

THESIS.

THE WORSHIP OF THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

AS REFLECTED

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT LITERATURE,

and its influence on

the development of doctrine.

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## CONTENTS.

I. DOMINANT FEATURES OF NEW TESTAMENT WORSHIP.

- A. Enthusiasm.
- B. Freedom.
- C. Joy and Confidence.

II. HISTORICAL SKETCH OF DEVELOPMENT DURING NT PERIOD.

- A. The Palestinian Church.
- B. The Gentile Church.
- C. *The Final Form of Christian Worship.*
- D. The Waning of the Enthusiasm.

III. THE WORSHIP AS FELLOWSHIP.

- A. Social Fellowship with one another.
- B. Religious Fellowship in the Spirit with Christ.

IV. THE WORSHIP IN DETAIL - The Service of the Word.

- A. Reading of Scripture.
- B. Interpretation of Scripture.
- C. Preaching.
- D. Prayer

- (1) Prayer followed the Reading and Interpretation of Script<sup>e</sup>.
- (2) Prayer was addressed to God, not to Christ.
- (3) The Lord's Prayer in Worship.
- (4) The Content of Prayer.
  - (a) Praise and Thanksgiving.
  - (b) Confession of Sin.
  - (c) Petition and Intercession.
  - (d) The Doxology.
  - (e) The Amen.

- E. Praise.

CONTENTS.

V. THE WORSHIP IN DETAIL - The Sacraments.

I. The Lord's Supper.

A. The Breaking of Bread Type.

B. The Pauline Type.

C. Subsequent Development.

D. The Eucharistic Prayer.

II. Baptism.

A. Historical Antecedents.

B. The Christian Significance.

1. A Confession of faith.

2. A Rite of Entry into the Church.

3. A Symbol of close union with Christ.

C. The alleged Hellenistic influence.

VI. THE CENTRAL PLACE OF WORSHIP IN CHRISTIAN LIFE and THOUGHT.

A. The central place of worship - a summary of results.

B. Influence of Worship on the course of early Christian thought.

C. Influence of Worship on the course of Christological thought.



Quotations from Scripture are generally in Moffatt's translation.

Cross-references within the Thesis are in the notation of the

Greek alphabet.

A list of the chief works consulted is given at the end.

METHOD OF TREATMENT.  
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The Thesis is arranged in SIX Sections, as in Table of Contents.

Perhaps the simplest way to explain the general lay-out is to say that the first five sections are set down here pretty much in the reverse order to that in which they were written. The detail work comes towards the end, in Sections IV and V; while the first three Sections expound the general impressions that my study of the worship has led to. For several reasons this seemed the best method of arrangement; but it may suffice to specify one. The worship becomes intelligible, only when it is viewed against the background of such magnitudes or conceptions as the Spirit, the Body of Christ, and the Ecclesia. Accordingly, these had to be introduced early.

These are introduced in Section I. It deals (a) with the cardinal feature of the Spirit-enthusiasm: (b) with the resultant Freedom in the expression and forms of the worship. (c) with the note of Joy and Confidence. This last division, though not so fundamental as the other two, has a wider range, and may be summarised thus;

A brief indication of the Sources of the Joy.

Entitled to assume that notes dominant in the literature were dominant also in the worship.

The Joy not 'emotional'; has a stable and steady objective basis.

The Joy of Brotherhood - the 'Family' note.

The Joy finds deeper expression in the 'Body of Christ' idea.

The Joy finds wider expression in the Ecclesia conception.

The Joy of the Communion of Saints.

Section II, a Historical sketch of the worship-development in the NT period, round its two focal centres of the 'Service of the Word' and the Lord's Supper. The last division of this section is important

as indicating the inner basis of the general development.

Section III is an attempt to get inside the worship-assemblies, and, so far as we may, inside the minds of the worshipers, and to describe the unique atmosphere of warm fellowship and brotherhood, leading up to the deeper religious fellowship, in the Spirit, with Christ. For reasons given, considerable emphasis is laid on the social side of the fellowship.

Sections IV and V deal with details of the worship. The former is already sufficiently summarised; the latter calls for a word of introduction.

In dealing with a subject so wide-reaching as the Lord's Supper, it was necessary to select some definite line of treatment and restrict myself to that. The line selected is that of Form-development, largely because it is here that most progress is, at present, being made. Aspects of the Supper which do not immediately emerge, along this line, have been simply left aside. Perhaps the most obvious lack is the absence of any attempt to estimate the extent to which early Christian thought was penetrated by the mystical and immanental tendencies of the Hellenism of the time. Except for occasional thrusts at extreme ex opere operato interpretations, this whole subject, including the Johannine conceptions, is left untouched. The limits of space and time made this a necessity.

Under 'Baptism,' more attention is given to the Mystery-influences, but only with a view to rebutting extreme interpretations. The main part of this division is occupied with an examination of the ideas which we know to have grown up round the rite. About the rite itself we know surprisingly little - about the 'how,' and the 'where,' and,

to some extent, the 'why' of the early administration.

Section VI is a summary of conclusions as to the central place of Worship in early Christian life, followed by an estimate of the manner in which Worship influenced the development of thought, in particular of Christological thought. The last phrase in the title of the Thesis, "development of doctrine," would have been better expressed as "development of thought"; since the use of the word 'doctrine' may suggest an intention of tracing the development of the complex of NT doctrines, with a view to estimating the influence of Worship upon them. Such was not my intention. The subject of the Thesis came to me in the course of reading Bousset's 'Kyrios Christos,' and my purpose has been, first and foremost, to gain as clear an idea as possible of what was said, and done, and thought by the worshipers in the course of their worship, with emphasis upon the prominent place held by Worship in their life in general, and in particular in their life of thought. This purpose runs throughout the Thesis. The last Section seeks to summarise and focus the results attained on this latter point, while at the same time relating them to the new light thrown on the conditions of early Christian life and thought by Archaeology, for which Deissmann is our best known spokesman. Finally, there is a specific application of my results and method to the Kyrios conception, followed by a more careful analysis of the manner in which Worship kept the early thought steadily directed upon the Figure of the historical Jesus. This appears to me to be a vital point, and is kept in view throughout the Thesis.

It has been my aim to preserve a unity of purpose throughout.

Section I.

DOMINANT FEATURES OF NEW TESTAMENT WORSHIP.

A. Enthusiasm.

New Testament worship, during its classic period which lasted till after the death of Paul, was enthusiastic, in the full religious sense of the word: it was God-inspired, Spirit-filled. This was its character from the earliest days. We do not begin to understand it till we realise that belief in the Spirit, as the dominant operative influence in worship, was cardinal.

It cannot be too often repeated that the belief in the Spirit has always arisen out of actual experience, and that the primitive church did not arrive at it by brooding over ancient texts and precedents. The belief was the expression of a fact. - SCOTT, Spirit in NT, p.61.

Very early in the Church's career - probably at Pentecost - the disciples became aware of a new power working within them. Its most striking manifestation, at first, was 'glossolalia,' a power of ecstatic utterance in an unintelligible tongue; and both those seized by this power and those who saw and heard its manifestations were convinced that some Power from a higher world had broken into their lives, endowing them with capacities of utterance, and with other gifts, which appeared to be something quite different from a heightening of endowments already theirs. People who hitherto had seemed to be nothing out of the common suddenly became capable of impassioned prayer and speech, or of lofty moods in which they were manifestly holding converse with the unseen. ACTS records many forms of the manifestations - speaking with tongues: moving eloquence: vision of

<sup>α</sup> 44 ff.

<sup>ε</sup> 4, 8: 6, 5.

the unseen: prophetic insight: knowledge of men's thoughts and words.<sup>3</sup> PAUL extends the list of manifestations. The special gifts of Apostles, Prophets, and Teachers are attributed to the Spirit. Also gifts of service and administration - in short, every marked capacity evinced in the worship, or in the service of the cause, seems to have been credited to the Spirit. And always it is conceived as a new and foreign power, descending from God upon men. At first, it is thought to be an intermittent visitant that comes and goes and returns again. Later, it was conceived as the more or less permanent possession of every Christian, though its presence might be more evident at some times than at others. Finally, by Paul, it was regarded as a power permeating and recreating the whole Christian life, the abiding source and inspiration of all Christian thought and feeling and action, and yet, none the less, a power from on high.

As to the meaning put upon these experiences by the first Christians, the material for interpreting them lay ready to hand in their Scriptures. The Spirit of God, they said, had come upon them, as of old it came upon saints and prophets, and as it had been foretold by the prophets themselves, when they said that the Spirit would be poured out, in larger measure, in the last days. It is quite unnecessary, therefore, to seek, from Hellenistic sources, ~~any~~ explanations either of the experiences or of their interpretation. The evidence points to the belief in the Spirit having been established before ever the Church moved out into the Hellenistic world. Further, if the reliability of ACTS as a witness on this point be challenged, it is to be noted that the APOCALYPSE OF JOHN and the Epistle to the HEBREWS,<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ACTS, 7, 55.    <sup>2</sup> 11, 28.    <sup>3</sup> 8, 29: 11, 12.    <sup>4</sup> HEB. 2, 4.

both of which preserve primitive modes of thought, are in line with the old Hebraic ideas of a sudden power which irrupts into the lives of men; and neither of these bears any trace of the mystical conceptions of Hellenism. Also, LUKE'S Gospel in its early chapters, which were clearly written under Palestinian influence, describes the Spirit as descending upon Zechariah, Elizabeth, and Simeon, in the O.T. manner of a power which comes upon men from God, impelling them to marvellous speech, or to inspired knowledge of the unseen.

It will elucidate matters if, at this point, we come to terms of understanding with the strange phenomenon of GLOSSOLALIA, which appears to have been the most arresting, and at first the most characteristic of the manifestations of the Spirit. It will suffice to summarise the results of such studies as those of LAKE, Earlier Epistles of Paul, pp241-252: SCOTT, Spirit in NT, chap. IV: and especially of J. WEISS, Comm. on I COR., excursus at 14, 26.

(1) The original meaning of γλώσσαις λαλεῖν was, probably, not "to speak in a foreign language," but "to speak in ANOTHER language"- the language of heaven, which, though unintelligible to men, was intelligible to God: compare "tongues of men and of angels." The other meaning lay close at hand, and may have been the popular one, as it has been in some modern revivals.

(2) The phenomenon was not peculiar to early Christianity. There were Pagan parallels: the Delphian prophetess; the magic papyri (see WEISS). There have been more recent manifestations: Montanists; Camisards; Irvingites; <sup>Methodists</sup> ~~Wesleyans~~; American revivals. Modern psychology accounts for the phenomenon as due to the excessive strain and stress of religious emotion, seeking for an outlet and perhaps trying to express the thoughts at its heart. This explanation will probably stand; but it is to be noted that while it may explain the immediate cause, it does not profess to account

for the ultimate cause, which lay in the overwhelming emotion. It still remains to discover any better explanation of that emotion than was given by the church when she attributed it to the Spirit of God.

(3) At Corinth the gift was highly prized, to the depreciation of other gifts. In dealing with its excesses, Paul shows his great sanity of judgment, and his instinctive adherence to the moral ideal as finally determinative. He has never a doubt as to glossolalia being a genuine gift<sup>1</sup> of the Spirit; he possesses and exercises the gift himself; possibly the "sighs which are beyond words"<sup>2</sup> ~~is~~<sup>are</sup> an echo from his own prayer experience, when speech proved inadequate to express what he would utter to God. We return, later,<sup>3</sup> to Paul's method of dealing with the matter.

(4) Perhaps the prevalence of glossolalia at Corinth was not typical of the church generally. Thessalonica appears to have been less hospitable to the manifestations.<sup>2</sup> If there was ever real danger of Christianity becoming an orgiastic religion, it was averted by the superior strength of the moral forces released by the Gospel. As the century advanced, and the enthusiasm cooled, the phenomenon would be less and less in evidence, yielding finally before the growing pressure of church order and organisation.

How deeply the Spirit was rooted in the Church's belief and worship is shown by a multiplicity of references in the NT, of which one or two of the more significant may be cited. Paul makes possession of the Spirit to be the test of the reality of a man's religion. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his."<sup>3</sup> He asks his Galatians whether it was by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith that they had received the Spirit, "as if the reception of the Spirit was something as definite and observable as, for example, an attack of influenza."<sup>4</sup> In Paul's thought and in John's the Spirit was so firmly established that neither of them

<sup>1</sup> ROM. 8, 26.

<sup>2</sup> I THESS. 5, 19.

<sup>3</sup> ROM. 8, 9.

<sup>4</sup> STREETER, Prim. Ch., p69.

<sup>1</sup> I Cor. 14, 18.

<sup>2</sup> p. 66.

makes any endeavour to part with it, although their idea of Christ as indwelling and as Logos had drawn into his hands practically all the functions of the Spirit and left no real need for the old conception. Further, the developed vocabulary, descriptive of the Spirit's operations, is noteworthy. Paul speaks of these in a three-fold aspect. They are CHARISMATA, or a variety of gifts bestowed by the one Spirit: DIAKONIAI, or varieties of service rendered to the cause of the one Lord: and ENERGEATA, or varieties of the dynamic effects of the power of the one God who works all in all. These three words<sup>1</sup> disclose a sweep of developed thought which must be the result of much experience and reflection. All that was felt, and said, and done within the worship-assemblies was believed to be under the influence of the Spirit's control. When the perplexed sinner was suddenly filled with a quite new feeling of trust, so that he cried, "Abba, Father", what was that but the Spirit of sonship bearing witness that he now belonged to the family of God?<sup>2</sup> "God's love floods our hearts"- actually and palpably - "through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us."<sup>3</sup> Even the humble-seeming aptitudes for ministration to the needy appear to be attributed to the same power.<sup>4</sup>

We moderns may wonder why the Church did not recognise the majority of these charismata to be just natural endowments, quickened and heightened by the power of Christ, and why she did not seek an explanation of the more arresting gifts along the same line. Yet the fact remains that precisely the opposite view was taken. The more marvellous gifts controlled the interpretation of all, and drew every phenomenon of the worship within the sphere of the Spirit. In this

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<sup>1</sup> ICOR. 12, 4-6.    <sup>2</sup> ROM. 8, 16.    <sup>3</sup> ROM. 5, 5.    <sup>4</sup> ICOR. 12, 28.

we have an index of the extent to which the early Church was dominated by the conviction that the living power of God was abroad in her midst. As that Power had burst anew into human history in Jesus, and through concrete action in his life and death had wrought out redemption for men, so it continued still to break into men's lives, dowering them with power from on high. Not only was the basis of their salvation objective; the process of its completion, through experiences such as those that met them in worship, was in a real sense objective also. It was the work of a Power that came upon them with sensible manifestation. As day by day, in their worship-assemblies, they beheld now one man, now another, swept to his feet and impelled to unwonted speech and action, their minds acquired a certain habit of objective poise. What was happening in their worship was not of their own doing, but of God's. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory." Their gaze had little occasion to turn inward upon themselves; mainly it was directed outwards, in adoring contemplation of the wondrous things which God had done for them in Christ, and still was doing for them through his Spirit. We shall return to this important aspect of the worship, particularly in connection with the early eucharistic prayers. Meanwhile, let it suffice to indicate that in this objective habit of mind we have an explanation of the massive simplicity, and the glow of wholesome emotion, restrained and reverential, which so signally distinguish many of the great prayers in the earlier liturgies of the church.

The flame of enthusiasm, ever kindled anew by the deeds of the Spirit, was fed from another contributory source. APOCALYPTIC HOPES burned in their hearts. Perhaps the earliest legacy that has

<sup>α</sup> p. 21f, 70f, 83, 146, 150f, 184ff.

come to us from the church's worship is the single word MARANATHA. It appears in ICOR.16,21, and in the DIDACHE, ch.10; and, without doubt, lies behind the "Come, Lord Jesus" of REV.22,20. In the two NT places it appears in the closing sentences of a book; while in the Didache it forms the close of an act of worship.

Note. It is worth pausing to note that in the Apocalypse of John, and in several of the letters of Paul, the writer's ~~deliberate~~ intention seems to be to begin and close his writing on the note of worship, as though he sought to set his work within the framework of an act of worship. LOHMEYER in particular emphasises this, as in his commentaries on the Apocalypse<sup>1</sup> and Colossians.<sup>2</sup> It is an indication of the prominent role which worship played, that it was able thus to draw within its orbit even the author as he bent over his task. Perhaps the immediate impulse came from his knowledge that what he wrote was to be read by some church, gathered for worship.

The word 'Maranatha' may be translated in either of two ways: "Our Lord, come!"; or, "Our Lord comes." The former is probably the meaning in the Didache, but in ICOR. the latter suits the context better, as Weisz indicates. In any case, its position at the close of the Didache formulary of worship, and its position, in near proximity to the benediction, in the two NT writings, strongly suggest that it formed part of the customary closing act of Christian worship, ~~and that it immediately preceded the benediction.~~ If that be so, then it was upon the apocalyptic note that the worship ended. Eagerly the minds of worshipers were strained forward in expectation of the day, which they confidently believed to be near, when their Lord himself would return to his people to consummate his kingdom. More than that—they believed the kingdom to be already in being; the decisive step had been taken; the new age had begun. The community of believing worshipers was "like a fragment of the future order projected into

<sup>1</sup> On Apoc. 22, 17-20.

<sup>2</sup> Coloss. Introd. sec.3. (Meyer's Comm. 7).

the present; an outpost of the kingdom thrust out into this world of time," as E.F. Scott somewhere describes it. Its potencies were even now at work in their assemblies: they were already "tasting the powers of the world to come." But when the great expected day arrived, then they would behold their Lord coming in his glory to end this present age with its imperfections and its evils; to subdue the banded powers of Satan; to take his place as Lord of all. For it was no mere drama of individual salvation that was to be consummated then; nor even a drama on some national scale. It was a drama involving the destinies of the whole world, nay, of the whole created cosmos of God.<sup>2</sup> It may be difficult for us to think ourselves back into that old world of apocalyptic thought; but even a slight acquaintance with it enables us to sense the fervid expectancy that throbbed in its denizens, quickening their joyous hope, stretching out their minds, and fanning their enthusiasm to a warmer glow.

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<sup>1</sup> HEB. 6. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Weiss. Ueber. 26.

B. Freedom.

Paul has been called the apostle of Liberty, and few would deny his claim to the title; yet he was only formulating and working out a principle which was to be found already in full operation in every Christian worship-assembly he entered. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." These words might have stood over the doorway of the most humble of the meeting-places of the early church as an appropriate motto. From the first, the control of the Spirit was taken seriously. The impressions we gather from reading the twelfth to the fourteenth chapters of I Corinthians are consonant only with a worship where the Spirit's guidance was accepted as final, and where no lesser control was recognised. We shall not therefore expect to find many fixed and settled forms of worship in the early church, but, rather, much diversity and freedom.

First, however, we consider a more general matter.

A great deal of our modern controversy about the government and worship of the early Church has been vitiated by failure to recognise this distinctive feature of liberty in the early religion. Later Churches and sects have each sought in the New Testament for the prototype of its own constitution and worship.

The Episcopalian has sought to find episcopacy, the Presbyterian presbyterianism, and the Independent a system of independency to be the form of Church government in New Testament times. But while each party to the dispute has been able to make out a case for his own view, he has never succeeded in demolishing the case of his opponent. The explanation of this deadlock, I have come to believe, is quite simple. It is the uncriticised assumption, made by all parties to the controversy, that in the first century there existed a single type of Church order. - STREETER, Prim. Ch., Introdn., p. VIII.

Streeter's main thesis is that "there is no basis in history for the traditional picture of the Apostles sitting together, like a College of Cardinals, systematising the doctrine and superintending the organisation of the Church." "The actual course of events was of a more haphazard, and at the same time, of a more dynamic character, - - an original diversity, a rapid evolution in response to urgent local needs, to be followed later by standardisation up to an efficient uniform model."<sup>2</sup> "The history of Catholic Christianity during the first five centuries is the history of a progressive standardisation of a diversity which had its origin in the Apostolic age."<sup>3</sup> At the end of his enquiry,<sup>4</sup> Streeter summarises in these words:

There is one result from which there is no escape. In the Primitive Church there was no single system of Church Order laid down by the Apostles. During the first hundred years of Christianity, the Church was an organism alive and growing, changing its organisation to meet changing needs. Clearly in Asia, Syria, and Rome during that century the government varied from church to church, and in the same church at different times. Uniformity was a later development; and for those times it was, perhaps, a necessary development."

It is not the province of this thesis to deal closely with the vexed question of Church Order and Government; but when that field is surveyed from the angle of worship, a simple, but important conclusion seems to thrust itself forward. (What follows in this paragraph and the next is advanced with some diffidence. Though Streeter's findings appear to lead up to it, the conclusion is so simple that one suspects some snag. Anyhow, it has forced itself on me.) My conclusion is this. FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES, the Church

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<sup>1</sup> op.cit. 27.    <sup>2</sup> p. 72.    <sup>3</sup> p. 47.    <sup>4</sup> p. 261.

at this time was the sum of her worship-assemblies; and her affairs were 'governed' by the Leaders of worship.

(a) The worship-assemblies were the Church. As a visible institution, she had nothing to show, nothing to administer, outside of these gatherings, and the few simple matters that were administered from them. She possessed no buildings, no property that needed 'management.' There was as yet no organisation, strictly speaking, binding the different churches together. Certain bonds did unite them - ties of  $\phi\iota\lambda\omicron\chi\rho\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$ : Apostles and others visiting from church to church, exhorting, advising, guiding: occasional collections and dispatchings of money to needy churches and workers elsewhere: and over all, the invisible bond of the Ecclesia making them, ideally, one Church of God. But as yet there was no actual organisation, such as would call for men to be set apart to control it. As a visible institution, the Church and the sum of her worship-assemblies were one and the same thing. (b) She was 'ruled' by her leaders of worship. When there was need for an important decision on some question of administration, such as the selection of missionaries for a decisively new venture, how was the decision made?

"Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon, and Lucius the Cyrenian, besides Manaen and Saul. As they were worshiping the Lord, and fasting, the Holy Spirit said: 'Come, set me apart Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Then after fasting and prayer they laid their hands on them and let them go."

This means that the momentous decision was taken during an act of worship. <sup>It was believed that</sup> the matter had already been decided by the Spirit; it remained only to discover, through worship, what the mind of the

Spirit was; and the men best equipped for this task were the men who had shown themselves most susceptible to the Spirit's leading - in this case, the prophets and teachers who were the outstanding figures in the local worship. (cf. the Apostolic decree: 'It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us:') The inference seems inevitable: the Church's great affairs were governed by the men who, as leaders in worship, possessed the freest access to the Presence-chamber of the supreme governing Will.

Now, PAUL makes it abundantly clear who these men, in his day, were. They were the Apostles, Prophets, and Teachers. They were elevated above the others, not in virtue of any 'office' to which they had been formally appointed - that seems clear from the passage immediately to be quoted - but in virtue of their personal charismata. The Spirit had chosen them, above others, to be his mouthpieces; daily they evinced their superior gift; and automatically, it would seem, they passed, in virtue of it, into the order of 'Apostle', or of 'Prophet', or of 'Teacher', as the case might be.

" God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues."<sup>2</sup>

The Prophet and Teacher represent "the two most important offices in what may be called the normal ministry in a local church";<sup>3</sup> while 'governments', which we take to mean 'administrative capacities', come far down in the list; not even at the end, where some importance might have been suggested, but second-last, giving the suggestion of very minor importance indeed. In the ROMANS' list,<sup>4</sup> the Prophet and

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<sup>1</sup> ACTS, 15, 28.    <sup>2</sup> ICOR. 12, 28.    <sup>3</sup> Streeter, op. cit., 77.    <sup>4</sup> 12, 6ff.

Teacher again come high up, while 'he that ruleth' comes near the end. When we reach EPHESIANS, we find a development. The 'Pastors' (ποιμνευεϛ: 'shepherds': in OT, equiv. to 'rulers'). "are obviously the equivalent of 'Episcopoi', but are no longer nameless as in the Corinthian letter, but come between the Prophets and the Teachers."<sup>2</sup> Evidently, the need for administrative rule, to secure coherence in the expanding Church, is being clearly realised - a need which Paul had already sensed, though faintly, in his Corinthian letter.<sup>3</sup> Finally, in the DIDACHE, the strengthening of the administrative element has become a central aim.<sup>4</sup> Further, it is probable that it was through gaining control, in the first instance, of the worship, that the Episcopoi reached and established their preeminence in the Church.<sup>5</sup> To sum up - everything points to the predominant position which the worship-assemblies held in the life of the Church, and, as a consequence, to the predominant position in the guidance of her affairs accorded to the men who were the leaders in these assemblies, and who owed their preeminence there wholly to their preeminent possession of the Spirit.

To come closer now to our immediate subject, which is the Freedom of the worship - in a Church led and 'ruled' by men who were distinguished for their inspired thought and utterance, and not by men preeminent as men of system and methodical rule, we should not expect to find fixed and settled forms of worship uniform throughout the churches; we should expect, rather, diversity and freedom. And that is what we find.

The student of Liturgiology will hardly need to be reminded

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<sup>1</sup> 4, 11f.    <sup>2</sup> Streeter, op. cit., 81.    <sup>3</sup> ICOR. 16, 15f.    <sup>4</sup> Streeter, 150.

<sup>5</sup> Bousset, *Kyr. Ch.*, 340.

that each of the great centres of Christianity evolved its own type of Liturgy. But attempts to trace these back to their earliest form suggest that, apart from a very few constant features, there existed a maximum of freedom and diversity in the earliest period. - Streeter, op. cit., 52.

The LORD'S SUPPER celebration provides an example. The more closely we examine the details of the celebration during the NT period, the more impressed we are with the 'freedom and diversity' disclosed. What could be more dissimilar than the Supper-conceptions of the Didache, emanating from Syria, and the conceptions disclosed in the sixth chapter of John's gospel emanating, almost contemporaneously, from the region of Ephesus? Or what unity of form could we hope to extract from the five Lord's Supper formularies which appear in Matthew, Mark, Luke, ICor. 11, and the Didache, to say nothing of the references in Acts to the Breaking of bread? Incessant effort has been spent during the centuries, in the endeavour to reconcile these formularies with each other and with the presupposition that they have all come into being as copies of a single original model, set up by Jesus in the words he spoke at the Last Supper in Jerusalem. Through very despair of the hope of reconciliation, some scholars in the more recent past have surmised that the old presupposition must have been false; that Jesus cannot have commanded the institution of a fixed rite modelled on his own last supper-meal; that whatever impulse he may have given to the subsequent adoption of a Supper-celebration by his followers, that celebration grew and developed among them, not after the manner of a rite authoritatively fixed in form and content, but rather after the manner of a living organism that develops by adaptation to an ever-changing environment; and that our five divergent formularies are simply deposits from a few

of the diverse forms which the celebration took in different localities. This is the nature of the conclusion reached in the Lord's Supper section of this thesis, but for more positive reasons than as a counsel of despair. Even the central celebration of the Church's worship was not exempt from the Spirit's law of liberty.

To us it may seem strange that Paul and other leaders of the Church should have been willing to commit the control of its worship to a power so incalculable as the Spirit, which was like the wind, blowing where it listeth. Paul soon discovered for himself some of the dangers it involved. "The church of Corinth exhibited over a period of years a turbulence which strained Paul's capacities, physical, moral, and intellectual, to the uttermost." And yet Paul does not seem to have once wavered in his confidence in the Spirit's leading. We cannot conceive of him weighing a suggestion to set up some committee of Apostles, or other leaders, to determine upon questions of worship or discipline. He would have repudiated such a suggestion as a weak reversion to the dead system of Law. He will have no control except that of the Spirit, or of the living Christ. He is conspicuously sparing even in his appeals to the authority of individual sayings or deeds of the Lord Jesus. True, he is glad to have at hand some clear word from his Lord when he has some knotty problem of church discipline to resolve.<sup>2</sup> But when dealing with matters of everyday conduct, he dispenses with all such support; as for instance, in Romans XII and XIII, and I Corinthians XIII, where his exhortations pour from him in a fiery stream, melodious in their phrasing,

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<sup>1</sup> Streeter, op. cit., 79.    <sup>2</sup> I Cor. 7, 25.

amazingly sure and confident in their cleaving to the heart of the greatest principles, proclaiming him to be a man whose mind did not work with <sup>particular</sup> ~~individual~~ laws, and maxims, and rules of conduct, even though spoken by Jesus, but had gathered these into its own fires and now gave them forth again, glowing and fused into living principles of conduct suited to the needs of the hour. Of the words of Jesus Paul makes little use, because for him the Spirit of Jesus is everything, and he trusts to it wholly.

And he trusts to it in everything. Though the Galatians had shown themselves to be an untutored and fitful people, yet he says to them confidently: "Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the desires of the flesh."<sup>1</sup> Such high-pitched idealism seems glaringly out of harmony with the moral capacity of those to whom it was addressed; and yet Paul did not hesitate. If men possess the Spirit, renewing their minds, and giving them a sure sense of what God's will is, then they will want to do it.<sup>2</sup> That was what Paul meant by freedom. It was the capacity for doing just what we want to do, combined with the gift of wanting to do only what pleases God. And this latter is a gift of the Spirit that renews men's minds.<sup>3</sup>

These wider considerations are relevant as showing how deeply rooted and how thoroughgoing was the belief in the Spirit. There was no domain of life where its right to control was not recognised, ~~and~~ and where the fact of its control was not experienced. And though it must remain to us an astonishing and humbling experience to observe the utter confidence with which the growing Church committed her whole life to the Spirit's guiding, yet, once we have grasped the truth

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<sup>1</sup> GAL. 5, 16.

<sup>2</sup> ROM. 12, 2.

<sup>3</sup> WEISS, Urchr., p. 433.

of this, it seems a quite natural, and indeed inevitable thing that she should have surrendered the control of her worship to the same power, and that she should have continued to reject the restraints of set forms and regulations until, towards the close of the century, the power of the Spirit began to wane<sup>α</sup>, and many of its functions were gathered into the hands of the encroaching powers of ecclesiastical system and authority.

Certain advantages were secured for the worship through its freedom from restraint. Here we specify two.

(a) The worship was kept flexible, and capable of easy adaptation to the needs of widely differing localities and races; while these, in their turn, contributed to it some touches of their peculiar genius, which thus passed into its accumulating stores. We find ample proof of this in the rich variety, both of form and content, which distinguishes the great Liturgies that emerged later in the wide-flung provinces of the Church.

(b) Within the individual worship-assemblies, the creative impulses were stimulated in the highest degree. The conduct of worship was not restricted to the few; it was open to the many. Each member was encouraged and, it would seem from ICOR. 14, 26, expected to take part. The community of goods (which appears to have broken down on the economic side) was firmly established here. Each threw his contribution into the common store, and, while enriching it, was himself enriched. For when he yielded himself to the impulses of the Spirit, faculties of mind and heart and soul, which had hitherto lain dormant, sprang to life. Often we have wondered, when wrestling with some difficult passage of Paul, how it came<sup>α</sup> that the young congrega-

tions at Rome, or Corinth, or in Galatia, composed for the most part of very ordinary people, should have been able to understand and appreciate letters which are so very far from being food for babes. A large part of the explanation is doubtless to be found in the character of the worship-assemblies. These bracing gusts of enthusiasm which blew, not upon the few but upon all, whipped their faculties and capacities into their fullest stride. There, common men rose to their best - rose even beyond any best they had hitherto disclosed; and the contributions they made to worship were, we may well believe, of no common order. The thought of the Church must have been vastly enriched, and its development greatly accelerated, through the enlistment into its service of so many different minds, and of minds which, for the most part, were working at their fullest stretch, under the impulses of the Spirit.<sup>α</sup>

### C. Joy and Confidence.

Since it was in worship that the religion found its fullest expression, we may be sure that the note of Joy, so evident in its literature, rang out even more clearly in its worship-assemblies. One has read somewhere of a journalist whose day's work took him to a conference of Salvation Army officers and workers, and who said afterwards that he had never, in his wide experience of public gatherings, seen such a crowd of happy faces. In the worship of the early Church, there were richer and grander notes sounded than would be the case at that conference; but its irrepressible joy was true to the great tradition.

It is not our task to lay bare the sources of this joy; to do so were to unfold the unsearchable riches which already the Church had discovered in Christ. Her joy was the joy of Redemption: of emancipation from the servitude of sin, from the bondage of the Law, from the tyranny of Death, from the dominion of Satan and his hordes of sinister spirits. It was the joy of Hope - the thrilling hope of the Parousia. It was the joy of forgiveness and reconciliation with God; of fellowship with Him through the Spirit; of fellowship with Christ, and with one another through Christ. Very clearly the note of joy is rung out in the early chapters of Acts. The disciples, as they ate 'with a glad and simple heart praising God', were no children of gloom or sorrow. Nor were the Apostles, with their *ἡσυχία*, giving 'their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus with great power'; nor Stephen, whose 'face shone like the face of an angel'. And the note of joy goes ringing through the whole literature. Behind Paul's epistles we discern people with happy faces; from the

Thessalonians who 'welcomed the word, though it brought them heavy trouble, with a joy inspired by the Holy Spirit', right on to the Philippians, bidden to rejoice in the Lord, 'and again I say, rejoice'. Even James, a drier type of man, knows of a 'pure joy' which comes in the wake of trials; while the authors of the Apocalypse and of the first epistle of John write triumphantly of 'the victory that has overcome the world'.

The man who has shared this basal experience of victorious joy and confidence - he, and only he, can understand Primitive Christianity. - WEISS, Urchr., p29.

But though we do not here attempt to unfold the rich content of NT joy, we must try to recapture something of the tone and colour of its expression in worship.

In the absence of direct evidence of the prevailing atmosphere of the early worship, we are entitled to assume that it was essentially one with the atmosphere pervading the literature. So, when we find PAUL'S life of fellowship with God habitually keyed to certain notes, we may conclude that these same notes were struck in the worship of the community. For Paul's spiritual life had been nurtured within the worshiping church, and his commanding personality, in its turn, had been steadily reacting on the church, leading it into deeper regions of thought and experience; and however far he may have surpassed others in force and range of mind, we may feel sure that in the united outpouring of hearts before God he and they were at one.

A case in point will serve to open up our subject. When Paul gives expression to his feelings towards God and Christ, he is markedly

sparing in the use of "love" language. Paul never calls Christ his 'beloved'; nor does he ever write in the strain of what we call "emotionalism"; in only five places, in all his letters, does he speak expressly of love to God or Christ.<sup>1</sup> This reserve is explained, partly on the ground that the free use of love-terms might have encouraged feelings of equality, instead of the more wholesome feelings of dependence which Paul's habitual faith-language evokes; but mainly on the ground that 'faith', while it implies love as its corollary, carries also a moral connotation which might easily be missed in 'love'. Further, this reserve in the use of emotional language is characteristic of the New Testament. "From the first, love in Christianity was an affection rather than an emotion"<sup>2</sup>; it involved mind and will as well as heart; a love dissociated from duty and reflection would not be true Christian love. We conclude, therefore, that the early worship was not hospitable to emotionalism. No doubt, there were outbreaks of it, but it could not long flourish in the prevailing atmosphere. Unlike the Mystery faiths, which offered to their worshipers a set of sensations and emotions, as proofs of the divine favour, Christianity did not seek for assurance of her faith from among the movements of her own subjective feelings. Though her assurance was rooted in experience, it rested ultimately on objective things: things that had been seen with the eye or heard with the ear: the great things which God had done in Christ, and the great things He still was doing through the Spirit. It was upon these that the gaze of the worshiper was steadily turned.

And so, his joy was no emotional or effervescent thing, but a joy that was always touched with awe, and was kept sober by this habit

<sup>1</sup> MOFFATT, 'LOVE in the N.T.', pp. 154 ff.

<sup>2</sup> do. p. 55.

of adoring contemplation of the great things God had done. Nowhere did the historical character, alike of the Jewish and the Christian religions, stand out more clearly than in their prayers at public worship. Sometimes a whole chain of historical events is made the object of prayer-contemplation; or some single event, such as the death and resurrection of Christ; or his single saving personality - but, always, it is something pertaining to the realm of historical fact that is the subject of thanksgiving and praise.<sup>1</sup> And the giving of thanks, as we shall see later,<sup>2</sup> was the predominant motive in early worship, overshadowing both petition and confession. Glad and adoring praise was its preeminent theme. "Rejoice at all times; never give up prayer; thank God for everything - such is His will for you in Jesus Christ."<sup>2</sup>

The warm note which rings in these words of Paul is characteristic of the NT, in contrast with the OT. In the daughter-faith a more intimate 'family' feeling emerged than had shown itself in the mother-faith. We have an excellent index of this in the habitual NT use of the words εὐχαριστεῖν, εὐχαριστία, to designate thanksgiving prayer. The word commonly used in the LXX is εὐλογεῖν, which suggests the homage paid to a king; while the NT word suggests the simpler, but deeper gratitude which a child gives to his father. The extent of the predominance of εὐχαριστεῖν in the NT is shown in detail by Von der Goltz,<sup>3</sup> who adds:

This marked predominance of the word in the NT cannot be an accident, when we consider that this word was not only

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<sup>1</sup> HEILER, Das Gebet, 445, 452.    <sup>2</sup> I THESS. 1, 17f.    <sup>3</sup> Das Gebet, 104.

<sup>α</sup> p. 6. u.    <sup>β</sup> p. 96.

frequent on the lips of Jesus, and used in almost every one of Paul's letters, but is rarely to be found in the old Jewish prayers, and never in their opening formulae. The Jewish piety confined itself, for the most part, to reverential praise of the Almighty, and its thanksgiving took the form of homage. It was only when it came into touch with the spirit of Jesus Christ that it learned to thank the holy God as a child thanks its father, and so brought to the front the word which rang with this personal note. Prayer became personal prayer of thanksgiving, where previously it had been rather an ascription of praise.

As we have seen, the Jewish note of reverential awe<sup>α</sup> was not left behind, but the spirit of glad and confident trust definitely took precedence of the older spirit of submission and godly fear.

Note. Significant of this is the absence from Paul's designations of God of a number of the designations most frequent in the old Jewish prayers. Such epithets as ἅγιος, ἰσχυρός, μέγας, παντοκράτωρ, δυνατός, βασιλεύς, ὑψιστος never appear in Paul, though, by the second century, they are frequent both in the prayers and the literature. An examination of the 36 designations of God, culled by Von der Goltz from Paul's letters, reveal the predominance of the warmer 'family' feeling.

This is one of the reasons why, with Paul and John, the idea of the Kingdom recedes into the background, in favour of the warmer conception of the Family of God. Christians habitually addressed each other as 'brothers'. True, the term was in common use among the members of the Pagan guilds,<sup>β</sup> and cannot be claimed as distinctively Christian; but it echoed a great thought of Jesus: "Whosoever doeth the will of God, the same is my brother and sister and mother," and it gave fitting expression to the intimate family feeling that pervaded the early fellowships. The holy kiss<sup>γ</sup> was a symbolic action, expressive

<sup>α</sup> p.106.

<sup>β</sup> p.58.

<sup>γ</sup> p.57.

<sup>δ</sup> Das Gebet, 107f.

of the same feeling. It was exchanged either during, or at the commencement of worship; and the custom rooted itself so deeply that Tertullian, at the end of the second century, could say that no prayer was complete apart from the kiss that followed it. As the churches grew in numbers, abuses appeared, and the practice had to be restricted, men now kissing only men and women women. But in the NT period, the kiss of 'peace', or of 'love', remained a simple and spontaneous expression of the warm family feeling prevailing amongst the worshipers towards each other.

If the kiss of peace was the most demonstrative expression of their glad sense of fellowship, a deeper expression was reached through the medium of a metaphor that came to be a prime favourite with Paul. The BODY OF CHRIST, he calls the Christian worshipers.<sup>2</sup> The metaphor is frequent in literary Greek, in phrases like our 'body-politic'; and very probably Paul got it from that source.<sup>3</sup> He employs it frequently, analysing and applying it in a variety of ways, and discovering so remarkable a correspondence between the 'body' in his metaphor and the fellowship it was used to illustrate, that in the end it ceases to be a mere metaphor and becomes something more. What began as a comparison ends in being a symbol, which goes some way towards becoming an equation: "ye are the Body of Christ". The figure is certainly an extraordinarily apt one, as descriptive of the functioning of a worship-assembly under the control of the Spirit. Members rising to their feet, one after another, each performing his separate function in the complete act of worship, and all alike controlled by the self-same animating power - it is hard to avoid

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<sup>1</sup> MOFFATT, op. cit., 245.    <sup>2</sup> ICOR. 12, 27.    <sup>3</sup> WEISS, Comm. in loco.

the surmise that it must have been on some occasion when Paul sat at worship observing all this, that its likeness to a human body, moving harmoniously in obedience to its central control, flashed for the first time into his mind. Bousset asserts that "when Paul speaks of the Christian community as a Body of which the head is Christ, always he is visualising the community as gathered together for worship."<sup>1</sup> This conception of the Church as the Body of Christ was to prove a most creative and fruitful one; but what matters now is to observe how close was the fellowship as thus conceived. It was fellowship at once with Christ the Head and with each other as cooperating members of his divine Body. The Body of Christ! Each worshiper an actual member of that living Body! As they begin to realise what this means, we seem to see their joy growing deeper and more devout; while some few already begin to draw their spirits apart, into mystic contemplation of this wondrous fellowship into which they have been called by God. In John's image of the Vine, we find a 'peculiarly perfect image', as HEILER calls it, of this intimate union and fellowship. Nowadays, he says, we are apt to interpret it too abstractly; whereas, if we look at it, not in isolation, but against the background of Christian worship, it acquires new life, and we discern something of the "glory of the Christ-mysticism which was associated with that worship".<sup>2</sup>

Although this conception of the Church as the Body of Christ needed little help from other conceptions, to give it depth and fervour, it was greatly widened in its range - as indeed all Christian thought was widened, by another conception, namely that of the Church as the

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<sup>1</sup> Kyrios Christos, 105.

<sup>2</sup> The Spirit of Worship, 24f.

ECCLESIA OF GOD. It will suffice to set down what is generally thought to have been the content of this conception, without touching on questions of the origin and order of emergence of its various elements.

(a) The Church, as composed of its worshiping-assemblies, was conceived as essentially one. The Corinthian assembly was not merely 'the church of Corinth'; it was 'the Church of God at Corinth' - that part of the great living organism functioning at Corinth. Parallel with this designation of individual churches as belonging to the one Ecclesia of God was the designation of individual worshipers as 'saints' - people called by God and set apart for special privilege and service.

(b) The term Ecclesia gave expression to the Church's deep consciousness that she represented the true Israel of God, and was the heir to Israel's promises and privileges, and in particular had inherited its task of bringing blessing to the whole world.

This conviction that they were a PEOPLE, involving the transference of all the prerogatives and claims of the Jewish people to the new community, at once furnished the adherents of the new faith with a political and historical self-consciousness. Nothing more comprehensive, or complete, or impressive than this consciousness can be conceived. This estimate of themselves rendered Christians impregnable against all attacks and movements of polemical criticism, while it further enabled them to advance in every direction for a war of conquest. - HARNACK, Expansion, I, 300.

This exalted consciousness reveals itself in a quite unconscious and incidental way - showing how familiar it had already become - when Paul writes: 'Put no stumbling-block in the way of Jews, or Greeks, or the Church of God' - as though the Church of God were a tertium genus hominum, alongside of Jews and Gentiles. - ICOR. 10, 32.

(c) The Church became the heir, not only to a glorious past, but also to the promise and certainty of a still greater future. She was the People, chosen afresh by God, to share with Him the glories of the coming Kingdom. We can hardly be too superlative in describing these high-pitched expectations. It was in the earlier period that the flame of hope burned most intensely, as, daily, the worshipers looked forward to the time of crisis when the old order would be swept away, and Christ would take his place as Lord of all, and they would reign with him. And though the flame burnt lower as the days passed and the crisis did not come, yet none the less they continued to contemplate the greatness of their place in the Plan of God. It is in the epistle to the Ephesians - well on in the NT - that the Ecclesia ideas are most fully developed. There the Church is displayed as having significance, not for this world of ours alone, but for the whole created universe of God; since she embodies the first-fruits of the consummation to which God is working - the reconciliation of the warring elements of His Cosmos.

This sketch of the main content of the Ecclesia conception may suffice to suggest how greatly it must have exalted the mood of the worshiper, giving to his joy at once a wider range and a surer confidence. It is a profound mistake, surely, to think of the Church as beginning her career with only meagre ambitions, and with narrow horizons, strictly commensurate with the humble and restricted circumstances of her origin. From very early days she possessed the substance at least of these great thoughts; and, even then, her worshipers could have responded to the impassioned words that a later teacher was to utter:

Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people: that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: which in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God. - I PETER, 2, 9f.

Happily we can detect some clear traces of the presence of these exalted notes in the early worship.

(a) It is widely agreed that one of the sayings of Jesus at the Last Supper that can be most confidently retained as authentic is his reference to the coming Kingdom, and his assertion that he would not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine until that day when he would drink it new with his disciples in his Father's Kingdom. "The Messianic Banquet had become one of the regular features of apocalyptic imagery". The image was congenial to the thought of the time as descriptive of 'joyous fellowship and the satisfaction of all desires.' It depicted a perpetual feast of gladness, prepared for his people in the Kingdom of God, at which he would himself preside.<sup>1</sup> After he had gone, and his disciples still continued their fellowship with him round their Supper-table, we may be sure that often they felt themselves to be lifted above space and time, and to be enjoying a foretaste of this heavenly Feast of joy. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."<sup>2</sup> This old thought, already taken over by Paul, soon became familiar in worship. It appears in I Clement, in association with the Sanctus, and found an established place in the later Liturgies. It gave worthy expression to the glad sense of wonder at the greatness of the future that lay in front, foretastes

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<sup>1</sup> SCOTT, The Kingdom and the Messiah, 241. <sup>2</sup> ICOR. 2, 9.

of which they were enjoying, even now, as they sat at Christ's table.<sup>1</sup>

(b) We have evidence that the SANCTUS held a place in the worship of the NT church. The indications are against its being associated, in NT times, with the eucharist - Justin Martyr makes no mention of it in his description of the worship, in his Apology.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the writer of I Clement was already, about the turn of the century, familiar with the sound of the "Holy, Holy, Holy", as it ascended from the voices of assembled worshipers.<sup>3</sup> From the epistle to the Hebrews, with its conception of religion as synonymous with worship, and from the majestic pictures of the heavenly worship in the Apocalypse of John, we infer that, very early, the thought had emerged that the worship of earth was an antitype of a more glorious worship above, and that the strains of both were blended together, as they rose to the throne of God. In Revelation, V, 11-14, we find an antiphony of Praise to Christ, between the "many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders" on the one hand, and, on the other, "every creature which is in heaven" - such as stars and birds - "and on the earth, and such as are in the sea". First the praise of heaven ascends; then the praise of earth; finally, the response to the earthly praise is given in the heavenly "Amen" - an echo, surely, of such Christian praise as Pliny reported on to Trajan: 'carmen Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem.'<sup>4</sup>

The local community, when in public worship it prays and sings praises, knows itself to be one with the choir of angels who surround the throne of God and without ceasing chant the Trishagion; one with the brethren who have been made perfect, whom the author of the Apocalypse beheld

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KNOFF, Comm. on IClem. 34. <sup>2</sup> I, 65, 3. <sup>3</sup> IClem. 34. LIETZMANN, M. u. H., 259.  
<sup>4</sup> Ep. X, 96(97).  
<sup>1</sup> p. 149.

standing before the throne of the Lamb clothed in white robes, offering praise and intercession. The Church militant forms with the Church triumphant one great community of prayer; nay this Church of Christ extends throughout the whole universe, the mighty choirs of which glorify the eternal Father through Jesus Christ, with one mind and with one voice.<sup>1</sup>

The Church, though she worshiped in humble meeting-places, reached out her arms towards a fellowship that was world-wide and heaven-high; and the joy of her worship on earth was attuned to the majestic joy of the worship above.

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<sup>1</sup> HEILER, The Spirit of Worship, 23.

## Section II.

## HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE CUSTOMS OF WORSHIP IN THE PERIOD.

A The original Palestinian church.

They devoted themselves to the instruction given by the apostles and to fellowship, breaking bread and praying together. Awe fell on everyone, and many wonders and signs were performed by the apostles in Jerusalem. The believers kept together; they shared all they had with one another, they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds among all, as anyone might be in need. Day after day they resorted with one accord to the temple and broke bread together in their own homes; they ate with a glad and simple heart, praising God and looked on with favour by all the people. Meanwhile the Lord added the saved daily to their number. - ACTS II, 42-47.

This account of the founding of the Church is generally accepted as embodying an authentic tradition. Possibly the writer idealises the situation somewhat - the picture at the beginning of chapter VI is less attractive; but there is no good reason to question the substance of his record. For brevity's sake, I will summarise, in the next paragraph, the general conclusions of FOAKES-JACKSON on the above passage, as given in his recent commentary on ACTS.<sup>1</sup>

As a consequence of what happened on the day of Pentecost, the followers of Jesus at Jerusalem formed themselves into a compact religious association. It was the natural thing for a body of Jews like them to do. All over the Graeco-Roman world, Jews had been combining in synagogues; in Jerusalem itself there were synagogues under the shadow of the temple.

Possibly, therefore, the rise of the Christian Church simply

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<sup>1</sup>Moffatt NT Commentary, 1931.

as a new synagogue would cause no surprise; and if its members, like the Essenes, had religious customs of their own, this would be regarded as perfectly natural. Indeed in ACTS the writer insists that the new society was regarded favourably by the people. - p.21.

It is not easy to define with clearness the attitude of the Jerusalem authorities to the new cause; but there appears no room for doubt as to the main outcome, which is what concerns us here. The new society was tolerated; its members were left free, with only partial and occasional exceptions, to live their lives openly, to take part in the temple worship, and to develop and extend their religious fellowship.

(a) Continued participation in the Jewish worship.

'Day after day they resorted with one accord to the temple'. This would be for a twofold purpose - to receive instruction from the apostles, and to take part in the temple worship. For the former purpose, they gathered in one or other of those same halls, or porches, in which Jesus himself had often taught. There they sat round their leaders to hear them teach, even as Moslems may still be seen in the mosques of Cairo or Jerusalem, seated in groups round a teacher of the Koran, reverently repeating the sacred words after him. 'They devoted themselves to the instruction given by the apostles'.

In addition to this, they took part in the worship of the temple. In the third chapter of Acts, we find Peter and John on their way to the temple for the afternoon hour of prayer. It is not stated, either in Acts or the Gospels, that Jesus or his disciples took part in the

sacrificial worship. Whether they did so is still a debated question. Oesterley, for instance, holds that Bartlet is too one-sided when he asserts that Jesus took little or no interest, or participation, in the sacrificial side of the temple worship; though Oesterley adds that the synagogue worship was more congenial to him. In any case, the main point for our present purpose is clear. After his death, his disciples continued to share in the temple prayers. They had no feeling, as yet, that they should break with the old religion, as though it had been superseded by the new. They simply continued their old habits of Jewish worship; retained the Jewish practice of stated prayers, at morning, afternoon, and sunset; feeling that these, so far as they went, provided a worthy vehicle for their Christian devotions.

Whether, in addition to frequenting the temple, they also attended one or other of the synagogues in Jerusalem, we do not know. It is possible, nay probable, that they may have done so. If they did, they would engage in the simple synagogue forms of Scripture-reading and interpretation, followed by prayer and praise to God.

To sum up - On one side their worship remained Jewish. Their Scripture was the Old Testament; their prayers were the same prayers they had been taught to pray before ever they had heard of Jesus. These were facts of great importance in shaping the further development.

(b) Distinctively Christian worship.

They 'broke bread and prayed together': 'they broke bread together in their own homes; they ate with a glad and simple heart, praising God, and looked on with favour by all the people.

Here is something quite new. They are no longer in the temple, mixed in a company of other worshipers, but are gathered in a closed circle of their own, in some private house in the city. Whether it is meant, by κατ'οἶκον, that they gathered as one company, now in one house, now in another; or whether it is meant that they gathered in different houses at the one time, as families or as groups of friends and neighbours, we cannot determine. The former would be the natural and desirable thing, but that it was physically possible, in view of their numbers, is not likely. The main point is clear. This distinctively Christian worship was held in some private house, or houses, presumably because of the lack of any other available place of meeting.

We defer, until the section on the Lord's Supper, the closer study of these private and intimate gatherings for the breaking of bread.

Let it be observed, in parenthesis, that this necessary omission, at this stage, of closer attention to the Lord's Supper must result in disproportionate space being accorded to the Jewish side of the worship, and will present a false, because one-sided picture of the worship as a whole, unless we are careful to remind ourselves that, all through our period, the Supper celebration was continuous, and almost certainly filled a larger place in worship-thought and experience than did the more distinctively Jewish elements.

Meanwhile, it must suffice to say, regarding this earliest form of the Supper celebration, that it took place in the course of the evening meal which was partaken in company; that there was some symbolism to mark the joyous belief that their meal together was a continuation of their fellowship with Jesus. It was 'a common meal in which they believed themselves to be closely united to the Master.' How frequently it was partaken we cannot determine. The tone of the narrative,

with its suggestions of lively religious impulses, points to a more frequent observance than once a week. Perhaps every evening - but we cannot be certain.

This is the second fact of great importance in shaping subsequent development. They gathered in private, as a company of Christian brothers, round a supper-table which, in some emphatic way, was their Master's own table.

Of less distinctive significance was another type of Christian gathering. Before Pentecost, we find the eleven, with the women and with the brothers of Jesus, gathered in the upper-room, where they 'resorted with one accord to prayer'.<sup>1</sup> On the day of Pentecost, it was when the disciples were all together seated in some house that the Spirit came upon them and they spoke with tongues.<sup>2</sup> We read also of the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where a 'number had met for prayer'.<sup>3</sup> There is no mention in these cases of any breaking of bread. They suggest, rather, informal meetings for prayer. It is well to note and carry with us this fact, that the Christians of that early time gravitated naturally to the holding of meetings for prayer in private houses, which were of an informal and intimate kind.

When the Church expanded beyond Jerusalem, and Christian fellowships were founded in the towns of Palestine and such Gentile cities as Antioch and Damascus, we may assume that the practices of the mother church were followed in the daughter churches; the only difference being that the worship in the temple was replaced by worship in the synagogues, in association with the local Jewish community.

<sup>1</sup> ACTS, 1, 12-14.    <sup>2</sup> 2, 1f.    <sup>3</sup> 12, 12.

We now sum up our survey of the worship of the Palestinian church. For close on twenty years, when the church was expanding under the hegemony of Jerusalem, and before Paul had opened out the greater Gentile world beyond the Taurus, the worship remained consistently semi-Jewish, semi-Christian. It was Jewish in its association with the temple and synagogue: Christian in its Supper-celebrations, and its informal meetings for prayer held in private houses.

#### B The Gentile church.

Christianity had moved into the Gentile world, notably in the region of Antioch, considerably before Paul's missionary journeys began. Hellenistic influences, of far-reaching import, are alleged to have entered the Antioch church; but we do not consider these meantime, as they are not alleged to have materially affected the forms of worship. We have already concluded that, during the first twenty years, the worship remained, on the one side, Jewish, its locus being the temple and the synagogue, on the other side, distinctively Christian, its locus being, generally, the private house.

But in the Pauline churches a new factor emerged. Although the traditional practice of joining in the synagogue worship appears to have been continued, it rarely lasted for long. Owing to the increasing heat of controversy with the Jews over the observance of the Law, there generally followed a complete breach between church and synagogue. What became of the Jewish side of the worship, when it was thus driven from its locus in the synagogue?

Two a priori alternatives offer themselves. Either some other place of public meeting might be secured; or a refuge might be found

for the Jewish type of worship, by combining it with the Supper celebration held in a private house.

(a) At Ephesus, the former alternative seems to have become available. After three months' association with the synagogue there, Paul

left it, withdrew his disciples, and continued his argument every day from eleven to four in the lecture room of Tyrannus. This went on for two years, so that all the inhabitants of Asia, Jews as well as Greeks, heard the word of the Lord.<sup>1</sup>

The lecture-room would doubtless be used for worship as well as for more distinctively propaganda work.

(b) At Troas, on the other hand, the second alternative seems to have been adopted.

On the first day of the week we met for the breaking of bread; Paul addressed them, as he was to leave next day, and he prolonged his address till midnight (there were plenty of lamps in the upper room where we met). - Then follows the Eutychus incident. - Then he went upstairs, broke bread and ate; finally after conversing awhile with them till the dawn, he went away.<sup>2</sup>

The writer is not concerned to describe in detail an act of worship, but only to describe the incidents that gathered round it; but his account suggests a meeting which opened, after the Jewish fashion, with scripture, homily, and prayer, and which closed with the Supper. The locus is a private house - in the 'upper room', or cenaculum, or guest-chamber, which commonly was on the top-flat and was approached directly by an outside stair.<sup>3</sup> It appears therefore that Troas was an instance of a town where no covered place of public meeting was available, and where the worship was held in private houses, the SERVICE OF THE WORD (as the Germans conveniently call the

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<sup>1</sup> ACTS, 19, 8-10.    <sup>2</sup> 20, 7-11.    <sup>3</sup> FOAKES JACKSON, op. cit., p. 6.

synagogue type of Christian worship) being combined with the Supper celebration. It is probable that Troas was more typical of the general practice than was Ephesus with its available lecture room. We read of the house of Gaius as one that gave hospitality to the church of Corinth; also of the house of Prisca and Aquila.<sup>1</sup> It will be noticed that the Troas type of combined Service, if our reconstruction of it is correct, is substantially identical with the Service to be described later by Justin Martyr; showing at how early a period the final form of Christian worship had already taken shape.<sup>2</sup>

So far, we have found two contrasts emerging continually from our study: (a) the contrast between Jewish and Christian; (b) the contrast between public and private in the locus of the worship. It remains to notice a third contrast (c) between Sunday and ordinary days. This has been reserved to the last, because it does not appear to have exercised any decisive influence on worship during the vigorous and creative period in the first century. Its potent influences came later.

There are few references in the NT to Sunday in connection with worship.

- (1) I Cor. 16, 2. - Paul suggests that 'on the first day of the week' each should lay aside a sum from his weekly gains to help the saints at Jerusalem.
- (2) Rev. 1, 10. - The seer was 'in the Spirit on the Lord's day'. This is the first use of the designation 'Lord's day', which, as the Ignatian letters show, was established, by the beginning of the second century, as a common designation for the day following the Sabbath.

<sup>1</sup> Ro. 16, 23; I Cor. 16, 9; Ro. 16, 5. <sup>2</sup> Confusion may arise from the fact that in James 2, 2 a Christian place of worship is called a synagogue. This might seem to imply that, when James wrote, Christians were still in the habit of meeting for worship in a synagogue building. But we find Hermas who wrote in the second century applying the term synagogue to a distinctively Christian gathering, and this makes it most probable that James used the term in the same sense. It was quite natural for Jews, especially in Jerusalem, to regard their Christian worship-gathering as a synagogue. cf. Streeter, op. cit., p. 72f.

(8) Acts, 20, 7. - It was on 'the first day of the week' that the meeting took place at Troas for the breaking of bread. But this may be a mere note of time, and may have no Worship-significance. It may have been that, since Paul dared not start a journey on the Sabbath, he had to delay till sunrise on the following day, and so, it was during the earlier hours of the first day of the week that he held the farewell meeting with his friends.

In (1) and (2) at least we have traces, though vague and indeterminate, of Sunday being already singled out as a special day in connection with worship.

The reasons for this development are obscure. Deissmann<sup>1</sup> inclines to find in it evidence of conscious protest against the Roman cult of the Emperor with its 'Augustus day'. Eousset<sup>2</sup> thinks that it was the result of growing antagonism towards the Jews, and of a desire to break with their Sabbath. (The later change from the Jewish Fast-days on Monday and Thursday to the Christian Fast-days on Wednesday and Friday would fall into line with this). Duchesne<sup>3</sup> attributes the new departure not to feelings of antagonism, but to a natural desire to have, side by side with the Sabbath which they celebrated along with their Jewish brethren, a day set apart for exclusively Christian assemblies. There certainly was no idea of equating the Sunday with the Sabbath.

The idea of imparting to the Sunday the solemnity of the Sabbath, with all its exigencies, and in particular its prohibition of work, was an entirely foreign one to the early Christians.- Duchesne, *op. cit.*

We find in the literature of the second century that by that time the celebration of Sunday was closely associated with the belief in the

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<sup>1</sup> Light from the Ancient East, (1927), p. 359.      <sup>2</sup> Kyrios Christos, (1918), p. 81.  
<sup>3</sup> Origins of Christian Worship, cap. II.

resurrection on the third day. It is to be noted however that the New Testament writers make no mention of this association; and there are two passages<sup>1</sup> in subsequent writings which suggest that the writers regarded the association with the Resurrection as an afterthought which had attached itself to the Sunday only after it had established itself in custom as the special day of worship. The whole question is still obscure.

What concerns us specially now is to determine whether this celebration of Sunday had any decisive influence on the course of the early worship. In the Didachē<sup>2</sup>, Christians are enjoined to gather themselves together and break bread 'on the Lord's own day'. Pliny reporting to the Emperor on the Christians in his Province, speaks of their habit of holding worship on a stated day - stato die. These two witnesses prove that by the beginning of the second century the Sunday was definitely asserting its place as the most important day of worship in the week. In the succeeding literature we find repeated appeals that Christians should gather for worship as often as possible. Origen bids them gather 'to the wells of scripture' every day if possible, and not merely on Feast-days and Sundays.<sup>3</sup> This suggests not merely that Sunday was overshadowing the other days, but that the absence of worship on these days was deplored as a decline from a better and older practice. The whole evidence indicates that, during the early creative period, there was little or no tendency to exalt the Sunday worship at the expense of the everyday worship. The New Testament depicts a remarkably rich and vigorous church life, with the Worship as its

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<sup>1</sup> Ignatius, Magn., 9: Barnabas, 15, 9. <sup>2</sup> Cyprian recommended daily communion; Hippolytus wrote a treatise, now lost; de eucharistia an accipienda quotidie. <sup>3</sup> chap. 14.

animating centre; and the final impression is of very frequent gatherings for worship. It was out of this rich and vigorous church-life that the special celebration of Sunday somehow emerged, and it would only be by degrees, as the enthusiasm cooled, that the Sunday would succeed in draining away their worship-activities from the other days of the week, and concentrating them more and more upon herself.<sup>1</sup>

C. The final form of Christian worship.

Christian worship attained its final form before the middle of the second century, as we learn from the description given by Justin Martyr of the Sunday Service to which he was accustomed, presumably at Rome, about the year A.D. 150.<sup>2</sup> From his description it will be seen that his Sunday Service was simply the Service-of-the-Word followed by the Lord's Supper. The Supper had now ceased being a meal; it was no longer even conjoined with the partaking of a meal, but had become a simple ritual act. Otherwise all the things said and done at this Service of Justin's time had been said and done, in kindred fashion at least though not always at the one time, since the beginning. Let it be noted also that this second-century Service represents the standard type of Service that was to prevail through the succeeding ages. The worship of the Church was to pass through some strange developments; but these developments all took place within this simple frame-work. It has never been superseded.

Justin's description is as follows: (the translation is Duchesne's).

On the day of the Sun, all who live in towns or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the Apostles and the writings of the Prophets are read as long as time permits.

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<sup>1</sup>On the whole question see espec. Eousset, Kyrios Christos, (1913), 81, 338f.

<sup>2</sup>Apology, I, 67.

Then when the reader has ceased, the President speaks, admonishing and exhorting to the imitation of these excellent things. Then all rise together and prayers are offered. At length, as we have already described, prayer being ended, bread and wine and water are brought, and the President offers prayers and thanksgivings to the best of his ability, and the people assent by saying 'Amen': and the distribution is made to each one of his share of the elements which have been blessed, and to those who are not present it is sent by the ministry of the deacons.

(In another passage, Apol. I, 65, the kiss of peace is mentioned as given by Christians to each other after the prayers and before the eucharist. Justin makes no other addition to his picture.)

Thus, the two elements that went to the making of the Sunday Service of Justin's day and, as it was to prove, of the standard Service of practically all Christendom since that day were the Service-of-the-Word and the Lord's Supper - the same two elements which we found at the beginning of the book of Acts to have been the vital elements of the Worship of the earliest Christians at Jerusalem.

It may help to clarify things if we pause at this point to look backward and take a general survey of the character and fortunes of these two elements.

The Lord's Supper, we may confidently assume, was from the first the climax-point of Christian worship. On the other hand, as will be maintained in a later section, it was not a celebration which was fixed in form and content from the beginning and developed in a straight line. On the contrary, it passed through a variety of forms, while remaining true to its central purpose of fellowship with Jesus. But we must defer our closer study of the variety and centrality of the rite.

Justin nowhere tells us at what time of the day this Service was held; but the probabilities are that it was in the morning. Pliny, in his letter to Trajan c. A. D. 112, speaks of Christians as 'persons who met together early in the morning and bound themselves with a sacrament'. Tertullian, c. A. D. 200, says plainly: 'The sacrament of the eucharist we take in assemblies before daybreak - antelucanis coetibus'. De Cor. Mil.  
cap. 3.

The Service-of-the-Word did not lend itself in the same way to variety in its form and content. We may feel sure that its simple order of Reading and Interpretation of scripture, Prayer, and Praise, remained stable as the opening form in each Service. On the other hand it is most probable that once the worship had commenced in this fashion the door was kept open for a large variety of contribution by members who felt themselves moved by the Spirit. There is no difficulty, for instance, in fitting the phenomena of ICor. XII-XIV into a Service-of-the-Word. But, in itself, this Service was so simple and natural a form that there was little or no temptation to try and improve on it. What better foundation could be found for an act of Worship than the Word of God? Or what other form could have provided a larger liberty for inspired speech and prayer? The form is so congenial to a sincere worship and so hospitable to free impulses of the Spirit that we cannot help feeling that Christianity would have discovered it for herself if the old, exile-chastened Jews had not anticipated her. Nor would it surprise us greatly if new evidence were to come to light showing that it was the normal rule for worship of all kinds - eucharistic, propagandist, or other, to commence in this manner. Probably one main reason for the scarcity of direct reference to worship in the NT lay in its being so simple in form, and altogether so much the natural and congenial thing that it called for no special comment from those who were steeped in it. No one talks or thinks much about the air he breathes, so long as it is fresh and pure.

But the available evidence does not warrant the conclusion that all Christian worship commenced in the same way. Indeed, when one has sought in vain for traces of a uniform practice so that one might build up some clear and reliable conception of what actually transpired at a normal diet of Christian worship, one is left with the same impression as

Streeter derived from his survey of the Church as a whole - the impression of a development of worship that was somewhat haphazard, yet markedly dynamic: 'an original diversity, a rapid evolution in response to urgent local needs, to be followed later by standardisation up to an efficient uniform model'.<sup>1</sup> Nothing appears to have been uniform and stable except the framework of the Service-of-the-Word and the celebration in some fashion of the Lord's Supper. True, the language of worship must have acquired a certain stability from the synagogue prayers; for these prayers, though never at that time permitted to be written down,<sup>2</sup> had become in large measure stereotyped and were familiar. On the other hand the prayers of the earlier Liturgies show with what freedom this familiar language had been remoulded to express the new thoughts. Further, we have seen how the worship was influenced by local conditions and needs - an influence always inimical to uniformity. The lack of a suitable public place of meeting, for instance, drove the worship into private houses and thus encouraged diversity of practice, perhaps even within a single city. For the rest, we have found nothing to shake our belief that, amid all this liberty and diversity, the Spirit remained the final controlling power. And when we survey the whole field of NT worship, from its terminus a quo in the combination of synagogue worship alongside of a celebration of the Supper, to its terminus ad quem in the 'final and efficient model' which the worship achieved in Justin's time about the middle of the second century, and when we observe that the latter is, in form, simply a juxtaposition of the two elements of the former, we get an impression of the sureness of that Guidance which led the Church's worship, through a century of most varied development, forward to what was nothing else than a single compacted form of the two simple elements with which she had started out at the first.

<sup>1</sup> op. cit., p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Heiler, Das Gebet, p. 487.

after the prayers and before the eucharist.

As already indicated, this form of service is simply the service of the Word followed by the Lord's Supper. The Supper has now ceased being a real meal, and has become a simple ritual act. Otherwise, all the things said and done in this service had been said and done in kindred fashion, though not always at one time, since the beginning. As for the future, this service of Justin's represents the standard type that was to prevail through the succeeding centuries. The worship of the Church was to pass through some strange developments; but these developments took place within this simple framework. It has never been superseded.<sup>α</sup>

#### D. The waning of the enthusiasm.

It was inevitable that the first enthusiasm should wane. Psychologically, it was inevitable; because human nature could not for long endure the tension of those high altitudes of emotion and experience. Historically also, it was inevitable; because certain of the conditions which fostered the enthusiasm were time-conditions which passed with the passing of the years. One of these conditions, for instance, was the fact that the echoes of Jesus' voice still lingered in the ears of living men, and there was abroad still in the Church an overwhelming sense of the NEWNESS of the Christian experience. It was springtime, when light was pouring in after darkness, and all things were being made new. But springtime must pass. 'In that first age the gospel was literally the good news, but the surprise and exultation of good news can only be felt once.'<sup>1</sup> The waning of the enthusiasm was, therefore, no mere decline from a higher

<sup>α</sup> p. 142.

<sup>1</sup> E.F. SCOTT, *The NT Today*, p. 21.

state of things, but a necessary stage in the advance of the cause. The creative period had passed, because its work was accomplished. Invariably, it is the beginning of a religious movement that marks its greatest achievement. 'Philosophy, art, literature ascend gradually to their golden age, by a long process of thought and experiment. But religion must leap to its goal by an intuition, or it will never reach it.' Christianity had already leaped to her goal, for, both in her literature and her worship, she had struck out her classic forms of expression, which no succeeding age was to surpass. It remained now that she should move down to lower levels, where her task was to consolidate her victories, organise her rich gains, and equip herself for her mission to the world.

The waning of the enthusiasm was no uniform process, nor one that can be definitely dated and documented. But there is one thing we can say. By about the year 65, the three great apostolic leaders, Peter, Paul, and James were dead; and from that time till the end of the century is one of the darkest periods of Christian history;<sup>2</sup> for there is no great name, and hardly any recorded incident to illuminate it. To pass from the year 65 to the year 100 has been compared to passing through a tunnel; but, we might add, it is the kind of tunnel that pierces a frontier mountain-range - when we emerge from it, we find ourselves in another climate; the air is cooler and the landscape more ordinary. This is a fair simile of the change from reading the epistles of Paul to reading the Pastoral epistles, or the letter of Clement. We have passed from the region of creative enthusiasm, and find ourselves in a region of

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<sup>1</sup> SCOTT, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> E.F. Scott, *Epistle to the Hebrews*, 1956ff.

growing ecclesiastical system and order.

In the Johannine writings we are not sensible of the acute change; and in the Apocalypse and the Ignatian epistles the authentic notes of enthusiasm still ring out. But in the rest of the New Testament, and in the bulk of the Sub-apostolic literature the change is evident.

For detail, reference may be made to Scott's Spirit in the NT, ch. 6. Summarised, the evidence points to the conception of the Spirit having been relegated to a subordinate place. Rarely, if ever, is it a central interest of the Christian life. It is still referred to, in passing, as the source of the charismata<sup>1</sup>: it is the vehicle of revelation, especially of that given in the Old Testament<sup>2</sup>; it is more intimately associated with stated ordinances, baptism and the laying on of hands<sup>3</sup>: it safeguards the belief given in the Church confession<sup>4</sup>. Referring in particular to the Pastoral epistles, Scott says:

The Spirit does not come direct from God, but is vested in the Church, and is transmitted through its duly appointed officers. ---- Before the century was over the Church had formed itself into an institution. ---- It preserved the earlier doctrine of the Spirit, but subordinated it to the conception of the Church. ---- The Spirit which was originally the sovereign power has now no other function than to support the authority of the Church. - p.228f.

Accompanying the decline of enthusiasm, there were POSITIVE FACTORS which cooperated in the 'cooling and hardening process', as HEILER<sup>5</sup> describes it. The increasing size of the congregations, as they grew

<sup>1</sup>HEB., 2, 4: IPET., 1, 12. <sup>2</sup>HEB., 3, 7: 9, 8: 10, 15: IPET., 1, 11.

<sup>3</sup>ITIM. 4, 14: IITIM. 1, 6. <sup>4</sup>IITIM. 1, 14. <sup>5</sup>cf. Das Gebet, 434.

from being compact and intimate house-assemblies into looser aggregations of people less familiarly known and bound to each other; the growing need for organisation and order and the resulting emergence to power of the men of affairs in place of the men of the Spirit - these hastened the process. Prophets who once had stood second only to Apostles in the esteem of the Church were now relegated to a lower place; indeed, by the time of the Didache, although the true prophet was still honoured and entrusted with the presidency at the eucharistic celebration and with liberty to pray there 'as he will'; yet prophets, as a class, were under a cloud; for there were many false prophets about, and watchful discrimination was called for.<sup>1</sup> The Episcopos, on the other hand, steadily advanced in prestige and power, and became the leading figure in worship. Bousset maintains that it was the control of worship that was the first rung of the ladder on which he mounted to his preeminence in the Church.<sup>2</sup> Streeter holds that an examination of the evolution of Church order at this period suffices, if not to prove, at least to make probable the fact of a 'slow but steady movement'.

It is a movement away from the state of things implied in I Corinthians - where preeminence in the Church depends on the PERSONAL possession of some spiritual gift (of which 'government' is one of the least esteemed) - and towards a state of things where importance is attached to the holding of an OFFICE invested with recognised authority. - op.cit. 83.

Within the worship, certain new tendencies emerged, with ever increasing emphasis.

(a) The layman is superseded by the official; the layman surrendering

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<sup>1</sup> ch. XI.      <sup>2</sup> Kyr. Chr., 340.

his functions in the conduct of worship through lack of spiritual initiative, while the official gathers these surrendered functions into his own hands. Ignatius writes of 'the prayer of the Episcopos and the whole church,'<sup>1</sup> thus showing how prominent a position the Episcopos in his region had already gained in the worship. The eucharistic prayer appears to have been the first element to be strictly reserved to the President; while the prayers preceding the eucharist continued for longer to be free prayers by individual members. Heiler thinks that in Justin's church-service we see the two types side by side. Although, in the end, all prayers passed into the hands of the officiating Bishops or Deacons, yet, for long, an exception was made in favour of laymen of high spiritual endowment, who were allowed to contribute prayers of their own.<sup>2</sup>

(b) Worship - but especially the prayers - became more stereotyped.  
 In the early worship, prayers were completely free. The enthusiasm brooked no restraints, and the prayers were products of the inspiration of the moment. Though in practice the man praying might draw upon the rich and familiar liturgical stores of the OT and the synagogue ritual, that was a matter for himself; he remained free to pray as he would. It is from this early practice that evangelical revivals, throughout the history of Christendom, have derived their charter of freedom in prayer: Tertullian, for example, when he champions the charismatic Montanist movement, and asserts that the Christians, in their gatherings, pray freely and without restraint - 'sine monitore, quia de pectore oramus': 'ut quisque de proprio ingenio posset.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> EPH. 5, 2.      <sup>2</sup> Das Gebet, 435.      <sup>3</sup> Apol. 30: 39.

The subduing of this original freedom was a long process. Even when the conduct of public worship had become the exclusive business of the Bishop or other official, the composition and the length of the prayer was left to his own discretion. The President at Justin's church-service prayed ὡς ἠδύναμις αὐτῷ - in the way and for the length of time he was able. But the mere fact that the prayers in any church had now passed into the hands of one or two officials tended inevitably to the stereotyping and standardising of prayer. Although a Bishop spoke his prayer 'free', he could not be in a position to produce something new every time; he would tend to fall into habitual thought-sequences, and to repeat familiar turns of expression and phrase; and through this unconscious process he would build up a ritual of his own. A good example of this is to be seen in Clement's prayer. Liturgies of the later church show themselves to be deeply indebted to the prayers of the synagogue; and some part of that debt was incurred, no doubt, at this period, when the individual Bishops had to maintain the worship of their churches out of their own prayer-resources; very naturally they would fall back upon the rich stores of the Jewish worship. An auxiliary factor, hastening the process of standardisation, was the practice for prominent leaders of worship to write out and disseminate 'pattern-prayers' (for an interesting pointer to the methods of Christian circulation or publication, see HERMAS, Visions, II, 4, 3). These pattern-prayers were to be used, not as binding formularies, but as models for the inexperienced or the unready of speech. The Didache contains examples of such model-prayers for use at the eucharist.

Till well on into the third century free prayer prevailed. By the fifth century we find everywhere fixed ordinances

<sup>α</sup> p. 86 f.

<sup>1</sup> Heiler, Das Gebet, 435 ff.

of public worship, and compulsory prayer-formularies. The leader of prayer no longer prays ἀπὸ στήθους<sup>1</sup>, or de pectore<sup>2</sup>, but recites a sacred text from memory, or reads it out of a ritual book. - Heiler, op.cit., 437.

(c) But before this result was attained, there was necessary a further process, which made for uniformity, not merely in the practice of the single church, but also in the practice of groups of churches over a region or province. When a church was first founded, we may take it that the main lines of its worship and practice were laid down for it by the example of its missionary-founder. But within those limits there must have been much freedom of development, resulting in diversity as between church and church. But with the growth and expansion of the Church, organisation became inevitable. Some great leading church in a region seems to have been accorded a hegemony, and naturally so, if on her rested the glory of having been founded by an Apostle or closely associated with one. From her the surrounding churches received guidance and example as to what was proper to a Christian church. The influence of the example would extend even to details of worship, such as the form and content of prayer; and all the more readily if the practice of the central church was in accord with familiar Jewish forms. The letter written by Clement from the church of Rome to the church of Corinth is a case of a church with great traditions taking upon herself the privilege of advising and guiding another church with traditions almost as great.<sup>3</sup> And so the process towards uniformity moved forward; hastened, we may be sure, by the frequent visits which individuals paid to churches in other districts, or other provinces, or other continents

<sup>1</sup> Egn. Ch. O.

<sup>2</sup> Tertullian.

<sup>3</sup> I Clement, 47.

where they were travelling. These guests of a church would feel at home, and make it be seen that they felt at home, largely in the degree in which they found the worship of their hosts to be in keeping with the familiar and much-loved worship of their own church at home. In such ways there grew up within the Church a public opinion making for uniformity, which accelerated the standardisation of worship, towards which so many factors were cooperating.



## Section III.

## THE WORSHIP AS FELLOWSHIP.

In this section, attention will be mainly fixed on the meetings for worship. We will endeavour to visualise these assemblies, so far as our scanty information permits, and to estimate the motives lying behind them. A certain amount of repetition of things already said will be unavoidable. We will think of some Pauline church, in one of the great Gentile centres. It was with this type of church, rather than with the more strictly Jewish type, that the future lay; and it is when we observe the young religion at worship in the midst of a heathen environment that we best appreciate its incomparable vigour and freshness and power. There, better than at Jerusalem, we see it welding its heterogeneous elements of Jew and Gentile, poor and rich, bond and free into a fellowship with each other and with the exalted Lord, which, for compactness and warmth and enduring quality, is without parallel in history.

It was a worship-fellowship that was (A) Social, and (B) Religious.

In this order of treatment, there is obvious a certain lack of logic. The warm social contacts and philanthropies of the early religion were a consequence of its fellowship being fundamentally a religious one, and strictly speaking we should study the cause before we study its effects. But the reverse method, which we will adopt, has two advantages. First, it enables us to observe the worship from the same line of approach as that from which it was observed by many of those who came to it for the first time. Among the strongest appeals which early Christianity made to the outsider was its human warmth, and the solidarity of its fellowship; and it is possible

that some of the new converts were held loyal, during the early stages of their adhesion, as much by the ties of brotherhood as by the tie of devotion to the unseen Lord. Secondly, our method throws emphasis from the start upon the unique way in which the worship was interpenetrated by social and philanthropic interests. And this needs emphasis, because, not being familiar with anything quite like it in our modern life, we find it elusive and difficult to grasp. Today, the social and philanthropic activities of the Church are not initiated, and planned, and carried towards execution within the actual place of public worship, in presence of the worshiping people, but elsewhere, in church committee rooms or halls; and a very large part of our Christian philanthropy is done through societies and organisations, which have no official connection with the Church at all. But in the first Christian churches, it was quite otherwise. These small and compact worship-assemblies which met, it appears, chiefly in private houses were the sole centres of early Christian life, and were the reservoirs into which gravitated everything that concerned the fellowship and the cause, and out from which issued the streams of Christian service and effort. The believers, we must recall, possessed nothing tangible beyond their worship-assemblies. They possessed no buildings: no sacred book that was distinctively their own: no defined creed, nor any 'rule,' such as Benedict or Bernard left - nothing, except their worship-assemblies, that could serve as a tangible rallying-point for their loyalties. The Worship-assemblies were, in fact, the centre of everything. It seems therefore that we must think of their benevolent activities, whether directed to those within the Christian circle or to those without, as being

not only inspired by the worship, but as being to a large degree initiated, and planned, and, in some cases, carried into execution during its course. It may seem natural to us to draw a distinction, in these assemblies, between the agenda that were occupied with the more human and secular side of affairs and those devoted to what we would describe as the exercises of worship proper; but it is doubtful if our distinction would have commended itself to the worshipers themselves. For there can be little question that they thought of their meeting, with all its varied agenda, as a complete unity, from first to last under the immediate control of the Spirit of God.

The above impressions are to be clearly gathered from the chapters in I Corinthians, which Paul devotes to questions which arose in the worship at Corinth, and where every aptitude alike - be it an aptitude for engaging in prayer, or an aptitude for ministering to the needy - is attributed to the self-same source. We get the same impression, though in a different way, from the twelfth chapter of ROMANS, where, in verses 3-8, Paul definitely visualises the Romans as gathered together for worship, and then, at verse 9, his thought glides imperceptibly into the wider sphere of their everyday life, only to return, as at verse 13, to the worship-gathering. In other words, Paul does not seem to be aware of any clear spiritual boundary-line separating the two spheres between which his thought oscillates. Again, in writing to the Colossians (3,16f), he is quite clearly envisaging them as gathered for worship when he says:

Let the inspiration of Christ dwell in your midst with all its wealth of wisdom; teach and train one another with the music of psalms, with hymns, and songs of the spiritual life; praise God with thankful hearts. Indeed

whatever you say or do, let everything be done calling upon the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks in his name to God the Father.

In the last sentence, the thought may, or it may not, pass from the worship-gathering to the wider sphere.<sup>1</sup> In either case, we sense<sup>are</sup> the absence of any clear line<sup>of</sup> demarcation<sup>between</sup> ritual worship<sup>and</sup> the practical service of God.<sup>the</sup>

The truth seems to be that the NT conception of worship was at once wider and more inward than ours. MOFFATT remarks that 'the three great definitions of worship or religious service in the NT are HEB. 13, 16, ROM. 12, 1f, JAMES 1, 27, and are all inward and ethical';<sup>2</sup> and it is to be noted that the words used to designate 'worship or religious service' are, in each case, ritual words. (θευσία: λατρεία: θησκειά). Perhaps we have a clue to this mode of thought in the fact that Christianity stood very near to the old sacrificial system, which, though discredited in practice, had bequeathed the wholesome idea that sacrifice was an essential element in true worship.<sup>α</sup> So it is probable that a cup of cold water given in the name of Christ was looked upon, not only as a thing well-pleasing to God, but as evidence of a real approach of the soul to God, as real as its approach to Him in prayer. Of course, such a conception is not far removed from the thought of good works as possessing atoning merit in themselves; and it may have been their sense of this danger that withheld Paul and others from saying anything quite so definite as our Ancient Mariner's 'he prayeth well who loveth well.' In any case, we seem entitled to conclude that neither in their thinking nor in the

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<sup>1</sup>cf. BOUSSET, KYR. Chr., 102 & 146, where BOTH interpretations are given!

<sup>α</sup>p. 149.

<sup>2</sup>I. C. C., on HEB. 13, 16.

practice of their worship-assemblies did the early Christians draw as clear a line as we are disposed to draw between the worship of God and the service of man in the name of Christ.

A. The fellowship with one another.

Let us picture the Christians of some Gentile city as they gather for their worship. A few are people in good circumstances, but for the most part, if Corinth may be accepted as typical, they are humble men and women - housewives, <sup>α</sup>artisans, merchants in a small way, labourers, and even a few slaves. All day long they have been tied to their tasks, isolated in a world which cares nothing about the new interest that has transformed life for them, making all things new. But now that it is evening and they are free to follow the bent of their desires, they make their way to where they know they will find brothers of the faith. Nor do they come with empty hands - except in the case of a few, and these the very poorest - for each carries a parcel of food, selected no doubt with careful thought, and purchased, it may be, with the coin of sacrifice. It is their contribution to the evening meal which all will share together, the richer brother the happier in that he is able to make up for what the poorer brother could not bring, and the poor brother glad to share from his neighbour's store, seeing it is offered in the name of love. 'AGAPE', 'love-feast', they later learned to call this meal; and if Tertullian is right, they called it so because it displayed their Christian love in action. The richer ministered to the needs of the poorer, while the poor, through their need, ministered to a soul-need of the rich.

Arrived at their place of meeting - some lecture hall, perhaps, in

a quiet street, or more likely some private house where a better-circumstanced brother lives, they greet each other with a kiss.<sup>α</sup> Paul speaks of it as a 'holy' kiss,<sup>1</sup> Peter as the 'kiss of love.'<sup>2</sup> In later Liturgies, it is known as the kiss of 'peace.' To what extent it was clearly differentiated, in Paul's time, from the ordinary kiss of greeting, we do not know. We may assume that it expressed the feeling that the brothers were members of one family, and that all unbrotherly impulses were left behind. Anyhow, we can scarcely exaggerate the warmth of this fellowship that was initiated with a kiss; nor can we hope to emulate it - we with our cooler modern faith and our colder northern blood.

It is illuminating to learn that social fellowships such as the Christian churches offered were a thing that made instant appeal to the mind of the age.

The organisations of the earliest churches were visible embodiments of such social ethics as fairly filled the soul of ancient man with enthusiasm.

In these words, Deissmann<sup>3</sup> refers to a remarkable phenomenon that was widespread in the Graeco-Roman world, of which an illuminative account may be found in DILL's 'Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius,' in the chapter on 'The Colleges and Plebeian life.' These 'colleges,' or guilds, sprang up, in the first instance, in the sea-ports and trading centres where foreigners drew together in order to render mutual assistance, and to maintain the religious traditions of their homelands. But the movement had spread irresistibly into every craft and every town; sometimes several guilds were to be found in a single street - so powerful was their attraction for the

<sup>1</sup> I THESS. 5, 26.

<sup>2</sup> I PET. 5, 14.

<sup>3</sup> L. A. E., 300

<sup>α</sup> p. 23f.

masses of artisans, labourers, merchants, and slaves, who at that time were experiencing an imperious need for human fellowship. The Roman Empire, in destroying the national and civic institutions, had broken up the old loyalties and left the individual in isolation, with a vacuum at his heart which he naturally sought to fill through voluntarily formed associations with his kind.

In the face of the world-wide and all-powerful system of the Empire, the individual subject felt ever more and more his helplessness and loneliness. The imperial power might be well-meaning and beneficent, but it was so terrible and levelling in the immense sweep of its forces that the isolated man seemed in its presence reduced to the insignificance of an insect or a grain of sand.<sup>1</sup>

In the guilds, the individual regained his self-respect, and found a satisfaction for his craving for sympathy and mutual succour.

When the brotherhood, many of them of servile grade, met in full conclave to transact guild business or to regale themselves with a modest repast, or when they passed through the streets with banners flying, and all the emblems of their guild, the meanest member felt himself lifted for the moment above the dim hopeless obscurity of plebeian life.<sup>2</sup>

These colleges became homes for the homeless, a little fatherland for those without a country. They were all more or less religious, many of them being associated with one or other of the Mystery-deities that were flooding in from the East. The members hailed each other as 'brothers,' a term which had thus acquired a religious sense before it appeared in the New Testament. It has been suggested that we might usefully think of these guilds as occupying in men's lives the place that would be taken, for a working man of to-day, by his Trades-union,

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<sup>1</sup> DILL, op. cit., 256.    <sup>2</sup> do. 256.

his Masonic lodge, his Friendly society, and his Free Church - all rolled into one.

This survey of the guild-movement is relevant as helping to explain the ready sympathy which the common people seem, from the first, to have extended to the appeals of the Christian fellowships. Outwardly speaking, it was no violent transition to pass from a Roman collegium, or a Greek θίασος, to one of the Ecclesias of Christianity. Socially, the aims of the guilds and the Church were largely parallel, and when the Church's expanding work called for machinery and organisation, it is possible that she borrowed suggestions from the riper experience of the guilds. One service the guilds did certainly render to the Church. By meeting the craving for fellowship, they nurtured and developed it, and so prepared the way for that intenser warmth of fellowship which the Christian ecclesias evoked.<sup>1</sup>

The NT is astonishingly rich in material which demonstrates the warmth and inward depth of the fellowship among the Christian brothers; so much so, indeed, that many moderns have singled out the 'enthusiasm of ~~for~~ humanity' as being the most distinctive quality of the new movement. Love is set forth in the NT as the chief of the Christian graces, and the bond that makes all cohere; and when Paul writes to the Thessalonians that there is no need for him to give injunctions about brotherly love, because "you are yourselves taught by God to love one another,"<sup>2</sup> we infer that love was the quality, above all others, that was seen to spring up spontaneously and inevitably, when a man became a Christian.

We confine our attention, however, to a few of the more tangible

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<sup>1</sup> WEISS, Comm. ICOR., Introdn.      <sup>2</sup> I THESS. 4, 9.

manifestations of this love. From the earliest Jerusalem days, a common fund had been in existence for ministering to the needs of the distressed. Some, like Barnabas, threw all their possessions into this fund, laying them at the feet of the Apostles to be administered for the common good. The first officials elected by the Church were chosen expressly to administer its charities, lest any be overlooked. Widows and orphans were a standing care; the sick, the distressed, the prisoner, the stranger were sought out and drawn within the circle of the Church's beneficence. With increasing regularity and system, local churches contributed, not only for their own poor, but also for their apostles and for the mother-church in Jerusalem. Ignatius may be cited as a witness for the later NT period. Though he was a man much preoccupied with questions of episcopal order and authority, and deeply distressed at any breach in the Body of Christ, yet even he makes it his final count against the schismatic heretics that

they have no care for the poor, none for the widow, none for the orphan, none for the afflicted, none for the prisoner, none for the hungry and thirsty. - Smy.6,2.

And all this warm philanthropy was most closely associated with the worship. To the assemblies of the brothers it owed not only its inspiration, but to a large extent also its execution. We have an evidence of this in the worship-practice of the second century, when the common meal had been relegated to a subordinate place, and the worship had shifted its centre to the morning-service described by Justin. Into this new and definitely ritual framework the ministration to the needs of the poor was carried over as an integral part of the

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<sup>1</sup> espec. IICOR. VIII, IX.

worship. It followed immediately on the celebration of the eucharist. Harnack has reconstructed the procedure; what follows is a summary of his reconstruction.

Each Lord's day (I Cor. 16, 2), or once a month (Tertullian), or when one felt moved, gifts in money or in kind were brought to the worship and handed over to the president. He laid them on the Lord's table and thereby consecrated them to God. The recipient now received them from God's hand. The president decided who was to receive, and how much, though he might be advised by the deacons who would be more familiar with the needs of each case. Then the deacons distributed the gifts to such recipients as were present, and after worship conveyed the remainder to the absent at their homes. From the first the president appears to have had the supreme disposal of the gifts, the deacons acting as his executives. The powers and responsibilities involved were great; hence the need that such men should be no lovers of money. - *Ausbreitung*,<sup>1</sup> 112.

#### B. The religious fellowship.

We have already found good reason for thinking that there was no standard form of worship uniform throughout the churches; consequently, we cannot be certain as to the details of the course which the worship followed. Nor do we know to what extent outsiders were allowed to participate in the normal worship. We must assume that an active evangelism was in operation in every local church, but we lack clear knowledge of the methods of propaganda after the customary breach with the synagogue. In I COR. XIV, we find both the ἰδιώτης<sup>α</sup> and the ἄπιστος present at worship, the former probably an adherent, with a connection sufficiently established to entitle him to have a seat reserved for his use.<sup>1</sup> We get a vivid sketch of

<sup>α</sup> p. 161.

<sup>1</sup> I COR. 14, 23. (WEISS, Comm. in loco).

one or other of these coming into the assembly when a prophet is speaking. As he listens, suddenly the Spirit-filled words take hold of him; they search his soul and seem to be dragging out its hidden secrets and exposing them in the sight of all; till at last he falls on his face and worships God exclaiming, 'Surely God is among you.'<sup>1</sup> An impressive index, this, of the tensivity of atmosphere that must have been frequent; but an index also that in these early days the door of the worship-assembly stood open for the unbeliever to come in. We may assume that ~~normally~~ the church would <sup>often</sup> seek out unbelievers in their own haunts, and when she gathered them in audience there, ~~might~~ <sup>would</sup> deliver her message in some form akin to a service of the Word, Her Supper-gathering, on the other hand, ~~would be~~ <sup>was primarily</sup> for professed brothers of the faith. Still, we must not assume for the Supper-gathering the strictly closed circle of later times. The Didache<sup>2</sup> is at pains to exclude from <sup>participation in</sup> the Supper all not-baptised, suggesting that a freer practice had not been unknown. In whatever way the outsider ~~may have been~~ <sup>was</sup> restricted from participation in the sacred rite, we must regard him as, at least, a welcome guest within the fellowship of the <sup>worship</sup> ~~Supper~~-assembly.

To proceed with the description of the worship - let us assume that the assembly is of the type we found at Troas, where the Supper celebration was preceded by a service of the Word. The president would begin the worship in <sup>the</sup> time-honoured fashion <sup>of the old Jewish religion,</sup> by reading a portion of God's word from the Old Testament, thereafter expounding its deeper meaning, or delivering an exhortation based on it. The president might be an Apostle, if such were present, or a Prophet, or a Teacher, or perhaps any member of the fellowship who had proved

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<sup>1</sup> ICOR. 14, 25.      <sup>2</sup> Ch. IX.

himself to be specially dowered by the Spirit, This, we may assume, was the essential qualification. After the reading and exposition of Scripture, members would be invited to take part. This was in accord with old Jewish custom.

When you meet together each contributes something - a song of praise, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, an interpretation. - ICOR.14,26.

More literally, 'each has something,' or 'has brought something with him.' This does not imply deliberate preparation (προμελετᾶν), but suggests that, even before he reached the place of assembly, a member might feel the Spirit coming upon him; and in any case, he enters the worship, knowing that at any moment he may become the mouthpiece of the Spirit. <sup>Accordingly,</sup> ~~so,~~ some one contributes a 'song of praise,' by which is probably meant a hymn in praise of Christ, or of God and the Lamb, such as are preserved in the first two chapters of Luke and in the book of Revelation. Another gives a 'teaching,' an exposition of some definite theme, let us say, a Spirit-inspired interpretation of some passage of Scripture. Or perhaps a Prophet rises, and with ecstatic fervour delivers a 'revelation,' it may be of the future, such as Paul himself gives us in ICOR.15,51f, or it may be a disclosure of the divine will on some present issue, such as the choice of missionaries.<sup>2</sup> Or it may be that the Prophet's aim is moral, and, as one and another listens to his searching words, the hidden secrets of their souls seem dragged to the light.<sup>3</sup> A prayer is offered, Spirit-inspired as all true prayer must be, and the whole assembly say the 'Amen.'<sup>4</sup> Perhaps it is a prayer uttered under great stress of feeling in the form of a 'tongue,'<sup>5</sup> in which case it will be intelligible only

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<sup>1</sup> LK. 21, 14.    <sup>2</sup> AC. 13, 2.    <sup>3</sup> IGN. Phil. 7.    <sup>4</sup> ICOR. 14, 16.    <sup>5</sup> ICOR. 14, 14.

to some gifted interpreter, whose office it will be to interpret.<sup>1</sup>  
 Perhaps already the practice is coming into vogue for the whole  
 assembly to pray together in unison, though this is highly doubtful,  
 as requiring some settled form of ritual.<sup>2</sup> Less improbable would be  
 the antiphonal singing of praise of which Pliny writes, and an  
 example of which we ~~find~~ <sup>found</sup> in the heavenly worship of the Apocalypse.<sup>3</sup>  
 As to the manner in which such praises were 'sung,' we know nothing.

Our materials for this picture of the worship are drawn mainly  
 from Paul's first letter to Corinth, which may throw greater  
 emphasis on the ecstatic elements than was typical of worship  
 throughout the Church. At Thessalonica the atmosphere was cooler,  
 yet that coolness did not find favour with Paul any more than did  
 the excessive ardours at Corinth; for he counsels the Thessalonians  
 with emphasis: 'never quench the fire of the Spirit, never disdain  
 prophetic revelations, but test them all, retaining what is good.'<sup>4</sup>  
 Paul was alive to the dangers inherent in ~~such~~ <sup>ecstatic</sup> worship, yet he seems  
 never to have wavered in his confidence that the Spirit's leading  
 was to be wholly trusted, and that it would be wrong to seek ease  
 and safety with some lesser but more calculable guide. And his faith  
 was justified. There was in this Spirit-guided worship an ardour,  
 a freshness, a variety, a sincerity, and a creative power that has  
 sent its pulse-beats throbbing through the worship of the centuries.  
 Because of their experience of the Spirit, those first worshipers  
 felt within themselves that they had access to the living sources  
 of power. They looked on others, plain people like themselves, and  
 beheld them suddenly made possessors of hitherto unsuspected capaci-

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<sup>1</sup> ICOR. 14, 28.    <sup>2</sup> JUSTIN Apol. I 65, 67.    <sup>3</sup> V 9-14.    <sup>4</sup> I THESS. 5, 19ff.

ties and gifts. It was a new thing in history. They were sharing in experiences never felt before. A new age had dawned for the world, and they were its heirs. An even greater time was at hand, when the Lord himself would return to his own. Meanwhile they waited, well-content because the Spirit which he had sent was among them, and was filling their lives with peace and love, giving them a new heart for their troubles and making it a pure joy to come together for their worship, where again they would experience his living power and be drawn deeper into fellowship with one another and with their exalted Lord.

It is held by some, and not only by the more extreme school of criticism, that, strictly speaking, 'the idea of the Spirit did not belong to the Gospel as proclaimed by Jesus, and that in some ways it brought an alien element into his religion.' In the message of Jesus, redemption meant essentially a renewal of the will, while the doctrine of the Spirit, it is said, introduced a different kind of power which must cooperate with the moral forces. A discussion of this large question would lead too far afield. Still, the conditions at Corinth - so different from what we would conceive as likely to spring up under the personal control of Jesus - call for some elucidation at least of the practical issue of the ecstatic versus the moral.

One may well wonder what would have happened to the developing religion if the excitements already showing at Corinth had been allowed to grow and spread. Quite conceivably the Corinthian assembly might have degenerated into something like a mob of ~~mob~~ howling

dervishes and Jump-to-glory-Janes! It was partly to avert such dangers that Paul wrote those Corinthian chapters which are so invaluable for the study of the worship. He makes his appeal, first and foremost, to the instincts of fellowship. He will have everything discouraged which is unintelligible, and therefore unhelpful to the building up of a worshipping community. Not that he questioned the genuine inspiration of the tongues, or of the ecstatic prophecies; some were spurious, but in the main he believed them to be authentic fruits of the Spirit; yet he pleads earnestly for a recognition of the greater serviceableness of the less showy and exciting of the charismata. However, it is <sup>in</sup> the aphoristic dictum of ICOR. 14, 32. that he discloses what is the heart and mainspring of his own guiding principle. "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." Here, Paul's moral personality flashes out. He flings a direct challenge to the notion, commonly entertained by the ecstatic himself, that he is in the grip of a power he cannot resist and must perforce yield to. Paul will not grant this even to the speaker with tongues; it is always in his power to keep silent (σιγάτω). Still less does he grant it to the prophet, who stands on a higher level than the speaker with tongues. The prophet's will remains at his disposal, and is never beyond his control. "The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." Surely this is the voice of moral sanity, or to put it more fittingly, the voice of one whose being was steeped in personal fellowship with the Lord Jesus.

We can scarcely overestimate the service rendered to the growing religion by such affirmations of the superior value, in their own right, of her moral elements. The Church has not failed to do justice

to Paul as the man of bold pioneering mind who greatly widened the horizons of her thought. Yet we must feel that he rendered an even more vital service, when he gave his strength to heading her off, in the days of her plastic youth, from the perils of emotionalism and orgiasm. And when, as happens here and happens again and again,<sup>α</sup> we find Paul wrestling with some dark and crucial problem and then suddenly turning upon it the flashlight of some great moral principle, which illuminates it once and for all, it becomes difficult to understand those historians who accuse Paul, of all men, of being the arch-betrayer of his Faith to the seductions of oriental mystery.

But great as were Paul's services to the developing worship, it was under stronger guardianship than his. The power of Christ himself was always upon it, to guide and control. This power was operative both in the manifestations of the Spirit and, above all, in the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

The Spirit was never conceived as a magnitude wholly separate from Christ. From the first they appear to have been closely connected. In the OT the gift of the Spirit is associated with the promise of the Messiah; while in the NT the Spirit is represented as the gift of the risen Christ, sent to support his people.<sup>!</sup> Further, when the Master was still with his disciples on earth, they had been aware of something more in his message than a body of new truths and principles. There was Power - some quickening and constraining power that laid hold of them, however vaguely they may have defined it to themselves then. So, when the Spirit came upon them after his

SCOTT, Spirit in NT, 86.

~~Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengesch. II 99.~~

<sup>α</sup> f. p. 174.

death, it did not come as something wholly strange and unrelated. On this ground alone, we might feel confident that, from the first, their conception of the Spirit was baptised into Christ. Further, it is very possibly true, as Karl Holl maintains, that it was while they were in the act of witnessing to his resurrection that the Spirit first came upon them. They had been conscious of a prophetic constraint laid on them to witness of what they had seen, and lo! while they were witnessing, suddenly they became aware of a new power that gave added fire to their hearts and words.<sup>1</sup> If this be a true interpretation of their Pentecost experience, it provides another link in the connection of the Spirit with Christ. The further development of this connection we cannot trace with clearness until, some twenty years later, we find Paul writing in terms which go far towards equating the Spirit with Christ. It is not merely that in one passage he seems to identify them: 'the Lord is that Spirit.'<sup>2</sup> Still more significant is his equating of them, for practical purposes, by assigning to them the same functions. This occurs often, but is specially clear in ROM. 8, 9-11. Most significant of all is the fact that while he regards the Spirit as the quickening power behind his whole Christian thinking and living, he, at the same time, regards Christ as the sphere in which he lives and moves. While it is certain that Paul's own vivid experience of Christ was responsible for hastening and maturing this development, there is no evidence that he altogether outstripped the general thought of the Church and left it behind. We may conclude, therefore, that when the worshiper found himself under the sway of the Spirit, he believed that the power that was swaying him was

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<sup>1</sup> Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengesch., II, 26.

<sup>2</sup> IICOR. 3, 17.

somehow the power of Christ, or a power closely associated with him.

It was in the celebration of the LORD'S SUPPER that the consciousness of being under the hand of Christ reached its climax. The manner of this celebration is reserved for later treatment. Meantime, two general facts are to be emphasised.

(a) The Lord's Supper brought the worshipers into the presence of their risen and exalted Lord.<sup>α</sup> "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Whether or not these be authentic words of Jesus, they voice the belief of the worshipping Church. This simple belief that he was still living and present with them was one of the supremely creative factors in the worship and growth of the Church, and a factor too often overlooked in the endeavour to explain the Church in the light of theological or mystical ideas. He lived still; was present at his own table, where they had fellowship with him - a fellowship which some few had enjoyed at other meals which they shared with him on earth. In what exact way his presence was realised, we do not know. That it was a presence somehow localised in the bread and wine we do not believe. That it was a presence, conceived in some such fashion as they conceived the presence of the Spirit, we may be confident. Perhaps a presence that enveloped and enswathed them, like an atmosphere<sup>2</sup> - but we do not know. As they had learnt to construe their conception of the Spirit in terms of Christ, it is probable that they had also learnt to construe their conception of the presence of Christ in terms of the Spirit. For the rest, we must be content with this fact, that they believed him to be living and present with them.

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<sup>1</sup>MATT. 18, 20.      <sup>2</sup>DEISSMADN., St. Paul, 128.

(b) The Lord's Supper focused their thoughts primarily upon the DEATH OF JESUS. Whether or not it was Paul who was responsible, humanly speaking, for the establishment of this Death-celebration, we cannot but realise how all-determining this celebration must have been in moulding their worship-thoughts and controlling their direction. We may feel certain that the Lord's Supper was the climax-point of their worship; and the fact that in this supreme act of their fellowship their thoughts were anchored to the Jesus of history is one of the utmost significance. We are not here concerned with the speculations of Paul and of later thinkers on the profounder meanings of the Death. It is doubtful if these speculations have played any prominent role in the vital communion-thoughts of the average worshiper through the centuries; it is well-nigh certain that they played no such role in the springtime of the worship. What gripped and held the worshiper, then, was the simple fact that, when he sat at the Supper, he had fellowship with a risen and exalted Lord, who, within recent memory, had died as a real man, dying a real death. This was the significant fact for that time - it was a REAL death and resurrection, not a mythical one. To realise the presence of a risen and exalted Lord was one thing - mystery-initiates were doing that often. To realise the presence of a risen and exalted Lord, who carried the imprint of wounds inflicted, on a certain day, outside Jerusalem was a quite different thing. In the first place, such an One could not fail to draw the worshiper 'with the cords of a man and the bands of love.' 'He loved me; he gave himself for me.' In the second place, such an One was a powerful check to the frequent impulse to follow the fashion of the day and clothe his Dying-and-

rising-again-saviour-God with the imaginations of myth; while, on the other hand, he was a powerful incentive to clothe his exalted Figure, more and more, with the attributes of the man Christ Jesus. And if the moral ideal in our religion was firmly wrought into the texture of the Church's thought and life during this creative and plastic period, so firmly that it has never been displaced but has remained almost the one constant and abiding element through all the changes of the centuries; then we owe this result, in no small degree, to the twin facts, that, embedded in the centre of her teaching (and later in the centre of her sacred book) was the story of the life and death of Jesus, and that, enshrined at the heart of her daily or weekly worship was a solemn celebration which directed thought and devotion to the Jesus who died on a cross and whose death was the epitome and consummation of the spirit of his life.<sup>α</sup>

To sum up. Their worship-communion was with God through One who was at once Spirit, Indwelling Christ, Exalted Lord, and <sup>the</sup> Lord Jesus of history. But, thanks to the Gospels and to the Lord's Supper, it was with the last-named of these that the final and controlling word continued to rest.

## Section IV.

THE WORSHIP IN DETAIL. - I. The Service of the Word.

In this, and in the following section, the various elements of the worship are examined in detail: the Sacraments in the following section: in the present section the 'Service of the Word', which, as we found in section II, was a direct copy of the worship of the synagogue. The elements we now examine, after a short introductory note on the origins of the synagogue, are Reading and Interpretation of Scripture, Preaching, Prayer, Praise.

Too little is known of the ORIGINS OF THE SYNAGOGUE WORSHIP to justify precise statements. We know that it was a product of exilic Judaism. Elbogen suggests that it may have been the Reading of Scripture that supplied the first impulse for these synagogue assemblies,<sup>1</sup> which were the first of their kind in the history of man's worship. Exiled to a land which was unclean and given over to demons, and debarred from approaching God in the ancestral manner of their temple worship, the Jews gathered to read their Scriptures, which not only spoke to them of their responsibility for their disasters, but showed to them, through the door of repentance, new vistas of hope and confidence. But whether or not the Scriptures provided the first rallying-point for their worship, it is generally agreed that it was PRAYER that came to be its most significant and expressive element.<sup>α</sup>

Jeremiah was the spiritual founder of the synagogue.----  
The conviction which gave vitality to the synagogue - that the Jew could live a loyal Jew without sacrifice, but could not so live without prayer - derived directly from the prophet. - A. C. WELCH, Jeremiah, 248.

The prayer-songs written by others in dependence on Jeremiah, giving expression to the exile-experiences, whether of suffering or confidence, rang out in these synagogue gatherings. The Psalter became the prayer-book of the exilic church. The power and passion of Jeremiah's praying spirit passed through the Psalms into the piety of the exilic church. - HEILER, Das Gebet, 42.

A final quotation from Elbogen indicates the historical significance of the synagogue worship.

The synagogue introduced a new kind of worship.-----It was the first time in the history of mankind that regular gatherings for worship were held in places which had no other consecration than that which the gatherings of believers gave them. It was a worship which freed itself from all hitherto customary usages among the peoples, and renounced all material adjuncts, like sacrifices and formal offerings, and discarded representation through priests, and placed at the centre of worship man with his inner spiritual life. - Quoted by Heiler, Das Gebet, 474.

#### A. READING OF SCRIPTURE.

Reference may be made to OESTERLEY, Jewish Background of the Christian Liturgy, Chs. II-V, for the many threads of evidence which show that the Church took over the synagogue custom of reading portions from the OT Law and Prophets. The first clearly detailed evidence comes from Justin, Apol. I, 67.

the memoirs of the apostles and the writings of the prophets are read as long as time permits. Then when the reader has ceased, the President speaks, admonishing, and exhorting to the imitation of these excellent things. Then all rise together and prayers are offered. At length, as we have already described, prayer being ended, bread and wine and water are brought.

From this it appears (a) that the passages were not yet fixed in length; the choice of them may have been left to the reader, and

the length determined by him, or by the circumstances of the moment. Whether, by this time, the reader was an official, we cannot determine. Streeter, ~~from whom the translation of Justin is taken,~~ discusses the position of the reader in the Church; but, although that position grew to be a relatively high one, it is unlikely that any special importance was attached to it in our period. In the synagogue, any one, even a boy of twelve, might be called on to read;<sup>2</sup> and possibly this tradition maintained itself during NT times.

(b) By Justin's time the NT writings were ~~beginning to take their~~ <sup>finding a</sup> ~~place~~ <sup>alongside the OT scriptures.</sup> in worship. The earliest mention of the reading of a Christian writing at worship is in COL. 4, 16: 'and when this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans.' So far as we know, such a Christian writing was not regarded as holy Scripture during the NT period. The OT Law and Prophets still retained that unique position.

Two matters of more general interest call for notice.

(1) The early Christian attitude to the Old Testament. The OT was the acknowledged Scripture of the Church as it was of the synagogue. There was no time when it was not regarded as the Word of God, speaking with the same authority with which it had spoken in the old religion. More than that: as early as Paul, we find the conviction expressly stated that the OT was an ~~exclusively~~ <sup>specifically</sup> Christian book.<sup>3</sup> The OT warnings and encouragements, he says, were 'all written down of old for our instruction.' Christ is the 'yea and amen' of the Scripture promises.<sup>4</sup> Christianity annexed the OT as its own, in the fullest sense. WREDE, commenting on I Clement, summarises the

<sup>1</sup> STREETER, Pr. Ch., 250.

<sup>2</sup> OESTERLEY, Jsh. Bkgd., 117.

<sup>3</sup> ROM. 15, 4; ICOR. 10, 11;  
ICOR. 9, 10.

<sup>4</sup> ICOR. 1, 20.

position in words which merit quotation.

I Clement's use of Scripture rests upon the universal presupposition that the OT was the one unique book, given by God to the Christians, yes, specifically to the Christians. Its words could claim absolute authority, and supplied the first and most important basis for all Christian παράδοσις. It would be a quite inadequate statement of the case to say that the OT, in whole or in part, was STILL valid for Christians; as though such recognition of it had been the result of reflection, or as though the possession of that wonderful and infallible book had not seemed, to the eyes of the Church, one of the most evident and attractive of the advantages of the new religion. We cannot too forcibly impress upon our minds the fact that, at that time, there was never the least idea that a day would arrive when a second holy Scripture would come into being, and take place alongside of, nay, superior to the first. - Quoted by HARNACK, *Ausbreitung*, 208.

In the section from which the above quotation is taken, Harnack writes in glowing terms of the commanding prestige of the Book, not only within the Church, but also among cultivated outsiders, for many of whom it became the bridge that carried them over to Christianity. In this connection, ANGUS quotes from G.F. Moore:

The possession of their sacred scriptures, descended from an antiquity by the side of which the beginnings of Greek philosophy were modern, and derived from divine revelation, made a doubly profound impression upon an age which turned its eyes to the ancients for wisdom and to heaven for a truth beyond the attainment of Reason.

As the generations passed, the position of the Book became even more exalted. It came to be looked on as a literary Cosmos; a second creation parallel to the first, and wrought by the same divine hand. The Christian origins were contemporaneous with the origins of the

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<sup>1</sup> ANGUS, *The Mystery Religions and Christianity*, 298.

world.

(2) Knowledge of Scripture must, in NT times, have been derived principally from its use in worship. The ground for this inference is the strong probability that the Book had no wide currency as a private possession in the hands of Christians generally. Harnack has collected the evidence in his 'Bible Reading in the early Church,' which, summarised, amounts to this:

(a) There was no theoretical restraint upon the reading and study of Scripture. In Judaism, the scriptures were both regula fidei and regula disciplinae; and so, as being the immediate rule for the life of each individual Jew, the book belonged to the school, the family, and the study. We have evidence that the <sup>books of the</sup> Law, though not so much the other books, were to be found in the homes of the people; we have the NT instance of the Eunuch with his copy of Isaiah. When Jews became Christians, they would continue their private use of the Scripture, probably more zealously than before, since now they sought proofs of the Messiahship of Jesus. For Gentile Christians, the LXX was available.

(b) On the other hand, although principle, custom, and common-sense alike pointed to a free private use of Scripture, such use was not common among the early Christians. There is no clear mention of it anywhere in the NT. - ITIM. 4, 13 seems to refer to the public reading of Scripture, while ACTS 17, 11 points to study of the synagogue copies, which were accessible to the individual. - This NT silence is probably no accident, but reflects the actual conditions. There was no large store of copies available, owing to the undeveloped state of the publishing trade, and to the fact that copies had to be made by hand; and though the copies on the market were not highly expensive, they would be beyond the means of most Christians.

The conclusion is that, although the genius of Christianity was wholly in favour of a complete publicity of the Word, yet the private possession of copies cannot have been widespread; and believers must

have depended for their knowledge of Scripture upon the teaching of the Church. Probably this teaching was communicated, for the most part, through the reading and interpretation during worship. A priori, it is improbable that in the early days there was SYSTEMATIC teaching, in classes of instruction, apart from the worship-assemblies. The first evidence of such appears <sup>towards</sup> ~~at~~ the end of the century, in connection with baptism; but in the earlier period, the conditions of enthusiasm, combined with lack of time and leisure, would militate against any developed system of instruction. This whole matter, however, presents a complex and important problem, especially in its bearing on the dissemination of knowledge of the life and teaching of Jesus. This problem is not entered on here. We must be content with the conclusion that knowledge of the Scriptures was disseminated chiefly through the public instruction given by the Church; we cannot, as yet, hope for agreed conclusions as to the precise manner in which it was given.

#### B. INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE.

From the passage quoted from Justin, it would seem that, in his time, the preacher and the reader were not, as a rule, the same person. For the earlier time we can say nothing definite.

On the analogy of the practice of the synagogue, what we should expect of a reader is that (if and when he did more than read the bare text) he would, at most, venture on a kind of paraphrase or running commentary. - STREETER, Prim. Ch., 252.

The 'admonishing and exhorting' was more of the nature of a homily, or sermon, based on the passage read. Sometimes, no doubt, the

<sup>1</sup> Heb. 6, 2.

preacher would read as well as preach. The one thing we may feel sure of is that the reading of Scripture was normally accompanied by a commentary, or by a freer and more extended homily based on it, or by both.

An important matter, on which we can speak more definitely, was the SPIRIT AND METHOD which controlled the interpretation of Scripture. This runs athwart all our modern ideas of scientific accuracy. It is not merely that Paul, for example, is content to work from the LXX text, without evincing any desire to check it by the original Hebrew; he does not even show any desire to master the context or to discover the original significance of the OT words for the man who wrote them. His whole concern is with some hidden meaning that is believed to lie underneath the words and to be their truest meaning, discernible, however, only by a mind illuminated by the Spirit given by Christ. Thus, in IICOR.3,14, he draws a contrast between the reading of the scriptures in the synagogue and the reading of the same scriptures in the Christian worship. In the synagogue a veil lies on the hearts of the hearers; they hear the words but understand not their real import. In the Christian assembly, on the other hand, the veil is withdrawn, and the light of God's truth can reach the mind and transform the life. Examples of this discovery of hidden spiritual meanings are ROM.10,8: GAL.3,16: 4,21: ICOR.9,9f. The last of these shows clearly how misleading this method could be. Paul will have it that when God forbids the muzzling of the ox as it treads out the grain, He must have been thinking of the needs of labourers in his coming Kingdom; for it is not to be conceived that God would be 'thinking about

cattle! Even a city-bred man like Paul would scarcely have been led so far astray but for his presupposition that beneath the surface-meaning of Scripture God had deposited hidden truths, which only a Christ-enlightened mind could discover.

In all this, Paul and other Christian interpreters - notably the author of Hebrews. - were merely following a thought-fashion of their day, which prevailed alike in the Jewish synagogue and the Greek Stoa. The MIDRASH, or popular teaching of the synagogue, which Abrahams describes as the 'poetry of the Talmud,' and which is defined in the Jewish Encyclopaedia as

an exegesis which, going more deeply than the mere literal sense, attempts to penetrate into the spirit of the scriptures, to examine the text from all sides, and thereby to derive interpretations which are not immediately obvious, was free to use fancy as much as it pleased, so long as it was 'unto edification.' The allegorising employed by the Stoic philosophers seems to have been of older standing than that of the synagogue, and was more thorough-going. The raison d'être of such a method is not far to seek. Alike in Greek mythology and in the Old Testament there was much archaic matter of which the meaning was either lost or had grown to be positively offensive to the moral instinct of a more advanced age. Scarcely was it possible to salve that ancient material, except by allegorising it. In the absence of any historic sense, it was perhaps the only way in which respect for sacred traditions could have been preserved and the continuity of religious thought maintained.

So, when we have said the worst that our modern thought can say against this method of interpretation, we come back to this, that only through such casuistry of faith could the OT have continued, in that age, to hold its commanding position as the sacred and infallible Word of God. Although Paul was unfortunate enough to meddle with the muzzled ox, and so to exhibit the method at its worst, yet we must acknowledge that it did far more good than harm. It preserved the Old Testament as God's Word, and secured for the Church the freedom of a rich world of spiritual thought and experience, where a Spirit-quicken'd mind could find the bread and water of life in abundance, without needing any help from allegory. And if some regions of that ancient thought-world were barren or positively noxious for the spirit of man, it would scarcely be wise to cavil overmuch at a practice through which the quicken'd imagination of the Church was able to invest these regions with fertilities and salubrities which they did not in themselves possess. A more scientific treatment of the OT might easily have turned the book into a derision for that age; or it might, in another way, have forged out of it a fetter and a hindrance to progress. As it was, the ancient scriptures continued to be the Word of God; and when they were read in worship, they were felt to be speaking home to the soul, with the voice of the life-giving Spirit of Christ himself.

C. . . PREACHING.

As we saw, Justin says that the custom in his church was that when the reader had finished, the President spoke, 'admonishing and exhorting to the imitation of these excellent things'. We shall call this 'preaching,' although it was probably a less elaborate and formal exercise than the word suggests to us. It is well, however, to hold to the generic term, <sup>n</sup>since there is no doubt that, just as this homily, or address, had grown out of the simple commentary on the read Scripture, so it became, in its turn, the progenitor of the more developed preaching of later days.

We possess no verbal report of any example of NT preaching. The reports of apostolic preaching in ACTS - as at Jerusalem, Cesarea, Pisidian Antioch, Lystra, Athens - are at the best mere summaries of what was actually said, and contain <sup>little</sup>~~none~~ of the vivid presentation of detail, or of the outflashing of the preacher's personality, which must have been large part of the secret of their effectiveness. Besides, these are reports, principally, of the MISSIONARY PREACHING of the Apostles, which is to be distinguished from the preaching in the Christian worship. Probably the missionary preaching approached closer to our ideas of preaching. When the preacher faced an audience that were strangers to him and to Christ, he had before him a definite task, restricted within fairly well defined limits. First, he had to bring his hearers to repentance, and, as a rule, he did this by rousing in them a sense of urgency and crisis in presence of an impending doom; then he had to present to them the great Redeemer with whom refuge was to be found. Now, before this double message could get home, a variety of prejudices, or

superstitions, or indifferences, as the case might be, had to be overcome; consequently the work must have been attended by a constant effort of thought to discover the best means of overcoming these, and of presenting the message in a form that would not repel. There would therefore be built up, in the course of experience, structures of approved argument and appeal, which probably were not greatly dissimilar in form from the thought-out preaching of later days.

But it is unlikely that this was the character of the preaching at the worship of believers. Later, when the enthusiasm had cooled, and when larger congregations gathered in more commodious buildings, the conditions became favourable for the growth of the more deliberate and premeditated sermon. But in the early worship, held frequently in private houses, the speaking must have been less formal, more intimate and spontaneous. In the missionary gatherings, the speaking was the decisive factor; it was through it that the Word of God was brought home to men with power. But in worship proper, the preaching does not seem ever to have had this all-prominent place. Rather it was prayer and the celebration of the eucharist that were felt to be the culminating points of worship, preaching being ancillary and preparatory to these.<sup>α</sup> Consequently, even if it was an early custom for the President to deliver a set homily or address after the reading of Scripture (and of this there is no clear evidence), it is unlikely that it bore the features of a premeditated and strenuous effort; at the most it would be regarded as primus inter pares alongside of the other utterances, by this man or that, elicited by the Spirit during the course of the worship. No doubt, it was different when Paul, or some other <sup>special</sup> personage, was present; at Troas

Paul preached so long that Eutychus fell asleep. But we may feel certain that neither the sleeping nor the extended preaching were customary things in the worship of the early Church.

At this point, we remind ourselves how seriously the control of the Spirit was taken in the early worship. Johannes Weiss, in a chapter of real insight on the missionary preaching, assures us that

we cannot be too earnest in familiarising ourselves with the thought that early Christianity did not conceive the new life as being merely a new way of thinking and living for a man, but rather as being a wonderful endowment of him with new powers direct from God. - Urchrn., Chap. X. p. 158.

The drama of salvation was wrought out, not merely within the mind and will; it was conceived more objectively than that - as the descent upon the man of powers coming from above. 'God's reign does not show itself in talk but in power' - as Moffatt translates ICOR. 4, 20.

The preacher of that day was never tempted, as the modern preacher often is tempted, to regard the burden of convincing others as resting finally upon the quality of his thought and speech; it rested elsewhere, with the Spirit of God. When Paul says that he came to Corinth, resolved to be 'ignorant of everything except Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ the crucified,' there can be little doubt what he meant. He had resolved to shun the methods of the rhetorician and the philosopher, and to entrust the demonstration of the truth of his message to the Spirit of God. So he would prepare for preaching, largely by steeping himself in the consciousness of his own salvation and of his own debt to Christ; and when he faced his hearers, he would simply give out to them what lay closest to his heart; speaking of the Christ he knew, who had loved him and given himself for him; and

then standing aside to let the message do its own work, as God brought it home to the lives He had chosen for His own.

It is possible that in such a passage as ROM.5,1-5 we have echoes of the warm directness and intimacy with which Paul spoke among his own Christian people.

We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have access into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.--- And our hope never puts us to shame, because the love of God floods our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.

When people listened to speech like this, their first and their last impression must have been that here was a man who had indeed found peace with God. Even if we had a verbatim report of this earliest preaching, we would not comprehend its full power; because its essential power lay, not in its matter nor in its method, but in something else which the written word can never capture - the dynamic of personalities that had surrendered themselves joyfully to God. Thus, at least, our modern speech tries to describe the secret of their power. The NT writers described it more simply as the Spirit of God. In the last resort, they and we mean the same thing.

D. PRAYER.

(1) In NT worship, Prayer FOLLOWED the Reading and Preaching.

This, so far as we know, was the invariable order. It was the order inherited from the synagogue; and the evidence of Justin<sup>1</sup> makes it clear that up to the middle of the second century, the traditional order had not been superseded. And we can understand how congenial this order would be to a worship that was Spirit-controlled. All true Christian prayer, and not merely prayer of the ecstatic type, had to be inspired by the Spirit. Paul declares that a man cannot even say that Jesus is Lord apart from the Spirit.<sup>2</sup> He attributes the consciousness of sonship - which is indispensable to prayer - to the working of the Spirit.<sup>3</sup> These are cited as two of his briefer indications that the whole Christian life, inclusive of its life of prayer, was sustained and directed by the Spirit of God. Consequently, prayer, as being dependent on inspiration from above, was fittingly deferred till the proper atmosphere had been prepared for it through the reading and preaching of God's Word. Heiler<sup>4</sup> quotes from LUTHER:

When the people are not first instructed by God, it is impossible to pray. Indeed, no one can pray aright by himself unless he preaches to himself beforehand. Through such preaching to oneself the heart is moved and wakened to prayer. This is what happens in our churches. The voice of the holy Evangelist rings forth that the people may be instructed in God's will. After such preaching comes the prayer and thanksgiving.

Heiler himself maintains firmly that, in early Christian worship, prayer was always the culminating point, being led up to by the

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<sup>1</sup> Apol. I, 65, 67.    <sup>2</sup> ICOR. 12, 3.    <sup>3</sup> GAL. 4, 6.    <sup>4</sup> Das Gebet, 433.

reading and preaching of the Word.

It is illuminating to observe the manner in which CLEMENT closes his letter to the Corinthians with his famous PRAYER, which is the earliest complete prayer of the Christian Church we possess, if we exclude the shorter eucharistic prayers of the Didache. Through fifty-eight chapters, Clement has been addressing all manner of earnest exhortation to his readers; then, in chapter 59, he draws to a close, in this fashion:

But if some be disobedient to the words which have been spoken by God through us, let them know that they will entangle themselves in transgressions and no little danger; but we shall be innocent of this sin, and will pray with eager entreaty and supplication that the Creator of the Universe may guard unhurt the number of his elect that has been numbered in all the world through his beloved Child Jesus Christ, through whom he called us from darkness to light, from ignorance to the full knowledge of the glory of his name. We would hope in thy name, thou source of all creation; open the eyes of our heart to know thee, that thou alone art the highest in the highest and remainest holy among the holy. Thou dost humble the pride of the haughty, thou dost destroy the imaginings of nations, thou dost raise up the humble and abase the lofty, thou makest rich and makest poor, thou dost slay and make alive, thou alone art the finder of spirits and the God of all flesh, thou dost look on the abysses, thou seest into the works of man, thou art the helper of those in danger, the saviour of those in despair, the creator and watcher over every spirit; thou dost multiply nations upon earth and hast chosen out from them all those that love thee through Jesus Christ thy beloved child, and through him hast thou taught us, made us holy, and brought us to honour. ----- !

The prayer then moves on, through more than two chapters, passing

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Translated by LAKE, The Apostolic Fathers (Loeb Classical Library).

from these ascriptions of praise to intercession for the afflicted, then back again to praise, followed by petition for forgiveness and for upholding in the ways of right and concord, and finally closing with intercession for secular rulers and governors.

What we notice, meantime, is the almost imperceptible transition from exhortation directed to man into prayer directed to God, and, more particularly, the exalted mood in which this transition is made. In the first sentence quoted, we see Clement possessed with the awareness of being the mouthpiece of God. His spirit mounts higher when he speaks of the eager entreaty and supplication he will address to God on his readers' behalf; higher still, at thought of God's beloved Child and what he has done for all; then, at this point, he glides with apparent ease and naturalness into his 'great prayer.' At the transition point, there is just sufficient irregularity in the Greek to give colour to the hypothesis that the prayer which follows was simply borrowed from the worship of the Roman church. But no one who reads this transition-passage with the sympathy which good literature has a right to claim, will find it easy to credit that Clement, when he began to write this passage, had already determined to add a borrowed prayer at the end, and was consciously working up to his quotation. Nor will a preacher, who has had the experience of passing from preaching to prayer without any sense of strain or effort, or even of readjustment, have difficulty in understanding Clement here. Quite patently, he is deeply moved as his letter draws to a close. His spirit kindles, more and more, till at last he finds himself speaking to God. And once begun to pray, he is swept on, along avenues of prayer he has often frequented when

leading the worship in his Roman church; falling back upon the familiar thought-sequences, and upon phrases already well-tested and proven; and yet giving forth no mere reproduction of past fervours, but a fresh and living prayer, fused into a unity of its own by the eagerness of his desire to help these troubled and dissident Corinthians. We owe Clement a large debt. Much of his letter, it must be confessed, is pedestrian stuff, and confirms the sure instinct of the Church in excluding it from the Canon. But Clement can rise above his normal level, and does so rise at the end of his letter, where he not only gives us our first priceless example of the kind of prayer customary in public worship, but also, by revealing his own processes of mind and spirit, throws light upon the spiritual basis of the order of worship which prescribed that prayer should not precede, but should follow the reading and preaching of the Word.<sup>1</sup>

CLEMENT'S PRAYER has other features which may be confidently regarded as typical of early Christian public prayer.

(a) Its dependence upon Jewish literature and worship is manifest. Von der Goltz,<sup>2</sup> among others, has traced and tabulated the evidences of this; and in the first section of the prayer, as quoted above, there are no fewer than fourteen phrases, or clauses, which clearly derive from the OT, or the later Jewish writings, or the worship of the synagogue. On the other hand, there are strikingly few echoes of the NT. It is probable that in Clement's prayer the Jewish elements bulk larger than would be the case in the prayers

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 Das Gebet, 196f. <sup>2</sup> do. 198.

of the earlier Church. By his time the enthusiasm was definitely cooling, and though far from extinct, had lost its creative vigour. Ignatius, who still possessed much of the old fervour, would scarcely have been content with a prayer so largely Jewish in its colouring. Still, it is the generally accepted opinion that, apart from the eucharistic prayers which were much more distinctively Christian as being centred more closely about Christ himself, the early Christian worship made large use of the rich stores of Jewish liturgical thought and language that had become so familiar and precious to the Church.

(b) It is a typical 'free' prayer - simple and direct, sure and confident, fresh and vital, issuing (de pectore, or ἀπό στήθους)<sup>α</sup> from a warm and glowing spirit, which, while making use of modes of thought and phrase, already in some degree fixed and stereotyped, fuses them afresh, and pours them into moulds of its own choosing to meet the purpose of the hour. Nor is there any of that conscious elaboration of epithets or that piling up of synonyms which give to some of the prayers in later Eastern Liturgies the appearance, less of prayers, than of edifying discourses. In short, it is a 'free' prayer - free from the restraints of inflexible forms, and from the encumbrance of labouring thought; because it still moves in obedience to a mind and heart which are under the Spirit of God.

(c) It is a typical prayer for use in public worship. It voices the aspirations and needs, not of an individual, nor of a class, but of a whole worshipping community.<sup>β</sup> Everything that is particular, or individual, or accidental is suppressed; only what is universal and common to all finds expression. So marked is this feature that

<sup>α</sup> p.50.

<sup>β</sup> p.107.

although it is a fairly long prayer that would take more than five minutes to deliver, yet there is not a sentence in it but could be used in our own worship, and could be trusted to evoke a response from the average worshiper of this modern age. And this is a remarkable thing. We are not surprised to find prayers of this universal type in the worship of the Roman Catholic Church, or in some evangelical Liturgies, which are products of long centuries of prayer-experience in communities comprising all differences of social stratum, and of culture, and of temperament, and even of race. As Guardini says in the opening sentences of his little book, 'Vom Geist der Liturgie,'

These conditions (for the growth of a liturgy that will make a universal appeal) emerge most clearly when the devotional life of a great fellowship has been able to develop through long periods.

The 'long periods' he is thinking of comprise centuries. Yet here, in Clement's prayer, we find universalism attained in little more than half-a-century. This is an index of the rapidity of the early Church's development, as also of the strong sense of unity and fellowship that must have prevailed, to be able thus to restrain, and finally to suppress, the voicing of mere individual feeling and experience, and that too in communities where individual experience was intense and must have striven for expression. It is a significant achievement of first century worship that it should have been able to produce a man like Clement, who, though apparently no extraordinary man, was yet capable, when he turned to public prayer, of giving forth an utterance sustained and noble, in which we seem to hear not so much his own voice as the voice of the whole praying

membership of his church.

(2) In public worship, prayer was addressed to God, never to Christ.

(a) There is no evidence of prayer in public worship having been addressed to Christ in NT times. Bousset<sup>1</sup> acknowledges this, though his conception of NT worship as a vigorous Kyrioskult would have welcomed with open arms any indication of prayer to Christ. We do not find such till we reach the Apocryphal Acts, which reflect popular Christianity about the turn of the second and third centuries. In these the address of prayer to Christ is common. ORIGEN, in his treatise 'On Prayer',<sup>2</sup> combats the practice, in a tone which suggests that the practice was common enough in his day to constitute a serious problem. Origen ranges himself on the side of tradition; and, appealing in particular to the example of Jesus in his Lord's prayer, condemns prayer which is directed to Christ himself. As we shall presently see, the early attitude towards Christ was one of religious dependence and adoration, scarcely, if at all, to be distinguished from the attitude of prayer; and the fact that, in spite of this, prayer continued to be directed to God is significant of the strength that resided in the monotheistic tradition, and in the example of Jesus, and in the apocalyptic habit of thought which presented the whole work of Salvation in the form of a purpose or plan of God - a form, that is to say, which in clear and vivid fashion placed in God's hands the supreme initiation and execution of that work, and assigned to Christ the strictly subordinate function of an instrument, *or perhaps more fittingly, an executive agent.*

<sup>1</sup> Kyr. Chr., 102, 285.

<sup>2</sup> 15, 16.

(b) Although Origen combats the practice of directing prayer to Christ, he maintains, on the other hand, that no prayer can be a true Christian prayer which does not contain some reference to Christ as our High-priest and Advocate with the Father. Here again Origen reflects the practice of the early worship. Every prayer that we know of contains some direct reference to Christ, introduced in no incidental way, but in a fashion which indicates that such reference was recognised as vital and essential. The prayer of ACTS 4.24ff, Clement's prayer, the eucharistic prayers of the Didache, the prayer of the martyr Polycarp are evidence of the custom of praying to God διὰ τοῦ (ἁγίου) πατρὸς σου. The Johannine and Ignatian writings show that, in their Christian circles, the customary form was prayer to the Father 'in the name of Jesus Christ.' For the many slighter evidences to be found in the doxologies and other prayers in the NT, reference may be made to Heiler, Das Gebet, 464f, who says that 'the old Christology, which assigned to Jesus the position of Mediator, nowhere comes to light so clearly as in the prayers at public worship.' He goes on to say that Jesus is not the hearer of prayer to whom the praying community turns; its prayers are addressed exclusively to God; but not to the eternal and almighty God who is throned high above the heavens, but to the God who has made the world through Jesus, revealed himself through him, and through him has bestowed the rich gifts of salvation.

For us there is one God, the Father, from whom all comes and for whom we exist; one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom all exists, and by whom we exist. - ICOR.8,6..

There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all. - ITIM.2,5.

Wherever this faith in Christ as Mediator and Advocate is vitally held, there can be no prayer which leaves the name of Jesus unnamed.

(c) Although the regular prayers in worship were never addressed to Christ, short ejaculatory petitions were sometimes directed to him. Such were the prayer of the dying Stephen, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,' and the MARANATHA, voicing the tension of apocalyptic longing. Paul 'besought the Lord thrice' about his thorn in the flesh. It may well have happened in the worship-assemblies that when men were strongly moved by the Spirit, short ejaculatory prayers to Christ were drawn from their lips. 'He who prays in Jesus' name, and with Jesus, will sooner or later pray to Jesus himself.' Most significant of all, the early Christian hymns which seem to have been largely concentrated on the person of Jesus, were, in many cases, directly addressed to him. Bousset<sup>2</sup> calls attention to the fact that in COL. 3, 16 the later Mss alter 'singing to God' into 'singing to Christ,' and that in EPH. 5, 19 the phrase has already become 'singing to the Lord.' In the Apocalypse, the 'new song'<sup>^</sup> <sup>in heaven</sup> to the Lamb is addressed to Christ.

Thou art worthy to take the scroll and open the seals, for thou wast slain and by shedding of thy blood hast ransomed for God men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation; thou hast made them kings and priests for our God and they shall reign on earth. - 5, 9f.

Pliny's account of the 'songs of praise sung to Christ as to God' shows the custom to have been widespread. In later times, when proof was being sought for the Godhead of Christ, appeal was made to these early psalms and hymns in which Christ was addressed as God. Justin<sup>3</sup> says that Psalm 45 was interpreted Christologically and sung to Christ.

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<sup>1</sup> BOUSSET, KYr. Chr. 102, 285.    <sup>2</sup> do. 286.    <sup>3</sup> Trypho, 63, 14ff.

To sum up. The evidence shows that while, on the one hand, prayer in public worship continued to be directed to God, and was never addressed to Christ, on the other hand, the name of Christ appeared, significantly, in every prayer; short personal petitions of an ejaculatory kind were directed to him; and, finally, hymns of praise were addressed to him. This shows that while there was a definite shrinking from placing Christ on an equality with God, yet he was worshiped and had divine honours paid to him. It is for the systematic theologian to interpret the significance of these facts.

(3) Use of the Lord's prayer in worship.

To what extent was the Lord's prayer used in worship? For the NT period, no satisfactory answer can be given. The accounts, in Matthew and Luke, of our Lord's teaching of his disciples to pray do not prove that he intended his model prayer to be more than an example of the fitting content and of the right spirit of prayer. Indeed, the variations of its wording in the three forms that have reached us (Matthew, Luke, The Didache) point to its not having been taught as a fixed formulary of prayer; for while these variations indicate a knowledge and use of the prayer in various localities, they indicate also the absence of anxious care to preserve the exact wording of the original form. Another important fact is that, beyond the two synoptic passages referred to, there is, in the NT, no single undisputed reference to the Lord's prayer. This would seem to indicate that the use of the prayer in worship during the first century was not so general or frequent as later. This can be understood. While the enthusiasm lasted and prayer remained a living and

spontaneous thing, no need would be felt for any fixed form, not even for one that contained the greatest and holiest of known prayer-words. On the other hand, we must keep in view the probability that, in the free worship, individuals might often feel moved to pray in the time-honoured words.

We have to distinguish between a liturgical and a PRIVATE use of the prayer. The Jewish hours of prayer - morning, afternoon, and sunset - were probably widely adopted as hours for private Christian prayer. Now, the individual would not be able to depend on himself for a free, extemporised, and Spirit-inspired prayer on all these stated occasions. Consequently, some more or less fixed private ritual, or form of prayer, must have been common. In such circumstances, the Lord's prayer would inevitably offer itself as containing words of the most high inspiration. It is probable that the Didache, when, after setting down the Lord's prayer, it adds, 'pray thus three times a day,' is enjoining a private, and not a liturgical use of the prayer.<sup>1</sup>

While therefore a private use of the prayer, during the first century, is highly probable, we can point to no clear evidence of a regular, stated use in public worship. The probabilities are,

indeed, against that. There is no mention of it by Justin in his

*but it is to be remembered that the argument from silence is of less value in this case since Justin wrote primarily for the eye of the Emperor*  
account of the Christian worship at the middle of the second century,<sup>1</sup>

In the later Liturgies we find it incorporated in the eucharistic service; the first mention of it there comes from Cyril of Jerusalem.

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<sup>1</sup>Von der GOLZ, Das Gebet, 190. BAUMSTARK, WdL, 9.

#### 4) The Content of the Prayers.

We will survey the content of the prayers in Christian worship under the three headings of Praise and Thanksgiving, Confession of sin, Petition and Intercession. Ever since Origen made his systematic study of Prayer, these have been the recognised component elements of a complete Christian prayer, and it is certain that they were all present in the Church's worship from the first. Not only were they already, all of them, established features of the prayers in the Jewish synagogue, but they also represent the inevitable modes or attitudes in which a spiritually-minded worshiper will seek speech with his God.

The NT contains no example of a complete church-prayer; Clement's prayer is the one and only example which that period has bequeathed to us, if we leave out of account the prayers in the Didache which are not general-church-prayers but are specifically eucharistic. On the other hand, the NT contains many injunctions concerning prayer, many echoes and perhaps actual fragments of church-prayers, and also frequent snatches of personal prayer by Paul and others on behalf the churches and their people, which cannot have differed vitally, in respect of their content, from the prayers of public worship. We will not aim at any close survey of these scattered details; they have been assembled and studied in books which are easily accessible. We will be content to indicate briefly the general content of the prayers, and, more particularly, we will endeavour to estimate the relative preponderance, in the church-prayers of Paul's time, of the various component elements mentioned above. It would be quite unhistorical to assume that Clement's prayer was typical, in this and other respects, of the prayers that went before it. Clement's prayer is the product of a time when the free

initiative of Spirit-controlled worship was on the decline and the Church's mood was less joyously and buoyantly confident. We must keep steadily in view this dominating factor of Spirit-control, which was a much more potent influence during the early period than were such things as a rhetorical, or liturgical, or stylistic tradition. The impulses of the Spirit were towards spontaneity, and freedom, and direct simplicity. Accordingly it is most probable that at first there was less divergence in form and content between private and public prayer than was the case later on. Also it is probable that such complete and comprehensive prayers as Clement's would not be common in the earlier period; possibly it often happened then that a prayer confined itself mainly to one or other of the component elements we have mentioned, in accordance with the Spirit-quickened mood of the worship at the moment. We need not therefore look for clear-cut conclusions either as to the content of the early prayers or as to the order in which these contents were arranged.

(a) Praise and Thanksgiving.

We take these two elements together because we find that in practice they were not kept separate, and even in thought they can scarcely be kept distinct. Thus in Clement's prayer we have not one single sentence of formal thanksgiving, but the spirit of thanksgiving is implicit in the many sentences which ascribe glory and praise to God. In the three eucharistic prayers of the Didache the exact reverse is the case. In each of these the opening words are We give thanks to thee, and within this formula, for the most part, their praise of God is voiced.

~~(4) The content of the prayers.~~

~~(a) PRAISE and THANKSGIVING.~~ Heiler distinguishes between Mystical, Prophetical, and Liturgical prayer - the last being <sup>here</sup> the prayer of the Jewish synagogue and the Christian Church.

In Mystical prayer, the central content is the turning of the soul exclusively to the highest God; in Prophetical prayer, it is the expression of the deep need of the soul and the petition for salvation; while in the Liturgical prayer of the synagogue and church, the central content is praise of the greatness and majesty of God and thanksgiving for His gifts of salvation.<sup>1</sup>

This is a useful general distinction, but is not intended to be pressed. It emphasises what, almost without question, was characteristic of early Christian prayer; it was predominantly prayer of praise and thanksgiving.<sup>5</sup> Attention has already been called to the NT preference for εὐχαριστεῖν as against εὐλογεῖν;<sup>α</sup> later, it will be shown to be probable that the early eucharistic prayers were wellnigh exclusively confined to praise and thanksgiving.<sup>β</sup> That it was otherwise with ordinary prayers is indicated by Clement's prayer,<sup>γ</sup> in which confession, petition, and intercession each have their place. It is to be remembered, however, that Clement belonged to a time when the enthusiasm of the creative period was passing away, giving place to a mood less confident and sure, and when consequently the prayer for forgiveness, and for establishing in the Christian way, came more to the front than before.

There are several definite indications of the predominance of praise and thanksgiving. The early worship in Jerusalem is described in ACTS

<sup>1</sup> Das Gebet, 444.

<sup>α</sup> p.22.

<sup>β</sup> p.144f.

<sup>γ</sup> p.86f.

<sup>δ</sup> p.148.

as a 'praising of God.'<sup>1</sup> Ignatius, with whom the early enthusiasm lingers on into its Indian summer, calls the worship-gathering a 'coming together for thanksgiving and praise.'<sup>2</sup> The prayers which Paul devotes wholly to thanksgiving outnumber those devoted to petition; while an examination of these thanksgivings, as tabulated by Von der GOLZ,<sup>3</sup> reveals the rich variety of occasion which Paul found for giving thanks. His marked insistence upon the duty of giving thanks, always and in everything, must have borne fruit in the worship-habits of his churches. We have also the a priori consideration that the confident and joyous enthusiasm of that period would find more natural expression in praise and thanks than in confession and petition.

(b) CONFESSION OF SIN.

On this point, we are faced by a lack of direct evidence bearing on the early worship, and must seek our clues from Paul. Now, it is quite clear<sup>that</sup> the intensive culture of sin-consciousness or sin-confession was never an aim of Paul's, either for himself or his churches. What he fostered was the conquering spirit of confidence and joy. His most congenial line of admonition was this: 'regard yourselves as dead to sin' (note the imperative, ROM. 6, 11); 'you are alive to God; your sins are behind you, forgiven; therefore be thankful, thankful, thankful.'<sup>4</sup> This did not mean that he shut his eyes to the real truth about his people; no one could be more earnest or more pointed in warning against various sins. But he adopted this latter line only when it was urgently called for; while his normal

<sup>1</sup> 2, 46.

<sup>2</sup> EPH. 13, 1.

<sup>3</sup> Das Gebet, 109ff.

<sup>4</sup> COL. 2, 12-14, 20: with 1, 12: 2, 7:

3, 15ff: 4, 2:

appeal was to men's idealism, and to the positive impulses making for goodness and for self-confidence in achieving it. It is therefore likely that the absence of explicit confession of sin from his recorded prayers is no accident; and that his churches, in their worship, did not as a rule go much beyond some simple words of contrition combined with the petition for forgiveness.

In the later part of the century when the enthusiasm was waning, we should expect a less confident mood, and a keener sense of weakness and need. Thus, the Didache enjoins: 'in the congregation thou shalt confess thy transgressions, and thou shalt not betake thyself to prayer with an evil conscience.'<sup>1</sup> Also: 'hold eucharist after confessing your transgressions, that your offering may be pure.'<sup>2</sup>

CLEMENT introduces confession well on in his prayer, interlacing it with the prayer for forgiveness:

O merciful and compassionate, forgive us our iniquities, and unrighteousness, and transgressions, and shortcomings. Reckon not every sin of thy servants and handmaids, but cleanse us with the cleansing of thy truth, and guide our steps ----<sup>3</sup>

That is all - simple and concise, evincing no effort to lay special stress on the confession of sin.

#### (c) PETITION AND INTERCESSION.

We combine Petition and Intercession under one survey, because any clear line of demarcation between them would, for NT prayer, be somewhat arbitrary. The reason for this is that NT petitions in worship were directed preeminently towards spiritual blessings; they

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<sup>1</sup> 4, 14: <sup>2</sup> 14, 1. <sup>3</sup> ch. 60.

remained loyal to the injunction, 'seek ye first the kingdom of God.' Their burden was the advancement of God's reign, whether in the individual life, or in the life of the local church, or in the Church as a whole. Moreover, the vivid sense of fellowship, as members all of the one Body of Christ, and the consequent sense that the welfare or suffering of one involved the welfare or suffering of all went far to weaken those distinctions between 'I' and 'you' and 'they,' upon which any clear discrimination between Petition and Intercession must finally rest.

Paul's petitions are exclusively for spiritual things; when he prays for some boon for himself, it is always bound up with his mission and work as a servant of Jesus Christ. For his readers and for the Church at large, his prayers are for such things as grace, peace, love, unity, and that they may be kept unto the day of Jesus Christ. We have already mentioned the petition for forgiveness as a constant in prayer. Constant also was petition for the welfare of the Church. The prayer of ACTS 4,24ff may be taken as reflecting an established habit of prayer. It pleads for the success of the work of the Apostles, for protection against adversaries, for a confident proclaiming of the message, and for demonstration with power of its effectiveness. The Didache must echo an old fashion of petition:

remember, Lord, thy Church, to deliver it from all evil and to make it perfect in Thy love, and gather it together in its holiness from the four winds to Thy kingdom which Thou hast prepared for it. - 10,4.

Both Ignatius and Polycarp show how deeply rooted was this habit of prayer for the Church. There was prayer also for the Christian brother who had sinned or had fallen away, although the writer of

I John discourages such prayer in the case of a sin which is 'unto death.'<sup>1</sup> In I TIM. 2, 1, we have the earliest injunction that prayer should be offered for 'all men, and for kings and all in authority.' In I CLEMENT, we have our first example of such a prayer. Noteworthy here is the fine choice of thought and expression:

and to our rulers, Lord, grant health, peace, concord, firmness, that they may administer the government which Thou hast given them without offence. - 61, 1.

This is at once a prayer for loyal obedience on the part of Christians and against oppression and persecution on the part of the rulers; and is in line with ROM. 13, 1 and I PET. 2, 13ff. Noteworthy also is the absence of any petition that the rulers may be brought to a knowledge of the truth and become Christian. That was a thought that lay beyond the horizon even of the second century. The earthly kingdom and the kingdom of God stood in stark opposition; the earthly kingdom could not do without its Emperor, but a Christian was what an Emperor could never be.<sup>2</sup> Finally, we have the prayer for

those of us who are in affliction; have mercy on the lowly, raise the fallen, show Thyself to those in need, heal the sick, turn again the wanderers of Thy people, feed the hungry, ransom our prisoners, raise up the weak, comfort the faint-hearted, let all nations know Thee that Thou art God alone, and that Jesus Christ is Thy child, and that we are Thy people and the sheep of Thy pasture. - 69, 4

Clement's prayer is the one and only example we possess from early Christianity of a great church-prayer, which embraces at once Thanksgiving for redemption, Intercession for the sick, poor, and needy, Petition for forgiveness, for the welfare and peace of the world, and for protection

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<sup>1</sup> 5, 16.      <sup>2</sup> TERTULLIAN, Apol. 21. cf. KNOPF, *Comm. on I Clem.*, in loco. (*Handbuch zum N.T.*)

from persecution, along with Intercession for the Emperor and all in authority. It may therefore be regarded as the noblest and most ancient form known to us of the so-called 'general-church-prayer' - Von der G., op.cit. 207.

Two matters call for more special attention.

(1) To what extent, and in what spirit was the help of prayer enlisted in dealing with individual necessities, as for example, the needs of the sick?

Of such use of prayer we have records in the NT, while in the succeeding literature they become more frequent. ACTS 9, 40 tells of the raising of Tabitha by Peter; ACTS 28, 8, of the healing of the father of Publius by Paul, through prayer and the laying-on of hands; JAMES 5, 15 gives directions regarding the anointing of the sick with oil, accompanied with prayer. These and other references in the NT and the subsequent writings - such as Tertullian's account of the manifold effects of prayer - demonstrate a profound belief in the efficacy of prayer for meeting individual need. Our modern minds are apt to shy at the Church's accounts of her wonders and healings; and, finding traces of legend or superstition, we incline to shelve the whole question for the time-being. Yet we must reckon with the fact that Paul, in his list of the charismata, sets down 'gifts of miracle-working and of healing'<sup>2</sup>; and not only so, but speaks of these with a certainty and an almost matter-of-fact calmness, which demonstrate that for him and his readers, such things belonged to the category of the familiar and the unquestioned. 'This', says J. WEISS<sup>3</sup>, commenting on the passage, 'is a fact of the utmost

<sup>1</sup> De Oratione, 29. <sup>2</sup> ICOR. 12, 28ff. <sup>3</sup> on I Cor. 12<sup>9</sup>.

historical <sup>significance</sup> ~~importance~~. Again, we have this from Paul: 'you had all the miracles that mark an Apostle done for you fully and patiently - miracles, wonders, and deeds of power.' Here he claims to have wrought these deeds of power himself. It goes <sup>almost</sup> without saying that all such deeds of power would be preceded by a prayer that the power of God should be released for action. We seem therefore shut up to the conclusion that such prayer was frequent in NT times. As a <sup>or at least frequently,</sup> rule, it would be carried through in private. Yet there can be little doubt that in those informal and intimate gatherings, signs and wonders were often witnessed. This <sup>may</sup> ~~appears to~~ have been so at Corinth, as the last-quoted passage <sup>seems to</sup> suggests. Also, we may feel sure that all the prayers for the sick were charged with the conviction that such prayer really availed towards securing its end. In the earlier ~~of the~~ NT literature, we <sup>are sensible of</sup> ~~can sense~~ a quite marked reserve in speaking about signs and wonders, which contrasts with the later manner of proclaiming them for purposes of propaganda. Nor do we have clear proof that the use of prayer as a magic influence or formula had any strong hold in the first century. Some of the Gentile converts would inevitably regard prayer in this light. But if the Johannine writings may be taken as reflecting the mind of the Church in general, we infer that while the word of the Johannine Christ, 'whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do,' was accepted at its full value, the attached reservation was also held firmly in mind, that what was sought must be in harmony with the will of God.<sup>2</sup> Prayer was not yet regarded as a means for getting man's will

<sup>1</sup> IICOR. 12, 12.      <sup>2</sup> IJOHN 5, 14.

done in heaven; its purpose was to get God's will done on earth.

(2) There is a striking lack of NT evidence of prayer being offered for the great world outside the Church. The earliest evidence of such is ITIM.2,1, 'my first counsel is that supplications, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings are to be offered for all men - for Kings and all in authority-----' Paul never once prays, or enjoins prayer, for those outside the Church, except for his own beloved people. The absence of evidence, on this point, may be simply an accident. If not, it may indicate a conception of the heathen world as somehow lying outside the effective prayer-circuits. In any case, the omission of a universal intercession would not demonstrate, what some have alleged, a 'sectarian' narrowing of the Church's sympathies, as compared with the universalism of Jesus. Moffatt<sup>2</sup> stresses the fact that the thought of God as the Father of men, qua men, is not a vital and operative NT thought. God is the Father of His own redeemed sons. Alongside of this, there is the constant effort to make love practical, and save it from 'evaporating into a general sentiment of affable good-will.' The primary sphere for the exercise of love was the Christian brotherhood; over against it, the world was the sphere of evil, a 'soiling power', where not already a persecuting one; and constant endeavour was needed to shield and fortify the young churches against influences that would have dragged back many of their converts from their hold of Christ. It was therefore neither unnatural nor unwholesome if their expressions of love in prayer did not flow out indiscriminately upon all, but

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<sup>1</sup>ROM.10,1.   <sup>2</sup>Love in NT,70.

were mainly directed upon the needs which cried out to them from their own fellowship. There certainly was no lack of desire or effort to share with the heathen world the privileges and blessings which the fellowship enjoyed. After all, the greatest service that Christians could render was the preaching of the Gospel. The message of Jesus to the Baptist, which culminated in the reminder that the poor had the Gospel preached to them, was no anticlimax; nor was its meaning lost on the early Church. If it did not pray for the heathen, it spent itself to the utmost carrying the Gospel to them. Moffatt emphasises these two things:

First, that no such sublimated cosmopolitanism as that expressed by 'the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man' was ever dreamed of as an equivalent for the real Christian message of love; and secondly, that while the apostle warned his followers against reducing the church to a religious club, he was keenly alive, and sought to make them alive, to the fact that the Church was the Household of the faith, in which members had a primary duty to their fellows, however kindly and sympathetic they might feel and act towards people on the outside.- op.cit.204.

(d) THE DOXOLOGY.

For detailed investigation of the various forms which the Doxology took in the early worship, reference may be made to CHASE, The Lord's Prayer in the early Church. Here we shall seek to estimate its general character and significance.

The evidence points to the closing doxology having been a constant feature of public prayer from the earliest days of the church. It was taken over from the worship of the synagogue, where the doxology was an adjunct to every prayer; and, both in form and expression,

the Jewish model was closely copied. The simplest form of the doxology seems to have been, 'to Thee be glory for ever.' This form was expanded in various ways, but these expansions, or additions, do not pass beyond the limits of Jewish thought and expression, except in one vital respect, to be mentioned presently. The variety of NT forms is indicative of the freedom which prevailed. The doxologies are composed in the rhythmical prose style of <sup>exalted</sup> prayer, and of hymn; and while retaining freedom to select the most worthy ascription of praise and glory that the Spirit-impulse may lead to, they never yield to the weakness of extravagance and redundancy, but remain strong, dignified, reverential.

Distinctively Christian is the incorporation of a reference to Christ. This might occasionally be only implicit, in the designation of God as 'Father'; but was more commonly explicit, 'through Jesus Christ.' 'To the only wise God be glory through Jesus Christ for ever and ever.'<sup>1</sup> We have already noted the significance of this introduction of the name of Christ into these solemn ascriptions of praise and glory. The doxology is always directed to God, except in IIPETER, 3, 18, where it is directed to Christ alone. HEB. 13, 21 and IPETER, 4, 11 are doubtful cases. Doxologies addressed to Christ are not frequent in the sub-apostolic age. The Trinitarian form emerges first in the prayer of Polycarp; 'Jesus Christ, through whom, to Thee, with Him and the Holy Ghost, be glory ---'. In the second century, the triple ascription becomes frequent; in the third century, customary.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ROM. 16, 27.      <sup>2</sup> Von der GOLZ, Das Gebet, 159.      <sup>α</sup> p. 92.

The steadfast adherence to the Jewish custom of closing each prayer with a sonorous ascription of praise and glory to God must have exercised a strong influence on Christian prayer. The old Jewish spirit of reverential homage and awe<sup>α</sup> in the presence of the Majesty of God found clear and constant expression in these closing phrases of every Christian prayer. Anything incongruous, or extravagant, or trivial in the prayer itself was shown up and rebuked by the exalted words at the end, which must therefore have acted as a constant restraint upon all forms of excess. If we may say so, ~~the~~ Spirit did, at this point, welcome and admit a definite form-barrier against the abuse of prayer. It was as though the old religion had bequeathed to the new a model which bodied forth what was highest in her own worship of God - a model, at once so compact and so expressive, that anyone could appreciate it, and could employ it as a standard by which to regulate his bearing and speech when he stood in the presence of the Highest.

(e) THE AMEN.

Originally, in accordance with Jewish custom, the Amen was spoken by the worshiping people. This is proved by ICOR. 14, 16: APOC. 5, 13: 7, 12: JUSTIN, Apol. 65, 3. The first clear case of the Amen being spoken by the man who utters the prayer is in Polycarp's prayer, where the presence of a worshiping community cannot be presupposed.<sup>1</sup> Thereafter, the original significance was ~~lost~~ frequently lost sight of, and the Amen was used, both in public and private prayer, as a simple reinforcement of the prayer, or an expression of confidence that it would be answered.

<sup>1</sup> Von d. Holz, Das Gebet, 160.

<sup>α</sup> p. 23.

But, at first, the Amen was invariably the response spoken by the worshiping people. It implied that they assented to what had been said, and appropriated it as their own. They identified themselves with the Leader's prayer, and solemnly confessed the inner unity which bound him and all of them together. In this single closing word, therefore, there came to expression one fundamental quality of Christian prayer. It was community prayer.<sup>α</sup> It was not the prayer of a priest or of an individual speaking on behalf of others. It was more even than the sum of a number of individual prayers ascending to God. It was, in some way, a real collective prayer, spoken by a company which approached God collectively as the Body of Christ, voicing, 'with one accord', the great experiences they shared together - the certainty of salvation in Christ, and confidence in the consummation of his rule.<sup>1</sup> Later, the conception was visualised in the praying figure of the Ecclesia orans of the Catacombs.

This raises questions both for the historian of religions and for the psychologist. To the former it presents the problem of the extent to which this collective consciousness in Christian worship was a survival of the collectivism that was native to ancient thought, and was deeply ingrained in the old tribal thinking of the Jews. For the psychologist, the question of 'crowd-psychology' emerges. This question is ventilated by R.S.SIMPSON, Ideas in Corporate Worship, from whom the quotations that follow are drawn.

Modern psychology emphasises this, that when you come

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<sup>1</sup> HEILER, Das Gebet, 471.

<sup>α</sup> p.89.

to what one may call a very high group of individuals, that is, a group which is more than an accidental crowd, a group of men which is possessed by a real intellectual or spiritual interest, then the more clearly shall you find that something spiritual or psychical is added by the group to that which is contributed by the individual members of the group. I mean, there appears an idea in the group which is not in the individual mind of the members of the group: there come to be subtly and mysteriously blended in the group, traditions, memories, suggestions, the poetry of an ideal and the stored riches of a continued life; and these from the group act upon the individual members who compose the group, so that in a very especial sense something new is added by the group consciousness to the consciousness of each individual who has a part within it. Now this applies in a very real sense to a worshiping congregation of Christian people. There is something added to the individual as he worships, not by himself, but in fellowship with others. Modern psychology is quite clear about that.

In the especial matter of worship there is a definite promise to the group which is quite distinct from the promise of the presence to the individual. 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am in the midst.'

Psychology teaches that something of great importance is added to the individual when he associates himself in worship with a group.

pp 47-49.

## D. PRAISE.

A few fragmentary remains, scattered over the New Testament, are almost all that we possess of the distinctively Christian hymns of the early worship. Nor has any one of the sacred writers ever paused to indicate the form and content of these hymns, or the manner in which they were sung. Consequently we have to be content at this point, as in other branches of the worship, with such inferences as may be drawn from sparse and incidental hints. Indeed, our difficulties are actually greater than usual, by reason of the fact that we get scarcely any assistance from the writers of the second century, or even those of the third century, and so must rely on the New Testament itself for our knowledge of the early Praise in a more exclusive measure than is the case with her Prayers and Sacraments. There are substantial reasons for this silence on the part of the records; but we shall be in a better position to appreciate these reasons a few pages further on.

A priori, we should expect that a movement which released so much emotion, and loyalty, and enthusiasm, would find expression in Song. This proved to be the case in after ages when the religion was already grown old and had need to rediscover some of the truth she had forgotten or mislaid; notably in the revivals associated with the emergence of Protestantism and of Methodism, the return of the light was hailed with wonderful outbursts of song. So it would have been strange indeed if the Church had remained songless in that first glorious dawn when the light from Christ came breaking across the horizons of life, making all things new. To the Christians of the first generation the art of singing praise to God was no strange or unpractised art. Behind them lay an ancient habit of Praise. From temple and from synagogue the strains of the Psalms had been rising to God for generations. It has to be admitted

## PSALMS AND HYMNS.

that our knowledge of synagogue-practice in the early Christian era is shrouded in uncertainties; but while it is probable that in the synagogues of the motherland in Palestine the singing of praise was a later development, it is equally probable that in the less conservative Greek-speaking synagogues, that were dispersed throughout the Gentile world, this development had already matured before the coming of Christ.<sup>1</sup>

A few of the psalms, or hymns, preserved in the New Testament, are more distinctively Jewish than Christian. In the opening chapters of Luke<sup>2</sup> we find three of these Jewish songs of praise - those of Mary, Zacharias, and Simeon.- all modelled, both in form and content, on the pattern of the Old Testament. Again, in the book of Revelation, we find quite a number<sup>3</sup> of what are now agreed to be songs of praise. Some of these<sup>4</sup> are manifestly Christian creations - new songs - such as could not have been sung in an earlier time; but others are as clearly not new, but old, with no word or phrase in them that might not have been used by a Jewish worshiper of the century before Christ. It would be unwise to claim these latter as Christian hymns; it is more natural to regard them as directly borrowed from the familiar worship of the Greek-speaking synagogue.

It is probable that from very early times the Church used as her Praise-book the Psalms of David - these Psalms, like the rest of the Old Testament, having been appropriated as a specifically Christian possession. But inevitably they were inadequate, by themselves, to express the deepening and expanding experience of the Church; and though we would

<sup>1</sup> Lietzmann, Geschichte der alten Kirche, I, 151f. <sup>2</sup> 1, 46-55; 6<sup>a</sup>-79; 2, 29-32.

<sup>3</sup> 1, 4-7; 5, 9-14; 12, 10-12; 19, 1f, 5-8; 21, 3f.: 4, 8; 4, 11; 15, 3f.; 11, 15-18; 7, 12.

<sup>4</sup> The first five.

PSALMS AND HYMNS.

gladly know more regarding the use that was made of them, it is of greater moment to enquire into the beginnings of a Psalmody and Hymnody that were distinctively Christian.<sup>1</sup>

When Paul says:<sup>2</sup> when you meet together, each contributes something - a song of praise, a lesson, a revelation, a 'tongue', an interpretation, it is generally agreed that by a song of praise he meant, not an Old Testament psalm, but some new Christian song. Again, when we read<sup>3</sup> that in prison he and Silas sang praises unto God, at midnight, probably we are right in taking these to have been Christian songs, improvised under the tense experience of the moment. From Pliny's Letter to Trajan we learn that in the province of Bithynia it was a regular custom, in the Christian worship of that time (c112A.D.) to sing to Christ as to a divinity; and further that this singing was antiphonal. This latter point need occasion no surprise, since antiphonal singing was not only an ancient tradition of the Greek drama, but "had been practised with much elaboration of detail in the psalmody of the Jews, as appears from the account which Philo gives of the Egyptian Therapeutes", and so its introduction into the Christian Church was a matter of course almost from the beginning. Probably the new song<sup>5</sup> of the heavenly worship in the book of Revelation is an echo of the antiphonal praise practised in

<sup>1</sup> Lest there be confusion about terms, it should be noted that psalm, hymn, and spiritual song appear to have been used by the early Church as practically synonymous terms. Since Jerome's day, persistent efforts have been made to discriminate them, as they appear together in Col. 3, 16 and Eph. 5, 19; but most scholars now incline to the opinion that Paul had no clear distinction in mind when he wrote. Psalm and hymn were the more religious words, song being more colourless and so requiring an ancillary adjective. In the first three Christian centuries, there seems a quite distinct reluctance to use the word hymn, probably because that was the current term for heathen cult-songs. Perhaps new songs was the only distinctive term which lay at hand to designate the new productions.

<sup>2</sup> ICor. 14, 26. <sup>3</sup> Ad. 16, 25. <sup>4</sup> Lightfoot, Apostolic Fathers, II, 1, p31. <sup>5</sup> 5, 8-14.

## PSALMS AND HYMNS.

the Church.

Thou art worthy  
to take the book, and to open the seals thereof:  
for thou wast slain,  
and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood,  
out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;  
and hast made us unto our God kings and priests:  
and we shall reign on the earth.

That is the new song, sung to Christ,<sup>1</sup> by the four beasts and the four and twenty elders. The burden of the song is then taken up and repeated by the whole angelic chorus of heaven, ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands:

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain  
to receive power, and riches, and wisdom,  
and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

Next follows the doxology, or ascription of praise, uttered in chorus by the whole multitude of the lower creatures of earth and sky:

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power,  
unto Him that sitteth upon the throne,  
and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

Finally, the Amen, spoken by the four beasts.

There is a passage in Colossians<sup>2</sup> which suggests, very strongly, that the stream of song which flowed through the early worship was a very considerable one. Paul wrote as follows:

And you must be thankful. Let the inspiration of Christ dwell in your midst with all its wealth of wisdom; teach and train one another with the music of psalms, with hymns, and songs of the spiritual life; praise God with thankful hearts. Indeed, whatever you say and do, let everything be done in dependence on the Lord Jesus, giving thanks in his name to God the Father.

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<sup>1</sup> For other evidence of hymns addressed to Christ see p.93. <sup>2</sup> 3,16.

## PSALMS AND HYMNS.

Now there is in this no faintest hint of there being anything out of the common in the injunction to 'teach and train one another with the music of psalms, with hymns, and songs of the spiritual life'. The passage suggests, rather, that Paul is simply underlining a practice which he knew to be already established, with a view to its encouragement. The thought dominating the whole passage is the thought of gratitude and thanksgiving to God; and the singing of psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, comes into Paul's mind, as he writes, simply as being one of the most natural and effective ways in which such gratitude could find expression and reinforcement. In these early worship-gatherings that were so vitally quickened by the Spirit, or, as it is put here, by the word, or inspiration of Christ, it must often have happened that a worshiper would rise and pour himself out in praises of Christ, making use of that solemn rhythmical prose in which the religious praise of that age, and of the ages before it, found its most common outlet, and a few examples of which we shall presently be examining. Many of these first Christian praises would have small literary value; improvisations of the moment, they would serve to express the quickened emotion of the speaker and to stir responsive chords in the like-quickened worshipers about him; yet they would quickly be forgotten as soon as some new interest swept the meeting.<sup>1</sup> But occasionally there would be produced something worthy of a longer life; and this would arrest the attention, and would fix itself in the memory of this man or of that, who might give utterance to it again on some later occasion, and perhaps in some richer and more artistic form. Thus it would go on passing from mind to mind, till at length it became widely familiar, and established for itself a place in the

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<sup>1</sup> The spirituals given forth at negro camp-meetings are adduced as a parallel, by E. F. Scott, Moffatt N. T. Commentary in loco.

## PSALMS AND HYMNS.

currency of Christian diction and thought. Happily there have been preserved in the New Testament a few examples of the more finished products of the early Praise, and some of these may have been chiselled into their present shape in the course of some such process as we have just described. We will examine three of the more outstanding.

(1) Ephesians, 5, 14.

Awake, O sleeper,  
and rise from the dead,  
and Christ will shine upon you.

"We may regard this almost certainly as belonging to an early Christian hymn, of which everything is now lost except this beautiful verse".<sup>1</sup>

It is the opinion of many that the hymn was originally used in connection with Baptism, as a song of welcome into the new life, as the convert was rising from the water: 'Wake up, O sleeper, and rise from the dead, and (hereafter) Christ will shine upon you'.

(2) I Timothy, 3, 16.

He who was  
"manifested in flesh,  
vindicated in spirit,  
seen by angels,  
preached among Gentiles,  
believed on in the world,  
taken up in glory."

The writer introduces this verse as a summary of the profound and mysterious truth of our religion. For long it has been recognised that his words are a quotation; but it is still debated whether they should be regarded as a quotation from a hymn, or as a quotation from

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<sup>1</sup> E. F. Scott, op.cit.

PSALMS AND HYMNS.

Some formula of Confession of faith. This raises a most interesting and important question. Scholars are more and more being led to recognise that in the early worship there was a very intimate connection between these three things, Thanksgiving-prayer, Hymns, and Credal-confessions. In all three the style and diction employed were substantially the same. All alike were couched in a stately, rhythmical prose; the words were Greek, but the structure of the sentences was Semitic and wholly un-Greek; while the style was solemn, exalted, hieratical.<sup>1</sup> When we come to deal with the eucharistic prayers of thanksgiving,<sup>2</sup> we will be in a better position to understand the deeper motives conditioning this kinship between Prayer, Hymns, and Credal-formulae. Meantime we observe that the Hymns were not yet differentiated, in diction and style, from the other two. They were not yet metrical structures, in our sense of the word. It was not till about the time of Augustine<sup>3</sup> that hymns began to be composed in the structures with which we are familiar. Previous to that, they adhered to the rhythmical prose structures which were common throughout the religious worship of the ancient East.

So the question with which we started, as to whether this passage from I Timothy is to be construed as a hymn or as a credal formula, is not a

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<sup>1</sup> It is not possible, without quoting extensively from original sources, to describe the features of this structure and style; the task has been accomplished by Norden in his pioneering book, Agnostos Theos, (1913). But its main qualities can be felt by a modern reader even of the Authorised English Version; and if he has an ear for such things, he must be aware of the essential poetry lying behind the stately prose of such passages as Philippians 2, 6-11, or the prayer-like opening paragraphs of Colossians, or the new songs of the Apocalypse. We would have been spared much tribulation, if only our fathers had been in a position to see that a passage like the so-called Kenosis-passage (Phil. 2, 6-11) was first composed in the mood and manner of an inspired poet, and only in a very secondary degree, in that of a scientific theologian; 2. Chap. X. probably under the influence of the new manner of praise introduced by Ambrose.

## PSALMS AND HYMNS.

very vital question. Possibly, by the time of writing, it had attained the latter character; but, if so, it must have had a previous history within the worship, either as a hymn, or as a part of the gradually evolving material of thanksgiving prayer; since we have strong reason for thinking that it was out of the elements which first took shape in Prayer or Hymn that the Credal confessions were eventually developed.

(3) Philippians II, 6-11.

Who being in the form of God,  
thought it not robbery  
to be equal with God;

but made himself of no reputation,  
taking upon him the form of a servant,  
and being made in the likeness of men;

and being found in fashion as a man,  
he humbled himself  
and became obedient unto death,  
even the death of the cross.

WHEREFORE God also hath highly exalted him,  
and given him a name  
which is above every name;

that at the name of Jesus  
every knee should bow  
of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things  
and that every tongue should confess under the earth;  
that Jesus Christ is Lord  
to the glory of God the Father.

The arrangement in six stanzas, of three lines each, is that adopted by Lohmeyer in his recent distinguished Monograph<sup>1</sup> on the passage. In the original Greek, this arrangement is even more convincing than in the

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<sup>1</sup>Kyrios Jesus, 1928.

## PSALMS AND HYMNS.

English. The lines are, with rare exceptions, triple-accented; even the concluding line of the second-last stanza contains only three accented words (it contains only five words in all, as against the thirteen in the English).<sup>1</sup> The first three stanzas describe the Humiliation; the latter three the Exaltation; and the whole is exactly divided between these two themes, the second being introduced by the emphatic Wherefore. There can be no question that we have here a highly-finished and exquisitely-balanced work of art; and one so packed with thought that its two sentences suffice to unfold the mighty cosmic drama of Salvation. Lohmeyer points to several indications which seem to him to demonstrate that this hymn was not the work of Paul himself, but that it must have come from some Great Unknown, some poet-prophet of the earlier Church. He also thinks that Paul may have become acquainted with it through the worship, where it may have established a place for itself in the eucharistic prayers of the author's home-church. We may not be able to follow Lohmeyer in these surmises, but at least we must feel that this great poem cannot have flowed extempore from even Paul's pen, at the moment of his reaching this point in his letter to Philippi. In itself it is a complete unity; its sweep of thought far transcends the immediate level and purpose of his writing; and it bears every mark of being a previously complete and independent whole. Another great scholar<sup>2</sup> - one of the most distinguished and reverent of our living authorities on the early worship,

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<sup>1</sup> The one difficulty about this arrangement is that the words even the death of the cross are hard to fit into it; either they make the last line of the stanza too long, or they add a fourth line to it. Lohmeyer, who holds that the hymn was not composed by Paul, attributes to Paul the addition of these words, as being a very natural comment for him to make when quoting the hymn. <sup>2</sup>Lietzmann.

## PSALMS AND HYMNS.

also designates this work as a hymn, and goes on to say that, should we ever attempt to visualise Paul conducting a eucharistic service in some one of his churches, we might not be far astray if we put into his mouth a eucharistic prayer that would unfold the greatness of Christ in some such fashion as this.

Once more we are made sensible of the connection between eucharistic prayer, hymn, and confession of faith; this great passage might quite well be conceived - and without undue strain - as functioning in any one of these capacities.

Why have so few early Christian hymns been preserved?

(1) The scantiness of hymn-deposits in the literature is not exceptional; the deposits from the worship as a whole are almost, though not quite, as fragmentary. The young Religion was too engrossed in living its life to take thought of keeping records of it. And there was no impulse to make records on behalf of after ages. There were to be no after ages; the end of the world was at hand; 'the hammer of the world's clock was already raised to strike'.

(2) The early hymns had about them nothing sufficiently distinctive to make them stand out from other elements of worship so as to claim special attention. God and Christ were praised in traditional forms, inherited from the parent Religion. There was no need to create new forms. Individual efforts in this direction may have been made, in imitation of Pagan models; but it was not to be expected that any man of sufficient poetical genius would be at hand to create new forms of Christian praise worthy of endurance. The great men of the Church were preoccupied with other

## PSALMS AND HYMNS.

things. Clement of Alexandria's hymn is the earliest in a new form that has been preserved.

(3) When we have regard to the workings of the Spirit, and to the richness of the diction-material that lay at hand, it seems probable that most of the early hymns would be improvised. We can conceive the Spirit impelling to utterance in the rhythmical prose of the hymn, as readily as in the kindred diction of exalted prayer. Such improvisation of hymns appears to have been known as late as Tertullian, who challenges Marcion to point to gifts of his God that could be set alongside the Church's gifts: edat aliquem psalmum, aliquam visionem, aliquam orationem, dumtaxat spiritualem, in ecstasi-----. Improvisation does not conduce to permanence.

(4) About the middle of the third century, there was a strong orthodox reaction against the hymn-singing of the day. The Gnostics had made large use of hymns, framed so as to catch the popular ear and taste; and the Church, taking alarm, condemned all such hymns as too modern and worldly, and forbade the use, within her own circle, of any hymns except such as were to be found in the Scriptures. This not only arrested the production of new hymns, but suppressed any of the less biblical type that might be in use. This 'biblicising' movement lasted for a period, and the policy was surrendered only when the resultant impoverishment of the Church's Praise was realised. It is probable that many earlier hymns, that might otherwise have been preserved, passed into oblivion at this time.

## Section V.

THE WORSHIP IN DETAIL. - II. The Sacraments.THE LORD'S SUPPER.

## A. The Breaking of Bread type.

It is coming to be widely recognised that the study of the origins of the Lord's Supper must start from an examination of the 'BREAKING OF BREAD' referred to by Luke in his Gospel and in Acts.

They devoted themselves to the instruction given by the apostles and to fellowship, breaking bread and praying together. - 2,42.

Day by day they resorted with one accord to the temple and broke bread together in their own homes. - 2,46.

Luke was evidently impressed with what he had heard of the attractiveness and joyfulness of these meals, for he adds, 'they ate with a glad and simple heart, praising God and looked on with favour by all the people.'

This language suggests that the meals were, in the first instance, real, hunger-satisfying meals; and this is confirmed by other evidence, notably Paul's account of the Supper at Corinth. It may be taken as certain that it was the evening meal that was thus signalised and made the centre of the Christian fellowship. When the day's work was done, they gathered to take their 'supper' together.

These meals are described by the verb, 'they broke bread'; sometimes by the noun, 'the breaking of bread'. Now these terms are never found, either in Hebrew or Greek, as equivalents for the simple taking of food; always they imply that the taking of food was

accompanied by a certain formal and conspicuous action - the pronouncing of a blessing over the bread that was to be eaten, followed by the breaking of the loaf, preparatory to its distribution round the table.<sup>1</sup> This was an old Jewish custom, corresponding to our grace before meals, but conveying deeper suggestions of religious fellowship than with us, and carried through with greater solemnity and ceremony, and reserved for certain meals of a more religious character. The blessing was pronounced, and the bread broken by the presiding host, or head of the household. On the occasion of the feeding of the multitudes, the ceremony was performed by Jesus himself.<sup>2</sup>

In none of the early accounts of these Supper meals is there any reference to a cup of wine. Neither in the passages already cited, nor in the other three which exhaust the NT references to the breaking of bread - ACTS, 20, 11; 27, 35; LUKE, 24, 30&35 - is any mention made of wine. The natural sense of all these passages is that no wine was <sup>necessarily</sup> drunk; there was only the breaking of bread.

Now when we turn to the APOCRYPHAL ACTS, dating from the second and third centuries, we find frequent descriptions of a type of Lord's Supper which knew only of the breaking of bread. Although these Apocryphal Acts<sup>3</sup> are notorious factories of legend, they may, on that very account, be accepted as good witnesses to the popular thought and practice of their time. In the ACTS of JOHN, we have a description of a Sunday's worship, comprising an exhortation and a prayer by the Apostle, followed by a celebration of the eucharist.

<sup>1</sup> Hunkin, The Christian Religion, I, 6, note.

<sup>2</sup> MK. 6, 41: 8, 6. MATT. 14, 19: 15, 36

<sup>3</sup> Streeter, Prim. Church, ch. I.

LK. 9, 16.

And he asked for bread and gave thanks thus: What praise or what offering or what thanksgiving shall we, breaking this bread, name save thee only, O Lord Jesu? We glorify thy name that was said by the Father -----(here follows a considerable prayer, filled with the praise of Christ).

And he brake the bread and gave unto all of us, praying over each of the brethren that he might be worthy of the grace of the Lord and of the most holy eucharist. And he partook also himself likewise, and said: Unto me also be there a part with you, and: Peace be with you, my beloved. - 106-110.(cf 85.)

ACTS OF THOMAS. - 133.

And when they, Siphor and his wife and daughter, were baptised and clad, the Apostle set bread on the table and blessed it and said: Bread of life, the which who eat abide incorruptible: Bread that filleth the hungry souls with the blessing thereof: thou art he that vouchsafest to receive a gift, that thou mayest become unto us remission of sins, and that they who eat thee may become immortal: we invoke upon thee the name of the mother, of the unspeakable mystery of the hidden powers and authorities: we invoke upon thee the name of Jesus. And he said: Let the powers of blessing come, and be established in this bread, that all the souls that partake of it may be washed from their sins. And he brake and gave unto Siphor and his wife and daughter. - cf 37: 29: 49f. CLEMENTINE HOM.14. VERCELLI ACTS OF PETER,5.

The Acts of John are not later than middle second century; the Acts of Thomas are third century. - M.R.JAMES, The Apocryphal NT; from which the above quotations are taken.

These quotations place it beyond doubt that in certain regions, well into the third century, the eucharist was frequently celebrated in the one element only. Probably it is a eucharist of this type that is portrayed in some of the earliest paintings in the Catacombs, where Jesus is seated at table with his disciples, apparently on the occasion of the Last Supper, but the food consists of loaves and fishes, and the baskets stand at the side filled with bread. In any

case, we have clear evidence that there persisted, till into the third century, a type of eucharist which bore the strongest family resemblance, in form, to the simple breaking of bread by the primitive church at Jerusalem. Presently we shall come upon another, and intermediate, link in this family chain.

In none of these breakings of bread in Acts and Luke is there any suggestion that it was the DEATH of Jesus that was in the forefront of thought and devotion. When we read that they ate with a glad and simple heart praising God, we catch the impression of joyful thanksgiving to God for His blessings of salvation, rather than of definite recalling to thought of their Master in the dark hour of his death. Some who hold that the death must have been prominent in the Supper celebration from the first explain the joy as a result of the fervid apocalyptic hopes. But it is doubtful if even these hopes would have had power to fill their hearts with joy while they were envisaging, through vivid symbolism, their recent memories of the blow and shock of his death. For at this early stage of their faith, we have reason to think that while the resurrection had kindled their hearts, the death had remained a thing dark and shadowed with mystery. There had not yet been time to search the scriptures and learn that the death was a 'must' in God's plan, and was indeed the crowning act of his redeeming love. So it is psychologically difficult to conceive of them as pondering on his death while they ate with 'a glad and simple heart, praising God'. Some twenty years later, Paul wrote a description of a Lord's Supper at Corinth, where there were unpleasant

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<sup>1</sup> J. WEISS, *Urchr.* 75ff. cf. p. 135, below.

<sup>2</sup> p. 135.

exhibitions of unbrotherly greed and self-indulgence. It is even more difficult, psychologically, to conceive of these Corinthians as pondering on their Lord's death, the while they were snatching their food, and letting their poorer neighbours go hungry, and in some cases 'getting drunk' themselves.<sup>1</sup> It is tempting to surmise that, in spite of his previous teaching,<sup>2</sup> Paul's type of Supper had never established itself firmly at Corinth, and that some Judaisers had arrived from Palestine and had introduced the Corinthians to their simpler type of Supper, which, being more tuned to the note of gladness and joy, had proved more attractive, though fraught with easy perils for immature and volatile believers like them.<sup>α</sup> Does not Paul himself suggest that one main reason for their abuse of the Supper was their failure to 'discern the Lord's body' in the bread they ate?<sup>3</sup>

We now turn to a highly important witness, the DIDACHE, which is to be dated, most probably, about the end of the first century.<sup>4</sup> In it we have the first examples of eucharistic prayers that we possess. Once again, there is no reference to the death of Christ. This is the more significant, in that here we have to do with an extended formulary, and not merely with brief notices of a 'breaking of bread', as in Acts. It will be well to set down the complete teaching of the Didache on the Supper. Lake's translation is used. On the whole subject, reference may be made to LIETZMANN, *Messe und Herrenmahl*, XIV: and BRILIOTH, *Eucharistic Faith and Practice*, 19f.

Chap. XIV. - On the Lord's day of the Lord come together, break bread and hold Eucharist, after confessing your transgressions, that your offering may be pure.

<sup>1</sup> 1 COR. II, 21.

<sup>2</sup> II, 23.

<sup>3</sup> II, 29.

<sup>4</sup> BRILIOTH, 19.

<sup>α</sup> p. 132.

CH. IX. - And concerning the Eucharist hold Eucharist thus:

First, concerning the Cup:

We give thanks to thee, our Father, for the Holy Vine of David thy child, which thou didst make known to us through Jesus thy child; to thee be glory for ever.

And concerning the broken bread:

We give thee thanks, our Father, for the life and knowledge which thou didst make known to us through Jesus thy child. To thee be glory for ever. As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains, but was brought together and became one, so let thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into thy kingdom, for thine is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever.

But let none eat or drink of your Eucharist except those who have been baptised in the Lord's name. For concerning this also did the Lord say, 'Give not that which is holy to the dogs.'

CH. X. - But after you are satisfied with food, thus give thanks:

We give thanks to thee, O Holy Father, for thy Holy Name which thou didst make to tabernacle in our hearts, and for the knowledge and faith and immortality which thou didst make known to us through Jesus thy Child. To thee be glory for ever. Thou, Lord Almighty, didst create all things for thy Name's sake, and didst give food and drink to men for their enjoyment, that they might give thanks to thee, but us hast thou blessed with spiritual food and drink and eternal light through thy Child. Above all we give thanks to thee for that thou art mighty. To thee be glory for ever. Remember, Lord, thy Church, to deliver it from all evil and to make it perfect in thy love, and gather it together in its holiness from the four winds to thy kingdom which thou hast prepared for it. For thine is the power and the glory for ever.

L. Let Grace come and let this world pass away.

W. Hosannah to the God of David.

L. If any man be holy let him come! if any man be not let him repent: MARANATHA.

W. Amen.

But suffer the prophets to hold Eucharist as they will.

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The closing sentences of this last prayer are probably a dialogue between the Leader and Worshipers, and are so set out here. We note in them the fervid expectation of the Advent, voiced in the Maranatha, and in the Hosannah which appears here for the first time in connection with the eucharist.

The arrangement of material in the Didache as a whole leaves no room for reasonable doubt that all the above-quoted passages refer to the same occasion<sup>1</sup>, and that "the occasion is a Christian form of the Jewish common meal, a single act which is at once eucharist and agape."<sup>2</sup> The prayers are such as would be suitable for a religious repast, and have several points of affinity with the synagogue ritual.<sup>3</sup>

Here again we have a real, hunger-satisfying meal, which began, it appears, with the celebration of the eucharist, and closed with a prayer of thanksgiving. What we specially note, however, is that in the whole formulary there is no commemoration of the death of Jesus, nor is there even a reference to the broken body or the shed blood, nor is there any suggestion that the celebration originated from the Last Supper of Jesus with his disciples. Clearly this is a type of eucharist radically divergent from Paul's. Further, the breaking of bread appears to be the central thing in it. Not only Ch. XIV indicates this, but also Ch. IX, where the distinctively Christian thanksgiving is offered in the prayer over the bread, and not in the other, with its recondite Messianic or Apocalyptic content. Further, there seems to be some confusion as to the order of the bread and wine. Although the wine precedes the bread in the general scheme, the reverse order is suggested by the words, 'let none eat or drink', which follow the first prayer. The conclusion seems warranted that we have here a type

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<sup>1</sup> LIETZMANN, 232.      <sup>2</sup> BRILIOTH, 19.      <sup>3</sup> OESTERLEY, Jsh. Bkgd. 131.

All references to "Lietzmann" are to his 'Messe und Herrenmahl.'

of the primitive Breaking of bread celebration, but in process of transition towards a fuller form. The wine-celebration has been added at the beginning, but has not yet been thoroughly incorporated.

We are entitled to conclude that in the 'Breaking of bread' in ACTS, in the DIDACHE, and in the APOCRYPHAL ACTS, we have evidence of a type of Lord's Supper much simpler than Paul's, in which there was only the element of bread - or if wine did appear, its significance was secondary - and which was in no sense a commemoration specifically of the death of Jesus. We find this type surviving in the Liturgy of Hippolytus, about the end of the second century, in its description of the AGAPE; and we find traces of it even in the Egyptian Liturgy of Serapion in the middle of the fourth century.<sup>2</sup>

We must now try to understand the motives lying behind the origin of this earliest type of Lord's Supper.

We have seen that the meal as a whole was, as we might describe it, *only* semi-sacred, ~~and semi-profane~~. It was a real meal, one of the daily, hunger-satisfying meals; but it was also a meal of religious fellowship with one another, and also, in some way, with Christ. Now, this distinction which we naturally draw between ~~the~~ <sup>a</sup> religious and ~~the~~ <sup>an</sup> ~~ordinary~~ <sup>profane</sup> element in the meal would have been largely unintelligible to these Jewish Christians. Even the most ordinary meal was to them no profane thing. Food was sacred; it came to their tables, not simply from the shop, but from God; and they never seem to have lost the sense that when they touched food they were near to God. In their national religion, there had been a long history of sacrificial meals,

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<sup>1</sup> LIETZMANN, Ch. XII.      <sup>2</sup> do. 195f.

reaching far back into the past; and though our knowledge of these is dim, it helps us to understand the aura of sacredness investing their meals and the attendant conceptions of table-fellowship with one another and with God. This does not mean that crude primitive ideas were still vital in their thoughts; but the atmosphere was still there, investing their fellowship with deep meanings which are by no means easy for us to recapture. Josephus tells us that the Essenes used to go to their meals in white garments, 'as though it were into a sacred temple; and had a priest to say grace both before and after.'

But though all Jewish meals were thus lifted above the level of the 'profane,' there were frequent meals at which the religious motive was intensified, and the ritual element became more pronounced. The Passover meal is the best known of these; but there were others of which we get glimpses in the Talmud. These special meals were held in private houses, and might be family meals; but there had grown up a club-habit in connection with them. A group of like-minded friends, (Chaber, 'comrade'), would form themselves into one of these clubs, or guilds, or societies that were called CHABUROTH, for the purpose of celebrating these meals together; and these Chaburoth were so firmly established institutions in the first century that, as we learn from the Talmud, the Rabbis held grave debate on the niceties of ritual at such gatherings. This Chaburah-habit among the Jews is an interesting parallel to the guild-habit among the people of the Graeco-Roman cities, but with this significant difference, that the Jewish purpose was fundamentally religious - the partaking of a sacred meal in company, the while they conversed about the things

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of God.

What we have, then, is a Jewish background of religious meals, and associated with them, a prevailing club- or Chaburah-habit. Now, Jesus and his disciples possessed, as a company, all the marks of such a Chaburah. Their last supper together was a typical Chaburah meal. They met, not as a family, but as a band of friends, like-minded in their interest in the things of God. They were celebrating a special religious occasion, whether Passover or 'Kiddush'; and they observed the ritual<sup>1</sup> appropriate to the occasion, and spent the evening in congenial converse round their table. The trend of opinion is in favour of the Last Supper having been a Kiddush-, and not a Passover-celebration;<sup>2</sup> and it would be a gain if this were established, because it would give us clear proof that Jesus and his disciples were in the habit of meeting once a week, at least, in formal Chaburah fashion. But a decision on this point is not essential for our present purpose. Whether it was a Passover-meal or a Kiddush-meal, the characteristics of a Chaburah were present, and we learn from the Talmud this important fact, that at every Chaburah gathering the ritual of Breaking the bread was customary.<sup>3</sup> So we may take it as practically established that Jesus and his disciples had been in the habit of observing this simple rite together. Jesus himself, as Master, would break the bread and say the blessing over it. We find him doing so at the feeding of the multitudes.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, there appears to have been something individual and peculiar about his way of doing it, whether in his action in breaking the bread, or in the blessing he spoke over it. Anyhow it was not until he

<sup>1</sup> OESTERLEY, 172f.

<sup>2</sup> LIETZMANN, 211ff: OESTERLEY, 156-194.

<sup>3</sup> LIETZMANN, 206.

<sup>4</sup> MK. 6, 41. etc.

broke the bread that the two disciples in the Emmaus story recognised him.<sup>1</sup>

And so, after his death and his reappearing among <sup>his disciples</sup> ~~them~~ in his risen glory, what more natural than that they and their fellow-Christians in Jerusalem should draw together in a close fellowship, meeting for their evening meal in each others' houses and sharing their common hope and joy? And as they <sup>sat together and saw</sup> ~~saw not one, nor another, of themselves~~ <sup>being broken,</sup> ~~breaking~~ the bread, even as He had been used to break it; and <sup>when</sup> the stab of memory had wakened to life everything <sup>within</sup> ~~in~~ them that belonged to him, what more natural than that they should feel that they were in living fellowship with him again, and were renewing, indeed, the happy table-fellowship of the past? We must not suppose that what they experienced was no more than a reaching out, however intense, of their minds and spirits towards him. There <sup>α</sup> was more than that. In some way, <sup>they felt</sup> ~~he~~ was really present with them. We never once overhear them mourning his loss, as all others, before and since, have mourned for their dead. They were satisfied that they had not lost him; that he was not only living, but living with them, here and now. 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them,' It may be that Jesus never spoke these words, but they assuredly voice the belief of his worshiping disciples. In what exact way they conceived his presence we do not know; but we may feel quite certain that they realised it, and that they conceived it as, in some way, a real continuation of their table-fellowship with him.<sup>2</sup>

We now pass to the Pauline type of Supper.

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<sup>1</sup> LK. 24, 35. <sup>2</sup> On whole subject, cf LIETZMANN, esp. XII, XIII: BRILIOTH, Ch. I: OESTERLEY, Chs. VI, VII.  
<sup>α</sup> p 69.

### B. The Pauline Type.

We call it the Pauline type, because it is from Paul that we get our earliest information about it, and, so far as we know, he was the first leader of the church to advocate its exclusive use. 'It is the Pauline account that shows most clearly the centre round which the still fluid ideas of the primitive church were more and more to gather.'<sup>1</sup> This was the type of Supper that rapidly became dominant over the church, except perhaps in Egypt. The fourth-century Liturgy of Serapion shows that the simpler type of Supper had held its ground in that province - the province which Paul never visited.

The Pauline type differs from the more primitive type in these ways:

- (1) It was a celebration in both elements, bread and wine.
- (2) It was a memorial specifically of the Death of Jesus.
- (3) It was not a continuation of the accustomed table-fellowship with Jesus, but attached itself to a single occasion. It claimed to be a replica of the Last Supper, and to have been instituted, by the express command of Jesus, as a permanent celebration.

At this point, we must briefly set down the generally accepted conclusions as to the relation of Paul's account of the Last Supper to the accounts contained in the Synoptic Gospels.

- (a) MATTHEW may be left aside as being directly dependent on MARK. There are only a few minor additions made by Matthew.
- (b) LUKE must also be left aside, as his text is too uncertain to build on. Verses 19b and 20 appear to be borrowed directly from Paul. These verses are omitted in the Western text D, and many scholars accept what remains as the original text, which would thus end with the bread-word, 'This is my body' - This would give a Supper similar IN FORM to the Didache type, with the wine--bread order, and with

<sup>1</sup> BRILLIOTH, 35.

the pronounced eschatological reference of the cup. But we must, however regretfully, refrain from building on this uncertain text.

(c) We are left, therefore, with MARK and PAUL as our only independent and sure witnesses. As literary documents, these two accounts are apparently independent, yet seem to belong to the same stream of tradition. They agree in their general account of the course of the Supper, but differ much in detail. We infer that both writers had before them the same older tradition, Mark probably being content to reproduce it with a greater fidelity than could be expected from the more independent and creative mind of Paul.

(On the above, see such recent summaries as Lietzmann, *Messe und Herrenmahl*, Ch. XIII; Hunkin, Ch. I, in *The Evangelical Doctrine of Holy Communion: Brilioth, Eucharistic Faith and Practice*, 9f.)

We now proceed to the closer examination of Paul's account.

When Paul asserts that he had received his knowledge of the Supper 'from the Lord,' we understand him as asserting his independence of human authority, in the same way as he does in GAL. 1, 11.

No, brothers, I tell you that the gospel that I preach is not a human affair; no man put it into my hands, no man taught me what it meant, I had it by a revelation of Jesus Christ.

In a similar vein, Paul here claims that his knowledge of the Supper had come to him by revelation from his Lord. Now, Paul cannot mean that what was revealed to him was the account of the Last Supper in all its details. That would be a travesty of revelation as we have been taught to understand it. Besides, Paul knew the story of that Supper already, as the similarity of his account to Mark's shows. What he means must be that his revelation was to the effect that this Last Supper should be the model of the church's celebration. That is to say, the core of his revelation is contained in the words, 'Do this

in remembrance of me! Paul is our one independent NT authority for these words. May not this uniqueness be due precisely to the fact that they were mediated through a unique revelation?

In such a revelation there are inevitably things we cannot hope to understand. We can only accept Paul's assurance that he was an inspired visionary who sometimes saw things that lie beyond the range of human knowledge.<sup>1</sup> The so-called Odes of Solomon give examples of the language of visionaries. Thus, in Ode X, the Christian poet-prophet seems, in ecstasy, to lose his own individuality and to become identified with his Lord, so that he seems to feel that he is simply opening his mouth for Christ to speak through him. Thus he says: 'I was strengthened and made mighty and took the world captive.' May not some such 'translocation of personality,' as Rendel Harris<sup>2</sup> describes it, lie behind Paul's attributing to Christ the words, 'This do' - a command, the substance of which was in reality the product of his own Spirit-illuminated thought?

Johannes Weiss, in his Commentary on the passage, maintains that Paul's use of the preposition ἀπό, instead of his usual παρά, indicates that he must be thinking of Christ as the ultimate, and not the immediate source of his knowledge; in other words, that Paul is here speaking of a tradition that came to him in the usual way from men, but was to be traced back to Jesus himself, as he spoke and acted at the Last Supper. This is not convincing. The fact that Paul habitually used a certain preposition when speaking of a tradition received from men is no proof that he must have used the same preposition in reference to a revelation received from his Lord. The conditions of communication are different in the two cases. Further, would Paul have written, 'I received it of THE LORD,' if he had referred to a tradition reaching back to the earthly Jesus? Would he not at least have said, 'I received it of the Lord Jesus?' Surely the plain meaning of the words, as written by this man of visions and revelations, is that he received it direct from his exalted Lord.

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<sup>1</sup> IICOR. 12, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by HUNKER, *Evangelical Doctrine of Holy Communion*, ch. I.

We seem, therefore, obliged to conclude that the words, 'This do in remembrance of me,' were not spoken by Jesus at the Last Supper. It may have been that Jesus was then dealing solely with the immediate crisis which his death would bring to the faith of his disciples, and that his words and actions were dictated by his simple desire to root in their minds the assurance that his death, which might well seem to be the ruin of their hopes, would prove to be in reality the divinely appointed means to their fulfilment. We have strong reason to believe that this was his own faith, especially toward the end. He had 'dreamed that God could redeem the world through him, and died to make the dream come true,' as Streeter expresses it somewhere in general and untheological phrase. May he not simply have sought, through the moving symbolism of the bread and wine, to communicate this faith to the anxious disciples as they sat at table beside him?

No one can part with these words, as authentic words of Jesus, without a sense of loss. Some would feel that, with the elimination of them, a blow was being struck at a citadel of their faith. But need that be so? With these words gone from the Last Supper, we may miss the uplift of obeying an explicit command of Jesus, but our observance of the Supper need not therefore be vain. One of the surest tests of reality and value is persistence, and the Supper has persisted, in manifold forms, for 1900 years, evincing a dynamic power of lifting the spirits of men nearer to God. Further, the elimination of these words would bring the Supper into line with the profound sense which many share, that Jesus was no institutionalist, in the sense of one who stresses forms and ceremonies as being essential things. It is

felt that for him the essential things in religion were two, Revelation and Faith - the divine disclosure and the human response - and that beside faith all other human energies, or institutions, or observances are secondary; that even the Church and the Sacraments are secondary, existing only to serve faith. It is felt that the claims, often put forward for them, that they possess within themselves a 'divine right, derived, not from their utility, but from their institution by Christ,' are a declension from his spiritual conception of religion. Feeling thus, one may find that the elimination of the words, 'This do in remembrance of me' is no permanent loss to faith, but rather a gain.

So far, attention has been confined to chapter XI, and Paul's conception of the Supper has been sought from it. This, surely, is the right method. The reference to the Supper in chapter X stands on quite a different footing from that in chapter XI. In the latter, Paul is expressly seeking to correct certain abuses in the local observance. He has missed in it something essential, and so he sets down, with marked impressiveness and deliberation, what he considers to be the right method of observance, and seeks in particular to bring home to the Corinthians its essential import as a memorial of the death of Jesus. In chapter X, on the contrary, the Supper is introduced in quite an incidental way. The Supper there is no more than one of a number of instances cited to show that, when men partake of 'numinous' objects, they are brought into a fellowship involving a permanent relation to the numinous object, or to the Being who is represented by it.

<sup>1</sup> MORGAN, *Nature and Right of Religion*, 260.

It is not proposed to examine the passage in chapter X in detail. No quite satisfying explanation of it has been offered by way of reconciling its thought with the thought of Chapter XI. One cannot resist the impression that the two passages have come from parallel, but different strains of the Apostle's thought.

I would offer the following tentative suggestions.

- (1) That, at the time of writing, the Breaking-of-bread type of Supper had begun to creep in at Corinth, with its predominant conception of a fellowship meal, and its emphasis on the eating and drinking, rather than on the death-symbolism of the broken bread and the poured-out wine.<sup>α</sup>

The grounds for this hypothesis are such as these:

- (a) At 11,29, Paul seems to sum up the abuses in the phrase, 'not discerning the Lord's body': the bread they ate had become for them just bread, with no special symbolism.
- (b) At 11,26, he deliberately emphasises the fact that the Supper is a celebration of the DEATH: 'ye do show forth the Lord's death.' Would this have called for stressing, if the Last Supper had been their established model of celebration? The death-motive is plain enough there.
- (c) The difficulty of understanding the behaviour at the Corinthian table, as already indicated.<sup>β</sup>
- (d) There was a Judaising, or at least a Peter-party at Cor. who presumably ~~followed~~ <sup>knew of the</sup> Jerusalem practice, and were sympathetic to it.
- (2) That, while in Chapter XI he is definitely bidding them return to their original practice, in the previous chapter he had been content to use their present practice to point his warning against idolatry, and to accommodate his thought to theirs. At Troas, we have found Paul celebrating a breaking-of-bread Supper. According to the probable chronology, this happened soon after the writing of ICOR.XI. Evidently Paul did not quarrel with such a celebration, so long as it was worthily carried through.
- (3) It would greatly ease matters, if we could regard Chap.X as belonging to an earlier letter than Chap.XI. The situation in Chap.X would then be that Paul had not yet regarded the abuses as so bad as to demand a sharp recall to original practice. But we have no clear evidence of the two chapters belonging to different

<sup>α</sup> p.120.

<sup>β</sup> do.

letters, though the whole question of the various letters to Corinth is still an open one.<sup>1</sup>

It has been already said that the best index to Paul's fundamental conception of the Supper is to be sought in the deliberate pronouncements of chapter XI, rather than in the incidental references of chapter X. It is partly owing to failure in recognising this that writers like Heitmueller, Lake, and, in a less degree, J. Weiss are able to discover in chapter XI traces of the invasion of Paul's thought by Hellenistic mystery ideas. These can easily be read out of the language of Chap. X, but they cannot be read out of Chap. XI, unless they are first read into it. There is nothing here about the Supper being the avenue by which believers enter into mystical union with Christ, or the means by which this union is sustained. Nor is there anything about a 'real presence' of Christ in the bread or wine such that believers, partaking of them, would receive elements charged with supernatural powers. The only suggestion of such is this:

He who eats and drinks without a proper sense of the body, eats and drinks to his own condemnation. That is why many of you are ill and infirm and a number even dead.<sup>2</sup>

But these words do not stand alone. Paul at once proceeds to suggest that such sickness and death did not issue immediately from the partaking of the elements as their efficient cause, but were a consequence of the divine chastening and judgment.

If we only judged our own lives truly, we would not come under the Lord's judgment. As it is, we are chastened when we are judged by him, so that we may not be condemned along with the world.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> ICOR. 11, 29f.    <sup>3</sup> 11, 31f.    <sup>1</sup> Weiss, Urchr. 245-272.

The passage teaches in clear and positive terms that the Supper is essentially a memorial of Christ's death for men.

This do in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. - ICOR. 11, 25f.

We saw reason to think that the former of these sentences is a specifically Pauline formulation<sup>α</sup> of the Lord's intention; while the latter is, without question, entirely Pauline, since it contains Paul's own added comment. These two sentences present the Supper as being, above all else, a memorial of Christ's death, and a means of 'showing it forth.' Whether this last word is to be construed with reference to spoken words accompanying the celebration, and so 'proclaiming' the death; or with reference to the celebration being a 'setting forth' of the death in dramatic symbolism - in neither case is there evidence of anything mystical or 'sacramental.' A memorial of Christ's sacrificial death, and a means of proclaiming it - that is what, supremely, the Supper signifies for Paul.

#### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS REACHED.

The evidence points to the existence of two different types of Lord's Supper in the early church:

- (1) The primitive JERUSALEM TYPE was a fellowship-meal, which began with the simple and familiar rite of breaking the bread. It was a continuation of the disciples' table-fellowship with Jesus; and it conveyed to the participants a sense that he was present with them.
- (2) The PAULINE TYPE also took the form of a meal, which began with the ceremony of the broken bread, and ended with the partaking

<sup>α</sup> p. 128f.

of a cup of wine.<sup>β</sup> But it was not a meal of simple table-fellowship. It claimed to be a continuation and reproduction, not of the frequent religious meals that Jesus had shared with his disciples, but of the one Last Supper on the eve of his death. The bread and the wine were now symbols of his broken body and shed blood; and the celebration, as a whole, was a memorial of his sacrificial death.

A priori, there are three possible relations between these two types.

(a) Concurrently with the Jerusalem type there may have been, from the first, another type, perhaps with bread only, but with the added words, 'This is my body.' If so, this would be the prototype of the later Pauline form.

But there is no evidence for this, unless we accept the short text of Luke as pointing in this direction. Apart from this doubtful index, the available evidence leads to the conclusion that Paul's type originated in the Gentile Church, while the other had its origin and later career in the Jewish-Christian church, or in regions, like Egypt, where Paul's influence did not prevail. Also, we may well question whether a celebration of the death would have been in accord with the primitive feeling that the death was a dark perplexity; at the best, a defeat gloriously annulled by the resurrection. The evidence suggests that, at first, they believed, not because of the death, but in spite of it.<sup>1, α.</sup>

(b) Paul's type may have been a direct development from the Jerusalem type, motivated by the expanding liturgical needs and sympathies of

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<sup>1</sup> WEISS, Urchr. 75-85.

<sup>α</sup> p. 119.

<sup>β</sup> p. 140.

churches that came increasingly under the influence of Hellenistic conceptions of a dying Saviour-god, borrowed from the Oriental cults.

We need not expound this theory. It is known as the hypothesis of aetiological cult-legends.<sup>α</sup> We may accept Lietzmann's matured pronouncement, that there is a wide gulf separating the liturgical conceptions of bread broken for use at a fellowship-meal, and, on the other hand, of the Broken Bread, as representing the body of Christ broken in death; and this gulf, he holds, is so wide that no stretch of the historian's imagination, working along the lines of liturgical development, has yet come near to bridging it.<sup>1</sup>

- (c) We are left, therefore, with the third alternative that the words, 'This is my body,' constitute an element which has not come into being through some process of liturgical development, but is an independent and original factor, with a basis in history. That is to say, the evidence we have gathered from sources other than the Gospels, regarding the Lord's Supper of the early church, DEMANDS a historical Last Supper, substantially as described by the Gospels.

On the other hand, the evidence points to this Last Supper as NOT having been expressly ordained by Jesus to be the basis and model of a rite to be observed by the Church after his death. It points to our Lord having spoken and acted at the Last Supper, primarily, perhaps wholly, with a view to meet the immediate need

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<sup>1</sup> LIETZMANN, 253.

<sup>α</sup> p.139.

of the disciples in the impending crisis of their faith, and not with any purpose of instituting a rite. That is to say, the words, 'This do in remembrance of me,' were not spoken by Jesus at the Last Supper. The independent account of Mark is accepted in substance as it stands, with this proviso that when it was first written down, in the early days of the Church, the purpose of the writer was to describe what happened on that moving and memorable occasion, and not to explain the origin of a rite which was now being celebrated by the Church.<sup>α</sup>

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Note on BRILIOTH'S 'Eucharistic Faith and Practice.'

This valuable book did not come into my hands till the above had been drafted. Brilioth says of Lietzmann that 'both his distinction of the two original types of the primitive eucharistic idea and his vindication of the reliability of the Marcan account are results of permanent value, and must be the starting-points of future investigations of the problem.'<sup>1</sup> On the other hand he challenges the conclusion that it was Paul who was responsible for the eucharist being attached to the Last Supper, as its basis and model. His ground of challenge is this:

'It is not easy to see how such a view (as Lietzmann's) can be reconciled with the contention that the Marcan account is independent of the Pauline, and in the main a trustworthy record of what happened at the Last Supper. It is to me simply inconceivable that this story of the Last Supper should have been narrated without any reference to the sacred meal of the Christian community.<sup>2</sup> --- If it can be regarded as certain that at least the Marcan account is independent of the Pauline and more original, what can that Marcan account contain but the belief of the early Palestinian church about the origin of their eucharist?<sup>3</sup> --- It is hardly conceivable that the accounts of the institution should have been preserved and

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<sup>1</sup> p. 7.    <sup>2</sup> p. 7.    <sup>3</sup> p. 11.    <sup>α</sup> p. 138.

written down, unless they had been regarded as describing the origin and the pattern of the regular religious meal of the Christian Church.' - p.12.

This is the one argument against Lietzmann's position. Surely it is inadequate. Why should it be 'simply inconceivable that the story of the Last Supper should have been narrated without any reference to the sacred meal of the Christian community'? Is it not conceivable, for instance, that at the Last Supper Jesus succeeded in planting in his disciples' minds a way of looking at his death, which, when the blow fell, kept their faith from falling to pieces, and led them forward to the resurrection experiences - which, on no reasonable hypothesis could have happened to faithless men? If this was so, then his words and actions at the last Supper meant nothing less than the saving of their souls, and, so far as we can see, the saving of the cause. Surely a sufficient reason for their being recorded. Does not the Last Supper become an even greater and more decisive event, viewed in some such light as this, than when it is viewed primarily as the institution of a memorial rite for the after-Church?<sup>α</sup>

On the other hand, Brilioth is in agreement with Lietzmann in recognising 'a polarity, or dualism, between two types in the primitive eucharist,' and says, 'this seems to me to be one of the most valuable positive results of Lietzmann's investigations.'<sup>2</sup> But Brilioth's reconstruction of the early eucharistic situation is not clear. Thus, in closing the discussion, he speaks of these two types, the Jewish meal of table-fellowship and the memorial of the death, and says:

'We may say that the memorial of the Lord's death would be, as it were, an intense focus of religious warmth within the wider circle of the common meal. At first it may have only been the possession of a very small group. But it had in it that intensity which is the motive power of all religious development. --- If this be right, the development for which Paul was responsible involved actually no radical change, but only a deepened apprehension of the relation of the death of Jesus and the eucharist, and the introduction into

<sup>1</sup> WEISS, Urchr. Ch. II, sec. 5.

<sup>2</sup> p. 23.

<sup>α</sup> p. 130.

every supper of the religious focussing-point of the memorial of his death.' - p.13.

Surely this view is closely akin to Lietzmann's. Strictly speaking, it implies - especially the words I have underlined - that Jesus cannot have instituted the Lord's Supper as a commanded rite. If he had done so, his disciples would have observed his injunction; and not only 'a very small group' of them, but, we may be certain, every one who belonged to that very compact community. It is just here that the real crux lies for our traditional view that at the Last Supper Jesus instituted the Church's eucharist. If he did so, why was his command, or his desire, not observed from the first? Why is it that for the first twenty years of the Church's existence we have no evidence to show that the rite was celebrated as a memorial of the death of Jesus? And why does Paul introduce the first notice we have of such a Supper, in a fashion which most definitely suggests, that what follows is something more than a mere codification of an accepted and universal practice?

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Perhaps it is worth noting, as a merit of Lietzmann's view, that it surmounts the very real difficulties attaching to each of the two types of critical theory which the investigations of last century produced. These two types were acutely summarised by Schweitzer, Das Abendmahl in Zusammenhang mit dem Leben Jesu und der Geschichte des Urchristentums. 1901. Brillioth(p.3) describes these two types of theory thus - and surely there is significance in the fact that the two types of theory correspond, in general, with the two types of Supper we have found actually existing.

- (a) Views which emphasise the memorial aspect - the act of Jesus at the Last Supper regarded as a symbolical action setting forth his passion.
- (b) Views which emphasise the reception of the bread and wine by the communicants.

The former tend regularly to the acceptance of the records of the institution as authentic, BUT do not succeed in explaining how and why the act came to be repeated in the eucharist of the Church. The latter views explain this readily, BUT find difficulty with the historical situation in the night he was betrayed, and they end in rejecting the accounts as aetiological cult-legends.<sup>α</sup>

Lietzmann's view surmounts both of these 'buts'. It explains the origin of the Supper as a simple continuation of the former table-

<sup>α</sup> p.136.

fellowship with Jesus. Further, it has no difficulty in accepting as substantially reliable the Gospel records of the Last Supper.<sup>α</sup> Finally, it finds in these records the model and basis of the memorial rite which the Church adopted IN THE END, once she had learned to regard the Death, not as a perplexing problem, but as a glorious victory.<sup>β</sup>

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C. Subsequent development.

The JERUSALEM TYPE did not have an extended history. North of the Mediterranean, the Pauline type seems to have carried the day decisively; while the other type shared the declining fortunes of the Jewish-Christian church. Only in Egypt and Ethiopia - regions where Paul's writ did not run<sup>α</sup> - *till later* does it appear to have flourished. We have traces of its influence in the Liturgy of Serapion (c. 350 A.D.). There we seem to see a Breaking-of-bread type of Supper in process of being penetrated and transformed by the influences of the dominant Pauline type. The Pauline words of institution are introduced, but only in a secondary and incidental way, as evidence that the bread and wine stand for the body and blood of Christ. In the Pauline type the words of institution were central and determinative.

The PAULINE TYPE. - In the Supper as *enjoined by Paul* ~~enjoined~~ at Corinth, it is well-nigh certain that the order was - Bread: Meal-proper: Cup.<sup>3</sup> But in ICOR. 11, Paul's mind is evidently already working towards a distinction between the bread and wine, as representing the body and blood of Christ, and the bread and wine, as consumed by way of food. He says, for instance, that if people wish a good meal, they should take it at home.<sup>2</sup> It is all rather vague and indeterminate, but his

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<sup>1</sup> LIETZMANN, Ch. XI.

<sup>2</sup> v. 22.

<sup>α</sup> p. 136.

<sup>3</sup> Lietzmann, 231.

<sup>β</sup> p. 135

mind seems already on the way to a differentiation between the ritual part of the Supper and the 'profane' part. Anyhow, this was what took place. First of all the cup was transferred from the end of the meal to its beginning, and so followed the bread immediately. This gave a unified and compact rite, standing out by itself at the commencement of the meal. The next step would be that only one prayer would be offered, instead of the two hitherto required for the separately-placed bread and wine. It could only be after this unification of the prayers that the custom would arise of calling this prayer 'the eucharist.'

note. Εὐχαριστεῖν and its noun are used in the NT to express the 'giving of thanks': in general - frequently: for food in particular - at the feedings of the multitude, at the Last Supper and at Emmaus, by Paul on board ship, and ROM. 14, 6; 1 TIM. 4, 3f.

In second-century writers, 'eucharist' becomes the regular name for the rite. Ignatius commonly describes it so. Justin uses the word in his accounts of the communion of the newly-baptised in Apol. 65, and of the regular Sunday service in 67, for the thanksgiving over the offered gifts. In Ch. 66, the rite itself is called the 'eucharist.'

From the third century onwards, the Greek Fathers use the word, no longer of the whole service, but only of the eucharistic prayer or else of the sacred elements. - BRILLIOTH<sup>1.20</sup>

It was now only a matter of time and circumstance for the final and decisive stage to be reached - the separation of the rite from the supper-meal, and its union with the 'Service of the Word.' First, we may assume, the prayer would grow in substance and length, thus adding impressiveness to the rite and emphasis to its separateness. Then there came the time when, especially in larger centres, the church buildings could not accommodate their growing membership,

spread out round tables at a common meal. To meet this difficulty, it would appear that the expedient of sectional meals was tried. At least, this seems to be the occasion for some of the admonitions of Ignatius against disunion and lack of deference to authority. Anyhow, behind his words we can sense a situation of strain and friction and incipient confusion, such as mark a time of transition.<sup>1</sup> About the year 150, we reach solid ground. From Justin's clear account we learn that, in Rome at least, the separation of eucharist and meal was, by that time, complete. The Morning-service he describes is one at which the eucharist was celebrated, following on the Service of the Word. In different localities this fusion would take place at different periods of time; but probably the second century witnessed the general adoption of this decisive step, which fixed the framework of the Christian Church-service, and 'produced the classical type of eucharistic liturgy.'<sup>2: 3: α.</sup>

~~THE AGAPE. What became of the meal after its separation from the eucharistic rite? It continued to be held in the evening, and was now commonly known as the 'Agape.' As a rule, the developed eucharistic rite was discontinued at the meal, and in place of it there reappeared the old custom of the blessing and breaking of bread. We learn this from the Liturgy of Hippolytus and a group of Liturgies dependent on it, which contain, in addition to the eucharistic ritual, rituals for the Agape as observed about the year 200; and although these rituals differ in detail, they present one fairly constant factor, the breaking of bread after the primitive fashion of Jerusalem.<sup>4</sup> In some regions,~~

<sup>1</sup> Smy. 8: Mag. 7: IClem. 40.

<sup>2</sup> BRILIOTH, 25.

<sup>3</sup> On whole, LIETZMANN, XVII.

<sup>4</sup> do. XII.

<sup>α</sup> p. 44.

## THE AGAPE.

The Agape. - What became of the meal after its separation from the Eucharistic rite? It continued to be held in the evening - the Eucharist being now celebrated generally in the morning - and was now commonly known as the Agape, or 'Love-Feast'. As a rule, the developed eucharistic rite was discontinued at the meal, and in place of it there reappeared the old, simple custom of blessing and breaking the bread. We learn this from the Liturgy of Hippolytus, and a group of Liturgies dependent on it, which contain, in addition to the eucharistic ritual, rituals for the Agape as it was observed about the year 200 A.D.; and although these rituals differ in detail, they present one fairly constant factor, namely, the Breaking of bread after the primitive fashion of Jerusalem.<sup>1</sup> In some regions, of which Africa was one, the evening meal, though separated from the eucharistic celebration in the morning, seems to have retained its dignity as a real eucharistic Supper, and began with the full rite. However, the history of the Agape, as a celebration distinct from the Lord's Supper, lies almost wholly outside our New Testament period, and cannot be pursued here.

The word Agape is not found in the New Testament in connection with the Lord's Supper till we reach the book of Jude; and that is the one, and only sure mention of it in Scripture. It occurs again in some Manuscripts in II Peter, 2,13; but scholars incline to regard it there as a corruption of another word, though Lightfoot and Elze support the reading, Agape.<sup>3</sup> Jude introduces the word in connection with some supra-spiritual sect who inclined to be superior to certain moral laws:

These men are stains on your Love-feasts; they have no qualms about carousing in your midst; they look after none but themselves.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lietzmann, op.cit., XII.

<sup>2</sup> v. 12.

<sup>3</sup> i.e. ἀγάπης v. ἀπάτης

Jude's words offer a striking parallel to the abuses in the Corinthian Supper. Ignatius is the first writer to use the term Agapê freely.<sup>1</sup> In the first two of the passages cited (at the foot of this page), the reference is clearly to the Eucharist. In the third passage Ignatius writes: "it is not lawful either to baptise or to hold an Agapê without the bishop". As Lightfoot points out, Agapê must here again designate the Eucharist, since Ignatius is apparently referring to the two most important functions in which the Bishop could take part, and it would have been incongruous, in such a connection, to link Baptism with any lesser rite than the Eucharist itself.<sup>2</sup> Lightfoot finds no indication in Ignatius that the Agapê and the Eucharist had yet become separated. It is evident, therefore, that Ignatius uses Agapê to designate the same celebration as Paul designated by the term Lord's Supper. Referring to the Didachê eucharistic service, which was nearly contemporaneous with Ignatius, Brilioth says: "That the occasion is a Christian form of the Jewish common meal, a single act which is at once eucharist and agapê, may now be regarded as certain".<sup>3</sup>

There is no evidence, either in the New Testament or in the literature immediately following it, to support the view that the Agapê and the Eucharist were, from the first, in some fashion separate things. All our evidence indicates that, if Agapê and Eucharist were terms employed at all during the first century in this connection, then they were employed simply as interchangeable designations for the whole celebration which Paul designated as the Lord's Supper. Much needless confusion appears to have arisen from the assumption (for it is nothing more) that

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<sup>1</sup> Eph. 20: Rom. 7: Smy. 8.      <sup>2</sup> Apostolic Fathers, II, II, 1, 312f.      <sup>3</sup> op. cit. p19.

Agapê and Eucharist were somehow separate things from the first, as in fact they did become separate later on. Probably the simple reason underlying this assumption is the unreadiness of our Western minds to grasp the fact that a meal was a sacred thing to a Jew, and that the whole Lord's Supper, with its ritual ceremonies and its meal-proper, was, in the early days, a compact unity, one single, sacred celebration. It is very natural for us to distinguish between the sacred, ritual part of the Lord's Supper, and the more 'profane' meal-proper; but it is wholly unhistorical to carry back this modern distinction, and impose it upon the Lord's Supper, as it was celebrated up to, and even beyond Paul's time.

We have no evidence to show that the designation Agapê was used before or during Paul's time; but it may have been, since the word gave fitting expression to one prominent aspect of the Lord's Supper, namely, its warm spirit of brotherly affection and benevolence. Tertullian suggests that this was the origin of the name: it connoted love in action. But if the word was at all freely used in New Testament times, and before the definite separation of the rite from the meal, then it was used to designate the same thing as Paul designated by The Lord's Supper.

When the separation did take place, and the meal was held by itself in the evening, it very naturally fell sole heir to the name which had derived its origin from the warm fellowships of the whole celebration. As already indicated, the history of the Agapê, as a separate celebration, lies beyond our period; but it may be said, in general, that with the passing of the generations, the Agapê tended to degenerate, till it became a kind of charity-supper. After a few centuries, it vanished altogether.

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<sup>1</sup> APOL. 39, 16. On the Agapê, see Oosterley, op.cit., Ch. VIII: Lichtmann, op.cit., Ch. XII. McLean, in Heating E.R.E. art. Agapê

~~when it was large enough, but later seems to have taken refuge in private houses, where the host provided the meal. In regions of persecution, it enjoyed a renewal of life. Gradually it declined, and, after a century or two, vanished altogether.~~

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#### D. The Eucharistic Prayer.

There is no example in the NT of a eucharistic prayer, so we can only infer from later specimens what its nature was. Of one thing we can be certain. It was predominantly a prayer of thanksgiving. The earliest complete example of such a prayer is in the Liturgy of Hippolytus (c.200). 'That this document really represents the use of the Roman church in the early third century may be regarded as established by the independent researches of Dom Connolly and E. Schwartz.'<sup>1</sup>

The eucharistic prayer<sup>2</sup> is as follows:

'We give thanks to thee, O God, through thy beloved <sup>Child</sup> ~~son~~, Jesus Christ, whom in these latter days Thou didst send to be our saviour and redeemer and the messenger of Thy will -----' Then the sentence continues, touching on his incarnation, his obedience, his establishing the Church and his suffering on the cross; then, still maintaining the relative clause, it touches on his triumph over death and the devil, and his revealing of immortality, and then proceeds to relate how, on the eve of accomplishing this, he 'took bread'; then follow the words of institution, compounded from Matthew and Paul. Then: 'Remembering therefore his death and resurrection, we offer to Thee ~~the~~ bread and ~~the~~ wine, giving Thee thanks for that Thou hast deemed us worthy to stand before Thee and worship Thee. And we pray Thee to send down Thy Holy Spirit

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<sup>1</sup> BRILIOTH, 20.      <sup>2</sup> Text, see Lietzmann, <sup>op.cit.</sup> 175.

upon the sacrifice of ~~Thy~~<sup>the</sup> holy Church ---' that all may be filled with it and have their faith strengthened, 'that we may praise and glorify Thee, through Thy ~~Son~~<sup>Child</sup> Jesus Christ, through whom, to Thee ---'.

- (1). This is entirely a prayer of praise and thanks. Petition is restricted to a request for the gift of the Holy Spirit upon the worshipers and their offering, and even this is to the end that 'we may praise and glorify Thee through Thy Son'. The thanksgiving motive dominates the prayer throughout.
- (2) The prayer is distinctively Christian. Its theme is the salvation wrought by Christ. There are no such elements borrowed from the Jewish worship as appear in the prayer of the Clementine Liturgy in the Apostolical Constitutions. Not even is the Sanctus<sup>α</sup> present - that almost universal element in the Liturgies. It had, as we know from ICLEM. 35, already found a place in Christian worship. Justin<sup>1</sup> is familiar with a eucharistic prayer in which thanks is offered to God that He has 'made the world and all that therein is for man's sake, and has delivered us from our inborn evil', which is evidently a prayer into which have been incorporated elements derived from the synagogue worship. But Justin makes no reference to the presence of the Sanctus; not even in Apol. 165, 3, where we would naturally expect it. This, along with the evidence from Hippolytus, makes it likely that in NT times the Sanctus did not appear in the prayer at the Lord's Supper. This is Lietzmann's<sup>2</sup> view. Brillioth<sup>3</sup> thinks that Lietzmann overstates the case for the late introduction of the Sanctus, and believes it must have been already present by the time when the framework of the

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<sup>1</sup> Dial. 41.    <sup>2</sup> Lietzmann, 259.    <sup>3</sup> p. 21.    <sup>α</sup> p. 29.

service first became fixed, 'a time perhaps not much later than the end of the first century.' This would almost exclude it in NT times. Serapion's Anaphora is the earliest complete text in which the Sanctus appears.

(3) The thanksgiving takes the form of what we might call a HYMN OF PRAISE TO CHRIST addressed to God. This feature will occupy our attention to the end of this section. These christological hymns emerge in other Liturgies, and in the NT we have a few examples, written in that rhythmic prose which marks Christian prayer at its best, and which appears in the prayer-like exordia of some of Paul's letters. The most notable example of such a Christ-hymn is in PHIL. 2, 5-11. Lohmeyer<sup>1</sup> has demonstrated that it is a work of high and polished art, articulated in six strophes of three lines each; the first three strophes presenting the Humiliation of Christ, and the last three his exaltation. What we note specially now is the OBJECTIVITY of its sweep of thought. Not once does it move into the sphere of the human-subjective. From first to last its sweep is cosmic; God, the World, Christ, are its themes, and what God has done for the world through the humiliation of Christ. Steadily the gaze remains fixed upon this mighty drama of salvation, as it unfolds itself, stage by stage. But although this sustained objectivity is perhaps nowhere so arresting as here in the NT, yet there is hardly a page where we may not sense it as the dominant habit of early Christian thought.<sup>α</sup> Always it is some objective act or work of God that is the final resting-place of faith and contemplation. And inevitably this habit of thought was reflected in the worship. We have seen that the prayer of

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<sup>1</sup> Kyrios Jesus, I. <sup>α</sup> p. 6, etc.

Hippolytus was consistently objective. So also is the longer prayer of the Apostolical Constitutions. Both of these owe much of their weight and strength to the solid masses of objective fact out of which they are built. Sentence by sentence, phrase by phrase, they present some fresh facet of God's redeeming work; and as the adoring gaze passes from point to point of the great structure, the thanksgiving pours forth.

Note. Brilioth thinks it 'probable that the forms of worship in the Pauline churches were much more Jewish than that of Hippolytus - so far as real forms can have existed in a time of prophetic ecstasies and charismatic freedom.'<sup>2</sup> This may be so. It is not conceivable, however, that in the period of enthusiasm there could have been any of that Jewish enlarging on God's works in creation and His deeds in the history of Israel, such as is found in the prayer in the Apostolical Constitutions. Once the enthusiasm waned, and the conduct of worship became the task of a few officials, such Jewish forms of prayer would increasingly creep in.<sup>β</sup> And it was well that it was so, and that the thanksgiving for Christ should come to be set within this larger framework of history. 'Had the cross been commemorated as an isolated fact, it would have been in danger of losing its moorings in history,<sup>3</sup> and drifting into the vague timelessness of a mystery-myth.' That seems true. But in the early days, when the cross was still a recent memory, this particular danger was not imminent; the fact of the death was then, in itself, sufficient anchorage.<sup>α</sup>

Primarily, the fervent thanksgiving was the spontaneous outpouring of hearts deeply moved. It was the outcome of the 'ache <sup>in</sup> of the loving heart <sup>in</sup> til<sup>4</sup> it has uttered its gratitude.' Intense joy and thankfulness express themselves as naturally in prayer, as does the sense of crying need. But in early Christian thanksgiving, we find something

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1 LIETZMANN, 125ff. 2 p. 24. 3 p. 280. 4 WELCH, Religion of <sup>Israel under the Kingdom,</sup> ~~the Prophets~~, 128  
<sup>α</sup> p. 195. <sup>β</sup> p. 49.

deeper than this. Thanksgiving stands on a quite different level from petition and confession. With Paul, thanksgiving is never just one among the exercises of faith, but the ultimate basis and the final goal of all faith. For thanksgiving is itself a work of the Holy Spirit, and is the inevitable human response to the grace of God. It is the prevailing mood of the truly Christian life. It is not possible to be a Christian, aware of the grace of God, and not give thanks. 'The more grace abounds, the more thanksgiving will rise and redound to the glory of God.' Speaking of a collection of money for the poor saints, Paul says, 'the service rendered by this fund does more than supply the wants of the saints, it overflows with many a cry of thanks to God.' Paul could have described his own life-work as being just the task of awakening the echoes of thanksgiving in the whole world; so close was thanksgiving bound up with the essence of his religion.

In all this, Paul was not expressing thoughts peculiar to himself, as is evident from the prevalence of the conception of thanksgiving-prayer as being the most PERFECT SACRIFICE that man can offer to God. The OT has the idea, as in Hosea's 'calves of the lips,' and the Psalmist's 'freewill offerings of my mouth.' We find it in Hebrews, 'and by him let us constantly offer praise to God as our sacrifice, that is the fruit of lips that celebrate his name.' In the book of the Revelation, incense is the prayers of the saints. Justin carries on the tradition: 'also I say that the prayers and thanksgivings directed to God by the righteous are the only perfect sacrifices

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LOHMEYER, Colossians, 1, 12. IICOR. 4, 15. 9, 11f. 13, 15. 8, 3f. Dial. 117.

p. 96.

wellpleasing to God! Praise and thanks are true 'divine service'.  
 Something is DONE in public worship. 'The central thing in worship  
 is objective, not subjective. In worship we do not only receive, but  
 primarily we give. Worship is offering! It is offering, not with a  
 purpose of propitiating God or changing His will, but as the simple,  
 solemn, joyous, spontaneous presentation to God of the Spirit-  
 quickened consciousness of the worshiping people, as, in adoring  
 wonder, they gaze out upon the redemptive work of God in Christ.  
 Dibelius,<sup>3</sup> commenting on ITHESS.1,9, speaks of thanksgiving as a  
 'giving back to God of the grace that has come from Him!'

Note The question of the eucharist being a sacrifice in any  
 sense except the above does not arise within our NT sphere.  
 'Harnack's statement that till Cyprian's time, there is no  
 idea of a sacrifice except that of praise and prayer seems  
 to be generally accepted, even by some Roman Catholic writers,  
 such as Renz and Wieland, at least as regards the period  
 before Irenaeus' - BRILIOTH, p.44.

There is a connection to be traced between the three things -  
 Thanksgiving Prayer, Praise of Christ, Credal Confession.

One cannot read the Te Deum alongside the eucharistic prayers of the  
 Liturgies, without recognising that it has issued from the same mint  
 of thought as they. Its kinship with the great prayer of the CApVIII  
 Clementine Liturgy is obvious. On the other hand, its kinship with  
 the Apostles' creed has often been remarked.

The Te Deum is a splendid illustration of the truth that  
 a real confession of faith ought to be sung, and as such it  
 has been on the lips of the Church ever since it was composed.<sup>2</sup>  
 Luther, who ranked it only third to the Apostles' Creed and

<sup>1</sup> SIMPSON, Ideas in Corporate Worship, 23.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps, c. 400 A.D.

<sup>3</sup> Handbuch zum NT.

p.55.

p.III.

the Nicene Creed, enthusiastically praised it as 'a fine symbol or confession, not only for confessing the right faith, but also for praising and thanking God withal.'

The truth of the matter probably is that the hymn-like praise of Christ in prayer, but more especially in the eucharistic prayer, supplied the seeds from which the creeds grew. Thus, ITIM. 3, 16, reads:

And who does not admit how profound is the divine truth of our religion? ~~It is He who was~~

~~"manifest in the flesh,  
vindicated by the Spirit,  
seen by the angels,  
preached among the nations,  
believed on throughout the world,  
taken up to glory."~~

*He who was  
"manifested in flesh,  
vindicated in spirit  
seen by angels,  
preached among Gentile,  
believed on in the world,  
taken up in glory."*

The inverted commas are Moffatt's. Here again we seem to have a christological hymn<sup>2</sup>, which may well have been chiseled<sup>1</sup> into shape through use in the eucharistic praise of Christ, and which, on the other hand, has obvious credal affinities. If our surmise is correct that the earliest credal statements grew out of the praise of Christ in prayer, then we have another sidelight upon the character of these prayers. They were not products of ecstasy or of highly-strung emotion; where such impulses were present, they were held in leash by the eucharistic habit of contemplating God's work of redemption as a great objective reality. The eucharistic prayer even in the days of the enthusiasm was, we may feel certain, one that drew its inspiration, not so much from the exalted mood of the moment as from the assured knowledge of accomplished facts, and the habitual contemplation of these. Hence the massive simplicity, in thought and diction, of many of the eucharistic prayers in the Liturgies; and we

<sup>1</sup> MOFFATT, Handbook to the Church Hymnary, 241.

<sup>2</sup> p. 6, etc.

<sup>2</sup> {Lietzmann, 179.  
{Lohmeyer, Kyr. Jesu, 63.

may feel confident that the seeds of these characteristics were in the eucharistic prayers from the first.

We infer, therefore, that the early eucharistic prayers, at least in Paul's type of Lord's Supper, were (a) prayers of thanksgiving, almost exclusively; (b) prayers with distinctively Christian content predominating, by reason of the prominence of the praise of Christ; (c) objective prayers, controlled, not by ecstasy or emotionalism, but by the mood of contemplative adoration.

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"The Communion Service should indeed be the greatest of all Services. It should be encompassed with dignity and with solemnity, and men should take part in it only with penitence and the broken heart with which the Lord is well pleased. But we believe in the forgiveness of sin, and the Gospel is the gladdest of revelations, and the Lord Jesus Christ is the King of Glory. He is to be adored, He is to be sung to, and we must learn to rejoice in Him. It was a wise liturgical instinct which led the Fathers and Teachers of our Scottish Communion Office to close the great offering of its worship with this great Eucharistic hymn:

O thou my soul, bless God the Lord;  
And all that in me is  
Be stirred up His Holy Name  
To magnify and bless.

Bless, O my soul, the Lord thy God,  
And not forgetful be  
Of all His gracious benefits  
He hath bestowed on thee." <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> SIMPSON, *op.cit.*, 38.

## BAPTISM.

### A. Historical Antecedents.

In ancient literatures, worshipers are frequently enjoined to approach the gods, only after contrition of heart and cleansing of body, with a clean heart and a clean body, and even with clean clothing.

In the more PRIMITIVE FAITHS, certain persons or objects were looked upon as charged with some noxious magic potency or evil spirit, and were regarded as 'tabu.' Contact with such brought defilement, which needed a lustral bath to wash it away. The water was supposed to absorb the defilement, or draw out the evil spirit.

In the LEVITICAL CODE of the OT, a higher stage is reached. The notion of tabu is superseded by that of ceremonial defilement. The water is no longer regarded as having magic efficacy, and the virtue of the rite rests solely upon its being commanded by God.

The Jews regarded their sacred rites as divine commands, elements in a covenant of God of which they were the subjects. They were circumcised because it was so commanded, that they might remain within the covenant into which as Jews they were born. They offered sacrifices, because these were the divinely appointed means for maintaining and renewing their good relations with Jehovah. But they did not regard their rites as instruments of spiritual grace. - GORE, The Holy Spirit and the Church, 92.

This means that, for the Jews, no material thing was <sup>an actual</sup> ~~IN ITSELF~~ a vehicle of spiritual grace. There is no evidence in Jewish literature that lustral washings were supposed to remove moral stains.

In OT PROPHECY, a still higher stage appears. With the great prophets, the rites have ceased to have importance, and the ritual

vocabulary can now be used in prophetic exhortations as supplying metaphors of moral cleansing.<sup>1</sup> It may have been this metaphorical or symbolic language that suggested to John the Baptist the adoption of his rite of baptism with a moral significance attached to it. It was a 'baptism of repentance unto the remission of sins.' It was a symbol of adherence to the company of those who waited for the Kingdom of God.

It may be accepted as certain that the Christian rite was not instituted by Jesus. The command to baptise appears only in MATT. 28, 19, which, with its Trinitarian formula, bears the marks of being a later ecclesiastical addition. In JOHN, 4, 1f, we are told that Jesus did not baptise, but that his disciples did so. The writer must here mean the rite as practised by the Baptist, for he clearly distinguishes Christian Baptism as ministering the gift of the Spirit, and that was a post-resurrection experience. On the other hand, Jesus was himself baptised; as also were some of his disciples.

The closest analogy to Christian baptism among the Jewish rites was the practice of baptising proselytes. But the Christian rite cannot have been based on this. For the Jewish rite was designed for Gentiles, to cleanse them from the defilements of contact with their pagan gods and practices, and it is inconceivable that Jews, who formed the bulk of the early converts to Christianity, would have submitted to a rite which equated them with Gentiles.

No one knows how baptism came to be adopted by the Church. Perhaps the most probable explanation is that it was under the immediate

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<sup>1</sup> IS. 1, 16. PS. 51, 7.

influence and example of the Baptist. With him, it had been a symbol of repentance and forgiveness, the outward seal of an inner amendment. That it meant no more than this is indicated by the fact that he emphasises, not the efficacy of the rite, but the obligation to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance; and by the further fact that he contrasts his baptism with the more efficacious Spirit-baptism which his successor will dispense.

At what time the rite was first adopted, we cannot confidently say; but it must have been introduced very early, if indeed it was not practised from the time of Pentecost. Both Paul and the writer of Acts associate it closely with the gift of the Spirit, which was the indispensable proof of adoption into the household of God. Almost everywhere, baptism is associated with this fundamental Christian experience; and it is probable that the story of Pentecost, in which there is this association, is substantially authentic, whatever legendary elements may have become attached to it. In any case, the rite was adopted early. Paul submitted himself to it, as a matter of course; he assumes its universal use; it is referred to in the NT as if it had always been valid; it forms part of the 'elements of Christian doctrine.'<sup>1</sup>

As to the form which the early rite took, we know little. Normally it was administered to adults only. Occasionally a whole household were baptised.<sup>2</sup> Usually, the method was by immersion in running water or in a pool, or by pouring water on the head.<sup>3</sup>

B. W. BACON, in 'The Story of Jesus,' makes a useful suggestion. He shows<sup>4</sup> that the synoptic narratives of the Baptism and Temptation of

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<sup>1</sup> HEB. 6, 1.      <sup>2</sup> AC. 16, 33.      <sup>3</sup> DIDACHE, VII.      <sup>4</sup> Ch. IV.

Jesus are written in the typical style of Jewish Midrash - the popular teaching of the synagogue, the 'poetry of the Talmud.' Vision and voice from heaven are conventional Jewish methods of expressing what is unseen or imperceptible to eye or ear. In similar fashion, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel had narrated their call. Origen is quoted as rebuking Celsus for his folly in treating the poetic symbolism of the synoptic narratives as if they were bare literal fact; and regret is expressed that we have so few scholars to-day, content, like Origen, 'not to translate oriental poetry into bald, matter-of-fact western prose.' Having thus secured the synoptic narratives as valid records of spiritual experience, Bacon proceeds<sup>1</sup> to deal with 'S,' the Source from which is drawn the Q material, common to the first and third Gospels; and he shows that, according to this Source, Jesus regarded his own movement as a continuation of John's, and submitted to John's baptism, not as to a half-meaningless rite, 'to fulfil all righteousness,'<sup>2</sup> but as being a consecration of himself to the cause of God's coming Kingdom. His baptism meant more to Jesus than it did to John. He infused into it his own spirit of self-dedication, unto death if need be. Now, if baptism already meant this to Jesus, then, even though he did not institute it as a rite, he had prepared the way for his followers to find in it those larger meanings which left John's baptism far behind.

#### B. The Christian Significance.

John's baptism had been a baptism of REPENTANCE AND REMISSION OF

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<sup>1</sup> Ch. V.      <sup>2</sup> MATT. 3, 15.

SINS, and this original and fundamental note is carried over into the Christian rite. This significance is explicitly attached to it by the book of ACTS.<sup>1</sup> It was the symbol of break with the evil past; the outward seal of an inner conversion, and of the forgiveness of sins. There were, however, superimposed upon this foundation certain distinctively Christian interpretations.

I. Baptism implied a confession of faith in Christ, and a dedication of the life to him.

Saul was baptised, 'calling upon the name of the Lord.'<sup>2</sup> 'Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'<sup>3</sup> Paul describes baptism as 'baptism in', or, 'into the name of the Lord', using each of three prepositions, but without any difference of meaning. We infer from these, and other indications, that at baptism, the name of Jesus was invoked, or pronounced, by the convert. Further, JAMES<sup>4</sup> utters a warning against the rich who 'blaspheme the honourable name called over you'. This suggests that the name of the Lord was 'called upon', not only by the convert, but also by the dispenser of the rite.

What is the significance of this CALLING UPON THE NAME OF THE LORD? It is held by many that the explanation is to be sought from ancient mystical ideas about a person's name being part of his personality, in such a real way that knowledge of his name gave one power over him. Thus, one had only to pronounce the name of a god to have his power at one's disposal. Such conceptions, if applied strictly to the Christian case, would mean that the name of Christ acted as a

<sup>1</sup> 2, 38: 22, 16.      <sup>2</sup> AC. 22, 16.      <sup>3</sup> ROM. 10, 13.      <sup>4</sup> 2, 7.

kind of spell, bringing his power down upon the convert. Other ancient ideas associated with the utterance of the God's name were to the effect that this act was a declaration of the god's property in the worshiper; the utterance of the name stamped him as belonging to the god, in some such way as did the tattooing of a god's name on the body of his devotee. The most distinguished exponent of this theory is Heitmüller, 'Im Namen Jesu,' 'Taufe und Abendmahl bei Paulus.' It would seem that there is not yet sufficient knowledge available, to enable scholars to pronounce clearly on it. Some things, however, may be said.

(1). We must demur to the suggestion that Paul, or Peter, or the early Christians in general, thought of the name of Jesus as acting as a spell. There is no evidence of this. The calling upon the name was not the most important factor in the rite. Paul could speak of baptism without introducing the 'name' at all, as 'baptism into Christ,' or 'into his death.' In the later literature, in the Gospels and Acts, we do find references to exorcism in the name of Jesus, and these, in the opinion of some, should be taken as proofs of belief in a magic power. But even should we be compelled by further evidence to assent to this view, nothing more would be established than the fact that magical ideas did, in NT times, invade the circumference of Christian thought; for certainly they never, at that time, penetrated to its centre. The potencies on which NT religion staked its trust were never things such as spells and incantations, but things such as Faith and the Spirit. The whole trend of the literature demonstrates this.

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(2) On the other hand, the ancient idea of the worshiper being declared, through the naming of the name, to be the property of his god would harmonise well with Christian conceptions. Some such idea would supply the most natural background for Paul's question, 'Were ye baptised into the name of Paul?' Christ's property - Christ's slave - these are ruling ideas with Paul.<sup>2</sup> It is almost certain that baptism carried some thought of surrender and allegiance to Christ.

(3) But it is probable that the primary idea behind the calling upon the name of the Lord was something simpler and more objective. There are indications in the NT that the earliest confession of faith was comprised in the words 'Jesus is Lord.' Thrice Paul repeats those words, and leaves the impression that he is repeating a formula. 'Every tongue shall confess ὅτι ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ.'<sup>3</sup> 'No one can say ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ΙΗΣΟΥΣ except in the Holy Spirit.'<sup>4</sup> 'Confess with your mouth ὅτι ΚΥΡΙΟΣ ΙΗΣΟΥΣ, believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, and you will be saved. For with his heart man believes and is justified, with his mouth he confesses and is saved. --- Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.'<sup>5</sup> In this last passage, the sequence of ideas suggests that Paul is referring to a declaration of faith which accompanied the act of baptism. It is highly probable, therefore, that at his baptism the convert made open confession of his faith, by repeating the formula JESUS IS LORD, This formula gave to Jesus his sovereign title, and when, through it, the convert 'called upon the name of

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<sup>1</sup> ICOR. 1, 13,      <sup>2</sup> WEISZ, Comm. in loco.      <sup>3</sup> PHIL. 2, 11.      <sup>4</sup> ICOR. 12, 3.  
<sup>5</sup> ROM. 10, 9&13.

the Lord; he at once confessed his faith and surrendered himself in allegiance to his Lord.

If, as the words of James suggest, the name was pronounced by both the convert and the dispenser of the rite, then, while in the case of the convert it implied a confession of faith and a pledge of allegiance, on the part of the dispenser, it would imply a declaration that the convert belonged to his Lord as his property, his slave - 'slave' being the correlate to 'Lord';

II. In baptism, the convert was received into the Christian community.

There is only one passage where Paul alludes to this aspect of baptism with any clearness. 'For by one Spirit we have all been baptised into one Body, Jews or Greeks, slaves or freemen; we have all been <sup>immersed in</sup> ~~imbued with~~ one Spirit.' Paul's chief interest in baptism seems to have lain elsewhere, in its symbolism of the believer's union with Christ in his experience of death and resurrection. But in Paul's own day, and certainly in earlier days, the thought of baptism as a rite of entrance into the Church was more pronounced than Paul's single reference to it would seem to indicate. Every religion of the day had its rites of entrance or initiation. Judaism had its rite of circumcision for its own sons, and its lustral washings for its heathen proselytes; while John's baptism had sealed those who, with him, were waiting for the Kingdom of God. But, apart from this universal impulse towards rites of initiation, the early Church was so compact a body, and possessed a consciousness of unity so deeply rooted and so sharply defined - both outwardly in relation

<sup>1</sup> ICOR. 12, 13.

to 'those without,' and inwardly in relation to its Lord and Head - that it possessed within itself the strongest impulse to adopt a rite, which would at once guard its door of entrance and serve as a seal of confirmation to those who were counted worthy to pass through.

The outstanding feature of this aspect of the subject is the close connection between baptism and the Spirit, which appears in the passage quoted above, and is almost universal in the NT references. To some, this connection appears so close that they maintain that it was the belief, probably of the early Church, certainly of Paul, that the Spirit was sacramentally mediated at baptism. This must be examined.

Two distinct stages of thought regarding the relation of baptism to the gift of the Spirit can be traced in the NT.

(a) In the earlier stage, the gift of the Spirit precedes baptism.

It was the belief of the early Church that the gift of the Spirit was the one convincing proof of adoption into the Family of God. To be a Christian one must be endowed with the Spirit. 'This only would I know, received ye the Spirit by doing the works of the Law or by believing the gospel message?'<sup>1</sup> 'If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.'<sup>2</sup> 'Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you, and ye shall be my witnesses.'<sup>3</sup>

In the early Church, the reception of the Spirit was a marked phenomenon, accompanied by striking manifestations in the recipient. Conversion was commonly attended by these Spirit-phenomena. The conversion of Cornelius<sup>4</sup> is a case in point.

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon

<sup>1</sup> GAL. 3, 2.

<sup>2</sup> ROM. 8, 9.

<sup>3</sup> AC. 1, 8.

<sup>4</sup> AC. 10, 44-48.

all who listened to what he said, and the Jewish believers were amazed that the gift of the Holy Spirit had actually been poured out on the Gentiles - for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Whereupon Peter said, 'Can anyone refuse water for the baptism of these people - people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we ourselves have?' And he ordered them to be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ.

We may accept this account as containing a reliable tradition, not only because it bears the marks of early enthusiasm, but also because the relation to baptism of the Spirit which it presents is not so familiar and congenial to the writer as is the later relation to be described presently. In the case of Cornelius, then, baptism was granted only after unmistakable evidence of the gift of the Spirit.

That enigmatic person, the ἰδιώτης<sup>1</sup>, becomes illuminating for our purpose, if we accept the account of him given by J. WEISS<sup>2</sup>, and based on an interpretation of the early Fathers. According to this account, he is a 'private' Christian, not yet baptised. Clearly, he is a more or less regular frequenter of the Christian gatherings, and special seats are set apart for him and his kind. He takes part in the worship, to the extent at least of joining in the Amens; is differentiated from full members of the Church on the one hand, and from unbelievers on the other. He is evidently a kind of Christian proselyte, who has given assent, more or less full, to the Faith, but has not yet received baptism; and the reason must be - here we enter the region of hypothesis - that he has not as yet given any clear sign of having received the Spirit. So he waits, or ~~is kept~~, is kept waiting, for the final and decisive moment when the Spirit will descend

1 ICOR. 14, 16&23.

2 Comm. in loco.

upon him. When Paul writes elsewhere, 'God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts crying "Abba! Father!";'<sup>1</sup> he is probably recalling a typical manifestation of the Spirit's working at just such a decisive moment. The recognition of God as the Father is the distinguishing mark of the filial spirit; and though the 'loud earnest cry' - κρᾶζον - seems ascribed to the voice of the Spirit within, it doubtless came to utterance on the lips of the convert, where its very earnestness and intensity of joy and wonder evinced the Spirit's working. In such ways did men of the first days show, by no uncertain signs, that they had come home to God and had been acknowledged by Him. The gift of the Spirit was theirs.

It is a fundamental NT conception, at least during the classic period, that the gift of the Spirit is a free and independent act of God. It is mediated through the Church only in the sense that people were generally converted through her agency. The Church is never the efficient cause of the gift of the Spirit; that is the sheer work of God Himself. First there is God's 'call' - another sheer work of God<sup>2</sup> - then there is its completion by the gift of the Spirit; and then follows baptism, as a more or less necessary completion on the human side of what is already complete on the divine side. This strict subordination of baptism, as a sort of visible adjunct for human purposes to an already accomplished and completed act of God, represents the thought of the Church in its early days, and, we would maintain, the thought also of Paul.<sup>3</sup>

The ground on which Paul is believed to teach the sacramental

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<sup>1</sup> GAL. 4, 6.      <sup>2</sup> BURTON, ICC, on GAL. 1, v. 6.      <sup>3</sup> GUNKEL, Wirkungen des H. G., 28.

mediation of the Spirit through baptism is contained in two passages.

(1) For by one Spirit we have all been baptised into one Body, Jews or Greeks, slaves or freemen; we have all been ~~imbued with~~ <sup>immersed in</sup> one Spirit. - ICOR. 12, 13.

There is certainly a connection implied here between baptism and the gift of the Spirit, but it is not asserted that the connection is one of cause and effect. The two things lay close together in thought, because they came close together in fact. In the early days, baptism must usually have followed close on conversion, as in the case of Cornelius. Besides, the rite itself must have been peculiarly impressive and moving, and must often have been the occasion for new and thrilling experiences for the convert. So it was very natural for Paul, or anyone, to run the two things, Spirit-conversion and baptism, together in thought, and in retrospect to look to the latter, with its visible and dramatic memories, as the landmark of the decisive moment.

(2). But ye ~~were~~ <sup>yourself,</sup> washed, ye were sanctified, ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and in the Spirit of our God. - ICOR. 6, 11.

Allowing that the reference in the 'washing' is to baptism, there is again a connection posited between the baptism and the renewal of the life. If we conceived of Paul as writing with the precision of a careful theologian, then we might have the right to insist that he must here be asserting that baptism somehow initiated and governed the process of renewal, including the being justified and sanctified. But did Paul write, either here or normally, ~~as a precise~~ as a precise theologian? Did he not write rather as an eager missionary? And if so, was it not more natural for his mind to fasten first upon the one clearly visible and dramatic happening in the whole process of renewal, and then to work back from that to the previous invisible acts of God? Like other distinguished men, whose function it has been to reach and mould the mass-mind of their age, Paul knew the value of word-pictures for getting his message home.

We conclude therefore, that neither of these passages demonstrates the <sup>merely</sup> sacramental mediation of the Spirit through the baptismal rite,

and that both can be naturally construed in a symbolical sense.

In view of this, and of the further fact that Paul frequently speaks of the gift of the Spirit without reference to any material rite, and shares the general NT view of the Spirit as a free and independent gift of God, we will require much more solid evidence to convince us that a <sup>strictly</sup> sacramental mediation is here taught.

(b) In later NT times, baptism came to be administered in advance of any clear evidence of the Spirit's working in the applicant, in the belief that the gift of the Spirit would accompany or follow the rite.

Whether or not our identification of the 'private' Christian of I Corinthians XIV is correct, there must have been attached to every expanding community an increasing number of people who, though drawn to share its influence and fellowship, had as yet evinced no clear sign of Spirit-experience. Further, as time went on, and with the waning of the enthusiasm, the more striking Spirit-manifestations grew rarer, the evidences of Spirit-experience would become less easy to detect. Thus there would emerge for the Church a pressing practical problem. Must she continue to insist upon clear evidence of the Spirit's presence before granting baptism? If she did, she would keep a rapidly growing number of proselytes standing indefinitely at her door. We do not know how this tension between Baptism and the Spirit wrought itself out; but we know the result. Baptism carried the day. The rite was administered where no clear signs of the Spirit had been visible. Candidates were probably now being carefully instructed in the faith beforehand, as HEB. 6, 2 suggests; and in the end were baptised upon a clear profession of faith, in the

belief that the gift of the Spirit would follow. Were they not now within the Church of God, which was the one earthly sphere of the Spirit's action?

Of this change we find evidence in the book of Acts and elsewhere. Of the Samaritans we read that 'as yet the Spirit had not fallen on any of them; they had simply been baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus.'<sup>1</sup> The three thousand baptised at Pentecost are not described as having received the Spirit, though this may have been assumed. In Luke's account of the baptism of Jesus,<sup>2</sup> it was after he had been baptised and was praying that the Spirit descended on him like a dove - a possible reflection of the custom of the writer's own time. At Ephesus, Paul found some disciples whom he asked,

'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' 'No,' they said, 'we never even heard of its existence.' 'Then,' said he, 'what were you baptised in?' 'In John's baptism,' they replied. 'John,' said Paul, 'baptised with a baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in him who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus.' When they heard this, they had themselves baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus, and after Paul laid his hands upon them, they spoke with tongues and prophesied. They numbered altogether about twelve men. - ACTS, 19, 2-7.

Here a new element is introduced. It is not at baptism, but afterwards, at the laying on of hands, that the Spirit is given.

Note. There are other references in Acts to the laying on of hands as preceding the gift of the Spirit: ACTS, 8, 17 - after baptism: 9, 17 - before baptism: cf. HEB. 6, 2: I TIM. 4, 14: II TIM. 1, 6. Paul seems to have known nothing of an established ceremony of laying on of hands as associated with the gift of the Spirit,<sup>3</sup> and it is almost certain to have been introduced

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<sup>1</sup> 8, 16.      <sup>2</sup> 3, 21.      <sup>3</sup> GAL. 3, 2.

later, derived from OT practices.<sup>1</sup>

The evidence, therefore, points to a time of transition, commencing probably in Paul's own time, when emphasis came to be laid, first upon baptism, then upon the laying on of hands, as precursors of the gift of the Spirit. The door is now open for the incursion of sacramental ideas.

We conclude that baptism was the visible ceremony, dramatic and impressive, which marked the moment of the convert's entrance into the Christian Church. It is possible that in I Peter 1,3 - 4,11 we have what was originally an address given to newly-baptised persons.<sup>2</sup> The ordinance marked the beginning of a closer relation with Christ. The Church was his Body, and the convert now became a member of him. The Christian community was the distinctive sphere of the activity of the Spirit, who was becoming more and more identified with Christ; to be within the Church was to be in permanent contact with him. All these things - the impressiveness of the rite itself, and its high significance as marking the entry upon a more exalted level of life, made it a memorable experience to the convert, and gave it prominence in the thought of the Church. That, in addition to this, it was a necessary and indispensable channel of grace, we cannot believe. Even Paul appears to place a certain disparagement upon the rite, as compared with the preaching of the Gospel, when he says, 'I am thankful now that I baptised none of you. --- Christ did not send me to baptise but to preach the Gospel.'<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> DEUT. 34, 9.      <sup>2</sup> STREETER, Pr. Ch. 123; BOUSSET, Kyr. Chr. 355. MOFFATT is adverse: Comm. in loco, The Moffatt Commy.      <sup>3</sup> ICOR. 1, 16f.

III. Baptism became a symbol of the closest inner union with Christ.

This aspect of baptism seems to have overshadowed every other in the mind of Paul.

For all of you who had yourselves baptised into Christ have taken on the character of Christ. - GAL.3,27.  
Perhaps Moffatt's translation of the final phrase is too modernly conceived. It probably means: 'you have become as Christ; your standing is as his; you are sons of God as he is Son of God.'

How can we live in sin any longer when we died to sin? Surely you know that all of us who have been baptised into Christ Jesus have been baptised into his death! Our baptism into his death made us share his burial so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live and move in the new sphere of life. - ROM.6,2-4.  
The thought is further developed in the following verses, and is taken up again in COL.2,11ff.

It is evident that Paul's mind was greatly attracted to this complex of ideas surrounding baptism, as giving wider expression to his deep sense of union with Christ. He felt himself bound to Christ in a union more intimate and mysterious than could be expressed in terms of the personal relation of faith and love. Many call it a mystical union, and certainly it was one which baffled the power of language to express. Paul makes every endeavour to express it. Christ lives in him, and he in Christ; he has been baptised into Christ; been crucified with him; been circumcised with his circumcision; has died with him; been buried with him; been raised again with him; is one with him in Spirit.

Language is strained to breaking-point in order to exhibit the completeness of the inward breach with the past, with

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BURTON, ICC, in loco.

the world and with sin, which resulted from true faith-union. Being crucified with Christ was a metaphor; stripping off the flesh was a metaphor; so was dying and living again. But they illustrated what was a spiritual and ethical experience regarding the reality of which Paul had no doubt. And in the rite of baptism he found a striking picture, seal, and confirmation of that experience, one too which could be reproduced in action. In the plunging below the water he saw a representation of the death and burial of 'the old man with his affections and lusts; in the emerging from the stream the representation of the rising again to life with God. Thus Baptism was a 'likeness' or representation of Christ's death, and 'through our baptism we were buried with into his death.' Baptism was again a sign and seal of that which had already taken place in the moment of faith-union with Christ. - C.A.A. SCOTT, Christianity acc. to St. Paul, 118.

Now, we could understand these deep thoughts being struck out originally by the strong and 'mystical' mind of Paul, but the trouble is that they do not appear to have originated there. These analogies were already current coin in the thought of the Church. Paul implies that his Roman readers were familiar with them, and there is no reason to think that they could have learned them from him. Whence then did they come? It is held by many that these ideas had passed into Christian thought from the Hellenistic Mystery-religions, in several of which there was the conception, not only of a Dying-and-rising-again-saviour-god, but also of a participation by the initiate in the god's experience of death and resurrection, so that he became one with his god. It may have been that the general idea of the believer's union with his Lord in His experience of death and resurrection was suggested from this Hellenistic source; but when it is asserted further that the Church borrowed not only the general idea but also the pagan implications behind it, then we call a halt

so far at least as Paul is concerned. Some hold that Paul believed that through baptism a man became "divinised", had his nature changed in its very substance, so that he became one with his Lord in a sense never contemplated in the ethical and spiritual thought of Jesus. But it is against just this type of idea that Paul seems to protest in ICOR.10,1-12. Though the Israelites were baptised into Moses by the sea and by the cloud, and though they all ate the same supernatural food and drank the same supernatural drink, yet that did not keep them from so displeasing God by their evil deeds that most of them perished miserably in the wilderness. Participation in Baptism and the Lord's Supper provided no guarantee of salvation. Where God's moral demands are ignored or slighted, no washings, or eatings, or drinkings can avail. The natural inference from such warnings is that the Corinthians were disposed to stress the efficacy of mere rites, and that Paul is emphasising the moral implications of the rites, and the obligation they impose of being loyal in life to the Lord into whose name they had been baptised. For the rest, there is no clear indication in all Paul's words that he regards the water of baptism as charged with supernatural virtue, or as in any way indispensable for securing the gift of the Spirit.

Wherever Paul touches on efficient causes, he has recourse not to the rite, but to the power of God, or to the working of faith, or again to the working of the mystical union.

It is difficult to resist the conclusion that baptism is no more than a graphic symbol of what for Paul is the vital thing, union with Christ in his death and resurrection.

MORGAN, Religion and Theology of Paul, 211.

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### C. The alleged Hellenistic Influence.

Before leaving the subject of Baptism, something more should be said about the alleged penetration of the Christian rite by the conceptions of the Hellenistic Mystery Religions.

For it is not enough (a) to show that the NT language can be construed at least as naturally in a symbolical sense, in accord with Jewish traditions, as in the thoroughgoing sacramental sense of the Hellenistic tradition. It should also (b) be shown that the symbolical interpretation is more in harmony with the general context of the NT literature and thought. So far, most of our attention has been given to (a). But when all is said, the fact remains that much of the NT language on baptism, when taken in isolation, admits of being construed hellenistically. More attention must therefore be given to (b). For brevity's sake, attention will be restricted to Paul; and, in the main, the modern theory stands or falls <sup>with</sup> ~~by~~ him.

When reading the literature of this theory, with its extensive quotations from the Mystery writings, its underlining of the parallelisms with the thought of Paul, and its more or less clearly drawn conclusions that it must have been from this thought-world that his conceptions were derived, one can hardly suppress the suspicion that these writers have been so carried away by their theory that they have been betrayed into creating an entirely new personality, to which they still attach the label 'Paul'. For their Paul could only have been a man so sympathetic to the Mystery cults that he had made a study of them, had read their literature, or in some way become thoroughly familiar with their conceptions. To talk, as Heitmüller does, about Mystery conceptions being in the air that

Paul breathed, like bacilli, is no explanation. There is point in Schweitzer's retort that bacilli are quite harmless things so long as they are in the air; they become harmful only when they discover a victim who offers a suitable nidus within himself where they may lodge and propagate. Was it likely that this Pharisee of the Pharisees would provide such a nidus for mystery bacilli? Schweitzer's extreme suggestion that Paul may quite well have absorbed no more of Hellenism than a <sup>Roman</sup> Catholic parish priest does of the critical theology, is probably a closer approximation to the truth than the view which makes him a sympathetic Hellenist, with an abounding hospitality for mystery ideas.

It is doubtful if the vogue of Mystery Religions in the Graeco-Roman world was as pronounced in the first century as has been supposed. Such eminent scholars as Wilamowitz and Edouard Meyer have continually insisted that we have no sure proof of the efflorescence of Mystery before the second century after Christ. # On the other hand there has been a recent discovery of the existence of the Mithras cult in Egypt as early as the third century B.C.<sup>1</sup> # Waiving this point, therefore, the most that has been demonstrated is that alongside of Christianity there were a number of other Religions with general conceptions closely resembling its own. But such parallelism does not prove identity of parentage, nor even close family kinship. And when the new theory does commit itself to bridging the gap between these parallel manifestations, the results are not convincing.

As a case in point, we take the conception of the Spirit; selecting it because of its prominence in Christian worship and its close

<sup>1</sup> HOLL, Aufsätze, II, p. 4

connection with Baptism. The modern theory does full justice to the central place which the Spirit occupied in Paul's religion. Indeed, it does it more than justice, representing it as the one living and outstanding factor in his experience, to the disparagement of other factors like his doctrine of justification by faith, which becomes a mere by-product of his missionary work, called into being by his controversies with the Jews. Now, it is maintained that every passage where Paul speaks of the Spirit can be, and should be, interpreted "in the light of Hellenistic speech-usage."<sup>1</sup> This is the method of approach to the study of Paul's conception of the Spirit, gravely insisted on by Reitzenstein. This might be a sound enough method, if Paul had been a theological author who published a new conception of the Spirit based upon the religious thought of his time. But Paul did not come to know the Spirit as a conception. It was the thing itself he knew. It had seized him, mastered him, taken possession of him. And with his own eyes he had seen it seizing, and mastering, and taking possession of others. To Paul the Spirit was primarily a fact, an objective power that was invading the lives of himself and others. Further, his first experiences of it had come to him in a Jewish environment, where there was no need or inducement to seek for a rationale of it from outside sources; there were ample clues lying to hand in the literature of his own people.

A crucial difficulty for the modern theory is presented by the MORAL CONTENT of Paul's Spirit-conception.

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, self-control: against

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<sup>1</sup> Hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen, 163.

such things there is no law. - GAL. 5, 22f.

This is recognised to be one of Paul's most matured pronouncements on the Spirit. Did Paul derive this idea about the Spirit from the Mysteries? Had the Mysteries such an idea to offer? No doubt the initiate felt himself uplifted and morally elevated during his experiences of becoming one with his god. But there is no evidence to show that a moral redemption was what he sought. The things he sought, and believed that he secured, were things such as immortality and union of nature with his god. Nor was this union, which was metaphysically and not morally conceived, capable of producing a moral renewal, by way of by-product. For the personality of his god was in every case - Attis, Osiris, Serapis, Adonis, even Mithras - too vague and mythical and weak in moral content to effect any such thing. So far, the Hellenistic theory has failed to make good its claims at this vital point.

But the Galatians passage carries us further in a positive direction, and illuminates what Paul's conception of the Spirit actually was.

We have Paul's own word for it,<sup>1</sup> that it was no easy matter, when the charismata of the Spirit were being displayed in worship, to distinguish between an utterance that was Spirit-inspired and one that was devil-inspired. At Corinth, he is content to apply the test of edification; an utterance which edified the community as a whole could be accepted as of the Spirit. And this was a good, rough-and-ready, pragmatic test, adequate for the discouragement of the more pronouncedly ecstatic and unbalanced manifestations, which was his

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<sup>1</sup>ICOR. 12, 2f. 14, 29.

main purpose at the time. But obviously the edification-test could not be final. "Edification" itself inevitably calls for definition. What precisely are the specific things at which edification should aim? Even if it be agreed that the final aim is 'moral' edification, what exactly do we include under 'moral'? The question of the final standard is still unsolved. Now, it is quite clear how Paul solved it. The fruits of the Spirit which he enumerates as authentically genuine are obviously just lineaments borrowed from his picture of Christ, and more especially from those aspects of the picture - to him the most moving of all - which present Him as giving himself in love for men. "Love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law." What we hear, in the last phrase, is surely the voice of the moral instinct. It is as though Paul said, "I feel it in my very bones, that these are the highest things in human life; they are final; against them there can be no appeal." The ultimate decision is given, therefore, by the instinct of the Christian moral consciousness, as enlightened by fellowship with the exalted Christ, who for Paul remained clothed with the moral attributes of the Jesus of history. In Paul's innermost religion there was a complex of closely associated conceptions of Christ. He was at once Spirit: indwelling Christ: exalted Lord: Lord Jesus who had loved him and given himself for him. But, whatever Paul may have meant by saying, 'though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more', there can be no question that his conceptions of the Spirit, and of the indwelling Christ, and of the exalted Lord never passed beyond the control of the moral ideal presented by the Lord Jesus in his life and death.

At this point, we feel that we are in contact with the real, essential Paul; and precisely at this vital point, we are far removed indeed from the thought-world of Mystery Religion.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> On whole subject, see KARL HOLL, Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengesch. II, Aufsatz 1.

## Section VI.

## THE CENTRAL PLACE OF WORSHIP IN EARLY CHRISTIAN LIFE AND THOUGHT.

The purpose of this closing section is (A) to summarise the conclusions reached as to worship being the central interest in the activities of the early Church: (B) to indicate, more specifically, its influence upon the course of the Church's thought: and, in particular, upon (C) the development of its Christological thought.

A. The central place of Worship.

From all that we know of the early Church and its Worship, it would appear that the immediate motive leading a number of Christians, in any place, to form themselves into a Christian fellowship was the desire to worship God together in their special Christian way. Their organisation as a visible body of believers was, first and foremost, an organisation for worship. Organisation for other purposes might grow out of their worship, or might lean upon it, but was in no case primary. It was when regular assemblies for worship were instituted in any place that the actual existence and continuance of a church in that place was attained.

Attention was given, in the first Section<sup>α</sup>, to the central place occupied by Worship, through its Leaders, in the government of the Church - if so definite a word as 'government' can be applied to the guidance of the Church's affairs through what were accepted as intimations of the Spirit's will. The leaders in the local worship,

<sup>α</sup> pp. 10-13.

the Prophets and Teachers, became, along with the Apostles, leaders in the church's administration, in virtue of their enjoying the most immediate access to the mind of the Spirit; and it was not until the worship-enthusiasm waned that a different type of men - men of affairs, with specialised gifts for rule and administration, gradually gathered the reins of power into their hands.

An attempt was made, in the third Section, to describe the central place of Worship in the life of the individual Christian. We had already found, in the second Section,<sup>α</sup> that there is no good reason for thinking that the activities of worship gravitated, to any appreciable extent, ~~upon~~<sup>towards</sup> one day in the week. The slender evidences bearing on this question do not conflict with daily, or at least frequent gatherings for worship; while the whole tone and temper of the early enthusiasm point definitely in that direction. The impulses towards frequent worship were exceedingly strong. It was only in the worship-assemblies that the believer could launch himself upon the broad current of the Spirit's power; it was in fellowship with his Christian brothers that he was able, most truly, to realise his fellowship with Christ; it was upon church people that he must depend, in the absence of written records, for his knowledge of the life, and work, and example of his Master; and it was from the warm intimacies and sympathies of the brotherhood that he derived the needed bracing for his difficult life out in the world. We also found reason to believe that the assemblies for worship were the centres from which radiated the streams of Christian beneficence.<sup>β</sup> The worship-assemblies appear, in short, to have been

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<sup>α</sup> pp. 41ff.    <sup>β</sup> pp. 59ff. 53

the vital centres, which regulated the pulse-beats and controlled the whole circulation of life within the early Christian communities.

Perhaps no NT writer realised the vital significance of Worship for the individual so clearly as did the author of HEBREWS. He lived in the time of waning enthusiasm, when defections from the Christian cause had become less rare; and as he observed the disastrous results in the lives of those who had 'fallen away', he had occasion, which earlier thinkers had happily lacked, to hold his Worship at arm's length and consciously estimate how invaluable a thing it was. What we refer to is not so much the fact that he conceives religion as being essentially Worship - our knowledge of the background of his thinking is hardly yet sure enough to warrant our erecting conclusions upon it. But very clear, and very significant is the grave solemnity of those warnings and appeals which, from time to time, flash out in his epistle, as he seeks to bind his readers in a closer loyalty to their Christian fellowship. There is a ring of real passion in his description of the doom of those who fall away; and it is clear, from the language he uses, that he thinks of their defection, not so much in the light of a falling away from the cause, or even of a falling away from Christ, as of a falling away from the privileges and obligations which they have accepted in their worship-fellowship.

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame. - 6,4-6.

Here we have clear references to worship; to Baptism - 'enlightened': to Scripture - 'the good word of God': to the Spirit-manifestations - 'the powers of the world to come.' Again:

Having therefore, brothers, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which he <sup>inaugurated</sup> dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a great priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a <sup>true</sup> ~~full~~ heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our body washed with pure water; let us hold fast the confession of our hope that it waver not; for he is faithful that promised; and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day drawing nigh. For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries.

10, 19-27.

Again, he pictures for his readers the wonderful fellowship to which Worship gives entrance.

Ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than that of Abel.

12, 22-24.

The man who wrote in the terms of these quotations had definitely realised that Worship was the very breath of life to a believing Christian.

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B. The influence of Worship on the course of early Christian thought.

Modern research into the origins of Christianity has carried us far beyond the old idea that the Church started on her career equipped with the full panoply of Christian truth. We have learned to perceive that all that she possessed, of distinctively Christian thought, were a few burning convictions, based on immediate experience of God's redeeming work in Christ; and that before her lay the whole task of thinking out the significance of what she had experienced, and of fitting it into the thought-forms she had inherited, and of discovering new forms with which to express what had never been expressed before. Very astonishing are the rapidity and sureness with which this task was overtaken. A wide distance separates the crudely primitive and wholly inadequate conception of Jesus as the Messiah or apocalyptic Son of man and Paul's conception of the exalted Lord who was also the indwelling Christ of each believer. Yet that distance was traversed in little more than a brief score of years. Nor was this accomplished by the labours of a few secluded thinkers. Such were not to be found in those fellowships where every man was labouring alongside of his brothers, and where even the greater men knew hardly more than did the ordinary disciple who had shared their experience of the risen Jesus.

The truth is that nothing was formulated in the infant community. Such officials as they possessed were entirely untrained, thinking the same confused, tentative thoughts on the great subjects which had come to occupy their minds. Their teachers were the men who proved themselves most capable of uttering the common convictions and of impressing other minds. A situation of this type serves to stimulate and develop intelligence which a better regulated system

often succeeds in sterilising. - A.C. WELCH, Visions of the  
End, 173.

When we discussed, in the first Section,<sup>α</sup> the Freedom which prevailed, we found a condition of things in the worship-assemblies which was highly stimulating to the intelligence, and which enlisted all types of mind in the tasks of Christian thinking. Amid the surge and ferment of thought in these Spirit-quicken<sup>d</sup> gatherings, new conceptions emerged and were cast into shape. Even as, in after years, the canon of their sacred book was to be determined, not by the decisions of a few superior intellects, but by a consensus of the general mind of the Church; so, in those early days, the main lines which Christian thought was to follow were determined by the common mind of the believers, as it declared itself in their worship-assemblies. There they sat, revolving in their minds the great themes, till the moment came when the Spirit impelled them to publish their thoughts in speech. Any one was allowed to speak, and all were encouraged to apply their intelligence to sift out the truth in what they heard. 'Quench not the Spirit; despise not prophesyings; prove all things; hold fast that which is ~~true~~<sup>good.</sup> Perhaps a Teacher or a Prophet would give expression to some fresh aspect of the manifold grace of God that had come home to him. If his new thought commended itself to the experience of others, it would be caught up into their minds, where it would fructify, and whence it would push its way to utterance again, probably in some enriched and developed form. Thus it would pass from mind to mind, being repeated, and developed, and repeated again,

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<sup>α</sup> pp. 17f. <sup>1</sup> I THESS. 5, 19ff.

till finally it became a part of the established currency of the Church's thought. By some such process of unconscious selection, new ideas were added to the permanent store. And if this seem a haphazard way of laying the foundations of a thought-structure that was to command the reverence of the ages, let it be remembered that the minds which thus tested the new ideas and passed them into currency were minds which the Spirit of God had stimulated to their fullest activity, and sharpened to their keenest insight.

And these minds that were thus laying the foundations of Christian doctrine were minds that belonged to what we call 'the common people.' Deissmann and others have rendered the great service of putting life into the dry bones of our knowledge that 'not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble were called.'<sup>1</sup> We can now visualise, in some fashion, those artisans, and merchants, and travellers by land and sea, and soldiers, and labourers, and martyrs-to-be, who were engaged in the Christian worship and employed their everyday speech to give expression to the deep truths of the Gospel. This largely explains both the sincerity and universality which marked the early thinking. For these were men and women in touch with real life. They had not the temptation, which more leisured and cultured people have, to regard religion as no more than an added interest and adornment to lives already richly stored. Their religion was, for most, the dominant factor in their existence; for it was the power of God, giving them the mastery amid the urgent needs of their life. As a consequence, anything artificial, or fine-spun, or superficially

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<sup>1</sup> ICOR. 1, 26.

emotional had small chance of survival in that atmosphere of reality and sincerity. Further, the joys and temptations of such people, their fears, and hopes, and sorrows, and sins were much the same as they are the world over - outcrops of that bed-rock of common humanity which is more or less the same in all. A divine message which could meet the case of people like these was a message that would meet the needs of the whole world. But, had the formulation of that message been left to some secluded and sheltered thinkers among them, or had it been confined even to the greater apostles themselves, with their less extended range of experience, it would have come short of that universal appeal which has been one of its preeminent characteristics. Universalism was, of course, inherent in the Gospel of Jesus; yet it might easily have become obscured, had it not been that the people whose task it became to translate His message to the world were such as could penetrate to its inmost essence, as a message for the deepest and most universal need of man.

If the worship influenced thought through being the sphere of an enthusiasm working upon minds of a certain type, it influenced it also through being the sphere of a warm brotherhood and love. For love brings insight.

Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God; he that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love-IJN. 4,7f.

May you be so fixed and founded in love that you can grasp with all the saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, by knowing the love of Christ which surpasses all knowledge. - EPH. 3,17f.

Of this Ephesian passage Moffatt says that 'it implies that brotherly love is the condition of religious insight and grasp of spiritual truth; for whilst "love" is to be taken in its full scope, the special stress here falls

not on love to God, but on mutual love within the Church.<sup>1</sup> The New Testament is emphatic on this matter. Insight into the deep truth of God was not the privilege of a few superior minds; it became the common possession of all who were instructed in love, and threw themselves into its mutual services in the spirit of Christ. Very significantly, it is in the very centre of his discussion of Worship that Paul introduces his glorious paean on love. Love, he asserts, is a greater force even than faith; it is a greater force than hope; it is the greatest force of all in the worshiping-community. And among other things, it gives insight into truth. Paul's wish for the Colossians and the Laodiceans and others like them who had never seen his face is that they may "learn the meaning of love; may they have all the wealth of conviction that comes from insight!"<sup>2</sup> And so, the early worship-assemblies, when they became the vital centres of a warm beneficence and spheres for the exercise of love, were, by that very means, equipping themselves for penetrating to the heart of God's message of love, and for expressing it in classic forms, which have been developed and enriched, but have never been superseded by the subsequent thought of the Church.<sup>3</sup>

Not the least of the services rendered by Worship to Christian thought came from the fact that it kept the mind of the worshiper steadily directed outwards, upon Christ and upon certain concrete deeds of God. Probably it was because of this that, though the early thinking was carried through by minds of the 'common people,' it yet bears no stamp of the peculiar subjectivities which usually attach

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<sup>1</sup> Love in the NT, 174.      <sup>2</sup> COL. 2, 2.      <sup>3</sup> On whole subject, MOFFATT, 173-185.

to minds of that type. Keen and urgent as were their own troubles and needs, their minds were never suffered to dwell, broodingly, amongst these; always they were being pulled away, to gaze outwards in adoring wonder upon what God had done for them in Christ. The facts of the Incarnation and of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus were the pillars carrying the edifice of divine purpose and deed, which formed the object of their contemplation; and each time they met for worship, these facts were kept in front of them, especially in their table-fellowship with their crucified and risen Lord. And, if ever a subjective bias of thought did assert itself unduly, it would speedily be corrected by some fresh manifestation of the Spirit's power, given within the actual place of worship - some visible or audible display of that divine energy which had broken into the world's life in Christ. This objective character of their Worship-thinking showed itself clearly in their thanksgiving prayers, and in their hymns to Christ and God, and was embodied, later, in the Church's Creeds. Indeed, it is probable that the early Creeds took shape directly out of the ascriptions of praise in the prayers of thanksgiving.<sup>α</sup>

When the Catholic Christian kneels at the words INCARNATUS EST or at the words AND WAS INCARNATE, he marks with proper solemnity his recognition that the Christian religion has its origin neither in general religious experience, nor in some particular esoteric mysticism, nor in a dogma, and he declares his faith to rest upon a particular event in history. Nor is the Catholic Christian peculiar in this concentration of faith. This is Christian Orthodoxy, both Catholic and Protestant.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>α</sup> p. 149f.

<sup>1</sup> HOSKYNS and DAVEY, Riddle of the NT, 10.

Those who would detach our religion from its historical basis, and sublimate it into a system of idealism, or a religious philosophy, or anything of that nature, must not hope for encouragement from the men who stood nearest to the origins of our Faith. There can be no question at all that, in those hours when their religion became most vividly real to them, that is to say, when they were engaged in their common worship, their thoughts were objectively centred round certain specific happenings in history<sup>α</sup> - round certain things which had been seen with the eye, or heard with the ear, or had become sensible even to the touch of human hands.<sup>1</sup>

C. The influence of Worship on the Christological thought.

Mackintosh, in the Introduction to 'The Person of Jesus Christ,' speaks of

the sovereign freedom with which the New Testament writers surveyed Christ, telling what they saw in books which have been justly described as literature, not dogma. Each looked at Jesus with his own eyes; each spoke out of his own mind; and to force their words into a mechanical or external harmony is to misconceive the genius of the Christian faith.

These words, we may feel certain, are applicable in substance to the prophets and teachers, and to each contributor to the worship-thought of the early Church. 'Each looked at Jesus with his own eyes; each spoke out of his own mind.'

No attempt is made here to reconstruct the course of Christological thought from its Messianic and Apocalyptic forms to the matured

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<sup>α</sup> pp. 6: 22: 70f: 150f. IJO. 1, 1.  
also 83, 146, 184.

conceptions of Paul and John; and then to investigate in detail how this development was influenced by Worship. In the nature of things, the influence must have been considerable. It would require an extended and careful analysis of that thought in order to isolate the elements that would be susceptible to Worship-influence, and to estimate the extent of that influence. Indeed, it is highly doubtful whether our records suffice for the purpose; and so far as I have been able to discover, the task has not been seriously attempted.

Attention will be restricted to two important features of the thought-development which are generally acknowledged, and where the influence of Worship may be more readily discerned.

I. The adoption of the title KYRIOS as a designation of Jesus.

II. The movement of Christological thought from 'official' to personal aspects.

I. The designation KYRIOS.

This is recognised to be the "greatest landmark in the history of early Christianity."<sup>1</sup> It definitely marked the transition from moral veneration to religious veneration of Jesus. For KYRIOS JESOUS implies that Jesus is now regarded as a divine being, and that homage is paid to Him as such. It was a decisive advance beyond the conception of him as Messiah. The 'Messiah' was at best, an angelic Being, higher, no doubt, than others, yet divided from God by the gulf that separates the creature from the Creator; and the main significance of the Messianic title of Jesus, for our present purpose, lies in the depth of the impression it reveals as having been made

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<sup>1</sup> MORGAN, Nature and Right of Religion, Ch. 7.

by Jesus in his earthly life. But, deep as that impression had been, it came short of placing Jesus on a level with God. The Kyrios title did that. As Kyrios, Jesus had been in the form of God before his incarnation, and after his resurrection was exalted to the side of God as His vicegerent in the government of the world. Though subordinate to God, he exercises the functions of deity, and bears the name which is above every name, and before which every creature shall bow the knee. "That, a few years after the crucifixion, there was in operation a fully developed cult, in which Christ was worshiped as God, no one now disputes."<sup>1</sup>

The origin of the title - Bousset's theory. Bousset holds that in the primitive Jewish Christianity there was no religious veneration of Jesus as Lord; at most there was the hope of his future return, the Son of Man type of Christology being dominant. The worship of Jesus as Kyrios must have emerged later, and in some Gentile region, probably Antioch. The title, according to this view, was borrowed from the Hellenistic cults where it was the common designation of the Saviour-god. This, in briefest summary, is Bousset's position. A condensed statement and criticism of it may be found in Rawlinson's 'The NT Doctrine of the Christ,' appended note, I.

The swing of recent critical opinion has been away from Bousset.<sup>3</sup> Outstanding points are:

(1) The word MARANATHA, and the NT use of Psalm 110 are obstacles which the theory has not been able to surmount. These point definitely to Jesus having been called 'Maran', 'our Lord', already in the primitive Palestinian church.

(2) Lohmeyer<sup>2</sup> has made a searching examination of the locus classicus of NT Kyrios-conception, Philippians 2,5-11, from which he concludes that the passage is a psalm or hymn in praise of Christ, composed by some poet-prophet earlier than Paul; and that Paul may have become acquainted with it in

<sup>1</sup>MORGAN, op. cit., Ch. 7.

<sup>2</sup>Kyrios Jesus, 1928.

<sup>3</sup>da p. 3.

worship, where it may have been used in the eucharistic prayers. Apart from this particular conclusion, which is somewhat speculative, Lohmeyer makes out a strong case for his contention that the whole thought of the hymn moves within the circle of Jewish and not of Greek ideas; and he appears to demonstrate that, in this passage, Kyrios means, not 'Lord of the Church,' as with Bousset, but 'Lord of the Cosmos.' The whole sweep of the thought is cosmic; its magnitudes are God, Christ, the World; nowhere does the Church or the individual believer appear on the colossal stage, unless it be incidentally, among the multitude of created beings that bow the knee to him who is Lord of all. KYRIOS is 'THE NAME above every name,' as being the LXX designation of God; and the giving of this name to Jesus carries with it the attribution to him of the functions of God. His 'equality' with God is one of function, not of substance—the problem of substance has not yet arisen. If all this be true, then the title was a native growth of the very early Church, and was not an importation from Hellenism. (3) The title Kyrios presupposes a cult. In this, both Bousset and his critics are agreed. But the tendency of opinion now is towards finding this presupposed cult, not in Hellenism, but in Jewish Christianity. In other words, the attitude of religious veneration to Jesus was implicit in Christianity from its earliest days after the Resurrection; and the new title only made explicit what was already implicit. Weiss<sup>1</sup>, after examining Bousset's contention, concludes that a cult, such as is presupposed in the use of Kyrios, presupposes, in its turn, the existence already of an attitude of essentially religious devotion to Jesus; and that this must be ascribed to the missionaries and not merely to their converts, and must accordingly be held as going back to the original Christianity of Palestine.

Assuming, then, that the designation Kyrios was bestowed upon Jesus very early in the career of the Palestinian church, we now enquire what influence worship had in bringing this about. We can

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<sup>1</sup> Urchristentum, 576, note 2.

only surmise. But we are entitled to take account of two things: firstly, of the experiences of the early worshipers round their Lord's table, where they believed they were renewing their fellowship with Him, and, we may feel sure, experienced afresh His POWER over their lives. Then, secondly, we take account of the tremendous impression made on them when the Spirit-phenomena broke into their midst. These were manifestations of the power of God; but they were manifestations also of the power of Christ, since, as we saw reason to believe,<sup>α</sup> the Spirit was from the first associated with Him. These must therefore have played no inconsiderable part in the process by which the impressions made by Jesus on his followers crystallised finally into their triumphant designation of him as Lord of all. On the other hand, most will feel that not even the Spirit-phenomena would have sufficed to persuade these Jewish-bred Christians of the propriety of bestowing upon Jesus a name hitherto reserved among them for God Himself, unless they had been convinced, on other grounds, that Jesus was worthy so to be called. That is to say, we must seek for the final source of this designation in the impression which Jesus had made on his disciples during his lifetime. It had been the impression, somehow, of a sovereign personality. The roots of the Kyrios designation, we may believe, lay there. They struck deeper into the faith of the disciples, when the Resurrection came; deeper still, when day by day they gathered for worship, and held fellowship with Jesus at his table, and felt his power to be still over their lives; deeper still,

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<sup>α</sup> p. 67f. WEISS, Urchr., 22ff.

when, at Pentecost and after, the Spirit burst into their midst. Then, at last, their faith came to full flower in the great confession, JESUS IS LORD.

II. The movement of Christological thought from 'official' to personal aspects; by which is meant, the process of clothing the 'official' Figure, represented by 'Messiah', 'Son of man', or 'Kyrios,' as the case might be, with the personal attributes and lineaments of Jesus.

In the content of these designations, as employed by the Church to describe her Redeemer, we have been taught - especially since the appearance of Harnack's 'Dogmengeschichte' - to distinguish two separate elements: the first, an element more or less mythological, theoretical, speculative, abstract, borrowed from the religious thought-world of the time; the other, a personal element, derived from immediate knowledge and experience of Jesus himself, of his personality, his work, and his power.<sup>1</sup> The latter of these elements is vital and continuous; the other is more of the nature of a framework, being some contemporary thought-form, the noblest and loftiest that was available at the time, taken over by the Church to serve as a vehicle for carrying her accumulating experience of Jesus and her growing thought about him, and destined to be superseded, or supplemented, once it proved itself inadequate, by some other thought-form, still loftier and more comprehensive. It cannot, of course, be lightly assumed that, as the Church's thought of Jesus thus passed from one category to another, it was

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<sup>1</sup>MORGAN, Nature and Right of R., Ch. 7.

at no point seriously deflected from the original and essential truth about him. This large and vital question cannot be entered on here. On the other hand, the simple experimental fact that the subsequent Church has always been able to nourish her faith in her Redeemer from all of the great NT conceptions of Him gives a prima facie probability to the assumption - which is made in what follows - that there was no such grave deflection at any stage; or in other words, to take a case in point, that the Jesus who was worshiped as Kyrios was essentially the same as the Jesus who had previously been revered under the less adequate designations of Messiah and Son of man.

Now, in this process of developing thought, there was one condition necessary to secure the continuity which we have assumed - the condition, namely, that when a new designation, such as Kyrios, was adopted, the personal element in it should become strong enough to subdue, and define, and in some measure even to absorb the speculative and mythological element.<sup>α</sup> And there was a real danger that this condition might have been frequently lacking. There was, of course, no such danger in the case of those who had known Jesus when he was on earth. In their case the personal element was primary and determinative in their thought of him. For them the identification of Jesus with the Kyrios was equally an identification of the Kyrios with Jesus; in other words, their Kyrios was clothed, from first to last, with the personal attributes of Jesus. But with others the case was quite different. Their primary knowledge was not of Jesus, but of the exalted Messiah or Lord. There was Paul, for instance, the greatest among that increasing multitude whose

<sup>α</sup> cf. p. 71, 174.

devotion was given, not initially to Jesus, but to the exalted Lord. It was they, even more than the handful of original disciples, who were to direct the course of the Church's future thought of Christ, and therefore it is important that we should have some clear understanding of the movement of their thought about Him. Happily, we know a good deal about the movement of Paul's thought. At first, it was upon the exalted Lord that his faith was steadily fixed; his Christ was clothed in the divine radiance, or δόξα, in which He had first appeared to him. But Paul's thought of his Lord did not remain directed thus exclusively upwards; it was taught to move backwards towards the Jesus of history. Perhaps it was from fellowship with Christians in Arabia that he gained his first intimate knowledge of the Jesus who had died; certainly he must have learned a great deal from Peter, during the fortnight with him in Jerusalem. Further, the logic of Paul's own thinking about his Lord must have driven his mind back upon enquiry about Jesus. Paul could not think of his Lord without thinking of the cross he bore; nor could he think of the cross without thinking of him who had died there for sin. In short -

We must conclude that his mind started from the Risen one who encountered him in glory at Damascus, moved thence to the cross, which the Lord had endured, and came finally to rest on the person of the Crucified. - MACKINTOSH, The Person of Jesus Christ, 53. cf. DEISSMANN, St. Paul, esp. Ch. 7.

Must we not assume that this movement of Paul's thought from the risen and exalted Lord back to the person of the Jesus who died on the cross was typical of the movement in all who, like Paul, gave their primary allegiance to the exalted One. When, for instance, a Diaspora Jew of the early days became a Christian, his primary allegiance



had probably grasped even less than had his Jewish brother of the story of Jesus' life and death. Further, his exalted Lord was a figure as undefined and vague as the exalted Messiah, if not actually more so. "It may be said with certainty that at the time when Christianity originated, 'Lord' was a divine predicate intelligible to the whole Eastern world." Yes, and because so widely intelligible, therefore undefined. For a 'Lord' might be anything - Adonis, Serapis, Mithras, or even the Roman Emperor, who was designated 'Dominus et Deus.' Further still, the Gentile convert was surrounded, in his work-a-day life, by people who still worshiped one or other of these 'Lords many', and welcomed any accretion to their particular Lord of an attractive feature from the realm of myth and imagination. And so, since the Gentile convert could transform his rather vague conception of his Christian Lord into something vitally and securely Christian only by that same movement of thought back to the Jesus of history, of which we have spoken, the question arises - what was there to ensure that, before this more or less lengthy process was accomplished, he might not be led away by the prevailing fashion of his time into mythical and distorting speculation about his Lord? Clearly, his Christian thought was in need of anchorage. Where was that anchorage to be found?

It must be evident that the Lord's Supper,<sup>α</sup> as celebrated in the Gentile Church, provided just such an anchorage. Let it be remembered that we are here dealing with a time when written records of the life of Jesus were not yet current in the hands of believers, and, for their knowledge of Jesus they had to depend upon oral instruction.

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<sup>1</sup> DEISSMANN, L. A. E., 350.

<sup>α</sup> p. 70f

It is highly improbable that oral instruction could have been, at this time, so efficiently organised and systematised as to be adequate, by itself, for the control and safeguarding of the converts' processes of thought. In such circumstances, the Lord's Supper must have rendered invaluable service. For when the believer sat at his Lord's table, his thoughts were constrained to move in the needed direction, and through moving symbolism were focused upon the death on the cross and upon the Jesus who had died. More than that: this death was, in itself, peculiarly challenging to his Gentile thought. For though he was quite at home with the idea of a dying god - he could tell of several who had died; and was not the grave of Zeus himself still to be seen in Crete? - he was far from being at home with the thought of THIS death. For this was no mythical death, but the real death of a real man. There had been a time when the thing seemed to him sheer foolishness; and even now, it still remained a paradox. And so, while the Lord's Supper kept his thought directed upon the death, the death itself kept insistently throwing it back upon the One who had endured it. Who was this man? What manner of man could he have been, that he should have been willing to die, and that his death should have borne such precious fruit? We must regard it as a fact of decisive importance that the thought of the whole Gentile Church was thus kept steadily circling round the death on the cross, and round the person of him who died there. Once a week at least - probably much oftener than that, Christian thought was constrained to take this direction. We must therefore regard the Lord's Supper as having contributed, in no small degree, to those processes which left upon the growing thought of the Church, at this plastic and formative

period, the indelible impress of the moral personality of Jesus.<sup>α</sup> That has been one of the very few constant factors in our Religion, throughout its manifold phases of development and change; and it is a fact of great significance that, some two thousand years after the founding of the Church's central rite, an outstanding Christian thinker<sup>1</sup> can speak of it in the following terms, and in words which would find an echo from every communion of Christendom:

When we receive Holy Communion, we express our belief that the mysterious Divine presence, of which we are conscious in prayer is not only God, or the Spirit of God, but the Spirit of Jesus --- we are identifying the living well-spring of our faith, the source of our hope and our happiness, the guide and inspirer of our lives, with a historical character who lived nearly two thousand years ago.

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<sup>1</sup>W.R. INGE, *Speculum Animae*, p. 17.

<sup>α</sup>p. 70f, 174f.

## WRITINGS OF THE SUB-APOSTOLIC AGE.

A brief account is here added of certain books referred to in this work as authorities for NT practice. The more important of these were contemporaneous in their origin with later portions of the NT; while some of them, like I Clement, Hermas, Barnabas, and the Didaché, were candidates for inclusion in the NT Canon, and were for long read in churches alongside of the Gospels and the Epistles of Paul. Though they are important and valuable documents, we cannot but assent to the wisdom which guided the Church in the end to refuse them a permanent place in that high company.

### THE DIDACHÉ.

The Didaché, or "Teaching of the Apostles", as its fuller title runs, was discovered only in 1875, at Constantinople; though its existence, and even some of its contents, had been known from references in the literature of the early centuries. Its discovery marked an epoch in the study of Primitive Christianity.

It contains sixteen short chapters, and may be described as a Manual of Church Instruction. There are two distinct parts in it: the first, chapters 1-6, called the Two Ways (the Way of Life, and the Way of Death) is explicitly stated to be a manual for instruction of candidates for Baptism; while the succeeding part contains instructions as to the conduct of worship, Baptism, Fasting, the Eucharist, the position, or function, or proper treatment of Apostles, Prophets, Bishops, and Deacons; and it closes with a chapter of warning and encouragement, based on the apocalyptic hope. The first part expounds the principles of Christian conduct, and is widely agreed to have been based on a manual originally used in the Jewish religion for the instruction of proselytes. The purpose of the whole work was evidently to provide guidance for churches which were in uncertainty owing to the lack of an established ministry; and for this purpose the work set down what was regarded as the Teaching handed down from the Apostles.

Nothing is known as to the authorship of the Didaché. Most probably it originated in Syria, perhaps in Antioch itself. Attempts have been made to discredit its value as a witness for early practice, on the alleged ground that it can only have emanated from some remote, out-of-the-way locality, and should not therefore be taken as representative of any widespread condition of things. Scholarly opinion is growingly

adverse to this view. Streeter, for instance, shows that "the influence of this little book on the later literature dealing with Church Order has been perhaps greater than that of any other work outside the New Testament". "It hovered on the verge of acceptance into the Canon until the fourth century". The book enjoyed "exceptional prestige", and must have been accepted, almost from the first, as "Apostolic in character, if not in actual authorship".

As to the date of its composition, external evidence is against a date much later than A.D. 100. Between 96 and 110 is the generally accepted date.

There is a very large literature on the Didaché. One of the most recent of the briefer studies of date and origin may be found in Streeter, The Primitive Church, pp. 279-287. A more extended, and easily accessible account is Vernon Bartlett's in Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible, The extra volume.

#### I CLEMENT.

This is a long Letter, or Epistle, of sixty five chapters, written by the Church at Rome to the Church at Corinth. In that old storm-centre, trouble and disunion had again broken out, resulting in the deposition of certain Presbyters; and the Church at Rome writes, exhorting upon this uprising against constituted authority, and tendering counsel and guidance to the disrupted church.

Clement's name does not appear in the Epistle, which claims to be a message from the Roman church; but tradition has consistently attributed the writing of it to Clement, and there is no good reason to question the tradition. The name of Clement appears in the episcopal lists as the third or fourth Bishop at Rome, towards the end of the first century. From other sources we infer that he was a man of recognised eminence.

The date of his writing lies within the limits, A.D. 75 and 110. There is wide agreement that the actual date was 96, the time of Domitian's persecution. "The Epistle of Clement is usually, and I believe correctly, dated A.D. 96", - Streeter, op.cit. p. 189.

#### THE EPISTLES OF IGNATIUS.

These also are highly important documents for our period. Ignatius was the third Bishop at Antioch in Syria. A man of strong personality and fervid zeal, he was condemned to be sent to Rome, there to be killed by beasts in the Amphitheatre. On his journey to Rome as a prisoner, he

passed through the Christian regions in Asia Minor; and while he was halting at Smyrna, he wrote letters to the churches at Ephesus, Magnesia, Tralles, and Rome. Then later, on reaching Proas, he wrote to the Philadelphians, Smyrnaeans, and to Polycarp the Bishop at Smyrna. He thanks each church for the kindness they have shown him - the church at Rome, not yet reached, is begged to do nothing towards saving his life and so denying him the crown of martyrdom; and counsels are given to the Asiatic churches, bidding them strengthen their loyalty to their Bishop and Presbyters, warning them against certain heresies, and bespeaking their sympathy and help for his own orphaned church at Antioch.

The date of his martyrdom at Rome is given elsewhere as A.D. 108. The exact date is doubtful; but there is no ground for rejecting the tradition that he was martyred at Rome during the reign of Trajan (98-117).

## II CLEMENT.

This is almost certainly of different authorship from I Clement. It is a Sermon, rather than an Epistle, inculcating a pure life, a belief in the resurrection of the flesh, and an exalted doctrine of Christ. The date is uncertain - somewhere between A.D. 120 and 170. About 150 is often accepted as the probable date. It may have emanated from Alexandria in Egypt.

## EPISTLE OF POLYCARP TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

Polycarp was Bishop at Smyrna, and became a martyr there, probably in A.D. 155, at the age of eighty six. He was, in his person, the most important link of continuity between the Age of the great Apostles and the end of the second century. (Lightfoot, Apostolic Fathers, II, I, 458f).

His Letter to the Philippians is the only one of his letters that has been preserved to us. Its immediate purpose was to act as a covering letter for a collection of the Letters of Ignatius which Polycarp was sending to the Philippians soon after Ignatius' martyrdom, in response to their request that he should secure these for them. Polycarp takes the opportunity to counsel the Philippians against certain disorders in their church, and against the danger of apostacy.

## THE EPISTLE OF BARNABAS.

This was reputed to be the work of Barnabas, the companion of Paul; but little reliance can be placed in this tradition. The ~~Letter~~<sup>Epistle</sup> itself

more strictly it is a Homily - makes no claim to have been written by an Apostle; and, if the writer's name was really Barnabas, he evidently thought himself well enough known to his probable readers to dispense with the need for further indicating his identity. There are reasons for believing that the place of origin was Alexandria, and there are none for connecting it with any other place. There is great uncertainty as to its date. The limits lie between the two great dates in the history of Jerusalem, A.D. 70 and 132. Lightfoot, Ramsay, and Bartlet accept a date soon after 70; others postpone it to the second century. The main purpose of the work is to give warnings against a Judaistic conception of the OT; and it provides many examples of the more extreme application of allegory to the interpretation of the ancient Scriptures - a method of exegesis which was particularly favoured in Alexandria.

#### "THE SHEPHERD" OF HERMAS.

The Shepherd ranks with the Apocalypse of John as a survival of the prophetism of the NT Age; though there is a wide difference between "the mediocrity of the timid little Greek and the fiery brilliance of the impassioned Jew". It was an exceedingly popular work during the early centuries, and was rejected from the Canon only at the last. Its popularity was due probably to its being a work which reflects the "simplicity and genuine piety of the rank and file of the average church members." It was written somewhere about the year A.D. 100. There would never have been much doubt about this but for a reference to the work in a later fragmentary list of books of the Canon of the NT, according to which it should be dated about the middle of the second century. It is highly probable that the list was in error, and that the correct date is approximately A.D. 100. - Streeter, op.cit., pp. 203-213.

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Two other important witnesses, often referred to in this work, call for notice.

#### JUSTIN THE MARTYR.

See Introduction. Justin wrote a second Apology, addressed to the Roman Senate; also a Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, which professes to be the record of an actual two days' disputation held at Ephesus.

#### PLINY'S LETTER TO TRAJAN (Ep. X, 97).

Pliny had been appointed the Roman Governor of the Province of Pontus and Bithynia by the Emperor Trajan, with whom he maintained an intimate

official correspondence - fortunately preserved to us - during the fifteen months or so of his tenure of that high post. His famous letter to the Emperor about the Christians in his Province was called forth by the need for a clearer policy in dealing with this growing problem. In seeking Trajan's guidance, he explains what his method of procedure hitherto has been. When persons were accused of being Christians, he made enquiry whether they were so or not. If they confessed to being Christians, they were asked a second and third time, with a threat of punishment. If they remained obdurate in their confession, they were put to death. Those who denied that they were Christians he released, on their calling upon the gods of Rome and cursing Christ. He further reports of certain apostates from the faith whom he examined:

"They asserted that this was the sum and substance of their fault or their error; namely that they were in the habit of meeting before dawn on a stated day and singing alternately (*secum invicem*) a hymn to Christ as to a god, and that they bound themselves by an oath, not to the commission of any wicked deed, but that they would abstain from theft and robbery and adultery, that they would not break their word, and that they would not withhold a deposit when reclaimed. This done, it was their practice, so they said, to separate, and then to meet together again for a meal, which however was of the ordinary kind and quite harmless. But even from this they had desisted after my edict, in which in pursuance of your commands I had forbidden the existence of clubs (*hetaerias*)."- See Lightfoot, op. cit., II, I, 13-21.

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