

The Sermon on the Mount

BURTON SCOTT EASTON

WESTERN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, CHICAGO

IT may be taken for granted, on the basis of general critical agreement, that the present form of Mt. 5-7 has been reached through the addition to an older source of material which in Lk. finds its parallel outside of the section 6 20-49.¹ In addition, there are certain sayings in Mt., such as 5 19, 29-30; 7 6, 19, 22-23, which by their inappropriateness to their context seem also to owe their present position to a later redaction. When the additions are removed there remains approximately Mt. 5 1-12, 17, 18, 20, 21-24, 27-28, 31-32, 33-37, 38-42, 43-48; 6 1-6, 16-18; 7 1-5, 12, 15-18, 20, 21, 24-27,—a section of homogeneous content and of simple structure.² The Beatitudes as a prologue lead up to the announce-

¹ With the important exceptions of Mt. 5 18 (Lk. 16 17) and Mt. 5 33 (Lk. 16 18).

² This reconstruction contains probably the maximum of material that can be assigned to the earlier source. Substantially the same form is given by Votaw (*Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, 5, p. 12) as representing the general opinion of scholars at the time of writing (1904). Among later works supporting approximately the same reconstruction may be cited B. Weiss, *Quellen der synoptischen Überlieferung* (1908), pp. 4-14; Klostermann, *Matthäus* (in Lietzmann's *Handbuch zum NT.*, 1909), p. 180; Allen, *Oxford Studies in the Synoptic Problem* (1911), pp. 242-248 (slightly different results in his *St. Matthew* (1907), pp. lxvii, 70-71). For an older source of like character but not containing the sections from Mt. 6 see J. Weiss, *Schriften des NTs.* (1906), p. 237, and Loisy, *Évangiles Synoptiques*, I (1907), p. 621 (footnote), and, on the whole, Holtzmann, *Synoptiker (Hand-Commentar zum NT.*, 1901), pp. 61-64. Holtzmann, however, refuses to commit himself definitely and regards as possible the theory that the Sermon is entirely the work of the Evangelist (p. 59). Nothing very definite can be said either for or against the presence of the sec-

ment of a text, "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil." This text is then developed in a series of six paragraphs, dealing respectively with the interpretation of the laws concerning murder, adultery, divorce, perjury, retaliation, and love of the neighbor. The third section treats of the external duties of religion and is composed of paragraphs on alms-giving, prayer, and fasting. The fourth part warns against judging and brings the "Sermon" proper to an end, closing with the Golden Rule so worded as to take up the language of the text, — "for this is the law and the prophets." An epilogue attacks false teachers and emphasizes the importance of good works, without which any religious superstructure is built on the sand.

The composition of Lk. 6 20-49 is different. The Beatitudes again form a prologue, but they are supplemented with a parallel series of Woes. There is no formal text. The section (vss. 27-38) that follows the prologue deals entirely with love of enemies and is formed of three paragraphs discussing the extent of that love (vss. 27-30), its unselfish character (vss. 31-35), and its heavenly recompense (vss. 36-38). The third section (vss. 39-45) is devoted to judging and treats only of the inability of an evil person to do good through his criticisms. There is no formal conclusion; but after a brief warning against shortcomings in good works (vs. 46) the final parable of Mt.'s source is appended (in a different wording) to form an epilogue.

A comparison of Lk.'s form with the source form in Mt. discloses the following facts: Mt.'s Beatitudes are blessings pronounced on spiritual conditions, while in Lk. they are pronounced on economic conditions. The second sections contain many points of resemblance, but each has some sayings not

tions from Mt. 6 in the original source. They would have been useless to Lk., and the connection between Lk. 6 36 (Mt. 5 48) and 6 37 (Mt. 7 1) is not close enough to prove that nothing ever stood between these verses. The most that can be said is that this treatment of the external duties of religion is somewhat out of key with the rest of the sermon. But, on the other hand, it is easier to refer these sections to the source than to Mt., for otherwise a *double* enlargement must be credited to the Evangelist, — first of the sections in question and then of 6 7-15. See below, note 24.

found in the other, and there is considerable difference in the wording of the common matter. Moreover, the order of the common sayings differs curiously, as may be seen by numbering the Lucan sayings 1, 2, 3,—, according to their order in Mt. Then, if x represent Lucan sayings not found in Mt., this part of Lk. runs 4, x, 5, 1, 2, 3, 12; 7, 8, x, x, 6; 9, 10, x, x, 11. The third section in Mt. has no parallel in Lk. Lk.'s third part, however, is made up of two verses (41-42) that are paralleled in Mt.'s fourth (Mt. 7 3-5), of three verses (43-45) that have parallels partly in Mt.'s epilogue (Mt. 7 18, 20) and partly in Mt. 12 33-35, and of two verses (39, 40) that are paralleled respectively in Mt. 15 14 and 10 24. Throughout the whole of this third section in Lk. the parallels with Mt. are so close that a common Greek source for the sayings must be presupposed. The concluding warnings and final parables diverge considerably in their wording.

A direct derivation of the Matthaean form from the Lucan is not to be thought of.³ The possibility of a reverse dependence, however, deserves very serious consideration.

The variations between the accounts at their beginning⁴ and end⁵ offer no particular difficulty; for, despite the divergence,

³ On the possibility of an indirect derivation see below, note 30.

⁴ The relation of the two versions of the Beatitudes to the original form is a complicated question, and the solution is probably to be sought in the assumption that Mt. has better preserved the original spirit and Lk. the original number. For definite preference for the Matthaean text (apart from the number of the sayings and some questions of wording) see Holtzmann, p. 59; B. Weiss, p. 112; J. Weiss, p. 413; Harnack (*Sprüche und Reden Jesu*, 1907, p. 40). Wellhausen (*Evangelium Matthaei*, 1904, pp. 15-16), however, argues for the Lucan form but supposes that it took the Matthaean spirit for granted. Loisy, p. 545, also prefers Luke's form but with the important reservation that "Matthieu en a sans doute mieux conservé l'esprit général." But Lk.'s Beatitudes are quite irrelevant to the Sermon, and there is little or no doubt that their wording is due to the experiences of the Palestinian church. In any event, such a short, characteristic section as the Beatitudes must have circulated in various forms.

Lk.'s "Woes" are pure apostrophes. There seems to be no question that they are secondary and obtained simply by "reversing" the Beatitudes.

⁵ Mt. 7 21 and Lk. 6 46 seem to rest on a common original that has been theologically elaborated in both Gospels. The relative originality of Mt. is favored by B. Weiss, p. 115; Holtzmann, p. 64; Harnack, p. 52;

it is seen at once that the same original material is presupposed. The enlargement of Lk.'s third part is likewise capable of easy explanation, — Lk. has simply combined the source material found in Mt. 7 18, 20 with a parallel tradition found in Mt. 12 33-35. The blending⁶ of this third part into the epilogue is due to the fact that the separating verse (Mt. 7 12) has been used by Lk. in advance (vs. 31). It is the second section that constitutes the serious problem.

Various theories have been advanced to account for the divergencies. Of these the simplest⁷ is that Lk. had before him Mt.'s source, which he revised for Gentile use in various ways, most notably by omitting all reference to the Mosaic law. And evidences of specifically Lucan redaction certainly exist. Among these are the participial constructions in vss. 29 and 30, the "literary" ἐπιηραΐζειν in vs. 28 (Mt. 5 44), the use of παρέχειν in vs. 29 (Mt. 5 39), ἀπαυτεῖν and τὰ σά in vs. 30 (Mt. 5 42), καὶ γάρ in vs. 32 (Mt. 5 46), the substitution of ἀμαρτωλοὶ for Mt.'s (5 47) ἔθνηκοί in the next verse, the avoidance of Mt.'s (5 47) very Jewish use of ἀσπάζεσθαι in vs. 33, the substitution of καθώς for ὡς in vs. 36 (Mt. 5 48), the preference for the simple dative instead of the (half-Semitic) dative with ἐν and the use of the compound ἀντιμετρεῖν in vs. 38 (Mt. 7 2). Perhaps the paranomasia in vs. 35

Jülicher, *Die Gleichnisreden Jesu*, II (1899, reprinted 1910), p. 265; Loisy, p. 641. Neither Weiss nor Harnack thinks that Lk. used the common original directly. Wellhausen, p. 33, regards Lk. as having the relatively more original form but finds the common origin in Mk. 3 35.

In the final parable Lk. insists more on human activity ("digging deep for a foundation") than does Mt. ("choosing a proper site"). Hence Jülicher, p. 266, considers Lk. more original. But for this very reason Lk.'s form can be understood easily as a revision of Mt.'s, while the reverse relation would be very difficult. The differences, however, are so numerous and the verbal points of contact so slight as to make *direct* derivation of one form from the other highly improbable. (The translation and comments of J. Weiss, p. 415, are particularly worthy of note.)

⁶ Holtzmann, p. 61, finds this blending preferable to Mt.'s separation. But the blending is far easier to understand; and, moreover, in Lk. vss. 43-45 are given too narrow an application. Loisy, p. 634, thinks that the Golden Rule stood originally before Lk. 6 37 (Mt. 7 1). For this there is no evidence at all.

⁷ So, e. g., Loisy, p. 585.

(*χρηστός, ἀχάριστος*) should be added to this list. Moreover, the variations between vs. 29^a and Mt. 5 39^b, vs. 30 and Mt. 5 42, vs. 31 and Mt. 7 12 can be referred readily to redactorial considerations, as may also, with somewhat greater difficulty, those between vs. 32-33 and Mt. 5 46-47 and those between vs. 36 and Mt. 5 48. So Mt. 5 41 could well have been thought inappropriate to readers who were acquainted only with the conditions of city life.⁸

But none of these differences is much more than superficial, and there remain more important divergencies, which the mere theory of Lucan editorship seems incapable of explaining. In the first place, the variations in order are unaccounted for. Nothing is gained by the changes; and, in particular, the transfer of the Golden Rule from the climax position to a subordinate place in the middle of the discourse is inexplicable. The omissions are by no means simply of reference to the Mosaic law. The section on anger was quite as applicable to the Gentile as to the Jew, and those on adultery and divorce more so. The substance of these could have been given perfectly well without the references to the Pentateuch. Nor could anything well be of more universal application than Mt. 5 45^b, which, however, does not appear in Lk. 6 35. The redactorial explanation of divergence becomes notoriously difficult in comparing Lk. 6 29^b and Mt. 5 40, for quite different cases are in point.⁹ A further difficulty is found in Lk. 6 37^b-38, a section that has no parallel in Mt. This may, to be sure, be treated as a rhetorical expansion of Mt. 7 1¹⁰, but such an expansion would be quite unlike anything found elsewhere in Lk.'s treatment of his sources. Decisive against the Lucan redactorial theory, however, is the character of the additional matter in Lk. 6 34-35^a; for this matter

⁸ Harnack, p. 46, adds, among other words, *χάρις* in vs. 32-34. But (cf. Holtzmann, p. 341) the word is here used in the sense of "reward"—a meaning not found elsewhere in the NT. Naturally there is nothing "Pauline" in its employment here, and Holtzmann's further remark that *χάρις* at least recalls the Pauline use is irrelevant.

⁹ For instances of opposite conclusions see, e. g., Harnack, p. 45, and Loisy, p. 587.

¹⁰ So, e. g., Holtzmann, p. 342, and Loisy, p. 622. Loisy thinks that Lk. has used Mk. 4 24-25, but the resemblance is very vague.

is so Jewish that Lk.'s Gentile readers must have had difficulty in understanding it. As giving an example of "natural" righteousness that may be found even among "sinners", the phrase is found "sinners lend unto sinners that they may receive the same things (*τὰ ἴσα*) again". But "sinners" among Gentiles did not lend with such little expectation. They lent that they might receive interest. In other words, since money lending in itself is treated as a virtue, the premise must be that the taking of interest was forbidden. This is comprehensible enough on Jewish soil but to Gentile ears the passage has always been obscure in the extreme. These considerations seem decisive. The section took on its form under Jewish influence and not at the hand of Lk.¹¹

Nor is very much gained for an explanation of the divergencies when the theory of accidental variations due to oral transmission is appealed to, either independently or in combination with the redactorial hypothesis. The oral theory will, in fact, solve certain difficulties. Such a difference as that between Lk. 6 26^b and Mt. 5 40 might arise in oral transmission.¹² Transposition of order might occur without much difficulty, although the removal of the Golden Rule from the climax position is not a simple matter. The insertion of additional sayings in such transmission would be extremely natural. But beyond this point the oral theory breaks down when applied to the concrete case in hand. Taken by itself it is entirely inadequate. Characteristic of the source form is the stereotyped expression, "it was said to them of old time — —, but I say unto you — —," which is repeated six times. It is the repeated phrase that is most accurately transmitted in oral tradition; but it is this very expression that does not appear at all in Lk., for the words "but I say unto you" in vs. 27 are only a very faint echo of it, if indeed they are not a mere accidental coincidence. Nor could the phrase have been brought down in the oral tradition and deleted by Lk., for as the section is constructed there is no room for it. The decisive argument against the oral tradition theory, however,

¹¹ See, moreover, the important notes of J. Weiss, pp. 414-415.

¹² The present writer, however, is not convinced that these sayings had not an independent origin.

is the literary skill manifested in the construction of Lk. 6 27-38. The three paragraphs are compactly formed and the transitions in vss. 31 and 35 are manipulated with no little ability. For work such as this conscious redaction is demanded.

Therefore the sole remaining alternative must be adopted,—viz. that Lk. 6 27-38 is not directly derived from Mt.'s source form at all. In this section Lk. has used the work of some earlier redactor,¹³ who must have been a Jew. Whether he worked on the sayings in written or in oral form, and whether or not he committed his result to writing, are matters of small importance. That the work was in oral form is perhaps a more natural view, but the other possibility cannot be excluded.

With this result it is easy to explain Lk.'s form of the Sermon from the assumption that Lk. had before him something virtually identical with Mt.'s source form. He preferred a form of the prologue containing the Woes as well as the Beatitudes. The first section of the Sermon proper, which was based on the contrasts of two systems of interpretation of the Law, was obviously unsuited for Gentile readers. Yet a revision that would omit these references and still leave a smooth connection would have been a difficult matter. Consequently Lk. simply substituted for this section a short discourse which he knew from another source and which contained most of the sayings found in this part of the Sermon; and he then continued to copy this source. Since he had used the Golden Rule in his insertion, he was obliged to omit it from the source at the point where it stood, and hence the epilogue was fused with the Sermon. The warning in vs. 46 he kept in a more original form than did Mt., and the final parable he either modified or found already modified. This solution of the problem accounts for all the facts noticed thus far.

It also accounts for certain further facts. This insertion of vss. 27-38 from a different source explains the sharp breaks that

¹³ So especially B. Weiss, pp. 113-115, where a reconstruction of the Greek text of the source is undertaken. Similarly J. Weiss, pp. 414-415, and Allen, *St. Matthew*, p. lix. Holtzmann, p. 62, thinks that Lk.'s text contains a mixture of Mt.'s source with certain extra-canonical material that has left traces in post-apostolic times.

exist between vss. 26 and 27 and between vss. 38 and 39 in Lk. The first of these breaks, as it stands at present, is particularly bad: — "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for in the same manner did their fathers to the false prophets. But I say unto you that hear, love your enemies." The extreme contrast here is due to the presence of the Woes. None the less, if the Woes are omitted, or even if Mt.'s form of the Beatitudes is prefixed to vs. 27, the transition at this point is extremely awkward. Less flagrant, but almost equally difficult, is the break between vss. 38 and 39: — "For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again. And he spake also a parable unto them, Can the blind guide the blind?"¹⁴ In other words, the lack of connection both at the beginning and the end of vss. 27-38 shows that the section could not have been intended for its present position.

On the other hand, that something has been omitted from Lk.'s Sermon is proved by the Beatitudes and the final parable. In Mt., where the Sermon treats of many aspects of righteousness, the Beatitudes form an admirable introduction and the final parable an equally admirable summing-up, showing respectively the character of the truly righteous man and the basic nature of true righteousness. In the body of Lk.'s Sermon, however, only two virtues are discussed, love of enemies and abstinence from judging. These two virtues do not sufficiently illustrate righteousness as a whole to be compatible with either the general introduction or the general conclusion.

Finally, there is a little piece of evidence in Lk.'s own Gospel that helps to corroborate the view that Lk. knew Mt.'s source form of the Sermon. In Lk.'s sixteenth chapter the parable of Dives and Lazarus has an extraordinary preface, which is at first sight quite irrelevant to what follows. "It is easier for

¹⁴ This connection is not improved if the two vss. 39-40, which have no parallel in Mt.'s Sermon, be removed. They are probably best understood in this place as due to a frank desire on Lk.'s part to make a fresh start, since the conclusion of his insertion had left him rather "in the air". B. Weiss, *Quellen der syn. Üb.*, p. 12, argues for the retention of vs. 39 in the source, but he seems to be alone in this opinion. The presence of this verse still further overloads the amount of space given to the merely critical spirit (cf. note 6).

heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the Law to fall. Every one that putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth one that is put away from a husband committeth adultery. Now there was a certain rich man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen,— —”, &c. There is, to be sure, no great difficulty in explaining the intention here, for Lk. meant vs. 17 to be read as an allegory of much the same kind as Rom. 7 1-4, — the Jews were bound to the Law as husband to wife, while for a Christian to adopt it would be spiritual adultery,— and the two vs. together are intended to explain the insistence on the permanence and sufficiency of the law in vs. 29-31.¹⁵ None the less, the difficulty of explaining how in the first place Lk. came to associate two such very discrepant verses would be vastly relieved if it could be shown that Lk. knew a source in which they stood in close conjunction,¹⁶ and Mt.'s source form fulfils this condition exactly. Even in the finished Gospel the sayings about the permanence of the Law (Mt. 5 18) and the saying on divorce (Mt. 5 32) are separated by only thirteen verses, and in the source form they stood much closer together.

The proof would seem to be complete. Lk. 6 20-49 is based on Mt.'s source form and differs from it chiefly through the substitution of a section on love of enemies for the more specifically legalistic sections of the source form.¹⁷

¹⁵ Something like this is the view of B. Weiss, *Evangelium des Lukas* (1901), p. 548, and of Jülicher, p. 533. Others, such as Holtzmann, p. 389, Wellhausen, *Evangelium Lucae*, p. 89, prefer to take vs. 18 as an example of the deepened meaning of the Law. Loisy, II, p. 167, hesitates between the two interpretations. J. Weiss, p. 450 (cf. Harnack, p. 139), feels unable to trace a connection, and the connection established by Zahn, *Evangelium des Lukas* (1913), p. 582, is incredible.

¹⁶ Holtzmann, p. 61, and Wellhausen, *Mt.*, pp. 21-22, undertake to reverse this relationship, and Wellhausen argues that the two verses in Lk. are the eventual source of most of Mt. 5. But the connection between the verses is almost intolerably difficult, even in Lk.'s context. Without it they become simply irreconcilable (as Wellhausen admits), and they never could have been circulated together as complementary precepts. Cf. B. Weiss, *Quellen des Lukas-Evangeliums* (1907), p. 89; Harnack, p. 139.

¹⁷ It therefore seems needless to enter into a discussion as to the possibility of deriving Mt.'s source form of the Sermon from some source

As regards the setting of the Sermon, Mt. and Lk. agree in the following particulars: It was delivered on (or, according to Lk., immediately after descending from) a mount; and it was spoken primarily to disciples, though others were also present.

The "mount" here offers no problem, for both Mt. 5 1 and Lk. 6 12 have simply taken it from Mk. 3 13. In fact Lk. has simply inserted the Sermon into Mk.'s narrative at this point after a very slight inversion of order (Mk. 3 7-11 being placed after Mk. 3 13-19), in order to gain a better introduction. Mt., evidently in his desire to place the teaching as early as possible, has altered Mk.'s order more radically; but none the less the point of insertion is the same, for not only does Mt. 5 1 correspond to Mk. 3 13, but the preceding vss. 4 24-25 in Mt. are taken from 3 7-10 in Mk. Both Mt. and Lk. have chosen this place for the insertion of the Sermon because the mount in Mk. is the first place where Jesus provides himself with the full number of apostles, thus giving a proper auditory. If, as may have been the case, the source prefixed the Sermon with a notice to the effect that "Jesus, having chosen his disciples", or perhaps with a list of the Twelve, the coincidence of Mt. and Lk. in their choice of location would receive further explanation. But such an hypothesis is hardly necessary.

The description of the two classes of auditors, however, is not in Mk. It may be only a chance coincidence, due to a natural desire on the part of Mt. and Lk. to dignify the delivery of the Sermon, but another explanation is offered below.

Mt.'s source form of the Sermon and the separate section in Lk. 6 27-38 represent the limits that can be reached by literary methods. The next problem is to determine the relations of these forms to Jesus. That the great bulk of the separate sayings involved are in essence authentic utterances of Jesus may be taken for granted.¹⁸ Whether or not, however, the source underlying Lk.'s form, as Loisy does throughout his whole discussion (pp. 534-645). Allen, *St. Matthew*, pp. lvii, lix, supposes that Mt.'s source form and the sayings from it passed through "several stages of transmission before they reached Lk." This is quite needlessly complicated and indeed amounts to abandoning the problem as insoluble.

¹⁸ The only serious dissident is Wellhausen. Walter Haupt, *Worte Jesu und Gemeindecüberlieferung* (1913), has adopted a position approximat-

form as a whole represents a single discourse delivered by him at a definite time and place is another question and positive proof for an affirmative answer to it seems to be very inadequate. There is certainly nothing in the Sermon itself that suggests particular application to any definite occasion, and indeed apart from Lk. 6 22^b, 46 (Mt. 5 11^b, 7 21)¹⁹ there is nothing in the Sermon that suggests that it was even intended particularly for disciples.²⁰ It is in no way esoteric,²¹ and can be construed admirably as a synagogue discourse on the true meaning of the Law. It would have been adapted to any Palestinian audience of the day and would have made an admirable point of departure for a call to repentance.²² Now, according to the evidence, synagogue teaching and exhortation to repentance were the predominant features of Jesus' work in the earliest period of the ministry; but the Gospels apparently give us little or nothing that is classed by them as formal public teaching of this period. Occasional pronouncements such as Mk. 3 4 do not belong to the formal teaching; and the synagogue scene in Lk. 4 16-30, in which Jesus' person is the only point at issue, is conceived from a later standpoint. Much of such teaching, al-

ing Wellhausen's, but he has added nothing to its validity. The question as to the authenticity of individual sayings is, however, a different matter. The passage most called in question is Mt. 5 17-18 (Lk. 16 17), concerning which the debate is familiar. The present writer is content to endorse Loisy's words (p. 564):—"Non seulement il est possible qu'on l'ait accusé de ruiner ainsi la Loi, mais il paraît inévitable que cette accusation ait été plus d'une fois soulevée,——. A cette accusation Jésus n'a pu faire d'autre réponse que celle qu'on lui attribue." It does not follow that Jesus made this declaration the *explicit* basis from which his ethic was developed. Mt. 5 19 is secondary in any case.

¹⁹ Both of these passages have certainly been amplified.

²⁰ This has generally been ignored by scholars.

²¹ J. Weiss, *e. g.*, holds (p. 237) that the Sermon assumes the near advent of the Kingdom, and hence was appropriate only for those who had been initiated into the secret. But there is nothing in the Sermon that is particularly conditioned by the near advent of the Kingdom. That the Kingdom was near was not a doctrine peculiar to Jesus, nor was it one that he regarded in any way as a secret. Indeed, the Gospels, even Mk. (1 15, cf. Mt. 10 7, Lk. 10 9 &c.), represent him as proclaiming this doctrine with the utmost publicity.

²² Cf. Harnack, p. 142.

though not specifically described as such, is no doubt to be found in the Gospels (particularly in the parables); but the peculiarity of the Sermon on the Mount is that its contents seem to be made up entirely of this teaching. And if the sayings in the Sermon belong to this period, the Sermon itself can hardly be held to have been delivered on any single occasion.

Moreover, it is inconceivable that sayings such as those of the Sermon should have been delivered only once. Indeed, they must have been repeated very often, whatever the length of the ministry may have been. Yet Jesus certainly did not belong to the class of men who repeat on many occasions the same address verbatim. The general framework may often have been the same, and the epigrammatic character of the individual sayings doubtless tended to become fixed;²³ but the variations in the discourse as a whole must have been as many as the occasions of delivery. And for a disciple, after even a few months,—let alone years,—to look back on these repetitions and variations and to pick out the definite form delivered on an particular occasion would have been a well-nigh impossible task, even if we assume that there was an occasion for doing so, or that such an undertaking would have occurred to any member of the primitive community. That after the final choice of the Twelve Jesus delivered to them an especially formal recapitulation of his teaching is of course in no way impossible or even improbable. But this is the most that can be said for the theory of a single origin on a definite occasion. Even in that case there is no guarantee that the source form contains the material that belonged to that occasion and no other.

The Sermon on the Mount is a collection of the sayings of Jesus made by the earliest church.²⁴ The form in which they

²³ It does not seem likely, however, that Mt. 5 17-18 would have been repeated very often. It doubtless belongs to a period when suspicion and opposition had been aroused. Cf. Loisy, p. 564.

²⁴ Consequently the "original form" of the Sermon is something of an *ignis fatuus*. The first editor was certainly not a rigorous logician, and a too detailed investigation of the connection of the sayings is hence impracticable. When, e. g., J. Weiss (p. 258) argues that Mt. 5 42 is out of its context, the most that is proved is that vs. 41 and 42 were not spoken in the present combination by Jesus.

are fixed may well have been one which was customary with him, but little depends on the possibility of this last assumption. There is nothing in the way of regarding the separate sayings as belonging to the earlier period of the ministry, and so understood they fill an awkward gap in the accounts given in the Gospels.

Jesus began his ministry with a call to repentance based on the near approach of the Kingdom of God. But for an adequate repentance the rules of the current ethical systems were insufficient, and there was need for a drastic revision of the whole contemporary conception of righteousness. Like the current systems, the new treatment took its point of departure from the Law, thus conforming to the synagogue methods. In part, however, Jesus' teaching broke away altogether from seeking even a formal contact with the Law, and so did explicitly, what his discussions concerning the Law had really done implicitly,—*i. e.* it relied for its content on the moral self-consciousness of the Master. Jesus' legal discussions, however, differed so widely from those in vogue at the time as to arouse the antagonism of the professional expounders of the Law.

The words of the great Teacher were at least ideally normative for his disciples and so for the earliest church. The Messiahship of Jesus was of course the doctrine which above all others distinguished those who followed the "way of the Nazarenes" from their fellow Jews of Palestine, and in Acts the impression is sometimes given (2 38, 8 35-36) that this was the only distinctive doctrine of primitive Christianity. But the preservation of so much of the Gospel material shows that this impression is erroneous (cf. Acts 2 41, 3 26). For instance, the "Nazarenes" were liberal in their interpretation of the Sabbath rules, were not particular about certain matters of ritual defilement, and in other respects were neglectful of the "tradition of the fathers",—often no doubt with no very clear idea as to what really distinguished that tradition from the actual precepts of the Law. But in addition the "Nazarenes" had their own ethical code, and it was one of heroic requirements.²⁵ The

²⁵ This is not to say, with Wellhausen, that the morality was so heroic that the community actually *created* these sayings. Still Well-

acceptance of Jesus as Messiah carried with it the recognition of the ethical demands that Jesus made, and it is in the Sermon that these found their chief codification. Perhaps we should not be far from the truth if we regarded the Sermon on the Mount as a sort of "manual for catechumens",—a code of conduct to be learned by all who sought (or who had received) initiation into the new sect.²⁶

This use of the Sermon as a rule for converts, coupled with a reminiscence that its precepts were originally delivered to the public at large, gives a complete explanation of the two classes of auditors found in the introductions to the discourse in Mt. and Lk. It was, intended for all men but it was meant primarily for the use of disciples. With this double end in view it "must" have been delivered by Jesus.

Since the material in the source form is practically all taken from sayings of Jesus, there is nothing in the Sermon that enables a dating of the labours of the redactor.²⁷ That for the use of Hellenists an "official" translation was made is altogether likely.

There remains the question of the origin of the section found in Lk. 6 27-38. That it was constructed by Jesus himself is hardly possible; for although considerable skill is manifest in its formation, the style is not that of the Master. Characteristic of the section is the cumulation of short, parallel phrases, of which there are four in vss. 27-28, four in vs. 35, three in vs. 37, and four in vs. 38. There is nothing quite like this elsewhere in the Gospels. Jesus' method was to present a single idea in a sentence. He often repeated his thought in regular Semitic

hausen's protest (*Einleitung*, ed. 2, 1911, p. 169) against current depreciation of the Jerusalem community is quite justified. The men who gave "Q" its basic importance in the general tradition were no mere Jewish obscurantists.

²⁶ So, e. g., Bousset, *Kyrios Christos* (1913), pp. 45-46, "die sogenannte Bergpredigt darf man mit Recht den Katechismus der Urgemeinde nennen, das neue Grundgesetz für ihr ethisches Verhalten".

²⁷ The basis of Mt. 5 11-12 (Lk. 6 22-23) and of Mt. 7 21 (Lk. 6 46) could belong perfectly well to Jesus' lifetime (cf. Harnack, p. 143). In the former passage there is not even anything that specifically designates *disciples*.

parallelism, but he never resorted to that singular piling up of terms²⁸ which gives to this passage a certain air of breathlessness. Moreover, the section is not quite homogeneous. The "enemies" that curse, assault, and plunder the disciples in vss. 28-29 are not the same as those that ask for a gift or for a loan in vss. 30, 38, 34-35. Indeed, it is not clear that in this last case "enemies" are really intended. But if such are meant, they are persons whom the disciples dislike; whereas those mentioned in vss. 28-29 hate the disciples passionately. Either Lk. or the earlier redactor has recognized this and endeavoured to secure conformity to the context by introducing *αἵπευ* in vs. 30^b; but the resulting disagreement with vs. 30^a shows the change clearly enough, even without recourse to the parallel in Mt. 5 42.²⁹ This section therefore is a mosaic made up of Jesus' sayings, a certain amount of rhetorical expansion by the earlier redactor, and some revision by Lk.³⁰

The section must be interpreted in terms of the experience of the earliest church. It was meant as a guide for the disciples in their conduct towards the non-believers of their own nation. Despite the intensity of the antagonism they were not to yield to resentment,—a counsel which was without doubt badly needed. It is interesting to compare the atmosphere of the preceding seven verses in Lk., where consolation under tribulation is sought in the reflection that the little band of disciples are God's elect, and that their oppressors are doomed to the Divine judgement.

²⁸ It is quite true that the "tristique, tétrastique" construction is Semitic (Loisy, pp. 536-537; cf. Wellhausen, *Lk.*, p. 24). But this does not prove that it is due to Jesus.

²⁹ In addition, Loisy, p. 585, notes the awkward change from the plural address in vss. 27-28 to the singular in vss. 29-30 and then back to the plural in vs. 31. B. Weiss, *Quellen der syn. Üb.*, p. 115, observes, moreover, that in vs. 38^a a *superabundant* recompense is promised, while in vs. 38^b the recompense is *exact*.

³⁰ Accordingly this section cannot come into consideration even as an indirect source for Mt.'s form. Wellhausen's contention (*Lk.*, p. 25) that Lk. is original *because* it is disordered is a reversal of correct method. It hardly seems necessary to reply to the extraordinary argument of Spitta (*Die synoptische Grundschrift*, 1912, pp. 119-142) that all of Lk. 6 20-49 is an exact report of a single, historical discourse of Jesus.

The point of view is different from that just discussed, but the difference does not indicate different circumstances of origin. The two attitudes are simply contrasted moods of the same body of men; but Lk.'s combination of the two has produced the rather bizarre sequence of thought:—"Your enemies are doomed to woe. Love your enemies."

Since the sayings on the whole are again sayings of Jesus, it is perhaps not legitimate to build on the omissions. Yet, inasmuch as the section is a definite redactorial construction, it may be of importance to note that among the motives given for loving one's enemies the possibility of converting them is not mentioned. On this point Mt. 5 16 stands in sharp contrast to our passage. If this omission has any significance, it would indicate a date at which the making of converts had become difficult or exceptional. If vs. 27-38 belong to anything like the same stage of redaction as vs. 20-26, a date later than the fall of Jerusalem is precluded by the character of the latter verses. Some time in the period of tension preceding the outbreak of the war with Rome, when Jewish patriotism was becoming exalted, would best suit all the requirements of the case.

Probably an Aramaic original underlies the section. The coincidences with Mt. in the Greek are due to the translator's use of the "official" version, of which he doubtless availed himself as far as possible.