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The Sermon on the Mount and Other Synoptic Fragments

Allard Pierson

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Preface

When the author of this historical-critical investigation accepted his present appointment, there was still in his portfolio an extensive work on the New Testament, from which he now offers a few pages, as it were in farewell to an activity which in our country does not exactly belong among the most rewarding, but from which he nevertheless believed he ought not to withdraw before he was called to other work.

These pages are presented as they stood in July 1877. The new appointment prevented him from taking account of what may have appeared on the subject treated here since that time. But if this work can be of use, it will not suffer under this circumstance. For the purpose aimed at here, no new building materials were required.

His study—which asks for a modest place alongside what has already been produced in this field by theologians of our own country—may, even if its conclusions are not always those of the prevailing theology, be received with some goodwill. That someone seeks truth in his own way can hardly be held against him, nor need it always be attributed to less admirable motives—something which Professor Oort, too, will surely be willing to concede.

Amsterdam, July 1878. A.P.

1

On Certain Flaws in the Method of Criticism of the Synoptic Gospels

In recent years historical criticism has not been at rest with regard to the evangelical narratives that report what Jesus is supposed to have done or what is supposed to have happened to him. To what extent the Gospels may be called sources for Jesus' teaching is a question which in recent times has been answered wholly unfavourably only with respect to the Fourth Gospel. The more this proved to be the case—in other words, the more one became convinced that in the Fourth Gospel it is not Jesus but the evangelist who speaks, and that the discourses there attributed to the incarnate Logos must therefore be regarded as free compositions of an author unknown to us—the more one seemed inclined to place full confidence in that, as it was called, wholly different type of Jesus' teaching which is offered to us by the Synoptists. With the aid of a proper sifting and elimination of the non-original elements of the synoptic presentation, it was thought possible to sketch a historical portrait of Jesus as a teacher of the people, and—with that degree of certainty to which historical inquiry in general can lead—to determine what and how Jesus of Nazareth taught.

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In the abstract it is entirely possible that this conclusion, if not actually caused, was at least hastened by the ease with which we are accustomed to arrive at it when two different and irreconcilable reports lie before us: we are apt to regard the second as credible as soon as the credibility of the first has collapsed under our criticism. In such a case there is always need of a fresh stimulus to bring us to examine the second report as well with an eye equally keenly armed. However one may explain the fact that this conclusion was reached, it seems beyond dispute that it was so, and equally that nowhere did one imagine oneself to be on more secure ground than when dealing with that portion of Jesus' teaching which has become so widely known under the name of the Sermon on the Mount.

I

In 1847, Baur of Tübingen wrote (pp. 585 ff.) in his *Critical Investigations into the Canonical Gospels, Their Relationship to One Another, Their Character and Origin*, after having given an analysis of the content of the Sermon on the Mount:

> "This discourse must be regarded as the true core of what the evangelical history communicates to us concerning Jesus' teaching. The characteristic feature of this discourse lies in the fact that the truth of what it proclaims and enjoins is simple, speaks for itself, and is drawn from the immediate testimony of the moral–religious

consciousness; it lies in its practical orientation, in the moral spirit that it breathes, free from all religious dogmatism. Here Christianity shines forth as purified of everything impure, as possessing that absolute significance which belongs to morality itself, as Judaism become spiritual, as the moral law. Indisputably, this discourse as a whole makes the impression of being an original piece that gives direct

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expression to what was taught; if anything, then certainly the portion directed against Pharisaism, and bearing witness to a polemic born directly out of life, belongs to the most authentic of what the Gospels have recorded concerning Jesus' teaching. Even those sayings and utterances that are not immediately connected with the principal content and main aim of the discourse bear the stamp of a talent for popular instruction, such as must be regarded as the distinguishing characteristic of Jesus' preaching. Whether we may also regard as authentic the form in which the first Gospel presents this portion of Jesus' preaching is a wholly different question. If, on the one hand, it is likely that Jesus, immediately at the beginning of his public activity, began with a discourse in which he declared his relation to his time and surroundings, the aim and direction of his work, as well as the fundamental principles of his moral–religious worldview, on the other hand the uncertainty of the tradition forbids us to assume that this discourse, as regards its extent and coherence, entirely corresponded to our Sermon on the Mount. The very nature of the Sermon on the Mount likewise forbids this assumption: in part we miss the necessary coherence, and in part the coherence is artificial. If the Gospel of Matthew was originally—as its oldest title indicates—a collection of sayings of Jesus, then one may expect in advance that it would bring together sayings that flowed from Jesus' lips at different times and on different occasions. The Sermon on the Mount still betrays this original character of the Gospel of Matthew, namely at those points where the words do not stand in a strict internal connection…. But the artificiality of the plan underlying the whole causes us no less to doubt the authenticity of the discourse as we now have it before us. It proceeds—so Baur believes he has demonstrated in his analysis—from one point to another according to a definite idea.

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It is unmistakable that it aims to encompass as much as possible and to lay bare in their unity the moral–religious principles of Christianity with respect to the various aspects of practical life. How strongly the Sermon on the Mount is designed to constitute a single, rounded whole, logically arranged, is shown especially by the final section, from Matthew 7:15 onward. It bears witness to artistic deliberation that the Sermon on the Mount passes, by way of a warning against and a characterization of false teachers, to its conclusion. While to that warning it attaches the general truth that what is genuinely good bears within itself its own mark in the

> fruits it produces, the ultimate goal of moral action is made the conclusion of the discourse. Jesus could have spoken in this manner only if from the outset he had intended to deliver a discourse which, as one great whole, was to develop all the principal points of the moral–religious consciousness, as this, under the influence of the idea of a messianic kingdom, was destined to become a new principle of life."

After Baur has then raised still other objections, which taken together make it in his view highly improbable that Jesus ever uttered the words of the Sermon on the Mount in their present sequence and on one and the same occasion, he once more sums up his opinion in the following manner:

> "Just as little as, with regard to the material content, any well-founded doubt can be raised against the authenticity of the discourse, just as little could the same be maintained with respect to its form and position."

Baur's result corresponded with the conclusion reached twelve years earlier by Strauss, who likewise acknowledged the relative originality of the Sermon on the Mount. "The pithy words of Jesus," wrote Strauss on p. 652 of the first volume of the first edition of his *Life of Jesus*, "have indeed not been dissolved in the flood of oral tradition, but we no longer possess them in their original connection."

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When Baur subsequently examines the historical character of the Gospel as a whole and finds himself compelled to assume mythical elements in this writing, his favourable judgment concerning the authenticity of Jesus' discourses (p. 604) becomes all the more remarkable.

> "Since, by the nature of the case, the mythical tendency of the tradition cannot have exercised the same influence upon the discourses, one has all the less right to call the historical character of these discourses into doubt, even though this character cannot be maintained for every individual word."

The arbitrariness of this criticism is immediately evident. The acuteness with which Baur judges the form of the Sermon on the Mount abandons him when he speaks of the authenticity of its content. Here we receive not a single argument and must content ourselves with very elastic and therefore obscure terms. Who, for example, can say what an assurance like this means: *"die Bergrede macht unstreitig den Eindruck des Unmittelbaren und Ursprünglichen"* ("the Sermon on the Mount indisputably makes the impression of what is immediate and original"). What is *das Unmittelbare*, and what *das Ursprüngliche*? And how can one receive an impression of it? Is the concept of "the immediate" and "the original" then so firmly established that I can at once assign a particular phenomenon to the group of phenomena from which that concept was derived? Rousseau in his time already spoke of *"ce n'est pas ainsi qu'on invente"*, and applied the infallible standard which he seemed to have at his disposal for determining what one can and cannot invent also to narratives of which German criticism has since demonstrated that they must certainly be invented. This broken standard Baur has used in judging the

authenticity of the synoptic discourses. He feels—he receives the impression—that, on the whole, the words of which the Sermon on the Mount consists are "immediate (?)" and original.

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It shows how mysticism and intellectual sluggishness lie at the door even where a critic of the first rank dwells. For here to proceed on the basis of impressions is, in my view, just as absurd as to say with other theologians: I feel that the Fourth Gospel is by the disciple who reclined on Jesus' breast.

We do not escape here from the realm of arbitrariness, of personal feeling, of indeterminate expressions, whenever the relative authenticity of the Sermon on the Mount is to be established. Strauss simply assures us that "the pithy words of Jesus have not been dissolved in the flood of tradition." Since we are not told how he knows this, we shall probably have to believe it on his authority. Baur enters more into particulars, but ones which must not be examined too closely. He informs us that *"der so ganz den Geist einer lebensfrischen Polemik athmende antipharisäische Theil gewiss"* belongs to the most authentic portion of the Sermon on the Mount. What a "*lebensfrische Polemik*" is, I should not know how to define with scientific precision; but still less could I explain why, in a discourse which one does not regard as authentic as a discourse, as a whole, precisely that portion must necessarily be authentic which breathes the spirit of such a "*lebensfrische Polemik*." Has it then already been proved that the writer who composed the discourse as a whole could not conduct a "*lebensfrische Polemik*" against the Pharisees? Why an Israelite of whom, according to Baur's own criticism of the Gospels, I know scarcely more than that his name was Jesus, could wage such a struggle against empty verbiage, etc., whereas an Israelite who bore another name could not wage such a struggle against the same evil, etc., is not explained to us further. The authenticity of certain isolated sayings is further maintained on the ground that they bear the stamp *"einer populären Lehrweisheit, wie sie als der die Lehrvorträge Jesu in so hohem Grade auszeichnende Vorzug gedacht werden muss." Muss*? Why? The only appropriate expression here would have been:

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> *"wie sie als der die Lehrvorträge Jesu in so hohem Grade auszeichnende Vorzug historisch verbürgt ist."*

But this expression Baur would probably not have accepted as his own. Historically, much more about Jesus would have to be firmly established than Baur's criticism makes possible before we would have the right to determine whether we know anything of Jesus' "discourses," and if so, what did or did not characterise those "discourses." Our answer to the first question, just as our conception of Jesus' manner of teaching, must surely—especially now that we must dispense with the Fourth Gospel as a source—to a considerable extent depend on the question whether and to what degree the Sermon on the Mount is authentic; that is precisely the question which now occupies us.

In confirmation of his favourable judgment concerning the authenticity of the content of the Sermon on the Mount, Baur further considers it probable that Jesus, immediately at the beginning of his public activity, appeared with a discourse *"in welcher er sich über seine Stellung zu der ihn zunächst umgebenden Gegenwart, die Aufgabe und Tendenz seiner Wirksamkeit, die Grundsätze seiner sittlich-religiösen Weltanschauung aussprach."* One would sooner think that this was a question of the appearance of a German professor than of Jesus. Let one recall above all the way in which Mark depicts the beginning of his activity. That this Jesus, dwelling in the wilderness among wild animals, almost exclusively casting out demons, whom mother and blood relatives regard as mad, should have felt the need to "appear" with a discourse in which he declared himself concerning the fundamental principles of his "world-view," can appear "probable" only to a historical criticism which, despite all its great merits, smells far too much of the lamp not to make us long for another historical criticism. With that partly very unhistorical historical criticism of the German study we can no longer be satisfied.

8

It has its categories of probability, of originality, of authenticity, which it has—heaven knows from where—obtained. If someone calls it in the highest degree improbable that the Jesus of Mark, on assuming his task, delivered a kind of inaugural address, he deserves just as much credence as Baur who asserts the opposite; that is to say: what men such as Moses, Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed will probably begin with escapes all calculation. What a professor will begin with I know; but what the inner impulse of religious founders will drive them to, of that I know absolutely nothing.

One may already surmise with what great arbitrariness Baur teaches that *"was das Materielle betreffe, gegen die Aechtheit der Rede kein gegründeter Zweifel erhoben werden kann."* This is nothing but a pronouncement of authority, which must not deter us from the inquiry that we wish precisely to undertake concerning the soundness of the objections here intended. Or is criticism to be silenced by the assertion of Baur which we cited last: *"het geschiedkundig karakter der redenen van Jezus mag te minder in twijfel worden getrokken, naar mate uit den aard der zaak bij die redenen de mythische richting der overlevering niet denzelfden invloed kan hebben uitgeoefend"*? What connection is there here between premise and conclusion? Will it suffice that some portion of the Gospels cannot be the work of the myth-forming community, in order to force us to see history in that portion? Is the formation of myths the only thing that produces false, unhistorical representations? If someone once composed a discourse of which Jesus never uttered a single word, and of which it could not be proved that Jesus could ever have uttered a single word, and nevertheless ascribed that discourse to Jesus, then one would surely arrive at a very wrong conclusion if, after reading that discourse, one said: undeniably authentic as to its content, for from the tendency to form myths this piece cannot have arisen.

9

Of Jesus' discourses in the Fourth Gospel one can and must even assert that *"bei ihnen der Natur der Sache nach die mythische Tendenz der Ueberlieferung nicht denselben Einfluss*

gehabt haben kann" as upon historical narratives, and yet Baur and his school rightly regard those discourses as inauthentic, in form no less than in content.

If, therefore, one wishes to cite Baur as a witness for the authenticity of the Sermon on the Mount, one must henceforth not forget that his testimony on this point has no more value than that of the first person one encounters; for he has adduced either no reasons at all or reasons entirely insignificant.

Do we reach firmer ground with Ewald? We consult here his work *Die drei ersten Evangelien übersetzt und erklärt*, published at Göttingen in the year 1850. On p. 208 he too concedes that the Sermon on the Mount shows traces of artificial coherence; but, he continues, the collection of sayings from which this principal part of Jesus' discourses is drawn had the right to assume that Jesus once delivered such an extensive exposition of the fundamental truths of the Kingdom of God. Ewald even finds proof of this in the silence of Mark. This evangelist has not given the Sermon on the Mount, but has, as it were, pointed out to us the place where it must have been delivered. He has done this by leaving a large gap somewhere. In Mark 3:13–19 we read: "And Jesus went up the mountain and called to him those whom he wanted; and they came to him; and he appointed twelve, that they might …" Then follow their names, ending (v. 19) with that of Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him, upon which v. 20 immediately follows with the report: "And they came into a house." No one, says Ewald, understands how Jesus could have gone up the mountain solely in order to choose the twelve apostles. Could he not, Ewald further asks, have chosen the twelve apostles without climbing a mountain?

> "Here," he then concludes, "one sees the gap clearly enough. Moreover, Luke read the passage (the Sermon on the Mount) precisely in his Mark and reproduces it here in abbreviated form."

What a strange line of argument! Jesus could just as well have chosen the apostles on the plain. If Mark reports that Jesus climbed the mountain in order to do so, then, silently, he is telling us: Jesus had something else to do on the mountain as well; and then this other thing can have been nothing other than the delivery of the Sermon on the Mount. How do we know this latter? From Luke 6. What does that chapter relate? The same thing we heard from Mark, namely that Jesus climbed the mountain solely in order to choose the twelve. And further? That Jesus came down from the mountain, stood on a level place, and there delivered a discourse which we find again in part of the Sermon on the Mount. Ewald's reasoning therefore in fact amounts to this: according to Mark, Jesus must have spoken on the mountain, because Luke says that he did so on the plain! More briefly still: according to Mark, Jesus must have spoken on the mountain, because Luke says that he spoke on the plain.

Ewald's criticism here condemns itself by its inaccuracy. He has correctly observed that in Luke there is a chronological connection between the choosing of the twelve and the uttering of a portion of the Sermon on the Mount. Had he therefore merely said: Mark, who reports the choosing of the twelve, leaves room for this discourse, one could not have contradicted him. But

how strange it is first to make this leaving of room for the Sermon on the Mount in Mark rest on the consideration that Mark surely would not have Jesus climb the mountain solely in order to choose the twelve, and then to make it rest on the circumstance that Luke does exactly the same thing, but then, after Jesus is already on the plain, puts a portion of the Sermon on the Mount into his mouth.

11

How strange it is to say: Luke read in his Mark after 3:13–19 that Jesus had delivered a discourse on the mountain, for Luke has Jesus deliver a discourse on the plain! The following conclusion seems to me far more legitimate: when Mark and Luke both relate that Jesus went up and down the mountain solely in order to appoint the twelve, and Luke alone afterwards has Jesus deliver a portion of the Sermon on the Mount on the plain, then there is nothing that forces us to assume a chronological connection between that appointment and that discourse; Mark may here have preserved the sequence just as well as Luke.

On the basis of a comparison of Mark 3:13 ff. with Luke 6:12 ff., it is therefore inadmissible to assume a gap between Mark 3:19 and v. 20, an open space that could be utilised for the Sermon on the Mount. If Luke had read in his Mark the words which he communicates from the Sermon on the Mount in 6:20 ff., then he must, according to Ewald's own assumption, likewise have read in his Mark that Jesus uttered those words on the mountain, in which case it remains unexplained why he changed the locality. — Should we perhaps assume that gap, that open space between Mark 3:19 and v. 20, on the ground of the consideration that Jesus surely did not climb the mountain merely in order to choose his twelve apostles? Let us allow that consideration to stand for once, in order to see where it must lead us. If one were to say to us: Jesus surely wanted, on the occasion of choosing his first disciples, to have a fine and wide view. This is evident, for he climbed a mountain and chose the twelve there. If one were to say that or something similar, the reasoning would hold, for one is accustomed to climb mountains for that or a similar purpose. Ewald, however, reasons as follows: Jesus climbs a mountain and chooses the twelve; for that he did not need to climb a mountain; therefore Jesus must also have delivered a discourse there!

12

But to deliver a discourse one likewise does not need to climb a mountain. For that purpose one may even deliberately come down from it, as we learn from Luke 6:17. I do not understand why Ewald did not go further. In Matthew 5:1 I read that Jesus "went up the mountain" and there delivered the Sermon on the Mount. I ask with Ewald: *"Konnte er das nicht auch ohne den Berg zu besteigen?"* — must of course answer: yes, and then again assume something new that will explain why Jesus left the plain. I could continue this to infinity so long as some activity is attributed to Jesus on the top of the mountain which he could just as well have performed at the foot of the mountain. In other words: that Jesus climbs a mountain to choose the twelve need not strike me as strange if Ewald does not find it strange that Jesus climbs a mountain to deliver a discourse. The moment of the choosing of the twelve was solemn enough to explain the seeking out of a solitary mountain peak. If one absolutely wishes to discover a gap in Mark, then

let one assume that after that choosing Jesus addressed some or even many impressive words to his disciples which have been lost to evangelical history. But what in the world gives us, after what has been observed concerning this field-sermon, the slightest occasion to suspect behind those words the whole or a part of the Sermon on the Mount?

The less impressive side of that same German theological criticism, to which we owe such inestimable obligations in other respects, comes strikingly to light here, as if to guard us against superstitious veneration. “Jesus did not need to climb a mountain in order to choose the twelve.” Ewald knows that. How does he know it? Probably on the basis of his awareness that he himself—he, Professor Ewald—would do it more simply and would summon his prospective ministers to himself. By such entirely unmotivated assertions as those of which Ewald is here guilty, one could bring the critical method, which ought to be dear to us all, into disrepute.

13

We recall for what purpose that entire appeal to the original Markan Gospel was meant to serve. It was asserted, without any form of proof, that the collection of Sayings certainly with good right ascribed to Jesus an extensive discourse in which the fundamental truths of Christianity were set forth in their mutual connection. From this proposition Ewald proceeded. But scarcely has he proceeded from it when he draws consequences. If, so he reasons, Jesus delivered such a great discourse, then the “Ur-Mark” cannot have omitted it entirely. If therefore we do not find it in our Mark, then we must at least still find the open place where it stood. And this we do find. Mark 3:13–19 relates the choosing of the Twelve; Luke 6:19 ff. does likewise. With Luke there then follows a portion of the Sermon on the Mount. That portion must therefore also have occurred in the “Ur-Mark” after Mark 3:19, for otherwise that “Ur-Mark” would have been foolish enough to let Jesus climb a mountain solely in order to choose the Twelve.

Of observation, as one sees, there is here no question. Before all discussion it stands fixed that Jesus must have delivered a great discourse. Why this stands fixed is not explained to us. What if Jesus had not been the teacher whom the Gospels portray! Whether he was so is precisely one of the most urgent points that we have to examine when we investigate the authenticity of the evangelical narratives. That he was in any case not the teacher of the Fourth Gospel we already know with the fullest historical certainty. A priori we may not assume that he was therefore certainly at least in general the teacher of the synoptic reports.

This, however, set aside, we recall that, even if Jesus was the popular teacher of the synoptic reports, he therefore truly did not yet have to deliver a great discourse on the fundamental truths of the Kingdom of God.

14

He could very well have spoken in parables and detached sayings, the most natural form for a popular teacher.

We now nevertheless wish, on the authority of Ewald, to assume that Jesus was a teacher and must have delivered a great discourse on the stated subject. As soon as we have legitimately

derived this conclusion from certain premises, good method nevertheless requires that we attempt once to make the proof by verification. As solid investigators we must then proceed further in the following manner, namely to say: if the conclusion "Jesus must have delivered a great discourse" contains truth, then it cannot be the case that in the oldest Gospel no trace of it is to be found. Let us therefore consult that oldest Gospel. If it were to answer unfavourably, then we would of course have to return to our first conclusion.

But Ewald does not proceed in this way. He does not consult that oldest Gospel. He makes it say something. He finds in it the choosing of the Twelve on the mountain and now postulates that on that mountain the well-known great discourse must also have been delivered, on the ground of the circumstance that Luke lets Jesus deliver a small discourse on the plain. What has all this to do with historical criticism? And what value can we now attach to Ewald's assurance on p. 209: "*bei Matthäus hat sich die grosse Rede (die Jesus nun einmal ausgesprochen haben m u s s) ihrer ganzen Anlage sowie ihrem überaus reichen Inhalte nach … verständig und klar erhalten?*" — especially since Ewald himself again concedes: "*obwohl nicht ganz in ihrer ursprünglichsten und vollsten Gestalt*."

In his book *Der Ursprung und die Komposition der synoptischen Evangelien* Koestlin did not deliberately investigate the authenticity of the Sermon on the Mount. On p. 56 ff., however, he says in general that "*die in lebensvoller und ursprünglicher Kraft und Gediegenheit (im Evangelium des Matthäus) aufbehaltenen Reden es wahrscheinlich machen, dass wir sie einem αὐτόπτης (eyewitness) zu verdanken haben.*"

This single sentence shows that Koestlin too allows, with regard to Jesus' words, a criticism of feeling, and despairs of finding an objective standard. "*Lebensvolle Kraft*" and "*Gediegenheit*" are again very elastic expressions which make us no wiser; and if one indeed believes that one possesses no objective standard for judging the authenticity of Jesus' words, one would do better to say this honestly and to place behind every question concerning that authenticity a humble *non liquet*. Such a standard is entirely lacking in Koestlin. He adheres to the authenticity of Jesus' discourses in the first Gospel because (p. 56) he considers those discourses derived from the Collection of Sayings and ascribes that Collection to the apostle Matthew. Here therefore there is a double proposition: the *logia kuriaka* are from Matthew; the Sermon on the Mount stood in the *logia kuriaka*. One can scarcely maintain that the first proposition is proved. In the first place Koestlin says that nothing speaks against it. He himself draws attention to the division according to the sacred number seven on the model of the Pentateuch and finds no objection in considering this artificial division as originating from an eyewitness and earwitness, since in the first collecting of Jesus' words one could well employ such a scheme. But Koestlin forgets to tell us how much or how little influence the making and using of such a scheme must have exercised upon the unadulterated reproduction of the words. He likewise does not fail to see in the *logia kuriaka* "in part" — for which part is not said — a free redaction, and even calls the Sermon on the Mount "*eine mit Rücksicht auf Paulus bearbeitete Darstellung der Lehre Jesu vom Gesetz*," with Matthew 5:19 cited as an example. He does not, however, ask himself

how an ear- and eyewitness could permit himself such a free redaction, a redaction moreover that was especially aimed at a tendency which did not yet exist in the time of Jesus.

16

Koestlin consoles himself with the remark that "*diese Redaction für Matthäus nichts anderes war (was Koestlin present?) als eine weitere Ausführung des von Jesu Gesprochenen gemäss dem Sinn und Geist des Meisters selbst*."

Thus stands the proof for the first proposition. It in fact comes down to this: I find a writing of Matthew, entitled *logia kuriaka*. In our first Gospel there stand many *logia kuriaka*. These evangelical *logia* are arranged and redacted with a freedom that I would not expect from a direct disciple of Jesus. Therefore nothing speaks against the supposition that the evangelical *logia* are one with the *logia kuriaka* and thus originate from Matthew. With Koestlin too criticism therefore stands under the dominion of the doctrine that the *logia kuriaka*, whose content we absolutely do not know, underlie our first Gospel. Koestlin's second proposition — that the Sermon on the Mount belonged to that Collection — seems even so self-evident that not the slightest attempt at proof is thought necessary, whereas the following of the only true method would imperatively demand that one, having once assumed the authenticity of the *logia kuriaka*, that is, their apostolic origin, should ask oneself: is the Sermon on the Mount of such a nature that it could have stood in a writing originating from an apostle? In other words: the authenticity of the Sermon on the Mount must be investigated entirely independently; and only then, when that investigation has run a favourable course, may one call it probable that that Sermon on the Mount was derived from the *logia kuriaka* assumed to be apostolic. That this alone is the true method one will only be able to see later, when from our investigation it will have become evident that phenomena occur in the Sermon on the Mount to whose import one cannot do full justice when one has a priori established the derivation of that discourse from the *logia kuriaka*, that is, from an apostolic source.

Koestlin's methodological error naturally avenges itself at the close of his entire work, where he communicates his result concerning the historical credibility of the synoptic Gospels.

17

On p. 398 he writes: "*ein weiterer Beweis geschichtlicher Glaubwürdigkeit erwächst der synoptischen Erzählung daraus, dass sie sich an ältere unzweifelhaft ächte Darstellungen der Lehren und Reden Jesu anschliesst und ebenso auch ihrem inneren Gehalt und Standpunkt nach wenigstens in der Hauptsache mit ihnen noch vollkommen harmonirt; an diesen Reden Jesu, die sie in sich aufgenommen, haben wir einen sichern Maasstab für eine geschichtliche Anschauung des Gesammtcharakters seiner Wirksamkeit, und zwar einen solchen, der eben dafür entscheidet, dass derselbe in den Erzählungen der Synoptiker jedenfalls in der Hauptsache richtig dargestellt ist, weil Beides innerlich zusammenstimmt und sich gegenseitig zu einem in sich harmonischen Bilde wirklicher und wahrer Geschichte ergänzt*."

Here one nevertheless sees the rickety nature of that so-called critical defence of the Gospels as historical sources for the Life of Jesus. Historically one can know the activity of Jesus, because its general character agrees with that of Jesus' discourses; and historically those discourses are guaranteed as genuine because one calls them derived from older sources, which one has never oneself seen, but proclaims as "indubitably genuine." It would then be much simpler to proclaim at once the credibility of the Gospels themselves, if one nevertheless wishes to pronounce a judgment upon them, on the basis of those older writings which one can no longer read, of which one cannot in fact prove that we still possess them in our present Gospels.

With Hilgenfeld (*Die Evangelien nach ihrer Entstehung und geschichtlichen Bedeutung*, 1854) — as with Ritschl's *Die Entstehung der altkatholischen Kirche* (1850) and Baur's *Die christliche Kirche der drei ersten Jahrhunderte* (1853) we need not pause here — we do not leave this uncritical standpoint.

18

He sees, like Koestlin, in the present form of the Sermon on the Mount many traces of an anti-Pauline hand; he too recognises that the historical framework in which it now occurs is entirely fictitious; but the refrain to which we have already become somewhat accustomed returns also with him (p. 65): "*Der Kern dieser Rede ist gewiss ächt geschichtlich*," a statement just as arbitrary as insignificant so long as it is not said wherein we are to seek that kernel.

How everything here stands on loose screws appears, among other things, from the circumstance that Hilgenfeld, like Koestlin, proclaims the authenticity of the main content of the Sermon on the Mount, but wants to know absolutely nothing of Koestlin's theory concerning the *logia kuriaka* as a collection of almost purely discourses. "*Der Ursprung unseres Evangeliums*," it says on p. 114, "*liegt vielmehr, wie es bei keinem andern der Fall ist, in ihm selbst, in dem Unterschied der Grundschrift und der Bearbeitung, deutlich vor.*" That "*Grundschrift*," according to Hilgenfeld, is not older than the year 51 or 52 and can have no other author than the apostle Matthew (p. 115). What is adduced against this will be "partly very weak and sprung from partisan predilection for the Fourth Gospel," partly aimed at the later redaction, not the original Gospel. Even if in that original writing the influence of Matthew's personality is perceptible, the less historical character that resulted from it is by no means of such extent that we should therefore need to doubt the apostolic origin of this writing. Matthew 5:18–19 is of course not authentic, for — the reason is certainly decisive — had Jesus spoken thus about the abiding authority of the Law, Paulinism could never have arisen in the bosom of the Christian community; as if this became any more intelligible when already in the year 51 an apostolic writing ascribed this saying to Jesus and could acquire authority. That we possess the first Gospel only in Greek is further, according to Hilgenfeld, no proof against its authenticity, since that language was already very commonly used in Palestine in the time of Jesus

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— an argument which would certainly be more convincing if not so ancient a testimony spoke of a Hebrew Matthew-Gospel.

To this opinion of 1854 Hilgenfeld has become unfaithful in his work which appeared in 1875 under the title *Historisch-Kritische Einleitung in das Neue Testament*. The remark that we last made there he has in this *Einleitung* answered, or rather rendered superfluous, by now not considering it impossible that our first, our Greek Gospel is a redaction of the Gospel of the Hebrews, a free redaction and expansion, not a translation. Hilgenfeld's example can teach us that one should never speak too boldly about what by its nature remains hypothetical. In 1854 his opinion was expressed in the strongest and most unequivocal manner. Then it read on p. 115 ff.: "*die Augenzeugenschaft … wird ferner auch gar nicht durch die griechische Abfassung der Grundschrift ausgeschlossen … Wir haben gar keinen Grund eine hebräische Abfassung der Grundschrift anzunehmen … Für die Grundschrift wird man kaum einen anderen Verfasser annehmen können als, gemäss der Überlieferung, den Apostel Matthäus … Die hier durchgeführte Unterscheidung der apostolischen Grundschrift und ihrer Bearbeitung findet ihre beste Bestätigung durch Vergleichung mit andern Bearbeitungen. Das hebräische Evangelium der Nazaräer und das Evangelium der Ebioniten sind nur andere … Überarbeitungen der apostolischen Grundschrift. Es ist sehr natürlich, dass man die (griechische) Schrift des Matthäus in das Aramäische übersetzte*." This, as I said, was spoken decisively and unequivocally. The Gospel of the Hebrews is a redaction of the original Greek Gospel of Matthew. In 1875, in the *Einleitung*, it is precisely the reverse; the Greek Gospel is a redaction of the Gospel of the Hebrews. On p. 460 ff.:

"*Das Hebräerevangelium hat wirklich vor dem kanonischen Matthäusevangelium die volle Ursprünglichkeit voraus … Warum sollte das kanonische Matthäusevangelium nicht eine griechische Bearbeitung des Hebräerevangeliums sein? Das kanonische Matthäusevangelium weist uns selbst auf eine Art von Hebräerevangelium als seine Grundschrift zurück*." As one observes, the new result is presented with the same confidence. But, what is worse, the new result does not remain unchanged. First the Gospel of the Hebrews was the *Grundschrift*. Then *Grundschrift* became a kind of Gospel of the Hebrews. After the entire investigation has been concluded, we read on p. 493: "*das kanonische Matthäusevangelium hat sich erwiesen als die Bearbeitung einer ältern, dem Hebräerevangelium verwandten Grundschrift*." Even if one already gains little from knowing that a writing is the free redaction of a writing which we know only fragmentarily, we have even less than this. On p. 494 we learn: "*Was der Evangelist vorfand, war aber auch nicht mehr das hebräische Urevangelium selbst (should read: the Grundschrift related to the Hebrew Ur-Gospel), sondern bereits eine griechische Bearbeitung desselben*." What therefore is, according to Hilgenfeld, the first of our canonical Gospels? A Greek redaction of something that was related to a Hebrew writing that we know only fragmentarily!

If now the Sermon on the Mount stands in that first of our canonical Gospels, then according to Hilgenfeld one must again distinguish in that Sermon on the Mount itself between kernel and outer wrapping. But of that kernel one may then also boldly assert: "*gewiss ächt geschichtlich!*"

Is it a wonder that modern criticism is often accused by its enemies of the greatest arbitrariness? Or shall one rather speak of credulity? One has the choice. But one of these two names deserves a so-called criticism which dares to put the "*gewiss ächt geschichtlich*" upon its lips

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with regard to a page from a writing which it has qualified as Hilgenfeld did our first Gospel. This criticism evidently wishes, after having given up the miracles, to save Jesus as teacher; hence its arbitrariness or credulity. Who, in an ordinary historical investigation, would attach the least value to a source which was the redaction of something related to a writing known only fragmentarily, and which so little impresses by its originality that one formerly even regarded it as itself a redaction? Just as now in the *Einleitung* p. 495 it reads: "*das Matthäusevangelium verleugnet keineswegs seine mittelbare Herkunft von einer aramäischen Urschrift*," so earlier (p. 116) it read: "*wir haben gar keinen Grund eine hebräische Abfassung (der Urschrift) anzunehmen*," and p. 117: "*das hebräische Evangelium ist eine Überarbeitung der (griechischen) Grundschrift.*"[1]

If in the composite manner in which our first Gospel became what it is there can scarcely lie a guarantee for the authenticity of one of its parts, in particular for that of the Sermon on the Mount, then perhaps we find such a guarantee in the high antiquity of the chapters which contain the Sermon on the Mount. Hilgenfeld seems to believe this when he writes (p. 462): "*der Kern des kanonischen Matthäusevangeliums wird schon durch Schriften, welche noch vor der Zerstörung Jerusalems verfasst sind, begläubigt*," and adduces in proof, among others, Matthew 5:32; 19:9 (the prohibition of divorce), compared with 1 Corinthians 7:10: "*Yet to the married I give charge, not I but the Lord, that the wife not separate from the husband.*"

For an exegesis which does not content itself with the sound of the words, this parallel, however, cannot stand.

> [1] Hilgenfeld does not deny the difference, but says of it: "*ich habe meine Grundansicht (of 1854) wiederholt verfochten, aber auch fortgebildet(?).*"

22

Matthew 19:9 need not occupy us here. Let us confine ourselves to Matthew 5:32. It contains an absolute prohibition of divorce that allows no exception, unless indeed the marriage has already in fact been dissolved by fornication. If one otherwise leaves his wife, one causes her to commit adultery. This prohibition is issued to all without any distinction: "whoever shall leave his wife, etc." Matthew 5:32 therefore teaches that according to Jesus no one may leave his wife for any reason (the well-known exception excluded); in other words, it teaches the absolute indissolubility of the marriage bond.

First Corinthians 7 does not address all human beings without distinction, but believers. The writer has no exalted conception of marriage (vv. 1–2): celibacy is in itself better ("it is good for a man not to touch a woman"); marriage is a necessary evil ("because of fornications let each

have his own wife"); it is an institution which must serve to prevent sexual immorality. Once the marriage exists, then, as soon as one of the parties desires it, the marital intercourse must also be practised, for (v. 3) it is a *debt* that must be paid (the same word as in Matthew 18:32: "you wicked servant, I forgave you all that debt"; the "willing obligation" [States Translation] is a gloss), a debt that arises from the marriage bond, in which [entirely in the spirit of Kant] each of the spouses relinquishes the right to use his own body at will (v. 4). But by mutual consent the payment of that debt may be postponed, in order that one may find time for fasting and prayer. It is, however, not good to postpone the payment too long; not because the exercise of marital intercourse in itself would have one or another ideal significance, would in itself be a good, but again solely to prevent sexual immorality. If one lacks the gift of continence, then one must also give Satan no hold; otherwise marriage loses its sole practical reason for existence (v. 5).

23

The exercise of marital intercourse is therefore not "commanded" but "permitted," "conceded," as a necessary evil (v. 6), for the gift of continence is in itself something better. Paul would indeed wish that all possessed it with him (v. 7), and it is not he who will advise anyone to enter into marriage (vv. 8–9). Is it now desired, then, that the marriage, when it was entered into before conversion to Christianity, later be dissolved on the basis of this high valuation of the gift of continence? Perhaps Paul might personally be inclined to answer in the affirmative, but "the Lord commands that the wife not separate from the husband" (v. 10). Yet Paul can conceive this command as so little unconditionally binding that he immediately adds (v. 11): "and if the wife does separate, let her remain unmarried." Concerning a universally acknowledged command of God, however, one does not even assume the possibility that a believer might cast it to the winds. But when Paul very definitely assumes this possibility in v. 11 with regard to the command of the Lord mentioned in v. 10, then that command cannot be the supposedly universally acknowledged command of Matthew 5:32. This becomes abundantly clear from v. 12. After having presented vv. 10 and 11 as not his own but the Lord's command—that married Christians remain with one another—he turns to those who, as one would now say, live in a mixed marriage. "To the others (that is, to those who did not together convert to Christianity) I say, not the Lord: if any brother (a Christian) has an unbelieving wife, and she is content to dwell with him, let him not leave her." Here Paul therefore assures us in so many words that a man must not leave his pagan wife is *not* a command of the Lord. Could someone speak thus who had read Matthew 5:32? Had Jesus then even with a single word left open the possibility of dissolving a marriage on the ground of the spouses' differing religious convictions?

24

If Paul communicated the word of v. 10—"let the believing wife not separate from the believing husband"—as a command of Jesus because he had read Matthew 5:32, then that same text, Matthew 5:32, would also have compelled him to communicate the word of v. 12—"let the believing man not separate from the unbelieving wife"—as a command of Jesus, since the cited text simply speaks of husband and wife and leaves entirely out of account whether they believe in Jesus or not when it comes to establishing the indissoluble character of the marriage bond.

It must be acknowledged: Paul does not regard that bond as absolutely indissoluble, and precisely for that reason he cannot have read Matthew 5:32. We already pointed to v. 11: “and if she does separate”; but no less characteristic are vv. 14 and 15. In mixed marriages no initiative toward divorce may proceed from the believing spouse, not because marriage in itself is inviolable, but because the believing spouse sanctifies the unbelieving spouse, which must also be assumed because otherwise the children would be unclean. This already deserves our attention. Children, begotten in a perfectly lawful marriage, are, according to Paul, unclean, unless it is true that a pagan woman, not because she is married, but because she is married to a Christian, is “sanctified.” Still more strongly speaks v. 15. While an initiative toward divorce may not proceed from the believing spouse, it can happen that the unbeliever conceives that idea. What then is the believer to do? To remind his counterpart of the abstract sanctity of marriage, of the indissoluble character of the marriage bond? To move heaven and earth in order that this abomination—divorce—may not take place? By no means. “If the unbeliever separates, let him separate. The brother or the sister is not enslaved in such cases.” Why should he attempt at all costs to maintain the marriage? Shall he do so driven by the prospect of someday yet bringing his unbelieving counterpart to Christ?

But what does he know of that? “What (v. 17) do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or what do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife?” (v. 16). In itself, therefore, marriage has for Paul no moral significance, and he sums up his pronouncements in this, with respect to marriage, rather haughty counsel (v. 27): “Are you bound to a wife? Seek not dissolution (as if after Matthew 5:32 it were still possible to seek it); are you not bound to a wife? Seek not a wife.”

I believe I have thereby proved that 1 Corinthians 7:10 does not presuppose Matthew 5:32 and even excludes it. If one asks what Paul then intended by that “the Lord commands” of v. 10, I consider it more than probable that he wished to speak of a command of Jesus, communicated to him in a mystical or supernatural manner, concerning spouses converted after their marriage. I infer this from v. 25: “Now concerning virgins, I have no command of the Lord.” The emphasis here must fall on the singular “I have”; otherwise the expression would be inappropriate. Had the apostle simply wished to indicate that the Lord, during his earthly life, had not expressed himself on the duty of virgins, he would most naturally have written: concerning virgins there is no command, or one has no command, or we have no command. The “I have no command” concerning this must therefore mean: nothing was revealed to *me* about this. But then it also lies close at hand to understand the “the Lord commands” of v. 10—since it cannot be a reflex of Matthew 5:32—as “the Lord commands *me*, gives *me* the command”; all the more since, if v. 10 were simply a quotation of Matthew 5:32, the origin of this command in a Christian community would speak so much for itself that the “not I command, but the Lord” would be entirely superfluous. This distinction, on the contrary, has in our explanation of v. 10 high ethical value, insofar as it,

in connection with v. 12 and v. 40, shows that Paul does not arbitrarily ascribe each of his personal sentiments to a special inspiration. That special inspiration or revelation is in his view so much a reality that, if need be, he sacrifices his personal opinion to it. Thus here. Paul says, in other words: it is good not to touch a woman; marriage is defensible only from a utilitarian point of view. By mutual consent you may, believers who are married, even withdraw yourselves from the marital obligation. If you cannot do that in the long run without giving Satan a hold on you, then "by concession" I permit you to come together again. In itself, however, I would wish that you did not need this remedy against Satan and were as I am. Are there such among you who, married as ignorant pagans, but later converted, now indeed possess the charisma of continence, so that they need not fear Satan's wiles? Well then, I personally would see no objection to their no longer regarding themselves as married. But although I personally would think thus, the Lord has caused a command to reach me, to the effect that believing man and woman remain man and woman, and in any case, even if marital intercourse ceases, do not separate; in a word: seek no dissolution, but (v. 29) have one another as not having. Concerning mixed marriages and the duty of virgins Jesus has revealed nothing to me.

If one wished to contest this interpretation of 1 Corinthians 7 with the remark that it makes Paul into a mystical man who appeals to special revelations, I answer that the usual view of the authenticity of the Pauline letters ought not to shrink from this. Someone who, as Paul in Galatians 1, testifies before God (v. 20) that he, hitherto a persecutor of Christianity, received the gospel not from a human being but through revelation of Jesus Christ (v. 12), and who, after receiving it in this way,

does not consult the only people who could have known something of it, but withdraws for three years into solitude and then associates for only fourteen days with two of the first eleven witnesses (vv. 18–19); someone who can solemnly assure this and even seek in it a guarantee for the proposition that he is a true servant of Christ (v. 10), can very well also allow a practical question that troubled believers (1 Corinthians 7:1) to be decided immediately by Jesus.

For the great antiquity of the Sermon on the Mount Hilgenfeld further appeals to Matthew 5:44 ("Bless those who curse you … pray for those who persecute you") = 1 Corinthians 4:12 ("We are reviled, and we bless; we are persecuted, and we endure"). But first it is the question whether these words ever formed part of the original redaction of the Sermon on the Mount (see on this later); secondly, a precise method of investigation requires leaving open the possibility that, conversely, Matthew 5:44 was derived from 1 Corinthians 4:12, or that both passages were derived from a common source, for example Job 31:29; Proverbs 24:17; 25:21; Sirach 8:7; 28:2 (see on this later).

Since we wished to treat the two writings of Hilgenfeld consecutively, we had to break the chronological order, to which we now return. It now leads us to open the in many respects excellent work of Prof. H. J. Holtzmann: *Die synoptischen Evangelien, ihr Ursprung und geschichtlicher Charakter* (1863).

That he too holds the Sermon on the Mount to be authentic in the main follows already from his view concerning the source from which we are to know it. Holtzmann is namely of the opinion that Luke 6:20–49 formed part of the document which he calls Document A, the oldest source of evangelical history; the work from which all three Synoptists drew and whose content we do not recover completely, but find *best* in Mark.

28

If proof can be furnished that the Sermon on the Mount, in the main or in its entirety, was read in this original writing, then there naturally arises a strong presumption in favour of its partial or complete authenticity; and the first question which must now occupy us can therefore be no other than this: has Holtzmann proved that his Document A contained Luke 6:20–49?

"The Sermon on the Mount," it says on p. 75, "must have stood in A, and indeed here. How else would it have come about that the two evangelists who expanded the original writing,[1] and who always diverge from one another with regard to the place assigned by them to the apophthegms of Jesus which are lacking in Mark, should here agree precisely with one another as regards the manner in which they historically frame what both report of the Sermon on the Mount? Matthew and Luke must without doubt have found what they report of the Sermon on the Mount already in another author, who communicated not only discourses of Jesus but also events; as the sequence of the narrative concerning the centurion of Capernaum proves, which in Luke immediately follows the Sermon on the Mount and in Matthew is separated from it only by the later inserted fragment Mark 1:40–44 (= Matthew 8:2–4)."

This first argument is not very convincing. In abbreviated form it runs thus: What precedes and follows the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew also precedes and follows it in Luke. Whence this agreement, unless both derived the Sermon on the Mount from the same source, and from a source which contained discourses and narratives and thus looked exactly as we must imagine Document A to have looked.

[1] This is probably Holtzmann's intention. He writes, however, only "*die erweiternden Evangelisten*," without indicating the object of his participle.

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This argument could only then be taken into consideration when the intended agreement were as complete as one must expect under Holtzmann's supposition. To say: with two writers in whom one otherwise observes a different order, a, b, and c follow one another in the same order; therefore they already found a, b, and c elsewhere in that order—this can only be said when, with those two writers, a, b, and c are actually identical and stand in exactly the same sequence, in other words, when the observed fact itself is undeniable. But the fact is not so—or not so telling—as it is presented:

1°. a is entirely different in Matthew than in Luke;
2°. b is in many respects different from Luke;

3°. between b and c there stands in Matthew a d which is lacking in Luke; and
4°. c again is in many respects different in Matthew than in Luke.

As regards the first point: in Matthew Jesus ascends the mountain; in Luke he descends from it.[1]

As regards the second: in Matthew the Sermon on the Mount is both longer and in many respects differently redacted than in Luke.

As regards the third: in Matthew, but not in Luke, Mark 1:40–44 follows upon the Sermon on the Mount.

For the fourth point we must pause somewhat longer. The story of the centurion is, according to Holtzmann's supposition, derived by Matthew and Luke from the same written source. We may nevertheless ask whether it looks that way. The points of difference are the following:

	In Matthew	In Luke
1°.	he narrated event takes place upon the entering of Capernaum;	during the stay there, after the centurion had heard Jesus speak.

[1] *See how arbitrarily Holtzmann on p. 219 attempts to remove this difficulty. Luke will here have altered Document A.*

2°.	the centurion himself comes;	he sends the elders of the Jews;
3°.	on account of someone of whom it is not said (cf. John 4:46 ff.)	of whom it is expressly said that he was the centurion's slave.
4°.	the boy lies paralyzed and suffering in bed;	he is at the point of death.
5°.		the centurion is recommended to Jesus by the elders.
6°.	Jesus says: "I will come";	Jesus goes with them.
7°.	the conversation between Jesus and the centurion takes place in the presence of those who follow (many or	the conversation takes place between Jesus and new emissaries of the centurion, in the presence of the crowd.

	few);	
8°.		explanation why the centurion himself did not come.
9°.	Jesus marvels;	Jesus admires the centurion.
10°.	prophecy concerning the reclining of the nations at Abraham's table;	this prophecy—which would also have been less flattering for the elders and the crowd—is found only in chapter 13.
11°.	*Jesus utters the words that are to effect the healing;*	they are not uttered.

"As one sees, the variants are important enough to make the unity of the source uncertain. The tenth variant in particular is of great weight. That Matthew 8:11 and 12 come as a surprise after the way in which the Sermon on the Mount had spoken about the Gentiles will be denied by no one. The only thing that could have moved the Evangelist to include those verses is slavish dependence on a written source. If his source was now the same as that in which Luke 7:1 ff. stood, then Luke 7:1 ff. would precisely prove that Matthew 8:11–12 were not read in it.

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But then the source from which Luke 7:1 ff. flowed cannot possibly be the same as that whose slavish dependence alone explains for us, in the first Gospel, the presence of Matthew 8:11–12.[1]

The phenomenon observed by Holtzmann need of course not be denied insofar as it actually exists; but in view of what has been adduced, it says too little to be able to count as proof.

The second proof is the gap which will still be visible after Mark 3:19. This argument, as one will recall, is borrowed from Ewald. When we discussed Ewald's opinion (see above), we already did what was ours to refute it.

Since Holtzmann has not succeeded in his demonstration, the presumption in favour of the authenticity of the Sermon on the Mount likewise falls away, a presumption which one might draw from the circumstance that the oldest evangelical writing already contained the Sermon on the Mount.

The discourse which Holtzmann wishes to maintain as authentic is, however, not the discourse of Matthew 5–7, but—apart from a small exception—Luke 6:20–49. "To Matthew," he writes on p. 175, "belong disposition and association of ideas; to Jesus, on the other hand, the individual apophthegms which fill out the schematism." This is said, but not proved—that is, not made probable. How little this is the case appears, among other things, from the following statements: (p. 76) "Ritschl quite rightly senses that the sermon must have been addressed exclusively to the disciples of Jesus"; (p. 174) it is said that "Matthew found the historical framing for the

sermon … in Source A." From this it follows that Luke must have read in that same Document A a discourse delivered on a mountain to the disciples.

> [1] *Is it not once again sheer arbitrariness when Holtzmann attempts to neutralise the force of the variants by simply saying on p. 220: "The literary form has been given to this tradition by Luke"? Or on p. 179: "Inserted here are vv. 11 and 12 from a piece of A?"*

Nevertheless Holtzmann writes on p. 219: 'Luke never entirely loses sight of A. Only as a result of this alteration did the Sermon on the Mount in Luke become a discourse not to the disciples, but to the crowd. Luke therefore regards the notice about the following multitude as a preparation for the Sermon on the Mount and in v. 17 gives a locality suitable for so much people…. We therefore have in Luke's plain merely a scenery that appeared necessary, such measures being found in Luke.' In other words: Luke arbitrarily turns a sermon on a mountain into a sermon on the plain, and a discourse to the disciples into a discourse to the multitude, but what he communicates as the content of the discourse is genuine; the words themselves come from Jesus. How does so arbitrary a writer—indeed, a writer who will not even have noticed that the discourse could not have been addressed to the multitude—suddenly become so reliable that one no longer suspects him of any important changes in the text of the discourse itself? In any case one would then at least expect that Luke 6:20–49 (with the exception, as Holtzmann wishes, of vv. 39 and 40) would still bear the clearest traces of having been addressed not to the multitude but to the disciples. Dare one assert that this is so? Does one expect, in an intimate circle, that solemn fourfold *Woe!* (vv. 24–26)? Are they the disciples, themselves Jews, to whom it could be said: 'Woe to you when all people speak well of you! For their fathers did the same to the false prophets'? Does not that *lapsus linguae*—the fathers of *all people* instead of the fathers of *all the Jews*—prove that the Jewish people as a whole is already regarded as hostile to the truth? Was 'lend, hoping for nothing in return' a command that one had to hasten to give to poor fishermen? For those few hearers does the discourse naturally rise to that 'You hypocrite!' of v. 42; indeed, in a speech exclusively for the Twelve is not every apostrophe misplaced—most of all that of v. 46:

'Why do you call me Lord! Lord! and do not do what I say?'

Let us nevertheless suppose that Holtzmann has succeeded in his attempt. He would then have proved that the Sermon on the Mount, as we possess it in Luke 6:20–49, stood in his Document A. Can one now say that the authenticity of the Sermon on the Mount is thereby guaranteed; that we are relieved of all further investigation? When was A written? Probably around the year 57 (p. 412). What guarantees the authenticity of words written down almost thirty years after the death of the one who is supposed to have spoken them—especially when we do not know at all whether the writing that reports those words arose in an environment that could, from its own memories, control their authenticity? In this case, according to Holtzmann, we do not know it. For on p. 418 we read: 'Where A arose can no longer be stated with certainty; even for

Palestine and Galilee no decisive reasons speak.' Holtzmann even considers it more probable that A was not written in Palestine. 'For there the memory of the Lord remained long enough alive even with oral tradition, as was customary in Judaism at that time; whereas the need for a connected written presentation would most readily arise among extra-Palestinian Jews and among Gentile Christians…. Nor does the habit of citing according to the LXX point us precisely to a Palestinian origin.' He then concludes that A must have been written in Rome or in Syria.

All this might perhaps still be regarded as less decisive, if the content of Document A, according to Holtzmann, distinguished itself by a strictly historical character. 'A few decades,' he says on p. 442—although this accords poorly with his assurance on p. 412 regarding the year 57—'a few decades had the reports of A lived only in oral tradition'

(—which is accustomed to preserve such reports uncorrupted—). The consequences did not fail to appear. 'Already in this main source the historical field is in more than one respect held wavering and unclear.' To the first and most natural questions we receive no answer. Whether Jesus was publicly active for one year, several years, and in the latter case for how many years, we do not learn from Document A, according to Holtzmann. 'Further, sometimes … factual affinity has given occasion for the sequence of events…. It must be assumed that at the time of the composition of A the … predictions of Jesus (about suffering and resurrection) … were already commented upon and particularized after the event…. Also in formal respect the words of Jesus, as they lie before us in A, have passed through the medium of a recognizable redaction, insofar as the few sections where A gives larger discourses present themselves as aggregates.' Of Mark 13 it is even said that the question still deserves a special investigation whether this chapter is not a free composition of the author of Document A, thus has no historical foundation at all. 'If we take all this together,' Holtzmann finally says on pp. 446 ff., 'and at the same time recall that the reports about baptism, temptation, transfiguration in the form in which A already delivers them have admittedly as much ideal as real content, then it is clear that we are not dealing here with a historian concerned with exact presentation in the sense of our time.'

And after all this, which Holtzmann so candidly concedes—as one would expect from his acumen and impartiality—it is nevertheless asserted on p. 448 that 'the usually, even down to details, genuinely historical character of Source A proves itself'; and the entire investigation of this source is concluded with the remark: 'Thus we have found in Source A a historical narrative

in whose vivid and pithy distinctiveness the most original memory of the disciples makes itself known.'

Accordingly: a writing that records what had already lived for several decades as tradition in the mouth of a religious sect; that did not arise in the land where what is narrated is supposed to have occurred; a writing in which the historical in more than one respect cannot lay claim to

firmness and clarity; that gives no answer to the first and most natural questions; that arbitrarily colors, connects, and even invents sayings; that communicates entire narratives which can be accepted only according to their ideal content; and that does not come from an author who intends to give what we would today call an exact account of what happened—such a writing will nevertheless display 'a genuinely historical character even down to details,' and of such a writing someone in our day will still consider himself able to assure that it revives 'the most original memories' of the eyewitnesses. I doubt whether, outside the theological domain, one would ever decide to pronounce so favorable a final judgment on a historical source that is in such a lamentable condition.

Must we then close our eyes to all the phenomena which Holtzmann (pp. 447–450) has noted in Document A in favor of its credibility? Should they not be taken into account in our final judgment? I would not like to answer affirmatively. For the evaluation of such phenomena is what one calls internal criticism, which always rests on the familiar, already cited: *ce n'est pas ainsi qu'on invente*. I always ask: What does one know about it? Has one already gone so far as to be able to determine what can or cannot be invented? Are the characteristics irrevocably established that could put into my hands a standard by which I may judge every narrative either: it cannot be true, or: it must be true? The right of

internal criticism is not denied by me in the abstract—far from it—but I doubt whether we have already advanced far enough to exercise it. When we stand before a document like Document A, as Holtzmann describes it; a document whose objective criticism shows unreliability, but in which internal criticism discovers features such as one is accustomed to find in a trustworthy writing, then, in my judgment, good method requires that we say: whether the presence of such features in a document *per se* entails its credibility, I do not know; for this is a question that—if I am not to revolve in a circle—can only be decided when it is established that such features never occur, and indeed can never occur, in a writing that is certainly not credible. Let us therefore for the present adhere to objective criticism, which occupies itself with questions such as these: Who is the author? What is his age? His environment? What does comparison of the writing with itself and with other documents teach? In most cases we shall by this means already get far enough. If the verdict of such objective criticism turns out unfavorable, and we then, by means of internal criticism, notice phenomena that would lead us to another conclusion, then in my opinion we have, at best, to suspend our judgment, but nevertheless to acknowledge that we lack the right to use the writing in question as a historical source.

The concrete application of this general principle is this: even if Holtzmann had proved that the Sermon on the Mount stood in Document A, he himself has described that document in such a way that from his exposition no presumption in favor of its credibility—and therefore of the authenticity of the Sermon on the Mount—may arise.

That our general principle still finds little assent is shown also by the way in which Holtzmann treats Document A. The Sermon on the Mount, whose authenticity he seeks to uphold,

is not only that Collection of Sayings which one reads in Luke 6:20–49; it also includes the series of sayings that are read in Matthew 5–7 and in Luke at various places in his Gospel and—which, if we do not include Luke 14:34–35 (see later), are ten in number (in the order in which they occur in Matthew: [Luke 14:34–35]; 16:17; 12:58–59; 16:18; 11:1–4; 34; 16:13; 12:22–34; 11:9–13; 13:24a). [We also find in Luke (8:16) a passage from the Sermon on the Mount, but Holtzmann refers this back to Document A]. These sayings Matthew and Luke will have drawn from a second source, called A. Since we are treating the grounds on which independent criticism believes in the authenticity of the content of the Sermon on the Mount, we must therefore also examine what Holtzmann has asserted about Document A and how he defends his assertion.

Holtzmann calls it on p. 459 ‘a collection of discourses originating from an apostolic ear-witness, composed almost entirely without any historical framing,’ and asserts that ‘every doubt regarding its complete credibility must fall silent.’ I begin by noting that the document whose impressive authenticity is to disarm our criticism at once has up to now led only a hypothetical existence. After careful observation of certain phenomena in the synoptic Gospels, Holtzmann has conjectured its existence, in the same way as, for example, Ewald conjectured the existence of a ‘Book of Higher History,’ which Koestlin banished to the land of fable, while that same Koestlin again discovered other documents which, however, together with their sisters that had found brave knights in other theologians, were declared by Holtzmann himself to be the ‘product of critical double-vision and other hallucinations’ (p. 168). Let us now assume that Holtzmann has made the existence of his Documents A and A′ much more probable, even highly probable; that existence nevertheless

always remains hypothetical; those documents do not exist for us in the same sense in which, for example, the first Gospel exists. We cannot observe that document, but must, by virtue of a reasoning that can always fail, conclude to its former observability.

In the second place, we note that Holtzmann could in any case make the hypothetical existence of his documents plausible only with the help of a hypothesis which, whether right or wrong in itself, cannot possibly count on everyone’s immediate assent, because at least it does not have probability on its side at first glance. Each of the documents whose extent he has determined contains texts that present Jesus’ relation to the Gentile world in entirely different ways. So long as we do not know that relation itself—indeed, are first occupied with the investigation of the sources from which knowledge even of this particular aspect of Jesus’ life must be drawn—it will surely be more natural to assign texts that let Jesus utter entirely different judgments about the Gentiles to different documents. In the abstract it is just as possible that Jesus completely changed his mind in this respect, so that he said both (Matt. 8:10) ‘I have found no faith in Israel so great as that of a Gentile centurion,’ and (Matt. 15:24) ‘I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel’; both to the apostles: ‘You shall not go on the way of the Gentiles’ (Matt. 10:5), and ‘many will come from east and west,’ etc. (Matt. 8:11–12) [A]. But it seems to me very

venturesome to determine the extent of a document according to a principle that brings us to attribute such a contradiction to Jesus himself—or, more generally, to hold two such contradictory utterances to be equally authentic. If some exegetes go too far when they immediately see in Matt. 15:24 proof of the 'tendency' of some

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historian or redactor, Holtzmann seems to me to be guilty of a *petitio principii* when he writes (p. 379): 'Concerning the dogmatic character of those source-writings one should not surrender to hasty conceptions in the sense of tendency-criticism. They represent nothing less than the party standpoint known as that adopted by later Jewish Christianity. Rather they are products of primitive Christianity, of a religious form still indeed limited to Palestine, which only by rejecting all the further-developing powers already inherent in its principle became closed Ebionitism.' That is precisely the question! If it is 'hasty' to do what Holtzmann disapproves, no less deserves that name what he himself does. And if someone replied to him: I am not eager to assume in advance that a religious founder like Jesus contradicted himself to such a degree, and therefore harbor doubt about the correctness of a critical principle that I cannot apply without obtaining a document that forces me to accept this contradiction—how would Holtzmann remove that hesitation, a hesitation proceeding from objective criticism, which indeed has the right to call reports uncertain on the ground of their internal contradiction?

It was not my intention to discuss the question itself here whether the documents A and A′ really have the extent that Holtzmann assigns to them. I have only wished to bring to light, first, that his documents have a hypothetical existence; and second, that even in the most favorable case Holtzmann could not prove that existence except, among other things, with the help of a hypothesis whose plausibility is at least not self-evident.

Let us now see how he has attempted to demonstrate the genuinely historical character of Document A. In the first place, everything rests

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on internal criticism. It is said of Schleiermacher "that happy insight has here acquainted us with material which bears the inner mark of its authenticity, and even provides us with a standard by which to assess the internal coherence and the historical character of the remaining portion of the transmitted material. Of this—so it is further said—of this aggregate of precious stones, which one finds especially in Luke still in its original condition, the words are applicable that Baur uses of Jesus' discourses in Matthew: 'it is not so much the person who gives the discourse its significance, but rather the weight of the content of the discourse, which first allows the person himself to appear in his true light; it is the matter itself that speaks here, the inner power of truth, pressing immediately upon the heart, which here announces itself in its world-historical significance.'" Holtzmann accordingly also invites us with confidence to read these discourses and to observe how one weighty saying displaces another; one will then discover the inexhaustible source to which we owe that abundance. "It is not saying too much," he continues with what Ewald finds here, "of the living breath that pervades everything, of pure

creative power, which everywhere bursts forth in the individual sentence as well as in the whole structure and progress of the discourse, of inimitable rhetorical sweep, which in a few words and sentences rises to the utmost extreme and, with an easy turn, descends again into the calmest dignity." All this excellence in the teaching of Jesus, according to Holtzmann, could have been committed to writing by no one "who had not originally stood very close to him." That such content should not be authentic, not historical, is an opinion "which will find less and less acceptance among competent judges."

As one perceives, we continue here to wander about in the realm of subjective feeling. I find here not the slightest trace of scientific criticism. If these critical

principles of a "living breath" and of "pure creative power" were applied, one could not prevent even the most conservative theologian from defending every biblical narrative. His subjective feeling is as good as that of Ewald or anyone else. One thus always returns to Rousseau's *ce n'est pas ainsi qu'on invente*. In matters of taste, the person of the evaluator may be taken into account; not so in matters of historical truth. Here we must, first of all, adhere to the objective—that is, to what has been scientifically established. Holtzmann's entire appraisal of his second document (pp. 459 ff.) therefore does full justice to the refined aesthete, but has no force to prove the authenticity of that document and thus teaches us absolutely nothing about the origin of the Sermon on the Mount.

If anything is capable of convincing us of the futility of a historical criticism that consults only subjective impressions, it is the circumstance that men whose judgment is accorded equal weight in other matters diverge so greatly in their evaluations of the question that concerns us. For Holtzmann, as we have seen, nothing is more evident than this: originally there were two principal source documents; the first was the Proto-Mark, and in our present Mark we find that Proto-Mark most purely preserved. One year after Holtzmann had asserted this, Strauss (1864) published his *Das Leben Jesu für das deutsche Volk bearbeitet*. Does Strauss build upon Holtzmann's results? Does he refute them in detail? He does not even mention them as belonging to that scholar, but writes with no less confidence than his immediate predecessor in the field of literary criticism of the Synoptics (pp. 127 ff.): "From the view that regards it [namely, our second Gospel] as the original Gospel, we believe we may here refrain, since it is self-refuted by the concession of its advocates that we no longer possess this original Gospel in our present Mark in its

original form, but as extensively interpolated and probably also shortened; and we must leave to the same tester of spirits, Ewald, who discerned in the venerable Baur the C. F. Bahrdt of the nineteenth century, the task of recognizing 'the bloom of the fresh flower' in this Gospel." For Strauss, therefore, it is just as impossible to receive from Mark the impression of originality as it is to regard Baur as a vulgar rationalist.

Strauss's "impression" thus again nullifies for us Holtzmann's "impression." Strauss's impression is in fact so unfavorable that he prefers to side with Schwegler (*Die Hypothese vom schöpferischen Urevangelisten*, in Zeller's *Theol. Jahrb.* 1843), "when he calls the text of Mark, in comparison with that of Matthew, flat and characterlessly smoothed down"; indeed, together with Köstlin, Strauss holds the view that "the second Gospel belongs to a later stage of evangelical historiography." Strauss thus returns once more to Schleiermacher's opinion, according to which our second Gospel is more reworked than those of the other two Synoptics and already approaches the apocryphal genre. Strauss considers all this so self-evident that he writes: "Every unbiased reader of Mark must confirm these observations." Holtzmann and all who agree with him (p. 420) that "in fact, at least with respect to Mark, it is consistently noticeable that he has hardly changed anything, that he has for the most part even reproduced what he received verbatim," Holtzmann and all of them are, according to Strauss, not unbiased—while Holtzmann is fully prepared to assert precisely the same of Strauss. What use, then, is such criticism, whose principal representatives contradict one another flatly—what else does it prove than how little the method they follow still appears to be an objective method? We may equally draw from this the conclusion that if Holtzmann and the exegetes who share his view have not succeeded

in making the relative originality of our second Gospel incontestable, one of his principal means of recovering his Document A falls away, let alone proving its authenticity and thus also the authenticity of Luke VI, 20–49.

In 1868 Professor J. H. Scholten, in his work *Het Oudste Evangelie* etc., partially took up again the thesis of Holtzmann and others. As regards the mutual relationship of Matthew and Mark, Professor Scholten already expresses in his Preface the expectation that "his investigation will strengthen many in the conviction that priority must generally be assigned to the text of Mark, while a relatively smaller number of passages, where the text of Matthew reads more originally, justifies the assumption that a common source underlies both, which is usually designated by the name Proto-Mark." The aim of his investigation was "historical, insofar as it seeks to bring forth from the critical process the image of Jesus as accurately as possible in its original form." To this end, the professor then deems it necessary (p. VII) to "establish" the original text, the Proto-Mark, and in this document to search for the genuinely historical elements. He hopes thereby "to trace the original text of Mark, which, in combination with the collection of sayings of Matthew, partially preserved in the canonical Matthew, and with the historical details … of … Luke, would supply the data from which [not Jesus, but] the Christ may be known in his original historical character." He further hopes that those of different views "will not break the staff" over brothers for whom Jesus is "a savior and redeemer."

A critical investigation undertaken with such expectations may, from the standpoint of a completely free criticism, well occasion some astonishment. Who would think of publishing a critical treatise, for example, on the correspondence

of William the Silent and accompanying it with the assurance that those who do not adopt his conclusions will nevertheless acknowledge that he holds William I to have been a very great man? But this impression must not prevent us from examining Professor Scholten's method of investigation with the greatest care.

At first, our author infers from the sequence of the narratives that the canonical Gospel bearing the name Matthew (or *Trito-Matthew*) is a compilation drawn from at least four different sources: Proto-Mark; a collection of sayings (in which the Sermon on the Mount stood); a now-lost writing which together form the *Deutero-Matthew* (one of the sources of Luke); and a fourth document. He then enumerates characteristic phenomena that distinguish these various sources from one another. Thus, among other things, the quotations from the sayings collection agree with the Septuagint, concerning which Professor Scholten remarks that "the quotations are free, as is to be expected in oral delivery." Since he here cites Matthew V, 21, 27, 33, 43, he prejudges to some extent the question of the authenticity of the Sermon on the Mount, precisely with regard to which it is asked whether it was ever delivered orally at all. Furthermore, the professor's investigation teaches that "where tradition fell short, prophecy came to its aid in order to construct narratives," a method that characterizes the final redactor in particular. A more detailed comparison of the first two Gospels then leads to the conclusion that "the redactor of the Gospel of Matthew commented upon a text such as that of Mark"; that Matthew in about a dozen passages slightly "dramatized" the simpler narrative manner of Mark; that his style is often, in contrast to the "less polished colloquial language" encountered in Mark, "more dignified, more refined," but also less forceful. In short, by various routes the professor attempts to bring the originality of Mark into the light—Mark whom Matthew corrected, sometimes even by "petty alterations." "The text of

Matthew is clearly later," also because "it betrays a hand more practiced in Greek than that of Mark," or "reveals a tendency toward exaggeration," or often remains unintelligible unless one places Mark alongside it, or distinguishes itself from the latter by a "dogmatic character." The originality of Mark does not, however, exclude the presence of "later additions" in the canonical text of Mark; and the final conclusion of the investigation is therefore "that both the Gospel of Matthew, already in its second form, and the canonical Gospel of Mark rest upon an older writing, the original text of which was preserved in most places by Mark, but elsewhere also by Matthew." But now a weighty question arises: was this Proto-Mark truly a *protos*, or was his work itself already a compilation? This investigation is undertaken, but it does not lead to a favorable result. "There exists," according to the professor, "reason to believe that (Proto-Mark), the writing commented upon by both Deutero-Matthew and Deutero-Mark, had itself already been exposed to interpolations." And "by this Professor Scholten acknowledges the possibility that other passages, whose mythical character does not harmonize well with the otherwise

sober-historical content of the Gospel of Mark, were not yet present in the oldest historical sketch."

First, then, the professor must demonstrate that the Gospel of Mark, taken in itself, exhibits a historical character. To this end he adduces the following reasons:

a. "A writing in which no birth or childhood narrative yet occurs thereby betrays its greater antiquity and historical character." The probative force of this argument is not immediately apparent. The circumstance that one or more myths do not occur in a writing which nevertheless does contain myths cannot guarantee that writing a "historical character"; in other words, the absence of certain myths in a writing need not necessarily be due to its greater antiquity or

historical character, but may be attributable to other causes, for example to the dogmatic criticism of a later author. That historical character must already be established from elsewhere. Once it is established, one may infer from it that such-and-such specific myths could not have been included. This judgment is corroborated by a glance at the Fourth Gospel. The Fourth Gospel likewise "knows neither a birth nor a childhood narrative." Does the Fourth Gospel, for that reason, "betray its greater antiquity and historical character"?

b. "Likewise, the historical character of the Gospel of Mark manifests itself in the way most narratives stand as isolated episodes in themselves." This argument, too, is not decisive. The self-contained nature of the narratives may indeed—but need not necessarily—be the result of authentic recording of facts; it may also be the result of the historian's inexperience.

c. "According to Mark, nothing prevents the assumption that Jesus arrived in Jerusalem already some considerable time before the Passover. Given this possibility, it becomes intelligible how opposition to his reforming work, extending over a longer period, had the opportunity gradually to develop." This seems to me a circular argument. The historical value of our Gospels has yet to be investigated. Whether Jesus indeed carried out a reforming work, and whether opposition to it developed, we therefore do not yet know. How, then, can it plead in Mark's favor that he opens up a longer period for the development of this as yet problematic opposition?

These are the actual arguments. In addition, Professor Scholten points to a multitude of details in the second Gospel, and at the end of this remarks (p. 268): "The aforementioned episodes and minor details in the Gospel of Mark, according to its older redaction, give the impression of being the core of a true history.

Jesus really lived and taught in this way, as Proto-Mark relates in its main features, so that we behold Jesus teaching and acting, as though transported onto the stage of events, in a manner that no later, already more dogmatic age could have fabricated." If I am not mistaken, subjective criticism once again carries the day here. Volkmar asserts that the Gospel of Mark "is a Christian epic, in which Pauline ideas are poetically clothed in a historical guise"; Professor Scholten asserts, on the basis of what has been stated above, that it is "impossible to regard it as such." I do not decide at all who is right. But is not the fact that two independent and competent historians arrive at conclusions that stand in direct opposition to one another sufficient to prompt us to say: historical criticism has not yet been granted the ability to elevate certain principles to axioms, such that one would already possess the right to write: this or that "gives the impression of being the core of a true history—this cannot be invented"? Here, too, sound method seems to require that one declare: in a writing which, like our second Gospel according to Professor Scholten's own statement, is the product of two anonymous revisions and already contained mythical elements even in its first redaction, there *may* lie the core of a true history—but no one is capable of determining whether that core is present, or where it lies.

The professor nonetheless considers himself capable of doing so and now proceeds to sift out the mythical elements. With confidence he draws the boundary where history ends and myth begins. First. On p. 277: "That Jesus, on his way to Jerusalem, encountered a fig tree and, on this occasion, as elsewhere in the form of a parable (Luke XIII, 6–9), prophesied concerning the Jewish nation—which, like such a tree, was nearing its downfall—is history. But it is equally clear that in the later tradition, already in Proto-Mark and, following it, in

Deutero-Matthew, the *prophetic* word of Jesus was understood as a *curse*, and as a consequence of this, the withering of the tree through Jesus' miraculous power was added as a symbolic fact to an originally symbolic utterance." Although all this appears to speak for itself, we are referred to pp. 244, 246; but p. 225 is equally relevant.

We can already form a clear picture here of Professor Scholten's method.

In Trito-Mark—for that is indeed what the second canonical Gospel now becomes—we have the story of the fig tree (XI, 12–14; 20–24). First, the text is restored to its original form (p. 225). At the end of v. 13 one reads: "for it was not the season for figs"; the professor annotates this as follows: a thoughtless gloss, to which a suitable sense can be given only by a forced interpretation; cf. Matthew XXI, 19, where this "gloss" is absent. Yet if we consider that we are here dealing with a narrative in which, at Jesus' command, a fruit tree is condemned to perpetual barrenness—a narrative in which the sudden withering of that fruit tree is *implicitly* cited by Jesus as proof that faith can accomplish what is otherwise impossible, namely move mountains—then I ask: what standard remains to us in such a narrative by which to distinguish a thoughtless gloss from a sensible remark? What if it had in fact been the intention of the original narrator to tell us,

in other words: whether it is fig season or not, from the moment Jesus demands figs from a tree they must be there, and in their absence he has the right to punish that tree, by the exercise of which right he provides his disciples with an example of great faith? What if that had indeed been his intention?

Perhaps the professor would reply that we must not attribute such a nonsensical intention to the original

narrator. But if an unknown redactor could produce a gloss that Professor Scholten deems thoughtless, how will he ever be able to prove that an equally unknown author could not have been just as thoughtless?

Such proof could of course be furnished only if the author otherwise showed himself to be entirely free of thoughtlessness. But if we, with Professor Scholten, call the gloss thoughtless, then the narrative itself deserves exactly the same qualification. Jesus finds no figs on a fig tree. Why not? Because there could be no figs on that tree. Why could there be no figs? Either because it was not yet fig season, or because this particular tree was barren. For this particular tree, the second explanation is just as sufficient as the first. From a barren tree Jesus could no more reasonably expect fruit during fig season than from a fruitful tree outside fig season. In other words: a reasonable person has no single ground, even in fig season, to be astonished that a particular fig tree bears only leaves. If, therefore, someone relates that Jesus prophesies eternal barrenness upon a fig tree without figs because he cannot satisfy his hunger from it, then he has either depicted the act of an unreasonable person or has thoughtlessly fabricated or copied a narrative. The former supposition, of course, does not occur to Professor Scholten. But if that same author then adds: “it was not the season for figs,” how shall I be able, with any probability, to determine whether this remark is to be charged to his account or to that of another? Where the entire affair is presented thoughtlessly—indeed in such a way that we may receive the most bizarre impression of Jesus—we ought not to be surprised at one thoughtless remark more or less.

Moreover, I cannot concede that in this narrative, as it now stands, the alleged gloss may rightly be accused of thoughtlessness. Let us remove it [Let us leave it out for a moment.]. Jesus then comes,

in fig season, hungry to a tree that bears no fruit, and now says, in order to avenge his disappointment: “May no one ever eat fruit from you again.” One involuntarily thinks: perhaps there was not much danger that this would happen anyway. If a fig tree bears no figs *in fig season*, it may already be barren, in which case Jesus’ curse or prophecy might well have been unnecessary. How little thoughtlessness—indeed how much deliberation—does the narrator therefore show in forestalling this objection by telling us:

do not think that the fig tree had only leaves because it was already barren; no—Jesus made it barren. If you would infer its barrenness from the fact that it bore no fruit, know that this proves nothing, for the simple reason that it was not yet fig season.

I leave aside whether the author intended this, but it is by no means impossible—and that suffices to demonstrate on what subjective grounds the alleged gloss would be removed as thoughtless.

According to the professor, the text is still not in order. "In Mark XI:14 the optative *ete*, by which Jesus' word becomes a curse, is less original than *from you no fruit shall come again forever*, Matthew XXI, 19, which is to be regarded as a prophecy." Why the one is more original than the other is not stated; how the professor knows this is likewise not explained. It seems to me that this second textual correction—whether it be justified or not—renders the first less desirable, and vice versa. For if we remove the gloss and change the optative into an aorist subjunctive with future force, then we indeed read the following: Jesus seeks fruit from a tree, naturally because the season led him to expect fruit. That tree, however, is barren, for otherwise

it would have borne fruit in that season. And then Jesus says: "from you no fruit shall ever come." An easy prophecy with regard to what was probably a completely barren tree. Thus the narrative becomes eminently tame. If, on the other hand, the gloss remains and we retain the optative, then we indeed read the following: Jesus is hungry, demands on that basis that a given tree should have fruit, finds himself disappointed, and now curses that tree. This may, from a certain standpoint, have a meaning not unlike that which we attach to Napoleon's well-known saying: *impossible n'est pas français*. But the narrative, according to the proposed correction, is so insignificant that one does not understand why it was ever made.

This textual revision by the professor once again demonstrates how subjective judgment often is. He frequently allows Mark to be corrected by Matthew. But Matthew XXI, 18 ff. is, according to him, not a correction of Mark XI, 12 ff.; it is more original, therefore derived from a better edition of Mark. For my part, were I willing to follow the professor along the path of entirely personal evaluations, I would say: if ever Matthew wished to correct Mark, it was precisely here. Matthew read Mark XI, 12 ff. in the "Grundschrift," took offense—just as Professor Scholten now does—at a narrative that presents the exalted foolishness of a faith that literally regards nothing as impossible, and weakened its force: first, by omitting what Scholten regards as a gloss; second, by altering the optative. But I shall refrain from speaking in this way, for the simple reason that I attach little value to this kind of internal criticism, in which one can always argue both pro and contra with equal confidence, and in which one so easily—by choosing one's starting point—unconsciously feels the influence of a certain dogmatism. It might, for example, be that someone does not like to see a narrative such as Mark XI, 12 ff. standing in an original document

because it places Jesus too much in the light of an enthusiast [fanatic], and for that reason does his utmost to discover glosses and textual corruptions in it. Conversely, the need to conceive of Jesus precisely as an enthusiast could just as well lead someone to refuse to hear of such glosses, etc.

Let us, however, continue to follow the professor. Earlier already, he says on p. 244, it was observed that in Matthew there is no connection between the clearly symbolic action in vv. 18 and 19 (the withering of the tree) and a faith that can move mountains (v. 21). Roughly the same had indeed been said earlier (p. 56), and the professor had added: "Perhaps those words (vv. 21 and 22) were also inserted only later." The professor did not prove his right to this assumption on p. 56; and it is all the more difficult to judge its legitimacy because its meaning is not entirely clear to me. On p. 56 we read: "Between the withering of the tree, a symbolic action, and the power of faith to wither trees, there is no connection." What is unusual here is the use of *to wither* as a transitive verb, and one is therefore uncertain whether it is taken transitively in both instances. But leaving this aside: the connection is lacking only because one term has been incompletely expressed. Between the withering of a tree and the power of faith—whatever its object—there is of course not the slightest connection. But when a particular tree is spoken of, when it is related that it withered immediately at Jesus' word, "from you no fruit shall ever come," and Jesus himself then adds: "if you had faith you would not only cause trees to wither but also move mountains," then it is unclear to me why the connection should not be in order here. If the connection *is* in order, then the probability that Matthew XXI, 21 and 22 "were inserted only later" likewise disappears. Or have I misunderstood the professor here?

I should like to have certainty on this point, for on p. 244 the professor continues as follows: "Since Mark likewise has these words, XI, 23, and Matthew commented on them, they must have stood in the common source of both"; and he then asserts: "Meanwhile it is clear that even there they do not fit into this context." Why not? On the basis of what has just been adduced? But if I have understood the professor, then I believe I have also refuted his assertion, and there is therefore a connection between Mark XI, 14 and 23. The connection is as follows: Jesus condemns the tree to perpetual barrenness (v. 14). On the following day Peter draws his attention to the fact that the curse has been fulfilled (v. 21), whereupon Jesus in effect says: No wonder; behold the power of faith; I knew that my curse would not be an empty word; have an equally powerful faith and your word to the mountain—be lifted up—will not be empty either; what you say will come to pass (vv. 22 and 23), just as what I said has come to pass. One may find all this extremely strange, but in the train of thought itself, so far as I can see, there is no break. Nor is there one in what follows: "Nor," says the professor on that same p. 244, "is there any connection between the withering of the barren fig tree, Mark XI, 20, and believing prayer, v. 24." No—if, with the professor on p. 56, one calls the causing of the fig tree to wither "a symbolic action." But he has not proved his right to do so. If we adhere to the narrative,

everything hangs together, and Jesus says: I said to the fig tree, wither, in firm trust in God who would make my word true. Say what you will in the same trust; it will come to pass. This saying is, after all, not the utterance of arbitrarily formed wishes, but a prayerful desire, and such desire will be fulfilled (v. 24). Verses 25 and 26 stand by themselves.

From my critique it appears to me—not that the connection which Professor Scholten misses is in fact there—but that the

absence of that connection is not so "clear" as he wishes to make it appear; indeed, a connection is found as soon as one does not a priori call the causing of the fig tree to wither a symbolic action, something for which, in my view, the text of our narrative affords not the slightest warrant.

Upon grounds whose weakness has become evident to us, further construction is now undertaken, where the professor writes: "If this already points in Proto-Mark to an interpolated text—we have not found that anything points to this—then the question next arises whether the entire pericope, Mark XI, 20–25, originally stood in this context." In other words: If I cannot call Mark XI, 14 a symbolic action and then relate Mark XI, 20–25 to it, then the question arises whether Mark XI, 20–25 is in fact related to v. 14. A safer method would surely be first to allow the question to arise whether Mark XI, 14 is indeed a symbolic action—especially since it has become clear to us that, when one does not read a symbolic action into it and thus takes v. 14 as it presents itself, the connection is perfectly in order. —Has the professor then made no attempt to render his interpretation of v. 14 plausible? On p. 245 he asks: "Was perhaps the word of Jesus (XI, 14) in a text preceding Proto-Mark nothing other than a symbolic utterance?"

Thus we continue to move in a circle. The text is interpolated, because vv. 20–25 do not stand in connection with the symbolic action of v. 14a; and the question whether v. 14a is not a symbolic utterance may arise because vv. 20–25 are interpolated! It seems to me that Scholten's question is entirely superfluous after the qualification he has given of v. 14. That 20–25 do not fit into this context cannot be "clear" unless it is established that v. 14 reports a symbolic action or utterance (which here amounts to the same thing); but if this is established—or if not, then once again the entire complaint about lack of connection is unfounded—there is

truly no need, as if it were a brand-new conjecture, modestly to ask whether v. 14 "might perhaps also be a symbolic utterance, occasioned by the sight of a fig tree standing by the road which, though decked with leaves, nevertheless bore no fruit." That "perhaps" cannot therefore prevent us from saying: Professor Scholten has here posited precisely what he had above all to prove. He assumes—naturally unintentionally—the appearance as if he had found, quite independently of the question whether v. 14 reports a symbolic

action, the probability that the narrative in question was interpolated, and as if he might now, on the basis of that finding, allow himself the right to make a conjecture. In reality the matter stands quite otherwise, and nothing whatever comes of the probability of an interpolation unless one has already beforehand assumed the correctness of what later appears as a mere innocent conjecture.

That modest "perhaps" therefore disappears very quickly. Immediately after what has been cited follows: "Concerning that tree (planted by Scholten himself) Jesus utters no curse or imprecation, as though, disappointed at finding no fruit, he wished to avenge himself"—(who could or should expect anything so passionate of the gentle teacher, who had absolutely nothing fanatical about him?)—"but Jesus sees in that tree the symbol of the Jewish nation, which, with much outward display of religion, nevertheless lacked the religion of the heart (cf. Luke XVI, 15; Matt. XXIII, 27, 28)." By this representation the professor feels so satisfied that he passes entirely into the historical style: "With that barren soil before his eyes, Jesus uttered the prophecy concerning the Jewish nation that it had fulfilled its role in world history and that no fruit was to be expected from it." Thus p. 245; upon which p. 277 follows quite apodictically: "that Jesus, on his walk to Jerusalem, encountered a fig tree (without fruit) along the way and

on this occasion prophesied concerning the Jewish nation, which was nearing its downfall, is history. But just as clearly" the later tradition made of it the myth which we now read in Matthew and in Mark.

Reduced to its briefest form, the argumentation is this:

Mark XI, 12–14; 20–25 cannot be original, because there is no connection between v. 14 and 20–25.

There is no connection, because vv. 12–14 report a symbolic action and vv. 20–25 deal with the power of prayer.

If there is no connection, then vv. 20–25 may be interpolated.

If they are interpolated, then v. 14 may very well be a symbolic utterance.

That v. 14 is a symbolic utterance is therefore history, and vv. 20–25 myth.

I hope that I am not doing Professor Scholten an injustice when I call this the bare presentation of his argument, and add that it would look less strange if the professor had become aware that his entire argument in fact rests on a premise which he has precisely not stated; namely this: Mark XI, 14 must be a symbolic utterance, because Jesus cannot have done what is read in XI, 14a when taken literally. The professor is of course free to entertain this view of Jesus; but we are entitled to call this not criticism but a preconceived

opinion. What Jesus may or may not have been able to say and do must, if possible, be determined from the sources. Conversely, the condition of those sources must not be judged according to a pious but arbitrary conception one has formed of Jesus; and the professor therefore cannot prevent us from concluding: If Mark XI, 12–14; 20–25 stood in his Proto-Mark, then he has also adduced not a single proof capable of making us acknowledge that this narrative was already interpolated.

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It is not unimportant to pause for a moment over the question whether this kind of criticism actually achieves its aim. Jesus must not "curse a tree as if, disappointed at finding no fruit on it, he wished to take revenge"; but Jesus may well "prophesy that the Jewish nation has fulfilled its role in world history, that no fruit is any longer to be expected from it." In what respect, then, is the first representation more offensive than the second? We have now exchanged a Jesus who takes revenge on a fig tree because his unjust expectation of finding fruit on it was disappointed, for a Jesus who—"saviour and redeemer" though he is above all of his own people—after the first disappointments, which at that time can scarcely have been very great, cries out to his nation: from you no fruit shall ever come again, and thereby shows himself already to be blind to all those splendid fruits that were still to be expected from that same supposedly withered nation. To become angry with an inanimate object is still human; to despair of one's own people is inhumanly cruel. How distance in time clouds the eye! If nowadays a Dutchman were to say to the Dutch: From you no fruit shall ever come again! You are an extinguished or withered nation!—would he not be accused of arrogance and contempt? And can a teacher of Christian theology hope ever to win his Israelite compatriots for a Jesus who is proclaimed to them as "saviour and redeemer," and now also as prophet, when those compatriots learn that what is now presented as the oldest biography has come to light, and that this biography makes Jesus despair of the future of his own people?

With a criticism that proceeds from the principle that Jesus may not curse an unfruitful fig tree, nothing else is gained than a Jesus who at least eighteen hundred years too early signed the death sentence of the nation from which he sprang, to which he owed what was best in him, and from which his own foundation,

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Christianity, still today derives its most distinctive characteristic over against other religions.

But let us return to our actual investigation, and recall once more what it is that we are examining.

By his criticism of the first two Gospels, Prof. Scholten has found Proto-Mark, but he hesitates to call this writing original, for, as the preface shows, he wants history—that is, a Jesus who both "fits into the framework of his time" and is "exalted and great and belongs to humanity." In itself certainly a praiseworthy desire, but one that nevertheless has its dangers, since it may lead to an erroneous purification of the text of Proto-Mark. The professor, however, lays down a canon

intended to place the matter on an objective footing. Is the writing of Proto-Mark not itself already a later reworking of "an even more original sketch of evangelical history" (p. 235)? In order to determine this, Prof. Scholten wishes to investigate whether the narratives and texts in this writing are so interconnected that they give the impression of having been composed originally according to a single plan, by a single hand, or whether a later interpolating hand can also be detected here. The legitimacy of this canon does not, in my view, appear to be free from serious objection. "One hand, one plan" need not necessarily go together. A chronicle, or a chronicle-like writing, can very well be the work of a single hand and yet show not the slightest trace of a plan. It may well have been the plan of that one hand to have no plan. If Dr. Scholten's canon were sound, it would have to be established—which in the present case is not established—that the most original Gospel narrative, the true Proto-Mark, was worked out according to a single plan. But let us see the professor at work.

Mark 3:22–30 (the discussion concerning Jesus' alleged alliance with the devil) is first in line. These verses are said to be an interpolation because they disrupt the natural

course of the narrative, which begins in verse 21 and is continued in verse 31. "Disrupt" is too strong a word. If a writer first reports that Jesus' relatives set out to seize him—thus not yet having arrived (v. 21)—then in the meantime relates a conversation between Jesus and the scribes (vv. 22–30), and then continues in verse 31, "Then his brothers and his mother came," one may say that everything has not been arranged so as to place the connection in the clearest possible light (as we attempted to do with our "in the meantime"), but it is an exaggeration to say that "the natural course of the narrative" is decisively broken. Mother and brothers still needed time to reach Jesus.

Mark 4:12–35. Verse 12 ("so that seeing they may see and not perceive," etc.) "cannot be original. Jesus did not choose that form in order to keep the teaching of the kingdom esoteric and hidden from the people." First of all, how does the professor know this? But then: that is not the question; the question is whether Proto-Mark intended it that way. He did not intend it that way, the professor says, because from verse 11 it appears that Jesus chose the parabolic form "because that form was the most suitable (for the people) to make the truth understood." The conclusion therefore is: "As original as verses 10 and 11 appear, so little is this the case with verse 12." I cannot agree with this, and rather think that whoever regards verse 11 as original must also regard verse 12 as original, since they say exactly the same thing. Verse 11: "To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but to those outside everything comes in parables." If now parables, as Scholten wishes, were "the best form to make the truth understood to those outside"—which "truth," since there is no twofold truth, must nevertheless be the hidden truth of the kingdom—then there is absolutely no contradiction here; then we could paraphrase verse 11 as follows: To you, my

disciples, it has been given to understand the mystery of the kingdom, but to those outside it has likewise been given, namely through the parables that I relate to them. Disciples and outsiders would then stand on exactly the same level. That this cannot be the intention appears from verse 10, which Scholten himself considers original: “And when he was alone, those around him with the twelve asked him about the parables.” Jesus then explains a parable to them. But before he does so, he gives the reason for his willingness: to them it was granted to understand the meaning (the mystery) of Jesus’ parables; to the crowd it was not; they had to content themselves with the outward story. The parables are therefore—precisely according to verses 10 and 11—so little “the most suitable form” for making the truth understood by the multitude that Jesus even had to explain them to his disciples. A highly suitable form for the multitude indeed—one that even proves insufficient for the Twelve! Had Jesus not expected so much lack of understanding in his disciples? Did they disappoint him? Then, having now been disillusioned about the suitability of the parabolic form for the people, he might well have called the people back in order to let them too share in the privilege of explanation. But no—he does not think of that. It is evidently welcome to him (v. 10) that the disciples ask about the parables, for to them it has been given to understand his parables (v. 11). That multitude outside, on the other hand, must hear and not understand (v. 12). I believe I have thereby shown that verse 11 presupposes verse 12 and verse 12 presupposes verse 11. The question here, too, is not whether such an esoteric teacher appeals to us, but whether we may remove him by an unmotivated critical operation.

I must still clarify the strange plural in verse 10. It means: the disciples asked him about the meaning of all the parables that, according to Mark 4:2, had already been communicated to them by Jesus, of which verses 3–8

give us a sample. The plural in verse 10 may very well be a reflection of the plural in verse 2. But may we translate “ask about the parables” as “ask about the meaning of the parables”? Prof. Scholten himself gives us the right to do so. For he writes: “The disciples had asked, verse 10, about the parables, i.e. not about the meaning of the parable of the sower—in which case there would have had to stand the parable.” But if, according to Prof. Scholten, “asking about the parable” means asking about the meaning of the parable, then “asking about the parables” must mean asking about the meaning of the parables. And if we then have in verse 2 a plural to which the plural with definite article in verse 10 can refer back, I do not see that anything obscure remains here—still less when we observe that Luke (8:9, “What may this parable be?”) has understood the accusative *parabolēn* in exactly the same way. The professor does say in his work *Het Paulinisch Evangelie* (p. 223): “Luke misunderstood the text,” but he has remained indebted to us for proof.

Thus the “contradiction” between verse 13a and verse 11 also disappears, as does the “strangeness” of 13b. If verse 2 can mean that Jesus had already presented more than one parable before verse 10 on this occasion, then his plural “How will you understand all the parables?” can refer to the parables he still intended to present. But above all, the professor’s objection to verses 14–20 also falls away: the explanation of the parable of the sower. “The

explanation of the parable that follows cannot originally have stood in connection with what precedes, where, according to verse 11, the parabolic form was chosen by Jesus for the sake of the as yet unreceptive multitude, and the disciples, in possession of the mystery of the kingdom of God, are supposed also without that form to understand the truth." This line of reasoning, however, amounts to the following: verses 14–20 must be an interpolation, since the

disciples, according to verse 11, themselves understand the mystery of the kingdom of God and the parable was not for them. But that, according to verse 11, the parable was not for them, I can only know once I know that verses 14–20 are interpolated. In investigating whether they are interpolated, I may therefore not already assume that the parables were not intended for the disciples. That is precisely the point at issue in the exegesis of verse 11. If I read the narrative without suspicion, then on the basis of the fact that verses 10–12 are immediately followed by verses 14–20, I say: the parables were both for the disciples and for the multitude, but the explanation only for the disciples. If one wishes to deprive me of this basis, one must, independently of the point at issue, make it probable that verses 14–20 are interpolated—for it speaks for itself that this cannot be done by saying: the parables were not for the disciples.

The professor has in fact attempted the former, with the help of the following two arguments. First: "Note further how in this pericope, contrary to Mark's custom, and here in contrast to Matthew, the plural occurs (see 4:15–20)."

Mark is thus supposed to have "the custom" of using the singular instead of the plural. But how can the professor know this? With regard to such a matter one can speak of custom only when someone's use of the singular has something forced or affected about it, not when someone uses the singular where the plural would be wholly inappropriate. If we were to read in an author several sentences such as "there once was a king," we would naturally not think of saying: the man has the habit of using the singular.

The professor has greatly obliged us by providing, in *Het Oudste Evangelie* as in his other works of the same kind, what one might call the grammatical and lexicographical statistics of the

New Testament writings he treated. I nevertheless permit myself to recall how dangerous a purely empirical statistics always remains. On pages 174–176 we find a list under the title *Singular and Plural*. Such a list, which shows us in parallel passages from the first two Gospels where Matthew and where Mark differ in their use of number, is of course an invaluable possession—but only if we make proper use of it.

The list consists of 49 parallel passages. It must first be noted that the list does not tell us where Mark and where Matthew use either the singular or the plural, but only where this has been done by the best copyist known to us of the works of Mark and Matthew [1]. With that copyist alone are we concerned here. Tomorrow a manuscript or a reading may be discovered, or a better recension made, that renders the list incomplete or wholly unreliable. This should not be

regarded as a purely abstract possibility. Dr. Scholten's *Oudste Evangelie* appeared in 1868. At that time he could write that Mark 3:35 has an unusual plural (*thelēmata*) and Mark 13:32 the singular *angelos*; likewise that Matthew 10:10; 14:19; 15:35; 19:21; 24:18 have the plural. Had a new edition of his work appeared in 1875, or perhaps already earlier—I have no opportunity to verify it—and had the author then followed the *editio academica octava* of the New Testament according to Tischendorf's recension, he would have found himself obliged to alter his statements at the seven cited passages and thereby to acknowledge that the alleged

[1] "And thus it comes about," says the conservative Tischendorf himself, "that we seem to have restored for ourselves—by preferring the following readings above all others—the authority of the Codex Sinaiticus and the Vaticanus and similar manuscripts: if not the very writing of the apostles themselves, then at least, for the most part, that which in the second century was regarded among Christians as apostolic."

peculiarity of an evangelist was, in seven cases—thus in exactly one-seventh of the list—a scribal error, a circumstance well suited to make us think twice before writing an assertion such as that found on page 137: "Mark 3:35: *thelēmata*. Unusual plural. Matthew corrects *thelēma*."

But let us now come to the list itself. It can be analysed in the following way. Eight times "the crowd"—entirely natural when the writer does not wish to speak of "groups or caravansaries."

Five times the singular: Mark 4:4, 5, 7. Here indeed a better stylist would have used a plural; but once the singular had been used in verse 4, everything else had to remain singular as well. These five cases therefore count as only one.

Mark 4:5, "the rocky ground"—not unnatural after the singular of verse 4.

Verse 11, "the mystery"—entirely correct if the mystery of the kingdom means precisely the meaning of the parables, which here cannot be denied a priori. "Mystery" in the singular here then has the same force as in Revelation 1:20.

Verse 39, "Jesus rebuked the wind"—entirely natural; the singular in verse 41 may have arisen from a copyist's error, his eye having been on verse 39; in Matthew perhaps the reverse occurred.

Mark 6:8, "He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff"—entirely natural; the singular does not exclude the plural here, any more than when I tell someone: take a blanket with you on your journey. "No money in the belt"—just as natural.

Verse 39, "on the grass"—not surprising.

Mark 7:20, "what comes out"—here the plural would be better; "that defiles" is a consequence of the singular in the

first part of the sentence; the two cases therefore count as only one.

Verse 22, “slander”—neutral usage; but since the writer has missed the opportunity to put the first three vices in the singular, this passage—if it really represents the original reading—shows that Mark was no more attached to the singular than to the plural. Mark 9:5, “Let us make tabernacles,” confirms this.

Mark 11:25; 13:32, “in heaven”—neutral usage; 12:25 has “in the heavens.”

Mark 13:16, “his garment”—neutral usage; does not exclude the plural, any more than Matthew 9:16 = Mark 2:21 or Hebrews 1:11 and especially Sirach 29:21. How little the number matters here is abundantly shown by a comparison of Mark 5:28 and 6:56.

Of the 49 texts, therefore, exactly two remain in which the use of the singular by the best copyist known to us of Mark is in any way remarkable. May one then infer from this that a writing—moreover one so small in scope as the Gospel of Mark—had the habit of using the singular? Of course not. But then Dr. Scholten’s first argument for the interpolated character of Mark 4:14–20 also falls away, all the more since the use of the plural in that pericope is in itself nothing surprising.

The second argument is as follows: “That Jesus should have explained his parables is highly unnatural.” We may readily concede this, but from it there would follow only that Proto-Mark reported something unnatural and thus unbelievable. If it followed from this that verses 14–20, which report this unnatural thing, are an interpolation, it would first have to be established that Proto-Mark cannot report anything unnatural. What does one know of that, so long as we are still searching for Proto-Mark? The hypothesis from which this criticism

unconsciously proceeds here emerges in a striking way. For the critic it is already established that the oldest Gospel cannot narrate anything unnatural; for if this were not established, it would make no sense at all to derive from the unnatural character of a narrative in Proto-Mark an argument against the authenticity of that narrative.

With regard to verses 21–35 we find the same manner of argumentation repeated. “Verses 21–25 are misplaced… the sayings here mentioned are connected only by the sound of the words. Verses 33 and 34 suddenly presuppose the presence of the crowds, who according to verse 10 had already departed.” All this may be conceded, but it does not prove what it is meant to prove. Who tells us that Proto-Mark, whom we do not yet know in this investigation, was not a careless writer?

The same objection applies to Mark 6:17–29, the third interpolation according to Scholten. When he writes: “the scene, verses 24–28, appears more theatrical than historical,” one may equally well infer from this that the original sketch already included some unhistorical reports.

The same holds, though to a lesser degree, for the fourth interpolation, Mark 7:1–23. Proto-Mark may have been just as clumsy as a later redactor.

The fifth pericope, Mark 8:1–9, is naturally condemned as a duplicate of Mark 6:35–44, and probably the sixth, Mark 8:14, 16–21, as well—although, strictly speaking, only verse 20 is suspect.

But our criticism, as I see it, regains its rights in relation to the alleged seventh interpolation, Mark 8:38–9:1. The professor finds in Matthew (p. 50) "a mechanical doctrine of retribution, which does not fit the purely ethical notion that someone… loses his true life and brings irreparable damage upon himself (Matt. 16:26). The text of Mark (v. 38) here sounds more appropriate: whoever denied Jesus would also by him… not be acknowledged

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as his own." On page 241, however, even this verse 38 of Mark is no longer found so appropriate, since here too, "just as in Matthew, reference is made to the judgment, with Jesus being regarded as the Messiah. Both evangelists here explain, each in his own way, a purely ethical warning of Jesus (verses 34–37 are meant) against the dying away of spiritual life in the service of sin, by the punishment that awaits the ungodly at the messianic judgment—as if the two were the same." On this basis, Mark 8:38–9:1 would be of later date, etc.

I cannot agree with this judgment. It rests on a circular argument. If it is already established that the incriminated verses are an interpolation—in this case a gloss explaining what precedes—then it is also established that verses 36 and 37 contain a purely ethical warning; but if this is not yet established—and that is precisely what we are investigating—then I have absolutely no right to regard verses 36 and 37 as such and on that basis to consider verse 38 to be such an explanation. The point at issue is here decided in advance by the criticism. If verses 38–9:1 are not an interpolation, then verses 36–37 cannot of course be regarded as a purely ethical presentation either; then, as a good exegete, I must explain: it is not advisable to choose the preservation of life over the denial of Jesus, for this results in the loss of one's soul (v. 37; cf. 10:45). That soul must indeed be lost, since it will be denied by Jesus (as one not redeemed by him) on the coming day of his return for judgment (9:1). Prove to us that 8:38–9:1 are interpolated, and the exegesis of what precedes will be different. But without making oneself guilty of a circular argument, one cannot do this by assuming a priori, for what precedes, only that exegesis whose plausibility can be shown only after the removal of the incriminated words as an interpolation.

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Here too the professor's criticism misses its mark. By his critical operation we should then, in the actual Proto-Mark, not have a Jesus who himself announces an impending Messianic judgment, but — a purely ethical conception. If we now examine that purely ethical conception more closely, we find a Jesus who allows himself to be called Messiah by Peter and who wishes to keep his Messianic dignity secret, but does not deny it (vv.

29–30); who explains that Messianic title by his own suffering and death, yes, but also at the same time predicts his own resurrection (v. 31); and who calls Peter no less than Satan, because the latter has a more earthly conception of Messianic dignity (vv. 32–33); who then summons the crowd to himself and now, in the presence of all, calls the doing of the good a following of his person, and promises true preservation of life to everyone who, for his sake and for the sake of the gospel, undergoes martyrdom (in "losing one's life" toward the middle, and "saving one's life" at the beginning of v. 35, *life* must mean the same thing both times: bodily preservation is thus set over against death, here martyrdom). In this entire conception there is much that is beautiful from an ethical point of view, but I do not find it purely ethical. It does not seem purely ethical to me to assign such decisive value to one's own person and to martyrdom for the sake of our person. From the over-tension that speaks here to the expectation expressed in v. 38 and IX, 1, the distance does not seem to me insurmountable. — Let my intention here and elsewhere be well understood. I absolutely do not assert that Jesus of Nazareth spoke as Proto-Mark has him speak; I do not even know whether a Proto-Mark ever existed; I am dealing here only with a question of method; I raise my objections against the method of Professor Scholten as against that of modern criticism in general; and one of those objections is this, that its result, even if it were correct, is for it so little satisfying.

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With regard to the eighth interpolation, Mark IX, 41–50, the professor's arguments strike me as convincing. It is not likely that an original writing contained so much that is genuinely incoherent.

Of the ninth, Mark X, 33–34, I cannot concede this, because even the most original sketch is later than Jesus' death, and the first author could therefore just as well as an interpolator have allowed himself to be tempted to a *vaticinium post eventum*. There is nothing to be said here.

The tenth is Mark X, 45. "As a ransom for many" must be interpolated because "the conception of his death (p. 243) as a ransom is later dogmatic reflection, which the Synoptists will not yet have known." Now one might point to Mark VIII, 37, which, especially now that the spuriousness of v. 38 has not been demonstrated, but also in itself, is quite unintelligible unless it means: how could anyone give a ransom for his soul? Therefore join yourself to Jesus, follow him. Jesus is here already the one who redeems souls, and consequently can very well, according to X, 45, have "come to give his own life as a ransom for many." But in addition we read Matthew XXVI, 28: "this is my blood … which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." The professor, however, does not permit us to appeal to this text. He refers us first to p. 107. There he says: "Matthew spoiled, under the influence of a later dogmatic idea, this beautiful thought (Jesus' religion a covenant established in his blood) by the addition 'for the forgiveness of sins,' as if Jesus had here wished to teach that his death was meant to serve, as a sin-offering, to obtain forgiveness of sins from God." This is nothing other than an assertion, not a proof. How can the professor possibly know what Jesus here or elsewhere wished to teach? He

then refers us further to p. 120. On that page I find a list entitled dogmatic glosses, among which the expression “for the forgiveness of sins” is included,

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and once again we are referred to p. 107. This therefore gets us no further.

His second argument is this: otherwise Mark XIV, 24 reads differently, where “my blood poured out for many, for the benefit of many,” indicates nothing more than that Jesus would die out of love and for the benefit of many. I can perceive no contradiction here. “For the benefit of many” is so general an expression that it determines nothing about the manner in which Jesus’ death would be beneficial. That death was supremely beneficial if it was to serve as a ransom. And then, even if there were a contradiction, by what standard would one choose between the two texts? If there really is a contradiction, then one could with equal right say: Mark XIV, 24 is interpolated, for it is far too weak after X, 45. Finally: even if the professor had here carried the point and proved that the historical Jesus never presented his death as an atoning death, now that he already finds that “dogmatic idea” in Paul (Rom. III, 24–25; p. 243), his proof would still avail him nothing for the question that occupies us here, which is no other than this: did the genuine Proto-Mark write X, 45? For if it is established that (1) Jesus did not speak that word, and (2) Paul knew that dogmatic idea, then the conclusion is not illegitimate: Proto-Mark could just as well have known that idea, either independently or from Paul. — It seems to me that there are two questions that the professor does not sufficiently keep apart: *what is history with regard to Jesus*, and *what does Proto-Mark teach?* He constantly speaks to us of what is historically more or less probable or natural with respect to Jesus. But at this point that is completely irrelevant to us. We want only to find the genuine Proto-Mark. Whether we shall give credence to its reports is a matter for later concern. Only if we feared, for some reason, that reports such as those of Proto-Mark would have to be regarded as descriptions of the historical Jesus, could it matter to us to

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ensure that those reports did not turn out too strange and did not prevent us from “honouring in Jesus Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God,” as the professor confesses to do on p. XVI.

A third argument for the spuriousness of Mark X, 45 the professor finds in the circumstance that “this dogmatic conception of Jesus’ death does not fit well into a context where one would at most expect an appeal to Jesus’ death as an example of self-sacrificing love.” — But if it is true that our souls need a ransom — and the author of X, 45 holds this to be true — how could that self-sacrificing love of Jesus be shown more strikingly than by the fact that Jesus, by his death, wished to pay that ransom? How subjective everything is here! That Jesus establishes a covenant, his religion, through his death, Professor Scholten finds “a beautiful thought” (p. 107). But that Jesus, through his death as through a sin-offering, obtained forgiveness of our sins from God: Matthew, who

teaches this, has “spoiled” this beautiful thought. This is, in my opinion, no question of beauty, no question of taste. The only question that belongs here is this: *must it be accepted as truth that forgiveness of sins was to be obtained through Jesus' death?* Besides, something can also be objected to the beauty of this thought. If Scholten finds ugly the conception of a God who needs Jesus' death as a sin-offering, there will be others who take little pleasure in the conception of a world created by God in which true religion can be established only through the death of the purest among the children of men. Victim of God's avenging justice, victim of God's ordering of the world — we gladly leave the choice to Professor Scholten, but one of the two Jesus must then nevertheless have been!

Since Mark XI, 20–25 was already dealt with earlier, we now come to the final pericope, Mark XIII, 9b–31.

We need not, however, dwell on it long. The argument here too is derived from incoherence, but is somewhat weakened by Professor Scholten's own concession, according to which this “pericope contains fragments of an original and self-contained apocalyptic piece.” For who will say whether the author of the original sketch did not himself incorporate it into his work? That those fragments do not form a good whole either among themselves or with his narrative can just as well be the result of that author's thoughtlessness as of later interpolation. Had the professor succeeded in convincing us of the existence of interpolations, and did we then, after subtracting those interpolations, retain a coherent whole, the matter would be different. But now that, with a few insignificant exceptions, we have not been able, following the professor, to discover interpolations in his Proto-Mark, we naturally cannot say with him that lack of coherence in this final pericope renders it unworthy to be a component of the original sketch. On the grounds adduced by the professor (cf. p. 250), therefore, there exists for us no “reason to believe that the writing of Proto-Mark itself had already been subjected to interpolations.” And even if such a reason were present, still — as we believe we have shown — this would not yet require acknowledgment of “the possibility that other pieces as well, whose mythical character does not accord well with the otherwise sober-historical content of the Gospel of Mark, were not yet present in the oldest historical sketch.” We have repeatedly seen that even this “oldest historical sketch,” as the professor has delimited it, is very far from having a “sober-historical content.”

We would scarcely need any further proof of this than the little that the professor leaves us of Mark XIII. Of the 37 verses, 25 have fallen away. In the twelve

that remain we retain a Jesus who, although truly human and nothing more, ventures a prediction concerning the fate of the temple (v. 2), which of course cannot be equated with applying to a particular building the general law of transience; who in any case, even if vv.

1 and 2 were not genuine, toward the end of his life still made possible, among his closest disciples, the question: “tell us when these things will be” (v. 4); who declares himself the Messiah by assuring that false Christs will come “in his name” (v. 6); who reads into the future and assures regarding a specific moment in that future that it is not yet the end (v. 7); who thereafter, though in contradiction to this assurance concerning what must have been unknown to him as well, finds it necessary to say that he no more than the angels in heaven knows what no mortal human can know, and while saying this calls himself alongside the Father “the Son” (v. 32). I ask with some frankness whether we are here on “sober-historical ground,” and whether there is any probability in favour of the idea that a writing which lets a Jewish teacher, however exalted, speak in such a way, without expressing any astonishment about it, originally contained no mythical elements whatsoever.

Result: no noteworthy interpolations have been demonstrated in Proto-Mark; and even if they had been, the writing of Proto-Mark would not thereby have acquired a sober historical character.

But perhaps this latter conclusion is premature. The professor has at least devoted a separate part of his investigation to “the historical value of the Gospel according to Mark.” We have already examined one or another canon employed by the professor in determining that historical value. There is yet another that must occupy our attention (p. 272):

“If all these words (Matt. XII, 39, 41, 42; Mark XI, 28–33;

Matt. XI, 6; Mark VIII, 12) are genuine, then the historical Jesus, however great deeds of philanthropy he also performed, equipped above others with the ‘gift of healing,’ was no thaumaturge or miracle-worker and did not wish to be one.” [As to that gift of healing, various texts give the professor “grounds to establish as historically certain that Jesus cast out demons and performed various other healings.”] “In such a state of affairs it is unthinkable that the reports concerning the enormous miracles, even according to Proto-Mark, performed by Jesus, would be of the same date as the pieces whose historical character is beyond reasonable doubt. Had Jesus performed such deeds, it is historically inexplicable how his wonder-loving contemporaries could still complain that he performed no miracles (Matt. XII, 39; Mark VIII, 12), and equally incomprehensible how Jesus could have warned his miracle-seeking contemporaries not to take offence at him (Matt. XI, 6). If Jesus did not perform those miracles, then all this becomes clear. What Jesus performed was not sufficient for the miracle-lust of the Jews; others did that as well, and therefore he was, in the estimation of those who desired a miracle-man, not the Messiah.”

Against this canon several objections can be raised.

1°. The professor posits a dilemma: if certain sayings of Jesus are genuine, then the miracle narratives have no historical character. Let us grant the dilemma for once; what follows from it? In my view, absolutely nothing. For I can just as well reverse it and say: if those narratives are historical, then those sayings are not genuine. I cannot arrange my choice here according to a personal preference for a miracle-working or non-miracle-working Jesus. If one already declares the miracle narratives, as miracle narratives, to be untrustworthy, then one may indeed find confirmation of this view in the sayings in question; but as long as I leave that trustworthiness

undecided, I may not use the sayings as a weapon against the narratives.

2°. Even if I were allowed to do so, far more would follow from it than the professor draws from it. He says: if Matthew XII, 39 is genuine, then for example Mark IV, 35–41 is not historical. If this inference is correct, then the following must be so as well: if Matthew XII, 39 is genuine, then Matthew XI, 20–23 is not genuine—yet the professor (p. 26) is convinced of the authenticity of these latter three verses. Indeed, Matthew XII, 39 teaches that Jesus categorically refuses to show any "sign" to "this evil and adulterous generation." His preaching, more impressive than that of Jonah; his wisdom, loftier than that of Solomon, ought to be fully sufficient for them. And yet I read Matthew XI, 21, 22, 23: a *woe* pronounced over Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, because these cities had not yet repented at that time, as even Tyre and Sidon would have done had the same "powers" of Jesus "been done" in those places as those of which the former had been witnesses. According to Prof. Scholten, those powers were exorcisms and other healings by means of the gift of healing. A conversion, already at that time, of those three cities solely through the influence of his preaching, Jesus could hardly have expected—and indeed he did not expect it. He judged that such conversion would already then have been possible because Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum had seen powers which would have brought even the inhabitants of two pagan cities to repentance and remorse.

But if the professor assures us that "Jesus was not alone in performing such works" (p. 270), that "the disciples of the Pharisees and persons who did not belong to his disciples also performed powers and cast out demons," indeed that "even false prophets" were capable of this, then we obtain a troubling picture of Jesus' character. He would then have demanded that three entire cities—after having seen from him what they could, so to speak, see every day from

anyone else, even from false prophets—should suddenly have converted to him; and when this did not occur, he pronounces woe upon them and announces to them nothing less than that they "will be cast down to hell." This is—unless Jesus was exceedingly unreasonable, an assumption which the professor elsewhere consistently excludes—utterly inconceivable. Jesus stood over against the Pharisees; Jesus and his disciples performed no other powers than the Pharisees or their disciples; and then it would be blamed upon someone—no, upon three entire

cities—that on seeing those entirely identical powers they did not convert from the teaching of the Pharisees to the teaching of Jesus, indeed that those cities would sink into hell for this!

The saying Matthew XI, 21 ff. must therefore include much more, and under "powers" much more must be understood than what, according to the professor, men of the most diverse tendencies could do and actually did at that time. But then it is also difficult to reconcile with Matthew XII, 39. How so? Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum have seen such powers as were indeed infallible signs of the divinity of Jesus' mission; those cities can and may be "reproached" for not converting en masse upon seeing those signs (Matthew XI, 20 ff.); and yet Jesus will have refused every sign to the evil and adulterous generation! (Matthew XII, 39). This latter verse excludes the former just as much, if Prof. Scholten remains faithful to his own canon.

Although in Matthew XI, 20 ff. the "powers" must therefore be much more than demon-expulsion and other healings, we do not even need this exegesis to bring out the conflict of these verses with Matthew XII, 39. Whatever those "powers" may have been, in any case Jesus himself must have regarded those powers as infallible signs of the divinity of his mission. Otherwise his reproach would have no meaning. For the inhabitants of Capernaum had by

no means remained insensitive to the only thing that followed from witnessing Jesus' powers, as soon as those powers were *not* to be interpreted as signs of divine, infallible, and exclusive authority. Highly instructive here is the comparison with Matthew IX, 8, the last passage that speaks of Capernaum before Matthew XI, 20. There one reads (for IX, 1 in connection with VIII, 18 and 5 proves that we are here in Capernaum) that the crowds, after having witnessed the healing of the paralytic, "marveled and glorified God, who had given such authority to *men*." A completely correct conclusion. Had Jesus done there what others there on the spot had also already done before and alongside him, then nothing whatsoever would have followed from the observation of Jesus' powers other than what IX, 8 expresses. If now nothing intervenes between IX, 8 and XI, 20, and Jesus then in the latter passage predicts for the inhabitants of that same Capernaum a descent into hell, then he must reproach them for having derived from his powers nothing more and nothing entirely different than a glorification of God because of the power granted by God to human beings; then he must have believed that something followed from his powers not concerning God and human beings, but concerning himself personally. In that case, however, he interpreted his powers as signs of his mission. And why then refuse a sign in Matthew XII, 39? Moreover, Jesus was, according to the professor's own assumption, obliged to perform a special sign. If he once upheld the principle that powers could be signs (and he upholds this in Matthew XI, 20 ff.), and if in his time all kinds of people performed the powers described by Prof. Scholten, then Jesus too—if something special concerning his person was to follow from his powers—had to perform a special sign. To that, I repeat, Jesus was then obliged vis-à-vis his rational fellow human beings. That Jesus upheld this principle—powers are signs—requires

no further proof; otherwise verse 20 would have had to read: “Then he began to reproach the cities in which he had preached most impressively, because they had not repented.” “What Jesus did was not sufficient for the *wonder-craving* of the Jews; others did this as well,” writes the professor, who has little sympathy for the Israel of Jesus’ time. We reply: of course it was not sufficient for them, since it was not sufficient for Jesus that his compatriots drew the consequences that could be drawn only so long as Jesus did nothing more than what others also did. And when the professor writes that Jesus’ powers were not sufficient for the *wonder-craving* of the Jews, a more impartial view, in my opinion, would rather testify that those ordinary powers were not sufficient for the *loyalty* of the Jews toward their in many respects excellent leaders, whom they could not abandon for Jesus if he, as the professor wishes, did nothing extraordinary that guaranteed his divine mission.

How little exegetical right one moreover has to understand “powers” exclusively as healings is abundantly shown by Mark VI, 5: “he could do no power there; but he … healed a few sick persons.” With respect to performing powers, healing here is something very subordinate.

There is therefore no escape: if Jesus did nothing extraordinary, then without great injustice he could not demand the sudden conversion of three entire cities; and if he did do something extraordinary, then he also at times performed the signs which he refuses in Matthew XII, 39.

3°. The distinction between “enormous” and non-enormous “miracles” is unphilosophical. “Without doubt,” writes the professor (p. 269), “Jesus healed bodily diseases, not by any medicine, but by virtue of his gift of healing, with which he was equipped above others (p. 272),” but “a thaumaturge he was not and did not wish to be.” This is no contradiction. On page XI (in the Preface) the professor has the Supreme Being say: “I cannot

make square circles, make donkeys speak, or create baked fish out of nothing,” although the professor knows absolutely nothing of this, since God has never and nowhere said that He could not do this. The “experience of the centuries,” to which the professor appeals, testifies nothing whatsoever about this theological truth; it testifies only that it does not happen and cannot happen according to the laws known to us, but in no way unfolds the dogma of God’s omnipotence. Nevertheless, if I were to assume, in spite of all well-established experience, that a human being can be equipped with the gift of healing and thus by virtue of possessing that gift can successfully say to a paralytic: “Rise, take up your bed, and go to your house” (Matthew IX, 6), then philosophically I would also raise no objection to the “enormous” miracle of creating baked bread and baked fish out of nothing. A logic which says: without doubt Jesus made a lame man walk at his command, but which at the same time relegates the multiplication of bread and fish to the realm of myth, I do not understand—least of all when that healing and that multiplication are reported in the same type of writings.

4°. But, the professor will say, that is not my logic either. Matthew IX, 6 I do not regard as historical; see p. 283. Indeed, that fact is denied there. What then remains of that gift of healing, and specifically of the “powers” which, according to Matthew XI, 23, occurred precisely in

Capernaum, when in the end every particular application of that gift is rejected by the professor? And that seems to be what it comes down to:

Mark I, 23–28; the healing of the demoniac: Christian symbolism (p. 281).

Mark I, 40–45; the healing of the leper: not historical (p. 282).

Mark II, 3–12; the bodily healing of the paralytic: not historical (p. 283).

Mark 3:1–6; the sudden healing of a withered hand: not historical (p. 285).

Mark 3:7b, 8; 10–12; various miracles also by touch: they perhaps did not stand in the original sketch (p. 287).

Mark 5:1–20; the healing of a demoniac: as it stands there, not historical (p. 289).

Mark 5:25–34; the woman with the issue of blood: this story may count as history, subject to the proviso that this woman was healed not by a power that went forth involuntarily from Jesus, nor by Jesus' will and word of power, but by "the power of her faith," and therefore proves nothing for Jesus' gift of healing (p. 293).

Mark 7:24–30; the Canaanite woman: "healing at a distance; an inconceivable miracle." And "can it be historical that Jesus praises a woman because she trusted in Jesus' physical miraculous power?" (p. 298).

Mark 7:32–37; the healing of a deaf-mute and a blind man: "this narrative bears no historical character" (p. 301), any more than 9:14–27.
Mark 10:46b–52; the blind man at Jericho: "this narrative bears no historical character, any more than the other reports concerning the healing of the blind" (p. 309).

There now remains, as a sample of special healings:

Mark 1:30–31; the healing of Simon's mother-in-law; but not by *touching* with the hand (Matthew); only by *taking* her by the hand.

It would nevertheless be important to learn how, on the basis of this narrative alone and of a few general statements, "Jesus healed the sick," the historian can have the right to say that Jesus "without doubt" performed powers and accomplished various other healings, especially when one reads p. 235: "the mythical narratives which Matthew has in common with the Gospel of Mark are to be judged by the same standard. — The original sketch which,

according to Holtzmann, will also have contained the Sermon on the Mount, has therefore not been cleansed by Prof. Scholten of its mythical components."

We now come to the professor's view concerning the Sermon on the Mount. In general his judgment is favorable, already because he considers it to be derived from the *logia kuriaka*. On p. 338 one reads: "in the canonical Matthew one finds a number of series of sayings and parables, which carry with them the inner character of authenticity." The so-called internal criticism thus seems here also, with Prof. Scholten, to be decisive. On p. 325, where "the historical value of the Gospel of Matthew will come to light," the "main content" of the Sermon on the Mount is therefore counted among the historical particulars that we owe to that Gospel, "with the exception of 5:19; 6:14, 15 and 7:22–23. This discourse," it is further assured, "contains sayings which, spoken on various occasions, were collected by Proto-Matthew, and either already by himself, or by the later redactor, artificially connected into a whole and by the latter unhistorically presented as a Sermon on the Mount." The usual result, then: framework and coherence unhistorical, some spurious components; the rest reliable, since it bears the stamp of authenticity.

As for those spurious components, in Prof. Scholten's work *The Pauline Gospel* p. 74 they are singled out. After the author has shown that the redaction in Matthew is more original than that of Luke, he continues: "In the discourse in Matthew a number of sayings are added to the original *logia* which clearly bear the character of later interpolation. Of that nature are the words Matt. 5:18, 19, as being in conflict with the fulfillment or the higher development of the law, Matt. 5:17, and with the application of this principle, Matt. 5:31, 32, 34, 38, where Jesus not merely abolishes 'one iota or tittle' of the law, but entire commandments: concerning divorce, the oath,

and retaliation. If this holds of v. 18, the same objection presses with still greater force upon the statement in v. 19, that 'whoever should relax one of these least commandments and so teach men, would be called 'the least' in the kingdom of heaven.' In these words, moreover, an antinomianism is opposed which did not exist in the days of Jesus. Nor does v. 20 fit well with vv. 18 and 19 and would, in view of the conjunction *for*, v. 20, have the reproach directed against the scribes and the Pharisees, that they taught men to disregard the commandments of the law, which is at odds with the context…. If the incriminated verses are of later origin, then it is not Jesus who speaks here, but the Jewish-Christian evangelist… has here intended Paul…. The same applies to Matthew 7:6…. In Matthew 7:15 it lies close at hand… to read a warning against the Paulinists."

The line of argument does not strike us as convincing. If the authenticity of the Sermon on the Mount were established, one might perhaps reason thus. If that discourse is perhaps a wholly free composition, then one may not derive from the lack of coherence or of historical allusions any argument to prove that the verses in which these occur must be interpolated. To name only one thing: someone was thoughtless enough to include in the same piece both 5:18 and 19 and vv. 31–34. A later redactor may have been so careless, but the original compiler may equally well have been so careless. Whether the Sermon on the Mount contains words of Jesus, or

whether it has anything to do with his teaching at all—that is the point in question, which Prof. Scholten, however, does not treat. Or rather: on the basis of a certain feeling he assumes that it will indeed be so.

Reuss does the same in his new Bible translation *La Synopse* (1876) p. 191: "There is not a line, not a word, which does not bear the stamp of originality, of absolute truth, of the most sublime conception, of the most admirable sentiment.

If anywhere the tradition which has preserved for us the memories of the passage of Jesus upon the earth carries with it certainty, proof of its fidelity, it is here indeed." How light-minded this judgment is will appear to us later. In his *Life of Jesus* (1876) p. 399 Hase speaks in the same way: "Both discourses (in Matthew and in Luke) are therefore… literarily composed… but from building blocks which bear the sharp stamp of their origin, piled one upon another like a cyclopean wall of granite blocks, on each the name-mark: Jesus of Nazareth!" Nothing but a phrase!

We need not carry our investigation of the method of the newer criticism further. Whatever great services that criticism—especially in our country through Prof. Scholten and others—has rendered us, it seems not always to remain unshakably faithful to its own principle, which is none other than that of observation and experience; and this infidelity seems to me especially to be due to its very understandable desire to arrive at a satisfying historical result concerning the presumed founder of Christianity, Jesus of Nazareth. It is good that criticism has freed itself from the old dogmatics, but it would be its ruin if it were to enter the service of a new theology and, for its benefit, had to prove the plausibility of one or another Christ-image. The investigation has not advanced far enough to give us the right already now to attempt a coherent portrayal of the life of Jesus.

As proof of this proposition I need only point to the following phenomenon. Three independent and keen-minded scholars—Scholten, Holtzmann, and Zeller—arrive at very different results when it comes to determining the principal sources for our knowledge of the historical Jesus. In his *Pauline Gospel* Scholten writes (p. VIII): "The critical investigation now completed places us in a position to treat the history

of original Christianity genetically. At the foundation of the Gospels lies the original tradition concerning Jesus' teaching and life, whose first written recording took place and was preserved partly in a collection of sayings, which in the canonical Gospel of Matthew, albeit fragmentarily, is still extant, partly in a short sketch, whose original form now appears in Deutero-Matthew, now again in Mark. From these two sources we derive the material in order to sketch the historical image of Jesus of Nazareth." The third Gospel, that of Luke, therefore does not come into consideration here for sketching the historical image of Jesus. No wonder: Luke has (p. 396) "chiefly composed his narrative from the Gospels according to Mark and Matthew." On p. 397 it

is further reported that he compiled from various sources and tried to arrange the material at his disposal as well as possible, though this did not succeed for him in many respects. Taken together, according to Prof. Scholten, these sources are: Proto-Mark, Trito-Matthew (p. 398), "other writings." The compiler at the same time redactor "did not follow the critical method of our time (p. 400)…. What was not Pauline could (according to Luke) also not have been said and done by Jesus or have happened to him. Jesus had (according to Luke) already in advance preached the Pauline Gospel by word and deed (p. 401)… the entire evangelical history was (by Luke) worked up according to the Pauline Christ-ideal and became an apology of Paulinism, and the Christ of Paul was made the Christ of history" (p. 402). As was to be expected after all this, "the writer (Luke) already stood (p. 409) at a relatively great distance in time from the scene of the events reported by him (between 90 and 138)"; and on p. 420 it is then said in so many words that "the method of Luke offers no guarantee whatsoever for the historical accuracy of his reports"

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… "For the modern biographer, therefore, the third Gospel is an unfruitful source for the historical knowledge of Jesus" (apart from a few historical particulars).

Now we have already heard that according to Holtzmann (see above) the "aggregate of precious stones, namely the discourses of Jesus, especially in Luke, is still found in its original condition." With Zeller, who will hear nothing of Holtzmann's Proto-Mark, one finds yet another representation that differs from the views of the two scholars just mentioned.

Zeller, namely, in his *Lectures and Essays of Historical Content*, second edition, p. 497, calls Luke the second oldest of the four evangelists. Even if Luke were the last of the Synoptists, he nevertheless in any case had wholly or in part the sources before him from which the other two had drawn (p. 498), so that of Luke too one could say what Prof. Scholten asserts of Matthew and Mark, namely that the original form of the primitive evangelical sketch also shines through in him, in which case one may, with equal right, use Luke as the other Synoptists—though under the same reservation—as sources for the historical image of Jesus. Concerning that original sketch the two scholars named are likewise not in agreement. While Prof. Scholten has thought he could sift out the mythical components in Proto-Mark and thus find the oldest soberly historical document, Zeller writes at the same place: "the first such presentation can, after all that has preceded, likewise only have been a derivative one and by no means a strictly documentary historical source." With this last remark even the question, with which of the Synoptists we find that "first presentation" in the relatively greatest purity, has lost much of its importance. To possess a not "strictly documentary historical source" in the relatively purest state—who

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can care very much about that? Let us nevertheless note that while Zeller is completely in agreement with Prof. Scholten in this, "that we are not to seek in Luke a faithful reproduction of the original Gospel," Zeller writes quite simply of the view according to which the Gospel of Mark

stands closest to the genuine "original Gospel" of Mark, the disciple of Peter: "I do not believe (p. 500) that it will ever succeed in truly removing the objections that stand in the way of this view." The alleged vividness of Mark, which according to Zeller has impressed many, is in the judgment of that same scholar "entirely and utterly fabricated" (p. 507), which again shows how far one can go with those subjective judgments about what can or cannot be invented. It is also noteworthy, in this same respect, that Renan believes he recognizes the eyewitness precisely in the narratives of the fourth evangelist—something which, as is known, is the worst heresy that one can confess before the tribunal of the newer criticism, and an assumption of which Zeller does not hesitate to say: "it has become a complete scientific impossibility"; while Zeller in the same breath testifies that "features in which the literary invention is so palpable as in the unsewn tunic of Christ must serve Renan outright as proof of the narrator's eyewitness character."

Such experiences are eminently suited to cause this whole kind of criticism—I mean this reliance on impressions of credibility and authenticity—to be regarded as still impermissible at present. How can I place any trust in such impressions, how can I therefore attach the least value to them, when I find them so different among equally competent investigators? When a man like Renan says: here I taste an eyewitness, and a man like Zeller says at the same place: here I find palpable invention, then the only lawful conclusion is: Renan and Zeller are speaking about matters

of which they know nothing. For what can or cannot be invented—we possess as yet no general law that decides this.

II

We now wish to dwell with some thoroughness on one of the very latest works that have appeared on the evangelical history: *Das Leben Jesu in urkundlicher Darstellung. Eine kritische Bearbeitung des Evangeliums nach Marcus, Matthaeus u. Lucas mit Einleitung und Erläuterungen von Carl Wittichen*, Jena, Hermann Dufft, 1876. The author begins his book—which likewise proceeds from the well-known critical principles of modern theology—with a paragraph entitled "the historical foundation of the life of Jesus," in which he brings together everything that occurs outside the ecclesiastical and apocryphal writings concerning Jesus and his first followers. He wishes to start from the emergence of the Christian community in the Roman world, and to supplement what he can learn of this with the reports of the earliest Christian witnesses concerning the life of Jesus and the influence that proceeded from him, as well as with such documents about the faith, the life, and the condition of earliest Christianity as will give us the right to draw inferences or make suppositions concerning the person and activity of Jesus. By means of all this the author hopes to be placed in a position to arrive at a well-grounded judgment about the historical content of our first three Gospels.

The report of Tacitus, *Annales* 15.44, naturally comes up first. It is regarded as credible, even though it was entirely unknown to Seneca. It nevertheless suffers from internal improbability. "The great fire of Rome in 64 was ascribed by a part of public opinion to Nero. Then Nero designated as the arsonists those whom one usually calls Christians and who

were hated because of acts that displayed their contempt for the state religion." Is this not sheer nonsense? The two assertions must, according to the author's intention, be taken as connected with one another. The connection, however, is entirely imaginary. If Nero had such a reputation that one suspected him of arson, what advantage could it bring him to shift the suspicion onto others? It benefited him, according to Tacitus' own testimony, so little that when the Christians succumbed under the most severe tortures, they aroused general sympathy, since "they had to die not for the common good, but for the satisfaction of the murderous lust of a single man." On the other hand, if Nero felt himself powerful enough to set fire to certain quarters of his city and to put to death people of whom the crowd acknowledged that their death was not demanded by the common good, how could he then attach so much weight to what public opinion did or did not ascribe to him? If one says that he wished to provide a target for the discontent that the fire had caused, a diversion for the people's resentment, and for that purpose fixed attention on people who were already hated because of their blasphemous behavior, one still remains obliged to explain how those unpopular Christians suddenly became objects of the crowd's pity, and above all: how that crowd suddenly arrived at the insight that the public good absolutely did not demand the death of those blasphemers. — In the second place, one does not understand why, if the Christians had indeed long been guilty of *flagitia*, and this was so well known that

they were universally hated, Nero had to wait for such a specific occasion in order to punish them. Could a Roman emperor not strike criminals against the religion of the State without first accusing them of something else which, judging from the rumor that

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had spread about Nero and from the feeling that took hold of the spectators during their tortures, everyone knew that they had not done?

Tacitus then relates that the name *Christians* is derived from Christus, who was put to death under Pontius Pilate, and continues: the execrable superstition, suppressed for the moment, nevertheless broke out again, not only in Judea, the birthplace of this calamity, but also in the capital, where everything that is abominable and shameful from all sides comes together and finds adherents. From where did Tacitus know these particulars: the momentary suppression of this superstition, its execrable character? Why seize this opportunity to brand Rome as the gathering place of all sorts of villains? The circumstance that an Eastern superstition had found adherents in Rome was surely not such an unheard-of fact that it required explanation. Taken literally, Tacitus moreover says that the Christian superstition had also broken out again in Rome. — Thirdly, we learn that first those were arrested who made confession, then a great number of people on the denunciation of the former. Did the former make confession after they had already been arrested? Did they become the informers of their brethren? — But the most remarkable point is yet to come. This great number of people is “condemned, not on account of the charge brought against them,” but *odio generis humani convicti*, translated by some as “convicted of hatred toward the human race,” by others as “in order to make them hated by the human race,” or: “because they were hated by the human race.” Hatred of mankind? But is someone convicted of that before a court of law? In order to make them hated? That was poorly calculated, for one indeed made them objects of pity. And what did it matter to Nero whether one hated a sect? Enough that the

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punishment inspired dread of their *flagitia*. Because of hatred by the human race? A strange exaggeration! Finally: they die amid the mockery of the people, and nevertheless they arouse sympathy—this, at least, seems to be the meaning of the conclusion, insofar as it can be understood.

So long as a fragment occurring in the work of a historian like Tacitus gives rise to such questions and difficulties, one cannot simply regard it as a historical report, and the suspicion is justified that we are here dealing with a narrative of Christian origin. Then everything awkward in the account becomes clear. The Christians naturally knew precisely that Christus had died under Pontius Pilate. They had an interest in presenting it in such a way as if the emperor had had to wait for a special occasion in order to strike them. They found it agreeable to have Rome branded by a Roman historian as the den of the dregs of humanity. They had to make it stand out as sharply as possible that their first martyrs had died not because of a crime imputed to them, but as a result of a general—and therefore already unreasonable—hatred. They could not

dispense with that final feature, the sympathy of the spectators. The only thing that remains unexplained under this assumption is the detail that some Christians in large numbers would have denounced their fellow believers. But perhaps this report is the result of the schism that prevailed in the Christian community of Rome. What prevents us from assuming that the narrative of Tacitus already lived on as a tradition in the Christian community, was supplied by it to Tacitus, and was eagerly taken over and worked up by this historian—with his well-known lack of criticism and his equally well-known fondness for rumors and for striking colors—when he undertook the portrayal of Nero's reign? The matter itself was indifferent to him, but the tableau in Nero's park the historical painter did not wish to miss.

That the matter itself was of no concern to him is shown, in my opinion, by the brevity and obscurity of the report. If the persecution of Christians at Rome in the year 64 was an event important enough to be recorded by Tacitus in his *Annals*, one cannot understand how that same Tacitus, in the first quarter of the second century, did not consider it worth the trouble to communicate anything more about those Christians. If their community already had an independent existence in 64 and notice had already been taken of it in the highest circles, then half a century later Tacitus might surely have been able to learn something more about it than the hopeless generalities which he serves up about it. If, therefore, he did write the report, then he contented himself with what was general and nebulous; in other words, he took no interest in the matter.

But in my view the supposition remains far more plausible that here a Christian tradition was taken over by Tacitus without any criticism. In either case the story has no historical value whatsoever. What was actually known in Tacitus' time about the Christians at Rome is shown by Suetonius, who carries his ignorance so far that he has Jews expelled from the capital under Emperor Claudius because they were continually rioting at the instigation of Chrestus. It is, however, possible that by Chrestus he does not mean Christ. But in that case his silence concerning the Christians in any event has great significance.

Of still far greater significance must one call the absolute silence of Josephus. It is even an insurmountable stumbling block for all those who, with Wittichen, seek a 'historical foundation' for a life of Jesus; something that was already felt so deeply at a very early stage in the Christian community that one did not shrink from a *pia fraus* and simply interpolated reports about Jesus and James into Josephus. No one disputes this any longer today. An insurmountable stumbling block! Indeed; behold here a historian, himself an Israelite, dealing

with the history of his people; a younger contemporary of Jesus; he occupies himself with the days in which Jesus must be supposed to have appeared and taught; he speaks about John the Baptist, he speaks about Herod, and he says not a word about the things which, according to the New Testament, were not done in a corner—no syllable about Jesus.

How, from the standpoint of a criticism that refuses to let such things lie, such stumbling blocks are removed can be seen by the reader in Wittichen, p. 4. It occurs at the end of a note: 'The silence of Josephus about Christ and Christianity is fully to be explained by his endeavour to sift out or cover over everything in Jewish history that could give offence to the Romans.' Wittichen, however, neglects even to show, by so much as a word, what there then was in the history of Jesus that must have been so particularly offensive to the Romans—more offensive than many another page that is now read in Josephus' work. The historian who found no objection to reporting at length the fanaticism that hastened Jerusalem's downfall—what motive could he have had for remaining silent about the rabbi in whom some had greeted the Messiah, other than that in fact there was nothing to relate about that rabbi?

The well-known letter of Pliny is likewise reckoned by Wittichen among the 'historical foundation' of the Life of Jesus. Naturally without any right. The letter dates from the year 112 and does indeed mention one thing and another about the Christians, but nothing about Jesus of Nazareth. And even if matters stood better in this respect, what would it avail? In 112 there was already a tradition in circulation about his person and life. Any report about Jesus in that letter could therefore never be regarded as anything other than an echo of that tradition, unless in the personality of the writer there lay a guarantee that his report

has the significance of an independent source. But, as I said, this entire consideration does not apply to Pliny. He speaks solely about the adherents of Jesus. If we are now permitted to infer from what he communicates about their belief concerning Jesus what Jesus himself was, then we can settle the matter much more briefly; namely, by consulting the Gospels, which also inform us what was believed about him among the adherents of Jesus.

But now the letter itself! For Wittichen it seems to present no difficulties. I am not in his position. Pliny begins by saying that he has never attended judicial investigations where Christians were concerned, since he has only been in Bithynia for a year. This is anything but clear. Had investigations indeed taken place, but had he never attended them? For whom, then, had the instruction been conducted? And why does he now take such an interest in a matter that does not concern him? Had there in that year been no proceedings at all against Christians, and had Pliny been able to govern Bithynia for a full year without encountering Christians, whence then all at once his need for fixed rules of legal procedure in their regard? Was Pliny in general so inexperienced that he could not at all allow himself to be guided by any analogy and had to ask the emperor for information about all sorts of details? He has never had Christians before his tribunal, and yet he already knows that they cannot all be treated alike; that there are among them those who may be called too simple to bear responsibility for the sect to which they belong; that there are nominal Christians among them who do not separate themselves from the Roman state religion. — Never, once again, has he had to conduct a trial against Christians, and immediately thereafter he himself relates to the emperor how he has hitherto always conducted such trials. He asks, as is evident from what follows, about the familiar procedure. Hitherto, so he assures him—that is, during the first year of his

stay in Bithynia—he has, as soon as Christians were brought before him, repeatedly, and finally under threat of death, put to them the question whether they were Christians; those who persisted (did not recant) he had put to death, or sent to Rome when they were Roman citizens, since in any case their inflexible obstinacy was punishable. What this last means I do not understand. What is this 'in any case'? If being a Christian was such a crime that Christians who were not Roman citizens were immediately condemned to death by him, then he truly had no need to excuse himself for sending Christians who were Roman citizens to Rome, nor to appeal to their obstinacy. It also seems from Pliny's words that a Roman citizen in the provinces could not go to Rome but had to go there as soon as he was accused of 'flagitia', wholly contrary to Acts XXVI, 32, where King Agrippa says to Festus—who in Judea held the office that Pliny exercised in Bithynia—as something self-evident: This man (Paul, a Roman citizen) could have been released if he had not appealed to the emperor. According to this passage Festus could have brought the trial to an end had Paul wished it. — When it had become known, Pliny further reports to the emperor, that he proceeded in this manner against the Christians, he had, while the cases in which he had to deal with Christians became more numerous, received an anonymous indictment containing a list of those who denied that they had ever been Christians. Who can form an idea of such a list? The names on it could have been those of all the inhabitants of the province of Bithynia, with the sole exception of the courageous confessors of the name of Jesus; for apart from that exception all the others will surely have denied that they had ever been Christians. If we were

dealing here with a historical writing in which the historian paused incidentally at what is here related, one might supplement his report by imagination and thus try to reduce its absurdity. But it is a document from a governor to his emperor, deliberately written in order to consult the emperor on this matter. Were Roman governors such bunglers that they had to express themselves so awkwardly? Did one in those days dare to send such nonsense to Rome?

We are still not at the end. Those who denied that they had ever been Christians—we then assume that what is meant are those on whom suspicion rested but who cast it off—are summoned before Pliny. Some of them blaspheme Christ and are released; and the governor deems it appropriate to inform the emperor that this blaspheming of Christ did not accord with the customary conduct of real Christians. Indeed! Just as he had just spoken of nominal Christians, so here of genuine Christians. Among those who now blasphemed Christ before the tribunal there were some who admitted that they had been Christians years before, and from these he had then heard what Christians actually did. Their whole guilt or error—what a precise distinction the governor makes with regard to a sect of which he had noticed nothing for a year!—consisted in the following: to assemble on a fixed day before sunrise in order to sing a hymn to Christ, as if he were a god, and to bind themselves by oath not to commit any crime such as theft, robbery, or adultery, to be faithful and honest. Thereupon they separated, but later assembled again to partake of ordinary and harmless food. But even this they had abandoned

since the promulgation of the imperial edict against secret religious associations. Who had abandoned this? One would think: the Christians. The

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Christians, however, are no longer the subject, but those who had formerly been Christians, among whom were some for whom this belonged to a past that already lay a quarter of a century behind them. Had they shown obedience to that imperial edict for more than twenty-five years? Why lay emphasis on their obedience to the laws of the state in this single point, where it was reported that they had for years abandoned Christianity altogether? One may also ask what the expression 'harmless food' means in the mouth of a Roman governor.

Now at last we hope to learn something that holds water. We are not permitted to do so. Whereas up to now there had only been talk of those who either denied ever having been Christians or declared that for some time they were no longer such, and only of them was it assured that they had been summoned before Pliny's tribunal, we suddenly hear him report that he had had two deaconesses put to the torture in order to investigate the truth of the declarations of those renegades. As the result of that investigation he had found only a perverse and excessive superstition. Here Pliny thus seems to know perfectly well how to conduct a Christian trial. The instruction has even led to a result. He now knows that Christianity is a perverse and excessive belief. The crime was therefore characterised. Did a Roman governor then not know how he had to deal with it?

Finally comes the report that the number of those who are infected by the contagious disease of this superstition is not small and is spread through cities, towns, and villages; which makes it all the more incomprehensible that Pliny for a year had noticed nothing of the Christians. Had there then suddenly been a change? Had this Christian superstition suddenly broken out like a fire? Was Pliny suddenly seized with fear? Did he, in his alarmed imagination, see all Bithynia converted to that Christ, and therefore

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write in all haste to the emperor? By no means. It seems to him that improvement of the condition characterised by him is still possible, if one allows room for repentance, *since people are again beginning to visit the temples and offer sacrifices*. In other words: the line of conduct hitherto followed with regard to the Christians had proved its own soundness. Everything is thus going according to wish. A sensible, liberal and at the same time vigilant governor; numerous renegades; revival of the popular religion. What more could one desire? But what, then, motivates this letter?

Wittichen finds everything here in order, and accordingly succeeds in drawing the most important conclusions from this writing. First: 'Christianity in 112 and in this part of Asia Minor is a power that threatens the pagan cult.' And Pliny writes precisely that temple attendance and sacrifices are again increasing. Nor does the humane tone, his wish to allow room for repentance, in any way prove that he was seized by fear. Second: 'people of all ranks are

Christians.' But whence then the fact that Pliny for a year does not see them before his tribunal and finally, while he—note well!—has already had some put to death, certainly not without prior torture, finds no one else to examine on the rack than a couple of poor deaconesses. Third: 'many go to their death for their Christian confession, which leads us to suppose that Christ occupied a high place in their religious consciousness as in their worship.' But we truly need not learn this from this letter.

This letter can teach us nothing so long as we do not know whether it is not a Christian fabrication. The author seems to be a Christian who wished to enhance the importance of his sect by presenting it as already impressive enough to provide material for a correspondence between a governor and his emperor. The letter is, as we have shown,

so foolish [naive] that it suggests the hand of a forger. That forced occasion: a governor who does not know how to treat the adherents of a superstition that forbids acts of homage to the image of the emperor; the contradictions to which we have drawn attention; the distinction between nominal Christians and true Christians; the precise formulation: *instar dei*, after the manner of a god; the affecting detail of the two deaconesses on the rack—everything prompts the question whether the entire correspondence was also devised in order to explain the defection of some Christians. In his reply (cf. C. de la Berge, *Essai sur le règne de Trajan*, p. 208 ff.) the emperor is made to say that those who denied their Christianity after having been arrested were to be released again.

Our unfavourable suspicion concerning the authenticity of those so-called oldest testimonies concerning Christianity is not a little confirmed by the silence, first of Philo, Seneca, Pliny the Elder, later of Juvenal and especially of Plutarch in his numerous moral writings, which gave so much occasion for discussion.

Even if one thinks one must refrain from any definite judgement concerning the origin of both Tacitus' and Pliny's reports, one will nevertheless concede that those reports are burdened by too many objections for it to be safe to wish to use them as a historical foundation for a Life of Jesus. We must then affirm that before the Gospels we possess not a single report concerning Jesus. If the Gospels are not historical, we have nothing better, nothing that can replace the Gospels, even partially. The foundation of Christianity lies in impenetrable darkness if the Gospels do not kindle light.

Or do we forget Paul? Wittichen explicitly draws attention to his testimony. In order to appraise this testimony

properly, he first poses the question: 'when and how did Paul come into contact with the first adherents of Jesus and thereby come into a position to obtain authentic reports concerning the founder of Christianity?' This, answers Wittichen, had already happened when he was still a persecutor. For the persecution itself—and here Wittichen appeals to Galatians I, 13 and 1

Corinthians XV, 9—presupposes that he had taken cognisance of Christianity and its founder and saw in it a danger to the continuing authority of the Mosaic religion. Such an insight presupposes knowledge, and that knowledge he must repeatedly have expanded whenever persecution brought him into contact with Christians. 'What he learned in this way undoubtedly bears the character of authentic reports; for if one compares the apostle's note according to which he fled from Damascus in order not to be captured by the commander of King Aretas (2 Corinthians XI, 32) with his statements about his stay in that city (Galatians I, 17), then his conversion must have taken place only a few years after the death of Jesus, since an occupation of Damascus can only have taken place in the years 37–39. In 37 Vitellius prepared for a campaign against Aretas (Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 18, 5. 3) and in 39 Arabia was divided by Caligula (Dio Cassius 59, 9. 12). But Paul must likewise have stood in relation with the first apostles.' Galatians I and II are to prove this.

All this, as one sees, stands or falls with the recognition of the authenticity of Paul's letter to the Galatians. With many critics that authenticity is therefore almost as firm as a dogma. One cannot dispense with it as a battering ram against the Book of Acts. Paul must be the ideal of a Pauline, that is, liberal Christianity. We nevertheless permit ourselves to pose the question whether the letter to the Galatians does not rather present itself as the work of an excessively Pauline writer, who, released from the moderation

from which a responsible pastor cannot withdraw and addressing himself only in appearance to an actual congregation, has taken delight in portraying a Paul who has, as it were, fallen from the sky, and a Paulinism that could never permit the slightest transaction? To the answering of that question we wish to contribute something. In our criticism we do not proceed from the authenticity or inauthenticity of any other letter that bears Paul's name. We shall allow ourselves in that to the Galatians to point out phenomena that strike us, regardless of whether other letters have or have not prepared us for them. We therefore assume as far as possible that we begin our reading of the letters attributed to Paul with Galatians, in order to give ourselves the clearest account of the impression that such a reading would make on us under those circumstances. Who is Paul? What does he want? We know nothing of this for the time being, and allow ourselves to be informed exclusively by himself. Since we do not wish to quote his words in the original nor always translate them literally, we shall from time to time have to try, by a small paraphrase, to render what appears to us to be his intention.

A certain Paul, who must be presumed to be known to his readers, introduces himself in Galatians I, 1 as an apostle, not sent by men, not appointed through a man, but through Jesus Christ and through God the Father, who raised Jesus. We therefore suspect that there already existed at that time evangelists who came in the name of certain persons, who came on the commission of a certain person. Our Paul, by contrast, has required no human commission or mediation whatsoever. Jesus and God, Jesus' Father, have sent him, have appointed him as preacher. He deems it necessary to recall this explicitly and immediately to a congregation that, as the continuation of the letter shows, is already, and already for some time, familiar with fairly complex

Christian conceptions, but did not know or no longer knew that Paul's apostolic authority derived immediately from God and from Jesus and therefore laid claim to unconditional obedience. No wonder that they fail to recognise the envoy of God, when they have become apostate from God himself (v. 6), who had called them, and have accepted another gospel. They would never, however, have believed in the possibility of another gospel if there had not been those who cast them into uncertainty. Yet there was not the slightest ground for the least uncertainty. The truth of Paul's gospel stands so firm that even his own authority, should he unexpectedly change his mind, no more than the authority of an angel from heaven, would be able to overthrow it. An angel from heaven who contradicted him, Paul, would simply be anathema, an object of curse.

Already here an exaggeration reveals itself such as seems more readily to flow from the pen of a zealous adherent than from that of a preacher who would surely have realised that, if he himself appealed to a mission from heaven, he weakened the force of that appeal not a little when he denied heaven the right to give new revelations, even if they were in conflict with the former ones. The exaggeration, the over-tension, whose tone is here set, is not disavowed later. The Paul of the letter to the Galatians is so passionately intransigent that he would see in the slightest popularity, were it to fall to his lot, a stain of disgrace; 'if he still pleased men, he would not be a servant of Christ.' That he gains no one's approval with the manner in which he presents the gospel is for him a mark of the immediate heavenly character of the mission that was entrusted to him personally, in contrast to others. How could any man in the world attach his approval to what is neither according to man nor from man,

but was revealed to him by Jesus Christ without the mediation of anyone's communication or instruction? Formerly he, Paul, who now proceeds from so undisguised a mysticism, had been a man of tradition, a zealot for the traditions of the fathers. But he had not yet then given himself an account of his true vocation. From his mother's womb God had already set him apart. And when that God revealed his Son in him, he consulted no man any more, asked the opinion or light of no man any more. Converted to Jesus, it would have been natural for him to seek information at once from the numerous Christians who, by his own assurance (v. 13), formed the community of God—one must not, however, accuse him of anything so unworthy. He did not return to Jerusalem; he did not visit the apostles of that Jesus whom he henceforth wished to proclaim; he went to Arabia, where no one could communicate anything to him about Jesus; and if he finally goes to Damascus, he does not speak with a single word of any intercourse with Christians there. Thus he spends three years, the first three, the decisive years; and that not in quiet reflection on a given historical material whose spiritual, dogmatic significance he sought to discover. Since he does not claim to have associated with Jesus, he could have obtained that historical material, that historical foundation of his reflections, only through human mediation, and human mediation he has precisely wholly excluded.

The Paul of the letter to the Galatians is therefore a man in whom Christ already lived without his being conscious of it. In his own soul he then finds that Christ revealed by God at a given

moment, and as soon as this has taken place he withdraws into quiet seclusion to immerse himself in his own revealed inner being—that is, in Christ; to immerse himself in Christ—that is, in his own revealed inner being. Thus he stands there, entirely as an auto- or as a theodidact. After the lapse

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of those three years, after his ideas had therefore naturally already taken on a fixed form, he does indeed travel to Jerusalem, but only in order 'to get to know' Peter; for that purpose he also remains there sufficiently long: fifteen days, during which time, apart from James, he sees none of the other apostles. These are not details to which the author of our letter attaches no weight. On the contrary; he considers knowledge of these details so extremely important that he confirms the truth of what he writes in the most solemn manner before the face of God (v. 20). His oath at the same time proves how improbable his communication appeared to him in itself.

And indeed it is so in the highest degree; and if it is from the apostle himself, then it must stamp him as a wholly unreliable witness, as the representative of a bottomless mysticism. That someone who wishes to proclaim to the world a gospel of his own—'his' gospel—and who dares in advance to strike every opponent with his curse, despises existing sources of information and expects wisdom solely from inner illumination is already strange enough. But that someone should boast of this neglect of the usual means of arriving at a well-grounded conviction, and testify before God that he has done none of those things by which alone one can hope to inspire any confidence in serious seekers of the truth, is certainly something that we can assume with regard to one of the earliest preachers of Christianity only after every other supposition has been tried. And then surely the hypothesis first suggests itself that a person who behaves so strangely as the Paul of Galatians is a fiction of an ultra-Pauline Christian and not a reality. Accustomed from our youth to the content of this letter, and while modern criticism has for thirty years already impressed upon us that this letter is now actually the most genuine thing conceivable, we run the risk of finding what is most astonishing

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here natural. But let one or another younger contemporary of Plato, originating from southern Italy, write in this way about Socrates! He had rejoiced at the death sentence of that philosopher, for he was a sophist heart and soul. Another light, however, has dawned upon him. To think as Socrates thought, to feel, to teach, to live as Socrates did, to identify oneself wholly with him—that, he has perceived, grasped by intuition—that is the one thing needful. Now will he—hasten to Athens? Plato still lives; Alcibiades still lives. From them, from so many others, he will try to learn what Socrates thought, felt, taught; what spirit spoke from his intercourse? No; he goes to Egypt; remains there three years, then writes and speaks his whole life long about Socrates, and is regarded by a—credulous world as nothing less than the most trustworthy witness concerning the Greek sage, the most reliable interpreter of his doctrine and intention!

The fiction, if it is fiction, is not consistently maintained. At first we receive the impression that Paul, by virtue of his heavenly calling, is the sole authentic preacher of the gospel. If he is to be

a servant of Christ, he must displease all, gain the approval of no one. He has nothing to learn from anyone. Thus speaks the man who stands exclusively over against a Jewish or pagan world, who has a brand-new doctrine to proclaim; thus speaks the Christian who lives in a situation in which he can, so to speak, still make of Christianity whatever he wishes. But this primitive situation, which ought continually to have formed the background of the entire letter, is instead repeatedly lost from view. The author of the Epistle to the Galatians already lives amid numerous congregations. He addresses the congregations of Galatia (v. 2); false teachers are at work (v. 7); those whom he persecuted already constituted the church of God (v. 13), composed of several congregations in Judea (v. 22). It is especially in chapter

II that the situation becomes different from what we should have expected after the opening of Galatians I. The overconfident intransigent there finds himself in an environment that already makes compromise unavoidable. The man who seeks no one's approval (I 10) now receives a revelation that he must go to Jerusalem and uses that occasion to lay his gospel before the men of standing there, lest he should run or have run in vain (II 2); the man who in I 7a knows of no two gospels acknowledges in II 7 that there is a gospel of the uncircumcision and a gospel of the circumcision, that is, that there are two gospels. The sole ruler contents himself with a joint authority.

It is as though the real author on the one hand wished to present Paul as an apostle in the eminent sense, indeed as the apostle par excellence, whose gospel is the absolute truth, but on the other hand, precisely in order to promote appreciation of his teacher among the opposing party, had to present that teacher as not altogether unmanageable. If Gal. I 7 and 10 are by a fictive Paul, then we need not pause over the exaggeration of a fanatical adherent, and we can even feel how much it must have cost him to write Gal. II 1–10. If, on the other hand, I 7a is by someone who really had to come to the compromise of Gal. II, then Gal. I 7a contains empty boasting; that verse would then have had to read quite differently. Paul should there have thundered against the people who did not keep to the agreement of II 9 but had come onto his territory, which was not the territory of the gospel of the circumcision. He could have demanded that no other gospel be preached in his congregations, but he could not have asserted that there was no other gospel.

Again and again the question arises whether the author of the Epistle to the Galatians forms a clear conception of the general situation in which he wishes to place Paul. I should like to see someone

form a coherent picture of the person who is here supposed to be writing, and of the reality in which he lives. His need for absolute independence drives him so far that, as a recent convert, he deliberately avoids those who were apostles before him; later he has, precisely at the right moment, a revelation, and thus feels the need to present his gospel to those who were apostles before him. He presents it in Jerusalem to those who are held in esteem there, lest he should

have laboured in vain (II 2), only then, in v. 6, to speak of those who are held in esteem with unmistakable contempt. Had he then found himself disappointed in their attitude toward him? On the contrary. “Titus, being a Greek (v. 3), was not compelled to be circumcised.” And Titus was not compelled because one wished to maintain freedom over against the stealthily introduced false brothers who wanted to spy on that freedom from the side (v. 4). Those who were held in esteem in the Jerusalem congregation therefore imposed nothing on him, Paul, with regard to the Gentiles beyond what his own insight and practice already entailed. Such liberality in those eminent men of the Jerusalem congregation was indeed greatly to be appreciated. But then why that spiteful parenthesis: “what sort of men they formerly were makes no difference to me”? Strange indeed that to him who attached so much value to his calling immediately by Jesus it was a matter of indifference whether a Peter, a James, a John (v. 9) had or had not been immediately called by Jesus, or had rather set themselves up as leaders of the congregation. If they were regarded as pillars of the congregation, it was then surely not the same thing for Paul on what that judgement was based. He also attaches value to the way in which they regard his gospel—otherwise why present it to them at all, and even make a journey to Jerusalem for that purpose? He does not consider it superfluous, for the confirmation of his own authority, to write to Galatia that they had extended to him the hand of brotherly fellowship.

Does he then hold

this opinion merely because Peter, James, and John happened in fact to enjoy great esteem, and it was therefore in his interest to have them on his side? Certainly not. But if then the fact that they respected Paul’s gospel and recognized him as a brother had a moral significance for him, then it must also have inspired in Paul the highest interest to know—precisely to know—how they had come to such great esteem in the congregation; in other words, he could not and should not have written: “what sort of men they formerly were makes no difference to me.” For the maxim “God does not accept the person of man” was here entirely beside the point. One cannot, out of one mouth, say: I presented my case to X, who is a very esteemed person; X approved it; X extended to me the hand of fellowship; but what X formerly was does not concern me in the least.

Here too one would like to see the hand of an anonymous author who writes a fictive letter and places Paul’s name upon it. He puts all kinds of “forceful expressions” into the apostle’s mouth—“There are not two gospels,” or “what Peter etc. were makes no difference to me”—but at the same time he never loses sight of the official ecclesiastical persons and does what lies in his power to spare them, that is, to present them as the representatives of a tendency that, alongside and together with that of Paul, has an equal right to exist.

Galatians II 11 ff. confirm us in this suspicion. With that idea of a spiritual joint authority exercised by Peter and by Paul in the Christian congregation of their days, with that idea of an equal right of existence of Jewish and Gentile gospel, provided each remains within its own sphere, harmonizes perfectly the stance that the author lets Paul take in Antioch; but with an

exclusive gospel of Paul it is wholly incompatible. Cephas is rebuked by Paul in Antioch not because he lives in the Jewish

manner, but: (1) because he does so out of fear of the men from James after first having eaten with the Gentiles; (2) because he wished to "compel" the Gentile Christians "to live in the Jewish manner." Hypocrisy and unfaithfulness to the agreement (vv. 6–9) are thus Paul's grievance, but not Judaizing as such. He does not rebuke the men from James; nor could he easily have done so, for the men from James will have lived in no other way than James himself, and from James Paul had accepted the right hand of brotherly fellowship in Jerusalem, far from seeing in him someone who denied the cross of Christ. Had Peter therefore remained in Antioch what he was in Jerusalem; had Peter in Antioch from the outset appeared as the apostle of the gospel of the circumcision—and what this entailed we now perceive precisely from the influence that the presence of the men from James exerted upon him—Paul would have found nothing to rebuke in Peter, provided at least that the latter had carefully refrained from imposing burdens upon the Gentile Christians in accordance with the agreement (v. 6 at the end). All this fits excellently with the assumption of a joint authority. But how is the standpoint that Paul here takes to be reconciled with those strong expressions of an exclusive Paulinism that we read in III 28; VI 15; V 3? Here the distinction between gospel of the circumcision and gospel of the uncircumcision is not acknowledged; or rather, the entire distinction is rendered wholly superfluous, for there is no Jew or Greek; circumcision nor uncircumcision has any force. Whoever allows himself to be circumcised has no share in Christ: absolute incompatibility of living in the Jewish manner and the life of Christian faith.

While we leave open whether authentic elements are to be found in our letter, we believe that from what has been adduced we may draw the conclusion that the letter, as it lies before us, offers no sufficient guarantees of authenticity to justify

the use that Wittichen wishes to make of it. In the abstract it certainly always remains possible that Paul was the mystic, the little-consistent man that the Epistle to the Galatians presents to us, but we have no right to assume this without further proof.

Comparison with other letters does not favour the assumption of the authenticity of the Epistle to the Galatians, although this argument has little weight so long as the authenticity of those other letters has not been raised above all doubt. Yet that comparison may not be entirely omitted. From 2 Cor. XI 32 we learn that Paul was let down through a window in a basket over the wall and in this way escaped Damascus, which was occupied by Aretas. Should one suspect this circumstance, this forced departure, behind Gal. I 17–18: "I returned again to Damascus, then I came to Jerusalem *to visit Peter*"? This purpose seems precisely to presuppose a voluntary coming to Jerusalem and thus a voluntary departure from Damascus. But above all Gal. I 10; II 11 ff. compared with 1 Cor. X 23–33 strike one. Here what there is condemned is recommended. Here: eat what is sold in the meat market, live in the Gentile manner. But if

someone else there has an objection, “for the sake of the one who informed you, do not eat it”; do not live in the Gentile manner. “Give no offence to Jews or Greeks in the church of God, just as I too please everyone in everything.” There: Peter was to be rebuked because he first ate what was sold in the meat market, lived in the Gentile manner. But when someone else, the party of James, had something against it, Peter lived without giving offence to Jews or to the church of God (Gal. II 13), and for that he is harshly attacked by Paul, who now rather declares that he wishes to please no one (I 10). Further to be considered here is 2 Cor. V 16 compared with Gal. I 12 and II 6. According to 2 Cor. V 16

Paul seems to have known Jesus personally. The cited texts from the Epistle to the Galatians seem to exclude this. In 1 Cor. XI 23; XV 3 he has received all kinds of historical details, which he in turn hands on as he received them, whereas Gal. I 1, 12, 16 in no way prepared us for this. By contrast, 1 Cor. VII agrees with Gal. I as regards the source of Paul’s knowledge.

On the question of the authenticity of the Epistle to the Galatians as a whole it naturally depends whether we can say with Wittichen (p. 14): “*Die Aussagen des Paulus über Christus sind von hohem Werthe für die Erkenntniss des Grundcharakters der historischen Wirksamkeit Jesu.*” If Paul neglected the best sources for knowledge of Jesus’ historical activity in the manner that the Epistle to the Galatians portrays, then his “statements” not only have no high value, they have no value at all as historical reports. Paul would then have been a man of a fantastic and mystical tendency, for whom the facts perhaps formed the point of departure, but certainly not the foundation of philosophical speculation. However important it must always remain to investigate what this remarkable spirit contributed to the rise of Christianity, nothing gives us the right to seek in his other letters a confirmation of particular evangelical facts so long as we possess no certainty regarding the authenticity of the Epistle to the Galatians.

Since Wittichen, though wrongly, believes himself to possess certainty in this respect, he proceeds calmly and collects from other letters that bear Paul’s name all the statements that can shed any light on the life of Jesus. We wish to examine them with him. “According to Paul,” says Wittichen (p. 14), “Jesus is descended from the line of David (Rom. I 3), which presupposes a non-supernatural birth, since the genealogy was compiled only in the male line (cf. Rom. IX 5; Gal.

III 16).” But Rom. I 3, where Paul says that he is set apart for the gospel of Jesus, “who came from the seed of David according to the flesh,” proves nothing. What is expressed there is not a historical conviction but a dogmatic one (cf. John VII 42; Acts XIII 23; Rev. V 5; XXII 16). Once Jesus was, in Paul’s eyes, the promised one of the fathers, then he was also a son of David. How is it possible to cite Paul’s testimony as historical testimony of any probative force when we see that two writers, Matthew and Luke, who deliberately concern themselves with Jesus’ history, have provided such genealogies? When those genealogies, in any case male, did not prevent the redactors of the first and third gospels from believing in Jesus’ supernatural birth, by

what right can one then infer from the fact that Paul ascribes Davidic descent to Jesus that he probably regards Jesus as born of a human marriage? With more right Wittichen infers from Gal. IV 4; Rom. V 15; 1 Cor. XV 21 that the apostle regarded Jesus as a man. Jesus was (see, however, Rom. VIII 3 and Phil. II 8a) "born under the law" (Gal. IV 4); was by right the Christ of the Jewish people (Rom. IX 5; XV 8), knew no sin (2 Cor. V 21), was obedient unto death, even death on the cross (Phil. II 8b), and was filled with the spirit of holiness (Rom. I 4).

One will nevertheless concede that this is evaluation, not historical report (with the exception of Phil. II 8b).

It is otherwise with 1 Cor. XI 23–25. But this direct allusion to an event from the life of Jesus stands entirely on its own, and it always remains remarkable that one can remove these verses from the context without the slightest disturbance. Verse 26 follows verse 22 just as well as verse 23 does.

But even if no interpolation is to be thought of here, how weighty is the fact that this is also literally the only thing that we can gather

from Paul's writings as a historical contribution, taken in the strictest sense of the word. If we proceed from the assumption that Jesus existed and had a life history rich enough to give rise to the gospel literature, and then ask ourselves how many and how clear allusions we should expect in the writings of the man who became the ardent preacher of that Jesus, then we find ourselves disappointed in a strange way. When he wrote his letters, Paul could not know that gospels would ever be written. How then was it possible that he both wished to make Christianity a world religion and yet felt not the slightest need to rescue from oblivion the, by common assumption, wholly unique life of Jesus? This fact—so exceedingly strange to me that I do not understand how it causes the critics so little difficulty—admits of only two explanations: either the life of Jesus was not so important, and it is more or less accidental that the sage of Nazareth gave his name to that complex of ideas, sensations, and emotions that we call Christianity; or Paul neglected the historical character of Christianity and ascribed value to no event except the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension—that is, to those events that allowed a spiritual interpretation. If it was a matter of that spiritual interpretation, how little scrupulous will he then, in all probability, have been in investigating the purely historical truth of those events! Moreover: if those events are only three in number, and if two of them already are such that no sober historian can accept them as facts, then by the nature of the case the third cannot stand unshakably on Paul's testimony alone.

If we then return from Paul's letters to the gospels, it cannot be otherwise than that we must be filled with serious

doubt regarding those gospels by what we have observed in the apostle. If he evidently had so exceedingly little to communicate about Jesus—he who, if anything special had happened,

could so well have been informed—how much confidence may we then place in narratives that know so much to report about Jesus, and so much that Paul, truly no less than death, resurrection, and ascension, could have used excellently for his theological speculations?

It goes without saying that Wittichen, once he sought such testimonies about the life of Jesus as precede the gospels, was brought into no small embarrassment by the Apocalypse. After recalling that the gaze of the author of the Apocalypse—whom he does not regard as the apostle John (without, however, giving the least account of this opinion)—was entirely directed toward the future and therefore does not linger on Jesus' life history, Wittichen draws attention to the glowing hatred of the Apocalypse against the Gentiles, in which he does not find Jesus' spirit, and to that which distinguishes this book from Paul's writings, dogmatically as well as practically, in order finally to rid himself of all the questions that may here be asked with full right by the following remark: "the Apocalypse thus proves anew how differently the personality of Jesus was later mirrored in the consciousness of Christianity according to the religious outlook that one brought with one from one's own past, and how powerful the impulse must have been that proceeded from Jesus, such that even the boldest Jewish expectations could be attached to his person."

Yet the matter cannot be disposed of so briefly. One must rather ask: granted—what is now almost generally accepted by modern theology—that the Apocalypse was written in the year 68 by the apostle John, to what conclusion do the phenomena that we observe in that writing then lead us with regard to the life

of Jesus? In addition to what we have already noted above on this point, let one further direct attention to the following:

The revelation communicated to us in the said work is a revelation of things that are about to happen. God gave that revelation to Jesus Christ in order to show it to his servants. Jesus Christ in turn entrusted it to his angel and in this way made it known to his servant John (I 1). That revelation is therefore the word of God, the testimony of Jesus Christ, and at the same time (as shown by Jesus' angel) the vision of John (v. 2); in other words, the Apocalypse is a tableau of the future unrolled by God for Jesus. That God unrolled no other tableau for Jesus, revealed no other future to Jesus, the truthfulness of Jesus serves the author as guarantee. For Jesus is the faithful witness. And that the reader may rely on finding here a trustworthy report of what was shown by God to Jesus has its ground in the fact that John in turn testifies to what the angel, in the name of his Sender, caused him to behold.

How highly does this introduction not strain our expectation. A disciple of Jesus; a man who, according to the assumption, heard from Jesus' mouth what must have been incomparable; a man who for thirty years could ponder Jesus' words and finally, in the full strength of his manhood—probably indeed about fifty years old—sets himself to write for seven congregations in that Asia Minor so deeply worked over by Greek civilization what was communicated by God to Jesus, by Jesus to his angel, and by that angel to him, and assures us in the most solemn

manner of the reliability of his communication! Indeed, if Jesus truly taught as the gospels have him teach, then from his disciple one might well expect an apocalypse

that leads us into the spirit of the Master.

Is it not then strange that here little else is offered than a stringing together of texts, formulas, or images from the Old Testament, as appears from the following overview drawn from Tischendorf's edition:

REVELATIONS.	OLD TESTAMENT.
I, 6.	Exodus XIX, 6; Isaiah LXI, 6.
I, 7.	Zechariah XII, 10 ff.; Daniel VII, 13.
I, 8.	Isaiah XLIV, 6.
I, 13, 14.	Daniel VII, 13; X, 5; Ezekiel I, 24. 27.
I, 15.	Daniel X, 6.
I, 16.	Isaiah XLIX, 2.
I, 17.	Ezekiel I, 28; Isaiah XLVIII, 12.
II, 14.	Numbers XXV, 2; XXXI, 16.
II, 20.	1 Kings XVI, 31.
II, 23.	Psalm VII, 10.
II, 26.	Psalm II, 8 ff.
III, 7.	Isaiah XXII, 22; Job XII, 14.
III, 9.	Isaiah XLV, 14.
III, 12.	Isaiah LVI, 5.
III, 19.	Proverbs III, 12.
III, 20.	Song of Songs V, 2.
IV, 2.	Ezekiel I, 26 ff.
IV, 6.	Ezekiel I, 22; Exodus XXIV, 10.

IV, 8[a].	Ezekiel I, 10.
IV, 8[b].	Isaiah VI, 3.
V, 1.	Ezekiel II, 9.
V, 5.	Genesis XLIX, 9 ff.
V, 6.	Zechariah IV, 10.
V, 11.	Daniel VII, 10.
VI, 2 ff.	Zechariah VI, 1 ff.
VI, 8.	Ezekiel XIV, 21.
VI, 12.	Ezekiel XXXII, 7 ff.
VI, 13.	Isaiah XXXIV, 4.

REVELATIONS.	OLD TESTAMENT.
VI, 15.	Isaiah II, 10; XXIV, 21.
VI, 16.	Hosea X, 8.
VII, 1.	Zechariah VI, 5.
VII, 3.	Ezekiel IX, 4.
VII, 16.	Isaiah XLIX, 10.
VII, 17.	Isaiah XXV, 8.
[VIII, 2.	Tobit XII, 15.
VIII, 7.	Exodus IX, 24; Isaiah XXVIII, 2.
VIII, 8.	Jeremiah LI, 25.
VIII, 10.	Isaiah XIV, 12; Daniel VIII, 10.
VIII, 12.	Amos VIII, 9.
IX, 2.	Joel II, 10.

IX, 6.	Job III, 21.
IX, 7.	Joel II, 4.
IX, 8.	Joel I, 6.
IX, 9.	Joel II, 5.
IX, 11.	Job XXVIII, 22 (in the original).
IX, 17^{b}.	Joel II, 3.
IX, 20.	Psalm CXXXV, 15.
X, 4.	Daniel VIII, 26.
X, 5.	Daniel XII, 7.
X, 7.	Amos III, 7.
X, 9.	Ezekiel II, 8 ff.; III, 1 ff.
XI, 1.	Ezekiel XL, 3.
XI, 4.	Zechariah IV, 2 ff.
XI, 5.	2 Kings I, 10.
XI, 6.	1 Kings XVII, 1; Exodus VII, 19.
XI, 7.	Daniel VII, 7.
XI, 10.	Esther IX, 22.
XI, 11.	Ezekiel XXXVII, 5.
XI, 15.	Daniel II, 44.
XII, 2.	Micah IV, 10.
XII, 4.	Daniel VIII, 10.
XII, 7.	Daniel XII, 1.

XII, 14.	Isaiah XL, 31.
XIII, 1.	Daniel VII, 3 ff.
XIII, 10.	Jeremiah XV, 2.
XIII, 15.	Daniel III, 5 ff.
XIV, 5.	Psalm XXXII, 2; Zephaniah III, 13.
XIV, 8.	Isaiah XXI, 9; Jeremiah LI, 7.
XIV, 10.	Psalm LXXV, 9.
XIV, 11.	Isaiah XXXIV, 10.
XIV, 14.	Daniel VII, 13.
XIV, 15.	Joel III, 13.
XIV, 19.	Isaiah LXIII, 3.
XV, 3.	Psalm CXI, 2; CXLV, 17.
XV, 4.	Jeremiah X, 7.
XV, 6.	Ezekiel IX, 2.
XV, 8.	Isaiah VI, 4; Exodus XL, 35.
XVI, 1 ff.	Exodus VII–X.
XVI, 12.	Isaiah XI, 15 ff.
XVI, 14.	1 Kings XXII, 21 ff.
XVI, 16.	Zechariah XII, 11.
XVI, 19.	Isaiah LI, 22.
XVII, 1.	Nahum III, 4.
XVII, 4.	Jeremiah LI, 7.
XVII, 12.	Daniel VII, 24.
XVIII, 2.	Isaiah XXXIV, 11 ff.; XIII, 21 ff.

XVIII, 3.	Jeremiah LI, 7; Nahum III, 4.
XVIII, 4, 5.	Jeremiah LI, 6–9.
XVIII, 6.	Psalm CXXXVII, 8.
XVIII, 7.	Isaiah XLVII, 7–9.
XVIII, 9.	Ezekiel XXVI, 16; XXVII, 30.
XVIII, 11.	Ezekiel XXVII, 36.
XVIII, 12.	Ezekiel XXVII, 5 ff.
XVIII, 15.	Ezekiel XXVII, 30.
XVIII, 17.	Ezekiel XXVII, 27.
XVIII, 19.	Ezekiel XXVII, 30.

REVELATIONS.	OLD TESTAMENT.
XVIII, 20.	Isaiah XLIV, 23.
XVIII, 21.	Jeremiah LI, 63 ff.
XVIII, 22.	Isaiah XXIV, 8; Jeremiah XXV, 10.
XVIII, 23.	Isaiah XXIV, 8; Jeremiah XVI, 9.
XIX, 2.	Deuteronomy XXXII, 43.
XIX, 3.	Isaiah XXXIV, 10.
XIX, 4.	Psalm CVI, 48.
XIX, 5.	Psalm CXXXIV, 1.
XIX, 6.	Ezekiel I, 24.
XIX, 7.	Psalm CXVIII, 24.
XIX, 13.	Isaiah LXIII, 1 ff.
XIX, 15.	Psalm II, 9.

XIX, 20.	Isaiah XXX, 33.
XX, 4.	Daniel VII, 9. 22. 27.
XX, 6.	Isaiah LXI, 6.
XX, 8.	Ezekiel XXXVIII, XXXIX.
XX, 11.	Daniel VII, 9 ff.
XX, 12.	Malachi III, 16.
XXI, 1.	Isaiah LXV, 17; LXVI, 22.
XXI, 3.	Ezekiel XXXVII, 27.
XXI, 4.	Isaiah XXV, 8.
XXI, 5.	Isaiah XLIII, 19.
XXI, 10.	Ezekiel XL, 2.
XXI, 12.	Ezekiel XLVIII, 31 ff.
XXI, 15.	Ezekiel XL, 3.
XXI, 16.	Ezekiel XLI, 21.
XXI, 19 ff.	Exodus XXVIII, 17 ff.
XXI, 23.	Isaiah LX, 19.
XXI, 24.	Isaiah LX, 3 ff.
XXI, 27.	Isaiah LII, 1.
XXII, 1.	Ezekiel XLVII, 1.
XXII, 2.	Ezekiel XLVII, 7.
XXII, 5.	Daniel VII, 27.
XXII, 10.	Daniel XII, 4.

XXII, 12.	Isaiah XL, 10.
XXII, 16.	Isaiah XI, 1.
XXII, 17.	Isaiah LV, 1.
XXII, 19.	Deuteronomy IV, 2.

This table would, of course, awaken far less astonishment if it were counterbalanced by a series of original utterances. One could then, with some justification, infer the origin of the latter from the instruction in which the author had shared at the hands of Jesus. At present, however, there is nothing in the Apocalypse that necessarily presupposes the preceding life and activity of the Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels; in other words: even if the Jesus of those writings had never existed, the Apocalypse could nevertheless have been written.

The conclusion of all these investigations may be summarized in two propositions.

1°. Since only two principal sources are named for the Gospels: the Logia and a “Ur-Gospel”;

2°. since the authenticity of the Logia does not seem capable of being proved, so that one has had to content oneself with the assertion that they bear the stamp of genuineness—which is a judgment without any value;

3°. since scholars have, to this very day, been unable to reach agreement either concerning the authenticity or concerning the extent of the “Ur-Gospel,” nor finally concerning the question in which of the Synoptists it is to be found in the greatest purity;

4°. since the incredible effort that has been made for so long a time, but in vain, to reach unanimity on these points gives little hope for the continuation of this endeavour;

5°. since those writings of the first two centuries of our era that come into consideration here give rise to no supposition whatsoever that the Synoptic Gospels have a historical background;

I. it is advisable to discontinue the investigation of the Gospels insofar as one seeks thereby to come into possession of the oldest reliable biography of Jesus; and

II. to continue that investigation only, in the first place if necessary, in the interest of negative criticism, which must demonstrate that, for a biography of Jesus, nothing of significance is to be expected from the Gospels; and, secondly, in the interest of the history of ideas in the first two centuries of our era.

Synoptic fragments.

I.

The Sermon on the Mount.

We find it in Matthew V, VI, VII presented by Jesus in one continuous discourse. According to Luke as well (VI, 20–49), Jesus will at least have delivered a portion of it on one and the same occasion. The remainder of the Sermon on the Mount is distributed over various occasions in Mark and Luke, especially in the latter.

The Sermon on the Mount deserves that name only in Matthew, ch. V, 1: “Jesus went up onto a mountain.” In Luke, on the contrary, it is a sermon on the plain. In Luke VI, 12–16 Jesus is on a mountain with the Twelve. Then v. 17 states explicitly: “And coming down with the Twelve, Jesus stood on a level place … and said (v. 20): ‘Blessed are you,’ etc.”

The historical framework in which Matthew places the Sermon on the Mount is as follows: On a certain day (IV, 25; the tense of the verb in the original compels us to that description), crowds from Galilee and the Decapolis, and Jerusalem, and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan followed him; and seeing the crowds, Jesus went up onto a mountain, and when he had sat down, his disciples came to him, and he opened his mouth and was accustomed (that again is the force of the tense in which the verb stands in the

original)[1] to instruct them (his disciples) in this manner. Thereupon follows a discourse which lasts about a quarter of an hour and within that short span heaps together some hundred sayings of weighty content and connected with a great variety of subjects. Not a single one among them compels us to think of any hearers other than the disciples of v. 1. When that discourse has ended (VII, 28), the motley crowd of IV, 25 is astonished at his teaching. Furthermore, VI, 18 ff. can tell us that the disciples for whom the Sermon on the Mount was delivered numbered four, for according to Matthew at that time no other disciples had yet been chosen than Peter, Andrew, James, and John.

If anyone maintains that this is not a historical framework, I shall not contradict him. For very natural questions remain unanswered here. In the hearing of whom was the Sermon on the Mount delivered? For four disciples, according to V, 1 in connection with IV, 18 ff.; for as motley a collection of people as possible, according to VII, 28 in connection with IV, 25; how, then, could the crowds be astonished at a teaching which they had not heard? If one makes a choice, it does not help. Whether one imagines Jesus calling out the words of the Sermon on the Mount from the top of a mountain to the multitude, or imagines that multitude looking on from below while Jesus is engaged in imparting that great number of meaningful sayings to four men, the

one is just as difficult to imagine as the other. In the latter case one must even say that, for communications within a circle of intimates, of only four friends, the top of a mountain, with a great crowd at its foot, may be called a strangely chosen place. The historical framework of the Sermon on the Mount thus lacks all vividness.

[1] In Greek one has the distinction that in French is made between *imparfait* and *prétérit défini*. Thus one ought to translate IV, 25 into French as: *et une foule nombreuse le suivit*; V, 2 as: *il les instruisait*.

When we then take note of the following: When we then take note of the statement "he was accustomed to teach them in this way" of v. 2, to which we have already drawn attention, the first Gospel itself seems to be telling the attentive reader that it did not intend to report a discourse which Jesus delivered on a specific occasion.

The probability of this is increased when we attend to the general content of the Sermon on the Mount. Can an evangelist seriously have intended that Jesus should initiate four disciples—who had only shortly before been chosen—let alone an entire multitude, into his teaching in this manner? Certain details in the Sermon on the Mount itself, compared with other passages of this same Gospel, likewise seem hardly to argue that it was ever delivered in this way. If it was delivered thus, then Jesus from the very beginning appeared as one greater than Moses, as Israel's supreme lawgiver, that is: as the Messiah, and according to Matt. VII, 28, in connection with IV, 25, the whole of Palestine would at once have known this. But what, then, is the meaning of the fact that Jesus in Matt. VIII, 4; IX, 30, and even still in XII, 16 imposes the strictest secrecy upon those whom he has benefited with regard to his person or his work? Further: if it was delivered thus, then Jesus already at the beginning of his activity (V, 31, 32), with only one single reservation, condemned divorce. But what then is the meaning of the fact that the disciples still in Matt. XIX, 10 show themselves surprised by Jesus' condemnation of divorce in precisely the same words, and, as though hearing this judgment for the first time, exclaim: "If the case of the man with the woman is so, it is not expedient to marry"? Finally: if Jesus already uttered the admonition about cutting off the foot in Matt. V, 29 ff., then in Matt. XVIII, 8 he fell into a repetition.

Let us sum up our findings. What is the phenomenon that we observe here? A conflict between the letter and

the apparent intention of a communication. According to the letter, Jesus at the beginning of his activity, in the hearing of a great multitude, on a single occasion, uttered the entire Sermon on the Mount in uninterrupted sequence. But for the reasons adduced it is nevertheless not the intention that we should believe this. If we look for an explanation of this phenomenon, then two suppositions, though not with equal force, press themselves upon us. It is possible that the entire first Gospel is by a single hand, and that the author proceeded so thoughtlessly that he failed to notice the incoherence of his presentation, and was too lacking in historical artistry to

be able to remedy it. It is, however, equally possible that our first Gospel consists of a series of fragments, between which we must not seek coherence, and which a redactor has sometimes connected with one another in an awkward manner.

The latter supposition appears the more plausible here: first, in itself, because we more readily assume that a redactor, out of respect for his materials, grants them a place one after another—even if a less coherent whole results—than that an author, merely in order to highlight a single feature, first lets Jesus appear on a mountain-top in his full dignity, only to present him seven chapters later as averse to all publicity; secondly, because later on many other phenomena favor the same supposition.

One is thus led to the opinion that the redactor of the first Gospel had before him a document in which the Sermon on the Mount stood in its entirety. It may have been perfectly clear to that redactor, it may have become clear to him from the very nature of that document, that Jesus could not possibly have uttered the words of the Sermon on the Mount one after another. He lacked the data to distribute these words of Jesus in a reliable manner over Jesus' public life, found them too remarkable to omit, and

therefore decided to incorporate this portion of his document as a whole. It may have begun with the words (V, 2b): "Jesus was accustomed to teach in this manner," and may have ended with (VII, 27): "and its fall was great." Now he had to insert this fragment; for this purpose he wrote at the beginning V, 1, 2a: "And seeing the crowds, Jesus went up onto a mountain, etc.," and at the close the formula VII, 28, 29, which, like Mark (I, 22) and Luke (IV, 32), he borrowed from the common source of the Synoptics; then in Matt. VIII, 1 he took up again the main point of IV, 25 and continued from there. Let one reread the two latter verses in succession, Matt. IV, 25: "and many crowds followed him from Galilee, etc."; VIII, 1: "and many crowds followed him when he had come down from the mountain." The narrative, as one sees, proceeds regularly with the omission of V–VII, and the repetition of that report about the crowds following him is just what one must expect after a long interruption.

The circumstance that Luke communicates a number of sayings from our Sermon on the Mount one after another (VI, 20–49) naturally puts us in a position to test our supposition. If it turns out that Luke communicates a certain number of sayings, which are not mutually connected, in the same order in which they occur in Matthew, while from other phenomena it becomes clear that he has not simply excerpted the Gospel of Matthew, then we have therein the proof of the matter, and we may conclude with confidence: there must have been a collection of sayings from which both drew. Without this common source the agreement in order would be a pure coincidence, but such a coincidence would be far too great. Let one judge:

The Beatitudes: Matt. V, 3–12 and Luke VI, 20–26.

Love of humankind: Matt. V, 38–48 and Luke VI, 27–36.

Judging and measuring: Matt. VII, 1, 2 and Luke VI, 37, 38.

The splinter, etc.: Matt. VII, 3, 4 and Luke VI, 41, 42.

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Tree and fruits: Matt. VII, 15–20 and Luke VI, 43–45.

Calling “Lord, Lord”: Matt. VII, 21–23 and Luke VI, 46.

House on sandy ground, etc.: Matt. VII, 24–27 and Luke VI, 47–49.

As one perceives, the subjects are treated in the two Gospels in precisely the same order.

This phenomenon, however important it may be, cannot entirely satisfy us. Luke VI, 20–49 contains, as one has likewise observed, only a relatively small portion of the Sermon on the Mount. Other sayings, which in Matthew likewise stand in the Sermon on the Mount, nevertheless also occur in Luke, but in him in connection with various historical occasions or prompts. One might therefore reason as follows: If the Sermon on the Mount of Matthew was taken in its entirety from a collection of sayings, and if Luke owes his chapter VI, 20–49 to that same collection, then Luke must naturally have known that collection, and thus also have drawn from that collection everything else that he reports from the Sermon on the Mount; but how then does it come about that he does not, like Matthew, reproduce the entire content of the Sermon on the Mount at once? If he has a certain number of sayings in a specific historical connection, then that collection must either not have consisted of sayings alone or have remained unknown to Luke, in which case he must have drawn his knowledge of the words of the Sermon on the Mount from another source. But then, as is self-evident, Luke also cannot be adduced as a witness for the existence of such a collection of sayings alone.

The reasoning is flawless—provided that the connection in which Luke communicates those other words of the Sermon on the Mount is in fact a historical connection. This point therefore presents itself first for our investigation.

We therefore have to investigate—since our inquiries cannot extend further—whether those words in Luke fit into their context, or whether they make the impression of having been placed there arbitrarily, so that they might just as well have been included

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in the discourse Luke VI, 20–49.

The order in which we treat the words is that in which they occur in Matthew V–VII.

The first, then, is apparently Matt. V, 13. In Luke one reads it at XIV, 34, 35: “Salt is good; but if the salt has become tasteless, with what shall it be made tasty?” etc. The connection in Luke is this: Jesus urges upon his followers unconditional devotion to his person and his cause. No one

(v. 27) can be Jesus' disciple who does not wish to bear Jesus' cross. Therefore everyone who resolves upon this (vv. 28–32) must beforehand calculate the cost, that is: examine whether he is prepared for everything that the status of disciple demands. It is no small thing: the disciple must leave everything. Whoever does not do this (v. 33) "cannot be my disciple." "Salt is good," then immediately follows, etc.

Here there is unmistakably a connection between "salt is good, etc." and what immediately precedes. Jesus says, in other words: I have no use for a disciple who makes any reservation; he is salt that has become tasteless. But that there is a connection here we actually see completely clearly only when we take vv. 33 and 34 to be a saying that is not the same as Matthew V, 13: "You are the salt of the earth, etc.," so that this opening is not only absent here, but had to be absent. We shall later set out our reasons for this, and for the time being permit ourselves to leave this passage of Luke out of consideration.

The second saying that comes into consideration here is Matt. V, 15; in Luke VIII, 16: "And no one who lights a lamp covers it with a vessel," etc. In Luke this saying stands entirely on its own; it follows immediately after the parable of the sower. Moreover, it is significant that this same saying appears once again at Luke XI, 33, with insignificant changes, and there too stands entirely by itself. By this

the arbitrariness with which in the third Gospel certain sayings of the Sermon on the Mount are distributed over the whole preaching activity seems, as it were, to be caught in the very act.

The third is Matt. V, 18; in Luke XVI, 17: not one jot of the law shall fall; outside all connection with what precedes.

The fourth is Matt. V, 25, 26; in Luke XII, 58, 59: going with one's adversary before the authorities; outside all connection with what precedes.

The fifth is Matt. V, 32; in Luke XVI, 18: concerning divorce; outside all connection with what precedes.

The sixth is Matt. VI, 9–13; in Luke XI, 1–4: the Lord's Prayer. The final verses of chapter X (Jesus with Martha and Mary) have nothing to do with XI, 1. Then, without any transition, it follows (v. 1): "And it came to pass that while he was praying in a certain place, when he had ceased, one of his disciples said to him: Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples" (v. 2); "and he said to them: when you pray, say: Our Father," etc. Can one now maintain that with v. 1 a historical connection is given? If the disciples had need of a prayer formula, did that need first reveal itself only now, only so late? Previously we had heard nothing in any of the Gospels that John had taught his disciples to pray. Leaving this and that aside, at this moment the request "teach us to pray" seems less appropriate than ever. Jesus has just been praying in the company of his disciples; he will therefore hardly have prayed silently to himself. Was his example then not enough for them? Can one finally well imagine that someone is asked for a prayer formula and then, in response, proceeds into a prayer? As the matter is

communicated here, it almost has the appearance as though Jesus had counted beforehand on the question of the disciples. How much more probable is it that someone reads the Lord's Prayer in a collection of sayings;

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reflects to himself on the occasion from which that prayer may well have arisen; finds no answer to this in the history, and, equipped with a small measure of imagination, invents an occasion such as that of Luke XI, 1. The connection in which this portion of the Sermon on the Mount occurs in Luke is therefore forced, and as one may expect from someone who wishes to give a home somewhere to a self-contained saying or prayer.

The seventh is Matt. VI, 19–21; in Luke XII, 33, 34: concerning treasure in heaven; it stands in no historical connection.

The eighth is Matt. VI, 22, 23; in Luke XI, 34: the eye, the lamp of the body; outside all substantive connection with what precedes.

The ninth is Matt. VI, 24; in Luke XVI, 13: serving two masters; it stands in no historical connection. Preceding it is the parable of the unjust steward. "Make friends for yourselves from the unrighteous Mammon" (v. 9); "if then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous Mammon, who will entrust to you the true?" (v. 11). What, then, has v. 13 to do with this: "you cannot serve God and Mammon"? The fact that the word "Mammon" also occurred here has misled the writer. He did not see that Mammon in v. 13 has a wholly different meaning from v. 11, where, as is clear from v. 12, it is equivalent to the (often unjustly acquired) "property of others," a meaning that it cannot have in v. 13. If anything emerges from the never fully explicable parable of the unjust steward, it would rather be that one could unite the service of God and Mammon, namely in the sense of v. 11. This very fact compels us to attach to "Mammon" in v. 13 an entirely different meaning. Far from being connected with what precedes, v. 13 rather forms the transition to v. 14 (the money-loving Pharisees).

The tenth is Matt. VI, 25–34; in Luke XII, 22–31:

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not being concerned for earthly things; it stands in no historical connection and in no necessary connection with what precedes.

The eleventh is Matt. VII, 7–11; in Luke XI, 9–13: ask and you shall receive; it stands in no historical connection, but is not unhappily fastened by Luke to the parable of vv. 5–8. Such a connection, as is self-evident, is not necessary.

The twelfth is Matt. VII, 13, 14; in Luke XIII, 23 ff.: 'Enter through the narrow gate.' This is the only thing that the two Gospels have here in common (Luke, v. 24a). In Luke the whole runs as follows: 'And someone said to him: Lord, are there also few who are saved? And he said to them: Strive to enter through the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will

not be able; (namely) after the master of the house has risen and you begin … to knock at the door … and he will answer you: I do not know you …' In this connection—which already shows its forced character from the fact that "one" asks and Jesus answers not him but "them"—the narrow gate does not fit at all. Those who remain outside remain outside; yet not because the gate is narrow, but because it is shut. Here too Luke has been misled by the word: door or gate. The original uses the same word for the gate that is narrow and for the door at which one knocks.

Our investigation is concluded. Among these twelve passages from the Sermon on the Mount—or eleven, if Luke XIV, 34–35 is not counted—scattered through the third Gospel, there is not a single one that is connected with any historical event; there are many that stand just as much on their own as in Matt. V–VII, others that do not fit into the context in which they occur.

In Mark one finds three sayings from the Sermon on the Mount (IX, 43, 45, 47 and 50 and IV, 21 and 24a); they stand in no historical connection whatsoever. If one takes into account that even the first Gospel (XVIII, 8 and XIX, 9) communicates words of the Sermon on the Mount

outside the context of that sermon—which proves that individual words of the Sermon on the Mount had remained known without one's knowing them precisely as parts of this whole—then what we observe in Mark likewise seems to argue in favor of the supposition that the Sermon on the Mount once existed separately as a collection of sayings of Jesus. If, on the other hand, we had to assume that the words which are now found in the Sermon on the Mount originally occurred, in the notes of that time, in one or another historical connection, but were lifted out of that connection by the author or the redactor of the first Gospel and united into a single whole, then one would, in my opinion, be entitled to expect both that Luke would have preserved for us more words in their historical connection and that Mark would have communicated more words which are now found in the Sermon on the Mount. It is easier to assume that an entire collection of sayings remained unknown to Mark and that he therefore has so little from the Sermon on the Mount, than that he would deliberately have omitted the words which are now found in the Sermon on the Mount and of which he then also knew that they belonged to the synoptic tradition.

What we observe in Mark thus gains weight in this way. If we could compare only Matthew and Luke here, we would have to remain uncertain with regard to the question whether the discourse that in Matthew has grown into the Sermon on the Mount is not found in its original form in Luke VI, 20–49, so that Matthew would then have supplemented that discourse with those twelve sayings of Jesus which we have just cited from various sections of the third Gospel. Now, by contrast, an affirmative answer to that question must appear to us very improbable. For if those twelve sayings from the beginning had been connected with their present surroundings, one cannot easily explain how ten of them remained unknown to Mark.

We must now consider our supposition from another side. If it does not contain the truth; if, on the contrary, we assume that the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew is the later reworking of a discourse which in its original or approximately original form is found again in Luke VI, 20–49, then Luke VI, 20–49 must nevertheless have the appearance of indeed being a discourse that could have been delivered consecutively; then they must both fit into the historical framework in which the third Gospel has placed them, and display an inner coherence, and correspond to the situation of the moment. From this threefold point of view we therefore now have to examine Luke VI, 20–49 more closely.

The historical framework in which the third Gospel places these verses is the following: Jesus goes out to the mountain to pray (v. 12). Which mountain is not said. He remains there "all night in prayer to God." When it has become day, he calls his disciples to himself and chooses twelve of them, whom he also named apostles (v. 13). How and from where did Jesus call those disciples to himself? Did he descend from the mountain for this purpose? It may well be so. But then one must assume that Jesus immediately went back up the mountain with them again, for in v. 17 we read: "And Jesus, having come down with them." Jesus must then have deemed it necessary that the choosing of the twelve should take place precisely on top of that mountain, and for that reason have deliberately climbed that mountain. This is hard to understand. The narrative therefore certainly did not intend to let Jesus go down and up again in such quick succession, and that only in order to choose twelve apostles. But if Jesus thus remained on the mountain where he had spent the night, then one again does not understand how Jesus there simply had to call his disciples (in general, for twelve still had to be chosen) in order to have them immediately with him.

How are we now further to make the matter vivid to ourselves? Jesus finds himself with a certain number of disciples on top of the mountain. From among them he chooses twelve, and with these twelve (v. 17) he descends to the plain. Where now did those rejected disciples remain? Imagine Jesus surrounded by an entire crowd of men, selecting twelve from among them, going off with these, while the others—certainly not an enviable position—remain behind for a moment and then may seek their own way. In passing we note that this, if it is to be called history, casts a very peculiar light on Jesus' character. We nevertheless doubt whether it is history. Mark at any rate does not know this representation. He has Jesus (III, 13) call to himself "those whom he wished, and he appointed twelve." Here one may therefore assume that Jesus called no one whom he did not intend to appoint as an apostle.

Be that as it may, those rejected disciples of v. 13 do not seem to have become embittered. At least in v. 17 there stands a crowd of people as well as a great multitude of disciples in the plain into which Jesus has descended. Miracles of healing take place (vv. 18 and 19), and thereupon immediately follows v. 20: "and lifting up his eyes over his disciples, he said: blessed are you poor," etc.

Is this now indeed a historical connection? Another discourse might have followed here. Where the discourse was delivered we do not learn. For the time being we must content ourselves with

the “level place” of v. 17, since only at VII, 1 do we learn that we are outside Capernaum. That the crowd of disciples followed him down from the mountain-top we must conjecture. How can someone be thought to lift up his eyes precisely over twelve persons when he is surrounded by “a great multitude of people”? What does it mean that this great multitude—according to VII, 1 assembled just outside Capernaum—is not from Capernaum itself, but “from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon”;

leaving aside the strange geographical designation: “from all Judea and Jerusalem”? It is as if someone were to say: from all Gelderland and Arnhem!—That great multitude has come from so far away in order to hear him. And where do they now find him? At Capernaum? In a synagogue? No, precisely at the foot of the mountain which Jesus had climbed the previous evening in order to pray. How did that great multitude know that they would find Jesus precisely there; how did they know it with such certainty that they did not hesitate to bring the sick and the possessed there? Even if the entire account of Luke VI, 12–19 is credible—which, in view of the objections advanced, one need not deny—in no case is it of such a nature that we arrive at the conclusion: here and nowhere else must the discourse vv. 20–49 have been delivered. In no case can there be any question here of a historical connection.

How then does the matter stand with the inner coherence of the discourse? We give a list of the topics treated in their order:

Blessings and threats	vs.	20–26
Love of enemies	vs.	27, 28
Forgiving disposition	vs.	29, 30
Love of humankind	vs.	31
Unselfishness	vs.	32–34
Love of enemies and unselfishness	vs.	35
(partly a repetition of vv. 27 and 34)		
Imitation of God’s mercy	vs.	36
Warnings against judging nd condemning	vs.	37
Warnings against stinginess	vs.	38
Warnings against trusting false leaders (parable)	vs.	39

Warnings against self-exaltation	vs.	40
Warnings against captiousness and elf-blindness	vs.	41, 42
Him who acts well, I must also call good	vs.	43
One may expect nothing from anyone that does not accord with his disposition	vs.	44

A person's speech betrays his inner being	vs.	45
The obligation imposed on us by our recognition of Jesus as Lord	vs.	46
The fate of him who does Jesus' words and of him who casts them to the wind	vs.	47–49

Within this short compass the discourse returns twice to a subject already treated (see v. 35 compared with v. 27, and v. 41 compared with v. 37). A strange "but" forms the transition between vv. 26 and 27 ("woe to you when all people speak well of you … but I say to you: love your enemies"). After v. 30 has already said: give to everyone who asks of you, and from him who takes what is yours do not demand it back, one scarcely expects a command of much narrower scope, such as that of v. 35: lend, hoping for nothing in return. At v. 39 the discourse is suddenly interrupted by the statement: "And he said to them a parable." That parable then fills only a single verse; it is followed by a saying that stands entirely on its own, but parable and saying do not prevent the discourse in v. 41 from returning to the thought of four verses earlier. That v. 43, v. 44, and v. 45 each treat a different subject would immediately be apparent, were it not that by chance trees or fruits are mentioned in each verse; these verses therefore follow one another as detached sayings. If one wished to force them together under the viewpoint that here we are being instructed about the standard of judging, then they are difficult to reconcile with the absolute prohibition of judging in v. 37. That vv. 46–49 stand in no logical connection whatsoever with v. 45 would again immediately be apparent, were it not that v. 45 speaks of a mouth and vv. 46–49 of words. Between v. 46 and the conclusion there is likewise no necessary connection. When someone has exposed the absurdity of calling him Lord and nevertheless showing him no obedience, he does not on that account still need to speak about the blessings attached to that obedience.

Let it be well borne in mind that our investigation here does not concern the question whether Jesus ever uttered similar detached sayings one after another: who could tell us that?—but only the question whether Luke VI, 20–49 is so edited that we may see in it nothing other than the report of a continuous discourse of Jesus. And then we answer: if such a discourse were presented here, of which Matt. V–VII would then contain the expansion, then in all probability precisely with respect to inner coherence the difference between those chapters of Matthew and Luke VI, 20–49 would strike the eye, and this difference would argue entirely in favor of the originality of the latter verses. This, however, is not the case. When I read: "But I say to you: love your enemies," I understand this "but" better in Matthew (V, 44), where it follows upon: "You have heard that it was said: … you shall hate your enemy," than in Luke (VI, 27), where it comes after the assurance that the flattery of people brings us no more happiness than it brought to the false prophets. Luke VI, 31: "as you wish that people should do to you, etc.," does not cohere with v. 30 any better than Matt. VII, 12 does with v. 11. In v. 30 Luke says namely that I must not demand back what was taken from me. I can refrain from this out of excessive generosity, but never on the basis of the consideration that I, having myself stolen something, would find it agreeable if no one made any claim against me. Insofar as I am generous, I cannot conceive myself in the situation of having taken something from another. Matt. VII, 3, "the splinter," stands better in its place with the command concerning judging than Luke VI, 41 after the statement: the disciple is not above his master. The sayings about the tree and its fruits are relatively better in their place in Matthew (VII, 16 ff.) than in Luke (VI, 43). The description of the fate of those who do not do Jesus' words is in Matthew linked

to the warning against the mere calling "Lord! Lord!" by v. 22 (note "on that day"); in Luke this transition is lacking.

From all this we by no means infer that Matt. V–VII is a coherent whole, but that, if these chapters are not so, Luke VI, 20–49 can be so even less, whereas, according to the supposition that we are contesting, in Luke VI, 20–49 precisely more coherence ought to be perceptible than in Matt. V–VII.

We do not, however, yet wish to regard the case as won, but, in order to decide the question whether in Luke VI, 20–49 we truly possess the report of a discourse of Jesus, to examine whether that alleged discourse, as regards its content, corresponds to the situation of the moment at which it is supposed to have been delivered.

Jesus in Luke VI, 19 is surrounded by all manner of foreign people. According to Luke VII, 1 he delivered his discourse in the hearing of that assembly, therefore to people from Tyre, from Sidon, from Judea, who probably then saw his face for the first time. Many a word of the discourse was clearly intended for the multitude; thus the threefold woe to the rich, the satisfied, the laughing. All the ethical admonitions, vv. 27–49, are general enough to be capable of being addressed to all. Has Jesus therefore spoken to the multitude? One nevertheless hesitates to

affirm it. To what end is it expressly reported at the beginning of this discourse that Jesus lifted up his eyes over his disciples, if he did not address the word to them in particular? And can the beatitudes be regarded as having been a fitting instruction for such a mixed audience, among whom there were even persons who only shortly before had been possessed by the devil? The discourse therefore is not altogether such as one would expect where disciples and a great multitude of people are listening.

Jesus speaks here undeniably in a prophetic manner. He reads in the future. He already has clearly before his mind the time in

which (v. 22) people separate themselves from his followers and hate them, indeed in which the name of those followers—thus a common name: the Christian name or that of Nazarene?—"is rejected as evil." He, for whom the future thus lay open, had just before chosen Judas Iscariot, "who also became the traitor" (v. 16). The discourse therefore is not such as one would expect from someone who at that time apparently still did not foresee this betrayal.

Jesus asks (v. 46): "why do you call me Lord, Lord! and do not do what I say?" Does this not presuppose an experience of sham Christianity which Jesus could scarcely yet have acquired at that time? Could there already then have been many who called him Lord, Lord, and yet refused him obedience?

Taken by themselves, such considerations would lie outside our framework, since the investigation with which this treatise is concerned does not have immediate reference to the credibility of our Gospels. We nevertheless had to bring these considerations forward here, because they are of importance for the question whether Luke VI, 20–49 presents itself as the original of which Matt. V–VII would be the reworking.

We are at the end of our argument and now sum it up.

Before us lay Matt. V–VII. Read attentively, in connection with IV, 25, they announced themselves as not fitting into the historical framework in which the first Gospel has placed them. The supposition therefore lay at hand: those chapters were originally a collection of sayings, which collection was here simply interpolated. That supposition was then tested against Luke VI, 20–49, the Sermon on the Mount, so to speak, in miniature. It was then observed the absolute identity of the order in which the subjects are treated in Matthew and Luke; an identity which would be the greatest coincidence if Matthew freely compiled words of Jesus from all parts of the synoptic tradition, while Luke, on the other hand, gave the historical report of a specific discourse. This led us to see in Luke VI, 20–49 nothing other than an excerpt from the document that has been preserved for us in Matt. V–VII. But before this could be asserted with full right, account had to be taken of the words from the Sermon on the Mount which occur in Luke elsewhere than VI, 20–49. If it should turn out that those words in him stand in a historical connection from which they cannot be lifted except by violence, then it would at the same time

appear that many words of the Sermon on the Mount had been woven into the synoptic tradition, and that therefore Matthew

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too would in all probability have been able to draw them from that tradition. An investigation of the context of the twelve words from the Sermon on the Mount which Luke communicates outside VI, 20–49 convinced us that they nowhere hang inseparably together with their surroundings, with the result that proof was furnished that Luke too may have derived them from a collection of sayings. The existence of such a collection was further rendered more probable by what we observed in Mark. His absolute silence concerning the Sermon on the Mount, with the exception of a couple of sayings which could just as well as Matt. XVIII, 8 ff. and XIX, 9 have remained preserved in the synoptic tradition, was more easily explained if one assumed that the Sermon on the Mount was originally a self-standing collection of sayings which by chance did not belong to the sources of Mark, than if one assumed that the various parts of the Sermon on the Mount had originally been connected with various parts of the synoptic tradition and were therefore deliberately omitted by Mark. However little Mark may have been inclined to portray Jesus as a teacher, he could scarcely, save for two, have silently passed over all the words of the Sermon on the Mount if he had in fact encountered them repeatedly on his way.

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If by this it was proved that in Luke VI, 20–49 one must see an excerpt from the document preserved in Matt. V–VII, then the proof of the matter still had to be taken. This was done when it was shown that Luke VI, 20–49 neither coheres with what precedes it, nor possesses inner coherence, nor is such as one would expect from a discourse of Jesus at that moment and for that audience.

Now we know only this— a knowing that always remains a knowing in the historical sphere and therefore can never be accompanied by certainty, but only by a high degree of probability—now we know only that an independent Collection of sayings once existed.

“But,” one may perhaps say, “this does not carry us much further. Even if the first Gospel incorporated the Sermon on the Mount in its entirety as an already existing compilation of sayings of Jesus, the person who earlier made this compilation must nevertheless have drawn the materials for it from the tradition concerning Jesus’ teaching. The difficulty is therefore only shifted. If the original collector drew them from different parts of that tradition, then Mark must nevertheless have known the words of the Sermon on the Mount that occurred in that tradition, and therefore, since he did not reproduce them, must have deliberately omitted them—whereby the argument that was just built on Mark’s silence would fall away; but then Luke too could have found them in the same parts of the tradition and need not have known them solely from that Collection which Matt. V–VII took over.”

The objection, however, loses its force as soon as one points out that the proposition: “the original collector must have compiled the words of the Sermon on the Mount from the tradition

concerning Jesus' teaching," is a wholly unproven assumption. What does one know about that? The Gospels tell us nothing convincing about it. The first Gospel simply acquaints us with a Collection of sayings:

Matt. V, 3–VII, 27. From whom those sayings originate, the Collection itself does not tell us. The heading V, 2b merely states that Jesus usually taught in this way. The redactor of the first Gospel ascribes them to Jesus (Matt. V, 1, 2a), but this statement is not a priori reliable, since it is inseparably connected with a historical framework which, upon closer investigation, presents itself rather as an embellishment to which we must not attach great weight. Luke likewise ascribes them to Jesus, but his statement too is, for the same reason—namely because of the difficulties that also cling to his historical framework (Luke VI, 12–19)—not able to silence all doubt. According to Mark, Jesus, with two exceptions, uttered not a single word of the Sermon on the Mount. We may therefore rather reason the other way round and say: if the Sermon on the Mount was originally the work of a compiler—that is, if its various parts had originally been connected with different historical moments in the life of Jesus—then that collector would nevertheless have had great difficulty in detaching them from that connection; then in the three Gospels certain gaps would still bear witness to that disturbed connection; then, finally, Mark would not, save for two, have remained unacquainted with all the words of the Sermon on the Mount.

When now no evangelist tells us convincingly: "the Sermon on the Mount contains a compilation of sayings of Jesus"; when one of the three evangelists, Mark, indirectly—namely by his silence—seems to say that in the synoptic tradition no words of Jesus occurred such as those of the Sermon on the Mount, then I cannot but call it rash to designate Matt. V, 3–VII, 27 without further proof as a compilation of detached sayings of Jesus. Moreover, if Jesus in the main uttered the Sermon on the Mount consecutively, how then did Luke know this so little that he arrogated to himself the right to fragment it? If Jesus uttered the words of the Sermon on the Mount on various occasions,

how can it then have come about that we can discover none of those occasions either in Luke or in Mark; that we are never once (not even Matt. XIX, 3–12 or XVIII, 8 ff.) compelled to exclaim: yes, here this or that word from the Sermon on the Mount must have been uttered by Jesus?

If, therefore, the phenomena observed do not compel us to see in Matt. V, 3–VII, 27 a Collection of sayings that flowed from Jesus' lips on one or more occasions, then it will be permissible for us—especially also with a view to Matt. V, 2b ("he usually taught them")—for the time being to see in it a free composition, drawn up in order to acquaint us, in the form of a discourse of Jesus, with the character of his teaching. Individual words of Jesus, some of which were preserved by the synoptic tradition, others lost to it, may, although in very modest proportions, have been taken up into that composition.

We must now draw attention to a series of new phenomena, upon the evaluation of which the final judgment concerning this our supposition will depend.

We must namely carefully examine the redactions of Matthew and Luke, and begin by listing all the variants, regardless of whether they appear important to us or not. The words in which the difference consists we print in italics, and general remarks follow after each pericope:

1°. In Matthew (V, 3–11) nine beatitudes; in Luke[1] only four (VI, 20–22).

2°. In M. it remains with the beatitudes; in L. there corresponds to them a fourfold woe.

3°. In M. the beatitudes, with the exception

of the last, are in the third person; in L. all without distinction are in the second person.

4°. In M. blessed are the poor in spirit; in L. the poor.

5°. In M. blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness; in L. those who now hunger.

6°. In M. blessed are those who are in mourning; in L. those who now weep.

7°. In M. the mourners shall be comforted; in L. they shall laugh.

8°. V. 5 of M. (“blessed are the meek”) is lacking in L.

9°. V. 7 of M. (“blessed are the merciful”) is lacking in L.

10°. V. 8 of M. (“blessed are the pure in heart”) is lacking in L.

11°. V. 9 of M. (“blessed are the peacemakers”) is lacking in L.

12°. In M. Jesus says: blessed are you when they revile and persecute you and, lying, speak all evil against you for my sake; in L. … when people hate you and exclude you and revile you and cast out your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man.

13°. V. 10 of M. (“blessed are those who are persecuted”) is lacking in L.

14°. In M.: “rejoice and be glad” (the same word as John VIII, 56 or 1 Peter I, 8), “for your reward is great in the heavens; for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you”; in L.: “rejoice on that day and leap [for joy]” (the same word as Luke I, 41); “for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for their fathers did likewise to the prophets.”

General remarks.

I. The redaction of Matthew appears in this section to be later than that of Luke:

a. because the former is longer;

b. because certain additions in M. seem intended to soften the harsh, paradoxical character of the beatitudes as they read in L., to make them more acceptable, and to bring out their moral character more strongly;

c. because the fourfold Woe is

absent in M., an omission which perhaps is connected with a condition of the Christian community in which one could no longer so unconditionally break the staff over people who were rich, satisfied, and held in general esteem;

d. because M. already speaks of persecutions, which L. does not do in so many words;

e. because the ill-treatment which in Luke takes place for the sake of the Son of Man—that is, for the sake of the Messiah, whom nothing here absolutely compels us already to identify with Jesus—takes place in M. "for my sake";

f. because M. already calls the prophets the forerunners of the apostles ("who were before you"), whereas L. here simply recalls the prophets, just as v. 26 recalls the false prophets, in order to indicate that ill-treatment and praise are no standard by which the moral worth of the person who is their object is decided;

g. because M. twice commends gentleness or peaceableness (of which L. does not speak) (vv. 5 and 9), which leads one to suppose that M. had before him a situation in which the harmony of the community already left something to be desired;

h. because perhaps the addition *of spirit* after *poor* may have had its reason in the circumstance that people had already begun to speculate about Christian truth;

i. because the sudden appearance of the second person plural in Matt. V, 11 seems to point to the existence of an earlier redaction in which (as Luke VI, 20 shows by comparison) all the beatitudes were in that person.

II. Nine phenomena, therefore, which lead us to regard the redaction of M. **in this section** as later than that of L., and, to my knowledge, not a single phenomenon alongside of opposite tendency. If thereby the relative priority of L. in this section is determined, something further in that redaction allows us to go still a step beyond. V. 22: "blessed … when they cast out your name as evil" seems to point to a time

in which the followers of Jesus already bore a common name and were known among "people" under this name, which most probably only began to be the case about the year 116 or 117. In v. 23, by "their fathers," the Jews are already placed on a level with "people," the world hostile to the Gospel. For it was not the fathers of people in general (to which grammatically, here as well as in v. 26, the possessive pronoun "their" refers back) who had reviled the prophets, but the

fathers of the Jews. This identification of the hostile world with the people of Israel seems to point to a time when Israel's conversion was already despaired of.

III. If the difference between the redaction of Matthew and that of Luke here is so great that it makes us think of their mutually different dating, and if even the older redaction, that of Luke, has peculiarities that can only be explained from situations which were not yet present during Jesus' life, then for this section of the Sermon on the Mount the question is doubly justified: What did Jesus actually teach? We are then not dealing with reports of contemporaries, who perhaps might a priori be supposed to supplement one another. The answer has already been given with what precedes and can be no other than this: we do not know. If one accepts the credibility of the two Gospels, then the uncertainty is complete on many an important point. Am I blessed merely because I am poor and hungry, or because I am poor in spirit and hunger for righteousness? Did Jesus condemn wealth, satiety, laughter, or did he not do so? If one does not accept that credibility a priori, then one has two mutually strongly divergent reports, of unequal date, of which the older

bears traces of having been redacted almost a century after Christ's activity, and the later betrays a need for amplification. Under such circumstances no one will find it strange that the thought arises whether the Sermon on the Mount may also be a free composition, which acquaints us with someone's conception of Jesus' teaching; a composition which we even possess (Matt. V–VII and Luke VI) in two redactions, which arose relatively long after one another and thus already display that conception to us in its historical development.

But we proceed to a new series of variants.

1°. In M.: "you are the salt of the earth"; lacking in L. (XIV, 34a).

2°. In L.: "the salt is good"; lacking in M.: V, 13a.

3°. In M.: "with what shall the tasteless salt be salted"; in L.: "prepared."

4°. In M.: "it is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled by people"; in L.: "it is fit neither for the land nor for the manure heap; they throw it out" (cf. Mark IX, 50).

5°. V. 14 of M. ("you are the light of the world, etc.") is lacking in L.

6°. In M.: "Nor do they light a lamp and set it under the bushel, but on the lampstand, and it shines to all who are in the house"; in L. (VIII, 16): "No one, having lit a lamp" (the same verb as Exodus XXX, 8 in the Septuagint, not literally translated from the Hebrew) "covers it with a vessel or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a lampstand, so that those who enter may see the light"; again in L. (XI, 33): "No one, having lit a lamp, puts it in a hidden place or under a bushel, but on …" In Mark IV, 21 one finds the "bushel" and the "bed" combined.

7°. Vv. 16, 17 of M. (“let your light shine” and “no abolishing of law or prophets”) are lacking in L.

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8°. In M.: “Truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one iota or one tittle of the law shall pass away, until all has come to pass”; in L.: “It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fall.”

9°. Vv. 19–24 of M. are lacking in L.

10°. In M.: “Be quickly reconciled with your adversary while you are still with him on the way, lest the adversary perhaps hand you over to the judge, and the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison”; in L. (XII, 58): “For as you are going with your adversary to the authority, be diligent on the way to be released from him, lest he perhaps drag you before the judge, and the judge hand you over to the collector, and the collector throw you into prison.”

11°. In M.: “Truly, I say to you, you will by no means come out of there until you have paid the last farthing (= two pennies, according to Mark XII, 42)”; in L.: “I say to you, you will by no means come out of there until you have paid the last penny.”

12°. Vv. 27, 28 of M. are lacking in L.

13°. Vv. 29, 30 of M. (cutting off of hand, etc.), which occur once again in M. (XVIII, 8–9) and, since they are likewise read in Mark IX, 43, 45, 47 (precisely in the latter two places with “the foot,” which does not occur in M. V, 29, 30), could have been connected with the synoptic tradition, are lacking in L.

14°. V. 31 of M. (certificate of divorce) is lacking in L.

15°. In M.: “But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife, except for the cause of fornication, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries the divorced woman commits adultery”; again in M. XIX, 9: “I say to you that whoever divorces his wife except for fornication and marries another commits adultery, and everyone who marries the woman divorced from her husband commits adultery.”

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16°. Vv. 33–39a of M. (oath, eye for eye, resisting the evil one) are lacking in L.

17°. In M.: “But whoever strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him also the other; and if someone wants to go to law with you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak also”; in L.: “to him who strikes you on the cheek, offer also the other; and from him who takes your cloak, do not withhold your tunic.” In the original as well there is difference in choice of words and sentence structure. The sentence structure of v. 40, however, corresponds with that of Luke VI,

29a. In Luke the cloak comes first.

18°. V. 41 of M. (“go two miles”) is lacking in L. (the word “compel” here the same as M. XXVII, 32 and Mark XV, 21).

19°. In M.: “Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you”; in L.: “But give to everyone who asks of you; and from him who takes what is yours, do not demand it back.” In the original as well the sentence structure is the same.

20°. V. 43 in M. (“you have heard that it was said … you shall hate your enemy”) is lacking in L. The saying is nowhere to be found in the Old Testament.

21°. In M.: “But I say to you: love your enemies, bless those who persecute you” (according to the best manuscripts no more stands in v. 44); in L.: “But I say to you who hear: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you; bless those who curse you, and pray for those who mistreat you.”

22°. In M.: “so that you may become sons of your Father who is in the heavens; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous”; in L.: “and you will be sons of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.”

23°. In M.: “For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? do not even the tax collectors do the same? and if you greet only your brothers, what extraordinary thing do you do?”

“Do not even the Gentiles do the same?”
In Luke: “And if you love those who love you, what thanks have you? for even sinners love those who love them; and if you do good to those who do good to you, what thanks have you? for even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive in return, what thanks have you? for even sinners lend to sinners, in order that they may receive back the same. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return, and your reward shall be great.”

24°. In M.: “You therefore shall be perfect, as your Father in the heavens is perfect”; in L.: “Be therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.”

General remarks. The evaluation of the variants in this section is more complicated than that of the preceding ones. We first go through the passages that Luke does not have at all, and examine whether they can be brought under general points of view and thus give us some information concerning the relative age of the two redactions.

I. Luke does not have:

Matt. V, 13 (“you are the salt”).
Matt. V, 14 (“you are the light”).
Matt. V, 16 (“let your light shine”).

Here is the place to return to an earlier assertion (see above p. 129). In my opinion—which I must now try to make plausible—the saying Luke XIV, 34 and 35 is not the same as Matt. V, 13. The latter is distinguished by the fact that it begins with “You are the salt of the earth.” In Luke the true disciple is described. That by which he is fit as a follower of Jesus is unconditional surrender. That complete surrender is the salt by which he becomes palatable, usable for Jesus. If he lacks that absolute devotion, nothing can make him palatable, that is,

useful. In Matthew, on the other hand, the world is described. That by which it is preserved from corruption is the presence in its midst of the disciples of Jesus. That presence is the salt by which it does not decay. If the salt were to cease to be salt, there would be no other salt with which to salt the world, to preserve it from rot and destruction. One therefore feels that the saying in Matthew could excellently begin with “You are the salt of the earth,” but the saying in Luke could not, since in Luke it is not the band of disciples, the salt of the world, but their own complete devotion that is their salt. But now one also realizes that in M. it had to read: “with what shall it be salted,” in L.: “with what shall it be prepared or made palatable.” In M. the point was the warding off of all corruption; in L. the point was the making edible or usable power of salt. Both sayings yield a good sense, but the two sayings, by virtue of their different meanings, have nothing in common with one another. On this ground we may declare that Matt. V, 13 is not found in Luke.

It cannot be accidental that precisely Matt. V, 13, 14, 16 are lacking in Luke. From the absence of these verses I infer that Matthew’s redaction of the collection of sayings is **here again** later. When in a New Testament writing such a high rank is ascribed to Jesus’ disciples as happens here; when they are praised as the salt of the earth, as the light of the world, as no less unmistakable in their moral exaltation than a city on the top of a mountain; when the beholding of their conduct is represented as sufficient to move “people” to the glorification of God—then such a writing naturally gives rise to the suspicion of being here of later date than a work in which

the praise of the apostles is not yet pitched so high. It could therefore very well be that Luke did not omit Matt. V, 13, 14, 16, but that they did not occur at all in the original Collection of sayings and were only added to it by the person who gave this Collection the form that has been preserved for us in Matt. V–VII. The redaction which we possess in the third Gospel would then have been made at a time when the exaltation of Jesus’ first apostles had not yet been raised to such a height. In the abstract, however, one might also think that Luke’s redaction was here the later one, namely that it deliberately omitted the verses in question in order to counteract that exaltation of the first apostles. If the question can be decided, it will only be possible to decide it

at the end of our entire investigation concerning the Sermon on the Mount, when it will then have become apparent from all the phenomena taken together to which of the two redactions we may ascribe the greater originality.—Further, Luke does not have:

Matt. V, 17 ("no abolition of law and prophets").
Matt. V, 19 ("the fate of those who abolish the least commandment").
Matt. V, 20 ("righteousness more abundant than that of the scribes").

These three texts may have formed part of the original Collection of sayings, because they, especially the first two, stand in close connection with Matt. V, 18, which is also read in the third Gospel (XVI, 17). Matt. V, 17 then places us in a time when the party struggle on one side made that "do not think" desirable. The redaction of that Collection which has been preserved in Luke has, as we suspect, deliberately omitted Matt. V, 17, 19, 20. One is led to this suspicion when one observes that Luke XVI, 17 does indeed have the saying Matt. V, 18,

but in somewhat less strong wording. In Matthew Jesus testifies in the most solemn manner: "Truly I say to you: until heaven and earth pass away, not one iota nor one tittle of the law shall pass away, until all has come to pass." That "truly, I say to you" drops out in Luke XVI, 17. More simply: "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fall." If the saying V, 18 stands both in Matthew and in Luke, then it must have stood in the Collection itself. If it reads somewhat stronger in Matthew, then it lies close at hand to seek the original form in him. But when Luke has then somewhat softened that form, and, already by not communicating it in the context of the discourse VI, 20–49, has given it a less conspicuous place, and when we finally must judge that Matt. V, 17, 19, 20 contain nothing that does not logically cohere with v. 18, then the conjecture is certainly not too bold that the redaction of the Collection of sayings which we now possess in the third Gospel deliberately omitted Matt. V, 17, 19, 20.

One can also suppose that the original collection contained only Matt. V, 18 = Luke XVI, 17, and that Matt. V, 17, 19, 20 were added to it by a redactor. But then that redactor would again have to be distinguished from the person who finally gave the Collection the form in which we now possess Matt. V–VII. This necessity becomes apparent from what now follows. Luke namely does not have:

Matt. V, 21–24 ("you have heard that it was said to the ancients," etc.).
Matt. V, 27, 28 idem.
Matt. V, 31 idem.
Matt. V, 33–37 idem.
Matt. V, 43 idem.

These are precisely all the passages from Matthew V that begin with 'you have heard that it was said to the ancients.' Luke therefore has none of those passages in which the relation between Jesus' teaching and the law is further unfolded. It seems to me self-evident to regard all these

passages concerning the full significance of the law as coming from the same writer or redactor as Matthew V, 17, 19, 20, where the authority of the law is discussed—especially because v. 20 ('unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes') forms a kind of transition to Matthew V, 21 ff. It thus appears that we must either ascribe all eight of the last-mentioned passages, which are lacking in Luke—Matthew V, 17, 19, 20, 21–24, 27, 28, 31, 33–37, 43—together to the original collection, or regard them as coming from the hand of a later redactor. But then that redactor can hardly be the final one, since in Matthew V, 21–24 etc. features occur which guarantee these sayings a high antiquity. These features are three in number: Matthew V, 22: 'whoever says to his brother, "empty fellow (raka)!" shall be liable to the council'; V, 24: 'first be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift'; V, 34, 35: 'do not swear at all … neither by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King.' All this must have been written before the destruction of city and temple, unless one should wish to assume that a much later redactor invented these features in order to give the whole more the appearance of having actually been spoken by Jesus. This is by no means absolutely impossible, since the complete absence elsewhere in the Sermon on the Mount of anything that recalls a particular place or a particular time could have struck a later redactor just as much as it strikes us now. But since this phenomenon stands by itself, we do not have

sufficient data to venture such an assumption. It therefore lies more at hand to see in the cited features real indications of relatively high antiquity, so that only the question remains whether they belong merely to the earliest redactor, reworker, or indeed already to the original Collection itself. And then the latter is again the more probable, since otherwise we would have to push the time of the origin of the Collection too far back, which reasons will prevent that will become clear from the course of this entire investigation.

Insofar, therefore, as a choice can be made here among various possibilities, we assume that Matthew V, 17, 19, 20, 21–24, 27, 28, 31, 33–37, 43 stood in the original Collection of sayings.

With v. 31 (Moses' permission to give a bill of divorce), however, v. 32 (no divorce at all, with one exception) is connected. It is now noteworthy, and a confirmation of our view, that we find v. 32 again in Luke, but outside the context of the discourse VI, 20–49 and much more in agreement with the redaction of that saying as we find it in Matthew XIX, 9 rather than as we find it in Matthew V, 32. In this latter place the redaction is very defective. It had been said: you may dismiss your wife, but you must give her a certificate of it. Jesus is now supposed to say: if you dismiss her, then you make her commit adultery. Why? If the dismissed woman remains unmarried, one can hardly accuse her of adultery. This 'then you make her commit adultery' Matthew XIX, 9—as we have seen (p. 149)—omits, and puts in its place: if you dismiss your wife and marry another, then you commit adultery. Here there is logical coherence. In the synoptic tradition this saying was therefore preserved as a saying of Jesus in an intelligible form. Would it then not be possible that a redactor

of the original Collection removed this saying from that Collection because he encountered it in the synoptic tradition in that better form; that this was the first occasion for him to omit that formula 'you have heard that it was said to the ancients,' and that he finally came to omit all the sayings that began with the same formula even where the coherence of a saying (as Luke VI, 27 following Matthew V, 43, 44) had to suffer as a result? Naturally nothing can be decided here, but the phenomenon nevertheless seemed to me important enough to draw attention to it briefly, all the more since that redactor, in the supposed case, nevertheless supplemented the saying as he learned it from the synoptic tradition (see Matthew XIX, 9) with the saying as it stands in Matthew V, 32. After he had written, namely, just as in Matthew XIX, 9: if you dismiss your wife and marry another, then you commit adultery, he adds what Matthew XIX, 9 does not, but Matthew V, 32 does have: he who marries the dismissed woman—thus marries her who must still be regarded as a married woman—he too commits adultery. Does not the double circumstance, that he replaces the first defective part of Matthew V, 32 with the better Matthew XIX, 9 and then expresses the thought of Matthew XIX, 9 more fully by means of the second part of Matthew V, 32, seem to prove both that this last verse was known to him and that it did not appear correct to him in its entirety?

Further, Luke does not have:
Matthew V, 29, 30 ('if then your right eye causes you to stumble,' etc.).

That Luke does not have it, while no reason can be found that could have induced him to omit it deliberately, already gives rise to the suspicion that these verses were lacking in the original Collection and were therefore added to it by the redactor who gave Matthew V–VII

their present form. This suspicion is confirmed when we observe that these sayings likewise occurred in the synoptic tradition: Matthew XVIII, 8, 9 and Mark IX, 43, 45, 47, but, as we saw (p. 149), in a fuller form. There the possibility of leading us into sin is assumed with respect to eye, hand, and foot; Matthew V, 29, 30 only with respect to eye and hand. When one further observes that the context in which the words V, 29, 30 occur is extremely defective—both the right and the left eye can look at a woman in an adulterous way, and the right hand naturally has nothing whatsoever to do here—then it lies close at hand to suppose that a redactor, reading in the original Collection: 'whoever looks at a woman,' thoughtlessly added a saying known to him from the synoptic tradition because that saying contained something about a sin to which the eye could give occasion. He then, however, perceived that 'the foot' did not fit here, and therefore simply removed that word from Matthew XVIII, 8, the redaction he followed, and not that of Mark, as is evident from the conclusion of Mark IX, 43, 45, 47. In itself the author of the original Collection could also have committed the same thoughtlessness, but since Luke does not have these verses, this at least argues more strongly for our first supposition.

Further, Luke does not have:
Matthew V, 41 ('and whoever compels you to go one mile').

This verse will be discussed presently.

II. In the second place we examine the sayings that occur both in Matthew and in Luke.

Matthew V, 15 (the lamp under the bushel) Luke does not have in connection with the discourse VI, 20–49, but elsewhere and twice. This, together with the defective

connection[1] between Matthew V, 15 and both the preceding and the following verse, makes it possible to suspect that this saying did not stand in the original Collection. The redactor of Matthew V–VII then borrowed it from the synoptic tradition (Luke VIII, 16 and XI, 33, as well as Mark IV, 21) and, in connection with his subject, wrote in place of Luke's words 'so that those who enter may see the light': 'it shines for all who are in the house.' The people for whom the light of the apostles shines must, after all, be assumed already to be within the same sphere ('in the house,' in the world) in which the light of the apostles is located.

Matthew V, 18 = Luke XVI, 17. Luke's redaction seems younger, because it removes the contradiction between 'until heaven and earth pass away' and 'until all has come to pass.' Matthew V, 25, 26 differ in wording sufficiently from Luke XII, 58, 59 to confirm us in the suspicion that there existed two different redactions of the original Collection of sayings, one of which was preserved in the first, the other in the third Gospel.—But see later.

Matthew V, 32 = Luke XVI, 18; see above p. 156.

Matthew V, 39, 40 = Luke VI, 29; here the same observation is to be made as with Matthew V, 25, 26.—Perhaps here the difference in redaction is even somewhat more significant in connection with the circumstance that Luke does not have Matthew V, 41 (see above). Since in Luke VI, 29 we do not read (as in Matthew): 'if someone wishes to sue you and take your tunic,' but only: 'to him who takes from you,' it could be that Luke here wished to recommend the same thing as VI, 30a: 'give to everyone who asks of you,' namely

[1] to which we shall return later.

extreme kindness, whereas Matthew thought more of the prudence that advises the oppressed, with regard to their oppressors in lawsuits and other situations, to observe the utmost compliance or readiness to oblige. If this is indeed the case, then Luke naturally could not use Matthew V, 41 at least in this context, whereas Matthew himself could, since the 'compelling to go one mile' spoken of in that verse refers to such compulsion as occurs, for example, in forced services, corvée labor, and not simply to a compulsion arising from the friendly urging of someone who wishes to walk a mile with us. Matthew V, 41 could, descriptively, be translated: if someone compels you to go one mile for his benefit, e.g. to carry a message somewhere, etc.—If our explanation is correct, then a somewhat different light also falls on Matthew V, 25 = Luke XII, 58. In Matthew the redaction is clear, but in Luke it is not. In Matthew the person whom Jesus addresses here is assumed to have a dispute with someone who is *per se* more powerful than he himself. 'Try quickly to come to terms with that adversary; try to settle the matter

between you, for if you do not show yourself accommodating, if you do not give way, then he can deliver you to the judge.' Of that judge it is silently assumed that he will naturally take the side of that adversary. This again places us wholly among a people who are oppressed. Matthew V, 25, 40, and 41 thus reflect the same situation. Luke XII, 58, by contrast, is unclear: there two people are going to the authority, which here must indeed be the judge. Now it is said to the one: 'try quickly to get free from your adversary lest he drag you before the judge.' And yet they were going precisely to that judge!"

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Does not everything become clear here when we assume, first, that Matthew V, 25, 40, 41 stood in the original Collection, written for a population that did not need the revolutionary incitements of the Zealots but the counsels of prudence and accommodation, because, in the opinion of the author, only through absolute submission could life remain bearable; secondly, that the redactor of the Collection, whose work we possess in the third Gospel, wrote for a public for which Matthew V, 25, 40, 41 had entirely lost their actuality? He therefore had to try to transform these counsels—which originally had a political character and were prompted by prudence—into lessons of general love of humankind, of generosity, of kindness. He could do this all the more readily because the Collection (see Matthew V, 42 = Luke VI, 30) also contained such lessons. He therefore first altered Matthew V, 25 into Luke XII, 58, and indeed, as we have seen, not in a particularly happy way; then in Matthew V, 40 he omitted the expression 'if someone wishes to bring a lawsuit against you,' and there altered the order with respect to tunic and cloak, since the robber would naturally begin with the cloak. Verse 41, 'if someone compels you to go one mile,' he could not use at all, since among a people that was not oppressed there could be no question of such compulsion.

What strengthens us in our interpretation is the following: in Matthew these counsels (vv. 39, 40, 41) concerning turning the cheek and letting even the cloak go are preceded by (v. 38): 'You have heard that it was said: eye for eye and tooth for tooth.' If one now takes these verses apart from any specific political situation and thus as commandments of love of humankind, then this preceding v. 38 becomes incongruous. For then what is in fact being said here is this: 'According to the law of Moses

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the judge must punish the guilty according to the law of retaliation; if someone has therefore suffered damage, then the judge must inflict upon the guilty exactly the same damage that he has inflicted upon another (Exodus XXI, 24; Deuteronomy XIX, 19, 21; cf. Exodus XIX, 22 and Deut. XIX, 17, 18). That is the old criminal law. But I (Jesus) say to you: if someone has struck you on the right cheek or taken your cloak, then do not avenge yourself.' It is clear that this 'but' does not form a contrast when simple forgiveness is being preached here. Criminal-law provisions in any case retain their force, whether or not I bring before the judge someone to whom I think they should be applied. In other words: the old law did not permit personal vengeance; it did not say: if someone knocks out your eye, knock out his eye as well, but: when you bring the matter before the judge, then the judge must strike the guilty according to the rule:

eye for eye, tooth for tooth. The old law by no means excluded forgiveness, just as little as it commanded it to the legislator. Naturally: a law has nothing to do with whether I wish to endure injustice or to prosecute it. The 'but' of v. 39, on the other hand, does form a contrast when one thinks here of a lesson in political prudence. Then it says: the old law allowed you to hope that justice would be done to you, but you can no longer expect that now: rather settle your disputes immediately; let yourself be struck and robbed. Suffering is your lot. Verses 42 ff. (general love of humankind) then attach themselves very well to what precedes. The author of the Collection gives this counsel of prudence not in order simply to make a virtue of necessity; no, that suffering, an unavoidable lot, also befits—independently of all political circumstances—the follower of Jesus who wishes to love enemies,

who wishes to be a child of the merciful God.

When we earlier observed that in Luke all those sayings drop out that begin with 'You have heard that it was said to the ancients' or 'it was said,' and when we were already able, with respect to Matthew V, 31, to indicate why that formula disappeared in Luke (see above p. 157), we have now also found a plausible explanation for the disappearance of that formula in Luke with respect to Matthew V, 38. For if Luke wished to retain only the counsels of general love of humankind, then he naturally could do nothing with that allusion to Exodus XXI, 24.

In connection with these observations it would not surprise me if the copyists of the manuscripts had made a similar error with respect to Matthew V, 42 = Luke VI, 30 as with respect to Matthew V, 44 = Luke VI, 27, 28 (see above p. 150). They have namely transferred these latter verses of Luke (see our States Translation) to Matthew V, 44. But then the conjecture is also permissible that they borrowed the expression of Luke VI, 30b: 'from him who takes what is yours, do not demand it back' for the Gospel of Matthew, and conversely borrowed the expression of the first Gospel (V, 42b): 'from him who wishes to borrow from you, do not turn away' for the third Gospel. There would then have to have been a transposition. Matthew V, 42b would have to become Luke VI, 30b and vice versa. The supposition 'if someone wishes to take what is yours' fits better, namely, into the situation that, according to our view, emerges in the counsels discussed here.[1])

If these counsels stood in the original Collection, and if we have placed them in the true light,

1) There is already a Greek reading which, instead of 'give,' has the form of the verb that occurs here and elsewhere in Luke.

then we also have some indication concerning the time in which the Collection of sayings was written: in no case later than the days in which the struggle between the moderates and the zealots was turning precisely on that 'resisting the evil one.' The redaction of the parallel passages in Luke must then either be from a time in which this question was no longer at issue,

or have been intended for a public that had no concern with this question. In the latter case nothing whatsoever can be said here about the date of the Lukan redaction.

Matthew V, 42 = Luke VI, 30; see above p. 163.

Matthew V, 44 = Luke VI, 27. In connection with what was earlier observed about the 'persecuting' in Matthew V, 10, 11, it may perhaps deserve attention that here too only Matthew has 'bless those who persecute you.' One could then see in v. 44 the same hand of the later redactor as in V, 10 and 11. In that case the saying originally read simply: Love your enemies; first of all with reference to the Romans.

Matthew V, 45 = Luke VI, 35b; they again argue for a different redaction of the Collection.

Matthew V, 46, 47 = Luke VI, 32–35a; argue for the same. That here only Luke speaks of lending perhaps confirms our conjecture about the true place of Matthew V, 42b. That one reads here only in Matthew of 'tax collectors and Gentiles,' while Luke speaks merely of 'sinners,' perhaps makes the redaction of Matthew here appear older, and, with still greater probability, as intended for a Jewish public.

Matthew V, 48 = Luke VI, 36. The 'be merciful' like God can be a softening commentary on the 'and you shall be perfect' like God; for which reason we would be inclined to regard Matthew V, 48 as more original."

III. For the question of what Jesus actually said, the difference between Matthew and Luke is, also for this section (Matt. V, 13–48), once again of the greatest importance, and of such a nature that the answer is either in many cases impossible or decisive for our view of Jesus' character. Did Jesus really, already at the beginning of his activity and in the hearing of a great multitude, call the apostles the only salt of the earth, the unmistakable light of the world in its radiance, and presuppose of their works that the contemplation of them must move "people" to the glorification of God? Matthew affirms it, Luke does not.

Did Jesus indeed assure that the dissolution of the old dispensation was not the aim of his work, and that in the new dispensation everyone will be placed last who has dissolved even the least Mosaic commandment? Matthew affirms it, Luke does not.

Am I, according to Jesus' teaching, liable to the hellish fire when I say to my brother: You fool? Matthew, not Luke, answers affirmatively.

When someone for a reason other than "on account of fornication" divorces his wife, does he then, according to Jesus, have on his conscience that he has made his former wife an adulteress? Yes, says Matthew, but Luke does not answer.
May I "not swear at all"? May I not reclaim what has been stolen from me? Will Jesus' follower one day be perfect as God? On these weighty questions the decision will each time be different,

according as I should wish to take the first or the third Gospel as the basis for a biography of Jesus. If one accepts the credibility of both Gospels, then uncertainty is complete on many important points. If one does not accept it a priori, then one has two mutually strongly divergent reports, of which the older does

not compel us to go back further than between the years 60 and 70 after Christ.

We pass on to a new series of variants:

1°. Matt. VI, 1–8 (almsgiving, etc., in secret) are lacking in Luke.

2°. In M. (VI, 9–13): Our Father, who art in the heavens; in L. (XI, 2): Father; in M.: thy will be done, as in heaven so also on earth; in L. this petition is lacking[1]); in M.: give us today our bread for tomorrow; in L.: give us each day our bread for tomorrow; in M.: forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven our debtors; in L.: forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us; in M.: and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one; in L.: and lead us not into temptation ("for thine is the kingdom," etc., is lacking in the best manuscripts in M. as well as in L.).

3°. Verses 14–18 of M. (elaboration of the Lord's Prayer and about fasting) are lacking in L.

4°. In M. (VI, 19–21): Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor gnawing (or corrosion) destroys and where thieves do not break through and steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart also be; in L. (XII, 33b): Make for yourselves imperishable purses, an unfailing treasure in the heavens, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys; for where your treasure is, there will your heart also be.

5°. In M. (VI, 22–23): The lamp of the body is the eye; if your eye is sound, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be dark. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great will that darkness be!; in L. (XI, 34–36): The lamp

1) According to ancient witnesses, instead of 'your kingdom come' there would have stood in Luke: 'your Holy Spirit come upon us and cleanse us.'

of your body is your eye; when your eye is sound, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is bad, your body also is dark. See then that the light that is in you is not darkness. If then your whole body is full of light, having no dark part, it will be wholly bright, as when the lamp by its shining gives you light.

6°. In M. (VI, 24): No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will cling to the one and despise the other; you cannot serve God and Mammon; in

L. (XVI, 13): No household servant can serve two masters; either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will cling to the one and despise the other; you cannot serve God and Mammon.

7°. In M. (VI, 25–34): Therefore I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body, with what you shall clothe yourselves. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the sky, that they do not sow or reap or gather into barns, and your heavenly Father feeds them; are you not much more valuable than they? And who of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his stature? And concerning clothing, why are you anxious? Observe the lilies of the field, how they grow; they do not toil nor spin, and I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. If then God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more you, you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying: What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or With what shall we clothe ourselves? For all these things the Gentiles seek; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom and its righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious

for tomorrow; for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. The day has enough with its own trouble; in L. (XII, 22–31): And he said to his disciples: therefore I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body, with what you shall clothe yourselves. Life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens, that they do not sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn, and God feeds them; how much more are you worth than the birds! And which of you by being anxious can add a cubit to his stature? If then you cannot do even the least thing, why are you anxious about the rest? Consider the lilies, how they neither spin nor weave; and I say to you that Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. If then God so clothes the grass in the field, which today is and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more you, you of little faith? And you, do not seek what you shall eat and what you shall drink, and do not be in suspense. For all these things the peoples of the world seek; but your Father knows that you need these things. Rather seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you.

8°. In M. (VII, 1–2): Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you judge you will be judged, and with the measure you measure it will be measured to you; in L. (VI, 37): And judge not, and you will not be judged. (38b) For with the measure you measure it will be measured back to you (this latter in another context than in M.).

9°. In M. (VII, 3–5): Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the beam that is in your own eye? Or how will you say to your brother: Let me take the speck out of your eye, and behold, a beam is in your own eye? Hypocrite! first take the beam out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye; in L. (VI, 41): Why do you see the speck that is in

your brother's eye, but do not notice the beam that is in your own eye?

10°. Verse 6 of M. (do not give what is holy to dogs) is lacking in L.

11°. In M. (VII, 7–11): Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you; for everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone; or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If then you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in the heavens give good things to those who ask him; in L. (XI, 9): And I say to you, ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. And which of you who is a father, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he instead of a fish give him a serpent? Or if he asks for an egg, will he give him a scorpion? If then you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father from heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.

12°. In M. (VII, 12): Therefore all things whatsoever you want people to do to you, do you also to them; for this is the law and the prophets; in L. (VI, 31): And as you want people to do to you, do likewise to them.

13°. In M. (VII, 13, 14): Enter through the narrow gate; for wide is [the gate] and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it; for [the gate] is narrow and the way is constricted that leads to life, and few are those who find it; in L. (XIII, 24): Strive to enter through the narrow door, for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

14°. Verse 15 of Matthew (false prophets) is lacking in L.

15°. In M. (VII, 16): By their fruits you will know them. Do people gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles?; in L. (VI, 44): For each tree is known by its own fruit; for figs are not gathered from thorns, nor are grapes cut from a thornbush.

16°. Verse 17 of M. (thus every good tree) is lacking in L.

17°. In M. (VII, 18): A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a rotten tree bear good fruit; in L. (VII, 43): For it is not a good tree that bears rotten fruit, nor again a rotten tree that bears good fruit.

18°. Verse 19 of M. (the bad tree cut down) is lacking in L.

19°. Verse 20 (repetition of v. 16a) is lacking in L.

20°. In M. (VII, 21): Not everyone who says to me, Lord! Lord! will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in the heavens; in L. (VI, 46): And why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not do what I say?

21°. In M. (VII, 22, 23): Many will say to me on that day: Lord! Lord! did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name do many mighty works? And then I will declare to them: I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness; in L. (XIII, 25): … After the master of the house has arisen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying: Lord! open to us; and he will answer you: I do not know you, where you are from; cf. vv. 26, 27.

22°. In M. (VII, 24–27): Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be likened to a prudent man who built his house upon a rock; and the rain fell and the floods came

and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be likened to a foolish man who built his house upon sand; and the rain fell and the floods came and the winds blew and struck that house, and it fell, and great was its fall; in L. (VI, 47–49): Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you whom he is like. He is like a man who, building a house, dug and went deep and laid the foundation on a rock; and when a flood came, the stream burst against that house and could not shake it, because it was well built. But the one who heard and did not do, he is like a man who built a house upon the ground without a foundation, against which the stream burst, and immediately it fell, and the collapse of that house was great.

General Remarks. We begin again with the passages that Luke does not have at all.

I. Luke does not have

Matt. VI, 1–8. Since these verses contain a polemic against the leaders of the Jewish people and warn against their influence, they probably stood in the original Collection, and their absence in L. can prove that L.'s redaction either belongs to a time, or was directed to a public, for which that polemic and that warning had become superfluous.

Matt. VI, 13 (in the States Translation); it is lacking in the best manuscripts in Matthew as well; that it is found in others proves that the text of the Lord's Prayer was not revered as an unchangeable formula and that one permitted oneself to expand it.

Matt. VI, 14, 15. What we remarked with respect to v. 13 gives us the freedom also to regard these verses as a later commentary on the fifth petition and thus not to reckon them as belonging to the original Collection; a supposition in which their absence in Luke confirms us.

Matt. VI, 16–18. These verses presuppose fasting, and thus could very well have formed part of the original Collection. Luke then did here as we have now already more than once seen him do; he omitted what did not fit his public or his time.

Matt. VII, 6a (do not give what is holy to the dogs). If we may understand here by the dogs the Gentiles, and indeed the Christians from among them, then this verse too could be considered as belonging to the original Collection and, for the well-known reasons, to have been omitted by Luke. The absence of this verse in Luke may be brought into connection with the circumstance already earlier remarked (p. 164), that Luke VI, 32–35a, in contrast with Matt. V, 46–47, does not speak of Gentiles and tax collectors, but only of sinners. Verse 6b one would be inclined to regard as a gloss of the redactor, since the "lest they" etc. cannot at all apply to the dogs, but only to the (boar) swine.

Matt. VII, 15. This warning against the false prophets probably stood in the original Collection, since it places us in the years of religious fanaticism that immediately preceded the fall of Jerusalem; it also places us in a small, closed circle, in which one could at once know who were meant by the false prophets. The warning, in every respect appropriate for a Jewish or Jewish-Christian community, naturally had to be omitted by Luke, and consequently he also had no place for Matt. VII, 16a. Since he had not spoken of the

false prophets, he could also not let Jesus say: By their fruits you will know them (see later).

Matt. VII, 19–20. On this omission one can likewise only deal later, in connection with the variants that occur in the sayings about the tree and its fruit.

One will probably have noticed that the explanation given for Luke's omissions in this section is of no other kind than those which we attempted to give for the previous sections; which safeguards that explanation against the suspicion of arbitrariness.

II. We pass to the sayings that Luke has in common with Matthew. Matt. VI, 9 ff. = Luke XI, 2 ff. Luke writes only "Father." What Matthew adds: "who art in the heavens," he omits together with the possessive pronoun "our." This is not the only place where the former omission strikes us. For Matt. V, 45 "Father in the heavens," L. (VI, 35) has "the Most High"; for M. V, 48 "Father in the heavens," L. (VI, 36) has "Father"; for M. VI, 26 "heavenly Father," L. (XII, 24) has "God"; for M. VI, 32 "heavenly Father," L. (XII, 30) has "Father"; for M. VII, 11 "Father who is in the heavens," L. (XI, 13) has the strange "Father, who is from heaven"[1]). Altogether therefore six places. Too many, in my opinion, to allow the omission to be put down to chance, since in the Sermon on the Mount, as it is read in L., no other opposing phenomenon stands over against it. May the omission itself not be placed on one line with that series of omissions which we have already observed and which could all be traced back to L.'s striving to write for a non-Jewish public? The representation of a Father in the heavens could for the circle

of readers for whom his redaction was intended be less self-evidently clear. Perhaps also the "Our" before "Father" seemed to him capable of arousing misunderstanding, in so far as it could suggest a contrast. If the Lord's Prayer stood in the original Collection—which nothing opposes now that it is found in both M. and L.—then it probably began there as it now does in Matt. VI, 9.

The absence in L. of "Thy will be done, etc." I regard as the result of the original reading. Had this petition stood in the Collection, L. could scarcely have omitted it, precisely because it would then have been a petition of Jesus. Those words must therefore be ascribed to that later redactor whose need for amplification of the original Collection has already become evident to us. They are in fact only an amplification, for after the first two petitions they teach us nothing new. "Our bread for tomorrow"; if the adjective used here by M. and L. is to be translated, it can, without arbitrariness, only be translated thus. Since "give us today" (M.) is a somewhat more difficult reading than "give us each day" (L.), we regard the former as more original. For the same reason we prefer M.'s "debts" to L.'s "sins"; the latter expression appears to be an explanation of the former, and M.'s "have forgiven" to L.'s "forgive." That L., with a view to his readers, omitted from the last petition the "but deliver us, etc.," seems probable to us. We shall say later why.

Matt. VI, 19–21 = Luke XII, 33b (a treasure in heaven). In Luke v. 33a precedes: "Sell what you have and give alms." This seems to us for the same reason to be more original as that which led us to prefer Luke VI, 20 ff. The redaction of M., which changed "poor" into "poor in spirit" and in general

gave the beatitudes more of a moral turn, also had reason to turn the counsel—here to sell everything, here to become poor in order to be rich hereafter—simply into an exhortation to heavenly-mindedness. We may therefore place Luke XII, 33 in its entirety in the original Collection, together with v. 34.

Matt. VI, 22–23 = Luke XI, 34–36 (the eye, the lamp). We have here a new example of what we remarked with regard to Luke VI, 20 ff. There all the beatitudes were in the second person, in M. in the third; that the second was used in the original Collection became probable to us from Matt. V, 11, where it suddenly appears, in contrast with all that precedes. Here too we find in L. "the lamp of your," in M. the lamp of the body. In M. there would thus now and then have existed the wish to give to what was originally conceived as spoken by Jesus to a particular circle of hearers, and which betrayed its origin also in its form, a more general tendency or even merely a more general form. Luke XI, 36 certainly originates from an inattentive copyist.

About Matt. VI, 24 = XVI, 13 there is nothing to say.

Matt. VI, 25–34 = Luke XII, 22–31. Because of the almost complete similarity these verses must have been drawn from the same document, that is: from the original Collection. The points of difference, however insignificant in themselves, are numerous enough to exclude the supposition that the one copied the other. The text of M. seems to me to be the oldest, on

account of Matt. VI, 32 = Luke XII, 30. M. has namely “the Gentiles,” which, without further qualification, means the heathen. In accordance with a tendency that we have already more than once been able to observe in L.’s redaction, L. also here has: the peoples of the world.

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Although L. uses the same word, it can scarcely be translated in his case in the same way as in M. ‘The heathens of the world’ would make no sense. Thus we have a new example of the way in which L. avoids speaking of ‘the heathens.’ — Perhaps verse 26 also makes the redaction of L. appear less original, so that this verse would then not belong to the original Collection. After it had been said that no one, however anxious he might be, can add a cubit to his stature (where it always remains somewhat uncertain whether one ought not, instead of stature, to read length of life), verse 26 asks: ‘If then you are not able to do even the least, etc.’ With what right the increase of one’s bodily stature is called ‘the least’ is difficult to see. The verse may very well be a marginal note that was later incorporated into the text itself. — By contrast, in Luke XII, 31 the earliest redaction seems to have been preserved: ‘seek rather.’ The ‘seek first’ of Matthew VI, 33 may be a deliberate weakening of the original idea, just as Matthew V, 3 is of Luke VI, 20; likewise L.’s omission of Matthew VI, 34 also seems to me to be authentic. That verse weakens the force of all that precedes.

Matthew VII, 1–2 = Luke VI, 37, 38 (judging and measuring). Luke VI, 37b and 38a are not found in M., and seem to have been inserted later in order to form a transition between the two sayings 37a and 38b (= Matthew VII, 1–2), whose connection is indeed not obvious. The transition is not particularly successful, for the saying: ‘with the same measure with which you measure, it shall be measured back to you’ (this ‘back’ occurs only in L., according to the best manuscripts), which in M. was meant to form a parallel to the clause omitted in L., ‘with what judgment you judge you shall be judged,’ now comes to stand in an entirely different light. In L. it serves to commend mildness on the basis of well-understood self-interest.

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Matthew VII, 3–5 = Luke VI, 41. The redaction of L., as the shorter one, may be the original.

Matthew VII, 7–11 = Luke XI, 9–13.
The redaction of M., so far as we are able to judge, is more original than that of L.:
1°. because of the expression “Father who is in the heavens” (v. 11), as against L.’s “Father from heaven” in v. 13 [see above p. 175];
2°. because of the expression “good things” in v. 11, as against L.’s more specific “Holy Spirit” in v. 13;
3°. because of the addition of “egg” and “scorpion” to “bread and fish,” “stone and serpent,” with which the redaction of M. is satisfied;
4°. because of the change of the abrupt “one will open to you” into the more easily understood “it will be opened to you.”

Matthew VII, 12 = Luke VI, 31.

One is readily inclined to suppose that the conclusion omitted by L. but present in M.: "for this is the law and the prophets," characterizes the redaction of M. as the original. In the time and circle in which we imagine the original Collection to have been written, this explanation was entirely in place. By contrast, the omission by L. accords completely with his silence regarding the words that indicate the relation of Jesus' teaching to the law.

Matthew VII, 13–14 = Luke XIII, 24.

The redaction of M. is more original, since in the redaction of L. the saying comes less into its own.

Matthew VII, 16 = Luke VI, 44.

The redaction of L. is clearly the later one. The omission of the warning against false prophets (M. v. 15), which immediately precedes in M., ought to have had as its consequence that L. also omitted the sayings about tree and fruits, which were most closely connected with that warning. For in M. the course of thought is this: I warn you against false prophets, and I can warn you against them because I can place in your hands a means

by which you can at once recognize them. Pay attention to their teachings, to the fruits that they produce. A grape does not come from thorns, nor a fig from thistles; a good teaching does not come from false prophets; good fruits come from a good tree, bad from a bad one. Mistake in judging a prophet is therefore impossible. — Thereupon the warning of v. 15 is once more pressed home with a proclamation of the dreadful fate that awaits the false prophets, and in which they can easily drag their followers along with them: every bad tree is cut down and thrown into the fire; every false prophet will perish; a threat which, according to Matthew III, 10, the Baptist had already uttered. Verse 20 summarizes.

In Luke, however, the sayings about tree and fruit are now completely detached from all connection with the said warning. They could therefore no longer have any sense. The redaction of L. has simply made of them this: first the trivial truth that I cannot call a tree that bears rotten fruit good, nor a tree that bears good fruit bad (v. 43); then the proposition, which has nothing to do with this truth, that the characteristic of every tree must be judged by its fruits (v. 44a). If, therefore, I pick a fig or a grape, I also know that I have before me a fig tree or a vine, and not, for example, a thorn bush or a cypress (v. 44b). Now it is something quite different to say: the soundness of the fruit proves that a tree is good, and to say: the kind of fruit proves that a tree belongs to this or that particular species. Finally the proposition of v. 45, which again stands entirely by itself: out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks; in other words, a person betrays his disposition by the nature of the conversations he most frequently holds. The question is not whether one might not be able to bring a certain coherence among

these different sayings, but whether it is not clear that, by the omission of Matthew VII, 15a (or XII, 31 ff., or something similar), the string that naturally held them together was broken. Has not the originality of the redaction of M. thereby been made probable?

Concerning M. VII, 21 = Luke VI, 46 nothing can be said except that both sayings stand entirely on their own, and that the redaction in M. seems original, because there it is not "doing what I say," but "doing the will of my Father."

Matthew VII, 22–23 = Luke XIII, 25.
Here the redaction of L. seems unmistakably the more original.
1°. "Many will say to me" (M.); "to the master of the house" in L.
2°. The prophesying, exorcising, and performing of miracles in Jesus' name in M., which L. does not have. All this betrays, in the redaction of M., a time in which Jesus had already become a metaphysical person. Luke XIII, 26–27, which contain a further elaboration of v. 25, confirm our suspicion. In L. the master of the house ("you taught in our streets") is here identified as Jesus himself, which did not occur in v. 25. These verses give the impression of containing the first commentary on v. 25, while M. VII, 22–23 could be regarded as a second commentary upon it. Thus the original saying ventured forth with the Master of the House, with whom one thinks of God. To this saying, which in itself forms a rounded whole and in its terseness leaves no further conversation between that Master of the House and those standing outside to be expected, someone then added vv. 26 ff., because he regarded the master of the house as Jesus; seeing this, someone else again went still further and simply wrote: "many will say to me" and "I never knew you." — We let v. 25 begin with v. 24b: "many will seek to enter, etc." — Perhaps it also deserves

notice that the word "unrighteousness" in M. VII, 23 and L. XIII, 27 differs in Greek; in L. it indeed corresponds to our "unrighteousness," in M. it also means "lawlessness." Might it be inferred from this that the redaction of M. here had the followers of Paul in view?

Matthew VII, 24–27 = Luke VI, 47–49.
These verses seem not to have stood in the original Collection; neither in the later redaction that was used either by the first or by the third Gospel, but to have been added to it by Matthew or Luke in the composition of the whole Gospel, and to have been taken over by the other; probably by Luke, since the form with him is somewhat shorter and simpler.

Not in the original Collection,
1°. because Jesus is here already represented as saying: "who hears my words and does them" (cf. what was remarked on Matthew VII, 21);
2°. because they seem to presuppose fierce opposition to Christianity, severe trials of faith, and great apostasy.

Not in one of the two later redactions, since one could then scarcely explain how they are nearly identical in the two redactions that clearly arose independently of one another. Nothing, on the

other hand, is more natural than that the compiler of one of the two Gospels, on the basis of experiences he had undergone in the community (note the redaction in L.: “who comes to me”), made this postscript and appended it to what he had communicated as a discourse of Jesus.

III. For someone who wished to write a Life of Jesus, the variants of this section too are not infrequently of a serious nature. It is again not a matter of indifference for the way in which we are to understand Jesus’ character whether or not he conducted a polemic such as M. VI, 5 reports, but which L. does not know. Jesus’ religious ideas appear differently in our conception, depending on whether one lets him

pray with M. VI, 13: “Deliver us from the evil one,” or with L. XI, 4 (according to the best manuscripts) omits this petition; whether or not Jesus made God’s forgiving us dependent on our forgiving; included fasting among religious duties; excluded the “dogs” (that is, probably the Gentiles) from the “holy,” as Matthew wishes in distinction from Luke. Did Jesus already promise the Holy Spirit? Assure that only few find the way to life? Warn against false prophets? Portray their future with “cutting down” and “throwing into the fire”? Assume that one could prophesy in his name and yet belong to the “workers of unrighteousness”? To these questions one receives different answers, according as one consults Matthew or Luke.

We now wish to give a brief survey of the results that our investigation of the Sermon on the Mount has thus far made probable, while reserving the right to adduce new proofs for some of these results.

The discourse, communicated in expanded form in M. V–VII and in shorter form in Luke VI, 20–49, was never delivered.

Even if some sayings that occur in this discourse may be from Jesus, with respect to not a single saying can we know this with historical certainty. For the time being, an exception must be made in favour of those sayings that are found both in the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere, in the synoptic tradition.

The discourse is a free composition, a product of Jewish Wisdom, composed not long before the year 70, and intended to recommend certain moral ideas also with an eye to the needs of the last years before the fall of Jerusalem.

In the first quarter of the second century this writing, which at its origin may have been dictated to several persons and consequently already differed somewhat in different copies, was subjected to a revision by someone who

worked outside Palestine and for Christians from among the Gentiles; in this revision one perhaps first ascribed the discourse to Jesus, altered sayings, omitted them, added them, and thus produced the redaction that has been preserved for us in L. The compiler of that Gospel

added a conclusion to it (Luke VI, 47–49). Through the carelessness of copyists that redaction had already previously undergone some changes.

In the first half of the second century the original writing was again revised by someone else with a view to new needs. His redaction was of a less far-reaching nature and has been preserved for us in the first Gospel, after possibly having undergone small changes as a result of the carelessness of copyists. The compiler of that Gospel took over (M. VII, 24–27) Luke VI, 47–49 and gave it a somewhat more rhetorical form.

The original writing consisted of the following pericopes:

Original Document	Redaction L.	Redaction M.
Matth. V, 2b (?)		
Luke VI, 20b, 21, 22 tot en met smaden	Luke VI, 20a, 22b	Matth. V, 3–14, 16
Luke VI, 23–26		
Matth. V, 15	Luk. VIII, 16	
Matth. V, 17–18	Luke XVI, 17	
Matth. V, 19–24	Omitted.	
Matth. V, 25–26	Luke XII, 58–59	
Matth. V, 27–28	Omitted.	
		Matth. V, 29–30
Matth. V, 31	Omitted.	
Matth. V, 32	Luke XVI, 18	
Matth. V, 33–37	Omitted.	
Matth. V, 38–39a	Omitted.	
Matth. V, 39b–42a	Luk. VI, 29–30a; M. V, 42b	
Luke VI, 30b		
Matth. V, 43	Omitted.	
Matth. V, 44a, 45–48	Luke VI, 27–28; 32–36	Matth. V, 44b (“who persecute you”)

Matth. VI, 1–8	Omitted.	
Matth. VI, 9–10a	Luke XI, 2a (up to Matth VI, 10b and including 'Father')	
Matth. VI, 11	Luke XI, 3 ("every day)	
Matth. VI, 12	Luke XI, 4 ("without")	
Matth. VI, 13a		
Matth. VI, 13b	Omitted.	
		Matth. VI, 14–15
Matth. VI, 16–18	Omitted.	
Luke XII, 33–34		Matth. VI, 19–21
Luke XI, 34		Matth. VI, 22–23
Matth. VI, 24	Luke XVI, 13	
Matth. VI, 25–32	Luke XII, 22–30	
Luke XII, 31		Matth. VI, 33–34
Matth. VII, 1–2	Luke VI, 37–38	
	Luke VI, 39–4	
Luke VI, 41.		Matt. VII, 3–5.
Matt. VII, 6a.	Omitted.	Matt. VII, 6b.
Matt. VII, 7–11.	Luke XI, 9–13.	
Matt. VII, 12.	Luke VI, 31.	
Matt. VII, 13–14.	Luke XIII, 24a.	
Matt. VII, 15–16a.	Omitted.	
Matt. VII, 16–20.	Luke VI, 43–44.	
	Luke VI, 45.	

Matt. VII, 21.	Luke VI, 46.	
Luke XII, 24b–25.		Matt. VII, 22–23a.
Luke XIII, 27c.	Luke XIII, 26a,b; 27.	Matt. VII, 23b.

Here, then, is an overview of what attentive reading of the gospel passages that were relevant here leads us to suppose.

Before, however, we may assign to these results that degree of probability to which historical investigation can generally lead, we must still put two questions to ourselves:
1°. can Matthew V–VII be a discourse that was delivered consecutively at the time indicated by M., or at some other time;
2°. is their content of such a nature that it cannot possibly be ascribed to anyone other

than such an entirely unique religious personality as Jesus is assumed to have been in the Gospels?

Jesus is supposed to have delivered this discourse to his disciples, in the hearing of a large and very mixed crowd, at the beginning of his activity, though after he had already effected many healings, and on “the mountain.” This discourse precedes Jesus’ wish not to be made known (see e.g. M. VIII, 4) and long precedes his public appearance as Messiah, for in Matthew XVI, 20 he forbids “his disciples that they should tell anyone that he was Jesus, the Messiah.”

Now let one imagine that Jesus, at Matthew XVI, 20—that is, when he already (v. 21) began to speak of his approaching end—still makes a deep secret of his messianic dignity, and one will then have to believe that already at the beginning he appeared with an authority such as could belong only to the Messiah. Had the crowds listened to his command (M. VII, 15 ff.), far from being astonished at his teaching, they could have turned away from him as from a false prophet on account of his presumption and blasphemy. One does not yet know that he is the Messiah; it is also his explicit wish that one should not yet know this; and meanwhile, in the hearing of the multitude, he disposes of reward in heaven (V, 12 and VI, 6), calls blessed those who are persecuted for his sake (V, 11), equates his disciples with the ancient prophets (V, 12), calls them the salt and the light of the world (vv. 13, 14). One must absolutely not know that he is the Messiah, but in the changeable world he promises imperishability to the law of his people (v. 18); it is he who ranks human beings in the heavenly kingdom (v. 19); who determines the condition upon which one enters that kingdom (v. 20); who sets the authority of his “I say” (v. 22 and elsewhere) over against the law of Moses and the tradition of the scribes, just as he (v. 22) condemns certain offenders to the fire of hell. Not only

with regard to moral, but also with regard to unmistakably contingent truths (v. 26), he lets his solemn “truly” be heard. Divine perfection he promises to his disciples (v. 48). Complete

freedom from care he dares recommend to them on the basis of his knowledge concerning their future fate (VI, 33). Some people are already in his eyes dogs and swine; all that is done for them is wasted effort (VII, 6). Already now he knows that only few find the way to life (v. 14). Before anyone has yet called him Lord, he already places that name upon the lips of his fellow human beings (v. 21), and speaks of a day on which he will openly deny "many," even though they have used his name to perform mighty works and to cast out demons (v. 22). Whoever lives according to his words is a prudent man; whoever lives otherwise, a fool; and thus the same teacher who threatens every other person with the fire of hell when the word "fool" slips from him toward his brother, and who later asks for trust on the basis of his known gentleness and humility (XI, 29), bears witness.

The phenomena observed here lead us to certainty. Matthew V–VII cannot have been spoken by Jesus at that time, if the notice of Matthew XVI, 20 is credible. To speak at the beginning of one's career as only the Messiah could speak, and at the end of one's career to present messiahship as a deep secret—how can that be reconciled?

Perhaps, however, Matthew XVI, 20 is not credible, and Matthew V–VII are. Let us then attend to the inner probability of these chapters, insofar as they contain a specimen of Jesus' earliest teaching.

In doing so we employ a threefold criterion: one speaks in order to be remembered, in order to be understood, and in order to meet existing needs.

Can a teacher hope that a hundred sayings, which for the most part are absolutely not connected with one another, will be retained in

the memory? That they are for the most part absolutely not connected with one another must be demonstrated here, since many have praised the Sermon on the Mount precisely for its inner coherence.

We need not dwell on the beatitudes, for if Matthew and Luke are both credible, then it follows from their reports that the beatitudes were very poorly remembered. Half of them has been lost in Luke; the other half has been significantly altered. Of the fourfold "woe" of L., not a word appears in Matthew.

After the beatitudes Jesus proceeds to make his disciples known with regard to their significance for the world and to inform them that their virtue must strike everyone's eye just as well as a city that lies on top of a mountain. This is either so or it is not; but if it is so, why must these same disciples then still be urged to let that light shine, which after all could not remain hidden, while this exhortation must moreover be pressed home by the image of the lamp and the lampstand? Scarcely is Jesus finished with this when he deems it necessary to combat erroneous conceptions regarding the aim of his activity. Although we had not yet been told that an erroneous opinion had formed in this regard, and there had scarcely been time for the emergence of such an opinion, he hastens to let his "Do not think" of v. 17 be heard. Be that as

it may: we now know what the teacher intends. The Old Testament remains immovably in force so long as the earthly order endures. Not one jot or tittle shall pass away from it. Unhappy is he who dissolves even the least Old Testament commandment “and teaches men so”; which does not prevent Jesus himself from dissolving—abolishing rather than fulfilling—the command concerning the bill of divorce (v. 32), the command concerning the oath (v. 34), and the command concerning a principal element of Jewish criminal law (v. 39), and teaching people so. In the midst of the course of his exposition of the commandments that he sharpens and those that he wishes to abolish, he pauses in order

to say one thing or another about the necessity of submitting to the most painful sacrifice as soon as one would otherwise have to be cast into hell. When the teacher is finally finished with the enumeration of the aforementioned commandments, it turns out that the reason for which it was originally begun has been completely lost from sight. From non-retaliation the speaker moves on, develops what is connected with it (V, 39–48), and then proceeds to warnings against a merely external display of religion and to the recommendation of practicing religion “in secret.” External coherence can be discerned here: in M. V, 21–48 a polemic against legislation, in VI, 1–18 against the practice of the scribes, although that polemic against their legislation, where it destroys it, does not agree with V, 18, 19. But the inner harmony of the various sayings is less clear. How can I let my light shine when I must do everything in secret? How greet my enemies, treat them kindly, without being seen by people?

From M. VI, 19 onward it is fruitless effort to seek coherence among the various parts of the discourse, as the following overview shows: One must gather treasures in heaven. Our eye must be sound. One cannot serve two masters. One must be free from care. One must not judge. One must not be blind to one’s own faults. One must not cast what is holy to dogs. One must pray with firm confidence of being heard. One must do to others what one wishes for oneself. One must enter through the narrow gate. One must beware of false prophets. One must not think that calling Jesus “Lord” suffices. Prediction of the final fate of the pseudo-Christians. A parable that shows the foolishness of those who are disobedient to Jesus’ words.

Was such a discourse suited to be remembered?

Furthermore, we note that this discourse contained much that

must have appeared enigmatic even to the disciples who had been chosen so shortly before. Yet those to whom later even the simplest parables had to be deliberately explained address not a single request for clarification to Jesus. What, however, could they have understood of their being equated with the ancient prophets, with salt, with the light of the world? How could they have grasped that, on pain of forfeiting the kingdom of heaven, they had to possess a righteousness surpassing that of the scribes, without asking themselves how, with that

teaching—indeed no gentle yoke and no light burden—they could become fishers of men? What impression must that word about divorce have made on them, when, after they had already been with Jesus for some time, they could not hear it again, though in a less severe form (Matthew XIX), without crying out in despair: "If the matter of the man with the woman is thus, it is not expedient to marry!" Of the crowds who also listened we need scarcely say anything. They later require the simplest and most popular examples and parables, often still receive no definite impression, and yet here they will have grasped the greater part of Jesus' teaching, although sayings of all kinds jostle one another here.

The Sermon on the Mount was intended for the disciples, but how can it then contain so much that seems less suited to their needs? Did they have need to be exalted so highly as is done here? They already hear that they are the light of the world at the very moment when Jesus still has to acquaint them with the program of his teaching and correct their opinion about it ("Do not think"). They still have to be warned against a morality that does not surpass that of the Gentiles and tax collectors, and already divine perfection is held up to them. They are fishermen who have left everything, and yet they are addressed at some length about giving alms, gathering earthly treasures, and being anxious about

food and clothing, as though they were caught up in all the cares of wealth. They are to appear as leaders of others; they need only let their light shine so that the world may glorify God, and yet they must still be put on their guard against false prophets and learn how those false prophets are to be recognized. Thus one seeks in vain to determine for which needs this discourse was actually calculated. Did those who were the salt of the earth still need the word against the mumbling of prayers, against disfiguring the face at times of fasting? They must then already have become very tasteless salt. Who are the "you" addressed here: the "you" of V, 14, who are the light of the world, or the "you," whether of VI, 30 who are "of little faith," or of VII, 5 who are "hypocrites" and see splinters in the eye of their neighbor? Does Jesus address a select few, to whom he can speak of "the people" as in V, 16, who will look upon them admiringly, or a great crowd, in whose midst it is not inappropriate to say, as in VII, 9: "what man is there among you"? Are they the same persons who must live so that people see their good works (V, 16) and who must anoint their heads and wash their faces "so that their fasting—also a good work that God even 'rewards'—may not be seen by people" (VI, 18)? At one moment one finds oneself, for example with the "Our Father" or with "do not give what is holy to dogs," in the most intimate circle of the disciples; at another, for example with threats such as Matthew VII, 22–27, transported into a great multitude.

Can a sensible teacher have delivered a discourse that attempts to meet such contradictory needs that one is no longer able to determine what audience he had in mind?

In order to judge the credibility of Matthew V, 1–2 in connection with what follows, it is finally not superfluous

to examine whether the Sermon on the Mount accords with what we otherwise learn about Jesus.

Not one jot or tittle of the law shall pass away, the least commandment may not be dissolved (Sermon on the Mount); but the sabbath is made for man and not man for the sabbath (Mark II, 27); nor does anyone put new wine into old wineskins (Luke V, 37), and the hour comes when no one will worship the Father in Jerusalem (John IV, 21); indeed, what goes into the mouth does not defile a person (Matthew XV, 11); the entire Old Testament hangs on the commandment of love for God and for one's neighbor (Matthew XXII, 40).

Punishable is whoever is angry with his brother (Sermon on the Mount, according to the best reading); but Jesus looks around in the synagogue with anger (Mark III, 5).

Equally punishable is a "Raka!" (Sermon on the Mount); but Jesus addresses the scribes as "you hypocrites!" (Matthew XXIII, 13, 14, 15).

Liable to hell is anyone who calls his brother a fool (Sermon on the Mount); but Jesus himself says to the scribes: "You fools and blind men" (Matthew XXIII, 17), and calls Herod a fox (Luke XIII, 32).

Going to hell can be avoided by cutting off a hand, by plucking out an eye (Sermon on the Mount); but what if the heart remains, from which evil things proceed (Matthew XV, 19)?

We shall not swear at all (Sermon on the Mount); but Jesus' "you have said it" (Matthew XXVI, 64) after the high priest's "I adjure you" was, according to Jewish usage, fully equivalent to taking the judicial oath.

Do not worry about the day of tomorrow (Sermon on the Mount); but Luke XVI, 9 praises the prudence that knows how to make friends from unrighteous Mammon.

Narrow is the gate and few find the way to life (Sermon on the Mount); but "my yoke is gentle and my burden is light" (Matthew XI, 29–30).

Thus: either the Sermon on the Mount is not by Jesus, or the passages cited here are not credible, or the teacher changed his views and at times acted and taught in contradiction to his own precepts.

All our objections, however, would lose their weight if our second question had to be answered in the affirmative. That question was this: Is the content of the Sermon on the Mount of such a kind that it cannot possibly be attributed to anyone other than such an altogether unique religious personality as Jesus is assumed to be in the Gospels?

Our negative answer rests on the following:

No special wisdom can be discerned in delivering such a discourse to only four disciples, in the hearing of a very motley crowd, on the summit of a mountain. Why did Jesus not wait until the circle of his disciples was complete? The chance that his words would be faithfully preserved and handed down to posterity, just as he actually spoke them, would then have been three times greater. Moreover, love of humanity imposed this simple precautionary measure as a duty upon someone who attached eternal significance to the 'doing of his words.'

From the Sermon on the Mount it does not appear that the teacher formed a clear conception of what he actually wanted. Hardly has he appeared (Matt. IV, 17) with the proclamation: 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has drawn near,' when he delivers a discourse in which that admonition is entirely absent—not only absent, but in which people are rather portrayed as being, from the outset, in a condition that decides their participation in the kingdom of heaven. From the Gentiles nothing is to be hoped; they think only of earthly things; they greet only their brothers; therefore one must not give the holy thing to them. But the scribes, too, are presented en bloc as worthless hypocrites; their righteousness is of such a sort that they cannot possibly enter the kingdom of heaven, any more than anyone

who does not possess a righteousness more abundant than theirs. Others, on the other hand, are praised with just as little reserve in a manner that opened the door to all kinds of misunderstanding, and his own four disciples are placed on a height which one would rather see granted to someone by the judgment of posterity. That judgment has in fact done little to justify such a favorable opinion of the four; it has never greeted Andrew and James the son of Zebedee as lights of the world, and has had to restrain itself with regard to Peter and John as soon as the authenticity of the writings attributed to their names appeared subject to reasonable doubt. Above all, what strikes us is the uncertainty of the relation in which the teacher of Nazareth places himself to moral prescriptions other than his own. Did he merely wish to oppose the scribes of his time? Why then did he not indicate this with a word; why instead does that repeated 'you have heard that it was said to the ancients' lead us to suppose that he condemned the entire ancient Jewish moral code in principle? Did he wish only to attack human tradition? But what he rejects is often cited in the very words of the Old Testament. Did he wish to bring out the deeper, spiritual sense of the Mosaic law? How is this intention compatible with the definite abolition of the oath and of the law of retaliation? And can one be said to interpret a law spiritually when one adopts it together with the exception which it itself allowed and then simply specifies that exception more precisely? The law had permitted divorce when one found 'something shameful' in one's wife (Deut. XXIV, 1); Jesus permits divorce when the woman prostitutes herself. One may well suppose that the teacher had in mind divorce 'for every cause' (Matt. XIX, 3), but this is not stated in the text, which takes notice only of the ancient provision. For the contrast 'but I say to you' (in v. 32) proves that undue significance is attached by some to the omission (v. 31)

of ‘by the ancients.’ The same omission occurs in v. 38. But especially perplexing is the rejection of the Mosaic criminal law with regard to false witnesses. If Jesus disapproved of that principle of Mosaic criminal law, then on an important point he set aside the Old Testament. If, on the other hand, he did not wish to speak of a juridical but of a moral principle meant to govern our dealings with others, then the citation of a criminal-law provision is surely misplaced, since it can never forbid anyone to leave that provision unused and to forgive one’s neighbor. For when the Old Testament, Deuteronomy XIX, 16 ff., said: ‘If a malicious witness rises up against someone to testify falsely against him, then the two men who have the dispute shall stand before the Lord, before the priests and the judges … and the judges shall inquire diligently; and behold, if the witness is a false witness … then you shall do to him as he had meant to do to his brother … eye for eye, tooth for tooth,’ what sense is there in following this citation with: ‘But I say to you, do not resist the evil one; whoever strikes you on the right cheek,’ etc.? Someone is speaking about how a false witness is to be punished, but I say to you that you must not avenge personal insults! This is absurd, unless precisely the criminal-law principle is being rejected. But then, in this case, that rejection strikes the Old Testament, of which the teacher nevertheless claims not to wish to abolish even the least commandment. The entire relation in which the author of the Sermon on the Mount places himself to the Mosaic dispensation is that of someone who either does not know, or does not say, what he wants—who in any case leaves undecided whom his polemic is actually meant to strike. With the same formula the Old Testament pronouncement ‘eye for eye’ is cited, and a saying is cited which is nowhere to be found in the entire Old Testament: ‘You shall hate your enemy’ (Matt. V, 43).

What would we think of someone who now wished to combat a certain doctrine and then sometimes quoted the New Testament, sometimes a Catholic or Protestant dogmatician, and sometimes finally no one at all verbatim, but ascribed to Christians a maxim on the basis of some people’s practice? We would praise him neither for his moderation, nor for his impartiality, nor for the clarity of his intention. Moreover, there occur in the Sermon on the Mount moral distinctions which seem to deprive the one who delivered that discourse of the right to combat in principle the casuistic moral teaching of the scribes. To be angry with one’s brother, to say ‘Raca!’ to him, exposes the guilty person to human punishment; to cry out to him ‘You fool!’ exposes the guilty person (V, 22) to a punishment that can be executed only by the deity. This makes a great difference, which can scarcely be derived from a purely principled conception of ethics.

The more strongly other doctrines are rejected by the teacher of the Sermon on the Mount, the more we feel compelled to examine both the excellence and the originality of his own doctrines.

From the standpoint of excellence, the first thing to be considered is their clarity. It leaves something to be desired here and there. How Christians are to think about the enduring validity of the Old Testament we cannot, as we have seen, learn from the Sermon on the Mount. Despite all interpretation, no one to this day can say what the first beatitude means. To be poor in spirit is either wholly unintelligible or equivalent to being dull-witted. Who would dare populate the kingdom of heaven with dull-witted people? ‘Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be

comforted' is also a saying whose meaning one would rather admit not to understand than wish to hold responsible, in earnest, someone who knows what he promises, for its apparently only possible sense. Only when someone is borne by

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such a superhuman sense of self as we usually observe only in fanatics can he declare the persecuted blessed for his sake. A similar sense of self is required for someone to assert that if a few fishermen who follow him are removed from the world, the world is thereby deprived of its salt and its light—while with regard to Christianity it would have been fully sufficient to have Paul alone. Habit must not dull us to the real import of such words. Since we are reluctant to accuse the teacher of the Sermon on the Mount of overestimating himself, one prefers to say that such statements leave something to be desired in clarity. Equally obscure remains the condition for entrance into the heavenly kingdom: righteousness must be abundant, more abundant than that of the scribes. Their righteousness, then, was also abundant. If the righteousness that secures that entrance was to be wholly different, to proceed from a wholly different principle, the expression would surely be clearer. I do indeed read later that if I love and greet only those who love and greet me, I do nothing 'beyond others,' nothing abundant (V, 47), but here there is neither mention of the righteousness of others nor of scribes; that saying therefore does not take us further. Further unexplained is why 'you fool!' and not already 'you empty-head!'—or however else Raca is to be translated—exposes someone to the fire of hell. Why I must not initiate any legal action at all because I might 'perhaps' lose it and end up 'in prison' is, at the very least, not self-evident, just as little as why, when we are no longer on juridical ground but on that of personal relations, I may leave my wife as soon as she has become unfaithful. That the oath is absurd I understand, but less so that everything beyond yes and no must be 'from the evil one.' The force of the image of sunshine and rain poured out over the evil and the good is somewhat weakened by

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the circumstance that destructive natural forces spare the good no more than the evil. That among Jesus' contemporaries there should have been people who, when giving alms, had trumpets blown before them in synagogues and in the streets is, to my knowledge, nowhere else reported to us; the report to that effect in the Sermon on the Mount therefore initially gives the impression of an exaggeration, capable of an immediate effect but not of lasting fruit. When someone advocates sobriety in prayer, one does not expect him, in a short prayer, to say the same thing three times. 'Hallowed be your name' expresses an idea to which one adds neither a second nor a third by following it with 'your kingdom come, your will be done,' etc. Much in this short prayer—which has been called the most perfect and on which the art of interpreters has exercised itself for so many centuries—remains obscure. The Greek adjective that we have translated as 'daily' cannot be satisfactorily explained; it occurs only in Matt. VI, 11 = Luke XI, 3 and must mean either bread belonging to subsistence or bread for the morrow. The first has no sense; the second raises the question: why precisely for the morrow? and astonishes doubly when we think of what immediately follows: 'do not be anxious about tomorrow.' How can a person draw a parallel between debts he has forgiven and his debts toward God? How suppose

that God could lead him into temptation? On all this one would desire clarifications, just as on that, in Matthew (not in Luke), so enigmatic saying: 'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.' One would be inclined to invert the saying, for if my heart is not in heaven, how shall I then come to lay up treasures there? No less difficulty is caused by the double motivation for not being anxious. First it says: do not worry about food and clothing, for God provides them; then (V, 34) do not worry about tomorrow, for

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the worries of today are truly enough. But if even for today I rely on the example of the lilies and the birds of heaven, then no single day has 'its own evil.'

Striking is that admonition against setting oneself up as a judge of others, coming from someone who with such self-confidence asserts that 'the Gentiles' do nothing extraordinary, pray badly, and know only earthly needs; that there are people who give alms, pray, and fast only 'in order to be seen by men'; from someone who will shortly present the discerning of false prophets as the simplest thing in the world! What, then, can that unconditional condemnation of judging be meant to signify? And likewise one would like to ask, by what standard one is to assess the quality of the fruits that one thinks one observes in prophets. Finally, does the riddle of this world advance a single step toward its satisfying solution when it is announced that all false prophets will be cast into the fire?

Enough, however, to show that the excellence of the Sermon on the Mount cannot be sought in its consistent clarity.

In my view it lies just as little in its practical usefulness. There is a large community of Jesus on earth, a community that for a long time was able to arrange everything according to its own liking; yet we do not find that one has ever or anywhere—where one did not withdraw from society—raised the Sermon on the Mount to the status of a code of law; from which one may indeed infer that it was not regarded as usable. The ideal of the Beatitudes has been made into a dream-image by eighteen centuries of Christianity. To be a dull person, a simple soul, is regarded by no one as desirable and by the majority, with good reason, as dangerous. One rejoices in persecution so little that everyone complains of being misunderstood.

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People have taken the liberty of annulling as many of the least and the greatest commandments as the circumstances of the time demanded. Whether one does more than the scribes troubles no Christian conscience. The avoidance of all lawsuits is not even imposed upon the Church as a duty. Disobedient to Jesus, one allows divorce or retaliation out of obedience to the civil code or the *Code pénal*; one swears oaths out of obedience to the State; and from him who wishes to borrow from us without providing proper security one turns away out of obedience to economic necessity. Long prayers and abundance of words have become the distinguishing mark of Christian gatherings. The accumulation of treasures on earth is also regarded by the orthodox believer as entirely permissible, and mendicant orders are viewed with a smile of pity or

contempt. Our shops and our industry prevent us everywhere, wherever civilized Christians dwell, from seeing the lilies grow. To the command "judge not" the Church has replied with the Inquisition, and still replies daily with anathematization. To judge prophets by their fruits is wholly unusual; for that purpose one has a standard in their fidelity to the tradition of this or that ecclesiastical community. If one asks what has remained in practice of the Sermon on the Mount within the Christian community, it is very little indeed. Perhaps one idea alone is still respected: forgiveness—within certain limits, especially around the time of the Lord's Supper. Although a lawgiver cannot be held responsible for the negligence with which his ordinances are observed, a moral teacher can hardly be praised for practical insight when he threatens eternal punishments for not doing his words, and meanwhile chooses those words in such a way that no ordered society can even think of putting them into practice.

Does the excellence of the Sermon on the Mount perhaps lie precisely in the sublimity of its morality, to which weak humanity

cannot attain? I believe, on the contrary, that the best among us desire a moral principle that stands higher than that of the Sermon on the Mount, since this often does not stand higher than that of the Old Testament: doing good and refraining from evil with a view to reward and punishment. One must do violence to the words of the Sermon on the Mount in order not to find this principle in them. The blessedness of a condition is not sought in the moral quality of that condition itself, but in the future which it entitles one to expect. If that future, or even merely firm belief in that future, were to fall away, the motivating force of many prescriptions would likewise fall away. I do not say of every prescription. There are sayings in the Sermon on the Mount that breathe the loftiest religious morality. But alongside them stand other sayings that are difficult to reconcile with a wholly disinterested ethical doctrine. Suffering for the sake of righteousness is to be borne with joy, because the reward is great in heaven. One must hasten to be reconciled with one's adversary, lest perhaps he deliver us to the judge; one must avoid every occasion of sin in order not to be cast into hell. Doing good in secret is urged with the promise that the heavenly Father will repay it. Likewise it is fear of retaliation that must restrain us from judging. The Law and the Prophets are summed up in the command to do to others everything that we would wish them to do to us, mindful of the rule that we shall be measured with the measure with which we measure. The Sermon on the Mount as a whole is concluded with a comparison that reduces obedience to Jesus' words to an act of the highest prudence, and leaves upon the hearers an impression that first and foremost causes them to admire the authority with which Jesus had spoken.

Of no less importance is the question of the extent to which the Sermon on the Mount excels in originality. To this end we must take account both of the Old Testament and of the teaching of

Jesus' time and compatriots (in the broadest sense).[1] The following table provides an overview of what is relevant here, insofar as we were able to assemble it.

Old Testament and other Jewish writings.	Sermon on the Mount (according to Matthew and according to Luke).
Deut. XXVIII, 3, 4, 5, 6. Blessed shalt thou be in the city; blessed the fruit of thy womb … blessed thy basket … blessed in thy coming in, blessed in thy going out (the last counted as one, thus exactly four times); vss. 16, 17, 18, 19: Cursed in the city … cursed thy basket … cursed the fruit of thy womb … cursed in thy coming in and cursed in thy going out (the last counted as one, likewise exactly four times). In one of the schools of the Rabbis it was observed that the Book of Psalms contains exactly twenty beatitudes, the Book of Isaiah exactly twenty times "Woe."	Luke 6:20–22: Blessed are you who are poor … blessed you who hunger … blessed you who weep … blessed when they hate you, etc. (exactly four times); vv. 24–26: Woe to you who are rich … woe to you who are satisfied … woe to you who now laugh … woe when all people, etc. (likewise exactly four times. In Deuteronomy and in Luke the same contrast between blessing and woe).
Isaiah LXVI, 2: Upon the poor will I look, says the Lord. Proverbs XXVIII, 6: The poor man who walks in his integrity is better than one who is perverse in his ways, though he be rich. The rich are placed in an unfavourable light in Wisdom of Jesus ben Sirach XIII, 2, 4, 17, 20–22.	Luke 6:20 = Matthew 5:3: Blessed are the poor. Luke 6:24: Woe to you who are rich.

[1] My citations from those Jewish writings that do not occur in the Old Testament, in the Old Testament Apocrypha, or in Philo Judaeus, I have taken at second hand.

Talmud: Rabbi Gamaliel wishes not to turn his attention away for a single moment from the "kingdom of heaven."	Matthew 5:3b: Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Isaiah LXVI, 2: I will look upon the broken in spirit. Ecclesiastes VII, 3–4: Sorrow is better than	Matthew 5:4a: Blessed are those who mourn; Luke 6:25: Woe to you who now laugh.

laughter. Tobit XIII, 14a: Blessed are all who have mourned over thy chastisements.	
Isaiah XL, 1: Comfort, comfort my people, shall your God say. Tobit XIII, 14b: for they shall rejoice for ever.	Matthew 5:4b: for they shall be comforted.
Psalm XXXVII, 11: The meek shall inherit the earth. Proverbs II, 21–22: the upright shall dwell in the land … but the wicked shall be cut off from the earth. Daniel VII, 27: The kingdom … shall be given to the people of the saints.	Matthew 5:5: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
Amos VIII, 11: I will send … not a hunger for bread nor a thirst for water, but to hear the words of the Lord.	Matthew 5:6a: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.
Psalm XXXVII, 19: The righteous shall be satisfied in days of famine. Proverbs X, 3: The Lord does not let the soul of the righteous hunger.	Matthew 5:6b: They shall be satisfied.

Exodus XXXIV, 6: Moses cried: Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, etc.	Matthew 5:7: Blessed are the merciful.
Psalm LXXXIII, 1: God is good to those who are pure in heart; Psalm LI, 12: Create in me a clean heart!	Matthew 5:8a: Blessed are the pure in heart.

1 Kings X, 8; 2 Kings XXV, 19: “to see the king’s face” meaning: always to be in his immediate presence.	Matthew 5:8b: They shall see God.
Talmud: Promise of temporal and eternal reward to those who make peace. Proverbs XII, 20: those who counsel peace have joy.	Matthew 5:9a: Blessed are those who make peace.
Jesus ben Sirach IV, 10: Be to the orphan as a father … and thou shalt be as a son of the Most High.	Matthew 5:9b: They shall be called sons of God.
2 Maccabees VI, 30: Eleazar suffering “for fear of the Lord”; VII, 20: the mother of the seven sons “bravely enduring that her seven sons were slain in one day because of her hope in the Lord”; vss. 22–23: “saying to them: … the Creator of the world will give you back breath and life with mercy, because you now do not count yourselves for the sake of his laws”; XII, 45: “inasmuch as (Judas the Maccabee) considered that for those who had fallen godly asleep (from the context: fallen in battle for the law) the most splendid reward of grace awaited”; vs. 44: “he expected that those who had fallen would rise again”; XIV, 46: Razis, dying as a martyr, “tore out his entrails … and calling upon the Lord of life and spirit to give them back to him, thus he died.”	Matthew 5:10–12: Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, etc. … your reward is great in the heavens.

Philo Judaeus explains, in his treatise on those who sacrifice, the salt and light used in Jewish worship as eminent men. In Job VI, 6 the tasteless (in the Hebrew text) is equated with what is most unbearable. Rabbis in the Temple are called in the Talmud the light of the world.	Matthew 5:13–16; cf. Mark 9:50: You are the salt … you are the light.
Talmud: Reflections on the apparently lost letter yod in the name Sarai, which, according to Philo as well, came to be in the name Joshua, and threats against those who, by omission of what Matthew V, 18 calls a "tittle," alter letters in the text of the Old Testament.	Matthew 5:18: Not one iota (the letter i) or tittle of the Law shall pass away.

Talmud: Everything has an end, even heaven and earth; one thing does not—the law. In his treatise on Righteousness, Philo Judaeus set forth reasons why the law must be immutable.	Matthew 5:18: until heaven and earth pass away.
The Talmud sharpens attention equally to the lightest and the heaviest commandments.	Matthew 5:19: Whoever therefore breaks one of these least commandments, etc.
"But I say" is a common formula among Jewish legal scholars in deciding a case.	Matthew 5:22a: But I say to you.
Philo, on the Ten Commandments, extends the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" also to insulting. In his treatise on special laws he equates the intention to kill with murder: "Even if he is not a murderer with the hand, he is one with the soul." Talmud: "He who calls his brother a slave	Matthew 5:22b: Whoever [is angry] with his brother, etc. … shall be liable to the Gehenna of fire.

shall be excommunicated; he who calls him bastard shall be struck with forty lashes; if he calls him wicked he shall share his life (of misery and poverty).” Book of Zohar: He who curses his brother is led into Gehenna. Targum of Jonathan on Genesis III, 24: “He prepared Gehinnom for the wicked.”	

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Isaiah I, 13 ff.: Bring no more vain offerings … your hands are full of blood … cease to do evil, etc. Talmud: He who offers a sacrifice without having restored unjustly taken goods offers no sacrifice.	Matthew 5:23–24: If therefore you are bringing your gift, etc.
Talmud: He who goes out into the street should already regard himself as a man delivered to the officer of justice; a gloss explains this with reference to the presence of the Gentiles. Jesus ben Sirach VIII, 1: Strive not with a mighty man, lest thou fall into his hands.	Matthew 5:25–26: Be quickly reconciled with your adversary while you are still with him, etc.
Talmud: Warning against intentionally looking even at a woman’s finger, and equating this with great unchastity.	Matthew 5:27–28: Do not commit adultery.
Talmud: The hand must be cut off if it is where it should not be; it is better that one’s belly be slit open than that he descend into the pit of destruction.	Matthew 5:29–31: Cut off the right hand, etc. … It is to your advantage that one of your members should perish.

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Deuteronomy XXI, 1 permits divorce “when the man has found something shameful in the woman,” which many interpret as evidence of previously committed unchastity. Malachi II, 15–16: “Let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth; for the Lord, the God of Israel, says that he hates putting away.” Genesis II, 24: Man and woman shall be one flesh. Talmud: The putting away of one’s spouse is disgraceful; everything can be replaced, but not the wife of one’s youth. Ben Sira: “Gnaw, gnaw on the bone that has fallen to you.”	Matthew 5:31–32: Divorce permitted on account of adultery.
Ecclesiastes IX, 2: The same fate befalls him who swears and him who fears an oath (there were therefore some who did the latter). Jeremiah II, 5: Though they say, “The Lord lives,” they nevertheless swear falsely. Hosea IV, 15: Swear not, “The Lord lives.” Jesus ben Sirach XXIII, 8–10: Accustom not thy mouth to the oath, and make it not familiar with the naming of the Holy One … for he who always swears is not clean from sin.	Matthew 5:34: Do not swear at all.

Proverbs XXIV, 29: Say not, “As he has done to me, so will I do to him; I will repay each according to his work.” Lamentations III, 30a: Let him give his cheek to him that smites him.	Matthew 5:39: Whoever strikes you on the right cheek.
Deuteronomy XV, 7–8: Thou shalt not shut thine hand against thy poor brother, but thou	Matthew 5:42: Give to the one who asks of you, and do not turn away from the one who wishes to borrow from you.

shalt open it wide unto him and lend him abundantly sufficient for his need. Jesus ben Sirach IV, 4 ff.: Reject not the supplicant in his need, and turn not thy face from the poor. Turn not thine eyes away from the needy. Incline thine ear to the poor.	
Deuteronomy X, 18–19: For the Lord your God … loves the stranger … therefore you shall love the stranger. Job XXXI, 29: If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me. Proverbs XXIV, 17: Rejoice not when thine enemy falls; XXV, 21: If thine enemy hunger, give him bread to eat; and if he thirst, give him water to drink. Jesus ben Sirach XXVIII, 2: Forgive thy neighbour the wrong; VIII, 7: Rejoice not over a dead man (which of course only has sense with regard to someone who was an enemy).	Matthew 5:44: Love your enemies, etc.

Jesus ben Sirach IV, 10: Be to the orphan as a father … and thou shalt be as a son of the Most High.	Matthew 5:45: That you may be children of your Father who is in the heavens.
Leviticus XI, 44: You shall be holy, for I am holy. Deuteronomy XVIII, 13 (LXX): Thou shalt be perfect before the Lord thy God.	Matthew 5:48: Be therefore perfect, as your Father [is perfect], etc.
Tobit XII, 8: Prayer with fasting and almsgiving is good. Talmud: Rabbi Jannai saw someone openly	Matthew 6:1 ff.: Almsgiving and prayers in secret, like fasting, summarized under the

giving alms to a poor man; he said to him: it would have been better not to have given than to give in this way (alluding to Ecclesiastes XII, 14). Proverbs XXI, 14: A gift in secret pacifies anger (according to Talmudic interpretation).	doing of righteousness in verse 1 (according to the best manuscripts).
Daniel II, 22: He knows what is in the darkness, for the light dwells with him. Apocryphal chapter XIII, 42: But Susanna cried out: Eternal God, who sees what is hidden.	Matthew 6:4: Your Father who sees in secret.
Talmud: Rabbi Akiba laughed at the bodily suffering of Rabbi Eliezer, because it was now evident that his reward still awaited him.	Matthew 6:5: They have received their reward.

Ecclesiastes V, 1: Let not thy heart be hasty to utter a word before God … let thy words be few (according to Talmudic interpretation). Proverbs X, 19: In the multitude of words transgression is not lacking. Isaiah I, 15: When you multiply prayer, I will not hear.	Matthew 6:7: When you pray, do not use vain repetition of words.
Isaiah LXIII, 15–16: Look down from heaven … Thou art our Father. Talmud: repeatedly: Our Father who art in the heavens.	Matthew 6:9a: Our Father who is in the heavens.
Isaiah XXIX, 23: They shall sanctify my name.	Matthew 6:9b: Hallowed be your name.

Ezekiel XXXVI, 23: I will sanctify my great name.	
Obadiah vs. 21: The kingdom shall be the Lord's. In Jewish schools it was held as an axiom that a prayer was no prayer unless the kingdom of God was mentioned.	Matthew 6:10a: Your kingdom come.
Talmud: Rabbi Eliezer cites as the short prayer: Accomplish thy will in heaven. Psalm CIII, 21: You his servants, who do his will.	Matthew 5:10b: Your will be done as in heaven.
Psalm XXV, 18: Forgive all my sins (the LXX uses here the same word as the Gospel for forgiveness). Jesus ben Sirach XXVIII, 2: Forgive thy neighbour the wrong; then on thy prayer thy sins shall be wiped away.	Luke 11:4: Forgive us our sins. Matthew 6:14: For if you forgive people their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

Jesus ben Sirach XXXIII, 1: He who fears the Lord shall meet no evil, but even in temptation he will deliver him again.	Matthew 6:13: Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.
Jesus ben Sirach XXXV, 9 ff.: Show a cheerful countenance in every gift … for the Lord is the one who repays, and he will repay sevenfold.	Matthew 6:16 ff.: When you fast, do not show a gloomy face … anoint your head; your Father, who sees in secret, will repay you.

Proverbs X, 2: Treasures profit not the wicked, but almsgiving delivers from death (the Dutch Bible has “righteousness”; this word often stands for generosity, almsgiving: in Matthew VI, 1 the two words alternate in manuscripts; perhaps Matthew V, 20 also means righteousness in the sense of almsgiving). Jesus ben Sirach III, 28–29: Almsgiving blots out sins; vss. 31–32: He who repays kindness remembers what may come; XXIX, 10 ff.: Lose your money for the sake of a brother and friend … store up your treasures (according to the command of the Most High) for almsgiving in your treasury, and they will rescue you from every distress; XL, 16: Mercy endures for ever. Tobit IV, 8–9: Give according to your ability … for you lay up for yourself a good treasure for the day of distress.	Luke 12:33 ff. (= Matthew 6:19 ff.): Give alms. Make for yourselves … a treasure in the heavens.

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Talmud: Rabbi Eliezer said: whoever still has a small loaf in his basket and says, “What shall I eat tomorrow?” is one of the little-faithful. Among the sayings of Ben Sira one finds: Do not worry about tomorrow; perhaps tomorrow will not come, and then you will have worried about a time that no longer concerns you. Proverbs XXIII, 4: Do not weary yourself to become rich. Jesus ben Sirach XI, 3 ff.: The bee is small among the birds, yet produces the sweetest	Matthew 6:31 ff.: Therefore do not be anxious, saying: what shall we eat, etc. … Will he not clothe you much more, you of little faith?

of all things. Boast not in your clothing … Child, overload yourself not with many kinds of work; for you will not remain unpunished if you have many tasks at hand … Many toil and labour and hasten, and yet are all the more in want … Many there are who need help, and the eyes of the Lord are upon them for good; XXXI, 1, 5: Anxiety over riches drives away sleep … He who loves gold will not be justified.	

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Book of Wisdom I, 1: Seek the Lord in simplicity of heart.	Matthew 6:22: If then your eye is single, etc.
Proverbs XXVIII, 28: A bad man judges rashly (according to the LXX). Ecclesiastes III, 16: I saw under the sun that in the place of judgment there was wickedness … I said in my heart: God shall judge the righteous and the wicked (the possibility of judging righteously is here assumed only with regard to God).	Matthew 7:1: Do not judge, so that you may not be judged.
Talmud: For with what measure you measure, etc.	Matthew 7:2: For with the measure with which you measure, etc.
Talmud: The image of the splinter and the beam for small and great sins.	Matthew 7:3–5: Why do you see the speck, etc.

Proverbs IX, 8: Reprove not a scoffer, lest he hate thee; XXIII, 9: Speak not in the ears of a fool, for he will despise the wisdom of thy words.	Matthew 7:6: Do not give what is holy to the dogs, etc.

Psalm LXXXI, 11: I am the Lord your God … open your mouth wide, and I will fill it. Jeremiah XXIX, 12 ff.: Then you shall call upon me and pray to me, and I will hear you; and you shall seek me and find me, and I will be found by you. Psalm CXVIII, 19: Open to me the gates of righteousness.	Matthew 7:7–11: Ask and it will be given to you, etc. Knock and it will be opened to you.
Tobit IV, 15: What you yourself hate, do not do to another.	Matthew 7:12: Therefore, all things whatsoever you wish, etc.
Psalm CXVIII, 20: This is the gate of the Lord, through which the righteous shall enter. Deuteronomy V, 32; Proverbs IV, 27; Isaiah XXX, 21: Exhortations not to turn either to the right or to the left.	Matthew 7:13: Enter through the narrow gate.
Deuteronomy XIII, 1–4: Warning against false prophets.	Matthew 7:15: Warning against false prophets.
Jesus ben Sirach XXVII, 6: By the fruit of the tree one knows the field, and by a man's word the deliberation of his heart.	Luke 6:44–45 (= Matthew 7:16–20): Every tree is known by its fruit; out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

Talmud: Rabbi Eliezer ben Azariah said: He whose knowledge is greater than his works—what is he like? Like a tree with many branches but few roots; the wind comes and uproots and overturns it. But he whose works exceed his knowledge—what is he like? Like a tree with few branches and many roots; even if all the winds in the world blow against it, they do not move it from its place.	Matthew 7:24 ff.: Everyone therefore who hears these words of mine and does them, etc.

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Our comparative table has shown that an Israelite, at home in the literature of his people and in the circle of ideas of his time, equipped with some good taste and power of discernment, could very well have composed the Sermon on the Mount; that it is therefore not its originality which compels us to attribute it to no one other than to a teacher as unique as Jesus is portrayed to us in the Gospels. We do not claim that the author of the Sermon on the Mount sought out and copied the various texts that correspond to his own sayings, but that, nourished from his earliest youth on the Wisdom of his people, he gave back from that Wisdom (meekness, peacemaking, endurance, generosity, hope in a heavenly kingdom) what seemed to him to be demanded by the circumstances of the time, especially by the relation to the Romans. The exaggeration, one-sidedness, lack of coherence and originality in the Sermon on the Mount are best explained if we see in it a new specimen of the relatively ancient **ḥokmah** literature of the Hebrews. The Sermon on the Mount may be called the Proverbs

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of Jesus in the same sense and with the same right as a certain writing of the Old Testament has been called the Proverbs of Solomon. There is nothing that compels us to go further than this conclusion.

Appendix.

By way of an appendix to this paragraph, it may not be unwelcome here to compare the Sermon on the Mount, and what the Sermon on the Mount presupposes, with the New Testament outside the Gospels. How instructive this comparison must be is obvious. If the Sermon on the Mount is not a collection of sayings that were later placed under the name of Jesus, but rather a—be it even a free—reproduction of both the substance and the manner of Jesus' teaching, then one may expect that at least the materials out of whose combination the Sermon on the

Mount later arose were known to the compilers of the New Testament writings, and that consequently traces of that familiarity will be encountered in those writings. If Jesus in the main taught what the Sermon on the Mount reports, then this could neither have remained hidden among the earliest Christians nor have been without influence. If Jesus was such a teacher, the apostolic writings cannot ignore it.

We go through the New Testament, and scarcely has the Sermon on the Mount come to an end with chapter VII, 27 of the first Gospel—that Sermon on the Mount which upheld the abiding significance of the old Covenant, had no good word for the Gentiles, and issued the command: *Do not give what is holy to the dogs*—when Matthew VIII, 11 has Jesus assure us: "I say to you that many shall come from East and West and shall recline with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into the outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth"; a saying which proclaims universalism in the strongest terms (cf. Luke XIII, 29). Immediately after the Sermon on the Mount, which knows nothing of repentance, one reads IX, 13: "for I have

come … to call sinners to repentance" (cf. Mark II, 17 and Luke XV). After the "blessed are those who mourn" or: "blessed are you who now mourn," IX, 15 surprises us: "can the sons of the bridechamber mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them?" (cf. Mark II, 19); after "not one iota or tittle of the law shall pass away," the radical statement of IX, 16 is astonishing: "nor does anyone put a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment" (cf. Mark II, 21). "Faith" does not occur in the entire Sermon on the Mount, yet already in VIII, 13 and IX, 22 we read: "let it be done to you according to your faith" and "your faith has saved you" (cf. IX, 28). The Sermon on the Mount had pronounced blessed those who make peace: what then are we to make of Jesus' testimony in X, 34 that he has come "not to bring peace but a sword," or, after having praised the hungry as blessed, that he himself comes (XI, 19) "eating and drinking," so that slanderers can call him a glutton and a winebibber? If Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount had still made the yoke of the scribes heavier, how can he then call his yoke gentle and his burden light (XI, 30)? In the Sermon on the Mount the teacher is condemned who loosens the least commandment and so teaches others; yet Jesus himself appears in XII, 1–8 to be such a teacher when he exalts himself above the Sabbath (cf. Mark II, 28). He who speaks as Messiah on the summit of a mountain is nevertheless hard to recognize in the "Beloved of the Lord" of XII, 19, who will not raise his voice in the streets. Can everyone, according to the Sermon on the Mount, refrain from judging anyone, and yet, according to XII, 37, be "justified by his words"? Can one uphold the Mosaic law in its entirety and yet maintain in XV, 11 that "what enters the mouth does not defile a person" (cf. Mark VII, 15)? The poor mother of the Maccabees thought otherwise about this! One must give to whoever asks of us and must not even turn away from the one who wishes to borrow from us, and yet he who commands this will himself have turned away from the Canaanite woman in the manner described in XV, 21 ff. (cf. Mark VII, 24 ff.).

He praises the blessedness of hunger and yet is moved with compassion in XV, 32 over the crowds because they have nothing to eat. Was he then not serious about that "blessed are you who hunger"? Has the same mouth forbidden to his first disciples both loosening the least commandment and judging, and yet promised them in XVI, 19: "I will give you the keys of the kingdom … and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven"? According to the Sermon on the Mount, God will not forgive us unless we forgive people their trespasses; how does this accord with XVIII, 15 ff.: "If your brother sins against you … rebuke him between you … if he does not listen to you, take one or two witnesses … if he does not listen to them, tell it to the congregation … if he does not listen even to the congregation, let him be to you as the Gentile and the tax collector"? "Ask and you will receive" does not lead one to expect that, in XVIII, 19, precisely two must agree in their prayer in order to see what they desire come to pass. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus equates being persecuted for righteousness' sake with being persecuted for his sake, whereas in XIX, 17 he asks someone: "Why do you call me good?" In the Sermon on the Mount he disposes of heaven and hell (the persecuted have the kingdom of heaven—"depart from me, you who work iniquity"), but in XX, 23 it is not his to grant sitting at his right and left hand (cf. Mark X, 40). Early in the morning, as he was returning to the city, he was hungry (XXI, 18)—he who according to the Sermon on the Mount found hunger blessed—and he causes a fig tree to wither because it offers no fruit to satisfy his hunger (cf. Mark XI, 12 ff.). The Sermon on the Mount opens the prospect of a reward that is great in the heavens, and Luke XVII, 10 equates hope of reward even for those who have done everything they were obliged to do with that of one who has tended his master's cattle and, on coming home in the evening, expects his master to

say to him: come here and recline. After the Sermon on the Mount has disapproved of the multitude of words in prayer, one does not expect Luke XVIII, 7 to approve and encourage the day-and-night crying of the elect with the promise of being heard.

We need not linger over the Gospel of John. It is well known that the teaching of Jesus in that writing neither in content nor in form recalls the Sermon on the Mount, which is also proof that in the circles in which the author of the fourth Gospel moved there was no tradition current concerning Jesus' manner of teaching that would have made impossible a writing in which Jesus preached so entirely differently from the teacher of the Sermon on the Mount.

That the Acts of the Apostles contain no recollections of Jesus' teaching and thus none of the Sermon on the Mount must not go unnoticed.[1] Acts II, 22 has Peter cry out to the assembled crowd: "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested by God to you by powers and wonders and signs which God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know." Not a word about Jesus' preaching. The "three thousand souls" who were added in one day "were persevering (II, 42) in the teaching of the apostles"; why not in that of Jesus? "That the Christ would suffer" is said in III, 18 to have been foretold beforehand by all the prophets, and likewise God has spoken through his holy prophets (v. 21) of the times of the restoration of all things. Here again no appeal to Jesus' own predictions. The purpose of Jesus' coming is

indicated in these very general terms (III, 26): “God has sent Jesus to you in order to bless you, in that he turned each of you away from your wickedness.” Where the first …

[1] Perhaps I, 1 constitutes an exception, but because of v. 3c one is almost led to suspect that here teaching of Jesus after the resurrection is meant, of which the Synoptics report so little.

that the apostles are persecuted happens, according to IV, 2, ‘because they proclaimed in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.’ The content of their earliest preaching is summarized in IV, 12 in this way: ‘salvation is in no other.’ They are forbidden in v. 18 ‘to teach in the name of Jesus.’ The resurrection of Jesus, with appeal to the prophecies, is the warp and woof of their preaching (IV, 33; V, 30 ff.; XIII, 30 ff.; XVII, 3, 31; cf. XXIII, 6; XXIV, 15, 21; XXV, 19; XXVI, 6, 8, 23), as proof of the dogmatic truth that he is the Son of God (VIII, 37; IX, 20, 22; XVIII, 5, 28; XX, 21; XXVIII, 23). Although Peter must also have heard from Jesus that one is not defiled by eating anything, he nevertheless (X, 10 ff.) needs a heavenly vision in order to grasp this truth. Thereupon Peter goes to Cornelius and says (v. 37 ff.): ‘you yourselves know the matter … concerning Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power; who went about the country doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil … and we are witnesses of all that he did … and he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead’: again not a word about Jesus’ teaching. Eating with the Gentiles is interpreted very unfavourably to Peter by ‘the apostles and the brothers who were in Judea’ (XI, 1), whereby they too show themselves unfamiliar with Matt. XV, 11. The report XIII, 51 may be an allusion to Matt. X, 14, but conversely it is of course also possible that Matt. X, 14 arose from Acts XIII, 51. The same holds for Acts XIV, 17 compared with Matt. V, 45. Peter, who from the Sermon on the Mount ought to have known that not even the least commandment might be annulled, asks (XV, 10) those who asserted that converts from the Gentiles had to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses (XV, 5): ‘Why do you put God to the test by placing a yoke upon the neck of the disciples

which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?’ And he even believes (v. 11) ‘that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ in the same way as they’; that is, without circumcision or observance of the Mosaic law. The only word of Jesus quoted in Acts (XX, 35): ‘it is more blessed to give than to receive,’ is not found again in our four Gospels. Paul himself describes (XXVI, 15, 16) his calling in this way: And Jesus said: … ‘For this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you as a servant and witness of the things both which you have seen and in which I will appear to you,’ to which Jesus’ life on earth and thus also his teaching obviously cannot belong.

In the letters which more recent criticism allows to Paul, we are struck by the absence of any allusion to Jesus’ activity as a teacher. Where Paul gives exhortations that agree with those of the Sermon on the Mount, such as: bless those who persecute you; repay no one evil for evil (Romans XII, 14; cf. 1 Cor. IV, 12), he does not appeal to any saying of Jesus. Obedience to

words or commandments of Jesus is not enjoined. With 'avenge not yourselves' (Rom. XII, 19) he cites Deuteronomy XXXII, 35; shortly thereafter Proverbs XXV, 21 and 22. With the command, Rom. XIII, 7: 'render therefore to all their dues,' Luke XX, 22 ff. is not mentioned. That love is the fulfilment of the law is stated in Rom. XIII, 10, likewise Galatians V, 14, as an original thought, without any recollection of Matt. XXII, 39, 40. With the question: why do you judge your brother? Rom. XIV, 10, an appeal is indeed made to Isaiah XLV, 23 but not to Matt. VII, 1. The 'be quickly reconciled with your adversary' of Matt. V, 25 is not to be recognized in 1 Cor. VI, 1 ff., where lawsuits among believers are discussed, any more than the absolute prohibition of divorce in Matt. V, 32 is to be found in 1 Cor. VII, 15, where resistance to divorce, when

it is desired by the unbelieving spouse, is not recommended, nor in 1 Cor. VII, 27: 'are you bound to a wife? do not seek release,' as though the opposite were conceivable.[1] The first chapter of the letter to the Galatians is of such a nature that, if in Paul's time there had existed any tradition concerning a teaching, a doctrine, of Jesus, the authenticity of that letter—which one generally regards as above all doubt—would become in the highest degree improbable. If there was a teaching of Jesus, Paul must have desired to know it; then he could have learned it in no other way than from the mouths of those who had heard it. Paul, however, shows not the slightest sign of cherishing that desire; accordingly he consults no one's recollections. He did not receive the gospel from a human being (I, 12), as though, if the gospel chiefly contained a teaching of Jesus, he could have received it in some other way. Having been converted to Christianity, he remains outside Palestine for three years, then only fifteen days in Jerusalem and even there does not enjoy personal intercourse with all the apostles, only with James. He testifies before God (v. 20) that he is not lying; that is, that he did absolutely nothing to acquaint himself with Jesus' teaching or life. Is all this conceivable if the Jesus to whom he was converted was then regarded as a teacher? That Jesus will have spoken words of which he himself predicts that they will outlast heaven and earth, and his most ardent apostle, who counts everything loss (Phil. III, 8) 'for the surpassing worth of the knowledge of Christ Jesus,' will be completely indifferent as to what those words were! And is there anyone whom this does not strike?

[1] See our introduction p. 21 ff., where we have shown that Paul speaks about marriage in a way that betrays complete unfamiliarity with the teaching of Jesus and points to a special revelation which, if that teaching had existed, would already beforehand have rendered it wholly superfluous."

— who accuses Paul of introducing an entirely new teaching? On the contrary: the communities in Judea hear (v. 23) that he was preaching the faith 'which he formerly destroyed.'

The Letter to the Philippians leads us to the same conclusion. Where Paul (I, 29) mentions that to the believers in Philippi grace has been granted to suffer for Christ, he makes no mention of the comforting promises of Jesus to those who would be persecuted for his sake. The 'be

anxious about nothing' (IV, 6) is again a wholly independent command. The author is by no means someone who attaches no importance to teaching: 'what you have also learned, do that,' he says in IV, 9, but not a word about a teaching of Jesus.

Finally, the Epistle of James is particularly instructive here, first because of the close relationship that will have existed between him and Jesus, but above all because of the many parallels which the Epistle presents with words that in the Gospels are placed in Jesus' mouth, while yet nowhere does any allusion or appeal to Jesus' teaching occur."

JAMES	JESUS
Count it all joy when you fall into various trials (I, 2).	Lead us not into temptation.
If anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask of God in faith, without doubting (vv. 5–6); **no allusion**.	Matthew VII, 8; XXI, 21.
When he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised (I, 12); a mode of expression which—since a promise of the Lord is cited—might have corresponded more closely to that of Jesus,	Matthew XXIV, 13; Mark XIII, 13.

Let no one say: I am tempted by God (I, 13).	Lead us not into temptation; which presupposes that God can indeed lead us into it.
If anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, etc. (I, 23); no allusion.	Matthew VII, 26 ff.
Has not God chosen the poor? (II, 5). No allusion. That James here speaks of God's promise to those who love him suggests that in I, 12 (see above) it is likewise God who promises. All the more noteworthy, therefore, that nothing here betrays any acquaintance with words of Jesus.	Matthew V, 3.
If you fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture (II, 8); no allusion.	Matthew XXII, 39.
An unmerciful judgment will be shown (v. 13); no allusion.	

	Matthew VII, 1–2.
Works are the animating force of faith (v. 26).	Matthew VII, 20: works are fruits.
Do not become many teachers (III, 1a); no allusion. NB. The stricter judgment of teachers.	Matthew XXIII, 10. The severer judgment of Israel's leaders: Mark XII, 40b.
Can a vine produce figs? (v. 2); no allusion.	Matthew VII, 16.
You desire and do not have, etc. (IV, 2–3) seems an allusion and even a correction.	Matthew VII, 7. Was this saying abused?

Chapter IV, 6 cites Proverbs III, 34, where a citation of Jesus' word might also have been possible.	Matthew XI, 29.
So whoever knows how to do good and does not do it, etc. (v. 17).	Luke XII, 47.
Chapter V, 1–3 against the rich; no allusion.	Luke VI, 24 ff.
The farmer waits for the precious fruit, patiently, etc. (v. 7); no allusion.	Luke XIII, 6 ff.
Against swearing (v. 12); no allusion.	Matthew V, 34–35; "nor by Jerusalem" does not occur in James, just as one does not find in James the polemic of Matthew XXIII, 16.

In more than one respect the comparison of the entire Epistle is important.

1° For our principal aim: when two teachers touch upon so many subjects in the same way; when the one calls himself (I, 1) "the servant" of the other, and then nowhere appeals to the teaching that is ascribed to that teacher, but presents everything in his own name, as of his own devising, or with citations from others, the supposition lies close at hand that he has never

heard of that teaching.

2° The Epistle of James does not differ in kind from the Sermon on the Mount. It is the Sermon on the Mount, a. in less good style, b. perhaps for people less attached to Jerusalem (see V, 12) and the Temple (see the absence of any parallel to Matt. V, 23–24: allusion to the cult), c. with far less accentuated polemic against the scribes (see III, 1 compared with Mark XII, 40b), d. with the tendency to correct the paradoxical character of certain sayings of the most recent Chokma literature (see I, 12–13;

IV, 2–3; and especially the motivation in V, 4). For James may have read the Sermon on the Mount before it was issued as a specimen of Jesus' teaching. e. with more Christian colouring (see II, 12: "the law of liberty," and v. 1: "hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ"). Jesus ben Sira, the Sermon on the Mount, the Epistle of James: with these writings we remain within the same genre; it is the continuation of Jewish Chokma literature, repeatedly modified according to the circumstances of the time. The one is no more elevated than the other; whereas the Sermon on the Mount, on the supposition of its authenticity, would have had to excel.

3° The lack of coherence, the passing from one thought to another on the sound of a word, which we observe in James—whose writing's unity is not disputed—must prevent us from wanting to see fragments of a former coherent whole in the Sermon on the Mount as soon as similar phenomena present themselves there. Already with striking examples, which have their analogies, I draw attention to James I, 6 and 8: doubting leads to double-mindedness; 9–11 stand entirely on their own; v. 19a likewise; vv. 26–27 likewise; v. 13 a "for" that explains nothing; III, 5, small tongue and great things: for the mention of the latter there was no other occasion than the antithesis; compare the entire pericope 3–10, where the thread repeatedly breaks; v. 11 contributes nothing; V, 7 the "thus" does not conclude from what precedes; between 18 and 19 there is no connection.

4° It is noteworthy that in V, 10–11 there is absolutely no pointing to the example of Golgotha, just as in II, 1 the faith of Jesus Christ is specified by nothing. For in V, 10–11 we read: "My brothers, take as an example of suffering … the prophets … you have heard of the perseverance of Job!" This complete absence of any individual recollection of Jesus in the Epistle of James certainly deserves, in connection with the subject that occupies us here, all our attention.

Finally we pause for a moment over the Apocalypse,

because its authenticity now seems to be raised above all suspicion, and we possess in it a work written before the destruction of Jerusalem. Jesus is here introduced as speaking. Such a fiction will nevertheless, in all probability, have to turn out to be highly transparent; in other words, the Jesus of the Apocalypse will have to recall the Jesus of the Synoptics. In part he does this as well, namely where the Jesus of the Synoptics is already the apocalyptic Jesus; see Rev. III, 2–3, 5; VI, 13, 16, texts which one finds again (although the last in a somewhat different connection) in Mark XIII, 37; Matt. XXIV, 42; Matt. X, 32 = Luke XII, 8; Matt. XXIV, 29

and Luke XXIII, 30. Set against this is the fact that the Jesus of the Apocalypse says (III, 21): "He who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne," whereas the Jesus of the Synoptics confines himself (Matt. XIX, 28) to the announcement that those who have followed him will sit with him on twelve thrones. Indeed, to the sons of Zebedee—and the author of the Apocalypse was one of them—Jesus in his lifetime, according to Matt. XX, 23; Mark X, 40, had assured that the sitting at his right and at his left was not his to give. In the Son of Man with his golden girdle, his eyes like a flame of fire, his voice like the sound of many waters (I, 13–15), it is not easy to recognize a well-known aspect of the synoptic image, for example the poor man, the meek one, the one who did not raise his voice in the streets. Passages such as Rev. I, 8, 17, etc., rather let Jesus speak in the manner of the Fourth Gospel. The polemic of Jesus against false apostles (II, 2 and elsewhere) does not recall that of Jesus against false prophets (Matt. VII, 15; Luke VI, 26). For an expression such as Rev. II, 6: "I hate the Nicolaitans," we were perhaps not prepared by Mark IX, 39–41. If Rev. VI, 16 was taken from Luke XXIII, 30, then the reproduction of that saying is in any case very free. In general the result here is more of a

negative nature. Were it too much to say that the apocalyptic Jesus excludes the synoptic Jesus, one would go just as far astray with the assertion that the former presupposes the latter. Jesus as the teacher of Matt. V–VII we have not found again anywhere in the entire New Testament.

Our appendix is hereby at an end. It has not overthrown our result concerning the Sermon on the Mount; in the main it has powerfully confirmed it. The Sermon on the Mount is, to the best of our knowledge, a wholly free composition, a book of Proverbs, which only later—specifically after the Epistle of James had been written—came to be regarded as a piece that reproduced Jesus' manner of teaching.

The tradition according to which Jesus would have been a teacher thus arose relatively late, and is less old than the representation of Jesus as a demigod.

II.

On fasting.

According to the presentation of the three Synoptics (Matt. IX, 14–17; Mark II, 18–22; Luke V, 33–39), the discussion about eating with the tax collectors is followed by another about fasting.

Here is what all three report: 1° Jesus is asked why the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but his disciples do not; 2° Jesus' answer to that question; 3° his prediction concerning their future fasting; 4° what no one does with an old garment and why not; 5° what no one does with new wine and why not.

Only Matthew and Mark agree in the following: 1° "while (your disciples) do not fast"; 2° "can the wedding guests"; 3° "and a worse tear is made."

Only Matthew and Luke agree in the following: 1° "the wine (is) poured out"; 2° one (puts) new wine into new wineskins.

Only Mark and Luke agree in the following: 1° (why fast) the disciples (third person plural); 2° "the disciples (of John and) of the Pharisees"; 3° the addition "in that day" or "those days"; 4° otherwise the new wine (makes) the skins burst.

Points of difference: 1° with Mark alone the historical remark v. 18a; 2° with Matthew exclusively the disciples of John appear and ask the question; with Mark (John's disciples can hardly speak of themselves in the third person), as with Luke, the subject is not clearly indicated; 3° only with Matthew is the question put in the first person plural; 4° only with Luke: "(they fast) often"; 5° only with Luke: "and make prayers"; 6° only with Luke: "(yours) eat and drink"; 7° only with Luke: "can you make (them) fast"; 8° only with Matthew: "(can the wedding guests) mourn"; 9° only with Mark does Jesus answer his own question; 10° with Luke only: "and he also said to them a parable," by which the saying about the old garment is somewhat separated from what precedes; 11° with Luke the redaction of the saying about the garment stands by itself as regards both content and form; 12° only with Matthew: "and both are preserved together"; 13° only with Luke v. 39 (the immediate desire for new wine after the old).

The first-mentioned points of agreement have the following variants: 1° with Matthew "they come saying"; with Mark "they come and say"; with Luke "they said"; with M. "come," expressed by a compound verb, with Mark by a non-compound verb; 2° "while the bridegroom is with

them," with Matthew expressed somewhat differently than with Mark and Luke; 3° with Matthew "(no one) puts," with Mark "sews"; 4° "onto" (an old garment), construed with the third case with Matthew, with the fourth case with Mark; 5° with Mark only "new" (the sewn-on patch); 6° with Matthew "and one does not put," with Mark and Luke: "and no one puts"; 7° "other" with Matthew and Luke not expressed quite in the same way as with Mark; with Matthew "they tear the skins," with Mark and Luke: "the skin tears"; 8° with Matthew "and one puts," with Luke "and one must put" (new wine).

The text of Matthew, like that of Mark, is rather incomprehensible. In Mark the entire narrative begins with the remark that the disciples of John and the Pharisees had the custom of fasting. To what end that remark? All Israelites had that custom. It sounds as if one were now to say: the Mennonites and the Roman Catholics had the custom of going to church on Sundays. How, moreover, does the author arrive at this assimilation of the disciples of the Baptist and the Pharisees? The Baptist and the Pharisees had surely not stood in such a friendly relationship to one another. If one translates: *they were fasting* (namely on a particular occasion), then, in view of that less friendly relationship to which we have alluded, one must assume that that occasion was not the same for the disciples of John and the Pharisees. The coincidence of their fasting would then have been entirely accidental. But if it was accidental, then there was also nothing remarkable in the fact that the disciples of Jesus at that moment were not accidentally fasting as well, and with that the entire occasion for the question would fall away. This translation is therefore not plausible. We must then continue to read: the disciples of John and the Pharisees had the custom of fasting. After that strange communication Mark continues: "and they came saying to him." According to the context these "they" are the disciples of John and the Pharisees. But how can these then speak of themselves in the third person: "why do the disciples of John and the disciples of the Pharisees fast," quite apart from the fact that the Pharisees of v. 18a have here, as under the influence of parallelism, become *disciples of the Pharisees*. Matthew does not have the strange communication of Mark II, 18a. With him the disciples of John come to Jesus. With him, in the question, the third person has been changed into the first person plural. Thus two difficulties fewer. But now it becomes all the more difficult to understand what moves those disciples of John to speak in the name of the Pharisees, and to say of him and

of themselves: why do *we* fast, as if they were most intimately united. Mark's statement II, 18a is certainly strange in itself, but it is indispensable if Matt. IX, 14, like in part Mark II, 18b, is to have those who question Jesus be disciples of John. For these can then direct their question to Jesus only if fasting is assumed at that time to have been something special, and something special that precisely, exclusively or pre-eminently, characterized them, the disciples of John, together with the Pharisees. If one does not assume this, and the absence of Mark II, 18a in Matthew makes it impossible for us, reading Matthew alone, to assume it, then our remark from just now returns, and we say with reason: what can have moved the disciples of John also to act in the

name of the Pharisees, whom their master had, after all (precisely according to Matthew), called a brood of vipers?

One might now assume that the text of Mark originally began with II, 18b ("and they came") and (like Luke as well) left it open who addressed the question to Jesus. A later redactor could then, in explanation of that combination of Pharisees and disciples of John, have written v. 18a as a gloss. If one considers this plausible, one must nevertheless concede that Matthew did not have that original text of Mark before him, unless one wishes to accuse him of the greatest thoughtlessness. He would then, after all, have changed in the question the third person plural—which without v. 18a is entirely in its place—into the first person plural in order to spoil a text intelligible in itself, and moreover would have fabricated his v. 14a in order to justify that unfortunate change. If, on the other hand, he read the text of Mark as we do, then he may have found Mark II, 18a, like us, strange, and the third person plural in v. 18b incorrect, and likewise

have introduced the changes that we observe in him in order to clarify matters. He is then certainly no more free of thoughtlessness, but it now consists only in this, that he, finding Mark II, 18a in itself rightly strange, did not perceive how it was nevertheless indispensable as soon as one let the question be asked which precisely presupposes that the fasting of Pharisees and disciples of John might be called something special, something characteristic. If Matthew wished once to omit Mark II, 18a, then he ought to have redacted the question thus: Why do *we* (we Israelites in general) fast, and you do not?

One can hardly assume that, conversely, Mark had the text of Matthew before him, understood that that text made a general remark as an explanation necessary, and for that reason fabricated Mark II, 18a. For we rightly ask how he would then have come to change so clumsily the first person plural which, on that assumption, he found in Matthew, into the third person plural, and the Pharisees of Matthew into the "disciples of the Pharisees." We must, however, acknowledge that the choice here is difficult. In itself Mark could just as well have proceeded in an outstandingly thoughtless manner. What prevents us here from letting Mark copy the text of Matthew is the consideration that Mark II, 18a would then be a gloss on the text as it now stands in Matthew. Now it does indeed occur that a glossator takes over a text as it is, even when his gloss ought properly to entail a change in that text; far less often does it occur that he arbitrarily corrupts the text which fits his gloss excellently.

If Mark II, 18a is a gloss on the original text of Mark, then we have here a new confirmation of that rule; for then we see precisely in the third person plural of v. 18b a remnant of that original text. The "they (came)" then leaves the subject entirely undetermined.

If textual criticism can thus remove one of the indicated difficulties (the use of "they" in Mark), it proves powerless in the face of the difficulties that are present in the question itself and further on in the narrative. Whoever, then, the subject may be in the "they" who ask, the assertion

remains highly astonishing that “the disciples of Jesus do not fast.” Is the meaning that they never fast? That would presuppose, on the part of Jesus’ disciples, a break with the Jewish religion, of which we find no trace elsewhere in the Gospel, while we should least of all expect such a break precisely on this point from an evangelist who, like Matthew (VI, 16), has Jesus give his disciples prescriptions concerning fasting. Is the meaning that they do not fast on a particular occasion on which the Pharisees and the disciples of John did fast? Then one understands the question still less, and just as little Jesus’ answer, which, in the supposed case, should simply have recalled that the particular occasion which made both the Pharisees and the followers of John fast on one and the same day did not exist for his disciples.

Instead of this Jesus answers: no fasting for the children of the wedding feast so long as the bridegroom is present. For my disciples fasting will begin only later, namely after our separation. How could Jesus know that he would outlive them? But even if a premonition in this regard had filled him, and this question thus were superfluous, as well as the other—how Jesus could attribute meaning and value to a religious observance so exclusively with reference to his own person—so much is certain: Jesus regards fasting exclusively as a sign of mourning. With Matthew one therefore simply reads: how can the children of the wedding feast mourn (instead of fast, as Mark has), and in doing so the same Greek word is chosen for mourning as in Matthew V, 4. The evangelist Matthew had not prepared us for this. In Matthew VI, 16 Jesus had, according to him,

upheld a conception of fasting in which precisely the mournfulness of fasting was set aside, and in Matthew V, 4 Jesus had pronounced the mourners blessed. With Mark one does not understand the redaction of verse 20: the days will come … they will fast in that day. Matthew has corrected this, but as a consequence has brought out all the more strongly another difficulty, also present in Mark. For now there remain days (in the plural) in which the bridegroom will have been taken away. It would therefore have been better to omit “days will come” and to let “in that day” stand, since the taking away naturally refers to a definite day, which is also indicated by the determinative “then,” which can hardly be explained as referring to the entire time after Jesus’ death.

Now follow in Matthew and in Mark sayings of which the writers evidently thought that they were connected with what precedes. They are, however, in no way connected.

We must not forget that Jesus has not actually spoken about fasting, but has answered as if he had been asked: why are your disciples not sorrowful? Those disciples, according to Jesus, were not yet sorrowful because he was still with them. On a definite day, however, he would go away from them, and then they too would be sorrowful. He then continues: no one patches an old garment with a new piece of cloth, for that new patch will cause an even worse tear. First, one might reply that in fact everyone does what Jesus here says no one does. For it is not a question of an all-too-old garment, too old to be mended, but quite generally; then one can ask why mending always causes worse tears; but finally and above all: what this entire remark has to do with the truth: my disciples cannot yet mourn, for I am still with them? Only an imprecise

exegesis can find a connection here—one that is satisfied with the sound of the words, and that, because fasting is an old custom and Jesus' foundation a new covenant,

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thinks itself reminded of this truth as soon as it hears the contrast between the old garment and the new patch. The second comparison is just as little connected with the conversation about fasting. Because new wine bursts old skins, are the disciples therefore not sorrowful so long as Jesus is with them?

Matthew IX, 17b ("but one puts") again appears to be a weak addition, and thus somewhat confirms us in the suspicion that the text of Mark is more original than the redaction of Matthew.

As soon as we now turn to Luke, we immediately perceive that we are dealing with a wholly different text, which does not display most of the enumerated difficulties. (1) With Luke there is not a word about the custom of the disciples of John and of the Pharisees to fast; (2) with Luke it is not they who put the question to Jesus; (3) with Luke it is not asked why the disciples omit fasting, the fulfillment of a particular religious observance, but why they eat and drink, make merry, are festive; (4) with Luke it is not reported that the followers of John and the Pharisaic party fast—which went without saying—but that they do so frequently and pray, which betrays a sorrowful and withdrawn disposition such as one would expect in two strict tendencies; (5) with Luke it is not said that the disciples of Jesus cannot be sorrowful, but that Jesus cannot demand this of them, that he cannot make them fast; (6) with Luke Jesus is not taken away both "in those days" and on a definite day, but the sentence is satisfactorily constructed and the anacoluthon can be explained from the pathos of the turn; (7) with Luke finally there is just as little connection between all this and the sayings about the old garment and the old wine, but neither is it asserted that there would be a connection; for those sayings are, it seems, separated from what precedes by

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the words occurring only in Luke (v. 36): "and he also spoke to them a parable."

Provisionally accepting this separation as correct, we can therefore first deal with Luke V, 33–35 and the parallel passages. If these latter, as we have shown, yield no sense, and Luke V, 33–35 contain intelligible language; if those parallel passages have six difficulties, none of which recur in Luke, then two assumptions are possible: either the original text has been preserved in Matthew and Mark and Luke had the talent to make something out of that incoherent account that reads very well, or—what seems more probable to us—Luke had the original text, which Mark did not understand and spoiled, while Matthew retouched Mark's text here and there, and indeed after in turn having read Luke's account. This latter suspicion is prompted by the observation that Matthew has a single feature in common with Luke. Thus Matthew, v. 15, by writing "mourn," accentuates the true meaning of fasting in this account. He may have been alerted to the absurdity of Mark's "in that day" by Luke's plural at the end of v. 35. Later we find in Matthew IX, 17b ("but one puts, etc.") a fairly strong reminiscence of Luke V, 38, a verse that

Matthew cannot have borrowed from Mark, who does not have it. Abstractly Matthew could also have spoiled Luke's text directly; but it has already become clear to us that his verse 17 seems better explained when the author knew Mark II, 18a.

Since, however, we are left with the improbability that two writers should have completely misunderstood in this way a narrative as clear in itself as that of Luke, we may here be compelled once more to take refuge in the assumption that also seems to be demanded by the account of John the Baptist and that of the cleansed leper. The older source from which the three evangelists drew contained

here and there only loose notes, the pragmatism of which had to be discovered or invented by their later editors. With regard to this discussion about fasting, that source may have contained the following: disciples of John and Pharisees do not take part in feasts like Jesus and his disciples. Children of the wedding feast do not fast so long as the bridegroom is there. Days of separation come, namely when the bridegroom will be taken away. The sayings about the old garment and the old wine, but without Luke v. 36a ("and he spoke to them a parable") and in whatever form.

That note "children of the wedding feast do not fast" may then have confused Matthew and Mark. They understood it of religious duty. All their other errors flowed from this, including those by which they connected the sayings at the end with this discussion about fasting. When we see that so many continue to do the same down to our own day, one cannot reproach them too harshly for this misunderstanding. Luke understood that there was no connection and made his insight known by his v. 36a, just as he will repeat the same procedure in chapter VI, 39.

That we may also place confidence in his redaction with regard to those sayings is shown, in my opinion, by the following: (1) that with him alone the sayings yield an intelligible sense; (2) that he alone was able to preserve the saying in v. 39. As to the first point, we have already seen that the sayings, insofar as they yield an intelligible sense, do not belong to the discussion about fasting. When, however, one detaches them from their external connection with what precedes, one does not know whether those sayings were composed in favor of the old or of the new. The first seems especially to plead for the old, in which one must take care that no worse tears arise; the second especially to defend the cause of the new: one must see to it that it does not

perish, that the new wine is not poured out. Do the sayings together mean: through forced union both the old and the new suffer damage? If this is the sense, then they advocate a very radical separation between law and gospel, in the spirit of the letter to the Galatians, and fit poorly with what precedes, where fasting, as practiced by the Pharisees, is indeed postponed by Jesus but not abolished. If this is the sense, then one asks whether it could have been the original sense of the words when one sees that Luke v. 39 has both a wholly different tendency and was omitted by Matthew and Mark.

In Luke's redaction the sense of the first two sayings is perfectly clear, and of such a nature that v. 39 fits them perfectly. The thought is this: do not add one or another piece of a new system to an old doctrine in the hope of thereby giving that old doctrine a better appearance; you will be disappointed; you will have damaged the new and introduced into the old an element that does not wish to accord with it. The old also does not need that supposed renovation. Do not bring teaching of young, inexperienced men into old minds, for which it is lost and from which they themselves do not profit. Let the young take it up; he who has lost the taste for the teaching of the old wise men does not ask after the new; he says: the old is good.

This explanation rests on the following considerations: the saying in Luke states what is entirely true, that no one damages (not new cloth but) a new garment in order to patch up an old garment with a piece of that new garment. It therefore tacitly advises not to do that either—but why not? Only in the interest of the new garment? To keep it whole? By no means. Also in the interest of the old, which would otherwise have to take up a heterogeneous element. The close of v. 36 has no sense unless one is here speaking in the interest of the old.

As regards verse 37, Pirkei Avot IV, 20 (according to the citation in Thomas Robinson's The Evangelists and the Mishnah) compares him who learns from old men to one who eats ripe grapes and drinks old wine, and conversely calls the teaching of young and inexperienced persons new wine. He who learns from young men is compared to one who drinks wine from an entirely new wine-skin. If wine means as much as teaching, then the skins must likewise represent not religious forms but that in which the teaching is stored, namely the brains. In our interpretation, verse 39 is therefore in its proper place.

This recommends it. For the form of the opening is in verses 36 and 37 and 39 entirely the same. That Matthew and Mark deliberately omit verse 39 is likely, since according to their understanding of the parable they could not comprehend it. That parable was indeed meant to give a panegyric on the old, as is evident even from the redaction of Matthew and Mark. It has often been read as though it said: No one puts an old patch (the fasting) on a new garment (the gospel); no one puts old wine into new vessels. It says precisely the reverse, but then the exegesis of this entire passage must also find its point of departure in verse 39.

Now if Luke V, 36–39 is the true reading, and we see in verse 36a the pragmatism of a redactor, since otherwise we should certainly find it also in Matthew and Mark, we naturally lack every guarantee for the authenticity of these words. Our result concerning the Sermon on the Mount leads us to the conjecture that here we have a new specimen of the well-known Chokmah literature of the Jews, the saying of a conservative man, fearful of the bursting of the old skins, and who with a certain irony calls the old wine not better, but good, and therefore sees no reason to desire new wine. For lack of authentic building-materials these sayings were later ascribed to Jesus of Nazareth.

It is of course not provable that he never uttered them, but neither is the opposite. Yet this is also immaterial, since with these sayings we do not rise above the ordinary level of prudence of the Jewish sages. Thus we already read in Jesus ben Sirach (IX, 10): 'Do not forsake an old friend, for the newcomer is not his equal; a new friend is like new wine: you will drink it with joy when it has grown old.' Again we read there XXV, 4 ff.: 'How comely is sound judgment for a grey-haired man, and how fitting the giving of good counsel for the aged. The crown of the old is ripe experience'; or XXXIX, 1: 'He who sets his mind on meditating on the law of the Most High searches out the wisdom of all the ancients.'

If one wishes to maintain that Luke's words 'and he said to them a parable' do not necessarily break the connection between verses 36–39 and what immediately precedes, one might perhaps assume the following: in the older source underlying Luke's redaction, the denial of the propriety of mourning and the sayings about the goodness of old wisdom followed one another, precisely because a certain direction of that old wisdom—over against the newer ascetic tendency of the disciples of the Baptist and of the Pharisaic party, and which the Sermon on the Mount often also expresses—encouraged a fitting enjoyment of life and warned against gloominess. Thus, for example, Jesus ben Sirach says (to pass over Ecclesiastes) XIV, 5–6: 'He who grants himself nothing, for whom will he be good? … There is no worse man than he who denies himself the good'; and XXX, 21 ff.: 'Do not give your soul over to sorrow, and do not torment yourself with brooding … Love yourself and cheer your heart, and keep sadness far from you.' It is therefore possible that in that older source human life was compared to a wedding feast in order to combat gloominess in general, and that

a specific polemic against the innovators was attached to it, who wished to recommend a somber view of life. In that case a later Christian reworking of that source could have added Luke V, 34 in order to moderate the impression of the saying and to justify the rather joyless view of life of the Christian community by portraying it as already foreseen and predicted by Jesus. It goes without saying that when one later came to put sayings of an originally impersonal Chokmah literature into the mouth of Jesus of Nazareth, similar glosses had to be made to those of which Luke V, 34 would then be a specimen. It likewise goes without saying that such conjectures may only be ventured with great reserve.

III.

In the grainfield.

If for the pericopes *the Paralytic*, *the Tollhouse*, *the Fasting* the order is the same in the three Synoptics, here, if Matthew is to keep pace with the narrative of the other two, we must turn a few pages. The walking of Jesus with the disciples through the sown fields follows in Mark (II, 23–28) and in Luke (VI, 1–5) immediately upon the saying about the wine, in Matthew only at XII, 1 ff.; for which reason an “at that time” (cf. e.g. III, 1a) precedes only in his account.

All three agree in the following:
1° Jesus goes through grainfields on a Sabbath;
2° his disciples pluck ears of grain;
3° Pharisees raise an objection to their conduct;
4° Jesus replies by appealing to the conduct of David;
5° it is said that the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.

Only Matthew and Mark agree in the following:
1° they make no attempt to determine the Sabbath more precisely;
2° the Pharisees raise an objection;
3° the objection is directed to Jesus and thus speaks of the disciples in the third person.

Only Mark and Luke agree in the following:
1° they do not report that the disciples were hungry;
2° the objection to the disciples’ conduct takes the form of a question;

3° “he and those who were with him”;
4° “and also gave [it] to those who were with him”;
5° “which [loaves] it was not permitted [to eat]”;
6° “also” (with reference to the Sabbath);
7° the order of the words in the final verse.

Only Matthew and Luke agree in the following:
1° the disciples eat the ears of grain;
2° the construction of the close of Matthew v. 2 and Luke v. 2;
3° both omit Mark’s “never” in v. 25.

Points of difference:
1° only in Luke is the Sabbath specified more closely and called the second-first Sabbath (probably a scribal error);
2° it is said that the disciples rub the ears;
3° only in Mark, that they make a path;
4° only in Matthew, that the disciples were hungry;
5° "seeing this";
6° only in Luke is the objection put into the mouth of some of the Pharisees;
7° the objection is directed to the disciples;
8° only in Mark, "when he (David) was in need";
9° the chronological specification: "in the time of Abiathar the high priest";
10° only in Luke, "David took the loaves";
11° only in Matthew, "which [kind of food] it was not permitted [to eat]";
12° only in Matthew does Jesus appeal to the Sabbath violation of the priests in the temple;
13° he appeals for the second time to Hosea VI, 6 (cf. Matthew IX, 13);
14° Jesus says what the Pharisees must have forgotten in order to dare to utter their unjust accusation;
15° only in Mark: "the Sabbath for man, etc.";
16° only in Matthew can, if need be, the concluding verse (v. 8) be a remark of the writer.

In the passages common to all, the following variants occur:
1° Matthew v. 1 has a different construction from Mark v. 23 and Luke v. 1, which also do not agree entirely with one another;
2° there Matthew has "go" (not compounded), Mark and Luke compounded with different prepositions;
3° the word "say" in Matthew v. 2 and the parallels is each time expressed somewhat differently;
4° it is indicated in a somewhat different way that Jesus answers;

5° Matthew v. 4 and the parallels (the opening) partly have a different construction, partly different words;
6° there "not permitted" is expressed somewhat differently and construed with a different case;
7° not in Mark ("priests") "alone."

In the passages common to Matthew and Mark the following variants occur:
1° a different form for "behold";
2° Matthew v. 8 "for" and Mark v. 28 "so."

In the passages common to Mark and Luke:
1° variants in the question concerning David;
2° in Mark v. 26 and the parallel passage a different word for "with."

In the passages common to Matthew and Luke the following variant occurs:
Matthew v. 2 “Sabbath” in the singular; Luke v. 2 in the plural.

Judging by the principal variants, the great difficulty with regard to these narratives, which relate an event and a conversation, lies in this, that the event is reported in an intelligible manner only by Mark, whereas the conversation that follows is intelligible only when the event has taken place as Matthew reports it.

According to Mark, Jesus goes with his disciples through and along grainfields, in other words along a path that ran through grainfields. The disciples clear a way for their master by plucking ears that impeded the passage on both sides of the narrow path. And this happens on a Sabbath. There you have the fact in itself sufficiently intelligible that the second evangelist relates.

Matthew reports something different. Jesus goes with his disciples straight through grainfields. Who does that? The disciples are hungry. How did that come about? It was nevertheless a Sabbath and they were going to the synagogue (v. 9). If v. 9 is not connected with it, then the walk was nevertheless no more than a Sabbath’s journey (about the seventh part of a German mile). Let this or that disciple have plucked a single ear: one can imagine it; but less readily

that they, in order to satisfy their hunger, caused a devastation on another man’s property great enough to be noticed from a distance by “the scribes.” For “the scribes” were surely not walking with them straight through those grainfields. This latter consideration weighs even more heavily for Luke’s narrative, who does not speak of the hunger of the disciples, lets them merely pluck ears and rub them with their hands, as one is accustomed to do as a pastime, in which case it is even less easy to imagine that others saw it and took offense.

If the narrative of Mark, taken by itself, thus compares favorably with that of the other two, nevertheless we must have recourse to the much less intelligible narrative of Matthew if we are to give an account of how the conversation could have attached itself to this narrative, the main content of which all three Synoptics report. The Pharisees—let us not ask whence this whole party has suddenly appeared again here (cf. Mark II, 16, 18; Luke V, 21)—say according to Mark to Jesus: why do they do on a Sabbath what is not permitted? The impermissible thing here can only be the clearing of a path. But this was not in itself impermissible (see Deuteronomy XXIII, 25); it could only be forbidden on a Sabbath. In that case, however, the question in Mark ought precisely to have been phrased as it is in the other two: why do they do what is not permitted to do on a Sabbath? In reply Jesus reminds them of David, who suffered want and hunger, according to Mark, and on that ground set himself above the law. What does this reminder of David’s hunger mean when no word has previously been said about the disciples’ hunger? And precisely of that only Matthew speaks. The reasoning in Mark now becomes the following: David had want and hunger and on that ground deemed himself justified in doing something unlawful; well then we too may, when we wish to make our path easier,

transgress the law on the Sabbath. Particularly convincing this reasoning certainly is not.

In Matthew (v. 1 once assumed) the reasoning works. It is the following: if David solely because he was hungry was allowed to break a law, we too may for the same reason do the same.

In Luke, on the other hand, the reasoning again limps badly. Since he in v. 1 does not mention the motive for eating the ears at all, the motive of the disciples cannot of course be compared with that of David, the validity of the former therefore cannot be assessed, and there thus really remains nothing other than this: David transgressed a commandment, why then should we not also be allowed to do so?—On the other hand Luke compensates for this again by preferring "some of the Pharisees" to "the Pharisees."

In the answer according to Mark's redaction there further occurs the inaccuracy that the name of the high priest who gives David the showbread is Abiathar and not, as 1 Sam. XXI relates, Ahimelech.

But now the answer itself. It arouses astonishment:
1° because one can hardly justify one transgression of the law by another;
2° because it does not emerge from 1 Sam. XXI, 1 that David made himself guilty of a transgression of the law. The high priest answers in v. 4: "there is no common bread, but there is holy bread, provided only that the young men have kept themselves from women"; David reassures him on this point (v. 5) and reminds him that the bread is already in some measure common (v. 5); whereupon the priest gives him the loaves, which are no longer showbread (v. 6). The writer is thus not accurately acquainted with the example that he has Jesus adduce. Has he thought of Exodus XXIX? There it says (v. 33) that "a stranger" shall not eat of the holy bread, but no formal prohibition with regard to Israelites who were not priests. One also doubts,

with an eye to v. 34, whether showbread is spoken of there. But let us set these objections aside; let the deed of David be a proof of a spiritual interpretation of the ceremonial law, which sets aside its letter where that letter comes into conflict with the great law of self-preservation and the observance of that letter would therefore be a denial of that beneficent purpose with which the Deity must be supposed to have given every law—how will one ever be able to prove that the disciples really found themselves in the situation in which a right feeling dares to elevate that spiritual interpretation to a rule of life? The narrative of 1 Sam. XXI expressly says: the priest gave that holy bread because there was no bread except the showbread (v. 6); could one likewise say that there was no other way than along that path? no other nourishment than those ears of grain? or finally no other occupation than rubbing those ears with the hands? We do not hear the reply of the Pharisees here either; but it may be doubted whether this argumentation of Mark, vv. 25 and 26, made a great impression on them. The question here is of course not whether the proposition on which their accusation rests is correct, but only whether that proposition is really undermined by a polemic such as that which is here put into Jesus' mouth.

This is asked in particular with regard to the second part of that polemic, which only Matthew has. The priests perform work in the temple on the Sabbath without making themselves guilty of Sabbath violation. The purport of this remark is obscure. If the law says: no work on the Sabbath, and then at the same time prescribes holy functions on the Sabbath to the priests, will then every individual have the right, on the basis of this latter prescription, to transgress that prohibition? Was the pious Israelite then to enter into discussion with the law in a rationalistic manner and accuse it of inconsistency? The writer here gives Jesus' polemic the advantage of a *quiproquo*. When

in ethics one has already abandoned the principle of unconditional obedience to the law, then certainly one can also justify that abandonment by demonstrating the impossibility of applying the law consistently. As long, however, as that principle itself still holds, one does not summon the law before the tribunal of one's criticism, but rather says: in the name of the same principle, that of unconditional obedience, I accept the one provision just as well as the other, even if they are in conflict with one another. Where is it written, where can it be written, that the provisions of a law may not contradict one another? And now let us imagine even the most unfavorable case. But who will seriously discover a contradiction between the prohibition concerning the Sabbath and the command concerning the holy actions of the priests?—Here one sees the usual procedure of religious reformers, who are always intent on showing that their innovations are not innovations.

There follows in Matthew: *I say to you that something greater than the temple is here.* This saying either stands by itself and is then scarcely open to interpretation, since in that case we do not know what it is that is called greater than the temple; or it stands in connection with what immediately precedes, and then it sheds a new light on the last adduced argument, and the sense is this: the working of the priests on the Sabbath, which in itself would be impermissible (which here is silently assumed to be indisputable; cf. our critique above), is sanctified by the fact that it takes place in the temple; so the in itself unlawful deed of my disciples is sanctified by the fact that it took place in my presence, for that stands above the temple in power to sanctify that to which it gives its consecration. To violate the Sabbath in the temple does not make one guilty; to do so in my presence (in my service?) still less. If this explanation is the correct one, then it would here be conceded that

the deed of the disciples was in itself a violation of the Sabbath, and the rule would be upheld that something is good or evil according to whether it does or does not occur in the service of Jesus.

There further follows in Matthew: If you had understood: I desire mercy and not sacrifice, you would not have condemned the innocent. The purport of this remark—which likewise in Matthew IX, 13 is put into Jesus' mouth and there likewise is read exclusively in Matthew—does not readily present itself either. The disciples were innocent or they were not. From the standpoint of

the Pharisees, which by the argument drawn from the temple service of the priests seems in principle to be acknowledged by Jesus, the only question was whether a positive law condemned the action of the disciples or not. They thought that the law did so, and for that reason drew Jesus' attention to a transgression that, in their conviction, could not be allowed to pass unnoticed without endangering the only thing that could still be saved of Israel's independence. A mercy that would have deprived them of the courage to act and speak according to this conviction would have been misplaced. Toward the innocent no mercy is required; toward the guilty only insofar as it must prevent harshness in condemning, not the condemning itself. But harshness is not to be detected in the remark of the Pharisees.

The saying itself is intended as a quotation from Hosea. In doing so, the peculiarity presents itself that the structure and thereby the boldness of the Hebrew text, which had been lost in the LXX translation, is preserved by Matthew, while he most probably renders the verb and certainly the object just as the LXX translates. The Hebrew text must be translated: I have pleasure[1] in

[1] Although the Hebrew verb can be rendered by *will*, since it also has the meaning *to have pleasure in*, this meaning must be retained as more in accordance with the tone of tenderness peculiar to Hosea and with the nature of what is desired.

piety[1] and not in sacrifices. "The translation of the LXX reads: I desire mercy rather than sacrifice. Matthew writes: I desire mercy and not sacrifice (which is in fact no pure antithesis: piety and sacrifice stand opposed to one another as inward and merely outward religion). How did Matthew arrive at his translation? Probably he derived it from the LXX, but corrected it according to the original text; otherwise he too would have had to write the weaker rather than. He may, however, also have had before him the inferior text of the LXX, in which the correction had already taken place.

Now that it has become clear to us that Hosea does not say what Matthew makes him say, the argument drawn from the quotation loses all its force. There is then no longer any question of mercy in judging the transgressions of others.

If we now combine all the arguments which Matthew here puts into Jesus' mouth against the Pharisees, we obtain the following sequence: 1°. There has been a transgression, but necessity breaks laws; see the conduct of David at Nob; 2° a: there has been a violation of the Sabbath, but violation of the Sabbath in the service of Jesus is innocent, since violation of the Sabbath in the service of the Temple already is so (or b—if no connection may be assumed between Matt. vv. 5 and 6—: the concept of Sabbath violation cannot be maintained, since the law, with regard to Sabbath observance, could not remain consistent); 3°. It is not the disciples who have transgressed God's commandments, but you, who have not understood God's command: 'I desire mercy.'"

[1] *Goodness* or *beneficence* gives no sense here; the word must here mean love toward God, faithfulness to God, on account of the entire context of discourse in which Israel's relation to God is spoken of (see the whole book and especially V, 7; VI, 1–3); on account of v. 4, where piety, not

goodness toward humans, can be compared to a cloud; on account of the parallelism in v. 6: the second object must have the force of the first; on account of v. 7; and on account of the polemic against the priests that follows.

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It is certainly not easy to believe that this three- or fourfold argumentation was employed by one and the same teacher on one and the same occasion, for its point of departure remains uncertain. Has there been Sabbath violation, or, more generally expressed, has there been violation of the law, yes or no? Arguments 1 and 2a answer in the affirmative; arguments 2b and 3, in the negative.

Thus far, then, our result is as follows: in Matthew an in-itself incomprehensible historical occasion, followed by a discourse of Jesus in which he knows not how to take sides on the main question, and cites the Old Testament inaccurately or according to a defective translation; in Mark an in-itself intelligible historical occasion, but one which prevents us from understanding why Jesus here specifically appeals to the example of David, while that example in any case proves how fully Jesus in principle conceded that there had been violation of the law, Sabbath violation; in Luke an in-itself improbable, in any case wholly insignificant historical occasion, which precisely for that reason prevents us from understanding how it could ever have given rise to a discussion, let alone this discussion.

But we are not yet at the end. In Mark, as we saw, and in him alone, stands v. 27: '(Have you not read what David did …) and he said to them: the Sabbath was made for man, etc.' There is here a striking lack of sequence, which, now that Matthew between Mark II, 26 and 27 still reports one thing and another, leads us to the supposition: at the first moment something must have dropped out in Mark, namely the words which we read in Matthew, vv. 5–7. And yet that supposition again appears so little plausible as soon as we see that Mark, v. 27, is not found again in Matthew. If Mark had excerpted the text of Matthew, or the text which is most fully preserved in Matthew, how did he then arrive at his good historical occasion (v. 23), how

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at his historical error with Abiathar; above all, how at his saying v. 27? Did he find that saying in that text of Matthew? Why then did Matthew, who piled so many heterogeneous arguments upon one another, omit precisely this one, the most elevated of all? Or did it once stand there, and did later readers and copyists of his Gospel perhaps strike it out as too liberal?

Be that as it may, we must adhere to the text of Mark, which would hardly be improved if we were to insert between vv. 26 and 27 those incoherent vv. 5–7 of Matthew. Infinitely more would the text of Mark gain if we might regard vv. 24–26 here as a gloss that a later copyist took over from Matthew, while perhaps lack of space prevented him from also taking over Matt. vv. 5–7. Mark II, 23, 27, 28 would then form a good whole: the disciples make a path on the Sabbath. Jesus encourages them with the words of v. 27: you do well, my friends; I see that you do not let yourselves be held back by foolish fear of Sabbath violation from making the path more passable. Matthew XII, 2–7 could then be a later elaboration. The writer of those verses would

have read Mark II, 23, 27, 28, and especially in v. 27 found a fine occasion to set out the arguments which he thought he had discovered against an all too strict observance of the law. One of those arguments was the example of David. Now he may, in order to make it applicable here, have awkwardly altered Mark v. 23, and, since he himself was still uncertain as to the question whether from a Christian standpoint there was violation of the law, yes or no, whether in particular there could be Sabbath violation, have omitted Mark v. 27 as too liberal.

It is a mere conjecture. But in view of the desperate condition of our texts, which have certainly been reworked countless times, conjectures are not unwelcome. This one rests on what we have already

observed, and is moreover confirmed by the following:

if Mark 25 and 26 belonged to the original text, why does v. 27 begin again with 'and he said to them'? Jesus would then already have been speaking from v. 25 onward (see the opening of v. 25). Why is 'he said' in v. 25 and v. 27 expressed differently in Greek?

On our conjecture one understands the important variants which we observe in Matthew, v. 8, and Mark, v. 28. In Mark we read: (the Sabbath is for man …) so that the Son of Man is lord, that is: man, (of all things) also of the Sabbath (a reading preserved in substance also in Luke). In Matthew, on the other hand: (you would not have condemned the innocent); for the Son of Man (the Messiah) is lord of the Sabbath. This alteration turns premise into conclusion and vice versa. In Matthew the disciples are innocent because the Messiah, in whose service they have laboured, is lord of the Sabbath and thus may acquit them; in Mark the truth that man is lord also of the Sabbath flows from the observation that the Sabbath was made for, for the benefit of, for the service of man. In other words: whoever wished to write Matt., v. 8, in that redaction could not use Mark, v. 27; and conversely: whoever deliberately omitted Mark, v. 27 had also to change the 'so that' of Mark into 'for', and consequently alter the entire structure of the sentence.

According to this same conjecture the text of Luke can also be explained. He knew Mark (vv. 23, 27, 28), but also the original redaction of Matthew; took in place of Mark, v. 23 Matthew, v. 1; but had enough with the 'eating' without the 'hunger', since he read Matt. v. 4 somewhat differently and understood it differently. In Luke David's coming into the house of God is, through 'he took and ate', the customary formula used at the Lord's Supper, made even more solemn; indeed one might almost say: the entire action has become 'a symbolic prefiguration of the meal of the New Covenant,

in which not only priests, but priests and laymen without distinction would take part.' Now Luke can dispense both with the hunger of the disciples and with Matt. v. 5, which now no longer contained anything new. Luke conceived the argumentation thus: Sabbath violation presupposes a distinction between priests and laymen, for for the priests the prohibition of

performing any work on the Sabbath applies in no way. But that distinction is fictitious. David has in fact already proved its nullity by eating what only priests were permitted to eat. Luke retained his v. 5 as a saying standing by itself according to Matthew's dogmatic alteration, and thoughtlessly connected it with a remnant of Mark's redaction.

Unexplained now still remains the mistake in Mark v. 26 with the name Abiathar. Perhaps it can be combined not unhappily with the interpretation which Luke in his v. 4 has given of Matt. v. 4. In that interpretation the weight of the example lies in the fact that David at Nob stood on the same footing as the priests. Suppose now that this were the interpretation suggested by the original form of Matt. v. 4, and that that verse in its very earliest redaction was read in this way: 'Have you never read how David came into the house of God and in the presence of, or before, Achimelech and Abiathar ate the showbread, etc.' A redactor may then not have understood the actual point and sought the justification of David's behaviour in his hunger, and on that ground added to the just-mentioned text: 'what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him.' Once this had happened, one began to seek the weight of the example in something quite different, in the truth: necessity breaks laws. Now the words 'in the presence of, or before, Achimelech and Abiathar' (Abiathar the son of Achimelech) lost all their significance. Mark still read them. A later copyist omitted the first name by mistake.

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A second took the Greek preposition to mean *under the rule of* and now believed he had to make a new correction by adding after the name Abiathar 'the high priest'.

That the Greek preposition here used, when joined with the genitive, can mean *in the presence of*, *before the court of*, etc., no one will deny in the abstract; numerous passages in the New Testament prove it. But what makes it likely that it has that meaning here? The redaction of Luke, v. 4 and parallel places, compared with 1 Sam. XXI, 1. According to the simple narrative of 1 Samuel, David comes to Nob to the priest Achimelech; he goes to meet David; David asks for some bread of whatever kind, 'five loaves or whatever is found.' The priest, however, demands from David a declaration regarding the purity of his person and of his young men, and only then is the request granted. Then 'the priest gave him the showbread, which had already been taken away from before the face of Yahweh, in order that one might set fresh bread.' In Matthew this is represented quite differently. 'David goes into the house of God and eats the showbread'; in Luke he goes into the house of God, takes the showbread, eats it, and himself distributes it to the young men: all so many details of which the narrative of 1 Sam. knows absolutely nothing or which it even excludes. Here the urge is evident to make of an ordinary occurrence a solemn act, a symbolic act; of something accidental something intentional. The fugitive David; the David who lies under suspicion of impurity; who meets the priest on the way; who asks in general for bread; who has to justify himself; who receives bread; that David has vanished, and in his place has come the David who goes into the house of God as leader of others, heads straight for the table with the showbread, takes it, eats it, distributes it. What fits this better? A laconic chronological note:

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in the time of Abiathar? or much better (and he did all this) in the sight of Achimelech and his son Abiathar? The author evidently wishes to say that these high personages gave their consent to what David did; he did it not in secret; on the contrary, in the most official manner.

No one may speak with certainty on these questions, but my conjecture seems to have the advantage of explaining all the odd phenomena in our texts.

In order now, by our historical imagination, after the most attentive reading of the texts, to make it vivid how an evangelical narrative may have arisen, let us here by way of example—one which according to our intention finds its analogies elsewhere in the Gospels—let the different forms follow which our texts about what happened in the grainfield may have passed through.

In one or another document of greater or lesser extent, forming part of the Chokma literature of the Jews in the first century of our era, and written by a sage or scribe of the freer tendency, who liked to compare practitioners of wisdom with wedding guests, there stood the following anecdote:

(I) It once happened that someone with his disciples went on a Sabbath along a path that ran through grainfields, and his disciples began to make a way [for him], plucking the ears [that obstructed the passage]. And [the Master] said to them: [quite right, even though it is the Sabbath] the Sabbath was made for the service of man, not man for the service of the Sabbath, which indeed proves that

[1] That one may have to do, in words of Jesus, with products of the literature of those who practised Wisdom, is shown by the very remarkable parallel Matt. XXIII, 34 ff. = Luke XI, 49 ff. In the former place Jesus is supposed himself to say: Therefore behold I send to you prophets, etc.; whereas Jesus in Luke XI, 49 testifies: Therefore also the Wisdom of God says: I will send prophets and apostles to them, etc. One sees, as it were, in Matthew the metamorphosis: Chokma becoming Jesus."

the human being is lord also of the sabbath (Mark II, 23, 27, 28).

(II) One of those Wise Men or Scribes who, according to the book of Jesus ben Sirach (XXXIX, 2), 'ponder within themselves the narratives of famous men and penetrate to subtle sayings,' read this story and found that its evident purport accorded with his own thoughts and suspicions. What, he reflected to himself, does that absolute prohibition of doing any work on the sabbath really mean? Do not the priests work on the sabbath? And he noted in his copy: 'Do we not read in the Law that the priests in the temple profane the sabbath and are guiltless?' (Matt. XII, 5).

(III) This copy later fell into the hands of a third person, who drew from the marginal note the conclusion that the entire notion of sabbath-breaking must therefore lose all its significance as soon as there is in fact no distinction between priests and the other sons of Israel. If that prohibition of performing any work on the sabbath could rightly be set aside by that Wise Man

who walked with his disciples through the grainfields, then this distinction cannot lie in the spirit of the Torah. And indeed he, in his turn, wrote in the margin of the meaningful story: 'Have you never read in the Law what David did, + how he came into the house of God and, before the eyes of Ahimelech and Abiathar, took the showbreads and ate them and distributed them among those whom he led—breads which only the priests are permitted to eat?' (Matt. XII, 4, in the earliest recension).

(IV) In this condition the story was copied by others, including someone who did not miss the thrust of this last marginal note. But it seemed to him to go too far. Not because he stood on the same footing as the priests, but because necessity breaks laws, David had been permitted to do what was otherwise unlawful. He therefore did not copy the story as it stood, but added to it, at the place where our + stands: 'when he was hungry, and those who were with him' (Matt. XII, 3b).

(V) Another person who read and copied this, and whose taste was

especially taken with the last marginal note, thought that the story would gain in clarity if he brought the opening into connection with it. He therefore altered the original occasion, so as to make the following of David's example by that Wise Man with his disciples quite clear through identity of motive, and heedlessly wrote: It once happened that someone on a sabbath went through the grainfields; his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck ears and to eat (Matt. VI, 1). On reaching verse 4 he omitted by mistake the name of Ahimelech, and also the taking of the showbreads as, in his view, an insignificant detail (second recension of Matthew, v. 4).

(VI) In this form the entire story first became known to a Wise Man belonging to the ever-expanding group of those who could no longer call the then widely cherished ideal of helpfulness, melancholy, resilient suffering, victory over death, Heracles or Asclepius, but gave it the name Jesus Christ. For his Life they drew especially on Greek myths, which they modified with taste and tact; for his teaching style, above all on sayings of Jewish Wisdom, supplemented with the aid of the still not yet extinct Greek inventive faculty of that time. Our Wise Man belonged to that circle among his fellow believers who were accustomed to attach a moral significance to Israel's expectations and their fulfilment, and who therefore leaned strongly toward the idea that the narrowly national politics of the Pharisees, with their insistence on the strictest formalism and legalism, had no future; that everything depended on true sonship of God, as they believed they saw it realized in Jesus. He therefore eagerly adopted our story, which seemed to him fully capable of giving his readers an impression of what he meant by his Jesus-ideal. At the beginning he now changed the word someone into the word Jesus. He knew his Old Testament too well to leave standing the phrase 'under the rule of Abiathar.' He

omitted the distributing of the breads as irrelevant to his purpose, and, on coming to the remark about the temple (Matt. XII, 5), of which he no longer understood at all what had occasioned it,

he felt compelled by his veneration for Jesus to add: 'And I say to you that something greater than the temple is here' (Matt. XII, 6). At the same time, precisely because he did not understand the thrust of verse 5, he judged that one should not engage the scribes in a principled debate over the difficult question of the sabbath. He had heard loveless remarks from the party of the scribes about those of a more ethical disposition, and so, while reading the story, he thought what that party might have said if they had once seen Jesus of Nazareth do this with his disciples. As a result of that reflection he wrote in his copy: 'And the Pharisees, seeing this, said to him: "See, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the sabbath"' (Matt. v. 2); but at the same time, in order to meet such objections without treating the question in principle: 'But if you had known what this means,' etc. (Matt. v. 7). He therefore considered it better to omit entirely that principled statement of Mark II, 27, and to entrust the decision of the delicate question in the highest instance to his deeply revered master, for him the Son of Man par excellence. He therefore changed so that into for, also deleted also, and wrote: for the Son of Man is lord of the sabbath (Matt., v. 8). (Final recension of Matthew.)

(VII) Meanwhile two other Christian writers had also become acquainted with the same story; the first with the story in its very earliest form (I); he had sufficient insight to transfer it unchanged to Jesus of Nazareth (Mark II, 23, 27, 28). But someone who later copied it and was acquainted with the story in form (V) thought to enrich it by taking over from it Matt. XII, 3 and 4.

He understood the Greek words epitou Abiathar as meaning under the rule of Abiathar, and therefore thought that Abiathar must then have been high priest, for which reason he wrote the word high priest after that name (Mark, v. 26). A still later copyist, who knew form (VI), took over Mark, v. 24 (= Matt., v. 2) from it. (Final recension of Mark.)

(VIII) The other of these two Christian writers knew form (V). Since he understood very well the sense of Matt. XII, 4 and believed he had fully done justice to it in Luke VI, 4, he found the mention of the disciples' hunger in Matt., v. 1 inappropriate, omitted it, elaborated somewhat the plucking of the ears, but forgot accordingly to strike out Matt., v. 3b. Having once adopted and excellently understood Matt., v. 4, he omitted Mark II, 27b ('The sabbath, etc.') as not fitting the argumentation of Matt., v. 4, and thus wrote immediately after Mark, v. 27a ('And he said') Mark, v. 28—something which a later copyist clumsily altered after the model of Matt., v. 8. (Recension of Luke.)

All this, of course, must be taken with many grains of salt. It is, I repeat, nothing other than a wholly conjectural attempt to show how, for the historical imagination, certain gospel narratives may have acquired their present form—a form which so often places honest exegesis in the greatest embarrassment."