

# THE CREATION OF CHRIST

*AN OUTLINE OF THE  
BEGINNINGS OF CHRISTIANITY*

BY

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TO  
THE MEMORY OF  
JOHN MACKINNON ROBERTSON

## FOREWORD

OF all the historical revolutions of the West, the Christian revolution was the deepest in its effects. To look on it as merely social or moral is to mistake it, for it was in its essence a religious revolution. A change was wrought in man because man had wrought a change in his God.

So new was the God offered by Christianity to mankind that he appears scarcely conceivable. This was no simply humanized God, as many another, but a deity that had drained humanity to the dregs, that was soaked in human misery even to degrading humiliation, ignoble suffering, and infamous punishment—a God who was also a tortured slave, who assumed with a human form all that man could suffer, even to the meanest, most unworthy, and most shameful degree. This was a God in whom the most abject human being, no matter how deep he had fallen, could find a fellow, and in whom, moreover, he could discover salvation.

“A civilization is transfigured,” says Andre Malraux, “when from its most grievous part is drawn a jewel of price—when the bondage of the slave and the toil of the labourer are no longer to be scorned, but to be the source of salvation.”<sup>1</sup> Salvation was expected from the crucified God. It is in the soul that God is born, and in the measure that the new God springs alive in groups of men more and more numerous in so much is the world transformed. In this manner is the birth of Jesus unceasingly renewed.

Before this indefinite rebirth of Jesus another more specific took place. This new deity did not spring forth wholly as we behold him in the fullness of his powers. His was a long and laborious gestation, and the story of his growth is the subject of this book.

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<sup>1</sup> *La Condition Humaine*; Paris, 1934, p. 394. vii

In truth, the martyred God is a new aspect, though a surprising one, of a glorious being, the *Son of Man*, who makes his appearance in the Book of Daniel and who shall be the judge on the day of doom. The Son of Man coalesced with the Crucified One, and the background from which Jesus takes shape is that of the utter and imminent destruction of the world. He is the central figure of a cosmic revolution which men awaited in feverish hope. Whatever he was at the beginning, whatever he has since become, the collective hopes of men made him. Endless expectation can give rise to the most amazing creation on this earth, and the unbroken wait of three hundred years for the coming of the Son of Man evolved uniformly a story which reaches from the "Book of Daniel to the Gospel according to St. Luke.

Hope is not set about with frontiers. The most lasting of religions was the work of men who believed there remained to them not a moment's respite before the end. The vast catastrophe for which they longed was imminent; they had come to the uttermost bourne of man's existence. With glazed eyes raised towards heaven for the hour at hand, they builded solidly an earthly temple in which they had no belief. The prophet of the Revelation counted the faithful of Jesus; they numbered 144,000. By how many million was he mistaken!

In this work we endeavour to follow the development of a belief, and attempt to carry out one of the tasks given to history by Fustel de Coulanges: "L'histoire n'étudie pas seulement les faits matériels et les institutions: son véritable objet est l'âme humaine. Elle doit aspirer à connaître ce que cette âme a cru, a pensé, a senti." (History does not only study material facts and institutions: its real aim is the study of the human soul. It should essay to know what that Soul has believed, thought, and felt.)

If it were possible to strike a balance showing the state of beliefs at a given epoch, belief would be presented in its greatest detail. Here we have other plans, for we have attempted to pursue a belief along the course which its dynamic impulse has taken it, and have noted the successive stages with the greatest exactitude possible to us. For this

chronology is the life-breath of history, and it is essential not to run before events. The historian is beset with temptations to allot to earlier stages, or even to the initial point of a belief, the state of a belief such as he finds it at the date when it is best known. He would like, for example, to imagine that the beliefs set out in the gospels must underlie the epistles of St. Paul or the Apocalypse of St. John, which were composed at an earlier date. There is a similar danger with respect to institutions, which is all the greater in that believers have displayed something more than a natural tendency, a dogmatic interest of the first order, in affirming that what they see developed and established in their own time has been even so developed and established from the very beginning. Writings which have been piously antedated are easy to distinguish. That delightful book, the Acts of the Apostles, has a more credible air, which must be withstood. The picture it gives us of early beliefs is valuable, but not with respect to the time to which it is supposed to refer—no, with reference to the time when the book was written. Its author threw a cloak over the violent conflicts which shook the early Church, and this cloak must be raised and the divisions between the founders of the cult be laid bare to the light of day, for of such are the direct and throbbing evidences of real life.

Another stumbling-block lies in the historian's path; religious belief tends to express its verities in terms of reality, whence endless misunderstandings. In the gospels this manner of expressing religious truth is frequently and freely used, yet it is rarely assessed at its right value, and often unperceived. Without further ado, we must admit that whatever is an object of faith tends to take on an appearance of reality in the eyes of the believer. From this it arises that religion becomes an art—the most ancient, necessary, sublime, and ardent of human arts; an art which gives to the world and to life a meaning and a dignity which allow men to live in society with self-respect and self-denial. A religious change can change all man's habits and relations to his environment. Such an art has its own modes of expression; its truths differ from those of poetry, and again from those of reason. And

of these three truths, which is the most true? A metaphysical question probably without meaning. Don Quixote is more true than all the Spaniards who ever lived. Jesus is true in yet another manner—in the manner of God. The story of Jesus, a religious verity, can never be brought into line with poetry nor with reason; for it is something apart from either. St. Paul was right when he wrote that the judgment of spiritual things belongs to the spiritual. For this reason it is useless to expect understanding of religious creations from a man with no religious sense, just as it would be absurd to expect a surveyor to employ his technique for the judgment of pictures or an insurance assessor to assess the value of a poem.

The history of Jesus is not the elaboration of something which took place, but the expression of something which men passionately wished to take place: the suffering and death of a god that mankind might be saved.

To say that Jesus was a god transformed into a man is to speak both for the believer and the historian, each according to his manner. But to declare that Jesus was a man made into a god is equally wrong both to the faithful and to the historian.

This book would never have been written but for the help and encouragement given me by the Rationalist Press Association and, in particular, by the late and most regretted J. M.: Robertson. To the memory of that most noble man I have dedicated this work, for he was one of the first to perceive clearly of what kind was the real nature of Jesus.

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# THE APOCALYPSES

(168 B.C.–A.D 40)

## I

### PRELIMINARY

THE spread of Buddhism, of Christianity, and of Islam are three of the greatest events in history. They rise like gigantic tides flowing over all the little doings of men, sweeping everything before them, and cleaving three divisions among mankind.

Alone of these three cataclysms, Islam has a clear origin; whereas the origins of Christianity are as obscure, for the critical historian, as those of Buddhism.

It has often been said that Christianity was born in the full light of history. This is an illusion. It is true that the history of the Roman Empire from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius is known with some degree of precision. The light of history illuminates only the summits, and Christianity was born in a shadowy vale. The first century and a half of its existence are plunged in pitchy night where gleam a few scattered embers.

The illusion lies in this: that for a true history of Christian beginnings there has been substituted a sacred history. When the Christian community became numerous, there arose a desire to know the origins of its faith. The pious and adroit hagiographer whom we know as Luke produced a lively narrative in two parts, the first being the Gospel and the second the Acts of the Apostles. This is sacred history—*i.e.*, a religious legend in historic form, in which no distinction is made between articles of faith and facts, and in which a holy story is mingled with human history.

Our task is to separate the holy from the human, to place each on its own plane, here the plane of fact and there the

plane of belief. In a similar manner the sacred history of Israel has been analysed. Those marvellous tales of the creation of the world, of the sin of Eden, of Cain and Abel, of the Flood, of the longevity of the Patriarchs, friends of Jehovah, are no longer looked upon as embellished and transformed facts of the prehistory of the Israelites, but as cultus myths without historicity, forming an integral part of the faith in the days of Judge Samuel or of King Josiah.

The work of dissociation of the sacred history of Christianity is more difficult than the dissection of Judaism. The critics are not yet unanimous in recognizing that the story of Jesus as a whole must be transferred from the plane of facts to that of beliefs. Many have been misled, as I see it, by a false historical analogy to imagine that Christianity is no more explicable without the man Jesus than is Islam without the man Mahomet. They fail to perceive that Mahomet is a prophet, whereas Jesus, from the earliest texts we have referring to him, is god, a face, a masque, a person of the divine unity.<sup>2</sup> The difference is of capital importance. Judeo-Christian theology allows no passage from the human state to the divine, and the deification of a man by Jewish monotheists is highly improbable. There is good ground for regarding Jesus, from the viewpoint of history, as entirely divine—*i.e.*, as a poetic creation in the wide sense of the word.

It is objected that the history of Christian origins must begin with a life of Jesus. I shall attempt to answer this objection and propose what, if I am not mistaken, has not yet been attempted—that is, to outline a history of Christianity, not without a Jesus, but with a Jesus kept on that spiritual plane, which is outside historic fact and unmeasured by time, and which is really his own. The story of Jesus is mingled with that of Christianity. The notion of Jesus

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<sup>2</sup> The earliest Christian text, I Thess., date *c.* 50–51, has this sentence in which God and Jesus together are not regarded as plural (iii. II): “Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, *directs ...*” In Rev. xi. 15, “... of our Lord, and of his Christ; and *he* shall reign...”; xxi. 22: “The Lord God and the Lamb *is*”; xxii. 3–4, “*his* servants shall serve *him, his face, his name* (of God and of the Lamb).” *Lord* is applied indifferently to God and to Jesus.

came into existence with the germination of a new theology in a Jewish mind. Jesus grew in spasms as this new theology lined ground, till it became capable of converting a world.

The formation of Jesus was at first slow, then explosive, and finally full and complete. In it lies the Christian evolution, which is a Revolution of Souls, the most radical of all. A revolution made, as most others, in schisms, quarrels, agony, and blood. Great is the price man pays for a god!

We must begin our search for Jesus by going back a century and a half before our era. Luke's Gospel, far from being our starting-point, will be our goal. What a strange and tortuous track links the two! By what bizarre stages, what gropings, what doubling back ere we reach that harmonious and peaceful scene on which is built, after terrible debates, the concord of the faithful!

I remark three great periods in the history of these three centuries. The first is characterized by the appearance, at long intervals, of secret and mysterious books, called Apocalypses; the second is marked by the eruptive and anarchic activity of Christian prophets, and the third by the composition of the gospels which fix and regulate the faith.

## II THE PROFANED TEMPLE

IT is a curious omen that the early history of the God Jesus should fall between two parallel convulsions of Jewry, two furious and bloody revolts, which, three centuries later, looked much like a repetition one of the other. The first is the resistance under Judas Maccabæus to the Hellenization decreed by Antiochus Epiphanes, King of Syria. The second is the opposition under Bar-cocheba<sup>3</sup> to the Romanization imposed by the Emperor Hadrian. Each time—the only times in history—the Temple was profaned and an idol installed in the seat of the invisible god. Both times prostrate Jerusalem received a new name. Named after Antiochus, it became Antioch Hierosolyma. Named after Aelius Hadrianus and the city god of Rome, it became Aelia Capitolina. The two revolts differed in this: the first was victorious, whereas in the latter the Jews were vanquished for ever. In the delirium of triumph Jesus took form, and in the depression of defeat his portrait, half of the earth and half of heaven, was completed.

Amid what circumstances did the embryo of a new divinity develop?

Antiochus, bizarre, prodigal, and frivolous prince, made of ancient Jerusalem a little Greek town, similar to many another.<sup>4</sup> From the precincts of the Temple was heard the applause at the theatre of the Muse of Euripides the Rationalist and of Aristophanes the Scoffer, and in the stadium the young priests wrestled, leaped, and raced naked, ashamed of their circumcision. They cast aside the sacerdotal turban for the drooping petasos of the epheboi. They welcomed the king, the strategos of the city, with torchlight processions

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<sup>3</sup> Also Bar-cochebas, Bar-Kokhba and Bar Kochba.

<sup>4</sup> E. R. Bevan, *The House of Seleucus*; London, 1902, pp. 168–169.

and bacchic shouting. The high priest Jason had paid for his see to the greedy coffers of Antiochus. He showed the largeness of his mind by sending money in the name of Jahweh to the god Herakles for the games held in his honour at Tyre every five years.<sup>5</sup> A little more and the grim God of the Jews had been assimilated, as so many others, to a Greek deity and absorbed in the complacent pantheon of the Hellenes.

But Antiochus hurried matters. In want of money, he dismissed Jason and sold the rights to the pectoral and to the gold bells to one Menelas, who was not of the family of Aaron, nor even of the tribe of Levi.<sup>6</sup> Jason, at the head of his partisans, forced his way into Jerusalem and revolted. The king thought to put an end to the business. He sent his Macedonian guards and his Mysian mercenaries against the city. He had the altar of Jahweh profaned with swine's blood, and put in its place the altar of the Olympian Zeus, Bringer of Victory, of which god Antiochus claimed to be a terrestrial manifestation.<sup>7</sup> A replica of the statue of Zeus, the finest work of Phidias, at Olympia was installed in the sanctuary. The customary sacrifices were to be offered to Zeus. At the Dionysia the usual ivy wreaths were to be obligatory. The king's birthday was to be celebrated every month according to Greek rites. Greek gods were installed in the villages, where the rising synagogues were put to the flames, the sacred rolls torn or profaned with images, while circumcision and all the practices of the Jewish cult were banned under penalty of death.

This went too far. In this narrow arena Zeus warred with Jahweh. If he had held his ground, he would now perhaps have been God of the West. But Jahweh won the day.

The power of God is the might of his champions. Jah-

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<sup>5</sup> 2 Mace. iii. 18–19. One "Niketas, son of Jason of Jerusalem," contributed to the festival of Dionysus in Caria, about the middle of the second century (Le Bas and Waddington, *Voyage Archéologique en Asie Mineure*, III, No. 294).

<sup>6</sup> 2 Mace, iv. 23–24; cf. iii. 4. Josephus (*Antiq.*, xiv. 5, 1) falls into a confusion (Th. Reinach, *Oeuvres complètes de Fl. Josèphe*, vol. III; Paris, 1904, p. 94, No. 1).

<sup>7</sup> Inscription on his coins (E. Babelon in A. Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Séleucides*; Paris, 1914, p. 655).

weh's fanatics went like a flame across the desert. They fell on the villages, massacred the renegades, and circumcised the children by force. One of them, Judas, was surnamed *Maccabæus*, the Hammer, for such were his blows.

What a storm! The petasos was blown away. The priest put on breeches again. The beautiful statue by Phidias was hurled on to a dung-heap, three short years after its setting-up, so wild was the blast that swept over this mountainous canton. Temple and town were cleansed of wreaths and rose-water (sickly stuff!). A new holy fire was lit, Jahweh was brought back to his empty house, to the chanting of psalms, amid the smoke of incense, the sound of harps, the clash of cymbals, and the waving of palms. This victory took place in the autumn of 165 B.C. The consequences still endure.

The hallowed fury of those remote days is still perceptible. Even as a phial of jade preserves a fragrance from long-past years, so do two psalms and the Book of Daniel hold the desperate anguish of the battle and the exaltation of the victory.

Hark to the accent of distress, the anxious invocation of Jahweh (Psalm lxxiv. 7-11, 18-19):—

They have cast fire into thy sanctuary,<sup>8</sup>  
They have destroyed and defiled the dwelling-place of thy name.  
They said in their hearts, Let us destroy them together!  
They have burned up all the synagogues of God<sup>9</sup> in the land.

We see not our signs:  
No more any prophet  
Nor among us who knoweth how long.

O God, how long shall the adversary reproach?  
Shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever?  
Why dost thou cross thy arms  
And withdraw thy hand in thy bosom?

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<sup>8</sup> The doors of the Temple were burned. I Mace. iv. 38.

<sup>9</sup> First mention of synagogues in Judea. They had existed in Egypt for over a century (W. Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums*. 2nd edit., 1906, p. 72).

Remember this, O Jahweh, the enemy has reproached  
And the foolish people blaspheme thy name!  
O deliver not to the beasts the life of thy turtle dove,  
Forget not the congregation of thy poor for ever!

And here is a fragment of triumphal psalm (Psalm cxviii. 1018):

All the nations compass me about:  
In the name of Jahweh I cut<sup>10</sup> them down.  
They compass me about, ever they encompass me:  
But in the name of Jahweh I cut them down.

Thou hast thrust against me sore that I might fall  
But Jahweh helped me.  
Jah is my strength and my song,  
And is become my salvation.

The voice of rejoicing and triumph  
Is in the tents of the righteous:  
The right hand of Jahweh doeth valiantly!  
Exalted is the arm of Jahweh!

I shall not die, I shall live  
And declare the works of Jah.  
Jah hath chastised me sore,  
But he hath not given me over to death.

Such was the exaltation of those whom God had just saved and who had just saved their God.

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<sup>10</sup> Also means *circumcise*.

### III

## THE DREAM OF DANIEL

THE Book of Daniel sprang from the same exaltation, but contains more sense. While the insurgents were fighting and the harpers besieged Jahweh with their rhythmic appeals, a scribe followed from shelter the vagaries of battle and meditated. He listened to the shrill cry of the psalmist: "We see not our signs: No more any prophet, nor among us who knoweth *how long!*"

The wonderful legend of Daniel, more angel than man, patron of wise men and of interpreters of dreams, who dwelt at the court of Nebuchadnezzar, was well known, and, marvellous to relate, the legend was told in such a manner that the actual events were foretold exactly! How surprising to hear that the seventy weeks, at the end of which Jahweh would make himself manifest and Israel would be saved according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, were seventy weeks of years. Lo, the moment had come! With what ecstasy of admiration, what thanks to God, the people learned that Daniel had foreseen it all, even to the details of the deeds of the Kings of Syria and Egypt, their expeditions, and their marriages. Here was announced with striking exactness the installation in the Temple of that stinking and cruel abomination which infected and desolated the Holy Land, and, too, the cleansing 1290 days later. Why, they had just seen it all for themselves!

And hereafter? Ah! happy would he be who should count 1335 days more! Michael, the guardian angel of the Jews, is at his post, ready to close the annals of the nations. A last tribulation, the greatest of all, is to come upon them, a time of distress such as none had yet known.

What then? In 1335 days these good Israelites whose



names are written in the book of Heaven shall be saved for ever. Their bodies shall become incorruptible as the bodies of the stars. Nor shall the living alone witness this change. A mighty wonder shall be seen. The greatest heroes and most infamous renegades who died in the struggle shall of a sudden live again, the former for eternal life and the latter for eternal infamy. The injustices of Death shall be repaired.

The date of this memorable book is evident: the death of Antiochus Epiphanes (164 B.C.) is the last event foretold. The author who made Daniel clairvoyant is, of course, unknown. I expect he was one of those wise men of whom he had such a high opinion, who were to become eternal stars.<sup>11</sup> He is well read in all the strange lore of Babylon, particularly in divination by dreams.

For this visionary, then, that which is to come shortly after the victory of Judas the Maccabee is not in any human sense the freeing of the Jews and a national government. It is a cosmic revolution in which the living shall be clothed in glory and the dead shall rise again. Here we have set out the great vision which, ever unrealized, shall be carried forward from one age to another till it develops into the Christian revelation.

As demiurge of this metamorphosis of the world there rises at the side of Jahweh a pale shape which is to become Jesus.

In a dream this shape rises up, a dream supposed to be Daniel's, one which its unknown author perhaps experienced himself. It is a lengthy dream, in which the sleeper is not inactive, but, although asleep, is anxious to see and understand all that "the visions of his head" show him. It is a sublime dream, in which, disguised in fantastic and impressive forms, the history of the world unrolls, such as the author perceives it to be.

I saw in my vision by night,  
And, behold, the four winds of heaven  
Strove upon the great sea. (Dan. vii. 2.)

The four winds give place to four beasts. These are the four great empires which succeeded one another. The first

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<sup>11</sup> Dan. xi. 33 (they that understand); xii. 3 (they that be wise...).

is a Winged Lion, Babylon. The seer follows it till its wings are plucked from it and it stands on its hind legs like an obedient pup.

The second is the Bear of Media and Persia. In its maw between its teeth are three ribs which cry to it: "Arise; devour flesh; eat much of it!"

The dreamer looks again, and beholds Alexander the Great, a Panther with four heads and four wings, for as many kingdoms came from him.

The dreamer seeks further into the visions by night, and discerns the last beast, the most hideous, the King of Syria.

It had great iron teeth,  
It devoured and brake in pieces,  
And stamped the residue with the feet of it.

Its ten horns are ten successive kings. Lo, and see an eleventh little horn, Antiochus Epiphanes, the Manifestation of God, the great blasphemer.

The measure is full. In the dream come thrones in readiness for the great Judgment. An Ancient of Days takes his seat; he is God.

Whose garment was white as snow  
And the hair of his head like the pure wool.  
His throne the fiery flame,  
The wheels burning fire.

A river of fire swelled forth before him.  
Thousand thousands ministered unto him.  
Ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.

The Judgment takes place. Books are opened. The beast Antiochus redoubles his bravado and his vain pride, but is slain, dismembered, and given to the flame. The other beasts are kept alive; they shall engage in the last battle of which Ezekiel foretold.

Now strikes the hour of the triumph of the Jews. Israel is enthroned. A human figure comes in place of the monstrous beasts. This is the ever-famous vision which gave birth to Christianity.

I saw in the night visions,  
And, behold, one like the Son of Man  
Came with the clouds of heaven  
And came to the Ancient of Days  
And they brought him before him.

There was given him dominion, glory, kingdom,  
That all people, nations, and tongues should worship him,  
His dominion everlasting, which shall not pass away.  
And his kingdom shall not be destroyed.

The soul, of me, Daniel, withdrew into its sheath  
So greatly the visions of my head troubled me.  
(Dan. vii. 2-15.)

A *Son of Man* in Aramaic, in which language the vision is described, is a customary expression for a man. The dreamer does not see a real man. He sees a dream-figure *like a man*, just as the foregoing figures were like beasts. The new empire which it symbolizes differs from the overthrown empire as man differs from beast. This Man does not issue from the Sea, mother of the Enemies of God. This figure comes forth with the clouds of heaven which are the chariot<sup>12</sup> of Jahweh. What it represents is not vomited forth from the Abyss like the pagan empires, but is the fruit of Heaven.

Twice the interpretation is clearly given. This is the empire of the saints, *i.e.*, the elect Jews, embodied in glory and invested by Jahweh with universal dominion. They are called "the saints of the Most High." The *most high* plural) are the loftiest heavens of Babylonian astrology. The saints are of celestial origin. That is why their dominion is that of God.

The saints of the Most High shall take the Kingdom  
And possess the Kingdom for ever,  
Even for ever and ever....

And the kingdom, the dominion, the greatness  
Of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven  
Were given to the people of the saints of the Most High.  
His kingdom is everlasting,  
All dominions shall worship and obey him.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Isa. xix. I (Jahweh on a light cloud).

<sup>13</sup> Dan. vii. 18, 27.

The *Son of Man* is just a symbol, like the Lion and the Bear and the Panther. He is not an angel, nor a god, nor a man. He is a sign in a dream. The whole thing signifies that the heroes are to be transfigured, the victorious Jews.<sup>14</sup> The meaning is the same as in another dream, caused by obsession with the fearsome idol in the Temple. The four empires are there represented by a statue of four different materials and the Jews by a stone which is thrown and strikes the clay and iron feet and crushes them. Beneath this blow, iron, bronze, silver, and gold fall to pieces. They are shattered and scattered like chaff on the threshing-floors of summer. The stone grows and grows till it becomes a mountain which covers the whole earth. Man in one dream, stone in another—these are symbols. It would be astonishing nonsense to imagine that the author of Daniel believed in the existence in the Most High sphere, at Jahweh's side, of a Celestial Man.

Yet such has been done. The error has been incredibly prolific of further error. If the gravity of events were to be measured by their consequences, there would scarce be discovered an event more grave than the dream imagined one clear night amid the heat and fragrance of victory, under the wall of the regained Temple, by a Jewish astrologer of whom we know not the name.

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<sup>14</sup> Dan. ii.

## IV

### THE REVELATIONS OF ENOCH

ONE thousand three hundred and thirty-five days passed away. More and more days slipped past in their myriads. The impossible prophecy was not accomplished. The precarious Jewish Kingdom constructed in place of Syrian anarchy perhaps owed its existence to the supernatural vision of early Maccabæan days. In no way did it fulfil them.

Was the dream of Daniel looked upon as false? Was it rejected as a lie? No; that would be to know faith ill. Faith can move mountains. Give a prophecy the right fire and fervour, add to it the longing of the human heart, utter in it the hidden day-dreams of pride and of hope, and the prophecy is proof against all events. The event will be in the wrong. The prophecy will have been ill understood. Its meaning is deep and dark, and it becomes a more precious treasure still.

The Book of Daniel was placed among those holy writings which follow the Law and the Prophets. It was given an honourable place between the scroll of Esther and the parchment of Ezra. It was revered as the most secret jewel of Israel, this revelation which cried *How long?*

It was a seed which fell on fertile ground and became a model of apocryphal literature, which published under the names of men of old revelations of the latter days. He who felt in his breast the inspiration of prophecy, afraid to speak in his own name, would speak it abroad as the words of Enoch, of the Twelve Sons of Jacob, or of Moses. These wondrous scriptures were not accepted by the religious authorities, but they were avidly hearkened to by the people. In such forgeries the prophetic genius of Israel, stifled for long centuries, found clandestine employ.

Those latter days! The authors lived in them. Nothing explains better the moulding of Christianity than the constant expectation, for three centuries, of the end of the world, at first among the faithful in Palestine, and later among the multitudes infected by this fever of fear. Imagine a multitude of men, daily more numerous, who rose each morning believing that on the morrow the world would pass away and *something else* come in its place! Such an expectation, such fear, such strange emotion, is the hidden motive of every act, of every thought. It is impressed in the inmost places of their being, and among men it creates a race apart.

This fire in the secret shrines of the soul was lit by the apocalypses. One in particular, after that of Daniel, must hold our attention for a space, since it is a milestone on our way.

Two generations have borne their hopes and fears to the tomb since the war of liberation from Antiochus. Alexander Jannæus, grand-nephew of Judas the Hammer, has been high priest and king for twenty to twenty-five years.<sup>15</sup> This Alexander is an old soldier and a drunkard who leads the life of a Greek tyrant. He dwells among hard and sceptic priests, a stranger in spirit to his pious subjects. Civil war rages. The king and high priest enlivens a banquet given in public to the women of his harem by crucifying 800 Jewish rebels and slaughtering their wives and children before their dying eyes.<sup>16</sup>

In their distress pious men invoke Jahweh. Some call on him to produce the Messiah King, that son of David, offspring of the ancient royal race promised by the oracles. Others despair of any human king. The successors of David are worth no more than those of Maccabæus. The way of the world can produce only evil. Hope lies only in a revolution of the cosmos. Daniel's dream is the truth of the matter.

There was in existence a strange book which pretended to give the revelations of Enoch. This patriarch, it will be

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<sup>15</sup> As to the date of *The Parables of Enoch* (c. 70 B.C.) vide R. H. Charles, *The Book of Enoch*, 2nd edit.; Oxford, 1912, p. liv and pp. 72–73; also L. Gry, *Les Paraboles d' Hénoc et leur messianisme*; Paris, 1919, p. 163.

<sup>16</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.*, xiii. 14, 2.

recalled, was carried alive to heaven in the days before the flood, and there he still lives, particularly well placed for acquaintance with the eternal mysteries. From time to time a supplement to this book was published; these supplements were not in harmony. One section was added in which Daniel's prophecy was held to go back to Enoch: it was given in more detailed and corroborated form (Enoch xxxvi-1xii; this section is called the Parables of Enoch).

What in Daniel is only a dazzling vision told in a few verses becomes in Enoch a detailed picture, a complete drama divided into several acts. This picture has a central figure; this drama boasts a hero. The *Son of Man*, who in Daniel is mere symbolism, is here a dweller in celestial halls, a heavenly Man who is not kneaded of dust and blood, but is pure like God, eternal like God, just like God, to whom God has allotted the mission of destroying the world and of making it anew.

The actual existence of this superhuman, superangelic Man is warranted by Enoch's word, since Enoch must have met him in heaven at the right hand of the Lord of Spirits, the Ancient of Days, who is God.

There I beheld the Chief of days  
His head white as pure wool,  
Beside him Another, in the shape of Man,  
His mien gracious as of a holy angel.

I asked an angel who went with me,  
Discovering to me all the mysteries,  
Who is this Son of Man and whence cometh he?  
Why is he at the side of the Chief of days?

He answered me,  
It is the Son of Man to whom is given Justice,  
With whom justice dwells,  
Who reveals the hidden treasures  
Because the Lord of Spirits has elected him:  
Before the Lord of Spirits his justice prevails for ever.  
This Son of Man whom thou hast seen  
Causes the Kings and the powers to rise from their couches,  
The mighty from their thrones.

He breaks the reins of the mighty,  
He shatters the teeth of the sinners.<sup>17</sup>

Here is the Chosen of God who shall overthrow evil kings and iniquitous governors. He is the Great Judge. He is also the Revealer. In this manner he takes on a theological existence. At God's side, delegate of God, he has his own destiny.

If he exists, he has a Name. God, in a solemn scene invests him with Judgment, uttering his Name. The day of investiture is the day when sufficient of the blood of the just will have been shed and when the number of the just will be completed.

The day has come.  
The prayer of the just has mounted up in these days  
And from the earth the blood of the just before the Lord of Spirits.  
In these days the Saints<sup>18</sup> who dwell in the height of heaven

Shall implore with one voice and demand  
For the blood of the just which has been shed  
That the prayer of the just may not be in vain.  
That justice be done to them  
That they suffer not forever.

In those days I saw the Chief of days  
Sit on the Throne of his Glory:  
The books of the living were open before him.

All his heavenly army and his councillors  
Stood before him;  
The hearts of the Saints were filled with joy,  
For the number of the just is completed,  
The prayer of the just heard,  
The blood of the just avenged before the Lord of Spirits.

In that hour the son of Man was named  
Before the face of the Lord of Spirits,  
His name before the Chief of days.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Enoch xlvi. 1-4. Cf. translations of Enoch by R. H. Charles, Oxford, 1912; de Beer, in Kautsch, Tübingen, 1900; Flemming and Radermacher, Leipzig, 1901; F. Martin, Paris, 1906.

<sup>18</sup> The Angels.

<sup>19</sup> Enoch xlvii; xlviii. 2.



The Name is kept secret by Enoch. This will stimulate imaginations in the future. The Son of Man and his Name were already in being for eternity.

Before the sun and the constellations were created,  
Before the stars of the sky were made,  
His Name was uttered before the Lord of Spirits.<sup>20</sup>

But till this day the Son of Man was “hidden before God.” (Enoch xlvi. 6.) For that reason he was unknown. God now “reveals him to the elect” (Enoch lxii. 7); meanwhile the terror-stricken world learns to recognize him.

Enoch has still more to say of this rising power. The following verse opens up vistas without end:—

He will be the staff on which the just shall lean without falling,  
He will be the *light of the nations*,  
The hope of those whose hearts are broken.<sup>21</sup>

“Light of the Nations” is an allusion to a mysterious character who says in Isa. xlix. 6:—

Jahweh said, It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant,  
To raise up the tribes of Jacob  
And to restore the preserved of Israel:  
I shall make of thee a *light of the nations*  
That thou mayest be my salvation  
Unto the ends of the earth.

“Those whose hearts are broken” refers to another verse in Isa. lxi. I:—

The Spirit of the Lord Jahweh is upon me;  
Because the Lord hath anointed me  
To preach good tidings to the unfortunate,  
To bind up the brokenhearted ...

This mysterious speaker in Isaiah, Enoch reveals to be the heavenly Man. When the world will have been overthrown, this heavenly Man will dwell with regenerated men. He shall be in good faith the Light of the Heathen, he shall preach good tidings to the unfortunate, and bind up hearts that the

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<sup>20</sup> Enoch xlvi. 3.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* xlvi. 4.

world will have broken. For him a whole human life is opened out.

This character is already complex, the synthesis of Daniel's *Son of Man* and of Isaiah's *Elect*, or *Servant of Jahweh*. To the qualities drawn from Daniel, the throne, the starry dwelling-place, divine attributes, and body of glory, are added the human characteristics given by Isaiah. This duplex origin provides a double nature, a composite god and man. The contradictory logic of faith unites the two finest mythic creations of Israel. In a unique spiritual being are combined two allegorical persons who, in the Bible, are separate and without interrelation other than personifying Israel—the one gloriously, the other sorrowfully.

In this creative synthesis the person derived from Isaiah, though less brilliant, is richer and deeper. He has not yet given all that he has. He is not only a consoler, he is also a sufferer. He is not only God's Elect, but also Man's Redeemer. He is the man of sorrows whose passion is expiatory. When Daniel's *Son of Man* will have assimilated all the *Man of Sorrows* of Isaiah, Christianity will be in existence.

Here we have a first sketch only. Enoch worships the Son of Man in his double form of terrible judge and gentle teacher, without considering him as divine martyr.

In what manner will the great judgment take place, for which the Son of Man has received his investiture? Vengeance can wait no longer. The kings and emperors shall be chastised by their own victims.

In these days the kings of the earth bowed down  
And the mighty of the earth because of their crimes.  
In the day of their doom they shall not escape:  
I shall cast them under the hands of my elect.  
Like straw they shall burn before my saints,  
Like lead they shall sink before the just,  
No trace of them shall be found. (Enoch xlviii. 8-9.)

Soon the dead shall rise and the Son of Man shall sort out his elect:—

In these days the earth shall give up its dead,  
Hell shall surrender what it had won,  
Death shall return all that it owes.

He shall choose from the multitude the just and the saints:  
The day is at hand when they shall be saved.  
(Enoch li. 1-2. The first verse is found in Rev. xx. 13.)

Then he will display his power:—

In these days the mountains will leap like rams,  
The hills will hop like lambs full of milk.  
The faces of the angels in heaven will shine with joy  
Because in these days the Elect shall arise.  
(Enoch li. 4-5.)

First will be judged the wicked angels who have corrupted mankind. They are to be stoned, even as stones are still cast at Satan at Mecca, and burned in Gehenna:—

I looked on the other side of the earth,  
I saw in a deep valley a fire aflame....  
There my eyes saw chains forging,  
Chains of iron which none could weigh.  
I asked the angel who went with me,  
For whom are these chains being made ready?  
They are made ready for the partisans of Azazel  
Who shall be taken and thrown into the Abyss for all damnation.  
Their jaws shall be covered with rough stones  
As the Lord of Spirits hath ordained.

Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, Phanael<sup>22</sup>  
In this great day shall seize them  
And cast them into the blazing furnace  
That the Lord of Spirits may be avenged on them  
For the sin of being subjects of Satan -  
And of corrupting the inhabitants of the earth. (Enoch liv. 1-6.)

After the angels, men shall come for judgment before the pitiless judge:—

The Lord of Spirits caused him to sit on the throne of his glory;  
The spirit of justice was given him.  
A word from his mouth slays all sinners,  
The wicked are destroyed before his face.

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<sup>22</sup> The four Archangels or four faces of God.

In this day shall stand the kings, the mighty,  
The famous, those who own the land,  
They shall see him and shall know him  
In that he sits on the throne of his glory.  
Justice gives judgment before him,  
No empty word may be spoken in his presence.

Pain shall grip them as a woman in labour  
When the child is at the mouth of the womb  
And she wails to be delivered . . .

All the kings, the mighty,  
The famous who lord over the earth  
Shall fall before him on their faces  
Shall worship him, shall put their hope in the Son of Man  
Shall supplicate him, shall cast themselves on his mercy.

But this Son of Man<sup>23</sup> shall compel them  
To disappear straightway from his sight.  
Their faces shall be full of shame,  
Darkness shall hide their countenances.

He shall deliver them to the angels of torture  
To punish them for having oppressed the elect.  
The elect, on beholding them,  
Shall laugh to see them  
For the wrath of this Son of Man strikes them  
And his sword is drunken with their blood.<sup>24</sup>  
(Enoch lxii. 3-4, 9-12.)

Finally, after the massacre of the doomed, the elect, endowed with bodies of glory, shall enjoy for ever and ever on earth the company of the heavenly Man :—

In that day the just and the elect shall be saved,  
They shall never look again on the sinners and the wicked.  
The Lord of Spirits shall remain among them  
And with the Son of Man they shall eat,  
They shall lie down and rise up,  
For ever and ever!

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<sup>23</sup> Correction by W. Bousset. Same correction in the next strophe.

<sup>24</sup> Passage imitated by Matt. xxv. 31-45, *vide* F. C. Burkitt, *Jewish and Christian Apocalypses*; London, 1914, pp. 23-25.

The just and the elect shall rise up from the earth,  
They shall no longer bow down,  
They shall be garbed in raiment of glory,  
In garments of life by the Lord of Spirits.  
Your garments<sup>25</sup> shall not grow old,  
Your glory shall not fade before the Lord of Spirits. (Enoch lxii. 13-16.)

The main lines of Enoch are those of Christianity. The background will alter little. The central figure will be thrown into greater relief and will take on new features. His title—the Son of Man—follows him into the gospels. It is the clue which indicates continuity from Daniel to Luke.

Orthodox Jews reject the Book of Enoch. Christians should read it, examine it, study it in detail as holy scripture.<sup>26</sup> St. Paul, St. John of Revelation, St. Matthew, and St. Luke were to know the verses of Enoch by heart.

Seventy years before Christ there were Christians—save for the name—in Palestine. They drew inspiration from a little book of revelations of the celestial Man. They held themselves predestined from all eternity, elect of divine grace, just like the supreme elect. They kept themselves apart from both Pharisee and Sadducee. Theirs was the mystic pride of saints who have “hated and despised the world of injustice.” They joyfully damn the powers of Israel, nor do they attach weight to the fiddling rites of devotees. They await the coming of the Son of Man. They are not many in numbers, it is true. Their bond is a mysterious book, not a living word. Yet a century more and their hidden creed will burst forth into the light of day.

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<sup>25</sup> Meaning bodies, cp. 2 Cor. v. 2-4.

<sup>26</sup> *Vide* the Epistle of Jude, 14: “Enoch, the seventh from Adam, Prophesied of these....”

## V

### THE REVELATIONS OF MOSES

THROUGHOUT a slow century the hand of Rome stretched farther and farther over the Holy Land. The Maccabæan princes fought among themselves. One appeals for aid to Rome, the other to Parthia. They become pawns for Pompey and Cæsar. A magnificent brute, Herod, half a Jew, was placed on the throne by the Roman Senate. His long reign is a debauch of superb building, of splendour, and of cruelty. At his death, while his son Archelaus was at Rome lobbying for the crown, three adventurers each called himself king. The Roman Governor was besieged in Herod's palace; the Temple was partly burnt down by the legionaries; and Galilee rose in revolt. Order was established in typical Roman fashion. The Legatus of Syria, Varus, took Sephoris in Galilee with two legions, reduced it to ashes, sold the inhabitants by auction, and then crucified 2000 Jews at Jerusalem. Varus's expedition left an incurable wound in Jewish memories.

Archelaus, successful in his quest, displayed as king all his father's vices without any of his talent. In A.D. 6 he was dethroned and exiled to Vienne in Gaul at the other end of the empire. Judæa, Samaria, and Idumea were annexed to the Roman dominions. The legate Quirinius had a census taken of the population as part of the inventory of the newly acquired property.

Then it was that those who were in expectation of the end of the world, anxiously spying the signs of its coming, discerned a sure prognostic of its imminence. An ancient prediction, one of Jacob's blessings on his sons, foretold:—

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah  
Nor the staff from between his feet

Till the coming of Shiloh  
Whom the nations shall obey. (Gen. xlix. 10.)

*Shiloh* is an obscure word. It is sometimes interpreted as *Shiloam* and translated *Sent*.<sup>27</sup> Who was Shiloh? For the readers of Enoch it could be no other than the Son of Man. The time of his coming was then at hand, since the sceptre had departed from Judah. Herod and Archelaus passed for Jews at a pinch. This time the prediction was evidently to be fulfilled.

It was in this fateful year, or thereabouts, appeared a new apocalypse, *The Assumption of Moses*. On the point of death, at the very moment of his translation to heaven, Moses unveils the future to Joshua. He shows him all that is to happen up to the days of Herod and the war of Varus. At that point Time will come to an end.

- VI 2. And an insolent king will succeed them,  
Who will not be of the race of the priests,  
A man bold and shameless,  
And he will judge them as they shall deserve.
6. And he will execute judgments on them  
As the Egyptians executed upon them,  
During four and thirty years,  
And he will punish them.
7. And he will beget children,  
Who, succeeding him,  
Will rule for shorter periods.
8. Into their parts cohorts  
And a powerful king of the west will come  
Who will conquer them:
9. And he will take them captive,  
And burn part of their temple with fire,  
And will crucify some around their colony.
- VII 1. And when this is done, the times will be ended...  
(*The Assumption of Moses*, trans. R. H. Charles; London, 1897.)

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<sup>27</sup> Vide Vulgate, *donec veniat qui mittendus est*; cf. John ix. 7. *Siloam* (which is by interpretation *Sent*).

There will remain only the last period of suffering, the time of trial and distress foretold by Daniel. Moses, no longer sustained by historical fact, describes the last days as though they were in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. The same scandals, the same horrors, occur again. The number of the just will be achieved when, like the seven martyred Maccabees and their mother, a levite and his seven sons, in order that they shall not transgress the precepts of God, will prefer to die of hunger in a cave. The story will then have attained the point foreseen by Daniel, and the last astounding catastrophe will be accomplished.

And then his kingdom will appear throughout all his creation,  
And then Satan will be no more,  
And sorrow will depart with him.

2. Then the hands of the Messenger<sup>28</sup> will be filled,  
And he will be established in the highest,  
And he will forthwith avenge them of their enemies.
3. For the Heavenly One will arise from his royal throne,  
And he will go forth from his holy habitation  
In fury and anger on account of his sons.
4. And the earth will tremble :  
To its confines will it be shaken:  
The high mountains will be made low and shaken,  
The hills shall fall down.
5. The sun will not give light:  
The horns of the moon will be broken  
And will be changed into darkness :  
She will be utterly turned into blood.  
And the circle of the stars will be confused.
6. And the sea will retire into the abyss,  
And the fountains of waters will dry up,  
And the rivers will fail.
7. For the Most High will arise, the Eternal God alone,  
And he will come to punish the nations  
And to destroy their idols.

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<sup>28</sup> *Nuntii* =Messenger, not angel. Cf. xi. 17.



8. Then thou wilt be happy, O Israel,  
And thou shalt mount on the necks and the wings of the eagle  
And they shall be filled.<sup>29</sup>
9. And God will raise thee on high,  
And place thee in the heaven of stars,  
In the place of their habitation.<sup>30</sup>
10. Thou wilt look from above,  
And wilt see thy enemies on the earth,  
Thou wilt recognize them and rejoice,  
Thou wilt give thanks and praise thy Creator.

This book, which is more national in tone than those of Enoch, is brief, yet in it we find reference to the Heavenly Man. Here he takes the new name of Messenger (*Nuntius*) because an old prophecy, most applicable to the events of the time, is realized in him. The overthrow of the universe is described at length. The rest is told shortly. A characteristic detail is that the earth is left to the heathen. Israel, saved, is borne to heaven. Where, then, shall the Elect have their kingdom, on earth or in heaven? The two conceptions meet in the Christian tradition.

Like the Book of Enoch, *The Assumption of Moses* is preserved only in the treasury of the Christians.<sup>31</sup> By the year 7 of our era those who awaited the Heavenly Man had assembled quite a little library on the subject.

But they had nothing more. One apocalypse was published after another. To guide them and to excite them the long-dead spoke across the centuries from the most remote ages, and their words were fixed on lifeless parchment. The real author remained unknown among them; they were not a sect, but a band of readers, a brotherhood of hearts with the same hope.

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<sup>29</sup> See Rev. xii. 14 and also a Mandæan parallel, Stahl, *Les Mandéens et les Origines chrétiennes*; Paris, 1930, p. 33

<sup>30</sup> Of God and the Messenger.

<sup>31</sup> A passage is quoted in the Epistle of Jude, 9. This passage is now lost from the known texts of the Assumption. In it the archangel Michael disputes the body of Moses with the Devil.

## VI

### THE PROPHET JOHN THE BAPTIST

DIVINE revolution was at hand and the coming of Shiloh was expected. Rome had installed its governor, and the trumpets of its legions resounded throughout the inhabited world. Subject to the authority of the Syrian Legate, a procurator, chosen from the financier class, and not from that of the diplomats, governed a proud and sensitive people—a people inferior in seeming, but superior in intelligence and dangerously fanatical—with the cut-and-dried, roughshod methods which Rome applied without distinction to barbarians. One of these officials, Pontius Pilate, remained ten years in the country, and from A.D. 26 to A.D. 36 made himself hated as much by his obtuse benevolence as by any excessive severity.

Lo, there came one proclaiming fearlessly, in tones which made many a heart vibrate, the coming of the Heavenly One which for two centuries had been whispered. What did it matter that Zechariah had (xiii. 3) ordained that there would be no further prophets and that should one come forward his father and mother should thrust a sword through him! Here was one who did not fear to don the ancient mantle of camel's hair. Once more after a long silence the living word of Jahweh resounded throughout Israel.

Our lack of knowledge of St. John the Baptist is a great handicap.<sup>32</sup> Christianity has altered his office and played hanky-panky with his words and deeds. Nevertheless in Matt. iii. 7–12 and Luke iii. 7–17 we have preserved an utterance which is of remarkable energy.<sup>33</sup> It is not a description of

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<sup>32</sup> Vide M. Goguel, *Au seuil de l'Évangile Jean-Baptiste*; Paris, 1928, and E. Lohmeyer, *Das Urchristentum, I. Johannes der Täufer*; Göttingen, 1932.

<sup>33</sup> Vide Martin Dibelius, *Die altchristliche Ueberlieferung von Johannes dem Täufer*; Göttingen, 1911, pp. 54–59.

the Heavenly Man, but a threat and a warning to those whom he will judge.

O generation of vipers,  
Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?  
Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.

Do not say to yourselves:  
We have Abraham to our father!  
I say unto you that God is able  
Of these *stones*<sup>34</sup> to raise up *children* to Abraham!

Already the axe  
Is laid unto the root of the trees.  
Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit  
Is hewn down and cast into the fire.

He that cometh after me  
Is mightier than I,  
Whose shoes I am not worthy to untie.  
I baptize you with water,  
He will baptize you with wind and fire.<sup>35</sup>

His fan is in his hand  
To purge thoroughly his floor;  
And gather his wheat into his garner;  
But he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

“Race of Vipers.” The ancients believed that the viper was the only snake which could bury itself in the earth see Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, viii. 59, 1). The prophet mocks the “vipers” who fancy they can hide in the ground from the wrath of God which is soon to burst upon them. No, they must repent (or more exactly, amend their souls) or perish.

There is no time for preparation. The wrath is already on its way. The axe is already at the tree-root awaiting the hand of the Woodman. He who is to come comes after the prophet—*i.e.*, he is just behind. The striking images mean that the last hour is at hand.

Who is it “who cometh after”? This is surely no mortal

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<sup>34</sup> A pun in Aramaic on *abenayya* (stones) and *benayya* (children).

<sup>35</sup> The Christians added to the word wind, or spirit, πνεύματι the adjective Holy, ἁγίω. This introduces the idea of the Holy Spirit which is foreign to the context. “Wind and Fire” are explained in the next verse by the metaphor of the threshing-floor.

man. He is the Divine Judge and Executioner, whose axe will cut down the bad trees and whose hand shall cast them into the fire. He is the Winnower whose terrible fan shall separate the grain to be garnered from the chaff to be burnt in unquenchable fire, whose sandals John is unworthy to bear. This is surely the *Son of Man* of Enoch.

To repent and await Him Who Is To Come. What else is conceivable? To live in expectation of such a Coming is to cease living. What can be done other than to seek out those who await His Coming too? What an inspiration it was to invent a rite which should become the most solemn, the most widely spread of all rites, which should be a bond between multitudes of believers, binding them into a single religious community!

“I baptize you with water, he will baptize you with wind and fire.” This plunging into water is called by its Greek name, baptism. Its meaning is profound and its might great. It is in antithesis to the passing through fire which he “who is mightier than I” shall give to those who reject him. Baptism in water will preserve the faithful from the baptism in fire. The soul must be purified by repentance first. Then shall the baptism in water give protection from the Wind and the Fire of the great Winnower.<sup>36</sup>

Only the waters which flow down Jordan are potent for the baptism of John. There, below the level of the ocean, in the depth of that strange rift in the earth’s crust, the prophet met the crowd of repentant believers.

Ezekiel foretold that in the latter days a stream should spring forth from the temple and flow down the accursed valley, which should thus be purified and cleansed. The waters of the Dead Sea should become sweet and fish dwell in its depths. From *En-Gaddi* to *En-Gallim* (A.V. *En-gedi* to *En-eglaim*) the fishers shall spread forth their nets.<sup>37</sup>

Here the prophecy is realized. The invisible stream has sprung forth. The lands once burned with fire from heaven

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<sup>36</sup> Cf. Josephus, *Ant.*, xviii. 5, 2. Josephus did not grasp the true sense of baptism of John. For him it was a mere corporal lustration.

<sup>37</sup> Ezek. xlvi. 1-12. *Vide* G. R. S. Mead, *The Gnostic John the Baptiser*; London, 1924, pp. 9-10

for their sins are now the first purified. A new life is beginning. The nets of the Fisher are spread forth.

The believer, having repented, goes down into Jordan at the Baptizer's side and is completely immersed. This rite was preserved in the early Church (Acts viii. 38) and among the Mandæans (*vide* R. Reitzenstein, *Die Vorgeschichte der christlichen Taufe*; Leipzig, 1929, p. 270). Having been baptized with water, he is safe from the whirlwind of fire, and is prepared to enter among the elect of the terrible Judge. He is baptized "on him which should come after him" (Acts xix. 4). He is admitted into the Kingdom. Baptism is a powerful link between the baptized. They are then separated from the rest of mankind.<sup>38</sup>

They were saved. They lived together in little communities apart from other men. Awaiting the imminent advent of him "who cometh," they fasted and prayed often (Luke v. 33); they prayed as John taught them to pray (Luke xi. 1). They were distinguished from the ordinary Jews by the name of Nazorean.<sup>39</sup>

If it may be said that a religion essentially consists in the common belief in a divine being and in a common rite which puts the worshippers in communion with their god, then the baptism of John associated with the myth of the Celestial Man offered the elements of a new religion. When the author of the Acts speaks of the Baptism of John, he effectively means the religion of John.<sup>40</sup> These are the foundations on which Christianity is to rise.

Derived from Judaism, the religion of John is no longer Judaism. To be a Jew was not enough to enter into its fold, and one might enter without being a Jew. "Do not say to yourselves, we have Abraham to our father! I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham." Race did not matter; it was baptism which

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<sup>38</sup> "John induced them to be united by a baptism." Josephus, *Ant.*, xviii. 5, 2—"them" refers to the Jews.

<sup>39</sup> This designation was retained by the early Christians (Acts xxiv. 5), by oriental Christians, and by the Mandæans, and probably means "those who observe" (Lidzbarski, *Ginza*; Göttingen, 1925, Introduction).

<sup>40</sup> Acts xviii. 25 (Apollos knew only the baptism of John), xix. 3 (unto John's baptism).

was the bond in the new sect. The foreign soldier, the unclean publican might be admitted as well as the purest and cleanest Jew.<sup>41</sup> The idea of a simple religion accessible to all is outlined here.

Such bold declarations caused busy stirrings among the people who flocked into the valley of Jordan.

The prophet was accustomed to dwell beyond Jordan, outside the Roman country in the deserts under the rule of Herod Antipas. Now Antipas was threatened with war. His wife, an Arab princess, had fled to her father, the King of Petra. Herod had abandoned her and sought to wed his sister-in-law, Herodias. The increasing crowds which frequented the Jordan frontier were a source of anxiety to Antipas; he therefore had the prophet incarcerated in the fortress of Machaero, near the Dead Sea, and had him done to death there. The war took place and Antipas was beaten disastrously. Josephus declares that the Jews believed it was a divine judgment on him for the murder of John. (Josephus, *Ant.*, xviii. 5, 2.)

The defeat of Antipas took place in A.D. 36; Vitellius, legate of Syria, who had been ordered to march against the Arab king, received the news of the death of Tiberius (March 16, 37) while on this campaign. The hate of Herodias for John and the dance of Salome must be placed among legends. When John was killed, Herodias was not yet the wife of Antipas, and Salome was the widow of that Philip who was, according to the evangelists, her father!

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<sup>41</sup> Cf. Luke iii. 10–14 (publicans and soldiers).

## VII ELEMENTS OF CHRISTIANITY

CHRISTIANITY was born of the travail of the days of John. The Baptist gave it two talismans with which to bind souls: the advent of the Heavenly Man in a universal cataclysm, and the rite of baptism which allowed the initiates to await, without apprehension, the Coming of the Judge. At first it is only the teaching of John which spreads like a brush fire—but the teaching alone without the name of John.

It was not long before the doctrine became enriched with striking additions of various kinds. First new names were found for the Heavenly Man. These were Lord, Christ, and Jesus.

The title of Lord was found in a psalm, one full of a secret meaning, in which the king David calls “my lord” a person on a throne in heaven—Psalm cx. 1:—

The Lord said unto my Lord,  
Sit thou at my right hand,  
Until I make thine enemies thy footstool.”<sup>42</sup>

To whom could this have been addressed? Surely not to the Messiah, the Son of David, waited for by the Pharisees. David would not have called his son “my Lord.” It must have been to the *Son of Man* who, according to the Revelation of Enoch, was placed on the throne of his glory by God Himself. David, inspired prophet, makes us certain that the Son of the Man (as those faithful who spoke Greek now called him) is enthroned on the right hand of God. He calls him his Lord. Following his example we, too, can call him our Lord.

Christ, *Christos*, is a somewhat barbarous translation of the Hebrew word which means consecrated by unction,

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<sup>42</sup> For the Christian interpretation see Luke xx. 41–44.

Messiah. Now the *Son of Man*, our *Lord*, was consecrated by unction. He it is, as Enoch explains, who says in Isaiah:—

The Spirit of the Lord Jahweh is upon me,  
For Jahweh has anointed me.  
He has sent me to bring good tidings to the unfortunate,  
To bind up the broken-hearted . . .  
(Isa. lxi. 1, quoted in Enoch.)

The Heavenly Man is the Anointed, the *Christ*, to fulfil for the elect a beneficent and gentle office. Thus the title “Son of Man” indicates the judge and avenger, while that of “Christ” recalls his kindlier functions. This is the name they prefer, and from which they derive their label, *christiani*, the people of Christ; for his name is ever on their lips. The title becomes a proper name of which they alone can appreciate the tender and mystic charm, whereas for the Pharisees the Christ or Messiah is merely a man, a son of David, a warlike and vain king, whose kingdom is of this world only.

The Lord Christ has, however, a name of his own. This Secret Name was uttered, according to the Revelation of Enoch, by God at the moment when he invoked him from his eternal dwelling-place to give him his mission. Enoch did not reveal it. But a careful scrutiny of the scriptures which are obscure mysteries of God will not fail to bring it to light.

Nor did it fail. A passage in the Book of Exodus was noted where God by the mouth of Moses said to the people (Septuagint xxiii. 20–21):—

Lo, I send my Messenger to thee  
To guard thee on thy road,  
To lead thee to the country I have made ready for thee;

Take heed of him, hearken to his word,  
Do not gainsay him.  
He will not desert thee  
For My Name is upon him.

*My Name is upon him.* Who, then, is the messenger who shall lead the people to the country prepared for them? It is Joshua, first called Oshea (Numb. xiii. 17, Septuagint xiii. 16,



A.V.). Moses called Oshea Joshua, which means Jahweh saves. Jahweh means when he says of Oshea “My Name is upon him” that one of the names of God is Jahweh saves. This name was not revealed to Abraham nor to Jacob. At the right time it was understood (for this mystic reasoning see Justin, Dialogue lxxv. 1–2). Joshua in Hebrew, Iesous in Greek, Jesus in Latin, is the personal name of the Son of Man, of the Christ, our Lord. It is the name “which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of those in heaven and of those on earth and of those under the earth” (Phil. ii. 9–10).

This name is the talisman of the Christians. He who knows the name has at his disposal illimitable power. In the name of Jesus the Christian can drive away demons, trample on serpents and scorpions, heal the sick, etc. He becomes the envy of the Jewish exorcist, who even essayed its power, for we read in Luke ix. 49–50 (Mark ix. 38–40) how one cast out devils “in thy name; and we forbade him because he followeth not with us”—*i.e.*, he was not a Christian; and in Acts xix. 13–17 how “certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus.” Moreover, in the Talmud it is written how one Jacob of Kefar Sekanya sought to cure in the name of Jesus a rabbi’s nephew who had been bitten a serpent.<sup>43</sup>

It is an extraordinary thing that the name Jesus should have been accepted in its Greek form and is never referred to in the Hebrew form. This shows the large part played in the development of the Church by Greek-speaking Jews. *The Lord Jesus Christ* was the full title given to the Son of Man. These three names, together or singly, served to invoke him.

In other directions the teaching of Enoch and John the Baptist was developed. As the verses of Isaiah were read which sang of the Servant of Jahweh, *the Light of the World*, identified by Enoch with the Heavenly Man, the listeners heard with intense horror the incredible passage in which the expiatory death of the Servant is described. Each word fell

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<sup>43</sup> J. Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth*; London, 1925, p. 286 (where the references are given).

on the ears of the faithful as a knell reverberating with sorrow and as a clear call, a promise of salvation.

Despised and rejected of men,  
Man of sorrows, acquainted with grief,  
Before whom we veil our faces,  
Despised and accounted as nought.

Surely our ills he bore them  
And our griefs he carried their burden ;  
But we, we thought him stricken,  
Smitten of god and afflicted.

He was wounded for our sins,  
And bruised for our iniquities.  
The chastisement which saves us is fallen upon him  
And with his stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray;  
We have turned every one his own way.  
Jahweh has laid on him  
The iniquity of us all.

Ill-treated, he was resigned,  
He opened not his mouth,  
Like a lamb that is brought to the slaughter,  
Like a sheep dumb in the hands of the shearer.

He was taken from us by a judgment of oppression.  
He was cut off from the land of the living  
And for our sins he was put to death.

His tomb has been placed among the impious,  
He is dead among the wicked.  
But there was no wrong in his deeds,  
No lie in his mouth. ·  
Yet it pleased Jahweh to bruise him .

... My Servant shall justify many;  
Their sins are his burden.  
Therefore I shall give a portion of many men;  
He shall receive multitudes as his share of booty.

Because he hath poured out his life,  
He was numbered with the evil-doers,  
Since he bore the sins of many  
And made intercession for the transgressors.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Isa. liii. 3–12. The text has been mutilated. The translations, of A. Condamin, *Le Livre d'Isaïe*; Paris, 1905, and of A. Loisy, *La Consolation d'Israel*; Paris, 1927, have been followed.

These fine verses became the Christian Charter. It was accepted that the Servant of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, had borne the burden of our sins and had suffered a death in the manner of an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of all. The revelation of Isaiah completed that of Enoch. Before being exalted to heaven and named with solemnity, the Heavenly Man, the Servant of God, had suffered death (see the famous passage in Phil. ii. 6–11, in which the same order appears—death on the cross, the giving of the name).

In what land was he slain? By whom? At what time? In what manner? The text was profoundly mysterious. Certain phrases struck the imagination, and suggested the Lord Jesus, in guise of a Heavenly Paschal Lamb, sacrificed before the creation of the world (*vide* Rev. v. 6; xiii. 8; and cf. I Cor. v. 7, “for even Christ our passover is sacrificed”). Then, again, his tomb among the impious and his death among the wicked suggested other mystic visions. St. Paul and John of Patmos will paint very different pictures of the redeeming death. But all were agreed that he died for our sins and that he was resurrected on the third day according to the prophecy in Hosea (vi. 2):—

After two days will he revive us;  
In the third day will he raise us up.

A new meaning is attached to baptism; it cleansed men of their sins by virtue of the redemption by the Divine Death.

“Mine Elect, in whom my soul delighteth” (Isa. Xlii. 1), the Resurrected Christ, the Anointed who shares with God the title of Lord, is soon identified as the Son of God, for the psalmist sang (Psalm ii. 7):—

“Jahweh hath said unto me, Thou art my Son;  
This day have I begotten thee.”

The day of his begetting is the day of his resurrection. This is no day of human measuring, no period of earthly time, but is of the mystic spiritual dimension.

God himself had therefore confirmed the belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God. The faithful were exalted towards the marvellous being on whom their salvation depended. Expectation, apprehension, adoration were

raised to ecstasy. The Lord Jesus Christ made his apparition. To one man first—great was his glory and the authority it gave him! Then to several at a time. These apparitions, duly testified, became irrefutable proofs and an unshakable foundation of the faith.

St. Paul gives us the earliest summary of the Christian belief when he reminds the Corinthians of the doctrine he has taught them (I Cor. xv. 3–8):—

For I delivered unto you first of all  
How that Christ died for our sins,  
And that he was buried  
And rose again on the third day.<sup>45</sup>

And that he was seen of Cephas,  
Then of the twelve ;  
After that he was seen of more than five hundred brethren at once,  
Of whom the greater part remain unto this present,  
But some are fallen asleep.

Then he was seen of James,  
After that of all the apostles;  
To the last of all as to an abortion  
He appeared to me also.”

In such wise there loom up from the gloom a few shapes, a few groups of early Christians of whom we know little other than in legends of later date and obvious arrangement. This Kephas or Peter (Petros), this James (Jacob)—Paul met them at Jerusalem where they were “pillars” of the sect (see Gal. ii. 2, 9). They must have owed their leading position to the apparitions which they had seen. John, the third “pillar,” had not yet been vouchsafed, at the moment Paul was writing, a vision of Jesus Christ. He was to have that later, a vision which he was to describe in magnificent phrases in his Book of the Revelation. This book gives us the best picture of the beliefs of the early Christian. We know nothing of the visions of Peter and of James. The latter was probably of a sufficiently intimate nature to

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<sup>45</sup> The Marcionite text. The A.V. adds after “first of all,” “that which I also received,” and after “died for our sins” and again after “rose again the third day,” “according to the scriptures.”

warrant the title of “brother,” for tradition bestows on him the title of “brother of the Lord,” just as Abraham was the “friend of God.”<sup>46</sup> His real brothers may have shared the title with him.<sup>47</sup>

The “Twelve,” whose names are not given either by Paul or John, formed a group who saw the Lord together, the first to do so after Kephas. This gave them prestige and honour. The five hundred brothers are probably all those who followed the first visionaries, Kephas and the Twelve, and successfully experienced the extraordinary feat of a grand collective vision of the Lord Jesus. This indicates in what hectic effervescence of mind the faith was engendered. Paul lays emphasis on the large number of witnesses who were still alive. The *apostles* to whom a common vision had been given were the missionaries who went out into the world wherever there was a Jewry to make known the power of the name of Jesus. Paul, the boldest of the apostles, with the “pride that apes humility,” tells how he was the last to behold Christ Jesus.

The difference between the doctrine of John the Baptist and that of the Christians lay in the knowledge of the names of God, in the death of Christ, and in the apparition of Christ. Christianity was therefore a schism from Johannism which occurred with little outcry.

The Baptist communities, after the murder of their prophet, continued their waiting in prayer and fasting and gained new converts by baptism. They swarmed out of Palestine. Some of the communities accepted Christian dogmas and prepared the way for Christianity. An Alex-

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<sup>46</sup> According to the Gospel to the Hebrews, James, having drunk from the Lord’s cup, swore that he would never eat bread again till he had seen the Lord rising from the dead. The Lord appeared to him said, “Bring a table and bread!”, took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and then gave it to James the Just, saying “*my brother*, eat thy bread, for the Son of Man is risen from the dead” (In Jerome, *De Viris illustr.*, 2).

<sup>47</sup> Gal. i. 19. “James, *the Lord’s brother*.” These words are missing in the Marcionite version. The name of “brothers of the Lord” was given to a group who had probably received the same grace as James (see I Cor. ix. 5: “other apostles and the *brethren of the Lord* and Kephas,” who apparently took their wives with them on missions).

andrian adept, the eloquent Apollos, taught “diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John” (Acts xviii. 25). In this sense John was the forerunner of Christ. In other places the Johannists were opposed to the Christians. At Ephesus they were strong enough to war with the author of the fourth gospel.

Generally the advance of Christianity was the retreat of Johannism. Moreover, it became permeated with Gnosticism and, as Mandæism, was to last through the ages preserving a treasure of sacred hymns in Aramaic.<sup>48</sup> Not far from Basra there still live a few hundreds of these Mandæans, holding themselves apart from the Arabs.

As for the Christians, they are at the beginning of their prodigious road. No longer bound to the words of a dead prophet, they have become prophets themselves, and preach throughout the ancient world the “good news” of the imminent coming of Christ Jesus.

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<sup>48</sup> Translated into German by Mark Lidzbarski, *Das Johannesbuch der Mandäer*; Giessen, 1915; Ginza, *Der Schatz oder das grosse Buch der Mandäer*; Göttingen and Leipzig, 1925. Lietzmann and Loisy have denied all historical connection between the cult of John the Baptist and Mandæism. They offer no explanation of the characteristics peculiar to both nor of the name Nazoræan used by both Mandæans and the disciples of John. New Manichæan documents from the Fayum prove the antiquity of Mandæism (H. C. Puech).

## **THE PROPHETS**

(A.D. 40–A.D. 130)

### **I**

## **THE SWARMING OF THE PROPHETS**

ONE of the most astonishing episodes in history is that of the Christian prophets. It is in Christianity what the first lightning conquests are in Islam. In but a few years the new religion had penetrated throughout the eastern parts of the Empire and reached Rome itself. Whereas in A.D. 40 there were some five hundred adherents in Palestine only, seventy years later the Roman Governor of the province which lay along the Black Sea, Bithynia, and Pontus, wrote to the Emperor Trajan that “the superstitious contagion is invading not only the towns, but the villages and fields” (Pliny the Younger, *Epist.*, 96), and, moreover, emptied the temples and ruined the business of the victims.

In contrast with Islam, this first invasion was not one of arms. The military solidity of the empire was untroubled. This was a victory of the “spirit,” as the Christians would call it. This “spirit” is a mysterious power which takes possession of men, causes them to stammer out strange words, impels them to utter prophecies without fear or secrecy, unrolls before their eyes revelations, reveals mysteries by means of their tongues, and performs miracles by means of their hands. This “spirit” dwells within a man, yet is superior to him. It is of God. As St. Paul declares, this Spirit is the Lord (2 Cor. iii. 17), it is Jesus. As the wars of the Hebrews were the wars of Jahweh, so the conquests of the Christians are the victories of Christ.

The Christian of the first century was first and foremost a prophet. St. Paul said to the Corinthians: “I would that

ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied” (I Cor. xiv. 5). God had foretold by the mouth of the prophet Joel that in the day of doom all men would prophesy.

I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh;  
And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,  
Your old men shall dream dreams,  
Your young men shall see visions,  
Upon your slaves and your handmaidens  
Will I pour out my spirit.<sup>49</sup>

(Joel ii. 28-29.)

The end of the world was at hand, and everyone was possessed with the spirit of prophecy. There was, it is true, a hierarchy. Over and above the simple prophets were the apostles, upper prophets who had received their mission from Christ himself in the days of his appearance on earth. Whereas the simple prophet ministered to a single congregation, the apostles went from one community to another as messengers from the Lord himself, who was in his turn the messenger of God. Below the prophets were the teachers, a more modest degree of prophet whose activities were limited to instruction, miracle-makers, and healers, prophets in action, helpers and administrators, speakers in unknown tongues and their interpreters—in short, the whole body of Saints.<sup>50</sup> Together they formed one body, the body of Christ (I Cor. xii. 27, “now ye are the body of Christ”).

Two words were borrowed from this same Joel which became technical terms—“evangel” and “church.” In the Greek version of Joel ii. 32 (Septuagint) occur the lines

Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved... they evangelize those whom the Lord shall call (εὐαγγελιζόμενοι).

By this St. Paul understood that those who invoke the name of Jesus shall be saved, and they must carry the good news, the evangel, to these predestined by Jesus

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<sup>49</sup> This passage is quoted by St. Luke (Acts ii. 17-23), who adds, “and they shall prophesy.”

<sup>50</sup> See I Cor. xii. 28, first the apostles, then the prophets, thirdly the teachers, etc.; and Rev. xviii. 20.



(Rom. x. 13). The good news was that the last days were come (Rev. xiv. 6–7, the εὐαγγέλιον announced to that the hour of Judgment is come). Salvation was to be obtained by the death and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Such was the Gospel which the apostles and the prophets were to proclaim throughout the world.

The ancient Book of Joel declared to the men of the latter days that they should “gather the people, sanctify a congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, etc.” (Joel ii. 16, Septuagint, ἀγιάσατε ἐκκλησίαν). This assembly—in Greek *ekklesia*, whence *église*, ecclesiastic—was in each town or hamlet the community of Saved, or Saints. It is sanctified in readiness for the Coming, like a chaste Bride for the celestial Bridegroom. The elders or presbyters, to develop into priests later, are those whom the *ekklesia* has chosen as leaders. As for the children, they are the neophytes, new-born into the faith. They suck the breasts, since they cannot digest more than the simple milk of doctrine (I Cor. iii. 1). Baptism is the rite which admits you into the *ekklesia*. The blood which Christ spilt in expiation for your sins makes of you a Saint. In giving you a part in the spirit, it makes of you a Prophet. You are a Saint and prophet “in Jesus Christ.” Impelled by the Spirit, it is your duty to spread the Good News and to build up the *ekklesia* by your prophecy, lest the Lord come.

The Christian system has been at once simple and potent, for it bore the mark of feverish haste. The urgent vision of what was about to befall the world gave it the power to dare all. In the utmost urgency and compelling need of the last days, the impossible was performed. St. Paul believed it possible to evangelize the whole Roman Empire in a few years, and then to behold the Coming of the Lord. Anxious not to overlook a single one of those called by Jesus, the Christian prophets swiftly sped over the roads and winnowed the towns of the Roman East.

## II DIVISIONS

THE apparitions of the Lord Jesus can be dated from chronology of St. Paul in A.D. 37–38—*i.e.*, at the beginning of the reign of Caligula. They determined the prophetic mission of the apostles, as the visions of Isaiah or of Jeremiah had done for the ancient prophets. These apparitions all took place in Palestine, except that of Paul, which was questioned. They conferred on the community at Jerusalem and on its chiefs, Kephas, James, the Twelve, an unequalled title and right to decide all that might be postulated in the name of the Lord Jesus.<sup>51</sup>

Kephas-Peter, the first to behold the Lord, made a number of missionary journeys of which we know but little. Other prophets of the community, such as Silas, Judas Barsabas, Joseph Barnabas, etc., went on missions wherever there was need of them. James remained on the hill of Sion and exercised there a permanent authority.

The group called itself “The Poor,” retaining the name used by the psalmists and by the readers of the apocalypses. That paradoxical city of Jerusalem has ever dwelt on its arid hill in an atmosphere of mendicancy. So it was established that the new communities should render a tribute of charity to the mother community in exchange for the precious gift of faith. In very early days Barnabas, who was a native of Cyprus, brought an offering from Antioch.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, the faithful undertook to support Kephas, the “brothers of the Lord,” and any other legates from Jerusalem, as well as

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<sup>51</sup> The last apparition, according to St. Paul, is dated by him as fourteen years before his journey to Jerusalem, when he met Peter, James, and John (Gal. ii. 1). This journey must have taken place in A.D. 51–52. See later, p. 52.

<sup>52</sup> Acts xi. 30; iv. 36. Paul is interpolated by the editor.

their wives, whenever they sojourned with them.<sup>53</sup> The priests and the Levites, who had formed a sort of sacerdotal proletariat about the Temple, flocked in numbers to the Poor of Jesus.<sup>54</sup>

Each community was divided into those who spoke Aramaic and those who spoke Greek. Difference in speech generally develops difference in thought and produces a division. The Grecians drew apart from the Hebrews, as they called the others, and appointed seven leaders, of whom the first and boldest was Stephen and the last a proselyte from Antioch called Nicholas, a pagan converted first to Judaism and then to Christianity.

Divergences of doctrine soon developed between the two sects. The first touched on the Temple. The Hebrews were assiduous at public prayer. They never failed to be present at the burning of the morning lamb and of the evening lamb. James in particular, according to tradition, was so fervent that his knees, from constant kneeling in the Temple, became as calloused as those of a camel.<sup>55</sup> The Grecians, on the other hand, had no respect whatever for Herod's building. Abraham knew not the Temple. What had been enough for Abraham was enough for them. What had the detailed ceremonies of Moses to do with them? God did not dwell in an habitation built by the hands of man. The Lord Jesus was soon coming to destroy the Temple, and what he would raise up was the ekklesia of the saints.

There was strife between the Greek Christians and the Greek Jews. To attack the Temple in Alexandria was imprudent; in Jerusalem it was a provocation to battle. The Temple was the Mecca of the Jew. When Caligula, that mad emperor, bade that his statue should be installed in the Temple at Jerusalem, the Jews rose and stood in six ranks at the frontier, men, old men, women, and children, to prevent such a sacrilege.<sup>56</sup> Stephen, that bold prophet, was

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<sup>53</sup> I Cor. ix. 5. Their wives were "sisters"—*i.e.*, Christians. Barnabas did not take advantage of this privilege.

<sup>54</sup> Acts vi. 7: "And a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."

<sup>55</sup> Hegesippus in Eusebius, *Eccles. Hist.*, ii. 23. 6.

<sup>56</sup> Philo, *Leg. ad Caium*, xxii.

denounced to the Sanhedrim for blasphemy against Moses and against God. He was sustained by a vision of the Celestial Man :—

Behold, I see the heavens opened,  
And the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God.  
(Acts vii. 55-58).

After his condemnation it would appear that he was stoned and lynched.<sup>57</sup> His last words were “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit” and “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.”

The Greek Christians were driven forth, some to Phœnicia, some to Cyprus, and others to Samaria.<sup>58</sup> Many went to Antioch, the home of Nicholas, where they formed a community in opposition to that of Jerusalem.

As for Kephas-Peter and the Hebrews, they would have nothing to do with their audacious brethren, and remained in the shadow of the Temple, but good Jews looked on them with doubt.

The assassination of Caligula in A.D. 41 liberated Judæa from the dread of seeing the Temple profaned. Claudius replaced the procurator by a protector, and Herod Agrippa became king. To give pleasure to the Jews, and to imitate the policy of Claudius, who, at Rome and at Alexandria, was repressing Jewish disturbances,<sup>59</sup> Herod ordered a Christian to be beheaded—probably the most notable, James the son of Zebedee, one of the Twelve. Peter was thrown into prison. The camel of piety, James, was respected, and Herod Agrippa died in 44. He was succeeded by a procurator, and the orthodox Jews celebrated the conversion of the royal family of Adiabene to Judaism. The Hebrews were left in peace for a few years, until the outbreak of the Jewish War.

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<sup>57</sup> Acts vii. 57–58. The brief note on Paul is an interpolation. Stephen’s speech is factitious, but advances old arguments against the Temple.

<sup>58</sup> The legend of Philip in Acts viii. The words put into Stephen’s mouth are flattering to the Samaritans; the tomb of the patriarchs is at Sichern, instead of Hebron; the erection of the Temple by Solomon was displeasing to God (Acts viii. 16 and 47–50).

<sup>59</sup> For Rome see Suetonius, Claud., 25, “Judæos impulsore chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit,” Dion Cassius, ix. 6, 6. For Alexandria see the Letter of Claudius to the Alexandrians, from a papyrus, by Idriss Bell; London, 1929.

The violent death of the son of Zebedee brought honour to his brother John, who became a “pillar,” together with Peter and James. He was fated to remain upright longer than the others. Twenty years later Peter and James had both fallen, and John, the sole survivor, was a refugee in Asia Minor, the last of those who claimed to have beheld the Lord Jesus. He became the greatest authority on the revelation of Christ Jesus, and that after the passing of his great antagonist, the other great Christian prophet, Paul.

In splendid Antioch, whither the Orontes bore all the superstitions of the East, the Grecian community, rich in prophets of their own and enriched by the presence of Barnabas, had done a bold thing. They had revealed to the heathen the mystery of the Lord Jesus. They had admitted to their *ekklesia* by baptism people who were in no way Jews.

What objection could be raised to this? Did not the Baptist himself say “God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham”? The question was by no means simple. What sort of “children of Abraham” were being raised up in this manner? Belief in the Heavenly Son implied a belief in Jahweh, and therefore a belief in Judaism, which implied a certain way of life. To suggest that certain Jewish practices, which might be regarded as indispensable to a believer in Jahweh, might be imposed on pagan converts was something very new, for since the Maccabsean revolt no compromise between Jewish life and pagan life had seemed possible. What Jewish practices were indispensable? This was to create a gulf between Jerusalem and Antioch.

Jerusalem declared that circumcision was essential for admission to the brotherhood, for God had prescribed it to Abraham before the time of Moses. But to circumcise a man who was not a Jew by birth was a crime, according to Roman Law.<sup>60</sup> Both the circumcised and the circumciser would be liable to condemnation to death.

The compromise which Jerusalem finally accepted was that the Gentile was to obey only the law given by Jahweh to

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<sup>60</sup> Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'Empire Romain*; Paris, 1914, i. 263–271.

Noah for all mankind.<sup>61</sup> It contains only one ritual precept. “But flesh with the life thereof, the blood thereof, shall ye not eat” (Gen. ix. 4). Thus the non-Jew Christian had to observe only one rite—that of eating Kosher meat. He was scrupulously to abstain from eating any meat bought in the market, for it had not been properly drained of its blood and had probably been offered to idols. In Greek towns the temples were frequently the only butchers. In actual practice this prohibition made the Christian dependent on the Jew butcher and prevented him from joining his pagan friends at any meal.

The extremists held that the New-Born in the Spirit was liberated by the Spirit—*i.e.*, by Jesus—from the burden of Noah as well as from that of Moses and that of Abraham. He could therefore buy without hesitation any meat for sale at the market and partake of any repast, Kosher or not. The idols were nothing. There was only one God, to whom everything belonged. Freed by the same Spirit, the Jewish Christians could join with their Gentile brethren in feasting without bothering whether the food was Kosher. Thus taught Nicholas of Antioch, the comrade of Stephen, a doctrine which the Hebrews of Jerusalem found abominable. But Nicholas, pagan by birth, knew in what manner pagans might be converted.

There was another difficulty. A married Gentile might be converted and the wife or husband remain heathen. What then? According to one tradition, Nicholas himself left his wife, no doubt because she remained unconverted.<sup>62</sup>

At Antioch no such separation seemed necessary, and the Greek Christians allowed a Christian to cohabit with his pagan wife and Christian women with their pagan husbands (1 Cor. vii. 12). This was an abomination in the eyes of the Hebrews, who looked upon it as fornication. There were

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<sup>61</sup> The same solution was adopted in our times by the Rabbi Eli Benamozegh for the admission of M. Aimé Pallière to Judaism (A. Pallière, *Le Sanctuaire Inconnu*; Paris, 1926).

<sup>62</sup> The Nicolaitanes are attacked in Revelation as teaching that meat offered to idols might be eaten and for allowing fornication. The tradition, which appears in Clement, *Strom.*, iii. 4, is obviously distorted. Irenæus, *Hær.*, l. 26, 3; iii. 10, 7; Hippolytus, *Philosoph.*, vii. 36; Euseb., *Hist. eccl.*, iv. 29, 1.

times when a young Gentile woman, in order to devote herself to the worship of the expected Saviour, had to escape from her family.<sup>63</sup> She was then entrusted to the care of an unmarried brother, who swore to preserve her virginity. If, however, a dangerous desire troubled him, he was permitted to marry his virgin (I Cor. vii. 36–38).

All that the Hebrews of Jerusalem could perceive in the sage doctrines of Nicholas of Antioch was abomination and fornication. Eating idols' meat and fornicating are the charges repeatedly made by John in Revelation against the Nicolaitanes. At Antioch the mixed believers in the Christ Jesus, who must not be confused with the Jews, were called Christians (*christiani*). The Hebrews at Jerusalem who were expecting the coming of Jesus were known as the disciples of John the Baptist, the Nazoræans.<sup>64</sup>

Barnabas brought back from Tarsus to the prophets of Antioch a little, sickly fellow, probably epileptic.<sup>65</sup> possessed by electric energy and by quivering pride. In earlier days he had been the scourge of the believers in Arabia. Jesus Christ had been revealed to him and the Spirit was strong in him. He had lately returned from proclaiming Jesus throughout Arabia, Syria, and Cilicia. He felt capable of proclaiming him from Jerusalem to the utmost ends of the West; nothing was impossible for his faith. A Jew, to the Jews he was known as Saul, and a Roman citizen, he called himself Paul.

We are now to follow him in his adventurous and fertile life, for he it was who stamped on Christianity the seal of his genius.

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<sup>63</sup> This situation is well illustrated by the story of Paul and Thecla, composed in the second century. The virgin Thecla left her mother and her betrothed and lived with Paul as an "admitted virgin" (*The Acts of Paul*, trans. L. Vouaux; Paris, 1913).

<sup>64</sup> Acts xi. 26 (Christians); xxiv. 5 (Nazoræans, affectation of archaism in the mouth of an advocate of Jerusalem).

<sup>65</sup> Gal. iv. 14: "Ye despised not nor rejected," or "you did not spit." It was customary to spit on epileptics to prevent contagion (Pliny, *Hist. Nat.*, xxviii. 7).

### III

## STRUGGLES AND SUFFERINGS OF ST. PAUL

CALLED and inspired by the Spirit, Barnabas and Paul undertook a missionary expedition. They crossed the island of Cyprus, passed along the southern coast of Asia Minor, through Pisidia and Lycaonia, two Hellenized and thickly peopled countries, into the Roman province of Galatia. They learned that preaching the gospel in the Greek world was no idyll. Blows were abundant and life itself was often in the hazard. Their method was to take the synagogues as bases of operations. It was customary on the Sabbath day to invite passing Jews to say a few edifying words. Barnabas and Paul profited by this custom to announce the imminent Day of Doom, to reveal the mystery of Jesus Christ dead and risen, and to preach Salvation by his name. Not many Jews were interested; they were annoyed. There were about every synagogue a number of men and women, especially women, who, though not Jews, feared the God of the Jews and desired to placate Jahweh by offering him worship. They formed a sort of floating, indefinite, and unorganized appendix to each synagogue. Among them were to be found the predestined Saints. They had to be detached from official Judaism, united among themselves in Jesus Christ, by means of baptism, by the holy kiss, by miracles and prophecies. Chiefs had to be found for them and they had to be kept chaste and holy for the arrival of the Lord. This led inevitably to strife. The local Jews raised Cain. They protested to the authorities. The prophets usually left in a riot, in a shower of stones, but leaving behind them a new *ekklesia* of Jesus.

The two apostles returned to Antioch rich in hope and experience. Paul planned a longer expedition. He took with him from Jerusalem a prophet named Silas to visit the new



churches and maintain their fervour. In Lycaonia he met with a second helper, Timothy, whose value lay in that his father was a Greek and his mother a Jewess. Paul had him circumcised that he might be equally well received by Jews and Gentiles. Led by the Spirit, they journeyed together across Asia Minor. Since the Spirit forbade them entry into Bithynia, they were stopped by the sea at Troas. In a dream a Macedonian appeared to Paul and appealed to him for succour. Whereon they embarked at Neapolis and landed in that Europe which was to become many centuries later the stronghold of Jesus. They did not, however, foresee this distant future. They hastened for fear lest they should be too late and the last Trump sound.

At Philippi, a Roman colony, the Word found listeners. A seller of purple, one Lydia of Thyatira, a worshipper of Jahweh, offered a roof and was baptized with all her household. But the storm which arose was great and the three prophets were driven out with violence (I Thess. ii. 2). At Thessalonica, a great business town, a well-frequented synagogue produced an excellent recruiting of Greeks and women of wealth. When the *ekklesia* was established at the house of one Jason, the Jews, furious at being, as they felt, the catspaw of the new sect, raised the town, and several of the new brethren were killed; for this is what we must understand by the expression in I Thess. iv. 14-16 "the dead in Christ" (Greek *dia tou Jesou*).<sup>66</sup> The magistrates sought to arrest Paul and his companions. They had foreseen the storm and had made good their escape (I Thess. iii. 4).

Paul fled by sea to Athens. Twice prevented by Satan from returning to Thessalonica, Paul felt great anxiety for his new church there, and sent Timothy to bear them comfort. Timothy returned with a good report. The *ekklesia* held firm to Paul, asked when the Lord would appear, and was exercised in mind as to the fate of the brethren who had been killed since they would not behold his Coming.

Joyfully Paul dictated a letter to be read to the assembled church. It combined prayer and prophecy, and passed from

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<sup>66</sup> See K. Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*; London, 1914, pp. 88.

the utterance of familiar recollections to the announcement of predictions and commands. It is the most ancient document which Christianity has preserved.

In it is to be found in a few lines the new religion (I Thess. i. 9-10):—

For they who are about us tell  
What manner of entry we had unto you,  
How ye turned from idols to God  
To serve the true and living God;  
And to wait for his Son from Heaven  
Whom he raised from the dead,  
Jesus who saves us from the wrath to come.<sup>67</sup>

The true and living god is that of the Jews. To his worship is joined that of the Son of God dead and raised again, for at the end of the world Jesus alone will save us. As for those who had recently been slain, they would rise with Jesus.<sup>68</sup> The prophet makes a prediction in the name of God (iv. 15-17).

For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord;  
We who are alive,  
Who remain for the Coming of the Lord,  
We shall not go before the dead.

For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven  
With a shout, with the voice of the Archangel  
And with the Trump of God,  
And the dead in Christ shall rise first.

Then we which are alive and remain  
Shall be caught up together with them in the clouds  
To meet the Lord in the air.

It would be the privilege of the martyrs to precede all others. Paul and the living would rise only on the second

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<sup>67</sup> Jesus, he who will save us (τὸν ρυόμενον), is the interpretation of the name Jesus (Jahweh saves) and the application to Jesus of the prophecy in Isaiah (lix. 20), "and he who saves shall come to Sion," which occurs not far from a verse which Paul adapts in I Thess. v. 8 (breastplate and helmet). Ecclesiasticus interpreted the name of Jesus as "great for salvation of his elect" (xlvi. 2). Cf. Matt. i. 21 "for he shall save his people."

<sup>68</sup> The resurrection of Jesus is not temporal. Paul places it both in the past and in the future. "Jesus raised (ἀνέστη) and God will raise (ἔξει) the dead with Jesus (σὺν αὐτῷ)," I Thess, iv. 14.

cloud. As for the Day, only one thing was known; it would come like a Thief in the Night.<sup>69</sup> The true believer should remain ever on the watch, strong in a breastplate of faith and love and helmeted in hope.

Corinth, risen from its ruins, Roman capital of Greece, trade centre and brothel for the sailors of two seas, was a blessed land for Paul. He was able to pass eighteen months there, thanks to the work which a Jewish couple gave him in making tents (booths) and to the support brought him by brethren from Macedonia.<sup>70</sup> The synagogue put up with him for quite a long time and its chief, Crispus, was charmed by him. When at last there occurred the inevitable flare up, the *ekklesia* was established in the house of a Jahweh worshipper who had been baptized, Titius Justus, and the proconsul turned a deaf ear to the legitimate complaints of the synagogue. Paul had the time to care for and develop this his cherished church, which was ever near to his heart and ever a thorn in his flesh.

This church consisted mostly of people of humble standing and of simple mind.<sup>71</sup> Among its members we find Latin names such as Titius, Lucius, Tertius, Quartus, Fortunatus, Achaicus, Titus (this brings us near to Rome), Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, Gaius, whose door was open to all Christians, the town treasurer Erastus, and in the very front the family of Stephanas, the first Greek to be baptized in Greece. Every one of them, man and woman, learned the manner of praying aloud, uttering prophecies, healing in the Spirit, and making miracles. When a prophet stood to speak and another, seated, was inspired by the Spirit, it was the duty of the former to hold his peace. Times were when the breath of Spirit wrung from these human lyres nought but æolian murmurs, sounds without recognizable meaning. Then it was they spoke *with tongues*. An interpreter, equally inspired, translated. Did the prophet

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<sup>69</sup> I Thess. v. 2. Cf. Jeremiah on the punishment of Edom (xlix. 9, Septuagint: *ὡς κλέπται ἐν νυκτί*).

<sup>70</sup> Acts xviii. 3; 2 Cor. xi. 9. A skene (*σκηνή*) is a light construction, a tent, a booth at a fair; a scene in a theatre.

<sup>71</sup> I Cor. i 26: "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many nobles are called."

cry “Ba! Ba! Ba!” the interpreter said “Abba!” (Father).<sup>72</sup> If he murmured “Ta! Ta! Ta!”, it was “atha, maran atha” (O Lord, come!). Paul was often inspired to speak with tongues, but he preferred to prophesy, that the church might be built up.<sup>73</sup> It was when Gallio, the brother of Seneca, was proconsul at Corinth—that is, about 50–52, towards the end of the reign of Claudius—that Paul dwelt there.<sup>74</sup> In 51 or 52 he embarked with Titus for Jerusalem in order to unite with the original church of Jerusalem the new churches which he had founded. Nervous perhaps at the idea of meeting Peter, James, and John, whom he had not yet encountered, he made a vow, and then, as was customary among the Jews, shaved his head.<sup>75</sup>

What his interview at Jerusalem was like, Paul tells later on to the Galatians in vivid words, desirous of proving that he, Paul, was not an apostle sent out by them of Jerusalem, but by the Lord himself, Jesus Christ (Gal. i. 15–ii. 10):—

But when it pleased him who chose me in the womb of my mother  
And called me by his grace,  
To reveal his son in me  
That I might preach him among the peoples,  
Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:  
Neither did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me,  
I went into Arabia,  
And returned again to Damascus.

Afterwards I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.  
I was unknown by face unto the churches of Judæa in Christ.

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<sup>72</sup> Gal. iv. 6; Rom. viii. 15; also Stahl, *Les Mandéens*, pp. 62–8.

<sup>73</sup> I Cor. xiv. 1–33, a curious extract.

<sup>74</sup> According to an inscription at Delphi, which dates the twenty-sixth acclamation of Claudius in the proconsulate of Gallio.

<sup>75</sup> The voyage to Jerusalem spoken of in Galatians is briefly referred to in Acts xviii. 18–22; Paul embarked at Cenchreæa, went by Ephesus to Cæsarea, and went up (*ἀναβάς*, the consecrated term for going to Jerusalem), and greeted the community there. *Vide* E. Barnikol, *Die drei Jerusalemreisen des Paulus*; Kiel, 1929. The two preceding journeys told of in Acts ix. 26–30 and Acts xi. 30 are fictitious. The first is related to an interpolation in Galatians (Gal. ii. 18–20) (*vide* Couchoud and Stahl, “Les deux auteurs des Actes des Apôtres” in *Les Premiers Ecrits du Christianisme*; Paris and Amsterdam, 1930).

They had heard only;  
That he who in times past persecuted us  
Now preacheth the faith which he once destroyed.  
And they glorified God in me.

Fourteen years later I went up to Jerusalem  
Taking Titus with me.  
I went up by revelation.  
I communicated to them the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles,  
And, privately, to the notables.  
Do I run, or have I run in vain?  
Nor was Titus who was with me,  
Although a Greek, compelled to be circumcised.

Because of false brethren  
Who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty  
Which we have in Jesus Christ  
And to bring us into bondage,  
We gave not place, not even an hour,  
That the true gospel might continue with you.

But of those who pretended to be *notable*  
(Whatsoever they were it maketh no matter to me;  
God distinguishes no man's person),  
These notables imposed nought on me.

But Peter, James, and John,  
Those who look upon themselves as pillars,  
Gave me the hand of fellowship;  
To us the Gentiles, to them the circumcised!  
That only we should remember the Poor  
Which I was careful to do.<sup>76</sup>

This is the first encounter between St. Paul and Jerusalem, and the picture is a remarkable one. Paul had, as it were, discovered a new world, and had brought back with him his baptized heathen, as Columbus did his Red Indian. General excitement! Private conversations with the authorities, in which Paul demands a definite answer. Spies listen at keyholes. Pressure is brought to bear on Paul, but they dare not require the circumcision of Titus. Paul offers a stubborn

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<sup>76</sup> The Marcionite text which I consider to be the first edition (*vide* "La première édition de Saint-Paul" in *Les Premiers Ecrits Christianisme*). Later additions have altered this outspoken fragment.

opposition. The resulting compromise: whatsoever is Jewish in origin is allotted to Jerusalem; whatsoever is pagan to Paul. But do not forget to send money for the upkeep of the Saints at Jerusalem! Paul gains the point.

The second conflict soon came about. After leaving Jerusalem, Paul returned to Antioch, so completing his great expedition. Peter followed him. At first Peter made no bones about falling in with the customs of Antioch. He took his place at the common table where they ate meat which was not Kosher. It was a victory for the Nicolaitanes. But the success was of short duration. Listen to what Paul says on the subject (Gal. ii. 11-14):—

Now when Cephas was come to Antioch,  
I withstood him to his face,  
For he was to be blamed.

Before certain men came from James,  
He ate with the Gentiles.  
But when they were come,  
He withdrew and held himself apart,  
Fearing them which were of the circumcision.  
Just as great hypocrites as he were the other Jews,  
So much so that Barnabas was also carried away with  
their dissimulation.

When I saw that they walked not uprightly  
According to the true Gospel,  
I said unto Cephas before them all:  
If thou, a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles,  
Why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews

This outburst led to a definite rupture. James gained the upper hand this time. Weak-kneed Peter swallowed his own deeds, and Paul, abandoned by Jerusalem and Antioch became an Apostle without a mandate. His authority was himself and Jesus. But to wean them from him and bring them into the common fold Jerusalem sent out emissaries to the new churches which he had founded.

He left Antioch for the third time, and fell seriously ill among the Galatians, who cared for him tenderly. He did not fail to instruct them to send a subsidy to the poor of Jerusalem (I Cor. xvi. 1). Then he went on to Ephesus,

the superb capital of Asia, where there were disciples of John the Baptist and Christians. From here he entered into a correspondence with his darling Church—that of Corinth.<sup>77</sup>

He was anxious, jealous, and irate. Ever since the visit of a learned missionary of the Baptist sect, Apollos of Alexandria, who preached, so he said, a higher wisdom, there were at Corinth strong-minded individuals who thought they possessed all knowledge.<sup>78</sup> They went further than Paul, repeating the aphorisms Paul had said to them the year before, but with a wider meaning. “All things are lawful unto me.” “An idol is nothing in the world, and there is none other God but one.” “But meat commendeth us not to God; for neither, if we eat [Kosher understood], are we the better, neither if we eat not, are we the worse “ (I Cor. viii). “Meats for the belly and the belly for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them” (I Car. vi. 13). Well, if the idol is nought, why avoid idolatry? If there is no reason why meat which has been consecrated to a god should not be eaten, why should not the harlot, which has been consecrated to a god, be sought out? “All things are lawful.” In the Church which Paul wished soon to lead to Jesus pure as a virgin there were, through knowing too much, idolators and lechers. There was even a man who had taken to wife his father’s wife, a shocking incest in all men’s eyes, even of the heathen. Paul, absent in body, but present in the Spirit, condemns the criminal to death by a curse. (I Cor. v. 4–5):—

In the Name of the Lord Jesus  
We, being gathered together, ye and my spirit,  
With the power of the Lord Jesus;  
That such a man should be delivered unto Satan  
For the destruction of the flesh,  
That the spirit may be saved for the Day of the Lord.

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<sup>77</sup> The two Epistles to the Corinthians consist of several letters, or fragments of letters, put together for the convenience of liturgical reading—*e.g.*, I Cor. v. 9: “I wrote unto you...” is an allusion to a passage in another letter which has also been preserved, I Cor. Vi. 12–20. *Vide* “Reconstitution et classement des lettres de St. Paul” in *Rev. de l’histoire des Religions*, 1923.

<sup>78</sup> At the moment Paul was writing, Apollos was no longer at Corinth, but at Ephesus (I Cor. xvi. 12).

He is very severe on the “strong” (I Cor. iv. 10) who imagined that they walked uprightly. He confounds them in their pretended knowledge. He, who had but lately striven with Jerusalem to enlarge the liberties of the Christians, had now to limit them in the struggle with the Corinthians. He reminds them that idolatry brought death on the Israelites in the desert. He bids them refrain from eating of meat which has openly been offered to idols to their knowledge or when it may scandalize a brother. He makes every attempt to bring back to the straight path of Jewry the subtle and dissolute Grecians. Moreover he reassures the scrupulous who fear to have commerce with their wives and the guardians troubled by the virgins they have in ward.

When the influence of the Jerusalem (perhaps a mission of Peter himself) party extended to Corinth, the position had become serious. Three divisions had developed—that of Paul, that of Apollos, and, most dangerous, that of Peter. The apostle essayed his most honeyed accents to lure the straying brethren back to his fold.<sup>79</sup> He called for the collection of pence for Jerusalem, which he proposed to take there himself, if it were worth while. He sent Timothy to re-establish order, but Timothy was incompetent and the friction was aggravated, so Paul, in alarm, abandoned the conflict he had on his hands at Ephesus and embarked hurriedly for Corinth. Alas! the Corinthians, whose *ekklesia* he had established, repulsed him as one without authority, a fellow without seal or letter of credit, a charlatan, a rascal who had “diddled” them, corrupted them, a spineless creature who dared not say “bo” to a goose, but when at a safe distance would scold like fury. His letters are full of fire and force and fight, but, when he comes face to face, how mild he becomes and how contemptible his words! A brother insulted him (2 Cor. vii. 12: ἀδικήσαντος). Paul went back to Ephesus deeply wounded, humiliated, cut to the quick. Had he lost his children? He had gained an idea of the power of Jerusalem.

In an outraged letter in which he announced to the Corinthians that he was soon to come and chastise them

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<sup>79</sup> A letter made up of I Cor. i-iv and xvi.



(2 Cor. ii. 14–vi. 13; vii. 2–3; x–xiii) he openly challenges those who had attacked him. He fearlessly compares himself with Peter, James, and John, whom he calls derisively the “very chiefest apostles” and consigns to the devil (2 Cor. xi. 14). He proclaims what he is, no less than are they; what he has done, more than have they; the revelations which he has received from the Lord, which they cannot parallel. What an astonishing bit of invective it is in which Paul lays himself bare in all his strength and his weakness, his weakness which is his strength, and a piece of lyrical autobiography (2 Cor. xi. 5 *et seq.*):—

For I suppose I was not a whit behind  
The very chiefest Apostles.  
I am rude in speech,  
But not in knowledge...

For they are false apostles,  
Deceitful workers,  
Disguised as Apostles of Christ.

Is it not a marvel!  
Satan himself disguised as an Angel of Light,<sup>80</sup>  
Therefore it is nought astonishing that his ministers  
Be also transformed into ministers of Righteousness.  
Their end shall be as their works!...

Seeing that many glory after the flesh,  
I will glory also.  
For ye suffer fools gladly—  
So wise are ye!

For ye suffer that a man should bring you into bondage,  
That a man devour you, that he raise his hand to you,  
That he smite you in the face!  
I say it with shame;  
Truly we have been over *weak*.

Whereinsoever any is bold,  
(I speak as a fool) I am bold also;  
Are they Hebrews? So am I.  
Are they Israelites? So am I.  
Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I.

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<sup>80</sup> In *The Book of Adam* (R.H. Charles, *The Apocr. and Pseudep. of the O.T.*; Oxford, 1913, ch. i, p. 146), Satan comes to tempt Eve in the form of an angel.

Are they ministers of Christ?  
(I speak as a fool) I am more!

In punishments much more,  
In prisons more frequent,  
In stripes beyond measure,  
In deaths often.

Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.  
Thrice was I beaten with rods,  
Once stoned.  
Thrice was I shipwrecked;  
A night and a day have I been in the deep,

In journeyings often;  
In peril of waters, in peril of robbers,  
In peril of Jews, in peril of heathen,  
Perils in the city, perils in the wilderness,  
Perils on sea,—perils of false brethren.

In weariness and toil; in watchings often;  
In hunger and thirst; often in fastings;  
In cold and nakedness.  
Above all these things, that which cometh upon me daily,  
The worry of all the churches.

Who stumbles and I not stumble?  
Who trips and I am not ashamed?  
If I must needs boast,  
Of my weaknesses will I boast.  
God the Father of our Lord Jesus knoweth it,  
Blessed be he for evermore!  
I do not lie.

Must I boast?  
It serves no purpose.  
I will come to the visions and revelations of the Lord.

I know a man in Christ,  
Who was fourteen years ago<sup>81</sup>  
(Is it in the body, I know not,  
Out of the body, I know not, God knoweth),  
Caught up, this man, to the third heaven.

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<sup>81</sup> These fourteen years are the fourteen years which Paul holds were between his first revelation and the visit to Jerusalem to James, Peter, and John. The interview at Jerusalem and the humiliation at Corinth must have taken place in the same year (Gal. ii. 1).

I know also, that the man  
(In the body or out of the body, I know not; God knoweth),  
Was taken up to Paradise  
And heard there words which were not uttered  
Which it is not lawful for man to utter.

Of that man I shall boast;  
Of myself I shall not boast  
—but in my infirmities.

If I would vaunt myself,  
I should not be a fool, I should say the truth.  
I forbear  
Lest any should think me  
More than he sees me or hears of me.

Lest, on account of the abundance of revelations,  
I should be exalted,  
My flesh has been given a thorn,  
An angel of Satan to buffet me,  
Lest I should be exalted beyond measure.

For this thing thrice I besought the Lord  
To put it aside from me.  
He answered me:  
My grace is sufficient for thee.  
In *weakness* is my strength made perfect.  
More gladly shall I then boast of my *weakness*  
That the strength of Christ may shine on me!

Therefore I take pleasure in my *weaknesses*,  
In ill treatment, in misfortunes,  
In persecutions and in disasters for Christ's sake.  
When I am *weak*,  
Then I become strong.

Paul gives us a full picture of himself, buffeted by Satan and prophet of God, the invincible apostle and the poor epileptic, the indomitable weakling who performed more than giants. On the one side Jerusalem and all its Christian organization well established, on the other an outcast who felt in himself the power to destroy all and begin it all anew.

While this terrible letter was borne across the sea, Paul

was struggling at Ephesus against increasing troubles. After a time the synagogue had been closed to him, as was frequently the case. He assembled his church in a *schola*, a meeting-place with usually a single circular bench in it. In this great swarming city, whither the temple of Artemis drew each spring vast multitudes of pilgrims, Paul had thought to find “a great door and effectual” opened to him, though “many adversaries” (I Cor. xvi. 9). The adversaries were not only Jews. The followers of John the Baptist did not all rally to the Spirit of Lord Jesus and speak in tongues and prophesy.<sup>82</sup> Nor did all the Christians consider Paul to be an authorized apostle. Later John praised the Church of Ephesus: “Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars.” Alexander the coppersmith who showed much hostility to Paul<sup>83</sup> was probably a Christian. The Ephesians were a pious people who worshipped their Goddess Artemis and gained much wealth thereby. They were naturally hostile to propaganda against idols. Paul had some difficulty in gaining a living. He suffered from thirst and hunger, he was “naked, buffeted, a vagabond, and we labour, working with our own hands.” Insulted, driven forth, defamed, he became “the filth of the world and the offscourings of all things” (I Cor. iv. 11–13). He began to wonder if he would not die before the Lord Jesus came. He found consolation in the thought that, unclothed of his mortal body, he would rise clothed in his immortal body for the great Resurrection (2 Cor, v. 1–9).

A riot took place against the Christians, provoked by the

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<sup>82</sup> They were still relatively powerful at Ephesus at the time of the Fourth Gospel. The Mandæans were marked by their hatred of the Holy Ghost (*vide* Stahl, *Les Mandéens*, pp. 57–61). Acts xix 1–7 tells how Paul converted a dozen of the disciples of the Baptist and caused them to speak in tongues and to prophesy.

<sup>83</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 14. The last thirteen verses form an authentic Pauline epistle inserted in a fictitious letter (*vide* P. N. Harrison, *The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles*; Oxford, 1921). This Alexander seems the same as the man who was “delivered unto Satan” by Paul (1 Tim. i. 20), and may be identified with that Alexander in the riot of the goldsmiths (Acts xix. 33) if it is admitted, with Meyer, that this last is a Christian of Jewish origin whom the Jews thrust forward to expose him to the fury of the people while Paul was borne off by his disciples. Alexander would appear to be the chief of the Christians opposed to Paul.

goldsmiths, who sold to pilgrims little temples of Artemis in silver, and who saw their welfare threatened. Was it in this street-fighting, or in some quarrel between the Christians, that Paul suffered severe injuries? He says curtly: "I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus" (I Cor. xv. 32)<sup>84</sup> in a context where the danger of death is implied. In the trial which followed his principal opponent was the coppersmith Alexander.<sup>85</sup> We find the Apostle in prison, wounded, it would seem, for he is divided between the desire to die and rejoin the Lord Jesus and that of living for the churches (Phil. i. 21).<sup>86</sup> He has received some money from the worthy Philippians. Their messenger Epaphroditus was nearly killed at Ephesus for the work of Christ (Phil. ii. 27), probably in the same rioting as that in which Paul was hurt.

In his reply by their own messenger, he bitterly refers to the rival Christians who, inspired by jealousy and partisanship, preach Christ falsely. He puts the Philippians on their guard against those who preach circumcision. Jerusalem had succeeded in spreading its doctrine as far as Macedonia. As for himself, he was in fetters in the *prætorium*, the palace of the proconsul, yet found means of preaching his gospel, and made converts among the slaves of Cæsar.<sup>87</sup>

While still in bonds he dictates a prayer and a prophecy for the distant Church of Colosse, of which he has heard spoken by his companions in captivity. He recommends the Colossians not to worship angels, because the Lord Jesus created the angels and he alone is to be adored by Christians.

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<sup>84</sup> *ἔθηριομάχησα* This chapter is a letter in itself. According to a reasonable tradition (*Les Actes de Paul*, edit. L. Vouaux, p. 247), Paul at Philippi, after the events at Ephesus, received from Corinth an enquiry as to the resurrection of the dead.

<sup>85</sup> 2Tim. iv. 14-16, in which the attacks of Alexander come in the same context as the first defence of Paul.

<sup>86</sup> The three epistles written "in my bonds" (Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon) have falsely been connected with the Roman captivity of Paul; they belong to Ephesus. There were a *prætorium* and imperial slaves at Ephesus as well as at Rome.

<sup>87</sup> Epaphroditus is called by Paul his brother, his companion in labour (*συνεργός*), and fellow-soldier (*συνστρατιώτης*). He is probably the "true yoke-fellow" whom Paul beseeches to make the peace between Evodias and Syntyche. The word *σύζυγος* means "companion in combat" in an inscription at Cos about gladiators (Herzog, *Koische Forschungen und Funde*, no. 133).

He writes a neatly rhythmic address to a Christian couple at Colosse or Laodicea to beg them to release a fugitive slave, Onesimus, whom he had converted in prison.

When brought before justice and attacked by Alexander, Paul felt abandoned of all. But he had the strength to defend himself and to escape from the lion's maw. He fled from Ephesus, where for over a year life had been very hard for him.<sup>88</sup> He went to Miletus, whence he could easily take ship (2 Tim. iv. 14–20).

Where could he go? Should he journey to Corinth? That would be asking for further trouble. Another bolt crashed from the blue. The Galatian brethren who had welcomed him as Christ Jesus himself and taken care of him, who had not spat upon him when he was ill, who would have torn out their eyes to give them to him, his Galatians had received the missionaries from Jerusalem. They had passed over to the other gospel, and were about to be circumcised.

Paul sent them a letter of mingled indignation and affection, probably by the hand of Crescens (2 Tim. iv. 10). He told them of the interview at Jerusalem and the pact made with Peter, James, and John to leave him the baptizer pagans on the sole condition of sending alms to the Poor. And those villains said he preached circumcision!<sup>89</sup> He made mock of those who came with their ritual knife: "May they be cut [castrated] they who trouble you" (Gal. v. 12) He braved those who sent them (Gal v. 10):—

I have confidence in you;  
you will not change your minds.  
But he that troubleth you shall bear the penalty  
—Whosoever he may be.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> The words "two years" (Acts. xix. 10) must not be taken to mean two complete years. The crisis which led to Paul's flight from Ephesus was expected by him when he wrote his angry letter to the Corinthians (2 Cor. iv. 8–9); and this letter is not more than a year distant from the visit to Jerusalem. Paul's imprisonment at Ephesus is not mentioned in Acts, but it is in the Latin prologue (Marcionite) to Acts, "jam ligatus scribit eis (sc. Colossensibus) ab Epheso" (Wordsworth White, N.T. latine ii. 1913, p. 415).

<sup>89</sup> Gal. v. 11. Probably because he had circumcised Timothy (Acts xvi. 3); but Timothy was half a Jew.

<sup>90</sup> The Marcionites held this to be an attack on Peter. "*Occulte iniquant, Petrum lacerat*" (Jerome *Comm. in Gal.*).

He called the Galatians fools. To let themselves be circumcised was to accept the whole law of the Jews. He bade them remember the true gospel which he had taught them, the true Christ which he had formed in them with all the labour of a woman in travail (Gal. iii. 27-8; vi. 15):—

All ye as have been baptized in Christ,  
Have put on Christ.  
There is neither Jew nor Greek,  
Neither bond nor free,  
Neither male nor female,  
For ye are all one in Christ Jesus...  
Nor is circumcision aught,  
Nor the foreskin;  
There is a new creation.

This letter gave Paul the chance of outlining the opposition between the Gospel and the Law, to which he was to give much thought. He finished with this stroke at his enemies: “As for the others, let none trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.” This had its effect, and it was not long before a brother from Derbe came with Paul to carry with him the collection made by the Galatians for Jerusalem.<sup>91</sup>

Corinth! Paul’s heart drew him thither. Were the Corinthians still obdurate? In what spirit had they received his letter of boasting? Titus had gone there, and should bring him back news. Titus was due to meet him at Troas, thence Paul should go into Macedonia and visit Philippi, the unfailing source of funds for the Gospel. But no Titus came to Troas; so Paul, full of anxiety and impatience, crossed the sea, despite some missionary work in good progress. In Macedonia he had no peace—strife without and fear within. At last Titus came.

His news was consoling. The letter had been received with sorrow. Certain people said that Paul wanted to regulate their faith, that he would not come, that his plans were made lightly, and that he wanted to have the last word in

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<sup>91</sup> Gaius (Acts xx. 4). The Galatians were probably brethren of Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch in Pisidia, towns in the Roman province of Galatia.

everything. However, there then came repentance. The offender against the apostle was driven from the *ekklesia*. The faithful had wept, they had received Titus in fear and trembling, they had obeyed him and showed nought but zeal and good-will towards their master.

Much moved, the old prophet began a letter with a prayer in which the words consolation and sorrow rattle like beads in a bell (2 Cor. i-ii. 11; vii. 4-ix. 15). He tells of the trials he had passed through in Asia, how he had "despaired even of life," and of the great depth from which God saved him. He wrote the letter "out of much affliction and anguish of heart" and "with many tears," so that they "might know the love" which he bore them. He asks them to forgive his adversary, "lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow." "To whom ye forgive I forgive also." He asks them to be liberal in giving to the poor, that collection which he was to carry to Jerusalem with Titus. The Macedonian churches had begun it well. Paul wanted to make a great success of it. The Saints at Jerusalem should glorify God "for your professed subjection unto the gospel of Christ and for your liberal distribution unto them and all."

The Corinthians obeyed the gospel of Paul. Paul was re-admitted into the circle of charity of Jerusalem, and the old pact was re-established. Titus had certainly shown himself a tactful ambassador to the Corinthians, and also probably to Paul. It would seem that Christianity owes a debt to this modest man for his successful efforts in conciliating the explosive power of Paul with the narrow prudence of Jerusalem.

In a last letter to the Corinthians (I Cor. xv.), the apostle no longer preaches his gospel in opposition to that of the Saints of Jerusalem. He takes his place once more as the last. "And last of all he was seen of me also," "for I am the least of the apostles that am not meet to be called an apostle because I persecuted the Church of God." Who would recognize in this man the writer of the bitter irony who spoke *as a fool*? He recites the faith "so we preach and so ye believe," and he feels once more sure of seeing in his lifetime the Coming of the Lord.



In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,  
At the last Trump, for the Trumpet shall sound,  
The dead shall be raised incorruptible  
And we shall be changed (2 Cor. xv. 52).

This was the *Good News* which the prophet brought across Macedonia to Illyricum. Then he sought repose in the bosom of his darling Church of Corinth. Consoled, he dictated at leisure a prophecy to Tertius, so that his gospel might be known to the Romans before he went thither to proclaim it in person. He expounded the themes he had declared to the Galatians, but without the remonstrances. The Epistle to the Romans is the last and the longest of the Epistles assigned to Paul, and the first of those little books in rhythmic language on which Christianity is based. It was written about A.D. 54, and was carried to Rome in the bosom of Phoebe, a sister in the church of Cenchreæ, just about the time when Nero began his reign in the most auspicious manner.<sup>92</sup> Paul's literary career is compressed into four years. Little wonder it was hurried and breathless.

Paul heard much of Rome from those about him. There were there several brethren who had been driven out of Ephesus, probably in the same disturbances as Paul. Before going there himself he considered he had a duty to accomplish towards the Saints of Jerusalem.

He did not journey this time with a single companion, a single baptized heathen, but with seven ambassadors from the Gentiles, laden with presents from Macedonia, Galatia, and Asia. The rendezvous was at Troas. Thence they sailed to Cæsarea, where they found lodging at the house of a former companion of Stephen and Nicholas, one Philip, whose four maiden daughters were all prophetesses. Ill fortune was foretold them in the spirit by the prophet Agabus from Judæa (Acts xxi. 10).

At Jerusalem Paul was welcomed by James and all the Elders. To fulfil a vow he was rash enough to enter the

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<sup>92</sup> According to the *Chronicon* of Eusebius (ed. Schoene, ii. 155) the procurator Felix was recalled in A.D. 56. Paul was arrested two years later at Jerusalem, and the epistle antedates this by a few months. The present text of the Epistle includes more than a third of additions of the second century.

Temple. Here he was seen by Jews from Asia, who accused him of bringing into the Temple an uncircumcised Christian (Trophimus the Ephesian). Paul was seized, dragged out of the Temple, beaten, knocked down, but saved by the intervention of Roman soldiery, who bore him aloft up the stairs to the castle. He was sent in chains to Cæsarea, whence after two years in prison he was sent to Rome, where we lose sight of him at the moment when he was on the point of being condemned, according to all expectation, to death by Nero's tribunal.

## IV

### THE CRUCIFIED GOD

THE greatest gift of Paul to Christianity was the Cross. Christians had been accustomed to interpret the prophecy of Isaiah that Jesus Christ had died for our sins. The usual notion—you might call it the orthodox interpretation—was suggested by the word *Lamb* in Isa. liii. The earthly temple had its counterpart in Heaven, and the Paschal Lamb has its celestial image in Jesus Christ. He was led to the slaughter in sacrifice, and his blood washes their sins from them who are bathed in it. Such is the picture drawn by John, the authorized prophet of the mother-church of Jerusalem. The Jew would understand how the sacrificial death of the Lord would wash away his sins. This idea would give a new significance to baptism and to the Easter, which thus became interassociated and symbolic of the sacrifice of the Heavenly Lamb. In the general wreck of Jewish rites this preserved the Easter (Paschal) Feast among Christians.

On the whole Paul accepted this interpretation; he reminds the Corinthians at the approach of Easter that “Christ our passover is sacrificed for us” (I Cor. v. 7). For him as for John the shedding of blood brings redemption. In Rom. iii. 25 he calls Jesus a “propitiation” (*ἱλαστήριον*)—*i.e.*, a ritual victim. But meditation on the sacred texts led him to enunciate a new interpretation of unheard-of boldness.

Psalm xxii, depicting the bitter suffering of a believer, might be read as a pendant to the verses of Isaiah on the expiatory slaying of the Servant; all the more since it is followed by xxiv, which describes the triumph of the King of Glory.

Let us with the eyes of a Christian prophet feverishly

seeking for revelation read these two psalms in the Greek version (Ps. xxii. 1–2, 6–8, 12–22: Septuagint):—

O God, my God, look upon me !  
Why hast thou forsaken me? . . .  
O my God, I shall cry in the daytime towards thee,  
And thou shalt hear me not  
In the night and I shall have no oblivion...

I am a worm, not a man,  
Reproach of men, rejected of the people,  
All who see me make mock of me,  
Make mouths at me and shake their heads;  
The Lord was his hope; let Him deliver him,  
Let Him save him since he is vowed to Him...

Numerous bulls have compassed me,  
Fat buffaloes beset me round.  
They have opened their mouths upon me  
As a lion ravening and roaring.

Like water my bones are poured out  
And scattered.  
My heart like wax is melted in my bosom;  
Like potsherd my strength is dried up.  
My tongue cleaves to my jaws;  
To dust of death thou hast brought me down.

For many dogs have compassed me,  
Assembly of rogues have beset me round.  
They have pierced my hands and my feet,  
They have counted all my bones.  
They have looked me over and stared at me;  
They have shared my garments among them,  
On my vesture they have cast lots.

Thou, O Lord, take not away from me thine aid,  
Look to my succour !  
Deliver my soul from the sword  
And from the tearing of the dog my only life.  
Save me from the maw of the lion,  
From the horn of the unicorns my destruction.

I shall recite thy name to my brethren,  
In the midst of the *ekklesia* will I sing it.

Two details must be picked out in particular from this

poignant and fantastic picture<sup>93</sup>: (1) *they have pierced my hands and my feet* and (2) *they have shared my garments among them*; for these evoked a vivid picture of the crucifixion. The Cross which exposed to men's inquisitive gaze the slow death agony of a brother man, which raised his lash-flayed and pierced body in its last tortured convulsions as a spectacle to the populace, is a masterpiece of man's cruelty. Beside it the wheel, the rack, and the stake are mild. The Roman governors and their imitators, the kings, employed it abundantly. Its terror maintained slavery, and for the whole Roman world the thought of it was a horror. Other details in the psalm suggested a non-human, an infernal crucifixion; the bulls, the fat buffaloes, the dogs, and the unicorns.

Two psalms later comes the pæan of an unappreciated king (Psalm xxiv. 7–10 (Septuagint), princes=ἄρχοντες):—

Lift up the gates, O ye Princes!  
Open, ye everlasting doors!  
The King of Glory shall come in.  
Who is this King of Glory?  
The Lord strong and mighty,  
The Lord strong in battle!

Lift up the gates, O ye Princes!  
Open, ye everlasting doors!  
The King of Glory shall come in.  
Who is the King of Glory?  
The Lord of Miracles, it is He,  
He is the King of Glory!

And who are the mysterious Princes to whom the order is given to lift the gates? They obviously do not know the King of Glory, since they ask who he may be.

Paul was obsessed by the idea of an unceasing struggle with Satan and his demons. These two divine revelations had a mystic meaning for him. Jesus Christ, who died for our sins, had been crucified. The demons are the *Princes of this World* (2 Cor. iv. 4); Satan is the God of this World (this Era), who has his principalities (ἀρχαί) and his powers

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<sup>93</sup> Probably it depicted originally the sufferings of a sick man who thought himself a prey to demon torturers.

(Col. ii. 15). They have crucified Him not knowing that He is the Lord of Glory. Compelled to open to Him the Everlasting Doors, they have been made a mock of, are vanquished and overthrown.

A verse in I Cor. shows that this meaning was well known to them (ii. 6-8):—

Wisdom we speak among them that are perfect,  
Wisdom which is not of this World [Time, Era]  
Nor of the *Princes of this World* who are overthrown.

No, we speak the wisdom of God in mystery,  
The Wisdom which is Hidden,  
Which God ordained before the World [the Eras] to our glory;  
Which none of the Princes of this World knew;  
For had they known it  
They had not crucified the Lord of Glory.

The usual title of Lord of Glory is a clear reference to Psalm xxiv. The Princes, the Archontes, who have crucified Jesus are evidently those of the Psalms. Paul teaches moreover, that the crucifixion of Jesus caused the overthrow of the *Principalities* and the *Powers*. In Colossians he tells how

Having spoiled *Principalities* and *Powers*,  
He openly made a show of them,  
Triumphing over them by the Cross. (ii. 15.)<sup>94</sup>

In the *Mystery of Jesus* as Paul teaches it the crucifixion by Devils is an addition to the humiliations and sufferings and death of the Saviour revealed by Isaiah. Jesus Christ was not only the Servant (*παῖς*), but also the slave (*δοῦλος*), for crucifixion is the punishment of slaves. He was not only put to death, but he was also crucified. He was put to death, not as a Lamb, but as a Man. The manner of death is thus emphasized, and is to be read with the description in Enoch of the investiture of the Heavenly Man where the latter receives his title. The uttermost abjection precedes the loftiest elevation. Paul uses similar language in Phil. ii. 6-11:—

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<sup>94</sup> Link αὐτῷ with τῷ σταυρῷ.

Who, being in the form of God,  
Thought it not robbery to be equal with God.<sup>95</sup>  
He disappeared  
And took upon himself the form of a slave,  
Become in the likeness of men.

And being found in fashion as a man  
He humbled himself,  
And became obedient unto death,  
Even the death of the Cross.

Wherefore God hath highly exalted him  
And given him a Name which is above every name;  
That at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow  
Of beings in heaven, in earth and under the earth;  
And that every tongue should confess;  
*Lord Jesus Christ*  
To the Glory of God the Father.<sup>96</sup>

The Holy Name comes from Enoch, and the death on the Cross is Paul's addition.

In spite of such solid support as the two Psalms, the theory that Christ was crucified, an ignoble and repulsive form of death, met with formidable opposition. There was, it is true, nothing in it contrary to the prophecy of Isaiah. It gave meaning to the words "he made his grave with the wicked" (Isa. liii. 9). Paul points out that Christ was "buried," which would not be the case of a sacrificed Lamb. The chief objection was that crucifixion was not a form of sacrifice. No blood was spilt. It was a death penalty; it was more, it was damnation, since it is written in Deuteronomy that he "that is hanged upon a tree is accursed of God" (xxi. 23). This was positively scandalous—to make Christ the Accursed of God!

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<sup>95</sup> Unlike Satan, who would place his throne above the clouds to be the equal of god (*The Book of the Secrets of Enoch*, ed. Morfill; Oxford, 1896; *The Book of Adam*, xv. 3; R.H. Charles, *The Apocr. and the pseudep. of the O.T.*; Oxford, 1913, ii, 137). R.V. "counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God."

<sup>96</sup> In the *Ascension of Isaiah* a similar revelation is made (ed. R.H. Charles; London, 1913). Paul never taught that Jesus appeared in the *flesh*, but only in the form of a man. The words in Col. i. 22 are a later addition; similarly in Rom. i. 3 and Gal. iv. 4. *Vide* "La Première Edition de St. Paul." in *Les Premiers Ecrits du Christianisme* ; Paris and Amsterdam, 1930. *Flesh* for St. Paul had always a depreciatory meaning.

For Paul crucifixion was sacrifice, and he held Christ's blood to have been amply spilt in a proper sacrificial manner (Rom. v. 9). Evidently the sacrifice of the Lamb was still to be seen in the crucifixion by the initiated. As for the formidable obstacle of the Curse of God, Paul was inspired to a remarkable reply. In Deut. xxvii. 26 we read: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not the words of this law to do them." An impossible obligation. Therefore all who feel it a duty to carry out the laws of Moses are accursed. The crucifixion expiates this curse (Gal. iii. 10-13). Christ by his death has "blotted out the writing of ordinances that were against us . . . nailing it to the cross" (Col. ii. 14).

Paul therefore forged from the crucifixion a weapon against the pretensions of the Hebrews. Moreover, he recalls to the Galatians, when they are led away into false paths which lead to circumcision, that he had preached to them the Crucified Christ (Gal. iii. 1). They could not accept the doctrine of the Crucifixion and keep the Mosaic Law at the same time, or, "if righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal. ii. 21). He himself, if he still preached the circumcision, he would no longer preach the crucifixion, and "the scandal of the cross" (Gal. v. 11) would cease. This is the "offence" for which they are persecuted, and it is "only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ" that certain of the Galatians would impose circumcision in the others. Rather than face the obloquy of preaching the crucifixion, they would renounce their Christian freedom. The faithful on the contrary should hold fast to the scandalous Cross, in which is freedom.

Christians of Gentile origin had even greater difficulty than their Hebrew brethren in accepting the crucifixion. The idea of a God on a stake seemed to them absurd, fantastic, and grotesque. Lucian calls it "their empaled sophist" (*De Morte Peregr. ἀπεσκολοπισμένον*). What power could there be in such an extremity of helplessness and shamefulness? How could this Christ save, if the devils of hell could wreck their will on Him thus?

Paul sought an answer in the inmost depths of his religious being. He was himself a "crucified." He had a thorn in



the flesh. He was buffeted by Satan. “We stand in jeopardy every hour... I die daily” (1 Cor. xv. 30–31). He looked upon himself as one of those gladiators condemned to death whose contest and death throes were to be seen in any amphitheatre (1 Cor. iv. 9):—

God, I think, sent us the apostles last  
As it were condemned to death,  
For we are made a spectacle unto the world,  
To angels and to men.<sup>97</sup>

He endures patiently all sorts of privations and humiliations (1 Cor. iv. 11–13):—

Even at this present hour we both hunger and thirst;  
We are in rags, are buffeted and houseless,  
Wearied with the toil of our hands.  
Being reviled, we bless;  
Being persecuted, we suffer it;  
Being defamed, we give consolation.  
We have become as the filth of the world,  
The sweepings of all at this very hour.

In spite of the worst tribulations he and his companions rise undismayed (2 Cor. iv. 8–9):—

On every side attacked, yet not yielding;  
Cornered, but not conquered;  
Pursued, but not overthrown,  
Cast down, but not slain!

Whence did he draw this power which grew greater (at Ephesus) as his sufferings increased? Not of himself, since he was but weakness. It was the greatness of the might of God in him. Out of weakness God breeds strength; from utmost weakness the greatest strength.

Let the Corinthians look to themselves! What are they? Of but little account. Yet God has made them his Elect and through them has confounded the wise (I Cor. i. 26–29):—

Brethren, behold who were called among you?  
Not many wise men after the flesh,  
Not many mighty,  
Not many noble.

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<sup>97</sup> *ἐπιθανατίους*. Tertullian translates it “bestiarios,”

But what the world had foolish, God has chosen  
To confound the wise.  
What the world had weak, God has chosen  
To confound the strong.

What was base and despised<sup>98</sup> in the world,  
God chose, even what is not,  
To bring to nought what is;  
That no flesh should glory in his presence.

They would then understand easily that the foolishness of God is of greater wisdom than men; and the weakness of God of greater might than men. No doubt Jesus Christ was crucified in his *weakness*, but “he liveth by the power of God” (2 Cor. xiii. 4). In the balance against his sufferings must be weighed his glory. The Devils thought him vanquished on the Cross. But by the Cross he overthrew them, plundered them of their power, and made them nought. Having passed through the portals of death by the Cross, he has been invested with the Name of Power before which all bow the knee, those above the earth, on the earth, and under the earth. By the Cross alone and its infinite pain and its profound shame was he enabled to conquer sin and death and save us. The Cross of Jesus, which appeared to ignorant men a sign of feebleness and folly, is the most potent and most profound plan of Almighty God (1 Cor. i. 18, 22–24):—

The preaching of the Cross is foolishness to them that perish;  
For us who are saved, it is the power of God...  
For the Jews require a *sign*,  
And the Greeks seek after *wisdom*,  
We, we preach Christ Crucified,  
To the Jews a *scandal*, to the Greeks *folly*,  
But to the Elect, both Jew and Pagan,  
Christ, the *power* of God and the *wisdom* of God.

Humanly speaking, the crucifixion of Christ is the projection on to the divine plane of the tortured life of Paul. If such a novel and such a shocking picture of a god had

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<sup>98</sup> “Despised rabble,” a strong expression.

value, it was because it had its origin in a very vivid and intense experience of suffering.

The mystic union of Paul and the Crucified is pushed as far as identification with the God. In Paul's mind Jesus was not He Who Has Been Crucified (*ὁ σταυρωθείς*), but He Who Is Always Crucified (*ὁ ἑσταυρωμένος*), in whom the Cross is a living source of power. Paul suffers on the Cross of Christ, "I am crucified with Christ . . . I do not live, Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20). On this Cross bearing both Jesus and Paul, what is brought to nothingness? The Law of Moses, of course: sin, death, the flesh with its emotions, the world. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. v. 24). "By the cross of Jesus the world is crucified to me and I unto the world" (Gal. vi. 14). "...Our old man has been crucified that the body of sin might be destroyed" (Rom. vi. 6).<sup>99</sup> This is the everlasting crucifixion in which the fleshly and sinful body is ever being destroyed and the invisible body of glory is ever being formed.

Baptism initiates the believer to the union on the Cross. To be baptized is to be plunged into death with Christ, to be buried with him, to rise again with him. The world, the flesh, sin, and law are left in the tomb. The Christian no longer lives in the world or in the flesh. Paul says to the Colossians (iii. 5; ii. 11-12): "Ye have put to death your members which are upon the earth... Ye are circumcised by the circumcision which is not of the hand of man by putting off the body of the flesh, the circumcision of Christ. Buried with him in baptism, in him also ye have risen again." Having put on the body of Christ, the initiate knows henceforward "the power of the resurrection and the fellowship of suffering, in taking the form of his death" (Phil. iii. 10). By the union complete with Christ, the mystic shall taste the newness of life hidden with Christ in God till Christ "shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. iii. 4).

The lofty mysticism of Paul can be understood only by placing on a non-temporal plane the life of Jesus with the

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<sup>99</sup> Vide J. Schneider, *Die Passionsmystik des Paulus*; Leipzig, 1929.

crucifixion, the burial, and the resurrection. These holy deeds have not been done once and for ever. They are eternal, neither of yesterday, to-day, nor tomorrow. Their doing will never cease till the Last Coming. They are coexistent in a changeless present.

Differentiation of personality is also abolished in the mystic union; Paul suffers with Jesus, Jesus with Paul. "The sufferings of Christ abound in us," said Paul to the Corinthians (2 Cor. i. 5):—

Everywhere we bear with us in the body the dying of Jesus,  
So that the life of Jesus  
May be made manifest in our body (2 Cor. iv. 10).

Paul speaks to the Galatians of the scars of Jesus on his body ("the marks of the Lord Jesus," Gal. vi. 17), and to the Colossians he sends the following astonishing words (Col. i. 24):—

I now rejoice in my sufferings for you  
And I complete what was lacking in the afflictions of Christ  
In my flesh, for his body,  
Which is the church.

The peaceful Colossians did not apparently realize the sufferings of Christ sufficiently; whereas Paul realized them to excess. Everything is in equilibrium in the body of Christ, which is the Community of Saints. Jesus, Paul, and the Church have but one agony on a single cross.

Paul opened the doors of the future to Christianity with the Cross of Jesus. The first wave of enthusiasm for the new religion was to die out in disappointment; the Last Coming was long delayed. Humanity is occasionally seized with fits of wild hope such as this. The doctrine of the Cross fitted with the inmost needs of the human heart, and was destined to capture innumerable souls and to hold them therefore without ever satiating their longings. A Crucified God, who was not only put to death, but also suffered with all humanity, whose humiliation, abnegation, and love surpassed all that man could suffer, offered a new realm to religious fervour and

discovered a limitless ocean of emotions, an infinity of sacrifices, a heaven of consolation. The Saint Bernards would count the wounds of Christ, the Saint Francises bear the stigmata, the Luthers sweep away all that is not of the Cross, the Pascals perceive the drop of blood which has been spilt for them, and the Bachs render in music the passion of the Crucified. Over half the earth to-day, on public buildings, temples, tombs, at crossroads, wherever a cross is raised, is a monument to the religious genius of St. Paul.

The stumbling-block of the Jews, the foolishness of the Greeks, Christ Crucified was proclaimed by Paul with feverish speed. He felt that if he halted, the Cross would be "made of none effect" (I Cor. i. 17). Tears came to his eyes when he learned that among the Christians at Philippi there were "enemies of the Cross of Christ" (Phil. iii. 18). He could explain their obstinacy only by their fleshly appetites. Among the Corinthians, puffed up with knowledge, he had thought at first to know Jesus and Jesus Crucified only. Nevertheless he realized that the doctrine of the Cross was not suitable for all to begin with. In his letter to the Thessalonians, new Christians, there is not a word of the Cross. When he is seeking out common ground with Jerusalem and a symbol of the Christian faith, he does not refer to the crucifixion. Instead of the sufferings of the Crucified he contemplates only the glory of the Heavenly Man (I Cor. xv. 3, 45-49).

The teaching of the Cross was not accepted immediately by all. There is no mention of it in the Apocalypse. It would require the passing of two more generations before the Christian world was to accept the invaluable gift which Paul had made it.

## V

### THE SACRIFICED LAMB

THE destiny of Christianity was dependent on the ultimate solution of that urgent problem—on what conditions were the heathen to be admitted into the *ekklesia*? This was the matter that set Paul and the Jerusalem party at loggerheads. Now that Paul, through the mediation of the converted pagan, Titus, was turning towards Jerusalem, Jerusalem, in its turn, was showing a readiness to be less exacting.

There was no longer question of circumcising the former heathen, as there had been when Paul had indited his furious letter to the Galatians. In place of such extremes, a compromise was put forward—that the converts from heathenism should submit to the law of Noah for the whole human race, which forbade idolatry and the consumption of meat containing blood.

When Paul came to Jerusalem, to be arrested in the Temple and lose his liberty, James and the Elders made known to him that, after due deliberation, they had commanded believers of pagan origin “that they keep themselves from meat offered to idols, from blood, from the flesh of strangled animals, and from fornication” (Acts xxi. 25).<sup>100</sup> A formula had been found, which should unite Antioch and Jerusalem in an edict to Christians converted from paganism. The text is to be found in Acts xv. 23–29, in which, however, against all verisimilitude, Paul has been brought in as one of the authors by antedating both the discussion and the edict:—

The apostles and the elder brethren  
To the brethren in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia,

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<sup>100</sup> This notification is made to Paul as something new, in contradiction with Acts xv. 2 and 22, according to which Paul took part in the formulation of the decree of Jerusalem. Such participation is also in contradiction with the Epistles.

Who are of the Gentiles,  
Greeting!

Since we have heard that certain of ours  
Have gone to trouble you with words,  
Subverting your souls,  
To whom we had given no commandment,

We gave decided with one accord  
To send chosen men to you...  
We send you therefore Judas and Silas  
Who will explain to you by mouth what follows.

It has been decided by the Holy Ghost and by us  
To lay upon you no further burden  
Than these necessary things;  
That you abstain from meats offered to idols,  
From blood, from flesh strangled, and from fornication.

If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well.  
Fare well.<sup>101</sup>

Meat offered to idols, blood, and strangled flesh are three variants of the prohibition of blood laid down by Jahweh on the seed of Noah. Fornication means, not merely debauch, but marriages between Christian and pagan.

We do not know whether Paul, in his utter submission, went so far as to subscribe to the Jerusalem edict. We have nothing from his pen after the moment when he learned of it, and his activity was immediately limited by imprisonment. But the communities which he had founded in Asia and those which had been influenced by him did not submit. They continued to do as they had been doing: to buy meat in the market without caring whether it had been duly bled or whether it had been offered up to idols. They did not cease to tolerate marriages between Christians and pagans. The authorities at Jerusalem scornfully called them Nicolaitanes, treated them as rebels worse than heathen, excommunicated them, and vowed them to early extermination by the sword of Jesus.

In the meantime the haughty Mother Church was struck

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<sup>101</sup> The mention of Barnabas and Paul in verse 25 is an interpolation, and the whole passage is out of its place. The Jerusalem decree should probably be placed a little before Paul's last journey to Jerusalem.

by an earthly sword: In the stormy year which preceded the Jewish insurrection, three “pillars” were taken from Jerusalem. About 62, after the death of the procurator Festus and before the arrival of his successor, James, the “brother of the Lord,” the camel of piety, was, together with others accused by the high priest Ananos as a law-breaker condemned, and stoned.<sup>102</sup> Kephas-Peter, the first to behold Jesus, perished at Rome, probably in the massacre of the Christians after the fire of Rome in 64. At Rome, too, died his adversary who had in former days impeached and mocked him so vigorously, Paul. Nothing is known of their deaths, save perhaps that jealousy and discord among the Christians brought them about.<sup>103</sup> As for John, the third pillar, he quitted Jerusalem, as it had become impossible for Christians to live there, and went soon after 64 to Patmos, an isle of exile, not far from Ephesus, where he fulminated against Rome, the harlot, the murderess of prophets and saints. The rest of the glorious community of Jerusalem was warned by a revelation given to its last prophets to leave the city before the war. They hid in Perea in the Greek commune of Pella (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccles.*, iii. 5, 3) and later on established in Basanitide the Ebionite sect which fanatically kept the traditions of James.

About 65 the three who had individually seen the Lord Jesus—Peter, James, and Paul—were all dead. Of those who had beheld him as one of a group, John alone survived. He is the Great Witness, the supreme warrant of the advent of the Lord. It was firmly believed that he would not die until Jesus should come.<sup>104</sup> He is then the prophet whose authority outweighs all other authority. In him is concentrated the hope and the ground for hope of that body of elect in which Jesus was revealed. He appears as the high priest of the Christians, and, like the high priest of Jews, he

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<sup>102</sup> Josephus, *Antiq.* .. xx. 197 and 199–203; the words “brother of Jesus called the Christ” have been added later by a Christian hand.

<sup>103</sup> Clemens Romanus, v. That there was jealousy and discord has been decisively shown by O. Cullmann, *Rev. d’Hist. et de Philosophie relig.*, 1930, pp. 294–300.

<sup>104</sup> John xxi. 23, “Then went this saying abroad among the brethren that that disciple would not die.” This passage at once is evidence of the belief and masks the disconcerting effect of John’s death.



wore a golden pectoral.<sup>105</sup> He it was who moved the seat of the new religion to Asia Minor and rallied round him the Asiatic churches which forgot the teaching of Paul. First came Ephesus, where Paul had never really gained a footing, then Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, all about the principal road going round the province. He stiffens their courage and warms their faith. He awaits the extermination of the Nicolaitanes at the hands of Jesus and preaches a sublime revelation in favour of the orthodox *ekklesia*—those who obeyed the Jerusalem edict, which pictured the final catastrophe which was to engulf mankind, the Day of Doom, the imminence of which was an article of faith.

Thirty years earlier he had beheld, in company with his brother, that vision of the Lord which all the Twelve had seen. In the little Grecian island of Patmos, fourteen hours by sea from Ephesus, whither he had come bearing words of prophecy, he saw Jesus, he alone, as aforetime Peter and James had seen him, and as Paul said he had seen him. From him he received the vision of what was to come.

He described this vision in prophetic style; it is the Revelation of St. John the Divine. It differs from the apocalypses of the Jews in that it was not attributed to a legendary and fictitious person, but from the beginning is of John himself.<sup>106</sup> What he himself has seen and heard is the subject of his book. He is in the line of the great prophets of Israel, and is himself, after St. Paul, the greatest of Christian prophets. His prophecy is called rightly an Apocalypse, for its object is to reveal the imminent coming of the Son of Man and the drama of the Day of Doom. These mysteries, which in Paul occupy small place, form the whole of the message of John.

John's religious genius is not as profound as that of Paul, nor is his prophetic style so varied, so supple, or so near the

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<sup>105</sup> Polycrates of Ephesus, in Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, v. 24, 3. James before him had worn at Jerusalem the *petalon* of gold, insignia of a high priest (Epiphanius, *Hær.*, xxx).

<sup>106</sup> The identification of John the author of the Revelation with John the Apostle is based on the evidence, among others, of Justin who lived at Ephesus about 135 (Dialogue 81).

heart. Nor in his invention is there anything so startling and affecting as the Cross of Jesus. He creates little that is new, but re-creates with greater intensity the grandiose images of the old Hebrews; for, though he wrote Greek, he thought Hebrew, and his language has a harsh, unyielding stiffness which is foreign to Hellas. On the other hand, his is a Hebrew majesty, compactness, and brilliance of word, a splendour which is over-long-drawn and over-remote, but quick with energy and of concentrated effect. Not his the pity which moves the bowels, but the starkness which grips the imagination. The gifts of a great poet are to be found in this work, where the blast of the trumpet is mingled with the soft notes of the cithara. As an eagle, he soars and pierces with his eye the infinite abyss; heaven and earth open before him in the final cataclysm.

The Jesus poem of which Paul had made a brief but surprising divine tragedy, in which abysmal dejection precedes supreme exaltation, in John's hands becomes a pageant of glory, moving to successive triumphs.

Death is the Christ's first victory. Nothing here of ignominy or tormented agony; a ritual sacrifice made before the beginning of the world, a celestial prototype of the Easter offering, the primordial sacrifice of the male lamb.

This sacrifice of the Lamb Jesus before the ages, like that of the Mithraic Bull, redeems through its expiatory virtue, and purifies the predestined. Through the blood of the Lamb, the elect are freed from their sins and their garments are whitened. Just as Jesus is the Lamb of the Sacrifice, so are they too an *offering*, and for that reason must be *without a stain*. Immaculate, they will be the everlasting companions of the Lamb;<sup>107</sup> a conception which is at once sublime and balanced. To the religious mind of the day, a sacrificial death alone had the power to redeem. Paul's idea of a crucifixion preserved, though without proper grounds for it, the character of a sacrificial shedding of blood in a manner which shows that it has been superimposed on the more ancient conception of a sacrifice before the beginning of time such as is presented in Revelation.

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<sup>107</sup> Rev. i. 5; vii. 14; xiv. 1-5.

Behind the whole of John's poem is an array of sacerdotal notions. Jesus is at one and the same time the Sacrifice and the Sacrificing Priest, and the holy priest and the hallowed victim are united in a single divine entity. That is why he appears to John as a heavenly priest, wearing the long robe of the Jewish high priest and the gold pectoral such as John wore, the high priest of New Israel (Rev. i. 10–18):—

I was in the Spirit on the day of the Lord.  
I heard behind me a great voice  
As of a trumpet saying:

I turned to see the voice which spoke to me.  
Having turned, I saw seven Candlesticks of gold;  
In the midst of the candlesticks one like a Son of Man,  
Robed in a garment which fell to the feet,  
Girded about the breasts with a golden girdle.

His head and his hair white,  
Like white wool, like snow,  
His eyes like flame of fire.

His feet like white gold,<sup>108</sup>  
As though red in the furnace,  
His voice as the sound of many torrents.<sup>109</sup>

In his hand seven Stars,  
From his mouth sprang a keen two-edged Sword.<sup>110</sup>  
His countenance was as the sun in its strength.

When I saw him,  
I fell at his feet as dead.  
He laid his hand on me, saying:

Fear not; I am the First and the Last,<sup>111</sup>  
The Living One, and I was dead.  
Lo, I live for ever and for ever:  
I hold the keys of Death and of Hell.

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<sup>108</sup> Description of Jahweh in Ezekiel (i. 27).

<sup>109</sup> The voice of Jahweh in Ezekiel (xliii. 2).

<sup>110</sup> Like the mouth of the Servant of Jahweh (Isa. xlix. 2). With this sword Jesus will strike the Nicolaitanes (Rev. ii. 16) and the pagans (Rev. xix. 15).

<sup>111</sup> See Isa. xlv. 6; xlviii. 12. Jesus has the same attributes as Jahweh, thus resembling the Metatron or Little Jahweh, of the Hebrew Book of Enoch (H. Odeberg, Cambridge, 1928), who shares the throne and glory of Jahweh and bears his name (cf. Exod. xxiii. 21).

Before he draws aside the veil of the future from before the eyes of his prophet, Jesus gives the seven churches of Asia a last warning. Each church has its heavenly double, an angel who is a star in Jesus's hand, and each receives its share of praise and blame.

The angel of the church of Ephesus derives merit because it has declared to be liars those who, like Paul, claimed to be apostles without having any right to the title; this is John's counterblast to Paul's angry letter written to the Corinthians from Ephesus. This church, though it has withstood many a trial well, has become lax; however, it hates the Nicolaitanes and all their works, and this holy hate will save it (Rev. ii. 2-6):—

I know thy works,  
Thy labour, thy patience,  
And that thou canst not tolerate the wicked.

Thou didst try them who call themselves Apostles.  
They are not—  
Thou didst find them to be liars.

Thou hast patience,  
Thou didst hold fast to My Name,  
Thou art not wearied.

But I have against thee  
That thou hast abandoned thy first love.  
Remember therefore whence thou art fallen!  
Repent!  
Do thy first works!

If not, I SHALL COME upon thee:  
I shall tear thy Candlestick from its place<sup>112</sup>  
If thou dost not repent.

But thou hast for thee  
That thou hatest the work of the Nicolaitanes,  
Which I also hate.

The angel of the church of Pergamus has been contaminated by the Nicolaitanes (Rev. ii. 14-16):—

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<sup>112</sup> Each *ekklesia* is a golden candlestick (i, 20) and to tear one from its place means to suppress it.

But I have somewhat against thee:  
Thou hast there some who follow the teaching of Balaam.<sup>113</sup>  
Who taught Balak<sup>114</sup>  
To cause the children of Israel to stumble,  
Even to eat the flesh offered to idols  
And to fornicate.  
Thou hast also them  
Who follow the similar teaching of the Nicolaitanes.<sup>115</sup>

Repent therefore,  
Or else I COME QUICKLY upon thee,  
I shall fight them with the Sword of my mouth.

At Thyatira—a small town with a market and a garrison—the state of things is worse. A prophetess is leading the church into vile ways—those of the teaching of Paul. As did Paul, so does she claim to know *the deep things of God*, which are truly the depths of Satan. Those who withstand her seem to be in a minority and to need encouragement (Rev. ii. 20–25):—

But I have this against thee  
That thou sufferest the woman Jezebel:<sup>116</sup>  
Who calls herself a Prophetess;  
She teaches my Servants whom she dupes  
To fornicate and eat of meats sacrificed to idols.  
I gave her time to repent;  
She will not repent of her prostitution.

Behold I will cast her on to the Bed,<sup>117</sup>  
And her adulterous lovers into great torment,  
If they do not repent of their works.

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<sup>113</sup> The famous seer (Num. xxxi. 16) became in Jewish legend the type of the false prophet (Josephus, *Ant.*, IV. vi. 6). The name Balaam (*he has destroyed the people*) is likened by a play on words to Nicolaos (*he conquers the people*).

<sup>114</sup> King of Moab. Philo says (*Life of Moses*, i. 53–55) that Balaam perverted Balak.

<sup>115</sup> Paul was indifferent to the eating of meat which had been offered to idols (I Cor. viii. 4, 8; x. 25–27), which John calls fornication.

<sup>116</sup> Means a woman who, like the wife of Ahab, entices the faithful to idols. A woman of Thyatira, Lydia, a seller of purple, *fearing God*, who had lately come to Philippi, was a strong partisan of Paul and his companions (Acts xvi. 14–15). She is probably the Jezebel here denounced by John.

<sup>117</sup> The Bed of the pain of death (Isa. l. 11).

Her children, I shall slay them with an evil death.  
All the Churches shall know  
That I am He who searches reins and hearts;<sup>118</sup>  
I will give to each one of you according to your works.

But I say to you, to the others of Thyatira,  
To all those who have not this doctrine,  
Who have not known the *Depths* of Satan,  
As they say.<sup>119</sup>  
I lay upon you none other burden.<sup>120</sup>  
But to him whom you have hold fast  
Till I COME.

One wonders what became of that woman of Thyatira Lydia, the seller of purple whom Paul converted at Philippi who gave to the brethren the hospitality of her house. Did she return to her own country? She is not mentioned among the Christians of Philippi in Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians. Did, then, Paul's kind hostess become John's Jezebel?

"I lay upon you none other burden" is the divine ratification, from the mouth of the god Jesus himself, of the Jerusalem decree which placed on Christians who were not of Jewish origin *no other burden* than the three prohibitions as to food and the tabu of fornication. No doubt it is hard to refrain from meat as commonly sold, particularly when the disciples of Nicolaos teach otherwise. Yet all must hold fast to right teaching till the coming of Jesus ; then "no thing shall any longer be forbidden" (Rev. xxii. 3). Till that day the Nicolaitanes must be striven with to the death.

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<sup>118</sup> According to Jer. xvii. 10, this is Jahweh. For the Jews the reins were the seat of the passions, the heart that of thought.

<sup>119</sup> Paul says (I Cor. ii. 10) : "For the Spirit searcheth all things—yea, the *deep things* of God." John says sarcastically "the *Depths* of Satan."

<sup>120</sup> Meaning observance. The decree of Jerusalem (Acts xv. 28–29), promulgated by the Apostles and Elders of whom John was one, orders the observances to be imposed on converted pagans thus: "For it seemeth good to the Holy Ghost and to us *to lay upon, you no other burden* than those which are indispensable; that you abstain *from meats offered to idols*, from blood, from things strangled, and from fornication." The agreement between the Decree of Jerusalem and Revelation, in the expressions *lay a burden* and the forbidding of *meats offered to idols* and of *fornication*, is striking.

The general idea we thus gain of the churches is one of laxness, of small heroism which must be spurred on to something greater, of still possible repentance. That is the picture of things as they are. Now for things as they are shortly to be.

The prophet is wafted from earth to heaven, where, in a dazzling blaze of gems and lightning, he beholds the Eternal and Formless God (Rev. iv. 2-6):—

Behold a Throne was set in heaven;  
On the Throne was One seated.

He who was seated was in aspect as a Jasper and a Sardius;  
A Rainbow round about the Throne  
In sight like an Emerald.

About the Throne were four-and-twenty thrones;  
On the thrones were sitting four-and-twenty Elders,  
Clothed in white raiment,  
On their heads crowns of gold.

Out of the Throne came lightnings  
And the crash of thunder.  
Seven Torches of Fire burned before the Throne  
Who are the Seven Spirits of God.  
Before the Throne a sea of glass  
Like a crystal.

In such a setting abides Jesus, for ever and ever sharing God's throne. He is now to be described.

John is present at the mysterious liturgy which comes before the great drama. A scroll sealed with seven seals is in God's hand. None in heaven, nor on earth, nor in hell, can open it. Further on its name is given as the Book of Life, the Book of the Slain Lamb.<sup>121</sup> This is the complete record in which the names of the elect are inscribed since the beginning of the world. When the seven seals are opened, the judgment will begin. Jesus alone can open them for to him belong the elect. Before the ages he redeemed them with his blood. He is the Sacrificed Lamb of Isaiah, the ram

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<sup>121</sup> Rev. xiii. 8 (the Book of the Life of the Lamb); xvii. 8; xx.12 (the Book of Life).

“slain from the beginning of the world” (Rev. xiii. 8; cf. I Peter i. 20: “foreordained before the foundation of the world,” a corrective to John). He appears in the midst of God’s throne (Rev. v. 6):—

I saw in the midst of the Throne and of the four Cherubim,  
In the midst of the Elders,  
A Lamb, as though slain,  
With Seven Horns and Seven Eyes,  
Who are the seven Spirits of God  
Sent forth into all the Earth.

The shape of the Lamb is the eternal shape of Jesus. In heaven he is the divine Ram, as Jahweh was originally a divine Bull. The Lamb takes the Book to the sound of a new song (Rev. v. 9–10):—

Thou hast the power to take the Scroll  
And to open the Seals of it,  
Because thou wast sacrificed,  
And bought for God with thy blood  
Men of every tribe, speech, nation, and race,  
Whom thou hast made for our God a Kingdom of priests,  
Who shall reign on Earth.

While the first six seals are being opened, warning events take place (Rev. vi. 1):—

I SAW the Lamb open one of the seven Seals;  
I HEARD one of the four Cherubim  
Say in a voice of thunder,  
Come!

I SAW; behold a white horse;  
He who rode him  
Held a Bow.  
To him was given a Crown:  
He went forth a conqueror to conquer.

After the conqueror come a red horse, a black horse, green horse; their riders are war, famine, and pestilence. The martyrs of old whose souls are beneath the heavenly



altar cry out to God for vengeance. They are first garbed in the white raiment which is their body of glory. Then a first quaking of the heavens will terrify mankind. After which an angel will mark the brows of the hundred and forty-four thousand elect with the sign which will protect them from the countless demons who are to be let loose. But a short while and a host of the elect rise to heaven, in their hands the palms of victory and about them their everlasting robes; these are the blessed who will die martyred in the great Torment which is soon to sweep across the world (Rev. vii. 14–17):—

They come from the Great Trial.<sup>122</sup>  
They have washed their robes,  
Have made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Therefore they are before the Throne of God;  
They serve him day and night in his Temple.  
He Who sits upon the Throne  
Shall dwell among them.

They shall hunger no more,  
They shall thirst no more,  
Nor shall the sun overwhelm them  
Nor the heat.

For the Lamb which is in the midst of the Throne  
Shall be their Shepherd.  
He shall lead them to the Fountains of Life.<sup>123</sup>  
God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.<sup>124</sup>

These first visions, strange but beautiful, sound a note of consolation. They assure to the elect the reality of their salvation by the blood of the Lamb.

Now the descriptions of the great Doom foretold by Daniel sweep through a crescendo of dread and sacred horror, a trial such as no man ever dreamed, not even for the saints (Rev. viii. 1–6):—

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<sup>122</sup> The Time of Distress which, according to Daniel, will precede the End (Dan. xii. 1).

<sup>123</sup> They are the Exiles returned to Jerusalem of the prophecy of Isaiah (Isaiah xlix. 10): "*They shall not hunger nor thirst... Jahweh shall guide them by the springs,*" The Lamb takes the place of Jahweh again.

<sup>124</sup> At the great feast prepared for all the nations (Isa. xxv. 6–8).

When he opened the seventh Seal  
There was a silence  
As it were half an hour.<sup>125</sup>  
I SAW the seven Angels,  
Who stand before God.<sup>126</sup>  
To them were given seven Trumpets.<sup>127</sup>

Another Angel came  
And stood before the Altar  
Holding a golden Scoop.  
Heaps of incense were given him  
To offer up with the prayers of the Saints  
On the golden Altar which is before the Throne.

Rose up the smoke of the incense  
With the prayers of the Saints<sup>128</sup>  
Out of the Angel's hand, in the presence of God.  
The Angel took the Scoop.  
He filled it with fire of the Altar  
And cast it on the Earth.<sup>129</sup>  
There were thunders and lightnings,  
Din, earthquakes.  
The seven Angels who held the seven Trumpets  
Prepared to sound.

As on the Hebrew New Year's day, the Day of God's New Age is hallowed in by trumpet blasts. At the first four fire falls from heaven and ravages the earth in four manners. At the sound of the last three an eagle at the highest point of heaven will shriek, "Malediction!" thrice. Twice the saints shall be spared, but the third time they will be assailed and overcome.

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<sup>125</sup> The eternal liturgy of the angels is interrupted to let the prayers of the Saints mount to heaven. The breaking of the seventh seal allows the Book to be opened. The introduction is completed. Everything is ready for the End of the World.

<sup>126</sup> Enoch xx. 7 calls them Archangels and gives their names.

<sup>127</sup> The horns and trumpets which, according to Joel (ii. 1), announce the coming of the Day of Jahweh, just as the holy trumpets announce New Year's Day, the festival of Jahweh the King.

<sup>128</sup> The prayers of the saints who have just appeared in heaven are added to those of the slain martyrs (Rev. vi. 10). They ask for the End of the World, just as in Enoch xlvi. 2.

<sup>129</sup> As the angel in Ezekiel x. 2. throws red-hot coals from heaven on Jerusalem.

As the eagle cries “Malediction” twice, swarms of demons like locust-scorpions, legions of demons, with fiery breath, torture and massacre the heathen. But so great will their blindness be that they will not refrain even then from worshipping demons, nor will they repent.

Then comes the most poignant revelation-the slaughter of the saints. At this point the prophet sees and hears a mighty angel swear by God that at the seventh trumpet, which will sound for the trial of the saints,

The Mystery of God shall be accomplished,  
As he gave the Gospel  
To his Servants the Prophets (Rev. x. 7).

For John, as for Paul, the *good tidings*, the evangel, is the revelation of God’s mystery. This for Paul is the abasement and exaltation of Jesus, for John it is the defeat and the triumph of the blessed.

To enable him to foretell the last stage, John obtains from the mighty angel a little book which he eats, as Ezekiel did. Whereon he pictures the vision of the last trial.

This, as Daniel foretold, will last three and a half years, half a week of years. During these three and a half years Jerusalem will be in the hands of the heathen, who will tread it beneath their feet. The Temple alone will be free from their soiling. Two prophets garbed in horsehair will test the inhabitants by the same plagues as those with which Moses tormented Egypt. Slain by the pagan, abandoned unburied, they will rise again and go up to heaven.<sup>130</sup> The tenth part of Jerusalem will fall into ruins, seven thousand men will perish, and the rest, in their terror, will be converted. The best Jews will thus be saved.

In heaven a marvellous event takes place. That he may judge the world, the heavenly Lamb must take the shape of a man, the Son of Man, in which form Daniel saw him. He must therefore be born by a celestial female.

In heaven there is a semi-divine being who is at one and the same time the Mother and the Bride of Jesus. This

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<sup>130</sup> It is to be noted that it will not be Jesus who will be put to death and rise again, but the two he sends as his witnesses.

woman is the celestial double of the community of saints, and is at the same time a City of Diamond, the New Jerusalem. In heaven there is also the Old Enemy of God and Jesus, the great Red Dragon which personifies Chaos, and is Satan. Jesus will be born of the woman to become the brother of the Elect, and the Dragon will seek to devour him (Rev. xii. 1-6):—

A great Wonder appeared in Heaven;  
A Woman clothed in the Sun,  
The Moon at her feet,  
On her head a Crown of twelve Stars.

She is big with child,  
She cries with the pain  
And torment of travail.

Another Wonder appeared in the heaven;  
Behold a great red Dragon  
With seven Heads and ten Horns,  
On his Head seven Crowns,  
His tail swept the third part of the Stars of Heaven.  
It cast them to earth.

The Dragon stood  
Before the Woman about to be delivered.  
He would devour her Child  
As soon as it was born.

She brought forth a Man child  
Who is to rule all the Peoples with a Rod of iron.  
The Child was caught up  
To God and his Throne.

The Woman fled into the Wilderness,  
Where she has a place prepared of God,  
Where she shall be fed twelve hundred and sixty days.

After 1260 days (three and a half years) of the great trial the woman goes up into the wilderness, like the Bride in the Song of Songs, to be the Bride of the Lamb.

The Dragon Satan is the counterpart in Revelation of the Archontes in Paul, the demons who crucify Jesus. But in the Apocalypse Satan cannot lay hands on Jesus, not even for a short while. He is driven out of heaven and cast down

on to earth. He has no power over Jesus, but he has over the other children of the Woman, the faithful followers and brethren of Jesus (Rev. xii. 7–9):—

There was war in heaven:  
Michael and his Angels  
Fought against the Dragon.  
The Dragon fought,  
His Angels also,  
He did not prevail:  
They found no longer a place in Heaven.

He was cast out, the great Dragon,  
The old Serpent,  
Called the Devil and Satan  
Who dupes the whole world,  
He was cast down to the Earth,  
His angels were cast out with him.

For three and a half years Satan, expelled from heaven, will lay waste the earth. He will have power to overcome and to slay, through his officers, the saints of the earth. On earth there are two Satanic powers, infernal counterparts of Jesus and the Woman, the Beast and the Whore (Rev. xiii. 1):—

I SAW rise up out of the Sea a Beast  
With ten Horns and seven Heads.  
On the Horns ten Crowns,  
On the Heads Names of blasphemies.<sup>131</sup>

These names, which are in themselves blasphemies against God, are those of false gods. The Beast is then the sum of those demons who on earth pass for gods, and therefore blaspheme the only god. One head—*i.e.*, one such pagan god—attracts special attention, so much so as to be taken for the whole Beast (Rev. xiii. 3):—

One of its heads was wounded as though sacrificed to death:  
Its deadly wound was healed.<sup>132</sup>

Such sacrifice and resurrection parody Jesus, and also God

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<sup>131</sup> The ten Crowned Horns come from Dan. vii. 7 and the Seven Heads represent the number of the False Gods.

<sup>132</sup> A wound made by a knife (xiii. 14).

by the mystic formula which explains his action. God is He *who is, who was, and who is to come* (Rev. i. 4 and 8). The Beast is He *who was, is not, and will ascend from the Abyss, the home of demons, or He who was, is not, and shall be present* (Rev. xvii. 8):—

The Beast which thou hast seen  
Was, Is Not, and Will Ascend from the Abyss.  
It goes to destroy.  
The dwellers on the earth shall wonder,  
They whose names are not written in the Book of Life  
From the beginning of the World,  
When they see the Beast  
For that He Was, Is Not, and Shall Be Present.

Ascension (*anabasis*) and presence (*parousia*) were technical terms of pagan mysteries. Here, then, is a reference to a god who in his mysteries disappears in death, then ascends, and is present. Who can he be? His name, which will be tattooed on the brows and hands of his followers, is given in a cryptogram so that the blasphemy may not soil the lips of the true believer (Rev. xiii. 18):—

Here is wisdom.  
Let him who has understanding  
Calculate the number of the Beast,  
For it is the number of a man<sup>133</sup>  
Its Number is *six hundred and sixteen*.<sup>134</sup>

616 is the sum of the letters of the dative of Attis (ATTEI),<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> *I.e.*, that a man can calculate; cf. "measure of a man,"—*i.e.*, one employed by men (xxi. 17).

<sup>134</sup> The figure 616 is given by one of the two best MSS. (C), by the old Latin version of Tyconius, and by an old Armenian text. Irenæus knew of it, though he did not adopt it; Jerome did adopt it (*De Monogrammate*; ed. G. Morin). It is probably the original. In many MSS. the number 666 is given, substituted either by analogy with that of Jesus, 888 (Deismann), or because it is a triangular number. (See Van den Berg van Eysinga, *La Littérature Chrétienne Primitive*; Paris, 1926, p. 201.)

<sup>135</sup> The dative is the case required for a votive inscription such as would be inscribed on the forehead or the hand. Isaiah foretold that the heathen would inscribe on their hands *To Jahweh*. The figure 666 corresponds to the accusative. See *The Book of Revelation*; Watts, London, 1932, p. 146. The identification of the Beast with Attis and of the Whore with Cybele is due to R. Stahl.

the name which would be written on the brows and the hands of the initiates. Jesus's rival is the Phrygian god who each year was wounded to death with a knife of flint and who, in his mysteries, dies and rises again, and thus *was, is not, and ascends, or is present*, the god whose annual festival the Emperor Claudius made official throughout the Empire.

Lo, a red and hideous couple! The Beast carries on his back the Whore, infernal rival of the Woman of Heaven (Rev. xvii. 3–5):—

I SAW a Woman  
Seated on a scarlet Beast  
Full of the Names of blasphemies,  
With seven Heads and ten Horns.

The Woman was clothed in purple and scarlet,  
Decked with gold, with precious stones and pearls,  
Holding in her hand a Cup of gold  
Full of abominations;  
The filthiness of her fornication.

A Name written on her forehead, a Mystery,  
*Babylon the great mother*  
*Of Harlots and Abominations* of the Earth.

The mystery of this name is not impenetrable. “Abominations” is the classic term in the Bible for heathen deities.<sup>136</sup> “Harlots” similarly is the elegant biblical way of referring to heathen goddesses. The Great Mother of the Gods (*Magna Mater Deum*) is the official name of Cybele in the Roman religion. The Woman seated on the Beast is as Cybele seated on the Lion, and holds a cup in her hand as Cybele holds a patera. Her name is composed of Babylon the Great—*i.e.*, Rome—and the Great Mother of the Gods. Just like the Woman of Heaven, she is both deity and city. Cybele is the mother and the bride of Attis, just as the Woman of Heaven is the mother and the bride of Jesus. She is Rome the unclean, as the other is the New Jerusalem. At Rome the temple of Cybele dominated the Emperor's palace, so that the emperors took as their protectress the Mother of the Gods (Rev. xvii. 6):—

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<sup>136</sup> *E.g.*, in the Septuagint, Ezek. vii. 20; I Kings xi. 5 (Astarte); 2 Kings xxiii. 13 (Moloch).

I SAW the Woman drunk with the blood of the Saints,  
With the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.

Cybele-Rome drank Christian blood, and was poisoned by it, so that she was burnt in a great fire as a witch for her sorcery.

The Beast, rival of God and Jesus, will have his false prophet, rival of the genuine prophets. He will hold his power of the Dragon, that he may overcome and slay the saints. Misled by this false prophet, men will worship the image of the Beast and will be proud to bear the mark of his name. The saints will have the fortitude to bear their fate—for some the dungeon, for others the sword.

At the end of three and a half years of torment will come a heavenly vengeance, the extermination of the idolaters. An angel will announce the Good News. The Hour of Doom is at hand.

Lo! Jesus, the Divine Man, hitherto hidden away, will come forth in Palestine on a cloud as Daniel had beheld him, and will gather together the elect, and will harvest a bloody vintage of the others (Rev. xiv. 14–20):—

I SAW;  
Behold a white Cloud.  
On the Cloud sat ONE LIKE TO A SON OF MAN,  
Having on his head a golden Crown,  
In his hand a sharp Sickle.

Another Angel came out of the Temple  
Uttering a great cry,  
To him who sat on the Cloud.

Thrust in thy Sickle! Reap!  
The Time is come for reaping  
For the Harvest of the Earth is ripe.

He who sat upon the Cloud  
Thrust his Sickle on the Earth;  
The Earth was reaped.

. . . . . 137

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<sup>137</sup> Interpolation by dittography. A copyist instead of writing “Another angel came out from the altar,” re-wrote “Another angel came out of the temple.” An editor, not recognizing the error, added a line giving the angel a sharp sickle, which put the angel on a par with Jesus. This is contradicted by xiv. 19, which declares that Jesus trod the winepress of the wrath of God.



Another Angel came out from the Altar,  
Who had Power over Fire.  
He cried with a loud cry  
To him who had the sharp Sickle,

Thrust in thy sharp Sickle.  
Gather the clusters of the Vine of the Earth  
For the grapes are ripe.

He thrust in his Sickle on the Earth.  
He gathered the Vine of the Earth  
And cast it into the Great Winepress of the Wrath of God.

The Winepress was trodden without the City.<sup>138</sup>  
Blood came out of the Winepress to the horse bridles<sup>139</sup>  
By the space of six hundred stadia.<sup>140</sup>

The seven blows of the wrath of God will fall on the pagan as once they fell on the Egyptian. Alone the elect will escape. As once the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, so will the elect cross the sea of crystal which separates the earth from heaven. Blow after blow will strike earth, sea, the waters, the sun, and the empire of the heathen; nevertheless men will not repent, but will blaspheme God as they suffer from his wrath. The kings of the earth will assemble their armies to do battle with the Lord of Hosts.

Before describing this crazy battle, John stops to savour the delights of the special punishment meted out to the Whore. In a hymn breathing hate he rejoices over the burning of Rome and intoxicates himself with the weeping and wailing that shall rise from about her (Rev. xviii.):—

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<sup>138</sup> In the valley of Jehosaphat (valley of judgment) (Joel iii. 2, 12).

<sup>139</sup> "A horse shall walk in the blood of sinners to its chest, and a wain shall be wholly covered" (Enoch c. 3).

<sup>140</sup> About the length of Palestine. This Judgment of Jesus will be for Palestine. The Harvest is of the just who worship in the Temple (xi. 1), and of sinners who have repented (xi. 13). The Vintage is of the Gentiles who have oppressed the holy city for three and a half years. After this the cups of the wrath of Jahweh will be poured over the whole world (xv–xvi), and Jesus will return to destroy (xix. 9–end).

They shall bewail and lament her,<sup>141</sup>  
The Kings of the Earth,  
With whom she whored and flaunted,  
When they shall see the smoke of her burning,

Standing far off, for fear of her torment, saying,  
WOE! WOE! that Great City,  
Babylon the Mighty,  
In one hour is thy Judgment come.

The Merchants of the Earth  
Weep and lament over her,  
For their merchandize  
Shall find no buyer.  
Cargoes of gold, of silver, or of precious stones and pearls,  
Of fine linen, of purple, of silk, and of scarlet,  
Of thyine wood, of ivory, and of vessels of rare woods,  
Of bronze and iron and of marble,

Of cinnamon, cardamom, perfumes, myrrh, and Frankincense,  
Of wine and of oil, of flour and wheat,  
Of cattle and sheep and horses, of wains and of slaves,  
And of the souls of men.

The vendors of these things,  
Who were made rich by her,  
Shall stand far off, for fear of her torment,  
Weeping and wailing, saying,

WOE! WOE! that Great City,  
Clothed in fine linen, and purple and scarlet,  
Decked with gold and precious stones and pearls,  
In one hour so great riches were destroyed utterly.

The pilots on the ships, and all the company in them,  
The sailors and all those who toil at sea  
Stood afar off.  
They cried when they saw the smoke of her burning,  
What is there like unto this great City?

They cast dust on their heads.  
They cried, wept, and lamented,  
WOE! WOE! that great City,

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<sup>141</sup> Compare the Fall of Tyre [Ezek, xxvi and xxvii].

Wherein were made rich all those who had sails on the sea,  
In one hour her wealth<sup>142</sup> is utterly destroyed.

Rejoice over her, Heaven!  
O Saints, O Apostles, O Prophets,  
God has judged your case against her.

A mighty Angel took up  
A stone like a great millstone,  
And cast it into the Sea, saying,

Thus in one cast shall be thrown down  
Babylon the Mighty City;  
It shall be found no more at all.<sup>143</sup>

The ripe fruit which thy soul coveted  
Has escaped thee.  
All that is dainty and goodly  
Is departed from thee.  
They shall be found no more at all.<sup>144</sup>

The music of harpers, of singers,  
Of pipers and trumpeters,  
Shall be heard no more at all in thee.<sup>145</sup>  
No craftsman of any craft whatsoever  
Shall be found any more in thee!

Sound of millstone  
Shall be heard no more in thee!  
Flame of lamp  
Shall no more gleam in thee!  
Song of the bridegroom and his bride  
Shall be heard no more in thee!<sup>146</sup>

For thy Merchants were  
The great men of the Earth,  
For by thy sorceries  
Were all mankind deceived,

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<sup>142</sup> ἡ τιμιότης, instead of ἐκ τῆς τιμιότητος (Charles).

<sup>143</sup> An act of magic. Cf. *Jer.* li. 63–64.

<sup>144</sup> This verse has been accidentally misplaced, and should be here (Charles).

<sup>145</sup> Jahweh said to Tyre : "I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease; and the sound of thy harps shall no more be heard" (*Jer.* xxv. 10).

<sup>146</sup> Jahweh silenced for ever in Judah "the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of millstones," and extinguished "the light of the candle" (*Jer.* xxv. 10).

For in thee is the blood of the Prophets and the Saints,<sup>147</sup>  
Of all who were martyred on the Earth.

The smoke of burning Rome will be applauded with a formidable Halleluiah! And Jesus will come down upon the heathen world, riding on a white horse and followed by the cavalry of saints, the God with the flowing cloak whose picture the pagans in Thrace and Asia adore unaware of the awful significance it has for them (Rev. xix. 11):—

I SAW Heaven open.  
Behold a white horse.  
He who rode him  
Called Faithful and True.<sup>148</sup>  
In justice does he judge and make war.

His eyes like flame of fire,  
On his head many Crowns,  
Bearing a Name written  
Which none knows but himself,  
Clothed in a Cloak steeped in blood.<sup>149</sup>

His Name has been called  
THE WORD OF GOD.<sup>150</sup>

The Armies in Heaven  
Follow him on white horses,  
Clothed in pure white linen.<sup>151</sup>

From his mouth springs forth a sharp Sword  
To smite the nations.

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<sup>147</sup> Blood with which the Woman has gorged and poisoned herself (xvii. 6). The curse on Rome is sandwiched between two allusions to martyrs. MSS., *in her* (ἐν αὐτῇ); Primasius, *in thee...* (*in te*).

<sup>148</sup> Epithets of Jesus (iii. 14). In Habakkuk (iii. 8) Jahweh has horses and chariots of victory. John brings into action the Celestial Cavalry. Jesus bestrides a *white* horse, symbol of domination and victory (cf. Rev. vi. 2). At an early date in the East the sun god became a horseman (F. Cumont, *Les Religions Orientales*, 4th ed., p. 222, n. 11).

<sup>149</sup> Because he has just annihilated Edom (Rome) (Isa. lxiii. 1–6).

<sup>150</sup> Jesus revealed his Name through the revealing angel. John stages here a scene from the Book of Wisdom (xviii. 15): "Thy Word (Logos), pitiless warrior, leaps from the heavens, from the royal thrones, into the midst of the destruction of the earth, bearing a sharp sword, thy irrevocable decree."

<sup>151</sup> The armies of Jahweh are angels. These are the "called, elect, faithful." After the victory they will dwell on earth with Jesus for thousand years (xx. 4).

He shall rule them with a Rod of Iron.<sup>152</sup>  
He treads the Winepress  
Of the wine of fury of the Wrath  
Of GOD MASTER OF ALL.<sup>153</sup>

He bears on the (Arm) and on the Thigh<sup>154</sup>  
A Name written,  
KING OF KINGS, LORD OF LORDS.<sup>155</sup>

The Knight Jesus will seize the Beast and the false prophet and cast them into everlasting fire. He will slay the paynim utterly (Rev. xix. 21):—

The remnant were slain  
With the sword of Him Who rode the Horse,  
The Sword which sprung from his mouth.  
All the birds were filled with their flesh.

As for the Dragon, Satan, he will be bound and imprisoned in the Abyss for a thousand years. For Jesus and his victorious squadrons will camp for a thousand years on earth, and will reign in Jerusalem on their thrones (Rev. xx. 4):—

They lived and reigned  
With the Messiah a thousand years.  
The other dead lived not again till the thousand years  
Were completed.

At the end of the thousand years the Dragon will be let loose and will gather together the last nations. Gog and Magog, from the four corners of the terrestrial table, will come to besiege Jerusalem, as Ezekiel said they would. Fire from heaven will consume them and the Dragon will be cast into the Lake of Fire.

Then at last will be the general resurrection of the dead.

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<sup>152</sup> As was predicted at his birth in human form (xii. 5).

<sup>153</sup> He trod this press near Jerusalem (xiv. 19–20).

<sup>154</sup> MSS.: "On the Mantle and on the Thigh." τὸ ἱμάτιον is probably a misreading for τὸν βραχίονα. The god Aion in the temple Kore at Alexandria had five divine seals—on the forehead, on the hands, and on the knees (Epiphanius, *Pan.*, li. 22). In an Egyptian picture a royal child bears a royal title on each limb (W. Weber, quoted by Lohmeyer).

<sup>155</sup> Jahweh's titles (cf. xvii. 14). This is read by all. The secret name is in cryptogram on his forehead, see above (xix. 12).

Heaven and Earth will flee away from before the face of God, and in the emptiness the dead will rise up before their judge. The book of life will be open and the registers of all their acts. Only those whose names appear in the Book of the Lamb will pass the test. For this sparse remnant of the first universe, benevolent God will create a new heaven and a new earth. The victors will be as children to God. The defeated and condemned (especially the Nicolaitanes) who have had commerce with idols, have fornicated and lied, will be cast into the Lake of Fire, where they will suffer a second death.<sup>156</sup>

In heaven Jesus will resume his eternal form—that of a male Lamb—and will celebrate his wedding with the Woman of Heaven, now become the New Jerusalem (Rev. xxi. 9–11):—

There came one of the seven Angels  
Who had the seven Cups...  
He spoke to me and said,  
Come! I will show thee  
*The Bride*, the Lamb's Wife.

He carried me away in the Spirit  
To a great and high Mountain.  
He showed me that great City,  
The Holy Jerusalem,  
Descending from Heaven, from God,  
Having the Glory of God;  
Its light was like unto a very precious stone,  
Even like crystal jasper.

Never did a Jewish bride glitter with such an abundance of gems. The whole city will be gold and jewels. Through gates of pearl the nations will bring in their tribute. The leaves of the Orchard of Life will heal them; its fruit will be the food of the elect, and they will drink the Water of Life. In the radiation of the Glory of God their priestly reign shall last for ever and ever (Rev. xxii. 3–5):—

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<sup>156</sup> At this point—xxi. 8—the earliest edition of the Book of Revelation came to an end. The rest—xxi. 9—end—was a later addition, and was probably made to fit on by means of xvii. 7. In the MSS. the two terminations are added by conflation (see *The Book of Revelation*; Watts, London, 1932, p. 22).

Nothing shall any longer be forbidden.  
The Throne of God and of the Lamb shall be there.  
His Servants shall serve him,  
They shall see his face,  
His Name shall be on their foreheads.

There shall be no more night.  
There shall be no further need of torches  
Nor the light of the sun,  
For the *Lord God* will shine on them.  
They shall reign for ever and ever.

Jesus here speaks once more to set the seal of authority on John's prophecy (Rev. xxii. 18):—

I testify to those who hear  
The Words and the Prophecy of this Book.  
If any man add to it,  
God shall add to him the Plagues  
Which are written in this Book.

If any man take away  
From the Word of the Book of Prophecy,  
God shall take away his part  
Of the Orchard of Life  
And of the Holy City  
Which are written in this Book.

The reading ends in the ritual cry, taken up by the whole congregation:—

Amen!  
Come, Lord Jesus!

John's prophecy was composed about ten years after Paul's activities, which John sought in this matter to negative, came to an end. Its date is apparent from the text; it is earlier than 70, for, though the prophet foresees the taking of Jerusalem by the Romans, he did not think possible the destruction of the Temple. In 70 the Temple was burned and demolished. Three towers alone stood of the town; and of the Temple nothing but a stretch of wall where the Jews thenceforth came to wail. Its date is somewhat later than 64; for the curse on Rome, calling fire down on the Eternal City, corresponds to the fire of Nero's day. We can,

then, claim a time about 65 for the composition of the Revelation of St. John the Theologian.<sup>157</sup> It antecedes the great war of the Jews against Rome, that terrestrial struggle of Jahweh with the false gods which saw his defeat, but not by many years, and has all the imprint of a period of horror, frenzy, and dread.

The entire poem of John is in antithesis with the fragments of Paul, which are at once more homely and more profound and mystic. John's book does not open up infinite vistas, immediately to hide them again, as does the work of Paul. But it does reveal, without leaving anything to vague implications, the complete expectation of Christendom; in that lies its merit, and also its flaw.

These two great prophets of early Christianity championed two opposed sects. Just as Paul furiously abused the apostles and pillars of Jerusalem as *agents of Satan*, even so did John abominate the mysticism of Paul as the *depths of Satan*. A house divided is a painful spectacle; the hate of Christian for Jew, of Christian for heathen was never so bitter as the hatred of Christian for Christian. Out of this strife developed the Christian dogmas to come.

Which won the day: Paul, supple in practice and bold in doctrine, apt at perceiving and satisfying the needs of man's soul; or John, unbending in his Hebrew pride, chancing all religion on the prophecy of What Was To Come. Quickly basing all on tradition, on the prophets of yore and accepted revelations? We who know our history know that the powers fought on Paul's side. But in 65 Paul was no longer in the field, and the field he had tilled could be ploughed anew and a new crop sown. The harvest would seem to be one man, the sole prophet surviving who could speak in the name of the faith's founder.

John's Revelation shows us the narrow, yet flamboyant world of thought and fancy which was also that of James and of Peter, of the Twelve and the Five Hundred. It is the true line, and in its substance, if not in date, it is the earliest

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<sup>157</sup> A later interpolation endeavours to insert a prediction of the return of Nero; this was made about 98, which led Irenæus to assign this date to the whole work. (See *The Book of Revelation*; Watts, London, 1932, p. 35).



Christian document; and from the authentic prophet, the pillar apostle, the "beloved disciple," we may expect the portrait of Christ which will have undergone the least touching up—the most faithful picture of Jesus.

After a careful study of the Apocalypse, we can have no doubt as to the original traits of Jesus. We have here the God Hero of a Divine Epic. Jesus is of heaven heavenly, and he is yet to come. He has nought as yet to do with the earth or with history, and is manifested in visions alone. To be known, he has yet to come down from heaven an instant, or the prophet must ascend to heaven. He partakes of the Throne of God; his essence is of Glory and his form the Bleeding Ram with the eyes of Spirit beneath the horns of Power. He is at once the officiating priest and the sacrifice for all eternity, the redemption given by God. He has had no earthly existence. But he will take on such an existence to last a thousand years, when he will leap down from heaven on a snowy horse, draped in a cloak red with dripping blood. His is the Awful Power of God.

The mystery of the Two Persons of God is at the base of this tableau. It pervades Christianity. Just as did Paul, John shares the Old Testament attributes of Jahweh between God and Jesus. As for John, so for Paul. God and Jesus is singular, grammatically and otherwise.<sup>158</sup> For John and for Paul God and Jesus are one. When a Christian worships Jesus as God he never looks upon himself as anything but a strict monotheist; Jesus was a new aspect of the divine substance.

But the revelation of the divine personality of Jesus was made to John in another manner than to Paul. To Paul Jesus came crucified in weakness and strength wrought in weakness. But John, on the other hand, beheld the In-violate Power beyond and above all devices of the enemy, untroubled by suffering. Thus he seemed to preserve divine might and to avoid the scandal and absurdity into which Paul seemingly fell; but he is unaware of the incomparable hold God thus gained on man.

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<sup>158</sup> The singular is often employed in the Apocalypse for God and Jesus together—*e.g.*, xi. 15 "he shall reign"; xxii. 3-4 "His servants, his face, his Name, etc."—Cf. Paul, I Thess. iii. 11.

John's priestly warrior is overmuch of Judah, is overlike the Hebrew Messiah to win the race against the unsuspected unheard-of Christ which Paul presented to the world. John's Jesus may die, his serene sacrificial death is the spectacle of a festival. Deity though he may be, he is the war-leader come to exterminate the heathen and avenge Israel, and the expectations he engenders are material and concrete; they narrowly escape the coarse and puerile.

About the time of John's Revelation—rather earlier than 70—was written a Jewish Apocalypse, attributed to the secretary of Jeremiah, Baruch, in which the abundance the days of the Messiah was described:—

It will come about, once all those things have been fulfilled  
Which must be fulfilled,  
That the Prince Messiah will be revealed...  
The earth will bear its fruits ten thousand times.<sup>159</sup>

A vine will bear a thousand branches.  
A branch will bear a thousand grapes;  
A grape will contain a thousand pips;  
To each pip an amphora of wine.

Those who have been hungry will be in plenty;  
They will see other miracles every day.  
The winds will waft towards me  
Every morning, the fragrance of perfumed fruit;  
Every evening, mists of sweet dew.<sup>160</sup>

The pathetic day-dreams of starving men; the kingdom of the Messiah will be a land of abundance. Burnt and harsh Palestine, generous in spasms and swiftly exhausted, is to become moist, fertile, and fat, a blessed land of guzzling and swilling, of cool breezes and ripe fruit.

John's "hearers" were to quote a similar prophecy as being revealed by Jesus to John:—

The days will come when the vines will bear,  
Each vineyard will have ten thousand vine-stocks,  
On each stock ten thousand branches.

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<sup>159</sup> A misreading of a passage in Genesis (xxvii. 28); Rendel Harris *Expositor*, 1895, pp. 438-449.

<sup>160</sup> R. H. Charles, *The Apocalypse of Baruch*; London, 1896, ch. xxiv.

On each branch ten thousand grapes,  
In each grape ten thousand pips,  
And each pip when pressed will give twenty-five pots of wine.

Whenever a Saint will cull a grape,  
Another will cry, I am a better grape;  
Take me, through me bless God!  
Similarly a grain of wheat will bear ten thousand ears,  
Each ear ten thousand grains,  
Each grain will give five pounds of clean, pale flour.

All other fruit, harvests and crops  
Will give as abundantly.  
All the creatures which will eat of this food  
Which the earth will receive  
Will be at peace and in harmony with one another;  
All will be subject to man in utter submission.<sup>161</sup>

This Jews' Christ, vindictive and warlike, giver of thrones and banquets, is the Christ after the flesh, which Paul would not recognize, for he held that Christ's crucifixion cleansed him of all that was egoist (2 Cor. v. 14-16):—

The love of the Christ constrains us  
Who have judged thus;  
If one died for all,  
Then all were dead.

And he died for all  
That the living should no longer live for themselves,  
But for him who for them  
Died and rose again.

Therefore we, henceforward,  
Know no man after the flesh;  
Though we have known the Christ after the flesh,  
Yet now we know him no more.

“After the flesh” here means, as often in Paul, egoistically.<sup>162</sup> Paul renounces all temporal profit from Christ; he

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<sup>161</sup> According to Irenæus (*Hær.*, v. 33, 3), Papias, "John's hearer," quoted this prophecy as the words of Jesus revealed by John, as witnessed by the elders who "had seen John, the disciple of the Lord."

<sup>162</sup> *E.g.*, in Rom. viii. 13: "For if you live after the flesh you shall die: but if through the Spirit you mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live." *After the flesh*=selfishly.

is utterly and irreversibly absorbed in mystic union with the crucified and risen Christ.

Fundamentally the Christs of John and Paul are incompatible and the two religions to which they gave rise were distinct in their essence. John did not admit the crucifixion.<sup>163</sup> Paul knew nothing of a flesh-and-blood Christ. John bathes in the blood of the Lamb, but admits no humiliation or suffering for the Supreme. Paul sees in his own sufferings the sufferings of his Christ. John sees himself riding pillion on the white charger behind his conquering Jesus. Paul preaches Jesus on the cross and feels the nails in his own flesh. The gates of John's mystic city were hardly to be opened to the pagan, whereas Paul hastened to bring to the heathen of the whole world the cross and salvation, hoping it might be in time. John unveils the mystery of the *time to come*, spelled in horrific letters of sulphur and flame. Paul draws aside the curtain from the timeless mystery, the desire for unburdening which crucifies the human heart.

The only mode of reconciling these two opposed visions was for one to prevail over the other, and the future was to St. Paul. Once the need for apocalyptic prophets had passed, once the atmosphere of secret gnosis should have been swept away, the Christian legend would take on a narrative and popular form, making an easy appeal to the masses. Then John's poem becomes jetsam, witness of the wreck of past dreams. It becomes a supplement to the New Testament, a special and strange picture of the last days, a record that the sacrificial death of Jesus has been, in opposition to both Paul and John, brought down from heaven to earth.

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<sup>163</sup> The little gloss—xi. 8—is obviously an addition. Such a capital point would not be limited to an adventitious gloss.

## THE GOSPELS

(A.D. 130-A.D. 150)

### I

#### THE CHRISTIAN PROVINCES

THE early vigour and rapid growth of Christianity were due to the prophets, but had they lasted much longer they would have caused its early death. As fast as the churches multiplied, the number of prophets grew in geometrical progression; and prophecy does not tolerate mediocrity. Paul and John were the torch-bearers of the procession, and after them came a great multitude of minor prophets, who left nothing capable of survival. Their finest inspirations would have been utterly lost if it had not been for the flowering of the gospels.

The prophetic gift is a principle of anarchy. Each prophet is divinely inspired, therefore of the highest authority. Where their divine inspirations disagreed, there was a dispute, and there could develop no common accord. What had brought about the end of the Jewish prophets of six centuries before now brought an end to the Christian prophets. The Lord was late in coming; the *ekklesia* which anxiously awaited the Advent became over-numerous and their adherents difficult to manage. Re-organization or bankruptcy became the word of the day.

In 170, when Montanus and two prophetesses disturbed the calm of the churches, they were strong enough to withstand these troublers. They could oppose undeniable authority to the living inspiration of prophets. For that a Book was necessary—not the naïf apocalypses which preceded Christianity—something new and incomparably efficacious, the Evangel of the Life and Teaching of the Lord Jesus. They must have been the fruit of much trial and experiment.

The half-century from 70 to 120 is the most obscure period in the history of Christianity. There exists scarcely a document of any importance in it, for the Letters of Clemens and of Ignatius, which have been referred to that period, properly belong to c. 150.<sup>164</sup> The sons of the generation which knew John and Paul are plunged in obscurity. There is a long *entr'acte*. When the curtain rises once more, we are in the year 111, and the scene is in Bithynia and Pontus, the province of Pliny the Younger, who expresses his astonishment at finding the country infested with people who ought to be condemned to death. Not for many years has the centre of Christianity been in Jerusalem. That city is slowly recovering from its destruction by Titus. The Church has four Provinces—Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and Ephesus.

The bulk of the believers are to be found in Asia Minor, with Macedonia and Greece as adjuncts. Here it was that in days gone by Paul and John had preached with success. At Ephesus and in Proconsular Asia the Elders tell of John reminiscences which pass into legend. That turbulent, intelligent town Ephesus, whose dwellers are bitten with religious fervour, where the devotees of Christ compete with the disciples of the Baptist, where Jew jostles Samaritan, is to produce an anonymous successor to John, a man of deeper feeling and more profound thought, just as to the first Isaiah succeeded a second. The coruscating journeys of St. Paul had cast strong and lasting light on the Grecian land. Out of Pontus was to come forth a successor to Paul as audacious, as inspired, and even more aggressive than his master.

Antioch, a town of Greek culture, was on the borders of the Aramean country which lay about Berea (Aleppo), Hierapolis, Nisibe, Edessa, and the frontiers disputed between Roman and Parthian. It was particularly in this Aramean part of bilingual Syria, widely peopled by Jews from ancient date, rather than in the Grecian part, that

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<sup>164</sup> Vide Henri Delafosse, *Lettres d'Ignace d'Antioche*; Pam, 1927, and "La Lettre de Clement Romain aux Corinthiens" in the *Rev. de l'Hist. des Relig.*, Jan., 1928.

Christianity took a strong hold. Its aspect here was more of a sort of reformed Judaism; it kept alive the spirit of James. The Bible was translated into Aramaic and illustrated with reasonable commentaries mingled with incredible tales. Syrian Christianity became austere, but not ascetic, and heavily mystical, emphasizing the moral and practical side of the faith. It sought expression in striking phrases, fresh offshoots of traditional wisdom, and in poetry of a bizarre lyrical quality such as the epistle attributed to James on the one part and the poems attributed to Solomon on the other. The Syrian masterpiece will be the Gospel of St. Matthew, supplemented by the *Didache*, or *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, a little manual of ritual and moral teaching.

Christianity held a brilliant position in Alexandria, that mixed town, part Greek, part Jewish, but an unstable one between the worship of Jahweh and the Mysteries of Isis; was invaded by the flood of allegorical and theosophical speculations let loose by Philo and by the charlatanism of an over-subtle people of market-bargainers. The Emperor Hadrian wrote from Alexandria to Servianus: "Here the worshippers of Serapis are Christians, and those who call themselves bishops of Christ are devotees of Serapis. Here there is not a Jew archisynagogue, nor a Samaritan, nor a Christian presbyter who does not claim to be an astrologer, haruspex, or a schoolmaster. When the patriarch [Jew] himself comes to Egypt, some of them make him worship Serapis, others Christ.... They have but one God, Money. This is *He* whom all Christians, all Jews, and the whole world reveres."<sup>165</sup> Alexandrian Christianity is a *Gnosis*, a refined and precious knowledge amidst competing or associated *Gnoses*. About this time it gave rise to the epistle attributed to Barnabas, in which the allegorical exegesis of the Bible borders on delirium, and the gnostic speculations of Basilides and Valentinus, which, not having been accepted by the churches, have been lost to us.

Christianity was banned at Rome, the capital of the Empire, and therefore ran greater dangers there than else-

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<sup>165</sup> *Scriptores Historiæ Auguste*, ed. H. Peter; Lipsiæ, 1884, p. 224.

where. In spite of the support of a few consular families the Roman community was ever on the look-out, apt dissimulation and patient in fortitude. Though at loggerheads with the Jewish community, whose legal status the Christians envied, it retained a Jewish aspect which allied it to the Syrian churches, and, like them, required its members to abstain from eating meat which had not been ritually bled, thus separating them from common Roman life.<sup>166</sup>

At this period the Church as a whole was far from homogeneous and was even at times torn by internal strife. Already in the days of Nero discord among the faithful had brought about the death of Kephias-Peter and that of Paul<sup>167</sup> thus reconciling them in common apotheosis. The bulk of the Church membership was made up of Judaizing foreigners such as Greeks and Orientals of modest fortune, whose common tongue was Greek. They loved to listen to the former slave, the Arcadian Hermas, babbling of the visions which appeared to him on his way to his country house. The Romans of the town and the Africans held themselves apart for they spoke Latin and showed a different spirit, more realistic and administrative. Their importance grew, however, till they took charge of affairs in 189. The Hebrew and converted Grecians.<sup>168</sup> ardent students of the Bible formed a little *élite*, proud of their high culture. Wearied by persecutions and by doctrinal uncertainty, were they not often tempted to return to Judaism? To them the Epistle to the Hebrews was addressed under a light veil of fiction From all parts of the Roman world, Christians came to the Eternal City, bringing with them the doctrines and rites peculiar to the church of the district whence they came. Some, such as the Asiatics, formed special communities.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Abstinence from meat containing blood was the rule in Churches of Vienne and Lyons which were affiliated to the Churches of Asia and Phrygia (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, v . i. 26) and in the Churches of Africa, affiliated to the Church of Rome (Tertullian *Apolog.*, 9; *De Monog.*, 5; *De Jejun.*, 4).

<sup>167</sup> *Epistle of Clemens*, The text itself and comparison with other examples of ill-deeds brought about by jealousy show that it was certainly a reference to jealousy and discord among *Christians* (Cullmann).

<sup>168</sup> *I.e.*, Jews speaking Greek.

<sup>169</sup> *Vide* G. La Piana, "The Roman Church at the End of Second Century," in the *Harvard Theological Review*, July 1925.



On the Roman Church was imposed the rôle of arbitrator between them, with the duty of obtaining uniformity, if possible.

There was as yet no central authority in any one church. Each was administered as of old, by elders. It was not till the Corinthians established a bishopric with a single individual at the head—and in so doing dismissed several venerable bishops, for which the Roman Church blamed them through the pen of their secretary Clemens—that an organization was introduced of which Rome was eventually to reap the benefit.<sup>170</sup>

The various Churches were accustomed to interchange letters in which they communicated the latest revelations, or a liturgical prayer, or some ancient document, or what purported to be such. Their union lay in the common expectation of the Advent and in their common peril; for they were illegal societies under a ban throughout the Empire, and their members were subject to the most rigorous punishments if denounced. Trajan and Hadrian suppressed abuses such as laying false information and lynching.

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<sup>170</sup> Anicet introduced the single bishopric at Rome in 154, and the African Victor established it solidly in 189. The names of some of the elders who preceded Anicet have been preserved traditionally, and Hegesippus made from them an imaginary succession.

## II CONFLICTS

THE first great problem was to fill the gap left by the prophets.

In primitive institutions the prophet is the principal person in the Church. In Syria the Churches had their own particular prophets, whom they fed, clothed, and cared for according to the Law for the upkeep of the Jewish priests. "Thou shalt take from the press and the threshing floor, from the oxen and from the flocks all the firstlings and give them to your prophets, for they are your priests ... If thou bakest bread, take the first made and give according to the commandment. If thou openest an amphora of wine or of oil, give the first cup to the prophets. Take what is due of money, of clothes, of any form of wealth, and give according to the commandment."<sup>171</sup>

Inevitably abuses cropped up. It became necessary to declare false prophets those who in the spirit had a meal served to them, or again who in the spirit asked for money. If, however, the money was asked for the poor, the "prophet" was not to be judged. If the prophet works "in view of the earthly mystery of the Church"—*i.e.*, probably symbolizes the union of the Church and the Lord by a strange marriage as did Hosea—he is neither to be judged nor imitated.<sup>172</sup> As for the title of apostle, so proudly vindicated by St. Paul it had fallen into disrepute. There were too many wandering beggars calling themselves apostles. "Let an apostle who comes to thy house be received as the Lord. He shall stop only one day, or two if in need. If he remain three days, he is a false prophet. Let the apostle, when he leaves, receive nothing, but bread that he may go as far as the next

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<sup>171</sup> *Didache*, xiii.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, xi.

night's lodging. If he asks for money, he is a false prophet."<sup>173</sup> What irony to say of some nuisance thrown out thus that he is "received as the Lord"! Lucian's Peregrinus, lecher, sodomite, and parricide, was for a time a Christian prophet and head of a church. Thrust into prison, he was looked on as a martyr and given many a basketful of good things.<sup>174</sup>

The leader of one Syrian church led his flock—men, women, and children—out into the desert to meet Christ. Lost and wandering in the mountains, they were nearly captured and put to death as brigands. In Pontus another prophet announced that it had been revealed to him in visions that the Judgment would take place the following year. His worthy followers, in tears and trembling, sold all their gear and left their homes. Next year came, and they had to do their best to get back what they had sold, given away, or lost (Hippolytus, *Comm. on Dan.*, iii. 18; written in 202–204).

Hermas tells how in Rome a prophet would give consultations like a magician; which moved him to wrath, since he spoke no prophecies "in corners" (Hermas, *Mand.*, xi). Rivalry between prophets wore out the patience of the Churches. It became too difficult for the faithful to distinguish a true prophet.

A slow and sage revolution raised above the prophets those whom Paul had placed lower—the *didascaloi* or teachers—and to the highest place those whom Paul had placed lowest—the administrators or *episcopoi*. We have a particular case of a clash between the prophet and the teacher. At a time of severe persecution, probably that in which the Bishop Telesphorus perished gloriously in the reign of Hadrian,<sup>175</sup> many Christians apostatized. As the saying then was, they "deserted the living god."<sup>176</sup> Could they be re-admitted to the Church? The teachers said "no"; it was against the teaching, for the Church is an assembly of Saints, and the remission of sins granted by

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<sup>173</sup> *Didache*, x.

<sup>174</sup> Lucian, *De morte Peregr.*, ed. Jacobitz, iii. p. 274. *προφήτης καὶ θιασιάρχης καὶ ξυναγωγέως*, written about 165.

<sup>175</sup> Irenæus, *Hær.*, iii. 3; *ἐνδόξως ἐμαρτύρησεν*.

<sup>176</sup> Hermas, *Vis.*, ii. 3, 2 and iii. 7, 2; Heb. iii. 12; *ἀποστήναί ἀπό θεοῦ ζῶντος*.

baptism cannot be renewed. With the authority of a vision and in opposition to the teachers, Hermas declared they might be re-admitted.<sup>177</sup> A Woman from heaven had given him a script, which he had copied, in which there was promulgated a special pardon of sins; this celestial being symbolized the Church. Clemens, whose duty it was, sent it out to the other churches, Graptas taught it to the widows and orphans; and he, Hermas, read it to the Elders of the Church at Rome.<sup>178</sup>

There was a *didascalus*, a thinker, a Philonian of high attainments, who expounded to the chosen few who would become *didascali* as he was, the doctrinal and scriptural reasons for strict observance.<sup>179</sup> What authority could greater than a prophet's? That of an Apostle. Add a few lines giving news of Timothy and a greeting for the brethren in Italy, and a fine homily becomes an Epistle from Paul to the *Hebrews* in Jerusalem. St. Paul was a much greater authority than Hermas. In this manner the pseudepigraphic literature which the living word of the prophets had brought to an end was revived. According to the need of the moment were published an Epistle of James, three John, two of Peter, one of Jude, and several of Paul, to mention only those which are generally accepted. The three "pillars" of Jerusalem and their former adversary gave posthumous instruction, even as Daniel, Enoch, and Moses had revealed their prophecies.

This appeal to the famous dead was, however, only an expedient; the scheme was to discover a book which should contain the whole Christian doctrine and put the prophets out of action. A problem connected with this discovery was the attitude to be adopted towards the Hebrew Bible. The Psalms and the Prophets of old were the food of faith and the nourishment of piety. Where would the Pentateuch come

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<sup>177</sup> Hermas, *Mand.*, iv. 3, 3. "Lord, I have heard say by certain teachers that there is no other means [than that of baptism]."

<sup>178</sup> Hermas, *Vis.*, ii. 2-3.

<sup>179</sup> Heb. vi. 4-8; x. 26-31; xii. 16-17. The insistence of the author on this point is remarkable. Cf. Heb. v. 12: "For a long time ye ought to have been teachers," and xiii. 7, in which the rulers (ἡγούμενοι) and not the prophets, "have spoken unto you the word of God."

in? How should it be interpreted? Should it be in part, or whole, or not at all? A Book cannot be revealed by God, and then its commandments ignored.

The Syrian Churches were clear on the point, as we may read in the Epistle of James ii. 10: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend on a single of the points, he is guilty of all." That is the law for Christians of Jewish birth. As for the others, the *Didache* tells us that it is good for them to keep the law as far as they can, "If thou canst bear the whole yoke of the Lord, thou wilt be perfect; if thou canst not, what thou canst, thou shalt do."<sup>180</sup> This solution is suitable for such Christians as are externally indistinguishable from Jews and for whom the efforts of Paul have been in vain.

The solution of the Roman *didascali* appears in the Epistle to the Hebrews, succinct and elegant. It refers to the passage in Jeremiah in which God announces that he will make with his people a *new covenant*; Christianity is this New Covenant. The first is therefore "made old."<sup>181</sup> The old order was changed. The old priesthood of the Levites was to give way before the priesthood of Christ. The Law was weak, carnal, inefficacious; for it came from the angels, and not direct from God, it "made nothing perfect" (Heb. vii. 19). It is to be replaced by the Word of God, and the Living God will not require sacrifices, but praise and works of charity. The stains which had once been cleansed at the Temple were washed away once and for all by baptism. The forbidden foods were forbidden no more. The Law had had its day. The New Covenant was at once the completion and the conclusion of the Old. The Bible was to be respectfully disobeyed.

In the Epistle of Barnabas a solution was found in Egypt which was still more radical and more shocking from the point of view of Jewish law. The Old Covenant had never been enforced. On the day when Moses, at the sight of the idolatry of the Jews, broke the tablets of the Law, the Jews

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<sup>180</sup> *Didache*, vi. 2. In the Talmud occurs this: "He who does all things, but omits a single one, he is guilty in respect of all" (Schabbath, lxxii. 2).

<sup>181</sup> Heb. viii. 13; *πεπαλαίωκεν*.

lost the Law. The Pentateuch was never written for the Jews, but for the Christians as a mystery. It was not even common to both; it was “ours” alone (Barnabas iv. 6–7, ἡμῶν μὲν). The commandments contained therein have in themselves no value, not even temporary. They conceal hidden spiritual precepts which the initiate alone can understand. For example, pork is forbidden. This signifies that the initiate should avoid those who, like pampered hogs, call on their master God only when they have need of him. The sparrowhawk means that rapacious men should be given the “go-by.” The hare refers to pederasts, since every year the hare develops an additional anus. The weasel means those women who act uncleanly with their mouths, since the weasel conceives through its mouth (Barnabas x).<sup>182</sup> In short, Judaism is simply nonsense. The initiate should ignore it with scorn, but keep the Bible which was an allegory specially destined for the followers of Christ. This answer, paradox fathered by St. Paul, was untenable. It were better to reject the Bible altogether than to interpret it in so strange a manner.

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<sup>182</sup> The author makes use against the Jews of the method of exegesis employed in *The Letter of Aristæus* and by Philo. Paul used it: “Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn” (1 Cor. ix. 9–10) means that the Christian apostle has a right to his share of “carnal things” (ix. 11). The Book of Exodus was written for the Christians (1Cor. x. 1–11).

### III

## THE CELESTIAL HIGH PRIEST

THE problem which offered the greatest difficulty was the presentation of Jesus. Gropingly a clearly defined picture was sought.

In the Epistle of James, Jesus is the Lord whose coming is imminent, the Judge who is at the door (James v. 7-9): He is also the "Worthy Name" called on by Christians (James i. 7). No allusion is, however, made to his sufferings. The Syrian who wrote this epistle when he would counsel patience in adversity, referred to the sufferings of Job, and not of Christ (James v. 10-11; cf. I Peter ii. 19-25).

The Jesus of the Roman Hermas had nothing in common with the Jesus of St. Paul. No mention of passion, not even of his death. His name is not even mentioned. He is the very venerable angel, the holy angel, the glorious angel (Hermas, *Vis.*, v. 2; *Mand.*, v. 7: ὁ ἄγγελος ὁ σεμνότατος; *Sim.*, v. 4, 4: ὁ ἅγιος ἄγγελος; *Sim.*, vii. 1 and 3; ix. I, 3: ὁ ἔνδοξος ἄγγελος;). He is just a superior archangel of colossal stature. Hermas gives us to understand, without saying it precisely, that he is the archangel Michael.<sup>183</sup> The six other archangels follow him on his right and his left, nor can they approach God without him (Hermas, *Sim.*, ix. 12, 8). Angels are at his orders; Penitence, who takes on the aspect of a shepherd; Punishment; Thegri, who closes the maws of monsters. Other angels are his adversaries: the angel of Voluptuousness and of Deceit, the angel of Evil. If he is not God's begotten son, he has become his son by adoption, thanks to his meritorious labours. The First-born of God, the beloved son and heir, is the Holy Ghost who sends to the prophets the Angel of the prophetic spirit (*Sim.*,

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<sup>183</sup> Michael in the eighth *Similitude* fulfils the same function as the Son of God in the fifth and ninth *Similitudes*.

5 and 6; *Mand.*, xi. 9; he also appears to Hermas as an old woman, the Church). The second son is the Flesh. Hermas tells how God chose for himself a “flesh,” a “faithful servant, accepted and esteemed.” He gave him the charge of establishing angels over his people as guardians. The Servant was not satisfied with this only. At the price great toil, he cleansed the people of their sins, and God rejoiced in the work of his Servant. With the consent of his beloved Son and of his angels, he makes the Servant co-heir with the beloved Son, causing “the holy ghost to dwell in this flesh which he had chosen.” The Servant, promoted to be Son of God, became “the *Lord* of the people, having received omnipotence from his father.” He it is who transmits the commands which God gives to the people (*Sim.*, v. 2 and 5-6). None, unless he has received his Name, may enter the kingdom of God (*Sim.*, ix. 12, 8).

The mystery of Jesus is scarcely to be recognized in this savourless, invertebrate story. Jesus has lost not only the potent and scandalous cross which he owed to St. Paul, but even the primitive features which he owed to Isaiah. His expiatory death is diluted into a labour of purification. Everything about him is as vague and formless as an effaced relief. Nevertheless he has gained a new trait, the only one to which Hermas holds. He personifies the Flesh, which has become associated with the Holy Ghost. Hermas clearly points the moral on account of which the flesh ill befits an archangel. “Never let the thought rise in thy heart that this flesh is perishable. Do not use it up in defilement. If thou soilest thy flesh, thou defilest the Holy Ghost” (*Sim.*, v. 7, 2). In this manner the mystery of Jesus is re-edited to be a foundation for the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh and to forge a weapon against the *spirituals* who claimed that the defilement of the flesh left the spirit untouched.

Goodman Hermas was in good company here. The great dogma of the Roman Church of the second century was the resurrection of the body.<sup>184</sup> The glorious, spiritual body,

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<sup>184</sup> See the strange proof which Clemens draws from the fable of the phoenix (*Clem.*, xxv).



which Paul had enthusiastically promised and of which Christ was the new Adam, was not enough. Just like the Jews, the Christians desired the resurrection of the flesh. No longer was the flesh scorned, as it was by Paul. Having passed through tribulation, it had become sanctified and deserved reward. Hence the endowment of Jesus with a body.

The trumpety theology, the debauch of angels, of this inexhaustible prophet called for a reply; and the teacher in the Epistle to the Hebrews gave it in an olympian manner. He presented a new interpretation of Jesus, drawn from the writings of St. Paul and from the Apocalypse.

Jesus was no longer a super-angel; they are but wind and fire. Nor is there any other Son of God mightier than he. He is the First-Born, mirror of God's Glory, Image of his Being. Jesus is no co-heir, but sole legatee of All. Everlasting Spirit, through him God created the world. Sole Mediator, he alone can redeem the sins of men, and that by his blood only, for "without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22)—a fundamental axiom of Christianity.

Whereas the Jews, to obtain the remission of sins, shed the blood of animals, Jesus shed his own blood once and for all and, when he enters the Holy of Holies of the Celestial Temple, he is fixed for ever in this august gesture. The Christ of Hebrews is the Eternal Offering even as the Christ of St. Paul was the Eternal Crucified.

To be this, Jesus did not merely come to earth in human semblance, as Paul had taught, but took on a real body of flesh and blood. On this point prophet and *didascalus* are agreed, but the *didascalus* buttresses his opinion with texts. "And the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him *a little lower than the angels*, and hast crowned him with glory and honour" (Psalm viii). Therefore Jesus was for some time as a man.

Again: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; but a body hast thou prepared me" (Heb. x. 5; Psalm xl. 6). God had made Jesus a veritable body. In Psalm xxii: "I will declare thy name unto my brethren" (cf. Heb. ii. 12),

Jesus treats men as his brothers. It follows, then, that “it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest... in that he himself has suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted” (Heb. ii. 17-18); and again, “We have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, but without sin” (Heb. iv. 15).

To teach that Jesus possessed a real body of earthly flesh and blood could lead to but one inevitable deduction—that he had really and historically existed. Yet such an idea is not that of the author of Hebrews. He does not behold Jesus illumined by the harsh light of historical truth, but bathed in the soft ethereal radiance of the Bible. Lo, Jesus is the mysterious Melchisedek, fatherless, motherless, without origin or ending, everlasting high priest to whom Abraham paid tribute. Behold, he is the star which arises from Judah in defiance of the privilege of Levi. He is the Crucified of Psalm xxii who offered up prayers and supplications (Heb. v. 7) unto him that was able to save him. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews considers the Crucifixion, which is at the same time the priestly sacrifice, as taking place in heaven. Since expiatory victims had to be burned *without the camp* (Heb. xiii. 11), Jesus suffered *without the gate*—*i.e.*, not in this world. “Let us go forth unto him without the camp . . . for here we have no continuing city” (xiii. 13-14). *Here* is the earth. Jesus suffered in the flesh, but not on earth.

To bring Jesus to earth, he had by some means or other to be cut loose from the Bible in which he originated. The means were at hand.

Jesus was no longer the mystic figure with which St. Paul could so passionately identify himself. The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews does not think of becoming part of Jesus, but of following Jesus, of imitating him in his act of sacrifice. Jesus was then half materialized; he had ceased to be wind and fire like the angels, and was a man like us, though a man of another world.

Paul could never agree that the Saviour was both flesh

and spirit, for, said he in I Cor. xv. 50, "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." But now faith willed it, and in Egypt the false Barnabas discovered in the Bible novel and curious proofs of the carnal existence of Christ and strange information as to his Passion in Jewish ritual. For him Jesus is the land promised to Abraham, and *land* means flesh. In Psalm lxix Christ on the cross declares that he was given gall for his meat and vinegar for his drink. He is the Scapegoat on whom all spat, who was crowned with scarlet wool and driven into the wilderness (Barnabas vi-viii; the author makes use of a text of Jewish ritual which is unknown to us). In such extravagant fashion does this author seek by gnosis to pierce the mystery of the Jesus of flesh and blood.

Yet a striking paradox was that he who would place the Son of God on a historic plane was to rob him of this carnal body, to deny it even in opposition to Rome and Alexandria.

The carnal body of Jesus and his historical existence are two separate theses which later became fused in one.

## IV

### MARCION

MARCION was one of the world's great religious geniuses, and takes his place between St. Paul and St. Francis of Assisi. In the crucible of his deep and ardent spirit religion is tested and all that is irreducible remains to the eye: the novelty of Christianity (he was the first to use this term), its vital possibilities, its infinite consequences, and the revolutionary relationship between God and man. He conceived an unrealizable creed which should have been the essence of Christianity. His work has been absorbed in part by average Christianity, which has drawn from it strength and sublimity—but much has been rejected, and his name has been anathematized and forgotten. The impartial historian must restore him to his true place.

Little is known of his life. He was a Greek of Paphlagonia, born, like Diogenes, at Sinope. His enemies termed him a Cynic.<sup>185</sup> He might have been called the Christian Cynic, ascetic, disrespectful of accepted values, friend of the wretched, in revolt against the established order. His honest and strict mind went to the heart of things. Candid, pure, austere, and sublime, he was quick with pity and with love. Imbued with a strong feeling of religious union, he was the first organizer, the essential founder of the monarchical bishopric, and hence of the papacy.

He was born a Christian. His father was an *episcopus* among the Saints of Sinope. He must have been an old man when he went in 139 to Rome.<sup>186</sup> and young when Pliny offered the Christians of Pontus the choice between apostasy and death. From this experience he learned to scorn the mighty and to long for martyrdom.

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<sup>185</sup> Hippolytus, *Philosoph.*, vii. 29: κυνικὸς βίος. Vide Harnack, *Marcion, Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott*; 2nd edit., Leipzig, 1924.

<sup>186</sup> Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.*, vii. 17: ὡς πρεσβύτης.

He gained his livelihood on the sea as pilot and ship's captain.<sup>187</sup> He sailed to Rome on his own ship; and such a life gave opportunities of visiting the churches where Paul had preached—Philippi, Thessalonica, and in particular Corinth. His ship was the first episcopal throne.

He placed his faith in Paul's doctrine of the crucified Christ and maintained it against the first apostles, for he was resolved to restore the churches to it, the heroic form of Christianity. He therefore sought out all that remained of the Pauline Epistles. A few relics of the man who mounted to the third heaven were piously preserved; the "clouts" he wore next his skin when in sore pain at Ephesus cured the sick. Among these relics Marcion found letters from which he collected ten, the *Apostolikon*, addressed to all the churches.<sup>188</sup>

This he did not do in the manner of a modern editor. In order to attain his aim of resurrecting anew the word of the Apostle, he gave precision and completion wherever he found these needful. The letter of Paul to the Thessalonians was explained by a second letter in which the imminence of the Advent of Lord Jesus is deferred till after the appearance of Antichrist. The Epistle to the Colossians was the subject of a commentary in an epistle to the Laodiceans<sup>189</sup> (now called Ephesians) in which the mystery of the institution and re-establishment of the world by Jesus is interpreted in mystery as the foundation of the Church. Six letters to the Corinthians were combined into two, that they might be more easily read in church, and were glossed with new instructions as to the silence of women in church,<sup>190</sup> the prohibition of meat sacrificed to idols,<sup>191</sup> the eucharist,<sup>192</sup> and a notable canticle on love.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> Tertullian, *De Præscr.*, 30; *Adv. Marc.*, v., 1. etc., *Ναύτης* (*naulerus*), which does not mean a ship-owner, but a captain (Moulton and Milligan: *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, s.v.)

<sup>188</sup> Cf. Acts xix. 12, a story apparently invented to authenticate the relics still existent at the time of the author.

<sup>189</sup> The letter referred to in Col. iv. 16 had been lost.

<sup>190</sup> I Cor. xiv. 33-35, which contradicts I Cor. xi. 5.

<sup>191</sup> I Cor. x. 16-22, which contradicts I Cor. x. 25-30.

<sup>192</sup> I Cor. xi. 23-32 added to a passage on repasts in common.

<sup>193</sup> I Cor. xiii, interpolation in an instruction by Paul on prophecy as compared with glossolaly.

The first edition of St. Paul was a notable event in the history of Christianity. Letters which had been sent by the Apostle to a single church for reading on a single occasion became a treasure common to all the churches whence jewels of doctrine could be drawn for the common profit. This soon had its effect. The Epistle of James was published in Syria as a counterblast to the Epistles to the Romans and the thesis of salvation by faith which seemed too strong to the timid and too easy to those who prided themselves on obeying every detail of the Law.<sup>194</sup> The Pseudo-Barnabas in Egypt read the *Apostolikon*, particularly the Epistles to the Laodiceans and to the Romans.<sup>195</sup> At Rome the prophet Hermas obsessed by his visions paid little honour to his great predecessor from whom he did not hesitate to borrow at need a maxim—for example, he found in I Thess. v. 13: “Be at peace among yourselves,” which pleased him so that he repeated it four times: *Vis.*, iii. 6, 9, and 12; *Sim.*, viii. 7. On the other hand, the author of Hebrews meditated the Crucified God and equated this to the Slain Lamb in the striking composition of the Eternal High Priest.

Marcion is probably the author of a life of St. Paul which was to form the framework of the Acts of the Apostles. In it were to be found both the fervent disciple and the sea-captain who knew which port of Crete was open to what wind and described skilfully the operations of the crew in a storm or when running ashore (Acts xxvii).

Constant study of the Epistle to the Galatians, which he placed first in his book, and meditation on the gulf between the Gospel and the Law, convinced this mystic sailor that Christianity was a perfectly new religion which had been revealed all at once to St. Paul, who broke away from Judaism and sought a path as yet untrodden. Since the Cruci-

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<sup>194</sup> James ii. 24: “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified and not by faith only,” which is opposed to Rom. iii. 28: “A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.” James ii. 21: “Was not Abraham our father justified by works?” as against Romans, iv. 2: “For if Abraham were justified by works...”

<sup>195</sup> *Vide* J. A. Robinson, *Barnabas, Hermas, and the Didache*; London, 1920, pp. 7, 8, 23. The gnostic interpretation on the twins in the womb of Rebecca is supposed to be known to the readers (Barnabas xiii. 3; Rom. ix. 6-13).

fied Christ had nothing in common with the Jewish Messiah, the Father of Christ had nought to do with Jahweh. Further, since there was only one God, this Jew deity could only be a demiurge such as Plato depicted in *Timæus*.

The literal translation of the Bible by Aquila of Sinope, a Jewish proselyte and contemporary compatriot of Marcion, fortified this conviction.<sup>196</sup> The old version of the Septuagint of which the churches commonly made use deviated frequently from the Hebrew, and lent itself to fantastic interpretations. Marcion therefore rejected allegory.<sup>197</sup> The Bible was to be taken literally and its God is sanguinary, wrathful, and jealous, prone to act as a cruel and ignorant man, a dealer out of rewards and vengeance, whose highest characteristic is a pretence to justice. How poor is such a figure beside that of divine love! The biblical law, being impossible to observe in entirety, is a trap for mankind and a justification for the torments to which they are destined. The Messiah which it promises is the image of his father, a braggart warrior untouched by pity, whose rod is of iron and whose sword is drunken with blood.

The God of the Bible boasts of being the Creator of the world—a poor accomplishment and a sorry responsibility! There is nothing truly divine in the world; its law is that of Jahweh, cruel, inflexible, blind, and destructive. To admire the work of God in nature is foolishness, for its chief work is war. The true God is unknown in the world; he created neither it nor its peoples. The Father, with whom Jesus is one, has a divine simplicity. His sole quality is goodness. In a spasm of pity and of love he sought to snatch mankind from the savage grip of their Creator and Judge, and his son, Jesus, resolved to abase himself and to sacrifice himself on the cross that the vengeance of the Creator might be exhausted on himself, that he might redeem mankind and

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<sup>196</sup> Aquila's translation is dated between 100 and 120, in the times of the Rabbin Elieser, Joshua, and Akiba.

<sup>197</sup> *Marcion allegorias non vult in prophetis habuisse formas* (Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.*, v. 18); *Marcion, cui per allegoriam nihil placet intelligi* (Origen, *Sel. in Psalmos*); Origen, *Comm. in Matth.*, xv. 3, declares that Marcion says that the Scripture must not be allegorized (Harnack, p. 260).

save them from the world, escaping the judgment of the Bible God. But those who should refuse and reject him shall be judged and doomed according to the Edict of their Creator.

The Good God is no judge, no distributor of penalties. He prefers sinners to the just, and remits sins without exacting punishment. His followers should be like him, and pass no judgments, should resist violence with love only, give all to the poor, and crucify themselves. Their maxim should be: "Be piteous even as God pities you."<sup>198</sup>

The love which permeates the limitless being of God should also infuse the soul of man, for it is sufficient for all, and nought can replace it. The man who has love is superior to the inspired prophets. The sweet and powerful emotion which, in Marcion's theology, emanates from the true God, is admirably expressed in a hymn inserted in the midst of Paul's teaching on prophecy in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, xiii.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels,  
And have not love,  
I should become as a sounding trumpet,  
A deafening cymbal.

Though I have the gift of prophecy,  
Though I understand all the mysteries, and all knowledge,  
Though I have all faith, so that I could move mountains,  
And I have not love, I am nothing.

Though I give away in mouthfuls all that I have,  
Though I give my body to be burned,<sup>199</sup>  
And I have not love, it will profit me nothing.

Love is long-suffering and of good-will;  
Love envies not;  
Love vaunts not itself;

Does not puff itself up, nor is impudent, nor selfish,  
Nor is easily provoked, nor thinketh evil;  
Rejoices not in iniquity,  
But rejoices in truth.

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<sup>198</sup> *The Gospel of Marcion*, vi. 36 (Harnack, p. 194).

<sup>199</sup> Zeno, the founder of Stoicism, placed above all other demonstrations of endurance the example of an Indian ascetic letting himself be burned at a slow fire (Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.*, ii. 20).



It covers all things,  
Believes all things,  
Hopes all things,  
Endures all.

Love never fails;  
Prophecies? They shall be their own destruction.  
Tongues? They shall be silent.  
Knowledge? It shall vanish away.

In part we know,  
In part we prophesy.  
When perfection shall be attained,  
That which is in part shall be done away.

When I was a child,  
I spoke as a child,  
Understood as a child, thought as a child.  
When I became a man,  
I put away childish things.

Now we see as in a glass, darkly,  
Then shall it be face to face.  
Now I know in part;  
But then I shall know all—  
As I was known.

And now abide faith, hope, and love,  
These three;  
But the greatest of the three is love.

The doctrine of love is the crowning glory of Paul's teaching. His religious experience was the welling up of divine power in the abyss of weakness and suffering. That of Marcion was the boundless might of unmighty love in the midst of unfettered violence. Christ crucified was the emblem of the one as of the other. For Paul, too, but in less degree, the divine sacrifice was one of infinite love.<sup>200</sup> This idea Marcion enlarged. The logical consequences of Paul's doctrine included the renunciation of the biblical god, the creator deity, for on the cross of Jesus both the law and the world were done away. But Paul had not gone as far as

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<sup>200</sup> "For ye know the grace (*χάρις*) of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet, for your sakes, he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (2 Cor. viii. 9).

this; he had not broken away from Judaism to that degree. Historically there was something equivocal in Marcion's doctrine, for he was compelled to employ the terms Christ, Son of Man, Jesus, Jesus Crucified, which came from the Bible; yet he would not accept from the Jewish scripture any attributes. Nevertheless he had received his Jesus as it had been slowly forged in Holy Writ from Daniel to Paul.

Ethically his teaching was a paradox, the profound truth of which the future was to prove. The doctrine of non-resistance, which Gandhi was to call the sword of self-sacrifice, has inspired men to accomplish all that is truly great. Religiously Marcion went further than St. Paul. Across the centuries he appeals to men who reject the Bible and find even no god whatever in the universe; for he offers a religion in the service of mankind and apart from the world.

On such moral and religious foundation Marcion organized the reformed churches, severed from the creator god by asceticism and by rejection of the works of the flesh. Being thus different from other churches, they formed a sort of monastic order into which entrance was gained only on renouncing marriage. Marcion, the very chaste master, would baptize and admit to the eucharist only the unmarried, the widowed, the divorced, or those who pledged themselves to continence.<sup>201</sup> Meat was completely forbidden. The most rigorous abstinence was practised, even to the verge of death, *apocarteresis*, though fish was allowed as a chaste food.<sup>202</sup> Fasting on the sabbath was avoided, as it was a Jewish custom (Epiphanes, *Hær.*, xlii. 3).

When the church assembled, the *catechumens* who had not yet been baptized were not kept without the door, as in other sects, but were present at the service with the initiated, listened, prayed, were kissed on the lips as they were; and

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<sup>201</sup> *Marcion sanctissimus magister* (Tertullian, *De Præscr.*, 30). *Non tingitur apud illum caro, nisi virgo, ni vidua, caelebs, nisi divortio baptisima mercata... quomodo tu nuntias dirimis nec jungens marem et feminum nec alibi conjunctos ad sacramentum baptismatis et eucharistiæ admittens nisi inter se conjuraverint adversus fructum nuptiarum* (Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.*, i. 29; iv. 34).

<sup>202</sup> *Escarum usum. quasi inhonestum criminant* (cf. Harnack, p. 149) (*Copias maris*) *quas sanctiorem cibum deputas... Hypocrita ut apocarteresi te marcionitam probes...* (Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.*, i. 14).

pagans were freely admitted.<sup>203</sup> There were no elders for life, as in other churches. The head of a church was the *episcopus*, who could be dismissed, just as the elder might become lay once more.<sup>204</sup> Women were not accustomed to prophesy in this church, but on the other hand, had an important part to play, especially those termed “holy women.”<sup>205</sup> Though they catechized, exorcized, and cured, yet spiritual gifts were not encouraged in them. Prophets were few; not so much was heard of visions nor ecstasies of prayer.<sup>206</sup> Marcion put an end to the period of the prophets which Paul had begun. The religious democracy which Paul had founded on the community of prophetic gifts was now based on the community of love. Martyrdom was the sole ambitioned privilege; the Marcionite churches were therefore at the very front of the strife with the Roman Empire, and won more martyrs’ crowns than any other church.<sup>207</sup> When facing their judges, then alone were the faithful encouraged to prophesy under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

Several of Marcion’s institutions became general throughout the churches; among them must probably be counted the alteration of the Easter feast and the transformation of the banquet into a sacrament. Easter, the feast of the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb, Jesus, was celebrated by the Christians on the same day as the Jews, the 14th Nisan, the day of

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<sup>203</sup> *Quis catechumenus, quis fidelis incertum est; pariter adeunt, pariter audiunt, pariter orant, etiam ethnici, si supervenerint . . . Pacem quoque passim cum omnibus miscent* (Tertullian, *De Præscr.*, 41).

<sup>204</sup> *Alius hodie episcopus, cras alius (ibid.); hodie presbyter qui cras laicus (ibid.)*.

<sup>205</sup> *Probet etiam. mihi mulierem apud se prophetasse* (Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.*, v. 8); cf. I Cor. xiv. 34 (Marcion’s interpolation): “Let your women keep silence in the churches.” “*Sanctiores feminæ*” (Tertullian, *Av. Marc.*, v. 8). *Quae audeant docere, contendere, exorcismos agere, curationes repromittere, frositan et tingere* (Tertullian, *De Præscr.*, xli). Epiphanes (*Hær.*, xlii. 3, 4) confirms that in the Marcionite churches women might baptize.

<sup>206</sup> *Exhibeat Marcion dei sui dona, aliquos prophetas ... edat aliquem visionem, aliquam orationem, dumtaxat spiritatem, in ecstasi* (Tertullian, *De Præscr.*, 41).

<sup>207</sup> Harnack, p. 150. The first author of the letters of Ignatius of Antioch, in which an unbounded desire for martyrdom is displayed, was the Marcionite Bishop of Syria. *Vide* H. Delafosse, *Lettres d’Ignace d’Antioche*; Paris, Rieder, 1927.

the first moon of the spring. Marcion had the Christian festival postponed to the following Sunday, day holy to Jesus, since he appeared at the end of a week. The Paschal reform was adopted by the Roman Church, while the Asiatic churches—notably the Smyrniote—kept the old usage.

A meal in common, preceded according to Jewish custom by a blessing or *eucharistia*, was usual among the churches (I Cor. xi. 17-34, omitting the interpolation 23-32). To bring it into conformity with the rule of abstinence, it was reduced to a scrap of bread and a cup of water. This was taken as a symbol of union with the Crucified God; the bread was the body and the water the blood shed by Jesus (Tertullian *Adv. Marc.*, i. 14; cf. the interpolation 23-32 in I Cor. xi). This reform of the eucharist was adopted by the Roman Church, save that wine replaced water as a better symbolism.<sup>208</sup> The Syrian churches remained faithful to the ancient custom of a full meal at which the blessings called on bread and wine had nothing to do with the flesh and blood of Jesus.<sup>209</sup>

The reading of the Bible did not form part of the Marcionite liturgy. This left a gap, which the epistles of Paul could not wholly fill. They replaced Isaiah and Jeremiah in their blazing, brilliant poetry, but there was no book of the law, no five books of Moses.

The true God, remote from this world, remained unknown to men and to their creator. To Paul, at last, he revealed his son Jesus. True that Peter, James, John, and the Twelve had also received this revelation, but they had been unable to understand it, so blinded were they by Judaism. Paul alone understood and realized that the Son thus revealed was a crucified God. Since that day, for more than a century, Jesus had been manifest to the world, thanks to God and to his wisdom. Thousands of sinners had been drawn to him, and their sins, by his grace, had been remitted. His prophets had been granted many a vision, many a precept, and many

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<sup>208</sup> Justin, 1 *Apol.*, lxxv. 2 and 5; lxxvii. 5, in which wine appears to be an addition to the original text. Vide Harnack, *Brot und Wasser, die eucharist. Elemente bei Justin (Texte und Untersuchungen, vii. 2 ; Leipzig, 1891).*

<sup>209</sup> *Didache*, ix-x., vide A. Loisy, *Les Origines de la Cène Eucharistique, Congrès d' Histoire du Christianisme; Paris et Amsterdam, 1928.*

a parable. By the hands of his exorcists he had wrought many a cure, and the hour was at hand when, after the Antichrist, the Jewish Messiah, should have attempted once more to deceive them, he should come once again, in his glory this time, to assemble his faithful and to save the elect. How might the good news be told?

Marcion therefore needed to show that the apparition of Jesus was recent, and had nothing to do with what had been predicted or revealed in the old scriptures of the Jews, but was a new thing. The manifestation of Jesus was a terrestrial fact; therefore the crucifixion must also be a terrestrial event.

This idea was to have far-reaching consequences, though the *didascalus* of Hebrews might repulse it with disdain. The populace straightway took it to heart. Novices of little instruction must have heard of it, Greeks of artistic bent, who took the theological data as a dramatized story. Thus there might come to the ears of some Roman magistrate obscure whisperings as to the mystery of Christ Crucified.

For it was a Roman magistrate who was the author of the first document in which we find the crucifixion of Jesus attributed to Pontius Pilate, and not to the Powers of Evil. In 111 Pliny the Younger, after cross-examining the Christians of Bithynia and Pontus, had no notion that their Christ was a real character. According to them, he reported to Trajan, on a certain day (surely Sunday) they assembled before dawn and chanted a hymn to the god Christ, those on the one part answering those on the other. (*Stato die ante lucem convenire carmenque Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem.*) Here it is a question of Christ, a heavenly being, awaited as the dawn on the first day of the week. A few years later, in 114, a friend of Pliny, a former consul too, Tacitus, was proconsul in Asia,<sup>210</sup> where it was not unlikely he had to consider cases against the Christians. Still a little later, in 117, Tacitus wrote the *Annals*, where he said of the burning of Rome that Nero thought the incendiaries to have been Christians, so called after Chrestus, who had been put

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<sup>210</sup> Hula and Szanto, *Sitzungsb. d. Wien. Akad.*, 132, ii (1895), p. 18; quoted by V. Chapot, *La Province Romaine Proconsulaire d'Asie*; Paris, 1904, p. 309.

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to death under Tiberius by the proconsul Pontius Pilate. (*Nero subdidit reos . . . quos per flagitia invisos vulgus Chrestianos appellabat. Auctor nominis ejus Chrestus*<sup>211</sup> *Tiberio imperitante per procuratorem. Pontium Pilatum siplicio adfectus erat.*)<sup>212</sup>

It is not likely that Tacitus obtained such information at Rome, for the Roman Christians, if they can be judged by Hermas, were far from thinking of Jesus as a historical person. The comment was derived from the interrogation of Asiatic Christians, followers of Paul, if not Marcionites, for the latter joined the words *Christos* and *chrestos* (good).<sup>213</sup> The idea Tacitus had of *Chrestus* from what he knew of Christians is analogous to that he had of Moses from what he knew of Jews: "Moses instituted new rites, different from those of other men, in order to form for himself a new people in the future." Josephus's silence in respect of Jesus is enough to prove that Tacitus here wrote as a polemic and not as a historian.

Pontius Pilate was the procurator who governed judæa for ten years in the time of John the Baptist. In the *Antiquities* of Josephus he is said to have been very harsh (XVIII. iii. 2; repression of a revolt in Jerusalem: iv. I; massacre of Samaritans), and the *Antiquities* appeared in 93. He it was became responsible for the putting to death of the Son of God.

Marcion accepted enthusiastically this popular, pagan idea of Christ's death; its simplicity appealed to him. It was looked upon as an accomplished event, and was not hampered with a baggage of visions, interpretations, gnosés, and what not. It was eminently readable and, read aloud in the

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<sup>211</sup> *Chrestus* and *Chrestianos* seem to be the original readings of the unique manuscript *Mediceus* which a scribe later altered to *Christus* and *Christianos*, scratching out the "e"s. Vide K. Linck, *De antiquissimis veterum quæ ad Iesum Nazarenum spectant testimonis*; Giessen, 1913, p. 78. *Per flagitia invisos* is an ironical antithesis with *Chrestianos*, from *χρηστός*, good, those who call themselves good.

<sup>212</sup> *Annales*, xv. 44. Tacitus imagined some sort of seditious superstition which was put down under Tiberius and reappeared under Nero.

<sup>213</sup> In an inscription of the Marcionite church of Lebaba in Syria, Jesus is called *Ἰησοῦς Χρηστος* (Harnack, p. 342). In the gospel according to Marcion (Luke) vi. 35, God is termed *chrestos*, "good" towards the ingrate and the wicked.

churches, would arouse more fervid faith than the most ebullient prophecy. The manifestation of God, extraneous to the world, could be told in the form of a brief tale of Jesus on earth, concluding with the death on the cross, the sacrifice for the salvation of mankind, which St. Paul considered the essential and lasting act of Christ.

Once the Cross of Jesus had been erected on earth, once the name of Pontius Pilate had been discovered, the details of Jesus's life soon developed. Each church brought its scrap of good news; here all recalled a prophecy, there a parable, formerly inspired by the Spirit of Jesus, and now ascribed to Jesus himself.<sup>214</sup> The work of Jesus remained what it had ever been—to call the sinners, cure souls, save the lost, preach the doctrine of the cross and of love. To clear the way for this new step it was necessary to show that the earlier apostles had ill understood their revelation, that they had been unintelligent, carnal, and cowardly, that Jesus had reprimanded them and had given them his approval of Paul's teaching.

It was not difficult to assemble details of Jesus's terrestrial life before he met his death on the cross out of the prophecies of the earthly life which was to follow his advent in glory. To bring a light unto the peoples, to comfort broken hearts. . . . The original theme is inverted. Paul changed it by interposing the crucifixion before the investiture. It now seemed natural to place the life on earth before the crucifixion.

In all the clutter of the Mandæan books there is preserved a curious passage which seems to be an echo of John the Baptist announcing the coming of the Man from Heaven in John's time, the time of Pontius Pilate. This heavenly person is called Enosh-Uthra, the angel Enoch, for in one of Enoch's visions, Enoch himself, carried up to heaven, becomes the *Son of Man* enthroned at God's side. (Enoch lxxi; a last vision which seems added to the book of the parables of Enoch).

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<sup>214</sup> Irenæus (*Hær.*, v. 33, 7) tells of one Papias and how a coarse passage emanating from a Christian prophet could be attributed to Christ himself.

Enosh-Uthra comes and makes his way to Jerusalem,  
Garbed in a cloak of cloud.  
He walks clad seemingly in a body,  
But he has no raiment of flesh.  
Wrath and vengeance are not in him.  
He comes in the years of Pilatus, king of the world.

Enosh-Uthra comes down to the earth  
With the power of the King of Light.  
He heals the sick, causes the blind to see,  
Cleanses the leprous, makes the lame to walk,  
And those who drag themselves along the ground to arise,  
Gives hearing to the deaf, and life to the dead.<sup>215</sup>

He finds his faithful from among the Jews.  
He shews them this:  
There is Death and there is Life;  
There is Darkness and there is Light;  
There is Error and there is Truth.  
He converted the Jews in the name of the High God of Light.

Three hundred and sixty prophets went up out of Jerusalem.  
They bear witness to the Name of the Lord of Greatness.  
Enosh-Uthra rises into the heights  
And takes his place at the side of Mshunné-Kushat.<sup>216</sup>

According to this prophecy the divine man began his manifestation on earth by his beneficent works before taking his place at the side of God to accomplish his terrible duty of the Day of Doom. His apparition is made, not *in the clouds*, as Daniel said, but in a *cloak of cloud, seemingly in a body*. The disciples of the Baptist, who were numerous at Ephesus, evidently believed, on the authority of a pronouncement such as the above, that the divine man, the Angel Enoch, the guardian angel and consoler of mankind, had made a visit in the body to earth in the years of Pontius Pilate, which were also the years of the Baptist. The Marcionites replied that this visit was that of Jesus. The Gospel of

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<sup>215</sup> Isaiah xxxv, 5, lepers and dead added.

<sup>216</sup> *Ginza*, trans. M. Lidzbarski; Göttingen and Leipzig, 1925, pp. 29-30. *Vide* R. Reitzenstein, *Das Mandäische Buch des Herrn der Grösse und die Evangelienüberlieferung*; Heidelberg, 1919.



Marcion (Luke) vii. 21-22, gives an enumeration of works similar to that on the Mandæan text, including the addition of the leprous and the dead. It is not likely that the Mandæan text should be derived from the Marcionites, since it is in a more ancient line of ideas which goes back directly to the Book of Enoch. Jesus is therefore substituted for the Divine Consoler of the followers of John.

Marcion left Jesus the *cloak of cloud* and the seeming body; in this he was faithful to Paul's teaching. Jesus, although come down upon earth, had nought in common with the flesh. His body was of the spirit, ethereal, veiled with the similitude of a body, as Paul had taught in I Cor. xv. 45-49, and Phil. ii. 7.

It must have been about 128-129 that Marcion had the notion that Jesus had led an earthly life. The Marcionites declared that a century had passed between Jesus and Marcion.<sup>217</sup> Now the ten years of Pontius Pilate offered dates A.D. 26, and Marcion choose 28-29 for the crucifixion. He completed the tale of Jesus's life on earth in 132. He began it with these extraordinary words: "Now, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being govenor of Judæa, Jesus, the Son of God, came down from heaven..."

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<sup>217</sup> Esnik, *Contre les Sectes* (J. M. Schmid, *Eznik von Kolb*, 1900, p. 176); Harnack, pp. 23, 375, 454. The century should end at an important point in Marcion's life.

## V

### THE GOOD GOD ON EARTH

(*The Gospel of Marcion*)

WHAT a stroke of genius, the greatest after the work of St. Paul, was it to picture the Lord Jesus as having dwelt on earth! The Son of God shook himself free of the prophets, their contradictory visions, and conflicting evidence, when he broke his way into history and descended from the celestial plane to the terrestrial. Then his sojourn among men, his teaching, and his death could be told in a simple and persuasive manner, yet convincing, as facts. An artless, obvious, touching story would have greater weight than all the dazzling and inflamed fancies of the seers.

Marcion's work was termed the Gospel and nothing more—just the Good Tidings. It was, just as Paul's spoken word and John's written word had been, the Annunciation of God's mystery. But with a great difference. The mystery which John had foretold for the imminent future, which Paul had perceived in the mystic present, was now in the past. Jesus, once He Who Is To Come, once He Who Is was now He Who Had Been.

The authorship was anonymous. When asked to name the author, the Marcionites replied that it was the Christ, meaning that the Christ had uttered all the words the Gospel contained. When it was pointed out that the Christ could scarcely have described his own death, they said that this was the book Paul meant when he spoke of "my gospel," and when he declared that there was no other gospel than his.<sup>218</sup> This Gospel was linked to the *Apostolikon*, the collec-

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<sup>218</sup> Rom. ii. 16; xvi. 25; Gal. i. 7. Declarations of the Marcionite Megethios (the Christ, then Paul) and of the Marcionite Marcus (the Christ) in the *Dialogues of Adamantios*, ed. Van den Sande-Bakhuyzen, i. 6 and 8; ii. 13.

tion of Paul's Epistles. These two books formed the new scriptures in opposition to those of the Jews, which they were to replace.

The Gospel was accompanied and explained by a commentary, called the *Antitheses*, which emphasized the antithesis between the new God and the new way of life and the Jewish God and the Jewish Law. Both books have been lost. But the Gospel has been so largely quoted by the polemicists, especially Tertullian, Adamantios, and Epiphanius, that it can be reconstituted, just as a broken statue can be pieced together from the fragments dug up from the earth.<sup>219</sup> It was included almost wholly in the gospel of St. Luke, which makes its restoration easier.<sup>220</sup> We are acquainted also through quotation with some of the commentaries used by Marcion and his followers to explain the gospel.

There is nothing of a connected narrative in it. It is composed of some sixty anecdotes, or *pericopes*, detached fragments without any connection between them. Often we meet prophecies or parables uttered by the Christ, but without any sort of introduction which could give a chronological order or any direction as to locality. Usually it is Jesus who is speaking, sometimes to solve a disputed problem, sometimes to lay down an article of doctrine, sometimes symbolically, in the guise of a miracle, to display his influence on the souls of men, or to reveal his true nature. Alone the tale of his passion and resurrection possess sequence. Up to that point the plan is the same; each fragment is a whole in itself, and repetitions are frequent. This gives an impression of discontinuity, not to say slovenliness. Unity, however, lies within it; for it is written in a style of simple majesty, possessing a discreet warmth and sincere faith, with a strong Pauline accent, which is softened by an essential goodness, a tone of nobility and

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<sup>219</sup> The most recent piecing together has been that of A. Harnack in *Marcion, Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott*; 2nd ed., Leipzig, 1924, Beilagen, pp. 177-255. See Appendix.

<sup>220</sup> Tertullian and Epiphanius pretended, on the contrary, that Marcion took his gospel from that of St. Luke. The critical examination to which I have subjected the two gospels demonstrates that the parts peculiar to St. Luke have all the appearance of additions and corrections, in particular the first two chapters.

reserve which attenuates polemics, and a profound feeling as to what Jesus was and what he means to the world.

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar,  
In the time of the governor Pontius Pilate,  
Jesus Christ, Son of God, came down from Heaven  
And appeared at Capernaum, a town in Galilee.

He taught in the synagogue,  
Do you believe I have come  
To fulfil the Law and the Prophets?  
I have come to do away with them, and not to fulfil them.<sup>221</sup>

All were astonished at his teaching,  
For his word had authority.

Jesus, we note, was not born, but came down from the heaven of the Good God fully grown. Marcion used to say that God could not take on a body of flesh and blood and remain pure, and that for a God to be born was an unclean thing.<sup>222</sup> The Son of God took on the appearance of a man, as St. Paul taught.<sup>223</sup> If he had really become a man, he would have ceased to be a God.<sup>224</sup>

He made his appearance at Capernaum—*i.e.*, at the borders of Zebulun and Naphthali—on the seashore, where, said Isaiah, the Hebrew Christ was expected.<sup>225</sup> That was why many, including even his first apostles, mistook him for the Messiah. Despite his ancient name of the Christ, he was a new deity.<sup>226</sup> And he had made his appearance among

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<sup>221</sup> The textual evidence for these words is to be found in the *Dialogues of Adamantios*, ii. 15, and in Isidore of Pelusium, *Epist.*, i. 37 (Migne, T. 78, col. 393). They are confirmed in their position by Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.*, iv. 7: “*Stupebant ... non quoniam adversus legum et proprietatis docebat...*”. Matt. v. 17 takes them topsy-turvy.

<sup>222</sup> John Chrysostom, *Hom.*, 23, 6 in *Ephesios* ; Tertullian, *Adv. Marcionem*, iii. 11 (*turpissimum dei nativitas*).

<sup>223</sup> Phil. ii. 7, passage cited by Marcion in Chrysostom, *Ad Phil.*, ii. 7.

<sup>224</sup> *Si Christus natus fuisset et hominem vere induisset, deus esse desisset, amittens quod erat, dum fit quod non erat... Ideo, inquis, nego deum in hominem vere conversum*” (Tertullian, *De Carne Christi*, 3).

<sup>225</sup> Isa. viii. 22-ix. I. Interpretation in Matt. iv. 13-16.

<sup>226</sup> “*Novus deus . . . quem quidem Iesus Christus et ille in veteribus nominibus novus revelavit*” (Tertullian, i. 8).

the Jews who were total strangers to him, and in a world which was not his, in order to save souls and to abrogate the God of the Jews, the Law, and the Prophets.<sup>227</sup> He declares in a synagogue that he has come not to fulfil the Jewish scriptures, but to destroy them.

A demoniac personifies the Jews as a whole who are possessed by an unclean spirit, as their own prophets admit.<sup>228</sup> Jesus drives out the demon to show that he can cleanse the Jews. The demon recognizes his power, but believes him to be an envoy of the God of the Jews. Jesus makes him keep silent. As for that evil race, the Jews, they are ever asking for signs, but Jesus is not ready to give them any, for he desires spontaneous faith. The Jews throw him out of the synagogue, lay hands on him, and would cast him down from a mountain. Jesus, his body being ethereal, passes through them.<sup>229</sup> Though he does not cease his efforts for the purification of the Jews, his duty calls him to other cities—*i.e.*, to the whole world. The Hebrew Christ was for Israel only; Jesus came to free the whole human race.<sup>230</sup>

He sees in a ship Peter and the sons of Zebedee—James and John. By means of the miracle of an astonishing catch of fish, he teaches them that they are to be fishers of men.

With his fleshless hand, which cannot be defiled, he touches a leper, thus breaking the law.<sup>231</sup> He cleanses him and tells him to execute the rites due according to the Laws of Moses for a cleansed leper, model of what a purified sinner—*i.e.*, a new convert—owes to the Church.<sup>232</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> Epiph., *Hær.*, xlii. 4; cf. Tertullian, iii. 6—*Christus alienus et extraneus Indaeis*.

<sup>228</sup> Isa. lxiv. 6; Hosea iv. 12; v. 4, etc.

<sup>229</sup> *Per caliginem elusus quae nullo omnino tactui succidisset* (Tertullian, iv. 21).

<sup>230</sup> *Quasi Iudaicus quidem Christus populo soli ex dispersione redigendo a creatore, (noster) vero omni humano generi liberando collatus (est)* (Tertullian, iv. 21).

<sup>231</sup> *Ut armulus legis tetigit leprosam* (Tertullian, iv. 9). *Quis fantasmatis habuit corpus ideo inquinari non potuit* (unknown Syrian, quoted by Zahn, *Neue Kirchl. Zeitsch.*, 1910, p. 512).

<sup>232</sup> *Hominem quandum peccatorem, verbo mox Dei immaculatum, offerre debet manus Deo apud templum . . . scilicet apud Ecclesiam* (Tertullian, iv. 9).

He frees a paralytic from the sins which hold his limbs in bondage. He absolves sins freely, without exacting punishment; so great is his unprecedented goodness.<sup>233</sup> To the healed paralytic he gives the order to carry away his bed in direct defiance of the law of the sabbath.<sup>234</sup>

He takes with him a publican, considered, as all his like were, a notorious sinner, and sits without hesitation at the same table as heathen, sinners by nature, as was Paul's custom<sup>235</sup> and that of the Nicolaitanes and of Marcion. When the Pharisees reprove him, he replies (Luke v. 31-32):

They that are whole need no physician;  
But they that are sick. . . .  
I am not come to call the righteous  
But the sinners.

He stands opposed to the spirit of Judaism, which is righteousness. The Good God would have neither righteous nor sinners, but he takes pity on the sinners. "He would have," cries Celsus indignantly, "by preference as sons sinners whom another has condemned, outcasts, or, to use their own word, *excrement*."<sup>236</sup> In contrast with Judaism, sin is a title to divine favour.

Jesus does away with the fasts of the Jews and of the followers of John the Baptist; but he replaces them with the fasts of Easter and of the sabbath, for on those days, between the day of his death and of his resurrection, the Bridegroom is taken away from the Bride.<sup>237</sup>

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<sup>233</sup> *Dimittit non vindicando et absolvit non puniendo* (Tertullian, i. 27). Nova ista Christi benignitas (*ibid.*, iv. 10).

<sup>234</sup> *In sabbato etiam portare praecepit a securato* (Hegemonius, *Acta Archelai*, ed. Beeson, p.64). The Gospel of St. John notes that the healing of the paralytic was done on the sabbath (v. 9).

<sup>235</sup> Paul, before the days of Marcion, threw open Christian gatherings to the heathen (1 Cor. xiv. 23). The teaching attributed to Peter was the opposite, for he forbade "a man that is a Jew to keep company or come unto one of another nation" (Acts x. 28). In the Clementine *Homilies* Peter tells Clement to take his meals apart since he was not baptized (*Hom.*, i. 22).

<sup>236</sup> Celsus, in Origen, *Contra Celsum*, vi. 53; cf. Phil. iii. 8- "do count them but dung" (σκύβαλα).

<sup>237</sup> [The Marcionites] term the Church the Bride and our Lord the true Bridegroom" (Ephrem, *Hymn.*, xlvii. 2). The Marcionites fasted on the Saturday of each week "that they might not do according to the rites of the God of the Jews" (Epiph., *Hær.*, xlii. 3).

He indicates in a parable that the new religion can have nothing in common with the old (Luke v. 37):--

No man putteth new wine into old bottles (wineskins).  
Else the new wine will burst the bottles  
And be spilled.  
But new wine is put into new bottles  
And both are preserved.  
And no man putteth a piece of a new garment  
On an old cloak,  
Else the new maketh a rent  
And agreeth not with the old,  
And the tear will become greater.

Paul was right when he said (2 Cor. v. 17), "Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." The Jerusalem Apostles attempted to mingle the old and the new, "the observance of the law and the words of the Saviour." They "perverted the Gospel by preserving the old customs."<sup>238</sup>

Jesus abrogates the sabbath by permitting his disciples to violate it and by violating it himself; for, he proclaimed, "The Son of Man is master also of the sabbath."

He chose twelve apostles, who afterwards showed themselves stupid and unworthy. The first, Peter, denied him, and the last, Judas, betrayed him.

There collected round him a vast multitude of people from the shores of Tyre and Sidon and from many another city, even from beyond the seas. To this crowd he taught maxims (*δόγματα*) intended to replace the commandments (*ἐντολαί*) of the God of the Jews.

Here is his rule:--

Blessed the poor  
For theirs is the kingdom of God!  
Blessed those who hunger  
For they shall be filled.  
Blessed those who weep  
For they shall rejoice.

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<sup>238</sup> *Apostolos admiscuisse ea quae sunt legalia salvatoris verbis* (Iren., *Hær.*, iv. 5, 5). *Pervertentes evangelium ... retentione veteris disciplinae* (Tertullian, v. 3).

Blessed shall you be  
When men shall hate you,  
When they shall abuse you,  
Shall cast out your name as contemptible  
Because of the Son of Man!  
In like manner to the prophets  
Did their fathers.<sup>239</sup>

But curse on you, you rich,  
For you have received your consolation!  
Curse on you, who are full,  
For you shall hunger!  
Curse on you who laugh now  
For you shall weep!

Curse on you, when men shall bless you!  
In like manner to the false prophets  
Did their fathers.

You have heard what has been said,  
Thou shalt love him who loves thee  
And thou shalt hate thy enemy.<sup>240</sup>

But I say to you who listen:  
Love your enemies,  
Do good to those who hate you,  
Bless those who curse you,  
Pray for those who abuse you!

You have heard what has been said:  
An eye for an eye  
And a tooth for a tooth.

But I say to you,  
If a man give thee a blow on the cheek  
Offer him the other also.  
If a man take thy cloak,  
Offer him thy shirt also.  
To every man who asks of thee, give;  
Of him who takes thy goods ask nothing back.

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<sup>239</sup> This expression “their fathers” shows that Jesus was not speaking to Jews, and that the “men” who will persecute the Christians will be the Jews. Jesus does not undertake the defence of the prophets, but simply points out that the Jews behaved impiously towards their own prophets (cf. Tertullian, iv. 15).

<sup>240</sup> These three lines are attested by the *Dialogues of Adamantios*, l. 12, 15; they are omitted by Luke and preserved by Matthew.



If you love those who love you  
What thank have you?  
Sinners also do it.  
If you lend where you hope for return,  
What thank have you?  
Sinners to sinners also lend  
That they may receive.

But love your enemies,  
Do good and lend  
Hoping nothing in exchange.  
You will be sons of God.  
For he is *good*<sup>241</sup> to the unthankful and the wicked.  
Be pitiful  
As your Father is pitiful to you.

Judge not,  
That you be not judged.  
Doom not,  
That you may not be doomed.  
Forgive, that you may be forgiven.

Give, it shall be given you;  
Full measure, pressed down, and running over,  
Shall be poured into your lap.  
In the measure with which you mete  
It shall be measured to you again.

The new programme, contrasted with that of the God of the Jews, is to resemble the Good God in everything. Put aside wealth and the pleasures of this world, to which he is a stranger. Suffer all, never resist evil, for he is goodness alone and his patience is infinite. Love his enemies, for he is good towards the wicked and the thankless. Have pity, for, moved in his bowels, he has had pity on men, who were nothing to him.<sup>242</sup> Not to judge, for he does not judge, so does not threaten, does not get angry, remains steadfast in tranquillity and mansuetude.<sup>243</sup> Not to condemn, for he

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<sup>241</sup> *χρηστός*, a word very similar to *χριστός*, and often substituted for it *by* the Marcionites.

<sup>242</sup> *Dialogues of Adamantios*, i. 3; cf. Tertullian, i. 14: *Deus melior adamavit hominem opus creatoris*.

<sup>243</sup> *Non minatur mitissimus deus quia nec iudicat nec irascetur* (Tertullian, iv. 19). *Tranquillitas et mansuetudo* (*ibid.*, iv. 29).

saves those who believe in him, but does not condemn those who do not believe in him.<sup>244</sup>

From the Good God nothing but good ever comes. What a contrast with Jahweh of the Jews, who said, I am he who created evil, and again, Behold I send evil to you.<sup>245</sup> A radical difference separates them:—

A bad tree cannot  
Bear good fruit,  
Nor a good tree  
Bear bad fruit.  
By its fruit the tree shall be known.<sup>246</sup>

These are the words Marcion showed to the Elders of the Church at Rome to prove to them the difference between the Creator and the Good God.

A centurion whose faith is mentioned as exemplary symbolizes the pagans who were converted to Christianity. A widow whose only son is resurrected by Jesus through compassion seems to represent Sion, widowed of her husband since the destruction of the Temple,<sup>247</sup> which Jesus alone can revive.

John the Baptist, prophet of the God of the Jews, was “scandalized” that the miracles of Jesus should come from another deity.<sup>248</sup> He did not recognize Jesus, because Jesus was not the Jewish Christ.<sup>249</sup> What, then, was John the Baptist? I tell you:—

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<sup>244</sup> *Adamantios*, ii. 4.

<sup>245</sup> Isa. xlv. 7: *Ego sum qui condo mala*. Jer. xviii. 11: *Ecce ego emitto in vos mala*. According to Tertullian (l. 2; cf. ii. 14 and 24), Marcion, on finding these words of the Creator God, applied to him the comparison of the bad tree producing bad fruit—*i.e.*, evil. He supposes another God is the good tree which produces only good fruit.

<sup>246</sup> “Two Lords are here referred to. Thou seest two natures” (*Adamantios*, i. 28).

<sup>247</sup> In the Fourth Book of Esdras, which Marcion could have read, Sion is represented as a desolate woman who has lost her only son, to whom it is promised that her son shall be restored (4 Esdras ix 38-x. 16).

<sup>248</sup> *Scandalizatur Iohannes auditis virtutibus Christi, ut alterius (dei)* (Tertullian, iv. 8).

<sup>249</sup> “John does not recognize Jesus, whereas it was impossible for the prophet of the Creator not to know his own Christ” (*Adamantios*, i. 26).

Greater than all the children of women  
Is the prophet John.  
But the least in the Kingdom of God  
Is greater than he.

John the Baptist, according to the Hebrew prophets, was the forerunner of the Hebrew Christ. For this reason he was greater than “all the children of women.” Jesus was not born of woman. The least of the Christians was greater than John the Baptist, for the reason that he belonged to the kingdom of another god than that of John. The least Christian is superior to the whole universe of the Creator.<sup>250</sup>

A prostitute washes Jesus’s feet with her tears. She is saved by the faith which her repentance proves, and by her love.

Generous women, prototypes of the “holy women” of the Marcionite Church, help Jesus with their gifts.

The parable of the Sower, like that of the Talents, shows how spiritual gifts remain dormant in some and fructify in others. These gifts are increased where they are made use of and taken away from those who do not use them.

To tempt Jesus and to find out whether he was born or not<sup>251</sup> he is told: “Thy mother and thy brothers are without, who seek thee.” He answers: “What mother, what brothers have I? Save those who listen to my words and do them.”

In this manner he declares that he was not born.<sup>252</sup> His sole family are the Christians whom faith and love have made children of God.

By calming a tempest he shows that he is master of the

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<sup>250</sup> *Alterius dei (est) regnum in quo modicus quis major erit Iohanne, alterios Iohannes* (Tertullian, iv. 18). *Marcion . . . melioris se decit naturae esse quam conditor est* (Jerome, *Comm. in Eccles*, p. 450). The Father of Jesus and the Creator God are separated by an infinite distance; *infinita distantia separati ab invicem* (Orig., *Hær.*, iv. 33, 2).

<sup>251</sup> *(Tentaverunt) per mentionem matris et fratrum ut scirent natusne esset, an non?* (Tertullian, iv. 197). *Tentandi gratia nuntiaverunt et matrem et fratres quos non habebat* (Apelles in Tertullian, *De Carne*, 7).

<sup>252</sup> *Ipse contestatur se non esse natum ... Constantissimum argumentum omnium qui domini nativatem in controversiam deferunt* (Tertullian, iv. 19).

elements and that the Creator is thenceforth subject to him<sup>253</sup>

He extends his indulgence even to devils, and consents not to cast into the abyss a whole legion of demons.

Against the Jewish Law, a woman suffering from hæmorrhage touches him. Through this act of faith she is cured and saved.<sup>254</sup> It was shameful, says Marcion, to treat such a woman as unclean and to “dishonour reddening flesh.”<sup>255</sup>

Jesus sends out his first apostles. In contrast with the Hebrew god who bade the Israelites, when they left Egypt, “Let your feet be shod, a staff be in your hands, a sack on your back; take away gold, silver, and all other things of the Egyptians,” the Good God said to his apostles, “Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, nor money, nor two coats.”<sup>256</sup>

By the miracle of Feeding the Five Thousand, Jesus established the agape, the loving feast of the Marcionites, where no meat was eaten.

Mankind did not know who Jesus was. Some took him for John the Baptist, others for Elias, others for some ancient prophet returned to earth. He asks the apostles who they say him to be. Peter answers for them all, “Thou art the Christ,” meaning by that the Hebrew Christ. Jesus rebukes him, forbidding him to say such a thing and to spread such a lie.<sup>257</sup> He teaches that the Son of Man must suffer, be rejected by the Jewish authorities, be crucified and rise again on the third day. The passion on the cross was not foretold, for the Hebrew Christ and the Creator would not have exposed his son to a death which

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<sup>253</sup> *Novus dominator atque possessor elementorum, subjecti jam et exclusi creatoris* (Tertullian, iv. 20).

<sup>254</sup> *Hanc mulieris fidem ... qua contempserat legem.* (Tertullian iv. 20).

<sup>255</sup> *Quid inhonestius quam carnis jam erubescens alia dedecoratio* (Tertullian, v. 5). *Lex a contacta sanguinentis feminae summovet, Christus vero idcirco gestivit non tantum contactum eius admittere sed etiam sanitatem donare* (Tertullian, iv. 20).

<sup>256</sup> *Adamantios*, i. 10 ; Tertullian, iv. 24.

<sup>257</sup> *Quia non recte (Petrus) senserat, noluit (Jesus) mendacium disseminari* (Tertullian, iv. 21).

he himself cursed.<sup>258</sup> The duty of the Christian is to bear in his turn his cross, that he may be saved. Thus Jesus sanctions Paul's doctrine.

He appears in his glory to the three apostles, Peter, James, and John. At his side are Moses and Elias, which deceives them. Peter wishes to erect three tabernacles, believing erroneously that Jesus is the Christ of Moses and Elias.<sup>259</sup> In spite of the teaching he has received he remains a man of the Law.<sup>260</sup> Together with the other apostles, he leans towards Judaism. But Moses and Elias are not with Jesus.<sup>261</sup> A voice is heard from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved son, hearken to him." Which meant that they were to listen to Jesus, and not to Moses and Elias. God's own voice even confirms that Jesus had come to supersede Moses and Elias.<sup>262</sup> Thus the famous apparitions to the Jerusalem apostles were metamorphosed and interpreted.

Through a lack of pure faith, the first disciples fail in their exorcism; which symbolized their failure in their true mission, which was to convert the Jews. Jesus cries to them:—

O faithless generation,  
How long shall I be with you?  
Till when shall I suffer you?<sup>263</sup>

He makes haste to choose other apostles; and these debate which is the greatest among them (Peter? or James?). So Jesus puts a little child beside them and says, "The

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<sup>258</sup> (*Negant Marcionitae*) *passionem crucis in Christum Creatoris predicatem et (argumentant) insuper non esse credendum ut in id genus, mortis exposuerit creator filium suum quod ipse maledixerat* (Tertullian, iii. 18).

<sup>259</sup> *Nescit quasi errans eo quod putaret illorum (scil. Moysis et Heliae) esse Christum* (Tertullian, iv. 22).

<sup>260</sup> *Petrus legis homo* (Tertullian, iv. 11). *Petrum ceterosque apostolis vultis Iudaismi magis adfines subintelligi* (*ibid.*, v. 3).

<sup>261</sup> By that separation (διαχωρίζεσθαι) Jesus demonstrates that the Law and the Prophets must be separated from the Gospel: *Voces et litteras ipsas (Moysis et Heliae) ab evangelio suo. (Christus) erat separaturus* (Tertullian, iv. 22) Jesus alone has the divine aureole (δόξα).

<sup>262</sup> (*Moysis et Heliae) destructor advenerat* (Tertullian, iv. 22).

<sup>263</sup> These words are addressed to the disciples, as Epiphanius attests (*Hær.*, xlii. sch. 19). *In (discipulos) insiliit* (Tertullien, vi. 23).

least among you, the same shall be great”—an obvious allusion to the least of the apostles—*i.e.*, Paul.

James and John want to bring fire down from heaven on the inhospitable Samaritan town. Jesus rebukes them, “You know not of what manner of Spirit you are. The Son of Man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.” Jesus is the Spirit of Salvation. In antithesis with the Christ who comes to destroy mankind in the Apocalypse stands the Good Christ, for whom the salvation of mankind is the urgent duty which comes before all other things.<sup>264</sup>

So Jesus chose new apostles to the number of seventy, the number of the nations of the world. These were such as the Seven and Paul. Theirs is the same mission as that of the Twelve, but extended to include all heathenry, and they will succeed. Jesus confirms in words Paul’s precept as to liberty of choice in food, “eating and drinking such things as they give.”<sup>265</sup> The Good God allows things to be eaten which are forbidden by the Jewish Law.<sup>266</sup> The new apostles prevail over demons in the name of Jesus. They are the predestinate whose names are “written in heaven,” whereas the other apostles go back to the God of the Hebrews. Jesus blesses them and their churches:—

I thank thee and bless thee,  
Lord of Heaven,  
What was hidden to the prudent and the wise  
Thou hast revealed to *babes*,  
Yes, Father,  
For such was thy good pleasure.

All was delivered to me by the Father.  
No man knew who the Father is, but the Son.  
No man knows who the Son is, but the Father  
And he to whom the Father has revealed it.

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<sup>264</sup> *Iesus de caelo (descendit) spiritus salutaris* (Tertullian, i. 19). *Humana salus urgentior causa ante omnia requirenda* (*ibid.*, *De Resurrect.*, 2).

<sup>265</sup> 1 Cor. x. 27.

<sup>266</sup> *Magnum argumentum Dei alterius, permissio omnium obsoniorum, adversus legem* (Tertullian, v. 7).

New Christians in the Pauline churches were known as *little children*.<sup>267</sup> He to whom it pleased God to reveal his Son was Paul.<sup>268</sup>

A Doctor of the Law asks Jesus: What must I do to obtain life? Jesus makes him recite the first two essential commandments of the Law: Thou shalt love Jahweh thy God and thy neighbour as thyself, and answers: Do that and thou shalt live. Here he refers to earthly longevity.<sup>269</sup> The Hebrew God gives neither the heavenly kingdom nor the life everlasting, but useful precepts for the present life. In particular his Law promises life.<sup>270</sup> This story has a sequel in which Jesus is asked: What shall I do to obtain *eternal life*? For that the commandments of the Law are no longer of any avail. The first condition is to rid oneself of the goods of this world, "All that thou hast, sell it, give it away to the poor." At that price life eternal can be gained.

To address the Father a new prayer is taught by Jesus:—

Father, let thy Holy Spirit come down on us  
And cleanse us;<sup>271</sup>  
Thy Kingdom come.  
Thy future bread, give us each day of it.  
Forgive our sins  
As we forgive those who are indebted to us.  
Let us not be led into temptation.

Accused of driving out devils through Beelzebub, the Prince of Devils, Jesus explains that his power comes from God, the Good deity, whose power is mightier than that of the armed soldier god of the Jews<sup>272</sup>:—

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<sup>267</sup> I Cor. iii. 1; Gal. iv. 3; Ephes. iv. 14.

<sup>268</sup> Gal. i. 15-16: "But when it pleased God ... to reveal his Son in me . . ." *Solus Paulus veritatem cognovits cui per revelationem manifestatum est mysterium* (Irenæus, *Hær.*, iii. 13, 1).

<sup>269</sup> *Doctor de ea vita videtur consuluisse quae in lege promittitur longaeva et Dominus ideo secundum legem responsum dedit* (Tertullian, iv. 25).

<sup>270</sup> Lev. xviii. 5, quoted in Gal. iii. 12.

<sup>271</sup> Luke altered this request to "Blessed be thy name." That Marcion's wording was the earlier is shown by the context (Luke xi. 13, "How much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?").

<sup>272</sup> *Militarem et armatum bellatorem praedicari putas, non figurate, non allegorice ... Creator ab alio deo subactus* (Tertullian, iv. 26).

When the Strong One armed wards his palace,  
What is his in peace.  
But when a Stronger than he *shall come upon* him  
And overcome him,  
He takes from him all his armour  
In which he had placed his trust  
And divides his spoils.

Marcion for this reason calls Jesus not He Who Come!! (ὁ ἐρχόμενος) but He Who Comes Upon (ὁ ἐπερχόμενος) (Tertullian, iv. 23 and 25).

Jesus pays no heed to the prescription to wash before a meal, for he would substitute alms for empty ceremony, and he aims his invective at vainglorious, hypocritical Pharisees and Doctors who do not serve the True God and hinder their followers from knowing him.

He encourages martyrs:—

To you, my friends, I say,  
Have no fear  
Of those who kill the body  
And afterwards have no power over you.

I will tell you whom you should fear.  
Fear Him who, after he has killed,  
Has the power to cast into Gehenna.  
Yes, I say to you, Fear him!

Men are not to be feared. The Creator God, whose is Gehenna, is the deity to whose mercy will be sent for punishment all those whom Jesus will deny before the True God.<sup>273</sup> This is the God who said himself, that he it is who slays.<sup>274</sup> He it is who rages in anger. He it is who is to be feared, whereas the Good God is in no wise to be feared, but to be loved.<sup>275</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> Severitatem creatoris infuscat . . . occisuri in gehennam (Tertullian, iv. 28).

<sup>274</sup> Deut. xxxii. 39. "This passage is continually being shown us and it is said, You see how the God of the Law is savage and inhuman" (Origen, *Hom. in Jerem.*, i. 16).

<sup>275</sup> *Deus ut dicitis saevit* (Tertullian, ii. 13). *Deus iudex. timeri vult, apud quem sunt materiae timoris: ira, saevitia, iudicia, vindicta, damnatio ... Deus, bonus timendus non est* (*ibid.*, iv. 8). *Prae se ferunt Marcionitae quod Deum suum omnino non timeant; malus enim, inquit, timebitur, bonus autem diligetur.*



No care should be taken as to food and clothing:—

Seek the Kingdom of God;  
All these things will be added to you.  
Fear not, little flock;  
The Father's good pleasure  
Is to give you the Kingdom.

That is all that counts. The elect are the *little flock*. “The creator is with the larger number; the Saviour, the Son of the Good God, is with each single elect.”<sup>276</sup>

At the Last Advent of Jesus all who are separated by the Lord will be taken by the fire of the creator. The Good God will abandon to their fate the infidels, as though he had never been called to save them.<sup>277</sup> The creator is a pitiless judge who will make them pay even to the last quarter of an as.<sup>278</sup> Few will be saved and of all the least will be of the Jews and the Judaists.<sup>279</sup> These bad Christians will never be able to boast of having eaten and drunk before the Lord—*i.e.*, of having partaken of a liturgical feast. They will be put on one side:—

Then you shall begin to say;  
We have eaten and drunk in thy presence,  
And in our streets thou hast taught.  
He will say to you,  
Depart from me,  
You workers of iniquity!

“Deceitful workers,” as Paul called the Judaist apostles in 2 Cor. xi. 13.

At the feast in the heavenly kingdom the Jews invited excuse themselves; so the master sends out for beggars, blind men and lame—*i.e.*, sinners. The sinner is the lost sheep, more cherished than the rest of the flock.

The parable of the faithless steward who makes friends

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<sup>276</sup> A Marcionite maxim from Clemens Alexandrinus, *Strom.*, iii. 10, 69.

<sup>277</sup> (*Ille abjectus*) *ab igne iniquiunt, creatoris deprehendetur* (Tertullian, i. 28). (*Segregat*) *solummodo et partem ejus cum infidelibus ponit acsi, non sit vocatus, ut statui suo redditus* (*ibid.*, iv. 29).

<sup>278</sup> *Iudicem qui mittit in carcerem . . . in persona creatoris disserunt* (Tertullian, iv. 29).

<sup>279</sup> *Non omnes salvi fiunt, sed pauciores omnibus et Iudaeis et christianis creatoris* (Tertullian, i. 24).

by means of his master's money is a lesson to the Christian on the only use for money, which is to give it away in alms. "Make friends with the Money of Unrighteousness... you cannot serve both God and Money."

The Law and the Prophets came to an end with John the Baptist. Then the era of the Gospel began. John is the frontier between the old and the new.<sup>280</sup> John did not make the way for Jesus, and Jesus rejected John's discipline, which was that of the God of the Hebrews. The disciples of Jesus were initiated into the mystery of another divinity of a very different nature.<sup>281</sup> Among other things Jesus forbids divorce, which the Jew God permitted.

The parable of Dives and Lazarus concerns Jews only. Place of torture and place of refreshment of those who obey the Law and the Prophets are both of hell, whereas Heaven is the bosom and the haven of those who belong to the Good God.<sup>282</sup> "The Creator saves him who believes in him with the salvation which is his" (Marcion in Clem. Alex., *Strom.*, v. 1, 4). Israel's poor have to hearken to Moses and the prophets; as for the rich, the poor Lazarus might well rise again, they would not listen to him.

Jesus cleanses ten lepers, symbolizing sinners. Quite against the detailed instructions of the Law, he heals them without touching them, without a word either, merely by his silent power, by an effort of will.<sup>283</sup> One alone, a Samaritan, thanked him. He alone will be saved, not by

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<sup>280</sup> *Limitem quemdam Iohannem. constitutum inter vetera et nova ad quem desineret iudaismus et a quo inciperet christianismus* (Tertullian, iv. 33).

<sup>281</sup> *Iohannes nihil administravit . . . Christus rejecit Iohannis disciplinam, ut dei alterius et discipulos defendit, ul merito aliter incidentes, aliam scilicet et contrariam initiatos divinitatem* (Tertullian, iv. 11).

<sup>282</sup> *Marcion ... utramque mercedem creatoris, sive tormenti, sive refrigerii, apud inferos determinat eis positam qui legi et prophetis abaudierint Christi vero et dei sui caelestem sinum et portum* (Tertullian, iv. 34).

<sup>283</sup> *Praevenientem solemnia legis etiam in curatione decem leprosum quos . . . in itinere purgavit sine tactu jam et sine verbo, tacita potestate et sola voluntate* (Tertullian, iv. 35).

his purification, but by his faith, which his gratitude proved. He will have no rites to perform as his praise of God has taken their place.<sup>284</sup>

When the Pharisees asked him as to the Kingdom of God, such as they imagined it, Jesus answered them in terms of another kingdom of a different god.<sup>285</sup> This kingdom was already among them, since Jesus had cast out demons, “behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” It will be made manifest when the Son of Man makes his effulgent apparition.

The parable of the Pharisee and the publican illustrates Paul's doctrine that man is not justified by works of the Law nor by himself. He is acquitted by God who pardons a sinner.

When one man, taking him for a rabbi, called him “Good Master,” Jesus replied: “Why callest thou me good? None is good, save one, that is God.” This passage was the “buckler” of the Marcionites—“good” is the epithet peculiar to the Father of Jesus. The creator has no right to the title of Good.<sup>286</sup> Alone of the two, the Good God is perfectly good, for he is goodness itself and is nothing but goodness, and the bad can in no way exist in him.<sup>287</sup> He is revealed directly in Jesus.<sup>288</sup>

At Jericho a blind man asked Jesus to heal him, calling him by mistake the Son of David.<sup>289</sup> Jesus does not reprimand him.

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<sup>284</sup> (*Christus*) *Samaritatem miratus non mandat offerre manus ex lege quia satis jam obtulerat gloriam deo reddens* (Tertullian, iv. 35).

<sup>285</sup> *Christus de alterius regno respondit quam de cujus consulebatur* (Tertullian, iv.- 35).

<sup>286</sup> (*Marcionitae*) *velut proprie sibi datum scutum putant, quod dixit dominus in evangelio: Nemo bonus nisi unus, deus pater, dicentes hoc esse proprium vocabulum patris Christi . . . Creatori bonitatis nullam Marcion dedit appellationem* (Origen, *De Princ.*, ii. 5, 1).

<sup>287</sup> *Ex duobus deis unum optimum* (Tertullian, iv. 36). *Deus tantummodo et perfecte bonus* (*ibid.*, i. 24). *Deus optimus et simplex et bonus tantum* (*ibid.*, *De Carne*, 5). “The Good, as they call him, because he is, as they say, good by nature, and the bad can in no way exist in him” (Esnik, *Contre les Sectes*, ed. Schmid, p. 181).

<sup>288</sup> *Deus noster iniquant Marcionitae . . . per semetipsum. revelatus est in Christo Iesu* (Tertullian, i. 19). The Marcionites also called Jesus the Good One: “The death of the Good One became the salvation of mankind” (*Adamantios*, ii. 9).

<sup>289</sup> *De David filio mentiebatur . . . Sed patiens dominus* (Tertullian, iv. 36).

mand him, but taking account of his faith, he heals him of his blindness, symbol of his ignorance.<sup>290</sup>

The publican Zacchæus, who receives Jesus with joy, who gives half his fortune to the poor, and who repays all his extortions quadruply, is the type of the rich man who can be saved.

When the Pharisees ask him by what authority he acts, Jesus replies by the question: "The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?" John was the greatest prophet of the Hebrew God. When they failed to recognize him, the Pharisees showed themselves incapable of recognizing a messenger of their own deity. They were even less likely to recognize the messenger of another deity, the Good God. Jesus acted by his own authority; he had no need for the support of any witness, nor of any prophecy.<sup>291</sup>

When he is asked: "Is it lawful for us to pay tribute to Cæsar or no?" he has a denarius shown him, one with the effigy and epigraph of Cæsar on it, and answers: "Render to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to God the things which are God's." The Holy Ghost which God gives and which should be employed for him is God's, and the tax is Cæsar's, since it is paid with coins which came from Cæsar. Jesus reproves the judæan rebels who refuse to pay the Roman tax and strike money without Cæsar's effigy, nevertheless they do not take the effigy of God. He confirms Paul's custom: "Render therefore to all their dues, tribute, etc ...." (Rom. xiii. 7).

"A woman who has wedded seven brothers successively, whose wife will she be at the resurrection?" asked the Sadducees, meaning the resurrection of the flesh.<sup>292</sup> Jesus replies, referring to another resurrection:—

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<sup>290</sup> *Hanc caecitatem hominis illius (enubilavit) ne ultra Iesum filium David existimaret.*

<sup>291</sup> "Marcion was the first who dared to thrust aside (prophetic) witness and to leave without any guarantee (ἀμάρτυρον) the preaching of the word of the faith." (Cyril of Jerusalem, *Disc. Catech.*, vi. 16.) "He who is superior to Moses and to the Prophets can make known, without the witness of prophets, what he wills and can serve the human race" (Marcionite sentence in Origen, *Comm. in Joh.*, ii. 199).

<sup>292</sup> *Ad ea (respondet Christus) de quibus non est consultus.*

The children of this world  
Marry and are given in marriage.  
But those whom the God of another world shall judge worthy  
To have their part in the resurrection of the dead  
Neither marry, nor are given in marriage.

For they will no longer die.  
They are for God like to the angels,  
Once they have become the Children of the Resurrection.

The God of this world is the creator and allows his children to marry.<sup>293</sup> The God of the world, who is the Good God, promises his followers the substance of angels. They will lay aside the flesh to take on the bodies of heavenly and spiritual beings, according to the doctrine of St. Paul.<sup>294</sup> Angels have no bodies, do not eat and have no sexual commerce, so that there is no resurrection of the flesh, said Pseudo-Justin (*De Resurr.*, 2). “The body, held by the earth, can have no salvation; there is no resurrection nor life nor salvation of the soul.”<sup>295</sup> Already in this life the Marcionites abstained from marriage because they are those whom the God of the other world has judged worthy of the resurrection, and not the sons of this world.<sup>296</sup>

Is Christ the Son of David? Against those who believe it is so on Biblical grounds Jesus points out that in the Bible itself David, in one of the Psalms, calls the Christ *my Lord*;<sup>297</sup>

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<sup>293</sup> *Filii hujus aevi de hominibus dictum est creatoris nuptias permittentis* (Tertullian, iv. 38).

<sup>294</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 35-50. *Deus tuus veram ... substantiam angelorum hominibus pollicetur* (Tertullian, iii. 9). *Substantiam carnis jubemur exponere* (*ibid.*, v. 10).

<sup>295</sup> Marcion in Epiphanius, *Hær.*, xlii. 3. *Salutem solum animarum esse futuram. . . . corpus autem quoniam a terra sit sumptum impossibile esse participare salutem* (Irenæus, *Hær.*, i. 27, 3). (*Deus Marcionis*) *ipsis quos salvos fecit, imperfectum salutem (praebet) scilicet animam salvis, carne deperditis, quae apud illum non resurgit* (Tertullian, i. 24).

<sup>296</sup> *Se autem (dicunt Marcionitae) quos deus illius aevi, alter scilicet dignatus est resurrectione, jam et hic non nubere, quia non sint filii ejus aevi* (Tertullian, iv. 38).

<sup>297</sup> Psalm cx. 1, called the Psalm of David. The argument is whether *my lord* means the Christ. The Pharisees understood it to mean Abraham (Strack and Billerbeck, *Komm.*, 3, N.T. IV; *Excursus*, 18). The Christians held that it referred to Christ (1 Cor. xv. 25; Acts ii. 34). The argument is then addressed to Christians, and was known to the author of the Epistle of Barnabas.

“how is he then his son?” The Christ comes from heaven; he is not the Messiah, the Son of David, expected by the Jews.

The last question resolved is: “When will the Lord come? What will be the sign of his coming?” The answer betrays the epoch of Marcion. “Take heed that you be not deceived! Many shall come in my name, saying, I am the Christ. Go not after them!”

In 132 Bar-cocheba was accepted by a party of the Jews as the Messiah, as the star which should rise in Judah. On the first coins struck in his reign he and the high priest Eleazar appear together, as were formerly associated the two Anointed Ones, Zerubabel and Joshua. The Hebrew Christ was destined by the Hebrew God to restore the Empire of the Jews. But he was unable to give any message as to the heavenly kingdom of which he was unaware.<sup>298</sup>

When you will hear of battles and revolutions  
Be not afraid.  
For these things must come to pass,  
But the end is not immediately,

For kingdom will rise against kingdom,  
Nation against nation.  
Plagues, famines, earthquakes will there be.  
Fearful sights and signs from heaven will there be.

Accepted as the Christ, Bar-cocheba declared Judæa to be independent and engaged in war with the Romans. Battles and revolutions suit the Christ of a harsh and odious god, the warlike warrior Messiah who is according to Isaiah to gain the power of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria.<sup>299</sup>

But before all these, they will lay hands on you,  
Persecute you, strike you,

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<sup>298</sup> *Christus (creatoris) pristinum statum Iudaeis pollicetur ex restitutione terrae . . . Caeleste regnum non praedicatum apud creatorem* (Tertullian, iv. 24).

<sup>299</sup> Isa. vii. 14; viii. 4. Cf. Tertullian, iii. 12. *Christus bellipotens (ibid., iii. 21). Militaris et armatus bellator (ibid., iv. 20). Quae omnia severo et atroci Deo congruunt (ibid., iv. 39).*

Delivering you to synagogues and prisons.  
For you there will follow martyrdom and salvation.

Bar-cocheba threw into prison and condemned to death those Christians who would not recognize him as the Christ. “In the recent Jewish war,” wrote Justin, “Bar-cochebas, the chief of the rebellion of the Jews, gave command that to the Christians alone terrible tortures should be applied if they did not deny the Christ Jesus and blaspheme against him” (*Apol.*, xxxi. 6).

When you shall see Jerusalem compassed with camps,  
Then know that the sack thereof is nigh.

The Romans had to take fifty fortified castles (*Dion.*, lxi. 12-14). Jerusalem was besieged and taken by Hadrian's generals (*Appian, Syr.*, 50), and the Hebrew Christ made his last stubborn fight at Bethel. Jerusalem is the City of the Great King—*i.e.*, of the Great God, of the God of the Jews. If it had been really that, it would not have been abandoned.<sup>300</sup> As the gospel does not seem to be aware of the last events of the war, the date of it would appear to be 133-134.

There will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars;  
On the earth distress of nations,  
Distracted as though by the roar of the foaming sea,  
Men dying of fear  
And of the expectation of evils which will come on the world,  
For the powers of heaven even will be shaken.

These blows will come from the Creator God, whose cruel dominion is about to come to an end. Then will come about the promises made by the God who is stranger to the world.<sup>301</sup>

Then they will see the Son of Man  
Coming from Heaven in great Power.  
When these things come to pass,

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<sup>300</sup> *Adhuc et de Hierusalem et de domino audent dicere quoniam si esset magni regis civitas* (Ps. xlviii. 3. Cf. Matt. v. 35) *non derelinquetur* (Irenæus, *Hær.*, iv. 4, 1).

<sup>301</sup> *Concussiones quidem (refert Marcion) ad creator, saevitiae scilicet deum ... promissiones vero deo optimo (deputat) quas creator ignorans illum non prophetasset.* (Tertullian, iv. 39).

Look up and lift up your heads,  
For your liberation is at hand.

The Son of Man, Jesus, who will bring salvation to all nations, is thus opposed to the Hebrew Messiah, the restorer of the Jewish Kingdom, just as the Good is opposed to the Righteous, the Gospel to the Law and Christianity to Judaism.<sup>302</sup>

Amen I say to you;  
Heaven and earth will not pass away  
Till all these things come to pass.  
Earth and Heaven shall pass away,  
But my Word shall last for all eternity.

With heaven and earth will disappear the god who created them.<sup>303</sup>

Just like other authors of apocalypses, Marcion fixes the date of the end of the world in his own time. This sober discourse, apocalyptic in a new spirit, is all that he retains from the great Revelation of St. John.

After the long teachings of Jesus comes a somewhat brief narrative of his death and resurrection.

He is betrayed by one of his first apostles, Judas, who personifies the Christian who remains still a Jew, who is capable of betraying his brother to whom he had just given a holy kiss.

On the day when the Jews sacrifice the Paschal Lamb, the fourteenth Nisan, Jesus has preparations made for a ritual meal. But he institutes a new ceremony, which he introduces in place of the Passover. Instead of the Easter lamb, he gives to his disciples bread which symbolizes his body, as it is about to be delivered up for their sake. (Since this body is not material, it can thus be symbolized.)

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<sup>302</sup> *Constituit Marcion alium esse Christum qui Tiberianis temporibus a deo quodam ignoto revelatus sit in salutem omnium gentium, alium qui a deo creatore in restitutionem Iudaici status sit destinatus, quandoque venturus inter hos magnam et omnem differentiam scindit, quantam inter justum et bonum, inter legem et evangelium, quandam inter Iudaismum et Christianismum* (Tertullian, iv. 6).

<sup>303</sup> *Dictum est praeterire caelum et terram, his praetereuntibus oportet etiam hunc deum (scil. creatorem) qui supersedeat praeterire.* (Irenaeus, *Hær.*, iv. 3, 1).



Taking bread,  
He gave thanks and broke it,  
And gave it to his disciples,  
Saying, This is my body  
Which is given for you.

The cup also, saying,  
This cup is my testament  
Through my blood which is shed for you.<sup>304</sup>

The cup of wine which should be drunk four times at the Passover is replaced by a cup of which the contents are not mentioned, but in the Marcionite liturgy it contained water only.<sup>305</sup> The cup represents the testament which the shedding of blood sanctifies,<sup>306</sup> by which Jesus bequeaths to his disciples what his Father had given him—*i.e.*, the Kingdom of Heaven.<sup>307</sup> Thus in the new rite the bread represents Christ and the cup the Kingdom of Heaven, the two great aims, identical in essence,<sup>308</sup> of the Christian faith.

In order to take on, as Paul said, the *form of a slave*, Jesus girds himself with a towel and washes the feet of his disciples.<sup>309</sup> They ought, following his example, to be slaves—slaves of Christ—in order to gain the Kingdom.

In addition, he sets them the example of not seeking trials, but of praying to be spared them. The presumptuous disciples who neglect this prayer will be the first to succumb.

Judas betrays him with a kiss. Peter denies him thrice before men, and will therefore be denied before God.<sup>310</sup>

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<sup>304</sup> *Hoc est corpus meum, id est figura corporis mei ... Propterea Christus panem sibi corpus finxit, quia corporis carebat veritate* (Tertullian, iii. 40).

<sup>305</sup> Epiph., *Hær.*, xlii. 3.

<sup>306</sup> *Testamentum sanguine suo obsignatum* (Tertullian, iv. 40).

<sup>307</sup> The word “testament” (*διαθήκη*) is explained further on by the words, “I leave (appoint A.V.) to you a kingdom, as my father...” (*διατίθεμαι*)

<sup>308</sup> *In evangelio est dei regnum Christus ipse* (Tertullian, iv. 33).

<sup>309</sup> “And took upon him the form of a servant” (Phil. ii. 7) say (the Marcionites) “when, girded with a towel, he washed the feet of his disciples” (Chrysostom, *Hom.in Phil.*, vii). This story is omitted from St. Luke, though the words referring to it, xxii. 27, have been retained. It appears in St. John.

<sup>310</sup> *Omnis qui negavit me coram hominibus, denegabitur coram deo* (Tertullian, iv. 28; cf. Luke xii. 9).

As Paul said, he did “not walk uprightly according to the truth of the gospel” (Gal. ii. 14).

After his betrayal, Jesus must, as he foretold, suffer greatly, be rejected by the leaders of the Jews, be crucified, and rise again on the third day.

His guards insult him by gambling and by giving him blows, saying, Prophecy, who is it who smote thee? They mistake him for a Hebrew prophet, and ill-treat him, as their forefathers had ill-treated the prophets of old.

The Sanhedrim asks him if he is the Christ, meaning the Hebrew Christ, and he replies:—

If I were to tell you, you would not believe.  
Hereafter shall the Son of Man be seated  
At the right hand of the power of God.

Then said they all,  
Art thou the Son of God?  
But he answered,  
You say I am.

You say so, but not I.<sup>311</sup> The title of Son of God is also equivocal, since the Sanhedrim use it in the sense of the Son of the God of Israel. Jesus does not reveal to the Jews who he is, because he had to suffer the Passion.<sup>312</sup>

They arose and led him to Pilate.  
They began to accuse him, saying,  
This man we found perverting the nation,  
Abolishing the Law and the Prophets;

Ordering not to pay taxes,  
Perverting women and children,  
Calling himself Christ the King  
Who will sit at the right hand of God.

Pilate asked him,  
Art thou the Christ?  
He answered,  
Thou sayest it.

Pilate sends him to Herod, who is interested to see Jesus;

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<sup>311</sup> *Vos dicitis, non ego* (Tertullian, iv. 41; cf. Æschylus, 719).

<sup>312</sup> *De quo Christo Iudaei quaesissent, nisi de suo? Cur ergo non vel tunc alium eis prodidit? Ut pati possit, inquis.* (Tertullian, iv. 41).

he is typical of the frivolously curious who do not deserve to know the truth. Jesus therefore does not answer him, so Herod sends him back to Pilate, arraying him in a “gorgeous robe,” perhaps as a compliment.<sup>313</sup>

Pilate assembles the “Chief Priests and the rulers and the people.” The *rulers* (ἄρχοντες) are brought in because Paul said that the Princes (ἄρχοντες) of this world crucified the Lord of Glory. The invisible Archontes are replaced by visible Jew Archontes, tools of Jahweh.<sup>314</sup> Pilate tells them that Jesus has done nothing to deserve death.

But they all cried out together,  
Kill him! Kill him!  
Release Barabbas to us!  
Who for a sedition in the city  
And for murder had been cast into prison.

The name Barabbas is an odd one; it means *the son of the father*, or *the son of his father*. It seems to have been made up in allusion to Bar-cocheba, the Jewish Christ who raised a rebellion against the Romans, whose hands were stained with the blood of his uncle, and who was preferred by the Jews to Christ Jesus.

Pilate releases Barabbas and delivers Jesus over to the will of the Archontes of the Jews.

Jesus is crucified by them between two criminals, at the place of the Skull, which is no other spot than the tomb of Adam, so that it illustrates Paul's words: “For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive.”<sup>315</sup> Jesus said, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” According to Paul, if the Archontes had only known “the wisdom of God” (1 Cor. ii. 7-8)—*i.e.*, the divine plan—they would never have crucified Jesus. Therefore they knew not what they did.<sup>316</sup>

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<sup>313</sup> A. W. Verrall in *Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol. X, p. 321.

<sup>314</sup> “The Creator, seeing that the Good God was destroying his law, made a plot against him, not knowing that the death of the Good One would be the salvation of men” (*Adamantios*, ii. 9).

<sup>315</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 22; cf. Origen, *Comm. in Matth.*, 126. “The skull of Adam, head of the human race, will be resurrected with all his race by the resurrection of the Saviour who suffered even at that place and rose again.”

<sup>316</sup> “The Creator killed Jesus without knowing that he was God” (Esnik, ed. Schmid, p. 172). Cf. the ascension of Isaiah, ix. 14 “The agents of the god of this world will raise their hands against him and will hang him from the wood without knowing who he is.”

When the Hebrew God understood his mistake, he “rent in his wrath his garment and the veil of his temple; he darkened the sun and wrapped his world in gloom” (Esnik, ed. Schmid, p. 172). Jesus commits to his Father the Spirit which the Father had given him:—

It was about noon.  
There was darkness on all the earth,  
And the sun was darkened.  
The veil of the Temple was rent in the midst.

Jesus uttered a great cry;  
Father, into thy hands I commit my Spirit.<sup>317</sup>  
Having said this, he gave up the ghost.

A Jew of some standing, who has not the prejudices of his people, undertakes Jesus’s burial. The generous women, who had helped Jesus, prepared spices for embalming him.

Two days after the crucifixion, on the first day of the week, the first Sunday of Easter, they go to the tomb and find no body. Two angels say to them: “Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is risen.” They then recall his words, and go to the apostles with their news, but the apostles will not believe them.

Two disciples, however, are going on that same day into the country. Jesus comes up to them and accompanies them, but their eyes are prevented from recognizing him; for they still think that Jesus is the Redeemer of Israel, the Hebrew Christ, just as the first apostles and the blind man of Jericho did. Jesus puts them right, and reminds them of his predictions which showed that he was nothing of the sort:<sup>318</sup>

O fools and slow of heart  
To believe all that I have spoken:  
That the Christ had to undergo these sufferings  
And to enter into his Glory.

He sits at table with them, blesses the bread, breaks it,

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<sup>317</sup> Expression borrowed from Stephen, *vide supra*, p. 44.

<sup>318</sup> *Quae locutus alterius se dei esse probat* (Tertullian, iv. 43).

and offers it to them. Then their eyes are opened, and they recognize him. They represent those Christians who have received at the liturgical repasts the true doctrine as to the Christ, the teaching of St. Paul.

Finally Jesus makes his apparition to the apostles, who, in their fright, think they behold a ghost:—

Why are you troubled?  
Why do doubts still arise in your hearts?  
Behold my hands and my feet;  
It is I myself;  
For a ghost has not bones  
As you see I have.

The body of the risen Jesus is as it was before the resurrection. It has no flesh, for the flesh is evil.<sup>319</sup> But he is not a ghost; he has bones, bones of his feet, of his hands, and his teeth. This is the body of the divine ascetic.

As they did not yet believe,  
He said to them, Have you here anything to eat?  
They offered him a slice of broiled fish.  
He took it and ate it before them.

Jesus's body is like that of the Creator's angels who ate in the house of Abraham.<sup>320</sup> The Marcionites based on this passage their abstinence from meat and their eating of fish.<sup>321</sup> Jesus's meal marks the end of the Easter fast for

Then he opened their understanding.  
And said to them, Thus it behoved Christ to suffer,  
That he might rise from the dead on the third day  
And that repentance for the remission of sins  
Should be preached in his name  
To all the nations.

In this manner the Crucified and Risen Christ, absolving

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<sup>319</sup> Marcion declared that the flesh was evil after the passage in Paul (Rom. vii. 18): "For I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwells no good thing." (Clem. Alex., *Strom.*, III, ii. 76.)

<sup>320</sup> *Dicunt (Marcionitae) corpus salvatoris nostri speciem quamdam fuisse ut corpus angelorum qui in domo Abrahae ederunt* (Ephrem, *Evangelii concordantis espositio*; ed. Moesinger, p. 255).

<sup>321</sup> "(The Marcionites) say: the Christ after the resurrection ate fish and not meat. That is why we too eat fish and no meat" [Esnik, ed. Schmid, p. 195].

all men of their sins, Paul's Christ, is clearly separated from the Hebrew Christ.

In this manner also the series of apparitions of Jesus in a single day is firmly established as on the Sunday of the Christian Easter.

Now that we have come to the end of this summary of Marcion's Gospel, what have we to say as to the character of this original yet ambiguous book? It is clear that it has no historical element. This astounding story of the Son of God who came down to earth in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar is not based on documentary nor on traditional evidence. It is more like a liturgical hymn with a narrative theme, still more of the nature of a parable. It was produced among people accustomed to perceive and understand parables, habituated to the expression of ideas in the guise of a concrete story. No matter what page of this gospel is examined, the idea will be found to be the end, which has given form to the whole. There is no essential difference between definite parables—*anecdotes incorporating a maxim, miracles full of meaning, stories laden with spiritual significance—and the tableau of the Passion which redeems mankind.* All through we note, in the words of Goethe “the greatest amount of verity without the shadow of reality.”

Beyond the concrete details of the story unfolded to us there develops another reality—that of Christian experience. All this similitude of historical fact is nothing but a long parable, a vivid and sustained allegory.

What is this reality of which it is the symbol? A spiritual reality. It is the Kingdom of Jesus such as it had been for a century on earth, developing to its accomplishment, which should be soon and sudden. It is the entity which Marcion would have men love, the mysterious Being which makes itself known to men by saving them. It is also the religious conflict between two sorts of Christians—those who remain half Jew at heart and those who abjure Jewry utterly, those who expect fiercely an avenging god, and those who crucify themselves in the image of a crucified Christ. The long and

agitated story of the Jesus cult is metamorphosed into the story of Jesus. Much matter was found to be told before the narration of the Passion, the poem of the Godhead. What the author of the Homeric Hymn did for Demeter, what the Nonnos of the Dionysiacs did for Dionysos, Marcion in his more sober manner did for Jesus. The true subject of the Gospel is not Jesus, but the Christian cult.

The legend is not merely allegoric; it is also didactic. A bold and coherent theology inspires it all through. The words and deeds of a god have served as a rule for Christian life. In the old apocalyptic literature the voice of Jesus could make itself heard on rare occasions only, and then in stiff, solemn tones, whereas in the evangelic form it took on a simple, human and colloquial abundance. Jesus, it might be said, undergoes a change of voice, and speaks a deeper bass which appeals, though it is none the less authoritative. He abandons the party of the old apostles and shows no hate for the Nicolaitanes. In fact, he changes sides, and pronounces in favour of the teaching and practice of Paul as revised by Marcion. The first apostles, half-Jews, are not more than half-Christian.

This book determined the fate of Christianity. In the maelstrom of warring currents, the helmsman Marcion gave the tiller a decisive direction towards Paulinism which was to have such an effect in the future. And his gospel furnished the model on which the other gospels were to be constructed, each by a church opposed to Marcion, each as a corrective to Marcionite doctrine.

## VI

### THE SON AND HEIR OF GOD

(*The Gospel according to St. Mark*)

THE narrative gospel, as Marcion introduced it, was for the Christian world fascinating reading. It had an essential authority which made it superior to any other writing, and which thrust into second place the established forms employed in teaching Christian doctrine—prophecies, apocalypses, epistles. Outside the Marcionite churches it was received only after correction. At Alexandria and at Rome it was profoundly revised and adapted to the ideas of Christianity which prevailed in those two provinces.

The Alexandrian revision was made by Basilides, a gnostic philosopher of profound mind, whose soul was sensitive to the rites of the mysteries. The Gospel according to Basilides and the Commentary (*Exegetica*) in twenty-four books has been irredeemably lost.<sup>322</sup> We know that it included, as did the Gospel of Marcion, the parable of Dives and Lazarus.<sup>323</sup> We know too that in Basilides Jesus was not crucified. That would have been against his doctrine, for he held that all suffering was expiation for sin, perhaps unknown sin, committed in some former life—Basilides was to some degree

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<sup>322</sup> Basilides was contemporary with Hadrian and Antonine (Clem. Alex., *Strom.*, vii. 17), and was consequently rather younger than Marcion. The Gospel according to Basilides (*κατὰ Βασιλείδην εὐαγγέλιον*) is known only by allusion in Origen, *Hom. i. in Lucam* (ed. Lamm, v. 86). The Commentary (*Ἐξηγητικά*) is mentioned by Agrippa Castor (in Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, iv. 7, 7), Clem. Alex. (*Strom.*, iv. 121, 599) and the *Acta Archelai*.

<sup>323</sup> Hegemonius, *Acta Archelai*, ed. Beeson, lv. There is no genuine indication that Basilides had any acquaintance with the Gospels of Mark, Matthew, and John (see H. Windisch, *Zeitschrift. N.T. Wiss.*, vii. 236-246). Apparently he knew only the principal source of Luke—*i.e.*, Marcion.



affected by Buddhism.<sup>324</sup> Otherwise the responsibility for unmerited suffering would eventually fall on God. "Anything rather than put evil to the account of Providence," he says in Book xxiii of the *Exegetica* (Clem. Alex., *Strom.*, vii. 17, 106). If Jesus was without sin, he could not possibly suffer on the cross.

Basilides tells how Jesus escaped his executioners. "A certain Simon of Cyrene was requisitioned to carry for him his cross, and, by error, was crucified in his place, for he was transfigured in such a manner that he was taken for Jesus, even as Jesus was taken for Simon and stood by making mock of the executioners. Since he is the incorporate Power and the Intelligence (*νοῦς*) of the unengendered Father, he could change figure as he would. So he went up to heaven to Him who had sent him. And he made them into laughing-stocks, since he could neither be seized nor seen of any."<sup>325</sup> The Pauline theme of the mocked Archontes is retained in this manner, although the crucifixion of Jesus is denied, a negation which is repeated in the *Acts of John* and in the Koran of Mahomet.<sup>326</sup>

Here, then, we find pushed to an extreme one of Marcion's essential ideas--that Jesus had no real body, that he could not be seized and that he could change his appearance at will.

The institution of the festival of Epiphany of Jesus and of his Baptism on January 6, was apparently due to Basilides.<sup>327</sup> This makes us think that according to Basilides the manifestation of Jesus as a god took place at a baptism

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<sup>324</sup> R. Garbe, "Buddhist Gnosticism, the System of Basilides"; J.R.A.S., 2902. 377-415. Van den Bergh van Eysinga, *Basileides und der Buddhismus*; Garbe-Fesgabe, 1927, 74-77.

<sup>325</sup> Irenæus, *Hær.*, i. 24, 4. Similarly Ps-Tertullian, *Adv. omnes hæc.* iv, sums up Basilides's doctrine: "*Christum autem . . . venisse in phantasmate, sine substantia carnis fuisse; hunc passum apud Iudæos non esse, sed vice ipsius Simonem crucifixum esse.*" Cf. Epiph., *Hær.*, xxiv. 3.

<sup>326</sup> "A Fragment of the Acts of John," in M. R. James, *Apocrypha Anecdota*, II; Cambridge, 1897, p. 17. *Le Coran*, trad. E. Montet; Paris, 1929, iv. 156, p. 181.

<sup>327</sup> Clem. Alex., *Strom.*, i. 21, 146. See P. Hendrix, "*La Fête de l'Epiphanie*" (*Congrès d'hist. du christ*; Paris, Rieder, 1928, II, 222 s). *Basileides*; Amsterdam, 1926, p. 50 s.

similar to the water festival celebrated at Alexandria also on January 6, but in honour of Osiris.

That is the little we know or guess of this lost gospel, which bore the stamp of a genius which was, perhaps, too individual. It lacked the seal of a powerful and organized church and the prestige of a mysterious origin.

The composition of the Gospel according to St. Mark took place at Rome. This is the first of the gospels declared canonic, the compact and vigorous model of the other three. There is no mention of the author, unless "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ" is intended to give the author. Official tradition attributes the composition to Mark, the companion and interpreter of Peter, which is in direct contradiction with the denigrations of Peter, and the other elder apostles, which are as frequent in it as in the Gospel of Marcion, but which give the book a certificate of ancient origin.

It is possible that the book was written in Latin, for that section of the Church which spoke Latin, if a translation by Ephrem is to be believed.<sup>328</sup> The Latin text which St. Cyprian read in Africa and which is preserved for us in two manuscripts is better in many points than the text of the Greek manuscripts.<sup>329</sup> Anyhow, the work has come down to us in poor condition. The archetype from which originated all the manuscripts we possess was faulty and lacking the end.

This short Roman gospel reflects the positive practical mind, the harsh theology, the heroic yet prudent action,

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<sup>328</sup> Ephrem, *Evangelii concordantis expositio*, ed. Moesinger; Venice, 1876, p. 286 : "*Marcus (scripsit evangelium) latine.*" The same note appears at the head of some Greek MSS. H. C. Hoskier (*Codex B and its Allies*; London, I, 126-172) thinks the author made two editions of his gospel, one in Latin and the other in Greek. The possibility of a Latin original of St. Mark was suggested to me by R. Stahl.

<sup>329</sup> See "L'Évangile de Marc a été écrit en latin" in *Premiers Ecrits du christianisme*; Paris, Rieder, 1930, 85-127, and "Notes de critique verbale sur St. Marc" in *Journal of Theological Studies*, xxxiv; 1933, 113-134 and "Le Texte de St. Marc dans le Codex Chester Beatty," *ibid.*, xxxv; 1934. The two manuscripts which give the African text of Mark are the Codex Palatinus (*e*) and the Codex Bobbiensis (*k*).

the sufferings, and the liturgy of the group of Christians to which it was addressed. At Rome the rupture with the Jews was accomplished. The Christian fraternities met in secret dwellings, buried their dead in catacombs, lived and died apart from the Jewries. Alone they suffered persecution under the law, whereas the Jews lived, as they had done for long years, under the protection of their privileges. Of the Jews the Christians expected nothing better than an occasional convert, and from the rest a more or less open and bitter hostility. The field was ready then for the growth of Paulinism, and, in particular, of the recent form, the narrative gospel.

On the other hand, a total rupture with the Hebrew God and the Hebrew Bible seemed unthinkable. Paul had never exacted as much. The psalms, the prophets, the selected extracts from the Pentateuch, to which were added pious books, such as Tobit and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, remained the main pabulum of the pious. The Scriptures were interpreted in an opposite sense from the interpretations of the Jews, and were interpreted, moreover, against the Jews, yet the Christians still held the Hebrew works in respect. The Very High God whom they worshipped was certainly the God of the Hebrew Bible, Jahweh. No other could be thought of. Unquestionably the Father of Jesus could only be him.

The dispute which split the ranks of Roman Christians was concerning the Only Son of God, or, as they used to say, the Beloved Son and Heir of God. The problem was to whom God had addressed the words in Psalm ii.: "Thou art my beloved son." The prophet Hermas, in his cathedra, advanced the view that the Holy Ghost was the Beloved Son and Heir of God,<sup>330</sup> who was manifest in the form of the Church.<sup>331</sup> Jesus was a great angel who, in reward for his services, had been made the Son and Co-Heir of God, the associate of the Holy Ghost.<sup>332</sup> The great didascalus of the Epistle to the Hebrews, under cover of a letter supposed

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<sup>330</sup> Hermas, *Sim.*, v. 2, 6; v. 5, 2; v. 6, 4; ix. 1, 1.

<sup>331</sup> *Sim.*, ix. 1, 1.

<sup>332</sup> *Sim.*, v. 2, 11 (*συγκληρονόμον*); v. 6, 6 (*κοινωνόν*). See above, p. 121.

to come from St. Paul, riposted that the gulf between Jesus and the angels was infinite, that Jesus alone had been made by God “ heir of all things “ (Heb. i. 2: *κληρονόμον πάντων*).

Mark—for convenience we will call this evangelist by this name—stands in the ranks of the followers of the Epistle against Hermas. For him the Voice of God said and repeated to Jesus, “Thou art my Beloved Son (*i.e.*, my Only Son).”<sup>333</sup> He represents Jesus as being served by angels (Mark i. 13). A parable, corrective to the heresy of Hermas, tells how Jesus was the *well-beloved son* and the *heir* of God.<sup>334</sup> The Gospel of Mark is the earthly story of the heir of Jahweh told behind closed doors to catechumens who, for the greater part, were not of Jewish blood.<sup>335</sup>

Instructed though he may be in sacred letters, Mark was not a teacher. His was the talent of a catechist, a rather common fellow who knew how to move others when he was moved himself. He talks somewhat loudly, as he has to make himself heard by dense Romans and Africans. He took the discontinuous, almost formless story of his predecessor and endeavoured to make it into a coherent drama. To do that he developed that section which already had some degree of connection—the Passion—of which he made for the first time a compact, poignant, and exemplary narrative. In it Jesus becomes the first of martyrs and their perfect model. Beginning his composition with the end, Mark made all his lines converge on the Passion. He goes for facts. He omits a central portion comprising decisions, parables, and sermons, something of which he employs again elsewhere. He attempts to forge connecting links wherever he can by vague references to times and places, the trick of which is often too obvious. He was unable to

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<sup>333</sup> Mark i. 11 and ix. 7. For the meaning “only son” of “beloved son,” see Septuagint Gen. xxii. 2, 12 and 16; Amos viii. 10; Jer. vi. 26; Zech. xii. 10 and C. H. Turner, *The Gospel according to St. Mark*; London, n. d., p. 13.

<sup>334</sup> Mark xii. 6 (*υἱὸν ἀγαπητόν*), and 7 (*ὁ κληρονόμος*). See “Quels livres St. Marc a-t-il lus?” in the *Hibbert Journal*; October, 1932.

<sup>335</sup> Mark, for example, thought it necessary to explain to his hearers: “For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not” (vii. 3; read *πρὶν ἢ* instead of *ἐὰν μὴ* *πυγμαῖ*).

take from the gospel its original character—that of falling into sections, each of which is without real connection either with what precedes or what follows it. In spite of this, Mark's story is the first attempt to give the colour, concreteness, and perspective of history to a poem which was essentially allegorical and didactic.

Mark did not take his matter just as he found it. Either intentionally or unintentionally, he occasionally turns it in such a manner that its original meaning is lost or completely perverted. He does not hesitate to modify or to add whenever it serves his purpose.

Just as did Marcion, he makes Jesus appear suddenly, adult. Drawing perhaps from Basilides, he makes the Epiphany take place in a baptism, which is the foundation and inauguration of the Christian baptism. John the Baptist gives this baptism, and acts towards Jesus in the rôle of Elias, who, in Hebrew belief, is to precede and indicate the Messiah of Israel.<sup>336</sup> The Epiphany of Jesus fulfils not only the prophecies which announce the coming of God's envoy, but those which announce the advent of Jahweh himself (Mark i. 1):—

The Beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.  
As it is written in Isaiah the Prophet;  
Behold I send my messenger before thy face  
Who will prepare thy way;<sup>337</sup>  
The cry of one shouting in the desert,  
Prepare the way of the Lord,  
Smooth the paths of our God.<sup>338</sup>

John the Baptizer was in the wilderness,  
Preaching the baptism of repentance  
For the remission of sins.

John announces that one Mightier than he comes after him:—

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<sup>336</sup> Cf. Tryphon, Justin, *Dialog.*, xlix: "Since Elias has not come, I judge that he [Jesus] is not the Christ," and Mark ix. 13: "But I say unto you that Elias is indeed come."

<sup>337</sup> A modification of a passage in Mal. iii. 1: "Behold I send my messenger and he prepares the way before *me* (Jahweh)."

<sup>338</sup> So in Tatian and Irenæus and the Codex Bezae (D) and the old Latin version. Quotation from Isaiah where it refers to Jahweh xl. 3).

I have indeed baptized you with water.  
He will baptize you with Holy Ghost.

In this manner the Christian baptism is distinguished, for it confers the Holy Ghost, whereas John's baptism was simply one of water. While John is in the act of baptizing Jesus with water, Jahweh causes the Spirit to come down on him:—

It came to pass in those days  
That Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee<sup>339</sup>  
And was baptized in the Jordan by John.  
As he was coming out of the water,  
He saw the heavens split asunder  
And the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him.  
There came a voice from heaven:—  
Thou art my Beloved Son,  
In whom I am well pleased.

Immediately after his earthly investiture, the only Son of God measures himself against his enemy, Satan, in the desert, the dwelling-place of Demons:—

Immediately the Spirit drives him into the desert.  
He was in the desert forty days,  
Tempted of Satan.  
He was among the beasts,  
Angels ministered to him.

In this manner the condition of the Son of God on earth is defined. This is the situation common to Christians.<sup>340</sup> Helped by angels, the Christian is tried by the temptations of Satan and his demons. When the fated Hour strikes, Jesus will submit to the Supreme Test, obeying the will of his Father.<sup>341</sup>

Without delay his mission begins according to the pro-

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<sup>339</sup> Jesus received the cultural epithet of Nazoræan; cf. Acts iii. 6 and iv. 10: "Jesus Christ the Nazoræan." The Nazoræan is the primitive Jesus and the most authentic, the Jesus of the Hebrews of Jerusalem. The evangelists thought this epithet meant "of Nazareth, village in Galilee."

<sup>340</sup> Cf. *The Testament of Naphthali*, viii. 4: "If you do good . . . the *Devil* will flee far from you, *Beasts* will fear you . . . *Angels* will serve you."

<sup>341</sup> Mark xiv. 36. The Epistle to the Hebrews teaches that Jesus underwent the temptation with which all men are tried.

gramme assigned to the mysterious Servant of Jahweh; preaching the good tidings to the poor, healing of broken hearts, liberation of the fettered and fulfilment of the *year of grace* of Jahweh.<sup>342</sup> The catechist Mark depicts Jesus as the first of Christian catechists and exorcists. Jesus at one and the same time preaches the gospel and creates it by living it. This gospel which must be believed (“believe the gospel”), for which home, brothers, sisters, mother, father, wife, and children must be deserted, fields and herds abandoned, even life itself given up so that life may be saved (Mark x. 29; viii. 35); this gospel is no longer only the proclamation of the Imminent End of the World, nor the Tidings of Salvation through the Death of a God: it is also the sacred recital of the words and deeds of Jesus.<sup>343</sup>

Mark then brings in, without any preliminary as to the miraculous catch of fish, the calling of the four fishermen—and without the miraculous catch the words “I will make you to become fishers of men” lose their point. Then he follows for a time the order of his predecessor—the healing of the demoniac in the synagogue at Capernaum, of various sick after the setting of the sun, the cleansing of the leper on whom penance is imposed, the curing of the paralytic whose sins are remitted, the calling of the publican and the feast with the sinners, the question of fasting, the sabbath-breakings, the choosing of the twelve apostles. To the symbolic healings is added in modest wise the healing of an attack of fever of Peter's mother-in-law<sup>344</sup>; such a detail heightened the verisimilitude. Jesus's withdrawal after these miracles and the command he gives to the demons not to reveal that he is the Son of God indicate that Jesus did not wish to reveal himself to the Jews. The choosing

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<sup>342</sup> Isa. lxi. 1-2.

<sup>343</sup> Mark xiv. 9: “Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached ... that she hath done shall be spoken of.”

<sup>344</sup> Mark i. 29-31. It is possible that there is a play on words at the back of this little miracle; in Aramaic *Hamata*-Tiberias, *hamâta*-mother-in-law and *hammtâ*, fever (H. Raschke, “Lieux et routes, de Jésus d'après l'évangile selon Marc,” in *Congrès d'hist. du christ*; Paris, Rieder, 1928, I, 188-204).

of the apostles is a scene of an initiation. Jesus retires from the crowd and calls those whom he wishes. The apostles typify the predestined. Marcion made out that Jesus was mistaken for the Hebrew Messiah. But according to Mark he is the genuine Messiah of Israel, who willfully hides his identity from his people.

In this spirit Mark composed two scenes in which Jesus breaks with the Israelite scribes and with his pretended parents. The notables of Israel who accuse him of being possessed by the prince of the demons are guilty of eternal sin.<sup>345</sup> They are foreordained to blindness and to punishment. And those persons who call themselves the earthly parents of Jesus are among those who were “without” who do not do the will of God, and therefore have no right of entry to his kingdom. Jesus has no other family than the little group of elect.

Mark's intention is again evidenced in the suppression of the great exhortation which Jesus makes to the multitudes and in his replacing it by a singular teaching, partly repeated. In front of the crowd Jesus utters words which are supposed to be incomprehensible to them, and he explains them in deep secrecy to his disciples (iv. 11-12):—

He said to them,  
To you is given the mystery of the Kingdom of God,  
But to those without all is in parable.  
So that seeing they may see and not know,  
And, hearing, they may hear and not understand,  
So that they should not return and that it may not be pardoned them.

The idea of a hidden mystery comes from Paul (1 Cor. ii. 7; Rom. xvi. 25; Ephes. iii. 5). The notion that a parable is unintelligible without an explanation is taken from

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<sup>345</sup> iii. 21. In Marcion the judgment on the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost (Luke xii. 10) referred to the martyrs who were exposed to a denial of the Spirit which inspired them. Mark alters the sense and applies it to the Jews who did not recognize in Jesus the Holy Spirit. He suppresses here the story of the casting out of a dumb devil (cf. Luke xi. 14), though he makes use of it elsewhere. It is, however, necessary as an introduction to the blasphemy of the scribes, who accuse Jesus of being possessed by Beelzebub.



Hermas.<sup>346</sup> The strange idea of a Providence which made the Jews blind so that they might be doomed comes from Isaiah as interpreted by Paul (Isa. vi. 9-10, Septuagint; Rom. xi. 7-10). Mark teaches that the parables are obscure in order to blind the Jews. Mark's suggestion is untenable, for, after expounding in secrecy the first parable<sup>347</sup>—that of the Sower—Jesus leaves the two others—that of the seed which grows by itself and that of the little mustard seed which becomes a great plant—for their meaning requires no interpretation. The parable of the murderous wine-dressers remains unexplained—nevertheless the Jews understand it quite well.<sup>348</sup>

Mark returns to Marcion when he tells of the stilled storm, the casting out of the Legion of Devils, the healing of the woman with a flow of blood, the mission of the apostles, Herod's uncertainty, the miracle of the loaves and fishes. To these stories he adds that of Jesus in his own country, which in Marcion appears much earlier. Mark re-tells them with additional details, names, digressions, and artificial links. The storm takes place on the same day as the discourse on parables; Jesus is in the same boat from which he spoke to the crowd and was not understood. The casting out of the Legion of Devils has an absurd sequel, the devils enter into a herd of swine, which cast themselves into the Abyss.<sup>349</sup> Then the healed demoniac is ordered to announce in the Decapolis all that the Lord has done for him; if Jesus wished to remain unknown among the Jews, he wanted to be celebrated among the pagans. The healing

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<sup>346</sup> Cf. in particular Hermas, Sim., v, 3, 7: "I will explain all to thee" (πάντα ἐπιλύσω), and Mark iv. 34: "He expounded all things (ἐπέλυεν πάντα).

<sup>347</sup> The parable of the sower, like the other parables, had no explanation in Marcion. In Mark the explanation does not give the true meaning of the parable, but attempts by means of allegory to reject various classes of hearers of the Word of God. See B. W. Bacon, *The Gospel of Mark*; New Haven, 1925, 141.

<sup>348</sup> Mark xii. 1-12.

<sup>349</sup> In Marcion the demons were spared the punishment of being cast into the abyss: (*depetebant veniam abyssi, denique impetraverant* (Tertullian, iv. 20). This episode of the swine is perhaps an allusion to the *Legio Fretensis*, which was quartered in Palestine and whose emblem was a Boar (Th. Reinach). The episode is placed at Gerasa, perhaps because this name means *Casting-out* (Raschke).

of the woman is connected with the raising of the daughter of Jairus; the two miracles demonstrate that Jesus can cure Jews when they believe in him.<sup>350</sup> The tale of Jesus's own country leads on to his occupation, he was a carpenter,<sup>351</sup> and to the names of his mother (Mary) and his brothers (James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon).<sup>352</sup> The mention of Herod recalls a legend, brought in as an interlude, of the death of John at the demand of the wife and daughter of Herod.

After the story of the miracle of the loaves and fishes, Mark leaves his original and gives some matter of his own.

In order to rejoin his disciples, Jesus walks on the waves—a symbolic episode to reveal the imponderable spiritual essence of Jesus's body.<sup>353</sup> In this Mark agrees with Paul and Marcion.

The Pharisees accuse the disciples of neglecting the ritual ablution before meals,<sup>354</sup> and Jesus makes use of the opportunity to condemn, not the whole Bible, as Marcion would have had him, but the pretended tradition which has trans-

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<sup>350</sup> The woman has been ill for *twelve* years, the girl is *twelve* years old; *twelve* is the number of Israel. The name of Jair means "he awakes, he raises again," and is drawn from the story itself (Cheyne).

<sup>351</sup> This appellation of carpenter (τέκτων) seems to have been chosen to indicate, without being understood by the profane, one who spoke of a *yoke* (cf. Matt. xi. 29: "take my yoke . . ."), and of a *plough* (cf. Luke ix. 62: "having put his hand to the plough"); see Justin, *Dial.*, 88: "He did carpenter's work, making yokes and ploughs."

<sup>352</sup> *Mary* is perhaps the same as Miriai, name given by the Mandæans to the sect of John the Baptist (*Das johannesbuch*, ed. Lidzbarski, pp. 131-143). It also suggests the sister of Moses, Miriam, who rebelled against him as the Jews rebelled against Jesus. James is the famous *brother of the Lord* who shared this title with his own brothers. In the Epistles attributed to James and to Jude they are not termed "brothers," but *slaves* ("servants") of Jesus Christ, and Jude calls himself the "brother of James."

<sup>353</sup> See G. Bertram, "Le Chemin sur les Eaux considéré comme motif de Salut," in *Congrès d'hist. du Christ.*, I, 137-166. It is to be noted that the Docetists who taught that Jesus had a real body took Mark as their sole Gospel (Irenæus, *Hær.*, iii. xi. 7).

<sup>354</sup> This theme is in Marcion (Luke xi. 37-41), but with a very different development. The distinction between the soiling of the hands and the soiling of the soul is common ground. See Euripides, *Hippolytus*, v. 312: "His hands are clean, but his soul is soiled." Epicharme, 13-26: "If thou hast the spirit clean, thy body is wholly clean."

formed and perverted the word of God. Mark's Jesus keeps the moral nucleus of the Bible, which he calls God's commandment, but he rejects as mere human additions all food regulations. He comes back to Paul's position, basing it, as Paul did, on an invective passage in Isaiah.<sup>355</sup> As is his custom, he gives a double interpretation. He puts to the crowd a sort of riddle (vii. 14-16):—

Hearken to me, all, and understand!  
There is nothing without a man, which, entering into him,  
Can defile him.  
But what comes out of a man  
Is what defiles him.

To his disciples, in secret, he interprets, with a certain wholesome vulgarity, that it does not matter what food is eaten, since in the digestive apparatus there is neither pure nor unclean. What defiles a man are his thoughts which rise from his heart. In this manner, after much skirmishing and combat, the whole code of food regulations of the Hebrews is done away with.

Jesus goes into the land of the paynim, to Tyre and Sidon. A heathen woman begs him, as the widow of Sarepta did Elias, to exorcise her child; this exorcism symbolizes the salvation of the pagans. Jesus raises the objection that the "Bread of the children is not for dogs"—*i.e.*, the children are the Jews and the dogs are the Gentiles. She answers humbly:—

Yes, Lord, yet the dogs, under the table,  
Eat of the children's crumbs.

For this reply Jesus answers her prayer. This is pure Paulinism in action. The Jews were the first to whom Jesus offered salvation. What they disdain, the heathen pick up.

First the Jews, and then the heathen. The idea inspires Mark to introduce a second miracle of loaves and fishes on the same lines as the first. Israel was the object of the

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<sup>355</sup> Isa. xxix. 13, cited by Paul, Col. ii. 22: "This people honours me with its lips, but its heart is far from me. They worship me in vain, for they take their precepts after the ordinances of men."

first one, whence twelve basketfuls, the number of Israel.<sup>356</sup> The second is for the pagans. Here, then, there are seven baskets of remnants; seven, the number of the apostles who spoke Greek, formerly grouped round Stephen and opposed to the Twelve; seven recalling the seventy nations of the Gentiles. Let the Christian converts from Israel take their meals as they will! The converts from paganism have a right to their own agapes. Mark intends the miracle to be taken in a material sense. So, when the apostles fear to run short of bread (viii. 16), Jesus rebukes them for their lack of faith<sup>357</sup> and reminds them of the two miraculous distributions of food. No heed should be taken for food the Lord will provide.<sup>358</sup>

Mark is the author of two miraculous healings—that of the stammering deaf man (vii. 32-37) and that of a blind man (viii. 22-26) that the prophecy of Isaiah might be fulfilled (xxxv. 5-6), in which the blind open their eyes, the deaf their ears, and the tongues of the dumb become loud with joy. Jesus no longer works, as in Marcion, from above and afar, without employing material means, and by making use of a spoken word alone. No, he spits into the sick organ, puts his fingers into the earholes, touches tongues, lays on hands several times, looks up to heaven, heaves sighs, utters abracadabra, all in the manner of the professional exorcist.

Having taken a flight of his own, the evangelist returns to the beaten path. He tells of Peter's confession, Jesus's transfiguration, the epileptic's healing, the two announcements of the Passion, the quarrel among the apostles as to precedence, and Jesus's approval of the strange exorcist. In all these borrowings he introduces vague indications of time and place, and does his best to dramatize the scenes,

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<sup>356</sup> The basket (*kophin*) was a plaited sack peculiar to the Jews: *Iudaeis quorum cophinus faenamque supellex* (Juvenal, iii. 14).

<sup>357</sup> Read in viii. 17 *ὀλιγόπιστοι* as found in the Codex Beatty and the Cæsarean text (*Journal of Theological Studies*, 1934, p. 15).

<sup>358</sup> Without making direct use of the lesson to take no care for food and clothing (Marcion, Luke xii. 22-31), Mark shows that he knows it. Similarly elsewhere (xi. 2-4) Mark does not quote the *Pater*, but shows he is acquainted with it.

to develop the idea, and to accentuate the features. He throws into still clearer relief the opposition of the older apostles to the doctrine of the cross. When Peter says abruptly to Jesus, "Thou art the Christ," Jesus, by way of answer, insists on the need for the Passion and Peter begins to reproach him. Whereat Jesus says harshly: "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou hast not the thoughts of God, but those of men." To "get behind" Jesus is to carry his cross and face death. Mark is here more vehement than Marcion. He does not forget that Paul compared the first apostles to Satan,<sup>359</sup> and he makes of Peter the type of animal man such as, according to Paul, is incapable of understanding what is the Spirit of God.<sup>360</sup>

He puts the finishing touch to the incredible stupidity of the apostles. After the transfiguration, when Jesus alludes to his future resurrection, Peter, James, and John, the very three who had witnessed the resurrection of Jairus's daughter, ask one another what this resurrection can mean. It cannot be doubted that Mark sought to raise at their expense the guffaws of the gallery.

The apostles are incapable of anything but the easiest exorcisms, just as they are too dense to understand a single syllable of the doctrine of the cross. But great is their vanity when they debate among themselves which of them is the greatest. The Little One who is to be received as Jesus himself, the capable exorcist who is not to be hindered, the generous Christian who has given much more than a glass of water, has given in fact great alms to the apostles because they were "of Christ"—this is Paul. This covert allusion to Paul is the link between otherwise incoherent passages.

From this point, Mark hurries matters and skips a third of Marcion's gospel in order to come more quickly to the Passion. He thrusts on one side a mass of mingled teaching and symbolic episodes. He joins together the lessons on scandal and divorce, which he amplifies in his manner. Marcion's Jesus cast a malediction on anyone who should cause a single one of these "little ones" (Pauline Christians) to stumble. Mark's Jesus speaks to a church in which

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<sup>359</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 14.

<sup>360</sup> I Cor. ii. 14.

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stumbling had become frequent and painful. He bids the faithful to rid themselves of any member which may cause them to offend, were it a hand, or a foot, or an eye,<sup>361</sup> and to reject salt, if the salt has lost its savour. Before all he desires peace within the church. He borrows from Paul the precept given to the Thessalonians, “Be at peace among yourselves” (1 Thess. v. 13).

In the matter of divorce Mark develops into a story the saying which Paul uttered in the Lord's name, and which is reproduced by Marcion.<sup>362</sup> Jesus is at the confines of Judæa, and the Pharisees ask him if a husband is allowed to divorce his wife. Jesus refers them to the Law of Moses, and then to the bitter saying of the prophets as to the hardness of heart of the Jewish people (Jer. iv. 4; Ezek. iii 7. Cf. Deut. x. 16), because divorce was tolerated among them; and then again to the primordial law of two becoming one flesh (Gen. ii. 24). We have, then, here a good example of anti-Jewish polemic. After that, behind closed doors, Jesus utters an edict against divorce.

Mark passes over more passages of Marcion. He tells with the colour and movement which he knew how to give, Jesus's teaching as to the Children to whom the Kingdom of God belongs (*children* who are then believers), the answer given to the rich young man who wishes to obtain life eternal, the answer given to James and John when they express a wish to be seated, the one on the right hand, the other on the left hand, at the apotheosis of Jesus.<sup>363</sup> The lesson Jesus gives the vainglorious apostles is wholly Pauline; in order to be first you must be the slave of all; Jesus himself had not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life in order to redeem the “many” (πολλοί).<sup>364</sup> Mark completes

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<sup>361</sup> The pagan philosopher Sextus, whose date is uncertain, has something to say on cutting off a member which prevents one from living wisely (Hennecke, *Neutestamentliche Apokryphen*; 2nd ed., p. 630). Whether Mark borrowed from Sextus, or *vice versa*, cannot be stated.

<sup>362</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 10-11; Marcion-Luke xvi. 18.

<sup>363</sup> Luke omitted this episode, though it was in Marcion, Origen (*In Luc. Hom.*, xxv) tells us that according to the Marcionites, the “others” for whom these places of honour were destined were Paul and Marcion.

<sup>364</sup> πολλοί is a technical expression meaning the heathen (Isa. liii. 11-12). Mark xiv. 24: “blood ... shed for the many.”

these pieces with a third announcement of the Passion and the Resurrection, displaying a decided taste for ternary constructions.<sup>365</sup> The healing of the blind man of Jericho is another example of the Pauline doctrine of saving faith. After this opens the drama of the Passion. Mark begins with Jesus's entry into Jerusalem. He displays in this narrative all his gifts of a story-teller and of a catechist. The sayings and the events are allotted to different days, whereas they had hitherto been disconnected. He founds the liturgy of a veritable holy week.

On the first day of the week Jesus makes his entry into Jerusalem as Messiah. On the second day, Monday, he performs a Messianic exploit—the cleansing of the temple. Without a pre-existing model, Mark invents two scenes after the prophecies of Zechariah (ix. 9 and xiv. 21): “Behold thy king comes to thee, meek and riding on an ass . . .” and “There will be no more selling and buying in the house of the Lord in that day.” He teaches, in opposition to Marcion, that Jesus is the Israelite Messiah, and at the same time he teaches that the temple had become the House of Prayer for all the nations (by reference to Isaiah), and at the same time, too, by a bizarre turn, he declares that Israel was cursed by Jesus (xi. 12-20):—

On the morrow, when they were come out of Bethany,  
He was hungry.  
Seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves,  
He went to see if he could find something.  
When he came to it, he found only leaves,  
For it was not yet the season for figs.

He spoke to it,  
Not for ever, not for eternity,  
May any man eat fruit of thee.  
His disciples heard him.

And in the morning, as they passed by,  
They saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.

If it had been question of a real fig tree and real figs,

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<sup>365</sup> On this point see P. Alfarcic, *Pour comprendre la vie de Jésus*; Paris, Rieder, 1930.

the curse would have been grotesque and absurd. But the fig tree symbolizes Israel. When there were prophets it produced fruit. Now the time of figs has gone by. For ever accursed, it will never more bear fruit. For this reason Jesus, the Messiah of Israel, is no longer the Messiah of Israel. He damns his own people and becomes the salvation of the other nations. Such is the doctrine, queer product of Christian experience, which Mark expresses in story form.

He throws light on his thought and completes it by means of a parable which he makes Jesus tell on the Tuesday (xii. 1-9):—

A man planted a vineyard,  
Set about it a hedge,  
Dug a wine-vat,  
Built a tower,<sup>366</sup>  
Let it out to wine-dressers and went away.

At the season, he sent to the wine-dressers a slave  
To receive from the dressers  
A share of the fruits of the vineyard.  
They seized him and beat him  
And sent him away with empty hands.

He sent to them another slave;  
They wounded this one and handled him shamefully.  
He sent to them another;  
They killed this one.  
And several others, some they beat, some they killed.

He had yet one, his well-beloved son.  
He sent him to them last of all,  
Saying, They will reverence my son.  
But the dressers said to one another,  
This is the heir.  
Come, let us kill him,  
The heritage will be ours.

They laid hands on him and killed him,  
And threw him out of the vineyard.  
What will the master of the vineyard do?  
He will come and destroy the wine-dressers  
And will give the vineyard to others.

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<sup>366</sup> This beginning, borrowed from Isa. v, 1-2, shows it refers to God and Israel.



The meaning is clear; the Jews have struck and slain the prophets their god sent them. They also slay and reject Jesus, the Only Son and Heir of God. That is why the Kingdom which was destined for them was transferred utterly to others, and that is why Jesus, the Messiah of Israel, is the Destruction of Israel.

Mark mingles with these new episodes, which express his doctrine and that of his church, matter from the old gospel—*e.g.*, the captious questions put by the Pharisees (Jesus works by whose authority? Should tribute be paid to Cæsar?; the woman with seven husbands; the Sadducean argument against resurrection; the objection made by the scribes; the Messiah of Israel must be the Son of David and not the Son of God). He also inserts other scraps out of Marcion—a passage on the power of faith, two lessons on prayer, the reduction of the commandments to two—love of God and love of the neighbour. Of his own he puts in the story which he culled perhaps from some Buddhist source, of the humble offering of the widow, in order to induce the faithful to give.

Out of three pieces which were separate in Marcion—namely, the signs of the end, the sudden arrival of the Son of Man, and the exhortation to vigilance, that modest substitute for the great Apocalypse (Marcion-Luke xxi. 5-34; xvii. 20-37; xii. 35-41)—Mark constructs a single apocalyptic prediction given by Jesus to four apostles only. Before the end of the world, the gospel must be preached to all nations, a Pauline doctrine.<sup>367</sup> The major sign of the imminent advent of the Christ was, for Marcion, the defeat of the Jew Messiah, Barcocheba, and the siege of Jerusalem by the armies of Hadrian. Mark adds a striking new detail which dates his book (xiii. 14):—

When you shall see the *abomination of desolation*  
Standing where it ought not—  
Let him who reads understand—

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<sup>367</sup> Rom. x. 18; xi. 25. The best text of Mark xiii is given by *k*: "*Sed confortamini prius enim oportet praedicari evangelium in omnes gentes.*"

Then those who will be in Judæa,  
Let them flee to the mountains! . . .

The mystery hidden in these words is not difficult to penetrate. The *abomination of desolation* or the *ordure of devastation* is the grand prophetic sign announced by Daniel after which the Son of Man is due to appear on earth. It means the erection of a pagan altar in the Temple at Jerusalem. Since the time when Antiochus Epiphanes raised an altar to Zeus Olympian the Bringer of Victory such a thing had not been seen. Titus had burned the Temple, but had not profaned it. Behold the sign was now evident to all. After the war of Bar-cocheba, the Emperor Ælius Hadrianus installed in the Temple, where it ought not to be, the altar and statue of Jupiter Capitolinus and also an altar and statue of himself. This was the *abomination of desolation*. Jerusalem even lost its name, for it became called after its new Gods, Ælia Capitolina. In these horrifying events there was what gave vivid emphasis to Daniel's prophecy, and an edge and an exasperation to the expectation of the Christians awaiting their Christ. Mark's gospel cannot be very much later than the year of these events—i.e., 135.

In his days there burned up again the swift fever of the time of Daniel and the devouring hope of the Son of Man. Since Daniel had prophesied, this grandiose figure had taken on complexity, density, and earthly humanity.

As for the day and the hour of the Advent Mark teaches, as Paul had before him,<sup>368</sup> that no man will know, “neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.” No prophet can reveal it. Be vigilant through all the watches, and be ready for any instant.

On the Wednesday a mysterious ceremony takes place; Jesus is anointed in preparation for death. Marcion told how a prostitute anointed, kissed, and washed with her tears the feet of Jesus, a poetic symbolization of pagan faith. Mark transforms the scene. A woman—no sinner—covers Jesus's head with precious nard, not for a throne, but for a tomb. Piously she carries out the funerary rite

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<sup>368</sup> 1 Thess. v. 1-3.

for the crucified Christ of Paul, in place of the royal rite for the Son of David. The evangelist adds a practical lesson to this solemn ritual. To see such a sum spent in this manner when it could have done much for the poor is a sore matter with some there, and Jesus answers (xiv. 7):—

Always you have the poor with you;  
When you will, you may always do them good.  
But me you have not always.

Marcion would have everything given to the poor; not so Mark. The expenses of the religious rites of the holy week come before the poor. Jesus adds:—

Wherever this gospel shall be preached, throughout the whole world,  
What she has done will be told also for a memorial to her.

Thus the gospel is depicted as a faithful record, complete and continuous, of all that happened to Jesus.

Thursday is the day of the sacramental feast of the Christians. Jesus is supposed to celebrate the Jewish Passover on the 14th Nisan. It does not matter a jot to the evangelist that the essential is lacking—*i.e.*, the Paschal Lamb. He replaces it by Jesus himself offered up as sacrifice in the guise of food and drink. It does not matter at all to him that he makes Jesus distribute among the disciples leavened bread (*ἄρτος*) which would not be tolerated in Jewish houses after noon on the 14th Nisan. Nor does he hesitate to make the chiefs of the Jews break the Paschal rest by arresting Jesus, nor to make the Sanhedrim judge him, nor to send Jesus himself and the Twelve up the Mount of Olives at night, when no man may go out of the door of his house till morning. The probability of his story is of no interest to him; his concern is to construct a liturgy. If he causes Jesus to celebrate the passover, it is to avoid, similarly to Marcion, Christ's death falling on the 14th Nisan, the day of the spring full moon, and to fix it better in his holy week. In this manner his narration serves as a foundation and a guide to the Roman ritual which no longer celebrated the death and resurrection

of Jesus on the 14th Nisan, as it was still celebrated in the “apostolic” ritual of Asia, but on the Friday and the Sunday which followed the full moon. Mark it was who put together the legend which explained the Roman festival; he was the *haggadist* of Rome.<sup>369</sup>

The sacramental Easter feast of Jesus has a fine scene sequel, the pathos of which is essentially Pauline and for which we may seek an author in the writer of Hebrews.<sup>370</sup> In Marcion Jesus went apart from his disciples in order to pray before his arrest. Mark describes this prayer. He recalled passage in Isaiah (lxiii. 1-5) in which a mysterious individual who has been abandoned cries out, “I have been alone to tread the *Press* . . . no man was with me. I looked, no man to help me. I have watched, no man to support me.” (Mark xiv. 32-42.)

They came to a place named Gethsemani.<sup>371</sup>  
He said to his disciples,  
Sit there while I pray.

He takes away with him Peter, James, and John.  
He was seized with fear and with distress;  
And he said to them, My soul is grieved to death.<sup>372</sup>  
Stay there and watch!

He went forward and fell on the ground.  
He prayed that, if it were possible,  
That hour might pass from him.  
He said, *Abba*, Father, all is possible to thee;  
Take away this cup from me.  
Nevertheless not what I will, what thou wilt.

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<sup>369</sup> The strange command given by Jesus to his disciples to follow a man carrying a keramion of water, and the rather mysterious manner in which he gives them to understand that they are to follow this man—*i.e.*, Marcion, whose name is a sort of anagram of keramion—instructs the Christian to observe the Marcionite rite in which water only was drunk in the eucharist (R. Stahl).

<sup>370</sup> Heb. v. 7-8, in which Psalm xxii is the source of inspiration: “Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him who was able to save him from death and was heard because he feared, though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.” This supplication which the author of Hebrews drew from the Psalm is given place and time by Mark.

<sup>371</sup> Means oil-press.

<sup>372</sup> Psalm xliii, 5

He comes and he finds them sleeping.  
He says to Peter, Simon, sleepest thou?  
Couldst thou not watch an hour?  
Watch, and pray that thou mayst not enter into the Trial.  
The spirit is quick, but the flesh is weak.  
Again he went away and prayed in the same manner.

He came back and found them sleeping.  
Their eyes were very heavy.  
They knew not what to answer him.

He comes the third time and says to them,  
Sleep on now, take your rest!  
Behold he who betrays me is at hand.

A little later he awoke them and said,  
Now is the hour.  
Behold, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.  
Awake, let us go!<sup>373</sup>

Jesus's grievous anguish is balanced by his glorious transfiguration. There are three witnesses of it, all stupid with sleep. The Pauline Christ suffers every human weakness, for "power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. xii. 9). As did Paul, Jesus prays God thrice to put away from him the bitter cup, and, in so doing, sets the example to the Church. The arrest at night is for Mark a typical trial, sudden persecution apt to strike unheralded the suffering Christian. Watch unceasingly, and never to seek a trial, for that is presumption, and the flesh is weak, but to pray that the trial may be put aside from us, that is the Christian's duty. If the trial does come, let God's will be done.

After Judas's kiss, the Man of Sorrows is arrested, treated like a criminal, after the words of Isaiah. All desert him and flee.

A young man followed him,  
Garbed in a shawl.  
They lay hold on him.  
But, leaving the shawl in their hands, he fled away naked.

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<sup>373</sup> For Jesus's third calling the best text is given in *k* (see *Notes de critique verbale sur St. Marc*; J. T. S., 1933, pp. 129-131).

The young man is there as a lesson. He followed Jesus as long as he might. When they laid hands on him, he escaped the trial, as young Moses did aforetime and, "leaving his clothing, fled away naked."<sup>374</sup> Before persecution, in a moment of urgent danger, flight is permitted.

Mark places Jesus's trial by the Sanhedrim, his condemnation by the scandalized high priest, and the judges' insults, at night. With him the sensational, even if somewhat on the heavy side, is more important than probability. For Mark it was a question of giving dramatic interest to liturgical narrative. By means of the nocturnal sitting of the Sanhedrim he cuts in two Peter's denial, so in adroit manner suspending the interest.<sup>375</sup> After his exhibition of cowardice, Peter weeps; even so can those Christians who have denied their faith under persecution be redeemed by repentance.

Friday and Saturday were in the Roman rite fast-days preceding the Sunday rejoicing. The death of Jesus and his sojourn in the tomb were celebrated mournfully just as in the official Roman calendar, the fasts of March 23 and 24 were in mourning for the death of Attis, preceding the *Hilaria* of March 25, which celebrated his Parousia.

Jesus is brought before Pilate in the early hours of Friday morning, and, obeying the words of Isaiah, he refuses to speak. Barabbas is preferred to him, and he is handed over for flagellation and crucifixion. Mark differs from Marcion in that he makes Jesus crucified by the Romans, and not by the Archontes—*i.e.*, the sinners, many of whom will be redeemed by his death if their faith is strong enough, crucify him. Luke xxiii. 25-26, and John xix. 16, tell how the Jews crucify Jesus, whereas Matthew follows Mark in making him crucified by the Roman soldiers. Jesus foretold that he would be delivered by the Jews to the Gentiles (x. 33) and also to sinners (xiv. 41); the equivalence of these two terms may be seen in 1 Macc. 34; ii. 48 and 62. Mark omits as pointless the sending of Jesus to Herod. The fine

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<sup>374</sup> *Testament of Joseph*. See "Quels livres Marc a-t-il lus?" in the *Hibbert Journal*; October, 1932.

<sup>375</sup> Just as he cuts in two the story of the raising of Jairus's daughter by introducing the episode of the woman with a flow of blood (v. 21-43).

cloak Herod gave Jesus becomes in Mark a mockery of kingship which the soldiery thrust on him (Mark xv. 16-19):—

The soldiers led him away into the Praetorium.  
They assembled the whole cohort.<sup>376</sup>  
They clothe him with purple,  
And, having plaited a crown of thorns, they crown him with it.

They began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews!  
They smote him on the head with a reed,  
They spat upon him,  
And, bowing, they worshipped him.

Jesus is treated like a poor natural who fancies himself a king. This is an almost literal illustration of Paul's statement that the crucified Jesus is a scandal to the Jews and madness to the Gentile.

On this hallowed day, when executions were solemnly forbidden, Jesus was led out to die. Simon of Cyrene, who for Mark was a known person, whose son he names, the same Simon who, according to Basilides, was crucified in the place of Jesus, is called on to bear the cross, thus symbolizing those who have been led by Paul's preaching to bear the Cross of Jesus, and he takes the place of that Simon who denied his Master.

From nine in the morning till three in the afternoon Jesus was hanging on the cross, as Isaiah wrote (lxv. 2): "I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people." And then he quotes Psalm xxii: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" while about him are fulfilled the details of the Psalm. He dies, insulted by the Jews, recognized as the Son of God by a centurion, first fruit of the Gentile Christendom. A man of standing asks Pilate for his body and, as it was written in Isaiah, prepares a tomb for him. In this tomb he remains during the uneventful day of the sabbath.

On Sundays, at break of day, the holy women, his handmaidens,<sup>377</sup> go to the tomb with perfumes (xvi. 5-8):—

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<sup>376</sup> About 600 men.

<sup>377</sup> These women are not mentioned by Mark before, and he borrows them from Marcion, including the name of the principal one, Mary Magdalene (Luke viii. 2-3).

Entering into the tomb,  
They saw a young man sitting on the right  
Arrayed in a white robe.  
They were afraid.

He said to them, Be not afraid.  
Are you seeking Jesus Nazarene the Crucified?  
He is risen; he is not here.  
Behold the place where they laid him.

Go, tell his disciples and Peter,  
He has gone before you to Galilee.  
There you will see him  
As he told you.

They went out and fled away from the tomb.  
For trembling and astonishment had come upon them  
For they were afraid. . . .<sup>378</sup>

At this point Mark's Gospel breaks off abruptly. All the manuscripts since the last quarter of the second century go back to an archetype mutilated at the end. Two artificial endings have since then been appended in place of the lost piece. If we judge by Matthew, who seems to have had a complete Mark in front of him, Jesus appeared to the women, and then, in Galilee, to the disciples and to Peter, whom he commissioned to preach the Gospel throughout the world.<sup>379</sup>

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<sup>378</sup> In the Greek manuscripts in front of "they were afraid" appear the words "and they said nothing to any one." These words do not occur in k, which runs: *omnia autem quaecumque praecepta erant eis qui cum petro erant breviter exposuerunt*. In both Greek and Latin texts these are retouches of an abruptly mutilated text. The original probably went, "for they were afraid lest the Jews should come" *ἐφοβοῦντο γὰρ μὴ ἰδῶσιν αὐτὰς οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι*). See the Gospel of Peter, 52, the author of which had read the complete text of Mark.

<sup>379</sup> In Mark's Gospel Jesus foretells his apparition to the disciples in Galilee (xiv. 8; cf. xvi. 7) and that after his resurrection he would "say the Word openly" (viii. 31-32; read *ἀναστῆναι καὶ παρρησίᾳ τὸν λόγον λαλεῖν*; see k, *resurgere et cum fiducia sermonem loqui*). Mark's Gospel probably ended with a command from Jesus to the disciples to preach the Word to all the nations, in imitation of Marcion's Gospel (in Tertullian, iv. 3; *et apostolos mittens ad praedicandum universis nationibus*). This again is imitated by Matthew (xxviii. 19-20): "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations..."



Mark's little volume had a special importance. After Marcion's long, poetic, and didactic Gospel, Mark gives a brief, vibrant, and hallowed narrative in which the interest is sustained and the plausibility sufficient. It was also well adapted for liturgical use and for moral application. Mark gave Jesus a place in popular fancy and made him into a hero of religious legend.

The story of Jesus is not in Mark something extraneous to human history. It is the last chapter of Holy Writ, and the most important and least to be expected; the chapter which illuminates and overthrows all the others. Jahweh had sent in vain prophet after prophet to Israel, so he sent at last his One and Only Son. This son, whom the Jews had not known till then, they kill and reject. His treatment of them is, not surprisingly, that of an irritated deity. Jesus condemns and curses the people whom Jahweh had elected and cherished. Heaven's policy veered round completely and a new regime comes into force. A new people worships a new Lord. Jesus is Jahweh's heir and successor, just as Jupiter was the successor of Kronos. The old God is left his honours and prerogatives, but his Law is a dead letter, and he himself becomes merely the Father of the Reigning Monarch. Men are transferred to a new grace and submit to new laws. To tell the truth, Jahweh's heir is not very different from the wholly New God of Marcion.

In essentials he is the Crucified God which Paul dreamed brought within the understanding of rough Roman heads. Mark follows Paul in that he accepts only a Crucified Christ. The cross gives its orientation to the whole gospel. Jesus is the Divine Redeemer who has given his life to ransom sinful men. Only those are predestined for redemption who walk after him, bear his cross, share his servile meekness and his tortured sufferings. His faithful must be ever ready to drink deep of the same cup as he and to be baptized with the same mortal baptism. Their lives must be an unceasing imitation of his martyrdom. The trial must find them at prayer in anguish and submission. Persecution is their natural state. Abandoning home, father, mother, brothers,

sisters, wife, children, lands, they find them again “in persecution.”<sup>380</sup> They know they must lose their souls to save them.

Mark's Jesus has some new traits, such as the grim decision to keep the Jews in ignorance by speaking to them in obscure parables and the jealous care to instruct his disciples apart, such as the contained heroism which he teaches them by means of curt oracles and of example. He is the Secret God who imparts knowledge in whispers and who, out of the mortuary, unquiet gloom of the catacombs, stretches forth his blood-streaked arms.

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<sup>380</sup> Mark x. 29-30.

## VII

### THE MESSIAH OF ISRAEL

*(The Gospel according to St. Matthew)*

FROM Rome the plain and energetic Gospel of St. Mark was sent out to the other Churches. About 140 it was in circulation in Asia Minor. Papias, bishop of Hierapolis in Phrygia,<sup>381</sup> mentions the criticism of a leader of the Ephesian Church, that the gospel was ill arranged. Mark's book was published as being an ancient document by a disciple and interpreter of Peter, one who had accompanied Peter to Rome and whom Peter had been in the habit of calling his son.<sup>382</sup> This gave it formidable authority. Its very roughness, its somewhat awkward construction, its popular note, all made it more effective than the subtle Gospel of Marcion in convincing the Christian that the Son of God whom they awaited and worshipped had really been to earth.

Mark's Gospel went as far east as the easternmost province of Christendom, that land east of Antioch which towards the Euphrates went even beyond the boundaries of the Roman Empire, a bilingual country where little churches abounded.

Remote Christian communities fell into two groups of importance. In Southern Syria, chiefly at Kokaba in Basanitide, were gathered those known as Ebionites, flotsam of the mother-church, obstinate offspring of the *Poor* of Jerusalem who observed the strict code of James and who repudiated Paul, calling him the apostate of the Law (Irenæus, *Hær.*, i. 26, 2; iii. 11, 7). This body later

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<sup>381</sup> Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, iii. 39. See B. W. Bacon, *Studies in Matthew*; London, 1930, pp. 439-441—a work of which I have made much use.

<sup>382</sup> In an Epistle supposedly addressed to the Christians of Asia Minor, Peter said (1 Peter v. 13): "She [the Church] that is elect in Babylon [Rome] salutes you, and so does Mark my son."

published a gospel based on the tradition and authority of James.

In Northern Syria and Mesopotamia, where Hellenism formed little islands in an ocean of Semitism, Greek culture could produce the refined genius of Lucian, but the dominant tongue was Aramaic, and old established Christian communities were to be found in which the spirit was more generous. From Damascus to the Euphrates extended that "Arabia" where Paul wrought his first period of apostolate. The Phrygian bishop Aberkios journeyed about 190 beyond Euphrates even to Nisibe. "With Paul as guide," he traversed the Syrian plain, and all its cities made him welcome. In the north, in Osrhoene, the church of Edessa boasted a fabulous foundation, going back to a correspondence between the toparch Abgar and Jesus himself.<sup>383</sup> Not far away was Hierapolis Bambyke, city of the Syrian Goddess, where was venerated the tomb of a Christian of great renown, Matthew,<sup>384</sup> of whom we have no certain information. Farther west at Berea Chalybis were to be found Nazarenes till the fifth century; these were Christian, speaking Aramaic, an ancient branch still very close to the original Jew. They used to read from Isaiah the passage (viii-ix) foretelling their deliverance from the yoke of the Scribes and the Pharisees and the vision of the light of the evangel penetrating as far as the seashore. They rejected the "second law" (*mischna*) which the Scribes and Pharisees had formulated without the approval of the heavenly Father. They had not a shadow of doubt that the "two houses of Israel" for whom, so said Isaiah (viii. 14), the Redeemer was to be a "stone of stumbling and a rock of offence," were "Hillel and Schammai, from whom spring the Scribes and the Pharisees, to whom succeeded Johanan ben Zacchai, then Eliezer."<sup>385</sup>

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<sup>383</sup> Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, i. 13. The odd passage in Matthew (iv. 24), "the report of him went forth into all Syria," was perhaps meant to support this legend.

<sup>384</sup> Lipsius, *Die apokryphan Apostelgesdrihten*; Braunschweig, 1883- 1887.

<sup>385</sup> Jerome, *Comm. in Isaiah*; P. L. p. 24, 122s, 126, 128, 348, 369; quoted by B. W. Bacon, *Studies in Matthew*.

The Jews were strong numerically throughout the Aramæan country, and in many districts were the preponderating religious sect. Between Nisibe and Edessa Adiabene was governed by a dynasty which were converts to Judaism. It was the Jews of Mesopotamia, of Adiabene, of Parthia, and of Northern Arabia for whom Josephus wrote in Aramaic the first edition of his *Jewish War*. When the Messianic revolt of Bar-cocheba came to its bloody end, here it was that the Jews gathered most thickly and from here was issued later on the Talmud of Babylon. The Dura synagogue with its astonishing Biblical frescoes is an expression of the lively faith and inventive genius of one of the Jewries of the Euphrates.

The Christians of this flat region were for the most part converted Jews.<sup>386</sup> Their manner of regarding the Kingdom of Heaven placed them apart from the Pharisaic Jews—both Jew and Christian spoke of the Kingdom of Heaven in order to avoid mentioning the name of God—the Kingdom which was to come and which was already in existence, and also the power over the Law which they considered was possessed by the Son of Man. These Christians boasted of belonging to Israel as did the Christians of no other region, and to a degree unknown elsewhere they hated the Pharisaic rabbis; for it is between near relations that the bitterest hatred is bred.

Did the Aramaic Churches find Mark's Gospel to their taste? It went rather too far in its scorn of the Law; there was overmuch Pauline doctrine in it. As literature it had the defects which Papias the Phrygian could mention as the criticism of the Elder of Ephesus. It did not give all the words of the Lord, and those it gave were without proper order. This was not surprising, since this Mark, Peter's dragoman, had never been an eye-witness of what he described. Of course he did not say anything wrong, but he omitted things, perhaps because Peter had not told him of them, and he had put down higgledy-piggledy what ought to be given in due order.

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<sup>386</sup> Cf. F. C. Burkitt, *The Gospel History and its Transmission*; (1911, p. 172.  
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A Christian scribe undertook to complete Mark's Gospel in the light of Marcion's. Mark had neglected certain pages of the latter. He would also arrange the Words Of the Lord in five parts, each preceded by a narrative section in the manner Moses had arranged his books in five, each containing narratives and precepts.<sup>387</sup> The whole should be attributed discreetly to an accredited eye-witness. He therefore substituted the legendary Matthew, well known in the Aramaean country, for the publican Levi of Marcion and Mark and put him in the list of the Twelve.<sup>388</sup> The new Gospel was issued as the work of the only one of the Twelve Apostles accustomed to handling a pen, and became looked upon, not as the compilation it really was, but as the most ancient and authentic narrative.

The Gospel according to St. Matthew was written in Aramaic. Papias, c. 140, noted: "Matthew put into order the words in Hebrew, and every one translates them as best he can."<sup>389</sup> Apparently Papias translated them himself. About 330 Eusebius was acquainted with the Aramaic text and quoted certain passages to correct the Greek version.<sup>390</sup> This Greek version was the only one to circulate among the Churches to any extent, and it alone has come down to us.

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<sup>387</sup> The Five Books of Matthew are preceded by a Prologue (the Childhood of Jesus) and terminated by an Epilogue (the Passion). Each "book" finishes with the words "And it came to pass when Jesus had made an end..." (vii. 28-29; xi. 1; xiii. 53; xix. 1; and xxvi. 1).

<sup>388</sup> Matt. ix. 9; x. 3. The same Matthew was used as an authority for the Ebionite Gospel.

<sup>389</sup> Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, iii. 39; read *συνετάξατο*.

<sup>390</sup> Eusebius, *Quaest. ad Marinum*, P. G. xxii. c. 941 (Matt. xxviii. 1; *ὀψέ σαββάτων* bad Greek gloss); *In Isa.* lxxvii. 2, P. G. xxiii. c. 904 (Matt. xiii. 35; the Greek is a bad translation of the Psalm); *Theophania*, Syriac version, Gressmann, *Eus. Werke*, iii. 2, p. 183 (Matt. x. 33; some words omitted in the Greek); *Theophania*, after Nicetas of Heraclea, P. G. xxiv. c. 685 s. (Matt. xxv. 14-30; an ill-balanced parable in the Greek, the punished servant of verse 30 in the original text had dissipated the goods of his master). It is considered that the glosses on certain manuscripts which bear the note *τὸ Ἰουδαϊκόν* (Schmidtke, *Judenchristliche Evangelien*; Leipzig, 1911) are derived from the Aramaic. Jerome confused the problem by affirming, with his customary impudence, that he had himself translated from Matthew's original the fragments he quoted from Origen, which the latter had taken from the Ebionite Gospel (Bacon).

In spite of the freedom it shows, it nevertheless bears marks indicating its origin. If parallel passages from Mark and Matthew are compared, we note in the latter pointless little changes in words and constructions which suggest that a Semitic version had come between the two, acting as a sort of refracting medium, and that the latter is a re-translation. This is even more noticeable between Marcion and Matthew.

Matthew—we will keep this name for convenience—treats Mark as his chief source of information, and takes from him bodily. From Marcion he borrows a single story—that of the centurion—and a large number of didactic passages, by means of which he develops Mark. He arranges his matter according to a new didactic plan, and from scattered sayings he constructs discourses which frequently show the joins. Similarly he links together a series of ten miracles, leaving to each one little more than its instructive skeleton. Where he meets two versions of the same episode, he endeavours to cover up the variation with some naïve trick. For example, Marcion tells of a demoniac that the demons which possessed him were not to be cast into the Abyss. Mark drives the legion of devils into a herd of swine which throw themselves into the sea. Matthew says there were two demoniacs. Similarly in Marcion the blind man of Jericho was cured at the entrance into the city, whereas in Mark it was at the going out. So Matthew gives us two blind men, and would leave us to think that each one told of his own healing.

What manner of man was this candid evangelist who hid himself behind a mask of the meagrest description? He describes himself when he makes Jesus say, when the disciples have learned the meaning of the parables of the Kingdom (xiii. 52):—

Every scribe who has become a disciple of the Kingdom of Heaven  
Is like to a householder  
Who draws from his treasure both new and old.

This Matthew is one of those scribes, a Christian scribe, a converted rabbi. The Church which he knows includes,

after the prophets, wise men and Scribes, just like a synagogue.<sup>391</sup> Fervently he awaits the Coming of the Kingdom of Jesus the Christ. For that he is ready to sacrifice all. Like the merchant in the parable he tells, he would unhesitatingly sell all he has in order to buy “one pearl of great price” (Matt. xiii. 46). Perhaps he was one of those who sought voluntary celibacy, “which made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake” (Matt. xix 12).<sup>392</sup> Though he has given himself, body and soul, to the new faith, he does not repudiate the old. In the same treasure-house he keeps both old and new, the Law wisely understood, and the Gospel. Though as ascetic as Paul or Marcion, he does not go as far as Paul in the matter of doctrine, and is opposed to Marcion.

In response to the needs of his congregation, this Matthew was reactionary, for they were catechumens drawn from among the Jews, and he is careful to find answers for the anxious questioning to be heard in the ranks of converted Jews and for the insidious objections advanced by the Jews who remained without the Church. This Jesus, who, said Mark, was rejected by the Jews and who rejected the Jews, could he really be the Messiah of Israel? They thought Mark did not make this clear enough. If he were not the true Messiah, what had he to move the children of Abraham? If he were the true Messiah, what a tragic horror is the unbelief of the blind Jews, and how the faith of the Jews who could see clearly becomes immovably anchored!

The whole of Matthew's Gospel is an attempt to demonstrate that Jesus was not only the Son of God—that had been emphasized sufficiently by preceding gospels—but, in direct opposition to Marcion, the Messiah himself promised by the prophets of Israel. Matthew demonstrates that this was the Messiah exactly as foretold. Every syllable of prophecy was realized and fulfilled in him; from the beginning of his preaching in the lands of Zebulun and Naphtali,

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<sup>391</sup> Matt. xxiii. 34: “I send unto you prophets, and wise men and scribes.”

<sup>392</sup> *Eunuch* is used allegorically for voluntary celibates as Marcion understood it (Origen, *Comm. in Matt.*, iii. 133).



his healings, his intentional obscurity, the obtuseness of his hearers, his employment of parables, the manner of his entry into Jerusalem, his betrayal, desertion, arrest, even to the use made of the price of his betrayal.<sup>393</sup> Jeremiah foretold: "And they took the thirty pieces of silver the price of him that was priced ... and they gave them for a potter's field." True that it was not Jeremiah, as Matthew said it was, but Zechariah (xi. 13). Nevertheless Matthew tells how Judas the traitor received from the Sanhedrim thirty pieces of silver with which he bought a potter's field. The concordance was perfect. The Scribes and Pharisees must be perverse if they would not believe such astounding proofs.

To complete his demonstration Matthew was obliged to add to Mark not only quotations from the prophets, but also new elements, one of the most important of which is the beginning of his Gospel.

One obstacle seemed insurmountable. The true Messiah must be of the race of Abraham and the family of David, and be born at Bethlehem. The prophecies were too definite on these points to be eluded. Was it possible for Jesus to be at one and the same time the Only Son of God and also a son of David? Marcion and Mark considered it impossible. Basing their argument on Psalm cx, they proclaimed Jesus the Lord of David, and not his son.<sup>394</sup> Before them the author of Revelation declared Jesus to be the root of David, and not David the root of Jesus. Now, if the Son of God cannot be the son of David, he could not be the genuine Messiah either.

The rabbinic mind does not recognize the word "impossible." Our worthy Matthew did not hesitate to invent a naïve solution which reveals a mind stuffed with popular legends and acute with the subtleties of rabbinical schooling. Jesus must be legally the son of David. The Law states that the Messiah will have a father of the race of David.

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<sup>393</sup> Matt. iv. 14; viii. 17; xii. 17; xiii. 14; xiii. 35; xxi. 4; xxvi. 24; xxvi. 31; xxvi. 54, 56; xxvii. 9.

<sup>394</sup> Rev. v. 5; xxii. 16. The expression "born of the seed of David according to the flesh" imputed to Paul (Rom. i. 3) does not appear in the first edition of the Epistles.

Yet he is also the Son of God, for his mother is a virgin who has conceived of the Holy Ghost. It was a current belief among the masses that a god could impregnate a woman. "The Egyptians," said Plutarch, a contemporary of Matthew, "believe that it is not impossible for the spirit of God to approach a woman and produce conception."<sup>395</sup> Jesus was at once a son of David through his putative father and Son of God through his virgin mother, the earthly substitute of the Woman of Heaven of the Apocalypse.

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ,  
Son of David, son of Abraham.

Abraham begat Isaac,  
Isaac begat Jacob,

Jesse begat David the king,  
David begat Solomon of the wife of Uriah,

Jacob begat Joseph,<sup>396</sup> the husband of Mary  
Of whom was born Jesus called Christ.<sup>397</sup>

The birth of Christ was in this wise.  
His mother Mary, betrothed of Joseph,  
Before they came together,  
Was found with child of the Holy Ghost.  
Joseph, her husband, a righteous man,  
Not willing to make her a public example,  
Resolved to send her away in secret.

As he was thinking,  
An angel of Jahweh appeared to him in a dream and said,  
Joseph, son of David, fear not to take Mary for thy wife;  
For what has been begotten in her is of the Holy Ghost.

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<sup>395</sup> Vita Numæ, 4.

<sup>396</sup> The name of Joseph given to Jesus's nominal father is no doubt due to the Jewish belief in a Messiah *the son of Joseph* who was to be killed and impaled (Zech. xii. 10-14 in the Talmud of Babylon *Sukkah*, Fo. 52a).

<sup>397</sup> Some old manuscripts (Ferrar, ancient Latin and Syriac versions from Sinai) read, "Joseph, to whom was betrothed the virgin Mary begat Jesus called Christ." In this passage, if it is original, *begat* implies merely paternity in the eyes of the law, as is shown by the mention of the virgin betrothed and the context.

She will bear a son  
And thou shalt call him by his name Jesus,  
For he it is shall save his people from their sins.<sup>398</sup>  
All this has taken place that it might be fulfilled  
What Jahweh said by the prophet,  
Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son;  
They shall call him by his name Emmanuel<sup>399</sup>  
(Which is, being interpreted, God with us).  
And Joseph arose from his sleep  
And did as the angel of Jahweh had commanded him;  
He took to him his wife,  
She brought forth a son.<sup>400</sup>  
He called him by his name Jesus.

So we have Jesus provided with the double genealogy, divine and Davidic, which had appeared incompatible to Mark and Marcion. He is born at Bethlehem because the prophet Micah foretold it of the Messiah. He is born in the reign of Herod, the first king who was not a Jew, because the sceptre should not leave Jewish hands till the Messiah had been born; Jacob had said so on his death-bed. Moreover, Balaam's prophecy of the rising of the Star of Jacob was realized:—

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of judæa  
In the days of Herod the king,  
Behold, Magi from the East came to Jerusalem  
Saying, Where is the King of the Jews?  
We have seen his Star in the East,  
We have come to worship him.

These perspicacious Magi were relatives of those who, on the night Alexander the Great was born of a woman and a god, cried out, "The Scourge of Asia was born this

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<sup>398</sup> Explains the name of Jesus, which means Saviour (cf. 1 Thess. 9-10) and the application to Jesus of Psalm cxxx. 8 (said of Jahweh): "And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities."

<sup>399</sup> Isa. viii. 10. The word *virgin* appears only in the Septuagint, and the idea of a miraculous birth is foreign to the context. For Matthew *Emmanuel* is equivalent in meaning to Jesus.

<sup>400</sup> So in *k* and in the Syriac of Sinai. The other manuscripts add, "and knew her not till she brought forth a son."

night.”<sup>401</sup> They came from the East, the country of the evangelist, that they might be the first, even before John the Baptist, to worship and recognize the Messiah of Israel.

Anxious for his throne, Herod sought to kill Jesus. But Joseph, warned in a dream by an angel from Jahweh, fled to Egypt, taking with him the child and his mother. Herod has all the children of Bethlehem and the surrounding district massacred. Here Matthew borrows a leaf from John's Revelation. Herod is the Red Dragon which watched the birth of Jesus that he might devour him. Disappointed in this hope by the flight of the woman into the desert, he slays the “other children.” This simple transposition converts the fantastic vision of the earlier apostle into a tale with an historic aspect.

When they had come back from Egypt, thus fulfilling the prophecy, “called my son out of Egypt” (Hosea xi. 1), Jesus came to dwell in Nazareth, thus fulfilling the prophecy, “he shall be called the Nazoræan.”<sup>402</sup> Henceforth Matthew keeps to the track beaten by his predecessors. He had emphasized strongly that Jesus was born the Messiah of Israel, and from the moment of his conception had been fulfilling prophecies. In doing this he had taken up the cudgels against Marcion, for whom the birth of a god was a very shameful thing.

Far from considering the power of the Son of God as absolute, Matthew subordinates it to the Law. By developing a few lines of Mark, he portrays Satan inciting the Son of God to do miracles for the gallery, change stones into loaves, throw himself into the airy abyss safe in the care of angels. Jesus replies with two texts from the Law. When Satan offers him all the kingdoms of the earth and their glory if he would but worship him, Satan, he answers: “Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, thou shalt worship Jahweh thy God; to him alone shalt thou offer worship.” The Messiah of Israel, the Son of God, is a disciple of the Law and a worshipper of Jahweh.

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<sup>401</sup> Cicero, *De Divin.*, I, 47.

<sup>402</sup> Unknown prophecy. Perhaps an Aramaic paraphrase of a passage in Judges xiii. 7: “The child shall be a *nazir* of God.” Nazir= saint. Nazoræan seems to be the ancient *cultus* title of Jesus.

Did the Messiah come to abolish the Law of Israel? Far from it: he came to fulfil it. Matthew's Jesus contradicts Marcion's Christ word for word (v. 17):—

Think not that I came to destroy the Law of the Prophets.  
I came not to destroy, but to fulfil.  
Amen I say to you:  
Till heaven and earth pass away  
Not one jot, not a tittle shall pass of the Law,  
Till all things be accomplished.

The Law and the Prophets are therefore the foundations of Christianity.

Even as the life of Jesus is a fulfilment of ancient prophecy, so is the life of the Christian a fulfilment of the Law. No man ought to teach as Paul taught that, provided the great commandments are kept, the minutiae of the Law can be disregarded.

Whoever shall do away with a single one of his least commandments  
And shall teach this to men  
Shall be the least in the Kingdom of Heaven.  
Whoever shall practise them and teach them,  
Shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.<sup>403</sup>

Matthew's Christ does not make it a reproach to the Scribes and Pharisees to keep the details of the Law (they are right to do so), but to neglect the main part (xxiii. 23):—

Curse on you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!<sup>404</sup>  
For you tithe mint and dill and cummin  
And omit the weightier part of the Law.  
Judgment, Mercy, Faith.  
*These you ought to have done, and not leave the other undone.*

And again (xxiii. 2-3):—

The Scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses's seat.  
All things which they bid you, these do and observe...

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<sup>403</sup> Matt. v. 19. The Epistle of James says more clearly still (ii. 10): "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all."

<sup>404</sup> Matthew, as was his wont, put into one speech two diatribes against the Pharisees which in Marcion are separate.

The least prescription has its importance. The best is to do them all. Matthew's spirit is that of the *Didache* (vi. 2-3), "If thou canst bear the yoke of the Lord, thou wilt be perfect. If thou canst not, do what thou canst. As for food, bear what thou canst."

But to fulfil (*πληρῶσαι*) is at one and the same time to realize and perfect. Matthew's Christian would not only observe all the detail of the Law, he would carry it out in a transcendent fashion (v. 20-34):—

I say to you that, if your righteousness does not exceed  
That of the Scribes and Pharisees,  
You will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

You have learned what was said to them of old,  
Thou shalt not kill;  
He who kills shall be in danger of judgment.  
I say to you,  
Whosoever is angry with his brother  
Shall be in danger of judgment.

You have learned that it was said,  
Thou shalt not commit adultery.  
I say to you,  
Whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her  
Has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

It was said also, let him who puts away his wife  
Give her a writing of divorcement.  
I say to you, Whosoever puts away his wife  
Save for fornication<sup>405</sup>  
Causes her to commit adultery.  
And he who shall marry her who is divorced commits adultery.  
You have learned that it was said to them of old,  
Thou shalt not forswear thyself  
But shall perform to the Lord thy oaths.  
I say to you, Swear not at all. . . .<sup>406</sup>

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<sup>405</sup> Matthew here corrects Paul, Marcion, and Mark by establishing divorce.

<sup>406</sup> In order to show the *perfections* of the Law, Matthew makes use of a passage in Marcion showing the *antitheses* of the Law, and, for the prohibition of swearing an oath, he goes to the Epistle of James, v. 12.

The free and rather bold doctrine of the fulfilment of the Law authorizes the Christian to pretend to an observance of the Law while he seems to break it, and Matthew is able to offer as the perfection of the Law the very thing that Marcion had advanced as the antithesis of the Law. Thus not a jot of the Law will pass, but great parts of it will be looked on as dead letter.

Similarly Matthew's Christ perfects with a touch of Stoic morality the three traditional works of Jewish piety—alms, prayer, and fasting. He prescribes that these shall be done in secret for God alone. It is as though he had in mind the Phrygian Epictetus, who said, "When you close the doors and make darkness within the house ... God is within."<sup>407</sup>

When thou doest alms  
Sound not a trumpet before thee  
As do the Hypocrites<sup>408</sup> in the synagogues and the streets  
That they may be glorified of men.  
Amen I say to you, they have received their wage.

But if thou doest alms  
Let thy left hand not know what thy right does  
That thy alms may be in secret  
And thy Father which sees in secret shall reward thee.

When you pray,  
You shall not be like the Hypocrites;  
In the synagogues and street-corners  
They love to stand and pray  
That they may be seen of men.  
Amen I say to you, they have received their wage.

But thou, when thou prayest,  
Go into thy chamber, shut thy door,  
And pray to thy Father in secret;  
And thy Father who sees in secret will reward thee.

When you fast,  
Be not, as the Hypocrites, of sad countenance.

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<sup>407</sup> Arrian, i, 14.

<sup>408</sup> As is explained in the Didache, the Hypocrites are the orthodox Jews (viii. 1).

They disfigure their faces  
That it may be seen of men that they fast.  
Amen I say to you, they have received their wage.

But thou, when thou fastest,  
Perfume thy head,  
Wash thy face  
So that men may not see that thou fastest;  
But thy Father who is in the hidden thing sees thee  
And thy Father who is in the hidden thing will reward thee.

This, then, is the road which must be followed by those whom the Christ has separated from the Hypocrites and the Synagogue, not by a new way, as St. Paul would have had it, but by the perfecting of the old life. Grace, which Paul placed in opposition to the Law, in Matthew is opposed to merit only.

Matthew is certain that the Messiah of Israel was first and last a Messiah for Israel, and he puts Mark right on this point with vigour. Jesus says, without leaving a shadow of doubt, to the Canaanitish woman: "I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (xv. 24). Indeed, he sends out his apostles only to strayed Israelites (x. 5-7, 23):—

Into way of Gentiles go not,  
Into city of the Samaritans enter not,  
Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.  
Go and preach,  
The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

But when they persecute you in this city Flee into the next.  
Amen I say to you,  
You will not have gone through the cities of Israel  
Before the Son of Man comes.

At this Advent the apostles will be put at the head of the Israelites (xix. 28):—

Amen I say to you,  
You who have followed me,



At the time of the Palingenesia<sup>409</sup>  
When the Son of Man shall sit on the Throne of His Glory,  
You also will sit on twelve thrones  
And will judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

It is not till the end of the gospel, after the crime of the Jews, at the Resurrection, that Jesus says to his apostles (xxviii. 18-20):—

Go, make disciples of all the nations,  
Baptize them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.  
Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you.

Nevertheless the evangelist's thought must be understood. He had been careful to introduce into Christ's genealogy the Canaanite Rahab and the Moabite Ruth to show that foreigners were admitted into the community of Israel, and even into the pedigree of the Messiah. By an adroit correction of Mark's text, he makes out that Jesus never left the soil of Israel. It was the Canaanite woman who came from the territories of Tyre and Sidon to beg a place beneath the Children.<sup>410</sup> Referring to the centurion's faith, he makes Jesus declare (viii. 11):—

I say to you,  
Many shall come from the East and the West  
And shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob  
In the Kingdom of Heaven.

The table is open to strangers, but it is Abraham's table. Matthew looks upon the Kingdom as belonging of right to the Hebrews, who will graciously allow other peoples to enter in.

The Messiah of Israel was unable to rally round him all Israel, because Israel is deaf and blind, as Isaiah said, and because a remnant only is to be saved, as said the prophets. Alone spiritual Israel is able to hear the voice of the Son

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<sup>409</sup> A Stoic expression used in the Greek translation of Matthew to denote the Judgment.

<sup>410</sup> Matt. xv. 22 correcting Mark vii. 24 in which Jesus went to Tyre and Sidon.

of God. The Father makes his revelations to the Little Ones, as opposed to the Wise and to the Intelligent. Matthew meant by the Little Ones Christians in general, whereas Marcion meant the Pauline Christians as opposed to the stiff and proud apostles of Jerusalem. The Son of God offers to the Little Ones to take from them the burden of the synagogue—that weighty yoke which the Pharisees had laid on their necks. He calls them in his sweet and tender tones (xi. 28-30):—

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,  
And I will give you rest.  
Take my yoke upon you.  
Learn of me that I am meek and lowly of heart.  
You will find rest for your souls  
For my yoke is easy and my burden light.

This *yoke*, this *burden*—they are the modified commandments which fulfil the ancient Law.

As for the learned men among the Jews—the Scribes and the Pharisees—they are opposed to the Son of God, they blasphemed the Holy Ghost through whom he healed his sick; they required him to give a sign. Could they not perceive that Jesus's call to repentance was more urgent than that of Jonah to the people of Nineveh, and that the wisdom of Jesus was greater by far than that of Solomon which brought from a remote land the Queen of Sheba? The sign of Jonah was given them; Jesus remained on earth as long as Jonah remained in the whale's belly. They were deaf and blind, as had been predicted. Matthew agrees with Mark in adopting the bizarre doctrine that Jesus used parables so that the Jews might be unaware of his meaning to their perdition. Matthew meant the Pharisees, for, where Mark is anti-Semite, Matthew is anti-Pharisee, even more bitterly.

The most serious question was how the Christians who rejected the traditions of the Scribes and Pharisees could know how to live in order to accomplish the Law. Mark's Christ gave a concrete example when the Pharisees reproached his disciples for not washing their hands before a meal. That, said he, was only man's precept—*i.e.*, it was part of

the Second Law, the hedge which the Scribes and Pharisees had raised round the true Law, and “every plant which my heavenly Father planted not shall be rooted up” (Matt. xv. 13). Matthew's Christ gave a clear decision that to eat without washing his hands does not defile a man. But he does not for that declare that all foods are clean,<sup>411</sup> nor does he blame those Christians who wish to eat *Kosher*. As for the keeping of the sabbath, Matthew agrees with Mark that the Son of Man has power over the sabbath. But in the two cases Mark gives of sabbath-breaking Matthew sees nothing which infringes the Law.<sup>412</sup> He shows that he was a learned scribe, which Mark and Marcion were not.

The Gospel does not pretend to answer questions of practice except as examples; it is not a Talmud. Who is to do this? It is here that Matthew shows himself to be the most original and most cunning Churchman. In the communities where Matthew would be a spiritual director the great error and danger would be to follow Paul's authority and to hold that the Cross cancelled the Law. Another patron was necessary, and Matthew offers them Peter.

In Matthew's Gospel, when Peter says to Jesus, “Thou art the Christ,” Jesus does not rebuke him, as in Marcion, nor enjoin silence on him, as in Mark. Far from it; Jesus solemnly congratulates him and rewards him. Paul had preached that the Christ in the flesh was not to be accepted, only the Crucified Christ, the Son of God whom God had revealed to him. The carnal Christ was the Hebrew Messiah with his carnal promises. Matthew ripostes that the Israelite Messiah is One with the Son of God, and that he was revealed to Peter, not by the flesh, but by God the Father himself (xvi. 15-19):—

He said to them,  
Whom say you that I am?  
Simon Peter replied,  
Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

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<sup>411</sup> Mark vii. 19 *καταρίζων* applies to *λέγει*. Cf. Origen, *In Matt.*, i, xi. 12. This phrase is suppressed by Matthew.

<sup>412</sup> Compare Matt. xii. 1-14 (*ἐξεστίν*) with Mark ii. 23-iii. 6. Note too Matthew's addition to Mark: “Pray that your flight be not in the winter, neither *on a Sabbath*” (xxiv. 20).

Jesus answered him,  
Blessed art thou, Simon Bar Jona,  
For flesh and blood have not revealed it to you,  
But my Father which is in Heaven.

On account of this celestial favour and this true doctrine, Peter is established as the Rock of the new Israel, as Abraham was the Rock of the old.<sup>413</sup> He receives the power to “bind and to loose—*i.e.*, to declare obligatory or not any particular observance:—

And I say to thee,  
Thou art Petros  
And on this rock (πέτρα)<sup>414</sup> I will build my church.  
And the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.<sup>415</sup>

I will give to thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.  
All that you wilt have bound on earth  
Will be bound in Heaven;  
All that thou wilt have loosed on earth Will be loosed in Heaven.

This new disciplinary power, the only one with the sanction of Israel's Messiah, was opposed to that of the Pauline Churches as much as to that of those who sit in the seat of Moses, the scribes and the Pharisees. This authority was conferred on Peter—*i.e.*, on the group of Churches attached to Peter and the old Apostles. Peter is a sort of imaginary president of a commission of Christian scribes. Jesus repeats to the disciples assembled together what he said to Peter (xviii. 18):—

Amen, I say to you,  
All things which you will bind on earth  
Will be bound in Heaven.  
All things which you will loose on earth  
Will be loosed in Heaven.

Peter and his followers have then received the authority to interpret the Law.

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<sup>413</sup> Isaiah li. 1. See Schechter, *J.Q.R.*; April 1900, p. 4285.

<sup>414</sup> An Aramaic play on words which is translated approximately into Greek.

<sup>415</sup> *I.e.*, the Church of Peter and no other will last till the end of the Age; cf. xxviii. 20.

Peter, however, had been a failure, for had he not denied the Christ thrice? Matthew did not dare suppress this episode, which symbolized, in Mark and in Marcion, Peter's defection at Antioch, which is stigmatized by Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians, but he balances it with another symbolic story. True that Peter stumbled, but the Christ had raised him again, stretching out to him his hand. Nowhere can we find a better example of the evangelist's method than this travesty of an idea in story-form.<sup>416</sup> It appears as Matthew's addition to the tale of Jesus's walking on the waves (xiv. 27-31):—

Straightway Jesus spoke to them,  
It is I; be not afraid.

Peter answered him,  
Lord, if it be thou,  
Bid me come to thee on the waters.  
He said to him, Come!  
And Peter went down from the boat  
And walked on the waters and went to Jesus.

But, seeing the wind, he was afraid  
And, beginning to sink, he cried out,  
Lord, save me!  
Immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand and caught him.  
He said to him,  
Man of little faith, why didst thou doubt?

In another supplement to Mark Peter acts as Jesus's steward in the matter of the collection of the didrachma, which was asked for each year. To pay it was to acknowledge that one was a Jew, whereas Christians are children of the God of Israel, and it is the Pharisees who are the strangers. Not to pay at all is to renounce all communion with Israel. Therefore it is better to pay. Nothing shows more clearly than this incident the tenacity with which

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<sup>416</sup> There is the same symbolism in a Buddhist tale. One of the Buddha's disciples was walking across a river in order to come and hear his Master. Half-way across he is seized with fear at the surging waves and is on the point of sinking, but is saved by faith in the power of Buddha (J. E. Carpenter, *Buddhism and Christianity*, 1923, p. 173).

the Aramæan Christians clung to their Jewish origin. The fantastic absurdity of the final detail is in a line with rabbinical stories (xvii. 24-27):—

When they came to Capernaum,  
Those who collected the didrachmas  
Came to Peter and said,  
Does not your master pay the didrachma?  
He said, Yes.

When he came to the house,  
Jesus spake first, saying,  
What thinkest thou, Simon?  
The kings of the earth, from whom do they receive toll or tribute?

From their sons or from strangers?  
He said, From strangers.

Jesus said to him,  
Then the sons are free.  
But that we may not cause them to stumble,  
Go to the sea, cast thy net,  
Take the first fish which rises.  
Open its mouth and thou wilt find a stater.<sup>417</sup>  
Take it and give it for me and for thee.

Matthew exalted Peter, whereas Marcion and Mark had abased him. In place of a pardoned renegade he makes of him the patriarch of Christians, the master of decisions, the oracle of the orthodox, the vicar authorized by Jesus to intercede between the Christ and the faithful, the symbol of authority in the churches and the foundation stone of union.

The Church which was built on this Rock such as Matthew had in mind was neither very large nor outstandingly pure. It was made up of little communities in which all were known to one another, in which the bad mingled with the good,<sup>418</sup> and everyone had an equal right of blame; the Church as a body did not intervene except in the last place (xviii. 15-17):—

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<sup>417</sup> A stater was worth exactly two didrachmas at Antioch and Damascus (Streeter, *The Four Gospels*; London, 1926, p. 504).

<sup>418</sup> Among those invited to the feast were “both bad and good” (xxii. 10).

If thy brother sin,  
Go, rebuke him, from thee to him alone.  
If he listens to thee,  
Thou wilt have gained a brother.

If he listen to thee not,  
Take one or two more with thee  
That on the word of two or three witnesses  
The whole matter may be settled.<sup>419</sup>

If he listens not to them,  
Tell it to the Church.  
If he will not listen to the Church,  
Let him be for thee as a pagan and a publican.

The pagan and the publican dear to the heart of Marcion were untouchables for Matthew. Matthew repeats Mark's savage precepts as to plucking out an eye, etc., but he is aware of the dangers of excommunications, and he shows his meaning in the parable of the Tares (xiii. 24-30). The enemy sows tares in God's field of wheat, and they grow up with the good corn. If the tares are torn out, then the good corn is also uprooted. Leave them till the Judgment which is at hand. Then the tares will be bound into bundles and burned, while the good corn will be gathered into the barn.

This Messiah who holds his earthly path a humble Master and meek, when shall he return riding a cloud, the grim King come to Doom? Matthew strikes the old note of expectation, the febrile hope of imminent triumph, which had produced Christianity.<sup>420</sup> Mark had prepared his hearers for martyrdom, rather than for the Millennium. Matthew, on the contrary, revives the old fever of the Apocalypses and emphasizes the Coming of the Lord, rather than the Martyrdom of the Great Trial. He finds new parables to teach that the watch must be unceasing, and that the faithful heart must be ever prepared for the unforeseen moment (xxv. 1-12):—

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<sup>419</sup> As in Deut. xix. 15.

<sup>420</sup> Matthew interpolates a prediction of the imminence of the Advent into a passage where Mark has no mention of it (Mark xiii. 9-13; Matt. x. 23).

Then shall the Kingdom of Heaven be likened to ten virgins  
Who take their torches  
And go out to meet the Bridegroom and the Bride;<sup>421</sup>  
Five of them were foolish, five wise.

The foolish when they took their torches  
Took no oil with them.  
The wise took oil in vials  
With their torches.

While the Bridegroom tarried,  
They all fell asleep and slept.  
At midnight there was a cry,  
Behold the Bridegroom, come forth to meet him!

Then all the virgins awoke  
And trimmed their torches.  
The foolish said to the wise,  
Give us of your oil,  
For our torches are going out.

The wise answered,  
There may not be enough for us and for you.  
Go rather to the chapmen,  
And buy for yourselves.

While they went away to buy,  
The Bridegroom came.  
They who were ready went in with him to the wedding.  
The door was shut.

Afterward come the other virgins saying,  
Lord, Lord, open to us!  
He replied,  
Amen I say to you, I know you not.

The end is at hand. The great sign is to be seen. Matthew repeats, but in less covert terms, Mark's allusion to the foretold profanation of the Temple at Jerusalem (xxiv. 15-16):—

When, therefore, you see the *Abomination of Desolation*  
Foretold by Daniel the Prophet  
Standing in the Holy Place—  
Let him who reads understand. . .

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<sup>421</sup> Text of D, fam I, Syriac of Sinai, probably the original (F. C. Burkitt, in J. Th. St., 1928, 384-386).



His Gospel could not have appeared much after that of Mark, nor long after the year 135. The Jews are still in the shadow of the terrifying accomplishment of Daniel's prophecy; on the Temple had been raised the altar of Ordure. In every man's mind was the destruction of Jerusalem by Hadrian's armies, the massacre of its inhabitants, and the persecution of the Christians by the false Hebrew Christ. Matthew adds to the parable of the guests who will not come to the feast a violent forced note; the invited guests (the Jews) seize the messengers, insult them, and kill them (xxii. 6-7):—

But the king was wroth.  
He sent his armies,  
And destroyed those murderers  
And burned their city.

The faithful must be patient. Immediately after the last plague, the Son of Man will come in His Power and His Glory. He will send forth angels to assemble the elect at the call of the trumpet. His blows will fall most heavily on the most hated enemies of the author. For John these were the Nicolaitanes; for Matthew they were the scribes and Pharisees (xxiii. 33):—

Ye serpents, ye offspring of vipers,  
How shall you escape the doom of Hell!

After this the evangelist seeks inspiration in a passage from the apocalypse of Enoch to depict a thrilling tableau of the last judgment. He is no theologian of predestination. He is a fervent homilist, obsessed with the reward for works, and he is the inventor of a splendid plan: that any charity made to an unfortunate Christian is made to Jesus himself (xxv. 31-40):—

When the Son of Man shall come in His Glory,  
And all His Angels with Him,  
Then shall He take his seat on the Throne of glory.  
All the nations shall be gathered before him.

He will separate them one from another  
As the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

He will put the sheep on his right hand,  
The goats on his left.

Then shall the King say to those on his right hand,  
Come, ye blessed of my Father,  
Take possession of the Kingdom which has been prepared for you  
From the beginning of the world.

For I was hungry, and you gave me meat;  
Thirsty, and you gave me drink.  
I was a stranger, and you took me in;  
Naked, and you clothed me.  
I was sick, and you visited me;  
I was in prison and you came to me.

Then shall the righteous say to him,  
Lord, when did we see thee hungry and fed thee,  
Thirsty and gave thee drink?  
When have we seen thee a stranger and taken thee in,  
Naked, and we have clothed thee?  
When did we see thee sick or in prison  
And came to thee?

The King will answer,  
I say to thee Amen,  
Each time you did as much  
To one of these my brethren, the least,  
To me you did it.

The Passion was the climax of Mark's Gospel, but in Matthew's it is little more than an epilogue. Matthew follows Mark very closely, though he inserts some new features in order to emphasize the fulfilment of prophecy, to point a new moral, in reply to an objection, or to give the story a romantic and marvellous aspect. At the arrest when a disciple draws a sword and strikes the high priest's slave, Jesus said to him (xxvi. 52-54):—

Put up thy sword into its place  
For all they who take the sword  
Will perish by the sword.

Thinkest thou that I cannot pray my Father  
Who will send me on the instant more than twelve legions of angels?

But how then shall be fulfilled the Scriptures  
That all must happen thus?

This Messiah who will not make use of his power is less moving than the trembling but resolute martyr of Mark.

When Jesus comes before the Roman tribunal, Pilate's wife is warned in a dream that Jesus is one of the righteous. Pilate washes his hands before the crowd to show that he is innocent of this blood. The death of Jesus is at the door of the Jews only. They cry out, "His blood be on us and on our children!" Thus the torrents of Hebrew blood shed in the Bar-cocheba revolt were for our evangelist the due punishment of the deicides.

At Jesus's death, when the veil of the Temple is rent (xxvii. 51-53):—

The earth quaked, the rocks were rent,  
The tombs opened  
And many bodies of saints who had fallen asleep were awakened.  
They came out of their tombs after his resurrection  
And went into the Holy City and appeared to many.

These risen dead were, according to Ignatius (Magnesians ix), the prophets of Israel. They have risen to follow in the train of the Messiah of Israel, the Conqueror of Death.

All sorts of details are inserted into the story of the empty tomb in order to meet Jewish objections which Mark had not foreseen. Thus—Attack: the disciples came at night to take away the body. Parry: Impossible. A Jew guard was placed at the tomb and the stone sealed down. Counter: In this case the soldiers would have seen that and would have reported them. Riposte: They did report them to the high priests, who bribed them heavily to declare that while they were sleeping the disciples had stolen away the body. "And this saying was spread abroad among the Jews till this day" (xxviii. 15). Matthew knew, therefore, what the Jewish polemic against the Gospels was.

Jesus appeared to the women at Jerusalem and then to the apostles in Galilee. He commissions these to preach

his teaching to all the peoples, and ends with these words of encouragement:—

Lo, I am with you always,  
Even unto the completion of the Age.

Matthew's Gospel is a veritable Christian Pentateuch which was written for the Aramæan churches which were to endure to the completion of the Age. It was to help them gain recruits among the Jews at the expense of the synagogues and to lead them to the true Messiah of Israel. This was the religious code of Jewish Christianity, but this species of Christianity was not fated to last long. Even in Euphratean Syria and in Osroene the influx of Gentile Christians soon changed the outward aspect and inward spirit of the churches. In the fourth century it was quite a curiosity to find at Berea-Chabylis a real Matthewesque church in which Aramaic was spoken, which was at one and the same time Israelite and anti-Pharisee, and which made regular use of the original text of Matthew.

In its noble and correct Greek version this Gospel was diffused by the powerful church of Antioch, and was widely received with admiration and respect as the work of one of the Twelve Apostles. In this manner it tended to supplant and to suppress the work of Mark; it was more complete, better arranged, clearer, more fully equipped and better documented, and for many churches the least Pauline of the Gospels became the principal one.

In Syria it was called “the Gospel of the Lord” in the *Didache* which furnishes a sort of administrative code supplementary to it, for example—“let not your fasts be on the same days as the Hypocrites. They fast on the second day of the week (Monday) and the fifth day (Thursday). You, therefore, fast on the fourth day (Wednesday) and the parasceve (Friday). Do not pray as do the Hypocrites, but, *as the Lord commanded in his Gospel*, pray in this manner, Our Father...”<sup>422</sup> Then follows the Paternoster according to St. Matthew.

In Asia the Christians of Smyrna were congratulated by

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<sup>422</sup> *Didache*, viii.

Ignatius of Antioch<sup>423</sup> because they were clearly convinced “that our Lord is truly of the race of David according to the flesh, but Son of God by the will and power of God, truly born of a virgin and baptized by John that all righteousness might be fulfilled in him,” a certain allusion to Matthew's Gospel. In Phrygia Papias consecrated an *Exegesis* in five books to the Sayings of the Lord, which had been arranged by Matthew in five great discourses.

Nowhere did the Gospel according to Matthew meet with a warmer welcome than at Rome. The Roman Church loved its grave and majestic tone, its Biblical air, its practical outlook, and its ecclesiastical sense. It approved this Gospel as a reaction against Marcionite audacities by showing that Jesus was truly the promised Messiah of Israel, by giving him real flesh and blood, a genuine birth, and yet preserving his character as God's own Son. One thing in particular placed it in the first rank. The Roman Church claimed Peter as its founder. All that increased Peter's authority increased Roman authority. The disciplinary power which Matthew had built up for the use of the circle of little churches in the East was seized upon by Rome for her own aggrandisement. Unconsciously the evangelist of Hebrew Christianity had made a gift of vast possibilities to a church of whose existence he was probably unaware, or, in any case, which was beyond the horizon of his consideration.

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<sup>423</sup> Ignatius, Smyrna, I.