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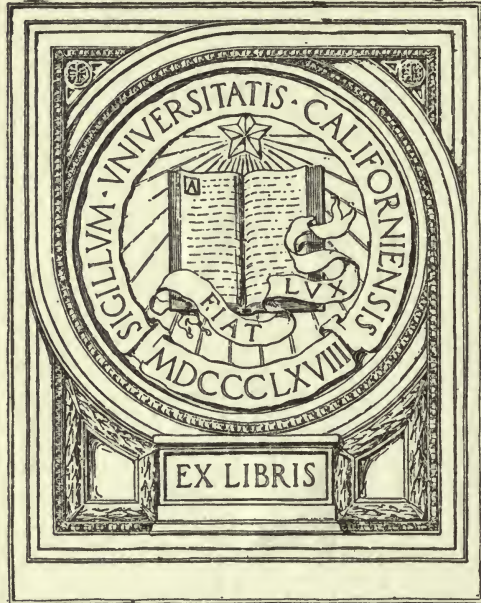
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The Combination *Theos Soter* as Explanation of
the Primitive Christian Use of *Soter*
as Title and Name of Jesus

CONRAD HENRY MOEHLMANN

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
University of Michigan

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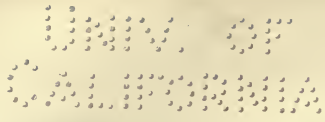
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It was my hope to expand the scope of this inquiry. The illness and death of Professor Walter Rauschenbusch, and my appointment to the professorship of Church History have prevented its realization.

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The Combination *Theos Soter* as Explanation of the Primitive Christian Use of *Soter* as Title and Name of Jesus

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

During its entire history, Christianity has been a religion of redemption. Salvation is a very characteristic word in the Christian vocabulary. The theology of redemption has varied; the proclamation of salvation has been continuous. The development of the Christian doctrine of salvation has been retarded or deteriorated by a host of faults such as bigoted intolerance, penance and satisfaction hypotheses, legalism, the cultivation of superstition and magic; but even these perversions of the religion of Jesus desired to be regarded as ways of salvation.

To demonstrate the proposition that Christianity from its origin has been a religion of salvation, reference may be made by way of illustration to some of the trends in the primitive era of Christianity. Christian gnosticism, though seeking to separate Christianity from its past, was a plan of salvation.¹ Each of the vagrant forms of Christian gnosticism has much to say regarding the "*Soter*" and salvation. The Naassene hymn illustrates the gnostic emphasis on redemption.

"Then Jesus said, Behold, O Father,
This being pursued by ills,
Wanders about upon the earth
Far from thy breath,
Seeking to escape from bitter chaos
And knows not how to pass through it.
Therefore, send me, O Father;
Bearing the seals I shall descend,
All the aeons I shall pass through
All mysteries I shall reveal
And the forms of the gods show;
And the secrets of the holy path,
Calling it gnosis, I shall transmit."²

¹ Encyclopedia Britannica, article Gnosticism VI; Hasting's Dictionary of Religion and Ethics, article Gnosticism 4, 6.
² Hippolytus, Philosophumena V, 5.

Likewise, Marcionism and Montanism, though opposed and rejected by nascent Catholicism, never thought of discounting salvation. And Catholicism which succeeded in maintaining connection between Christianity and its past, developed its "apostolic" creed, its "apostolic" canon and its "apostolic" episcopate primarily in the interest of salvation.

Not only was Christianity announcing a gospel of salvation, but the environment of early Christianity was pregnant with manifold varieties of salvation. That was an exceedingly religious epoch, and religious syncretism had for scores of years been making the idea of *soter* familiar to the peoples of the Graeco-Roman world. Serious quest of salvation and intense expectation of or glorious realization of a *soter* are outstanding manifestations of the era of Jesus.

But Jesus was not called *soter* from the beginning of Christianity. During the first decades of its life, Christianity promulgated a soterless soteriology. The earliest strata of Christian literature do not contain the title *soter* of Jesus and yet make much of the transformation of sinners and the destruction of the power of sin through Jesus. All the hope of these humble folks centers in Jesus as bringer of salvation, but the agent of redemption is not called *soter*. Christianity at first appears in the soterful Graeco-Roman world as a religion specializing in salvation and with a gospel concerning Jesus without employing the title or name *soter* of its founder. Prior to the eighth decade of the first Christian century, the term *soter* hardly occurs as title in any of the Christian documents. Indeed, it is the middle of the second century ere *soter* is found absolutely as the name of Jesus.

The problem investigated in this study is the persistent refusal on the part of the primitive church, the church to the close of the life of Paul, to apply the word *soter* to Jesus. Further, by tracing the employment of the title *soter* in Christian literature to the age of the early apologists, we desire to discover at what point and with what significance in the developing Christology of the church, *soter* began to be used of Jesus.

I.

THE FAILURE TO EMPLOY *SOTER* AS TITLE OF JESUS DURING THE EARLY DECADES OF THE EXISTENCE OF CHRISTIANITY

One of the elements of religion is the recognition of personality in the universe. Prophetism requires its prophets. The prophetic development in Israel is marked by remarkable personalities. Legalism has its founders. "Allah is great, and Mohammed is his prophet." There have been religions of redemption that sought to disregard the personal factor. They were doomed to lack the approval of the masses. Gautama Buddha failed to dissociate himself from Buddhism.³ Eschatology regards the coming period of bliss as the conferment of a savior-king. The title *soter* was current in Parsism, in Judaism, in the mystery religions, in the imperial cult, and in the general religious life of the Roman empire.

1. The personality of Jesus and the title *soter*.

Christianity follows the course of religious development in emphasizing the personality of Jesus. Jesus of Nazareth is inextricably woven into the origin and history of Christianity. Jesus placed himself at the converging point of the group organizing about him. The verdict of Jesus set aside the sacred tradition of the Jews. He challenged the hoary past with its Moses and its Ezra with a simple "but I say." A peasant of Galilee dared to repudiate the past and present supreme court of Israel. This astonishing and perplexing self-consciousness of Jesus may be witnessed in such a saying as, "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father; and no one knoweth the Father save the Son; neither doth anyone know the Son, save the Father, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal himself."⁴ Jesus compares himself with the men of the past and feels his superiority: "greater than Jonah is here."⁵ Jesus demanded acknowledgment and persecution for his sake: "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and my words . . . of him shall I be ashamed; whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."⁶

³ Carpenter, J. E., *The Historical Jesus and the Theological Christ*. London, 1911 p. 114 ff.

⁴ Following Weiss, J., in *Theologische Studien Heinrichi dargebracht* p. 120 ff, Matthew 11:27 ff.

⁵ Luke 11:29.

⁶ Mark 8:38.

He anticipated personal vindication: "the stone rejected by the builders hath become the head of the corner."⁷ He claimed the power on earth to forgive sins.⁸ He insisted on loyal and immediate obedience: "let the dead bury their dead, follow thou me."⁹ His spoken word should last on though heaven and earth were to pass away. Within a brief time after the humiliating death on the middle tree, hesitating, doubting, despairing fishermen may be seen leaving their nets by the side of the Sea of Galilee to return to the city where Jesus had met ignominy and catastrophic defeat to proclaim there that it was not possible for such a one to be held down in the clutch of death.¹⁰ The return to Jerusalem is one of the greatest acts of faith in human history. But these plain men believed in the continued existence of Jesus only because they first believed in him. Not the third day but the personality of Jesus is the beginning of Christology. The greatest achievement of Jesus was himself. The personality of Jesus accounts for Christianity and is inseparable from Christianity. What title should such a central personality forthwith have received?

2. The principal purpose of Jesus and the title *soter*.

Jesus defined his principal aim in terms of salvation. Our attention has been called to a unique group of sayings in the gospels introduced by the formula "I came to" or its equivalent.¹¹ Two of these utterances characterize the attitude of Jesus: "Do not imagine I came to bring peace on earth; I came not to bring peace but a sword;" "I came to throw fire on the earth. Would it were kindled already." Another of these distinctive sayings is concerned with Jesus' relation to the past: "Do not imagine I came to destroy the law or the prophets; I came not to destroy but to fulfill." The remaining sayings of this special group refer to salvation: "I came not to call just men but sinners;" "the Son of Man himself has not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many;" "for the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost;" "for the Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives but to save them;" "it was only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel that I was sent." To these may be added the sentence in the reply to the query of John

⁷ Matthew 16:25.

⁸ Mark 2:10 ff.

⁹ Mark 12:1 ff.

¹⁰ Acts 2:24.

¹¹ Harnack, *Zeitschrift fuer Theologie und Kirche* 1912, p. 1 ff. The passages are: Mark 2:17, 10:45; Luke 19:10, 9:55; Matthew 15:24, 5:17, 10:34; Luke 12:59; Matthew 11:3 ff; Luke 7:20 ff; John 12:46, 18:37.

the Baptist, "to the poor the gospel is preached." There are also two passages in the Johannine tradition that bear on the matter: "I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me, may not abide in the darkness;"¹² "to this end have I been born and to this end am I come into the world that I should bear witness to the truth."¹³

These sayings offer very valuable data to ascertain Jesus' estimate of his mission. Here is evidence from our oldest narrative source, from the material peculiar to Matthew, from the material peculiar to Luke, with similar material found in the oldest sayings source, and corroborated by the Johannine tradition. The case is the strongest possible. These sayings concisely define Jesus' main purpose in life. What was it? Tersely and classically put, it was: "I came to save" or I am *soter*. Why then does Jesus nowhere call himself *soter*?

3. The primitive Christian church and the title *soter*.

The primitive Christian community, the earliest organized group of followers of Jesus, was deeply interested in the matter of salvation. It was this group that preserved the narrative of the life of Jesus, that collected the sayings of Jesus, and began to develop a theology of his person. A glance at the frequent employment of the verb "to save" and its cognates in the gospels is sufficient to show their interest in salvation. Moreover, Jesus is often described as providing for physical needs, rescuing from physical dangers, curing physical ills. The recurring summaries of the healing activity of Jesus indicate the impression made by the savior of the body. "Now when evening came, when the sun set, they brought him all who were ill or possessed by daemons—indeed the whole town was gathered at the door and he cured many who were ill with various diseases and cast out many daemons."¹⁴ The leprous, palsied, paralytic, blind, deaf, lame, anaemic, insane who felt themselves helped formed centres of ever-enlarging personal groups propagating their faith in Jesus as healer. One who could release and free men from the sway of evil spirits deserved the title of *soter*. If one recalls how widespread and popular the cult of Asclepius was, it is easy to assume that the reputation of Jesus as healer should have sufficed to fix upon him the title *soter*.¹⁵ Even Lucian, the rationalist, does not

¹² John 12:46.

¹³ John 18:37.

¹⁴ Mark 1:32.

¹⁵ Cf. Harnack, *Expansion of Christianity* I p. 127 ff.

venture to poke fun at Asclepius, though all the high Greek gods and the mystery religions are subjected to his wit. Clement of Alexandria identifies physician and *soter*. "The all-sufficient physician of humanity, the *soter*, heals both body and soul."¹⁶ In the Acts of John, the Acts of Philip, and the Acts of Thomas, Christ as physician plays an important role.¹⁷ Celsus contrasts the *soter* Asclepius with the *soter* of the Christians.¹⁸ The temples and altars of Asclepius dotted the Graeco-Roman world and they were dedicated to Asclepius *Soter*.¹⁹ Ignatius describes the "one Physician" in the terminology of *soter*.²⁰ Evidence like this suggests how immediately and persistently the existence of the worship of Asclepius *Soter* would raise the issue of *soter* with reference to Jesus, the healer.

The primitive Christian community also interpreted Jesus as an authority in the realm of thought. It loved to recall how in the marketplace or in the synagogue, the masses had approved the opinions of the Nazarene. The carpenter of Nazareth without intellectual lineage had vanquished in debate the eloquent teachers of the law. Customs handed down from the fathers, practices traced to Moses were abolished with a "verily, verily, I say unto you." His teaching was new and unique and appealed to common folks. He could reduce the cleverest argument of a Pharisee to absurdity and could silence the wily Sadducee as well. The multitudes were astonished at his teaching. Here was one not shackled by tradition or by nationalism or by eschatological pessimism. With him the inestimable worth of the individual was axiomatic. Moreover, Jesus had obliterated the ceremonial and the formal, had actually destroyed the law by applying it, had proclaimed the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, had announced an ethical religion of redemption, had fused religion and morality, had promulgated as the general marching orders of his followers: "ye are the light of the world," "be ye therefore perfect even as your Father is perfect," had paid attention to the inside of the cup.

¹⁶ Clement, *Paedagogi Lib.* I, 2.

¹⁷ Doelger, *Ichthys, Rom*, 1910 p. 418, note 4; *Acta Philippi* 41, 118; *Acta Joh.* 22, 108; *Acta Thom.* 10, 37, 143, 156.

¹⁸ Origen, *contra Celsum* III 3.

¹⁹ Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East* p. 311, 374; Roscher, *Ausführlicher Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie*, under *soter*; Walton, *Cult of Asklepios*, Ithaca, N. Y., 1894; G. Dindorfii, *Aristides*, Leipzig, 1829; Justin, *Apology* 21, 22, 25, 54; Tatian, *Oratio ad Graec.* 21; Clement, *Protreptikos* II, 26; Origen, *contra Celsum* III 22, 24, 25.

²⁰ Ignatius, *Ephesians* 7:2, cf also Harnack, *History of Dogma* I p. 118, note 1, *Expansion of Christianity* I p. 121-151.

Jesus neither demanded asceticism nor practised sacramentarianism. Jesus emancipated men from nationalism, ceremonialism and legalism. Such a liberator should hardly have escaped the title *soter*.²¹

But Jesus also had much to say concerning the sway, the rule, the sovereignty of God. "Christianity is a religion of salvation in the sense of the hope of future salvation and that salvation not only and not in the first place of individual beings but of human society as such, the message of a future salvation, and that, too, to be hoped for in the immediate future, salvation from the present miserable condition of the world—the message of the dawn of a new world, of the coming of the kingdom of God, in which universal peace, happiness and righteousness shall rule—that was the great message that went forth from Palestine."²²

Thus Jesus was entitled to the designation *soter* for social and eschatological reasons, but was not called *soter*.

The primitive Christian community could not forget that Jesus had paid attention to the sinner. Jesus sought to understand the problem of the sinner who had experienced the tragedy of acting against his loftiest ideals, of doing what he detested. Jesus was interested in the hard cases, in the outlawed publican, in the village prostitute, in the despised throngs of Galilee driving aimlessly hither and yon. His laboratory was filled with the potsherd of life. He was the friend of sinners, the associate of the ignoble and the base. The followers of Jesus soon acquired a reputation for devotion to the lower classes. Celsus pointed out that the Christian appeal was to the ignorant and wicked: " 'Let no cultured person draw near, none wise, none sensible; for all that kind of thing we count evil; but if any man is ignorant, if any man is wanting in sense and culture, if any is a fool, let him come boldly.' Such people they spontaneously avow to be worthy of their God; and, so doing, they show that it is only the simpletons, the ignoble, the senseless, slaves and women-folk and children, whom they wish to persuade or can persuade—But let us hear what sort these people invite; 'whosoever is a sinner or unintelligent or a fool,' in a word, whosoever is god-forsaken, him the Kingdom of God will receive."²³

Jesus' message concerning sin and the sinner may best be studied

²¹ On *διδάσκαλος* and *προφήτης* as *σωτήρ* see Reitzenstein, *Poimandres* 180; cf. the connection of the teacher of righteousness and unique teacher with the Messiah in "Fragments of a Zadokite Work" 1:7, 2:10, 8:10, 9:29, 39, 50, 53, 15:4 (Charles, *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, Oxford, 1913, vol. II, p. 799 ff).

²² Pfeleiderer, *Religion and Historic Faith*, New York, 1907, p. 254.

²³ Origen, *contra Celsum* III 44, 59.

in Luke vii and xv. The despised prostitute is renewed by a diagnosis of what has gone on within her. Jesus explains her manifestation of love as evidence that God has pardoned her sin. The son who departed from home to enjoy his inheritance and who squandered all is given a regal welcome in spite of the anticipated protest of the elder brother. For God always rejoices over the lost who return. Without the slightest hesitation, without a moral criticism of his previous career, without the demand of reparation or the assignment of penalty, God's forgiving love recognizes the return itself as evidence of a good disposition. Deliverance from brooding fear because of sin, certainty of sonship to God, joy, hope, confidence, a new God, a new man, a new world are here. God's nature is grace. This is the watershed in ethical religious development. This is the culmination of the ethical religion of redemption. Forgiveness of sins plus the new creation of ethical personality—this is the supreme contribution of Christianity to the religious development of man.

At once the answer is made, precisely so and therefore the primitive Christian church had no need of a *soter*. God desires freely to forgive. This is the perfect ethical religion of redemption. By his own view of God, Jesus eliminated himself. The conclusion is erroneous. For he who announced such a revolutionary and such a liberating view of God by his proclamation created himself *soter*. Moreover, the immediate followers of Jesus had experienced his death. It was an experience at the focusing point of conviction and of feeling. Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah and yet Jesus of Nazareth had been nailed to the cross. Such a Messiah was a contradiction of Jewish eschatology.²⁴ The Jew of the time of Jesus did not interpret the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah of the Messiah. The documents of Christianity demonstrate in many concrete instances that such a construction was not contemplated. The disciples had to be taught the necessity of the death of Jesus.²⁵ Paul's problem could have been far more easily resolved, if the rabbis had known of a suffering and dying Messiah. It never occurs to Trypho, the Jew, to discount the claims of Justin by pointing to such a Jewish dogma. The Messiah of IV. Ezra dies, but after holding sway four hundred years and not alone but with all humanity and not catas-

²⁴ Charles R. H., *Religious Development between the O. T. and the N. T.*, New York, p. 77: "Indeed, prior to the advent of Christianity, Jewish exegetes seem never to have apprehended the messianic significance of the suffering Servant of Yahweh. The idea of a crucified Messiah was an impossible conception to the Judaism of that period."

²⁵ Mark 8:31, 9:12, 31; Luke 24:20 ff.

trophically in connection with suffering but naturally.²⁶ The Samaritan Messiah also dies a natural death. He dies because he is mortal. The rabbis are familiar with a Messiah ben Joseph and a Messiah ben David, a suffering Messiah. But the rabbinical Messiah ben Joseph does not come into existence until the period of Hadrian, and it is the seventeenth century before his death is regarded as propitiatory. Moreover, his ministry is political. The doctrine of a suffering Messiah as far as the Jewish rabbis are concerned originated between the third and sixth centuries of our era.²⁷ Consequently, the early Christians were compelled to develop a philosophy of the death of Jesus. *And thus the gospel of Jesus became a gospel concerning Jesus.* Jesus of Nazareth had died on the cross. Forthwith the Deuteronomic curse challenged his life: "Cursed be everyone hanged on a gibbet." The message of Christ, the crucified, had to prove a stumbling block to the Jews.²⁸ Now how should the death of Jesus be explained? Part of the explanation evolved was that the Jewish leaders had killed Jesus on account of enmity: "the God of our fathers raised Jesus whom you murdered by hanging him on a gibbet;"²⁹ "which of the prophets did your fathers fail to persecute? They killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Just One and here you have betrayed him and murdered him."³⁰ The violent death of Jesus was also accounted for by means of Jewish determinism: "And he proceeded to teach them that the Son of Man had to endure great suffering, to be rejected by the elders and the high priests and scribes;"³¹ "He said to them, 'O foolish men, with hearts so slow to believe, after all the prophets declared! Had not the Christ to suffer thus and so enter his glory?'"³² "This Jesus betrayed in the predestined course of God's deliberate purpose, you got wicked men to nail to the cross and murder."³³ Further, the forgiveness of sins is associated with Jesus in several passages: "Repent, let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins;"³⁴ "There is no salvation by anyone else, nor even a second name under

²⁶ IV Ezra 7:28 ff.

²⁷ Dalman, *Der leidende und der sterbende Messias der Synagoge*, Berlin, 1888, p. 16 ff, 88 ff. 91.

²⁸ I Corinthians 1:23.

²⁹ Acts 5:30 cf. 2:36, 3:17, 4:10, 10:39; Mark 9:31; Matthew 17:12, 22.

³⁰ Acts 7:52.

³¹ Mark 8:31 cf. 14:21.

³² Luke 22:76 f.

³³ Acts 2:23.

³⁴ Acts 2:38.

heaven appointed for us men and our salvation;”³⁵ “All the prophets testify that everyone who believes in him is to receive remission of sins through his Name.”³⁶ The bestowal of the title *soter* on Jesus the Messiah should have resulted from such convictions as these. And the evidence is not yet exhausted. For there is a peculiar phrase found in Acts, in I Peter, and in Galatians which merits attention. It constitutes a connecting link. It is “on a gibbet” or “hanging him on a gibbet” or “cursed be everyone who hangs on a gibbet.”³⁷ In the context where this phrase occurs, forgiveness of sins is always in the background. Is the conclusion therefore warranted that the primitive Christian church related the forgiveness of sins to the death of Jesus? The question might be seriously debated, if Paul did not himself affirm that the primitive church prior to his conversion possessed a definite soteriology making Jesus *soter* from sin: “first and foremost I transmitted to you what had been transmitted to me, namely, that Christ died for our sins.”³⁸ Is it not passing strange then that the most thoroughgoing search of the vocabulary and terminology of the primitive church prior to Paul does not discover a single instance of the employment of the word *soter*?

4. Paul and the title *soter*.

An investigation of the Pauline gospel yields a result similar to that ascertained for the primitive Christian church. The usual approach to the Pauline religion has been by way of the epistle to the Romans. It is not difficult to see that for Paul there are only two fundamental types of men, those who support their claim to salvation by appeal to achievement and those who unreservedly trust in God. Religion based on the fulfillment of the law was demonstrated to be a tragic failure. For obedience to the law is not within the ability of man. Hence the law cannot absolve man from guilt but merely discloses the true nature of sin. Under a moral government, man is a transgressor, is hostile to God, is involved in sin and guilt and subject to condemnation. What is the outcome for all men? “No person will be acquitted in his sight on the score of obedience to law. What the law imparts is the consciousness of sin.”³⁹ There is only one way to righteousness and life. It is God’s way. Man imperatively needs a divine release.

³⁵ Acts 4:12.

³⁶ Acts 10:43.

³⁷ Acts 5:30, 10:39; I Peter 2:24, Galatians 3:13, cf. Feine, Neutestamentliche Theologie under passages quoted.

³⁸ I Corinthians 15:3.

³⁹ Romans 3:20.

Because God's nature is grace, God intervened. The redeemer descended. The death and the resurrection of Christ made justification, reconciliation and life available for man. Those who believe this announcement are men of the faith type. To observe how necessary a *soter* is to this outline of the apostle's religion, consider Romans 3:21-26. We have here a series of contrasts between the former status and the present status, between man guilty, an enemy of God and dying and man justified, reconciled, living; between man under legalism and man under faith. To bring about the new condition of things, a deliverance was necessary. And Jesus is described as the selected or manifested propitiation. The propitiatory transaction is efficient through a sacrificed life, operative through faith, designed to demonstrate that God's character is just and that justification is through faith. But who accomplished this deliverance? The one word most needed to complete this comprehensive description of the righteousness of God is *soter*. But that precisely is the word omitted. Had the title *soter* not been in existence, the apostle should have coined it to meet this emergency. What perplexes is that with the title *soter* in most ordinary use, Paul should have avoided it.

Paul's religion may also be approached from the angle of his Christology.⁴⁰ The apostle's message is the gospel of the son of God.⁴¹ "Son of God" in case of Paul has metaphysical significance. Jesus was a heavenly, pre-existent being, creator and soul of the world, who became incarnate, won a victory over the power of sin and was appointed reigning sovereign.⁴² The incarnation of the heavenly one is described as a great condescension, a becoming poor for man's sake. But what was the basic reason for the incarnation? Apocalypticism expected the heavenly man to appear in glory, sit at the great assize, establish the eschatological Kingdom of God. With that hypothesis Paul had long been familiar. His pre-Christian problem was to bring the life and death of Jesus into harmony with the pre-existent heavenly man. The humanity of Jesus was on record. The idea of a glorious pre-existence was inviolable dogma. Why need the pre-existent one abandon the former glory and live such a limited and circumscribed human career? The answer finally given by Paul's experience was that the Messiah was destined to die for man's sin and on account of the power of sin. Sin was reigning in the flesh and

⁴⁰ See especially Weiss, J., *Christ, the Beginnings of Dogma* and Bousset, W., *Kyrios Christos*, Goettingen, 1913.

⁴¹ Romans 1:3 ff Galatians 2:20, 4:4; Romans 8:32.

⁴² Philippians 2:7 ff Colossians 1:15-17; I Corinthians 15:45 ff.

resulting in death. The law could not overcome its sway. Consequently, God intervened. God sent his son to win the great victory over sin and its sway.⁴³ Evidently, Paul is describing the son of God as *soter* but again disappoints us by his failure to employ the title *soter*.

The religion of Paul may also be viewed from the angle of his cosmology.⁴⁴ To the apostle the history of the world was continuous and a terrific conflict between two kingdoms, the kingdom of the Messiah and the kingdom of Satan. There are two world periods, the present evil world and the coming aeon. The present aeon is marked by three ellipses with one common focus. Their independent foci are the fall of Adam, or the beginning of sin and death in the world; the promise to Abraham; and the law. Their common focus is Christ. There are, then, the Adam-Christ ellipse, the Abraham-Christ ellipse, and the law-Christ ellipse:⁴⁵ "as all die in Adam, so shall all be made alive in Christ;"⁴⁶ "for in him is the 'yes' that affirms the promises of God;"⁴⁷ "now Christ is an end to law, so as to let every believer have righteousness."⁴⁸ The coming age which began with the victorious death of Christ⁴⁹ will witness the overthrow of all opposition, the utter destruction of Satan and his cohorts, and the establishment of the complete sovereignty of God.⁵⁰ Even in this cosmic salvation the death of Christ is a very concrete thing. Not an intellectual victory but a moral religious victory is pictured. Jesus Christ released and delivered humanity from the turbulent and wicked cosmic spirits: "the Lord Jesus Christ gave himself for our sins to rescue us from this present evil world;"⁵¹ "sin's wage is death but God's gift is life eternal in Christ Jesus our Lord;"⁵² "one man's obedience will make all the rest righteous;"⁵³ "for God destined us not for wrath but to gain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ who died for us."⁵³ It was this cosmic interpretation of redemption which attracted Gnosticism with its *soter* to Paulinism. But nowhere in this cosmic philosophy does Paul grant Jesus the title *soter*.

⁴³ Romans 8:3, 4.

⁴⁴ Carré, H. B., *Paul's Doctrine of Redemption*, New York, 1914.

⁴⁵ Following Weinel, H., *Biblische Theologie des N.T.*, Tuebingen, 1913, p. 412 ff.

⁴⁶ I Corinthians 15:22.

⁴⁷ II Corinthians 1:20.

⁴⁸ Romans 10:4.

⁴⁹ Galatians 1:4.

⁵⁰ I Corinthians 15:23-28.

⁵¹ Romans 6:23.

⁵² Romans 5:19.

⁵³ I Thessalonians 5:9.

Our study of the Pauline gospel in its varied aspects has shown Paul's primary question to be, "What must I do to be saved." The noun "salvation" and the verb "to save" occur again and again in the Pauline correspondence, but the title *soter* is not used.

5. The primitive Christian environment and the title *soter*.⁵⁴

Thus far our attention has centered upon the Christian community. Internal reasons for the bestowal of the title or name *soter* upon Jesus have been discussed. There are also reasons for the employment of the title *soter* of Jesus growing out of the environment of Christianity. During the past quarter of a century much time has been devoted to the genetic study of the entire religious situation which resulted in Christianity. It is now granted that Christianity was not produced within a few months in Galilee. It developed in a larger area than that of Palestine. The only adequate background for the study of Christianity is the civilization of the Mediterranean world during the two centuries preceding and following the origin of Christianity. The Christian religion grew in the soil of a vast syncretistic process. Eschatology was not a phenomenon characterizing the religious development of merely one nation. Before the time of Jesus the religious currents had merged in two principal streams, in religions of attainment where man attempts to do something for himself and religions of redemption where the major weight of emphasis is thrown upon the deity. The problem of sorrow and suffering was before the human race. Religion was becoming the concern of the individual rather than of the state. Like-minded individuals were organizing groups, religious communities, churches, where they might give social expression to their opinions and their experiences. The answers given to the problem of suffering and life varied from those of the mystery religions, mysticism, gnosticism, eschatology to those of orthodox Judaism and Stoicism. Salvation might be regarded as outward success and deliverance, as physical union with the deity by means of degraded rites; as likeness to God, spiritual union, devotion, prayer, ethical purity, consecration by voluntary death in the mysteries, entering the Kingdom of God, attainment of the blessed life; as the exercise of the ethical will, the escape from suffering by the suppression or annihilation of experience; or as the longing for a golden age, the expectation of a savior-god or a savior-king. How-

⁵⁴ This section attempts to summarize the results of recent comparative study, following Weinel, H., *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, introductory chapter; cf also Case, S. J., *The Evolution of Early Christianity*, Chicago, 1914.

ever defined, there was well-nigh universal hope of deliverance or salvation.⁵⁵ But when the expected deliverance did not materialize, when the conviction that all had sinned became more and more oppressive, when conscience refused to be silenced by theories or practices ever so involved, when the golden expectations of the new age faded away before the experience of sorrow, when man found that he could not, then there was presented an opportunity for another religion of redemption. Here in the Graeco-Roman world there was a longing for salvation and an appreciation of the idea of *soter* and dissatisfaction because of failure to attain the ideal.⁵⁶ Christianity had another gospel, another explanation of salvation, and another agent of salvation. But Christianity failed to employ the title *soter* of Jesus—the very title the world of that day most needed and should have most appreciated.

In spite of the internal and external reasons for the employment of the title *soter* with reference to Jesus, we do not find Jesus calling himself *soter*. Nowhere did the synoptic tradition coin the formula, "the *soter* said" or even add the title to the name of Jesus. The late Johannine tradition merely permits the Samaritans to confess that Jesus is the *soter* of the world.⁵⁷ The fourth evangelist avoids the title and does not even introduce it into the controversies with the Jews. To appreciate the situation, it will be necessary to outline the usage of the term *soter* within the period of primitive Christianity.

⁵⁵ Cf Seneca's "Where shall he be found, whom we have been seeking so many centuries?" "The soul, God, knowledge, expiation, asceticism, redemption, eternal life with individualism and with humanity substituted for nationality—these were the sublime thoughts which were living and operating . . . during the imperial age," Harnack, *Expansion* I p. 36.

⁵⁶ "Eine alte, reiche Kulturwelt im Sterben und in der Agonie, im Sehnen nach einer Neuschöpfung und Wiedergeburt, in einer nicht zum Ziele kommenden Unruhe des Gottsuchens—so stellt sich uns das niedergehende Heidentum dar," Wendland, *J., Hellenistisch-eroemische Kultur*, Tuebingen, 1912 p. 186.

⁵⁷ John 4:42.

II.

THE CHRISTIAN USAGE OF THE TERM *SOTER* TO THE TIME OF THE EARLY APOLOGISTS⁶⁸

The usage of the term *soter* in primitive Christian literature is limited to God and Jesus.

6. The term *soter* as used of God.

In case of God, *soter* occurs once in an Old Testament quotation. Thus in Luke 1:47 "and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my *soter*." *Soter* is employed in I Clement 59:3 in a prayer to God, "thou art the helper of those in danger, the *soter* of those in despair" with the ordinary literal significance of rescue, aid, deliverance. The formula "God our *Soter*" occurs six times in the later writings of the New Testament. I Timothy 1:1 "Paul an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our *Soter* and Jesus Christ our hope." I Timothy 2:3 "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our *Soter*." Titus 1:3 "according to the commandment of God our *Soter*." Titus 2:10 "that they may adorn the doctrine of God our *Soter* in all things." Titus 3:4 "But when the kindness of God our *Soter*." Jude 25 "to the only God our *Soter* through Jesus Christ our Lord." In I Timothy 4:10 this formula is expanded to include all men: "For to this end we labor and suffer reproach because we trust in the living God, who is the *Soter* of all men."⁶⁹

7. The term *soter* as used of Jesus.

In case of Jesus, *soter* also occurs in Old Testament quotations. In his Dialogue with Trypho 26:3, Justin has "behold thy *soter* cometh." The immediate context does not indicate the precise nature of the reference. But Justin's custom of appropriating all such Old Testament passages for Jesus supports our interpretation. In the Dialogue 36:4 "mercy from God his *soter*" is certainly of Christ, for Christ is here called God, Lord of Hosts, and Jacob. A further attempt is made by Justin to discover Jesus our *soter* in the Old Testament in the Dialogue 72:1 "And Esdras said to the people, 'this passover is our *soter* and our refuge.'" Justin is accusing the Jews of mutilating the scriptures by removing references to Jesus.

⁶⁸ No New Testament book was born canonical. All the Christian productions of the pre-Irenaean epoch should be considered adequately to appreciate the New Testament. The early apologists are near the borderline of Old Catholic Christianity.

⁶⁹ Compare the Odes of Solomon 5:9 "Because the Lord is my salvation" where the Coptic has the equivalent of "quia tu es deus meus, *salvator* meus."

This otherwise unknown passage is cited to establish his point. Justin plainly identifies Jesus with "our *soter*" of the assumed Old Testament reference.

Justin has two passages that deal with the explanation of the word *soter*. One is found in Justin's Apology 33:7 "And the name Jesus in the Hebrew language means *soter* in the Greek language." Here Justin referring to Matthew 1:21 affirms that the title *soter* is simply Greek for the Hebrew Jesus and his point rests on the literal significance of the words involved. Jesus is the equivalent of *soter*. Somewhat similar usage is met with in the Appendix 6:4 "But Jesus, his name as man and *soter*, has also significance. For he was made man . . . for the sake of believing men and for the destruction of the daemons."

In another group of instances, *soter* is used as a descriptive term. *It is always indefinite, always accompanied by another term.* The background in this type of usage is Jewish messianism, and the literal significance of *soter* is felt. The instances are four in number. Luke 2:11 "For unto you hath been born this day in the city of David, a *soter*, who is the Lord Christ," Acts 5:31 "Him did God exalt to be a prince and a *soter*." Acts 13:23 "Of this man's seed God, according to promise, brought unto Israel a *soter*, even Jesus."⁶⁰ Philippians 3:20 "For our commonwealth is in heaven, whence also we wait for a *soter*, the Lord Jesus Christ."

In a further group of instances relating to Jesus, *soter* has title value and is definite. Two kinds of usage are here observable. In the first of these *soter* is definite and accompanies or is accompanied by an additional title. Thus, Justin in his Dialogue with Trypho 110:4 "For the vine planted by God and Christ the *soter* is his people." Ignatius in his epistle to the Philippians 9:2 "the coming of the *soter*, our Lord Jesus Christ." II Timothy 1:10 "the appearing of our *soter* Jesus Christ." The Epistle of Ignatius to the Smyrneans 7:1, Justin's Apology 33:5, 61: 3 "our *soter* Jesus Christ." Titus 1:4, Ignatius to the Magnesians Introduction, Ephesians 1:1 "Christ Jesus our *soter*." The Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians Introduction "mercy and peace from God Almighty and Jesus Christ our *soter*." Titus 3:6, Justin's Apology 66:2, 67:7 "Jesus Christ

⁶⁰ Luke 2:11 is from a "Palestinian Jewish-Christian Greek or Aramaic source which Luke revised and incorporated" (Moffatt, Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament, New York, 1911, p. 267); Acts 5:31, 13:23 shows the redactor's presence. On the author's own attitude toward the *theos* question, see, e. g., Luke 9:35, 8:39, 9:20, 43, 17:15, 16, 18, 18:43, 19:37; Acts 14:11 ff 28:6.

our *soter*." II Peter 1:11, 2:20, 3:18, Dialogue with Trypho 93:2 "our Lord and *soter* Jesus Christ." Ephesians 5:23 "as Christ also is the head of the church *autos soter tou somatos*."⁶¹ The phrase is puzzling. Chrysostom and others referred *soter* to the husband. The words are in any case parenthetical and may be a later addition. The Johannine literature twice employs the formula, "*soter* of the world." One instance is in the gospel, John 4:42, "this is indeed the *soter* of the world;" the other instance is in I John 4:14 "the father hath sent the son, the *soter* of the world." The Gospel of Peter 4:13 has "the *soter* of men." The Martyrdom of Polycarp 19:2 reads "he is blessing our Lord Jesus Christ, the *soter* of our souls." The church at Alexandria, in the second century, used in worship a hymn containing the expression, "Jesus *soter* of all the world."⁶²

In the second group of instances where *soter* has title value, it is associated with God. Thus, Titus 2:13 "Looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and *soter* Jesus Christ."⁶³ The second instance of this noteworthy combination occurs in II Peter 1:1 "the righteousness of our God and *soter* Jesus Christ." The following evolution is traceable in the Pastoral Epistles and II Peter: God our *soter*, Jesus Christ our *soter*, Our Lord and *soter* Jesus Christ, our God and *soter* Jesus Christ. Recall in this connection how Old Testament passages involving *Kyrios* originally applied to Yahweh are in the New Testament referred to both God and Christ. Isaiah 40:13 is in Romans 11:34 applied to God and in I Corinthians 2:16 applied to Christ; Isaiah 45:23 is in Romans 14:11 applied to God and in Philippians 2:11 applied to Christ. Observe the analogy: God is *soter*, Jesus Christ is *soter*, Jesus Christ is God and *soter*. And God is *Kyrios*; Jesus is *Kyrios*; Jesus Christ is God and *Kyrios*. John 20:28, "Thomas answered and said unto him, My *Kyrios* and my God." Thus the correct rendering of I Timothy 5:21 may be, "In the presence of Jesus Christ, God and Lord, and the elect angels I adjure thee."

In the final stage of the development of *soter* as applied to Jesus, it has evolved into a name. If the Odes of Solomon are to be assigned to the neighborhood of A. D. 100, they furnish the earliest instance of *soter* as name employed of Jesus. Thus in the Odes of Solomon 41:12, the poet says: "From another race am I: for the Father of truth

⁶¹ *soter* cum Aleph^c B D E etc; *ho soter* Aleph* A³ etc; *Ks I. soter* I³ 56.

⁶² Clement Paedagogi Lib. III 12, 101³.

⁶³ *Versus* Abbot, Journal of the Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, 1881 (June) p. 3 f and others; *cum* Moulton, Prolegomena p. 84, Winer-Schmiedel p. 158.

remembered me. He who possessed me from the beginning: for his bounty begot me, and the thought of His heart; and His word is with us in all our way; 12. the *soter* who makes alive and does not reject our souls." Quadratus has "the works of our *soter*."⁶⁴ Justin's Dialogue with Trypho 18:1 reads "taught by our *soter*." So-called II Clement 20:5 contains the doxology "to the only invisible God, the father of truth, who sent forth to us the *soter* and prince of immortality." II Peter 3:2 refers to "the commandment of the Lord and *soter* through your apostles." Justin's Dialogue with Trypho 8:2 has "words of the *soter*." Melito, according to a fragment preserved by Eusebius, said "since thou hast often expressed the wish to have extracts made from the law and prophets concerning the *soter*."⁶⁵ Tatian wrote a treatise "Concerning Perfection according to the *Soter*."⁶⁶ An Oxyrhynchus papyrus assigned to the latter part of the second century of our era by Grenfell and Hunt contains the absolute *ho soter* repeatedly. "And a certain Pharisee, a chief priest, whose name was Levi, met them and said to the *Soter*, who gave thee leave And the *Soter* straightway stood still and his disciples and answered . . . The *Soter* answered." The fragment consistently refers to Jesus as "the *Soter*."⁶⁷ Irenaeus states that the Valentinians called Jesus *soter* rather than *kyrios*. "And for this reason they affirm it was that the *Soter*, for they do not please to call him Lord, did no work in public during the space of thirty years."⁶⁸ The important letter on the Christian attitude toward the Old Testament which Ptolemy wrote to Flora, in the neighborhood of A. D. 160, employs *soter* as name sixteen times, and twelve of these instances are absolute. And this letter covers only six pages in Harnack's edition.⁶⁹ The Valentinian sacred canon was in two parts of which one was known as *ho soter* and the other as *ho apostolos*.⁷⁰ The Excerpta ex Theodoto have the following usage:

ho Soter in 1:1, 2:2 (twice); 3:1, 44:2, 46:2;

ho soter in 5:2, 8:2, 9:1, 18:1, 19:2, 51:3, 52:1 (twice); 61:7, 66:1, 67:2, 75:3;

⁶⁴ Eusebius, H. E. 4:3, 2.

⁶⁵ Eusebius, H. E. 4:26, 13.

⁶⁶ Clement, Stromateis III, 12, 8.

⁶⁷ Oxyrhynchus Papyri V, No. 840.

⁶⁸ Irenaeus adv. omnes haer. I 1:3, 5:3.

⁶⁹ δ σωτήρ I, 5 II 1, 3, 4, 10 III 1(3 instances), 2, 11, IV 1, 2; δ σωτήρ ἡμῶν 5, 9 V 4, 10, cf Sitzungsberichte der koeniglichen Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. 1902, I p. 505 ff.

⁷⁰ Excerpta ex Theodoto 22, 48, 49, etc.

tou Soter in 45:2, 59:2;

tou soter in 5:3, 18:2, 61:6, 68, 76:1;

ton soter in 23:3, 33:2 and quote Philippians 2:11: *Κύριος τῆς δόξης Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς σωτὴρ*⁷¹

The Valentinian Heracleon wrote a commentary on the fourth gospel in the latter part of the second century. Fragments of this commentary survive in Origen. The following instances of the absolute *ho soter* or its equivalent occur:

VI. 12 p. 56, p. 57 (twice); p. 58 (twice)

X. 9 p. 66, 67 (once); 14 p. 67 (twice); 19 p. 69; 22 p. 71

XIII. 10 p. 72 (twice); 11 p. 73, 74 (three times); 30 p. 82 (twice); p. 83 (four times); 38 p. 84, 85 (three times); 44 p. 86; 46 p. 87 (twice); 48 p. 88; 52 p. 91 (twice); 59 p. 92, p. 93 (three times); p. 94

XIX. 4 p. 96 (four times)

XX. 8 p. 97 (three times); 30 p. 101⁷²

Here are forty-six instances of *soter* as name and twenty-nine of them must be credited to Heracleon. Hegesippus in his narrative of the death of James the Just has "Jesus was the *Soter*."⁷³ The Epistle to Diognetus, probably to be assigned to the third century, contains this sentence: "Having convinced us then of the inability of our natures to attain life in time past and now having shown the *Soter* who is able to save."⁷⁴

We have now examined all the types of usage of *soter* during the primitive Christian period. Our next task is to interpret the data.

8. Interpretation of the data.

Our study of the usage of *soter* in the primitive period of Christianity reveals an interesting situation. *Soter* occurs twenty-four times in the New Testament. In eight instances the reference is to God, in sixteen instances the reference is to Jesus. *Soter* has more than descriptive function in only twelve instances where employed of Jesus. One of these twelve instances is the somewhat doubtful case in Ephesians. Eleven of the instances where *soter* has title value or is a name are found in the late writings of the New Testament, in the

⁷¹ Excerpta 43:4; quotations from Staehlin's edition of Clement, Leipzig 1909, volume 3; what is Valentinian gnosticism and what hails from Clement is not as yet precisely determined, see Otto Dibelius in Zeitschrift fuer die N. T. Wissenschaft 1908, p. 230 ff.

⁷² Citations from edition of Brooke, A. E., Texts and Studies, Cambridge, 1891, volume I #4.

⁷³ Eusebius H. E. II, 23.

⁷⁴ Epistle to Diognetus 9:6.

pastoral epistles, in the Johannine literature and in Second Peter. We twice met with the expression "our God and *soter* Jesus Christ." There is but one instance in the entire New Testament where *soter* has become a name and even here it accompanies another title.⁷⁵ The earlier strata of the New Testament do not at all contain the term *soter* whether with literal or technical significance. The Markan narrative, the Q source, the material peculiar to Matthew, the material peculiar to Luke with the exception of the infancy section do not record a single instance of the employment of *soter*. *Soter* is not to be discovered in the sayings of Jesus or among the titles appropriated by him or assigned to him by his immediate interpreters. *Soter with more than descriptive force* is lacking in the entire Pauline correspondence unless the doubtful case in Ephesians is assigned to him.⁷⁶ The search for the word *soter* in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of James, I Peter, the Didache, the Epistle of Barnabas, and the Shepherd of Hermas would be fruitless. Further I Clement has only one instance of *soter* and even here the reference is not to Jesus. For some three decades or more of its history, the primitive Christian community consistently refrained from calling Jesus who was the Christ, the Son of Man, the Lord, who had come to save, *soter*. To appreciate the meaning of all this, consider the frequency with which Jesus is called the Christ or Son of Man or Lord and recall how appropriate and essential the title *soter* would have been. In the correspondence of Paul there are "nearly 350 occurrences of *Christos*."⁷⁷ *Kyrios* is applied to Jesus 400 times within the pages of the New Testament. Son of Man, a title which practically disappears after the gospels, is used of Jesus more than four score times. But *soter* as a definite title enters Christian literature in the pastoral epistles. The absolute *ho soter* without accompanying genitive or additional title is not attested until about the middle of the second century. At that time it is the favorite name for Jesus among the Gnostics, although more orthodox groups of Christians also frequently employ it and apparently feel no repugnance toward it. There are some Christian communities which even about A. D. 150 do not make use of the name *soter*. From Irenaeus onward *soter* as a name is general.

⁷⁵ II Peter 3:2.

⁷⁶ The instance in Philippians 3:20 is descriptive, indefinite and accompanied by explanatory phrase. Moreover it has no title value and implies a contrast with the *soter*es of the Graeco-Roman civilization and refers to the parousia of the reigning and exalted "second man." Is it original? Is Paul making use of one of the inferior meanings attaching occasionally to *theos-soter* in the Graeco-Roman usage (see Harnack, History of Dogma I, 119 note 2)? For Paul's own feeling, compare part IV, 14 (2) of this study.

⁷⁷ Case, S. J., in Journal of Biblical Literature 1907 p. 153.

Merely for the sake of completeness, we may add that the tendency to employ *soter* as title or name for Jesus was retarded among the Latin Christian writers because *soter* had no Latin equivalent and modified because the Latin word chosen to represent *soter* had no historical background. Martianus Capella states that Cicero refused to call *soter*, *salvator* but used as circumlocution "who provided deliverance." In this way the Latin stylist avoided an unusual word.⁷⁸ Augustine commenting on the text, "faithful is the saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am the chief"⁷⁹ remarks that Christ Jesus denotes Christ the *soter*, that the Latin equivalent for Jesus is *salvator*, that the scruples of the grammarians are overcome by the Christian fact of salvation, that *salus* is a Latin word, that *salvare* and *salvator* were not Latin until the *Salvator* came, that his coming made these words Latin.⁸⁰ Tertullian wrestles with the same problem because *salvator* is not for him the actual equivalent of *soter*. Hence he usually employs circumlocutions, although *salvator* also occurs.⁸¹ Tertullian has I Thessalonians 5:23 in the "Lord and *soter*" form, using *salutificatoris* for *soter*.⁸² Cyprian has *salvator* at least twice.⁸³ *Salvator* is also Jerome's choice for *soter*.⁸⁴ With the exception of Luke 1:47 where it has *salutari*, the Vulgate employs *salvator* for *soter*. It is interesting to note that Beza's Latin New Testament uses *servator* for *soter* with the exception of Ephesians 5:23, where he reads "*is est qui salutem dat*" and I Timothy 4:10 where he reads *conservator*.

The data, then, in case of the primitive Christian usage of *soter* show that *soter* is a term at first deliberately avoided by the church and only very gradually appropriated by the church as a title and name for Jesus. The remainder of this investigation will seek to ascertain the reasons for this development.

⁷⁸ De Nupt. Phil. et Merc. V, 510.

⁷⁹ I Timothy 1:15.

⁸⁰ Augustine Sermo 299, 6.

⁸¹ Adversus Marc. III, 18.

⁸² Adv. Marc. V, 15 cf also IV, 23 *salus*.

⁸³ Treatise XII 2:7, 3:11, Migne Pat. Lat. 4 col. 731, 769.

⁸⁴ Migne Pat. Lat. 26 col. 18, 34, 36, etc.

III.

THE SOURCES AND HISTORY OF THE *SOTER* IDEA

The primitive Christian met the *soter* terminology in two principal sources. One of these was the Jewish scriptures and connected literature; the other was the religious life of the Roman empire.

9. The Jewish scriptures and other Jewish productions as the source of the *soter* terminology.

When the Jewish or Gentile primitive Christian read the scriptures, he came upon the word *soter*. Heroic men are styled *môšî'* occasionally in the literature of the Old Testament.⁸⁵ But *môšî'* is far more frequently employed of Yahweh. Thus Isaiah 43:3 "For I am Yahweh, thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior;" Isaiah 43:11 "I even I am Yahweh; and besides me there is no Savior;" Micah 7:7 "But as for me I will look unto Yahweh; I will wait for the God of my salvation."⁸⁶ The Greek Old Testament translates *môšî'* by *sozon* or *eis soterian*, rarely by *soter*. On the other hand it prevailingly renders *yîš'i* with pronominal suffix by *soter*. The phrase "God our Savior" is found in the prophets⁸⁷ and far more frequently in the psalter.⁸⁸ In the extra-canonical Jewish literature such as Ecclesiasticus, Maccabees, Psalms of Solomon; Wisdom, *soter* also occurs.⁸⁹ The usage of the Psalms of Solomon indicates not only the popularity of *soter* as a religious term, but also its restriction to God: "the stability of the righteous is from God their *soter*; and we will not depart from thee, for thy judgments are good; upon us and our children is thy good will forever, O Lord God, our *soter*, and we shall not be shaken again forever; when Israel went forth into captivity to a strange land because they departed from the Lord their *soter*; he pricked me, like the spur of the horseman, according to his watchfulness: my *soter* and my helper at all times is he; he saved me: I will praise thee, O God, because thou hast helped me with thy salvation: and has not reckoned me with sinners for destruction; O Lord, thou art our king, now and forever: for in thee, O God, our soul shall glory. And what is the life of man upon the earth? for according to his time, so also is his hope.

⁸⁵ Judges 3:9, 15; II Kings 13:5; Neh. 9:27.

⁸⁶ See also Isaiah 45:15, 21, 63:8; Hosea 13:4; II Samuel 22:3; Hab. 3:18.

⁸⁷ Micah 7:7; Isaiah 12:2, 17:10; Hab. 3:18.

⁸⁸ Psalm 24:5, 25:5, 27:1, 9, 62:37, 65:6, 79:9, 95:1.

⁸⁹ Eccles. 51:1, I Maccabees 4:30, III Mac. 6:29, 32, 7:16; Wisdom 16:7.

But we hope in God our *soter*.”⁹⁰ We may conclude that the idea which the primitive Christian from his perusal of the holy literature of Judaism usually associated with *soter* was *theos*.

The vast body of extra-canonical Jewish literature known as the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha contains a great variety of titles for the Messiah, such as Son of Man, Elect One, the Righteous, the Lord's Anointed, the Holy Prince, my Son, the Coming One, the Sprout, and even the Leper.⁹¹ But in the entire Jewish literature *kyrios* as title for Messiah does not appear.⁹² The same reserve would seem to hold with reference to *soter* as title for Messiah.⁹³ This avoidance of the title *soter* is very noticeable in the thirteenth chapter of IV Ezra where the context demands the title “*soter* of the world”: “Whereas thou didst see a man coming up from the heart of the sea: this is he whom the Most High is keeping many ages and through whom he will redeem his creation. . . . Behold, the days come when the Most High is about to redeem them that are upon the earth. . . . But the survivors of the people, even those who are found within my holy border shall be saved.”

It should also be recalled that the Messiah is not an essential element of the eschatology of Israel and Judaism. Writings like Isaiah 24-27, Daniel, Enoch 1-36, Jubilees, and others fail to mention him. Yahweh is *soter*. “In the Old Testament it is God who is for Israel redeemer, liberator, Savior, deliverer and never the Messiah; and no similar agency is there ascribed to the latter.”⁹⁴

In the later development of Jewish eschatology, the Messiah is sometimes described not only as prince of a redeemed people but also as a redeemer. Passages like Sibylline Oracles III 652 ff., Baruch 39:7, 40:1 ff., 70:9, 72:2-6; IV Ezra 12:32 ff. depict the Messiah as participating in the redemptive program but do not call him *soter*. For Testament of Levi 2:10, Charles prefers the reading “and shall proclaim concerning the redemption of Israel.”⁹⁵ And the other reading “concerning him who shall redeem Israel” (*tu mellontos lutrousthai*) would not furnish an instance of *soter*. As far as the Shemoneh Esreh is concerned, the first petition employs *gô'el* (*lu-*

⁹⁰ Psalms of Solomon 3:6, 8:39, 9:1, 16:4, 17:2.

⁹¹ Enoch 37-71; IV Ezra 7:13; Ps. of Solomon, Sibylline Oracles III 49; IV Ezra 7:21 ff, 13:32, 37, 52, 14:9, etc., see Bousset, *Religion des Judentums* p. 305.

⁹² Boehlig, H., *Zum Begriff Kyrios bei Paulus*, *Zeitschrift fuer N. T. Wissenschaft* 1913 p. 27.

⁹³ No reference in either the Oxford or Kautzsch index.

⁹⁴ Dalman, *Words of Jesus*, Edinburgh, 1902, p. 295.

⁹⁵ Charles, *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, London, 1908, p. 30.

trotos) of the one who is to redeem posterity, while God is called *môšē* (*salvator, soter*). Indeed the seventh petition plainly states that God and God alone is Israel's redeemer. The reason for the omission of the title *soter* in case of the Messiah appears to be that it came to be reserved for God.

Attention should now be given to the usage of Josephus and Philo in order to ascertain whether it confirms or contradicts the result thus far obtained. An original and independent examination of the Niese text of the twenty books of the "Antiquities of the Jews" by Josephus shows that the verb *sozo* with its compounds and cognates occurs over 215 times. The noun *soter* appears seven times. In five of these seven instances *soter* is to be capitalized because title. Thus in XII 3, "and the cities were sufferers, and lost a great many of their inhabitants in these times of distress, insomuch that all Syria, by the means of Ptolemy, the son of Lagus, underwent the reverse of that title of *Soter*, which he then had." XII 11, "When Alexander had reigned twelve years and after him Ptolemy *Soter* forty years;" XII 223 "at this time Seleucus who was called *Soter* reigned over Asia;" XIII 222 "But Antiochus, the brother of Demetrius, who was called *Soter*, wandered about and was not admitted to any of the cities on account of Trypho;" XIII 271 "He was the son of Antiochus that was called *Soter*, who died in Parthia." In only two instances does *soter* occur with other than title value. One of these is VI 240 "So David appeared and fell at Jonathan's feet and bowed down to him and called him the *soter* of his soul." Here *soter* obviously is employed with merely literal significance and is limited by a definite genitive. The remaining instance of *soter* in the "Antiquities of the Jews" is found in XIV 444 "and these called Herod their *soter* and protector." Herod on his way to join Antony then besieging Samosata on the Euphrates arrives at Antioch. Considerable forces are assembled there with the purpose of reaching Antony but afraid to venture forth because the barbarians are in possession of the roads. Herod assumes the leadership. Two days march from Samosata, the barbarians suddenly attack and succeed in routing the advance guards of Herod. But Herod riding hard arrives in time to instill courage into the defeated troops, drives back the barbarians, rescues the baggage, and puts the main body of the enemy to flight. For thus clearing the roads and rescuing a considerable portion of the forces intent on aiding Antony, Herod was called "their *soter* and protector."

This survey of the usage of the "Antiquities of the Jews" with

reference to the word *soter* proves that the Jewish historian does not have a single instance of the absolute use of *soter* and that he himself refrains entirely from employing *soter*. To his own vocabulary *soter* is alien. It is only in those instances where as historian he considers himself to be relating what took place that he employs *soter* at all. Inasmuch as the history of Israel abounds with experience upon experience of rescue by Yahweh and those sent by Yahweh and further inasmuch as there are sections in the history of Josephus where *sozo* and its cognates occur repeatedly in rapid succession,⁹⁶ his failure to employ *soter* can be explained only on the ground of intention.

We might expect the usage of Philo to be at variance with what has thus far been noted. Philo as pre-eminent allegorist should hardly be expected to conform. Philo could have filled *soter* with another, a deeper significance. But Philo reserves *soter* for God. *Soter* occurs once in the treatise "About the Contemplative Life,"⁹⁷ once in that "On the Creation of the World,"⁹⁸ once in that "On the Migration of Abraham";⁹⁹ twice in "Why God is Unchangeable."¹⁰⁰ In all of these instances the reference is to God. Our investigation has proceeded far enough to indicate that Philo is acquainted with the combination *theos soter* and that he therefore restricts *soter* to God.¹⁰¹

Hence our conclusion regarding the usage of *soter* in the Jewish scriptures and Jewish productions in general should be that it is usually associated with and generally restricted to God.

10. The history of the *soter* idea in the Graeco-Roman civilization.¹⁰²

The second way in which the primitive Christian became familiar with the *soter* idea was through contact with the religious life of the Roman empire. Before proceeding to examine the content of the idea in the civilization of the Graeco-Roman world in the time of Paul it

⁹⁶ e. g., II 134-147 covering little more than a solid page and one-half of Niese, concerning the finding of the cup in Benjamin's bag, *sozo* and cognates occur eight times but *soter* not once.

⁹⁷ Mangey II, 485.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.* I, 41.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.* I, 455, while *sozo* and cognates occur nine times, Mangey I 436, 438, 440, 455 (five times) 461.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.* I, 293, 296, while *sozo* and its cognates occur nine times (Mangey I, 275, 283 (twice) 284, 291, 292 (twice), 293, 296).

¹⁰¹ Madden, F. W., *Coins of the Jews*, Boston, 1881, has no instance of *soter*.

¹⁰² This section is based on: Lietzmann, *Der Weltheiland*, Bonn, 1909; Roscher under *soter*; Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*, Goettingen, 1913, *Hauptprobleme der Gnosis*, Goettingen, 1907, *Theologischer Rundschau*, 1912, p. 41 ff 251 ff, *Gnosticism in Encyclopedia Britannica*; Wendland in *Zeitschrift fuer die N. T. Wissenschaft* 1904 p. 335 ff; Harnack, *Reden und Aufsätze*, Giessen, 1904, I 307 ff; Wobbermin, *Religioese Studien*, Berlin, 1896; Wagner, *Zeitschrift fuer die N. T. Wissenschaft*, 1905, p. 205 ff; Case, *Evolution of Early Christianity*, Chicago, 1914; k. t. e.

will be worth-while to consider the usual objection that primitive Christianity was in no wise subject to such an influence. One of the comfortable axioms of yesterday when there was no science of the history of religion to raise perplexing questions of origin, when there was no psychology of religion to focus attention on mental processes and the religious phenomena of the race, when the sands of Egypt and the mounds of the Euphrates valley had not yielded their treasures, was that Christianity had been planted in a special area and was averse to amalgamation with Hellenism. It is even now dogmatically stated that Paul owes nothing to Graeco-Roman culture.¹⁰³ But long since the comparativist has disproved this assumption. Today there is insistence on relativity, subjectivity, development. The New Testament is understood to be a documentary deposit of primitive Christianity laid down in a definite environment. Long before the period of the New Testament, Judaism, in spite of the Maccabean particularism, had been modified by Greek ideas, as during the previous centuries by Babylonian, Egyptian and Persian ideas.¹⁰⁴ A significant stratum of Hellenism had been laid over Semitic civilization. Such a chapter as the seventeenth chapter of Acts with his recognition of the religion of Greece, with its allusion to the unknown God, with its emphasis on the divine descent of the human race and the unity of humanity simply compels the assumption of syncretistic influence. Had not the Old Testament been translated into Greek and thereby opened Judaism to the powerful modification of the Greek religious terminology? A few years ago it was still being asserted that over five hundred words of the New Testament vocabulary of some five thousand words were "biblical." At present there are less than fifty words of the New Testament vocabulary not attested in the common or literary language of the Greeks. It must now be granted that there was pre-Christian gnosticism, that gnostic opposition to the God of the Old Testament implies contact with the religion of the synagogue.

Paul was by birth an Aramaic-speaking Jew. He received the training of a rabbi. But Paul was also a child of the diaspora. During the most impressionable years of his life, he lived at Tarsus. The second half of his career was passed in the Graeco-Roman world.

¹⁰³ See, e. g., Headlam, *St. Paul and Christianity*, p. IX.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. Ezekiel 8:14, 16; Jer. 44:24; Skinner on Genesis p. 85; Barton in *Studies in the History of Religion* presented to C. H. Toy, New York, 1912, p. 187 ff; Wendland, *Kultur* p. 293; Isaiah 10:4, 17:10, 11, I Kings 12:24 according to LXX; Jerome, letter 58 section 3.

Paul learned and employed the Greek language. The acquisition of a language is never a purely formal and external affair. A new language mediates new ideas. Paul prevalingly quotes from the Greek Old Testament. Paul was familiar with the Greek book of Wisdom and with the syncretistic Jewish eschatology. The analogy of the body found in Paul occurs also in Cicero, Livy, Seneca, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius. The various sin catalogues that feature the Pauline correspondence have parallels among the Stoics. Such words as law, works, propitiation, faith, man's "righteousness," "God's righteousness," reveal the Jew. But such words as spirit, flesh, death of Christ, union of all Christians in the pneumatic Christ, gnosis, ecstasy require Greek connections. Paulinism is an amalgam of Pharisaic juristic elements and Hellenistic mystical elements. "Mysticism did not grow on Jewish soil." Paul's content of salvation was largely Hellenistic. Jewish monotheism did not give birth to Paul's idea of son of God. An illustration or two should show Paul's indebtedness to Hellenism. Take such a verse as I Corinthians 15:22, "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." What is involved? All that participate in the death of Adam die, all that participate in the life of Christ live. The beginning of a series includes the succession. The idea contains the individual object. The first series connects with its head, the second series connects with its head. This is the logical, mystical, metaphysical background of the argument. But the metaphysical and mystical approach is Greek. Or take the preceding section, I Corinthians 15:12-19, where Paul mentions the five-fold consequences of denying the resurrection of the dead. If we do not arise, Christ did not. What is the underlying assumption? The Christian proclamation is that Christ arose from the dead. But we are one with him. Therefore his resurrection signifies our resurrection. Some say we shall not arise. But Christ is one with us. Therefore Christ did not arise. Who can read the verses without recalling how intimately the mystery religions connect the idea of the death and resurrection of the initiate with the death and resurrection of the god-savior. Again in I Corinthians 15:44, Paul almost identifies *psychikon* with *sarkikon*. Elsewhere he practically equates *psychikon* and *pneumatikon*. How may this difficulty be overcome? The answer is furnished by the mystery religions: "where the *psyche* is, there the *pneuma* may not be." It may therefore no longer be asserted that primitive Christianity was not influenced by contact with Hellenism. Indeed, the religious

views of the Graeco-Roman world must be ascertained before one may be certain what is original and what is derived in Christianity.¹⁰⁵

The association of the title *soter* with the Roman emperors brought it vividly to the attention of the early adherent of Jesus. Augustus was often called *soter* in inscription, public proclamation, epic poem. Thus a dozen years before the beginning of the Christian era, a temple on the island of Philae was consecrated to Augustus with the official inscription: *Αυτοκράτορι καίσαρι Σεβαστῆι Σωτῆρι καὶ Εὐεργέτῃ.*

Soter as title of Augustus occurs in Greece, Southern Russia, Asia Minor, Egypt. Land in the vicinity of Ptolemais was dedicated to Augustus the great god and *soter*. The Egyptian month Payni was called *Soter* in his honor.¹⁰⁶ It might seem that a review of the preceding century of Roman history would amply justify the bestowal of the title *soter* on Augustus. There had been civil wars to the number of twelve. Panics, famines, plundering by soldiers, betrayals of fathers by sons and husbands by wives, taxes imposed on women had kept things in ferment at Rome. There were deliberate legalized proscriptions from the three thousand reputed followers of Gracchus to those caught in the net of Antony. Political assassinations had begun with the Gracchi and included Cæsar and Cicero ere they were done. The road from Capua to Rome had looked on the six thousand crucified survivors of the insurrection managed by Spartacus. Militarism was running riot; Italy was being depopulated; economic distress was becoming unbearable. The proscription of the triumvirs invited to wholesale frameups: "those who kill the proscribed and bring us their heads shall receive the following rewards: to a freeman 25,000 Attic drachmas per head, to a slave his freedom and 10,000 Attic drachmas and his master's right of citizenship. Informers shall receive the same reward."¹⁰⁷ The imposition of taxes on women called forth the opposition and the eloquence of Hortensia: "Why should we pay taxes when we have no part in the honors, the commands, the statecraft, for which you contend against each other with such harmful results? 'Because this is a time of war' do you say? When have

¹⁰⁵ For all references to the epistle to the Corinthians, see Weiss, J., in Meyer series on Corinthians; cf Reitzenstein, R., *Die hellenistische Mysterienreligionen*, Leipzig, 1910, p. 43 f, 136 f especially 154, 169 f, 172; on the question at issue, see further American Journal of Theology 1914, p. 497 ff, 1917 p. 358 ff; Matthews, I. J., *The Jewish Apologetic to the Graeco-Roman World in the Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphical Literature*, Chicago, 1914; Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums* (revised edition 1906), p. 540 ff.

¹⁰⁶ Otto, *Hermes*, Band 45 (1910), p. 448 ff; Dittenberger, *Orient Inscript.* II 458; C. I. G. 2122.

¹⁰⁷ Appian, *The Civil Wars* IV, §11.

there not been wars?"¹⁰⁸ Augustus had finally succeeded in abolishing civil wars and insurrections, had established law and order, and had brought the long desired golden peace. Is it any wonder that he should be called "*soter* of the Greeks and of the whole world?"¹⁰⁹

Horace gives beautiful expression to the reaction of the common man when peace finally came:

"From gods benign descended, thou
 Best guardian of the fates of Rome
 For safe the herds range field and fen
 Full-headed stand the shocks of grain
 Our sailors sweep the peaceful main
 And man can trust his fellow men."¹¹⁰
 "Long, long to heaven be thy return delayed."¹¹¹

Virgil voices a similar sentiment:

"Turn, turn thine eyes! see here thy race divine,
 Behold thy own imperial Roman line:
 Cæsar with all the Julian name survey,
 See where the glorious ranks ascend today!
 This, this is he! the chief so long foretold
 To bless the land where Saturn ruled of old,
 And give the Latian realm a second age of gold!
 The promised prince, Augustus the divine,
 Of Cæsar's race and Jove's immortal line!
 This mighty chief his empire shall extend
 O'er India's realms to earth's remotest end."¹¹²

But the hypothesis that the title *soter* as employed of Augustus developed spontaneously out of the experience of deliverance from the confusion and chaos of the preceding century cannot be sustained. For the same title is used of Tiberius, Claudius, Nero, Vespasian, Titus, Trajan, Hadrian, Marcus Aurelius and others. Moreover, we observed such expressions as "a second age of gold," "Augustus the divine," "Jove's immortal line." There is an eschatological background here and the God-King and God-Savior conception as well. A few lines from the fourth Eclogue of Virgil will emphasize the point.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. §32.

¹⁰⁹ Inscript. Olymp. 366.

¹¹⁰ Odes IV 5:1 ff.

¹¹¹ Odes I 2:41.

¹¹² Aeneid 6:787 ff.

"Lo the last age of Cumae's seer has come!
 Again the great millennial aeon dawns
 E'en now thy brother, Lord of Light and Healing,
 Apollo, rules and ends the older day
 The goats shall come uncalled, weighed down with milk
 Nor lion's roar affright the laboring kine
 The treacherous snake and deadly herb shall die,
 And Syrian spikenard grow on every bark
 Nature shall give new colors to the fleece,
 Soft blushing glow of crimson, gold of crocus,
 And lambs be clothed in scarlet as they feed."¹¹³

Such views of the new age are not peculiar to Roman literature, as we well know and as a few illustrations will show.¹¹⁴

"And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse
 And a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit
 And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb,
 And the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
 And the lion shall eat straw like the ox."¹¹⁵

"For the age is hastening fast to its end
 Then shall the sun suddenly shine forth by night and the moon
 by day;
 And blood shall trickle forth from the wood, and the stone shall
 utter its voice
 The peoples shall be in consummation, the outgoings of the stars
 shall change."¹¹⁶

"And it shall come to pass, when he has brought low everything
 that is in the world,
 And has sat down in peace for the age on the throne of his
 kingdom
 That joy shall be revealed,

¹¹³ Horace in his *Carmen Saeculare* manifests the same hope; his sixteenth epode is pessimistic:

"Back unrepentant we will veer the sail
 When Po shall lave the summits of Matinus;
 When into ocean juts the Apennine;
 When herds no longer fear the tawny lion;
 When nature's self becomes unnatural."

¹¹⁴ Compare Bousset, *Religion des Judentums* p. 258 ff; Oesterley, W. O. E., *The Evolution of the Messianic Idea*, London, 1908.

¹¹⁵ Isaiah 11.

¹¹⁶ IV Ezra 4:26, 50 f, 5:4 f.

And rest shall appear,
 And then shall healing descend in dew,
 And disease shall withdraw
 And anxiety and anguish and lamentation pass from among
 men
 And wild beasts shall come forth from their holes and submit
 themselves to the little child
 And the reapers shall not grow weary
 Nor those that build be toilworn"117

"Therefore at that time the retribution of the sinful shall be . . .
 And so may we be such as make the world renewed
 For at the dispensation the blow of the annihilation of falsehood
 shall fall."118

The eschatological emphasis of the Roman poets urged us to enter the syncretistic area of the Graeco-Roman civilization. The reference to the God-Savior idea and the God-king idea also forces us to consider the wider history of the *soter* concept. For the God-king idea is of Oriental ancestry¹¹⁹ and the God-Savior idea is of Greek origin. The epithets *soter* and *soteira* were applied to numerous Greek and non-Greek gods and goddesses. More than two score gods and goddesses are thus described. Among the goddesses were Aphrodite, Artemis, Athena, Demeter, Hecate, Hera, Hygieia, Kore, Nike, Roma, Themis, Tyche; among the gods were Apollo, Asclepius, Dionysus, Hades, Helios, Hermes, Poseidon, Telesphorus, and Zeus.¹²⁰ Thirty-five columns in Roscher are devoted to the mere cataloging in fine print of attestations of *soter*. Practically every country of the Mediterranean world has yielded coin or votive tablet or altar inscription or some other evidence of *soter*. One living in the time of Paul could hardly escape acquaintance with some *theos soter*. Some four score localities, dotting the Roman empire, furnish eloquent evi-

¹¹⁷ II Baruch 73, 74.

¹¹⁸ Avesta Yasht 30:8 f; Carpenter, J. E., The Historical Jesus, p. 64: "But even the old Avesta announces the advent of a Savior (Saoshyant) who should be the helper or agent in the great consummation."

¹¹⁹ See, e. g., Breasted, Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt, New York, 1912, p. 15ff, 328, 331, 336, 367; Reitzenstein, Poimandres 309 ff; Case, Evolution of Early Christianity 197 ff.

¹²⁰ For the best recent list, see Roscher (Hoefler), *Ausführlicher Lex. der griech. und roem. Mythologie* 1913, Lieferung 66/7 col. 1236 ff; earlier lists in Preller, *Griech. Mythologie* Berlin, 1894, see index; Dittenberger, *Sylloge Reg. IV* 1; the Harvard Collection of Coins, Period III A (B. C. 400-336) #8 Cyzicus *soteira* of Demeter or Persephone period VI (B. C. 190-100) B #6 Thasos *Herakleous soter* Thasion, #7 Thrace *Herakleous soter* Thrakon.

dence of the widespread popularity of the *soter* title for Zeus. The next most popular *theos soter* was Asclepius. From its ancient seat in Thessaly, this cult had spread to Boeotia, Epidaurus, Achaia, Arcadia, the islands, Asia Minor and the West. Hundreds of Asklepieia are attested in epigraphical and in literary sources.¹²¹ The localities of the Asclepius cult include such towns as Athens, Pergamum, Rome, Smyrna, Thyatira, Tralles. The possibility of Christian involvement is at once noticeable. Eusebius pays special attention to the destruction of the temple of Asclepius in Cilicia, describing the god of healing as the "demon worshipped in Cilicia whom thousands regarded with reverence as the possessor of saving and healing power, who drew his worshippers from the true Savior."¹²² On the coins that passed from hand to hand, on statue in marketplace or along the roadside, in local cults, in mystery religion convocations, on altar and on temple the inhabitant of the Graeco-Roman world beheld *soter*. That world was filled with known and unknown *theoi soter*es. No living person could escape contact with some *theos soter*.

A very complicated soteriology characterizes gnosticism and the mystery religions. In both a *soter* appears somewhere. Recent investigation has shown that gnosticism can no longer be regarded as the "acute hellenization of Christianity." Christian gnosticism is merely the amalgamation of existing gnosticism with Christian conceptions. "The actual ancestry of gnosticism is now understood to be pre-Christian Oriental mysticism." Gnosis is not intellectual knowing, but marvellous, revealed wisdom communicated and received in ecstasy or in connection with the ritual. Gnosticism is theosophy rather than philosophy. The goal in gnosticism is salvation. The gnostic systems tell in detail how the deity grants salvation to the individual. The Valentinian system illustrates how the historical Jesus was simply grafted upon an already existing complicated theology. There was a myth relating to the holy wedding of the two deities, the *Soter* and *Sophia*; this union was typical of the anticipated union of the immortal being of the gnostic with heavenly spiritual powers. In the primitive gnostic soteriology, the divine *Soter* descends to Hades to release the fallen and imprisoned *Sophia*. In the later, historical redemption through Jesus, this ancient *Soter* is merely brought into relation with Jesus. The point we are at present inter-

¹²¹ Roscher I, 1, 620 ff (c. 1886) had catalogued 320; Walton, *Cult of Asklepios*, Ithaca, 1894, is not at all complete; cf also Preller, 525, note 1; Harnack, *Expansion of Christianity I* 121-151.

¹²² Eusebius *Vita Const.* 3, 56.

ested in observing is that gnosticism prior to merging with Christianity makes use of a primitive, heavenly, divine *Soter*.¹²³

The recent extensive study of the various mystery religions has demonstrated that the end in view is salvation.¹²⁴ The mystery religions were religions of redemption. The method of obtaining

¹²³ Bousset, *Hauptprobleme der Gnosis* 263 ff, *Theolog. Rundschau*, 1912, p. 41 ff, 251 ff, article *Gnosticism*, *Encyl. Britannica*.

¹²⁴ Asterius, *Hom. X* (Migne 40:324): *ho polus kai anarithmos demos ten soterian auton einai nomizousi ta en to skoto para ton duo prattomena*; Firmicus Maternus *de errore pr. rel. XXII, 1*: *tharritei mustai estai gar hemin ek ponou soteria*; cf Tertullian *de haer. 40*; Reitzenstein, *Poimandres* p. 178, etc.

We must content ourselves with the description of but one of these religions of redemption and select the Isis-Serapis mystery religion for which there is somewhat abundant material. About the middle of the second pre-Christian century, the Isis religion appears in Italy. A hundred years later it is established at Rome. It was A. D. 560 before Christianity with imperial assistance finally triumphed over it. In the eleventh book of the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius there is a record of the experience of Apuleius in becoming an adherent of the Isis religion. Apuleius conceals his experience by a literary device in which Lucius, the hero of the romance, is turned into an ass because of a careless magical experiment. After a series of extraordinary adventures, he finally manages to escape and finds himself on the strand of Cenchreae. As he beholds the moon in the evening sky, he prays to the goddess of the sky for help. A form of wonderful beauty appears to him and reveals herself as Isis. She directs him to approach her high-priest at the festival in her honor and to steal a few roses from the wreath in the priest's hand. These are to enable him to become himself again. An impressive description of the procession of the Isis community follows. Lucius does as instructed and is restored to human shape. He thereupon dedicates his life to the service of the goddess. He becomes a novice and passes through the various grades of initiation into the mysteries. The process of initiation begins with the mention of the name of the candidate who desires to affiliate with the movement. The novice dedicates himself to the holy militant service of the goddess, pledging unconditioned obedience and service to her. He is thenceforward in the *douleia* of the goddess. He remains for some time in the temple of Isis. The duration of the novitiate is determined by the goddess herself. She must appear in a dream to the candidate informing him that the time for consecration has come and must likewise reveal herself to the priest who is to officiate. Only at great risk may the unsummoned approach the goddess. Anyone who without being elected views the goddess must die. During this interval from the mention of the name until the consecration, the initiate is called the *katochos* of the goddess. After the twofold summons, the consecration occurs, accompanied by elaborate ceremonies. It begins with a baptism followed by an esoteric description of the experiences awaiting the neophyte. After ten days of severe asceticism, the moment of consecration approaches. The rest of the mystics give parting dedicatory gifts to the initiate. For in the mystery, the old man dies and a new man is born. Then the act of consecration takes place. The initiate must pass through all the terrors of the underworld. And now at midnight, he beholds a great light. He sees the gods face to face. This beholding of deity signifies exaltation to the divine plane. The holy beholding signifies deification. At the conclusion of the ritual, the neophyte is clothed in holy raiment and finally in a heavenly dress, with a wreath on his head and a flaming torch in his hand. This takes place on a postament before the assembled church, after which the consecrated is greeted and worshipped as a god. The divine raiment and the wreath of the sungod have transformed the candidate into a god. The purpose of all this ritualism is to secure salvation for the initiate. He shares the life of the god to attain the eternal life,—following analysis of Bousset; cf also Apuleius, *Metamorphoses XI*, Plutarch *de Iside et Osir. c 66 ff*, Pausanias *X 32, 13*, Herodotus *II 170ff*, Wendland, *Kultur*, *Tafel 8*, Clement, *Stromat. VI 4:35-37*, Athenagoras, *Suppl. pro Christ. c 22*, Tertullian *de monog. 17*; valuable bibliography in Case, *Evolution of Early Christianity*, p. 315, note 1.

salvation is union with the deity. This union may be conceived of in very crass, crude, physical, sensual, passionate fashion or in a more ethical spiritual manner as likeness to the god or as the indwelling of the god. Salvation has to do with the maintenance of the earthly life, success, protection from disease, deliverance from danger and culminates in the conferment of a new higher life, in the entering of the kingdom of God, in the attainment of the blessed life, in escape from judgment. To put it briefly, in the mysteries the deity aids man in procuring salvation. And the helping god was called *soter*. Of this there should be no longer any doubt. An inscription of the time of Ptolemy IV. found in the vicinity of Alexandria reads:

Ἐπὲρ βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου
καὶ βασιλίσσης Ἀρσινόης
θεῶν φιλοπατόρων Σαράπιδι
καὶ Ἰσιδι Σωτῆρσιν Ἀρχέπολις
κόσμον Λεοννατεύς¹²⁵

An inscription found at Abydos and belonging to the time of Ptolemy IV. contains

Σαράπιδι Ὅσειριδι Μεγίστῳ Σωτῆρι.¹²⁶

An inscription of the time of Ptolemy Epiphanes found at Akoris contains

Ἰσιδι Μωχιάδι Σωτείρα.¹²⁷

The following three statements are from inscriptions found at Philae and of the time of Ptolemy Auletes,

τὴν μεγίστην θεὰν κυρίαν Σώτειραν Ἰσιν;¹²⁸
τὴν θεὰν Σώτειραν Ἰσιν;¹²⁹
παννώτειραν Ἰσιν.¹³⁰

These inscriptions of the pre-Christian era prove that the gods of the mystery religions were *soteres*. There is a number of inscriptions of unknown date which support this conclusion. On an altar at Lindos:

σαραπιος σωτηρος.¹³¹

¹²⁵ Brescia Bulletin de la Société archéologique d'Alexandria #10. Nouvelle Série Tome II, 2me fascicule. Alexandria 1908, p. 170; Doelger, Ichthys, Rom. 1910, p. 420.

¹²⁶ Journal of Hellenic Studies 22 (1902) p. 377.

¹²⁷ C. I. G. 3, 4703 c.

¹²⁸ C. I. G. 3 add 4930 b p. 1223.

¹²⁹ C. I. G. 3 add 4930 d p. 1229.

¹³⁰ C. I. G. 3 add 490 p. 1221.

¹³¹ I. G. 12, 1 No. 932.

At Alexandria, Delos, Talmis, in Nubia similar inscriptions occur.¹³²

Thus far our study has shown that *soter* was employed of numerous Greek gods, that gnosticism and the mystery religions emphasized the god-*soter* idea. In the further development of the *soter* usage, the Dioscuri,¹³³ and Heracles¹³⁴ and the good daemons¹³⁵ are called *soter*. Oedipus is *soter* for Attica,¹³⁶ and Eurystheus for Athens.¹³⁷

The earliest known instance in which the title *soter* is applied to historical persons is that of the Spartan Brasidas. The occasion was the costly victory over the Athenians at Amphipolis, when Brasidas was fatally wounded and lived only long enough to hear that his side had been victorious. Thereupon he was buried "at public expense within the city in front of the present marketplace; and from that day forth the men of Amphipolis, having fenced his tomb, sacrifice to him as a hero . . . and honor him with games and sacrifices every year. They even adopted him founder of the city and called him *soter*."¹³⁸ Agesilaus was called *soter* by his soldiers.¹³⁹ Dio was likewise called *theos* and *soter* by the people of Syracuse.¹⁴⁰ Demosthenes accuses the Thessalonians and Thebans as regarding Philip as friend, *evergetes* and *soter*.¹⁴¹

The career of Alexander the Great added another element to the Greek *soter* conception. Alexander had swept down from the North and with titanic strength and with bewildering speed had moved through the Orient, subduing his opponents, settling the quarrels of countless princelets, establishing order, wedding Greek culture to Oriental life. This succession of events was so out of the ordinary that it was looked upon as beyond the achievement of mortal man. Here was the realization of the Oriental conception of the king as the

¹³² For Alexandria, Strack, Die Dynastie der Ptolemaeer p. 239 nr. 66, *Sarapidos Cha Isdos Theon Soteron*; for Delos, Dittenberger Sylloge 2761, 764, p. 618, 619, the former of Isis and Serapis, the latter of Isis, Astarte, Aphrodite, etc; for Talmis, C. I. G., 3 #5041 *Isin Sarapin tous megistous ton theon soteris agathous*. In the Orphic hymns, the deities are often called *soteris* cf 2:14, 9:12, 14:8, 12, 27:12, 36:13, 38:3, 24, 67:8, 74:7, 9, 75:5, 85:10, see Wobbermin, Religionsgeschichte. Studien 1896 p. 58 ff, Dieterich, Deut. Literaturzeitung 1892, s 1644.

¹³³ Homeric Hymn 33, 6, Theoc. 22:6, Luc. Alex. 4, Pausanias 2, 1:9, Eur. Hel. 1664, Clement of Alexandria Protrep. 22, C. I. G. 3, 4042 (Ancyra), C. I. G. 1, 1261 (Sparta).

¹³⁴ I. G. 14, 1001 (Rome); Thasos, Head, Hist. num. 229, etc.

¹³⁵ Roscher, 1913, *soter*, column 1253.

¹³⁶ O. C. 460, 463 cf Oed. R. 480.

¹³⁷ Eur. Heracl. 1032.

¹³⁸ Thucydides 5, 11, 2.

¹³⁹ Xenophon, Ages, 11, 13.

¹⁴⁰ Plut. Dio 46.

¹⁴¹ Demosth. de corona 43, cf further Wendland, Kultur, p. 124.

incarnation of the deity. The hymn of Ikhnaton is the classic expression of this Oriental conception:

“Thou art in my heart
 There is no other that knoweth thee,
 Save thy son Ikhnaton
 Since thou (Aton) didst establish the earth
 Thou hast raised them up for thy son,
 Who came forth from thy limbs,
 The king, living in truth
 The son of Re, living in truth, lord of diadems
 Ikhnaton whose life is long.”¹⁴²

Alexander was not slow to grasp the significance of this religious sentiment and therefore personally encouraged this dogma of his divine kingdom. Alexander was granted divine honors by Asiatic and European Greeks, was known as the son of Ammon, and his last desire was to be buried in the oasis of Zeus Ammon. Thus was the Oriental view of a god-king inaugurating a new aeon fused with the Greek god-*soter* idea.¹⁴³

The successors of Alexander divided his empire and appropriated the Oriental god-king conception.¹⁴⁴ In 307 the Athenians voted divine honors to Antigonos and Demetrius Poliorketes, calling them god-saviors and electing a priest for the new cult.¹⁴⁵

The Ptolemies perfected the union of the Greek and Oriental ideas of *soter*.¹⁴⁶ The cult of the Θεοὶ ἀδελφοί introduced by Philadelphus certainly proves the existence of the cult of the reigning sovereign. And it would even seem that Ptolemy I. and Berenice were worshipped as *soter* while reigning. The Rosetta stone provides indubitable evidence for the completed union of the god-savior and god-king ideas. The inscription directs that statues of Ptolemy as *soter* of Egypt be made and that one be set up in every temple of Egypt for the priests and the people to worship. Figures of Ptolemy in gold are to

¹⁴² Breasted, *A History of the Ancient Egyptians*, N. Y., 1911, p. 276 f.

¹⁴³ Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt* p. 16; Maspero, *Comment Alexandre devint dieu en Égypte*, *École des Hautes Études annuaire* 1897; Lucian, *Dialogues of the Dead* XIV; Lietzmann, *Der Weltheiland*; Reitzenstein, *Poimandres* 308 ff, *Case Evolution of Early Christianity*, pp. 195-238.

¹⁴⁴ The Harvard Collection of Coins supplies the following data: Period VA (B. C. 280-190) #26 Bactria: *Diodotou soterou*; #27 *Euthudemou theou*. Period VII A (B. C. 100-1) #14 *basilissa Kleopatra thea neotera*; #20 Bactria: *basileos megalou soterou kai philopatoros Apollodotou*; #21, Hermaeus: *basileos soterou Hermaiou*.

¹⁴⁵ Plutarch, *Demet.* 10.

¹⁴⁶ Dittenberger, *Sylloge* #202, *Diodor.* XX, 10, *Pausanias* I 8:6, *Wendland, Kulturgesch Beilage* 1. *Deissmann Light from the Ancient East* 349.

be made and placed in gold shrines which are to be set side by side with the shrines of the gods and carried about in procession with them. The priests are to be known as the "priests of the beneficent god Ptolemy Epiphanes who appeareth on earth." Soldiers may borrow the shrines with the figure of Ptolemy inside of them and a copy of the decree is to be set up in certain temples "side by side with the statue of Ptolemy the ever living god." Ptolemy is described as the "living image of Zeus, God of God, descended from God, son of Isis."

Henceforth the *soter* title occurs constantly.¹⁴⁷ It is attested for Antiochus,¹⁴⁸ Mithridates,¹⁴⁹ Antiochus IV,¹⁵⁰ Antiochus I. Com-magene,¹⁵¹ Pompey,¹⁵² Verres,¹⁵³ Marcus Agrippa,¹⁵⁴ Julius Cæsar¹⁵⁵ and many others. Plutarch relates how Camillus, Pelopidas, Sulla, Cato the Younger were called *soter*. If the historian is guilty of reading back the usage of his own time, we at least may observe how very frequent the employment of *soter* then was.¹⁵⁶

11. The significance of the *soter*-idea.

We have briefly traced the history of the *soter*-idea in the Graeco-Roman civilization and may now summarize the acknowledged results of the study of the *soter*-problem.

The underlying idea in *soter* is that of helper in time of need. The deliverance may involve protection on some dangerous journey, escape from shipwreck, rescue in battle, removal of economic distress, banishment of pest or plague or the doing away with any kind of obstruction. Further an eschatological emphasis developed about the idea because of its connection with the mystery religions. But the principal point is that the idea of *soter* involves the god-idea. When the delivered person was unfamiliar with the name of the god who had come to his assistance, he called the unknown god *soter*. If the deliverance occurred in such a way as to be associated with the function of any known god, *soter* would immediately become a temporary title of the god in question. A series of rescues by the same god would inevitably cause the temporary title to become a permanent title.

¹⁴⁷ See especially Wendland, *Zeitschrift fuer die N. T. Wissenschaft* 1904, 335 ff.

¹⁴⁸ Kornemann, *Zur Geschichte des antiken Herrscherkultes* I 68-78 ff.

¹⁴⁹ Cicero pro Flacco 60.

¹⁵⁰ Dittenberger, *Orient Inscript.* 253.

¹⁵¹ Dittenberger, *Or. Gr. Inscript. Selectae* I, 383.

¹⁵² Dittenberger, *Sylloge* I 337-40.

¹⁵³ Verres, Act II 2, 154.

¹⁵⁴ Collitz, *Dialektinscrip.* I 219.

¹⁵⁵ Dittenberger, *Or. Ins.* 346 f, *Sylloge* I, 347.

¹⁵⁶ Camillus 11, Pelopidas 12, Sulla 34, Cato Minor 71.

Originally *soter* was a title limited to the gods. The god's employment of some person as agent and the heroising of the conspicuous and powerful dead promoted the attachment of *soter* to heroes, and then to men who had in some extraordinary manner demonstrated themselves deliverers.

Thereupon, during the period of the hellenization of the East, the Oriental god-king idea plus an eschatological emphasis fused with the Greek *soter*-conception.

Hence, in the religious vocabulary of the ordinary man in the first century, *soter* was a term of very complex content. But the one element practically universally present in *soter* was *theos*. Alexander, the Ptolemies, the Seleucids, Pompey, Verres, Agrippa, Julius Cæsar, Augustus are *theos* as well as *soter*. When we are near *soter*, we are also near *theos*. And it should be borne in mind that a great variety of significance attaches to *theos*.¹⁵⁷ An exception to this rule of *theos-soter* would be the employment of *soter* as descriptive term without title value. Honors equal to those of the gods are bestowed on the Ptolemies. The Rosetta stone inscription is filled with the idea of deity. Antiochus IV. is *epiphanes*, *ktistes*, as well as *soter*. The world is described as full of temples to Pompey. Julius Cæsar is the *god epiphanes*, the offspring of Ares and Aphrodite as well as the common savior of humanity.¹⁵⁸ Augustus is divine, son of Jupiter, god. After B. C. 40, Augustus called himself *divi filius*. After the battle of Actium, Octavius was associated with the gods in hymns of praise. In B. C. 7, the genius of Augustus was added to the cult of the *Lares compitales*. "The whole world regarded Augustus as equal to the Olympians" is the judgment of Philo. "You (Augustus), while in life, are honored as divine, and vows and oaths are taken at your shrine."¹⁵⁹ "Who is the god this people shall invoke to save a realm that rushes to its fall?"¹⁶⁰ "To a god I owe this blest repose; to him as god I bow."¹⁶¹ The inscription of Priene puts it: "Providence has sent this man to us and to coming generations as a *soter*, he will make an end to all struggle and mould things gloriously . . . the birthday

¹⁵⁷ For a most valuable summary on the usage of *theos*, see Harnack, History of Dogma I, 119, note 2.

¹⁵⁸ Inscription from Ephesus, B. C. 48, Dittenberger Sylloge 347; statue in the temple of Quirinus in honor of Caesar inscribed "to the invisible god," cf Angus, Environment of Early Christianity, 1915, p. 86 f.

¹⁵⁹ Horace, Epistles II, 1, 15 (Conington).

¹⁶⁰ Horace, Odes I 2, 25 cf IV 5, 31 f.

¹⁶¹ Virgil, Eclog. I, 7.

of the god has led the world to the messages of joy."¹⁶² The gods of the mystery cults are called *soteres*. The holy scriptures of the Jews tended to restrict *soter* to Yahweh. To put it tersely, to say *soter* was to say *theos*. When the author of the epistle to Titus says, "looking for the blessed hope and epiphany of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,"¹⁶³ he summarizes the ordinary content of the *soter*-idea in the culture of his day. *Theos soter* is a rather fixed, inseparable religious combination in the civilization of the Roman empire. "No one could be a god any longer unless he was also a savior" had its complement in no one could be a savior without being a god.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² cf *Dia de patroon kai soteria tou koinou tou anthropou genous*, number 894 of inscriptions from Halicarnassus in British Museum, Wendland, *Kulturges.* 410.

¹⁶³ Titus 2:13.

¹⁶⁴ The Harvard Collection of Coins supplies the following data: Period V A (B. C. 280-190) # 26 *Diodotou soteris*; #27 *Euthudemou theou*; Period VII A (B. C. 100-1) #14 *basilissa Kleopatra thea neotera*.

IV.

THE EXPLANATION OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN FAILURE TO APPLY THE TITLE *SOTER* TO JESUS

Our study has shown that primitive Christianity needed a *soter*, that the early church to the time of Paul avoided calling Jesus *soter*, that the idea of *soter* in the religious vocabulary of the Graeco-Roman world was bound up with the idea of *theos*. We should now seek the explanation of this manifest failure to apply the title *soter* to Jesus.

12. Christianity and the imperial employment of the title *soter*.

It might be plausibly argued that the appropriation of the title *soter* by the Roman emperors sufficiently accounts for its avoidance by the primitive Christian community. Whatever may be affirmed of various groups of Christians, this reason would not account for the universal omission of the title *soter*. The favorite Pauline title *kyrios* was also employed of the Roman emperors. Moreover, the title *soter* was by no means restricted to the Roman emperors. It was employed by the Jews, in gnosticism, in the mystery religions, in case of numerous Greek gods and especially in the cult of the god of healing. But the fallacy lies deeper. The argument for the avoidance of *soter* because of opposition to the Roman empire presupposes that Christianity entered the Graeco-Roman civilization as a world religion, challenging publicly all existing cults. Whereas, the evolution of the distinctiveness of Christianity was very gradual. For decades the Roman empire identified Christianity with Judaism. It required the fire at Rome and the missionary propaganda and death of Paul as well as the Jewish insurrection of the seventh decade of the first Christian century to make the empire conscious of the separateness of Christianity. Within Christianity *soter* could have been used of Jesus for many years without in any way coming to the knowledge of the empire and without causing conscientious objections on the part of the followers of Jesus, for the holy scriptures of the Jews had employed the term *soter*.

Again, it is after the menace of Christianity has been recognized by the empire that the title *soter* appears in Christian compositions. It is after A. D. 70, that *soter* becomes frequent. The situation really is that at the beginning when the Christian movement was little or-

ganized and insignificant, when no problem of attitude toward the overshadowing empire presented itself, the title *soter* is avoided by Christians, whereas at a time when it might have proved dangerous to employ the title or when there might have been scruples against its employment, Christians are using it.

There is opposition to the imperial religion with the cult of the living emperor in the revolutionary apocalypse of the New Testament. The decisive world-battle is the conflict between Christians and the cult of the emperor. The *kyrios* and his church in the end win the victory.¹⁶⁵ The Johannine apocalypse avoids the title *soter* and this attitude of opposition to the empire is probably a contributing factor. Yet in other Christian circles the title *soter* puts in an appearance at just the time when the Johannine apocalypse reaches a larger audience. Finally, the path of the New Testament apocalypse to a secure place in the canon was by no means smooth.

13. The expansion of Christianity and the title *soter*.

It has been suggested that the use of the Christian title *soter* runs parallel to the separation of Christianity from its original soil and its syncretism with hellenic culture. Jewish messianism and the title "Christ," it is said, were strange to the Gentiles and hence *soter* was employed to enable the Gentiles to appreciate Christianity.¹⁶⁶ But *soter* was used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament and Christianity was on Gentile territory within a few years after the death of Jesus. Further "Christ" occurs some 350 times in Paul.¹⁶⁷ All of his surviving letters are addressed to Gentile Christian churches. Yet *soter* with title value seems not to occur in the Pauline correspondence. Moreover, *soter* is absent from the Epistle of Clement, the Epistle of Barnabas, the Shepherd of Hermas and the apologies of Aristides, Tatian, and Athenagoras. Barnabas avowedly allegorizes the holy scriptures of the Jews and completely appropriates them for Christianity. He should have given particular attention to the usage of *soter* in the Greek Old Testament. The Shepherd of Hermas has been shown to be acquainted with and dependent upon Poimandres.¹⁶⁸ And no one would affirm that the Greek apologists with their numerous allusions to Greek religion are unfamiliar with the terminology of the Greek religion.

¹⁶⁵ Revelation 14:1, 5:12, 7:12.

¹⁶⁶ Wendland, Kulturgeschichte 221; Wobbermin, Mysterienreligionen 105 ff.

¹⁶⁷ On Paul's employment of Christ, see Case, Evolution of Early Christianity, 112 ff.

¹⁶⁸ Reitzenstein, Poimandres 11 ff, 32 ff.

14. The Christology of the primitive Christian church and the title *soter*.

The only adequate explanation of the primitive Christian rejection of *soter* as title for Jesus is supplied by the Christology of the primitive church.

(1) The Christology of the church prior to Paul and the title *soter*.

One of the earliest titles applied to Jesus was son of God. Did this title prior to Paul possess ethical-religious, theocratic or metaphysical significance? The answer to our question is furnished by the narrative of the baptism and the temptation of Jesus.¹⁶⁹ The description of the experience of Jesus at his baptism is very varied. It has been pointed out that the baptism of Jesus constituted a problem for Matthew and Luke and the primitive church in general.¹⁷⁰ The fourth evangelist so modified it as to transform it. The "Western" form of Luke, attested also by Clement of Alexandria, adds "this day have I begotten thee." This was most inconvenient for Christians of the second century. Indeed, this form of text disappears after 400 A. D. The "this day" proved the significance of sonship to be ethical-religious: God loved Jesus in a special way and gave him a special work to do and therefore called him son.¹⁷¹ In the temptation narrative Jesus meets the temptations of the Messiah. The interpretation of the narrative of the temptation yields this precipitate: the early church regarded Jesus as Messiah in spite of his natural life because he submitted to the method of God and refused to enter into any coalition with the power of evil. The term "son of God" for the very primitive church had historical, ethical-religious connotation and not metaphysical value.

Another title applied to Jesus by the primitive church was "Son of Man." But this title does not involve the equation Jesus is God. We shall pause only to recapitulate recent historical investigation of the complicated "Son of Man" question.¹⁷² The earlier study of the "Son of Man" problem was principally an exegetical evaluation of the passages of the New Testament concerned. The usual conclusion was that Jesus by its employment desired to indicate that he was humanity's ideal. About 1880, the historical method of study began to call attention to the phenomena of Daniel and related Jewish literature.

¹⁶⁹ Mark 1:11ff; Luke 3:21ff; Matt. 3:16 ff; John 1:31 ff; gospel according to the Hebrews, Ebionite Gospel.

¹⁷⁰ Harnack, *Sprueche und Reden*, Leipzig, 1907, p. 216.

¹⁷¹ Cf Acts 13:33, Hebr. 1:5.

¹⁷² Based on Theolog. Rundschau 1900, p. 201 ff, Bousset, *Kyrios Christos* 6-27, *Religion des Judentums* (revised edition) p. 297 ff (305 note 1, 307 note 2).

For various reasons it seemed unwarranted to let Jesus employ the title heavenly Son of Man of himself. Consequently, the interpretation varied between temporary messianic existence, anticipatory employment, and humanity's ideal. As soon as it was conceded that Jesus spoke Aramaic, a new period in the interpretation of the title "Son of Man" began, for its Aramaic equivalent must be discovered. In 1894 *bar 'naša'* was assumed to be the underlying Aramaic equivalent of the odd expression "the Son of Man." But as this Aramaic expression was assumed to signify "the man," messianic significance was denied the title. Somewhat later it was argued that the title "Son of Man" never existed in the Aramaic and therefore Jesus did not apply such a title to himself. But the data of Enoch soon compelled the definite acknowledgment that "Son of Man" does occur in Enoch. The only point remaining subject to debate as far as Enoch was concerned was whether "Son of Man" in Enoch had technical significance. In 1898 it was pointed out that the Jerusalem-Palestinian Aramaic of the period of Jesus had *'naš* for man, that the singular *bar 'naš* was of rare occurrence and only found in imitation of the Hebrew Old Testament. It was only later that *bar 'naš* became the customary expression for man. To put it another way, in the time of Jesus *bar 'naš* was felt to be an archaic, poetical expression. Further, the definite, determined *bar 'naša'* is not to be discovered in the Aramaic. Thus it might be granted that *bar 'naša'* could develop technical meaning, title significance. And because Jewish apocalypticism was fond of mysterious terms, it was all the more probable that "the man" should become a messianic title. The outcome of the long controversy was to locate "Son of Man" within the terminology of Jewish apocalypticism. It was recognized that the idea of pre-existence attaches to the title "Son of Man." "Son of Man" is the transcendent, pre-existent Messiah, "the primitive man," "the second man," who appears in the clouds of heaven, who participates in the world assize. But never does "Son of Man" signify God. Therefore the primitive church by employing the title "Son of Man" is not calling Jesus *theos*.

The primitive church also called Jesus *kyrios*. The origin of this title is not clear. The usual interpretation traces it to the Aramaic Christian community, especially because Paul taught his Gentile converts the phrase *maran atha*.¹⁷³ A very recent view is that the title

¹⁷³ Case, *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 1907, p. 153 ff.

kyrios originated in the church at Antioch.¹⁷⁴ Whatever the origin of the title *kyrios*, did it signify to the primitive Christian that Jesus was *theos*?

To anticipate a possible objection that the employment of the title *ho kyrios* of Jesus demonstrates that for the early Christians, Christ was *theos*, we must briefly consider the usage of *kyrios*. It is well known that a number of Greek gods and goddesses were called *kyrios* or *kyria*. The list includes Artemis, Atargatis, Athena, Hecate, Isis, Apollo, Asclepius, Dionysus, Hades, Hermes, Osiris, Sabazius and Zeus.¹⁷⁵

Moreover, although the Rosetta stone does not contain an absolute *ho kyrios*, Ptolemy XIII. is called "the lord, king, and god" and Ptolemy XIV. and Cleopatra "the lords, the most great gods." Further, the native heath of the title *kyrios* is Asia Minor, Egypt, and Syria. It apparently played no important role in the national Greek religion. Caligula, Claudius, and Nero were called *kyrios* and Domitian was called *dominus et deus noster*.¹⁷⁶

The earlier strata of New Testament material seem to avoid *kyrios* as title of Christ. Thus, Q has no instance and Mark but one instance in the author's narrative of the use of *kyrios* as title of Christ.¹⁷⁷ Matthew likewise has *kyrios* but once or twice.¹⁷⁸ There is no altogether certain instance of *kyrios* as title of Christ in the first nineteen chapters of Johannine gospel. Luke, however, has the title more than a dozen times. And in the Pauline correspondence and the rest of the New Testament, the title *kyrios* dominates.

Another dissimilarity between the New Testament usage of *soter* and *kyrios* is the great variety of significance attaching to *kyrios* and also the unusually large number of occurrences of *kyrios*. Whereas *soter* occurs but twenty-four times in the entire New Testament, *kyrios* occurs hundreds of times. Whereas *soter* is restricted to God and Christ, *kyrios* is employed of any insignificant or significant lordship. Whereas *soter theos* is an inseparable combination, *kyrios* may not be thus limited.

The Greek writers employ *kyrios* not only of the gods but of the master of the house, the head of the family, the guardian of children,

¹⁷⁴ Bousset, *Kyrios Christos* p. 108 ff.

¹⁷⁵ For complete list and attestation, see Drexler in Roscher II, 1 col. 1755 ff; Harnack *History of Dogma* I 119 note 1.

¹⁷⁶ Bousset, *Kyrios Christos* 113 ff, Deissmann *Light from the Ancient East* p. 353 ff.

¹⁷⁷ Mark 11:3.

¹⁷⁸ Matt. 21:3, 28:6.

any trustee. The Greek Old Testament employs *kyrios* of Abraham, Esau, Joseph, the king of Egypt, the king of Israel, Nebuchadrezzar, Eglon of the Moabites, overlords in general, not to mention the universal use of the vocative.¹⁷⁹ The New Testament continues the same broad usage of *kyrios*. "And when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the laborers and pay them their hire."¹⁸⁰ "Watch therefore: for ye know not when the lord of the house cometh."¹⁸¹ "And as they were loosing the colt, the lords thereof said unto them. Why loose ye the colt?"¹⁸² "The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he expecteth not."¹⁸³ "What shall I do seeing that my lord taketh away the stewardship from me?"¹⁸⁴ "A certain maid having a spirit, a Python, met us, who brought her lords much gain by her soothsaying."¹⁸⁵ "But I say that so long as the heir is a child, he suffereth nothing from a bond-servant though he is lord of all."¹⁸⁶ "As Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord."¹⁸⁷ "As there are gods many and lords many."¹⁸⁸ These instances which could be greatly extended and which make no use of the vocative are sufficient to emphasize the wide range of meaning attaching to *kyrios* as well as its constant employment apart from *theos*.

A quotation from the Old Testament found at Mark 1:3, Matthew 3:3, Luke 3:4 finely illustrates how the writers of the New Testament discriminate between *kyrios* and *theos*.¹⁸⁹ In Isaiah 40:3, the prophet says:

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness,
Make ready the way *kyriou*
Make straight the paths *tau theou hemon*.

In the New Testament this has become:

"The voice of one crying in the wilderness,
Make ye ready the way *kyriou*
Make his paths straight!"

Christ was *kyrios* and the *kyriou* of the Old Testament is retained.

¹⁷⁹ Gen. 18:12, 32:4, 5, 44:8, 45:8, 40:1; Daniel 4:21; Judges 3:25; Isa. 26:13, etc.

¹⁸⁰ Matt. 20:28.

¹⁸¹ Mark 13:35.

¹⁸² Luke 19:33.

¹⁸³ Luke 12:46.

¹⁸⁴ Luke 16:3.

¹⁸⁵ Acts 16:16.

¹⁸⁶ Gal. 4:1.

¹⁸⁷ I Pet. 3:6.

¹⁸⁸ I Cor. 8:5.

¹⁸⁹ On the following quotation and statistics, see Case in Journal of Bibl. Lit. 1907, p. 151 ff; Sanders in Bibl. Sacra, April, 1914, p. 275 ff.

But *kyrios* is not the equivalent of *theos* and therefore *tau theou* of the Greek Old Testament is transformed into "his" in the New Testament. New Testament statistics regarding the usage of *theos* and *kyrios* confirm this inference. *Theos* is used of God some thirteen hundred times in the New Testament. *Kyrios* is used of Christ some four hundred times. Outside of quotations from the Old Testament, the writers tend to restrict *kyrios* to Christ. Christ is called *theos* at the very most only a few times in the later strata of the New Testament. If *kyrios* signified *theos*, how comes it that with such frequency of employment of *theos* in the New Testament, *theos* should only so late and so rarely have been applied to Christ? Moreover, inasmuch as the primitive Christians worshipped Christ¹⁹⁰ and applied Old Testament scripture originally employed of Yahweh to him, it is all the more remarkable that they do not call Christ *theos* and that *kyrios* did not soon become the equivalent of God.

The three representative answers regarding the original significance of *kyrios* are: "*Kyrios* does not imply that Christ is elevated to the place of Yahweh but is descriptive of his heavenly authority over the community in the spiritual sphere;"¹⁹¹ "by *kyrios* the early Christians meant the complete lordship of Jesus. He directed and controlled the entire life of the Christian. It meant that God had given to Christ the sovereignty of the world. It denoted that Christ shared the sovereignty with God;"¹⁹² "*kyrios* denoted that Jesus was Lord of the life of the Christian community especially as this life manifested itself in worship; denoted Jesus Christ as worshipped by the Christian community."¹⁹³ There is agreement here that *kyrios* is not to be equated with *theos*.

The primitive church preserved a number of sayings of Jesus which beyond question subordinate Christ to God. In the controversy with the Pharisees regarding the secret of his power over daemons and in refutation of the Pharisaic hypothesis that Jesus cast out daemons by Beelzebul, the prince of daemons, Jesus states, "Whosoever says a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whosoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven neither in this world nor in the world to come."¹⁹⁴ Jesus here clearly discriminates between himself and the higher power under whose sway he feels himself to be.

¹⁹⁰ II Cor. 1:20, 12:8; Col. 3:16 f.

¹⁹¹ Case, *ibid.*, p. 160.

¹⁹² Lietzmann on Romans 10:9.

¹⁹³ Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*, p. 105.

¹⁹⁴ Matt. 12:32.

The fourth evangelist preserves the tradition that "even his brothers did not believe in him."¹⁹⁵ Mark records that the family of Jesus "set out to get hold of him, for what they said was, 'He is out of his mind.'"¹⁹⁶ In the eschatological discourse, Jesus says, "Now no one knows anything about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, not even the Son, but only the Father."¹⁹⁷ The knowledge of the son is limited. He shares the counsels of God as no other, but the time of the end he does not know. There is another passage which should be taken at its face value. "As he went out on the road a man ran up and knelt down before him. 'Good teacher,' he asked, 'what must I do to inherit life eternal?' Jesus said to him, 'Why call me good? No one is good, no one but God.'"¹⁹⁸

Our examination of the documents of the primitive church prior to Paul has shown the absence of the proposition Jesus is *soter* and also the absence of the proposition Jesus is *theos*.

(2) The Christology of Paul and the title *soter*.¹⁹⁹

Paul's view of the Son of God involves a relation between two persons, a relation not due to appointment but originating in God. This Son of God was pre-existent and of the Davidic line when he appeared in the flesh. He was established reigning Son of God in connection with his resurrection from the dead.²⁰⁰ The pre-existent one though possessing the mode of being characteristic of God did not seize equality with God but became incarnate. Even prior to the incarnation, Christ was not metaphysically identical with God. He was like God yet other than God.²⁰¹ He was the second man, the heavenly man.²⁰² Christ reveals to men the otherwise incomprehensible God. Christ outranks every creature, because everything in heaven and on earth, the seen and the unseen, thrones, sovereignties, powers, might were created in him; everything came into being through him and is limited by him. Christ heads everything and the cosmos is grounded in him.²⁰³ But nowhere does the apostle equate the Son of God with *theos*.

¹⁹⁵ John 7:5.

¹⁹⁶ Mark 3:21.

¹⁹⁷ Mark 13:32.

¹⁹⁸ 10:17, 18 cf also Mark 15:34; Luke 11:29, 7:23; Matt. 13:58.

¹⁹⁹ See on this section, Weiss, *Christ, the Beginnings of Dogma*, Boston, 1911; Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*; Weinel, *Bibl. Theologie des N. T.*, Granbery, *Outlines of N. T. Christology*, Chicago, 1909.

²⁰⁰ Rom. 1:1 ff, 8:3; Gal. 4:4; Phil. 2:6 ff; Col. 1:15 ff.

²⁰¹ Phil. 2:5 ff.

²⁰² I Cor 15:47.

²⁰³ Col. 1:15-17.

There is a Christ mysticism in Paul.²⁰⁴ The mysticism of the mystery religions issues in identity with God. There men cease to exist as men. They are god. But Paul never says, "I am Christ." In spite of all mysticism Paul preserves his own individuality. Christ remains transcendent, and Paul remains practical.²⁰⁵ In the same way even in the Pauline mysticism Christ does not merge with *theos*.²⁰⁶

In II Corinthians 3:17 the apostle says, "the Lord is the Spirit."²⁰⁷ And "Lord" here equals Christ. This identification of Christ and the Spirit occurs in cosmological speculation. The Christian is in Christ as in the Spirit.²⁰⁸ Christ is in the Christian as the Spirit is in the Christian.²⁰⁹ There are other similar comparisons.²¹⁰ Christ is a heavenly power, a cosmic personal energy in which the Christian is and lives. On the other hand, Paul discriminates between the Spirit and Christ. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."²¹¹ "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are diversities of ministrations and the same Lord."²¹² Though Paul equates the Lord and the Spirit, he nowhere equates the Lord and *theos*.

Moreover, there is very positive evidence that Paul both discriminated between Christ and God and also subordinated Christ to God. The Christian belongs to Christ, but Christ belongs to God: "ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."²¹³ The Christian confession is not that Jesus is *theos* but that Jesus is *kyrios*: "Because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as *kyrios* and shall believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."²¹⁴ The majestic name conferred upon the obedient one was not *theos* or *soter* but *kyrios*: "Wherefore also God highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name . . . that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is *kyrios* to the glory of God the Father."²¹⁵ For Paul there is but one God: "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth; as there are gods many, and lords

²⁰⁴ I Cor. 6:17; Gal 3:27; Col. 1:27, 2:6, 3:3, etc.

²⁰⁵ II Cor. 5:14 ff, Gal. 3:28.

²⁰⁶ Col. 3:3, Rom. 6:10, Phil. 2:13, I Cor. 3:16.

²⁰⁷ Cf Bousset's interesting discussion in *Kyrios Christos*, p. 126 ff.

²⁰⁸ Rom. 8:9, II Cor. 5:17.

²⁰⁹ I Cor. 3:16, Rom. 8:9.

²¹⁰ I Cor. 16:24, Col. 1:8; Rom. 14:17, II Cor. 5:21, I Cor. 6:11, Gal 2:17.

²¹¹ II Cor. 3:17.

²¹² I Cor. 12:4 ff.

²¹³ I Cor. 3:23.

²¹⁴ Rom. 10:9.

²¹⁵ Phil. 2:9-11; on Rom. 9:5, see Sanday-Headlam commentary *in loco* and Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*, p. 185.

many; yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and we through him."²¹⁶ In I Corinthians 15:23-28, Paul outlines the cosmic program, narrating the resurrection, the overthrow of all the opposing powers. Finally, the kingdom is delivered to God and the Son himself is subjected to God, that "God may be all in all." Jewish monotheism survives in Paul the Christian with noteworthy persistence. Paul nowhere sustains the equation, Christ equals *theos*.

(3) The Christology of various primitive Christian documents omitting the title *soter*.²¹⁷

The subordination of Jesus to God appears throughout I Peter.²¹⁸ Christ is *kyrios*: "But sanctify in your hearts Christ as *kyrios*."²¹⁹ The author's Christology is epitomized in these words: "if any man speaketh, speaking as it were oracles of God; if any man ministereth, ministering as of the strength which God supplieth: that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, whose is the glory and the dominion forever and ever."²²⁰ The word *soter* does not occur in I Peter and Jesus is not called *theos*.

In the epistle of James, God is clearly supreme. Prayer is addressed to God: "But if any of you lacketh wisdom, let him ask of God;" "therewith bless we the Lord and Father."²²¹ The believer draws nigh to God and is subject to him.²²² God tempts no man but as Father bestows good and perfect gifts.²²³ God is one. The parousia of Christ is mentioned in passing.²²⁴ Christ is *kyrios* but not *theos*.²²⁵ There is not the slightest trace of the equation, Christ equals *theos* and *soter* is not employed.

The so-called Epistle to the Hebrews emphasizes the idea of salvation. Testament, priesthood, sacrifice of Christ, death of Christ, shedding of blood are primary words of his theological vocabulary. Jesus became incarnate to die and thus "bring to naught him that had power of death, that is, the devil."²²⁶ "And apart from the shedding

²¹⁶ I Cor. 8:5, 6.

²¹⁷ The earlier strata of synoptic material have been examined under 14 (1) (2). To raise the question of the authors' personal Christology is not pertinent to this investigation.

²¹⁸ I Pet. 1:3, 2:5, 3:22.

²¹⁹ 3:15.

²²⁰ 4:11.

²²¹ James 1:5, 3:9.

²²² 4:7, 8.

²²³ 1:13, 17, 27; 3:9.

²²⁴ 2:19.

²²⁵ 5:7.

²²⁶ Hebrews 2:14.

of blood there is no remission."²²⁷ "But now once at the consummation of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."²²⁸ "But he, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God."²²⁹ "So Christ also, having been once offered to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for him unto salvation."²³⁰ Jesus is the author of eternal salvation. Jesus is the high-priest, one of the author's favorite terms.²³¹ With such an emphasis on salvation, *soter* would almost seem essential to the complete description of Jesus. But *soter* nowhere appears.

The humanity of Jesus is one of the chief interests of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. "We have a high-priest that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin;" "who in the days of his flesh offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying unto him that was able to save him from death;" "for in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted"²³²—passages like these show how the synoptic picture of Jesus had made a permanent impression on the author of Hebrews.

There is constant discrimination in Hebrews between God and Christ. God is supreme. Christ is subordinated to God. God made Jesus a little lower than the angels,²³³ made Jesus perfect through suffering.²³⁴ God appointed Jesus son and high-priest.²³⁵ Christ learned obedience through the things which he suffered.²³⁶ Christ came to do God's will.²³⁷ God is the judge of all.²³⁸ Indeed, terminology reminiscent of an adoptive sonship of Christ is found. Thus in Hebrews 1:5, "for unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? I will be to him a Father, And he shall be to me a Son."²³⁹ Just so Christ was constituted high-priest.²⁴⁰ It may be difficult to ascertain when Jesus was appointed son or high-priest, but the appointive, declarative, acclaiming, constituting ele-

²²⁷ 9:22.

²²⁸ 9:26.

²²⁹ 10:12.

²³⁰ 9:28.

²³¹ 4:14, 7:25 f, 9:24, 10:12.

²³² 4:15, 5:7 ff, 2:10 f, 18.

²³³ 2:9.

²³⁴ 2:10.

²³⁵ 1:5, 5:5, 10.

²³⁶ 5:8.

²³⁷ 10:7.

²³⁸ 12:2, 23.

²³⁹ cf 5:5.

²⁴⁰ 5:6, 10.

ment may not be obliterated from the idea of sonship. This is decisively settled by Hebrews 7:28, where for the fourth time the appointive element is emphasized: "For the law appoints human beings in their weakness to the priesthood; but the word of the oath which was after the law appoints a Son who is made perfect forever."²⁴¹ The idea of the eternity of Christ does not at all exclude the idea of appointment to sonship. And at the close of the incarnate period, Christ merely sits down "at the right hand of the throne of God."²⁴² Finally, the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews indicates how everything centers in God.

Favorite titles of Christ in Hebrews are Son, High-priest, and Lord.²⁴³ Christ's pre-existence is assumed.²⁴⁴ Through Christ God made the cosmos: "through whom he also made the worlds;" "thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth. And the heavens are the works of thy hands: They shall perish; but thou continuest: . . . thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."²⁴⁵ All the angels of the Lord are summoned to the worship of the firstborn.²⁴⁶ The Son is superior to the angels and Moses and Melchizedek.²⁴⁷

The only verse in the Epistle to the Hebrews that could be cited to establish the equation, Christ equals *theos* is found in the first chapter: "but of the Son, he saith, thy throne, O God, is forever and ever"²⁴⁸—provided this is the correct translation. The context makes it plain that the emphasis is on the eternal sway of the Son and not on the address. In verse five of this same first chapter occur words reminiscent of the adoptive stage of Christology. Further, it is difficult to understand how God, who is the speaker, should say to his chosen Son, "thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." This would be a dualism not elsewhere discernible in our homily. This confusion becomes more confounded in verse nine, for we should be compelled to inquire what relation the speaker (God) sustains to the two gods here mentioned. Westcott proposed, "God is thy throne forever and ever" as the proper rendering of our verse and as the way out of the dilemma. The problem is more easily solved by recalling that verse eight of the first chapter of Hebrews is a quotation from the Old Testament. Even in

²⁴¹ cf 1:2.

²⁴² 12:2.

²⁴³ 1:5, 5:5, 7:28, 4:14, 7:27, 2:3, 7:14, 13:20, 1:10.

²⁴⁴ 1:6, 10:5 ff, 2:14.

²⁴⁵ 1:2, 10 ff.

²⁴⁶ 1:6.

²⁴⁷ 1:4, 4:14—10:18.

²⁴⁸ 1:8.

the Old Testament passage the first "O God" is troublesome and is regarded as an insertion.²⁴⁹ Whatever difficulty is present in the Epistle to the Hebrews is due to the preacher's straight quotation from the Greek Old Testament. He did not pause to make any necessary adjustments because he was emphasizing the eternal sway of the Son and because according to his exegesis the quotation did not mean that Christ was *theos*. The remainder of the homily demonstrates that the "writer did not advance to the idea of an essential divinity of the Son in the sense of identity with God."²⁵⁰

The opposition of the Johännine apocalypse to the Roman empire might sufficiently account for its avoidance of the title or name *soter*. But even here it is nowhere affirmed that Christ is God. The author is at great pains to discriminate between God and Christ: "And he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father;" "the revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave him;" "I have found no works of thine perfected before my God;" "he that overcometh I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God;" "and they cry with a great voice, saying, salvation unto our God who sitteth on the throne and unto the lamb;" "now is come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ;" "that keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus;" "to gather them together unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty;" "but they shall be priests of God and of Christ."²⁵¹

Moreover, Christ is subordinated to God. God is the God of Jesus.²⁵² The believer is to share the sovereignty with Christ, as Christ shares the sovereignty with God.²⁵³ Christ is Son.²⁵⁴ God not Christ is the judge of the world.²⁵⁵ Usually it is God who is worshipped. "And they fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God;" "and he said with a great voice, Fear God, and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made the heaven and the earth and the sea and fountains of waters;" "and the four and twenty elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God that sitteth on the throne, saying, Amen, Hallelujah;" "and I fell down before his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See

²⁴⁹ cf Kautzsch on Psalm 45:7.

²⁵⁰ Mac Neill, H. L., *The Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Chicago, 1914, p. 102.

²⁵¹ Rev. 1:1, 6; 2:18; 3:2, 5, 12; 7:10, 11, 17; 9:13; 11:15; 12:10, 17; 14:4, 12; 16:14, 20:6.

²⁵² 1:6; 2:7; 3:2, 12.

²⁵³ 3:21.

²⁵⁴ 3:5, 21; 14:1.

²⁵⁵ 3:5.

thou do it not: I am a fellow servant with thee and with thy brethren that hold the testimony of Jesus: worship God;" "and he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow servant with thee and thy brethren the prophets and with them that keep the words of this book: worship God."²⁵⁶

There are other passages in the Johannine apocalypse where the Lamb is associated with God in worship; just as we previously observed the primitive church worshipping Christ. The fifth chapter provides a good illustration. The Lamb has taken the "book written within and on the back, close sealed with seven seals." Thereupon the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders fall down before the Lamb. They have harps and the golden bowls of the prayers of the saints. They sing a new song. The chorus is continued by many angels and finally every created thing in heaven and on earth and on the sea says, "Unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing and the honor and the glory and the dominion forever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the elders fell down and worshipped."²⁵⁷ Again, the innumerable multitude arrayed in white robes with palms in their hands, cry: "Salvation unto God who sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb."²⁵⁸

In the first chapter the Living One has the keys of death and Hades,²⁵⁹ a power associated with God in apocalyptic tradition. The name of the one on the white horse is Logos of God, but the term here has to do with the judgment and conflict and is not used with the significance given it in the fourth gospel. Christ is also Lord of Lords, and King of Kings but Christ is not *theos*. Whether the Johannine apocalypse avoids *soter* because of opposition to the imperial cult may be debated. But the passage remains to be discovered in which Christ is equated with *theos*.²⁶⁰

In the Epistle of Clement there appears to be deliberate avoidance of the word *soter*. "This is the way, beloved, in which we found our salvation, Jesus Christ, the high-priest of our offerings, the defender helper (βοηθόν) of our weakness;" "O thou who alone art able to do these things and far better things for us, we praise thee through Jesus

²⁵⁶ 7:11, 11:17, 14:7, 19:4 f 10, 22:9.

²⁵⁷ 5:8, 13 ff.

²⁵⁸ 7:9 f.

²⁵⁹ 1:18 cf 3:7.

²⁶⁰ Even Buechsel, *Die Christologie der Offenbarung Johannis*, Halle, 1907, admits that he has not found such a verse.

Christ, the high-priest and *guardian* of our souls.”²⁶¹ Further, God is universally supreme and Christ is subordinated to him. We cite but one of a host of instances. “All who believe and hope on God shall have redemption through the blood of the Lord.”²⁶² The doxologies are in honor of God: “to glorify the name of the true and only God, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.”²⁶³ Christ is to be revered and God is to be worshipped.²⁶⁴ Three words are reserved for God: *θεός, δεσπότης, δημιουργός*²⁶⁵

The unity of God is affirmed: “to glorify the name of the true and only God;” “have we not one God.”²⁶⁶ The absolute monotheism of the author of the Epistle of Clement is illustrated in his prayer: “let all nations know thee, that thou art God alone and that Jesus Christ is thy child.”²⁶⁷ Nowhere in this long letter to the church at Corinth is *soter* employed of Christ and nowhere is the equation Christ is *theos* found.

In the Didache, *kyrios* is the favorite title of Christ.²⁶⁸ Other titles employed are “Son,” “Child,” “Jesus Christ.”²⁶⁹ The trinitarian formula occurs: “baptize, in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”²⁷⁰ Chapters 9 and 10 emphasize the supremacy of God. Prayer is offered to the Father. In chapter 16:7, we read: “but not of all the dead, but as it was said, ‘The Lord shall come and all his saints with him.’” Here language originally applied to Yahweh is used of Christ. Yet this is far removed from the proposition that Christ is God, as the passages in the New Testament involving a similar employment of Old Testament statements abundantly demonstrate. Thus once more we find the omission of *soter* coupled with data that Christ is not *theos*.

In considering the Epistle of Barnabas, we must remember that the author was a stalwart among the allegorists and that the composition was “intended for some community, in which Alexandrian ideas pre-

²⁶¹ 36:1, 61:3, 64:1, see further Stark, A. R., *The Christology in the Apostolic Fathers*, Chicago, 1912.

²⁶² 12:7 cf 7:4; 20:11; 26:1; 1:1, 3; 2:3, 8; 3:4; 8:1; 14:1; 19:2; 21:7; 24:1; 26:7; 30:3, 6; 33:2; 35:1, 6, 12; 4:1; 43:3; 50:3; 56:1; 65:2.

²⁶³ 43:6 cf 58:2, 61:3, 20:12, 50:7.

²⁶⁴ 21:6; 38:2; 48:1, 50.

²⁶⁵ 8:2; 11:1; 20:11; 33:1, 2; 20:11; 33:2; 35:3, etc.

²⁶⁶ 43:6, 46:6, 58:2, 49:5 f.

²⁶⁷ 59:4.

²⁶⁸ Didache 4:1, 12, 13; 6:2; 8:2; 9:5; 10:5; 11:2, 4, 8, etc.

²⁶⁹ 9:2, 3, 4; 10:2; 7:1, 3; 9:4; 12:5.

²⁷⁰ 7:1, 3.

ailed."²⁷¹ The allegorist is always in quest of the deeper meaning of an Old Testament statement. One illustration must suffice.

"Learn fully then, children of love, concerning all things, for Abraham, who first circumcised, did so looking forward in the spirit of Jesus, and had received the doctrines of three letters. For it says, 'And Abraham circumcised from his household eighteen men and three hundred.' What then was the knowledge that was given to him? Notice that he first mentions the eighteen and after a pause the three hundred. The eighteen is I (ten) and H (eight)—you have Jesus—and because the cross was destined to have grace, in the T he says 'and three hundred.' So he indicates Jesus in the two letters and the cross in the other."²⁷²

By this method of interpreting the Old Testament, Barnabas is able to confiscate the Jewish scriptures for the Christian church: "It is ours: but in this way did they finally lose it when Moses had just received it."²⁷³ Barnabas has a broad view of the holy scriptures, denying the literal significance to the law and regarding the ceremonial enactments as the device of a deceiving evil angel. He quotes Enoch as scripture²⁷⁴ and calls the apocalyptic Ezra prophet. Barnabas ascribes pre-existence to the *kyrios*.²⁷⁵ He discriminates between God and Christ.²⁷⁶ The subordination of Christ to the Father is clearly asserted, when the author remarks: "For it is written that the Father enjoins on him that he should redeem us from darkness and prepare holy people for himself."²⁷⁷ The only statement that could be quoted to vindicate the proposition that Christ is *theos* is, "thou shalt not command in bitterness thy slave or handmaid who hope on the same God, lest they cease to fear the God who is over you both; for he comes not to call men with respect of persons, but those whom the Spirit prepared."²⁷⁸ The last statement is reminiscent of a saying of Jesus. Does Barnabas then assert that God is Christ? Recall, first of all, that our quotation appears in the portion of the Epistle of Barnabas which makes use of the document known as "the Two Ways," and the affirmation may be due to the document and not to the allegorist. The clause may also be a careless addition to the source. It is at any

²⁷¹ Lake, *Apostolic Fathers*, New York, 1912, I 337.

²⁷² Barnabas 9:7 f cf 6; 8:4 f; 10:1 ff; 11:1 ff; 12:1 ff; 14:1 ff.

²⁷³ 4:6 f, 13:1 ff.

²⁷⁴ 4:3.

²⁷⁵ 5:5.

²⁷⁶ 5:9; 7:2, 9; 12:8 ff; 14:5.

²⁷⁷ 14:6 cf chapter 16.

²⁷⁸ 19:7.

rate puzzling that "he" should be used when in the immediate context "God" has so repeatedly appeared. It may be that the author by employing "he" has in mind God in Christ. Possibly too the allegorist has omitted the intervening link and has passed directly to his symbol. One who could say, "God says," "the prophet says," "the scripture says"²⁷⁹ without intending that we should conclude that he identifies "God" and "the scripture" could easily assign a saying of Christ to God without feeling that he was thereby affirming that Christ is identical with God. Indeed, the monotheism of "now may God, who is the Lord over all the world, give you wisdom, understanding, prudence, knowledge of his ordinances, patience. And be taught of God"²⁸⁰ cannot be discounted, and this quotation is from the same section of the Epistle of Barnabas. Hence, our conclusion is that the Epistle of Barnabas does not assert that Christ is *theos* and *soter* does not occur.

The Shepherd of Hermas contains a rather perplexing Christology. The glorious angel is Michael; the glorious angel is the Son of God; the Son is the Spirit; the Spirit is the Church.²⁸¹ Throughout this apocalypse, the author discriminates between God and Christ. God is very much in the foreground of the description. Christians pray to God, propitiate God, confess their sins to God, love God, serve God, fear God, obey the commandments of God, live to God, are saints of God, have been chosen of God—the entire Christian life and worship center on God.²⁸² God is supreme: "the Holy Spirit which goes forth, which created all creation, *did God make to dwell in the flesh which he willed.*"²⁸³ The pre-existence and cosmic significance of the Son of God are affirmed in Similitude IX 12:1-3, 14:5. Two quotations will show that Hermas does not identify Christ with God: "For the former ignorances," said he, 'it is possible for *God alone* to give healing, for 'he has all power;'" "first of all believe that God is one, 'who made all things and perfected them . . . and contains all things and is himself alone uncontained.'"²⁸⁴ And the Shepherd of Hermas does not contain the word *soter*.

(4.) The Christology of primitive Christian documents containing the title *soter*.

²⁷⁹ 2:4, 7, 10; 3:1; 4:11; 14:4.

²⁸⁰ 21:5 f.

²⁸¹ Sim. VIII 3:3, IX 8, 1:1.

²⁸² Vis. I 1:9, II 1:2, 2:1; Sim. II, 6; Vis. I 2:1, 3:1; Vis. III 1:6, 8:8, 9:2; Mand. V 1:1.

²⁸³ Sim. V 6:5.

²⁸⁴ Sim. V 7:3, Mand. I.

Thus far our study of the documents omitting *soter* has shown that they do not support the equation that Christ is *theos*. We should now examine the documents that contain the title *soter* to ascertain whether they also support the proposition that Christ is *theos*.

The Pastoral Epistles furnish instances of *soter* as title both of God and of Jesus. The instances where *soter* is used of God confirm our previous conclusion that *soter* in the religious vocabulary of the first century was associated with *theos*. The other member of our equation is also sustained for Christ is here called *theos*. Thus, in the Epistle to Titus 2:13, "looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ."

In the Johannine literature the title "Savior of the world" was twice employed of Christ. The Johannine gospel is a philosophical poem whose hero is Jesus the incarnate God and whose theme is salvation. From those earliest moments near Jordan, at the very dawn of the new time, Jesus is the lamb of God bearing the sin of the whole world. The elaborate description of the trial and crucifixion forms the necessary sequel to the confession of the Baptist, "Behold, the lamb of God."²⁸⁵ Statements like "God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world but that the world should be saved through him;" "I am the resurrection and the life;" "And who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God" reveal the principal subject of the evangelist. Even the Samaritans so hated by the orthodox Jews make the great discovery that this one is the Savior of the world. The man born blind concludes that this is the Son of God. Jesus goes forth to meet death as a conqueror and not as the trembling man of Gethsemane. Jesus was sent to be the light and life of the world, to bestow life eternal, indestructible, the opposite of all dying and weakness. The fourth gospel definitely acclaim Jesus God. Jesus was the Logos. "And the Logos was God."²⁸⁶ "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."²⁸⁷ "For this cause therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only broke the sabbath but also called God his own Father making himself equal with God."²⁸⁸ "Not that *any man* hath seen the Father, only he who is

²⁸⁵ Cf. Heitmüller on the Gospel of John in Weiss' Die Schriften des N. T., Goettingen, 1907, 8.

²⁸⁶ 1:1.

²⁸⁷ 1:18.

²⁸⁸ 5:18.

from God, *he hath seen the Father.*"²⁸⁹ "And he said, 'Lord, I believe.' And he worshipped him."²⁹⁰ "The Jews answered him, 'For a good work we stone thee not but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.'"²⁹¹ "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God, and him thou didst send Jesus Christ" (how? "as the true God?").²⁹² "Thomas answered and said unto him, 'my Lord and my God.'"²⁹³ "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."²⁹⁴ In the Johanne literature Christ is *theos soter*.

Second Peter provided five instances of *soter* with reference to Jesus. Three times the expression "our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," once the expression "the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ," once the expression "the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles" occurred. We observe, then, that Second Peter has *theos soter*. It is exceedingly difficult to draw the line between *kyrios* equivalent to God and *kyrios* equivalent to Christ in Second Peter. For example, in II Peter 3:10, "day of the Lord" is "day of Christ," but in II Peter 3:8-9 "the Lord" is clearly God. Are we to conclude from this that Christ is God? There are only two instances in II Peter in which *kyrios* certainly refers to God.²⁹⁵ There are eight instances in which *kyrios* certainly refers to Christ. The others are doubtful. However, the case may finally stand with reference to *kyrios*, we have one instance in which the author says "our God and Savior Jesus Christ." Therefore, II Peter sustains our thesis that where *soter* appears, there *theos* is also found.

The Ignatian epistles contained four instances of the use of *soter* as title of Jesus.²⁹⁶ To answer our question whether Ignatius identifies Jesus with God, consider the following quotations from the genuine epistles. "I became acquainted through God with your much beloved name which you have obtained by your righteous nature according to faith and love in *Christ Jesus our Savior*. You are imitators of God

²⁸⁹ 6:46.

²⁹⁰ 9:38.

²⁹¹ 10:33.

²⁹² 17:3.

²⁹³ 20:28.

²⁹⁴ I John 5:20.

²⁹⁵ 2:9, 11.

²⁹⁶ Ephes. 1:1, Magn. Intro. Phil. 9:2, Smyr. 7:1.

and, having kindled your brotherly task *by the blood of God*, you completed it perfectly."²⁹⁷ "By the will of the Father and Jesus Christ our God."²⁹⁸ "There is one Physician who is both flesh and spirit, born and yet not born, who is God in man."²⁹⁹ "Let us therefore do all things as though he were dwelling in us, that we may be his temples and that he may be our God in us."³⁰⁰ "For our God, Jesus the Christ, was conceived by Mary by the dispensation of God."³⁰¹ "Beware therefore of such men; and this will be possible for you, if you are not puffed up, and are inseparable from our God Jesus Christ."³⁰² "Abundant greeting in Jesus Christ, our God."³⁰³ "Nothing visible is good, for our God Jesus Christ being now in the Father is more plainly visible."³⁰⁴ "Suffer me to follow the passion of my God."³⁰⁵ "I give glory to Jesus Christ the God who has thus given you wisdom."³⁰⁶ "You did well to receive as deacons of Christ God, Philo and Rheus Agathopous who followed me in the cause of God."³⁰⁷ "I bid you farewell always in our God, Jesus Christ; you may remain in him in the unity and care of God."³⁰⁸ Evidently for Ignatius, Christ is *theos soter*.

The Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians contained "mercy and peace from God Almighty and Jesus Christ our Savior" and the martyrdom of Polycarp reads, "he is blessing our Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of our souls."³⁰⁹ Both the epistle and the narrative are very practical in aim. The former is largely composed of New Testament quotations, while the latter is evidently modeled on the passion of Christ and the Acts of the Apostles. The intimate relation between Ignatius and Polycarp would presuppose acquaintance on the part of Polycarp with the Ignatian theory that Christ is God. But we need not depend on assumption. The letter of Polycarp states that its author is familiar with the Ignatian correspondence.³¹⁰ Indeed, Polycarp transmits with approval Ignatian letters. And Ignatius writing

²⁹⁷ Ephes. 1:1.

²⁹⁸ Ephes. Introd.

²⁹⁹ 7:2.

³⁰⁰ 15:3.

³⁰¹ 18:2.

³⁰² Trall. 7:1; "A" omits *theou*; text in doubt.

³⁰³ Romans Introd.

³⁰⁴ 3:3.

³⁰⁶ 6:3.

³⁰⁶ Smyrn. 1:1.

³⁰⁷ 10:1 according to G (L); "deacons of God" according to BA.

³⁰⁸ Polycarp 8:3.

³⁰⁹ Martyrdom of Polyc. 19:2.

³¹⁰ 13:2.

to Polycarp, bids him "farewell always in our God Jesus Christ."³¹¹ Hence in such a letter as that of Polycarp to the Philippians, we are not surprised to discover, "*qui credituri sunt in dominum nostrum et deum Jesum Christum.*"³¹² And the Martyrdom of Polycarp, originating in the same vicinity some four decades later than the epistle to the Philippians would also formally sustain the equation that Christ is God, were it not so fundamentally biographical and modelled on the New Testament. The author's theology is obvious, for Polycarp when exhorted to "swear by the genius (*tuchen*) of Cæsar" and to say, "away with the atheists (*tous atheous*)"³¹³ is represented as replying, "How can I blaspheme my king who saved me?" Christ is the Christian emperor in antithesis to Cæsar the god and Christ is also savior. This is the significance of the answer of Polycarp, if we recall that the scene takes place in the East, where the emperors had long been equated with gods.³¹⁴

The homily known as II Clement furnishes one instance of *soter* with reference to Jesus: "To the only invisible God, the father of truth, who sent forth to us the Savior and prince of immortality."³¹⁵ And this sermon begins, "Brethren, we must think of Jesus Christ as of God."³¹⁶ "And another scripture also says, 'I come not to call the righteous but sinners.'³¹⁷ The words of Jesus are scripture. "And he (i. e. Christ) says also in Isaiah, "This people honoreth me with their lips but their heart is far from me"³¹⁸—the Old Testament speaking is Christ speaking. "Let us then wait for the *Kingdom of God* from hour to hour in love and righteousness seeing that we know not the day of the *appearing of God*. For when *the Lord* himself was asked by someone when *his kingdom* would come, he said; When the two shall be one and the outside as the inside, and the male with the female, neither male nor female."³¹⁹ "For when they hear from us that God says: 'It is no credit to you if ye love them that love you, but it is a credit to you if ye love your enemies and those who hate you'³²⁰—Jesus speaking is God speaking. "Let us then remain righteous and holy in our

³¹¹ 8:3.

³¹² 12:2 "*et deum* is omitted by some of the manuscripts of L."

³¹³ 9:2, 10:1.

³¹⁴ See Wendland, *Kulturgeschichte* 149 ff and compare Pliny's "*Carmen dicere Christo quasi deo*" and especially Reitzenstein, *Poimandres* p. 176 ff on *basileus soter*.

³¹⁵ II Clement 20:5.

³¹⁶ 1:1.

³¹⁷ 2:4.

³¹⁸ 3:5.

³¹⁹ 12:1 ff cf 17:4.

³²⁰ 13:4.

faith, that we may pray with confidence to God, who says, 'While thou art speaking, I will say, Behold here am I.' For this saying is the sign of a great promise; for the Lord says that he is more ready to give than we to ask."³²¹ It would seem that the author of II Clement knows Christ as both *soter* and *theos*.

The writings of Justin the Martyr contained numerous instances of *soter* employed of Jesus. Justin appropriated Old Testament passages involving God for Jesus. His view of the Old Testament permits him to assert that Christ is there called both God and Lord of Hosts and Jacob.³²² "Moreover in the 'diapsalm' of the forty-sixth psalm reference is thus made to Christ: God went up with a shout . . . sing ye to our God."³²³ "Accordingly in the forty-fourth psalm, these words are in like manner referred to Christ . . . thy throne, O God, is forever and ever."³²⁴ In the forty-eighth chapter of the Dialogue with Trypho, the Jewish opponent says: "When you say that this Christ existed as God before the ages . . . this appears to me to be not merely paradoxical but also foolish." Justin replies: "Now assuredly, Trypho, the proof that this man is the Christ of God does not fail, though I be unable to prove that he existed formerly as Son of the Maker of all things, being God, and was born a man by the virgin."³²⁵ "Therefore these words (Ps. 45:7ff) testify explicitly that He is witnessed to by Him who established these things as deserving to be worshipped as God and as Christ."³²⁶ "Some scriptures . . . expressly show Christ as suffering, as to be worshipped and as God."³²⁷ "For if you had understood what has been written by the prophets, you would not have denied that He was God, son of the only, unbegotten, unalterable God."³²⁸ "Christ being Lord and God, the Son of God."³²⁹ This evidence from the writings of Justin could be extended.³³⁰ But we should then only know what is already plain that Justin subscribes to the formula *theos soter* for Jesus.

Melito, bishop of Sardis, refers to Christ as *soter*.³³¹ Only fragments

³²¹ 15:3 f.

³²² Dial 36:2.

³²³ 37:1.

³²⁴ 38:4.

³²⁵ 48:1, 2.

³²⁶ 63:5.

³²⁷ 68:9.

³²⁸ 126:2.

³²⁹ 128:1.

³³⁰ See, e. g., Apol. 63, Dial 34, 115, 127.

³³¹ Eusebius H. E. 4, 26, 13.

of his numerous treatises are extant. Yet they are sufficient to permit us to conclude that Christ was *theos* for Melito.

Οὐκ ἔσμεν λίθων οὐδεμίαν αἰσθησιν ἐχόντων θεραπευταί, ἀλλὰ μόνου θεοῦ τοῦ πρὸ πάντων καὶ ἐπὶ πάντων καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ ὄντος θεοῦ λόγου πρὸ αἰώνων ἔσμεν θρησκευταί, καὶ τὰ ἐξῆς.³³² . . . Θεὸς γὰρ ὢν ὁμοῦ τε καὶ ἄνθρωπος τέλειος ὁ αὐτὸς τὰς δύο αὐτοῦ οὐσίας ἐπιστώσατο ἡμῖν, τὴν μὲν θεότητα αὐτοῦ διὰ τῶν σημείων ἐν τῇ τριετία τῇ μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα, τὴν δὲ ἀνθρωπότητα αὐτοῦ ἐν τοῖς τριάκοντα χρόνοις τοῖς πρὸ τοῦ βαπτίσματος, ἐν οἷς διὰ τὸ ἀτελὲς τὸ κατὰ σάρκα ἀπέκρυβε τὰ σημεῖα τῆς αὐτοῦ θεότητος, καίπερ θεὸς ἀληθῆς προαιώνιος ὑπάρχων³³³ . . . ὁ θεὸς πέπονθεν ὑπὸ δεξιᾶς Ἰσραηλίδος.³³⁴

Moreover, Eusebius says, "who is ignorant of the books of Irenaeus and Melito which teach that Christ is God and man."³³⁵

The Epistle to Diognetus probably should be assigned to the third century and therefore does not belong to the literature we are studying for the purpose of ascertaining the validity of the *theos soter* combination. In passing it may be observed that "the Savior" occurs once in this epistle.³³⁶ The following passages show that Christ is also *theos* for its author. "For in truth the almighty and all creating and invisible God himself founded among men the truth from heaven, and the holy and incomprehensible Logos, and established it in their hearts, not as one might suppose by sending some minister to men, or an angel, or ruler, or one of those who direct earthly things, or one of those who are entrusted with the dispensations in heaven, but the very artificer and creator of the universe himself by whom he made the heavens, by whom he enclosed the sea in its bounds, whose mysteries all the elements guard faithfully; from whom the sun received the measure of the courses of the day . . . him he sent to them . . . he sent him as God."³³⁷

There are three apologies for Christianity belonging to the second century which require investigation. We refer to the apologies of Aristides, Tatian, and Athenagoras. The Apology of Aristides was composed between A. D. 138-147 and was addressed to Antoninus Pius. Tatian's "Address to the Greeks" vindicates the author's ac-

³³² Chron. Pasch. I 483 p. 308 of Goodspeed, Die Aeltesten Apologeten, Goettingen, 1914.

³³³ Anast. Sin., Migne Ser. Gr. T. 89 col. 229, Goodspeed p. 310.

³³⁴ Ibid. p. 310.

³³⁵ Eusebius, H. E. 5, 28.

³³⁶ Diogn. 9:6.

³³⁷ 7:2 ff.

ceptance of Christianity and was probably composed several years after the middle of the second century. The Apology of Athenagoras is dated between A. D. 170-180 and is addressed to Marcus Aurelius and Commodus. The major portion of these apologies is devoted to the criticism of Gentile religions. Very little space is given to an exposition of the Christian view of salvation. How the emperors or the Greeks could have gained much knowledge of the peculiar tenets of Christianity is beyond comprehension. In Aristides the verb "to save" and its cognates fail to appear in any undisputed reading. Aristides has "the Lord Jesus Christ" in but one certain instance.³³⁸ Tatian does not furnish a single instance of the employment of Christ, Lord, Jesus, Jesus Christ, or Jesus the Christ. Athenagoras likewise has no instance of Jesus, Christ, Jesus Christ, Jesus the Christ or Lord Jesus. Compare this state of things with the data of Justin, where the verb "to save" and its cognates and all the various names and titles of Christ appear with great frequency. We should therefore not be surprised to find Jesus called *theos* without discovering any instance of *soter*. In the Apology of Aristides we find that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and was born of a virgin.³³⁹ He also asserts that Christians *γινώσκουσι τὸν θεὸν κτίστην καὶ δημιουργὸν τῶν ἀπάντων καὶ ἄλλον θεὸν πλὴν τούτου οὐ σέβονται*.³⁴⁰

For Tatian the evidence is not so meagre. The Logos was in God and was the first-begotten work of the Father and was the beginning of the world and begat the world.³⁴¹ The Logos is also the light of God.³⁴² There is but one God and Christ was God: "We do not act as fools, O Greeks, nor utter idle tales, when we announce that God was born in the form of man."³⁴³ Although *soter* does not occur in Tatian's "Address to the Greeks," he regarded Christ as *soter*. For Clement of Alexandria records that Tatian wrote a "treatise concerning perfection according to the Savior."³⁴⁴ Athenagoras has much to say concerning the unity of God and the absurdity of polytheism. The Greek poets and philosophers were compelled to acknowledge the oneness of God. There is no room in the cosmos for a second God. There has been but one God from the beginning, and he was the sole creator of the world.³⁴⁵ The Father and the Son

³³⁸ 15:1, cf the doubtful reading in 15:3.

³³⁹ 15:1.

³⁴⁰ 15:3.

³⁴¹ Tatian 5.

³⁴² 13.

³⁴³ 19.

³⁴⁴ Strom. III, 12.

are one; the Son is in the Father, and the Father is in the Son, Christians speak of God the Father and of God the Son and of the Holy Spirit.³⁴⁶ The failure of Athenagoras to call Jesus *soter* is accounted for, when we recall that he is not discussing the Christian doctrine of salvation.

The literature assigned to the primitive period of Christianity has now been studied. From this time onward the equation that Christ is *theos soter* gains wider and wider approval. We content ourselves with mentioning a few of the attestations: Irenaeus, "Christ Jesus our Lord and God and Savior and King;"³⁴⁷ Tertullian, "We do indeed definitely declare that two beings are God, the Father and the Son and with the addition of the Holy Spirit even three;"³⁴⁸ Clement of Alexandria, "David has shown to us cursorily, as it appears, that the Savior is God;"³⁴⁹ Eusebius, "Who is at once a jealous God and a true Savior."³⁵⁰

³⁴⁵ Athenag. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

³⁴⁶ 10 cf 18, 24.

³⁴⁷ Irenaeus adv. Haer. I, 9.

³⁴⁸ Tertullian, adv. Prax. 13, cf adv. Marc. III, 12 IV, 23.

³⁴⁹ Clement, Stromat. VII, 10; for Origen, see contra Celsum VIII, 12; I, 40; V, 5.

³⁵⁰ Eusebius, Vita Const. III, 56; Eusebius has 51 instances of Savior in this biography; "God the supreme Savior" said to have been the watchword in the victory over Licinius II, 6.

CONCLUSION

The primary purpose of this study was to ascertain when and why Jesus was called *soter* by the primitive Christian church.

Our investigation has shown that, although Christianity from its origin was emphatically a religion of redemption and because of the attitude and significance of Jesus required from the beginning that Jesus should be called *soter*, the earlier strata of New Testament material are marked by the utter absence of the title *soter* with reference to Jesus. It is only in the period subsequent to the death of the apostle Paul that *soter* as title of Jesus emerges.

Our investigation has also demonstrated that the title *soter* was exceedingly well-known in the first-century of the Christian era, that it was frequently found both in the religious literature of Judaism and in various phases of the religious life and literature of Graeco-Roman civilization and further that *theos soter* was a fixed combination.

Dismissing such explanations of the primitive Christian failure to employ *soter* as title of Jesus as opposition to the imperial employment of *soter* and lack of contact with the Gentile world as evidently inadequate and unsatisfactory, we followed the lead of the *theos soter* formula and sought the true explanation of the omission in the Christology of the primitive church.

Our study of the Christology of the primitive Christian church to and including the Apostle Paul revealed the entire absence of the title *soter* with reference to Jesus as well as the discrimination between Christ and God and the subordination of Christ to God.

The examination of various documents of primitive Christianity omitting *soter* established also the absence of the equation Christ is *theos*.

The examination of the various primitive Christian documents to the period of the early apologists containing the title *soter* established also the presence of the equation that Christ is *theos*.

As the result of the evidence thus adduced, our conclusion must be that Jesus was not called *soter* until he was also called *theos* and this first occurred in the period after Paul.



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