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JESUS' MISSION, ACCORDING TO HIS OWN
TESTIMONY

(SYNOPTICS)

Under the title of "*I came: the express self-testimony of Jesus to the purpose of His sending and His coming,*" Adolf Harnack has published a study of the sayings of Jesus reported in the Synoptic Gospels, which are introduced by the words "I came" or, exceptionally, "I was sent", or their equivalents.¹ These, says he, are "programmatic" sayings, and deserve as such a separate and comprehensive study, such as has not heretofore been given to them. In his examination of them, he pursues the method of, first, gathering the relevant sayings together and subjecting them severally to a critical and exegetical scrutiny; and, then, drawing out from the whole body of them in combination Jesus' own testimony to His mission.

It goes without saying that, in his critical scrutiny of the passages, Harnack proceeds on the same presuppositions which govern his dealing with the Synoptic tradition in general; that is to say, on the presuppositions of the "Liberal" criticism, which he applies, however, here as elsewhere, with a certain independence. It goes without saying also, therefore, that the passages emerge from his hands in a very mauled condition; brought as far as it is possible to bring them, even with violence, into line with the "Liberal" view of what the mission of Jesus ought to have been. It is reassuring, however, to observe that, even so, they cannot be despoiled of their central testimony. That Jesus proclaimed Himself to have come—to have been

¹ *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 1912, xxii, pp. 1-30.

sent—on a mission of salvation, of salvation of the lost, Harnack is constrained to present as their primary content. By the side of this, it is true, he places a second purpose—to fulfil the law, that is, to fill it out, to complete it. Accordingly, he says, Jesus' self-testimony is to the effect that "the purpose of His coming, and therewith His significance, are given in this—that He is at once Saviour and Law-giver". Behind both lies, no doubt, love, as the propulsive cause—"I came to minister"—and yet Jesus is perfectly aware that His purpose is not to be attained without turmoil and strife—"I came to cast fire upon the land and to bring a sword." These sayings, he remarks in conclusion, contain very few words; and yet is not really everything said in them? Shall we call it an accident that "under the superscription 'I came', the purpose, the task, the manner of Jesus' work, all seem to be really exhaustively stated, and even the note of a bitter and plaintive longing is not lacking"?

It seems to be well worth while to follow Harnack's example and to make this series of sayings in which our Lord's testimony to the nature of His mission has been preserved for us in the Synoptic record, the object of a somewhat careful examination. Approaching them free from the "Liberal" presuppositions which condition Harnack's dealing with them, we may hope to obtain from them a more objective understanding than he has been able to attain of how Jesus really thought of His mission.

I

Our differences with Harnack begin with even so simple a matter as the collection of the passages. He discovers eight, as follows: Mat. x. 34 ff = Lk. xii. 51, 53; Mk. ii. 17 = Mat. ix. 13 = Lk. v. 32; Mk. x. 45 = Mat. xx. 28; Lk. xii. 49; Lk. xix. 10; Lk. ix. 56; Mat. v. 17; Mat. xv. 24. This list, however, seems to us to require a certain amount of correction.

(1) We are compelled to omit from it Lk. ix. 56, as,

despite the vigorous defence of its genuineness by Theodor Zahn,² certainly spurious.

Harnack's argument in its favor suffers somewhat from a confusion of it with some neighboring interpolations. Because he supposes himself to discover certain Lucan characteristics in these, he concludes that this too is Lucan in origin. Because some of them appear to have stood in Marcion's Gospel he assumes that this also stood in that Gospel. It is a matter of complete indifference, meanwhile, whether it stood in Marcion's Gospel or not. It may be urged, to be sure, that it is easier to suppose that it was stricken out of Luke because of Marcion's misuse of it, than that it was taken over into Luke from the Gospel of that "first-born of Satan". Meanwhile, there is no decisive evidence that it stood in Marcion's Gospel;³ and, if it had a place there, there is no reason to suppose that it was taken over thence into Luke. It was, on the contrary, already current in certain Lucan texts before Marcion.⁴

The method of criticism which is employed by Harnack here,—a method with which Hilgenfeld used to vex us and of which Harnack and Bousset and Conybeare seem to have served themselves especially heirs⁵—is, let us say it frankly, thoroughly vicious. Its one effort is at all costs to get behind the total formal transmission, and in the attempt to do this it is tempted to prefer to the direct evidence, how-

² *Das Evangelium des Lucas* ausgelegt von Theodor Zahn, 1913, pp. 400 ff., 765 ff. The grounds on which the omission of the passage is justified are sufficiently stated by F. J. A. Hort, *The New Testament in the Original Greek*, [ii], Appendix, 1881 pp. 59 ff.

³ Cf. Zahn, as cited, p. 767: "On the other hand we do not as yet know whether Marcion had this third questionable passage also (verse 56: ὁ γὰρ υἱὸς . . . σώσαι in his Gospel. Tertullian, however, had precisely this passage in his text. . . ."

⁴ The character of its attestation implies as much. Accordingly Tischendorf remarks *ad loc.*: "It is unquestionable from the witnesses, especially the Latin and Syriac, that the whole of this interpolation was current in MSS. already in the second century."

⁵ This vicious critical method is thetically asserted by H. J. Holtzmann, *Einleitung*, §49, ed. 2, p. 49. It has been recently defended in principle by G. Kittel, *TSK*, 1912, 85, pp. 367-373.

ever great in mass and conclusive in effect, any small item of indirect evidence which may be unearthed, however weak in its probative force or ambiguous in its bearing. The fundamental principle of this method of criticism naturally does not commend itself to those who have made the criticism of texts their business. Even an Eduard Norden sounds a salutary warning against it,⁶ and the professional critics of the New Testament text reject it with instructive unanimity.⁷ Nobody doubts that wrong readings were current in the second century and it goes but a little way towards showing that a reading is right to show that it was current in the second century. Many of the most serious corruptions which the text of the New Testament has suffered had already entered it in the first half of that century. The matter of importance is not to discover which of the various readings at any given passage chances to appear earliest, by a few years, in the citations of that passage which have happened to be preserved to us in extant writings. It is to determine which of them is a genuine part of the text as it came from its author's hands. For the determination of this question Harnack's method of criticism advances us directly not a single step, and indirectly (through, that is, the better ascertainment of the history of the transmission of the text) but a little way.

When, now Harnack deserts the textual question and suggests that it is of little importance whether the passage be a genuine portion of the Gospel of Luke or not, since in any event it comes from an ancient source, he completely misses the state of the case. This professed saying of Jesus has no independent existence. It exists only as trans-

⁶ *Agnostos Theos*, 1913, p. 301: "The philologist knows from experience that the manuscript transmission must be given a higher value than the indirect."

⁷ Cf. C. R. Gregory, *Prolegomena* to the eighth edition of Tischendorf's New Testament, *Pars Ultima*, 1894, p. 1138; *Textkritik des Neuen Testaments*, II, 1902, p. 754; *Canon and Text of the New Testament*, 1907, p. 422; E. Miller in *Scrivener's Introduction*, etc., ed. 4, II, pp. 188-9; Hammond, *Outlines*, etc., ed. 2, p. 66. On the general subject, see H. J. M. Bebb, in the Oxford *Studia Biblica*, II, 1890, p. 221.

mitted in Luke's Gospel. If it is spurious there, we have no evidence whatever that it was spoken by Jesus. It comes to us as a saying of Jesus' only on the faith of its genuineness in Luke. Falling out of Luke it falls out of existence. There is no reason to suppose that it owes its origin to anything else than the brooding mind of some devout scribe—or, if we take the whole series of interpolations in verses 54-56 together, we may say to the brooding minds of a series of scribes, supplementing the work one of another—whose pen—or pens—filled out more or less unconsciously the suggestions of the text which was in process of copying. The manuscripts are crowded with such complementary interpolations,—E. S. Buchanan, for example, has culled many instructive examples from Latin manuscripts⁸—and none could bear more clearly on its face the characteristic marks of the class than those now before us. “And when His disciples James and John saw, they said, Lord, wilt Thou that we bid fire to come down from heaven and consume them [as [also] Elias did]? But He turned and rebuked them and said, ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. [[For] the Son of Man came not to destroy [men's] lives, but to save them].”

(2) As an offset to the omission of Lk. ix. 56 we should insert into the list Mk. i. 38 = Lk. iv. 43.

This passage Harnack rejects on the ground that no reference is made to the mission of Jesus in Mark's “for

⁸In his *Sacred Latin Texts* (I, 1912; II, 1914, III, 1914) Buchanan is accustomed to give lists of striking readings occurring in the manuscript he is editing. Here are a few from the Irish codex, Harl, 1023: Lk. i. 57, And she brought forth *according to the word of God* a son; viii. 12, Take heed how ye hear *the word of God*; xi. 3, Give us today for bread, *the word of God from heaven*; xv. 29, But as soon as this *son of the devil came*; Jno. vi. 44, No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me *and the Holy Spirit* draw him; viii. 12, He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the *eternal light of the life of God*. See also *The Records Unrolled*, 1911. The parallel is made more striking by Buchanan's tendency to think such readings more original than those of the critical texts. The lengths he would go in this contention may be observed in his pamphlet: *The Search for the Original Words of the Gospel*, 1914.

to this end came I out", His coming forth from Capernaum alone being meant; while Luke's specific, "for therefore was I sent" is due merely to a misunderstanding on Luke's part of Mark's statement. The major premiss of the conclusion thus reached is obviously a particular hypothesis of the composition of the Synoptic Gospels and especially of the relation of Luke to Mark. On this hypothesis, Mark is the original "Narrative-Source", and the matter common to Luke and Mark is derived directly by Luke from Mark. We cannot share this hypothesis: the matter presented by both Luke and Mark seems to us rather to be derived by both alike from a common source (call it the "Primitive Mark"—*Urmarkus*—if you like) underlying both. But assuredly no hypothesis could be more infelicitous as an explanation of the relation of Luke to Mark in our present passage. If Luke is here drawing directly on Mark, he certainly uses a very free hand. The same general sense could scarcely be conveyed by two independent writers more diversely. This is apparent even to the reader of the English version, for the difference extends to the whole literary manner, the very conception and presentation of the incident. It is much more striking in the Greek, for the difference permeates so thoroughly the language employed by the two writers as to approach the limit of the possible. In the verse which particularly concerns us, for example, it is literally true that except at most the two words, translated diversely in the English version, in Mark "to this end", in Luke "therefore",⁹ no single word is the same in the two accounts. If there is anything clear from the literary standpoint, it is clear that Luke is not here drawing upon Mark but is giving an independent account. In that case, Luke's report of what our Lord said cannot be summarily set aside as a mere misunderstanding of Mark.

It may still be said, of course, that what Luke gives us is a deliberate alteration of Mark. Something like this

⁹ We give to εἰς τοῦτο the benefit of the doubt in Lk. iv. 43. Probably the right reading is ἐπὶ τοῦτο.

appears to be the meaning of C. G. Montefiori, who writes: "Luke's 'I was sent' (*i.e.* by God) is a grandiose and inaccurate interpretation of Mark's 'I came forth' (from the city)." Alfred Loisy traces at length what he conceives to be the transformation of the simple record of facts given by Mark into the announcement of a principle by Luke. "The difference between the historical tradition and the theological point of view", he remarks, "appears very clearly in the words of Christ; '*Let us go elsewhere . . . it is for this that I came out*'; and '*It must needs be that I proclaim to other towns the kingdom of God—I was sent for that*'." It is the same general conception that underlies H. A. W. Meyer's explanation that Mark's "expression is original, but had already acquired in the tradition that Luke here follows a doctrinal development with a higher meaning". And the step from this is not a long one to H. J. Holtzmann's representation of Luke's "I was sent" as a transition-step to the doctrinal language of John. Luke's language, however, bears no appearance of being a correction, conscious or unconscious, either of Mark's or anybody else's statement: it looks rather very much like an independent account of a well-transmitted saying of Jesus'. And we are moving ever further from the actual state of the case, in proportion as we introduce into our explanation the principle of a developing tradition with its implication of lapse of time. There is no decisive reason for supposing that Luke wrote later than Mark. And it is no less unjustified to describe his point of view than his Gospel as later than Mark's. The two Gospels were written near the same time,—Mark's being probably, indeed, a few years the younger.¹⁰ They came out of the same circle, the mis-

¹⁰ A Plummer's dating of Mark (*The Gospel According to Mark*, 1914), between 65 and 70 A.D., probably nearer the latter than the former date (we should say about A.D. 68), seems to us the only reasonable one: *cf.* Johannes Weiss, *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, I,¹ 1906, p. 32 (*cf.* also p. 35): "about the year 70, probably somewhat earlier." On the other hand Harnack's later view of the date of Luke as prior to A.D. 63 seems to be not improbable.

sionary circle of Paul. And they reflect the same tradition in the same stage of development, if we may speak of stages of development regarding a tradition in which we can trace no growth whatever. If the element of time be eliminated, and we speak merely of differing temperaments, there might be more propriety in attributing a more theological tendency to the one than to the other. When a matter of historical accuracy is involved, however, Luke surely is not a historian who can be lightly set aside in his statements of fact. His representation that Jesus spoke here of His divine mission and not merely of His purpose in leaving the city that morning, makes on purely historical grounds as strong a claim upon our credence as any contradictory representation which may be supposed to be found in Mark, especially as it was confessedly no unwonted thing for Jesus to speak of His divine mission.

In point of fact, however, there is no difference of representation between Luke and Mark. Mark too reports Jesus as speaking of His divine mission. The possibility that he does so is allowed by Harnack himself, when he writes: "The probability is altogether preponderant that in the words of Jesus (Mark i. 38), 'Let us go elsewhere into the next towns that I may preach there also; for to this end came I forth', the 'came I forth' (*ἐξῆλθον*) has no deeper sense, but takes up again the 'went out' (*ἐξῆλθεν*) of verse 35: 'And in the morning, a great while before day, He rose up and went out [from Capernaum] and departed.'" Others, making the same general contention, open the door to this possibility still wider. C. G. Montefiori comments: "'I came out'—*i.e.*, from the city. But the phrase is odd. Does it mean 'from heaven'? In that case it would be a late 'theological' reading." In similar doubt Johannes Weiss writes: "It is not altogether clear whether He means 'For this purpose I left the house so early', or 'For this purpose I have come out from God—come into the world' (it is thus that Luke understood the text)." Mark's meaning is, then, not so clearly that Jesus referred merely

to His coming out from Capernaum, nor indeed is it quite so simple, as it is sometimes assumed to be.

Harnack is scarcely right in any event in making the "I came out" of verse 38 both refer to Jesus' leaving Capernaum and resume the "He went out" of verse 35. It is not at all likely that the "He went out" of verse 35 refers to His leaving Capernaum. The statements as to Jesus' movements in verse 35 are remarkably circumstantial: they tell us that Jesus, having got up¹¹ before dawn, went out and went forth to a desert place. It is not the "went out" (ἐξῆλθεν) but the "went forth" (ἀπῆλθεν) which refers to His departure from Capernaum: the "went out" means that He "went out of doors", "out of the house". This is very generally recognized. It is recognized, for example by both Loisy and Montefiori, as well as by Holtzmann before them, all of whom understand the "going out" of verse 38 of "leaving the town". It is recognized also by Johannes Weiss, who saves the back reference to it of verse 38 by making the "I came out" of that verse too mean "from the house". Surely, however, it would be too trivial to make Jesus say: "It was for this reason that I left the house so early this morning—that I might preach also in the neighboring towns." Was He to visit all those towns that day, and therefore needed to make an early start? Mark apparently means us to understand, on the contrary, that the reason of His leaving the house so early was that He might find retirement for prayer. The "coming out" of verse 38 is then, in any case, not a resumption of that of verse 35, but a new "coming out" not previously mentioned. What reason is there for referring it back to the "going forth" (ἀπῆλθεν, "departed") from Capernaum of verse 35? Would it be much less trivial to make Jesus say that He came out from Capernaum so early that morning to preach throughout Galilee than that He came out of the house for that purpose, The solemn declaration, "For to

¹¹ Cf. Holtzmann's note: "ἀναστὰς is to be taken here literally, therefore not merely as = ׀ר',.]". Cf. also G. Wohlenberg's note.

this end came I out" must have a deeper meaning than this. In point of fact He did "come" in this deeper meaning to preach; and He did fulfil this purpose and preached throughout Galilee as Mark had just duly recorded (i. 14). Is it not much more natural that He should have said this here, and that His biographer should have recorded that He said it, than that He should have said and been recorded as saying that He came out of Capernaum that morning early with this purpose in view? We cannot but think G. Wohlenberg right in pronouncing such an understanding of the declaration "superficial". Jesus seems clearly to be making here a solemn reference to His divine mission.¹²

(3) There is another passage with Harnack's dealing with which we cannot agree. This is Luke xii. 49-53.

Harnack rends this closely knit paragraph into fragments; discards two of its five constituent sentences altogether; and, separating the other three into two independent sayings, identifies one of these (verses 51, 53) with Mat. x. 34 ff and leaves the other (verses 49, 50) off to itself. This drastic treatment of the passage seems to have been suggested to him by the comment on it of Julius Wellhausen.¹³ This comment runs as follows:

The three first verses do not square with one another. The fire which Jesus longs for is an abiding, universal effect, the baptism of death a passing personal experience, the prospect of which he dreads. What stands here is not: "My death is the necessary precondition of my great historical effect." Rather, the declarations of verse 49 and verse 50 are presented as parallel, although they are not so. Just as little is verse 50 homogeneous with verse 51. But neither do verses 49 and 51 agree together; the wished-for fire can have nothing to do with the terrible division of families. The whole of verse 50 and the second half of

¹² So J. A. Alexander, J. J. Van Oosterzee, E. Klostermann, H. B. Swete, A. Plummer, *et al.* Meyer *ad loc.* gives older names.

¹³ A. Loisy appears not unwilling also to make a discreet use of Wellhausen's disintegrating criticism in his attempt to show how Luke concocted his narrative. Montefiori after reporting Wellhausen's criticism, expresses doubt regarding it, and then slips off into the lines of his favorite mentor, Loisy.

verse 49 are lacking in Marcion. In their absence, a connection would no doubt be instituted; the fire would be the inward war, and Luke would be reduced to Matthew (x. 34, 35). I have, however, no confidence whatever in this reading of Marcion's, but rather believe that Luke has brought together wholly disparate things according to some sort of association of ideas.

This slashing criticism Harnack reproduces in its main features, as follows:

Luke would undoubtedly have these two verses [verse 49 and 50] considered as fellows: they are bound together by $\delta\epsilon$, are framed similarly, and close even with a rhyme. But their contents are so diverse as to interpose a veto on their conjunction. It has been in vain, moreover, that the expositors have tried to build a bridge between the two verses. Every bridge is wrecked on the consideration that the first verse refers to the action of Jesus, the second to something which threatens Him; for it is impossible to think in the second verse of baptism in general (Jesus' own baptism of suffering is meant, see Mk. x. 39), since the words, "How am I straitened, etc.," would then be wholly unintelligible or would have to be explained in a very artificial manner. The contention also that the eschatological idea connects the two verses is wrong; for the futures which the two verses contemplate are different. Add that the "fire" of the first verse has nothing to do with the "baptism with fire"; for Jesus could not say of that fire that He came "to cast" it upon the earth. It is therefore to be held that Luke who often follows external associations of ideas, has been led to put the two verses transmitted to him together by the similarity of their structure, and because some connection between fire and baptism hovered before his mind. He has similarly again made an arbitrary connection in the case of the next verse, when he adjoins the saying about peace and sword of which we have already spoken. This saying too can scarcely have been spoken in the same breath with ours, precisely because it exhibits a certain relationship with it but is differently oriented.

The superficiality of this criticism is flagrant. It owes whatever plausibility it may possess to the care which is taken not to go below the surface. So soon as we abstract ourselves from the mere vocables and attend to the thought the logical unity of the paragraph becomes even striking. Even in form of statement, however, the passage is clearly a unity. Harnack himself calls attention to the structure of verses 49 and 50 as a plain intimation that they form a

pair in their author's intention, and the bridge which he desiderates to connect them he himself indicates in the "but" by which the author, before the expositors busied themselves with the matter, expressly joins them. When Jesus had given expression to the pleasure that it would give Him to see the fire He had come to cast into the world already kindled, it was altogether natural that He should add an intimation of what it was that held this back—He must die first. And nothing could be more natural than that He should proceed then to speak further of the disturbance which His coming should create. It would be difficult to find a series of five verses more inseparately knit together. That such rents should exist between them as are asserted, and they be invisible to H. J. Holtzmann, say, or Johannes Weiss, neither of whom is commonly either unable or unwilling to see flaws in the evangelical reports of Jesus' sayings is, to say the least, very remarkable; and a unitary understanding of the passage which commends itself in its general features alike to these expositors and, say, Theodor Zahn, can scarcely be summarily cast aside as impossible. It is quite instructive to observe that the lack of harmony between verses 49 and 50, which is the hinge of the disintegrating criticism of the passage, is so little obvious to, say, Johannes Weiss, that it is precisely to the combination of these two verses that he directs us to attend if we wish really to understand Jesus' state of mind with reference to His death. "The parallelism of the fire and baptism, preserved only by Luke", he urges, "is one of Jesus' most important sayings, because we can perceive from it how Jesus thought of His end." "How Jesus really thought of His future", he says in another place, "a declaration like Luke xii. 49 f, perhaps shows".¹⁴

Looking, thus, upon Lk. xii. 49-53 as a closely knit unit, it would be difficult for us to accept Harnack's identification

¹⁴ *Die Schriften*, etc.,¹ pp. 438 and 138. Weiss even speaks of Mk. x. 38 as "no doubt an echo of Lk. xii. 50" (p. 160), but it is not perfectly clear what he means by this (it is retained in the second edition).

of Lk. xii. 51, 53, torn from its context, with Mat. x. 34-36, also removed from its context; and the assignment of the "saying", thus preserved by both Matthew and Luke, to the hypothetical "Discourse-Source", which it is now fashionable to cite by the symbol Q. Even apart from this difficulty, however, the equation of the two passages would not commend itself to us. The phraseology in which they are severally cast is distinctly different. The decisive matter, however, is the difference in the settings into which they are severally put by the two evangelists. Both of the sections in which they severally occur, confessedly present difficulties to the harmonist, and the dispositions which harmonists have made of them in their arrangement of the evangelical material vary greatly.¹⁵ It seems to be reasonably clear, however, that in the tenth chapter of Matthew and the twelfth chapter of Luke we are dealing with two quite distinct masses of material, spoken by our Lord on separate occasions. We may be sorry to forego any advantage which may be thought to accrue from the assignment of one of the sayings of Jesus in which He speaks of His mission to the hypothetical "Discourse-Source".¹⁶ But we cannot admit that there is involved any loss of authenticity for the two sayings in question. We see no reason to suppose that the source or sources from which the two evangelists drew severally the sayings they have reported to us compared unfavorably, in point of trustworthiness as vehicles of the tradition of Jesus' sayings, with the hypothetical "Discourse-Source", from which they both some-

¹⁵ For example, Edward Robinson, having placed Mat. x. 34 ff. in its natural position in his §62, preposits Lk. xii. 49 ff. to his §52. John H. Kerr, on the contrary, retaining the same natural position for Mat. x. 34 ff. (at his § 50), more correctly places Lk. xii. 49 ff. at his § 90. C. W. Hodge, Sr., *Syllabus of Lectures on the Gospel History*, 1888, p. 73, very properly speaks of Robinson's "dislocation" of the material of Luke as "the principal blot on his harmony": "he breaks up the connection just where commentators find a striking unity."

¹⁶ Willoughby C. Allen and A. Plummer deny that Mat. x. 34 ff. and Lk. xii. 51 ff. come from Q. "Phraseology and context alike differ," says Allen. "The two evangelists draw from different sources."

times draw in common. On the whole the certainty that Jesus said what is here attributed to Him is increased by His being credibly reported to have said it twice in very similar language and to entirely the same effect.

We therefore amend Harnack's list at this point also, and instead of listing the two sayings as Mat. x. 34-36 = Lk. xii. 51, 53, and Lk. xii. 49, 50, give them as Mat. x. 34-36 and Lk. xii. 49-53.

As the result of this survey of the material, we find ourselves, like Harnack, with eight "sayings" at our disposal, although these eight are not precisely the same as those which he lists. Arranged, as nearly as the chronological order can be made out, in the order in which they were spoken, they are as follows: Mk. i. 38 = Lk. iv. 43; Mat. v. 17; Mk. ii. 17 = Mat. ix. 13 = Lk. v. 32; Mat. x. 34 f; Mat. xv. 24; Lk. xii. 49 ff; Mk. x. 45 = Mat. xx. 28; Lk. xix. 10.¹⁷ Five of these sayings are found in Matthew; four in Luke; and three in Mark. As no one of them is found only in Matthew and Luke we need not insist that any of them is derived from the hypothetical "Discourse-Source" (Q), to which are commonly assigned the portions of the Synoptics found in Matthew and Luke but lacking in Mark. As all of these sayings are found in either Matthew or in Luke (and one in both) there seems to be no good reason, however, why some (or all) of them may not possibly have had a place in a document from which both Matthew and Luke are supposed to draw.¹⁸ One is found

¹⁷ Along with these there are certain other sayings which come illustratively into consideration. Primary among them is Mat. xi. 3 ff. = Lk. vii. 20 ff. which Harnack (p. 23) is tempted to include in the list itself as a ninth saying. Others are: Mk. xi. 9, 10 = Mat. xxi. 9 = Lk. xix. 38 = Jno. xii. 13; Mat. xxiii. 39; Mat. xi. 18, 19 = Lk. vii. 33, 34. Cf. also Mat. x. 40; Mk. ix. 37 = Lk. ix. 48; Lk. x. 16. There may be added [Mk. ix. 11 = Mat. xvii. 13; Mat. iii. 11 = Lk. iii. 16]. We have made some remarks on the general subject in *The Lord of Glory*, pp. 39 f., 76 f., 126 f., 190 f.

¹⁸ We may quote here, say, Johannes Weiss, who says (*Die Schriften*,¹ I, p. 33): "Possibly there belongs to it yet many another [passage]

in all three Gospels, one in Mark and Matthew, and one in Mark and Luke. These three at least, two of them very confidently in the form in which we have them, and the third (Mk. i. 38 = Lk. iv. 43) very possibly in one of the forms in which it has come to us, may be thought to have stood in the hypothetical "Narrative-Source" (*Urmarkus*). And it is possible that all the others may have stood in it too, since all the Gospels draw from it. Three are found in Matthew alone and two in Luke alone. These are at no disadvantage in point of trustworthiness in comparison with their companions which occur in more than one Gospel. Apart from the fact that they may have stood in any source from which their companions were drawn but did not chance to be taken from it by more than one evangelist, the determination that some of the sources used by the evangelists were drawn upon by more than one of them has no tendency to depreciate the value of those which were drawn upon by only one. No doubt the hypothetical "Narration-Source" which lies behind all three of the Synoptics is a very old document and is very highly commended to us by the confident dependence of them all upon it. There is no sound reason for assigning any of these Gospels to a date later than the sixties, and Luke and Matthew may easily have come from a considerably earlier date. A document underlying them all must have existed in the fifties and may be carried back almost to any date subsequent to the facts it records. But much the same may be said of a document underlying any one of the Synoptics: a document drawn on by one of them only may be just as old and just as authoritative as one drawn on by all of them. The matter of primary importance does not concern the particular hypothetical document—they are all hypothetical—from which it may be supposed that our Gospels have derived this saying or that. The disentangl-

which is found only in Matthew, or only in Luke." As we ourselves believe that Mark also knew the "Discourse-Source", we might add also "or only in Mark."

ing of the hypothetical sources from which they may be supposed to have derived the several items of their narratives is a mere literary matter. We know nothing of these sources after we have disentangled them except that they all are earlier than the Gospels which used them; and that when the contents of each are gathered together and scrutinized, the contents of them all prove to be, from the historical point of view, all of a piece. This is the fundamental fact concerning them which requires recognition. The tradition of Jesus' sayings and doings, gathered out of earlier sources (written or oral) and preserved by the Synoptic Gospels, is a homogeneous tradition, and the original tradition. Behind it there lies nothing but the facts. Whether written down in the fifties or the forties or the thirties: whether some short interval separates its writing from the facts it records—say ten or twenty years—or no interval at all; no trace whatever exists of any earlier tradition of any kind behind it. It is for us at least the absolute beginning. In these circumstances we are justified in holding with confidence to all the sayings of Jesus transmitted to us in these Gospels. It is not that we cannot get behind these Gospels: it is that we can get behind them and find behind them nothing but what is in them.¹⁹

The term used by our Lord in these passages to express the fact of His mission is normally the simple "I came" (*ἦλθον*, Mk. ii. 17, Mat. v. 17, ix. 13, Mt. x. 34, Lk. xii. 49; *cf.* *ἦλθεν*, Mk. x. 45, Mat. xx. 28). But variations from this "technical term" occur. Once, after it has been once employed, it is varied on repetition to "the more elegant" (as Harnack calls it) term for public manifestation, "I came forth" (*παρεγενόμενῳ*, Lk. xii. 49, 51). Once, in a parallel, the tense is changed to "I have come" (*ἐλήλυθα*, Lk. v. 32). Once the compound "I came out" (*ἐξῆλθον*, Mk. i. 38) is used. And in two passages, "I was sent"

¹⁹ See the state of the case as presented in the PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL REVIEW, 1913, xi, 2, pp. 195-269.

(Lk. iv. 43, Mat. xv. 34; *cf.* Mk. ix. 37 = Lk. ix. 48, Mat. x. 40, Lk. x. 16) takes the place of "I came". In the majority of cases our Lord speaks directly of Himself as the one whose mission He is describing, in the first person: "I came", "I was sent", "I came out". In a few instances, however, He speaks of Himself in the third person under the designation of "the Son of Man"—"the Son of Man came" (Mk. x. 45 = Mat. xx. 28, Lk. xix. 10). There is a difference also in the nature and, so to say, the profundity of the reference to His mission. Sometimes He is speaking only of His personal ministry in "the days of His flesh", and the manner of its performance (Mk. i. 38 = Lk. iv. 43, Mat. xv. 24, *cf.* Lk. xix. 10). Sometimes His mind is on the circumstantial effects of the execution of His mission (Mat. x. 34 ff., Lk. xii. 49 ff.). Sometimes the horizon widens and the ultimate ethical result of His work is indicated (Mat. v. 17). Sometimes the declaration cuts to the bottom and the fundamental purpose of His mission is announced with respect both to the object sought and the means of its accomplishment (Mk. ii. 17 = Mat. ix. 13 = Lk. v. 32; Lk. xix. 10; Mk. x. 45 = Mt. xx. 28): "I came not to call the righteous but sinners"; "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost"; "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." It should not pass without notice that it is in these last instances only that our Lord deserts the simple form of statement with the personal pronoun, "I came", and substitutes for it the solemn declaration, "the Son of Man came."

II

In investigating the meaning of these sayings severally it is not necessary to follow carefully the chronological order of their utterance. In a broad sense they increase in richness of contents as our Lord's ministry develops itself. It was not until late in His ministry, for example, that our Lord spoke insistently of His death and His allusions

to His mission in His later ministry reflect this change. Nevertheless these sayings do not grow uniformly in richness as time goes on, and it will be more convenient to arrange them arbitrarily in order of relative richness of content than strictly to follow the chronological sequence. The order to be pursued has been suggested at the close of the immediately preceding paragraph.

I

Mk. i. 38: And He saith unto them, Let us go elsewhere into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for to this end came I out.

Lk. iv. 43: But He said unto them, I must preach the good tidings of the kingdom of God to the other cities also; for to this end was I sent.

As reported by Mark, in this saying Jesus declares His mission in the briefest and simplest terms possible. It was just to preach. "For to this end came I out", He says; namely "to preach".²⁰ The context intimates, it is true, that this preaching was to be done in the first instance in the immediately neighboring towns: "Let us go elsewhere into the next towns that I may preach there also." It lay in the nature of the case that any preaching intended to extend over the land should begin with the nearest towns, and that these therefore should be particularly in mind in the announcement. But that the preaching was not intended to be limited to these "next" towns²¹ is clear enough in itself, and is made quite plain (so far as the understanding of the reporter, at least, is concerned) by the next verse, which tells us what Jesus did by way of fulfilling the mission which He here announces: "And He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee,²² preaching and casting out

²⁰ Cf. G. Wohlenberg *in loc.*: "The *εἰς τοῦτο*, verse 38, means just the *κηρύσσειν* in general, not especially the *κακεῖ κηρύσσειν*."

²¹ In the parallel, Luke says simply, "to the other cities," which suggests no other limitation than what Th. Zahn (p. 247) calls "the self-evident one" of "the other Jewish cities of Palestine."

²² Cf. Mat. iv. 23: "And He went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the good tidings of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of disease, and all manner of sickness among the

devils." Luke in the parallel, extends the boundaries even further. "And He was preaching in the synagogues of Judaea", he says,—but without prefixing the emphatic "all". By "Judaea" he means Palestine as a whole,²³ but, as the omission of the "all" already advises us, he does not intend to assert that there was no part of Palestine to which Jesus did not carry His Gospel, so much as that His mission was distinctively to Palestine.²⁴ In a word, Jesus announces His mission here as a mission to the Jewish people: He came out, was sent, to preach to the Jews.

The emphasis thus laid on preaching as the substance of Jesus' mission does not, however, so set preaching in contrast, say, to the working of miracles as to exclude the latter from any place in His mission. It has become fashionable in one school of expositors to see in the accounts which the evangelists give here a more or less complete misunderstanding of Jesus' motives in leaving Capernaum, although these are supposed nevertheless to shimmer through the narrative sufficiently to guide "the seeing eye".²⁵ When Jesus is represented as moved by a desire to preach in other places, less than half the truth, it is said, is told. What really determined His action was a desire to get away from Capernaum. And the reason for His desire to get away from Capernaum was that a thaumaturgical function had been thrust upon Him there. He fled from this in the night (Mk. i. 35). What He really announced in the words here misleadingly reported, was that His mission was to

people." The emphasis in both Mark and Matthew is on the completeness with which Galilee was covered by this itinerant preaching.

²³ See especially Th. Zahn, p. 248, and pp. 61 f. Cf. A. Loisy, I, p. 462: "Luke has chosen a general term in order to signify that the mission of Jesus was for the whole country, conformably to what was said in verse 43 (B. Weiss, *Einleitung*, pp. 307-308)." Also, B. Weiss, C. F. Keil, Johannes Weiss *in loc.* Wellhausen: "Judaea (verse 44) includes Galilee in it: cf. i. 5; vi. 17; vii. 17, and D. xxiii. 5." Godet rejects the reading "Judaea" as "absurd."

²⁴ We are following Th. Zahn here (p. 248).

²⁵ So, *e.g.* H. J. Holtzmann, A. Loisy, J. Weiss. C. G. Montefiori draws back.

preach, not to work miracles. So far from permitting this to shimmer through them, however, the narratives of the evangelists flatly contradict it. Mark, for example, tells us that in leaving Capernaum Jesus did not leave His miracles behind Him: "And He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee, preaching, and casting out devils." The parallel in Matthew (iv. 23) enlarges on this: "And He went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people." It may be easy to say, as Johannes Weiss for example does say, that such statements do not correspond with what really happened, and that Luke in his parallel account (iv. 44) has done well to omit them. But it is not so easy thus lightly to erase, not a couple of remarks merely, but the entire presentation of Jesus' work by the evangelists. According to their account, not merely at Capernaum in the beginning, but throughout His whole ministry, "mighty works" were as characteristic a feature of Jesus' ministry as His mighty word itself.²⁶ There is not the least justification in the narratives themselves, moreover, for the attempted rereading of their implications. There is no suggestion in them that Jesus was "betrayed into thaumaturgical works" at Capernaum. There is no hint that He was shocked or troubled by His abounding miracles there, or that He looked upon them as a scattering of His energies, or a diversion of Him from His proper task or as making a draft upon His strength. They are represented rather as His crown of glory. He is not represented as fleeing from them and as endeavoring to confine Himself to activities of a different nature. He is represented rather as looking upon them as the seal of His mission and His incitement to its full accomplishment. "I must needs preach in *the other* towns": "that I may preach there *also*". Not a contrast with His work at Capernaum,

²⁶ Cf. the conjunction of the two in Jesus' instructions to the Twelve, Mat. x. 5-8, and His reply to the Baptist's question, Mat. xi. 4-5.

but a repetition of it, is what He hopes for elsewhere. The whole contrast lies between Capernaum and the rest of the land: between a local and an itinerant ministry. What He had done in Capernaum, He felt the divine necessity of His mission driving Him to do also in the other cities. And therefore "He went into their synagogues throughout all Galilee preaching, and casting out devils". The ground of Jesus' leaving Capernaum lay, shortly, as Holtzmann recognizes it to be Luke's purpose to intimate, solely in "the universality of His mission".²⁷

What Jesus came out to preach in fulfilment of His mission Mark's statement does not tell us. It says simply, "I came out to preach". But this is not to leave it in doubt. It was too well understood to require statement. Mark had just told his readers summarily that "after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the glad-tidings of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye and believe in the glad-tidings" (*cf.* Mat. iv. 17). When he tells them now that Jesus announced His mission to be to preach, it is perfectly evident that it is just this preaching which he has in mind. The parallel in Luke declares this in so many words. "I must needs", Jesus is there reported as saying, "proclaim the glad-tidings of the kingdom of God, for to this end was I sent." The accent of necessity is here sounded. It were impossible that Jesus should do anything other than preach just this Gospel of the kingdom of God. His mission to this end lays a compulsion upon Him: He was sent to do precisely this, and needs must do it.²⁸ Jesus' mission is to preach a Gospel, the Gospel of the kingdom of God.

For Jesus so to describe His mission, clearly was to lay claim to the Messianic function. Preaching the glad-tidings

²⁷ P. 333: "The ground of His flight, verse 43 finds in the universality of His mission."

²⁸ On the accent of "necessity" in Jesus' life, see Hastings' *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*, article "Foresight," at the beginning.

of the kingdom of God is the Messianic proclamation. The accompanying miracles are the signs of the Messiah. Accordingly when the Baptist sent to Jesus inquiring, "Art thou He that Cometh or look we for another?" Jesus replied by pointing to these things: "the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have the glad-tidings preached to them."²⁹ "He that Cometh" is a Messianic title, and therefore, as Harnack reminds us, those who heard Jesus say, "For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord", understood Him to be speaking of the Messiah, and would have understood that just the same if the words "in the name of the Lord" had been wanting.³⁰ The question lies near at hand, accordingly, whether Jesus merely by speaking of "coming" "being sent" does not lay claim to Messianic dignity. In that case those terms would be used pregnantly. The Baptist "came", neither eating nor drinking, as truly as Jesus "came" eating and drinking (Mat. xi. 18; cf. xxi. 32). The prophet is "sent" as truly as the Messiah (Lk. iv. 26; Mat. xiii. 37 = Lk. xiii. 34; Jno. i. 6, 8, iii. 28). What the words openly declare is a consciousness of divine mission; and the two modes of expression differ according as the emphasis falls on the divine source of the mission ("I was sent") or on its voluntary performance ("I came").³¹ Something more needs to be added, therefore, to mark the mission which they assume, plainly as Messianic. That

²⁹ Mat. xi. 3 ff. = Lk. vii. 20 ff. Harnack (p. 25) says: "The question whether the miracles which are enumerated are to be understood spiritually is to be answered in the negative for Matthew and Luke, and probably also for Jesus Himself." But that places Harnack in a quandary: "But that Jesus should have spoken here literally of raising the dead is nevertheless not easy to acknowledge."

³⁰ P. 1: Mat. xxiii. 39 = Lk. xiii. 35.

³¹ Cf. Th. Zahn's words *Das Evangelium des Matthäus*,³ p. 610, distinguishing between "the execution of a commission laid on Him by God (Mat. x. 40, ὁ ἀποστέλλας με, xv. 24; xxi. 37)" and "the purpose and meaning of His life comprehended by Himself (ἠλθεν)."

something more is added in the present passage by the purpose which is declared to be subserved by the mission. That purpose is the Messianic proclamation. He who came to preach the glad-tidings of the kingdom of God and who could point to the signs of the Messiah accompanying His preaching, has come as the Messiah.

Jesus, however, does not here say merely "I came". He says, "I came *out*", and the preposition should not be neglected. At the least it must refer to Jesus' coming publicly forward and entering upon the task of public teacher. J. J. van Oosterzee insists upon this sense: "The Saviour speaks simply of the purpose for which He now appeared publicly as a teacher."³² That, however, in this Messianic context, appears scarcely adequate. We seem to be compelled to see in this term a reference to Jesus' manifestation as Messiah with whatever that may carry with it. This is apparently what C. F. Keil and G. Wohlenberg have in mind. According to the former, the phrase "I came out" is used here absolutely in the sense of coming into publicity, coming into the world; and if, he adds, we wish to supply anything we may add in thought *παρὰ* or *ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ*—as we may find in Jno. xiii. 3; xvi. 27, 30. Similarly the latter considers the reference to be to Jesus' entrance upon His Messianic calling, and adds that it is not surprising if the expression tempts us to find in it an allusion to the coming forth from the Father such as John speaks of at xiii. 3; xvi. 27, 30; xvii. 8. Even if we follow this path to its end and say simply, with J. A. Alexander, F. Godet, A. Plummer, H. B. Swete and others, that when He says, "I came out" Jesus means, "I came out from God" or "from heaven" we are not going beyond the implications of the Messianic reference. If Jesus thought Himself the Messiah there is no reason why He may not be supposed to have thought of Himself as that transcendent Messiah which was "in the air" in "the days of His flesh". That He did think of Himself" as the Transcendent Messiah is

³² On Lk. iv. 43.

indeed already evident from His favorite self-designation of the Son of Man,—as reported by Mark as by the other evangelists. The Son of Man carries with it the idea of preëxistence. When then Mark records that He spoke of His mission as a “coming out”, the phrase may very well come before us as the vehicle of Jesus’ consciousness of His preëxistence; and F. Godet is speaking no less critically than theologically when he remarks that “Mark’s term appears to allude to the incarnation, Luke’s only refers to the mission of Jesus.”³³

When we say Messiah we say Israel. We naturally revert here, then, to Jesus’ testimony that His mission was to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to the cities of Judaea. He is obviously speaking not of the utmost reach of His mission, but of the limits of His personal ministry. His personal ministry, however, He describes as distinctively to the Jews. He “came out”, He “was sent”, to proclaim the glad-tidings of the imminence of that Kingdom to the people of God to whom the Kingdom had been promised. This was, in its external aspects, His mission.

2

Mat. xv. 24: And He answered and said, I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

What in the former saying is given a perhaps somewhat unarresting positive expression is in this saying asserted in a strong, almost startling, negative form. Jesus declares that His mission was not only to the Jews, but to them only. Denying a request from His disciples that He should exercise His miraculous powers for the healing of a heathen girl who was suffering from possession, He justifies the denial by explaining that His mission was not to the heathen but solely to the Jews: “I was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” The language in which He clothes this explanation had been employed by Him on a

³³ It is less obvious that the simple “I came” presupposes preëxistence as many commentators insist (*e.g.* A. Plummer, *Matthew*, p. 156, note 2, cf. A. M. McNeille on Mat. x. 40). But on this see below pp. 568, 581 ff.

previous occasion. When He was sending His disciples on their first mission He laid, first of all, this charge upon them: "Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Mat. x. 5). The circumstantial negative clauses act as definitions of the language of the positive clause. This language is just as sharply definite in our present saying. Jesus declares that He has no mission to the heathen. His mission is distinctively to the Jews.

It may be possible to exaggerate, however, the exclusiveness of this declaration. After all, it has a context. And it should not be overlooked that despite the emphasis of His assertion that He had no mission to the heathen, Jesus healed this heathen girl. Nor can it quite be said that He healed her by way of exception; overpersuaded, perhaps, by the touching plea of her mother, or even, perhaps, instructed by her shrewd common-sense to a wider apprehension of the scope of His mission than He had before attained. When He threw Himself back on His mission, He invoked in His justification the authority of God.³⁴ And therefore, in adducing His mission, He employs the phrase "I was sent" rather than "I came". By that phrase He appeals to Him with whose commission He was charged, and transfers the responsibility for the terms of His mission to Him.³⁵ After this it can scarcely be supposed that

³⁴ Montefiori is quite right in saying: "The explanation is that God had ordered this limitation."

³⁵ In only two of the sayings in which Jesus expounds His mission (Lk. iv. 43, Mat. xv. 24) is the form "I was sent" employed. It is perhaps not without significance that in the only one of these which has a parallel (Lk. iv. 43), it is not the simple "I came" which stands in this parallel (Mk. i. 38), but a form which more pointedly refers to the source of the mission in God ("I came out"). The "I was sent" is reflected in its active equivalent in the "Johannine" (Jno. xiii. 20) phrase of Matt. x. 40; Mk. ix. 37 = Lk. ix. 48; Lk. x. 16, in which the unity of the sent and sender is suggested. Note the emphasis placed on Jesus' employment of "I was sent" in our present passage by F. L. Steinmeyer, *The Miracles of Our Lord*, pp. 140 ff., and J. Laid-

He overstepped the terms of His mission, as He understood them, in healing the heathen child. In other words, when He declares, "I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel", He is not to be understood as declaring that His mission was so exclusively to the Jews that the heathen had no part in it whatever.

The whole drift of the incident as recorded whether by Mark or by Matthew bears out this conclusion. The precise point which is stressed in both accounts alike is, not that the Jews have the exclusive right to the benefits of Jesus' mission, but that the preference belongs to them. This is given open expression in Jesus' words as reported by Mark, "Let the children *first* be fed; it is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs." But it is equally the implication of Matthew's account.³⁶ Jesus does not suggest that the dogs³⁷ shall have nothing; but that they shall have only the dogs' portion. What the portion of the dogs is, is not here indicated. It is only intimated that they have a portion. The children have the preference, of course: but there is something also for the dogs. Jesus' whole conversation in this incident is certainly pedagogically determined. He employed the application of this heathen woman to Him in order to teach His disciples the real scope of His mission. There is no contradiction between His declaration to them that He was sent distinctively to Israel and His subsequent healing of the heathen child. He heals the child not in defiance of the terms of His mission, but because it fell within its terms; and He commends the mother because she had found the right way: "And He said unto her, *For this saying*, go thy way: the devil is gone out of thy daughter." A comment

law, *The Miracles of Our Lord*, p. 144. Th. Zahn remarks that here for the first time in Matthew is Jesus presented as the ἀπόστολος of God, and adds: "cf. xv. 24; xxi. 37 as correlate of the ἄλλων of v. 17; ix. 13; x. 34. Apart from John cf. Heb. iii. 1, Clem., 1 Cor. 42."

³⁶ This is solidly shown by Th. Zahn.

³⁷ It has been often pointed out that the use of the diminutive here softens the apparent harshness of the language. Shall we say "doglings"?

of Alfred Edersheim's sums up not badly the teaching of the incident: "when He breaks the bread to the children, in the breaking of it the crumbs must fall all around".³⁹

Obviously what Jesus tells us here is very much what Paul tells us, when, summing up his Gospel ringingly as the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes, he adds, "To the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Rom. i. 16, *cf.* ii. 10). Many "Liberal" expositors therefore represent Mark as corrupting the record of Jesus' conversation when he puts on Jesus' lips a sharp assertion of this principle: "Let the children *first* be filled".³⁹ "If the Jews have only the *first* right", comments Johannes Weiss, for example, "it follows that the heathen too have a right. This is an echo from the Epistle to the Romans, i. 16,—the Jew first, then the Greek!"⁴⁰ It is not, however, merely in this sharp assertion of it that this principle is given expression in the narrative of the incident. It is present as truly in the account of Matthew as in that of Mark. The whole drift of both accounts alike—the climax of which is found not in any word of Jesus' but in a marvellous word of His petitioner's—is that there is something left for the dogs after the children are filled: "Even the dogs under the table eat of the crumbs of the children"; "even the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from the table of their masters." Had there been no provision for the Gentiles, indeed, Jesus could scarcely have expected His disciples to recognize Him as that "One to Come" with whose mission there had from the beginning been connected blessings for the Gen-

³⁸ *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*,¹ II, 1883, p. 41.

³⁹ H. J. Holtzmann (p. 144): "Let *first* (πρῶτον = prius, maxim from Rom. i. 16; ii. 9, 10) *the children* (Israelites) *be filled*; this explanation, which still leaves room for the satisfaction of the mother, is simply lacking in Mat. xv. 26, and therefore the conclusion is commonly drawn that in the narrative of Mark we have a deliberate mitigation, a dependence upon the later, Pauline mission, and therefore secondary work (so Hilgenfeld, last in *ZWTh*, 1889, 497; B. and J. Weiss, *Jülicher, Gleichnisreden*, II, 256 f., even Wittichen 188, and with more reserve, Wernle, 133)."

⁴⁰ *Schriften*, etc.,¹ I, 1906, p. 128.

tiles also. The evangelists are not drawing from Paul when they represent Jesus as teaching that His mission was to Israel and yet extends in its beneficial effects to the world (*cf.* especially Mat. viii. 11; xxviii. 19).⁴¹ Paul on the contrary is reflecting the teaching of Jesus as reported by the evangelists when, as Jesus proclaimed Himself to have been sent only to Israel, he declares Him to have been made a minister of the circumcision;⁴² and when, as Jesus suggests that nevertheless there is in His mission a blessing for Gentiles also, he declares that by His ministry to the circumcision not only is the truth of God exalted and the promises unto the fathers confirmed, but mercy is brought to the Gentiles also (Rom. xv. 8 ff.).

How His mission could be distinctively for Israel and yet contain in it a blessing for the Gentiles also Jesus does not here explain to His disciples. He is content to fix the fact in their minds by the awakening object-lesson of this memorable miracle, in which His saving power goes out of Himself and effects its beneficent result across the borders of a strange land.⁴³ We can scarcely go astray, however, if we distinguish here, as in the case of Mark i. 38 = Lk. iv. 43, between His personal ministry and the wider working of His mission. When He says, "I was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel", He has His personal

⁴¹ Wellhausen represents Mark as free from such universalizing utterances. Nowhere does it put such a statement as Mat. viii. 11 f. on Jesus' lips; and only in the eschatological discourse, Mk. xiii. 10, do we find a prediction of the extension of the preaching of the Gospel to the heathen attributed to Jesus. Montefiori adds xiv. 9. The implication is, of course, that neither of these passages is authentic.

⁴² "Christ has become minister of the circumcised," comments H. A. W. Meyer: "for to devote His activity to the welfare of the Jewish nation was, according to promise, the duty of the Messianic office, comp. Mat. xx. 28, xv. 24."

⁴³ "It has been remarked," says Wellhausen (*Das Ev. Marci*, 1903, p. 60), "that this is up to now the only example in Mark in which Jesus heals from a distance, by His mere word." "This is the second example of a miracle wrought from a distance," says Loisy (I, p. 977). "The first was wrought on the centurion's son." Then he cites Augustine's remarks in *Quaest. Ev.*, I, 18.

ministry in mind. It will hardly be doubted that this was the understanding of the evangelist. C. G. Montefiori, for example, paraphrases thus: "His disciples shall convert the world; He Himself is sent only to Israel." "Jesus says that He has been sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel only. This looks like a 'narrow' tradition. But it is not. It is intended to explain the undoubted but perplexing fact that Jesus the universal Saviour and Mediator, did actually confine Himself to the Jews. The explanation is that God had ordered this limitation. After His resurrection, He will send His disciples to all the world."⁴⁴ Did Jesus Himself have no anticipation of this course of events, or purpose with reference to it? It should go without saying that, just because He conceived His mission as Messianic, He necessarily conceived it both as immediately directed to Israel, and as in its effects extending also to the Gentiles. That was how the mission of the Messiah had been set forth in those prophecies on which He fed. We cannot be surprised, then, that it is customary to recognize that it is to His personal ministry alone that Jesus refers when He declares that He "was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel".⁴⁵

The messianic character of His mission is already implied in the terms in which He here describes it. When He speaks of "the lost sheep of the house of Israel", His mind is on the great messianic passage, Ezek. xxxiii., xxxiv., in which Jehovah promises that He Himself will feed His sheep, "and seek that which was lost"; and that He will "set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them,

⁴⁴ Vol. II, pp. 657, 658.

⁴⁵ So from Augustine and Jerome down. H. A. W. Meyer expresses the general opinion when he says: "It was not intended that Christ should come to the *Gentiles* in the days of His flesh, but that He should do so at the subsequent period (xxviii. 19) in the person of the Spirit acting through the medium of the Apostolic preaching (Jno. x. 16, Eph. ii. 17)." Cf. Th. Zahn: "His personal and immediate vocation." Also, R. C. Trench, *Notes on the Miracles of Our Lord*, second American ed., 1852, p. 274; J. Laidlaw, *The Miracles of Our Lord*, 1890, p. 252; A. Edersheim, *Life and Times*, etc.,¹ 1883, II, p. 40.

even my servant David; he shall feed them and he shall be their shepherd".⁴⁶ When, with His mind on this prophecy, Jesus spoke of His mission as to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" it may admit of question whether the genitive is epexegetical or partitive,—whether He conceives His mission to be directed to Israel as a whole, conceived as having wandered from God, or to that portion of Israel which had strayed⁴⁷—but it can admit of no question that He conceived of those to whom His mission was directed as "lost". He thought of His mission, therefore, as distinctively a saving mission, and He might just as well have said, "I was sent to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Harnack is quite right, therefore, when, after calling attention to the adoption of the language of Ezek. xxxiv. 15, 16, he adds: "And the mission to the lost sheep contains implicitly the 'to seek and to save'." How He is to accomplish the saving of the lost sheep of the house of Israel, Jesus does not in this utterance tell us. He tells us only that He has come, as the promised Messiah, with this mission entrusted to Him,—to save these lost sheep.

3

Mat. x. 34 ff.: Think not that I came to cast peace on the earth; I came not to cast peace but a sword. For I came to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law: and a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

⁴⁶ Observe the address of the petitioner in our passage (Mat. xv. 22), "O Lord, Son of David", which is not repelled by Jesus. "Spoken by a heathen", remarks Edersheim (ii, p. 39), "these words were an appeal, not to the Messiah of Israel, but to an Israelitish Messiah". They supply the starting point for a conversation, however, in which the Messiah of Israel brings relief to the heathen.

⁴⁷ That in Mat. x. 6, "the lost sheep of the house of Israel", the genitive is not partitive seems to be shown by the contrast of verse 5: the disciples are to go, not to Gentiles or the Samaritans, but to Israel, described here as "lost sheep". Cf. H. A. W. Meyer *in loc.*: "Such sheep (ix. 36) were *all*, seeing that they were without faith in Him, the heaven-sent Shepherd." The same phrase in Mat. xv. 24, in a similar contrast (with the Canaanitish woman), might naturally be held to be used in the same broad sense. Israel as a whole in that case would be the "lost sheep".

In this context Jesus is preparing His disciples for the persecutions which awaited them. They must not think their case singular: their Teacher and Lord had Himself suffered before them. Nor must they imagine that they are deserted: the Father has not forgotten them. And after all, such things belong in their day's work. They have not been called to ease but to struggle. Strife then is their immediate portion; but after the strife comes the reward.

When Jesus introduces what He has to say with the words, "Think not", He intimates that He is correcting a false impression, prevalent among His hearers (*cf.* v. 17).⁴⁸ His reference can only be to expectations of a kingdom of peace founded on Old Testament prophecy.⁴⁹ Since these expectations are focussed upon His own person He is obviously speaking out of a Messianic consciousness; and is assuming for Himself the rôle of the Messiah, come to introduce the promised kingdom.⁵⁰ Of course He does not mean to deny that the Messianic kingdom which He has come to introduce is the eternal kingdom of peace promised in the prophets. He is only warning His followers that the Messianic peace must be conquered before it is enjoyed. As His mind at the moment is on the individual, He describes the strife which awaits His followers in terms of the individual's experience. The language in which He does

⁴⁸ *Cf.* B. Weiss (Meyer, 9, 1898) and A. Plummer *in loc.*, and A. Loisy, i, p. 891.

⁴⁹ G. S. Goodspeed, *Israel's Messianic Hope*, 1910, p. 123: "All the seers of Israel look forward out of the present, whether gloomy or bright, to a golden age of peace." W. A. Brown, *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, III, p. 733a: "Among the blessings to which Israel looks forward in the Messianic Times, none is more emphasized than peace." *Cf.* A. Loisy, i, p. 891.

⁵⁰ Neglecting this, Harnack speaks inadequately when he writes: "This discourse is not Messianic in the literal sense—even John the Baptist could, it would appear, have said it—but in the burden of the discourse and in the saying, 'I came for this purpose', there lies a claim which soars above the prophets and the Baptist. For Jesus implicitly demands here that the severest sacrifices be made and the enmity of the nearest kindred be incurred, *for the sake of His person.*"

this is derived from an Old Testament passage (Micah vii. 6) in which the terrible disintegration of natural relationships incident to a time of deep moral corruption is described. The dissolution of social ties which His followers shall have to face will be like this. Let them gird themselves to meet the strain upon them loyally. For, as the succeeding verses show, it is distinctly a question of personal loyalty that is at issue.⁵¹

It should be observed that Jesus does not say merely, "Think not that I came to *send* (or *bring*) peace upon the earth", as our English versions have it. He says, "Think not that I came to *cast* peace upon the earth." The energy of the expression should not be evaporated (*cf.* vii. 6). What Jesus denies is that He has come to fling peace suddenly and immediately upon the earth,⁵² so that all the evils of life should at once and perfectly give way to the unsullied blessedness of the consummated kingdom. Such seems to have been the expectation of His followers. He undeceives them by telling them plainly that He came on the contrary to cast a sword. Strife and struggle lie immediately before them, and the peace to which they look forward is postponed. The pathway upon which they have adventured in attaching themselves to Him leads indeed to peace, but it leads through strife.

When Jesus says that He came to cast a sword upon the earth and to set men at variance with one another, the declaration of purpose must not be weakened into a mere prediction of result.⁵³ He is speaking out of the funda-

⁵¹ *Cf.* the excellent remarks of Th. Zahn, p. 415.

⁵² So B. Weiss, *Das Matthauevangelium und seine Lucas-Parallelen*, 1876, p. 281, also in Meyer, 9th ed. 1898, and in *Die Vier Evangelien*, etc., 1900 *in loc.* So also H. J. Holtzmann, *Die Synoptiker*,³ 1901, p. 235, who remarks: "Thus Jesus strikes out of the picture of the Messianic age, at least for the immediately following transitional period, the joy and peace predicted in Micah. iv. 3, v. 4, Zech. ix. 9, 10, and brings war into prospect in its stead, in reminiscence of Ex. xxxii. 27, Ezek. vi. 3, xiv. 17, xxi. 12."

⁵³ It is often so weakened. Thus *e.g.* A. Loisy: "The appearance of the Christ has therefore, for consequence—not for end, but the

mental presupposition of the universal government of God, which had just found expression in the assertion that not even a sparrow, or indeed a hair of our heads, falls to the ground "apart from our Father" (verses 29-31). The essence of the declaration lies in the assurance that nothing is to befall His followers by chance or the hard necessity of things, but all that comes to them comes from Him.⁵⁴ Not merely the ultimate end, but all the means which lead up to this end—in a linked chain of means and ends—are of His appointment and belong to the arrangements which He has made for His people. They are to face the strife which lies before them, therefore, as a part of the service they owe to Him (verses 37 ff.), their Master and Lord (verses 24 f.). This strife is not indeed all that Jesus came to bring, but this too He came to bring; and when He casts it upon the earth, He is fulfilling so far His mission. He "came", "was sent" (verse 40) to "cast a sword".

In this saying, too, we perceive, Jesus is dealing with what we may without impropriety speak of as a subordinate element of His mission. He does not mean that the sole or the chief purpose of His coming was to stir up strife. He means that the strife which His coming causes has its part to play in securing the end for which He came. When He said in Mk. i. 38 = Lk. iv. 43, "I came to preach", He was looking through the preaching, as means, to the end which it was to subserve. When He said in Mat. xv. 24 that He was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, He did not forget the wider end of which His ministry to Israel should be the means. So, when He says, "I came to cast a sword upon the earth", He is thinking of the strife which He thus takes up unto His plan not for

Biblical language does not make a sharp distinction between the two—the division signified by the sword." Also, B. Weiss (Meyer, 9th ed., 1898): "What is the immediate, inevitable consequence of His coming, Jesus announces as its purpose." Cf. A. H. McNeille on Mat. x. 34.

⁵⁴ Cf. B. Weiss, *Das Matthaevangelium*, etc., 1876, p. 281: "It does not come like an unavoidable evil which is connected with the sought-for good, but it is foreseen and intended by Him."

itself but as an instrument by which His ultimate purpose should be reached. He tells us nothing of how long this strife is to last, or through what steps and stages it is to pass into the peace which waits behind it. Is He speaking only of the turmoil which must accompany the acceptance of Him as Messiah by His own people, involving as it does adjustment to the revised Messianic ideal which He brought?⁵⁵ Is He speaking in a "springing sense" of the ineradicable conflict of His Gospel with worldly ideals, through age after age, until at last "the end shall come"?⁵⁶ Or is He speaking of the "growing pains" which must accompany the steady upward evolution through all the ages of the religion which He founded?⁵⁷ The passage itself tells us nothing more than that Jesus came to cast a sword

⁵⁵ This appears to be A. Loisy's idea: "Because the proclamation of the kingdom has as its immediate effect (had not the Saviour found this Himself in His own home?) to cause discord in families—one accepting the faith, another rejecting it, and this discord placing believers and unbelievers at odds." See also C. G. Montefiori: "The sword does not mean war between nations, but dissension between families, of which one member remains a Jew, while another becomes a Christian."

⁵⁶ This appears to be A. Plummer's meaning: "So long as men's wills are opposed to the Gospel there can be no peace. . . . Once more Christ guards His disciples against being under any illusions. They have entered the narrow way, and it leads to tribulation, before leading to eternal life."

⁵⁷ Something like this seems to be Johannes Weiss' meaning: "This saying belongs to the most characteristic and the most authentic sayings of Jesus concerning Himself: 'I came not to bring peace on the earth but a sword.' Jesus must have felt deeply how utterly His proclamation stood in contradiction with what men were accustomed to hear and wished to hear. And what He Himself in His parental home seems to have experienced, that he foresees as a universal phenomenon which He portrays by means of words derived from Micah: a cleft is to go through families; and indeed it is to be the young generation which shall oppose the old ('three against two and two against three' says Luke: the wife of the son lives in the house of her parents-in-law). Jesus does not reprehend this, and offers no exhortation against loss of piety. He simply posits it as an inevitable fact. Thus it has always been a thousand times over; and it may be to the elders a warning and to the children a consolation, that even the Gospel of Jesus must create so painful a division."

upon the earth; that there were to result from His coming strife and strain; and that only through this strife and strain is the full purpose for which He came attainable. For what is more than this we must go elsewhere. Only let us bear well in mind that the note of the saying is not discouragement but confidence. There rings through it the "Fear not!" of verse 31. There underlies it the "I too will confess him before my Father in heaven" of verse 32. And it passes unobserved into the "He who loses His life for my sake shall find it" of verse 39, and the "whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward" of verse 42. Jesus warns His followers of the stress and strain before them. But He does this as one who buckles their armor on them and sends them forth to victory. The word on which the discussion closes is "Reward".

4

Lk. xii. 49-53: I came to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish that it was already kindled! But I have a baptism to be baptised with; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished! Think ye that I am come to give peace in the earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: for there shall be from henceforth five in one house divided, three against two and two against three. They shall be divided, father against son, and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter against her mother; mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

To some of the questions started by Mat. x. 34 ff., answers are suggested by the present saying. Here too Jesus is protecting His followers against the false expectation which they had been misled into forming, that He, the Messiah, would at once introduce the promised reign of peace.⁵⁸ In repelling this expectation, His own claim to the Messianic dignity and function is given express intimation. He corrects, not their estimate of His person or vocation, but their conception of the nature of the Messianic

⁵⁸ Cf. Hahn's note *in loc.*

work. The language in which He makes this correction is very strong: "Ye think that it is peace that I am come to give in the earth. Not at all, I tell you; nothing but division."⁵⁹ The emphasis which, by its position, falls on the word "fire" in the first clause, corresponds with this strength of language and prepares the way for it: "It is fire that I came to cast upon the earth".⁶⁰ It is clear that the two sentences belong together and constitute together but a single statement. The "fire" of the one is, then, taken up and explained by the "division" of the other, just as the "came" (ἦλθον) of the one is repeated in the "am come" (παρεγενόμην) of the other, and the "cast" (βαλεῖν) of the one by the "give" (δοῦναι) of the other. The greater energy of the language in the former declaration is due to its being the immediate expression of Jesus' own thought and feeling: "It is fire that I came to cast upon the earth"; whereas in its repetition it is the thought of His followers to which He gives expression: "Ye think that it is peace that I am here⁶¹ to give." What it is of chief importance for us to observe is that by the "fire" which He has come to cast upon the earth, Jesus means just the "division"⁶² which He describes in the subsequent

⁵⁹ A. Plummer: "I came not to send *any other thing than* division." Th. Zahn: "Think ye that I am come to give peace on earth? No, I say to you, nothing else than division." Cf. 2 Cor. i. 13.

⁶⁰ Cf. Plummer's note.

⁶¹ παραγίνομαι, "to come to the side of", is, says Harnack, a "more elegant" word than ἔρχομαι, and Luke has varied the ἦλθον of verse 49 to the παρεγενόμην of verse 51 for the sake of better literary form. If Luke was really the author of all the nice touches with which he is credited, he would need to be recognized as one of the most "exquisite" writers of literary history. The variations of language between the parallel statements of verses 49 and 51 are grounded in the nature of the case and reflect the truth of life. It is better to explain παρεγενόμην as the natural phrase to express the disciples' thought of Jesus' "coming" relatively to themselves, than to give it with Thayer-Grimm the sense of "coming forth", "making one's public appearance" (Mat. iii. 1, Heb. ix. 11).

⁶² Cf. Loisy, p. 893: "In view of the expressions chosen and of the progress of the discourse, the fire is nothing else than the discord introduced into the world by the preaching of the Gospel, or, better still

clauses in much the same language in which He had spoken of it in Mat. x. 34 ff. That is to say, He has in mind, here as there, a great disarrangement of social relationships which He speaks of as the proximate result of the introduction of the Kingdom of God into the world.

No more here than there does Jesus mean to represent this discord which He declares He came to give in the earth, as the proper purpose or the ultimate result of His coming.⁶³ The strength of the language in which He declares it to be His purpose in coming to produce this dissension, shuts off, indeed, all view beyond. When He says, "Ye think it is peace that I am here to give on the earth. Not at all, I tell you: nothing but division", He is thinking, of course, only of the immediate results, and, absorbed in them, leaving what lies beyond for the time out of sight. The absoluteness of the language is like the absoluteness of the, "I was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." But something does lie beyond. This not only belongs to the nature of the case, but is already intimated in the last clause of the first sentence (verse 49): "It is fire that I came to cast on the earth, and how I wish that it was already kindled." Clearly Jesus did not long for the kindling of the fire for the fire's own sake; but for the sake of what would come out of the fire.

What this clause particularly teaches us, however, is that the fire which Jesus came to cast on the earth was not yet kindled. The clause is of recognized difficulty and has been variously rendered. Most of these renderings yield, however, the same general sense; and it is reasonably clear that the meaning is represented with sufficient accuracy by,

perhaps the movement excited for or against the religion of Jesus by the Apostolic preaching, from which the discord arose."

⁶³ Cf. Zahn, p. 516: "That the ultimate purpose of His life and work is to bring peace upon the earth, Jesus of course does not here deny" [*cf.* to the contrary, Acts x. 36, Lk. i. 79, Is. ix. 6. Eph. ii. 14-17], "but only that the intended and immediate consequence of His coming and manifestation is a universal condition of peace upon earth,—a thing which even the angels on the night of His birth did not proclaim. . . ."

"And how I wish that it was already kindled."⁶⁴ For even the fire which He came to cast upon the world, Jesus thus points to the future. Not even it has yet been kindled. The peace which His followers were expecting lies yet beyond it. He was not to give peace in the world but nothing but division: yet even the division was not yet come—for even that His followers were to look forward. He is, then, not accounting to His followers for the trials they were enduring: He is warning them of trials yet to come. He is saying to them in effect, "In the world ye shall have tribulation"; but the subaudition also is present, "But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." These things He was speaking to them, therefore, that despite the impending tribulation, they might have the peace which they were expecting—at least in sure prospect.

From the strong wish which Jesus expresses that the fire which He came to cast upon the earth had already been kindled, Harnack takes occasion to represent Him as a disappointed man. Harnack explains the fire which Jesus says He came to cast upon the earth as "an inflammation and refining agitation of spirits", and discovers an immense pathos in Jesus' inability to see that it had as yet been kindled.

Jesus moved with pain, acknowledges that the fire does not yet burn What Jesus wishes, yes, what He speaks of as the purpose of His coming, He does not yet see fulfilled—the great trying and refining agitation of spirits in which the old is consumed and the new is kindled. That "men of violence" (*βασταί*) are necessary that the kingdom of God may be taken, He says at Mat. xi. 12. To become such a man of violence (*βαστής*) one must be kindled from the fire. This fire He fain would bring, He has brought; but it will not yet burn; hence His pained exclamation. Elsewhere, only in the saying about Jerusalem (Mat. xxiii. 37) does this pained complaint of the failure of results come to such sharp expression.

⁶⁴ So Kinuol, Olshausen, De Wette, Bleek, Meyer, B. Weiss, Holtzmann, Zahn. On this use of the *τί* see A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek of the New Testament*, 1914, on Lk. xii. 49 as per Index, and Zahn *in loc.* p. 514, note 54. On the *εἰ ἤδη ἀνήφθη* see Zahn *in loc.* and note 53.

It is needless to point out that this whole representation is in direct contradiction with the context. Harnack has prepared the way for it by cutting off the context and taking the single sentence of verse 49 in complete isolation. In so doing, He has rendered it impossible, however, confidently to assign any particular meaning to that, in that case, perfectly insulated saying. It is in this state equally patient to a dozen hypothetical meanings. The sense which Harnack puts upon it is simply imposed upon it from his own subjectivity: he merely ascribes to Jesus the feelings which, from his general conception of His person and work, he supposes He would naturally express in such an exclamation. Fortunately, the context interposes a decisive negative to the ascription. We have here not the weak wail of disappointment, but a strong assertion of conscious control. That, indeed, is sufficiently clear from the declaration itself. When Jesus asserts, "It is to cast fire upon the earth that I came" it is anything but the consciousness of impotence that is suggested to us. And the note of power vibrating in the assertion is not abolished by the adjoined expression of a wish that this fire was already kindled. No doubt there is an acknowledgment that the end for which He came was not yet fully accomplished: He had not finished His work which He came to do. But this does not involve confession either of disappointment at the slowness of its accomplishment, or fear that it may never be accomplished. The very form of the acknowledgment suggests confidence in the accomplishment. When Jesus says, "Would that it was already kindled"! He expresses no uncertainty that it will in due time be kindled. And even the time, He does not put outside of His power. He even tells us why it has not already been kindled. And the reason proves to lie in the orderly prosecution of His task. "How I wish", He exclaims, "that it was already kindled! But" He himself is postponing the kindling: "But I have a baptism to be baptised with." The fire cannot be kindled until He has undergone His

baptism.⁶⁵ Its kindling is contingent upon that. No doubt He looks forward to this baptism with apprehension: "And how am I straitened till it be accomplished"! But with no starting back. It is to be accomplished: and His face is set to its accomplishment. The entire course of events lies clearly in His view, and fully within His power. He has come to cast fire on the earth; but one of the means through which this fire is to be cast on the earth is a baptism with which He is to be baptized. This baptism is a dreadful experience which oppresses His soul as He looks forward to it. He could wish it were all well over. But He has no thought of doubting its accomplishment or of shrinking from His part in it. It is a veritable pre-Gethsemane which is revealed to us here.⁶⁶ But as in the actual Gethsemane, with the "Let this cup pass from me", there is conjoined the, "Nevertheless not my will but thine be done."

That the baptism with which Jesus declares that He is to be baptized (*cf.* Mk. x. 38) is His death is unquestionable and is unquestioned. What we learn, then, is that the kindling of the fire which He came to cast upon the earth is in some way consequent upon His death.⁶⁷ Of the manner of His death He tells us nothing, save what we may infer from the oppression of spirit which its prospect causes Him. Of the nature of its connection with the kindling of the fire which He came to cast upon the earth He tells us

⁶⁵ So Holtzmann (p. 374), and Zahn (p. 515).

⁶⁶ *Cf.* *Princeton Biblical and Theological Studies*, 1912, pp. 71 f.

⁶⁷ The "from henceforth" of verse 52 introduces no difficulty; *cf.* H. A. W. Meyer's comment: "Jesus already realizes His approaching death". "The lighting up of this fire," he remarks at an earlier point, "which by means of His teaching and work He had already prepared, was to be effected by His death (see ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν verse 52) which became the subject of offense, as, on the other hand, of His divine courage of faith and life (comp. ii 35)." A. Loisy is altogether unreasonable when he writes (p. 893): "In making Jesus say that the divisions will exist henceforth, 'from now', the evangelist appears to forget that, according to him, the fire of discord should be kindled only later, when the Saviour had been baptized in death; but with him the time when Jesus spoke and that of His death were almost confounded together."

as little. We may be sure, indeed, that the relation of the two events is not a merely chronological one of precedence and subsequence. The relation between such events cannot be merely chronological; the order of time which is imperative in the development of Jesus' mission can never be a purely arbitrary temporal order. We must assume that the death of Jesus stands in some causal relation to the kindling of the fire He came to cast on the earth. What this causal relation is He does not, however, tell us here. Can we think of His death as needed to prepare Him to execute His task of casting fire upon the earth? Shall we think of His death giving impressiveness to His teaching and example and so creating in all hearts that crisis which issues in the decision by which there is produced the division with which the fire is identified? Or are we to think of His death entering in some yet more intimate manner into the production of this crisis, lying in some yet more fundamental manner at the basis of His efficient activity in the world? Jesus is silent. He tells us only that His death has a part to play in the kindling of the fire which He came to cast upon the earth; and that before it—and that means without it—that fire cannot be kindled. He tells us that His death is indispensable to His work; but He does not explain how it is indispensable.

Meanwhile we are advanced greatly in our understanding of what Jesus means by the "fire", the "sword", the "division" which, according to His statement in Mat. x. 34 ff., Lk. xii. 49 ff., He came to cast on the earth. And our sense of His control over the events by which His mission is accomplished is greatly deepened. What He came to do, He will do; even though in order to do it, He must die: even though He die—nay, just because He dies—He will do it. He came to set the world on fire. He came to die that He might set the world on fire. He wishes that the conflagration was already kindled: He is oppressed by the prospect before Him as He walks the path to death. But let no man mistake Him or His progress in the performance

of His mission. His death, He will accomplish: the fire He will kindle. Men may fancy that He is come to give peace: not at all: nothing but division. That primarily. We shall see the whole world turned up-side-down (Acts xvii. 6). After that, no doubt, we shall see what we shall see. But the implication is express that, in whatever we shall see, will be included at least that peace which, after all said, lies at the end of the sequence.

5

Mat. v. 17, 18: Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil. For, verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished.

“Think not”, says Jesus to His disciples, “that I came to destroy the law or the prophets.” That is as much as to say that they were thinking it, or at least were in danger of thinking it.⁶⁸ And that is as much as to say that He was recognized by them as the Messiah, and that He was speaking to them on the presupposition of His Messiahship, and of His Messianic mission. On the basis of such a prophecy as that on the New Covenant in Jer. xxxi. 31 ff.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ It is unreasonable for Johannes Weiss (p. 246) to say: “The error that Jesus came to destroy the law and the prophets was no doubt current in the time of the evangelist in certain circles, but cannot be proved for the life-time of Jesus, at least in the case of His disciples.” Harnack refutes Weiss on his own ground (pp. 19 f.): but no refutation is needed beyond the words themselves.

⁶⁹ Cf. F. Giesebrecht, *Com. on Jer.*, 1894, *in loc.*: “For Jeremiah, to whom it was a matter of course that the old covenant would not last forever, there can therefore lie in the future only a new covenant, as with Is. lv. 3; lix. 21, lx. 20, lxi. 8, and Ezek. xxxiv. 25, xxxvii, 26. The old covenant had proved its insufficiency by the people’s not keeping it and not being able to keep it. And since every good and perfect gift comes from above, God must for the future give the strength which the people lack for keeping the law, or else no stable, abiding relation between God and the people is ever possible. The requirement envisaging the people now in external letters must become one with the mind and will of man. . . . He has not yet attained to the conception of a ‘new heart’, Ezek. xi. 19, xxx. 2 ff.; Ps. li. 12, although he thinks of an inward influencing of the heart by divine power, so that it acquires a new attitude towards the content of the law.”

it was not unnatural to think of the Messiah as a new law-giver under whom "the old law should be annulled and a new spiritual law given in its stead".⁷⁰ This point of view, we know, existed among the later Jews,⁷¹ and could hardly fail to have its part to play in the Messianic conceptions of Jesus' time. That Jesus needed to guard His disciples against it was, thus, a matter of course,⁷² and it was most natural that He should take opportunity to do so after the great words in which He greeted them as the salt of the earth and the light of the world, and exhorted them to let their light so shine before men that their good works should be seen and their Father in heaven be glorified. In guarding them against it He declares, almost expressly following out the thought of Jeremiah's prediction with respect to the writing of the law on the heart (Jer. xxxi. 33), that He came not to abrogate but to perfect. Thus, in the most striking way possible, Jesus lays claim to the Messianic dignity.

Richness and force is given to Jesus' declaration, "I came not to destroy but to fulfil," by the absence of an expressed object. The object naturally taken over from the preceding clause is a double one, "the law or the prophets". The development in the subsequent verses deals only with the law. The statement itself stands in majestic generality. Jesus declares that His mission was not a destroying but a fulfilling one. In making this declaration, His mind was particularly engaged with the law, as the course of the subsequent discussion suggests; or rather with the Scriptures of the Old Covenant as a whole, thought of at the moment from the point of view of the righteousness which they inculcate, as the collocation of the "law" and the "prophets" in the preceding clause suggests. But His mind

⁷⁰ These words are quoted from A. F. Gfrörer, *Das Jahrhundert des Heils*, 1838, ii., p. 341.

⁷¹ See Gfrörer as cited, and especially the citation (p. 342) from the book Siphra on Levit. xxvi. 9.

⁷² H. A. W. Meyer states the matter excellently with respect to our passage.

is engaged with the law as an application⁷³ of the general principle asserted, rather than as exhausting its whole content. He presents Himself quite generally as not an abrogator but a perfecter.

The commentators are at odds with one another as to the exact meaning which should be assigned to the word "fulfil". Some insist that, in its application to the law, it means nothing but to do what the law commands: Theodor Zahn, for example, employing a lucid figure, describes the law—or more broadly the written Word—as an empty vessel which is fulfilled when it receives the content appropriate to it,—law in obedience, prophecy in occurrence.⁷⁴ Others urge that "to fulfil the law" means to fill the law out, to bring it to its full and perfect formulation:⁷⁵ Theophylact beautifully illustrates this idea by likening Jesus' action to that of a painter who does not abrogate the sketch which he completes into a picture. The generality of the expression surely requires us to assign to it its most inclusive meaning, and we do not see that Th. Keim can be far wrong when he expounds "to fulfil" as "to teach the law, to do it, and to impose it". It is clear enough from the subsequent context that when Jesus applied to the law His broad declaration that He had come not as an abrogator but as a fulfiller, He had in mind both the perfecting and the keeping of the law. In point of fact, He presents Himself both as the legislator developing the law into its fullest implications (verses 21 ff.), and as the administrator, securing full obedience to the law (verses 18-20). The two functions are fairly included in the one act spoken of by Jeremiah—whose prophecy we have seen reason to suppose underlay Jesus' remark—as writing the law on the heart. To write the law on the heart is at once to perfect it—to give it its most inclusive and most searching meaning—and to secure for it spontaneous and therefore perfect obedi-

⁷³ See Zahn's discussion here.

⁷⁴ P. 213f

⁷⁵ So H. A. W. Meyer, and A. H. McNeille.

ence. It is to obtain these two ends that Jesus declares that He came, when He represents His mission to be that of "fulfiller" with reference to the law.

Harnack, nevertheless, lays all the stress on the single element of legislation.⁷⁶ Jesus, he supposes, presents Himself here as law-giver; and what He declares, he paraphrases thus: "I came not to break, that is, to dissolve the law together with the prophets: I came not in general to dissolve but to consummate, that is, to make complete." He explains:

The exact opposite to *καταλύσαι* is to "establish", to "ratify". But Jesus intends to say something more than this. He is not satisfied, as Wellhausen finely remarks, with the positive but chooses the superlative. Not to ratify, that is to say, to establish (see Rom. iii. 31), is His intention, but to consummate. That could be done, with reference to the law, in a twofold manner, either by strengthening its authority, or by completing its contents. Since, however, the former cannot be thought of—because the law possesses divine authority—only the latter can be meant; and it is precisely this to which expression is given in verses 21-48. In this discourse the law is completed thus—that what "was said to them of old time" remains indeed in existence (*οὐ καταλύω*) but is completed by deeper and stricter commands which go to the bottom and direct themselves to the disposition, through which moreover it comes about that many definitions are supplanted by others. Those that are replaced do not appear, however, to be abrogated because the legislative intention of Jesus does not look upon the previous legislation as false but as incomplete, and completes it.

What is said here is not without its importance. Jesus does present Himself as a lawgiver come to perfect the law, by uncovering the depths of its meaning, and thus extending its manifest reach. How He, thus, as legislator brings the law to its perfection He shows in the specimen instances brought together in verses 21-48. But, saying this, we have said only half of what must be said. What Jesus is primarily concerned for here, is not the completer formulation of the law but its better keeping. And what He proclaims His mission fundamentally to be is less the perfecting of

⁷⁶ So also Wellhausen.

the law as a "doctrine" as Harnack puts it—"our verses [17-19] too are spoken by Him as *legislator*, that is, they contain a doctrine"—(although this too enters into His mission) than the perfecting of His disciples as righteous men (a thing which could not be done without the perfecting of the law as a "doctrine"). The immediately succeeding context of His proclamation of His mission as not one of destruction but of fulfilment, deals not with the formulation of the law but with its observance (verses 18-20).

"I came not", says Jesus, "to destroy but to fulfil,—*for*" And, then, with this "for", He immediately grounds His assertion in the further one that the whole law in all its details, down to its smallest minutiae, remains permanently in force and shall be obeyed. "For, verily I say unto you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one jot or one tittle shall pass away from the law until all [of them] be accomplished." This assertion is made with the utmost solemnity: "Verily, I say unto you"; and there are two elements in it neither of which should be allowed to obscure the other. On the one hand it is asserted with an emphasis which could not easily be made stronger, that the law in its smallest details remains in undiminished authority so long as the world lasts. Jesus has not come to abrogate the law—on the contrary the law will never be abrogated, not even in the slightest of its particulars—the dotting of an *i* or the crossing of a *t*—so long as the world endures. But Jesus does not content Himself with this "canonizing of the letter" as H. J. Holtzmann calls it, certainly without exaggeration. The law, remaining in all its details in undiminished authority, is, on the other hand, to be perfectly observed. Jesus declares that while the world lasts no jot or tittle of the law shall pass away—until they all, all the law's merest jots and tittles, shall be accomplished. He means to say not merely that they should be accomplished, but that they shall be accomplished. The words are very emphatic. The "all", standing in correlation with the "one" of the "one jot" and "one tittle", de-

clares that all the jots and all the tittles of the law shall be accomplished. Not one shall fail. The expression itself is equivalent to a declaration that a time shall come when in this detailed perfection, the law shall be observed. This amounts to a promise that the day shall surely come for which we pray when, in accordance with Jesus' instruction we ask, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done as in heaven so on earth". So far from coming to abrogate the law, He comes then to get the law kept; not merely to republish it, in all its reach, whether of the jots and tittles of its former publication, or of its most deeply cutting and widely reaching interpretation, but to reproduce it in actual lives, to write it on the hearts of men and in their actual living. "Therefore", He proceeds to tell His disciples (verses 19-20), the "breaking"⁷⁷ of one of the least of these—these jots and tittles of—commandments, and the teaching of men so, is no small matter for them. Their place in the kingdom of heaven depends on their faithfulness to the least of them; and unless their righteousness far surpasses that of the Scribes and Pharisees with all their, no doubt misplaced, strictness, they shall have no place in that kingdom at all.

In a word, we do not understand the nature of the mission which Jesus here ascribes to Himself until we clearly see that it finds its end in the perfecting of men. His purpose in coming is not accomplished in merely completing the law: it finds its fulfilment in bringing men completely to keep the completed law. If we speak of Him as legislator, then, we mean that He claims plenary authority with respect to the law. The law is His, and He uses it as an instrument in the accomplishment of His great end, the making of men righteous. He knows what is in the law, and He brings all its content out, with the most searching analysis. But this is but the beginning. He came to make this law, thus nobly expounded, the actual law of

⁷⁷ That λύση, verse 19, is "break", not "abrogate", the parallel ποιήση sufficiently shows.

human lives. Abrogate it? Nothing could be further from His purpose. He came rather to fulfil it, to work it out into its most wide-reaching applications, and to work it, thus worked-out, into men's lives. Those who are His disciples will not be behind the Scribes and Pharisees themselves in the perfection of their obedience to its very jots and tittles. But their righteousness will not be the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. The difference will be that their obedience will not be confined to these jots and tittles. In their lives there will be "accomplished" the whole law of God in its highest and profoundest meaning. Their lives will be a perfect transcript in act of the law of God, a perfect reflection of the will of God in life. It is for this that Jesus says that He "came". When this complete moralization of His disciples shall be accomplished; how, by what means, in what stages this perfect righteousness is to be made theirs; He does not tell us here. He tells us merely that He "came" to do this thing: so that His disciples shall be truly the salt of the earth which has not lost its savor, the light of the world which cannot be hid.

6

Mk. ii. 17: And when Jesus heard it, He saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous but sinners.

Mat. ix. 12-13: But when He heard it, He said, They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what this meaneth, I desire mercy and not sacrifice: for I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.

Lk. v. 31: And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole have no need of a physician but they that are sick. I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.

In the immediately preceding saying (Mat. v. 17), Jesus tells us that He came to make men righteous. In this He tells us what manner of men they are whom He came to make righteous. They are sinners. "I came not to call

righteous but sinners." The anarthrous terms throw the qualities of the opposing classes into strong relief. Of course Jesus means by these terms the really righteous and really sinful. This Harnack perceives. "The righteous", he rightly remarks, "are really, apart from all irony, the righteous; and the sinners are really the sinners; and Jesus says that His life-calling is not to call the one but the other." Here, says Harnack; is an immense paradox. "It is one of the greatest milestones in the history of religion", he declares; "for Jesus puts His call in contrast with all that had hitherto been considered the presupposition of religion." So Celsus, he adds, already saw; and that is the reason of his passion when he writes:⁷⁸

Those who invite to the solemnization of other mysteries make proclamation as follows: "He who has clean hands and an understanding tongue, come hither", or "He who is pure from all fault, and who is conscious in his soul of no sin, and who has led a noble and righteous life, come hither." This is what is proclaimed by those who promise expiation of sins! Let us hear, on the other hand, what kind of people the Christians invite: "Him who is a sinner, a fool, a simpleton, in a word an unfortunate—him will the Kingdom of God receive. By the sinner they mean the unjust, the thief, the burglar, the poisoner, the sacrilegious, the grave-robber. If one wished to recruit a robber band, it would be such people that he would collect.

The contrast here is very arresting and very instructive. But we can scarcely call it paradoxical to invite sinners to salvation—as Origen did not fail to remind Celsus. Paradox is already expressly excluded when Luke, in his record, adds the words, "to repentance". There is no paradox in calling not righteous but sinners—to repentance. Harnack, no doubt, asserts that this addition is "inappropriate". So little inappropriate is it, however, that it would necessarily be understood even if it were not expressed, and it is understood in the records of Matthew and Mark where it is not expressed. There can be no doubt that Jesus came preaching precisely repentance (Mk. i. 15, Mat. iv. 17): and when He says that He came to call not

⁷⁸ Origen, *Contra Celsum*, iii. 59.

righteous but sinners, it is clear that this was just because He was calling to repentance. All paradox, moreover, is already excluded by the preceding "parable" of which this declaration is the plain explanation: "They that are strong", says Jesus, "have no need of a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call righteous but sinners." If Jesus' mission is like that of a physician and its end is healing, how could it be directed to the strong? Just because He came to save, He came to call only sinners. "But", says Harnack, "we have no certainty that this saying stood originally in this context (see Wellhausen on the passage), nor that the saying of Jesus originally combined both clauses." And if it did (he contends),—it would not yield the idea of calling to repentance. For in that case, sin would be likened to sickness, and sickness requires healing not repentance. It is best, then, to take the simple words, "I came not to call righteous but sinners" by themselves. They need no presupposition to be supplied by the preceding "parable": "they stand on their own feet with equal surety". This is obviously special pleading. Harnack does not desire the qualifications provided by the context, and therefore will have no context. Meanwhile, it is clear that Jesus who came preaching the Gospel of God, and crying Repent! (Mk. i. 15, Mat. iv. 17)—to preach which Gospel He declares that He "was sent", (Lk. iv. 43)—very naturally represents that His mission is not to righteous but sinners; and equally naturally likens His work to that of a physician who deals not with well people but with the sick. He does not mean by this to say that sin is merely a sickness and that sinners must therefore be dealt with in the unmixed tenderness of a healer of diseases; but that the terms of His mission like those of a physician cast His lot with the derelicts of the world. He has come to call sinners, and where would men expect to find Him except with sinners?

When Jesus declares, "I came not to call righteous but sinners", then, He uses the words "righteous" and "sin-

ners" in all seriousness, in their literal senses. By "righteous", He does not mean the Pharisees; nor by "sinners" the Publicans. Nevertheless it is clear that He so far takes His start from the Pharisaic point of view that He accepts its estimate of His table-companions as sinners. He does not deny that those with whom He ate were sinners.⁷⁹ His defence is not that they were miscalled sinners, but that His place was with sinners, whom He came to call.⁸⁰ Similarly His employment of the term "righteous" may not be free from a slight infusion of ironic reference to the Pharisees, who, by their question, contrasted themselves with the others and thus certainly ranked themselves with those "which trusted in themselves that they were righteous and set the rest at nought" (Lk. xviii. 9). His saying would at least raise in their own minds the question where they came in; and thus would act as a probe to enable them to "come to themselves" and to form a juster estimate of themselves. That such a probing of their consciences was within the intention of Jesus, is made clear by a clause in His declaration, preserved only by Matthew, interposed between the "parable" of the physician and the plain statement of the nature of His mission: "But go and learn what this meaneth, I desire mercy and not sacrifice" (Mat. ix. 13).⁸¹ He is as far as possible from implying, therefore, that the Pharisees were well and had no need of His curative ministrations. He rather subtly suggests to them (and perhaps with

⁷⁹ Cf. H. A. W. Meyer on Mat. ix. 10: "Observe that Jesus Himself by no means denies the *πονηρὸν εἶναι* in regard to those associated with Him at table, ver. 12 f. They were truly diseased ones, sinners."

⁸⁰ Cf. Johannes Weiss (p. 167): "The answer which He gives to the criticism of the Scribes neither provides a complete analysis of His motives nor wholly reveals what He holds as to the publicans and sinners. He justifies His conduct only by an immediately obvious reason against which there is nothing to adduce: 'The strong have no need of a physician, but the sick' . . . He goes to those who need help and where He can help."

⁸¹ Cf. H. A. W. Meyer *in loc.*: "Through that quotation from the Scriptures . . . it is intended to make the Pharisees understand how much they too were sinners."

Hos. vi. 6 in mind we would better not say so subtly either) that they deceived themselves if they fancied that to be the case. In thus intimating that the Pharisees were themselves sinners, He intimates that there were none righteous. A. Jülicher, it is true, vigorously asserts the contrary,⁸² and insists that the "righteous" must be as actually existing a class of men as "sinners": and A. Loisy follows him in this. Jesus, looking out upon mankind, saw that some were righteous and some sinners. With the righteous, He had nothing to do; they needed no saving. It was to the sinners only that He had a mission; and His mission to them was, as Luke is perfectly right in adding, to call them to repentance. There were many who needed no repentance (Lk. xv. 2), but no sinner can be saved without repentance, and Luke's motive in adding "to repentance" is to make this clear and thus to guard against Jesus' call of sinners being taken in too broad, not to say too loose, a sense. This, however, is quite inconsistent with the whole drift of the narrative. Jesus is not separating mankind into two classes and declaring that His mission is confined to one of these classes. He is contemplating men from two points of view and declaring that His mission presupposes the one point of view rather than the other. Reprobation of Him had been expressed, because He associated with publicans and sinners. He does not pursue the question of the justice of the concrete contrast—though, as we have seen, not failing to drop hints even of it. He responds simply, "That is natural, I came on a mission not to righteous men but to sinners." The question whether any righteous men actually existed is not raised.⁸³ The point is that His mission is to sinners, and that it ought to occasion no surprise, therefore, that He is found with sinners.⁸⁴

⁸² *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu*, ii., pp. 175, 322.

⁸³ So far rightly, H. H. Wendt, *The Teaching of Jesus*, E. T., vol. ii., p. 51: "In these words He left quite untouched the question whether they were truly righteous in this sense."

⁸⁴ Cf. J. A. Alexander: "The distinction which He draws is not between two classes of men, but between two characters or conditions of the whole race."

What Jesus does in this saying, therefore, is to present Himself as the Saviour of sinners.⁸⁵ He came to call sinners; He is the physician who brings healing to sick souls. He does not tell us how He saves sinners. He speaks only of "calling them", of calling them "to repentance". From this we may learn that an awakened sense of wrong-doing, and a "change of heart", issuing in a changed life, enter into the effects of their "calling",—that, in a word, it issues in a transformed mind and life. But nothing is told us of the forces brought to bear on sinners to bring about these results. Meanwhile Jesus declares explicitly that His mission in the world was to "call sinners". That was no doubt implicit in all the definitions of this mission which have heretofore come before us. It is here openly proclaimed. Harnack says this saying is not Messianic, "because", he explains, "it has nothing to do with the Judgment or the Kingdom". When He who came to announce the Kingdom of God, calling on men to repent, called sinners to repentance,—had that nothing to do with the Kingdom? A "call to repentance"—has that not the Judgment in view? Who in any case is the Saviour of Sinners if not the Messiah? And who but the Messiah could proclaim with majestic brevity, "I came not to call righteous but sinners"?

7

Lk. xix. 10:—For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost.

This saying is very much a repetition of the immediately preceding one in more searching language. Harnack himself points out the closeness of their relation. "This saying, says he, "in the best way completes that one, with which it is intimately connected; the 'sinners' are the 'lost', but in

⁸⁵ J. Weiss will not allow that Jesus spoke more than the "parable" of the physician; but he recognizes that the Evangelist, by the main saying he puts into Jesus' mouth reflects the belief of the community that Jesus is the Saviour of sinners: "All those called into the community, felt themselves saved sinners, and in the retrospect of the whole work of Jesus, He appears as the savior of sinners. Cf. Lk. xix. 10."

being 'called' they are 'saved.'" The expressive language of the present saying is derived from the great Messianic prophecy of Ezek. xxxiv. 11 ff., which Jesus has taken up and applies to Himself and His mission. Harnack is thoroughly justified, therefore, in saying: "What is most important about this saying, along with its contents, is that Jesus claims for Himself the work which God proclaimed through the prophets as His own future work." The whole figurative background of the saying, and its peculiarities of language as well, are taken from Ezekiel. "Thus saith the Lord Jehovah", we read there: "Behold I myself, even I, will search for my sheep, and will seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered abroad, so will I seek out my sheep and I will deliver them . . . I will seek that which was lost, and will bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up all that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick. . . ." Jesus obviously means to say that He came like this shepherd, with the particular task laid upon Him to seek and to save what was lost. Because the statement is introduced as the reason, we might almost say the justification, of His saving that "sinful man", Zacchaeus, the word "came" is put prominently forward,⁸⁶ with the effect of declaring with great emphasis that it was the very purpose of Jesus' "coming" "to seek and to save that which is lost". Here too Harnack's observations are just:

Ἡλθεῖν is given the first place here with emphasis. Thus it is made very clear that the salvation of what is lost (see Mat. x. 6, xv. 24; Lk. xv. 6, 9, 32) is the main purpose of Jesus' coming. What appears often in the parables and in separate sayings, is here collected into a general declaration, which elevates the saving activity of Jesus above all that is accidental. He Himself testifies that it is His proper work.

The term "lost" here is a neuter singular, used collectively.⁸⁷ It is simply taken over in this form from Ezek.

⁸⁶ Cf. H. A. W. Meyer: "ἦλθε; emphatically placed first."

⁸⁷ Cf. the similar use of the collective neuter in Jno. vi. 37, xvii. 2.24.

xxxiv. 16, where Jehovah declares: "I will seek that which was lost."⁸⁸ In explaining His saving of Zacchæus, Jesus assigns him to the class to seek and save which He declares to be His particular mission. Precisely what He meant by speaking of the objects of His saving actively as "lost" has been made the subject of some discussion. Hermann Cremer, for example, wishes us to bear in mind that "lost sheep" may always be found again; that they exist, so to speak for the purpose of being found. And A. B. Bruce, taking up this notion, even reduces the idea of "the lost" to that of "the neglected", and invites us to think of Jesus' mission as directed to "the neglected classes".⁸⁹ Such minimizing interpretations are not only wholly without support in the usage of the terms, and in the demands of the passages in which they occur. They are derogatory to the mission which Jesus declares that He came to execute. He speaks of His mission in tones of great impressiveness, as involving supremely great accomplishments. Obviously "the lost" which He declares that He came to seek and to save were not merely neglected people but veritably lost people, lost beyond retrieval save only as He not merely sought them but in some great sense saved them. The solemnity with which Jesus speaks of having come as the Saviour of "the lost" will not permit us to think lightly of their condition, which necessarily carries with it thinking lightly also of His mission and achievement.

⁸⁸ Harnack therefore remarks that Wellhausen rightly supplies "sheep", translating: "For the Son of man came to seek and save das verlorene Schaf." Is the employment of the singular, "Schaf", here accurate? Wellhausen can scarcely intend it to apply to Zacchæus as the example of a class.

⁸⁹ *The Kingdom of God*, p. 138. Bruce allows that the middle voice of the verb ἀπόλλυμι sometimes imports "irretrievable predition", but he will allow no such connotation to "the neuter participle τὸ ἀπολωλός." The neuter participle τὸ ἀπολωλός is found in the absolute sense of the "the lost", however, only in Lk. xix. 10. The participle occurs, however, as a qualifier of substantives in Lk. xv. 4, 6, 24, 32, Mat. x. 6, xv. 24. These are all the passages which Bruce has to go on: they obviously do not sustain his contention.

The solemnity of this declaration is much enhanced by Jesus' designation of Himself in it by the great title of "the Son of Man." He does not say here simply, as in the sayings we have heretofore had before us, "I came", or "I was sent", but, speaking of Himself in the third person, "The Son of Man came." By thus designating Himself He does far more than explicitly declare Himself the Messiah and His mission the Messianic mission, thus justifying His adoption of Ezekiel's language to describe it. He declares Himself the transcendent Messiah, and in so doing declares His mission, to put it shortly, a divine work, not merely in the sense that it was prosecuted under the divine appointment, but in the further sense that it was executed by a divine agent. Great pregnancy is at once imparted to the simple verb "came" by giving it the transcendent Son of Man for its subject. To say "I came" may mean nothing more than a claim to divine appointment. But to say, "the Son of Man came" transports the mind back into the pre-temporal, heavenly existence of the Son of Man and conveys the idea of His voluntary descent to earth. We recall here the language of Mk. i. 38, and see that intimation that Jesus thought of His work on earth as a mission of a visitant from a higher sphere, raised into the position of an explicit assertion. We perceive that Jesus is employing a high solemnity of utterance which necessarily imparts to every word of His declaration its deepest significance. The terms "lost", "saved" must be read in their most pregnant sense. Jesus represents those whom He came to seek and save as "lost"; but He declares that the Son of Man who came from heaven for the purpose has power to "save" them. The stress lies on the greatness of the agent, which carries with it the greatness of the achievement, and that in turn carries with it the hopelessness, apart from this achievement by this agent, of the condition of the "lost". It is with the fullest meaning that Jesus represents Himself here as the Saviour of the lost.

If Jesus represents Himself here as the Saviour of the

lost, however, does He not represent Himself as the Saviour of the lost of Israel only? We have heard Him in a previous saying, with the same passage from Ezekiel lying in the background, declaring, "I was not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Mat. xv. 24). Is not salvation here similarly declared to have been brought by Him to Zacchaeus' house only because Zacchaeus too was a son of Abraham?⁹⁰ Jesus is speaking, primarily, of course, of His own personal ministry, which was strictly confined to Israel.⁹¹ It was in the prosecution of His personal ministry to Israel that He came to Zacchaeus' house, bringing salvation. When He justifies doing this by appealing to the terms of His mission as the Saviour of the lost, He naturally has primary reference to the salvation of Zacchaeus, that Son of Abraham, and may be said by the "lost" to mean, in the first instance, such as he. Must we understand Him as having the lost specifically of Israel therefor exclusively in view? The evangelist who has recorded these words for us certainly did not so understand them. They are in themselves quite general. The Gentiles too are sinners, and are comprehended too under the word "lost". However they may have lain outside the scope of Jesus' personal ministry, they did not lie beyond the horizon of His saving purpose.⁹² If we cannot quite say that He tells us here that His mission of salvation extends to them also,

⁹⁰ Cf. the language of Lk. xiii. 16. We cannot take the words in a spiritual sense, even with the modification suggested by Holtzmann and Plummer who combine the two senses.

⁹¹ Cf. Zahn p. 623, note 73: "According to the whole evangelical tradition, Jesus repeatedly indeed visited localities with a preponderant heathen population, and even worked some healings there (cf. Lk. viii. 27-39, Mat. xv. 26-28, xv. 29-39, and see *Commentary on Matthew*,³ pp. 531 ff.), but He never preached to the heathen or even once entered a heathen's house (cf. Lk. vii. 2-10, Jno. vii. 35, xix, 20-32, and see *Commentary on John*,³ pp. 391f. 511, 518)."

⁹² Cf. in Luke, iii. 5,6; iv. 24 ff.; xiii. 18-21, 29; xiv. 22f.; xx. 16; xxiv. 47. See above in Mat. xv. 24. On the universalism of Luke, cf. Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. iii, pp. 172 f. On the universalism of Jesus, cf. F. Spitta, *Jesus und die Heidenmission*, 1909, and the article "Missions" in Hastings' *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*.

we need not contend that He tells us that it does not. The declaration has, in point of fact, nothing to say of the extension of His mission. It absorbs itself in the definition of its intensive nature. It is a mission of salvation. It is a mission to the "lost". Jesus in it declares that the explicit purpose of His coming was to save the lost. This is the great message which this saying brings us.

8

Mk. x. 45: For verily the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.

Mat. xx. 28: Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.

Although Harnack too includes this saying among Jesus' testimonies to the purpose of His "coming", he nevertheless, expresses grave doubt of its authenticity; and this doubt passes, with respect to the latter member of it, into decisive rejection. The grounds on which he bases this doubt and rejection are three.⁹³ The saying is not recorded in Lk. xxii., 24-34, a passage which Harnack chuses to consider another and older form of the tradition reproduced in Mat. xx. 20-28 = Mk. x. 35-45. The transition from "ministering" to "giving the life as a ransom", Harnack represents as, although not unendurable, yet unexpected and hard: "ministry" is the act of a servant and no servant is in a position to ransom others. Nowhere else, except in the words spoken at the Last Supper, is there preserved in the oldest tradition an announcement by Jesus that

⁹³In these criticisms Harnack pretty closely follows Wellhausen, *Das Evangelium Marci*, 1903, p. 91: "The ἀπολύτρωσις through the death of Jesus intrudes into the Gospel only here: immediately before, He did not die *for* others and in their stead, but He died *before* them that they might die afterwards. The words καὶ δοῦναι κτλ. are lacking in Lk. xxii. 27. They do not in fact fit in with διακονῆσαι, for that means 'wait at table' as the third and fourth evangelists rightly understand. The passage from serving to giving life as a ransom is a μετὰβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος. It is explained by the service at the Lord's Supper, where Jesus administers His flesh and blood with bread and wine." Wellhausen is an adept at this sort of carping, surface verbal criticism.

He was to give His life instead of others.⁹⁴ As these reasons bear chiefly upon the latter portion of the saying, Harnack contents himself with rejecting it, and allows to Jesus the former half, which commends itself to him, moreover, by its paradoxical form and the pithiness of its contents. The statement of these grounds of doubt is their sufficient refutation. There is no reason to suppose that the incident recorded in Lk. xxii., 24-36 is the same as that recorded in Mat. xx. 20-28 = Mk. x. 35-45. The differences are decisive.⁹⁵ Jesus does not represent the giving of one's life as a ransom for others as a servant's function, or even ascribe the act to a servant. He represents the giving of one's life as a ransom for others as a supreme act of service for one, not Himself a servant, to render when He gave Himself to service to the uttermost. Harnack Himself allows that in one other saying, at least, Jesus does represent His death as offered for others, and, indeed, in a subsequent passage, himself extracts all the probative force from this objection, by pointing out that no presumption can lie against Jesus' expressing Himself concerning His death as He is here reported as doing (p. 26) :

Whether Jesus Himself expressly included in the service which He performed, the giving of His life as a ransom for many, we must leave an open question; but the matter is not of so much importance as is commonly supposed. If His eye was always fixed upon His death (and the zealous effort to throw this into doubt is, considering the situation in which He ordinarily stood, simply whimsical) and knew Himself as the good shepherd,

⁹⁴ Johannes Weiss, *Die Schriften*, etc.¹ I. p. 161, tells us that the grounds on which recent criticism denies the saying to Jesus are these three—which may be compared with Harnack's: "First, the entire life-activity of the Lord is here reviewed ('He came'); secondly, the term 'ransom' and the whole series of conceptions opened up by it, do not occur elsewhere in Jesus' preaching; and thirdly, the parallel declaration from the Discourse-Source, Lk. xxii. 27, contains nothing of the redemptive death." That is to say, in brief, Jesus cannot have said what He is here reported to have said, because He is not reported to have said it often.

⁹⁵ Cf. G. Hollmann, *Die Bedeutung des Todes Jesu* and Runze as there quoted.

John has only said the most natural thing in the world when he puts on Jesus' lips the declaration that the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep. Whether Jesus really said it, whether He, in another turn of phrase, represented His life as a thing of value for the ransoming of others, is not to be certainly determined; but if He designated His life in general as "service" then His death is properly included in it, for the highest service is—so it has been and so it will remain—the giving of the life.⁹⁶

The case being so; it is surely unreasonable to deny to Jesus words credibly reported from His lips in which He declares that His ministry culminated in the giving of His life for others, merely because He is not reported as having frequently made this great declaration.⁹⁷

There is the less reason for doubting that we have before us here an authentic saying of Jesus', because it was eminently natural and to be expected that Jesus, at this stage of His ministry, when describing the nature of His mission, should not pause until He had intimated the place of His death in it. According to the representation of all the evangelists, it was characteristic of this period of His ministry that He spoke much and very insistently of the death which He should accomplish at Jerusalem, and of the indispensableness of this death for the fulfilment of His

⁹⁶ Somewhat similarly, Johannes Weiss, who denies Mk. x. 45, Mk. xx. 28, to Jesus but allows to Him Lk. xxii. 27, writes (*Die Schriften*¹, vol. I, pp. 161-2): "It is, however, of course not inconceivable that Jesus should have included also His approaching death in this work of service and love. It is even probable that He was of the conviction that His death would somehow accrue to the advantage of the men for whom He had labored in word and deed. But whether He thought directly of a sacrificial death, or of a vicarious punishment, such as is described by Isaiah in the Fifty-third chapter,—that must remain doubtful, Cf. ix. 24." Why—when He certainly knew Isaiah liii, certainly applied it to Himself, and is credibly reported to have spoken of His death as a sacrificial offering (Mk. xiv. 24) and as a vicarious punishment (Mk. x. 45)? The discussion by H. J. Holtzmann, *Synopt.*³, p. 160 is notable from the same point of view.

⁹⁷ It is purely arbitrary for Harnack to add in a note: "If the declaration," as to giving His life as a ransom, "comes from Jesus, we have at least no guaranty that it was spoken in connection with the *διακονεῖν* and was introduced by *ἡλθον*." There is no justification in any legitimate method of criticism for thus rending unitary sayings into fragments and dealing with each clause as a separate entity.

task. "From that time", says Matthew, marking the beginning of a period, "began Jesus to show unto His disciples, how that He must go unto Jerusalem . . . and be killed."⁹⁸ His insistence upon this teaching during this period is marked by all the evangelists again and again,⁹⁹ and it was immediately after the third of these insistences which have been recorded for us that the incident is introduced by Matthew and Mark which occasioned the declaration before us. Jesus' preoccupation with His death is strikingly betrayed by His allusion to it even in His response to the ambitious request of James and John, and that in such a manner as to show that it held, in His view, an indispensable place in His work.¹⁰⁰ It would have been unnatural, if when, in the sequel to this incident, He came to reveal to His disciples the innermost nature of His mission as one of self-sacrificing devotion, He had made no allusion whatever to the death in which it culminated, and the indispensableness of which to its accomplishment He was at the time earnestly engaged in impressing upon them.

The naturalness, not to say inevitableness, of an allusion to His death in this saying has not prevented some expositors, it is true, from attempting violently to explain away the open allusion which is made to it.¹⁰¹ Thus, for example, Ernest D. Burton¹⁰² wishes us to believe that "to give His life" means not "to die" but "to live",—"to devote His life-energies"—and that Jesus here without direct reference to His death is only exhorting His followers to devote their lives without reserve to the service of their fellows. In support of this desperate contention, he urges that he has not been able to find elsewhere the exact phrase, "to give

⁹⁸ Mat. xvi. 21; cf. Mk. viii. 31; Lk. ix. 22.

⁹⁹ Mat. xvii. 22f, Mk. ix. 30f, Lk. ix. 43ff; Mat. xx. 17ff, Mk. x. 32ff, Lk. viii. 31ff.

¹⁰⁰ Mat. xx. 22, Mk. x. 38.

¹⁰¹ Not Harnack, whose phrase: "The announcement that Jesus gave His life as a *λύτρον* for others, that is to say, was to die for all" . . . indicates his conception of the meaning of the words.

¹⁰² *Biblical Ideas of Atonement*, 1909, pp. 114ff.

life", used as a synonym of "to die".¹⁰³ It does not seem very difficult to find;¹⁰⁴ but in any event Burton might have remembered that this phrase is not so much used here as the synonym of "to die", as the wider phrase "to give His life a ransom for" is used as a synonym for "to die instead of".¹⁰⁵ In other words, the employment of the term "to give" is determined here by the idea of a ransom—which is a thing given, whether it be money or blood—and not by the idea of dying.¹⁰⁶ Its employment carries with it, indeed, the implication that Jesus' death was a voluntary act—He gave it; but the thought is not completed until the purpose for which He gave it is declared—He gave it as a ransom.

In this context, the saying occurs as an enforcement of Jesus' exhortation to His disciples to seek their greatness

¹⁰³ He finds the phrase "give your lives" in the exhortations of Matthias to his sons, 1 Macc. ii. 50 f.; but he supposes it to mean there, "to devote your life energies", an interpretation which did not suggest itself to Josephus, *Antt.* xii. 6. 3, Niese iii. pp. 120 f. (cf. Sirach xxix. 15, and, with *παρδίδωμι*, Acts xv. 26, Hermas, *Sim.*, ix. 28.2; Just. *Apol.* I, 50 from Is. 53, 12).

¹⁰⁴ See preceding note, and also cf. Ex. xxi. 23: *δώσει ψυχὴν ἀντὶ ψυχῆς*. A. Seeberg, *Der Tod Christi*, etc., 1895, p. 350, says: "The words *δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν* refer in any case to death, for this formula which corresponds to the Hebrew *שָׂרַף לְמָוֶת* occurs frequently in the sense of the surrender of the life in death." In a note he cites Ex. xxi. 23, 1 Macc. ii. 55, Sr. xxix. 15, with other less close parallels. There can be no doubt that "to give His life" means to Clement of Alexandria, for instance, *Paed.* I, ix, somewhat past the middle, simply to die.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Th. Zahn, *Das Ev. d. Matthaeus*,¹ 1903, p. 604, ed. 3, 1910, p. 611: "The greatest service, however, will be done by Him only in the gift of His life. No doubt this is not said clearly by *δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ* by itself; *δοῦναι* rather finds its necessary supplement only in the object-predicate *λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν*. But just this action described so figuratively, can take place only in a voluntary endurance of death; for no one can give a purchase-price for another without in doing so depriving himself of it."

¹⁰⁶ Cf. H. A. W. Meyer, on Mat. xx. 28 (E. T. II, p. 51): "*δοῦναι* is made choice of, because the *ψυχὴ* (the soul, as the principle of the life of the body) is conceived of as a *λύτρον* (a ransom)." Note Josephus, *Antt.* xiv. 7.1: *λύτρον ἀντὶ πάντων ἔδοκεν*, and cf. LXX Ex. xxi. 50, xxx. 12.

in service. He adduces His own example. "For even the Son of Man", He says, "came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." To enhance His example He designates Himself by the transcendent title, "The Son of Man."¹⁰⁷ If any, the Son of Man might expect "to be ministered unto" in His sojourn on earth. In His sojourn on earth—for, when we say "Son of Man" we intimate that His earthly life is a sojourn. The eye fixes itself at once on a heavenly origin and a heavenly issue; and we necessarily think of pomp and glory. If even the Son of Man "came" not to be ministered unto but to minister, what shall we say of the proper life-ideal for others? Jesus is not speaking of the manner of His daily life on earth when He speaks here of "coming" to serve. The manner of His daily life on earth was not that of a servant. He lived among His followers as their Master and Lord, claiming their obedience and receiving their reverence.¹⁰⁸ He did not scruple to accept from others or to apply to Himself titles of the highest, even of super-human, dignity. In this very saying He speaks of Himself by a title which assigns to Him a transcendent being. It was not the manner of His earthly life but the mere fact of this earthly life for Him, which He speaks of as a servile mission. That He was on earth at all; that He, the heavenly one, demeaned Himself to a life in the world; this was what required explanation. And the explanation was, service.

This was not news to His followers. He is not informing them of something hitherto unimagined by them. He is reminding them of a great fact concerning Himself

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Harnack (p. 10): "That Jesus says here, not 'I' but 'the Son of Man' is explained from the contents of the saying, which acquires force from Jesus' laying claim at the same time to the (future) Messianic dignity." This is saying too little and it says it with a wrong implication, but it allows the main matter. Jesus' use of "the Son of Man" here plays the same part that Paul's phrase "being in the form of God" plays in Phil. ii. 5.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. the striking presentation of the facts here by Zahn, *Matthew*, p. 603.

which, He intimates, it were well for them to bear in mind. He "came", not to exercise the lordship which belongs naturally to a great one like Himself, but to perform a service. What the service which He came to perform was, and how He performs it He tells us by mentioning a single item, but that single item one lying so much at the center that it is in effect the whole story. "To minister *and* to give His life a ransom" are not presented as two separate things. They are one thing presented in general and in particular. The "and" is not merely copulative; it is intensive,¹⁰⁹ and may almost be read expegetically: "The Son of Man came to minister, *namely* to give His life a ransom."¹¹⁰ It is in "to give His life a ransom" that the declaration culminates; on it that it rests; through it that it conveys its real meaning. For this is the wonderful thing of which Jesus reminds His followers, to compose their ambitious rivalries—that He, the Son of Man, came unto the world to die. Dying was the service by way of eminence which He came to perform. Dying in the stead of others who themselves deserved to die¹¹¹—that they need not die. We do not catch the drift of this great saying until we perceive that all its emphasis gathers itself up upon the declaration that Jesus came into the world just to die as a ransom.

The mode in which the service which Jesus came to render to others is performed is described here, then, in the phrase, "to give His life a ransom for many." It would be difficult to make the language more precise. Jesus declares that He came to die; to die voluntarily; to die voluntarily in order that His death may serve a particular pur-

¹⁰⁹ Cf. H. A. W. Meyer: "intensive: adding on the *highest act*, the culminating point in the *διακονῆσαι*."

¹¹⁰ Cf. Seeberg, p. 368: "Jesus became man, in order as Messiah, to give His life in death, for of course the words *δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν* give the content of *διακονῆσαι*."

¹¹¹ Whoever the "many" are, they certainly include the "sinners" whom He "came to call" (Mk. iii. 17, Mat. ix. 13, Lk. v. 327) and "the lost" whom "He came to seek and save" (Lk. xix. 10). For these "sinners" and "lost" He came to give His life a ransom. This is the way He saves them.

pose. This particular purpose He describes as a "ransom"; and the idea of a "ransom" is explicated by adding that, in thus giving His life as a ransom, His given life, His death, is set over against others in a relation of equivalence, takes their place and serves their need and so releases them.¹¹²

It is always possible to assign to each word in turn in a statement like this the least definite or the most attenuated meaning which is ever attached to it in its varied literary applications, and thus to reduce the statement as a whole literally to insignificance. Thus Jesus' strong and precise assertion that He came into the world in order to give His life as a ransom-price for the deliverance of many has been transmuted into the expression of a dawning recognition by Him that His death had become inevitable and of a more or less strong hope, or expectation, that it might not be quite a fatal blow to His wish to be of use, but might in some way or to some extent prove of advantage to His followers.¹¹³ According to H. H. Wendt,¹¹⁴ for example,

¹¹² Cf. H. A. W. Meyer on Mat. xx. 28: "ἀντί denotes *substitution*. That which is given as a *ransom* takes the *place* (is given *instead*) of those who are to be set free in consideration thereof." The "meaning is strictly and specifically defined by λύτρον (לִּפְדוּת) according to which ἀντί can only be understood in the sense of *substitution*, the act by which the ransom is presented as an equivalent to secure the deliverance of those on whose behalf it is paid." In the *κοινή*, ἀντί seems to be going out of use. Instead of it ὑπέρ is employed (L. Rademacher, *N. T. Grammatik*, 1911, pp. 115-116). It must therefore be held to be fully intended when used.

¹¹³ Cf. C. G. Montefiori, vol. I, p. 260: "Moreover Jesus may just conceivably have realized that His death would be to the advantage of many; that many would enter the Kingdom as the effect of His death. Menzies takes this view. He thinks 'Jesus became reconciled to the prospect of death when He saw that He had to die for the benefit of others'. This is a possible view, though I think it an unlikely one. It is rebutted by Pfeleiderer, *Urchristentum*, I, p. 372. Holtzmann thinks that λύτρον here is a translation of an Aramaic word which may merely mean 'deliverance'. Jesus 'delivered' people by causing them to repent . . ." "Holtzmann" at the end of this extract is a misprint for "Hollmann": see G. Hollmann, *Die Bedeutung des Todes Jesu*, 1901, pp. 124f: "The following is then to be summarily derived from our passage: (1) that Jesus' death stands on the same plane with Jesus' life-work; (2) (negatively) that it

Jesus makes no reference whatever here to the "ransoming" of individual souls from the guilt and punishment of sin: "it is more correct to say that Jesus meant the bringing about of the salvation of the Messianic end-time in a wholly general sense".

Because He now, as death threatened Him for His works' sake, was determined rather to give His life up than be untrue to the vocation imposed on Him by God (Jno. x. 13-18); and because in strong trust in God, He was assured that His death would work out not for the destruction but for the furthering of His work; He could designate His yielding up of His life a "ransom", that is a means for bringing about the Messianic "liberation" for all those who would permit themselves to be led by Him to the Messianic salvation.

According to Friedrich Niebergall,¹¹⁵ on the other hand, there is no objective reference in the allusion to a ransom: "the figure is doubtless here only an expression for the religious impression that by Christ's death we are liberated from evil Powers". In a similar vein Johannes Weiss says:¹¹⁶

When Mark wrote this declaration it was immediately intelligible to all his readers. For their religious life was governed by the fundamental feeling that they were liberated from the dominion of the devil and the demons (*cf.* 1 Cor. xii. 2, Gal. iv. 8) and therewith delivered from the terrible destruction which impended over the kingdom of sin at the end of the ages.

Questions, such as have been raised by the dogmaticians, as to the meaning of the saying "will no longer occupy us", says Weiss, "if we keep the main idea in mind, that the immediate liberation from the dominion of demonic tyrants which was felt directly by the ancient Christians

prevents many souls from falling into destruction; (3) (positively) that it brings many hitherto unbelieving to salvation. There can be added as most probable that (4) their salvation lies in the operation of *μετανοια*."

¹¹⁴ *System der Christl. Lehre*, pp. 308ff, 323.

¹¹⁵ Lietzmann's *Handbuch zum N. T.*, v., 1909, pp. 102 f.

¹¹⁶ *Die Schriften*, etc.¹ vol. I, p. 161. He speaks of the statement as Mark's, not Jesus'. *Cf.* W. Beyschlag, *Leben Jesu*, vol. I, p. 356: a deliverance "from the dark powers which hold men morally in bondage."

was a mark of the ministering love of the Christ who gave His life for them."

Comments like these merely lead away from the simple, penetrating declaration of Jesus, the meaning of which is perfectly clear in itself,¹¹⁷ and is further fixed by the testimony of His followers. For Jesus' declaration did not fall fruitless to the ground: it finds an echo in the teaching of His followers, and in this echo we can hear His own tones sounding.¹¹⁸ It marks the very extremity of perverseness, when an attempt is made to reverse the relation of this key-declaration and its echoes in the apostolical writings, explaining it as rather an echo of them. How this is managed may be read briefly in, say, H. J. Holtzmann's comment on Mk. x. 45.

The thought of the Discourse-Source, Lk. xxii. 27, is so expressed here in Paulinizing form (*cf.* Ro. xv. 3) that Jesus also is represented as having found His vocation only in service (Phil. ii. 7, 1 Cor. ix. 19), and as having yielded up His life in that service (Phil. ii. 8). . . . While, however, the disciple can only "lose" his life in the service of his Lord (Mk. viii. 36 = Mat. x. 39, xvi. 25 = Lk. ix. 24, xvii. 33), it is the part of the Lord to give it voluntarily, according to Gal. i. 4, ii. 20. Especially, however, the "give His life a ransom for many" corresponds to the "who gave Himself a ransom for all" of 1 Tim. ii. 6 and the "He gave Himself for us that He might ransom us" of Titus ii. 14, that is, the idea of Jesus is glossed by a reminiscence of the Pauline doctrine of redemption.

Perverse as this is, it at least fixes the sense of Jesus' declaration. The attempt to represent it as a reminiscence of the Pauline doctrine of redemption shows at any rate that it is identical with the Pauline doctrine of redemption.

It lies in the nature of the case that a brief saying, consisting of only two short clauses, made, moreover, not for itself but in order to enforce an exhortation to conduct becoming in followers of Jesus, should not tell us all we

¹¹⁷ We content ourselves with referring here to the excellent remarks of James Denny, *The Death of Christ*, 1903, pp. 36ff, cap. pp. 42ff.

¹¹⁸ *Cf.* Zahn, p. 605, note 90: "The conception of the redemption (*redemptio*) wrought by Jesus and especially by His death, would not recur everywhere in the New Testament, if it did not go back to Jesus Himself." Zahn then cites the details.

should like to know of the great matter which it thus allusively brings before us. Many questions arise for guidance on which we must look elsewhere. Fortunately answers to some of them are supplied by the sayings which have already engaged our attention. We can scarcely refuse to correlate Jesus' testimony in them, for example, that He came "to call sinners", that He came "to save the lost" with His testimony here that He came to do many a service,—above all, this service, by His death to ransom them. Undoubtedly the giving of His life as a ransom is the manner in which He saves the lost. And undoubtedly by the "lost" are meant just "sinners", and by "sinners" in turn are meant those who are not "righteous", that is to say the guilt-laden.¹¹⁹ What we have here, then, is a declaration by Jesus that He came to save lost sinners by giving His life a ransom for them. The effect, called in a former saying "salvation", is clearly in the first instance relief from the penalties due to their sin: He purchases lost sinners out of the obligations which they have incurred by their sin, by giving His life a ransom for them. That is as far perhaps as our particular saying will carry us. Others of the sayings which have come before us, however, carry us further. They tell us that Jesus secures for lost sinners also perfected righteousness of life—and perhaps something like that is after all suggested in this saying also, for it too has to do with conduct. His disciples are exhorted to follow Jesus' example, and it is implied that His example is a perfect one. The ransom-paying certainly lies at the bottom of all and of that alone is there explicit mention. But there is a call to perfection of life too: and not a call to it merely, but a provision for it. In a word there is a complete "salvation" hinted at here: relief from sin both in its curse and its power. Say that it is in this its completeness only hinted at. That is to say that it *is* hinted at.

¹¹⁹ Cf. Harnack (p. 20): "The 'lost' and the 'sinners' are, however, still more closely characterized by the contrast 'not the righteous',—they are really the dying and guilt-laden, who must perish without Him."

III

We shall only in the briefest possible manner sum up the results of this survey of the eight sayings in which, according to the report of the Synoptics, Jesus declared the purpose of His mission. In doing so we may take our start from the remarks with which Harnack opens the summary of the results of his survey of practically the same series of sayings. "The eight sayings from the Synoptics which we have collected and studied", says he, "contain very few words, but how much is said in them! On investigation they compose a unity which is equally important for the characterization of Jesus, and for the compass and range of His work." We shall wish to say a word each on both of these matters.

First of all, we note, then, that these sayings are not without their teaching as to Jesus' person. The simple phrases, "I came", "I was sent", naturally, do not of themselves testify to more than Jesus' consciousness of a divine mission. It is quite clear, however, that, this divine mission of which He thus expresses consciousness, stands in His mind as that of the Messiah. He speaks in all these sayings out of the Messianic consciousness and assumes in them all Messianic functions. Even that, however, does not exhaust their implications.¹²⁰ There is a certain pregnancy of speech in them, a certain majesty of tone, a certain presupposition of voluntariness in the action expressed by the "I came",—of active acquiescence lying behind the "I was sent"—which have constantly led expositors to feel in them a claim greater than that to the Messianic dignity itself. Harnack will not admit that even the specifically Messianic consciousness speaks through them, and yet is constrained to exclaim (p. 28):

¹²⁰ A. Seeberg, *Der Tod Christi*, etc., 1895, p. 348, is quite right when he says: "All the passages in which a coming of Jesus into the world is spoken of (Mk. ii. 67, Mat. v. 17, ix. 113, Lk. v. 32, xii. 219, xix. 10) fix their eyes upon a nearer or more distant purpose of His Messianic vocation."

Who, then is this "I" that here "came". . . Undoubtedly there lies in that "I came", no matter who is meant, something authoritative and final. There lies in it the consciousness of a divine mission, as indeed it is interchanged with the expression "I was sent." The finality, however, is given by the definitions of purpose. He who came to perfect the law, He who was sent to recover the lost sheep, that is, to fulfil the prediction of the coming of God Himself, He who came with fire and sword—He comes as the final and ultimate one.

To others, even this seems inadequate; and they are right. Justice may be done by it to the impression which the reader receives from these sayings of the majesty of the speaker; scarcely to the impression which they equally make on him of the speaker's sense of complete control over all the circumstances of His mission, including the mission itself. It is this strong impression which expresses itself in the constant tendency of expositors to see in the "I came", "I was sent" a testimony by Jesus not merely to His divine mission but to His heavenly origin. "In the coming of Jesus", expounds A. Seeberg, for example,¹²¹ "it is not some kind of an appearance (*Auftreten*) of Jesus in the world that is spoken of, but His entrance (*Eintritt*) into the world, such as is unmistakably spoken of in Jno. xvi. 28, where the coming into the world corresponds to the going away to the Father".

Unquestionably in some of these sayings Jesus speaks out of a consciousness of preëxistence. That is not merely suggested by the appearance in one of them, instead of the simple "I came" of a more significant "I came out" (Mk. i. 38), which is scarcely completely satisfied by any other supplement than "from heaven" or "from the Father". It is clearly presupposed in two of them by the employment, instead of the personal pronoun, of the descriptive periphrasis, "the Son of Man", the particular Messianic designation which especially emphasizes preëxistence (Lk. xix. 10, Mk. x. 45 = Mat. xx. 28). The declaration of Mk. x. 45 = Mat. xx. 28 runs most strikingly on the same lines with Phil. ii. 5 ff., and bears similar testimony to the pre-

¹²¹ As cited.

existent glory of the great exemplar of humility, whom both passages hold up to view. The whole force of the example presented turns on the immense incongruity of the Son of Man appearing in the rôle of a servant; this force would be much decreased, if not destroyed, if the Son of Man had never been anything but a servant, was in His own nature a servant, and was fitted only for a servant's rôle. That three out of eight of these sayings thus imply the preëxistence of Jesus, and take their coloring from this implication, perhaps sufficiently accounts for the tendency of commentators to read the whole of them from this point of sight. We know at least that He who says in them, "I came", "I was sent", was conscious of having come from heaven to perform the mission which He ascribes to Himself.

In this implication of a preëxistence in glory, distinct in some of these sayings, possibly to be assumed in them all, they range themselves by the side of the more numerous similar sayings of Jesus recorded in the Gospel of John.¹²² "The not infrequent addition, 'into the world,'" remarks Harnack, in commenting on these, "shows a new horizon, alien to Jesus Himself". Not so. The difference in this as in other things, between the Synoptic and the Johannine record, is rather quantitative than qualitative. This Johannine feature too is found in the Synoptic record; but in fewer instances.

It is not, however, of the person of Jesus, but, as was to be expected—for do they not speak of His mission?—of His work, that we learn most from these sayings. According to their teaching Jesus' work may be fairly summed up in the one word, "salvation". He came to call "sinners"; He came to seek and save "the lost"; He came to give His life a "ransom" for many. Everything else which Jesus testifies that He came to do takes a place

¹²² The Johannine passages are adverted to by Harnack twice, pp. 2 and 22. For a synoptical view of them see B. F. Westcott in the "additional note" on Jno. xx. 21.

subordinate and subsidiary to "salvation". Even the "fulfilling" of the law. Harnack is wrong in attempting to co-ordinate the two functions of Saviour and Lawgiver in Jesus' testimony to His mission. "According to His self testimony, the purpose of His coming and thus His significance is given in this—that He is at once Saviour and Lawgiver. . . . Redeemer and Lawgiver: all that constitutes the significance of His coming is exhausted in that collocation . . . Programmatic in the strict sense are only these two sayings: 'I came to save' and 'I came to fulfil the law'."¹²³ Jesus does declare that He came to fulfil the law, and by this He means also "to fill it out", to complete and perfect it, so that it shall be a faultless transcript of the will of God, the Righteous One. But not this only, or even mainly. He means more fundamentally that He came to get the law observed, so that it shall be perfectly expressed in righteous lives. His mind is more on the transforming of law-breakers into law-keepers, than on the perfecting of the codex itself. That is to say, He is thinking of salvation; of salvation in its ultimate effects. And what could be more poignant than to declare side by side, "I came not to call righteous but sinners", "I came to make human lives the perfect reflection of the law of God"?

Those whom Jesus came to call, He describes as sinners and as lost, that is to say as lost sinners; as those who can lay claim to no righteousness of their own and who have no power to obtain any, that is to say as helpless dependents on Him the Saviour. To them He comes to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom; He calls them to repentance; He seeks them out and saves them; He gives His life a ransom for them; He writes the law of God upon their hearts. This is the process of His "salvation". Their own energies are enlisted: He preaches the Gospel of the Kingdom to them and calls them to repentance. Their hearts are changed: He writes the law of God upon their hearts and sets them spontaneously to fulfil it. But beneath all this,

¹²³ Pp. 25-26.

there lies something deeper still which attracts to itself especially His greatest word: "I came to save". He gives His life a ransom for them. And it is only as He thus ransoms them by the gift of Himself that they cease to be "lost"; and having thus ceased to lie under the curse, can cease also to lie under the power of sin.

Harnack pushes this greatest declaration, "I came to give my life a ransom for many" into the background. It makes little difference, he hints, whether Jesus ever said it or not. Jesus certainly died. And if all His work in the world was comprehended—as He witnesses that it was—in the category of ministry, then of course His death was included in this ministry. We may even say it was the culmination of His ministry, since the gift of one's life is the highest ministry which he can render. But the main matter is that Jesus declares that He came into the world to minister—whether by living or dying. "What it has meant in history that Jesus expressly said that He did not come to be ministered unto but to 'minister'—that cannot be expressed in words! All the advance in ethics, in these nineteen centuries which have flowed by, has had its most powerful lever in this".¹²⁴

Imitatio Christi! It certainly is the most powerful lever to move men to endeavor which has ever entered the world; it has revolutionized all conceptions of values; it has transformed the whole spirit of conduct and changed the entire aspect of life. But it has one indispensable precondition. Only living things can imitate anything. Dead things must be brought to life. Lost things must be found. Sinners must be saved. Even the heathen knew that he may see the good and yet pursue the bad. The awakened soul cries out, O wretched man that I am who shall deliver me out of this body of death? Jesus has done for us something far greater than set us a good example, and summon us to its imitation: something without which there could have been no imitation of His example; no transformed ethics; no transfigured

¹²⁴ P. 26.

lives. He has undoubtedly set before our eyes in living example the perfect law of love. But He has done more than that. He has written it on our hearts. He has given us new ideals. And He has given us something even above that. He has given us the power to realize these ideals. In one word, He has brought to us newness of life. And He has obtained for us this newness of life by His own blood.

It is this that Jesus declares when He says, "I came to give my life a ransom for many." And therefore this is the greatest declaration of all. In it He shows us not how He has become our supreme example merely, but how He has become our Saviour. He has set us a perfect example. He has given us a new ideal. But He has also given us His life. And in giving us His life, He has given us life. For "He gave His life a ransom instead of many".

Princeton.

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