

**Paul Edward Kretzmann**

**The New Testament  
in the Light of a  
Believer's Research**



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# The New Testament in the Light of a Believer's Research

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# The New Testament in the Light of a Believer's Research

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## **A Note about Typos** [Typographical Errors]:

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# 1. The Inspiration Of The New Testament

INSPIRATION is that miraculous, supernatural process by and through which God, specifically the Holy Spirit, at specified times and for specific purposes, caused certain men, the prophets of the Old Testament and the apostles (and evangelists) of the New Testament, to write down in words of human speech both such historical incidents as they were already familiar with and such other accounts of persons and events, together with immediate revelations concerning future events and the mysteries of salvation, as are a matter of His divine omniscience and wisdom alone, so that every possibility of error, not only in every main proposition with its discussion, but also in every subsidiary remark and incidental reference, was eliminated from the outset, while still in this breathing-in, which must be claimed for every word of the original documents, both the natural characteristics and temperaments and the acquired abilities of the various writers were employed in such a way as to produce that variety of style which gives to the Bible its wide and varied appeal.

Let us briefly analyze this definition. The word **inspiration** is found in the English translation of the Bible, in the well-known passage, 2 Tim. 3:16, where, however, the Greek has no noun, the text reading: *pasa graphe theopneustos*, where both the context and the usage of the Koine fully warrant the translation: All Scripture, or the whole Scripture, is God-breathed; for the adjective certainly carries the passive connotation. The process, although ascribed to God in general in the adjective, is specifically ascribed to the Holy Spirit in a great many passages of the Bible, as in 2 Sam. 23:2 (“**The Spirit of the Lord** spake by me, and His Word was in my tongue”), Mark 13:11 (“It is not ye that speak, but **the Holy Ghost**”), 2 Pet. 1:21 (“Holy men of God spake as they were moved **by the Holy Ghost**”), 1 John 5:6 (“It is **the Spirit** that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth”).



—— In the present paper we have in mind as inspired writers the apostles (and evangelists) of the New Testament. These men were not constantly under the effect of this particular process of inspiration (as when Peter gave offense in the city of Antioch, Gal. 2:14), but only at such times when they gave public testimony of the truth committed to them. It was then also that the specific purpose of the Holy Spirit was connected with their work, their preaching and writing, when their words were in truth the vehicle of the Spirit's power. In many instances, as in matters of the life and ministry of Jesus and the founding and propagation of the Apostolic Church, the writers could speak from first-hand knowledge or from information obtained by eye-witnesses (Luke 1:1-4; John 19:35-37; 1 John 1:1-4), and here the Spirit's work consisted in eliminating every possible error, both of memory and of reference, while in matters pertaining to the revelation of the mysteries of salvation as well as some concerning historical information both the contents and the form of the message was supplied by the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:7-10; 11:23; 15:3; Gal. 1:11, 12). These facts imply as a matter of course and demand the belief in **verbal** inspiration; for the Holy Spirit did not inspire thoughts, but He gave His message in **words** (1 Cor. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:21), and the proclamation of the Gospel was made in words, both oral and written. If the possibility of a mistake in subsidiary remarks and incidental references were conceded, then the usage of Scripture and of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself must be repudiated, and the certainty of Gospel-preaching would be replaced by the subjective vagaries of a fallible human intellect. Yet in thus setting forth the truth of inspiration, we recognize and appreciate the fact that the Holy Spirit made the dialectical ability of Paul the vehicle of His message as He did the poetical inclination of Peter, that He utilized the blunt challenge of James as He did the simplicity and charm of John. Whether we are dealing with the utter simplicity of the narrative of Christ's ministry or with the sublime utterances of some of the New Testament letters, we ever and throughout have the same powerful evidence of truth, the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

But why go to such lengths in defining the concept of inspiration and explaining its various implications? Because the number of men who, especially during the last century, and in the last decades with renewed force, have denied and are denying the truth of the inspiration of the Scriptures, has been on the increase and also because the element of doubt in conservative circles, fostered by the idea that a subjective certainty alone

would serve as a defense, has caused some uneasiness. With regard to the first point it will probably suffice to call attention to only two expressions found in the words of German theologians. Adolf Harnack writes (*Dogmengeschichte*, I, 343):

“Die Annahme der Inspiration der BUECHER, die harmonistische Interpretation derselben, die Vorstellung von ihrer absoluten Suffizienz in bezug auf jede Frage, die auftauchen kann, und in bezug auf jedes Ereignis, welches sie berichten, das Recht uneingeschraenkter Kombination von Stellen, die Annahme, dasz nichts in den Schriften gleichgueltig ist, endlich die allegorische Deutung sind das unmittelbare und sofort zu konstatierende Ergebnis der Kanonisierung.”

Surely strange words from a man who disavowed the higher criticism of the **Tuebingen Schule**, a strange mixture of conceptions that are not on the same level on the part of one who was an acknowledged master in the history of the early Church. On the other hand, the words of Deissmann (**The New Testament in the Light of Modern Research**, 12, 14) appear even more strange when he naively states:

“Just as a stenographer receiving letters from a business man works quite mechanically, so were the apostles pens and pencils of the Holy Spirit. The dogma of verbal inspiration of every letter of the New Testament, which rightly can be called mechanical inspiration, is now abandoned in all scientific theology... We may say again, it is, not because it is a religious answer that we reject the theory of verbal inspiration nor because it speaks of inspiration, but rather because it conceives of inspiration as mechanical, and this mechanical conception eliminates what is best in the evangelists and the apostles, their individuality. It degrades Paul, John, and all the others into mere writing machines.”

Evidently Deissmann does not understand the doctrine of verbal inspiration as it is held by Bible Christians. Of course, we cannot agree with such statements, just as we cannot accept the intuition theory of inspiration, that of mere divine direction and assistance, the illumination theory, the dictation theory, the dynamic theory, and the theory of progressive

revelation or that of a wider conception of inspiration, as promulgated by Goebel a few years ago. We hold that the inspiration also of the New Testament must be conceived of as we have outlined it in our definition, with its explanation given above.

We concede, of course, that there is a **difficulty** connected with the doctrine of inspiration **as applied to the New Testament** unlike the relatively easy explanation which conservative Christians have for the verbal inspiration of the Old Testament. For it is certain beyond the shadow of a doubt that 2 Tim. 3:16 safeguards the entire **corpus** of the Old Testament, if nothing more. It distinctly states that the entire Scripture is God-breathed. But this same truth is found expressed in numerous passages of the New Testament, whose **historical** evidence can in any event not be gainsaid. The Old Testament is spoken of as a unit, as a definite entity, when the writers of the New Testament, including our blessed Savior Himself, call it **Scripture**, or **the Scripture**, *he graphe*, John 7:38; 10:35; Acts 8:32; Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:22; 4:30; Jas. 2:8; 1 Pet. 2:6; 2 Pet. 1:20, also in the plural, **the Scriptures**, *hai graphai*, Matt. 21:42; 26:54; Mark 11:49; Luke 24:27; John 5:39; Acts 17:2, 11; 18:24, 28; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4, **the Holy Scriptures**, *en graphais hagiais*, Rom. 1:2, **the prophetic Scriptures**, *dia te graphon prophetikon*, Rom. 16:26, **the Scriptures of the prophets**, *hai graphai ton propheton*, Matt. 26:56, also **the Holy Writings**, *hiera grammata*, 2 Tim. 3:15, **the oracles**, or words, **of God**, *ta logia tou theou*, Rom. 3:2; Heb. 5:12; 1 Pet. 4:11, not to mention the passages in which the large divisions of the Old Testament are enumerated, as in Rom. 3:21 (“the Law and the prophets”), Luke 16:29, 31 (“Moses and the prophets”), and Luke 24:44 (“the Law of Moses, the prophets, and the Psalms”). These passages corroborate the truth of the inspiration of the Old Testament, even if they be regarded as mere historical documents. If we should want to add the mass of internal evidence from the Old Testament itself, the testimony would be truly overwhelming.

## Evidence for Inspiration

But what evidence have we for the inspiration of New Testament? How can we be sure of our ground? By what right may the ministers of the Word

stand before their congregations speaking from texts taken from the New Testament and assert, "Thus saith the Lord"?

## 1. The Choice and Mission of the Men

We have a number of clear and compelling reasons for our stand in accepting the inspiration of the New Testament. In the first place, the very **choice and mission of the men** whom the Lord chose to be His representatives and ambassadors to men indicate the fact that their inspiration could not be inferior to that of their predecessors, the prophets of old. The Lord plainly stated: "**He that heareth you heareth Me**, and he that despiseth you despiseth Me; and he that despiseth Me despiseth Him that sent Me," Luke 10:16. Because He had sent these men, the Seventy, because they were His ambassadors, therefore their words, their message, were to be accepted as the full truth. The same statement is found in the Lord's assurance to His apostles on the evening of His resurrection: "Peace be unto you. As My Father hath sent Me, **even so send I you**," John 20:21. This was in exact accordance with the words of His sacerdotal prayer, John 17:8, 14, 18: "**I have given unto them the words** which Thou gavest Me; and they have received them and have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they have believed that Thou didst send Me... **I have given them Thy Word... As Thou hast sent Me** into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." There would be no sense to all these statements if the Lord did not intend to convey thereby the assurance that His representatives would usually bring the full message of divine truth. The position of envoys was distinctly given» to the apostles also in the special commission given to them on the day of Christ's ascension: "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth," Acts 1:7. As envoys of the risen and ascended Lord the apostles required at full measure of the Spirit, also in presenting the facts of the redemption wrought by Christ, who was ever associated with their work. As Gausson puts it (**Theopneustia**, 75): "If, then, the prophetic Spirit was necessary for the former men of God in order to show the Messiah under the shadows, was it not much more necessary for them, in order to their bringing Him out into the light and to their evidently setting Him forth as crucified among us, in such a manner that he

that despiseth them despiseth Him (the Father), and he that heareth them heareth Him? Let one judge by all these traits what the inspiration of the New Testament behooved to have been compared with that of the Old; and let one say whether, while the latter was wholly and entirely prophetic, that of the New could be anything less.”

## 2. Specific Promises of Christ

In the second place, we cannot but see that the **specific promises** of Christ to His apostles are bound to give us an **a priori** basis of the inspiration of the New Testament. We take first those premises which gave to the envoys of the Lord the assurance of His presence and of His Spirit to give them the precise words which they were to employ on given occasions. In sending them out on their first preaching tour, the Lord told the newly-chosen apostles: “When they deliver you up, take no thought how or what (*pos e ti*) ye shall speak; for **it shall be given you** in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the **Spirit of your Father** which speaketh in you,” Matt. 10:19, 20. Another instance of a similar promise was when tens of thousands were gathered around the Lord to hear Him. It was at that time that He stated: “When they bring you unto the synagogues and unto magistrates and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer or what ye shall say; for **the Holy Ghost shall teach you** in the same hour what ye ought to say,” Luke 12:11, 12. And again, in the eschatological sayings of Jesus, we find the Lord’s promise: “Settle it therefore in your hearts not to meditate before what ye shall answer; for **I will give you a mouth and wisdom** which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist,” Luke 21:14, 15. “On these different occasions,” writes Gausscn, “the Lord assured His disciples that the fullest inspiration would regulate their language in the most difficult and important moments of their ministry... They behooved to cast themselves entirely on Him; it would be given them entirely; it would be given them by Jesus; it would be given them in the same hour; it would be given them in such a manner and in such plenitude that they should be able then to say that it was no more they, but the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of their Father, which spoke in them; and that then also it was not only an irresistible wisdom that was given them, it was a mouth.” (L. c., 76.)

But we have also very specific promises concerning the speaking or teaching of the truth as given to the apostles. It is of this function that the Lord speaks, John 14:26: “But **the Comforter**, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He **shall teach you all things** and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you.” The purpose of this teaching and testifying is given in the next part of the Lord’s last discourse, John 15:26, 27: “But when **the Comforter** is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even **the Spirit of Truth**, which proceedeth from the Father, **He shall testify of Me!** and **ye also shall bear witness** because ye have been with Me from the beginning.” Cp. John 14:16-18. Still more complete is the promise in John 16:13: “Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, **He will guide you into all truth**; for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come.” And then the main object of all apostolic and Christian preaching is given: “He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine and shall show it unto you.” Rohnert (**Inspiration der Heiligen Schrift**, 24 f.) rightly says that these promises of the Lord fully guarantee not only the proper and adequate presentation of the divine truth of salvation, but also an unfailing historical faithfulness in remembering occurrences and an ability to have prophetic visions and to foretell future events, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And all the promises of the Lord are summarized in His last instructions to His apostles, on the day of His ascension: “**Ye shall receive power** after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye **shall be witnesses** unto Me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” This special gift of the Holy Ghost was directly connected with their ambassadorial office, with their testifying of Christ and His vicarious atonement. This much must be kept in mind with regard to the **a priori** basis of the inspiration of the New Testament. Men who were given such assurances, not merely of divine assistance, but of a direct communication of testimony, must be accepted as inspired witnesses of the saving truth.

But we hasten to add here at once the **a posteriori** evidence for the inspiration of the New Testament, the evidence which gives us the assurance that the promise of the Savior according to His merciful intention and purpose could not fail, but was bound to be fulfilled. In His sacerdotal prayer, John 17:18, 20, 21, the Lord says: “As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world... Neither pray I for

these alone, but **for them also which shall believe on Me through their word**, that they all may be one.” If the word of the apostles, whether oral or written, had not been that of Christ and of the Holy Spirit, inspired throughout, then it would not have had the power to bring men to the knowledge of the truth, to faith in Christ and His redemption. It follows therefore that wherever the word of the apostles is proclaimed, we are dealing with God’s inspired Word. The same conclusion must be drawn from Mark 16:14-16: “He appeared unto the Eleven as they sat at meat... And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world and **preach the Gospel** to every **creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.**” The Gospel as preached by the apostles, by God’s promise, has the power to work faith in the hearts of men everywhere; hence their word must have contained the power which comes by inspiration only.

### **3. Testimony of the Writers**

We now take up our third reason for believing in the inspiration of the New Testament; it is that contained in the testimony of the writers themselves. There can be no doubt in the mind of any unprejudiced reader of the New Testament that the writers of the various letters and gospels were fully convinced, and that without any morbid strain of a false enthusiasm, that the promises of Christ were" carried out in their [own persons, that they operated with the idea of being filled with the Holy Spirit. In the resolutions of the so-called Apostolic Council of the year 49 A.D., we find the motivation stated: “It seemed good to **the Holy Ghost and to us,**” Acts 15:28. And this motivation was satisfactory not only to the Christians of Jewish antecedents, but to those from among the Gentiles as well, to whom the resolutions of this meeting were transmitted, Acts 16:4. In the first letter written by Paul in an official capacity we find the statements: “When ye received **the Word of God which ye heard of us**, ye received it not as the word of men, but, **as it is in truth, the Word of God**, which effectually worketh also in you that believe,” 1 Thess. 2:13. And again: “He therefore that despiseth, **despiseth not man, but God**, who hath also **given unto us His Holy Spirit,**” 1 Thess. 4:8. About six years later the apostle wrote to the Christians of Corinth: “Which things also **we speak**, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but **which the Holy Ghost teacheth...** For who hath known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct Him? But we

have the mind of Christ,” 1 Cor. 2:13, 16. In the fall of the year 57 the apostle wrote to the same congregation: “I told you before and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now, I write to them which heretofore have sinned and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare, since **ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me**, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you,” 2 Cor. 13:2, 3. But this same strain of alleging that it was Christ and the Holy Ghost who were teaching through him, is found also in the other letters of the great missionary apostle. With great earnestness and holy zeal he writes to the congregations of Galatia: “Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed . . . But I certify you, brethren, that **the Gospel which was preached of me is not after men**. For I neither received it of men, neither was I taught it, but by **the revelation of Jesus Christ**,” Gal. 1:8, 11, 12, thus repeating what he had also told the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 15:1, 3: “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you **the Gospel which I preached unto you**, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand. . . For I delivered unto you first of all **that which I also received**.” A very emphatic statement is also that found in Rom. 15:18, 19: “For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders, **by the power of the Spirit of God**, so that from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum I have fully preached **the Gospel of Christ**.” If we turn to the letters of the first captivity, we find assertions which do not vary in any point from those of the preceding decade. Paul writes to the Ephesians: “Ye are **built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets**, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Cornerstone,” or Key-stone, chap. 2:20; and in chap. 3:3—5: “How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is **now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets** by the Spirit.” So the apostle insists that his knowledge of the mystery of the Gospel, like that of the other apostles, is a gift of God, knowledge granted to the apostles as it was given to the prophets of old. And he is so sure of his ground that he speaks in a very sharp manner in 1 Tim. 6:3: “If any man teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome words, even **the words of our Lord Jesus Christ**, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness,



he is proud, knowing nothing.” This is not empty self-assertiveness, but it is the expression of a conviction founded in the assurance of the Spirit, on the fact of inspiration. And Peter is no less sure of his ground when he writes, 1 Pet. 1:12: “Unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you **by them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.**” So it is stated that the Gospel as preached to the Christians of Northern Asia Minor by the apostle and his coworkers was a product of the Holy Ghost given to the men of God for that purpose.

But under this third reason, with its testimony of the writers themselves, we have also **their statements regarding their actual writings.** It was not merely the oral proclamation of the message of salvation for which the apostles and evangelists demanded the assent of their constituents, but specifically their written words, in the form of treatises and letters. In Rom. 1:13 ff. St. Paul expresses his regrets that it had not been possible for him to come to Rome in person and so to bring the Christians of that city the Gospel-message; hence he writes them a letter containing the chief articles of the Christian doctrine. The oral and the written proclamation of the apostle are on the same level; both bring the same Word of God. For that reason he also admonishes the Thessalonians, 2 Thess. 2:15, “Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, **whether by word or our epistle.**” And the same position is taken by the other apostles, notably by St. John. He writes, 1 John 1:1-4, “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life;... that which we have seen and heard **declare we unto you** that ye also may have fellowship with us... And these things **write we unto you** that your joy be full.” In this case also oral proclamation and written message are placed on the same level. Cp. 1 John 2:1, 12-14. The same apostle, in transmitting to the seven congregations of Asia Minor the message of the ascended Lord, repeats his admonition time and again: “He that hath an ear, **let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches,**” Rev. 2:11, etc. And this is on the basis of the admonition and commission which he himself had received: “What thou seest **write in a book** and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia,” Rev. 1:11. That the written Word of God as put down on paper by His apostles had the same object as the spoken message appears throughout the letters of John, as in the well-

known passage 1 John 2:12-14, 21, 26. Of particular interest in this connection is 1 John 5:13: "These things **have I written unto you** that believe on the name of the Son of God that ye may know that ye have eternal life and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." This, in turn, agrees exactly with John's words in John 20:30, 31: "And many other signs, truly, did Jesus in the presence of His disciples which are not written in this book; but **these are written** that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, ye might have life through His name." Surely this is asserting in the strongest terms that these writings are the truth inspired by God, carrying in themselves the conviction of God's wisdom and power. — To this list of passages we might well add those in which, for example, St. Paul emphasizes that the things which he writes are not a lie, Gal. 1:20; that he does not handle the Word of God deceitfully, 2 Cor. 4:2; that he speaks in Christ as of God, in the sight of Christ, 2 Cor. 2:17; that he is separated unto the Gospel of Christ, Rom. 1:1, 15, 19; that he, with his coworkers, is a minister of Christ and steward of the mysteries of God, 1 Cor. 4:1; Eph. 1:9; 3:3. It is because the apostles are so sure of their ground as the ambassadors of Christ that they demand for their proclamation the willing ears of their listeners and readers. St. Paul writes: "And my **speech and my preaching** was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in **demonstration of the Spirit and of power** that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but **in the power of God**," 1 Cor. 2:4, 5. And again: "If any man think himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that **the things that I write unto you** are the commandments of the Lord," 1 Cor. 14:37. And again: "Our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and **in the Holy Ghost** and in much assurance," 1 Thess. 1:5. So much emphasis does the apostle place upon his letters, knowing that they are divinely inspired, that he charges the Thessalonians: "I charge you by the Lord that **this epistle be read** unto all the holy brethren," 1 Thess. 5:27. The same thought underlies the statement in 2 Thess. 2:2: "That ye be not soon shaken in mind or be troubled, neither by spirit **nor by word nor by letter as from us**." Just as evident is the conviction of the apostle from his remark to the Christians at Colossae: "When **this epistle** is read among you, cause that it **be read also in the church of the Laodiceans**," Col. 4:16. —A most instructive and stimulating passage, finally, is Luke 1:1-4, where Luke sets forth the motivation of his treatise to his patron, the noble Theophilus. We shall

revert to this passage once more; but in this connection certain expressions in this classical prolog may be noted, to-wit: "Even as they delivered them unto us which from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word... having had perfect understanding of all things from the very beginning." The last expression, in the Greek, is one word, *anōthen*, which may indeed be translated "from the beginning," but has as its original connotation "from above," as in John 3:3, 7; 19:11; Jas. 1:17; 3:15, 17. A few sentences from Gausson are worth quoting at this point, when he writes (*op. cit.*, 86 f.): "You see in fact that his [Luke's] object there is to contrast the certainty and divinity of his own account with the uncertainty and the human character of those narrations which many had taken in hand to set forth on the facts connected with the Gospel — facts, he adds, most surely believed among us, that is to say, among the apostles and prophets of the New Testament... And therefore, adds St. Luke, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from above, to write of them to thee in order. St. Luke had obtained this knowledge from above, that is to say, by the wisdom

which comes from above 'and which had been given him.' It is very true that the meaning ordinarily attached to this last expression in this passage is 'from the very first,' as if instead of the word *anōthen* (from above) there were here the same words *ap' arches* (from the commencement), which we find in verse second. But it appears to us that the opinion of Erasmus, of Gomar, of Henry, of Lightfoot, and other commentators ought to be preferred as more natural." The argument, if not absolutely conclusive, surely carries much weight, especially in connection with some further points which are to be introduced in favor of the gospels of Mark and Luke. This much is certain, and it should be noted with satisfaction, that the writers of the New Testament regarded themselves as the mouthpieces of the Lord when they penned the treatises and letters which are contained in the New Testament canon.

And still another point must be considered in connection with this third reason, of the testimony of the writers themselves, namely, that these men deliberately placed themselves and their writings on a level with the Old Testament writings. Certain passages seem to imply and to suggest, if not to force, the conclusion that the writers of the New Testament prepared their written messages on the basis of a specific command of God. This seems to

be the import of 1 Cor. 14:37: "The things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord." In 2 Cor. 1:13 the same apostle writes: "We write none other things unto you than what ye read or acknowledge and, I trust, ye shall acknowledge even to the end." Also in 2 Cor. 13:10: "Therefore I

write these things being absent, lest, being present, I should use sharpness according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification and not to destruction." Peter speaks along the same lines: "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance," 2 Pet. 3:1. Also John, I Ep. 2:7: "Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning."——To these passages we add others of the same kind, as 2 Pet. 3:2: "That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets and of the commandments of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior." Compare with this statement that of Jude 17: "But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ." These passages surely claim for the message of the apostles the same authority as that possessed by the writings of the prophets. But St. Paul speaks in the same strain. He writes, Rom. 16:25-27: "Now, to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my Gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith, to God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever!" Again, in Eph. 2:20: "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets," where St. Paul even puts the apostles in first place. Also in Eph. 3:4, 5: "How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery... whereby, when ye

read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mysstery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." Cp. 2 Tim. 2:14. These surely are bold and comprehensive statements, and they would have little meaning if they could not be accepted in the spirit in which they were made, namely, that the writers of the New Testament were conscious

of being on the same level with the prophets of old in the matter of inspiration.

Our fourth reason for accepting the inspiration of the New Testament on a level with the Old Testament is found 'in the internal evidence offered by references to earlier writings in the later books of the first century, that is, those contained in the convolute of the New Testament as we now have it, as well as those which indicate that letters or treatises were to be kept, thus acquiring canonical standing in the Church. To begin with the latter point first, we have such passages as Luke 1:1-4, in which the writer expressly makes the claim that his gospel would give men the certainty of the things in which they had been instructed, that is, in the way of salvation. In 1 Thess. 5:27 the Apostle Paul charges the recipients of the letter that it should be read to all the holy brethren; and in Col. 4:16 he writes: "When this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans," words which clearly indicate that he intended his message to have authority, not only among the congregations to which his individual letters were immediately addressed, but among other Christians as well. The contention repeatedly made, in these later days espe-

cially by Deissmann, that the New Testament letters are mere *Gelegenheitsschriften*, is not borne out by a close study of the writings themselves.—An interesting passage is 1 Tim. 5:18, where St. Paul writes: "For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn; and, The laborer is worthy of his reward." Now, the first of these quotations is clearly taken from the Old Testament, from Deut. 25:4. But the second is not found in that form anywhere in the corpus of the acknowledged Scripture of the Old Testament. It is found, however, in Luke 10:7, and we are practically obliged to conclude, both that the gospel of Luke was in existence before the year 64 or 65, and that it had the standing of "Scripture" among the early Christians, specifically in the eyes of Paul. Just as important in this connection is the passage Jas. 4:5, 6: "Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But He giveth more grace. Wherefore He [or it; for the antecedent may well be the Scripture] saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." The first quotation seems to be a free re-statement of Gal. 5:17, which alone would be valuable enough in this connection; but the second offers the thought of Matt. 23:12 as contained literally in 1 Pet. 5:5,

a fact which clearly points to the use of earlier books of the New Testament by later writers. We have an analogy to this in Dan. 9:2, where Daniel quotes a contemporary prophet, Jer. 25:11, 12, concerning the duration of the Babylonian Captivity.— But the most interesting passage in this connection is 2 Pet. 3:15, 16, where Peter refers to Paul, his brother apostle, in the words: "Even

as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things." There is no doubt that Peter is speaking of a number of epistles, and his words seem to imply some sort of collection of the letters of Paul, one to which Peter's own hearers had access, with which they might be presumed to be familiar. Gaussen (op. cit.) has the following passage: "Let the reader be so good as to attend to the following passage of the Apostle St. Peter. It is very important, inasmuch as it lets us see that in the lifetime of the apostles the book of the New Testament was already almost entirely formed in order to make one whole together with that of the Old. It was twenty or thirty years after the day of Pentecost [more exactly, about the year 67] that St. Peter felt gratified in referring to all the epistles of Paul, his beloved brother, and spoke of them as sacred writings, which, even as early as his time, formed part of the Holy Letters (hieron grammaton) and behooved to be classed with the other Scriptures (hos kai tas loipas graphas). He assigns them the same rank and declares that 'unlearned men can wrest them but to their own destruction'." So much for this point.

Our fifth reason for regarding the inspiration of the New Testament as being on the same level with that of the Old Testament is found in the fact that the Lord evidently acknowledged the work of the men, of the apostles, who were preaching in His name, on the strength of the promise which He had given them before His death and on the day of His ascension. As the result of Peter's Pentecost ser-

mon three thousand souls were added to the congregation, Acts 2:41, and immediately afterward we read: "The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved," vs. 47. After the imprisonment of Peter and John, when the apostles had returned to the congregation and the great prayer of faith had been offered, we are told: "They were filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the Word of God with boldness," Acts 4:31. Even Gamaliel was obliged to concede: "If this counsel or this work be of men, it will

come to naught; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it,” Acts 5:38, 39. When Paul was working in Corinth, he received the assurance of the Lord: “Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee, for I have much people in this city,” Acts 18:9, 10. Of the success of the apostle in Ephesus even the Silversmith Demetrius had to concede: “Not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people,” Acts 19:26, and that in spite of the fact that Paul endured many tribulations and trials, 2 Cor. 1:8-10; 4:1, 2. His own testimony as to the situation is given in these words: “For a great door, and effectual, is opened unto me,” 1 Cor. 16:9. And so throughout the Apostolic Age and the early centuries the Lord was on the side of the servants whom He had equipped with the gift of inspiration to make known the message of His salvation. As Tertullian and other early apologists have shown, the growth of the Church was due to the fact that the power of the Lord attended His servants, not to a false enthusiasm, which would have amounted to nothing but a flash in the pan.

The founding and the propagation of the Christian Church on the basis of the Gospel-message was obviously the work of God, who thus supported His ambassadors in their labors.

Our sixth reason for accepting the New Testament as the inspired Word of God is the marvelous agreement between the two parts of the Bible. Evidence of this is found even in the many quotations and allusions contained in the books of the New Testament which are taken from the Old Testament, often with a specific mention of the author. We do not only find the expression “that it might be fulfilled what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet.” but Jeremiah is named in Matt. 2:17, Isaiah in Matt. 3:3, the same prophet in Matt. 4:14, again in Matt. 8:17, again in Matt. 12:17, again in Matt. 13:14, again in Matt. 15:7, David in Matt. 22:43; and so we could enumerate passage after passage showing the intimate inner relationship between the writers of the Old and those of the New Testament. In Matthew alone there are more than sixty quotations and expressions from, and references to, the Old Testament. And some one has made a conservative count of all such places in the New Testament and found that the number of quotations from the Old Testament amounts to 277, of expressions to 100, and of references to 121; but that does not include the use of Old Testament thoughts in words which show just a slight difference.

A very interesting and convincing feature of this argument is the use of Old Testament prophecies in showing the exactness of the fulfilment as given in the accounts of the gospels and in the letters. Take passages like the following: Matt. 26:56: "That the

Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled"; Luke 4:21:"This day is this scripture fulfilled"; John 7:42:"Hath not the Scripture said?"; John 13:18; 17:12; 19:24, 28, 36, 37:"That the Scriptures might be fulfilled"; Acts 1:16:"The Scripture must needs be fulfilled"; Rom. 4:3; Gal. 4:30:"What saith the Scripture?"; Rom. 9:17; 10:11; 11:2; 1 Tim. 5:18; Jas. 2:23; 4:5:"The Scripture saith."—But the argument comes to us with overwhelming force when we consider the marvelous agreement to be found in many parts of the New Testament as compared with similar passages in the Old. This is not in the nature of quotations, but in the imagery used and' in the scope of the thoughts presented. Thus the Apocalypse has as the background of many of its visions a temple or an immense throne-room, just as we have it in chapter 1 of Ezekiel and elsewhere. There are four living beings in Rev. 4:7 ff. and in that whole vision, just as there are four living creatures in Ezek. 1:4 ff'. Gog and Magog are introduced in Rev. 20:8 ff', just as we find these enemies of the Church mentioned in Ezek. 38 and 39. There is a miraculous stream of water proceeding from the throne of God and' of the Lamb in Rev. 22:1 ff.; the same stream is evidently referred to in Ezek. 47. In Rev. 22:2 a tree of life with twelve kinds of fruit is spoken of; in Ezek. 47 we have many trees on both sides of the miraculous river of water. And these comparisons could be extended almost indefinitely. They offer one of the most convincing proofs of the unity of the Bible and of the inspiration of the New Testament.

In closing this first part of our discussion, we may be called upon to meet some objections with regard

to the writers of the New Testament. Books whose authorship is apostolic would seem to offer little difficulty; the gospel of Matthew; the gospel, the epistles and the Revelation of John; the thirteen epistles of Paul; the two epistles of Peter; the letter of James, especially if we identify this James with James the Less, the son of Alphaeus, the half-brother or cousin of our Lord; the epistle of Jude, if we assume that this Jude was also a member of the Twelve. The difficulty would concern Mark, Luke, and the author of the Letter to the Hebrews. As to Mark, apart from the external



evidence which we intend to present shortly, he was related closely with Paul, both in his earliest and in his later career, but especially with Peter, who calls him his son, 1 Pet. 5:13. It seems that Mark was closely associated with both Paul and Peter after the year 62 A.D., and that his gospel was written about this time. Patristic evidence, that of Papias, whose designation of Mark as the “interpreter” (*hermeneutes*) of Peter is well known, and that of Justin, Irenaeus, Clement of Rome, and Origen, agrees in noting the influence of Peter on the gospel of Mark. This is not to be understood as making Mark a mere amanuensis, or secretary, of the apostle, but as obtaining his information of the things most surely believed by Peter, the **Traditions hypothesis** being especially well sustained in his case. In much the same way we think of Luke in his relation to Paul, whose close companion he was for more than a decade, as far as can be determined. This is substantiated also by the fact that there is a strong inner relationship between the cast of Paul’s message and that of Luke in his gospel and in the Book of Acts. Besides, the evidence furnished by the prolog of his gospel cannot be overlooked by the honest searcher for the truth. As for the Letter to the Hebrews, it may be a little too unsafe to ascribe it to Paul, for certain internal and external reasons, but it certainly belongs to the treatises of the inner Pauline circle. Nor may the points made by both Rohnert and Gausson be ignored, who place the three authors here concerned into the circle of apostles in the wider sense. (Cp. Gausson, *op. cit.*, 83 ff.)

## External Evidence

Having offered now in a brief form the main points pertaining to the internal evidence for the inspiration of the New Testament, let us examine just as briefly the **external evidence for the New Testament books**. Let us turn first to the Apostolic Fathers to see what historical evidence for our position is offered by these unimpeachable witnesses, men who surely cannot be charged with any ulterior motives in presenting the truth as they know it. In the writings concerned, it is true, the expressions *he graphe* and *gegriptai* are continued in use for the books of the Old Testament, but they, like *to gegrammenon* and *to hagos logos*, are used also for New Testament references, particularly at first for the sayings of the Lord Jesus, extended to include the Gospel accounts of His ministry. Thus we find in the Letter of

Barnabas (IV, 14): “Let us take heed lest, **as it is written**, we be found ‘many called, but few chosen’.” Ignatius writes to the Smyrneans (VII, 2): “Give heed to the prophets and especially **to the Gospel**, in which the Passion has been revealed to us and the Resurrection has been accomplished.” In his letter to the Philadelphians the same man writes: “Your prayer will make me perfect for God that I may attain the lot wherein I found mercy, **making the Gospel my refuge** as the flesh of Jesus” (V, 1). In the Didache (VIII, 2) we find the passage: “Do not pray as the hypocrites, but **as the Lord commanded in His Gospel**, pray thus: ‘Our Father who art in heaven...’.” A few chapters farther on we read: “And concerning **the apostles** and prophets, act thus according **to the ordinance of the Gospel**” (XI, 3). Particularly strong is the statement in the letter of Ignatius to the Philadelphians (VIII, 2): “But I beseech you to do nothing in facetiousness, but **after the teaching of Christ**. For I heard some men saying, ‘If I find it not in the charters, in the Gospel, I do not believe,’ and when I said to them that it is in the Scripture, they answered me, ‘That is exactly the question’.” And just as the story of Jesus, as preserved in the accounts of His life, in the gospels, was generally accepted as the truth and designated as “Scripture,” so the letters and treatises of the apostles were regarded as inspired and authoritative. Their commands and ordinances as contained in their accepted writings were accepted without hesitation. This authority is referred to in **I Clement**, 44, in Ignatius to the Romans IV, 3 (“I do not order you as did Peter and Paul; **they were apostles**, I am a convict”), also in that to the Trallians III, 3 (“I did not think myself competent, as a convict, **to give you orders like an apostle**”), and VII, 1 (“Beware therefore of such men; and this will be possible for you if you are not puffed up and are inseparable from God, from Jesus Christ, and from the bishop and **the ordinances of the apostles**”). In 2 Clement, XIV, 2, according to the text given by Zahn (**Geschichte des Kanons**, II, 942 if.), the books of the prophets and the apostles are referred to as authorities in matters of doctrine. In perfect agreement with this View the writings of the subapostolic age are permeated with quotations from, and references to, practically all books of the New Testament. The number of excerpts, quotations, expressions, and allusions to New Testament books in the Apostolic Fathers is as follows: to Matthew, 100; to Mark, 24; to Luke, 32; to John, 35; to Acts, 21; to Romans, 31; to First Corinthians, 43; to Second Corinthians, 10; to Galatians, 9; to Ephesians, 25; to Philippians, 16; to

Colossians, 5; to First Thessalonians, 8; to Second Thessalonians, 4; to First Timothy, 16; to Second Timothy, 11; to Titus, 10; to First Peter, 28; to Second Peter, 4; to First John, 7; to Second John, 1; to James, 19; to Jude, 1; to Hebrews, 27; to Revelation, 6. This is a truly formidable array of testimonies. Its significance causes Seeberg (**Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte, I, 159**) to remark: "Es kann als sichere Tatsache bezeichnet werden, dass in den ersten Dezennien des zweiten Jahrhunderts der 'Kaenon' in seinem Grundstock in den heidenchristlichen Gemeinden wohl ueberall in Gebrauch kam. Das 'vierfaeltige. Evangelium' und die Sammlung von dreizehn Paulusbriefen bildeten den Grundstock. Um diesen Grundstock rankten sich die' uebrigen Schriften in lockerer Vereinigung." There are many interesting points which might be introduced here, such as the fact that Zahn, for the period 95 to 140, can find only four gospel citations which cannot be derived from our present gospels, while a great many quotations and allusions attest the Church's use of the four gospels which have been accepted since the earliest days. (Cp. Souter, **The Text and the Canon of the New Testament**, 162).

If we take the period of the apologists, down to the end of the third century, we find much corroborative material, showing that the present books of the New Testament were regarded as canonical. As Souter shows, it is now a practical certainty that Justin used Matthew, Luke, and John, and the reference to the recollections of the Apostle Peter is best explained as a reference to the gospel of St. Mark. To quote Souter directly: "Justin knows the Apocalypse as a prophetic work by the Apostle John. Knowledge of the following further books is evident from his writings: Acts, First Peter, Romans, First Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Second Thessalonians, Hebrews, and the **Didache**." (L. c., 168.) At the end of the second century Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons on the lower Rhone, in Gaul, quotes from, or refers to, all the books of the New Testament except Third John and Philemon. It is but necessary to consult any good history of the canon of the New Testament to find how Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen of Alexandria, and practically all the Church Fathers down to Augustine, in whose days the canon was fixed by resolution of the councils at Hippo and of Carthage (393 and 397), stood. One might here profitably consult the extensive study by Gregory, in his **Canon and Text of the New Testament**. And our particular interest in the question is fully satisfied,

inasmuch as most of the teachers of the early days express themselves in no uncertain terms concerning their acceptance of these books on the basis of the apostolic authority attaching to them and the inspiration which prompted their writing.

But what about the so-called **antilegomena**? Is not the very word an evidence of uncertainty with regard to inspiration? Our answer is emphatically negative. The question of the **antilegomena** is not at all one that concerns inspiration, but chiefly one of historical witness and secondarily of the analogy of faith. Instead of weakening our position with regard to the inspiration of the New Testament and the position of its various books, it tends very materially to strengthen our attitude. The situation is this. Even in the days of Paul's early missionary labors, about the middle of the first century, he found it necessary to warn the congregations against unauthorized letters, apocryphal and pseudepigraphic. He tells the Thessalonian Christians that they should not be soon shaken in mind or troubled, "neither by spirit nor by word nor by letter as from us," 2 Thess. 2:2. And at the end of the same letter, 3:17: "The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle; so I write." He was compelled, then, to give his readers a special token and guarantee that the letters which he sent in person were genuine. And in a similar way Luke states to Theophilus that many unauthorized persons had undertaken to write accounts of Christ's life and ministry, from which we may infer that he had been duly commissioned. It is a well-known fact also that the number of apocalypses in the early period of the Church was very great.

Hence, the early Christians made use of the utmost caution. Every book which claimed apostolic authority and inspiration had to pass muster, had to prove its right to be received into the New Testament canon. The **Didache** and the **Letter of Barnabas** were considered apostolic in some parts of the Church, but eventually they had to withdraw because of insufficient historical evidence and doctrinal difficulties. In some parts of the Church doubts regarding certain books remained: Second and Third John were private letters; Second Peter was undoubtedly penned very shortly before the death of the apostle and hence was not widely enough known to be accepted without question; Jude seemed to some to be a mere repetition of Second Peter, and its tone lacks some of the fervor of the more important

writings; James seemed to be out of harmony with the sweeping statements of Paul on justification by faith alone; Hebrews names no author, and there seemed to be certain doctrinal difficulties in the letter; and the Apocalypse was under suspicion simply because of its nature. If inspiration came into the discussion at all, it was only as a secondary consideration; for if the books are not apostolic and canonical, then they are also not inspired by the Holy Ghost. The historical and doctrinal obstacles have largely been removed, but we still respect the arguments that led up to the distinction in name and would therefore not charge anyone with lack of respect for the Scripture if he shares the doubts of some of the teachers of the Church from the earliest days. But as for the inspiration of the New Testament, it stands secure; and for the **whole Bible** we say: **Verbum Dei manet in aeternum!**

## 2. The Freer Manuscripts And The Oxyrhynchus Papyri

IN THE HISTORY of the New Testament manuscripts a few facts and dates stand out with peculiar sharpness. Among these we may mention the stupendous undertaking of editing the Complutensian Polyglot, 1514—1517, the first edition of the Greek New Testament by Erasmus, at Basel, in 1516, the **Editio regia** of the printer Stephanus in 1550, the edition by Beza of Geneva in 1565, and that of the brothers Elzevir in Leyden since 1624, whose second printing in 1633 contained the proud advertisement: *Textum ergo habes nunc ab omnibus receptum*, whence the expression **Textus receptus**. Of still greater interest for the purpose of textual study and criticism are the dates of the discovery or of the publication of manuscripts within the last four hundred years. Thus the year 1582 is memorable because Beza in that year brought out his Greek New Testament, the text having been revised very carefully on the basis of the **Codex Cantabrigiensis** (D 1), from the monastery of St. Iraeneus at Lyons, and of the **Codex Claromontanus** (D 2), from the monastery of Clermont. In 1628 Cyril Lucar, patriarch of Constantinople, presented the **Codex Alexandrinus** (A) to Charles I of England. In 1844 and 1859 Tischendorf found the **Codex Siniaticus** (Aleph) in the Convent of St. Catherine at the foot of Mount Sinai. In 1889 a photographic facsimile reproduction of the **Codex Vaticanus** (B) was published by the Vatican itself, after a number of scholars had, for more than two hundred years, attempted to collate the manuscripts with varying success. In 1843, the New Testament section of the **Codex Ephraemi** (C) was issued by Tischendorf, the manuscript being reproduced line for line, in facsimile.

We are now, and have been for the past fourteen years, in a position to add to these great uncials another very valuable manuscript, or rather two, the “Freer Manuscripts,” of which that containing the gospels is known as

the Washington Manuscript and has been named W in Gregory's list, while that containing the Pauline Epistles has been designated by the same critic as I. Both manuscripts are uncials, and though the second is rather fragmentary, they are both valuable for the further fixation of the New Testament text.

Both manuscripts were bought by Mr. Charles L. Freer, of Detroit, of an Arab dealer named Ali, in Gizeh, near Cairo, December 19, 1906. They were both written on parchment, and the text of the gospels was everywhere in a fairly legible state, which permitted a careful study as made principally by Professor H. A. Sanders, of the University of Michigan. The fragment of the Pauline Epistles was in an almost hopelessly decayed condition as it came in the hands of Mr. Freer, being practically nothing but a blackened lump of parchment as hard and brittle on the outside as glue. Whereas the leaves of the gospel manuscript were in such a good state of preservation that the skins may be distinguished without difficulty, those of the Pauline Epistles were so brittle that it was necessary to separate them and lift them off very carefully by means of a thinbladed knife. The gospel manuscript contains the four gospels in the order Matthew, John, Luke, and Mark. In the epistle manuscript there are evidences that the original number of leaves was between 208 and 212. "The legible fragments begin at 1 Cor. 10:29, and portions of all the remaining Pauline Epistles are found. The Epistle to the Hebrews follows 2 Thessalonians. There have been lost at the beginning of the manuscript fifteen quires and two leaves. On the basis of the amount of text per page in the preserved portion we may reckon Acts at about sixty leaves, or eight quires, of which the last was probably a four-leaf quire; the Catholic epistles would fill 24 leaves, or three quires, and the Epistle to the Romans with the missing part of 1 Corinthians would require some 34 leaves, i.e., just over four quires. This was, then, the content of the original manuscript." (Sanders, **The New Testament Manuscripts in the Freer Collection**, 252.)

A careful investigation seems to have shown that the manuscripts belonged to the Church of Timothy in the Monastery of the Vinedresser, which was located near the third pyramid, and that the first two owners of the gospel manuscript, at any rate, belonged to the fifth century, and the third to the sixth (i. e., 2, 3). The date of manuscript "I" is placed by Sanders as the fourth century, "though the beginning of the fifth must still be

admitted as a possibility” (l. e., 139). The parent of the manuscript he dates soon after the persecution of Diocletian, in 303.

So far as the **materiale** of the text is concerned, the following conclusion is offered: “It was made up out of six separate parts: Matthew, John 5:12 to the end, Luke 1—8:12, Luke 8:13 to end, Mark 1—5:30, Mark 5:31 to end” (p. 133). Both manuscripts belong to the Alexandrine group, to which also the Vaticanus and the Sinaiticus pertain. The beginning of Mark shows North African influence, Matthew and the last part of Luke are of the Antioch recension. While the text of the gospels from W is not yet edited in its entirety, it seems safe to say, from the evidence offered, that we may hardly expect a new Resultant Text, all indications rather pointing to a further corroboration of the readings accepted by the best conservative scholars and critics.

The number of papyri manuscripts of Bible texts that have been discovered in the last three decades have given new impetus to Biblical philology, not only on account of their own intrinsic value, but because they corroborate the text in such a remarkable manner. The number of such manuscripts is much larger than is commonly known. In 1910 A. Deissmann, in an article written for the **New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge**, enumerated forty-four Biblical and Christian fragments from these sources. After further critical work by Gregory, Milligan, and others, Cobern (**The New Archaeological Discoveries**, 1917) was able to print an annotated list of almost fifty fragments of the New Testament alone (pp. 143-160).

Of special interest to the Biblestudent are the Oxyrhynchus Papyri, as they have been edited by the Messrs. Grenfell and Hunt. These men, in 1897, for the Egyptian Exploration Fund, excavated the now famous site of Be-hnesa, the ancient Oxyrhynchus, situated in the Fayum district of the Nile Valley, about 120 miles south of Cairo. Due to the fact that this district had been isolated since about the third or fourth century, the amount of material discovered was so great that the papyri were shipped to England by the ton. The work of editing the masses of manuscripts has been going on steadily since that time, fourteen volumes of Oxyrhynchus papyri having appeared till now.



Naturally, the Bible texts discovered have claimed a great deal of attention, and it is gratifying to know that they have “proved the integrity of the ancient texts in a manner entirely satisfactory to believers,” as Cobern puts it. The following sections from the New Testament are included in these papyri: A fragment of Matt. 1, third century; Mark 10:50, 51, and 11:11, 12, fifth or sixth century; John 1 and 20, third century; Rom. 1, fourth century, an uncial with two cursive lines; Matt. 1 and 2, fifth or sixth century, uncial, 1 John 4, late fourth or fifth century, semiuncial; a fragment of a lost gospel, similar to those of the synoptists, third century; parts of Hebrews, early fourth century; fragment of an uncanonical gospel containing scraps of a conversation between Jesus and a chief priest, fourth or fifth century; John 2:11-22, fourth century; Rev. 16:17-20, fifth century; 1 Cor. 7 and 8, fourth century; Phil. 3 and 4, fourth century; Heb. 9:12-19, fourth century; Rev. 1:4-7, late third or fourth century; Rev. 3:19—4:2, fourth century; Matt. 6:8-17, fifth or sixth century; Matt. 10:32—11:5, fifth century; Jas. 2:19— 3:9, late third century; Matt. 12:24-33, fifth century; John 15 and 16, late third century; Jas. 1:10-18, fourth century; Rev. 5 and 6, early fourth century; 1 Pet. 5, fourth century; Rom. 1:1-16, sixth or seventh century; Rom. 8:12—9:9, third century. As stated above, all of these texts corroborated the ancient texts, and not only the Eastern manuscripts, but also the Codex Bezae, the importance of the latter being emphasized in certain quarters at the present time with much plausibility, especially by Harris and Hoskier.

There are other fragments contained in the Oxyrhynchus papyri which have elicited much comment by scholars, especially the **Logia Jesou**, or “Sayings of Christ,” of which several parts have been found, dating back to the third century. It seems that both real and apocryphal sayings of Christ were transmitted by word of mouth, until they were finally collected and given an authority almost equal to that of the gospels. There is a prayer from the late third or the fourth century which makes a strong appeal to the Christians of today, since its language agrees so exactly with that of our best prayers. It reads: “O God Almighty, who madest the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is therein, help me, have mercy on me, wash away my sins, save me in this world and in the world to come, through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, through whom is the glory and the power forever and ever, Amen.”

Nor is this all that gives such unusual importance to these fragments, the chief interest rather being attached to the fact that the papyri show the language of the greater portion of the New Testament to have been that of the common people, of the nonliterary Greek-speaking populace in the countries bounding on the Mediterranean. This fact, however, is so important that it must be discussed in a special section.

### 3. The Koridethi Manuscript And The Latest Discoveries In Egypt

A LITTLE MORE than ten years ago a short article was offered in the **Theological Monthly**, on the topic, "The Freer Manuscripts and the Oxyrhynchus Papyri" (Vol- I, 1921, 255-259). The importance of these manuscripts for the student of the Greek New Testament has since been abundantly demonstrated, and it is most fortunate that reprints and facsimile copies of most of the important material included in these finds is available in the larger libraries. If nothing else, it is a matter of no small satisfaction to know that every new discovery in this field tends to give further support to the text of the New Testament as it is now available in the editions by Tischendorf, Alford, Westcott and Hort, Souter, and Nestle and substantially reproduced in Luther's German Bible and in the Authorized Version.

About the same time when Dobschuetz published **Eberhard Nestle's Einfruehrung in das griechische Neue Testament** in the fourth edition, May, 1923), Prof. Kirsopp Lake, together with Dr. R. P. Blake, published an article in the **Harvard Theological Review** (July, 1923) in which the authors discuss with great thoroughness the so-called Koridethi Manuscript of the New Testament. Owing to a number of accidents this manuscript, which had come to the attention of scholars in the last quarter of the nineteenth century (it disappeared for about thirty years), was not studied until G. Beermann and C. R. Gregory published it in Leipzig, in 1913, under the title **Die Koridethi-Evangelien**. Three years later Burkitt discussed the text in the **Journal of Theological Studies** (Vol. 17, 1 ff.; 139 ff.). The manuscript has during the last years received as much attention as the Freer text, and there are indications that it may be of value in settling the difficult question of families of texts.

The Koridethi manuscript is an uncial, the handwriting of which, according to Gregory, places it between the seventh and the ninth century. Streeter (**The Four Gospels**, 79) says: “The ordinary tests by which the handwriting of manuscripts can be dated are difficult to apply; but it probably belongs to the eighth century.” It was discovered in a remote valley of the Caucasus Mountains, in the district of ’Swanetia, in the former Russian government Kutais, where the ignorant villagers looked upon it with superstitious awe as a kind of village fetish; but at a much earlier date the manuscript had belonged to a monastery at Koridethi, at the eastern end of the Black Sea, just inside the old frontier between Russia and old Turkey. The handwriting of the copy is very poor, almost like the scribbling of a schoolboy, showing clumsy, irregular letters, which may account for the fact that it was at first not given the attention which it deserves.

Streeter makes the statement that the discovery of this manuscript is comparable in importance with that of the Sinaiticus or the Sinaitic Syriac. This does not refer to its age, as Streeter says, but to the fact that it supplies a missing link, enabling us to see the real connection between certain cursives, the exceptional character of which has long been an enigma to the critic. It was Lake who, in the brilliant article referred to above, demonstrated the relation, as he thought, between this manuscript, now known as Θ (038), formerly No. 1360, and the group of cursives representing the so-called Caesarean text. The matter is now being investigated more closely by a number of scholars, of whom some seem to think that the Koridethi manuscript is a copy of a fairly ancient text, closely related to the Codex Bezae, the Vetus Syra (Syr. sin. and cur.) and the Vetus Latina (the Afra of Stummer).

Some of the readings in the family Θ are very striking. Matt. 1:16 reads: *Jakob de egennesen Joseph, ho mnestenthcz’sa parthenos Mariam egennesen Jesoun ton legomenon Christan.* Concerning Mark 16:9-20 Streeter has the remark: “In the newly discovered Vatopedi MS. 1582 — the oldest manuscript of Family 1 — there is a concluding ornamentation after *ephoubounto gar*, Mark 16:8, followed by a scholion: ‘In some copies the Gospel ends here, up to which point also Eusebius Pamphili made his canons, but in many [copies] there is also found this.’ Then follows 16:9—16.” John 7:53—8:11: “Pericope Adulterae, om. Θ, 22, 2193, 565, 1424, etc... ., with a note that it is found in some copies, but not commented upon

by the holy fathers Chrysostom, Cyril Alexandrinus, and Theodore of Mopsuestia.” (Op. cit., 88 f.)

The Koridethi manuscript, as stated above, has been known for some time, although it is just now being properly evaluated. With regard to the latest discovery in Egypt little is known as yet, but scholars are looking forward to the publication of this manuscript with great interest. As stated in a note in the columns of this journal a few months ago (p. 219), announcement of the newly discovered manuscript was made toward the end of the year 1931 in the **London Times**, with a reproduction of one page of the manuscript, also in the **Spectator**. Further information on the find and its possible importance in the study of the text is given in the **Zetschrift fuer die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft**, in the last number of 1931, the article by Carl Schmidt- Berlin having been closed December 27, 1931. From this article it appears that the following information is now available.

As early as the spring of 1930 it was known that a further find in the field of Bible manuscripts had been made, for it was then that individual papyrus leaves were offered for sale by dealers in Egypt at most exorbitant prices. It remained for A. Chester Beatty, a private collector of England, to acquire 190 leaves of a fairly complete collection. His purchase brought a literary treasure of incalculable value to London, where Sir Frederic Kenyon, former Director-General of the British Museum, and Dr. Bell, another noted expert in the field of papyrology, with the aid of Dr. Ibscher of the Berlin Museum, have taken steps to preserve the manuscript and to collate the fragments. The preliminary information issued by the future editor of the manuscript brings the following facts to the attention of interested scholars.

The Book of Genesis is represented by two different sections. The first section, of 44 leaves, contains chaps. 9—41, the date of the handwriting being the fourth century. The second manuscript comprises 22 leaves, containing chaps. 22—46, of the late third century. Dr. Schmidt here refers to a text purchased by him at Achmin, Egypt, in 1906, containing chaps. 1—35, with some omissions. This was published by him and Prof. A. H. Sanders of the University of Michigan in 1927 (**The Minor Prophets in the Freer Collection and the Berlin Fragment of Genesis**). This codex is dated in the third century.

Numbers and Deuteronomy are included in a single copy, in an unusually good handwriting, which Kenyon dates not later than the middle of the second century, all the leaves being in a good state of preservation, twelve pertaining to the Book of Numbers and thirteen to the Book of Deuteronomy. The text is Num. 5:12—8:19 and parts of 22:11-34, 8; Deut. 1:20—7:18 and 28:43-60. Fragments of individual leaves are in the collection of the Michigan University.

Of Isaiah there are parts on twelve leaves, together with a few fragments, of Jeremiah only one leaf. The conjecture of the editor at present is that these parts are to be dated in the first half of the third century.

Of Esther and Ezekiel there are sixteen leaves, a form of a codex in keeping with the quaternions of that day. The text offered is that of Esther 2:20—7:9 and Ezek. 11:25—17:21. The apocryphal sections of Esther are included, as was customary in the Greek text.

Of the prophet Daniel chap. 3:72—6:18 and 7:1-8, 27 are preserved, but with several gaps. Kenyon thinks that the handwriting belongs to the first part of the third century. The text of this book is especially interesting, since it contains the original translation of the Septuagint, before the recension of Theodotion. Till now the original translation was contained only in one copy, that of the Chigi Library in Rome, whose date is the eleventh century.

Of Ecclesiasticus there is only one leaf preserved, containing 36:28—37:22, the handwriting being assigned to the fifth century. It is clear that the science of textual criticism has received some very valuable material. Both the Cambridge and the Goettingen edition of the Septuagint may be influenced by the new discoveries.

Of the New Testament three sections are distinguished in the new find. The first is a manuscript of the four gospels and of the Book of Acts, dated not later than the third century. Twenty-eight leaves have been preserved, some of them, however, in a very fragmentary condition. But it is plain that the text contains Matt. 20 and 26; Mark 4:36—9:31; Luke 9:26—14:33; and John 10:7—11:56, to which must be added thirteen leaves of the Acts, with 4:27—17:17. It is significant that the gospels and the Book of Acts appear in one volume, whereas it was formerly assumed that the four gospels were never issued together in the early centuries, at least not before the fourth century.

Of the letters of the New Testament, the so-called **Apostolos**, the following sections are contained on nine leaves: Rom. 5:17—11:32, the end of the Philippians and the beginning of Colossians, and a small part of First Thessalonians. Since this codex was issued with numbered pages, it has been calculated that 70 leaves have dropped out between Rom. 11:32 and the present beginning of Philippians. The editor assumes that this section contained Hebrews, the two letters to the Corinthians, Galatians, and Ephesians. The manuscript is to be dated not later than the third century.

Of the Apocalypse ten leaves have been preserved, containing 9:10—17:2, the manuscript being dated in the latter half of the third century. Besides this, five leaves of the Book of Enoch were found, with an appendix of an ancient Christian homily. This Kenyon assumes to have been written in the fifth century.

It has not yet been determined where these leaves were found, but Dr. Schmidt believes one may well conclude that they were found in the village of Atfih, the ancient Aphroditopolis, the home of Antonius, who was the founder of monasticism in Egypt. There can be no doubt that there were churches and monasteries in this neighborhood in considerable numbers, in which consecrated scribes were willing enough to make copies on papyrus after the ancient copies on parchment had been used up in the services of the churches and monasteries.

## 4. When Was Jesus Born?

THE BEGINNING of the Christian era, and therefore the supposed year of Christ's birth, was first fixed by Dionysius Exiguus, a Scythian monk, who lived in Rome at the beginning of the sixth century. He was greatly interested in computations pertaining to the church-year and did much toward establishing a uniform practice with regard to the celebration of Easter. He placed the birth of Christ in the year 754 a. u. c. (after the founding of the city of Rome). Even before his time several of the Popes of Rome had tried to determine the date of Christ's birth. It is said that Pope Julius I (336—352) had the imperial archives of Rome searched for the exact date of the birth of Christ, and it has been established beyond a doubt that Pope Liberius fixed the celebration of Christmas for December 25. By the middle of the sixth century, then, the date of the birth of Jesus was generally accepted to have been December 25, 754 a. u. c.

In an article in **Lehre and Wehre** of December, 1902, the writer shows that the computation of Dionysius Exiguus was undoubtedly erroneous. Using chiefly chronological tags from the Bible, all of which render the year 754 a. u. c. altogether improbable, the essayist finally concludes that the year 750 a. u. c. is the correct year of Christ's birth and that the Christian era should therefore be moved back four years. This idea was held quite generally among orthodox theologians about two decades ago.

But in the meantime, evidence was brought forth which indicated that a further correction in the computations must be made in order to harmonize facts from secular history with the Scriptural account. Work has been done chiefly by Sir William Ramsay, but subsequently also by Robertson, Deissmann, McKinley, and others, and the difficulty may now be said to have been solved with a reasonable amount of certainty. The argument proceeds from four points of departure: the time of the vision of Zacharias in the Temple, the beginning of John the Baptist's ministry, the first census



of Augustus, and the death of Herod. Of these arguments the first is rather precarious, since it is based upon the date when Zacharias was supposed to have been on duty in the Temple, when "he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course," Luke 1:8, namely, that of Abia. Even if the alleged Jewish records were always reliable, the latitude in the matter, according to the Bible account, is so great as to make the element of conjecture disproportionately great. But the other lines of argument are decidedly worth considering.

If we begin with the relation of Herod to the time of Christ's birth, we have a number of facts to consider. In the first place, it is clear that Herod the Great was still ruling in Palestine; for Matthew writes: "Now, when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod, the king," Matt. 2:1. Moreover, some time must be allowed between the birth of Jesus and the death of the cruel tyrant. The Magi clearly left their home in search of the newborn King only after His birth had actually taken place, Matt. 2:2, 3. The journey from the East to Jerusalem occupied" some time, even if we assume that the men traveled with all speed. Some time must be allowed for the consultation with the priests, as it was arranged by Herod, Matt. 2:4 ff. Then, again, Herod may well have allowed a week or two for the Magi to return to Jerusalem before he staged the slaughter of the innocents. And, finally, to take only one more Scripture tag at this point, a further period of time must be figured before the death of Herod, since Joseph and Mary were evidently in Egypt for some time, for they were to remain in Egypt until they should receive word, Matt. 2:13, and they did stay there until after the death of Herod, Matt. 2:15. The conclusion seems safe, then, that the death of Herod did" not take place in the same year in which Jesus was born, especially since he himself allowed a possible total of two years between the birth of the Child and the time when he slew the children of Bethlehem.

To these facts, deduced from the Bible, we may add certain others from fairly reliable historical sources. In the first place, Herod the Great died thirty-seven years after he was made king of Judea and the other Palestinian provinces, at the beginning of April in the year 750 a. u. c., or shortly after the eclipse of March 12, 750. In the second place, about the year 746 a. u. c. Herod fell into disgrace with Augustus, a fact which made certain embassies from him to the Roman court necessary. (Cp. Josephus,

**Antiquities**, XVI, 9, 3.) This fact must be kept in mind also in connection with the next point.

We have next to consider the matter of the census, of which Luke writes: “And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria,” Luke 2:1, 2. The two difficulties here encountered are those pertaining to Cyrenius, or Publius Sulpicius Quirinius, and the census itself. It has been known since 1764 that Quirinius was governor of Syria from 6 to 9 A.D. But it has more recently been established that, whereas Sentius Saturninus was civil governor of Syria from 9 to 7 B.C., to be followed by Quinctilius Varus, yet Quirinius was military legate, not only of Syria, but also of Cilicia and other provinces in the Taurus region of Asia Minor, the date 10 to 7 B.C. having been definitely established in this connection. (Cp. **American Journal of Archaeology**, IV, 1924, 436.) He was evidently in charge of the armies of the East, chiefly in conducting the war against the Homonadenses, but also in acting as the special lieutenant of the emperor in the affairs of Syria and the neighboring provinces. (Cp. Ramsay, **Was Christ Born in Bethlehem?**, chap. XI; Robertson, **Luke the Historian**, 128.)

But how about the census itself? It was generally alleged that Luke had made a mistake in speaking of an enrollment by households which extended throughout the Roman Empire. But the facts are that we now have incontrovertible evidence of a periodic census in the Roman Empire beginning with the time of Augustus, the period being fourteen years. In an edict by Gaius Vibius Maximus, governor of Egypt, 104 A.D., we read: “The enrollment by households being at hand, it is necessary to notify all who for any cause are outside their homes to return to their domestic hearths, that they may accomplish the customary dispensation of enrollment and continue steadfastly in the husbandry that belongeth to them.” (Robertson, **Luke the Historian**, 125 f.; Deissmann, **Licht vom Osten**, 4 Aufl., 231 f.) Deissmann, who is certainly not too conservative in his evaluation of Bible material, says at this point: “Es handelt sich um eine der alle vierzehn Jahre stattfindenden Volkszählungen zum Zwecke der Feststellung der Kopfsteuer oder sonstiger personaler Verpflichtungen.” It has been proved that an enrollment was made in the year 90 A.D., also one at the time of Nero in 61—62 A.D., extending a year or two beyond. A

fragment found by Grenfell and Hunt, dated the sixth year of Tiberius, 20 A.D., shows conclusively that periodic enrollments were in use at that time. A papyrus has also been discovered ordering an enrollment in Egypt 23 to 22 B.C. (Cp. Ramsay, **Was Christ Born in Bethlehem?**, chap. VII.)

If we, now, add to this material the evidence found in Luke's writings, we find that he refers to a census in Acts 5:37, at about the time when Archelaus had been deposed from his position as king, or ethnarch, of Judea and Samaria, and the so-called first general enrollment, of Luke 2:1, the former being the census of 6 A.D., the latter that of 9 to 8 B.C.

But there is still some other material which cannot be disregarded at this point. We know that John the Baptist was approximately six months older than Jesus. But we read of him in Luke 3:1, 2: "Now, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness." Since Tiberius was co-regent of Augustus, from 11—12 A.D. till 14 A.D., it follows that the fifteenth year of this emperor would be 26—27 A.D. Shortly afterward we are told that Jesus Himself began to be about thirty years of age, Luke 3:23, the *hosei* of the Greek expressing about what our phrase "He was in His early thirties" would state. An additional tag is found in John 2:20, which refers to about the same time in the public ministry of Jesus, His first Passover, shortly after He had begun to preach in public. The Jews there remark: "Forty and six years was this Temple in building." Since the Temple of Herod was begun in 20—19 B.C., this fact would again make the date 26—27 A.D.

The situation then, comes down to this. The **terminus a quo** is the year 9—8 B. (1., when Augustus actually sent out the decree commanding an enrollment throughout the empire, and the **terminus ad quem** is the year 4 B.C., the year of Herod's death. That we must go beyond the latter date a matter of some two or more years seems to follow from the various factors enumerated above. But that we cannot go all the way back to 8 B.C. in fixing the date of Christ's birth is also apparent from a number of points. In the first place, the decree could reach the territory under Herod's jurisdiction only via the legate of Syria, who transmitted it to the **rex socius**, this being the standing of Herod in the Roman Empire. The sending

of messengers hearing a copy of the decree naturally consumed much more time than that a similar transaction would occupy today. After Herod had received the text of the document at Jerusalem by way of Antioch, there was still some delay. As Ramsay points out (**Was Christ Born in Bethlehem?**, Chap. IX), his conclusions being based partly upon Josephus and partly upon other sources, Herod at this time sent two embassies to the court of the emperor, for he was not at all willing to accept the census, a mark of servitude and degradation in rank, without some form of protest. When his petition went unheeded the first time, he sent a second embassy announcing his compliance with the emperor's wishes. All this, of course, took time, very likely more than a year. The year 8—7 B.C. which ended with April 17, 7 B.C., may practically be eliminated in our discussion. The only thing that remains is for us to conclude that the year 7 B.C. itself is the year during which the enrollment in Palestine was carried out, and if we desire to abide by the result of the search. instituted in the fourth century, we could accept December 25 of that year as the date of Christ's birth.

It would follow from this, interestingly enough, that Jesus was fully thirty-three years old when He entered upon the work of His public ministry, early in 27 A.D., that He died at Eastertide in the year 30, when He was fully thirty-six years old, and that the formal establishment of the Christian Church took place on Pentecost Day of that year.

## 5. The Earliest Christian Congregations At Rome And At Antioch

THE VERY FIRST congregation which was founded after the coming of our Lord was that at Jerusalem. Not, indeed, as though there had not been a congregation in the sense in which He speaks of it, Matt. 18:19, 20, before. Just as soon as the Lord called His first disciples, John 1:35-51, He had a small congregation of believers, which had all the rights and privileges of a regular congregation. This band of believers, moreover, during the time of the Lord's ministry, grew in numbers to embrace a total of more than five hundred for the entire country of Palestine, 1 Cor. 15:6, and some 120 in Jerusalem alone, Acts 1:15. Yet the formal organization of the first Christian congregation may be said to have taken place on and after the first Day of Pentecost of the New Testament Church. The date of this event may be fixed, with a fair degree of certainty, on the basis of a few passages, one of which is Luke 3:1, 2. Since Tiberius, who became emperor of Rome in the year 14 A.D., had been coregent of Augustus for a few years, the fifteenth year of his reign was the year 27 A.D. This date agrees with the other facts which are noted by Luke; for Pilate became procurator of Judea and Samaria in the year 26 A.D., being subject to the legate of Syria. The ministry of Jesus, therefore, began in the year 27 A.D., shortly before the Passover; for John describes his first journey to Jerusalem after his baptism in chapter 2 of his gospel. It is now generally assumed that the Passoverfestival at which Jesus suffered death was the fourth of His public ministry. It was therefore, in the year 30 A.D. that the first Christian congregation was established at Jerusalem. The history of this congregation up to the outbreak of the Jewish war has been described quite frequently. But concerning two of the other early congregations of the apostolic age

conditions are not quite so favorable, and much contradictory material has been published. It may be well for this reason to give a short summary of the history of the congregations at Rome and at Antioch till about the end of the first century.

With regard to the church at Rome it is a matter of common knowledge that the Roman Catholic Church insists that the congregation was founded by Peter and that Peter was its first bishop, being followed in this office by Linus and then by Clement. However, historical evidence in support of this claim is entirely lacking. Concerning Peter we have the information contained in the first part of the Book of Acts, chapter 12, telling us that Peter, after his miraculous liberation from imprisonment at Jerusalem, departed from the city and went into another place. From Gal. 2:11-14 we learn that Peter made a visit to Antioch some time between 33 and 49 A.D. From the two letters of Peter we may draw the conclusion that he had visited all the provinces of Asia Minor, 1 Pet. 1:1, and we may assume that at the time of writing his two letters he was at Rome, for so the word Babylon, 1 Pet. 5:13, is now generally understood. But this was in the early sixties. and it is hardly believable that Peter had labored in Rome in the interval, especially since Paul, about the year 58 A.D., addressed his letter to the Roman Christians. In this letter we find no reference to Peter, and we know that Paul was very careful not to build upon the foundation of another man. The instruction which he gives in his letter to the Romans is evidently the first apostolic instruction which the Christians of that city received. That the church of Rome was not founded by Peter seems to be evident also from the fact that we have no Petrine Liturgy, for the Roman Liturgy does not go back to the early decades of the first century. Both external and internal evidence with regard to this liturgy indicate that it is younger than the liturgy of St. James and that of Ephesus (Paul and John). How, then, was the church at Rome established? If we look over the list of names given in connection with. the people who were present at the first celebration of Pentecost after the death of Jesus, we find that there were present strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Rom. 2:10. There is no evidence of any kind connecting the founding of the church at Rome with any of the twelve apostles. Paul is excluded by his own testimony, Rom. 15:22, 23. It is safe to conclude, therefore, that the congregation at Rome was founded by some of the Jews from the capital who had been in Jerusalem when the great Pentecost miracle took place. These people, who may have been both men

and women, were evidently Jews, who, after their return to Rome, began to make known the great and wonderful works of God, especially the fact that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah. Thus, in the course of the next few years, a small congregation may well have been established. The movement seems to have received further impetus on account of the dispersion which took place after the murder of Stephen, Acts 8:4. The congregation at Rome, at this time, seems to have been composed largely of Jewish Christians, who lived in the Jewish quarter of the capital. Whether the congregation at this time became very large and influential or not, does not appear in any manner.

The next historical tag which will serve to direct us in our investigation is that which we find in the Roman historian Suetonius, who writes: “**Judaeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit.**” This is said of Claudius Caesar, and the decree, according to other information, chiefly that of Orosius, was issued in the ninth year of this emperor, or in the year 49 A.D. This note from Suetonius is interesting from a number of angles. This information, of course, was inexact, since he speaks of Chrestus, or Christus, as being the instigator of the tumult. The obvious conclusion is this, that there was some difficulty in the Jewish quarter of Rome, very likely along the same lines which we find indicated in Acts 28:22, where the leaders of the Roman Jews tell Paul concerning “this sect” (the Christians) “that everywhere it is spoken against.” Very likely the congregation, having become a little stronger in the course of the years, had been doing some aggressive mission-work, the result being that the Jewish leaders of that time instigated a persecution of some kind, which resulted in a tumult. The emperor, receiving only inadequate information concerning the situation, regarded it as a bit of Jewish foolishness, and since he did not care to have his city made a scene of rioting, he simply expelled all the Jews from the city. It was at this time that Aquila and Priscilla came to Corinth, since they also were included in the decree of Claudius, Acts 18:2. The expulsion of the Jews seems to have interfered very decidedly with the further growth of the congregation, if it did not end its life for the time being.

However, Claudius Caesar died in the year 54 A.D., and the decree was therefore no longer in force. Accordingly we find that Aquila and Priscilla, who had accompanied Paul to Ephesus and remained there for a number of

years (four or five), returned to Rome in order to save their business or to reestablish it. This is clear from Rom. 16:3-5, where Paul sends greetings to Priscilla and Aquila at Rome, and greets also the church in their house. Evidently these two staunch helpers of Paul, having returned to the capital about the year 55, had lost no time in once more establishing a congregation at Rome, and they had already had sufficient success, so that at least a small congregation was once more in existence in the year 58, when Paul wrote his letter to the Romans. It is all the more plausible that this congregation consisted of Jews and proselytes who had been dispersed on account of the decree of Claudius, since Paul was acquainted personally with so many of them; for his list of friends to whom he sends greetings in chapter 16 is the longest in any of his letters.

Matters seem to have gone ahead without much difficulty until the early sixties of the first century. For eight or nine years the congregation had grown inwardly and outwardly, until the number of adherents of the Christian sect, as it was called, was quite large. Not only in Rome itself was there a congregation of some size, but the Christians of Rome had done mission-work also in the suburbs and elsewhere in the neighborhood; for Luke speaks of brethren whom they found at Puteoli, Acts 28:13, 14. Between the years 61 and 63 A.D. Paul himself could preach to the congregation. After he had been set free, at the end of his first imprisonment in Rome, he very likely left for Spain, then for Crete and the eastern provinces. It was during his absence from Rome at this time that the sudden persecution of Nero took place. In July of the year 64 a large part of the city of Rome was destroyed by a terrible conflagration, and when the people of Rome began to mutter, accusing Nero of having caused the fire, he placed the blame on the Christians, whose number evidently was large enough at that time to make them conspicuous even in the capital of the world. Not only Suetonius and Tacitus refer to this persecution, but also Juvenal and Martial, as well as Dio Cassius. Owing to the circumstances connected with the accusation against the Christians the persecution was extremely severe, the Christians being hunted down like wild beasts. They were sewed in the skins of animals to be torn by wild beasts; they were soaked with oil and other inflammable material and then elevated on poles in the parks of Nero, where they were set on fire in the evening to serve as torches for the raving populace. All this was done because they were accused of a new and malicious superstition and of hatred of the entire



generation of man. The melancholy spectacle was accompanied with a horse race and honored with the presence of the emperor himself, who mingled with the people in the dress of a charioteer.

Just how far this persecution affected the existence of the congregation at Rome cannot definitely be stated, but undoubtedly the effect was quite severe. Not only do we find Paul complaining that he had no one to take care of him in his second imprisonment, 2 Tim. 4:11-17, but other information which we have likewise shows that the congregation was pretty well dispersed. And it was only after the fury of the people had been appeased by the death of Paul and Peter, and very likely by that also of other leaders of the Christians, that they permitted the believers again to establish themselves in Rome. During the following three or four decades the congregation became very well established indeed, with not only one place of meeting, but a number of them in various sections of the city, so that the congregation at Home at this time became one of the largest and most influential of any in the large cities of the empire. —

The city of Antioch, the metropolis of Syria and the third city of the Roman Empire, is very interesting to us on account of the fact that the Christian congregation which was there established about the middle of the third decade of the first century, was founded by laymen. We are told that the members of the church at Jerusalem who had been scattered abroad on account of the persecution which arose about Stephen traveled about as far as Phenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, Acts 11:19. Now, it had been stated before, Acts 8:1, that the believers of Jerusalem who were scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria did not include the apostles. All these disciples preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ, at first to the Jews only. But we are told that some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, evidently Jews from the Dispersion, who were somewhat more liberal in their views. These men, when they were come to Antioch, spoke the Word to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus, Acts 11:20. The result of their preaching was apparent at once; for the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number of their hearers “believed and turned unto the Lord.” Although no exact date is given, it is safe to assume that the founding of the church at Antioch took place in the latter part of the third decade of the first century.

The establishment of this congregation was plainly a miracle of the Lord, as was that of the founding of the Corinthian church some ten or twelve years later. Antioch was known throughout the Orient for the licentiousness and the open immorality of its citizens. Groves of Daphne were freely given over to the most shameful vices, and the great majority of the citizens of Antioch and the visitors in the Syrian metropolis felt free to join in the immoral practices at any time, their attitude being made easy by the immense wealth of the city. The description of the city given by various secular writers shows that, far from being ready to receive the Gospel of the humble Prince of Peace, the people of Antioch, by reason of their environment and training, were utterly and violently opposed to a religion which makes purity an essential virtue.

And yet the Word of God was established in the midst of this wicked city. Nor were the lower classes, especially the slaves, the only ones to accept the Gospel of the redemption through Jesus Christ; on the contrary, the history of the congregation shows that people of the upper classes likewise became interested in the story of the Atonement. When Barnabas of Jerusalem was sent to Antioch to gain some personal knowledge of the situation there, he found the grace of God apparent in the work of the church, and he therefore exhorted the believers to cleave to the Lord with steadfast purpose. Evidently the congregation still grew and prospered, especially since they had the advantage of having in their midst, among other great teachers, the great Apostle Paul himself. Their influence upon the other citizens of the city must have been considerable, for it was here that the disciples were first called Christians, Acts 11:26.

We find two interesting facts stated concerning the congregation at Antioch, even in the first decades of its existence. The one is that the Christians of this congregation were filled with the proper spirit of charity from the beginning. When there was a famine in Judea during the early years of Claudius Caesar, the Christians of Antioch sent relief to the brethren in Judea, the collection being delivered by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. The other outstanding event in the early history of the congregation at Antioch was the sending forth of the first heathen missionaries. The story is recorded in the first verses of Acts 13. The Holy Spirit directed, through the leaders of the church, that Barnabas and Saul should be sent abroad for missionary work among the Gentiles.

Accordingly they were solemnly ordained for this office, the congregation as such being present at their installation.

The interest of the congregation at Antioch in foreign mission work did not wane for the next decade or two. We find that at the end of the first missionary journey Paul and his companions returned to Antioch, where they gathered the congregation together and rehearsed to its members all that God had done through them and how He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles, Acts 14:27. At the end of the second missionary journey we likewise find Paul returning to Antioch and spending some time there, Acts 18:22, 23. After this there is no special mention of the church at Antioch, for Paul could not return there the third time, since he was made prisoner in Jerusalem and from there taken down to Caesarea.

That the church at Antioch was influential from the beginning appears not only from the passages which have been quoted above, but also from the fact that the delegates from this congregation were very respectfully received at Jerusalem, when they came to place an important question before the apostles and the church at Jerusalem, Acts 15. Moreover, the church at Antioch was regarded as being on a level with that of Jerusalem. This we see from the action of Paul in reproving Peter when the latter, upon the occasion of a visit to Antioch, dissembled with some of the Jewish Christians, thereby giving great offense to some of the brethren from the Gentiles, Gal. 2:11-14.

Of the history of the church at Antioch between the fifth and the ninth decade of the first century but little is known. The discovery of the so-called "chalice" of Antioch has caused some interesting speculation. It seems certain that the beautiful chalice belongs to the Augustan age of Roman art and must be definitely placed in the first century. The fact that we have a picture of Christ within a halo seems to confirm this supposition. The heads of the five chief men of the congregation at Antioch also confirm the historical facts which we know from the Bible. The number of loaves shown on the sides of the chalice corresponds with that of the two feedings of Jesus, thus furnishing a corroboration of the gospel account also in this instance. If the chalice was actually in the possession of the congregation at Antioch, it indicates a wealth which was quite unusual for a congregation at that time. But, at the same time, it shows that the Christians from the beginning were not opposed to beautiful ornaments in their churches and

meeting-places. The congregation at Antioch, up to the Council of Nicaea and beyond, held a very prominent place in the early Church, furnishing some of the outstanding teachers of the Orient. It was a center of Christianity not only for Syria, but for the entire eastern part of Asia Minor as well.

## 6. The Chronological Sequence Of The Pauline Letters

IN CHAPTER XXVII of his excellent book, **Archaeology and the Bible**, Professor Barton remarks: “The chronology of the life of Paul cannot be fully determined from the Bible itself. Such chronological data as the New Testament affords helps us only to a relative chronology. Could the year of one of the dates given by the New Testament be determined by a date of the Roman Empire, it would enable scholars to affix with approximate certainty the other dates” (page 439). Since the discussion has always been based on a relative chronology, the various systems differ from one another by from four to five years, and as a result there has been quite a little bit of confusion pertaining to the chronological data of Paul’s letters.

So far as the relative chronology of the Pauline letters is concerned, we have the following passages of Scripture to aid us in forming a picture of this section of history. In Gal. 1:18 Paul writes: “Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter.” This period of time is evidently to be reckoned from the date of his conversion and includes the time of the so-called Arabian sojourn. In Gal. 2:1 the Apostle, connecting up with the late date mentioned by him, writes: “Then fourteen years after, I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas and took Titus with me also.” This trip is evidently identical with the one described in Acts 15, the occasion being that of the so-called Apostolic Council. In Acts 18:11 we are told that Paul continued in Corinth a year and six months, and afterwards it is stated that Paul after this tarried there yet a good while. This was after he had been brought before Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia. In the same chapter we are told that, before Paul had started on his third missionary journey, he spent some time in Antioch before his departure for Galatia and Phry—gia. In chapter 19:8 we find that Paul went into the synagog at Ephesus and spoke boldly for the space of three months. The Jews having turned from him, he

continued his work in the school of one Tyrannus, this continuing by the space of two years. Some further time was used by Paul in work at Ephesus, for we read that he stayed there even after the tumult of Demetrius. The total length of Paul's sojourn at Ephesus is indicated by his remark in Acts 20:31: "Remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." At this point we must insert from 1 Cor. 5:8 the remark of Paul: "Let us keep the Feast," evidently the Passover. And from 1 Cor. 16:8: "I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost." Continuing in the account of Acts, we find that Paul spent three months in Corinth, after reaching this city by way of Macedonia. On his return to Jerusalem, Paul sailed away from Philippi with his companions after the days of unleavened bread, Paul's purpose being to reach Jerusalem before the day of Pentecost. Of later chronological data we have only the reference in Acts 24:27, stating that after two years Porcius Festus became the successor of Felix, and Acts 28:30, where we are told that Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house.

From this material alone an absolute chronology of the events connected with the journeys and the letters of Paul is obviously impossible. But fortunately we have recently come into possession of certain information which enables us to fix the exact date of certain events mentioned in Scripture and thus to give a clearer picture of the sequence of incidents in the life of Paul. In Acts 18:2 we find the statement that a certain Jew named Aquila, lately come from Italy, with his Wife Priscilla, was living in Corinth, and the significant explanation is given: "because that Claudius had demanded all Jews to depart from Rome." The date of this decree of expulsion may be gained with reasonable certainty from three secular writers. Suetonius (Claudius 25) writes: **Judaeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit.** This statement is supported by Josephus, according to whose account the date of the edict of Claudius must be placed between the year 50 and 52 A.D., during the absence of Herod II from Rome, who was a friend of the Jews. (Antiquities, XXVI, 3.) Basing his remarks on the account of Josephus, found in a book which has been lost, Orosius writes: **Anno esjudem nono expulsos per Claudium Urbe Judaeos Josephus refert.** Since Claudius reigned from 41 to 54 A.D., this would place the date of the decree in either 49 or 50 A.D., and, if, with Ramsay (St. Paul, 68), we suppose that the statement of Orosius have evidently dated events of Claudius a year too early, we may safely place the

date at 49 A.D. This would explain the expulsion of Aquila and Priscilla from Rome.

The next point concerns the date of Gallio's proconsulship of Achaia. Fortunately this has been fixed with great definiteness on the basis of a fragmentary inscription which has come to light from Delphi. The inscription is given by Deissmann (St. Paul, 261, 262) from the article published by Bourguet. It has recently been reproduced a number of times and reads as follows: "Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, Pontifex Maximus, of tribunican authority for the 12th time, imperator the 26th time, father of the country, consul for the 5th time, honorable, greets the city of the Delphians. Having long been well disposed to the city of the Delphians... I have had success. I have observed the religious ceremonies of the Pythian Apollo... now it is said also of the citizens... as Lucius Junius Gallio, my friend and the proconsul of Achaia, wrote... on this account I accede to you still to have the first..."

The importance of this inscription, as Barton points out, lies, first, in the fact that it mentions Gallio as proconsul of Achaia, and, second, in the reference to the twelve tribunican years and the twenty-sixth imperatorship of Claudius. As Appel remarks, in his *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, this inscription clearly shows the letter of Claudius to have been written between January and August of the year 52 A.D. If Gallio was then in office and had been in office long enough to give information to Claudius of material importance to the purpose of the letter to the Delphians, Gallio must have arrived in Corinth not later than the year 51. Now, according to Dio Cassius (LX, 17, 3), Claudius in January of the year 43 had decreed that all new officials should start for their provinces not later than the middle of April. Accordingly Gallio must have entered upon the duties of his office, according to Barton, by the new moon of the month of June in the year 51. In any event he must have been in Corinth before the middle of that year.

These two points having been considered, the date of Paul's entrance into Corinth may easily be deduced. In the first place, the Jews left Rome in the year 49/50 A.D. This was a flight, an expulsion, and therefore it is evident that Aquila and Priscilla made the journey from Rome to Corinth in a short time. In the second place, Paul entered the house of Aquila and Priscilla when they had **lately** come from Italy. We are compelled, then, to

accept as the date of Paul's entrance into Corinth the latter part of the year 50 A.D. (Cp. Barton, **Archaeology and the Bible**, 439, 440; Cobern, **The New Archaeological Discoveries**, 494, 502.) It is true that an objection has lately been voiced by Larfelt in **Neue Kirchliche Zeitschrift** (Heft 10, 1923), for he wishes to show that Paul entered Corinth in the autumn of 51 A.D., or after Gallio became proconsul. But he entirely ignores the edict of Claudius and the arrival of Aquila and Priscilla after their expulsion from Rome, and therefore his argumentation is not conclusive.

A further factor in establishing the chronology of the Pauline letters is the reference to Aquila and Priscilla in the various letters written by the great Apostle. From Acts 18 we note that they were in Corinth, and from 1 Cor. 16:19, where Paul sends greetings from them, it is clear that they were then still in Ephesus. But in Rom. 16:3—5 Paul sends greetings to Aquila and Priscilla while they were in Rome, while in 2 Tim. 4:19, the letter which Paul addressed to Timothy at Ephesus, it is evident that Priscilla and Aquila were once more in Ephesus, where they had gone with Paul in the first place. From these references it is clear that Aquila and Priscilla returned to Rome after the death of Claudius in 54 A.D., but that, after winding up their affairs in the capital, they once more returned to the city which they had determined to make their permanent home, that is, Ephesus.

After thus having established some of the chief events of chronological importance in the life of Paul, we are in a position to fix the time in which he wrote the various letters. The first letter to the Thessalonians was clearly written during the first sojourn in Corinth. Now, since he arrived in this city in the latter part of the year 50, and we must allow some time for the return of Timothy from Thessalonica (Acts 17:15; 1 Thess. 1:1), and since we must also take into consideration the fact that the good report concerning the Thessalonian Christians had spread throughout the two provinces (1 Thess. 1:8), therefore we may conclude quite definitely that this letter was written in the latter part of the year 51 A.D. (Cp. 1 Thess. 3:1, 2, 6.) The Second Letter to the Thessalonians was clearly written not very long after the first letter, and if we assume an interval of three or four months, we may readily conclude that it may be placed at the very end of the year 51 or in the beginning of the year 52 A.D.

So far as the letter to the Galatians is concerned, its date depends upon the fact whether one would insist upon the North Galatian theory or accept



the South Galatian theory. In the one case we should have to assume that the letter was written from Corinth in the year 51, and in the other that it was written during the third journey, from Ephesus, or again, also during the third journey, from the city of Corinth, but in the spring of the year 58 A.D. So far as the First Letter to the Corinthians is concerned, circumstances point to Ephesus as the place where it was written and to the early part of the year 57 as the time, about Easter. Second Corinthians, as the entire letter shows, was written while Paul was on the way to meet Titus, whom he had sent to Corinth. It was evidently not written in any city of Asia Minor, because Paul had gone to Troas in the hope of meeting Titus, and had not found him. (2 Cor. 2:12, 13.) This letter was therefore written from some city in Macedonia, very likely Philippi. As to the time when it was written, this may be determined from two facts. In the first place Paul had intended to remain in Ephesus until Pentecost, very likely of the year 56 (or 57). From 1 Cor. 16:1-3 and 2 Cor. 9:2 one may infer that a full year had elapsed since Paul had written the First Letter to the Corinthians. The date would therefore be about autumn of the year 57. The Apostle continued his journey, reaching Corinth a few months later and remaining there for at least three months, Acts 20:2, 6. The letter to the Romans was therefore written about the first part of the year 58 A.D., in March, before shipping opened, for we find him sailing from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, Acts 20:6.

So far as the other letters of Paul are concerned, there is now no longer so much dispute as in times past. There are still some scholars who would place the so-called captivity letters into the time of Paul's stay at Caesarea or even at Ephesus, but on the whole it is now conceded that his later letters were written in about the following order: Colossians during the first Roman captivity, about the year 61 or 62, Ephesians shortly afterward, followed by Philemon, and Philippians toward the end of his captivity, about the end of 62 or the beginning of 63. The Pastoral Letters were written after the release of Paul from his first captivity, Titus and First Timothy being written from Macedonia about the year 65, and Second Timothy during the second captivity of Paul at Rome in the year 66 or early in 67.

## 7. The Place And Time Of The Captivity Letters

FOUR LETTERS ascribed to the Apostle Paul have from ancient times been called the Captivity Letters, namely, those to the Colossians, to Philemon, to the Ephesians, and to the Philippians, and the traditional view is that they were written during Paul's first captivity in Rome, from 61 to 63 A.D. But some recent scholars in the field of New Testament isagogics are inclined to reject the traditional view, preferring to assume that either Caesarea, between 58 and 60, is to be accepted or Ephesus, between 54 and 57. The proponents of Caesarea have some difficulty in adjusting historical data, however, while those who would speak in favor of Ephesus seem to have a much stronger case. For that reason it may be profitable to make a somewhat more careful examination of the theory which attempts to place the Captivity Letters in the time of the Ephesine sojourn. The investigation is not a mere bit of pastime in the field of introduction, but touches upon certain critical questions which may impugn the veracity of certain statements in various books of the New Testament. **Which view, then, may most safely and correctly be held concerning the place and the time of the Captivity Letters, that which ascribes them to the Ephesine sojourn of Paul, between 54 and 57, or the traditional account, which states that they were written in Rome, during the first captivity?**

Before we take up the arguments for the writing of the Captivity Letters during the Ephesine sojourn of Paul, it ought to be noted that Feine places both Colossians and Ephesians in the time of the Caesarean captivity, chiefly on the basis of negative, subjective reasons. On that account even Appel brushes Feine's contention aside when he writes: "Caesarea as the place of writing Philippians, Philemon, Colossians, and Ephesians is excluded by the traveling plans of Paul. According to Acts 19:21 Paul, even in Ephesus, had the definite intention to travel to Jerusalem via Achaia and

thence to Rome. This intention he also expresses in the letter to the Romans, written from Corinth, chap. 15:23, and in a dream he receives the assurance from the Lord, Acts 23:11, that this intention should be realized in spite of his arrest. Now, indeed, this realization was considerably retarded by his arrest, but that very fact would be a stimulus for the apostle to lose no time in carrying it out after his release. Thus he cannot have written Philippians from Caesarea, for according to chap. 2:24 he intends to visit Philippi immediately after his release, nor the other letters, for according to Philemon 22 he plans a journey to Colossae. He might still have determined to make a trip to Rome in a roundabout way if the condition in those congregations to which he addressed letters had been one to cause him apprehension. But that was not the case (cp. Phil. 1:3 fl'.; 2:12; 4:1; Col. 1:3 f.; 2:5, and all of Ephesians).” (**Einleitung in das Neue Testament**, 52.)

The reasons for assuming an Ephesine captivity of Paul are found entirely in a number of passages contained in the two letters to the Corinthians. In 1 Cor. 15:32 the apostle writes: “If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me if the dead rise not?” This is interpreted as a reference to a gladiatorial combat in which the apostle was forced to take part after being arrested by the Roman authorities. In further support of this contention several passages in Second Corinthians are adduced, such as chap. 1:8-10: “For we would not have you ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life; but we had the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raiseth the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver.”

The reasons for placing Colossians Philemon, and Ephesians at Ephesus are given by Appel (p. 54) as follows: “1. The statements made concerning the captivity; for the tribulations referred to in Phil. 2:27; 4:14; Eph. 3:13 remind one of 1 Cor. 4:9; 15:30 ff.; 2 Cor. 1:8 fl'.; and.’ in any event the apostle, during a captivity associated with so many tribulations, could not preach the Word of God, Phil. 1:13 f.; Col. 4:3; Eph. 6:19. — 2. The local circumstances presupposed in the letters. From Ephesus the apostle could easily make the short trip to Colossae, Philemon 22, and even Philippi was located so near that the trip there and back would not consume very much

time, to which the further consideration must be added that the sojourn planned for that place, according to 2:24, could be carried out during the trip to Achaia, which was announced in 1 Cor. 16:5. If Paul was in Ephesus, he might have the intention to send Timothy to Philippi and to await his return and yet give them the prospect of his early arrival in Philippi, chap. 2:19 ff. Moreover, the news of the concern of the Philippians over the condition of Epaphroditus might have gotten back from Philippi before it had been possible to send a report of his recovery, Phil. 2:25 ff., just as Paul might have sent Onesimus to Colossae, even if he intended to use his service during his captivity, and he could have made arrangement for quarters at the house of Philemon, Philemon 11 ff.”

The reason for placing the letter to the Philippians in the alleged Ephesine captivity are enumerated by Feine as follows (**Einleitung in das Neue Testament**, 150 ff.): “1. Chapter 3 is an arraignment of Judaism,... but we may not think of these Judaists as being present in Philippi... . 2. In language, literary form, and presentation of thought Philippians is closer to the older letters than to the Captivity Letters... . 3. The case against Paul (Phil. 1 and 2) cannot be the same as the one which was brought against him according to Acts 23.... 4. The local statements of the letter fit not only Rome, but may be claimed also for Ephesus... 5. The assumption that Paul wrote in Ephesus will more easily explain certain statements in Philippians (the travel plans of Paul, the conflict of Phil. 1:30, the exchange of communications between Paul and the Philippians).” Such are the points which are adduced by Feine in support of the hypothesis concerning the writing of the Captivity letters during an alleged captivity in Ephesus, sometime between 54 and 57, preferably in 56.

Before we take up the counter-arguments from the historical data of the Book of Acts and the epistles themselves, let us register the objections recently made by other scholars in the field. Barth writes (**Einleitung in das Neue Testament**, 67 f.): “Concerning Paul’s experiences during his Roman captivity we learn in the Captivity Letters to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and to Philemon. These are not written in Caesarea (as Schneckenburger, Thiersch, Haupt, Feine—in part—assume), since Paul intended to travel from there to Rome and therefore would hardly have announced visits in Asia Minor and in Macedonia, as he does in Philemon 22 and Phil. 2:24, since furthermore the escaped slave Onesimus could

much more easily hope to remain undiscovered in populous Rome than in Caesarea, and since the complaint of Paul that he had only a few fellow-workers of the circumcision in his neighborhood would not fit for Caesarea, where, among others, Philip lived. On the other hand, all these references are easily explained if Paul wrote the letters in Rome. There he was not altogether alone, but he was visited by disciples, who came and went, such as Timothy, Luke, Aristarchus, Mark, Jesus Justus. Through these and by his daily intercession before God he remained in fellowship with his congregations. He felt the bodily absence from them as a distinct interference with his activity; sometimes presentiments of death came upon him, Phil. 1:20 f.; 2:17 f.; he felt that he had become older (Philemon 9) and occasionally resented the fact that some preachers of the Gospel in Rome believed that they no longer owed the captive any consideration, Phil. 1:15 f.; 2:21. But stronger than all such impressions was the joy over the successes which he as a captive had, for example, among the soldiers, Phil. 1:13, which made his sufferings appear as a continuation of the saving sufferings of Jesus by virtue of the communion of his life with the exalted Lord; but joy also over the powerfully advancing evangelization of the Orient and the Occident, through which he saw the joyful message even now proclaimed in the whole world, yea, almost to every creature which is under heaven, Col. 1:6, 23.” And Knopf writes (**Einfuehrung in das Neue Testament**, 80): “When Paul, soon after writing Romans, made the trip to Jerusalem, he was there taken captive and at first kept in captivity in Caesarea, then, after a tedious journey, two years in Rome. To the time of this captivity, and very likely that of Rome, are to be ascribed these letters.”

Let us now take up the points which have been adduced in favor of Ephesus as the place of the Captivity Letters and see whether they are tenable in view of the historical data presented in the Book of Acts and the historical sections of the epistles.

[1] As to the Ephesine captivity, on which the entire theory is based. The assertion that 1 Cor. 4:9; 15:30 ff.; 2 Cor. 1:8 ff., especially when compared with Phil. 2:27; 4:14; Eph. 3:13, refer to a captivity, and in particular 2 Cor. 1:8 if. even to a gladiatorial combat, is not warranted by the content of the passages. The tribulations and afflictions of which Paul speaks there may well have been such as pertained to the spirit alone, having their basis in the difficulties with which the apostle was battling, not only in establishing the

congregation in Ephesus on a sounder basis, but also in removing the obstacles which had arisen in the congregation at Corinth, as his two letters to Corinth so amply demonstrate. If 1 Cor. 15:32 is to be taken as referring to an actual physical encounter with wild beasts in the arena at Ephesus, then we should practically be compelled to construe the word of 2 Tim. 4:17 in the same manner, for there Paul speaks of being delivered out of the mouth of the lion. There is no evidence for assuming either a local or a general persecution of the Christians on the part of the Roman government as early as the year 56, and if Paul had at any time been condemned to a gladiatorial combat, it is more than likely that at least one of the early Christian writers would have given us an account of that encounter. That the apostle frequently had to deal with the hostility of the Jews and that there might occasionally have been a sudden flare-up of the authorities, is shown by the experience which he had at Philippi and his almost casual reference "in prisons more frequent" of 2 Cor. 11:23. — But the case of the alleged Ephesine captivity becomes still weaker if we carefully read the account given in Acts 19 and 20. In these chapters there is not one word to indicate that Paul was imprisoned by the Roman authorities for as much as one day. The account gives him an uninterrupted activity, and even the tumult of Demetrius did not stop the work. It can hardly be called an exaggeration when Paul says of himself, Acts 20:31: "Remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." Cp. 5:18. Moreover, when the town clerk of Ephesus addressed the assembly in the theater, he did not intimate with one syllable that any gladiatorial combat of Christian leaders had been held or was contemplated, and this man can certainly not be accused of a bias in favor of Paul. And the probability becomes still stronger against the Ephesine captivity of Paul, especially one instigated by the Roman authorities, if we remember that some of the Asiarchs sent word to him, warning him not to go out among the people, Acts 19:31. Whether these Asiarchs were religio-political officers who presided over the annual assembly of civic deputies, as Mommsen, Lightfoot, Ramsay, and others think, or municipal delegates of individual cities to the provincial assembly, as Brandis insists, would make little difference in the significance of the incident alluded to. It is clear that some of the most prominent men in all of Proconsular Asia were deeply concerned for the welfare of the apostle, a solicitude which would have been impossible if Paul had at this period been under suspicion from the

Roman government or had been in prison or in the arena shortly before. For if he had been vindicated at this time, he would certainly not have continued his complaint about the afflictions which continued to bother him, even after he left Ephesus and traveled northward along the coast, first to Troas and then over to Macedonia. Cp. 2 Cor. 2:13; 7:5-7. Every reason of probability and historical background speaks against an Ephesine captivity of Paul.

[2] But what about the long array of points of probability offered by Appel and Feine, not to mention others, who offer little or no evidence for their placing the Captivity Letters at Ephesus? Surely the proposed visit of Paul at Colossae, Philemon 22, could be made from Rome after the release of the apostle; for a trip of this length would hardly hold terrors to one who has traveled so often and so far. And as for the trip to Philippi, Phil. 2:24, the difference in the journey between Ephesus and Philippi, on the one hand, and Rome and Philippi, on the other, was by no means as great as has been implied. The roads along the [Egean Sea north of Pergamos were not of the best kind, and the trip by coastwise vessel could well consume more than a week. On the other hand, the roads leading from Rome toward the southeast and connecting with the famous Via Egnatia, which crossed Macedonia, would take a traveler to Philippi in less than two weeks. And, as a matter of fact, such a comparison was not even necessary; for Paul might well, after his release, have made a trip through the entire East, through Achaia and Macedonia as well as through Proconsular Asia and all of Asia Minor. — The argument brought by Feine, based on style and vocabulary, is admittedly always tenuous, if not entirely unreliable. Since the occasion for writing to the Philippians was of a different nature than that which incited the apostle to write to the congregations at Colossae and Ephesus, since also the circumstances by this time had taken on an entirely different character, one could well expect a different style. The assertion that the congregation at Philippi was not bothered with Judaistic teachers is entirely subjective, even if it is not based upon a false conception of the nature of this menace to the Apostolic Church—Even the statement of Feine, based apparently upon careful research, that the word *praetorium* in Phil. 1:13 and the expression *hoi ek tes Kaisaros oikias* in Phil. 4:22 does not necessarily refer only to Rome, is not decisive for concluding the argument. For even if the palaces of the proconsuls in the senatorial provinces were also designated as **praetoria**, and even if the expression

**domus** or **familia Caesaris** was used for the servants in charge of imperial property or possessions throughout the empire, this does not change the fact that the designations were eminently correct in Rome, where they 'had originated, and could therefore be used with the highest propriety. Besides, it is most fitting that Rome should be thought of in connection with Phil. 1:19-25 and 2:23; for these passages, as compared with Acts 28:16, 30, clearly show that Paul enjoyed the *custodia libera* for two years, until his case came up for its hearing in the imperial court. He was then removed to the pretorium of Rome, in the immediate neighborhood of the imperial palace, where he had an opportunity to do more extensive mission-work among the soldiers of the imperial barracks.

[3] However, our investigations would not be complete without an examination of the many passages referring to Paul's companions during the captivity in question, men whose whereabouts give us a number of clues as to the circumstances of Paul's life at this time. Let us take **Aristarchus** first. It is true that this man is mentioned in Acts 19:29 as Paul's companion in travel, whence we conclude that he was with Paul during the latter's Ephesine sojourn, at least for some time. But this same Aristarchus, of Thessalonica, who was one of the delegates that brought the collection of the Macedonian brethren to the needy Christians in Jerusalem and Judea, Acts 20:4, was a companion of Paul on the voyage from Caesarea to Rome, Acts 27:2, and he may have been a fellow-prisoner even then, as he is called by Paul in Col. 4:10. These facts surely point with great definiteness to Rome, also for the writing of the letter to Philemon; for Aristarchus is mentioned in 5:24 of that epistle as a fellow-laborer of the great apostle. In the case of Ephesus a captivity of Paul and Aristarchus is conjecture, pure and simple; in the case of Rome the four passages concerned agree in making Aristarchus a fellow-laborer and a fellow-prisoner. — Timothy may well be taken next, for he is named by Paul in the address of three of the four Captivity Letters, namely, Col. 1:1, Philemon 1, and Phil. 1:1. He was clearly with Paul during the time when these letters were written. But if the Ephesine theory is to be accepted, there is a difficulty on account of Acts 19:22; for according to Luke's account, Paul, during the Ephesine sojourn and before the tumult of Demetrius, sent Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia, the final goal of this trip being Corinth, 1 Cor. 16:10. It is also clear that Timothy was again with Paul toward the end of the summer or in the fall of the year 57, when he wrote Second Corinthians from some



station in Macedonia, very likely Philippi. See 2 Cor. 1:1. But all these references greatly complicate matters if we place the letter to the Philippians in Ephesus, for in Phil. 2:19 Paul announces the early coming of Timothy to the congregation at Philippi. If the theory should stand, we are obliged to place Second Corinthians, or at least First Corinthians, into the same period of Paul's labors as Philippians, and there the discrepancy offers obstacles which defy harmonization. But if the letter to the Philippians is placed at Rome, there is no such difficulty. —The case of Tychicus, who apparently hailed from Ephesus, is very much like that of Aristarchus. He was among the men who accompanied Paul to Jerusalem, Acts 20:4, and he was clearly in Paul's company when he wrote the letter to the Ephesians, for the apostle testifies that Tychicus was a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, Eph. 6:21, 22. He was the bearer of this letter, as also of that to the Colossians, Chap. 4:7, 8. That he was with Paul in Rome at least during the second captivity appears from 2 Tim. 4:12. The only way in which we could straighten out this difficulty according to the Ephesine theory is by making the letter addressed to the saints at Ephesus an encyclical sent from Ephesus, a procedure which is hardly tenable on a number of counts, as we shall indicate below. But the entire difficulty disappears if we consider Tychicus a companion of Paul during the first captivity in Rome; for in that event he becomes the bearer of the letters to Ephesus and to Colossae (also to Philemon), and the recommendation given by Paul, after an interval of approximately four years, is one which might be expected in the circumstances. — It would be interesting to place Onesimus and Epaphras into the picture, since they were both associated with Paul in the captivity here concerned, the former according to Col. 4:9, and the letter to Philemon, the latter according to Philemon 23; Col. 1:7; 4:12; but we have no reference to these men in the Book of Acts and hence have no means of telling the connection on the basis of parallel accounts. — But there is one more name that must be added in this part of our discussion, namely, that of Luke, the beloved physician. This man was clearly in the company of Paul at the time when the Captivity Letters were written; for Paul refers to him in Col. 4:14 as one who sends greetings to the brethren at Colossae, and in Philemon 24 as a fellow-laborer who saluted Philemon. Here the Ephesine theory breaks down completely; for, as the "we" sections show, Luke was not with Paul during the Ephesine sojourn, since the first section of this kind closes with Acts 16:17, during

the apostle's stay at Philippi. Luke does not again join the apostle till Acts 20:4, evidently being one of the delegates from Macedonia, specifically Philippi, and a companion of Paul on the way to Jerusalem, Acts 20:4—16; 21:1-18. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that Luke was a companion of Paul during the latter's journey to Rome, and the indication is that he remained in Rome with the apostle, according to Acts 27:1-28, 16. Thus Luke, being a companion of Paul during the latter's first Roman captivity, was with him when the Captivity Letters were written, at least Colossians and Philemon and, by implication, Ephesians, which is so intimately related to Colossians.

Thus the evidence of the books concerned, if carefully analyzed, clearly disposes of the theory that the Captivity Letters were written during an alleged captivity of St. Paul in Ephesus and decidedly strengthens the traditional view of their composition during the first Roman captivity, between the spring of the year 61 and the early summer of 63. While little depends upon the exact chronological sequence of these letters, a study of the internal factors concerned will very likely lead to the following conclusions: Epaphras, the founder of the congregation at Colossae and its first pastor, having learned that the apostle was in Rome awaiting the adjustment of the charges against him in the emperor's court, came to the capital and brought Paul news of the Colossian congregation, Col. 1:7, 8. Thereupon Paul, late in 61 or early in 62, wrote the letter, which he intended to send to Colossae at the earliest Opportunity. A certain degree of agitation and the adjustment to the situation in Colossaa mark it as being the first of the Captivity Letters. After this letter was finished, and most likely before it was sent off, the apostle had leisure to plan and write the letter to the Ephesians, a more formal epistle, almost a doctrinal essay, whose language of lofty and sustained eloquence gives it a position among Paul's letters second only to the letter of the Romans. This letter was also written in 62. Meanwhile the runaway slave Onesimus had somehow found his way to Paul or had been found by the apostle. He was gained for the Gospel, and Paul, desiring to return him to his master, wrote the remarkable letter to Philemon. His own circumstances had meanwhile so shaped themselves that he was looking forward to his release at a not distant date. Therefore this letter may well be placed late in 62. In the same year Epaphroditus, one of the pastors of the congregation at Philippi, made a journey to Rome, partly to give the apostle news of this Macedonian congregation, partly to

be the bearer of the gifts of the Philippians to the beloved and honored apostle, Phil. 2:25 11"; 4:10, 11, 15-19. Paul then, late in 62 or early in 63, wrote the letter to the Philippians, which was most likely delivered by Epaphroditus upon the latter's return to his home town.

In conclusion it may be well to list the arguments against the theory which has attempted to make the letter to the Ephesians an encyclical epistle.

[1] The introductory sentence of the epistle surely did not read *tois ousi... kai pistois*, for that would be almost nonsensical in view of the careful manner in which the apostle at other times designates his readers. If the Holy Ghost had intended this letter for an encyclical epistle, He would undoubtedly have given the names of all the congregations concerned, just as He does in 1 Pet. 1:1 and with regard to the seven letters of the Apocalypse.

[2] Though the words *en Epheso* are missing in Codices:4, B, and in Codex 67, of the twelfth century, they are found in all other ancient manuscripts as well as in the most ancient translations, some of which antedate the most ancient manuscripts now known.

[3] The entire ancient Church has designated the letter as that addressed to the Ephesians, as, for instance, the Canon Muratori, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Ignatius, and others.

[4] The testimony of Tertullian, formerly thought to have been adverse to the traditional view, has upon closer examination been found to speak in favor of the letter as directed to Ephesus. Further witnesses are Jerome and Basil the Great. In short, the external proofs for Ephesus as the address of the letter outweigh other, supposedly negative proofs nine to one. Let us not forget that the argument **e silentio** can at best be only a supporting argument and should never be admitted as primary. Since Ephesus is excluded as the place of the Captivity Letters, one of the main reasons for suggesting the possible encyclical character of the letter to the Ephesians has dropped away. The simple acceptance of the transmitted data is not a blind bowing to tradition, but is thoroughly scientific in the best sense of the word.

## 8. The Last Twenty-Five Years Of Peter's Life

THE REASON for putting the topic in this form is obvious. It refers, as a matter of course, to the years 42—67 A.D., during which, according to belief in Roman Catholic circles, Peter, the “Prince of the Apostles,” was bishop of the congregation at Rome and incidentally the first Pope. The situation with regard to the Romish claims is well set forth by Shotwell (in Shotwell and Loomis, **The See of Peter**, XXIII) as follows: "With reference to the Petrine doctrine... the Catholic attitude is much more than a ‘predisposition to believe.’ That doctrine is the fundamental basis of the whole papal structure. It may be summed up in three main claims. They are: first, that Peter was appointed by Christ to be His chief representative and successor and the head of His Church; second, that Peter went to Rome and founded the bishopric there; third, that his successors succeeded to his prerogatives and to all the authority implied thereby. In dealing with these claims, we are passing along the borderline between history and dogmatic theology. The primacy of Peter and his appointment by Christ to succeed Him as head of the Church are accepted by the Catholic Church as the indubitable word of the inspired Gospel in its only possible meaning. That Peter went to Rome and founded

there his see is just as definitely what is termed in Catholic theology a dogmatic fact. This has been defined by an eminent Catholic theologian as ‘historical fact so intimately connected with some great Catholic truths that it would be believed even if time and accident had destroyed all the original evidence therefor.’ In this sense [so Shotwell continues] it may be said that Catholics accept the presence of Peter at Rome, on faith. But they assert at the same time that faith is really not called upon, since the evidence satisfactorily establishes the event as an historical fact."<sup>1</sup> )

Let us pause here to remark: It is evident from the paragraph just quoted that the author holds no brief for the traditional view, that he has no sympathy for its origin and later ramifications, but that his interest, on the contrary, is that of an objective searcher for the truth, so far as it may be ascertained. His paragraph, on the whole, gives the **status quo** of the Catholic position as such, even if individual Catholic historians have discredited the papal claims on a historical basis.

The questions which concern us in this short study are these: **What do we know about the last twenty- five years of Peter's life?** Was Peter ever bishop of the Roman congregation? May we concede that he visited Home or was brought there at any time between 42 and 67? What about his alleged martyrdom in Rome? Let us state at once that we are not here concerned with the **doctrinal** proofs against the **primacy** of Peter; we are merely interested in finding whether there is some nucleus of truth in the information which is commonly dispensed.

A peculiar feature of the situation is the rather vehement attempt on the part of Protestant writers to disprove the Romish claims **in toto**. Luther's interest in objecting to the claims of Rome was to show the utter insufficiency of their alleged proof for the primacy of Peter. This was also the main point in the attempts of later Lutheran writers. But since Baur of Tuebingen presented his chief objections to the traditional Romish view about Peter's residence in Rome, his arguments have been repeated in various forms to this day, undoubtedly in good faith. But no one will deny the danger connected with a procedure which seems to begin with a thesis and, consciously or unconsciously, presents only such material as supports the contention of the thesis. After all, **it is not necessary to: state that Peter never was in Rome if our purpose is merely to show that the claim regarding his episcopacy and primacy are unfounded.**

Let us take up the Petrine tradition as it is summarized chiefly by Shotwell and Loomis, since these two authors have gathered all the evidence extant in primary and secondary sources. In the so-called First Epistle to the Corinthians, ascribed to Clement of Rome and certainly to be dated before the end of the first century, we have the following passage (chap. 5; Loeb, **The Apostolic Fathers**, 1, 16-18): "There was Peter, who by reason of unrighteous envy endured not one or two, but many trials, and so, having borne his testimony, he passed to his appointed place of glory.

Amid envy and strife, Paul pointed out the way to the prize of patient endurance. After he had been seven times in bonds, been driven into exile, been stoned, been a herald in the East and the West, he won noble renown for his faith, for he taught righteousness unto the whole world and reached the farthest bounds of the West and bore his testimony before the rulers; thus he departed from the world and passed unto the Holy Place, having set an illustrious pattern of patient endurance.”

It has been stated: “Not a word about Peter in Rome.” But the **argumentum e silentio** may in this case prove a boomerang, for it would apply in equal measure to Paul, of whom we know that he was in Rome.

In the **Ascension of Isaiah**, a document of 75 to 100 A.D. (quoted by Shotwell, 71), we find the statement: “He himself, even this king, shall persecute the plant which the twelve apostles of the Beloved shall plant, and’ one of the Twelve shall be delivered into his hands.” This has been taken as “the most ancient of surviving testimonies as to the manner of Peter’s death” (Shotwell). — Ignatius of Antioch, in his **Letter to the Romans** (Lake, *Apostolic Fathers*, I, 230), addresses himself to the Christians of the capital: “I do not command you as Peter and Paul did. They were apostles; I am a convict. They were free; I am a slave to this very hour.” Even if Ignatius addresses the Ephesians and the Trallians in almost the same words, the argument from silence concerning Rome would hardly hold here; on the contrary, the Christians of Rome are admonished like those of Ephesus and Tralles, who had likewise heard Paul (and Peter).<sup>2</sup> The silence of the writers concerning the city may simply indicate that neither the primacy nor even the episcopacy of Peter was thought of in those days. But it surely cannot be asserted that the name of Peter was never associated with Rome before the year 150 A.D.

It may now simply be noted in passing that Papias of Hierapolis (fl. ca. 120) held the view of Peter’s activity in Rome, that Dionysius of Corinth (ca. 170), in writing to the Romans, makes the statement: “You have thus by this admonition bound together the plantings of Peter and Paul at Rome and at Corinth; for they both alike planted in our Corinth and taught us, and both alike taught together in Italy and suffered martyrdom at the same time” (quoted by Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, II, 25), and that Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and others accepted the statement of Peter’s having been in Rome.

So strong is the nucleus of evidence in the traditional account that Shotwell (l. c., XXIII, 74) is constrained to remark: "Since, in the nature of things, a tradition is never contemporary evidence, the determination of its value must depend upon verification through other sources. **Undoubtedly the tendency to reject tradition went too far in the nineteenth century.** It is now generally agreed that tradition, while losing or distorting the details, very commonly embodies some historical elements... It seems to show that at the opening of the second century Peter was connected with the community at Rome in the minds of prominent Christians of Asia Minor." No matter, then, whether later writers were clearly not justified in making the most of indefinite traditional accounts in the interest of establishing the Petrine episcopacy and primacy, we may not go to the opposite extreme in using the argument from silence, since this must yield in even this domain. It is more than likely that there was no need for stressing the connection of Peter with Rome, since this was generally accepted as a fact.

Other extraneous material which cannot be ignored is that found in apocryphal writings of the second, third, and fourth centuries. The embellishments of the stories may indeed be inventions, often strongly permeated with superstition, but there is almost invariably a nucleus of truth which can be discerned without difficulty, especially if the various apocryphal writings originated in widely separated communities. There are the **Actus Petri cum Simone** (ca. 180-220), in which the alleged conflict between the Apostle Peter and Simon Magus is pictured, containing also the **Domine, quo vadis?** episode; the **Didascalia Apostolorum** (third century), not to be confused with the **Didache ton Dodeka** of the beginning of the second century, in which Peter is himself represented as giving a report on the heresy of Simon in Rome; the pseudo-Clement **Letter to James** (third century), in which there is a reference to Peter's coming to Rome and the last incidents of his life; the **Recognitiones**, ascribed to Clement (third century), in which the coming of Peter to Rome forms a large part of the story; the **Martyrium Sanctorum Apostolorum Petri et Pauli** (fourth century), which gives a long account of the alleged trial and death of the two apostles; and the **Acti Petri et Pauli** (fourth century), which shows many strange accretions, indicating a great distance from the source. But the nucleus of all these stories is the same and may, therefore, according to the psychology of traditions, be accepted as essentially true, namely, that

both Peter and Paul were in Rome toward the end of their lives and that they suffered martyrdom in the capital of the Roman Empire.<sup>3</sup>

And yet another field of extraneous material must be touched upon, namely, that of Christian archaeology, particularly that of numismatics and epigraphy. Here gilded glasses and bronze busts of the Apostles Paul and Peter are especially interesting, since some of them are of acknowledged antiquity. Concerning these even Bennett (**Christian Archaeology**, 113 f.) concedes that some of them may go back to the third century. But Cobern (**New Archaeological Discoveries**, 520), who has followed the work of the recent Italian archaeologists with every indication of objective scholarship, writes: "Another even more certain ancient relic commemorating the two great apostles are the gilded glasses, dating from the second half of the second and the beginning of the third century, on many of which pictures of Peter and Paul are executed on the flat bottom in gold leaf. Out of 340 of these glasses published by Garucci these pictures are found on eighty. They also contained such mottoes as, 'Mayest thou live long!'; 'A mark of friendship'; 'Life and happiness to thee and thine.' These were evidently gifts for festival occasions, and Marucchi believes, since there is a uniformity of type in the pictures, that they have originated from real portrait pictures."<sup>4</sup>

Cobern and Bennett write from the Protestant viewpoint, but it is significant that Kaufmann (**Christliche Archaeologie**, 388), writing from the Roman Catholic viewpoint, makes his statement in the same objective fashion:

"Hervorragende Beispiele dieser Art verdanken wir der plastischen Kunst, welche unsweifelhaft einen neuen Anstosz zuru Portraetierung Petri und Pauli gegeben hat. .Es wird zufaellig sein, wenn in roemischen Denkmaelermaterial Petrus zuerst auf den Fresken erscheint... Die Sicherheit, mit welcher der traditionelle Typus auftritt und alle Schwankungen ueberwindet, welche sich aus dem Verlassen des Idealbildes und der Aufnahme des realen ergeben, laeszt im Verein mit den zeitgenoessischen literarischen Hinweisen auf Apostelportraets keinen Zweifel, dasz er an authentische Verlagen anknuepft, mithin srich vom apostolischen Zeitalter herauf vererbte. An der Spitze der einschlaegigen Denkmaeler steht der...



Bronzediskus, dessen technische Behandlung einer Datierung ins Zeitalter der Antonine, wie sie de Rossi ansetzt nicht widerspricht.”

That would place the disk shortly after the middle of the second century. It was found in the catacombs of St. Agnes. In evaluating this and similar evidence, one is inclined to agree with the (Protestant) historian Foakes-Jackson, who, in referring to this and other epigraphical evidence, especially from the catacombs, makes the statement: “One is prepared to accept as final the statement: ‘for the archaeologist the presence and execution of SS. Peter and Paul in Rome are facts established beyond a shadow of doubt by purely monumental evidence’.” (Peter, **Prince of the Apostles**, 162.)

But what about this cumulative evidence in the face of the alleged silence of Scriptures or the reference to “Babylon” as a clue to the residence of Peter in the last years of his life? Is the New Testament really dead against Peter’s being in Home at any time? Let us examine the positive evidence, especially that from Scripture.

We know, of course, that Peter was in Jerusalem in the year 30 A.D., the year of the formal organization of the Christian Church on the great day of Pentecost. He was there for some time, according to Acts 3—8, for at least a year and a half or two years, or till after the murder of Stephen. He was there in the year 35/6; for Saul visited him three years after his conversion, after his sojourn in Arabia, and abode with him fifteen days, Gal. 1:17, 18. Shortly after Saul left for Tarsus, Peter was busy with missionary work in Western Judea, in Lydda, Saron, Joppa and Caesarea, Acts 9:32 ff.; chap. 10. He was again in Jerusalem about the year 37 or somewhat later, Acts 11:2 ff. That there was no indication of a primacy or even of a superior position on the part of Peter at that time is evident from the fact that some of the members of the congregation at Jerusalem “contended with him,” calling him to task for his ignoring of the rules of Levitical purity. When Saul was brought back to Antioch, about 43/4, he remained there for at least a year before he and Barnabas made the trip up to Jerusalem with the relief for the brethren, Acts 11:22-30. Now, although Peter evidently was in Jerusalem about this time, it is interesting to note that Saul and Barnabas did not report to him, but to the elders of the congregation, Acts 11:30. About that time, in the year 44, Peter was still in Jerusalem, for he was

imprisoned after the death of James, the brother of John, only to be set at liberty by an angel, Acts 12:5-17. This was shortly before the death of Herod Agrippa I, which occurred in the year 44.

The comprehensive account which the Book of Acts gives concerning the activity of Peter closes with chapter 12, and it is clear, even at this point, that the alleged presence of Peter in Rome as early as 42 is not in keeping with historical truth. It may well be assumed, however, on the basis of the address of First Peter, that he employed the next years in doing mission-work in Northern Asia Minor, in the provinces of Pontus, Galatia (the northern part), Capadocia, Asia (the proconsular province, its northern part), and Bithynia. This would also account for the fact that Paul, a few years later, was hindered from doing mission-work in these provinces. We next list the episode of Gal. 2:11 ff., since that best agrees with Acts 15:1. That Peter accepted the reproof of Paul upon this occasion appears from his conduct at the meeting at Jerusalem. Since we now know the time of Paul's entrance into Corinth on his second missionary journey (see the Gallio inscription and the comment thereon in Barton, **Archaeology and the Bible**, 439 f.), we are able also to give the time of this meeting, namely, the year 49. That Peter had now returned to Jerusalem is plainly stated in Acts 15:7 ff. and Gal. 2:9, 10. This takes seven more years away from the papal claim concerning the twenty-five years of Peter's bishopric in Rome.

Beyond this year we have no historical knowledge of Peter in any New Testament passage. There are incidental references, of course, as when Paul, in 1 Cor. 9:5. asks the question: "Have we not power to lead about a sister [as] a wife as well as other apostles and as the brethren of the Lord and Cephas?" The final reference is that of 1 Pet. 5:13, which has caused so much contention, since it states: "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you, and so doth. Marcus, my son." This, in the opinion of the anti-Petrine scholars, clinches the matter, for it seems to show that Peter spent the last years of his life in some Babylon, preferably that in the Far East. But the matter is not quite so self-evident and simple, as we shall presently see. For the present we quote only the rather dry and objective remark of Meusel (sub voce "Babylon"):

"Babylon in 1 Petr. 5:13 wird entweder buchstablich von dem alten Babylon am Euphrat oder von Babylon in Aegypten oder von

Neu-Babylon (Seleucia am Tigris) verstanden oder am besten, da ueber einen Aufenthalt des Petrus am Euphrat sonst gar keine Andeutung verliegt, als symbolische Bezeichnung fuer Rom gedeutet, was seine Analogie ja auch in der Apogkalypse hat (14:8; 16:19 u. oe.)”

Are Meusel and his coworkers steeped in a dead traditionalism?

Let us approach our problem from another angle, one suggested by the reference in 1 Peter 5:13, to “Marcus, my son.” Acts 12:12 tells us that Peter was well acquainted with the mother of John Mark, or Marcus, in whose home the congregation met for the great prayer—meeting on the night of Peter’s deliverance from prison. That John Mark was himself in Jerusalem at that time, in the year 44, appears from Acts 12:25, since Barnabas and Saul, upon their return from Jerusalem, when they brought the relief for the brethren, took with them John whose surname was Mark. Mark was an anepsios to Barnabas, a “cousin germane,” as the dictionaries have it, which may mean first cousin, but it may also mean that Mary, the mother of Mark, was a sister to Barnabas. It is clear that Peter, during his ministry at Jerusalem, came into close spiritual touch with Mark, and that the intimacy was later renewed after the young man had earned his spurs in the work of the Lord.

This intimacy is brought out in a most interesting way in connection with the Gospel of Mark. This gospel, as the leading textbooks in New Testament Introduction (Appel, Barth, Feine, Fuerbringer, Zahn, etc.) bring out, shows a certain dependence upon Peter. Justin Martyr, in his **Dialog with Trypho**, calls the Gospel of Mark the “memoirs of Peter.” Papias calls Mark the hermeneutes of Peter, not in the sense of an amenuensis, but in the sense of one transmitting information which he has received, so that certain features of the original form are still clearly discernible. Similar statements are made by Irenaeus (**Adv. Haer.**, III, I, I), Clemens Alexandrinus (**Hypotyp.**), his third reference reading in Latin (ad. 1 Pet. 5:13):

Marcus, Petri sectator, praedicante Petro evangelium jalam Romae coram quibusdam Caesareanis equitibus et multa Christi testimonia proferente, petitus ab eis, ut possent quae dicebantur memoriae

commendare, scripsit ex his, quae Petro dicta sunt, evangelium, quod secundum Marcum vocitatur."

But while the Gospel according to St. Mark is associated with Peter, it is likewise associated, on the basis of internal reasons, with the West, with that part of the Roman Empire in which Latin was the speech at least of the common people, where one might expect Latinisms in a Greek document. Robertson says of this phenomenon: "There are a few more Latin words in Mark than in the other gospels, but this is certainly only natural if he was in Rome. They are all political, military, or monetary words, just the ones that would permeate the current Greek. So we find denarius (Mark 6:37), centurion (15:39, 44), quadrans (12:42), pallet, or camp-bed (2:4, 9, 11), legion (5:9, 15), sextarius, or wooden pitcher for measuring liquids (7:4, 8), spy, or scout, **speculator** (6:27)." (**Studies in Mark's Gospel**, 127.) Prof. Fritz Barth of Berne writes in his **Einleitung** (p. 182):

"Die vielen lateinischen Woerter, welche in dem Griechisch dieses Verfassers vorkommen,... haben auf die Vermutung gefuehrt, dasz das zweite Evangelium in lateinischem Sprachgebiet entstanden sei, und speziell fuer Rom scheint zu sprechen, dasz 15:21 ein Rufus als bekannte Person vorausgesetzt wird, welcher vielleicht identisch ist mit 'Rufus, dem Auserwaehlten im Herrn', Roem. 16:13; die von Paulus erwaehte Mutter desselben waere dann die Gattin des Simons von Kyrene gewesen."

One conclusion seems warranted on the basis of internal evidence, namely, that Mark, while associated with Peter, was also associated with Rome.

But Mark's relation to the Apostle Paul rests upon an even more solid basis. That he was the servant of Saul and Barnabas, with whom he had made the journey from Jerusalem to Antioch, Acts 12:25, appears from Acts 13:5. But this first venture of the young man into the field of foreign mission work was evidently too much for his untried soul, and we are told of his defection in Acts 13:13: "John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem." That this was really a serious matter, at least in the eyes of Paul, is seen from Acts 15:38 f., since Paul refused "to take him with them who departed from them from Pamphylia and went not with them to the work." But Mark made good the mistake of his early manhood. In the fifteen years

between 47 and 62 he became a valued worker in the Church. When Paul, during his first captivity in Rome, about the year 62, wrote to the Colossians, he included the following recommendation: "Aristarchus, my fellow-prisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments; if he come unto you, receive him)," Col. 4:10. And somewhat later, during the same captivity, he wrote to Philemon, including in his letter greetings also from Marcus, his fellow-laborer, 5:24. Approximately five years later, during the second captivity of the apostle in Rome, he wrote to Timothy, then at Ephesus: "Take Mark and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry," 2 Tim. 4:11. So Mark was evidently still in the neighborhood of Ephesus, probably in Colosse, where he had gone about the year 63. Had he, in the mean time, made a journey to the Far East in order to be with Peter, when the latter wrote his First Epistle General? It is possible, yes; but probable? Decidedly no.

To complete this sketch, it will now be necessary to give at least an outline of the history of the Roman congregation in the first decades of its existence and the relation of Paul (and possibly Peter) to this church. Even if we refuse to associate the founding of this congregation with the reference to the strangers of Rome present at the first Pentecost, we cannot deny the rapid spread of the Gospel which set in after the persecution following the murder of Stephen, Acts 11:19-21. There must have been a congregation of Christians at Rome in the early forties, for by the year 49 its missionary fervor had stirred up some trouble, which resulted in the expulsion, in an altogether indiscriminate manner, of all the Jews of Rome, Acts 18:2. The date of this expulsion is brought out on the basis of Orosius and Suetonius, the latter remarking, in his *Annales* (Claud. 25): "**Judeaos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit.**" This is confirmed also by Dio Cassius and other early witnesses. But after the death of Claudius, in the year 54, the decree was no longer in force, and not only the Jews, but also the Jewish Christians quickly found their way back to the capital. An instance of such a return is that of Aquila and Priscilla. About the year 56 they were still in Ephesus, having placed their house at the disposal of the congregation, 1 Cor. 16:19, but early in 58 they were back in Rome, for Paul greets both them and the church that is in their house, Rom. 16:3-5. By this time also the congregation had grown strongly in Gentile members, as the letter clearly shows. At this time no apostle had as yet

served the congregation; for this follows from Paul's well-known statement in Rom. 15:20, about not building upon another man's foundation. Cp. 2 Cor. 10:15, 16. — It was in the spring of the year 61 that Paul came to Rome as a prisoner who had appealed to the highest court of the Roman Empire. But, although the Christians of Rome and its suburbs honored the apostle by coming out to meet him as far as Appii Forum and the Three Taverns, there is no evidence that Paul ever assumed the bishopric of Rome. Certain it is that we cannot place Peter in the city at this time. Paul confined himself chiefly to home mission work and to teaching until, after two years, he received his release, evidently leaving the city as soon as possible, as his statements to Philemon and other correspondents would lead us to believe.<sup>5</sup>

The following points may now be said to stand' out clearly: Mark was associated with Peter in person; Mark was associated with Peter in the writing of his gospel. But this gospel was associated with Rome; hence Peter may well be said to be associated with Rome in his connection with Mark. The conclusion is given additional weight by the fact that Mark was definitely associated with Paul in Rome, in 62/3 and in 67 A.D. **There is nothing to hinder the conclusion that Peter may well have been in Rome between 63 and 67.**

And this introduces the final factor in the argument. In July of the year 64, about a year after Paul's release from his first captivity, a terrible fire swept the city of Rome. The result is well known. The Christians were blamed for the outbreak of the conflagration, and Nero staged the first persecution of the Nazarenes, the details of which are given not only by Suetonius and Tacitus, but also by Martial and Juvenal and by later writers. This persecution of Nero, commonly believed to have been entirely local, obviously went beyond the confines of Rome and even of Italy, at least in a sporadic fashion, as the various references in the First Epistle of Peter and the Letter to the Hebrews indicate. It was during the aftermath of this persecution that Paul was arrested and taken to Rome. And it is more probable, it has the support of the best internal evidence, not to speak of the extraneous material listed above, that Peter also was arrested, wherever he may have been, in 65, even if he had not come to Rome as early as 63 or 64, an assumption which would connect him somewhat more closely with the congregation in the capital. This, then, may well be the conclusion of an unbiased study of all source material, including everything that Scripture

offers: Peter never was bishop of Rome, least of all did he claim the primacy, and the claim of a twenty—five year residence is utterly without foundation. But the **authentic information**, as offered above, **will certainly warrant the conclusion that Peter may well have come to Rome after the year 63, if only as a captive in the aftermath of the Neronian persecution, during which he also suffered death as a martyr of the faith.**

This, by the way, is also in its essential features the position taken by Luther in his conclusions on the subject, especially in his writing **Auf das ueberchristliche, uebergeistliche and ueberkuenstliche Buch das Bocks Emsers zu Leipzig Antwort Dr. M. L.** There we read: “Although I hold that St. Peter was in Rome, yet I should not want to die on this as on an article of faith... It is no article of faith, and no one is a heretic on this account whether he does not believe that St. Peter was ever bishop at Rome [**zu Rom je gesessen babe**].” (18, 1334.) Luther rejects the bishopric of Peter in Rome absolutely, especially that of an alleged twenty-five-year period, and he rightly concludes that, with the inability to prove the episcopacy and the primacy of Peter, all papal claims fall to the ground. And that, after all, is the only interest we have in solving this question, without overshooting the mark, in a dispassionate, objective discussion of available facts.

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1. According to the recent book by Gilbert Bagani, **Rome and the Papacy**, the dogma of the Papacy is a belief resting on the authority of the Church, independently of historical evidence.↵
  2. There is no reference to Peterrin either Ephesians or Trallians, in the version of the Ignatian letters as now accepted. But it is interesting to note that the longer version, which cannot be much later than the first quarter of the second century, has, in the **Epistle to the Trallians**, chap. VII, a passage stating that Anencletus and Linus acted as deacons to Peter. (See **Apost. Fathers**, ed. by Coxe, I, 69.)↵
  3. For further references and discussions in this field see Shotwell and Loomis, l. c.. 135, note; also James, **The Apocraphal New Testament**.↵

4. Illustrations of such gilded glasses are given by Bennett on Plate I. and his remark in that connection is most interesting: “With the exception of a very few of late origin there is in these gilded glasses no intimation or any preeminence of Peter over Paul. In some instances where these apostles are associated with Christ on the same glass, Paul had the place of honor; in others Peter is at the right hand of Christ, thus showing that the primacy of either would not once be suggested by the pictorial representations.”↵
5. For a short history of the congregation at Rome see Iverson, **The Roman Congregation at the Time of Paul**; also Edmundson, **The Christians in Rome in the First Century**.↵



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