations between a future heroic figure and heavenly portents (sun and moon motionless) or connections (the east = the arising one) similar to those noted in some of the Joshua/Jesus traditions in the Hexateuch (Josh 10.12ff), in Zechariah (3.8, 6.12) and perhaps elsewhere.

It might also prove interesting to test the possibility of such a Joshua/Jesus messianology hovering somewhere in the background of certain Qumran passages. "4Q Testimonia" in particular is intriguing with its juxtaposition of the Mosaic prophet passage from Dt 18.15 (and in a "Samaritan" text form -- cf. Ex 20.21), the star & scepter oracle from Nu 24.15ff, a portion from the Blessing on Levi in Dt 33.8ff, and a passage from the 4Q Psalms of Joshua" material dealing with Joshua's curse on Jericho (= Jerusalem ?; compare Cyril of Jerusalem). Similarly, the "star & scepter" testimony is given in the War Scroll in the context of the final battle between the forces of God and the evil world dominion (cf 1QM 11.6ff). It may well be that the similarities suggested above are purely coincidental, but one can only determine this by a serious grappling with the available evidence.

As we see from the above, those valuing the witness of history are confronted with a curious circumstance, that predating Christianity, there existed amongst the Jews a highly-developed Christology:

For the Word is the eldest-born image of God. This same Word both pleads with the immortal as supplant for afflicted mortality and acts as ambassador of the ruler to the subject. He glories in this prerogative and proudly described it in these words 'and I stood between the Lord and you.' (Deut. v. 5), that is neither uncreated as God, nor created as you, but midway between the two extremes, a surety to both sides; to the parent pledging the creature that it should never altogether rebel against the rein and choose disorder rather than order; to the child, warranting his hopes that the merciful God will never forget His own work. For I am the harbinger of peace to creation from that God whose will is to bring wars to an end, who is ever the guardian of peace. But if there be any as yet unfit to be called a Son of God, let him press to take his place under God's First born, the Word, who holds the eldership among the angels, their ruler as it were. And many names are His, for he is called "the Beginning," and the Name of God, and His Word, and the Man after His Image, and "he that sees," that is Israel. (Judaeus Philo)

If one didn't know any better, one's inclination might be to suspect that Philo, a well-known, 1<sup>st</sup> century, Alexandrian Jew, had lifted from the apostle Paul his material relating to the existence of a messianic mediator between Man and God. As well, he might be accused of having plagiarized from the author of *John's Gospel*, concerning the Messiah being God's Word. But there's this one fact needing to be taken into account, Philo died in 50 AD, and probably wrote the above statements decades beforehand. In other words, Philo, not the apostle or evangelist, had the priority. Credit be given where credit is due.

In our day, one could easily forget how passionate messianic Judaism could be and though it would seem that the fires of faith are banked and burn low, yet the Jewish people hope against hope. The twelfth of Moses Maimonides' thirteen principles yet resonates in Jewish hearts

I believe with complete faith in the coming of the Messiah, and even though he may delay, nevertheless I anticipate every day that he will come.

Not that there isn't much ambivalence as well. One can understand why. Having fallen for two false Messiahs: Bar Kokhba in 135 AD and, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century AD, Sabbetai Tzvi, Jews these days, generally speaking, would rather think about something else more pleasant. But, thanks to Zionism, the nightmare begins anew. It's not just idle chatter, this business of rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem, is well past the planning stage. All the paraphernalia necessary to such a venture, the robes, the furnishings, have been collected, and servants trained in their duties to carry out animal sacrifices, are at the ready. All is in readiness, waiting only for the Muslim's Dome of the Rock to be blasted to smithereens so that Temple construction can get underway. Circumstances are ripe for the "messiah" to reveal himself, so that the work can be authorized. So what does the good doctor have to say by way of advice regarding these matters? Wrote Dr. Maimonides:

The anointed King is destined to stand up and restore the Davidic Kingdom to its antiquity, to the first sovereignty. He will build the Temple in Jerusalem and gather the strayed ones of Israel together. All laws will return in his days as they were before: Sacrificial offerings are offered and the Sabbatical years and Jubilees are kept, according to all its precepts that are mentioned in the Torah.

Maimonides adopted an experimental if-it-works-it-works, if-it-doesn't-work-it-doesn't-work approach:

Do not imagine that the anointed King must perform miracles and signs and create new things in the world or resurrect the dead and so on. The matter is not so: For Rabbi Akiva was a great scholar of the sages of the Mishnah, and he was the assistant-warrior of the king Bar Kokhba, and claimed that he was the anointed king. He and all the Sages of his generation deemed him the anointed king, until he was killed by sins; only since he was killed, they knew that he was not. The Sages asked him neither a miracle nor a sign. . . . And if a king shall stand up from among the House of David, studying Torah and indulging in commandments like his father David, according to the written and oral Torah, and he will coerce all Israel to follow it and to strengthen its weak points, and will fight Hashem's [God's] wars, this one is to be treated as if he were the anointed one. If he succeeded {and won all nations surrounding him. Old prints and mss.} and built a Holy Temple in its proper place and gathered the strayed ones of Israel together, this is indeed the anointed one for certain, and he will mend the entire world to worship the Lord together, as it is stated: "For then

I shall turn for the nations a clear tongue, to call all in the Name of the Lord and to worship Him with one shoulder (Zephaniah 3:9).

But if he did not succeed until now, or if he was killed, it becomes known that he is not this one of whom the Torah had promised us, and he is indeed like all proper and wholesome kings of the House of David who died. The Holy One, Blessed Be He, only set him up to try the public by him, thus: "Some of the wise men will stumble in clarifying these words, and in elucidating and interpreting when the time of the end will be, for it is not yet the designated time." (Daniel 11:35). (*Hilkhot Melakhim Umilchamoteihem*, chapter 11)

There's not much in the way of guidance here for the perplexed or for anyone else, just a shrug and a sigh and a "but if you succeed not" because probably you won't. What Maimonides didn't know, what rabbinic Judaism doesn't to this day know, is the *Testimonia*. As a result, their pretender Messiah will ignite a conflagration that will set the world on fire.

In conclusion, the Dead Sea Scrolls have definitely reignited interest in the *Testimonia*:

. . . it is relevant to our enquiry to ask whether we are to imagine the Christians of the New Testament period . . . using 'testimony books' – anthologies of such Old Testament passages as were regarded as significant for Christians. J. Rendel Harris (1916, 1920) answered in the affirmative. Working back from Cyprian's book of testimonies (*Testimoniorum libri III ad Quirinum*, c. and observing such phenomena as the juxtaposition of the stone passages' from Isa. viii and xxviii in Rom. X and I Pet. ii, he suggested that the evidence pointed to the very early use of such testimony books. More recently C. H. Dodd, followed by J. W. Doeve and others, argued that the New Testament data would be satisfied by postulating simply that, without necessarily using written anthologies at all, the Christians learnt to use whole sections of scripture in the light of the events they had experienced, and that these sections thus came to be associated together in their minds and on their lips. It is difficult . . . to see, *prima facie*, any reason why written collections should not also have been in circulation, especially in view of the Qumran 'florilegium' and messianic 'testimonia', . . .

(C. F. D. Moule, *The Birth of the New Testament*, third ed.)

#### **NONSENSE IS LIONIZED, TRUTH IS LEFT AS AN ORPHAN**

"The Testimony Book is a partially confirmed hypothesis which disappointingly explains little or nothing."

(Robert Horton Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel*)

Illustrating how poor a reception Christendom's all-time most distinguished scholar was getting in America, in 2004 I applied for an inter-library loan in Washington State for Harris's two volume *Testimonia*. Volume I came from Texas, volume II, from Illinois. Fortunately they are now available in reprint but not long ago they were not to be had this side of the Mississippi. Harris found a ready reception from other first-rate scholars of his day: Mouton, Burkitt, for example, but not from "Establishment" scholars. When not ignoring

him entirely, they have shown Harris at best a wary regard. Take Brevard Childs for example, in his 1992 book, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments*, he wrote:

In 1916 J. Rendel Harris (*Testimonies*) put forth a bold thesis regarding the use of the Old Testament by the church which initiated a lengthy debate, especially within the English-speaking world. His was one of the first attempts to use the form of Old Testament citations as a tool to recover the different strata within the early church's proclamation. Harris argued that there was an early Christian collection of Old Testament texts which had been organized for the use of Christian apologists and that this collection antedated every canonical writing. Of course, if this thesis could have been proved, it would have provided the earliest literary product of the church, and established a starting point for all subsequent development of early Christian proclamation.

Except for his use of the subjunctive "if this thesis could have been proved," his summation of Harris' contribution seems accurate enough and, perhaps, if a bit begrudgingly, even laudatory. But Childs then immediately goes on to chide Harris:

However, Harris' theory of a literary collection of 'testimonies' has not stood up well, and following the detailed scrutiny of C.H. Dodd, has been generally abandoned.

This is high-level academic sniping. So far from having "abandoned" the *Testimonia* concept, C. H. Dodd, Professor Emeritus in the University of Cambridge, albeit throwing in a small caveat or two, embraced it, as a close reading of his 1953 book, *According to the Scriptures: the Substructure of New Testament Theology*, reveals. As Dodd wrote:

It was suggested long ago that the phenomena of scriptural quotation in the New Testament might be accounted for by the hypothesis that a collection of "messianic proof-texts" was compiled at a very early date, and that this was used by New Testament writers. The hypothesis was worked out most elaborately by Rendel Harris, first in a series of articles, which were subsequently published, with additional matter, in two slim volumes entitled "*Testimonies*" (1916, 1920).

Harris's argument started from two ends. First, we have a volume under the name of Cyprian entitled *Testimonial*, containing just such a collection, organized and classified for the use of Christian apologists. It is easy to see that Cyprian is little more than an editor who revised and enlarged an earlier work. Harris showed abundantly how substantial portions of the classified collection can be recognized in such earlier writers as Tertullian, Irenaeus and Justin.

At the other end, we have the New Testament itself, where Harris noted certain points: in particular certain passages tend to be quoted by more than one writer; when they are so quoted, the said writers not infrequently agree in a reading different from that of the LXX, as if they were using in common a different translation, though such translation can seldom be identified, except in so far as some of these peculiar renderings reappear in the later versions of Aquila or Theodotion;

certain passages tend to appear in combination in more than one New Testament book, suggesting that two or more authors took them from a source in which they were already combined; and this suggestion is all the stronger where it appears that a writer has inadvertently attributed two passages from different authors to the same author, as for example Mark (i.2-3) gives a composite citation from Malachi and Isaiah and attributes the whole to Isaiah, an error which might easily arise if he were drawing the quotations not from copies of the books in question, but from an anthology which gave the two prophecies together; groups of passages tend to recur, connected by some key word or idea, e.g. various passages which speak of a stone — the stone which the builders rejected, the corner-stone of Zion, the stone of stumbling, and Daniel's stone cut without hands, which overthrew the great image and ground it to powder. Such groupings seem to anticipate the classification of testimonies in Cyprian and others, where we find, e.g. the passages just referred to under the catch heading "*Quod idem (Jesus) Lapis dictus sit.*"

Harris drew the conclusion that the original Book of Testimonies was, if not the earliest literary product of the Church, at least one of the earliest, antedating every canonical writing, and that its compiler was Matthew the Apostle; and he adopted from F. C. Burkitt the suggestion that it was this compilation which Papias meant when he said that "Matthew composed the Logia." The subsequent fortunes of this most important book he was able, with his immense and curious learning, to trace through innumerable writings, in various languages, of the patristic period, showing that it was used, re-edited and enlarged constantly throughout this period; and he even ventured to identify a sixteenth century MS. preserved on Mount Athos, containing a work against the Jews in five books which consists mainly of a collection of Testimonies, and is attributed to "Matthew the Monk," as a late form of the primitive Testimony-book, with the name of its true author confusedly preserved. This final stage of the argument, I fancy, no one, perhaps not even Harris himself, took very seriously. [I have heard him whimsically parody his own methods with an apparent seriousness which imposed upon some of his hearers.] But the main theory commanded wide attention and gained the assent of many scholars. In fact it may be said that in Great Britain at least Rendel Harris's book was the starting point of modern study of the use of the Old Testament in the New. It has, I believe, been assumed by most recent British writers that some such anthology of quotations was actually in existence at an early period, and that its use by New Testament writers is the best explanation of the phenomena before us.

This above, I would say, represents a huge concession, if not outright endorsement on Dodd's part of the *Testimonia* concept. What Dodd takes exception to is the large role attributed to the apostle Matthew; also, in granting prominence to one official version. Whatever Matthew's role, the point is well taken, as the Dead Sea Scrolls demonstrate, the *Testimonia* was a work-in-progress, with Jewish scribes producing various versions of the *Testimonia*, as well, the Nazarenes, as well the Church. Dodd goes on to write:

For myself, I worked with Harris's hypothesis for many years. Many of the observations which I have already made, and shall make, I owe originally to the study of his work. But I have come to think that his theory outruns the evidence, which is not sufficient to prove so formidable a literary enterprise at so early a date. Indeed, if such a work existed, was known to be the work of an apostle, and was held in such high esteem that Paul, the author to the Hebrews, the evangelists, the author of Acts, and one after another of the early patristic writers made it their *vade mecum*, it is scarcely to be understood that it should have been omitted from the Canon, should never be referred to, unless in Papias's enigmatic note, and should not have emerged into the light of day, as a substantive work, until Cyprian edited it in the middle of the third century.

. . . the selection and presentation of *testimonial* was not a static achievement, but a process, and one which continued well through the New Testament period and beyond. But in most of the cases we have examined there seemed to be good reason to infer that the first step, at least, had been taken by the Church at a very early stage indeed, often demonstrably earlier than the epistles of Paul. At the earliest period of Church history to which we can gain access, we find in being the rudiments of an original, coherent and flexible method of biblical exegesis which was already beginning to yield results. If we ask further questions about the actual beginnings of the process, we are on much more uncertain ground, but some degree of controlled conjecture may be allowed. It must be conceded that we have before us a considerable intellectual feat.

The various scriptures are acutely interpreted along lines already discernible within the Old Testament canon itself or in pre-Christian Judaism — in many cases, I believe, lines which start from their first, historical, intention — and these lines are carried forward to fresh results.

Very diverse scriptures are brought together so that they interpret one another in hitherto unsuspected ways. To have brought together, for example, the Son of Man who is the people of the saints of the Most High, the Man of God's right hand, who is also the vine of Israel, the Son of Man who after humiliation is crowned with glory and honour, and the victorious priest-king at the right hand of God, is an achievement of interpretative imagination which results in the creation of an entirely new figure. It involves an original, and far-reaching, resolution of the tension between the individual and the collective aspects of several of these figures, which in turn makes it possible to bring into a single focus the "plot" of the Servant poems of II Isaiah, of the psalms of the righteous sufferer, and of the prophecies of the fall and recovery (death and resurrection) of the people of God, and finally offers a fresh understanding of the mysterious imagery of apocalyptic eschatology.

This is a piece of genuinely creative thinking. Who was responsible for it? The early Church, we are accustomed to say, and perhaps we can safely say no more. But creative thinking is rarely done by committees, useful as they may be for systematizing the fresh ideas of individual thinkers,



and for stimulating them to further thought. It is individual minds that originate. Whose was the originating mind here? . . . the New Testament itself avers that it was Jesus Christ Himself who first directed the minds of His followers to certain parts of the scriptures as those in which they might find illumination upon the meaning of His mission and destiny. That He formally set before them a comprehensive scheme of biblical interpretation, after the manner of Lk. xxiv. 25-27, 44-45, we may well hesitate to believe; but I can see no reasonable ground for rejecting the statements of the Gospels that (for example) He pointed to Psalm cx as a better guide to the truth about His mission and destiny than the popular beliefs about the Son of David, or that He made that connection of the "Lord" at God's right hand with the Son of Man in Daniel which proved so momentous for Christian thought; or that He associated with the Son of Man language which had been used of the Servant of the Lord, and employed it to hint at the meaning, and the issue, of His own approaching death. To account for the beginning of this most original and fruitful process of rethinking the Old Testament we found need to postulate a creative mind. The Gospels offer us one. Are we compelled to reject the offer?

In imaginative reconstructions of the first age of the Church we have often been presented with the picture of a group of puzzled Galileans huddled together for mutual support and encouragement, and coming to form one of the many groups or sects within the Jewish community, without any idea that they were anything more, until with the gradual emergence of other similar groups a kind of *esprit de corps* arose, and persecution drove them into closer association, and so by degrees they achieved a doctrine of the one Church, as it meets us, for example, in the Epistle to the Ephesians. A study of the primitive *testimonia* shows that this picture is out of focus. From as early a stage as we can hope to reach (presupposed already by Paul) the primitive Christians were aware that they belonged to the new "Israel of God," which had emerged, as the prophets had always said it would, out of judgment and disaster. It was the true *ecclesia*, or people of God, by definition single and unique, one in all the earth. The universality of the ultimate people of God is an integral feature of the final *denouement* in various prophetic passages, notably in those of Joel, Zechariah, and II Isaiah. If the precise position of Gentile believers in the Church was at first somewhat ambiguous, this ambiguity is already present in the prophecies. Paul forced the Church to draw the logical conclusions from its doctrine of the new "eschatological" Israel, but it is highly improbable that he invented that doctrine.

If then the whole episode of the beginnings of Christianity is to be understood, as the first Christians understood it, in the light of prophecy, what happened was that the existing Jewish community ceased to represent the true Israel of God, as the embodiment of His purposes for mankind, and its place was taken by the Christian *ecclesia*.

## EXTRACTS FROM MELITO'S TESTIMONY BOOK

One of the prophets said: "Lord, bend the heavens and come down to us" (Isaiah lxiv. 1). One said: "O thou that sittest upon the cherubim show thyself to us, stir up they might, and come for our salvation" (Psalm lxxx. 1). And one of them said: "There is no intercessor and no king, but the Lord will come and save us. Another prophesied, saying: "The Lord sent his word and healed us from our toil and saved us." (Psalm cvii. 20). Another prophesied, saying openly: "He shall come and shall not tarry" (Habakkuk ii.3). The prophet David prophesied, saying: "Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord: God is the Lord and he hath appeared unto us" (Psalm cxviii. 26, 27). He said also: "The Lord shall come and shall not keep silence; fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him" (Psalm 1. 3)

"His name shall be blessed forever; His name endures before the sun and moon throughout all ages." (Psalm lxxii). About whom among men did God's prophet prophesy, or, among the kings of the earth, whose name is blessed among the nations? Or whose name endures before the sun and before the moon, save the Christ the Word and the Light of God.

Zachariah the prophet prophesied by the Holy Ghost, saying: Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold! Thy King cometh unto thee, riding upon an ass and her foul. The Christ came in, when he entered the Holy City, sitting upon an ass, on the day of the palm trees. The children of Israel met him with olive trees and palm branches, with their wives and children. The babes and sucklings adored him, saying: Hosanna to the Son of David: Hearest thou not what these say, doth not their saying exalt when they adore thee as God is adored? The Christ said to them: Have ye not read in the psalms of the prophet David what he said by the Holy Ghost, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast foreordained thy praise? This is the eighth psalm.

Concerning Judas who betrayed him, Amos (v. 12) prophesied, the oppressor of the righteous has taken a bribe. And Zechariah (xii. 12): If it be pleasing in your eyes, give me my price; and if not, you defraud me: and they weighed me thirty pieces of silver, and I took the thirty pieces of silver and cast them into the treasury. And Jeremiah said: And they gave me the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the valued one, whom they valued from the sons of Israel, and I gave them for the potter's field. And Isaiah (iii.10) said: Woe to the wicked: because the evil of the work of their hands shall be recompensed. And David (Psalm lxxviii): Command evil upon him (Psalm cix: 8) and his dwellings and ministry let another take. And Solomon (Proverbs vi:12, 13) says: A foolish person: a wicked man walks in slander: and he makes signs with his eyes and strikes with his fist. And Moses (Deuteronomy xxvii: 25) says: Cursed is everyone that taketh a bribe to kill the soul of the righteous.

For this was He Who was Pilot to Noah; Who conducted Abraham; Who was bound with Isaac; Who was in exile with Jacob; Who was the Divider of the inheritance with Jesus the son of Nun . . .

## THE INFLUENCE OF THE TESTIMONIA ON THE GOSPEL TEXT

If the Testimony Book is really the earliest 'gospel describing the personality of Jesus in the words of the Old Testament', we can scarcely wonder that it influenced the Gospel-text. . . . we should be prepared to find it influencing the textual tradition of the Gospels as long as it remained side by side with the Gospels themselves.

(Bakker, *Amicitiae Corolla*)

The composite O.T. quotations in the N.T. as well as in early Christian literature from Barnabas and Melito to Cyprian's *Testimonia* especially, render it highly probable that *florilegia* and *catenae* of O.T. passages were in circulation. A pre-Christian origin for such excerpts is not impossible; the size of the O.T. would make it convenient for short manuals of this kind to be drawn up for the purpose of teaching and propaganda. But this need would be intensified when the controversy between Jews and Christians turned largely on the O.T. proof that Jesus was the true Messiah.

(Moffatt, *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*)

. . . it is obvious that a mere collection of prophecies would be of little use to the Christian until they had been brought into direct relationship with those episodes of our Lord's life which they were thought to prophesy. That is to say that the first step which the Christian teacher would take would be to illustrate the fulfilment of the prophecies in his Testimony Book by the stories of actual events known to his hearers (Acts ii. 22). These events were not narrated for the sake of their own particular interest, but in order to clinch an argument; and in course of time certain events would be 'married' to certain testimonies. Thus, in Acts ii. 16-35, St. Peter is described as first reciting a prophecy, and then showing how that prophecy had been fulfilled within the knowledge of his hearers; and it is only reasonable to suppose that others who were responsible for the teaching of the Faith followed his example. But if this supposition is correct the implications are enormous. For it means that from the very first there was a record of at least certain incidents connected with the life of our Lord (e.g. the one to which St. Peter referred) and possibly of a Passion story as full as that which we find in the Gospels. And when the official list of messianic prophecies was committed to writing, it would carry with it at least some of the incidents which had become attached to it; and such literature must have had an effect on the compilation of the Gospels, for none of the Evangelists could possibly have disregarded it.

The Apostolic Preaching connected incidents in the life of our Lord with certain definite messianic prophecies. This process was carried on by every primitive Christian preacher, so that in course of time there came into existence a storehouse of such incidents 'married' to some messianic prophecy. A primitive Testimony Book would provide the nucleus to which any incidents that seemed germane to some particular testimony would naturally gravitate. This may explain the fact that there are no extant stories about our Lord's early manhood; the Testimony Book did not provide hooks upon which to hang them, and the Gospel stories are related for evidential and not biographical reasons.

We have already seen that the Apostolic preaching was based upon the testimony principle, and in the analysis that follows Prof. Dodd continually lays stress upon the fact that our second Gospel corresponds with the primitive preaching (*Kerygma*) of the Apostles in that it emphasizes prophecy and its fulfilment. . . .

The problem before us is as to when and how those illustrations were first committed to writing and married to the prophecies which they were claimed as fulfilling. The moment that happened an embryo Gospel was formed, awaiting an Evangelist to bring it to birth.

The reason for the different arrangement and order in the various Gospels is most easily explained by the supposition that their original source had no distinct chronological order, but was fitted into a different kind of framework. That is to say that what would be a natural order for a Testimony Book (where kindred prophecies were grouped together under a common head) would not necessarily be the chronological order of their fulfilment; so that any description of the way in which some particular prophecy had been fulfilled might contain no note of time which would enable the Evangelist to place it in its proper chronological sequence, Therefore he would have to decide the correct position of any material which he drew from such a source by other considerations, . . .

I am not, of course, suggesting that all the Gospel material was derived from these illustrations to the Testimony Book, but that they set the ball rolling, so to speak, and any other incidents and discourses were fitted into the framework which the Testimony Book supplied. The converse is also probably true. Not everything connected with the Testimony Book found its way into the Gospels. There is the well known addition in Cod. W to the long ending of Mark (between verses 14 and 15), and the less well-known addition at the same place found in Cyril (Lect. xi. 3) –

They who know not are excusable; but ye, the Apostles, who have in My name cleansed lepers and cast out devils and raised the dead, ought not to be ignorant of Him for Whom ye do these wondrous works.

The statement of Papaïas is evidence that there was a more primitive document than Mark, and it is difficult to believe that St. Mark was unacquainted with it. (Hunt, *Primitive Gospel Sources*)

“The cloak that I [Paul] left at Troas with Carpus, when thou [Timothy] comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.” (II Timothy 4:13)

It [the *Testimonia*] was a *vade-mecum* [workbook] for teachers, and indeed for all who wished to answer objections made by Jews, and to win them to the true faith. . . . the early Church believed that they had supreme authority for their method in dealing with the Old Testament, and that this authority thus given to the method must have covered, in part, the matter and the arrangement. (J. R. Harris, *Testimonia II*)

## THE MAGI, HEROD AND MESSIANIC FULFILMENT

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, in Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, and thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshiped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. (*Matthew 2:1-12*)

The Magi were men wise in interpreting the stars, which meant either that they were astrologers or else astronomers, either or both. In our day we take our calendar for granted that we will know when to sow, when to harvest, when to mourn, when to celebrate, but it was not always so. In olden times the best minds were engaged in determining such matters. The Magi, being men of excellence, well-trained, careful observers, were the first of the Gentiles called by Jehovah to do the Messiah homage.

Isaiah speaks of the “procession of the nations to Zion” and the Magi, typifying Gentile seekers, were in the vanguard of that procession. Having seen his star in the east, they came to do the new-born king obeisance in the Oriental manner.

And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. . . . they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall show forth the praises of Jehovah. (*Isaiah 60:3, 6*)

Knowing that the one whom they sought to honor was born king of the Jews, the Magi, as seekers, did the logical thing, which is to say, they went to the capital city, to Jerusalem, probably supposing that a king would be found there.

The Magi went as Balaam’s successors. Balaam having been the Gentile prophet from Moses’s times who “saw that it pleased Jehovah to bless Israel and not, as at other times, to seek for enchantments” (*Numbers 24*). Balaam said prophetically:

"I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but he is not near: there shall come a star out of Jacob  
And a Scepter shall rise out of Israel; he shall slay the princes of Moab, and rule over all the children of  
men."  
(Numbers 24:17)

As did the Queen of Sheba who came to Jerusalem bearing gifts for King Solomon, so arrived the Magi to Jerusalem bearing precious gifts, this time, however, for one greater than Solomon, for this was the King of Kings whom they sought to honor, only, instead of being received with joy, there was consternation in Jerusalem, for:

When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

Of course Herod was troubled, being the pseudo-, usurper-king that he was; those type always hate what is real. Likewise the pseudo-religionists, the leaders of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, they were none too thrilled with the possibilities of *Micah 5:2* being fulfilled anytime too soon, no doubt, for fear what it might mean for their own power and authority.

As if he were Balak's successor, who sought to curse Israel, Herod sent forth agents to kill the Israel of God. Later, the religious Establishment, the leaders of the Pharisees and the Sadducees would do likewise. But as did Balaam, who frustrated the designs of Balak, so also did the three wise men, frustrate the designs of Herod by not reporting back to him as he demanded but they departed by another way, in obedience to Jehovah who did not turn their case over to an angel but who Himself gave them a dream as to what to do.

The Magi, obedient to the initial call of Jehovah, came from afar; and when they reached Jerusalem, they were obedient to the prophecy of *Micah 5:2*, that Jehovah's king would be born in Bethlehem; after which they "rejoiced with exceeding great joy" to see the star Jehovah sent to guide them; then, in Bethlehem, when they found mother and child, they fell down with foreheads pressed to the ground and worshiped Jehovah's son; and afterward, obedient to Jehovah's dream, they departed by another way. Insofar as Scripture informs us, they did all things well. We see how their search went not unrewarded. It was not a matter of always seeking but never finding, rather, with finding their hearts' desire:

"And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory,"  
saith Jehovah of hosts.  
(Haggai 2:7)

## DIALOGUE

A genre in its own right, or perhaps a sub-genre, since it is a spinoff from the *Testimonia*, the *dialogues* contained much the same kind of information as was found in the *Testimonia*, only couched in terms of a spirited debate between a believer and non-believer over the merits of Jesus' messianic claim with both parties resorting to holy Writ for support of their views. Whether such debates actually happened or whether this was merely a literary device, we cannot now say. The oldest dialogue we know of by name is *Jason and Papiscus*. Though its text perished long ago, even in a Latin translation by Celsus Afer, a preface to it remains; also, comments by those who were personally familiar with it. Of it Origen wrote:

A Christian disputes with a Jew on the basis of the Jewish Scriptures, and proves that the prophecies about the Messiah apply to Jesus, while his opponent in a gallant and not unequal manner plays the part of the Jew in the argument. (Origen, *Con. Cel.* IV. 52)

While the text of *Jason and Papiscus* is unavailable to us, other related texts from antiquity have survived. Belonging to this category: *Simon and Theophilus*, *Zacchaeus and Apollonius*, *Athanasius and Zacchaeus* and *Timothy and Aquila*. Though they often quoting the same Scripture verses in the same order and to the same end, yet none of them seem to have been derived from the other, which leads one reasonably to postulate that there must have been a source antecedent to them all and upon which all of them were dependent.

Falling into a somewhat different category is Justin Martyr's mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century *Dialogue with Trypho*. Though early and though covering much the same ground as the others, it differs from the aforementioned dialogues in that it quotes not only from the *Prophets* and from *Moses* but also from a gospel harmony to make its points. Also, it is more a monologue than it is a dialogue with the non-believing Jew lucky at best if he could get a word in edgewise. Therefore, we will lay aside consideration of Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho* as standing somewhat apart from the literary tradition we are considering here. In relating the dialogues to the *Testimonia* complex, F. C. Conybeare wrote:

In the absence of fuller knowledge of what was in Papiscus and Jason, it must remain a mere surmise that it was the basis of *Athanasius and Zacchaeus* and *Timothy and Aquila*. But I do not think it disputable that the document underlying these two dialogues was in the hands of Tertullian, coloring his works . . . ; that it also influenced, through some channel or other, Cyprian; . . . that it was also in the hands of Apollinarius and of the author of the pseudo-Gregorian *Testimonia*; and at an earlier time of Origen and perhaps of Irenaeus and Justin Martyr. Lastly, it unquestionably was in some form closely resembling Papiscus and Jason utilized by Maximus of Turin. . . . there is no convincing reason why 'Jason and Papiscus' should not have been a first century compilation.

If the Dialogue genre dates from the 1<sup>st</sup> century, then it could well be germane to our

understanding as to how the gospels were formed. But before getting down to cases, let us ask, for what purpose were new dialogues being written? Why didn't the Church Fathers stick with the original one? For one, it was between two Jews, whereas later dialogues involved an unbelieving Jew and a Gentile Christian. The *dialogue* format was more limiting than that of the *Testimonia* in that it was mainly focused on establishing Jesus' messianic claim, whereas in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century the main issue for the Church was to deal with heretical challenges as from Marcion or from certain Gnostics. Beyond that, the Church's Testimony Books delved off into various tangents to cover disputes over Mary's perpetual virginity, or Christ's two natures, or to inculcate a highly-developed Trinitarian theology.

Examples: whereas *Matthew 21:15* speaks of "children crying in the Temple," *Timothy and Aquila* instead of having this as referencing juveniles, has, instead, the Aramaic expression "the children of the Hebrews." Corroborating this reading the *Acts of Pilate* has Pilate's officer saying: "I saw him [Jesus] sitting on an ass, and the children of the Hebrews held branches in their hands and shouted ... Hosanna." Whereas the *Dialogue* speaks of olive branches, *John's Gospel* speaks of palm branches. Palms, being sub-tropical, did not grow in the immediate environs of Jerusalem but in Jericho. Maybe it was more a triumphal procession than just a triumphal entry. Another corroborative reading comes from an Arab tractate first published in 1898 which reads: "The children of Israel met Him [Jesus] with olive trees and palm branches with their wives and children." This type of corroboration, coming as it does from far disconnected sources, points to the survival of an ancient fund of apostolic writing not included in the *New Testament*. As Conybeare put it:

A document woven out of the canonical Gospels would not change the context of famous sayings of or about our Lord in the way in which the Gospel used by the author of the dialogue must have done.

Another example having to do with the mid-day darkness that descended on the crucifixion:

And once again there was light, as is written in Isaiah . . . and at eventide there shall be light.

This expansion, also found in Ephraim's commentary on the *Diatessaron*; also found in Latin codex *k*, is attributed to *Isaiah* but it comes, rather, from *Zechariah 14:7*. This is of a pattern, the *Testimonia* would string together quotes from diverse sources on a particular topic, with later copyists at times preserving only the first, most prominent attribution. Copyists, in trying to show fidelity to the text, often simply transcribed what was before them even if obviously flawed in grammar or, as above, providing a seemingly mistaken attribution. This conservative approach to manuscript copying is greatly beneficial to scholars today who would understand the history of the text. Thus we see, on occasion how incorrect *New Testament* attribution could have been derived from the *Testimonia*.



## A POSSIBLE CAUSE OF CHRONOLOGICAL DISCREPANCY

The Apostolic Preaching connected incidents in the life of our Lord with certain definite messianic prophecies. This process was carried on by every primitive Christian preacher, so that in course of time there came into existence a storehouse of such incidents 'married' to some messianic prophecy. A primitive Testimony Book would provide the nucleus to which any incidents that seemed germane to some particular testimony would naturally gravitate. This may explain the fact that there are no extant stories about our Lord's early manhood; the Testimony Book did not provide hooks upon which to hang them, and the Gospel stories are related for evidential and not biographical reasons.

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The statement of Papias is evidence that there was a more primitive document than Mark, and it is difficult to believe that St. Mark was unacquainted with it. (Hunt, *Primitive Gospel Sources*)



# The recording of mighty words, mighty deeds

Matthew, also called Levi, apostle and aforesaid publican, composed a gospel of Christ at first published in Judea in Hebrew for the sake of those of the circumcision who believed, but this was afterwards translated into Greek, though by what author is uncertain. The Hebrew itself has been preserved until the present day in the library at Cæsarea which Pamphilus so diligently gathered. I have also had the opportunity of having the volume described to me by the Nazarenes of Berœa, a city of Syria, who use it. In this it is to be noted that wherever the Evangelist, whether on his own account or in the person of our Lord the Saviour quotes the testimony of the Old Testament he does not follow the authority of the translators of the Septuagint but the Hebrew. Wherefore these two forms exist Out of Egypt have I called my son, and for he shall be called a Nazarene.

*(On Illustrious Men, ch. 3, Jerome)*

## CANONICITY

The restraint of revelation  
is the unheralded accomplishment  
of enduring religions.

Explanatory note:

In transcendence we go beyond,  
shifting context and meaning  
in the wake of revelations we experience.  
This is inherently disturbing or disrupting  
of the individual and societal status quo.

Thus a primary function of religions  
is to delimit transcendence and channel revelation,  
to prevent going beyond established boundaries  
of texts, creeds, interpretations, and performances.

In so doing, religions to some extent point their adherents  
away from raw encounters with the real mysteries,  
and away from greater revelations,  
while also protecting them from the attendant dangers of the divine wind.

(David Kailin)

## FACTORS DETERMINING THE CONTOURS OF THE NAZARENE BIBLE

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God shall stand for ever. (*Isaiah 40:8*)

A change of Scripture could signify, indeed, often does signify, a change of religions. For instance, the Samaritans have the Torah i.e., the five *Books of Moses*, plus *Joshua*. That is all. This, their canon, represents their understanding as to what constitutes God's standard for sacred literature. Rabbinical Judaism has the *Tenakh*, thirty-nine books consisting of *Torah* (Law), *Nevi'im* (Prophets), and *Ketuvim* (Writings); Orthodoxy has 75 books, consisting of testaments *Old* and *New*. (Included in this number are nine books, sometimes referred to as inter-testamental, deuterocanonical, or apocryphal, yet, in their view, are canonical); Catholicism has 73 books; Protestantism, 66; the Mormons, more than 80, while the Church in Ethiopia has two canons - one long, one short, and both uniquely its own.

If anything the Nazarene Scriptural canon is as distinct from those already mentioned as they are from each other. If we want to know more about the Nazarenes, we would do well to find out what they were reading - as well as what they were writing - as Scripture. But let us not suppose in the absence of an authoritative pronouncement from God (of which there is none) that they held hard-and-fast doctrinaire views. Because we simply do not have a "Thus saith the Lord" on the matter, personal discretion must necessarily come into play.

In part it is a matter of allegiance: the Samaritans look to Moses but not to David. The Jews look to David but not to Jesus; Christians generally look to the Jesus of the *New Testament* while Mormons look to all of the above, plus Joseph Smith and the *Book of Mormon*. But who has the right to determine which books are in and which are out? To say that it's self-evident or obvious when all the while thoughtful, well-educated people differ, is to fly in the face of the facts. The existence of competing canons is proof that no consensus exists.

Let us ask again, which Bible, whose Bible? To such Protestants as adhere to the swinging-door theory, that God closed the *Old Testament* canon 400 years before opening it again for the New, it will come as no small surprise to learn that the Nazarenes' canon of Scripture looked rather more like Orthodoxy's and Catholicism's than their own, which is to say that the inter-testamental concept so dear to Protestant theologians is a fictitious construct. (Evidence confirming this comes from J. Rendel Harris's recovery of Matthew's *Testimonia* demonstrating much Nazarene dependence on the so-called "deuterocanonical" books to establish Jesus' messianic claim.)

And what of this "deuterocanonical" business, a secondary canon. It's like being just a

little pregnant. Either one is pregnant or not pregnant. Either a book is inspired or not inspired. But let us take care not to call uninspired that which Jesus called inspired.

Even within Judaism, consensus in Jesus' day on the Bible's boundaries was not to be found for what the Sadducees in the Temple thought on the matter did not agree with what the Pharisees in the Synagogue thought, much less with what the Jews in Alexandria thought. As for the *Dead Sea Scrolls Bible* translators, they observed:

At the time of Jesus and rabbi Hillel – the origins of Christianity and rabbinic Judaism – there was, and there was not, a "Bible." . . . There was a Bible in the sense that there were certain sacred books widely recognized by the Jews as foundational to their religion and supremely authoritative for religious practice. There was not, however, a Bible in the sense that the leaders of the general Jewish community had specifically considered, debated, and definitively decided the full range of which books were supremely and permanently authoritative and which ones – no matter how sublime, useful, or beloved – were not.

In about 90 AD, the Rabbinical school in Jamnia is said to have rejected certain books, among others: *Ecclesiasticus*, *the Wisdom of Solomon* and the *Gilyonim* (the Aramaic gospels). Later, the entire *Septuagint* would be rejected. All of these writings helped to establish Jesus' messianic claim. Later, much later, in the 1880's AD, an abject, Judaizing Protestantism, embracing this rabbinical judgment, removed from their Bible the inter-testamental books, thereby largely conforming its *Old Testament* with that of the rabbinical *Tenach* while rejecting certain Scriptures recognized as valid by Jesus and his apostles.

Every communion takes pride in its own canon. How seriously is this taken? Very. For instance, a little known fact regarding the Bible's removal from American public schools: it did not happen, as one might suppose, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century due to a challenge from atheists or by the ACLU but in the 19<sup>th</sup> century due to a conflict between immigrant Catholics and Protestants in Boston. No room for compromise existed. No one wanted their child exposed to someone else's Bible, be it *King James* or *Douay*.

Is it possible to believe in God but not believe in God's miracle: a Bible perfectly preserved, complete, knowable?

(Miriam Weinstein, *A Nation of Words*)

Actually, living with ambiguity and uncertainty is far better than having the kind of cocksure, know-it-all certitude that commonly passes for biblical learning. Thus, in response to Miriam Weinstein's question, the answer is, unequivocally, yes! Only the compulsively anxious-minded would care to see the great, unfathomable ocean that is the Bible reduced to a "knowable" backwater which passes for fundamentalist biblicism. Typically, hierarchical de-

nominalism, be it rabbinical or churchly, does not encourage its communicants to think for themselves, which is why it defines minutely the doctrines that are to be believed and from which they are not to deviate. Yet it is a believer's prerogative to form his or her own opinions and change them as he or she grows. Thinking to clarify matters, organized religion only muddles them further by attempting, first, to narrowly define for their respective members what constitutes God's Word, then, compounding error with error, attempting to narrowly define its meaning. While this may help bind a communion's adherents together more tightly, it necessarily alienates all others whose scriptural canons or interpretations differ; it is a surefire recipe for division. The remedy is respect for individual judgment. If Jesus is the Truth, then the Bible is but the truth about the Truth, while our interpretation of the Bible is, at best, the truth about the truth about the Truth. To make a litmus test of our interpretation is to go the sectarian road.

To say, "God said it, I believe it, that settles it," settles nothing. Do we really know what God said? And if so, do we really know what He meant or how to apply the meaning correctly? Where then lies the path between denying altogether the possibility of identifying God-inspired books and dependance on a religious institution to define them for us? It would be for us to make this a matter of personal discovery, not by starting with a doctrinal claim, but with a question mark. After that, instead of expecting a once-for-all discovery, let's make of it an ongoing adventure, for only a personal, experiential approach can make the Bible come alive. Far better is it to form a point of view slowly, hesitantly, than smugly thinking it's all so simple and self-evident. Maybe it is not God's communicating inadequately, but our listening inattentively that is the source of misunderstanding, for, in substituting what is programmatic and mechanistic, do we not inadvertently tune out the Spirit? May we not lose sight of the vital good that Scripture can do us, for:

All scripture is inspired by God and can profitably be used for teaching, for refuting error, for guiding people's lives and teaching them to be holy. That is how the man who is dedicated becomes fully equipped and ready for any good work. (II Timothy 3:16-17)

#### THE NAZARENE BIBLE

... that the scriptures might be fulfilled. (John 17:22, see also Mark 14:49)

The gospels are integrally connected to a larger body of writing for sure, but the nature and extent of that connection (what might be termed a boundary issue), remains in certain respects uncharted territory for we have no "thus saith the Lord." Therefore, it is a matter of personal discretion. By appropriating such books as the *Wisdom of Solomon* and *Sirach*, for use in their *Testimonia*, the Nazarenes, beginning with Jesus, demonstrated that their Bi-

ble looked rather more like that used by Catholic and Orthodox Christianity, than it did that currently used by Protestant Christianity or by the Jews. But what of the “Old Testament”/ “New Testament” dichotomy? These are not legitimate terms, for just as there’s one Lord, one faith, one baptism, so is there one body of Scripture – not bifurcated, *Old* and *New*. For instance, without *Maccabees*, a regrettable historical gap exists, for Jesus kept Hanukkah (see *John 10:22-23*).

Conversely, propounding what is called the “swinging door theory,” various Protestant theologians have claimed that the door of Scripture opened with Moses but that it blew shut about 400 BC, only to swing back open for the *New Testament*, after which, presumably, it was shut for good. But Nazarenes, not knowing anything about such a theory, as do Orthodox, as do Roman Catholics, had available for their use the *Wisdom of Solomon*, a book Protestants dismiss as “inter-testamental or “deutero-canonical.” One passage in it reads:

Let us oppress the poor Righteous Man. . . . Let our strength be the law of righteousness, for that which is feeble is proved unprofitable. And let us lie in wait for the Righteous Man, for he is ill-profitable to us, and he opposeth our works, and he upbraideth us with sins of the law, and he allegeth against us sins of our discipline. He professeth to have the knowledge of God, and calleth himself the Lord’s son. He was made to reprove our thoughts. He is grieveth unto us even to behold, for his life is not like other men’s, and his ways are diverse. We are esteemed of him as base metal, and he abstaineth from our ways as from uncleannesses. He pronounceth the end of the righteous to be blessed, and boasteth that God is his father.

Let us see if his words be true: and let us tempt what [shall happen] in his outgoing. For if he is the Righteous Son of God, He will help him, and deliver him from the hand of his adversaries. Let us examine him with shameful treatment and torture, that we may learn his gentleness and judge his forbearance. Let us condemn him with a shameful death, for he shall be visited out of his own words.

These things they imagined, and they were deceived, for their own wickedness blinded them. And they knew not the mysteries of God, neither hoped they for the wages of holiness, nor discerned a reward for blameless souls. For God created the Man for incorruption and made him the image of His own being.

(*Wisdom of Solomon 2:10-23* +/-110 BC)

Protestants say that the New Testament created the Church. Conversely, Catholics say that the Church created the New Testament. While the evidence of history supports the Catholics’ claim, both parties, once they put on their New Testament blinders, are equally oblivious to their indebtedness to the Nazarenes or that outside their New Testament are writings, such as the *Odes of Solomon*, which are just as inspired as the ones in it.

While it is not necessarily what one believes but how one construes it that counts (which



is why good people are found spread liberally amongst all the various communions), seeing Jesus through the apostolic writings, rather than through a distorted *New Testament* lens, can only help. My intention is to make good the claim that with a deft hand, the Church subtly, but systematically, skewed Jesus' portrayal in its "canonical" gospels as one who was aloof not only from women in general, or from the Magdalene, in particular, but, as well from John the Baptizer, his own disciples, his family, his brother James, as well, his Jewish people. By gratuitously portraying a less human, less humane, more God-like Jesus who was often angry, arbitrary and enigmatic, the Church authorities cunningly increased their own latitude to act arbitrarily and capriciously. By confusing the time-line, they turned what had been a straightforward narrative accessible to laymen, into a never ending source of controversy for theologians. As well, it was no accident on the part of Church authorities to give Mary Magdalene and James the Just short shrift; it was all part of a bid to replace the original apostolic community with a Gentile organization intent on channeling the transcendent and taming it that its communicants might not come back with too many new understandings.

**AUTHORSHIP OF THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS  
(ABRIDGED)**

J. Rendel Harris

(Editors note: Adolph Harnack of Germany came up with a seemingly outlandish proposal that both scandalized and endeared him to the public, namely, that the author of The Epistle to the Hebrews was Priscilla. He claimed this would explain a certain tendency he detected in the Epistle to "femininize." J. Rendel Harris, who touched academic swords with Harnack on a regular basis, albeit in a collegial sort of way, responded with his own analysis of the Epistle. His analysis included a consideration of the Bible which the author of Hebrews was using, a matter of obvious application here, where the Protestant Bible is challenged as not being that of the apostles. Because in Harris's article the issues of authorship and canonicity are inextricably linked, I have included both, even though the principle issue here is that of canonicity. – (P. S. I have my own candidate for author and it's not Priscilla.)

I propose to approach this subject from two fresh points of view; first, by comparison with a similar roll of heroes elsewhere; second, by a more exact elucidation of the persons intended . . . We begin, then, by asking for a similar composition. For it is agreed on all hands that this is the meaning of Hebrews XI. It's watchword is Faith, but its subject is the praises of the elders. It is true that the roll-call is prefaced by a statement that the worlds were made by the word of God and that it is by faith that we understand this. But then this is preceded by the statement that "Faith is the mark of the men of old time"; so we see clearly

that the allusion to creation only means that the writer is turning the pages of his Bible for instances of faith, and recognizes in passing that even in Gen. 1:1 we find a place for faith, in the conviction that the Seen is the product of the Unseen. But this allusion is only there for the sake of literary completeness; it amounts to saying that we will search the Bible through for this thing, from Genesis to whatever was the last book in the writer's Old Testament. And as we are going to to examine the roll-call in Hebrews by the side of another famous roll-call, it will be necessary to find out, if possible, just what the last book in the writer's Bible was. And I think it is not difficult to see to see that it must have been the fourth book of Maccabees. The fourth book of Maccabees is not much read nowadays, and its authorship is unknown: for a time it passed under the name of Josephus, but it can easily be seen that such an eloquent treatise, with such flashing rhetoric, and such acquaintance with Stoic philosophy cannot have been the work of Josephus. Moreover, it must have been earlier. It is concerned with the praises of the mother and her seven sons who withstood the frown of Antiochus the tyrant and despised his laws. It tells of the triumph of reason over passion, and it glows with the hope of an immortal life beyond the pains of death or the tortures of the tyrant. The early Christian Church took over the Maccabees and set them amongst the saints, where the Greek Church still commemorates them, and this book, the so-called fourth of Maccabees, is the text book, as I suspect, of the primitive commemoration. When the writer of this book has described in detail the resistance which the Maccabees mother and her seven sons made to the ordinances and threats of Antiochus (the key note of resistance is the two words "until death itself"), and when the death of the seven sons has been followed by the suicide of the mother, he says that it would have been well to put an inscription on their tomb for a national memorial, and to say –

"Here lies an aged man, and an aged women, and her seven sons through  
The violence of a tyrant, who sought to overthrow the Hebrew polity.  
But they avenged their race, by looking away to God, and by enduring  
Tortures even unto death."

Now if we compare the closing passages of Hebrews XI. with the opening words of Hebrews XII. we shall find all commentators agree that the bede-roll includes the Maccabees, and concludes with them; but it has not been so generally noticed that Hebrews XII. continues with the Maccabees, and imitates the language which is suggested for their memorial. Look at the expressions, "Let us run our race also, looking away to Jesus, for ye have not yet resisted unto blood."

So we may say that the Bible of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews ran from Genesis to IV. Maccabees. But I must not dwell further on this point, but return to the other bede-roll with which I propose to compare that in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

In the Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach there is towards the end of the book, a celebrated chapter, which is commonly read in English Colleges on the day appointed for the commemoration of benefactors. It is

called the *Praise of Famous Men*, from its opening words, "Let us now praise famous men." In Greek its title is "The hymn (or praise) of the fathers." The writer, then, records in detail the praises of Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Phinehas, Joshua, Caleb, Samuel, David, Solomon, Elijah, Elisha, Hezekiah, Josiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the twelve prophets, Zerubbabel, Nehemiah: and then after a few stray references to earlier worthies, the writer settles down to dilate on the merits and glory of the latest hero of all, Simon the Son of Onias.

Now if we review this list, I think we shall see that here also the writer is turning the pages of his Bible, at least mentally, when he writes; the reference to the twelve prophets probably shows that he is working from a book. So he is doing just the same as the writer to the Hebrews is doing. And the curious thing is that he never mentions a woman at all in the whole of his story of Israel. This, then, is the way in which a man would write the historical summary; and the observation and the comparison with Hebrews, strongly confirms Harnack's suggestion that the latter writer feminized. It is either a woman, or a man under the influence of a woman.

But, having made this comparison, and shown how it works in favor of the Priscilla hypothesis, we can go a step further; we can try and get some closer idea of what the Bible writer of the writer to the Hebrews was like, and so make some further identification of the persons whose praises are there, at least in epitome. We will identify some further characters in the cloud of witnesses. The cloud, in fact, very readily becomes crystalline, though I do not think the interpreters of the Epistle have adequately recognized this. When we read the chapter carefully we soon see the roll of the saints changes into a roll of the virtues of the saints; the names of the heroes and heroines are dropped, and their deeds only are commemorated; but it is not difficult, speaking generally and recognizing that we are making a Biblical study, to identify the persons behind the actions. No one, for instance, has the slightest doubt that "stopped the mouth of lions" refers to Daniel, and "quashed the violence of fire" refers to the Three Children; and it would be a perverse exegesis, which should try to add any other figure to Daniel because the plural is used and we are told that "believers have stopped lions' mouths and quenched fire." So we know that Daniel was in the Bible which we are exploring for. In the same way any one who is acquainted with the apocryphal books that tell of the death of Isaiah and his rapture to heaven, or of the murder of Jeremiah by his compatriots, will have no doubt that Isaias and Jeremiah were intended by the terms, "were stoned and sawn asunder"; the legend of Isaiah's death at the hands of Menasseh and of Jeremiah's end must have been in the hands of the writer of the Epistle, who may very well have had the traditions in a written form; but it is sufficient if we say that the thought of Isaiah and Jeremiah in the Bible History called up their traditional deaths. So we are encouraged to seek for further identifications and we know the way to go to work. The presumption is that we are dealing with Biblical matter, and that a single person or group of persons (as in the case of the Three Children), underlies each clause; though we do not know that they are restricted to single clauses. (The Maccabees, for instance, appear to

be diffusely treated.) But in order to make our identifications correctly, we must observe that such identifications were matter of inquiry in the first century of our era, probably within twenty-five years of the production of the book.

If, for instance, we turn to the first Epistle of the Clement of Rome. C. 17, we shall find him speaking as follows:

“Let us become imitators of those who went about in goatskins and sheepskins, preaching the coming of the Christ: I mean Elijah and Elisha and also Ezekiel; and besides them those men also that obtained a good report.”

Here we see (1.) That Clement knows his Epistle to the Hebrews, (ii) that he has been identifying the characters in the eleventh chapter. Of the acquaintance of Clement with Hebrews there cannot be a shadow of doubt: he quotes it so often, that some early writers suggested that he might be the author; and it is curious that he never says he is quoting, as he does when he quotes Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians. So either the authorship was unknown in Rome, or, as Harnack suggests, it was suppressed.

Clement goes on to say that “Abraham obtained an exceeding good report and was called the friend of God,” in which we see him combining the language of Hebrews with that of the Epistle of James. There are other coincidences and assonances, besides his larger quotations, by which we can see how thoroughly Clement had assimilated the Epistle to the Hebrews. Now let us turn to the fifty-fifth chapter in which Clement is enumerating the sacrifices which have been made from time to time through love of others. After allusions to pagan illustrations of the virtue of self-sacrifice, he turns to the Scripture and remarks as follows:

“Many women being strengthened by the grace of God have performed many manly deeds. The blessed Judith, when the city was beleaguered, asked of the elders that she might be suffered to go forth into the camp of the aliens. So she went forth and exposed herself to peril and went forth for love of country, and of her people which were beleaguered: and the Lord delivered Holofernes into the hand of a woman.”

Bearing in mind what we have already said about Clement's acquaintance with the eleventh chapter, and the identifications which he has made in it, let us throw into parallelism this passage of Clement with Hebrews xi. 34;

<b>Clement.</b>	<b>Hebrews.</b>
Many women were made strong by the grace of God;	Out of weakness were made strong:
performed many manly deeds;	Waxed valiant in fight;
Judith went forth to the camp of the aliens	turned back camps of the aliens.

It seems clear, then, that the persons, who out of weakness became strong are in Clement's judgment women in general and Judith in particular. But this identification in which Clement passes from the general statement as to woman's weakness, to the particular triumphant instance, requires that the word "woman" in Hebrews xi. 35 should stand higher up, or that it should be repeated. The text must run "women out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, overthrew camps of aliens." But at this point the objection will be made that if we are in this way resorting to the dangerous expedient of conjecturally restoring the text, we must go further; we must correct the masculine word for valiant into the feminine. If we do, I think we shall miss the point of the writer, who wants to say that "weak women became strong (men) in fight" and uses the masculine deliberately. Clement sees this and therefore explains that "women made strong by Divine Grace performed manly deeds;" he is explaining the masculine adjective. So, after all, our conjectural emendation, as far as we have gone, need not amount to more than the displacement or repetition of a single word. But perhaps the suggested use of the masculine adjective may be thought too rhetorical a device for the Epistle to the Hebrews. In that case we must emend.

But this is not all that we learn from Clement; not only has he identified Judith as the woman who overthrew the camp of the aliens, but he goes on with another illustration of feminine courage. "To no less peril did Esther also, *who was perfect in faith*, expose herself that she might deliver the twelve tribes of Israel, when they were on the point to perish. For through her fasting and her humiliation she entreated the all-seeing Master, the God of the Ages; and He, seeing the humility of her soul, delivered the people for whose sake she encountered the peril." The allusion to Esther, following on Judith, with the statement as to the perfection of her faith, suggests that we are still in the region of Hebrews XI. and raises the question as to whether Esther also must not be found in the roll of heroes. But it is not quite so easy to define Esther's position as it was Judith's. Perhaps "escaped the edge of the sword" may cover the case, but the description is very general and can hardly be relied upon with confidence. (We might perhaps compare Esther xiv. 13 "Think not that thou shalt escape.") It depends in part on the unknown order of the books of the Bible in the writer's collection. We do not know how the books were arranged or what was the order of chronology deduced from them. As I said above, we are sure that the history ends with Maccabees: over and above the reference to IV. Maccabees, we have the language of II. Maccabees, imitated as in Hebrews xi. 38 ("wandering in deserts and mountains and in dens and caves of the earth") with which we may compare II. Maccabees x. 6 (they were living herded together like beasts in the mountains and in the caves").

And now we have said sufficient as to the structure of the Praises of the Famous, and the conclusion must be that there are Famous Women in the list as well as Famous Men. To Sarah and Rahab and the Widow of Sarepta we have added Judith and Esther. So there ought to be no hesitation in saying positively, what Harnack said doubtfully, that the eleventh chapter has feminized. And if this be correct, the case for authorship of Priscilla is much strengthened, by the removal of some of the strongest objections. We are still

somewhat surprised at not finding a definite reference to Deborah, but what we have found is positive evidence, which silence on certain points hardly affects any further.

(ii.) There remains one further, and perhaps fatal objection to be met, the masculine grammar of the chapter. The eleventh chapter, like the rest of Hebrews, has the transition to which Harnack alludes from "We" to "I." In xi. 2 we have "We understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God". But this is only the "we: of the community, and so has no bearing upon "dual" or "multiple" authorship. On the other hand we have in v. 32 the words "The time would fail *me* recounting," &c. And here we have not only the singular but the masculine singular. And this masculine participle is the real rock in the track, if we want to refer the Epistle to the Hebrew (or even the eleventh chapter) to Priscilla.

There remains, however, the possibility that, as it is a case or variation of a single letter, the text may have undergone correction. In that case we should probably find the original reading lurking somewhere amongst the MSS., unrecognized or unrecorded. So far as I have been able to make investigation, I have not found any trace of the supposed missing reading. And until such traces can be found, it is only fair to say that the adverse evidence at this point to the Priscilla hypothesis is very strong: and it would not be proper to cure the text of its difficulty by a conjectural emendation unless the case were already finally settled by other considerations. So we may leave the matter in uncertainty, but with the hope that after all some light has been thrown upon the meaning of the text, and that, sooner or later, decisive evidence as to authorship may be forthcoming.

We need not make apologies because we are not able to settle finally all the points that come up before us for investigation. There is much that will always remain obscure in the history and the interpretation of an ancient literature; on the other hand there is also much that can be elucidated. The twentieth century has its disadvantages but it is not a bad time to live in for the genuine explorer. And if our lectures can only be decorated by the title of side-lights, we may hope that they have the merit of being fairly clear of prejudice, and that in seeking after further light, we have not added anything either to the fog that bewilders or to the darkness that paralyzes those who are engaged in the progressive interpretation of the Christian religion.

#### **A NAZARENE NARRATIVE GOSPEL**

Arguably the literary, crown jewel of the Nazarene movement, the narrative gospel of Jesus' life and ministry survived for centuries in a single, 14<sup>th</sup> century manuscript known as *MS Pepys 2498*. Once belonging to the famous 18<sup>th</sup> century diarist Samuel Pepys (after whom it is named), this manuscript is currently quartered at Cambridge University.

Misidentified a century ago by Cambridge's Magdalene Library, it was lost in inventory. Once rediscovered, it was published untranslated in 1922 as a "medieval gospel harmony,"

otherwise known as the "Pepysian Gospel Harmony (PGH), which begs the question, who needs a medieval gospel harmony? Few, evidently, for it languished in obscurity for two generations until an intrepid researcher, Yuri Kuchinsky of Toronto, Canada, gave it a proper investigation and found good cause to identify it as a primitive Jewish-Christian gospel. In January, 2002, he re-published it in modern English. Only then did the world of scholarship or the public at large begin to learn of its many unique, primitive features. As Kuchinsky put it: "What was previously merely a matter for speculation now lies in broad daylight."

The *Nazarene Gospel*, is a harmony of the synoptic gospels plus that of the beloved disciple, but not quite as we know them from the *New Testament*; rather, it is a synopsis of their primitive prototypes. Until this gospel harmony was created, the Johannine community, as scholars have termed it, had existed in isolation from the rest of the Nazarene movement, this despite its gospel having preserved early, valuable material of a most interesting character which augments the synoptic accounts in helpful ways. Yet it was only in the first half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD that it was utilized. Even Justin Martyr in the mid-2nd century in his defense of the faith to the Roman Senate did not utilize this gospel.

Not the least of this gospel's virtues is its narrative sequence, for the key to harmonizing the gospel accounts is to sequence them aright. That is where modern attempts always fall short; there is no agreement. If anyone knew how to do this, that would have been Symeon. His father, Cleopas, Jesus' uncle, was a member of Jesus' band of followers. And Symeon, Jesus' cousin, may well have had first-hand and certainly second-hand knowledge. He may even have had access to the travel journal. In any case, *John* or *proto-John*, possessed essential information necessary to getting the chronology right. One of the *Nazarene Narrative Gospel's* greatest virtues is that of authoritatively clarifying numerous issues of chronology, such as informing us as to the duration of Jesus' ministry, that it was two years, not one or three; also, clarifying when Jesus was anointed by the Magdalene, that it was on the first day of Holy Week as in *John's Gospel*, not on the fifth day as in *Mark's Gospel*.

Unlike the "canonical" four, this gospel makes possible our understanding cause and effect this relationships such as why Jesus headed north to the border after John the Baptist's demise (he was seeking to stay out of Herod's clutches) or his relationship with the Magdalene (she was his convert, out of whom he cast seven demons after which she became a key member of his entourage.) Moreover, this gospel explicitly identifies Mary of Bethany as the Magdalene.

At the beginning of the last century, a team of scholars assigned by Cambridge University examined MS 2498. Drawn from its medieval studies department, evidently their expertise

ran more toward Chaucer than the Bible, for all too hastily they pronounced it "a medieval harmony." In consequence, biblical scholars with manuscripts a 1000 years older to work with paid it but scant notice, for who in their right mind needs a medieval harmony? (Evidently very few; for instance, my university, inter-library loan copy, though being 80 + years old, had never had its pages cut. I was the first and only person ever to read it!)

These matters rested until recently, when Kuchinsky gave *MS 2498* its first proper inspection, and found good indication of its having had a primitive, Jewish-Christian gospel as its progenitor. Unlike its more sophisticated, canonical cousins with their dependent clauses and large vocabularies, *MS Pepys 2498*'s simplified sentence structure and vocabulary points, rather, to a Semitic substrate, than to a Greek substrate, the implication being that its exemplar was of an earlier generation. Its straightforward account provides a surprising feeling of closeness to the events it records. Probably early on it was translated into Latin from which the Middle English (the language of Chaucer), was derived.

There is a poignant, personal quality to *MS Pepys 2498*'s text which trumps any other telling – a quaint, artless candor. As for its simplified sentence structure, this itself should tell us something, that we've entered into a different thought world than that of the Greek Gospels. By the way, did anyone ever really think that the original gospelers, those untutored, Galilean fisherman, were Greek scholars? Here the style is distinctly Semitic and uncomplicated. And throughout, almost as a refrain, one finds the expression "*swete Jesu*," which in modern parlance translates as "sweet Jesus," for evidently that is how he was known by those who knew him best. The portrayal then of Jesus throughout is that of one who was down-to-earth approachable and sympathetic.

Being in part a harmony and in part a synopsis of the four proto-gospels which underlie the four canonicals, *MS 2498* has as its base text proto-Matthew. With very little attempt at integration, the other gospels are added in blocks, the least synthesized being proto-John which is added in six large blocks until the Passion, after which smaller blocks of text are employed.

One of its unique, distinguishing characteristics is the complete absence of SoMs; that is to say, in the canonicals Jesus often self-references as "the Son of Man," but in *MS 2498* he never does so. Indicative of the cursory nature of previous examinations, Kuchinsky was the first to spot this curious anomaly some 80 years after the manuscript's initial publication. As an embellishment, this expression lends to Jesus a certain, magisterial air, conceivably an inducement for adding it. As yet no plausible motive for removing SoMs has surfaced.



Were the gospel merely a harmony of medieval origin, there would not be, as indeed there are, traces of its language in pre-medieval, Aramaic, Parthian, and Latin biblical texts and commentaries. For instance, a century ago, fragments of a biblical text were discovered by archaeologists in central Asia, in the city of Turfan, Turkistan, which fragments have unique textual agreements with *MS 2498*, including a passage lacking a SoM. This fits a pattern worldwide: in faraway places, beyond the reach of Rome, in obscure languages such as Old Armenian, Sogdian, Osmaniac, evidence of a prior gospel is found. Fortunately for the recovery of the earlier record, the obscurantist Church was usually not very inventive or creative and, for the most part, could only muddle, garble, and confuse.

In its wealth of detail, in its grasp of chronological sequence, *MS Pepys* goes well beyond what can be derived from the canonicals. Confirming impressions of antiquity is the comparison of canonical John's and *MS 2498*'s accounts of the marriage at Cana. In *MS 2498* there is a feast but no marriage and rather than creating upwards of 30 gallons of wine, Jesus created only three. Canonical *John*'s expansions well illustrate the human tendency to exaggerate. But what would induce a scribe to minimize this story? Or, rather, we should say, multiple scribes, since Kuchinsky has located texts in five different languages separately corroborating aspects of *MS 2498*'s version. Following are the informed observations of one investigator of *MS Pepys 2498*:

The Pepysian Gospel Harmony mentions the city of Gerasa which was an ancient city in Palestine which was destroyed by the 10th Roman legion *Firensis* in AD 70. Only the very oldest existing manuscripts of the canonical gospels mention the city of Gerasa while later manuscripts refer to the area as the land of the Gerasenes. Thus the author of the original source of the Pepysian Gospel Harmony may have lived prior to AD 70.

The sequence of the Pepysian Gospel Harmony also parallels many aspects of the theoretical "Q" text. The Greek texts of Matthew and Luke in some areas are letter for letter matches which have led some scholars to theorize that at one time a single text "Q" was formed from an early form of Matthew and of Luke and then later portions of our modern forms of Matthew and Luke were copied from this single gospel text.

Additionally, in the modern text of Luke the "Parable of the Lamp" occurs in both Chapter 8 and Chapter 11. It has been theorized that an early text that contained Luke had only one "Parable of the Lamp" and that the parable was either cut in half or duplicated in our modern texts. The Pepysian Gospel Harmony sequence combines portions of Luke Ch. 8 and 11 and only has a single account of the "Parable of the Lamp" just as some scholars have theorized would've existed in the single gospel forerunner of the modern text of Luke.

Scholars have also theorized that the "Q" text would've been constructed into categories and composed of lists such as a list of parables. This idea was formulated in part based on the gospel of Thomas found at Nag Hammadi. The PGH does form the gospel account into categories or groupings and there are two major groupings of parables in its sequence just as theorized for the "Q" text.

The event sequence of the PGH also enhances the account of the four gospels. The sequence produces cause and effect relationships between events and the interactions of various individuals with each other and with Jesus. For instance, The Pepysian Gospel Harmony sequence contains both Mary Magdalene's conversion and subsequent discipleship (this is in the modern gospel texts but is somewhat obscured due to their non-chronological sequence). Thus Mary Magdalene plays a major role in the account of Jesus which is implied by many ancient sources such as the gospel of Thomas but not highlighted by the canonical gospels in their present sequence. The same is true for the significance of John the Baptist in Jesus' ministry.

In the Pepysian Gospel Harmony sequence, John the Baptist is portrayed as an important ally of Jesus' ministry and his arrest and later death are both pivotal moments in Jesus ministry as portrayed by the Pepysian Gospel Harmony sequence. The importance of John the Baptist in the ministry of Jesus is implied by many ancient sources and that importance is vividly depicted in Jesus' ministry using the Pepysian Gospel Harmony sequence of the canonical gospels.

The four canonical gospels make no claim to being written in chronological sequence. There are historical/traditional accounts that indicate that the four canonical gospels were not written in chronological order. For instance, Papias (AD 135) indicated that Mark was not in any particular order. An engineered reconstruction of the chronological order of the gospels indicates that while several sequences are possible -- the sequence of the modern gospels is not in chronological order. For instance, the passage in Mark 3:13-19 not only precedes the passage in Mark 3:20-31 by over a dozen events but in fact several passages in Mark actually occur between Mark 3:13-19 and Mark 3:20-31.

Also, while there have been many modern attempts to reconstruct the sequence of the events of Jesus life as narrated in the four canonical gospels none of these reconstructions has as many parallels to the theoretical "Q" text as the Pepysian Gospel Harmony. Furthermore the theory for the "Q" text was first proposed in the 1800's and the Pepysian Gospel Harmony manuscript predates the "Q" text theory by 400 years. Thus the best candidate to date for the "Q" text sequence is the Pepysian Gospel Harmony manuscript. (*The Gospels in Four Part Harmony*, 2001 by J. Clontz)

A personal aside: the translation enclosed hereafter is my own, completed in 2010. I profess no special training in Chaucerian English. All are welcome to improve on my or Kuchinsky's translational efforts by making one of their own. Chaucerian English, after all, is English and it requires no great expertise to render English to English. When I went to secure my own copy of the 1921 publication of Oxford's transcription of the Chaucerian text, I learned that no library in Washington State had it. The copy I got from Eugene, Oregon, to my surprise had never been cut. In other words, no one in 80 years had ever read it.

#### MS 2498 AS AN ABBREVIATING TEXT

MS 2498 has been described as an "abbreviating text," meaning that many of Jesus' teachings are only alluded to or not included at all. The explanation for this could lie in its having been created in the 1<sup>st</sup> century before the codex form had come into vogue, i.e., before individual pages were folded and bound together to form a volume. For example, we do not speak of the *Dead Sea Books* but, rather, of the *Dead Sea Scrolls*. As a practical matter, the scroll format limits length. As it is, MS 2498's unified narrative, i.e., one gospel from multiple witnesses, is quite lengthy, perhaps prohibitively so were the full complement of teachings included. It's logical to suppose that a companion sayings gospel was created but, if so, either it has not survived or else it has not yet to come to light, which is not to say that Jesus' sayings are lost, for they are largely embedded in the canonical gospels.

As one of the more learned scholars of our time whose area of expertise is in the study of the Diatessaron, the late William Petersen, wrote:

... in 1992 M.-E. Bosmard published a book in which he argued that in addition to Tatian's Diatessaron, the harmony used by Justin had also left a mark on the harmonized gospel tradition. He singled out the Pepsian Harmony [MS 2498] as the best surviving witness to this pre-Tatianic harmony. This raises the possibility that the "abbreviating" character of the Pepsian Harmony and what Plooi called "mutilation" (when compared with other Diatessaronic witnesses) may in reality, stem from the fact that it represents a distinct textual tradition, one which is related to the Diatessaron - for Tatian seems to have used Justin's harmony when he created the Diatessaron - but anterior to it. (Tatian's Diatessaron)

The operative word above is "anterior." If the text of MS Pepys 2498 predates Tatian's Diatessaronic harmony, then, indeed, its text is early. In his *Apology* dedicated in about 150 AD to Emperor Antoninus (138-165 AD), Justin Martyr (105-168 AD), made reference to the weekly public reading of the "*Memoirs of the Apostles*." Though quoting gospel texts a couple of dozen times yet he never mentions individual evangelists and none of his quota-

tions properly align with the canonicals as we know them, leading scholars to conclude that he was working from a different text than now exists. Regarding this, the *Catholic Encyclopedia* states:

It is quite probable that Justin used a concordance or harmony, in which were united the three synoptic Gospels and it seems that the text of this concordance resembled in more than one point the so-called Western text of the Gospels.

Besides Justin's harmony, the *Catholic Encyclopedia* also makes reference to a second harmony:

... a hearer of Justin, Tatian wrote many works. Only two have survived. One of these is "Oratio Graecos" (Pros Hellanes), ... The other extant work is the "Diatessaron", a harmony of the four Gospels containing in continuous narrative the principle events in the life of Our Lord.

The foregoing is not merely the view of Catholic scholars but is the scholarly consensus of all persuasions. The only disputed points are whether the *Diatessaron* was originally composed in Syriac or in Greek; also whether it was actually Tatian who created it or someone else. However those questions may be resolved, the salient point here is the clear progression that exists from Justin's less synthesized *Memoirs* to the highly synthesized *Diatessaron*. When *MS 2498* is added to the equation, what we have are three distinct harmonies with *MS 2498* appearing to preserve the earliest, least synthesized text, a point Kuchinsky ably demonstrates in his on-line exposition of *Matthew 19:16-17*, titled "Rich Man's Question."

Another point: all three harmonies share certain affinities with the so-called "Western" text, the significance of which is that this was the text of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century Church Fathers. Though surviving in but one Greek manuscript, *Codex Beza*, the Western Text is represented by the Old Latin (a text form later replaced by Jerome's Vulgate) also by the Old Syriac (a text form later replaced by the Peshita.) It has been aptly suggested that the "Western Text" might more appropriately be referred to as the Syrio-Latin Text inasmuch as the earliest Latin and Syriac gospels are "Western." Indeed, in this regard, one of the most recognized authorities in the field of biblical studies, F. C. Burkitt, over a century ago saw that even calling it "Western" was a misnomer, for, as he said:

... we must recognize that the earliest texts of the Gospels were fundamentally "Western" in every country of which we have knowledge, even in Egypt. If we have any real trust in antiquity, any real belief in the continuity of Christian tradition, we must be prepared to admit many "Western" readings as authentic, as alone having a historical claim to originality.

The three commonly recognized texts are the Alexandrian, thought to have arisen in, or at least favored by, Alexandria to the south; the Byzantine which was favored by, Byzantium in the east; and the Western Text, alleged to have arisen in Italy to the west (but, in reality, was everywhere, north, east, south, west.) The Alexandrian is preserved in the oldest complete NT, the *Codex Sinaiticus*, and is favored by most Ph.D. biblical scholars. The Byzantine, also called the Majority Text because the vast majority of Greek manuscripts, some 5000, are of this textual tradition, is the one from which the *King James Version* was translated. It too is championed by many. Meanwhile, the Western Text, though having the best claim to originality, as Burkitt points out above, is all but an orphan.

From early times mention is made in the historical record of a fifth gospel, one often termed the *Gospel According to the Hebrews*. A question-begging title, it invites the inference that other gospels might have been of Gentile provenance. As early as 1814, J.C. Zahn identified this gospel as the one Justin Martyr was using. Is it possible that that which is commonly called the fifth gospel was, or at least was derived from, that which was the first?

In 62 AD came troublous times beginning with the martyrdom of James, followed by the flight of Jerusalem's Nazarene community to Pella in 66 AD, after which came the siege of Jerusalem, followed by the temple's destruction in 70 AD. As confirmed by 20<sup>th</sup> century archeological excavation, the believing community returned, re-establishing itself in Jerusalem on the very site where the Last Supper occurred. On regrouping there, there might well have been a strong incentive to harmonize the movement's multiple gospel accounts into one narrative, thus justifying the creation of *MS 2498's* progenitor. On James' demise, Simeon, Cleopas' son was unanimously chosen to exercise oversight in Jerusalem. Reputed to have lived to the ripe age of 120 before he himself was martyred, he would have had the requisite stature to authorize the harmonizing of the movements' competing or, if you will, complementary gospel accounts. Lending credence to this scenario, at that time there were yet those who understood the chronological sequence - which is one of *MS 2498's* chief virtues - that its narrative account makes sense.

But we should not think that the *Nazarene Narrative Gospel* is the only at issue. There was also the *Gospel According to the Hebrews*. We are not so fortunate to have the entire text but we do have some of it.

## FRAGMENTS FROM THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THE HEBREWS

The following selections are excerpted from Ron Cameron in *The Other Gospels: Non-Canonical Gospel Texts* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1982), pp. 85-86. Philipp Vielhauer and George Ogg made the original translation in *New Testament Apocrypha* and also one quote is from *The Other Bible*, editor, Willis Barnstone.

1. It is written in the Gospel of the Hebrews:

When Christ wished to come upon the earth to men, the good Father summoned a mighty power in heaven, which was called Michael, and entrusted Christ to the care thereof. And the power came into the world and it was called Mary, and Christ was in her womb seven months.

(Cyril of Jerusalem, *Discourse on Mary Theotokos* 12a)

2. The mother of the Lord and his brothers said to him, "John the Baptist baptizes for the forgiveness of sins; let us go and be baptized by him." But he said to them, "In what way have I sinned that I should go and be baptized by him? Unless, perhaps, what I have just said is a sin of ignorance."

(Jerome, *Against Pelagius* III.2)

3. According to the Gospel written in the Hebrew speech, which the Nazaraeans read, the whole fount of the Holy Spirit shall descend upon him. . . Further in the Gospel which we have just mentioned we find the following written:

And it came to pass when the Lord was come up out of the water, the whole fount of the Holy Spirit descended upon him and rested on him and said to him: My son, in all the prophets was I waiting for thee that thou shouldest come and I might rest in thee. For thou art my rest; thou art my first-begotten Son that reignest for ever.

(Jerome, *Commentary on Isaiah* 4 [on Isaiah 11:2])

4. And if any accept the Gospel of the Hebrews - here the Savior says:

Even so did my mother, the Holy Spirit, take me by one of my hairs and carry me away on to the great mountain Tabor.

(Origen, *Commentary on John* 2.12.87 [on John 1:3])

5. As also it stands written in the Gospel of the Hebrews:

He that marvels shall reign, and he that has reigned shall rest. (Clement, *Stromateis* 2.9.45.5)

To those words (from Plato, *Timaeus* 90) this is equivalent:

He that seeks will not rest until he finds; and he that has found shall marvel; and he that has marveled shall reign; and he that has reigned shall rest.

(Ibid., 5.14.96.3)

6. As we have read in the Hebrew Gospel, the Lord says to his disciples:

And never be ye joyful, save when ye behold your brother with love.

(Jerome, *Commentary on Ephesians* 3 [on Ephesians 5:4])

7. In the Gospel according to the Hebrews, which the Nazaraeans are wont to read, there is counted among the most grievous offences:

He that has grieved the spirit of his brother. (Jerome, *Commentary on Ezekiel* 6 [on Ezekiel 18:7])

8. The Gospel called according to the Hebrews which was recently translated by me into Greek and Latin, which Origen frequently uses, records after the resurrection of the Savior:

And when the Lord had given the linen cloth to the servant of the priest, he went to James and appeared to him. For James had sworn that he would not eat bread from that hour in which he had drunk the cup of the Lord until he should see him risen from among them that sleep. And shortly thereafter the Lord said: Bring a table and bread! And immediately it added: he took the bread, blessed it and brake it and gave it to James the Just and said to him: My brother, eat thy bread, for the Son of man is risen from among them that sleep.

(Jerome, *De viris inlustribus* 2)

An abbreviated commentary from: *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1924), pp. 1-8. Regarding *The Gospel According to the Hebrews* by M. R. James:

This is on a different level from all the other books we have to deal with. It was a divergent yet not heretical form of our Gospel according to St. Matthew. Even to sketch the controversies which have raged about it is impracticable here. What may be regarded as established is that it existed in either Hebrew or Aramaic, and was used by a Jewish Christian sect who were known as Nazaraeans (Nazarenes), and that it resembled our *Matthew* closely enough to have been regarded as the original Hebrew of that Gospel. I believe few, if any, would now contend that it was that original. It is generally, and I believe rightly, looked upon as a secondary document. What was the extent of the additions to or omissions from *Matthew* we do not know: but two considerations must be mentioned bearing on this: (1) The Stichometry of Nicephorus assigns it 2,200 lines, 300 less than *Matthew*.

Jerome, who is our chief source of knowledge about this Gospel, says that he had made a Greek and a Latin version of it. The statement is wholly rejected by some, and by others thought to be an exaggeration. It is very difficult to accept it as it stands. Perhaps, as Lagrange suggests, the truth may be that Jerome took notes of the text in Greek and Latin. Schmidtke, it should be added, has tried to show that all Jerome's quotations are borrowed from an earlier writer, Apollonaris; but there is no positive evidence for this.

## A HISTORICAL TURNING POINT

The Hadronic war, which had wrung the death knell of Jewish hopes of political independence had also relegated the church of the apostles to the rank of a heretical sect.

(Hugh Schofield, *History of Jewish Christianity*)

When Hadrian (76-138 AD) outlawed observance of the Mosaic Law throughout the Roman Empire, Jews in the Holy Land rebelled, and justly so. The Nazarenes, themselves Law-observant, might well have joined with them in this rebellion except for one consideration, the rebellion's leader, Bar Kocheba, had been declared to be the Messiah. Believers could not in good conscience accede to being led by a false Messiah. Not long thereafter, as if caught in the pincers of a giant nutcracker, Jerusalem's apostolic community was destroyed in a mighty bloodbath when, in 135 AD, Jerusalem fell to Rome's legions. With this conquest, all Jews - Nazarenes included - such as had survived, that is, were banned from entering the City under penalty of death. Renamed Aelia Capitolina, Jerusalem became, thereafter, a Gentile enclave. It was then that certain Gentile Christians found it expedient to distance their religion from its Jewish roots. It was then that the Nazarene's nemesis arose, namely, the Church. Taking pains to distinguish the Church from the Nazarenes, its Gentile-dominated leadership revamped the faith once delivered to the saints, making it more amenable to the Roman powers-that-be, as well as more suitable to the proclivities of the Church's hierarchy men who held to a male-dominant agenda. Accompanying this change of leadership and direction was a change of Scriptures. Such was the sequence of events preceding a 2<sup>nd</sup> century Church edit. Thus did Rome not only conquer militarily but again religiously through the Church which hijacked both the moral agenda and the sacred text. This 2<sup>nd</sup> century edit spelled the final parting of the ways, when the Church became a religion unto itself, separate and apart from the Nazarene community, for once the *New Testament* was sent forth, all gospels not included therein, became, as it were, incriminating evidence in need of suppressing. Wholesale destruction began in earnest with one bishop, Theodoret, Bishop of Cyrrhus, even bragging how he had withdrawn two hundred *Diatessaronic* manuscripts from churches in Syria.

What lay behind Theodoret's book-burning zeal was his own peculiar circumstances. Having run afoul of the authorities doctrinally over the matter of Christ nature, whether he had two distinct natures, as Nestorius had asserted, or not, he was deposed from his bishopric, being declared a heretic by the Council of Ephesus in 491 AD. The following year, however, he regained his oversight of 800 congregations by servilely submitting to the Imperial Commissioner at Calcedon. He did so by authoring a *Treatise against Heresies*, detailing his many acts against even the *appearance* of Nestorianism. Hence his specious charge that the



Diatessaron, because it did not include the genealogies, was against Christ's human nature. In fact, the Diatessaron has as many references to Jesus' human nature as the canonicals do.

Axiomatically, almost as if it were a tenet of their faith, Protestants believe that through the Church, God saw to it that the apostolic word would be preserved for future generations. (The word has been preserved indeed, just not through the agency they suppose, nor in the form they suppose either.) The assumption is that it wasn't until Constantine's time in the 4<sup>th</sup> century that the Church was seduced by the allure of state power. True, by then the *New Testament* had been disseminated so widely as to be beyond recall for major revision. (Embroidering around the edges has always been going on.) And it's true enough that 3<sup>rd</sup> century papyri and 4<sup>th</sup> century uncials confirm that 4<sup>th</sup> century tampering, if not completely absent, was not a significant factor overall. But to extrapolate from this that in pre-Constantine times the Church had been a trustworthy custodian of the apostolic writings, as we shall see, is an unwarranted leap of faith. In other words, what is called into question is the institutional Church's role as historic guardian of the apostolic deposition. Did the Church maintain the chain of possession from apostolic times to our own? Can we vouch for fidelity of transmission or confidently claim, as once we did, that Matthew actually wrote *Matthew*; or Mark, *Mark*, etc.? The issue is foundational: is the house of faith built on the Rock of apostolic teaching or is it built on something less stable such as Church tradition?

What then of the *New Testament*? The term itself cannot be traced before 200 AD. But let's not hang up on terminology, what as to its contents, are they apostolic? Scholarship indicates that it originates mostly from the apostolic era. That is not quite the same as saying, however, that it is apostolic. James and Jude were not apostles, nor was Mark or Luke. And so we can dispense with saying that the New Testament is apostolic. Is it inspired? As far as I can tell, it is but that's my private judgment. Is the New Testament the only inspired writing? Again, that is a matter of judgment but I happen to know of writings equally authoritative and inspired from that era, which the Church, for whatever reason, did not include. For generations scholars have grappled with these questions without coming to consensus. Certainly much of value has been learned but it is, after all, an arcane field of study. For example, making sense of the complex relationship between *Matthew* and *Luke*:

... the Sermon on the Mount presents unusual complications in the matter of sources. ... Of the Sermon's 111 verses, about 45 have no obvious parallels in Luke, 35 have loose parallels, and 31 have parallels which are close both in content and in phraseology. The curious feature of this evidence is [that] ... the close parallels are unusually close, and the loose parallels are unusually loose!

(McArthur, *Understanding the Sermon on the Mount*)

## RECONSTRUCTING GOSPEL CHRONOLOGY

An additional source of help in reconstructing the event-filled years of ministry may have been a day book, a kind of accounts journal kept for the purpose of satisfying the Temple and Herodian taxing authorities' requirement that gifts to their ministry be accounted for. The logical person to keep the tax account would have been Matthew, the tax-collector. His other name, Levi, may indicate that he was connected to the Temple's Levitical priesthood.

Evidence for such a book having once existed is the peculiar exactitude with which various locations and individuals, not later important in the history of the Nazarene movement, are named throughout the gospels. Certainly, in sequencing the multitudinous happenings, travels, and personalities encountered, possessing such a chronicle would have been most helpful. While we have no direct, historical reference to a Nazarene accountant ledger, one scholar who has looked into this matter, Jerry Clontz, has deduced the following reasons why the keeping of such a journal would have been a valuable adjunct to the ministry:

1. Tithes – The OT tithing requirement to be paid yearly at the temple in Jerusalem would've required a ministry like Jesus' group to keep an account ledger to know how much to tithe at Jerusalem at Passover every year.
2. Taxes – The Romans and Herodians levied taxes that may have required accounting records.
3. Proof of Innocence – Jesus' group was traveling from town to town with a money box. In order to prove that they weren't bandits that stole the money they would've possibly kept records of donors names and the cities where they lived in addition to the amounts received. Also they would've kept notes indicating why the people donated money to them to prove it wasn't from illegal activity. The notes would've included significant events that resulted in donations i.e. miracles, healings or information concerning moving sermons or inspiring stories. If Roman soldiers stopped them and arrested them as bandits they would have needed enough info that the soldiers could check at the various towns involved. This information would've needed to be memorable enough that it could be verified several months or a few years after the donations occurred.
4. Couriers of offerings to the temple – It is possible that donations to Jesus' group included offerings that ultimately were destined to the temple. Jesus' group may have acted as couriers taking offerings to the temple that they were entrusted with. The Book of Acts relates similar courier activity involving Paul. If they were couriers for temple offerings they would've kept records of the amounts entrusted to them as well as the names and cities of the donors for the temple authorities.

Additionally, Clontz points out the value of such a ledger for internal financial control. How was it known that Judas Iscariot was filching from the money box? An audit of the accountant's ledger. If such a ledger had indeed existed, it probably also included abbreviated jottings of key names, places, events, sayings, donations, disbursements, thereby creating useful associations by which to jog memories. In whose possession was it? Matthew's? Peter's? Maybe it was held jointly and in trust, available to anyone within the inner circle of apostles who might have had need to consult it. Luke, the evangelist, notes that Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others were contributing to the support of the ministry out of their private means. He didn't get this information from consulting canonical *Matthew* or *Mark*. Perhaps he had access to the account ledger itself or, else, to some source that did.

#### POWERFUL ACTS / INCISIVE TEACHINGS

On the road to Emmaus, Cleopas, Joseph's brother, described Jesus of Nazareth as:

"... mighty in deed and word." (*Luke 23:11*)

Taking this statement as a starting point, let us observe that *Mark's Gospel* records Jesus' mighty deeds but few of his teachings while *Matthew's Gospel*, if we subtract from it that part clearly word-for-word dependent on *Mark*, has not many additional mighty deeds; rather, it records Jesus' mighty words, most notably the Sermon on the Mount, but also the Temple discourse, the Mount of Olives discourse, the Seaside Discourse, among others.

We have seen what a large consensus there is of scholars, approaching the study of the Synoptic Gospels from very different directions, in favour of some form of the theory which postulates as the duration of our present gospels two main documents . . . which correspond sufficiently well with the two works described by Papias, the "Notes of the Preaching of St. Peter" put together by St. Mark and the "collection of *Logia*" – oracles and utterances – of the Lord set down in writing by St. Matthew.

(William Sanday)

The salient point is that there were two traditions, narrative and sayings. To help explain why teaching and deeds were treated separately, let us consider this from the standpoint of a natural division of labor between the transcription of speech and the description of events. From antiquity, the task of transcription was credited to Matthew. But whether it was his or another's, the transcription made of Jesus' sayings are so detailed, so specific, one can only suppose that it was done by dictation. In that day this would have been possible by using a wax-coated slate which, when scratched by a stylus, would allow for speech to be recorded. Then, typically, a scribe would make a more durable parchment or papyrus record.

It's not that big a problem to locate Jesus' discourses in the *Gospel of Matthew*, once we become aware that they have been separated into five distinct, widely-dispersed sections (chapters: v-vii/x/xiii/xviii/xxiii-xxv). Each of the five section has its own introductory and each concludes with the statement: "When Jesus had finished saying these things." It may have been that there were separate sayings gospels for separate types of material: kingdom saying for instance, or table talk, or morality tales. Heated debates over such matters as the existence of "Q" ("Q" standing for *Quelle*" German for "source," which is how scholars denote a theoretical collection of Jesus' recorded sayings) but one need not speculate. Obviously a complex web of borrowings existed, involving the exchange of materials and ideas.

#### MATTHEW AND THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THE HEBREWS

We have the apparently independent testimony of three witnesses in the second century – Papias, Irenaeus and Pantaeus – that St. Matthew wrote in "Hebrew." Nor is there any ancient authority to the contrary. The Fathers of the Church are agreed that it was so, and only since the Reformation has the fact been seriously, and I think, most unjustifiably called in question. (Arthur Wright)

Though little known of in our day, what is sometimes referred to as the 5<sup>th</sup> gospel (which may actually have been the 1<sup>st</sup>), the *Hebrew Gospel*, was broadly attested to in antiquity:

Matthew, having written the Gospel in Hebrew, published it in Jerusalem, and slept in Hierae of Parthia.  
(Hippolytus, *De Duodecim Apostolis*)

The first Gospel was written by Matthew, who once had been a tax collector but later became an apostle of Jesus Christ, having published it for believers from Judaism, composed in Hebrew script.  
(Origin, Eusebius, *Hist.eccl.* 6.25.4)

[the Nazoreans] have the Gospel according to Matthew complete in Hebrew. For it is still distinctly preserved among them, as it was originally written, in Hebrew script. (Epiphaneus *Pan.* 29.9.4)

And of Matthew it is said, when Jews who believed approached him and asked him to reduce his spoken words into writing for them, he brought forth the Gospel in the Hebrew Language.

(John Chrysostom, *Hom. Mtt.* 1.3)

. . . The Hebrew itself is preserved to this day in the library at Caesarea which was collected with such care by the martyr Pamphilus. I also had an opportunity of copying it afforded me by the Nazarenes who use the book, at Beroea, [modern-day Aleppo] a city of Syria. (Of *Illustrious men*, Jerome)

Having only fragmentary quotes, and not the text itself, we cannot say with complete assurance what all the *Hebrew Gospel* did contain, except this we know, that it was profound:

“And also in the Hebrew Gospel we read of the Lord speaking to his disciples, ‘Never be ye joyous save ye behold your brother with love.’” (Jerome, *Comm. Eph* 5.4)

And in the Gospel according to the Hebrews which the Nazarenes are accustomed to read, it is placed among the greatest sins ‘if a man have grieved the spirit of his brother.’

(Jerome, *On Ezekiel*. xviii. 7)

As we have found somewhere in the Gospel which the Jews have in the Hebrew tongue where it is said: “I choose for myself them that are good: the good are they whom my Father which in heaven hath given me.”

(Eusebius, *Theophany*)

Also, in the Gospel according to the Hebrews is written the saying, ‘he that wondereth shall reign, and he that reigneth shall rest.’ (Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* I. 9. 45)

In the Hebrew Gospel according to Matthew it is thus: Our bread of the morrow give us this day; that is, ‘the bread which thou wilt give us in thy kingdom, give us this day’. (Jerome, *On Ps.* cxxxv)

In the Gospel which the Nazarenes and Ebionites use (which I have lately translated into Greek from the Hebrew, and which is called by many the authentic Matthew), this man who had the withered hand is described as a mason, who prays for help in such words as this: ‘I was a mason seeking a livelihood with my hands: I pray thee Jesus, to restore me mine health, that I may not beg meanly for my food.’

(Jerome, *On Matt.* xii. 13)

The Gospel also entitled ‘according to the Hebrews’ which I lately translated into Greek and Latin, and which Origen often quotes, contains the following narrative after the Resurrection: ‘Now the Lord, when he had given the cloth to the servant of the priest, went to James and appeared to him.’ For James had taken an oath that he would not eat bread from that hour on which he had drunk the cup of the Lord till he saw him risen from the dead. Again a little later the Lord said ‘Bring a table and bread,’ and forthwith it is added: ‘He took bread and blessed and broke it and gave to James the Just and said to him, “My brother, eat your bread, for the Son of Man is risen from those who sleep.’

(Jerome, *Vir.* III. 2)

But according to the Gospel that is written in the Hebrew language, the Nazarenes read:

... ‘It happened that when the Lord came up out of the water, the whole fountain of the Holy Spirit descended on him, and rested on him, and said to him, ‘My Son, in all the prophets I awaited you, that you might come and I might rest in you. For you are my rest, you are my first-born Son, who reigns eternally.’”

(Jerome, *Comm. Isa.* 11.1-3)

We are informed by the Strichometry of Nicephorus that the *Hebrew Gospel* consisted of

“2200 lines (300 lines less than canonical *Matthew*)” indicating that it was a substantial work in its own right. Patristic quotation from it which probably concentrated on its unique aspects allow us to conclude that it was not merely a harmony of the other synoptic gospels, or a 2<sup>nd</sup> century, Aramaic knock-off of canonical *Matthew*, but an independent composition within the synoptic tradition. It may well have led the way in creating that tradition.

Albeit no copies of the *Hebrew Gospel* have survived, as we see above, quotes from it by various Church Fathers have. Did such a valuable document perish through neglect or was it actively sought out for destruction? Sad to say, deliberate destruction of manuscripts, even if completely orthodox, has been Church policy in times past. Even so great a Bible translator or as William Tyndale was burned at the stake for producing a vernacular version. While it is practically axiomatic for most Christians that the Church is God’s approved instrument, his chosen vessel, for preserving and perpetuating the Gospel, that assumption needs to be tempered by the knowledge that this same institution lost or even deep-sixed many valuable texts.

#### A HEBRAIC SOURCE FOR CANONICAL MATTHEW AND CANONICAL LUKE

A written, literary relationship between *Matthew*’s and *Luke*’s gospels exist, one standing wholly apart from any relationship they have with *Mark*. In 2002, Robert McIver and Maria Carroll published their findings in the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, in which they concluded:

... any sequence of exactly the same 16 or more words that is not an aphorism, poetry or words to a song is almost certain to have been copied from a written document.

(*Experiments to Develop Criteria for Determining the Existence of a Written Sources, and their Potential Implications for the Synoptic Problem*)

According to their research, *Luke* and *Matthew* share eleven such passages, while *Mark* has three in common with *Luke* and nine in common with *Matthew*. Arises the question: did *Luke* depend on *Matthew* or, conversely, did *Matthew* depend on *Luke*? Answer: neither the one nor the other. No way did Luke systematically deconstruct *Matthew*’s highly structured Sermon on the Mount and spread its contents throughout half a dozen chapters. No way did Luke truncate *Matthew*’s Lord’s prayer so as to provide a more anemic telling. By the same token, no way would the apostle Matthew, had he had *Luke*’ *Gospel* in front of him, have completely overlooked *Luke*’s nativity story; likewise *Luke*’s Perean ministry section. Matthew did not have *Luke*’s *Gospel* to look to; neither did Luke have *Matthew*’s *Gospel* but, as I shall have occasion to relate later, there were a host of intermediate documents.

#### LUKE, THE EVANGELIST:

... of Antioch in Syria, by profession a physician; who, having been a disciple of the Apostles, and having afterward followed Paul until his martyrdom, and having served the Lord continually, without wife and without children, fell asleep at the age of 84 in Boeotia, being full of the Holy Ghost.

(An early 2<sup>nd</sup> century, Latin introduction to *Luke's Gospel*)

A widely held assumption is that Luke was a Gentile writing to a Gentile audience. This is a modern idea. Try finding ancient authority to back it up! There is none. I will concede that Luke had a Gentile audience in mind, but only if it is also conceded that he had a Hellenistic Jewish audience in mind. According to *MS Pepys 2498*, Luke was Cleopas' fellow-traveler on the road to Emmaus. If so, that would settle the matter, he was a Jew in the Holy Land conversant with either Aramaic or Hebrew or both. Scholars who have looked into it agree, *Luke's Gospel* does, indeed, evidence an unusual number of Semitisms:

Hebraisms proper are special characteristics of Luke. There is reason, therefore, for a closer scrutiny of this evangelist with its wealth of Hebraisms. (Gustav Dalman, *The Words of Jesus*)

For all its good Greek, Lukan style has always been noted for a significant amount of Semitisms.

(Joseph Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke*)

Fitzmyer, whose stated opinion is that Luke was a Gentile, finds his Hebraisms "puzzling." He concludes that their source "will remain a mystery."

But just maybe James Edwards, in *The Hebrew Gospel & the Development of the Synoptic Tradition* solves the mystery. He traces a possible source of Luke's Hebraisms back to a dependence on the Hebrew Gospel. Giving the following as an example of this dependence, Edwards states that:

In a letter to Hedybia, Jerome writes that many Jews came to faith when Jesus prayed from the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Like many citations from the Hebrew Gospel, this prayer for forgiveness is found in the canonical Gospels only in Luke (23:34). Jerome does not mention the Hebrew Gospel as the source of the story, but three late (ninth-fourteenth-century) texts that appear to quote the passage from Jerome do. In a ninth-century *Commentary on Isaiah*, Haimo of Halberstadt writes: "As it is said in the Gospel of the Nazarenes: at the voice of the Lord many thousands of the Jews who were standing around the cross believed." The same testimony is repeated in the 13<sup>th</sup> century by Hugo of St. Cher: "And he prayed for the transgressors (Luke 24): Father, forgive them because, etc. At that voice many thousands of the Jews who were standing around the cross believed, according to the Gospel of the Nazarenes." Finally, the anonymous fourteenth-century *History of the Passion of the Lord* expands the story: "Father, forgive them, because they do not know they do. And take heed of what is said in the Gospel of the Nazarenes that at this important prayer of Christ eight thousand were converted to the faith at a later date."

It may be that Luke preserved for us the better part – or at least the best parts – of *Hebrews*, a consideration that softens somewhat the blow of losing this valuable text. Besides the *Gospel according to the Hebrew*, another source for *Luke* was the *Testimonia*.

Foreasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed. (Luke 1:1-4 KJV)

It has long been assumed that the “many” referred to above by Luke were busily writing gospels. But the same verses, re-translated by B. P. W. Stather Hunt sees it another light, that *Luke’s* prologue is referencing to the writing of the *Testimonia*. Hunt’s translation reads:

Since many took in hand to make a reconstruction of those prophecies which have been fulfilled among us (even as they delivered it to us, who were themselves eyewitnesses and ministers of the word) it seemed good to me also, having studied the whole argument carefully from the beginning, to put those events in written order for you, so that you may know the certainty of the matters wherein you have been instructed before our eyes. (Luke 4:1 Hunt)

Justifying the changes he has introduced, Hunt asserts that ἀνατάξασθαι, translated by the KJV above as “set forth in order,” is in error. He points to Irenaeus’s usage of this word in the following sentence: God “inspired Ezra the priest, of the tribe of Levi, to *reconstruct* all the words of the former prophets.” Therefore “recovery,” not “order,” is the correct meaning. Another point Hunt makes relates to πεπληροφορημένων which the KJV translated it as “most surely believed.” Lightfoot claims no justification for this translation exists, while J. M. Creed in his book, *The Gospel according to St. Luke*, writes: “the word is equivalent to πληρώω, to fulfil.” Of this Hunt writes: “that is exactly what we have been claiming, and what better description could we have of a document wherein prophecy and its fulfilment are arranged under definite heads.”

#### **JAMES THE JUST, HIS ROLE IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPEL TRADITION**

James, the Lord’s brother, as overseer of Jerusalem’s Nazarene community for 32 years, was well-positioned to play a leading role in the written gospels’ development. It’s likely that he was responsible for the *Gospel of Matthew* having assumed the canonical form that it has. This *Gospel*, which has a more developed articulation of Jesus’ thoughts than does *Luke’s*, speaks of “the poor in spirit” and those who “hunger for righteousness” whereas *Luke’s* simply refers to the poor and the hungry. Probably a catechismal objective was in view, leading to the dominical sayings in canonical *Matthew* being bundled into five major discourses. Luke, likewise, was familiar with most of these sayings but not necessarily in a



thematically collected form. Both Luke and James knew of the Lord's sayings from other sources, one of those being the *Gospel According to the Hebrews*, a text Church Fathers credited to Matthew.

Though canonical *Matthew* breathes the very atmosphere of Jerusalem, its Greek is more Greek than is canonical *Luke's*. How can that be? Was this Matthew the evangelist's doing? I think not. Rather, I believe that James took extracts of Jesus' sayings recorded by Matthew and translated them into Greek, combining this with an early version of *Mark's Gospel* to create our familiar canonical *Gospel of Matthew*. In what sense then is *Matthew's Gospel* actually Matthew's? Only in an honorary sense, that it ultimately derived from an extract from Matthew's notes or else an extract made from his *Hebrew Gospel*.

It's ironic that not only have many doubted Luke's proficiency in Hebrew but also James' proficiency in Greek. We should know better. For one, we have James' *Epistle* before us which is excellent Greek, besides which, for another, we know that James grew up in Nazareth only four miles from the Galilee's most prominent Greek-speaking city, Sepphoris.

In our day, normative or rabbinical Judaism's rejection of the *Septuagint* Greek version of the Scriptures is complete and unequivocal but it was not always so. Originally and for many centuries thereafter, the *Septuagint* was seen by Jews as one of their most noble accomplishments. It was only after Christians adopted it that they reject it. It should come as no surprise that when the *Septuagint* was yet in good odor with the Jews generally that a 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, Law-observant Jew, James, the brother of Jesus, would sponsor a Greek edition of the Gospel to accompany the *Septuagint*. As James plainly tells us at the outset of his *Epistle*, his purpose was to reach out to diaspora Jewish believers spread abroad throughout the world. Often those who extol Paul's worldwide ministry overlook, James's worldwide ministry. Well do we know what language James would have used, for the diaspora Jews favored, not Hebrew but Greek.

#### JAMES'S HEBREW MATTHEW

Because his first responsibility was to Jerusalem's Nazarene community, and only secondarily the diaspora, it is logical to suppose that James would first have wanted to have a Hebrew edition of the Gospel and not just a Greek one. And it just may be that we have a goodly portion of that very Hebrew text as James knew it, or at least we have a near cousin to it. The text I am referring to is not to be confused with Matthew's *Gospel according to the Hebrews*. Rather, I am speaking of a text which more resembles our canonical *Matthew*. Published in 1385 by Shem-Tob ben-Isaac ben-Shaprut as part of a larger, anti-Christian treatise called, *Evan Bohan*, his Hebrew *Matthew* is the oldest complete Hebrew text of that book in existence.

For a long time it was assumed that Shem-Tob's *Matthew* was his own translation from Jerome's Latin Vulgate. Modern studies have completely disproved that. There are many, many readings connecting it to earlier texts to which no one in the Middle Ages would have had access. Rather, this Hebrew *Matthew* provides abundant evidence of having passed through the hands of the Ebionites (a heretical, 1<sup>st</sup> century offshoot of the Nazarenes) who evidently modified it that it might better accord with their peculiar views. Despite omissions and additions made by those through whose hands it passed, this text is still at root Nazarene. Its text gives fair evidence that it goes right back to the beginning in Jerusalem where James, the Lord's brother, was overseeing Jesus' resurrection community.

One unique aspect of Shem-Tob's text is its use of the Tetragrammaton, which it does so 19 times. (Chalk one up for the Jehovah Witnesses.) Other unique readings follow:

ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE GREEK	SHEM-TOB'S HEBREW IN ENGLISH
He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.	He will baptize you with the fire of the Holy Spirit.
Watch, therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man comes.	Be careful, therefore, because you know neither the day nor the hour when the bridegroom will come
What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder	Whatever the creator has joined together man is unable to separate.
And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or fathers or mothers or children or lands, for my sake, will receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.	Everyone who leaves his house and his brothers, also his sisters, his father, his mother, his wife, and his children for my name will receive a hundred like them and will inherit the kingdom of heaven.
You are Peter and on this rock I will build my church.	You are a stone and upon you I will build my house of prayer.
Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.	Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in all the world, that which this one has done will be said in reference to my memory.
Come, see the place where he lay.	Come, therefore, and see the place where the lord arose.

The scholar who has done the deepest study of the Shem-Tob's *Matthew* is George Howard:

Shem-Tob's Hebrw Matthew is characterized by literary devices such as puns, word connections, and alliteration. These are numerous – the text is saturated with them, far beyond what appears in the Greek – and belong to the very structure of the Hebrew text.

A pun appears in the Hebrew text of 10:34-36, giving the section literary structure. Verse 36 reads: The *enemy* is to be *loved* ones. “Enemy” and “loved ones” are similar in sound and appearance, being האויבים *ha-oyvim* and אהובים *ahuvim*, respectively. From this pun, the word “love” (אהב) emerges as a catchword that makes contact with the next pericope, in which it reappears as a major element. The absence of vs 38 is important for this catchword context, since its occurrence in the Greek text disrupts the connection. It reads: “And he who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.” The Greek form of vs 39 is also disruptive of the catchword context, reading: “He who *finds* his life will lose it.” Both of these interruptions are absent in the Hebrew text, allowing the pun/catchword *love* to dominate the entire section. The Hebrew is clearly more artistic than the Greek, even though its literary structure is based upon a shorter text (the absence of vss 37b-38). The short text is supported, however, by P<sup>19</sup> (=P. Oxy. 1170) a fourth- or fifth-century manuscript in the Bodleian Library in Oxford. Vs 37b is also missing in B\* D 983 and a few others. (George Howard, *Hebrew Gospel of Matthew*)

Working the same ground, but a generation earlier than Howard, was Hugh Schonfield, whose book: *An Old Hebrew Text of St. Matthew's Gospel* was published in 1927. To explain certain similarities between Hebrew Matthew and the Vulgate, he observes:

It is to Jerome that the revision of the Latin version, known as the Vulgate, is due, and it is not impossible that he may have incorporated into his revised text readings from the Aramaic Gospel which he held in high esteem. . . . In many instances the reading of the Hebrew are a distinct improvement over the Received Text.

Schonfield then offers various examples of possible improvements, two of which I pass along here:

Matt. 5:46 – In this place and throughout the Gospel the Hebrew has transgressors for publicans. This appears to be the true reading on the following grounds: (1) The parties in question are commonly associated with sinners or harlots. Now if tax-gatherers was intended, it is curious to find them singled out for classification with such company. Why not dicers, usurers, or members of some other immoral profession? If, however, we accept the word transgressors we find the conjunction to be an ordinary Jewish usage: thus we get such associations as these – “the wicked (Sept. ‘Ungodly’) and the sinner” (Prov. 11:31); “the ungodly and the sinner” (1 Pet. 4:18); “sinners and ungodly” (Enoch 38:3); “sinners and evil doers” (*ibid.* 45 5). (2) פְּרָשָׁה often used in the O. T. of transgressing the Law, covenant, the commandments of God (Deut. 26:13; Josh. 7:11; Dan. 9:11, etc.) and in the N. T. we have the Greek equivalent ‘a transgressor of the law,’ (James 2:11); Why do you also transgress the commandment of God?” (Matt. 15:3). (3) At the time of Christ this very term “transgressors,” was used to denote a class of people who might fitly be grouped with sinners, harlots, and heathen.

Matt. 8:20 – “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heavens have nests; but the son of man hath not a

floor whereon he may lay his head.” The addition of the word floor, gives a new pathos to this utterance, which seems to accommodation tin the common khan or carravan-serai of the village, where the rudest provision was made for the traveler in the allotment of a paved recess, raised a foot or two above the level of the courtyard where the cattle were tied. “Such travelers would neither expect nor require attendance, and would pay only the merest trifle for the advantage of shelter, safety, and a floor on which to lie.” (Farrer, *Life of Christ*)

#### THE BOOK OF ENOCH AND THE FOURFOLD GOSPEL TRADITION

Given how well attested it is by scholars, one would not suppose any particular degree of courage would attach to speaking about a 4<sup>th</sup> synoptic gospel; rather, one might suppose gratitude would be an appropriate response, but James R. Edwards disabuses us of this notion:

. . . from the first study program in Israel that I led, in 1968, . . . I rejuvenated my Hebrew in order to read the OT with greater facility, but one of the unanticipated consequences of this rejuvenation was a different perspective on the *New Testament*. In no NT book did Hebrew make a greater difference than in my reading of the Third Gospel. . . . in the Gospel of Luke – or at least parts of it – the subtext became much more visible. The Hebrew words seem to have been erased less completely than elsewhere in the Gospels. They are more evident, intrusive, and inescapable. . . . Nor did Luke seem to make an effort to tame or camouflage the Hebraisms. Their primitive and alien dignity seem to be consciously retained without Hellenizing or harmonizing to Lukan style. They give every appearance of coming from a *source* that the author valued and attempted to preserve. . . .

At the time I did not know that my discovery concurred with that of other scholars. In the past century and a half, scholars have repeatedly recognized an inordinately high number of Semitisms in the Third Gospel. Conversations with colleagues on the topic evoked within me the same hopes and fears I faced as a mountaineer before attempting an ascent. . . . One of my most respected mentors suggested that the Hebrew Gospel could be a trap. An acquaintance, less well known, told me that if I published my thesis it would be the end of my scholarly career. Without having willed it, I stood at a classic existential fork in the road.

By acknowledging the validity of a fourth synoptic gospel, Edwards found himself in a quandary. Proceed as he was doing and he would find himself contradicting one of Christendom’s more cherished shibboleths, the fourfold gospel tradition (three synoptic gospels plus *John*). The restriction on the number of gospels to four has a long history going back to an influential, 2<sup>nd</sup> century theologian by the name of Irenaeus, who wrote:

It is impossible that the Gospels can be more or less than they are. For as there are four zones in the world which we inhabit, and four principle winds, while the Church is spread abroad the earth, and the pillar and basis of the Church is the gospel and the spirit of life, it is right that she should have four pillars exhaling immortality on every side, and bestowing renewed vitality on men. From which fact it follows that the Word has given us four versions of the Gospel, united by one spirit.

Where was Irenaeus getting his ideas from? Is there a “thus saith the Lord” backing him up? His source was “*The Book of Enoch*” which at the time of his writing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century was accepted in some quarters as Scripture. Among other things, this book graphically describes how the antediluvian patriarch, Enoch, in the company of an angel, took a miraculous flight to “the stone which supports the corners of the earth, and the four winds which bear up the earth, and constitute the pillars of heaven.” These, so Irenaeus assures us above, are “facts.”

Though the “*Book of Enoch*” did not ultimately gain Church sanction in Europe and was lost there, it did gain canonical status in, of all places, Ethiopia where to this day the Church preserves it as part of its *New Testament* which is why we have exact knowledge of it. Although the book itself had disappeared in Europe, some of its imagery lingered on. For instance, it was *Enoch’s* cosmological concepts which got certain mediaeval astronomers into hot water. If the inspired prophet saw the stone which supports the corners of the earth, then how dare these impious men claim otherwise and say the earth goes around the sun!

What if on such a basis the four winds, the four corners of the earth, etc, Irenaeus had asserted that there were four and only four apostles when we know there to have been twelve or four commandments when we know there are ten? Why, then, was it so important to him to assert that there were four, and only four, gospels? We have to speculate a little as to his motives which possibly had to do with the known rivalry between the Church and the Nazarene community as they vied for the leadership of the Jesus’ movement. That may go a long way toward explaining why Aramaic antecedents are underplayed while Greek is treated as king.

#### JOHN MARK

John Mark comes to us highly recommend: Peter in his first epistle (5:13) calls him “my son.” (It is not thought that he was speaking in terms of physical generation but in the spiritual sense.) And to Timothy Paul said of Mark: “he is profitable to me for the ministry” (*II Timothy* 4:11). Mark’s home in Jerusalem was a gathering place for believers. It is where Peter headed to when released from prison, “where many were gathered together praying.”

A traveling man, Mark, so Eusebius informs us, was sent to Egypt in the first year of Em-

peror Claudius's reign, 41 A.D. and, according to Jerome, he took with him there his gospel. According to St. Chrysostom, he wrote his gospel in Egypt. Later he accompanied Paul and his cousin Barnabas on Paul's first missionary tour which took them from their starting point in Antioch to Seleucia and from there to Cyprus, then to Salamis and then on to Perga in Pamphilia (See Acts chapters 13-14.) This would be about 50 AD. For reasons not explained, John Mark then abandoned the mission and returned to Jerusalem. Later, when he wanted to join Paul's and Barnabas's second missionary journey, Paul opposed him which led to a sharp dispute between Paul and Barnabas with the upshot being that Paul took Silas instead while Barnabas took Mark, the latter two returning to Cyprus. Sometime after 61 AD, Mark is reported to have joined up with Peter in Rome:

In his *Hypotyposes* Clement of Alexandria tells us that it was part of the tradition of former times that 'When Peter had publicly preached the word in Rome, and declared the Gospel by the Spirit, those who were present, being many, urged Mark, as one who had followed him for a long time and remembered what he said, to record what he stated; and that he having made his Gospel gave it to those who made the request of him; . . .'

(Theodore Zahn)

From internal considerations, as well as we see above, from historical considerations, reason exists for supposing that Mark prepared multiple editions of his gospel narrative.

. . . We shall show presently that the Markan narrative in the first Gospel bears unmistakable marks of an Alexandrian origin, while canonical Mark as distinctly points to Rome. . . . But if these marks appear in these two gospels, the Lukan Mark has many traits which point to a Palestinian origin, . . .

(William West Holdsworth, *Gospel Origins*)

Organizing the statements of Scripture and the Church Fathers about Mark and the *Gospel of Mark* is a daunting task. To help us through it all is William West Holdsworth's 1913 book, *Gospel Origins: a study in the Synoptic Problem*. His is one of the more useful treatments of this subject in that he thoroughly understands that *Mark* went through several editions, an important insight in unlocking the Synoptic puzzle. However, Holdsworth is not up on the *Gospel according to the Hebrews* nor fully aware of a Semitic *Vorlage* generally.

St. Mark was the son of a woman named Mary, and his mother's home in Jerusalem seems to have been a place of resort for the disciples. There is a tradition that the Upper Room, where the Lord celebrated the last Passover, as well as the room in which the disciples were assembled at Pentecost, was in her house. Some have supposed that the man carrying a pitcher of water, and the young man who fled away naked, which are mentioned only in the Markan narrative, were St. Mark himself. Papias says that 'he neither heard the Lord nor followed him, but subsequently attached himself to Peter.' The latter, on being delivered from prison (Acts xii.), went at once to

St. Mark's house, 'where many were gathered together praying.' He was well known there and was recognized by the servant, whose name was inserted in the record by the person from whom St. Luke derived the earlier chapters of 'The Acts of the Apostles' – probably from St. Mark himself. We are told, again by Papias, that St. Mark became the interpreter of St. Peter, and as the latter was probably unable to speak Greek with ease, this was likely enough. It has often been pointed out that the address given by St. Peter in the house of Cornelius (Acts x. 34 ff.) is an epitome of the second Gospel, and this becomes significant if St. Mark was one of the brethren that accompanied St. Peter from Joppa (Acts x. 23). We have only to accept that the newly baptized in Caesarea wished to retain some record of St. Peter's preaching, and that St. Mark wrote down what St. Peter had said, and left it with them. Eusebius tells us that St. Mark was sent to Egypt in the first year of the Emperor Claudius, which would be in A.D. 41, and both Eusebius and Jerome tell us that he took his Gospel with him. St. Chrysostom tells us that he wrote his gospel in Egypt.

Both statements might well be true if St. Mark, wishing the Church in Alexandria to 'possess some record of apostolic teaching on the facts of Christ's life, re-wrote 'as much as he remembered' ( ὅσα ἐμνημόνευσεν ) of St. Peter's addresses. This document would pass into the treasured records of the Church in Alexandria.

We next find St. Mark in the company of Paul and Barnabas at Antioch. Presumably he had returned from Egypt to Jerusalem, and accompanied the two apostles on their missionary journey, which may be assigned to the year A.D. 50 (Acts xiii. 5). He did not, however, continue long. They were together when St. Paul wrote his epistle to the Colossians (Col. iv. 10), and St. Mark's name occurs again in connection with St. Luke's in the Epistle to Philemon (24). The reference in the Colossian Epistle shows St. Mark to be on the point of making a journey from Rome to Asia, but a few years after this he is again required at Rome by St. Paul, who says (2 Tim. iv. 11): 'Take Mark and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry,' words which Zahn (vol. ii. p. 448) interprets to mean that St. Mark was in possession of 'treasure of narrative from the lips of Peter and of other disciples of Jesus, who were accustomed to come and go in his mother's house.' Apparently he did return to Rome, for it is generally accepted now that the reference in I Peter v. 13 is to be taken as showing that St. Mark and St. Peter were together in that city when the first Epistle of Peter was written. This would be after the year A.D. 61. This falls in with other references in Patristic writings. In his *Hypotyposes* Clement of Alexandria tells us that it was part of the tradition of former times that 'When Peter had publicly preached the word in Rome, and declared the Gospel by the Spirit, those who were present, being many, urged Mark, as one who had followed him for a long time and remembered what he said, to record what he stated; and that he having made his Gospel gave it to those who made the request of him; . . . ' (T. Zahn, p. 432). . . . The last Father to be cited in this connection is Irenaeus, who says (*Haer.*

iii. 11) that 'Matthew published his Gospel . . . while Peter and Paul were preaching and founding the Church in Rome. After their departure Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, himself also has handed down to us in writing the things which were preached by Peter.'

. . . We shall show presently that the Markan narrative in the first Gospel bears unmistakable marks of an Alexandrian origin, while canonical Mark as distinctly points to Rome. . . . But if these marks appear in these two gospels, the Lukan Mark has many traits which point to a Palestinian origin, . . . (pp. 114-117)

#### DOUBLETS IN MARK

Evidence indicating multiple editions of *Mark* is the presence of what are called 'doublets.' As J. T. Marshall observed in a 19<sup>th</sup> century treatise: *The Aramaic Gospel*:

In describing the healing of the leper who came to Christ I the first days of His ministry, with such wonderful faith, saying, "If Thou art willing Thou art able to cleanse me," we find different phrases used to describe the fact of his recovery.

Matt. viii, 3: His leprosy was cleansed.

Luke v. 13: His leprosy departed from him.

Mrk I. 12: His leprosy departed from him, and he was healed.

We would suggest that this difference is due to a various reading: אהגקה for אהגדה .

In the reading in Mark's Gospel, "His leprosy departed from him, and was cleansed," we have our first instance of a phenomenon which will before long engage our serious attention – doublets in Mark. . . . a translator is acquainted with two translations of the original, in his uncertainty as to which is correct, . . . sometimes inserts *both*.

For other examples of doublets see Burkett's *Rethinking Gospel Sources*, pages 122-126. What *Mark's* editing reveals was a consistently conservative approach, i.e., an attempt to conserve ever so slightly divergent readings even if this led to some degree of redundancy. Indeed, a cautious conservatism pervades the entire gospel-writing enterprise.

#### ERRANCY OR INERRANCY?

The question as to why God has allowed variants to creep into the early texts and versions of these sacred books must be a puzzling one to many minds. The answer may be that His work is not mechanical, like ours. Is it not possible that we have ourselves confounded the idea of inspiration with that of dictation? The latter would have meant the production of a text whose every letter might have been worshiped; the former means that God put it into the hearts of chosen men the desire to write what they knew for a certainty about His



dealings with them, but that He kept them at perfect liberty both to express and to transmit His meaning in their own way.

(Agnes Smith Lewis, *The Old Syriac Gospels*, 1910)

The idea of the gospel accounts as having been worked up from rudimentary, eyewitness reports into more finished products is anathema to fundamentalists who prefer that they had simply dropped from the heavens. Rather than having an angel drop off some golden plates for translation or leaving us his own divine account, Jesus, instead, left his apostles at perfect liberty to express, each in his or her own way, his message, for, in fact, the gospels are the product of human hearts and human hands with abundant evidence of intermediate documents indicating that literary effort was required. It will be gratifying to some, while disturbing to others, to learn that one such intermediary document, MS Pepys 2498, has survived to our day, allowing us to go behind the *New Testament* to an earlier strata of witness.

What then of the theory of Peter or Mark not having set pen to paper until after twenty, thirty, forty years had passed? Three distinct groups, each for their own reasons, have upheld this theory. Originally, various Gentile Church scholars, in seeking to distance Christianity from its Semitic roots, wanted Greek translations not to be thought of as translations, but as original compositions. It wouldn't do for Aramaic-speaking fishermen to start writing right off the bat. Then, in the modern era, destructive critics entered the fray. In their disbelief that Jesus did the miracles attributed to him, they want to give the evangelists time enough to make it plausible to say that they conjured up fabulous tales. Curiously enough, in defense of their theory of inspiration called "inerrancy," certain Protestant scholars have also entered this fray. They posit that in some discrete moment in time, the Holy Spirit visited each evangelist and had him write out his gospel, as it were, by dictation, an angel guiding his hand, while a voice from heaven spoke. To explain word-for-word correspondence among the synoptic gospels, they concede, one canonical writer could borrow from another – but not from intermediate, non-canonical source. Decades of oral ministry by the apostles works for all three groups. Greek only also works for all three groups.

#### SYNOPTIC MERRY - GO - ROUND

A problem for fundamentalists to solve and for the rest of us to ponder are the numerous, word-for-word agreements appearing so frequently among the synoptic gospels. Obviously, there is literary dependence. But who was depending on whom? Was *Mark* prior to *Matthew* and *Luke* and therefore available to them as a source? or was *Matthew* prior to them all? Maybe *Luke* was prior to them all. If one considers all the permutations, more than a dozen ways exist for one or more of the gospels to be used by one or more of the other gospels. Each possibility has its champions. For instance, 1,500 years ago Augustine of Hippo

avored *Matthean* priority. According to the Augustinian hypothesis, *Matthew's Gospel* was utilized by Mark and his *Gospel* was used by Luke. Since the Reformation, most scholars of Protestant persuasion have posited *Markan* priority. According to the *Holtzmann/Streeter hypothesis* (advanced by H. J. Holtzmann in 1863, and refined in 1924 by B. H. Streeter), Mark wrote his gospel first. This was later independently used by Matthew and Luke. Over the last 30 years arose what is called the Jerusalem School whose scholars, observing that *Luke* translates back into Hebrew the easiest. Thus, they are proponents of *Lukan* priority.

But it goes beyond the schools mentioned above. Because each one advances a position easily enough refuted by every other school, further complexities have been introduced, such as positing a hypothetical (some would say mythical) "Q" document ("Q" short for *quelle*, German for "source") Thus there exists the "three-source hypothesis" whereby Luke supposedly knew *Matthew's Gospel*, Q, and *Mark*. Then, too, there is the "four-source hypothesis" and beyond that many other theories. Ronald Higgins, for instance, advances "*Matthean* posterity," that is, that Matthew utilized both *Mark* and *Luke*. Conversely, A. M. Farmer's take is that Luke used both *Matthew* and *Mark*, a view shared by both Michael Goulder and Mark Goodacre. After several centuries of this sort of argumentation, the only real question is: how do we escape from all the idle, Alice-in-Wonderland speculation?

The improbability of any of these options which some call "the synoptic maze" is laid out in a copiously documented book titled: "*Rethinking the Gospel Sources*" by Delbert Burkett. Backing up his thesis with chart after chart, he demonstrates the necessity of intermediate Greek documents. *Matthew*, for instance, uses not canonical *Mark* but a *proto-Markan* text. *Luke* uses a second *proto-Markan* text. Our canonical *Mark* combines the two *proto-Markan* texts which is why canonical *Mark* offers us numerous, discrete episodes, called *pericopea*, which provide a fuller, more satisfying telling of events than do either *Matthew* or *Luke*. Our *Mark*, albeit the fuller text at many points, uses noticeably less grammatical Greek, indicating thereby that in some respects its text is the earlier, more primitive one. Both *Luke* and *Matthew* correct its grammatical blunders but we need not suppose that the *Mark* they were working from and correcting was fully the canonical *Mark* with which we are familiar.

#### COMPARING TEXT WITH TEXT

A careful and minute study of a Greek harmony of the Gospels reveals a threefold classification of their contents.

- A. – There are numerous passages – sections, verses, or phrases – in which each of the evangelists stands alone.
- B. – There are many instances in which two, or sometimes three, evangelists agree

verbatim; or at all events the differences are not greater than may have taken place in process of transcription from a Greek text, . . .

- C. – There are other instances where the parallel passages agree in thought, but not in words. (J. T. Marshall)

As scholars have long observed – and laymen with a Greek copy of the gospels can easily confirm – word-for-word correspondence exists in various places among the synoptic gospels while in other places, the ideas correspond but the words do not. Because the evangelists have woven a complex tapestry from a welter of languages and intermediate documents, alas, no longer extant, we might as well resign ourselves to not having an overarching theory explaining everything they did. But then only the anxious-minded need to have all the answers tied up in a neat package. The rest of us will be happy enough to have provisional answers. In this regard, though he flourished more than a century ago, J. T. Marshall in his era went well beyond where Delbert Burkitt has gone in ours. The latter only considers Greek usage, which is useful enough in helping us understand agreements in language, but Marshall, by deducing underlying, Aramaic usage, allows us to understand linguistic incongruities:

- I. If in the parallel passages in the synoptic Gospels we find 'resemblance in substance, but not in words,' this is the indication that first places us on the alert.
- II. If in such parallel passages we notice an unusually rich Aramaic colouring, and,
- III., if the verbs differ in voice or tense, we have confirmatory evidence. His evidence is much increase if
- IV. Be also present: that is, if two divergent Greek words in the several Gospels can be shown to be derived from the same Aramaic consonants, only differently vocalized. But No.
- V. is our main support. If in homologous passages which possess some or all of these marks we come across two Greek words, in two several Gospels, which are unlike in meaning, but these meanings can be shown to belong to one and the same Aramaic word, we may then with confidence affirm that the two Greek words have been translated from the same Aramaic original. For instance, Matthew vi. 12 says: "Forgive us our debts," ὀφειλήματα; Luke xi. 4: "Forgive us our sins," ἁμαρτίας. Why this disagreement in so peculiarly sacred a passage? If the prayer had originally been given by our Lord in Greek, such a diversity would be impossible. When we remember however, that the Aramaic word ܠܚܝܒ means (1) a trespass, (2) a debt, we perceive that the two evangelists were translating the same word ܠܚܝܒܝܬܐ. We intend to adduce about *thirty* clear cases like this.

## A NAZARENE REFERENCE IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she being with child cried, travaillth in birth, and pained to be delivered. . . . And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God . . . And to the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

(Revelation 12:1-2, 5-6, 14-17)

About 1900 AD, a remnant scrap of gospel text was discovered in an area which is now inside modern-day China, but which once laid aside what was then the Silk Road running through Turfstan. Written in an ancient, Parthian dialect, these fragments were published in Berlin, in 1904. Dating to before 1000 AD, this text, denominated M-18, has a few unique and surprising connections to *the Nazarene Gospel Narrative*. First, the Parthian fragment:

Think about what Jesus told you while still in Galilee, "It is necessary for me to be delivered to them, and to be crucified; on the third day I will rise from the dead."

Then, from the *Nazarene Gospel Narrative*:

. . . it was necessary for him to suffer his passion on the cross, and to die, and on the third day to rise from death to life." (NGN 103:12)

Finally, from *Luke*:

. . . the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and on the third day rise. (Luke 24:7)

Neither the Parthian fragment nor the Nazarene Gospel have *Luke's* "Son of Man." They do share, however, the statement about rising from "the dead" or "death." Another parallel:

And they all struck him below the ear . . . (NGN 98:23)

. . . they struck him on the upper jaw. (M-18)

These two very specific texts, which are basically equivalent, are not found in other witnesses. Occasionally such small, verbal agreements as these add up to something significant, in this case, that a harmonizing, possibly Nazarene, gospel text was influencing gospel transmission in some of humankind's furthest out outposts. But why at the edges? Because this was beyond the reach of the Jewish Establishment, as well, beyond the reach of the Roman Church. The Nestorians, a Persian-based form of Christianity, were active a thousand years ago, in taking the Gospel to the Far East. To this day, the Serpent, ever wroth with the woman, makes war on her offspring and to this day the earth, yet helps to protect the woman's offspring from the ever growing intrusion of the all-seeing eye of the Zionist national security state.

#### THE DIATESSARON

About 170 AD, Tatian, a disciple of Justin Martyr, created a combined text out of the four canonical gospels. The Greek term for this is "Diatessaron," meaning the combining of four. Masterfully interwoven, some think Tatian achieved this result by taking a knife to a manuscript and cutting out single words and painstakingly reassembling them to form a unified text. However that may be, his text became the standard gospel text of Syria for several centuries until finally a Church prelate gathered up all the copies of the Diatessaron he could find and destroyed them. He did his job so well, not one Syriac copy of the Diatessaron survived. But that was not the end of the matter, for in translation, the Diatessaron had spread throughout the world: in Arabic, in Persian, in Latin, in German, and in many other languages. Its spread occurred often without official Church sanction. The basis for its popularity needs explaining, which the late, Diatessaronic scholar, William Petersen, did superbly in his book: *Tatian's Diatessaron: its Creation, Dissemination, Significance, and History in Scholarship*:

Although the idea of a gospel harmony seems odd today – especially to Biblical scholars who are trained to detect the slightest differences among the gospels, and to lay persons, some of whom are taught Biblical inerrancy – they are still common. Children are taught the story of Jesus' life in a harmonized form. Cinematic and theatrical adaptations of Jesus' life (e.g., "Passion Plays") harmonize the gospels. The "Words of Institution" used in liturgies are a harmony of the three synoptic versions, each of which is different) and Paul's (I Cor. 11:24), which adds the uniquely Pauline "do this in remembrance of me." These examples reveal two powerful motives for creating a harmony: teaching (or evangelization), and the desire not to omit anything (or put differently, to reproduce fully what is spread out among various sources). These same motives were operative in the second century, and probably contributed to the creation of harmonies in the early church. In antiquity (and perhaps even now) a third motive also seem to have been at work, and that was the desire to disarm critics of Christianity, such as Celsus (fl. C. 180), who used the inconsistencies and contradictions in the gospels to prove that the new religion was a fraud.

## VULGATIZATION AND HARMONIZATION

Reconstructing the Diatessaron's text has been no small task, for not only was the original Syriac text completely destroyed but most of the surviving copies in translation have been subject to revision whereby they were conformed to the standard canonical text. That standard in Latin was Jerome's Latin Vulgate – "vulgate" being a word in this context meaning "common." But the process of revision, because it was laborious, was often executed haphazardly, the revisor's attention being subject to what is called "editorial fatigue." Thus, valuable readings were retained. Back in the 1930's, a Middle Dutch text, known as the "*Leige Diatessaron*" was discovered by the dean of Diatessaronic scholars, Daniel Plooij, to have largely escaped the vulgatization process. Conversely, assimilation was a two way street with Diatessaronic or pre-Diatessaronic readings sometimes being incorporated into canonical texts:

In 1980, I pointed out a number of harmonistic readings in the Old Syriac Gospels which are unsupported by the Diatessaron and agree with pre-Tatianic authors. From these studies, it may be concluded that harmonization characterized the Gospel tradition from very early times, even before Tatian made his harmony. (George Howard)

Gilles Quispel, has documented unique textual correspondences between the *Heliand* and MS Pepys 2498, also, between an Old High German Diatessaron preserved in the library of St. Gallen, a monastery founded by the Culdees. These and the Liege Diatessaron were never systematically vulgatized, therefore mostly escaped the vulgatization process.

The Gospel describes Jesus as a rabbi and his followers as disciples. In Antiquity, as often as not, Christ was represented as a philosopher surrounded by his students. But in Anglo-Saxon England schools were hardly known and philosophers did not appeal to the imagination of the people. The society was based on the idea of loyalty: a knight was supposed to be loyal to his lord. It is often said that this idea of the comitatus is typically Germanic. But it is found in feudal societies all over the world. Therefore, when Christ is described as a king and his disciples as "thegnas", as happens in the poem *The Dream of the Rood*, this reflects not so much a Germanic as a feudal society.

The venerable Bede has described in a famous passage in his *Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (IV, 24) how these biblical epics originated: an indigenous poet, Caedemon, would go to a learned monk and have translated to him a passage of the Bible; the next day he would return and show his idiomatic, heroic, poetical translation of it. And this would go on until a complete poem had come about. . . . And it is quite possible that the *Heliand*, made after Anglo-Saxon examples and

meant to be sung in the halls of the squires was made in the same way. The *Heliand*, the most beautiful achievement of the Carolingian renaissance . . . is an Saxon poem of 5983 verses which tells the story of the life of Christ. . . . the Heiland is based on a Latin Diatessaron. (G. Quispel)

#### FROM THE PREFACE TO THE LIÈGE DIATESSARON

D. Plooij, 1929

Until 1923 it was common opinion among scholars that Tatian wrote his Diatessaron in Greek; that he translated it into Syriac and that the Latin Harmony extant for instance in the Codex Fuldensis was a more or less independent reproduction of the Greek Diatessaron. Zahn however, and after him Vogels, who studied the tradition of the Harmony in the West, discovered that this line of tradition was not so simple as it was supposed to be, and that the standard Vulgate text of the Fuldensis showed traces of an Old-Latin form. In 1910 already Vogels stated that the text of the Gospels in Codex Bezae, i.e. a fundamentally Old-Latin text, was deeply influenced by harmonistic readings from Tatian's Diatessaron, but even so the Greek origin of the famous work remained axiomatic and unquestionable.

In 1922 however a closer study of the text of a mediaeval Dutch Harmony, preserved in a xiv cent. Manuscript in the Liège University Library under the title *Vita Jesu Christi Flanrice*, . . . showed that the Liège text had been translated from an otherwise lost Old-Latin text, and that this Old-Latin text showed traces of being translated not from a Greek but from a Syriac original. On this find I reported in . . . 1923 under the title: *A primitive Text of the Diatessaron*, and followed in 1925 by a second study . . . *A Further Study of the Liège Diatessaron*.

Two theses were maintained in these studies:

1. That the Vulgate Latin Diatessaron is based upon an Old-Latin form of the text, which has largely influenced the whole Old-Latin textual tradition of the Gospels, and accordingly is anterior to these, i.e., belongs to the period of about 200 A.D.; and
2. That this Old-Latin text is a translation not from the Greek but from the Syriac.

The importance of these theses – if they are found to be confirmed by the facts – is so far-reaching for the text of the Gospels (and, as the problem belongs to the great problem of the 'Western' Text, also for the rest of the N. Test. Text, especially of Acts), that the interest taken in the new solution was quite justified: It would establish to a great extent the far-reaching influence of Tatian's work on the N. Test. Textual history, and would show at the same time a close relation between the early Syriac- and Latin-speaking Christianity (independent of the Greek-speaking Church) of which otherwise so little is known. Of a Greek Diatessaron in the meanwhile, not a single line has hitherto been discovered, and its existence, taken to be axiomatic,

remains entirely hypothetical.

The thesis of a Syriac origin for the Latin Diatessaron, being based upon textual data offered by a xiii century Dutch translation, was so romantic and unexpected, that the incredulity of scholars was entirely explicable if not justified. Their scepticism has been a little modified since the appearance of the second study, but as yet the whole attitude remains unaltered.

#### THE ORIENTALIST LOOKS TO THE WEST, AS WELL, EASTWARD

. . . the likeliest historical scenario, it seems to me, is that the Old Latin source of the Magdalene Gospel [MS Pepys 2498] had been cherished and preserved in the British Isles for over a 1000 years.

(Yuri Kuchinsky)

There is a mystery to be unraveled regarding the presence of various Diatessarons in mediaeval Europe. We know that they were spread there by missionaries from the British Isles by a class of people known as “Culdees” but how came Culdees to have Tatian’s Diatessaron in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, when long before, in 5<sup>th</sup> century, it had been completely rooted out of its presumptive homeland of Syria? More mysterious yet is the presence of a unique pre-Tatianic Diatessaron, MS Pepys 2498, in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Without gainsaying in any way the innate spiritual qualities of the Celts, we detect as part of their cultural heritage a Nazarene infusion. Here to some extent we enter a land of legend as misty as the emerald isles themselves. Gilles the Wise, a 5<sup>th</sup> century historian, Briton’s earliest, in describing Britain as God’s “latter day Israel,” wrote obliquely, so we believe, of Joseph of Arimathea, when he said:

“We know that Christ the true Sun afforded His light to our island in the last time of Tiberias Caesar.”

Joseph of Arimathea was reputed to have been a wealthy tin merchant who, according to tradition, traveled repeatedly to Cornwall, Wales, for tin, a commodity mined there in abundance. It is further alleged that Joseph brought with him his nephew, Jesus, when yet a teenager. As William Blake asks most sweetly:

*And did those feet in ancient time  
Walk upon England's mountains green?  
And was the holy Lamb of God  
On England's pleasant pastures seen?  
And did the countenance divine  
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?*

It is further alleged in legend that Joseph returned to Glastonbury after Jesus’ ministry in the company of 12 evangelists to establish a mission and that 12 hides of land, i.e, 1900 acres, were granted them.



*The pure culdees  
were Albys earliest priests of God,  
ere yet an island of her seas  
by foot of Saxon monk was trod.*

But what of this word “Culdee”? Some say it was derived from a Gaelic word *Culdrich*, meaning “pilgrim.” But others aver that it came from the Caldeean (Syriac), meaning “holy man.” In the Aramaic that would be *khalid*, meaning “friend of God.”

The original Caldees were “Jacobites,” which is to say, their branch of Christianity derived from James, not Paul. They observed the Passover, not Easter, believed in a married, not a celibate, priesthood, observed Levitical food injunctions, such as the avoidance of pork, and they kept the 7<sup>th</sup> day Sabbath. Their form of Christianity pre-dated the Church’s.

The question of Culdee Easter observance is rather complex, to be sure. And yet, it is reasonably clear that they were quartodecimans, i.e. they always celebrated Easter on the full moon of 14th of Nisan, coinciding with the Passover observances of the Jews. Interestingly, this is supported by Enc. Britannica, . . .

“. . . the church in Britain, which had few links with European churches at this time, retained the Quartodeciman position . . .” . (The Western calendar and calendar reforms - Britannica.com),

Culdees fully accepted marriage for priests, bishops, and even for monks. This puts them very close to the Jewish tradition, where marriage is recommended to all rabbis. (Yuri Kuchinsky)

Even great monastic communities were sometimes under the tutelage of a woman, such as Brigid of Kildare or Hilda at Witby. And when the light of learning had burned low or been extinguished in much the rest of Europe, the Culdees were actively establishing monasteries, not only in the British Isles, but across northern Europe, even as far away as Kiev.

. . . confining our attention to its spread on the Continent, we find this religious community in France, at the beginning of the eighth century, existing in the heart of the National Church, and not merely tolerated, but over the whole country, from the Jura to Nantes, and from this, line as far north as the delta of the Rhine, *Rome-free*, and entirely unrestricted in its internal organization, decidedly favored by the Merovingian kings, even dominating the National Church in the sense of spiritual and intellectual influence, and often also taking part in external government by the appointment of its abbots to important sees. We find the whole of the north of France sowed, so to speak, with monasteries, with all their peculiarities, in unopposed development. Then we find the whole of the Rhineland converted to Christianity by the Culdean Church, and ecclesiastically governed by it in its own peculiar manner; likewise the whole of the country now called Franconia, and Alamannia, and Bavaria, converted and ecclesiastically governed by Culdeans, and Culdeans alone.

All of the distinctive peculiarities of the Culdean Church – its married priests, its sending out of its missionaries by twelve, its practice of constructing settlements in separate houses, its subjection of chorepiscopi (or bishops of monasteries) to the rule of the abbots – all this we find in Bavaria and Alamannia in 730-739, just as it was in Scotland in 565.

(Johannes Ebrand, a 19<sup>th</sup> century historian)

Culdee artwork, as found in the marvelous Book of Kells has no element that identifies it as having been derived from Greece or Rome but its motifs and designs correspond amazingly to what one can find from Ethiopia. This is not to say that there was ever direct course between England and Rome, only that their art shared a common source halfway between the two. All of this fits a pattern. The famous Stowe missal of the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> century found in 1795 secreted in the walls of O’Kennedy Lackeen Castle gives good indication of having been influenced by the Syrian *Didache*, and, as well, by the East Syrian liturgy of Mari and Addai. Then, too, there is Celtic music:

Although the Celtic chant is said to be lost, that is not altogether true. A piece of Celtic Psalm music from Inchcolm Antiphonar, originating from West Highlands, and resembles in scale, key, timing, melodic movement and general embellishments a chanted song sang an isolated Christian group in Ethiopia. It is generally believed by historians that the isolated Ethiopian Church retained the most ancient of Christian music, possibly from original Palestinian or Temple sources.

Additional recent evidence of a fusion of Celtic Hebraic Chant form is the result of the systematic deciphering by Haik-Vantuura of the notation existing in the ancient Masoretic Hebrew Old Testament of the 9<sup>th</sup> century. The Masoretic author Moses ben Asher, noted in the text that the notation was “delivered to him as it was passed down from the prophets of old.” Analysis reveals that there are many similarities in the embellishments, modes and melodies of the early Irish Psalmody and the Hebrew Temple chant of the Book of Psalms.

(David Michael “Eastern Bishops and the Celtic Order of the Culdees”)

The Culdees, being of a decidedly scholarly bent, applied themselves not only to Scripture but also to the practical arts, making it a part of their ministry to teach the people improved agricultural techniques. With regard to their own Scriptural tradition, the Culdees, instead of changing over to Jerome’s 4<sup>th</sup> century, Latin Vulgate, continued with the Old Latin text called *Itala*. That could be seen as indicative of a kind of conservatism but in this instance, not of the selfish variety, for:

. . . unlike the Catholics of the time, the Culdees believed that the Scriptures should be translated into the vernacular languages of the people. Another similarity to the Protestants, and a clear influence on Wickliffe, the first prominent translator of biblical texts into English. The Culdees even preserved the knowledge of biblical languages. For example, St. Adamnan, a biographer of Columba, was very knowledgeable of not only Latin, but also of Greek and Hebrew.

(Yuri Kuchinsky)

The Culdees were ones for keeping Rome at arms length:

*Gwae ni cheidw ey gaiul,  
ac ef yn vigail  
ac ni areilla!  
Gwae ni theidw ey dheueid,  
rhae bleidhie Rhiefeniaid,  
ai ffon grewppa!*

*Woe to those priests I say,  
who keep not vigil over their flocks  
as befits their office!*

*Woe if elders keep not  
from Roman wolves, their fold of sheep  
with staffs and weapons strong!*

In a letter from St Columban to Pope Boniface (AD 590), Columban does not write as a subordinate, but as a fellow bishop, in no way inferior to the Roman Pope. In his letter, Columban encourages Boniface to "cleanse his holy See" from error. While he does agree to honour the See of Rome, Columban reserves the highest place of honour for the See of Jerusalem, since it is known scripturally as the place of the Lord's resurrection. In these disputes, Culdees often appealed to ancient records that proved, according to them, that the bishop of Rome should not pretend to command other Christian bishops. (Yuri Kuchinsky)

#### **PELAGIUS, THE CULDEAN, AND NESTORIUS, THE CHALDEAN**

From the British Isles, came Pelagius, a Culdean whose writings have mostly been lost, nay, destroyed, but we do have a few letters from which I have extracted the following concerning grace and freewill, the issue over which he was condemned:

"God's grace lies in the fact that we have been so created as to be able to do this by the will, and in the further fact that God has given to us the assistance of His law and commandments, and also in that He forgives their past sins when men turn to Him... [and] in these things alone. . . . This grace we for our part do not, as you suppose, allow to consist merely in the law, but also in the help of God. God helps us by His teaching and revelation, whilst He opens the eyes of our heart; whilst He points out to us the future, that we may not be absorbed in the present; whilst He discovers to us the snares of the devil; whilst He enlightens us with the manifold and ineffable gift of heavenly grace."

Even in condemning him, Pelagius's opponents are compelled to speak well of him:

Pelagius was highly educated, spoke and wrote Latin as well as Greek with great fluency and was well versed in theology. In Rome itself he enjoyed the reputation of austerity, while St. Augustine called him even a "saintly man", *vir sanctus*: . . .

The gravest error into which he and the rest of the Pelagians fell, was that they did not submit to the doctrinal decisions of the Church. . . . at that time, the doctrine of Christian grace was everywhere vague and undefined; even the West was convinced of nothing more than that some sort of assistance was necessary to salvation and was given gratuitously, while the nature of this assistance was but little understood. In the East, moreover, as an offset to widespread fatalism, the moral power and freedom of the will were at times very strongly or even too strongly insisted on assisting grace being spoken of more frequently than preventing grace. It was due to the intervention of St. Augustine and the Church, that greater clearness was gradually reached in the disputed questions and that the first impulse was given towards a more careful development of the dogmas of original sin and grace.

*(New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia)*

Because few of Pelagius's writings have survived, it is not possible to speak definitively about his beliefs. This we know, in December in 415 AD the Synod of Diospolis concluded:

Now since we have received satisfaction in respect of the charges brought against the monk Pelagius in his presence and since he gives his assent to sound doctrines but condemns and anathematizes those contrary to the faith of the Church, we adjudge him to belong to the communion of the Catholic Church.

Nevertheless, in 418 AD, at the behest of Saint Augustine and Hoorius, emperor of Rome, Pelagius was excommunicated by Pope Zosimus and, as well, he was expelled from Jerusalem, after which he was sent to Egypt, never to be heard from again.

To a surprising degree, just a few years later, the distinguished orator and theologian, Nestorius, met the same fate as did Pelagius, his writings were burned, he was excommunicated from the Church, and then he was banished to the desert of Egypt where he died. Again let us allow his opponents to tell the sorry tale:

Nestorius was a disciple of the school of Antioch, and his Christology was essentially that of Diodorus of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia, . . . The lot of Nestorius was a hard one. He had been handed over by the pope to the tender mercies of his rival, Cyril; he had been summoned to accept within ten days under pain of deposition, not a papal definition, but a series of anathemas drawn up at Alexandria under the influence of Apollinarian forgeries. The whole council had not condemned him, but only a portion, which had not awaited the arrival of the bishops from Antioch. He had refused to recognize the jurisdiction of this incomplete number, and had consequently refused to appear or put in any defence. . . . He retired to his monastery at Antioch with dignity and apparent relief. The bishops who were suspected of being favourable

to Nestorius were deposed. An edict of Theodosius II, 30 July, 435, condemned his writings to be burnt. A few years later Nestorius was dragged from his retirement and banished to the Oasis [Egypt].

The Persian Church was now organized, if not thoroughly united, and was formally committed to the theology of Antioch. . . . Nestorius has always been venerated as a saint by the Persian Church. The Persian Christians were called "Orientals", or "Nestorians", by their neighbours on the west. They gave to themselves the name Chaldeans; . . . One thing more was needed for the Nestorian Church; it wanted theological schools of its own, . . . Barsaûma opened a school at Nisibis, which was to become more famous than its parent at Edessa. The rector was Narses the Leprous, a most prolific writer, of whom little has been preserved. This university consisted of a single college, with the regular life of a monastery. Its rules are still preserved. At one time we hear of 800 students. Their great doctor was Theodore of Mopsuestia. . . . The fame of this theological seminary was so great that Pope Agapetus and Cassiodorus wished to found one in Italy of a similar kind. the attempt was impossible in those troublous times; but Cassiodorus's monastery at Vivarium was inspired by the example of Nisibis.

The Nestorians also penetrated into China and Mongolia and left behind them an inscribed stone, set up in Feb., 781, which describes the introduction of Christianity into China from Persia in the reign of T'ai-tsong (627-49). The stone is at Chou-Chih, fifty miles south-west of Sai-an Fu, which was in the seventh century the capital of China. It is known as "the Nestorian Monument". (New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia)

. . . the controversy between Nestorius of Constantinople and Cyril of Alexandria, a bitter dispute that racked the entire oecumene. The Christian church's decision on the Arian heresy, at Nicaea in 325, brings in its wake further problems of the same kind. If Jesus is 'of one substance with the Father', he is incontrovertibly God. It follows that the Virgin Mary, though herself entirely human, gives birth to God. The phrase *theotokos* ('bearer of God' in Greek) is soon widely used of her.

This becomes a political issue in the 5th century when Nestorius, the bishop of Constantinople, says that the word *theotokos* should not be used. An ecclesiastical rival, Cyril the patriarch of Alexandria, seizes the opportunity to harm Constantinople by declaring its bishop a heretic.

Nestorius dies in about 451 - the year in which another council, at Chalcedon, confirms the decisions of Ephesus and specifically declares that Mary is indeed *theotokos*, the Mother of God. In certain regions, particularly Syria, there is widespread support for Nestorius. Christians of this persuasion, escaping from militant orthodoxy, move east into Persia. (Wikipedia)

What at root was the controversy about? Why were Pelagius and Nestorius dealt with so harshly? I would suggest that theological differences were only part of the story. Yes, Pela-

gius emphasized free will when Augustine emphasized the bondage of the will and, yes, Nestorius, emphasized the manhood of Christ, but these differences in emphasis hardly constituted heresy. More to the point, these were men who thought their own thoughts, expressed themselves freely in their own way, and weren't about to knuckle under, which was infuriating to those who demand conformity of thought and obedience to "higher authority," which raises a question, who needs a one-size-fits-all organization, anyhow? That wasn't part of the original faith once delivered to the saints but some latter accommodation to the world. Note, too, that much of the controversy occurs at the borders and follows linguistic and cultural divides: the Gaelic divide in Briton, the Berber divide in North Africa (i.e., the Donatist controversy in which Augustine played a key roll in bringing in Roman force of arms against the local church). In the East there was the Semitic divide.

#### THEODORE OF TARSUS (602 - 690)

One of the most remarkable personalities of his era was Theodore of Tarsus, the eighth archbishop of Canterbury. Born in the same city as was the Apostle Paul, a Byzantine Greek, beginning about age 12, he lived under Persian rule and absorbed Persian culture. Later he matriculated in Antioch from whence he received much the same theological training Nestorius had and was a lifelong proponent of that school's unique theological emphasis. After that he studied in Constantinople and became completely conversant with Roman civil law and Greek rhetoric and philosophy, as well, medicine. After that he moved to Rome, where he lived with eastern monks in a monastery and continued his education, becoming fully acquainted with Latin culture, both sacred and profane. Consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury in 669, thereafter, he established an influential school which ushered in the "golden age" of Anglo-Saxon scholarship.

Theodore of Tarsus was a strong partisan of duothelitism (= Christ had a divine and human will). Through him some niceties of Greek theology fell on English soil, which turned out to be extremely fertile. Commentaries of Theodore have been identified which show him to be a sober exegete of Scripture with great attention to the letter of the Bible. He was the real teacher of the venerable Bede, who was an outstanding biblical scholar, especially in his wonderful commentary of Luke. The English were not slow to discover what this seemingly dogmatic detail meant for their faith. With this stress on the human will of Jesus the church legitimated their view that Christ was a king who willingly died for his people. In the end this view was of great help in delivering the Nordic peoples from their submission to fate. Alcuin, who made his theology the dominant philosophy of the Carolingian epoch, put it in this way: "*Non aliqua necessitate coactus sed propria voluntate passus est pro nobis, dum voluit*". That Christ broke fate by his will helped the Christians who still struggled with the old idea of "*Wurd*" (fate) to discover his and so their own liberty. It was this

shade of Christianity, both popular and learned, which was brought by the Anglo-Saxon missionaries to Northern Europe. It is reflected in the *Heliand*, where Jesus wills the will of God:

He need not have stood,  
nor such grievous sufferings,  
nor have endured such anguish.  
But He did so for this host  
Since He wanted to save  
the children of men.

And this leads up to Anselm of Canterbury, according to whom the humanity of Christ atones for mankind by its voluntary suffering, and to Bernard of Clairvaux's mysticism of the Bridegroom on the Cross. Western Christianity, the theology of the Cross, so different from the Byzantine stress on Godman and triumphal resurrection, has its roots in Anglo-Saxon England. (G. Quispel)

#### **C H R I S T   O U R   E X A M P L E**

"I came down from heaven, not that I might do mine own will but the will of the Father which sent me!"

By appealing to our better angels, by appealing to us to follow his example, Jesus holds us accountable to respond to his commands. In this, one might say that he maintains an optimistic view regarding our competency to respond. As Jesus said:

"God prevent it that man should tempt Him by asking for help to be saved, but not help himself."

"Whoso maketh earnest supplication with open heart, his prayer shall be heard before God."

"It behooveth him who would be my disciple, to give the most careful attention to letting go of all such things as would be disturbing of my love."

"Whoso will have life without end, look that he keep the commandments of God."

Not all, however, believe we have better angels or light within. At the far end of the spectrum in its pessimistic assessment is that ultimate expression of fatalism devised by puritanical Calvinism, as summarized by the acronym TULIP:

**T**otal Depravity (also known as Total Inability and Original Sin)

**U**nconditional Election

**L**imited Atonement (also known as Particular Atonement)

**I**rresistible Grace

**P**erseverance of the Saints (also known as Once Saved Always Saved)

But it wasn't just John Calvin who offers the council of despair, much likewise can be found in Martin Luther's book: *The Bondage of the Will*. But where are they getting this stuff from? As it turns out, both Calvin and Luther were Augustinian, both follow the lead of the western Church's preeminent theologian.

The argument then is not just over the separated gospels of the Church versus the combined gospels of the Nazarenes, nor at root was it even doctrinal, but there existed non-compatible world views: one hopeful, one pessimistic.

. . . it's helpful to think of the [two] natures [of Christ] adverbially. The divine Son exists humanly -- not in a diminished sense of 'rather *like* the human than as human', but in acknowledgment that humanity, the full human natural realm, is now the way in which the Son divinely exists. He has a divine will humanly, which means equally that he has a human will divinely, since it is the human will of the divine Son. It is *both* a human and a divine will, inasmuch as it is the singular will of the God-man. The real challenge of the dythelete controversy was not over confessing that Christ had two natural wills in perfect union, but articulating how they could be in such a perfect union while being *both active*. (Matthew Steenburg)

### *Celtic Prayer*

*Let us go forth,*

*In the good news of our merciful father,  
In the gentleness of our brother Jesus,  
In the radiance of his Holy Spirit,  
In the faith of the apostles,  
In the holiness of the saints,  
In the courage of martyrs,*

*Let us go forth,*

*In the wisdom of our all-seeing Father,  
In the patience of our all-loving brother,  
In the truth of the all-knowing spirit,  
In the learning of the apostles,  
In the patience of the saints,  
In the gracious guidance of the angels,*

*In the self-control of the martyrs,*

*Such is the path for all servants of Christ,  
The path from death to eternal life.  
The will of God be done by us,  
The law of God be kept by us,  
Our evil will controlled by us,  
Speedy repentance made by us,  
Blessed death welcomed by us,  
God's highest praises sung by us.*

*Christ's death would I ponder,  
My own death remember;  
Christ's cross would I carry,  
My own cross forget.*



# Linguistic issues

## THE LANGUAGES OF PROCLAMATION

A standing joke among a certain class of sophisticates is that rube Christians are so ignorant, they actually believe the Bible to have been originally written in King James English. Perhaps a few do. The joke, however, may be on the advanced thinkers who suppose that the gospels were originally written in Greek, the one *faux pas* being as big as the other. If not Greek, then in what language were the gospels originally recorded? Silly question that! No stone was left unturned by Jesus' followers in their effort to reach the world with the Gospel. In the multilingual society in which they lived, a variety of languages were employed to document the life and ministry of our Lord and the synoptic gospels bear good testimony to this admixture for from it a rich tapestry was woven.

It would be a nice thing, one might suppose, to say that all languages were created equal but that would be to overlook the fact that in Palestine in the 1<sup>st</sup> century different languages served different functions. Even within the home, it was commonly the case that two languages were employed. The term scholars use for this is *diglossia* and it involved what is referred to as a top language and a bottom language. Then, too, there was a *lingua franca* used outside the home, usually by men transacting commercial business.

The type of languages which we have called 'home-languages' often enjoy among their speakers great affection and tenacious loyalty, but no social prestige. In most cases, one language is spoken in ordinary, everyday life by everybody, and the other is employed in formal speech, on formal occasions, in writing, in religious activities, and the like. . . . not everyone is able to handle the upper language. In most cases it is imparted by some process of formal education. The number who can understand it to some extent will be larger than those who can speak it and write it. In contrast to the *lingua franca*, anyone who handles such a prestige language will aspire to do so perfectly, without mistakes, even though perhaps not elegantly.

(Hebrew and Aramaic in the First Century)

## THE SUITABILITY OF ARAMAIC, THE LANGUAGE OF THE PEOPLE

When once the Church of Christ fully realizes the truth, which has hitherto lain in a state of sub-consciousness, that our Lord spoke Aramaic, there can not fail to be a strong desire to get back to the *ipsissima verba* which proceeded from his lips, . . . (J. T. Marshall)

Once a transcription of Jesus's speech had been made, Matthew (or whoever else) may then have made a translation. The question is: from which language and into which language? In reply: it is established fact that the common folk of Jesus' day spoke Aramaic. From this one logically infers that the language Jesus used in his discourses to the multitudes was Aramaic. Actually, we don't need to deduce; our Greek version provides telling evidence, not only of Aramaic loan words, but of outright Aramaic usage as when Jesus said to the little girl whom he raised from death to life: "*Talitha cumi*," i.e., "Damsel arise." And from the cross, Jesus said: "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?*", i.e., "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Thus we see that at the point of death, at least as recorded in *Mark*, Jesus, in addressing God, did not speak Hebrew, the language of the Bible but, rather, as people in extremity tend to do, he returned to the language of his cradle and of his mother, Mary.

Aramaic, the common tongue of the Middle East, was also the language of home and market in the Holy Land and by Jesus' day had been in continuous use some 500 years, indeed, ever since the first Temple's, (that being Solomon's) destruction in 587 BC. After Alexander the Great had swept through the Holy Land essentially unhindered in 325 BC, Greek became the favored language of a cosmopolitan elite, yet Aramaic continued in use the same as ever by common folk. In 64 BC, Rome, under Pompey's leadership, vanquished the Selucid (Greek) Kingdom after which Latin became the language of government but still Aramaic remained as the language of the people. As an example of the resiliency of Aramaic usage, I have personally inspected a modern-day *ketubah*, that being the traditional marriage vows a Jewish couple take, having Hebrew characters but Aramaic wording.

When in 539 Cyrus conquered Babylon and set up a Persian empire on the ruins of the Babylonian one, Aramaic was made the language of administration for the whole empire, except the Persian homeland, and became the *lingua franca* used between its many-tongued population. This language, now referred to as imperial Aramaic, was cultivated by scribal schools and seems to have enjoyed great prestige. This lasted a long time beyond the existence of the Persian empire.

The lower languages of the Aramaic *diglossia* were, according to the locality, various forms of dialect tending towards middle Aramaic, or dialects belonging to proto-Arabic, the predecessors of classical literary Arabic.

It is not to be excluded that there were also places with an Aramaic-Hebrew diglossia in which Aramaic played the role of the upper, and mishnaic Hebrew that of the lower language. It may be assumed that immediately after the beginning of the Maccabean revolt, Hebrew was in a very healthy state. Being an important symbol in the struggle against Greek influence, it may possibly have made good some previous losses. However, in 165 or 164 b.c.e. Simon and Judas went out to Galilee and Transjordan and led the Jews living there to Judaea, thus sharply reducing the area where Hebrew was spoken, and possibly importing to the center elements already speaking Aramaic. When in 104-103 Aristobulus conquered Galilee and part of the land of the Arab Ituraeans, and John Hyrcanus between 135 and 104 conquered Idumaea, and in both cases the local inhabitants were forced to accept Judaism, large numbers of Aramaic speakers were incorporated into the community, and some of those who took their new religion seriously would come and settle in Jerusalem. Indeed the very splendor of the Temple attracted Jews from eastern, Aramaic-speaking countries, and thus further increased the percentage of Aramaic speakers in Judaea. (*Hebrew and Aramaic of the First Century*)

#### L I N G U I S T I C   C O U S I N S :   A R A M A I C   A N D   S Y R I A C

While no Palestinian Aramaic gospel has survived to our day, a close, 2<sup>nd</sup> century relative of it has, that being Old Syriac. Albeit translated from Greek or Latin, it retains West Aramaic elements, perhaps because its translators were Palestinian Jews. Its Middle Eastern flavor becomes evident by comparing F. C. Burkitt's translation of what Jesus said to the repentant thief on the cross, (*Luke 24:43*), with that of the Greek-derived, King James Version:

Verily say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise. (KJV)

Amen I say to thee to-day that with me thou shalt be in the garden of Eden. (SYRIAC)

As this verse demonstrates, it is characteristically Semitic to look for a colorful, vivid expression, whereas the Greeks gravitate more naturally to a generalized categorization.

#### F R O M   A R A M A I C   T O   G R E E K   A N D   B A C K   A G A I N

Whether one reconstructs Aramaic from Greek or Greek from Aramaic, either way, a certain amount of educated guesswork is involved. Notwithstanding that, in the hands of a skilled linguist this approach can help us recover what Jesus actually intended to convey. One brief example: from *Aramaic Sources of Mark's Gospel* by Maurice Casey, the author offers as a conjectural emendation the following translation of *Matthew 8:20 / Luke 9:58*:

The jackals have holes, and the birds of the air have  
roosts, and a son of man has nowhere to lay his head.

As Casey observes, the Holy Land is on a migratory route where birds roost but do not nest. Since a nest is something which is built, the point of Jesus' expression, that animals, unlike humans, do not have to build homes, would be clearer if the word was roost, not nest. But this is speculation lacking any textual support.

Additionally, according to Casey, Jesus did not take upon himself the apocalyptic title "Son of Man," but, rather, used a common Aramaic expression which applies to mankind generally. He thinks, possibly, that a linguistic misunderstanding occurred. Though Casey didn't know it when postulating this, documentary evidence exists, MS PEPYS 2498, that being a gospel where this title is completely absent.

#### **THE SUITABILITY OF HEBREW, THE TRADITIONAL BIBLICAL TONGUE**

Beyond the use of Aramaic, Jesus also used Hebrew, for not only did he address the multitudes in the street but also the learned, religious leaders within the precinct of the Temple. Hebrew at that time was still very much a living language. Not only are 3/4 of the Dead Sea Scrolls in Hebrew but many secular documents from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple era are also in Hebrew. Said Origen in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century: "the beginning of the Gospel is connected with the Jewish writings."

Parents will often go to great lengths to see that their children are able to speak a language which they themselves do not normally use. This may well be the implication of the passage, often quoted as evidence that Hebrew was still spoken in *Sifeon Deuteronomy* 26:4. 'And you shall teach them to your sons' (Deut. 11:19): your sons and not our daughters, according to R. Jose ben Akiba. Hence it has been said: when the toddler begins to speak, his father shall talk to him in the Holy Tongue and teach him the Law. And if he does not speak to him in the Holy Tongue and does not teach him the Law, it is as if he had buried him. The statement shows clearly that the child is assumed to have started speaking in another language, and that it is only the father who can talk to him in the Holy Tongue. . . . Such a passage proves that there was still a living tradition of speaking the language, in this case no doubt mishnaic Hebrew. . . . While we may assume that in Jerusalem and Judea mishnaic Hebrew was still the ruling language, and Aramaic took the second place, the situation must have been reversed in areas such as the coastal plain and Galilee. There Aramaic, and possibly Greek, were the dominant languages spoken by the people from all classes, while Hebrew mainly functioned as a literary language. The important point to remember is, however, that prestige and loyalty were accorded to Hebrew, and perhaps to Greek, but not to Aramaic, and that therefore many of those who habitually spoke Aramaic, but had acquired a certain facility in Hebrew, would count themselves as Hebrew speakers. Those who, like Jesus, took part in the discussions in the synagogues (Mark 1:21) and in the Temple in Jerusalem (Mark 11:17) and disputed on Halakah (Matthew 19:3)

no doubt did so in mishnaic Hebrew. In other words, while in Jerusalem mishnaic Hebrew was a home language and probably already also a literary language, and Aramaic a *lingua franca*, in Galilee Aramaic was a home language and mishnaic Hebrew the upper language of a diglossia.

(*Hebrew and Aramaic of the First Century*)

#### THE SUITABILITY OF GREEK, THE LANGUAGE OF THE EDUCATED WORLD

Indicative of the use of Greek in Palestine: Jesus conversing with the centurion, Jesus and Pilate conversing, Peter and Cornelius conversing; the inscription on the cross in Greek.

We cannot overemphasize the importance of Greek in the developing synoptic gospel tradition. While the initial work was done in Palestinian Aramaic and Mishnaic Hebrew, the final editing was almost all in Greek. Particularly useful in understanding the editorial process is to compare text to text. As we see below, all the words are identical except the first one, which is Peter's address to Jesus. *Mark's* transliterated Aramaic title, "Rabbi," *Matthew's Gospel* and *Luke's*, each in its own way, changed toward something more properly Greek.

MATTHEW 17:4	MARK 9:5	LUKE 9:33
κύριε, καλόν ἐστὶν ἡμᾶς ὧδε εἶναι	ραββί, καλόν ἐστὶν ἡμᾶς ὧδε εἶναι	ἐπιστάτα, καλόν ἐστὶν ἡμᾶς ὧδε εἶναι
Lord, it is good for us to be here.	Rabbi, it is good for us to be here.	Master, it is good for us to be here.

#### THE SEMITIC STYLE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT (ABRIDGED)

Michael D. Marlowe

Although the language of the New Testament is fundamentally the *koine* or "common" Greek of the period in which it was written, the New Testament authors wrote in a *Hebraic* or *Semitic* style which is not entirely idiomatic Greek. This stylistic character may be seen in several areas, including the grammar, syntax, semantics, and rhetorical features of the text. Particular examples of this style are called linguistic *Hebraisms*, or, more broadly, *Semitisms* (a term which covers Aramaic influences as well as Hebrew).

A *Semitism* is defined as a linguistic usage, expression or construction typical of a Semitic language appearing in another language. It is not necessary for an expression to be ungrammatical or otherwise completely outlandish in the usage of the second language in order for it to be considered a Semitism. Although some Semitisms are of this stark and absolute nature, others are what we may call relative Semitisms, when there is an unusual strain against ordinary usage probably due to Semitic influence. So there is a gray area, in which

there is some room for disagreement in marginal cases. One scholar may consider an expression to be a Semitism while another doubts whether it is right to classify it as such. Nevertheless, all scholars agree that various Semitisms are abundantly present in the New Testament.

There is also some disagreement as to why they are there. Some scholars are inclined to think that much of the New Testament was originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic, and that the Semitisms of the Greek text are a consequence of the translation of these original sources, in which Hebrew or Aramaic idioms were reproduced literally. Thus, the Semitisms of the New Testament are explained in the same way as we explain the Semitisms of the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, which often literally reproduces the Hebraisms of its Hebrew source. Other scholars prefer to explain the Semitisms of the New Testament as a consequence of peculiarities in the Greek commonly spoken by bilingual Jews in the first century. Other scholars believe that the Semitic style of the New Testament is best explained as a kind of "Biblical" style which Jewish authors or preachers of the era would have used, not so much in their ordinary speech, but in their writing and in preaching, after the model of the Septuagint.

Probably there is some truth in all of these explanations. It can hardly be doubted that at least some of the material included in the Gospels (especially the sayings of Jesus) was originally recorded or perhaps orally transmitted in Aramaic, and that at some point this Aramaic was translated into the Greek which we have in our New Testament.

When we have good reason to suppose that an expression in the New Testament reflects a Hebrew idiom, then it should be interpreted as if it were "Hebrew in disguise." In this manner we correctly apprehend the meaning of many words and expressions in the New Testament.

#### **WRITTEN ON THE FLY**

As it was their Master, so also his followers. They were on the run for their very lives. Eventually, as did their master, they, too, succumb to the religious Establishment's wrath:

Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin. (*1 Peter 4:1*)

They were not deterred. Despite arrest and flogging, Peter and John said:

"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." (*Acts 4:20*)

Anticipating that their earthly sojourn was liable to be brief and end violently, the apostles delayed not but with events yet fresh in their minds, committed to parchment that which they had seen, heard, and handled of the Word of Life. Most particularly, as chief apostle, it was Peter's place to see that this happened:

Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it proper, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; knowing that I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me. Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance. For we did not follow cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: knowing this first that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

(II Peter 1:12 - 21)

As we infer from the excerpt above, Peter did not want to wing it on a personal testimony, a mere verbal, when “a more sure word of prophecy” was called for, that being an authoritative text. Our tendency is to think of the *New Testament* as something apart from prophecy but not so the apostles for their Bible was not bifurcated *Old* and *New*. They knew nothing about a *New Testament*; rather a twofold division of Scripture: the *Law* and the *Prophets*; or, else, a three-fold division: the *Law*, the *Prophets*, and the *Psalms*. Be it prophecy foretold or prophecy fulfilled, prophecy is still prophecy. The Gospel was prophecy to them.

#### EXPECTATIONS OF JESUS' SOON RETURN

According to the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica, the apostles “were so absorbed in the expectation of the speedy return of Christ that they did not feel called to make provision for the instruction of subsequent generations.” In other words, some number of decades passed before it dawned on them that Jesus’ *parousia* would be delayed. Yet the only notion the apostles could have had on the matter of Jesus’ second coming would have been from Jesus himself. No, Jesus did not misinform them; rather, they were to occupy until his return, whenever that might occur. Since one of their key job requirements, as stated by Jesus in his commissioning of them, was to “go into all the world,” they did not wait years or decades as the encyclopedia insinuates; rather, they buckled right down right away to the task at hand to produce a written account and, as we can see, their Gospel testimony has indeed gone forth into all the world.

## PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

Were not the apostles raised to value Holy Writ? Of course they were. It came to them, as it were, with their mothers' milk. No way on God's green earth as leaders of a prophetic, messianic movement there were they were going to leave to others the privilege of committing the Gospel to parchment or papyrus when responsibility for doing so was their own.

But what did a fisherman, Peter, know about the making of books? Initially, probably not much. Was he a skilled writer? or schooled in Greek? Highly doubtful on both counts. Was he even literate? No matter. He was the right man for the job because he was forthright and had the courage of his convictions. Wasn't he the very one who had hopped from the boat into a frothy sea to walk to Jesus? Yes, the very one, and though he faltered and began to sink, at least he was game to try. Nor was he too proud to own up to his failings which were many. Because of his honesty, his refreshing candor, he was the one to fashion a new literary genre – the gospel, where divine and human elements collide and interact. How involved was Peter in the writing process? For sure we know that, as one of the Gospel's key protagonists, he had much in the way of firsthand information to contribute.

This too we know, that Peter and his colleagues, in telling the greatest story ever told, did so with such aplomb that it's remained on the bestseller list ever since. Rather than novelists or raconteurs, they were men shot through with the glory of having been with Jesus. With the Nazarene community's backing, they carried forward with "the ministry of the word":

Then the Twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven of honest report, full of the holy ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." And the saying pleased the whole multitude. (Acts 6:2-5)

## PETER WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM HIS FRIENDS

By reason of there having been many witnesses, there were many able and willing to help in the work of reconstructing the events of Jesus' ministry. Can you not picture marathon bull sessions at which each disciple contributed his or her two cents, for having made a indelible impression, Jesus remained to them all a living presence. Particularly, Peter would have had the help of James and John, the three of them having formed Jesus' inner circle. It was these three who accompanied Jesus up the mount of transfiguration and who were with him in the garden of Gethsemane. It is most likely that these three constructed the Gospel narrative. It is most likely that Matthew, Thomas, and Luke were most responsible for preserving Jesus' sayings.



Since it was not only fisherman but educated people who were attracted to Jesus, certainly there existed in their midst those who could serve the apostles in the capacity of amanuensis. “Marcus, my son” wrote Peter in *I Peter 5:13*. This was the John Mark of *Mark’s Gospel*. Also, because he tells us so, we know Peter had assistance in writing his first epistle:

“By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying . . .”  
(*I Peter 5:12*)

#### THEORIES OF INSPIRATION

The idea of the gospels as having been worked up from rudimentary, battlefield reports into more finished products back at headquarters is anathema to those who prefer that they had simply dropped from the heavens. But did they? Admittedly, not every subject is a good candidate for investigation but in this case evidence aplenty exists that intermediate documents once existed. It will be gratifying to some, and no doubt disturbing to others, to learn that at least one of these intermediary manuscript survived, allowing us to go behind the *New Testament* and helping us in confirming that other, earlier versions also existed.

What then of the theory about Peter not having set pen to paper until after twenty, thirty, forty years had passed? Three distinct groups, each for their own reasons, have upheld this theory: originally, various Gentile Church scholars sought to distance Christianity from its Semitic roots. They wanted Greek translations not to be thought of as translations but as original compositions. Then, in the modern era, destructive critics entered the fray. In their disbelief that Jesus did the miracles attributed to him, they want to give the evangelists time enough to have conjured up fabulous tales. In defense of their theory of inspiration called “inerrancy,” certain Protestant scholars have also entered the fray, positing that in a discrete moment in time, the Holy Spirit had each evangelist write out his gospel, as it were, by dictation, an angel guiding the hand while a voice from heaven spoke. To explain word-for-word correspondence among the synoptic gospels, they concede that one canonical writer could borrow from another – but not from intermediate, non-canonical texts. Decades of oral ministry by the apostles works for all three groups. Greek only also works for all three.

Regarding the issue of oral versus written transmission, by way of rebuttal, I offer the following quote from Bernhard Weiss (*Introduction*, vol. ii., p. 209) who states that the agreements existing among the synoptic gospels is not simply one of an occasional word; rather it:

. . . extends to finishing touches and details of expression, as also to its introductory and transitional formulae, and in many cases continues throughout long speeches and even series of narratives such as could never have been transmitted in oral tradition.

#### CHURCHLY EMENDATION

A scholarly book, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament* by Bart Ehrman shows us how heated 2<sup>nd</sup> century doctrinal disputes had become over such issues as adoptionism (that is, was Jesus born the Christ or did he become so at baptism?) or docetism (did Jesus just seem to be flesh and blood human or was he really so?) For the most part, scribes were faithful transmitters, not creators, of tradition, but at times they were tempted, if only subliminally, to fix things up a bit to make a theological point and this, too, is reflected in the manuscript record. We should take some comfort in the knowledge that this activity was happening only sporadically and not in an organized way and that, except for some embroidering around the edges, the 2<sup>nd</sup> century Church just did not have motivation, skill, or imagination to carry off a major revision of the synoptic gospels. As to the Church's handling of *John's Gospel*, I address that in due course as a separate matter having to do with Mary Magdalene.

By comparing the Alexandrian text with the Byzantine text with what is called the Western text, that is, the three major editions of the Greek text that have come down to us, we find various alterations but they are mostly of the scribal error variety. In the case of the Byzantine text, there is reason to think says Kirsopp Lake that the "Byzantine text itself was a revision made by the originator of the lectionary, and that because of its persistent use it came to influence the gospel MSS.

What we do not find is a heavy, agenda-driven rewrite. It may have been by the 3<sup>rd</sup> century the *New Testament* gospels were so widely dispersed as to be beyond recall or for anyone to have edited them without being detected.

#### ALL WRITING IS REWRITING

The creative period of gospel development lasted approximately 35 years, that is, from 30 AD to about 65 AD. But then, in 62 AD, James was martyred in Jerusalem. Peter was crucified upside down in Rome during the Neronian persecution, sometime between 64 AD and 68 AD. As for Luke's gospel, its writing probably preceded that of his *Acts of the Apostles*, which book draws to a close with Paul's house arrest in Rome in the early 60s AD. But matters didn't end there. Jesus' blood relatives, *desposyni*, rendered literally meaning: "belonging to the Lord," continued refining the text. This would be a source of controversy because the emerging proto-Catholic Church highly favored its own version of "apostolic succession" which devalued Jesus' blood relatives. Cleopas was the father of Symeon and Symeon ben Clopas, was James's successor in Jerusalem where he oversaw the community of faith for more than forty years, until in 107 AD, when he too was martyred.

Leaving nothing to us in writing, Jesus trusted, instead, that his Spirit-empowered disciples would produce *their* own witnesses of him in *their* own words, in *their* own way, in *their* own good time, an awesome responsibility. Yes, the apostles would want to refine the expression of their thoughts, for, yes, writing, like life itself, requires, not just inspiration, but perspiration. Life, not being handed to us on a platter, takes working at, always.

If Jesus wanted us to have a divine document, he could have left us one, authored by himself. Instead he saw to it that we would have a human document written on the fly by those not trained as scholars. How did the apostles accomplish their task? By giving to it due diligence, for when we add to our faith the substance of righteousness, benefits multiply:

. . . giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged of his old sins. (II Peter 1:5-9)

In a human/divine partnership, both parties to the Abrahamic Covenant have promises to keep and responsibilities to uphold. That is where the Gospel comes into the picture, to help us succeed in holding up our end of the bargain. By word and deed Jesus in the gospel accounts provided us a role model to emulate; as well offering us wise admonitions to reflect on and live by. Through the renewing of our minds, the Gospel helps us as we are *transformed* into the people God would have us to be and not just be *conformed* as to doctrine, school, or sect. It's not magic. Character development is not the work of a day nor ever easy.

#### MEMOIRS OF THE APOSTLES

With the passing of the apostles from the scene, as note has already been made, the creative period of gospel development ended but the work of collating what was achieved continued on. Departing Jerusalem in 66 AD, the Nazarenes returned after its destruction in 70 AD, to continue building on its apostolic foundation. Overseeing this was Symeon ben Cleopas, a relative of James and of Jesus. Appointed as James' successor, he served into Emperor Trajan's reign, when, in 107 AD, he too was martyred. Under his leadership, an antagonistic division within the Nazarene movement between the Hellenistic wing in Galilee and the Judaic-Christian wing in Jerusalem was healed. This would have occurred after Paul and James were gone from the scene. As part of the healing process, the Jerusalem-oriented *Gospel of Matthew* and the Galilean-oriented *Gospel of Luke* were harmonized. The evidence for saying this comes from a harmonized synoptic gospel used by Justin Martyr (martyred about 165 AD). In his two defenses of the Faith (called *Apologies*) presented to

the Roman Senate, Justin Martyr quotes repeatedly from a document which he refers to as *the Memoirs of the Apostles*. In the main it combines *Matthew* and *Luke* and to a lesser degree, *Mark*, but also a non-canonical gospel which, as best as scholarship can tell us, was the *Gospel according to the Hebrews* but possibly, as well, a *Logia*, that being a sayings gospel. Absent are quotes from *John's Gospel*.

Before considering which gospel text Justin used, we should first know a little about Justin himself, that he was born at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century in Palestine, in the town today called Nablus, but which in his day was called, Flavia Neapolis, and, in ancient times, Shechem; that, as a youthful seeker of truth, he became a philosopher but in about 130 AD converted, becoming a Christian. Thereafter, he traveled widely and ultimately migrated to Rome where he established a Christian academy; and from whence he authored numerous books, three of which have survived to our day. A substantial thinker, he was strategically located in a major Christian center. For those reasons, it is likely that the gospel text he used was not idiosyncratic or parochial but reflected the practice of Christianity in his era.

Extracted from Justin's extant writings and italicized, are those parts of certain passages lacking a canonical counterpart. Taken together, such passages have led some scholars to conclude that a non-canonical gospel had been incorporated into Justin's apostolic *Memoirs*:

The parents of Jesus could find no lodging in Bethlehem, so it came to pass that *he was born in a cave near the village* and laid in a manger.

At his birth there came Magi *from Arabia* who knew by a star that appeared in the *heaven* that a king had been born in Judaea.

By a process of nature he grew to the age of thirty years or more, *not comely of aspect (as had been prophesied)*, practicing the trade of a carpenter, *making ploughs and yokes, emblems of righteousness*.

At the baptism of Jesus a fire was kindled on the Jordan, and, as he went up out of the water, a voice was heard from heaven *saying in the words of David, 'Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.'*

Jesus too, like John (*whose mission ceased when he appeared in public*), began his ministry by proclaiming that the kingdom of heaven was at hand.

Those who *from their birth*, blind, dumb, lame, he healed - indeed he healed all sickness and disease and he raised the dead. *The Jews ascribed these miracles to magic.*

*"There shall be schisms and heresies."*

*"In what things I take you [by surprise] in those things I will judge you."*

After it [the Lord's Supper] Jesus sang a hymn, and taking with him three of his disciples to the Mount of Olives was in an agony, his sweat falling in *drops* to the ground. His captor surrounded him *like the horned bulls of Psalm xxii*, there was none to help, for his followers *to a man* forsook him.

He was led both before the Scribes and Pharisees and before Pilate. In the trial before Pilate he kept his silence as *Psalm xxi*. He has the piercing with nails, the casting of lots and the dividing of garments, and the *sneers* of the crowd and their taunt, *he who raised the dead*, let him save himself.

One of the more intriguing ideas concerning the gospel text Justin was using was advanced by A. J. Bellinzoni in his book: *"The Sayings of Jesus in the writings of Justin Martyr,"* wherein he suggests that Justin was employing not one but two gospel harmonizations in the epistle he addressed to the Roman Senate: one liturgical, the other, catechismal. Since Justin's purpose was to set the Senators' minds at ease about the lurid rumors they had been hearing about cannibalistic Christians drinking blood as part of their Eucharistic rite and other calumnies of like character, he demonstrated the falsity of these charges by giving to them samples of Christian teaching to baptismal candidates. The following appears as a single unit in Justin's text:

<i>Apol.</i> 16:9	<i>Mt.</i> 7.21	→	<i>Lk.</i> 6.46	
	↓		↓	
<i>Apol.</i> 16:9			<i>Lk.</i> 6.47	→ <i>Lk.</i> 10:16
<i>Apol.</i> 16:9	<i>Mt.</i> 7.21		<i>Lk.</i> 13:26f	
	↓			
<i>Apol.</i> 16:9			<i>Lk.</i> 13:28	→ <i>Mt.</i> 13:42f.
<i>Apol.</i> 16:9	<i>Mt.</i> 7.21, 16, 19, and <i>Mt.</i> 7.21			

Writes Bellenzoni:

... we can conclude with certainty that these five verses are based on a source that was a carefully composed harmony of material from Matthew and Luke and that was based on the order of Matthew 7. It has already been argued above that the entire section *Apol.* 15-17 may have been based on a single source different from the source underlying the rest of Justin's sayings of Jesus, and I have tried to indicate that this section has many features in common with primitive Christian catechisms. It is, therefore, quite probable from the foregoing discussion that there is underlying *Apol.* 15-17 a primitive catechism in use in Justin's school in Rome, a catechism that was known in similar form to Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and the author of the Pseudo-clementine *Homilies*, a catechism

based primarily on the text of the Sermon on the Mount but that harmonized related material from Mark, Luke, and from other parts of Matthew, and a catechism whose tradition was of great influence in later manuscript witnesses of the synoptic gospels.

#### LATE 1<sup>ST</sup> AND EARLY 2<sup>ND</sup> CENTURY QUOTATIONS FROM THE SYNOPTICS

. . . the Gospel quotations found in the Apostolic Fathers must be considered. Numerous instances are found which look like quotations from the Synoptic Gospels, but in only a few cases is the resemblance really close; . . . This will be seen if certain passages of 1 Clement of Rome and Polycarp, which resemble parts of the sermon of the mount, are compared with the saying most like them in S. Matthew and S. Luke. . . . the word for 'forgive' both in Clement and Polycarp, is ἀφίετε, while in S. Luke vi. 37 it is ἀππολύετε; . . . If we account for variations of Clement of Rome from the Synoptic Gospels as due to mere looseness of quotation, it is hard to account for the exactness with which Clement's wording is reproduced in other writers. The suggestion that Clement himself was quoting exactly, not from the Canonical Gospels, but from some collection of Christ's sayings similar to, but not identical with, S. Matthew's second source, seems to offer a better solution. This hypothesis is supported by the words with which Clement introduces his quotation, which closely resemble those with which the saying 'It is more blessed to give than to receive,' are introduced in Acts xx. 35, 'to remember the words of the Lord Jesus.' Similar words, 'Remember the words of Jesus, our Lord,' introduces another notable quotation in Clement of Rome (xli. 7, 8).

'Woe to the man, good were it for him if he had not been born, than to cause one of the elect to stumble; better would it have been for him that a millstone should have been placed about him, and that he should have been drowned in the sea, than to cause one of these little ones to stumble.'

Here the opening words are all found in S. Mark xiv. 21; the remainder is similar to Christ's warning against causing little ones to stumble, but is not an exact reproduction of any one of the three evangelists, as will be seen if the three passages are compared.

S. Matthew xviii. 6: –

'Whosoever shall *cause one of these little ones* who believe in Me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a *millstone* turned by an ass should be hanged *about* his neck, and that *he should be drowned* in the depth of the sea . . . however, *woe to that man* through whom the cause of stumbling comes.'

S. Mark ix, 4: –

"And whosoever *shall cause one of these little ones* who believe on Me to *stumble*, good is it *for him* rather if a *millstone* turned by an ass encircles about his neck, and he is cast *into the sea*.'

S. Luke xvii. 1,2: –

'It is inevitable that causes of stumbling should come; however, woe to him through whom it comes. It is advantageous for him if a millstone encircles about his neck, and he is cast *into the sea*, than that *he should cause one of these little ones to stumble*.'

Now, if this be a correct explanation of the fact that these quotations show marked divergences from the Synoptic Gospels, it follows that the sayings of Jesus were preserved in a larger number of forms than those included in the Gospels. This would support the hypothesis . . . that, prior to the formation of the Canonical Gospels, a number of different collections of Christ's sayings existed, and were subject to a gradual process of accretion and arrangement. Thus the process, which ended in the production of the Synoptic Gospels, would be more intricate, and the literature out of which they are formed more extensive, than is at present generally held.

Too much stress must not be laid on the variations found in the Gospel quotations in the Apostolic Fathers, but they do form part of the evidence which must be taken into account in forming any adequate theory of the formation of the Gospels, for the resemblances existing between certain apparent quotations in Clement of Rome, Polycarp (and Clement of Alexandria, though he is of later date), in points where they differ from the Canonical Gospels, forbid us to explain all the variation offhand as due simply to loose quotation from memory. To put the matter in a slightly different way, it may be said: –

- I. The variations in the Gospels themselves between similar sayings prove the existence of more than one tradition.
- II. That the sources from which the Gospels were drawn should have remained in use after the composition of the Gospels is quite probable.
- III. There is, then, nothing *a priori* improbable in the assumption that writers of the early second century should have quoted from the sources rather than the Gospels.

(Eric Rede Buckley, *An Introduction to the Synoptic Problem*, published in 1912)

Buckley's book is evidence that many of the ideas advanced here are not recent innovations but have been kicking around for the better part of a century. That doesn't make them true, just persistent. In all this while, however, they have not been discredited, just ignored.

#### **J U S T I N ,   T H E   D I D A C H E ,   &   T H E   P S E U D O - C L E M E N T I N E   H O M I L I E S**

As previously noted, outside of the *New Testament*, to about the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, very few secondary sources containing extended quotations from the canonical gospels currently exist and, such quotes as we do have do not properly corresponded with the canonical gospels. Arises the question: how representative are the surviving witnesses? We cannot say for sure. But a pattern does emerge from which we conclude that in this sub-apostolic period, no one was using a fourfold gospel. In fact, we know of no instance where the individual synoptic gospels: *Matthew*, *Mark*, and *Luke* were in common use together.

What, then, was going on? two things: harmonization and conflation. Harmonization involves the combining of readings from two or more different sources, whereas conflation involves the combining of readings from the same source. But this activity was not necessarily

happening haphazardly. Rather, by comparing three sources: Justin Martyr's writings, the *Didache*, and the *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies*, we can tell that they were sharing a common gospel text. Since it is not likely that they were relying on each other, this would indicate that all of them had available a prior text and that may have been an authorized, official text.

Having already said somewhat about Justin Martyr, we will move on to mention a very early Church manual, the *Didache*, a most curious and interesting text which seems to preserve early Nazarene traditions, such as the existence of an itinerant ministry, also, charismatic manifestations. Further contributing to the impression that it was of primitive provenance is a certain naive quality, such as giving out as the way to discriminate between hypocrites and true believers is by detecting on which days one group observes its fast days as opposed to the other group. Some scholars think it dates as early as mid-1<sup>st</sup> century. Others see it as a composite work with some early elements but also some late elements.

Then, too, there are the *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* which scholars date to the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. While they purport to be by Clement, the very Clement whom Paul mentioned in his epistle to the Romans and who later was Bishop of Rome, no one today actually believes this, the near-universal consensus now being that this is a fabulous tale, albeit one serving pious ends. Once very popular, with over 100 manuscripts of it in both Latin and Greek yet existing, its particular value these days is its gospel quotations which have a particular affinity with those found in Justin's writing, just as Justin's have an affinity with those found in the *Didache* and in other sub-apostolic and patristic writings.

The modern, scholarly investigation of the gospel text found in the *Homilies* is credited to A. Neander in 1723, who thought its gospel recession had been derived from the *Gospel according to the Hebrews*. In 1818, Orelli detected an apocryphal tradition "of the ancients" and, in 1832, K. A. Credener, concluded that an apocryphal gospel had been used. There findings have been reaffirmed over the centuries by other scholars, most recently by Leslie L. Kline whose book: *The Sayings of Jesus in the Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* summarizes much previous research. He asks:

What does this study of the sayings of H (i.e., the *Homilies*) tell us about the history of gospel material in the early church? Primarily, it confirms the existence and influence of a harmonized sayings collection which was used by Justin and H and probably known to others (Did. 1.3, 2 Clement, perhaps Clement, Origen and others.) . . . the influence of the sayings collection probably continued for some time. It may even have exercised an influence on the [canonical] textual tradition. We saw numerous occasions in which the readings of H departed from the Nestle text, but were found in the manuscript tradition.

In conclusion, it is not as if the individual synoptic gospel accounts did not exist mid-2<sup>nd</sup>



century. They existed alright. It's just that we can't find anyone who was actually using them. The clear preference of the time was for a harmonized text.

#### HARMONIZATION: OUR COMING INTO THE GOOD OF IT

One of the documents scholars of various shades of opinion like to hypothesize about is Matthew's long lost *Logia*. But let us start off with a housekeeping chore, that of learning the terminology applied to it, for this has changed over time. The first modern to speculate about such a document was an Englishman, Herbert Marsh. In 1801 he called it by the Hebrew alphabet's 2<sup>nd</sup> letter ב, "*beth*." But in 1832, Fredrich Shleiermacker called it "*Logia*," that being the Greek word for "Oracle." It was then assigned the Greek letter lamda λ. He did this on the basis of Papias of Hierapolis's ambiguous statement (c. 125 AD) that "Matthew compiled the oracles (*logia*) of the Lord in Hebrew," which begs the question, which Lord or whose dominical statements, Jesus' or God's? If the former, than Jesus' words were in view; otherwise God's prophetic statements were in view. Because the propriety of using Papias's statement was open to question, toward the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Johanness Weiss renamed the *Logia* with the more neutral sounding "Q" (short for *quelle*, German for "source").

Never mind how denominated, the larger issue is, can our consideration of such a hypothetical document bring Jesus' teachings into better focus for us today? Some answering this question affirmatively, say that "Q" was developed over time in three distinct stages, and that by application of redactional analysis, we can peel back the layers until we get to the true, historical Jesus. Large symposiums are held to debate such matters in all seriousness. Too often the intention driving such interest seems to be an effort to cast doubt on Jesus' messianic role in favor of Jesus as Jewish sage, or even Jesus as Stoic philosopher.

After more than a 100 years of discordant debate over such matters as these, a debate generating much heat but providing little light, we might want to handle "Q" with asbestos gloves, if at all. Except for the good work of one scholar, Charles A. Briggs, I would let it go at that. But Briggs has shown us a better, more productive approach. The informing idea of his article: *The Use of the Logia of Matthew in the Gospel of Mark*, is that by bringing together all the evidence which the synoptic gospels provide us, we can recover the cadence of Jesus' speech, that it was vibrant poetry, not prose. Jesus, as with the voice of many waters, spoke poetry. Given his working knowledge of both Greek and Hebrew, Briggs, to a remarkable degree, I think, has succeeded in doing what he set out to do. I cannot say I agree with at every point or affirm every finding but Brigg's findings are thought-provoking. In somewhat abridged form (I have left out much of the Hebrew), here is his 1904 article:

## THE USE OF THE LOGIA OF MATTHEW IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK (ABRIDGED)

Charles Biggs

In this paper I shall limit my attention to the Logia. I have shown in my articles on the Wisdom of Jesus, that the Logia of St. Matthew contained only the sayings of Jesus in the form of Hebrew Wisdom, and not his parables, or his discussions in the form of Halacha; and that these sayings were usually introduced by the words, "Jesus said," and had only occasional brief historical allusions. The Logia of St. Matthew contained no historical narrative whatsoever. It is just these Sayings of Jesus that we are to investigate in this paper.

They are all of the type of Hebrew Wisdom; that is, like those of the Book of Proverbs, the Wisdom of Ben Sira, and the Sayings of the Fathers in the Mishna. They are Hebrew gnomic poetry, having parallelism, measured lines, and, where sufficiently long, strophical organization. They were written in Hebrew, the religious language of the Jews of the first century of our era, and not in Aramaic, which was the language of common life in a great variety of dialects, but not the language of literature or of religion in the Apostolic age.

These logia, for the most part, appear in several versions in the Gospels. We have to use the principles of textual criticism to determine their original form, namely : (1) the reading which lies at the root of all the variations, and best explains them, is to be preferred. (2) The most difficult reading is more likely to be correct, from the natural tendency of the scribe to make his text as easy and intelligible as possible, and the natural process of simplification in transmission. (3) The reading most in accordance with the context, and, especially, with the style and usage of the author and his times, is to be preferred. This is on the principle of consistency and "intrinsic probability."

Those readings are to be preferred —

- (a) which give the best parallelism,
- (b) which accord with the measure of the lines,
- (c) which make the strophes symmetrical,
- (d) which accord with the gnomic language and style.

With this statement of principles we may take up the logia in detail.

- (1) They that are strong have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.

I came not to call the righteous; but on the contrary, sinners.

This is an emblematic couplet, hexameters, with the caesura after the fourth beat in both lines. It is given in Mk. 2:17, Mt. 9:12-13, Lk. 5:31-34, in all at Levi's farewell feast, in response to the Pharisees who charged Jesus with impropriety of conduct in eating with Publicans and sinners. This is, in all three, introduced by a formula:

Mk.: ὁ Ἰησοῦς λέγει αὐτοῖς.

Lk.: ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτοῦς.

Mt.: ὁ ὁὲ εἶπεν.

The original of these variations was  $\gamma\lambda\psi\ \tau\omicron\mu\alpha$ .

The Oxyrhynchite logia all begin with λέγει Ἰησοῦς, as Mark, not εἶπεν, as Matthew and Luke.

The variations of the couplet itself are :

(a) Mark and Matthew, οἱ ἰσχύοντες, *they that are strong*, which is an exact translation of the original.

Luke, ὑγιαίνοντες, is a better medical term and better Greek, indicating, therefore, intentional change.

(b) Mark and Matthew have ἦλθοι, Luke ἐλήλυθα; both translations of Hebrew pf.  $\text{הָלַךְ}$ .

(c) Luke adds the explanatory εἰς μετάνοιαν, which makes the line too long for the measure, and cannot, therefore, be original.

(d) Matthew interjects between the two lines of the couplet a citation from Ho. 6:6, which is apt, but destroys the beauty of the couplet. It certainly was not original, but came from the editor of the present Matthew; who, indeed, gives the same citation again, Mt. 12:7.

Was this couplet we are considering in the original Mark as a part of the narrative, and was it derived with the narrative from him by Matthew and Luke, or do the evangelists all cite from the Logia of Matthew? The evidence of the introductory formula is dubious, because it was necessary in its connection with the narrative, and, therefore, cannot prove citation from the Logia. Two of the changes of Luke are stylistic and interpretative; the only one that looks like independence of Mark is the use of the perfect for the aorist. On the whole, it is probable that this logion was in the original Mark, and that it was not derived from the Logia; and that the other Gospels depend on Mark for its use here; although Luke may also have been influenced in his version by its use in the Logia.

(2) No one putteth a new piece of cloth on an old garment,

For the new teareth from the old and the rent is made worse.

No one putteth new wine into old skins,

For the wine bursteth the skins and the skins perish.

No one desireth new wine, who drinketh old,

For old wine is better than new wine.

This is an emblematic saying in three hexameter couplets.

This logion in Matthew and Mark is without introduction. But Luke has ἔλεγον δὲ καὶ παραβολὴν. This does not stand for parable in the usual New Testament sense of a prose Haggada, but for the Hebrew כִּשְׁלָה, an emblematic gnome, as not infrequently in the Gospels. It is probable that Luke found it in his original, the Logia of Matthew. It is evident that he does not depend on Mark, for he not only has quite a different version of two of the couplets from Mark and Matthew, but he alone gives the third couplet. Matthew also differs so much from Mark that it could not have derived the logion from Mark. All three depend on the same original, the Logia of Matthew. The variations appear sufficiently in the Revised English Version:

"No man seweth a piece of undressed cloth on an old garment; else that which should fill it up taketh from it, the new from the old, and a worse rent is made.

"And no man putteth new wine into old wine-skins, else the wine will burst the skins, and the wine perisheth, and the skins: but (they put) new wine into fresh wine-skins."

(Mk. 2:21-22.)

"No man putteth a piece of undressed cloth upon an old garment ; for that which should fill it up taketh from the garment, and a worse rent is made.

"Neither do (men) put new wine into old wine-skins; else the skins burst, and the wine is spilled, and the skins perish: but they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved."

(Mt. 9:16-17.)

"No man rendeth a piece from a new garment and putteth it upon an old garment; else he will rend the new, and also the piece from the new will not agree with the old.

"And no man putteth new wine into old wine-skins, else the new wine will burst the skins, and itself will be spilled, and the skins will perish. But new wine must be put into fresh wine-skins.

"And no man having drunk old (wine) desireth new; for he saith, The old is better.'" (Luke 5:36-39)

The Gospels all mingle interpretation with the original; in fact, giving us paraphrase rather than translation of their original. The Gospels are evidently independent in their use of their source in the Logia of Matthew; but they all give the logion the same place in their Gospels. Does this imply that they found it here in Mark, and changed it intentionally by going back to the original in the Logia? That is improbable, because Mark is, in fact, nearer to the original, in the two strophes it uses, than either of the others. There was no sufficient reason, therefore, to leave this version and resort to the original; certainly not for Matthew, for it is difficult to see why in this case Matthew would

omit the third strophe, given by Luke only. In fact, this logion, while topically appropriate where the Gospels have given it, has no real propriety there. Jesus had sufficiently answered the Pharisees in the previous context. The application of this logion to the question of fasting is not evident in itself. It was more appropriate to later conceptions than to the historical circumstances in which it is placed. It seems probable that it was not in the original Mark, but was added here for topical reasons by the Greek translator.

- (3) The Sabbath is for man,  
Not man for the Sabbath.  
The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath. (Mk. 2:27-28, Mt. 12:8, Lk. 6:5.)

This is composed of a trimeter antithetical couplet, with its synthetic consequence in a third line.

The first two lines were used by Mark only. Matthew and Luke condensed the logion into the last line. But no logion ever consisted of a single line. Mark and Luke have the same introduction, καὶ ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς; Matthew, as usual, omits it. This logion has no other than a topical relation to its present place in Mark. It is possible that the others condense from Mark, or that they all use the same source, the Logia of Matthew. We cannot determine in this case. In the former case, the logion came from St. Peter, the authority for the original Mark.

(4) Two logia are attached by Mark, 3:23-29, to the story that his friends thought Jesus was beside himself, Mk. 3:19:6-21, which is unknown to Matthew and Luke. Matthew attaches the same logia (Mt. 12:25-32) to the healing a dumb demoniac, Mt. 12:22-23; which, in accordance with Luke, is a much later event, and adds still other logia to them, Mt. 12:33-45. Luke attaches the first of these logia, Lk. 11:17-22, to the same event as Matthew, Lk. 11:14, and then adds other logia to those given in Matthew, Lk. 11:23-36; but Luke gives the second logion in another group of logia, Lk. 12:10. It is evident, therefore, that these evangelists use two independent logia in connections which seem to them most suitable topically.

It is improbable that either Matthew or Luke derived them from Mark, otherwise they would have given them in connection with the same incident as Mark. It is also improbable that they were in the original Mark, otherwise Matthew or Luke would have given the incident with them. It is probable, therefore, that they were added to Mark by the second hand; and that the three evangelists use the same source, the Logia of Matthew, and use it independently.

Mark introduces the logia by the words ἐν παραβολαῖς ἔλεγεν αὐτοῖς. This implies that they were enigmatic מְשָׁלִים; and, as we have seen, this term was doubtless in the original of Matthew's Logia. It is also probable that in this case the first logion had a brief historical introduction, which appears in the three evangelists, probably in the briefer form, resembling Mk. 3:22:

The scribes which came down from Jerusalem said:

"He hath Beelzebub, and, by the prince of the demons casteth he out the demons."

The original was probably three tetrastichs:

If a kingdom is divided against itself, it is brought to desolation.

If a house is divided against itself, it cannot stand.

If Satan is risen up against himself, he is divided.

If Satan is divided, his kingdom cannot stand.

If I by Beelzebub cast out demons,

By whom do your sons cast them out ?

But if I by the finger of God cast out (demons),

Then is the kingdom of God come upon you.

When the strong man in armor guardeth his court,

Then his goods are in peace in his house.

But when a stronger than he cometh and overcometh him,

He taketh his armor and divideth his spoil.

Luke is, throughout, nearest to the original. Matthew condenses more than Luke, but gives the three strophes. Mark omits the second strophe altogether, and condenses in other respects. Therefore, from this point of view, it is improbable that Matthew and Luke used Mark. This logion, with its introduction, came first into the Greek Mark from the Logia of Matthew, and was not in the original Hebrew Mark.

The second logion of Mark, 3:28-29, has certainly only a loose, topical connection. It is separated from the previous logion, in Mt. 12:31-34, only by a logion couplet, not used in Mark, but given also in Lk. 11:28. But the second logion of Mark is given in Lk. 12:10 in an entirely different connection. The original was probably:

Their sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men,

And all their blasphemies wherein they blaspheme ;

But whosoever shall blaspheme against the Spirit shall not be forgiven.

Whosoever shall speak against the Son of man shall be forgiven;

But whosoever shall speak against the Spirit shall not be forgiven,

Neither in this age, nor in the age that is to come.

Matthew is much nearer the original, giving both strophes. Mark gives only the first, Luke only the second. In the first strophe, Matthew uses the term " the Spirit." The measure of the second strophe requires " the Spirit" also. But Mark uses "Holy Spirit" in the first strophe, Matthew and Luke in the second; " Holy " in both cases being an addition

of the evangelists. It is most probable that this came from the second hand rather than from Mark. Both of these logia in Mark have only topical propriety.

(5) A trimeter tristich, Mk. 3:34-36 Mt. 12:49-50 Lk. 8:21:

Behold my mother and my brethren !

For whosoever doeth the will of God,

The same is my brother and my mother.

The first line is the same in Mark and Matthew, except that in the Greek style of the one we have ἴδε, in the other ἴδοῦ. But Luke omits the line altogether. Mark gives the second line. Matthew changes τοῦ Θεοῦ into τοῦ πατρός μου τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς, characteristic of the present Gospel of Matthew, and not of its source, the Logia. Otherwise, there is only the stylistic difference of ὅστις for ὅς. In the third line, Mark inserts καὶ ἀδελφῇ; so Matthew. Luke combines both lines into a prose sentence and paraphrases, omitting "sister": "My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God and do it." All attach this logion to the same incident; and it is most appropriate there. It seems to have been derived from Mark by the others, and to have been in the original Mark.

(6) Mk. 4:21-25 gives five logia between the parable of the Sower and the parable of the Seed growing secretly. They certainly did not belong there in the teaching of Jesus. They have only topical propriety; for none of them are given by Matthew in this connection. Four of them are given by Lk. 8:16-18, in the same connection as Mark, but three of them also elsewhere. The remaining one is given by Luke elsewhere.

(a) vs. 21 is given by Lk. 8:16, in the same connection; and, then again, 11:33, in connection with another set of logia. It is also given in Mt. 5:15, in still another set of logia. The original form seems to be most nearly preserved in the latter passage, though the couplets are differently distributed. They were originally two independent tetrastichs. The original was probably:

No one, when he hath lighted a lamp, putteth it under an ephah;

But putteth it on a lampstand, that they which enter in may see light,

For nothing is hid that shall not be made manifest,

Nor anything secret that shall not come to light.

Ye are the light of the world.

A city set on a hill cannot be hid.

So let your light shine before the children of men,

That they may see your good works and glorify your Father.

Luke, in both passages, paraphrases rather than translates. It is evident that Luke, in neither passage, uses Mark; because in both he is much nearer the original than Mark. Mark gives this logion in its most condensed form, and puts it in the form of a question: "Is the lamp brought to be put under the bushel, or under the bed, and not to be put on the stand?" It is introduced, however, by καί ἔλεγον αὐτοῖς, the usual formula introducing a logion. It is evident that the three evangelists are independent in their use of this logion. They all alike derived it from the Logia of Matthew.

(d) vs. 22 is also given by Luke here, 8:17, but in Lk. 12:2 an entirely different context. It is given by Mt. 10:29 in connection with the Commission of the Twelve. The connection of Lk. 12:2 is most appropriate, moreover, as it is there associated with another logion, given by Mt. 10:27-32, in connection with the Commission of the Twelve. The original was probably a tetrameter tetrastich:

There is nothing covered up, that shall not be revealed;

There is nothing hid, that shall not be made known:

That which one saith in darkness, in the light shall be heard :

That which one whispereth in the ear, on the housetop shall be proclaimed.

. . .

It is strange that Luke should have given, in this, as in the previous logion, two different versions of the same original, from the Logia of Matthew ; but I see no escape from the conclusion that he did so here and elsewhere. Mark and Lk. 8:17 both omit the last two lines of the logion given in Mt. 10:27 and Lk. 12:3. There is an interesting difference between them which shows a variant interpretation of a common Hebrew original.

The ptcs. of the original are interpreted by Luke as referring to the disciples, "what ye have said," "what ye have spoken"; but in Matthew, as first person, referring to Jesus, "what I tell you," in the first clause; in the second, "what ye hear." In all probability, the original was designedly indefinite, referring to neither Jesus nor his disciples particularly, but to any one whatever, as I have rendered it.

(c) vs.23-24 breaks up two lines of a couplet, assigning one to the conclusion of the previous logion, and the other as an introduction to Mark's fourth logion. The latter is given by Luke here as an introduction to the last logion given by Mark in this place. The original was doubtless :

If any one hath ears, let him hear;

But let him take heed how he hears.

The formula indicates derivation from the Logia of Matthew; but the separation of the lines is that of an editor wishing to combine the two heterogeneous logia. It is improbable that it was so in the original Mark. It is improbable



that if Luke found it there he would omit the logion to which it was attached. Moreover, the first line is given in a similar form in all three evangelists at the close of the parable itself: Mk. 4:9, introduced by *καί ἔλεγεν*; Lk. 8:8, *ταῦτα λέγων ἐφώει*; Mt. 13:9, without introduction. It is quite possible that it originally belonged just here.

(d) vs.24b is given by Lk. 6:38, Mt. 7:2 in the Sermon on the Mount, where it properly belongs. Luke alone gives the logion in its completeness:

Judge not, and ye shall not be judged:  
Condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned:  
Eventually acquit, and ye shall be eventually acquitted:  
Give, and it shall be given unto you in good measure;  
Full and pressed down shall it be given unto your bosom:  
With what measure ye measure, it shall be measured to you.

Matthew omits two lines of the first strophe and two of the second, giving only the first of the first strophe and the last of the second strophe. Mark gives only the last line of the second strophe, and adds another verb to make it more emphatic. It must be evident that these three evangelists are all independent in the use of a common source. It is altogether improbable that this line was in Mark when Matthew and Luke use Mark. Luke. It came into the text from the second hand.

(e) vs.25 is given by Lk. 8:18b, and also Mt. 13:12. Lk. 19:26 also gives it in connection with the parable of the Pounds, and Mt. 25:29 in connection with the parable of the Talents, these being different versions of the same parable.

The original was probably :

The one that hath, to him shall be given ;  
The one that hath not, what he hath shall be taken.

Lk. 19:26 is nearer the original. Mt. 25:29 paraphrases; so does Lk. 8:18. The form of Mk. 4:25 is so different from any of them that there can be no dependence of Luke upon Mark here. They all use independently the same source, the Logia of Matthew.

It is evident, therefore, that all these logia were not in the original Mark; but came into Mark from the Logia of Matthew by a second hand, probably the translator.

(7) Mk. 6:4 gives a saying of Jesus in connection with his rejection at Nazareth, which appears in the same context in Mt. 13:57, Lk. 4:24; and, also, in Jn. 4:44, on Jesus' journey northward, through Samaria to Galilee, probably with

Nazareth as its destination. In all these passages only a single line is given. The other line of the couplet is missing. Happily, the entire couplet is given in the Oxyrhynchite fragments. Jesus saith:

A prophet is not acceptable in his own country.  
A physician works no cures upon them that know him.

This is introduced by λέγει Ἰησοῦς, and was evidently in the collection of Logia as a separate logion. Luke is nearer to it in the use of δετός ἐν τῇ πατρίδι αὐτοῦ. Mark and Matthew use ἄτιμος; John, τιμὴν οὐκ ἔχει.

Mark emphasizes by adding "among his own kin, and in his own house." Matthew adds, "and in his own house." Luke certainly used the logia from the collection of Logia, even if he had Mark before him. Matthew is so close to Mark that it looks like dependence upon him. On the whole, it seems most probable that this logion was in the original Mark, as it is so suited to its context.

(8) Mk. 6:8-11 gives a logion in connection with the Commission of the Twelve. This is given in Mt. 10:9-14 Lk. 9:3-5. It is doubtless in its original place in Mark, and Luke used it there. It is in a condensed form in Mark, when compared with Matthew, which gives it from the Logia of Matthew with many other similar logia.

(9) Mk. 8:34b-9:1 gives several logia in connection with Jesus' prediction of his death and resurrection, in the closing weeks of his ministry in Galilee, (a) vs.34b, Mt. 16:24, Lk. 9:23, a couplet of discipleship. The original:

If any man would come after me,  
Let him deny himself and follow me.

The versions of the three may all be explained as translations of the Hebrew Mark, and the logion was doubtless in the original Mark. They all add καὶ ἀράτω τὸν σταυρὸν αὐτοῦ, to which Luke adds καθ' ἡέραν. The reference to cross-bearing may not be original; it makes the last line of the logion just these two words too long if it be a tetrameter couplet. It probably was derived from the logia of the final commission, given out of place in Mt. 10:38, in connection with the original Commission of the Twelve, and in Lk. 14:27, in connection with a series of logia grouped about the warning to count the cost of discipleship.

(b) vs.35, Mt. 16:25, Lk. 9:24, Jn. 12:25 is another logion supplementary to the previous one, and may indeed be a second couplet of it. The original was:

Whoso findeth his life shall lose it,  
But whoso loseth his life shall find it.

This is a simple antithetic couplet of the tetrameter movement, complete and perfect in itself. This was cited, Mk.

8:35, as follows:

Whosoever would save his life shall lose it,  
And whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it.

It is evident that Mark interprets in the use of "would save" and "shall save" for "find" in the two clauses; and that it inserts "for my sake and the gospel's" in order to show that this loss of life must have a Christian motive. Furthermore, this addition destroys the measure of the line, and transforms the couplet from poetry to prose.

Mt. 16:25 is nearer the original, having "shall find it" in the second clause, instead of Mark's "shall save it." Lk. 9:24 also inserts the demonstrative, "the same shall save it."

But Matthew and Luke, in other passages, cite the logion directly from the Logia, and not mediately through Mark. Thus, Mt. 10:39 cites it exactly from the Logia; and makes no change except by inserting "for my sake" in the second clause. Lk. 17:33, however, paraphrases here, so that the most of the language is new:

Whosoever shall seek to gain his life shall lose it,  
But whosoever shall lose (his life) shall preserve it.

It is noteworthy, however, that no additions are made to it.  
But the greatest change is found in the Gospel of John, 12:25:

He that loveth his life loseth it,  
And he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

The first line is simply a paraphrase; but the second line makes a long insertion as well as a paraphrase, so that nothing of the original is left but the substance of the thought. Furthermore, the antitheses of love and hate, and of this world and the life eternal, are characteristic of the author of John's Gospel, and show clearly how his mind has colored and reconstructed the logion of Jesus (*Introduction to the Study of Holy Scripture*, pp. 69-70).

Mk. 4:35 was doubtless, in its Hebrew form, the original of the three Versions in Greek, which, appearing in the same context, differ only by amplification. The logion here is in a prosaic form, which might well have come from the original Mark. But the form in which it appears in the other passages was doubtless derived from the Logia of Matthew direct. In other words, they found it both in the Hebrew Mark and the Hebrew Logia.

(c) vs.36-37, Mt. 16:26, Lk. 9:23 give us also logia in a prose form, so nearly alike that they may be explained as translations of the same Hebrew sentence in the Hebrew Mark. We might find the original logion as follows:

What shall a man be profited

If he gain the world and forfeit his life ?

What shall a man give in exchange for his life ?

If we may thus restore this triplet, it is probable that the three logia were all parts of one logion, given by the Hebrew Mark, in a prose form, from the teaching of St. Peter.

(d) vs.38 Mt. 16:27 Lk. 9:26. This logion in Mark is in a prose form, and Luke depends upon it. Matthew, however, omits the first two lines, and gives a fourth line, not in the others.

The original was probably:

Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words.

Of him will the Son of man also be ashamed,

When he comes in the glory of his Father with the angels.

Then will he reward each according to his work.

(e) 9:1 Mt. 16:28, Lk. 9:27 give a logion introduced by Mark and Matthew by ἄμην λέγω ὑμῖν, and by Luke λέγω ὁ ἐὶν ὑμῖν ἀληθῶς, doubtless all derived from the Logia. It is attached to the previous ones without historic connection, and refers to an entirely different situation. Its present position has led to serious mistakes in its interpretation. The original connection has been lost. The original was probably:

Some are standing here,

Who will not taste of death,

Till they see the kingdom of God.

Luke, in the Bezan codex, gives the logion in its simple and complete form. He does not condense the Greek Mark, who substitutes for kingdom of God "the kingdom of God coming in power." Matthew substitutes "the Son of man coming in his kingdom."

It is possible that the original Mark had the simple Hebrew logion, and that the change in Mark is due to the Greek translator; but it is most probable that all derive from the same source, the Logia of Matthew. However, they have not any of them given this logion a very appropriate place.

(10) Mk. 9:35-37 attaches two logia to the rebuke of the disciples for reasoning among themselves who should be greatest. Jesus takes a little child in his arms to point the lesson. Mark separates the two logia by the statement of his taking the little child. Lk. 9:48 gives the first of them after the second. This may be stylistic. Mt. 18:5 only uses the second; and gives another logion before it, used by Mk. 10:15 and Lk. 18:17.

(a) The first of these is given also Mt. 20:26-27, Mk. 10:43-44 in connection with the reproof of James and John, where the logion is complete and doubtless in its original place.

It is also given Mt. 23:11 in another connection, evidently out of place. Lk. 22:26 gives it also at the Lord's Supper. It is probably an addition to Mark by the second or third hand. It is also tacked on in Lk. 9:48. The narrative is more forcible without it. We shall consider it where it belongs, Mk. 10:43-44.

(b) The original of the second logion was:

Whosoever receiveth one of the little ones, receiveth me.

Whosoever receiveth me, receiveth Him that sent me.

This was doubtless in the Hebrew Mark. The second line is given exactly by Luke, but enlarged by Mark. It is not given at all by Matthew. The first line is enlarged by all, by the addition of "in my name." The reference to little ones is indefinite in Mark and Matthew, but definite in Luke.

(11) Mk. 9:41-50 give a series of logia, not in Luke here, doubtless, therefore, an addition to the original Mark from the Logia of Matthew. Some of them are in the parallel of Mt. 18.

(a) vs. n is not in either Matthew or Luke here, but is given by Mt. 10:42, in connection with the Commission of the Twelve. The connection is not very appropriate in either case.

The original was probably:

Whosoever giveth a cup of water to drink,

He shall not lose his reward.

It is doubtless an addition to Mark by the second hand.

(b) vs.42= Mt. 18:6-7. It is given by Lk. 17:12 in a better connection.

The original was probably this:

Woe unto the world because of occasions of stumbling !

It must needs be that occasions of stumbling come ;

But woe to him through whom they come.

Whoso causeth one of the little ones to stumble,

It were better for him if he had a millstone about his neck,

And that he should be sunk into the depths of the sea.

Matthew gives it completely, only that Gospel transposes the strophes to connect them better with the logion as to little children. Luke gives all but the first line. Mark gives only the second strophe, and that with some modifications. It is impossible to suppose that either Luke or Matthew found this logion in the original Mark.

They derived it from the Logia of Matthew, as did Mark of the second hand.

(c) vs. 43-47, Mt. 18:8-9. This beautiful tristich is given by Mt. 5:29-30, in his version of the Sermon on the Mount, but evidently out of place.

The original was :

If thy light hand cause thee to stumble, cut it off:  
It is better for thee maimed to enter into life,  
Than to have two hands and be cast into Gehenna.  
And if thy foot cause thee to stumble, cut it off:  
It is better for thee halt to enter into life,  
Than to have two feet and be cast into Gehenna.  
And if thine eye cause thee to stumble, cast it out:  
It is better for thee with one eye to enter into life,  
Than to have two eyes and be cast into Gehenna.

These are tetrameters. Mark is much nearer the original than Matthew in either of his versions. He must have cited it from the Logia more accurately. It was not given by Luke at all. It is suited to the previous logion, which Luke gives in a more appropriate place. It is doubtless an addition to the original Mark. Furthermore, Mk. 9:48 adds a term which is characteristic of Matthew elsewhere.

(d) vs 49-50:

For every one shall be salted with fire.  
Salt is good:  
But if the salt have lost its saltiness,  
Wherewith will ye season it?  
Have salt in yourselves.  
And be at peace one with another.

This logion is given in Mt. 5:13, in the Sermon on the Mount:

Ye are the salt of the earth :  
But if the salt have lost its savour,  
Wherewith shall it be salted?  
It is thenceforth good for nothing,  
But to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.

It is also given by Lk. 14:34-35, attached to the logion on counting the cost:

Salt therefore is good :  
But if even the salt have lost its savour,  
Wherewith shall it be seasoned?  
It is fit neither for the land, nor for the dunghill:  
Men cast it out.

The connection of Luke is certainly most appropriate. It belongs to the Perean ministry. The introductory sentence of Mark is doubtless a seam of explanation. It could hardly have been in the original Mark. The original was probably as follows:

Salt is good for seasoning;  
But if the salt have lost its savour,  
Wherewith shall it be salted?  
It is fit neither for the land nor for the dunghill,  
But to be cast out and to be trodden under foot.  
Have salt in yourselves.

(12) Mk. 10:11-12 Mt. 19:9.

This logion is attached to the question as to divorce most naturally; it is, however, given again by Mt. 5:32, in his version of the Sermon on the Mount, and also by Lk. 16:18, in a connection where it is evidently out of place. Both the evangelists modify the original, but in different ways. It is probable that Matthew here depends upon Mark. 5.

(13) Mk. 10:14-15, Lk. 18:16-17, Mt. 19:14.

This section was probably derived by all from the Logia of Matthew; and it is the same incident as Mk. 9:33-37, Lk. 9:46-48, Mt. 19:14, derived from the original Mark. It is, therefore, an addition to the original Mark.

There are two logia here:

And he said unto them:

1) Suffer the little children to come unto me;  
Forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

2) Verily I say unto you: Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child,  
he shall in no wise enter therein.

This is identical in Mark and Luke. Matthew (19:14) omits second strophe here, but gives it in the other place, 18:3-4: "Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Matthew here has two couplets, and these are quite near their original gnomic form. Mark condenses the second under a prose sentence, and omits the first altogether.

(14) Mk. 10:31, Mt. 19:30 attached to the discourse as to the call of the rich ruler:

But many that are first shall be last;  
And the last first.

This is given by Matthew again, 20:16, at the close of the parable of the Hired Servants:

So the last shall be first, and the first last.

It is given by Lk. 13:30, in connection with the parable of the Foolish Virgins:

And behold, there are last which shall be first,  
And there are first which shall be last.

The logion is most complete in the version of Luke, and most appropriate there. It is tacked on in Mark, and can hardly be original.

(15) Mk. 10:42-45, Mt. 20:25-28.

This is most suitable here. But it is given by Lk. 22:25-26 at the Last Supper appropriately, and again by Mk. 9:35 in another connection, already considered as inappropriate :

The rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them;  
And their great ones exercise authority over them.  
Whosoever would be great among you shall be your minister;  
And whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant.  
The Son of Man came (not to lie ministered unto but) to minister,  
And to give his life a ransom for many.

(16) Mk. 11:25:

And whensoever ye stand praying,  
Forgive, if ye have aught against any one;



That your Father also (which is in heaven) may forgive you your trespasses.

This is not in Matthew here, and is out of place in Mark. The phrase of Matthew, "Father which is in heaven," is an evidence that the logion is not original to Mark. It is similar to Mt. 6:1415, in the Sermon on the Mount, and is doubtless a reference to the section in the Lord's Prayer on forgiveness.

(17) 12:38-40, Mt. 23:1, Lk. 20:45-47 is doubtless in place here, and quite near the original:

Beware of the scribes,  
Which desire to walk in long robes,  
And love salutations in the market-place,  
And chief seats in the synagogues,  
And chief places at feasts;  
They which devour widows' houses,  
And for a pretence make long prayers;  
These shall receive greater condemnation.

Luke copies this closely. But Matthew gives a long discourse, in which these lines appear in a different order, some of them not at all. Lk. 11:43 gives also:

For ye love the chief seats in the synagogues,  
And the salutations in the market-places.

We have examined carefully the logia used in the Gospel of Mark. Several couplets are given in connection with historical incidents, which evidently were with the stories in the original Mark. Several logia are given in a condensed or prosaic form in connection with certain incidents where they seem to be in their original place. None of these give evidence of derivation from the Logia of Matthew. But the greater portion of the logia used in Mark are in places where they have no close connection with the context. They seem to have been added for topical reasons, and to have been derived from the Logia of Matthew. They were not in the original Mark; but were added to the original Mark by the second, and, in some instances, by the third hand.

#### **JERUSALEM'S NAZARENE COMMUNITY - R. I. P.**

In the conflict of 66-73 AD, known as the first Jewish-Roman War, Jerusalem and its Temple were destroyed and the countryside laid waste. One might suppose that it would be the end of the matter, that it would be a long time before Jewish nationalism reasserted itself. Not so. 60 years later, if anything, a bigger conflagration occurred. The sequence of events was this: in 118 Hadrian became Emperor. Initially he favored, or at least acted as if he favored, Jewish aspirations, even granting permission to the Jews to rebuild the Temple, to

which ended the collecting of materials was begun. However, the relationship soon soured. Going back on his word, Hadrian demanded that the Temple be moved to some other location so that he could proceed with plans to build a temple to Jupiter on the Temple Mount. As early as 123 AD, some Jews had adopted hit-and-run guerilla tactics. Hadrian responded by bringing in the Sixth Ferrata, a powerful Roman legion. He also appointed a particularly harsh governor, Tinnieus Rufus, who ruled with a rod of iron. For several years the pot simmered. Then, in 132 AD, a full scale revolt broke out led by Shimon bar Kokhba. At first, this rebellion was highly successful but eventually the tide turned, Jerusalem again being destroyed, as well, 50 Jewish fortresses and 985 villages. More than 500,000 Jews are thought to have perished.

The relevancy of all this for the Nazarenes and for the Gospel is this: Bar Kokhba, because he purported to be the Messiah, made himself a fierce opponent of the Nazarenes, viewing as a rival claim their belief that Jesus was the Messiah. Of this Justin Martyr wrote:

Barchochebas, the leader of the revolt of the Jews, gave orders that Christians alone should be lead away to cruel punishments, unless they should deny Jesus as the Christ and blaspheme.

(Justin, *First apology* 31.6)

On the one hand, the Romans outlawed Sabbath observance, Torah reading, and circumcision. Being Law-observant, the Nazarenes could not comply. On the other hand the Nazarenes could not follow a false messiah. As if caught in a nutcracker between the Jewish Establishment and the Roman Army, the Nazarenes were largely destroyed, after which their rival, the proto-Roman Catholic Church, felt emboldened to go its own way, leading to what some have termed the “Great Gentile Hijack,” after which issues of text and canonicity were theirs to decide by default. Now the choice is ours: whether to stick with what is churchly or go with what is Nazarene and apostolic.

#### OLD TEXTS / NEW DISCOVERIES

Literary analysis, as above, rests on the availability of texts to be analyzed, which brings us to the issue of archeological discovery and its ability to open anew the debate.

In 1896, two youthful Oxford fellows, Bernard Grenfell and Arthur Hunt, funded by the Egypt Exploration Society of London, traveled about 150 miles up the Nile to the Bahr Yusuf branch of the Nile, then headed inland. Motivating them was the hope of finding papyri containing classical literary works which travelers reported as being available in that area. There they hit the mother lode: Euclid, Euripides, Aristophanes, and much, much more.

The ancient town Oxyrhynchus to which they went, called Behneseh by the locals, consisted, according to Hunt, of “a few squalid huts,” bordering on an east-west caravan path at

the edge of the Great Western Desert. At one time it had been a thriving regional capital, having its own canals which connected it to the river Nile, supplying it with abundant water.

The name “Oxyrhynchus” comes from a species of fish and translates as “sharp snout.” But the fish had gone the way of the canals, for after the Arab invasion of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the canals fell into disrepair and dried up, as did the town itself, dependent as it was upon them, after which, a 1000 plus years, the desert’s sifting sands covered over its refuse heaps.

But sometimes, as we know, one man’s trash becomes another man’s treasure. And so it was that in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the town’s buried treasures began to be exposed as the peasants fashioned a living from marketing its ancient papyri to European collectors. Today, after more than a hundred years of continuous excavation, the discoveries keep a-coming.

The relevancy to this study is that among the discoveries of 1897 were certain Greek sayings of Jesus, some never before seen. Eminent Bible scholars, including Adolf von Harnack and J Rendel Harris, detected in these sayings an underlying Hebrew stratum older than our canonical gospels. Because they were fragmentary and had not the title, they knew not the work from whence they came, that they were from the *Gospel of Thomas*. Nevertheless, working with what he had, Harris, in particular, was able to draw many far-reaching conclusions:

I was looking at the text of the book of Deuteronomy . . . There, before my eyes, were the opening sentences:

“These are the words which Moses spake to the people in the wilderness,”

and at looking at them I was at once struck by their parallelism with the opening sentences of the recently found Sayings of Jesus:

“These are the words (the wonderful words) which Jesus the living One spake, &c.”

It was natural to suggest the Christian writer had imitated the opening to Deuteronomy. In that case, there was an intention: we were being called from the words of Moses to the words of Christ. The very name of Deuteronomy to a Jew is taken from its opening Hebrew words; *Elle Debarim* is what they call it, or “These be the words”; and it follows that every Jew would catch the meaning of the form in which the Book of Sayings was cast. They are an intimation that we are leaving Moses for Christ.

(*Side-lights on New Testament Research*, 1908)

As indicated by Dr. Harris in the *Contemporary Review* article following, the newly discovered *Logia* gave the impression of predating canonical sources. I quote his 1898 article in full.

## THE "LOGIA" AND THE GOSPELS

J. Rendel Harris

IN the following remarks I wish to express the opinion which I have formed of the importance of the new discovery of *Logia* in the criticism of the Gospels, both as regards their text and their composition. I shall not attempt at the present time an exhaustive treatment of a subject which is already provoking an astonishing diversity of opinion. My object is simply to draw attention to the fact that this single page of *Logia* is in evidence for the disputed question of the influence of extra-canonical texts upon the readings of the New Testament, and that our existing Gospels occupy a subordinate position relatively to some such extra-canonical texts as we get a glimpse of in the fragment of *Logia*.

In order to make this statement, it is not necessary to discuss the various hypotheses which are current with regard to the origin or interpretation of these curious sayings. If, for example, it should be maintained, as by Dr. James in the *Contemporary* for last month, that the *Logia* in question are a series of excerpts from one or more uncanonical Gospels, I shall not spend time in confuting the statement (though I do not believe it to be a correct one), because Dr. James concedes the vital point of the existence of non-canonical sources of the evangelic tradition, though the concession is slightly veiled by the suggestion that the *Logia* are only a series of excerpts. As they are not excerpts from any known or authorised Gospels, we are introduced by them into the lost evangelical literature of the early Church, for either the *Logia* are themselves a part of that literature, or are derived from some unknown branch of it. And this is a vital concession in view of the steady contradiction of the existence of such literature by the great representatives of orthodox criticism.

Neither do we discuss in detail the conflicting interpretations of the several *Logia*, except so far as is necessary to vindicate their extreme antiquity and the correctness of their ascription to Jesus Christ. We shall do this for a single *Logion* which has been the subject of the worst misunderstanding. For example, with regard to the "Fast and Sabbath" *Logion* (if I may give it a name), I find in recent journals such decided statements as the following. The *Athenaeum* of August 7, in a review whose author is somewhat difficult to recognize, declares that:

"The second fragment states that *unless you fast you will not find the kingdom of God, and unless you keep the Sabbath you will not see the Father*. The Therapeutae fasted every day and the whole day, and they were rigid in the observance of the Sabbath. They believed fasting essential to salvation. They were bound to carry on the contemplation of God during the daylight, doing nothing else; thinking that all the deeds of the body, such as eating and drinking, should not be begun till darkness came on. The fragment has the words . . . [the world] added to . . . [unless ye fast], which makes no sense. The editors try to force a sense into them. The reading may originally have been . . . [until sunset] . . . . If our conjecture were correct, then the saying would embody exactly the rule of the Therapeutic. The great object of the Therapeutae was to see the Father, to attain to the vision of God."

And the same opinion is expressed, without any reference to a possible Therapeutic origin for the *Logia*, by an able American writer (Dr. B. W. Bacon) in the *New York Independent* for July 22. He says:

"It is well known that a number of reported sayings of our Lord were rejected by the consensus of the early Church as not genuine, although they were current in early circles; and the second of these sayings may very well be of this character. *It imposes the duty of fasting and the duty of keeping the Sabbath under penalty of rejection from the kingdom of God.* There is nothing like this in the Gospels, and nothing like it in any of the Epistles," &c.

The remarks which follow will show that the words underlined in the two extracts which I have given are a misapprehension of the meaning of the *Logion*.

I shall also, in the second place, explain more fully what I apprehend to be the general effect of the new discovery upon the Higher Criticism, as well as the Lower Criticism, of the New Testament. With regard to the latter, it is, indeed, easy to see that the recovered *Logia* confirm Resch's view as to the genesis of variants in the New Testament by extra-evangelic influences. The Oxford editors have drawn attention to one striking case. But Resch is not merely a "lower" critic busied with readings of the existing Gospels; he is a "higher" critic occupied with the genesis of all Gospels out of their primitive deposit. And if Resch is right in supposing that there was a primitive, oft-translated Hebrew book of *Logia*, or *Ur-Evangelium*, we shall many of us have to abandon the theory, defended so zealously by Lightfoot and Westcott, that our Gospels are themselves the primitive deposit.

Here, for the first time, we are definitely introduced to a new stratum in the history of the evangelic literature, which may be only separated from the lowest stratum of the deposited tradition by the fact of a translation from Hebrew into Greek. That is to say, *We are behind the Gospels*. Once again the higher critics have turned out to be right and the conservatives wrong; for the latter have steadily ignored the existence of written documents underlying our Canonical Gospels, while the former have recognised their existence, and have used the critical art to recover them.

Yesterday there were no *Logia* in the minds of the majority of English-speaking critics; to-day every one is talking *Logia*. And when one reads over, in the light of the present discovery, the laborious attempts made by Westcott, in his "History of the Canon," to prove that the variations in the evangelical quotations of the Fathers are not due to the use of extra-canonical sources, the conviction is overwhelming that he was defending an untenable position. We cannot any longer say, with the easy confidence that Westcott does, that "Papias bears direct testimony to our Gospels,"\* nor can we assent, without grave reservations, to the statement that Papias tells us the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark were current in his time, and that of the *former* Papias says, "Matthew composed the Oracles in Hebrew; and each one interpreted them as he was able." It may be so, but it does not any longer seem likely. And when, in a footnote, Westcott goes so far as to say that "the sense [of this passage in Papias] would be best expressed by the translation, 'Matthew composed his Gospel in Hebrew,' giving to the word its necessary notion of scriptural authority," it is difficult to be patient with the apparent *petitio principii* involved in the substitution of "Gospel" for "*Logia*," and the attempt to limit the authority of the New Testament Scriptures to their canonical form.

We are told, further, that "it has been shown that the use of *ru Aoyto* for the Scriptures generally is fully established," and Westcott is "not aware that *X6yia* can be used in the sense of *Xoyoe*, discourses." The interpretation, however, which Westcott rejects is rendered peculiarly attractive by the repeated "Jesus says" (*Xey«*), which is so striking a characteristic of the new document.

Now, perhaps, some one will say, "We readily concede that the •existence of collections of Christ's sayings is demonstrated and must be allowed for in the criticism of the existing Gospels. In this sense, then, the *Logia* of Jesus are behind the Gospels, and are an earlier stratum. But does it follow that the recovered *Logia* have come down to us without contamination and without accretion; and may we not, – even in this single page, be in danger of ascribing too high an authority to sayings which perhaps do not belong to the primitive tradition at all?" To such an objection it would be well to give heed, and perhaps the best way to make a test of the matter is to examine one of the difficult non-canonical sayings in the *Logia*, determine its true meaning, and see whether it lies before or after some landmark in the literature of the New Testament.

We will take, then, as a specimen, the curious *Logion* No. 2, to which we referred in our opening sentences:

"Except ye fast to the world, ye shall in no wise find the kingdom of God; and except ye keep the Sabbath, ye shall not see the Father."

Here a superficial criticism detects the influence of the fourth Gospel in the phrase "see the Father," and concludes, therefore, for the lateness of the *Logion*. But let us examine the matter more carefully. The *Logion* is in the form of a Hebrew parallelism, and we infer that the expression, "see the Father" is another way of saying "find the kingdom." It is to be compared with the expressions "theirs is the kingdom," and "they shall see God," in Matthew. There is no necessary connection with the fourth Gospel.

(The equivalence of the phrases referred to can also be seen from\* such a passage as this from the Acts of Thomas, "Blessed are ye meek, for God has counted you worthy to inherit his kingdom; . . . blessed are ye meek, for ye shall see the face of your Lord.")

Next we ask, What is the meaning of the expression "Fast the world," with its harsh grammar?

On turning to Clement of Alexandria (Strom. iii. p. 556) we find him discussing a passage in Isaiah (lvi. 3-5) in which the Lord promises a special blessing on those eunuchs who keep His Sabbaths. Clement explains that *they keep the Sabbath by refraining from sins*, and that, having thus cut themselves off from all sin for the kingdom of heaven's sake, they are blessed in that they fast from the world . . . Here, then, is the very expression which puzzled us in the *Logion*, only the grammar, or perhaps the Hebraism of the language, has been corrected. Note the connection between the two ideas of *keeping the Sabbath* and *fasting the world*. Evidently our *Logion* is a true case of Hebrew parallelism, both members of which are in Clement's mind.\*

Next turn to the seventh book of Clement's "Stromateis" (Strom. vii. p. 877), and we find him discussing the

character of the Gnostic, as he loves to call the spiritual man. He tells us that this Gnostic understands the meaning of the two fasting-days in the week p for the Wednesday and Friday are the days of Mercury and Venus. Now Hermes is the covetous nature and Aphrodite the sensual, and the true Gnostic fasts with regard to the life that loves greed and \* We owe this reference to Dr. Joseph B. Mayor.

Please note. He fasts according to the law from base actions, and according to the Gospel from wicked imaginations. And Clement goes on to say that such a one, having carried out the command according to the Gospel, *makes a Lord's day* of that day in which he casts away the base imagination, he glorifies the Lord's resurrection in himself, and when he receives the comprehension of the intellectual vision, he reckons *to see the Lord* as he directs his eyes towards things invisible. Note the connection of ideas; *he fasts, he keeps a spiritual Sunday, and he sees the Lord.* We are very near indeed to our *Logion*.

Turn, in the next place, to the Prophetic Eclogues of Clement (p. 992), (a passage which we again owe to Professor Mayor), and we find Clement discussing again the nature of fasting. He shows it cannot be the mere absence from meat, for meat does not commend us to God. It must then be understood mystically; fasting is a. form of dying, and so we are to *fast to worldly things* in order that we may die to the world, and after that may partake of heavenly food and live to God.

So here we have another enforcement of the doctrine that we are to fast to the world. We may be sure that Clement knew the *Logion* and that he interpreted both parts of it, the fast and the Sabbath, mystically. So the expressions are justified and the meanings are also clear. *It has nothing to do with fasting or keeping the Sabbath in the common sense.*

We shall see this still more clearly if we recall the fact that all the primitive preaching about which we know anything involved a proof from the Old Testament that God was going to make a new covenant. And this involved also, as the controversies and books of testimonies' against the Jews show, the doctrine of a new law, new baptism, new circumcision, new fast, new Sabbath, new sacrifices, &c.

Now this doctrine of the new fast was usually grounded on a passage in Isaiah lviii.: "Is not this the fast that I have chosen," &c., Accordingly, Justin says in his dialogue with Trypho, the Jewish Rabbi (c. 15), "Now learn to fast *the true fastoi* which Isaiah speaks, in order that yon may please God." And again (c. 12): "The time is come when yon need a new circumcision and you want the old one in your flesh. The new law commands you to Sabbatize continually, and yon think yourselves pious if you are idle for one day, not understanding the reason why it was appointed; and if you eat unleavened bread, you say you have fulfilled the will of God. The Lord our God delights not in these things. If there is among you a perjured person, or a thief, let him cease to do such things. If there is an adulterer, let him repent, and thus he has *Sabbatized the true* and delightsome *Sabbath* of God." Here the very expression is found concerning which the Oxford editors ask, . . . "It is curious that in quoting from this chapter the obligation of

a perpetual Sabbath, they missed the answer to their question about the meaning of the *Logion*.

But was it an ancient one? We may admit that it is involved in the teaching of Clement and Justin. But does it explain anything in the New Testament? We say it does. For this doctrine of "fasting the world" underlies such an expression as 1 Pet. ii. 10, "*Abstain* from fleshly lusts which war against the soul." If this at first sight seems a little remote, it ceases to be so when we notice the form which the same sentiment takes in the Teaching of the 12 Apostles, "*Abstain* from fleshly and *worldly* lusts." So we can from one single and spiritual *Logion* trace the language of the first Epistle of Peter, and of the Teaching of the Apostles as well as the later explanations of Clement and Justin.

The antiquity of the *Logion* is, therefore demonstrated; and we do not hesitate to state our belief that it is a genuine saying of Jesus Christ.

Nor is it without interest that Clement of Alexandria, with his, at first sight, peculiar mysticism, turns out to be the best exponent of the mind of the Master. Between Christ's time and Clement's, the doctrine of the Real Abstinence had been replaced by a Holy Wednesday and Friday; the True spiritual Rest had suffered also from the accretion of a fresh sacred feast-day. But Clement brushes these on one side, as Christ had brushed away the Monday and Thursday fasts of the Jews, and says we fast to Mercury and we fast to Venus, we die to desire of gain and we crucify the flesh with the passions thereof. And his interpretation was Christ's, which he had rediscovered and reapplied to the religious practices of his own day.

We have now examined carefully into the meaning of this *Logion*, and we have concluded it to be just as primitive as any of those its companions that go under the name of Canonical Gospel. The idea that it involved the obligation of fasting and Sabbath-keeping is the exact opposite of the truth.

Now the effect of this discovery of the antiquity of the recovered matter upon the criticism of the Gospels cannot fail to be great; for we find not only that we are behind the Gospels, but that *there is more in the sources of the Gospels than is conserved in the Gospels themselves*.

The next thing that is clear is that we have to do with something more than an oral tradition preceding our Gospels. We shall prove this by actually recovering by critical methods the opening sentences of the *Ur-Evangelium*, in one at least of its primitive forms.

The general consent of critics has recognized in Acts xx. 35 a true *Logion* of Jesus Christ, either oral or written. It is introduced by the remark that "we ought to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." Here there is a suggestiveness about the intruded words, "how He said." They remind one of the recurring "Jesus says" of the recovered *Logia*.



Now let us turn to the Epistle of Clement of Rome (c. 13), and we find the writer advising us “to be mindful of the words of the Lord Jesus which He spake when teaching sweet reasonableness and long-suffering, for thus He said:

“Be merciful that ye may obtain mercy: Remit that it may be remitted to you: As ye do, so shall it be done unto you: As ye give, so shall it be given unto you: As ye judge, so shall it be judged unto you: As ye are kind, so shall kindness be done to you: With what measure ye mete, it shall be meted to you.”

Now, these are certainly *Logia*, but they vary from the existing *logia* of the New Testament in such a way as to preclude the thought that they are a free reminiscence of Matthew and Luke. And these *Logia* are introduced by a statement similar to that in the Acts, that *we are to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, for thus He said*. The same seven *Logia* recur with hardly a variation in Clem. Alex. (Strom. ii. p. 476), where they are introduced by the words, “the Lord says.” There is no reason to suppose one Clement is quoting the other.

Further, in the 46th chapter of the same epistle, we find Clement of Rome saying, “*Remember the words of Jesus our Lord, for He said*, Woe to that man; and it were good for him if he had never been born, than that he should offend one of my elect: it were better for him that a millstone should be placed about him and he be drowned in the sea, than to offend one of my little ones.”

Here again we find the saying repeated by Clem. Alex. (Strom. iii. p. 561), and introduced by the words, “the Lord says.”

Here, then, is another combination of *Logia*, and it is certainly *not* from the Canonical Gospels, though Westcott will have it to be a recollection of these. And this Gospel extract of Clement of Rome is again introduced with the words which enjoin the recollection of Christ's sayings.

Next turn to the Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians (c. 2), and we find him enjoining upon us “*to remember the things which the Lord, said in His teaching* :

Judge not that ye be not judged: Remit and it shall be remitted to you: Be merciful that ye may obtain mercy: In what measure ye mete, it shall be measured back to you: and that Blessed are the poor, and those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of God.”

Here we have the same peculiarity—viz., a quotation of *Logia*, not from our Gospels, with a prologue about the remembrance of what He said. And we have noticed the phenomenon four times. We conclude that it was the introductory formula of the book, which must have been something like this: “We ought to remember what things our Lord said in His teaching, for He said . . .” and then probably follows the first *Logion*.

How ancient this collection must have been, if we find it quoted by Paul, by Clement of Rome, and by Polycarp!

The critical importance of this attempt to restore the opening of a primitive collection of *Logia* is very great.

On the one hand, it gives us the suggestion of an earlier Gospel or Gospels than any of our existing volumes. On the other hand, it prevents our quoting Clement and Polycarp as attesting the antiquity of the Canonical Gospels. And this means a possible lowering of our idea of the antiquity of the extant Synoptists. We conclude, moreover, from a study of the variants in the recovered *Logia* that there is reason to believe not only in the existence of much pre-canonical evangelic matter, but also (we refer especially to the reading, "a city *built* on a hill," in the seventh *Logion*, whose origin Kesch divined so acutely) in the influence that the extra-evangelic documents have had on the transmission of the text of the canonical Gospels.

Again, in Egypt, in 1945, a precious lode of texts emerged from the sands of upper Egypt, this time in a place called Nag Hammadi near where once, millennia ago, had stood a monastery. An alert Arab farmer, Mohammed Ali al-Samman, looking for nitrogen-rich fertilizer called *sabakh* uncovered a sealed, 4-ft. tall, earthen jar containing 13, leather-bound books dating to the 4<sup>th</sup> century. After getting them home, Mohammed Ali's mother promptly used one of them as a fire-starter. One was given to a Coptic priest. Others were exchanged for cigarettes and oranges; the rest were sold to black market dealers. One ended up in Europe in the possession of Carl Jung but, finally, it and the others were reunited under the auspices of the Coptic Museum in Cairo. Only in the 1980's were they fully translated into English. Since then, these texts, over 1000 pages of material, have been working their way into public awareness, altering perceptions regarding Jesus and altering perceptions of Christian origins. Not all of these texts were Gnostic in character. One was of Plato, and one of Jesus.

Both the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Nag Hammadi collections were hidden away for the same reason, to escape destruction either by the Romans, or by Rome's surrogate, the Church. When the bishop, Athanasia, decreed certain books canonical in 367 AD, it implied that others were heretical. And so some thoughtful individual or group secreted away those texts that did not make the cut and did such a good job of it, they survived 1,5000 years. That is what kept many precious words of Jesus from being lost to humanity as the Church assiduously sought to erase from memory any telling of the gospel other than its own.

The failure by the powers-that-be to destroy all evidence puts one in mind of Moses who, when he was 40 years old, slew an Egyptian and then buried him in the sands of Egypt. Evidently he left a toe sticking up out of the sand, because word of his deed got out and he had to flee. Likewise, though it generally went about its self-appointed task of suppression with great diligence, the Church overlooked a few texts whose survival, albeit tattered and torn, will prove in the long run most detrimental to its cause. History it is said is written by the winners. For a long while the Church was that winner but the truth will out in the end. Meanwhile, It is our privilege to relate an alternative telling and assess its value.

## NON-CANONICAL GOSPELS

In his most famous surviving work, *Against Heresies*, Irenaeus made many an argument against non-canonical gospels. However, one argument he did not make, indeed, I suspect, dared not make, is that of priority. All he would have had to do to clinch his case was to show how the canonicals were older and thus more original than any of the others. But this he did not attempt to do and, I suspect, for good reason, that too many people were around at that time, the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century, who knew otherwise, who could have called him on it.

. . . there has always been a synoptic problem, ever since the three Gospels appeared together in the canon of the New Testament. . . . every attempt at solution seemed only to add to the difficulty of finding an adequate one; . . .  
(James Iverach, *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*)

So many contradictory hypotheses to contend with, so many scholars to advance them! For instance, there's the oral hypothesis tradition first advanced by Gieseler in 1818, later to be upheld by Alford and Wescott. But this did not adequately explain all the verbal agreements. Thereafter a variety of mutual use hypotheses came into being whereby each of the three synoptic canonical gospels has been accorded – by reputable scholars, I might say – first, second, or third place chronologically with each being described as either the source for, or else as having been derived from, one or more of the others, with every possible combination having its advocates. For a century Ph.D candidates have intently scrutinized the texts and have advanced and exploded innumerable theories without coming to consensus: there is Streeter and Holtzmann's Two Source Hypothesis; the Greisbach Hypothesis championed by Farmer; the Farrar Hypothesis backed by Goulder; the Jerusalem School Hypothesis; the Augustinian Hypothesis wherein *Mark* is seen as the last gospel to have been written, a view adopted by F. Baur and the Tübingen school etc, etc. 'Round and 'round we go. Why? because one dare not suggest intermediate, non-canonical texts.

The average Church communicant, knowing little about the growing body of research presented here, in all sincerity struggles on to distinguish what is valid and apostolic and what is not. (I know: for 35 years that was your's truly.) But if we would stop and think about it, we would see that it is simply not credible that any of the canonical gospels were written by a single individual. The complex web of interrelationships and mutual borrowings had to have required a long process of development. Verbatim agreements demonstrate literary dependence. Had the gospels been intended to be purely individual, one-witness accounts, they would not have shamelessly cribbed word-for-word from each other. No, they are jointly-witnessed accounts. And behind each account were Christian communities who sponsored the apostles' work of witness. As Stather Hunt ably wrote:

I wish also to draw attention to a small point which has been largely overlooked. When in the Gospels and the Acts the Apostles and others are described as '*witnesses*' (Lk. xxiv. 48; Acts I. 8, 22; ii. 32; iii. 15; v. 32; x. 9, 41; xvii. 15; xxvi. 16. Cf. Heb. xii. 1; I Pet. v 1), this is generally taken to mean much the same as when to-day in certain circles a man is described as 'witnessing for Christ'. But this is to miss the whole significance of the word. Unlike any man of to-day the Apostles were witnesses for Christ because they had seen with their own eyes the events which testified to His Messiahship. Thus in Lk. xxiv. 48, after He had given a long list of prophecies and '*opened their understandings that they might understand*' the way in which those prophecies had been fulfilled in Him, our Lord says to His disciples 'You have seen these events with your own eyes, and therefore you are the people who must testify and explain to others'.

If this interpretation is correct it means that the Apostles were commissioned by our Lord for the express purpose of bearing witness *from their own personal experience of them* to the truth of those events which proved His messiahship, . . . This is why St. Luke in his preface emphasizes that he had obtained the *facts* (ἡράγματα) of his Gospel from *eye witnesses*, who could of their own knowledge vouch for the truth of '*those things which have been fulfilled among us*'. In other words, the purpose of his Gospel was not to give a biography of our Lord but to set forth evidence of eye witnesses that '*those things which God had announced before by the mouth of all the prophets that Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled*' (Acts iii. 18). So that the first task of the Apostles was to bear witness to the *fact* that these prophecies had all been fulfilled in our Lord, (Jno. xv. 27), and the Acts show that this is precisely what they did. Thus the foundation of the Gospels, and of the Christian religion itself, was laid upon testimony; the human testimony of the Apostles, and the evidential testimony of the messianic prophecies. (Stather Hunt, *Primitive Gospel Sources*)

If the canonicals are not to be accepted uncritically, neither should the non-canonical gospels be rejected uncritically. Both categories have valid and invalid elements. Nevertheless, the standard academic line remains that of Robert M. Grant, Professor of New Testament, University of Chicago who in his book, *A Introduction to the New Testament*, states:

. . . since the norms for determining authenticity must lie within the canonical gospels, it is hard to see what contribution apocryphal gospels could make even if some of the material in them should be judged genuine.

This type of reasoning may have had its day once but for a host of reasons is passé. By availing ourselves of *MS Pepys 2498*, the *Nazarene Gospel Narrative*, we can dispense with the notion of the canonicals being "the norm." However implausible, the standard, academic line is to deny the existence of a Hebrew or Aramaic original. Who do they suppose the Galilean fishermen were, Greek scholars? Once it's recognized that the canonicals cannot be relied upon without reservation, then the door is open to consider other sources of information. From too long dependence on a single textual tradition, the Alexandrian text-

type, on which the vast majority of modern *New Testament* translational activity is based, a kind of mental laziness has overtaken the field of biblical study. At first, parting with this accustomed crutch will seem painful, nevertheless, doing so is not without its compensations: narrow certitude may be out, but the joy of unfettered discovery is in.

Whether an expression was derived from a canonical or non-canonical source, it matters not, for the legitimate function of scholarship to look dispassionately upon it and bring forward any relevant information. That is what AnneMarie Luijendijk did regarding an expression found in the Greek version of the Gospel of Thomas. From an article of her's posted to the internet, I have excerpted the following:

In 1953, French papyrologist Roger Rémondon obtained a small, inscribed linen shroud from an antiquities dealer in Behnasa, the site of the ancient city of Oxyrhynchus. [On it] "Jesus says:

'There is nothing buried that will not be raised.' "

With these confident words written on a linen shroud, a deceased Christian in late antique Egypt was interred to await resurrection. For, as those familiar with the Greek text of the Gospel of Thomas will recognize, the funerary sentence is very similar to the concluding line of its logion 5. Is there indeed a literary connection with the Gospel of Thomas? We know from papyrological evidence that the Gospel of Thomas was read in Oxyrhynchus in the third century.

But what happened later? Was that still the case in subsequent centuries? Despite the forceful exclusion of the Gospel of Thomas from the New Testament canon by church leaders, I argue that this funerary bandage hints that the Gospel of Thomas was still in use and considered ritually effective in the Oxyrhynchite community well into Late Antiquity.

The saying on the shroud matches the Greek text of the Gospel of Thomas (as far as preserved) almost verbatim [yet] I do not picture a scribe poring over a manuscript of that text and, having located the right saying, copying it on the shroud. . . . just like contemporary ecclesiastical authors quoted mostly from memory, I imagine that the scribe who drafted this verse on the shroud – or whoever commissioned it – would have known this saying from studying, memorizing, and reciting the Fifth Gospel.

Christian funerary prayers ask for the physical resurrection of the dead person, as, for instance, in this mid-fourth-century liturgy attributed to Sarapion of Thmuis in the Egyptian Delta:

We pray to you for the sleep and rest of this your (female or male) servant. Give rest to his soul, his spirit, in green pastures, in the inner rooms of rest with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and all

your saints. And raise (her/his) body on the appointed day according to your truthful promises so that you may give to him according to the worthy inheritance(s) in your holy pastures.

In a sermon held ca. 450, abbot Shenoute of Atripe (an approximate contemporary of the person behind the saying on the shroud) assured his audience of a restored body at the resurrection:

Even if they pluck out your eyes, you will not rise in the resurrection without eyes. . . . Even if they remove your head, you will rise again with it upon you. Even if they cut you apart limb from limb, not only will you rise and not be separated from the little digit on your hand or your foot, but you will also rise with a spiritual body.

Whoever commissioned the saying on the funerary cloth believed also in the physical resurrection of the body. This inscribed funerary shroud in its affirmation of bodily resurrection, appropriately depicts the cross. it functions as symbol of the resurrection: it both wards off evil and is a "landmark of paradise."

The sixth-century Egyptian monk Cosmas Indicopleustes:

"The cross, interchangeable with the Tree of Life (as contrasted to the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil), was a potent symbol of the economy of salvation, Christ's resurrection, and humankind's future resurrection."

Testimonia to the Gospel of Thomas reveals that influential Christian authors in this period reject it. Eusebius of Caesarea groups the Gospel of Thomas among the heretical texts. Cyril of Jerusalem prohibits its reading, claiming: "Let no one read the Gospel of Thomas."

In his article on "The Canon of the New Testament in Antiquity," Christoph Marksches advocated that we should look beyond influential church leaders and canonical lists in order to understand early Christian reading practices and take into account also "which types of canons and books of contents of canons appeared in the public, liturgical and private lives of ancient Christians."

While this phrase is present in the Greek text, it is absent from the Coptic translation the addition of this saying to the Gospel of Thomas in logion 5 is not the insertion of an independently transmitted *agraphon* attributed to Jesus. This was never an oral saying to begin with. Rather, I contend, it was an exegetical addition, where the scribe interpreted the "hidden and manifest" in logion 5 as "buried and raised," in an allusion to the Pauline creed in 1 Cor 15:4, "that he was buried and that he was raised." This funerary cloth allows us to catch glimpses of the people that read the Fifth Gospel and applied it to their lives, or better, their deaths.

# Buddhist Christianity, the Nazarene way out?

We don't want to say that Buddhism is a kind of Christianity and Christianity is a kind of Buddhism. A mango cannot be an orange. I cannot accept the fact that a mango is an orange. They are two different things. But when you look deeply into the mango and into the orange, you see that although they are different, they are both fruits. If you analyze the mango and the orange deeply enough, you will see the same elements are in both, like the sunshine, the clouds, the sugar, and the acid, . . . the only difference between them lies in the degree of emphasis. At first you see the differences . . . but if you look a little deeper, you discover many things in common. Buddha and Jesus are two brothers who have to help each other . . . not for the sake of Buddhism, not for the sake of Christianity, but for the sake of humankind and for the sake of other species on Earth. (Thich Nanh Hanh)

## OUR JUDEO-BUDDHIST HERITAGE

*an antidote to Judeo-Christian bellicosity*

Lecturing in Ascona, Switzerland some years ago, a 91 year-old Zen Buddhist, D. T. Suzuki, put his finger on the problem, namely Western Christendom's ugly proclivity for unbridled aggression. As he put it:

Man against God.  
God against man.  
Man against Nature.  
Nature against man.  
God against Nature.  
Nature against God.  
Very funny religion.

Funny religion, indeed! But it didn't start out that way. Rather, it was subverted. We need to see what Christianity was like before it was hijacked by dark forces. We should know more about the dark forces, that we might not be taken unaware our ourselves subverted.



## The Prodigious Father from a Buddhist perspective

At one time a favorite disciple of Buddha was athirst, having traveled from afar. At a well he encountered a girl, Matanga, and asked her to give him water to drink. But as one of low caste, she was afraid of contaminating a holy Brahmana and humbly declined.

"I ask not for caste, but for water!" said Ananda. His saying this won her heart.

It so happened that Matanga had a cunning mother, well versed in magic arts. When this woman heard how much her daughter was in love, she threw her spell round the disciple and brought him to her cave. Helpless, he prayed to Buddha, who forthwith appeared and cast out the wicked demons.

But the girl Matanga remained in a wretched state. At last she determined to repair to Buddha himself and appeal to him. The Great Physician, reading the poor girl's thought, questioned her gently:

"Supposing that you marry my disciple, can you follow him everywhere?"

"Everywhere!" said the girl,

"Could you wear his clothes, sleep under the same roof?" said Buddha, alluding to the nakedness and beggary of the "houseless one." By slow degrees the girl began to take his meaning, and at last she took refuge in the Three-Great Jewels: *Tsing-tu-wan*, the loving father of all that lives; our loving Father of all that breathes; and *loca pita Swayamhua*, the Healer and protector of all creatures.

Albeit living many centuries before Jesus' time, albeit coming from a different culture, Buddha taught, as did Jesus, in parables. The parables of Buddha are reported in the Lotus of the Perfect Law to be veiled from the ignorant by means of an enigmatic form of language. Because his sons feel no joy on hearing spiritual things, Buddha was forced to veil much of his thought, for only by slow degrees can their minds be trained and disciplined for higher truths. Such is the case concerning the parable of the burning mansion:

Once there was an old man, broken, decrepit, but very rich. He possessed much land and many gold pieces. Moreover, he possessed a large rambling mansion which also showed plain proofs of Time's decay. Its rafters were worm-eaten; its pillars were rotten; its galleries were tumbling down; the thatch on its roof was dry and combustible. Inside this mansion were several hundreds of the old man's servants and retainers, so extensive was the collection of rambling old buildings. Unfortunately, this mansion possessed only one door.

One day there was a smell of burning, and he ran out by the solitary door. To his horror he saw the thatch in a mass of flame, the rotten old pillars were catching fire one by one, the rafters were blazing like tinder. Inside, his children, whom he loved most tenderly, were romping and amusing themselves with their toys. The distracted father said to himself,

"I will run in and save my children. I will seize them in my strong arms. I will bear them harmless through the falling rafters and the blazing beams!"

Then the sad thought seized him that his children were romping and ignorant.

"If I tell them that the house is on fire they will not understand me. If I try to seize them they will romp about and try to escape. Alas! not a moment is to be lost!"

Suddenly a bright thought flashed across the old man's mind. "My children are ignorant," he mentally said, "but they love toys and glittering playthings. I will promise them some playthings of unheard-of beauty. Then they will listen to me!" So the old man shouted out with a loud voice, "Children, children, come out of the house and see these beautiful toys. Chariots with white gold and tinsel. See these exquisite little antelopes! Whoever saw such goats as these! Children, children, come quickly or they will all be gone!"

Forth from the blazing ruin came the children in hot haste. The word "playthings" was almost the only word that they could understand. Then the fond father, in his great joy at seeing his offspring freed from peril, procured for them some of the most beautiful chariots ever seen. Each chariot had a canopy like a pagoda. It had tiny rails and balustrades, and rows of jingling bells. It was formed of the seven precious substances. Chaplets of glittering pearls were hung aloft upon it; standards and wreaths of the most lovely flowers. Milk-white oxen drew these chariots. The children were astonished when they were placed inside.

The meaning of this parable is thus rendered in the "White Lotus of Dharma." The old man is *Tathagata*, and his children the blind, suffering children of sin and passion. *Tathagata* fondly loves them, and would save them from their unhappiness. The old rambling mansion, unsightly, rotten, perilous, is the Domain of Karma, the Domain of Appetite. This old mansion is ablaze with the fire of mortal passions, and hates, and lusts. *Tathagata* in his "immense compassion" would lead all his beloved children away from this great peril, but they do not understand his language. Their only thought is of tinsel toys and childish pastimes. If he speaks to them of the great inner quickening which makes man conquer human pain, they cannot understand him. If he talks to them of wondrous supernatural gifts accorded to mortals, they turn a deaf ear to him. The tinsel chariots provided for the children of *Tathagata* are the "Vehicles" of the Buddhist teaching. Another parable:

A certain man had a son who went away into a far country. There he became miserably poor. The father, however, grew rich, and accumulated much gold and treasure, and many storehouses and elephants. But he tenderly loved his lost son, and secretly lamented that he had no one to whom to leave his palaces and fine things at his death.

After many years the poor man, in search of food and clothing, happened to come to the country where his father had great possessions. And when he was afar off his father saw him, and reflected thus in his mind:

"If I at once acknowledge my son and give to him my gold and my treasures, I shall do him a great injury. He is ignorant and undisciplined ; he is poor and brutalized. With one of such miserable inclinations 'twere better to educate the mind little by little. I will make him one of my hired servants."

Then the son, famished and in rags, arrived at the door of his father's house; and seeing a great throne upraised, and many followers doing homage to him who sat upon it, was awed by the pomp and the wealth around. 'Instantly he fled once more to the highway. "This," he thought, "is a the house of the poor man. If I stay at the palace of the king perhaps I shall be thrown into prison."

Then the father sent messengers after his son; who was caught and brought back in spite of his cries and lamentations. When he reached his father's house he fell down fainting with fear, not recognizing his father, and believing that he was about to suffer some cruel punishment. The father ordered his servants to deal tenderly with the poor man, and sent two laborers of his own rank of life to engage him as a servant on the estate. They gave him a broom and a basket, and engaged him to clean up the dung-heap at a double wage.

From the window of his palace the rich man watched his son at his work: and disguising himself one day as a poor man, and covering his limbs with dust and dirt, he approached his son and said:

"Stay here, good man, and I will provide you with food and clothing. You are honest, you are industrious. Look upon me as your father."

After many years the father felt his end approaching, and he summoned his son and the officers of the king, and announced to them the secret that he had so long kept. The poor man was his son, who in early days had wandered away from him; and now that he was conscious of his former debased condition, and was able to appreciate and retain vast wealth, he was determined to hand over to him his entire treasure. The poor man was astonished at this sudden change of fortune, and overjoyed at meeting his father once more.

(Much of the above is drawn from *The Influence of Buddhism on Primitive Christianity* by Arthur Lillie, 1893)

Following are select *Odes of Solomon* which, I submit, in the unmediated immediacy of their experience, in their sensibility, provide examples of Buddhism in a Nazarene setting.

## COMMENTARY ON THE ODES

J. Rendel Harris, 1909

The Odes and Psalms of Solomon is an important addition to our knowledge of the literature which immediately anticipates or directly follows the time of Christ. It contains, on the one hand, a hitherto unknown version of the Psalms of Solomon, a collection which has often been studied, from the standpoints both of the higher and lower criticism, and which is, by common consent, referred to the middle of the first century B.C.; and on the other hand it presents a new collection which I have called, for the sake of distinction, and in harmony with the references in ancient writers, by the name of the Odes of Solomon ; they are here edited and translated from a Syriac (Aramaic) manuscript in my own possession. I believe that their value and antiquity will at once be recognized. The Odes are marked by a vigor and exaltation of spiritual life, and a mystical insight, to which we can only find parallels in the most illuminated periods of the history of the Church.

In the Odes, there is little that can be traced to the Old Testament, almost nothing that is to be credited to the Gospels or other branches of Christian literature. Their radiance is no reflection from the illumination of other days, their inspiration is first-hand and immediate. It answers very well to the summary which Aristides made of the life of the early Christian Church when he described them as indeed 'a new people with whom something Divine is mingled.'

In the Odes, there is not a sad note, and there is hardly a vindictive note in the whole collection. And on the theological side, the leading characteristic is experience, and not dogma : and experience is much harder to date than dogma, and shows fewer of the weather marks of evolution. Sometimes, the expressions of the Odists rise to such a height that they catch from the object of their Faith something that is everlasting rather than evolutionary. It is difficult to date a man who has disclosed the fact that he is supremely happy and that God has made his face to shine with the light of heaven. The only way in which we could date such a phenomenon would be to say that, if he is not an isolated specimen, the songs must proceed from some time of spiritual elevation; and since it is historically verifiable, that the experimental time of the bloom of Church life is the first age, then these hymns or odes must belong to the first days of the Church.

There can be no reasonable doubt of the antiquity of the recovered Book of Odes. That which seems to be the latest composition amongst them is attested already by Lactantius in the beginning of the fourth century as having place in the collection which it occupies in our manuscript. The portions of the Odes which have been transcribed by the author of the *Pistis Sophia* towards the end of the third century, are evidently taken from a book which was either canonical or not very far removed from canonicity ; so that it is easy to carry the Odes back into the second century.

Our own investigations have shown that the Odes agree in the extent of their composition with the statistical data for their measurement, preserved in the early Stichometries. We have also shown that they agree in sentiment with the beliefs and practices of the earliest Ages of the Church. It came out clearly in the investigation that the writer, while not a Jew, was a member of a Community of Christians, who were for the most part of Jewish extraction and beliefs, and the apologetic tone which is displayed, in the Odes, towards the Gentiles, as a part of the Christian Church, is only consistent with the very earliest ages, and with communities like the Palestinian Churches where Judaism was still in evidence and in control.

We think therefore, that it will be admitted on all hands, that the discovery of this collection of Odes and Psalms is not only valuable for the fact that it presents us, for the first time, with the Syriac version of the extant Psalms of Solomon, but that the Odes of Solomon is in itself a memorial of the first importance for rightly understanding the beliefs and experiences of the Primitive Church. We have expressed our belief that in part, at least, the collection belongs to the latter quarter of the first century (75 A.D.), but if it should be objected that this is too early a date, it cannot be many years in excess. Even if the writings do not fall within the actual time of the composition of the books of the New Testament, they scarcely fall outside the limits of the same, and we may, therefore, be sure that the Christian Church of today has been enriched by the discovery of a literary monument of the highest value.

#### **S E L E C T   O D E S**

##### Ode 1.

The Lord is on my head like a crown, and I shall not be without Him. They wove for me a crown of truth, and it caused thy branches to bud in me. For it is not like a withered crown which buddeth not: but thou livest upon my head, and thou hast blossomed upon my head. Thy fruits are full-grown and perfect, they are full of thy salvation.

##### Ode 14.

As the eyes of a son to his father so are my eyes, O Lord at all times towards thee. For with thee are my consolations and my delight. Turn not away thy mercies from me, O Lord: and take not thy kindness from me. Stretch out to me, O Lord, at all times thy right hand: and be my guide even unto the end, according to thy good pleasure. Let me be well-pleasing before thee, because of thy glory and because of thy name: Let me be preserved from evil, and let thy meekness, O Lord, abide with me, and the fruits of thy love. Teach me the Psalms of thy truth, that I may bring forth fruit in thee: And open to me the harp of thy Holy Spirit, that with all its notes I may praise thee, O Lord. And according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, so thou shalt give to me; and hasten to grant our petitions; and thou art able for all our needs. Hallelujah.

#### Ode 19.

A cup of milk was offered to me: and I drank it in the sweetness of the delight of the Lord. The Son is the cup and He who was milked is the Father: and the Holy Spirit milked Him: because His breasts were full, and it was necessary for Him that His milk should be sufficiently released; and the Holy Spirit opened His bosom and mingled the milk from the two breasts of the Father and gave the mixture to the world without their knowing: and they who receive in its fulness are the ones on the right hand. 6 The Spirit opened the womb of the Virgin and she received conception and brought forth; and the Virgin became a Mother with many mercies; And she travailed and brought forth a Son, without incurring pain; and because she was not sufficiently prepared, and she had not sought a midwife (for He brought her to bear) she brought forth, as if she were a man, of her own will; and she brought Him forth openly, and acquired Him with great dignity, and loved Him in His swaddling clothes and guarded Him kindly, and showed Him in Majesty. Hallelujah.

#### Ode 24.

The Dove fluttered over the Messiah, because He was her head; and she sang over Him and her voice was heard: and the inhabitants were afraid and the sojourners were moved: the birds dropped their wings and all creeping things died in their holes: and the abysses were opened which had been hidden; and they cried to the Lord like women in travail: and no food was given to them, because it did not belong to them; and they sealed up the abysses with the seal of the Lord. And they perished, in the thought those that had existed from ancient times; for they were corrupt from the beginning; and the end of their corruption was life: and every one of them that was imperfect perished: for it was not possible to give them a word that they might remain: and the Lord destroyed the imaginations of all them that had not the truth with them. For they who in their hearts were lifted up were deficient in wisdom and so they were rejected, because the truth was not with them. For the Lord disclosed His way and spread abroad His grace: and those who understood it, know His holiness. Hallelujah.

#### Ode 30.

Fill ye waters for yourselves from the living fountain, of the Lord, for it is opened to you: and come all ye thirsty and take the draught; and rest by the fountain of the Lord. For fair it is and pure and gives rest to the soul. Much more pleasant are its waters than honey; and the honey-comb of

bees is not to be compared with it. For it flows forth from the lips of the Lord and from the heart of the Lord is its name. And it came infinitely and invisibly: and until it was set in the midst they did not know it: blessed are they who have drunk therefrom and have found rest thereby. Hallelujah.

#### Ode 31.

The abysses were dissolved before the Lord: and darkness was destroyed by His appearance: error went astray and perished at His hand: and folly found no path to walk in, and was submerged by the truth of the Lord. He opened His mouth and spake grace and joy: and He spake a new song of praise to His name: and He lifted up His voice to the Most High and offered the sons that were with Him. And His face was justified, for thus His holy Father had given to Him. Come forth, ye that have been afflicted and receive joy, and possess your souls by His grace; and take to you immortal life. And they made me a debtor when I rose up, me who had been a debtor: and they divided my spoil, though nothing was due to them. But I endured and held my peace and was silent as if not moved by them. But I stood unshaken like a firm rock which is beaten by the waves and endures. And I bore their bitterness for humility's sake: In order, that I might redeem my people, and inherit it and that I might not make void my promises to the fathers to whom I promised the salvation of their seed. Hallelujah.

#### Ode 32.

To the blessed there is joy from their hearts, and light from Him that dwells in them: and words from the Truth, who was self-originate: for He is strengthened by the holy power of the Most High: and He is unperturbed for ever and ever. Hallelujah.

#### Ode 42.

I stretched out my hands and approached my Lord: for the stretching of my hands is His sign: my expansion is the outspread tree which was set up on the way of the Righteous One. And I became of no account to those who did not take hold of me and I shall be with those who love me. All my persecutors are dead; and they sought after me who hoped in me, because I was alive: and I rose up and am with them; and I will speak by their mouths. For they have despised those who persecuted them; and I lifted up over them the yoke of my love; like the arm of the bridegroom over the bride, so was my yoke over those that know me: and as the couch that is spread in the house of the bridegroom and bride, so is my love over those that believe in me.

## THE SUBVERSION OF CHRISTIANITY

We now live in a nation where doctors destroy health, lawyers destroy justice, universities destroy knowledge, governments destroy freedom, the press destroys information, religion destroys morals, and our banks destroy the economy.

(Chris Hedges)

The list is seemingly endless: doctors, lawyers, academics, bureaucrats, politicians, the press, the financiers, but the churches, too? Yes, generally speaking, the churches too have failed to fulfil their mission and are destructive of morality, due particularly to their war-mongering. But in this failure we see opportunity, for almost anything we do is going to be an improvement over what is. If we are ever to be righteous in our food and righteous in our drink and righteous in our communications, then a good place to begin is by doing some serious truth-telling. We need to tell the truth about the corrupt script we carry about in our pockets called "Federal Reserve Notes," that it is backed by nothing but hot air, and someday soon this script will be worthless. We need to tell the truth about the mercury-bearing vaccinations that are killing babies with autism; we need to tell the truth about the fluoride rat poison deliberately put in municipal water to "medicate" us. We need to tell the truth about the genetically-modified, virus-infected DNA garbage called food, robbing the populace of health.

But why are the churches and individual Christian so vulnerable to take over? We need to look into that.

*The Church and the World walked far apart  
on the changing shores of time.  
Said the World to the Church  
"your dress is too simple to please my taste;  
I will give you pearls to wear,  
rich velvets and silks for your graceful form,  
and diamonds to deck your hair."*



So begins a quaint poem familiar to many evangelical Christians. Actually, it is code language alluding to Rome's embrace of the Church in 325 AD, at which time Constantine made Christianity the Empire's state religion. That is when Protestantism dates the falling away from primitive virtue. Without gainsaying that particular moment's importance as a historical turning point, I would note an earlier one - almost 200 years earlier - whose greater significance has somehow been forgotten, namely, the destruction of Jerusalem by Hadrian in 135 AD, after which the Church assumed the Nazarene's literary legacy.

Remarkable what can slip down a memory hole into a lake of collective forgetting. For instance, how many among us know that George Washington was not the U. S.'s first President but its 8<sup>th</sup> or that John Hanson was its 1<sup>st</sup>? Or how many of us know it was not the *U.S. Constitution* for which American insurgents fought and died but, rather, *The Articles of Confederation*? A bait and switch operation, the patriots of the American Revolution were baited to fight on the promise of sovereign statehood but, once the fighting was done, their individual States were subsumed into a consolidation. And if this can happen in modern times in our own land - yet mostly without our being aware of it - as well, it can happen in the distant past in a faraway land, again without our being cognizant of it. The world would be a different place today (in my opinion, a far better place) had *The Articles of Confederation* not been set aside; likewise the Way of the Nazarene. At issue is the nature of religious enterprise. Is it about controlling us or liberating us? Are we to be *conformed* or *transformed*?

Intellectual renewal is sparked when challenging ideas or long-lost documents are brought to the fore but spiritual renewal occurs when head and heart are brought into balance, both being fully engaged by the passion and pathos of our Lord.

It is our pleasure that all nations, which are governed by our clemency and moderation, should steadfastly adhere to the religion which was taught by Peter to the Romans. . . . We authorize the followers of this doctrine to assume the title of Catholic Christians; and as we judge, that all others are extravagant madmen, we brand them with the infamous name of Heretics. (Emperor Theodosius edict of 380 AD)

Included among the heretics were the Nazarenes! What the Roman emperors wanted of the Church was an institution that would unify their empire religiously, while motivating its subjects to fight their wars. As for the Church's hierarchy, they saw this as their rendezvous with destiny. To win Rome's favor, they reworked the Nazarene faith by de-emphasizing the peaceable Buddhist aspect in favor of something more muscular, namely, attributes borrowed from the cult of the Sun God, Mithra. In 313 AD, Mithra's birthday, December 25<sup>th</sup>, became Christ's. The goddess, Astarte, became our Easter. A warriors' religion, the one preferred by Rome's legionaries, as an ancient cult held a high status. Its sacramental meal, in-

volved the administration of a round “sun” wafer by a priest. This, not the Nazarene’s love feast, became the model for the Church’s Eucharist. Naturally, being a sun cult, worship occurred on Sunday. Once the Empire’s most influential cult, Mithraism by the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD had disappeared entirely, having been absorbed into the Church as synchronism became the order of the day, whereby local deities were transmuted into Christian saints, even as Christian saints took on the attributes of local deities; and as temples became churches even as churches carried out rites suitable to pagan temples, wherein Christian priests were transformed into magicians. Thus did Rome blur the distinction between Church membership and Roman citizenship. Once monopoly status was obtained, blind faith became everything while love and knowledge fell along the wayside, as Christendom lost its ability to go down to the marketplace of ideas and argue its case and instead it reaches for a gun.

### The spirit of Mithraism at work in our time:

St. Mary’s Cathedral, located in Nagasaki City’s Urakami River district, was a massive structure and a landmark easily visible from 31,000 feet above. The cathedral was one of the landmarks on which the Bock’s Car’s bombardier had been briefed for weeks before the mission. The cathedral was briefly seen through a break in the clouds, and the drop was ordered. The bomb exploded in a searing fireball as hot as the sun 500 meters above the church. The Urakami Cathedral was Ground Zero for the second atomic bomb ever used against civilian populations in war time, and most Nagasaki Christians who lived in the area did not survive. 6000 of the church members died instantly, including all who were at confession at 11:02 am that morning. Of the 12,000 members of the church, eventually 8,500 died as a direct result of the bomb. Three orders of nuns and a Christian girl’s school were incinerated. Tens of thousands of innocent people died instantly and hundreds of thousands were mortally wounded, some of whose progeny are still living in agony as a result of the cross-generational contagiousness of the deadly plutonium. An irradiated crucifix was photographed in the days following the blast, lying helpless and forlorn and lying on its back, a deeply profound symbol of a religion gone wrong.

The Urakami Cathedral was the oldest and largest Christian church in the Orient, and Nagasaki was the oldest, largest and most influential Christian community in Japan, having been founded by the Jesuit missionary, Francis Xavier, in 1549. The Nagasaki Christian community is legendary in the history of Japanese Christianity because of its two centuries of catacomb-like existence during the horrible persecutions by the Imperial Japanese government - including mass crucifixions of faithful Christians who refused to give up the faith. Despite the persecutions and the formal outlawing of the religion (it was a capital crime to be a Christian - as it was for the original non-violent form of Christianity - for over 2 centuries), Nagasaki Christianity survived and ultimately flourished – until 11:02 am, August 9, 1945. What Imperial Japan could not do for over two centuries of brutal persecution and the arbitrary use of the death penalty, fellow Christians from America did in 9 seconds. The Cathedral was totally destroyed by the plutonium bomb and thousands of Nagasaki Christians were instantly boiled, incinerated, carbonized or vaporized. Radiation-induced disease and deformities among the surviving victims and their progeny continues to this day as a gruesome testament to the horrors of nuclear war. (Gary Kohls, August, 2010)

Dragon thunders  
Rainclouds  
Lightning  
Power  
Strength  
Warrior proclaims:  
Gentle

Excellent,  
Fruits grow and taste delicious  
As Buddha nature blossoms  
The world has no regrets  
But experiences the dharma  
And rejoice in the Great Eastern Sun  
Let us wake as buddha!

#### THE LUCKIEST OR UNLUCKIEST MAN IN THE WORLD

Richard Lloyd Parry

Four years ago, shortly before the 60th anniversary of the end of the war, I interviewed Mr Yamaguchi, and two of his fellow double-hibakusha, over the course of several days. Here is the long piece which I wrote about them for the Times Magazine.

Tsutomu Yamaguchi, Akira Iwanaga and Kuniyoshi Sato are either the luckiest or the unluckiest men alive, and after three days in their company and long hours of conversation, I still had no idea which. It is sixty years since their monstrous ordeal and all three are well into their ninth decade. Mr Sato, who is 86, uses a wheelchair after injuring his back, and 89-year old Mr Yamaguchi is almost deaf in one ear. But all of them exude the dignified vigour of elderly Japanese, the world's healthiest and longest living race. "I was a heavy smoker," Mr Yamaguchi told me during our first meeting, "but I gave up smoking and drinking when I was 50. I didn't expect to live to 80. And now I'm well over 80." The miracle is not that he is alive now, but that he made it past the age of 29.

Mr Yamaguchi and his friends are freaks of history, victims of a fate so callous and improbable that it almost raises a smile. In 1945, they were working in Hiroshima where the world's first atomic bomb exploded 60 years ago this morning, on 6 August 1945. 140,000 people died as a result of the explosion; by pure chance, Mr Yamaguchi, Mr Sato and Mr Iwanaga, were spared. Stunned and injured, reeling from the horrors around them, they left the city for the only place they could have gone – their home town, Nagasaki, 180 miles to the west. There, on 9th August, the second atomic bomb exploded over their heads.

In a century of mass killing, the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki marked the beginning of a new age. The end of the world was transformed from an imaginative notion, the fancy of poets and prophets, into a real and living possibility. Three men survived the beginning of the end of the world, not once, but twice. Sixty years later, all three of them are alive.

They still send one another New Year cards with news of friends and family, but until I met up with Mr Yamaguchi and Mr Iwanaga in the Nagasaki Peace Memorial Park, it was the first time they had seen one another since 1969. "We sat down by the fountain of peace with young Sato, and talked for a long time," said Mr Yamaguchi. "That was more than thirty years ago now. But we always have a mental bond, no matter how much time passes."

These days Nagasaki is famous in the west as a symbol of tragedy, but long before 1945 it had established itself as one of the most dynamic, cosmopolitan and romantic cities in Asia. For centuries, Western innovations, western learning and western technology flowed into Japan through Nagasaki's beautiful and celebrated harbour, surrounded on three sides by green mountains. Japan's first gun, its first telephone, its first metal type printing press and its first pumpkins made their appearance in Nagasaki. Christianity was introduced here in the 16th century before being brutally quashed by the shoguns 100 years later. And when Japan embarked on its long war, first against China in the 1930s and then against the United States, Nagasaki was a crucial military and industrial base.

It was a city dominated by one company, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, and it was there that Yamaguchi, Iwanaga and Sato worked as technical draughtsmen designing oil tankers. The beginning of the war with the United States was as big a surprise to ordinary Japanese as it was to the US Navy in Pearl Harbour. But by the middle of 1942, the runaway military successes of the first six months of the war went into a grinding reverse, and the country was stricken by terrible shortages.

"I never thought Japan should start a war," said Mr Yamaguchi. "It seemed so sudden – I was amazed. Soon we were running out of iron, steel and oil, but the tankers bringing in the oil were constantly being sunk by submarines. If ten tankers went out, and one of them came back, that was considered a success. At work, I could see the shortage of materials and the loss of personnel, but we couldn't keep up with demand and quite soon thought that Japan couldn't win."

In May 1945, Mr Yamaguchi's first child, a boy named Katsutoshi, was born. "I thought about what I would do when we were defeated and the enemy would invade this country," he said. "I thought about what to do with my wife and family when the enemy came. Rather than letting them be killed I should do something, give them sleeping pills and kill them, kill my wife and family. I was seriously considering such things." As Mr Yamaguchi was preoccupied with these appalling thoughts came bad news. Along with Sato and Iwanaga, he was to be dispatched to work in another shipyard of Mitsubishi Heavy Industries – in Hiroshima.

For a new father, the timing could not have been worse, but there was no choice. From spring until summer, the three men worked long days in the southern outskirts of Hiroshima on the waters of the Seto Inland Sea. After three months the job was done and orders were given to return to Nagasaki on 7th August 1945. The day before they rose early, packed their bags, and set out from their lodgings to say goodbye to their colleagues.

On the bus, Mr Yamaguchi realised that he had forgotten something important – the personal name stamp which he needed to sign off on his departure documents. While his two colleagues went ahead of him, Mr Yamaguchi hurried back to the company dormitory, picked up the stamp, jumped back on the bus and got off at the last stop. Then he began the thirty minute walk to the Mitsubishi Shipyard.

We were sitting outside as Mr Yamaguchi described all of this, in the garden of his daughter's house on a beautiful hillside outside Nagasaki. The hillside was covered with fruit trees; Mr Yamaguchi's daughter, Toshiko, brought bowls of sweet loquats. "I was walking towards the shipyard," said Mr Yamaguchi. "It was a flat, open spot with potato fields on either side. It was very clear, a really fine day, nothing unusual about it at all. I was in good spirits. As I was walking along I heard the sound of a plane, just one. I looked up into the sky and saw the B-29, and it dropped two parachutes. I was looking up into the sky at them, and suddenly ... it was like a flash of magnesium, a great flash in the sky, and I was blown over."

The American B-29 bomber 'Enola Gay' had flown from the Pacific island of Tinian 1500 miles away. It had dropped a 13 kiloton uranium atomic bomb, nicknamed 'Little Boy', which exploded 580 metres above the centre of Hiroshima at thirty seconds after 8.15 am.

"I didn't know what had happened," Mr Yamaguchi went on. "I think I fainted for a while. When I opened my eyes, everything was dark, and I couldn't see much. It was like the start of a film at the cinema, before the picture has begun when the blank frames are just flashing up without any sound. I saw my baby son, and I saw my wife and brothers – they all came to my eyes in a flash. I thought I might have died, but eventually the darkness cleared and I realised I was alive.'

"When the noise and the blast had subsided I saw a huge mushroom-shaped pillar of fire rising up high into the sky. It was like a tornado, although it didn't move, but it rose and spread out horizontally at the top. There was prismatic light, which was changing in a complicated rhythm, like the patterns of a kaleidoscope. The first thing I did was to check that I still had my legs and whether I could move them. I thought, 'If I stay here, I'll die.'

“Two hundred yards ahead, there was a dugout bomb shelter, and when I climbed in there were two young students already sitting there. They said, ‘You’ve been badly cut, you’re seriously injured.’ And it was then I realised I had a bad burn on half my face, and that my arms were burned.”

After two hours in the shelter, Mr Yamaguchi set out again for the shipyard. He walked past a small hill which lay between it and the city centre. Anti-aircraft guns had been mounted there; the bodies of the gunners lay sprawled and motionless. But the shelter of the hill had saved the lives of Mr Iwanaga and Mr Sato and their colleagues in the shipyard.

They had been inside the works office at the moment of the explosion, saying their goodbyes. Glass and furniture had flown across the room, but apart from a few cuts and bruises no one had been seriously injured. They had gone out to look for Mr Yamaguchi, but returned in despair, beaten back by the fires and the broken bridges. “I was glad to see them, and they were glad to see me too,” he said. “The three of us were together again, and we had survived.”

City-dwelling Japanese were well used to being bombed by this stage in the war, but everyone immediately recognised that this was something new. “We had no idea what kind of bomb it was, of course,” said Mr Yamaguchi. “All we knew was that it had been just a single bomb, but it had done all this.” The one thing that everyone remembered was that the explosion had two distinct components. First came the soundless flash of blinding magnesium light, and fractionally later the blast wave and the roar. It was this observation that gave the bomb its earliest name in Japanese, based on the onomatopoeic expressions for a flash and boom: pika-don.

The three took a motor launch to try to find a way back in to the city and to their lodgings. “From the boat we could see the city burning,” said Mr Yamaguchi. “Every branch of the delta was burning. The sky was dark, so you could clearly see these pillars of flame. I thought that all of Hiroshima was finished.” But it was only after they disembarked and began the walk back to their lodgings that they understood what this new kind of bomb had done to people. These are the scenes that every survivor of Hiroshima or Nagasaki remembers, the images that crawl through their dreams and wake them up in the middle of the night.

To Mr Yamaguchi, there seemed to be children everywhere, some running, many limping along the side of the road. “They didn’t cry,” he said. “I saw no tears at all. Their hair was burned, and they were completely naked. I saw so many of these children. Behind them big fires burned. Miyuki Bridge, next to our dormitory, was still standing, but all over it there were burned people, children as well as adults, some of them dead, some of them on the verge of death. They were the ones who couldn’t walk any more, who

had just lain down. None of them spoke, none of them had the strength to say a word. It's funny that during that time, I didn't hear human speech, or shouts, just the sound of the city burning. Under the bridge there were many more bodies, bobbing in the water like blocks of wood."

After a sleepless night in an air raid shelter, they retrieved their bags from the ruins of their dormitory and made for the west of the city, where a single railway station was operating. They passed more scenes of human agony: blinded people, people with their faces so swollen it was impossible to tell if they were men or women, people with their skins hanging off their bodies. "We saw a mother with a baby on her back," said Mr Iwanaga. "She looked as if she had lost her mind. The child on her back was dead and I don't know if she even realised. There were some things I couldn't look at – internal organs hanging out, the tongue or the eyes hanging loose. If you have a normal set of nerves it's very difficult to look at something like that."

They were corpses along every road and in all the rivers, as well as the corpses of horses. At one downed bridge, the three men had to wade through a river, parting before them a floating carpet of dead bodies. They reached the station, and forced their way through the crowds which were pressing to get on the train for the overnight journey to Nagasaki. Mr Sato got separated from his two friends and it was he who witnessed the final horror.

A young man sat opposite him in the carriage clasping on his knees an awkward bundle wrapped in a cloth. An appalling smell issued from the bundle; with every bump and lurch of the train, the young man gripped it tightly. "I asked him what it was," remembered Mr Sato, "and he said, 'I married a month ago, but my wife died yesterday. I want to take her home to her parents.'" He lifted the cloth and showed Mr Sato what lay beneath: it was an upturned helmet containing the severed head of the young man's wife.

At the distance of 60 years it seems incredible, a cosmic joke, that anyone should be exposed to two atomic bombs, but at the time that was exactly what Mr Yamaguchi and his friends expected. They had no way of knowing that the United States possessed only two of the weapons, or that Hiroshima was the only city to have been attacked with them. When they got home all three men thought the same thing: that it could only be a matter of time before the same thing happened in Nagasaki, and that urgent preparations needed to be made.

Mr Sato and Mr Iwanaga went to their homes on the outskirts of the city and set about removing the glass from their windows and deepening their dug out air raid shelters. Mr Yamaguchi went straight to the hospital where his burns were treated and bandaged – it is this prompt treatment, he believes, which saved

him from the appalling keloid scars which disfigured other victims of the bomb. Other men might have used exposure to an atomic bomb as an excuse to take a few days off work. But the next day, as perhaps only a Japanese worker would, he reported for work at the shipyard.

"I was covered in bandages," he said. "People could only see my eyes, lips and nose. Until I opened my mouth, my own mother didn't recognise me. I reported to the director who had sent me to Hiroshima and he asked me what was going on there. I said that I didn't know what kind of bomb it was but that a single one had destroyed the entire city. I told him that I had come back with Iwanaga, but that I failed to come back with Sato, although I knew he was alive.

"Well, the director was angry. He reproached me for losing Sato. He said: 'A single bomb can't destroy a whole city! You've obviously been badly injured, and I think you've gone a little mad.' At that moment, outside the window, I saw another flash and the whole office, everything in it, was blown over.

"We were both on the ground. The director was shouting, 'Help me! Help me!' I realised at once what had happened, that it was the same thing as in Hiroshima. But I was so angry with the director. I climbed out of the window and got away because I had to help myself."

A second B-29, 'Bock's Car', had left Tinian that morning. It had dropped a 25 kiloton plutonium bomb, known as 'Fat Man', which exploded above the northern part of Nagasaki at 11.02 am.

At that moment, Mr Iwanaga was dozing on a suburban train bound for central Nagasaki. The glass on the side of the train facing the city was blown in, but he escaped without injury.

Mr Sato was also in the shipyard, standing by the quayside. "People were asking me what happened in Hiroshima, because they had heard rumours," he said, "I was just explaining when I saw the flash of light. Instinctively I knew what was happening, so I jumped immediately into the water." He trod water for an hour, and escaped without a scratch.

Mr Yamaguchi crawled home to his wife and baby, who had no more than scratches and bruises. The blast had blown off his bandages, exposing the raw burns. The hospital where he had been treated the day before was destroyed; 70,000 people were dead or dying. Mr Yamaguchi curled up in the shelter behind his damaged house, and lay there for days, semi-conscious, in a high fever, hovering between life and death.

"I must have stayed there for a week," he said. "I didn't know if it was night or day. Then one day, it was the 15th August, I realised that people around me were crying. Some were crying, some were delighted."



They were listening to the famous broadcast by Emperor Hirohito, the first one ever made by a Japanese emperor, announcing Japan's surrender. "I had no feeling about it," Mr Yamaguchi said. "I was neither sorry nor glad. I was seriously ill with a fever, eating almost nothing, hardly even drinking. I thought that I was about to cross to the other side."

For sixty years, soldiers, politicians and historians have argued about the morality of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Did it bring an end to the war, removing the need for a land invasion which would have killed many more civilians and soldiers than the bomb itself? Or was it a cynical test of a new weapon on an enemy which was already on the verge of collapse? Whatever moral doubts exist about the bombing of Hiroshima, they are redoubled in the case of Nagasaki.

In the three days since the first bomb, no word had come from Tokyo suggesting imminent surrender. But American intelligence was fully aware of the confusion which reigned in the Japanese High Command: the question under debate was not whether, but how, to submit to the inevitable. It knew too that, with the entry into the Pacific War of the Soviet Union, Japan's decline was irreversible. "Why did they have to drop another bomb on Nagasaki?" Mr Yamaguchi asked me as we sat in the fruit garden. "They could have made their point by dropping one bomb. I think they were in a hurry to show their superiority. It would have been one thing if they had used it on a battlefield. But they knew that it would kill women, children, babies. How could they do that?"

The years after the war were hard ones for the three men from the Mitsubishi shipyard. But all of them eventually won their share in Japan's astonishing post-war prosperity. Mr Iwanaga became a civil servant in the Nagasaki City Office, and Mr Sato had a career in the local government of nearby Amakusa island, where he still lives. Mr Yamaguchi worked first for the US military occupation, then as a teacher, and finally returned to Mitsubishi Heavy Industries. He is the oldest of the three, and the most emotional and imaginative. Sato and Iwanaga, practical engineers and bureaucrats, seemed to me to have overcome the anguish of the atomic bombings. But in Tsutomu Yamaguchi, I sense, it lives on undiminished.

"I write poems, songs of the atomic bomb," he said, and he wept as he spoke. "People often ask me to write new ones. When I'm writing a poem like that, I have to transport myself back to when it happened, and that's tough for me. That's tough. On those nights I dream of what I saw. I dream of the dead lying on the ground. They get up from the ground and they walk past me, one by one. This is the dream I have when I write poems, when I remember the wasteland."

I read one of Mr Yamaguchi's tanka, a traditional Japanese stanza, which he wrote in 1969.

*Thinking of myself  
As a phoenix  
I cling on until now.  
But how painful they have been,  
These twenty-four years past.*

I asked Mr Yamaguchi if he felt optimistic about the future. He hesitated, then said: "I have hope for the future."

Where did that hope come from? "I believe in love, in human beings," he said, and he was weeping again. "The reason that I hate the atomic bomb is because of what it does to the dignity of human beings. Look at the photographs of the aftermath of the atomic bombing, those dead bodies in the photographs. When you forget the dignity of individual human beings, that it is when you are heading towards the destruction of the earth."

What did it mean, I asked, to have lived through two atomic bombs? "I think that it is a miracle," he said. "But, having been granted this miracle, it is my responsibility to pass on the truth to the people of the world. For the past 60 years, atomic bomb survivors have declared the horror of the atomic bomb, but I can see hardly any improvement in the situation."

Towards the end of our long conversation, Mr Yamaguchi wept repeatedly. It was the week of the United Nations conference on non-proliferation Treaty. The mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had travelled to New York to make an appeal for disarmament on behalf of the survivors of the atomic bomb. But the meeting had ended in failure, and Mr Yamaguchi was taking it hard.

There was another reason for his sadness. His wife had lived in an old people's home for five years, and in March, Katsutoshi, the baby son born amid such trepidation, had died too. "My son was born in February 1945," Mr Yamaguchi said. "He was exposed to the radiation of the bomb when he was just six months old. He died this February 4th at the age of 59. He had cancer. The son of 59 died, leaving the father of 89 behind. He was still a baby to me. The death of my son takes away my will to live." Mr Yamaguchi was consoling himself with a demanding spiritual exercise. He was painting the images of Buddhas, representing the 88 temples of a famous pilgrimage on the island of Shikoku. "I am too old to visit those places physically," he said. "But by painting in their colours, I want to pray for the spirits of the people who died in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and for my son."

I heard from Mr Yamaguchi's daughter the other day. He had worked day and night to colour in the

drawings of the Buddhas of the Shikoku pilgrimage, she said, and had finished all 88 of them; afterwards he fell into an exhausted depression. He seemed calmer these days, but detached, and she understood the reason. It was as if he was preparing to cross over to the other side.

Richard Lloyd Parry is Asia Editor for *The Times* and has lived in Japan since 1995.

#### T H E R A P U T A E

It all came together for me one evening in November, 2007, when I read Philo of Alexandria's "The Life of Contemplation," an essay about a semi-monastic sect with which Philo was personally acquainted, called the Therapeutae. Suddenly I sat bolt upright and exclaimed, "Eureka! they're Nazarenes! the Therapeutae are Nazarenes!" I wasn't the only one to so react. The Church preserved much of Philo's voluminous work based on the same perception, that the Therapeutae were Christians.

Then, because of their anxious desire for an immortal and blessed existence, thinking that their mortal life has already come to an end, they leave their possessions to their sons or daughters, or perhaps to other relations, giving them up their inheritance with willing cheerfulness; and those who know no relations give their property to their companions or friends, . . . (para. 13)

And they depart, not to another city as those do who entreat to be purchased from those who at present possess them, . . . but they take up their abode outside of walls, or gardens, or solitary lands, seeking for a desert place, not because of any ill-natured misanthropy to which they have learnt to devote themselves, but because of the associations with people of wholly dissimilar dispositions to which they would otherwise be compelled, and which they know to be unprofitable and mischievous. Now this class of persons may be met with in many places, for it was fitting that both Greece and the country of the barbarians should partake of whatever is perfectly good; and there is the greatest number of such men in Egypt, in every one of the districts, or nomes as they are called, and especially around Alexandria; and from all quarters those who are the best of these therapeutae proceed on their pilgrimage to some most suitable place as if it were their country, which is beyond the Mareotic lake, lying in a somewhat level plain a little raised above the rest, being suitable for their purpose by reason of its safety and also of the fine temperature of the air. (para 18-22)

And in every house a sacred shrine exists called the holy place, and chapel in which they retire alone to perform all the mysteries of a holy life, bringing in nothing, neither food, nor drink, nor anything else to sustain the physical body, but they study there the laws and the sacred oracles delivered by God's holy prophets, and hymns, and psalms, and like matters by reason of which knowledge and piety are increased and brought to perfection. Therefore they always retain an imperishable recollection of God, so that not even in their dreams is any other object ever presented to their eyes except the beauty of the divine virtues and of the divine powers. . . . Twice every day, at morning and at evening they pray; when the sun is rising entreating

God that the happiness of the coming day may be real happiness, so that their minds may be filled with heavenly light, and when the sun is setting they pray that their soul, being entirely lightened and relieved of the burden of the outward senses, and of the appropriate object of these outward senses, may be able to trace out truth existing in its own consistory and council chamber. (para. 25-27)

And the interval between dawn to dusk they devote entirely to meditation and practice of virtue, for they take up holy writ and investigate the allegories of their ancestral philosophy, since they view the literal meaning as symbols of some hidden inner meaning of nature, intended to be conveyed in those figurative expressions. (para. 28)

And these expounders of the law, having first of all laid down temperance as foundational for the soul, proceed to build up other virtues on this foundation, and none of them partake of food or drink before sunset, adjudging philosophical work as one worthy of the light, but bodily needs as suitable only to darkness, on which account they appropriate the day to the one occupation, and a brief portion of the night to the other; . . . (para. 34)

And they do not employ slave labor, viewing the possession of servants of slaves as something entirely contrary to nature, for nature has created all men free, . . . (para. 70)

And the banquet table, too, has nothing on it which has blood, but there is bread for food and salt for seasoning, to which also hyssop is sometimes added as an extra sauce for the sake of the fastidious, for just as right reason commands priests to offer up sober sacrifices, so also these men are commanded to live soberly, for wine is the medicine of folly, and costly seasonings and sauces excite desire, the most insatiable of all beasts. (para. 73-74)

[their president] . . . picks out some passage in the sacred scriptures, or explains some difficulty proposed by another, doing so without any thoughts of display on his own part, for he is not aiming at reputation for cleverness and eloquence, but is only desirous to see some points more accurately, and is content when he has thus seen them himself not to bear ill will to others, who, even if they did not perceive the truth with equal acuteness, have at all events an equal desire of learning. (para. 75)

And these explanations of the sacred scriptures are delivered by mystic expressions in allegories, for the whole of the law appears to these men to resemble a living being, and its express commandments seem to be the body, and the invisible meaning concealed under and lying beneath the plain words resembles the soul, in which the rational soul begins most excellently to contemplate what belongs to itself, as in a mirror, beholding in these very words the exceeding beauty of the sentiments, and unfolding and explaining the symbols, and bringing the secret meaning naked to the light to all who are able by the light of a slight intimation to perceive what is unseen by what is visible. (para. 78)

. . . and then some one rising up sings a hymn which has been made in honour of God, either such as he has composed himself, or some ancient one of some old poet, for they have left behind them many poems and songs in trimetre iambics, and in psalms of thanks giving and in hymns, and songs at the time of libation, and at

the altar, and in regular order, and in choruses, admirably measured out in various and well diversified strophes.  
(para. 80)

And after the feast they celebrate the sacred festival the whole night through. . . . two choruses are formed, one of men and the other of women, singing hymns composed in honour of God in many metres and tunes, at one time all singing together, and at another moving their hands and dancing in corresponding harmony, and uttering in an inspired manner songs of thanksgiving, . . .  
(para. 83-84)

. . . therefore, being intoxicated all night till the morning with this beautiful intoxication, without feeling their heads heavy or closing their eyes for sleep, but being even more awake than when they came to the feast, . . . [and] when they saw the sun rising they raised their hands to heaven, imploring tranquillity and truth, and acuteness of understanding. And after their prayers they each retired to their own separate abodes, with the intention of again practicing the usual philosophy to which they had been wont to devote themselves.  
(para. 89)

This then is what I have to say of those who are called therapeutae, who have devoted themselves to the contemplation of nature, and who have lived in it and in the soul alone, being citizens of heaven and of the world, and very acceptable to the Father and Creator of the universe because of their virtue, which has procured them his love as their most appropriate reward, which far surpasses all the gifts of fortune, and conducts them to the very summit and perfection of happiness.  
(para. 90)

How like the *Book of Acts* where the followers of Jesus in Jerusalem had “all things in common” and met “daily in the Temple” for praise, prayer, and contemplation! Obliquely, Philo makes reference to the “writings of men of old who were the founders [of the Therapeutae],” yet without identifying who they were or from whence they hailed. Possibly he didn’t know. Fortunately, sources both ancient and modern exist to whom we can turn to assist us in making the identification. According to Zacharias P. Thundy, a linguist, the word “Therapeutae,” is derived from the Buddhist term “*Thera-vada*,” a form of Buddhism currently practiced throughout Southeast Asia. A Hellenization of Pali, “*theraputa*” means literally, “son of the elder.” But how did Buddhism get to Egypt? For one, in 326 BC, Alexander the Great pushed the borders of Macedonia to the banks of the Indus River. Thereafter a constant contact with the Indian subcontinent was maintained by Alexander’s Hellenistic Seleucid successors. In about 240 BC, India’s King Ashoka (who ruled from 273-232 BC), famous for his wise and beneficent edicts, sent Buddhist missionaries to Antioch in Syria, to Macedonia, and to Alexandria and to Iraq (Maggā). So reads his 13<sup>th</sup> edict which he had engraved on stone pillars, which pillars exist to this day.

One might reasonably ask: when and how could Jesus, a Jew, have been exposed to Buddhism? Since the *New Testament* gives us little clue about the 17 years, the so-called “hidden years” when Jesus was between the age of 13 and 29, ample room for speculation

exists. As one legends has it, Jesus spent those years in Tibet. Another legend of a persistent nature and backed by interesting detail, is that Joseph of Arimathea, Jesus' uncle, being a tin merchant, had conferred on him by Roman authorities the title '*Nobilis Decurio*' or Minister of Mines. It is further alleged that on one occasion Joseph took with him his little nephew, Jesus, on a buying expedition to Cornwall, England. If such a trip had occurred, who is to say what influences Jesus might have been exposed to?

But if Jesus did not go to Tibet or meet with Druids in England, perhaps India came to him in the form of a Buddhist missionary. After all, Nazareth, being just four miles from Sepphoris, the Galilee's most cosmopolitan Greek city, could have been a point of contact. Another possibility, when Joseph and Mary scooped up their infant son and fled from Herod, they may well have gone to Egypt's closest, big city, Alexandria. Possibly there on the Nile's diluvial plain that they found succor from a semi-monastic group called "Therapeutae."

Further evidence of continuing contact between East and West comes from the Greek geographer Strabo. Writing in the 20s of the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, he observed that there were 120 ships preparing to set sail from a Red Sea harbor for India. But Buddhist missionaries didn't stop at the Red Sea, or with the Levant, or the Mediterranean litoral, for as Origen (ca. 185 - ca. 254 AD) wrote:

The island (Britain) has long been predisposed to it [Christianity] through the doctrines of the Druids and Buddhists, who had already inculcated the doctrine of the unity of the Godhead. (*Commentary on Ezekiel*)

One of history's little ironies is that Philo's Jewish brethren have paid him scant attention over the centuries, this despite his having been one of Judaism's premier philosophers but Christians, confused over the sequence of events, entertained the notion that Philo and the Therapeutae were Christians. Eusebius was of this opinion and so was Jerome who even included Philo among the Church Fathers! Their's was an understandable misunderstanding in that the Therapeutae were so very like the Nazarenes and early Christian monastics that they could be confused as one and the same. In consequence, through misapprehension, much of Philo's voluminous writings were preserved for posterity by the Church:

The semianchoritic character of the Therapeutae community, the renunciation of property, the solitude during the six days of the week and the gathering together on Saturday for the common prayer and the common meal, the severe fasting, the keeping alive of the memory of God, the continuous prayers, the meditation and study of Holy Scripture were also practices of the Christian anchorites of the Alexandrian desert."

(Scouteris, The Therapeutae of Philo and the Monks as Therapeutae according to Pseudo-Dionysius)

It is acknowledged, historical fact that the Nazarene Faith quickly spread from the Holy Land southwest to Egypt and from there further south to Ethiopia; northward to Syria and

eastward to Persia and beyond, even as far as India; also to Greece and Italy, even reaching as far as England and this before the close of the 1<sup>st</sup> century. Few, however, seem to have a clue how this amazing spread could have occurred. It was not Paul's doing. He was active in Asia minor and Greece. Nor was it a phenomenon that occurred within the boundaries of the Roman Empire. The thesis advanced here is that in God's providence, the ground had been prepared ahead of time by Mandaeans and Buddhists and Socrates and many other righteous Gentile seekers of Truth, Wisdom, Light.

**NEVER THE TWAIN SHALL MEET OR DID THEY ALREADY MEET?**

*"East is east, and west is west, and never the twain shall meet"* Or so goes Rudyard Kipling's famous poem. However, long before his time and, indeed, long before there were Christians or Christian missionaries, Buddhist monks (*dharma-bhan-akas*) were traveling the Silk and Spice Routes, spreading abroad the Buddha's *dharma*, i.e., his teaching. With reference to this, renowned orientalist and Sanskrit scholar, Frederick Max Muller (1823-1900), the same scholar as had introduced many of India's ancient religious texts to the West, wrote:

Between the language of the Buddha and his disciples, and the language of Christ and his apostles, there are strange coincidences. Even some Buddhist legends and parables sound as if taken from the New Testament, though we know that many of them existed before the beginning of the Christian era.

We may go back even farther into antiquity, and still find strange coincidences between the legends of India and the legends of the West, without as yet being able to say how they traveled, whether from East to West, or from West to East. That at the time of Solomon there was a channel of communication open between India and Syria and Palestine is established beyond doubt, I believe, by certain Sanskrit words which occur in the Bible as names of articles of export from Ophir, articles such as ivory, apes, peacocks, and sandalwood, which, taken together, could not have been exported from any country but India.

If I do find in certain Buddhist works doctrines identically the same as in Christianity, so far from being frightened, I feel delighted, for surely truth is not the less true because it is believed by the majority of the human race. I believe we have made some progress during the last thirty years. I still remember the time when all heathen religions were looked upon as the work of the devil. We know now that they are stages in a growth, and in a growth not determined by an accidental environment only, but by an original purpose, a purpose to be realized in the history of the human race as a whole. Even missionaries have begun to approach the heathen in a new and better spirit. They look for what may safely be preserved in the religion of their pupils, and on that common ground they try to erect a purer faith and a better worship, instead of attempting to destroy the sacred foundations of religion, which, I believe, exist, or at least, existed, in every human heart. (See Max Muller's book: *India: What it can teach us*)

On coming to the Orient, Christian missionaries for the first time made contact with Bud-

dhist Scripture. Astounded by uncanny coincidences with Christian teachings, they exclaimed: "Buddhism is the Christianity of the East!" Inasmuch as Buddhism long predated Christianity, they might more aptly have exclaimed: Christianity is the Buddhism of the West.

## JOHN THE BAPTIST AND THE MANDAEAN CONNECTION

### A WILDERNESS PREPARATION

The Nazarene movement commenced not with Jesus but with John. Unique in all the world, this was a religious movement whose founder from its inception said that he was merely a placeholder for someone else whose identity he didn't know. As he said:

I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing by water.

*(John 1:31)*

As we see above, John's primary purpose in baptism was that the Messiah would be revealed. His consistent message was this:

"Repent, the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

*(Matthew 3:2)*

Long before he made this pronouncement, John first underwent a protracted period of preparation, for:

As soon as he had come of age, he went into the desert and dwelled there until the Holy Ghost commanded him to go and preach the coming of Jesus Christ. . . . He went into the desert until he was thirty years old.

*(Nazarene Gospel Narrative, chapters 2, 7)*

It is reasonable to infer from this report that John spent no less than twelve years and maybe as many as eighteen years in the wilderness, this depending on how the expression "had come of age" is interpreted.

Since an Essene community is thought to have been situated on the Dead Sea (Khirbet Qumran which was excavated 1951-1954), it's widely assumed that John, if not fully associated with this sect, must at least have been in contact with it and on favorable terms. Indeed, so strong runs this assumption that it is not unheard of to hear him identified as "John the Essene." Yet somehow none of this quite computes. The Essenes, because of their rigorous purification laws, lived a highly structured existence, necessitating their creating a closed society isolated not only from Gentiles but, as well, from fellow Jews. Also, they were highly nationalistic; as well, they believed in predestination. Left unexplained is how a free-wheeling John the Baptist would have accepted, or been accepted by, a rigid sect whose devotees were all conformed, not only as to doctrine but down to dress and manners, for:

St. John ate nothing but wild garlic and bryony and his clothes were of camel's hair, and he had a thong about his waist.

*(Nazarene Gospel Narrative, chapter 7)*



Found amongst the Dead Sea scrolls is a document called the *Manual of Discipline* or, alternatively, *The Rule of Yahad* [*Yahad* being the Hebrew word for community.] This Rule specifies that:

A man shall not speak a word which is not to the liking of his superiors [and] any man who has a word to say to the superiors, the man shall stand up on his feet and say: I have a word to say to the superiors: if they tell him, he will speak.

Can anyone imagine John the Baptist submitting to such dictates even for one minute? I can't. But the manual goes on to say with regard to those who were submissive to this cult's commands:

By the spirit of uprightness and humility all his sins will be atoned, and by the submission of his soul to all the ordinances of God, his flesh will be purified for the sprinkling with water for impurity.

As for those who decline to associate with this sect, the *Manual of Discipline* enjoins:

He cannot be cleansed by mere ceremonies of atonement nor cleansed by waters of ablution, nor sanctified by immersion in lakes or rivers, nor purified by any bath.

One would almost think that it was to thwart John the Baptist that they came up with some of the language they did but why would they want to do that? Because they saw themselves, not John, as being the authorized forerunner of the Messiah:

And when those will form themselves a *Yahad* in Israel according to the rules, they shall be separated from the midst of the sessions of the men of evil to go to the wilderness to prepare there His way as it is written: in the wilderness prepare the way, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Does that mean that John's only option by default was that of living as an isolated hermit? Not necessarily, for others than Essenes existed in the Judean wilderness with whom he might have fellowshipped. At the very time of John's wilderness sojourn, a little-mentioned group, not even Jewish, resided along Jordan's banks. Could this group, called "Mandaean" (an Aramaic word meaning "knowledge"), have had contact with John? If so, is it possible that this group played a crucial role in the development of the nascent Nazarene movement? Daily baptizers, of a morning, the turbaned, white-rob-ed, Mandaean holy men awaited the rising sun; then, when it burst forth, they descended into the water.

Who were these Mandaeans? Buddhists? Zoroastrians? Ganges River bathers? some mixture of these? or something else altogether? At this late date it's hard to say. Anthropologists think they originated in Persia. As did the Jews of Jesus' day, they spoke the *lingua franca* of the Middle East, that being Aramaic. To this day this sect continues to exist in southern Iraq on the Euphrates, eking out a modest living as simple farmers, while practicing

their age-old rites. In their ancient Scriptures, the *Ginza Rba*, that is, in the *Book of Souls*, are found surprising parallels with *John's Gospel* and the *Gospel of Thomas*, particularly in distinguishing light from darkness; also, references to living water, the true vine, and so on.

Evidently the Mandaeans and John the Baptist hit it off quite well for there is a highly favorable recollection of John in the Mandaean's Scriptures. One can hardly imagine that any of this went down too well with Pharisaical traditionalists who thought ill of outsiders associating with Jews or Jews associating with outsiders.

Who, then, were the Mandaeans? They were wise men from the East. Does this not ring a bell? Wise men from the East who knew how to read the stars, who were among the first to herald the newborn Messiah.

Let us not lightly write off the Mandaeans' holy men as heathen idolaters for their sense of the sacred had been awakened in the solitude of the wilderness, where stark, natural beauty, was incorporated into their vision quest, affording them a remarkable degree of spiritual clarity. Camped out under star-studded skies such as only desert nights can provide, their days were spent under the blazing desert sun. Thus did they live with a heightened sense of dichotomy. Cool, life-giving waters, warming fire, aerial breezes, the cyclical passage of seasons, time's effect on sun-bleached bones, clouds, moon, sky, rain, soil, crawling things that go snap in the night, all became an invitation to them to move on up to an ethereal abode of expanded consciousness beyond the reach of earthly language. In the freshness of the new dawn, they baptized in the Jordan River. Thus did the Creator become known to them through the experience of his Creation, for Mother Nature is the commonly knowable aspect of God and becomes the experience of Divinity. The *Ginza Rba*, chap. 21:

*In the name of the Life!*  
*I rose up from the Jordan*  
*And I met a group of souls,*  
*A group of souls I met,*  
*who surrounded our father Shitil*  
*Saying to him*  
*"By thy life, our father Shitil,*  
*Go with us to the Jordan!"*  
*"If I go with you to the Jordan*  
*Who will be your witness?"*  
*"Lo, Sun hath risen above us;*

*He will be our witness!"*  
*"It is not he whom I seek,*  
*Not he whom my soul desireth.*  
*The sun of which ye spake,*  
*Riseth early, setteth at dusk.*  
*The sun of which ye spake,*  
*the sun is vanity and cometh to an end.*  
*Sun cometh to an end and becometh vanity*  
*And his worshippers come to an end and are vanity."*  
*I rose up from the Jordan*  
*And a group of souls I met,*

A group I met of souls  
 Who surrounded our father Shitil,  
 Saying to him,  
 "By thy life, our father Shitil,  
 Go with us to the Jordan!"  
 "If I go with you to the Jordan,  
 Who will be your witness?"  
 "Lo, Moon who shineth above us,  
 He will be our witness!"  
 "It is not he whom I seek,  
 Not he whom my soul desireth.  
 The moon, of whom ye spake,  
 Riseth at dusk and setteth at dawn.  
 The moon of which ye spake,  
 the moon is vanity and cometh to an end  
 And his worshippers come to an end and are vanity."  
 I rose up from the Jordan  
 And a group of souls I met,  
 A group I met of souls  
 Who surrounded our father Shitil,  
 Saying to him,  
 "By thy life, our father Shitil,  
 Go with us to the Jordan!"  
 "If I go with you to the Jordan  
 Who will be your witness?"  
 "Lo, there burns a fire.  
 It will bear witness for us."  
 "That is not what I seek,  
 Not that which my soul desireth.  
 the fire of which ye spake  
 Once a day needs a firebrand.  
 The fire of which ye spake –  
 Fire, is vanity and cometh to naught

And its worshipers come to naught and are vanity."  
 I rose up from the Jordan  
 And a group of souls I met,  
 I met a group of souls  
 Who surrounded our father Shitil,  
 Saying to him,  
 "By thy life, our father Shitil,  
 Go with us to the Jordan!"  
 "If I go with you to the Jordan,  
 Who will be your witness?"  
 "The Jordan and its two banks  
 Will bear witness for us;  
 Pihta, kushta and mambuha  
 Will bear witness for us;  
 Habshaba, (Sunday) and Kana-d-Zidqa  
 Will bear witness for us;  
 The sanctuary in which we worship  
 Will bear witness for us;  
 The alms that is in our laps  
 Will bear witness for us;  
 And our father who is our head  
 Will bear witness for us."  
 "This is that which I seek,  
 This is that which my soul desireth!  
 When I rise to the House of Life  
 And travel to the Everlasting Abode,  
 When Life questioneth me, (these) witnesses  
 Will come and will bear witness.  
 Witnesses of the truth are they,  
 Sure is all that they say!"  
 And Life is victorious!

John the Baptist got along fine with the Mandaeans but not so well with the Pharisees:

Then came the religious folk called Pharisees, for to be baptized by him. And Saint John told them that they should seek repentance, and that they should not put their trust in their kinship connection with those who sometime past were well pleasing to God: for God might make good men of those also who have no such hope before them. And God would not delay having each man done by him according As he deserved. And then asked these folk what they should do, and how might they be saved. And John answered them that they should give alms to the poor for the love of God. (Nazarene Gospel Narrative, chap 7)

Being already God's covenant people in the ethnic, historical sense, the Jewish leadership took umbrage with John for demanding an additional ceremonial act, baptism, which they viewed as an assault on the adequacy of their corporate identity as the sons of Abraham. The Pharisees, too, practiced baptism, but not of Jews; rather, they traversed sea and land to baptize proselytes who went under the water as Gentiles and emerged as Israelites. For them to admit that they, too, were sinners in need of getting right with God, would be to admit that being Jewish in and of itself was not enough. Anticipating their objection, John said to the Sadducees and Pharisees who came to him in the wilderness:

"O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits fit for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham for our father: for I say to you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." (Matthew 3:7-9)

John's message of personal repentance represented a radical departure from the religious assumptions of the day, an innovation which those in leadership positions were not about to countenance. Yet John knew whereof he spoke in warning the Pharisees "not to put their trust in their kinship connection," for that was the problem, their holier-than-thou, Chosen People's Complex.

Completely misunderstanding who John the Baptist was, or Jesus, or Paul, the narrow-minded evangelical churches go at the world today, like the Pharisees did, with maniacal hatred and miss entirely the integrity of the Mandaeans' or anyone else's quest for truth.

#### **D H A R M A   A N D   D I D A C H E**

There is a principle which is pure, placed in the human mind, which in different places and ages has had different names; it is deep and inward, confined to no form of religion nor excluded from any, where the heart stands in perfect sincerity. (John Woolman)

Jesus: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." (*Luke 6:31*)

Buddha: "Consider others as yourself." (*Dhammapada 10:1*)

Jesus: "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." (*Mat. 25:45*)

Buddha: "If you do not tend one another, then who is there to tend to you? Whoever would tend me, he should tend the sick." (*Vinaya, Mahavagga 8:26:3*)

Buddha: "The light of the sun and the moon illuminates the whole world, both him who does well and him who does ill, both him who stands high and him who stands low." (*Sadharmapundarika Sutra 5*)

Jesus: "Your father in heaven makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous." (*Matthew 5:45*)

Buddha: "Just as a mother would protect her only child at the risk of her own life, even so, cultivate a boundless heart towards all beings. Let your thoughts of boundless love pervade the whole world." (*Metta Sutta*)

Jesus: "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friend." (*John 15:12-13*)

Buddha: "The avaricious do not go to heaven, the foolish do not extol charity. The wise one, however, rejoicing in charity, becomes thereby happy in the beyond." (*Dhammapada 13:11*)

Jesus: "If you wish to be perfect, go sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven." (*Matthew 19:21*)

Buddha: "Do not look at the faults of others, or what others have done or not done; observe what you yourself have done and have not done." (*Dhammapada 4:7*)

Jesus: "Why do you see the speck in your neighbor's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye?" (*Luke 6:41*)

Buddha: "Just as rain penetrates a badly-covered house, so passion enters a dispersed mind. Just as rain does not penetrate a well-covered house, so too does passion not enter a well-developed mind." (*Dhammapada 1:13-14*)

Jesus: "Everyone who hears my words and does them is like a man who built a house on rock. The rain fell, a torrent broke against the house, and it did not fall, for it had a rock foundation.

Buddha: "Hatreds do not ever cease in this world by hating, but by love: this is an eternal truth. Overcome anger by love, overcome evil by good. Overcome the miser by giving, overcome the liar by truth." (*Dhammapada 1.5, 17.3*)

Jesus: "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse

you. From anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them back." (*Luke 6:27-30*)

Buddha: "If anyone should give you a blow with his hand, with a stick, or with a knife, you should abandon all desires and utter no evil words." (*Majjhima Nikaya 21:6*)

Jesus: "If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also." (*Luke 6:29*)

Buddha: "The faults of others are more easily seen than one's own, but seeing one's own failings is difficult." (*Dhammapada*)

Jesus: "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" (*Matthew 7:3*)

Jesus came to fulfill the Law and Buddha, though not born under the Law, also fulfilled the Law for, through enlightenment, he did by nature the things the Law requires. By the same token, whether Jesus was personally acquainted with Buddha's Four Noble Truths, or not, or consciously applied them or not, yet, he fulfilled them all. As for Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, it appears to be essentially Buddhist in nature. The commandment "love thy neighbor as thyself," is *Leviticus 19:18* but until Jesus came along, it was Buddha who did the most to flesh out this commandment with specifics. Said the Buddha:

"Hostility is never conquered by hostility in this world;  
hostility is conquered by love. That is the eternal law."

While it was his place to minister to the lost sheep of Israel, Jesus was not exclusively the Jewish messiah but the Universal messiah. And while biblical Judaism is rich in revelation, Buddhism is rich in contemplation. It is not inherently a conflict to bring the two together, Jewish prophecy and Buddhist sensibility. The combination is simply divine, for Gentiles, too, were looking for the Messiah and in doing so, they often demonstrated a greater sensitivity for spiritual things than the Temple/synagogue authorities ever did.

"All that we are is the result of what we have thought. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him."  
(Buddha)

"For to the pure everything is pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure, but their mind and conscience is defiled."  
(*Titus 1:15*)

## THE STORY OF THE BUDDHA

1. The hero of our story is Prince Siddhartha, the Buddha-to-be, who lived more than 2,500 years ago. His father was the Rajah of the Sakya clan, King Suddhodana, and his mother was Queen Maha Maya. They lived in India, in a city called Kapilavatthu, in the foothills of the Himalayas.
2. Siddhartha's parents belonged to the Indian warrior caste. They lived in a great palace in their capital city of Kapilavatthu, beneath the majestic mountains of the Himalayas. Queen Maha Maya was beautiful, intelligent and good. King Suddhodana was honoured and respected because he ruled well. Both of them were admired and loved by the people they ruled.
3. After many years, Queen Maha Maya became pregnant. She and her husband were very happy about it. On the full moon day in the month of May, she gave birth to a boy in Lumbini Park, while she was on her way to see her parents. Five days after the prince's birth the king asked five wise men to select a name for his son. They named him Siddhartha. This name means "the one whose wishes will be fulfilled".
4. There had been much rejoicing at the birth of the prince, but two days after he was named, Queen Maha Maya died. Everybody was shocked and felt very sad. But the saddest person was, of course, her husband King Suddhodana. He was worried, too, because his wise advisers had predicted that if the prince saw someone old, someone sick, a dead person, and a monk, he would want to leave the palace and become a monk himself, instead of being a prince.
5. The Queen's sister Prajapati Gotami took care of the baby prince with as much love as if he were her own son. Prince Siddhartha was a healthy and happy boy. He liked to learn and found it easy to study, and was the cleverest in his class and the best at games. He was always considerate to others and was popular among his friends.
6. The prince was kind to everyone. He was gentle with his horse and other animals. Because he was a prince his life was very easy, and he could have chosen to ignore the problems of others. But he felt sympathy for others. He knew that all creatures, including people, animals and all other living beings, like to be happy and don't like suffering and pain.
7. Siddhartha always took care not to do anything harmful to any creature. He liked to help others. For example, one day the prince saw one of the town boys beating a snake with a stick. He immediately stopped the boy, and told him not to hurt the snake.
8. One day, Siddhartha was playing with his friends in the palace garden. One of the boys was his cousin, Prince

Devadatta. While Siddhartha was gentle and kind, Devadatta was by nature cruel and liked to kill other creatures. While they were playing, Devadatta shot a swan with his bow and arrow. It was badly wounded. But Siddhartha took care of the swan until its wounds healed. When the swan was well again, he let it go free.

9. Siddhartha liked to watch what was happening and think about different things. One afternoon his father took him to the annual Ploughing Festival. The king started the ceremony by driving the first pair of beautifully decorated bullocks. Siddhartha sat down under a rose-apple tree and watched everyone. He noticed that while people were happily enjoying themselves, the bullocks had to work terribly hard and plough the field. They did not look happy at all.

10. Then Siddhartha noticed various other creatures around him. He saw a lizard eating ants. But soon a snake came, caught the lizard, and ate it. Then, suddenly a bird came down from the sky, picked up the snake and so it was eaten also. Siddhartha realised that all these creatures might think that they were happy for a while, but that they ended up suffering.

11. Siddhartha thought deeply about what he saw around him. He learned that although he was happy, there was a lot of suffering in life. So he felt deep sympathy for all creatures. When the king and the maids noticed that the prince was not among the crowd, they went to look for him. They were surprised to find the prince sitting with legs crossed, in deep meditation.

12. The king did not want his son to think about deep things in life too much, because he remembered that the wise men had predicted that his son might one day want to leave the palace and become a monk. So, in order to distract him, the king built Siddhartha a beautiful palace with a lovely garden to play in. But this did not stop the prince from thinking about the suffering and unhappiness that he noticed around him.

13. Siddhartha grew up to be a handsome young man of great strength. He was now of an age to get married. To stop Siddhartha from thinking of leaving home, King Suddhodana arranged for him to be married to his own beautiful cousin, Princess Yasodhara.

14. Following the ancient tradition, Siddhartha had to prove how brave he was to be worthy of Yasodhara. In the presence of her parents he was asked to tame a wild horse. Siddhartha tamed the horse not by beating it, as some suitors might, but by talking to the horse to calm it and stroking it gently. Yasodhara wanted to marry the prince, and no one else. They were married in a great ceremony. Both were only sixteen years old.

15. To stop the prince from thinking about unhappiness or leaving home, King Suddhodana built a pleasure palace



for Siddhartha and Yasodhara. Dancers and singers were asked to entertain them, and only healthy and young people were allowed into the palace and the palace garden. The king did not want Siddhartha to know that everybody gets sick, grows old and will die. But in spite of the king's efforts, the prince was not happy. He wanted to know what life was like for people who lived outside the palace walls.

16. Finally, the king allowed Siddhartha to go on short visits to the nearby towns. He went with his attendant, Channa. On his first visit Siddhartha saw a white haired, wrinkled man dressed in rags. Such a sight surprised him, as he had never seen anyone old before. Channa explained to him that this man was old and that everyone will be old one day. Siddhartha felt frightened by that and asked Channa to take him back home. At night, he could not sleep and he kept on thinking about old age.

17. Although Siddhartha felt frightened by the vision of getting old, he wanted to see more of the world outside. On his next visit, he saw a man lying on the ground and moaning. Out of compassion, he rushed over to the man. Channa warned him that the man was sick and that everyone, even noble people like Siddhartha or the king could get sick.

18. On the third visit, Siddhartha and Channa saw four men carrying another man on a stretcher. Channa told Siddhartha that the man was dead and was going to be cremated. He also said that no one can escape death, and told the prince that everyone will die one day. When they returned to the palace, Siddhartha kept on thinking about what he had seen. Finally, he made a strong decision to find a way out of the suffering of old age, sickness and death.

19. Some time later, while the prince was riding in the garden, he saw a man in a yellow robe. He noticed that the man looked very peaceful and happy. Channa explained to him that the man was a monk. The monk had left his family and given up his desire for pleasures to search for freedom from worldly suffering. The prince felt inspired by the sight of the monk and began to want to leave home to search for freedom in the same way. That day, his wife gave birth to a lovely baby boy. Although he loved the boy, Siddhartha could not rejoice because he wanted to become a monk. He realised that now it would be more difficult for him to leave home.

20. From the day when he decided that he wanted to leave the palace the prince lost all interest in watching the dancing girls and other such pleasures. He kept on thinking instead about how to free himself and others from sickness, ageing and death. Finally, he decided he had to leave the palace and his family and become a homeless monk, in order to understand life and what caused suffering.

21. One night, when everyone in the palace was asleep, Siddhartha asked Channa to prepare his horse, Kanthaka.

In the meantime he went into the room where Yasodhara and their newborn boy Rahula slept. He was filled with loving-kindness towards them and promised himself that he would come back to see them. But first he had to understand why all creatures suffer, and find out how they could escape from suffering.

22. In the silence of the night, Prince Siddhartha mounted Kanthaka. Accompanied by Channa, he left the palace and the city of Kapilavatthu. They stopped at a river some distance from the city and the prince took off his expensive dress and put on the robes of a monk. Then he told Channa to take the horse back to the palace. At first, both Channa and Kanthaka refused to go back, but Siddhartha insisted that he had to go on alone. With tears rolling down his face, Kanthaka watched as the prince walked out of sight.

23. So, at the age of 29, Siddhartha began the homeless life of a monk. From Kapilavatthu, he walked south to the city of Rajagaha, the capital of the Magadha country. The king of this country was named Bimbisara. The morning after Siddhartha arrived, he went to the city and obtained his meal for the day by begging.

24. After his meal, Siddhartha decided to go to the mountains where many hermits (people who live alone) and sages (wise people) lived. On the way there, he came across a flock of sheep. Shepherds were driving the herd to Rajagaha to be sacrificed in a fire ceremony. One little lamb was injured. Out of compassion Siddhartha picked up the lamb and followed the shepherds back to the city.

25. In the city, the fire was burning on the altar, and King Bimbisara and a group of priests were chanting hymns. They all worshipped fire. When the leader of the fire-worshippers lifted his sword to kill the first sheep, Siddhartha quickly stopped him. He asked the king not to let the worshippers destroy the lives of the poor animals. Then Siddhartha turned to the worshippers and told them: "Life is extremely precious. All living creatures want to live, just like people."

26. He continued: "If people expect mercy, they should show mercy. By the law of cause and effect (karma), those who kill others will, in turn, be killed. If we expect happiness in the future, we must not harm any creatures. Whoever sows suffering will reap the same fruits." This speech completely changed the king's mind, and the minds of the fire-worshippers. He stopped the killing ceremony and invited Siddhartha to stay and teach his people. But Siddhartha declined, as he had not yet found the truth he was seeking.

27. After Siddhartha left Rajagaha, he went to see a sage (wise person) named Alara Kalama. He stayed with the sage and studied diligently. Soon, he knew as much as his teacher. But although he had learned how to make his mind very calm, he still did not know the way to freedom from all suffering. So he thanked Alara Kalama and left to find another teacher.

28. Siddhartha then studied with a sage named Uddaka Ramaputta. He learned how to make his mind very still and empty of all thoughts and emotions. But he still did not understand the mystery of life and death, and did not find the complete freedom from suffering that he sought. Again, Siddhartha thanked his teacher and left. But, this time, he decided to find the ultimate truth by his own wisdom and effort.

29. In those days, there were many wandering monks who belonged to various cults. They had left their families to become ascetics. They believed that by starving themselves or tormenting their bodies (asceticism) they would be reborn in heaven. Their belief was that the more they suffered in this life, the more pleasure they would receive in the future. So some ate extremely little food, some stood on one foot for a long time, and others slept on boards covered with sharp nails.

30. Siddhartha also tried to become an ascetic. He thought that if he practiced hard enough, he would become enlightened (that is, know the way and be able to overcome suffering). So he found a place at Uruvela near a river and a village, where he could wash and obtain his daily food. There were five other men living there, and they became his companions. Like Siddhartha, they also practiced asceticism. Their names were Kondanna, Bhaddiya, Vappa, Mahanama and Assaji.

31. Siddhartha practiced various forms of asceticism for six years. He reduced his eating more and more until he ate nothing at all. He became extremely thin, but still he did not want to give up such practice. One day, while meditating alone he fainted, exhausted by the ascetic practices.

32. At that time, a shepherd boy with a goat walked by. He saw Siddhartha and realised that without any food Siddhartha would die very soon. So he quickly fed him some warm goat's milk. Soon Siddhartha regained consciousness and began to feel better. He realised that without the boy's help, he would have died before attaining enlightenment.

33. From then on, Siddhartha began eating normally. Soon his health was completely restored. It was clear to him now that asceticism was not the way to enlightenment. However, his five friends continued with their ascetic practices. They thought that Siddhartha had become greedy and so they left him. One morning, a girl named Sujata offered Siddhartha some delicious milk-rice porridge and said to him: "May you be successful in obtaining your wishes!"

34. On the same day, Siddhartha accepted an offering of straw from a straw-peddler, made a seat from it and sat down to meditate under a large bodhi tree, facing east. He made a promise to himself: "I will not give up until I achieve my goal, until I find a way of freedom from suffering, for myself and all people."

35. As he meditated, Siddhartha let go of all outside disturbances, and memories of pleasures from the past. He let go of all worldly thoughts and turned his mind to finding the ultimate truth about life. He asked himself: "How does suffering start? How can one be free from suffering?" At first many distracting images appeared in his mind. But finally his mind became very calm, like a pond of still water. In the calm of deep meditation, Siddhartha concentrated on how his own life had started.

36. First, Siddhartha remembered his previous lives. Next, he saw how beings are reborn according to the law of cause and effect, or karma. He saw that good deeds lead the way, from suffering to peace. Then he saw that the origin of suffering is being greedy, which arises from thinking that we are more important than everybody else. Finally, he became completely free from thinking in a way that caused him any suffering. This freedom is called nirvana. So, at the age of 35, Siddhartha became the Buddha, the Supreme Enlightened One.

37. After attaining the supreme enlightenment, the Buddha remained sitting in the happiness of nirvana for several days. Later, a Brahmin, an upper caste man, came by the tree where the Buddha sat. He greeted the Buddha and asked: "What qualities does one have to have to be a true Brahmin and a noble person?" The Buddha replied: "The true Brahmin must give up all evil. He must give up all conceit, try to understanding all things and practice pure living. This way he will deserve to be called a Brahmin."

38. After a long rest, the Buddha began to plan what to do in the future. He thought: "Although the Dharma (teaching) is deep and will be difficult for most people to understand, there are some who only have a little craving. Such people may be able to accept the Dharma. They are like the lotuses that extend their stalks from the bottom of the pond up in the air, to receive sunshine. So I should not keep this radiant truth a secret. I should make it known everywhere, so that all people can benefit from it."

39. Then the Buddha thought: "Who should I teach first? The person must be interested in the Dharma and quick to understand it." First he thought of his old teachers, Alara Kalama and Uddaka Ramaputta. But they had both died. Then he remembered his five ascetic friends, Kondanna, Bhaddiya, Vappa, Mahanama and Assaji. When he found out that they were living at Sarnath, near Varanasi, he left soon afterwards to find them.

40. At Sarnath, when the five ascetics saw the Buddha coming, they decided not even to greet him or talk to him. They still thought that he was greedy and had given up his search for truth. But as he got closer, they realised that he was surrounded by a brilliant light and looked very noble. They were so astonished that they forgot about their previous decision. They greeted him, offered him some water and quickly prepared a seat.

41. After sitting down, the Buddha told them: "Monks! I have realised the truth of the end of suffering (nirvana), and

the way to end suffering. If you learn and practice it, you will soon become enlightened. You must take responsibility for working to understand these things." At first, the five monks doubted his words and asked him many questions. But finally they began to trust him and wanted to hear his teaching. And so the Buddha gave his first teaching to the five monks at Sarnath.

42. The Buddha taught them the Four Noble Truths. The first Noble Truth was about the fact that suffering exists. The second was about the cause of suffering; the third was that it is possible to end suffering; and the fourth explained the path to be followed if you want to end suffering. During this first teaching, Kondanna understood everything and attained the first stage of enlightenment. Then he asked the Buddha to ordain him as a monk. Soon the other four also joined the Buddha's order. All five monks practiced diligently and with the help of the Buddha they soon became fully enlightened ones, or arahants.

43. The Buddha continued teaching at the Deer Park in Sarnath. After hearing the teachings Yasa, a young man from a wealthy family, and his best friends left home and became monks. Later, fifty young men from high-caste families also left their homes and joined the community of monks to spend their lives practising the Buddha's teachings.

44. When the Buddha had sixty monks as his disciples (students) he held a meeting. He told them: "Go and spread the Dharma to other places, to give more people the chance of gaining freedom from suffering. Spread the Dharma so that human lives may be purified and brightened. There are people ready for the Dharma. They will be able to understand it. I myself will go to teach at Uruvela."

45. After the Buddha sent out his sixty-arahant disciples for the first time, he travelled to Magadha in the southeast, to Uruvela village. After hearing the Buddha's teaching, many men left their homes and became monks. Later, more than 1,000 of them became fully enlightened arahants.

46. Then the Buddha took his arahant disciples to Rajagaha. He went to teach and enlighten King Bimbisara and his people, as he had previously promised the king he would. After hearing the Dharma, King Bimbisara took refuge (look for protection and help) in the Buddha and became his follower. Later, he donated Veluvana Park as a residence for the Buddha and the monks. Veluvana became the first Buddhist monastery.

47. One morning, on his way from Veluvana to beg for his daily alms food, the Buddha came across a young man named Sigala. The man was bowing to the east, south, west and north. Then he saluted the sky above and the earth below. He finished by scattering seeds in these six directions. The Buddha asked him why he did such things.

Sigala replied that his father, before he died, asked him to do this ritual daily, to protect himself from any evil that might happen to him.

48. The Buddha then explained to Sigala what his father had really meant. By asking him to bow in the six directions, his father really wanted him to remember, respect and be kind to all living beings in all directions. By doing this he would create good karma and he would be protected. Finally, the Buddha instructed Sigala not to kill, steal, be unfaithful to his wife, lie or take intoxicants. These are the training rules known as the Five Precepts.

49. During the Buddha's stay near Rajagaha, there was a well-known teacher of one of the traditional schools. He had about two hundred students, and among them were Upatissa and Kolita. These two students were best friends. They wanted to learn more about life and death than their teacher had been able to teach them. So they agreed with each other that they would search for the highest knowledge, and as soon as one of them found it, he would share it with the other.

50. One morning Upatissa was walking towards Rajagaha. On the way there he met a monk who looked very peaceful and seemed to be free from all fear. This monk was the arahant Assaji, one of the five former ascetics. Upatissa went towards him and said: "Venerable master! Who is your teacher and what did he teach you?" The monk replied with a smile: "My teacher is a great sage of the Sakya clan. He is the Buddha, and I practice according to his teaching."

51. Then Upatissa asked Venerable Assaji: "What is the teaching of the Buddha?" Assaji replied: "I will tell you the meaning of the Buddha's teaching very briefly. The Buddha said that there is a cause for everything and he also taught how things decay." Upatissa was so clever that when he heard this he understood that whatever comes into existence will also decay, and he attained the first stage of enlightenment. Then he thanked Assaji, asked him where he might find the Buddha, and left.

52. After this encounter Upatissa was filled with happiness, and went straight to see Kolita. He told Kolita what the noble monk Assaji had told him. Instantly, Kolita also understood the Buddha's teaching and attained the first stage of enlightenment. Finally, the two friends went to see the Buddha. They asked him to accept them as monks and the Buddha agreed. After practicing diligently, they both attained arahantship. Later, they became the Buddha's chief disciples and were known under their monks' names as Sariputta and Moggallana.

53. When the Buddha was living at Rajagaha, a conference was held at Veluvana on the full moon of the third month of the year. One thousand two hundred and fifty monks attended the meeting. They were all arahants and all of them arrived on the same day.

54. On this special occasion, the Buddha told his disciples to practice and teach following the same basic principles. The essence of this teaching was: do not do anything bad, do good and purify your mind.

55. When King Suddhodana learned that his son had become a Buddha and was staying at Rajagaha, he sent an officer to invite the Buddha to Kapilavatthu. The Buddha promised to visit his family. So one day the Buddha took his disciples to Kapilavatthu. They arrived in the evening and stayed in a garden outside the city. The next morning, the Buddha and his disciples went to the city to beg for alms food.

56. When the king found out that the prince was begging for food, he felt very angry and disappointed. He asked his driver to take him straight to the Buddha. When he saw the Buddha, he spoke to him in an angry way: "My son! Today you have done a most disgraceful thing to the royal family and me. Have your ancestors ever done such a thing? Have they ever accepted food like beggars?"

57. The Buddha spoke calmly to his angry father: "Father! I am not following the custom of my worldly ancestors. I am following the tradition of the Buddhas of the past. All past Buddhas begged for food, to inspire people to follow the teachings. Then the Buddha explained some basics of the Dharma to the king. Then King Suddhodana calmed down and asked the Buddha and his disciples to accept food at the palace.

58. In the palace, after finishing a delicious meal, the Buddha taught the Dharma to the king, his relatives, and other people. Then he took two of his senior disciples to see Yasodhara, the cousin he had married at the age of sixteen, and Rahula, his son. Yasodhara was very sad. The Buddha could see past lives, and he compassionately told her about the good actions she had done in the past and explained the Dharma to her.

59. Later Rahula, who was seven years old, was ordained by the Buddha and became the first novice in the Buddhist tradition. (A novice is someone who is in training but has not yet taken the full vows of a monk or nun.) Besides Rahula, the Buddha also converted his step-brother Nanda and several princes of the Sakya clan. Among them were his cousins Ananda and Devadatta.

60. Many years after he left Kapilavatthu, the Buddha went back to visit his father King Suddhodana, who was very ill. The king was very happy to see the Buddha again and felt better. But because he was very old, he could no longer resist the illness, and two or three days later he passed away. Everyone felt very sad.

61. When King Suddhodana died, Lady Prajapati Gotami felt very sad. She and several other women decided to leave the worldly life and join the Buddha's group of monks to practice the Dharma. So she led the women to see

the Buddha. She asked him to accept them as nuns, but the Buddha refused. The women felt very disappointed and cried. But they did not give up their wish to become nuns.

62. When the Buddha was residing at the Mahavaha Monastery, Lady Prajapati Gotami and her group of women went to the monastery and told Ananda what had happened. Ananda felt compassion for them and promised to help them. He went to see the Buddha to ask him to be merciful and let the women join the monastic order. But the Buddha refused again.

63. Ananda then said: "I beg you, Lord Buddha, please do a favour to Prajapati Gotami and accept her and other women as nuns, because she has done you great favours in the past. She brought you up as her own son." So finally the Buddha said: "Alright, if they are willing to follow the monastic rules I give them, they can leave home and become nuns and practise the Dharma."

64. After leaving the Buddha, Ananda went to tell Lady Prajapati Gotami the good news. All the women were very happy and promised to observe the eight rules of conduct that the Buddha gave them. Ananda then went back to the Buddha and told him that the women were happy to follow the rules. So Prajapati Gotami became the first Buddhist nun.

65. Of all the disciples of the Buddha, his cousin Ananda, was the most devoted to him. So the Buddha selected him to be his close attendant. Another of the Buddha's cousins also became a monk. His name was Devadatta. But he was envious of the Buddha and competed with him, trying to take over the leadership.

66. Devadatta was very conceited, and was jealous of the two chief disciples of the Buddha. So he left the Sangha (the community of monks and nuns) and made friends with the crown-prince Ajatasattu, son of King Bimbisara. The prince built a private monastery for Devadatta. Devadatta then persuaded the prince to kill his father, King Bimbisara, and make himself king. The prince followed Devadatta's evil scheme and starved his father to death so he could become king.

67. Now Devadatta felt very powerful, because the new king was his friend and supporter. So he decided to kill the Buddha. One evening, while the Buddha was walking past a rocky hill, Devadatta pushed a huge stone down the hillside, intending to kill the Buddha. But the rock suddenly broke into many pieces and only one sharp piece hit the Buddha, on his foot. The Buddha returned to the monastery and was treated by the famous physician Jivaka.

68. Although his evil plot had failed, Devadatta tried to kill the Buddha again. When the Buddha was on his daily alms-round at Rajagaha, Devadatta set loose a wild elephant. But as the wild elephant ran towards the Buddha, it



became calm because of the Buddha's enormous loving-kindness. After this incident, Devadatta gave up trying to kill the Buddha, but he still wanted to break up the Sangha.

69. To impress the other monks and nuns and disrupt the Sangha, Devadatta asked the Buddha to make stricter rules of conduct for the Sangha. He asked that monks not be allowed to sleep in houses or eat any meat. But the Buddha refused Devadatta's proposal. He said: "If some monks prefer to sleep in the open or not eat meat, they are free to do so. But if they do not wish to live this way they do not have to." Finally, the Buddha said: "Devadatta, if you try to break up the Sangha you will reap the evil fruits."

70. Devadatta ignored the Buddha's warning, led away a group of monks and made himself their leader. One day, when Devadatta was asleep, the Buddha's chief disciple Sariputta came and warned the monks about the consequences of evil actions. The monks realised their mistake and returned to the Buddha. When Devadatta woke up he was so angry that he became ill. Eventually, he began to regret his actions, and he asked his servants to take him to see the Buddha. But he died unexpectedly on the way there.

71. The Buddha taught people for forty-five years. He travelled to different kingdoms in India, always on foot. During the rainy seasons, he stayed at monasteries built for him and the Sangha by different supporters. The places the Buddha stayed at most often were Veluvana, near Rajagaha, and Jetavana, near Savatthi. During all these years, the Buddha worked hard every day to spread the teachings.

72. The Buddha usually got up before sunrise, took a bath, and then contemplated on whom to teach. When he found someone ready to understand and accept the teaching, he would go and teach that person the same day. After sunrise, the Buddha went to beg for alms from people in the neighbourhood. Sometimes he went alone, and sometimes with his monks. Some people also invited him to their homes to accept offerings. After the meal, he taught them the Dharma. Then he returned to the monastery.

73. Back at the monastery, the Buddha rested quietly in the hall, under a tree or in his room, waiting for the monks to return from their alms round. When all the monks and nuns had assembled in the hall he gave a Dharma talk or just encouraged them to practice the Dharma. Some monks also asked him for personal instructions for their Dharma practice. The Buddha then considered their natures and gave to each of them the individual advice that suited them best.

74. In the summertime, the people from the neighbourhood used to visit him in the evenings. Some came to offer him gifts, others to hear his teachings. The Buddha taught them the Dharma using skillful language, so that everyone would benefit. After the talk everyone would feel happy and satisfied.

75. After the people left, the Buddha usually took a bath. Then he would meditate for some time. After that, he would instruct monks who came from other places. He helped them to understand the difficult parts of the Dharma and so made them very happy. At sunset, the Buddha usually went for a walk to refresh himself. After this he would again give talks to his monks. Late at night, distinguished people, such as kings, came for advice and instruction in the Dharma.

76. After this, the Buddha went to sleep, usually for four hours only. He slept on his right side and woke up before sunrise. Then he entered into deep meditation to explore the natures of his audience for that day.

77. The Buddha always worked very hard to spread the Dharma. When he was not travelling, he spent time not only explaining the Dharma, but also in helping people to solve their daily problems. He was always willing to help people from any station in life, whether they were a housewife, a farmer, or just somebody in need of help.

78. The Buddha was never reluctant to answer difficult questions or explain complicated problems. He never felt irritated by the person asking questions, and always was able to answer correctly. The Buddha always explained the Dharma in a way that was most suited to the natures of his listeners. He welcomed all people. Many who doubted him at first became convinced of the truth of his teaching. They then became his loyal disciples.

79. After 45 years of travelling and teaching, the Buddha had reached his eightieth year. Although his mind was strong, he felt that his body was getting weaker. He realised that his life was coming to an end. So he decided to go north to the foothills of the Himalayas, the region where he was born. He wished to enter the final nirvana, or freedom from suffering. On the way north, the Buddha and Ananda stopped in the Bamboo Grove Village, in the kingdom of Patali. The Buddha decided to stay there for the rainy season.

80. During his stay in the village the Buddha fell seriously ill. After he recovered, he told Ananda: "Ananda, by now the Sangha should know the way to practice, be able to check their practice and attain nirvana. I do not keep any secrets. With all my heart I wish the best for all the monks and nuns. I am an old man now. You should depend on yourselves. You should rely on the Dharma."

81. In the morning, after eating, the Buddha went to the Pava Stupa to meditate. He sat on a rock in the shade of a tree and investigated with his mind when he would be due to pass away. He concluded that he would enter the final nirvana after three months. When he told this to Ananda, Ananda begged him: "Please stay and continue helping people to end suffering!" The Buddha replied: "Ananda, the life of the Buddha is drawing to its close. He will attain final nirvana three months from now. Death is unavoidable."

82. Then the Buddha called the monks and gave them many important instructions. He encouraged them to practice his teaching for the benefit of all people in the world, and to help others to learn and practice the Dharma. He also encouraged them to serve as good examples for the people of the world. Finally he instructed: "All things must grow old and pass away. Study the truths I have taught you and put them into practice; guard your own minds; do not be careless, so that you can be freed from suffering and rebirth."

83. One morning, to have a last look at the city of Vesali, the Buddha and Ananda went there to beg for alms. After that the Buddha and his disciples visited neighbouring villages, and the Buddha taught the Dharma to people. The Buddha also told his disciples that when anyone teaches them the Dharma, they should carefully verify it against the Dharma taught by the Buddha. He said that if it was not consistent with his teaching, they should reject it. Then they continued to the city of Pava and rested in the Mango garden, which belonged to Cunda, the son of a goldsmith.

84. The Buddha taught Cunda and his family. They gained confidence in the Dharma and took refuge in the Buddha and the Dharma. But the meal that Cunda offered to the Buddha contained a fungus that made the Buddha feel very ill. However, in spite of the pain, the Buddha and his disciples continued their journey to Kusinara. On the way they met a prince of the Malla clan. The Buddha taught him the way to live in peace. The prince then took refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha (the Three Jewels), and offered two rolls of fine gold-coloured cloth to the Buddha. The Buddha kept one and gave the other to Ananda.

85. Finally the Buddha and Ananda arrived at the boundaries of Kusinara. When they came to Salavana, a holiday resort of the royal clan of the Mallas, the Buddha felt he could go no further. So he asked Ananda to prepare a place for him to lie down. Ananda took the Buddha's outer robe and placed it on a bed between two big sal trees. The Buddha then lay down on his right side. He did not fall asleep, but rested to relieve his pain and fatigue. His mind remained as tranquil as it had ever been.

86. Ananda felt that the Buddha was really leaving him this time, and he felt deep grief in his heart. So he left the Buddha, and went to an isolated place among trees to cry. He thought: "Unlike the other monks, I still have not reached the stage of an arahant, and I shall lose my compassionate master forever, and be left alone." His face became flooded with tears. When the other monks told the Buddha that Ananda was weeping in a hidden place, the Buddha asked them to bring Ananda back.

87. On Ananda's return, the Buddha praised him in front of the other monks. He told them: "Ananda has, at all times, been my most excellent attendant. He knew how to arrange just the right time for me to meet with visitors. He always treated all visitors well." Later, Ananda said to the Buddha: "Lord Buddha, please do not enter nirvana in such a small and unimportant place. Please select one of the large cities, such as Rajagaha or Vesali, and enter

the final nirvana there. In those cities there are many rich and powerful people who are your disciples. They can take responsibility for your holy remains."

88. The Buddha said to Ananda: "No Ananda, do not say that. This is not a small and insignificant place. Long ago this was a prosperous city, and the residence of a righteous king. Ananda, go to Kusinara and tell the king and the people that late tonight the Buddha will enter the final nirvana in this forest. If they wish to, they should come to see me before this time." So Ananda went to Kusinara with several monks and told King Malla and his people what the Buddha had said.

89. When the people of Kusinara learnt that the Buddha was about to enter nirvana, they all felt very sad and cried. They said: "It is too early for the Buddha to enter final nirvana. The light of the world is going to be extinguished too soon!" Men, women and children, crying loudly, went to Salavana, where the Buddha was staying. They all hoped to see the Buddha one more time.

90. A wandering young man from an ascetic cult, whose name was Subhadda, happened to be in Kusinara. When he learnt that the Buddha was about to enter the final nirvana, he decided to visit him. He wanted to ask the Buddha some questions that bothered him. He believed that only the Buddha would be able to give him a thorough explanation. So he went to Salavana, and asked Ananda to allow him to see the Buddha. However Ananda refused him permission, as he thought that the Buddha was too tired to see visitors.

91. But Subhadda was very anxious to see the Buddha and asked Ananda again and again. When the Buddha heard them both talking, he knew Subhadda's good motivation. So he told Ananda to let Subhadda come in. Having listened to Subhadda's questions, the Buddha taught him until any problems in Subhadda's mind were cleared up. Subhadda gained confidence in the Buddha and the Dharma and asked the Buddha to accept him as a monk. Thus Subhadda became the last person to be ordained by the Buddha.

92. Later the Buddha gave the monks and nuns the last chance to ask any questions. He asked them if any of them still had doubts about the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. But none of them had any doubts about the Triple Gem. Finally the Buddha said to the monks: "Monks, this is the last time for me to talk to you. All things change. Work hard to gain your own salvation!"

93. The Buddha then entered into meditation, deeper and deeper, until his mind was purely balanced and steadily focused. And then he passed away. Thus, the Buddha, the Blessed One, had attained that final freedom known as nirvana. Soon after the death of the Buddha a meeting of 500 arahants was held to collect together all his teachings. They were memorised and handed down from one generation of monks to the next. In this way, the teachings of the Buddha were not lost, and we can still hear them today. (Buddha Dharma Educational Association)

## GOSPEL OF THOMAS, A BUDDHIST GOSPEL?

Jesus spoke in parables to the masses but in private to his disciples, he said:

Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God:

but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables; . . . (*Mark 4:11*)

Although Jesus' teachings about "the mystery of the kingdom of God" are present to some degree in the *New Testament*, they are abundantly present in the *Gospel of Thomas*. From its outset there is an oblique reference to this mystery:

These are the hidden sayings which the living Jesus spoke, and which Didymos Judas Thomas transcribed.

In the translation above, the word "hidden," not "secret," is used because a negative connotation attaches to the word "secret." The surviving Coptic text was made from the Greek, which was made from Syriac. Translators are obligated to exercise a cautious freedom to supply the logical word. The idea of Jesus going around whispering secrets in people's ears and obligating them to keep his secrets does not comport with what else we know of him. Certain things were hidden, not because Jesus or the apostles wanted to be secretive but because of an affliction of spiritual blindness making concealment a prudent measure. Instead of sequestering knowledge, Jesus made it his business to reveal hidden things.:

"To those worthy of my mysteries, I disclose my mysteries."

(*Logion 62a*)

Next is the claim of Gnosticism. Various authors say unreservedly that the *Gospel of Thomas* was "GNOSTIC." Were it truly Gnostic, as critics allege, also as many of its friends say, then, contrary to Gnostic beliefs, why does it praise one who was overtly Law-observant such as James? (See *logion 12*.) As was Jesus, James was very Mosaic, whereas Gnosticism is noted for having being overtly anti-Mosaic. Unlike texts which are truly Gnostic, it does not posit a God above YHVH. Also, it lacks any reference to intermediaries: *Demi-urges*, *Plaromas*, or *Aeons* or the like.

In view of this, some will retort, "alright it's not Gnostic, it's proto-Gnostic." True, Gnostic writings pick up some of *Thomas'* sayings but, these same writings also use canonical expressions. Does that make the canonicals proto-Gnostic? Some say, since it was preserved among Gnostic writings, that *Thomas* must be Gnostic, in other words, guilt by association.

Occasionally canonical writings turn up among those considered heretical. This proves nothing. That the *Gospel of Luke* was favored by Marcionites or the *Gospel of Matthew* was favored by Ebionites proves nothing. If anything, the reference in *Logion 12* advising the disciples to repair to James is an indication that *Thomas* was an early composition, perhaps

even contemporaneous with James, when such advice could actually have been acted upon. If so, then it predated the Gnostic-Christian movement for James died in 62 AD, a full generation before them.

An enduring mystery for scholars has been the unmistakable contrast in tone and content between *John's Gospel* and the three synoptics: *Matthew*, *Mark*, and *Luke*. This centuries-old puzzle only deepened with the discovery in 1909 of the earliest Christian hymnbook, the *Odes of Solomon*, and deepened further in 1945 with the discovery of the Coptic text of the *Gospel of Thomas*, for these texts have surprising affinities with themes found in *John's Gospel*. Instead of just one aberrant text, now scholars found themselves trying to account for an entire body of related literature. Initially the assumption was that such congruencies as existed amongst these texts were based on dependence on *John's Gospel*. Additional study, however, has not borne this out. Instead, it is generally thought that all these writings arose from a common milieu.

Two elements emerge as important here: first, the Gospel of Thomas has material that comes from the earliest traditions of the sayings of Jesus; second, the Gospel shares theology and perspective with the Johannine community (although that common material is often very different, and even polemical). The Gospel of Thomas, then, connects to early Christian literature in two ways: some of its contents parallel the material in the Synoptic Sayings Source Q, from primitive Christianity; some of the way in which that material is developed parallels the work of the Johannine community.

(Richard Valentasis, (*Gospel of Thomas*)

In his book *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?*, Harold Bloom, albeit falling into the common error about *Thomas* being “Gnostic,” makes these trenchant observations:

If you turn to the Gospel of Thomas, you encounter a Jesus who is unsponsored and free. No one could be burned or even scorned in the name of this Jesus, and no one has been hurt in any way, except perhaps for those bigots, high church or low, who may have glanced at so permanently surprising work. . . . this Jesus is a wisdom teacher, gnomic and wandering, rather than a proclaimer of finalities. You cannot be a minister of this gospel, nor found a church upon it. Everything we seek is already in our presence, and not outside ourself. What is most remarkable in these sayings is the repeated insistence that everything is already open to you. What is best and oldest in you will respond fully to what you allow yourself to see. . . . implied in nearly every saying: there is light in you, and that light is not of the created world. It is not Adamic. . . . what is best in us was never created, so cannot fall. The Gospel of Thomas addresses itself only to . . . those capable of knowing, who then through knowing can come to see what Jesus insists is plainly visible before them, indeed all around them. . . .

Richard Valentasis, in his book, *Gospel of Thomas*, helps us to see its purpose:

A collection of sayings by nature cannot fulfill expectations of a systematic presentation of discursive theology, . . . . It must be made clear, however, that the Gospel of Thomas does indeed present a recognizable and articulated theology, but both the mode and the content of that theology differs from other theological discourses. . . . I would characterize this theology as a performative theology whose mode of discourse and whose method of theology revolves about effecting a change in thought and understanding in the readers and hearers (both ancient and modern). The sayings challenge, puzzle, sometimes even provide conflicting information about a given subject, and in so confronting the readers and hearers force them to create in their own minds the place where all the elements fit together. The theology comes from the audience's own effort in reflecting and interpreting the sayings, and, therefore, it is a practical and constructed theology even for them. . . .

This mystagogic Jesus describes himself as the light, the "all" found in every place, the one who is the origin and destiny of all creation (Saying 77). As a bearer of secret wisdom (Prologue), Jesus is portrayed as a divine figure who not only permeates all life, but enables true vision to occur (Saying 37), and who guides people to the fulfilling of their deepest desires (Saying 51). Moreover, Jesus' presence becomes merged with the seekers so that there can be no distinction between Jesus and those who follow him (Saying 108). . . .

The Gospel of Thomas connects the hearer and seeker to the very voice of the living Jesus speaking in the midst of an interpreting community.

Kenneth Arnold, in presentingd to the Buddhist-Christian Studies Association in 2000, his essay "The Circle of the Way: reading the Gospel of Thomas as a Christzen Text," states:

Elaine Pagels in *The Gnostic Gospels* notes that the living Jesus of the Nag Hammadi Gnostic texts speaks of illusion and enlightenment, not sin and repentance." Instead of coming to save us from sin, he comes as a guide who opens access to spiritual understanding. But when the disciple attains enlightenment, Jesus no longer serves as his spiritual master: the two have become equal – even identical" (Pagels, xx). (Hence, the voice of Thomas is Didymus Judas Thomas, revered in the early Syriac church as an apostle and twin brother of Jesus.) Jesus said, "I am not your master. Because you have drunk, you have become drunk from the bubbling stream which I have measured out. . . . He who will drink from my mouth will become as I am: I myself shall become he, and the things that are hidden will be revealed to him." (Thomas, 35 and 50)

This comes close to Paul's formulation of the exchanged life, his: "Christ in you the hope of glory." On notable critic of the *Gospel of Thomas*, however, didn't see it that way. Robert Grant, in his very scholarly, erudite book, *The Secret Sayings of Jesus*, states that:

It [the *Gospel of Thomas*] is probably our most significant witness to the early perversion of Christianity by those who wanted to create Jesus in their own image.

Robert Grant goes on to say:

The Jesus of the Gospel of Thomas is obviously related to the Jesus of the canonical gospels, but he has been transformed into the Gnostic revealer of secret wisdom and saving truth.

That's it, "a revealer of secret wisdom and of saving truth"? What is the big problem with that? Grant is grasping at straws. What he and other critics are really exercised about is not so much any particular heresy that *Thomas* presumably promotes; rather, that it exists at all and by existing, demonstrates that the Church's *New Testament* gospels may not be the be-all-and-end-all that they would have us to think.

The following is an offer by Jesus Christ to give us spiritual experience, unmediated by the Church. This Jesus said:

"I shall give you  
that which eye hath not seen  
and that which ear hath not heard  
and that which no hand hath touched  
and what hath not occurred to the mind of man."

"Whoso is nigh unto me is nigh unto the fire,  
and whoso is far from me is far from the kingdom."

"Whoso drinketh from my mouth shall become like me. I myself  
will become like him, and to him the hidden things shall be revealed."

(*Gospel of Thomas* 17, 82, 1208)

We might want to be open to the idea that *Thomas* in its present form is not entirely the work of a single individual, that in the course of its transmission, particularly in translation, certain embellishments, expansions, contractions, were introduced. This I say based on a comparison of the Coptic and Greek texts. Much of the scholarly disagreement as exists revolves around textual critics focusing too narrowly on a single example and running with that to the exclusion of all other considerations. Doing justice by this subject means taking a more global approach. Unlike the New Testament where many texts have survived, in this instance, we have only one fairly complete Coptic text, one fragmentary Greek text, and a limited number of quotes from Church fathers. Given such a slender record to work with, we must recognize the somewhat tentative or provisional nature of our findings. Let us begin by addressing the issue of age. A certain substrate of material in *Thomas*, as witnessed to in antiquity, is derived from the first century, pre-canonical *Hebrew Gospel*.



"Let not him who seeketh cease from seeking until he hath found; and when he hath found, he shall be amazed; and when he hath been amazed he shall reign; and when he hath reigned he shall have rest."

So also reads Greek Oxyrhynchus version of *Thomas*, logion #2. So also Clement of Alexandria. But this is somewhat at variance from the the Nag Hammadi Coptic version's ending:

"Let him not cease who seeks until seeking he finds and when he finds, he will be troubled, and being troubled, he will be astonished, and rule over the All."

Whereas the end goal in the Greek version is to "rest," the end goal in the Coptic version is to "rule." Meanwhile, the later, truncated synoptic version reads, "Seek and ye shall find (*Matthew 7:7*), which says less about process. But *II Timothy 2:12* states is also about process when it states: "if we suffer [with Jesus], we shall also reign with him." In this we see reigning and resting as being related concepts.

In *Thomas* saying # 3, Jesus states:

"If those who would attract you should say to you, 'Behold, the kingdom is in the sky,' then the birds of the sky will precede you. If they should say to you, 'It is in the sea,' then the fishes will precede you. Rather, the kingdom is within you, and outside of you. When you know yourselves, then you will become known, and you will realize that it is you who are the sons of the living Father. But if ye know not yourselves, then you dwell in poverty and you are that poverty."

This verse builds on the one proceeding it by advocating reigning through self-empowerment as opposed to dependency on a leadership which misleads. The value of the *Gospel of Thomas* is that it promotes the Way, the Truth, and the Life without having to resort to rituals or hierarchy. That is what made it so dangerous to the hierarchical Church then and to the militaristic, Zionized Church now. Mithraism hates Buddhism. In this the age of the internet people are discovering for themselves this non-threatening gospel. I have yet to hear of anyone having been led into a den of iniquity because of it.

The similarity between John and Thomas lies in their portrayal of Jesus as a fully self-conscious sage-redeemer whose words and judgments are true and flawless. Both gospels claim: to understand Jesus and his words is to achieve salvation. (Alexander Mirkovic, *Johannine Sayings in the Gospel of Thomas*)

The challenge, as I see it, is to be vigilant, be alert. We don't want throw away sayings original to Jesus on the one hand or be manipulated by antinomian Gnostics. How we approach this book will determine what we take away from it for better or for worse.

## THE IMAGERY OF BAPTISM

Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan and were baptized of him in Jordan confessing their sins. (Matthew :5-6)

John's baptism left an indelible impression on those who submitted to it. I refer to its lyrical aspect. Conceivably he could have conducted his ceremony in the pool of Siloah in Jerusalem but, instead, he stayed in the wilderness where the people came to him, not he to them. When the Israelites entered the Promised Land, they did so by crossing dry shod over the Jordan River. It was the last leg on their 40-year journey. Fast-forwarding 1500 years in time, travel was still not easy. The road from Jerusalem down to Jericho was fraught with peril, for highwaymen were out plying their trade, that of luring pilgrims over for quick and easy seizure. Other privations awaited in the wilderness, yet the folk came, if only to leave their footprints in the sand, the pilgrimage itself being part of the experience, a time to reflect, a time to take stock. The river to which they headed had its headwaters in Lebanon nearly two miles up and more than a hundred miles away. On Jordan's banks where John ministered were reeds and willows and birds of every description. Its waters spoke of healing, cleansing, refreshment, a good place to wash away ones sins and be reconciled with God.

As it is written: John baptized in "Bethabara beyond Jordan" (*John 1:28*). "A compound word, *beth* means "the place" and *abara* means "crossing over." Just such a place is to be found in the river bend east of Jericho where the otherwise swift-flowing river broadened out and became shallow and one could hop from rock to rock so as to ford the river.

There on Jordan's far side, John pitched camp at the base of *Tel Mar Elias*, i.e., Elijah's Hill, a naturally-occurring mound from whence Elijah ascended to heaven in a fiery chariot.

Jesus asked rhetorically, "What went ye out to the wilderness to see, a man clothed in soft raiment?" Answering his own question, Jesus said:

"For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist. . . . if you will receive it, this is Elijah, which was for to come." (*Matthew 11:8, Luke 7:28, Matthew 11:14*)

Years before Gabriel said to Zechariah, John's father, regarding his son's mission:

"He [John] shall go before him [Jesus] in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (Luke 1:17)

To better understand who John the Baptist was, let us recall to mind who Elijah the Tishbite was, that he was the greatest of Israel's non-writing prophets, also the most honored. Such was his natural vitality that he ran before King Ahab's chariot from Carmel to Jezreel,

some 25 miles. Later, when fleeing from Ahab's wife, Jezebel, he traversed close to a hundred miles. After that he went to Mt. Sinai, an even greater distance.

Such was his power with God that when Elijah prayed for the rain to stop, the heavens closed and it ceased to rain three years and six months. And when he prayed again, the heavens opened and the rains fell and the earth returned to its former fruitfulness.

In the spirit and power of Elijah John the Baptist called on the nation to repent. In the spirit and power of Elijah who stood up to the priests of Baal, John stoutly opposed the Pharisees and Sadducees. In the spirit and power of Elijah, John proclaimed Jesus, saying:

"I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God." (*John 1:34*)

It all came together on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of creation when *mayim* (water) fell from the *shamayim* (heavens) to become a *mikva*, that is to say, a collected body of water. Thus did Earth receive its first baptism:

And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering of waters (*mikvah mayim*) he called Seas: and God saw that it was good. (*Genesis 1:9-10*)

Because we are so accustomed to the Greek-derived word "baptism," we neglect to look for its Hebrew equivalent. That would be "*t'vilah*," meaning immersion. Also, as we have already seen, one can say "*mikvah*" which is the general Hebraic term for a natural body of water, but, in a more specialized sense, it stands for a baptismal font.

Our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all *baptized* unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea. (*I Corinthians 10: 1-2*)

In addressing those who spoke Greek, Paul wrote Greek. But in the original account in *Exodus*, naturally one does not find a Greek word but a Hebrew word, that word being *t'vilah*. Thus Pharaoh's army was "cast into the sea [i.e., immersed], while later in the same verse the agency of immersion, that is, a body of water, the word *mikvah*, is employed:

Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he [YHWH] cast [*t'vilah*] into the sea: his chosen captains also are drowned [*mikvah*] in the Red Sea." (*Exodus 15:4*)

Afterward, when God gave the law from Mt Sinai, the Israelites underwent a second baptism, in other words, a second *t'vilah*:

YHVH said to Moses, "Go to the people and set them apart today and tomorrow, and let them wash [*t'vilah*] their clothes, and be ready by the third day: for on the third day Yahveh will come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai." And Moses went down from the mount to the people, and set apart the people, and they washed [*t'vilah*] their clothes. (*Exodus 19:10,11,14*)

## THE WATERS OF PURIFICATION

Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (Hebrews 10:22)

When studying Baptism's origins, it is not with the idea of re-instituting that which does not now apply; rather, to understand what does apply:

"He who touches the dead body of anyone shall be unclean seven days. He shall purify himself with the water on the third day and on the seventh day; then he will be clean. But if he does not purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not be clean. Whoever touches the body of anyone who has died, and does not purify himself, defiles the tabernacle of YHWH. That person shall be cut off from Israel. He shall be unclean, because the water of purification was not sprinkled on him; his uncleanness is still on him." (Numbers 19:11-13)

The purpose of ceremonial washing was to prepare the people to come into the Divine presence. Understandably the people wanted, not only to be clean but to feel clean. They not only wanted to feel clean, they wanted assurance from the priests that they were clean.

Water symbolizes life. Nevertheless, that which was life for some, the escaping Israelites, became death for others, the pursuing Egyptians. But then, the same water as flows in the river Jordan as living-giving water, becomes stagnant water in the Dead Sea. Also to be observed is that those who survived the first baptism crossing the Red Sea may not have lived to see the second baptism at Sinai, for many of them had succumbed to the cult of the golden calf and were struck down and perished. As Paul informs us, the Israelites had consumed spiritual food and spiritual drink; nonetheless, they fell in the wilderness.

Not a magical amulet, baptism is a milestone along the Way of Life which in and of itself guarantees nothing, yet comforts and instructs. Thus today we can no more rest our confidence on having been baptized, than could the fleeing Israelites. We can no more afford to become complacent on account of it than they could. How then does baptism benefit? Holy Writ shows us how, just as it did John the Baptist, which is why he needed no Essene, no Mandaean, no Pharisee to teach him about baptism, nor did he derive his ceremony from theirs, for just as the rain fell from the heavens above and immersed the earth below, so also was the knowledge of God poured forth upon John. With Heaven above and the Spirit within and with Holy Writ before him, John had an abundance of material to work with, as well, the power to utilize it, and we too if only we will access that which is ours.

As one of priestly lineage, of Aaronic descent, John, from that connection alone, would have been familiar with the symbolic use of water in Temple purification rites. For instance, in the outer court of King Solomon's Temple there was a huge brazen sea. An imposing

structure, it consisted of a basin measuring ten cubits across and five cubits deep which basin was carried aloft on the backs of twelve outward-facing oxen each of which represented one of the twelve tribes of Israel. Three oxen faced to the north, three to the south, three eastward, three westward. The volume of this gathered body of water was the equivalent of 2000 baths or 150 *mikvas*. Priests who were to serve before the altar were required to be immersed, preparatory to their being considered ceremonially clean. (See *I Kings 7:23-27*, *II Chronicles 4:2-6* for a fuller description.)

Between pure and impure, between clean and unclean, between holy and profane, lies a body of water, a *mikva*. No priest was allowed to approach a holy God to serve Him in the holy place, especially in the inner sanctum, the holy of holies, without first achieving ritual cleanliness through immersion. With *t'vilah* (immersion) and *mikva* (the gathered water), purification, restoration, sanctification, ordination, initiation, consecration, were achieved.

As well, a psychological component existed – a washing of the spirit, that being an affirmation that things are right between God and man. Before a priest would be immersed in a ceremonial bath, he took a bath. The ceremony was never about physical cleanliness.

On each side of the molten sea were 5 lavers, or ten in all, each Paul advanced linguistically when he told Titus (*Titus 3:5*) that we are saved “through the washing [laver] of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.” As well, Jesus said to Peter: “If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.” (*John 13:8*)

#### G O D O U R M I K V A H

O YHVH, the hope [*mikvah*] of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters.

(*Jeremiah 17:13*)

There is a perfectly good Hebrew word for hope and it is not *mikvah*, but *tikvah*. Is it possible that certain translators, not comfortable with the prophet Jeremiah's metaphorical way of speaking, decided to fix things up just a bit, for why else would they not translate that which was before their very eyes? True, without *mikvah* there is no *tikvah*. Be that as it may, God is our *mikvah*. God is our baptism. With that thought in mind, let us ponder Jesus' words to one who came to him by night, to Nicodemus, a leader among the Pharisees, and a member of the Sanhedrin:

“Truly, truly, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

(*John 3:3*)

Provocatively, perhaps facetiously, Nicodemus asked Jesus:

“How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?”

(John 3:4)

Nicodemus seems to imply by his response that amniotic fluid might be the type of water to which Jesus was referring. Many theologians in our day also credit physical water, albeit baptismal, not amniotic. If we have in mind, however, that Jesus is our baptism, our *mikva*, then I believe we will draw a conclusion truer to his words’ intent, not only here but elsewhere about “living water,” that he is speaking metaphorically:

“But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

(John 4:14)

And when Jesus commissioned his apostles “to go into all the world and to baptize all nations” (*Matthew 28:19*), it may be that he had more in view than water baptism for, as the verse continues, the underlying Greek can well be translated “baptizing them *into* the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” meaning that our salvation is to be immersed in them, Father, Son, and Spirit, that they are our *mikvah*, our baptism. It is not “he that is baptized” who shall be saved, rather, “he that *believeth* and is baptized” who “shall be saved.” (See *Mark 16:16*.)

“The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?” (*Luke 20:4*)

The Temple authorities wanted Jesus to tell them by what authority he acted but immediately Jesus turned the tables on them by asking them about the origin of John’s baptism. An adroit move, Jesus tapped into a hidden reservoir of support from untold thousands of Jerusalemites and Judaeans who had been to the wilderness and had witnessed John’s power and integrity and had been baptized by him. John’s baptism was no abstract, theological construct to them but a personal commitment to ready themselves to receive their long-sought Messiah. The Temple authorities clammed up, knowing from biblical history what had befallen the priests of Baal who had opposed Elijah, that all 850 of them were executed in the space of a single day; privately, they voiced concern that the people might stone them.

At Jordan three witnesses were given: the epiphany of the Father, “Thou art my Son, in thee I am well pleased”; then, the observable descent of the Spirit in the form of a dove; and finally John’s testimony: “This is the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.”

It was the Spirit’s anointing of Jesus that made him the Messiah, the “Anointed One,” for the word “anoint” in Hebrew is our word “Messiah.” In Greek the word for anoint is *Christos*, and obviously that is where we get our word “Christ.” But where did it all began? On Jordan’s bank. We, however, do not have to go to the physical Jordan River, for Jordan has come to us in Christ, making his baptism ours in him.

## BAPTISMAL TESTIMONIA

He leadeth me beside the still waters. *(Psalm 23:2)*

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth: the Lord is upon many waters. *(Psalm 29:3)*

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. *(Ezekiel 36:25)*

Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil. *(Isaiah 1:16)*

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. *(Psalm 51:2-3)*

Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day shall ye say, Praise Jehovah, call upon his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. *(Isaiah 12:3-4)*

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. *(Micah 7:18-19)*

Mary and James:  
the Elevated and the Just



#### JESUS' RIGHT HAND AND HIS LEFT

The missing ingredient in most gospel studies is any consideration of those who created the gospel accounts. It is like a hanging predicate without a subject. Surely the gospels did not come about in a vacuum but each one arose in select communities under the guidance of key personalities. Let us rectify this shortcoming in scholarship by turning our attention to two of the Nazarene movement's more important personalities: Mary and James, the Elevated and the Just. No monolith, from its inception the Nazarene movement demonstrated a tolerant maturity, making room, as it were, under one roof for a wonderful variety of characters, each with his own concerns, ministry, or emphasis. Because of Jesus' transforming influence, there was a blossoming of individuality and scope for bold, new approaches to spirituality. Never was there only one "normative" way to be Christian but the mountain of faith was always approachable from many directions.

By the word the will of God is made known and through the living word, Jesus, the will of God is made known. In just that way, with head and heart working in tandem, James excelled in his handling of Scripture while Mary excelled in her devotion to the Man. No one knows a brother like a brother; that was James. No one knew her beloved as did the beloved one; that was the Magdalene. As a high tower, she was of all women most elevated; he of all men, most just. This one most passionate, that one most mild. Having qualities which balance and complement, this one most vulnerable, that one most venerable; the one deeply caring, the other thoughtfully wise. Very different personalities, each one carved out their own separate identity, each one shaped his or her own unique sphere of influence.

Before appearing to the Twelve, early on the first day of the week, Jesus appeared first to the Magdalene, then, as the *Gospel of the Hebrews* reports, later that morning to James "the brother of the Lord." Priority of appearance after his resurrection was a signal honor for them but for us a sign. The Twelve vied amongst themselves for the honor of sitting on Jesus' right hand and his left in the Kingdom to come but all for naught, for it was not theirs to ask any more than it was his to grant. Nor were they necessarily given first place in the messianic community. One of the Twelve, Judas Iscariot, ended up in last place. Honor given to whom honor is due; so, also, dishonor. In pointing this out, it is not to make light of the institution of the Twelve, for its members' contributions were great and they are with Jesus always. Rather, the purpose is to restore to memory the role played by James and Mary. In so doing, we redress an ancient wrong committed by those Church Fathers who with their stubby pens, as much as they dared, expurgated them both from the *New Testament* and from history. Nevertheless, in the Spirit, these two stood on Jesus' right hand and on his left.

Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks. (*Psalms* 48:9,13)

## MARY AND JAMES IN PROPHECY

As one might expect, the bulk of messianic prophecies apply directly to the Messiah but a few also apply to members of his immediate entourage, as well to the larger messianic movement. For instance: "A virgin shall conceive" – would that not be a prophetic reference to Jesus' mother, *Isaiah 7:14*? "A voice crying in the wilderness:" is that not the Forerunner, John, *Isaiah 40:3*? "The son of perdition" – would that not be Judas Iscariot, *Psalms 109:8*? And so it goes from Jesus on down, there was a prophetic delineation of various key players in the messianic movement. Among this select number stands James the Just, otherwise known as "the Bulwark of the People;" and Mary Magdalene whose epithet "Magdalene" means "high tower" or "elevated."

In the Bible, a name change often signified a change of status. Abram became Abraham; Sari, Sarah; Jacob, Israel. Likewise with the granting of titles: Simon became *Petros*, i.e., "a small stone," indicating as it were that he was a chip off of "The Rock." As the 4<sup>th</sup> century's most renowned biblical scholar, Jerome, (c. 340-420 AD) wrote regarding the Magdalene:

Mary of Magdala received the epitaph "fortified with towers" because of her earnestness and strength of faith, and was privileged to see the rising of Christ first before even the apostles.

And of James, the historian Eusebius (c. 260-340 AD) wrote:

Because of his superlative righteousness, he was called the Righteous [or Just] One [*Dikaïos*] and Oblias, which from the Greek translates as "Bulwark of the People."  
... as the Prophets declare of him.

## JAMES, THE BROTHER OF JESUS

In the aftermath of the Messiah's life, death, and resurrection, Jesus' band of followers, numbering about 120, established themselves in Jerusalem as a society of friends in intentional community with James the Just, the brother of our Lord, as their leader. Yet, in the *Acts of the Apostles*, few particulars relating to this are provided. Curiously missing from this account until chapter 12 is any mention of James. And even when he is introduced into the story line, it's done most peculiarly, simply: "tell James ..." (*Acts 12:17*). Somehow the reader is supposed to divine which of two Jameses was intended or why it might be important to tell him anything at all. To that point, the only Jameses mentioned in *Acts* was James, a son of Zebedee, reported as killed in *Acts 12:2*, and James a son of Alphaeus. That James, the Lord's brother, over thirty years the Nazarene community's leader in Jerusalem, not to be recognized is most curious. Folks, this is not the normal way to tell a story! The only way I

know to make sense of it is to assume that something fell out of the text. In all probability it didn't just "fall" out. Though conjectural and not proven, almost certainly a sizable portion of text was removed in a mid- 2<sup>nd</sup> century, Church-sponsored edit. As if it were a big shark, the Church came along and chomped off an essential piece of the story not suitable to its purposes. Not only missing are James' deeds but, also, much of the real story of the Jerusalem community is missing. Still discernable, however, is the gaping hole left behind.

So long as there existed a thriving Nazarene movement, the emerging, proto-Catholic Church felt its own authority at risk which could explain why James was viewed with such jaundiced eye that even his *Epistle*, which comes closest of any in the *New Testament* in atmosphere and perspective to *Matthew's Gospel*, was not granted unqualified canonical status but was placed in the disputed category where it remained in limbo for many centuries. Only after the Nazarene movement was toast, was James heartily embraced.

Whereas the tendency has been to view the Magdalene absent any reference to her Jewishness, as if perhaps she was divorced from her roots, James often is seen as being too Jewish. That was Luther's assessment. In his edition of the *New Testament*, he bumped James' epistle, which he deprecated as "a strawy epistle," from its accustomed location, relegating it to an appendix at the rear. His expressed intention: to do away with it altogether:

The Epistle of James is written by a Jew who so far as Christianity is concerned has indeed heard the bell ring, but does not know where the clapper is. Here in Wittenberg we have cast James out of theology; indeed we have almost thrown him out of the Bible.

(Martin Luther, 1542)

Unlike Luther, Catholicism and Orthodoxy have long wanted to identify James with their respective institutions, albeit on their terms. Recasting James as a proto-Catholic, they credit him with authoring the Divine Liturgy of St James, an ancient, still widely-practiced Church rite. However, neither this rite's well-developed Trinitarian theology nor its high-church ceremonialism, could James or anyone else from the 1<sup>st</sup> century have conceived. Initially, so far from being popular with the Church, James was roundly ignored. For instance, no reference to him is found amongst the sub-apostolic Church Fathers. Nor is his epistle listed in the Roman Catholic Muratorian canon of c. 200 AD. Only in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, once the Nazarene movement that James had led had been put to flight and declared a heresy, do we find record of a Church father, namely, Origen, looking favorably upon him. In the 4<sup>th</sup> century, Augustine embraced him and the church historian, Eusebius, extolled him, making reference to his "episcopal throne." (This very throne, having survived into modern times, on scientific examination, proved, alas, to be a 4<sup>th</sup> century artifact derived from the same material as the church structure from the same time period associated with it.)

By the way, what a fine piece of nonsense: James "enthroned," ruling from a raised plat-

form as if he were a potentate, when his only authority was moral authority which he exercised mostly from on his knees. The Church's perceived need to connect itself to James by the use of hopelessly anachronistic claims is symptomatic of its inherent insecurity about its origins, all of which reflects adversely on the presumed efficacy of its rituals, which depends on unbroken, physical, apostolic succession.

Though neither the Jewish leadership then or the Church now care to acknowledge this, James, of all Jews, was most observant. He never abandoned tallit or phylacteries, yet, at the same time, he was most Christ-like, thereby demonstrating the compatibility of Moses and Jesus. At the same time that the Jewish leadership found his message to be too universal, the Church was finding it to be too Jewish or, as Edward Gibbon put it:

The Nazarenes were Jews who were converted to Christ, who, because they kept the law of Moses together with the gospel, were cast out of the Church.

*(The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire)*

In light of all we know about the Magdalene, it would be to blunder to portray James as having been a narrow-minded legalist when we know that the movement to which both belonged was at heart humane. We should know better than to think that James took pride in his religion or his ethnicity instead of his humanity. Instead of parochialism or exclusivist tendencies, by the evidence of his epistle, we can say that he was wonderfully open and generous. He said it all when he wrote:

. . . mercy rejoiceth against judgment. (*James 2:12*)

#### J A M E S   T H E   T S A D I K

In *Genesis*, for his kinsman Lot's sake, and for his kinsman's family's sake, Abraham negotiated with God to save Sodom. He asked of God:

"Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?" (*Genesis 18:24*)

Eventually Abraham bargained God down to ten, whether that for the sake of ten righteous men (the word for righteous in Hebrew being *Tsadik*, or *Zaddik*), God would spare the city. From this incident was developed a generalized application, that humanity's continued existence is predicated on the presence of God's righteous ones among us. James the Just, that is, James the Righteous One, *Ya'akov Ha Tsadik*, was widely considered to be such a one. Thus we read in *Thomas*:

The disciple said to Jesus, "We know that you are going to leave us. Who will be our leader? Jesus said to them, "No matter where you are you are to repair to James the Just, for whose sake heaven and earth came

into being.

(Logion 12)

James' reputation for righteousness stems from a variety of causes:

And once during a drought, he [James] lifted his hands to Heaven and prayed, and at once Heaven sent rain . . . Thus they no longer called him by his name, but his name was, rather, "the Just One." (Epiphanius)

1<sup>st</sup> century Jewish historian, Josephus, speaking of James' "great holiness," "his preeminent righteousness," attributed this to his devotion to prayer. For this reason also was conferred on him the appellation, "camel knees." As James wrote:

. . . the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. (*James 5:16*)

Personal piety in his view was not an end in itself but a means to a greater end and without charity piety is a detriment. As for James' regard for the poor, it was not based on sympathy alone but on respect:

Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? (*James 2:5*)

#### **ESCHATOLOGICAL HIGH PRIEST**

As Aaron served as his brother's spokesman and was appointed to be the high priest, so was James Jesus' spokesman and high priest after his death and resurrection. Confirming this are accounts from antiquity of his entering the Temple's inner sanctum as opposition high priest:

But we find that he [James] also exercised the Priesthood according to the ancient Priesthood. . . . To James alone was it permitted to enter the Holy of Holies once a year, because he was a Nazarite and connected to the priesthood. . . . Many before me have reported this of him - Eusebius, Clement and others. He was also allowed to wear the [priestly] mitre on his head as the aforementioned trustworthy persons have testified in the same historical writings. (Epiphanius)

For 32 years the Sadducees bided their time, never forgetting Jesus' chastisement of them when he cleansed the temple in 30 AD or whose brother it was who continued to challenge their legitimacy, for all this while James had been a bone in their throat. His mere presence reminded them of their guilt. His modest lifestyle was a daily reproach to their extravagance. Because they were held in contempt by the people, the Sadducees were not anxious to move precipitously against him. Eventually they felt compelled to act, particularly when arose a new controversy regarding their designs on the Temple's treasury. According to Josephus (Ant. 20: 205-7), the Sadducees, led by Ananus II, in 58 AD illegally seized that portion of the tithe due the rural priests. Upholding the Temple's integrity, James appears to have championed the rural priests' cause. Dangerous. The Establishment is always greedy.

It was just then that Jerusalem found itself between Roman-appointed governors, that is, the interregnum between Festus and Albinus. Now, finally, the temple leadership must have thought, whatever the risk, the time was ripe to make their move. Eager to have done with James once and for all, the Sadducees chose as the opportune moment the Passover in 62 AD to query James: "What is meant by 'the door of Jesus'?" A transparent ploy intended to mousetrap him, James responded, as they knew he must:

"Why do you ask me concerning the Son of Man? He is sitting in heaven on the right hand of the great Power and will come in the clouds of heaven."

By identifying Jesus as the Savior, James gave the Temple leadership the pretext they needed to charge him with "having transgressed the law." Thus on such grounds as these did they engineer his demise.

In rounding out our understanding of James' sacerdotal ministry, we should remember that beyond supplication, as we shall see below, other Temple functions existed which also needed to be fulfilled, for the Temple experience was as different again from a Pentecostal shout and praise meeting as that is from a high Episcopal Church service. As C. S. Lewis invites us to do in his book: *Reflections on the Psalms*, picture if you can the festive pageantry of the high holy days, the singers and the minstrels, trumpets blowing and damsels with timbrels and tambourines in hand, following whom was a great throng, as the folk ascended the Temple steps in grand procession. Glorious the shouts of hosanna! James was not just an observer but a participant, and more than that, he presided over this joyful throng. To James, no less than to the Psalmist before him, nothing could be finer than to:

... dwell in the house of God ... to behold the fair beauty of YHWH and to enquire in his temple. ... I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept the holy day. For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

(*Psalms* 27:4, 42:4, 84:10)

#### THE BURIAL SHROUD

In the *Gospel to the Hebrews*, James and Jesus break bread together, after which Jesus hands to the "servant of the high priest" the grave clothing. Who would that have been? Surely not the servant of the high priest, Caiphas, the same as helped bring about his execution? That makes no sense, for James, not Caiphas, was the eschatological high priest. By handing over to James' servant, and not to James himself, the grave clothes, Jesus preserved James' ability to remain ritually clean in accordance with applicable Mosaic provision. Possibly one of the items Jesus presented James at that time is known to us today as the Shroud of Turin. Certainly possession of such an object would've lent credence to the disciples' eyewitness accounts of the resurrection, as well, help explain the positive response they received.

*I am a priest of the Lord,  
and to Him I do priestly service:  
and to Him I offer the sacrifice of my thought.  
For His thought is not like the thought of the world  
nor the thought of the flesh,  
nor like them that work carnally.  
The sacrifice of the Lord is righteousness,  
and purity of heart and lips.  
Present your reins before Him blamelessly:  
and let not thy heart do violence to heart,  
nor thy soul to soul.  
Thou shalt not acquire a stranger  
by the price of thy silver,  
neither shalt thou deprive him of the covering  
of his nakedness:  
But put on the grace of the Lord without stint;  
and come into His Paradise  
and make thee a garland from its tree,  
and put it on thy head and be glad;  
and recline on His rest,  
and glory shall go before thee,  
and thou shalt receive of His kindness  
and of His grace;  
and thou shalt be flourishing in truth in the praise  
of His holiness.  
Praise and honor be to His name. Hallelujah.*

*(Ode 20)*

**LIVING IN COMMUNITY**

Just as a coal taken from the hearth burns less brightly in isolation so also do our lights often burn less brightly in isolation. We have God above and within, for he is both transcendent and immanent, yet we are also social beings in need of one another. Whereas walking in the light is a move toward personal transcendence; holy friendship is a move toward mutual transcendence; while the linking of voluntary, face-to-face home-based communities is a move toward societal transcendence.

And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods and parted them to every man had need. And they continuing daily of one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. (Acts 2:44-47)

A lover of equality, James would have seen in this the opportunity to put into practice the egalitarian principles he advocates so eloquently in his epistle. Perhaps the bartering of services within the community helped offset the lack of money while the tightening of bonds that goes with communal living helped stave off the demoralizing effect of having individuals picked off one-by-one by the authorities.

Unity is the goal of *community*. But this is not to be taken as automatic for we must be aware of intentional community where there are too many intentions, especially of the wrong kind. Either there is transparency with the intentions being clearly articulated or not; either a God dynamic or a group dynamic exists; either coercion or autonomy; either we are liberated or else controlled. That is the choice. The closer people draw to one another, the more the boundaries between them need to be respected. Intentional community is not meant for those with an exaggerated regard for human authority: "I am of Cephas, I am of Paul." Nor should it foster dependency. Purposeful living requires personal initiative, for unity is not uniformity.

As James interpreted it, faith is an active principle, not the substance of things hoped for, but the *substantiating* of things hoped for:

Even so faith, if it hath not works is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. . . . For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. (James 2:17-18, 26)

Taking Abraham for his example, James related deeds, faith, and friendship:

Was not Abraham our forefather justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do ye see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was



called the friend of God.

(James 2:21-23)

A friend of God is one who shows himself friendly to the things valued by God. Thus James says it ought not to be that we bless God but curse men which are made after the similitude of God. Friendship with God fits us to be members of a society of friends, holy friendship – not doctrinal formulations or hierarchy – providing the organizing principle.

In living lightly, James was keeping to a way of life which, if broadly practiced, would obviate the need for war. Wars arise from two causes: greed and need. Greed needs to be harnessed, even as needs need to be met. There's room for all under the sun on God's green earth, if we will but accommodate one another.

From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask not and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

(James 4:1-3)

Another take on James' voluntary simplicity and vegetarian lifestyle:

The abstinence of St. James was not exclusively directed to the mortification of the flesh . . . He who abstains from meat altogether would not be called upon to eat the Paschal Lamb; he who had no land or possessions was not concerned with the laws of Tithe . . . Like Jesus the Temple was for him a House of Prayer: he was Righteous, he kept the Law, so far as it applied to him, but sacrifices were a matter of flesh-eaters and tithes for the rich.

(F. C. Burkitt, *Christian Beginnings*)

For the better part of 2000 years, with few exceptions, Christendom has avoided facing the challenge James presents to believers to disengage from the world system and exit from the circle of war. Surely we do not need to be fronting for rapacious corporations, war profiteers or grasping politicians, anymore than we need to involve ourselves in capitalistic or nationalistic conflicts. Much less do we need to be involved in the murderous, One World Global Zionist dictatorship or the Zionized churches promoting it. By contrast, living lightly is an appeal to the conscience, saying by our example that we march to a different drummer and need not live by the law of conspicuous consumption or trying to keep up with the Jones.

An alternative to Judeo-Christian belligerency exists - namely Nazarene faith and practice. Not a sect, organization, or school of thought, it is an attitude toward life that has been there all along, just overlooked or ignored (that is, when not actively being persecuted.) Whereas Zionized Christians are seemingly transfixed by a "my God is bigger than your god" mentality, priding themselves on their "chosen"-ness, those who are really chosen

never try to get a leg up on anyone, much less bomb their neighbors into "democracy," or rip off their art and museum pieces or sow the land with radiation.

The self-perception of a Nazarene is that of inquirer, seeking Life's source, nature, and purpose, with a commitment to ethical standards. Written off as "purists" or as "idealists," then marginalized, they often live and die in profound obscurity. Or, as has been the case with such leading Nazarene luminaries such as Mary Magdalene and James the Just, they have been maligned, misrepresented, and/or martyred.

#### **MARTYRDOM IN JERUSALEM**

Unable to endure any longer the testimony of the man, who through a lifetime of ascetic observance and piety was deemed by all men to be the most righteous, they [the priests] slew him [James], using anarchy as an opportunity for power, since at that time Festus [Procurator 60-62] had died in Judea, leaving the province without governor or procurator. . . . (Clement, quoted by Eusebius)

While thus they were stoning him, one of the Priests of the sons of Rechab, the son of Rechabites, spoken of by Jeremiah the prophet, cried out, saying, "Stop what you are doing, the Just One is praying for you." And one among them, who was a fuller, took the club with which he beat out clothes and struck the Just One on the head. . . . Thus, he suffered martyrdom, and they buried him on the spot by the temple, and his monument is still there by the temple. (Hegesippus)

From 30 AD, before Pentecost, to 62 AD, at Passover, when he was martyred, James oversaw the messianic community in Jerusalem. As a light on a hill, even holy Mt. Zion, he was most conspicuously placed. Jerusalem, the focus of three world religions, is the navel of the world, where trade routes from three continents meet; where Abraham would have sacrificed Isaac; where the temple in which Jesus was dedicated stood; where prophets prophesied; where David reigned; where pilgrims gather; where armies clashed, where the Messiah suffered passion and died and rose again, to which he will return to reign with the saints in glory. It had to have been a very tough posting, though not without its rewards. For more than three decades, for thirty-two years, James stood in the gap, forestalling judgment, this despite the ire of the religious authorities. Except that they feared the people who held James in awe, the Temple's rulers would have gladly done him in at any time. Eventually they created an opportunity.

#### **PURE RELIGION**

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. (James 1:27)

By the definition James provides us above, pure religion is one of good deeds perform-

ed, not a belief system or an organization to instil such a belief system, much less is it all the trappings and extraneous paraphernalia that undergird religion. As even a cursory study of history will show that over time religious organizations lose their integrity and fractionate and new ones arise to take their place, and why not? None of them has an innate claim to sanction. Underwriting much of this religious activity are folk afraid to stand on their two feet, afraid of unstructured freedom. Claiming God, they follow man; they want the comfort of knowing what to do, without personally having to figure it out. More than the freedom that is ours in Jesus Christ, what they want is security, even the everlasting arms of the Church. Whereas pure religion is the Golden Rule of compassionate living, impure re-ligion is a crutch leading to closed minds, ritualistic behavior, and blind compulsions. Orthopraxy - *i.e.*, right deeds, not orthodoxy - *i.e.*, right creeds, is a truer indicator of the Nazarene Way.

Beyond good deeds performed, James saw humanity's potential to walk with God, to be blessed by God, and ultimately to:

. . . receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them which love him. (*James 1.12*)

#### M A R Y   M A G D A L E N E

Picking our way through the welter of opposing claims about the Magdalene is no small task: in Catholic tradition, there is the fallen Mary, ever submissive to her "betters," ever repenting (thus "maudlin" a word deriving from her name, meaning effusively sentimental); also there is the feminist Mary, a usurper of male prerogatives, jealous for her gender; also, there is Scorsese's tattooed Mary, a lascivious temptress. Then, too, there's the enlightened, Gnostic Mary, "the one who knew the All." (The Egyptian goddess Isis was so termed.) According to this interpretation, when Jesus cast from Mary seven demons, she descended through the seven gates of the underworld before being reborn the initiatrix of sacramental ecstasy. Then, as an avatar of the divine feminine, as the crescent moon rising from the sea to the stars, Mary, through a Gnostic bridal chamber rite presumably carries souls aloft to the apotheosis of divine self-realization. Showered with extravagant praise, the Magdalene has been titled "the gate of heaven," "refuge of sinners," "ark of the Covenant," "second Eve," "the Holy Grail."

But terms meant to demean are also hurled at her, such as "plaiter of hair," euphemistically, a prostitute. It is enough to cause one to exclaim: "will the real Mary Magdalene please stand up?"

This we know, making Mary Magdalene out to be some sort of goddess is to miss the point entirely, that at every turn the imagery regarding her is not pagan but fits comfortably within the monotheistic tradition. She was worshipful, not worshiped. This we can assert

for now, that Mary Magdalene symbolizes the human search for the Divine, even as Jesus symbolizes the Divine search for humanity, and it would seem that the both found in each other what they were looking for.

Along with James, the Magdalene, though she was one of the Nazarene movement's key personalities, yet she is missing *in toto* from *Acts*. As for the canonical accounts, why is it like extracting teeth to pull from them a coherent story about her? Whether by inadvertent omission or by design, the story line is so scrambled that her relationship with Jesus is effectively obscured. Only by conflating the canonicals can we restore to any degree the true state of affairs, yet the composite picture formed thereby remains problematical. For instance, trying to account for anointing scenes which differ in time, place, and circumstance, yet curiously overlapping in coincidental detail. Thus *John's* anointing scene, chapter 12, involved Mary of Bethany in her brother Lazarus' home six days before Jesus' crucifixion, whereas in *Mark*, chapter 14, and *Matthew*, chapter 26, it is an unidentified woman who anoints Jesus in "the house of Simon the Leper" two days before. *Luke*, chapter 7, has an unidentified penitent anointing Jesus, but this happened much earlier in his career, this time, however, "in the house of Simon the Pharisee." In *Matthew* and *Mark*, it was Jesus' feet which were anointed, whereas in *Luke* and *John*, it was his head. Though agreeing in no other particular, *Luke* and *Mark* agree word-for-word that an "alabaster jar of ointment" was used. In none of the canonicals is the woman doing the anointing identified as "the Magdalene." True, *Luke* refers to her by that name in chapter 8, but in another context, as one "out of whom went seven demons." So which, if any, of these was one of the three who stood at the foot of Jesus' cross? Were we to conclude that they were all one-and-the-same individual, how then do we resolve apparent contradictions baffling even to scholars who refer to this as "the muddle of the Marys?" Why all the convoluted reticence?

Was there something to hide? Having only the *New Testament* to go by, one supposition is as defensible or as indefensible as another. The Greek Orthodox Fathers distinguished three persons: the penitent of *Luke* 7:36-50; Martha's sister, *Luke* 10:38-42 and *John* 11; and Mary Magdalene. Protestants, however, generally accede to there having been only two distinct persons, Mary of Bethany and the penitent of *Luke* chapter 7. As for the Latin Fathers of the Catholic Church, they are on record as declaring the three one. Such was the position of Pope Gregory I in 591 AD. There matters rested for many, long centuries, that is, until quite recently when *MS Pepys 2498* confirmed the traditional Catholic position in this matter that Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany are one and the same person.

FROM WHENCE COMETH THE TITTLE "MAGDALENE"?

What does this word "Magdalene" mean? Over this question, a three-way split of opinion exists. Some theologians associate this title with a fishing village southwest of the Sea of Tiberias on the flank of Mt. Arbel called Magdala, (*Matthew 15:39*), a transliteration from the Greek, the Hebrew of which is Migdal meaning tower as in *Joshua 19:8: Migdal-el*, "the tower of God." It could stand for any raised platform as in *Jeremiah 8:4*, where it is translated as "pulpit" but more commonly it was applied to various fortified cities within Israel. As one theory goes, in Migdal Nunaiya "the Tower of Fish" (the name being derived from a fish drying operation), there was a woman, named Mary, who met Jesus on the one occasion we know of that he journeyed there, and subsequently followed him to Jerusalem. Thus, as one from Magdala, she became known ever afterward as "Magdalene," which is to say, she was "of Magdala." One little problem with this explanation: were she the same Mary as was the sister of Martha, whose brother was Lazarus, then it would appear that she was from Bethany in Judea, not from Magdala in Galilee. Another consideration: if she were the same woman as anointed Jesus in *Luke*, chapter 7, then she must have known him well before he went to Magdala, inasmuch as this anointing took place before he went north.

Moving on then to a second explanation: certain other scholars have said that Mary was called "Magdalene" because of the seductive arranging of her hair:

Dr. Lightfoot, finding in some of the Talmudists' writings that Mary Magdalene signified Mary the plaiter of hair, thinks it applicable to her, she having been noted, in the days of her iniquity and infamy, for that plaiting of hair which is opposed to modest apparel. (*Matthew Henry's Commentary*)

Astonishing, really, that anyone would paste a woman with a term of opprobrium, a euphemism for an adulteress, passing this off as an acceptable explanation for her title and resorting to Jesus' and the Nazarenes' sworn enemy, the Talmud, for support of this position! Though a distinguished scholar, Lightfoot is playing fast and loose with the language. On linguistic grounds alone, his suggestion is most dubious in that the underlying Aramaic expression, *magadla nshaya*, a woman's hairdresser, is not even a near fit. He is simply grasping at straws. In dealing condescendingly with the Magdalene, Lightfoot was hardly alone. Over a thousand years before, in a famous address (or infamous, depending on one's point of view), Pope Gregory the Great (540-604 AD), drew a strong connection between demonic oppression and the Magdalene's surmised sinfulness. In his Easter homily of 591 AD, he stated:

She whom Luke calls the sinful woman, whom John calls Mary, we believe to be the Mary from whom seven devils were ejected according to Mark. And what did these seven devils signify, if not all the vices? . . .

It is clear, brothers, that the woman previously used the unguent to perfume her flesh in forbidden acts.

Notice how Gregory says "it is clear, brothers" at the very point his argument is least

clear. So ingrained is this assumption that few Church communicants are aware that no scriptural basis exists for saying that the Magdalene had been a prostitute. In 1969 the Second Vatican Council, in an attempt to make amends, removed from her title "penitent," also removed from the liturgical calendar for her feast day the traditional reading, *Luke*, chapter 7. Yet old stereotypes die hard. Going where no reputable scholar would go, movie producer, Mel Gibson, in his "Passion" identified the woman taken in adultery in *John 8* as being the Magdalene and the late Pope, having been granted an advance screening, is alleged to have said, "it is as it was." No, it isn't "as it was." Not at all. It is as the Church's misanthropic, hierarchical leadership has long misrepresented it as being. Had the Magdalene indeed been an adulteress, as charged, it would not matter, God's grace suffices. What is happening here, however, is a concerted effort to reduce her stature by dredging up an invented past. On this basis, theologians, various ones through the centuries, such as Augustine of Hippo, have laid upon the Magdalene the claim that she had to subject herself to the apostles so as to help her overcome her sinful nature. Or they would say that Jesus let Thomas touch him, whereas he forbade the Magdalene to do so because she was abjectly sinful in a way that Thomas was not. But this "touch me not" verse is entirely absent in *MS Pepys 2498*. But here is the clincher: in *MS Pepys 2498*, the Magdalene is converted in chapter 31, while the incident involving the anonymous woman taken in adultery doesn't take place until chapter 58. Were the adulterous lady really the Magdalene, then she must have done some serious backsliding after her conversion, only to be restored to everyone's good graces just in time for the Passion. Nonsense.

Moving on, let us seek a third explanation, for if Mary hailed from Bethany, then she was not from Magadan, an obscure fishing village north of Galilee. Rather than a place name, "Magdalene" is the title Jesus conferred upon her, its Hebrew meaning being "elevated" – for when everyone else was putting her down, Jesus was lifting her up, setting her on the King's royal highway. The elevated position of the Magdalene in the *Nazarene Narrative Gospel* should be a wake-up call, hopefully, to reconsider the role Jesus envisioned for feminine leadership as the following quote from *Micah* suggests: "Magdalene" does not mean "from Magdala," a Galilean fishing village, but its Hebrew meaning is "elevated," a suitable title for one whom Jesus elevated to be the apostles' apostle. This epitaph for the Magdalene de-rives not from a place name taken from an obscure fishing village, nor was it a scarlet badge of shame; rather, as the following quote from *Micah* suggests, it was a title of profound and prophetic significance:

In that day, saith YHVH will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; and I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and YHVH shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever. And thou O tower of the

flock (*Magdal-eder*), the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem. (Micah 4:6-8)

What set the Magdalene apart from all others is that she loved Jesus with all her heart and wasn't afraid to show it. Whereas some had scoffed at her for "wasting" expensive ointment on Jesus, Jesus made a point of saying that her deed should be remembered in perpetuity. No idle gesture was this for the Magdalene stood by Jesus after all the rest had fled. Truly, she is deserving of the sobriquet, "O tower of the flock." No wonder she was the first person he chose to reveal himself to on rising from death to life. No wonder his commissioning her to tell his apostles that he had risen, for in this he made her *de facto* apostle to the apostles. No wonder Jesus upbraided his disciples for their unbelief, for they dismissed her report to them out-of-hand. Even then the apostles never could quite accept that Jesus would have elevated a mere woman above themselves. That may explain why the beloved disciple's gospel was not utilized early on, for evidently neither Peter or most of the other apostles were ready to see patrilineal Judaism set on its ear.

Among the last to leave the cross and the earliest to the grave site, the Magdalene gave good evidence as to who was her all. Though she conversed with angels in the garden of Gethsemene, this was not a matter of consequence to her; all she wanted was to know what had been the disposition of the body of her Lord. As she stood without the empty sepulcher weeping, a voice said to her, "Mary." It is this same voice which each will hear who is called to the heavenly marriage feast. By reason of her single-minded devotion, Mary has come to epitomize in idealized form more than just her gender but the entire community of faith which says "Come, Lord Jesus, Come!"

From whence came the term "Magdalene" if not from Jesus, for who else would have been so bold or so insightful as to take a poor, afflicted woman out of whom came seven demons, and apply to her such an honorific title? Jesus wanted this woman to exemplify the transformative power of God's redeeming grace and if it takes 2000 years for his followers to follow him in this, then so be, his judgment stands. Jesus said that the Magdalene's devotion to him would be spoken of wherever the Gospel went in all the world. So shall it ever be.

#### DAUGHTER OF ZION

Hailing from Bethany, a town but a mile from Jerusalem, Mary was probably witness to Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Representationally speaking, she was the Daughter of Zion. Consequentially, the appropriateness of applying *Zechariah 9:9* to her:

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion;

Shout O daughter of Jerusalem:  
behold thy king cometh unto thee:  
he is just, and having salvation;  
lowly, and riding upon an ass,  
and upon a colt, the foal of an ass.

#### **BRIDE OF CHRIST**

*Like the arm of the bridegroom over the bride, so is my yoke over those who know me. (Odes of Solomon 42:8)*

Just as James represented Jesus' family, the house of David, the *Desposyni*, so Mary representationally was God's archetypal Bride. The day when Bride and Bridegroom will consummate their marriage approaches:

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. . . . Blessed are they who are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.

*(Revelation 19:7-8, 9)*

Mary's destiny was bound up with Jesus'. Thus, paraphrasing Paul, when Jesus was crucified, the Magdalene, who was standing at the foot of his cross, through identification, was crucified with him. When Jesus was buried, she, a "bearer of myrrh," through identification, was buried with him, having been baptized into his death. When Jesus arose from death to life, she, through identification, arose with him in newness of life. Thereafter the life she lived was not her own but his in her for she, through perfect identification, had presented herself a holy sacrifice, acceptable unto God. Through this fellowship of sufferings, she found consolation. No longer conformed to the world, but transformed by the renewing of her mind, she knew in a living way what was the good and acceptable will of God.

#### **THE CRY OF THE PENITENT**

*My heart was cloven and its flower appeared;  
and grace sprang up in it:  
and it brought forth fruit to the Lord,  
for the Most High clave my heart by His Holy Spirit  
and searched my affection towards Him:  
and filled me with His love.  
And His opening of me became my Salvation;  
and I ran in His way in His peace,  
even in the way of truth:*



*from the beginning and even to the end  
I acquired His knowledge:  
and I was established upon the rock of truth,  
where He had set me up:  
and speaking waters touched my lips  
from the fountain of the Lord without grudging:  
and I drank and was inebriated with the living water that doth not die;  
and my inebriation was not one without knowledge,  
but I forsook vanity and turned to the Most High my God,  
and I was enriched by His bounty,  
and I forsook the folly which is diffused over the earth;  
and I stripped it off and cast it from me:  
and the Lord renewed me in His raiment,  
and possessed me by His light,  
and from above He gave me rest in incorruption;  
and I became like the land which blossoms  
and rejoices in its fruits:  
and the Lord was like the Sun  
shining on the face of the land;  
He lightened my eyes,  
and my face received the dew;  
and my nostrils enjoyed  
the pleasant odour of the Lord;  
and He carried me to His Paradise;  
ere is the abundance of the pleasure of the Lord;  
and I worshipped the Lord on account of his glory;  
and I said, Blessed, O Lord,  
are they who are planted in thy land!  
and those who have a place in thy Paradise;  
and they grow by the fruits of thy trees.  
And they have changed from darkness to light.  
Behold! all thy servants are fair,  
who do good works, and turn away from wickedness*

*to the pleasantness that is thine:  
and they have turned back the bitterness  
of the trees from them, when they were planted in thy land!  
and those who have a place in thy Paradise;  
and they grow by the fruits of thy trees.  
And they have changed from darkness to light.  
Behold! all thy servants are fair, who do good works,  
and turn away from wickedness to the pleasantness that is thine:  
and they have turned back the bitterness of the trees from them,  
when they were planted in thy land;  
and everything became like a relic of thyself,  
and a memorial for ever of thy faithful works.  
For there is abundant room in thy Paradise,  
and nothing is useless therein:  
I am altogether filled with fruit;  
glory be to thee, O God,  
the delight of Paradise for ever. Hallelujah.*

*(Odes of Solomon, 11)*

#### **DID THE MAGDALENE PRODUCE A GOSPEL ACCOUNT?**

As does no other gospel text, the *Nazarene Gospel Narrative* makes explicit who Mary Magdalene was. No incidental figure was she; rather, Mary was the penitent who had washed Jesus' feet with her tears; she was the one from whom Jesus had cast out seven demons, who, once freed from her affliction, joined Jesus' entourage; also, she was the one who anointed Jesus beforehand for burial. Also made explicit is that Mary Magdalene and Mary of Bethany were one and the same person. In other words, Martha was her sister and Lazarus, her brother. The Magdalene was the one of the three Marys keeping vigil at the cross. She helped prepare Jesus' body for burial and later was the first to discover the empty tomb. She was the one in the garden to whom our resurrected Lord first appeared. Moreover, and most relevant to the current inquiry, Mary Magdalene was the Beloved Disciple. It is not that the other disciples were not loved, or less loved. It is just that this was her title, and, most relevant to this study, I am asserting that she was either the original author or, one of the original authors of what we call "the Fourth Gospel," otherwise called the *Gospel of John*.

#### **A FAMILY ACCOUNT**

A peculiar fact needing to be accounted for is the total lack of references to the Fourth Gospel by Church Fathers before 180 AD. Some scholars say that this is evidence that it didn't exist until then. But left unexplained is who could have written so long after the fact so poignant, so unique a composition, so filled with telling details, could have come to be. Yet "Orthodox" or Catholic Christianity was unaccountably slow to accept it. The first use of *John's Gospel* that we know of was by the Gnostic, Heracleon, (d. 180 AD). There is a mystery here to be solved.

Decidedly more intimate than the synoptic gospels, this gospel is in some respects more a *private* memoir than a public accounting of Jesus' ministry, featuring as it does one-on-one meetings such as with Nicodemus or with the Samaritan woman by the well. Its detailed recollection of Jesus' passion is more personal, more poignant. Not only does it hone in on Jesus' Judean, not his Galilean, ministry, but it also hones in on a particular family – that consisting of three siblings: Martha, Mary and Lazarus. Plausibly it is the family witness of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary as recorded by the apostle John. Or perhaps it is the Magdalene's personal witness. Whose voice is to be heard? On grammatical grounds alone, we can say that it's not the voice of the John who wrote the *Apocalypse*. He was noted for his incorrect Greek whereas this is beautifully correct. Nor is it the voice of the author of the *Epistles of John* which contain vague resemblances to *John's* prologue but that prologue is not part of proto-John. Had Lazarus been its author, he would have been credited, just as *Luke* and *Mark* were credited, even though they were not apostles.

Perhaps in part out of gratitude for restoring her brother Lazarus to life six days before the Passover, the Magdalene anointed Jesus with oil worth 300 denarii. In doing this, unintentionally she raised the stakes even higher because this so angered Judas Iscariot that it led to his betraying Jesus' location to the authorities in return for 30 denarii – that being the tithe on 300 denarii. Was this just a curious coincidence? The question hinges on what had angered him. Only *John's Gospel*, (the *Magdalene's Gospel*, if you will) informs us that Judas Iscariot's was a thief who had been filching from the money-bag. Framing the crime scene:

1. Judas kept the money box.
2. Judas was pilfering from the money box.
3. The betrayal was conceived after a dispute involving 300 denarii.
4. Judas negotiated for thirty denarii (pieces of silver) to perform the betrayal.
5. Judas threw the money obtained from the betrayal into the temple.

The flask of perfume worth 300 denarii was part of the monetary holdings of the group. Note that Judas knew the exact amount the perfume was worth when Mary poured it on Jesus. The loss of the flask of

perfume resulted in a 300 denarii loss to the group. However the tithes due on the flask would've been 30 denarii. The moneychanging fee for converting the flask contents into money was ten percent or 30 denarii. Judas in anticipation of obtaining the 30 denarii moneychanging fee for himself advanced himself 30 denarii by pilfering from the money box that contained the tithes to the temple.

With the flask of perfume consumed, Judas was going to be 30 denarii short on the temple tithes that were due at Passover. Thus Mary Magdalene's action which prepared Jesus for burial was also the initial event leading to the betrayal. Somehow, Judas had to obtain 30 denarii before Passover and deliver it to the temple. Otherwise, as the keeper of the money box the temple authorities would've discovered that Judas had embezzled the 30 denarii from the tithes. (Jerry Clontz)

Though this is a subjective judgment – let us call it “informed speculation” – once some of the later, churchly overlayment is stripped away from canonical *John*, in its delicacy, in its sensibility, one can hear the voice of a woman, perhaps even that of the cultured Magdalene who, as one who hailed from a wealthy, distinguished family, would have had the resources to produce a written memoir as well as a translation for Gentiles. But most important of all, she was an eyewitness. It is only this, her Memoir, if that is what it is, which allows us to identify the proximate cause of Jesus' crucifixion. *John 10:40* records what no other gospel records, that Jesus took refuge across the Jordan River where John the Fore-runner first baptized. It further records, to his disciples' chagrin, his leaving that haven in what is currently modern-day Jordan so as to return to Bethany which was only a mile from Jerusalem, where his sworn enemies were plotting his demise. This Jesus did that he might raise the Magdalene's brother, Lazarus, from death to life. It was this act that led Caiaphas, the high priest, in a fit of jealous rage to prophesy that one man should die for the nation.

Perhaps out of gratitude for restoring her brother Lazarus to life six days before the Passover, the Magdalene anointed Jesus with oil worth 300 denarii, no small fortune. In doing this, however, unintentionally she raised the stakes even higher because this so angered Judas Iscariot that it led him to betray Jesus' location to the authorities in return for 30 denarii – an amount exactly equal to a tithe for the 300 denarii which the Magdalene had expended on Jesus. Was this just a curious coincidence or was there a reason?

While in a larger sense, Jesus came to die for the sins of the world, the record is clear: he placed his life on the line for the Magdalene and for her family and that this crucially influenced the timing of his sacrifice.

Most relevant for the current study is the near-complete absence of the expression "the disciple whom Jesus loved" from the Magdalene sections of *MS 2498*. In its stead is the name "John." Is it possible that John, the son of Zebedee, was not the beloved disciple?

Neither at the Last Supper (*John* chapter 12), nor in the courtyard of the high priest (*John*, chapter 18), nor at the empty tomb (*John* ch. 20), nor with the risen Christ on the seashore (*John* chapter 21) is he so described in *MS 2498*. Only at the Cross *John* chapter 19, where exists a real possibility of confusion in transmission or translation, is he so identified.

The question arises, why would anyone add this title if it weren't there originally? It's not as if John were unworthy of it. After all, he is portrayed as having been at Jesus' right hand at the Last Supper and, in the community of believers, is often named with Peter and James in a leadership position. Certainly he is worthy of the honor. But what if it was a later addition? What would motivated such an addition? If less than conclusive, there is persuasive evidence indicating that it was the Magdalene's title, which the Church assigned to him to keep from her. It is true to fact to say that the Magdalene, and women like her, played an active role in ministry. It is true to fact that such women later became an embarrassment to an organization which defined leadership – and not just the administrative variety, but real spiritual leadership – as being exclusively male. Not just a male prerogative but a male characteristic. This attitude is the basis for cover-up, literally. For instance, in the apocryphal *Acts of Philip* (which is of a Gnostic character), Jesus advises Mary:

“As for you Mary, change your clothing and outward appearance: reject everything which from the outside suggests a woman.”

Given the prejudices of her times, it has been suggested that for Mary to have acted in any capacity outside the usual domestic one, she needed a male "covering." To that end, some have claimed she turned to the apostle John to be her "head covering," her veil of anonymity. Did the Magdalene internalize this attitude, accepting second-class citizenship as proper and as the norm, or did she merely accede to it as a necessary evil? Then again, maybe neither one nor the other but it was imposed after the fact by the Church. (At least, those are the reasonable alternatives that I am aware of.)

The idea of the Magdalene as being the author who stands behind John's gospel is recent, the first person to publicly posit this being Jusino who, in 1998, in an article posted to the internet and titled "Mary Magdalene: Author of the Fourth Gospel?" He takes as his starting point the scholarship of Raymond F. Brown who is generally recognized as America's foremost Catholic biblical scholar. As have other scholars, Brown's thinking on the question of authorship has evolved. Backing off from his initial assessment in 1966 that the author of canonical *John* was the apostle John, in 1979 he adopted, instead, the stance that there was little evidence of Johannine authorship. Positing a three stage development, he saw the first as being the contribution of an anonymous Beloved Disciple who was personally known to Jesus, as well as an eyewitness to the events recounted; the second stage he attributed to an unidentified evangelist; and the third stage to a redactor.

Of this final stage, Jusino wrote:

. . . an important assertion of mine is that the redactor carefully concealed the identity of Mary Magdalene as the Beloved Disciple, by referring to her only as an anonymous disciple. As the redactor reworked the seven passages cited above [John 1:35-40; 13:23-26; 18:15-16; 19:25-27; 20:1-11; 21:7; 21:21-24] which refer to the Beloved Disciple, he simply changed any reference to Mary Magdalene by substituting it with an anonymous reference to the Beloved Disciple or to "another disciple." For most of the document this was fairly easy to do and the resulting text appeared to be congruous. Instead of seeing the Magdalene's name, the reader is simply presented with an anonymous male disciple.

Removing references to Mary Magdalene from most of the story was easy. However, in the course of his work, the redactor was confronted with a problem. The tradition placing Mary Magdalene at the foot of the Cross and at the Empty Tomb Sunday morning was too strong to deny. The Magdalene's presence at both these events was common knowledge among most early Christian communities. (This is evidenced by the fact that all three of the other New Testament Gospels report her presence at these events.) The redactor could not simply omit any reference to the Magdalene at the Crucifixion or any reference to her as a primary witness to the Resurrection. However, the redactor still wanted to establish the Beloved Disciple as the founder of his community and as an eyewitness to these major events in the work of salvation. The way he could still maintain that the founder of his community was an eyewitness to the events in the Gospel even though he inexplicably fails to reveal his identity (John 21:24).

At this point the redactor probably asked himself a question very similar to this one: How can I suppress the knowledge of Mary Magdalene having been the founder of our community without being so obvious as to remove her from the Crucifixion/Resurrection accounts, with which most Christians are already familiar?

The redactor's solution to this problem was quite simple. In those two events where he could not deny the presence of the Beloved Disciple, he would rework the text so as to make it appear as if Mary Magdalene and the Beloved Disciple were two different people appearing simultaneously in the same place, at the same time. Consequently, Mary Magdalene and the male Beloved Disciple appear together in the Fourth Gospel in only two passages - 19:25-27 (at the foot of the Cross) and 20: 1-11 (at the Empty Tomb on Sunday morning).

Isn't that interesting? And it is precisely at these two points that we find some major structural inconsistencies within the text of the Fourth Gospel. Brown discusses the inconsistencies in both of these passages. (That shows that I'm not just reading inconsistencies into passages that have none.) Notably, Brown finds no such structural defects in any of the other passages which contain references to the Beloved Disciple.

Let us consider one of Brown's "structural inconsistencies." *John 19:25* begins with three Marys listed as standing by the Cross but not the apostle John. Thus Jesus turned and ad-

dressed his mother, about "the disciple whom he loved standing nearby." One might on first blush assume he meant the Magdalene, that is, until reading further along to learn that John was also there. Why was he not listed in the first place?

If Jusino is right in his supposition that the Magdalene was originally the one being addressed, not John, then there are important implications. For one, if the Magdalene was "family," then what Jesus said to his mother was, in essence, this: here is your daughter-in-law and to the Magdalene: here is your mother-in-law. Preparing Jesus' body for burial was a family responsibility and so, for that matter, so was caring for Jesus' mother. Also, as the Magdalene was a woman of financial means, it is more plausible that Jesus would advise his mother to move into the Magdalene's home which was just a mile or so away, rather than into John's home, which, if he had one, would probably have been back in Galilee. As the text reads: "From that time on, this disciple took her into his home." Or was it originally "her home"? Since we know that mother Mary was present at Pentecost in Jerusalem 50 days later, it's likely that she had been staying all the while near at hand to Jerusalem with the Magdalene rather than spending days trudging back and forth to and from Galilee.

In the Fourth Gospel, there is a curious juxtaposing of the apostles John and Peter and when this occurs, of the two, John always comes off on top. When they have a foot race to the Empty Tomb, John wins. When they both see the grave clothes, John understands the implications first and believes. When they both espy Jesus from afar in the fishing boat, John is the first to recognize who it is. Earlier, when they both go to the high priest's home, John is the one who gains them entrance. At the Last Supper, John is closest to Jesus and Peter has to go through John to get a question to Jesus answered. What if the Magdalene is substituted for John? In that case, rather than there being two competing personalities, which in itself is a matter of no real significance, there are two opposing policies: Peter's upholding male dominance; and the Magdalene's upholding Jesus' empowerment of women.

In light of all else we know about the Church, it is plausible enough that the Church Fathers were aware of this gospel but, because they knew it had been written by or authorized by a woman, they assiduously avoided it until the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century when they rewrote it, attributing their newly-minted creation to the apostle John. If this supposition is correct, it would go along way toward explaining what the great cover-up with respect to the Magdalene was all about – a woman so forward as to write Scripture! I can imagine that purloining the Magdalene's literary heritage probably would have made Church authorities a bit queasy, especially if they were caught in the act. How would they or civil authorities ever justify keeping women in subjection, or for that matter, husbands their wives, if it were widely known that Mary Magdalene wrote scripture? Why the precedent of it! Were notions of female competency to become common knowledge, it could spark a revolution!

Yes, the Magdalene was the beloved disciple. It's not as if the apostle John or the other apostles were unbeloved. It's simply that this was her title.

In the canonical version of this gospel, chapter 11, verse 3, is found the Greek expression *hon phileis*, meaning "the one whom you love," which was said with reference to Lazarus. Then in chapter 12, a meal is hosted by Lazarus in his home; then in chapter 13, verse 23, there's a second reference to a beloved disciple (not named) and another meal. Anyone not acquainted with the synoptic gospels, might reasonably assume on reaching this point in the text that this was another reference to Lazarus but the canonical text later identifies it as the apostle John. Was this how this gospel originally read or has tampering occurred?

Let us consider on the one hand that Lazarus was a high status person residing near Jerusalem known to the High Priest Caiphas, whereas John the son of Zebedee was a youthful Galilean fisherman. Which one would likely have had access to the courtyard of the High Priest? Also, who was best in a position to have taken Jesus' mother into his home? Lazarus, a man of means whose home was about a mile away, or John whose home, if he owned one at all, would likely have been in Galilee? Yet the Gospel account reads: "From that time on, this disciple took her into his home." Since we know from *Acts* that Mother Mary was present at Pentecost fifty days later, it is more likely that she was staying in or near Jerusalem rather than making the arduous trek back and forth to Galilee.

Most telling that the Beloved Disciple who wrote the Fourth Gospel was not John, the son of Zebedee, is that nothing to which John was a primary eyewitness is included. As one of the three apostles of Jesus' inner circle, John accompanied Jesus up the Mount of Transfiguration. He was with him when he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, and he was present when Jesus resurrected Jarius's daughter but none of this made it into the Fourth Gospel. Meanwhile many scenes to which John was not privy are included, particularly those having to do with Mary Magdalene, Lazarus's sister. Yet the Fourth Gospel's postscript, presumably appended after his demise, claims this Gospel to be the Beloved Disciple's "testimony." Further, the postscript (21:23) mentions the saying went abroad that the Beloved Disciple "should not die." From whence arose such an expectation? I would suggest it came from Lazarus's having died and been raised to life, after which some supposed that he would live to see Jesus' return. I would further suggest that it was his experience of being restored to life which gave Lazarus the insight to see Jesus as "the Resurrection and the Life," one of this gospel's key theological insights.

The only scene from north of Galilee included in the Fourth Gospel is the feast in Cana. If Mary and Lazarus had taken Mother Mary into their home, then she was probably their



source. But why was Lazarus not part of Jesus' traveling entourage? This may have had to do with a family affliction. As one biblical scholar, Ben Witherington, has discerned:

Scholars of course have often noted how the account of the anointing of Jesus in Bethany as recorded in Mk. 14.3-11 differs from the account in Jn. 12.1-11, while still likely being the same story or tradition. Perhaps the most salient difference is that Mark tells us that the event happens in the home of Simon the Leper in Bethany, while Jn. 12 indicates it happens in the house of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus in Bethany. Suppose for a moment however that Simon the Leper was in fact the father of these three siblings. Suppose that Lazarus himself, like his father, had also contracted the dread disease and succumbed to it (and by the way we now know for sure that the deadly form of Hansen's disease did exist in the first century A.D.). Now this might well explain why it is that none of these three siblings seem to be married. Few have remarked about the oddness of this trio of adults not having families of their own, but rather still living together, but it is not at all odd if the family was plagued by a dread disease that made them unclean on an ongoing or regular basis. It also explains why these folks never travel with Jesus' other disciples and they never get near this family until that fateful day recorded in Jn. 11 when Jesus raised and healed Lazarus. Jesus of course was not put off by the disease and so had visited the home previously alone (Lk. 10.38-42). But other early Jews would certainly not have engaged in betrothal contracts with this family if it was known to be a carrier of leprosy. ("Was Lazarus the Beloved Disciple?")

*Luke* chapter 7 tells of an anonymous "women in the city, which was a sinner" who washed Jesus' feet with her tears. And Jesus is depicted as saying that "her sins which are many are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little."

Compare this then with the same incident as related in *MS Pepys 2498* which explicitly identifies this women as afflicted with "seven fiends," and giving her name as Mary Magdalene. It goes on to depict Jesus as saying: "I tell you many sins have been forgiven her. And therefore I love her much by reason that the one to whom most is forgiven is most loved." The emphasis here is no longer on her feelings but on his. Is it possible that the Magdalene was the Beloved Disciple and that the canonical account was rewritten to disguise this fact?

Preparing Jesus' body for burial was a family responsibility. That the Magdalene was allowed to participate in this sacred duty shows that in some sense she was family. But how did she get to be family? I cannot answer that. Were they married or betrothed? I do not think so. But were they in modern parlance, an item? Maybe. This I do know, the Church while forward in asserting that Jesus was the Son of God, recoils in horror as if scandalized from the corollary that he was also every inch a man. While giving lip service to Jesus' humanity, the idea of Jesus' having formed a special relationship with Mary, even if entirely on a spiritual plane, was wholly unacceptable.

Is it possible that John, the son of Zebedee, was not the beloved disciple but that Lazarus and Mary were? Neither at the Last Supper (*John* chapter 12), nor in the courtyard of the high priest (*John*, chapter 18), nor at the empty tomb (*John* ch. 20), nor with the risen Christ on the seashore (*John* chapter 21) is John so described in *MS Pepys 2498*. Only at the Cross, *John chapter 19*, where exists a real possibility of confusion in transmission or translation, is he so identified.

## DEEDS OF JAMES THE JUST

### *His family*

Then there was James, who was called the Lord's brother, for he too was named Joseph's son.

(Eusebius)

Is this [Jesus] not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James?

(*Mark* 6:3)

And Jude, whose letter it is true is of but a few lines, yet filled with encouraging words of heavenly grace, said, "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ and the brother of James." (Origen, *Jude* 1)

### *John's Baptism*

Behold, the mother of the Lord and his brothers said to him [Jesus], "John the Baptist baptizes for the remission of sins; let us go and be baptized by him." (*Gospel of the Hebrews*)

### *The Nazarite lifestyle*

He [James] has been universally called the Just from the time of our Savior down to the present day [c. 170 AD]. For many have borne the name of James; but this one was consecrated from his mother's womb. He drank neither wine nor strong drink, nor did he eat meat. No razor came near his head, nor did he anoint himself with oil, and he did not go to the [Roman] baths a place of debauchery]. (Hegesippus, quoted by Eusebius)

James wore no second tunic, but used only a linen cloak,... For it was John and James and James, these three, who walked in this [the Nazarite] way of life: the two sons of Zebedee and James the son of Joseph and brother of the Lord. (Eusebius)

He [James] alone enjoyed the privilege of entering the holy of holies, since, indeed, he did not wear woolen, but only linen clothes, and went into the Temple alone and prayed on behalf of the People, so that his knees were reputed to have acquired the callousness of a camel's knees.

(Jerome)

But we find that he [James] also exercised the Priesthood according to the ancient Priesthood. . . . To James alone was it permitted to enter the Holy of Holies once a year, because he was a Nazarite and connected to the priest-hood. Many before me have reported this of him -- Eusebius, Clement and others. He was also allowed to wear the [priestly] mitre on his head as the aforementioned trustworthy persons have testified in the same historical writings. (Epiphanius)

#### *Integrity*

Because of his exceedingly great Justice, he was called the Just [*Dikaïos*] and *Oblías*, which signifies in Greek, "Bulwark of the People" and "Righteous" [*Dikaïosune*], in accordance with what the prophets declare concerning him. (Hegesippus / Eusebius)

And once during a drought, he lifted his hands to Heaven and prayed, and at once Heaven sent rain . . . Thus they no longer called him by his name, but his name was rather, "the Just One." (Epiphanius)

The disciples said to Jesus, "We know that you will leave us. Who then will become our leader?" Jesus said unto them, "Whithersoever you are come, repair to James the righteous [for unto the righteous] were heaven and earth created." (*Gospel of Thomas*, Logion 12)

#### *Jesus' post-resurrection appearances to James*

He [Christ] was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that over five hundred brethren at once, ... After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. (*I Corinthians 15:5, 6, 7*)

Now the Lord, after he had given his linen clothes to the Servant of the Priest, went to James and appeared to him. For James had sworn that he would not eat bread from that hour in which he drank the Cup of the Lord until he should see him risen again from the dead. The Lord said, "Bring a table and bread." He took the bread, blessed it, and breaking it, gave it to James the Just, saying to him, "My brother, eat your bread, for the Son of Man is risen from among those that sleep." (*The Gospel of the Hebrews* as quoted by Jerome; *Of Illustrious men* 2)

To James the Just, to John, and Peter, did the Lord after his resurrection impart knowledge. These delivered it to the rest of the Apostles, and they to the Seventy, of whom Barnabas was one. (Clement / Eusebius)

#### *Living in community in Jerusalem*

This James, therefore, whom the ancients, on account of the excellence of his virtue, surnamed the Just, was the first that received the oversight of the summoned-out community at Jerusalem.

But Clement, in the sixth book of his Institutions, represents it thus: "Peter, and James [son of Zebedee], and John after the ascension of our Savior, though they had been preferred by our Lord, did not contend for the honor, but chose James the Just as overseer in Jerusalem."

(Eusebius)

Neither was there any among them who lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made to every man according to his need. (Acts 4:35)

*Of Peter's miraculous release from prison*

[Peter:] Go show these things [regarding the circumstances of his release] to James and the brethren. (Acts 12:17)

*James and Paul*

Then after three years I [Paul] went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Then after fourteen years, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas. And I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain. And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision. Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

(Galatians 1:18-19; 2:9-10)

*James' counsel regarding obliging Gentile believers to Mosaic observance*

And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Except you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question. So, being sent on their way by the summoned-out community, they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, reporting the conversation of the Gentiles; and they brought great joy to all the brethren. And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the summoned-out assembly and the apostles and the elders; and they rehearsed all that God had done with them. But some of the party of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses." And the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter and when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them:

"Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of good tidings and believe. So God who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us, and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our forefathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they." Then all the multitude kept silent and listened to Barnabas and Paul declaring how many miracles and wonders God had worked through them among the Gentiles. And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, "Men and brethren, listen to me: Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. And to this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: 'After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down: I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up: so that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD. Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name,' So says the LORD who made these things known from the beginning of the world. Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood. For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath." Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole assembly, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, namely, Judas who was also named Barsabas and Silas, leading men among the brethren.

(Acts 15:1-22)

*James advises Paul concerning a false rumor*

And when we [Luke, Paul, and others] had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. When he had greeted them, he rehearsed one by one those things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord. And they said to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law; but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs. What then? The assembly must certainly meet, for they will hear that you have come. Therefore do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow. Take them and be purified with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave their heads, and that all may know that those things of which they were informed concerning you are nothing, but that you yourself also walk orderly and keep the Law. But as touching the Gentiles who believe, we have written and decided that you should observe no such thing, except that they should keep

themselves from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality." Then Paul took the men, and the next day, having been purified with them, entered the Temple to announce the expiration of the days of purification, at which time an offering should be made for each one of them. (Acts 21: 17-26)

*The circumstances surrounding James' martyrdom*

The younger Ananus, who as we have said, had been appointed the High Priest, was of a rash temper and highly insolent. He was also of the party of the Sadducees, who were of all Jews most uncompromising, as we have observed, in executing judgment. Possessed with such a character, Ananus thought that he had a favorable opportunity because Festus was dead and Albinus [the replacement procurator] was on the way. And so he convened the judges of the Sanhedrin and brought before them a man named James, the brother of Jesus who was called the Christ.

(Josephus / Eusebius)

Josephus also in the 20th book of his Antiquities and Clement in the 7th of his Outlines mention that on the death of Festus who reigned on over Judaea, Albinus was sent by Nero as his successor. Before he had reached the province, Ananus the high priest, the youthful son of Ananus of the priestly class, taking advantage of the state of anarchy assembled a council and publicly tried to force James to deny that Christ is the Son of God. When he refused, Ananus ordered him to be stoned. Cast down from the pinnacle of the temple, his legs broken, but still half alive, and raising his hands to heaven, he said, "Lord, forgive them for they know not what they do." Then struck on the head by the club of a laundryman, such a club as laundrymen are accustomed to beat out clothes with, he died. James was buried near the temple from which he had been cast down. His tombstone with its inscription was well known until the siege of Titus and the end of Hadrian's reign. Some of our writers think he was buried on the Mount of Olives, but they are mistaken. (Jerome)

So when many even of the ruling class believed [that Jesus was the Messiah], there was a commotion among the Jews, and scribes, and Pharisees, who said: "A little more and we shall have all the people looking for Jesus as the Messiah." They came, therefore, in a body to James, and said: "We beseech you, restrain the people: for they are gone astray in their opinions about Jesus as if he were the Christ. We entreat you to persuade all who have come hither for the day of the Passover, concerning Jesus. For we all accept what you say, as do all the people; since we, as well as all the people, bear you testimony that you are just, and show partiality to none. Therefore persuade the people not to entertain erroneous opinions concerning Jesus: for all the people, and we also accept what you say. Therefore take your stand upon the pinnacle of the Temple that you

may be clearly visible on high and your words readily audible to the entire gathering, for because of the Passover all the tribes have gathered together and numbers of Gentiles too." So the aforesaid Scribes and the Pharisees made James stand on the Temple parapet and shouting to him, cried out, "O Just One, whose word we all ought to obey, since the people are led astray after Jesus, who was crucified, tell us what is meant by 'the door of Jesus?'" And he answered shouting out loudly, "Why do you ask me concerning the Son of Man? He is now sitting in Heaven at the right hand of the Great Power and he will come on the clouds of Heaven?" Many were convinced by these words and gloried in James' testimony, and cried forth, "Hosanna to the Son of David." Then again the Pharisees and scribes said to each other, "We erred in providing Jesus with such testimony, but let us go up and cast him down, so they -- the people -- will be frightened and not believe in him." And they cried out saying "Oh! Oh! Even the Just One has gone astray!" -- fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah: " 'Let us remove the Just One, for he is unprofitable to us.' Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their works." So they went out and cast down the Just One, saying to one another, "Let us stone James the Just," and they began to stone him, since he had survived the fall. But he turned and fell to his knees, saying, "I beseech You, O Lord God and Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." While thus they were stoning him, one of the Priests of the sons of Rechab, the son of Rechabites, spoken of by Jeremiah the prophet, cried out, saying, "Stop what you are doing, the Just One is praying for you." And one among them, who was a fuller, took the club with which he beat out clothes and struck the Just One on the head. Thus, he suffered martyrdom, and they buried him on the spot by the temple, and his monument is still there by the temple. (Hegesippus/Eusebius)

Thus, even Simeon bar Cleophas, his cousin, who was standing not far away, said, "Stop, why are you stoning the Just One? Behold, he is praying the most wonderful prayers for you." (Jerome)

Afterwards James, the Lord's brother, whom of old the people of Jerusalem called "the Just" for his extraordinary virtue, being asked by the chief priests, and teachers of the Jews what he thought about Christ, and answering that He was the Son of God, was also stoned by them. (Eusebius)

Unable to endure any longer the testimony of the man, who through a lifetime of ascetic observance and piety was deemed by all men to be the most righteous, they slew him, using anarchy as an opportunity for power, since at that time Festus [Procurator 60-62] had died in Judea, leaving the province without governor or procurator. (Clement, quoted by Eusebius)

After James' martyrdom, the circumstances leading to the siege and fall of Jerusalem Vespasian, who gained distinction in the campaigns against the Jews, was proclaimed sovereign in Judea and

received the title of Emperor from the armies there. Setting out immediately, therefore, for Rome, he entrusted the conduct of the war against the Jews to his son Titus. But the people of the community in Jerusalem had been commanded by a revelation vouchsafed to approved men there before the war, to leave the city and to dwell in a certain town of Perea [Transjordan] called Pella.

(Eusebius)

And so great a reputation for Righteousness did this James have, that Flavius Josephus, who wrote the Antiquities of the Jews in twenty volumes, when wishing to exhibit the cause why the people suffered so great misfortunes that even the Temple was razed to the ground, said that these things happened to them in accordance with God's wrath for that which they did against James the brother of Jesus who is called the Messiah. And the wonderful thing is, that, though he did not accept Jesus as Messiah, yet he gave testimony that the righteousness of James was so great; and he says that the people thought that they had suffered these things because of James. He ought to have said that the plot against Jesus was the reason why these catastrophes came upon the people, because they had killed the prophesied Messiah; however, though unconscious of it, he is not far from the truth when he says that these disasters befell the Jews to avenge James the Just for having put him to death, although he was a man of preeminent righteousness.

(Origen)

This same Josephus records the tradition that James was of such great Holiness and reputation among the people that the fall of Jerusalem was attributed to his death.

(Jerome)

So admirable a man, indeed, was James, and so celebrated among all for his Righteousness, that even the wiser part of the Jews were of the opinion that this was the cause of the immediate siege of Jerusalem, which happened to them for no other reason than the crimes against him.

(Eusebius)

#### *James' successor, Symeon*

After the martyrdom of James the Just on the same charge as the Lord, his paternal uncle's child Symeon the son of Clopas is next made overseer, who was put forward by all as the second in succession, being the Lord's cousin."

(Hegesippus)

It is said that those of the apostles and disciples of the Lord that were still living came together from all direction with those that were related to the Lord according to the flesh (for the majority of them were still alive) to take council as to who was worthy to succeed James. They all with one consent pronounced Symeon.

(Eusebius)

It might be safely reasonably assumed that Symeon was one of those who saw and heard the Lord, judging from the length of his life, and from the fact that the Gospel makes mention of Mary, the wife of Clopas, who was the father of Symeon. Under the emperor whose times we are now



recording [Trajan], a persecution was stirred up against us in certain cities in consequence of a popular uprising. Certain of these heretics brought accusation against Symeon, the son of Clopas, on the ground that he was a son of David and a Christian; and thus he suffered martyrdom at the age of one hundred and twenty years, while Trajan was emperor and Atticus governor. He was tortured in various ways for many days, and astonished even the judge himself and his attendants in the highest degree, and finally he suffered a death similar to that of our Lord. (Eusebius)

*Symeon's successor, Justus*

But when Symeon also had died in the manner described, a certain Jew by the name of Justus succeeded to the seat of oversight in Jerusalem [98 AD?]. He was one of many thousands of the circumcision who at that time believed in Christ. (Eusebius)

*Continuity of witness*

But when this same Domitian had commanded that the descendants of David should be slain, an ancient tradition says that some of the heretics brought accusation against the descendants of Jude (said to have been a brother of the Saviour according to the flesh), on the ground that they were of the lineage of David and were related to Christ himself. Hegesippus relates these facts in the following words. "Of the family of the Lord there were still living the grandchildren of Jude, who is said to have been the Lord's brother according to the flesh. Information was given that they belonged to the family of David, and they were brought to the Emperor Domitian by the Evocatus. For Domitian feared the coming of Christ as Herod had also feared it. And he asked them if they were descendants of David, and they confessed that they were. Then he asked them how much property they had, or how much money they owned. And both of them answered that they had only nine thousand denarii, half of which belonged to each of them; and this property did not consist of silver, but of a piece of land which contained only thirty-nine acres, and from which they raised their taxes and supported themselves by their own labor." Then they showed their hands, exhibiting the hardness of their bodies and the callousness produced upon their hands by continuous toil as evidence of their own labor. And when they were asked concerning Christ and his kingdom, of what sort it was and where and when it was to appear, they answered that it was not a temporal nor an earthly kingdom, but a heavenly and angelic one, which would appear at the end of the world, when he should come in glory to judge the quick and the dead, and to give unto every one according to his works. Upon hearing this, Domitian did not pass judgment against them, but, despising them as of no account, he let them go, and by a decree put a stop to the persecution of the summoned-out community. But when they were released they led the communities, because they were witnesses and were also relatives of the Lord. And peace being established, they lived until the time of Trajan. . . . until the siege of the Jews, which took place under Adrian [132-135

AD], there were fifteen overseers ... , all of whom were said to be of Hebrew descent, and to have received the knowledge of Christ in purity, so that they were approved by those who were able to judge of such matters, and were deemed worthy of oversight. For their whole community consisted then of believing Hebrews who continued from the days of the apostles until the siege which took place at that time; in which siege the Jews, having again rebelled against the Romans, were conquered after severe battles. But since the oversight of the circumcision ceased at this time, it is proper to give here a list of their names from the beginning. The first then, was James, the so-called brother of the Lord; the second Symeon; the third, Justus; the fourth Zacchaeus; the fifth, Tobias; the sixth, Benjamin; the seventh, John; the eighth, Matthias; the ninth, Philip; the tenth, Seneca; the eleventh Justus; the twelfth, Levi; the thirteenth, Ephres; the fourteenth, Joseph; and finally, the fifteenth, Judas. These are the overseers of Jerusalem that lived between the age of the apostles and the time referred to, all of them belonging to the circumcision.\* (Eusebius)

\*[These were not as Eusebius seems to suppose, successive monarchical bishops as would have been the case in his own day in a Gentile Church setting but elders of a deliberative, community body.]

*The final struggle*

For in the late Jewish war Bar Kochba, [his name signifying 'son of a Star'] the leader of the Jewish rebellion, commanded that Christians alone should be visited with terrible punishments unless they would deny and blaspheme Jesus Christ. (Eusebius / Hegesippus)

As the rebellion of the Jews at this time grew much more serious, Rufus, governor of Judea, after an auxiliary force had been sent him by the emperor, using their madness as a pretext, proceeded against them without mercy, and destroyed indiscriminately thousands of men and women and children. The war raged most fiercely in the eighteenth year of Adrian, at the city of Bithara, which was a very secure fortress, situated not far from Jerusalem. When the siege had lasted a long time, and the rebels had been driven to the last extremity by hunger and thirst, and the instigator of the rebellion had suffered his just punishment, the whole nation was prohibited from this time on by a decree, and by the commands of Adrian, from ever going up to the country about Jerusalem. For the emperor gave orders that they should not even see from a distance the land of their fathers. Such is the account of Aristo of Pella. And thus, when the city had been emptied of the Jewish nation and had suffered the total destruction of its ancient inhabitants, it was colonized by a different race, and the Roman city which subsequently arose changed its name and was called Aelia, in honor of the emperor Aelius Adrian. And the church there was now composed of Gentiles, the first one to assume the government of it after the oversight of the circumcision was Marcus. (Eusebius)

Until then, the community remained as a virgin, pure and uncorrupt . . . but when the sacred band of Apostles and the generation of those who with their own ears had been privileged to hear the Divine wisdom, in diverse ways had passed from the scene, then impious error arose through the folly of false teachers who, seeing that none of the apostles were left alive, shamefacedly proclaimed, in opposition to the preaching of the truth, "knowledge which is falsely so-called.

(Eusebius / Hegesippus)

# T h e G o s p e l

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light:  
they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death,  
upon them hath the light shined.

(Isaiah 9:2)

## *darkness at noon*

As if existing under a dark cloud, the Holy Land in Jesus' day was a place where illness was chronic, where poverty was endemic, where injustice reigned supreme. It was a place where the folk, like sheep without a shepherd, were herded about and harried by ravenous wolves, their leaders. Such was captive Israel's sorry plight, its synagogues dominated by Pharisees, its Temple by Sadducees, while a pagan king sat upon the throne. Their problems went beyond the usual political, financial or religious ones. Spiritual oppression – even demonic possession – ran rampant throughout the land. 2000 years had elapsed since God had covenanted with Abraham. Was that it? Was this as good as it gets?

### *A new day dawning*

How beautiful upon the mountains  
are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings,  
that publisheth peace;  
that bringeth good tidings of good,  
that publisheth salvation;  
that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! (Isaiah 52:7)

Uniquely it was Israel's mission to receive God's Anointed One, the Messiah. To that end Jesus was born in Bethlehem. But all did not go according to plan. While the common folk heard him gladly, the leadership did not, which is why of a necessity Jesus lived his first 30 years in obscurity, albeit he was in plain view. On being revealed to the nation by John, Jesus said:

... the kingdom of God is at hand, repent ye, and believe the gospel. (Mark 1:15)

As one who was fulfilling the signs required of the Messiah, Jesus said:

... the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear,  
the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. (Luke 7:22)

It made no difference to the powers-that-be what Jesus did. If he performed miracles they cynically accused him of doing so by the power of Beelzebub. Jesus responded in kind by accusing them of committing the unpardonable sin, that of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. For sure, he had to keep on the move for thereafter he was on the religious mafia's permanent hit list. Finally, setting his face toward Jerusalem, Jesus perfected his redeeming work from a stake of impalement. Then up from the grave he arose.

### **PUTTING THE GOSPEL FRONT AND CENTER**

Justin Martyr spoke of the community of believers as gathering on the first day of the week to read aloud the *Memoirs of the Apostles*. Where were they gathering? Not in buildings, whether called "churches" or "synagogues," specially dedicated to worship; rather, in the homes of individual believers where the Gospel was read and discussed. By taking seriously God's word, by applying it as best they knew how, they experienced God's presence.

By 1<sup>st</sup> century's end, despite persecution, from home to home the Gospel spread throughout the world, from India to the British Isles and beyond. A professional religious caste, not needed, thank you. Denominationalism, not needed, thank you. Sacraments and ceremonies not needed, thank you. The Gospel is wonderfully sublime. It needs no amendment.

To summarize: Jesus' followers *saw*, they *heard*, they *read*. What they saw were mighty deeds; what they heard were wise teachings and to this, both words and deeds, they applied the prophetic scriptures. And all of this they made known to us. And we do well to take heed thereto for we are assured that in doing so the day star will arise in our hearts. To reiterate: if we will give Jesus time enough to speak to us long enough, a light within us will be kindled which light will lend credibility to our witness, that being not to ourselves, but, rather, to the Lord.

Whereas Protestant church services are largely built around the sermon, Catholic church services are largely built around the Eucharist. But the primitive community of believers built their communal worship around service and the Gospel record:

And the wealthy among us help the needy; and we always keep together; and for all things wherewith we are supplied, we bless the Maker of all through His Son Jesus Christ, and through the Holy Ghost. And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability, and the people assent, saying Amen; and there is a distribution to each, and a participation of that over which thanks have been given, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons. And they who are well to do, and willing, give what each thinks fit; and what is collected is deposited with the president, who succors the orphans and widows and those who, through sickness or any other cause, are in want, and those who are in bonds and the strangers sojourning among us, and in a word takes care of all who are in need.

(Justin Martyr, his First Apology to the Roman Senate c. 150 AD)

The *Memoirs of the Apostles* to which Justin Martyr makes reference above is not the four canonical gospels, rather a harmony of the synoptic gospels which harmony included the *Gospel According to the Hebrews*. Neither the *Memoirs* nor the *Hebrew Gospel*, so far as we know, has survived to our day, except in isolated quotes, but thanks to the survival of another, related document, the *Nazarene Gospel Narrative* (which text made it down to our time in one, mediaeval manuscript), we can recover much of Justin Martyr's text.

#### THE NARRATIVE OF POWER / THE POWER OF PERSONAL EXAMPLE

Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the YHVH of hosts. (Zechariah 4:6)

Presenting himself as Israel's rightful King, Jesus appointed twelve men to rule Israel's twelve tribes. But instead of being crowned king, he was crucified, his bona fide offer re-

jected. Before that happened, he had already moved on in his thinking to plan “B”:

If I be lifted up from the earth, will draw *all* men unto me.     (*John 12:32*)

Initially Jesus went to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. Only after every institution of Jewish corporate life had failed – the Davidic kingship, the Aaronic priesthood, the Synagogue – did he move on to Plan “B.” Rather than his trying to reform, revitalize, or replace any of the aforementioned institutions – Jesus adopted as his fallback position, not something new, but something quite **old**. Instead of establishing a “new,” replacement Israel or any such thing, Jesus put the focus back where it had been originally, on a one-on-one, faith relationship between man and his Maker which is how it all began with Abraham. His larger objective: to take the Abrahamic Covenant to a higher level with the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles removed. To Abraham’s spiritual, not physical, heirs he looked:

I [Jesus] say unto you, that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.     (*Matthew 8:11-12*)

With that pronouncement, the Abrahamic Covenant from the divine perspective ceased to be the Tribal Jewish Project it had once been. By reaching out to those of other races, religions, economic and social backgrounds, and especially to the dispossessed (as it were, to the untouchables), Jesus set the tone for how to conduct redemptive fellowship, helping us to see possibilities where others before had only seen impossibilities. To that end, Jesus turned to the last remaining bastions of human decency: the individual believer, the sanctified family, and the faithful community. In doing so, he effectually *deconstructed* the narrative of power, replacing it instead with a radical egalitarianism, that being the power of personal example which yields no ground to the usual divisive dichotomies: male/female, rich/poor, Jew/barbarian. Nor should it surprise us that a universal religion would be established on a foundation of universal respect. Setting the tone for inclusion, Jesus elevated for purposes of illustration one from a despised ethnic group, a Samaritan, whose compassion for a wounded wayfarer contrasted sharply with that of a Levite who passed over on the far side of the road.

This, then, is the “East”-ness and the “West”-ness of it all, that the true Israel of God cannot help but witness to the Light in others, notwithstanding cultural divides or divergence of tradition, for no one people has a monopoly on pious impulses. But if no one ethnic group or religion has a monopoly on the Good, the True, or the Beautiful what of those burdened by a “Chosen People Complex,” who suppose that every other culture, religion, or sect – except their own – is lacking in merit? Rest assured, none of this will sit too well with them. And yet the truth remains, the Gospel of Jesus Christ dictates that our happiness depends

on our seeking the happiness of others – and that this attitude must be universally applied. Meanwhile, to Abraham's unbelieving, bloodline descendants, Jesus addressed these uncompromising words:

The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and  
given to a people bringing forth the fruits thereof. *(Matthew 22:43)*

The good news Jesus proclaimed affirms God's character, that God is Light, that in him is no darkness whatsoever. It further affirms that God, a loving father, has established one mediator between God and man, the man, Christ Jesus (this is a big NO! to hierarchical religion.) As well, the good news is about the freedom that is ours in Jesus Christ (this is a big YES! to individual autonomy.)

In Jesus Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female; rather, we are all in this together as brothers and sisters. Hence, the good news is one of inclusion, that instead of abolishing the Abrahamic Covenant, Jesus expanded and revitalized it so that people everywhere might yet say "Father Abraham!" When Jewish tribalism is subsumed into Gospel universalism, a hopeful, life-affirming message emerges for humanity. Jesus' Gospel is about neighborliness, peaceableness, and good works for all.

What's the good news? That our Savior was not untouched by human infirmity but, rather, drank to the dregs our every woe. He tasted death for every man, he:

Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him for death, and was heard in that he feared; . . . *(Hebrews 5:7)*

#### **HOW MUCH IS "ALL"?**

Master, what good must I do to live? He said to him: Man, do the law and the prophets. He answered him: I did. He said to him, go, sell all that you possess and divide it among the poor and come follow me. But the rich man began to scratch his head and it did not please him. And the Lord said to him: Is it not written in the law: Love your neighbor as yourself? And see, many of your brothers, sons of Abraham, are covered with dung, dying from hunger, and your house is filled with many good things, and absolutely nothing goes out of it to them. And he turned to Simon his disciple who sat with him and said to him: Simon, son of Jona, it is easier for a camel to pass through an eye of a needle than for a rich man into the kingdom of heaven.

*(Gospel of the Hebrews)*

The rich man wants to absolve himself of guilt by punctilious observance, touch all the bases and be justified was the informing idea. But what if the Law doesn't exist for that purpose? What if the Law exists for man, not man for the Law? That would seem to be the clear logical extension of Jesus' saying that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. But we don't need to conjecture about this. Jesus said:

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.  
This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy  
neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”

(Matthew 22:37-40)

If the Law and the Prophets exist for us, not we for them, then for us to divorce God’s  
commandments from neighborly concern and practical human need is a travesty. Since  
human need is endless, we can never say , as did the man above, “I did.

Of like import then is Jesus’ Great Commission, to:

Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. (Mark 16:15)

How great is “all”? *all* the world socially, *all* the world culturally, *all* the world environ-  
mentally, *all* the world educationally, *all* the world economically? What limits dare we place  
on “all”? Jesus’ followers were not called to be the salt of the prayer meeting or the light of  
the Church steeple but “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world?”

The good news is not just that Jesus died to make men holy; he also died to set men free.  
As the Physician of souls *and* bodies, he came to treat the whole man, opening the eyes of  
those born blind, as well, opening darkened minds, releasing humankind from bondage of  
every kind, be it broken hearts or broken bones. Let the captives go free! As he said in his  
first sermon in Nazareth:

The Spirit of YHVH is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath  
sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering sight to the blind,  
to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of YHVH. (Luke 4:18)

#### TO WHOM GOOD NEWS IS BAD NEWS

Rather than lighten the Torah’s yoke, from sunrise to sunset, the rabbis vexed the people  
with all manner of strict obedience, stamping upon their minds the six hundred and thirteen  
laws with their explanations and the explanations of the explanations, numbering sixty times  
six hundred and thirteen. Only a person of means could have coped with all these pseudo-  
obligations and imaginary duties. For that reason, it was commonly supposed that only rich  
folk could be pleasing to God. Truly the masters of the Law had lain upon the backs of the  
poor burdens grievous to be borne which they themselves touched not even with one finger.

By contrast, Jesus proclaimed his yoke was easy, his burden light. Thus when Jesus de-  
nounced the “wisdom of the elders” as making God’s Law of no effect, it was the rabbis be-  
loved “oral law,” their *Mishnah*, which he was speaking against, that being their justification  
for lording it over their fellow man.



When Jesus spoke against titles of nobility, he took aim not just at the pronouncement of words but the practices behind them. Thus to those who be his followers, Jesus said:

But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.  
And call no man your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is our Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

(Matthew 23: 8-11)

But that was as nothing compared to Jesus' throwing open the shuttered doors of Jewish exclusivity, extending to all a royal welcome, be they Samaritans or Greeks, Hottentots or Eskimos. This directly impinged on the Jewish merchant class's prerogatives for, functionally speaking, the only bible they had to inform their religious sensibilities was two brief verses:

Moreover of the offspring of the alien residents who sojourn among you, of them shall ye purchase, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your slaves for ever: but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigor. (*Leviticus 25:44-45*)

As well, Jesus upended the counting tables on the predatory, loan-sharking financiers whose truncated bible consisted of only two verses drawn from *Deuteronomy*:

Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury: unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: . . . (*Deuteronomy 23:19-20*)

Cutting through all the convoluted formulations of Law as promulgated by the rabbis, Jesus, quoting *Leviticus 19:18*, said: "thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," which begs the question "who is our neighbor?" In his parable about the good Samaritan, Jesus provides the answer, the next person whom we meet.

In announcing that he had come to "preach deliverance to the captives" did Jesus mean to limit this only to those in spiritual bondage? Was there no social application? Be assured, Jesus was also out to change the moral climate, to make usury and trafficking in slaves unacceptable and the Jewish Establishment knew it. All over the Roman Empire, Jewish merchants and financiers, the Empire's leading purveyors of slaves and capital, were growing rich by plying their respective trades in human cargo and money bondage with some of their ill-gotten gains being plowed back into the Temple treasury to buy absolution through animal sacrifice. As we know, the Pharisees already didn't like Jesus because he represented a threat to their moral authority but why did the Temple's authorities who were Sadducees also hate him? Because Jesus' Golden Rule, to do unto others as you would have others

do unto you, represented a direct threat to their Rule of Gold. The Temple priesthood had been bought and sold as if they were just so many plantation darkies.

By breaking down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, Jesus abolished the hostility inherent in the us/them, Jew/Gentile paradigm. Whither then *Leviticus 25:44-45*? Whither then *Deuteronomy 23:19-20*? They were left in abeyance. This organized Jewry begrudged him and holds against him to this day, for not only has his Gospel touched their wallets by de-legitimizing slavery and usury, it also de-legitimized the very concept that might makes right. Whenever Gospel values are honored: kindness, neighborliness, and friendliness, it is an unspoken rebuke of the Jewish Establishment which is then forced to operate more in the shadows than would otherwise be so, lest its predatory practices be seen for what they are, shameful and evil. Deceptive talk about “Judeo-Christian values” fills the air these days, yet the values of Jesus and of Pharisaism are diametrically opposed. Jesus’ values and the world’s are diametrically opposed. Paraphrasing C. K. Chesterton:

The Gospel was not tried and found wanting; rather,  
the Gospel was found difficult, therefore not tried.

#### G E N D E R   E Q U A L I T Y

“Even now my mother the Holy Spirit took me and carried me up unto the great mountain Thabor.”

(*Gospel of the Hebrews*)

In Aramaic, the word for “Spirit” is of the feminine gender. Beyond the grammatical issue, however, is the fact that God is both Father and Mother. As well, Jesus possessed not only masculine attributes but also feminine attributes, even going so far as to compare himself to a mother hen who tenderly gathers her chicks under her wings.

My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of Glory, with respect of persons. . . .

But if ye have respect of persons, ye commit sin, and are convicted of the law as transgressors.

(*James 2:1, 9*)

Although the Epistle's supporting example above has to do with that of the rich acting prejudicially against the poor, the underlying principle applies equally to the male/female dichotomy or to any other social divide as would artificially limit spiritual fellowship or freedom. Baptism, however, is our entre into a new moral realm where we rise above the making of invidious, biological distinctions. As Clement of Alexandria wrote c. 180 AD:

. . . men and women share equally in perfection, and are to receive the same instruction and the same discipline. For the name "humanity" is common to both men and women; and for us "in Christ" is neither male nor female.

It must be conceded, among churchmen Clement of Alexandria was the exception, that,

in fact, most of his colleagues from his days to ours, as a matter of principle, have subordinated the interests and talents of women to the interests of a male hierarchy. But this is not the way it was in the beginning, for, as part of the new Gospel order, the home, not the synagogue, became God's appointed place of worship. The home, being the nexus for faith, culture, and civility, is where friends meet, where life happens. In the classical world, it was traditional for men to dominate in a public setting, but not so in the home. Thus, when Jesus elevated the home over public or institutional settings, one consequence was that of his elevating the status of women.

On finding Jesus engaged in a well-side conversation with a Samaritan woman, his disciples became indignant. What was it that was disturbing to them? that she was a woman? a Samaritan? or that she had been married five times? Maybe it was that Jesus was upsetting the norms of society. However that may be, in imparting knowledge to her, a woman, Jesus was tacitly empowering her, for knowledge is the pathway to respect and equality.

Most challenging to the disciples was Jesus' relationship with Mary Magdalene, for by appearing first to the Magdalene after his resurrection and telling her to tell his other disciples that he had risen, Jesus, in effect, had made her his apostle to his apostles. Thus did he turn patrilineal Judaism on its ear for a qualified woman is competent to lead, not just follow. In raising her status to equal theirs, he turned patrilineal Judaism on its ear and re-balanced the gender relationship.

One of the more curious documents fashioned by the institutional Church in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century was the *Apostolic Church Order* in which the apostle John is depicted as saying:

When the Master blessed the bread and the cup and signed them with the words, "This is my body and blood," he did not offer it to the women who are with us. Martha said, "He did not offer it to Mary, because he saw her laugh." Mary said, "I no longer laugh; he said to us before, as he taught, 'Your weakness is redeemed through strength.'"

(*Apostolic Tradition* 18:3)

Mary Magdalene is portrayed as failing to have carried her point about female redemption, after which the male disciples are alleged to have disallowed women from becoming priests. Along this line, speaking for the vast majority of his colleagues, Tertullian (ca. 150-225 AD), enunciated the position ever since upheld by Catholicism and by Orthodoxy:

It is not permitted for a woman to speak in the church, nor is it permitted for her to teach, nor to baptize, nor to offer [the Eucharist], nor to claim for herself a share in any masculine function - least of all, in priestly office.

In another place, Tertullian states ever so biliously:

These heretical women - how audacious they are! They have no modesty; they are bold enough to teach, to engage in argument, to enact exorcisms, to undertake cures, and it may be, even to baptize!

*(De Virginibus Velandis 9)*

Oh, horror of horrors, even to baptize! What will those uppity women think of next! Evidently the idea of a woman serving in a priestly capacity was enough to send someone of Tertullian's dyspeptic disposition into a complete tailspin. But on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of the Passover, while Jesus was supping with Lazarus, it was the Magdalene who:

. . . took a pound of greatly precious ointment, and anointed Jesus' head and feet as he sat at the meal:  
and all the house was full of its sweetness.

*(Nazarene Gospel Narrative, ch. 81)*

By Mosaic provision, it was the High Priest's place to anoint Israel's King. But it was the Magdalene who fulfilled this function. Of her anointing, Jesus said:

. . . her deed shall be spoken of over all the world wherever the Good Tidings are proclaimed.

*(Nazarene Gospel Narrative, ch. 81)*

Who ever the Spirit inspires is divinely ordained to speak.

*(Pistas Sophia 36:71)*

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues. I will pour out my spirit on all flesh . . . Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.

*(Acts, chapter 2)*

The question arises, how did we get from all down to just some? When it came to equality between Jewish and Gentile believers, Paul was fierce the way a mother bear is fierce in defending her cubs:

But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?

*(Galatians 2:11-14)*

The operative word above is *compel*, "why *compellest* thou?" Here Paul displays an excellent grasp of the importance of maintaining strictist equality. In this he was straight and true but when it came to gender equality, he retreats from the same standard. (This is assuming that Paul, and not some 2<sup>nd</sup> century Church editor, wrote the following):

Let your women keep silence in the assemblies: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the assembly. What? came the word

of God out from you? or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.

(1 Corinthians 14:34-37)

Paul, why would you *compel* the ladies to be silent? That's not right. The Spirit is where the Spirit goes. A Spirit-filled lady has as much right to be heard as you do. Was there not anyone to stand up to Paul, even as he withstood Peter to his face? If not, too bad, for I believe he could have used correcting in this matter. A larger-than-life personality, Paul might have been an awkward sort of fellow to confront. Nonetheless, an important principle was at stake and it matters not from whom it was in need of defending, for it is not according to the truth of the Gospel to condemn an entire class of people (women) instead of dealing with individuals on a case-by-case basis. If the report in *Acts* is to be accepted, James extended to Paul the right hand of fellowship. No doubt he saw Paul's good side, his deep commitment, his sincerity. If he had reservations, and there's no record that he did, he probably kept them to himself. There is no record of Paul and the Magdalene as ever having met. Had they done so, she might have set him straight on a few matters. Whether it be Peter or Paul, just because a person happens to be an apostle or a pillar of the community, doesn't automatically make for infallibility. That holds true for the Magdalene, for James, for anyone. Everything stands or falls on its merits, not on who said it. Divine principle trumps human say-so. Test all things, eschew evil, do good.

Meanwhile, one of the finest formulations of equality is Paul's, who wrote:

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

(Galatians 4:28)

As for the basis for equality, Paul plainly tells us, it is baptism which water symbolizes and Christ exemplified. Of baptismal unity, he wrote:

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

(Galatians 3:27-29)

#### THE LITTLE FLOCK

"Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32)

In deconstructing the narrative of power, Jesus freed up local, small-scale, Christian societies from centralizing bureaucratic constraints that they might proceed unhindered with ministries of reconciliation and encouragement. The breaking of bread from home to home is qualitatively different from what happens in a congregational setting. Whereas one involves a face-to-face coming together as a society of friends, the other involves a crowd passively

gazing upon the backs of strangers while looking forward to a raised platform from which professional clergy minister. It is true, the sound of congregational singing is liable to be more impressive than what might emanate from a home and it's true that a professional platform speaker is liable to be more eloquent than a home speaker. Therein lies a choice, to go with what is most outwardly impressive or else with what is most conducive of individual growth. It's not as though congregating, *per se*, was anything to be ashamed of. It's just that Jesus sanctioned his little flock.

Albeit modest in scope, Jesus' approach is revolutionary in its potential to exercise moral authority through force of personal example. Let us not rue the day of small deeds or good examples. As leaven infiltrates dough, so also does the fellowship which Jesus envisioned quietly infiltrates society, spreading contagiously from individual to individual and from home to home. The disciples went house to house breaking bread because the home is the last bastion and truly appropriate place of assembly.

Once each home is the source of its own discipline and generates its own traditions, then there exists on a practical level the basis for diversity. Unlike a sect or congregation, a community of autonomous homes can tolerantly accept a diversity of paths. Only in such an environment can Jews be Jews, Gentiles, Gentiles, with equality of fellowship between them, as Jesus' generous universalism transcends every form of boundary-setting sectarianism. Pray, sing, dance, break bread, read, converse, be it highly structured or spontaneous, jovial or solemn, it all depends on the tradition of the particular home and the inclinations of those present. Expressing this, the freedom that is ours in Jesus Christ, Paul wrote:

How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying. (*I Corinthians 14:26*)

If we've learned anything over the last 2000 years, it is that God does not indwell organizations but the Life of God is in the heart of man.

#### **A THREEFOLD GOSPEL WITNESS**

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, . . . For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. (*I John 1:3, Acts 4:20*)

"Witnessing," a term employed commonly enough in Christian circles, is usually applied to a personal witness, as for instance: "The Lord washed me of all my sins." At times such declarations are credible; at other times, are best taken with a grain of salt. The Greek word for "witness" is "martyr," martyrdom being we know serious business. But I am not speaking about a personal testimony, however credible, rather, a Gospel witness to Jesus:

For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice [i.e., ear-witness] to him from the majestic glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy [i.e., prophetic witness]; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: . . . (II Peter 1:16-19)

Since we are neither eye-witnesses nor ear-witnesses, we have to go by written evidence. Does conviction steel over us that this is the real deal and not just someone's overactive imagination? Can we affirm that this is as it was? Let us keep in mind, this is suppose to be about real events, not "cunningly devised fables." To summarize: Jesus' followers *saw*, they *heard*, they *read*. What they saw were mighty deeds; what they heard were wise teachings and to this they add the study of Scripture, the latter being "a more sure word of prophecy." Said Paul, who, like us, was no eye-witness but who did have access to the prophetic word:

I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles. (Acts 26:22-23)

Said Peter to Cornelius's household:

And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. (Acts 10:39-43)

#### THE WITNESS OF PHILIP, THE EVANGELIST

In *Acts of the Apostles* (8: 26-40) the story is told with few extra trimmings of an unnamed Ethiopian, a higher-up in the court of Ethiopia's Queen. He was wending his way back home from Jerusalem, when, on the road north of Gaza, he encountered Philip who had just dropped in out of the blue, literally, having departed Samaria on the fly. Immediately he espied the aforementioned Ethiopian traveling by chariot. Approaching, Philip saw that he was reading the Scriptures and inquired:

"Understandest thou what thou readest?"

Said the Ethiopian:

"How can I, except some one shall guide me?"

The Ethiopian wasn't comprehending and was honest enough to admit it. His problem was not so a dearth of information so much as having too much information. He had just left Jerusalem, his ears full of grasshoppers from contact with learned Temple scholars whose guidance proved to be little more than *mis*-guidance. Despite a long pilgrimage, the Ethiopian was returning home a disappointed man, his questions unanswered. Philip, too, had recently left Jerusalem, the difference being that he was fleeing for his very life. It was time to get out of Dodge. The Temple authorities had contracted with a zealous young ruffian named Saul who was hellbent to get anyone he could lay hands on. Having just participated in the stoning death of Philip's colleague, Stephen, Paul, breathing further threats of violence, was raring to take on the whole Nazarene movement for committing the heinous crime of naming the name of Jesus as their Savior. Albeit undeterred in his vocation, Philip prudently headed northward to Samaria where a great revival broke forth. Then, on the Spirit's prompting, Philip, suddenly departed southward from Samaria, for the desert area north of Gaza where he espied the aforementioned Ethiopian traveling along by chariot.

The book the Ethiopian was studying when his and Philip's paths had crossed was that of *Isaiah*, namely, that part which reads:

He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: in his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth.

Inquired the Ethiopian of Philip:

"Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?"

That was all the lead-in Philip needed. The Ethiopian possessed the Scriptures but not the key that opens them and that is where Philip could be helpful, for he possessed, as it were, the key, that being the good news of the life and teachings of our Lord. Without our knowing all the details, it's safe to say that a wide-ranging conversation ensued because the Ethiopian came around to asking Philip:

"See here is water; what doeth hinder me to be baptized?"

Evidently nothing hindered for, in reply to his question, Philip said:

"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."

Affirmed the Ethiopian:

"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."



Just like that, it was a done deal. Not deputized by some higher religious authority, Philip of his own volition, guided by the Spirit's prompting, was competent to preach and to baptize. No creed, no catechism, no period of investigation was required of the Ethiopian, just faith. Neither time or place were at issue; any body of water would do. Such were the ways of the Nazarenes: their ordinances were simple, their teachings public, their standard for fellowship: heartfelt allegiance to God alone.

And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

Afterward, the Ethiopian went his way rejoicing and why not, since he had not been put on a mailing list, inducted into a tithe-collecting church, nor did he even have to climb, climb up sunshine mountain where heavenly breezes blow. He was home free and free to go home, unencumbered by obligations to a hierarchical institution.

How can we explain the Samaritans', as well the Ethiopian's immediate embrace of Philip's message? For one, both their societies had a long history of contact with Scripture and had received the word of Jehovah with favor. Let us recall to mind that Ethiopia as a nation had adopted Judaism a 1000 years before, yhis in the days of King Solomon after the Queen of Sheba had gone to Jerusalem to receive wisdom and had returned home carrying the seed of David. As for the Samaritans, they, too had texts of Moses older and more authentic than the Masoretic text used by the Jews today and they valued them.

In the intervening centuries, however, much had changed. The Pharisees now sat in Moses' seat. Pharisaical Judaism had replaced Mosaic Law with their own "oral Law," so-called, of which neither Ethiopians nor Samaritans had knowledge of. The "oral" Law," actually the *Mishnah*, Jesus had denounced as the wisdom of the elders which made God's Law of no effect. It was so much extra theological baggage, if not pernicious nonsense, which closed the eyes and ears of Jerusalem to Jesus' claims.

The revival that occurred was no flash-in-the-pan excitement whipped up by a trained orator. For one, we know that only a little time before Philip had been appointed by the apostles to be a waiter-on-tables. Not emotionalism, but a straightforward presentation of Scripture is what did the trick. Thus it was, as *Acts* reports: the Samaritans "received the Word of God" and "were baptized into the name of Jesus." Little place existed for American-style evangelization. That Philip could reach them so quickly with his message, reflected well on them and it reflected well on Philip and the training he received, that he was able to bring to his hearers a compelling, well-reasoned position, rooted in Scripture.

We know that Philip and the other apostles, though they lived by humble trades, yet they could articulate their faith to the world. Their boldness came from the Spirit, yes, but their

learnedness came from Jesus. Though they lived by humble trades, Philip and the other apostles were able to articulate a coherent message and this before there were written gospels. Philip was emboldened and empowered by the Spirit, that we know, but from whence came his learnedness in the Word? Ultimately it came from Jesus who taught his disciples “the first principles in the oracles of God.”

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (II Timothy 2:15)

#### **PETER, THE EVANGELIST**

To his apostles, Jesus said:

Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. (Mark 16:15)

Initially this, the “Great Commission,” was construed narrowly as only to include Jews and diaspora Jews. Eventually this came to be seen by the Nazarenes as a sadly inadequate response to the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. What limits dare we place on the word “all”?

As chief apostle, Peter thought he knew where lay the limits to Gospel presentation, that Gentiles were not included but he was in for a surprise. First, in a vision from God, Peter was instructed not to call unclean that which God called clean. Then, while pondering this vision and yet doubting its meaning, there came a knock at his door. Three men representing a certain Roman officer were there, requesting his presence in Caesarea. And immediately God’s Spirit spoke to Peter, saying:

“Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.”

The next day Peter went to Caesarea, to the home of Cornelius, where was gathered an assembly for the purpose of hearing him out. Addressing them, Peter said:

“Ye know how it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company or come unto one of another nation; but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.”

Peter could say this because just the day before his preconceptions about Gentiles had been upended by direct revelation from God. As we see, he was beginning to learn the difference between God’s royal law of universal regard and man’s propensity for arbitrary boundary setting.

In reply to Peter’s accommodating statement, Cornelius said:

“Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.”

Then Peter opened his mouth and said,

“I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”

Without attempting to recap the entire account (it runs for 66 verses), in essence, this was Peter’s *eureka!* moment, the instant when on meeting a righteous Gentile it dawned on him that the mountain of faith can be climbed from many directions. For Peter, sharing the Gospel didn’t just mean changing another person’s mind but changing his own, for he had not been baptized into some piddling, sectarian stream but into the great ocean who is our God.

But then we make of Scripture and of Scripture’s Author what we will, which is why it’s often not so much *what* we believe as *how* we construe it that counts. Others before and since Peter have had such insights. Even so, his was a bright, shining moment when religion took a holiday from parochial sectarianism.

The righteous of all nations have a place in the kingdom to come.

Note: the righteous Gentile in question, Cornelius, he was neither a Jew nor a Christian but a God-fearing pagan who, as such, could not have distinguished Jesus from Adam, yet, at the time of visitation, he had God’s approval. But on what basis? obviously not on the basis of his having “saving faith” in Jesus (for how can one believe who hasn’t heard?) Rather, it was on the basis of his personal integrity from which issued forth faithful deeds, even as it is written:

... an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, “Cornelius.” And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, “What is it, Lord?” And he said unto him, “Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.” (Acts 10:3-4)

And what was Peter’s response after he saw that God had bestowed on the Gentile believers the Holy Spirit, even as on Jewish believers? He exclaimed:

“Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Spirit, as well as we?” (Acts 10:47)

In recounting this event to the rest of his colleagues, Peter said:

“Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 11:16)

As was the case above with Peter and Cornelius, so also with Jesus’ Nazarene followers generally, instead of trying to be controlling, they approached the world with full hearts and open arms and, to a surprising degree, they found their openness reciprocated, such that by 1<sup>st</sup> century’s end the Gospel had spread across the globe from the British Isles to India and to

many points in between and would have kept spreading except that it was subverted and eviscerated from within by the Church.

If ever we find something wisely said by the pagans, we should not scorn it with the name of the author . . .  
but as the apostle says, "Test all things, holding fast what is good. (Origen, *Homily on Exodus*)

The cultural attainments of Israel's mighty neighbors, Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome in turn tempted and repelled. What was of Truth and need to be accepted? And what of idolatry that needed to be rejected? Either way, let us observe, biblical Judaism did not simply fall from the sky as some might suppose (or fervently wish), for overwhelming evidence exists of judicious borrowings.

From its inception, Israel drew inspiration from a multiplicity of sources: Moses, for instance, came of age in the courts of the Pharaoh where he became conversant with the learning and wisdom of Egypt. Later, fleeing to the wilderness, he was refreshed by the Midianites, particularly Jethro, the Midianite priest, who became his father-in-law. Exposure to primitive, tribal religion infused Judaism with a kind of hybrid vigor.

Later, Greek ideas and modes of expression also left an imprint on the biblical record, especially on the *New Testament* but elsewhere as well. Many scholars think, for instance, that the complete absence of Jewish features in *Job* may be because its origin wasn't Jewish at all but Greek. None of this, if true, detracts from its value. Nor does it negate the existence of direct revelation.

The Holy Land is where East meets West, where Oriental mysticism and Occidental logic combine. Only blind parochialism could keep us from seeing the reality that the Israelite commonwealth was no cultural backwater but, as John Henry Newman put it:

She began in Chaldea, and then sojourned among the Canaanites, and went down into Egypt, and thence passed into Arabia, till she rested in her own land. Next she encountered the merchants of Tyre, and the wisdom of the country, and the luxury of Sheba. Then she was carried away to Babylon, and wandered to the schools of Greece. And wherever she went, in trouble or in triumph, still she was a living spirit, the mind and the voice of the Most High; "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions"; claiming to herself what they said rightly, correcting their errors, supplying their defects, completing their beginnings, expanding their surmises, and thus gradually by means of them enlarging the range and refining the sense of her own teaching. So far, then, from her creed being of doubtful credit because it resembles foreign theologies, we even hold that one special way in which Providence has imparted divine knowledge to us has been by enabling her to draw and collect it together out of the world and, in this sense, as in others, to "suck the milk of the Gentiles and to suck the breast of kings."

## HELLENIZATION

And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. (Acts 6:1)

So reads the King James Version. Clarifying the meaning somewhat, the Revised Version of 1881 exchanged for "Grecian" the word "Hellenist." At issue, then, was not a quarrel between Jews and Gentiles as a casual reading of this verse might lead one to believe; rather, the dispute was between Greek-speaking Nazarenes who, albeit, were observant Jews, were influenced by Hellenistic ideas and thought patterns and those Nazarenes, particularly from Jerusalem, who were out-and-out Hebraics.

One would like to think that with Jesus' words yet ringing in their ears, his example fresh in their minds, and with the recent descent of the Spirit at Pentecost, that Nazarenes generally would have risen above making invidious racial and social distinctions but, as we see in the candid statement above, this was not necessarily so. There was emboldenment and ennoblement for a season, yes, but this did not resolve all issues, for Jesus' followers were men and women of like passion as ourselves, subject to honest differences of opinion as well as to disparate cultural influences. Putting them on a pedestal can easily become a copout, an excuse to look backwards instead of forwards, to institutionalize the apostles' memory, instead of learning from their example.

## PAUL

His Tortuous Journey out of the Pit --  
From Persecutor to Forgiveness & Freedom

As a young man Paul had turned to persecution. His problem, like that of many other over-earnest youths, was his hoping to earn God's favor through performance of good works but we suspect that he was experiencing a nagging suspicion of failure. If only on an unconscious level, he knew in many ways he fell short and judged himself harshly for that. And, judging himself harshly, he also judged others harshly. Yes, Paul had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. Setting about to establish his own righteousness, he missed out on God's righteousness. With such a religion as his, it would have been better if he had none at all.

Judgmental zealotry such as Paul displayed often manifests as an exaggerated concern with creeds instead of deeds: orthodoxy instead of orthopraxy. (By definition, orthodoxy

has to do with what folks believe whereas orthopraxy has to do with their actual conduct.) Since the life-blood of sectarianism is boundary setting through manipulation of doctrine, the religious establishment is all too glad to sharpen any distinction, creating, thereby, dislike of the unlike. Indeed hierarchy men take every impulse, be it high or low, and bend it to their own purposes, for, above all, religious conformity promotes the selfish will to power. Thus the followers of Jesus, being nonconformists in both word and deed, became the perfect object of the Establishment's ire and wrath.

From the astringency of religious zeal, the urge to persecute emerged. Even so, Paul would probably not have acted murderously, except for his psychological state having been adroitly exploited by the Sanhedrin. It was the High Priest who granted Paul letters of introduction to the leading Jews of Damascus, authorizing them to assist him in his task of bringing back to Jerusalem, bound in chains, believers in Jesus. By giving himself over to the impulse to control people through threat and force, Saul became the very antithesis of freedom. Today the Zionized, warmongering Church, thinking it follows Paul, instead follows, the "chief of sinners," namely, the pre-conversion Saul the Pharisee, Saul the Zionist. But then came Paul's Damascus Road experience, forever changing his life:

And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him,

Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said,

I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

And he trembling and astonished said,

Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?

And the Lord said unto him,

Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. (Acts 9:3-8)

Continuing on is Paul's firsthand account of this incident:

And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there [in Damascus] came unto me, Brother Paul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldst hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why terriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord. (Acts 22:12-16)

Once the scales had fallen from his eyes, Paul forsook the way of persecution. Once he had been filled with the Spirit and was water baptized, Paul was a new man, fit for service. His greatest victory was not that of seeing through the false claims of the religious establishment, though he did indeed do that. No, his greatest victory was that which he won over his own ego. Finally, on seeing the impossibility of earning his way into God's good graces, he humble himself before the stake of impalement.

In and of himself, Paul had failed miserably. Pouring out his guts, he confessed:

"Oh wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" (Romans 7:24)

However, with a new dynamic operative in his life Paul ceased his futile struggle, spinning his wheels, making a mess of his own life as well as messing up the lives of others. Despite all the sorrows and labors that befell him, Paul found joy and fulfillment, for in the power of a new creation with his deepest psychological needs being met. After that his life was revelation, for Paul the persecutor had become Paul the freedom fighter. He wrote:

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free and be not entangled again with a yoke of bondage. (Galatians 5:1)

Freedom was no end in itself. That Paul knew. He knew that free dom needed to be tempered by responsibility but this sense of responsibility had to come from within. It could not be coerced. As he wrote:

"For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; . . ."  
(I Corinthians 9:19)

The effect of biblical faith is not that of squashing human personality, for even as an artisan well effortlessly runs over, so too the Good Tidings brings its own form of overflowing effervescence to each individual who breathes in its essential offer of freedom and liberation.

Paul has established for all times the Christian's right to think. He raises above the faith which is valid by tradition that knowledge which flows from the spirit of Christ. There lives in him an unlimited uninterrupted reverence for truth. He accepts only those bonds which are imposed by love, not those which are imposed by scholastic authority. . . . The result of this first appearance of the activity of a great thinker in Christianity, is to establish for all time the confidence that the Christian faith has nothing to fear from the power of thought, even if the latter is disturbing to tranquility, is apt to provoke disputes which seem to promise little fruit for piety . . . Paul is the patron saint of thought in Christianity. All those who think to serve the gospel of Christ by destroying the liberty of thinking must hide their faces from him.

(The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, Albert Schweitzer)

For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men -- as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as servants of God. (Galatians 5:13)

## M O T H E R   M A R Y

Beyond excesses relating to Maryolatry, many have carried away positive impressions by reflecting on Mary, her role in the great scheme of things.

*When creation was begun,  
God had chosen you to be  
Mother of his precious son.*

*All of us are children too,  
Often doubtful what to do,  
Thus we turn to you and say:*

*When creation was restored,  
You were there beside our Lord  
Whom you cherished and adored.*

*Lead us to your child above  
He will teach us how to love,  
How to pity and forgive.  
  
Holy Mary, full of grace.*

## B A R N A B A S

And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. (*Acts 14:12*)

From the passage above, we see that at least in the perception of certain pagans, Paul was the lesser god, Mercury, who was the spokesman for the greater god, Jupiter, that is, Barnabas. Of course, neither man wished to be taken for a god. Nevertheless, however mistaken this identification, it is indicative that both men had made a very great impression. Further confirmation is that both men were commissioned as co-equals to lead Antioch's historic first missionary journey. With this history in mind, let us now correct a glaring misidentification later made by the Church when it attributed one of the New Testament's most substantial epistles, *Hebrews*, to Paul, when in all likelihood its author was Barnabas.

The one thing we can be sure about is that Paul did not write *Hebrews*. Most scholars in our day who have looked into the matter agree, the style of *Hebrews* is not Paul's, nor is the subject matter his. Also, at certain points *Hebrews* exhibits an exact knowledge of Temple procedures which Paul, who was not a priest or Levite, would not likely have had but which Barnabas, a Levite would have. Unless Paul had had a brain transplant (which they weren't doing in those days or, thankfully, yet in ours) then it had to have been someone else who wrote it. Somewhat after 200 AD, Tertullian wrote:

For there is extant withal an Epistle to the Hebrews under the name of Barnabas – a man sufficiently accredited by God, as being one whom Paul has stationed next to himself . . . .

Because the Church wanted, as it were, everything done through official channels, it has



ever clung tenaciously to the claim that authorship of the New Testament is limited to those who were apostles or else who were authorized by an apostle. The only exceptions made are for James and Jude, who get a special dispensation by virtue of being Jesus' relatives. Thus, Paul presumably authorized Luke to write the gospel that goes by Luke's name and Peter presumably authorized Mark to write the Gospel that goes by Mark's name. The problem with Barnabas it is too great a leap to say that he was Paul's subordinate. Since *Hebrews* in both style and substance arguably outshines any of Paul's compositions, including it in the New Testament under Barnabas's name would have exploded the churchly theory of apostolic authorship as a necessary qualification for inclusion. As is the case with modern-day scholars, so too 2<sup>nd</sup> century Church scholars saw *Hebrews* as not having been written by Paul. Two strategies were adopted. One was to reject this letter as not rising to the level of Scripture. Thus we see that it was not included in the Muratorian canon. When that didn't work because it was too good to suppress, it was embraced as having been written by the apostle Paul. That's the Church's story and they are sticking with it.

#### OBEY? OBEY NOT!

By Catholics, by a Jehovah Witness, by a Plymouth Brethren, by one from the Church of Christ, by Adventists, by Bible Church, by those who are non-denominational, by Charismatics (the list is seemingly endless), I have heard repeatedly the same dreary old message:

Obey them that have the rule over you. (Hebrews 13:17)

With all due respect, allow me to advise: "Don't!" Don't obey for obedience sake any religious Pooh Bah whatever may be his ecclesiastical affiliation or high office. Commit yourself neither to man nor institution but to God alone! To Him alone are you accountable! First of all forget "obey". The underlying Greek word, *peitho*, means something else altogether. As used by the author of *Hebrews*, it means "persuade". In fact in an earlier verse he employs the same word, *peitho*, and notice how the *KJV* translates it:

. . . we are persuaded [*peitho*] better things of you. (Hebrews 6:9)

Had the author of *Hebrews*, Barnabas, really meant "obey" he would have used the word, *hupakouo*, as he did two chapters before in the sentence:

By faith Abraham when he was called to go out into a place which  
he should after receive as an inheritance, obeyed [*hupakouo*] . . . (Hebrews 11:8)

And forget rule over. It's not there either. Neither rule nor over is there. The Greek word used is *hegeomai*. It is the same word used by Luke when he quotes Jesus as saying:

He who is greatest (i.e. a leader) [*hegeomai*] among you, let him  
be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. (Luke 22:26)

This is yet another example of an anti-hierarchical imperative. The unification God seeks is not achieved through coercion but through persuasion. So let us forget the ominous spin that sectarian spin doctors give *Hebrews 13:17* because it more correctly translates as:

Encourage those who provide leadership [*hegeomai*] among you . . .

Another example, this from Paul's letter to the Thessalonians:

And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you [*proistemi*] in the Lord.

(*1 Thessalonians 5:12*)

Again over you is not there. The underlying Greek is: *proistemi*. It is the same word as Paul uses in *Titus 3:14* where he writes:

. . . learn to maintain [*proistemi*] good works.

As it turns in this instance it is possible to have one translation suitably fit both quotes. It is to care for. Them which "labor among you" are those who "care" for you. And so "take care to learn good works."

Finally, putting obedience into proper perspective, Peter said to the High Priest:

We ought to obey God rather than man. (*Acts 5:29*)

#### **WAS THE AUTHOR OF HEBREWS IN EXILE?**

According to J. Rendel Harris, there are strong indications affirming this question.

We will restrict ourselves to one single chapter of the Epistle [to the Hebrews], . . . the chapter to which I refer is the eleventh. In my own reading of this chapter, one of the most striking in the book, and almost capable of dissected out as a separate Bible lesson or tract. . . . In my own reading of this chapter I was struck with the stress laid on the thought of exile by the writer, whether in recording instances from the past in which good men have had to leave all to follow God, or in inculcating the characteristic Christian grace of detachment, which results from a right estimate of things transitory and of things eternal.

And I have hazarded the conjecture that in most cases where the grace of detachment is in a high state of development, it is connected with outward forms of detachment, which have providentially been the stepping-stones into the higher experiences. Now we do not say that unworldliness and *Heimweh* are found only in the Epistle to the Hebrews, but they are found so emphatically there and especially in the eleventh chapter, that one is disposed to believe that it is an exile that writes and that enforced wanderings have laid the foundation for the doctrine and experience that "there remaineth a rest to the people of God."

Now when we read our chapter through, we find –

(1) that Abraham was one of faith's exiles: that he went in search of a promised land; that Isaac and Jacob were also dwellers in tabernacles, and they all looked for a city of God at the end of or beyond the tent-life. All this patriarchal circle confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims in the earth. Their talk betrayed their country. They might have returned if they would; but they are pressing toward a better, a heavenly country. God thinks better of them because of their passion for a better land.

(2) And what about Joseph dying in Egypt, and giving instructions about the return of his bones to the home-land? And why did he talk of the exodus of the children of Israel? We are astonished, too, to find that it was an act of faith when Moses fled from Egypt, and the incident is coupled with an allusion of the wrath of the king. It is surprising that this chapter should be credited to an actual exile, and in that case the forsaking of Egypt becomes parallel with a decree of Claudius Caesar that Jews in general, and two particular apostolical Jews among them, should depart from Rome? So we write against this chapter the words, "an exile speaks." That the motive for the discourse was not confined to the subject-matter of the chapter, viz, "the making and fortunes of the heroes of God," may seem from the way the writer strikes the same note in the thirteenth chapter: "Let us go to Jesus outside the camp, and let us bear His reproach, for here we have no abiding city, but we are seeking the one to come."

(J. Rendel Harris, *Side-lights on New Testament Research*, 1908)

#### COMMUNITY / CONGREGATION / CHURCH

##### ***Kyriakon***

As most English translations have it, Jesus said to Peter:

"Upon this rock I will build my Church (*ekklesia*); and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

(*Matthew 16:18*)

By reason of this translation alone, it is axiomatic for most Christians to believe, first, that the Church IS, and, secondly, since presumably God ordained it, we're obliged to join it, the only remaining issue being to identify which one is the true Church. Is it the one headquartered in Rome? Salt Lake City? Brooklyn? Boston? Tacoma Park? Nashville? (This list could be much extended.) Conversely, noted Hebrew and Greek scholar, James Tabor, in an open letter to supporters of the *Original Bible Project*, stated:

The *Original Bible* will be one of the few modern English translations of the Greek Christian Scriptures in which the word "church," so sacred to millions, *will not appear!*

Is this sophistry or scholarship? Is the Church real or just a mirage? Let us reason this out, biblical Greek, albeit God breathed, is not angel talk, rather, it is idiomatic, idiosyncratic human talk, requiring close attention to context. As for the word “church,” language scholars tell us it was not originally English but came from the German word, *kirche*, which itself derived from *kyriakon*, a Greek word meaning, “the Lord’s house.” In consulting the 16<sup>th</sup> century New Testament of William Tyndale, we find that he used the word “church” only twice, once in *Acts 14:13* and once again in *Acts 19: 37*. In each instance the reference is to a pagan place of worship, the Lord’s house being a pagan Lord, i.e., Jupiter, but in *Matthew 16: 18*, Tyndale translated *ekklesia*: “congregation.” For this heinous crime, that of making the Bible comprehensible in the vernacular, Tyndale was burned alive at the stake.

*Webster’s International Dictionary* defines “church” as

1. A building set apart for public worship, ...
2. A place of worship of any religion, as, formerly, a Jewish or pagan temple or a mosque. Acts six. 37.

Highly suspect is the business of substituting of one Greek word for another, *kyriakon* for *ekklesia*, then not translating *kyriakon* but only transliterating it.

#### ***Ekklesia: THE WAY OUT***

In response to a question Jesus posed his disciples:

“Who do you say that I am?”

Jesus’ disciple, Peter, replied:

“You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

Then Jesus said to Peter:

“Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my *ekklesia* and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

The above statement is incompletely translated. Left untranslated is the word "*ekklesia*," a word occurring more than 100 times in the Greek New Testament. A compound word “ek” means "out of" and "*klesia*," “called” (from the verb *kaleo*.) Who are those summoned out?

In the classical Greek of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, *ekklesia* was used with reference to the town crier's summons as he called citizens out for the purpose of conducting public business. The assembly consisted of the “called ones.”

*He ekklesia* was the lawful assembly in a free Greek city of all those possessed of the rights of citizenship for the transaction of public affairs. That they were summoned is expressed in the latter part of the word; that they were summoned out of the whole population, a select portion of it including neither the populace, nor the strangers, nor yet those who had forfeited their civic rights, this is expressed in the first.

(Liddell and Scott)

In the Septuagint Greek, a translation of the biblical Hebrew text dating to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC, (and from which the apostles often quote *verbatim*) *ekklesia* was the word of choice for translating the Hebrew word: *qahal*. Of the one hundred and twenty occurrences of *qahal* in the Hebrew Bible on 77 occasions the Septuagint renders them *ekklesia*. Checking each instance for meaning, we find that *qahal* generally refers to an "assembly" or "meeting" of the people of Israel. Two readings that illustrate this:

Solomon held the feast ... and all Israel with him, a very great assembly [*ekklesia*] (II Chronicles 7:8)

In the midst of the assembly [*ekklesia*] will I praise thee. (Psalm 22:22)

Occasionally, the Septuagint employs *ekklesia* to refer to entities other than to a gathering of Israel, as for instance:

. . . the company [*ekklesia*] of prophets prophesying (I Samuel 19:20)

I, [Jehovah] hate the assembly [*ekklesia*] of evil-doers. (Psalm 26:5)

There is yet another Hebrew word beside *qahal* to be considered and that is *edhah*. *Edhah* is never translated in the Septuagint by the word *ekklesia*. Instead, about one hundred and thirty times in the Septuagint it is translated by the Greek word *synagoge*. Because a key issue is whether God's *ekklesia* is modeled after the Jewish synagogue or follows some other line, we find ourselves having to extend our inquiry by comparing the meaning of *edhah* and *qahal*. With regard to the distinction to be made in these allied, but not fully synonymous words, we observe that *edhah* applies to a group – but one not necessarily assembled together or even acting in concert. Its usage is broad and can even apply to animals, such as to a swarm of bees. But when applied to Israel it is properly applied to the society itself. Meanwhile, *qahal* is about the people who assemble in physical meeting:

The fact that *qahal* comes from the same root as *qol*, the word for "voice," suggests that the Old Testament *qahal* was the community summoned by the Divine Voice, by the Word of God. It was the people of the voice of the Word of God. Of that concept *ekklesia* is a very apt translation, indicating as it does the community of "the called" (*kletoi*) of God. ... his Voice was heard by all Israel, and his Word founded the covenant community.

(T. F. Torrance)

On occasion as in *Exodus 12:6* and *Numbers 14:5*, we have in Scripture the phrase *qahal edhah*. It is correctly translated:

The call to assembly (*qahal* / *ekklesia*) of the community (*edhah* / *synogoge*).

In the development of the meaning of *ekklesia*, this is the progression: first it meant a summoning of citizens to a civic event; then it applied to the meeting itself; then to the body of people so assembled. Nor is that the end of the story, for we have yet New Testament usage to consider, where additional meanings accrue, where *ekklesia* might even mean an unruly mob:

And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having Gaius and Aristarchus . . . they rushed with one accord into the theatre. . . . Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the mob (*ekklesia*) was confused; and most of them knew not why they had come together. (Acts 19:29-32)

Another example of *ekklesia*, this one from *Acts 8:3*, which reads:

As for Saul, he made havoc of the community (*ekklesia*), entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

Clearly Saul was going after scattered individuals in their homes and not picking up people *en mass* as would be the case had he interrupted a meeting in progress. Therefore I have translated *ekklesia* as “community,” rather than, as did Tyndale, “congregation,” much less “church,” as did the *KJV*.

### ***Call and Response***

“I [Jesus] have called you [my disciples] out of the world.” (John 15:19)

Not everyone who hears God's call is included, for Jesus said:

“Many are called but few are chosen.” (Matthew 22:14)

The reason many are called but few chosen is because of the many who are called few ever respond as Peter did, by taking a proactive stance:

Brethren, give diligence to make your election and calling sure. (II Peter 1:10)

Not by brick and mortar, nor by the will of man, but as an interior chapel; not as an observable, exterior kingdom, but as an interior kingdom, with the King residing within, that is God's *ekklesia*. Let us do due diligence to assure the call for this call is one of dependency on Him, God being the Rock on which Jesus builds his *koinonia*, his summoned-out community. No church is so big as to include, nor so small as to exclude, all who are upon the Rock.

# The Abrahamic Covenant

Long in advance of Abraham's day, God made certain promises, first to Adam, then to Noah, which promises are known respectively as the Adamic and the Noahic Covenants. These, and all such covenants since: Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic are rooted in *Genesis 3:15*, where the belly-crawling serpent is said prophetically to wound the heel of the promised seed and the promised seed is said to wound the serpent's head.

Then, too, we know, of an additional covenant, a "new Covenant" (*Jeremiah 31:31*), "a better covenant" (*Hebrews 8:6*), which is "not according to the covenant that I [God] made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt." One little question which seems too often overlooked: when is this better covenant to be implemented? I ask because many these days would deep-six the Abrahamic Covenant in favor of this better covenant and never mind that it is explicitly stated of the New Covenant that: "no man will teach his brother, but from the least to the greatest all will know the Lord." Is that to be squared with what we see going on every day? Obviously, the New Covenant is of another time, another era, an era called "the millennial kingdom." Meanwhile, in these present times, helping us deal with present realities, we have for guidance the Abrahamic Covenant.

O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. . . .  
For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed;  
but my kindness shall not depart from thee,  
neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed,  
saith Jehovah that hath mercy on thee. . . .  
Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear,  
and your soul shall live;  
and I will make an everlasting covenant with you,  
even the sure mercies of David.

(*Isaiah 44:21, 54:10, 55:3*)

1. The Abrahamic Covenant is predicated on faith:

Abram . . . believed in Jehovah; and he counted it unto him for righteousness. (Genesis 15:6)

2. The Abrahamic Covenant has moral content:

For I [Jehovah] know him [Abraham], that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of Jehovah, to do justice and judgment; ... (Genesis 18:19)

3. The Abrahamic Covenant is an on-going, corporate, work of redemption which takes in the entire sweep of history from Abraham's time forward to our own:

And I [Jehovah] will establish my covenant with thee and with thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant. (Genesis 17:7)

4. Though an everlasting covenant, nonetheless the Abrahamic Covenant consists of qualified promises to qualified people:

. . . they shall keep the way of Jehovah, to do justice and judgment; that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. (Genesis 17:14)

5. Because it is an everlasting covenant, the Abrahamic Covenant remains as much in effect today as ever. In no wise has it been superseded, nor will it be until Kingdom come.

6. The Abrahamic Covenant is not an agreement between equals, nor was it the result of a negotiation but is a revelation of God's sovereign intent:

I [Jehovah] will make of thee [Abraham] a great nation. (Genesis 12:2)

7. By instituting a covenant, God, in a manner of speaking, places Himself under obligation – albeit on His terms not ours. His role is that of *Respondent Superior*, for He takes responsibility for his agents, His creatures, for His creation is the work of His hands.

The law of Jehovah is perfect, converting the soul:

The testimony of Jehovah is sure, making wise the simple.

The Statutes of Jehovah are right, rejoicing the heart:

The commandment of Jehovah is pure, enlightening the eyes.

The fear of Jehovah is clean, enduring for ever:

The judgments of Jehovah are true and righteous altogether.

More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold:

Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. (Psalm 19:7-10)



#### TO ABRAHAM, GOD SAID

Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. (Genesis 12:1-3)

In brief, this is God's call to Abraham, the Abrahamic Covenant, which neither time nor circumstance has diminished. Nor has God revoked it. While authorities differ as to the exact year, there is general agreement that it was made in the twentieth century B.C.

To be sure, Abraham did not carry out his part of the Covenant perfectly. For instance, contrary to instructions, he took with him from his native land his kinsman, Lot, who later proved to be a serious hindrance. Albeit many times through history the Covenant's conditions have been breached, nevertheless, God's redemptive plan continues to unfold. In a pattern that repeats through Scripture, the Abrahamic Covenant was renewed and elaborated upon at least four times to Abraham, and many times more thereafter to his descendants.

There was many reiterations yet one Covenant with one all-embracing Promise. Said the Apostle Paul in chains to King Agrippa:

And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. (Acts 26:6-7)

What is God's overarching Promise? that He will provide the lamb:

And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. (Genesis 22)

Long in advance of Abraham's day, God made certain promises first to Adam and later to Noah, which promises are known respectively as the Adamic Covenant and the Noahic Covenant. In the larger scheme of God's redemptive purpose, these Covenants, beginning with *Genesis 3:15*, were all of one piece, for all of them, each in their own way, looked ahead to the day when God would provide a lamb. There is an abattoir:

#### THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT (HEBREWS 10:29)

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. (Hebrews 10:19)

The oath God made to Abraham, He reiterated to his son, Isaac:

And Jehovah appeared unto him [Isaac], and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.

*(Genesis 26:1-5)*

And to Jacob, Abraham's grandson by Isaac, the Promise was again reiterated:

And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, Jehovah stood above it, and said, I am Jehovah God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

*(Genesis 28:10-15)*

Afterward God reconfirmed His Covenant with Moses:

And the angel of YHWH appeared unto him [Moses] in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when YHWH saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses, And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

*(Exodus 3:2-6)*

Then to Joshua, God reconfirmed his Abrahamic Covenant:

Hear O Israel: thou art to pass over Jordan this day, to go in to possess nations greater and mightier than thyself, cities great and fenced up to heaven, a people great and tall, the children of the Anakim, whom thou knowest and of whom thou hast heard say, Who can stand before the children of Anak!  
... Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, dost thou go to possess their land:

but for the wickedness of these nations Jehovah thy God doth drive them out from before thee, and that he may perform the word which Jehovah sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

*(Deuteronomy 9:1-2, 5)*

As the above Scripture indicates, the mandate by which Joshua acted, so far from displacing the Abrahamic Covenant, was directed entirely toward its fulfillment. Space does permit a complete recounting of the Covenant's multitudinous reiterations to King David, King Solomon, King Josiah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Nehemiah, etc, up to and including to the times of the Maccabees:

Was not Abraham found faithful in temptation, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness? Joseph in the time of his distress kept the commandment, and was made lord of Egypt; Phinees our father in being zealous and fervent obtained the covenant of an everlasting priesthood. Joseph for fulfilling the word was made a judge in Israel. Caleb for bearing witness before the congregation received the heritage of the land. David for being merciful possessed the throne of an everlasting kingdom. Elijah for being zealous and fervent for the law was taken up into heaven. Ananias, Azarias, and Misael, by believing were saved out of the flame. Daniel for his innocency was delivered from the mouth of lions. And thus consider ye throughout all ages that none that put their trust in him shall be overcome. *(I Maccabees)*

Moving forward chronologically, Mother Mary said:

He hath helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; as he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever. *(Luke 1:54-55)*

And as Zechariah, the father of, John, the forerunner, said:

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel;  
for he hath visited and redeemed his people.  
and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us  
in the house of his servant David;  
as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets,  
which have been since the world began:  
that we should be saved from our enemies,  
and from the hand of all that hate us;  
to perform the mercy promised to our fathers,  
and to remember his holy covenant;  
the oath which he sware to our father Abraham, . . . *(Luke 1:68-75)*

The Law given 430 years later did not annul the Covenant. Nor did Christ. To the contrary, through Jesus Christ the blessing of Abraham came to Jews and Gentiles alike.

My covenant I will not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. *(Psalm 89:34)*

God's promises are not as man's – contingency dependent – but immutable decrees:

And I [Jehovah] will establish my covenant with thee and with thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant. *(Genesis 17:7)*

Through His messiah, the Abrahamic Covenant applies to Jews and Gentiles alike:

And if ye be Christ's, then are you Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. *(Galatians 3:29)*

The ethnic aspect has not been cancelled out, for:

God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. *(Romans 11:2)*

However estranged the original Covenant people currently may be, however scattered abroad they may be, for them the best is yet to be:

And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion a Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant with them, when I shall take away their sins. *(Rom 11: 26-27)*

Regarding His Covenant's future fulfillment, thus saith the Lord:

Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in Jehovah your God: for he hath given you the former rain and moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors will be full of wheat, and the vats overflow with wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of Jehovah your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed. And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am Jehovah your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed. And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of Jehovah come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the name of Jehovah shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as Jehovah hath said, and in the remnant whom Jehovah shall call. For behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and bring them into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land. *(Joel 2:23-3:2)*

#### HE WILL EVER BE MINDFUL OF HIS COVENANT (*Psalm 111:5*)

O give thanks unto Jehovah; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works. Glory ye in his holy name. Let the heart of them rejoice that seek Jehovah. Seek Jehovah and his strength: seek His face evermore. Remember his marvelous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth; O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob his chosen. He is Jehovah our God: his judgments are in all the earth. He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations. Which covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac; and confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, And to Israel for an everlasting covenant: saying, Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the lot of your inheritance. When they were but a few men in number; yea, very few, and strangers in it; when they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people; He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproveth kings for their sakes: saying, Touch not my anointed, and do my prophets no harm. . . . For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham his servant. And he brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness: And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they inherited the labor of the people; That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye Jehovah. (*Psalm 105:1-15,42-45*)

#### QUALIFIED PROMISES TO QUALIFIED PEOPLE

Jehovah will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. (*Psalm 84:11*)  
Demonstrating a balanced understanding of the human/Divine partnership, where God is the senior initiating partner and humankind the junior respondent, where each party has duties to perform and promises to keep, Jude in his *Epistle* wrote:

But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. (*Jude 1:20-3*)

Jewish sages of old have said that all is ordained by God except the reverence and love of God. In this way they recognized that God has granted man space to make choices. Without violating that which makes us human, namely, our freedom to choose, God executes his Covenant. Thus, when a certain individual asked Jesus: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" he received in reply two questions: "What is written in the Torah?" and "How readest thou?" (*Luke 10:25-26*), the implication being that the answer to the inquirer's question is found, not only in the written word according to the normal signification of words, but also within himself as the interpreter of those words.

The promises of the Covenant are not a guaranteed outcome but a guaranteed oppor-

tunity to apprehend and apply God's Law. Is there no place then within the Covenant for certitude? In God, yes; in ourselves, no. There's no place for saying: "once-in-grace-always-in-grace-no-matter-how-much-a-disgrace." Some who cling to the Eternal Security Doc-trine, no doubt for safety sake, will claim, "sin all you want, you can't loose your salvation." In response, others would say, "but I already sin more than I want."

This then is the conditionality of the Abrahamic Covenant by which believers live:

If my people, which are called by my name shall, humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. (II Chronicles 7:14)

If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, ' wherewith I said I would benefit them. (Jeremiah 18:7-10)

Jesus also employed the if word. To his community of believers in Sardis, he said:

If therefore thou shalt not watch, [then] I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know that hour I will come upon thee. (Revelation 3:3)

As well did the apostle Peter used the if word:

For if these things [faith, virtue, knowledge, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity] be in you and abound, [then] that make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (I Peter 1:8)

This then is the benediction at the close of Jude's *Epistle*:

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power both now and ever, Amen. (Jude 24-25)

In summation: Jesus Christ came into the world to confirm God's Abrahamic Covenant, the same Covenant as was reiterated over and over to the fathers. In this we see a certain symmetry, for between Abraham and the coming of Christ was 2000 years and by the end of that time the Jews had made a shipwreck of the faith. Now another 2000 years, from Christ's time to the present has passed and we see that Christendom also is making a ship-wreck of the faith. There never was a time it seems when individual responsibility wasn't called for. Just going along with the herd won't cut it. Never did. Never will.

T H E   N A R R O W   W A Y

There is guidance and comfort in the Gospel but a spur, spurring us on, for only to the extent that its core values are affirmed and put into practice, do we come into the good of it. It takes courage as well as grace to walk the Gospel walk and not just talk it. We should not overlook Jesus' sterner admonitions, that:

. . . narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. (Matthew 7:14)

Whoso will have life without end, look that he keep the commandments of God.

(NGN, chapter 74)

Professions of faith notwithstanding, we are still on the hook as those who must give account and to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, even as Jesus warned:

"God prevent it that man should tempt him by asking for help to be saved, but not help himself."

(NGN, chapter 8)

No feel-good, opiate-type religion was Jesus pitching but qualified promises to qualified people, his is, a covenanted partnership requiring the highest level of commitment whereby both Man and God have promises to keep and standards to maintain.

#### CONTINUITY OR DISCONTINUITY?

The real reason the concept of the *Testimonia* is controversial, and, therefore, is rejected, is because it is conservative. It is conservative precisely because it rests on continuity. In that it is the opposite of Gnosticism which posits a Jesus who replaces Jehovah. It is the opposite of the Church's idea who sees itself as replacing Israel. It is the opposite of evangelical Dispensationalism which posits a succession of ages, each having their own rules. Alas, many Christians, particularly those of a fundamentalist persuasion, vociferously dispute these claims, their position being that Jesus came to cancel the Law and replace it with what they call "the New Covenant." For example, one respected conservative theologian of the previous generation, Graham Scroggie, claimed:

The Old Covenant ... holds us in bondage, but the New brings us into freedom. The Old involves a curse, but the New imparts a blessing. In the Old man seeks God, but in the New God seeks man. By the Old man is condemned as a sinner, but by the New he is delivered from his sin. In the Old God says 'you cannot', but in the New Christ says 'I can'. The Old covenant is really bad news, but the New Covenant is Good News, that is, Gospel. . . . How wonderful is the contrast: Moses and Christ; Mosaism and Christianity; Death and Life; on Stone and in the Heart; Letter and Spirit; condemnation and Righteousness; Passing and Permanent; face Veiled and Unveiled; Bondage and Freedom; Transience and Transformation. ... There are at least ten points of contrast between the Old and the New Dispensations. Christianity is not glorified Judaism; it is something entirely new.

There is a fundamental difference between the Law and the Gospel. (W. Graham Scroggie *The unfolding Drama of Redemption*, Kregel Publications, 1994 (vol. II, p 74, vol. III, p. 92)

Boldly embracing a belief in contrasts, Scroggie apparently saw little in way of continuity between the Testaments, *Old* and *New*. No doubt he sincerely believed that he was promoting "the faith once delivered to the saints." (*Jude* 3) but he fell about a century short, embracing instead the antithetical thinking of Marcion whose competing movement's rate of growth in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century briefly outpaced that of the proto-Catholic Church. In an effort to counter it's influence, certain of Marcion's tenets were picked up and propagated in modified form by the Church, a practice continuing to this day. Though Marcion's book, *Anti-thesis*, long ago disappeared, as has his religion, their influence continues, albeit largely unrecognized for what it is.

Nor is it just the Hebrew Scriptures that are to be set aside, Jesus' teachings are also to be set aside:

Many interpreters see the Sermon on the Mount as directly and primarily applicable to Christians today. To do this, interpreters depend heavily on the method of spiritualization, for it is apparent that the laws and regulations found in the Sermon cannot be directly applied today without producing insurmountable problems and repercussions.

The requirements of turning the other cheek and not asking for that which had been borrowed, although applicable under some conditions, would be difficult to apply under all circumstances.

As Charles Ryrie observes: "But if the laws of the Sermon are to be obeyed today they could not be taken literally, for as [George Eldon] Ladd points out, every businessman would go bankrupt giving to those who ask of him. This is the dilemma every interpreter faces. If literal, it cannot be for today; if for today, it cannot be literal. Moreover, a casual reading of the Sermon reveals that it contains an embarrassing absence of church truths.

Nothing is said regarding Christ's sacrifice for sin (found as early as John 3), the faith which brings salvation, prayer in the name of Christ, the Holy Spirit, and even the church itself. These are all foundational truths taught by Christ during His early ministry.

If this the most lengthy and didactic of Christ's teachings were truly intended to be primarily related to the Christian church, its omission of basic church truths would be highly irregular.

There are, of course, parallels between precepts in the Sermon and those found in the Epistles, but this does not mean that one equals the other. The Ten commandments are all reiterated in the New Testament except one, but this does not mean that the Ten commandments and the New Testament precepts are one



and the same.

In view of these considerations, the proper conclusion with regards to the Sermon on the Mount is that the full and non-modified fulfillment of this portion of Matthew is possible only in relationship to the future institution of the Messianic Kingdom. It is applicable primarily to the nation Israel as she anticipates the institution of the kingdom at the millennium. It has no primary application in the church and should not be so taken.

*(The Interpretation of Prophecy, Paul Lee Tan, Th.D.)*

So here we have a situation where the Law is cancelled because we are under the New Covenant but, since the Millennium hasn't arrived, Jesus' New Covenant teaching need not be acted upon either. Thus it is that the antinomian Church has fallen into the crack between covenants, *Old* and *New*. Fundamentalist Christianity's adopted goal is to get men out of hell and into heaven, overlooking somehow that in between conversion and death there is a life to be lived. Their's is simply too narrow a foundation on which to build a moral community. The answer to covenantless Christianity is not to postulate two Israels, one Old, one New, or multiple dispensations, or multiple testaments but to accept that there are believers, both Jews and Christians, and those from every family and tribe who are spiritually awakened who name Abraham as their father and call upon God with no middle wall of division between them, having as a common mediator the man, Jesus Christ.

Naturally, none of this going to go down too well with those folk raised in conventional Christian settings, who are unprepared to countenance the idea that *none* of the Church's ceremonies, call them sacraments if you will, are efficacious; or that the Church is not a mediator between man and God, that only the man, Christ Jesus is; or that access to Jesus is not limited by any churchly hierarchy, or that salvation is dependant in any way on apostolic succession. Actually, on reflection, given repeated demonstrations of institutional frailty, this is good news, for the churches, being the human constructs that they are, are weak reeds on which any of us might rest our eternal well-being. Jesus admonishes us to take responsibility for our behavior.

And so then Jesus warned them [his disciples] of the pains and torments which they would suffer for his love. And he bade them be wise as a serpent and as simple as a dove. And at the end he comforted them and said that whoso had steadfast faith he would be safe, and that those who received them would also have good reward even as would those who received himself, or God Almighty, his father. (*ngn*, chapter 113)

This too is of the covenant, that it is not all of grace nor all of self effort but it is a partner-

ship, for:

The kingdom of God cometh not with outward show; neither shall they say,  
Lo here! or, Lo there! for behold, the kingdom of God is within you. (Luke 17:20-21)

The Gospel is not just about God's transcendence but also His immanence, that being the Life of God in the Soul of Man, a core 1<sup>st</sup> century belief, is about our becoming by grace what God is by nature. Called *Theodosia* in Greek, Peter at Pentecost said of it:

For the promise [of spiritual enlightenment] is to you and to your children,  
and to *all* who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." (Acts 2:9)

The Gospel advances on two planes simultaneously: outwardly as the approaching millennial kingdom when Jesus will return in force but also within as the Spirit's presence.

#### NAZARENE MEANS "BRANCH"

And there came forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch [*N'tzer* in Hebrew or Nazareth in Gk.] shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah; . . . (Isaiah 11:1-2)

"A rod from the stem / a branch from the root," if you've ever puzzled about these expressions or the cognomen "Branch Davidian," they're all references to the prophesied messianic offshoot which grew forth from King David's family tree. That is the subject of this essay, Nazarene history, not Church history. Though they share certain features, they are rivals having different Scriptures, modes of operation, and potentialities.

Albeit "the Branch," Jesus did not start the Nazarene movement but John the Baptist did which is why he's known as the "Forerunner." At the root of the movement were covenantal promises made to David and before him to Abraham. This, the Abrahamic/Davidic Covenant, Jesus extended to all people. This he did not annul, replace, or supercede as some suppose, especially as the Church supposes.

Because trees grow from the bottom up, not from the top down, our assessment of the Nazarene movement necessarily depends on our assessment of its roots – is it a valid expression of the promises made to King David a 1000 years before. As for Davidic promises, are they consistent with the Covenant made a 1000 years before his time with Abraham? Abraham > the House of Israel > the House of David > the Nazarene Branch, all depend on whether they are rooted in God or not. In approaching such questions, let us do so with our eyes open, for credulity is not belief, any more than honest inquiry is sacrilege. *Intellige*

*ut credas* – from understanding cometh believing. Does this not comport with “the spirit of wisdom and understanding ... the spirit of knowledge and reverence of YHVH”?

And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, he shall be called a Nazarene. (*Matthew 2:23*)

Odd that statement, since Nazareth is never mentioned in prophecy, indeed, is never mentioned in Scripture, nor even in prior secular literature. The only other *New Testament* “Nazarene” reference – at least translated as such in the King James Version – is *Acts 24:5* where Paul is described by his detractors as a “ringleader of the sect of the Nazarene.” However, all four canonical gospels, in various places, in the original Greek use the form “*Iesou Nazarene*” (e.g. *Matthew 26:71*; *Mark 1:24, 10:47, 14:67*; *Luke 4:34*; *John 17:5*; *Acts 2:22*) which, while all are translated as “Jesus of Nazareth,” might better be translated as “Jesus the Nazarene.”

“Nazarene” is the term used to this day throughout the East, in Hebrew, in Syriac, in Arabic for “Christian” – that is, “Messianic.” Three possible Hebrew words exist from which “Nazarene” could have been derived: from *N’tzer*, meaning “Branch”: or *Nozrei*, meaning “to keep” as in *nozrei ha-Brit*, “keepers of the Covenant.” Jeremiah uses the term regarding the Rechabites who “keep the oath of their father Jonadab” and: *Nazar* meaning “consecrated to,” or “set apart unto God,” that is a Nazarite. According to one scholar, Robert Eisenman:

The term [‘Nazarene’] probably cannot derive from the word ‘Nazareth’ though Nazareth could derive from it – that is, there could be a city in Galilee which derived its name from the expression Nazoraean in Hebrew, but not the other way around.” . . . “The ‘keeping’ aspect of this terminology is exactly the definition by modern-day offshoots of this orientation, ‘the Sabaeans of the marshes’ in Southern Iraq, who still hold the memory of John the Baptist dear and call their priests ‘Nazoreans’ ... Apparently ‘Mandaean’ was the name used for the rank and file of such groups, the priestly elite being known as the *Nazoraean*s! ‘*Suba*’ of course, meant to be baptized or immersed. (*James the Brother of Jesus*, Robert Eisenman)

Nearly 4000 years have elapsed since the Covenant was established with Abraham. In this expanse of time, testings have been frequent, with respites having been relatively few and brief. From the shadows of the pyramids forward, Abraham's physical descendants have long been a perishing people, yet they live and the promises of God remain. From Abraham to Jesus, 1970 BC to 30 AD (2000 years), were the former days and – since that time, there are the latter days.

In the former days were patriarchs, kings, and priests; in these latter days there are redemptive fellowships in which context no special place is accorded priests, prelates, popes, vicars, rabbis, or any other authority figure – God the Father being sufficient. If there are priests, it is the priesthood of believers. All are priests and kings or none are. Nevertheless, believers are finite and fallible. Though ruled above and from within by God, as social beings we need each other, but only on the basis of mutual respect.

Having been rejected by temple and synagogue, Jesus' fall back position was to establish an egalitarian society of friends against whom the gates of hell would not prevail. Rather than replace, abolish, or reform any of the aforementioned institutions, Jesus simply moved on. Instead of promoting a reformed or even a substitute synagogue movement, or a purified Aaronic priesthood, or a resurrected Davidic kingship, Jesus turned to the last bastions of civility: face to face communities, the home, and the individual believer. Networked together, though one waters and the other plants, and God gives the increase even as His power is diffused among them.

#### DEFINING "ISRAEL"

The word 'Israel' today generally refers to the oversea's political nation, the State of Israel. When people say 'I am going to Israel,' they mean a trip to Tel Aviv or Jerusalem . . . [But] the prayers that Judaism teaches, all use the word 'Israel' to mean 'the holy community.

(Rabbi Jacob Neusner)

"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean -- neither more nor less." "The question is," said Alice, "whether you can make words mean so many things." "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master -- that's all."

(Lewis Carroll, *Through the Looking Glass*)

Those possessing great power over society have a way of making their definitions stick. Nonetheless, a higher law than their's pertains, namely, the Law of First Mention, whereby a word means that which Holy Writ first says it means. Let us ask, what meant the word "Israel" when it fell from the lips of the unidentified "man" who had engaged the patriarch Jacob in an all-night wrestling match? Having held his own, Jacob at daybreak demanded a blessing from this mysterious person. His reply was swift in coming:

"Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but **Israel**: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

(Genesis 32:28)

A compound word, "Israel" in Hebrew divides into three parts: 'ils- "man" ra- "struggle" and "-el," "God." A God wrestler, Jacob, the "man who struggles with God" wrestled God's

mysterious representative to a draw until morning and won a blessing. Suggestive of whom he was wrestling, Jacob/Israel named that place of struggle and blessing “Pneiel,” *pnei-*, meaning “face of,” for, as he put it:

“I have seen God face to face and lived.” (Genesis 32:30)

Not long thereafter, Jacob built an altar. In naming it, he appropriated his new name, calling that place “*El-elohe-Israel*,” which translated means: “God is the God of him who struggles with God.”

Now here’s where things get just a little complicated for there exists an alternative way of translating “Israel,” one widely recognized in antiquity, that is to break the word *Israel* into three parts: *’is ra’a el*, meaning the “man who saw God.” (Or: *yasur el*, meaning: [he] sees God.) Let us recall what Jacob said:

“I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.” (Genesis 32:30)

Wrote Philo of Alexandria (c. 25 BC - 41 AD?) :

For seeing is the lot of the freeborn and first born Israel, which [name], translated, is the one seeing God.  
(*On Flight and Finding*)

Hippolytus of Rome (c. 170-c 236 AD) wrote:

“Israel means a “man seeing God,” while others say it is a “man who will see God.” (*Pentateuch*)

Wrote Origen (185-232 AD):

“It is this people alone which it is said to “see God,” for the name Israel when translated has this meaning.”  
(*On First Principles*)

Wrote Eusebius (c. 260 - c. 340 AD):

“Israel” means “seeing God,” in the sense of the knowing and contemplative faculty.” (*Praeparatio Evangelica*)

Wrote Augustine of Hippo (354 - 430 AD):

. . . he [Jacob] then asked for a blessing from the same angel whom he had just overcome. The granting of this new name was thus the blessing. For Israel means “one seeing God,” which in the end will be the reward of all the saints.  
(*City of God* 16:39)

Let us leave to linguists the finer points of definition. Given our present state of knowledge, it is reasonable to allow for both meanings, both “to struggle” and “to see.” And who is to say that a double meaning wasn’t intended from the outset?

Was the person whom Jacob saw the same his grandfather Abraham saw, Melchizedek, King of Salem? Was it the same as the “son of man” whom Daniel saw in the fiery furnace? Was the voice Jacob heard, the still, small voice Elijah heard? However that may be, Jacob was a changed man.

Truly a tale of epic proportions, Israel’s story was written on a very large canvas, one possessing numerous twists and turns and surprising psychological insights. Only a few notables, a Moses or a David, are given a fuller, more detailed treatment in Scripture. Thus it has come to pass that in all his struggles Jacob/Israel has come to embody the hopes and fears, not only of his own people, but of people everywhere, for his life speaks volumes about the passions and pathos of the human predicament. Even in our relentlessly secular era among those not religiously inclined, broad acquaintance exists with the particulars of his story, for instance, how he obtained his twin brother Esau’s birthright by cunningly disguising himself so as to deceive his blind, aged father, Isaac, into granting him Esau’s blessing. After that he had to flee to the far country to escape Esau’s wrath. There he lived 20 years in Laban’s household (Laban being his mother Rebekah’s brother). By agreement with his uncle, Jacob worked seven years for the hand of Laban’s daughter, Rachel, and, as the Scriptures read, those years seemed to him “but a few days, for the love he had for her.” But on his wedding night, he discovered that he had been deceived, that his veiled bride was not Rachel, rather Rachel’s unmarried older sister, Leah. Therefore he worked another seven years for Rachel and six more years after that, and all the while Laban kept diddling him and changing his terms of employment.

After two decades absence, on a word from God, Jacob and his extensive entourage, including two wives and many sons returned to the land promised to Abraham. On approaching Canaan, Jacob learned to his chagrin that Esau was advancing toward him with an army of 400. As it is written, he was “afraid and distressed.” As some exegetes have said, he was afraid of losing all in battle but also distressed that he might have to kill. Working every angle he could, Jacob sent gifts ahead and divided his people into two bands. Taking up the thread of his story as told in *Genesis*, let us begin with the eve before his fateful meeting with Esau:

And Jacob said, O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, YHWH who said unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shown unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he come and smite, and the mother with the children, and thou said, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered

for multitude. And he lodged there that same night . . . And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him. And when he saw he prevailed no against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name And he said, wherefore is it that thou ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel; for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. And he passed over Peneul the sun rose upon him, and he hated upon his thigh.

(Genesis 32:9-13, 24-31)

Returning to a previously-made point, that language is idiosyncratic, that it is the nature of the idiom for multiple meanings to attach to a single word. Let us consider how the meaning of "Israel" expanded in biblical usage as to include Jacob/Israel's descendants. For instance, in *Exodus*, God tells Moses to tell Pharaoh:

"Thus saith YHWH, 'Israel is my son, even my first born . . . Let my son go." (Exodus 4:22-23)

Later, it is written of King Solomon that "all Israel obeyed him" (*I Chronicles 29:23*), the idea being, not that *every* Israelite obeyed him, but, corporately speaking, the nation was subject to him and obeyed him. After King Solomon's time, the Israelite nation broke apart into two: the Southern Kingdom, called "Judah;" and the Northern Kingdom, called "Israel" (*I Kings 15:9*). Thus we see that besides Jacob and his descendants, there was a political entity called "Israel."

But let us now go one step further by inquiring whether Jesus IS Israel. In *Isaiah 41:8*, God is credited with saying:

"But thou, Israel, art my servant ... the seed of Abraham."

Referencing to this same verse immediately above, the apostle Paul wrote:

"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. The Scripture does not say, 'and to seeds' meaning many people, but, 'and to your seed' meaning one person, who is Christ." (*Galatians 3:16*)

"Seed of Abraham" is singular above, not plural. Referring only to Jesus, it does not include Abraham's wicked posterity. Abraham was promised heirs who would become as numerous "as the sands of the sea and the stars of heaven." But those heirs are not necessarily racially Jews but Gentiles also who through the ages have trusted God and obeyed his Spirit.

It's not just Paul. About 800 BC, Hosea too speaks of Israel in the singular. He recorded

God as saying:

"When Israel was a child, then I love him, and called my son out of Egypt." (*Hosea 11:1*)

*Matthew*, quoting this verse as applying prophetically to Jesus:

. . . until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord  
by the prophet, saying, "out of Egypt have I called my son." (*Matthew 2:15*)

So, *Hosea* had in mind the nation but *Matthew* had in mind the person. So which is it, individual or nation? There's a way to straddle this question by seeing that Jesus was representative Israel. To an amazing degree, Holy Writ, unlike any other book, contains types and antitypes. That is to say, the nation of Israel and the outworking of its history, were object lessons foreshadowing the events of Jesus' life.

If we're right in our supposition that the man/angel who wrestled Jacob until dawn was the pre-incarnate Jesus, then, perhaps, we can see that by renaming Jacob "Israel," Jesus was lending to him his own name, a name which he later reclaimed. But why would Jesus lend his name to Jacob? because Jacob, in his struggle to save his family, mirrored or foreshadowed the struggles Jesus would have as Savior. This we see of Jesus on the stake of impalement, crying forth in agony, "My God, my God why hath thou forsaken me?" His was code language, for so the psalms were identified by speaking forth their first verse. He was saying in effect, go read *Psalms 22*.

Jesus intervenes with God on man's behalf, even as it is written: "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, ..." (*I Timothy 2:5-6*). Why so? because he is uniquely "... the lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (*Revelation 13:8*). In the great controversy between God and Satan, Jesus, by appointment of God, entered the fray on our behalf. That's why he's the Eternal God wrestler, the Eternal Israel of God.

They are not all Israel, which are of Israel. (*Romans 9:6*)

Unrepentant sinners of any race have no inheritance from a holy God – on earth or in heaven. They can only expect God's wrath. Evangelicals misinterpret God's blessing to Abraham and also misread His curses. God told Abraham, "I will bless them that bless you and curse them that curse you." (*Gen. 12:3*) Most Christians mistakenly fear that to criticize evil Jewish leadership is to "curse God's chosen people." Result: they unconditionally support Israel's most egregious injustices. But this verse applies to righteous Abraham and only to those descendants who also walk in righteousness. Yes, God did promise the land of Israel to Abraham's genetic descendants. But only obedient Jews can enjoy that inheritance. Paul says someday



a Jewish remnant will repent at Christ's return; "the Lord shall return to Zion and turn ungodliness from Jacob (Rom. 11:26) The Promised Land is their birthright. Out of the dry bones of Jewish unbelief, Christ will raise up a nation of saints (Ezekiel 37); and for the first time in at least 2,000 years, believing Jews will be divinely endorsed to occupy Palestine. . . . God hasn't changed. He said the Jews turned away from Him, but He remained the same (Malachi 3:6). Those who have changed and forgotten God's law are not only the Jews – but tens of millions of evangelicals. (Who are Abraham's Children, Rev. Tred Pike 3/23/2010)

There is the outward, physical fact of generation, but also the inward reality of spiritual regeneration. It wasn't merely that his grandfather was Abraham or his father Isaac, but Jacob, through the integrity of his faith in God, attained spiritual reality. The nature of his engagement with God merited remembrance. Prophesied Balaam:

"There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel . (*Numbers 24:17*)

In *Psalms 80:8*, Israel, the nation, is called "a vine" whom God brought out of Egypt but Jesus says of himself, that "I am the true vine" (*John 15:1*). And Isaiah quotes God as saying of the nation, Israel:

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed he shall not break, and the smoking flax he shall not quench; he shall bring forth judgment unto truth." (*Isaiah 42:1-3*)

God called Israel "mine elect," but we see that Jesus is God's elect. How did he handle election? By emptying himself, by becoming a servant. That's what Abraham did, that's what Jacob did, and that's what we have to do. Moving on, let us consider another expression of Paul's:

For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. (*Galatians 6:15-16*)

If I'm hearing Paul aright, he's expanding the meaning of "Israel" beyond what we have heretofore considered to include a spiritual aspect separate apart from any ethnic consideration. In other words, a Gentile could have the same quality of engagement with God that Jacob/Israel had. Certainly, earlier in his epistle to the Galatians, that would seem to be the thrust of Paul's argument when he writes:

If you are in Christ, then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promises. (*Galatians 3:29*)

Be they Gentile or Jew, whoever is Abraham's seed, spiritually speaking, is Israel. Alas, Christian theologians have pushed the whole matter in the wrong direction by claiming that

the “Church is the “new,” replacement Israel. The problem with this line of reasoning (sometimes referred to as replacement theology or supersessionism) is that the name “Israel” is applied to a corporate entity, the institutional Church, when it’s only rightly applied to the individual or class of individuals who quest to know God. The idea, then, is not of a “new,” replacement Israel but of the Israel of old who prevailed with man and God.

Behold Israel after the flesh, . . . (*I Corinthians 10:18*)

Paul’s expressions “Israel after the flesh” and “the Israel of God” are often treated as if they were diametrically opposed but this cannot be. Jesus was both Israel after the flesh and Israel after the Spirit. Paul’s expression need not be seen as an either/or proposition.

Arises, then, the question, who is “Israel after the flesh” in our day? Are modern-day Israelis even descended from the Israelites of old? Strong evidence exists that they are not. According to one historian, Shlomo Sand, of Tel Aviv University:

Then there is the question of the exile of 70 AD. There has been no real research into this turning point in Jewish history, the cause of the diaspora. And for a simple reason: the Romans never exiled any nation from anywhere on the eastern seaboard of the Mediterranean. Apart from enslaved prisoners, the population of Judea continued to live on in their lands, even after the destruction of second temple. Some converted to Christianity in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, while the majority embraced Islam during the 7<sup>th</sup> century Arab conquest.

Most Zionist thinkers were aware of this: Yitzhak Ben Zvi, later President of Israel, and David Ben Gurion, its first prime minister, accepted it as late as 1929, the year of the great Palestinian revolt. Both stated on several occasions that the peasants of Palestine were the descendants of the inhabitants of ancient Judea. Yitzhak Ben Zvi, the second president of the State of Israel, wrote in 1929 that “the vast majority of the peasant farmers do not have their origins in the Arab Conquerors, but rather, before then, in the Jewish farmers who were numerous and a majority in the building of the land.”

But if there was no exile after 70 AD, where did all the Jews who have populated the Mediterranean since antiquity come from? The smokescreen of national historiography hides an astonishing reality. From the Maccabean revolt of the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century BC to the Bar Kokhba revolt of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, Judaism was the most actively proselytizing religion. . . . The most significant mass conversion occurred in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, in the massive Khazar kingdom between the Black and Caspian seas.

If those currently ruling the Promised Land are not racially Semites but Asiatics, it’s next reasonable to ask whether they are religiously or spiritually Israelites? Since most modern, Israeli Jews are religiously nonobservant, one can hardly say that they qualify on religious grounds. But what of the observant Israeli minority? According to Jesus their practices, being the practices of the Pharisees, is diametrically opposed to anything Jacob would have

known of or have approved of. Of Talmudic Judaism, Jewish authorities say:

The Jewish religion as it is today traces its descent without a break through all the centuries from the Pharisees. Their leading ideas and methods found expression in a literature of enormous extent, of which a very great deal is still in existence. The Talmud is the largest and most important single piece of that literature and the study of it is essential for any real understanding of Pharisaism.

*(The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia, p. 474)*

If we had any real interest in Abraham's physical offspring, that is, Israel after the flesh, or even if we had any interest in simple justice, we would be championing the Palestinians' cause because the current situation is one of Ashkenazis interlopers, awarding to themselves the Law of Return when they were never there in the first place while denying to those who were there all along the right to continue living there. When we support the modern State of Israel, what we're supporting is not the faith once delivered to the saints but Pharisaism, or worse yet, an international bankers' conspiracy. Supporting such would make us doubly Abraham's foes in that we would be opposing both his physical and spiritual heritage. In a nutshell Zionism is the granting to Asiatic pretenders rights to the Promised Land when they possess no legitimate claim whatsoever – be it legal, racial, or religious. God promised Abraham,

"Unto thy seed will I give this land." (Genesis 12:7)

#### **THE INGATHERING OF THE DISPOSSESSED**

And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

*((Zechariah 12:10))*

To whom applies this verse, to Asiatic interlopers or to Abraham's true physical descendants? Much of Christendom is off on a fool's errand to "bless Israel," this based on race, not grace, and it is another gospel entirely. Despite pretensions Asiatic interlopers entertain regarding their chosen-ness, they are not the apple of God's eye; rather, redeemed humanity is. That is the Israel of God. In due course, as it is written, Jehovah God will throw the money changers out, as well, the armies of Gentiles which they have mustered to serve their cause:

Then shall YHWH go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought the day of battle. . . . And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And YHWH shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one YHWH, and his name one. *(Zechariah 13:3, 14:8-9)*

#### **WRONGLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH**

Dispensationalism is a system of theology whose adherents strive for a consistently literal interpretation of the Bible. It makes careful distinctions between different periods of God's progressive dealings with mankind, and between His plans for national Israel and for the New Testament Church. Dispensationalism is currently the most common interpretive framework for lay-level evangelicals in the United States. What makes dispensationalism distinct from other historical perspectives is that a new dispensation is generally not responsible for the revelation intended for other dispensations. The Church is not under the obligations of the Old Testament law, and in fact is not subject to any law at all. As Lewis Sperry Chafer explained, whereas the command of the Old Testament was "repent," the command of the New Testament is "only believe!" (C. Pope)

Contrasting Law and Grace as belonging to entirely different dispensations, Dr. Cyrus Scofield, the famed author of the Scofield Reference Bible, wrote:

It is, however, of the most vital moment to observe that Scripture never, in any dispensation mingles these two principles. Law always has a place and work distinct and wholly diverse from that of grace. . . . Everywhere the Scriptures present law and grace in sharply contrasted spheres. The mingling of them in much of the current teaching of the day spoils both, for law is robbed of its terror and grace of its freeness. . . . As a dispensation, grace begins with the death and resurrection of Christ.

As a corollary to his injunction not to co-mingle Law and Grace, Dr. Scofield came to the surprising conclusion, that both the Lord's prayer and the Sermon on the Mount are "pure law" rooted, he says, in "legal ground." The prayer "forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," is applicable, he claims, only to a past or future dispensation and he warns his readers that Jesus only intended by the Sermon on the Mount to convey a legalism impossible to practice.

One of the most remarkable innovations dispensationalists ever came up with is the assertion that there are two New Covenants, one for the Jew, one for the Christian:

There remains to be recognized a heavenly covenant for the heavenly people, which is also styled like the preceding one for Israel, a "new covenant." It is made in the blood of Christ (cf. Mark 14:24) and continues in effect throughout this age, whereas the new covenant made with Israel happens to be future in its application. . . . To suppose that these two covenants – one for Israel and one for the Church – are the same is to assume that there is a latitude of common interest between God's purpose for Israel and His purpose for the Church. (Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology*)

[The] basic premise of Dispensationalism is two purposes of God expressed in the formation of two peoples who maintain their distinction throughout eternity. (Charles C. Ryrie)

The church and Israel are two distinct groups with whom God has a divine plan . . . These considerations all arise from a literal method of interpretation. (Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come*)

As we see from the quotes above, leading dispensationalists, if they had their druthers, would forever separate followers of Jesus from Israel.

According to Lewis S. Chafer, founder of Dallas Theological Seminary, the 20<sup>th</sup> century's leading dispensationalist systematizer, the Church is "wholly unrelated to any divine purpose which preceded it or follows it." In light of such views, it is understandable that some evangelicals, supposing the Church age to be all but over, a mere parenthesis, so they say, bracketed on either side by Israel, are moving their allegiance to Israel:

In the last eight years alone, an estimated 400,000 born-again donors have sent [Rabbi Yechiel] Eckstein about a quarter of a billion dollars for Jewish causes of his personal choosing. No Jew since Jesus has commanded this kind of gentile following.

("The Rabbi Who Loved Evangelicals and Vice Versa" Zev Chafets)

Alas, the love which evangelicals have showered on the rabbi is unrequited. In his book, *What You Should Know About Jews and Judaism* (p. 295), Rabbi Eckstein, states explicitly:

A Jew who accepts Jesus as Lord or Messiah effectively ceases to be a Jew.

What we have then, beginning with Dr. Cyrus Scofield, is not so much new-found tolerance between Jews and Christians as a temporary convergence of triumphalisms:

. . . an alliance in which each side assumes that the other is playing a role it doesn't understand itself, in which each often regards the other as an unknowing instrument for reaching a higher goal. (Gershom Gorenberg)

Zionized Christians and Zionized Jews, even as they trumpet "our Judeo-Christian heritage," each in their own way, are building a wall of separation between Jews and Christians and, as well, between Israel and the Church. Zionized Christians and Zionized Jews,

#### **B R E A K I N G   D O W N   T H E   W A L L   O F   S E P A R A T I O N**

Wherefore remember , that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law

of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. *(Ephesians 2:11-22)*

#### **B L E S S I N G   A B R A H A M**

Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. *(Genesis 12:1-3)*

Evangelicals are adamant, if we will just bless the Jews, then God will bless us. But how true is that? Is that what Scripture says? Not really, for the Promise is not to carnal but to spiritual generation through faith, otherwise Ishmael, not Israel, is blessed. But, then, evangelicals have displayed an uncanny knack for calling blessed that which God calls cursed.

One might reasonably ask, how blessed is America for having under-written the Zionist State these last 60 years? Not blessed at all. In this same time span America went into steep moral decline, as well as ending up awash in debt (at least \$14 trillion of which is owed to foreigners), and this from fighting the interloper's wars. Thus has America gone from being history's biggest creditor nation to history's biggest debtor nation, with indebtedness now so great, it can never be repaid.

As we see above, God's Covenant with Abraham includes aspects both tribal and universal, with the universal aspect predominating. That Gentile Christians can say "Father Abraham" is because they are Abraham's children, not distant relatives. By breaking down the middle wall of partition separating Jew and Gentile through his sacrificial death, Jesus opened the way to those not physically descended from Abraham to fellowship on a par with those who are so descended. That is to say, Jesus did not abrogate or annul the Abrahamic Covenant; to the contrary, he expanded it out to include all God's children, and this on the basis of strictest equality. This then is the east-ness and the west-ness of it all:

And they shall come from the east, and from the west and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness.

*(Luke 13:29, Matthew 8:12)*

## THE WORKS OF ABRAHAM

When certain Pharisees claimed that "We be Abraham's seed," (*John 8: 33*), Jesus in effect replied that this wasn't their automatic birthright as they seemed to think, that certain criteria existed, for, as he said to them:

"If you were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." (*John 8:39*)

"The works of Abraham"? Since so much seems to rest on it, we'd like to know more specifically, what works are these? But maybe we already know, for it is written:

He hath shown thee, O man, what is good; and what doth YHVH (Jehovah) require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? (*Micah 6:8*)

On one level, the works of Abraham relate as we see above to simple honesty motivated by goodwill. More specifically, however, it can also relate to Abraham's willingness to part with the apple of his eye, his son Isaac, the son of promise, in obedience to God's decree. However, in many a conventional Christian circle it is commonly taught (however implausibly) that Jesus replaced the Abrahamic Covenant with the New. (By the Law of First Mention, the New Covenant defined in *Jeremiah 31* applies to the millennial Kingdom-to-come, not to present times or circumstances.) The antinomian "once saved, always safe" concept, cannot be squared with Jesus' sterner admonitions regarding the path of duty as the Way of Life. Once again (albeit this time not through works of the Law but through trivialization) the "children of the kingdom," albeit seated at their Father's table, are starving for want of spiritual reality, while faithful others from afar do feast. If the Abrahamic Covenant Jesus neither canceled, replaced, or annulled but graciously extended to all, then let us inquire as to its prophetic foundation for inclusion:

It is through Isaac [through faith] that your offspring will be reckoned. As he [God] saith in Hosea, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God. (*Romans 9:6, 7, 25-26*)

From the quotes immediately above and below (a sample of many), we see that the Abrahamic faith from its very inception was intended to be universal in scope:

"And I will make of thee [Abram] a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." . . . Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be called Abraham, for a father of many nations have I made thee." (*Genesis 12:2-3, 17:5*)

## FATHER ABRAHAM

Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? (*James 2: 21-22*)

Though half dead from old age and though there seemed to be no way, yet Abraham, hoping against hope, believed God would somehow redeem the situation. What Abraham sought for was a place under the sun for himself and his progeny, for more than life itself, Abraham loved his son, Isaac, the apple of his eye, whom God had gifted to him in his old age but somewhere along the way Abraham took to heart a deep truth: that of putting the giver above the gift. Thus he subordinated his personal desires to a higher consideration, a stance which stood him in good stead in the day of testing on Mount Moriah. His was true Zionism, indeed, and:

"It was counted unto him for righteousness."

(*Romans 4:3*)

In response to Abraham's faithfulness, God said to him:

By myself have I sworn, saith YHWH, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand that is upon the seashore; and thy seed shall possess the gates of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."

(*Genesis 22:16-18*)

"Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be called Abraham, for a father of many nations have I made thee."

(*Genesis 17:5*)

"And I [Jehovah] will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

(*Genesis 12:2-3*)

Too often it's been the case with evangelical Christians that the verse above has been twisted to mean that one should support the Zionist State. Think about that for a moment – giving aid and comfort to those who, spiritually speaking, are linearly descended from the very Pharisees who put Jesus to death. Besides which, they fail to distinguish the interests of the Jewish people from those of the Jewish Establishment, a grievous error in its own right because 2000 years ago the former heard Jesus gladly while the latter had him crucified.



## THE ORIGIN OF THE SECRET RAPTURE DOCTRINE

The sooner the end times are ushered in, the sooner the Christians are raptured out, the sooner the Rothschilds are left to their own devices to rule the world from Jerusalem. That is what helps drive the need to distinguish Christians as God's heavenly people from Jews as God's earthly people:

In the predictions concerning the future of Israel and the church, the distinction is still more startling.

The church will be taken away from the earth entirely, but restored Israel is yet to have her greatest earthly splendor and power. (Dr. Cyrus Scofield)

And what of the teaching of a secret rapture that takes away the Church but leaves everyone to suffer? No church before 1830 promoted such a doctrine, none. To be sure, Scofield's 1909 Study Bible, heavily promoted by its publisher, Oxford University Press, lent this doctrine an aura of respectability and is to be credited with mainlining this doctrine into the bloodstream of Protestant, evangelical Christianity but the doctrine itself predates Scofield's birth in 1843. Scofield was merely a transmission belt for Darby.

With 30 volumes to his credit, each averaging 600 pages, Darby was a force to be reckoned with. Much of Protestant Christendom was bowled over by his learnedness but not everyone was equally impressed. Said one of his worthy contemporaries, George Mueller:

I am a constant reader of the Bible, and I soon found that what I was taught to believe did not always agree with what my Bible said. I came to see that I must either part company with John Darby, or my precious Bible, and I chose to cling to my Bible and part from Mr. Darby.

As to Darby's professional background: in the 1860s he entered into the employ of the British East India Company, which organization took its profits running opium into China. The British East India Company's owners, the Sassoons, otherwise called the Rothschilds of the Far East, with whom they are now intermarried, established what amounted to a symbiotic relationship, the missionaries to China would go over on the same ships as were carrying the Sassoons' opium and both parties were protected by the British army and navy.

Let us be realistic about this, in their quest to subvert all nations, the powers-that-be have not ignored religion. Working with Darby and others, they eventually succeed in poisoning much of Christendom with their peculiar brand of religious opiate. Today, Zionist control of the evangelical churches is near complete. In part this has been achieved by limiting the oxygen of publicity to select televangelists, (particularly those in three-piece, polyester suits with blow-dried hair-jobs), thus creating the false impression that these nabobs are Christianity's spokesmen.

Some are born great, some achieve greatness, some have greatness thrust upon them. That would be Jerry Falwell, an almost buffoonish character, yet founder of an influential, multi-million member movement, the Moral Majority. It was a set-up job. Others did the work, he got the credit. By cheapening and trivializing Christianity, the powers that be have done much to reduce it to the level of a laughingstock religion, thereby marginalizing it. At a more basic level, by taking control of Christian theology, they have led astray individual Christians with a subtle, lying propaganda.

Dr. Scofield originated neither the secret rapture doctrine nor the dispensational scheme. Rather, his mentor was Dr. James H. Brookes, whose mentor was James Nelson Darby and it was Darby who did the real work of systematizing. Eventually Darby and Scofield would meet.

Amply demonstrating that it's not *what* you know but *who* you know that counts, Dr. Scofield's career was much enhanced after he was befriended by Samuel Untermyer, the same Untermyer as was President Wilson's confidant (and blackmailer, for with Wilson's purloined love letters, he wrangled from Wilson a promise to appoint the Zionist Louis Brandeis to the Supreme Court.) Untermyer opened various doors to Scofield, one being to the New York City's exclusive Lotus Club, which for the next 20 years Scofield listed as his place of residence. One might wonder, what Untermyer, a New York sophisticate who operated at the highest levels of society, was doing hobnobbing with a fundamentalist preacher from Dallas (or vice versa)? However, as the leading Zionist of his day and chairman of the Jewish National Congress, Untermyer had his reasons, having to do with the subversion of Christianity.

The most important door Untermyer opened to Scofield, one not normally available to the uncredentialed, was that to Oxford University Press which became the *Scofield Reference Bible's* publisher. In print ever since 1909, with multiple millions of copies sold, this book greatly influenced Protestant theology throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century and beyond.

When it comes to the secret Rapture Doctrine, not even Darby is to be fully credited with originating it, only with placing it within a dispensational, End Times, prophetic framework. The original source of Darby's secret rapture doctrine appears to have been a book titled: *The Coming of the Messiah in Glory and Majesty*. Presumably written by one Rabbi Juan Josephat Ben Ezra, a convert to Christianity, it was actually written by Emmanuel de Lacunza, a Jesuit Priest:

With Jesuit cunning, he [Lacunza] thus conspired to get his book a hearing in the Protestant world. They would not even permit it in their homes coming from a Jesuit pen but as the earnest work of the "converted Jew," they would consume it with avid interest! Within the pages of this elaborate forgery, Lacunza taught

the novel notion that Jesus returns not once, but twice, and at the "first stage" of His return He "raptures" His Church so they can escape the reign of the "future antichrist." (J. Preston Eby)

Lacunza's does not tell us outright his purpose. We have to deduce it but it seems to have been to deflect the Protestant charge made by Martin Luther and others that the Pope was the anti-Christ. Whatever his motive, Lacunza spent the better part of his adult life creating a book interpreting the *Book of Revelation* from what is called the futurist perspective, meaning that, as much as is possible, *Revelation's* contents are seen as applying strictly to the end times. His work is so cryptic it's doubtful whether anyone knows what it's really all about, but one passage is particularly relevant to this inquiry and therefore worth quoting:

The instruments or documents which we have presented in this dissertation, if they be seriously considered and combined with one another, appear more than sufficient to prove that God hath promised in his word, to raise many other saints besides those already raised, before the general resurrection; . . .

Here we have Christ returning, not once, as in Scripture, but twice, the first time to rapture the saints, then, after a time of trouble and lawlessness, i.e., the Great Tribulation, returning to rule the world in power. On this bifurcated return, the dispensational schemers built their theological edifice.

Originally published in 1811 in Spanish, Lacunza's book was translated by Edward Irving (founder of the Catholic Apostolic Church) into English and published in 1827. Both Irving and Darby thereafter began espousing a pre-tribulation rapture. Darby wrapped around the pre-trib rapture an entire theologic system, derisively termed by some as "Darbyism:"

John Darby (1800-1882) said that the dispensation of law ended at the cross when the dispensation of grace began. But then when the seven year dispensationalist tribulation period begins, another dispensation of law begins - so proposed Darby. This created a problem for Darby's theory. How could another dispensation of law go on when the Church was still on earth? He thought that in the dispensation of law during the tribulation, God would be dealing with the Jews. Would the Church in the tribulation return to be under the law? The solution was that Darby postulated that before the events of the tribulation began and the one man dispensationalist Anti-Christ appeared, the Church would be raptured off the earth. With the Church gone, God would then turned to deal with the Jews during the tribulation. (Bernard Pyron)

Thus we see, with not one scintilla of biblical backing, yet according to dispensationalists, Jesus plans, not one, but two returns. The first time around, instead of "all eyes will see him," no eye will see him since it is suppose to be a "secret rapture," whereby the living saints are lifted out of the world with the rest left behind to cope with the Great Tribulation.

When the late Reverend Jerry Falwell introduced Israel's Prime Minister Menachem Begin,

to his peculiar version of modern-day, evangelical Christianity, it must have warmed the cockles of the Prime Minister's heart, for its core belief that born-again Christians will be secretly raptured off of the planet, would leave the Jews in charge. That such news fell as sweet music on Begin's ears, is seen in the Prime Minister's reply, for as he put it to Falwell, if the Christians will support the Jews today, he will support the Christians tomorrow when the Messiah comes.

That's the tradeoff, Zionist Christians get to entertain their chimerical illusions about a pre-tribulation rapture, for which not one scintilla of biblical evidence exists, while Judaic Zionists get to fulfill their nefarious plan to rule the world from Jerusalem. And think not for one moment that the Christians' Judaic brethren wouldn't give their good, Christian brethren a swift kick where it counts and send them all to kingdom come.

In placing its hope in a pre-tribulation rapture, much of evangelical Christianity, has seen its status reduced to the level of a death-dealing, latter-day, dooms-day cult, one which tends to leave its adherents unprepared to face the terrors which it has itself helped unleash. To be sure, not all evangelicals have been conned and some of them actively counter this error:

There are some among us teaching there will be no tribulation, that the Christians will be able to escape all this. These are the false teachers that Jesus was warning us to expect in the latter days. Most of them have little knowledge of what is already going on across the world. I have been in countries where the saints are already suffering terrible persecution. In China, the Christians were told, "Don't worry, before the tribulation comes you will be translated - raptured." Then came a terrible persecution. . . . Later I heard a Bishop from China say, sadly, "We have failed. We should have made the people strong for persecution rather than telling them Jesus would come first. Tell the people how to be strong in times of persecution, how to stand when the tribulation comes - to stand and not faint." (Corrie Ten Boom)

"If we Americans fail to support Israel," intoned Reverend Falwell, "we will be unimportant to God." However questionable that assertion, there is no questioning Falwell's importance to the State of Israel which, for services rendered, gifted him a Learjet, no doubt to facilitate his spreading abroad the secret rapture doctrine. After having the nuclear power plant in Iraq bombed, before phoning President Reagan, Prime Minister Begin first called his pal Jerry Falwell with the news, no doubt a signal honor.

How much Falwell's perspective has been taken to heart by his fellow Zionists can be seen from one of his Holy Land bus tours, whose participants, when given a choice, were least interested in visiting Nazareth but most interested in meeting with an Israeli general.

The worship of one's own collective human power, as embodied in a parochial community and organized in a parochial state, has been in truth the master religion . . . The process by which parochial-community-

worship has been imposed on a previously established religion may thus have been different in the histories of civilizations of different generations, but one unhappy consequence has been the same. In all cases, the victory of parochial-community-worship has worked havoc. . . . this religion is an expression of self-centredness; because self-centredness is the source of all strife; and because the collective ego is a more dangerous object of worship than the individual ego is. . . . the ultimately fatal effects of this religion are slow to reveal themselves and do not become unmistakably clear till the mischief has become mortally grave. . . . the self-worship of a parochial community is essentially incompatible with the moderation commended in such maxims as 'Live and let live' and 'Do as ye would be done by'.

(Arnold Toynbee, *An Historian's Approach to Religion*)

With multiple dispensations to juggle, it's no wonder that rudderless, covenantless Christendom has lost its way. Having been subverted, it now finds it easier to acquiesce to the demand for a Jews-only State, than to uphold Christian universalism. Jewish (actually Ashkenazi) particularism represents a giant backward leap into apostasy. Said Albert Einstein:

I fear the internal damage that Judaism will sustain due to the development, in our ranks, of a narrow nationalism. We are not anymore the Jews of the Maccabees period. To become again a nation in the political sense of the word will be equivalent to turning away from the spiritualization of our community that we owe to the generosity of our prophets.

#### **ROTHSCHILD AMBITION**

In a letter extraordinarily for its candor written in 1919, Lord Balfour articulated what would be the Zionist's *modus operandi*:

For in Palestine we do not propose even to go through the form of consulting the wishes of the present inhabitants of the country," ... [T]he Four Great Powers are committed to Zionism. And Zionism, be it right or wrong, good or bad, is rooted in age-long traditions, in present needs, in future hopes, of far profounder import than the desires or prejudices of the 700,000 Arabs who now inhabit that ancient land. . . . [I]n short, so far as Palestine is concerned, the Powers have made no statement of fact which is not admittedly wrong, and no declaration of policy which, at least in the letter, they have not always intended to violate.

From the outset the aim has been to enmesh the West in a struggle to secure Palestine, the strategic center of the religious world. Subsidized into existence by a bankers cartel and our tax money, the Zionist State exists not only as a pretext to seize Middle Eastern oil but, worse yet, as a pretext to instigate a global religious war for global religious unification.

If we just let our vision of the world go forth, and we embrace it entirely and we don't try to piece together clever diplomacy, but just wage a total war . . . our children will sing great songs about us years from now.

(Richard Perle, Pentagon advisor)

That is Zionism in a nutshell: "total war" on behalf of a self-serving goal, world dominion. Presumably Richard Perle would be good to his own children but, in plotting aggressive, unjust war, he has made himself an unholy terror to his neighbors' children. Ethnic cleansing, dead American soldiers, the maiming of civilians, all of this seems to have been a matter of no moment to a "pragmatist" of his stripe, for whom the end always justifies the means. But should any of Perle's offspring be so fortunate as to survive the coming onslaught, instead of "singing great songs" about him, as he supposes, more than likely they will rise up and denounce his memory, maybe even piss on his bones, for most Jews are moral people, glad to affirm that all humankind are God's children and worthy of our concern.

#### **"LET'S YOU AND HIM FIGHT"**

"Money is the god of our times, and Rothschild is his prophet." (Heinrich Heine)

From one generation to the next, first by expanding the money supply, then by contracting it, the Rothschild banking syndicate has bankrupted homeowners, businesses, and entire nations. Thus does the Syndicate lay upon the backs of the poor burdens grievous to be borne which it touches not with one finger. By loaning money to both sides to buy Rothschild munitions, the ones who promote war always prosper. What this leads to is appropriately called a "bloodsucker economy," for these leaches feasts morning, noon, night on the blood of widows, orphans, and the elderly.

#### **THE ZIONIST BOMB**

Science has taught us how to put the atom to work. But to make it work for good instead of for evil lies in the domain dealing with the principles of human dignity.

(Bernard Baruch, UN Atomic Energy Commission, June 14, 1946)

Unlike his friend Churchill who was a spellbinding speaker, Baruch was a platitudinous bore who could anaesthetize almost any audience. His so-called Baruch Peace Plan would have placed all nukes worldwide at the Zionists' disposal. Like the League of Nations, this too was rejected by the USSR. Ironical that Lenin and Stalin were all that stood between us and the Zionists.

The atomic bomb was developed at the Los Alamos Laboratories in New Mexico. The top secret project was called the Manhattan Project, because its secret director, Bernard Baruch, lived in Manhattan, as did many of the other principals.

(Eustice Mullins)

One might reasonably wonder, why was Baruch, a Wall Street financier, running a nuc-

lear bomb program? But who better than he to represent the Zionist dream of world domination? And what better way to get control of the world than through fear of the bomb?

When Einstein arrived in the United States, he was feted as a famous scientist, and was invited to the White House by President and Mrs. Roosevelt. He was soon deeply involved with Eleanor Roosevelt in her many leftwing causes, in which Einstein heartily concurred. Some of Einstein's biographers hail the modern era as "the Einstein Revolution" and "the Age of Einstein", possibly because he set in motion the program of nuclear fission in the United States. His letter to Roosevelt requesting that the government inaugurate an atomic bomb program was obviously stirred by his lifelong commitment to "peace and disarmament". His actual commitment was to Zionism; . . .

Einstein's letter to Roosevelt, dated August 2, 1939, was delivered personally to President Roosevelt by Alexander Sachs on October 11. Why did Einstein enlist an intermediary to bring this letter to Roosevelt, with whom he was on friendly terms? The atomic bomb program could not be launched without the necessary Wall Street sponsorship. Sachs, a Russian Jew, listed his profession as "economist" but was actually a bagman for the Rothschilds, who regularly delivered large sums of cash to Roosevelt in the White House. Sachs was an advisor to Eugene Meyer of the Lazard Freres International Banking House, and also with Lehman Brothers, another well known banker. Sachs' delivery of the Einstein letter to the White House let Roosevelt know that the Rothschilds approved of the project and wished him to go full speed ahead.

Of Japan's 66 biggest cities, 59 had been mostly destroyed. 178 square miles of urban dwellings had been burned, 500,000 died in the fires, and now twenty million Japanese were homeless. Only four cities had not been destroyed; Hiroshima, Kokura, Niigata, and Nagasaki. Their inhabitants had no inkling that they had been saved as target cities for the experimental atomic bomb. Maj. Gen. Leslie Groves, at Bernard Baruch's insistence, had demanded that Kyoto be the initial target of the bomb. Secretary of War Stimson objected, saying that as the ancient capital of Japan, the city of Kyoto had hundreds of historic wooden temples, and no military targets.

The tragedy of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was that a weak, inexperienced president, completely under the influence of Byrnes and Baruch, allowed himself to be manipulated into perpetrating a terrible massacre.

. . . the President's Interim Committee on the Atomic Bomb decided on May 31 'that we could not give the Japanese any warning'. . . . On June 1, 1945, a formal and official decision was taken during a meeting of the so-called Interim Committee not to warn the populations of the specific target cities. James Byrnes and Oppenheimer insisted that the bombs must be used without prior warning.

Otto Frisch remembers the shouts of joy, 'Hiroshima has been destroyed!' 'Many of my friends were

rushing to the telephone to book tables at the La Fonda Hotel in Santa Fe in order to celebrate. Oppenheimer walked around "like a prizefighter, clasping his hands together above his head as he came to the podium".

Dr. Hida says that while treating the terribly mangled and burned victims, "My eyes were ready to overflow with tears. I spoke to myself and bit my lip so that I would not cry. If I had cried, I would have lost my courage to keep standing and working, treating dying victims of Hiroshima."

When the Air Force dropped the atomic bomb on Nagasaki . . . the principal target was a Catholic church. The roof and masonry of the Catholic cathedral fell on the kneeling worshippers. All of them died.

#### **M O R E   A B O U T   B A R U C H**

I probably had more power than perhaps any other man did to the war, doubtless that is true.

(Bernard Baruch speaking in an appearance before a select Congressional Committee)

What Baruch is referring to above is President Wilson's having appointed him Director of the War Industries Board with the entire nation's industry subject to his dictates. Alas, on his watch a seemingly endless stream of scandals occurred, for instance, a billion dollars of taxpayer money being expended on airplanes that were never delivered. It has been claimed that Baruch himself netted \$200 million on the war effort.

One of the 20<sup>th</sup> century's most powerful Zionists, Bernard Baruch operated for 50 years at the highest levels of finance and government, yet, curiously enough, few these days have ever heard of him. (Just ask anyone under 90 and see the glazed look you get.) The who's who of the Jewish world is the *Encyclopedia Judaica*. With 20,000 plus pages of biographical material in its 22 volumes, one might suppose that a person of Baruch's stature, whose name was once a household word, would merit an individual listing, yet only brief mention is made in an article about his father (a civil war surgeon). It is understandable that the powers that be would want to throw a veil over his activities, given the nature of those activities. Thanks to the internet, this veil has been partially lifted.

Bernard Baruch (1870-1965), a Wall Street millionaire before he was 30, was given to sitting alone on a park bench in Lafayette Park, Washington, D.C. or in Central Park, New York City, as if he were a simple commoner with spare time, watching the world pass by. But, lo, who should join him there? a Winston Churchill or some other dignitary.

On behalf of Rothschild banking interests, Baruch established tobacco and copper trusts. His specialty as a stock market plunger was seeing to it that others lost their shirts while he and his Wall Street banker buddies made out like bandits. That is what happened in 1929. But also in 1907. The way the game is played: first loosen credit, causing the market to soar



and getting new players in, then suddenly removing the punch bowl by constricting credit. With insider information, sell short then buy back low.

They always want more for themselves and less for everyone else. But it's not enough for them just to gyp people, no, they have to ruin and enslave them. Thus in 1907, the head of Rothschild subsidiary Kuhn, Loeb and Co., Jacob Schiff, in a talk before the NY Chamber of Commerce, warned that:

Unless we have a Central Bank with adequate control of credit resources, this country is going to undergo the most severe and far reaching money panic in its history.

Here is how his warning came to pass:

The panic of 1907 was triggered by rumors that the Knickerbocker Bank and the Trust Company of America were about to become insolvent. Later evidence pointed to the House of Morgan as the source of the rumors.

The public, believing the rumors, proceeded to make them come true by staging a run on the banks. Morgan then nobly helped to avert the panic by importing \$100 million worth of gold from Europe to stop the bank run.

The mesmerized public came to believe that the country needed a central banking system to stop future panics.

(Ellen Brown)

Baruch's role in helping the Rothschilds take control of America's finances revolved around advancing the career of one Woodrow Wilson, first by becoming his biggest campaign contributor, then by leading him about as if he were a poodle on a string. For instance, when Wilson balked at signing into law the Federal Reserve Act of 1913, Baruch all but guided his hand. But the bankers' ambitions went well beyond merely the counterfeiting of money by having their own, privately-owned central bank; they also wanted the US Constitution amended to allow for a Federal Income Tax. Once they achieved those two goals, they then initiated WWI, the idea being to exhaust physically, financially, and emotionally both sides, then get agreement for a world army and world government. That was the real purpose of the League of Nations treaty which Wilson signed but the Senate never ratified. Ultimately their plan included making Jerusalem the world capital. That is why the Ottoman Empire was drawn into the conflict, to break Palestine loose from it and why the Balfour declaration promised a "Jewish homeland." Yes, they were all Zionists.

In an appearance before a Congressional Committee, Baruch testified:

I thought a war was coming long before it did . . . I explained to him [Wilson] as earnestly as I could that I was very deeply concerned about the necessity of the mobilization of the industries of the country. The President listened very attentively and graciously, as he always does . . .

Baruch was treading on delicate ground. After all, Wilson had gotten himself re-elected

on the slogan: “he kept us out of war,” yet immediately on re-election reneged. Because Wilson didn’t like looking foolish or dishonest (who does?), he would get bulky, making it necessary for Baruch and his Zionist co-conspirator, Colonel Mandell House, to whip him into line. Colonel House had become, as Wilson confessed, his “alter ego.”

We shall reveal the origin of "the strangest and most fruitful personal alliance in history," and tell, for the first time, the true story of why it was broken. There will be no doubt as to who was the real author of the Fourteen Points and who tried to save them in Paris. We shall discover that Woodrow Wilson made a secret agreement pledging the United States to war before he was reëlected,

Wilson's mysterious physical breakdown was probably due largely to psychic causes. All his life Wilson shrank from contact with other men. Everyone who knew Wilson closely testifies that such contacts, except under conditions chosen by himself, were a torture to him. But Wilson had found an escape from his difficulty by his alliance with House, who permitted the outside world to filter through his mind to Wilson, but protected his sensitive partner from the harsh winds that blew. For seven years House had functioned as his defense. The collapse of his alliance with House compelled him to bear unendurable frictions and combats.

(George Sylvester Viereck)

Poor Wilson, beset on all sides by Ashkenazi Zionists, who in turn buttered him up or else hectorated him, he soon fell into a state of abject dependancy. One of these Zionist hangers-on was the shyster lawyer, Samuel Untermyer, the same as oversaw Dr. Scofield’s bogus reference Bible, who threw before Wilson a packet of Wilson’s love letters addressed to another man’s wife. He then magnanimously offered to pay the munificent sum of \$40,000 to buy off the presumed blackmailer, that is, if only Wilson would appoint his Zionist buddy, Louis Brandeis, to the Supreme Court. And it worked! Wilson caved. Probably there never was a blackmailer except Untermyer himself who then paid himself the \$40,000.

It wasn’t just blackmail that kept Wilson in line, nor was fear the only motivator, for he, too, had the courage of his convictions. When his doctor advised against his conducting an arduous campaign to convince America to give up its sovereignty to the League of Nations, he responded, saying:

I know why you are here. You want to persuade me not to go. I know all your arguments and I admit their truthfulness. But the boys who went overseas did not refuse to go because it was dangerous. Many of them sacrificed their lives in an attempt to bring about a permanent peace. The thought of their sacrifice makes me more determined to put forth my utmost endeavor to have the League ratified, for I believe it will prevent another such world-wide catastrophe. No; despite your advice, I must go. . . . Even though, in my condition, it might mean the giving up of my life, I will gladly make the sacrifice to save the Treaty.

Raised a Scotch Presbyterian, Wilson was brought up to be an earnest Calvinist to which

he later added a Zionist overlay. Not one who could bear the thought that he had sent the flower of America's youth to their death in vain, although he had been bullied and humiliated by the Zionists, nevertheless, he believed in their agenda, that if we as a people do not submit to them, terrible consequences will ensue. As he said:

I can predict with absolute certainty that within another generation there will be another world war if the nations of the world do not concert the method by which to prevent it. (Woodrow Wilson, 1919)

Because Wilson really believed this, he sided with the Zionist perspective of Colonel House against his own Secretary of State's pacific, Christian agenda. Said William Jennings Bryan to Wilson on resigning:

Colonel House has been secretary of state, not I, and I have never had your full confidence.

That Wilson sided with the Zionist Jews is confirmed below:

Mr. Balfour had been in communication with Lord Rothschild, who was the head of the Zionist Movement in this country, and who was pressing on behalf of his fellow Zionists for a declaration which could be issued to the Jews throughout the world, guaranteeing that the Allies would make it one of the conditions of the Peace Settlement with Turkey that there should be a National Home for the Jews in the land from which they had been driven as a people, but with which their name would always be associated. When the matter was brought to the attention of the Cabinet on the 3rd of September, 1917, it was decided to communicate with President Wilson informing him that the Government were being pressed to make a declaration in sympathy with the Zionist Movement, and seeking his views as to the advisability of such a declaration being made. It took so Mr. Balfour reported that "President Wilson gave me a memorandum in favor of the Zionist Movement" (David Lloyd George, *Memoirs of the Peace Conference*)

Regarding the Balfour Declaration, President Wilson gave this explanation to the American public:

I am persuaded that the Allied nations, with the fullest concurrence of our Government and our people, are agreed that in Palestine shall be laid the foundations of a Jewish Commonwealth.

Part of Zionism's appeal to Southerners of Wilson's stripe is that it is rooted in racism, with the Jews presumably being God's master race, followed thereafter by Caucasians, followed thereafter by people of color:

One of Wilson's first acts when he became president, was to re-segregate Washington, to impose the Jim Crow doctrine, 'separate but equal,' on the city of Washington . . . (Gary Gerstle, professor of history)

After victory, Wilson appointed Baruch to head a 117 member delegation to Versailles. When all did not go as the Zionists had planned and the US Senate rejected handing over American sovereignty to the League of Nations, the Zionists' expectation for the war were

greatly set back. But Zionists are not giver-uppers. Still set on achieving their objective of world dominion they started all over again manufacturing new crises, fomenting more wars. Thereafter, Baruch became one of the Council of Foreign Affairs's founding members, from this platform, to manufacture the next world crisis that Wilson had tried in vain to warn the world about. And of course Baruch continued on with his activities as a stock market plunger:

In June, Bernard Baruch told Bruce Barton, in a famous interview published in *The American Magazine* that "the economic condition of the world seems on the verge of a great forward movement." He pointed out that no bears had houses on Fifth Avenue. (John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Great Crash* 1929)

That to be sure was the bunk. What was going on behind the scenes was another story altogether:

On the three black days – Thursday Oct 24th, Monday Oct. 28th and Tues. Oct. 29th 13 million shares, 9 million shares and 16 million shares were transferred from the middle class to international high finance. The crashes were in each case precipitated deliberately by banks making margin calls which forced sell offs. When the ticker tapes got behind three hours in a steadily falling market – Percy Rockefeller, Bernard Baruch, Thomas W. Lamont (senior partner of Morgan's), Albert Wiggin (chairman of Chase National), Seward Prosser (Bankers Trust) and William Potter (Guarantee Trust) . . . each day after the ticker got behind, these men began to buy, gaining all of those shares of American industry.

Meanwhile, as a little side project, in 1933, Baruch advised President Roosevelt to seize Americans' gold, and give it to his Rothschild buddies. Roosevelt's executive order authorizing this heist came April 5, 1933. By this decree, anyone not turning over his or her gold was subject, presumably, to a ten-years jail sentence but almost no one was prosecuted and no one actually did time. It was all part of a ruse to get people to cough up their savings. And it worked. Tons of gold were confiscated in one of the greatest daylight robberies on record. Rest assured, though sitting on a dragon's hoard of gold, neither Roosevelt nor Baruch, or the rest of them ever surrendered a thin dime. That was just for little people. And now it is clear why the Great Depression was so enduring, the means of restarting the economy, private capital formation, was discouraged.

#### **Z I O N I S T S   G O   F O R   T H E   G O L D**

From: President of the United States Franklin Delano Roosevelt  
To: The United States Congress Dated: 5 April, 1933

Presidential Executive Order 6102

Forbidding the Hoarding of Gold Coin, Gold Bullion and Gold Certificates By virtue of the authority vested in me by Section 5(b) of the Act of October 6, 1917, as amended by Section 2 of the Act of March 9, 1933, entitled An Act to provide relief in the existing national emergency in banking, and for other purposes, in which amendatory Act Congress declared that a serious emergency exists, I, Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States of America, do declare that said national emergency still continues to exist and pursuant to said section to do hereby prohibit the hoarding gold coin, gold bullion, and gold certificates within the continental United States by individuals, partnerships, associations and corporations and hereby prescribe the following regulations for carrying out the purposes of the order:

Section 1. For the purpose of this regulation, the term "hoarding" means the withdrawal and withholding of gold coin, gold bullion, and gold certificates from the recognized and customary channels of trade. The term "person" means any individual, partnership, association or corporation.

Section 2. All persons are hereby required to deliver on or before May 1, 1933, to a Federal Reserve bank or a branch or agency thereof or to any member bank of the Federal Reserve System all gold coin, gold bullion, and gold certificates now owned by them or coming into their ownership on or before April 28, 1933, . . .

Section 9. Whoever willfully violates any provision of this Executive Order or these regulation or of any rule, regulation or license issued there under may be fined not more than \$10,000, or, if a natural person may be imprisoned for not more than ten years or both; . . .

~ ~ ~ ~

Every man's life is at the call of the nation and so must be every man's property. (Bernard Baruch, 1919)

#### **WINSTON CHURCHILL**

During WWI Baruch and Churchill became best of friends. Then and afterward, they both did their level best to involve their respective countries, Britain and America in war: first WWI, then WWII, then in the Cold War.

A week before the [Lusitania] disaster, Churchill wrote to Walter Runciman, President of the Board of Trade that it was "most important to attract neutral shipping to our shores, in the hopes especially of embroiling the United States with Germany."

The story of Winston Churchill, like Teddy Roosevelt's, is one best not shared with young boys or liberals. It tends to overheat the blood.

In 1911, Churchill became First Lord of the Admiralty, and, during the crises that followed, used every opportunity to fan the flames of war. When the final crisis came, in 1914, Churchill was all smiles and was the only cabinet member who backed war from the start. Asquith, his own Prime Minister, wrote: "Winston very bellicose and demanding immediate mobilization . . . has got all his war paint on."

Never one to pass up an opportunity to watch history in the making, Winston Churchill was in the gallery of the New York Stock Exchange on October 24, 1929, a witness to Black Thursday. Then, October 29<sup>th</sup>, the day the stock market did its biggest swan dive, Churchill was Baruch's guest of honor at his Fifth Avenue mansion. Later Churchill was to write ever so obliquely, that he was not there "quite by chance."

Beginning in 1925, as head of the British exchequer, Churchill had played a unique role in crashing the British economy which led to the Great Depression. The larger purpose of the Great Depression was to create the conditions that would necessarily lead to the "New Deal," that being a type of socialism with centralized planning. After that it was on to WWII and after that the founding of NATO and the UN.

In violation of American sovereignty and constitutional rights (but with the approval of Roosevelt):

In 1940, Churchill sent British agent "Intrepid" to the United States, where he set up shop in Rockefeller Center, where, with the full knowledge and cooperation of Roosevelt and the collaboration of federal agencies, "Intrepid" and his 300 agents "intercepted mail, tapped wires, cracked safes, kidnapped, . . . rumor mongered" and incessantly smeared their favorite targets, the "isolationists" (i.e., Jeffersonians) as nazis and fascists.

After the U.S. had officially entered the war, on February 15, 1942, in the House of Commons, Churchill declared, of America's entry into the war:

"This is what I have dreamed of, aimed at, worked for, and now it has come to pass."

Never one to be overly shy in making his sentiments regarding "lesser races" known, Churchill was not one to be squeamish in applying severe measures in dealing with them either:

In 1919, as Colonial Secretary Churchill advocated the use of chemical weapons on the "uncooperative Arabs" in the puppet state of Iraq. "I do not understand the squeamishness about the use of gas," he declared. "I am strongly in favor of using poison gas against uncivilized tribes."

I do not admit that a great wrong has been done to the Red Indians of America or the black people of Australia. I do not admit that a wrong has been done to these people by the fact that a stronger race, a higher-grade race, a more worldly wise race, has come in and taken their place. (The Real Churchill, Adam Young)

Not to be overlooked is Churchill's mother, Jenny Jerome, who, being Jewish, meant that, by Talmudic law, Churchill was Jewish. It may be in making the crack above about a "more worldly race," that the object of his racial affection was his mother's lineage more than his father's.

For one placed in charge of the British Exchequer, Churchill had a surprisingly tenuous hold on financial issues. Indeed, he could hardly balance his own check book. No wonder Churchill esteemed Baruch, referring to him as “his favorite American”:

... men who have amassed fortunes while he [Churchill] has struggled year after year creditors, hold enormous appeal for him. That was Baruch's charm. It also explains, in part, Winston's fondness for Baruch, though Baruch's appeal is broader. He is American, he is Jewish, he recognizes the menace of an aggressive Germany, and Churchill is indebted to him for an extraordinary act of shrewdness and generosity. Winston was badly hurt in the Wall Street Crash three years ago. Had it not been for Baruch, however, it would have been much worse; he could have spent the rest of his life in debt. He is not a born gambler; he is a born losing gambler. In New York at the time, he dropped into Baruch's office and decided to play the market, and as prices tumbled he plunged deeper and deeper, trying to outguess the stock exchange just as he had tried to outguess roulette wheels on the Riviera. In Wall Street, as in Monte Carlo, he failed. At the end of the day he confronted Baruch in tears. He was, he said, a ruined man. Chartwell and everything else he possessed must be sold; he would have to leave the House of Commons and enter business. The financier gently corrected him. Churchill, he said, had lost nothing. Baruch had left instructions to buy every time Churchill sold and sell whenever Churchill bought. Winston had come out exactly even because, he later learned, Baruch even paid the commissions.

(William Manchester, *The Last Lion; Winston Spencer Churchill; Visions of Glory*)

#### Q U O T E   W I T H O U T   C O M M E N T

The League of Nations is a Jewish idea. We created it after a fight of 25 years. Jerusalem will one day become the Capital of World Peace.

( Nahum Sokolow)

The collapse of these three Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia) in their old form represents a considerable gain for the carrying on of a Ashkenazi national policy, and the fact that the same war, which brought about the world-wide recognition of Zionism, also brought about the fall of three anti-Ashkenazi powers, is a unique coincidence which may well give cause for thought. (Dr. Martin Buber, Berlin 1919)

With the fall of Jerusalem some few days ago and the passing of the Holy City into British hands, there can be no doubt that the cause of Zionism has made very far-reaching progress, and we should pray that Palestine never again pass from under the suzerainty of Great Britain.

(Jacob H. Schiff, to Zangwill, December 12, 1917)

A great industrial nation is controlled by its system of credit. Our system of credit has been concentrated. The growth of the nation and all our activities are in the hands of a few men. We have come to be one of the worst ruled, one of the most completely controlled and dominated governments in the world – no longer a government of free opinion, no longer a government by conviction and vote of the majority, but a government by the opinion and duress of small groups of dominant men.

(Woodrow Wilson)

## **G O D ' S   Z I O N   O R   M A N ' S   Z I O N I S M ,   O U R   C H O I C E**

There are two ways of teaching and two wielders of power;  
one is of light and the other is of darkness.  
Between those two ways lies a vast difference,  
because over the one are posted light-bearing angels  
while over the other are Satan's messengers;  
and one of these two is the Lord from all eternity,  
while the other stands paramount over  
this present age of iniquity.

### **TRUE ZIONISM:**

For YHVH hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. *(Psalm 132:13)*

Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. *(Psalm 48:1-2)*

But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, . . . *(Hebrew 12:22)*

Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. *(Isaiah 28:16, I Peter 2:6)*

And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with him a hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. *(Revelation 14:1)*

O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; Jerusalem, that bringeth good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! *(Isaiah 40:8)*

. . . thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; . . . The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, . . . The sons also of them that are afflicted shall come bending unto thee; . . . and they shall call thee, The city of YHVH (Jehovah), the Zion of the Holy One of Israel. *(Isaiah 60:11, 13, 14)*

Many things more did I see concerning the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem, which are hard to be uttered, and would be hard to be received. But, in short, this holy city is within the light; and all that are within the light, are within the city; the gates whereof stand open all the day (for there is no night there), that all may



come in. Christ's blood being shed for every man, he tasted death for every man, and enlightens every man that comes into the world; and his grace, that brings salvation, having appeared to all men, there is no place or language where his voice may not be heard. The christians in the primitive times were called by Christ 'a city set upon a hill;' they were also called 'the light of the world,' and 'the salt of the earth;' but when christians lost the light, salt, and power of God, they came to be trodden under foot, like unsavory salt. Just as the Jews were preserved above all nations while they kept the law of God, but when they turned their backs on God and his law, they were trodden under foot of other nation. Likewise Adam and Eve, while they obeyed God, were kept in his image and in the paradise of God, in dominion over all the works of his hands; but when they disobeyed God, they lost the image of God, the righteousness and holiness in which they were made; they lost their dominion, were driven out of paradise, and so fell under the dark power of Satan, and came under the chains of darkness. But the promise of God was, 'that the seed of the woman, Christ Jesus, should bruise the serpent's head,' should break his power and authority, which had led into captivity, and kept him in prison. So Christ, who is the first and last, sets man free, and is the resurrection of the just and unjust, the judge of the quick and dead; and they that are in him are invested with everlasting rest and peace, out of all the labors, travails, and miseries of Adam in the fall. So he is sufficient and fully able to restore man up into the state that he was in before he fell; and not into that state only, but up into that state also that never fell, and beyond that state even to himself.

(George Fox, *Statement of Principles*)

And now let Christendom examine themselves and see "if they be come to Mount Zion and the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the innumerable company of angels," and to the general company of the first born written in heaven , and to the 'spirits of just men made perfect , and to Jesus the Mediator, and to the blood of sprinkling;' and that they do not turn away from hearing Christ that speaks from heaven. Heb. Xii. 'For he stands at the door and knocks.' Rev.iii.

(George Fox, *Gospel Truth Demonstrated*)

#### **FALSE ZIONISM:**

The "founding father," of the Zionist State, its first Prime Minister, David ben Gurion, at a meeting of Labor Zionist, December 7, 1938, rejected plans to save Jewish children from Europe, saying:

If I knew that it would be possible to save all the children in Germany by bringing them over to England, and only half of them by transporting them to Eretz Yisrael, then I would opt for the second alternative. For we must weigh not only the life of these children, but also the history of the People of Israel.

February 1, 1940 Henry Montor, executive vice-President of the United Jewish Appeal, declined to intervene on behalf of a shipload of Jewish refugees stranded on the Danube river. As he put it:

Palestine cannot be flooded with . . . old people or with undesirables.

In an article titled “Zionists Were Spiritually And Physically Responsible For The Holocaust” by Rabbi Gedalya Liebermann of Austria, made the following historical points:

On December 17, 1942 both houses of the British Parliament declared its readiness to find temporary refuge for endangered persons. The British Parliament proposed to evacuate 500,000 Jews from Europe, and resettle them in British colonies, as a part of diplomatic negotiations with Germany. This motion received within two weeks a total of 277 Parliamentary signatures.

On Jan. 27, when the next steps were being pursued by over 100 M.P.'s and Lords, a spokesman for the Zionists announced that the Jews would oppose the motion because Palestine was omitted.

On Feb. 16, 1943 Roumania offered 70,000 Jewish refugees of the Trans-Dniestria to leave at the cost of \$50 each. This was publicized in the New York papers. Yitzhak Greenbaum, Chairman of the Rescue Committee of the Jewish Agency, addressing the Zionist Executive Council in Tel Aviv Feb. 18 1943 said,

"When they asked me, "Couldn't you give money out of the United Jewish Appeal funds for the rescue of Jews in Europe, I said NO! and I say again, NO! . . . one should resist this wave which pushes the Zionist activities to secondary importance."

No one will ever accuse David Ben Gurion of thinking small. He wasn't thinking merely in terms of the Promised Land but, rather, of the Promised Planet:

In Jerusalem, the United Nations will build a shrine of the prophets to serve the federated union of all Continents; this will be the seat of the Supreme Court of Mankind, to settle all controversies among the federated continents, as prophesied by Isaiah. (Prime Minister ben Gurion, *Look Magazine*, '62)

Our God-given country is a unity, an integral historical and geographical whole. The attempt to dissect it is not only a crime but a blasphemy and an abortion. Whoever does not recognize our natural right to our entire homeland, does not recognize our right to any part of it. And we shall never forego this natural right.  
(from Menachem Begin's address to the nation, May 15, 1948)

"We must use terror, assassination, intimidation, land confiscation, and cutting of all social services to rid the Galilee of its Arab population." (David Ben-Gurion, 1948, to the General Staff. From *Ben-Gurion, A Biography*, by Michael Ben-Zohar, Delacorte, New York 1978)

"There is no such thing as a Palestinian people . . . It is not as if we came and threw them out and took their country. They didn't exist." (Golda Meir, statement to *The Sunday Times*, 15 June, 1969)

"This country exists as the fulfillment of a promise made by God Himself. It would be ridiculous to ask it to account for its legitimacy." (Golda Meir, *Le Monde*, 15 October 1971)

(IAP News) (02/06/03) -- An Israeli professor and military historian hinted that Israel could avenge the holocaust by annihilating millions of Germans and other Europeans. Speaking during an interview which was published in Jerusalem Friday, Professor Martin Van Creveld said Israel had the capability of hitting most European capitals with nuclear weapons. "We possess several hundred atomic warheads and rockets and can launch them at targets in all directions, perhaps even at Rome. Most European capitals are targets of our air force."

Creveld, a professor of military history at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, pointed out that "collective deportation" was Israel's only meaningful strategy towards the Palestinian people. "The Palestinians should all be deported. The people who strive for this (the Israeli government) are waiting only for the right man and the right time. Two years ago, only 7 or 8 per cent of Israelis were of the opinion that this would be the best solution, two months ago it was 33 per cent, and now, according to a Gallup poll, the figure is 44 percent." Creveld said he was sure that Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon wanted to deport the Palestinians. "I think it's quite possible that he wants to do that. He wants to escalate the conflict. He knows that nothing else we do will succeed." Asked if he was worried about Israel becoming a rogue state if it carried out a genocidal deportation against Palestinians, Creveld quoted former Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan who said "Israel must be like a mad dog, too dangerous to bother." Creveld argued that Israel wouldn't care much about becoming a rogue state.

"Our armed forces are not the thirtieth strongest in the world, but rather the second or third. We have the capability to take the world down with us. And I can assure you that this will happen before Israel goes under."

(By Nadim Ladki)

#### **P R O X Y   Z I O N I S M**

Its divisiveness is repugnant. Its history is bloody. And the "God loves me more than you" mindset is infantile at best, and homicidal at worst.

(Judy Andreas)

By its combining the worst elements in Judaism with the worst elements in Christianity, Zionized Protestantism has become the standing denial of everything Jesus ever stood for. Instead of Christendom turning the world upside down, Zionism has turned Christendom upside down, the anti-Christ being substituted for Christ, the false messiah for the true. Duped by Zionism, a large swath of Western-style religiosity lays smoldering in moral ruins as does a large swath of the world itself lay in ruins from Zionist-inspired wars.

At root, Zionism is about who gets to control Jerusalem's Mt. Zion, the great ambition being to demolish the Dome of the Rock, rebuild the Temple, and from it rule the world. Thus, the impetus to defame/destroy the Islamic people. But it doesn't stop there. Zionism's posture toward all the world is one of balled up fists – not open arms. In pursuit of the religious

high ground, i.e., to be king of the mountain, they've conquered the Promised Land but, in so doing, have forfeited the moral high ground.

Let us inquire more specifically: what kind of Zionism is this? Not Christian Zionism such as was practiced by mediaeval crusaders (which was bad enough), the proof being that the number of Christians dwelling in Palestine/Israel over the last 60 years continues to dwindle with each passing year. What many Christians are practicing is proxy Zionism, which religion subordinates every consideration to the Jewish Tribal Project. Their brand of Zionism isn't the last stage, only the latest stage, in a long-developing descent into apostasy.

To the extent that Christendom has morphed into an End Times, rapture-crazed, dooms-day cult, then to the same extent has it parted company with the Faith once for all delivered to the saints. Is this overstating the case? Unfortunately, no.

The 2004 exit poll showed that a whopping 78% of white evangelicals voted for President Bush and that they comprised 23% of the overall electorate, making them by far the single most potent voting block in the electorate. (Report of the Pew Forum, *The Guardian*, 05/31/06)

Said Joe Biden:

You don't have to be Jewish to be a Zionist. I'm a Zionist!

(Senator Joe Biden, *Shalom TV, Israel*, 04-07-07)

Right on Joe! the vast majority of Zionists, like yourself, are not Jewish at all; rather, they are Catholic, Protestant, Pentecostal but, especially, they are evangelical and their numbers run in the tens of millions.

By reason of sheer numbers - in excess of 25 million - and on account of their having coalesced around one individual, namely, President George W. Bush, "born-again" Christians, for a little while in recent years, had the upper hand in the making of national policy, such that without their support, it is doubtful whether the Iraq war could have been prosecuted, let alone these many years - or even ever begun. But what was there about it to cause evangelical Christianity to veer off in this direction? This is the answer:

I can tell you, from all of our polling, that no issue more encapsulates an evangelical view of the world than the United States relationship to Israel. I have had evangelical leaders say that George Bush can do just about everything and not alienate his base, except on the issue of Israel.

(Luis Lugo, the director of the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life)

Support for the State of Israel comes down to Jerusalem, even to Mount Zion, God's holy hill. But which one, since there are two? A choice exists made explicit by the apostle Paul who observed that there are two Jerusalems, one from above and one from below.

For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a free-woman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the free-woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

(Galatians 4:23-26)

Generally speaking, the more we have to do with the Jerusalem below, the less we will have to do with the Jerusalem above. And now within the ranks of conservative, evangelical Christianity there is growing disquietude, as one by one Christians awaken to this reality that there never were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, only weapons of mass deception aimed at themselves by their own lying prophets.

The prophets of war, as if hellbent on bloody rampage, actively seeking to ramp-up the “War on Terror,” to include preemptive attacks on Iran & Syria, then on to Venezuela and Cuba, and after that, Russia & China. Fixated on a pre-tribulation rapture (for which not one scintilla of biblical support exists), these “Christian leaders” seem to think that Paradise lies on the other side of WWII, their attitude being “bring it on!” Once we get our eyes open to the reality that these are false prophets, then we will have the incentive to work our way past their style of “fundamentalism” to the fundamentals Jesus taught. What few Christians could have imagined just a few years go is that when they chose to follow Jesus, they’d be immersing themselves into a subculture backing across-the-board assaults on ancient principles of jurisprudence, ranging from preemptive, nuclear war to secret prisons, from torture to illegal surveillance.

Mushroom clouds, bacteriological warfare labs, these were not “intelligence failures,” but bald-faced lies. Why were we so gullible as to believe any of it? Behind our gullibility was our misplaced allegiance to the modern, Zionist State. Meanwhile, sucker-punched National Guardsmen, serving third or fourth tours of duty in Iraq, didn’t choose to be the “Chosen People’s” bullet-stoppers, much less their instruments for mass-murder, but were dragooned into an unjust, illegal war. One might reasonably have hoped for better things from those who claim to represent Christ, who proclaim his gospel, for:

Those who defend war, must defend the dispositions that lead to war, and these are clean against the gospel.

(Erasmus)

#### **PROXY ZIONISM'S HIDDEN ROOTS**

Between the time when Christopher Columbus flourished in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century and the rise of dispensational Christianity in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, some 300 years had elapsed, in which a sea change in thinking occurred in the Western world, most particularly, in the Eng-

lish-speaking world, causing interest in the muscular brand of Zionism to wither away, while the servile, proxy variety prospered. Let us seek to identify causes.

England of the 1600s, as Carlyle put it, had become a place of "awful devout Puritanism" but what of the merry Old England of Chaucer's day? One needn't look too far afield, beginning with King Henry VIII. Born the year before Columbus set sail to America, he was coronated King in 1509. Two days later, he then had two of his late fathers ministers arrested, then executed for treason. This was a pattern repeated itself during his long reign or terror which finally ended with his demise in 1547. He even had two of his six wives' heads cut off. Meanwhile the wastrel king lived in luxury, having fifty-five castles. But how did this affect Christianity?

As part of his break with Catholicism leading on to his excommunication, King Henry had the monasteries shuttered and their assets seized. This led to a huge social dislocation for the monasteries harbored much of England's poor who were now put out, as it were, on the street, destitute and left to perish. Such was England's introduction to the Protestant Reformation, with King Henry as Supreme Governor of the English Church.

On a brighter note, King Henry had the Bible translated into the vernacular. On a less bright note, however, he then banned its distribution.

The upshot of Henry's machination as well as those of his successors, was that many sects arose, some such as Levelers and Ranters, quite fanatical but others, such as the Quakers, respectable. Understandably amidst the insanity of it all, people were looking for reality, as they still do today.

After King Henry's daughter, Queen Elizabeth I, assumed the throne, his policy of keeping the Bible from the laity was reversed. The effect of this, however, was not as immediately uplifting as one might hope:

To most or them it [the Bible] was their only book. How they poured over their treasure one can well imagine. Buried long in an unknown tongue, it came to them with all the freshness of a new revelation, producing effects very different from those produced upon adult readers in the nineteenth century. We read the Bible in the light of commentators, who have established rules of interpretation well suited to the modern mind. The inconvenient passage is a figure of speech; this monstrous law condemning witches or idolaters to death was intended only for a special time; these teachings of the Savior are not to be taken literally, for our society could not continue under such a construction; but the passage which conform to our ideas of right or propriety, which sustain our theological systems, and which allow us to live the life which is agreeable, whether they are found in the Old or New Testament, in the simple Gospels or in the philosophical letters of St. Paul, have no figurative meaning and were written for all time. . . .

When this record was for the first time placed before the Englishman of the sixteenth century, it was inevitable that he should be attracted by the portion that suited his stage of moral and intellectual development. This he found in the Old Testament.

But these men of three hundred years ago had no conscious conception of this modern mode of dealing with the word of inspiration. To them the Bible was a whole; every book, every chapter, and every word was equally inspired, every commandment was of equal binding force. Yet, consciously or unconsciously, men will take from the Bible that which suits their dispositions.

(Douglas Campbell, *The Puritan in Holland, England, and America*)

The Puritans' identification with the chosen people of the Old Testament, is evidenced in the naming of their children, all the Hezekiahs, Obadiahs, Uriahs, etc. Their foremost literary figure, John Milton, in his essay on education, advocated adding the Hebrew language to the general curriculum. Most striking of all, however, was their so-called Sabbath observance (which applied not to the Biblical seventh day, but to the first):

It may first appear strange that a rite, ordained in the most ancient state of the ancient Israelites, should have no inconsiderable influence in the modern history of Great Britain— and in no other! For three hundred years after Christ, the most erudite researchers have shown that the Christian was bound by no law to the strict observance of the Lord's day, nor was any sort of labour interdicted on Sundays. . . . [Queen] Elizabeth unquestionably never considered Sunday as a Sabbath, . . . [She said] "And if for any scrupulosity or grudge of conscience some should superstitiously abstain from working on those days, they shall grievously offend."

It was however in the reign of Elizabeth, during the unsettled state of the national religion, that a sect arose among those reformers of the reformed, the first Puritans, who were known by the name *Sabbatarians*. These held the Decalogue as of perpetual obligation; and according to their new creed, if the Sabbath-day had been changed, which they doubted, the Judaic rigors of its strictest observance were still to sanctify it. Labor and recreation, with those persons, equally profaned the silence and the repose of the Sabbath. John Knox the great Reformer of Scotland, was the true father of this doctrine in England, . . . Knox acquired many advocates in England [including] Whittingham, the Puritan Dean of Durham, who had resided at Geneva and married the sister of Calvin, . . .

At Paris-garden where public amusements were preformed on Sundays, a crowded scaffold gave way, and by this accident some were killed and many wounded. The Lord Mayor sent notice of it to Lord Burleigh as a judgment of Heaven for the violation of the Sabbath; and the Recorder chronicled the event in his Diary under the head of "a punishment of the violators of the Sabbath." This doctrine therefore must have been general in 1582.

A gloomy and anti-social spirit was fast prevailing among the people in their "preciseness," as this new system was termed. Puritanic persons had deprived the populace of their accustomed festivals and pastimes on the

Sunday afternoons after divine service; festivals and pastimes are the poor man's inheritance, his unbought enjoyments, the leisure of his servitude, the common solace of the ancient friendships of the village!

(Isaac Disraeli, *Commentaries on the Life and Reign of Charles the First, King of England*)

When the strength and glory of England were placed in the hands of the Puritans, their extravagant conduct on many national objects was never more visible than on their sabbatic regulations. It seemed as if religion chiefly consisted of the Sabbatarian rigours, and that a British senate had been transformed into a company of Hebrew Rabbins. In 1605 an act was passed for inflicting penalties for breach of the Sabbath, some of which included dancing and singing, or traveling in a boat, on horseback, or in a coach or sedan, except to church. This exception occurred on the remonstrance of one of the Members of the House of Commons complaining that "in their zeal they had tied the Godly from going to Church by water or coach, for this he coming from Westminster to Somerset-house to sermon, had his boat and waterman seized for the penalty." . . . In their code of laws, among the Sabbatic prohibitions under severe penalties are these, "No one shall run on the Sabbath-day, or walk in his garden, cook victuals, make beds, sweep house, cut hair or shave." "No woman shall kiss her child."

#### BLACKSTONE'S MEMORIAL

March 5, 1891, Chicago real estate magnet and Methodist Episcopal layman, William E. Blackstone, presented President Benjamin Harrison and Secretary of State Blaine with a petition to "use their good offices and influence to secure their holding at an early date of an international conference to consider the condition of the Israelites and their claims to Palestine as their ancient home." Known to history as the "Blackstone Memorial," it was signed by 413 of America's wealthiest, most prominent, most powerful citizens, including the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court; the Speaker of the House, a future US President (William McKinley), the Governor of Massachusetts, mayors, editors, publishers, notable clergymen (Dwight L. Moody, for instance), business moguls, John D. Rockefeller, J. Pierpoint Morgan, Cyrus McCormick, Russel Sage, Charles Scribner, etc., etc.

Blackstone's motivations were religious. A dispensationalist after having been converted at the Niagara Conference of 1878, he was given to describing himself as "God's Little Errand Boy." But what of the others who signed on to his petition? Overall, they were not known to be religious enthusiasts or even believers. Some of them were quite roguish. As "Rothschilds' Errand Boys," they were in service to those whose family's ambition for generations has been to rule the world from Jerusalem.

#### CHARLES TAZE RUSSELL

Please observe the year of Blackstone's Memorial, 1891; that was the year before Nathan Birnbaum had coined the term "Zionism" and a decade before the "father of Zionism,"



Theodor Herzl, first published. Yet, predating Blackstone, Birnbaum, Herzl, *et al*, was Charles Taze Russell. In 1879 he propounded the concept of a “prophetic double,” whereby God’s favor, which rested on the Jews from Jacob to Jesus, was then withdrawn, only to be restored in 1878. In 1880, with amazing foresight, Russell prophesied that the Jews would return to the Holy Land, this just two years after the founding of two tiny villages, Petah Tikvah in Judah and Rosh Pinnah in Galilee. In 1891 Russell wrote Lord Rothschild:

May the God of Jacob direct you, my dear Sir, and all interested with you i the deliverance and prosperity of Israel, and blessed will they be who, to any extent, yield themselves as his servants in fulfilling his will as predicted.

(To its credit, the Watchtower organization would later reversed course from its founder, Russell, in this matter by removing themselves from the Zionist circle of war.)

In 1910, Charles Taze Russell addressed some 4,000 Jews in New York’s Hippodrome about immigrating to Palestine. His message, though well received, was little heeded with few American Jews making *aliya*. In England he addressed 4600 Jews in Prince Albert Hall. Back again state-side, he held additional meetings but for all his personal magnetism, which was great, Russell’s immediate impact was small, nor did his efforts change facts on the ground, anymore than having the rich and the famous sign a petition. It would take two world wars and 70 million dead to bring about the birth of the Jews-only, Zionist State.

#### **S I M O N   B A R   K O K H B A   R E D U X**

Unquestionably one of Jewish history’s most controversial figures, Simon bar Kokhba, presented himself to Israel as its long-awaited messiah. Confirming this were coins struck during his reign inscribed "Shimon, President of Israel," and "Year One of the Redemption of Israel." So impressed was the great rabbinical sage, Rabbi Akiva with bar Kokhba that he exclaimed, “this is the king Messiah.” Not everyone was likewise impressed. Replying to Rabbi Akiva, Rabbi Yochanan said: "grass will grow from your cheeks and yet the son of David (the king messiah) will not have come." In the Talmud, bar Kokhba is no longer called “bar Kokhba,” (that is, “son of a Star,” the star being Jacob’s), rather, “bar Koseva,” (that is “son of deceit”) on account of his having deceived the Nation.

Again a rising star, bar Kokhba’s fortified headquarters, Beitar, today is the name of a Zionist youth movement. After Beitar’s fall, bar Kokhba and his forces regrouped in the famous Dead Sea fortress, Massada, where they made their last stand. Today, recruits are initiated into the Israeli Defense Force in that very place in a bizarre, cult-like ceremony. The State of Israel’s first prime minister, Ben Gurion, took his name from one of bar Kokhba’s

generals. In his day bar Kokhba collected materials for the rebuilding of the Temple. To-day, materials are again being collected for the anticipated rebuilding of the Temple where the Ashkenazi anti-Christ is to be installed.

Now here's the kicker: more Christians are involved in this later day restoration of Jewish national aspiration than there are Jews. It is Zionized Christendom which fights the Zionists' wars, whose children are sacrificed in the fires of Molech that have been lit for them in Iraq and Afghanistan, who fall for the false prophets: the Jerry Falwells, the Pat Robertsons, the Hagees, the Lindseys, the Grahams. Behind them, underwriting them, providing them with the oxygen of publicity are the international bankers, the Rothschilds and the Rockefellers, whose objective is to rule the world from Jerusalem.

#### TEMPLE ENVY

The moral of our tale is that the Christian world has been perennially haunted by the ghost of the temple - a ghost in which it does not believe. If the least be said for it, the temple has never lost its power to stir men's imaginations and excite their emotions, and the emotion which it has most often inspired in Christian breasts has certainly been that of envy, a passion the more dangerous for being suppressed. The temple has cast a shadow over the claims and the confidence of the Christian church from early times, a shadow which is by no means diminishing in our own day. (Hugh Nibley)

Hugh Nibley, a Mormon scholar, made above the Mormon argument for re-instituting Temple worship. He had sound historical grounds on which to make his case:

Upon taking Jerusalem in 1099 the Crusaders moved straight to the object of their desire, the Holy Sepulchre, and then proceeded directly to Solomon's Temple: *ad dominicum sepulcrum, dehinc etiam ad Templum*. As they marched they sang apocalyptic hymns of joy hailing the millennial day and the New Jerusalem. The Crusades are a reminder that Christianity was never able to settle for a spiritual temple or forget the old one: . . . (Hugh Nibley)

Ironical that for many centuries until the rise of Islam, the Roman Church tried to put a damper on interest in Jerusalem. Roman Catholicism wanted Rome, not earthly Jerusalem, to be God's holy city, thus Jerusalem's Bishop Macarius, by authorization of the Emperor, demolished the temple of Jupiter that the Romans had "built on the very spot where formerly the Temple of God had stood." This occurred immediately after his return from the Council of Nicea in 350 AD but he did this not so as to honor the site for after that the Temple Mount became a trash dump.

Pope Leo I also known as "Leo the Great" (c. 391 or 400 - 461) saw a problem in the Church's having two centers, one in Rome, one Jerusalem:

Leo, who did more than any other man to transform the old universal *devotio Romana* into a new *devotio Christiana*, clearly saw in the temple at Jerusalem his most serious opponent. His sermons bristle with barbed and invidious remarks that betray his touchiness on the subject.

Rome has died pagan and been resurrected Christian. The tomb of Peter now performs the function that once belonged to the *templum* of Hadrian, the great round tomb by the Tiber that was designed to draw all the world to it, while Hadrian's image now stands in the temple of Jerusalem - the roles of the two cities have been neatly reversed.

Leo freely admits the debt of Christian Rome to pagan Rome, and sees in the great Easter and Christmas congregations of his people both the old Roman national assembly and the gathering of Israel at the temple: "Here you see the heavenly Jerusalem, built of all nations," he cries, addressing such assemblies, "purged of all impurity on this day, it has become as the Temple of God!" "Now a new and indestructible Temple has been erected," with Leo himself presiding in it, ordained in honor of Christ, the prophet "after the order of Melchizedek, not after the order of Aaron whose priesthood ceased with the Law of the Old Testament." Rome has not abolished the rites of the temple, however, but simply taken them over, every particle of the ancient ordinances and imagery having been absorbed in the Christian sacraments: "Ours today is the circumcision, the anointing of priests, etc. is the honor of the Temple!" Thanks to the ministrations of Peter and Paul, the people of Rome are now "a holy generation, a chosen people, a priestly and royal city." In a word, Rome was now Jerusalem. (Hugh Nibley)

#### THE RISE OF ISLAM

Only with the Islamic invasion did the situation on the Temple Mount change. On conquering Jerusalem in 638 AD, Caliph Omar wanted first of all to see "the glorious Temple that Solomon had built," only to find out that the Christians had turned it into site for refuse. That which had been spurned by the Church, the Moslems exploited by building the magnificent Dome of the Rock, which monument became the focal point of pilgrimage.

The Moslem intellectuals, exactly as the Jewish and Christian doctors before them, protested against the glorification of a mere building, and campaigned vigorously against the pilgrimages, but the temple had a powerful advocate in Christian jealousy. Like children fighting for a toy, each faction came to prize the temple more highly when it saw how much the other wanted it. (Hugh Nibley)

Since Islam identifies with Abraham's son, Ishmael, the question arises, why would it want to build a shrine on Mt. Zion associated with Abraham's other son, Isaac? (The Temple Mount, after all, was the place where Abraham was told to sacrifice Isaac.) It looks as if Islam is picking peas on the wrong side of the fence.

However that may be, in 1090 AD, the crusaders took possession of the Temple Mount, converting the Dome of the Rock into a church, called the *Templum Domini* i.e., "Temple of

our Lord" and it remained in Christian hands until Saladin's army retook Jerusalem in 1187 AD. After that the Dome was restored to Islam. Whether it is Islam or Christianity, this was Zionism. To be sure the Zionism of the crusaders was not the modern dispensational variety but a muscular brand of Christianity which existed for its own sake and not for the sake of the Jews. As such, it represented a partial break from former times when the papacy wanted to underplayed the Temple Mount's importance.

Beginning in 1492, Christopher Columbus made four trips to the New World, his primary purpose being that of finding gold but not, as some have surmised, for personal enrichment, for this would be to misread the man entirely. To the contrary, Columbus, a religious zealot, had taken to wearing a Franciscan habit and referring to himself by the title "Christ-bearer." His expressed intention? that of funding an expedition to retake the Holy Land. His ambition was, as admiral, to lead a fleet of ships across the Mediterranean, this as an agent to Spain's King Ferdinand, the same as who on his deathbed in 1516 told his minions that he could not die as yet, for God had told him that he would lead a great crusade to recapture Jerusalem. Nonetheless, the King and Columbus, too, died, their ambition left unfulfilled.

The blood and treasure expend on Zionism over the centuries simply defies description.

On a visit to Salt Lake City in 1875, Baron Rothschild asked:

"Elder Taylor, what do you mean by this temple? What is the object of it? Why are you building it?"

After being given a detailed explanation, Baron Rothschild replied:

"This is not our temple."

Then Elder Taylor said to Baron Rothschild:

"No, but you will build a temple, for the Lord has shown us, among other things, that the Jews have quite a role to perform in the latter days – that all the things spoken of by your old prophets will be fulfilled, that you will be gathered to the old Jerusalem."

Later Baron Rothschild would proclaim:

"I created the Yishuv [the Jewish settlement in Palestine], I alone. Therefore no men, neither colonists nor organizations, have the right to interfere in my plans."

#### **THE THIRD TEMPLE**

The ROTHSCILDS are the wonders of modern banking. Sprung from that poetic, that ancient, that

mysterious race, from which we derive all our religion and half of our civilization, we see the descendants of Judah, after a persecution of two thousand years, peering above kings, rising higher than emperors, and holding a whole continent in the hollow of their hands. The Rothschild govern a Christian world. Not a cabinet moves without their advice. They stretch their hand, with equal ease, from Petersburg to Vienna, from Vienna to Paris, from Paris to London, from London to Washington. Baron Rothschild, the head of the house, is the true king of Judah, the prince of the captivity, the Messiah so long looked for by this extraordinary people. He holds the keys of peace or war, blessing or cursing. To what will all this lead? Is the holy city to be rebuilt – the third temple to rear its turrets to heaven? (N. Y. Herald, Sept., 1835)

Currently underway is a collaborative effort by Jewish and Christian Zionists to rebuild what they term "the Third Temple" in Jerusalem. It all began in 1866 when the British War Office lent Lieutenant-General Sir Charles Warren to the Palestine Exploration Fund. In a massive archaeological undertaking, he played a leading role in revealing the outer walls of Herod's temple 1,000 ft. long, and 200 ft. high. A member of the Rothschild-dominated Masonic "research lodge" (*Ars Quator Coronatorum*), Sir Charles could be viewed as acting as a Rothschild agent, as well as acting on the Crown's behalf.

Even now in Jerusalem there stands a palatial, intricately-designed edifice, Israel's Supreme Court. Costing untold millions to construct and loaded with masonic religious symbols (including a huge pyramid, perhaps demonstrating a certain spiritual affinity for Egypt), it could provide a suitably grand venue in which to conduct a legally-sanctioned "anointing" of the prophesied "priest-king." Picking up the tab, as well as controlling every detail relating to its construction, is the Rothschild banking family, the same as originally whistled the Zionist entity into existence. A multi-generational family project, their aim goes well beyond simply that of establishing a one-world political or economic system. The larger objective is to elicit the world's adoration. Thus the third pillar of their family project calls for a global religious system in which their representative is to be worshiped universally in the temple in Jerusalem:

Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all. But in his estate he shall honor the God of forces: and a god whom his fathers knew not shall he honor with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things.

(Daniel 11:37-38)

Naturally few are privy to Rothschild plans and deliberations, especially regarding so sensitive a matter as this, but we can make an educated guess, mine being that the one whom they have in mind to serve as "New Age Messiah" will somehow be tied in with either British or European royalty and whose ancestry traces back to the Merovingians and, presumably, through them back to Mary Magdalene and Jesus. Currently seeking to re-establish the

temple priesthood, at the same time undo the judgment of 70 AD, are the self-described "Temple Mount Faithful" who have gathered together furnishings, sacred vessels, vestments, etc., in anticipation of the removal of the Islamic Dome of the Rock to be replaced by an edifice of their own devising and who's to say what mischief they contemplate or what mayhem they might instigate to achieve their goal? Already hundreds have been trained in their duties to carry out the anticipated temple's functions. All stands in readiness for the messianic claimant to the Davidic throne to reveal himself and authorize construction to begin:

On the 7th October 1998 The Temple Mount and Land of Israel Faithful Movement brought the cornerstone for the Third Temple to the gates of the Temple Mount and the City of David in a very exciting and historical event. . . . the Israeli authorities . . . allowed the Faithful, and even encouraged them, to bring the cornerstone to the City of David very close to the gates of the Temple Mount and then to carry the cornerstone around the walls of the Temple Mount and the Old City seven times. . . . The struggle will continue until the Israeli flag will again be on the Temple Mount . . .

([www.templemountfaithful.org](http://www.templemountfaithful.org))

In an article appearing in The Times, (12/13/19'99) p. 39. titled, "The righteous will survive and the rest will perish," Sam Kiley, the Times' Jerusalem correspondent, in interviewing Gershon Salomon, the Temple Mount Faithful's founder, quoted him as insisting on the Islamic shrine's removal: "We must have a war," he said. "There will be many nations against us but God will be our general. I am sure this is a test, that God is expecting us to move the Dome with no fear from other nations. The Messiah will not come by himself, we should bring Him by fighting." These are not merely the ranting of a lone, half-crazed, religious crank:

The Israeli rabbinical council involved with re-establishing the Sanhedrin, is calling upon all groups involved in Temple Mount research to prepare detailed architectural plans for the reconstruction of the Jewish Holy Temple. The Sanhedrin was a 71-man assembly of rabbis that convened adjacent to the Holy Temple before its destruction in 70 AD and outside Jerusalem until about 400 AD. . . . the group will establish a forum of architects and engineers to begin plans for rebuilding the Temple, a move fraught with religious and political volatility. The group, which calls itself the Sanhedrin, is calling on the Jewish people to contribute toward the acquisition of materials for the purpose of rebuilding the Temple, including the gathering and preparation of prefabricated, disassembled portions to be stored and ready for rapid assembly, "in the manner of King David." . . . [Rabbi Adin] Steinsaltz [temporarily the Sanhedrin's president] is best known for his translation and commentary on the Talmud, but he has also served as resident scholar at Princeton and Yale Universities. He heads a network of Israeli educational institutions called Mekor Chaim and outreach programs in the U.S., the former Soviet Union, Great Britain and Australia. He is also a past recipient of the Israel Prize.

The Sanhedrin was reestablished last October in Tiberias, the place of its last meeting 1,600 years ago.

Since then, it has met in Jerusalem on a monthly basis. (New 'Sanhedrin' plans rebuilding of Temple.

WorldNetDaily.com Wednesday, June 8, 2005)

Not for the sake of the Jewish people is this happening nor to advance world peace, not even to advance "normative" Judaism but to advance the ambitions of designing men who, for more than a century, have used Zionism as a vehicle for exploitation, dominion, and war. It is true to fact to say that Israel exists not to serve as a "homeland" for the beleaguered Jewish people, rather, to advance empire on a grand scale:

The Jews might have had Uganda, Madagascar, and other places for the establishment of a Jewish Fatherland, but they wanted absolutely nothing except Palestine, not because the Dead Sea water by evaporation can produce five trillion dollars of metaloids and powdered metals; not because the sub-soil of Palestine contains twenty times more petroleum than all the combined reserves of the two Americas; but because Palestine is the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and Africa, because Palestine constitutes the veritable center of world political power, the strategic center for world control.

(Nahum Goldman, President World Jewish Congress)

In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century the Rothschilds played a key role in formulating a theology called British Israelism. Through this and the Rothschilds' intermarrying into British aristocracy, Jewish and Gentile ambitions have become somewhat intertwined.

Queen Victoria seems to have subscribed to this Davidic theory and had her male children circumcised by a Jewish ritual circumciser, a mohel. Both Edward VII, the duke of Windsor, and Charles, the current prince of Wales, were circumcised by a well-known London physician and mohel, Dr. Jacob Snowman.

(Shalom Goldmann *God's Sacred Tongue*)

Confirming her abiding interest in all things Jewish, Queen Victoria took upon herself the title: Protectress of the Jews.

#### **OCCULT FAITH**

What neither evangelicals nor rabbinical Judaism properly calculate on, is that the Rothschilds have something up their sleeve beyond anything Judaism or Christianity ever dreamed of, for the Rothschilds are not Talmudic, Law-observant Jews, rather, for generations, they have been the leaders of another religion, namely, the worldwide Masonic movement where they have been working behind the scenes at the highest levels.

The modern State of Israel does not exist for the sake of advancing Judaism, nor for the sake of the Jewish people. The Rothschilds funded Israel into existence for their own sake because they intend to control the world from Jerusalem with one of their own, a cosmocrat, at the helm. A central tenet of the Masonic faith to which they adhere is that of establishing a Temple in Jerusalem:

. . . Take from Freemasonry its dependence on the Temple; leave out of its ritual all references to that sacred edifice, and to the legends and traditions connected with it, and the system itself would at once decay and die . . .

Freemasonry is not the sort of religion to put all its cards on the table:

Masonry conceals its secrets from all except the Adepts, the Sages, and the Elect; and uses false explanations of its symbols to mislead those deserving to be misled.

(Albert Pike, Commander of the Scottish Rite)

As one pious rabbi, Benamozegh, wrote:

Are we to wonder that Judaism has been accused of forming a branch of Freemasonry? It is quite certain that Masonic theology is at root nothing else than Theosophy, and that it corresponds to the theology of the Cabala. Besides, a deep study of the rabbinical monuments of the early ages of the Christian era supply numerous proofs that the aggada was popular form of an esoteric science, which presents, in its methods of initiation, the most striking resemblance to the Masonic system.

As Jewish apologist, Bernard Lazare, put it:

There were Cabalistic Jews around the cradle of Freemasonry, as certain rites still in existence conclusively show.

#### **THE MARK OF THE BEAST**

“Hex” is Greek for “six.” Also “to cast a spell.” A triple witching, “hex-hex-hex” is bewitchment. In occult circles the six-pointed star passes for being a magical talisman, meaningful to alchemists and Kabbalists alike. No evidence has been adduced showing that it was used by King David or that he ever intended it for Temple use. In fact, the terms “Star of David” i.e., “Magen David” cannot be traced earlier than the Middle Ages. Likewise, the term “King Solomon’s Seal,” it, too, is of mediaeval origin. Historically, the Menorah, not the hexagram has symbolized God's Covenant.

Here is wisdom: Let the one having reason count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man and its number is six hundred and sixty six. (Revelation 13:18)

While we are told of the shared values of the State of Israel with those of the USA and of Christianity, in reality Zionism is naught but the golden calf of Ashkenazi supremacy. It is Pharisaism on steroids. “Judeo-Christianity,” being neither Judaism or Christianity does justice to neither. Rather, it functions to condition us to war and to view favorably the mark of the beast squarely planted at the center of Israel’s flag. The fate of those who submit:

If any man do homage to the beast and his image, and receive his mark on his forehead, or upon his hand,



the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever; and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. (Revelation 14:9-11)

Resistance to the imposition of the mark of the beast, albeit possibly fatal, is not futile, for there stands God's promise of reward to those who resist:

And I saw...them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image and over his mark. . . . And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (Revelation 15:2, 20:4)

Though pledging allegiance to the hex flag of the State of Israel may risk the judgment of *Revelation 14*; yet many a Zionized, evangelical church displays it from the podium. In this regard, check out the "Rothschild" name, for it is not the family's original name but the one it took up in conjunction with the display of the *roth* (red) hex shield on their door. *Roth* is German meaning "red," the same as the Hebrew word, "Edom." Those who follow these latter day Edomites, the same will surely receive an Edomite's reward.

A chilling indication of the higher-level alliance currently pertaining has to do with the 20 tons of heavy water that was surreptitiously sent to Israel in the years 1959 to 1960 from Great Britain. Great Britain? In the movie, *Exodus*, wasn't it Britain that at every turn tried to thwart Israel? That was for public consumption. In reality, there has been a co-ordinated effort, with Britain providing the heavy water, France, a nuclear reactor, and the US, in 1967, huge quantities of fissile material. Taken together, all of this made possible for a small, seemingly impoverished nation to become one of the world's premier nuclear powers with hundreds of nuclear bombs in its arsenal.

To top it off, at the very time Germany was in negotiation with Iran to limit its nuclear energy program, it was providing long-distance submarines to Israel, thereby allowing the Zionist entity to bring its nuclear-tipped missiles to within striking distance of Iran. Five such submarines were underwritten, if not outrightly gifted, by Germany to Israel. By the time of this writing, spring 2012, four of these have been delivered.

What does this indicate regarding these "Christian" nations' commitment to non-prolifer-

ation? Maybe that it was always just a ploy, a public relations charade, that in truth no such commitment ever existed.

The one person who stood up against the Zionist State's nuclear ambitions was President Kennedy. His principled stance that Israel's nuclear facility, Dimona, be inspected (this among others), not a lone gunman, is what cost him his life.

As does its submarines, Zionism runs silent, runs deep, and is lethal. The ruling passion of our age, Zionism runs roughshod over all who would stand in its way. Some worry about an Islamic bomb. But what about the Zionist bomb? The nuclear era began in greatest secrecy in the Manhattan home of Wall Street financier, Bernard Baruch (the Atomic Energy Commission's first head). Hence the expression "Manhattan Project." Behind Baruch, however, were the Rothschilds and behind them, a substantial part of the world's wealth. The bomb was dropped on Japan, not to end the war with Japan, but to terrorize the world.

Lumping Islam with Confucianism and condemning them both, a prominent Establishment academic, Samuel Huntington, identified the "Islamic- Confucian world" (that being Eurasia, from the Middle East to China) as "an arc of crisis," in need of American intervention. As the one who coined the expression: "clash of civilizations," the title of his book, he foresaw hostilities between the US and China breaking out by the year 2010, predicting that the flash point will be the oil lanes of the South China Sea. Evidently, his brand of Judeo-Christianity knows not the commandment: thou shalt not covet thy neighbors' oil. Though he called his book *Clash of Civilizations*, he might better have called it *Clash of Religions, Zionism against the entire planet*. That would better describe the cleavage line.

#### TRIUMPHALISM, THE CHURCH MILITANT

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? . . . Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. (II Corinthians 6:14-15, 17)

There is a war on for our allegiance. The battle is an ongoing, knock-down, no-holds-barred fight. Once we understand that, we will be far more inquiring about our choices and less trusting in the things we are told. The synagogues of Satan will be judged in due course. Speaking truth to power has always been a hazardous occupation.

#### THE TEMPLE WITHIN

"Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:21)

Said the Samaritan woman by the well to Jesus and Jesus' reply to her:

Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. . . . [for] God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. (John 4:20-21, 24)

In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) (John 7:37-39)

The above declaration Jesus made in the Temple during the eight-day, feast of Tabernacles. This, the last in the Mosaic cycle of feasts, also called the feast of Booths, is when temporary structures called *succas* are constructed of palm fronds in which are hung fruit, symbolizing the coming Messianic kingdom, when each family will live at peace under its own fig trees. Then will earth be baptized in God's Holy Spirit. Poured out without measure, He will flow forth to every nook and cranny, filling all.

A tradition grew up in the few centuries before Jesus that on the 7 days of the Feast of Tabernacles, a golden container filled with water from the pool of Siloam was carried in procession by the High-Priest back to the temple. As the procession came to the Watergate on the S[outh] side of the inner temple court, 3 trumpet blasts were made to mark the joy of the occasion and the people recited Is. 12:3, "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation." At the temple, while onlookers watched, the priests would march around the altar with the water container while the temple choir sang the Hallel (Pss. 113–118). The water was offered in sacrifice to God at the time of the morning sacrifice. (The MacArthur Study Bible)

It was no more pleasing to the Temple rulers then to have Jesus stand up and claim that God's Temple existed to symbolizes him, than it is today to their Zionist successors. Having made a 2000-year opposition to Jesus, they are not going to desist, particularly not now that they have made deep inroads into the servile, churches, their willing sycophants.

"But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple." (Matthew 12:6)

In declaring that he is greater than the Temple Jesus placed himself at the center of all worship. Once we are clear on that point, that Jesus saw himself so, then we are in a better position to fathom what Ezekiel was saying:

Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under

the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar.

Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side.

And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles.

Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters were to the loins.

Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.

And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river.

Now when I had returned, behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other.

Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed.

And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh.

And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from Engedi even unto Eneglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many.

But the miry places thereof and the marshes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt.

And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.

*(Ezekiel 47:1-12)*

Along with Zionism's unbridled ambition to be "king of the mountain." goes a willingness to run roughshod over anyone standing in the way. To that end, the Temple Mount Society actively contemplate seizing from Islam the Temple Mount:

The Temple Mount and Land of Israel Faithful Movement is fighting to ensure the Temple Mount will no

longer be desecrated and that the Israeli Government will remove the shrines and rebuild the Temple in our lifetime. We know that this will soon come about. (<http://www.templemountfaithful.org>)

Even now certain evangelicals are helping the Temple Mount Faithful in such matters as locating a red heifer as required by rabbinical authority or with funding, etc. Their advocacy of Temple animal sacrifice borders on contempt for the shed blood of Jesus Christ. The rationalization: that this is a necessary step to ushering in the prophesied messianic age. Also, of course, are prophesied wars, plagues, and apostasy. Does moral imperative attach to advancing these woes, as well? Shall we do evil that good might come of it? What Zionized Christians are doing amounts to little more than an attempt to undo the judgment of 70 AD!!

Never mind about holy places, here or there or anywhere, this is totally retrograde thinking. Our place is to cultivate the chapel within:

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (*I Corinthians 6:19-20*)

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. (*Romans 8:14-17*)

It is unfortunate that a significant part of Christendom never got the message that our Lord had called us, not to brick and mortar edifices, rather, to the constructing of a chapel within. As Jesus said:

"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." (*John 5:39-40*)



# "Judaism is not spelled with a 'Z'"

*Rabbi Ahron Cohen, an address delivered at Birmingham University, England 02/26/2003*

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As you have already been told, I am an orthodox Jew (that is a Jew who endeavors to live his life completely in accordance with the Jewish religion). I am involved in ecclesiastical duties within the Jewish Community and am particularly involved in educating our youth and in helping them to achieve healthy and correct attitudes. It is therefore of particular interest to me to be able to talk to you, a student body, today.

I have been asked to talk to you about Judaism and Zionism. This subject is of course tremendously relevant in the light of the current situation in Palestine, where you have - let's face it - one side, the Zionists (who are also Jews), wishing to impose a 'sectarian' State over the heads of an indigenous population, the Palestinians. A confrontation which has resulted in horrific bloodshed and brutality with no end in sight unless there is a very radical change.

My qualification to talk on this subject is by virtue of my being one of many orthodox Jews who absolutely sympathize with the Palestinian cause, and we protest vehemently against the terrible wrongs being perpetrated against the Palestinian People by the Zionist illegitimate regime in Palestine. . . .

Let me firstly state quite categorically that Judaism and Zionism are incompatible. They are diametrically opposed. The question must surely arise in the minds of many of you here today that there appears to be a paradox. After all everyone knows that Zionists are Jews and that Zionism is for the benefit of Jews. The Palestinians are the enemies of the Zionists. How come then that I, a Jew, can sympathize with the Palestinian cause? I would like to try to answer this question and to revert to the subject of my talk - Judaism and Zionism - on two levels, religious belief and humanitarianism. Bearing in mind that to be humanitarian is also a basic religious requirement.

Firstly from a Jewish religious belief point of view. One has to take a look at some aspects of the history of the Jewish people and at their basic belief in the Al-mighty's control of our destiny and what the Al-mighty wants of us. All as set out in our Religious teachings, our Torah, and as taught to us through the generations by our great religious leaders. Against this we also have to look at the history of Zionism, how it developed, what are its aims. Our religion is for us a total way of life. Showing us how to live a life in the service of the Al-mighty. It affects every aspect of our life from the cradle to the grave. We are taught that it was revealed to us by Divine Revelation, as described in the Bible, some three and a half thousand years ago, and that is when the Jewish People came into being. All of our religious requirements, practical and philosophical, are set out in the Torah which comprises the Bible (the old testament) and a vast code of Oral Teaching handed down to us through the generations.

As mentioned, our religion is a total way of life covering every aspect of our life. One area of our religion is that subject to certain conditions is that we will be given a land, the Holy Land, now known as Palestine, in which to live

and carry out various parts of our service of the Al-mighty. Now, before I go any further, I wish to point out something which is very basic to understanding the difference between Judaism and Zionism and that is that the orthodox Jewish concept of nationhood is very different to the concept of nationhood held by most peoples. Most peoples understand a nation to be a specific people living in a specific land.

The land is essential for the identity of the nation. They may or may not have a religion, but the religion is immaterial to the national identity. The orthodox Jewish concept of nationhood however, is a specific people with a specific religion. It is the religion that establishes the national identity. They may or may not have a land, the land is immaterial to the Jewish national identity. This is borne out by the fact that the Jewish nation has been without a land for 2000 years, but as long as they retained their religion they retained their identity.

Now I mentioned earlier that we were given a land but under certain conditions. The conditions were basically that we had to maintain the highest of moral, ethical and religious standards. The Jewish People did have the land for approximately the first one thousand five hundred years of their existence. However, regrettably, the conditions were not fulfilled to the required degree and the Jews were exiled from their land. For the last two thousand years or so the Jewish people have been in a state of exile decreed by the A-lmighty because they did not maintain the standards expected of them. This state of exile is the situation that exists right up to the present day. It is a basic part of our belief to accept willingly the Heavenly decree of exile and not to try and fight against it or to end it by our own hands. To do so would constitute a rebellion against the wishes of the A-lmighty. In practical terms, although we have maintained our Jewish identity by virtue of our attachment to our religion, never the less exile for us means firstly that Jews must be loyal subjects of the countries in which they live and not attempt to rule over the established indigenous populations of those countries.

Secondly, that we may not attempt to set up a State of our own in Palestine. This would apply even if the land would be unoccupied and it certainly applies when, as is the case, there is an existing indigenous population. This prohibition is a basic part of our teaching and we are forsworn not to contravene it and we are warned of the dire consequences of doing so. It follows, therefore, that Jews have no right to rule today in Palestine.

... The practical outcome of Zionism in the form of the State known as 'Israel' is completely alien to Judaism and the Jewish Faith. The very name "Israel" which originally meant what are known as the Children of Israel i.e. the Jewish People was usurped by the Zionists. For this reason many orthodox Jews avoid referring to the Zionist State by the name 'Israel'.

The ideology of Zionism is not to rely on divine providence but to take the law into one's own hands and to try to force the outcome in the form of a State. This is completely contrary to the approach to the matter of exile which our Torah requires us to adopt, as handed down to us by our great religious teachers. I have spoken till now from the religious belief point of view. But let us consider the humanitarian point of view (and to do so is also a religious requirement as I mentioned earlier). The Zionist ideology was and is to force the aim of a State irrespective of the cost in life and property to anyone who stands in the way. The Palestinians stood in the way. We have a fact that



in order to achieve an ill conceived nationalistic ambition, a shocking contravention of natural justice was committed by the Zionists in setting up an illegitimate regime in Palestine completely against the wishes of the established population, the Palestinians, which inevitably had to be based on loss of life, killing and stealing.

To sum up. According to the Torah and Jewish faith, the present Palestinian/Arab claim to rule in Palestine is right and just. The Zionist claim is wrong and criminal. Our attitude to Israel is that the whole concept is flawed and illegitimate. We have another problem and that is that the Zionists have made themselves to appear as the representatives and spokes-people of all Jews thus, with their actions, arousing animosity against the Jews. Those who harbor this animosity are accused of anti-Semitism. However, what has to be made abundantly clear is that Zionism is not Judaism. Zionists cannot speak in the name of Jews. Zionists may have been born as Jews, but to be a Jew also requires adherence to the Jewish belief and religion.

So what becomes abundantly clear is that opposition to Zionism and its crimes does not imply hatred of Jews or 'anti-Semitism'. On the contrary Zionism itself and its deeds are the biggest threat to Jews and Judaism. . . . The strife between Arab and Jew in Palestine only began when the first Zionist pioneers came to Palestine with the express aim of forming a State over the heads of the indigenous Arab population. That strife has continued until this very day and has cost and continues to cost thousands and thousands of lives. The oppression, abuse and murder in Palestine is a tragedy not only for the Palestinians but for the Jewish people as well. And is in fact part of the dire consequences of which we are warned if we transgress our religious requirement not to rebel against our exile.

I wish to add that the connection between Muslims and Jews goes right back into ancient history. Mostly the relationship was friendly and mutually beneficial. Historically, the situation frequently was that when Jews were being persecuted in Europe they found refuge in the various Muslim countries. Our attitude to Muslims and Arabs can only be one of friendliness and respect. I would like to finish with the following words. We want to tell the world, especially our Muslim neighbors, that there is no hatred or animosity between Jew and Muslim. We wish to live together as friends and neighbors as we have done mostly over hundreds even thousands of years in all the Arab countries. It was only the advent of the Zionists and Zionism which upset this age old relationship. We consider the Palestinians as the people with the right to govern in Palestine.

The Zionist State known as "Israel" is a regime that has no right to exist. Its continuing existence is the underlying cause of the strife in Palestine. We pray for a solution to the terrible and tragic impasse that exists. Hopefully based on results brought about by moral, political and economic pressures imposed by the nations of the world. *We pray for an end* to bloodshed and an end to the suffering of all innocent people - Jew and non-Jew alike - worldwide. We are waiting for the annulment of Zionism and the dismantling of the Zionist regime, which will bring about an end to the suffering of the Palestinian people. We would welcome the opportunity to dwell in peace in the holy land under a rule which is entirely in accordance with the wishes and aspirations of the Palestinian People. May we soon merit the time when all mankind will be at peace with each other.

## GENOCIDING THE CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM

### The Irradiation of 100,000 Sefardi Jewish Children

Barry Chamish 0/17/05 – abridged

On August 14, at 9 PM, Israeli television station, Channel Ten, broke all convention and exposed the ugliest secret of Israel's Labor Zionist founders; the deliberate mass radiation poisoning of nearly all Sephardi youths. Every Sephardi child was to be given 35,000 times the maximum dose of x-rays through his head. For doing so, the American government paid the Israeli government 300,000 Israeli liras a year. The entire Health budget was 60,000 liras. The money paid by the Americans is equivalent to billions of dollars today.

To fool the parents of the victims, the children were taken away on "school trips" and their parents were later told the x-rays were a treatment for the scourge of scalp ringworm. 6,000 of the children died shortly after their doses were given, the many of the rest developed cancers that killed them over time and are still killing them now. While living, the victims suffered from disorders such as epilepsy, amnesia, Alzheimer's disease, chronic headaches and psychosis.

Yes, that is the subject of the documentary in cold terms. It is another matter to see the victims on the screen, ie. To watch the Moroccan lady describe what getting 35,000 times the dose of allowable x-rays in her head feels like. "I screamed make the headache go away. Make the headache go away. Make the headache go away. But it never went away."

To watch the bearded man walk hunched down the street. "I'm in my fifties and everyone thinks I'm in my seventies. I have to stoop when I walk so I won't fall over. They took my youth away with those x-rays."

To watch the old lady who administered the doses to thousands of children. "They brought them in lines. First their heads were shaved and smeared in burning gel. Then a ball was put between their legs and the children were ordered not to drop it, so they wouldn't move.

The children weren't protected over the rest of their bodies. There were no lead vests for them. I was told I was doing good by helping to remove ringworm. If I knew what dangers the children were facing, I would never have cooperated. Never!"

Because the whole body was exposed to the rays, the genetic makeup of the children was often altered, affecting the next generation. We watch the woman with the distorted face explain, "All three of my children have the same cancers my family suffered. Are you going to tell me that's a coincidence?"

Everyone notices that Sephardi women in their fifties today, often have sparse patchy hair, which they try to cover with henna. Most of us assumed it was just a characteristic of Sephardi women. We watch the woman on the screen wearing a baseball-style hat. She places a picture of a lovely young teenager with flowing black hair opposite the

lens. "That was me before my treatment. Now look at me." She removes her hat. Even the red henna can't cover the horrifying scarred bald spots.

The majority of the victims were Moroccan because they were the most numerous of the Sephardi immigrants. The generation that was poisoned became the country's perpetual poor and criminal class. It didn't make sense. The Moroccans who fled to France became prosperous and highly educated. The common explanation was that France got the rich, thus smart ones. The real explanation is that every French Moroccan child didn't have his brain cells fried with gamma rays.

The film made it perfectly plain that this operation was no accident. The dangers of x-rays had been known for over forty years. We read the official guidelines for x-ray treatment in 1952.

The maximum dose to be given a child in Israel was .5 rad. There was no mistake made. The children were deliberately poisoned. David Deri, makes the point that only Sephardi children received the x-rays.

"I was in class and the men came to take us on a tour. They asked our names. The Ashkenazi children were told to return to their seats. The dark children were put on the bus."

The film now quotes two noted anti-Sephardi racist Jewish leaders, Nahum Goldmann and Levi Eshkol. Goldmann spent the Holocaust years first in Switzerland, where he made sure few Jewish refugees were given shelter, then flew to New York to become head of the World Jewish Congress headed by Samuel Bronfman. According to Canadian writer Mordecai Richler, Bronfman had cut a deal with Prime Minister Mackenzie King to prevent the immigration of European Jews to Canada.

The Moroccan lady is back on the screen. "It was a Holocaust, a Sephardi Holocaust. And what I want to know is why no one stood up to stop it."

David Deri, on film and then as a panel member, relates the frustration he encountered when trying to find his childhood medical records. "All I wanted to know was what they did to me. I wanted to know who authorized it. I wanted to trace the chain of command. But the Health Ministry told me my records were missing." Boaz Lev, the Health Ministry's spokesman chimes in, "Almost all the records were burned in a fire."

Here was the government cabinet at the time of the ringworm atrocities:

Prime Minister - David Ben Gurion / Finance Minister - Eliezer Kaplan

Settlement Minister - Levi Eshkol / Foreign Minister - Moshe Sharrett

Health Minister - Yosef Burg / Labor Minister - Golda Meir

Police Minister - Amos Ben Gurion / Director General Of The Defence Ministry, Shimon Peres.

That a program involving the equivalent of billions of dollars of American government funds should be unknown to the Prime Minister of cash-strapped Israel is ridiculous. Ben Gurion was in on the horrors and undoubtedly chose his son to be Police Minister in case anyone interfered with them.

## ~ THE JEWS OF IRAQ ~

By Naeim Giladi

I write this article for the same reason I wrote my book: to tell the American people, and especially American Jews, that Jews from Islamic lands did not emigrate willingly to Israel; that, to force them to leave, Jews killed Jews; and that, to buy time to confiscate ever more Arab lands, Jews on numerous occasions rejected genuine peace initiatives from their Arab neighbors. I write about what the first prime minister of Israel called "cruel Zionism." I write about it because I was part of it.

My ancestors had settled in Iraq more than 2,600 years ago-600 years before Christianity, and 1,200 years before Islam. I am descended from Jews who built the tomb of Yehezkel, a Jewish prophet of pre-biblical times. My town, where I was born in 1929, is Hillah, not far from the ancient site of Babylon.

I made my way to the new state of Israel, arriving in May, 1950. My passport had my name in Arabic and English, but the English couldn't capture the "kh" sound, so it was rendered simply as Klaski. At the border, the immigration people applied the English version, which had an Eastern European, Ashkenazi ring to it. In one way, this "mistake" was my key to discovering very soon just how the Israeli caste system worked.

When I reported to the Labor Office in al-Majdal, they saw that I could read and write Arabic and Hebrew and they said that I could find a good-paying job with the Military Governor's office. The Arabs were under the authority of these Israeli Military Governors. A clerk handed me a bunch of forms in Arabic and Hebrew. Now it dawned on me. Before Israel could establish its farmers' city, it had to rid al-Majdal of its indigenous Palestinians. The forms were petitions to the United Nations Inspectors asking for transfer out of Israel to Gaza, which was under Egyptian control. I read over the petition. In signing, the Palestinian would be saying that he was of sound mind and body and was making the request for transfer free of pressure or duress. Of course, there was no way that they would leave without being pressured to do so. These families had been there hundreds of years, as farmers, primitive artisans, weavers. The Military Governor prohibited them from pursuing their livelihoods, just penned them up until they lost hope of resuming their normal lives.

That's when they signed to leave. I was there and heard their grief. "Our hearts are in pain when we look at the orange trees that we planted with our own hands. Please let us go, let us give water to those trees. God will not be pleased with us if we leave His trees untended."

I asked the Military Governor to give them relief, but he said, "No, we want them to leave." I could no longer be part of this oppression and I left. Those Palestinians who didn't sign up for transfers were taken by force-just put in trucks and dumped in Gaza.

Subsequently, I wrote letters trying to get a government job elsewhere and I got many immediate responses asking me to come for an interview. Then they would discover that my face didn't match my Polish/Ashkenazi name. They would ask if I spoke Yiddish or Polish, and when I said I didn't, they would ask where I came by a Polish name. Desperate for a good job, I would usually say that I thought my great-grandfather was from Poland. I was advised time and again that "we'll give you a call." I was disillusioned at what I found in the Promised Land, disillusioned personally, disillusioned at the institutionalized racism, disillusioned at what I was beginning to learn about Zionism's cruelties. The principal interest Israel had in Jews from Islamic countries was as a supply of cheap labor, especially for the farm work that was beneath the urbanized Eastern European Jews. Ben Gurion needed the "Oriental" Jews to farm the thousands of acres of land left by Palestinians who were driven out by Israeli forces in 1948.

And I began to find out about the barbaric methods used to rid the fledgling state of as many Palestinians as possible. The world recoils today at the thought of bacteriological warfare, but Israel was probably the first to actually use it in the Middle East. In the 1948 war, Jewish forces would empty Arab villages of their populations, often by threats, sometimes by just gunning down a half-dozen unarmed Arabs as examples to the rest. To make sure the Arabs couldn't return to make a fresh life for themselves in these villages, the Israelis put typhus and dysentery bacteria into the water wells. Uri Mileshtin, an official historian for the Israeli Defense Force, has written and spoken about the use of bacteriological agents. According to Mileshtin, Moshe Dayan, a division commander at the time, gave orders in 1948 to remove Arabs from their villages, bulldoze their homes, and render water wells unusable with typhus and dysentery.

Acre was so situated that it could practically defend itself with one big gun, so the Haganah put bacteria into the spring that fed the town. The spring was called Capri and it ran from the north near a kibbutz. The Haganah put typhus bacteria into the water going to Acre, the people got sick, and the Jewish forces occupied Acre. This worked so well that they sent a Haganah division dressed as Arabs into Gaza, where there were Egyptian forces, and the Egyptians caught them putting two cans of bacteria, typhus and dysentery, into the water supply in wanton disregard of the civilian population. "In war, there is no sentiment," one of the captured Haganah men was quoted as saying.

About 125,000 Jews left Iraq for Israel in the late 1940s and into 1952, most because they had been lied to and put into a panic by what I came to learn were Zionist bombs. Among the most important documents in my book, I believe, are copies of two leaflets published by the Zionist underground calling on Jews to leave Iraq. One is dated March 16, 1950, the other April 8, 1950. The difference between these two is critical. Both indicate the date of publication, but only the April 8th leaflet notes the time of day: 4 p.m. Why the time of day? Such a specification was unprecedented. Even the investigating judge, Salaman El-Beit, found it suspicious. Did the 4 p.m. writers want an alibi for a bombing they knew would occur five hours later? If so, how did they know about the bombing? The judge concluded they knew because a connection existed between the Zionist underground and the bomb throwers.

This, too, was the conclusion of Wilbur Crane Eveland, a former senior officer in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), whom I had the opportunity to meet in New York in 1988. In his book, *Ropes of Sand*, whose publication the CIA opposed, Eveland writes:

In attempts to portray the Iraqis as anti-American and to terrorize the Jews, the Zionists planted bombs in the U.S. Information Service library and in synagogues. Soon leaflets began to appear urging Jews to flee to Israel. . . . Although the Iraqi police later provided our embassy with evidence to show that the synagogue and library bombings, as well as the anti-Jewish and anti-American leaflet campaigns, had been the work of an underground Zionist organization, most of the world believed reports that Arab terrorism had motivated the flight of the Iraqi Jews whom the Zionists had "rescued" really just in order to increase Israel's Jewish population."

Eveland doesn't detail the evidence linking the Zionists to the attacks, but in my book I do.

I not give his name, confided in me that the laboratory tests in Iraq had confirmed that the anti- American leaflets found at the American Cultural Center bombing were typed on the same typewriter and duplicated on the same stenciling machine as the leaflets distributed by the Zionist movement just before the April 8th bombing.

Tests also showed that the type of explosive used in the Beit-Lawi attack matched traces of explosives found in the suitcase of an Iraqi Jew by the name of Yosef Basri. Basri, a lawyer, together with Shalom Salih, a shoemaker, would be put on trial for the attacks in December 1951 and executed the following month. Both men were members of Hashura, the military arm of the Zionist underground. Salih ultimately confessed that he, Basri and a third man, Yosef Habaza, carried out the attacks.

Zionist Leaders: From the start they knew that in order to establish a Jewish state they had to expel the indigenous Palestinian population to the neighboring Islamic states and import Jews from these same states. David Ben Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, told a Zionist Conference in 1937 that any proposed Jewish state would have to "transfer Arab populations out of the area, if possible of their own free will, if not by coercion." After 750,000 Palestinians were uprooted and their lands confiscated in 1948-49, Ben Gurion had to look to the Islamic countries for Jews who could fill the resultant cheap labor market. "Emissaries" were smuggled into these countries to "convince" Jews to leave either by trickery or fear. In the case of Iraq, both methods were used: uneducated Jews were told of a Messianic Israel in which the blind see, the lame walk, and onions grow as big as melons; educated Jews had bombs thrown at them.

We Jews from Islamic lands did not leave our ancestral homes because of any natural enmity between Jews and Muslims.

# Two Prodigal Sons, One Prodigious Father

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Were all of Holy Writ lost to me save one portion alone, I would choose for that portion Jesus' parable about the prodigal son. Uniquely preserved by Luke, it is an unparalleled revelation of God's fatherly concern for us all. Jesus, the story's narrator, is saying in essence: This is what God is like. As a revelation of God's love, it is without peer. From that standpoint alone, it is the greatest story ever told.

The circumstance of its telling was that certain religious folk had observed Jesus in conversation with those whom in their view were beyond redemption, common, run-of-the-mill neer-do-wells. Bad enough, they grumbled, his conversing with sinners but did he have to eat with them too? They were totally offended. Perceiving their disapproval, Jesus said in substance: Why don't you folk stand stock still a minute because I want to paint your picture with some words. Thus he told them about a shepherd who'd lost a sheep, a woman who'd lost a coin, and finally about a father who'd lost a son. It is the latter story about a father who lost a son, to which I now draw attention.

By using commonplace examples, Jesus illustrates the principle that the lost animal, the lost article and, ultimately, the lost person has a claim to our attention. No representation is made that the lost sheep was better than other sheep. Nor was the lost coin necessarily more valuable than other coins. It's simply that it was lost and needed to be found.

Sometimes it's hard for us to see how this principle applies even in the case of the profligate, i.e., someone who is a sinner by every standard of his day. This limitation in our vision could reflect on our natural tendency as finite creatures to underestimate, or else undervalue, God's mercy. It's where a deeper acquaintance with this parable can benefit us, by making as clear as the Gospel itself, that the basis for forgiveness is the heart of the Father.

While traditionally it is called: the "Parable of the Prodigal Son," singular, actually two prodigals are in view and it's very clear who the two are suppose to represent – you and me. We are a combination of the sins of the flesh of the younger son and the sins of the attitude of the older son. Now we may put on a pretty good front – but inwardly we all have our problems. As well, it is clear who the father is intended to represent – God the Father.

The younger of the two sons went to his father and said: "Father, divide unto me the portion of my inheritance that is due me." Normally speaking a Jewish boy would not make such a request of his father, but he was within his legal rights to do so. Given what we know about the elder brother, it may be that in part the younger brother's motivation was to get

away from the atmosphere created by his big brother – the religious prig that he was. Be that as it may, it is all too evident that the younger son, contemptuous of advice, and eager for the pleasures of the world, was out of step with the father, for not many days thereafter, having gathered all together, he shouldered up his backpack and caught the first bus out of town, the one heading south to the border. There in a foreign land he

. . . wasted his substance with riotous living.

Considering his improvident lifestyle, it's not surprising that his financial picture soon went from bad to worse to bankrupt:

And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in the land and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country who sent him off into his fields to feed swine.

While slopping the hogs isn't anyone's idea of a desirable occupation, for someone of Hebraic ancestry, for whom swine were *trief* (unclean), this chore was particularly onerous.

And he would have satisfied his hunger with the husks that the swine did eat, yet no man gave unto him.

Finally, as the *King James* reads, "he came to himself." Sometimes it takes a disaster for us to come to ourselves, to get our head on straight. Nor is it surprising that our darkest moments provide the catalyst to make us receptive to God's greatest revelations. And while he was yet there in the pig pen, the son got down to composing a speech. Rehearsing, he said:

"I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee and am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of your hired servants.'"

It was his will which had taken him from his father, it would be his will that would take him back.

But when he was yet a great ways off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

Can you picture that father running down the road, all his servants running down the road after him? Aristotle once said: "Great men never run in public." Great men may not run in public but this father ran when he saw his boy. Not standing on formality, he ran, for there was his son standing forlorn and destitute in rags, the odor of the pig pen yet about him.

But the son said: "Wait a minute Dad, I have a speech to make." And so he started in, saying: "I have sinned before heaven and in your sight and am no more worthy to be called your son." Now that was not his full speech. Interrupting the recitation, his father said: Bring a robe and put it on him, cover those vestiges of the pigpen. And bring a ring, the family signet ring, and put it on his finger. And, oh, yes, put shoes on his feet. The significance of this latter request is that servants didn't wear shoes; only sons wore shoes.



The son's carefully rehearsed speech was devoted to the idea of his earning his way back into his father's good graces, *earn* the ring, *earn* the robe, *earn* the shoes, but his words fell on deaf ears. The father wasn't accepting his son home as a second-class citizen; he was home as son. "Put shoes on his feet; and a ring on his finger; and a robe about his shoulders." And, oh, yes, go out and get the fatted calf, the one that won the prize at the stock and rodeo show and call in the neighbors because we're going to have the biggest party and barbeque you've ever seen. As the *King James* put it: "And they began to be merry." We'd say "They had a blast!"

What a party that must have been! I'm afraid some of us wouldn't have known how to act at such a party, so afraid are we of good times, but maybe that would be because we don't understand the heart of the Father.

Meanwhile, the elder brother, having come in from the field, heard the music. Not knowing what was going on, he inquired of one of the hired hands, who said to him:

"Your brother is back and your father has killed the fatted calf because he has returned to him safe and sound."

That piece of news did not sit at all well with the older brother, for:

Then was the elder brother angry and refused to enter in or partake of the festivities.

On being entreated by his father to join in, the elder son said:

"Lo, these many years did I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends: but as soon as this thy Son was come, who hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf."

There are several points one could make about the elder brother: first, that he had an "I" problem: "I," "me," and "mine;" also, a conveniently selective memory: "neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment." Come, come, no one is *that* perfect! Nor could he call brother "brother;" all he could say was "thy son." As Augustine of Hippo put it:

A darkened heart is the far country for it is not by our feet but  
by our affection that we either leave Thee or return unto Thee.

Real forgiveness, this parable's basic message, is costly. It's not telling the youth who came back from the far country that what he did didn't make any difference, because it did. It hurt him. It hurt his father. It was wrong and the scars incurred remain. But no one gets to be 20 years of age or 30 years of age, much less 40 years of age, without incurring a number of scars. And what are scars but symbols of healing, of starting over? Forgiveness is not to say: "Let's keep score." Rather, it is to say: "Let's begin anew."

Now the elder brother was right in a certain sense that this does not add up to a fair deal.

But if you're hung up on having your rights, then you are just going to be hung up at that point. Forgiveness may not add up to a fair deal but it will add up to freedom from the kind of resentment the elder brother was experiencing as he stood outside listening to the party going on within. When we forgive, when we seek forgiveness, then are we in touch with God, for He invented forgiveness and He is its greatest practitioner.

Many elder sons out there in the world work hard year in and year out, yet some essential ingredient is missing. Because their confidence rests on their own good works, they are inclined to discount God's good work of forgiveness. And yet:

There is one who can forgive everyone everything because he shed  
innocent blood for everyone and everything. (Fyodor Dostoevsky)

So compelling was the logic of welcoming back his wayward son that the father said to his elder son:

"It was fit that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother  
was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and now he is found."

If we're still trying to get on God's good side, maybe it's only because we haven't yet absorbed this parable's message, that our Father has already come to our side. As for anyone's status as son or daughter – it's not earned; but is a free, unmerited gift, for which the Father put everything on the line to make happen, including His own son. Such is the good tidings.

How did we ever get the erroneous notion that God's got Gabriel up there putting stars by our name every time we do something commendable – as if we were accumulating merit with God? That's exactly backwards. The Good News is not about us. The Good News is about God. Nor does love originate with us. Love originates with God, for God is good and God is love and all we have to do is love him back, and when we do, then language begins to fall into place and our feet start to assume the upward path.

We call it the "Parable of the Prodigal Son," when in reality the story's chief protagonist is neither of the two sons; the chief protagonist being instead the sons' prodigious Father.

And all things are ours: the robe, the ring, the shoes, the party. Therefore, why stand about with the elder brother wondering what's going on within when the choice is ours to join the party? After all, we're all invited.

"For the son of Man has come to seek and to save that which is lost." (Luke 19:10)

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## **INTERPRETING OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETIC LITERATURE IN MATTHEW: DOUBLE FULFILMENT (ABRIDGED)**

Craig Blomberg

### **Introduction:**

... a particular OT prophetic text cited by Matthew often points both to and beyond its immediate historic context, without necessarily affirming all that the gospel writer or the individuals he quotes maintains. This phenomenon, which I am provisionally entitling "double fulfillment" emerges particularly prominently in Isaiah.

Now a clarification is required at the outset. The expression "double fulfillment" at times has been a virtual synonym for *sensus plenior*, that is, the idea that an OT text has a straightforward literal meaning and a second, more esoteric or opaque meaning, often understood to be part of the divine intent of the text but not consciously in the human author's mind. That is most assuredly not how I am using the expression. Rather, by double fulfillment I mean that in a number of texts from the latter prophets cited by Matthew, and especially in Isaiah, the results of an ordinary grammatico-historical exegesis of the OT text point clearly to a referent within the time frame of the OT books. Yet those same passages, especially when read within the context of their immediately surrounding paragraphs or chapters, disclose a further dimension of meaning never approximated by any OT-age event.

### **III. Isa 9:1-2 in Matt 4:15-16:**

Matthew intriguingly associates Jesus' move to Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee with Isaiah's prophecy of future honor for "Galilee of the Gentiles." Here we have another one of Matthew's unique fulfillment formulae. The context in Isaiah is the identical passage that culminates in the prediction of the wonderful child of 9:6, which we have already discussed. Again there is clear bifocal vision present in Isaiah's prophecy. The gloom for those humbled and in distress, in the area partly contiguous with the territories of the ancient tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun, obviously refers to those afflicted by the invasion by the Assyrians of Israel (v. 1a). Yet immediately Isaiah adds, "but in the future he will honor Galilee of the Gentiles" (v. 1b), a reference to coming restoration after Israel's two exiles, and a key to understanding the perfect tenses of v. 2 as prophetic: "the people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned." "The way of the sea, along the Jordan" (v. 1b) will thus refer to the highway from the northeast that returning exiles would take to the Sea of Galilee and, for some, on beyond in the direction of the Mediterranean.

In their euphoria, the first Jews heading home under Cyrus' edict permitting repatriation might well have imagined that they would live to see the complete fulfillment of these promises of restoration, but it would not take many generations for Israel to realize that much remained unfulfilled. Obviously, no king like that described in 9:6-7 had yet been born. The Qumran sectarians recognized that even they, to some extent, still walked in darkness (1QS 11:10). So Matthew is perfectly understandable when he applies this text to Jesus (by Matthew's time, recognized in his community as the Messiah) taking up residence in the same geographical area, as he prepares to inaugurate his public ministry of

proclaiming the full good news of the in-breaking kingdom - a truly great light for those living in spiritual darkness. There is a partial fulfillment within OT times and a more complete fulfillment with Jesus, two events which suggest the expression "double fulfillment."

#### **VI. Isa 6:9-10 in Matt 13:14-15**

Here appears the second quotation of Isaiah that Matthew has taken over from Mark (cf. Mark 4:11-12). It is also the first of Matthew's Isaiah quotations in which the fulfillment centers primarily on the opponents of Jesus rather than on Jesus himself. While Jesus reenacts Isaiah's mission of preaching to his countrymen, the focus is on the obdurate nature of his audience: "ever hearing but never understanding," "ever seeing, but never perceiving" (Isa 6:9). At first glance, it seems that here we have typology pure and simple: Jesus speaks in parables to confirm his opponents in their freely chosen rebellion just as Isaiah had been sent to prophesy to reinforce his contemporaries' calloused hard-heartedness. But a reading of the larger context of Isaiah 6 suggests something more. Immediately after receiving this commissioning, Isaiah asks God, "For how long O Lord?" (v. 11a). God's answer is until there is utter desolation of the land (vv. 11b-12). Even then a tenth remains, only to be laid waste again (v. 13a). But the chapter ends with a message of hope: "But as the terebinth and oak leave stumps when they are cut down, so the holy seed will be the stump in the land" (v. 13b). Taken as a whole, vv. 9-13 suggest that the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy occurs over a continuous, prolonged period of time-beginning with the judgment that will befall his contemporaries until such time as a righteous people once again populate the land. Given Jesus' and the first Christians' convictions that such a situation had not yet been obtained even in the first century (a view not unique to Christian Jews!), it would be legitimate for them to see the obdurate rejection of Messiah as part of the ongoing fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy.

It seems plausible, therefore, to affirm that the prophetic author consciously looked both for a relatively immediate referent and for a more longer-term eschatological fulfillment. . . . the text literally reads, "in them is completely fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy" (Matt 13:14)? Whether or not that is the case, we have at least another example of double fulfillment-a referent in Isaiah's day and one in Jesus' time, both at least implicitly part of Isaiah's original meaning, even if the latter could only be explicated in detail when it finally occurred.

#### **VIII. Isa 56:7 in Matt 21:1**

Here the evangelist understands the primary referent of the prophecy neither as the Messiah nor as his opposition, but as the temple. In fact, Matthew follows Mark by contrasting two prophetic texts, Isa 56:7 and Jer 7:11, so that Jesus declares that God's house was designed to be a place of prayer, even for Gentiles, but the current Jewish regime has turned it into a "den of robbers," . . .

The passage excerpted from Isaiah refers explicitly to the future: "my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations." The context is explicitly eschatological. [60]This is the time when salvation and righteousness are revealed (Isa 56:1), when no foreigner or eunuch need be excluded from God's people (vv. 3-6), when there is joy on God's



holy mountain (Zion, the temple mount-v. 7) and exiles return home who had not done so during previous periods of amnesty (v. 8). Thus, for the first time in our survey, the clearest referent for Isaiah's prophecy is the one in the eschatological future, not the more immediate one. Indeed, here one might be tempted to call the prophecy-fulfillment scheme one of a direct prediction that has to this day never been fully realized. The very late rabbinic midrash on Lamentations (1:2) in fact takes this text explicitly as a messianic prophecy.

Yet the specific portion cited in the gospels also clearly referred to God's design for the temple from its outset. The court of the Gentiles was set aside from its inception for "prayer for all nations" - in the sense both of prayers for all peoples of the world and of prayers by members of any ethnic group who came to Jerusalem wanting to worship Yahweh (cf. 1 Kgs 8:41-43). [61] So, like the generic prophecy about the obduracy of Israel's leadership, one may justifiably speak here of the perennial purpose for the Jewish temple, but also of two particularly important foci that create the double fulfillment scheme when one compares the referents in Isaiah's day and in Matthew's. [62] In both settings, the temple was not functioning at all as it was supposed to - thus the contrasting rebukes by both scriptural writers immediately following the restatement of the temple's purpose (Isa 56:8-57:13; Matt 21:13b-cf. also v. 12).

#### **Conclusion:**

Perhaps Isaiah understood more clearly than other prophets that much of what God was revealing to him had import both for his generation (or the comparatively near future) and for a coming messianic age.

Matthew seems to think something special is going on in Isaiah, since he highlights the book by citing it by name six times (3:3; 4:15; 8:17; 12:18; 13:14; 15:8), as many times as he mentions all other Scripture writers or speakers put together (cf. 2:18; 19:7; 22:24, 44; 24:15; 27:9).

Matthew regularly and with justification understands Isaiah consciously to have intended his oracles to refer to events both in the near and in the more distant future. Occasionally, these two foci may be seen as part of an uninterrupted process that could be described as generic prediction and fulfillment, but in most instances this is not obviously the case.

The upshot of this study, then, is to suggest that we ought to pay more careful attention to a phenomenon, at the very least important in Isaiah, but probably also in at least some other OT texts, in which neither the older, classic conservative model of straightforward prediction and fulfillment nor the critical consensus' claim of no messianic intent proves adequate. Instead, in these instances, the prophetic author recognizes and expects his audience to recognize both a preliminary fulfillment during the course of OT history and a more distant fulfillment accompanying the future messianic age. It is a "both/and" approach that affirms the frequently legitimate insights of both the classic conservative and critical consensus models, without pitting them against each other as has so regularly been done. It is not an approach that is a panacea for solving all exegetical cruxes, but it seems to be an important concept at least worth considering whenever one encounters a particularly puzzling NT use of the Old.



## THE ORIGIN OF THE PROLOGUE TO ST JOHN'S GOSPEL (ABRIDGED)

J. Rendel Harris

A nearer approach to the origin of the Christology of the Church means a closer approximation to the position of those who first tried to answer the question "Who do men say that I am?"; and to be nearer the Apostles is to be nearer, also, to Christ Himself.

Is this Prologue an intellectual Athena bursting forth suddenly from the brain of a mystical Zeus? Or is it, like so many other surprising statements of poets, sages, and saints which seem to defy evolution and to be as independent of ancestry as Melchizedek, a statement which carries about it, upon close examination, marks of an ancestry in stages and by steps, like most of the religious, intellectual and physical products with which we are acquainted?

The Church is firmly persuaded and not without strong supporting reasons, that these opening sentences of the Fourth Gospel are among the most inspired words in the whole of the Christian records. . . . However that may be, it is certain that the Prologue of St John is the high-water mark of inspiration for those who read the Scriptures reverently. . . . Is it any wonder that direct and immediate inspiration has been claimed for these majestic verses?

It is just at this point that the enquiring mind puts in a protest and asks whether it is not possible that, conceding the inspiration of the words, we might legitimately question the immediateness of the inspiration. Suppose then we go in search of any prior stages of thought that may underlie the famous Prologue. To begin with, there is the description of Christ as the Logos. Was that reached immediately, as soon as Philosophy and Religion looked each other fairly in the face in Ephesus or Palestine or Alexandria? How soon did the term "Word of God" acquire a metaphysical sense? The question is perhaps easier asked than answered. In the Synoptic Gospels the term "Word of God" is always used of the utterance divine or the record of that utterance. It is that which the sower sows, that which the traditionalist makes void by his tradition, that which the multitudes throng round Jesus to hear. And the curious thing is that in the Fourth Gospel there is a similar usage, after one passes away from the Prologue and the doctrine of the Incarnation. Jesus Himself speaks of the readers of a certain Psalm as those to whom the Word of God came, and of His own message (rather than Himself) as the Word of the Father which He has communicated to His disciples.

"I have given them thy word." The suggestion is natural that we should regard the philosophical use of Logos as the latest deposit upon the surface of the narration, a verbal usage which has displaced an earlier meaning and sense. It is the more curious that the Evangelist never reverts to the Logos with which he opens his narrative, in view of the fact that Christ speaks as "Light" and "Life" in various parts of the Gospel, and so identifies Himself (or is identified) with the metaphysic of the Prologue.

Is it possible, we ask next, that the Logos may have displaced an earlier metaphysical title as well as that employment of the word which we usually indicate by not writing it in capitals?

All through the rest of the New Testament the Word of God means the Evangelic message, except in one passage in the Apocalypse, where it is a title of the Messiah, and a doubtful place in Hebrews where the "quick and powerful" word of God appears to be explicable by Philonean parallels in a metaphysical sense.

We find, however, that there is occasionally another title given to Jesus Christ. He is called "the Wisdom of God and the Power of God," and is said to become the Wisdom of his people. "He has become to us Wisdom." So the question arises whether Sophia may not be an alternative title to Logos and perhaps prior to it.

For instance, in the Gospel of Luke (xi. 49) the Wisdom of God is personified and speaks of sending prophets and wise men to be rejected by the scribes and Pharisees. Apparently this is not meant for a Biblical quotation, and in that sense is not the Word of God; the "Wisdom" that speaks is not the title nor the contents of a book. In the corresponding passage of Matthew (I suppose we must refer the origin to the lost document Q) we have simply "Therefore, behold! I send unto you, etc." So when Tatian made his Harmony, he naturally produced the sentence, "Behold ! I, the Wisdom of God, send unto you, etc.," which brings out clearly the involved, personified Wisdom Christ; and inasmuch as God is personified and speaks through Sophia, when He sends His processional array of prophets and wise men, we have what in Greek looks like a feminine form of the Johannine Logos. The suggestion arises (at present in the form of a pure hypothesis) that *the way to Logos is through Sophia and that the latter is the ancestress of the former*. Now let us try if we can re-write the Johannine Prologue, substituting the word Sophia for the word Logos. It now runs as follows –

In the beginning was the Divine Wisdom,  
and Wisdom was with God,  
and Wisdom was God.  
The same was in the beginning with God:  
All things were made by her, and without her was nothing made that was made.

As soon as we have written down the sentences we are at once struck by their resemblance to the Old Testament: we could almost say that we were transcribing a famous passage in Proverbs:

Prov. viii. 22-30. The Lord possessed me (Sophia) *in the beginning* of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, *from the beginning* . . . when he prepared the heavens *I was there*: when he set a compass upon the face of the deep . . . then *I was by him*."

It seems clear that we have found the stratum of the Old Testament upon which the Prologue reposes.

This is practically admitted by almost all persons who find Old Testament references in the New: they simply cannot ignore the eighth chapter of Proverbs. If this be so, and if the Logos is quoted as being and doing just what Sophia is said to be and to do in the Book of Proverbs, then the equation between Logos and Sophia is justified, and we may speak of Christ in the metaphysical sense as the Wisdom of God, and may write out the first draft of the doctrine of the Logos in the form which we have suggested above.

In other words, we have in the Prologue not an immediate oracle, but a mediated one, in which separate stages can be marked out, and an original ground-form postulated.

... It is not necessary to assume an actual reference back to the original Hebrew of Proverbs: the Septuagint text will probably be sufficient to explain the form of the Prologue. The restoration of Sophia into the place occupied by the Logos in the Prologue will help us to understand better the course of the argument. For example, the statement that "all things were made by her" is a summary of the verses in Proverbs describing Wisdom's activity at the Creation; while the repetition "and without her nothing was made" shows that we have in the verse a reflection from another passage, where we are told that "in wisdom (or by wisdom) he hath made them *all*" (Ps. civ. 24).

The next step will be to see whether the proposed scheme of evolution for the Johannine Prologue will throw light on the remaining clauses of the argument contained in it. Perhaps, however, this will be sufficient for a first statement. So we will merely recapitulate our hypothesis, which is, that the Logos in the Prologue to John is a substitute for Sophia in a previously existing composition, and the language of the Prologue to the Gospel depends ultimately upon the eighth chapter of the Book of Proverbs.

Our hypothesis that the Logos of the Fourth Gospel is a substitute for a previously existing Sophia involves (or almost involves) the consequence that the Prologue is a hymn in honour of Sophia, and that it need not be in that sense due to the same authorship as the Gospel itself. The best way to test the hypothesis is to see where it will take us, and what further light it will shed upon the primitive Christian doctrine. Let us then retrace our steps for awhile and see whether the foundations of the argument are secure.

The first thing that needs to be emphasized is that we are obliged to take a different view of the Greek of the Fourth Gospel from that which is commonly taken by New Testament exegetes. They are in the habit of describing the Greek of the Gospel as simple, but correct, and of contrasting it in that respect with the Greek of the Apocalypse. Our position is that the very first verse of the Gospel ought to have undeceived them as to the linguistic accuracy of the writer, and to have marked him as a "barbarian" in the Greek sense. In other words, ἦν πρὸς Θεόν is not Greek at all: and a Greek scholar ought to have felt this at the very first reading. The various subtleties which are read into the expression are self-condemned, in that they can neither be justified by the theological thought of the time when the book was composed, nor can they be made to harmonize with the assumed simplicity of the writer's diction.

... we have in the Syriac the rendering –

I<sub>e</sub>wath Alaha

which was, as any Syriac scholar will admit, the only possible rendering of ἦν πρὸς Θεόν, ... It is this Syriac rendering that is the key to understanding the passage, for (i) it is the equivalent either of ἦν πρὸς Θεόν or of παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ, and (ii) if we take it in the second of the two senses, we have the exact parallel of the language of the Proverbs, where wisdom is described as being "with God," in the sense of being seated by God and in attendance upon Him. If the language of the Gospel is to be taken as unintelligible, the language of the Book of Proverbs must be taken as unintelligible also.

We are dealing with what is called "Translation Greek" or Semitic Greek."

Now let us return to Sophia. Our supposition that the Logos of the Gospel is a substitute for a primitive Sophia will be confirmed if we can show

- (i) that there is any literature, devotional or otherwise, connected with the praises of Sophia:
- (ii) if we find that Jesus, who is equated with the Logos, is also equated with the Wisdom of God:
- (iii) if the praises of Sophia are as notably derived from the Book of Proverbs, as we have seen the Prologue of the Gospel to be; and
- (iv) if the conjunction of Logos and Sophia is intellectually sufficiently close to allow one of them to be interchanged with the other.

With regard to the first and third points, we hardly need to remind ourselves that there is a whole series of Sapiential books, of which the principal representatives, the so-called Wisdom of Solomon, and the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach, are seen by a very superficial criticism to be pendants to the great hymn in the eighth chapter of Proverbs. If, for example, the Book of Proverbs represents Wisdom as saying,

I was by Him as one brought up with Him,

this Attendant- Wisdom or Assessor- Wisdom appears in the prayer of Solomon "Give me Wisdom that sits by Thy throne" (Sap. Sol. ix. 4) and is said to have been:

With thee and aware of thy works, and present with thee at the world's making (Sap. Sol. ix. 9);

and a further prayer as follows:

Despatch her from the Holy Heaven,

Send her from the Throne of Thy Glory

(Sap. Sol. ix. 10);

in all of which passages Wisdom is conceived, as we said before, as the Co-Assessor and Attendant of the Creator. The motive for all these rhythms is in the eighth chapter of Proverbs. The ninth chapter of the Wisdom of Solomon is, in fact, a pendant to the eighth of the Proverbs of Solomon: it occupies an intermediate position between Proverbs and John. More than this, it furnishes the transition from Logos to Sophia, by using parallel language for the two personifications. The chapter opens thus:

O God of our fathers and Lord of Thy mercy,

Who hast made all things *by Thy Word*,

And hast ordained man *by Thy Wisdom*.

Here the parallel is made between creative word and creative wisdom: the Word and the Wisdom are almost equivalent: the earlier concept, Wisdom, in the Book of Proverbs, by whom all things were made, has attached to it a second concept, the Logos, and what was said of the former is now said of the latter: we have passed from

Without her was nothing made,  
to  
Without Him was nothing made.

We have crossed from Proverbs to John; the bridge upon which we crossed is the ninth chapter of the Wisdom of Solomon: so the praises of Sophia become the praises of the Logos.

The chapter closes with another suggestive parallelism between Sophia and the Holy Spirit, as follows:

Who knoweth Thy counsel  
Unless Thou givest Wisdom  
And sendest Thy Holy Spirit from on high?

When we pass from the so-called Wisdom of Solomon to the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach, we are confronted with similar phenomena to those which we have already adumbrated. Again we see that the underlying text is the Great Chant in Proverbs, and that these so-called Sapiential books are variations of the same theme, that Wisdom is with God, that She is before all things, and that She is involved in the creation of all the works of God.

We are to set over against Proverbs viii. 22

The Lord created me in the beginning of His way,  
Before His works of old,  
the passage  
Wisdom has been created before all things,  
Intelligence and understanding from Eternity (Sir. i. 4);  
and

The Lord created her Himself,  
\*       \*       \*       \*       \*  
And shed her forth over all His works (Sir. i. 9).

But when we have made these obvious parallels we cannot detach them from the language of the Prologue :

In the beginning was the Word.  
\*       \*       \*       \*  
All things were made by Him.

The dependence of Sirach in its Sophia-doctrine upon Proverbs will be conceded readily enough: whole sentences are, in fact, transferred bodily, e.g.: Proverbs ix. 10 – Sir. I. 14; Prov. viii. 17 – Sir. iv. 11.; Prov. viii. 36. – Sir. iv. 12.;

And so on.

It will not, perhaps, be so readily conceded that the language of the Johannine Prologue is a case of similar dependence; the practical difficulty arises from our insufficient familiarity with the language of the Sapiential books, and from the lack of the clue furnished by the inter-relation of σοφία and λόγος, to which we have drawn attention above.

Jesus, then, is identified with the Wisdom of God and the Word of God successively: first with the Wisdom because the Logos-doctrine is originally a Wisdom-doctrine, and after that with the Word, because the Wisdom becomes the Word.

. . . The fact is that Logos and Sophia were originally very near together, almost a pair, although under Gnostic speculation they were moved far apart. The substitution of Logos for Sophia in the primitive Christology was little more than the replacing of a feminine expression by a masculine one in Greek-speaking circles, and the transition was very easy. It appears, then, that we can justify the evolution of the Johannine Prologue from the eighth chapter of Proverbs, and we can show the line of the evolution to have passed through the Sapiential books.

If this be so, we do not need to imitate modern exegetes who speak of the influence of the teaching of Heraclitus upon the Ephesian philosophers or upon the early Ephesian Church. It is doubtful whether there is any need to introduce Heraclitus at all. Certainly we can explain further points in the primitive Christology, without turning aside from the path we have already been taking. A Sapiential student, if we may so describe a person who makes himself acquainted, from the Sapiential books, with the virtues and potencies and privileges of the personified Wisdom of God, will tell us, for example, that Wisdom is a *Holy Spirit* and an *Only-Begotten Spirit* (cf. Sap. Sol. vii. 22, ἔστιν γὰρ ν αὐτῇ πνεῦμα νοερόν, ἅγιον, μονογενές), where, in the first instance, the meaning of the word μονογενής was simply that She was the only one of her kind; a little lower down this expands itself into the statement that "because She is One, She can All" (μία δὲ οὖσα πάντα δύναται [vii. 27]).

Thus behind the Only-Begotten Son of God to whom John introduces us, we see the Unique Daughter of God, who is His Wisdom, and we ought to understand the Only-Begotten Logos-Son as an evolution from the Only-Begotten Sophia-daughter.

Let us take another instance from the early Christology, not exactly coincident with the Johannine doctrine, but running parallel to it; I mean the Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In the very lofty opening sentences of this Epistle, we find the statement that the Son of God is the heir of all things, and that by Him the ages (or worlds) were made, and that He is the Radiance of the Divine Glory, and the Reflexion of the Divine Being. Now recall what we said of the identification of Jesus with the Wisdom of God, and see what is said in the Wisdom of Solomon of the Divine Wisdom, that she is the

Radiance of the Eternal Light (vii. 26),



and the

Spotless Mirror of the Divine Activity,

and the

Image of His goodness.

The statements from the Epistle to the Hebrews can be deduced at once from the Sapiential books: for it was the Wisdom of God that made the worlds, Wisdom that is the Radiance of God ( ὁπαύγασμα ) and Wisdom that is the imprint of God ( χαρακτήρ in Hebrews, εἰκὼν and ἔσοπτρον in the Wisdom of Solomon).

Thus we can see the doctrine that Jesus is the Divine Wisdom underlying the Christology of Hebrews.

Now let us come to consider some of the difficulties in the supposed dependence of Logos on Sophia, and of the Johannine Prologue upon Proverbs.

Up to the present point, the enquiry can be expressed in the simplest terms. The "barbarism in the opening Greek sentence of the Prologue can almost be made intelligible in English, with Westcott's commentary to help us: and when the peculiar language is corrected, the dependence of the Prologue upon the Book of Proverbs can be established by an English- Bible student, without any outside help. The Bible, however, cannot be read satisfactorily apart from the Church History (old Church and new Church) in which it is embedded: and the question at once arises as to whether there is corroborative evidence on the side of the Church History and Literature for the assumed transition from Sophia to Logos: if there is an evolution of the one from the other, why are there no more traces of the change in the Biblical and semi-Biblical literature, and in the writings of the Early Fathers? For it must be admitted that the evidence for Sophia in the New Testament is not overwhelming. So we will address ourselves to this point: we want more evidence that Jesus is the Sophia of God, and more evidence that the eighth chapter of Proverbs has been a factor in the production of a primitive Christology.

The earliest Christian books, of which we recover traces as having been current in the period that elapsed between the death of the Founder of the Faith and the circulation of the canonical Christian Gospels, are mainly two in number; there was a book called the *Sayings* or *Words of Jesus*, of which fragments occasionally come to light in early papyri or in the citations of early Patristic and other writers; and there was over against this another volume or collection, which comprised *Quotations*, or as they were called *Testimonies*, or with a more explicit title, *Testimonies against the Jews*, the object of which collection of passages from the Jewish writings was to prove to the Jews from the Old Testament those Christian claims which constitute the doctrine of the New Testament. There need be no doubt as to the antiquity of this anti-Judaic quotation book, for it has survived in a number of more or less modified forms, and its influence may even be detected in the New Testament itself. Amongst the forms in which it has come down to us, one of the most interesting is the three books of *Testimonia adversus Judaeos* which are bound up with the writings of Cyprian: of these the first two are easily seen to be the adaptation by Cyprian of an earlier textbook, which he modifies from time to time, and to which he adds matter which can often be confidently credited to himself. The original arrangement can clearly be made out: the matter is arranged under headings which are almost always

primitive, and the selected proof-texts are those which can be traced in the web of not a few early Patristic works. Now let us look at the second book of Cyprian's *Testimonia*, which contains the Christology, and see how the matter is arranged for the early Jewish objector or enquirer. The book opens with a capitulation as follows:

1. *Christum primogenitum esse et ipsum esse sapientiam Dei*, per quem omnia facta sunt.
2. *Quod Sapientia Dei Christus*, et de sacramento incarnationis eius et passionis et calicis et altaris et Apostolorum, qui missi praedicaverunt.
3. *Quod Christus idem sit et sermo Dei*.
4. *Quod Christus idem manus et brachium Dei*.

And so on.

There is no need to transcribe the rest of the headings under which the citations are grouped. The first two headings appear to stand for a single primitive capitulation, according to which Christ is declared to be the *Wisdom of God*, or, perhaps, the First-born Wisdom of God: and this is followed by a third heading which tells us that the same Christ is the *Logos of God* (*sermo* being the primitive translation of *λόγος*).

We may say with confidence that the order of appeal made by the early Christian controversialist to the unconverted Jew proceeded from an article which equated Christ with the Wisdom of God, and continued with a proof that the same Christ is the Word of God. The order of the proof is naturally the order of evolution of the Christology. Now let us see how the teaching is presented from the Scriptures of the Old Testament. It opens with Proverbs viii. 23-31.

Dominus condidit mo initium viarum suarum . . .  
cum laetaretur orbe perfecto.

Then follows a passage from the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach, which is introduced as being "from the same Solomon in Ecclesiasticus," the writer having confused the Wisdom of Ben Sira with the so-called Wisdom of Solomon: the passage quoted is xxiv. 3-16, 19, and runs as follows (it is necessary to quote the passage in full for there are important consequences that will result from it).

Ego ex ore Altissimi prodivi ante oimem creaturam.  
Ego in caelis feci ut oriretur lumen indeficiens,  
et nebula texi omnem terrain.  
Ego in altis habitavi et thronus meus in columna nubis.  
Gyrum caeli circumivi et in profundum abyssi penetravi,  
et in fluctibus maris ambulavi et in omni terra steti  
et in omni populo et in omni gente primatum habui  
et omnia excellentium et humilium corda virtute calcavi.  
Spes omnis in me vitae et virtutis.

Transite ad me, omnes qui concupiscitis me.

The speaker is the Divine Sophia, and the passage in Ben Sira is described as the Praise of Wisdom and opens with the statement that "Wisdom will praise herself." The passage as it stands in the *Testimonies* shows striking variations from the Septuagint and from the Vulgate: for example, the opening words in the Greek LXX are

ἐγὼ ἀπὸ στόματος Ὑψίστου ἐξήλθον ,

and there is nothing to answer to

ante omnem creaturam.

The Vulgate, however, says definitely

primogenita ante omnem creaturam.

The word *primogenita* is necessary to the argument of the *Testimonies*, which tell us that Christ is the Firstborn and the Wisdom of God. And it is still more evident when we notice the coincidence with the language of the Epistle to the Colossians, that "Christ is the firstborn of every creature," which passage is actually quoted a little lower down by the *Testimony Book*. It is not necessary to assume, nor is it likely, that the first draft of the *Testimony Book* quoted New Testament writings at all. The point is that Colossians is itself, in part, a book of Testimonies, and that St Paul is quoting from Sirach. He has transferred the "Firstborn of every creature" from Sophia to Christ. We shall see this more clearly presently. Meanwhile observe that the difficulty as to the non-occurrence of the Sophia-doctrine in the New Testament is going to be met. It underlies the Pauline Christology as well as the Johannine, and is necessary to its evolution.

The twenty-fourth chapter of Sirach is now seen to be a typical member of a series of *Praises of Wisdom*: but it is equally clear that it is a pendant to the eighth chapter of Proverbs. . . .

Returning to the *Testimony Book*, we note that the second section of the proof that Christ is the Wisdom of God is taken again from Solomon in Proverbs; it is the opening of the ninth chapter of Proverbs: "Wisdom hath builded her house," and is treated as predictive of the Sacraments; but this is a deduction from the equation between Christ and Sophia.

The section which follows is the proof that Christ is the Word of God. The chief point is to notice that it opens with

Eructavit cor meum verbum bonum (Ps. xlv. 1);

and its appearance in the *Testimony Book* is a sufficient verification of our previous remark that Jerome was not the first to use the Psalm for Christological ends.

Assuming then that the equation between Christ and Sophia was fundamental in the *Book of Testimonies*, it will be interesting to take a later form of the same collection, that namely which is attributed to Gregory of Nyssa, and which will be found in the *Collectanea* of Zacagni.

Here we shall find many of the Cyprianic Testimonies, but the order of the argument is changed. We begin with the Trinity and with the proof-texts from the Old Testament that Christ is the Word of God. At first sight it looks as if Sophia had disappeared: but as we read on, we suddenly stumble on the expression of 1 Corinthians i. 24, that Christ is the Power of God and the Wisdom of God. And then follows abruptly something which appears to have been broken away from another setting:

(It says) in the person of Wisdom, that is to say, of the Son, when He prepared the Heaven was there by Him, and I was the One in whom He delighted; every day was I joying before His face.

It is the very passage with which Cyprian opens the second book of his Testimonies to which we referred above.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the eighth chapter of Proverbs, and those associated chapters of the Apocryphal Wisdom - books, are fundamental for the primitive Christology, as it was presented in the proof-texts against Judaism. The *Book of Testimonies*, then, shows clearly that the doctrine that

Christ is the Word of God

reposes on an earlier doctrine that

Christ is the Wisdom of God.

The Prologue to the Fourth Gospel is constructed out of the material furnished by the *Praises of Wisdom*, and the very same material is seen to underlie the great Christological passage in the Epistle to the Colossians. In both of these great passages we have to translate the language back into an earlier and intermediate form. For instance, it will have struck the reader of the *Praise of Wisdom* in the twenty-fourth chapter of Sirach that the expression

In every people and in every race I had the primacy (*primatum habui*)

is something like the expression in Colossians, "that in all things he might have the preeminence"; and Cyprian (or one of his forbears) thought so too, for he follows his identification of the Firstborn Wisdom with "Christ the firstborn of every creature" (Col. i. 15), . . .

In the previous section we examined the primitive books of *Testimonies against the Jews*, in order to see whether they showed any traces of an evolution of the Logos-Christology out of a previous Sophia-Christology. The results were significant, and we were able to take the further step of affirming that the great Christological passage in the Epistle to the Colossians was like the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel in its ultimate dependence upon the eighth chapter of Proverbs. The next step would seem to be an enquiry as to whether these results are confirmed by Patristic study. Do the early Christian Fathers show, by survival or reminiscence, or in any other way, any traces of (a) the equation between Christ and Sophia, or (b) any signs that the famous statement that "the Lord created me the beginning of His way, before His works of old," has been a factor that can be recognized in the development of the doctrine of the Person of Christ. To these points we may now address ourselves. In so doing, we may occasionally

be repeating the evidence of the previous section, for the reason that the earliest Patristic literature is coloured by the conventional *Testimonies* that were employed by Christian propagandists; but this overlapping is inevitable, and we need not discount the evidence of Irenaeus or Justin because it contains elements that run parallel to the *Book of Testimonies*: if they are saying the same things twice over, in any case, they say them from a different point of view, and by the mouth of fresh witnesses. Justin Martyr, for example, uses the method of prophetic testimony beyond any other Christian writer; but his evidence runs far beyond the small pocket edition of Quotations used by a primitive controversialist. Let us leave the hypothetical *Book of Testimonies*, and if we please, the actual Cyprianic collection, and ask the question whether Justin ever calls Christ Sophia, and whether he argues from the Sapiential books when he develops his Christology.

Here is a striking passage from the *Dialogue with Trypho* (c. 139), where Justin has been deducing plurality in the Godhead from the book of Genesis ("Behold, the man has become one of us" and similar well-known passages), and where he goes on to quote Proverbs, under the title of Sophia, as though the real Wisdom of Solomon was the book of Proverbs itself. So he says: "In Sophia it is said: If I announce to you everyday occurrences I can also recall matters out of eternity. The Lord created me the beginning of his ways. . . . Before the hills He begat me."

After quoting the famous speech of Sophia from the Book of Sophia, he turns to his listeners and says that the thing which is here said to be begotten is declared by the Word of God to have been begotten before all created things, and every one will admit that there is a numerical distinction between that which begets and that which is begotten. We see that Justin uses the word Logos, not for Christ but for the Scripture; the Heavenly Birth is not the Logos but the Divine Wisdom, which he identifies with Christ. In a previous chapter (c. 126) he definitely calls Christ the Wisdom of God, after the manner of the *Book of Testimonies*, to which he may even be referring, and he says: "Who can this be who is sometimes called the Angel of the Great Counsel, and by Ezekiel is called a man, and by Daniel like a Son of Man, and by Isaiah a child, and Christ and God worshipful by David, and Christ and a Stone by many writers, and *Sophia by Solomon*, etc., etc."

In the sixty-first chapter of the same dialogue, Justin goes over the same ground, and introduces the matter as follows:

"I am now going to give you, my friends, another Testimony from the Scriptures that God before all His other creatures begat as the Beginning a certain spiritual Power, which is also called Glory by the Holy Spirit, and sometimes Son, *and sometimes Sophia*, and sometimes Angel, and sometimes God, and *sometimes Lord and Word*, and sometimes calls himself Commander-in-Chief, etc."

He then continues that "The Word of Wisdom will attest what I say, being itself God begotten from the Father of the Universe, and being *Word and Wisdom* and the Glory of its Sire, as Solomon affirms": after which we are again treated to Proverbs viii. 21-36. It is clear that this speech of Sophia in the eighth of Proverbs occupied a large space in the accumulated material for Justin's Christology.

Now let us turn to the writings of Theophilus of Antioch whose three books addressed to Autolycus are dated in 168 A.D. We shall find in Theophilus the two streams of Christology flowing into one another, and we can actually see the absorption of the doctrine that

Christ is the Wisdom of God,  
by the doctrine that

Christ is the Logos of God.

For awhile they flow side by side, but it needs no commentator to point out which of the two is to absorb the other. For instance, when Theophilus talks of the Creation of the world, he tells us:

Ps. xxxiii. 6 : God by His Word and His Wisdom made all things: for by His Word were the Heavens established; and all their host by His Spirit. Very excellent is His Wisdom.

Prov. iii. 19: By Wisdom God founded the earth, and He prepared the Heavens by understanding.

Theoph. ad AutoL i. 7.

He returns to the theme at a later point where his language will require careful consideration.

Ps. xlv. 1 : God having within Himself His own inherent Word, begat Him with His own Wisdom, having emitted Him before the Universe.

This passage is, for our purpose, important, (1) for the co-existence of the Word of God and the Wisdom of God, (2) because the word *emitted* ( ἐξερευσάμενος ) is due to the finding of the "good word" in Ps. xlv. (My heart is emitting a good word): this identification of the Logos with the language of the psalm we have shown to be very early, and to have been current in the primitive *Book of Testimonies*. Theophilus goes on: This Word He had as His assistant in the things that were made by Him, and it was through Him that He made all things. This "Word" is called beginning ( ἀρχή ) because he is ruler ( ἄρχει ) and lord of all things that have been created by Him. It was He, who, being the Spirit of God, and the Beginning and the Wisdom and Power of the Most High, descended on the prophets and through them discoursed of the Creation of the World and all other matters. Not that the prophets were themselves at the Creation of the World; but what was present was the Wisdom of God that was in it (the World?) and the Holy Word of His that was always with Him.

Here we see that the reference to the Logos as Beginning ( ἀρχή ) leads at once to the introduction of the Sophia who is the Archē of the O.T. The writer says as much: the Logos is Arche and Wisdom. When he states the co-existence of the Word and the Wisdom in Creation, he uses of the Logos the expression "always present with Him" ( ἄει συμπάρων αὐτῷ ) which we recognize at once as borrowed from the description of Wisdom in the eighth chapter of Proverbs. And lest we should miss the reference, and the consequent equivalence of Word and Wisdom, Theophilus explains:

This is why He speaks as follows through Solomon:  
When He prepared the heavens I was by Him,  
( συμπαρήμην αὐτῷ ), etc. Theoph. *ad Autol.* ii. 10.

The Logos-doctrine of Theophilus, then, although earlier than himself (as is clear not only from his well-known references to the opening verses of John, but also from the use of Ps. xlv.), is based upon a still earlier Wisdom-doctrine, which it is gradually displacing.

Sophia does not, however, wholly disappear; Theophilus goes on to talk of the creation of Light and the Luminaries, and explains that "the three days which elapsed before the creation of the Luminaries, are a type of the Trinity, i.e. of God, and *His Word and his Wisdom*." This is the first mention of the Trinity in theological literature, in express terms ( τριᾶς ), and Theophilus arrives at it by a bifurcation of the original Wisdom into Word and Wisdom, the τριᾶς being thus an evolution of a previous δυάς: if we prefer to put it so, we may say that Theophilus identified the Wisdom-Christ, now detached from the Logos-Christ, with the Holy Spirit. It will be seen from the foregoing that theologians will have to make a new study of the doctrine of Christ the Wisdom of God, and that incidentally, the often quoted passages in Theophilus will obtain a fresh illumination. For it is no casual remark that Theophilus has dropped; it expresses his fundamental position: he returns to it later, when he has to explain the plurality of the language in Genesis ("Let us make man");

To no one else did he say, Let us make man, but to His own Logos and His own Sophia (ii. 18);

and again, when he has to explain how God could appear in a garden and converse with man, he says:

It was *His Word*, by whom He made all things, *which was His Power and His Wisdom*, that assumed the Person of the Father and Lord of the Universe, and so came into the garden, etc. (ii. 22).

The foregoing passages will suffice to show the direction in which Christian thought was moving and what it was moving into.

(Harris next turns to consider relevant writings of Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Origen and finds with each of them a similar pattern of quotation and argumentation along the lines we have seen already. For the sake of brevity, I will jump ahead to Harris's consideration of Eusebius while inviting inter-ested reader to access Harris's book on the internet to get the full story.)

The chain of Patristic interpretation which deduces Logos from Sophia is practically unbroken: the finding of the investigation may be summed up in the *Prophetic Eclogues* of Eusebius (pp. 98 sqq.), who tells that the whole of the Book of Proverbs appears to be written in the person of Wisdom, who sometimes lays down ethical principles, and sometimes takes to herself the words of others: at one time offering us riddles, and at another teaching us concerning herself and instructing us as to her own Divine dignity. From these we may select whereby to learn that Wisdom is indeed a Divine creature and altogether to be praised in her nature, being the same as the second cause of the

Universe after the prime Deity, and as the Word-God who was in the beginning with God, and as the Providence of God which regulates and orders all things, and penetrates to matters terrestrial, which Wisdom was created before every other Being and Substance, being the Beginning of the Ways of the whole creation. And what she, Sophia, says herself is on this wise: Then follows Proverbs viii. 12: This, then, is the teaching of Wisdom concerning herself; and who she is the holy Apostle teaches us, saying:

Christ the power of God and the Wisdom of God (1 Cor. i. 24).

And again

Who of God is made unto us Wisdom (1 Cor. i. 30).

It is Christ, then, who is the speaker in the passage from Proverbs. Wisdom is also the Word of God, by whom all things are made. For "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by Him," and

By Him were all things created, whether in Heaven or on Earth, whether visible or invisible,  
as the Apostle says (Col. i. 16).

And just as in one aspect He is called the Word of God, and in another Life and Truth and True Light, and whatever other names the Scriptures give Him, so also *He is entitled Sophia*, the Handmaid of the Father for the Providence and Regulation of the Universe.

In these words Eusebius hands on the ecclesiastical traditions which we have been considering, identifying Sophia and Logos, and explaining the Prologue in John and the Christological passage in Colossians by the help of the eighth chapter of Proverbs, from which they are thus admitted to have been derived.

It is not for the sake of multiplying references that we cite one Father after another, but with the object of showing the continuity and consistency of the Patristic tradition, which appears to have been inadequately treated by leading commentators of our day, who did not see the meaning of the constant reference to Christ as the Wisdom of God, nor recognize the close connection between these early Patristic commentaries and the primitive collections of Testimonies. To illustrate the matter once more from a fresh point of view, suppose we go back to the opening capitulations of the second book of Cyprian's *Testimonies*, the book that contains the prophecies concerning Jesus Christ. We pointed out that these opening summaries of the sections that are to follow bore evidence of having been somewhat modified; for example, that the theme of the first chapter was originally the identification of Christ with the Wisdom of God, and that this Wisdom was the firstborn (primogenita), the adjective being applied to Sophia in the first instance. Now if we were to turn to Eusebius, *Evangelical Demonstration*, we should find the very same theme before us, the collection of prophetic arguments for Christological purposes; and it would be quite easy to show that Eusebius, while working with great freedom, is not independent of the approved Testimonies which have come down from the early days of the Church.

The first chapter of the fifth book of the *Demonstratio Evangelica* has for its heading the statement that "among the



Hebrews the most wise Solomon was aware of a certain *firstborn* ( πρωτότοκος ) Power of God, which he also entitles His Wisdom and His Offspring, with the same honour that we ourselves also bestow." Compare that with the Firstborn Wisdom of the Testimonies, and then note how the writer plunges at once into Proverbs viii., and after enumerating the praises of Wisdom, remarks that Wisdom is the Divine and all-virtuous Substance that precedes all created things, the intellectual ( νοερός ) and firstborn ( πρωτότοκος ) Image ( εἰκὼν ) of the Unbegotten Nature,, the true-born and only-born ( μονογενής ) Son of the God of all.

Here Christ is declared to be the Wisdom of God, in *the terms in which Wisdom is described in Proverbs and the other Sapiential Books* (see especially Sap. Sol. vii. 22 sqq.). And, just as in the early Testimonies, Eusebius goes on to quote Colossians (i. 15, 17) and complete the proof that Christ is the Firstborn of every Creature; for Christ, he says, was speaking in His own person when Wisdom (apparently) spoke in hers. The equation between Christ and the Wisdom of God covers the whole of the argument.

Reviewing the course of the enquiry, we see that the commentators upon the great Christological passages in the New Testament, the Prologue to St John, and the parallel passage in Colossians, have failed to set these passages in the true line of their historical evolution. We have tried to restate the texts upon which the accepted Christology is based, first by correcting a grammatical error in the first verse of St John's Gospel, which ought to have been obvious to an unsophisticated reader; second, by showing that the theology of the Church is best seen in the first days of its making by a careful consideration of the primitive books of Testimonies; it follows from these corrections and identifications that the key to the language of the Johannine Prologue and to St Paul's language in the Epistle to the Colossians lies in the Sapiential tradition, and not in the reaction from Plato or Philo or Heraclitus.

. . . .

If we are substantially right in the foregoing investigation, the next step will be to see how much further elucidation of St John's Prologue will result from the restoration of Sophia to its right place in the theme. This further enquiry will involve important considerations.

Before, however, we turn to this part of the enquiry it will be interesting to show that the suggestion of hymns in honour of Sophia, produced in the time that is adjacent to that in which the Fourth Gospel was written, is not a hypothesis destitute of illustration outside of the Scriptures. We actually have a Sophia-hymn of the kind that we have described in the Odes of Solomon.

The twenty-third Ode of this collection, after a somewhat obscure opening, in which Divine Grace appears to be speaking in the Person of Christ, goes on to tell of a Perfect Virgin, who stands and cries to men:

"There stood a perfect Virgin, who was proclaiming and calling and saying, ye sons of men, return ye; ye daughters, come ye: and forsake the ways of that corruption and draw near unto me, and I will enter into you and will bring you forth from perdition, and make you wise in the ways of truth; that you be not destroyed nor perish: hear ye me, and be redeemed. For the Grace of God I am telling among you, and by my means you shall be redeemed and become blessed. I am your judge; and they who have put me on shall not be injured; but they shall possess immortality in the

new world: my chosen ones, walk ye in me, and my ways will I make known to them that seek me, and I will make them trust in my name."

One has only to recall the language of the Book of Proverbs in the beginning of the eighth chapter,

Doth not Wisdom cry?

And Understanding put forth her voice?

\* \* \* \* \*

Unto you, O men, I call;

And my voice is to the sons of men.

It is clear that the Virgin speaker is Sophia and we are to illustrate the Ode in question by Proverbs viii., upon which it is based. It will be easy to adduce fresh parallels to the language, but what is really important for us to note is that the Sophia who speaks exchanged personality with the Christ. "I will make them trust in my name"; and the "Grace who stands on a lofty summit" (at the beginning of the Ode) and cries from one end of the earth to the other, is, perhaps, only a modification of the figure of Wisdom in Proverbs viii. 2, who "standeth on the top of high places."

Thus we have actually found a Sophia-Christ-Ode in the early Christian Church, quite unconnected with the Sophia that we discovered in the *Testimony Book*. Note in passing that she describes herself as a Preacher of Divine Grace.

In the preceding series of arguments we have attempted to show that St John in his Prologue was working from existing materials, which comprise the *Praises of Sophia* in the Sapiential Books, and perhaps from some Sophia-songs that are no longer extant. There are foundations apparent underneath his edifice; and it is only reasonable to ask whether we can go further in the detection of the sources, and whether we can thereby throw any further light upon the language of the Prologue.

For example, we have in the seventh chapter of the book of Wisdom, a description of Wisdom as the Radiance of the Eternal Light, and it is natural to compare this with the Johannine doctrine that Christ is the Light, and the doctrine of the Epistle to the Hebrews that Christ is the Radiance of the Father's Glory. When we read a little further we find (Sap. Sol. vii. 29) that Sophia is "more illustrious than the Sun and brighter than the positions of all stars," and that compared with all "created" Light (or with "day"-light) she is found to be anterior;

φωτὶ συγκρινομένη εύρίσκειαι προτέρα :

this answers very well to the statement in the Fourth Gospel that "in Him was Life and the Life was the Light of men"; we may imagine, if we please, an earlier form that

In her was Life, and the Life was the Light of men:

or

In her was Light and the Light was the Life of men;

but now see what follows: the writer goes on to argue for the priority and the permanence of the Light in these words: Night, indeed, follows on created Light. But no evil overpowers Wisdom. Here we evidently have the origin of the phrase in the Johannine Prologue, which is commonly rendered, and the darkness comprehended it not: but which is better expressed in Moffatt's translation,

Amid the darkness the Light shone,  
But the darkness did not master it.

There can hardly be a reasonable doubt that the explanation of the phrase in John is to be found in the passage of the Wisdom of Solomon. It does not require any philosophical reference to dualistic conflicts between Good and Evil, and Light and Darkness, *except as such conflicts are assumed in the language of the Wisdom of Solomon*. The darkness which masters the light is the darkness which comes on at the end of the day, existing potentially through out the day but operating triumphantly when the end of the day comes. We are to take κατέλαβεν in John i. 5 as the equivalent of ἀντισχύει in Sap. Sol. vii. 30, and to say that Wisdom, being the Radiance of the Everlasting Light, has no ending to the day which it produces. Thus the chapter which furnished us with the explanation of the Johannine Only-Begotten, the Radiance of Hebrews, and the Image in Colossians, furnishes us also with the clue to the argument in John i. 5, and with the right way to translate the words.

Our next instance shall be the great Incarnation verse (John i. 14), which tells us that

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us:

where there is much discussion as to the meaning of the word ἐσκήνωσεν, which is connected by etymology with the word σκηνή (a tabernacle or tent) and so with the Hebrew word *Shekinah*. . . .

Since, however, we are arguing from the hypothesis that the Logos has been evolved from Sophia, the first thing to be done is to ask whether σκηνώω or its equivalent κατασκηνώω is one of the Sapiential words, and in what sense it is used in the *Praises of Wisdom*. The answer is that it occurs over and over again in the Αἵνεσις Σοφίας in the twenty-fourth chapter of Sirach: for example:

Sir. xxiv. 4: I dwelt (κατεσκήνωσα) on high:

\* \* \* \* \*

Sir. xxiv. 8: He that created me pitched my tent (σκηνήν)  
And said, *Dwell thou* in Jacob (κατασκήνωσον)  
Let thy inheritance be in Israel:

(= Prov. viii. 22): Before the world from the Beginning He created me,  
(And said) unto the end of the world I will not forsake thee.  
*In the Holy Tabernacle* (σκηνῇ) before Him I ministered,

And thus was I established in Zion:  
In the beloved City likewise He made me to rest,  
And in Jerusalem was my authority:  
I took root among the honoured people;  
In the Lord's portion of His inheritance.

Reading these rhythms carefully we see they are founded on the eighth chapter of Proverbs, and that they essay to prove that Wisdom has made her dwelling among the Jews, and especially in Jerusalem. He says this over and over in eight different ways and he uses the etymology of σκηνώω from σκηνή and suggests that we may have to employ the awkward word Tabernacle instead of dwelling or tarriance if we are to bring out the force of his words. It results, moreover, from these Sapiential passages, which lead up to the Dwelling or Tabernacling of the Logos, that we ought to understand in John i. 14 that the Logos made His dwelling among the Jews, and in this case we must look back a sentence or two, and understand the words "He came to His own, and His own received Him not," in the sense that "He came to the Jews," . . .

The first draft of the argument appears to have been of the type that

In Jewry God is known;

and the first persons who received the Messiah are of the group described as οἱ Ἰδιῶται, *i.e.* of the Jews. Naturally we go on to refer to such believing Jews the words,

The Sophia -Logos dwelt among us.

It will now be clear that this investigation divides itself into two parts, (1) the discovery of those Johannine and Colossian terms which belong to the Sapiential tradition; (2) the enquiry whether in either John or Colossians an additional Sapiential document should be assumed to underlie the Christian teaching. A good deal has been done in the way of defining which terms are really Sapiential: we can underline ἀρχή and ἀπαύγασμα and εἰκὼν and ἐσκήνωσεν and πωτότοκος and μονογενής, as well as certain sentences in which the action of the Divine Wisdom is intimated. Some of these sentences do not require a special bridge to be built for them from the Sapiential books to the New Testament: the statements

πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο (John i. 3),

and

ἐν αὐτῷ ἐκτίσθη τὰ πάντα (Col. i. 16),

are equivalents to the language of Proverbs, which are capable of immediate deduction, so soon as we have agreed that Jesus is the Wisdom of God. So also the doctrine that

αὐτός ἐστιν πρὸ πάντων (Col. i. 17)

is an immediate consequence of the existence of Sophia *πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος*, and similarly for other obvious deductions. It is not so easy, however, to infer the immediate derivation of such terms as *Μονογενής* or *Πρωτότοκος*. No doubt Monogenes is a Sapiential term, but it is as unique in use as it is in meaning. When we come to the Gospel we find that it is one of the current words of the New Testament religion, and it is difficult to believe that it acquired currency so immediately, as to become, by one stroke, from an obscure adjective, one of the leading terms of theology. We seem to need an intermediate document, but do not quite see how to prove that it is absolutely required. To suspect is not enough.

Meanwhile, it is interesting to observe that Colossians does not exactly agree with St John in its treatment of the Logos-theme. In Colossians i. 18 Jesus is the *ἀρχή* in agreement with Proverbs,

*ἀρχὴν ἔκτισέν με.*

But in John this is somewhat obscured, and the language of Proverbs is interpreted to mean *ἐν ἀρχῇ*; the source is the same, the treatment is different. In Colossians, Jesus is the Firstborn who has the First Rank, even among the dead. We have shown reason to suspect that this is an interpretation of a primitive *ἡγήσατο*, used of the Firstborn taking the lead; but in the Gospel we have what looks like a variant of the same theme, viz., "*Μονογενής . . . ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο*," where the difficulty of interpreting *ἡγήσατο* has been partly got over by the substitution of a compound verb for the simple form. Yet it is not really got rid of, for *ἐξηγέομαι* can also mean "to take the lead," "to have the front place," and does not necessarily mean anything different from the *πρωτεύειν* of Paul.

Both writers, then, are working on the same theme, and working independently, but John is working more freely than Paul. The passage in Colossians resembles a list of the titles and offices of Christ; the Prologue in John is more like a poem, and in so far as it is poetic, is nearer to the Sapiential origins, even though in detail it may be more remote from them.

Consequently, if there is a Sophia-document missing, it underlies John rather than Paul; or if it underlies both of them, John is nearer to the form of the document.

As we have learnt a good deal by comparing the Colossian doctrine of the Logos with the Johannine, we make a further observation, and we notice that both writers have the doctrine of the Pleroma, which in later days, *i.e.* in Gnostic circles, acquired such prominence.

The Gospel has it in the form that "we have all received of the Pleroma of Jesus and grace for grace." The Epistle tells us that "according to the good pleasure of the Father all the Pleroma dwelt in the Son." After what we have already seen of the relation of the Gospel and Epistle *inter se*, it is not too much to say that they are working here from a common vocabulary. On the other hand, there does not seem to be any trace of the use of this word in the Sapiential Books upon which we have been working; and the word itself is so striking when used as expressing a communication of Divine Attributes, that we have a right to say that it has been found in some document intermediate

between the Sapiential books and the New Testament. It may have been a hymn in praise of Sophia.

That it is Sophia who possesses the Pleroma may be seen in another way. The language of the Gospel is:

and we have all received of His Pleroma, grace piled on grace; for the law was given by  
Moses, Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.

The antithesis is recognized as being one between Law and Grace, the latter of which displaces the former. If, then, the writer is modifying a previous document and replacing Sophia by Jesus, we ought to have a sentence connecting Law and Truth with Sophia. The missing sentence is found in Proverbs iii. 16:

Out of her mouth goeth forth Righteousness,  
*Law and Mercy* she bears on her tongue.  
ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτῆς ἐκπορεύεται δικαιοσύνη,  
νόμον δὲ καὶ ἔλεον ἐπὶ γλώσσης φορεῖ.

The bridge between Proverbs (Law and Mercy) and the Gospel (Grace and Truth) will be found in Sap. Sol. iii. 9 (and iv. 15), *Grace and Mercy* to his elect.

οἱ πεποιθότες ἐπ' αὐτῷ συνήσουσιν ἀλήθειαν·

\* \* \* \* \*

ὅτι χάρις καὶ ἔλεος τοῖς ἐκλεκτοῖς αὐτοῦ (Sap. Sol. iii. 9).

The suggestion to replace Law by Grace, so natural to the primitive Christian, had already been made in part by the Wisdom of Solomon. We can see the passages growing from one form to another before our eyes. But this will require that the Pleroma also should be a transfer from Sophia to Jesus. And I think that we may find the origin of the Pleroma: it was a Pleroma of Law. That was the way in which Wisdom was to find expression. In order to see this, we may take two related passages of Sirach, as follows:

They that fear the Lord will seek out His good pleasure ( εὐδοκίαν )

And they that love Him will be filled with the Law ( ἐμπλησθήσονται τοῦ νόμου ). Sir. ii. 16.

He that fears the Lord will accept chastening,

And they that rise early will find His good pleasure ( εὐδοκίαν );

He that seeks Law will be filled with it ( ἐμπλησθήσονται ). Sir. xxxv. 14, 15.

The two passages are, as we have said, cognate: they imply a Pleroma of Law, and this is what pleases God; the Law is the Good Pleasure.

Now let us turn to Colossians and see how the Pleroma is introduced: we are told that "it was the Father's good pleasure that all the Pleroma should make its residence in the Son,"

ἐν αὐτῷ εὐδόκησεν πᾶν τὸ πλήρωμα κατοικῆσαι,

where we have again the connection between the εὐδοκία and the πλήρωμα.

The displacement of the Sophia that is interpreted as Law by the Sophia that is interpreted as Grace, may be illustrated from an actual equation made by the Jewish Fathers between Torah and Wisdom, as represented in the eighth chapter of Proverbs: thus in *Pirke Aboth* (vi. 10) we learn that the Holy One has five possessions in the world; of these, Torah is one possession . . . Torah, whence? because it is written, *the Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old* (Prov. viii. 22). Here Sophia is clearly equated with Torah.

Other cases of the same equation will be found in Taylor (*Sayings of the Jewish Fathers*, ed. 2, p. 173); eg., Bereshith Rabbah begins with Proverbs viii. 30, "Then was I by him as one brought up with him . . . and I was daily his delight as one brought up with him." Torah is here identified with Wisdom, and is also made to say with reference to Proverbs i.e., "I was the Instrument by which he created the world." See *Aboth* iii. 23. "Beloved are Israel that there was given to them the instrument with which the world was created."

We have assumed in the foregoing that the πλήρωμα is an experimental knowledge of the Law, in accordance with the statements of Sirach

They that love Him will be filled with the Law (ii. 16),  
He that seeks Law will be filled with it (xxxv. 15).

In these passages we are almost bound to take the Law as an equivalent of *Wisdom*, just as in the *Sayings* of the Jewish Fathers, the Wisdom passage, Proverbs viii. 22, is made to apply directly to the *Thorah*, which is one of the Divine possessions, because "the Lord possessed me (Wisdom) in the beginning."

We thus see that there is a line of development of thought open, in which Christ will be announced not merely as Σοφία but also as Νόμος. It can be shown that this subordinate equation between Christ and Law was actually made, sometimes with the reservation that Christ is the New Law. Thus Clement of Alexandria quotes the *Preaching of Peter* to prove that Christ is Νόμος and Αόγος . . . The same occurs in a fragment of Hippolytus on *Luke* . . .

There is another direction in which the idea of Pleroma might have been reached by the student of the Old Testament who was in search of Christ in its pages. It is, in fact, said of the Holy Spirit that it fills the whole world:

πνεῦμα Κυρίου πεπλήρωκεν τὴν οἰκουμένην, (Sap. Sol. i. 7.)

and this passage is one of Gregory of Nyssa's proof-texts for the Holy Spirit. It is, however, clear as we have shown by a variety of illustrations that the Holy Spirit came into the Christian Theology, through the bifurcation of the doctrine of the Divine Wisdom, which, on the one side, became the Logos, and on the other the Holy Ghost. It is Wisdom which is, in this passage, denoted by the Holy Spirit.

It appears to be quite natural that the Law should turn up in the praises of Sophia, when Sophia is interpreted in a pre-Christian sense, and that it should be spoken of depreciatingly, when Sophia is interpreted in a Christian sense.

From the foregoing considerations it follows that there is an anti-Judaic element in the Fourth Gospel, from its very first page. The Law is antagonized and the people to whom the Law came.

When we make that statement and follow Alford and Westcott in what is certainly the right explanation of "His own who did not receive Him," we are again treading on the heels of the first composers of books of Testimonies against the Jews; for a scrutiny of Cyprian's First Book of Testimonies shows conclusively the very same rejection of the Jews on the ground that they have rejected the Lord.

Let us turn to the third chapter of the book in question. It is headed as follows:

That it was foretold that they (*i.e.* the Jews) would neither recognize the Lord  
nor understand nor receive Him.

Then follow the proofs, and we readily anticipate the opening verses of Isaiah, with its appeal to a sinful nation,

Israel that doth not know, my people that doth not understand. But a little lower down we come upon a reference to Proverbs i. 28 ff.: as follows:

Item apud Solomonem: Quaerent me mali et non inuenient. Oderunt enim  
*Sapientiam, sermonem autem Domini non receperunt.*

Here we have the Logos and Sophia side by side in the same verse, and the statement that the Wisdom has been hated and the Word not received. The parallel with John i. 11 is obvious. That verse is of the nature of an anti-Judaic Testimony. It is an adaptation of the LXX of Proverbs i. 29

ἐμίσησαν γὰρ σοφίαν, τὸν δὲ λόγον τοῦ Κυρίου οὐ προσείλαντο.

The transition from σοφία to λόγος is natural and easy, and a primitive statement that Wisdom came to the Jews and the Jews did not receive her, would readily be re-written in terms of the Logos, who

Came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

The two statements are in part equivalent; . . .

The Gospel, after reciting the unresponsiveness of the Jewish people generally to the Logos who had come among them, goes on to explain that there were some who did receive the Logos, and that, in consequence of this reception, they became children of God, and experienced a spiritual birth;" to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the children of God, owing their birth not to carnal generation nor human impulse, but to the Divine Will." It may be asked whether this striking passage has any counterpart in the Sophia literature upon which we have been drawing.

The answer is that to this beautiful description of the appearance of the Life of the Spirit as given in the Gospel, there is a parallel, shorter indeed, but almost as beautiful, in the seventh chapter of the Wisdom of Solomon, from which we



have already taken so many illustrations. "In all ages Wisdom entering into holy souls, makes them Friends of God and prophets."

It is this work of Sophia in the making of "Friends of God" ( φίλους Θεοῦ ) that has prompted the "Children of God" ( τέκνα Θεοῦ ) who result from the reception of the Logos.

...

In his discourse on the Resurrection, he [Methodius] tells us that "Wisdom, the Firstborn of God, the parent and artificer of all things, brings forth everything into the world . . . whom the ancients called Nature and Providence, because she, with constant provision and care, gives to all things birth and growth. For, says *the Wisdom of God*, 'my Father worketh still, and I work' (John v. 17)." We note the identification of Jesus with the Wisdom of God, and compare the way in which the passage from John is introduced with the similar feature which we observed in the Gospel of Luke (xi. 49).

...

In the Clementine Homilies (which contain so much early controversial matter by way of survival), we have in the sixteenth homily a dispute between Peter and Simon Magus over the Divine Unity. Simon challenges the consistency of the doctrine of the Unity with the language of Genesis (i. 26) "Let us make man," etc., and Peter replies as follows:

He who said to His Wisdom, Let us make, is one. And His Wisdom is that with which He always joyed as though it were His own spirit: for She is united as Soul to God: *and is stretched out by Him as a Hand for the creation of the world.*

...

If Wisdom is the Hand of God, and the Creative Instrument, we see why the statement to that effect occupies the position that it does in the Testimony Book. The whole of the passage quoted is of interest and is redolent of antiquity. The great stumbling-block for monotheists in the first chapter of Genesis, is explained by a duality in God, rather than a Trinity. Simon says, "Let us make" implies two or more. There are, says he, evidently two who created. Peter accepts it and identifies the second Creator with the Sophia of the eighth chapter of Proverbs. There is the Begotten God and the Unbegotten; the latter makes the world by the former.

...

It will be interesting to see how this interpretation that the 'hand of God is His Wisdom, by which He instrumentally made the world, can be reconciled with correct theology. The interpretation is clearly ancient, and it labours under a difficulty, in that it represents God as a Duality, and not as a Trinity. In the dispute between Peter and Simon Magus in the Clementine story, this is conceded on both sides. It is, however, clear that it will have to be modified, or there will be theological friction. The way of escape is to say that God has two hands or creative instruments, viz.: (i) His Wisdom, (ii) His Word, or, comprehending them under a single formula, His Word and His Wisdom.

... we come to the statement [in Irenaeus] that the angels could not be responsible for the creation of man, since *God had His own Hands. "He had always by Him the Word and the Wisdom, the Son and the Spirit through whom*

and in whom of His own free will He made all things . . .

The transition from "one hand" to "two hands" in the description of the instruments by which Creation was effected, may be seen very clearly in Tertullian's *Treatise against Hermogenes*: after contesting the belief of Hermogenes as to the eternity of matter on philosophical grounds, he turns to the evidence of the Scriptures and the teaching of the prophets:

They did not mention matter but said that Wisdom was first set up, the beginning of His ways for His works (Prov. Viii 22); then that the Word was produced through whom all things were made, and without whom nothing was made (John I. 3). . . He (the Word) is the Lord's right hand, indeed His two hands, by which He worked and fashioned. For, says He, the Heavens are the works for thine hands (Ps.cii. 25) wherewith He hath meted out the Heaven, and the earth with a span (Is. XI. 12, xlviii. 13).      *Adv. Hermogenem*, c. 45.

. . .

Wisdom is either the Divine Conjugate or the Divine Offspring; it is not quite clear which. If the former, the Logos is her Son; if the latter, the Logos is her brother. The former position leads on to the curious Word of Christ in the *Gospel of the Hebrew*, "My Mother the Holy Ghost," the latter to the twinship of Jesus and the Holy Spirit, as we find in the *Pistis Sophia*. When the Logos becomes also an Assessor Dei, we have the Christian Trinity: but behind this there is the earlier stratum of a Christian Duality (the Holy Spirit being not yet come, in a theological sense, because the Divine Wisdom has not been divided into Logos and Pneuma).

We now begin to see that the controversy between Arius and Athanasius is not a mere struggle of an orthodox Church with a n aggressive and cancerous heresy: the heretic is the orthodox conservative, and the supposed orthodox champion is the real progressive. The conflict is one between two imperfectly harmonized strata of belief. Arius and Athanasius do not stand at opposite poles: they are really next-door neighbours. This appears *inter alia*, from the fact that they practically use the same traditional Scripture proofs; we have shown elsewhere how painfully faith-ful Athanasius is to the body of conventional Christian Testimonies. It is not, however, that Arius is at heart a Jew, and must be struck down with the weapons proper to anti-Judaic struggle. Arius is as much anti-Judaic as Athanasius; only his collection of Testimonies has not been completed as to the text, and still less as to the interpretation.

. . .

Here is a further piece of evidence that Jesus was familiarly known as the Wisdom of God in certain early Christian circles. We have referred from time to time in this investigation to the Dialogues between Christians and Jews, of which the earliest example is the Dialogue between Jason and Papiscus by Ariston of Pella, which is lost, though no doubt it survives in a number of more or less modified descendants: amongst these one of the most interesting is the Dialogue between Athanasius and Zacchaeus published some years since by Mr F. C. Conybeare. In this Dialogue the points of the Testimony Book turn up to such an extent, that the Dialogue may be treated as a literary recast of the other anti-Judaic document. . . .Athanasius has to explain the sense in which these typical terms are used and to give him illustrations. When Athanasius demonstrates from the Old Testament the Divine Nature of Jesus, there is again an interruption on the part of the other member of the debate. "Do you mean to say that the Wisdom of God is

another God?" It is very curious to remark that the equation between Christ and Wisdom is accepted by Zaccha-eus. The whole passage is interesting, on account of its parallelism with certain clauses in the Nicene Creed. . . . If we could find out how much of this dialogue is derived from the previous "Jason and Papiscus" we should be able to tell whether the foregoing identifications and their Nicene consequences were trans-Jordanic in their ultimate origin ; for the first of the Dialogues in question comes from Pella.

As soon as we have decided that behind the Logos-doctrine there lies a more Jewish and less metaphysical Sophia-doctrine, and that the early Christian preaching about Jesus proclaimed Him as the Wisdom of God, we cannot avoid the enquiry whether Jesus identified Himself with the Wisdom of God and announced Himself as such.

One thing seems quite clear: *Jesus did not announce Himself as the Word of God*. That title came from His follow-ers and not from the first generation of them: but since we have shown reason to believe that *Word of God* is a substitute for *Wisdom of God*, it is not unlikely that this latter title, admitted to be antecedent to the second genera-tion of discipleship, may go back to Jesus Himself, for it certainly belongs to the first generation of His followers; and therefore either they gave it to Him or He gave it to Himself. The two things are, in any case, not very far apart chronologically.

Another way in which we approach the subject, without wandering off into comparative religion, is to notice how readily we ourselves recover the title when we are speaking in an elevated strain of His Being and Perfections : for example, amongst modern religious writers, one of the illuminated of the last generation was certainly T. T. Lynch, both as Preacher and Poet ; he says some where of Jesus:

He is the new and ancient Word,  
All Wisdom man hath ever heard  
Hath been both His and He:  
He is the very life of truth,  
In Him it hath eternal youth  
And constant victory.

Here the writer has taken his flight from St Augustine s "Beauty, Ancient and yet new," to the Logos, who is also the Eternal Wisdom and the Eternal Truth. And Augustine might be quoted in the very same strain; for he also accepted Wisdom as an Eternal Divine Hypostasis. We may recall that great passage from the conversation at Ostia:

We came to our own minds and passed beyond them, that we might arrive at that region of never-failing plenty, where thou feedest Israel for ever with the food of truth, and where Life is the Wisdom by whom all these things were made, both what have been and what shall be, and she herself is not made, but is as she hath been, and so shall be for ever; yea, rather, to have been and hereafter to be are not in her, but only to be, seeing she is eternal.

Evidently St Augustine would have found no difficulty in a statement that "Wisdom was with God and that Wisdom

was God": and it was as easy for him as it is possible for us, to recover the lost title "Wisdom of God" for Jesus.

Such a title is almost involved in "the Truth and the Life," which Jesus in the Fourth Gospel affirms Himself to be: but we naturally desire more direct evidence and if possible Synoptic evidence as to the use of the term by Jesus of Himself. The passages which Tatian harmonised from Matthew and Luke into the form "therefore, behold! I, the Wisdom of God, send unto you prophets and wise men and scribes," would be decisive if we could be sure that Tatian had recovered the original meaning or given the original sense to the passage of Q which Matthew and Luke are quoting. It is not an easy point to settle. It is, however, much more likely that Jesus spoke in the person of the Divine Wisdom, than that the passage is a reference to Scripture either extant or non-extant; and I therefore incline to believe that Tatian has given the sense of the passage.

That this Wisdom of Jesus was one of the things that most impressed His contemporaries is evident from the Synoptic tradition,

Whence hath this man this Wisdom? (Matt. xiii. 54, Mark vi. 2).

According to Luke he was from his earliest years filled with Wisdom and advancing in the same: but this does not necessarily involve the doctrine that Sophia has descended to dwell amongst us (Luke ii. 40, 52). St Paul, it should be observed, not only identifies Jesus with the Wisdom and Power of God, but also affirms Him to be the repository of "all the treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge " (Col. ii. 3).

No doubt it was by His Wisdom that Jesus impressed His own and succeeding generations.

This, however, is insufficient evidence for our purpose. Another direction suggests itself, by which we can infer that Jesus identified Himself with the Sophia of the Old Testament. It has been from time to time affirmed that the explanation of many of His sayings is to be found in parallel utterances in the Sapiential books; as for instance, that the verses in Matt. xi. 28-30 are to be traced back to Sirach xxiv. 19, where Sophia says,

Come unto me all ye that desire me,  
Fill yourselves with my fruits;  
For my memorial is sweeter than honey,  
My inheritance than the honey-comb,

with Sirach li. 26,

Put your neck under her yoke etc.

Similarly it is suggested that the Words of Jesus that

He that cometh to me shall never hunger,  
He that believeth on me shall never thirst (John vi. 35)

are an antithesis to the language of Sophia in Sirach xxiv. 21,

They that eat me shall hunger again,

They that drink shall thirst again.

If we could be sure that we had traced these sayings of Jesus to their proximate original, it would be easy to infer that He had borrowed the language of Sophia and was speaking in her person. This would very nearly settle the question that we are investigating. Jesus would be Sophia because His invitations would be those of Sophia.

. . .

The point reached by our investigation appears to mark an advance in the following sense. Two fresh facts (hitherto unnoticed or almost unobserved) have come to light: first that the tradition of the Testimony Book is earlier than the New Testament, antedates the Gospels, is Apostolic in origin, and the common property of all schools of Christian thought. Second, in accordance with the tradition of the Testimony Book, as well as from several other lines of enquiry, it is clear that the first and foremost article of Christian belief is that Jesus is the Wisdom of God, personified, incarnate, and equated with every form of personification of Wisdom that could be derived from or suggested by the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Upon the recognition and right evaluation of these two facts our reconstruction of the theology of the first age of the Church will depend.

OBERLIN LECTURE ON THE TESTIMONIA, 1910 (ABRIDGED)

J; Rendel Harris

Composite quotations were the thing that arrested Dr Hatch's attention: and our analysis has shown that with such composite quotations the scribes have a tendency to go wrong (as in Isaiah for *Balaam* or *Moses*, where only the latter part was really Isaiah). The moment we make the suggestion of composite quotations whose ascription has become confused, we are reminded of the textual difficulty in the opening verses of Mark. Ought we to read,

As it is written in the prophets:  
"Behold! I sent my messenger before thy face,  
Who shall prepare thy way:  
The voice of one crying in the wilderness,  
Prepare the way of the Lord,  
Make his paths straight";

or should it be,

As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, "Behold! etc."

The textual critics insist rightly that "Isaiah" is the true reading, whether it makes Mark look inaccurate or not. Suppose, then, for a moment that Mark had taken this proof of Christ's coming out of a prophetic Testament book; such a book ought to have had on the margin the two names

*Malachi*: "Behold I send etc."

*Isaiah*: "The voice of one crying etc."

We have shown, in an exactly parallel case, how easy it is for one title to be neglected, and for the other to govern the whole of a composite quotation.

The suggestion is a startling one, and will need confirmation; for Mark is our earliest Gospel, and to put the *Book of Testimonies* behind all the Gospels is a bold step. Perhaps some one will object at once and say that Mark is not the evangelist who bases his argument on the fulfillment of prophecy, which is rather the characteristic of the Gospel according to Matthew. No doubt there is some force in the objection: but I should like to draw attention to a chapter in which Mark affirms the argument from prophecy. If we turn to the close of Mark's seventh chapter, in which the miracle of the Ephphatha healing is recorded, the incident is summed up with the words, "He hath done all things well: he makes both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak." Here the word "well" means "appropriately," "as he should have done," "in accordance with prophecy." [Cf. Mark 7.6 ("Well did Isaiah prophecy") and the similar language in Acts 28.25.]

Thus the people recognize, in Mark, the fulfillment of prophecy: and Mark, himself, under such circumstances, could not miss it. What was the prophecy that they recognized as fulfilled? The answer is, the 35th chapter of Isaiah;

and that Mark has this very chapter in mind is betrayed by the fact he calls the subject of the miracle κωφός and μογιλάλος, "deaf" and "speaking with difficulty." The rare word μογιλάλος, is, in itself, sufficient to show that Isaiah 35 is in the mind of the evangelist, even if that passage had not been intimated by the closing words of the section about the making of deaf people to hear and speechless folk to talk. But this passage of Isaiah is, as we have seen, a leading proof-text in the *Book of Testimonies*. We may almost say that Mark wrote his seventh chapter to be read along with the *Book of Testimonies*. And certainly his interest in the verification of prophecy by Christ is betrayed in the chapter to which we have referred. There is no difficulty in making Mark into a student of prophecy. [Cf. Mark 7.6 ("Well did Isaiah prophecy") and the similar language in Acts 28:25].

But if this is correct, we shall expect verification of our hypothesis, from other parts of the New Testament. Suppose we ask the question whether there are any other places in the Gospels in which the suggestion of a misplaced title for a prophecy would be at home. We at once think of that much disputed passage in Matthew (Matt. 27.9), concerning the purchase of the potter's field: here we read -

Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying "And I took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the valued one whom they priced of the children of Israel, and I gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

You know the trouble over this passage: the quotation is from Zechariah 11:13: but the textual critics (those at least who deal in honest wares), will not allow you to alter "Jeremy the prophet." On the other hand the coincidence with Zechariah is far from being exact. My suggestion is that Matthew has used a Testimony book in which a quotation from Zechariah was preceded or followed by one from Jeremiah, and that he has not accurately defined the limits of his quotations. For instance if we turn to Gregory of Nyssa's collection of *Testimonies against the Jews*, we shall find under the proof-texts for the Passion of Jesus, [Zacagni p. 309] the following sequence:

*Jeremiah*: "But I as an innocent lamb was led to the slaughter; I did not know,"  
and again: "Come and let us put wood on his bread and let us erase his name from the living, and let his name be remembered no more."  
*Zecharias*: "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the valued one, whom they priced of the children of Israel, and they gave them for the field of the potter, as the Lord commanded me."

Here the passage from Zechariah is quoted just as in Matthew, but I do not think it has been emended from the canonized Gospel. It looks as if it were the original from which Matthew worked: and in any case the sequence of Nyssen's quotations suggests directly the blunder in the reference to Jeremiah.

Some such explanation, arising out of a collection of proof-texts of the kind indicated, would clear up the difficulty which has long been perplexing the students of the Gospel.

(For the complete and unabridged discussion of this topic, see the Appendix.)

I admit, however, that this is not such a good instance as the previous one, and it is wanting in completeness of proof: for I have not cleared up the variation of the text of Zechariah as quoted, when compared with the original prophecy.

Next let us examine a case of composite quotations, such as those to which Dr Hatch drew attention.

We have a striking combination in 1 Pet. 2.6-8,

Behold! I lay in Zion an elect corner-stone.

A precious stone:

And he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded . . .

The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense.

Here we have quotations from Isa. 28.16; Ps. 118.22 and Isa. 8.14, the connecting link for the composite passage being the idea that Christ is a stone.

Now suppose we turn to Romans 9.32-33, we have the statement made concerning the Jews that

They stumbled at the stumbling-stone, as it is written: "Behold! I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence, and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded.

Here the same two passages from Isaiah appear again, interwoven into a single reference. If now we could show that the early books of Testimonies actually had a section in which Christ was treated as the Stone spoken of by the prophets, it will become quite clear why Peter and Paul both make the same extracts from Isaiah.

Fortunately this can be at once established. For when we turn to Cyprian's collection of *Testimonies against the Jews*, we find a whole section headed by the words,

That the same [Christ] is called a stone.

and the next section is

That the same stone should become a mountain and fill the earth;

and other passages to the same effect may be cited from Justin and elsewhere. Cyprian begins with two of the quotations which we have been discussing, after which he goes stone-hunting all over the Old Testament. This is



the way in which he commences:

Cyp. *Test.* ii.16. That Christ is also called a stone in Isaiah: "Thus saith the Lord, behold I place on the foundations of Sion a precious stone, elect, chief, a corner stone, honorable and he who trusteth in Him shall not be confounded." Also in the 117th [118] Psalm: "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner. This is done by the Lord, and it is wonderful in our eyes. This is the day etc."

Accordingly I claim that both Peter and Paul have had access to a collection of prophetic Testimonies: putting this with what has gone before, and with what might easily be expanded from other parts of the New Testament, we frame the hypothesis that the early Christian Church used collections of prophetic Testimonies, especially in their controversies with the Jews, and that these can be traced back as far as the very beginning of the canonical Christian literature.

It is interesting to note that in Prof. Gwatkin's recently published *Church History*\*, [Vol I. P. 199] the antiquity of the collected Testimonies is practically conceded, and they are inferred to be at least earlier than the Gospel of Matthew. The passage to which I refer runs as follows:

If they [the early Christian writers] were all borrowing from the same very early manual of proof-text [Rendel Harris and Burkitt have this theory] which must be at least earlier than the first Gospel, we may safely say that few books have so influenced Christian thought.

And now what prospect have we of recovering the lost book? In its original form there is, perhaps, but a slight probability of our ever laying hands upon it, although a handbook which was probably in use wherever the Church and the Synagogue were debating with one another must have been widely diffused and may turn up somewhere someday. But if we cannot recover the original form, we can often restore it from its descendants; and it is really surprising on how many lines its tradition has been preserved to us. For example, of actual books of Testimonies there are quite a number. We have the first two books of Cyprian's *Testimonies*, which certainly are modelled on an earlier form; we have the book of *Testimonies* ascribed to Gregory of Nyssa, and published by the Vatican Librarian Zacagni in his *Collectanea*; we have also a most instructive treatise by the great Syria Father Bar Salibi, which I detected in an unpublished work of his against Moslems, Jews and Heretics. The part relating to the Jews, is a collection of testimonies, translated for the most part, from a very early base. No doubt additions can be made to these. Then, beyond the

actual collections, there are whole regions of Patristic literature which the work in question has affected. We have seen one or two instances in what precedes; especially we may note the works of Justin and Irenaeus. From these various sources, it ought to be possible to re-edit the lost books with some approximation

to accuracy. The difficulty will arise, however, that a polemical work like this was constantly being altered and amended. In the original draft there were proof-texts that turned out to be apocryphal and arguments that would not stand criticism. The first generations of Christians were by no means infallible, whatever their successors may have become; sometimes they corrected their mistakes; and sometimes they held on to them: sometimes they attached the most important theological conclusions to mistranslations and misquotations. A single instance may be given, which is the most striking that I know. The doctrine of Christ's nature, and especially his pre-existence was proved to the Jews by a passage from the 110th Psalm; in the Hebrew which is itself perhaps corrupt, the prince who is addressed in the Psalm is said to have "the beauty of holiness from the womb of the morning"; and to have "the dew of his youth"; this unintelligible matter is given by the Septuagint in the form,

From the womb before the day-star I begat thee;  
and this was seized on by some Christian controversialists as a conclusive proof of Christ's pre-existence. One would suppose such an argument would have been brushed away at once, at least by an appeal to the Hebrew. On the contrary all the Fathers, from Justin onward use it: and it was one of the weapons with which Athanasius demolished Arius at the Council of Nicaea.

Primitive Christianity, on the Dogmatic side, must not always be taken seriously. They would have done better to content themselves with the prologue to St John's Gospel and to have left alone these prophetic Testimonies.

Before leaving this question, I should like to draw attention to another which has been raised by the discussion of the hypothesis of the *Testimony Book*.

A reference to Prof. Gwatkin's new *Church History* will show, in a footnote on p., the statement that Rendel Harris and Prof. Burkitt believe there was a primitive collection of Biblical Testimonies, and that Prof. Burkitt is disposed to identify this collection with the famous lost book on which Papias commented. It will be remembered how much controversy has raged round the lost work of Papias on the *Dominical Oracles*, a lost commentary on a lost book: and the question as to the nature of these lost oracles is still far from a solution. It has been commonly held that the five books of Papias were a commentary upon the lost Saying

of Jesus; but objection to this has been made, that Sayings (λόγοι) are not the same thing as Oracles (λόγια), and that the word Oracles belongs rather to the Old Testament than to the collected words of Christ. It is not, therefore, surprising that Prof. Burkitt should have suggested that our *Book of Testimonies* from the Old Testament is the real work upon which Papias made his comments.

Here is a new argument which brings some support to Burkitt's hypothesis.

It will be remembered that in his treatise *On the Incarnation*, Athanasius devotes a number of chapters to the refutation of the Jews, and that in those chapters we detected the use of the *Testimony Book*. Well, in the beginning of ch. 38 Athanasius expresses himself as follows;

If they do not think the preceding arguments sufficient, let them be persuaded by further oracles (λόγια) from those which they have in their possession.

Then he goes on to quote passages from Isaiah, which belonged to the *Testimony Book*. So here we see Athanasius actually describing his Biblical extracts by the name of Oracles (λόγια).

This is suggestive, but not finally decisive. For when we turn to Justin's *Apology* (ch. 49) where Justin is going to quote the very same passage that Athanasius had used against the Jews (Isa. 65.1-3), he calls the passage "Sayings" (λόγοι) and not "Oracles"; ("these sayings were spoken as if in the person of Christ"). So the same collection might be described either way. And this rather inclines us to believe that the terms "Oracles" and "Sayings" were more nearly synonymous than we might have at first supposed. If this were so, we could not affirm that Papias' book was a comment on Old Testament passages. It might have been, but the matter would require further investigation.\* [\* We shall find the same ambiguity in Justin, *dial.* 15, where he has a chapter which was probably taken from the *Testimony Book*, and concludes his quotation by saying, "Circumcise then the uncircumcision of your hearts, as the Sayings (λόγοι) of God throughout all these Sayings (λόγοι) demand."

Here the *Testimonies* seem to be called Sayings of God, which is not very far removed from the *Dominical Oracles* of Papias: and if we read a little further, observing that Justin has been quoting *Saying of Jesus* as well as *Testimonies from the Prophets*, we find him (ch. 18) remarking as follows: "Since you, Trypho, have admitted that you have read the teachings of that Savior of ours, I don't think I shall be doing anything out of place in reminding you of some brief Oracles of his in addition to those taken from the prophets." Here the term (λόγια) is used both

of the *Testimonies from the Prophets* and of the *Saying of Jesus*. In the very next chapter (ch. 19 *ad fin.*) we have

a passage from Ezekiel quoted as (ὁ λόγος αὐτοῦ). From these passages it seems right to infer that

we

are not justified in restricting the term Oracles to the Old Testament or Saying to the New Testament or literature bordering on the New.]

It is possible that, in trying to clear up difficulties, especially where the matter of writings discussed overlap the records of the New Testament, that we may raise more problems than we solve. I can quite understand that people do not like to be told that there may be primitive errors in the Gospels, and some people will not like to be told that there were earlier books from which the Gospels may have derived them. Also it is possible that the method of exploring for minute peculiarities in the texts of the early Fathers, like Justin and Irenaeus, may seem to be unduly subtle. We may, however, be sure that in work of this kind it pays to take pains: and it is absolutely necessary to

be conscientious. Painstaking comparison of Gospel texts, along with determined honesty has convinced all sound scholars that we must read Isaiah in the opening of Mark and not the prophets: and that we must read Jeremy the prophet in Matthew's account of the betrayal. If then, by close and careful comparison of the common quotations

in early patristic writers, we can make the hypothesis reasonable of their borrowing from a common source, and confirm its accuracy in a multitude of ways, we have in our hands the instrument for the correcting of the errors which may seem to have been imported into the text of the Gospels; we know how they arose, we are a step further in the problem of their composition, and we are in closer touch than we were before with the mind and the method

of the early Christian Church. All of this is genuine progress; and each step taken prepares the way for a further step and for a wider vision. [In reference to the explanation by means of the shifting of carelessly transcribed or marginally arranged title, I see that Zacagni, the librarian of the Vatican, who edited for us the *Testimonies* of Gregory of Nyssa, had ingeniously detected the error in question in one passage and almost gave the explanation. As it is important to collect these instances, which are far more numerous than one would suppose, I will translate (transcribe) the page in question, along with Zacagni's note. It runs as follows:

*Concerning the miracles which the Lord was to show forth after his incarnation.*

*Jeremiah:* Behold! I have set thee for a covenant of the race, for a light of the Gentiles, that thou mayest establish the earth and possess the inheritance of the desert, saying to those who are in bonds, Go forth; and to those who are in darkness, be enlightened." And that these things cannot be said by a mere man concerning himself is clear, since it was the same one who said:

[*Baruch*] "This is our God and there shall not be reckoned another beside him."

*Isaiah*: "Be strong, ye relaxed hands and feeble knees etc."

Here the first extract is not from Jeremiah, but from Isaiah (49.6 8). Zacagni explains the matter thus: Nyssen took it for a passage of Jeremiah, because he subjoins a testimony from Baruch (Bar. 3.36), who is often quoted under the name of Jeremiah. He meant it, therefore, to be referred to Jeremiah. It only remains, then, to add that the error must be earlier than Nyssen: and that it arose from the wandering of the eye of a scribe from the correct Isaiah to the Jeremiah (Baruch) which followed.

Before leaving this brief statement of an admittedly imperfect investigation, it may be worth while to ask the question what the net result of the enquiry is upon the general subject of the correct statement and proper defense of Christian doctrine. It is quite evident that the results of the examination into the mode of composition and transmission of prophetic Testimonies is inconsistent with the ordinary belief in a verbally inspired Gospel canon. For a large part of the argument turns upon an observed coincidence in blunders of transmission, and we were not able to limit these errors to persons belonging to the sub-apostolic or sub-evangelic Age. So that an enquiry of this kind is barred in advance for those who insist on an infallible text of the Scriptures as a preliminary to the enquiry. Not only is the argument one which is, of necessity, fallacious from their point of view, but in order to maintain the position in which they are entrenched, they have to surrender to impossible textual criticism (as by reading "the prophets" for "Isaiah" in the opening of Mark), or to equally impossible exegesis (as in explaining away "Jeremy the prophet" from the text of Matthew).

On the other hand, so soon as we admit the possibility of errors in transmission, we are in the great position of advantage of seeing how a number of such errors have arisen and of reflecting upon the very small importance that attaches to them historically.

But then there is another advantage that is gained by this method of enquiry. We are often challenged as to the validity of the Christian Gospels, considered as historical documents, in view of the generally accepted conclusion that they were not composed until nearly a quarter of a century after the events which they record. That empty space between the date of the Ascension and the beginning of the Christian literature, is one of the difficulties

that have to be met. Even when we allow the Pauline and other letters to be adduced in evidence of the beliefs of the early Church, we are still far from being adequately supplied with material for historical interpretation: nor does it seem to me that we can fairly meet the difficulty by taking as positively as some do, about the Oral tradition and the existence of the order of Catechists, who are assumed to have the tradition by heart from the first Apostolic utterance onward, and never to have made serious errors of memory in the transmission of the tradition. Now it is in just such directions as we have been occupied that the void which perplexes us begins to be filled up. *There are lost books of the early Church*, and some of them have been employed in the composition of our existing Gospels. Of this family one leading member was the *Book of Testimonies*; a second, to which we shall refer presently in another lecture, was the lost *Book of the Saying of Jesus*. And I have little doubt that, if our critical eyes were keener, and especially if we could recover some more fragments of early Christian literature, we should be able to affirm the existence of quite a little library of early Christian books. In this way much would become clear that is now somewhat obscure in the Evangelic history. We should not only have the original Mark, of which the critics talk (if there was an Ur-Marcus), and the companion document which they call Q which has been employed by both Matthew and Luke, but we should have two or three other leading Christian documents, belonging to the very space that was perplexing us by its vacancy. And it is easy to image that the vacancy (which is only due to the carelessness of the Church over its records) might wholly disappear. For we do not forget what Luke tells us about many who had tried to compose a Gospel History and who were certainly not Oral traditionalists or Catechists! Our enquiry, then, is a real alleviation of the difficulty of the situation, and the first step, perhaps, towards its complete removal.

On the other hand it may be urged that in emphasizing the use of the Old Testament in early Christian

times, we

are making things worse for the exegete and the believer: for if the primitive Christians appealed so freely to prophecies of all kinds, they must often have made wrong appeals which were discredited almost as soon as made, or which are certainly not to be credited amongst ourselves.

This part of the problem, however, is not new: we shall have to settle for ourselves, quiet apart from the *Book of Testimonies*, whether Matthew was right in his interpretation of the calling of the Son out of Egypt. If he was the victim of an incorrect exegesis, this may have been, on our hypothesis, some one else's mistake and not his own. We shall still have to decide this and other matters with the best light we can get. And the real advantage of our method lies in this very direction, that it is an increase of light and an extension of knowledge. And I do not think the central figure of Christianity or its central doctrines are likely to be obscured by a careful restoration of the broken and almost lost fabric of its earliest literature.

