

a *Grace Notes* course

## **History of the Christian Church**

By Philip Schaff

### **VOLUME 1. First Period – Apostolic Christianity**<sup>1</sup>

Chapter 12: The New Testament

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<sup>1</sup> Editor: Warren Doud

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# History of the Christian Church

## VOLUME 1. First Period – Apostolic Christianity

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## Volume 1, Chapter 12. The New Testament

### 1.74 Literature.

The CRITICAL EDITIONS of the Greek Testament by LACHMANN (1842–50, 2 VOLS.); TISCHENDORF (ed. octava critics major, 1869–72, 2 vols., with Prolegomena by C. R. GREGORY, PART I., LEIPZ., 1884); TREGELLES (1857–79); WESTCOTT AND HORT (1881, with a vol. of Introd. and Appendix. Cambridge and New York, revised ed. 1888).

Lachmann laid the foundation; Tischendorf and Tregelles greatly enlarged and carefully sifted the critical apparatus; Westcott and Hort restored the cleanest text from the oldest attainable sources; all substantially agree in principle and result, and give us the ancient uncial instead of the mediaeval cursive text.

Two bilingual editions also deserve special mention in connection with the recent revision of Luther's and King James's versions. OSKAR VON GEBHARDT, *Novum Testamentum Graece et Germanice*, Lips., 1881, gives the last text of Tischendorf (with the readings of Tregelles, and Westcott and Hort below) and the revised translation of Luther. His Greek text is also separately issued with an "Adnotatio critica," not contained in the diglott edition. The Greek-English New Testament, containing Westcott and Hort's Greek Text and the Revised English Version on opposite pages, with introduction by Schaff. New York (Harper & Brothers), 1882, revised ed. 1888.

The works quoted below on the Gospels and Epistles.

On the CANON OF THE NEW TEST., THE WORKS OF KIRCHHOFFER (*Quellensammlung*, etc. Zürich, 1844, Engl. transl. enlarged by CHARTERIS: *Canonicity*, etc. Edinb., 1881); CREDNER (*Zur Gesch. des Kanon.* Halle, 1847; *Geschichte des Neutest. Kanon*, herausg. von Volkmar. Berlin, 1860); GAUSSEN (Engl. transl., London, 1862; abridged transl. by Kirk, Boston, 1862); TREGELLES (*Canon Muratorianus*. Oxford, 1867); SAM. DAVIDSON (LOND., 1878, 3D ED., 1880); WESTCOTT (CAMBRIDGE AND LONDON, 1855; 6TH ED., 1889); REUSS (*Histoire du canon des S. Écritures*. Strasb., 2d ed., 1864); AD. HARNACK (*Das muratorische Fragment und die Entstehung einer Sammlung Apost.-katholischer Schriften*, in Brieger's "Zeitschrift f. Kirchengeschichte," 1879,

III., 358 sqq.; comp. 595 sqq.); F. OVERBECK (*Zur Geschichte des Kanons*. Chemnitz, 1880); RÉVILLE (FRENCH, 1881); THEOD. ZAHN (*Forschungen zur Geschichte des neutestamentl. Kanons*, Part I-III., 1881–84; and *Geschichte des Kanons d. N. T.*, Leipz., 1888 sqq., 3 vols). Comp. HARNACK: *Das N. T. um das Jahr. 200*, Freiburg, 1889 (against Zahn), and Zahn's reply, Leipz., 1889.

### 1.75 Rise of the Apostolic Literature.

Christ is the book of life to be read by all. His religion is not an outward letter of command, like the law of Moses, but free, quickening spirit; not a literary production, but a moral creation; not a new system of theology or philosophy for the learned, but a communication of the divine life for the redemption of the whole world. Christ is the personal Word of God, the eternal Logos, who became flesh and dwelt upon earth as the true Shechinah, in the veiled glory of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. He spoke; and all the words of his mouth were, and still are, spirit and life. The human heart craves not a learned, letter-writing, literary Christ, but a wonder-working, cross-bearing, atoning Redeemer, risen, enthroned in heaven, and ruling the world; furnishing, at the same time, to men and angels an unending theme for meditation, discourse, and praise.

So, too, the Lord chose none of his apostles, with the single exception of Paul, from the ranks of the learned; he did not train them to literary authorship, nor give them, throughout his earthly life, a single express command to labor in that way. Plain fishermen of Galilee, unskilled in the wisdom of this world, but filled with the Holy Spirit of truth and the powers of the world to come, were commissioned to preach the glad tidings of salvation to all nations in the strength and in the name of their glorified Master, who sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, and has promised to be with them to the end of time.

The gospel, accordingly, was first propagated and the church founded by the personal oral

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teaching and exhortation, the "preaching," "testimony," "word," "tradition," of the apostles and their disciples; as, in fact, to this day the living word is the indispensable or, at least, the principal means of promoting the Christian religion. Nearly all the books of the New Testament were written between the years 50 and 70, at least twenty years after the resurrection of Christ, and the founding of the church; and the Gospel and Epistles of John still later.

As the apostles' field of labor expanded, it became too large for their personal attention, and required epistolary correspondence. The vital interests of Christianity and the wants of coming generations demanded a faithful record of the life and teaching of Christ by perfectly reliable witnesses. For oral tradition, among fallible men, is liable to so many accidental changes, that it loses in certainty and credibility as its distance from the fountain-head increases, till at last it can no longer be clearly distinguished from the additions and corruptions collected upon it. There was great danger, too, of a wilful distortion of the history and doctrine of Christianity by Judaizing and paganizing errorists, who had already raised their heads during the lifetime of the apostles. An authentic written record of the words and acts of Jesus and his disciples was therefore absolutely indispensable, not indeed to originate the church, but to keep it from corruption and to furnish it with a pure standard of faith and discipline.

Hence seven and twenty books by apostles and apostolic men, written under the special influence and direction of the Holy Spirit. These afford us a truthful picture of the history, the faiths, and the practice of primitive Christianity, "for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

The collection of these writings into a canon, in distinction both from apocryphal or pseudo-apostolic works, and from orthodox yet merely human productions, was the work

of the early church; and in performing it she was likewise guided by the Spirit of God and by a sound sense of truth. It was not finished to the satisfaction of all till the end of the fourth century, down to which time seven New Testament books (the "Antilegomena" of Eusebius), the second Epistle of Peter, the second and third Epistles of John, the anonymous Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistles of James and Jude, and in a certain sense also the Apocalypse of John, were by some considered of doubtful authorship or value. But the collection was no doubt begun, on the model of the Old Testament canon, in the first century; and the principal books, the Gospels, the Acts, the thirteen Epistles of Paul, the first Epistle of Peter, and the first of John, in a body, were in general use after the middle of the second century, and were read, either entire or by sections, in public worship, after the manner of the Jewish synagogue, for the edification of the people.

The external testimony of tradition alone cannot (for the Protestant Christian) decide the apostolic origin and canonical character of a book; it must be confirmed by the internal testimony of the book itself. But this is not wanting, and the general voice of Christendom for these eighteen hundred years has recognized in the little volume, which we call the New Testament, a book altogether unique in spiritual power and influence over the mind and heart of man, and of more interest and value than all the ancient and modern classics combined. If ever God spoke and still speaks to man, it is in this book.

#### **1.76 Character of the New Testament.**

In these inspired writings we have, not indeed an equivalent, but a reliable substitute for the personal presence and the oral instruction of Christ and his apostles. The written word differs from the spoken only in form; the substance is the same, and has therefore the same authority and quickening power for us as it had for those who heard it first. Although these books were called forth

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apparently by special and accidental occasions, and were primarily addressed to particular circles of readers and adapted to peculiar circumstances, yet, as they present the eternal and unchangeable truth in living forms, they suit all circumstances and conditions. Tracts for the times, they are tracts for all times; intended for Jews and Greeks of the first century, they have the same interest for Englishmen and Americans of the nineteenth century. They are to this day not only the sole reliable and pure fountain of primitive Christianity, but also the infallible rule of Christian faith and practice. From this fountain the church has drunk the water of life for more than fifty generations, and will drink it till the end of time. In this rule she has a perpetual corrective for an her faults, and a protective against all error. Theological systems come and go, and draw from that treasury their larger or smaller additions to the stock of our knowledge of the truth; but they can never equal that infallible word of God, which abideth forever.

The New Testament evinces its universal design in its very style, which alone distinguishes it from all the literary productions of earlier and later times. It has a Greek body, a Hebrew soul, and a Christian spirit which rules both. The language is the Hellenistic idiom; that is, the Macedonian Greek as spoken by the Jews of the dispersion in the time of Christ; uniting, in a regenerated Christian form, the two great antagonistic nationalities and religions of the ancient world. The most beautiful language of heathendom and the venerable language of the Hebrews are here combined, and baptized with the spirit of Christianity, and made the picture of silver for the golden apple of the eternal truth of the gospel. The style of the Bible in general is singularly adapted to men of every class and grade of culture, affording the child the simple nourishment for its religious wants, and the profoundest thinker inexhaustible matter of study. The Bible is not simply a popular book, but a book of all nations, and for all societies, classes, and

conditions of men. It is more than a book, it is an institution which rules the Christian world.

The New Testament presents, in its way, the same union of the divine and human as the person of Christ. In this sense also "the word became flesh, and dwells among us." As Christ was like us in body, soul, and spirit, sin only excepted, so the Scriptures, which "bear witness of him," are thoroughly human (though without doctrinal and ethical error) in contents and form, in the mode of their rise, their compilation, their preservation, and transmission; yet at the same time they are thoroughly divine both in thoughts and words, in origin, vitality, energy, and effect, and beneath the human servant-form of the letter, the eye of faith discerns the glory of "the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."

The apostolic writings are of three kinds: historical, didactic, and prophetic. To the first class belong the Gospels and Acts; to the second, the Epistles; to the third, the Revelation. They are related to each other as regeneration, sanctification, and glorification; as foundation, house, and dome. Jesus Christ is the beginning, the middle, and the end of all. In the Gospels he walks in human form upon the earth, and accomplishes the work of redemption. In the Acts and Epistles he founds the church, and fills and guides it by his Spirit. And at last, in the visions of the Apocalypse, he comes again in glory, and with his bride, the church of the saints, reigns forever upon the new earth in the city of God.

This order corresponds with the natural progress of the Christian revelation and was universally adopted by the church, with the exception of a difference in the arrangement of the Epistles. The New Testament was not given in the form of a finished volume, but the several books grew together by recognition and use according to the law of internal fitness. Most of the ancient Manuscripts, Versions, and Catalogues arrange the books in the following order: Gospels, Acts, Catholic Epistles, Pauline Epistles, Apocalypse. Some

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put the Pauline Epistles before the Catholic Epistles. Our English Bible follows the order of the Latin Vulgate.

### 1.77 Literature on the Gospels.

#### CRITICAL DISCUSSIONS.

NATHANIEL LARDNER (1684–1768, a dissenting minister of great learning): *The Credibility of the Gospel History*. First published in 17 vols. 8vo, London, 1727–1757, and in his collected Works, ed. by A. Kippis, London, 1788 (in 11 vols.), vols. I–V. Unsurpassed for honest and solid learning, and still valuable.

J. G. EICHHORN (d. 1827): *Allgem. Bibliothek der Bibl. Liter.*, vol. V. (1794), pp. 759 sqq. *Einleitung in das N. Testament.*, 1804, vol. I., 2d ed., 1820. Here he brought out his new idea of an Urevangelium.

HERBERT MARSH (Bishop of Peterborough, d. 1839): *An Illustration of the Hypothesis proposed in the Dissertation on the Origin and Composition of our Three First Canonical Gospels*. Cambridge, 1803. Also his translation of J. D. Michaelis: *Introduction to the New Test.*, with a *Dissertation on the Origin and Composition of the Three First Gospels*. London, 1802. A modification of Eichhorn's hypothesis.

FR. SCHLEIERMACHER: *Kritischer Versuch über die Schriften des Lucas*. Berlin, 1817 (*Werke* I. 2, pp. 1–220); trans. by Thirlwall, Lond., 1825. Comp. his *Einleitung in das N. Testament*. (posthumous).

J. C. L. GIESELER: *Historisch-kritischer Versuch über die Entstehung und die frühesten Schicksale der schriftlichen Evangelien*. Leipz., 1818.

ANDREWS NORTON (a conservative Unitarian, died at Cambridge, 1853): *The Evidences of the Genuineness of the Gospels*. Boston, 1837; 2d ed., Cambridge, Mass., 1846–1848, 3 vols. Abridged ed. in 1 vol., Boston (Am. Unitar. Assoc.), 1867 and 1875. By the same: *Internal Evidences*

of the Genuineness of the Gospels (posthumous). Boston. 1855. With special reference to Strauss.

FR. BLEEK (d. 1859): *Beiträge zur Evangelien-Kritik*. Berlin, 1846.

F. CHR. BAUR (d. 1860): *Kritische Untersuchungen über die kanonischen Evangelien*. 1847. Comp. the first volume of his *Church History* (Germ. ed., pp. 22 sqq., 148 sqq.).

ISAAC DA COSTA: *The Four Witnesses: being a Harmony of the Gospels on a New Principle*. Transl. (from the Dutch) by David Scott, 1851; New York ed., 1855. Against Strauss.

AD. HILGENFELD (Tübingen School): *Die Evangelien nach ihrer Entstehung und geschichtl. Bedeutung*. Leipz., 1854. His *Einleitung*, 1875.

CANON WESTCOTT: *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*. London and Boston, 1860; 7th ed., London, 1888. Very useful.

CONST. TISCHENDORF (d. 1874): *Wann wurden unsere Evangelien verfasst?* Leipz., 4th ed., 1866 (Engl. transl. by W. L. Gage, Boston, 1868).

H. JUL. HOLTZMANN: *Die synoptischen Evangelien, ihr Ursprung und geschichtl. Charakter*. Leipz., 1863. See also his art. *Evangelien in Schenkel's "Bibel-Lex."* II. 207, and two articles on the Synoptic Question in the *"Jahrbücher für Protest. Theol."* 1878, pp. 145 sqq. and 533 sqq.; but especially his *Einleitung in das N. T.*, 2d ed., 1886.

C. WEIZSÄCKER (successor of Dr. Baur, but less radical): *Untersuchungen über die evang. Gesch., ihre Quellen, etc.* Gotha, 1864.

GUSTAVE D'EICHTHAL: *Les Évangiles*. Paris, 1863. 2 vols.

L. A. SABATIER: *Essai sur les sources de la vie de Jésus*. Paris, 1866.

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- ANDREW JUKES: The Characteristic Differences of the Four Gospels. London, 1867.
- EDWARD A. THOMSON: The Four Evangelists; with the Distinctive Characteristics of their Gospels. Edinburgh, 1868.
- C. A. ROW: The Historical Character of the Gospels Tested by an Examination of their Contents. 1865–67. The Jesus of the Evangelists. London, 1868.
- KARL WIESELER: Beiträge zur richtigen Würdigung der Evangelien und der evangel. Geschichte. Gotha, 1869.
- Supernatural Religion (anonymous). London, 1873, 7th ed., 1879, vol. I., Part II., pp. 212 sqq., and vol. III. Comp. the careful review and refutation of this work by Bishop LIGHTFOOT in a series of articles in the "Contemporary Review," 1875, sqq.
- P. GODET: The Origin of the Four Gospels. In his "Studies on the New Test.," 1873. Engl. transl. by W. H. Lyttelton. London, 1876. See also his Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke, Introd. and Appendix, Eng. trans. from 2d French ed. Edinb., 1875.
- W. SANDAY: The Gospels in the Second Century. London, 1876.
- BERNHARD WEISS (Professor in Berlin): Das Marcusevangelium und seine synoptischen Parallelen. Berlin, 1872. Das Matthäusevangelium und seine Lucas-Parallelen erklärt. Halle, 1876. Two very thorough critical works. Comp. also his reply to Holtzmann in the "Jahrbücher for Protest. Theologie," 1878; and his Einleitung in's N. T., 1886.
- D. S. GREGORY: Why Four Gospels? or, the Gospels for all the World. New York, 1877.
- E. RENAN: Les évangiles et la seconde génération Chrétienne. Paris, 1877.
- GEO. P. FISHER (Professor in New Haven): The Beginnings of Christianity. New York, 1877. Chs. VIII.-XII. Also several articles on the Gospels in the "Princeton Review" for 1881.
- WM. THOMSON (Archbishop of York): The Gospels. General Introduction to Speaker's "Com. on the New Test.," vol. I., pp. xiii.-lxxv. London and New York, 1878.
- EDWIN A. ABBOTT (Head Master, City of London School): Gospels, in the ninth edition of the "Encyclopaedia Britannica," vol. X., pp. 789–843. Edinburgh and New York, 1879.
- FRED. HUIDEKOPER (Unitar. Theol. Seminary, Meadville, Pa.): Indirect Testimony of History to the Genuineness of the Gospels. New York, 2d ed., 1879.
- JOHN KENNEDY (D. D.): The Four Gospels: their Age and Authorship. Traced from the Fourth Century into the First. London; Am. ed., with an introduction by Edwin W. Rice. Philadelphia, 1880 (Am. Sunday School Union).
- J. H. SCHOLTEN: Das Paulinische Evangelium. Transl. from the Dutch by E. B. Redepenning. Elberfeld, 1881.
- C. HOLSTEN: Die drei ursprünglichen, noch ungeschriebenen Evangelien. Leipzig, 1883 (79 pages). A modification of Baur's tendency-hypothesis. Holsten assumes three forms of the original oral Gospel—the Pauline, the Petrine, and the Judaistic.
- Norton, Tischendorf, Wieseler, Ebrard, Da Costa, Westcott, Lightfoot, Sanday, Kennedy, Thomson, Godet, Ezra Abbot, and Fisher are conservative and constructive, yet critical; Baur, Hilgenfeld, Holtzmann, Keim, Renan, Scholten, Davidson, and the author of "Supernatural Religion" are radical but stimulating and negatively helpful especially Baur, Reim, and Renan. Bleek, Ewald, Reuss, Meyer, and Weiss occupy independent middle ground, but all defend the genuineness of John except Reuss, who hesitates.
- COMMENTARIES.
1. Ancient Works: Origen (in Math., Luc., etc., fragmentary); CHRYSOSTOM (Hom. in Matth., ed. Fr. Field, 1839); JEROME (in Matth.; in Luc.); AUGUSTINE (Quaestionum

Evangeliorum libri II.); Theophylact (Comment, in 4 Evang., Gr. et Lat.); EUTHYMIUS ZIGABENUS (Com. in 4 Evang., Gr. et Lat.); THOMAS AQUINAS (Catena aurea in Evan.; English edition by Pusey, Keble, and Newman. Oxford, 1841–45, 4 vols.).

2. Since the Reformation: CALVIN (Harmonia, and Ev. Joa., 1553; Engl. ed., Edinb., 1846, 3 vols.); MALDONATUS (R. Cath., Com. in quatuor Evang., 1615); PASQUIER QUESNEL (Jansenist; The Four Gospels, French and English, several editions); JOHN LIGHTFOOT (Horae Hebraicae et Talmudicae in quatuor Evangelistas, and Harmonia quatuor Evangelistarum tum inter se, tum cum Veteri Testamento, in his Opera. London, 1684; also Leipz., 1675; Rotterdam, 1686; London, 1825); J. MACKNIGHT (Harm. of the Four Gospels, with Paraphrase and Notes. London, 1756; 5th ed., 1819, 2 vols.); GEORGE CAMPBELL (d. 1796; The Four Gospels, with Dissertations and Notes. Aberdeen, 1814, 4 vols.; Andover, 1837, 2 vols.).

3. In the nineteenth century: OLSHAUSEN (D. 1839; 3D ED., 1837 SQQ. REVISED AND COMPLETED BY EBRARD AND OTHERS; ENGL. TRANSL., EDINB. AND NOW YORK); DE WETTE (d. 1849; Exeget. Handbuch zum N. T., 1837; 5th ed. by Brückner and others, 1863 sqq.); BLEEK (d. 1859; Synopt. Erklärung der 3 ersten Evang., 1862, 2 vols.); MEYER (D. 1874; 6TH ED., 1876–80, MATTHEW BY MEYER MARK, LUKE AND JOHN REVISED BY WEISS); LANGE (AM. ED. ENLARGED, NEW YORK AND EDINB., 1864 SQQ., 3 VOLS.); ALFORD (D. 1871; 6TH ED., 1868; NEW ED., 1877); WORDSWORTH (5TH ED., 1866); JOS. A. ALEXANDER (d. 1859; Mark and Matthew, the latter unfinished); MCCLELLAN (The Four Gospels, with the Chronological and Analytical Harmony. London, 1875); KEIL (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, 1877–1881); MORISON (Matthew and Mark, the latter in a third ed., 1882); GODET (Luke and John, French and English), STRACK AND ZÖCKLER (1888). FOR ENGLISH READERS: SPEAKER'S Com., ELLICOTT'S Com., SCHAFF'S Revision Com., 1882, etc.

### 1.78 The Four Gospels.

#### GENERAL CHARACTER AND AIM OF THE GOSPELS.

Christianity is a cheerful religion and brings joy and peace from heaven to earth. The New Testament opens with the gospel, that is with the authentic record of the history of all histories, the glad tidings of salvation through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The four canonical Gospels are only variations of the same theme, a fourfold representation of one and the same gospel, animated by the same spirit. They are not full biographies, but only memoirs or a selection of characteristic features of Christ's life and work as they struck each Evangelist and best suited his purpose and his class of readers. They are not photographs which give only the momentary image in a single attitude, but living pictures from repeated sittings, and reproduce the varied expressions and aspects of Christ's person.

The style is natural, unadorned, straightforward, and objective. Their artless and naïve simplicity resembles the earliest historic records in the Old Testament, and has its peculiar and abiding charm for all classes of people and all degrees of culture. The authors, in noble modesty and self-forgetfulness, suppress their personal views and feelings, retire in worshipful silence before their great subject, and strive to set it forth in all its own unaided power.

The first and fourth Gospels were composed by apostles and eye-witnesses, Matthew and John; the second and third, under the influence of Peter and Paul, and by their disciples Mark and Luke, so as to be indirectly likewise of apostolic origin and canonical authority. Hence Mark is often called the Gospel of Peter, and Luke the Gospel of Paul.

The common practical aim of the Evangelists is to lead the reader to a saving faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the promised Messiah and Redeemer of the world.

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**COMMON ORIGIN.**

The Gospels have their common source in the personal intercourse of two of the writers with Christ, and in the oral tradition of the apostles and other eye-witnesses. Plain fishermen of Galilee could not have drawn such a portrait of Jesus if he had not sat for it. It would take more than a Jesus to invent a Jesus. They did not create the divine original, but they faithfully preserved and reproduced it.

The gospel story, being constantly repeated in public preaching and in private circles, assumed a fixed, stereotyped form; the more readily, on account of the reverence of the first disciples for every word of their divine Master. Hence the striking agreement of the first three, or synoptical Gospels, which, in matter and form, are only variations of the same theme. Luke used, according to his own statement, besides the oral tradition, written documents on certain parts of the life of Jesus, which doubtless appeared early among the first disciples. The Gospel of Mark, the confidant of Peter, is a faithful copy of the gospel preached and otherwise communicated by this apostle; with the use, perhaps, of Hebrew records which Peter may have made from time to time under the fresh impression of the events themselves.

**INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS.**

But with all their similarity in matter and style, each of the Gospels, above all the fourth, has its peculiarities, answering to the personal character of its author, his special design, and the circumstances of his readers. The several evangelists present the infinite fullness of the life and person of Jesus in different aspects and different relations to mankind; and they complete one another. The symbolical poesy of the church compares them with the four rivers of Paradise, and with the four cherubic representatives of the creation, assigning the man to Matthew, the lion to Mark, the ox to Luke, and the eagle to John.

The apparent contradictions of these narratives, when closely examined, sufficiently solve themselves, in all essential points, and serve only to attest the honesty, impartiality, and credibility of the authors. At the same time the striking combination of resemblances and differences stimulates close observation and minute comparison, and thus impresses the events of the life of Christ more vividly and deeply upon the mind and heart of the reader than a single narrative could do. The immense labor of late years in bringing out the comparative characteristics of the Gospels and in harmonizing their discrepancies has not been in vain, and has left a stronger conviction of their independent worth and mutual completeness.

Matthew wrote for Jews, Mark for Romans, Luke for Greeks, John for advanced Christians; but all are suited for Christians in every age and nation. The first Gospel exhibits Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah and Lawgiver of the kingdom of heaven who challenges our obedience; the second Gospel as the mighty conqueror and worker of miracles who excites our astonishment; the third Gospel as the sympathizing Friend and Saviour of men who commands our confidence; the fourth Gospel as the eternal Son of God who became flesh for our salvation and claims our adoration and worship, that by believing in him we may have eternal life. The presiding mind which planned this fourfold gospel and employed the agents without a formal agreement and in conformity to their talents, tastes, and spheres of usefulness, is the Spirit of that Lord who is both the Son of Man and the Son of God, the Saviour of us all.

**TIME OF COMPOSITION.**

As to the time of composition, external testimony and internal evidence which modern critical speculations have not been able to invalidate, point to the seventh decade of the first century for the Synoptic Gospels, and to the ninth decade for the Gospel of John.

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The Synoptic Gospels were certainly written before A.D. 70; for they describe the destruction of Jerusalem as an event still future, though nigh at hand, and connect it immediately with the glorious appearing of our Lord, which it was thought might take place within the generation then living, although no precise date is fixed anywhere, the Lord himself declaring it to be unknown even to him. Had the Evangelists written after that terrible catastrophe, they would naturally have made some allusion to it, or so arranged the eschatological discourses of our Lord (Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21) as to enable the reader clearly to discriminate between the judgment of Jerusalem and the final judgment of the world, as typically foreshadowed by the former.

On the other hand, a considerable number of years must have elapsed after the resurrection. This is indicated by the fact that several imperfect attempts at a gospel history had previously been made (Luke 1:1), and by such a phrase as: "until this day" (Matt. 27:8; 28:15).

But it is quite impossible to fix the precise year of composition. The silence of the Epistles is no conclusive argument that the Synoptists wrote after the death of James, Peter, and Paul; for there is the same silence in the Acts concerning the Epistles of Paul, and in the Epistles concerning the Acts. The apostles did not quote each other's writings. the only exception is the reference of Peter to the Epistles of Paul. In the multiplicity of their labors the Evangelists may have been engaged for several years in preparing their works until they assumed their present shape. The composition of a life of Christ now may well employ many years of the profoundest study.

The Hebrew Matthew was probably composed first; then Mark; the Greek Matthew and Luke cannot be far apart. If the Acts, which suddenly break off with Paul's imprisonment in Rome (61-63), were written before the death of the apostle, the third

Gospel, which is referred to as "the first treatise" (Acts 1:1), must have been composed before A.D. 65 or 64, perhaps, in Caesarea, where Luke had the best opportunity to gather his material during Paul's imprisonment between 58 and 60; but it was probably not published till a few years afterwards. Whether the later Synoptists knew and used the earlier will be discussed in the next section.

John, according to the universal testimony of antiquity, which is confirmed by internal evidence, wrote his Gospel last, after the fall of Jerusalem and after the final separation of the Christians from the Jews. He evidently presupposes the Synoptic Gospels (although he never refers to them), and omits the eschatological and many other discourses and miracles, even the institution of the sacraments, because they were already sufficiently known throughout the church. But in this case too it is impossible to fix the year of composition. John carried his Gospel in his heart and memory for many years and gradually reduced it to writing in his old age, between A.D. 80 and 100; for he lived to the close of the first century and, perhaps, saw the dawn of the second.

#### CREDIBILITY.

The Gospels make upon every unsophisticated reader the impression of absolute honesty. They tell the story without rhetorical embellishment, without any exclamation of surprise or admiration, without note and comment. They frankly record the weaknesses and failings of the disciples, including themselves, the rebukes which their Master administered to them for their carnal misunderstandings and want of faith, their cowardice and desertion in the most trying hour, their utter despondency after the crucifixion, the ambitious request of John and James, the denial of Peter, the treason of Judas. They dwell even with circumstantial minuteness upon the great sin of the leader of the Twelve, especially the Gospel of Mark, who derived his details no

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doubt from Peter's own lips. They conceal nothing, they apologize for nothing, they exaggerate nothing. Their authors are utterly unconcerned about their own fame, and withhold their own name; their sole object is to tell the story of Jesus, which carries its own irresistible force and charm to the heart of every truth-loving reader. The very discrepancies in minor details increase confidence and exclude the suspicion of collusion; for it is a generally acknowledged principle in legal evidence that circumstantial variation in the testimony of witnesses confirms their substantial agreement. There is no historical work of ancient times which carries on its very face such a seal of truthfulness as these Gospels.

The credibility of the canonical Gospels receives also negative confirmation from the numerous apocryphal Gospels which by their immeasurable inferiority and childishness prove the utter inability of the human imagination, whether orthodox or heterodox, to produce such a character as the historical Jesus of Nazareth.

No post-apostolic writers could have composed the canonical Gospels, and the apostles themselves could not have composed them without the inspiration of the spirit of Christ.

The Credibility of the Gospels would never have been denied if it were not for the philosophical and dogmatic skepticism which desires to get rid of the supernatural and miraculous at any price. It impresses itself upon men of the highest culture as well as upon the unlearned reader. The striking testimony of Rousseau is well known and need not be repeated. I will quote only from two great writers who were by no means biased in favor of orthodoxy.

Dr. W. E. CHANNING, the distinguished leader of American Unitarianism, says (with reference to the Strauss and Parker skepticism): "I know no histories to be compared with the Gospels in marks of truth, in pregnancy of meaning, in quickening

power." ... "As to his [Christ's] biographers, they speak for themselves. Never were more simple and honest ones. They show us that none in connection with Christ would give any aid to his conception, for they do not receive it .... The Gospels are to me their own evidence. They are the simple records of a being who could not have been invented, and the miraculous and more common parts of his life so hang together, are so permeated by the same spirit, are so plainly outgoings of one and the same man, that I see not how we can admit one without the other." See Channing's Memoir by his nephew, tenth ed., Boston, 1874 Vol. II., pp. 431, 434, 436. The testimony of GOETHE will have with many still greater weight. He recognized in the Gospels the highest manifestation of the Divine which ever appeared in this world, and the summit of moral culture beyond which the human mind can never rise, however much it may progress in any other direction.

### **1.79 The Synoptists.**

#### THE SYNOPTIC PROBLEM.

The fourth Gospel stands by itself and differs widely from the others in contents and style, as well as in distance of time of composition. There can be no doubt that the author, writing towards the close of the first century, must have known the three older ones.

But the first three Gospels present the unique phenomenon of a most striking agreement and an equally striking disagreement both in matter and style, such as is not found among any three writers on the same subject. Hence they are called the Synoptic or Synoptical Gospels, and the three Evangelists, Synoptists. This fact makes a harmony of the Gospels possible in all essentials, and yet impossible in many minor details. The agreement is often literal, and the disagreement often borders on contradiction, but without invalidating the essential harmony.

The interrelationship between Matthew, Mark, and Luke is, perhaps, the most complicated and perplexing critical problem

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in the history of literature. The problem derives great importance from its close connection with the life of Christ, and has therefore tried to the utmost the learning, acumen, and ingenuity of modern scholars for nearly a century. The range of hypotheses has been almost exhausted, and yet no harmonious conclusion reached.

#### THE RELATIONSHIP.

The general agreement of the Synoptists consists:

1. In the harmonious delineation of the character of Christ. The physiognomy is the same, only under three somewhat different aspects. All represent him as the Son of man and as the Son of God, as the promised Messiah and Saviour, teaching the purest doctrine, living a spotless life, performing mighty miracles, suffering and dying for the sins of the world, and rising in triumph to establish his kingdom of truth and righteousness. Such unity in the unique character of the hero of the three narratives has no parallel in secular or sacred histories or biographies, and is the best guarantee of the truthfulness of the picture.

2. In the plan and arrangement of the evangelical history, yet with striking peculiarities.

(a.) Matthew 1–2, and Luke 1–2, and 3:23–38, begin with the genealogy and infancy of Christ, but with different facts drawn from different sources. Mark opens at once with the preaching of the Baptist; while the fourth Evangelist goes back to the eternal pre-existence of the Logos. About the thirty years of Christ's private life and his quiet training for the great work they are all silent, with the exception of Luke, who gives us a glimpse of his early youth in the temple (Luke 2:42–52).

(b.) The preaching and baptism of John which prepared the way for the public ministry of Christ, is related by all the Synoptists in parallel sections: Matt. 3:1–12; Mark 1:1–8; Luke 3:1–18.

(c.) Christ's baptism and temptation, the Messianic inauguration and Messianic trial: Matt. 3:13–17; 4:1–11; Mark 1:9–11, 12, 13 (very brief); Luke 3:21–23; 4:1–13. The variations here between Matthew and Luke are very slight, as in the order of the second and third temptation. John gives the testimony of the Baptist to Christ, and alludes to his baptism (John 1:32–34), but differs from the Synoptists.

(d.) The public ministry of Christ in Galilee: Matt. 4:12–18:35; Mark 1:14–9:50; Luke 4:14–9:50. But Matthew 14:22–16:12, and Mark 6:45–8:26, narrate a series of events connected with the Galilaean ministry, which are wanting in Luke; while Luke 9:51–18:14, has another series of events and parables connected with the last journey to Jerusalem which are peculiar to him.

(e.) The journey to Jerusalem: Matt. 19:1–20:31; Mark 10:1–52; Luke 18:15–19:28.

(f.) The entry into Jerusalem and activity there during the week before the last passover: Matt. 21–25; Mark 11–13; Luke 19:29–21:38.

(g.) The passion, crucifixion, and resurrection in parallel sections, but with considerable minor divergences, especially in the denial of Peter and the history of the resurrection: Matt. 26–28; Mark 14–16; Luke 22–24.

The events of the last week, from the entry to the resurrection (from Palm Sunday to Easter), occupy in all the largest space, about one-fourth of the whole narrative.

3. In the selection of the same material and in verbal coincidences, as in the eschatological discourses of Christ, with an almost equal number of little differences. Thus the three accounts of the healing of the paralytic (Matt. 9:1–8, and parallel passages), the feeding of the five thousand, the transfiguration, almost verbally agree.

The largest portion of verbal agreement, to the extent of about seven-eighths, is found in the words of others, especially of Christ; and

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the largest portion of disagreement in the narratives of the writers. This fact bears against the theory of interdependence, and proves, on the one hand, the reverent loyalty of all the Synoptists to the teaching of the great Master, but also, on the other hand, their freedom and independence of observation and judgment in the narration of facts. Words can be accurately reported only in one form, as they were spoken; while events may be correctly narrated in different words.

**THE CANONICAL GOSPELS INDEPENDENT OF ONE ANOTHER.**

There is no direct evidence that any of the three Synoptists saw and used the work of the others; nor is the agreement of such a character that it may not be as easily and better explained from antecedent sources. The advocates of the theory of interdependency, or the "borrowing" hypothesis, differ widely among themselves: some make Matthew, others Mark, others Luke, the source of the other two or at least of one of them; while still others go back from the Synoptists in their present form to a proto-Mark, or proto-Matthew, proto-Luke, or other fictitious ante-canonical documents; thereby confessing the insufficiency of the borrowing hypothesis pure and simple.

There is no allusion in any of the Synoptists to the others; and yet Luke expressly refers to many earlier attempts to write the gospel history. Papias, Irenaeus, and other ancient writers assume that they wrote independently. The first who made Mark a copyist of Matthew is Augustine, and his view has been completely reversed by modern research. The whole theory degrades one or two Synoptists to the position of slavish and yet arbitrary compilers, not to say plagiarists; it assumes a strange mixture of dependence and affected originality; it weakens the independent value of their history; and it does not account for the omissions of most important matter, and for many differences in common matter. For the Synoptists often

differ just where we should most expect them to agree. Why should Mark be silent about the history of the infancy, the whole sermon on the Mount (the Magna Charta of Christ's kingdom), the Lord's Prayer, and important parables, if he had Matthew 1-2, 5-7, 13, before him? Why should he, a pupil of Peter, record the Lord's severe rebuke to Peter (Mark 8:27-33), but fail to mention from Matthew 16:16-23 the preceding remarkable laudation: "Thou art Rock, and upon this rock I will build my church?" Why should Luke omit the greater part of the sermon on the Mount, and all the appearances of the risen Lord in Galilee? Why should he ignore the touching anointing scene in Bethany, and thus neglect to aid in fulfilling the Lord's prediction that this act of devotion should be spoken of as a memorial of Mary "wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world (Matt. 26:13; Mark 14:9)? Why should he, the pupil and companion of Paul, fail to record the adoration of the Magi, the story of the woman of Canaan, and the command to evangelize the Gentiles, so clearly related by Matthew, the Evangelist of the Jews (Matt. 2:1-12; 15:21-28; 24:14; 28:19)? Why should Luke and Matthew give different genealogies of Christ, and even different reports of the model prayer of our Lord, Luke omitting (beside the doxology, which is also wanting in the best MSS. of Matthew) the petition, "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth," and the concluding petition, "but deliver us from evil" (or "the evil one"), and substituting "sins" for "debts," and "Father" for "Our Father who art in heaven"? Why should all three Synoptists differ even in the brief and official title on the Cross, and in the words of institution of the Lord's Supper, where Paul, writing in 57, agrees with Luke, referring to a revelation from the Lord (1 Cor. 11:23)? Had the Synoptists seen the work of the others, they could easily have harmonized these discrepancies and avoided the appearance of contradiction. To suppose that they purposely varied to conceal plagiarism is a moral

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impossibility. We can conceive no reasonable motive of adding a third Gospel to two already known to the writer, except on the ground of serious defects, which do not exist (certainly not in Matthew and Luke as compared with Mark), or on the ground of a presumption which is inconsistent with the modest tone and the omission of the very name of the writers.

These difficulties are felt by the ablest advocates of the borrowing hypothesis, and hence they call to aid one or several pre-canonical Gospels which are to account for the startling discrepancies and signs of independence, whether in omissions or additions or arrangement. But these pre-canonical Gospels, with the exception of the lost Hebrew Matthew, are as fictitious as the Syro-Chaldaic Urevangelium of Eichhorn, and have been compared to the epicycles of the old astronomers, which were invented to sustain the tottering hypothesis of cycles.

As to Luke, we have shown that he departs most from the triple tradition, although he is supposed to have written last, and it is now almost universally agreed that he did not use the canonical Matthew. Whether he used the Hebrew Matthew and the Greek Mark or a lost proto-Mark, is disputed, and at least very doubtful. He follows a plan of his own; he ignores a whole cycle of events in Mark 6:45–8:26; he omits in the common sections the graphic touches of Mark, for which he has others equally graphic; and with a far better knowledge of Greek he has yet more Hebraisms than Mark, because he drew largely on Hebrew sources. As to Matthew, he makes the impression of primitive antiquity, and his originality and completeness have found able advocates from Augustin down to Griesbach and Keim. And as to Mark, his apparent abridgments, far from being the work of a copyist, are simply rapid statements of an original writer, with many fresh and lively details which abundantly prove his independence. On the other hand, in several narratives he is more full and minute than either Matthew or Luke. His

independence has been successfully proven by the most laborious and minute investigations and comparisons. Hence many regard him as the primitive Evangelist made use of by both Matthew and Luke, but disagree among themselves as to whether it was the canonical Mark or a proto-Mark. In either case Matthew and Luke would be guilty of plagiarism. What should we think of an historian of our day who would plunder another historian of one-third or one-half of the contents of his book without a word of acknowledgment direct or indirect? Let us give the Evangelists at least the credit of common honesty, which is the basis of all morality.

#### APOSTOLIC TEACHING THE PRIMARY SOURCE OF ALL THE SYNOPTISTS.

The only certain basis for the solution of the problem is given to us in the preface of Luke. He mentions two sources of his own Gospel—but not necessarily of the two other Synoptic Gospels—namely, the oral tradition or deliverance of original "eyewitnesses and ministers of the word" (apostles, evangelists, and other primitive disciples), and a number of written "narratives," drawn up by "many," but evidently incomplete and fragmentary, so as to induce him to prepare, after accurate investigation, a regular history of "those matters which have been fulfilled among us." Besides this important hint, we may be aided by the well-known statements of Papias about the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew and the Greek Mark, whom he represents as the interpret

The chief and common source from which the Synoptists derived their Gospels was undoubtedly the living apostolic tradition or teaching which is mentioned by Luke in the first order. This teaching was nothing more or less than a faithful report of the words and deeds of Christ himself by honest and intelligent eye-witnesses. He told his disciples to preach, not to write, the gospel, although the writing was, of course, not forbidden, but became necessary for the

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preservation of the gospel in its purity. They had at first only "hearers;" while the law and the prophets had readers.

Among the Jews and Arabs the memory was specially trained in the accurate repetition and perpetuation of sacred words and facts. The Mishna was not reduced to writing for two or three hundred years. In the East everything is more settled and stationary than in the West, and the traveler feels himself as by magic transferred back to manners and habits as well as the surroundings of apostolic and patriarchal times. The memory is strongest where it depends most on itself and least upon books.

The apostolic tradition or preaching was chiefly historical, a recital of the wonderful public life of Jesus of Nazareth, and centered in the crowning facts of the crucifixion and resurrection. This is evident from the specimens of sermons in the Acts. The story was repeated in public and in private from day to day and Sabbath to Sabbath. The apostles and primitive evangelists adhered closely and reverently to what they saw and heard from their divine Master, and their disciples faithfully reproduced their testimony. "They continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching" (Acts 2:42). Reverence would forbid them to vary from it; and yet no single individual, not even Peter or John, could take in the whole fullness of Christ. One recollected this, another part of the gospel story; one had a better memory for words, another for facts. These differences, according to varying capacities and recollection, would naturally appear, and the common tradition adapted itself, without any essential alteration, to particular classes of hearers who were first Hebrews in Palestine, then Greek Jews, proselytes, and Gentiles.

The Gospels are nothing more than comprehensive summaries of this apostolic preaching and teaching. Mark represents it in its simplest and briefest form, and agrees nearest with the preaching of Peter as far as we know it from the Acts; it is the oldest in

essence, though not necessarily in composition. Matthew and Luke contain the same tradition in its expanded and more matured form, the one the Hebrew or Jewish Christian, the other the Hellenistic and Pauline type, with a corresponding selection of details. Mark gives a graphic account of the main facts of the public life of Christ "beginning from the baptism of John unto the day that he was received up," as they would naturally be first presented to an audience (Acts 1:22). Matthew and Luke add the history of the infancy and many discourses, facts, and details which would usually be presented in a fuller course of instruction.

#### WRITTEN DOCUMENTS

It is very natural that parts of the tradition were reduced to writing during the thirty years which intervened between the events and the composition of the canonical Gospels. One evangelist would record for his own use a sketch of the chief events, another the sermon on the Mount, another the parables, another the history of the crucifixion and resurrection, still another would gather from the lips of Mary the history of the infancy and the genealogies. Possibly some of the first hearers noted down certain words and events under the fresh impressions of the moment. The apostles were indeed unlearned, but not illiterate men, they could read and write and had sufficient rudimentary education for ordinary composition. These early memoranda were numerous, but have all disappeared, they were not intended for publication, or if published they were superseded by the canonical Gospels. Hence there is room here for much speculation and conjectural criticism. "Many," says Luke, "have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us." He cannot mean the apocryphal Gospels which were not yet written, nor the canonical Gospels of Matthew and Mark which would have spared him much trouble and which he would not have dared to supersede by an improved work of

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his own without a word of acknowledgment, but pre-canonical records, now lost, which emanated from "eye-witnesses and ministers of the word," yet were so fragmentary and incomplete as to justify his own attempt to furnish a more satisfactory and connected history. He had the best opportunity to gather such documents in Palestine, Antioch, Greece, and Rome. Matthew, being himself an eyewitness, and Mark, being the companion of Peter, had less need of previous documents, and could rely chiefly, on their own memory and the living tradition in its primitive freshness. They may have written sketches or memoranda for their own use long before they completed their Gospels; for such important works cannot be prepared without long continued labor and care. The best books grow gradually and silently like trees.

We conclude, then, that the Synoptists prepared their Gospels independently, during the same period (say between A.D. 60 and 69), in different places, chiefly from the living teaching of Christ and the first disciples, and partly from earlier fragmentary documents. They bear independent testimony to the truth of the gospel. Their agreement and disagreement are not the result of design, but of the unity, richness, and variety of the original story as received, understood, digested, and applied by different minds to different conditions and classes of hearers and readers.

#### THE TRADITIONAL ORDER.

There is no good reason to doubt that the canonical arrangement which is supported by the prevailing oldest tradition, correctly represents the order of composition. Matthew, the apostle, wrote first in Aramaic and in Palestine, from his personal observation and experience with the aid of tradition; Mark next, in Rome, faithfully reproducing Peter's preaching; Luke last, from tradition and sundry reliable but fragmentary documents. But all wrote under a higher inspiration, and are equally honest

and equally trustworthy; all wrote within the lifetime of many of the primitive witnesses, before the first generation of Christians had passed away, and before there was any chance for mythical and legendary accretions. They wrote not too late to insure faithfulness, nor too early to prevent corruption. They represent not the turbid stream of apocryphal afterthoughts and fictions, but the pure fountain of historic truth.

The gospel story, being once fixed in this completed shape, remained unchanged for all time to come. Nothing was lost, nothing added. The earlier sketches or pre-canonical gospel fragments disappeared, and the four canonical records of the one gospel, no more nor less, sufficient for all purposes, monopolized the field from which neither apocryphal caricatures nor skeptical speculations have been able to drive them.

#### EXOTERIC AND ESOTERIC TRADITION.

Besides the common Galilean tradition for the people at large which is embodied in the Synoptic Gospels, there was an esoteric tradition of Christ's ministry in Judaea and his private relation to the select circle of the apostles and his mysterious relation to the Father. The bearer of this tradition was the beloved disciple who leaned on the beating heart of his Master and absorbed his deepest words. He treasured them up in his memory, and at last when the church was ripe for this higher revelation he embodied it in the fourth Gospel.

The problem of the RELATIONSHIP OF THE SYNOPTISTS was first seriously discussed by Augustine (d. 430), in his three books *De Consensu Evangelistarum* (Opera, Tom. III., 1041-1230, ed. Migne). He defends the order in our canon, first Matthew, last John, and the two apostolic disciples in the middle (*in loco medio constituti tamquam filii amplectendi*, I., 2), but wrongly makes Mark dependent on Matthew (see below, sub. I. 1). His view prevailed during the middle ages and down to the close of the eighteenth century. The

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verbal inspiration theory checked critical investigation.

The problem was resumed with Protestant freedom by Storr (1786), more elaborately by Eichhorn (1794), and Marsh (1803), and again by Hug (a liberal Roman Catholic scholar, 1808), Schleiermacher (1817), Gieseler (1818), De Wette (1826), Credner (1836), and others. It received a new impulse and importance by the *Leben Jesu* of Strauss (1836), and the Tübingen school, and has been carried forward by Baur (1847), Hilgenfeld, Bleek, Reuss, Holtzmann, Ewald, Meyer, Keim, Weiss, and others mentioned in the *Literature* (p. 577). Starting in Germany, the investigation was prosecuted also in France, Holland, England, and the United States.

It is not easy to find a way through the labyrinth of the Synoptic question, with all its by-ways and cross-ways, turns and windings, which at first make the impression.

The following classification of theories is tolerably complete, but several overlap each other, or are combined.

I. The INSPIRATION hypothesis cuts the Gordian knot by tracing the agreement of the Synoptists directly and solely to the Holy Spirit. But this explains nothing, and makes God responsible for all the discrepancies and possible inaccuracies of the Evangelists. No inspiration theory can stand for a moment which does not leave room for the personal agency and individual peculiarities of the sacred authors and the exercise of their natural faculties in writing. Luke expressly states in the preface his own agency in composing his Gospel and the use he made of his means of information.

II. The INTERDEPENDENCY hypothesis, or BORROWING hypothesis holds that one or two Evangelists borrowed from the other. This admits of as many modifications as the order in which they may be placed.

1. Matthew, Mark, Luke. This is the traditional order defended by Augustine, who

called Mark, rather disrespectfully, a "footman and abbreviator of Matthew"

Many scholars besides those just mentioned hold to this order without admitting an interdependence, and this I think is the correct view, in connection with the tradition hypothesis. See below, sub V. and the text.

2. Matthew, Luke, Mark. So first Clement of Alexandria (*Eus., H. E., VI. 14*), but, without intimating a dependence of Mark except on Peter. Griesbach (in two Programs, 1789) renewed this order and made Mark an extract from both Matthew and Luke. So Theile (1825), Fritzsche (1830), Sieffert (1832), De Wette, Bleek, Anger, Strauss, Baur, Keim. The Tübingen school utilized this order for the tendency theory (see below). Keim puts Matthew A.D. 66, Luke, 90, Mark, 100.

Bleek is the most considerate advocate of this order (*Einleitung in das N. T., 2d ed., 1866, 91 sqq., 245 sqq.*), but Mangold changed it (in the third ed. of Bleek, 1875, pp. 388 sqq.) in favor of the priority of a proto-Mark.

3. Mark, Matthew, Luke. The originality and priority of Mark was first suggested by Koppe (1782) and Storr (1786 and 1794). The same view was renewed by Lachmann (1835), elaborately carried out by Weisse (1838, 1856; Hilgenfeld calls him the "Urheber der conservativen Markushypothese"), and still more minutely in all details by Wilke (*Der Urevangelist, 1838*; but he assumes numerous interpolations in the present Mark and goes back to a proto-Mark), and by B. Weiss (*Das Marcusevangelium, 1872*). It is maintained in various ways by Hitzig (*Johannes Markus, 1843*), Ewald (1850, but with various prior sources), Ritschl (1851), Reuss, Thiersch, Tobler, Réville (1862), Eichthal (1863), Schenkel, Wittichen, Holtzmann (1863), Weizsäcker (1864), Scholten (1869), Meyer (*Com. on Matt., 6th ed., 1876, p. 35*), Renan (*Les Évangiles, 1877, pp. 113*, but the Greek Mark was preceded by the lost Hebrew Matthew, p. 93 sqq.). Among English writers, James Smith, of Jordan Hill (*Dissertat. on the Origin of the Gospels, etc.,*

Edinb., 1853), G. P. Fisher (Beginnings of Christianity, New York, 1877, p. 275), and E. A. Abbott (in "Encyclop. Brit.," vol. X., 1879, art. "Gospels") adopt the same view.

The priority of Mark is now the prevailing theory among German critics, notwithstanding the protest of Baur and Keim, who had almost a personal animosity against the second Evangelist. One of the last utterances of Keim was a passionate protest against the Präkonisation des Markus (Aus dem Urchristenthum, 1878, pp. 28–45). But the advocates of this theory are divided on the question whether the canonical Mark or a lost proto-Mark was the primitive evangelist. The one is called the Markushypothese, the other the Urmarkushypothese. We admit the originality of Mark, but this does not necessarily imply priority of composition. Matthew and Luke have too much original matter to be dependent on Mark, and are far more valuable, as a whole, though Mark is indispensable for particulars.

4. Mark, Luke, Matthew. Herder (1796), Volkmar (1866 and 1870).

5. Luke, Matthew, Mark. Büsching (1776), Evanson (1792).

6. Luke, Mark, Matthew. Vogel (1804), Schneckenburger (1882).

The conflicting variety of these modifications shakes the whole borrowing theory. It makes the omissions of most important sections, as Matt. 12–17; 14:22 – 16:12; and Luke 10–18:14, and the discrepancies in the common sections entirely inexplicable. See text.

III. The hypothesis of a PRIMITIVE GOSPEL (Urevangelium) written before those of the Synoptists and used by them as their common source, but now lost.

1. A lost Hebrew or Syro-Chaldaic Gospel of official character, written very early, about 35, in Palestine by the apostles as a manual for the travelling preachers. This is the famous Urevangeliumshypothese of the learned Professor Eichhorn (1794, 1804, 1820), adopted and modified by Bishop

Herbert Marsh (1803), Gratz (1809), and Bertholdt (who, as Baur says, was devoted to it with "carnal self-security").

But there is no trace of such an important Gospel, either Hebrew or Greek. Luke knows nothing about it, although he speaks of several attempts to write portions of the history. To carry out his hypothesis, Eichhorn was forced to assume four altered copies or recensions of the original document, and afterwards he added also Greek recensions. Marsh, outgermanizing the German critic, increased the number of recensions to eight, including a Greek translation of the Hebrew original. Thus a new recension might be invented for every new set of facts ad infinitum. If the original Gospel was an apostolic composition, it needed no alterations and would have been preserved; or if it was so defective, it was of small account and unfit to be used as a basis of the canonical Gospels. Eichhorn's hypothesis is now generally abandoned, but in modified shape it has been renewed by Ewald and others. See below.

2. The Gospel "according to the Hebrews," of which some fragments still remain. Lessing (1784, in a book published three years after his death), Semler (who, however, changed his view repeatedly), Weber (1791), Paulus (1799). But this was a heretical or Ebionitic corruption of Matthew, and the remaining fragments differ widely from the canonical Gospels.

3. The Hebrew Matthew (Urmatthäus). It is supposed in this case that the famous Logia, which Matthew is reported by Papias to have written in Hebrew, consisted not only of a collection of discourses of our Lord (as Schleiermacher, Ewald, Reuss, I., 183, explained the term), but also of his deeds: "things said and done." But in any case the Hebrew Matthew is lost and cannot form a safe basis for conclusions. Hug and Roberts deny that it ever existed. See next section.

4. The canonical Mark.

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5. A pre-canonical proto-Mark (Urmakus). The last two hypotheses have already been mentioned under the second general head (II. 3).

IV. The theory of a number of fragmentary documents (the Diegesentheorie), or different recensions. It is based on the remark of Luke that "many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative (dihvghsin concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us" (Luke 1:1). Schleiermacher (1817) assumed a large number of such written documents, or detached narratives, and dealt very freely with the Synoptists, resting his faith chiefly on John.

Ewald (1850) independently carried out a similar view in fierce opposition to the "bestly wildness" of the Tübingen school. He informs us with his usual oracular self-assurance that Philip, the evangelist (Acts 8), first wrote a historical sketch in Hebrew, and then Matthew a collection of discourses (the *logia* of Papias), also in Hebrew, of which several Greek translations were made; that Mark was the third, Matthew the fifth, and Luke the ninth in this series of Gospels, representing the "Höhebilder, die himmlische Fortbewegung der Geschichte," which at last assumed their most perfect shape in John.

Köstlin, Wittichen, and Scholten likewise assume a number of precanonical Gospels which exist only in their critical fancy.

Renan (*Les Evang.*, Introd., p. vi.) distinguishes three sets of Gospels: (1) original Gospels of the first hand, taken from the oral tradition without a previous written text: the Hebrew Matthew and the Greek proto-Mark; (2) Gospels partly original and partly second-handed: our canonical Gospels falsely attributed to Matthew, Mark, and Luke; (3) Gospels of the second and third hand: Marcion's and the Apocryphal Gospels.

V. The theory of a common ORAL TRADITION (Traditionshypothese). Herder (1796), Gieseler (who first fully developed it, 1818), Schulz (1829), Credner, Lange, Ebrard (1868), Thiersch (1845, 1852), Norton,

Alford, Westcott (1860, 6th ed., 1881), Godet (1873), Keil (1877), and others. The Gospel story by constant repetition assumed or rather had from the beginning a uniform shape, even in minute particulars, especially in the words of Christ. True, as far as it goes, but must be supplemented, at least in the case of Luke, by pre-canonical, fragmentary documents or memoranda (*dihghvsei*). See the text.

VI. The TENDENCY hypothesis (Tendenzhypothese), or the theory of DOCTRINAL ADAPTATION. Baur (1847) and the Tübingen school (Schwegler, Ritschl, Volkmar, Hilgenfeld, Köstlin), followed in England by Samuel Davidson (in his *Introd. to the New Test.*, 1868, revised ed., 1882). Each Evangelist modified the Gospel history in the interest of the religious school or party to which he belonged. Matthew represents the Jewish Christian, Luke the Pauline or Gentile Christian tendency, Mark obliterates the difference, or prepares the way from the first to the second. Every individual trait or characteristic feature of a Gospel is connected with the dogmatic antithesis between Petrinism and Paulinism. Baur regarded Matthew as relatively the most primitive and credible Gospel, but it is itself a free reproduction of a still older Aramaic Gospel "according to the Hebrews." He was followed by an Urukus, a purely Pauline tendency Gospel. Mark is compiled from our Matthew and the Urukus in the interest of neutrality. Then followed the present Luke with an irenical Catholic tendency. Baur overstrained the difference between Petrinism and Paulinism far beyond the limits of historic truth, transformed the sacred writers into a set of partisans and fighting theologians after modern fashion, set aside the fourth Gospel as a purely ideal fiction, and put all the Gospels about seventy years too far down (130–170), when they were already generally used in the Christian church—according to the concurrent testimonies of Justin Martyr, Tatian, Irenaeus, and Tertullian. Volkmar went even beyond Baur in reckless

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radicalism, although he qualified it in other respects, as regards the priority of Mark, the originality of Luke (as compared with Marcion), and the date of Matthew which he put back to about 110. See a summary of his views in Hilgenfeld's *Einleitung*, pp. 199–202. But Ritschl and Hilgenfeld have considerably moderated the Tübingen extravagancies. Ritschl puts Mark first, and herein Volkmar agrees. Hilgenfeld assigns the composition of Matthew to the sixth decade of the first century (though he thinks it was somewhat changed soon after the destruction of Jerusalem), then followed Mark and paved the way from Petrinism to Paulinism, and Luke wrote last before the close of the first century. He ably maintained his theory in a five years' conflict with the Tübingen master (1850–1855) and reasserts it in his *Einleitung* (1875). So he brings us back to the traditional order. As to the time of composition, the internal evidence strongly supports the historical tradition that the Synoptists wrote before the destruction of Jerusalem.

### 1.80 Matthew.

#### LIFE OF MATTHEW.

MATTHEW, formerly called Levi, one of the twelve apostles, was originally a publican or tax gatherer at Capernaum, and hence well acquainted with Greek and Hebrew in bilingual Galilee, and accustomed to keep accounts. This occupation prepared him for writing a Gospel in topical order in both languages. In the three Synoptic lists of the apostles he is associated with Thomas, and forms with him the fourth pair; in Mark and Luke he precedes Thomas, in his own Gospel he is placed after him (perhaps from modesty). Hence the conjecture that he was a twin brother of Thomas (*Didymus*, i.e., *Twin*), or associated with him in work. Thomas was an honest and earnest doubter, of a melancholy disposition, yet fully convinced at last when he saw the risen Lord; Matthew was a strong and resolute believer.

Of his apostolic labors we have no certain information. Palestine, Ethiopia, Macedonia, the country of the Euphrates, Persia, and Media are variously assigned to him as missionary fields. He died a natural death according to the oldest tradition, while later accounts make him a martyr.

The first Gospel is his imperishable work, well worthy a long life, yea many lives. Matthew the publican occupies as to time the first place in the order of the Evangelists, as Mary Magdalene, from whom Christ expelled many demons, first proclaimed the glad tidings of the resurrection. Not that it is on that account the best or most important—the best comes last,—but it naturally precedes the other, as the basis precedes the superstructure.

In his written Gospel he still fulfils the great commission to bring all nations to the school of Christ (Matt. 28:19).

The scanty information of the person and life of Matthew in connection with his Gospel suggests the following probable inferences:

1. Matthew was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, yet comparatively liberal, being a publican who came in frequent contact with merchants from Damascus. This occupation was indeed disreputable in the eyes of the Jews, and scarcely consistent with the national Messianic aspirations; but Capernaum belonged to the tetrarchy of Herod Antipas, and the Herodian family, which, with all its subserviency to heathen Rome, was yet to a certain extent identified with the Jewish nation.

2. He was a man of some means and good social position. His office was lucrative, he owned a house, and gave a farewell banquet to "a great multitude" of his old associates, at which Jesus presided. It was at the same time his farewell to the world, its wealth, its pleasures and honors. "We may conceive what a joyous banquet that was for Matthew, when he marked the words and acts of Jesus, and stored within his memory the scene and the conversation which he was inspired to

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write according to his clerkly ability for the instruction of the church in all after ages." It was on that occasion that Jesus spoke that word which was especially applicable to Matthew and especially offensive to the Pharisees present: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." It is remarkable that the first post-apostolic quotation from the Gospel of Matthew is this very passage, and one similar to it (see below).

3. He was a man of decision of character and capable of great sacrifice to his conviction. When called, while sitting in Oriental fashion at his tollbooth, to follow Jesus, he "forsook all, rose up, and followed Him," whom he at once recognized and trusted as the true king of Israel. No one can do more than leave his "all," no matter how much or how little this may be; and no one can do better than to "follow Christ."

#### CHARACTER AND AIM OF THE GOSPEL

The first Gospel makes the impression of primitive antiquity. The city of Jerusalem, the temple, the priesthood and sacrifices, the entire religious and political fabric of Judaism are supposed to be still standing, but with an intimation of their speedy downfall. It alone reports the words of Christ that he came not to destroy but to fulfill the law and the prophets, and that he was only sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Hence the best critics put the composition several years before the destruction of Jerusalem.

Matthew's Gospel was evidently written for Hebrews, and Hebrew Christians with the aim to prove that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah, the last and greatest prophet, priest, and king of Israel. It presupposes a knowledge of Jewish customs and Palestinian localities (which are explained in other Gospels). It is the connecting link between the Old and the New Covenant. It is, as has been well said, "the ultimatum of Jehovah to his ancient people: Believe, or prepare to perish! Recognize Jesus as the Messiah, or await Him as your Judge!" Hence he so often points out the

fulfillment of Messianic prophecy in the evangelical history with his peculiar formula: "that it might be fulfilled," or "then was fulfilled."

In accordance with this plan, Matthew begins with the genealogy of Jesus, showing him to be the son and heir of David the king, and of Abraham the father, of the Jewish race, to whom the promises were given. The wise men of the East come from a distance to adore the new-born king of the Jews. The dark suspicion and jealousy of Herod is roused, and foreshadows the future persecution of the Messiah. The flight to Egypt and the return from that land both of refuge and bondage are a fulfillment of the typical history of Israel. John the Baptist completes the mission of prophecy in preparing the way for Christ. After the Messianic inauguration and trial Jesus opens his public ministry with the Sermon on the Mount, which is the counterpart of the Sinaitic legislation, and contains the fundamental law of his kingdom. The keynote of this sermon and of the whole Gospel is that Christ came to fulfil the law and the prophets, which implies both the harmony of the two religions and the transcendent superiority of Christianity. His mission assumes an organized institutional form in the kingdom of heaven which he came to establish in the world. Matthew uses this term no less than thirty-two times, while the other Evangelists and Paul speak of the "kingdom of God". No other Evangelist has so fully developed the idea that Christ and his kingdom are the fulfillment of all the hopes and aspirations of Israel, and so vividly set forth the awful solemnity of the crisis at this turning point in its history.

But while Matthew wrote from the Jewish Christian point of view, he is far from being Judaizing or contracted. He takes the widest range of prophecy. He is the most national and yet the most universal, the most retrospective and yet the most prospective, of the Evangelists. At the very cradle of the infant Jesus he introduces the adoring Magi from the

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far East, as the forerunners of a multitude of believing Gentiles who "shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven;" while "the sons of the kingdom shall be cast forth into the outer darkness." The heathen centurion, and the heathen woman of Canaan exhibit a faith the like of which Jesus did not find in Israel. The Messiah is rejected and persecuted by his own people in Galilee and Judaea. He upbraids Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, wherein his mighty works were done, because they repented not; He sheds tears over Jerusalem because she would not come to Him; He pronounces his woe over the Jewish hierarchy, and utters the fearful prophecies of the destruction of the theocracy. All this is most fully recorded by Matthew, and he most appropriately and sublimely concludes with the command of the universal evangelization of all nations, and the promise of the unbroken presence of Christ with his people to the end of the world.

#### TOPICAL ARRANGEMENT

The mode of arrangement is clear and orderly. It is topical rather than chronological. It far surpasses Mark and Luke in the fullness of the discourses of Christ, while it has to be supplemented from them in regard to the succession of events. Matthew groups together the kindred words and works with special reference to Christ's teaching; hence it was properly called by Papias a collection of the Oracles of the Lord. It is emphatically the didactic Gospel.

The first didactic group is the Sermon on the Mount of Beatitudes, which contains the legislation of the kingdom of Christ and an invitation to the whole people to enter, holding out the richest promises to the poor in spirit and the pure in heart (Matt. 5-7). The second group is the instruction to the disciples in their missionary work (Matt. 10). The third is the collection of the parables on the kingdom of God, illustrating its growth, conflict, value, and consummation (Matt. 13).

The fourth, the denunciation of the Pharisees (Matt. 23), and the fifth, the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world (Matt. 24 and 25).

Between these chief groups are inserted smaller discourses of Christ, on his relation to John the Baptist (11:1-19); the woe on the unrepentant cities of Galilee (11:20-24); the thanksgiving for the revelation to those of a childlike spirit (11:25-27); the invitation to the weary and heavy laden (11:28-30); on the observance of the Sabbath and warning to the Pharisees who were on the way to commit the unpardonable sin by tracing his miracles to Satanic powers (Matt. 12); the attack on the traditions of the elders and the hypocrisy of the Pharisees (Matt. 15 and 16); the prophecy of the founding of the church after the great confession of Peter, with the prediction of his passion as the way to victory (Matt. 16); the discourse on the little children with their lesson of simplicity and humility against the temptations of hierarchical pride; the duty of forgiveness in the kingdom and the parable of the unforgiving servant (Matt. 18); the discourse about divorce, against the Pharisees; the blessing of little children; the warning against the danger of riches; the parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard and the nature of the future rewards (Matt. 19 and 20); the victorious replies of the Lord to the tempting questions of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matt. 22).

These discourses are connected with narratives of the great miracles of Christ and the events in his life. The miracles are likewise grouped together (as in Matt. 8-9), or briefly summed up (as in 4:23-25). The transfiguration (Matt. 17) forms the turning-point between the active and the passive life; it was a manifestation of heaven on earth, an anticipation of Christ's future glory, a pledge of the resurrection, and it fortified Jesus and his three chosen disciples for the coming crisis, which culminated in the crucifixion and ended in the resurrection.

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#### PECULIAR SECTIONS

Matthew has a number of original sections:

1. Ten Discourses of our Lord, namely, the greater part of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7); the thanksgiving for the revelation to babes (11:25-27); the touching invitation to the heavy laden (11:28-30), which is equal to anything in John; the warning against idle words (12:36, 37); the blessing pronounced upon Peter and the prophecy of founding the church (16:17-19); the greater part of the discourse on humility and forgiveness (Matt. 18); the rejection of the Jews (21:43); the denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees (Matt. 23); the description of the final judgment (25:31-46); the great commission and the promise of Christ's presence to the end of time (28:18-20).
2. Ten Parables: the tares; the hidden treasure; the pearl of great price; the draw-net (13:24-50); the unmerciful servant (18:23-35); the laborers in the vineyard (20:1-16); the two sons (21:28-32); the marriage of the king's son (22: 1-14); the ten virgins (25:1-13); the talents (25:14-30).
3. Two Miracles: the cure of two blind men (9:27-31); the stater in the fish's mouth (17:24-27).
4. Facts and Incidents: the adoration of the Magi; the massacre of the innocents; the flight into Egypt; the return from Egypt to Nazareth (all in Matt. 2); the coming of the Pharisees and Sadducees to John's baptism (3:7); Peter's attempt to walk on the sea (14:28-31); the payment of the temple tax (17:24-27); the bargain of Judas, his remorse, and suicide (26:14-16; 27:3-10); the dream of Pilate's wife (27:19); the appearance of departed saints in Jerusalem (27:52); the watch at the sepulcher (27:62-66); the lie of the Sanhedrin and the bribing of the soldiers (28:11-15); the earthquake on the resurrection morning (28:2, a repetition of the shock described in 27:51, and connected with the rolling away of the stone from the sepulcher).

#### THE STYLE

The Style of Matthew is simple, unadorned, calm, dignified, even majestic; less vivid and picturesque than that of Mark; more even and uniform than Luke's, because not dependent on written sources. He is Hebraizing, but less so than Mark, and not so much as Luke 1-2. He omits some minor details which escaped his observation, but which Mark heard from Peter, and which Luke learned from eye-witnesses or found in his fragmentary documents. Among his peculiar expressions, besides the constant use of "kingdom of heaven," is the designation of God as "our heavenly Father," and of Jerusalem as "the holy city" and "the city of the Great King." In the fullness of the teaching of Christ he surpasses all except John. Nothing can be more solemn and impressive than his reports of those words of life and power, which will outlast heaven and earth (24:34). Sentence follows sentence with overwhelming force, like a succession of lightning flashes from the upper world.

#### PATRISTIC NOTICES OF MATTHEW

The first Gospel was well known to the author of the "Didache of the Apostles," who wrote between 80 and 100, and made large use of it, especially the Sermon on the Mount.

The next clear allusion to this Gospel is made in the Epistle of Barnabas, who quotes two passages from the Greek Matthew, one from 22:14: "Many are called, but few chosen," with the significant formula used only of inspired writings, "It is written." This shows clearly that early in the second century, if not before, it was an acknowledged authority in the church. The Gospel of John also indirectly presupposes, by its numerous emissions, the existence of all the Synoptic Gospels.

#### THE HEBREW MATTHEW

Next we hear of a Hebrew Matthew from Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, "a hearer of John and a companion of Polycarp." He collected from apostles and their disciples a variety of apostolic traditions in his "Exposition of

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Oracles of the Lord," in five books. In a fragment of this lost work preserved by Eusebius, he says distinctly that "Matthew composed the oracles [of the Lord] in the Hebrew tongue, and everyone interpreted them as best he could."

Unfortunately the Hebrew Matthew, if it ever existed, has disappeared, and consequently there is much difference of opinion about this famous passage, both as regards the proper meaning of "oracles" and the truth of the whole report.

1. The "oracles" are understood by some to mean only the discourses of our Lord; by others to include also the narrative portions. But in any case the Hebrew Matthew must have been chiefly an orderly collection of discourses. This agrees best with the natural and usual meaning of Logia, and the actual preponderance of the doctrinal element in our canonical Matthew) as compared with our Mark.

2. The report of a Hebrew original has been set aside altogether as a sheer mistake of Papias, who confounded it with the Ebionite "Gospel according to the Hebrews," known to us from a number of fragments. It is said that Papias was a credulous and weak-minded, though pious man. But this does not impair his veracity or invalidate a simple historical notice. It is also said that the universal spread of the Greek language made a Hebrew Gospel superfluous. But the Aramaic was still the vernacular and prevailing language in Palestine (comp. Acts 21:40; 22:2) and in the countries of the Euphrates.

There is an intrinsic probability of a Hebrew Gospel for the early stage of Christianity. And the existence of a Hebrew Matthew rests by no means merely on Papias. It is confirmed by the independent testimonies of most respectable fathers, as Irenaeus, Pantaenus, Origen, Eusebius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, and Jerome.

This Hebrew Matthew must not be identified with the Judaizing "Gospel according to the Hebrews," the best among the apocryphal

Gospels, of which in all thirty-three fragments remain. Jerome and other fathers clearly distinguish the two. The latter was probably an adaptation of the former to the use of the Ebionites and Nazarenes. Truth always precedes heresy, as the genuine coin precedes the counterfeit, and the real portrait the caricature. Cureton and Tregelles maintain that the Curetonian Syriac fragment is virtually a translation of the Hebrew Matthew, and antedates the Peshito version. But Ewald has proven that it is derived from our Greek Matthew.

Papias says that everybody "interpreted" the Hebrew Matthew as well as he could. He refers no doubt to the use of the Gospel in public discourses before Greek hearers, not to a number of written translations of which we know nothing. The past tense (hjrnhvneuse) moreover seems to imply that such necessity existed no longer at the time when he wrote; in other words, that the authentic Greek Matthew had since appeared and superseded the Aramaic predecessor which was probably less complete. Papias accordingly is an indirect witness of the Greek Matthew in his own age; that is, the early part of the second century (about A.D. 130). At all events the Greek Matthew was in public use even before that time, as is evident from the quotations in the Didache, and the Epistle of Barnabas (which were written before 120, probably before 100).

#### THE GREEK MATTHEW.

The Greek Matthew, as we have it now, is not a close translation from the Hebrew and bears the marks of an original composition. This appears from genuine Greek words and phrases to which there is no parallel in Hebrew, as the truly classical "Those wretches he will wretchedly destroy," and from the discrimination in Old Testament quotations which are freely taken from the Septuagint in the course of the narrative, but conformed to the Hebrew when they convey Messianic prophecies, and are introduced by

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the solemn formula: "that there might be fulfilled," or "then was fulfilled."

If then we credit the well nigh unanimous tradition of the ancient church concerning a prior Hebrew Matthew, we must either ascribe the Greek Matthew to some unknown translator who took certain liberties with the original, or, what seems most probable, we must assume that Matthew himself at different periods of his life wrote his Gospel first in Hebrew in Palestine, and afterward in Greek. In doing so, he would not literally translate his own book, but like other historians freely reproduce and improve it. Josephus did the same with his history of the Jewish war, of which only the Greek remains. When the Greek Matthew once was current in the church, it naturally superseded the Hebrew, especially if it was more complete.

Objections are raised to Matthew's authorship of the first canonical Gospel, from real or supposed inaccuracies in the narrative, but they are at best very trifling and easily explained by the fact that Matthew paid most attention to the words of Christ, and probably had a better memory for thoughts than for facts.

But whatever be the view we take of the precise origin of the first canonical Gospel, it was universally received in the ancient church as the work of Matthew. It was our Matthew who is often, though freely, quoted by Justin Martyr as early as A.D. 146 among the "Gospel Memoirs;" it was one of the four Gospels of which his pupil Tatian compiled a connected "Diatessaron;" and it was the only Matthew used by Irenaeus and all the fathers that follow.

### **1.81 Mark.**

#### **LIFE OF MARK**

The second Evangelist combines in his name, as well as in his mission, the Hebrew and the Roman, and is a connecting link between Peter and Paul, but more especially a pupil and companion of the former, so that his Gospel may properly be called the Gospel of

Peter. His original name was John or Johanan (i.e., Jehovah is gracious, Gotthold) his surname was Mark (i.e., Mallet). The surname supplanted the Hebrew name in his later life, as Peter supplanted Simon, and Paul supplanted Saul. The change marked the transition of Christianity from the Jews to the Gentiles. He is frequently mentioned in the Acts and the Epistles.

He was the son of a certain Mary who lived at Jerusalem and offered her house, at great risk no doubt in that critical period of persecution, to the Christian disciples for devotional meetings. Peter repaired to that house after his deliverance from prison (A.D. 44). This accounts for the close intimacy of Mark with Peter; he was probably converted through him, and hence called his spiritual "son" (1 Pet. 5:13). He may have had a superficial acquaintance with Christ; for he is probably identical with that unnamed "young man" who, according to his own report, left his "linen cloth and fled naked" from Gethsemane in the night of betrayal (Mark 14:51). He would hardly have mentioned such a trifling incident, unless it had a special significance for him as the turning-point in his life. Lange ingeniously conjectures that his mother owned the garden of Gethsemane or a house close by.

Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas as their minister on their first great missionary journey; but left them half-way, being discouraged, it seems, by the arduous work, and returned to his mother in Jerusalem. For this reason Paul refused to take him on his next tour, while Barnabas was willing to overlook his temporary weakness (Acts 15:38). There was a "sharp contention" on that occasion between these good men, probably in connection with the more serious collision between Paul and Peter at Antioch (Gal. 2:11 sqq.). Paul was moved by a stern sense of duty; Barnabas by a kindly feeling for his cousin. But the alienation was only temporary. For about ten years afterwards (63) Paul speaks of Mark at Rome as one of his few "fellow-workers unto the kingdom of

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God," who had been "a comfort" to him in his imprisonment; and he commends him to the brethren in Asia Minor on his intended visit (Col. 4:10, 11; Philem. 24). In his last Epistle he charges Timothy to bring Mark with him to Rome on the ground that he was "useful to him for ministering" (2 Tim. 4:11). We find him again in company with Peter at "Baby]on," whether that be on the Euphrates, or, more probably, at Rome (1 Pet. 5:3).

These are the last notices of him in the New Testament. The tradition of the church adds two important facts, that he wrote his Gospel in Rome as the interpreter of Peter, and that afterwards he founded the church of Alexandria. The Coptic patriarch claims to be his successor. The legends of his martyrdom in the eighth year of Nero (this date is given by Jerome) are worthless. In 827 his relics were removed from Egypt to Venice, which built him a magnificent five-domed cathedral on the Place of St. Mark, near the Doge's palace, and chose him with his symbol, the Lion, for the patron saint of the republic.

#### HIS RELATION TO PETER

Though not an apostle, Mark had the best opportunity in his mother's house and his personal connection with Peter, Paul, Barnabas, and other prominent disciples for gathering the most authentic information concerning the gospel history.

The earliest notice of his Gospel we have from Papias of Hierapolis in the first half of the second century. He reports among the primitive traditions which he collected, that "Mark, having become the interpreter of Peter wrote down accurately whatever he remembered, without, however, recording in order what was either said or done by Christ. For neither did he hear the Lord, nor did he follow Him; but afterwards, as I said, [he followed] Peter, who adapted his instructions to the needs [of his hearers], but not in the way of giving a connected account of the Lord's discourses. So then Mark committed no error in thus writing down such details as he remembered; for he made it his one

forethought not to omit or to misrepresent any details that he had heard."

In what sense was Mark an "interpreter" of Peter? Not as the translator of a written Aramaic Gospel of Peter into the Greek, for of such an Aramaic original there is no trace, and Peter (to judge from his Epistles) wrote better Greek; nor as the translator of his discourses into Latin, for we know not whether he understood that language, and it was scarcely needed even in Rome among Jews and Orientals who spoke Greek; nor in the wider sense, as a mere clerk or amanuensis, who wrote down what Peter dictated; but as the literary editor and publisher of the oral Gospel of his spiritual father and teacher. So Mercury was called the interpreter of the gods, because he communicated to mortals the messages of the gods. It is quite probable, however, that Peter sketched down some of the chief events under the first impression, in his vernacular tongue, and that such brief memoirs, if they existed, would naturally be made use of by Mark.

We learn, then, from Papias that Mark wrote his Gospel from the personal reminiscences of Peter's discourses, which were adapted to the immediate wants of his hearers; that it was not complete (especially in the didactic part, as compared with Matthew or John), nor strictly chronological.

Clement of Alexandria informs us that the people of Rome were so much pleased with the preaching of Peter that they requested Mark, his attendant, to put it down in writing, which Peter neither encouraged nor hindered. Other ancient fathers emphasize the close intimacy of Mark with Peter, and call his Gospel the Gospel of Peter.

#### THE GOSPEL

This tradition is confirmed by the book: it is derived from the apostolic preaching of Peter, but is the briefest and so far the least complete of all the Gospels, yet replete with significant details. It reflects the sanguine and impulsive temperament, rapid movement,

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and vigorous action of Peter. In this respect its favorite particle "straightway" is exceedingly characteristic. The break-down of Mark in Pamphylia, which provoked the censure of Paul, has a parallel in the denial and inconsistency of Peter; but, like him, he soon rallied, was ready to accompany Paul on his next mission, and persevered faithfully to the end.

He betrays, by omissions and additions, the direct influence of Peter. He informs us that the house of Peter was "the house of Simon and Andrew" (Mark 1:29). He begins the public ministry of Christ with the calling of these two brothers (1:16) and ends the undoubted part of the Gospel with a message to Peter (16:7), and the supplement almost in the very words of Peter. He tells us that Peter on the Mount of Transfiguration, when he proposed to erect three tabernacles, "knew not what to say" (9:6). He gives the most minute account of Peter's denial, and—alone among the Evangelists—records the fact that he warmed himself "in the light" of the fire so that he could be distinctly seen (14:54), and that the cock crew twice, giving him a second warning (14:72). No one would be more likely to remember and report the fact as a stimulus to humility and gratitude than Peter himself.

On the other hand, Mark omits the laudatory words of Jesus to Peter: "Thou art Rock, and upon this rock I will build my church;" while yet he records the succeeding rebuke: "Get thee behind me, Satan." The humility of the apostle, who himself warns so earnestly against the hierarchical abuse of the former passage, offers the most natural explanation of this conspicuous omission. "It is likely," says Eusebius, "that Peter maintained silence on these points; hence the silence of Mark."

#### CHARACTER AND AIM OF MARK

The second Gospel was—according to the unanimous voice of the ancient church, which is sustained by internal evidence—written at Rome and primarily for Roman readers,

probably before the death of Peter, at all events before the destruction of Jerusalem.

It is a faithful record of Peter's preaching, which Mark must have heard again and again. It is an historical sermon on the text of Peter when addressing the Roman soldier Cornelius: "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." It omits the history of the infancy, and rushes at once into the public ministry of our Lord, beginning, like Peter, with the baptism of John, and ending with the ascension. It represents Christ in the fullness of his living energy, as the Son of God and the mighty wonder-worker who excited amazement and carried the people irresistibly before him as a spiritual conqueror. This aspect would most impress the martial mind of the Romans, who were born to conquer and to rule. The teacher is lost in the founder of a kingdom. The heroic element prevails over the prophetic. The victory over Satanic powers in the healing of demoniacs is made very prominent. It is the gospel of divine force manifested in Christ. The symbol of the lion is not inappropriate to the Evangelist who describes Jesus as the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

Mark gives us a Gospel of facts, while Matthew's is a Gospel of divine oracles. He reports few discourses, but many miracles. He unrolls the short public life of our Lord in a series of brief life-pictures in rapid succession. He takes no time to explain and to reveal the inside. He dwells on the outward aspect of that wonderful personality as it struck the multitude. Compared with Matthew and especially with John, he is superficial, but not on that account incorrect or less useful and necessary. He takes the theocratic view of Christ, like Matthew; while Luke and John take the universal view; but while Matthew for his Jewish readers begins with the descent of Christ from David the King and often directs attention to the fulfillment of prophecy, Mark, writing for Gentiles, begins with "the Son of God" in his

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independent personality. He rarely quotes prophecy; but, on the other hand, he translates for his Roman readers Aramaic words and Jewish customs and opinions. He exhibits the Son of God in his mighty power and expects the reader to submit to his authority.

Two miracles are peculiar to him, the healing of the deaf and dumb man in Decapolis, which astonished the people "beyond measure" and made them exclaim: "He hath done all things well: he maketh even the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak" (Mark 7:31-37). The other miracle is a remarkable specimen of a gradual cure, the healing of the blind man at Bethsaida, who upon the first touch of Christ saw the men around him walking, but indistinctly as trees, and then after the second laying on of hands upon his eyes "saw all things clearly" (8:22-26). He omits important parables, but alone gives the interesting parable of the seed growing secretly and bearing first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear (4:26-29).

It is an interesting feature to which Dr. Lange first has directed attention, that Mark lays emphasis on the periods of pause and rest which "rhythmically intervene between the several great victories achieved by Christ." He came out from his obscure abode in Nazareth; each fresh advance in his public life is preceded by a retirement, and each retirement is followed by a new and greater victory. The contrast between the contemplative rest and the vigorous action is striking and explains the overpowering effect by revealing its secret spring in the communion with God and with himself. Thus we have after his baptism a retirement to the wilderness in Judaea before he preached in Galilee (1:12); a retirement to the ship (3:7); to the desert on the eastern shore of the lake of Galilee (6:31); to a mountain (6:46); to the border land of Tyre and Sidon (7:24); to Decapolis (7:31); to a high mountain (9:2); to Bethany (11:1); to Gethsemane (14:34); his rest in the grave before the resurrection; and his withdrawal from the world and his

reappearance in the victories of the gospel preached by his disciples. "The ascension of the Lord forms his last withdrawal, which is to be followed by his final onset and absolute victory."

#### DOCTRINAL POSITION

Mark has no distinct doctrinal type, but is catholic, irenic, nonsectarian, and neutral as regards the party questions within the apostolic church. But this is not the result of calculation or of a tendency to obliterate and conciliate existing differences. Mark simply represents the primitive form of Christianity itself before the circumcision controversy broke out which occasioned the apostolic conference at Jerusalem twenty years after the founding of the church. His Gospel is Petrine without being anti-Pauline, and Pauline without being anti-Petrine. Its doctrinal tone is the same as that of the sermons of Peter in the Acts. It is thoroughly practical. Its preaches Christianity, not theology.

The same is true of the other Gospels, with this difference, however, that Matthew has a special reference to Jewish, Luke to Gentile readers, and that both make their selection accordingly under the guidance of the Spirit and in accordance with their peculiar charisma and aim, but without altering or coloring the facts. Mark stands properly between them just as Peter stood between James and Paul.

#### THE STYLE

The style of Mark is not classical, inelegant, provincial, homely, poor and repetitious in vocabulary, but original, fresh, and picturesque, and enlivened by interesting touches and flickers..

He was a stranger to the arts of rhetoric and unskilled in literary composition, but an attentive listener, a close observer, and faithful recorder of actual events. He is strongly Hebraizing, and uses often the Hebrew and, but seldom the argumentative for. He inserts a number of Latin words,

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though most of these occur also in Matthew and Luke, and in the Talmud. He uses the particle "forthwith" or "straightway" more frequently than all the other Evangelists combined. It is his pet word, and well expresses his haste and rapid transition from event to event, from conquest to conquest. He quotes names and phrases in the original Aramaic, as "Abba," "Boanerges," "Talitha kum," "Corban," "Ephphathah," and "Eloi, Eloi," with a Greek translation. He is fond of the historical present, of the direct instead of the indirect mode of speech, of pictorial participles, and of affectionate diminutives. He observes time and place of important events. He has a number of peculiar expressions not found elsewhere in the New Testament.

#### CHARACTERISTIC DETAILS

Mark inserts many delicate tints and interesting incidents of persons and events which he must have heard from primitive witnesses. They are not the touches of fancy or the reflections of an historian, but the reminiscences of the first impressions. They occur in every chapter. He makes some little contribution to almost every narrative he has in common with Matthew and Luke. He notices the overpowering impression of awe and wonder, joy and delight, which the words and miracles of Jesus and his very appearance made upon the people and the disciples; the actions of the multitude as they were rushing and thronging and pressing upon Him that He might touch and heal them, so that there was scarcely standing room, or time to eat. On one occasion his kinsmen were about forcibly to remove Him from the throng. He directs attention to the human emotions and passions of our Lord, how he was stirred by pity, wonder, grief, anger and indignation. He notices his attitudes, looks and gestures, his sleep and hunger.

He informs us that Jesus, "looking upon" the rich young ruler, "loved him," and that the ruler's "countenance fell" when he was told to sell all he had and to follow Jesus. Mark, or

Peter rather, must have watched the eye of our Lord and read in his face the expression of special interest in that man who notwithstanding his self-righteousness and worldliness had some lovely qualities and was not very far from the kingdom.

The cure of the demoniac and epileptic at the foot of the mount of transfiguration is narrated with greater dramatic vividness by Mark than by the other Synoptists. He supplies the touching conversation of Jesus with the father of the sufferer, which drew out his weak and struggling faith with the earnest prayer for strong and victorious faith: "I believe; help Thou mine unbelief." We can imagine how eagerly Peter, the confessor, caught this prayer, and how often he repeated it in his preaching, mindful of his own weakness and trials.

All the Synoptists relate on two distinct occasions Christ's love for little children, but Mark alone tells us that He "took little children into his arms, and laid his hands upon them."

Many minor details not found in the other Gospels, however insignificant in themselves, are yet most significant as marks of the autopticity of the narrator (Peter). Such are the notices that Jesus entered the house of "Simon and Andrew, with James and John" (Mark 1:29); that the Pharisees took counsel "with the Herodians" (3:6); that the raiment of Jesus at the transfiguration became exceeding white as snow "so as no fuller on earth can whiten them" (9:3); that blind Bartimaeus when called, "casting away his garment, leaped up" (10:50), and came to Jesus; that "Peter and James and John and Andrew asked him privately" on the Mount of Olives about the coming events (13:3); that the five thousand sat down "in ranks, by hundreds and fifties" (6:40); that the Simon who carried the cross of Christ (15:21) was a "Cyrenian" and "the father of Alexander and Rufus" (no doubt, two well-known disciples, perhaps at Rome, comp. Rom. 16:13).

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We may add, as peculiar to Mark and "betraying" Peter, the designation of Christ as "the carpenter" (Mark 6:3); the name of the blind beggar at Jericho, "Bartimaeus" (10:46); the "cushion" in the boat on which Jesus slept (4:38); the "green grass" on the hill side in spring time (4:39); the "one loaf" in the ship (8:14); the colt "tied at the door without in the open street" (11:4); the address to the daughter of Jairus in her mother tongue (5:41); the bilingual "Abba, Father," in the prayer at Gethsemane (14:36; comp. Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6).

The natural conclusion from all these peculiarities is that Mark's Gospel, far from being an extract from Matthew or Luke or both, as formerly held, is a thoroughly independent and original work, as has been proven by minute investigations of critics of different schools and aims. It is in all its essential parts a fresh, life-like, and trustworthy record of the persons and events of the gospel history from the lips of honest old Peter and from the pen of his constant attendant and pupil. Jerome hit it in the fourth century, and unbiased critics in the nineteenth century confirm it: Peter was the narrator, Mark the writer, of the second Gospel.

Some have gone further and maintain that Mark, "the interpreter of Peter," simply translated a Hebrew Gospel of his teacher; but tradition knows nothing of a Hebrew Peter, while it speaks of a Hebrew Matthew; and a book is called after its author, not after its translator. It is enough to say Peter was the preacher, Mark the reporter and editor.

The bearing of this fact upon the reliability of the Synoptic record of the life of Christ is self-evident. It leaves no room for the mythical or legendary hypothesis.

#### INTEGRITY OF THE GOSPEL

The Gospel closes (Mark 16:9-20) with a rapid sketch of the wonders of the resurrection and ascension, and the continued manifestations of power that attend the messengers of Christ in preaching

the gospel to the whole creation. This close is upon the whole characteristic of Mark and presents the gospel as a divine power pervading and transforming the world, but it contains some peculiar features, namely: (1) one of the three distinct narratives of Christ's ascension (16:19, "he was received up into heaven;" the other two being those of Luke 24:51 and Acts 1:9-11), with the additional statement that he "sat down at the right hand of God" (comp. the similar statement, 1 Pet. 3:22) (2) an emphatic declaration of the necessity of baptism for salvation ("he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"), with the negative clause that unbelief (i.e., the rejection of the gospel offer of salvation) condemns ("he that disbelieves shall be condemned"); (3) the fact that the apostles disbelieved the report of Mary Magdalene until the risen Lord appeared to them personally (Mark 16:11-14; but John intimates the same, John 20:8, 9, especially in regard to Thomas, 20:25, and Matthew mentions that some doubted, Matt. 28:17; comp. Luke 24:37-41); (4) an authoritative promise of supernatural powers and signs which shall accompany the believers (Mark 16:17, 18). Among these is mentioned the Pentecostal glossolalia under the unique name of speaking with new tongues.

The genuineness of this closing section is hotly contested, and presents one of the most difficult problems of textual criticism. The arguments are almost equally strong on both sides, but although the section cannot be proven to be a part of the original Gospel, it seems clear: (1) that it belongs to primitive tradition (like the disputed section of the adulteress in John 8); and (2) that Mark cannot have closed his Gospel with Mark 16:8 (gavr) without intending a more appropriate conclusion. The result does not affect the character and credibility of the Gospel. The section may be authentic or correct in its statements, without being genuine or written by Mark. There is nothing in it which, properly understood, does not harmonize with apostolic teaching.

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NOTE ON THE DISPUTED CLOSE OF MARK, 16:9–20.

I. Reasons against the genuineness:

1. The section is wanting altogether in the two oldest and most valuable uncial manuscripts, the Sinaitic (a ) and the Vatican (B). The latter, it is true, after ending the Gospel with Mark 16:8 and the subscription KATA MAPKON, leaves the remaining third column blank, which is sufficient space for the twelve verses. Much account is made of this fact by Drs. Burgon and Scrivener; but in the same MS. I find, on examination of the facsimile edition, blank spaces from a few lines up to two-thirds and three-fourths of a column, at the end of Matthew, John, Acts, 1 Pet. (fol. 200), 1 John (fol. 208), Jude (fol. 210), Rom. (fol. 227), Eph. (fol. 262), Col. (fol. 272). In the Old Testament of B, as Dr. Abbot has first noted (in 1872), there are two blank columns at the end of Nehemiah, and a blank column and a half at the end of Tobit. In any case the omission indicates an objection of the copyist of B to the section, or its absence in the earlier manuscript he used.

I add the following private note from Dr. Abbot; "In the Alexandrian MS. a column and a third are left blank at the end of Mark, half a page at the end of John, and a whole page at the end of the Pauline Epistles. (Contrast the ending of Matthew and Acts.) In the Old Testament, note especially in this MS. Leviticus, Isaiah, and the Ep. of Jeremiah, at the end of each of which half a page or more is left blank; contrast Jeremiah, Baruch, Lamentations. There are similar blanks at the end of Ruth, 2 Samuel, and Daniel, but the last leaf of those books ends a quaternion or quire in the MS. In the Sinaitic MS. more than two columns with the whole following page are left blank at the end of the Pauline Epistles, though the two next leaves belong to the same quaternion; so at the end of the Acts a column and two-thirds with the whole of the following page; and at the end of Barnabas a column and a half. These examples show that the matter in question depended largely on

the whim of the copyist; and that we can not infer with confidence that the scribe of B knew of any other ending of the Gospel."

There is also a shorter conclusion, unquestionably spurious, which in L and several MSS. of the Ethiopic version immediately follows Mark 16:8, and appears also in the margin of 274, the Harclean Syriac, and the best Coptic MS. of the Gospel, while in k of the Old Latin it takes the place of the longer ending. For details, see Westcott and Hort, II., Append., pp. 30, 38, 44 sq.

2. Eusebius and Jerome state expressly that the section was wanting in almost all the Greek copies of the Gospels. It was not in the copy used by Victor of Antioch. There is also negative patristic evidence against it, particularly strong in the case of Cyril of Jerusalem, Tertullian, and Cyprian, who had special occasion to quote it (see Westcott and Hort, II., Append., pp. 30–38). Jerome's statement, however, is weakened by the fact that he seems to depend upon Eusebius, and that he himself translated the passage in his Vulgate.

3. It is 'wanting in the important MS. k representing the African text of the Old Latin version, which has a different conclusion (like that in L), also in some of the best MSS. of the Armenian version, while in others it follows the usual subscription. It is also wanting in an unpublished Arabic version (made from the Greek) in the Vatican Library, which is likewise noteworthy for reading ο{ in 1 Tim. 3:16.

4. The way in which the section begins, and in which it refers to Mary Magdalene, give it the air of a conclusion derived from some extraneous source. It does not record the fulfillment of the promise in Mark 16:7. It has many words or phrases (e.g., *poreuomai* used three times) not elsewhere found in Mark, which strengthen the impression that we are dealing with a different writer, and it lacks Mark's usual graphic detail. But the argument from difference of style and

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vocabulary has been overstrained, and can not be regarded as in itself decisive.

II. Arguments in favor of the genuineness:

1. The section is found in most of the uncial MSS., A C D C G D S, in all the late uncials (in L as a secondary reading), and in all the cursive MSS., including 1, 33, 69, etc.; though a number of the cursives either mark it with an asterisk or note its omission in older copies. Hence the statements of Eusebius and Jerome seem to need some qualification. In MSS 22 (as Dr. Burgon has first pointed out) the liturgical word *tevlo* denoting the end of a reading lesson, is inserted after both Mark 16:8 and 16:20, while no such word is placed at the end of the other Gospels. This shows that there were two endings of Mark in different copies.

2. Also in most of the ancient versions, the Itala (with the exception of "k," or the codex Bobbiensis, used by Columban), the Vulgate, the Curetonian Syriac (last part), the Peshito, the Philoxenian, the Coptic, the Gothic (first part), and the Aethiopic, but in several MSS. only after the spurious shorter conclusion. Of these versions the Itala, the Curetonian and Peshito Syriac, and the Coptic, are older than any of our Greek codices, but the MSS. of the Coptic are not older than the twelfth or tenth century, and may have undergone changes as well as the Greek MSS.; and the MSS. of the Ethiopic are all modern. The best MSS. of the old Latin are mutilated here. The only extant fragment of Mark in the Curetonian Syriac is 16:17–20, so that we cannot tell whether Mark 16:9–20 immediately followed 16:8, or appeared as they do in cod. L. But Aphraates quotes it.

3. In all the existing Greek and Syriac lectionaries or evangeliaries and synaxaries, as far as examined, which contain the Scripture reading lessons for the churches. Dr. Burgon lays great stress on their testimony (ch. X.), but he overrates their antiquity. The lection-systems cannot be traced beyond the middle of the fourth century when great liturgical changes took

place. At that time the disputed verses were widely circulated and eagerly seized as a suitable resurrection and ascension lesson.

4. Irenaeus of Lyons, in the second half of the second century, long before Eusebius, expressly quotes Mark 16:19 as a part of the Gospel of Mark (Adv. Haer., III. 10, 6). The still earlier testimony of Justin Martyr (Apol., I. 45) is doubtful (The quotation of Mark 16:17 and 18 in lib. viii., c. 1 of the Apostolic Constitutions is wrongly ascribed to Hippolytus.) Marinus, Macarius Magnes (or at least the heathen writer whom he cites), Didymus, Chrysostom (?), Epiphanius, Nestorius, the apocryphal Gesta Pilati, Ambrose, Augustin, and other later fathers quote from the section.

5. A strong intrinsic argument is derived from the fact that Mark cannot intentionally have concluded his Gospel with the words *ejfobou'nto gavr* (Mark 16:8). He must either have himself written the last verses or some other conclusion, which was accidentally lost before the book was multiplied by transcription; or he was unexpectedly prevented from finishing his book, and the conclusion was supplied by a friendly hand from oral tradition or some written source.

In view of these facts the critics and exegetes are very much divided. The passage is defended as genuine by Simon, Mill, Bengel, Storr, Matthaei, Hug, Schleiermacher, De Wette, Bleek, Olshausen, Lange, Ebrard, Hilgenfeld, Broadus ("Bapt. Quarterly," Philad., 1869), Burgon (1871), Scrivener, Wordsworth, McClellan, Cook, Morison (1882). It is rejected or questioned by the critical editors, Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott and Hort (though retained by all in the text with or without brackets), and by such critics and Commentators as Fritzsche, Credner, Reuss, Wieseler, Holtzmann, Keim, Scholten, Klostermann, Ewald, Meyer, Weiss, Norton, Davidson. Some of these opponents, however, while denying the composition of the section by Mark, regard the contents as a part of the

apostolic tradition. Michelsen surrenders only 16:9–14, and saves 16:15–20. Ewald and Holtzmann conjecture the original conclusion from 16:9, 10 and 16–20; Volkmar invents one from elements of all the Synoptists.

III. Solutions of the problem. All mere conjectures; certainty is impossible in this case.

1. Mark himself added the section in a later edition, issued perhaps in Alexandria, having been interrupted in Rome just as he came to 16:8, either by Peter's imprisonment and martyrdom, or by sickness, or some accident. Incomplete copies got into circulation before he was able to finish the book. So Michaelis, Hug, and others.

2. The original conclusion of Mark was lost by some accident, most probably from the original autograph (where it may have occupied a separate leaf), and the present paragraph was substituted by an anonymous editor or collector in the second century. So Griesbach, Schulthess, David Schulz.

3. Luke wrote the section. So Hitzig (Johannes Marcus, p. 187).

4. Godet (in his Com. on Luke, p. 8 and p. 513, Engl. transl.) modifies this hypothesis by assuming that a third hand supplied the close, partly from Luke's Gospel, which had appeared in the mean time, and partly (Mark 16:17, 18) from another source. He supposes that Mark was interrupted by the unexpected outbreak of the Neronian persecution in 64 and precipitously fled from the capital, leaving his unfinished Gospel behind, which was afterward completed when Luke's Gospel appeared. In this way Godet accounts for the fact that up to Mark 16:8 Luke had no influence on Mark, while such influence is apparent in the concluding section.

5. It was the end of one of the lost Gospel fragments used by Luke 1:1, and appended to Mark's by the last redactor. Ewald.

6. The section is from the pen of Mark, but was purposely omitted by some scribe in the third century from hierarchical prejudice,

because it represents the apostles in an unfavorable light after the resurrection, so that the Lord "upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart" (Mark 16:14). Lange (Leben Jesu, I. 166). Unlikely.

7. The passage is genuine, but was omitted in some valuable copy by a misunderstanding of the word *tevlo*" which often is found after Mark 16:8 in cursives. So Burgon. "According to the Western order," he says (in the "Quarterly Review" for Oct., 1881), "S. Mark occupies the last place. From the earliest period it had been customary to write *tevlo*" (THE END) after 16:8, in token that there a famous ecclesiastical lection comes to a close. Let the last leaf of one very ancient archetypal copy have begun at 16:9, and let that last leaf have perished;—and all is plain. A faithful copyist will have ended the Gospel perforce—as B and a have done—at S. Mark 16:8." But this liturgical mark is not old enough to explain the omission in a, B, and the MSS. of Eusebius and Jerome; and a reading lesson would close as abruptly with *gavr* as the Gospel itself.

8. The passage cannot claim any apostolic authority; but it is doubtless founded on some tradition of the apostolic age. Its authorship and precise date must remain unknown, but it is apparently older than the time when the canonical Gospels were generally received; for although it has points of contact with them all, it contains no attempt to harmonize their various representations of the course of events. So Dr. Hort (II., Appendix, 51). A similar view was held by Dean Alford.

Lachmann gives the disputed section, according to his principle to furnish the text as found in the fourth century, but did not consider it genuine (see his article in "Studien und Kritiken" for 1830, p. 843). Tischendorf and Tregelles set the twelve verses apart. Alford incloses them in single brackets, Westcott and Hort in double brackets, as an early interpolation; the Revised Version of 1881 retains them with a marginal note, and with a space between Mark 16:8 and 9. Dean

Burgon ("Quarterly Rev." for Oct., 1881) holds this note of the Revision (which simply states an acknowledged fact) to be "the gravest blot of all," and triumphantly refers the critical editors and Revisionists to his "separate treatise extending over 300 pages, which for the best of reasons has never yet been answered," and in which he has "demonstrated," as he assures us, that the last twelve verses in Mark are "as trustworthy as any other verses which can be named." The infallible organ in the Vatican seems to have a formidable rival in Chichester, but they are in irreconcilable conflict on the true reading of the angelic anthem (Luke 2:14): the Pope chanting with the Vulgate the genitive (eujdokiva", bonae voluntatis), the Dean, in the same article, denouncing this as a "grievous perversion of the truth of Scripture," and holding the evidence for the nominative (eujdokiva) to be "absolutely decisive," as if the combined testimony of a\* A B D, Irenaeus, Origen (lat.), Jerome, all the Latin MSS., and the Latin Gloria in Excelsis were of no account, as compared with his judgment or preference.

### 1.82 Luke.

#### CRITICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL

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JAMES SMITH (of Jordanhill, d. 1867): Dissertation on the Life and Writings of St. Luke, prefixed to his Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul (1848), 4th ed., revised by Walter E. Smith, London, 1880 (pp. 293). A most important monograph, especially for the historical accuracy and credibility of the Acts, by an expert in navigation and an able scholar.

E. RENAN: Les Évangiles. Paris, 1877. Ch. XIX, pp. 435-448.

TH. KEIM: Aus dem Urchristenthum. Zürich, 1878, Josephus im N. T., pp. 1-27. An

unsuccessful attempt to prove that Luke used Josephus in his chronological statement, Luke 3:1, 2. Keim assumes that the third Gospel was written after the "Jewish war" of Josephus (about 75-78), and possibly after his "Antiquities" (A.D. 94), though in his Geschichte Jesu (I. 71) he assigns the composition of Luke to A.D. 90.

SCHOLTEN: Das Paulinische Evangelium, transl. from the Dutch by Redepenning. Elberf., 1881.

The Ancient Testimonies on the Genuineness of Luke, see in CHARTERIS (Kirchhofer): Canonicity, Edinb., 1880, pp. 154-166.

On the relation of Luke to Marcion, see especially Volkmar: Das Evangelium Marcions, Leipz., 1852, and SANDAY: The Gospels in the Second Century, London, 1876 (and his article in the "Fortnightly Review" for June, 1875).

#### EXEGETICAL.

Commentaries by ORIGEN (IN JEROME'S LATIN TRANSLATION, WITH A FEW GREEK FRAGMENTS), EUSEBIUS (FRAGMENTS), CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA (SYRIAC VERSION WITH TRANSLATION, ED. BY DEAN SMITH, OXF., 1858 AND 1859), EUTHYMIUS ZIGABENUS, THEOPHYLACT.—MODERN COM.: BORNEMANN (Scholia in Luc. Ev., 1830), DE WETTE (Mark and Luke, 3d ed., 1846), MEYER (Mark and Luke, 6th ed., revised by B. WEISS, 1878), JAMES THOMSON (EDINB., 1851, 3 VOLS.), J. J. VAN OOSTERZEE (IN LANGE, 3D ED., 1867, ENGL. ED. BY SCHAFF AND STARBUCK, N. Y., 1866), FR. GODET (ONE OF THE VERY BEST, 2D FRENCH ED., 1870, ENGL. TRANSL. BY SHALDERS AND CUSIN, EDINB., 1875, 2 VOLS., REPRINTED IN N. Y., 1881), BISHOP W. B. JONES (in Speaker's Com., Lond. and N. Y., 1878), E. H. PLUMPTRE (in Bp. Ellicott's Com. for English Readers, Lond., 1879), FREDERICH W. FARRAR (CAMBRIDGE, 1880), MATTHEW B. RIDDLE (1882).

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LIFE OF LUKE.

As Mark is inseparably associated with Peter, so is Luke with Paul. There was, in both cases, a foreordained correspondence and congeniality between the apostle and the historian or co-laborer. We find such holy and useful friendships in the great formative epochs of the church, notably so in the time of the Reformation, between Luther and Melancthon, Zwingli and Oecolampadius, Calvin and Beza, Cranmer, Latimer and Ridley; and at a later period between the two Wesleys and Whitefield. Mark, the Hebrew Roman "interpreter" of the Galilean fisherman, gave us the shortest, freshest, but least elegant and literary of the Gospels; Luke, the educated Greek, "the beloved physician," and faithful companion of Saul of Tarsus, composed the longest and most literary Gospel, and connected it with the great events in secular history under the reigns of Augustus and his successors. If the former was called the Gospel of Peter by the ancients, the latter, in a less direct sense, may be called the Gospel of Paul, for its agreement in spirit with the teaching of the Apostle of the Gentiles. In their accounts of the institution of the Lord's Supper there is even a verbal agreement which points to the same source of information. No doubt there was frequent conference between the two, but no allusion is made to each other's writings, which tends to prove that they were composed independently during the same period, or not far apart.

Luke nowhere mentions his name in the two books which are by the unanimous consent of antiquity ascribed to him, and bear all the marks of the same authorship; but he is modestly concealed under the "we" of a great portion of the Acts, which is but a continuation of the third Gospel. He is honorably and affectionately mentioned three times by Paul during his imprisonment, as "the beloved physician" (Col. 4:14), as one of his "fellow-laborers" (Philem. 24), and as the most faithful friend who remained with him

when friend after friend had deserted him (2 Tim. 4:11). His medical profession, although carried on frequently by superior slaves, implies some degree of education and accounts for the accuracy of his medical terms and description of diseases. It gave him access to many families of social position, especially in the East, where physicians are rare. It made him all the more useful to Paul in the infirmities of his flesh and his exhausting labors.

He was a Gentile by birth, though he may have become a proselyte of the gate. His nationality and antecedents are unknown. He was probably a Syrian of Antioch, and one of the earliest converts in that mother church of Gentile Christianity. This conjecture is confirmed by the fact that he gives us much information about the church in Antioch (Acts 11:19-30; 13:1-3; 15:1-3, 22-35), that he traces the origin of the name "Christians" to that city (11:19), and that in enumerating the seven deacons of Jerusalem he informs us of the Antiochian origin of Nicolas (Acts 6:5), without mentioning the nationality of any of the others.

We meet Luke first as a companion of Paul at Troas, when, after the Macedonian call, "Come over and help us," he was about to carry the gospel to Greece on his second great missionary tour. For from that important epoch Luke uses the first personal pronoun in the plural: "When he [Paul] had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them" (Acts 16:10). He accompanied him to Philippi and seems to have remained there after the departure of Paul and Silas for Corinth (A.D. 51), in charge of the infant church; for the "we" is suddenly replaced by "they" (17:1). Seven years later (A.D. 58) he joined the apostle again, when he passed through Philippi on his last journey to Jerusalem, stopping a week at Troas (Acts 20:5, 6); for from that moment Luke resumes the "we" of the narrative. He was with Paul or near him at Jerusalem and two years at Caesarea, accompanied him on his perilous

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voyage to Rome, of which he gives a most accurate account, and remained with him to the end of his first Roman captivity, with which he closes his record (A.D. 63). He may however, have been temporarily absent on mission work during the four years of Paul's imprisonment. Whether he accompanied him on his intended visit to Spain and to the East, after the year 63, we do not know. The last allusion to him is the word of Paul when on the point of martyrdom: "Only Luke is with me" (2 Tim. 4:11).

The Bible leaves Luke at the height of his usefulness in the best company, with Paul preaching the gospel in the metropolis of the world.

Post-apostolic tradition, always far below the healthy and certain tone of the New Testament, mostly vague and often contradictory, never reliable, adds that he lived to the age of eighty-four, labored in several countries, was a painter of portraits of Jesus, of the Virgin, and the apostles, and that he was crucified on an olive-tree at Elaea in Greece. His real or supposed remains, together with those of Andrew the apostle, were transferred from Patrae in Achaia to the Church of the Apostles in Constantinople.

The symbolic poetry of the Church assigns to him the sacrificial ox; but the symbol of man is more appropriate; for his Gospel is par excellence the Gospel of the Son of Man.

#### SOURCES OF INFORMATION.

According to his own confession in the preface, Luke was no eye-witness of the gospel history, but derived his information from oral reports of primitive disciples, and from numerous fragmentary documents then already in circulation. He wrote the Gospel from what he had heard and read, the Acts from, what he had seen and heard. He traced the origin of Christianity "accurately from the beginning."

His opportunities were the very best. He visited the principal apostolic churches between Jerusalem and Rome, and came in

personal contact with the founders and leaders. He met Peter, Mark, and Barnabas at Antioch, James and his elders at Jerusalem (on Paul's last visit) Philip and his daughters at Caesarea, the early converts in Greece and Rome; and he enjoyed, besides, the benefit of all the information which Paul himself had received by revelation or collected from personal intercourse with his fellow-apostles and other primitive disciples. The sources for the history of the infancy were Jewish-Christian and Aramaean (hence the strongly Hebraizing coloring of Luke 1-2); his information of the activity of Christ in Samaria was probably derived from Philip, who labored there as an evangelist and afterwards in Caesarea. But a man of Luke's historic instinct and conscientiousness would be led to visit also in person the localities in Galilee which are immortalized by the ministry of Christ. From Jerusalem or Caesarea he could reach them all in three or four days.

The question whether Luke also used one or both of the other Synoptic Gospels has already been discussed in a previous section. It is improbable that he included them among his evidently fragmentary sources alluded to in the preface. It is certain that he had no knowledge of our Greek Matthew; on the use of a lost Hebrew Matthew and of Mark the opinion of good scholars is divided, but the resemblance with Mark, though very striking in some sections, is not of such a character that it cannot as well, and even better, be explained from prior oral tradition or autoptical memoirs, especially if we consider that the resemblances are neutralized by unaccountable differences and omissions. The matter is not helped by a reference to a proto-Mark, either Hebrew or Greek, of which we know nothing.

Luke has a great deal of original and most valuable matter, which proves his independence and the variety of his sources. He adds much to our knowledge of the Saviour, and surpasses Matthew and Mark in fullness, accuracy, and chronological order—

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three points which, with all modesty, he claims to have aimed at in his preface. Sometimes he gives special fitness and beauty to a word of Christ by inserting it in its proper place in the narrative, and connecting it with a particular occasion. But there are some exceptions, where Matthew is fuller, and where Mark is more chronological. Considering the fact that about thirty years had elapsed since the occurrence of the events, we need not wonder that some facts and words were dislocated, and that Luke, with all his honest zeal, did not always succeed in giving the original order.

The peculiar sections of Luke are in keeping with the rest. They have not the most remote affinity with apocryphal marvels and fables, nor even with the orthodox traditions and legends of the post-apostolic age, but are in full harmony with the picture of Christ as it shines from the other Gospels and from the Epistles. His accuracy has been put to the severest test, especially in the Acts, where he frequently alludes to secular rulers and events; but while a few chronological difficulties, as that of the census of Quirinius, are not yet satisfactorily removed, he has upon the whole, even in minute particulars, been proven to be a faithful, reliable, and well informed historian.

He is the proper father of Christian church history, and a model well worthy of imitation for his study of the sources, his conscientious accuracy, his modesty and his lofty aim to instruct and confirm in the truth.

#### DEDICATION AND OBJECT

The third Gospel, as well as the Acts of the Apostles, is dedicated to a certain Theophilus (i.e., Friend of God), a man of social distinction, perhaps in the service of the government, as appears from his title "honorable" or "most noble." He was either a convert or at least a catechumen in preparation for church membership, and willing to become sponsor and patron of these books. The custom of dedicating books to princes and rich friends of literature was

formerly very frequent, and has not died out yet. As to his race and residence we can only conjecture that Theophilus was a Greek of Antioch, where Luke, himself probably an Antiochian, may have previously known him either as his freedman or physician. The pseudo-Clementine Recognitions mention a certain nobleman of that name at Antioch who was converted by Peter and changed his palace into a church and residence of the apostle.

The object of Luke was to confirm Theophilus and through him all his readers in the faith in which he had already been orally instructed, and to lead him to the conviction of the irrefragable certainty of the facts on which Christianity rests.

Luke wrote for Gentile Christians, especially Greeks, as Matthew wrote for Jews, Mark for Romans, John for advanced believers without distinction of nationality. He briefly explains for Gentile readers the position of Palestinian towns, as Nazareth, Capernaum, Arimathea, and the distance of Mount Olivet and Emmaus from Jerusalem. He does not, like Matthew, look back to the past and point out the fulfillment of ancient prophecy with a view to prove that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah, but takes a universal view of Christ as the Saviour of all men and fulfiller of the aspirations of every human heart. He brings him in contact with the events of secular history in the vast empire of Augustus, and with the whole human race by tracing his ancestry back to Adam.

These features would suit Gentile readers generally, Romans as well as Greeks. But the long residence of Luke in Greece, and the ancient tradition that he labored and died there, give strength to the view that he had before his mind chiefly readers of that country. According to Jerome the Gospel was written (completed) in Achaia and Boeotia. The whole book is undoubtedly admirably suited to Greek taste. It at once captivates the refined Hellenic ear by a historic prologue of classic construction, resembling the

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prologues of Herodotus and Thucydides. It is not without interest to compare them.

LUKE begins: "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled 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 traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most noble Theophilus; that thou might know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed."

HERODOTUS: "These are the researches of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, which he publishes, in order to preserve from oblivion the remembrance of former deeds of men, and to secure a just tribute of glory to the great and wonderful actions of the Greeks and the barbarians; and withal to put on record what were their grounds of feud."

THUCYDIDES: "Thucydides, an Athenian, wrote the history of the war in which the Peloponnesians and the Athenians fought against one another. He began to write when they first took up arms, believing that it would be great and memorable above any previous war. For he argued that both States were then at the full height of their military power, and he saw the rest of the Hellenes either siding or intending to side with one or other of them. No movement ever stirred Hellas more deeply than this; it was shared by many of the barbarians, and might be said even to affect the world at large." (Jowett's translation.)

These prefaces excel alike in brevity, taste, and tact, but with this characteristic difference: the Evangelist modestly withholds his name and writes in the pure interest of truth a record of the gospel of peace for the spiritual welfare of all men; while the great pagan historians are inspired by love of glory, and aim to immortalize the destructive wars and feuds of Greeks and barbarians.

#### CONTENTS OF THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

After a historiographic preface, Luke gives us: first a history of the birth and infancy of John the Baptist and Jesus, from Hebrew sources, with an incident from the boyhood of the Saviour (Luke 1 and 2). Then he unfolds the history of the public ministry in chronological order from the baptism in the Jordan to the resurrection and ascension. We need only point out those facts and discourses which are not found in the other Gospels and which complete the Synoptic history at the beginning, middle, and end of the life of our Lord.

#### CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF LUKE.

The third Gospel is the Gospel of free salvation to all men. This corresponds to the two cardinal points in the doctrinal system of Paul: gratuitousness and universality of salvation.

1. It is eminently the Gospel of free salvation by grace through faith. Its motto is: Christ came to save sinners. "Saviour" and "salvation" are the most prominent ideas Mary, anticipating the birth of her Son, rejoices in God her "Saviour" (Luke 1:47); and an angel announces to the shepherds of Bethlehem "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people" (2:10), namely, the birth of Jesus as the "Saviour" of men (not only as the Christ of the Jews). He is throughout represented as the merciful friend of sinners, as the healer of the sick, as the comforter of the broken-hearted, as the shepherd of the lost sheep. The parables peculiar to Luke—of the prodigal son, of the lost piece of money, of the publican in the temple, of the good Samaritan—exhibit this great truth which Paul so fully sets forth in his Epistles. The parable of the Pharisee and the publican plucks up self-righteousness by the root, and is the foundation of the doctrine of justification by faith. The paralytic and the woman that was a sinner received pardon by faith alone. Luke alone relates the prayer of Christ on the cross for his murderers, and the promise of paradise to the penitent robber,

and he ends with a picture of the ascending Saviour lifting up his hands and blessing his disciples.

The other Evangelists do not neglect this aspect of Christ; nothing can be more sweet and comforting than his invitation to sinners in Matthew 11, or his farewell to the disciples in John; but Luke dwells on it with peculiar delight. He is the painter of CHRISTUS SALVATOR AND CHRISTUS CONSOLATOR.

2. It is the Gospel of universal salvation. It is emphatically the Gospel for the Gentiles. Hence the genealogy of Christ is traced back not only to Abraham (as in Matthew), but to Adam, the son of God and the father of all men (Luke 3:38). Christ is the second Adam from heaven, the representative Head of redeemed humanity—an idea further developed by Paul. The infant Saviour is greeted by Simeon as a "Light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel" (2:32). The Baptist, in applying the prophecy of Isaiah concerning the voice in the wilderness (Isa. 40), adds the words (from Isa. 52:10): "All flesh shall see the salvation of God" (Luke 3:6). Luke alone records the mission of the Seventy Disciples who represent the Gentile nations, as the Twelve represent the twelve tribes of Israel. He alone mentions the mission of Elijah to the heathen widow in Sarepta, and the cleansing of Naaman the Syrian by Elisha (4:26, 27). He contrasts the gratitude of the leprous Samaritan with the ingratitude of the nine Jewish lepers (17:12–18). He selects discourses and parables, which exhibit God's mercy to Samaritans and Gentiles. Yet there is no contradiction, for some of the strongest passages which exhibit Christ's mercy to the Gentiles and humble the Jewish pride are found in Matthew, the Jewish Evangelist. The assertion that the third Gospel is a glorification of the Gentile (Pauline) apostolate, and a covert attack on the Twelve, especially Peter, is a pure fiction of modern hypercriticism.

3. It is the Gospel of the genuine and full humanity of Christ. It gives us the key-note

for the construction of a real history of Jesus from infancy to boyhood and manhood. Luke represents him as the purest and fairest among the children of men, who became like unto us in all things except sin and error. He follows him through the stages of his growth. He alone tells us that the child Jesus "grew and waxed strong," not only physically, but also in "wisdom" (Luke 2:40); he alone reports the remarkable scene in the temple, informing us that Jesus, when twelve years old, sat as a learner "in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking questions;" and that, even after that time, He "advanced in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (2:46, 52). All the Synoptists narrate the temptation in the wilderness, and Mark adds horror to the scene by the remark that Christ was "with the wild beasts" (Mark 1:12); but Luke has the peculiar notice that the devil departed from Jesus only "for a season." He alone mentions the tears of Jesus over Jerusalem, and "the bloody sweat" and the strengthening angel in the agony of Gethsemane. As he brings out the gradual growth of Jesus, and the progress of the gospel from Nazareth to Capernaum, from Capernaum to Jerusalem, so afterwards, in the Acts, he traces the growth of the church from Jerusalem to Antioch, from Antioch to Ephesus and Corinth, from Greece to Rome. His is the Gospel of historical development. To him we are indebted for nearly all the hints that link the gospel facts with the contemporary history of the world.

4. It is the Gospel of universal humanity. It breathes the genuine spirit of charity, liberty, equality, which emanate from the Saviour of mankind, but are so often counterfeited by his great antagonist, the devil. It touches the tenderest chords of human sympathy. It delights in recording Christ's love and compassion for the sick, the lowly, the despised, even the harlot and the prodigal. It mentions the beatitudes pronounced on the poor and the hungry, his invitation to the maimed, the halt, and the blind, his prayer on the cross for pardon of the wicked murderers,

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his promise to the dying robber. It rebukes the spirit of bigotry and intolerance of the Jews against Samaritans, in the parable of the good Samaritan. It reminds the Sons of Thunder when they were about to call fire from heaven upon a Samaritan village that He came not to destroy but to save. It tells us that "he who is not against Christ is for Christ," no matter what sectarian or nonsectarian name he may bear.

5. It is the Gospel for woman. It weaves the purest types of womanhood into the gospel story: Elizabeth, who saluted the Saviour before his birth; the Virgin, whom all generations call blessed; the aged prophetess Anna, who departed not from the temple; Martha, the busy, hospitable housekeeper, with her quiet, contemplative sister Mary of Bethany; and that noble band of female disciples who ministered of their substance to the temporal wants of the Son of God and his apostles.

It reveals the tender compassion of Christ for all the suffering daughters of Eve: the widow at Nain mourning at the bier of her only son; for the fallen sinner who bathed his feet with her tears; for the poor sick woman, who had wasted all her living upon physicians, and whom he addressed as "Daughter;" and for the "daughters of Jerusalem" who followed him weeping to Calvary. If anywhere we may behold the divine humanity of Christ and the perfect union of purity and love, dignity and tender compassion, it is in the conduct of Jesus towards women and children. "The scribes and Pharisees gathered up their robes in the streets and synagogues lest they should touch a woman, and held it a crime to look on an unveiled woman in public; our Lord suffered a woman to minister to him out of whom he had cast seven devils."

6. It is the Gospel for children, and all who are of a childlike spirit. It sheds a sacred halo and celestial charm over infancy, as perpetuating the paradise of innocence in a sinful world. It alone relates the birth and growth of John, the particulars of the birth of Christ, his

circumcision and presentation in the temple, his obedience to parents, his growth from infancy to boyhood, from boyhood to manhood. Luke 1 – 2 will always be the favorite chapters for children and all who delight to gather around the manger of Bethlehem and to rejoice with shepherds on the field and angels in heaven.

7. It is the Gospel of poetry. We mean the poetry of religion, the poetry of worship, the poetry of prayer and thanksgiving, a poetry resting not on fiction, but on facts and eternal truth. In such poetry there is more truth than in every-day prose. The whole book is full of dramatic vivacity and interest. It begins and ends with thanksgiving and praise. Luke 1–2 are overflowing with festive joy and gladness; they are a paradise of fragrant flowers, and the air is resonant with the sweet melodies of Hebrew psalmody and Christian hymnody. The Salute of Elizabeth ("Ave Maria"), the "Magnificat" of Mary, the "Benedictus" of Zacharias, the "Gloria in Excelsis" of the Angels, the "Nunc Dimittis" of Simeon, sound from generation to generation in every tongue, and are a perpetual inspiration for new hymns of praise to the glory of Christ. No wonder that the third Gospel has been pronounced, from a purely literary and humanitarian standpoint, to be the most beautiful book ever written.

#### THE STYLE.

Luke is the best Greek writer among the Evangelists. His style shows his general culture. It is free from solecisms, rich in vocabulary, rhythmical in construction. But as a careful and conscientious historian he varies considerably with the subject and according to the nature of his documents.

Matthew begins characteristically with "Book of generation" or "Genealogy", which looks back to the Hebrew Sepher toledoth (comp. Gen. 5:1; 2:4); Mark with "Beginning of the gospel", which introduces the reader at once to the scene of present action; Luke with a historiographic prologue of classical ring, and unsurpassed for brevity, modesty, and

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dignity. But when he enters upon the history of the infancy, which he derived no doubt from Aramaic traditions or documents, his language has a stronger Hebrew coloring than any other portion of the New Testament. The songs of Zacharias, Elizabeth, Mary, and Simeon, and the anthem of the angelic host, are the last of Hebrew psalms as well as the first of Christian hymns. They can be literally translated back into the Hebrew, without losing their beauty. The same variation in style characterizes the Acts; the first part is Hebrew Greek, the second genuine Greek.

His vocabulary considerably exceeds that of the other Evangelists: he has about 180 terms which occur in his Gospel alone and nowhere else in the New Testament; while Matthew has only about 70, Mark 44, and John 50 peculiar words. Luke's Gospel has 55, the Acts 135 *hapax legomena*, and among them many verbal compounds and rare technical terms.

The medical training and practice of Luke, "the beloved physician," familiarized him with medical terms, which appear quite naturally, without any ostentation of professional knowledge, in his descriptions of diseases and miracles of healing, and they agree with the vocabulary of ancient medical writers. Thus he speaks of the "great fever" of Peter's mother-in-law, with reference to the distinction made between great and small fevers (according to Galen); and of "fevers and dysentery," of which the father of Publius at Melita was healed (as Hippocrates uses fever in the plural).

He was equally familiar with navigation, not indeed as a professional seaman, but as an experienced traveler and accurate observer. He uses no less than seventeen nautical terms with perfect accuracy. His description of the Voyage and Shipwreck of Paul in Acts 27-28, as explained and confirmed by a scholarly seaman, furnishes an irrefragable argument for the ability and credibility of the author of that book.

There is a striking resemblance between the style of Luke and Paul, which corresponds to

their spiritual sympathy and long intimacy. They agree in the report of the institution of the Lord's Supper, which is the oldest we have (from A.D. 57); both substitute: "This cup is the new covenant in My blood," for "This is My blood of the (new) covenant," and add: "This do in remembrance of Me" (Luke 22:19, 20; 1 Cor. 11:24, 25). They are equally fond of words which characterize the freedom and universal destination of the gospel salvation. They have many terms in common which occur nowhere else in the New Testament. And they often meet in thought and expression in a way that shows both the close intimacy and the mutual independence of the two writers.

#### GENUINENESS

The genuineness of Luke is above reasonable doubt. The character of the Gospel agrees perfectly with what we might expect from the author as far as we know him from the Acts and the Epistles. No other writer answers the description.

The external evidence is not so old and clear as that in favor of Matthew and Mark. Papias makes no mention of Luke. Perhaps he thought it unnecessary, because Luke himself in the preface gives an account of the origin and aim of his book. The allusions in Barnabas, Clement of Rome, and Hermas are vague and uncertain. But other testimonies are sufficient for the purpose. Irenaeus in Gaul says: "Luke, the companion of Paul, committed to writing the gospel preached by the latter." The Muratori fragment which contains the Italian traditions of the canon, mentions the Gospel of "Luke, the physician, whom Paul had associated with himself as one zealous for righteousness, to be his companion, who had not seen the Lord in the flesh, but having carried his inquiries as far back as possible, began his history with the birth of John." Justin Martyr makes several quotations from Luke, though he does not name him. This brings us up to the year 140 or 130. The Gospel is found in all ancient manuscripts and translations.

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The heretical testimony of Marcion from the year 140 is likewise conclusive. It was always supposed that his Gospel, the only one he recognized, was a mutilation of Luke, and this view is now confirmed and finally established by the investigations and concessions of the very school which for a short time had endeavored to reverse the order by making Marcion's caricature the original of Luke. The pseudo-Clementine Homilies and Recognitions quote from Luke. Basilides and Valentinus and their followers used all the four Gospels, and are reported to have quoted Luke 1:35 for their purpose.

Celsus must have had Luke in view when he referred to the genealogy of Christ as being traced to Adam.

#### CREDIBILITY

The credibility of Luke has been assailed on the ground that he shaped the history by his motive and aim to harmonize the Petrine and Pauline, or the Jewish-Christian and the Gentile-Christian parties of the church. But the same critics contradict themselves by discovering, on the other hand, strongly Judaizing and even Ebionitic elements in Luke, and thus make it an incoherent mosaic or clumsy patchwork of moderate Paulinism and Ebionism, or they arbitrarily assume different revisions through which it passed without being unified in plan.

Against this misrepresentation we have to say: (1) An irenic spirit, such as we may freely admit in the writings of Luke, does not imply an alteration or invention of facts. On the contrary, it is simply an nonsectarian, catholic spirit which aims at the truth and nothing but the truth, and which is the first duty and virtue of an historian. (2) Luke certainly did not invent those marvelous parables and discourses which have been twisted into subservience to the tendency hypothesis; else Luke would have had a creative genius of the highest order, equal to that of Jesus himself, while he modestly professes to be simply a faithful collector of actual facts. (3) Paul himself did not invent his type of doctrine,

but received it, according to his own solemn asseveration, by revelation from Jesus Christ, who called him to the apostleship of the Gentiles. (4) It is now generally admitted that the Tübingen hypothesis of the difference between the two types and parties in the apostolic church is greatly overstrained and set aside by Paul's own testimony in the Galatians, which is as irenic and conciliatory to the pillar-apostles as it is uncompromisingly polemic against the "false" brethren or the heretical Judaizers. (5) Some of the strongest anti-Jewish and pro-Gentile testimonies of Christ are found in Matthew and omitted by Luke.

The accuracy of Luke has already been spoken of, and has been well vindicated by Godet against Renan in several minor details. "While remaining quite independent of the other three, the Gospel of Luke is confirmed and supported by them all."

#### TIME OF COMPOSITION.

There are strong indications that the third Gospel was composed (not published) between 58 and 63, before the close of Paul's Roman captivity. No doubt it took several years to collect and digest the material; and the book was probably not published, i.e., copied and distributed, till after the death of Paul, at the same time with the Acts, which forms the second part and is dedicated to the same patron. In this way the conflicting accounts of Clement of Alexandria and Irenaeus may be harmonized.

1. Luke had the best leisure for literary composition during the four years of Paul's imprisonment at Caesarea and Rome. In Caesarea he was within easy reach of the surviving eyewitnesses and classical spots of the gospel history, and we cannot suppose that he neglected the opportunity.

2. The Gospel was written before the book of Acts, which expressly refers to it as the first treatise inscribed to the same Theophilus (Acts 1:1). As the Acts come down to the second year of Paul's captivity in Rome, they cannot have been finished before A.D. 63; but

as they abruptly break off without any mention of Paul's release or martyrdom, it seems quite probable that they were concluded before the fate of the apostle was decided one way or the other, unless the writer was, like Mark, prevented by some event, perhaps the Neronian persecution, from giving his book the natural conclusion. In its present shape it excites in the reader the greatest curiosity which could have been gratified with a few words, either that the apostle sealed his testimony with his blood, or that he entered upon new missionary tours East and West until at last he finished his course after a second captivity in Rome. I may add that the entire absence of any allusion in the Acts to any of Paul's Epistles can be easily explained by the assumption of a nearly contemporaneous composition, while it seems almost unaccountable if we assume an interval of ten or twenty years.

3. Luke's ignorance of Matthew and probably also of Mark points likewise to an early date of composition. A careful investigator, like Luke, writing after the year 70, could hardly have overlooked, among his many written sources, such an important document as Matthew which the best critics put before A.D. 70.

4. Clement of Alexandria has preserved a tradition that the Gospels containing the genealogies, i.e., Matthew and Luke, were written first. Irenaeus, it is true, puts the third Gospel after Matthew and Mark and after the death of Peter and Paul, that is, after 64 (though certainly not after 70). If the Synoptic Gospels were written nearly simultaneously, we can easily account for these differences in the tradition. Irenaeus was no better informed on dates than Clement, and was evidently mistaken about the age of Christ and the date of the Apocalypse. But he may have had in view the time of publication, which must not be confounded with the date of composition. Many books nowadays are withheld from the market for some reason months or years after they have passed through the hands of the printer.

The objections raised against such an early date are not well founded.

The prior existence of a number of fragmentary Gospels implied in Luke 1:1 need not surprise us; for such a story as that of Jesus of Nazareth must have set many pens in motion at a very early time. "Though the art of writing had not existed," says Lange, "it would have been invented for such a theme."

Of more weight is the objection that Luke seems to have shaped the eschatological prophecies of Christ so as to suit the fulfillment by bringing in the besieging (Roman) army, and by interposing "the times of the Gentiles" between the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world (Luke 19:43, 44; 21:20-24). This would put the composition after the destruction of Jerusalem, say between 70 and 80, if not later. But such an intentional change of the words of our Lord is inconsistent with the unquestionable honesty of the historian and his reverence for the words of the Divine teacher. Moreover, it is not borne out by the facts. For the other Synoptists likewise speak of wars and the abomination of desolation in the holy place, which refers to the Jewish wars and the Roman eagles (Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14). Luke makes the Lord say, Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles till the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). But Matthew does the same when he reports that Christ predicted and commanded the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom in all parts of the world before the end can come (Matt. 24:14; 28:19; comp. Mark 16:15). And even Paul said, almost in the same words as Luke, twelve years before the destruction of Jerusalem: "Blindness is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in" (Rom. 11:25). Must we therefore put the composition of Romans after A.D. 70? On the other hand, Luke reports as clearly as Matthew and Mark the words of Christ, that "this generation shall not pass away till all things" (the preceding prophecies) "shall be fulfilled" (Luke 21:32). Why did he not omit this passage if he

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intended to interpose a larger space of time between the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world?

The eschatological discourses of our Lord, then, are essentially the same in all the Synoptists, and present the same difficulties, which can only be removed by assuming: (1) that they refer both to the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world, two analogous events, the former being typical of the latter; (2) that the two events, widely distant in time, are represented in close proximity of space after the manner of prophetic vision in a panoramic picture. We must also remember that the precise date of the end of the world was expressly disclaimed even by the Son of God in the days of his humiliation (Matt. 24:36; Mark 13:32), and is consequently beyond the reach of human knowledge and calculation. The only difference is that Luke more clearly distinguishes the two events by dividing the prophetic discourses and assigning them to different occasions (Luke 17:20-37 and 21:5-33); and here, as in other cases, he is probably more exact and in harmony with several hints of our Lord that a considerable interval must elapse between the catastrophe of Jerusalem and the final catastrophe of the world.

#### PLACE OF COMPOSITION

The third Gospel gives no hint as to the place of composition. Ancient tradition is uncertain, and modern critics are divided between Greece, Alexandria, Ephesus, Caesarea, Rome. It was probably written in sections during the longer residence of the author at Philippi, Caesarea, and Rome, but we cannot tell where it was completed and published.

#### 1.83 John.

The best comes last. The fourth Gospel is the Gospel of Gospels, the holy of holies in the New Testament. The favorite disciple and bosom friend of Christ, the protector of his mother, the survivor of the apostolic age was pre-eminently qualified by nature and grace

to give to the church the inside view of that most wonderful person that ever walked on earth. In his early youth he had absorbed the deepest words of his Master, and treasured them in a faithful heart; in extreme old age, yet with the fire and vigor of manhood, he reproduced them under the influence of the Holy Spirit who dwelt in him and led him, as well as the other disciples, into "the whole truth."

His Gospel is the golden sunset of the age of inspiration, and sheds its luster into the second and all succeeding centuries of the church. It was written at Ephesus when Jerusalem lay in ruins, when the church had finally separated from the synagogue, when "the Jews" and the Christians were two distinct races, when Jewish and Gentile believers had melted into a homogeneous Christian community, a little band in a hostile world, yet strong in faith, full of hope and joy, and certain of victory.

For a satisfactory discussion of the difficult problems involved in this Gospel and its striking contrast with the Synoptic Gospels, we must keep in view the fact that Christ communed with the apostles after as well as before his visible departure, and spoke to them through that "other Advocate" whom he sent to them from the Father, and who brought to remembrance all things he had said unto them. Here lies the guarantee of the truthfulness of a picture which no human artist could have drawn without divine inspiration. Under any other view the fourth Gospel, and indeed the whole New Testament, becomes the strangest enigma in the history of literature and incapable of any rational solution.

#### JOHN AND THE SYNOPTISTS

If John wrote long after the Synoptists, we could, of course, not expect from him a repetition of the story already so well told by three independent witnesses. But what is surprising is the fact that, coming last, he should produce the most original of all the Gospels.

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The transition from Matthew to Mark, and from Mark to Luke is easy and natural; but in passing from any of the Synoptists to the fourth Gospel we breathe a different atmosphere, and feel as if we were suddenly translated from a fertile valley to the height of a mountain with a boundless vision over new scenes of beauty and grandeur. We look in vain for a genealogy of Jesus, for an account of his birth, for the sermons of the Baptist, for the history of the temptation in the wilderness, the baptism in the Jordan, and the transfiguration on the Mount, for a list of the Twelve, for the miraculous cures of demoniacs. John says nothing of the institution of the church and the sacraments; though he is full of the mystical union and communion which is the essence of the church, and presents the spiritual meaning of baptism and the Lord's Supper (John 3 and John 6). He omits the ascension, though it is promised through Mary Magdalene (20:17). He has not a word of the Sermon on the Mount, and the Lord's Prayer, none of the inimitable parables about the kingdom of heaven, none of those telling answers to the entangling questions of the Pharisees. He omits the prophecies of the downfall of Jerusalem and the end of the world, and most of those proverbial, moral sentences and maxims of surpassing wisdom which are strung together by the Synoptists like so many sparkling diamonds.

But in the place of these Synoptic records John gives us an abundance of new matter of equal, if not greater, interest and importance. Right at the threshold we are startled, as by a peal of thunder from the depths, of eternity: "In the beginning was the Word." And as we proceed we hear about the creation of the world, the shining of the true light in darkness, the preparatory revelations, the incarnation of the Logos, the testimony of the Baptist to the Lamb of God. We listen with increasing wonder to those mysterious discourses about the new birth of the Spirit, the water of life, the bread of life from heaven, about the relation of the eternal and

only-begotten Son to the Father, to the world, and to believers, the mission of the Holy Spirit, the promise of the many mansions in heaven, the farewell to the disciples, and at last that sacerdotal prayer which brings us nearest to the throne and the beating heart of God. John alone reports the interviews with Nicodemus, the woman of Samaria, and the Greek foreigners. He records six miracles not mentioned by the Synoptists, and among them the two greatest—the changing of water into wine and the raising of Lazarus from the grave. And where he meets the Synoptists, as in the feeding of the five thousand, he adds the mysterious discourse on the spiritual feeding of believers by the bread of life which has been going on ever since. He makes the nearest approach to his predecessors in the closing chapters on the betrayal, the denial of Peter, the trial before the ecclesiastical and civil tribunals, the crucifixion and resurrection, but even here he is more exact and circumstantial, and adds, interesting details which bear the unmistakable marks of personal observation.

He fills out the ministry of Christ in Judaea, among the hierarchy and the people of Jerusalem, and extends it over three years; while the Synoptists seem to confine it to one year and dwell chiefly on his labors among the peasantry of Galilee. But on close inspection John leaves ample room for the Galilean, and the Synoptists for the Judean ministry. None of the Gospels is a complete biography. John expressly disclaims, this (20:31). Matthew implies repeated visits to the holy city when he makes Christ exclaim: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem ... how often would I have gathered thy children together" (23:37; comp. 27:57). On the other hand John records several miracles in Cana, evidently only as typical examples of many (2:1 sqq.; 4:47 sqq.; 6:1 sqq.). But in Jerusalem the great conflict between light and darkness, belief and unbelief, was most fully developed and matured to the final crisis; and this it was one of his chief objects to describe.

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The differences between John and the Synoptists are many and great, but there are no contradictions.

#### THE OCCASION

Irenaeus, who, as a native of Asia Minor and a spiritual grand-pupil of John, is entitled to special consideration, says: "Afterward" [i.e., after Matthew, Mark, and Luke] "John, the disciple of the Lord, who also had leaned upon his breast, did himself publish a Gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia." In another place he makes the rise of the Gnostic heresy the prompting occasion of the composition.

A curious tradition, which probably contains a grain of truth, traces the composition to a request of John's fellow-disciples and elders of Ephesus. "Fast with me," said John, according to the Muratorian fragment (170), "for three days from this time" [when the request was made], "and whatever shall be revealed to each of us" [concerning my composing the Gospel], "let us relate it to one another. On the same night it was revealed to Andrew, one of the apostles, that John should relate all things in his own name, aided by the revision of all. ... What wonder is it then that John brings forward every detail with so much emphasis, even in his Epistles, saying of himself, What we have seen with our eyes, and heard with our ears, and our hands have handled, these things have we written unto you. For so he professes that he was not only an eyewitness, but also a hearer, and moreover a writer of all the wonderful works of the Lord in their historical order."

The mention of Andrew in this fragment is remarkable, for he was associated with John as a pupil of the Baptist and as the first called to the school of Christ (John 1:35-40). He was also prominent in other ways and stood next to the beloved three, or even next to his brother Peter in the catalogues of the apostles.

Victorinus of Pettau (d. about 304), in the Scholia on the Apocalypse, says that John wrote the Gospel after the Apocalypse, in

consequence of the spread of the Gnostic heresy and at the request of "all the bishops from the neighboring provinces."

Jerome, on the basis of a similar tradition, reports that John, being constrained by his brethren to write, consented to do so if all joined in a fast and prayer to God, and after this fast, being saturated with revelation, he indited the heaven-sent preface: "In the beginning was the Word."

Possibly those fellow-disciples and pupils who prompted John to write his Gospel, were the same who afterward added their testimony to the genuineness of the book, speaking in the plural ("we know that his witness is true," 21:24), one of them acting as scribe ("I suppose," 21:25).

The outward occasion does not exclude, of course, the inward prompting by the Holy Spirit, which is in fact implied in this tradition, but it shows how far the ancient church was from such a mechanical theory of inspiration as ignores or denies the human and natural factors in the composition of the apostolic writings. The preface of Luke proves the same.

#### THE OBJECT

The fourth Gospel does not aim at a complete biography of Christ, but distinctly declares that Jesus wrought "many other signs in the presence of the disciples which are not written in this book" (John 20:30; comp. 21:25).

The author plainly states his object, to which all other objects must be subordinate as merely incidental, namely, to lead his readers to the faith "that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing they may have life in his name" (20:31). This includes three points: (1) the Messiahship of Jesus, which was of prime importance to the Jews, and was the sole or at least the chief aim of Matthew, the Jewish Evangelist; (2) the Divine Sonship of Jesus, which was the point to be gained with the Gentiles, and which Luke, the Gentile Evangelist, had also in view; (3) the practical

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benefit of such faith, to gain true, spiritual, eternal life in Him and through Him who is the personal embodiment and source of eternal life.

To this historico-didactic object all others which have been mentioned must be subordinated. The book is neither polemic and apologetic, nor supplementary, nor irenic, except incidentally and unintentionally as it serves all these purposes. The writer wrote in full view of the condition and needs of the church at the close of the first century, and shaped his record accordingly, taking for granted a general knowledge of the older Gospels, and refuting indirectly, by the statement of facts and truths, the errors of the day. Hence there is some measure of truth in those theories which have made an incidental aim the chief or only aim of the book.

1. The anti-heretical theory was started by Irenaeus. Being himself absorbed in the controversy with Gnosticism and finding the strongest weapons in John, he thought that John's motive was to root out the error of Cerinthus and of the Nicolaitans by showing that "there is one God who made all things by his word; and not, as they say, one who made the world, and another, the Father of the Lord." Jerome adds the opposite error of Ebionism, Ewald that of the disciples of the Baptist.

No doubt the fourth Gospel, by the positive statement of the truth, is the most effective refutation of Gnostic dualism and docetism, which began to raise its head in Asia Minor toward the close of the first century. It shows the harmony of the ideal Christ of faith and the real Christ of history, which the ancient and modern schools of Gnosticism are unable to unite in one individual. But it is not on this account a polemical treatise, and it even had by its profound speculation a special attraction for Gnostics and philosophical rationalists, from Basilides down to Baur. The ancient Gnostics made the first use of it and quoted freely from the prologue, e.g., the

passage: "The true light, which enlightens every man, was coming into the world" (1:9).

The polemical aim is more apparent in the first Epistle of John, which directly warns against the anti-Christian errors then threatening the church, and may be called a doctrinal and practical postscript to the Gospel.

2. The supplementary theory. Clement of Alexandria (about 200) states, on the authority of "presbyters of an earlier generation," that John, at the request of his friends and the prompting of the divine Spirit, added a spiritual Gospel to the older bodily Gospels which set forth the outward facts. The distinction is ingenious. John is more spiritual and ideal than the Synoptists, and he represents as it were the esoteric tradition as distinct from the exoteric tradition of the church. Eusebius records also as a current opinion that John intended to supply an amount of the earlier period of Christ's ministry which was omitted by the other Evangelists. John is undoubtedly a most welcome supplementer both in matter and spirit, and furnishes in part the key for the full understanding of the Synoptists, yet he repeats many important events, especially in the closing chapters, and his Gospel is as complete as any.

3. The Irenic tendency-theory is a modern Tübingen invention. It is assumed that the fourth Gospel is purely speculative or theological, the last and crowning literary production which completed the process of unifying Jewish and Gentile Christianity and melting them into the one Catholic church of the second century.

No doubt it is an Irenicon of the church in the highest and best sense of the term, and a prophecy of the church of the future, when all discords of Christendom past and present will be harmonized in the perfect union of Christians with Christ, which is the last object of his sacerdotal prayer. But it is not an Irenicon at the expense of truth and facts.

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In carrying out their hypothesis the Tübingen critics have resorted to the wildest fictions. It is said that the author depreciated the Mosaic dispensation and displayed jealousy of Peter. How in the world could this promote peace? It would rather have defeated the object. But there is no shadow of proof for such an assertion. While the author opposes the unbelieving Jews, he shows the highest reverence for the Old Testament, and derives salvation from the Jews. Instead of showing jealousy of Peter, he introduces his new name at the first interview with Jesus (1:42), reports his great confession even more fully than Matthew (John 6:68, 69), puts him at the head of the list of the apostles (21:2), and gives him his due prominence throughout down to the last interview when the risen Lord committed to him the feeding of his sheep (21:15-19). This misrepresentation is of a piece with the other Tübingen myth adopted by Renan, that the real John in the Apocalypse pursues a polemical aim against Paul and deliberately excludes him from the rank of the twelve Apostles. And yet Paul himself, in the acknowledged Epistle to the Galatians, represents John as one of the three pillar-apostles who recognized his peculiar gift for the apostolate of the Gentiles and extended to him the right hand of fellowship.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.**

The Gospel of John is the most original, the most important, the most influential book in all literature. The great Origen called it the crown of the Gospels, as the Gospels are the crown of all sacred writings. It is pre-eminently the spiritual and ideal, though at the same time a most real Gospel, the truest transcript of the original. It lifts the veil from the holy of holies and reveals the glory of the Only Begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. It unites in harmony the deepest knowledge and the purest love of Christ. We hear as it were his beating heart; we lay our hands in his wound-prints and exclaim with doubting Thomas: "My Lord and my God." No book is so plain and yet so deep, so natural

and yet so full of mystery. It is simple as a child and sublime as a seraph, gentle as a lamb and bold as an eagle, deep as the sea and high as the heavens.

It has been praised as "the unique, tender, genuine Gospel," "written by the hand of an angel," as "the heart of Christ," as "God's love-letter to the world," or "Christ's love-letter to the church." It has exerted an irresistible charm on many of the strongest and noblest minds in Christendom, as Origen in Egypt, Chrysostom in Asia, Augustine in Africa, the German Luther, the French Calvin, the poetic Herder, the critical Schleiermacher, and a multitude of less famous writers of all schools and shades of thought. Even many of those who doubt or deny the apostolic authorship cannot help admiring its more than earthly beauties.

But there are other skeptics who find the Johannine discourses monotonous, tedious, nebulous, unmeaning, hard, and feel as much offended by them as the original hearers.

Let us point out the chief characteristics of this book which distinguish it from the Synoptic Gospels.

1. The fourth Gospel is the Gospel of the INCARNATION, that is, of the perfect union of the divine and human in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, who for this very reason is the Saviour of the world and the fountain of eternal life. "The Word became flesh." This is the theoretical theme. The writer begins with the eternal pre-existence of the Logos, and ends with the adoration of his incarnate divinity in the exclamation of the sceptical Thomas: "My Lord and my God!" Luke's preface is historiographic and simply points to his sources of information; John's prologue is metaphysical and dogmatic, and sounds the keynote of the subsequent history. The Synoptists begin with the man Jesus and rise up to the recognition of his Messiahship and divine Sonship; John descends from the pre-existent Son of God through the preparatory revelations to his incarnation and crucifixion till he resumes the glory which he had before

the world began. The former give us the history of a divine man, the latter the history of a human God. Not that he identifies him with the Godhead (οἱ θεοὶ); on the contrary, he clearly distinguishes the Son and the Father and makes him inferior in dignity ("the Father is greater than I"); but he declares that the Son is "God" (θεοὺς), that is, of divine essence or nature.

And yet there is no contradiction here between the Evangelists except for those who deem a union of the Divine and human in one person an impossibility. The Christian Church has always felt that the Synoptic and the Johannine Christ are one and the same, only represented from different points of view. And in this judgment the greatest scholars and keenest critics, from Origen down to the present time, have concurred.

For, on the one hand, John's Christ is just as real and truly human as that of the Synoptists. He calls himself the Son of man and "a man" (John 8:40); he "groaned in the spirit" (11:33), he "wept" at the grave of a friend (11:35), and his "soul" was "troubled" in the prospect of the dark hour of crucifixion (12:27) and the crime of the traitor (13:1). The Evangelist attests with solemn emphasis from what he saw with his own eyes that Jesus truly suffered and died (19:33-35).

The Synoptic Christ, on the other hand, is as truly elevated above ordinary mortals as the Johannine. It is true, he does not in so many words declare his pre-existence as in John 1:1; 6:62; 8:58; 17:5, 24, but it is implied, or follows as a legitimate consequence. He is conceived without sin, a descendant of David, and yet the Lord of David (Matt. 22:41); he claims authority to forgive sins, for which he is accused of blasphemy by the Jews (quite consistently from their standpoint of unbelief); he gives his life a ransom for the redemption of the world; he will come in his glory and judge all nations; yea, in the very Sermon on the Mount, which all schools of Rationalists accept his genuine teaching, He declares himself to be the judge of the world

(Matt. 7:21-23; comp. 25:31-46), and in the baptismal formula He associates himself and the Holy Spirit with the eternal Father, as the connecting link between the two, thus assuming a place on the very throne of the Deity (28:19). It is impossible to rise higher. Hence Matthew, the Jewish Evangelist, does not hesitate to apply to Him the name Immanuel, that is, "God with us" (1:23). Mark gives us the Gospel of Peter, the first who confessed that Jesus is not only "the Christ" in his official character, but also "the Son of the living God." This is far more than a son; it designates his unique personal relation to God and forms the eternal basis of his historical Messiahship (Matt. 16:16; comp. 26:63). The two titles are distinct, and the high priest's charge of blasphemy (26:65) could only apply to the latter. A false Messiah would be an impostor, not a blasphemer. We could not substitute the Messiah for the Son in the baptismal formula. Peter, Mark, and Matthew were brought up in the most orthodox monotheism, with an instinctive horror of the least approach to idolatry, and yet they looked up to their Master with feelings of adoration. And, as for Luke, he delights in representing Jesus throughout as the sinless Saviour of sinners, and is in full sympathy with the theology of his elder brother Paul, who certainly taught the pre-existence and divine nature of Christ several years before the Gospels were written or published (Rom. 1:3, 4; 9:5; 2 Cor. 8:9; Col. 1:15-17; Phil. 2:6-11).

2. It is the Gospel of LOVE. Its practical motto is: "God is love." In the incarnation of the eternal Word, in the historic mission of his Son, God has given the greatest possible proof of his love to mankind. In the fourth Gospel alone we read that precious sentence which contains the very essence of Christianity: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16). It is the Gospel of the Good Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep (10:11); the Gospel of the new

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commandment: "Love one another" (13:34). And this was the last exhortation of the aged disciple "whom Jesus loved."

But for this very reason that Christ is the greatest gift of God to the world, unbelief is the greatest sin and blackest ingratitude, which carries in it its own condemnation. The guilt of unbelief, the contrast between faith and unbelief is nowhere set forth in such strong light as in the fourth Gospel. It is a consuming fire to all enemies of Christ.

3. It is the Gospel of MYSTIC SYMBOLISM. The eight miracles it records are significant "signs" which symbolize the character and mission of Christ, and manifest his glory. They are simply his "works", the natural manifestations of his marvelous person performed with the same ease as men perform their ordinary works. The turning of water into wine illustrates his transforming power, and fitly introduces his public ministry; the miraculous feeding of the five thousand set him forth as the Bread of life for the spiritual nourishment of countless believers; the healing of the man born blind, as the Light of the world; the raising of Lazarus, as the Resurrection and the Life. The miraculous draught of fishes shows the disciples to be fishers of men, and insures the abundant results of Christian labor to the end of time. The serpent in the wilderness prefigured the cross. The Baptist points to him as the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. He represents himself under the significant figures of the Door, the good Shepherd, the Vine; and these figures have inspired Christian art and poetry, and guided the meditations of the church ever since.

The whole Old Testament is a type and prophecy of the New. "The law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (1:17). Herein lies the vast superiority of Christianity, and yet the great importance of Judaism as an essential part in the scheme of redemption. Clearly and strongly as John brings out the opposition to the unbelieving

Jews, he is yet far from going to the Gnostic extreme of rejecting or depreciating the Old Testament; on the contrary "salvation comes from the Jews" (says Christ to the Samaritan woman, 4:22); and turning the Scripture argument against the scribes and Pharisees who searched the letter of the Scriptures, but ignored the spirit, Christ confronts them with the authority of Moses on whom they fixed their hope. "If ye believed Moses, ye would believe me; for he wrote of me. But ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" (5:46). John sees Christ everywhere in those ancient Scriptures which cannot be broken. He unfolds the true Messianic idea in conflict with the carnal perversion of it among the Jews under the guidance of the hierarchy.

#### THE JOHANNINE AND SYNOPTIC DISCOURSES OF CHRIST

4. John gives prominence to the transcendent DISCOURSES about the person of Christ and his relation to the Father, to the world, and the disciples. His words are testimonies, revealing the inner glory of his person; they are Spirit and they are life.

Matthew's Gospel is likewise didactic; but there is a marked difference between the contents and style of the Synoptic and the Johannine discourses of Jesus. The former discuss the nature of the Messianic kingdom, the fulfillment of the law, the duty of holy obedience, and are popular, practical, brief, pointed, sententious, parabolic, and proverbial; the latter touch the deepest mysteries of theology and Christology, are metaphysical, lengthy, liable to carnal misunderstanding, and scarcely discernible from John's own style in the prologue and the first Epistle, and from that used by the Baptist. The transition is almost imperceptible in John 3:16 and 3:31.

Here we reach the chief difficulty in the Johannine problem. Here is the strong point of skeptical criticism. We must freely admit at the outset that John so reproduced the words of his Master as to mould them unconsciously

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into his own type of thought and expression. He revolved them again and again in his heart, they were his daily food, and the burden of his teaching to the churches from Sunday to Sunday; yet he had to translate, to condense, to expand, and to apply them; and in this process it was unavoidable that his own reflections should more or less mingle with his recollections. With all the tenacity of his memory it was impossible that at such a great interval of time (fifty or sixty years after the events) he should be able to record literally every discourse just as it was spoken; and he makes no such claim, but intimates that he selects and summarizes.

This is the natural view of the case, and the same concession is now made by all the champions of the Johannine authorship who do not hold to a magical inspiration theory and turn the sacred writers into unthinking machines, contrary to their own express statements, as in the Preface of Luke. But we deny that this concession involves any sacrifice of the truth of history or of any lineament from the physiognomy of Christ. The difficulty here presented is usually overstated by the critics, and becomes less and less, the higher we rise in our estimation of Christ, and the closer we examine the differences in their proper connection. The following reflections will aid the student:

(1) In the first place we must remember the marvelous height and depth and breadth of Christ's intellect as it appears in the Synoptists as well as in John. He commanded the whole domain of religious and moral truth; he spoke as never man spoke, and the people were astonished at his teaching (Matt. 7:28, 29; Mark 1:22; 6:2; Luke 4:32; John 7:46). He addressed not only his own generation, but through it all ages and classes of men. No wonder that his hearers often misunderstood him. The Synoptists give examples of such misunderstanding as well as John (comp. Mark 8:16). But who will set limits to his power and pedagogic wisdom in the matter and form of his teaching? Must he not necessarily have varied his style when he

addressed the common people in Galilee, as in the Synoptists, and the educated, proud, hierarchy of Jerusalem, as in John? Or when he spoke on the mountain, inviting the multitude to the Messianic Kingdom at the opening of his ministry, and when he took farewell from his disciples in the chamber, in view of the great sacrifice? Socrates appears very different in Xenophon and in Plato, yet we can see him in both. But here is a far greater than Socrates.

(2) John's mind, at a period when it was most pliable and plastic, had been so conformed to the mind of Christ that his own thoughts and words faithfully reflected the teaching of his Master. If there ever was spiritual sympathy and congeniality between two minds, it was between Jesus and the disciple whom he loved and whom he entrusted with the care of his mother. John stood nearer to his Lord than any Christian or any of the Synoptists. "Why should not John have been formed upon the model of Jesus rather than the Jesus of his Gospel be the reflected image of himself? Surely it may be left to all candid minds to say whether, to adopt only the lowest supposition, the creative intellect of Jesus was not far more likely to mould His disciple to a conformity with itself, than the receptive spirit of the disciple to give birth by its own efforts to that conception of a Redeemer which so infinitely surpasses the loftiest image of man's own creation."

(3) John reproduced the discourses from the fullness of the spirit of Christ that dwelt in him, and therefore without any departure from the ideas. The whole gospel history assumes that Christ did not finish, but only began his work while on earth, that he carries it on in heaven through his chosen organs, to whom he promised mouth and wisdom (Luke 21:15; Matt. 10:19) and his constant presence (Matt. 19:20; 28:20). The disciples became more and more convinced of the superhuman character of Christ by the irresistible logic of fact and thought. His earthly life appeared to them as a transient state of humiliation which was preceded by a pre-existent state of glory

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with the Father, as it was followed by a permanent state of glory after the resurrection and ascension to heaven. He withheld from them "many things" because they could not bear them before his glorification (John 16:12). "What I do," he said to Peter, "thou knowest not now, but thou shalt come to know hereafter" (13:7). Some of his deepest sayings, which they had at first misunderstood, were illuminated by the resurrection (2:22; 12:16), and then by the outpouring of the Spirit, who took things out of the fullness of Christ and declared them to the disciples (16:13, 14). Hence the farewell discourses are so full of the Promises of the Spirit of truth who would glorify Christ in their hearts. Under such guidance we may be perfectly sure of the substantial faithfulness of John's record.

(4) Beneath the surface of the similarity there is a considerable difference between the language of Christ and the language of his disciple. John never attributes to Christ the designation Logos, which he uses so prominently in the Prologue and the first Epistle. This is very significant, and shows his conscientious care. He distinguished his own theology from the teaching of his Master, no matter whether he borrowed the term Logos from Philo (which cannot be proven), or coined it himself from his reflections on Old Testament distinctions between the hidden and the revealed God and Christ's own testimonies concerning his relation to the Father. The first Epistle of John is an echo of his Gospel, but with original matter of his own and Polemical references to the anti-Christian errors of big day. "The phrases of the Gospel," says Westcott, "have a definite historic connection: they belong to circumstances which explain them. The phrases in the Epistle are in part generalizations, and in part interpretations of the earlier language in view of Christ's completed work and of the experience of the Christian church."

As to the speeches of the Baptist, in the fourth Gospel, they keep, as the same writer

remarks, strictly within the limits suggested by the Old Testament. "What he says spontaneously of Christ is summed up in the two figures of the 'Lamb' and the 'Bridegroom,' which together give a comprehensive view of the suffering and joy, the redemptive and the completive work of Messiah under prophetic imagery. Both figures appear again in the Apocalypse; but it is very significant that they do not occur in the Lord's teaching in the fourth Gospel or in St. John's Epistles."

(5) There are not wanting striking resemblances in thought and style between the discourses in John and in the Synoptists, especially Matthew, which are sufficient to refute the assertion that the two types of teaching are irreconcilable. The Synoptists were not quite unfamiliar with the other type of teaching. They occasionally rise to the spiritual height of John and record briefer sayings of Jesus which could be inserted without a discord in his Gospel. Take the prayer of thanksgiving and the touching invitation to all that labor and are heavy laden, in Matt. 11:25-30. The sublime declaration recorded by Luke 10:22 and Matthew 11:27: "No one knows the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son wills to reveal him," is thoroughly Christ-like according to John's conception, and is the basis of his own declaration in the prologue: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (John 1:18). Jesus makes no higher claim in John than he does in Matthew when he proclaims: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:18). In almost the same words Jesus says in John 17:2: "Thou hast given him power over all flesh."

On the other hand, John gives us not a few specimens of those short, pithy maxims of oriental wisdom which characterize the Synoptic discourses.

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#### THE STYLE OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

The style of the fourth Gospel differs widely from the ecclesiastical writers of the second century, and belongs to the apostolic age. It has none of the technical theological terms of post-apostolic controversies, no allusions to the state of the church, its government and worship, but moves in the atmosphere of the first Christian generation; yet differs widely from the style of the Synoptists and is altogether unique in the history of secular and religious literature, a fit expression of the genius of John: clear and deep, simple as a child, and mature as a saint, sad and yet serene, and basking in the sunshine of eternal life and love. The fourth Gospel is pure Greek in vocabulary and grammar, but thoroughly Hebrew in temper and spirit, even more so than any other book, and can be almost literally translated into Hebrew without losing its force or beauty. It has the childlike simplicity, the artlessness, the imaginativeness, the directness, the circumstantiality, and the rhythmical parallelism which characterize the writings of the Old Testament. The sentences are short and weighty, coordinated, not subordinated. The construction is exceedingly simple: no involved periods, no connecting links, no logical argumentation, but a succession of self-evident truths declared as from immediate intuition. The parallelism of Hebrew poetry is very apparent in such double sentences as: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you;" "A servant is not greater than his lord; neither one that is sent greater than he that sent him;" "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that hath been made." Examples of antithetic parallelism are also frequent: "The light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not;" "He was in the world, and the world knew him not;" "He confessed, and denied not;" "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish."

The author has a limited vocabulary, but loves emphatic repetition, and his very monotony is solemn and impressive. He uses certain key-words of the profoundest import, as Word, life, light, truth, love, glory, testimony, name, sign, work, to know, to behold, to believe. These are not abstract conceptions but concrete realities. He views the world under comprehensive contrasts, as life and death, light and darkness, truth and falsehood, love and hatred, God and the devil, and (in the first Epistle) Christ and Antichrist. We look in vain for such important words as church, gospel, repentance, but the substance is there in different forms. He does not even use the noun "faith", which frequently occurs in the Synoptists and in Paul, but he uses the verb "to believe" ninety-eight times, about twice as often as all three Synoptists together. He applies the significant term Logos (ratio and oratio) to Christ as the Revealer and the Interpreter of God (1:18), but only in the Prologue, and such figurative designations as "the Light of the world," "the Bread of life," "the Good Shepherd," "the Vine," "the Way," "the Truth," and "the Life." He alone uses the double "Verily" in the discourses of the Saviour. He calls the Holy Spirit the "Paraclete" or "Advocate" of believers, who pleads their cause here on earth, as Christ pleads it on the throne in heaven. There breathes through this book an air of calmness and serenity, of peace and repose, that seems to come from the eternal mansions of heaven. Is such a style compatible with the hypothesis of a post- and pseudo-apostolic fiction? We have a large number of fictitious Gospels, but they differ as much from the fourth canonical Gospel as midnight darkness from noonday brightness.

#### AUTHORSHIP

For nearly eighteen centuries the Christian church of all denominations has enjoyed the fourth Gospel without a shadow of doubt that it was the work of John the Apostle. But in the nineteenth century the citadel was assailed with increasing force, and the conflict

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between the besiegers and defenders is still raging among scholars of the highest ability. It is a question of life and death between constructive and destructive criticism. The vindication of the fourth Gospel as a genuine product of John, the beloved disciple, is the death-blow of the mythical and legendary reconstruction and destruction of the life of Christ and the apostolic history. The ultimate result cannot be doubtful. The opponents have been forced gradually to retreat from the year 170 to the very beginning of the second century, as the time when the fourth Gospel was already known and used in the church, that is to the lifetime of many pupils and friends of John and other eye-witnesses of the life of Christ.

I. The EXTERNAL PROOF of the Johannine authorship is as strong, yea stronger than that of the genuineness of any classical writer of antiquity, and goes up to the very beginning of the second century, within hailing distance of the living John. It includes catholic writers, heretics, and heathen enemies. There is but one dissenting voice, hardly audible, that of the insignificant sect of the Alogi who opposed the Johannine doctrine of the Logos (hence their name, with the double meaning of unreasonable, and anti-Logos heretics) and absurdly ascribed both the Gospel of John and the Apocalypse to his enemy, the Gnostic Cerinthus. Let us briefly sum up the chief testimonies.

1. Catholic testimonies. We begin at the fourth century and gradually rise up to the age of John. All the ancient Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, including the Sinaitic and the Vatican, which date from the age of Constantine and are based upon older copies of the second century, and all the ancient versions, including the Syriac and old Latin from the third and second centuries, contain without exception the Gospel of John, though the Peshito omits his second and third Epistles and the Apocalypse. These manuscripts and versions represent the universal voice of the churches.

Then we have the admitted individual testimonies of all the Greek and Latin fathers up to the middle of the second century, without a dissenting voice or doubt: Jerome (d. 419) and Eusebius (d. 340), who had the whole ante-Nicene literature before them; Origen in Egypt (d. 254), the greatest scholar of his age and a commentator on John; Tertullian of North Africa (about 200), a Catholic in doctrine, a Montanist in discipline, and a zealous advocate of the dispensation of the Paraclete announced by John; Clement of Alexandria (about 190), a cultivated philosopher who had travelled in Greece, Italy, Syria, and Palestine, seeking religious instruction everywhere; Irenaeus, a native of Asia Minor and from 178 bishop of Lyons, a pupil of Polycarp and a grand-pupil of John himself, who derived his chief ammunition against the Gnostic heresy from the fourth Gospel, and represents the four canonical Gospels—no more and no less—as universally accepted by the churches of his time; Theophilus of Antioch (180), who expressly quotes from the fourth Gospel under the name of John; the Muratorian Canon (170), which reports the occasion of the composition of John's Gospel by urgent request of his friends and disciples; Tatian of Syria (155–170), who in his "Address to the Greeks" repeatedly quotes the fourth Gospel, though without naming the author, and who began his, "Diatessaron"—once widely spread in the church notwithstanding the somewhat Gnostic leanings of the author, and commented on by Ephraem of Syria—with the prologue of John. From him we have but one step to his teacher, Justin Martyr, a native of Palestine (103–166), and a bold and noble-minded defender of the faith in the reigns of Hadrian and the Antonines. In his two Apologies and his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, he often quotes freely from the four Gospels under the name of Apostolic "Memoirs" or "Memorabilia of the Apostles," which were read at his time in public, worship. He made most use of Matthew, but once at least he quotes a passage on

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regeneration from Christ's dialogue with Nicodemus which is recorded only by John. Several other allusions of Justin to John are unmistakable, and his whole doctrine of the pre-existent Logos who sowed precious seeds of truth among Jews and Gentiles before his incarnation, is unquestionably derived from John. To reverse the case is to derive the sunlight from the moon, or the fountain from one of its streams.

But we can go still farther back. The scanty writings of the Apostolic Fathers, so called, have very few allusions to the New Testament, and breathe the atmosphere of the primitive oral tradition. The author of the "Didache" was well acquainted with Matthew. The first Epistle of Clement has strong affinity with Paul. The shorter Epistles of Ignatius show the influence of John's Christology. Polycarp (d. A.D. 155 in extreme old age), a personal pupil of John, used the First Epistle of John, and thus furnishes an indirect testimony to the Gospel, since both these 'books must stand or fall together. The same is true of Papias (died about 150), who studied with Polycarp, and probably was likewise a bearer of John. He "used testimonies from the former Epistle of John." In enumerating the apostles whose living words he collected in his youth, he places John out of his regular order of precedence, along with Matthew, his fellow-Evangelist, and "Andrew, Peter, and Philip" in the same order as John 1:40-43; from which it has also been inferred that he knew the fourth Gospel. There is some reason to suppose that the disputed section on the woman taken in adultery was recorded by him in illustration of John 8:15; for, according to Eusebius, he mentioned a similar story in his lost work. These facts combined, make it at least extremely probable that Papias was familiar with John. The joint testimony of Polycarp and Papias represents the school of John in the very field of his later labors, and the succession was continued through Polycrates at Ephesus, through Melito at Sardis, through Claudius Apollinaris at Hieropolis, and

Pothinus and Irenaeus in Southern Gaul. It is simply incredible that a spurious Gospel should have been smuggled into the churches under the name of their revered spiritual father and grandfather.

Finally, the concluding verse of the appendix, John 21:24, is a still older testimony of a number of personal friends and pupils of John, perhaps the very persons who, according to ancient tradition, urged him to write the Gospel. The book probably closed with the sentence: "This is the disciple who beareth witness of these things, and wrote these things." To this the elders add their attestation in the plural: "And we know that his witness is true." A literary fiction would not have been benefited by an anonymous postscript. The words as they stand are either a false testimony of the pseudo-John, or the true testimony of the friends of the real John who first received his book and published it before or after his death.

The voice of the whole Catholic church, so far as it is heard, on the subject at all, is in favor of the authorship of John. There is not a shadow of proof to the contrary opinion except one, and that is purely negative and inconclusive. Baur to the very last laid the greatest stress on the entangled paschal controversy of the second century as a proof that John could not have written the fourth Gospel because he was quoted as an authority for the celebration of the Lord's Supper on the 14th of Nisan; while the fourth Gospel, in flat contradiction to the Synoptists, puts the crucifixion on that day (instead of the 15th), and represents Christ as the true paschal lamb slain at the very time when the typical Jewish passover was slain. But, in the first place, some of the ablest scholars know how to reconcile John with the Synoptic date of the crucifixion on the 15th of Nisan; and, secondly, there is no evidence at all that the apostle John celebrated Easter with the Quartodecimans on the 14th of Nisan in commemoration of the day of the Lord's Supper. The controversy was between conforming the celebration of the Christian

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Passover to the day of the month, that is to Jewish chronology, or to the day of the week on which Christ died. The former would have made Easter, more conveniently, a fixed festival like the Jewish Passover, the latter or Roman practice made it a movable feast, and this practice triumphed at the Council of Nicaea.

2. Heretical testimonies. They all the more important in view of their dissent from Catholic doctrine. It is remarkable that the heretics seem to have used and commented on the fourth Gospel even before the Catholic writers. The Clementine Homilies, besides several allusions, very clearly quote from the story of the man born blind, John 9:2, 3. The Gnostics of the second century, especially the Valentinians and Basilidians, made abundant use of the fourth Gospel, which alternately offended them by its historical realism, and attracted them by its idealism and mysticism. Heracleon, a pupil of Valentinus, wrote a commentary on it, of which Origen has preserved large extracts; Valentinus himself (according to Tertullian) tried either to explain it away, or he put his own meaning into it. Basilides, who flourished about A.D. 125, quoted from the Gospel of John such passages as the "true light, which enlighteneth every man was coming into the world" (John 1:9), and, my hour is not yet come "(2:4).

These heretical testimonies are almost decisive by themselves. The Gnostics would rather have rejected the fourth Gospel altogether, as Marcion actually did, from doctrinal objection. They certainly would not have received it from the Catholic church, as little as the church would have received it from the Gnostics. The concurrent reception of the Gospel by both at so early a date is conclusive evidence of its genuineness. "The Gnostics of that date," says Dr. Abbot, "received it because they could not help it. They would not have admitted the authority of a book which could be reconciled with their doctrines only by the most forced interpretation, if they could have destroyed

its authority by denying its genuineness. Its genuineness could then be easily ascertained. Ephesus was one of the principal cities of the Eastern world, the centre of extensive commerce, the metropolis of Asia Minor. Hundreds, if not thousands, of people were living who had known the apostle John. The question whether he, the beloved disciple, had committed to writing his recollections of his Master's life and teaching, was one of the greatest interest. The fact of the reception of the fourth Gospel as his work at so early a date, by parties so violently opposed to each other, proves that the evidence of its genuineness was decisive. This argument is further confirmed by the use of the Gospel by the opposing parties in the later Montanistic controversy, and in the disputes about the time of celebrating Easter."

3. Heathen testimony. Celsus, in his book against Christianity, which was written about A.D. 178 (according to Keim, who reconstructed it from the fragments preserved in the refutation of Origen), derives his matter for attack from the four Gospels, though he does not name their authors, and he refers to several details which are peculiar to John, as, among others, the blood which flowed from the body of Jesus at his crucifixion (John 19:34), and the fact that Christ "after his death arose and showed the marks of his punishment, and how his hands had been pierced" (20:25, 27).

The radical assertion of Baur that no distinct trace of the fourth Gospel can be found before the last quarter of the second century has utterly broken down, and his own best pupils have been forced to make one concession after another as the successive discoveries of the many Gnostic quotations in the Philosophumena, the last book of the pseudo-Clementine Homilies, the Syrian Commentary on Tatian's Diatessaron, revealed the stubborn fact of the use and abuse of the Gospel before the middle and up to the very beginning of the second century, that is, to a time when it was simply impossible to mistake a pseudo-apostolic fiction for a

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genuine production of the patriarch of the apostolic age.

II. INTERNAL EVIDENCE. This is even still stronger, and leaves at last no alternative but truth or fraud.

1. To begin with the style of the fourth Gospel, we have already seen that it is altogether unique and without a parallel in post-apostolic literature, betraying a Hebrew of the Hebrews, impregnated with the genius of the Old Testament, in mode of thought and expression, in imagery and symbolism, in the symmetrical structure of sentences, in the simplicity and circumstantiality of narration; yet familiar with pure Greek, from long residence among Greeks. This is just what we should expect from John at Ephesus. Though not a rabbinical scholar, like Paul, he was acquainted with the Hebrew Scriptures and not dependent on the Septuagint. He has in all fourteen quotations from the Old Testament. Four of these agree with the Hebrew and the Septuagint; three agree with the Hebrew against the Septuagint (6:45; 13:18 19:37), the rest are neutral, either agreeing with both or differing from both, or being free adaptations rather than citations; but none of them agrees with the Septuagint against the Hebrew.

Among the post-apostolic writers there is no converted Jew, unless it be Hegesippus; none who could read the Hebrew and write Hebraistic Greek. After the destruction of Jerusalem the church finally separated from the synagogue and both assumed an attitude of uncompromising hostility.

2. The author was a Jew of Palestine. He gives, incidentally and without effort, unmistakable evidence of minute familiarity with the Holy Land and its inhabitants before the destruction of Jerusalem. He is at home in the localities of the holy city and the neighborhood. He describes Bethesda as "a pool by the sheep gate, having five porches" (5:2), Siloam as "a pool which is by interpretation Sent" (9:7), Solomon's porch as being "in the Temple" (10:23), the brook

Kedron "where was a garden" (18:1); he knows the location of the praetorium (18:28), the meaning of Gabbatha (19:13), and Golgotha (19:17), the distance of Bethany from Jerusalem "about fifteen furlongs off" (11:18), and he distinguishes it from Bethany beyond Jordan (1:28). He gives the date when the Herodian reconstruction of the temple began (2:19). He is equally familiar with other parts of Palestine and makes no mistakes such as are so often made by foreigners. He locates Cana in Galilee (2:1; 4:26 21:2), to distinguish it from another Cana; Aenon "near to Salim" where there are "many waters" (3:23); Sychar in Samaria near "Jacob's well," and in view of Mount Gerizim (4:5). He knows the extent of the Lake of Tiberias (6:19); he describes Bethsaida as "the city of Andrew and Peter" (1:44), as distinct from Bethsaida Julias on the eastern bank of the Jordan; he represents Nazareth as a place of proverbial insignificance (1:46).

He is well acquainted with the confused politico-ecclesiastical Messianic ideas and expectations of the Jews (1:19-28, 45-49; 4:25; 6:14, 15 7:26; 12:34, and other passages); with the hostility between Jews and Samaritans (4:9, 20, 22 8:48); with Jewish usages and observances, as baptism (1:25; 3:22, 23 4:2), purification (2:6; 3:25, etc.), ceremonial pollution (18:28), feasts (2:13, 23; 5:1 7:37, etc.), circumcision, and the Sabbath (7:22, 23). He is also acquainted with the marriage and burial rites (2:1-10; 11:17-44), with the character of the Pharisees and their influence in the Sanhedrin, the relationship between Annas and Caiaphas. The objection of Bretschneider that he represents the office of the high-priest as an annual office arose from a misunderstanding of the phrase "that year" (11:49, 51 18:13), by which he means that memorable year in which Christ died for the sins of the people.

3. The author was an eye-witness of most of the events narrated. This appears from his life-like familiarity with the acting persons, the Baptist, Peter, Andrew, Philip, Nathanael,

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Thomas, Judas Iscariot, Pilate, Caiaphas, Annas, Nicodemus, Martha and Mary, Mary Magdalene, the woman of Samaria, the man born blind; and from the minute traits and vivid details which betray autopticity. He incidentally notices what the Synoptists omit, that the traitor was "the son of Simon" (6:71; 12:4; 13:2, 26 at Thomas was called "Didymus" (11:16; 20:24 21:2); while, on the other hand, he calls the Baptist simply "John" (he himself being the other John), without adding to it the distinctive title as the Synoptists do more than a dozen times to distinguish him from the son of Zebedee. He indicates the days and hours of certain events, and the exact or approximate number of persons and objects mentioned. He was privy to the thoughts of the disciples on certain occasions, their ignorance and misunderstanding of the words of the Master, and even to the motives and feelings of the Lord.

No literary artist could have invented the conversation of Christ with Nicodemus on the mystery of spiritual regeneration (John 3), or the conversation with the woman of Samaria (John 4), or the characteristic details of the catechization of the man born blind, which brings out so naturally the proud and heartless bigotry of the Jewish hierarchy and the rough, outspoken honesty and common sense of the blind man and his parents (9:13-34). The scene at Jacob's well, described in John 4, presents a most graphic, and yet unartificial picture of nature and human life as it still remains, though in decay, at the foot of Gerizim and Ebal: there is the well of Jacob in a fertile, well-watered valley, there the Samaritan sanctuary on the top of Mount Gerizim, there the waving grain-fields ripening for the harvest; we are confronted with the historic antagonism of Jews and Samaritans which survives in the Nablus of to-day; there we see the genuine humanity of Jesus, as he sat down "wearied with his journey," though not weary of his work, his elevation above the rabbinical prejudice of conversing with a woman, his superhuman

knowledge and dignity; there is the curiosity and quick-wittedness of the Samaritan Magdalene; and how natural is the transition from the water of Jacob's well to the water of life, and from the hot dispute of the place of worship to the highest conception of God as an omnipresent spirit, and his true worship in spirit and in truth.

4. The writer represents himself expressly as an eye-witness of the life of Christ. He differs from the Synoptists, who never use the first person nor mix their subjective feelings with the narrative. "We beheld his glory," he says, in the name of all the apostles and primitive disciples, in stating the general impression made upon them by the incarnate Logos dwelling. And in the parallel passage of the first Epistle, which is an inseparable companion of the fourth Gospel, he asserts with solemn emphasis his personal knowledge of the incarnate Word of life whom he heard with his ears and saw with his eyes and handled with his hands (1 John 1:1-3). This assertion is general, and covers the whole public life of our Lord. But he makes it also in particular a case of special interest for the realness of Christ's humanity; in recording the flow of blood and water from the wounded side, he adds emphatically: "He that hath seen hath borne witness, and his witness is true: and he knoweth that he saith things that are true, that ye also may believe" (John 19:35). Here we are driven to the alternative: either the writer was a true witness of what he relates, or he was a false witness who wrote down a deliberate lie.

5. Finally, the writer intimates that he is one of the Twelve, that he is one of the favorite three, that he is not Peter, nor James, that he is none other than the beloved John who leaned on the Master's bosom. He never names himself, nor his brother James, nor his mother Salome, but he has a very modest, delicate, and altogether unique way of indirect self-designation. He stands behind his Gospel like a mysterious figure with a thin veil over his face without ever lifting the veil. He leaves the reader to infer the name by

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combination. He is undoubtedly that unnamed disciple who, with Andrew, was led to Jesus by the testimony of the Baptist on the banks of the Jordan (1:35-40), the disciple who at the last Supper "was reclining at the table in Jesus' bosom" (13:23-25), that "other disciple" who, with Peter, followed Jesus into the court of the high-priest (18:15, 16), who stood by the cross and was entrusted by the dying Lord with the care of His mother (19:26, 27), and that "other disciple whom Jesus loved," who went with Peter to the empty sepulcher on the resurrection morning and was convinced of the great fact by the sight of the grave-cloths, and the head-cover rolled up in a place by itself (20:2-8). All these narratives are interwoven with autobiographic details. He calls himself "the disciple whom Jesus loved," not from vanity (as has been most strangely asserted by some critics), but in blessed and thankful remembrance of the infinite mercy of his divine Master who thus fulfilled the prophecy of his name Johanan, i.e., Jehovah is gracious. In that peculiar love of his all-beloved Lord was summed up for him the whole significance of his life.

With this mode of self-designation corresponds the designation of members of his family: his mother is probably meant by the unnamed "sister of the mother" of Jesus, who stood by the cross (John 19:25), for Salome was there, according to the Synoptists, and John would hardly omit this fact; and in the list of the disciples to whom Jesus appeared at the Lake of Galilee, "the sons of Zebedee" are put last (21:2), when yet in all the Synoptic lists of the apostles they are, with Peter and Andrew, placed at the head of the Twelve. This difference can only be explained from motives of delicacy and modesty.

What a contrast the author presents to those pseudonymous literary forgers of the second and third centuries, who unscrupulously put their writings into the mouth of the apostles or other honored names to lend them a fictitious charm and authority; and yet who

cannot conceal the fraud which leaks out on every page.

#### CONCLUSION

A review of this array of testimonies, external and internal, drives us to the irresistible conclusion that the fourth Gospel is the work of John, the apostle. This view is clear, self-consistent, and in full harmony with the character of the book and the whole history of the apostolic age; while the hypothesis of a literary fiction and pious fraud is contradictory, absurd, and self-condemned. No writer in the second century could have produced such a marvelous book, which towers high above all the books of Justin Martyr and Irenaeus and Tertullian and Clement and Origen, or any other father or schoolman or reformer. No writer in the first century could have written it but an apostle, and no apostle but John, and John himself could not have written it without divine inspiration.

#### 1.84 Critical Review of the Johannine Problem.

The importance of the subject justifies a special Section on the opposition to the fourth Gospel, after we have presented our own view on the subject with constant reference to the recent objections.

#### THE PROBLEM STATED

The Johannine problem is the burning question of modern criticism on the soil of the New Testament. It arises from the difference between John and the Synoptists on the one hand, and the difference between the fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse on the other.

I. The Synoptic aspect of the problem includes the differences between the first three Evangelists and the fourth concerning the theatre and length of Christ's ministry, the picture of Christ, the nature and extent of his discourses, and a number of minor details. It admits the following possibilities:

(1.) Both the Synoptists and John are historical, and represent only different

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aspects of the same person and work of Christ, supplementing and confirming each other in every essential point. This is the faith of the Church and the conviction of nearly all conservative critics and commentators.

(2.) The fourth Gospel is the work of John, and, owing to his intimacy with Christ, it is more accurate and reliable than the Synoptists, who contain some legendary embellishments and even errors, derived from oral tradition, and must be rectified by John. This is the view of Schleiermacher, Lücke, Bleek, Ewald, Meyer, Weiss, and a considerable number of liberal critics and exegetes who yet accept the substance of the whole gospel history as true, and Christ as the Lord and Saviour of the race. The difference between these scholars and the church tradition is not fundamental, and admits of adjustment.

(3.) The Synoptists represent (in the main) the Christ of history, the fourth Gospel the ideal Christ of faith and fiction. So Baur and the Tübingen school (Schwegler, Zeller, Köstlin, Hilgenfeld, Volkmar, Holtzmann, , Hausrath, Schenkel, Mangold, Keim, Thoma), with their followers and sympathizers in France (Nicolas, d'Eichthal, Renan, Réville, Sabatier), Holland (Scholten and the Leyden school), and England (the anonymous author of "Supernatural Religion," Sam. Davidson, Edwin A. Abbott). But these critics eliminate the miraculous even from the Synoptic Christ, at least as far as possible, and approach the fourth hypothesis.

(4.) The Synoptic and Johannine Gospels are alike fictitious, and resolve themselves into myths and legends or pious frauds. This is the position of the extreme left wing of modern criticism represented chiefly by Strauss. It is the legitimate result of the denial of the supernatural and miraculous, which is as inseparable from the Synoptic as it is from the Johannine Christ; but it is also subversive of all history and cannot be seriously maintained in the face of overwhelming facts and results. Hence there has been a

considerable reaction among the radical critics in favor of a more historical position. Keim's, "History of Jesus of Nazara" is a very great advance upon Strauss's "Leben Jesu," though equally critical and more learned, and meets the orthodox view half way on the ground of the Synoptic tradition, as represented in the Gospel of Matthew, which he dates back to A.D. 66.

II. The Apocalyptic aspect of the Johannine problem belongs properly to the consideration of the Apocalypse, but it has of late been inseparably interwoven with the Gospel question. It admits likewise of four distinct views:

(1.) The fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse are both from the pen of the apostle John, but separated by the nature of the subject, the condition of the writer, and an interval of at least twenty or thirty years, to account for the striking differences of temper and style. When he met Paul at Jerusalem, A.D. 50, HE WAS ONE OF THE THREE "PILLAR-APOSTLES" OF JEWISH CHRISTIANITY (GAL. 2:9), BUT PROBABLY LESS THAN FORTY YEARS OF AGE, REMARKABLY SILENT WITH HIS RESERVED FORCE, AND SUFFICIENTLY IN SYMPATHY WITH PAUL TO GIVE HIM THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP; WHEN HE WROTE THE APOCALYPSE, BETWEEN A.D. 68 and 70, he was not yet sixty, and when he wrote the Gospel he was over eighty years of age. Moreover, the differences between the two books are more than counterbalanced by an underlying harmony. This has been acknowledged even by the head of the Tübingen critics, who calls the fourth Gospel an Apocalypse spiritualized or a transfiguration of the Apocalypse.

(2.) John wrote the Gospel, but not the Apocalypse. Many critics of the moderate school are disposed to surrender the Apocalypse and to assign it to the somewhat doubtful and mysterious "Presbyter John," a contemporary of the Apostle John. So Schleiermacher, Lücke, Bleek, Neander, Ewald, Düsterdieck, etc. If we are to choose

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between the two books, the Gospel has no doubt stronger claims upon our acceptance.

(3.) John wrote the Apocalypse, but for this very reason he cannot have written the fourth Gospel. So Baur, Renan, Davidson, Abbott, and nearly all the radical critics (except Keim).

(4.) The fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse are both spurious and the work of the Gnostic Cerinthus (as the Alogi held), or of some anonymous forger. This view is so preposterous and unsound that no critic of any reputation for learning and judgment dares to defend it.

There is a correspondence between the four possible attitudes on both aspects of the Johannine question, and the parties advocating them.

The result of the conflict will be the substantial triumph of the faith of the church which accepts, on new grounds of evidence, all the four Gospels as genuine and historical, and the Apocalypse and the fourth Gospel as the works of John.

#### THE ASSAULTS ON THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

Criticism has completely shifted its attitude on both parts of the problem. The change is very remarkable. When the first serious assault was made upon the genuineness of the fourth Gospel by the learned General Superintendent Bretschneider (in 1820), he was met with such overwhelming opposition, not only from evangelical divines like Olshausen and Tholuck, but also from Schleiermacher, Lücke, Credner, and Schott, that he honestly confessed his defeat a few years afterward (1824 and 1828). And when Dr. Strauss, in his *Leben Jesu* (1835), renewed the denial, a host of old and new defenders arose with such powerful arguments that he himself (as he confessed in the third edition of 1838) was shaken in his doubt, especially by the weight and candor of Neander, although he felt compelled, in self-defence, to reaffirm his doubt as essential to the mythical hypothesis (in the fourth edition, 1840, and afterward in his popular *Leben Jesu*, 1864).

But in the meantime his teacher, Dr. Baur, the coryphaeus of the Tübingen school, was preparing his heavy ammunition, and led the second, the boldest, the most vigorous and effective assault upon the Johannine fort (since 1844). He was followed in the main question, though with considerable modifications in detail, by a number of able and acute critics in Germany and other countries. He represented the fourth Gospel as a purely ideal work which grew out of the Gnostic, Montanistic, and paschal controversies after the middle of the second century, and adjusted the various elements of the Catholic faith with consummate skill and art. It was not intended to be a history, but a system of theology in the garb of history. This "tendency" hypothesis was virtually a death-blow to the mythical theory of Strauss, which excludes conscious design.

The third great assault inspired by Baur, yet with independent learning and judgment, was made by Dr. Keim (in his *Geschichte Jesu von Nazara*, 1867). He went beyond Baur in one point: he denied the whole tradition of John's sojourn in Ephesus as a mistake of Irenaeus; he thus removed even the foundation for the defence of the Apocalypse as a Johannine production, and neutralized the force of the Tübingen assault derived from that book. On the other hand, he approached the traditional view by tracing the composition back from 170 (Baur) to the reign of Trajan, i.e., to within a few years after the death of the apostle. In his denial of the Ephesus tradition he met with little favor, but strong opposition from the Tübingen critics, who see the fatal bearing of this denial upon the genuineness of the Apocalypse. The effect of Keim's movement therefore tended rather to divide and demoralize the besieging force.

Nevertheless the effect of these persistent attacks was so great that three eminent scholars, Hase of Jena (1876), Reuss of Strassburg, and Sabatier of Paris (1879), deserted from the camp of the defenders to the army of the besiegers. Renan, too, who had in the thirteenth edition of his *Vie de*

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Jesus (1867) defended the fourth Gospel at least in part, has now (since 1879, in his *L'Église chrétienne*) given it up entirely.

#### THE DEFENCE OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

The incisive criticism of Baur and his school compelled a thorough reinvestigation of the whole problem, and in this way has been of very great service to the cause of truth. We owe to it the ablest defenses of the Johannine authorship of the fourth Gospel and the precious history which it represents. Prominent among these defenders against the latest attacks were Bleek, Lange, Ebrard, Thiersch, Schneider, Tischendorf, Riggenbach, Ewald, Steitz, Aberle, Meyer, Luthardt, Wieseler, Beyschlag, Weiss, among the Germans; Godet, Pressensé, Astié, among the French; Niermeyer, Van Oosterzee, Hofstede de Groot, among the Dutch; Alford, Milligan, Lightfoot, Westcott, Sanday, Plummer, among the English; Fisher, and Abbot among the Americans.

It is significant that the school of negative criticism has produced no learned commentary on John. All the recent commentators on the fourth Gospel (Lücke, Ewald, Lange, Hengstenberg, Luthardt, Meyer, Weiss, Alford, Wordsworth, Godet, Westcott, Milligan, Moulton, Plummer, etc.) favor its genuineness.

#### THE DIFFICULTIES OF THE ANTI-JOHANNINE THEORY.

The prevailing theory of the negative critics is this: They accept the Synoptic Gospels, with the exception of the miracles, as genuine history, but for this very reason they reject John; and they accept the Apocalypse as the genuine work of the apostle John, who is represented by the Synoptists as a Son of Thunder, and by Paul (Gal. 2) as one of the three pillars of conservative Jewish Christianity, but for this very reason they deny that he can have written the Gospel, which in style and spirit differs so widely from the Apocalypse. For this position they appeal to the fact that the Synoptists and the

Apocalypse are equally well, and even better supported by internal and external evidence, and represent a tradition which is at least twenty years older.

But what then becomes of the fourth Gospel? It is incredible that the real John should have falsified the history of his Master; consequently the Gospel which bears his name is a post-apostolic fiction, a religious poem, or a romance on the theme of the incarnate Logos. It is the Gospel of Christian Gnosticism, strongly influenced by the Alexandrian philosophy of Philo. Yet it is no fraud any more than other literary fictions. The unknown author dealt with the historical Jesus of the Synoptists, as Plato dealt with Socrates, making him simply the base for his own sublime speculations, and putting speeches into his mouth which he never uttered.

Who was that Christian Plato? No critic can tell, or even conjecture, except Renan, who revived, as possible at least, the absurd view of the Alogi, that the Gnostic heretic, Cerinthus the enemy of John, wrote the fourth Gospel. Such a conjecture requires an extraordinary stretch of imagination and an amazing amount of credulity. The more sober among the critics suppose that the author was a highly gifted Ephesian disciple of John, who freely reproduced and modified his oral teaching after he was removed by death. But how could his name be utterly unknown, when the names of Polycarp and Papias and other disciples of John, far less important, have come down to us? "The great unknown" is a mystery indeed. Some critics, half in sympathy with Tübingen, are willing to admit that John himself wrote a part of the book, either the historic narratives or the discourses, but neither of these compromises will do: the book is a unit, and is either wholly genuine or wholly a fiction.

Nor are the negative critics agreed as to the time of composition. Under the increasing pressure of argument and evidence they have been forced to retreat, step by step, from the

last quarter of the second century to the first, even within a few years of John's death, and within the lifetime of hundreds of his hearers, when it was impossible for a pseudo-Johannine book to pass into general currency without the discovery of the fraud. Dr. Baur and Schweigler assigned the composition to A.D. 170 or 160; Volkmar to 155; Zeller to 150; Scholten to 140; Hilgenfeld to about 130; Renan to about 125; Schenkel to 120 or 115; until Keim (in 1867) went up as high as 110 or even 100, but having reached such an early date, he felt compelled (1875) in self-defence to advance again to 130, and this notwithstanding the conceded testimonies of Justin Martyr and the early Gnostics. These vacillations of criticism reveal the impossibility of locating the Gospel in the second century.

If we surrender the fourth Gospel, what shall we gain in its place? Fiction for fact, stone for bread, a Gnostic dream for the most glorious truth.

Fortunately, the whole anti-Johannine hypothesis breaks down at every point. It suffers shipwreck on innumerable details which do not fit at all into the supposed dogmatic scheme, but rest on hard facts of historical recollections.

And instead of removing any difficulties it creates greater difficulties in their place. There are certain contradictions which no ingenuity can solve. If "the great unknown" was the creative artist of his ideal Christ, and the inventor of those sublime discourses, the like of which were never heard before or since, he must have been a mightier genius than Dante or Shakespeare, yea greater than his own hero, that is greater than the greatest: this is a psychological impossibility and a logical absurdity. Moreover, if he was not John and yet wanted to be known as John, he was a deceiver and a liar: this is a moral impossibility. The case of Plato is very different, and his relation to Socrates is generally understood. The Synoptic Gospels are anonymous, but do not deceive the

reader. Luke and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews honestly make themselves known as mere disciples of the apostles. The real parallel would be the apocryphal Gospels and the pseudo-Clementine productions, where the fraud is unmistakable, but the contents are so far below the fourth Gospel that a comparison is out of the question. Literary fictions were not uncommon in the ancient church, but men had common sense and moral sense then as well as now to distinguish between fact and fiction, truth and lie. It is simply incredible that the ancient church should have been duped into a unanimous acceptance of such an important book as the work of the beloved disciple almost from the very date of his death, and that the whole Christian church, Greek, Latin, Protestant, including an innumerable army of scholars, should have been under a radical delusion for eighteen hundred years, mistaking a Gnostic dream for the genuine history of the Saviour of mankind, and drinking the water of life from the muddy source of fraud.

In the meantime the fourth Gospel continues and will continue to shine, like the sun in heaven, its own best evidence, and will shine all the brighter when the clouds, great and small, shall have passed away.

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## THE ACTS AND THE THIRD GOSPEL.

The book of Acts, though placed by the ancient ecclesiastical division not in the "Gospel," but in the "Apostle," is a direct continuation of the third Gospel, by the same author, and addressed to the same Theophilus, probably a Christian convert of distinguished social position. In the former he reports what he heard and read, in the latter what he heard and saw. The one records the life and work of Christ, the other the work of

the Holy Spirit, who is recognized at every step. The word Spirit, or Holy Spirit, occurs more frequently in the Acts than in any other book of the New Testament. It might properly be called "the Gospel of the Holy Spirit."

The universal testimony of the ancient church traces the two books to the same author. This is confirmed by internal evidence of identity of style, continuity of narrative, and correspondence of plan. About fifty words not found elsewhere in the New Testament are common to both books.

## OBJECT AND CONTENTS

The Acts is a cheerful and encouraging book, like the third Gospel; it is full of missionary zeal and hope; it records progress after progress, conquest after conquest, and turns even persecution and martyrdom into an occasion of joy and thanksgiving. It is the first church history. It begins in Jerusalem and ends in Rome. An additional chapter would probably have recorded the terrible persecution of Nero and the heroic martyrdom of Paul and Peter. But this would have made the book a tragedy; instead of that it ends as cheerfully and triumphantly as it begins.

It represents the origin and progress of Christianity from the capital of Judaism to the capital of heathenism. It is a history of the planting of the church among the Jews by Peter, and among the Gentiles by Paul. Its theme is expressed in the promise of the risen Christ to his disciples (Acts 1:8): "Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you (Acts 2): and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem (Acts 3-7), and in all Judaea and Samaria (Acts 8-12), and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 13-28). The Gospel of Luke, which is the Pauline Gospel, laid the foundation by showing how salvation, coming from the Jews and opposed by the Jews, was intended for all men, Samaritans and Gentiles. The Acts exhibits the progress of the church from and among the Jews to the Gentiles by the ministry of Peter, then of Stephen, then of

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Philip in Samaria, then of Peter again in the conversion of Cornelius, and at last by the labors of Paul and his companions.

The Acts begins with the ascension of Christ, or his accession to his throne, and the founding of his kingdom by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit; it closes with the joyful preaching of the Apostle of the Gentiles in the capital of the then known world.

The objective representation of the progress of the church is the chief aim of the work, and the subjective and biographical features are altogether subordinate. Before Peter, the hero of the first or Jewish-Christian division, and Paul, the hero of the second or Gentile-Christian part, the other apostles retire and are only once named, except John, the elder James, Stephen, and James, the brother of the Lord. Even the lives of the pillar-apostles appear in the history only so far as they are connected with the missionary work. In this view the long-received title of the book, added by some other hand than the author's, is not altogether correct, though in keeping with ancient usage (as in the apocryphal literature, which includes "Acts of Pilate," "Acts of Peter and Paul," "Acts of Philip," etc.). More than three-fifths of it are devoted to Paul, and especially to his later labors and journeys, in which the author could speak from personal knowledge. The book is simply a selection of biographical memoirs of Peter and Paul connected with the planting of Christianity or the beginnings of the church.

#### SOURCES.

Luke, the faithful pupil and companion of Paul, was eminently fitted to produce the history of the primitive church. For the first part he had the aid not only of oral tradition, but she of Palestinian documents, as he had in preparing his Gospel. Hence the Hebrew coloring in the earlier chapters of Acts; while afterward he writes as pure Greek, as in the classical prologue of his Gospel. Most of the events in the second part came under his personal observation. Hence he often speaks in the plural number, modestly including

himself. The "we" sections begin Acts 16:10, when Paul started from Troas to Macedonia (A.D. 51); THEY BREAK OFF WHEN HE LEAVES PHILIPPI FOR CORINTH (17:1); THEY ARE RESUMED (20:5, 6) WHEN HE VISITS MACEDONIA AGAIN SEVEN YEARS LATER (58), AND THEN CONTINUE TO THE CLOSE OF THE NARRATIVE (A.D. 63). Luke probably remained several years at Philippi, engaged in missionary labors, until Paul's return. He was in the company of Paul, including the interruptions, at least twelve years. He was again with Paul in his last captivity, shortly before his martyrdom, his most faithful and devoted companion (2 Tim. 4:11).

#### TIME OF COMPOSITION.

Luke probably began the book of Acts or a preliminary diary during his missionary journeys with Paul in Greece, especially in Philippi, where he seems to have tarried several years; he continued it in Caesarea, where he had the best opportunity to gather reliable information of the earlier history, from Jerusalem, and such living witnesses as Cornelius and his friends, from Philip and his daughters, who resided in Caesarea; and he finished it soon after Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, before the terrible persecution in the summer of 64, which he could hardly have left unnoticed.

We look in vain for any allusion to this persecution and the martyrdom of Paul or Peter, or to any of their Epistles, or to the destruction of Jerusalem, or to the later organization of the church, or the superiority of the bishop over the presbyter (Comp. Acts 20:17, 28), or the Gnostic heresies, except by way of prophetic warning (20:30). This silence in a historical work like this seems inexplicable on the assumption that the book was written after A.D. 70, or even after 64. But if we place the composition before, the martyrdom of Paul, then the last verse is after all an appropriate conclusion of a missionary history of Christianity from Jerusalem to Rome. For the bold and free testimony of the

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Apostle of the Gentiles in the very heart of the civilized world was the sign and pledge of victory.

#### THE ACTS AND THE GOSPELS.

The Acts is the connecting link between the Gospels and Epistles. It presupposes and confirms the leading events in the life of Christ, on which the church is built. The fact of the resurrection, whereof the apostles were witnesses, sends a thrill of joy and an air of victory through the whole book. God raised Jesus from the dead and mightily proclaimed him to be the Messiah, the prince of life and a Saviour in Israel; this is the burden of the sermons of Peter, who shortly before had denied his Master. He boldly bears witness to it before the people, in his pentecostal sermon, before the Sanhedrin, and before Cornelius. Paul likewise, in his addresses at Antioch in Pisidia, at Thessalonica, on the Areopagus before the Athenian philosophers, and at Caesarea before Festus and Agrippa, emphasizes the resurrection without which his own conversion never could have taken place.

#### THE ACTS AND THE EPISTLES.

The Acts gives us the external history of the apostolic church; the Epistles present the internal life of the same. Both mutually supplement and confirm each other by a series of coincidences in all essential points. These coincidences are all the more conclusive as they are undesigned and accompanied by slight discrepancies in minor details. Archdeacon Paley made them the subject of a discussion in his *Horae Paulinae*, which will retain its place among classical monographs alongside of James Smith's *Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul*. Arguments such as are furnished in these two books are sufficient to silence most of the critical objections against the credibility of Acts for readers of sound common sense and unbiased judgment. There is not the slightest trace that Luke had read any of the thirteen Epistles of Paul, nor that Paul had read a line

of Acts. The writings were contemporaneous and independent, yet animated by the same spirit. Luke omits, it is true, Paul's journey to Arabia, his collision with Peter at Antioch, and many of his trials and persecutions; but he did not aim at a full biography. The following are a few examples of these conspicuously undesigned coincidences in the chronological order:

#### PAUL'S CONVERSION.

Comp. Acts chs. 9; 22 and 26; three accounts which differ only in minor details.

Gal. 1:15-17; 1 Cor. 15:8; 1 Tim. 1:13-16.

#### PAUL'S PERSECUTION AND ESCAPE AT DAMASCUS.

Acts 9:23-25. The Jews took counsel together to kill him ... but his disciples took him by night, and let him down through the wall lowering him in a basket.

2 Cor. 11:32, 33. In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king guarded the city of the Damascenes, in order to take me; and through a window I was let down in a basket by the wall, and escaped his hands

#### PAUL'S VISITS TO JERUSALEM.

9:26, 27. And when he was come to Jerusalem ... Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles.

Gal. 1:18. Then after three years [counting from his conversion] I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and tarried with him fifteen days.

15:2. They appointed that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders [to the apostolic conference to settle the question about circumcision].

Gal. 2:1. Then after the space of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus also with me. And I went up by revelation. [This inner motive does, of course, not exclude the church appointment mentioned by Luke.]

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PAUL LEFT AT ATHENS ALONE.

17:16. Now while Paul waited for them [Silas and Timothy] at Athens.

1 Thess. 3:1 We thought it good to be left behind at Athens alone, and sent Timothy, etc. Comp 3:7.

PAUL WORKING AT HIS TRADE.

18:3. And because he [Aquila] was of the same trade, he abode with them, and they wrought; for by their trade they were tent makers. Comp. 20:34.

1 Thess. 2:9. Ye remember, brethren, our labor and travail: working night and day, that we might not burden any of you. Comp. 1 Cor. 4:11, 12.

PAUL'S TWO VISITS TO CORINTH.

18:1; 20:2.

1 Cor. 2:1; 4:19; 16:5.

WORK OF APOLLOS AT CORINTH.

18:27, 28.

1 Cor. 1:12; 3:6.

PAUL BECOMING A JEW TO THE JEWS.

16:3; 18:18 21:23–26.

1 Cor. 9:20.

BAPTISM OF CRISPUS AND GAIUS.

18:8.

1 Cor. 1:14–17.

COLLECTION FOR THE POOR BRETHREN.

28:23.

1 Cor. 16:1.

PAUL'S LAST JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM.

20 ;6; 24:17

ROM. 15:25, 26

HIS DESIRE TO VISIT ROME.

19:21.

ROM. 1:13;15:23.

PAUL AN AMBASSADOR IN BONDS.

28:16–20.

EPH. 6:19, 20

THE ACTS AND SECULAR HISTORY.

The Acts brings Christianity in contact with the surrounding world and makes many allusions to various places, secular persons and events, though only incidentally and as far as its object required it. These allusions are—with a single exception, that of Theudas—in full harmony with the history of the age as known from Josephus and heathen writers, and establish Luke's claim to be considered a well-informed, honest, and credible historian. Bishop Lightfoot asserts that no ancient work affords so many tests of veracity, because no other has such numerous points of contact in all directions with contemporary history, politics, and typography, whether Jewish or Greek or Roman. The description of persons introduced in the Acts such as Gamaliel, Herod, Agrippa I., Bernice, Felix, Festus, Gallio, agrees as far as it goes entirely with what we know from contemporary sources. The allusions to countries, cities, islands, in Syria, Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy are without exception correct and reveal an experienced traveller. We mention the chief points, some of which are crucial tests.

1. The rebellion of Theudas, Acts 5:36, alluded to in the speech of Gamaliel, which was delivered about A.D. 33. Here is, apparently, a conflict with Josephus, who places this event in the reign of Claudius, and under the procuratorship of Cuspius Fadus, A.D. 44, ten or twelve years after Gamaliel's speech. But he mentions no less than three insurrections which took place shortly after the death of Herod the Great, one under the lead of Judas (who may have been Theudas or Thaddaeus, the two names being interchangeable, comp. Matt. 10:3; Luke 6:16), and he adds that besides these there were many highway robbers and murderers who pretended to the name of king. At all events, we should hesitate to charge Luke with an anachronism. He was as well informed as Josephus, and more credible. This is the only case of a conflict between the two, except the case of

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the census in Luke 2:2, and here the discovery of a double governorship of Quirinius has brought the chronological difficulty within the reach of solution.

2. The rebellion of Judas of Galilee, mentioned in the same speech, Acts 5:37, as having occurred in the days of the enrolment (the census of Quirinius), is confirmed by Josephus. The insurrection of this Judas was the most vigorous attempt to throw off the Roman yoke before the great war.

3. Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians, 8:27. Strabo mentions a queen of Meroë in Ethiopia, under that name, which was probably, like Pharaoh, a dynastic title.

4. The famine under Claudius, 11:28. This reign (A.D. 41–54) was disturbed by frequent famines, one of which, according to Josephus, severely affected Judaea and Syria, and caused great distress in Jerusalem under the procuratorship of Cuspius Fadus, A.D. 45.

5. The death of King Herod Agrippa I. (grandson of Herod the Great), 12:20–23. Josephus says nothing about the preceding persecution of the church, but reports in substantial agreement with Luke that the king died of a loathsome disease in the seventh year of his reign (A.D. 44), five days after he had received, at the theatre of Caesarea, divine honors, being hailed, in heathen fashion, as a god by his courtiers.

6. The proconsular (as distinct from the *propraetorian*) status of Cyprus, under Sergius Paulus, 13:7. Here Luke was for a long time considered inaccurate, even by Grotius, but has been strikingly confirmed by modern research. When Augustus assumed the supreme power (B.C. 27), he divided the government of the provinces with the Senate, and called the ruler of the imperial provinces, which needed direct military control under the emperor as commander of the legions, *propraetor* or *legate*, the ruler of a senatorial province, *proconsul*. Formerly these terms had signified that the holder of the office had previously been *praetor* or *consul*; now they signified the administrative

heads of the provinces. But this subdivision underwent frequent changes, so that only a well-informed person could tell the distinction at any time. Cyprus was in the original distribution (B.C. 27) assigned to the emperor, but since B.C. 22, and at the time of Paul's visit under Claudius, it was a senatorial province; and hence Sergius Paulus is rightly called *proconsul*. Coins have been found from the reign of Claudius which confirm this statement. Yea, the very name of (Sergius) Paulus has been discovered by General di Cesnola at Soli (which, next to Salamis, was the most important city of the island), in a mutilated inscription, which reads: "in the *proconsulship* of Paulus." Under Hadrian the island was governed by a *propraetor*; under Severus, again by a *proconsul*.

7. The *proconsular* status of Achaia under Gallio, 18:12. Achaia, which included the whole of Greece lying south of Macedonia, was originally a senatorial province, then an imperial province under Tiberius, and again a senatorial province under Claudius. In the year 53–54, when Paul was at Corinth, M. Annaeus Novatus Gallio, the brother of the philosopher L. Annaeus Seneca, was *proconsul* of Achaia, and popularly esteemed for his mild temper as "*dulcis Gallio*."

8. Paul and Barnabas mistaken for Zeus and Hermes in Lycaonia, 14:11. According to the myth described by Ovid, the gods Jupiter and Mercury (Zeus and Hermes) had appeared to the Lycaonians in the likeness of men, and been received by Baucis and Philemon, to whom they left tokens of that favor. The place where they had dwelt was visited by devout pilgrims and adorned with votive offerings. How natural, therefore, was it for these idolaters, astonished by the miracle, to mistake the eloquent Paul for Hermes, and Barnabas who may have been of a more imposing figure, for Zeus.

9. The colonial dignity of the city of Philippi, in Macedonia, 16:12 ("a Roman colony,"; comp. 16:21, "being Romans"). Augustus had sent a colony to the famous battlefield where

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Brutus and the Republic expired, and conferred on the place new importance and the privileges of Italian or Roman citizenship (jus Italicum).

10. "Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira," 16:14. Thyatira (now Akhissar), in the valley of Lycus in Asia Minor, was famous for its dying works, especially for purple or crimson.

11. The "politarchs" of Thessalonica, 17:6, 8. This was a very rare title for magistrates, and might easily be confounded with the more usual designation "poliarchs." But Luke's accuracy has been confirmed by an inscription still legible on an archway in Thessalonica, giving the names of seven "politarchs" who governed before the visit of Paul.

12. The description of Athens, the Areopagus, the schools of philosophy, the idle curiosity and inquisitiveness of the Athenians (mentioned also by Demosthenes), the altar of an unknown God, and the quotation from Aratus or Cleanthes, in Acts 17, are fully borne out by classical authorities.

13. The account of Ephesus in the nineteenth chapter has been verified as minutely accurate by the remarkable discoveries of John T. Wood, made between 1863 and 1874, with the aid of the English Government. The excessive worship of Diana, "the great goddess of Artemis," the temple-warden, the theatre (capable of holding twenty-five thousand people) often used for public assemblies, the distinct officers of the city, the Roman proconsul, the recorder or "town-clerk", and the Asiarchs or presidents of the games and the religious ceremonials, have all reappeared in ruins and on inscriptions, which may now be studied in the British Museum. "With these facts in view," says Lightfoot, "we are justified in saying that ancient literature has preserved no picture of the Ephesus of imperial times—the Ephesus which has been unearthed by the sagacity and perseverance of Mr. Wood—comparable for

its life-like truthfulness to the narrative of St. Paul's sojourn there in the Acts."

14. The voyage and shipwreck of Paul in Acts 27. This chapter contains more information about ancient navigation than any work of Greek or Roman literature, and betrays the minute accuracy of an intelligent eye-witness, who, though not a professional seaman, was very familiar with nautical terms from close observation. He uses no less than sixteen technical terms, some of them rare, to describe the motion and management of a ship, and all of them most appropriately; and he is strictly correct in the description of the localities at Crete, Salmone, Fair Havens, Cauda, Lasea and Phoenix (two small places recently identified), and Melita (Malta), as well as the motions and effects of the tempestuous northeast wind called Euraquilo (A. V. Euroclydon) in the Mediterranean. All this has been thoroughly tested by an expert seaman and scholar, James Smith, of Scotland, who has published the results of his examination in the classical monograph already mentioned. Monumental and scientific evidence outweighs critical conjectures, and is an irresistible vindication of the historical accuracy and credibility of Luke.

#### THE ACTS AN IRENICUM.

But some critics have charged the Acts with an intentional falsification of history in the interest of peace between the Petrine and Pauline sections of the church. The work is said to be a Catholic Irenicum, based probably on a narrative of Luke, but not completed before the close of the first century, for the purpose of harmonizing the Jewish and Gentile sections of the church by conforming the two leading apostles, i.e., by raising Peter to the Pauline and lowering Paul to the Petrine Plane, and thus making both subservient to a compromise between Judaizing bigotry and Gentile freedom.

The chief arguments on which this hypothesis is based are the suppression of the collision between Paul and Peter at Antioch, and the

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friendly relation into which Paul is brought to James, especially at the last interview. Acts 15 is supposed to be in irreconcilable conflict with Galatian. But a reaction has taken place in the Tübingen school, and it is admitted now by some of the ablest critics that the antagonism between Paulinism and Petrinism has been greatly exaggerated by Baur, and that Acts is a far more trustworthy account than he was willing to admit. The Epistle to the Galatians itself is the best vindication of the Acts, for it expressly speaks of a cordial agreement between Paul and the Jewish pillar-apostles. As to the omission of the collision between Peter and Paul at Antioch, it was merely a passing incident, perhaps unknown to Luke, or omitted because it had no bearing on the course of events recorded by him. On the other hand, he mentions the "sharp contention" between Paul and Barnabas, because it resulted in a division of the missionary work, Paul and Silas going to Syria and Cilicia, Barnabas and Mark sailing away to Cyprus (15:39–41). Of this Paul says nothing, because it had no bearing on his argument with the Galatians. Paul's conciliatory course toward James and the Jews, as represented in the Acts, is confirmed by his own Epistles, in which he says that he became a Jew to the Jews, as well as a Gentile to the Gentiles, in order to gain them both, and expresses his readiness to make the greatest possible sacrifice for the salvation of his brethren after the flesh (1 Cor. 9:20; Rom. 9:3).

#### THE TRUTHFULLNESS OF THE ACTS.

The book of Acts is, indeed, like every impartial history, an Irenicum, but a truthful Irenicum, conceived in the very spirit of the Conference at Jerusalem and the concordat concluded by the leading apostles, according to Paul's own testimony in the polemical Epistle to the Galatians. The principle of selection required, of course, the omission of a large number of facts and incidents. But the selection was made with fairness and justice to all sides. The impartiality and truthfulness

of Luke is very manifest in his honest record of the imperfections of the apostolic church. He does not conceal the hypocrisy and mean selfishness of Ananias and Sapphira, which threatened to poison Christianity in its cradle (Acts 5:1 sqq.); he informs us that the institution of the diaconate arose from a complaint of the Grecian Jews against their Hebrew brethren for neglecting their widows in the daily ministration (6:1 sqq.) he represents Paul and Barnabas as "men of like passions" with other men (14:15), and gives us some specimens of weak human nature in Mark when he became discouraged by the hardship of missionary life and returned to his mother in Jerusalem (13:13), and in Paul and Barnabas when they fell out for a season on account of this very Mark, who was a cousin of Barnabas (15:39); nor does he pass in silence the outburst of Paul's violent temper when in righteous indignation he called the high-priest a "whited wall" (23:3); and he speaks of serious controversies and compromises even among the apostles under the guidance of the Holy Spirit—all for our humiliation and warning as well as comfort and encouragement.

Examine and compare the secular historians from Herodotus to Macaulay, and the church historians from Eusebius to Neander, and Luke need not fear a comparison. No history of thirty years has ever been written so truthful and impartial, so important and interesting, so healthy in tone and hopeful in spirit, so aggressive and yet so genial, so cheering and inspiring, so replete with lessons of wisdom and encouragement for work in spreading the gospel of truth and peace, and yet withal so simple and modest, as the Acts of the Apostles. It is the best as well as the first manual of church history.

#### 1.86 The Epistles.

The sermons of Stephen and the apostles in Acts (excepting the farewell of Paul to the Ephesian Elders) are missionary addresses to outsiders, with a view to convert them to the Christian faith. The Epistles are addressed to

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baptized converts, and aim to strengthen them in their faith, and, by brotherly instruction, exhortation, rebuke, and consolation, to build up the church in all Christian graces on the historical foundation of the teaching and example of Christ. The prophets of the Old Testament delivered divine oracles to the people; the apostles of the New Testament wrote letters to the brethren, who shared with them the same faith and hope as members of Christ.

The readers are supposed to be already "in Christ," saved and sanctified "in Christ," and holding all their social and domestic relations and discharging their duties "in Christ." They are "grown together" with Christ, sharing in his death, burial, and resurrection, and destined to reign and rule with him in glory forever. On the basis of this new relation, constituted by a creative act of divine grace, and sealed by baptism, they are warned against every sin and exhorted to every virtue. Every departure from their profession and calling implies double guilt and double danger of final ruin.

Occasions and calls for correspondence were abundant, and increased with the spread of Christianity over the Roman empire. The apostles could not be omnipresent and had to send messengers and letters to distant churches. They probably wrote many more letters than we possess, although we have good reason to suppose that the most important and permanently valuable are preserved. A former letter of Paul to the Corinthians is implied in 1 Cor. 5:9: "I wrote to you in my epistle;" and traces of further correspondence are found in 1 Cor. 16:3; 2 Cor. 10:9; Eph. 3:3. The letter "from Laodicea," referred to in Col. 4:16, is probably the encyclical Epistle to the Ephesians.

The Epistles of the New Testament are without a parallel in ancient literature, and yield in importance only to the Gospels, which stand higher, as Christ himself rises above the apostles. They are pastoral letters to congregations or individuals, beginning with

an inscription and salutation, consisting of doctrinal expositions and practical exhortations and consolations, and concluding with personal intelligence, greetings, and benediction. They presuppose throughout the Gospel history, and often allude to the death and resurrection of Christ as the foundation of the church and the Christian hope. They were composed amidst incessant missionary labors and cares, under trial and persecution, some of them from prison, and yet they abound in joy and thanksgiving. They were mostly called forth by special emergencies, yet they suit all occasions. Tracts for the times, they are tracts for all times. Children of the fleeting moment, they contain truths of infinite moment. They compress more ideas in fewer words than any other writings, human or divine, excepting the Gospels. They discuss the highest themes which can challenge an immortal mind—God, Christ, and the Spirit, sin and redemption, incarnation, atonement, regeneration, repentance, faith and good works, holy living and dying, the conversion of the world, the general judgment, eternal glory and bliss. And all this before humble little societies of poor, uncultured artisans, freedmen and slaves! And yet they are of more real and general value to the church than all the systems of theology from Origen to Schleiermacher—yea, than all the confessions of faith. For eighteen hundred years they have nourished the faith of Christendom, and will continue to do so to the end of time. This is the best evidence of their divine inspiration.

The Epistles are divided into two groups, Catholic and Pauline. The first is more general; the second bears the strong imprint of the intense personality of the Apostle of the Gentiles.

### **1.87 The Catholic Epistles.**

The seven Epistles of James, 1st and 2d Peter, 1st, 2d, and 3d John, and Jude usually follow in the old manuscripts the Acts of the Apostles, and precede the Pauline Epistles,

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perhaps as being the works of the older apostles, and representing, in part at least, the Jewish type of Christianity. They are of a more general character, and addressed not to individuals or single congregations, as those of Paul, but to a larger number of Christians scattered through a district or over the world. Hence they are called, from the time of Origen and Eusebius, CATHOLIC. This does not mean in this connection anti-heretical (still less, of course, Greek Catholic or Roman Catholic), but encyclical or circular. The designation, however, is not strictly correct, and applies only to five of them. The second and third Epistles of John are addressed to individuals. On the other hand the Epistle to the Hebrews is encyclical, and ought to be numbered with the Catholic Epistles, but is usually appended to those of Paul. The Epistle to the Ephesians is likewise intended for more than one congregation. The first Christian document of an encyclical character is the pastoral letter of the apostolic Conference at Jerusalem (A.D. 50) to the Gentile brethren in Syria and Cilicia (Acts 15:23-29).

The Catholic Epistles are distinct from the Pauline by their more general contents and the absence of personal and local references. They represent different, though essentially harmonious, types of doctrine and Christian life. The individuality of James, Peter, and John stand out very prominently in these brief remains of their correspondence. They do not enter into theological discussions like those of Paul, the learned Rabbi, and give simpler statements of truth, but protest against the rising ascetic and Antinomian errors, as Paul does in the Colossians and Pastoral Epistles. Each has a distinct character and purpose, and none could well be spared from the New Testament without marring the beauty and completeness of the whole.

The time of composition cannot be fixed with certainty, but is probably as follows: James before A.D. 50; 1ST PETER (PROBABLY ALSO 2D PETER AND JUDE) BEFORE A.D. 67; JOHN BETWEEN A.D. 80 and 100.

Only two of these Epistles, the 1st of Peter and the 1st of John, belong to the Eusebian Homologumena, which were universally accepted by the ancient church as inspired and canonical. About the other five there was more or less doubt as to their origin down to the close of the fourth century, when all controversy on the extent of the canon went to sleep till the time of the Reformation. Yet they bear the general imprint of the apostolic age, and the absence of stronger traditional evidence is due in part to their small size and limited use.

JAMES.

The Epistle of JAMES the Brother of the Lord was written, no doubt, from Jerusalem, the metropolis of the ancient theocracy and Jewish Christianity, where the author labored and died a martyr at the head of the mother church of Christendom and as the last connecting link between the old and the new dispensation. It is addressed to the Jews and Jewish Christians of the dispersion before the final doom in the year 70.

It strongly resembles the Gospel of Matthew, and echoes the Sermon on the Mount in the fresh, vigorous, pithy, proverbial, and sententious style of oriental wisdom. It exhorts the readers to good works of faith, warns them against dead orthodoxy, covetousness, pride, and worldliness, and comforts them in view of present and future trials and persecutions. It is eminently practical and free from subtle theological questions. It preaches a religion of good works which commends itself to the approval of God and all good men. It represents the primary stage of Christian doctrine. It takes no notice of the circumcision controversy, the Jerusalem compromise, and the later conflicts of the apostolic age. Its doctrine of justification is no protest against that of Paul, but prior to it, and presents the subject from a less developed, yet eminently practical aspect, and against the error of a barren monotheism rather than Pharisaical legalism, which Paul had in view. It is probably the

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oldest of the New Testament books, meagre in doctrine, but rich in comfort and lessons of holy living based on faith in Jesus Christ, "the Lord of glory." It contains more reminiscences of the words of Christ than any other epistle. Its leading idea is "the perfect law of freedom," or the law of love revealed in Christ.

Luther's harsh, unjust, and unwise judgment of this Epistle has been condemned by his own church, and reveals a defect in his conception of the doctrine of justification which was the natural result of his radical war with the Romish error.

**PETER.**

The FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER, dated from Babylon, belongs to the later life of the apostle, when his ardent natural temper was deeply humbled, softened, and sanctified by the work of grace. It was written to churches in several provinces of Asia Minor, composed of Jewish and Gentile Christians together, and planted mainly by Paul and his fellow-laborers; and was sent by the hands of Silvanus, a former companion of Paul. It consists of precious consolations, and exhortations to a holy walk after the example of Christ, to joyful hope of the heavenly inheritance, to patience under the persecutions already raging or impending. It gives us the fruit of a rich spiritual experience, and is altogether worthy of Peter and his mission to tend the flock of God under Christ, the chief shepherd of souls.

It attests also the essential agreement of Peter with the doctrine of the Gentile apostle, in which the readers had been before instructed (1 Pet. 5:12). This accords with the principle of Peter professed at the Council in Jerusalem (Acts 15:11) that we are saved without the yoke of the law, "through the grace of the Lord Jesus." His doctrinal system, however, precedes that of Paul and is independent of it, standing between James and Paul. Peculiar to him is the doctrine of the descent of Christ into Hades (1 Pet. 3:19; 4:6; comp. Acts 2:32), which contains the

important truth of the universal intent of the atonement. Christ died for all men, for those who lived before as well as after his coming, and he revealed himself to the spirits in the realm of Hades. Peter also warns against hierarchical ambition in prophetic anticipation of the abuse of his name and his primacy among the apostles.

The SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER is addressed, shortly before the author's death, as a sort of last will and testament, to the same churches as the first. It contains a renewed assurance of his agreement with his "beloved brother Paul," to whose Epistles he respectfully refers, yet with the significant remark (true in itself, yet often abused by Romanists) that there are in them "some things hard to be understood" (2 Pet. 3:15, 16). As Peter himself receives in one of these Epistles (Gal. 2:11) a sharp rebuke for his inconsistency at Antioch (which may be included in the hard things), this affectionate allusion proves how thoroughly the Spirit of Christ had, through experience, trained him to humility, meekness, and self-denial. The Epistle exhorts the readers to diligence, virtue, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly love, and brotherly kindness; refers to the Transfiguration on the Mount, where the author witnessed the majesty of Christ, and to the prophetic word inspired by the Holy Spirit; warns against antinomian errors; corrects a mistake concerning the second coming; exhorts them to prepare for the day of the Lord by holy living, looking for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwell righteousness; and closes with the words: "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom be glory both now and forever."

The second Epistle is reckoned by Eusebius among the seven Antilegomena, and its Petrine authorship is doubted or denied, in whole or in part, by many eminent divines but defended by competent critics. The chief objections are: the want of early attestation, the reference to a collection of the Pauline Epistles, the polemic against Gnostic errors,

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some peculiarities of style, and especially the apparent dependence of the second chapter on the Epistle of Jude.

On the other hand, the Epistle, at least the first and third chapters, contains nothing which Peter might not have written, and the allusion to the scene of transfiguration admits only the alternative: either Peter, or a forger. It seems morally impossible that a forger should have produced a letter so full of spiritual beauty and unction, and expressly denouncing all cunning fabrications. It may have been enlarged by the editor after Peter's death. But the whole breathes an apostolic spirit, and could not well be spared from the New Testament. It is a worthy valedictory of the aged apostle awaiting his martyrdom, and with its still valid warnings against internal dangers from false Christianity, it forms a suitable complement to the first Epistle, which comforts the Christians amidst external dangers from heathen and Jewish persecutors.

#### JUDE.

The Epistle of JUDE, a "brother of James" (the Just), is very short, and strongly resembles 2 Peter 2, but differs from it by an allusion to the remarkable apocryphal book of Enoch and the legend of the dispute of Michael with the devil about the body of Moses. It seems to be addressed to the same churches and directed against the same Gnostic heretics. It is a solemn warning against the antinomian and licentious tendencies which revealed themselves between A.D. 60 and 70. Origen remarks that it is "of few lines, but rich in words of heavenly wisdom." The style is fresh and vigorous.

The Epistle of Jude belongs likewise to the Eusebian Antilegomena, and has signs of post-apostolic origin, yet may have been written by Jude, who was not one of the Twelve, though closely connected with apostolic circles. A forger would hardly have written under the name of a "brother of James" rather than a brother of Christ or an apostle.

The time and place of composition are unknown. The Tübingen critics put it down to the reign of Trajan; Renan, on the contrary, as far back as 54, wrongly supposing it to have been intended, together with the Epistle of James, as a counter-manifesto against Paul's doctrine of free grace. But Paul condemned antinomianism as severely as James and Jude (comp. Rom. 6, and in fact all his Epistles). It is safest to say, with Bleek, that it was written shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem, which is not alluded to (comp. Jude 14, 15).

#### THE EPISTLES OF JOHN.

The FIRST EPISTLE OF JOHN betrays throughout, in thought and style, the author of the fourth Gospel. It is a postscript to it, or a practical application of the lessons of the life of Christ to the wants of the church at the close of the first century. It is a circular letter of the venerable apostle to his beloved children in Asia Minor, exhorting them to a holy life of faith and love in Christ, and earnestly warning them against the Gnostic "antichrists," already existing or to come, who deny the mystery of the incarnation, sunder religion from morality, and run into Antinomian practices.

The SECOND AND THIRD EPISTLES OF JOHN are, like the Epistle of Paul to Philemon, short private letters, one to a Christian woman by the name of Cyria, the other to one Gains, probably an officer of a congregation in Asia Minor. They belong to the seven Antilegomena, and have been ascribed by some to the "Presbyter John," a contemporary of the apostle, though of disputed existence. But the second Epistle resembles the first, almost to verbal repetition, and such repetition well agrees with the familiar tradition of Jerome concerning the apostle of love, ever exhorting the congregation, in his advanced age, to love one another. The difference of opinion in the ancient church respecting them may have risen partly from their private nature and their brevity, and partly from the fact that the author styles himself, somewhat remarkably, the "elder,"

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the "presbyter." This term, however, is probably to be taken, not in the official sense, but in the original, signifying age and dignity; for at that time John was in fact a venerable father in Christ, and must have been revered and loved as a patriarch among his "little children."

### 1.88 The Epistles of Paul

#### GENERAL CHARACTER.

Paul was the greatest worker among the apostles, not only as a missionary, but also as a writer. He "labored more than all." And we may well include in this "all" the whole body of theologians who came after him; for where shall we find an equal wealth of the profoundest thoughts on the highest themes as in Paul? We have from him thirteen Epistles; how many more were lost, we cannot even conjecture. The four most important of them are admitted to be genuine even by the most exacting and skeptical critics. They are so stamped with the individuality of Paul, and so replete with tokens of his age and surroundings, that no sane man can mistake the authorship. We might as well doubt the genuineness of Luther's work on the Babylonian captivity, or his Small catechism. The heretic Marcion, in the first half of the second century, accepted ten, excluding only the three Pastoral Epistles which did not suit his notions.

The Pauline Epistles are pastoral addresses to congregations of his own founding (except that of Rome, and probably also that of Colossae, which were founded by his pupils), or to individuals (Timothy, Titus, Philemon). Several of them hail from prison, but breathe the same spirit of faith, hope, and joy as the others, and the last ends with a shout of victory. They proceeded from profound agitation, and yet are calm and serene. They were occasioned by the trials, dangers, and errors incident to every new congregation, and the care and anxiety of the apostle for their spiritual welfare. He had led them from the darkness of heathen idolatry and Jewish

bigotry to the light of Christian truth and freedom, and raised them from the slime of depravity to the pure height of saving grace and holy living. He had no family ties, and threw the whole strength of his affections into his converts, whom he loved as tenderly as a mother can love her offspring. This love to his spiritual children was inspired by his love to Christ, as his love to Christ was the response to Christ's love for him. Nor was his love confined to the brethren: he was ready to make the greatest sacrifice for his unbelieving and persecuting fellow-Jews, as Christ himself sacrificed his life for his enemies.

His Epistles touch on every important truth and duty of the Christian religion, and illuminate them from the heights of knowledge and experience, without pretending to exhaust them. They furnish the best material for a system of dogmatics and ethics. Paul looks back to the remotest beginning before the creation, and looks out into the farthest future beyond death and the resurrection. He writes with the authority of a commissioned apostle and inspired teacher, yet, on questions of expediency, he distinguishes between the command of the Lord and his private judgment. He seems to have written rapidly and under great pressure, without correcting his first draft. If we find, with Peter, in his letters, "some things hard to be understood," even in this nineteenth century, we must remember that Paul himself bowed in reverence before the boundless ocean of God's truth, and humbly professed to know only in part, and to see through a mirror darkly. All knowledge in this world "ends in mystery." Our best systems of theology are but dim reflections of the sunlight of revelation. Infinite truths transcend our finite minds, and cannot be compressed into the pigeon-holes of logical formulas. But every good commentary adds to the understanding and strengthens the estimate of the paramount value of these Epistles.

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#### THE CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER.

Paul's Epistles were written within a period of about twelve years, between A.D. 52 or 53 and 64 or 67, when he stood at the height of his power and influence. None was composed before the Council of Jerusalem. From the date of his conversion to his second missionary journey (A.D. 37 to 52) we have no documents of his pen. The chronology of his letters can be better ascertained than that of the Gospels or Catholic Epistles, by combining internal indications with the Acts and contemporary events, such as the dates of the proconsulship of Gallio in Achaia, and the procuratorship of Felix and Festus in Judaea. As to the Romans, we can determine the place, the year, and the season of composition: he sends greetings from persons in Corinth (Rom. 16:23), commends Phoebe, a deaconess of Cenchraea, the port of Corinth, and the bearer of the letter (16:1); he had not yet been in Rome (1:13), but hoped to get there after another visit to Jerusalem, on which he was about to enter, with collections from Macedonia and Achaia for the poor brethren in Judaea (15:22-29; comp. 2 Cor. 8:1-3); and from Acts we learn that on his last visit to Achaia he abode three months in Corinth, and returned to Syria between the Passover and Pentecost (Acts 20:3, 6, 16). This was his fifth and last journey to Jerusalem, where he was taken prisoner and sent to Felix in Caesarea, two years before he was followed by Festus. All these indications lead us to the spring of A.D. 58.

The chronological order is this: Thessalonians were written first, A.D. 52 or 53; then Galatians, Corinthians, and Romans, between 56 and 58; then the Epistles of the captivity: Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon, Philippians, between 61 and 63; last, the Pastoral Epistles, but their date is uncertain, except that the second Epistle to Timothy is his farewell letter on the eve of his martyrdom.

It is instructive to study the Epistles in their chronological order with the aid of the Acts, and so to accompany the apostle in his

missionary career from Damascus to Rome, and to trace the growth of his doctrinal system from the documentary truths in Thessalonians to the height of maturity in Romans; then through the ramifications of particular topics in Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians, and the farewell counsels in the Pastoral Epistles.

#### DOCTRINAL ARRANGEMENT.

More important than the chronological order is the topical order, according to the prevailing object and central idea. This gives us the following groups:

1. ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND SOTERIOLOGICAL: Galatians and Romans.
2. ETHICAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL: First and Second Corinthians.
3. CHRISTOLOGICAL: Colossians and Philippians.
4. ECCLESIOLOGICAL: Ephesians (in part also Corinthians).
5. ESCHATOLOGICAL: Thessalonians.
6. PASTORAL: Timothy and Titus.
7. SOCIAL AND PERSONAL: Philemon.

#### THE STYLE

"The style is the man." This applies with peculiar force to Paul. His style has been called "the most personal that ever existed." It fitly represents the force and fire of his mind and the tender affections of his heart. He disclaims classical elegance and calls himself "rude in speech," though by no means "in knowledge." He carried the heavenly treasure in earthen vessels. But the defects are more than made up by excellences. In his very weakness the Strength of Christ was perfected. We are not lost in the admiration of the mere form, but are kept mindful of the paramount importance of the contents and the hidden depths of truth which he behind the words and defy the power of expression.

Paul's style is manly, bold, heroic, aggressive, and warlike; yet at times tender, delicate, gentle, and winning. It is involved, irregular, and rugged, but always forcible and

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expressive, and not seldom rises to more than poetic beauty, as in the triumphant paean at the end of the eighth chapter of Romans, and in the ode on love (1 Cor. 13). His intense earnestness and overflowing fullness of ideas break through the ordinary rules of grammar. His logic is set on fire. He abounds in skilful arguments, bold antitheses, impetuous assaults, abrupt transitions, sudden turns, zigzag flashes, startling questions and exclamations. He is dialectical and argumentative; he likes logical particles, paradoxical phrases, and plays on words. He reasons from Scripture, from premises, from conclusions; he drives the opponent to the wall without mercy and reduces him ad absurdum, but without ever indulging in personalities. He is familiar with the sharp weapons of ridicule, irony, and sarcasm, but holds them in check and uses them rarely. He varies the argument by touching appeals to the heart and bursts of seraphic eloquence. He is never dry or dull, and never wastes words; he is brief, terse, and hits the nail on the head. His terseness makes him at times obscure, as is the case with the somewhat similar style of Thucydides, Tacitus, and Tertullian. His words are as many warriors marching on to victory and peace; they are like a mountain torrent rushing in foaming rapids over precipices, and then calmly flowing over green meadows, or like a thunderstorm ending in a refreshing shower and bright sunshine.

Paul created the vocabulary of scientific theology and put a profounder meaning into religious and moral terms than they ever had before. We cannot speak of sin, flesh, grace, mercy, peace, redemption, atonement, justification, glorification, church, faith, love, without bearing testimony to the ineffaceable effect which that greatest of Jewish rabbis and Christian teachers has had upon the language of Christendom.

CHRYSOSTOM justly compares the Epistles of Paul to metals more precious than gold and to unfailing fountains which flow the more abundantly the more we drink of them.

BEZA: "When I more closely consider the whole genius and character of Paul's style, I must confess that I have found no such sublimity of speaking in Plato himself ... no exquisiteness of vehemence in Demosthenes equal to his."

EWALD begins his Commentary on the Pauline Epistles (Göttingen, 1857) with these striking and truthful remarks: "Considering these Epistles for themselves only, and apart from the general significance of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, we must still admit that, in the whole history of all centuries and of all nations, there is no other set of writings of similar extent, which, as creations of the fugitive moment, have proceeded from such severe troubles of the age, and such profound pains and sufferings of the author himself, and yet contain such an amount of healthfulness, serenity, and vigor of immortal genius, and touch with such clearness and certainty on the very highest truths of human aspiration and action .... The smallest as well as the greatest of these Epistles seem to have proceeded from the fleeting moments of this earthly life only to enchain all eternity they were born of anxiety and bitterness of human strife, to set forth in brighter lustre and with higher certainty their superhuman grace and beauty. The divine assurance and firmness of the old prophets of Israel, the all-transcending glory and immediate spiritual presence of the Eternal King and Lord, who had just ascended to heaven, and all the art and culture of a ripe and wonderfully excited age, seem to have joined, as it were, in bringing forth the new creation of these Epistles of the times which were destined to last for all times."

On the style of Paul, see my Companion, etc., pp. 62 sqq. To the testimonies there given I add the judgment of REUSS (Geschichte der h. Schr. N. T., I. 67): "Still more [than the method] is the style of these Epistles the true expression of the personality of the author. The defect of classical correctness and rhetorical finish is more than compensated by the riches of language and the fullness of

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expression. The condensation of construction demands not reading simply, but studying. Broken sentences, ellipses, parentheses, leaps in the argumentation, allegories, rhetorical figures express inimitably all the moods of a wide-awake and cultured mind, all the affections of a rich and deep heart, and betray everywhere a pen at once bold, and yet too slow for the thought. Antitheses, climaxes, exclamations, questions keep up the attention, and touching effusions win the heart of the reader."

### **1.89 The Epistles to the Thessalonians.**

Thessalonica, a large and wealthy commercial city of Macedonia, the capital of "Macedonia secunda," the seat of a Roman proconsul and quaestor, and inhabited by many Jews, was visited by Paul on his second missionary tour, A.D. 52 or 53, and in a few weeks he succeeded, amid much persecution, in founding a flourishing church composed chiefly of Gentiles. From this centre Christianity spread throughout the neighborhood, and during the middle ages Thessalonica was, till its capture by the Turks (A.D. 1430), a bulwark of the Byzantine empire and Oriental Christendom, and largely instrumental in the conversion of the Slavonians and Bulgarians; hence it received the designation of "the Orthodox City." It numbered many learned archbishops, and still has more remains of ecclesiastical antiquity than any other city in Greece, although its cathedral is turned into a mosque.

To this church Paul, as its spiritual father, full of affection for his inexperienced children, wrote in familiar conversational style two letters from Corinth, during his first sojourn in that city, to comfort them in their trials and to correct certain misapprehensions of his preaching concerning the glorious return of Christ, and the preceding development of "the man of sin" or Antichrist, and "the mystery of lawlessness," then already at work, but checked by a restraining power. The hope of the near advent had degenerated into an

enthusiastic adventism which demoralized the every-day life. He now taught them that the Lord will not come so soon as they expected, that it was not a matter of mathematical calculation, and that in no case should the expectation check industry and zeal, but rather stimulate them. Hence his exhortations to a sober, orderly, diligent, and prayerful life.

It is remarkable that the first Epistles of Paul should treat of the last topic in the theological system and anticipate the end at the beginning. But the hope of Christ's speedy coming was, before the destruction of Jerusalem, the greatest source of consolation to the infant church amid trial and persecution, and the church at Thessalonica was severely tried in its infancy, and Paul driven away. It is also remarkable that to a young church in Greece rather than to that in Rome should have first been revealed the beginning of that mystery of anti-Christian lawlessness which was then still restrained, but was to break out in its full force in Rome.

The objections of Baur to the genuineness of these Epistles, especially the second, are futile in the judgment of the best critics.

THE THEORETICAL THEME:: The parousia of Christ.

THE PRACTICAL THEME: Christian hope in the midst of persecution.

LEADING THOUGHTS: This is the will of God, even your sanctification (1 Thess. 4:3). Sorrow not as the rest who have no hope (4:13). The Lord will descend from heaven, and so shall we ever be with the Lord (4:16, 17). The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night (5:2). Let us watch and be sober (5:6). Put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet, the hope of salvation (5:8). Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks (5:16). Prove all things; hold fast that which is good; abstain from every form of evil (5:21, 22). The Lord will come to be glorified in his saints (2 Thess. 1:10). But the falling away must come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of

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perdition (2:3, 4). The mystery of lawlessness doth already work, but is restrained for the time (2:7). Stand fast and hold the traditions which ye were taught, whether by word, or by epistle of ours (2:15). If any will not work, neither let him eat (3:10). Be not weary in well-doing (3:13). The God of peace sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming (ejn th' / parousiva/) our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thess. 5:23).

### 1.90 The Epistles to the Corinthians.

Corinth was the metropolis of Achaia, on the bridge of two seas, an emporium of trade between the East and the West—wealthy, luxurious, art-loving, devoted to the worship of Aphrodite. Here Paul established the most important church in Greece, and labored, first eighteen months, then three months, with, perhaps, a short visit between (2 Cor. 12:14; 13:1). The church presented all the lights and shades of the Greek nationality under the influence of the Gospel. It was rich in "all utterance and all knowledge," "coming behind in no gift," but troubled by the spirit of sect and party, infected with a morbid desire for worldly wisdom and brilliant eloquence, with skepticism and moral levity—nay, to some extent polluted with gross vices, so that even the Lord's table and love feasts were desecrated by excesses, and that the apostle, in his absence, found himself compelled to excommunicate a particularly offensive member who disgraced the Christian profession. It was distracted by Judaizers and other troublers, who abused the names of Cephas, James, Apollos, and even of Christ (as extra-Christians), for sectarian ends. A number of questions of morality and casuistry arose in that lively, speculative, and excitable community, which the apostle had to answer from a distance before his second (or third) and last visit.

Hence, these Epistles abound in variety of topics, and show the extraordinary versatility of the mind of the writer, and his practical wisdom in dealing with delicate and

complicated questions and unscrupulous opponents. For every aberration he has a word of severe censure, for every danger a word of warning, for every weakness a word of cheer and sympathy, for every returning offender a word of pardon and encouragement. The Epistles lack the unity of design which characterizes Galatians and Romans. They are ethical, ecclesiastical, pastoral, and personal, rather than dogmatic and theological, although some most important doctrines, as that on the resurrection, are treated more fully than elsewhere.

I. THE FIRST EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS was composed in Ephesus shortly before Paul's departure for Greece, in the spring of A.D. 57. It had been preceded by another one, now lost (1 Cor. 5:9). It was an answer to perplexing questions concerning various disputes and evils which disturbed the peace and spotted the purity of the congregation. The apostle contrasts the foolish wisdom of the gospel with the wise folly of human philosophy; rebukes sectarianism; unfolds the spiritual unity and harmonious variety of the church of Christ, her offices and gifts of grace, chief among which is love; warns against carnal impurity as a violation of the temple of God; gives advice concerning marriage and celibacy without binding the conscience (having "no commandment of the Lord," 7:25); discusses the question of meat sacrificed to idols, on which Jewish and Gentile Christians, scrupulous and liberal brethren, were divided; enjoins the temporal support of the ministry as a Christian duty of gratitude for greater spiritual mercies received; guards against improprieties of dress; explains the design and corrects the abuses of the Lord's Supper; and gives the fullest exposition of the doctrine of the resurrection on the basis of the resurrection of Christ and his personal manifestations to the disciples, and last, to himself at his conversion. Dean Stanley says of this Epistle that it "gives a clearer insight than any other portion of the New Testament into the

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institutions, feelings and opinions of the church of the earlier period of the apostolic age. It is in every sense the earliest chapter of the history of the Christian church." The last, however, is not quite correct. The Corinthian chapter was preceded by the Jerusalem and Antioch chapters.

LEADING THOUGHTS: Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you (1 Cor. 1:13)? It was God's pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching [not through foolish preaching] to save them that believe (1:21). We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto Gentiles foolishness, but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God (1:24). I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus, and him crucified (2:2). The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God (2:14). Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ (3:11). Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroy the temple of God, him shall God destroy (3:16, 17). Let a man so account of ourselves as of ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God (4:1). The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power (4:20). Purge out the old leaven (5:7). All things are lawful for me; but not all things are expedient (6:12). Know ye not that your bodies are members of Christ (6:15)? Flee fornication (6:18). Glorify God in your body (6:20). Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but the keeping of the commandments of God (7:19). Let each man abide in that calling wherein he was called (7:20). Ye were bought with a price; become not bondservants of men (7:23). Take heed lest this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to the weak (8:9). If meat [or wine] maketh my brother to stumble, I will eat no flesh [and drink no wine] for evermore, that I make not my brother to stumble (8:13). They who proclaim the gospel shall live of the gospel (9:14). Woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel (9:16). I am become all things to all men, that I may by

all means save some (9:22). Let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall (10:12). All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient. Let no man seek his own, but each his neighbor's good (10:23). Whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord ... He that eats and drinketh eats and drinks judgment unto himself if he discern (discriminate) not the body (11:27-29). There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit (12:4). Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; and the greatest of these is love (13:13). Follow after love (14:1). Let all things be done unto edifying (14:26). By the grace of God I am what I am (15:9). If Christ hath not been raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins (15:17). As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive (15:22). God shall be all in all (15:28). If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body (15:44). This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality (15:54). Be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord (15:58). Upon the first day in the week let each one of you lay by him in store, as he may prosper (16:2). Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all that ye do be done in love (16:13, 14.).

II. THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS was written in the summer or autumn of the same year, 57, from some place in Macedonia, shortly before the author's intended personal visit to the metropolis of Achaia. It evidently proceeded from profound agitation, and opens to us very freely the personal character and feelings, the official trials and joys, the noble pride and deep humility, the holy earnestness and fervent love, of the apostle. It gives us the deepest insight into his heart, and is almost an autobiography. He had, in the meantime, heard fuller news, through Titus, of the state of the church, the effects produced by his first Epistle, and the intrigues of the emissaries of the Judaizing party, who followed him

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everywhere and tried to undermine his work. This unchristian opposition compelled him, in self-defense, to speak of his ministry and his personal experience with overpowering eloquence. He also urges again upon the congregation the duty of charitable collections for the poor. The Epistle is a mine of pastoral wisdom.

**LEADING THOUGHTS:** As the sufferings of Christ abound unto us, even so our comfort also abound through Christ (2 Cor. 1:5). As ye are partakers of the sufferings, so also are ye of the comfort (1:7). Not that we have lordship over your faith, but are helpers of your joy (1:24). Who is sufficient for these things (2:16)? Ye are our epistle, written in our hearts, known and read of all men (3:2). Not that we are sufficient of ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God (3:5). The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life (3:6). The Lord is the Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (3:17). We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake (4:5). We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves (4:7). Our light affliction, which is for the moment, works for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory (4:17). We know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens (5:1). We walk by faith, not by sight (5:7). We must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ (5:10). The love of Christ constrains us, because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died (5:14). And he died for all, that they who live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again (5:15). If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new (5:17). God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation (5:19). We

beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God (5:20). Him who knew no sin he made to be sin in our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him (5:21). Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers (6:14). I am filled with comfort, I overflow with joy in all our affliction (7:4). Godly sorrow works repentance unto salvation, but the sorrow of the world works death (7:10). Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich (8:9). He that sows sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that sows bountifully shall reap also bountifully (9:6). God loveth a cheerful giver (9:7). He that glories, let him glory in the Lord (10:17). Not he that commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends (10:18). My grace is sufficient for thee; for my power is made perfect in weakness (12:9). We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth (13:8). The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all (13:14).

### **1.91 The Epistles to the Galatians.**

Galatians and Romans discuss the doctrines of sin and redemption, and the relation of the law and the gospel. They teach salvation by free grace and justification by faith, Christian universalism in opposition to Jewish particularism, evangelical freedom versus legalistic bondage. But Galatians is a rapid sketch and the child of deep emotion, Romans an elaborate treatise and the mature product of calm reflection. The former Epistle is polemical against foreign intruders and seducers, the latter is irenic and composed in a serene frame of mind. The one rushes along like a mountain torrent and foaming cataract, the other flows like a majestic river through a boundless prairie; and yet it is the same river, like the Nile at the Rapids and below Cairo, or the Rhine in the Grisons and the lowlands of Germany and Holland, or the St. Lawrence at Niagara Falls and below

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Montreal and Quebec where it majestically branches out into the ocean.

It is a remarkable fact that the two races represented by the readers of these Epistles—the Celtic and the Latin—have far departed from the doctrines taught in them and exchanged the gospel freedom for legal bondage; thus repeating the apostasy of the sanguine, generous, impressible, mercurial, fickle-minded Galatians. The Pauline gospel was for centuries ignored, misunderstood, and (in spite of St. Augustine) cast out at last by Rome, as Christianity itself was cast out by Jerusalem of old. But the overruling wisdom of God made the rule of the papacy a training-school of the Teutonic races of the North and West for freedom; as it had turned the unbelief of the Jews to the conversion of the Gentiles. Those Epistles, more than any book of the New Testament, inspired the Reformation of the Sixteenth century, and are to this day the Gibraltar of evangelical Protestantism. Luther, under a secondary inspiration, reproduced Galatians in his war against the "Babylonian captivity of the church;" the battle for Christian freedom was won once more, and its fruits are enjoyed by nations of which neither Paul nor Luther ever heard.

The Epistle to the GALATIANS (Gauls, originally from the borders of the Rhine and Moselle, who had migrated to Asia Minor) was written after Paul's second visit to them, either during his long residence in Ephesus (A.D. 54–57), or shortly afterwards on his second journey to Corinth, possibly from Corinth, certainly before the Epistle to the Romans. It was occasioned by the machinations of the Judaizing teachers who undermined his apostolic authority and misled his converts into an apostasy from the gospel of free grace to a false gospel of legal bondage, requiring circumcision as a condition of justification and full membership of the church. It is an "Apologia pro vita sua," a personal and doctrinal self-vindication. He defends his independent apostleship (Gal.1:1–2:14), and his teaching (2:15–4:31),

and closes with exhortations to hold fast to Christian freedom without abusing it, and to show the fruits of faith by holy living (Gal. 5–6).

The Epistle reveals, in clear, strong colors, both the difference and the harmony among the Jewish and Gentile apostles—a difference ignored by the old orthodoxy, which sees only the harmony, and exaggerated by modern skepticism, which sees only the difference. It anticipates, in grand fundamental outlines, a conflict which is renewed from time to time in the history of different churches, and, on the largest scale, in the conflict between Petrine Romanism and Pauline Protestantism. The temporary collision of the two leading apostles in Antioch is typical of the battle of the Reformation.

At the same time Galatians is an Irenicon and sounds the key-note of a final adjustment of all doctrinal and ritualistic controversies. "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith working through love" (5:6). "And as many as shall walk by this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God" (6:16).

CENTRAL IDEA: Evangelical freedom.

KEY-WORDS: For freedom Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage (5:1). A man is not justified by works of the law, but only through faith in Jesus Christ (2:16). I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live but Christ liveth in me (2:20). Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (3:13). Ye were called for freedom, only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another (5:13). Walk by the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh (5:16).

### 1.92 The Epistle to the Romans.

A few weeks before his fifth and last journey to Jerusalem, Paul sent, as a forerunner of his intended personal visit, a letter to the

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Christians in the capital of the world, which was intended by Providence to become the Jerusalem of Christendom. Foreseeing its future importance, the apostle chose for his theme: The gospel the power of God unto salvation to every believer, the Jew first, and also the Gentile (Rom. 1:16, 17). Writing to the philosophical Greeks, he contrasts the wisdom of God with the wisdom of man. To the world-ruling Romans he represents Christianity as the power of God which by spiritual weapons will conquer even conquering Rome. Such a bold idea must have struck a Roman statesman as the wild dream of a visionary or madman, but it was fulfilled in the ultimate conversion of the empire after three centuries of persecution, and is still in the process of ever-growing fulfillment.

In the exposition of his theme the apostle shows: (1) that all men are in need of salvation, being under the power of sin and exposed to the judgment of the righteous God, the Gentiles not only (1:18–32), but also the Jews, who are still more guilty, having sinned against the written law and extraordinary privileges (2:1–3:20); (2) that salvation is accomplished by Jesus Christ, his atoning death and triumphant resurrection, freely offered to all on the sole condition of faith, and applied in the successive acts of justification, sanctification, and glorification (3:21–8:17); (3) that salvation was offered first to the Jews, and, being rejected by them in unbelief, passed on to the Gentiles, but will return again to the Jews after the fullness of the Gentiles shall have come in (Rom. 9–11); (4) that we should show our gratitude for so great a salvation by surrendering ourselves to the service of God, which is true freedom (Rom. 12–16).

The salutations in Rom. 16, the remarkable variations of the manuscripts in 15:33; 16:20, 24, 27, and the omission of the words "in Rome," 1:7, 15, in Codex G, are best explained by the conjecture that copies of the letter were also sent to Ephesus (where Aquila and Priscilla were at that time, 1 Cor. 16:19, and again, some years afterwards, 2 Tim. 4:19),

and perhaps to other churches with appropriate conclusions, all of which are preserved in the present form.

This letter stands justly at the head of the Pauline Epistles. It is more comprehensive and systematic than the others, and admirably adapted to the mistress of the world, which was to become also the mistress of Western Christendom. It is the most remarkable production of the most remarkable man. It is his heart. It contains his theology, theoretical and practical, for which he lived and died. It gives the clearest and fullest exposition of the doctrines of sin and grace and the best possible solution of the universal dominion of sin and death in the universal redemption by the second Adam. Without this redemption the fall is indeed the darkest enigma and irreconcilable with the idea of divine justice and goodness. Paul reverently lifts the veil from the mysteries of eternal foreknowledge and foreordination and God's gracious designs in the winding course of history which will end at last in the triumph of his wisdom and mercy and the greatest good to mankind. Luther calls Romans "the chief book of the New Testament and the purest Gospel," Coleridge: "the profoundest book in existence." Meyer: "the greatest and richest of all the apostolic works," Godet (best of all): "the cathedral of the Christian faith."

**THEME:** Christianity the power of free and universal salvation, on condition of faith.

**LEADING THOUGHTS:** They are all under sin (Rom. 3:9). Through the law cometh the knowledge of sin (3:20). Man is justified by faith apart from works of the law (3:28). Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (5:1). As through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned (5:12): [so through one man righteousness entered into the world, and life through righteousness, and so life passed unto all men on condition that they believe in Christ and by faith become

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partakers of his righteousness]. Where sin abounded, grace did abound much more exceedingly: that as sin reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (5:20, 21). Reckon yourselves to be dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Christ Jesus (6:11). There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus (8:1). To them that love God all things work together for good (8:28). Whom he foreknew, he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son ... and whom he foreordained them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified (8:29, 30). If God is for us, who is against us (8:31)? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ (8:35)? Hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved (11:25). God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all (11:32). Of Him, and through Him, and unto Him are all things (11:36). Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service (12:1).

**1.93 The Epistles of the Captivity.**

During his confinement in Rome, from A.D. 61 to 63, while waiting the issue of his trial on the charge of being "a mover of insurrections among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes" (Acts 24:5), the aged apostle composed four Epistles, to the COLOSSIANS, EPHESIANS, PHILEMON, AND PHILIPPIANS. He thus turned the prison into a pulpit, sent inspiration and comfort to his distant congregations, and rendered a greater service to future ages than he could have done by active labor. He gloried in being a "prisoner of Christ." He experienced the blessedness of persecution for righteousness' sake (Matt. 5:10), and "the peace of God which passes all understanding" (Phil. 4:7). He often refers to his bonds, and the coupling chain or hand-cuff by which, according to Roman custom, he was with his right wrist fettered day and night to a

soldier; one relieving the other and being in turn chained to the apostle, so that his imprisonment became a means for the spread of the gospel "throughout the whole praetorian guard." He had the privilege of living in his own hired lodging (probably in the neighborhood of the praetorian camp, outside of the walls, to the northeast of Rome), and of free intercourse with his companions and distant congregations.

Paul does not mention the place of his captivity, which extended through four years and a half (two at Caesarea, two at Rome, and six months spent on the stormy voyage and at Malta). The traditional view dates the four Epistles from the Roman captivity, and there is no good reason to depart from it. Several modern critics assign one or more to Caesarea, where he cannot be supposed to have been idle, and where he was nearer to his congregations in Asia Minor. But in Caesarea Paul looked forward to Rome and to Spain; while in the Epistles of the captivity he expresses the hope of soon visiting Colossae and Philippi. In Rome he had the best opportunity of correspondence with his distant friends, and enjoyed a degree of freedom which may have been denied him in Caesarea. In Philippians he sends greetings from converts in "Caesar's household" (Phil. 4:22), which naturally points to Rome; and the circumstances and surroundings of the other Epistles are very much alike.

Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon were composed about the same time and sent by the same messengers (Tychicus and Onesimus) to Asia Minor, probably toward the close of the Roman captivity, for in Philemon 22, he engaged a lodging in Colosae in the prospect of a speedy release and visit to the East.

Philippians we place last in the order of composition, or, at all events, in the second year of the Roman captivity; for some time must have elapsed after Paul's arrival in Rome before the Gospel could spread "throughout the whole praetorian guard"

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(Phil. 1:13), and before the Philippians, at a distance of seven hundred miles from Rome (a full month's journey in those days), could receive news from him and send him contributions through Epaphroditus, besides other communications which seem to have preceded the Epistle.

On the other hand, the priority of the composition of Philippians has been recently urged on purely internal evidence, namely, its doctrinal affinity with the preceding anti-Judaic Epistles; while Colossians and Ephesians presuppose the rise of the Gnostic heresy and thus form the connecting link between them and the Pastoral Epistles, in which the same heresy appears in a more matured form. But Ephesians has likewise striking affinities in thought and language with Romans in the doctrine of justification (comp. Eph. 2:8), and with Romans 12 and 1 Cor. 12 and 1 Cor. 14) in the doctrine of the church. As to the heresy, Paul had predicted its rise in Asia Minor several years before in his farewell to the Ephesian elders. And, finally, the grateful and joyful tone of Philippians falls in most naturally with the lofty and glorious conception of the church of Christ as presented in Ephesians.

### 1.94 The Epistle to the Colossians.

#### THE CHURCHES IN PHRYGIA.

The cities of Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis are mentioned together as seats of Christian churches in the closing chapter of Colossians, and the Epistle may be considered as being addressed to all, for the apostle directs that it be read also in the churches of the Laodiceans (Col. 4:13-16). They were situated within a few miles of each other in the valley of the Lycus (a tributary of the Maeander) in Phrygia on the borders of Lydia, and belonged, under the Roman rule, to the proconsular province of Asia Minor.

Laodicea was the most important of the three, and enjoyed metropolitan rank; she was destroyed by a disastrous earthquake A.D. 61 or 65, but rebuilt from her own resources

without the customary aid from Rome. The church of Laodicea is the last of the seven churches addressed in the Apocalypse (Rev. 3:14-22), and is described as rich and proud and lukewarm. It harbored in the middle of the fourth century (after 344) a council which passed an important act on the canon, forbidding the public reading of any but "the canonical books of the New and Old Testaments" (the list of these books is a later addition), a prohibition which was confirmed and adopted by later councils in the East and the West.

Hierapolis was a famous watering-place, surrounded by beautiful scenery, and the birthplace of the lame slave Epictetus, who, with Seneca and Marcus Aurelius, ranks among the first heathen moralists, and so closely resembles the lofty maxims of the New Testament that some writers have assumed, though without historic foundation, a passing acquaintance between him and Paul or his pupil Epaphras of Colossae. The church of Hierapolis figures in the post-apostolic age as the bishopric of Papias (a friend of Polycarp) and Apollinaris.

Colossae, once likewise famous, was at the time of Paul the smallest of the three neighboring cities, and has almost disappeared from the earth; while magnificent ruins of temples, theatres, baths, aqueducts, gymnasia, and sepulchres still testify to the former wealth and prosperity of Laodicea and Hierapolis. The church of Colossae was the least important of the churches to which Paul addressed an Epistle, and it is scarcely mentioned in post-apostolic times; but it gave rise to a heresy which shook the church in the second century, and this Epistle furnished the best remedy against it.

There was a large Jewish population in Phrygia, since Antiochus the Great had despotically transplanted two thousand Jewish families from Babylonia and Mesopotamia to that region. It thus became, in connection with the sensuous and mystic

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tendency of the Phrygian character, a nursery of religious syncretism and various forms of fanaticism.

#### PAUL AND THE COLOSSIANS

Paul passed twice through Phrygia, on his second and third missionary tours, but probably not through the valley of the Lycus. Luke does not say that he established churches there, and Paul himself seems to include the Colossians and Laodiceans among those who had not seen his face in the flesh. He names Epaphras, of Colossae, his "dear fellow-servant" and "fellow-prisoner," as the teacher and faithful minister of the Christians in that place. But during his long residence in Ephesus (A.D. 54–57) and from his imprisonment he exercised a general supervision over all the churches in Asia. After his death they passed under the care of John, and in the second century they figure prominently in the Gnostic, Paschal, Chiliastic, and Montanistic controversies.

Paul heard of the condition of the church at Colossae through Epaphras, his pupil, and Onesimus, a runaway slave. He sent through Tychicus (Col. 4:7) a letter to the church, which was also intended for the Laodiceans (4:16); at the same time he sent through Onesimus a private letter of commendation to his master, Philemon, a member of the church of Colossae. He also directed the Colossians to procure and read "the letter from Laodicea," which is most probably the evangelical Epistle to the Ephesians which was likewise transmitted through Tychicus. He had special reasons for writing to the Colossians and to Philemon, and a general reason for writing to all the churches in the region of Ephesus; and he took advantage of the mission of Tychicus to secure both ends. In this way the three Epistles are closely connected in time and aim. They would mutually explain and confirm one another.

#### THE COLOSSIAN HERESY.

The special reason which prompted Paul to write to the Colossians was the rise of a new

heresy among them which soon afterward swelled into a mighty and dangerous movement in the ancient church, as rationalism has done in modern times. It differed from the Judaizing heresy which he opposed in Galatians and Corinthians, as Essenism differed from Phariseeism, or as legalism differs from mysticism. The Colossian heresy was an Essenic and ascetic type of Gnosticism; it derived its ritualistic and practical elements from Judaism, its speculative elements from heathenism; it retained circumcision, the observance of Sabbaths and new moons, and the distinction of meats and drinks; but it mixed with it elements of oriental mysticism and theosophy, the heathen notion of an evil principle, the worship of subordinate spirits, and an ascetic struggle for emancipation from the dominion of matter. It taught an antagonism between God and matter and interposed between them a series of angelic mediators as objects of worship. It thus contained the essential features of Gnosticism, but in its incipient and rudimental form, or a Christian Essenism in its transition to Gnosticism. In its ascetic tendency it resembles that of the weak brethren in the Roman congregation (Rom. 14:5, 6, 21). Cerinthus, in the age of John, represents a more developed stage and forms the link between the Colossian heresy and the post-apostolic Gnosticism.

#### THE REFUTATION.

Paul refutes this false philosophy calmly and respectfully by the true doctrine of the Person of Christ, as the one Mediator between God and men, in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And he meets the false asceticism based upon the dualistic principle with the doctrine of the purification of the heart by faith and love as the effectual cure of all moral evil.

#### THE GNOTIC AND THE PAULINE PLEROMA.

"Pleroma" or "fullness" is an important term in Colossians and Ephesians. Paul uses it in

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common with the Gnostics, and this has been made an argument for the post-apostolic origin of the two Epistles. He did, of course, not borrow it from the Gnostics; for he employs it repeatedly in his other Epistles with slight variations. It must have had a fixed theological meaning, as it is not explained. It cannot be traced to Philo, who, however, uses "Logos" in a somewhat similar sense for the plenitude of Divine powers.

Paul speaks of "the pleroma of the earth," i.e., all that fills the earth or is contained in it (1 Cor. 10:26, 28, in a quotation from Ps. 24:1); "the pleroma," i.e., the fulfillment or accomplishment, "of the law," which is love (Rom. 13:10); "the pleroma," i.e., the fullness or abundance, "of the blessing of Christ" (Rom. 15:29) "the pleroma," or full measure, "of the time" (Gal. 4:4; comp. Eph. 1:10; Mark 1:15; Luke 21:24); "the pleroma of the Gentiles," meaning their full number, or whole body, but not necessarily all individuals (Rom. 11:25); "the pleroma of the Godhead," i.e., the fullness or plenitude of all Divine attributes and energies (Col. 1:19; 2:9); "the pleroma of Christ," which is the church as the body of Christ (Eph. 1:23; comp. 3:19; 4:13).

In the Gnostic systems, especially that of Valentinus, "pleroma" signifies the intellectual and spiritual world, including all Divine powers or aeons, in opposition to the "kenoma," i.e., the void, the emptiness, the material world. The distinction was based on the dualistic principle of an eternal antagonism between spirit and matter, which led the more earnest Gnostics to an extravagant asceticism, the frivolous ones to wild antinomianism. They included in the pleroma a succession of emanations from the Divine abyss, which form the links between the infinite and the finite; and they lowered the dignity of Christ by making him simply the highest of those intermediate aeons. The burden of the Gnostic speculation was always the question: Whence is the world? and whence is evil? It sought the solution in a dualism between mind and matter, the

pleroma and the kenoma; but this is no solution at all.

In opposition to this error, Paul teaches, on a thoroughly monotheistic basis, that Christ is "the image of the invisible God" (1:15; comp. 2 Cor. 4:4—an expression often used by Philo as a description of the Logos, and of the personified Wisdom, in Wisd. 7:26); that he is the preëxistent and incarnate pleroma or plenitude of Divine powers and attributes; that in him the whole fullness of the Godhead, that is, of the Divine nature itself, dwells bodily-wise or corporeally, as the soul dwells in the human body; and that he is the one universal and all-sufficient Mediator, through whom the whole universe of things visible and invisible, were made, in whom all things hold together, and through whom the Father is pleased to reconcile all things to himself.

The Christology of Colossians approaches very closely to the Christology of John; for he represents Christ as the incarnate "Logos" or Revealer of God, who dwelt among us "full (plhrh)¼ of grace and truth," and out of whose Divine fullness" we all have received grace for grace (John 1:1, 14, 16). Paul and John fully agree in teaching the eternal preëxistence of Christ, and his agency in the creation and preservation of the world (Col. 1:15–17; John 1:3). According to Paul, He is "the first-born or first-begotten" of all creation, Col. 1:15, distinct from , first-created), i.e., prior and superior to the whole created world, or eternal; according to John He is "the only-begotten Son" of the Father. (John 1:14, 18; comp. 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9), before and above all created children of God. The former term denotes Christ's unique relation to the world, the latter his unique relation to the Father.

The Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Colossians will be discussed in the next section in connection with the Epistle to the Ephesians.

THEME: Christ all in all. The true gnosis and the false gnosis. True and false asceticism.

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LEADING THOUGHTS: Christ is the image of the invisible God, the first-begotten of all creation (Col. 1:15).—In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (2:3).—In him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (2:9).—If ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God (3:1).—When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory (3:4).—Christ is all, and in all (3:11).—Above all things put on love, which is the bond of perfectness (3:14).—Whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus (3:17).

### 1.95 The Epistle to the Ephesians.

#### CONTENTS.

When Paul took leave of the Ephesian Elders at Miletus, in the spring of the year 58, he earnestly and affectionately exhorted them, in view of threatening disturbances from within, to take heed unto themselves and to feed "the church of the Lord, which he acquired with his own blood."

This strikes the key-note of the Epistle to the Ephesians. It is a doctrinal and practical exposition of the idea of the church, as the house of God (Eph. 2:20–22), the spotless bride of Christ (5:25–27), the mystical body of Christ (4:12–16), "the fullness of Him that filleth all in all" (1:23). The pleroma of the Godhead resides in Christ corporeally; so the pleroma of Christ, the plenitude of his graces and energies, resides in the church, as his body. Christ's fullness is God's fullness; the church's fullness is Christ's fullness. God is reflected in Christ, Christ is reflected in the church.

This is an ideal conception, a celestial vision, as it were, of the church in its future state of perfection. Paul himself represents the present church militant as a gradual growth unto the complete stature of Christ's fullness (4:13–16). We look in vain for an actual church which is free from spot or wrinkle or

blemish (5:27). Even the apostolic church was full of defects, as we may learn from every Epistle of the New Testament. The church consists of individual Christians, and cannot be complete till they are complete. The body grows and matures with its several members. "It is not yet made manifest what we shall be" (1 John 3:2).

Nevertheless, Paul's church is not a speculation or fiction, like Plato's Republic or Sir Thomas More's Utopia. It is a reality in Christ, who is absolutely holy, and is spiritually and dynamically present in his church always, as the soul is present in the members of the body. And it sets before us the high standard and aim to be kept constantly in view; as Christ exhorts every one individually to be perfect, even as our heavenly Father is perfect (Matt. 5:48).

With this conception of the church is closely connected Paul's profound and most fruitful idea of the family. He calls the relation of Christ to his church a great mystery (Eph. 5:32), and represents it as the archetype of the marriage relation, whereby one man and one woman become one flesh. He therefore bases the family on new and holy ground, and makes it a miniature of the church, or the household of God. Accordingly, husbands are to love their wives even as Christ loved the church, his bride, and gave himself up for her; wives are to obey their husbands as the church is subject to Christ, the head; parents are to love their children as Christ and the church love the individual Christians; children are to love their parents as individual Christians are to love Christ and the church. The full and general realization of this domestic ideal would be heaven on earth. But how few families come up to this standard.

#### EPHESIANS AND THE WRITINGS OF JOHN.

Paul emphasizes the person of Christ in Colossians, the person and agency of the Holy Spirit in Ephesians. For the Holy Spirit carries on the work of Christ in the church. Christians are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise

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unto the day of redemption (Eph. 1:13; 4:30). The spirit of wisdom and revelation imparts the knowledge of Christ (1:17; 3:16). Christians should be filled with the Spirit (5:18), take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and pray in the Spirit at all seasons (6:17, 18).

The Pneumatology of Ephesians resembles that of John, as the Christology of Colossians resembles the Christology of John. It is the Spirit who takes out of the "fullness" of Christ, and shows it to the believer, who glorifies the Son and guides into the truth (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13–15, etc.). Great prominence is given to the Spirit also in Romans, Galatians, Corinthians, and the Acts of the Apostles.

John does not speak of the church and its outward organization (except in the Apocalypse), but he brings Christ in as close and vital a contact with the individual disciples as Paul with the whole body. Both teach the unity of the church as a fact, and as an aim to be realized more and more by the effort of Christians, and both put the centre of unity in the Holy Spirit.

#### ENCYCLICAL INTENT

Ephesians was intended not only for the church at Ephesus, the metropolis of Asia Minor, but for all the leading churches of that district. Hence the omission of the words "in Ephesus" (Eph. 1:1) in some of the oldest and best MSS. Hence, also, the absence of personal and local intelligence. The encyclical destination may be inferred also from the reference in Col. 4:16 to the Epistle to the church of Laodicea, which the Colossians were to procure and to read, and which is probably identical with our canonical Epistle to the Ephesians."

#### CHARACTER AND VALUE OF THE EPISTLE.

Ephesians is the most churchly book of the New Testament. But it presupposes Colossians, the most Christly of Paul's Epistles. Its churchliness is rooted and grounded in Christlikeness, and has no sense whatever if separated from this root. A

church without Christ would be, at best, a praying corpse (and there are such churches). Paul was at once the highest of high churchmen, the most evangelical of evangelicals, and the broadest of the broad, because most comprehensive in his grasp and furthest removed from all pedantry and bigotry of sect or party.

Ephesians is, in some respects, the most profound and difficult (though not the most important) of his Epistles. It certainly is the most spiritual and devout, composed in an exalted and transcendent state of mind, where theology rises into worship, and meditation into oration. It is the Epistle of the Heavens, a solemn liturgy, an ode to Christ and his spotless bride, the Song of Songs in the New Testament. The aged apostle soared high above all earthly things to the invisible and eternal realities in heaven. From his gloomy confinement he ascended for a season to the mount of transfiguration. The prisoner of Christ, chained to a heathen soldier, was transformed into a conqueror, clad in the panoply of God, and singing a paean of victory.

The style has a corresponding rhythmical flow and overflow, and sounds at times like the swell of a majestic organ. It is very involved and presents unusual combinations, but this is owing to the pressure and grandeur of ideas; besides, we must remember that it was written in Greek, which admits of long periods and parentheses. In Eph. 1:3–14 we have one sentence with no less than seven relative clauses, which rise like a thick cloud of incense higher and higher to the very throne of God.

Luther reckoned Ephesians among "the best and noblest books of the New Testament." Witsius characterized it as a divine Epistle glowing with the flame of Christian love and the splendor of holy light. Braune says: "The exalted significance of the Epistle for all time lies in its fundamental idea: the church of Jesus Christ a creation of the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit, decreed from

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eternity, destined for eternity; it is the ethical cosmos; the family of God gathered in the world and in history and still further to be gathered, the object of his nurture and care in time and in eternity."

These are Continental judgments. English divines are equally strong in praise of this Epistle. Coleridge calls it "the sublimest composition of man;" Alford: "the greatest and most heavenly work of one whose very imagination is peopled with things in the heavens;" Farrar: "the Epistle of the Ascension, the most sublime, the most profound, and the most advanced and final utterance of that mystery of the gospel which it was given to St. Paul for the first time to proclaim in all its fullness to the Gentile world."

THEME: The church of Christ, the family of God, the fullness of Christ.

LEADING THOUGHTS: God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blemish before him in love (Eph. 1:4). In him we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace (1:7). He purposed to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth (1:10). God gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all (1:23). God, being rich in mercy, quickened us together with Christ and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus (2:4-6). By grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, that no man should glory (2:8, 9). Christ is our peace, who made both one, and broke down the middle wall of partition (2:14). Ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone (2:19, 20). Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints,

was this grace given, to preach Unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ (3:8). That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fullness of God (3:17-19). Give diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (4:3). There is one body, and one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all (4:6). He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints (4:11, 12). Speak the truth in love (4:15). Put on the new man, which after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth (4:24). Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell (5:1, 2). Wives, be in subjection unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord (5:22). Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it (5:25). This mystery is great; but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church (5:32). Children, obey your parents in the Lord (6:1). Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil (6:11).

### 1.96 Colossians and Ephesians Compared

#### COMPARISON.

The Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians were written about the same time and transmitted through the same messenger, Tychicus. They are as closely related to each other as the Epistles to the Galatians and to the Romans. They handle the same theme, Christ and his church; as Galatians and Romans discuss the same doctrines of salvation by free grace and justification by faith.

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But Colossians, like Galatians, arose from a specific emergency, and is brief, terse, polemical; while Ephesians, like Romans, is expanded, calm, irenic. Colossians is directed against the incipient Gnostic (paganizing) heresy, as Galatians is directed against the Judaizing heresy. The former is anti-Essenic and anti-ascetic, the latter is anti-Pharisaic and anti-legalistic; the one deals with a speculative expansion and fantastic evaporation, the latter, with a bigoted contraction, of Christianity; yet both these tendencies, like all extremes, have points of contact and admit of strange amalgamations; and in fact the Colossian and Galatian errorists united in their ceremonial observance of circumcision and the Sabbath. Ephesians, like Romans, is an independent exposition of the positive truth, of which the heresy opposed in the other Epistles is a perversion or caricature.

Again, Colossians and Ephesians differ from each other in the modification and application of their common theme: Colossians is Christological and represents Christ as the true *pleroma* or plenitude of the Godhead, the totality of divine attributes and powers; Ephesians is ecclesiological and exhibits the ideal church as the body of Christ, as the reflected *pleroma* of Christ, "the fullness of Him who filleth all in all." Christology naturally precedes ecclesiology in the order of the system, as Christ precedes the church; and Colossians preceded Ephesians most probably, also in the order of composition, as the outline precedes the full picture; but they were not far apart, and arose from the same train of meditation.

This relationship of resemblance and contrast can be satisfactorily explained only on the assumption of the same authorship, the same time of composition, and the same group of churches endangered by the same heretical modes of thought. With Paul as the author of both everything is clear; without that assumption everything is dark and uncertain.

#### AUTHORSHIP.

The genuineness of the two cognate Epistles has recently been doubted and denied, but the negative critics are by no means agreed; some surrender Ephesians but retain Colossians, others reverse the case; while Baur, always bolder and more consistent than his predecessors, rejects both.

They must stand or fall together. But they will stand. They represent, indeed, an advanced state of Christological and ecclesiological knowledge in the apostolic age, but they have their roots in the older Epistles of Paul, and are brimful of his spirit. They were called forth by a new phase of error, and brought out new statements of truth with new words and phrases adapted to the case. They contain nothing that Paul could not have written consistently with his older Epistles, and there is no known pupil of Paul who could have forged such highly intellectual and spiritual letters in his name and equaled, if not out-Pauled Paul. The external testimonies are unanimous in favor of the Pauline authorship, and go as far back as Justin Martyr, Polycarp, Ignatius, and the heretical Marcion (about 140), who included both Epistles in his mutilated canon.

The difficulties which have been urged against their Pauline origin, especially of Ephesians, are as follows:

1. The striking resemblance of the two Epistles, and the apparent repetitiousness and dependence of Ephesians on Colossians, which seem to be unworthy of such an original thinker as Paul. But this resemblance, which is more striking in the practical than in the doctrinal part, is not the resemblance between an author and an imitator, but of two compositions of the same author, written about the same time on two closely connected topics; and it is accompanied by an equally marked variety in thought and language.

2. The absence of personal and local references in Ephesians. This is, as already

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remarked, sufficiently explained by the encyclical character of that Epistle.

3. A number of peculiar words not found elsewhere in the Pauline Epistles. But they are admirably adapted to the new ideas, and must be expected from a mind so rich as Paul's. Every Epistle contains some hapax legomena. The only thing which is somewhat startling is that an apostle should speak of "holy apostles and prophets" (Eph. 3:5), but the term "holy" is applied in the New Testament to all Christians, as being consecrated to God (John 17:17), and not in the later ecclesiastical sense of a spiritual nobility. It implies no contradiction to Eph. 3:8, where the author calls himself "the least of all saints" (comp. 1 Cor. 15:9, "I am the least of the apostles").

4. The only argument of any weight is the alleged post-Pauline rise of the Gnostic heresy, which is undoubtedly opposed in Colossians (not in Ephesians, at least not directly). But why should this heresy not have arisen in the apostolic age as well as the Judaizing heresy which sprung up before A.D. 50, and followed Paul everywhere? The tares spring up almost simultaneously with the wheat. Error is the shadow of truth. Simon Magus, the contemporary of Peter, and the Gnostic Cerinthus, the contemporary, of John, are certainly historic persons. Paul speaks (1 Cor. 8:1) of a "gnosis which puffeth up," and warned the Ephesian elders, as early as 58, of the rising of disturbing errorists from their own midst; and the Apocalypse, which the Tübingen critics assign to the year 68, certainly opposes the antinomian type of Gnosticism, the error of the Nicolaitans (Rev. 2:6, 15, 20), which the early Fathers derived from one of the first seven deacons of Jerusalem. All the elements of Gnosticism—Ebionism, Platonism, Philoism, syncretism, asceticism, antinomianism—were extant before Christ, and it needed only a spark of Christian truth to set the inflammable material on fire. The universal sentiment of the Fathers, as far as we can trace it up to Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, and Polycarp found

the origin of Gnosticism in the apostolic age, and called Simon Magus its father or grandfather.

Against their testimony, the isolated passage of Hegesippus, so often quoted by the negative critics, has not the weight of a feather. This credulous, inaccurate, and narrow-minded Jewish Christian writer said, according to Eusebius, that the church enjoyed profound peace, and was "a pure and uncorrupted virgin," governed by brothers and relations of Jesus, until the age of Trajan, when, after the death of the apostles, "the knowledge falsely so called" (comp. 1 Tim. 6:20), openly raised its head. But he speaks of the church in Palestine, not in Asia Minor; and he was certainly mistaken in this dream of an age of absolute purity and peace. The Tübingen school itself maintains the very opposite view. Every Epistle, as well as the Acts, bears testimony to the profound agitations, parties, and evils of the church, including Jerusalem, where the first great theological controversy was fought out by the apostles themselves. But Hegesippus corrects himself, and makes a distinction between the secret working and the open and shameless manifestation of heresy. The former began, he intimates, in the apostolic age; the latter showed itself afterward. Gnosticism, like modern Rationalism, had a growth of a hundred years before it came to full maturity. A post-apostolic writer would have dealt very differently with the fully developed systems of Basilides, Valentinus, and Marcion. And yet the two short Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians strike at the roots of this error, and teach the positive truth with an originality, vigor, and depth that makes them more valuable, even as a refutation, than the five books of Irenaeus against Gnosticism, and the ten books of the Philosophumena of Hippolytus; and this patent fact is the best proof of their apostolic origin.

**1.97. The Epistle to the Philippians.**

## THE CHURCH AT PHILIPPI.

Philippi was a city of Macedonia, founded by and called after Philip, the father of Alexander the Great, in a fertile region, with contiguous gold and silver mines, on the banks of a small river and the highway between Asia and Europe, ten miles from the seacoast. It acquired immortal fame by the battle between Brutus and Mark Antony (B.C. 42), in which the Roman republic died and the empire was born. After that event it had the rank of a Roman military colony, with the high-sounding title, "Colonia Augusta Julia Philippensis." Hence its mixed population, the Greeks, of course, prevailing, next the Roman colonists and magistrates, and last a limited number of Jews, who had a place of prayer on the riverside. It was visited by Paul, in company with Silas, Timothy, and Luke, on his second missionary tour, in the year 52, and became the seat of the first Christian congregation on the classical soil of Greece. Lydia, the purple dealer of Thyatira and a half proselyte to Judaism, a native slave-girl with a divining spirit, which was used by her masters as a means of gain among the superstitious heathen, and a Roman jailer, were the first converts, and fitly represent the three nationalities (Jew, Greek, and Roman) and the classes of society which were especially benefited by Christianity. "In the history of the gospel at Philippi, as in the history of the church at large, is reflected the great maxim of Christianity, the central truth of the apostle's teaching, that here is 'neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female, but all are one in Christ Jesus.'" Here, also, are the first recorded instances of whole households (of Lydia and the jailer) being baptized and gathered into the church, of which the family is the chief nursery. The congregation was fully organized, with bishops (presbyters) and deacons at the head (Phil. 1:1).

Here the apostle was severely persecuted and marvelously delivered. Here he had his most

loyal and devoted converts, who were his "joy and crown." For them he felt the strongest personal attachment; from them alone he would receive contributions for his support. In the autumn of the year 57, after five years' absence, he paid a second visit to Philippi, having in the meantime kept up constant intercourse with the congregation through living messengers; and on his last journey to Jerusalem, in the spring of the following year, he stopped at Philippi to keep the paschal feast with his beloved brethren. They had liberally contributed out of their poverty to the relief of the churches in Judaea. When they heard of his arrival at Rome, they again sent him timely assistance through Epaphroditus, who also offered his personal services to the prisoner of the Lord, at the sacrifice of his health and almost his life. It was through this faithful fellow-worker that Paul sent his letter of thanks to the Philippians, hoping, after his release, to visit them in person once more.

## THE EPISTLE.

The Epistle reflects, in familiar ease, his relations to this beloved flock, which rested on the love of Christ. It is not systematic, not polemic, nor apologetic, but personal and autobiographic, resembling in this respect the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, and to some extent, also, the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. It is the free outflow of tender love and gratitude, and full of joy and cheerfulness in the face of life and death. It is like his midnight hymn of praise in the dungeon of Philippi. "Rejoice in the Lord alway; again I will say, Rejoice" (Phil. 4:4). This is the key-note of the letter. It proves that a healthy Christian faith, far from depressing and saddening the heart, makes truly happy and contented even in prison. It is an important contribution to our knowledge of the character of the apostle. In acknowledging the gift of the Philippians, he gracefully and delicately mingles manly independence and gratitude. He had no

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doctrinal error, nor practical vice to rebuke, as in Galatians and Corinthians.

The only discordant tone is the warning against "the dogs of the concision" (3:2), as he sarcastically calls the champions of circumcision, who everywhere sowed tares in his wheat fields, and at that very time tried to check his usefulness in Rome by substituting the righteousness of the law for the righteousness of faith. But he guards the readers with equal earnestness against the opposite extreme of antinomian license (3:2–21). In opposition to the spirit of personal and social rivalry and contention which manifested itself among the Philippians, Paul reminds them of the self-denying example of Christ, who was the highest of all, and yet became the lowliest of all by divesting himself of his divine majesty and humbling himself, even to the death on the cross, and who, in reward for his obedience, was exalted above every name (2:1–11).

This is the most important doctrinal passage of the letter, and contains (together with 2 Cor. 8:9) the fruitful germ of the speculations on the nature and extent of the kenosis, which figures so prominently in the history of Christology. It is a striking example of the apparently accidental occasion of some of the deepest utterances of the apostle. "With passages full of elegant negligence (Phil. 1:29), like Plato's dialogues and Cicero's letters, it has passages of wonderful eloquence, and proceeds from outward relations and special circumstances to wide-reaching thoughts and grand conceptions."

The objections against the genuineness raised by a few hyper-critical are not worthy of a serious refutation.

#### THE LATER HISTORY.

The subsequent history of the church at Philippi is rather disappointing, like that of the other apostolic churches in the East. It appears again in the letters of Ignatius, who passed through the place on his way to his martyrdom in Rome, and was kindly entertained and escorted by the brethren, and

in the Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians, who expressed his joy that "the sturdy root of their faith, famous from the earliest days, still survives and bears fruit unto our Lord Jesus Christ," and alludes to the labors of "the blessed and glorious Paul" among them. Tertullian appeals to the Philippian church as still maintaining the apostle's doctrine and reading his Epistle publicly. The name of its bishop is mentioned here and there in the records of councils, but that is all. During the middle ages the city was turned into a wretched village, and the bishopric into a mere shadow. At present there is not even a village on the site, but only a caravansary, a mile or more from the ruins, which consist of a theatre, broken marble columns, two lofty gateways, and a portion of the city wall. "Of the church which stood foremost among all the apostolic communities in faith and love, it may literally be said that not one stone stands upon another. Its whole career is a signal monument of the inscrutable counsels of God. Born into the world with the brightest promise, the church of Philippi has lived without a history and perished without a memorial."

But in Paul's Epistle that noble little band of Christians still lives and blesses the church in distant countries.

THEME: Theological: The self-humiliation (kenosis) of Christ for our salvation (Phil. 2:5–11). Practical: Christian cheerfulness.

LEADING THOUGHTS: He who began a good work in you will perfect it (1:6). If only Christ is preached, I rejoice (1:13). To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain (1:21). Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who emptied himself, etc. (2:5 sqq.). God works in you both to will and to work (2:13). Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice (3:1; 4:1). I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ (3:8). I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (3:14). Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever

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things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things (4:8). The peace of God passeth all understanding (4:7).

### **1.98 The Epistle to Philemon.**

Of the many private letters of introduction and recommendation which Paul must have written during his long life, only one is left to us, very brief but very weighty. It is addressed to Philemon, a zealous Christian at Colossae, a convert of Paul and apparently a layman, who lent his house for the religious meetings of the brethren. The name recalls the touching mythological legend of the faithful old couple, Philemon and Baucis, who, in the same province of Phrygia, entertained gods unawares and were rewarded for their simple hospitality and conjugal love. The letter was written and transmitted at the same time as that to the Colossians. It may be regarded as a personal postscript to it.

It was a letter of recommendation of Onesimus (i.e., Profitable), a slave of Philemon, who had run away from his master on account of some offence (probably theft, a very common sin of slaves), fell in with Paul at Rome, of whom he may have heard in the weekly meetings at Colossae, or through Epaphras, his fellow-townsmen, was converted by him to the Christian faith, and now desired to return, as a penitent, in company with Tychicus, the bearer of the Epistle to the Colossians (Col. 4:9).

#### **PAUL AND SLAVERY.**

The Epistle is purely personal, yet most significant. Paul omits his official title, and substitutes the touching designation, "a prisoner of Christ Jesus," thereby going directly to the heart of his friend. The letter introduces us into a Christian household, consisting of father (Philemon), mother (Apphia), son (Archippus, who was at the same time a "fellow-soldier," a Christian minister), and a slave (Onesimus). It shows

the effect of Christianity upon society at a crucial point, where heathenism was utterly helpless. It touches on the institution of slavery, which lay like an incubus upon the whole heathen world and was interwoven with the whole structure of domestic and public life.

The effect of Christianity upon this gigantic social evil is that of a peaceful and gradual care from within, by teaching the common origin and equality of men, their common redemption and Christian brotherhood, by, emancipating them from slavery unto spiritual freedom, equality, and brotherhood in Christ, in whom there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female, but all are one moral person (Gal. 3:28). This principle and the corresponding practice wrought first an amelioration, and ultimately the abolition of slavery. The process was very slow and retarded by the counteracting influence of the love of gain and power, and all the sinful passions of men; but it was sure and is now almost complete throughout the Christian world; while paganism and Mohammedanism regard slavery as a normal state of society, and hence do not even make an attempt to remove it. It was the only wise way for the apostles to follow in dealing with the subject. A proclamation of emancipation from them would have been a mere brutum fulmen, or, if effectual, would have resulted in a bloody revolution of society in which Christianity itself would have been buried.

Paul accordingly sent back Onesimus to his rightful master, yet under a new character, no more a contemptible thief and runaway, but a regenerate man and a "beloved brother," with the touching request that Philemon might receive him as kindly as he would the apostle himself, yea as his own heart (Philem. 16, 17). Such advice took the sting out of slavery; the form remained, the thing itself was gone. What a contrast! In the eyes of the heathen philosophers (even Aristotle) Onesimus, like every other slave, was but a live chattel; in the eyes of Paul a redeemed child of God and

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heir of eternal life, which is far better than freedom.

The New Testament is silent about the effect of the letter. We cannot doubt that Philemon forgave Onesimus and treated him with Christian kindness. In all probability he went beyond the letter of the request and complied with its spirit, which hints at emancipation. Tradition relates that Onesimus received his freedom and became bishop of Beraea in Macedonia; sometimes he is confounded with his namesake, a bishop of Ephesus in the second century, or made a missionary in Spain and a martyr in Rome, or at Puteoli.

#### PAUL AND PHILEMON.

The Epistle is at the same time an invaluable contribution to our knowledge of Paul. It reveals him to us as a perfect Christian gentleman. It is a model of courtesy, delicacy, and tenderness of feeling. Shut up in a prison, the aged apostle had a heart full of love and sympathy for a poor runaway slave, made him a freeman in Christ Jesus, and recommended him as if he were his own self.

#### PAUL AND PLINY.

Grotius and other commentators quote the famous letter of Pliny the Consul to his friend Sabinianus in behalf of a runaway slave. It is very creditable to Pliny, who was born in the year when Paul arrived as a prisoner in Rome, and shows that the natural feelings of kindness and generosity could not be extinguished even by that inhuman institution. Pliny was a Roman gentleman of high culture and noble instincts, although he ignorantly despised Christianity and persecuted its innocent professors while Proconsul in Asia. The letters present striking points of resemblance: in both, a fugitive slave, guilty, but reformed, and desirous to return to duty; in both, a polite, delicate, and earnest plea for pardon and restoration, dictated by sentiments of disinterested kindness. But they differ as Christian charity differs from natural philanthropy, as a Christian gentleman differs from a heathen

gentleman. The one could appeal only to the amiable temper and pride of his friend, the other to the love of Christ and the sense of duty and gratitude; the one was concerned for the temporal comfort of his client, the other even more for his eternal welfare; the one could at best remand him to his former condition as a slave, the other raised him to the high dignity of a Christian brother, sitting with his master at the same communion table of a common Lord and Saviour. "For polished speech the Roman may bear the palm, but for nobleness of tone and warmth of heart he falls far short of the imprisoned apostle."

The Epistle was poorly understood in the ancient church when slavery ruled supreme in the Roman empire. A strong prejudice prevailed against it in the fourth century, as if it were wholly unworthy of an apostle.

Jerome, Chrysostom, and other commentators, who themselves had no clear idea of its ultimate social bearing, apologized to their readers that Paul, instead of teaching metaphysical dogmas and enforcing ecclesiastical discipline, should take so much interest in a poor runaway slave. But since the Reformation full justice has been done to it. Erasmus says: "Cicero never wrote with greater elegance." Luther and Calvin speak of it in high terms, especially Luther, who fully appreciated its noble, Christ-like sentiments. Bengel: "mire ajstei'o". Ewald: "Nowhere can the sensibility and warmth of a tender friendship blend more beautifully with the loftier feeling of a commanding spirit than in this letter, at once so brief, and yet so surpassingly full and significant." Meyer: "A precious relic of a great character, and, viewed merely as a specimen of Attic elegance and urbanity, it takes rank among the epistolary masterpieces of antiquity." Baur rejects it with trifling arguments as post-apostolic, but confesses that it "makes an agreeable impression by its attractive form," and breathes "the noblest Christian spirit." Holtzmann calls it "a model of tact, refinement, and amiability." Reuss: "a model of tact and humanity, and an expression of a

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fine appreciation of Christian duty, and genial, amiable humor." Renan, with his keen eye on the literary and aesthetic merits or defects, praises it as "a veritable little f-d'oeuvre, of the art of letter-writing." And Lightfoot, while estimating still higher its moral significance on the question of slavery, remarks of its literary excellency: "As an expression of simple dignity, of refined courtesy, of large sympathy, of warm personal affection, the Epistle to Philemon stands unrivalled. And its pre-eminence is the more remarkable because in style it is exceptionally loose. It owes nothing to the graces of rhetoric; its effect is due solely to the spirit of the writer."

### 1.99 The Pastoral Epistles.

#### CONTENTS.

The three Pastoral Epistles, two to Timothy and one to Titus, form a group by themselves, and represent the last stage of the apostle's life and labors, with his parting counsels to his beloved disciples and fellow-workers. They show us the transition of the apostolic church from primitive simplicity to a more definite system of doctrine and form of government. This is just what we might expect from the probable time of their composition after the first Roman captivity of Paul, and before the composition of the Apocalypse.

They are addressed not to congregations, but to individuals, and hence more personal and confidential in their character. This fact helps us to understand many peculiarities. Timothy, the son of a heathen father and a Jewish mother, and Titus, a converted Greek) were among the dearest of Paul's pupils. They were, at the same time, his delegates and commissioners on special occasions, and appear under this official character in the Epistles, which, for this reason, bear the name "Pastoral."

The Epistles contain Paul's pastoral theology and his theory of church government. They give directions for founding, training, and governing churches, and for the proper

treatment of individual members, old and young, widows and virgins, backsliders and heretics. They are rich in practical wisdom and full of encouragement, as every pastor knows.

The Second Epistle to Timothy is more personal in its contents than the other two, and has the additional importance of concluding the autobiography of Paul. It is his last will and testament to all future ministers and soldiers of Christ.

#### THE PAULINE AUTHORSHIP

There never was a serious doubt as to the Pauline authorship of these Epistles till the nineteenth century, except among a few Gnostics in the second century. They were always reckoned among the Homologumena, as distinct from the seven Antilegomena, or disputed books of the New Testament. As far as external evidence is concerned, they stand on as firm a foundation as any other Epistle. They are quoted as canonical by Eusebius, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and Irenaeus. Reminiscences from them, in some cases with verbal agreement, are found in several of the Apostolic Fathers. They are included in the ancient MSS. and Versions, and in the list of the Muratorian canon. Marcion (about 140), it is true, excluded them from his canon of ten Pauline Epistles, but he excluded also the Gospels (except a mutilated Luke), the Catholic Epistles, and the Apocalypse.

But there are certain internal difficulties which have induced a number of modern critics to assign them all, or at least First Timothy, to a post-Pauline or pseudo-Pauline writer, who either changed and adapted Pauline originals to a later state of the church, or fabricated the whole in the interest of Catholic orthodoxy. In either case, the writer is credited with the best intentions and must not be judged according to the modern standard of literary honesty and literary property. Doctrinally, the Pastoral Epistles are made the connecting link between genuine Paulinism and the Johannine Logos—

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philosophy; ecclesiastically, the link between primitive Presbyterianism and Catholic Episcopacy; in both respects, a necessary element in the formation process of the orthodox Catholic church of the second century.

The objections against the Pauline authorship deserve serious consideration, and are as follows: (1) The impossibility of locating these Epistles in the recorded life of Paul; (2) the Gnostic heresy opposed; (3) the ecclesiastical organization implied; (4) the peculiarities of style and temper. If they are not genuine, Second Timothy must be the oldest, as it is least liable to these objections, and First Timothy and Titus are supposed to represent a later development.

#### THE TIME OF COMPOSITION

The chronology of the Pastoral Epistles is uncertain, and has been made an objection to their genuineness. It is closely connected with the hypothesis of a second Roman captivity, which we have discussed in another place.

The Second Epistle to Timothy, whether genuine or not, hails from a Roman prison, and appears to be the last of Paul's Epistles; for he was then hourly expecting the close of his fight of faith, and the crown of righteousness from his Lord and Master (2 Tim. 4:7, 8). Those who deny the second imprisonment, and yet accept Second Timothy as Pauline, make it the last of the first imprisonment.

As to First Timothy and Titus, it is evident from their contents that they were written while Paul was free, and after he had made some journeys, which are not recorded in the Acts. Here lies the difficulty. Two ways are open:

1. The two Epistles were written in 56 and 57. Paul may, during his three years' sojourn in Ephesus, A.D. 54-57 (see Acts 19:8-10; 20:31), easily have made a second journey to Macedonia, leaving Ephesus in charge of Timothy (1 Tim. 1:3); and also crossed over to the island of Crete, where he left Titus

behind to take care of the churches (Tit. 1:5). Considering the incompleteness of the record of Acts, and the probable allusions in 2 Cor. 2:1; 12:13, 14, 21; 13:1, to a second visit to Corinth, not mentioned in the Acts, these two journeys are within the reach of possibility. But such an early date leaves the other difficulties unexplained.

2. The tradition of the second Roman captivity, which can be raised at least to a high degree of probability, removes the difficulty by giving us room for new journeys and labors of Paul between his release in the spring of 63 and the Neronian persecution in July, 64 (according to Tacitus), or three or four years later (according to Eusebius and Jerome), as well as for the development of the Gnostic heresy and the ecclesiastical organization of the church which is implied in these Epistles. Hence, most writers who hold to the genuineness place First Timothy and Titus between the first and second Roman captivities.

Paul certainly intended to make a journey from Rome to Spain (Rom. 15:24), and also one to the East (Philem. 22; Phil. 1:25, 26; 2:24), and he had ample time to carry out his intention even before the Neronian persecution, if we insist upon confining this to the date of Tacitus.

Those who press the chronological difficulty should not forget that a forger could have very easily fitted the Epistles into the narrative of the Acts, and was not likely to invent a series of journeys, circumstances, and incidents, such as the bringing of the cloak, the books, and the parchments which Paul, in the hurry of travel, had left at Troas (2 Tim. 4:13).

#### THE Gnostic HERESY.

The Pastoral Epistles, like Colossians, oppose the Gnostic heresy (1 Tim. 6:20) which arose in Asia Minor during his first Roman captivity, and appears more fully developed in Cerinthus, the contemporary of John. This was acknowledged by the early Fathers, Irenaeus and Tertullian, who used these very

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Epistles as Pauline testimonies against the Gnosticism of their day.

The question arises, which of the many types of this many-sided error is opposed? Evidently the Judaizing type, which resembled that at Colossae, but was more advanced and malignant, and hence is more sternly denounced. The heretics were of "the circumcision" (Tit. 1:10); they are called "teachers of the law" (1 Tim. 1:7, the very reverse of antinomians), "given to Jewish fables" (Tit. 1:14), and "disputes connected with the law" (Tit. 3:9), and fond of foolish and ignorant questionings (2 Tim. 2:23). They were, moreover, extravagant ascetics, like the Essenes, forbidding to marry and abstaining from meat (1 Tim. 4:3), 8; Tit. 1:14, 15). They denied the resurrection and overthrew the faith of some (2 Tim. 2:18).

Baur turned these heretics into anti-Jewish and antinomian Gnostics of the school of Marcion (about 140), and then, by consequence, put the Epistles down to the middle of the second century. He finds in the "genealogies" (1 Tim. 1:4; Tit. 3:9) the emanations, of the Gnostic eons, and in the "antitheses" (1 Tim. 6:20), or anti-evangelical assertions of the heretical teachers, an allusion to Marcion's "antitheses" (antilogies), by which he set forth the supposed contradictions between the Old and New Testaments. But this is a radical misinterpretation, and the more recent opponents of the genuineness are forced to admit the Judaizing character of those errorists; they identify them with Cerinthus, the Ophites, and Saturninus, who preceded Marcion by several decades.

As to the origin of the Gnostic heresy, which the Tübingen school would put down to the age of Hadrian, we have already seen that, like its counterpart, the Ebionite heresy, it dates from the apostolic age, according to the united testimony of the later Pauline Epistles, the Epistles of Peter, John, and Jude, the Apocalypse, and the patristic tradition.

#### ECCLESIASTICAL ORGANIZATION

The Pastoral Epistles seem to presuppose a more fully developed ecclesiastical organization than the other Pauline Epistles, and to belong to an age of transition from apostolic simplicity, or Christo-democracy—if we may use such a term—to the episcopal hierarchy of the second century. The church, in proportion as it lost, after the destruction of Jerusalem, its faith in the speedy advent of Christ, began to settle down in this world, and to make preparations for a permanent home by a fixed creed and a compact organization, which gave it unity and strength against heathen persecution and heretical corruption. This organization, at once simple and elastic, was episcopacy, with its subordinate offices of the presbytery and deaconate, and charitable institutions for widows and orphans. Such an organization we have, it is said, in the Pastoral Epistles, which were written in the name of Paul, to give the weight of his authority to the incipient hierarchy.

But, on closer inspection, there is a very marked difference between the ecclesiastical constitution of the Pastoral Epistles and that of the second century. There is not a word said about the divine origin of episcopacy; not a trace of a congregational episcopate, such as we find in the Ignatian epistles, still less of a diocesan episcopate of the time of Irenaeus and Tertullian. Bishops and presbyters are still identical as they are in the Acts 20:17, 28, and in the undoubtedly genuine Epistle to the Philippians 1:1. Even Timothy and Titus appear simply as delegates of the apostle for a specific mission. The qualifications and functions required of the bishop are aptness to teach and a blameless character; and their authority is made to depend upon their moral character rather than their office. They are supposed to be married, and to set a good example in governing their own household. The ordination which Timothy received (1 Tim. 4:14; 5:22) need not differ from the ordination of deacons and elders mentioned in Acts 6:6; 8:17; comp. 14:23; 19:6). "Few

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features," says Dr. Plumptre, himself an Episcopalian, "are more striking in these Epistles than the absence of any high hierarchical system." The Apocalypse, which these very critics so confidently assign to the year 68, shows a nearer approach to episcopal unity in the "angels" of the seven churches. But even from the "angels," of the Apocalypse there was a long way to the Ignatian and pseudo-Clementine bishops, who are set up as living oracles and hierarchical idols.

#### THE STYLE

The language of the Pastoral Epistles shows an unusual number of un-Pauline words and phrases, especially rare compounds, some of them nowhere found in the whole New Testament, or even in Greek literature.

But, in the first place, the number of words peculiar to each one of the three epistles is much greater than the number of peculiar words common to all three; consequently, if the argument proves anything, it leads to the conclusion of three different authors, which the assailants will not admit, in view of the general unity of the Epistles. In the next place, every one of Paul's Epistles has a number of peculiar words, even the little Epistle of Philemon. The most characteristic words were required by the nature of the new topics handled and the heresy combated, such as "knowledge falsely so called" (Tim. 1:10); "Jewish myths" (Tit. 1:14); "genealogies" (Tit. 3:9); "profane babblings" (2 Tim. 2:16). Paul's mind was uncommonly fertile and capable of adapting itself to varying conditions, and had to create in some measure the Christian idiom. The Tübingen critics profess the highest admiration for his genius, and yet would contract his vocabulary to a very small compass. Finally, the peculiarities of style are counterbalanced by stronger resemblances and unmistakable evidences of Pauline authorship. "There are flashes of the deepest feeling, outbursts of the most intense expression. There is rhythmic movement and excellent majesty in the doxologies, and the

ideal of a Christian pastor drawn not only with an unflinching hand, but with a beauty, fullness, and simplicity which a thousand years of subsequent experience have enabled no one to equal, much less to surpass."

On the other hand, we may well ask the opponents to give a good reason why a forger should have chosen so many new words when he might have so easily confined himself to the vocabulary of the other Epistles of Paul; why he should have added "mercy" to the salutation instead of the usual form; why he should have called Paul "the chief of sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15), and affected a tone of humility rather than a tone of high apostolic authority?

#### OTHER OBJECTIONS.

The Epistles have been charged with want of logical connection, with abruptness, monotony, and repetitiousness, unworthy of such an original thinker and writer as Paul. But this feature is only the easy, familiar, we may say careless, style which forms the charm as well as the defect of personal correspondence. Moreover, every great author varies more or less at different periods of life, and under different conditions and moods.

It would be a more serious objection if the theology of these Epistles could be made to appear in conflict with that of his acknowledged works. But this is not the case. It is said that greater stress is laid on sound doctrine and good works. But in Galatians, Paul condemns most solemnly every departure from the genuine gospel (Gal. 1:8, 9), and in all his Epistles he enjoins holiness as the indispensable evidence of faith; while salvation is just as clearly traced to divine grace alone, in the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim. 1:9; Tit. 3:5), as in Romans.

In conclusion, while we cannot be blind to certain difficulties, and may not be able, from want of knowledge of the precise situation of the writer, satisfactorily to explain them, we must insist that the prevailing evidence is in favor of the genuineness of these Epistles.

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They agree with Paul's doctrinal system; they are illuminated with flashes of his genius; they bear the marks of his intense personality; they contain rare gems of inspired truth, and most wholesome admonition and advice, which makes them to-day far more valuable than any number of works on pastoral theology and church government. There are not a few passages in them which, for doctrine or practice, are equal to the best he ever wrote, and are deeply lodged in the experience and affection of Christendom.

And what could be a more fitting, as well as more sublime and beautiful, finale of such a hero of faith than the last words of his last Epistle, written in the very face of martyrdom: "I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day: and not only to me, but also to all them that have loved his appearing."

**1.100 The Epistle To The Hebrews.**

The anonymous Epistle "to the Hebrews," like the Book of Job, belongs to the order of Melchizedek, combining priestly unction and royal dignity, but being "without father, without mother, without pedigree, having neither beginning of days nor end of life" (Heb. 7:1-3). Obscure in its origin, it is clear and deep in its knowledge of Christ. Hailing from the second generation of Christians (2:3), it is full of pentecostal inspiration. Traceable to no apostle, it teaches, exhorts, and warns with apostolic authority and power. Though not of Paul's pen, it has, somehow, the impress of his genius and influence, and is altogether worthy to occupy a place in the canon, after his Epistles, or between them and the Catholic Epistles. Pauline in spirit, it is catholic or encyclical in its aim.

**CONTENTS.**

The Epistle to the Hebrews is not an ordinary letter. It has, indeed, the direct personal appeals, closing messages, and salutations of a letter; but it is more, it is a homily, or rather a theological discourse, aiming to strengthen the readers in their Christian faith, and to protect them against the danger of apostasy from Christianity. It is a profound argument for the superiority of Christ over the angels, over Moses, and over the Levitical priesthood, and for the finality of the second covenant. It unfolds far more fully than any other book the great idea of the eternal priesthood and sacrifice of Christ, offered once and forever for the redemption of the world, as distinct from the national and transient character of the Mosaic priesthood and the ever-repeated sacrifices of the Tabernacle and the Temple. The author draws his arguments from the Old Testament itself, showing that, by its whole character and express declarations, it is a preparatory dispensation for the gospel salvation, a significant type and prophecy of Christianity, and hence destined to pass away like a transient shadow of the abiding substance. He implies that the Mosaic oeconomy was still existing, with its priests and daily sacrifices, but in process of decay, and looks forward to the fearful judgment which a few years, afterward destroyed the Temple forever. He interweaves pathetic admonitions and precious consolations with doctrinal expositions, and every exhortation leads him to a new exposition. Paul puts the hortatory part usually at the end.

The author undoubtedly belonged to the Pauline school, which emphasized the great distinction between the Old and the New Covenant; while yet fully acknowledging the divine origin and paedagogic use of the former. But he brings out the superiority of Christ's priesthood and sacrifice to the Mosaic priesthood and sacrifice; while Paul dwells mainly on the distinction between the law and the gospel. He lays chief stress on faith, but he presents it in its general aspect as trust

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in God, in its prospective reference to the future and invisible, and in its connection with hope and perseverance under suffering; while Paul describes faith, in its specific evangelical character, as a hearty trust in Christ and his atoning merits, and in its justifying effect, in opposition to legalistic reliance on works. Faith is defined, or at least described, as "assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen" (11:1). This applies to the Old Testament as well as the New, and hence appropriately opens the catalogue of patriarchs and prophets, who encourage Christian believers in their conflict; but they are to look still more to Jesus as "the author and perfecter of our faith" (12:2), who is, after all, the unchanging object of our faith, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever" (13:8).

The Epistle is eminently Christological. It resembles in this respect Colossians and Philippians, and forms a stepping-stone to the Christology of John. From the sublime description of the exaltation and majesty of Christ in Heb. 1:1-4 (comp. Col. 1:15-20), there is only one step to the prologue of the fourth Gospel. The exposition of the high priesthood of Christ reminds one of the sacerdotal prayer (John 17).

The use of proof-texts from the Old Testament seems at times contrary to the obvious historical import of the passage, but is always ingenious, and was, no doubt, convincing to Jewish readers. The writer does not distinguish between typical and direct prophecies. He recognizes the typical, or rather antitypical, character of the Tabernacle and its services, as reflecting the archetype seen by Moses in the mount, but all the Messianic prophecies are explained as direct (Heb. 1:5-14; 2:11-13; 10:5-10). He betrays throughout a high order of Greek culture, profound knowledge of the Greek Scriptures, and the symbolical import of the Mosaic worship. He was also familiar with the Alexandrian theosophy of Philo, but he never introduces foreign ideas into the Scriptures, as Philo did by his allegorical interpretation.

His exhortations and warnings go to the quick of the moral sensibility; and yet his tone is also cheering and encouraging. He had the charisma of exhortation and consolation in the highest degree. Altogether, he was a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and gifted with a tongue of fire.

#### THE STYLE.

Hebrews is written in purer Greek than any book of the New Testament, except those portions of Luke where he is independent of prior documents. The Epistle begins, like the third Gospel, with a rich and elegant period of classic construction. The description of the heroes of faith in the eleventh chapter is one of the most eloquent and sublime in the entire history of religious literature. He often reasons a *minori ad majus* (eij ... povsw/ ma'llon). He uses a number of rare and choice terms which occur nowhere else in the New Testament.

As compared with the undoubted Epistles of Paul, the style of Hebrews is less fiery and forcible, but smoother, more correct, rhetorical, rhythmical, and free from anacolutha and solecisms. There is not that rush and vehemence which bursts through ordinary rules, but a calm and regular flow of speech. The sentences are skilfully constructed and well rounded. Paul is bent exclusively on the thought; the author of Hebrews evidently paid great attention to the form. Though not strictly classical, his style is as pure as the Hellenistic dialect and the close affinity with the Septuagint permit.

All these considerations exclude the idea of a translation from a supposed Hebrew original.

#### THE READERS.

The Epistle is addressed to the Hebrew Christians, that is, according to the usual distinction between Hebrews and Hellenists (Acts 6:1; 9:27), to the converted Jews in Palestine, chiefly to those in Jerusalem. To them it is especially adapted. They lived in sight of the Temple, and were exposed to the persecution of the hierarchy and the

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temptation of apostasy. This has been the prevailing view from the time of Chrysostom to Bleek. The objection that the Epistle quotes the Old Testament uniformly after the Septuagint is not conclusive, since the Septuagint was undoubtedly used in Palestine alongside with the Hebrew original.

Other views more or less improbable need only be mentioned: (1) All the Christian Jews as distinct from the Gentiles; (2) the Jews of Jerusalem alone; (3) the Jews of Alexandria; (4) the Jews of Antioch; (5) the Jews of Rome; (6) some community of the dispersion in the East (but not Jerusalem).

#### OCCASION AND AIM.

The Epistle was prompted by the desire to strengthen and comfort the readers in their trials and persecutions (Heb. 10:32-39; Heb. 11 and 12), but especially to warn them against the danger of apostasy to Judaism (2:2, 3; 3:6, 14; 4:1, 14; 6:1-8; 10:23, 26-31). And this could be done best by showing the infinite superiority of Christianity, and the awful guilt of neglecting so great a salvation.

Strange that but thirty years after the resurrection and the Pentecostal effusion of the Spirit, there should have been such a danger of apostasy in the very mother church of Christendom. And yet not strange, if we realize the condition of things, between 60 and 70. The Christians in Jerusalem were the most conservative of all believers, and adhered as closely as possible to the traditions of their fathers. They were contented with the elementary doctrines, and needed to be pressed on "unto perfection" (5:12; 6:1-4). The Epistle of James represents their doctrinal stand-point. The strange advice which he gave to his brother Paul, on his last visit, reflects their timidity and narrowness. Although numbered by "myriads," they made no attempt in that critical moment to rescue the great apostle from the hands of the fanatical Jews; they were "all zealous for the law," and afraid of the radicalism of Paul on hearing that he was teaching the Jews of the Dispersion "to

forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs" ( Acts 21:20, 21).

They hoped against hope for the conversion of their people. When that hope vanished more and more, when some of their teachers had suffered martyrdom (Heb. 13:7), when James, their revered leader, was stoned by the Jews (62), and when the patriotic movement for the deliverance of Palestine from the hated yoke of the heathen Romans rose higher and higher, till it burst out at last in open rebellion (66), it was very natural that those timid Christians should feel strongly tempted to apostatize from the poor, persecuted sect to the national religion, which they at heart still believed to be the best part of Christianity. The solemn services of the Temple, the ritual pomp and splendor of the Aaronic priesthood, the daily sacrifices, and all the sacred associations of the past had still a great charm for them, and allured them to their embrace. The danger was very strong, and the warning of the Epistle fearfully solemn.

Similar dangers have occurred again and again in critical periods of history.

#### TIME AND PLACE OF COMPOSITION.

The Epistle hails and sends greetings from some place in Italy, at a time when Timothy, Paul's disciple, was set at liberty, and the writer was on the point of paying, with Timothy, a visit to his readers (13:23, 24). The passage, "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them" (13:3), does not necessarily imply that he himself was in prison, indeed 13:23 seems to imply his freedom. These notices naturally suggest the close of Paul's first Roman imprisonment, in the spring of the year 63, or soon after; for Timothy and Luke were with him there, and the writer himself evidently belonged to the circle of his friends and fellow-workers.

There is further internal evidence that the letter was written before the destruction of Jerusalem (70), before the outbreak of the Jewish war (66), before the Neronian

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persecution (in July, 64), and before Paul's martyrdom. None of these important events are even alluded to; on the contrary, as already remarked, the Temple was still standing, with its daily sacrifices regularly going on, and the doom of the theocracy was still in the future, though "nigh unto a curse," "becoming old and ready to vanish away;" it was "shaken" and about to be removed; the day of the fearful judgment was drawing nigh.

The place of composition was either Rome or some place in Southern Italy, if we assume that the writer had already started on his journey to the East. Others assign it to Alexandria, or Antioch, or Ephesus.

#### AUTHORSHIP.

This is still a matter of dispute, and will probably never be decided with absolute certainty. The obscurity of its origin is the reason why the Epistle to the Hebrews was ranked among the seven Antilegomena of the ante-Nicene church. The controversy ceased after the adoption of the traditional canon in 397, but revived again at the time of the Reformation. The different theories may be arranged under three heads: (1) sole authorship of Paul; (2) sole authorship of one of his pupils; (3) joint authorship of Paul and one of his pupils. Among the pupils again the views are subdivided between Luke, Barnabas, Clement of Rome, Silvanus, and Apollos.

1. The PAULINE AUTHORSHIP was the prevailing opinion of the church from the fourth century to the eighteenth, with the exception of the Reformers, and was once almost an article of faith, but has now very few defenders among scholars. It rests on the following arguments:

(a) The unanimous tradition of the Eastern church, to which the letter was in all probability directed; yet with the important qualification which weakens the force of this testimony, that there was a widely prevailing perception of a difference of style, and consequent supposition of a Hebrew original, of which there is no historic basis whatever.

Clement of Alexandria ascribed the Greek composition to Luke. Origen observes the greater purity of the Greek style, and mentions Luke and Clement, besides Paul, as possible authors, but confesses his own ignorance.

(b) The mention of Timothy and the reference to a release from captivity (Heb. 13:23) point to Paul. Not necessarily, but only to the circle of Paul. The alleged reference to Paul's own captivity in 10:34 rests on a false reading (in my bonds," instead of the one now generally adopted, those that were in bonds). Nor does the request 13:18, 19, imply that the writer was a prisoner at the time of composition; for 13:23 rather points to his freedom, as he expected, shortly to see his readers in company with Timothy.

(c) The agreement of the Epistle with Paul's system of doctrine, the tone of apostolic authority, and the depth and unction which raises the Epistle to a par with his genuine writings. But all that can be said in praise of this wonderful Epistle at best proves only its inspiration and canonicity, which must be extended beyond the circle of the apostles so as to embrace the writings of Luke, Mark, James, and Jude.

2. The NON-PAULINE AUTHORSHIP is supported by the following arguments:

(a) The Western tradition, both Roman and North African, down to the time of Augustin, is decidedly against the Pauline authorship. This has all the more weight from the fact that the earliest traces of the Epistle to the Hebrews are found in the Roman church, where it was known before the close of the first century. Clement of Rome makes very extensive use of it, but nowhere under the name of Paul. The Muratorian Canon enumerates only thirteen Epistles of Paul and omits Hebrews. So does Gaius, a Roman presbyter, at the beginning of the third century. Tertullian ascribed the Epistle to Barnabas. According to the testimony of Eusebius, the Roman church did not

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regard the Epistle as Pauline at his day (he died 340). Philastrius of Brescia (d. about 387) mentions that some denied the Pauline authorship, because the passage 6:4–6 favored the heresy and excessive disciplinary rigor of the Novatians, but he himself believed it to be Paul's, and so did Ambrose of Milan. Jerome (d. 419) can be quoted on both sides. He wavered in his own view, but expressly says: "The Latin custom (*Latina consuetudo*) does not receive it among the canonical Scriptures;" and in another place: "All the Greeks receive the Epistle to the Hebrews, and some Latins (*et nonnulli Latinorum*)." Augustin, a profound divine, but neither linguist nor critic, likewise wavered, but leaned strongly toward the Pauline origin. The prevailing opinion in the West ascribed only thirteen Epistles to Paul. The Synod of Hippo (393) and the third Synod of Carthage (397), under the commanding influence of Augustin, marked a transition of opinion in favor of fourteen. This opinion prevailed until Erasmus and the Reformers revived the doubts of the early Fathers. The Council of Trent sanctioned it.

- (b) The absence of the customary name and salutation. This has been explained from modesty, as Paul was sent to the Gentiles rather than the Jews (Pantaenus), or from prudence and the desire to secure a better hearing from Jews who were strongly prejudiced against Paul (Clement of Alexandria). Very unsatisfactory and set aside by the authoritative tone of the Epistle.
- (c) In 2:3 the writer expressly distinguishes himself from the apostles, and reckons himself with the second generation of Christians, to whom the word of the Lord was "confirmed by them that heard" it at the first from the Lord. Paul, on the contrary, puts himself on a par with the other apostles, and derives his doctrine directly from Christ, without any human

intervention (Gal. 1:1, 12, 15, 16). This passage alone is conclusive, and decided Luther, Calvin, and Beza against the Pauline authorship.

- (d) The difference, not in the substance, but in the form and method of teaching and arguing.
- (e) The difference of style (which has already been discussed). This argument does not rest on the number of peculiar words for such are found in every book of the New Testament, but in the superior purity, correctness, and rhetorical finish of style.
- (f) The difference in the quotations from the Old Testament. The author of Hebrews follows uniformly the Septuagint, even with its departures from the Hebrew; while Paul is more independent, and often corrects the Septuagint from the Hebrew. Bleek has also discovered the important fact that the former used the text of Codex Alexandrinus, the latter the text of Codex Vaticanus. It is incredible that Paul, writing to the church of Jerusalem, should not have made use of his Hebrew and rabbinical learning in quoting the Scriptures.

3 CONJECTURES concerning the probable author. Four Pauline disciples and co-workers have been proposed, either as sole or as joint authors with Paul, three with some support in tradition—Barnabas, Luke, and Clement—one without any Apollos. Silvanus also has a few advocates.

- (a) Barnabas. He has in his favor the tradition of the African church (at least Tertullian), his Levitical training, his intimacy with Paul, his close relation to the church in Jerusalem, and his almost apostolic authority. As the *uijo*;" *paraklvsew*" (Acts 4:36), he may have written the *lovgo*" *paraklvsew*" (Heb. 13:22). But in this case he cannot be the author of the Epistle which goes by his name, and which, although belonging to the Pauline and strongly anti-Judaizing tendency, is yet far inferior to Hebrews in spirit and wisdom. Moreover, Barnabas

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was a primitive disciple, and cannot be included in the second generation (2:3).

- (b) Luke. He answers the description of 2:3, writes pure Greek, and has many affinities in style. But against him is the fact that the author of Hebrews was, no doubt, a native Jew, while Luke was a Gentile (Col. 4:11, 14). This objection, however, ceases in a measure if Luke wrote in the name and under the instruction of Paul.
- (c) Clemens Romanus. He makes thorough use of Hebrews and interweaves passages from the Epistle with his own ideas, but evidently as an imitator, far inferior in originality and force.
- (d) Apollos. A happy guess of the genius of Luther, suggested by the description given of Apollos in the Acts 18:24–28, and by Paul (1 Cor. 1:12; 3:4–6, 22; 4:6; 16:12; Tit. 3:13). Apollos was a Jew of Alexandria, mighty in the Scriptures, fervent in spirit, eloquent in speech, powerfully confuting the Jews, a friend of Paul, and independently working with him in the same cause at Ephesus, Corinth, Crete. So far everything seems to fit. But this hypothesis has not a shadow of support in tradition, which could hardly have omitted Apollos in silence among the three or four probable authors. Clement names him once, but not as the author of the Epistle which he so freely uses. Nor is there any trace of his ever having been in Rome, and having stood in so close a relationship to the Hebrew Christians in Palestine.

The learned discussion of modern divines has led to no certain and unanimous conclusion, but is, nevertheless, very valuable, and sheds light in different directions. The following points may be regarded as made certain, or at least in the highest degree probable: the author of Hebrews was a Jew by birth; a Hellenist, not a Palestinian; thoroughly at home in the Greek Scriptures (less so, if at all, in the Hebrew original); familiar with the Alexandrian Jewish theology (less so, if at all, with the rabbinical learning of Palestine); a

pupil of the apostles (not himself an apostle); an independent disciple and coworker of Paul; a friend of Timothy; in close relation with the Hebrew Christians of Palestine, and, when he wrote, on the point of visiting them; an inspired man of apostolic insight, power, and authority, and hence worthy of a position in the canon as "the great unknown."

Beyond these marks we cannot go with safety. The writer purposely withholds his name. The arguments for Barnabas, Luke, and Apollos, as well as the objections against them, are equally strong, and we have no data to decide between them, not to mention other less known workers of the apostolic age. We must still confess with Origen that God only knows the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

I.—The POSITION of Hebrews in the New Testament. In the old Greek MSS. (a, B, C, D) the Epistle to the Hebrews stands before the Pastoral Epistles, as being an acknowledged letter of Paul. This order has, perhaps, a chronological value, and is followed in the critical editions Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Westcott and Hort), although Westcott and Hort regard the Pastoral Epistles as Pauline, and the Ep. to the Hebrews as un-Pauline. See their Gr. Test., vol. II., 321.

But in the Latin and English Bibles, Hebrews stands more appropriately at the close of the Pauline Epistles, and immediately precedes the Catholic Epistles.

Luther, who had some doctrinal objections to Hebrews and James, took the liberty of putting them after the Epistles of Peter and John, and making them the last Epistles except Jude. He misunderstood Heb. 6:4–6; 10:26, 27; 12:17, as excluding the possibility of a second repentance and pardon after baptism, and called these passages, "hard knots" that ran counter to all the Gospels and Epistles of Paul; but, apart from this, he declared Hebrews to be, "an Epistle of exquisite beauty, discussing from Scripture, with masterly skill and thoroughness, the

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priesthood of Christ, and interpreting on this point the Old Testament with great richness and acuteness."

The English Revisers retained, without any documentary evidence, the traditional title, "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews." This gives sanction to a particular theory, and is properly objected to by the American Revisers. The Pauline authorship is, to say the least, an open question, and should have been left open by the Revisers. The ancient authorities entitle the letter simply, Pro; JEbraivou", and even this was probably added by the hand of an early transcriber. Still less is the subscription, "Written to the Hebrews from Italy by Timothy" to be relied on as original, and was probably a mere inference from the contents (Heb. 13:23, 24).

### 1.101 The Apocalypse.

#### GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE APOCALYPSE.

The "Revelation" of John, or rather "of Jesus Christ" through John, appropriately closes the New Testament. It is the one and only prophetic book, but based upon the discourses of our Lord on the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world, and his second advent (Matt. 24). It has one face turned back to the prophecies of old, the other gazing into the future. It combines the beginning and the end in Him who is "the Alpha and the Omega." It reminds one of the mysterious sphinx keeping ceaseless watch, with staring eyes, at the base of the Great Pyramid. "As many words as many mysteries," says Jerome; "Nobody knows what is in it," adds Luther. No book has been more misunderstood and abused; none calls for greater modesty and reserve in interpretation.

The opening and closing chapters are as clear and dazzling as sunlight, and furnish spiritual nourishment and encouragement to the plainest Christian; but the intervening visions are, to most readers, as dark as midnight, yet with many stars and the full moon illuminating the darkness. The Epistles to the

Seven Churches, the description of the heavenly Jerusalem, and the anthems and doxologies which are interspersed through the mysterious visions, and glisten like brilliant jewels on a canopy of richest black, are among the most beautiful, sublime, edifying, and inspiring portions of the Bible, and they ought to guard us against a hasty judgment of those chapters which we may be unable to understand. The Old Testament prophets were not clearly understood until the fulfillment cast its light upon them, and yet they served a most useful purpose as books of warning, comfort, and hope for the coming Messiah. The Revelation will be fully revealed when the new heavens and the new earth appear—not before.

"A prophet" (says the sceptical DeWette in his Commentary on Revelation, which was his last work) "is essentially an inspired man, an interpreter of God, who announces the Word of God to men in accordance with, and within the limits of, the divine truth already revealed through Moses in the Old Testament, through Christ in the New (Rom. 16:25). Prophecy rests on faith in a continuous providence of God ruling over the whole world, and with peculiar efficacy over Israel and the congregation of Christ, according to the moral laws revealed through Moses and Christ especially the laws of retribution. According to the secular view, all changes in human affairs proceed partly from man's power and prudence, partly from accident and the hidden stubbornness of fate; but according to the prophetic view, everything happens through the agency of God and in harmony with his counsels of eternal and unchangeable justice, and man is the maker of his own fortunes by obeying or resisting the will of God."

The prophecy of the Bible meets the natural desire to know the future, and this desire is most intense in great critical periods that are pregnant with fears and hopes. But it widely differs from the oracles of the heathen, and the conjectures of farseeing men. It rests on revelation, not on human sagacity and

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guesses; it gives certainty, not mere probability; it is general, not specific; it does not gratify curiosity, but is intended to edify and improve. The prophets are not merely revealers of secrets, but also preachers of repentance, revivalists, comforters, rebuking sin, strengthening faith, encouraging hope.

The Apocalypse is in the New Testament what the Book of Daniel is in the Old, and differs from it as the New Testament differs from the Old. Both are prophetic utterances of the will of God concerning the future of his kingdom on earth. Both are books of the church militant, and engage heaven and earth, divine, human, and satanic powers, in a conflict for life and death. They march on as "a terrible army with banners." They reverberate with thunderings and reflect the lightning flashes from the throne. But while Daniel looks to the first advent of the Messiah as the heir of the preceding world-monarchies, John looks to the second advent of Christ and the new heavens and the new earth. He gathers up all the former prophecies and sends them enriched to the future. He assures us of the final fulfillment of the prophecy of the serpent-bruiser, which was given to our first parents immediately after the fall as a guiding star of hope in the dark night of sin. He blends the glories of creation and redemption in the finale of the new Jerusalem from heaven.

The Apocalypse, as to its style of composition, is written in prose, like Daniel, but belongs to prophetic poetry, which is peculiar to the Bible and takes there the place of the epic poetry of the Greeks; God himself being the hero, as it were, who rules over the destinies of man. It is an inspired work of art, and requires for its understanding a poetic imagination, which is seldom found among commentators and critics; but the imagination must be under the restraint of sober judgment, or it is apt to run into fantastic comments which themselves need a commentary. The apocalyptic vision is the last and most complete form of the prophetic poetry of the Bible. The strong resemblance between the Revelation and Daniel, Ezekiel

and Zechariah is admitted, and without them it cannot be understood.

But we may compare it also, as to its poetic form and arrangement, with the book of Job. Both present a conflict on earth, controlled by invisible powers in heaven. In Job it is the struggle of an individual servant of God with Satan, the arch-slanderer and persecutor of man, who, with the permission of God, uses temporal losses, bodily sufferings, mental anguish, harassing doubt, domestic affliction, false and unfeeling friends to secure his ruin. In the Apocalypse it is the conflict of Christ and his church with the anti-Christian world. In both the scene begins in heaven; in both the war ends in victory but in Job long life and temporal prosperity of the individual sufferer is the price, in the Apocalypse redeemed humanity in the new heavens and the new earth. Both are arranged in three parts: a prologue, the battle with successive encounters, and an epilogue. In both the invisible power presiding over the action is the divine counsel of wisdom and mercy, in the place of the dark impersonal fate of the Greek drama.

A comparison between the Apocalypse and the pseudo-apocalyptic Jewish and Christian literature—the Fourth Book of Esdras, the Book of Enoch, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Apocalypse of Baruch, the Sibylline Oracles, etc.—opens a wide field on which we cannot enter without passing far beyond the limits of this work. We may only say that the relation is the same as that between the canonical Gospels and the apocryphal pseudo-Gospels, between real history and the dreamland of fable, between the truth of God and the fiction of man.

The theme of the Apocalypse is: "I come quickly," and the proper attitude of the church toward it is the holy longing of a bride for her spouse, as expressed in the response (Rev. 22:20): "Amen: come, Lord Jesus." It gives us the assurance that Christ is coming in every great event, and rules and overrules all things for the ultimate triumph of his

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kingdom; that the state of the church on earth is one of continual conflict with hostile powers, but that she is continually gaining victories and will at last completely and finally triumph over all her foes and enjoy unspeakable bliss in communion with her Lord. From the concluding chapters Christian poetry has drawn rich inspiration, and the choicest hymns on the heavenly home of the saints are echoes of John's description of the new Jerusalem. The whole atmosphere of the book is bracing, and makes one feel fearless and hopeful in the face of the devil and the beasts from the abyss. The Gospels lay the foundation in faith, the Acts and Epistles build upon it a holy life; the Apocalypse is the book of hope to the struggling Christian and the militant church, and insures final victory and rest. This has been its mission; this will be its mission till the Lord come in his own good time.

#### ANALYSIS OF CONTENTS.

The Apocalypse consists of a Prologue, the Revelation proper, and an Epilogue. We may compare this arrangement to that of the Fourth Gospel, where John 1:1-18 forms the Prologue, John 21 the Epilogue, and the intervening chapters contain the evangelical history from the gathering of the disciples to the Resurrection.

I. The Prologue and the Epistles to the Seven Churches, Rev. 1-3. The introductory notice; John's salutation and dedication to the Seven Churches in Asia; the vision of Christ in his glory, and the Seven Churches; the Seven Epistles addressed to them and through them to the whole church, in its various states.

II. The Revelation proper or the Prophetic Vision of the Church of the Future, 4:1-22:5. It consists chiefly of seven Visions, which are again subdivided according to a symmetrical plan in which the numbers seven, three, four, and twelve are used with symbolic significance. There are intervening scenes of rest and triumph. Sometimes the vision goes back to the beginning and takes a new departure.

The Prelude in heaven, Rev. 4 and 5. (a) The appearance of the throne of God (Rev. 4). (b) The appearance of the Lamb who takes and opens the sealed book (Rev. 5).

The vision of the seven seals, with two episodes between the sixth and seventh seals, 6:1-8:1.

The vision of the seven trumpets of vengeance, 8:2-11:19.

The vision of the woman (the church) and her three enemies, 12:1-13:18. The three enemies are the dragon (12:3-17), the beast from the sea (12:18-13:10), and the beast from the earth, or the false prophet (13:11-18).

The group of visions in Rev 14: (a) the vision of the Lamb on Mount Zion (14:1-5); (b) of the three angels of judgment (14:6-11), followed by an episode (14:12, 13); (c) the vision of the harvest and the vintage of the earth (14:14-20).

The vision of the seven vials of wrath, 15:1-16:21.

The vision of the final triumph, 17:1-22:5: (a) the fall of Babylon (17:1-19:10); (b) the overthrow of Satan (19:11-20:10), with the millennial reign intervening (20:1-6); (c) the universal judgment (20:11-15); (d) the new heavens and the new earth, and the glories of the heavenly Jerusalem (21:1-22:5).

III. The Epilogue, 22:6-21. The divine attestation, threats, and promises.

#### AUTHORSHIP AND CANONICITY.

The question of authorship has already been discussed in connection with John's Gospel. The Apocalypse professes to be the work of John, who assumes a commanding position over the churches of Asia. History knows only one such character, the Apostle and Evangelist, and to him it is ascribed by the earliest and most trustworthy witnesses, going back to the lifetime of many friends and pupils of the author. It is one of the best authenticated books of the New Testament.

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And yet, owing to its enigmatical obscurity, it is the most disputed of the seven Antilegomena; and this internal difficulty has suggested the hypothesis of the authorship of "Presbyter John," whose very existence is doubtful (being based on a somewhat obscure passage of Papias), and who at all events could not occupy a rival position of superintendency over the churches in Asia during the lifetime of the great John. The Apocalypse was a stumbling-block to the spiritualism of the Alexandrian fathers, and to the realism of the Reformers (at least Luther and Zwingli), and to not a few of eminent modern divines; and yet it has attracted again and again the most intense curiosity and engaged the most patient study of devout scholars; while humble Christians of every age are cheered by its heroic tone and magnificent close in their pilgrimage to the heavenly Jerusalem. Rejected by many as not apostolic and not canonical, and assigned to a mythical Presbyter John, it is now recognized by the severest school of critics as an undoubted production of the historical Apostle John.

If so, it challenges for this reason alone our profound reverence. For who was better fitted to be the historian of the past and the seer of the future than the bosom friend of our Lord and Saviour? Able scholars, rationalistic as well as orthodox, have by thorough and patient investigation discovered or fully confirmed its poetic beauty and grandeur, the consummate art in its plan and execution. They have indeed not been able to clear up all the mysteries of this book, but have strengthened rather than weakened its claim to the position which it has ever occupied in the canon of the New Testament.

It is true, the sceptical critics who so confidently vindicate the apostolic origin of the Apocalypse, derive from this very fact their strongest weapon against the apostolic origin of the fourth Gospel. But the differences of language and spirit which have been urged are by no means irreconcilable,

and are overruled by stronger resemblances in the theology and Christology and even in the style of the two books. A proper estimate of John's character enables us to see that he was not only able, but eminently fitted to write both; especially if we take into consideration the intervening distance of twenty or thirty years, the difference of the subject (prospective prophecy in one, and retrospective history in the other), and the difference of the state of mind, now borne along in ecstasy from vision to vision and recording what the Spirit dictated, now calmly collecting his reminiscences in full, clear self-consciousness.

#### THE TIME OF COMPOSITION.

The traditional date of composition at the end of Domitian's reign (95 or 96) rests on the clear and weighty testimony of Irenaeus, is confirmed by Eusebius and Jerome, and has still its learned defenders, but the internal evidence strongly favors an earlier date between the death of Nero (June 9, 68) and the destruction of Jerusalem (August 10, 70). This helps us at the same time more easily to explain the difference between the fiery energy of the Apocalypse and the calm repose of the fourth Gospel, which was composed in extreme old age. The Apocalypse forms the natural transition from the Synoptic Gospels to the fourth Gospel. The condition of the Seven Churches was indeed different from that which existed a few years before when Paul wrote to the Ephesians; but the movement in the apostolic age was very rapid. Six or seven years intervened to account for the changes. The Epistle to the Hebrews implies a similar spiritual decline among its readers in 63 or 64. Great revivals of religion are very apt to be quickly followed by a reaction of worldliness or indifference.

The arguments for the early date are the following:

1. Jerusalem was still standing, and the seer was directed to measure the Temple and the altar (Rev. 11:1), but the destruction is predicted as approaching. The Gentiles "shall

tread (pathvsousin) the holy city under foot forty and two months" (11:2; Comp. Luke 21:24), and the "dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also their Lord was crucified" (Rev. 11:8). The existence of the twelve tribes seems also to be assumed in 7:4-8. The advocates of the traditional date understand these passages in a figurative sense. But the allusion to the crucifixion compels us to think of the historical Jerusalem.

2. The book was written not long after the death of the fifth Roman emperor, that is, Nero, when the empire had received a deadly wound (comp. 13:3, 12, 14). This is the natural interpretation of 17:10, where it is stated that the seven heads of the scarlet-colored beast, i.e., heathen Rome, "are seven kings; the five are fallen, the one is, the other is not yet come, and when he cometh, he must continue a little while." The first five emperors were Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and Nero, with whom the gens Julia ingloriously perished. Next came Galba, a mere usurper (seventy-three years old), who ruled but a short time, from June, 68, to January, 69, and was followed by two other usurpers, Otho and Vitellius, till Vespasian, in 70, restored the empire after an interregnum of two years, and left the completion of the conquest of the Jews and the destruction of Jerusalem to his son Titus. Vespasian may therefore be regarded as the sixth head, the three rebels not being counted; and thus the composition of the Apocalypse would fall in the spring (perhaps Easter) of the year 70. This is confirmed by 13:3, 12, 14, where the deadly wound of the beast is represented as being already healed. But if the usurpers are counted, Galba is the sixth head, and the Revelation was written in 68. In either case Julius Caesar must be excluded from the series of emperors (contrary to Josephus).

Several critics refer the seventh head to Nero, and ascribe to the seer the silly expectation of the return of Nero as Antichrist. In this way they understand the passage 17:11: "The

beast that was, and is not, is himself also an eighth and is of the seven." But John makes a clear distinction between the heads of the beast, of whom Nero was one, and the beast itself, which is the Roman empire. I consider it simply impossible that John could have shared in the heathen delusion of Nero redivivus, which would deprive him of all credit as an inspired prophet. He may have regarded Nero as a fit type and forerunner of Antichrist, but only in the figurative sense in which Babylon of old was the type of heathen Rome.

3. The early date is best suited for the nature and object of the Apocalypse, and facilitates its historical understanding. Christ pointed in his eschatological discourses to the destruction of Jerusalem and the preceding tribulation as the great crisis in the history of the theocracy and the type of the judgment of the world. And there never was a more alarming state of society. The horrors of the French Revolution were confined to one country, but the tribulation of the six years preceding the destruction of Jerusalem extended over the whole Roman empire and embraced wars and rebellions, frequent and unusual conflagrations, earthquakes and famines and plagues, and all sorts of public calamities and miseries untold. It seemed, indeed, that the world, shaken to its very centre, was coming to a close, and every Christian must have felt that the prophecies of Christ were being fulfilled before his eyes.

It was at this unique juncture in the history of mankind that St. John, with the consuming fire in Rome and the infernal spectacle of the Neronian persecution behind him, the terrors of the Jewish war and the Roman interregnum around him, and the catastrophe of Jerusalem and the Jewish theocracy before him, received those wonderful visions of the impending conflicts and final triumphs of the Christian church. His was truly a book of the times and for the times, and administered to the persecuted brethren the one but all-sufficient consolation.

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INTERPRETATION.

The different interpretations are reduced by English writers to three systems according as the fulfillment of the prophecy is found in the past, present, or future.

1. The PRETERIST system applies the Revelation to the destruction of Jerusalem and heathen Rome. So among Roman Catholics: Alcasar (1614), Bossuet (1690). Among Protestants: Hugo Grotius (1644), Hammond (1653), Clericus (1698), Wetstein (1752), Abauzit, Herder, Eichhorn, Ewald, Lücke, Bleek, DeWette, Reuss, Renan, F. D. Maurice, Samuel Davidson, Moses Stuart Cowles, Desprez, etc. Some refer it chiefly to the overthrow of the Jewish theocracy, others chiefly to the conflict with the Roman empire, still others to both.

But there is a radical difference between those Preterists who acknowledge a real prophecy and permanent truth in the book, and the rationalistic Preterists who regard it as a dream of a visionary which was falsified by events, inasmuch as Jerusalem, instead of becoming the habitation of saints, remained a heap of ruins, while Rome, after the overthrow of heathenism, became the metropolis of Latin Christendom. This view rests on a literal misunderstanding of Jerusalem.

2. The CONTINUOUS (OR HISTORICAL) system: The Apocalypse is a prophetic compend of church history and covers all Christian centuries to the final consummation. It speaks of things past, present, and future; some of its prophecies are fulfilled, some are now being fulfilled, and others await fulfillment in the yet unknown future. Here belong the great majority of orthodox Protestant commentators and polemics who apply the beast and the mystic Babylon and the mother of harlots drunken with the blood of saints to the church of Rome, either exclusively or chiefly. But they differ widely among themselves in chronology and the application of details.

3. The FUTURIST system: The events of the Apocalypse from Rev. 4 to the close lie beyond the second advent of Christ. This scheme usually adopts a literal interpretation of Israel, the Temple, and the numbers (the 31 times, 42 months, days, 3 1/2 years). So Ribera (a Jesuit, 1592), Lacunza (another Jesuit, who wrote under the name of Ben-Ezra "On the coming of Messiah in glory and majesty," and taught the premillennial advent, the literal restoration of the ancient Zion, and the future apostasy of the clergy of the Roman church to the camp of Antichrist), S. R. Maitland, De Burgh, Todd, Isaac Williams, W. Kelly.

Another important division of historical interpreters is into POST-MILLENNARIANS AND PRE-MILLENNARIANS, according as the millennium predicted in Rev. 20 is regarded as part or future. Augustin committed the radical error of dating the millennium from the time of the Apocalypse or the beginning of the Christian era (although the seer mentioned it near the end of his book), and his view had great influence; hence the wide expectation of the end of the world at the close of the first millennium of the Christian church. Other post-millennarian interpreters date the millennium from the triumph of Christianity over paganism in Rome at the accession of Constantine the Great (311); still others (as Hengstenberg) from the conversion of the Germanic nations or the age of Charlemagne. All these calculations are refuted by events. The millennium of the Apocalypse must be in the future, and is still an article of hope.

The grammatical and historical interpretation of the Apocalypse, as well as of any other book, is the only safe foundation for all legitimate spiritual and practical application. Much has been done in this direction by the learned commentators of recent times. We must explain it from the standpoint of the author and in view of his surroundings. He wrote out of his time and for his time of things which must shortly come to pass (1:1, 3; 22:20), and he wished to be read and

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understood by his contemporaries (1:3). Otherwise he would have written in vain, and the solemn warning at the close (22:18, 19) would be unintelligible. In some respects they could understand him better than we; for they were fellow-sufferers of the fiery persecutions and witnesses of the fearful judgments described. Undoubtedly he had in view primarily the overthrow of Jerusalem and heathen Rome, the two great foes of Christianity at that time. He could not possibly ignore that great conflict.

But his vision was not confined to these momentous events. It extends even to the remotest future when death and Hades shall be no more, and a new heaven and a new earth shall appear. And although the fulfillment is predicted as being near at hand, he puts a millennium and a short intervening conflict before the final overthrow of Satan, the beast, and the false prophet. We have an analogy in the prophecy of the Old Testament and the eschatological discourses of our Lord, which furnish the key for the understanding of the Apocalypse. He describes the destruction of Jerusalem and the general judgment in close proximity, as if they were one continuous event. He sees the end from the beginning. The first catastrophe is painted with colors borrowed from the last, and the last appears as a repetition of the first on a grand and universal scale. It is the manner of prophetic vision to bring distant events into close proximity, as in a panorama. To God a thousand years are as one day. Every true prophecy, moreover, admits of an expanding fulfillment. History ever repeats itself, though never in the same way. There is nothing old under the sun, and, in another sense, there is nothing new under the sun.

In the historical interpretation of details we must guard against arbitrary and fanciful schemes, and mathematical calculations, which minister to idle curiosity, belittle the book, and create distrust in sober minds. The Apocalypse is not a prophetic manual of church history and chronology in the sense of a prediction of particular persons, dates, and

events. This would have made it useless to the first readers, and would make it useless now to the great mass of Christians. It gives under symbolic figures and for popular edification an outline of the general principles of divine government and the leading forces in the conflict between Christ's kingdom and his foes, which is still going on under ever-varying forms. In this way it teaches, like all the prophetic utterances of the Gospels and Epistles, lessons of warning and encouragement to every age. We must distinguish between the spiritual coming of Christ and his personal arrival or parousia. The former is progressive, the latter instantaneous. The coming began with his ascension to heaven (comp. Matt. 26:64: "Henceforth ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven") and goes on in unbroken succession of judgments and blessings (for "the history of the world is a judgment of the world"); hence the alternation of action and repose, of scenes of terror and scenes of joy, of battles and victories. The arrival of the Bridegroom is still in the unknown future, and may be accelerated or delayed by the free action of the church, but it is as certain as the first advent of Christ. The hope of the church will not be disappointed, for it rests on the promise of Him who is called "the Amen, the faithful and true witness" (Rev. 3:14).

#### NERO.

The Apocalypse is a Christian counterblast against the Neronian persecution, and Nero is represented as the beast of the abyss who will return as Antichrist. The number 666 signifies the very name of this imperial monster in Hebrew letters, rs'qi @woonoe, Neron Kaesar, as follows: n (n) = 50, r (r) = 200, / (o) = 6, @ (n) = 50, q (k) = 100, s (s) = 60, r (r) = 200; in all 666. The Neronian coins of Asia bear the inscription: Nerwn Kai'sar. But the omission of the iy (which would add 10 to 666) from rsyq = Kai'sar, has been explained by Ewald (Johanneische Schriften,

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II. 263) from the Syriac in which it is omitted, and this view is confirmed by the testimony of inscriptions of Palmyra from the third century; see Renan (*L'Antechrist*, p. 415).

The coincidence, therefore, must be admitted, and is at any rate most remarkable, since Nero was the first, as well as the most wicked, of all imperial persecutors of Christianity, and eminently worthy of being characterized as the beast from the abyss, and being regarded as the type and forerunner of Antichrist.

This interpretation, moreover, has the advantage of giving the number of a man or a particular person (which is not the case with Lateinos), and affords a satisfactory explanation of the *varians lectio* 616; for this number precisely corresponds to the Latin form, Nero Caesar, and was probably substituted by a Latin copyist, who in his calculation dropped the final Nun (= 50), from Neron (666 less 50=616).

The series of Roman emperors (excluding Julius Caesar), according to this explanation, is counted thus: Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Galba. This makes Nero (who died June 9, 68) the fifth, and Galba the sixth, and seems to fit precisely the passage 17:10: "Five [of the seven heads of the beast] are fallen, the one [Galba] is, the other [the seventh] is not yet come; and when he cometh he must continue a little while." This leads to the conclusion that the Apocalypse was written during the short reign of Galba, between June 9, 68, and January 15, 69. It is further inferred from 17:11 ("the beast that was, and is not, is himself also an eighth, and is of the seven; and he goeth into perdition"), that, in the opinion of the seer and in agreement with a popular rumor, Nero, one of the seven emperors, would return as the eighth in the character of Antichrist, but shortly perish.

This plausible solution of the enigma was almost simultaneously and independently discovered, between 1831 and 1837, by several German scholars, each claiming the credit of originality, viz.: C. F. A. Fritzsche (in

the "*Annalen der gesammten Theol. Liter.*," I. 3, Leipzig, 1831); F. Benary (in the "*Zeitschrift für specul. Theol.*," Berlin, 1836); F. Hitzig (in *Ostern und Pfingsten*, Heidelb., 1837); E. Reuss (in the "*Hallesche Allg. Lit.-Zeitung*" for Sept., 1837); and Ewald, who claims to have made the discovery before 1831, but did not publish it till 1862. It has been adopted by Baur, Zeller, Hilgenfeld, Volkmar, Hausrath, Krenkel, Gebhardt, Renan, Aubé, Réville, Sabatier, Sam. Davidson (I. 291); and among American commentators by Stuart and Cowles. It is just now the most popular interpretation, and regarded by its champions as absolutely conclusive.

But, as already stated in the text, there are serious objections to the Nero-hypothesis:

(1) The language and readers of the Apocalypse suggest a Greek rather than a Hebrew explanation of the numerical riddle.

(2) The seer clearly distinguishes the beast, as a collective name for the Roman empire (so used also by Daniel), from the seven heads, i.e., kings (*basilei*) or emperors. Nero is one of the five heads who ruled before the date of the Apocalypse. He was "slain" (committed suicide), and the empire fell into anarchy for two years, until Vespasian restored it, and so the death-stroke was healed (Rev. 13:3). The three emperors between Nero and Vespasian (Galba, Otho, and Vitellius) were usurpers, and represent an interregnum and the deadly wound of the beast. This at least is a more worthy interpretation and consistent with the actual facts.

It should be noticed, however, that Josephus, *Ant. XVIII.* 2, 2; 6, 10, very distinctly includes Julius Caesar among the emperors, and calls Augustus the second, Tiberius the third, Caius Caligula the fourth Roman emperor. Suetonius begins his *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* with Julius and ends with Domitian, including the lives of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius. This fact tends at all events to weaken the foundation of the Nero-hypothesis.

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(3) It is difficult to conceive of a reasonable motive for concealing the detested name of Nero after his death. For this reason Cowles makes Nero the sixth emperor (by beginning the series with Julius Caesar) and assigns the composition to his persecuting reign. But this does not explain the wound of the beast and the statement that "it was and is not."

(4) A radical error, such as the belief in the absurd heathen fable of the return of Nero, is altogether incompatible with the lofty character and profound wisdom of the Apocalypse, and would destroy all confidence in its prophecy. If John, as these writers maintain, composed it in 68, he lived long enough to be undeceived, and would have corrected the fatal blunder or withheld the book from circulation.

(5) It seems incredible that such an easy solution of the problem should have remained unknown for eighteen centuries and been reserved for the wits of half a dozen rival rationalists in Germany. Truth is truth, and must be thankfully accepted from any quarter and at any time; yet as the Apocalypse was written for the benefit of contemporaries of Nero, one should think that such a solution would not altogether have escaped them. Irenaeus makes no mention of it.

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