Matthew's Implicit Criticism of Paul

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1 Introduction

The relationship between Paul and Matthew has received relatively little attention among scholars. Indeed H. J. Holtzmann tried to promote the thesis that Matthew (5:19) criticizes Paul more than a century ago, but received little support. The core difficulty for approaching the problem is that there is no explicit vestige or mention of Paul in the First Gospel. However, one cannot deny the relevance of the macro picture of Early Christianity, roughly as follows:

1. Spatially, both of them are located in the Mediterranean region, even probably in the same big city of Antioch of Syria.
2. Historically, both of them are Christians with Jewish heritages.
3. Chronologically, Matthew's composition is after Paul's.
4. Theologically, both of them are church leaders of Christianity with very similar concerns (the relationship of human beings with God and with fellow peoples, etc.)

Alone these few considerations suffice to warrant a deeper investigation into their relationship, even though there are no explicit vestiges. It is also unconvincing to say that Matthew has completely no connection with Paul. Yet, how shall one approach the issue of Matthew's relationship with Paul? One of the major weaknesses of Holtzmann's thesis is that there is little textual evident supporting it, even though scholars generally agree that both of them have contradictory attitudes on the Jewish Law. Both texts of Matthew and Paul (7 undisputed Letters) give much attention to the Law. Closer examination shows that Matthew values it and demands Jesus' followers observe it strictly; while Paul deprecates it in his famous teaching of justification. In Paul, it is 'faith', but not 'law / works of law', that brings salvation to a person (Gal 2:16); whereas Matthew advocates that one maintains behavioral righteousness.

Nevertheless, both maintain that the Law is valid forever (Matt 5:18) or is holy (Rom 7:12). This paper does not aim at solving all the difficulties in approaching the relationship of Matthew with Paul. Instead we will collect, thematise and analyze 3 common concerns of both Matthew and Paul (Law, Gospel and Mission), in the hope that these themes could provide a stronger evidential base for further investigation and discussion.

2 Previous Interpretation (Matt 5:19 – The Jewish Law)

Our following discussion on the Jewish Law may at the same time serve as a brief literature survey showing previous efforts of scholars on the relationship of Matthew and Paul.

In the Tübingen School in the 19th century Ferdinand C. Baur (1792-1860) locates the Gospel of Matthew to the Jewish Christian party of Peter, which had often aroused tension and conflict with the Gentle Christian party of Paul (Baur, 1847). His follower Karl R. Köstlin (1819-1894) is probably the first to allude to a polemic in Matt 5:19 against a liberal teacher of the law. This teacher relaxes commandments of the law. Karl R. Köstlin regards it as invective against Paul (Köstlin, 1853). But many rejected this view, among them Hermann F. von Soden, who found no convincing hints from the terminology used and nor of Pauline theology in the Gospel of Matthew.

Following the Tübingen School, Heinrich J. Holtzmann (1832-1910) advocates the thesis that Paul or his followers are to be identified as the ones who relax the smallest commandment. For Matthew, Paul and his followers belong to the opponents, who are regarded as the antinomists (ἀνομία). Therefore, Matthew is opposed to Paul and his theology (Holtzmann, 1897; Pfleiderer, 1890). This interpretation of Matt 5:19 is often found (Weiß, 1917; Montefiore, 1858; Manson, 1949; Brandon, 1951).

Many works in the late 20th century are however skeptical of the identification of the one who is ‘least in the kingdom of heaven’ as Paul and /or his followers. For example, W. D. Davies (1911-2001) maintains that such an interpretation is exaggerated, on the basis of the following three arguments: (1) the immediate context before Matt 5:19 does not show any anti-Pauline tendency. (2) The fact that Paul calls himself the ‘least’ of the apostles is only superficially related to the ‘least’ in the kingdom of heaven. (3) The 3 texts (Matt 15:15; 18:21; 19:27), where Matthew inserts Peter from his special

source, does not indicate any polemic against Paul. So Davies concludes that 'the SM (Sermon on the Mount) could not be interpreted as a reaction against Paulinism' (Davies, 1964).

The issue appears in another form. There are 2 following positions, both starting from the fact that there is clear polemic in some texts in the Gospel of Matthew. Either they argue these polemical texts do not relate to Paul, or they reflect a view which is not that of the Evangelist Matthew and he uses them as mere tradition.

At three points the Gospel of Matthew attacks Christians who do ἀνομία (lawlessness) as a phenomenon of the end time (7:23; 13:41; 24:12). Matthew is being unmistakably polemical. The crucial problem is who are these who practice ἀνομία and how are they to be identified. Gerhard Barth explores who those who practice ἀνομία might be: the first possibility is that they are Christians living in a Jewish milieu, but Barth prefers the second possibility, namely that they are Christians living in a hellenistic milieu. Matthew is arguing against them, whom James also targets, because though these people speak of 'faith', they understand 'faith' differently from Matthew (Barth, 1968). Barth's position is in fact similar to that of Gerhard Kittel, who claimed that this fits no other historical figure in the first and second century except Paul. A figure depicted as having the motto, 'faith without works', is just like Paul. However, Barth himself rejects the move to identify Paul or Paulinists as the doers of ἀνομία in the Gospel of Matthew. Instead, he argues for 'hellenistic liberals', as those against whom Matthew polemizes (Barth, 1968; Kittel, 1942). His position of not affirming Paul as the doer of ἀνομία is difficult to understand; and he leaves us with the problem of identifying who is meant by 'hellenistic liberals'!

In contrast to Barth, Andreas Lindemann accepts the thesis that Paul was the one once identified as the person in Matt 5:19, but believes that this polemic does not come from the Evangelist Matthew himself, but belongs rather to pre-Matthean tradition (Lindemann, 1979). Accordingly in his estimation, neither Matthew nor Mark is influenced by Pauline theology, even though they have possibly suppressed and omitted Pauline elements. Besides, one should not expect that the Evangelists inherited non-synoptic traditions in their Gospels. Lindemann discusses in detail 3 texts as 'hints for a possible controversial connection with Paul: Matt 5:17-19; 7:22-23 and 13:24-28 (Lindemann, 1979). He accepts only 5:19 as having a polemic relation to Paul and believes that

Matthew has inherited and used this tradition without making it his own. Accordingly, the Gospel of Matthew is not anti-Pauline, but un-Pauline. Lindemann rejects a common consensus that Paul and his tradition were known in Syria, a place where the highly probable setting for the Gospel of Matthew (Lindemann, 1979). There is of course a consensus that Syria is the place of origin for Matthew's gospel, even though we do not know the exact time of origin. And it is also generally accepted that Pauline tradition was widespread in Syria at the time when Matthew was written (Luz, 1985; Davies & Allison, 1988). Lindemann represents the moderate, skeptical approach characteristic of good contemporary exegetes. Paul and Matthew seem accordingly to have little to do with each other.

Nevertheless, in the last few decades, there are 4 works with different perspectives in discussing the relationship of Paul with Matthew: R. Mohrlang's (1984) textual comparison, Thomas L. Brodie's (2004) intertextual analysis, David C. Sim's (1998, 2002, 2008, 2009) rather comprehensive anti-Paulinistic interpretation of Matthew, and Gerhard Theissen's (2005, 2010) attempt at uncovering anti-Paulinistic polemic in all the 5 big speeches of Matthew. We shall briefly see how their works contribute to the issue of the relationship of Paul and Matthew.

R. Mohrlang limits his investigation on a text to text comparison between Paul and Matthew. He compares synchronically and statically the structures of ethics of both Matthew and Paul, but does not look into the dynamic interaction between them. On the issue of Law, he concludes that 'Matthew's viewpoint is closer to that of traditional Judaism, while Paul represents a more radical break with it.' (Mohrlang, 1984; Goulder, 1974). The comparison on the relation between 'indicative' and 'imperative' is in the same vein: 'While Matthew emphasizes the imperative, Paul focuses rather on the indicative from which the imperative derives' (Mohrlang, 1984). Mohrlang discusses further some social, polemical, motivational, psychological, Christological, etc., interpretative factors, which may explain the reason that Paul and Matthew are so different (Mohrlang, 1984). His positive contribution lies in the synchronically and factual (text to text) comparison between Paul and Matthew. Unclear remains, whether he understands the First Gospel as an answer to Paul, and whether or how Matthew reacts on Paul and answers to Paul, and which social reality stands behind the compared texts (of Paul and Matthew).

Methodologically Thomas L. Brodie's work focuses on intertextuality. He regards the Gospel of Matthew as a revision of Pauline theology and especially the Letter to the Romans. He discovers in both texts so many common words, themes and structures, that he has only one explanation for it: The Evangelist Matthew possesses a copy of Romans and uses it as source (Brodie, 2004). This fits the observation that 'where Mt is most distinctive (from Mark), the connections (with Romans) are strong' (Brodie, 2004). The work of the Evangelist Matthew exists in a 'reworking Paul's theology' (Brodie, 2004). The use of Romans is seen especially in Matt 1:1 – 17:20. Accordingly, both Matthew and Paul express that Jesus is a descendant of David (Matt 1:3; Rom 1:1-3). The Matthean version of the Lord's Prayer (and the whole teaching on almsgiving, prayer and fasting in chapter 6) is influenced by Romans 10, which is possibly an original thesis. Their relation is seen, on the one side, in the threefold repetition of 'in your heart' in Rom 10:6-9, on another side, also in the threefold repetition of 'in secret' (Matt 6:4, 6, 18). One may perhaps say: one discovers the relationship, which Brodie understands between Matthew and Romans, only with some exegetical postulations.

David C. Sim presents publications on the relationship between Paul and Matthew, which are highly convincing. In method he combines intertextuality-research, factual comparison and historical work. He renews the thesis of 'Matthew's anti-Paulinism' (Sim, 1998). He argues for there being evidence of anti-Pauline tendency not only in Matt 5:19, but also in the polemic against 'wrong teacher' in Matt 7:21-23, in the Great Commandment at the end of the Gospel, (Sim, 2008) in the Understanding of the Law, (Sim, 2009a) and in the Messianic confession of Peter: (Sim, 2009b) in response to which Jesus praises Peter with a blessing in Matt 16:17 because his knowledge (Jesus is the son of the living God) does not come from 'flesh and blood', but from God's revelation. Such a revelation corresponds strikingly to the narrative of Damascus experiences of Paul in Gal 1:15-16, according to which God revealed his 'son' to Paul, though without mentioning reference to 'flesh and blood'. Sim regards therefore that Matthew's depiction of Peter's Messiah-confession might be described as standing in opposition to Paul's calling to apostle. For Sim, the relation between Matt 16:17-18a, on the one side, Gal 1:12, 16-17 and 1 Cor 10:4 on the other side, are a test case for the intertextual relation of the Matthean Gospel to the Pauline Letters. We may say, Sim is the first who has submitted such a full anti-Paulinistic interpretation in the Gospel of Matthew.

Nevertheless, the majority of exegetes still remain skeptically opposed to it. Some emphasize the basic agreement between Matthew and Paul, others understand Matthew as a necessary complementary addition, while most regard the Gospel of Matthew as neither pro- or anti-Paulinistic, but as un-Paulinistic (Sim, 2002).

Recently, Gerd Theissen has developed the thesis that within its horizon of narrative time the Gospel of Matthew looks to the time after Jesus' death in its depiction of his teachings, and in this way addresses the contemporary (Theissen, 2005, 2007, 2010). He discovers a hidden anti-Pauline polemic in each of the 5 blocks of teachings. Thus in the programmatic introduction of the Sermon on the Mount, Paul is inserted as a kind of opposite figure. He is the teacher of the Law who dissolves the commandments (Matt 5:19). In the Mission Instruction, the 'provision-teaching' is changed by Matthew, so that missionaries are forbidden not only to bring money, but also to acquire any wealth (Matt 10:9). This applies to any types of missionary, including Paul and Barnabas. They both make money for their missionary trips by means of working. In the Teaching of the Parables, Paul is indirectly attacked under the figure of the 'enemy'. His preaching sows weeds among the good wheat (Matt 13:25). In the Teaching on the Community, any person who gives cause for annoyance to the little ones (σκανδαλίση), is implicitly pointing to a person, like Paul. This person with his message of 'annoyance of the cross' did not only cause offense, but he wanted to arouse it (Matt 18:6). In contrast, Peter is held up as a counter-model against this person (like Paul); for he deliberately gave up arousing offence (Matt 17:24-27). In the Woes to the Pharisees and Eschatological Discourses, Paul is indirectly attacked as the Pharisee who traverses land and sea to make a single proselyte, and then make this proselyte 'a child of hell' (Matt 23:15). The Gospel of Matthew contrasts 'this gospel of the kingdom' in the Eschatological discourses (Matt 24:14) with the one which Paul sought to spread over the world. Not the Pauline gospel, but the 'Gospel' of Matthew should be spread over the world.

It has to be emphasized, however, that the abovementioned authors, who see an anti-Pauline polemic in the First Gospel, are exceptions. In many works, this issue, as outlined above, is not discussed at all. This applies even to works whose focus is on conflict in early Christianity. For example, Walter Bauer (1877-1960) does not at all deal with the relationship of Paul and the Synoptics (Bauer, 1934). Similarly, Gerd Lüdemann does not discuss the Gospel of

Matthew in his work on the history of anti-Paulinism (Lüdemann, 1980). C. K. Barrett investigates the influence of Paul in the early Christianity, but also neglects the features relating to Matthew (Barrett, 2003; Jervell, 1984; Goulder, 1994), although he is aware of this gap. He states nevertheless, that 'a full discussion (of the positive Pauline legend) would seek traces of it elsewhere, e.g., in the gospels' (Barrett, 1973-74).

Handbooks and commentaries are indicators of the awareness of the problem in the New Testament academia. We can note that James Dunn: *Cambridge Companion to St Paul* (2003), which deals with the Influence History of Paul from 2nd century to the contemporary age, gives no attention to Paul's relationship to the canonical Gospels (Dunn, 2003). In the same vein, general presentations of Paul contain few indications of any relationship between Paul and the gospels (Sampley, 2016; Schnelle, 2003; Riches & Sim, 2005). Among commentaries on Matthew, the two major commentaries, those of Ulrich Luz and W. D. Davies / Dale C. Allison, offer no treatment of Matthew's relationship to Paul (Luz, 1985; Davies & Allison, 1988).

Nevertheless, although people pay little attention to the relationship of Matthew to Paul, there are often comments which indicate acceptance of the notion that a polemic against Paul is present in Matt 5:19. Thus while Rudolf Bultmann regards Paulinism as a whole as having had no influence on the redaction of the Synoptic Gospels (Bultmann, 1958), he nevertheless sees a jibe against Paul in Matt 5:19 (Bultmann, 1958; Klostermann, 1971). H. D. Betz gives the issue no weight (Betz, 1995). However, he is convinced of polemic in 5:19, although he ascribes it to a pre-Matthean source (Betz, 1982, 1992, 1995). For C. Heubült, this source expresses Matthean theology (Heubült, 1980). This concession of an anti-Pauline meaning at least in Matt 5:19 opens the door for a more comprehensive interpretation. Because Matt 5:19 is the closing comment in the programmatic statement at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount, it must be given weight and be understood as targeting a specific teaching and the person advocating it. If the Evangelist Matthew provides his programmatic statement about Jesus' proclamation with an anti-Pauline jibe, then this is so to say: the Evangelist is aware of the opposition of his picture of Jesus and his theology to another (probably Pauline) teaching. Further, this means we should consider it likely that such an opposition lies hidden in the background also elsewhere in the Gospel.

After a century long history of academic interpretation of the New Testament, the interpreters have still not yet reached a position which provides a convincing picture of the relationship between Matthew and Paul. There are, as the discussion above has outlined, many reasons for this. Exegesis of both Paul and Matthew is always demanding and sometimes confusing, requiring a high degree of specialization on the part of exegetes in dealing with all the details. The reason why a satisfactory explanation of the relationship has not been reached firstly lies in the fact that there is little commonality between the Gospel of Matthew and Paul's writings. For instance a central word, like δικαιοσύνη, which is common to both authors, is used by each with almost opposite meaning. And again, Paul writes letters in reflective and polemical style, whereas Matthew narrates a story with the aid of many anecdotes and references to human behavior.

In the following, we shall suggest two more points of contact: 'gospel' and 'mission', besides the afore-mentioned subject of the Jewish Law. This will at the same time serve as a brief literature review.

3 Gospel

- τὸ εὐαγγέλιον περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ (Rom 1:1-7. 16f)
- τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας (Matt 4:23; 9:35; 14:14)

The terminology, gospel (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον), constitutes the main theme and focus of the whole New Testament. It is also one of the most important theological concepts of both Paul (Rom 1:16f; Gal 1:6-9) and the canonical Gospels, as per se its use as their titles of the first 4 books of the NT (Marcus, 2002; Stuhlmacher, 1968). However, this word is not used first by the New Testament. The word itself derives from its Greco-Roman context, but at the same time has been enriched by the Jewish heritage. The Hebrew root פגש verb in Pi'el form means 'to proclaim good news' (1 Kings 1:42; Jer 20:15; in LXX as εὐαγγελίζειν) (Stuhlmacher, 1968). At the time of the Roman Empire, the word τὰ εὐαγγέλια (in plural form) is used in announcement of important political events, such as the birth of an heir to the Emperor and his accession to the throne. For example, the inscription (VGT, 259; 9 BCE) refers to the birthday of Augustus as a gospel (good news) for the people of the Roman Empire (Stuhlmacher, 1968). Josephus records εὐαγγέλια in the context of Roman

emperor worship and uses it to refer to the elevation of Vespasian to emperor (Jewish War 4: 618, 656) (Schnelle, 1998).

Among early Christians, Paul and Matthew are not the first ones to borrow this word εὐαγγέλιον to describe Jesus Christ in the NT. Paul expresses clearly to the Corinthians: the εὐαγγέλιον they learned from him was something that Paul himself had received (from Christians before him) in 1Cor 15:1-3. Such a pre-Pauline tradition about the word and content of the εὐαγγέλιον is also reflected in Rom 1:3-4 and 1Thess 1:9-10 with the absolute use of the term recorded in 1 Thess 1:5; 1 Cor 15:1. Paul probably learned it from Jewish-Hellenistic Christians, and further developed it. The evangelist Matthew's predecessor, Mark, of a later generation (at least one to few decades after Paul) could hardly be regarded as the first one to borrow use of the word εὐαγγέλιον in the NT, though Mark is probably the first one to expand the given content of the εὐαγγέλιον with the life (words and deeds) of a person, Jesus. He thus creates a new genre, which is later called εὐαγγέλιον as according to the wording of the beginning of his book (Taylor, 1952; Strecker, 1975, 1979; Ferdinand, 2002; Cranfield, 1975a; Wilckens, 1978; Burridge, 1992). Matthew, following the 2 source-theory, adopts and expands the Gospel of Mark.

In the following, we will try, as far as possible, to discern the earliest development of the Christian concept of the εὐαγγέλιον. The Pauline letters were the first written and preserved documents for us. We will begin with a brief stretch of how Paul takes over the εὐαγγέλιον and further develops it.

Paul's Understanding of the εὐαγγέλιον

According to his earliest written letter preserved for us, Paul preaches the gospel to the Thessalonians (1 Thess 1:5) with four main themes: (1) God raised Jesus from death; (2) Jesus rescues us from the wrath (of God) that is coming; (3) Christians wait for this son of God coming back from heaven; (4) as a result they turned from idols to serve the living and true God (1 Thess 1:9-10). From these themes, we may identify the contents of the gospel preached here. First, a narrative of the resurrection of Jesus Christ; second, the basic meaning of the resurrection so that Christians can be saved and rescued from God's coming wrath; third, Christians hope for Jesus Christ's second coming; and fourth, an ethical dimension so that Christians should respond or behave according to their

belief, which is to turn from idols. So, Paul's gospel consists of an historical event, which has its significance for human beings in terms of hope and ethics.

However, a closer look into Paul's letters will show that there are at least two places which reflect how the earliest Christians described the content of the gospel prior to Paul, and are different from what Paul depicts as the content in 1 Thessalonians (Suh, 2003).

1) The Pre-Pauline Fundamental Content of the Gospel (1Cor 15:3b-5; Rom 1:3-4)

In 1Cor 15:1, Paul leaves us a hint about the primitive content of the gospel (in absolute use, i.e., without 'God' as its predicate) among the earliest Christians prior to his own conversion to Jesus Christ. He explicitly tells the Corinthians that the gospel he has preached to them is what he himself has received and learned (Stanton, 2003). This gospel concentrates on the Easter event as foretold by the Scriptures: Christ is said to have died for our sins, was buried, was raised on the third day; and he appeared to Cephas and the twelve (1Cor 15:3b-5). Whether such a kerygma, perhaps the earliest εὐαγγέλιον, contained further appearances, reflected by use of the Greek conjunction ἔπειτα / εἵτα, is debatable, but the definitive length of this εὐαγγέλιον is not our immediate concern here. Nevertheless, if what Paul cites does not end in verse 8, then 1 Cor 15:12 identifies a clear conflict with the content of this earliest gospel when Paul turns to the question of the Corinthians, who were querying that there is any resurrection.

Here in the gospel Paul has received the immediate meaning of Jesus' death for the sins of humanity is expressed, but the significance of the other details of the Easter event is not articulated. If one thinks conceptually about 'Jesus' death for our sins', one has to admit that its purpose is already included in the expression in 1Thess 1:10: 'Jesus rescues us from the wrath (of God) that is coming'. The purpose of being forgiven of sins is understood as a means to escape or to be rescued from God's wrath and to have a good relationship with God. In 1 Cor 15:3b-5 we note that the core of the gospel that Paul has received and learned is more primitive than that presented in 1 Thess 1:5, 9-10, in which a wider spectrum of meanings of the gospel can be seen.

In Rom 1:3-4, Paul quotes, if not recites verbatim, another of the earliest understandings of the εὐαγγέλιον or an already existing confessional formula. The gospel is indeed the gospel of God (θεοῦ) about his son Jesus Christ (περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ). The Roman Christians being addressed probably share the

understanding of the dual sonship of Jesus Christ: he was descended from David according to the flesh and designated son of God in power according to the spirit of holiness. The key words in this statement of dual identity are not Paul's usual vocabulary (e.g., ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ κατὰ σάρκα, κατὰ ἀγιωσύνης πνεῦμα), and scholars generally agree that they are pre-Pauline (Cranfield, 1975a, 1975b; Lohse, 2003; Cullmann, 1949; Bultmann, 1958). Apart from the dual identity of sonship of Jesus Christ, the content of this gospel includes the Easter event that God has raised Jesus Christ from death. We may observe that as in 1 Cor 15:3-5 and 1 Thess 1:5, 9-10 there is no interpretation of the significance of the Easter event. The emphasis on the Davidic line, the Jewish royal family, is not just to highlight the humanity of Christ, but it also intends to legitimize him as the Messiah. This understanding of Jesus as the Christ is especially meaningful to Christians with Jewish origin and heritage. The designation of Jesus as the son of God is a confession that Jesus was raised from the dead, and an assertion that he has universal significance for human beings.

Paul's Development of the Eschatological Kingship

There is still an unsettled issue in relation to the earliest content of the gospel in Rom 1:3-4 concerning the Messiahship of Jesus. According to the Jewish tradition, it is a necessary but not sufficient condition that the Messiah should be a Davidic descendent. The Christ in the Jewish sense is indeed a political and military leader. The earthly Jesus obviously did not fulfill the role of this leadership. By confessing Jesus as Christ/Messiah, the earliest Christians have to deal with the dilemma, whether Jesus is legitimately called the Messiah. This is indeed a major distinction between Christian Jews and other Jews, namely whether to confess Jesus as Messiah or not. As far as we know, this remains an issue in the time of the Gospel of John, whose purpose of writing is to affirm that Jesus is the Messiah (Joh 20:30-31). For the earliest Christians, Jesus had already died and could no longer be any political and military leader of their nation in their living world.

Paul, one of the earliest Christian preachers, is probably the first one who deals with the dilemma, whether Jesus is legitimately called the Messiah because he was not a king on earth at all. While defending the resurrection of Christ, Paul incorporates the eschatological kingship of Jesus Christ into the understanding of the gospel about him (1 Cor 15:24-26). Although Jesus died, he

will rule in the near future (Collins, 1999), which is echoed in the synoptic gospels' treatment of the 'delay of the Parousia'. As mentioned earlier, the core content of this earliest gospel consists mainly of Jesus' death, resurrection and appearances (1Cor 15: 3-5). Having answered the question posed to him by the Corinthians, Paul comes to reinforce the fact that Christ is now raised from the dead (15:20). First, he uses the symbol of 'first fruit' to articulate the meaning of Jesus Christ's resurrection for believing Christians, who will in turn follow Jesus and be raised from the dead in the end of time as well. In describing the resurrection of Christians when Jesus Christ will come again to gather the dead and living in his first written letter, Paul employs the conjunction ἔπειτα to organize the order of the procedure: the dead in Christ will rise first; then (ἔπειτα) those who are alive will be caught up ... (1 Thess 4:16-17). In 1 Cor 15:6-7, Paul uses the same ἔπειτα to enlarge the group of witnesses of Jesus' appearance after resurrection. Reusing the same literary device, Paul uses the Greek conjunction ἔπειτα / εἴτα in 1Cor 15:23-24 to develop the kingship of the resurrected Christ (15:24-26). There is again a neat order: Christ the first fruit, then (ἔπειτα) at his coming those belonging to him - then (εἴτα) comes the end (15:23f). Christ will rule (kingship) after destroying all enemies (including the last one, death). The issue or dilemma of Christ's kingship is now no longer a historical one, but an eschatological and transcendent one (enemies of the kingly Christ includes the mystical figure, death). So Jesus is made king: Having been resurrected from the dead, Jesus Christ must rule (βασιλεύειν) and will give the kingdom (βασιλείαν) to God at the end (1 Cor 15:24-25). However, this gospel, albeit with kingship, is not identical with the gospels' τα εὐαγγέλια in the secular Roman sense (usually in plural form) or a means to challenge and threaten the existing political authority and power. Consequently, Paul's gospel would have a better chance to survive in the external world of political power; and at the same time the earliest Christians could continue to claim that their Christian belief had its roots from the Jewish tradition.

(3) We have discussed Paul's understanding of the gospel above and we may summarize these observations: it is reasonable to assume that Paul does know the life of the earthly Jesus, although there are indeed just a few of Jesus' sayings cited in Paul's letters. Paul certainly intends to talk more about Christ, as he says, 'from now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way' (2 Cor 5:16, NRSV). Therefore, the prepositional

phrase, περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ (about his son, i.e. Jesus Christ, in Rom 1:3a) qualifying the 'gospel of God' (v. 1b), does not point to the details of the life of the earthly Jesus, but it aims at 'receiving grace from him' (Rom 1:5a). In other words, Paul concentrates his teachings not on the historical details of the life of earthly Jesus, but on the meaning of the Jesus Christ through whom God channels his grace to all human beings of the world. Therefore, the significance of his death (cross) and resurrection for all human beings is the essence of Paul's gospel of God. The main content of Paul's gospel of God embraces issues which existed before Paul: the significance of Jesus Christ for human beings and his kingship. The subject of this gospel, which is to be preached, is Jesus Christ (Rom 1:16f). Paul's own missionary task concerning the gospel (εἰς εὐαγγέλιον, v.1) is to proclaim it especially to the Gentiles.

Mark's and Matthew's Understanding of the εὐαγγέλιον

The above discussion shows that Paul's understanding of the εὐαγγέλιον about Jesus Christ concentrates on the significance of the Easter event for Christians (e.g. 1 Thess 1:5, 9-10). If the dual sonship of Jesus Christ as the fundamental Christian belief is present in the pre-Pauline formula (Rom 1: 3f), we may say that Paul mainly develops and formulates his theology based on the aspect of the divine sonship, κατὰ πνεῦμα ἀγιωσύνης, much more than that of his earthly humanity, κατὰ σάρκα (Rom 1:3f). While developing the meaning of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection in contrast to the historical accounts of the gospels, Paul also theologizes the concept of the kingship of the Messiah in the context of his eschatology (1 Corinthians 15).

Before we discuss Matthew's concept of the εὐαγγέλιον, we have to take a look into how and what Mark has done prior to Matthew.

Mark's Strategic Use of the Term εὐαγγέλιον

Here, we shall simply discuss Mark's understanding of εὐαγγέλιον in its literary context, because our focus is on Matthew not on a detailed discussion of Mark.

From a literary perspective, Mark incorporates the passion narrative (direct allusion to Paul's *theologia crucis*), the human side (κατὰ σάρκα) of Jesus and some of Jesus' teachings and deeds (indirectly alluded to in Paul) into his gospel. Mark's way of developing and presenting the gospel (that which Jesus Christ preaches), concentrates on the other concept of the gospel: the biography

(vital words and deeds) of Jesus Christ; and this form of presentation thus evolves into new genre (different from Paul's). However, the Gospel of Mark is not to be seen as a contradiction of Paul's gospel (Marcus, 2000). They have different emphases: Mark on the historical accounts while Paul on the conceptual, spiritual meaning. They are indeed complementary to each other. Without Paul's success at transforming the role of Jesus' kingship into the eschatological context as the background for Mark, Mark's narrative up to the empty tomb and the fear of the two women would have remained a purely past historical event, and the kingly role of Jesus would also have remained 'buried' together with his death (Reimarus, 1778)!

From the above considerations we may say that Mark knows the dual sonship of Jesus Christ, the core of the earliest Christians εὐαγγέλιον, if not directly identical to its two fundamental formulas which Paul preserves for us (1 Cor 15:3-4; Rom 1:3-4). Mark develops and formulates the gospel κατὰ σάρκα in a different direction from what Paul has understood and done with κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιοσύνης. Furthermore, Mark does not forsake, but eludes to Paul's theological concept of the εὐαγγέλιον, that is, the gospel for all human beings. This is supported by the two following considerations: (1) At the literary level, the genitive construction, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, constituting the first words to the Second Gospel and part of its title, allows a double understanding of the εὐαγγέλιον, that is, the gospel about Jesus Christ (Paul) and the gospel that Jesus preaches (Mark). Mark's opening phrase alludes to the gospel, employing Paul's fundamental vocabulary, with the predicate as an objective genitive, while at the same time, legitimates Mark's own new genre of the gospel with the predicate as a subjective genitive. (2) On the theological level, Mark constructs the Second Gospel with an emphatic focus on the concept of the passion or *theologia crucis*, which is the direction of Paul's understanding of the meaning of the gospel about Jesus Christ. Moreover, Mark shares the gospel with the Gentile/universal mission, the very conviction of Paul, who devotes all his life after conversion as a missionary to all the world. While Paul understands and transforms Jesus' kingship into an eschatological concept, Mark now presents it in narrative form linked to some concrete events of the earthly Jesus.

Matthew

Matthew understands τὸ εὐαγγέλιον differently from Mark, whose εὐαγγέλιον Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ could have a fluid meaning.

Matthew confines and diminishes its meaning. Three times he brings the genitive predicate τῆς βασιλείας to τὸ εὐαγγέλιον 'the gospel of the kingdom', rather than the objective genitive Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ as in Mark 1:1, and also in Paul (see above). In Matthew, Jesus is the subject not the object and he is the one preaching the gospel, who sets forth the good news of the kingdom of God through his preaching, healing and teaching. Mark's twofold perception of Jesus' relation to the gospel (as subject and object) does not appear in Matthew at all.

Jesus Christ as the subject who preaches the Gospel

Matthew has three times placed the predicate τῆς βασιλείας right after τὸ εὐαγγέλιον (Matt 4:23; 9:35; 24:14). In 4:23 and 9:35, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας is in fact a specific formulation of Matthew's, bracketing the ministry of Jesus Christ, both his words (chapter 5-7, or the Sermon on the Mount) and his deeds (chapter 8-9, or cycle of miracles). The exemplary illustration of Jesus' ministry in chapter 5-9 is framed by two summaries, which both feature the use of διδάσκων, κηρύσσων and θεραπεύων (Matt 4:23 and 9:35). The subjective role of Jesus is crystal clear (cf. 4:17): Jesus himself is preaching the gospel of the kingdom. One then could hardly regard Jesus as the object of this gospel being preached here.

The Matthean formula 'τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας' occurs the third time in Matt 24:14 (// Mark 13:10), where Mark uses τὸ εὐαγγέλιον absolutely, whereas Matthew has the genitive predicate τῆς βασιλείας. Both contexts are exactly the same with close parallels. In this eschatological context of Matt 24:14 (//Mark 13:10), the gospel of the kingdom is said to be preached to all nations first, and then the end will come.

In order to understand Matthew's use of the gospel (Matt 24:14), we shall examine it further at the readers' and story level in comparison with its parallel in Mark 13:10, and the use of the cognate verb form εὐαγγελίζω, which Matthew uses once to denote the ministry of the same Jesus Christ.

(i) In the context of Mark 13:10, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον is used absolutely without any qualifier.

One could thus imagine that from the time of Easter to the composition of the Gospel of Mark, Christian preachers, like Paul, have already been preaching the gospel about Jesus Christ. This understanding of the gospel is silently and subtly assumed between Easter and Mark. This εὐαγγέλιον in Mark 13:10 could also be understood as having the same meaning as τὸ εὐγγέλιον Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ in Mark 1:1 (as objective genitive) by Mark's first, intended readers. However, this does not apply to Matthew.

But Matt 24:14 applies also to the Gentiles! And its content is 'the gospel of the kingdom'. The specific Matthean formulation τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας has already been defined in content as Jesus' words and deeds in Matt 4:23 and 9:35. The predicate τῆς βασιλείας to the εὐαγγέλιον in the Matthean context does not permit us to think of it as the 'gospel about Jesus Christ', for the genitive predicate Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ is omitted (Hagner, 1995).

(ii) The objective genitive understanding of the gospel (about Jesus Christ) in Matt 24:14 is also very unlikely at the narrative level. Jesus Christ himself, as noted above, is the one who preaches the gospel in the Gospels. The cognate verb εὐαγγελίζω, which occurs only once in the Gospel of Matthew (11:5), confirms our interpretation. In Jesus' answer to the question of John the Baptist sent through his disciples (Matt 11:4-6), we find six parallel phrases each with a plural noun and a verb in the third person plural relating to the blind, the lame, the lepers, the deaf, the dead and the poor. All these people are satisfied because of the deeds of Jesus Christ, which John's disciples have witnessed (heard and seen). This Matthean verb εὐαγγελίζω, which connects directly with all those in need (physically, but not spiritually), and so cannot have meant anything else apart from Jesus' deeds, which is a preaching of the gospel, indicating that Jesus is the subject, the one preaching and performing that gospel.

Furthermore, this Matthean understanding of the gospel is reinforced by the demonstrative pronoun τοῦτο placed in front of τὸ εὐαγγέλιον in 24:14 (also in 26:13). The syntactic use of τοῦτο twice to qualify 'gospel' is indeed unexpected and thus signifies Matthew's deliberate addition because his source in Mark 13:10 and 14:9 does not have this τοῦτο. Martin Dibelius correctly observes that τοῦτο should not be seen as accidental and later commentators see it as undeniable as a literary observation and support his viewpoint (Dibelius, 1933; Schniewind, 1937; Davies & Allison, 1988; Luz, 2002a, 2002b). Davies & Allison further suspect that the addition of the τοῦτο in Matthew serves as a

mark to distinguish this “true proclamation” from that of the false prophets (Davies & Allison, 1988).

Obviously, Matthew wants to stress this gospel of his, and not any others. He could even have the false gospel, preached by false prophets (cf. Matt 7:21-23) in his mind. Inevitably, one thinks of Paul's polemic tone, the ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον, which his opponents, the conservative law-observant Jewish Christians, preached (Gal 1:6) (Sim, 1998, 2008). It shows that the content of the εὐαγγέλιον could be greatly argued over or even quarreled about and also preached quite differently in the beginning of early Christianity. (The singular use of ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον in Gal 1:6 could imply a specific form or content of a gospel that Paul is arguing against.)

From the standpoint of Matthew, there are probably more gospels being preached which do not correspond to τοῦτο τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας with Jesus Christ as the one doing the preaching as he so programmatically emphasizes in 4:23 and 9:35. Matthew could have been thinking of the gospel of Paul, or of the gospel as depicted by Mark, perhaps even of the gospel which Paul argued against and regarded as ‘another gospel’. That ‘another gospel’ differs from Paul's, Mark's and Matthew's gospels by insisting on ritual demand, like circumcision, which are not even mentioned once in Mark and Matthew.

Prior to Matthew, there were at least two kinds of gospels: Paul's gospel about Jesus Christ and the gospel that Paul identifies as another gospel. Now, Matthew is defining the εὐαγγέλιον by τοῦτο and τῆς βασιλείας, in which Jesus is the subject preaching the gospel, whereas in Paul's gospel Jesus is the object being preached.

In contrast to the 3 previous occurrences in Matthew, the predicate τῆς βασιλείας does not appear in the last appearance of the noun τὸ εὐαγγέλιον (26:13). However, the demonstrative pronoun τοῦτο there adequately shows that τοῦτο τὸ εὐαγγέλιον bears the same meaning as the previous three occurrences from a linguistic point of view. Therefore, the omission of the predicate τῆς βασιλείας should not be seen as indicating a shift from the subjective genitive understanding of Jesus Christ's gospel. We conclude that the word τοῦτο is deliberately placed in front of the phrase τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας in Matt 24:14 (cf. 26:13). If the qualifiers, τοῦτο and τῆς βασιλείας, in Matthew receive enough attention, one could hardly deny the contrast between the Matthean subjective genitive understanding of τοῦτο τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας (Jesus

Christ preaches) and Paul's objective genitive understanding of the gospel (Jesus Christ is being preached).

4 Mission

Paul is the greatest missionary in early Christianity. He labors for and establishes many Christian communities in the Mediterranean region (Acts of the Apostles). His prominence extends, beyond these communities, as far as his opponents among the Jewish Christians. His writings have been famous, widespread and influential since his day. The positive Pauline legend is, in his time, well developed and reflected in some deuter-Pauline epistles, for instance, Ephesians, Acts, the Pastorals and 1 Clement (Barrett, 1974). Some of the deuter-Pauline epistles are even forgeries. The Acts of the Apostles regards him even as a hero (Fitzmyer, 1981)!

With the above evidence about mission fields, we would like to draw attention to the common consensus that Matthew is regarded as written in Syria, and even probably in its major city Antioch. This is to say, one can hardly think of the scenario that Matthew did not come across or know of Paul. Apart from this probability, we shall further illustrate some more small hints relating to the concept of mission, which may bring us near to the possible relationship between Paul and Matthew.

Mission Field

Matthew describes and interprets allegorically the situation of the mission field in the parable of the weeds among the wheat: 'a man (v.24) sows good seeds in the field', which is interpreted as 'the sons of the kingdom in the harvest time' (v.37). Contrastingly, the bad seeds among the wheat in the same mission field that the enemy 'ὁ ἐχθρὸς' (v.25) sows later become 'the sons of evil in the end time' (v.38). The man and the enemy are interpreted as the Son of Man (v.37) and the devil (v.39) respectively. Hence, the parable unfolds before us different groups of people growing together in a mission field and this could probably refer to a mixed Christian community in the world of the Gospel (Wong, 1992).

In view of the agricultural parables of the kingdom of heaven in Matthew chapter 13, one can easily figure out in the Parable of the Sower (13:3-23) that one sower sows the seeds (word of the kingdom) onto the soil (different

audience) while the unfruitful and fruitful soils symbolize different responses of the audience to the message. In the parable of the weeds among wheat (13:24-30; 36-43), we note that there is more than one sower (preacher). Actively working in the field / world are: the Son of Man (the man) and the Evil One (enemy 'ἐχθρός').

The seed stands for the message, and sometimes also for the people who hear it. Different seeds (weeds and wheat) sowed symbolize different messages delivered to the audience by different preachers. That is to say, besides the messages of the Son of Man, there exist some other messages in the mission field. Matthew does not make it clear from where these other messages come. However, we know that besides the royal use of the terminology εὐαγγέλιον in the ancient world of the Roman Empire (see above), there were different gospels, or different messages preached among Christians prior to the composition of the Matthean Gospel. And Matthew (24:14) emphasizes that his own gospel of the kingdom of God is to be preached all over the world. It seems, therefore, reasonable to assume that the enemy is someone, whom we may call a missionary, or a figure, behind which there are different missionaries. This enemy preaches a gospel, which differs from the gospel that Matthew preaches.

The Epistle of Peter to James (2:3-4) in the Pseudo-Clementine Literature probably identifies the hostile man as Paul (Coxe, 1995; Rehm, 1953). Peter writes:

For some from among the Gentiles have rejected my legal preaching, attaching themselves to certain lawless and trifling preaching of the man who is my enemy (ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐχθρός, 'the enemy man' literally). And these things some have attempted while I am still alive, to transform my words by certain various interpretations, in order to the dissolution of the law; as though I also myself were of such a mind, but did not freely proclaim it, which God forbid (Coxe, Roberts & Donaldson, 1995)!

Could Paul be one of the active missionaries in the region of the Gospel of Matthew, who sowed weeds, in the eyes of Matthew, among the wheat? Was he so strongly disputed in early Christianity? Many opinions deny that Paul is this 'hostile man' because the enemy is later identified as Satan in the allegory (Matt 13:39) (Holtzmann, 1897). One can hardly imagine that the figure of Paul would be demonized in early Christianity.

Yet, such an identification, on the one hand, is not absolutely necessary to put Paul in this position. For Paul and his teaching could also be the bad seeds, which Satan has sown, in the view of his (Paul's) Christian opponents. Satan in the allegory of the parable (Mt 13:36-43) stands opposite to the angel, who has 'sown' good people. Satan may also sow bad people. On the other hand, the demonization of opponents in early Christianity is not uncommon. In fact, Paul himself does so when he polemicizes against his Christian opponents, probably with Jewish background:

"For such boosters are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder! Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is not strange if his ministers also disguise themselves as ministers of righteousness. Their end will match their deeds." (2 Cor 11:13-15; NRSV)

The opponents are indeed here only the ministers of Satan, but not Satan himself. But it is only a small step to the assertion that Satan transforms himself as these ministers. Such an interpretation above would be inconsistent with Matt 5:19, where Paul accordingly will be given the lowest place in the kingdom of heaven. This inconsistency could, however, disappear if one freely interprets this text as meaning that those who teach the setting aside of the Law are de facto to be excluded from it. However taking into account the wider picture, inconsistency is not uncommon in the early Christian writings. Perhaps Paul's message is just one of the common seeds which the Devil has spread. But his communities grow like the weeds among the wheat.

Paul's work was pioneering a new chapter in the Jesus movement, embracing and allowing all Gentiles to inherit and share in God's promise, which was originally reserved solely for the Jewish ancestors. In his metaphor, Paul describes himself as one of the co-workers of God and through the other co-workers, God makes things grow: 'I (Paul) planted, Apollos watered ... but only God gave the growth' (1Cor 3:6f).

Different from Paul, Matthew does not present the missionaries and preachers as God's co-worker in the parable of the weeds among the wheat and its allegorical interpretation (Mt 13:24-30, 36-43). At the same time, for those servants who take on passive roles in nurturing the growth of the seeds, we cannot simply regard them as co-workers in Paul's vocabulary. However, it is possible to infer that the servants may have assisted their master, who has helped the message grow among the audience in the mission field, yet they do

not sow through preaching. The master, the only one who sows the seeds and who is identified as the Son of Man, forbids them from weeding the field (Matt 13:29). He permits the coexistence of weeds and wheat. Eventually he himself will send his reapers (angels) to separate the sons of evil or sons of the kingdom at harvest. The parable of the weeds among the wheat and its interpretation show that Matthew is aware of the situation, in which there are different groups or different audiences in the Christian community. As one can hardly know a human heart or the essence of a person, he demands his Christian community to be tolerant towards different ones (cf. Matt 7:1-5). Above all, the authority of judgment belongs solely to God. Thus we may conclude from the parable that Matthew presents the reality of a mixed community; and he wants to enhance a communal life of different groups in this Christian community.

Instructions to Missionaries

Matthew shares the ideal of Paul's world mission by giving two sending commissions. The first one limits its target exclusively to the Jews, in which Jesus sends his own disciples (Mt 10:5b-6). The second commission at the very end of the Gospel in 28:18-20 calls for a worldwide mission to all nations / Gentiles (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη) (Wong, 1992). The risen Lord gives his last words and discharges his eleven disciples (not twelve, excluding Judas) directly to make disciples (but not to preach the gospel about Jesus Christ) all over the world: going out (πορευέσθε) to reach the target audience, baptizing (βαπτίζοντες) them when they accept the good news, and teaching (διδάσκοντες) the newly converted Christians to observe what the earthly Jesus has taught in the world. The ultimate aim of their tasks is to make disciples (μαθητεύσατε) of all nations. This μαθητεύσατε is the only full verb (imperative) in this great commandment. The other three are participles (going, baptizing and teaching) depending on the main verb. In other words, all nations become the target audience and people should not just hear the gospel about Jesus Christ (genitivus objectivus), but should also be taught to know and to be able to keep all Jesus' teachings, as written in the First Gospel (Strecker, 1966).

Matthew's Jesus demands that those who want to follow him leave their families and possessions, and even abandon their family responsibilities by leaving the dead to bury their own dead (Mt 8:22). In this vein, Jesus' coming does not intend to bring peace, but a sword on the earth, which could perhaps

break a family (Matt 10:34-39). Jesus himself is an itinerant charismatic with a radical life-style, whose relationship with his own family is also under tension (Mark 3:31-35) (Theissen, 1992).

Paul himself also knows this kind of life-style, but he does not follow it (1 Cor 9:3-12)! We know that Paul is also an itinerant charismatic traveling around preaching the gospel about Jesus Christ and for this he labors and suffers (1 Cor 4: 9-13; 2 Cor 11:16-28). He is probably a Roman citizen with a good education. Despite his background, he stigmatizes himself as slavish, uneducated and useless (Barton, 2003; Hock, 1980). Paul works for his own living (1 Cor 9:6) and only occasionally receives financial support from his churches (2 Cor 11:8-9; Phil 4:15-16). As he possesses the skill of tentmaking, which allows him to enjoy the freedom of mobility, he can earn his own living apart from his missionary career (which is voluntary!). Other itinerant preachers, who were once farmers or fishermen, cannot live this way because their living is bound up with the land and sea or lake (Theissen, 1992a, 1992b). Barnabas and Paul admit that this is their way of serving the Lord and are proud of their situation (1 Cor 9:6). However, their way of life per se, especially acquiring their own living (a form of wealth), violates the specific Matthean instruction of Jesus, the renunciation of acquiring wealth and of receiving food from the mission.

Matthew argues against this life-style of Paul as an itinerant charismatic. From the Q logion, we learn that Jesus, while sending his disciples, demands his disciples to give up their property: 'carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and salute no one on the road' (Luke 10:4 // Matt 10:10a). The rationale behind this renunciation of earning money for a living is the Lord's instruction 'for the laborer deserves his food' (Luke 10:7b; Matt 10:10b). Such a radical saying is probably preserved for us by the itinerant charismatics, who follow Jesus' exemplary radical form of life exactly. Matthew changes the word 'purse' in Luke to three similar words denoting wealth, 'gold, silver, copper'. This change suggests to us that the Christian community behind the Gospel of Matthew is living in a big and wealthy ancient city. Matthew also adds an extra verb 'κτάομαι' (to acquire). Consequently, the demand of carrying no wealth in Luke is now altered into a prohibition against acquiring wealth by the itinerant preachers in Matt 10:9 (Davies & Allison, 1991).

Obviously, Matthew does not accept itinerant charismatics who acquire their living during their mission. Paul and Barnabas are the two obvious deviants, who are precisely proud of this form of itinerant charismatic lifestyle.

Jewish missionaries in Matthew

In the polemic against the Pharisees and scribes, Matthew accuses them of hypocrisy and curses them with seven woes (Matthew 23). In the second of the seven woes, the Pharisees and scribes are said to be, on the one hand, so enthusiastic as to traverse sea and land (Luz, 1997) to make a single proselyte, and, on the other hand, likely to they make him twice as much a child of hell as themselves (23:15). They are here described as a kind of Jewish missionary.

Although there might be few examples of being included into Jewish community (proselytes), the Jews understood themselves as God's chosen people, separated from all other peoples, the Gentiles. Judaism in the time of Jesus or Matthew was not keen on missionary work. Indeed, it is a common consensus that there is insufficient evidence to prove that Judaism was 'a proselytizing religion' at that time (Luz, 1997; McKnight, 1991; opposition to this view (Gnilka, 1988; Feldman, 1993).

The content of this logion does not seem to be characteristic of Jesus (Luz, 1997; Davies & Allison, 1997). There are two main considerations focusing either on the 'proselyte' or the 'Pharisee missionary' which can be considered if we want to identify the situation envisaged in Matt 23:15 in the history of Judaism and early Christianity:

1. The first consideration focuses on the 'proselyte'. They are either converted to Judaism in general or converted to Pharisaism in particular. For the former, one would think of some exceptional Gentiles, who converted to Judaism. The singular form of the word 'proselyte' suggests that the text could be pointing to a famous individual conversion, such as King Izates or Flavius Clemens (Jos Ant 20:40-42) (Davies & Allison, 1997; Luz, 1997).

For the latter case of converting to Pharisaism in particular, we have to understand that the Pharisees formed a special group before 70 CE. Yet, they 'were not a uniform, far less monolithic, party'. They were interested in keeping the law and in developing a distinctive halakhic (a Hebrew word meaning 'walk') interpretation of Torah, the traditions of their fathers, the so-called oral

law. They are intent on determining how individuals should ‘act’ in particular situations according to rules and rulings derived from the written Torah (Dunn, 2003). Therefore, the ‘proselytes’ in this case were clearly Jews (not Gentiles), who converted their lifestyle to this Pharisaic group. With this understanding, this logion against the Pharisees could even be traced back to the earthly Jesus himself (McKnight, 1991; Feldman, 1993; Jeremias, 1958).

2. The second consideration extends our attention from the ‘proselyte’ to the converter or Pharisaic missionary. In this case, we will locate the logion in the inner Christian situation in the post Easter period, or more precisely in the time of the Matthean community. After the Roman invasion of Jerusalem in 70 CE, the Pharisees and scribes became representatives of the Jewish leaders of emergent Rabbinic Judaism.

There is more to the logion in Matt 23:15 than its superficial literary meaning relating to Jewish missionaries. Again there are also two figurative possibilities: (1) In order to differentiate itself from Judaism, the Matthean community could here be representing, through counter-examples, the kind of teaching that the church should not give (Davies, & Allison, 2004). Matt 23:15 could be a warning against these examples in Judaism; but at the same it could refer to figures within Christianity. In this vein, we have to be reminded that there were also Pharisees among the Christian circle. According to Act 15:5, Christian Pharisees intruded into the situation in Antioch and insisted that Gentile Christians had to receive circumcision and to keep the law, as the proselytes do. Without being full proselytes, Gentile Christians could not really be saved (Luz, 1997). This opinion is similar to that of Paul’s Law-observant opponents in Galatians, who also demanded that Gentile Christians become proselytes. The second figurative possibility: (2) We may also think of the most famous Christian Pharisee, Paul himself, as being criticized in Matt 23:15.

From Luke’s report and Paul’s own testimony in his letters, we know that Paul was a Pharisee who traversed sea and land to undertake mission and bear witness to Jesus Christ, so that Gentiles might be included in the promise of God to the Jewish forefathers, and become part of the new chosen people of God. Paul is scourged in the Jewish synagogue, which is an internal disciplinary punishment applied to the Jews in the synagogue. He informs us that he has received five times at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one (2 Cor 11:24).

Could this latter possibility of this brilliant figure, who was once a troublemaker in Judaism, be excluded from this group of Pharisees missionaries in the Matthean redaction (23:15)? Or is it probable that Matthew has Paul in mind when writing his polemic against the sea-traversing missionaries? Could we think of any great Jewish and/or Christian missionaries other than Paul who traversed sea and land, were involved in struggling and suffering, in order to win a person for one's own sake? Is it inconceivable that Paul's opponents refused his mission because they saw Paul's teaching, which could lead to disobedience of the Law in the Christian communities, as a work of hell?

5 Conclusion

Law

The idea that Matthew could relate to Paul is not new. In the 19th century, there was already a thesis suggested by Holtzmann regarding the one who will be the least in the kingdom of heaven, in contrast to the Jewish religious leaders who cannot enter it (Matt 5:19-20). The identification of Paul or his followers as the least in the kingdom was heavily criticized subsequently and gradually disappeared. It seemed hard to substantiate the thesis with further hard evidence, even though some scholars last century tried hard to approach the relationship of Matthew and Paul in this light.

Mission

No doubt Paul was the greatest missionary in early Christianity. One can imagine that Christians of one or more generations post Paul's era (like Matthew) must have somehow come across Paul, either via his legacy, theology or even personally through direct contacts. However, though NT documents were generally written after Paul, there is no explicit reference to Paul at all outside of Pauline literature, except once in 2 Pet 3:15-16, which criticizes Paul's teaching as hard to understand. We do not have any obvious hints about whether Matthew himself was also a missionary. Yet, we may see a contrast here: Paul devotes his life to mission in the Mediterranean region; whereas Matthew writes about the mission field making three key observations:

- a) While Matthew sees the whole world as the missionary field, in the parable of the weeds among the wheat he indicates that there are other seed/message/gospels in the missionary field which are sown by the enemy, who is identified as a figure who is engaged in activities similar to those of Paul's mission.
- b) Matthew also criticizes the kind of missionary lifestyle which was characterized especially by meeting one's needs by acquiring resources by working for one's own living, a practice of which Paul is proud.
- c) Matthew further criticizes the Pharisaic missionary traveling sea and land, of which Paul was perhaps the most famous example.

Gospel

Matthew's emphasis on 'this gospel of the kingdom' implicates that he is aware of the fluid meaning arising from the title of Mark 1:1. He does not agree with Paul's understanding of the gospel with the objective genitive meaning, but defines his own gospel in a manner, in which Jesus Christ as the subject preaches the kingdom. The very content of the gospel should not be merely the meaning of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection (as Paul thought), but focus much more on Jesus' teachings, instruction, and commandments.

It must be granted that there is a core difficulty here, namely that the name Paul is never mentioned in the First Gospel and that there is no explicit text which can serve as direct evidence in Matthew for criticism of Paul. Thus one cannot reach firm conclusions about whether Matthew was responding to or criticizing Paul. On the other hand, after analyzing and comparing all these small and indirect hints in relation to Paul and Matthew, can we really say that all these concerns of Matthew (law, mission, gospel) were without some point and had no target in mind? Or may we be allowed to suggest that all these texts of Matthew at least be regarded as indicating a tendency, pointing to a kind of person(s), who has characteristics which we can identify in Paul?

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