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A LITERARY AND THEOLOGICAL COMPARISON BETWEEN THE ODES OF SOLOMON AND THE JOHANNINE LITERATURE

by

Alan Thomas Morrison

Ph. D Thesis

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ABSTRACT

From the time of the discovery of the Odes of Solomon relationships to the Johannine Literature have been seen. As during the course of this century new documents were discovered and related to the Fourth Gospel, as for example Mandaean texts, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Gnostic library from Chenoboskion, so they have also been related to the Odes.

The investigation into the relationship between the Odes of Solomon and the Johannine Literature is based on four main areas - Christology, Soteriology, the Holy Spirit, and Eschatology. A study of these four areas reveals that although there is a certain amount of correspondence in terminology and concept, the differences are greater than the similarities. Particularly important for both the Odes and John is Christology, and it can be shown that only in the very basic titles of Christology is there any correspondence in terminology, but these terms are not employed in the same way.

The attempt to express the nature of the relationship leads to an investigation of the place of Gnosticism in early Christianity. This is a question beset with difficulties because of the lack of agreed terminology and the problems of definition. Therefore we attempt to define what is meant by Gnosticism, and to draw some conclusions about the relationship between the Odes and John on the one hand, and Gnosticism on the other.

In attempting to define the relationship between John and the Odes more closely, we refer to other religious movements to which they are related - Judaism and the Qumran movement, Gnosticism, Mandaeism, and also to O. Cullmann's thesis of the relationships of the Johannine circle. We conclude that the area which best provides the link between the Odes and John is Gnosticism, the language and conceptuality of which is seen to be part of the Syrian environment of the Odes and John.

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INTRODUCTION

In the following thesis we are to attempt a literary and theological comparison between the Johannine literature and the Odes of Solomon. The primary question then is, is there a relationship between the Johannine literature and the Odes such that a real comparison is possible? If there is, what is the nature of that relationship? What light does such a comparative study throw upon our understanding of these two bodies of literature? In this introductory section we shall devote ourselves to three preliminary areas of investigation, which are essential for any comparative study: (a) The definition of the terms in the title. (b) The statement of the problem. (c) The methodology to be used.

(a) Definition

(i) The Johannine Literature

In the New Testament there are five books which are associated with the name of John. Our task here is not to enter into a full discussion of the relationship between these various writings, but to delimit those which will be used in the following investigation. The Revelation of John contains several correspondences of terminology and concept with the Odes, and these will be mentioned in the discussion. At the same time, however, some of these are explicable in terms of a common use of generally available language, and in other cases their use is quite different in the two writings. The different eschatological perspective, the different situations which lie behind each of them and the difference in language make the value of using Revelation very questionable. This does not mean that we necessarily consider this book to be derived from a circle other than that which was responsible for the other Johannine writings, the relationship between which we must consider next, but that for this thesis, it will not be of primary significance.

The relationship between the Gospel of John and the Epistles of John,

and the relationships between the three Epistles, have been discussed in the various commentaries and elsewhere. Here we draw attention to some arguments which will be of assistance in defining the extent of the literature which will be used in our investigation.

1. There are significant differences between the Gospel and the First Epistle in the areas of Christology, Eschatology, Atonement and the Holy Spirit, and in the Epistle these are presented in a way which is closer to what is regarded as the "teaching of the main body of the Church".(1)

2. This is not due to the fact that the Epistle was written prior to the Gospel, since the understanding of the former pre-supposes the latter, but is due to a drawing back towards a more normative expression of the Christian faith.(2)

3. II John is a pastoral letter which is dependent upon I John, and adds nothing to the thought of the latter except the command to reject anyone who comes bringing a doctrine other than that which is stated previously. The question concerning the signification of "the elect lady" (ἐκλεκτὴ κυρία) can be safely left on one side, since the letter is clearly addressed to one or more congregations,(3) and it matters little whether this was then a letter intended specifically for one church, or was a general pastoral letter to be delivered in turn to several.

4. In III John, in contrast to the Second Epistle, three individuals are mentioned : Gaius, Diotrephes and Demetrius. There is little doctrine in the letter and it deals with the rejection of the elder's authority by Diotrephes, who has not only not welcomed those who have come from the elder, but has put out (ἐκβάλλει)(4) of the church those who would welcome them (III Jn. 10).

5. The dispute which is evidenced in III John is most probably not merely one of authority in terms of ecclesiastical office, but one of authority in doctrinal matters. This letter may, though it need not necessarily do so, reflect the same kind of doctrinal problems which occur in the other letters.

6. If the Third Epistle can be seen within this same framework, we can detect a gradually worsening situation within the church community. In the First Epistle we find that some had left the church (2.19) together with a warning to "test the spirits", the test being whether or not the confession that "Jesus Christ has come in the flesh" (4.2) was made. The term "antichrist" in the context of both passages shows that one and the same group is spoken of. In the Second Epistle we read again that "many deceivers have gone out into the world, men who will not acknowledge the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antiChrist" (II Jn 7). The letter also includes the command to test the doctrine (v.10f.). In III John, the elder writes from a position of usurped authority, so that those who support him, and presumably his doctrine, are excluded from the church.

It is not to be assumed that this worsening situation outlined above should have occurred in the one congregation, or that it should be viewed in chronological sequence. The writer of the First Epistle wrote to a congregation with which he had very close contact. That at least is a reasonable inference to be drawn from the repeated use of "us" in expressions such as "of us" (3 times), "from us" and "with is" (I Jn 2.19),[5] and the distinction between "they went out from us" in that same verse and "have gone out into the world" in II Jn 7. The other two Johannine Epistles may well have been directed to other churches with which the writer had only intermittent contact. If II Jn is a pastoral letter directed to several churches, warning against the same danger as the First Epistle, it can only be said with certainty that the same doctrinal problem occurred elsewhere, and not whether it occurred at the same time or later. If the same doctrinal question was at stake in the church to which the Third Epistle was written, the situation may be viewed in two ways. (1) This church originally held to the doctrines taught by the Elder, but later on this teaching was supplanted by another, so that those who might be termed "orthodox" with respect to

the teaching of the Elder, now became "heterodox" with respect to the main group led by Diotrephes.[6] (2) This struggle was present almost from the beginnings of the foundation of this church, and in the end, it was the group led by Diotrephes which gained supremacy.

But how is this situation to be viewed? According to E.Käsemann,[7] Diotrephes is no heretic but the representative of traditional orthodoxy, who expels the elder, who was a presbyter in the congregation and who represented a speculative, Gnostic and therefore heretical form of Christianity. R.Bultmann agrees that"Käsemann may well be correct in holding that Diotrephes is the representative of the legitimate ecclesiastical tradition, to whom the Johannine literature must have appeared as suspiciously heretical", but he disagrees with his emphasis on the doctrinal nature of the problem and states that his view of the elder as a presbyter in the congregation of Diotrephes who was excommunicated, but who still retained the title of presbyter is "simply fanciful".[8] But if, as Bultmann also states, III John "presupposes I John", is this likely to be the case? For as he says, it is against "gnosticising false teachers" that the author of the First Epistle writes. Must we then assume that the Elder stood somewhere between the Christian tradition and the Gnostic speculation on it, so that while he combatted the latter he was still too heterodox for the developing ecclesiastical tradition? This is conceivable, but is it any more likely than that the elder was combatting, in the Third Epistle, the same situation which was present elsewhere, but that in this case the situation was such that the heterodox teaching had gained supremacy within the congregation, although some members remained faithful?

Our understanding of the relation between the Gospel and the Epistles is as follows. The four writings are not necessarily to be attributed to one author, but to a school of thought.

(1) The Gospel was written in a way which was congenial to Gnostic ways

of thought,[9] and which, regardless of the Gnostic question, was open to serious mis-interpretation.

(2) The First Epistle offers correctives to certain aspects of the Gospel, for this had become necessary in view of the mis-understanding which had occurred.

(3) These correctives are not offered as strict "either-or" alternatives, but rather change the point of emphasis from the "either" to the "or". As the Epistle pre-supposes the Gospel, so a consideration of both is necessary for an understanding of the theology of the Johannine group.[10]

(4) The Second Epistle is a pastoral letter written to the churches of this group, expressing concern at the emergence of this problem, and warning against those who teach a doctrine based on such a mis-understanding.

(5) The Third Epistle pre-supposes the same situation, but does not mention the doctrinal problem, because now the issue has shifted radically. It is now no longer a question of heterodoxy within the church, but the heterodox group are now strong enough to expel those who follow the Elder's teaching. Until the question of authority is settled, the doctrinal issue must remain in abeyance.

It may seem that this account of the relationship between the Gospel and the Epistles is too neat to be of service, and that much more attention ought to be paid to the development of ecclesiastical doctrinal norms and of the exercising of ecclesiastical authority in ensuring the application of these norms. It is to be expected that in the Johannine group such development would occur sooner or later. But two factors cause us to hesitate to place too much emphasis at this point.

1. Is there any real evidence which points to the development of ecclesiastical authority? We may point to the title ὁ πρεσβύτερος which does suggest that the person so described has some claim on the attention of those to whom he writes, but does it imply that he holds a

position similar to that of a local bishop?(11) According to E.Schweizer "It is clear that this (the title 'Elder') does not denote either his apostolic rank or his membership of a directing body in a local church; it means that he is regarded by the recipients as a highly esteemed prophet or teacher who still stands 'on this side of any ecclesiastical constitution' ".(12) Likewise the First Epistle appeals more to the inward witness of the Spirit, to the anointing from the Holy One by which they all know,(13) and have no need of others to teach them (2.20). Certainly the readers are warned to test the Spirits, which is a warning against false prophecy, but there is again no evidence to show that the prophetic utterance within the church was given by a special group of "prophets", any more than there is evidence to show that the false prophets were part of any, or of this special, group.(14) It is much more a question concerning those who are "of God", so that "every spirit (πᾶν πνεῦμα) which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit (πᾶν πνεῦμα) which does not confess Jesus is not of God" (4.2f.).

2. It is correct to see the Johannine Epistles as an attempt to emphasise the true nature of the Christian faith in the face of mis-interpretations of it. But is it also correct to view them as "a stage which attempts to draw back, under conservative pressure, exerted perhaps from a weight of 'normative' Christianity elsewhere, from Gnostic-type tendencies and towards the teaching of the main body of the Church"?(15) As we have said above, the Fourth Gospel could readily allow itself to be used in the service of Gnostic ways of thought. But do the Epistles, or at least the First Epistle, give evidence of a drawing back from the theology of the Gospel? Did those responsible for the Epistles view the Gospel as dangerously speculative and as Gnostic in tendency? If so, it is strange that the First Epistle pre-supposes the Gospel to the extent that it does. It therefore appears to us that the First Epistle does represent a drawing back from the form of expression used in the Gospel,

and that this is a re-interpretation of the Gospel. But this re-interpretation was caused, not by the weight of pressure from "normative" Christianity, but by the false doctrine which resulted from a mis-interpretation of the Fourth Gospel. The Gospel was not regarded as intentionally heterodox, but as being in need of a more clear statement of those areas in which the difficulty arose. If of course we regard the Gospel as being in some sense Gnostic in intent, it will be much easier to view the Epistles as an attempt to introduce a "normative Christianity", but this fails to take account of the dependence of the First Epistle on the Gospel.

In making our investigation into the literary and theological relationships between the Johannine literature and the Odes of Solomon, it will therefore be necessary for us to consider the Johannine literature as being comprised of the Gospel and the three Epistles. Although most of the relationships which will appear will be between the Gospel and the Odes, the use of at least the First Epistle is necessary in order to see re-statements and corrections of the language of the Gospel, and to place the latter within a wider context.

(ii) The Odes of Solomon

In the case of the Odes of Solomon, there is at least no problem of definition. However, we add here a few remarks on the identification of this body of writing. There is, at the present time, no complete text of the Odes. The material which we do possess is contained in two Syriac manuscripts, a brief description of which will be found in Volume I of the two-volume work on the Odes and Psalms of Solomon, by J.R. Harris and A.Mingana.(16) The first manuscript to be identified is defective both at the beginning, where the text begins at some point in Ode 3, and at the end, where the 17th Psalm of Solomon breaks off after two words of v.38. The omission at the beginning is indeed unfortunate, since the other Syriac manuscript begins only at Ode 17.7. This defect is made up

in part by the material contained in the Pistis Sophia. In chapters 58,59,65,69 and 71 of the Pistis Sophia the following odes are quoted: 5.1-11;1; 6.8-18 ; 25 and 22, which are introduced by "prophesied formerly through Solomon" or "prophesied concerning it formerly in the Ode of Solomon". The material which must be the first ode is introduced by the words, "My Lord, your Power of Light prophesied in these words formerly through Solomon in his nineteenth ode, and it said". The ode which follows this does not correspond to our nineteenth ode, and the Pistis Sophia gives us no other indication of number in the other odes which are quoted. However, since there are other odes quoted in the Pistis Sophia and attributed to Solomon, and since from the two Syriac manuscripts we know that the Odes and Psalms of Solomon circulated together, it is practically certain that the writer of the Pistis Sophia also possessed the Odes and the Psalms together, but in reverse order to that of the two Syriac manuscripts. Thus the Odes, following on from and consecutively numbered with the 18 Psalms of Solomon, would commence with number 19.

As well as these quotations from the Odes in the Pistis Sophia, we see evidence of the Odes in the church in three sources.

a) In the Pseudo-Athanasian Synopsis Sanctae Scripturae, after the Antilegomena of the Old Testament we find: σὺν ἐκείνοις δὲ καὶ ταῦτα ἠρίθμηνται· Μακκαβαϊκὰ βιβλία δ. Πτολμαϊκά. Ψαλμοὶ καὶ ᾠδὴ Σολομῶντος. Σώσαννα. ταῦτα τὰ ἀντιλεγόμενα τῆς Παλαιᾶς Διαθήκης[17]

b) In the Stichometry of Nicephorus (758-829) Patriarch of Constaninople we read: ὅσαι ἀντιλέγονται τῆς Παλαιᾶς αὗται εἰσιν followed by a list of works including Ψαλμοὶ καὶ ᾠδὴ Σολομῶντος· στιχ. βρ'[18] The length of this work, 2100 verses, shows that here ᾠδὴ Σολομῶντος as in the previous list, is written in error for ᾠδαὶ Σολομῶντος.

c) The one quotation of the Odes in the early Church is found in the Divine Institutes of Lactantius Bk.IV.12, written between 304 and 312. This reads, "Salomon in ode undevicesima ita dicit: infirmatus est uterus virginis et accepit fetum, et grauata est et facta est in multa miseratione mater virgo".[19] This quotation is close enough to the Syriac text of ode 19.6f. to show that it is in fact from the Odes of Solomon.

One further manuscript has recently come to light which provides us with the Greek text of ode 11,[20] and which is dated in the third century. It is therefore of a much greater age than either of the two Syriac manuscripts, and is older than the Pistis Sophia. The text of the ode is headed simply ΩΔΗ ΣΟΛΟΜΩΝΤΟΣ.

For the text of the Odes we therefore possess the following authorities:

(a) MS. H. A Syriac manuscript dated about the sixteenth century, presenting a text which runs from some point after the beginning of ode 3 to the end, and which is followed by the Psalms of Solomon, almost to the end.

(b) MS. N. A Syriac manuscript dated from the tenth to the thirteenth century, containing odes 17.7 to the end, which are also followed by the Psalms of Solomon.

(c) p^{72} . A Greek manuscript dated in the third century,[21] containing ode 11. This text contains several lines which do not occur in MS.H.

(d) The Pistis Sophia. This work contains five odes, or part thereof, in a Coptic translation. The Pistis Sophia is dated by C.Schmidt in the second half of the fourth century.[22]

(e) Caelius Firmianus Lactantius. In the Divine Institutes, Bk iv.12, Lactantius quotes from part of two verses of the Odes (19.6f.) translating them into Latin.

Several facts emerge from this review of the evidence for the Odes.

1) The Odes and Psalms of Solomon were transmitted together, and were regarded as being among the disputed books of the Old Testament.

2) The order of the two works in the Pistis Sophia, the Synopsis Sanctae Scripturae and the Stichometry of Nicephorus is the reverse of that in the two Syriac manuscripts we possess,(23) for in the earlier witnesses the Psalms preceded the Odes. No information is offered by the Greek manuscript or by Lactantius about the combination of the two works, or in the case of the Greek manuscript, whether the copyist had access to more than one ode. If Lactantius possessed the two works together, the order would have been the same as that of the Syriac manuscripts, but no certain conclusions can be drawn here.

3) On the evidence available, the Odes were transmitted only in Christian circles, although they were assigned to the Antilegomena of the Old Testament.

4) The one quotation of the Odes which has been discovered shows that they were considered unsuitable for expression of Christian doctrine, irrespective of how they may have been thought of from other points of view.

Two final preliminary comments need to be made before we move to the next section.

1. In the Harris-Mingana edition of the Odes and Psalms of Solomon the two Syriac manuscripts are designated H and B. These sigla represent the names of the people responsible for the recognition of the manuscripts, and are here placed in order of discovery.(24) We have adopted the designations of the manuscripts which are to be found J.H.Charlesworth's edition of the Odes of Solomon, H and N, since this edition is more generally available than that of Harris-Mingana.

2. In the years immediately following the first publication of the Odes, and especially before the discovery of the second manuscript, many

emendations to the text of the Odes were proposed. This is a fairly hazardous procedure even if there is only one manuscript, and the discovery of the second manuscript showed that the majority of these suggested emendations could not be sustained. We will therefore not refer to these in our investigation unless it can be shown that the text cannot be satisfactorily interpreted as it stands, and that reasons cannot be produced for the present reading in the text.

(b) The Problem

A.von Harnack, in his discussion on the Odes, believed that they were of particular importance for the interpretation of the Fourth Gospel.(25) Since then, several scholars have made extensive use of the Odes in commenting upon the Fourth Gospel and its background.(26) In the English-speaking world, however, most commentators on the Gospel of John have not used the Odes in their work and the references which are found are usually restricted to the Introduction. J.H.Bernard, who had already written on the Odes, makes mention of them at several points in his commentary and finds that the doctrine of the Logos in the Odes is dwelt on in a way that recalls the Johannine teaching.(27) This use is such that if the Odes could be dated in the first century, "we should have to treat the Odes not only as arising in an environment like that which was the birthplace of the Fourth Gospel, but as being actually one of the sources from which its distinctive doctrines were derived".(28) Since he regards the date of composition of the Odes as about 160 or 170 A.D., they cannot be viewed as one of the sources of the Fourth Gospel, but "they catch the very tone of John, and show how deep-rooted in Christian devotion was the Johannine doctrine of the Word, within seventy years of the publication pf the Fourth Gospel".(29) R.H.Strachan states that "These odes contain some remarkable parallels with Johannine forms of expression", but quotes them only once in the commentary. For him, the Odes reflect a "Jewish 'Gnosticism' or type of religion founded in 'knowledge'" which was present among Jews of the Diaspora, and "some are clearly Jewish, and a few have evidently been affected by Christian ideas".(30) C.H.Dodd states that the thought of the circle in which the Odes originated "certainly resembles that of the Fourth Gospel in some respects", but apparently finds this of significance only with respect to the teaching about the Word.(31)

C.K.Barrett notes the reference to the Fourth Gospel in the Odes which Lagrange had given, but says that none is convincing. He feels that "The major resemblances (such as they are) between the two works are due to this common drawing upon a non-Christian source of religious terminology (i.e. from Oriental-Hellenistic religion)".(32) R.E.Brown suggests that any similarities between the Odes and the Gospel of John are to be found in the Prologue rather than in the discourse material of the Gospel and he says of the passage of the Odes to which he draws attention, "The few passages cited in the Odes are possibly dependent on John".(33)

There could well be good reasons for the apparent unwillingness of these and other scholars to consider the Odes in their commentaries.(34) Firstly, there is no full-scale study of the relationships between the Odes and John, and although several studies on the Odes have appeared, we still lack an adequate commentary. These earlier studies were of course made before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Coptic Gnostic materials of the Nag Hammadi, and these finds have added a new dimension to the study of the Odes. One would hardly expect that this preliminary work is also to be added to commentaries on John when these works are increasing in size with each new commentary which is written. But secondly, can it be said that the Odes could really be of value for the interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, or is it the case that the best they could achieve would be to show how the Fourth Gospel was understood in one part of the early Church? Since von Harnack believed that the Odes were a Jewish-Christian psalm book of the first century, it was also possible to see them as a formative influence on the author of John. Bultmann also held that the Odes were prior to John and thus could assume the same. But if the Odes were written in the second century, are they worth more than a passing mention in a commentary on John? Thirdly, we

wonder to what extent the "Gnostic" label which has been attached to the Odes, particularly in R.Bultmann's very influential commentary, has been responsible for their comparative lack of use in English commentaries.

The question which we have set ourselves is that of the literary and theological relationships between the Johannine literature and the Odes of Solomon. This does not mean in the first instance asking whether the Odes are of significance for the interpretation of the Fourth Gospel and the First Epistle of John. Hopefully an answer to this question will emerge at the end of this study. First of all we are asking whether there is literary and theological dependence between the two writings or not. Is there any evidence of quotation or allusion? Are the various similarities of thought due to the knowledge and use of the one by the other, and do the differences between them outweigh the similarities? If the similarities are not due to the use of the one by the other, how are they to be explained? If the relationship between them is merely that of each borrowing from a common stock of ideas, does the use of these ideas in the Odes imply anything for our understanding of the Fourth Gospel? If we are able to answer these questions, we will have an answer to the question about the literary and theological relationships between the two writings, and will also be able to comment on the usefulness and validity of using the Odes of Solomon as a help towards understanding the Johannine literature.

But immediately we ask these questions, several preliminary ones present themselves.

1. If we are to consider the possibility of dependence between the two groups of literature, in which direction does such dependence operate? This question is from some points of view closely related to:

2. To which area do we assign the Odes in the sphere of the History of Religions?

As we have noted above, A.von Harnack supposed that the Odes were a group of Jewish hymns, and that they had been subject to later Christian interpolations. This Christian redaction he dates at about 100 A.D. Several scholars followed von Harnack in this hypothesis,(35) but it was shown to be untenable by G.Kittel,(36) who established that the Odes were transmitted only in the Christian church, that they are undoubtedly Christian in numerous passages, that there is no proven passage which is purely Jewish; i.e. which is to be understood as coming from the mouth of a Jew, and that the so-called interpolations cannot be removed from their context and still leave a collection of hymns. L.G.Rylands in his book The Beginnings of Gnostic Christianity maintains that "the assumption that the writer was acquainted with any Christian literature is unnecessary, and therefore logically unjustifiable" (p.27). He sees the community of the Odes as Jewish, but this was a community which had not long separated itself from orthodox Judaism. This does not mean that community O belonged to the church, for whether it had yet entered into the "loose federation" of communities which formed the church or not depends on the date assigned to the Odes. However he believes that they were at one time included among the books of the Old Testament and the hardening of attitude towards heterodox writings among Pharisees means that it may be inferred that the Odes were written before 70 A.D. The combination of the Odes and Psalms of Solomon may also give an indication that they were written at about the same time. Rylands therefore provides us with the earliest suggested dates for the composition of the Odes, and offers between 80 B.C. and the closing years of the last pre-Christian century (pp.44-48).

At the other end of the scale, W.R.Newbold[37] and F-M.Braun[38] have connected the Odes with Bardaisan of Edessa, which gives a time of composition towards the end of the second century A.D., and several dates in between these two in the Christian era have also been suggested. For the purpose of this investigation it is sufficient to know whether the Odes are to be linked with the pre-Christian or Christian era, and if the latter, as they provide us with material which could be regarded as source material for the Johannine writings, are they later and possible dependent on the Johannine material, or do they stem from approximately the same period?

An answer to these alternatives cannot be given until we have ascertained the place which the Odes occupy within the religious atmosphere of the period under question. Firstly, it does not appear to us that we can place the Odes satisfactorily within a Jewish religious sphere, although some relationship to Judaism is evidenced in the hymns. This judgment includes heterodox as well as orthodox Judaism, as represented by the Theraputae, and more importantly by the Dead Sea community. J.Carmignac[39] for example has suggested that the Odes were the work of a former member of the Qumran community who was converted to Christianity, and the similarities between the two groups of literature have been noted by several other scholars.[40] But Carmignac and others thereby see the Odes as Christian compositions, not heterodox-Jewish. M.Testuz,[41] on the other hand, dealing only with the Greek text of Ode 11, claims that there is no specifically Christian teaching there, that Christ is neither mentioned nor alluded to, and that the ode is the work of an Essene, dating from the middle of the first Christian century. There are undoubted similarities between the Odes and the Dead Sea Scrolls, especially the Hodayot of the latter, but these are not

sufficient to demonstrate authorship within a circle common to both, and the differences, as Carmignac himself has pointed out, make this impossible. The author of the Odes has moved beyond the thought-world of the Qumran community, even granted the remote possibility that he ever belonged to it.

If on the other hand we place the Odes within a Christian context, what kind of Christianity is here represented? It is immediately apparent to anyone who reads the Odes that there is a strong concentration on knowledge, and that there is no mention at all of sin or forgiveness, and this together with other features which show some relationship to Gnosticism has led to the conviction on the part of several scholars that the Odes are Gnostic. This question will be dealt with more fully in a later section of the thesis, and here we draw attention only to the way in which this judgment is expressed.

As early as 1910 H.Gunkel was convinced of the gnostic origin of the Odes, and believed that in them a part of the psalm book of the Valentinians had been found. But what is of more importance than this is his understanding of the kind of Gnosis represented by the Odes. "Dieser Art der Gnosis - den Namen gebe ich jederzeit preis - enthielt also Sätze, wie sie die christliche Kirche den uns bekannten Gnostikern gegenüber verteidigt hat, und stand darin der Kirche näher als jenem. Wie stark hat die Pistis Sophia die Oden umdeuten müssen, um sie für die späteren Gnostikern geniessbar zu machen".(42) We are therefore dealing with, in Gunkel's judgment, a product of Valentinian Gnosis which stands closer to the thinking of the church than to that of the Gnostic groups which the church combatted. R.Bultmann(43) sees the Odes as the product of an early Oriental Gnosis, which is very close to the kind of Oriental Gnosis evidenced in the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel. H.-M.

Schenke[44] has examined the relationships between the Odes and the Gospel of Truth, and has come to the conclusion that both stemmed from the same circle. More difficult for us perhaps is R.E.Brown's description of the Odes as "Christian semi-gnostic",[45] which implies that they are partly Gnostic or show some influence of Gnosis without actually being Gnostic. He does not in any case find any significance for the understanding of the Fourth Gospel in these hymns. R.Schnackenburg[46] does not deny the closeness of thought of the Odes and John, nor that the Odes reveal "strong Christian influences". But where there is relatedness to John or to other passages in the New Testament, "all such 'Christian' passages teem with Gnostic interpretations ..... We may conclude that the Odes of Solomon are a valuable example of Gnostic themes and imagery, but scarcely come in question as the concrete background of John". J.H.Charlesworth[47] however has attempted to show that the Odes are not Gnostic. Some of the features indicative of Gnosticism which he claims are not present in the Odes will need more examination later, but although the conclusion presented is that the Odes are not Gnostic, Charlesworth does find there docetic overtones, and the language and imagery of the Odes lead him to view them as "a tributary to Gnosticism which flows from Jewish apocalyptic mysticism .... to the full-blown Gnosticism of the second century".

There is a question of the definition of Gnosticism and Gnosis involved here, and if it is maintained that "Gnosticism" is not present until we arrive at the Christian heresy of the second century, and if also "Gnosis" is regarded as no more than tendencies towards Gnosticism which do not yet deserve to be thought of as "Gnostic", then the Odes are not Gnostic. That there are similarities to the thought of Christian Gnosticism is undeniable, but the differences are too great to allow us to place the Odes within

this framework. And yet, although this may be so, it is felt even by some scholars who would not wish to apply Gnostic label to the Odes, that there is some connection with Gnosticism or at least with the emergence of the Gnostic way of thought. This becomes of more importance for our enquiry in view of the way in which the Gospel of John is related to Gnosis, and especially because both John and the Odes have been seen as having their closest Gnostic relation in the Gospel of Truth.

The Odes have therefore been assigned to the following categories: Jewish; heterodox Jewish (Qumran); Christian; Jewish-Christian;[48] Gnostic. We would wish to exclude the first two as being inappropriate, but the reasons for this, and indeed the choice which must be made between the last three, can only be offered on the basis of a study of the text which will follow in this study. For the moment it can only be said that all three categories have something to be said for them, and that the Qumran writings will at least need consideration.

The range of dates of composition of the Odes has been given by various scholars as between 80 B.C. and 200 A.D. The upper date can at least be fixed with some degree of certainty, for it is determined by the presence of five of the Odes or parts thereof in the Pistis Sophia, and the availability of the Greek manuscript of the eleventh ode which is dated by M.Testuz in the third century. The date of composition of the Odes can therefore not be much later than the end of the second century. If the Odes are a Christian composition, they must have been written sometime between the middle of the first century and the end of the second. Is there anything in them to allow a more precise date to be fixed? J.R.Harris assigned to them a date in the latter part of the first century, because he believed that he had demonstrated that the Odes were known to Ignatius of Antioch.[49]

But this is a very dubious conclusion on the basis of the available evidence. J.H. Charlesworth rejects literary criteria, and chooses instead "extrinsic historical and political evidence and intrinsic character and theology".(50)

But the only "extrinsic" evidence available is the reference to the "temple" in ode 6 and the supposedly symbolic reference to it in ode 4. As we shall show, there is by no means any certain reference to the Temple in the Odes in any way which could assist us in dating them. The intrinsic evidence(51) is comprised of the "strong Jewish quality" of the Odes, the "spontaneous joy" with which each ode abounds, and the "primitive theology of the composition". Added to this are the facts that there is no ecclesiology in the Odes, no mention of ecclesiastical offices, with no passages which imply consolidation of the church, and no mention of persecution. Charlesworth states that the mention of bishops, deacons, and other church officials distinguishes the canonical works written late in the first century from those written earlier, and that it was not until the seventh decade of the first century that the Christians were collectively persecuted, and so these facts "reinforce the idea that the Odes were composed early in the first century".(52)

It is not necessary at this point to evaluate this argument in order to show that it is insufficient. For all of these elements depend upon the kind of environment in which the Odes were written, and upon the kind of Christian community which developed there. The argument assumes a general, uniform growth in theology and ecclesiastical administration and consolidation as well as a uniform, temporal movement away from "Jewish" ways of thinking and expression to "Christian" ones. It can by no means be demonstrated that the church in different areas accomplished this transition in the same way or at the same time. Indeed it can be shown that this did not happen.(53)

But we must further ask about the odist and his work. Was the writer primarily attempting to express the Christian faith in terms of the best mode of theological expression which he knew, or was his primary aim to express the joy and certainty of salvation? This is in some respects an improper question, since the two alternatives cannot be separated; the writer did in fact express his joy through the theological concepts we find in the Odes. But the question is valid to the extent that it asks whether we should judge the work primarily in terms of the writer as a theologian, or as a religious enthusiast whose emotional outburst comes to expression in the Odes. In other words, do the Odes tell us about theology or about the psychology of religion with its variety of religious expression? Ultimately, we shall have to judge the Odes by their theological mode of expression, but we need to keep in mind the possibility that the writer had very little interest in what might be termed the "proper" expression of theology, but was greatly concerned to set down in a group of hymns his tremendous joy in and love towards God who had given him salvation.(54)

It must also be admitted that it is difficult to make an accurate assessment of the theology of the odist and his community solely on the basis of the poetic material contained in the Odes. If, for example, the Hodayot were the only writing available to us from the Qumran community, would we come to the same results concerning their theology? We do not know what other literature the community possessed, nor do we know how their theology was expressed through prose compositions. These are all questions to which answers are desirable, even if they are not available. They are mentioned here because there is a grave danger, in dealing with material such as the Odes, of circular argument. It is unfortunately all too easy, on the basis of a reading of the Odes, to assume that they must belong to one or another religious environment or to some particular period in the development of religious thought, and to find evidence to support the assumptions.(55) If then

we assume that the Odes are Christian, or Gnostic, evidence can be produced in support, but in many cases, the evidence is at best ambiguous. We need to investigate the Odes as a group, asking if what seems to be evidence supporting a particular conclusion is counterbalanced by other evidence on the same subject which modifies or perhaps even contradicts the former.

3. A third question which needs to be investigated concerns the original language of the Odes, with which is connected:-

4. Their place of origin.

To the question concerning the original language of the Odes, three possibilities have been offered: Greek, Hebrew, and an Aramaic dialect. The last-mentioned possibility has been left wide enough to allow for not only Syriac, but also another dialect of Aramaic as the original language.(56) J.H.Charlesworth has made a full investigation into the arguments which have been advanced in support of these various hypotheses,(57) and it is not necessary for us to repeat them all here, although several of them will be mentioned during the course of our investigation. It should be noted however that the poetic style and structure have been held to support each of the various hypotheses, and supposed mis-translations from an original Greek or Hebrew text have been produced to prove that the original language was other than Syriac.(58) On the first point it must be said that, in view of the paucity of early Syriac poetic material which is available, and in view of the way in which Semitic and Greek language influenced each other, this is at best a dubious criterion to use. The poetic style of the Odes provides no more support for one than for either of the others. The second argument is also seriously open to question, and can only be valid if the text as we have it in Syriac is completely unintelligible, and good sense is restored through re-translation. But it is always dubious to assume that a text as we have it has no meaning, and that a translator wrote deliberate nonsense. If we do encounter a passage which appears

meaningless we must ask first of all whether it is the text, or our interpretation of the text, which is at fault, and secondly, whether the difficulty is caused, in the case of the Odes, by an inner Syriac corruption or can be explained by some other means within the context of the language itself. It is interesting to note that in the places where there is a real difficulty in the text of the Odes, neither the Greek nor the Hebrew hypothesis provides us with any help. This situation is further complicated by the fact that there is not one, but there are two, languages which provide us with so-called evidence of mis-translation. This does not necessarily mean that one of the alternative languages suggested is not the original language of the Odes, but requires that caution be exercised in the criteria employed, and in any case the first thing which must be done is to investigate the text as we have it and to attempt to make sense of that.

The discovery of a Greek manuscript containing ode 11 has at least provided us with something concrete to work on, but does not solve the problem. In some ways the Greek text is explicable in terms of translation from the Syriac, but the question concerning the priority of the language does not rest solely on the translation. Here we have only one ode, entitled ΩΔΗ ΣΟΛΟΜΩΝΤΟΣ. Since there is no indication that the writer of the manuscript knew more than this one ode, is it to be assumed that he simply copied or translated one from the 42 odes at his disposal, or that he had access to only one in Greek or in Syriac, and copied or translated this? If he had access only to the ode in Syriac, did he attempt to translate the text accurately, or did he feel that at some points the text needed to be altered slightly?(59)

It is interesting to note the other documents which are also to be found in the Greek manuscript: The Nativity of Mary, Paul's third letter

to the Corinthians, (then follows ode 11); the Epistle of Jude; Melito's Homily on the Passover; a fragment of a hymn; the Apology of Phileas; Psalms 33,34; the two Epistles of Peter.[60] This list of Christian writings suggests that the copyist regarded the ode also as a Christian document,[61] and any changes made in a supposed Syriac text would not have occurred because of theological reasons. Is it then more likely that a Syriac translator has altered a Greek text which was before him, for theological reasons? But the differences between the Greek and the Syriac texts do not appear to be motivated by theological reasons, and another explanation must be sought. Probably the one suggested by J.H.Charlesworth is most likely to be the correct one when he says "Since the variants are so divergent between H and G, indeed much more numerous and distant than either the variants between the Coptic and the Syriac listed above or the variants between the two Syriac manuscripts listed below, we clearly have two textual traditions".[62] This may well be the case, but it is unfortunate that there is no Coptic text, and no other Syriac text available of ode 11, so that a full comparison may be made.

There remain the seven lines of Greek text in ode 11 which are not present in the Syriac manuscript. J.H.Charlesworth has produced five arguments to show that the construction favours a Semitic rather than a Greek source for this, and also suggests that they are authentic. Whether the omission is best described as "haplography" .. "due to parablepsis" .... "facilitated by homoeoteleuton" is open to question, but there is nothing here which is not in harmony with the rest of the ode.

The question of the original language of the Odes is related to that of its place of origin in so far as it might be expected that if the original language was Syriac, we should probably look more in the direction of Edessa,[63] while if it was Greek, we should look

somewhere West of there, possibly to the region around Antioch, although it is possible that a bi-lingual poet in Antioch could have composed them in Syriac. The following study will attempt to suggest answers to these questions. They are however by no means simply of academic interest in our enquiry, but are closely connected with a further preliminary question, viz.,

5. How are we to view the possibility of a relationship between the Odes and the Johannine literature?

If we are to speak of a literary dependence between the Odes and the Johannine literature, this pre-supposes that both bodies of writing were present in the one area at the same time. If, for example, as is more likely to be the case, the Johannine literature ante-dates the Odes, at what stage is it likely that the odist would have had access to this material? It is well known that the Fourth Gospel was known in Egypt during the first half of the second century and it may be assumed that the Gospel was written at about the end of the first.(64) If we look to Syria as the place of origin of the Odes, there would seem to be no great problem. And yet the evidence for the use of the Fourth Gospel by Ignatius of Antioch at the beginning of the second century, and even by Justin Martyr at Rome in the middle of the second century, is by no means unambiguous. Although it has been advocated that the Fourth Gospel was first of all accepted by "Gnostics" and only later recovered by the orthodox, this has been disputed.(65) But if we were to accept that the Johannine literature were available to the writer of the Odes in Antioch in the first half of the second century, could it also be said that it would have been available to him had he been in Edessa? But further, in speaking of the "dependence" of the Odes on the Johannine literature, does this necessarily imply dependence on that literature as we now possess it, or on the traditions which lay behind its present written form?

If the original language of the Odes was Syriac, was the writer bilingual, knowing both Greek and Syriac, or was he only Syriac speaking? If the latter, must we pre-suppose a time of composition of the Odes in which at least the Gospel was available in Syriac? Tatian's Diatessaron is usually dated at about 170 A.D., and the Old Syriac Gospels in the second half of the second century. Was there another Syriac translation of the Gospels, or at least of John, of which nothing is known, or must we therefore assume a date for the Odes later than the Syriac Gospels which are available to us, or do we assume again the dependence of the odist upon Johannine traditions rather than upon written material?

The question is complicated by the fact that although there is no evidence of the use of the Fourth Gospel, or of any of the four, through quotations, neither is there any actual quotation from the Old Testament. The closest to such a quotation is in ode 41.6, where it is said "And let our hearts meditate in his love by night and by day". Here there appears to be an allusion to Psalm 1.2, but the differences are immediately apparent. The verb "meditate", and the phrase "by night and by day" supply the impetus for the idea of dependence, but the odist has the "hearts" meditating where the psalm does not, and also replaces "law" by "love", and reverses the order of the Psalm's "by day and by night". The most that could be said then of the relationship between the Psalm and the Ode is that the odist is making a free adaptation of the Psalm on the basis of a reminiscence of it. A direct quotation is ruled out. Therefore, although Harris-Mingana claim to be able to detect the allusions to the Old Testament in the Odes,(66) and to be certain about the particular version which the odist was using, the problem is not at all as simple as this, and usually we are left with a "feeling" that such and such a passage may have provided the odist with his inspiration for a particular ode or part thereof. Ought we to expect that, even if the odist had at his disposal a written text of

the New Testament, he would have treated this source any differently from the way in which he dealt with the Old Testament? Does the answer to this question perhaps depend more on the period at which the Odes were written, so that the lack of quotation is governed by the fact that the Gospel had been not long in circulation?

This setting forth of the problem allows us to see that there are various combinations of answers which may be offered to the questions about the date and place of origin of the Odes, their original language, and place within the history of religions, and which will affect the way in which the relationships between the Odes and the Johannine literature may be seen. It will therefore be necessary to arrive at answers to all of these questions through the investigation of the text, so far as answers are possible, in order to be able to draw any conclusions concerning the relationship between the Johannine literature and the Odes of Solomon.

(c) Methodology

Our task is to show what relationships, if any, exist between the Johannine material as defined above and the Odes of Solomon. In attempting this investigation we shall deal with the Johannine literature in the form in which we now have it. We are therefore not primarily concerned with the Source-criticism of the Fourth Gospel, although our inquiry may produce some results which are related to the question of sources in John. If, for example, the investigation shows that there is some evidence of literary relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the Odes, and that this occurs within a particular kind of material in the Gospel of John, it may be that this gives evidence of a relationship to one of the sources of the Fourth Gospel rather than to the Gospel as we now have it. On the other hand of course, it would be equally possible to argue that the odist has chosen to allude to only those parts of the present Gospel which suited his own particular theological outlook.

Since in the Odes the name "Jesus" does not occur, and since there is nothing which clearly refers to any event in the life of Christ, except perhaps to the Passion and Resurrection, together with one oblique reference to the Baptism, and since when the odist writes ex ore Christi it is clearly the risen and glorified Christ who speaks, it would be a little strange to find material in the Odes which alludes to a narrative source dealing with the activities of Jesus. The whole question of the sources of the Fourth Gospel is however still in such a state of flux that any particular source theory cannot be used as a point of departure for us in this enquiry. We shall therefore attempt to investigate the relationships between the Odes and the Johannine literature as a whole.

The method by which we shall proceed in the following chapters is as follows. In Chapter 1 we shall consider the Christology of the two writings, both in terms of the Christological titles used and in a more general way, in terms of the figure of the Redeemer. It will be seen that the only titles which the two writings have in common are ones which were in common use in Christianity, and that the specifically Johannine titles are by and large missing in the Odes. On the other hand, there are some titles in the Odes which do not occur in the Johannine literature. This may seem to point immediately to a fairly negative conclusion to our study, but certain similarities are found when we move away from the investigation of titles to the understanding of Christ as Redeemer.

The second chapter will investigate Soteriology. Here again we will consider terminology, and we shall find that there is much more correspondence between the two bodies of literature. The Johannine dualism and predestination, and the terminology which goes with them, are present in the Odes, but there are also some significant differences. In particular, we shall need to discuss the emphasis in the Odes on

knowledge and corruption, contrasted with error, ignorance and corruption, and the stress on "immortal life" in place of the Johannine "eternal life". In addition to these differences, there is the complete omission of "sin" in the Odes.

In chapter 3 we look at the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Here we shall find some points of comparison, but there are significant differences between the Odes and John at this point. Not least of these is the omission of the Paraclete title. In the Odes, it appears that the risen Word exercises the function which is the province of the Paraclete in the Fourth Gospel.

In chapter 4, we investigate the eschatological concepts of the two sets of writing. Here we shall see that the so-called "realised eschatology" of the Fourth Gospel is found in the Odes of Solomon also. Some of the Johannine concepts will appear also in the Odes, but the odist also employs other ways of expressing eschatological salvation which are not derived from the language of the Johannine literature. In the case of the Odes, however, the question is not simply one of realised eschatology, but of realised resurrection. But both the Odes and the Johannine literature present us with some future expectation for the man who has found life in Christ.

In chapter 5, for reasons which will appear shortly, we shall devote our attention to the relationship between on the one hand, the Odes of Solomon and the Johannine literature, and on the other, Gnosticism. Since there are such widely divergent views concerning the origin and scope of Gnosticism, we shall devote some space to the question of definition. Within this section, we shall introduce some of the themes which are of significance in Gnosticism, to see them in the

light of the previous discussion. Secondly, we shall investigate the question of the "I" of the Odes. It is frequently held that in some way the "I" coalesces with the Messiah, so that there is identity between the Saviour and the one who is saved.

In the final chapter we shall attempt to draw together the results of this study. Here we shall look at the question of the literary dependence between the Odes and John, and consider further areas of religious thought which can be used to attempt to bring the Odes into contact with the Johannine literature. Here too we consider the essential elements which relate the Odes to John, and consider which of these best allows us to define the relationship between them.

In the following chapters it will be noted that more space is devoted to the investigation of the Odes of Solomon than to the Johannine literature. This is primarily a reflection on the degree to which the two bodies of literature have been researched, and is also a matter of academic necessity. The literature on the Fourth Gospel alone is staggering, and that on the matters directly relevant to this enquiry is very considerable. Therefore although all of the questions relating to the Johannine material have not been settled, there is a consensus of opinion about many of those with which we are concerned. We will therefore not repeat all of the arguments which have been put forward on all matters relating to this literature, but will frequently outline the problems and draw conclusions on the basis of previous work. The situation is quite different in the case of the Odes, since the work done on them, with respect to a full-scale enquiry into their theology, is very little. We shall therefore need to spend a far greater proportion of time in the exegesis of the Odes.

In attempting this comparative study we shall naturally seek points of contact in other early Christian literature, but we also believe that it would be of advantage if these two bodies of literature could be set in relation to one other distinct group of writings. For it needs to be remembered that the Odes of Solomon have been seen to be related to the same areas of literature as the Johannine literature, or at least the Fourth Gospel has. If there is said to be a close relationship between the Christology of John and the Wisdom tradition, the same is said also of the Odes. If, of all the material in the New Testament, it is the Gospel of John in which the closest resemblances to the Dead Sea Scrolls are found, it has also been said that the Odes of Solomon were written by an Essene or by one who had previously been an Essene. If the Fourth Gospel has been seen to be related to Gnostic and Mandaean texts, so have the Odes, and if, of the recently discovered Nag Hammadi texts, it is the Gospel of Truth which is most closely related to the Fourth Gospel, it has also been said that the Odes originated in the circle which produced the Gospel of Truth.

Of these three, we believe that it is Gnosticism which provides the most adequate point from which to understand the relationship between the Odes of Solomon and the Johannine literature, since resemblances to the Wisdom literature and to the Dead Sea Scrolls can in part be understood in terms of concepts and terminology which are present in Gnosticism. To what extent Jewish speculation on Wisdom was a determining factor in the Gnostic understanding of the figure of the Revealer is open to question, but it is undeniable that Sophia is a central figure in the Gnostic doctrine of salvation, although in a way which is quite different from the use of Wisdom motifs in the Fourth Gospel, and in the Odes of Solomon.[67] But at the same time the application of Wisdom characteristics to Christ in the Gospel of John and in the Odes, may well be responsible for the similarity

between the Christ of John and of the Odes on the one hand, and the Gnostic figure of the Revealer on the other. The dualism of the Scrolls and the terminology associated with it, together with the ideas of predestination and eschatology which are related to it, also occur in a much stronger form in Gnosticism. This does not mean that the Dead Sea Scrolls are to be regarded as Gnostic, or even as proto-Gnostic, but if there is a connection between Jewish heterodox speculation and the emergence of Gnosticism, then the kind of thinking which is reflected in parts of the Dead Sea Scrolls could very well have become, in a modified form, one of the elements of the system which is called Gnosticism.(68)

C.K.Barrett has said, "That there exists a relationship of some kind between the Fourth Gospel and non-Christian Gnosticism is scarcely open to question; exactly what this relationship is, is one of the most disputed problems in current New Testament scholarship".(69) If there is in fact a "non-Christian Gnosticism",(70) we at least have a point of comparison with the Fourth Gospel, but if it is believed that there is only a Gnosticism which developed as the result of the confluence of Christianity and other elements which could not yet be called Gnostic, and that this occurred no earlier than the middle of the second century, there can be no relation between the Fourth Gospel and Gnosticism except the borrowing of the former by the latter. It will therefore be necessary for us to investigate the definition of terms used in connection with Gnosticism, and to enquire into the possibility of a pre-Christian Gnosticism, in order to determine whether we are dealing with a relation between John and Gnosticism, or between John and some of the elements which, although not yet Gnostic, later on became elements in a Gnostic system.

We shall attempt to show that a pre-Christian Gnosticism is a

viable proposition, or at least that the emergence of the Gnostic movement is more or less contemporaneous with the emergence of Christianity. But having arrived at this position, it will still be necessary to enquire into the kind of relationship between John and Gnosticism. Did the author of the Fourth Gospel use Gnostic concepts because he saw in them the most satisfactory means of making his Gospel intelligible to the community within which he wrote, or did he adopt ways of thinking current among Gnostics and within his community in order to counteract the influence of Gnostic thought which was undermining the Christian expression of the Gospel?(71) These two alternatives must not be polarised, because if there were Gnostic modes of thought in the area in which he wrote, it is also possible that he would have employed them as the most satisfactory way of communication with his readers. These alternatives hold good whether we interpret John 20.31 in terms of "coming to belief" or of "being confirmed in the faith".(72) But, as it has frequently been pointed out, not everything that sounds Gnostic is Gnostic, and even if the author of the Fourth Gospel did use Gnostic concepts, this does not mean that we can brand him a Gnostic. That judgment can be made only on the basis of the whole of the Gospel, and on the relationship between the use of such concepts in John and in Gnosticism.

But even here we must not pre-judge the issue, but we shall have to enquire whether, even if there was an early Gnosticism, contemporaneous with John, the language of the latter shows evidence of contact with that Gnosticism or only of contact with thinking which is related to Gnosticism, but which is not Gnostic. It is very possible that the way in which the relationship between the Fourth Gospel and Gnosticism has been expressed by scholars such as Bauer, Bultmann, Käsemann and others, has made the scholars wary of

attempting to express such a relationship. The ambiguity of the situation may be demonstrated by reference to some comments of R.E. Brown on the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel. He asks whether there is any polemic in v.14a, and states that "while v.14a would not be acceptable to some of the schools of philosophical or theological thought in the Hellenistic world, we cannot be certain that it was written against such views".(73) But he finds a more clearly polemic tone in I John 4.2f., and II John 7. Yet this begs the question of the relationship netween the Gospel and the Epistles with which Brown does not deal. If there is no polemic against Gnostics or at least Docetists in the Gospel, but there is in the Epistles, does this mean that there was no problem when the Gospel was written but only emerged later, that the Gospel writer was aware of the problem but chose to ignore it, that the writer of the Epistle, being someone other than the writer of the Gospel, made explicit what was implicit in in the Gospel, or that the writer of the Epistle offered a corrective to what he considered to be ambiguous language in the Gospel? However, even if there is a polemic in John 1.14, it need only be directed against Docetism, not against Gnosticism. But in his comment on John 1.3 Brown writes, "We note finally that in saying that it is through the Word that all things came into being, the Prologue is at a distance from Gnostic thought whereby a demiurge and not God was responsible for material creation, which is evil".(74) Can this be related to Docetic thought in contrast to Gnostic thought? J.N.D.Kelly states that the ultimate roots of Docetism "were Graeco-Oriental assumptions about divine impassibility and the inherent impurity of matter".(75) But Docetism was a Christological heresy, and although it avoided for Christological reasons the union of Christ with impure flesh, is there any justification for suggesting that the Docetists also maintained that

this world was not the creation of God?[76] Brown allows for the possibility that Cerinthus may have have held this view, in which case John 1,3 would be significant, but he really skirts the problem when he says "But this is scarcely a major emphasis in the Gospel" (p.LXXV).

Certainly we shall need to keep all options open when considering this question, but it will be shown that the suggested relationship between John and Gnosticism depends not simply on isolated elements which may be seen to have some points of contact with the latter, but on a series of elements which seem to show a knowledge of the Gnostic scheme of salvation. In John we note the following which, it must be emphasised again, are not employed in a Gnostic way, but which offer correctives to the Gnostic way of thought. (a) The statement that nothing has come into being apart from the Logos, to which must be added, the use of the term ὁ κόσμος to describe man in his rejection of God's revelation, but which is also the object of God's saving love. (b) The fundamentally other-worldly nature of Christ, who descends from above and who ascends again, and who brings to man the true revelation of the Father who sent him, because he says and does only those things which he has seen and heard in the presence of the Father. (c) The dualism of the Fourth Gospel, which seems almost to imply that men are saved because they are "from above" and not that they are "from above" because they are saved. (d) The emphasis on the realised nature of the eschatology which states that the believers have passed from death to life, which certainly implies that in some sense the resurrection is realised. Certainly there is a tension in John as elsewhere between the "now" and the "not yet" of eschatology, but it is insufficient simply to point to this correspondence with the rest of the New Testament. We must ask why there is such a predominant emphasis on the realised nature of eschatology in the Fourth Gospel, and why this emphasis is altered

somewhat in the First Epistle. (e) The understanding of the Spirit as a second stage in the process of the revelation of God, in which the Spirit merely takes over the revelation which has occurred through Jesus, and reminds the disciples of the things which Jesus has said. To these may be added (f). The verb "to sin" and its cognate forms occur several times in the Fourth Gospel, but the predominant significance of the words involves a rejection of the revelation which has come in Christ. (g) Consequently, nowhere in John do we find any mention of repentance or of forgiveness.(77) The cumulative effect of these elements means that we must take seriously the possibility of the use by the author of the Fourth Gospel of at least the general structure of the Gnostic way of salvation, while not allowing them to prejudice the results of our enquiry.

The situation is different in the case of the Odes of Solomon, perhaps because this is not a canonical writing, and the charge of being Gnostic can be levelled against it with greater ease, or at least the Gnostic elements can be more easily seen. But of one thing there can be no doubt. The only evidence we possess concerning the presence of the Odes in the Church shows that they were regarded as acceptable reading material, which would hardly be the case if the church saw them as Gnostic. Of the writings with which the Greek text of the eleventh Ode is grouped, there are 3 canonical writings from the New Testament, two Psalms, and Paul's Third Letter to the Corinthians, which was regarded as genuine for some time in the Syriac and Armenian Churches. The last-mentioned is placed immediately prior to the eleventh ode and it would be very strange for the copyist to have added this ode had there been any doubts about its orthodoxy, having in mind what he had just written down. One quotation from the Epistle will suffice to show this. "They (the heretics Simon and Cleobius) say that we must not use the prophets and that God is not

almighty and that there shall be no resurrection of the flesh and that man was not made by God and that Christ came not down in the flesh, neither was born of Mary, and that the world is not of God but of the angels". As we have said before, there is no evidence that the copyist had access to more than this one ode,[78] but Gnostic ideas have been seen in it as well as in others.

The Pistis Sophia quotes the Odes in the same way in which the canonical Psalms are quoted, and there is no reason to assume that the writer did not regard them as canonical. H.Gunkel, a proponent of the Gnostic origin of the Odes, recognised that the writer of the Pistis Sophia needed to re-work the text to adapt the Odes to his framework of thought. Lactantius also speaks of "the prophets" who "many ages previously foretold" the Virgin Birth and then quotes from the 19th Ode, followed by a quotation from Isa.7.14. The mention of The Psalms and Odes of Solomon in the pseudo-Athanasian Synopsis Sanctae Scripturae and in the Stichometry of Nicephorus likewise attest that the Odes were not regarded as heretical (even if they were regarded as being of doubtful worth), in at least certain areas of the Church.

Yet it is nevertheless true that the Odes do appear to reflect a kind of Gnostic system of thought, and the various elements which have been mentioned above in connection with the Fourth Gospel are all present in the Odes, and in some cases, in a more emphatic manner. Therefore we shall use Gnosticism as a point of comparison for both the Odes and the Johannine literature, in the attempt to investigate the relation of each to Gnosticism, and consequently their respective positions relative to it.

1. J.L. Houlden, The Johannine Epistles, p.14; cf C.H. Dodd, The Johannine Epistles, pp.1ivf.; A.E. Brooke, The Johannine Epistles pp.xixff.

2. Along with the question of the priority of the Gospel over the Epistle or vice versa goes the other question of common authorship or not. In addition to the commentaries cited in the previous note see R. Bultmann, The Johannine Epistles, p.1; E. Haenchen, "Neuere Literature zu den Johannesbriefe", pp.267-91; C.H. Dodd, "The First Epistle of John and the Fourth Gospel" BJRL 21 (1937), 129-156; W.G. Wilson, "An Examination of the Linguistic Evidence Adduced against the Unity of the First Epistle of John and the Fourth Gospel" JTS 49 (1948), 147-56.

3. See commentaries on II John 1.

4. R. Bultmann states that this "putting out" can only mean excommunication as in Jn 9.34f., and says "It is clear that the Epistle was written in an actual situation which can be characterised as the period of conflict between the old, specifically Johannine tradition and the initial development of ecclesiastical organisation". The Johannine Epistles, p.101 n12. See p.4 below.

5. The "us" is not spatially but theologically determined - those who believe as we do. Yet use of "us" here does seem to imply a common group.

6. W. Bauer has demonstrated amply the problems involved in using terms such as "orthodoxy" and "heresy" in the early period of the formation of the church's doctrine. See his Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity.

7. E. Käsemann, "Ketzer und Zeuge. Zum johanneischen Verfasser problem", Z ThK 48 (1951), 292-311.

8. op.cit. p.101 n 8. For a contrary view see J.L. Houlden op.cit p.9 ; R. Schnackenburg, Die Johannesbriefe, pp.299f.

9. This can be seen from the use made of the Fourth Gospel by Gnostics and from the fact that the first known commentary on the Gospel was written by the Gnostic Heracleon.

10. This does not imply a polemic in I John against the Gospel. This would only be the case if it is assumed that the Fourth Gospel is Gnostic in intent, and if the indications of agreement with "normative" Christian thought in the Gospel are the work of an ecclesiastical redactor and not of the evangelist. For a partial comparison with the situation here suggested, note the correspondence of Paul to the Thessalonians. See W.G. Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament, p.187.

11 See B.H. Streeter, The Primitive Church p.188. But cf. G.Bornkamm "πρέσβυς" TDNT VI, 659 ff, 670 f. and the next note.

12. Church Order in the New Testament, p.128. Cf also J.L. Houlden op.cit. p.4; C.H. Dodd, The Johannine Epistles, p.155. E. Haenchen sees an office intended: "Damit aber wird es wahrscheinlich, dass er Träger eines Gemeindeamtes war, und als 'praeses presbyterii' eine Stellung innehatte, welche der des Diotrephes praktisch entsprach", art.cit. p.291.

13. Reading πάντες with ℵBPΨ sah. The alternative reading πάντα may well be an attempt to smooth out the text, since the reading πάντες allows for no object for the verb οἴδατε. See the various commentaries.

14 E. Schweizer states, "Evidently every church member is on principle a prophet" op.cit. p.127, n 477. Also R. Schnackenburg, Die Johannesbriefe, pp.220-222 who compares the "test the spirit" of I Jn with I Thess. 5,21.

15. J.L. Houlden op.cit. p.14. Following R. Bultmann, Houlden sees this process already at work in the correctives applied in the Gospel itself (p.13).

16. Cited in this study as Harris-Mingana.

17. J.P. Migne (ed.) P.G. 100 ed.1057. The text in Migne has the variant ὠδαί.

18. J.P. Migne (ed.) P.G. 28 col 432.

19. S. Brandt and G. Laubmann (ed.) C.S.E.L. 19. The "infirmatus est" of the quote differs from the Syr. text. See p.206.

20. M. Testuz (ed.) Papyrus Bodmer X - XII.

21. M. Testuz (ed.) op.cit. p.3.

22. Koptisch-Gnostische Schriften, p.xviii. For the date of composition of the Pistis Sophia Schmidt suggests the third century, op.cit. p.xxiv.

23. Harris-Mingana refer in their work (1, xi) to a further MS fragment which does not contain any of the Odes, but which witnesses to the same order as the Syr. MSS. The 16th Psalm of Solomon is here introduced by ܡܙܡܘܪ ܫܬܝܢ ܕܫܠܝܡܘܢ ܗ i.e. it is numbered 58.

24. MS B had long been catalogued in W. Wright's Catalogue of Syriac MSS in the British Museum but not recognised before F.C. Burkitt. The description of this MS in Wright's Catalogue is found in Vol. II, 1008. See also F.C. Burkitt, "A New MS of the Odes of Solomon", JTS 13 (1912), 372-85.

25. Ein jüdisch-christliches Psalmbuch aus dem ersten Jahrhundert, p.119, "Fur die geschichtliche Erklarung des Johannesvangeliums ist ihre Entdeckung geradezu epochmachend".

26. G. Bert, Das Evangelium des Johannes; W. Bauer, Das Johannesevangelium; E. Percy, Untersuchungen uber den Ursprung der johanneischen Theologie; R. Bultmann, The Gospel of John. He had already drawn attention to many aspects of the relationship between the Odes and John in an earlier article, "Die Bedeutung der neuerschlossenen mandäischen und manichäischen Quellen fur das Verständnis des Johannesevangeliums", ZNW 24(1925), 100-46; R. Schnackenburg, The Gospel according to St. John.

27. St. John, p.cxlvii. In a footnote he states that this recalling of Johannine teaching is true not only of the Logos doctrine, but there is also a concentration on "the great Johannine themes - Love, Knowledge, Truth, Faith, Joy, Light". Bernard's earlier work on the Odes, The Odes of Solomon, has been an attempt to show that these were hymns of the baptised Christian. See also his "The Odes of Solomon" JTS 12 (1911), 1-31.

28. op.cit. p.cxlvii. Bernard regards the date of composition of the Odes as about 160 or 170 A.D. p.cxlvi.

29. ibid.

30. The Fourth Gospel, p.52. For a fuller statement of Strachan's understanding of the relationship between the Odes and John see his earlier article, "The newly discovered Odes of Solomon and their bearing on the Problem of the Fourth Gospel", ExT 22(1910-11),7-14.

31. There are only three references to the Odes in The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, a work which elsewhere explores fairly fully those religious areas which have a bearing on John. Cf R. Bultmann's criticism of Dodd for his failure in this respect in his review in NTS 1 (1954-5), 78.

32. The Gospel according to St. John, p.55. The references from Lagrange are on p.95 of this work.

33. The Gospel according to John I,21; cf also p.xxxii. Brown regards the Odes as a group of "2nd century Christian semi-Gnostic hymns".

34. It would be remiss of me not to mention that one of the above-mentioned scholars, C.K. Barrett, was responsible for suggesting that this present study should be undertaken, and has been supervisor to me during the course of it.

35. For a survey of opinion regarding the theory put forward by von Harnack, see J.H. Charlesworth, A Critical Examination of the Odes of Solomon : Identification, Text, Original Language, Date, pp.142 ff.

36. Die Oden Salomos: überarbeitet oder einheitlich? See also J. Carmignac, "Un Qumranien converti au Christianisme: l'auteur des Odes de Salomon" in Qumran-Problème p.76; "D'abord le style manifeste une si parfaite unité que rien ne distingue 'l'original' des prétendues 'Interpolations' ".

37. "Bardaisan and the Odes of Solomon", JBL 30 (1911), 161-204.

38. "L'Enigma des Odes de Salomon", R Th 57 (1957), 613-615. Note his statement on p.614: "si l'auteur des Odes n'est pas Bardesane lui-meme, il lui ressemble etonnement"; also in his Jean le Théologien, pp.238-42.

39. "Un Qumranien converti au Christianisme: l'auteur des Odes de Salomon" in Qumran-Problème, pp.75-108. See also his "Les Affinités Qumraniennes de la onzième Ode de Salomon", RQ 3 (1961), 71-102.

40. Cf J.H. Charlesworth, "Les Odes de Salomon et les manuscrits de la Mer Morte" RB 77(1970), 522-49; idem. "Qumran, John and the Odes of Solomon" in John and Qumran, pp.107-136; J. Daniélou, The Theology of Jewish Christianity, p.32 f.; F.M. Braun suggests the Hodayot and the Community Rule may have been known to Bardaisan as well as to the author of the Odes, art. cit. p.613.

41. Papyrus Bodmer X-XII, p.58.

42. "Die Oden Salomos", ZNW 11 (1910), 328.

43. John, p.25.

44. Die Herkunft des Evangelium Veritatis, pp.26-29.

45. St. John I, 21.

46. St. John I, 144f.

47. "The Odes of Solomon - not Gnostic", CBQ 31 (1969), 367-69.

48. See A.F. Klijn, "The Influence of Jewish Theology on the Odes of Solomon and the Acts of Thomas" in Aspects du Judéo-Christianisme, pp. 170f. For a discussion of the definition of this term see J. Daniélou, Theology of Jewish Christianity, pp. 7ff; G. Strecker, "On the problem of Jewish Christianity" in W. Bauer, Orthodoxy and Heresy, pp. 241-285; J. Munck, "Jewish Christianity in Post-Apostolic Times", NTS 6 (1960) 103ff.; R.McL. Wilson, Studies in the Gospel of Thomas, pp. 117ff. We see the problem of definition most acutely in R. Longenecker, The Christology of Early Jewish Christianity, in which everything in the New Testament is subsumed under "Jewish Christianity".

49. See Harris-Mingana, II, 42-49.

50. A Critical Examination of the Odes of Solomon, p. 165.

51. ibid. pp. 170-181.

52. ibid. p. 174. Elsewhere in this work Charlesworth states that the Odes were probably composed in the first century (pp. 181,2). In a more recent article he has suggested that both the Odes and John were probably composed in the same community, without giving any closer indication of the date of either: "The Odes of Solomon and the Gospel of John", CBQ 35, (1973), 320.

53. See especially W. Bauer, Orthodoxy and Heresy.

54. It is valid to compare the language and theological expression of several present day Christian groups which are characterised by a joyful certainty of salvation and love to God, but whose form of theological expression, when judged by any "norm", leaves much to be desired.

55. This problem is of course not unique to the Odes.

56. A. Mingana suggested that the Aramaic of the Odes was different from Edessan Syriac and similar to Palestinian Syriac. "Quelques mots sur les Odes de Salomon", ZNW 15 (1914), 248; ZNW 16 (1915), 167. A. Adam looks instead to the region around Edessa for the dialect of the Odes: "Die ursprungliche Sprache der Salomo-Oden", ZNW 52 (1961), 155.

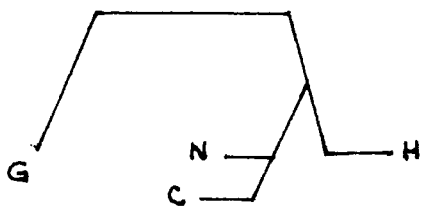
57. A Critical Examination of the Odes of Solomon, pp. 67-138. Charlesworth himself decides in favour of "Christian Palestinian Aramaic", pp. 135-38.

58. e.g. 13.3; 18.7; 20.6.

59. This question is prompted by the major changes in meaning in vv.11f. and 21f. We regard it as unlikely that the copyist (translator) deliberately emended the text, but the reasons for the changes will need to be investigated.

60. See B.M. Metzger, The Text of the New Testament, pp.40f.

61. A Critical Examination of the Odes of Solomon, p.56. This judgment refers to the whole textual tradition of the Odes, not just to Ode 11. Charlesworth expresses the relation between the various documents through the following diagram.



(p.66)

62. R.M. Grant, writing on the presence of the Epistle of Jude in this papyrus states, "Perhaps the anthologist did not regard it as fully canonical - or else his canon was unusually large", "A Historical Introduction to the New Testament", p.227. Whichever of these is correct, the presence of the ode in this collection shows that it was not regarded as heretical.

63. See W. Bauer, "The Odes of Solomon" in NTA II, 810.

64. The contention that the Gospel of John is Hellenistic and late has been radically revised by the contention that "Hellenistic" and "Jewish" are not two mutually exclusive categories, and also by the recognition that this Gospel reflects genuine Palestinian traditions. See e.g. E.R. Goodenough, "John a primitive Gospel", JBL 64 (1945), 145-82.

65. The question of the use of John in the early church is open to question. See F.M. Braun's summary in Jean le Théologien, pp.290-96, and of C.K. Barrett, The Gospel according to St. John, pp.92ff.

66. Harris-Mingana, II, 318, and in the same volume "The Biblical Quotations of the Odes", pp.110-25. Cf. R.H. Connolly, "Greek the Original language of the Odes of Solomon", JTS 14 (1913), 535.

67. We could also point to the figure of Achamoth, which points back to the Jewish Hochmah. In the Gnostic texts however, Sophia is not the Redeemer, but the cause of the disturbance in the Pleroma.

68. i.e. there is no necessary connection between the Dead Sea Scrolls and Gnosticism.

69. "The Theological Vocabulary of the Fourth Gospel and of the Gospel of Truth", in Current Issues in New Testament Interpretation, p.210.

70. That is to say, for the period of the composition of John.

71. If we look to Syria as the place of the traditions behind the present form of the Fourth Gospel, both of these alternatives are possible.

72. Cf. the two readings πιστεύητε and πιστεύσητε and the commentaries thereon.

73. John I, 31. Brown also refers to Jn 6.51-9 and 19.34-5.

74. ibid. p.26.

75. Early Christian Doctrines, p.141.

76. This may be a natural inference to make, but was this a problem which the Docetists had in mind?

77. To this list we may also add the emphasis on "knowing" in the Fourth Gospel. This emphasis on knowing does not of course make John Gnostic, but neither does the non-use of γνῶσις show that the evangelist is avoiding Gnostic terminology.

78. Nor have we any evidence that any of the Odes was ever circulated separately, but such an argument from silence is always dangerous.

CHAPTER I

CHRISTOLOGY

In this discussion of the relationships between the Odes of Solomon and the Johannine literature with respect to their Christology, we shall focus our attention mainly on the titles which each uses to refer to Christ, and draw out the theological implications from these. We shall therefore divide this investigation into three sections, considering first those titles which are common to the two writings, and then those which are peculiar to each. Finally we shall consider other aspects which are of significance in the understanding of the Person of Christ.

1. TITLES COMMON TO THE ODES OF SOLOMON AND THE JOHANNINE LITERATURE.

A. THE WORD.

(i) The Fourth Gospel.

The use of the Absolute ὁ λόγος as a designation for Christ occurs only in the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel, and since it occurs in this unqualified way right at the beginning of John, it is reasonable to assume with Kümmel that "the author evidently takes it for granted that the reader knows from the outset who is meant by the designation "the Word", and that he "therefore intends with it to say something important".(1) But what it is that he intends to say is dependent on the understanding of the Prologue as a whole, including the questions concerning the form and nature of the probable source lying behind it, as well as on the significance of the concept of λόγος elsewhere in the Gospel.

If, as most scholars are agreed, the writer of the Fourth Gospel used an existing hymn as the basis of the Prologue which he then amplified to form a fitting introduction to the Gospel as a whole, was this a Christian or a non-Christian composition? This question depends upon at least three others.

(a) What was the extent of this pre-Johannine hymn - did it include v. 14, or stop earlier than this?(2)

(b) At what point in the existing Prologue are we to understand the first reference to the Incarnation - is it to be found only at v. 14, or is this idea already present at v. 9 or even at v. 5?(3)

(c) What area of thought provides the most satisfactory range of ideas which might explain the use of the term "Logos" in the Prologue?(4)

It is not possible to enter here into a discussion of the literary criticism of the Prologue, and the literature on this question, although fairly extensive, shows no unanimity among scholars. For the purposes of our investigation into the relationship between the Johannine literature and the Odes, the question is not of importance if it is held that the Odes are dependent on John, but this question is far from settled. However, the real difficulty comes with v. 14. R. Bultmann assigns this to the gnostic pre-Christian hymn, and states that "Just as the ancient world and the Orient tell of gods and divine beings who appear in human form, so too the central theme of the gnostic Redeemer-myth(5) is that a divine being, the Son of the Highest, assumed human form, put on human flesh and blood, in order to bring revelation and redemption". He sees two reasons behind this in Gnosis. The first is that he puts on flesh for the purposes of disguise, so that he will not be recognised by the demonic powers of this world, and

the second is for the purpose of revelation, which Bultmann illustrates by reference to ode 7.3ff. E. Käsemann objects to this on the grounds that to assign v. 14 to the gnostic source means that he is necessarily ascribing to it "not only the tenet of the pre-existence of the Baptist, but also that of the incarnation of the Revealer", and he rightly asks whether the "pre-Christian use of the theme of becoming flesh in its Johannine formulation and intention really credible?"(6)

If v. 14a is regarded in any real sense as an incarnation,(7) it is extremely difficult to assign it to a Gnostic source, since the parallels which Bultmann produces from Gnosis do not support the idea of an incarnation, but are at best docetic.(8) It may thus be said that if v. 14 does belong to the pre-Johannine hymn, it was not a gnostic but a Christian hymn which was employed.

Käsemann does not include v. 14 as part of the original hymn, but regards it as the work of the evangelist. Yet he places no great weight upon v. 14a, which Bultmann regards as the theme of the whole Gospel, and concentrates upon the second half of the verse καὶ ἐθεασάμεθα τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ. For he considers that the Christology of John is coloured by a "naive docetism", and the statement "the Word became flesh" does not speak of a real incarnation, but "'flesh' for the evangelist here is nothing else but the possibility for the Logos, as the Creator and Revealer, to have communication with man".(9) While we have sympathy with Käsemann's difficulty in seeing a truly human figure behind the Christology of the Gospel, there are sufficient indications to show that the evangelist was concerned to show that the revelation of God had occurred in the person of the man Jesus of Nazareth, and that the

becoming flesh of the Revealer signifies more than merely the possibility of revelation.(10)

It is also suggested that v. 14a provides an Anti-Gnostic element in the Prologue.(11) If John was composed, at least in part, within a Gnostic environment, this is likely to be the case. But if anti-Gnostic, the question is immediately raised whether this is an anti-Gnostic statement thrown out against the Gnostic environment, or against an implied Gnostic understanding of the hymn. If the former, nothing speaks against the hymn being originally a Christian composition, and v. 14 a part of it, but if the latter, we would have to reckon with at least the possibility that a gnostic source lies at the lack of the Prologue. No clear cut answer is available from the Prologue, and for the moment we will leave this question open.

Verses 10-12 of the Prologue in its present form must refer to the work of the incarnate Revealer, since the statement concerning the Baptist in vv. 6ff. are scarcely to be understood in their present position in any way other than as a witness to the one who has come among men. This is not universally accepted,(12) but alternative explanations have to deal with Brown's argument that the insertion of the reference to John the Baptist before v. 10 means that the editor of the Prologue has misunderstood the hymn.(13) It would still be possible, however, to regard the purpose of the insertion about the Baptist as the attempt of the evangelist to make vv. 10ff. into a reference to the incarnate Christ, whereas the original hymn did not do this, but spoke simply of the coming of the revelation among men. Perhaps in this way it could be possible to get back to an underlying Gnostic hymn.(14) There are of course elements within this postulated hymn which are not compatible with

Gnostic thinking in its most usual expression, viz., the creation of the world through this Word, but Bultmann is able to see an early Oriental Gnosis in which the Old Testament faith in the Creator God[15] is a distinctive feature, and which is seen also in the Odes of Solomon. The investigation of "the Word" in section (ii) will attempt to show the extent to which the Odes are of assistance in seeing such a myth in the Prologue.

A consideration of the possible background for the term Logos itself leads to no more certainty.[16] The beginning of the Prologue may well look back to the opening verses of Genesis, but the Word of the Prologue cannot be explained simply by reference to "the word of the Lord" of the Old Testament. Nor has Jewish speculation on the Law or the Logos of Philo been seen as a sufficient impetus towards the Logos of the Fourth Gospel. Rather it is in the Jewish speculation on "Wisdom" that the best parallels to the Johannine Prologue have been seen, but this leaves us with two questions. If it is this Wisdom speculation which provides the background for the use of the term "Logos",[17] why has the Prologue spoken of "Word" rather than "Wisdom"? Secondly, what is the relationship between such speculations on Wisdom and the Gnostic myth of Sophia? Brown answers the former by stating that at least a part of the solution lies in the fact that in Greek Wisdom is a feminine noun while Word is masculine. But this is not a sufficient explanation unless "Word" and "Wisdom" had already assumed the same functions.

In answer to the second question, Bultmann states that "the Wisdom myth is only a variant on the Revealer-myth, which is developed in Hellenistic and Gnostic literature",[18] and that therefore the relationship between the Prologue and the Wisdom speculation is to be

seen not in terms of the derivation of the former from the latter, but only in terms of the fact that both go back to the same source. Even if this is the case, it is not to be assumed without question that the author of the Prologue-hymn understood his composition in terms of the Gnostic Revealer-myth, any more than it is to be assumed that the author of the Fourth Gospel understood the hymn in precisely the same way that it was originally intended. Nor ought we to assume that the original composer of the hymn, or the evangelist, had nothing to say other than what was already contained in the respective sources.

The Gnostic origin of the hymn however remains very problematical, even if in the body of the Gospel there are signs that John has made use of Gnostic categories in order to express his understanding of Christ. The categories from the Wisdom literature which are applied to the Word probably best provide the explanation for the use of the term "Logos" in the Prologue. This is not to say that the original hymn was a poem about Wisdom, for it is just as likely that the identification of Christ with the Word and Wisdom of God had already been made within the Christian tradition and that this is expressed in the hymn. At the same time, while the Wisdom motifs may best explain the use of the word "Logos", we need not restrict the background of the term to these, for the total environment of the Gospel - or in the case of the hymn, the environment of the writer - needs to be drawn upon in order to understand the origins of the term.

If no certainty is possible with regard to these questions, we can at least see the range of ideas within which the Prologue is moving, and can see what he is saying concerning this Logos. This Word is in the beginning with God, and can be called "God", although this does not mean that the Word is to be identified with

God.[19] The totality of creation is to be ascribed to him, for without him, nothing came into being.[20] With v. 4 we move on from the creative activity of the Word in creation to that of his activity of revelation to and enlightenment of man, and very probably we have to do here with the historical manifestation of the Word in the person of Christ. So the light which is visible through his life illuminates men and shines in the darkness, but the darkness has neither comprehended nor overcome the light.[21] When the light came to the world which had been created through him, and to "his own" he was not recognised as the light except by those who believed in his name and who were born of God.[22] V. 14 then states clearly what has been indicated in the previous verses by declaring that this Word has become subject to the conditions of humanity and dwelt among men, and his glory has been seen. Through him man has encountered grace and truth, in contrast to the Law which came through Moses. The Prologue concludes with the declaration that although no man has ever seen God, he has been made known in the person of Jesus Christ, the only God.[23] That is, in Christ God reveals himself so that he might be seen, so that men might have that knowledge of God which is eternal life.

It is not only in the Prologue, but also in the body of the Gospel that we find material relevant for the understanding of the Johannine Logos. It is correct to state with Howard that "the Gospel must not be interpreted by the term Logos, rather we must understand this term with its varied history in the light of the Gospel as a whole".[24] So Christ comes, not with his own words, but with the word of the Father. What he says and does are only those things which he has heard and seen in the presence of the Father. Therefore, it is only as the Father has commanded

him to speak that he does so. It is because everything that Christ says and does is the manifestation of the Father that his words are words of eternal life, and that the word which he speaks will be the judge at the last day. And so it is that to believe in him is to believe in the one who has sent him, and to see the Father. As the one who comes with the word of God, he gives no content to the revelation, other than to call men to believe in himself as the one having come from above, sent from God, for he is not only the Revealer, but the Revelation also.(25)

Through the man, Jesus of Nazareth, God speaks to his world. This is no human word, for in his words and deeds man encounters what God himself is saying. It is therefore a divine word, through which man hears and experiences God's life-giving power, if he responds to this revelation in faith, or through which he encounters the judgment of God, and remains in darkness and death, if he responds in unbelief.

The Johannine concept of the Logos may be summarised as follows:

(a) his pre-existence, and divinity in the presence of God.
(b) his activity in creation.
(c) the enlightenment which men receive through him.
(d) the rejection of the Logos when he comes as Revealer.
(e) his empowering of those who believe in him to become children of God.
(f) his becoming flesh.
(g) his activity is God himself in communication with man, and through it he makes God known.

(ii) The Word in the Odes of Solomon.

Most of what has just been said in summary of the Johannine concept of the Logos can be paralleled from the Odes, but it is questionable whether we can derive the Word of the Odes from that of John. Here we shall investigate the use of the terms for "word" in the Odes to determine the extent to which relationship between them may be seen.

The attempt to ascertain the significance of "the word" in the Odes is complicated by the fact that there are two different Syriac words used to express this concept. We will use here some words of Harris-Mingana to outline the problem. "In reading the Odes we find that in two of them (16 and 41) ܡܠܬܐ is used to express 'Logos'; but this same λόγος is expressed by the inadequate ܡܢܬܐ in the Odes 12 , 32. No Christian writer would ever have used, in speaking of Christ, such an unchristian and unevangelical expression if he were writing long after the end of the second century, i.e. after the vulgarization of the Syriac Gospels, any more than a modern theologian would say that 'in the beginning was the vocable'".(26) They further note that in the prophetic books of the Old Testament Pesh. the use of melletha and pethgama alternated confusedly without any difference of meaning, because the Johannine and Christian conception of λόγος is not well developed at the time of their translation. Their conclusion is as follows. "On the hypothesis of a Greek original, the translator, believing the Odes to be the work of the Biblical Solomon, must have adopted the unsettled terminology of the Old Testament. On the other hand, would not this Syrian Christian translator have preferably used the word melletha to make the sentence more applicable to Christ, the Word of God?"(27)

Certain points are to be noted in this exposition of the problem.

(a) When it is said that the odist pays little attention to the use of ecclesiastical terms, this statement is valid only for the period at which such ecclesiastical terminology operates. Harris-Mingana makes reference to what was the practice after the end of the second century, but they do not suggest that the Odes should be dated as late as this.(28) This implies nothing with respect to the use of ecclesiastical terms in the time of the composition of the Odes.

(b) The statement is made about the confused alternation of the two Syriac words in the O.T. Pesh., and about this "unsettled terminology", but we need to remind ourselves that it is only confused and unsettled from the standpoint of one who reads the O.T. Pesh from within the Christian tradition. It was presumably not confusing to those who translated it and who read it in the age for which it was compiled.

(c) The reason given for the alternation of the two Syriac words in the O.T. Pesh., that the Johannine Logos concept was not well developed at this time, is ambiguous. Do they mean that if this concept had been well developed it would have influenced the terminology of the Pesh. translation, or do they also intend to convey the idea that the Odes follow this terminology rather than that of later usage because the concept of the Logos as we have it in John was not developed at the time of the writing of the Odes?

(d) Harris-Mingana operate here on the basis of a Greek original(29) for the Odes, and come back in their conclusion to the fact that a Syrian Christian translator would still have preferred to use ܟܠܡܐ , even if he believed that the Odes were the work of

the Biblical Solomon. This begs the question which has been raised throughout the discussion on this terminology, viz., whether there was any technical terminology available to the writer of the Odes. Along with this goes a second question, whether or not such technical terminology existed ready for his use, did the writer intend, by his use of either or both of the Syriac words, to give expression to the Johannine concept of the Logos?

We shall therefore devote here some space to a consideration of the use of the two words in the O.T. Pesh. and in the Syriac translations of the N.T., in order to see what implications there are for the use of the terminology of the Odes.(30)

J.T. Sanders(31) sees the significance of the two Syriac words in the fact that they are of different gender, and he finds two different hypostaseis through this fact. In view of this, he concludes that "hypostatization in the Odes of Solomon, particularly the hypostatization of the Word, has proceeded independently of the Prologue of John and is in some respects logically prior in its development to the hypostasis of the Logos in the Prologue of John".(32) By this statement he does not mean to imply that the Odes are earlier than John, but only that the traditions behind the Odes are logically prior in development to that of the Vorlage of the Prologue.(33)

Sanders expresses the differences between these two hypostaseis in the following way.(34)

(1) "The Melta is usually an instrument of God's action (note the frequency of the phrase bemeltah), and thus falls into the line of feminine hypostases in Judaism, headed by Wisdom, who are pre-existent with God and who assist him at creation and in the further carrying out of his will".

(2) "Regarding the masculine word for Word, Petgama, however, a different situation exists. Whereas Melta is never associated with Truth and Knowledge, Petgama regularly is and seems to be equated with Truth.(35) Thus when the Petgama emanates from Truth, it emanates from itself (32 .2), and such an identification is certainly in the background when 12 .3 refers to the 'petgama' (which is true). It is not clear what 7 .7, which equates the Father with the Petgama, means, but the equation is certainly made".

(3) These two statements mean that one of the hypostaseis is independent but the other is not. "The Melta is never a completely independent being; but when the swiftness of the Petgama is referred to (12 .5), and when it is said that he "came to me" (37.3 ...), one sees that the Petgama can be fully independent. The same seems also to be implied by 12 .10, where the worlds, 'stimulated (from) the petgama ... knew him that made them'. Here 'stimulation' and 'making' mean the same thing".

These arguments would, if correct, provide us with some valuable guidelines for interpreting "the word" of the Odes. But while they contain some of the truth, they are far from containing the whole truth, and rest on an inadequate investigation into the terminology of the Odes. They will be answered in detail throughout the following discussion, but here we will make a few general observations, as an indication of the way in which they will be answered.

(1) It is correct to say that ܟܠܡܐ is an instrument of God's action, but not to say that ܟܪܝܙܐ is not. Sanders has himself chosen an unfortunate example to illustrate the independence of the ܟܪܝܙܐ by referring to ode 12.10.(36) Further, the "Word" which perhaps most clearly suggests the coming of the Word through the man who was humbled and exalted is ܟܠܡܐ in ode 41.11.

(2) The statement concerning the relationship between ܟܪܝܙܐ and Truth is correct as far as it goes, but neglects the fact that ܟܠܡܐ is also associated with Light, and light and truth are closely related concepts. It will be shown that the word does not emanate from itself in ode 32.2, and his other examples of the identification of ܟܪܝܙܐ and truth are very questionable.

(3) It needs to be asked how, on the basis of the swiftness of the word, and of the coming to the odist of the word, it is to be seen so clearly that "the Petgama can be fully independent". Even if hypostatisation is intended in ode 12, the attribute of swiftness is hardly any basis for a claim about independence. Although swiftness is not often predicated of the word of God, we may compare with the ode Ps. 147.15, where in the Pesh. both Syriac words occur: "He sends forth his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly". ܫܕܪ ܡܠܬܗ ܥܠ ܐܪܥܐ ܥܕ ܣܓܝ ܪܗܛ ܡܠܬܗ. ܟܠܡܐ Similarly, when ode 37 speaks of the coming of the word, this scarcely suggests any independence, and it is doubtful that any hypostatisation is intended. The ode implies no more than the fact that in answer to his prayer, God sent him an answer. What the coming of the word means exactly depends upon what is meant by the "labour" in which the speaker is engaged. It may be that the labour is no more than the prayer itself, or may indicate the act of proclaiming of the truth, which the odist performs by means of the word given him by God, as in odes

18, 29. In either case, there is no necessary hypostatisation here, nor is the language incarnational.[37]

(a) ode 41.11-15.

We begin our investigation of the use of "word" in the Odes with this passage, for it brings together several other titles which are of significance for the Christology of the Odes, and is probably the closest the Odes come to offering what may be termed a "Logos Christology".

11 And his word[38] is with us in all our way,
The Saviour who gives life, and does not reject ourselves.
12 The Man who humbled himself,
But was exalted because of his own righteousness.
13 The Son of the Most High appeared
In the perfection of his Father.
14 And light dawned from the Word
That was before time in him.
15 The Messiah in truth is one,
And he was known before the foundations of the world,
That he might give life to persons for ever by the truth
of his name.

Here we can see some ideas which are quite similar to concepts found in the Fourth Gospel. The dominant theme is the soteriological one, and the whole passage must be seen in terms of the statement of v. 11, repeated in v. 15, that the aim of this Word is to give life. Thus he comes as the expression of the Perfection of the Father (v. 13); from him comes the light which illuminates man, that is, the light which is the knowledge of God and the expression of God (v. 14). This Word is pre-existent, known before the foundations of the world (v. 15). It is not clearly stated that "the Word became flesh", but

the reference to "the Man who was humbled" probably indicates the appearance of the Word upon the human scene, and the humiliation which he experienced at the hands of his enemies.(39) Verse 14 expresses this particular and historical manifestation of the revelation of God, and v. 11 states that this life-giving revelation continues through man's union with the Word.

But there are also differences from the Johannine account. The odist does not state that the Word was "with God" (πρὸς τὸν θεόν) but that he was "in him" ( ) (v. 14). This seems to suggest that the Word is an attribute of God with no separate existence, until the time at which God brought him forth for the purpose of revelation.(40) In agreement with this is the statement of v. 15 that "he was <u>known</u> before the foundations of the world". In view of the following purpose clause, the meaning is that God eternally had in mind the idea of putting forth his Word in order to provide salvation for man, and not that there was a reciprocal knowledge between God and the Word prior to this.

It is also worth noting that this passage is introduced with a reference, not to "the Word", but to "his Word" ( ), and the reference in v. 14 to "the Word" must be seen in terms of this qualification. In fact, in the majority of cases where the Word is mentioned, it is so qualified that it is the word of the Lord which is in the mind of the writer, and not an absolute ὁ λογος .

(b) ode 32.

The theme of the Word who brings illumination and who dwells within man is found again in ode 32, but this time with reference to the . Here, however, it is suggested that this Word is self-originate.

1 To the blessed ones the joy is from their heart,

And light from him who dwells in them;

2 And the Word of truth who is self-originate.

3 Because he has been strengthened by the Holy Power of the Most High,

And he is unshaken for ever and ever.

There is a certain incongruity about v. 3, if the subject of the verse is "the Word of truth who is self-originate", for we do not expect to find that one who is self-originate has been strengthened by God's Holy Power, nor do we need to be told that such a being is unshaken for ever.(41) But also, if the subject of v. 3 is the Word, the reason clauses introduced by "because" are something of a non sequitur, for it hardly explains the joy of the blessed, even though a connection between the first and last verses can be made.

The structure of vv. 1f. show however that the translation of v. 2 above is incorrect, and the analysis of this structure may provide some additional light on the matter.

ܘܢܗܝܪܐ ܡܢ ܗܘ ܕܒܗܘܢ ܫܪܐ ܀

ܘܡܠܬܐ ܕܫܪܪܐ ܗܘ ܕܡܢ ܪܡ ܐܝܬ ܠܗ ܀ 2

ܕܐܬܬܚܝܠ ܒܚܝܠܐ ܕܥܠܝܐ ܘܩܝܡ ܗܘ ܠܥܠܡ ܘܠܥܠܡܝ ܥܠܡܝܢ ܀(42)

It will be seen that in each line there is a ܕ indicating the origin of the concept which precedes. But in vv. 1b and 2 there are additional elements, and the parallel structure requires that we understand the two lines in terms of this. For here we find the preposition ܕ followed by the demonstrative ܗܘ and the relative ܕ . We would therefore translate these lines in the following way:

And light from (ܕ) him who (ܕ ܗܘ) dwells in them;

And the word from (ܕ) the truth who (ܕ ܗܘ) is self-originate.

Indeed, in view of the indwelling of the word already referred to in connection with ode 41, we would prefer to translate the ⲟ with which v. 2 begins by "even" rather than "and", so that v. 2 becomes epexegetic of v. 1b, explaining who "him who dwells in them" is. The ode thus declares the blessedness of those who have joy which stems from the heart, and light from the word which comes from the self-originate truth.(43)

The "he" of v. 3 therefore does not refer to "the word" but picks up with a sing. pronoun the plural "blessed" of v. 1. This may be inelegant grammar, but is not impossible. The "Holy Power of the Most High" does not refer to some means whereby the word is strengthened, but is the word by which the Lord strengthens the believer to obtain victory over his enemies, and which is thus the reason for his joy.(44)

"The Word" here is then the word of God which dwells within the believer. There is no evident hypostatisation of this word, and this is to be inferred only from the similar concept of the indwelling word in ode 41.

(c) ode 16.

In this creation hymn we read again of the "word" which is certainly personified, but only with difficulty is this word to be regarded as hypostatised. "The Lord" throughout this ode is God, and "the word" is the word of the Lord. This word "searches out what is invisible abd reveals his (the Lord's) thought". The reference to revealing the thought of the Lord means that the "what is invisible" of the previous clause signifies that which in God is inaccessible to man's unaided understanding, and which becomes accessible to man through the operation of the word.(45) In this ode the writer is particularly concerned with the revelation of God which comes through creation, which God effects

through his word.

"The word of the Lord" of this ode is not to be thought of as a separate hypostasis who is responsible for creation, but as God's own expression of his intention to create. This is not contradicted by the last two verses of the ode which speak of creation through the word.

18 And there is nothing outside of the Lord,
Because he was before anything came to be.
19 And the worlds are by his word,
And by the thought of his heart.

Charlesworth compares the first line of v. 18 with Jn. 1. 1-3, and the second with Jn. 8. 58.(46) The problem with this is that "the Lord" here is not the word, but God himself, as the following verse shows. The verse is thus not about the creating activity of the Logos, nor about the pre-existence of the Logos, but states that the Lord alone existed before he brought his creation into being. Verse 19 should therefore be interpreted more in terms of Old Testament parallels(47) than of New Testament ones. Through his word, which is the expression of his thought, i.e., his thought put into effect,(48) God has brought the worlds into existence. The nature and function of the word of the Lord in this ode is quite different from the statements about the creative activity of the Logos in the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel.(49)

(d) Ode 12

Ode 12 is wholly concerned with the "word", but contains several problems of interpretation which make it very difficult to ascertain precisely what the concept of the word implies here. The ode begins with the statement that God has filled the speaker with words of truth so that he might speak the truth.(50) Therefore

knowledge abounds in him, because "the mouth of the Lord is the true word,[51] and the entrance of his light"[52] (v. 3). The true word is thus the word spoken by God, which brings light and knowledge to the believer.

The following verses of the ode deal with the gift of this word to the "worlds" (,ܥܠܡܐ),[53] and with the effects of this revelation which God has provided. The text of v. 5 appears to be corrupt,[54] but its content deals with the inexpressible swiftness and sharpness of the word, whose progress is without limit. Verse 6 declares that this word cannot be overcome,[55] and his descent and his way are incomprehensible to man. With the mention of the "descent" (ܢܚܬܐ) it is possible that we have arrived at an indication of the incarnation, but this is not necessarily the case since comparable expressions are to be found concerning the descent of Wisdom.[56] Verse 7 gives no certain sense as it stands,[57] but provides the connecting link to the following statements about the results of the descent of the word.

Because this word is the light and the dawning of thought (v. 7b) communication is established between the worlds, and those which were silent began to speak (v. 8).[58] This communication comes about through the love and agreement between them as a result of the revelation through the word, by which the worlds come to know who made them (vv. 9f.). This is because it is the mouth of God himself which speaks to them, and which provides the exposition about God (v. 11). The ode concludes with the statement of the indwelling of man by the word, and of the blessedness of those who through this word have truly known the Lord:

12 For the dwelling place of the Word is man,
And his truth is love.
13 Blessed are they who by means of him have perceived everything,
And have known the Lord in his truth.(59)

Again we find here concepts and phrases which sound like the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel. And yet this word who dwells within man and who provides for man the knowledge of God by which he knows him in his truth is not yet the word become flesh.(60) The whole ode concerns the word which God speaks to man and which remains within man as the expositor of God,(61) thus bringing him to that knowledge of God which provides immortal life, and the whole poem can be interpreted without any reference to the incarnation of the word as we find it in Jn. 1. But vv. 8 - 10 of Jn. 1 contain ideas which are paralleled in ode 7, in which a better case can be brought forward to support the concept of the incarnation of the word.

(e) ode 7

One of the more difficult sections of this ode is in vv. 7ff. with its assertion that

7 The Father of knowledge
Is the Word of knowledge.
8 He who created wisdom
Is wiser than his works.
9 And he who created me when yet I was not
Knew what I would do when I came into being.

However, the suggested identification of the Father and the Word(62) in this section is only one of the problems of interpretation in this ode. For the odist's understanding of the Word, there are also the

difficulties caused by the ambiguity with respect to the incarnational language of vv. 3 - 6, and with respect to the subject of reference of the pronoun "he" in vv. 8-11. Further, there is some doubt about the identity of the "Lord" in the later verses of the ode.

In vv. 3-6 the speaker states that the Lord is his helper,[63] because in his kindness he has diminished his greatness (v. 3),[64] has become like him so that he might receive him and put him on (v. 4), and has become like his nature and his form so that he might understand him and not turn away from him (v. 6). When these verses are read with the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel in mind, it is easy to imagine that the writer is here speaking about the incarnation, even if the language sounds rather docetic.[65] But does this passage speak of the appearance of the word of v. 7 in human form, or is the "Lord" here God himself who has assumed a form appropriate to his revelation among men?

In favour of the first alternative is the reference to the "Beloved" in v. 1,[66] where the "joy over the Beloved" is taken up in v. 2 by "my joy is the Lord". The Beloved is identified with the Lord, and if the former signifies Christ, then so does the latter. But this identification is not certain, and the Beloved here may well be God himself.[67]

The Lord is also referred to as the "Helper" in v. 3, and again there is the same ambiguity with regard to the identification, and the other instances in which this term occurs are just as, if not more appropriate as, a designation of God rather than of Christ.

But on the other hand, v. 3b suggests that the one who has diminished himself and made himself known to man is God himself. For elsewhere in the Odes the function of the word is to make God

known, and not to make himself known. The word explains God and directs men to him, and the use of ܡܠܠ ... ܐܡܪ in v. 3b does not fit very well if the subject of this verb is the "word".

What then is to be understood by the implied identification of the Father and the word in v. 7? Although the preceding verses suggest that God himself has appeared among men, it is unlikely that a strict identification of God and his word is intended, for this is the case nowhere else in the Odes. Instead, it is more likely that God himself appears to men because the "word of knowledge" is his own word, the word which was previously in him (ode 41:14), and which, in being put forth for the purpose of revelation to men in human form, may be regarded as God revealing himself. The word is both the Revealer and the Revelation in so far as here God is speaking his own word in a form which may be appropriated by men, by which men may come to understand their relationship to their Creator.

However a further possibility is present which does not conflict with what has just been said, but which does ease the problem of the implied identification of the Father and the word. It is quite possible that ܡ or ܡܢ [68] has dropped out of the text, and that the line should read, "From the Father of knowledge is the word of knowledge". This suggestion is worth consideration because it maintains the relationship between the Father and the word as we have it throughout the Odes, and it also provides an adequate introduction to the following verses which require that the Father, and not the word, be the subject of vv. 8-16.

In vv. 8-16 of this ode the subjects of all the verbs are pronominal, and there is therefore a certain degree of ambiguity with respect to them. But with v. 12 there is some differentiation made.

12 He has allowed him to appear to them that are his own,
In order that they may recognise him that made them,
And not suppose that they came of themselves.

The subject of this verse is clearly the Father, who has given[69] the word of knowledge to appear to men, so that they might recognise their Maker. But does "his own" refer to those who are God's or to those who are Christ's? In view of the statement that this recognition comes as the result of God's gift of his word, the most natural meaning of the verse is as follows: God has given his word to appear to those who are God's, in order that they may recognise God.[70]

The word is not identical with the Father, but the Father gives his word in order that men may know him. Yet there is a sense in which the two are one, for this word is God in communication with men, God himself speaking and revealing himself.[71] This is close to the relationship between the Father and his revelation through the Word in the Fourth Gospel, but in the ode, as elsewhere in this group of hymns, there is no clear differentiation between the Father and the word, at least in so far as the relationship between them prior to the putting forth of the word in revelation is concerned.

(f) ode 39. 9-13

The same ambiguity is found in this ode that we met in ode 7, with respect to the identification of the "Lord". The ode begins with a description of the destructive power of the Lord,

which is to be compared to raging rivers which destroy those who attempt to cross them (vv. 1-4). This appears to imply that the Lord here is the Father. But v. 9 states,

> 9 The Lord has bridged them (the waters) with his word,
> And he walked and crossed them on foot.

This bridge is seen in vv. 10f. to be "the footsteps of our Lord Messiah", and it becomes more probable that "the Lord" of v. 9 is also the Messiah rather than God himself. For the one who "walked and crossed them on foot" cannot be the word, but must be the Lord.(72) "The word" of this ode is thus not the word of ode 7 which appears among men in human form, but the word which the Messiah himself speaks, the revelation which he brings. "Word" here is thus not a Christological title,(73) but its use is significant in terms of the fact that the following verses show that the revelation of the Messiah is nothing other than the life of the Messiah himself, who leads the way across the waters in order that his followers may go the same way after him. By his life, and perhaps also by his death,(74) he makes a way for his believers, and his word remains as the means of access to the Father.

(iii) Comparison of "the Word" in John and the Odes of Solomon.

(a) Terminology.

In the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel, we find the absolute use of the term "the Word" at 1.1, 14, and it is to be assumed that this term was understandable without the need for any further qualification. The Word was in the beginning, was with God and was God, and this was the Word who became flesh. Certainly this Word is immediately set in relationship to God, but is not referred to as "the Word of God".(75) He is a separate hypostasis alongside of God, though without the implication that this involves

the recognition of two Gods.

The situation is quite different in the Odes, for there the word is usually described as the word of the Lord. Where we find "the word" used without any qualification, as for example in ode 41.14, it is also to be interpreted in the same way, since this has already been qualified as "his word" in v. 10. The significant exception[76] to this is Ode 12, which introduces the "true word" which is identified with "the mouth of the Most High". But in this ode the word is not an incarnate word, but one which dwells within man. In fact, only in odes 7 and 41 is it possible to speak of an incarnation of the word in some sense, and hypostatisation of the word can be seen in other odes only on the basis of these two. There is thus a two stage existence of this revealing word. In the first, he appears among men with the revelation of God in human form, in order that he may be understood by men. In the second, he is the word which is constantly within men, bringing them to life-giving knowledge as the Saviour. These two aspects of the ministry of the word are found side by side in ode 41. 10-13. This two-fold activity of the word perhaps finds a parallel in the present φαίνει of John 1. 5, but it is the present revealing work of the word on which the odist concentrates, and which corresponds more to the activity of the Paraclete of the Fourth Gospel than to that of the Logos.

(b) The Word's relation to God.

In the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel we read that the Word was πρὸς τὸν θεόν; ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν; θεός. The Word is thus alongside of God as a separate hypostasis, and shares the title of God. This does not, as we have already said, imply a duality of Gods, for this Word reveals God and is the revelation of God. So in the body of the Gospel we find that Christ speaks only those things which the Father has commanded him to speak (12. 49),

and it is the Father's word which he has given to the disciples (17. 14). But this does not mean that the Word is no more than a function of the Father, and that the unity between them blots out the distinction. For just as the Prologue states that the Word was in the beginning with God, so Christ says later on that the Son says only those things which he has seen with his Father (παρὰ τῷ πατρί 8. 38), and just as he has come forth from God, so he goes again to take again the glory which he had with God (παρὰ σεαυτῷ ; παρὰ σοί) before the world was (17.5).

The Odes, on the other hand, do not know of any separate hypostasis of the word prior to creation, or more probably, prior to the putting forth of the word in human form. Very little is said in the Odes, as also in John, of the pre-temporal relationship between the Word and the Father, but in contrast to the existence of the Word "with God" in the Fourth Gospel, ode 41. 14 declares that the word was "before time in him" ( ). Earlier in this same ode it is said ex ore Christi that "the Father of Truth remembered me, he who possessed me ( ) from the beginning" (v. 9). These verses suggest not an existence alongside of God, but an existence within him, an attribute of God rather than a separate hypostasis, so that at the proper time this word can be expressed in human form for the purpose of revelation.

(c) The Incarnation.

The Prologue declares that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth" (1. 14), and goes on the speak of the grace and truth which came through Jesus Christ (1. 17). The Word thus becomes manifest among men in the historical person of Jesus of Nazareth through whom God is made known. And just as the Prologue identifies the incarnate Word

with Jesus, so the Gospel closes with the statement that it has been written "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (20. 31). The revelation of God is found in his incarnate Word, Jesus of Nazareth, who lives a human life and dies a real death.

In the Odes the language of incarnation is very ambiguously stated. The Lord becomes "like me", "like my nature", "Like my form", but nowhere is it actually said that "the Word became flesh". The mention of "the man" ( ) in 41. 12 may support the idea of a real incarnation, but this depends upon the meaning of . But only in odes 7 and 41 is there any attempt to describe the appearance of the Word in human form, and elsewhere the emphasis is upon the Word as it dwells within man and directs him to salvation. It is therefore not surprising that the names "Jesus" or "Jesus Christ" do not appear at all in the Odes, for the odist is not concerned with the particular person in whom the Word appeared. That is to say, it is important for the odist that the Word appeared in human form, for only in this way could the revelation of God be made accessible to men, but it is not important that this historical manifestation should be identified with Jesus of Nazareth.

(d) The Function of the Word.

Here we find much more in common between John and the Odes. In both, the Word is involved in creation, even though there are differences in the way in which this is expressed in both. But it is in the area of revelation that the concept of the Word is most significant, and the same concepts are found associated with the Word in both writings. The Word brings illumination, and is light for men (Jn. 1. 4ff.; 3. 19ff.; 8.12 etc. ode 7. 14; 12. 3, 7;

29. 7; 32: 1; 41: 14); is closely related to the truth (Jn. 1. 14, 17; 8. 32, 40, 45; 14. 6; 17: 17; ode 8: 8; 12: 3, 12, 13; 15: 4; 32. 2; 41. 15). The Word is he who makes God known (Jn. 1. 18; ode 12. 11) and is therefore the means to knowledge of God (Jn. 14. 7, 17; 17. 3; ode 6: 6; 7. 7, 13, 16; 12: 3, 10, 13).

Summary:

Both John and the Odes employ the concept of the Word in order to express the revelation of God which comes to men in human form, and in both, this Word is related to the concept of Wisdom. The Word of the Odes cannot be derived from that of John, for in the former the Word has not the same independent existence alongside of God as he has in the latter. The Word of the Odes is more clearly seen as the "word of the Lord", and may result from the combination of the Old Testament concept of the "word of the Lord" and speculation on the figure of Wisdom.(77) We see at least in the Odes a stage at which these two concepts have been combined, yet this combination produces a concept of the Word which, although influenced by Christianity, is still unorthodox.(78) The reason for this lack of orthodoxy is to be seen in terms of the Gnostic environment in which the Odes were written, but the Odes do at least provide us with a concept of the Word which could have been used by, and fully Christianised by, the author of the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel.(79)

B. SON OF GOD

(i) In John.

One of the outstanding characteristics of the Johannine Christology is the absolute use of the term "the Son", which occurs 17 times in the Gospel, frequently as a title used in relation to "the Father".(80) In addition to "the Son" we also find "the Son of God" seven times,(81) and ὁ υἱὸς ὁ μονογενής or ὁ μονογενὴς υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ twice.(82) The absolute use of the title in the Fourth Gospel is in sharp contrast to the Pauline corpus, in which the absolute term occurs once only.(83) Although it is possible that the absolute "the Son" and "the Son of God" were originally separate titles,(84) we ought not to distinguish too sharply between them in the Gospel.(85) John shows a marked preference for the absolute title, since by this he can express more adequately the Father-Son relationship, and the usage of "the Son of God" is therefore attenuated. In the First Epistle however, the situation is reversed in terms of numerical frequency, but the two titles are used synonymously.(86) As in the Gospel, so also in the First Epistle the absolute title is used where there is a direct relationship to the Father mentioned.(87) The reason for the difference between the Gospel and the Epistle in this respect may be that while the writer of the latter is concerned with the confession of faith in Jesus as the Son of God, the writer of the Gospel is less concerned with this confession as such,(88) and much more concerned with expressing the relationship which exists between the Father and the Son, since it is through this relationship that God expresses his own reality.

(a) The Son is sent by the Father.

The fact that God has sent the Son is emphasised in the Fourth Gospel, and God is referred to as ὁ πέμψας με no fewer that eighteen times in the book. On a further six occasions, we find the concept of "sending" associated with the Father in the expression ὁ πέμψας

με πατήρ. Apart from this usage, the verb πέμπειν occurs relatively infrequently. Twice it refers to the sending of a disciple by his master (13. 16,20), but this is related to the fact that Jesus has been sent by God (13. 20). The same verb is also used of the sending of the Spirit by the Father (14. 26) or by Christ (15. 26; 16. 7). The verb occurs in John on two further occasions only. The first deals with the sending of representatives by the Jews to John the Baptist (1. 22)[89] and the second deals with God's sending of John the Baptist, so that he too can call God ὁ πέμψας με.[90] The verb is similarly used to express the sending of the Son by the Father, without any discernible difference in meaning.[91]

The function of these verbs[92] with respect to the Son is to emphasise the fact that, having been sent by God,[93] he is God's valid representative,[94] and as such, may lay claim to be the true means whereby God is really known.[95] It is therefore important that those to whom Jesus speaks know that the Father has sent him (11. 42; 17. 21,23), for it is belief in Christ as the one sent by God which constitutes true belief in andknowledge of God (5. 24;[96] 12. 44). The Son is the divine Revealer who has been sent from God, and who returns to God again (7. 33; 16. 5,10,17), or in other words, he has his origin in God[97] and he returns to the one from whom he came.

(b) The Son performs the work of the Father.

In Jn. 5 we read of the dispute between Jesus and the Jews which was initiated by the fact that Jesus had healed a man on the Sabbath and commanded him to carry his bed,[98] thus breaking the Sabbath law, but which was aggravated by the words of Jesus about his work, so that the Jews charged him with claiming equality with God (vv. 15 - 18). Jesus does not rebut the charges against him, but states that he can do nothing by himself, for he does only those things which he sees the

Father doing[99] (v. 19). And the particular functions which the Father had given the Son to perform were those of giving life[100] and exercising judgment. (vv. 21f.). Otherwise expressed, the Father has life in himself, and he has given to the Son to have life in himself, and has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is "Son of Man" (vv. 26f.).[101] This means that in the Son man encounters God himself, and man's response to the Son is his response to the Father who sent him. Christ has come not to do his own will but that of God (5. 30; 6. 38), and therefore the works which he does bear witness to his sending from God, and in them the Father himself is witnessing to him (5. 36f). Belief in the Son thus constitutes belief in the Father who sent him (12. 44), and the Jews' rejection of Jesus means that they reject the testimony of the Father,[102] and of the Scriptures which point to him (5. 45ff). In view of this authoritative witness to the Son, man must make a choice and find life and salvation through faith in him, or judgment and condemnation through disbelief.[103]

(c) The Relation between the Son and the Father.

There is a certain degree of subordination of the Son to the Father implied by what has been said about the sending of the Son and his doing only what God wills. But alongside of this dependence of the Son on the Father there is also a heavy stress on the unity of both.[104] If therefore Jesus does not speak on his own authority but the Father who dwells in him does his works (14. 10), this is because he is in the Father and the Father is in him (14. 10f). It is the oneness of the Father and the Son which brings the charge of blasphemy in chap. 10 as in chap. 5, for Jesus declares his oneness with and sonship to God in such terms that the only response to it can be the one which his accusers make, "You, being a man, make yourself God" (10. 33).[105]

This unity between the Father and the Son is grounded in the

love which exists between them, and it is because the Father loves the Son that he shows him all that he does (5. 20),[106] just as it is also in order that the Son's love for the Father might be known that he does what the Father has commanded him (14. 31). This mutual love between the Father and the Son is an eternal relationship (17. 24), and characterises their eternal unity, so that the Son may be said to have always shown the glory of the Father (8. 56,58).[107] This unique relation of love between the Father and the Son and the consequent unity between them is demonstrated in the Son who is sent, and is expressed in the term μονογενής.[108] As God's only Son, Jesus stands in this special relationship of love to the Father,[109] and the sending[110] of the Son shows at the same time the love of God for the world (3. 16; I Jn. 4. 9,10). Through the demonstration of this love and unity, the believer enters into this unity with God through Christ,[111] and has within him the love which the Father has for the Son (17. 23,26).

It is the oneness of the Father and the Son which is the content of the proclamation of Christ, for only if man sees in him the one who is one with God can he accept the fact that in him the authentic revelation of God is to be found. There is therefore a sense in which it may be said that "Jesus as the Revealer of God reveals nothing but that he is the Revealer".[112] Yet there is some content to the revelation other than the fact of revelation itself.[113] For just as the Son has come to make known the Father who is essentially unknown (1. 18), the Father whom no one but the Son has ever seen (6. 46), so that he who has seen Jesus has seen and known the Father (14. 7,9), so it is also the case that the recognition that in Jesus God reveals himself is the means whereby man experiences God's love to which he must respond in loving acceptance. Failure to do so is to cut himself off from life.

"The Son" in the Fourth Gospel is used primarily to express this relationship between the one who has come as the revelation of God and the Father who sent him.[114] It is because of this relationship between them that the coming of the Son sets man in the situation where he must make a decision about the Son, and consequently about his own relationship to the Father. To accept the Son as having been sent from God means to share in God's eschatological blessing of life and freedom from judgment (5. 24), and to reject him means remaining in darkness and death under the wrath of God (3. 18ff,36;9. 41).

(ii) In the Odes of Solomon.

In the Odes we find the title "Son" eight times. On three occasions the term is conjoined with another concept, e.g., the Son of Truth (23. 18), the Son of the Most High (41. 13), the Son of God (42. 15). Elsewhere the term is employed absolutely (3. 7; 7. 15; 19. 2, 7; 23. 22). In odes 19 and 23, we find the "Son" used within a Trinitarian context, and in ode 19 there is some attempt to formulate a relationship between Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

(a) ode 3

In v. 7b there is the one reference to the Son in this ode, without which it would be possible to interpret this ode purely in terms of the union between the believer and God.[115] It is therefore not surprising that several scholars have excised this line from the ode.[116] Verse 7 is usually translated as follows:

> I have been united (to him) because the lover has found the Beloved,
>
> Because I love him that is the Son, I shall become a son.

This translation takes no account of the ܕ which introduces the second clause of line b, and it will be of assistance to set out the Syriac text.[116a]

The clause structure here is not, as the above translation suggests, abba, but abbc, and the two lines are not in synonymous parallelism. It can clearly be seen that the second clause of line a and the first clause of line b have exactly the same form - conjunction (ܘ), verb and subject (ܐܬܝ ;); proleptic pronominal object ( ); noun object (;).

Clause a of line b explains the preceding clause, but the question which remains to be answered is if the meaning of both is identical, or if the latter explains how the former is achieved. That is to say, does the term "the Beloved" refer to the Son or to the Most High, and therefore does the odist's love for the Son mean that he has found the Beloved, or is it through his love for the Son that he finds the Beloved. It may seem from odes 38 and 42, where there is a bridegroom-bride relationship imagery between Christ and his believers that the Beloved is Christ.[117] However, the preceding verses imply that the Beloved is the Most High himself.

5 I love the Beloved and I myself love him,
And where his rest is, there also am I.

6 And I shall be no stranger,
Because there is no jealousy with the Lord Most High
and Merciful.

This means that the Beloved is God,[118] and the aim of the believer is union with God. Verse 7b then explains how this union with God, this finding of the Beloved is made possible. It is through the believer's love for the Son that he enters into his love relationship with God, and the result of this is sonship for the believer. We would therefore understand v. 7 as follows: I have been united with God, because the lover has found the Beloved, (which has occurred because I love the Son), in order that I may become a son.

Since the aim of the believer is sonship through union with God, this also means that the concepts of immortality and life in vv. 8 and 9 belong not with the Son, but with God.

8 Indeed he who is joined[119] to him who is immortal (ܕܚܝ ܠܗ)
Truly shall be immortal (ܚܝܐ ܠܥ).
9 And he who delights in the life (ܒܚܝܐ)
Will become living.(ܢܚܝ).

There is thus a sense in which the believer participates in the immortality and life of God, but it is also clear that the believer is not deified,[120] and he does not share the immortality and life in the way in which God is immortal and is life. The different expressions which are used in vv. 7f. of God and of the believer, place a clear line between them. If these verses applied to the Son rather than to God, we would have a parallel to the Johannine use of υἱός and τέκνον to describe the sonship of Christ and of believers respectively.[121]

There is virtually no content given to the concept of "Son" in this ode. All that can be said of the Son is that he is the one through whom men love the Father, and come to sonship.[122] But the ode at least implies that the Son is the love of God in action, and that it was through the revelation of God's love expressed in the Son that the odist recognised God's love for him, so that he was able to love in return (vv. 3f.).[123]

(b) ode 7.15

Certain aspects of this ode have already been discussed with reference to the concept of the Word. The Lord has become like the odist with respect to his form and nature, so that he might receive him and put him on, understand him and not turn away from him. This revelation of God comes through the Word, who has appeared to those who are God's in order that they might recognise God as their Creator. God has established the

way to knowledge which he has brought to perfection, setting over it the traces of his light (vv. 3 - 14). Verses 17ff. state that the saints[124] are to announce the coming of the Lord to those who are waiting for him, and should tell them to come forth and meet him. The arrival of the knowledge of God upon earth means the abolition of hatred, jealousy and ignorance, and the singers should therefore sing of the grace of the Lord Most High. All of this could be applied to the Word of knowledge of v. 7, the Word which the Father has given to appear to those that are his. In v. 15 however, we find reference to the Son:

> For by him he was served,
>
> And he was pleased with the Son.

The Father's pleasure with the Son is found several times in the Gospels[125] and this may provide the inspiration for this verse in the ode, although the Syriac translations use a different word for "was pleased".[126] But it is possible that ܨܒܐ is intended in another sense, and that it means "resting, dwelling at ease".[127] There are therefore two interpretations of this verse, depending upon the meaning of ܨܒܐ . 1. The Father was served by the Word, and he was pleased with the Son. This offers a virtual identification of "Word" and "Son", with the qualification that the Son would be regarded as the Word who had assumed human form for the purpose of revealing God to men. 2. The Father was served by the Word and the Word[128] rested in the Son. This would imply a certain degree of separation between the Word and the Son, but ode 19 could be interpreted in the same way.[129] On this interpretation, "the Son" would mean the human form which the Word indwelt.[130] Perhaps by the use of the word ܨܒܐ the odist was attempting to express both thoughts: The Father was pleased with the work of revelation which was achieved through the Son, and, The Son was indwelt by the Word of God. If ܨܒܐ does mean that the Word rested in the Son, it cannot imply that there is a clear distinction between the Word and the human form which

constitutes the Son. For ode 3 has already stated that love for the Son means union with God, and therefore "the Son" must at least signify the Word in his human manifestation.

(c) ode 19

In this ode we are presented with a rather bizarre[131] picture of the relationship between the three persons of the Trinity.

1 A cup of milk was offered to me
And I drank it in the sweetness of the Lord 's kindness.
2 The Son is the cup,
And the Father is he who was milked;
And the Holy Spirit is she who milked him.
4 Because his breasts were full,
And it was undesirable that his milk should be ineffectually released.
5 And the Holy Spirit opened her bosom,
And mixed the milk of the two breasts of the Father.
5 Then she gave the mixture to the world without their knowing,
And those who received it are in the fulness of the right hand.

The Son is the vessel in which the milk of the Father's revelation is received by the odist, and as R. Abramowski rightly points out, there appears to be "eine gewisse Distanzierung" between the Son and the revelation.[132] After v. 2 there is no mention of the cup, and the emphasis lies totally on the mixture which the Holy Spirit gave to the world, and in vv. 6ff, to the Virgin. The separation may therefore not be as great as at first appears through the image of the cup.

Two questions must be answered before we can evaluate the significance of "the Son" in this ode. 1. Why does the odist mention the two breasts of the Father, and twice make reference to the mixture from

them? 2. What does "the Holy Spirit opened her bosom" imply?

1. It must be admitted immediately that the odist's use of symbolism is such that an unambiguous interpretation of it is not always possible. But we cannot suppose that in making specific mention of the two breasts of the Father, the writer is saying no more than that a mother possesses two breasts.(133) Both are important for it is the mixture from them that is given to the world and to the Virgin. The metaphor of mixing suggests that we ought not to place too much emphasis on the separation between the revelation of God and the vessel in which that revelation is encountered, as the image of cup and drink of milk suggests. It may be, however, that the mixture from the two breasts signifies that both the divine revelation and the human form in which it appeared among men are derived from the Father.(134) This can only be investigated after we have considered the second of our questions.

2. Why does the Holy Spirit open her bosom and mix the milk of the two breasts of the Father? The image is difficult, but this is not sufficient justification for emending the text from "her bosom" to "his bosom".(135) Positively, it means that it is through the Holy Spirit that the revelation of God in the Son is made available to the world, and that through the Holy Spirit the Virgin gave birth to the Son. Negatively, it shows that the Holy Spirit is not the mother of Christ,(136) but the Spirit hands on what she has received from the Father.

There is no temporal sequence intended in vv. 5 and 6, so that the Holy Spirit gave the mixture to the world (137) which did not recognise it, and then it was given to the Virgin who brought forth the Son. It is indeed doubtful if the odist thought that there had been any real revelation of God to the world prior to the revelation through Christ.(138) The ode thus falls into two sections. In vv. 1 - 5 the odist is speaking

of the way in which he and his community receive the revelation of God. In vv. 6ff. he goes on to show the way in which that revelation was first made available among men, namely, through the Son who was born of the Virgin.[139] We deal with the odist's understanding of the Virgin Birth in a separate section,[140] and there we suggest that it is very difficult to derive an orthodox understanding of the person of Christ from vv. 6ff. of this ode. Indeed, it appears that for the odist, both the revelation of God and the body which comes from the Virgin are derived from God, and that the mixture of the two breasts of the Father signifies that the divinity and the "humanity" of Christ come from the Father. This may be a little unfair on the odist, but he concentrates so strongly on the divine nature of this revelation[141] that very little is left of the real human nature of Christ.

"The Son" in this ode thus stands for the human manifestation of the revelation of God. The title does not really signify the humanity of Christ, nor does it signify his divinity, but only expresses the form appropriate for the reception of God's revelation by men.

(d) ode 23. 18.

Ode 23 also speaks of the coming down of the revelation of God to men, and it speaks of this in terms of the descent of the Lord's thought and will:"And his thought was like a letter,[142] and his will descended from on high" (v. 5). The use of the verb "descended" ( ) may suggest that the odist is here giving a parallel to ode 22. 1, and that the descending will is to be identified with the Messiah, but the later verses of the ode do not support this. The starting point for the understanding of the descending will is the Old Testament Law, for in v. 21 we read that "the letter became a large volume which was entirely written by the finger of God".[143]

But when this letter came down, it was not apprehended. (144) Many attempted to take it and read it, but it escaped from them, and they were afraid of the seal on it for the power over the seal was greater than they were (vv. 7 - 9). Others went after the letter to find out where it would land to see who would read and hear its contents (v. 10). The letter was thus sealed, not addressed to those among whom it came, and they had to wait until the rightful addressee took it. Thus far, although the will and thought of God had come down among men, no revelation of God had taken place. The coming of the letter brought only fear. The most probable explanation of these verses is that the odist is saying to Jewish opponents that they had no real knowledge of God, and that the real revelation of God arrived only later in the person of Christ.

The ode then proceeds to speak of the mysterious wheel which received the letter.

11 But a wheel received it
And it (the letter) came over it.
12 And a sign was with it (the letter)
Of kingdom and of providence.
13 And everything which was disturbing the wheel
It mowed and cut down.
14 And it restrained a multitude of adversaries,
And bridged rivers.
15 And it crossed over and uprooted many forests
And it made an open way.
16 The head went down to the feet,
For down to the feet ran the wheel
And whatever had come upon it.

The wheel thus exercises a two-fold function. Firstly, it is the vehicle for the letter which comes upon it. There are several possibilities open

for the interpretation of this . As a vehicle, it reminds us of the Throne Chariot of Ezekiel's vision.(145) This is the vehicle in which the will of God descends to men. Harris-Mingana(146) suggest that the word may signify an angelic being. J.H. Charlesworth(147) thinks of the Cross.

The second function of the wheel provides us with another meaning. For this wheel is not merely a vehicle, but also performs a destructive function, or more properly, a clearing function. It mows down that which hinders its progress, bridges rivers, uproots forests so that an open way is made. Elsewhere in the Odes we find this concept of making a way for the redeemed, and it occurs through the activity of the Messiah.(148) This function is reminiscent of the "threshing sledge" of Isa. 41. 15, and although  does not occur in the Old Testament Pesh. of this passage,(149) the word is used in this sense.(150) This is the primary significance of the wheel in ode 23, and it signifies the redemptive work of the Messiah in leading his people to salvation in terms of a new exodus.

Verse 16 is not concerned simply with the idea of the revolution of the wheel, but with the theological concept of the descent of the head, the Messiah, to the feet, his members,(151) and with the fact that in this descent he manifests the will of God. The "whatever had come upon it" of v. 16c clearly looks back to v. 11, and the odist declares that with the coming down of the wheel, the letter comes down also. When this will had previously descended no one had been able to apprehend its contents. Now that the Messiah has brought it,(152) it becomes the means whereby men from all regions(153) (v. 17) may understand it and find salvation. In the coming of the Messiah the seal is removed and the contents of the letter made available to men.

In v. 18 we find the one reference to the Son:

18 And there was seen at its head, the head which was revealed,
Even the Son of Truth from the Most High Father.
19 And he inherited and possessed everything,
And the scheming of the many ceased.

The head which was revealed at the head of the letter is the head who had come down to the feet in v. 16, and who is now identified as "the Son of Truth".[154] The revealing of the Son of Truth at the head of the letter signifies that it is he to whom the letter had been addressed. This is the fulfilment of the search of those who had gone after the letter to see where it would land (v. 10). The Son of Truth is thus the only one who has the authority from the Father to break the seal and to reveal its contents. In other words, he is the sole source of revelation. Through this revelation he inherits everything; that is, he gains his people for his possession.

Since this is the only instance of "Son of Truth" in the Odes the title obviously has a particular significance. In the context of the descending will of God and the allusion to the Law, the title is to be explained through the traditions that "truth" signifies the Torah, and that the seal of God is truth.(155) There is an anti-Jewish polemic here. The odist declares that what the Jews believed to be the revelation of God was in fact no revelation. They did not receive God's truth because this has come only with the Messiah who truly reveals the will of God,(156) which is life for those who will receive it (cf. ode 9. 4).

Of the relationship between the Son and the Father nothing again is said beyond the fact that the Son is "from" the Father. But as in the other odes, the title signifies the form of God's revelation appropriate to human perception.

(e) ode 41. 13

In this ode we read of "the Son of the Most High" who "appeared in the perfection of his Father". Verses 11 - 14 join together several titles which are all concerned with the revelation of God, Word (v. 11), Saviour (v. 11), the Man (v. 12) the Son of the Most High (v. 13), the Word (v. 14). All of these designations signify different aspects of the God in his revelation to man, and are bound together by the assertion of v. 15, "The Messiah is in truth one".(157) It is quite clearly much more difficult to maintain the separation between the divine revelation and the human appearance of that revelation, such as we have considered in odes 7 and 19. But here as in the other odes we have considered, the term "the Son of the Most High", signifies the form in which the revelation of God is appropriated by men. In him the perfection of the Father is seen.(158)

This does not mean that the Son came down from heaven to reveal God. For when the odist speaks of the prior relationship between God and the illumination which comes from him, he reverts to the terminology of "the Word that was before time in him".(159) It is the illumination which has appeared for men to see in the Messiah, the appearance of the revelation in human form which constitutes what the odist understands by "the Son".

(f) ode 42. 15

In this final ode of the collection we find again the concept of the sonship of the Messiah, and in v. 15 there occurs the one instance of the term "Son of God". From v. 3 of this ode Christ speaks,(160) and from v. 10 he describes his overcoming of Sheol and Death, his release and that of many others from there, and his proclamation to the dead in Sheol in order that they might through faith in him, come out and find life.

When he has made his proclamation to the dead, they cry out to him, "Son of God, have pity on us, and bring us out from the bonds of darkness ..... for we perceive that our death does not touch you .... for you are our Saviour" (vv. 15 - 18). In ode 41, 11 it is the Word who is the Saviour, in this ode it is the Son of God. As the Son of God, death does not hold him. Here we are dealing with much more than a concept of the Son which signifies only the human manifestation of the Word. It is because Christ is the Son of God that he shatters Sheol and brings men forth from death. The concept of sonship has here become equivalent to that of the Redeemer of ode 28, "And I did not perish, because I was not their brother, nor was my birth like theirs. And they sought for my death but were unsuccessful, because I was older than their memory, and in vain did they cast lots against me" (vv. 17f.).

Does this then mean that the concept of the divinity of the Redeemer belongs to the odist's understanding of the sonship of the Messiah? On the basis of the other odes examined the answer to this question must be given in the negative, and it may not be necessary to alter this judgment in the case of this ode. There is in the Odes a close correlation between the concept of the descent into Sheol and the descent of the Messiah to earth in revelation, and the use of the term "Son of God" may be influenced by the parallel between the proclamation to the dead in Sheol and the proclamation to the dead on earth.(161) The title then would signify the same as in the other odes, since for a proclamation to the dead in Sheol, Christ would need to have had a human form with which to enter Sheol. It does seem however, that in odes 41 and 42, the odist attempts to provide a more substantial content to the idea of Christ's sonship, and to link this more closely with God's revelation of himself.(162)

(g) ode 10. 4 and 31. 5

In neither of these odes is the term "Son" given directly to Christ, but the concept is stated through the use of "my (his) Father". In ode 10 Christ has captured the world, and "it became mine for the glory of the Most High, even of God my Father" (v. 4). This capture of the world by Christ is repeated by the odist, whose mouth has been directed by the Word of the Lord (v. 1). There is therefore a connection here between the Word and the Son of God such as we have seen in ode 41. The Word of the Lord is the one who is with the odist in the time in which he writes, while the Son of the Most High is he who appeared upon earth and effected victory over him who held men in bondage, and the odist repeats this victory in so far as he the Word who dwells in him speaks through him. Here again, as in odes 41 and 42, the term "Son" implies the human appearance of the Word, but does not imply the separation between the Word and the Son as has been suggested for ode 19.[163] Again in ode 31. 5 it is to the Son that his Holy Father gives those who had become sons through him, and the Son offers these back to God. The concept of sonship also refers to the earthly appearance of the Messiah in this ode, as is shown by the use of the word "appearance" (ܕܡܘܬܐ)[164] in v. 1, and by the allusions to the Passion in vv. 8ff.

In summary, it can be said that "the Son" in the Odes designates the Word under the conditions of his earthly appearance, and is not a term which signifies the divine origin of the Redeemer. There does appear at times to be a separation between the divine Redeemer and the human form in which he appears, which results in an apparently docetic Christology, but this is more apparent than real, for it is as the Son that Christ performs his work of revelation, overcomes Sheol and Death, and makes a way for the redeemed to arrive at salvation.

C. THE SON OF MAN

(i) In John

It will not be possible for us to investigate fully the many problems associated with the use of the "Son of Man" title in the Fourth Gospel,(165) and we can only note the ways in which the evangelist uses it with a view to determining the significance of the title for him. As in the Synoptic Gospels, this title occurs in John only on the lips of Jesus,(166) and is used in the context of the suffering and of the judging activity of the Son of Man. The title comes to John from the tradition about Jesus,(167) but John's use of it is different from that of the Synoptic Gospels. In the Fourth Gospel, "The Son of Man" is used in specific contexts and serves a particular purpose, and it is not used simply as an equivalent expression for "Son (of God)".(168)

(a) The descent and ascent of the Son of Man.

The Son of Man is he who has descended from heaven and ascends again to heaven. The verb ἀναβαίνειν is not used very frequently with the significance of an ascent to heaven, and καταβαίνειν, with the meaning of a descent from heaven is found most often in ch. 6. Only in Jn. 3. 13 and 6. 62 are these two verbs conjoined, and in both verses, the combination serves to express the descent and ascent of the Son of Man. The difficulty with 3. 13 is that Jesus is made to state anachronistically that he has already ascended, and it is therefore denied that an ascent is mentioned in this verse. Several scholars state that the only assertion of Jesus here is that "No one has ascended (ἀναβέβηκεν) into heaven, but there is one who has descended from heaven, the Son of Man".(169) Jesus is here supposedly denying that anyone has ascended, and asserting that it is only from the one who descended from heaven that the heavenly things are to be learned. This verse is then said to be directed against the kind of mysticism which stated that certain men had ascended to heaven to learn divine secrets, which they then communicated on their return

to earth.(170)

This interpretation depends upon a particular interpretation of the εἰ μὴ of Jn. 3, 13 as "a restriction which does not correspond to what has preceded".(171) In support of this, reference is made to Rev. 21. 27; "But nothing unclean shall enter it, nor anyone who practises abomination or falsehood, but only (εἰ μή) those who are written in the Lamb's book of life". F.J. Moloney writes, "There is no doubt that those who are written in the Lamb's book of life are not unclean, nor the practisers of abomination or falsehood". That is undoubtedly correct, but this is not the force of the statement. The verse rather emphasises that it is not the unclean, but those written in the book who shall enter. The only difference between this verse and John 3. 13 is that whereas in the former there is a distinction made between two groups, one of whom shall enter and the other who will not, in the latter there is no one who is to be contrasted with the Son of Man, the only one who has ascended. Jn. 3. 13 is then not a denial that the Son of Man has ascended, but an affirmation that he is the only one to have done so.(172)

But why should Jesus be made to state anachronistically(173) that he has already ascended to heaven? The answer to this is connected with the contrast between the ἐπίγεια and the ἐπουράνια,(174) as well as with the significance of the title "Son of Man". This title is connected with a whole complex of ideas concerning the descent of the Son of Man, his life-giving gift through his revelation (ch. 6) and especially his exaltation through the Cross by which he ascends again to where he was before (6. 62).(175) It is through his "lifting up" that he draws all men to himself (12. 32), and the necessity of this lifting up is mentioned in the verse immediately following the assertion about the descent and ascent (3. 14). The "heavenly things" are only understandable in the

light of the whole history of the Son of Man, and probably include the notion of the exaltation and ascent, along with the implication that through this, man is able to follow Christ to where he has gone. The Son of Man is therefore the "heavenly man" who descended[176] and ascended, and who by this descent and ascent provides full salvation to those who have faith.

(b) The exaltation of the Son of Man.

Only with the "Son of Man" title is the verb ὑψωθῆναι[177] used, and this verb carries with it the twin ideas of lifting up on the Cross and of exaltation[178] (3. 14; 8. 28; 12. 32). As in the Synoptic Gospels the necessity of the death of the Son of Man on the cross is maintained, but in distinction to the Synoptics, the lifting up on the cross is, in John, the moment of the glory of the Son of Man.[179] This double use of ὑψοῦν is peculiar to the Fourth Gospel in the New Testament, and marks a development from the idea that the exaltation followed on from the death on the cross, which was the humiliation of the Son of Man.[180] For John the Cross is not humiliation but glorification, since through it Christ returns to the Father,[181] he accomplishes that for which he was sent,[182] and as Son of Man draws men to himself (12. 32).

In line with this understanding of the exaltation of the Son of Man in the Cross are the statements concerning the "glorification" in 12. 23 and 13. 31. The verb δοξάζειν is used with "Son of Man" only in these two places in the Fourth Gospel, and is more usually found in the context of the glorification of the Son[183] (8. 54; 11. 4; 17. 1,5) or of Jesus (7. 39; 12. 16). But these verses express the same thought that is found in connection with the use of ὑψοῦν, that Jesus goes to the cross as Son of Man, and in this he is glorified, and God is glorified in him. This is in sharp contrast to the Synoptic Gospels,

where the concept of the glory of the Son of Man is connected only with the future apocalyptic figure who comes on the clouds of heaven.

(c) The Son of Man as judge.

In Jn. 5, 27 we find that God has given to the Son authority to execute judgment because he is υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου. This is the only instance of the anarthrous use of "Son of Man" in the Fourth Gospel, and for the most part, John states that judgment occurs in the encounter of men with the Son, as has already been stated in v. 22 of this same chapter. In Jn. 9, 39 Jesus says that it was for judgment that he came into the world, and since this follows upon the question, Do you believe in the Son of Man, it is clear that here again judgment is connected with Jesus as Son of Man. This means that it is in the recognition or in the rejection of Jesus as the Son of Man, the one through whom men see as they believe or remain blind as they refuse to believe, that judgment occurs. The Son of Man is he whom God has authenticated[184] as the bearer of the revelation, the bread of life (6. 27), and it is in the rejection of this revelation that men are judged.

It is within the context of this revelation which is seen in the Son of Man that Jn. 5. 27 is to be understood. The anarthrous "Son of Man" does not signify simply "man", but it does signify the Revealer under the conditions of humanity. The title is not used here with a sense which approximates to that of "the Son" elsewhere, but the use of the two titles side by side shows the difference between them. "The Son" is used primarily to show the relationship which exists between Jesus and God, while "the Son of Man" expresses his relationship to humanity. It is because Jesus is "Son of Man", the divine Revealer who has participated fully in human existence, that judgment has been given to him as Son of God.

(d) Belief in the Son of Man.

In the Fourth Gospel belief is usually directed towards the Son, but in 9. 35, Jesus asks the man whose sight he had restored if he believed in the Son of Man. Since this is the only occasion in the Gospel on which "believe" and "Son of Man" are connected,(185) it is going a little too far to say that "It is faith in the Son of Man which is true Johannine faith".(186) Belief in the Son of Man here is concerned with the fact that it is as Son of Man that Jesus has come manifesting the light to the world, so that through him men see and find life, or alternatively, they do not believe in him, do not see, and remain in their guilt (9. 40).

(e) The Son of Man as the union between heaven and earth.

These four statements about the Son of Man are prepared for by the first "Son of Man" saying in the Gospel in 1. 51; You will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. Most scholars see here a reference to Gen. 28. 12,(187) although there are differences in the ways in which the Gen. text is brought to bear on the interpretation of John.(188) This verse in John describes the "greater things" which the disciples of Jesus as a whole(189) will see, and forms a fitting climax to the rather inadequate understanding of Christ which has been expressed by the disciples in the previous verses of this chapter. Men think of Jesus as "Messiah", "Rabbi","Son of God" and "Son of Man", but in ways which are insufficient for them to grasp the revelation of God which is being offered to them. The evangelist points instead to Jesus as the Son of Man, the one in whom heaven and earth meet. The ascent and descent of the angels upon the Son of Man signifies not only that he is in constant communion with heaven while he is upon earth, but signifies much more that in him the full revelation of God is seen by men, that he is the "place"(190) where men see the glory of God manifested. The glory of the Son of Man is not observed as he sits at the right hand of God and as he comes with the clouds of heaven (cf. Mk. 14. 62), but is seen

in his full revelation of God, while he is on earth as the location of the union of heaven and earth. The promise of Jn. 1. 51 is a promise of the vision of this glory, but it is also a promise of participation in the heavenly things which are revealed in the Son of Man.(191)

The title "the Son of Man" is used in the Fourth Gospel within the context of this earthly revelation of the glory of God. The apocalyptic elements which are attached to the title in the Synoptic tradition have been removed,(192) and the emphasis lies totally on the present manifestation of the heavenly glory in the person of the Son of Man who has come down from heaven. The title signifies Jesus as man, but as man in whom heaven and earth meet, and it is because he is the heavenly man in whom the revelation of God appears that he is the judge, and the one to whom faith can be directed. "Son of Man" unlike "Son of God" does not signify the relation between the Revealer and God, but expresses the place where the revelation of God is to be appropriated.

But this picture of the Son of Man also involves the concept of his descent and ascent, and this raises the question of the origin of the combination of this concept and the "Son of Man" title. It is generally agreed that John has not derived the idea of the descending and ascending Son of Man from Gnosticism, even if there was an Anthropos myth in Gnosticism.(193) Some scholars have therefore connected the Johannine Son of Man with the Jewish notion of the "heavenly man", or "ideal man", which was related to the idea of the divine Original Man, a concept which was wide-spread in the religious environment of Judaism.(194) Other scholars reject this association, claiming that the descent of Wisdom provides the closest analogy to the notion of the descent in John.(195) Neither of these concepts is sufficient to explain the Johannine Son of Man without some modification, and although it may safely be said that both were known to John, it is also true that John was not simply carrying over

ideas from either of them to form the basis of his understanding of the Son of Man.(196)

With regard to the descent-ascent motif as related to the Son of Man in the Fourth Gospel, the following statements may be made.

1. The whole Christology of John is characterised by this notion of descent and ascent, and not only that aspect of it which deals with the Son of Man.

2. This feature is caused by the dualistic structure of the Gospel, with its separation of "this world" and the being of God, so that if God is to be made known to the men of this world, the agent of this revelation must come from outside of it, from God, from above.

3. The "Son of Man" sayings in the Fourth Gospel are concerned only with the earthly ministry of the Revealer. The idea of his descent pre-supposes that of his pre-existence, but John is not concerned with this, nor is he concerned with the existence of the Son of Man after his ascension.(197) All of the emphasis lies on the presence of the Son of Man among men, and the descent and ascent motif is governed by the necessary fact that the revelation brought by him must come from above.

It is therefore with the Son of Man as man that the Fourth Gospel is concerned. As man he is composed of flesh and blood, and as man he dies on the cross and is exalted. But this Son of Man who is truly man is the same divine Revealer who has come down as the Son of God, but viewed from a different perspective. For while "the Son of God" is used of Christ in all stages of his existence and with especial reference to his relationship with God,(198) "the Son of Man" is restricted to those aspects of his existence which occur on the human plane, and which reveal his participation in human existence. But the Son of Man title is not merely a symbol for the humanity of Christ, for it is as the divine Revealer that he descends as Son of Man.(199) The title signifies rather that in this

divine Revealer as man, the divine revelation is encountered, the heavenly and the earthly come together, and in the response to this revelation men believe and find life, or they refuse to believe and remain in their guilt under judgment.

(ii) In The Odes of Solomon.

(a) ode 36. 3 - 8.

We believe that these verses are not written ex ore Christi and that there is no reference to the Son of Man, but in view of the statements which have been made concerning the Christology of these verses, we shall here give our reasons for our opinion. Verses 3 and 4 read as follows:

3 (The Spirit) brought me forth before the Lord's face,
And being a man,
I was named the illuminated one, the son of God.
4 While I was glorifying among those who glorified,
And I was great among the great ones.

J.H. Charlesworth[200] notes that "out of context, one would translate the last two lines (of v. 3) as 'And although I was a man, I was named the Light, the Son of God'". The only other usage of ܒܪ ܐܢܫ is in ode 12. 12, where it means "man", but Charlesworth translates v. 3b, "And because I was the Son of Man", and justifies this rendering on the following grounds: 1. The analogy with ode 12. 12 does not apply because this section in ode 36 is composed ex ore Christi. 2. The odist has several times stressed the pre-existence of the Messiah, and this should exclude an adoptionist Christology. 3. The verse should not be rendered as if it were in antithetic parallelism, in view of the docetic overtones elsewhere in the Odes. 4. The odist is a master of words and a Christian, and could therefore not be unaware of the Christological significance of the term in the middle of the first century.

The first of these arguments is the most significant, since the others are all based upon it. We shall therefore attempt to show that these verses are not written ex ore Christi but refer to the believer who has been renewed.

1. The word ܐܡܬ occurs 19 times in the Odes, and only in vv. 3 and 4 of ode 36 does Charlesworth translate it "because". The same word is also used in v. 2 of the ode, where it unquestionably means "while". Although it is not impossible that it should have the meaning "because", the most natural way of understanding it here is "while" (I was a man).(201)

2. The term "son of God" does not imply that he is the only son whom God has, but expresses his relationship to God as that of being "God's son", and makes no assertion about any other sons God has.(202) The term in this ode cannot imply some special status which is unique to the speaker since according to v. 6, the speaker "became one of those who are near him".

3. In connection with the significance of the word ܢܝܗܪ , which we have translated "the illuminated one", it needs to be noted that whereas ܢܘܗܪܐ occurs 20 times, signifying the light which comes from the Word and illuminates the believer, the word ܢܝܗܪ occurs four times only. In form it is the passive part. of ܢܗܪ (to be light, to shine), and as an adjective has the meaning "light, shining, enlightened, wise",, and as a substantive, "light, luminary", and may be used of the sun, moon or torches. In ode 16 it is used of the brightness which comes from the sun, and in ode 34 it is used of the "illuminated "thought which characterises the man who is single minded and is at peace. On the basis of this observation, we suggest that the word in ode 36 signifies that the speaker is one who has been illuminated, not one who illuminates others.(203)

4. The prepositions ܒ or ܠ , following an adjective do form a superlative, but this is unlikely to be the case in ode 36. For if the speaker is "the most glorious among the glorious ones, and the greatest among the great ones", it is then anti-climactic to have him say, "And I became one of those who are near him".

5. The part. ܡܫܒܚܢ is in form either active or passive, but there are several reasons for suggesting that in this case it ought to be regarded as active. a) The same expression ܡܫܒܚܢ ܠܗ has already been used in v. 2 of the ode, and it would be a little strange for the writer to give to it a completely different meaning two verses later. b) In the case of the second part. in this line, MS H reads instead the Nomen. Agentis ܡܫܒܚܢܝ , which clearly means "the glorifiers", and this probably indicates that this text understood the first part. as active. c) Because there is an inherent ambiguity in the Pael part., had the passive been intended, all ambiguity could have been avoided by the use of the Peal part.(204) d) In addition to v. 2 of this ode, the same expression is found in ode 21. 7, where the speaker is praising God and where he is also "near him", an idea which also occurs in v. 6 of ode 36. That the speaker becomes one of those who are near God, does not represent a dubious Christology in which Christ is one of the divine neighbours,(205) but signifies that the speaker is one who has been brought into the divine presence and praises God there.

6. Harris-Mingana(206) see a particular significance attached to "the great ones" of v. 4. They state, "Special attention should be paid to this term ܪܒܪܒܐ (in vulgar Syriac ܪܒܒܐ), for it answers to the Targumic רברבין which is the translation of Elohim when that word is taken in the plural and does not mean God. For instance, in Gen. 3. 5, the serpent assures the woman that, if they eat of the forbidden fruit, they will be like the great ones who know good and evil". They point out that since the author of the Odes states elsewhere that God does not know evil, he could not interpret Gen. 3. 5 of God, and he therefore makes use of this Syriac word to express this plural significance of Elohim. This point is important, because "the expression in the Odes shows that the person who is speaking is not an ordinary human being". There are several objections to this. a) Since we are dealing with a Syriac word, the reference to the Targum of Gen. 3. 5 is of significance only as an

argument against Harris-Mingana, for the Old Testament Pesh. does not use ܪܒܝܐ (207) there. b) The use of this word in the O.T. and N.T. Pesh.(208) does not support the conclusion that no ordinary human being is speaking in ode 36. c) The adjective ܪܒ which is used at the beginning of v. 4b has no plural form. When the plural of "great" is required, this is derived from ܪܒܪܒܐ.(209) The word in the ode is thus the plural of ܪܒ which has been used of the speaker, and it is this latter word which is the primary one, since the "great ones"(210) are those who like the speaker have become great. According to v. 5 of this ode the speaker has been made according to the greatness of the Most High, and renewed according to his newness. Since the odist several times makes reference to the greatness(211) of the Lord who saves him, the most probable meaning of "great" in v.4 is that through the greatness of the Lord the speaker has come to share in part in this greatness(212) through the renewal which he has experienced.(213)

In view of these factors, it is certain that there is no Christological significance attached to ܪܒܝܬܐ in this ode, and that vv. 3 - 8 are not spoken <u>ex ore Christi</u>.

(b) ode 41. 12

In this ode we find the terminology "the Man" (ܐܢܫܐ), but there is some ambiguity connected with the statements about this Man.

12 The Man who was humbled (ܡܬܬܟܢܝ)

But was exalted (ܡܬܪܡܡ) through his own righteousness.

The verb in line a, ܡܬܬܟܢܝ , could be either reflexive or passive. If it is reflexive, as J.H. Charlesworth maintains, the line could well refer to the descent of the Man, i.e., a heavenly Man who comes from above, and we could think with Charlesworth in terms of the incarnation.(214) When he says, however, that "the contiguous verses suggest that this line refers to the incarnation", he is over-stating the case. For vv. 11 - 14

deal with the Messiah in all stages of his activity, and it seems more probable that v. 12 is concerned with the death and resurrection of the Messiah. For v. 11 speaks of the Word who is always with the speaker, and since this Word is the Saviour, it is reasonable to assume that this is the Word who has come to earth and after his work of revelation now is in constant union with the believers.(215) In v. 13 we read of the appearance of the Son of the Most High, which refers to the coming in human form of the Word.(216) Verse 14 speaks of the dawning of the light, and this refers to the revelation which was present in the Son, but the verse also goes on to talk of the Word which was before time in God. It therefore appears that the odist is giving in a sense a chronological account of the existence of the Messiah, in inverse order, which he then gathers together with the statement, "The Messiah is in truth one".(217) This Messiah is the Word who was before time in God, who appeared on the human scene, and who is now ever present with the believers. If this is so, v. 12 describes the transition between the earthly appearance of the Word and his present existence in which he remains with those who have been illuminated by him. That is to say, the humiliation and exaltation of the Man refer not to the incarnation and ascension of Christ, but to his death and resurrection.

J.H. Charlesworth has drawn attention to the parallel between ode 41. 12 and ode 8. 5, but he should also have noted v. 3 of ode 8.

3 Rise up and stand erect
You who were sometime brought low ( ).

5 You who were despised, from henceforth be lifted up
( )
For your righteousness has been lifted up ( ).

"Righteousness" here signifies the victory which Christ has gained, so that for the believer the struggle is already over.(218) While this could be interpreted in terms of the victory of Christ over the powers of this

world through his revelation of the mystery of God, the place where this victory is really gained in Sheol, and this is expressed in ode 8 by the reference to Christ as "him who lives"(again), and "him who was saved".[219] The believer is brought low in that he is in bondage to the powers of darkness and death, and his salvation from this condition is patterned on the victory of Christ in Sheol.

Verse 12 of ode 41 therefore refers to Christ's descent into Sheol and his resurrection from there, and not his descent to earth. It does not therefore make reference to a heavenly Man who descends, but states that it is as man that Christ goes to Sheol and rises again. If, because of the lack of other material for comparison[220] in the Odes, the "Man" does refer to a heavenly Man who descends and ascends, and the "being humbled" refers to his descent to earth and not to Sheol, we are told nothing about this Man except that through his victory he is raised. In either case, the possibility of contact with the Johannine Son of Man is very slight.[221]

(c) ode 19. 10

The last two verses of ode 19 conclude the odist's account of the Birth through the Virgin, and in v. 10 we find that the Virgin has given birth ܝܠܕܬ. The language of these verses is rather obscure, and we set them out in full.

10 She brought forth like a man with will ( ),
And she bore according to the manifestation ( ),
And acquired with great power ( ).
11 And she loved with redemption ( ),
And guarded with kindness ( ),
And declared ( ) with grandeur ( ).

The similarity to the structure of 1 Tim. 3, 16 has been noted by scholars,[222] but the significance of the preposition ἐν in that passage is readily

understood. This is not the case with the ode, and the meaning of these lines is not immediately apparent. However, we have here six statements concerning the birth of the Son, and since the same verb is repeated in lines a and b of v. 10, it is probable that line a of that verse states the proposition, and the following lines explain the significance of the event.(223) The nouns in v. 10b and c are hap. leg. in the Odes, and their meaning is not clear, although there may be a direct connection between ܪܚܡܘܬܐ in v. 10b and ܚܢ in v. 11c, since both of these are derived from the same root.(224)

The nouns in v. 11 must refer to the activity of God, for all three of them are used regularly of God in the Odes. This is particularly the case with "redemption",(225) and it is difficult to see what this could mean if it is applied to the Virgin. The noun "kindness" (ܪܚܡܐ) likewise is elsewhere an attribute of God, although in this case the line is applicable to the activity of a mother. In this verse however, it picks up the thought of v. 1, in which the revelation of God is offered to the speaker in the sweetness of the Lord's kindness (ܪܚܡܐ). We therefore suggest that v. 11 looks to the Virgin's care of the child, with a view to the manifestation of God's redemption,(226) kindness(227) and greatness(228) which shall take place in him. In other words, the verse stresses the intention of God to reveal himself through this one who is born of the Virgin, a process which finds its fulfilment, for the odist, in his own reception of God's revelation, as recorded by him in vv. 1ff.

This being the case, the nouns in v. 10 b and c are to be interpreted on the same principle, although the situation is less clear on account of the words used, to which there is no parallel in the Odes. The situation is however somewhat different, since in v. 10 the nouns appear to refer to the means whereby the Virgin gave birth. For although in v. 10b we could translate "And she bore (him) for the manifestation", which then finds its fulfilment in v. 11c, "And she manifested him for

the greatness (of God), is this possible in the case of v. 10c, where" she acquired him"ܩܢܝܢܗ ? The noun is derived from ܩܢܐ, and consequently means a laying hold of something, a possession, or authority.(229) Does it therefore refer to the Virgin's taking hold of what was offered to her by the Spirit,(230) or does it refer to the fact that Christ has come for the purpose of taking hold of and possessing his people?(231) The question is made more acute because of the verb used in v. 6 to describe the Virgin's act of taking the mixture from the Spirit.(232)

It seems to us that these lines can and do refer to the intention and activity of God, and that in each case, the preposition is to be translated "on account of", and that vv. 10 b and c and 11 have the following meaning. "And she bore him on account of the manifestation(233) of God which occurred through him, and she acquired him on account of the possession he took. And she loved him on account of the redemption which was through him, and guarded him on account of the kindness of God which was seen in him, and showed him forth on account of the greatness of God which was revealed in him"..

In line a of v. 10 the same principle applies. The Virgin brought forth the Son on account of the will of God, who did not wish that his milk should be ineffectually released (v. 3). The will concerned is not the Virgin's will,(234) but God's, for he desires that men should have life, and this life is to be found through the revelation of himself through his Messiah (9. 3f.). But the difficulty in v. 10a is that the text does not say, "She brought forth the Son" but, "She brought forth like a man (ܐܝܟ ܓܒܪ). Harris-Mingana(235) state that "the word ܐܝܟ is almost certainly the object of all the Syriac verbs in verses 10 - 11", and that "For the words 'as a man', we must probably go to Dan. 7. 13, where 'one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven'; for this passage was very early interpreted of the

Incarnation".[236] The difficulty with this is that the ode deals from start to finish with the revelation through the Son, and we suggest that the object of the verbs in vv. 10f. is not ܒܪܐ, but "the Son", and the phrase ܒܪܐ ܐܝܟ applies to him. That is to say, the verse means, "She brought forth the Son like a man[237] on account of God's will". The preceding verses have shown that this was no ordinary birth, and that the one who was born was no ordinary mortal, and the phrase "like a man" expresses this fact. It has nothing to do with a Son of Man Christology, but reproduces the language of ode 7. 3ff. in which the coming to earth of God in his revelation is expressed in terms of similarity to human existence but not of identity with it.

D. THE MESSIAH

(i) In John

In the Fourth Gospel the term ὁ Χριστός is clearly used as a title rather than as a proper name,[238] and there is a great deal of stress placed upon the fact that Jesus is the Messiah. Of all the New Testament writings, the Gospel of John is the only one in which the transliterated form of the Aramaic, ὁ Μεσσίας is preserved.[239] The Gospel begins with the question of the identity of the Messiah, and ends with the assertion that "these things have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God" (20. 31). In 1. 19ff. we find that John the Baptist denies that he is the Messiah, but he has been sent to prepare the way for the Messiah. But in v. 29, when John recognises Jesus as the one who has precedence over him, he refers to him not as the Messiah, but as "the lamb of God[240] who takes away the sin of the world", and follows this up in v. 34 with the testimony that "this is the Son of God".[241]

Although the question of the messiahship of Jesus occupies a

prominent place in the Fourth Gospel, it is clear that for the evangelist, the title "Christ" is inadequate as a designation of the Redeemer who had come. This can be seen not only in the other titles given to Jesus in 1. 29, 34 mentioned above, but especially in the statements dealing with belief in Christ. In Jn. 20. 31, belief in Jesus as "the Christ, the Son of God" is the aim of the writing of the Gospel. Similarly in 11. 27 Martha confesses belief in Jesus as "the Christ the Son of God, he who is coming into the world".(242) In 6. 69 the Petrine confession "You are the Christ",(243) becomes "You are the holy one of God".(244) In 1. 41 Andrew declares to Peter "We have found the Christ", but in the conversation with Nathaniel which follows, Nathaniel confesses "You are the Son of God, the king of Israel" (v. 49). In all of these instances, some other title is required alongside that of "Christ" in order that an adequate confession in Jesus be made.

The reason forthis is that although John wishes to show that Jesus is the fulfilment of the hopes concerning the coming of the Messiah, he also must show that the Jewish expectations about the Messiah are inadequate. For this reason he deals with certain current conceptions about the Messiah and indicates the differences between them and the proper understanding of Christ. The confession of Nathaniel that Jesus is the King of Israel(245) is important here. This is obviously a messianic title,(246) and is found only at 1. 49 and 12. 13. For the Jews it meant a political figure, as the attempt to take Jesus by force and make him king in 6. 15 shows. Apart from the Passion Narrative, the idea of the kingship of Jesus is not stressed, but there the terms "king" or "king of the Jews" occur far more frequently than in the Synoptic accounts.(247) John accepts the idea of kingship as applied to the Messiah, but refuses to accept the nationalistic and political ideas associated with it. For Jesus' kingship is not of this world (18. 36), and this kind of

kingship means that his servants do not fight to prevent his death, because his kingship is established in and through his death.

In Jn. 7 the Jews are concerned with the question of the origin of the Messiah. According to the Scriptures, Christ was descended from David and comes from Bethlehem, David's city (7. 42). Jesus came from Galilee, and could therefore not be the prophet (v. 52).(248) The Jews knew where Christ came from, but no one was to know where the Messiah came from (v. 27). This objection may reflect the opinion that the Messiah would remain hidden until he actually entered upon his messianic mission,(249) but this is not the issue with which John is concerned. The Jews think that they know where Jesus comes from because they know that he comes from Galilee and that his father was Joseph. But in fact they are in complete ignorance concerning Jesus' origins, for he has been sent from God (v. 29), and their rejection of him means that they neither know him nor God who sent him (v. 28).

A further objection to the messiahship of Jesus by the Jews is found in ch. 12 with the reference to the death of Christ. According to the Law, the Christ was to remain for ever, but Jesus had just said that the Son of Man was to be lifted up. The Jews rightly understood that Jesus was referring to his death, and this was for them a denial of the idea that the Messiah would being in the messianic age which was to last for ever.(250) This mis-understanding of the crowd rests upon their failure to appreciate the double significance of the verb ὑψωθῆναι, which for them signified only the death of the Messiah, but which for John signifies his glorification as well. Of importance here also is the use of the verb μένειν. This verb occurs frequently(251) in the Johannine literature, and is used of the indwelling of God in Christ (14. 10), of Christ in the love of God (15. 10), the mutual indwelling of

Christ and the believer (15. 4), or the dwelling of Christ in the believer (15. 5-7). It thus signifies the abiding and permanent relationship between Christ and God, and between the believer and Christ, and is eschatological in intention.(252) For the Jews, the death of the Messiah meant that he could not remain for ever, but this is not so for John, for whom Jesus is the Son who abides for ever in the Father's house (8. 35), for he is in the Father and the Father is in him (14. 10).(253) For John, the death of Christ is not the humiliation of the Messiah and the removing of his authority, but it is his glorification, the taking again of the glory which he had with the Father before the foundation of the world (17. 5,24).

In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus as the Messiah fulfils and more than fulfils the messianic hopes of men.(254) But the content applied to this title is more negative than positive, for John deals with the current expectations concerning the Messiah(255) and shows that, in the light of the revelation of God in Christ, these are inadequate. This has certain implications for the idea of the "messianic secret" in John. Here we do not find Jesus forbidding men to declare that he is the Messiah. In the first chapter Andrew says, "We have found the Messiah" (1. 41). Jesus tells the Samaritan woman that he is the Messiah expected by her people.(4.26). The confession of belief in Jesus as the Messiah comes not from the disciples, but from Martha (11. 27). But although the messiahship of Jesus is proclaimed throughout the Gospel, the Jews still must say, "If you are the Christ, tell us plainly" (10. 24). But Christ has demonstrated his messiahship through his works, and their failure to recognise the hand of the Father in the works which Jesus performs means that they have not the Father's word in them (5, 38), that they are still of the world, from below (8. 23), and they cannot therefore recognise him as the Messiah. In one sense there is no messianic secret in John, for Jesus does not attempt to hide the fact

of his messianship at all. But in another sense, the fact of the messiahship of Jesus is most hidden in the Fourth Gospel. For it is open only to those who are open to the revelation of God,[256] and the Jews, by their pre-conceived ideas about the Messiah, have rejected Jesus' messiahship and consequently have cut themselves off from the salvation which they hoped for through the Messiah.

(ii) In the Odes of Solomon.

The title "Messiah" is found seven times in the Odes, and in all except one instance it is combined with "the Lord", but this combination of titles yields two different concepts. In three cases we find "the Lord's Messiah" (ܡܫܝܚܗ ܕܡܪܝܐ[257] 9. 3; 29. 6; 41. 3), and in another three, "Lord Messiah" (ܡܪܝܐ ܡܫܝܚ[258] 17. 16; 24. 1;[259] 39. 11). The one exception noted above is found at 41. 15, where the term "the Messiah" occurs absolutely, but since in v. 3 of this ode "the Lord's Messiah" is implied, there is a case for saying that this instance also belongs to the first group.

J.T. Sanders[260] has suggested that "the use of both terms should be ascribed to the writer(s) of the Odes of Solomon, and that such usage reflects the confusion in the Odes regarding the recipient of the designation 'Lord', who can be both God and redeemer (Messiah)". With regard to the particular expression "the (our) Lord Messiah", it can be shown that although in the New Testament the most common combination of "Lord" and "Christ" occurs in the expression "the Lord Jesus Christ", we also find "the (our) Lord Christ" in three places in the epistles (Rom. 16. 18; Col. 3. 24; 1Pet. 3. 15). The difference between this New Testament expression and that of the Odes is that in the former "Christ" is employed as a proper name, whereas this is not likely to be the case in the Odes, where it is used as a title. At the same time however, the

"confusion" which Sanders finds in the Odes regarding the recipient of the title "Lord" is also present in the New Testament. In Lk. 2. 9ff. an angel of the Lord (God) appeared to the shepherds, and the glory of the Lord shone around them. The angel announced to the shepherds the birth of the Saviour, Christ the Lord.(Χριστὸς κύριος).[261]

(a) ode 17. 17.

In this ode the title "Lord Messiah" occurs only in the doxology with which the ode concludes, and is combined with the concept of Christ as the Head of his people, taking up the thought of the preceding verse. Because Christ has freed his people, gathered them to himself and given them salvation, he is addressed as "Lord Messiah", which we may expand as "the Messiah who is Lord". The only other instance of "Lord" in this ode is in v. 2, where it probably, though some ambiguity exists here,[262] means God. Verses 10 - 17 at least of this ode are spoken ex ore Christi,[263] and the title of God is now applied to the Messiah because of his victory over those powers which held men captive.

(b) ode 24. 1

In the opening verse of ode 24 we read,

> The dove fluttered over the head of our Lord Messiah[264]
> Because he was her head.

If this verse refers to the Baptism of Christ, as has been suggested,[265] the ode is also concerned with the idea of Christ's descent into Sheol. For in vv. 5ff. we read of the opening and closing of the abysses[266] and their search for the Lord who was not given to them for food,[267] but in his submersion the abysses themselves were crowned and perished. Again, as in ode 17, it is Christ's victory which associates the title "Lord" with that of "Messiah". But in v. 1 we read not that Christ is the Head of his members, as in ode 17, but that he is the Head of the Spirit, represented by the dove. This implies a degree of subordination of the Spirit to the

Messiah, but the odist's doctrine of the Spirit is not well developed, and Irenaeus can say the same thing of the relationship between Christ and the Spirit.[268]

(c) ode 39. 11

In this ode we read of the crossing of the raging rivers which symbolise the power of the Lord, who himself has bridged the waters by his Word. Two images are combined in this description of the crossing of the waters. In v. 10 it is stated that "his footsteps stand firm upon the waters and were not destroyed, but they are like a beam of wood that is constructed on truth". The "beam of wood" most probably is a reference to the Cross of Christ, and looks back to the "sign" on the waters in v. 7.[269] This is the bridge over which the believer must pass if he is to arrive safely. That is, the way of the believer is also that of the Cross, as he follows the faithful course laid out by the Messiah (v. 13).

The other image is in v. 11 and speaks not of the Lord walking over the water but of the waters being divided, lifted up on one side and the other, and "the footsteps of our Lord Messiah stand firm". Both of these images are connected,[270] and may be derived from a variety of Biblical passages.[271] The essential thought from the point of the Messiahship is that since Christ has opened the way to life, since through his revelation he has enabled men to avoid the destruction which results from the rejection of God, he is the Messiah who is Lord.

(d) ode 29. 6

This verse forms a bridge between the two titles "The Lord's Messiah" and "the Lord Messiah", for here we read,

> For I believed in the Lord's Messiah
> And he appeared to me, he who is the Lord.

At first sight, this verse fits rather strangely into its context, for from v. 2 to v. 8 we find an account of all that the Lord has done for and to the speaker: He made me, he gave to me (v. 2); he exalted me, he lifted me up (v. 3); he caused me to ascend from the depths of Sheol (v. 4). Verse 5 is a little different in that there is both a statement about the speaker's humbling of his enemies, and God's justification of him. Verse 7 then continues with the statement that the Lord has revealed to him his sign and led him by his light. This is followed in v. 8 by the Lord's gift to the speaker of "the rod of his power" by which he subdued his enemies. Why should the speaker mention his belief in the Lord's messiah in the middle of all of these statements which recount what the Lord has done for him?

Before answering this question, we must consider a point of translation. Several scholars[272] have translated line b, "And it appears to me that he is the Lord". This is no doubt a possible translation, but it is somewhat strange that the odist should pass from one statement about his belief in the Lord's Messiah to another in which he supposes him to be the Lord. We therefore suggest that the second line of the verse should read, "And he appeared to me, he who is the Lord".[273]

Verse 6 joins together the first and second sections of the ode. Up to v. 5, the odist has described the fact of his salvation. Verses 7ff. describe how this comes about in his own experience. It is through being shown the Lord's sign,[274] being led by his light, and being armed with his Word. Verse 6b thus states that it was through the appearance[275] of the Lord that this has come about. Verse 6a is then capable of two interpretations. Firstly, it may mean that the speaker has believed in this one who as the Lord's Messiah has appeared to him. Secondly, it may mean that the speaker has believed that God would send

his Messiah, and as a result of this belief the Lord appeared to him in salvation. That is to say, the appearance of the Lord is the fulfilment of God's plan concerning his Messiah. This may give a somewhat strange sense to "believed in the Lord's messiah", but it appears to be supported by the other passages in which this phrase occurs.

(e) ode 9. 3

It seems to us preferable to understand the opening verses of this ode as being ex ore Christi,(276) since v. 3, "The Word of the Lord and his desires, the holy thought which he has thought concerning his Messiah" appear to be the content of "myself", which closes v. 2. It is certainly not a part of the sentence which comprises v. 4. Christ therefore says, "Give yourselves to me, and I will give myself to you; I am the Word of the Lord, the Holy thought he has thought about his Messiah". This means that the Word of the Lord is the coming to expression of the Lord's intention to provide a Messiah for his people. The Word is not the Messiah as such, but is the idea of Messiahship in action.

(f) ode 41. 3, 15

In commenting upon the preceding two odes, we have suggested that the term "the Lord's Messiah" signifies the Lord's intention to provide a Messiah for his people more than the figure of the Messiah who appears as deliverer. Can the same be said of ode 41? Verse 3 seems to imply that this is not so:

We live(277) in the Lord by his grace,
And life we receive through his Messiah.

If men receive life through the Lord's Messiah, then it is through the ministry of the Messiah and not simply through God's intention about him that life is gained, and the parallelism between the two lines of this verse show that the work of the Messiah is the expression of God's grace. Verse 4 then goes on to speak of the illumination which has been received

through the Messiah. It therefore seems that in this verse, "the Lord's Messiah" is the one who has come, rather than the one who is to come.

In v. 15 however, the picture changes again. Here we read,

> The Messiah in truth is one,
> And he was known before the foundations of the world,
> That he might give life to persons for ever by the truth of his name.

The statement that the Messiah is one is not intended to refute arguments that there are more Christs,(278) but it emphasises the oneness of the Messiah who is the Word who is always with man and does not reject him (v. 11), the Man who was humbled and exalted (v. 12), the Son of the Most High who appeared in the perfection of his Father (v. 13) and the Word who was before time in the Father (v. 14). That is to say, the term "the Lord's messiah" gathers together the various aspects of God's intention to save mankind, as this intention is expressed in the one who was to come, the one who has come, and the one who is now ever present with those who believe in him. This is the force of the verb "was known" in line b of v. 15, which takes up the thought of Christ's being remembered by the Father in v. 9.(279) It has been God's intention to provide a Messiah for his people. The various titles in vv. 11 - 14 express the ways in which this intention has been achieved.

The odist therefore uses the two terms "the Lord's messiah" and "the Lord Messiah" with two different emphases in mind. The former is connected with the intention of God, the concept of the Messiah which he had within him, by which he would save men through the revelation which he would bring in his earthly appearance. The latter expression is used within the context of the victory of the Messiah over the powers of

Sheol and death, that is, within the context of his actual messianic work in which he shows himself to be the Lord.

E. THE LORD.

(i) In John.

For the most part the term "the Lord" is restricted in the Fourth Gospel to the risen Christ,(280) and is therefore confined mostly to chaps. 20 and 21. In three verses the word is used in Old Testament quotations and refers to God,(281) and in three others it designates the earthly Jesus, although these are generally regarded as coming from a hand other than that of the evangelist.(282) There are also several passages in which the vocative form is used, but in these the term is one of politeness and respect and need mean no more than "Sir".(283)

Especially important is the confession of Thomas in Jn. 20. 28, "My Lord and my God".(284) It is the sight of the risen Lord and the recognition that this was the one who had been crucified which brings forth this confession of faith, although he had been unable to accept the testimony of the other disciples that Jesus had risen. The Gospel culminates(285) in a confession which takes up the opening words stating that the Word was θεός . Thomas has seen the risen Christ and can make his confession, but in the future Christ will reveal himself through those who are his followers, who will do even greater things because he goes to the Father (14. 12).(286) The Lordship of Christ is established through his resurrection and his return to the one who sent him, and this means that his Lordship is manifested by, and demonstrated through, those who proclaim him. But although the confession "Jesus is Lord" stands behind the declaration of Thomas, it does not appear to be this confession, but "Jesus is the Son of God", which is the focus of the Johannine faith.(287)

(ii) In the Odes of Solomon.

A glance at the concordance to the Syriac text of the Odes in Vol. II of Harris-Mingana shows that the title "Lord" (ܡܪܝܐ) occurs far more frequently than any other in the collection. It occurs about 100 times, is found in all except five[288] of the odes (22; 28; 32; 33; 34), and in the 24vv. of ode 11 is met with eight times. We have shown above that the term "Lord Messiah"[289] occurs three times, where the emphasis lies on the victory of Christ over Sheol, but the difficulty with the title elsewhere is that it is not always possible to determine who is designated by "Lord". Although in certain cases it is relatively easy to decide whether God or Christ is intended, in the remainder there is no attempt at clarification.[290]

This ambiguity does not however lead to a negative result with respect to the significance of the title in the Odes, but to the positive assertion that no clear differentiation is to be made between the Lord God and the one who has come as the revelation of God.[291] Thus in ode 7. 3ff. it is the Lord who has shown himself and who has diminished himself for the sake of man, in order that man might receive him, put him on and understand him. But as the following vv. show, this revelation of God is to be seen in the Word who has been given in order that man might know his Creator (vv. 7ff). The Word is not here called "Lord" but the ministry of the Word is the Lord's manifestation of himself. Similarly in ode 15, where "the Lord" is the Sun[292] which illuminates the odist, the title most probably signifies God rather than Christ, but the ode is clearly concerned with the revelation which comes through the Messiah.

In the majority of cases where this title is used in the Odes, it is possible to make it refer to God,[293] and it is probable that in the first instance this is its primary reference. But the fact that in

Christ God reveals himself means that the Messiah also bears the same title, as the use of the term "Lord Messiah" shows.[294] It is this fact which provides the ambiguity about the recipient of the title in several odes, and which gives the significance of the title with respect to Christ. It is because the Messiah is the revelation of the Lord himself that he bears the title "Lord".[295] The usage therefore is quite different from that of the Fourth Gospel, where the title signifies the risen Christ, and not Christ in his activity of revelation.

F. THE RIGHTEOUS ONE

(i) In the Johannine Literature

In I Jn. 2.1, Jesus Christ is the Righteous One[296] who is the Paraclete with the Father. Here "Paraclete" refers to Christ as the intercessor[297] for those who have sinned, and it is because Christ is the Righteous One that he can perform this intercessory function. The opponents of the Johannine community may make the claim "We have no sin" or "We have not sinned" (1.8,10), but the author of this epistle knows that this is merely self-deception. Sin is a reality[298] in the community and in the world, and in order to remove this sin, man needs the advocacy of Christ.

The fact that Christ is the Righteous One means that he is sinless, as a consideration of the other instances of δίκαιος in this epistle shows. The contrast between "doing sin" and "doing righteousness" is seen most clearly in I Jn. 3.7f.: "He who does right (ὁ ποιῶν τὴν δικαιοσύνην) is righteous (δίκαιος) as he is righteous (δίκαιος). He who commits sin (ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν) is of the devil". Christ has come in order to remove sin and he is without sin (3.5), and it is this sinlessness[299] which enables him to be the one who is the "expiation" for sin (2.2; 4.10).

With the mention of "expiation" (ἱλασμός) in v. 2, the thought moves away from that of advocacy[300] or at least incorporates a further idea into the qualifications of the advocate. For with this term the author is probably thinking back to his statement that "the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin" (1.7). This does not necessarily mean that Jesus is here regarded as a sin offering to God in his sacrificial death, for the whole of the earthly ministry of Christ could be seen as a means of expiating the sin of man, but it does suggest that there is an especially close connection between the death of Christ and the forgiveness of sins.[301]

According to R. Bultmann, I Jn. 2.2. along with 1.7b, is an interpolation of the ecclesiastical redactor, since ἱλασμός means "expiatory sacrifice" and this concept does not agree with v.1. Bultmann also notes that the idea of expiation is foreign to the Gospel[302] also. It is true that this concept is muted, if not hidden in the Gospel, and yet it is possible that members of the Johannine circle could derive it from the statement that Jesus is the Lamb of God,[303] or from the episode of the foot-washing[304] in ch. 13. For the author of the First Epistle of John then, Jesus is the Righteous One who because of his sinlessness makes intercession to God on behalf of sinners, and he can do this because his death means cleansing from sin for man.

(ii) The Odes of Solomon.

In the Odes of Solomon Christ is referred to as "the Righteous One" in ode 42, in a context which places this title in conjunction with the Cross.

1. I extended my hands and approached my Lord,
   For the expansion of my hands is his sign.
2. And my expansion is the upright cross
   That was lifted up[305] on the way of the Righteous One.

These two verses are very similar to ode 27, and G. Diettrich believes that they do not originally belong to this ode. In their original form they were "ein therapeutisches Glaubensbekenntnis", but after the work of the Christian redactor they have become a Christian confession.(306) As we have shown in the Introduction, the hypothesis that these Odes were originally Jewish hymns cannot be sustained, and we accept these verses as an integral part of the ode. The following verses, spoken ex ore Christi, speak of Christ's resurrection and his removal from Sheol of those who believe in him.(307)

Two lines of interpretation are possible with regard to the Significance of the title "the Righteous One".

1. It may be derived from the idea of the just man of Jewish thought. With v. 3 the speaker changes and Christ draws out the implications of his Passion.

3. And I became useless to those who knew me (not),
Because I am hidden from those who possessed me not.

The text of MS N omits the "not" from line a, and the copyist of MS H has passed from the ܠܐ of line a to the same word in line b, thus omitting this very crucial section.(308) However, it seems necessary to include the "not" since without it the verse makes little sense. Harris-Mingana translate the verse as it stands suggesting that the key to the difficulty lies in the fact that the odist is working on Ps. 88 (87 LXX), and for v. 3 of the ode he takes his thought from v. 6 of the Psalm, with a sidelight from v. 9: ἐγενήθην ὡς ἄνθρωπος ἀβοήθητος · ἐμάκρυνας γνωστούς μου ἀπ' ἐμοῦ (309) But even if we accept that the odist does have Ps. 88 in mind here, it is quite clear that he is not quoting the Ps. and any correspondence would be due to a re-interpretation of the ideas involved. However, this text would still imply that knowledge of Christ is somehow deficient, and this is in plain

contradiction to vv. 8f., where knowledge is equated with belief, and where knowledge of Christ implies Christ's love of the believers. Therefore we must also reject the translation of W. Bauer which implies this inferior kind of knowledge: "Und ich war ohne Nutzen für die, die mich (nur) kennen".(310)

It is possible that a starting-point for the background of this verse is Isa. 3.10(LXX) "Let us bind the just man because he is displeasing to us" - Δήσωμεν τὸν δίκαιον, ὅτι δύσχρηστος ἡμῖν ἐστιν , a verse which was applied to the Passion of Christ in the early church.(311) In this connection it is interesting to note the use of this verse in the Acts of the Martyr Apollonius,(312) where δύσχρηστος is explicitly equated with ἄχρηστος; οἱ γὰρ δίκαιοι τοῖς ἀδίκοις ἄχρηστοι. Here also the "unjust" (ἄδικοι) looks back to the "ignorant" (ἀπαιδεύτοι) of the previous sentence. Here then Christ is the Righteous One who is regarded as useless by those who are ignorant.

A similar combination of ideas is found in Wisdom 2. Verse 11 speaks of the common idea that might is right and weakness is useless (ἄχρηστον). Verse 12 is almost the same as Isa. 3.10 (LXX), the only difference being that ἐνεδρεύσωμεν is used instead of δησωμεν. Verse 13 sets forth the claim of the just man, ἐπαγγέλεται γνῶσιν ἔχειν θεοῦ καὶ παῖδα κυρίου ἑαυτὸν ὀνόμασεν. The thought differs from that of the ode, but brings together the elements which are significant; the righteous man, his uselessness, and knowledge. There is strictly speaking no equivalent for the "taking hold" of the ode but the "binding" of Isa. 3.10 could be represented by ܩܛܪ especially since this word is used of the arrest of Christ in the Gospels.(313)

At the same time there are further thoughts in the following

section of Wisd. which seem to be reflected in the later verses of the ode. The writer of Wisd. has been speaking of those who have no hope for life beyond death: Our life is short and full of trouble, and when a man comes to the end there is no remedy; no man was ever known to return from the grave" (2.1). In contrast to this the writer points to the hope which the just man has. He has a sure hope of immortality (3.4), and even if he should die an untimely death he will be at rest (4.7), and he will shame the godless who are still alive (4.16). Because of this hope the writer can say, "But the souls of the just are in God's hand and torment shall not touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to be dead. Their departure was reckoned as defeat, and their going from us as disaster" (3.1ff.). If this is the background for the thought of this ode, it would enable us to see the apparently docetic[314] expressions connected with the death of Christ in a new light. Thus when the odist says in the name of the dead in Sheol "we see that our death does not touch you" (v.17), or in the name of Christ "I did not perish although they thought it of me" (v. 10), it is quite possible that he formulates his statements in this way on the basis of the figure of the just man. Just as the just man only seems to die because he finds immortality, although it is a real death which is spoken of, so also Christ the Righteous One seems to die, although in his death he overcomes death and provides immortality for those who believe in him and who know him.[315]

It therefore seems not unlikely that the odist has in mind the righteous man of late Judaism when he refers to Christ as the Righteous One but he has put an entirely new complexion on the idea. For Christ as the Righteous One is not merely a source of irritation to those who have not put their trust in God, but he becomes of no use at all to those who have not known him[316] or taken hold of him, when he is the one who alone is able to bring knowledge of God and immortality. It is not

Christ who dies, but those who were his persecutors (v. 5), for in their rejection of him they have rejected life.

At the same time however, ܙܕܝܩ is not the most common word to express δίκαιος, even though the two words are closely related in meaning.(317) W. Frankenberg(318) suggests that v. 3 ought to read the same as ode 27.3, ܙܕܝܩ ܡܠܬܝ ,ܫܦܝܪ with the other words being regarded as a gloss which explain what ܫܦܝܪ meant. This explanation was introduced into the text and the ܙܕܝܩ was separated from ܡܠܬܝ, with the result that ܙܕܝ is altered to the emphatic state under the influence of the pronominal suffix in ܙܕܝܩܐ. Harris-Mingana(319) further suggests that ܙܕܝܩ could be taken as a contracted feminine adjective referring to ܙܕܝܩܐ, which would yield the following translation for the verse: "And my expansion is the extended wood which has been hung up on His straight way". But this is not the most likely way of understanding the verse, and although Frankenberg's suggestion is plausible, there is no reason to suppose that ode 42.1-2 was intended merely to duplicate ode 27. The words which Frankenberg understands as a gloss belong to this ode, because they provide a bridge between the statement of ode 27 and the following verses which speak of Christ's resurrection.

But the question still remains concerning the significance of the term used ܙܕܝܩ. Not only in odes 27 and 42, but also in odes 34 and 35 the root ܙܕܝ is found in conjunction with the root ܫܦܝ. The combination in ode 35 is important for the understanding of the Righteous One in ode 42:

> 7 And I spread out (ܐܫܦܝ) my hands in the ascent (ܒܡܣܩܐ) of myself,
> And I directed myself (ܐܙܕܝܩ) towards the Most High.

The earlier verses of this ode have spoken of the peace and security of

the speaker, and of his new birth, in contrast to the fear and judgment which was the lot of the non-believer. The speaker now belongs to the Lord's legion, he is a new creation of God, and as elsewhere in the Odes, this newness is expressed in terms of the ascent to God, to be with him. The verb ܐܬܝܗܒ in v. 7b is to be understood as an alternative way of expressing this ascent.(320) This then also means that we ought to understand the title "the Righteous One" or "the Upright One" in terms of Christ's own rising up in victory, and consequently in terms of his own righteousness, which in the Odes signifies this victory.(321)

In the Odes, as in I Jn., the title "the Righteous One" is used in conjunction with the fact of Christ's death, but this is also true of the other New Testament occurrences of the title also. Both perhaps also are connected with the "just man" of Jewish theology,(322) but if so, their usage of this is quite different. In I Jn. the material derived from this source is concerned with the intercessory function of the Just Man, while in the Odes it deals with the immortality which belongs to him. There is no suggestion at all in the Odes that the blood of Christ effects any forgiveness of sins, while this is of importance to the writer of I John. For the writer of the Odes the fact that Christ is "the Righteous One" does not indicate his sinlessness as it does in I Jn., but his "uprightness" in the sense that he "rises up". These facts make it impossible to believe that the odist and the writer of I Jn. are at all related in their understanding of "the Righteous One".

SUMMARY OF COMPARISON BETWEEN CHRISTOLOGICAL TITLES COMMON TO JOHN AND THE ODES

All the titles under discussion in this section, with the exception of "the Word", occur in other New Testament books as well as in Johannine literature, and in the case of "the Son", "the Son of Man", "Christ" and "Lord", we have commonly used Christian titles. Since "the Word" is the exceptional title in this group, we have offered a comparison between the use of this term in the Odes and in John earlier, and will here present only the results of that comparative study.

A. THE WORD.

We have shown above that in both John and the Odes of Solomon "the Word" is used to express the revelation of God which comes to men, but the differences between the two writings with respect to this term suggest that the Word in the Odes is less well developed than is the case in John. In the Odes, the Word is still the "word of the Lord", and probably has no existence prior to creation other than his existence "in God". The odist understands the diminution of the Lord as the coming of the Word, probably implying a real incarnation, but he is much more concerned with the Word who dwells within the believers and who is therefore the Saviour. The few verses of the Odes which sound like passages in John are used so differently that dependence upon John seems very unlikely.

B. THE SON

The fundamental significance of "the Son" in the Odes is quite different from that found in the Johannine literature. We do not read in the Odes of the sending of the Son, nor of his doing the works of the Father. More significantly, the essential oneness of the Father and the Son as it is expressed in the Fourth Gospel, and the love which is

at the heart of this unity, is completely missing in the Odes. Also, the idea of belief in the Son does not occur in the Odes. As we have shown above, the title is used in the Odes more in the sense of the fact of the historical manifestation of the Redeemer, than in the sense that in the Son God himself encounters man.

There are however some points of contact. Ode 23 expresses the fact that the Son of Truth has come as the manifestation of the Father's will, and this will, according to ode 9.4 is eternal life for man. In John, Christ has come to do his Father's will (5. 30), and God's will is life for men (6. 39f.). But there is also a difference here. In the Odes a contrast is made between the lack of any revelation of the will of God prior to the arrival of the Son of Truth and its full revelation in him. In John, although there is a contrast between the law which was given through Moses and the grace and truth which was in Christ (1. 17), Moses and the Scriptures do at least give testimony to Christ (5. 45f.). On the one hand, John's contrast appears to be between a very partial and imperfect manifestation of the will of God through the Law, and the perfect expression of it in Christ. On the other hand, the contrast in the Odes seems to be between no apprehension at all of the will of God prior to Christ, and the full expression of it in him.

Several points of comparison exist between Jn. 17 and ode 31 and these do raise the question of dependence.

(i) John 17 is the great high-priestly prayer of Jesus as he speaks to God concerning those who have believed in him. The ode is not expressed in the form of a prayer, but this is implicit in vv. 3f.

(ii) In John this prayer is spoken in the context of Jesus' immiment departure from the world (v. 13), when he has completed the work which

the Father had given him to do (v. 4). In this ode we find some of the clearest references to the Passion in the whole collection.

(iii) In John, Jesus prays for those whom God had given to him and who had come to belief in him, that God would keep them (vv. 6 - 11). In the ode Christ offers back to the Father those who had become sons through him, for they had been given to him by the Father (vv. 4f.).

(iv) The theme of the affliction of the believer is present in both (Jn. 17. 14f.; ode 31. 6).

(v) It is only in Jn. 17 and ode 31 that the term "Holy Father" occurs in each of these writings (Jn. 17. 11; ode 31.5).

(vi) "The name" is an important element in the prayer of Jn. 17, (vv. 6,11,12,26), and in ode 31. 3, Christ recites a new song of praise to the Father's name.(323)

These factors taken together heighten the possibility of dependence. According to R. Schnackenburg(324) and E. Massaux,(325) the direction of dependence is from John to the Odes. If this is so, it is also clear that several important Johannine concepts are missing from the ode. There is nothing here about the pre-existence of the Son and the glory which he had with God before the world was made (vv, 5.24), or about the glory which he has given to his believers (v. 22). Secondly, there is no reference to the "word" (vv. 6,17,20), or to the "truth" (17,19), concepts which are of importance elsèwhere in the Odes. Thirdly, the theme of the unity of the believers and of the Son and the Father, or the union of the believers with God and Christ (vv. 11,21,22,12), has no place in the ode.(326) Fourthly, the concept of the love of the Father for the Son,(327) or of the Father's love for the believers (vv. 23, 26), is missing in ode 31.(328) At the same time, it may also be noted that there are two features of the ode which find no parallel in Jn. 17. The first is the concept of the sonship of the believers (v. 4), and the second is the idea that Christ was justified(329) because the Father had

given to him those who became sons (v. 5). Both of these ideas are ones which find parallels elsewhere in the Odes, and thus belong to the odist's field of language.(330) Of particular significance here is the inclusion of the concept of the sonship of believers in ode 31. For John 17 speaks about God's own or Christ's own (vv. 6,9,10), and this is also a more common way of expressing the relationship between God or Christ and the believers in the Odes than is the concept of sonship.(331)

Because of these differences between the ode and John, which would not be caused by theological considerations on the part of the odist, it is unlikely that the latter is dependent on the text of John in writing the ode, and we have no good reason to believe that John was dependent on the ode.(332) Is it then possible that the odist was dependent upon Johannine traditions rather than the Gospel itself? This is the verdict of J.H. Charlesworth and R.A. Culpepper, but it is impossible to agree with their conclusion that the parallel between Jn. 17 and ode 31 indicates "that both compositions probably come from the same community or school".(333) The theological differences between the two writings with respect to their understanding of the Word and the Son alone, are sufficient to show that the two writings do not stem from the same community. If on the other hand by "school" we may understand the whole of the development of the Johannine tradition, it may be possible to speak of the odist in terms of standing within this total structure.

The Johannine Epistles show us certain tensions which existed within the Johannine tradition, which resulted in acts of mutual exclusion. It seems perfectly possible to us that the Odes originated in a group which was an heir to the Johannine tradition, but which did not stand in the main-stream of it as represented by the Fourth Gospel and the First Epistle.(334) Such a conclusion will need to be demonstrated by the remainder of this comparative study, but the only real alternative to

it is to suppose that the correspondences between ode 31 and Jn. 17 are purely fortuitous. The parallels are too close and numerous however, to allow this as a working hypothesis.

C. THE SON OF MAN

None of the major emphases in the teaching on the Son of Man in John is present in the Odes, even if it is to be accepted that the latter have the Son of Man in mind, which is doubtful. If ode 41. 12, with its mention of "the Man", is a reference to the Son of Man, the only thought which bears any relationship to the Fourth Gospel is the humiliation and exaltation of the Man. And in distinction to the Fourth Gospel, the ode does not identify the moment of apparent humiliation with the exaltation but clearly separates them.(335) The Odes therefore do not attempt to portray the Son of Man figure of the Fourth Gospel.

D. THE MESSIAH

In both the Odes and John, the Messiah fulfils the promise of the expected Coming One. However, in the Fourth Gospel the title is used to correct current expectations about the Messiah, so that a further title needs to be used alongside it for an adequate confession of faith to be made. These correctives are not reflected at all in the Odes, and the two expressions which regularly occur in the Odes to describe the Messiah, "the Lord's Messiah", "Lord Messiah" are not to be found in John. The latter expression, which is used to describe the work of revelation which Christ performs, reflects an understanding of Christ different from that of the Fourth Gospel, where "Lord" is used of Christ only after his resurrection.

E. THE LORD

In the Fourth Gospel, as we have just said, the title "Lord" is applied to Christ only after his resurrection. In the Odes, this title serves to designate God in his activity of revealing himself, or Christ

who is the revelation of God. The term is used to such an extent in the Odes that quite often it is impossible to be sure whether God or Christ is the proper recipient of the title. The usage in the Odes thus differs radically from that in John. This gap can hardly be closed by suggesting that the Odes were written in a situation which is concerned with the historical Jesus so that it is always the risen and exalted Lord who is in mind, for this title does not occur at all in the Johannine Epistles.

F. THE RIGHTEOUS ONE.

In both the Odes and John "the Righteous One" is used in connection with the Cross, but this is also the case in Ac. 3. 14; 7. 52; I Pet. 3. 18. What we do not find in the Odes is any mention of the Righteous One as the expiation for sin, or as the Paraclete with the Father. There is therefore no question of dependence between the Odes and the Johannine literature with respect to the use of this term.

Summary.

In the use of the titles of Christ which are common to the Odes of Solomon and the Johannine literature, there is very little to suggest that the two bodies of literature are related. In fact, were it not for the parallel between Jn. 17 and ode 31, and a few other verses which have a Johannine ring, along with the concept of the Word as applied to the Messiah, the question of dependence would hardly arise. These similarities do however suggest some level of relatedness, and in the following discussion we shall attempt to define this more closely.

1. The Theology of the New Testament, p.280.

2. For a survey of attempts to set out the limits of the original hymn, see R.E. Brown, The Gospel according to John, p.22. Cf. R.T. Fortna, The Gospel of Signs, pp.161f. and the literature there cited.

3. V.14:- J.H. Bernard, St. John p.19; R. Bultmann, John pp.60f.; C.H. Dodd, Interpretation p.281; R. Schnackenburg, St. John p.266; J.N. Sanders and B.A. Mastin, St. John p.76. V.9:- C.K. Barrett, St. John p.133; J. Marsh, Saint John p.104; R.E. Brown, John pp.28f. finds the reference to the Incarnation first in the hymn at v.10, and "V.9 is the transition that the editor has made to adapt vv. 6-8 to their present place in the Prologue". V.5:- E. Käsemann "The Prologue to St. John's Gospel" p.151; S. Schulz, Das Evangelium nach Johannes pp.20f., who regards the second strophe of the hymn as v.5, 10-12b; W.G. Kümmel, The Theology of the New Testament p.279. R.H. Strachan states that already in v.4 the evangelist's thought "begins to circle around the human life of Jesus, leading up to the summary statement of v.14", The Fourth Gospel p.99. R.H. Lightfoot says that "although the incarnation of the Logos is not explicitly mentioned until 1.14, yet St. John wishes his readers to understand several of the earlier verses as a description both of the permanent work and functions of the Logos and of the Lord's historic life and work", and mentions vv. 4,5,9,10,11-13 as reminders of the historical ministry of Jesus; St. John's Gospel p.81. L. Schottroff however sees the Incarnation present right from the first verse of the Prologue: "es muss dann im Prolog nicht ab V.14, V.9 oder V.5 vom λόγος ἔνσαρκος die Rede sein, sondern ab V.1"; Der Glaubende und die feindliche Welt p. 230.

4. On the very complex background of the term "Logos" in the Old Testament, Jewish Wisdom literature, Philo, Hellenistic Philosophy and Gnostic literature, see S. Schulz, Komposition und Herkunft der johanneischen Reden pp. 7-69; C.K. Barrett, St. John pp.127-129; R.E. Brown, see John pp.519-524, Appendix II "The Word"; R. Schnackenburg, St. John pp. 481-493 Excursus I, "The Origin and Nature of the Johannine Concept of the Logos".

5. For Bultmann's reconstruction of the Gnostic myth see his Primitive Christianity pp. 193-204. Bultmann accepts that the sources available for the reconstruction of the Gnostic Redeemer myth are later than John, but he finds its greater age proved by "the appearance of parallel forms of the basic ideas in both the religio-philosophical literature of Hellenism from the first century onwards and in the Christian Gnostic sources", see John p.27. He also points to Ignatius, the Odes of Solomon and the Mandaean literature. Bultmann did not have access to the Nag Hammadi literature when he provided this accoubt. To what extent his reconstruction may need to be modified in the light of these newly discovered Gnostic texts is discussed later. The quotation here is from p.61 of his commentary.

6. art. cit. p.150. He rightly states that "as far as gnosticism is concerned parallels to the Johannine formulation and paradoxical statement would certainly need to be produced", ibid.

7. J.C. Meagher suggests that although there is no question about the present text of Jn 1. 14a, the train of thought of the Prologue, which has already mentioned the incarnation in vv.11f., leads more naturally to the Spirit than to the incarnation as a past event. He therefore suggests that the source behind the Prologue read at this point καὶ ὁ λόγος πνεῦμα ἐγένετο and that the change from πνεῦμα to σάρξ occurred because of the struggle against early Gnosticism and Docetism. "John 1.14 and the New Temple", JBL 88(1969),66.

8. See his commentary, p.61 n.1, and his article "Die Bedeutung der neuerschlossenen mandäischen und manichäischen Quellen für das Verständnis des Johannesevangeliums", ZNW 24 (1925), 104ff.

9. "The Prologue to John's Gospel", 159. See also his Testament of Jesus pp.9f.

10. See below on the expression of the humanity of Christ in John pp. 210ff.

11. See n.7 above. R. Schnackenburg, St. John p.268, states, "the Logos hymn undoubtedly envisaged Gnostic falsifications of the Christian faith, which were already giving the communities some trouble". J.N. Sanders and B.A. Mastin likewise point to the presence of Ebionism and Docetism, "John's writings exclude them both", St. John p.80. R.E. Brown on the other hand, while noting the opposition in thought between the Gospel and Gnosicism, says that "we cannot be sure that it (the Gospel) was written against such views", see John p.31.

12. Cf. n.3 above.

13. op.cit. p.29.

14. Is there a polemic against John the Baptist in vv. 6-8. and if so, why? Cf. R.E. Brown, op.cit. p.28, which needs to be viewed along side of the fuller statements in the Introduction to his commentary pp.lxvii-lxx. R. Schnackenburg points to the second century Baptist circles claimed John as Messiah, and states that v.8 is "directed against an over-estimation of the Baptist", St. John p.252. See also R. Bultmann, in John p.49. Cf. J.N. Sanders and B.A. Mastin who reject any polemical intention here, St. John p.74.

15. See John p.29. "The mythology, again as in the Odes of Solomon under O.T. influence, has been pushed into the background". This "anti Gnostic" feature of the Prologue has been noted by all scholars, but see H.-M. Schenke "Die neutestamentliche Christologie und der gnostische Erlöser"

pp. 226f., who also relates the fact that creation is through the Logos to Judaism and its idea of God. However Schenke sees the Prologue as gnostic. "Das Lied handelt von die Göttlichkeit des Logos, von der Schöpfung durch den Logos, von der Uroffenbarung durch den Logos; als die ihren Zweck verfehlt, geht der Logos in die Menschenwelt ein, erscheint er immer wieder in einzelnen Menschen, um so doch den Menschen noch die Offenbarung zu bringen; nur Menschen nehmen allerdings die Offenbarung an, aber die macht der Logos dann zu Kindern Gottes. Die Doppelheit des Erlöserwirkens des Logos in Uroffenbarung und kontinuierlicher Offenbarung in Verbindung mit dem durch die Konzeption der σκοτία (V.5) bezeichneten Bruch in der Weltanschauung erweist das Lied, trotz der nichtgnostischen Parallelen (Sophia-Spekulation; Philo), die sich neben den gnostischen Parallelen (Oden Salomos; Evangelium der Wahrheit; Corpus Hermeticum usw.) zu seinen Vorstellungen und Begriffen finden, als gnostisch". This is "eine ganz besondere Gnosis" related to that of the Odes of Solomon.

16. See n.4 above.

17. See F.M. Braun, "Saint Jean, la Sagesse et l'Histoire" in Neotestamentica et Patristica pp. 122-133. It is not only the "Logos" terminology which is held to have come from the Wisdom tradition. E. Schweizer has shown that for Paul, the notion of the pre-existence of Christ is prepared for by speculation on Wisdom, and R. Schnackenburg suggests that this was also the source of inspiration for the statements of the Fourth Gospel about the "descent", and consequently the "ascent" of Christ. Schnackenburg does note that the "ascent" motif is not to be found in the Wisdom texts in the same sense as in John, and the ascent of Enoch 42.1 is a "disappointed withdrawal". See his commentary Excursus VI, "The Gnostic Myth of the Redeemer and the Johannine Christology" pp. 543-557; E. Schweizer, Jesus Christus pp. 83-92; U. Wilckens sees the point of departure for the development of the idea of pre-existence in the concept of the Son of Man who waits in heaven. Later on the earthly Jesus is identified with the heavenly Son of Man; U. Wilckens, "Präexistenz Christi", RGG V, 491.; R. Bultmann derives the concept of pre-existence from oriental Hellenism, to which is related the "Redeemer" od the Gnostic myth: Theology of the New Testament I, 130; H.M. Schenke finds the point of departure for the idea in the concept of the exalted one. The movement of thought is as follows: "ein himmlisches Wesen kann man eigentlich nicht werden, sondern muss man immer schön sein". Therefore the thought moves "von der himmlischen Postexistenz auf eine himmlische Präexistenz zu"; "Die neutestamentliche Christologie und der gnostische Erlöser" in Gnosis und Neues Testament pp.206f.

18. See John p.23. Cf. W.G. Kümmel, "But since the Wisdom myth obviously was a form, adapted to Jewish thought, of the myth, native to Gnostic piety, of the descending redeemer, one can conjecture that in the circles of Jewish Gnosticism by which the Johannine conceptual world was generally influenced, the myth of the descending redeemer had also been used in connection with 'the Word'"; The Theology of the New Testament pp.280f.

19. On the use of the anarthrous predicate noun in θεὸς ἦν ὁ λογός see E.C. Colwell, "A Definite Rule for the Use of the Article in the Greek New Testament", JBL 52 (1933), 12 - 31; C.F.D. Moule, An Idiom

Book of New Testament Greek p.116; P.B. Harner "Qualitative Anarthrous Predicate Nouns: Mark 15.39 and John 1.1", JBL 92 (1973), 75.- 87. The New Testament rarely calls Jesus "God", and texts such as II Thess. 1.12; Tit. 2.13 and II Pet. 1,1 are ambiguous. Yet the New Testament also witnesses to the divinity of Christ, and through the titles "Son of God" and "Kurios" the way is prepared for the unequivocal assertion that Jesus is God. Cf. Ign. Eph.7,2; 18.2; 19.3; Trall.7.1; Rom.3.3; Smyrn.1,1; 10,1; Pol.8,3; II Clem.1; Ep. Apost.3

20. On the problems of the verse division and interpretation of Jn 1.3f. see below on"World".

21. On the various meanings of κατέλαβεν see Brown, in John p.8. We prefer, with C.K. Barrett, (St. John p.132), to allow the ambiguity of the word to stand, but cf. R. Schnackenburg, St. John pp. 246f., who says that "If the evangelist is thinking in v.5 of the encounter of the Logos, the light with the world of men ..... then of the two possible meanings of κατελαμβάνειν 'master' (=overwhelm) and 'grasp' (=embrace with the mind and will), only the second can be considered". There is ample evidence in the Fourth Gospel of the attempts of Christ's opponents to quench the light, as there is also evidence of their inability to comprehend it.

22. The plur. οἱ ἐγεννήθησαν is to be preferred, notwithstanding the support for the sing. reading in b Iren. Tert cur. The Epist. Apost ch.3 also supports the sing. "And God, the Lord, the Son of God - we believe that the Word, which became flesh through the holy virgin Mary, was carried (conceived) in her womb by the Holy Spirit, and was born not by the lust of the flesh but by the will of God"; NTA I, 192f. See below on the Virgin Birth p.205.

23. It is not possible to decide with certainty the question of the original reading in v.18 and the arguments for and against either ὁ μονογενὴς υἱός or (ὁ) μονογενὴς θεός tend to cancel each other out. See the various commentaries. Ὁ μονογενὴς υἱός is more Johannine, but the Logos has already been termed θεός in v.1. The difference between the two readings does not make any substantial difference to the sense.

24. Christianity according to St. John p.47. See also C.H. Dodd Interpretation pp.265ff.; O. Cullmann, Christology of the New Testament pp.259f.; G. Kittel "λογος" TDNT IV, 128ff.; R. Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament II, 63f.

25. Cf. R. Bultmann, "Jesus as the Revealer of God reveals nothing but that he is the Revealer", Theology of the New Testament II, 66, but see the whole section on "The Revelation as the Word", pp.59-69.

26. J.R. Harris and A. Mingana, The Odes and Psalms of Solomon II, 92f. J.H. Charlesworth and R.A. Culpepper accept that "the noun ( ) is inappropriate in the history of ecclesiastical terms" and deduce from this that the Odes must be either contemporary with or earlier than John; "The Odes of Solomon and the Gospel of John" CBQ 35 (1973), 311.

27. Harris-Mingana II,93.

28. They suggest that the Odes most probably originated in Antioch in the first century. op. cit. II, 69.

29. More correctly, their argument here is based on the hypothesis of a Greek original. Their verdict on the original language is however that this was Aramaic; II, 170. J.R. Harris's original contention had been that Greek was the original language (The Odes of Solomon, pp.46f.), while A. Mingana in 1914 had agreed, for a Syriac original, this being distinct from Edessan Syriac but similar to Palestinian Syriac. He repealed these conclusions in the following year: "Quelques mots sur les Odes de Salomon.I" ZNW 15 (1914), 248f; "Quelques mots sur les Odes de Salomon II (Schluss)" ZNW 16 (1915),167.

30. For a survey of the use of ܟܠܡܐ and ܟܠܡܬܐ in the Syr. versions of the Old and New Testament see Appendix.

31. J.T. Sanders, The New Testament Christological Hymns,p.115.

32. ibid. p.119.

33. "It should be emphasised that it is immaterial that the Odes of Solomon were actually composed later than the composition of that Vorlage (i.e. of the Prologue to John). The traditions may be older and the Odes later than John", p.118 n.1.

34. The three quotations following are all from p.117.

35. Sanders asks in a footnote "As a syzugy?" For a discussion on ode 32 and the relation between the Word and the truth there, see below pp.59ff.

36. "And they were stimulated by the Word (ܡܢ ܟܠܡܬܐ) and knew him who made them". Since Sanders wishes to see only the independence of the ܟܠܡܬܐ he renders "stimulated (from) the Word", and says that "stimulation and making mean the same thing" (p.117). In the first place we cannot see what sense is obtained by bracketing "from", and in the second place, if "stimulation" does mean "making" this tells against his argument since in ode 16 the ܟܘܟܒܐ were made "by his word" (ܒܡܠܬܗ).

37. J.H. Charlesworth and R.A. Culpepper,art.cit. pp.310f.; "Few will miss the incarnational dimensions of ode 37.3: His Word came towards me". In agreement with the Hebrew text the O.T.Pesh regularly has ܡܢ ܩܕܡ ܝܗܘܐ for the word of the Lord which the prophet receives. (Jer.40,1 ; Ezek.12.8; Dan.9,2; Hos.1,1; Joel 1,1; Mic.1,1). R. Payne Smith does however provide evidence for the same construction as we find in the ode, without any incarnational dimension: ܟܠܡܬܐ ܐܬܐ ܠ ܩܕܡ ܝܗܘܐ A Compendious Syriac Dictionary,p.413a.

38. The 'Word' of this ode is ܟܠܡܐ.

39. See below pp.100ff.

40. Ode 41.9 "For the Father of truth remembered me, he who possessed me from the beginning "suggests that in this ode the writer is thinking of Christ as God's Wisdom, as in Prov.8,22. If there is dependence here it is on the Hebrew text of Prov. and not the O.T.Pesh., which agrees with LXX. The Christology of the ode is similar to that in Theophilus of Antioch Ad Autol.2,22, commenting on Jn 1.1 -3. "He (John) shows that originally God was alone and the Logos was in him ..... Since the Logos is God and derived his nature from God, whenever the Father of the universe wills to do so he sends his into some place where he is present and is heard and seen".

41. Cf. Harris-Mingana II, 373, "It is difficult to ascertain who is the "unshakable" or "unperturbed" of the three possibilities "the Word", "the strength of the Most High" and the "Most High" himself." They prefer the first. We will suggest below that the sing. "he" of v.3 picks up the plur. "blessed ones" of v.1.

42. The ܕ is omitted by MS.N.

43. On the indwelling word, cf. ode 12.12 "For the dwelling place of the Word (ܡܫܟܢܐ) is man".

44. Cf. ode 29,7-9 And he revealed to me his sign
And he led me by his light.
And he gave me the sceptre of his power.....
To make war by his word (ܡܫܠܚܡ)
And to take victory by his power.

45. The function of the word here is very close to that of the Spirit of God in I Cor.2.10ff.

46. The Odes of Solomon p.73 n.15. But the ode does not state that nothing came into being apart from the Lord in v.18a, but that nothing existed apart from him, and for v.18 we look rather to Isa.43.10f. (Pesh.)
Isa. ܕܠܐ ܐܬܒܪܝ ܐܠܐ ܡܢ ܡܪܝ ܘܠܐ ܐܬܒܪܝ ܐܠܐ ܡܢ ܡܪܝ
ܐܢܐ ܐܢܐ ܗܘ ܕܐܬܒܪܝ ܐܠܐ ܡܢ ܡܪܝ ܘܠܐ ܐܬܒܪܝ ܐܠܐ ܡܢ ܡܪܝ

Ode ܡܪܝ ܐܬܒܪܝ ܘܠܐ ܐܬܒܪܝ
ܐܠܐ ܡܢ ܡܪܝ ܕܟܠ ܡܕܡ ܐܬܒܪܝ ܘܠܐ ܡܢ ܡܪܝ ܕܟܠ ܡܕܡ

47. Cf. Ps.33.6; II Esdras 6.38; cf. Jer.10.12; 51.15. For the combination of "thought" and "word" of the ode cf Sirah 43.23,26 "By the power of his thought he tamed the deep and planted it with islands. By his own action he achieves his end, and by his word all things are held together".

48. It is doubtful that "the Odist wishes to give expression to both sides of the meaning of the Greek term λόγος in using the two terms ܡܠܬܐ and ܡܫܟܢܐ , C.H. Dodd, Interpretation p.273. For the

odist the Word is indeed God's thought put into effect, but it is doubtful that this writer thought of the one without the other, and more doubtful that the Greek term λόγος stood behind these two words; cf. odes 9.3; 23.5; 41.10.

49. That is, apart from the fact that the Word is the creative agent. But even here the ode has the plural "worlds" against the sing. "world" of Jn.1.10. This reminds us more of Heb.1.2f. than of the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel, but the creation through the Word is a common enough theme not to look for any specific source of inspiration; cf.Heb.11.3.

50. Harris-Mingana translate "He has filled me with words of truth, that I may speak the same", but note the suggestion of W.R. Newbold, "Bardaisan and the Odes of Solomon", JBL 30 (1911), 185 that the Seyame points over ܡܠܝ should be eliminated in order to provide a subject for ܡܠܠ . This is unnecessary (cf.the opening vv. of ode 22). Further, it breaks the connection of thought with vv.2ff., where it is clear that the Word is given from the Most High. Finally, Newbold's suggestion may remove a grammatical difficulty in v.1, but this raises the same problem in v.3, unless the subject of line a is "the Word" as Newbold and Harris-Mingana suggest. This is possible, although the "because" clause following in line b fits in less easily on this interpretation. J.H. Charlesworth has misled himself in his note on p.62, stating that "This translation (that I may proclaim it) however, is unlikely because 'truth' is feminine". "Truth" is in fact clearly masc. as v.2a shows.

51. V.3b is claimed by J.T. Sanders as another example of the identification of Pethgama and Truth, and he translates "The mouth of the Lord is the Petgama which is true" op.cit. pp.161f. Both the translation and the argument which he builds on it cannot be sustained.

52. Cf. v.76 of this same ode "For he is the light and the dawning of thought" and 41.14 "And light dawned from the Word (this time ܡܠܬܐ) that was before time in him". Both Syr. words for "Word" are used with the same sense. There is a partial correspondence here with the thought of Jn 1.4 but no clear dependence. Any real correspondence consists in the work of the Word who speaks what God himself says, thus bringing illumination to men. But cf. also Ps.119.130.

53. Cf. J.H. Charlesworth, op.cit. p.61, "to his generations". It is unnecessary to distinguish between "worlds" and "generations" in the way in which Charlesworth does.

54. V.5 reads ܘܡܬܠܗ ܕܡܠܬܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܚܫܒ ܒܗ ܘܐܝܟ ܡܬܠܗ ܗܘ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܚܫܒ ܒܗ ܘܐܝܟ ܕܡܬܠܗ ܗܘ ܕܠܐ ܡܬܚܫܒ ܒܗ

Harris-Mingana state that "the text of this verse is certainly corrupt" (II,274) and suggest a dittographical error repeating "ܠܐ ܡܬܚܫܒ ܒܗ", and yielding the sense "the swiftness of the Word is without record: And like His swiftness so also is His sharpness". This would provide more sense, but involves not only the assumption of dittography but also the re-arrangement of the wording of line b. J.H. Charlesworth avoids the problem by translating ܕܡܬܠܗ in line a by "subtlety" and in line b by

"swiftness" but this will not do. A further difficulty consists in the wording ܕܠܐ ܣܦܪ which means "without narration, description" together with the fact that in line b the swiftness and sharpness of the word is compared to this description. As a possible way out of this problem we would suggest the emendation of ܡܬܚܫܒܢܐ of line a to ܡܬܚܫܒ to yield the following sense: For the eloquence of the Word is without description. And as this cannot be described so it is also the case with the swiftness and sharpness of the Word.

55. "It never falls but remains standing". The concept of "standing" is an important one in the Odes. See pp. 432 f.

56. Cf. E. Schweizer, art. cit. n.17 above.

57. See Harris-Mingana II, 275. J.H.Charlesworth suggests that with v.7, "'His' refers not so much to the abstract 'Word' as to the personal 'Word', the 'Lord'", op. cit. p.63 n.11.

58. This word is therefore not a word which proceeds from silence, but one which enters the silence and produces communication. Cf. Ign. Ad Magn. viii,2. See C.H.Dodd, Interpretation, p.272.

59. ܒܫܪܪܘܬܗ . One could also translate "through his truth" and equate "truth" with the Word. However the emphasis is more on arriving at a true knowledge of God in this verse. The different prepositions used in lines a and b ܒ ,ܒ also probably support the translation given.

60. It is not possible to agree with C.H.Dodd when he says of ode 12.11f., "This is the Word which was incarnate in Christ, as in Od. Sol. xli.13-14 etc.", Interpretation, p.272;cf. also J.H.Charlesworth and R.A. Culpepper, art. cit. p.305. Harris -Mingana state that this "is very near to the statement that the 'Logos dwells among us', but does not involve the personal incarnation nor the assumption of flesh", II,275. F. Spitta claims, rightly we believe, that this has nothing to do with Jn.1.14, "da es sich nicht um das personliche Wort und um dessen Wohnen in der Mitte der Menschen handelt", "Die Oden Salomos und das Neue Testament", 95. On the other hand of course the ἐν ἡμῖν of Jn.1.14 was interpreted in this way; J-M. Voste(ed.), Theodori Mopsuesteni Commentarius in Evangelium Johannis Apostoli, CSCO, 115, "To become flesh means to dwell in our nature". See also J.C.Meagher, who claims that "argument from grammatical parallel (in John) would ordinarily weigh for the translation of ἐν ἡμῖν as 'in us'", art. cit. p.60. Cf. Aphrahat, "he cast out from us unclean spirits and made us a dwelling place for his divinity".

61. A better case can be made out for relating ode 12.11 with Jn.1.18, although there is no evidence of a literary connection.

62. J.T.Sanders claims that whatever the meaning of this verse, "the equation is certainly made", op. cit. p.117.

63. V.3a has caused problems. The text reads ... The difficulty consists in the ... before ... . Harris-Mingana translate "For I have a Helper, to the Lord", taking the ... as meaning direction to. This is possible, and makes good sense, but does not seem to fit in with the general thought of the ode which shows how the Lord himself is the helper. J.H. Charlesworth translates "For there is a Helper for me, the Lord", and although he states that "the Lamadh affix to 'Lord' is probably not a nota dativi since the subsequent verses reveal that the 'Helper' is the produced parallels from other Semitic languages to show that the ... signifies "indeed", "surely"; "Notes on two passages in the Odes of Solomon" JTS 25 (1974), 435. Perhaps the simplest explanation is to accept the ... as redundant, so that ... = simple ... See T. Nöldeke, A Compendious Syriac Grammar, para. 308b, where this is said to be a rare construction which is "old and rude".

64. Cf. W. Wright, Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles II, ... "Glory to your greatness, which became small for us"; Ephrem Syrus, "praise our Sun who brought his breadth down low and humbled his mightiness", Hymns on the Nativity 13.9.

65. Note the frequency of "like" (...) in vv. 4-6. This is not necessarily docetic, and would appear less so if this Syr. word were translated "as" instead of "like". It is rather difficult to express the comparison between the eternal and the temporal in any other way; cf. Phil.2.7f.; "being born in the likeness of men (ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος) And being found in human form" (καὶ σχήματι εὑρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος) But see V. Corwin, Ignatius and Christianity in Antioch, p.102, who notes that the Christology of the Odes is naively docetic, and yet also states, "To be 'like' man in form and nature does not necessarily mean the same thing as becoming flesh, although the writer may have had in mind a full incarnation". R. Schnackenburg points out that in the Johannine Epistles φανεροῦσθαι, not φαίνεσθαι is used to express the "appearance" of the Son; Die Johannesbriefe p.268, n.174. The Syr. verb, ..., which is regularly used in the Odes to express the "appearance" of the Redeemer can translate both of these Greek verbs, and is used in the Pesh. translation to render the φανερουσθαι of I John.

66. The opening lines of this ode present us with a rather strange simile.

As the course of anger (...) over wickedness (...)

So is the course of joy over the beloved.

The comparison here can only consist in the degree of emotion which is felt, while the emotions themselves are completely opposite. By positing haplography in the words "of anger" and by re-pointing the word for "wickedness", we arrive at a rather better simile:

As the course of love (...) over infancy (...; cf. 28. 2).

This latter word is used of the embryonic stage of life as well as of infancy, and has been used of the abiding in the womb of Christ, (see J. Payne Smith, A Compendious Syriac Dictionary, p.405a). This is unlikely to be the meaning here, if the emendation is allowed.

67. See below p. 116.

68. That is, through Haplography. The previous verse ends with ...

69. The verb is ܫܡ , as is also the case in 12,4. The verse reminds us of the intention of Jn.3.16ff., but there is clearly no dependence.

70. The distinction is in any case unimportant except that if "his own" refers to "Christ's (the Word's) own", this would argue for a more independent existence for the Word. Thus while it could be said that ode 7.12 reflects the situation of Jn 1.11f., there is again no dependence. Line c of ode 7.12 reminds us of Ps 100. 3 as understood by LXX and Pesh.

71. According to R.H. Fuller, in the Odes "Adam plays some part, but there is still no redeemer figure. The gnosis or revelation is conveyed direct from God to the soul", The Foundations of New Testament Christology, p.95. This might indeed appear to be the case with the "Word", although some qualification is needed even here. But when we see the full range of titles in the Odes, Fuller's statement is incorrect. Even later on in ode 12 itself the mention of the "Son" brings a new dimension to the odist's Christology.

72. The fem. ܡܠܬܐ cannot be the subject of the verbs "walked" and "crossed" in v.9b. One could interpret this quite differently, so that the word, the footsteps of our Lord Messiah, is the word of the Lord (God) which comes into being through the Messiah. In either case, there is no clear hypostatic existence of the "word" implied.

73. There is no need with J.H. Charlesworth, op.cit. p.137 n.10 to see v.10 as a reference to Christ's walking on the water (Matt.14.25; Mk.6.48; Jn.6.19). The point of the ode is that the way which Christ has marked out remains for man to follow. In the Ep. Apost. ch.11, the fact that Christ leaves a footprint is evidence that he is no ghost or demon. The ode is also quite different from this.

74. The use of ܡܫܟܢ in 27.3 and 42.2 with reference to the Cross suggests that its use in 39.10 also bears this meaning.

75. Cf. C.H. Dodd, who states after considering 16.20 that "There is therefore a very strong case to be made out, stronger than has sometimes been recognised, for the view that the Logos of the Prologue is the Word of the Lord", Interpretation p.273.

76. In addition to the passages mentioned above, there are others in which the word is clearly that word of God with which the speaker is provided for defence and offence against that which threatens his immortal life; 10.1; 15.9; 18.4; 29.9f. In one case, 42.14, the word is the word which Christ has spoken, and which must come to fulfilment.

77. For parallels to the Wisdom tradition in the Odes see Harris-Mingana II,72ff. Such parallels as do occur are, however, more evident in other Christological terminology and expression than in connection with the "Word".

78. Unorthodox at least to the extent that the revelation through the word remains unattached to the historical ministry of Jesus of Nazareth.

79. Here we can at least agree with the verdict of J.T. Sanders that it is the traditions which stand behind the Odes' doctrine of the Word which are older than the Fourth Gospel, and not the Odes themselves. See above n.43.

80. Eighteen times if we include Jn 17.1 : Πάτερ... δόξασόν σου τὸν υἱόν. This single instance of "your son" is followed in the next clause by the absolute ὁ υἱός.

81. Eight times if we read ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ in Jn 1.34 with p.66, p.75, ℵ^{c} A B it vg Pesh boh arm.

82. μονογενὴς υἱός Jn.3,16; μον. υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ Jn.3.18. Cf. also Jn. 1.14 ὡς μονογενοῦς and 1.18 μονογενὴς θεός which is also read in come MSS as μον. υἱός. The Son of God is also μονογενής in I Jn.4,9.

83. I Cor.15,28. "Son of God" is found only four times, Rom.1,4; II Cor. 1.19; Gal.2.20; Eph.4.13, and "his Son" a further 12 times (We include here both Eph. and Col. although one or both are regarded by some scholars as deutero-Pauline). W. Kramer states "In comparison with the passages in which the titles Christ Jesus or Lord occur, this is an infinitesimally small figure". Christ,Lord, Son of God p.183.

84. See F. Hahn, The Titles of Jesus in Christology, pp.279ff. Their History in Early Christianity. W. Grundmann sees the absolute formula as the oldest, with a development of "Son of God" and "Son of Man" Christologies from this, "Mt.11.27 und die johanneischen Der Vater- Der Sohn Stellen", NTS 12 (1965-6), 46ff; B. Lindars suggests that ὁ υἱός expresses Christ's personal relationship to God without involving the special ideas associated with either "Son of God" or "Son of Man". In Jn.3,16ff for example he thinks that ὁ υἱός is "virtually an abbreviation of "the Son of Man"; "The Son of Man in The Johannine Christology", 49f.

85. So E. Schweizer "υἱός", TDNT VIII, 385.

86. "Son of God" or "his son" 16 times. "the Son" six times. Occasionally we find both together in contexts which show their equivalence. In I Jn. 4.9 God sent his only Son τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ , in v.10 God sent his Son τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ : and in v.14 The Father sent the Son τὸν υἱόν (see also the next note). Cf also I Jn.5,12 where "the Son" and "the Son of God" are used in parallel.

87. I Jn.2,23 (twice) 24; 3.8.23; 4.14. The one exception is at 5,12 where "He who has the Son has life; he who has not the Son of God has not life" (Cf 2,23). R. Bultmann suggests that the τοῦ θεοῦ of the second half of the verse may be an addition by the author of the First Epistle, the rest of the verse comes from his source; The Johannine Epistles, p.83

88. That he is concerned with the confession of faith in Jesus as the

Son of God is shown by 20,31.

89. In Jn.1.19 the verb used is ἀποστέλλειν which is taken up by the πέμπειν in v. 22. In v. 24 ἀποστέλλειν is again used.

90. But there is a clear difference between the sending of John and the sending of the Son. See O. Cullmann, The Christology of the New Testament, p.301; C.H. Dodd, Interpretation, pp.259f: E. Schweizer "υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ" TDNT VIII, 386.

91. See C.H. Dodd, op.cit. p.254.

92. In Jn.3.16 δίδόναι is also used. See below p.76.

93. R.H. Fuller suggests that the title derives ultimately from the language of prophetology, The Foundations of New Testament Christology, p.231. See also C.H. Dodd op.cit. p.254.

94. This representative function of Christ as the one sent is emphasised by C.H. Dodd op.cit. pp.254f; P. Borgen,"God's Agent in the Fourth Gospel", 137-148; A.E. Harvey, Jesus on Trial, pp.90-97.

95. See R. Schnackenburg, Johannesevangelium II, 167; "Die joh Sohn - Christologie ist wesentlich Heilslehre für die Glaubenden, also nicht isolierte lehre über Jesus Christus selbst, sondern im Hinblich auf die Menschen entworfene lehre von ihm als Gottes Gesandten, der das Heil Offenbart und vermittelt".

96. The hearing of Christ's words and believing in him who sent him are closely connected. See C.K. Barrett, op.cit. p.217.

97. See esp. Jn.16.28, "I came forth from the Father" (ἐκ τοῦ πατρός) cf. 8.42; 13.3. On the significance of the ἐκ, see C.H. Dodd, Interpretation, p.259. There is however some textual variation in 16. 27f., and D W Β sin omit ἐξῆλθον ἐκ τοῦ πατρός. C.K. Barrett suggests that the shorter reading is to be preferred. If the clause is accepted, he prefers ἐκ τοῦ πατρός to παρὰ τοῦ πατρός as contained in p^{5} ℵ A Θ ; op.cit. p.414. J.H. Bernard, St. John II, 521 sees no difference at all between παρά, ἐκ and ἀπό in John.

98. See A.E. Harvey, Jesus on Trial, p.50: "The responsibility lay with him who had effected the cure". The question asked by the Jews in v.12 suggests that at least some of the responsibility rested with the one giving the order.

99. C.H. Dodd regards this as a parable of the apprenticed Son, Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel, p.386, n.2. It seems more likely that "the Son" and "the Father" are used here in the unique sense which applies to them alone. See E. Schweizer, "υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ" TDNT VIII, 385. Cf. also Jn. 5.30, "I can do nothing on my own authority".

100. See C.H. Dodd, Interpretation, p.324: "The present discourse .... makes the express claim that Jesus does what God alone can do" for the functions of ζωοποίησις and κρίσις belong to God.

100a. According to W.H. Cadman, this means that "the life-giving faculty of the Logos has been imparted to the man Jesus". The Open Heaven, p.77. "The Son" in the Fourth Gospel is always the divine Son, not the man Jesus without the Logos.

101. This is the only instance of the anarthrous "Son of Man" in the Gospels. It has been suggested that the omission of the article may be explained in terms of John's use of Dan. 7.13, where the article is also omitted: B. Lindars, "The Son of Man in the Johannine Christology" pp.51f; R.E. Brown, John,I, p.215; C.K. Barrett, St. John, p.218. The expression is to be understood here in a titular sense in Jn.5.27, see C.K. Barrett, op.cit. p.218; R.E. Brown, op.cit. I,220, R.G. Hamerton-Kelly, Pre-Existence, Wisdom and the Son of Man, p.235. A. Schlatter, Der Evangelist Johannes, p.152. For the qualitative sense, see E.M. Sidebottom, The Christ of the Fourth Gospel, p.93; R. Leivestad, "Exit the Apocalyptic Son of Man" NTS 18 (1971-2), 252; W. Temple, Readings in St. John's Gospel, p.114. R. Bultmann, John, p.261, n.5. states that "it is quite impossible in view of the use of υἱὸς τ. ἀνθρ. elsewhere in John .... that υἱὸς τ. ἀνθρ in v.27 should mean 'man' in the simple sense". See also below on the"Son of Man".

102. And therefore the Father's word is not in them, 5.38.

103. See Jn.3.35, and of E. Schweizer, "The authoritative character and dominion of the Son are unmistakable. Under this rule neutrality is no longer possible; only faith or disobedience"; "υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου" TDNT, VIII, 385.

104. E. Schweizer notes the subordinationist tendency in Jn.5.19, but also notes that the unity of the Father and the Son is such that this is "no longer a single transfer of power but a lasting demonstration", art.cit. p.385.

105. See O. Cullmann, op.cit. p.302; W.G. Kümmel, The Theology of the New Testament, p.269; C.H. Dodd, Interpretation, p.258.

106. For the Father's love of the Son see also Jn.3.35; 10.17; 15.9; 17.23ff.

107. See E. Schweizer, art.cit. p.387.

108. On the use of this word in the LXX as a guide to its meaning in the New Testament see F. Büchsel," μονογενής" TDNT, IV, 738ff. Th.C. de Kruijf, "The Glory of the Only Son (Jn.1.14)", pp.112ff. R. Bultmann notes also the wider use of the term, especially in Gnosticism and suggests that in Jn.1.14, where it is used without any noun "it is probably to be regarded as stemming from Gnostic mythology"; Theology of the New Testament II, 35; idem John, pp.71-73.

109. See D. Moody, "God's Only Son. The translation of John 3.16 in the Revised Standard Version", JBL 72 (1953), 213-19, who states that the only translation of μονογενής is "unique", "uniquely beloved". R.E. Brown, John, I, 13f. points to the usage of the word as applied to Isaac, who was "Abraham's uniquely precious son but not his only begotten", cf. R. Schnackenburg, St. John, p.271, n.187. Th.C. de Kruijf attempts to show that there is a special meaning attached to this word, namely, the dangerous situation in which the son stands, and concludes that John uses the title "to indicate that in the sacrifice of Jesus' life, God manifests his true love to those who believe that the crucified Jesus is the only Son of God, op.cit. pp.119-123. cf. also O. Cullmann, op.cit. p.301, "John 3.16 ... alludes to the sacrifice of Isaac".

110. O. Cullmann suggests that the ἔδωκεν of Jn.3.16 has the double meaning of "send" and "deliver up to die", op.cit. p.300. See also R. Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, II, 35. But cf. E. Schweizer, art.cit. p.375 who says that the context in vv.17ff. show that the word signifies the sending of the Son. This seems more likely, but Jn.3.16 is the only instance of the use of δίδόναι with the Son, and Cullmann may be right.

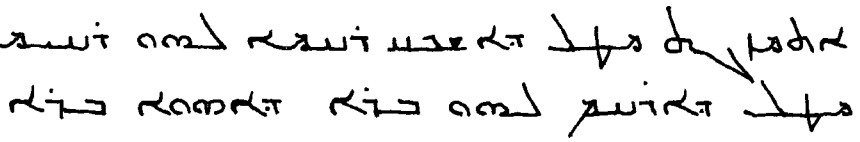
111. But not into the same unity which Christ has, so that the believer becomes a son in the sense in which Christ is the Son. John uses υἱός only for the sonship of Christ, while τέκνα is used for the sonship of believers. See C.K. Barrett, op.cit. pp.136f; R.E. Brown, John I,11

112. R. Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament II, 66; see also ibid. pp.61ff.

113. Cf. ibid.p.66 "John ... in his Gospel presents only the fact (das Dass) of the Revelation without describing its content (ihr Was)".

114. See the excursus of R. Schnackburg in Vol.II of his commentary on John, "Der Sohn als Selbstbezeichnung Jesu im Joh-Ev." pp.150-168, and note especially his concluding remarks on p.168.

115. According to W. Frankenberg the ode, even with the inclusion of v.7b is still about the fellowship"Zwischen dem Sohne (= Gott) und der Seele": Das Verständnis der Oden Salomos, p. 101.

116a. 

116. A.von Harnack believed that v.7b broke the connection between the lines on either side, and that the mention of "the Son" was totally unexpected and must therefore be interpolated: Ein jüdisch-christliches Psalmbuch aus dem ersten Jahrhundert, p.79. This interpolation theory was followed by several other scholars, but G. Kittel has shown that v.7b does not break the connection but is an integral part of the structure: Die Oden Salomos:- überarbeitet oder einheitlich? p.45. His whole book is directed against the theory that the Odes are a group of Jewish hymns which contain many Christian interpolations, as espoused by von Harnack and others. More recently, J.H. Charlesworth has argued

that v.7b may indeed be interpolated, but this is a Christian interpolation of an already Christian hymn; A Critical Examination of the Odes of Solomon, p.146. A. Menzies sees no interpolation in v.7 but draws the conclusion that the Odes are jewish. "The Son" represents the Jewish people as in Hosea; "The Odes of Solomon", Interpreter, VII (1910),20. On the basis of the use of the term 'Son' in the Odes, we suggest that in this ode "the Son" is the Messiah, and we believe that there is no adequate reason for excising v.7b.

117. See below on the "Bridegroom" in the Odes pp.172ff.

118. In ode 3.5,7 "the Beloved" is ܚܒܝܒܐ. This word occurs elsewhere only at 7.1 where the reference is to the Lord who becomes like the believer. The other term for Beloved (ܚܒܝܒ) is found at ode 8.21 and 38.11 where it refers more clearly to Christ.

119. The part ܕܡܫܬܒܚ looks back to the verb ܫܒܚ in v.7a

120. The Redeemer and the redeemed do not become one. Cf. R. Abramowski, "Der Christus der Salomo-oden", ZNW 35 (1936), 44-69. The identity of the Redeemer and the redemmed is an important element in Gnosticism, stemming from the conviction that the spiritual man is originally from the world of light. See Iren. Adv. Haer. 1.13,3, "Adorn thyself as a bride who expects her bridegroom, that thou mayest be what I am, and I what thou art" (translation from Gnosis,I,201) Hipp. Ref. vi.17,2 "I and thou are one, thou art before me, I am after thee"(Gnosis,I,258). See also below on the "I" of the Odes of Solomon pp. 177 ff.

121. There would also be a parallel to the Johannine "I am ... the life", Jn.11.25; 14.6. See J.H. Charlesworth, The Odes of Solomon, p.20 nn.10f., idem. with R.A. Culpepper, "The Odes of Solomon and the Gospel of John", CBQ 35 (1973), 301f; E. Massaux, Influence de l'Évangile de Saint Matthieu sur la littérature chrétienne avant saint Irénée, p.210.

122. There is thus a general parallel here to Jn.1.13; Gal.4.4f.

123. Several commentators draw attention to I Jn.4.19. The emphasis is however different, and the parallel is no closer than that in Diog.10. "How will you love him who has first so loved you?".

124. It is possible that the ܐܝܬܝܗܒ (to announce) with which v.17 begins refers back to v.12: "He has given him to appear (ܠܡܬܚܙܝܘ) .....", in order that they may recognise (ܕܥܒܕܗ ܗܘ ܡܢ) him that made them". This makes it uncertain whether the "to announce" of v.17 follows on from the first or the second purpose clause. If the first, v.17 states that the announcement of the coming of the Lord was made by the Word, not by the saints.

125. Matt.3.17 (= Mk.1.11; Lk.3.22, with ἐν σοί in place of Matt's ἐν ᾧ); Matt.12.18; 17.5; Jn.8.28.

126. The word in the Odes ( ) carries a two-fold meaning of "being pleased" or "resting" . In the Arabic text of the Diatesseron the same ambiguity is found in the reading of Matt.12.18.

127. W. Frankenberg claims that cannot mean "rested" and translates this by ηὐδοκησεν . Das Verständnis der Oden Salomos, p.10. Cf. J.H. Bernard: The Odes of Solomon, p.62, who thinks the verse means, "The Light created by God (Gen.1.3) rests in the Son; a characteristically Johannine thought".

128. "The Word" in this ode is and is thus masc. as "Father" is.

129. See below pp.81f.

130. Cf. Hermas, Sim. v.6.6.

131. R. Abramowski feels with good justification, that the images of the Odes is at its crudest (am krassesten) in this ode: "Der Christus der Salomo-Oden" ZNW 35 (1936), 45.

131a. H. Grimme, Die Oden Salomos, p.45 and W.R. Newbold "Bardaisan and the Odes of Solomon", JBL 30 (1911), 190, insert the Seyame points, rendering "to the worlds" (cf.ode 12.4). This is unnecessary for the following plur. part. See Harris-Mingana,II,299f., and note 137 below.

132. art.cit. p.53. Ephraem also calls Christ "a cup that contains all strong wines", Hymns on Nativity 3 ; cf also ibid.2, These statements are made in the context of the eucharist, and it is not impossible that a similar context may be in the mind of the odist. See below on the "Cup", p.170.

133. W. Frankenberg, op.cit.,p.85, suggests that the two breasts signify the two Testaments. This is unlikely.

134. Cf. J. Payne Smith A Compendious Syriac Dictionary, p.261, where it is shown that is used theologically of the joining of Godhead and manhood in Christ. But we cannot import this into the Odes without raising problems of chronology.

135. See W. Bauer Die Oden Salomos, p.40.

136. Cf. Gospel of the Hebrews, Frag.3, in NTA,I,164.

137. As the following line shows there were some who accepted what the Spirit offered. Where the sing. "world" is used in the Odes, it usually designates that which is still in need of salvation and this may explain the use of this term with the following plural part. There is a partial parallel in thought here with Jon.1.11, the difference consisting in the fact that for the odist, Christ is available only through the Spirit.

138. See below on ode 23.

139. This is the normal pattern of the Odes. The writer deals first with the situation in which he and his community are, and then deals more specifically with the work of Christ. See especially the odes in which there are ex ore Christi passages.

140. See below pp. 205ff.

141. See especially ode 7.3ff., where "The Lord" becomes like the speaker in the act of showing himself to men, and where this title means "God". See also below on "the Lord", pp.116ff.

142. H. Jones sees in this letter a typically Gnostic motif connected with the "call" from beyond. The Gnostic Religion p.119; See also idem, Gnosis, I,120ff; K. Rudolf Die Mandäer II,263f. The Gnostic idea of the letter is clearly seen in Ac.Thom. chs.110f., but the central idea is missing from the ode. The letter here brings no revelation but the desire to see who would read it. For the use of the letter symbolism See also S.P. Brock, "Ephrem's letter to Publius", Le Muséon 89 (1976), 275.

143. See Ex. 31,18; Deut. 9.10.

144. There is a partial correspondence in thought with Jn.1.5, but not enough to show dependence. Cf. Wisd. 9.13-17. Harris-Mingana,II,339, suggest that there is represented here a controversy about the birth-place of the Messiah, but this has little merit.

145. ܐܬܝ is found in O.T.Pesh as a translation of אתה in Ezek 1.15.16.19.20.21 as also of הלך in Ezek 10.2.6.13 etc.

146. II,340

147. The Odes of Solomon,p.96, n.16. J. Daniélou also thinks of the Cross and suggests that "the vertical dimension of the cross seems to represent the katabasis and anabasis of the Word", Theology of Jewish Christianity, p.282.

148. See odes 22; 29.

149. The word here is ܐܝܬܝ.

150. See J. Payne Smith (ed.) A Compendious Syriac Dictionary, p.68.

151. See below p.171

152. Cf. Wisd. 9.10f.

153. Cf. W. Frankenberg, op.cit. p.91: "Unter die τοποι sind naturlich die Gaben und Krafte der Seele verstehen". He interprets the Odes in a thoroughly inferior fashion.

154. Cf 41.8 "the Father of Truth". The two Syriac expressions may be translated "the true Son", "the true Father", but in view of the emphasis on "truth" in the Odes, it is preferable to translate them giving full weight to the concept of truth. This means that the Father is the originator of truth and the Son the expression of that truth. Cf. Jn.14.6. J.T. Sanders suggests that "the Son of Truth" is derived from the Tammuz (Adonis) worship which he sees reflected in the Odes. New Testament Christological Hymns, p.110, n.1.

155. Strack-Billerbeck, II, 361f.

156. It is not impossible that in this ode we have a reflection of the belief that Jesus is the νόμος, as expressed in Jewish Christian theology. See J. Daniélou, op.cit., p.163; W.D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, p.149; R. Longenecker, The Christology of Jewish Christianity, p.40.

157. See below on the Messiah in the Odes, p.114 and n.278. R. Bultmann believes that this is a Gnostic idea, related to the Gnostic concept of the μονογενής, which he also sees behind the μονογενής of Jn.1.14: John p.73, note 2 from p.71.

158. Cf. R. Bultmann, John,p.77, n.1. Bultmann understands ܡܠܝܢܐ to mean πλήρωμα in every instance in the Odes, the pleroma being the heavenly world. For him v.13 means that the Son "has appeared with the pleroma of the Father". He further states that this is confirmed by the use of the verb ܡܠܐ "to fill". It may be noted however that ܡܠܝܢܐ is from the Shaphel form of this verb, which means to fulfil, complete, perfect, although this word does translate πλήρωμα in the Pesh. at Rom.11.12; Eph.1.23.

159. v.14; cf. also 41. 8f.

160. See below on the ex ore Christi passages in the Odes, p.199

161. It is also possible that there exists a parallel between the use of "Son of God" in this ode and its use in Jn.5.25;cf. also Jn.11.43. Cf. J.H. Charlesworth and R.A. Culpepper who suggest a possible relationship between ode 42.15-17 and Jn.10.9, art.cit. p.322.

162. The difference between these odes, and also ode 23 is perhaps explicable partly in terms of the fact that in them "the Son" is set in a syntactical relation to the Father or God, whereas in the other odes we meet the absolute term "the Son". See above n.5.

163. See the previous note.

164. Cf. the use of the verb ,ܫܕܪ in odes 7.12: 12.18: 29.6: 41.13.

165. For a recent survey of scholarly opinion on the Son of Man problem in the Fourth Gospel, see F.J. Moloney, The Johannine Son of Man pp.1-22.

166. John 12.32 is no exception to this, since the crowd use the title only in response to Jesus' own use of it.

167. On John's acquaintance with the tradition about the Son of Man and his re-interpretation of it see R. Schnackenburg, "The 'Son of Man' in the Fourth Gospel" (Excursus V in his The Gospel according to St. John) pp.535-38; C.H. Dodd, Interpretation pp.241-49; S. Smalley, "The Johannine Son of Man Sayings" NTS 15 (1968-9), 298f.

168. So, for example B. Lindars, "In fact John's variation between 'the Son of God' and 'the Son of Man' is never accidental but is carefully chosen in accordance with the needs of his argument", "The Son of Man in the Johannine Christology", 44. Most scholars would agree with this, but cf. E.D. Freed, "The Son of Man in the Fourth Gospel" JBL 86 (1967), 402-9, and J. Coutts, "The Messianic Secret in St. John's Gospel" St. Ev. 3 (1964) 51-53, who think that the two titles are used indifferently. According to O. Cullmann, "Son of Man" is John's fundamental christological concept op.cit. p.186.

169. J.H. Bernard, St. John I,lll: B.F. Westcott, St. John.p.53: E. Sidebottom The Christ of the Fourth Gospel, pp.120f; F.J. Moloney op.cit. pp.54f.

170. According to F.J. Moloney, it is specifically a "Moses mysticism" which is combated here, op.cit. p.57. See also W.A. Meeks, The Prophet King, p.295, who however does not deny that the ascent of the Son of Man is asserted here, but states that the descent-ascent pattern which has no parallel in the Moses traditions closely connects the Johannine Christology with gnostic mythology, ibid.p.297. P. Borgen sees here a polemic against the idea of an ascent to heaven to learn heavenly secrets as expressed in Philo, "God's Agent in the Fourth Gospel", p.146. J.H. Bernard notes these traditions, but finds no trace of them in the Fourth Gospel, op.cit. I,lll. R. Schnackenburg likewise states that "the central idea, that the ascent takes place in order to receive revelations or to bring tidings from above, is not found here" op.cit. p. 392.

171. F.J. Moloney op.cit. p.55, based on the judgment of M.J. Lagrange, B.H. Westcott and J.H. Bernard; E.M. Sidebottom, The Christ of the Fourth Gospel, pp.120f.

172. A better parallel to the use εἰ μή is found at Jn.6.46, where the structure is different but the meaning the same.

173. That the perfect "has ascended" refers to the ascension of Jesus is held by among others W. Bauer, Das Johannes evangelium, p.56; R. Bultmann, John pp.149f; C. K. Barrett, St. John, p.177; R.E. Brown, John I, 145; O. Cullmann, The Christology of the New Testament, p.185. W.H. Cadman looks for a meaning of ἀνα βέβηκεν which is not anachronistic, and finds it in the idea that the Son of Man had come into the presence of God. "His ascent to heaven is His coming under the guidance of the Script to a knowledge of that (His) origin and of its implications for mankind"; The Open Heaven p.30.

174. At least one part of the ἐπουράνια is the necessity of the exaltation and ascent of the Son of Man. See R. Schnackenberg, op.cit. pp.378f: R.E. Brown, op.cit. I, 132. Cf. R. Bultmann, who states that "the central doctrine of the ἐπουράνια is the doctrine of the ascent of the soul", op.cit. p.148. This however goes too far. The "heavenly things" are those which pertain to the world above, and one of the elements belonging to them is the descent and the ascent of Christ, by which men receive the true revelations of God, and are able to follow Christ where he has gone.

175. See R. Schnackenburg, "'Der Menschensohn' ist nicht etwa eine einfache, verhüllende Selbstbezeichnung Jesu, sondern ruft in Joh.Ev. den ganzen Vorstellungskomplex des vom Himmel herabgestiegenen und dorthin wieder aufsteigenden Menschensohnes hervor", Das Johannes evangelium II,48 F.J. Moloney, in his rejection of any parallels between the Fourth Gospel and the Gnostic myth of the Redeemer, understands the reference to the "ascent" here in the same way as he understands Jn.3.13, viz., as a polemic against the idea that men had ascended to heaven to receive a revelation of God.

176. B. Lindars thinks that the idea of the descent does not belong with the Son of Man concept, and that John only identifies the one who has come down with the Son of Man. "In other words, descent is no part of the Johannine Son-of-Man myth though it is an essential feature of his Christology" (italics his), "The Son of Man in the Johannine Christology" p.48, n.16; R. Leivestad, "Exit the Apocolyptic Son of Man", NTS 18, (1971-2), 253.

177. The passive is regularly used except at Jn.8.28.

178. Several scholars see in this double meaning a possible Aramaic background. See M. Black, An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts, p.141; A. Schlatter, Der Evangelist Johannes, p.96; G. Kittel, "'izdaqeph = ὑψωθῆναι = Gekreuzigtwerden" ZNW 35 (1936), 282-85; G. Bertram, "ὑψόω", TDNT VIII, 610, n.38. J.H. Bernard, St. John I, 114f., and F.C. Burkitt, "On 'lifting up' and 'exalting'" JTS 20 (1918-9), 336-8, see no Aramaic influence. O. Cullmann has attempted to show that the Fourth Gospel is characterised by ambiguous expressions which express simultaneously the incarnate Jesus and the exalted Christ: "Der johanneische Gebrauch doppeldeutiger Ausdrücke als Schlüssel zum Verständnis des 4 Evangeliums" TZ 4 (1948), 360-72; idem. The Johannine Circle, p.17.

179. M. Black sees the exaltation and glorification of the Son of Man in John as the main additions to the Synoptic tradition which he has used; "The Son of Man Passion Sayings in the Gospel Traditions", ZNW 60 (1969), 5-7.

180. The word is also used in Ac 2.33; 5.31; Phil.2.9 to describe the exaltation of Christ, but this exaltation follows on from a humiliation. Cf. Lk.24.26 "Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter his glory?" In John the moment of humiliation is lost in the exaltation. R. Schnackenburg calls this "a most important step in Christology", St. John, p.396. It may also be noted that John never uses πάσχειν to express the idea of Christ's suffering.

181. Cf. especially Jn.7.33; 16.5 where Jesus goes to him who sent him. See also Jn.13.3 for the same idea of return to God.

182. The last word from the Cross in the Fourth Gospel τετέλεσται (19.30) is a declaration that Christ has fulfilled everything and his work is completed. It is not a statement of his impending death. See C.K. Barrett, St. John, p.460, and cf. R.E. Brown, John II, 930f.

183. C. Colpe sees in the mutual glorification of the Son of Man and God in 13.31f a "tendency, shown at 5.27, to assimilate the meaning of Son of Man to the more general concept of Son in John", TDNT VIII, 468.

184. Or "sealed" (ἐσφράγισεν). "It is God the Father who attests the authority and truth of Jesus". C.K. Barrett St. John, p.238. J.H. Bernard also understands the "sealing" in this way, and both of these scholars look to the baptism as an explanation of the aorist. B.F. Westcott suggests that the sealing refers to Jesus' consecration to death, St. John p.100. J. Marsh compares the aorist to a Hebrew "prophetic perfect" and refers the "seal" to the crucifixion and resurrection, or, in Johannine terms to the exaltation of the Son of Man, St. John, p.295 L. Van Hartingsveld notes that John uses either ὁ πατήρ or ὁ θεός and never ὁ πατήρ ὁ θεός and he therefore understands the verse as an expression of the divinity of the Son of Man:- τοῦτον γὰρ ὁ πατὴρ ἐσφράγισεν - ὁ θεός . That is, the Father has sealed him as God: Die Eschatologie des Johannesevangeliums, p.77. On this combination of πατήρ and ὁ θεός, see C.K. Barrett, op.cit.

185. Most scholars combine the ἐν αὐτῷ in Jn.3.15 with ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον and not with πιστεύων. See C.K. Barrett, St. John, p.179.

186. F.J. Moloney op.cit. p.53.

187. W. Michaelis does not. He looks on this as the Johannisation of Synoptic material, especially of the temptation story through which John speaks of a lasting and complete communion with God; "Joh.1.51, Gen. 28.12 und das Menschensohn-Problem", TLZ 85,(1960), 578.

188. For a survey of ways in which Gen.28.12 has been used in the interpretation of Jn.1.51, see F.J. Moloney, op.cit. pp.26-33.

189. Note the change from sing. "you will see" (ὄψῃ) to plur. "you will see" (ὄψεσθε) in vv.50 and 51. R. Schnackenburg suggests that v.51 "may have circulated originally without any setting", though he rightly goes on to say that "no better context can be found for it"; St. John, p.320.

190. R. Schnackenburg St. John p.320; Sanders and Mastin, St. John, p.160; F.J. Moloney, op.cit. p.40.

191. See R. Bultmann, John p.106; R.H. Lightfoot, St. John's Gospel, p.99; R.H. Strachan, The Fourth Gospel, pp.10f. This does not necessarily imply that the Son of Man saying in 1.51 is about the conjunction of the earthly man with his heavenly counterpart, or that the Son of Man is an inclusive or corporate figure: (See H. Odeberg, The Fourth Gospel pp.33-42). C.H. Dodd, Interpretation, p.244.

192. As for example the future coming in glory and the future judging activity of the Son of Man (Matt 25,31; Mk 14,62). R. Bultmann does not look to the Synoptic Gospels or to Jewish apocalyptic for the origin of the Son of Man of the Fourth Gospel, but to the Gnostic myth, John p.149, n.4 idem. Theology of the New Testament, II, 37.

193. See R. Schnackenburg "The 'Son of Man' in the Fourth Gospel" (St. John Excursus V), pp.538-42: C. Colpe "υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου" TDNT,VIII, 412-15. For an account of the myth see H-M Schenke,Der Gott "Mensch" in der Gnosis, pp.6-15.

194. O. Cullmann,The Christology of the New Testament pp.142ff: C.H. Dodd, op.cit. pp. 243f.: C.K. Barrett, op.cit. p.156.

195. R. Schnackenburg op.cit.pp.532ff; C. Colpe assumes a knowledge of the Anthropos myth among the readers of the Fourth Gospel, but states that for the evangelist or his source, "Son of Man" meant "man", art. cit.p.415. See also ibid p.467, where the descent of Wisdom is said to provide the closest analogy to the idea of descent in John. E.M. Sidebottom goes back ultimately to the myth in his investigation of the Son of Man title, but modifies this to the extent of saying that if John was influenced by speculations about the Man, "it was probably through that form of it which was entertained in the Wisdom circles of Judaism" op.cit.pp.99-111 (quotation on p.111). See also R.G. Hamerton-Kelly, Pre-existence, Wisdom and the Son of Man, pp.87-102.

196. A more precise expression of the relationship between the Authropos myth and the Son of Man in John can be omitted here, since there is no evidence that this myth has influenced the Odes' use of "Son of Man" or "Man".

197. There is for example, no statement about the Son of Man comparable to those dealing with the Son's prior and future glory with the Father (Jn.17.5,24), or with those which speak of the Son's doing those things which he had seen while he was in the Father's presence (8.28,38; 10.32).

198. See F.J. Moloney op.cit. pp.211-13.

199. C. Colpe suggests that the "Son of Man" concept may be used in a way comparable with that of the "Logos" concept of the Prologue. "The Logos became flesh means the (Son of) Man came down, art.cit.p.470. See also O. Cullmann, op.cit.p.187, who however also states, "one cannot deny that the Son of Man concept is much more important than that of the Logos in the Gospel of John as a whole".

200. The Odes of Solomon p.127 n.4.

201. This is especially so in v.4a where ܒ ܕ is used with the part. ܡܫܬܒܚ : See Th. Noldeke A Compendious Syriac Grammar, para. 275.

202. Cf. ode 3.7; 31.4; 41.2, where the sonship of believers is asserted. R. Abramowski also states that here the Son of God is "der erlöste Mensch". art.cit. p.68.

203. The one other instance of this word is at 18,6, which is discussed in the next chapter.

204. That is, ܫܒܚ

205. So Harris-Mingana II,385. See also H. Gunkel, who thinks that in the Odes Jesus is originally a man who died and rose again as a God, after the names of Osiris, Attis Adonis. Verse 6 shows that Christ was only one of the highest heavenly beings; "Die Oden Salomos" ZNW 11(1910), 301f. We believe the reference to being "near God" is more satisfactorily explained through the idea of Wisd 6.19. "To keep her (Wisdom's) laws is a warrant of immortality; and immortality brings a man near to God".

206. Vol II, 386.

207. Pesh. ܟܠܗ ܥܡܐ.

208. The word in the Syr. translations of the Bible designates people of importance and is used to translate the following words. שר (Ezek 11.1; 17.12; 22.7) שרי הצבא (I Chr. 25.1); גדלים (Prov. 25,6); הרברין (Dan 3.24,27; 6.7); οἱ μεγάλοι (Mk. 10.42); οἱ ἐν ὑπεροχῇ ὄντες (1 Tim 2.2).

209. See J.Payne Smith A Compendious Syriac Dictionary p.525, 536. On the latter page he lists the two forms of the plural of this word ܪܒܢܐ and ܪܒܪܒܢܐ, and states that the longer form is used only as a substantive.

210. J. Carmignac sees here a transposition of the Qumran designation "the Many" (ר ב י ם) to "the great ones" by a writer who has left the Qumran community and become a Christian. "Un qumranien converti au Christianisme", p.83. A. Dupont-Sommer says that Rabbim may also be translated: the Great Ones: This interpretation would make it a title of respect accorded to members of the Holy Council, but I think this sense is less limited", The Essene Writings from Qumran, p.85, n.1: cf. J.P. Pryke, who asks if the title means "the Teachers": "John the Baptist and the Qumran Community" RQ4 no.16 (1964), 492 n.33. There is no need to look to Qumran for an explanation of this term in the Odes. See below.

211. The term ܚܝܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ is found at 7.3,23; 15.7; 18,16; 19,11; 29.3 as well as in this ode. Of these cf. especially 15.7 amd 29.3. See also 38.18 for the verb ܐܬܚܝܐ.

212. Harris-Mingana attempted to explain the problem of Christ being one of those who are near God, by reference to Dan.7.13 (II,386). This they felt, removed "any suspicion of unorthodox learnings". For the idea of becoming great, in the case of the odist, we could refer to Dan.2. 20ff. In.vv.20-22, Daniel blesses God for revealing to him the mystery of the King's dream and in v.23 he gives God thanks and praise (ܠܟ ܐܡܪ ܠܟ ܫܒܚܢ) because he had given him wisdom and strength, and made known what was asked of him. As a result of Daniel's interpretation "The king gave Daniel high honours"(2.48; Pesh. ܒܪܟ i.e. made him great). If the Book of Daniel is in the thought of the odist, the becoming great could well signify the odist's reception of divine mysteries. However, we believe that this idea is better explained in terms of the odist's being made according to the greatness of God.

213. This does not imply deification or identity with God. See ode 3. 8,9 for the different expressions which distinguish God's life and immortality from that of the odist.

214. op.cit. pp.142f. n.16. Charlesworth sees "a striking similarity between this verse and Phil.2,8-9." Other scholars have likewise noted the similarity to the Philippians passage. The Pesh renders the ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτόν by ܡܟܟ ܢܦܫܗ showing a real reflexive which is not present in the ode. The Phil. passage also states that after Christ emptied himself he was found in form as a man (Pesh. ܒܪܢܫܐ ܐܫܟܚ), while the ode speaks only of the Man. But if the Phil. passage, with its use of the verbs dealing with the humiliation and exaltation of Christ is to be used for the interpretation, then it does not support the view that this verse refers to the incarnation, for according to Phil.2.8, the humbling of himself by Christ took place after he had been found in human form.

215. This is the Christ who in ode 42.6 says "I rose up and am with them, and will speak through their mouths"; cf. also 9.2f; 10.1; 12,12; 18.4;

216. See above on "Son".

217. On the significance of this statement, see below on "Messiah", pp. 158f.,n. 278.

218. Cf.8.7 "Peace has been prepared for you before your war takes place". It is because Christ's victory, his righteousness goes before the believer, that he is assured of continued union with Christ (v.19).

219. There is no saved saviour myth in the Odes. See below p.221, n.59.

220. This is the only instance of ܒܪ in the Odes apart from 19.10, where the Son is born ܒܪ ܐܫܟܚ. On this verse, see the next section.

221. If the ܢܚܬ of the ode corresponded to the κατα βάς of John 3.13 there would be some correspondence, since ܐܬܝ ܠܥܠ is the translation of ὑψωθῆναι in the Syr. versions of the N.T. But in John the elevation on the Cross is at the same time exaltation, while for the odist the exaltation takes place as a result of the descent into Sheol. We do not however suggest that ܢܚܬ signifies the descent of the Man to earth.

222. P. Batiffol "Les Odes de Salomon" RB 8(1911), 58f; J.H. Bernard, op.cit. p.88.

223. That is, the repetition of the verb is not brought about by the parallelum of these two lines, but the last five lines of vv.10 and 11 explain what is involved in the first. This means that v.10a is in a sense separate from the rest of these verses.

224. The verb ,ܐܫ is usually used to describe Christ's act of showing to the believer what he needs to know for his salvation (8.9; 24.13; 29.7; 38.7). On two occasions it is used of the believer's "showing" what he has received (7.25; 12.2). J.H. Charlesworth relates the ܚܕܘܬܐ to Lk.1.26ff; op.cit p.84. n.16.

225. H. Gressmann sees the difficulty here and accordingly amends to ܚܣܝܪܘܬܐ (with care). This is unnecessary, and neglects the fact that not only salvation but also kindness and greatness are characteristic of God's dealings with men.

226. The Odes are particularly concerned with salvation, and we find the noun 15 times, the active verb 4 times, and the passive verb 13 times.

227. The noun ܛܝܒܘܬܐ elsewhere always refers to God's kindness (7.3; 11.20; 14.3; 17.8; 20.9; 25.12;42.16): Cf. especially v.1 of this ode where the speaker drinks the cup of milk "in the sweetness of the Lord's kindness.

228. This noun occurs elsewhere in the emphatic state only at 7.3, where the coming of the Lord to men is a diminution of his greatness, and at 36.5 where the believer is made according to the greatness of the Most High. Elsewhere it is found only in the construct state in the expression ܪܘܡ ܕܥܠ which also refers to God (7.23; 15.7; 18.16; 29.3).

229. See for example Pesh Lk.2.1; 1 Pet.5.11.

230. Cf. J.H. Charlesworth, op.cit. p.84, n.17: J.H. Bernard, op.cit. p.88.

231. As is the case in odes 10, 23 and 42.

232. The verb is ܒܥܐ and seems to imply catching something, rather than accepting what is offered. See below on the Virgin Birth p.206f.

233. R. Labourt translates "en example", Cf. P. Batiffol who says on this,"Sens bien médiocre" au lieu ܚܕܘܬܐ je lirais ܚܕܘܬܐ :"Les Odes de Salomon" RB 7 (1910),500.

234. At least it is not the Virgin's will that is the primary consideration although this may be implied also. See below on the Virgin Birth p.208f.

235. II, 302,306.

236. Although ܒܪ ܐܢܫ is used in Dan. several times, it is not used of the Son of Man figure. If this is what the odist intended we would expect him to have used ܒܪ ܐܢܫ ܗܘ. The Pesh. of Dan.7.13 has ܒܪ ܐܢܫ ܗܘ

237. It is not the Virgin, but the Son who is like a man. See below and the Virgin Birth p. 209 . See also P. Batiffol, art.cit. p.58, who states that the Syriac means "ὡς ἄνθρωπον ἐγγένησεν (εἰ non ὡς ἄνθρωπος)".

238. "Jesus Christ" appears only twice (1.17; 17.3), "Christ" is found 17 times. In the First Epistle "Jesus Christ" occurs seven times, "the Christ" only twice.

239. Μεσσίας . 1,41; 4,25.

240. C.H. Dodd regards this as a Messianic title "virtually equivalent to ὁ βασιλεὺς τοῦ Ἰσραήλ"; Interpretation p.238.

241. Or, more probably "the elect of God" (ὁ ἐκλεκτὸς τοῦ θεοῦ). This is the reading of ℵ sin cur and probably p^5. A conflated reading ὁ ἐκλεκτὸς υἱός is found in a sah. It is easier to understand the change from "the elect of God" to "the Son of God" in the Johannine text than the reverse. See C.K. Barrett, St. John,pp.148f; R. Schnackenburg, St. John pp.305f.

242. Cf. 1 Jn.2.23; 5.1 where it is a question of belief (or denial) in Jesus as the Christ. In the First Epistle of John "Christ" has become equivalent to "Son of God"; R. Schnackenburg, Die Johannesbriefe, p.157; M.de Longe "The Use of the Word Χριστός in the Johannine Epistles" 67f.

243. Cf. Mk.8. 27-30 and pars. See C.H. Dodd, Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel, pp.219f.

244. The textual variants which occur can generally be explained as attempts "to harmonise with Matt.16.16 and Mark 8.29", C.K. Barrett, op.cit. p.253. The title comes elsewhere in the N.T. at Mk.1.24 (and Lk.4.34).

245. G.W. Buchanan suggests that "Israel" in the Fourth Gospel refers to Northern Israel, i.e. Samaria, and sees here s part of the evidence for the Samaritan origin of John, "The Samaritan Origin of the Gospel of John", pp.158-161. This is quite unnecessary, and in Pss.Sol. 17.42 this title is used of the Jewish Messiah.

246. Whether or not "Son of God" was used of the Messiah in Judaism is a matter of debate. G. Dalman denies that it was: The Words of Jesus p.272; also E. Huntress "'Son of God' in Jewish Writings Prior to the

Christian Era", JBL 54 (1935), 117f. Other scholars suggest that it is likely that this royal title would at times have been transferred to the Messiah: O. Cullmann, The Christology of the New Testament, p.274: R. Bultmann sees this as "perfectly possible", The Theology of the New Testament, I,50. See also J. Howton "Son of God in the Fourth Gospel", NTS 10 (1963-4), 234; E. Lohse, 'υἱός', TDNT, VIII, 361.

247. Matt. 4 times; Mark 6 times; Luke 4 times; John 12 times.

248. Cf. Nathanael's question in 1.46.

249. See Strack-Billerbeck II, 488f.; Justin Dial. 8.

250. As C.K. Barrett points out, there were two different opinions about the status and duration of the messianic age. The first held that the messianic age itself brought the fulfilment of the messianic hopes, the second that the messianic age would end before the final period, op. cit.p.356. See also Strack-Billerbeck II, 552. W.C. van Unnik thinks that Ps.89.36 is the particular passage from the Law to which the crowd points in 12.34; "The Quotation from the Old Testament in Jn.12.34", Nov.T 3(1959), 174-79.

251. Fourth Gospel, 40 times, Johannine Epistles, 27 times. In contrast to this the verb appears 3 times in Matt, twice in Mk, 7 times in Luke and 17 times in Paul. Statistics in R. Morgenthaler, Statistik des neutestamentlichen Wortschatzes, p.119

252. The verb is also used of the wrath of God abiding on the unbeliever (3.36), or of sin, with its consequent guilt, remaining (9.41).

253. C.K. Barrett also relates this to the fact that the Messiah "makes his abiding place (μονή) with those who receive him", op.cit. pp.59f.

254. M. de Jonge art.cit. p.73: R. Schnackenburg, "Die Messiasfrage im Johannesevangelium", pp.243. This fulfilment of their hopes applies to Samaritans as well as to Jews, as chap. 4 shows. See H. Conzelmann, An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament, p.337.

255. "No other New Testament writer shows himself as fully aware of the Jewish ideas associated with it (the title "Messiah") as does the Fourth Evangelist", C.H. Dodd, Interpretation, p.228.

256. See C.K. Barrett, op.cit. p.59; R. Schnackenburg, St. John, p.510.

257. This form is found only at 29.6. The other two instances have only "his Messiah", but the antecedent of the pronoun is clearly "The Lord".

258. This form only at 17.16. Elsewhere the text has "Our Lord Messiah" (Lord Jesus).

259. MS H reads only "The Messiah".

260. The New Testament Christological Hymns, p.107. See also his discussion of Ps. Sol. 17 on the same page.

261. This is the reading of the majority of MSS, but there are several variations on it. The reading of Pesh, (along with sin and W) is ܠܐ ܐܝܬ .Cf. also Ac.4.24ff.

262. Jn.v.1 we read "I was crowned by my God", in v.2 "I was justified by my Lord". Is the parallelism such that "God" = "Lord", or is there a reference to both God and the Messiah? The situation is further complicated by v.4 which reads "My chains were cut off by her hands". Should this be amended to "by his hands", as by most commentators? The difference is not great, but it is extremely unlikely that the writer was influenced at this point by "the thought of Truth" which is found three lines later, as Harris-Mingana suppose (II,291). Since the one who breaks bonds later on in the Ode is the Messiah, we probably ought to read "by his hand" here. The notation in J.H. Charlesworth's apparatus is wrong. In his translation he reads "by His hands", and the apparatus says, ܕܝܕܗ ed". This is actually the reading of the text, which on his translation should be amended to ,ܕܝܕܗ . This change is too great to be acceptable.

263. See below on the Revelation Sayings of Christ. J.T. Sanders, New Testament Christological Hymns, pp.108f, and F.H. Borsch, The Son of Man in Myth and History, p.192, see no reason to regard this, or any passage in the Odes as being ex ore Christi.

264. See above n.259

265. So Harris-Mingana. II, 344; J.H. Bernard, The Odes of Solomon pp.102f; H. Duensing, "Zur vierundzwanzigsten der Oden Salomos" ZNW 12(1911), 87; J.H. Charlesworth, The Odes of Solomon, p.99. n.3.

266. J. Carmignac suggests a parallel here to 1 QH 3, 16-18, "Un qumranien converti au Christianism", in Qumran Problème p.83. Cf. also Ephraem, Nisibene Hymns 38.7.

267. On the idea of Christ as food for death, see Ephraem, Nisibene Hymns, 41.13. In section 15 of the same hymn Ephraem tells of the sorrow and mourning of Death because at the voice of Christ the dead lived and came forth from Sheol. Elsewhere we read of Christ as bait for the devil, or for death, who thinking to swallow Christ, vomits up those whom he had swallowed; Cyril of Jerm. cat. 12.15; cf. also Gregory of Nyssa, or.cat. 24; Augustine, serm. 261.1.

268. "He himself is made the head of the Spirit and gives the Spirit to be the head of man, for by him we see and hear and speak", Iren. Adv. Haer. V.20,2,LCC I, 390. See also below on "The Holy Spirit".

269. V.7a "The sign on them (the waters) is the Lord". W. Frankenberg emends ܠܝܗ to ܠܝܗܘ and translates into Greek: ἐπεὶ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς τὸ σημεῖον τοῦ κυρίου ; Das Verständnis der Oden Salomos p.33. If we accept the reading of the MSS, as we probably should since both have the same reading, this verse comes very close to the assertion that the Lord is the way (cf. Jn.14.6), since the next line reads "And the sign on the way for those who cross in the name of the Lord". Alternatively we could re-point ܥܠܘ to ܥܠ and translate "Because the Lord has come on them", but this destroys the connection with the following line.

270. In both v.10a and 11b we read that the footsteps ﻣﺸﻰ .

271. J.H. Bernard sees significant allusions to Josh.3.15,17 and 4,9 although the phraseology is that of Ex.14.22. The details of the story in Josh. do not fit the ode as well as Bernard thinks, although according to Josh.4.9 the stones were set up in the Jordan at the place where the feet of the priests had stood - (in v.3 these stones are taken out and set down at the lodging place, so obviously there are two accounts combined) - but the priests with the ark did not precede the people across, as the ode suggests Christ did; cf. R. May, "Joshua", in Peake's Commentary on the Bible who thinks that they did, p. 293 . As well as the Exodus and Joshua accounts of crossing waters, the story of 1 Kings 2.8ff. may be in the mind of the writer. But according to R. Abramowski, the Old Testament provides only the colours for the odists picture but the narrative of Jesus walking on the water in Matt.14 and Jn. 6 is decisive for its meaning: "Der Christus der Salomo-oden" ZNW 35 (1936), 55.

272. W. Frankenberg, op.cit. p.27; J.H. Bernard, op.cit. p.113; J. Flemming, Ein jüdisch-christliches Psalmbuch aus dem ersten Jahrhundert, loc. cit.. J.H. Charlesworth is a little more positive with the translation, "I considered that he is the Lord", op.cit. p.112. H. Grimme, Die Oden Salomos, loc.cit, is more positive still, "Und er erschien mir als der Herr", as is also R. Abramowski, art.cit. p.57, "Und es war mir klar, dass er der Herr ist".

273. Harris-Mingana try to find a way between the two translations given by rendering 'And He appeared to me that He is the Lord" (II, 363), but what this means is not immediately apparent. In the note on the text they draw attention to the meanings "saw, noticed" for ﻟﻪ ,ﺍﻇﻬﺮ

274. MS H has "and he showed to him (ﻟﻪ) his sign". This sign may be the sign of the Cross, as we have suggested for ode 39, but it is certainly connected with the activity of Christ through which he prepares the way of salvation for believers, as in ode 39.

275. Cf. especially the root ﻇﻬﺮ in odes 7, 12, 31 and 41 to illustrate the appearance of the Lord and his Word.

276. See W. Frankenberg, op.cit. p.80.

277. MS H. (ﻧﺴﺮ ﻟﻪ) MS N has "we rejoice" (ﻧﺴﺮ ﻟﻪ), which is more probably caused by metathesis rather than a different textual tradition.

278. J. Carmignac suggests that there is a polemic here against the idea of two Messiahs at Qumran, "Un Qumranien converti au Christianisme" pp.80f. J.H. Charlesworth thinks this is "not impossible" op.cit. p.143, n.17. On the theory of the two Messiahs at Qumran and the development of the idea, see J.R. Fitzmyer "The Aramaic 'Elect of God'" in Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament, pp.129-139; K.G. Kuhn "The Two Messiahs of Aaron and Israel" in The Scrolls and The New Testament, pp.54-64; H. Silberman, "The Two Messiahs of the Manual of Discipline" VT 5(1955), 77-82. Cf. R.B. Laurin "The Problem of the Two Messiahs in the Qumran Scrolls" in RQ 4 no.13(1963), 39-52, who asserts that Qumran held to the idea of one Messiah only. R. Bultmann states that the phrase, "The Christ is one in truth" is shown to be Gnostic by its continuation" and was

known before the foundation of the world." If this is an argument against a multiplicity of Christs, we would need to look not only to Qumran, but also to Gnosticism; c f Iren. Adv. Haer III, 17.4 "they teach that there was not one Christ, but many", ANF I, 445; Hippol Ref. VI, 36.4 where there are three Christs: "the one brought forth by Nous and Truth along with the Holy Spirit, the Joint Fruit of the Pleroma, the Holy Spirit, and Thirdly, the one born through Mary" in Gnosis I, 193. According to R. Bultmann, "the phrase 'The Christ is one in truth' is shown to be Gnostic by its continuation "and was known before the foundation of the world", John p.73. The phrase in the ode is not Gnostic, but could be designed to exclude the kind of separation which the Gnostics advocated. L.G. Rylands thinks the oneness of the Messiah is patterned on the oneness of Wisdom, but the intention of the ode is clearly in another direction. See The Beginnings of Gnostic Christianity, p.51. Cf. also I Clem.46, where the fact that there is one Christ is used to condemn divisions in the church. This again is different from the ode. The theme of the unity of the church is also behind the assertion of Ignatius of Antioch that there is one Jesus Christ ... who came forth from the one Father (ad. Magn. 7).

279. The "possession" the Redeemer by the Father in v.9 signifies the indwelling of the Word in the Father as in v.14. Cf. R. Bultmann's comment in the above note.

280. H. Conzelmann, An Outline of The Theology of the New Testament, p.338; R. Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, II, 50. O. Cullmann notes that there are also passages earlier in the Gospel in which the title is not present, but in which the theme of Christ's lordship is implicit. This is the theme of the "farewell discourses"; The Christology of the New Testament, pp.232f.

281. This is certainly the case in 12.13,38. Jn.1.23 has the quotation from Isa.40,3 which differs in two respects from the use of it in the Synoptic Gospels. Firstly the quotation is shortened "Make straight the way of the Lord in place of "Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight". Secondly, in the Fourth Gospel the quotation is used by the Baptist of himself, whereas in the Synoptic Gospels the Isa. text is used by the evangelists about the Baptist. If John the Baptist is here speaking in his capacity as a witness to Christ the term "Lord" could refer to Christ. See C.H. Dodd, Historical Tradition in the Fourth Gospel, pp.252f. on this verse.

282. The verses are 4. 1; 6.23; 11.2. In the case of 4.1, some MSS read ὁ Ἰησοῦς instead of ὁ κύριος . It is possible that this was the original reading, or that originally neither of these terms stood in the sentence. C.K. Barrett notes that one MS, (047), contains no substantive, and that both ὁ κύριος and ὁ Ἰησοῦς may be conjectural supplements, while also admitting the possibility that because κύριος is rare in narrative in John, the text may have been altered from ὁ κύριος to ὁ Ἰησοῦς; St. John, p.192. But see also R.E. Brown, John I,164; R. Bultmann, John, p.176; R. Schnackenburg, St. John, p.422, n.4. Sanders and Mastin state that the reading "Lord" is to be preferred to "Jesus" "as being less common in the FG"; St. John, p.137, n.3.

283. Not only Christ is addressed as κύριε, but Philip is addressed in the same way in Jn.12.21.

284. O. Cullmann stresses the genitive μου in the confession (as also in 20.13) and states that "the whole Gospel of John considers the

Lordship of Christ more strongly than the other New Testament writings from the viewpoint of the individual relationship between the exalted Christ and each of those who belong to him", op.cit. p.232.

285. So O. Cullman op.cit. p.232; C.K. Barrett op.cit. p.477.

286. The "greater works" of the disciples consist in the harvest of followers which they will bring into the Church through their proclamation of the Gospel. See C.K. Barrett op.cit. p.384; Sanders and Mastin, op. cit. p.324. R. Bultmann, op.cit. pp.610f.

287. O. Cullmann rejects R. Bultmann's slight evaluation of the κύριος title in the Gospel, since the fact that the title is first used in the Easter account "is connected with the fact that also according to the fourth evangelist Jesus was first made Kyrios on the basis of his resurrection", op.cit. p.232, n.1. This does not avoid the difficulty contained in the fact that κύριος does not occur at all in the Johannine Epistles (The Harclean version reads "our Lord Jesus" at II Jn.3). See R. Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament II,36.

288. In a further two odes, 27 and 42, we have only the noun with first person sing. pronominal suffix (,ܝ), not the emphatic form.

289. See above on "The Messiah", pp.109ff.

290. Cf. for example ode 8. There is no clear object of reference of the term "Lord" in vv.1 and 2. In v.6 "The Lord" is the "helper" of those addressed (cf.7.3ff) and in v.8 Christ speaks. This may imply that "the Lord" in v.6 is Christ. In v.20 the hearers are told to "abide in the love of the Lord" and v.21 goes on to speak of abiding in the Beloved, in him who lives and in him who was saved, which refers to abiding in Christ. But v.22 then proceeds to state that the hearers will be incorrupt "on account of the name of your Father". This may of course mean that if the believers abide in Christ they will be incorrupt for God, but the imprecision with respect to the recipient of the title "Lord" is such that J.H. Charlesworth apparently thinks that "your Father" in v.22 is Christ, see his note 20 on p.44 of "The Odes of Solomon".

291. That is, with respect to the use of the title "Lord". That a differentiation is made between God and his Messiah is seen in several passages, e.g. 10.4; 31.4f; 39.9ff.

292. See below pp. 181f.

293. It is therefore not surprising that several of the scholars who studied the Odes shortly after their publication regarded them as Jewish or that R.H. Fuller should conclude that "there is still (in the Odes) no redeemer figure. The gnosis or revelation is conveyed direct from God to the soul"; The Foundations of New Testament Christology, p.95. We believe these judgments to be wrong, but also believe that J.H. Charlesworth has gone too far in the other direction, in seeing Christ as the recipient of the title "Lord" too frequently, even though he does state that "in most passages one can not be sure of whom it is predicated". See A Critical Examination of the Odes of Solomon, pp.175f.

294. Of particular importance in this context is ode 39. "The Lord" in v.1 is God, and in v.9a this appears to be the case also. The Lord has

bridged them by his Word" ( ). This seems to mean that through the gift of his Word, God has made it possible for men to pass over the raging rivers. But in v.9b the one who crossed over them is the Lord, not his Word and in v.11 we read "The footsteps of our Lord Messiah stand firm". "The Lord Messiah" in v.11 thus stands for God in his revelation of himself through his Messiah.

295. Cf. J.T. Sanders, who says that it is better to explain the use of the term "Lord" in the Odes in terms of the influence on a Jewish group from some other religion, specifically that of Adonis, rather than in terms of the coming of Christianity to a Jewish group: The New Testament Christological Hymns, p.109.

296. In the rest of the N.T. see Ac.3.14; 7.52; 22.14; Jas.5.6; perhaps also in I Pet.3.18. See J. Jeremias, The Servant of God p.91. For the Jewish background to the title, see G. Schrenk "δίκαιος" TDNT II,186f.

297. The function of the Paraclete here is different from that of the Holy Spirit the Paraclete in the Fourth Gospel, who is "another Paraclete" (Jn.14.16). The function of the exalted Christ as Paraclete in I Jn is seen to be connected with that of the earthly Jesus in the Gospel in the sense that both look to the High Priestly ministry of Jesus. See R. Schnackenburg, Die Johannesbriefe pp.90f.; O. Cullmann, The Christology of the New Testament, p.106; O. Moe, "Das Priestertum Christi im N.T. ausserhalb des Hebräerbriefes" TLZ 72 (1947), 338; J. Behm, " παράκλητος" TDNT V,812. This high priestly function is also related to these writers to Christ's High Priesthood in Hebrews.

298. On I Jn.3,9 where the impossibility of the believer's sin is mentioned see below.

299. A.E. Brooke The Joh.Eps.p.77: "As δίκαιος he can enter the presence from which all sin excludes".

300. That is, from advocacy in a forensic sense which is implied by 1,1. See R. Schnackenburg, "Die forensische Bedeutung des 'Parakleten' trit hier hinter der hohepriesterlichen Funktion Christi zurück", Die Johannesbriefe, p.91. J. Behm sees the high priestly function connected with the forensic one, art.cit. p.812. n.91.

301. See C.H. Dodd, The Johannine Epistles pp.26f. "The term used (ἱλασμός) however, does not in itself connote a blood sacrifice, and the expression in 2.2 is wide enough to cover the whole work of Christ". R. Schnackenburg points to the meaning "Sühnung" and states that it "kann hier entweder als Abstractum pro concreto oder als Neubildung für 'Sühnopfer' verstanden werden", Die Johannesbriefe, p.92 See also F. Büchsel " ἱλασμός ", TDNT 3,317f.

302. The Johannine Epistles, p.23

303. The difficulty in seeing the "Lamb of God" as an expiatory sacrifice consists in the identification of this Lamb; What can be said is that John 1.29 is related to I Jn. 3,5 in the sense that only in these two places is αἴρειν used of the removal of sin(s). I Jn. 3,5 is concerned with the coming of Christ, not with his sacrificial death, but it is not impossible that I Jn.2.2 is based on the symbolism of Jn.1.29.

304. See R.E. Brown. "The simplest explanation of the footwashing, then, remains that Jesus performed this servile task to prophesy symbolically that he was about to be humiliated in death. Peter's questioning,

provoked by the action, enabled Jesus to explain the salvific necessity of his death: it would bring men their heritage with him and it would cleanse them of sin", St. John II,568; also J.N. Sanders and B.A. Mastin, St. John p.306. Other commentators however see not the cleansing of sin symbolised by the footwashing but "an assertion that there is no glory save through the sharing in the humility and the humiliation", J. Marsh, St. John p.488; see also C.K. Barrett, St. John. p.367. For C.H. Dodd, this incident "dramatises the saying of Luke 22. 27", Interpretation, p.393; cf. also his Historical Tradition, p.62, where "the primary meaning of the story is to be found in the idea of imitatio Christi, expressed quite simply in 13.15", although there are also several subsidiary meanings. R. Bultmann relates the cleansing of Jn.13 to 15.3 where cleansing occurs through the Word; John p.470; Is it also possible that the issue of blood and water from the side of Christ in Jn.19.34 symbolises cleansing through death? Most commentators see here a reference to the outpouring of the Spirit, or to the Sacraments. These are not unlikely, but do they exclude a reference to the cleansing effect of Christ's death? See C.K. Barrett, St. John, p.463, for the combination of elements which apply here.

305. The translation is that of J.H. Charlesworth. The verb is strange and means "was hanged, suspended". It is used in N.T.Pesh. of the "hanging" of Jesus on the Cross, Ac.5.30; 10.39; Gal.3.13, and is possibly used with reference to this.

306. Die Oden Salomos pp.133f. Accordingly he sees the speaker in vv.3ff. not as Christ, but as personified Truth.

307. Cf.v.6: "I rose up and am with them". In the Odes the removal of the believers from the bonds of Sheol often symbolises the freedom of men from the forces of ignorance and error in this life, but in ode 42 a real descent of Christ into Sheol seems to be included. See pp.

308. W. Frankenberg, Das Verständnis der Oden Salomos p.35, (see also p.44) omits the section entirely, as does J.H. Bernard in his translation, The Odes of Solomon, p.129. J.H. Charlesworth has shown that this is not the only occasion in ode 42 on which the copyist of MS. H has committed the same error. It also occurs in vv.19b, 20a. A Critical Examination of the Odes of Solomon, p.64. This suggests that the missing words should be kept as part of the text.

309. Harris-Mingana II, 407, see also II, 79f.

310. Die Oden Salomos p.79 J.H. Charlesworth regards this as "vaguely possible" expressing the belief that knowledge is not enough. The Odes of Solomon, p.146.

311. Barn.6.9.

312. H. Musurillo, The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, p.101.

313. N.T.Pesh. Matt.26.4,50; Mk.14.1,44,46,49. This however is not the meaning of the word in the ode, but it could imply a contrast between those who took hold of Christ and killed him, and those who hold to him in faith.

314. See J.H. Charlesworth, "There seems to be a docetic nuance to this verse (v.10)", The Odes of Solomon, p.147. n.17. cf. also his note on 28.17.

315. This is clearly not the impetus for the odist's thought. Much stronger is the idea that Christ is different from men, that he has come down from heaven.

316. The "became" is temporally determined by the death on the Cross, cf. Jn.8,28. On the seeking and not finding of Jn.8.21 cf. ode 42,5 in Charlesworth's translation. This however is unlikely to be correct.

317. ܙܕܝܩ does not translate δίκαιος in Pesh N.T. (the Syr. is ܫܪܝܪ or ܚܣܝܕ) although the plural ܙܕܝܩܐ is found as a variant for ܫܪܝܪܐ (translating δικαιωματα) in the Crawford MS. of Rev. 19.8. But see Ps.119,137 "Righteous art thou, O Lord, and right are thy judgments". ܙܕܝܩ ܐܢܬ ܡܪܝ ܘܫܪܝܪ ܗܘ ܕܝܢܟ . It may be noted however that the odist never uses the word ܫܪܝܪ , though he does speak of "being justified" through the verb ܙܕܩ .

318. op.cit. p.44. Cf. also the suggestion of H. Gunkel on this verse in "Die Oden Salomos" ZNW 11 (1910), 302.

319. op.cit. II, 406.

320. Cf. also ode 34.1. "There is no hard way where there is a simple (ܦܫܝܛܐ) heart,
Nor barrier for upright
(ܙܕܝܩܐ) thoughts." The thought here is clearly that of a free access to God above, since "everything is above, and below there is nothing" (v.5). A similar significance belongs to the verb in ode 6.16 where the ministers of the water drink have restored (ܩܝܡ) and set up (ܐܬܬܩܢ) the limbs which had collapsed. This sounds more like a resurrection than an ascent, but these two ideas are not to be distinguished too sharply, if at all. See below pp. 410f.

321. On "Righteousness" in the Odes see below pp. 257 ff. , but cf. 8.5,21,9,10; 41,12. In 8.5, J.H. Charlesworth sees "your righteousness" as "a surrogate for Jesus Christ the Righteous One"; The Odes of Solomon p.43,n.5.; cf. R. Longenecker, who states that "the alteration of the first person singular suffix to the third person singular suffix in the Qumran text of Isa. 51.5 suggests that possibly the Qumran sectaries understood the expression 'my righteousness' in the passage more as a messianic title than merely a divine attitude", The Christology of Early Jewish Christianity, p.46 (see also p.100).

322. See R. Schnackenburg, Die Johannesbriefe, p.92.

323. The concept of "the name" is used quite frequently in both the Johannine literature and the Odes.

324. St. John, p.145.

325. Influence de l'Évangile de saint Matthieu, p.212.

326. The latter idea is important elsewhere in the odes, but the union is usually spoken of in terms of being "with" God or Christ, rather than being "in" him. See odes 3.2; 5.15; 8.6,21; 13.4; 28.4. For the idea of Christ being "in" the believer, cf. odes 7.4; 33.8. For the "word" in the believer, see odes 12.12; 32.1.

327. This idea is entirely absent from the Odes.

328. Since the contexts are similar the justification of Christ in ode 31.5 could be a reflection of Jn.17.9, where however, Christ is glorified in those whom the Father has given to him.

329. The root נצח in the Odes is usually connected with the idea of victory; see below p. 258 . On the sonship of believers in the Odes, see 3.7; 8.22; 14.1; 41.1f.

330. Cf. J.H. Charlesworth "Qumran, John and the Odes of Solomon", p.128. "There are too many expressions in these two verses (4f.) of Ode 31 that are neither attributable to Jn.17 nor to the peculiar vocabulary of the odist". There is nothing in these verses which cannot be traced to the odist's use of vocabulary elsewhere.

331. For the believers as Christ's (or God's) own, or his members, see odes 3.2; 7.12; 8.14.20; 10.6; 17.11.15; 25.11; 42.20; (cf. also 23.19 and note also v.12 of ode 31, "That I might redeem my people and inherit it").

332. The theological differences are too great to allow this as a real possibility.

333. "The Odes of Solomon and the Gospel of John" CBQ 35 (1973),308. See also J.H. Charlesworth, "Qumran, John and the Odes of Solomon", p.128, who states the same conclusion, but notes that "further research is needed before we can be certain". This latter article was published prior to the one first mentioned.

334. But neither is it to be identified with that represented by the opponents of the First Epistle.

335. There is accordingly no word in John which corresponds to the נצחך of ode 41.12.

II. CHRISTOLOGICAL TITLES OCCURRING IN THE ODES OF SOLOMON

A. THE MIRROR

In the thirteenth ode, Christ is the mirror through which the believer is to see himself and to learn what manner of being he is (vv. 1f.). This image of the mirror may be derived ultimately from Wisd. 7. 26, where we meet "the flawless mirror of the active power of God and the image of his goodness", but the function of the mirror is quite different in the two writings.(1) In Wisd. the image is used to show how the figure of Wisdom reflects the operation and the goodness of God himself, while in the ode it serves to designate the unblemished form of Christ to which the believer is required to conform. As the believer looks at Christ, he sees himself as he is and as he ought to be. He beholds the holiness of Christ and recognises his own lack of holiness. This then means that he ought to love Christ's holiness and put it on (v. 3), so that he will be "unblemished at all times with him" (v. 4).

J.Charlesworth draws attention here to the Acts of John, ch. 95, where Christ says, "I am a mirror to you who know me". This statement occurs in a context in which several titles, lamp, mirror, door, and way, are used by Christ of himself, and which is followed by another statement which is similar in one respect to ode 13; "Now if you follow my dance, see yourself in me who am speaking" (ch. 96). However, there is no need to look to the Acts of John for parallels to the ode. The essential ingredients of the imagery are already present in the New Testament at II Cor. 3. 18, where Christians "beholding (as in a mirror) the glory of the Lord are being changed into his likeness".(2) A similar use of the image is found in I Clem. ch. 36: "By him (i.e. Christ) we look up to the heights of heaven. By him we behold, as in a glass, his immaculate and most excellent visage. By him are the eyes of our hearts opened. By him our foolish and darkened understanding blossoms up anew towards his marvellous light".(3)

It is with Ephraem that the mirror image is used to the full. In his Hymns on Virginity 31 Christ is the cleaned or spotless mirror that was set before the Gentiles, into which they looked and saw their own hatefulness, and repented.(4) Elsewhere we see the image of the mirror being applied to Jonah,(5) the water of baptism,(6) the Word,(7) the church,(8) and the dispute between Death and Satan.(9) In the Letter to Publius, Ephraem make a very extended use of the mirror imagery, this time with reference to the Gospel. The first paragraph explains the function of a mirror, and we quote a section of this to show its relatedness to the thought of the ode.

"You do well not to let drop from your hands the polished mirror of the holy Gospel of your Lord, for it provides the likeness of anyone who looks into it, and it shows the resemblance of all who peer into it. And, while it preserves its own nature and undergoes no change, having no spots and being quite free of any dirt, yet when coloured objects are placed in front of it, it changes its aspect, though it itself undergoes no change.... In itself it depicts every limb of the body: it rebukes the defects of the ugly, so that they may remedy themselves, and remove the blackness from their faces".(10)

The use of the imagery of the mirror is sufficiently widespread to allow us to think that the odist has here employed it because it was a common and understandable image for his readers. For the odist, Christ is the one upon whom men must look and fix their eyes in order to see themselves in the light of his life. As they do this and recognise their own lack of holiness, they need to put on the holiness which is seen in Christ.(11)

It is less clear how we are to understand the precise nature of the requirement to be Christ-like. Is the ode a general call to imitate Christ, or is there something specific intended? The question is raised by the wording of v. 3, which reads:

And wipe the ..... from your face,

And love his holiness and put it on.

(12) ܘܡܫܚ ܡܢ ܐܦܝܟ ܕܣܝܡܐ

As all commentators on the Odes have noted, the reading of the MS in line a, ܕܣܝܡ cannot be sustained. The line is generally rendered, "And wipe the filth from your face". Harris-Mingana emended the word in question to ܕܣܝ , which they claimed was a shortened form of ܕܣܝܡ . This was rejected by J.H.Charlesworth, on the following grounds: 1. This shortened form is unattested. 2. The longer form is not a noun but an adjective, and means "filthy".(13)

Charlesworth himself suggests that "it is possible that ܕܣܝ the pass. part. of ܣܝ , was the original form in the manuscript".(14) As he notes, the value of this emendation is the very minor change which is required, necessitating only the transference of the diacritical point from below the ܬ to above it. He states: "This restoration would present the following meaning: 'And wipe the paint from your face'".

If this emendation and translation are allowed, it would give a good sense to the ode, although we disagree with the contention of Charlesworth that chs. 28f. of the Acts of John provide the key to the correct understanding of the ode. For in the Acts, the mirror has no symbolic significance. It merely shows the apostle what his outward appearance is like, so that he can say that the painting of him is like him and yet not like him, since all the artist has been able to capture with his paints is "a dead likeness of what is dead". In the mirror he sees only his "image in the flesh". The colours which the artist has used are therefore not able to provide a true portrait of a person. He needs rather the colours which Jesus, who paints all of us for himself, provides; faith, knowledge, reverence and the like. The contrast in the Acts of John is between the colours

which are natural colours and which are therefore unable to depict the essential man, and which are irrelevant in such an attempt, and those colours which come from Christ and which present the soul to Christ "undismayed and undamaged". There is no perjorative sense attached to "Paint" as there would be in the ode.

A more fruitful source of inspiration for this imagery would be those passages in the Old Testament which speak of paint in derogatory terms, and where "painting the eyes" is virtually equivalent to harlotry.(15) This would be of particular importance in connection with the "holiness" with which the paint in the ode is contrasted, especially if the ode is using this term in a technical sense, that of sexual abstinance.(16) Since asceticism was fairly important in the life of the Syrian church, this aspect needs to be considered, but in view of the fact that this is the only occurrence of "holiness" in the Odes, and that in only three instances are the believers called "holy ones", there is insufficient evidence to suppose that this technical sense is intended here.

If the thought of wiping paint from the face is what the ode is about, the safest way of understanding it will be in terms of spiritual harlotry, of unfaithfulness to God. This would fit in well with the general thought of the Odes, where the relationship between the believers and Christ is expressed in terms of the Bride and the Beloved,(17) and where there is a battle going on between Christ and the false Bridegroom who seeks to deceive men and draw them to himself. Within the context of the Odes, harlotry should be seen more in terms of being joined to the Deceiver instead of to Christ, than in terms of celibacy.(18)

The mirror image does not occur in the Johannine literature, but the idea of the vision of God does. In I Jn. 3. 2f. it is said: "Beloved,we

are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is". The writer however is looking forward to the Parousia, when through their vision of the glorified Christ, the believers will become like him. It is not necessary for us to look to Hellenistic mysticism and to Gnosis in order to explain this transformation, even if it is possible that the author of I Jn. had these religious systems in mind when he wrote. We have already seen that the idea of being transformed into the glorious likeness of Christ is present in II Cor. 3. 18,(19) although there the vision of Christ and the transformation which it produces are already operative.

The idea in the ode and that in I Jn. are similar at one further point, since in the latter, we find that the basis on which this future hope of the vision of Christ lies is that the believer purifies himself (ἁγνίζει ἑαυτόν), as Christ is pure (ἁγνός). This means that there is not only a conforming to the vision of Christ at the Parousia, but also that this transformation is in the process of taking place at the present time, to reach its perfection at the Parousia.

Nevertheless, the symbol of the vision of God is seen differently in the Odes and in I John. The latter understands the transformation of believers to take place at the Parousia, when there will be a perfect vision of Christ, even if an imperfect vision is available in the present,and on the basis of this he exhorts his readers to keep themselves pure from sin. The odist, on the other hand, exhorts his readers to have that vision of Christ which will enable them to see their imperfection, to love Christ's holiness and to put it on, so that they might remain spotless with Christ. In the one, freedom from sin excludes shame at the coming of Christ, and will guarantee a perfect vision of Christ. In the other, the vision of Christ produces a transformation in the life of man, showing up his defects, and producing the desire to share Christ's holiness. The function of the

vision is quite different in the two writings.

B. THE CUP

This symbol has been mentioned above, in connection with the odist's concept of the Son.[20] Ode 19 begins:

1 A cup of milk was offered to me,
And I drank it in the sweetness of the Lord's kindness.
2 The Son is the cup,
And the Father is he who was milked,
And the Holy Spirit is she who milked him.

The image of the cup plays no further part in the ode, and there is an apparent separation between the cup and the milk which goes into it. The milk imagery is further developed, and it is clear that this represents the revelation of God. But this cannot mean that the odist is saying that the revelation, the Word, is separated from the body in which that word expressed itself on the human scene. For the ode also goes on to state that, having mixed the milk of the two breasts of the Father, the Holy Spirit gave this to the Virgin and she gave birth to the Son. This indicates that the odist in some way regards the body of Christ as also having been derived from the Father, and we can account for this by the odist's understanding of the Virgin Birth. But this denies the separation which appears to be present in vv. 1f.

It is possible that the image of being offered a cup of milk to drink refers to some sacramental act. Ephraem, for example, refers to Christ as "a cup who contains all strong wines", giving a clear allusion to the Eucharist.[21]

Nevertheless, there are difficulties in the way of this interpretation. The first is a purely practical one, that it is difficult to fit in

to the ritual of the Odes a drink of water, a drink of milk, and a milk and honey meal.

The second is concerned with the fact that the whole ode deals with the revelation of God and the way in which this is communicated to man. This suggests to us that the image deals only with this fact, and is not to be understood in terms of some ritual activity.

C. THE HEAD

In the Odes this title signifies two things.

1. It means first that Christ has authority, especially over the powers which are hostile to God. In ode 23, the appearance of the Head means that the Son possesses everything, and the seducers and the apostates were destroyed (vv. 18-20). This same idea of the authority of the Messiah is probably also behind the use of the title in ode 17, where Christ has broken the bars and opened the doors for his people to come out (vv. 9ff.)[22]

2. The other aspect of the headship of Christ deals with the gathering of his own to him, so that "they became my members and I was their head" (17. 16). This same idea of the headship of Christ involving the gathering of his people, his members, is also implied in ode 23, with the mention of Christ's inheritance of everything (v. 19). The title thus signifies Christ's Lordship over his people and his union with them.

John does not use this title, although part of the meaning of it in the Odes is paralleled by the image of the Vine and the Branches.[23] The odist however, is closer to Paul than to John in the use of this particular image.[24]

D. BRIDEGROOM

In the Odes, the language of Bridegroom and Bride is found twice, in odes 38 and 42, and in addition, ode 3 carries the symbolism without the terminology. Scholars have generally failed to see any relationship between the "bridegroom and bride" terminology in the Fourth Gospel and the "sacred marriage" (ἱερὸς γάμος) of the mystery religions and of Gnosis, but it is felt that there is some connection between the Odes and the sacred marriage.(25)

(i) Ode 38.9-15

The full passage of ode 38 which contains the marriage symbolism runs as follows:

9 And I saw the corrupting of the corruptor
When the bridegroom who was corrupting was adorned,(26)
And the bridegroom who corrupts and is corrupt.
10 And I asked the truth, who are these?
And he said to me, This is the Deceiver and the Error.
11 And they imitate the Beloved and his Bride,
And they cause the world to err and corrupt it.
12 And they invite many to the wedding feast,
And allow them to drink the wine of their intoxication;
13 So they cause them to vomit up their wisdom and their knowledge,
And prepare for them nonsense.
14 Then they abandon them;
And so they stumble about like mad and corrupted men.
15 Since there is no understanding in them,
Neither do they seek it.

Here it will be seen that although the term "Bridegroom" is not used of the Messiah explicitly, the use of "Beloved" and the reference to the "Corrupt and corrupting bridegroom" who imitates the Beloved means that

Christ is regarded as the true bridegroom. The picture here is of a wedding feast to which many are invited, made intoxicated and deprived of wisdom and understanding, (vv. 12f.), or, expressed differently, we see here a corrupt bridegroom and his bride who lead the world into error and corrupt it (v.11).

There are, however, two elements in this picture which require comment. Firstly, the emphasis in this ode is not on the marriage feast of the Beloved and his Bride, for this is not mentioned except by way of reference to the "imitation" by the corrupt bridegroom and bride. Nor is the emphasis placed even on the wedding feast of these imitators, but is on the corrupting work which they accomplish. There is no attempt to describe the marriage of the corrupt bridegroom and his bride, and the wedding feast simply provides the occasion for their work of deceit and corruption. The passage therefore pre-supposes a marriage relation between the Messiah and his believers,[27] but it is this relationship and not the marriage ceremony which is primary.

Secondly, in this comparison by way of contrast, the fate of the wedding guests is important. What happens to them is found in vv. 14f.

14 Then they abandon ( ) them,
And so they stumble about ( ) like mad ( )
and corrupted ( ) men.
15 Since there is no understanding ( ) in them
Neither do they seek it.

The translation of v. 14 is derived by inference from the thought of the intoxication and deprivation of knowledge which characterises the wedding guests, but there is no warrant for using such deliberately loaded words as "abandon" and "stumble about". Nor should we forget that may be either the active or the passive participle

Pa'el, and it would therefore have been preferable to have allowed this ambiguity to remain in translation by rendering the word "corrupt". Further, the description of the intoxicated guests as "mad" ought to be seen in relationship to ode 28, where the connection between being corrupt and having a lack of understanding also occurs:

14 And they surrounded me like mad dogs (ܟܠܒ̈ܐ ܣܟ̈ܠܐ)
those who in stupidity (ܒܣܟܠܘ̈ܬܐ ܕܠܐ) attack their masters.

15 Because their thought is depraved (ܡܚܫ̈ܒܬܐ),
And their mind is perverted (ܣܠ̈ܝ̈ܢ).

In this section of ode 28 (vv. 9-20), Christ speaks of the attempts of his enemies to achieve his death, and of their inability to do so. For our present purposes it is sufficient to note that it was because of the depravation or corruption of their thought and the perversion of their minds that they attacked him who was before them. They are thus to be compared to mad dogs who ignorantly attack their masters.

In ode 38 it is not the Messiah, but the believer who is under threat of attack. The opening vv. of this ode show us the speaker being borne along by the truth through many dangers, until he reaches the haven of salvation. But it is only because he is so accompanied at all times by the truth that he remains safe. The truth reveals to him all that he does not know, and this includes the drugs of error and the corrupting effect of the wedding feast of the corrupt bridegroom and bride. Because he has been saved from this he says,

16 But I have been made wise so as not to fall into the hands of the Deceivers,
And I myself rejoiced because the truth had gone with me.

The ode is thus about the dangers to which the believer is exposed, and the consequent possibilities of salvation or corruption which lie before him. Man walks with the truth and is established, or he is

deceived through error and becomes intoxicated and without knowledge. The odist is writing about a situation which confronts him and his community in their present life, and in view of the similarity of thought between odes 28 and 38, we should most probably understand that in the latter ode the corrupting influence is exercised through the guests who have been invited and who have accepted the invitation. This means that we should translate v. 14 as follows: "Then they send them out (عدمي), and so they go about (طوفي) like mad (فرني) and corrupt (مسحلي) men. (28) The guests remain guests, and do not become the bride of the Corruptor, but are the means whereby the work of corruption is carried out. If therefore we return to the fact that all of this activity is performed in imitation of that of the Beloved and his Bride, it will mean that the odist regards the true believers as those who have accepted the invitation to the wedding feast of the corrupt bridegroom and bride.

There is no suggestion at all in ode 38 that the believer is or becomes the bride of the Messiah, even if the odist is aware of the Bridegroom - Bride relationship between Christ and the church. The ode is not concerned with the marriage of bridegroom and bride, but with the guests who are invited to the wedding. Christ is the true Bridegroom, and it is by accepting the invitation to his marriage (29) that the believer is able to remain in the truth and not be led away into error. (30)

(ii) ode 42. 7-9

7 For they have rejected those who persecute them;
And I threw over them the yoke of my love.

8 Like the arm of the bridegroom over the bride,
So is my yoke over those who know me.

9 And as the bridal feast is spread out by the bridal pair's home,

So is my love by those who believe in me.

The meaning of v. 9 is determined by the significance of the word here translated "bridal feast" ( ). The noun means "bed", "couch", especially a bridal bed or chamber, and is also used metaphorically of the heavenly resting place or bridal feast. It is used for example in the O.T. Pesh. of the chamber from which the bride or bridegroom comes in Joel 2.16 and Ps. 19.5, and in the N.T. Pesh. as a translation of νυμφών , in the expression "children of the bridechamber".(31) According to R. Murray, "The gnona seems to have been a sort of enclosed tent set up in the house of the bridal pair (bet hatne).(32) The verb translated "is spread out" is of no assistance here since its meaning is also ambiguous, and may mean "stretch out" or "prolong". If we adopt the former of these two meanings, we should also adopt a meaning such as that given by Murray for , since the analogy requires that something be "over" those who believe in Christ. If the latter meaning of is accepted, we could translate, "And as the bridal feast is prolonged in the home of the bridal pair, so is my love over those who believe in me". The difference is not crucial to the interpretation of the ode, but in the first instance the odist would be speaking of the spreading out of the Messiah's love over those who believe in him, a thought which he has already made in v. 8, while in the second instance, the emphasis would lie on the prolongation of Christ's love for his believers.

The theme of Christ's love for his own runs, in ode 42, from v. 4, where Christ promises to be with those who love him. His persecutors have died, but he has risen and will speak through the mouths of those who believe in him, for they have rejected their persecutors. Therefore he has thrown over those who believe the yoke of his love. It is like the arm of the bridegroom over the bride, and it is prolonged like the bridal feast. The fact that the odist uses the bridegroom -

-bride terminology in order to express the simile, and probably also the "yoke"[33] reference in this context, signifies that the writer undoubtedly thought of the relationship between Christ and the church in terms of Bridegroom and Bride. However, his main purpose is not to speak of the marriage which takes place between them, but to show the kind of love relationship which exists.

(iii) ode 3. 3-9

3 For I should not have known how to love the Lord
If he had not continuously loved me.
4 Who is able to distinguish love
Except him who is loved?
5 I love the Beloved and I myself love him,
And where his rest is, there also am I.
6 And I shall be no stranger
Because there is no jealousy with the Lord Most High and Merciful.
7 I have been united (to him), because the lover has found the beloved,
Because I love him that is the Son, I shall become a son.
8 Indeed he who is joined to him that is immortal
Truly shall be immortal.
9 And he who delights in the Life
Will become living.

The terminology of "Bridegroom and Bride" does not occur in this ode, but quite clearly the terminology of "Beloved and lover" is leading in this direction. The two verbs which are found in the context of these terms show us however that the writer is thinking of the marriage relation which exists between the believer and the Lord. In v. 7 the verb ܚܒܪ is probably used because of the marriage connotations

which it suggests. Ephrem uses this verb to express the union between the persons of the Trinity, the union between Christ and the church in the Eucharist and the union between Christ and the church, his Bride.(34) That the last mentioned is the primary meaning in this ode is shown by the verb in the following verse, ܕܒܩ , which is also used of the "cleaving" of a man to his wife, e.g. in Gen. 2.24, Matt. 19.5. A use of this verb which comes closer to that of the ode is found in I Cor. 6.16f., where the emphasis is different, but where the verb is used to signify the joining of the members of Christ to him. (35)

The major difficulty connected with the marriage metaphor of ode 3 is the signification of " the Beloved". Is he Christ or God? Although it is not impossible that Christ is intended, it is more likely that God is regarded as the Beloved, in view of the parallelism between vv. 6 and 7, and the reference to "the Lord Most High and Merciful" in v.7. The situation is complicated in v.7 by the clause "because I love him that is the son" which follows "because the lover has found the Beloved", but this does not necessarily demand that the "Son" is the Beloved. We have already drawn attention to the syntactical problem of this verse, (36) and it was there suggested that clause a of line b is not an exact equivalent of clause b of line a, but that it explains how the lover has found the Beloved. That is to say, the believer has found the Beloved, God the Father, and has been united to him, because he loves the son who has come in order to make the Father known. The ambiguity is caused because here, as elsewhere in the Odes, it is not clear whether the odist sees a clear distinction between the Son and the Father or not.

But how is this union between the believer and God envisaged in the Odes? Here we must not anticipate too much that will need consideration later, but certain conclusions can be drawn.

1. The union between the believer and the Lord is not conceived of in any

individualistic way, but occurs within the context of the community. Thus, although the ode is composed, like the rest, in the first person aingular, this "I" is representative of any who enter the membership of this community. The speaker is dependent upon the members of the Lord who are "with Him" (v.2).

2. It is the Lord's love for those who believe in him which is primary. On the basis of the recognition of that love, the speaker loves the Lord in return (vv. 3f.). The statement of v.2 that the speaker is dependent upon the members of the Lord signifies that it is within the community that the love of God has been made known to him, so that the response of love can be made.

3. The result of this love for God is the entry of the speaker into the "Rest" of the Lord, which may here be synonymous with the community itself. Verse 6, "And I shall be no stranger, because there is no jealousy with the Lord Most High and Merciful", means primarily that the speaker has not been initiated into a union with God which is simply between the two of them, but has been brought into a fellowship which God opens freely to all who wish to come to him. The fact that God is not jealous means that he does not restrict fellowship with himself to just a few chosen ones.(37)

4. A further result of this love and union is that the speaker comes to share, to a certain degree, in the being of God, and of the Son. He will become a son, he will be immortal (ܕܐܪ ܐܬ) and will become living (ܚܝ) (vv. 7-9). These terms correspond to the Son (ܐܒܪ), him who is immortal (ܐܒܐ ܐܬ ܕܡ) and the life (ܚܝܐ).(38) But that this union is not used to convey the idea of the deification of the believer is clearly shown by the different expressions which are used in vv. 8 and 9.

5. All of this is achieved through the Spirit, who is not false,(39) and who teaches men to know the ways of the Lord (v.10).

To summarise: The odist uses the terminology of lover and

Beloved in order to express the relationship between the believer and God, and does this in conjunction with other language which makes this very appropriate for the Bridegroom-Bride concept which we have seen in odes 38 and 42. In ode 38 there is no emphasis at all on the significance of this symbolism for an understanding of the relationship between God or Christ and the church. Instead, all of the emphasis falls on the effects of the marriage between the corrupt bridegroom and bride upon the wedding guests, and the subsequent behaviour of these guests. In ode 42 the Bridegroom-Bride symbolism is used, but only to show that Christ's love for those who believe in him may be described in this way. It is only in ode 3 that any development of this theme is given, and there we find that union with the Lord in this love relationship means sonship, immortality and life, though this is expressed in terms which reject deification of the believer. In this ode the believer is drawn into the community, recognises God's love for him, responds in love and is united to God, so that through the Spirit he receives sonship, immortality and life. As in the other odes there is no attempt to dwell on the Bridegroom-Bride imagery,(40) which is simply symbolic of the union between the believers and God.

There are a few statements in ode 3 which tend to remind us of the Fourth Gospel, but these are not sufficient to show any dependence, and the Bridegroom-Bride concept in any of the above mentioned odes is dealt with in a way which is quite different from anything in the Johannine literature. The image as it is used in the Odes is perfectly explicable in terms of its use in Judaism and its subsequent use in the church.(41)

E. THE SUN

In ode 15 the Lord is the Sun who enlightens the speaker and lifts him up. The first few verses of this ode are quite similar to part of ode 11, and help us to understand the symbolism:

13 And the Lord is like the sun
Upon the face of the land.(42)
14 My eyes were enlightened
And my face received the dew.
15 And my breath was refreshed
By the pleasant fragrance of the Lord.
16 And he took me into his Paradise
Wherein is the wealth of the Lord's pleasure.

In ode 11, the term "Lord" appears to refer to the Most High all the way through and the same could be said of ode 15. Verse 8, "I put on incorruption through his name" is a possible exception to this, but it is equally possible that in the Odes Christ is "the name" of the Most High. However, we regard the title as a reference to Christ, since he is the agent through whom the knowledge of God comes. This ambiguity is due to the fact that the odist does not distinguish critically between Christ as the revelation of God, and God in his self-revelation to man through Christ.

The significance of the title "Sun" here is two-fold:
(a) The title probably refers to the advent of Christ, to the dawning of God's day of salvation. Just as to men who look for daybreak the sun is a source of joy, so is the Lord a source of joy to the odist (v.1), for he has seen this dawn for which he looks. Therefore the "holy day" which the odist has seen in v.3 is the day on which God's illumination has flooded the world through the advent of Christ. This is also the "great day" which the odist states has shined upon the community in 41.4, the day on which the Lord has given to them of his glory.(43) This is the

eschatological day of deliverance on which the sun of righteousness will rise, according to Mal.4.2, and which was fulfilled in the birth of Christ, according to Lk.1.78. The Odist is here thinking not simply of the birth of Christ, or of Christ's whole ministry of revelation, but also of his own apprehension through faith of the fact that in Christ God has made himself known.(44) The day dawns and the sun shines when man in faith recognises and comes to know the revelation which has been given. (b) As the Sun, Christ removes the darkness. This thought is very similar to that of ode 7.21 where the advent of knowledge through the coming of the Lord means that ignorance is destroyed. As a result of this illumination the speaker is lifted up by the Sun's rays. The parallel passage in the eleventh ode suggests that this "lifting-up" refers to the entry of the speaker into Paradise,(45) but this seems a strange way of expressing the means of salvation. The Gnostic Treatise on the Resurrection contains a parallel to this idea. "But if we are manifest in the world bearing him, we are that one's beams, and we are held by him until our setting, which is our death in this life. We are drawn into heaven by him as the beams by the sun, not being restrained by anybody - this is the spiritual resurrection which swallows up the psychic as well as the fleshly" (45.29ff.).(46) The differences from the ode are clear. The odist does not regard the believers as the rays of Christ, the lifting up is not related to death but to the time of reception of salvation, and the odist knows nothing of the three kinds of resurrection implied in the Gnostic writing. But the odist does regard this experience as a kind of resurrection, and this fact suggests that the odist is working within the same range of ideas as the writer of the Treatise.(47)

III THE EX ORE CHRISTI PASSAGES IN THE ODES AND THE EGO EIMI SAYINGS IN JOHN

In the Odes of Solomon there are several sections which are held by most commentators to be spoken ex ore Christi, although the extent of these passages is a matter of debate. The act of separating the ex ore Christi sections is beset with difficulties and involves some measure of circular argument, since they can only be separated from their context on the basis of an understanding of the odist's theology, and then they are used to illustrate, at least in part, the Christological thought of the Odes. However, if it is agreed that there are such passages, and they seem to be demanded, the lack of agreement over their extent is in most cases not an insuperable problem. It is these passages that R. Bultmann sees as providing a parallel to the Revelation Sayings and especially to the Ego Eimi sayings of the Fourth Gospel.(48)

F.H. Borsch cannot find any reason to claim that there is a change of speaker in the Odes, and states that "the psalmist in these Odes becomes not just a saved one, but the mighty saviour, a creator as well as a redeemer. At times he is said to become like the Most High himself, (e.g. 36.5), not just the Messiah",(49) Yet these passages usually indicate the salvation which the Messiah has achieved for those who believe in him, and this statement is balanced by a description of the same salvation as seen from the perspective of the believer. It will be seen that what applies to Christ does not apply to the believer, and that although the destiny of the latter is patterned on that of the former, the two are not identical to the extent that the believer, or even a particular speaker, is elevated to the status of Messiah.(50)

(a) ode 17.6ff.

This is probably the most difficult of the ex ore Christi passages to delineate. On the one hand, v.6 agrees substantially with ode 41.8 which also is probably spoken ex ore Christi, and there does

appear to be a change of direction in the thought from v.5, although there is a connection with v.4. From v.7 to v.9 the thought moves in a line from the idea of God's knowledge and exaltation of the speaker, through his glorification[51] and the raising of his understanding to the height of truth, to the point where God gives to the speaker the authority to walk in his steps so that he opens the doors which were closed. In vv.10ff. the speaker shatters the bars of iron, while his own shackles melt before him and he goes to free all who are bound. This activity of the speaker cannot be ascribed to the odist who has been elevated to the status of Messiah, since he has described his own release from bonds in v.4, and there seems to be no good explanation for a second release for him. We must therefore at this stage be dealing with the activity of the Messiah.

But in vv.7-9 the language is quite similar to that used elsewhere of the believer who has been given new life. We read for example of the knowledge of God of "his own", (7.9; 8.12f.), and of the "becoming great" of the believer (36.4).[52] The truth leads the believer in v.5 of this ode, and in ode 38 it makes clear to the odist whatever he did not understand (v.7). On the other hand, it is not said elsewhere in the Odes that God knew his Messiah, although it is said that he "remembered" him (41.9). More significant is the fact that the Odes nowhere give us the impression that the understanding of the Messiah needs to be raised to the height of truth, for the usual picture is that the revelation of God comes down as the Word of the Lord and that the revelation of God comes down as the Word of the Lord and that this is in effect the revelation of God himself. If these verses are ascribed to the Messiah and not to the believer, it sets a limitation on the divine nature of the Revealer which is at odds with the rest of the Christology of the Odes, and implies a greater degree of humanity than is usually the case.[53]

If these verses do refer to the odist and not to Christ, the

safest place to make the transition in speaker from the odist to Christ, would be at the end of v.9a, "And from there he gave me the way of his steps", signifying that the speaker proceeds along the way which has been laid down and which leads to God. Verse 9b, "And I opened the doors which were closed" fits in better with the activity of the Messiah as it is described in the following verses, but we should allow the existing verse division to stand. But is v.9b does refer to the odist this does not necessarily identify him with the Messiah. The idea then would be the same as in ode 29.8ff., where the odist is given the power to make war by the Word of the Lord which has been given to him, and it is clearly shown that it is the Lord who overthrows the enemy. This is also the force of ode 15.9, where the odist states that "Sheol has been vanquished by my word",(54) and where it is specifically stated that eternal life has arisen in the Lord's land through the proclamation of this life to those who believe.

In vv. 10ff. of ode 17 Christ speaks of himself as the door or opening of everything,(55) signifying the fact that he has released men from their bonds and brought them out of the realm of death into the sphere of life. Here it is clear that life lived in ignorance on this earth is regarded as the equivalent of life in Sheol, and it is through the communication of Christ's knowledge that men are freed from this condition of bondage to death, as well as through the prayer(56) which he offers in his love for them (v.13). In v.14, the fruits which Christ sows in the hearts of those who have been freed symbolise his own freedom from bondage and it is probable that we have in this ode the combination of two ideas connected with Sheol. Firstly there is the concept already mentioned of Sheol representing this world. But secondly, it is probable that the odist is thinking of a real descent of Christ into Sheol, as a result of which death is overcome in order that the fruits of Christ's victory should be available to the believers. The result of this is the transformation of the believer into a new person, and the gathering of the believers to Christ

for salvation (v. 15). Verse 14 clearly reflects v. 4 which is spoken from the point of view of the believer's understanding of his salvation, and v. 15 may well reflect v. 5. That is to say, the gathering of Christ means being led by the truth and not departing from it, which means that if the believer abides in the truth as revealer by Christ he is united to him.

This account of Christ's saving activity leads to a further Christological title and a metaphor for the relationship between Christ and his followers: "Because they became my members and I was their Head" (v. 16). The ode then concludes with a doxology addressed to "our Head, O Lord Messiah" (v. 17). This image of Head and members does not occur in John. In John we find the images of the Shepherd and his sheep, and the Vine and the branches, which do, like the ode, stress the importance of the dependence of the believer on Christ.(57) We may then conclude that although the odist has not derived his terminology from the Fourth Gospel, he uses his own image of Head and members in a way which is similar to the use in the Fourth Gospel of metaphors which signify the life-giving union between Christ and those who believe in him.

(b) ode 8.8-19

Here Christ again speaks as the Revealer who brings knowledge of the Most High (vv. 8ff.). He knows his own and does not reject them (v. 12), and before they came into existence he set his seal upon them (v. 13). That Christ's knowledge of his own before their existence refers to the time before their new birth is shown by v. 14, which speaks of the "members" which Christ prepared for them, and of his preparation of his breasts in order that "they might drink his holy milk and live by it". This mention of the holy milk takes up the thought of the knowledge which he brings in vv. 8 ff., and the idea of the new birth in vv. 13f. Nothing can therefore stand against those who have come to a new existence through Christ (v. 16f).(58) This security which the believer now experiences is the

result of Christ's own renewal of him, and he becomes Christ's own, and is set at Christ's right hand (v. 18). The believer's security also is to be found in the fact that Christ's righteousness, his victory, leads him, and Christ's name remains with him (v. 19).

As in ode 17, the emphasis here is not only upon the knowledge which Christ brings, but also upon Christ's victory and release. This latter fact is shown not simply in v. 19, but again in the closing verses of the ode which are spoken in the name of the believer. In these verses the believer is told to pray and abide in the love of the Lord, those who are loved in the Beloved, those who are kept in him who lives, and those who are saved in him who was saved. This is no reference to the myth of the "saved-Saviour",(59) but an affirmation that those who have been saved by Christ must remain in him who has been released from the power of death by God. There is nothing in this ode which demands that this release from death signifies the Passion and Resurrection of Christ, but it can hardly mean anything else. It cannot, for example, signify his release from the flesh, because there is insufficient emphasis on the fact that the Word who descended was actually involved in human flesh.(60) Instead, the odist states that by revelation of God, and by his victory over the power of death in his own death and resurrection, Christ has provided victory and life for those who abide in him.(61)

(c) ode 10. 4ff.

The ode begins with the odist declaring that God has directed his mouth by his Word, and given to him to proclaim the fruit of his peace (vv. 1f.). This means that he proclaims Christ's victory over the powers which enslave man, and through this proclamation men are converted and brought to freedom in union with God (v. 3).

The ex ore Christi section of this ode follows the same

pattern as the two previously mentioned. Christ has taken the world captive, that is, he has brought out to freedom those who were captive to death, and it then becomes his for the glory of God his Father (v. 4). Verse 5 deals with the gathering together of those who were dispersed, but here the emphasis is on the nations (Gentiles) ( ). Line b of this verse contains a difficulty relating to the motive of Christ in gathering together the Gentiles: but I was not polluted . This should be translated "by my debts" or "by my sins",(62) and this has led to various emendations. 1. W.E. Barnes(63) altered the pronominal suffix, reading "by their sin". This cannot be correct because the following line states that the reason Christ was not stained was "because they confessed me in high places". 2. H. Gunkel(64) simply omitted the suffix all together. 3. Several scholars(65) omitted the Seyame points, reading "by my love". The MS reading certainly creates difficulties, but if could mean "what is owed to me" instead of "what I owe", then the significance of this line could be seen in the contrast with ode 31. 8f.,

8 And they condemned me ( ) when I stood up
Me who had not been condemned ( ).
9 And they divided my spoil,
Though nothing was owed ( ) to them.

This would then imply that although at the death of Christ his enemies took from him that to which they were not entitled, he in gathering together the Gentiles through his death and victory was taking that which was in fact due to him.(66) The question must however remain open. In the concluding verse of the ode the thought returns again to the revelation which Christ gives, and the union with Christ through abiding in Christ and becoming his people.

(d) ode 22

Harris-Mingana suggest that this ode is entirely ex ore Christi, although it seems more probable that the change from the third

person to the second person in v. 6 signifies a change in speaker.(67)

The opening verses of this ode introduce an idea which has not been expressly stated in the previous ex ore Christi passage we have considered:

1 He who caused me to descend ( ) from on high,
And to ascend ( ) from the regions below;
2 And he who gathers what is in the middle ( ),(68)
And throws them to me. ( )

Christ has been brought down from on high and brought up from below. The whole context of this ode deals with the destruction of the seven-headed dragon, the new life into which the believers have entered, the destruction of the world and the kingdom which has replaced it. As in the other odes, man apart from salvation through the Messiah is regarded as dead, and it is with the renewal of life on this earth with which the ode is concerned. It has therefore been suggested that "on high", "below" and "the middle" signify heaven, earth and the air. This is highly unlikely in view of the facts just mentioned, that those who are gathered are the men of the earth, and that the renewed world replaces this present one. The odist is rather saying that Christ's descent into Sheol and his victory there is the cause of the gift of new life to believers in their present existence.

In this account of Christ's saving work we encounter the same characteristics as before, with the exception that nothing is said here about the knowledge which Christ brings. All emphasis is concentrated on the image of the descent into Sheol, and salvation results from believing in the one who has gained the victory and prepared the way for the believers. Again, as in ode 8, we have the idea of union with Christ expressed in terms of the guarding activity of the Name,(70) and the concept of the new body(71) which is provided for the believer. What is totally new in this ode is the assertion that Christ's victory means the dissolution of the present world

and the establishment of God's kingdom upon the rock,[72] and it is most probable that "thy rock" is here a designation for Christ.[73]

(e) ode 28. 9ff.

The opening verses of this ode deal with the odist's security, joy and confidence, gained as a result of his inseparable union with Christ and the life-giving Spirit within him.

In the ex ore Christi passage the pre-existence of Christ is clearly stated: He "was older than their memory" (v. 18), and he was "before" those who came "after" him (v. 19), which is another way of stating v. 18. It is then within this context that the statement of v. 17, "And I did not perish, because I was not their brother, nor was my birth like theirs",[74] together with the other statements implying a docetic view of Christ's death, must be understood. Verses 9f. indicate the amazement of those who saw him because they thought that he had perished, but this injury[75] became his salvation. But because their minds were perverted and they had no understanding, they rejected him and hated him. This rejection and lack of understanding is focused on the fact that there was no jealousy in Christ, that is, that he did good to every man. (vv. 12-15).

With v. 16 we come to another of the obscure images of the Odes:

But I was carrying water in my right hand,
And their bitterness I endured by my sweetness.

Harris-Mingana suggest that a further line, "that I might put out their flame" may need to be inserted between these two lines of text, although "perhaps no explanation is necessary ..... the dogs were mad and would run away at the sight of water. Hydrophoria ..... was the natural cure for hydrophobia". This suggestion however, hardly assists towards the understanding of the ode.[76]

Two questions arise with respect to this verse: 1. To what does the pronominal suffix "their" in line b refer - the enemies, the water or both? 2. Is there a Biblical allusion here, and if so, what is the source? The idea of Christ bearing the bitterness of his enemies is also found in ode 31.12, and this idea also fits in well with ode 28. If however the pronoun "their" refers to the enemies, the "water" of line a then signifies something which Christ had which enabled him to endure the assults of his enemies. That is to say, the water is equipment for Christ, because of which he came through his ordeal. This could be the meaning intended, but it is difficult to see what the water stands for.(77)

Alternatively, the bitterness could refer to the water, and there are then several Biblical passages which could be in mind. From the New Testament there is the "wine mingled with gall" of Matt. 27.34(78) with which is contrasted the sweetness of Christ in Ephraem's Hymns on Virginity 31.13. J.H. Bernard regards Matt. 27.34 as the most likely origin of the verse, with the bitter drink symbolising the "incidents of the Passion".(79) From the Old Testament the bitter water of Marah provided writers of the early chruch with a symbol of the Passion of Christ, in which the tree which Moses threw into the water to make it sweet is compared with Christ's cross.(80) A second water of bitterness is found in Num. 5.17 - 27, which the priest has in his hand and which he gives to a suspected adulteress to drink, and which Ephraem regards as being derived from the water with the power of the golden calf which Moses gave the Israelites to drink in Ex. 32.20.(81)

It is not possible to isolate any one of these possible Biblical allusions to the exclusion of the others, and it is likely that in some measure all are in the mind of the writer. The verse would then imply the following: The bitter water symbolises the curse of God, and through his cross Christ has removed this curse which rightly is directed against man, so that man is now united to God.

The ode thus states that Christ is the pre-existent One.[82] His descent is not explicitly mentioned, but is implied by this fact. In his coming to men he was rejected because of his universal offer of salvation. But through his Cross he has removed the alienation between man and God, and brought them into union, provided that man has faith in him. A further effect of the Cross may be the gift to the believer of the Spirit, which is the guarantee of the life he has experienced.

(f) ode 31. 6-13.

In the opening verses of this ode the odist relates how the chasms, darkness, error and contempt were all destroyed at the appearance of the Lord through his truth. Christ offers to the Most High those who had become sons through him,[83] and he was justified, for his Holy Father had given them to him.[84] (vv. 1-5).

The ex ore Christi passage begins with a call to those who have been afflicted to come forth and receive life (vv. 6f). Verses 8-10 refer to Christ's condemnation and lack of guilt, the dividing of his spoil and his silence in the face of all this, and are inspired by the tradition of Christ's Passion. But the use of the word "spoil" (ܣܠܒܐ)[85] in v. 9 suggests that while the idea of dividing Christ's spoil was motivated by the dividing of his clothing at the crucifixion, it has been interpreted by the odist in terms of the successful attempt by men of his own day in causing men to defect from the faith.[86] That is to say, Christ's spoil is the fruit of his victory over Sheol, and the odist's opponents, those who reject and condemn Christ, have managed to seduce men from the faith, or have prevented them from coming to faith. This also implies that there is a double significance attached to the idea of Christ's standing up in v. 8a. On the one hand he stands up to the judged, but the verb also signifies the resurrection "Rising up". The verse thus implies, on the part of men opposed

to the odist, rejection of the belief in the resurrection of Christ, which constitutes a condemnation of him.

In v. 11 Christ is likened to a "solid rock" (ܟܐܦܐ ܕܫܪܪܐ), which became a significant Christological title in later Syriac literature, but which does not appear to be so used in the Odes,[87] notwithstanding the importance of the adjective "solid, true". In this ode is symbolises the firmness and stability of Christ in the face of his opponents, a stability which is like that of a rock which is pounded by the waves.[88]

Verse 12 states that Christ has borne the bitterness "because of humility" (ܒܡܟܝܟܘܬܐ ܠܝ), in order that he might redeem and inherit[89] his people. But what does "because of humility" signify here? Harris-Mingana translate "for humility's sake", to which J.H. Charlesworth objects on the ground that "The suffering was endured because Christ was humble, and not 'for humility's sake'".[90] The distinction is important, because on it depends whether or not the humility (or humiliation) was of any effect in the redemption of Christ's people. Probably the odist means that Christ endured the assault of his enemies for the sake of humility: i.e. so that he would be humiliated.[91] Through the humiliation on the Cross, Christ descends to Sheol and overcomes it.

In v. 13 we find the explanation of the redemption of Christ's people given in terms of the salvation of the seed of the patriarchs, to whom had been given the promise of such a deliverer. According to J.H. Charlesworth, "This passage was probably composed ..... by Christians who were Jews and saw in Jesus the Messiah who fulfilled the promises to them".[92] That is possible, but unlikely if ode 10. 5 signifies an unwillingness on the part of Jews to accept the Gentiles as part of God's people. It is more probable that the odist's community was composed (predominantly composed) of Gentiles, who lived in close contact with Jews, and who saw

themselves as the true heirs to the Biblical promises.[93]

There is a stronger emphasis here on the tradition of the Passion of Christ than in some other odes,[94] but the same general ideas are present. Christ enters Sheol and redeems his people. Nothing is said of the new being which the believer becomes, but it is implied in the assertion that those who have been given to Christ by his Father have "become sons through him" (vv. 4f.). What is new in this ode is the assertion in v. 13, that the Redeemer is the fulfilment of the promises to the patriarchs.

(g) ode 33. 6 - 13.

Some scholars are of the opinion that the "perfect Virgin" who proclaims in vv. 6ff. is not Christ, but the church.[95] But although the church can be described as a virgin, it is not likely that from the church we would find statements such as we find in vv. 8 and 12, where the speaker will "enter into" the hearers, or where they will "put me on".[96] Is it the church or Christ who is their judge (v. 11)? Finally, does the church really say, "I will make them to trust in my name"? These statements belong to Christ rather then the church, and we believe that vv. 6ff. are spoken ex ore Christi, and that Christ is here pictured as Wisdom.

There are however a couple of difficulties in the opening verses of this ode which need consideration before we can interpret the ex ore Christi passage.

1. How is the change of pronoun from feminine to masculine in vv. 1ff to be understood?

1 But again Grace was swift and dismissed the Corruptor,
And descended upon him to renounce him.[97]
2 And he caused utter destruction before him,
And corrupted his work.
3 And he stood on the peak of a summit and cried aloud,
From one end of the earth to the other.

4 Then he drew to him all those who obeyed him,
For he did not appear as the Evil One.

According to W. Bauer,[98] the "he" is the redeemer, "in dem die Gute von oben herabkam". U. Wilckens goes further and says that "die Gestalt des Erlösers teilweise weiblich (v. 1. 5), teilweise mannlich (v. 2 - 4) ist, wobei offensichtlich ein und diesselbe Gestalt gemeint ist".[99] If the subject of these two verses is the same, it is impossible to make any sense of the text which states that the descent of Grace had as its purpose the bringing to nothing of this "him". The "he" is the corruptor of v. 1a, and he it is who causes utter destruction and corrupts his own work.[100] Certainly this "he" also is pictured in the form of Wisdom in vv. 3f., but this is the whole point of vv. 6ff. The Corruptor has appeared in the form of Wisdom, calling to men to come to him and find life. This he cannot do because he pretends to be Wisdom but is not, and the danger is all the more insidious precisely because of this; he does not appear as the Evil One and therefore he does not repel, but attracts men to himself.[101] It is because of this danger that the perfect Virgin summons men to come to her instead, to leave the ways of the Corruptor which they have accepted, and thus to find life, not destruction. The issue is thus about the two options available to men; either to listen to and obey the Corruptor, which can only lead to destruction, or to listen to and obey the perfect Virgin, Christ, which results in being brought from destruction and experiencing life.

2. How is v. 1 related to this? The translation above is that of J. H. Charlesworth, but is fairly close to that of Harris-Mingana, who has "left" instead of "dismissed". Others prefer also to translate ܫܒܩ by "corruption" instead of "corruptor". Although the odist does not always follow a logical train of thought, he rarely writes nonsense, as Harris-Mingana suggest.[102] It therefore is crucial to the understanding of this ode to determine in what sense Grace has "left" or "dismissed" the corruptor (or corruption). It is scarcely possible to make this equivalent to

"was not corrupted",[103] and keep any sequence of thought in this verse. Nor does it make any sense to say that Grace left the Corruptor and came upon him to bring him to nothing, but it would make sense if the two ideas were re-arranged.[104]

We suggest a rather different meaning needs to be given to the verb ʿzb in this verse, based on other considerations in the ode. In our opinion, this verb should be translated not "left", but "let loose" and it signifies the loosing of Satan for his assault on men prior to his complete destruction by Christ, as we find in Rev. 20, 7ff. This is the final great battle between Christ and the Corruptor in which the latter is totally crushed. But before this he has the opportunity of drawing men to himself, for he pretends to have the truth and to be worthy of man's allegiance. The Odes have left very little room for a future eschatology hope, but in v. 12 the mention of the "new world" supports our interpretation. This is not to assert that the odist necessarily understands this reference to the new world in a future sense, but clearly this new world symbolises the totally new order of creation which comes into force after the destruction of the Corruptor.[106] This is the situation which the odist sees already in operation within his own community, and the response to, or rejection of the message of Christ pre-figures this final battle for man between Christ and the Corruptor.

The ex ore Christi passage contains Christ's call to men to forsake the ways of the Corruptor, and obey him and be saved. The eschatological note sounds again in the assertion that Christ is "your judge",[107] but added to this is the assertion that for those who have put on Christ will not be rejected but will possess incorruption in the new world. In distinction to the Corruptor, whose ways lead to destruction, Christ will make known his ways to those who seek him, and he will make them to trust[108] in his name.

The account of the saving work in this ode is similar to that elsewhere, consisting of the overcoming of him who brings man to death, and his gift of life to those who trust him through his revelation of the truth. But the imagery in which this teaching about Christ is delivered is different from that elsewhere, although it is closely related to it. Elsewhere Christ's victory has been seen in terms of his descent into and victory over Sheol, while here the victory is presented as the final drama of the world's history,(109) unless we think in terms of Christ's release of the corruptor in ode 17. We have here also a further Christological function presented, that of Christ as judge. Here judgment is related to one thing only - the acceptance or rejection of the revelation of Christ.

(h) ode 36. 3ff.

Although some scholars believe that this section is spoken ex ore Christi, we believe that it is more naturally spoken from the point of view of the believer, and it will therefore not be considered here.(110)

(i) ode 41. 8 - 10.

Verses 1 - 7 of ode 41 constitute a call to the believers to give praise and honour to the Lord because of the gift of the Messiah through whom they have received God's light and glory. In vv. 11ff. the odist explains more fully who the Messiah is - the Word of the Lord, the man who was humbled, the Son of the Most High.

In vv. 8 - 10 Christ speaks, and these verses provide a connecting link between the other two sections of the ode, for they deal with the origin of the Messiah through whom the believers have found life, and explain how it is that the believers have been able to experience this life-giving activity of the Messiah.

8 All those who see me will be amazed,

Because I am from another race.

9 For the Father of Truth[111] remembered me;
He who possessed me from the beginning.
10 For his riches begat me,
And the thought of his heart.

Verse 8 indicates the essentially other-wordly character of the Messiah which we have seen in other odes. Verse 9 then proceeds with a statement of the Father's intention concerning the Messiah, along with a description of the Messiah's pre-existence. But this pre-existence is not an existence alongside of the Father such as we find in the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel.[112] The Father "possessed" his Messiah, and this means that the Messiah existed within, not alongside, God, as v. 14 shows. When the ode says that the Father "remembered" the Messiah, this means that God had the intention of putting forth the Messiah within him for the work of salvation, and that he now remembered this intention and put it into effect. This is shown firstly by v. 10 where the begetting of the Messiah occurs through God's thought, and secondly by v. 15, where the Messiah "was known before the foundations of the world". This knowledge of the Messiah by God is his knowledge that he would put forth his Messiah for men's salvation, an event which occurred in the appearance of his Word, the man, the Son of the Most High. Expressed in other words, this means that God had within his heart his thought of sending his Messiah to save men, and his remembering signifies the intention of putting this thought into effect, which is another way of saying that the thought of the Father begot the Messiah. It was through the "richness" (ܥܘܬܪܐ) of the Father that this occurred, and this term is a shorthand way of saying that through the richness of the Father, man would be enriched.[113]

The ex ore Christi passage in this ode adds nothing to the understanding of Christ which is present in the other odes, but does provide a corrective to the pre-existence concept in odes 22 and 28, where, in any

case, there is no content given to the concept. From this ode we would have to say that the pre-existence of Christ means not being eternally with the Father, but eternally in the Father, and at the proper time this Christ who is present in the Father as an intention, is put forth as the Christ in human form for the purposes of salvation.(114)

(j) ode 42. 3-20

This passage falls into two sections, vv. 3 - 9 and vv. 10 - 20. The first deals with the effects of Christ's resurrection, both for those who rejected him and for those who trust in him.(115) The second section deals with Christ's descent into Sheol, and here at least the odist thinks of a real descent into Sheol, following on from the reference to the Cross in vv. 1f. Here too the odist thinks of a real death of Christ, in so far as he is able to express this. Thus when Christ states,

10 I was not rejected although I was considered to be so,
And I did not perish although they thought it of me,

the odist is not expressing a docetic view of Christ. The emphasis rather is upon the fact that although Christ was thought to have died, death could not hold him. At the sight of him Sheol was shattered, Death disgorged him and many along with him (v. 11),(116) for he went down to the depths of Sheol(117) and death was not able to endure him(118) (vv. 12f.). Among those who were held captive by death Christ preached the word of life and made a congregation of living men (v. 14).(119) Those who became living were those who recognised him as the Son of God who could not be held by death, and who believed that he was able to bring them out from death(120) so that they could be saved with him(121) (vv. 15-18). Christ then placed(122) their faith in his heart and set his name upon them because they had become free and belonged to him (vv. 19 - 20).

In this ode we find the same characteristics which are present

in the other odes we have considèred. Christ goes down to Sheol, frees those who are bound, gathers to himself those who believe in him, and makes them his own, placing his name upon them as a sign of their new allegiance. Since this is the descent of Christ into Sheol after his crucifixion which is being related, the dead must be those who had died prior to the coming of Christ, and who had not yet had the opportunity of faith and life. In the first section of this ex ore Christi passage, the odist therefore expresses the significance of this descent into Sheol for the people of his own community.

The death of Christ, the removing of the revelation of God through him, marks a turning point in the opportunity open to man for salvation, for at his death, Christ became useless to those who did not know, or had not possessed him, since he is hidden from them (v. 3). But Christ will be with those who love him, who set their hope on him, because he rose up and is alive, and will speak through them (vv. 4 - 6). The persecutors of Christ are dead (v. 5), but those who believe in Christ must face persecution also, and in their rejection of their persecutors and their love for Christ, they are encircled by Christ's love, a love which is like that of the bridegroom for his bride (vv. 7 - 9).

These verses (3 - 9) which deal with the relationship between Christ and those who believe in him in the period after his resurrection, characterise the odist's understanding of union with Christ for the members of his own community. Christ has been crucified, but for those who believe that he has overcome death and made available the gift of life, he is the Saviour who loves them and is always with them.

THE EGO-EIMI SAYINGS

On seven occasions in the Gospel of John we find Jesus addressing his audience in the form of an "I am" saying, in which he both

presents himself as the one in whom salvation is to be found, and offers the promise of life to those who accept him as the revelation of God. In these sayings Jesus sets forth his claim to be the one and only mediator of salvation, and he makes this claim in opposition to other supposed mediators.(123) Who these other claimants were is a matter of debate. R.E. Brown wishes to see these statements placed firmly within a background of Palestinian Judaism, so that the false claimants spring entirely from a Jewish mis-apprehension of God.(124) Others regard these claims of Jesus as being in opposition to Gnostic Revealer figures, and look particularly to the Mandaean writings to provide parallels for them. As a first step we ought to consider the "I am" through which the divine word of revelation is offered in the Old Testament, and in most cases it is relatively easy to derive the content of these Johannine assertions from the imagery of these writings. However the use of such predications is much wider than this, and S. Schulz(125) points out that the "I am" statement in combination with an abstract image is to be found neither in the Old Testament, nor in late Jewish writing nor in Qumran, but it occurs frequently in the Gnostic literature. Schulz therefore sees the "I am" saying as based on a Gnostic pattern, in combination with images which are derived in the main from Old Testament and Jewish-apocalyptic origins.(126) It is also the case that the word of promise attached to the "I am" sayings in the Fourth Gospel is not to be found in the Old Testament, but neither can it be shown to belong to the Gnostic literature.(127) We do not believe that it is necessary to look specifically to Gnostic parallels to understand the "I am" statements of the Fourth Gospel, even if this Gospel was directed, at least in part, against a Gnostic front.(128) Christ is there the one Revealer of God, the one way to the Father, before whom all other pretended mediators of salvation, regardless of their origin, are non-existent.

The usual form of the Ego-Eimi sayings is as follows: I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall never hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst (Jn. 6. 35). Jesus first of all identifies himself as the means of life through some particular image, and then offers a promise, which includes within it the conditions for receiving what is promised.(129) Five of the seven Ego-Eimi sayings follow this pattern. The exceptions are Jn. 10. 11, concerning the Good Shepherd, and Jn. 15. 1, which speaks of the True Vine. These two differ from the others in two ways: an adjective, "good", "true", is added to the image; the image is developed almost to a parable.(130)

The image of the True Vine differs in one other respect also. This not only speaks of Christ, but of the Father too. "I am the True Vine and my Father is the gardener. Every branch of mine which bears no fruit he takes away and every branch which does bear fruit he prunes, that is may bear more fruit. Here the emphasis is on the action of the Father, not of Christ. The other sayings presuppose a situation in which men are confronted with the revelation of God in Christ, and need to respond in faith to that revelation. In this final saying, it is presupposed that men have made a response to the revelation of God in Christ, and the challenge here is to continue in the faith into which they have entered. Therefore the Vine imagery deals with abiding in Christ (15. 5ff.), or abiding in his word (15. 7),(131) or abiding in his love (15. 10).(132)

These Ego-Eimi sayings set forth unambiguously Christ's claim to be the revelation of God, and the only revelation. Over against the claims of the Jews that the Torch was heavenly bread, Jesus declares that he alone is living bread, and that only through eating the bread which he would give through his death, his flesh, (6. 51), can man live. Or, over against the light of the world. To follow him is to have the light of life, but to fail

to do so is to remain in darkness, which is guilt (9. 41).[133] Alternatively it can be said that to turn away from Christ, and to reject his revelation is to die in sins, because when they have lifted him up on the Cross so that he returns to the Father, the opportunity for life is gone (8. 22ff).[134] Therefore, because the light is with men for only a short time, they must believe in the light and become sons of light, for when the light is removed, they will be left in darkness, (12. 35f).

Just as Christ claims to be the Revealer of God to the exclusion of all others, so he claims to offer salvation to all. This is implied in several of the sayings; "he who comes"; "he who believes"; "he who follows"; "if any man enter". These expressions suggest that the revelation which Christ has brought is for all men, so that all may know the Father, even if it is also clear that this unambiguous and exclusive claim to be the one and only revelation of God inevitably causes offence, and calls forth rejection, so that in the end, those who believe are sharply differentiated from those who do not.[135]

The ex ore Christi passages in the Odes and the Ego-Eimi sayings of the Fourth Gospel perform very much the same functions; to show that the Messiah is the only source of knowledge of God, and that in him alone is eschatological life to be found. Yet there are clearly significant differences.

1. In John, the emphasis in the Ego-Eimi sayings is concentrated on receiving the revelation in Christ, on coming to him and believing in him, so that the Father can be seen and known. In the Odes, there is some emphasis on this in the ex ore Christi passages on the fact of Christ as Revealer, (odes 8, 17, 33); in the majority of odes, including the three just mentioned, the emphasis falls on the defeat of Sheol, and the release of the captives from there. The one exception to this is ode 41, where the ex ore Christi

passage deals with the relationship between Christ and the Father.

2. The Johannine images associated with the Ego-Eimi sayings do not, for the most part, occur in the ex ore Christi passages. The one exception to this is "the Door", but this is used in a different sense from John's. For John, Jesus is the means of entry into life. For the odist, the Messiah is the one who opens the doors of the prison and releases men. In the end, this means that the open door also leads to life, but the Messiah is not identified with the Door, he is rather the own who opens doors.(136)

3. There is one saying in the ex ore Christi passages which agrees in form with the Ego-Eimi sayings. In ode 33. 11 b and 12 Christ says, "I am your judge; and those who have put me on shall not be injured, but shall possess incorruption in the new world". This verse of the ode gives us the clearest indication of a future eschatological hope in the whole collection. In the Fourth Gospel, not only do we not find the figure of the judge in the Ego-Eimi sayings, but they are not concerned with future eschatological events. All attention is on the presence of life in the response to Christ now.

We conclude that although there may have been a common source of inspiration behind the form of the Revelation sayings in the Fourth Gospel and the ex ore Christi passages in the Odes, the odist has not derived his particular form of expression from the Gospel. Rather we should think of two prophetic communities each dealing with different images and theological concepts, and using these to express the significance of Christ for their own particular communities.

IV THE VIRGIN BIRTH

The Gospel of John has nothing which corresponds to the Birth Narratives of Matt. and Luke, and does not mention the fact of the birth through the Virgin at all. This statement would need correction if the singular reading ἐγεννήθη (137) in Jn. 1. 13 is adopted, but this is almost certainly not original.(138) C.K. Barrett believes that although the singular is to be rejected, "it remains probable that John was alluding to Jesus' birth, and declaring that the birth of Christians, being bloodless and rooted in God's will alone, followed the pattern of the birth of Christ himself".(139) It is possible then that John was aware of the tradition of the Virgin Birth and did not wish to exclude it from the range of ideas within which he was working. But at the same time the allusions to this tradition are very slight, and John's major pre-occupation is with Christ who is the Son of the Father, who was eternally with the Father, and who has come to reveal to men those things which he has seen and heard in the presence of the Father.(140)

In the Odes of Solomon the concept of the Virgin Birth is found in ode 19, but there are question marks placed against the identification of the Virgin with Mary, whose name does not occur in the Odes. The relevant section of the Ode runs:

5 The she (the Holy Spirit) gave the mixture to the
world(141) without their knowing,
And those who received it are in the fulness of the
right hand.
6 The womb of the Virgin took it,
And she received conception and gave birth.
7 So the Virgin became a mother with great mercies.
8 And she laboured and bore the Son without pain,
And because it did not occur without purpose.(142)

9 And she did not require a midwife
Because he caused her to give life.
10 She brought forth like a strong man with desire,
And she bore according to the manifestation,
And acquired with great power.

According to W. Frankenberg,(143) who interprets the Odes throughout in terms of the inner life of the mystic, the "world" in v. 5 does not indicate the world of men, but ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος . The fate of the Word which comes to man in God's revelation is this in paralled to that of the Logos who came among men, the world did not know him (Jn. 1,10.26). The following verses also picture the fate of this Word which is placed within man, but this time in terms of the virgin who hungrily accepts the offered Word. The "virgin" therefore represents the soul, which in the acceptance of the Word gives birth to the Son, the individualised Christ. This is interesting, but the concept of the "world" cannot be internalised in the way in which Frankenberg attempts. This interpretation also creates a disjunction between vv. 5 and 6, whereas there is no good reason why this should be done. The cup of milk offered to the speaker in v. 1 symbolises the revelation which is given through the Son, a revelation which is also offered to the world and which also becomes manifest in the Son who is born to the Virgin.(144) We therefore wish to exclude this interpretation, along with that of A. Nairne, who sees the Virgin as the church.(145)

The verb in v. 6 which describes the action of the virgin's womb in taking the mixture is strange, ( ), and of the emendations offered, that given by W.E. Barnes(146) would be the most likely, since it would appear to be the basis for the "infirmatus est" in the quotation in Lactantius, Divine Institutes IV,12. This understanding of would fit in with the view of the birth in vv. 8f., but is strange in the context of the following line. We should then accept the reading of the text as we

have it, symbolising the catching by the virgin of what was given by the Spirit.(147)

There are three features of this birth which call for attention.

1. The birth is painless, and the virgin appears to have had almost no significance in the proceedings. This latter fact depends upon the translation of v. 8b, but it appears to mean that because the birth caused no pain, or perhaps because the birth was not without purpose, the virgin was quite ineffective.(148) We find this idea of the absence of pain at the birth of Christ in the Gospel of Bartholomew II.13,(149) but as Harris-Mingana state parallels can be found in pagan literature. The idea however provides some questions with regard to the nature of the birth so descrived.

2. As a result of this understanding of the birth, the virgin has no need of a midwife to deliver her. Harris-Mingana(150) make reference to the fact that the odist is working on the text of Ps. 22 and that this provides the explanation for the ode. They also draw attention to the ἄνευ χειρῶν of Dan. 2.45 which was also used to illustrate the same fact. At the same time the idea has been used to support a rather dubious Christology. In the Protoevangelium of James for example, we read of the conception of Mary through the Holy Spirit and of Joseph going to seek a Hebrew midwife when the birth of the child was imminent (ch. 18). When Joseph and the midwife arrived back at the cave a cloud overshadowed it. Then when the cloud disappeared "a great light appeared so that our eyes could not bear it. A short time afterwards that light withdrew until the child appeared, and it went and took the breast of its mother Mary".(151) More significant for our ode is Gospel of Peter ch. 24, which not only mentions the absence of the midwife, but also makes reference to the stone cut without hands of Dan. 2. 34.35 and to the one who comes like a son of man from Dan. 7.13, to which

Harris-Mingana also refer. Therefore it is significant that the writer of the Acts of Peter can claim that a prophet has said, "We have neither heard her voice, nor has a midwife come in. Another prophet says, 'He was not born from the womb of a women, but came down from a heavenly place'". This picture of the birth of Christ may be explained in terms of the difficulty which faces all who would speak of a real encounter with God in the person of Christ, but the humanness of Christ is pushed so far into the background that it is debateable if there is any humanity left. The logical end of such thinking is that criticised by Iren. Adv. Haer. III.11,3,(152) where he speaks of those who "make the assertion that this dispensational Jesus did become incarnate, and suffered, whom they represent as having passed through Mary just as water through a tube". The odist may not quite be saying this, but he appears to have been influenced by ideas such as this.

3. Verse 10 of ode 19 states that the virgin brought forth like a strong man with desire, in the translation above. The two questions which need to be answered here are, What does "like a strong man" (ܐܝܟ ܓܒܪ) mean, and What is the meaning of "with desire" and with what element in the line is it associated?

The phrase "like a man" could refer either to the virgin or to the one born of her. Harris-Mingana(153) opt for the latter, probably rightly, stating that in vv. 10 and 11, "the word ܐܝܟ is almost certainly the object of all the Syriac verbs". This interpretation also seems to be required by the account of the birth which has just given in the ode. W.E. Barnes suggested that the Phrase refers to the action of the virgin, and that she brought him forth 'as a strong man,'(154) making reference to Ps. 19.5. This is less likely than the former interpretation.

The phrase "with desire" (ܒܨܒܝܢܐ or "with will") can have three possible meanings. It may go with "like a man", giving the rendering of J.H. Charlesworth, "like a strong man with desire", but since we have

rejected this interpretation of "like a man" this can be set aside. The other two possibilities are that the phrase refer either to the virgin or to God. The latter is supported by Harris-Mingana, who then see a reference to Jn. 1.13, but the context of the ode does not allow us to be as specific as this. On the one hand, the verb in v. 6a suggests an eager taking of what was offered by the Spirit, and this could imply that v. 10 means, It was in accordance with the will of the virgin that she bore the son.

This brings us to the significance of the words "as a man". There is a sense in which to speak of Christ as a man but not as a man like other men is orthodox enough, and the Christological heresies of the early church bear witness to the attempts to explain this fact and show the one-sided solutions which were offered.(155) The Christology of the odist may be interpreted in an orthodox sense,(156) but the preceding verses of ode 19 suggest that the odist was not attempting to state that the son born of the virgin was truly God and truly man. The human element has been almost lost in the account of the divine revelation which has come to men. God has come to man to bring knowledge of himself, and the Son appears, especially in this ode, to be the form of that revelation which is appropriate to human perception. This is close to the gnostic understanding of the Revealer, although it is not without qualification to be categorised as Gnostic.(157) It does mean however, that we do not find in the Odes a statement such as "The Word became flesh", nor can the Christology of the Odes provide us with such an idea.

V THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST

We have shown that the odist's understanding of the Virgin Birth leads him to statements which, while they do not deny the fact of Christ's true humanity, also do not expressly affirm it. When we look for evidence of the humanity of Christ the evidence is ambiguous. We have shown above that although the Odes appear to suggest that the Redeemer is simply the manifestation of God in human form, there is a clear cut distinction between God and Christ. This can be demonstrated not only by the use of the term "the Lord's messish", but also by those other passages which speak of the Father being pleased with the Son (7. 15), of the work of Christ being for the praise of God his Father (10. 4), or of the Son's offering to the Father of those who had become sons (31. 4). It is also possible to assume that if as ode 7. 15 states, the Father was pleased with the Son, this means more than the fact that God took pleasure in the work of the Revealer who had been sent from above, and the pleasure is based upon the obedient activity of the Son,(158) but this remains uncertain. It is when we come to the statements in the Odes about the Cross of Christ and his descent into Sheol that we find more cause to see evidence of the humanity of Christ, but it is only perhaps in ode 42 that the descent into Sheol is intended to portray Christ as having actually died, and even there the language is not without problems. However, we accept that there the odist is speaking of a real death, in accordance withhis understanding of the Christian Gospel. Elsewhere in the Odes the descent into Sheol signifies the descent of Christ to earth, to bring the revelation of God and to bring men to life from the death of error and ignorance. In the Odes, all of the Christological emphasis is placed on this descent to bring to men the revelation of God, in order that the believer might be able to follow Christ to new life with God, and there is no attempt to describe any of the "human" events in Christ's life.

This fact must be seen in association with the further one that nowhere in the Odes is the name "Jesus" mentioned.(159) J. H. Bernard

notes that this is a characteristic which the Odes have in common with the Shepherd of Hermas, which is "undoubtedly a Christian composition" and he concludes that the omission "may not be significant".(160)

But the omission of the name from the Odes suggests that this is because there is no particular salvific significance attached to it. The odist is concerned with the revelation which has come from God, and at a particular point in time this revelation was manifested in the Christ who came. For the odist however, this time is past, and it is no longer possible for him and his community to receive knowledge of God through this one who came as a man. For him this is only possible through the proclamation of the community, and when he speaks of the "coming" of the Lord, he does so from his stand-point within the community. Ode 7 speaks about the appearance of the Word among men to reveal God, so that the Most High will be known by his saints. Verses 17ff. show how the odist understands this.

17 To announce to those who have songs of the coming of
the Lord
That they may go forth to meet him and may sing to him
With joyand the harp of many tones.
18 The Seers shall go before him
And they shall be seen before him.
19 And they shall praise the Lord in his love
Because he is near and does see.

The thought in v. 17 is that those who are waiting for the coming of the Lord are to be told that their waiting is over, for he has come. While this could be interpreted in terms of the coming of the Lord in Jesus Christ, the following verses suggest that this coming occurs for the members of this particular community in some cultic act. The picture here is that

of a procession in which the "seers" (ܚܙܝܐ) precede the Lord, praising him for his love in providing knowledge of himself through his word, and the singers are therefore to "sing the grace of the Lord Most High" (v. 22). There is no certain New Testament allusion in mind here, although we could think of the Triumphal Entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, or perhaps of the Virgins waiting for the Bridegroom in Matt. 25. 1ff.(161) But although the odist has earlier been speaking of the appearance on earth of the Word, here he is thinking only of the Word as proclaimed in the community. The knowledge of God arrives as it is declared to men and received by them. For all men who could not by eyewitness of the historical Jesus the message which he brought needs to become available through the preaching of the Word, but this preaching needs to be firmly tied to the historical manifestation of Jesus himself.(162) For the odist this does not appear to be the case. The use of the word "seers" (ܚܙܝܐ) in v. 18 is probably significant in this respect. This word can be used of an Old Testament prophet,(163) but it may also be used of an eyewitness,(164) and the verse most probably signifies that the seers are those who are able to announce the coming of the Lord because they have received and believed the Word which has come,(165) and are therefore eyewitnesses of the arrival of the Lord through his Word. But the odist is careful to avoid the suggestion that the believer is an eyewitness of the Lord himself. He says rather that "the seers shall be seen before him" (v. 18), or "he is near and does see" (v. 19).

We cannot of course separate vv. 17ff. from the preceding ones which speak of the appearance of the Word among men and which link this to the title "Son" which signifies the human manifestation of this Word. But the odist does leave us with the impression in these verses that the appearance of the Word in this particular form is of no greater significance than the appearance of the Word through the community proclamation in his own time. The appearance of the Messiah can be related to his coming in human form, or

it may be related to the act of faith. Therefore ode 29. 6 says, "And I believed in the Lord's Messiah, and he appeared to me, he who is the Lord".(166) It is not surprising then, that in ode 41. 11, "the Saviour who gives life and does not reject us" is "the Word (who) is with us in all our way". Here again there is the connection made in the following verses to the human manifestation of this Word, but it is significant that it is the Word within who is the Saviour, even if this same life giving function is also attributed in v. 15 to the Messiah.

It cannot be said unambiguously that the odist has no concern for the historical Jesus, but the evidence suggests that the significance of this historical existence for faith is minimal. This is quite different from the Johannine literature, where in the Gospel the Prologue introduces the Word who "became flesh". Whatever the precise meaning of the σὰρξ ἐγένετο(167) of Jn. 1. 14, it does at least involve the assertion that the eternal Logos entered fully into the conditions of human existence. It is therefore necessary to believe that this Logos become flesh is the one whom the Father has sent,(168) for in him alone is the Father to be seen.(169) After his death and return to the Father the Paraclete comes, not to bring new information about the Father, but to bring full insight into the work and words of Jesus of Nazareth.(170) At all points the revelation must be related to this historical manifestation of the Word, for life is found through belief in him, not through the words which he says, since his word cannot be separated from him who is the Word.

E. Käsemann however asks: "In what sense is he flesh, who walks on the water and through closed doors, who cannot be captured by his enemies, who at the well of Samaria is tired and needs a drink, yet has no need of drink and has food different from that which the disciples seek?". Käsemann sees the confession "My Lord and my God" not only spoken through

Thomas, but at every point in the Gospel. He therefore asks if the statement "the Word became flesh" really means more than that "he descended into the world of man and there came into contact with earthly existence, so that an encounter with him became possible".(171) The question is important, for in the Fourth Gospel the indicators of human existence serve a theological purpose. If Jesus is tired and thristy in 4. 6f., this provides an opportunity for him to remain behind while the disciples go to buy food, and this results in the conversation with the Samaritan woman. If Jesus thirsts in 19. 28, he says that he is thirsty in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled. If in 11. 35 Jesus weeps, this cannot signify the emotion of human sorrow over the loss of a loved one, even if this is how the crowd understand it, for Jesus knew that Lazarus was dead and had come knowing that he would raise him, so that through this act the Son of God would be glorified. Even though Jesus is taken and crucified, the Fourth Gospel makes it quite plain that this event is not determined by those who wish to put Jesus out of the way. On the contrary, he lays down his life of his own accord, and the timing of this is determined by Jesus, by his "hour", and when men seek to seize him on other occasions they are unable to do so.(172)

All the way through the Gospel, the subject is the Son of God who has descended with the revelation of God, and real indications of human limitations are hard to find. But if the characteristics pertaining to human existence are subordinated to the theological fact of the descent of the Son of God,(173) it is this Son of God made flesh in whom the confession of faith must be made, and to whom the church in its proclamation must point.

We conclude that the Fourth Gospel does depict a real incarnation of the Logos, and that the Odes of Solomon probably intend to witness to this also. The reason for the apparent docetism of the Odes stems from the fact that for the odist the significant element is the revelation itself, not the one in whom this came among men in human form. This has led to a certain

separation between the revelation and Jesus which is not possible in the Fourth Gospel. This does not make the Odes Gnostic or heretical, but we would hesitate to call it orthodox.(174) Rather we would suggest that the odist has an understanding of the descent of Christ which shares several characteristics in common with that of the Fourth Gospel, but he has not been able to hold in tension the divine and the human elements, and this has resulted in the almost complete obliteration of the latter.

FOOTNOTES TO PP. 165 - 215

1. In Wisdom, the mirror reflects the power and goodness of God, while in the ode the mirror shows man as he is, and at the same time, since the mirror is Christ, shows him that to which he has to conform.

2. For our purposes it makes no difference whether the κατοπτριζόμενοι of II Cor. 3. 18 is held to mean, "beholding (as in a mirror)", or "reflecting (as in a mirror)". See W.Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, pp. 425f. and the literature thereon. The part. was at least regarded as meaning "beholding", and II Cor. 3. 18 implies a being conformed to what is seen.

3. The mirror imagery is also found in the Acts of Andrew, ch. 15, with reference to the preached word. A Gnostic use of the same image, quite different from that of the ode, can be seen in the Acts of Thomas, ch. 112, in the Hymn of the Pearl, in which the returning son is re-united with his heavenly self: "But suddenly, when I saw it over against me, (the splendid robe) became like me, as my reflection in a mirror. I saw it (wholly) in me, and in it I saw myself quite apart from myself, so that we were two in distinction, and again one in a single form"; tr. in NTA II, 502.

4. Hymns on Virginity, 31. 12.

5. Hymns on the Epiphany, 3. 20.

6. ibid. 9. 7. Harris-Mingana have drawn attention to the similarity between the ode and Ephraem, suggesting that the latter has deliberately altered the wording of the ode; II, 19ff. R.Murray says that the similarity "seems too close for accident"; "The Exhortation to Candidates for Ascetical Vows at Baptism in the Ancient Syriac Church", NTS 21 (1975), 73.

7. Homily on our Lord, 5.

8. Nisibene Hymns, 19. 14.

9. ibid. 54. 5. For a complete survey of the mirror imagery in Ephraem see E.Beck, "Das Bild vom Spiegel bei Ephräm", OCP 19 (1953), 5-24.

10. See S.P.Brock, "Ephrem's Letter to Publius", Le Muséon 88 (1975), 261-305.

11. The ode "is a clear and beautiful call to a redeemed and Christlike life", Harris-Mingana II, 278.

12. This is the reading of the MS, which Harris-Mingana rightly emended to ,ܡܫܬܚܠ .

13. J.H.Charlesworth, The Odes of Solomon, p. 64, n. 3.

14. J.H.Bernard, The Odes of Solomon, accepts "filth" as the word intended by the author. H.Grimme translates, "wischt den Schmutz". W.Frankenberg translates into Greek

15. See Ezek. 23. 40; Jer. 4. 30; II Kings 9. 30; II Esd. 15. 54.

16. A Vööbus has shown that in the Syriac speaking church "Holiness" was a technical term, signifying celibacy. He believes that this is the meaning of that term also in the Odes, and that "the holy ones" are the celibates; Celibacy, p. 22; idem., A History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient, pp. 104ff. G.Diettrich, Die Oden Salomos, p. 26, agrees. R.Murray also notes this technical sense of the term, but is uncertain if this sense is applicable to ode 13; Symbols of Church and Kingdom, pp. 12, 73.

17. See below, pp. 172ff.

18. We are not denying that the ascetic life is promoted in the Odes, but we question if this is the fundamental issue here.

19. C.H.Dodd states, "The presupposition of this is the doctrine that the vision, or knowledge of God makes a man like God. There is no direct authority for this in the New Testament, but it was widely accepted in 'Hellenistic Mysticism', in the sense that through Gnosis, direct knowledge of God, a man might become immortal and even divine"; The Johannine Epistles, p. 71. Dodd goes on to point out that the author of I John was assuming principles which he held in common with the "Gnostic" teachers he was combatting, although his use of the tradition was distinctively Christian. Cf. R.Schnackenburg, "Nicht das Schauen vergöttlicht sie, sondern weil sie vergöttlicht werden,(um bei diesem Ausdruck zu bleiben), schauen sie"; Die Johannesbriefe, p. 172. R.Bultmann says that the idea is that expressed in Rom. 8. 17-19; Phil. 3. 21; Col. 3. 4; The Johannine Epistles, p. 49.

20. See above pp. 81ff.

21. See above p. 145, n. 132.

22. This same sense of authority lies behind the reference to the Messiah as the Head of the Spirit in ode 24. 1. For this thought cf. Ephraem Hymns on the Nativity, 9. 1.

23. See E.Schweizer, Church Order in the New Testament, p. 118 for the similarities between the concept of the head and members in Paul, and that of the vine and branches in John. The odist does not develop his image at all.

24. See especially Col. 1. 18 and 2. 10 where the two themes of the ode occur. The concept has its origins in Judaism, as W.D.Davies has shown; Paul and Rabbinic Judaism, pp. 53-57. This concept is not derived from Gnosticism, in the idea of the gathering together of the scattered particles from the light world, as R.Bultmann thinks; The Theology of the New Testament, I, 310. On this question, see the introductory essay in Gnosis und neues Testament, p. 19.

25. R.Bultmann claims that the motif of the ἱερὸς γάμος occurs at least as an image in ode 38. 11 and 42. 8; John, p. 174. R.Schnackenburg does not connect the Odes directly with this concept, but sees some relationship through the erotic element in odes 38 and 42.

26. R.Murray points out that "Kallta msabbatta 'Bride adorned' seems to have been a consecrated phrase at least from the time of the very early Syriac version of the Didascalia, where it appears"; Symbols of Church and Kingdom, p. 132. The phrase does not occur in the Syriac translations of Rev. 21. 2, but this book was not included in the Syriac canon. Murray sees the source of inspiration for the phrase in Isa. 62. 10. This could also be the case with the ode.

27. Unlike the marriage in Gnosticism, there is no suggestion in the Odes of a marriage between Christ and Sophia (see Irenaeus Adv.Haer. I. 7, 1; I. 30, 12), nor are believers given as brides to the angels (see Exc. ex Theod. 64. 1).

28. That is, men who are both corrupt, and who exercise a corrupting influence upon others.

29. Cf. here the Synoptic parables in the Synoptic Gospels in which the image of the marriage feast is used (Matt. 22. 1ff; 25. 1ff.). The point of these parables is different from the meaning of the ode.

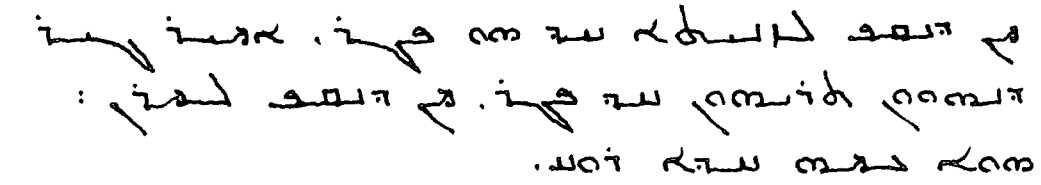
30. Cf. R. Murray: "The false bridegroom is presumably false doctrine rather than the personification of natural marriage", op. cit. p. 133. If this were the case, it would imply that the Bridegroom is the truth, but this does not appear to be how the relationship between the believer and truth is seen in the earlier vv. of the ode.

31. υἱοὶ τοῦ νυμφῶνος ; ..., Mk. 2. 19 and pars. The word is also used at Matt. 22. 10, where it reflects the reading ὁ νυμφών of B* L sah, rather than the ὁ γάμος of B^{mg} D K W f^{1} f^{13} it vg.

32. op. cit. p. 132, n. 2.

33. "The yoke of my love" ( ) is the love which binds together Christ and those who believe in him. in addition to the general meaning of "yoke fellow" can also be used specifically of a spouse.

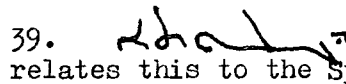
34. See R.Murray, op. cit. p. 107.

35. 

36. See above pp. 72f.

37. Ode 3. 6 says implicitly what ode 11. 23 says explicitly: "There is much room in your Paradise". Cf. John 14. 2.

38. See below on Life, pp. 390 ff.

39.  =Without falsehood. J.H.Charlesworth relates this to the Spirit of Truth in the Fourth Gospel. We consider this below, when dealing with the Spirit.

40. If we speak of an erotic element in the Bridegroom-Bride imagery as R.Schnackenburg does (see n. 6 above), then it should be admitted that this element is rather more subdued in the Odes than it is for example in the Song of Songs, or in some later Syriac writers.

41. See J.Jeremias, " νύμφη ", TDNT IV, 1101-1106. On the use of the imagery in the Syriac speaking church, see R.Murray, Symbols of Church and Kingdom, pp. 131-142.

42. The odist has just stated before this that he has become like a land (v. 12).

43. P.Kleinert, "Zur religionsgeschichtlichen Stellung der Oden Salomos", Th Stud u Krit 84 (1911), 610, suggests that this ode is a hymn composed for Sunday. This is possible, but the importance of the theme of illumination in the Odes makes it more likely that it is with this idea of enlightenment that the odist is concerned.

44. Ephraem several times refers to Christ as the Sun, speaking of the birth of Christ through which illumination has come, and of the humbling of the Sun in the Incarnation. See Hymns on the Nativity 13. 9; 14. 6; 17. 12; 19. 7; Hymns on the Epiphany 1. 9, 18. J.Daniélou refers to the Philonic exegesis of Gen 2. 4, where ἡμέρα stands for the word by which God created the heaven and the earth; Theology of Jewish Christianity, p. 171. R.H.Fuller, The Foundations of New Testament Christology, p. 101 looks to the dualism of light and darkness in Gnosticism, and sees here a clear Gnostic background.

45. That this is so is confirmed by v. 10 of ode 15, where "the Lord's land" in which immortal life has arisen, most naturally refers to Paradise. Note also the transition to the theme of Paradise in ode 11.

46. Cf. also Exc. ex Theod. 61. 6.

47. We cannot say that there is any particular relationship between the Odes and the Gnostic Treatise, but they are working with similar ideas. The following should be noted.
a) The Saviour has given the way of our immortality (42. 20ff; cf. the idea of the "way" in the Odes).
b) Great are they who believe (46. 22; cf. ode 36.4).
c) The world is but an illusion (48. 15 ; cf. ode 34. 4f.).
d) Light swallows up the darkness (49. 2f.;cf ode 15. 1f.).

48. History of the Synoptic Tradition, p. 163.

49. The Son of Man in Myth and History, p. 189, n. 4. Borsch sees in the Odes the conception of a hero appointed to represent or to become the figure with divine attributes, a kind of representative Messiah below who is the counterpart of the Messiah above.

50. See below on the "I" of the Odes. Cf. R.Abramowski, who thinks that in the end there is no difference between the filius proprius and the filius adoptivus of the Odes; "Der Christus der Salomo-oden", ZNW 35 (1936), 45ff.

51. MS H reads "And he glorified me" ( ). MS N reads .

52. V. 7 reads . Unfortunately, MS N does not begin until the following line of this ode, and we are thus left with only one version of the text. Two alternatives are possible for the . 1. - "and he brought me up", reading the Pa'el of . 2. "and he exalted me", reading the Aph'el of . Both of these alternatives were suggested by Harris-Mingana, II, 291. J.H.Charlesworth decides strongly in favour of the second alternative, noting the ease with which haplography could occur here.

53. On the Humanity of Christ, see below, pp. 210ff.

54. F.H.Borsch says that "This claim is astonishing in the mouth of any ordinary person, not least a Christian"; op. cit. p. 191. The idea is however similar to that in Luke 10. 17ff.

55. See below, p.204.

56. The text says, "And I gave my knowledge generously and my in my love". J.H.Charlesworth states that means "my resurrection", and connects this verse with II Macc. 12. 44; op. cit. p. 77. The ode however is rather different, and speaks of Christ's prayer to God for those who had been set free. For this idea cf. ode 31. 4. R.Bultmann sees a parallel between ode 17. 13f. and Christ's High Proestly prayer in Jn. 17, but the absence of any content to the prayer in the ode makes

this impossible to prove; John, p. 498, n. 10. We would agree that there does seem to be some connection between ode 31 and Jn. 17, which could be extended to ode 17 in the way Bultmann suggests.

57. See above on the Head, pp. 171ff. We should note also ode 3. 2, where the dependence of the members on one another is stated.

58. Cf. Josh. 23. 9. It is because Christ has already achieved salvation and victory that no one can withstand those who are his new creation. We find a similar idea in Melito's Homily on the Passion, 101f.:"Who is he that struggles against me? Let him stand before me. I freed the condemned; I made the dead live again; I raised up him who was buried. Who lifts up his voice against me?"; (tr. in J.Quasten, Patrology I, 245).

59. R.Abramowski thinks this concept is present here; art. cit. pp. 45ff. H.-M.Schenke has shown that the concept of the "saved-Saviour" comes into Gnosis only at the time of Manichaeism. There is also a sense in which the New Testament speaks of a "saved-Saviour", and this is found in those texts which speak of Christ being raised from the dead. Schenke is emphatic that this has nothing to do with the Gnostic idea of the "saved-Saviour"; "Die Gnosis", in Umwelt des Urchristentums, p. 382. A.F.J.Klijn notes that "in the Odes we meet a Redeemer, but he is not redeemed"; "The Influence of Jewish Theology on the Odes of Solomon and the Acts of Thomas", in Aspects du Judéo-Christianisme, p. 175.

60. We do not suggest that the Christology of the Odes is docetic, but that the divine nature of the Messiah overshadows the fact of his humanity. When J.Danielou says that the Incarnation is a repeatedly essential theme of the Odes and constitutes the spirit of the Odes, he must be using the word "incarnation" in a fairly general sense; "Un Qumranien converti au Christianisme", in Qumran-Problème, pp. 87f.

61. With v. 20 b, "Abide in the love of the Lord", cf. Jn. 15. 10. The verb "abide" has a fairly limited use (4 times) in the Odes in comparison with its use in John.

62. In Matt. 5. 6 Pesh. ܫܒܩ ܠܗ translates ὀφειλήματα, and in Col. 2. 14, Pesh. renders τὸ καθ' ἡμῶν χειρόγραφον τοῖς δόγμασιν by ܕܒܝܫ ܫܒܩ ܠܢ.

63. "The Text of the Odes of Solomon", JTS 11 (1910), 573.

64. "Die Oden Salomos", ZNW 11 (1910), 311.

65. Harris-Mingana II, 264. So also J.H.Bernard, The Odes of Solomon; J.H.Charlesworth, The Odes of Solomon.

66. J.Carmignac relates the ܫܒܩ ܠܗ to the fear of legal impurity at Qumran, and states that the odist is saying that his apostleship near heathens was no stain for him; art. cit. p. 82. We would rather relate

this to other passages in the Odes which suggest that it is improper to make the offer of salvation universally; see odes 18, 28.

67. R.Murray thinks this is possible; Symbols of Church and Kingdom, p. 296.

68. "The Middle" could signify either the air, the place between heaven and earth, or the earth itself, the place between heaven and Sheol. According to A.F.J.Klijn, "the middle is obviously the firmament in accordance with Gen. 1. 6, 7 and Aphraates 14. 34"; art. cit. p. 174. J.Danielou points out that according to Jewish Christian ideas, the habitat of the fallen angels, their prison, is the air, and it is there that the struggle with them takes place. But the descent into Hell attracted this struggle to itself; op. cit. p. 233. Daniélou sees the Odes as introducing the final stage of the descent into Hell, linking the theme of Christ's victory over death in Hell with the liturgical theme of baotism; ibid. p. 244. In ode 30. 6, this same Syriac word is used to express the place to which the revelation of God came. We therefore suggest that the meaning of the word is "the earth", and that the verse means that God has gathered men from earth and given them to Christ, as in ode 31.

69. MS H reads ܠ ܡܢܐ ; the Pistis Sophia ⲁⲩⲧⲥⲁⲃⲟⲟⲓ ⲉⲣⲟⲟⲩ "and taught me concerning them". Although the Coptic differs from the Syriac, it shows that the ܠܡܐ of MS N ought to be retained. In opposition to theories of a Greek original for the Odes, J.Carmignac has suggested that this variant between the Coptic and the Syriac could be caused very easily through different readings of an underlying Hebrew text; "Recherches sur la langue originelle des Odes de Salomon", RQ 4 (1963), 432. F.H.Borsch accepts the reading of MS H and translates "cast me down", referring to "the casting down in mockeries like Isa. 14. 12ff.; Ezek. 2. 8, and the Adapa myth"; op. cit. p. 193, n. 3. The comparison between the Syriac and Coptic texts at the beginning of this note shows that this cannot be accepted.

70. ode 22. 6; "Your name was round about (ܥܠ) me". MS H, mistaking the initial ܥ for a ܒ reads ܒܠ .

71. The allusion to Ezek. 37 is plain. The odist is saying that the believer now possesses the new body of the new age which has come about through the defeat of the Dragon, and the destruction of the world.

72. The Coptic has "light" (ⲟⲩⲟⲓⲛ). J.Carmignac again suggests that this variation has occurred through a mis-read Hebrew original צור - rock; אור - light; "Recherches sur la langue originelle des Odes de Salomon", p. 431f. There seems to be some dependence upon Matt. 16. 18, but if so, Christ is now the Rock, and it is not the church, but the Kingdom which has been established. R.Murray says that "the hint of Matt. 16. 18 is surely one of the most certain New Testament allusions in the Odes"; op. cit. p. 240.

73. On the use of the title "Rock" in the Syriac speaking church, see R.Murray, op. cit. pp. 206ff.

74. MS N reads "nor did they acknowledge my birth". J.H.Charlesworth

claims that in the reading of H "we find one of the strongest docetic passages in the Odes"; op. cit. p.110. This does not follow at all, unless we are to say that the ideas of the Virgin Birth and the pre-existence of Christ, which of necessity make the birth of Christ unlike that of other men, constitutes a docetic type of Christology.

75. ܥܘܠܐ may refer to the injury suffered by Christ in his passion, or to the false accusation directed against him, which led to his death. The verb ܙܠܦ in ode 33 probably implies a false judgment, as Charlesworth has suggested; op. cit. p.120.

76. op. cit. II, 361. Likewise, we should reject the explanation of W. Frankenberg, who emends ܥܝܫ to ܥܝܠ, and translates, "But I was holding on to your right hand, O Lord" (ἐγὼ δὲ κύριε ἀντειχόμην τῆς δεξιᾶς σου); Das Verständnis der Oden Salomos, pp.27, 42.

77. K.Rudolph, Die Mandäer, II, 63, makes reference to the fact that the Redeemer carries a staff of living water in his hand. The meaning is different from the ode. In the Mandaean religion, this staff of living water is for the benefit of the fallen soul, while in the ode it appears to be equipment for Christ, as he faces his enemies.

78. οἶνον μετὰ χολῆς μεμιγμένον. The Pesh. renders ܚܡܝܪܐ ܥܡ ܡܪܝܪܘܬܐ ܚܠܝܬܐ gall mingled with bitterness.

79. The Odes of Solomon, p.112. Bernard rejects any association with the bitter waters of Marah, but regards the water as the water of baptism.

80. Cf. Ephraem, Hymns on the Nativity. 13.25; Homily on our Lord, 4; Aphrahat Dem.,21; On Persecution,10.

81. Homily on our Lord, 6.

82. This pre-existence concept needs to be modified in the light of v.20, where it seems that Christ is the "thought of the Most High", which has been put forth for the work of salvation. See also below on ode 41. 8-10.

83. ܒܝܕܘܗܝ. The translation "through him" fits in better with the overall thought of the Odes than Harris-Mingana's "in his hands", II, 369. They offer "by his means" as an alternative in a footnote.

84. Cf. Jn.17.6 fot the Father's gift of believers to the son, and Jn.17.11 for the address to God as "Holy Father", which is found once only in John and in the Odes. This address is also found in Did. 10.2.

85. ܐܚܕ ; cf. Lk.11.22.

86. Harris-Mingana see this verse as an adaptation of Ps.22.18, meaning "they despoiled me and divided the plunder", II. 372. We believe this is a part of the meaning of the verse, but the addition of the pronominal suffix leads us to think that it was Christ's own spoil which was being divided, his spoil being the fruit of his captivity of the world as in ode 10.4.

87. Cf. 11.5 "I was established on the rock of truth", but here the text has ܩܫܬܐ ܕܟܐܦܐ. Both ܟܐܦܐ and ܫܘܥܐ can be used to translate πέτρα without any differnetation in meaning, but if technical terminology were involved here we should expect to find uniformity of expression and probably ܟܐܦܐ rather than ܫܘܥܐ. See A.F.J. Klijn, "Die Wörter 'Stein' und 'Felsen' in der syrischen Übersetzung des N.T.", ZNW 50 (1959), 99-105; R.Murray, Symbols of Church and Kingdom, p.205.

88. In v.11, H reads "pounded ܡܬܒܪ̈ܐ", N has "pounded ܒܟܐܦܐ ܕܡ̈ܝ. J.H.Charlesworth suggests that ܟܐ̈ܦ here means not "rocks" but "columns" and emends the text to ܒܟ̈ܐ̈ܦ ܕܡ̈ܝ, "columns of waves"; The Odes of Solomon, pp.117, n.10. G. Driver has a more plausible solution which requires no emendation apart from the change of vowels. Instead of ܡ̈ܝ (waves) he reads ܡ̈ܝ (round or rolling) - as a further alternative he offers ܒܓ̈ܠ̈ܐ -pounded by rolling rocks; "Notes on Two Passages in the Odes of Solomon", JTS 25 (1974), 436f.

89. ,ܕܢܬܝܪܟ. J.H.Charlesworth regards this verb as being derived from ܝܪܟ , to instruct, and translates "That I might redeem my nation and instruct it", The Odes of Solomon, p.117, p.118, n.13. We agree with the majority of commentators on the Odes that the verb is from ܝܪܬ , to inherit, cf. ode 23.19.

90. The Odes of Solomon, p.118, n.11. H. Grimme emended the text to ,ܕܢܬܝܪܟ, Die Oden Salomos, loc. cit.

91. Cf. use of ܦܪܫ in 41.

92. Op. cit. p.118, n.14. Cf. also the note above on ode 28.13, and Harris-Mingana's note on ode 10.5; "The Gentiles are still somewhat on sufferance", II, 265.

93. Cf. Rom.15.8; Gal.3.14,17; Eph. 3.6; Barn.5; Justin, Dial. 119.

94. J.Carmignac sees in this ode the only reference to the Passion in the whole collection, "Un Qumrânien converti au Christianisme", 87. This is too strong a judgment on the odist, but it is true that the concern is not with the Passion as such, but with the descent into Sheol.

95. J.H.Charlesworth, op. cit. p. 121, n.7; J.H.Bernard, The Odes of Solomon, p.118.

96. Note especially v.12. The allusion to ode 4.6, "Who can put on your grace and be injured?" is unmistakeable. V.12 therefore looks back to v.1, where Grace descends upon the Corruptor to bring him to nothing.

97. The verb is from the root ܒܛܠ which means to empty, lay waste, deprive, bereave. In ode 31.1 3 it is used with the negative to express "not making void" the promise to the patriarchs. Here it must be used in the sense of stripping the Corruptor of those who believed in and obeyed Christ.

98. J.H.Bernard, "Again Grace hastened and left corruption, and it descended in Him to make it harmless". This "seems to mean that Grace in the Person of Christ ... descended to Hades", The Odes of Solomon, p.177, but this leaves us with no antecedent for the pronoun "him".

99. Weisheit und Torheit, p.136. He further states, p.137, "Der Einfluss des Sophia-Erlöser-Mythos auf die Ode ist im Blick auf v.1-5 ganz unverkennbar, wenn man sich klar macht, dass als mythische Situation einzig das Herabkommen der Syzygie des erlösten Erlösers zur Erlösung und Sammlung der gefangenen Licht-teile(v.4) vorausgesetzt ist". As we have noted above on ode 8.21, there is no myth of the "Saved Saviour" in the Odes. Cf. also B. Mack, Logos und Sophia, p.100, who also thinks that the same person is the subject throughout vv.1-4, but who sets this "Personenwechsel" in relationship to the Logos Sophia concept in Philo.

100. ܡܥܒܕ. The sense of the line is "He corrupted all that he was making", i.e., in drawing men to him he was corrupting them.

101. That Satan can make himself appear as an angel of light is stated in II Cor.11.14; cf. also Ac. And. ch. 17, and especially Martyrdom of Pionius, 14.10; ἐπείπως καὶ ὁ ἀντίχριστος ὡς ὁ Χριστὸς φανήσεται in The Acts of the Christian Martyrs, p.154.

102. Op. cit. II, 376, "This Ode seems to begin abruptly and unintelligibly; we suggest that something has been lost at the opening". F. Schulthess emended ܚܒܠ to ܠܒܫ - "put on corruption", "Textkritische Bemerkungen zu den syrischen Oden Salomos", ZNW 11 (1910), 255, but while this would make sense, the emendation is unjustified.

103. So J.H.Bernard, The Odes of Solomon, p.117.

104. This is how W.E.Barnes understood v.1: "Again Grace hastened and left Hades (corruption), for he descended into it in order to empty it", "An Ancient Christian Hymn Book", The Expositor 10 (1910), 62. The text does not however permit this translation.

105. There are obviously significant differences between Rev. and the Odes in the way in which this concept operates. For a closer linking of the ideas of the ode, cf. II Thess.2.7-12. Cf. also ode 17.11: That I might not leave any man bound nor him who binds.

106. Cf. also ode 22, especially v.11, "You have brought your world to destruction " ( ).

107. "I am your judge" ( ) R.H.Connolly suggests (your armour), but this is unlikely in the context; "Review of Die Oden Salomos: Überarbeitet oder einheitlich", JTS 15 (1914), 466. This is the only "I am" saying in the Odes which corresponds in form to those of the Fourth Gospel, containing the promise along with the assertion, "I am your judge; and those who have put me on shall not be rejected, but shall possess incorruption in the new world". This saying differs from the Ego-Eimi sayings in the Fourth Gospel in that in the latter, there are abstract images used with the "I am" statement.

108. According to J.H.Charlesworth, "The idea of making 'the chosen ones' to trust is poor theology, and inconsistent with the general tone of the Odes". He therefore translates "And I will promise them my name", The Odes of Solomon, p.122, n.15. (1) It is not the chosen ones who have walked with Christ whom he makes to trust in his name, but those who seek him and who still have to learn his ways. (2) The fact that Christ causes those who seek him to trust in his name does not imply compulsion or pre-determination, but it is the making known of Christ's ways which brings about the trust. The "name" here as in other odes is a term which implies Christ in his union with the believer; cf. odes 8.19; 22.6; 25.11; 42.20. The sense of v.12b is: To those who seek me I will make known my ways, and through this they shall be brought to trust in me.

109. The meaning of the in v.1 is uncertain. Does it mean "again", or does it simply signify "Now"?

110. See above on the "Son of God".

111. As J.H.Charlesworth notes (p.142) this title is also found in the Gospel of Truth 16.33, but it also occurs in II Clem.3;20; (cf.II Clem.19 "God of Truth").

112. J.H.Charlesworth compares the of ode 41.9 with the opening of the Fourth Gospel and of Genesis, The Odes of Solomon, p.142,n.13. In his article written in conjunction with R.A.Culpepper, Jn.8.58 is put forward as a parallel to ode 41.8; "The Odes of Solomon and the Gospel of John", CBQ 35 (1973), 322. J.H.Bernard regards vv.8-10 of this ode as spoken by the baptised Christian rejoicing in his new birth; The Odes of Solomon, p.129.

113. The of the ode is not the Uthra of the Mandaean literature as K. Rudolf suggests: "War der Verfasser der Oden Salomos ein Qumran Christ?", RQ 4 (1964), 533. We should compare rather the other instances of the root in the Odes 5.9; 11.9.16 etc. and especially 9.5: "Be enriched ( ) in God the Father, and receive the thought ( ) of the Most High. Be strong and redeemed by his grace". The word for "thought" here is different from that used in ode 41.10.

114. Cf. W. Bousset, Kyrios Christos, p.387, n.7. Having quoted ode 41.14f., he simply comments" λόγος ἐνδιάθετος ! "

115. The text of v.5 reads ... Harris-Mingana translate, "And they sought after me who proclaimed about me; because I am alive", adding in a footnote that " ... may also be translated 'set their hope on me' ", op. cit. II, 404. J.H.Bernard adopts the latter alternative; The Odes of Solomon, p.129. J.H.Charlesworth translates "who declared against me", but it is difficult to see why those who declared against Christ should seek him because he is alive, especially since the previous line has said, "All my persecutors are dead". The only possibility open for this interpretation would be that Christ's persecutors sought him in vain because he had risen. This would then provide a parallel to Jn.7.33f., but the ode does not really suggest this. W. Frankenberg, in his translation into Greek, renders καὶ ἐζήτησάν με οἱ νομίζοντες ὅτι ζῶν εἰμι, but this neglects the ... before ... ; Das Verständnis des Oden Salomos, p.35. The context of this passage suggests that whereas Christ's persecutors died, those who hoped in him sought him because he was alive, and his being alive meant union with his believers. We therefore understand ... in the sense of ἐλπίζειν ἐπι , as in the Pesh. translation of Rom.15.12; I Tim.5.5; I Pet.1.13. There is a general resemblance of thought here to Jn.14.19.

116. This verse probably owes its inspiration to Matt.27.52f. See also Ephraem, Nisibene Hymns 39.18. "The righteous has constrained me to devour, but Jesus has compelled me to disgorge all that I had eaten", (tr. in NPNF 13 (second series), 202); 39.9; 41.15.

117. Verse 12b, ... "I went down with it as far as there was depth in it". What does the pronoun "it" signify? The previous line has said that Christ was gall and bitterness to it (i.e. to death), and therefore we would expect that in the second line, "it" should refer somewhere to death, but it can hardly refer to death on both occasions. Therefore several scholars have proposed that the second ... should be ... , i.e., Christ went down with death to the uttermost depths of Sheol; F.Schultess, "Textkritische Bemerkungen zu den syrischen Oden Salomos", ZNW 11 (1910), 257; J.H.Bernard, The Odes of Solomon, p.131; Harris-Mingana II, 407, regard this as a "plausible emendation". J.H.Charlesworth says that the odist "could have been referring to either; or with his love of double entendre he could have been referring to both", The Odes of Solomon, p.147, n.20. There is a further possibility which avoids the necessity of emendation. The first "it" could refer to the "gall and bitterness" of the previous line. This then would mean that Christ descended to the depth of Death with this bitterness and that it was this bitterness within Death which caused him to vomit up Christ.

118. Cf. Ac.Thom. ch.156, "who didst descend into Hades with great power, the sight of whom the princes of death could not endure", NTA II, 524; Ephraem, Nisibene Hymns 36.13, Death speaks, "The death of Jesus is for me a torment; I prefer for myself his life rather than his death", (tr. in NPNF 13 (second series),197). There are three possible interpretations of the "feet and head" which death released in v.13: (1) The head is Christ and the feet are his members; J.H.Bernard, The Odes of Solomon, p.131, following J.R.Harris's suggestion in the first edition of the Odes; so also W.Frankenberg, Das Verständnis der Oden Salomos, p.44. If the

assertion in ode 23.16, "The head went down to the feet" signifies the descent of Christ to his people, this interpretation may be the correct one, although it is difficult to see why the feet should be mentioned first. (2) Harris-Mingana draw attention to Cyril of Jerusalem's use of "head and feet" to signify the Godhead and manhood of Christ, II, 55f. (3) The phrase could be a way of expressing the totality of Christ's release.

119. The theme of gathering Christ's own has already been seen in odes 8;17. On the release of the dead at the voice of Christ, see Ephraem, Nisibene Hymns 36.11, "the voice of our Lord sounded in Hell, and he cried aloud and burst the graves one by one", (tr. in NPNF 13 (second series), 197); ibid. 41.15. For the theme of Christ's descent into Sheol in order to proclaim deliverance to those who had died before Christ's coming, see J. Daniélou, The Theology of Jewish Christianity, pp.233ff.

120. Here the believers say, "Open for us the door by which we may come out to you". Christ is here not the door, but the opener of the door. This is also the significance of the statement in ode 17.11, "I was the opening of everything".

121. See above note 59 on the absence of the Gnostic "saved-Saviour" myth in the Odes.

122. MS H omits a full line, passing from the ܕܪܥܐ of v.19b to the same word in 20a. The copyist has this word as ܕܪܥܐ, probably because he was thinking of the ܕܪܥܐ of v.19a.

123. For the forms of these sayings and their classification, see E. Schweizer, Ego Eimi; R. Bultmann, John, pp. 225f.; S. Schulz, Komposition und Herkunft der johanneischen Reden, pp. 90-131.

124. John I, 534f. Brown draws particular attention to the idea that behind the "Ego Eimi" stands the O.T. name for God.

125. Das Evangelium nach Johannes, p.129.

126. Schulz finds exceptions to this in the images of the shepherd and the vine, and he sees here Gnostic influence alongside of the Old Testament one; ibid. Cf. R. Schnackenburg, St John, I,141.

127. See W.G. Kümmel, "Likewise without parallel (in Gnostic texts) in the context of such self-commendation are the conclusions frequently attacked in John, which make further specific reference to the saving significance of Jesus"; The Theology of the New Testament, p.284. Onthe use and structure of such sayings in Gnosticism, see G.W. MacRae, "The Ego Proclamation in Gnostic Sources", in The Trial of Jesus, pp.122-134.

128. C. Maurer sees the absolute claim of Jesus in the Ego-Eimi sayings in terms of a confrontation with Gnostic Redeemer figures; "Der Exklusivanspruch des Christus nach dem Johannesevangelium", in Studies in John, pp.146f. Maurer does state that the thought behind these sayings is derived from the Old Testament, and that in them is heard the God of

the Old Testament, ibid. pp.152f. W.G.Kümmel sees that there is no real development of the nature of the false bearers of salvation; op.cit.p.287.

129. The Ego-Eimi declaration of Christ is not confined to these seven sayings, but is found elsewhere in the Gospel also. R. Bultmann classifies these into (a) the presentation formula, (b) the qualificatory formula, (c) the identification formula, (d) the recognition formula; see John, pp.225f.

130. These two are those which S. Schulz finds as being influenced by Gnostic thought, particularly so in the case of the True Vine. These are "recognition formulae", and the use of the adjectives "good" and "true" brings the exclusiveness of the claim of Jesus to expression in a polemical way; Das Evangelium nach Johannes, pp. 129f.

131. To have Christ's word abiding in them, or to abide in his word (cf.5.38) is the same thing, and signifies the abiding authority which the words of Christ have for the believer. The thought is similar to ode 41.11, "His word is with us in all our way, the Saviour who makes alive and does not reject us". Cf. also ode 38.5.

132. Cf. ode 8.20f.

> Pray and increase,
> And abide in the love of the Lord.
> And you who are loved, in the Beloved,
> And you who are kept, in him who lives,
> And you who are saved, in him who was saved.

The thought is similar to that of John 15, but the word "abide" is seldom used in the Odes (4 times).

133. They are guilty because in their claim to see, they claim a source of light other than Christ. The idea is the same as that in Jn.15.22-24. With this thought cf. ode 24.7-9.

134. "When Jesus is lifted up (v.28) in crucifixion, resurrection and ascension, he draws all men to him (12.32); and in that moment it will be clear to those who have the eyes of faith that he truly bears the divine name ('I AM'), and that he has the power of raising men to the Father. But if men refuse to believe, refuse to see, then there is no other way (14.6) that leads to the Father; and men go to their graves without the gift of life"; R.E. Brown, John I, 350.

135. C.K. Barrett speaks of the "tension of predestination and choice" in the Fourth Gospel, which is also "characteristic of New Testament theology as a whole"; St. John, p.68. It is also found in the Odes of Solomon, where the universalism of the offer of salvation is set alongside of other statements which imply that the elect have been predestined to salvation.

136. See E. Schweizer, Ego Eimi, p.34.

137. Sing. read by it^{b} Irenaeus. The Curetonian Syriac and some Pesh. MSS read ܢܠܕ , but the elision of the final ܐ of the 3rd plural verb is not exceptional. Tertullian also reads the sing., but cf. R. Schnackenburg who states that in view of the argument in which Tertullian is engaged, he is "therefore an indirect witness to the antiquity of the plural in Africa", St.John I, 264. The singular is also read by the Epist. Apost. 3.

138. So most scholars.

139. St. John pp.137f. See also p.244f of his commentary where he finds a perhaps ironical allusion to the Virgin Birth in 6.42 One could also derive an allusion to the Virgin Birth in Jn.8.41. The charge that Jesus was born of fornication could have a reference to some hint of irregularity about his own birth, although this is certainly not the only way of understanding the verse. In the Acts of Pilate II, 3, this charge is brought against Jesus by the Jews, who have already stated to Pilate that Jesus was "the son of Joseph and was born of Mary", I,1 (NTA I, 451); cf. also Origen, C. Celsum 1.28. See R.E. Brown, St. John I, 357; C.K.Barrett, St. John, p.288; J.N.Sanders and B.A. Mastin, St. John, p.230.

140. R. Bultmann claims that the Fourth Gospel "not only does not contain the idea of the virgin birth, but excludes it", John, p.59 n.5. This judgment is based on the supposition that the Christology of John follows the pattern of Bultmann's reconstructed Redeemer myth. Cf. J.N. Sanders and B.A.Mastin, "There is nothing in John's theology incompatible with the doctrine", St. John, p.79.

141. We have followed the translation of J.H.Charlesworth in this section, but have altered the translation from "generation" to "world". H. Grimme suggested the plural "worlds", as also did W.R. Newbold, "Bardaisan and the Odes of Solomon", JBL 30 (1911), 187.

142. The "without purpose" links back to v.3, where "it was undesirable that the Father's milk should be ineffectually (ܒܛܠܐ) released ".

143. Die Oden Salomos, p.82.

144. See above on "the Son of God" pp. 81f. Cf. Harris-Mingana II, 305.

145. "The Odes of Solomon", The Guardian, 3365 (June 3, 1910), 778. That Mary is equated with the mother who is the Church in Syriac-literature is not to be denied. See R. Murray, Symbols of Church and Kingdom, pp.142-150.

146. He suggests ܚܫ instead of ܚܝ ; "The Text of the Odes of Solomon", JTS 11 (1910), 574.

147. On the various meanings of ܚܝ see Harris-Mingana II, 300. The verb is possibly connected in thought with the ܡܫܟܚ in v.10. The meaning would then be that the virgin caught hold of and held on to

what the Spirit gave to her. W.R. Newbold emended to ܐܠܨ "they (the aeons) formed the Virgin"; "Bardaisan and the Odes of Solomon", JBL 30 (1911), 187.

148. The text of v.8 b reads ܕܠܐ ܕܥܒܕܬ ܠܐ ܗܘܬ ܐܦ The use of the two verbs in this line, one masc. and one fem., suggests that the translation ought to be soemthing like "Because there was not (pain), she was ineffective". R.H.Connolly suggests that the ܕܥܒܕܬ reflects a Greek κενῶς , but that perhaps κοινῶς was intended- "because it did not happen in the ordinary way"; "The Odes of Solomon: Jewish or Christian", JTS 13 (1912), 309.

149. "But thou wast pleased to be contained in me, without causing me pain"; (tr. in NTA I, 493).

150. Op. cit. II, 305,307.

151. 19.2 (tr. in NTA I, 384). A similar account is found in Asc. Isa.11.7ff., where Joseph and Mary are in the house alone and suddenly Mary sees a small child.

152. (Tr. in ANF I, 427). See also the view of Bardaisan that "the heavenly body of Christ had only passed through Mary, but was not formed in her", quoted in W. Bauer, Orthodoxy and Heresy, p.31.

153. Op. cit. II, 302. See also J.H. Bernard, The Odes of Solomon, pp.87f.

154. art. cit. p. 574. The translation of J.H.Charlesworth presupposes the same meaning of this phrase.

155. See J.N.D. Kelly, Early Christian Doctrines, pp.139ff. The formula "truly God and truly man" was and remains far easier to state than to explain.

156. So J. Carmignac, "les odes, par leurs multiples allusions à l'ensemble du Nouveau Testament et par l'orthodoxie foncière de leur théologie, sont un émouvant témoin de Christianisme primitif"; "Un Qumrânien converti au Christianisme", 92, see also 91. It needs to be remembered that the Odes do not reflect a well-thought-out theology, and the symbolism and the poetic form of these hymns make certainty at times very difficult if not impossible.

157. See below on the next section.

158. As e.g. in Jn.8.29, on which see R. Bultmann, St. John, p.354; "Die Bedeutung der neuerschlossenen mandäischen und manichäischen Quellen für das Verständnis des vierten Evangeliums", ZNW 24 (1925), 113f. As we have shown above, the ܫܪܝ of ode 7.15 may reflect both the pleasure of the Father, and the resting of the Father in the Son.

159. Nor does it occur in III John, but this is a very short letter of

only 15 verses. See also the next note.

160. See J. Quasten, Patrology I,99f., and especially the quotations from Sim. 5.6, 5 7, where the understanding of the humanity of the Son of God does have points of contact with the Odes. The flesh here is no more than the body chosen by the Spirit for a dwelling and because of the conduct of this flesh, "God admitted it to share with the Holy Spirit". This is a pattern "for all flesh which through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit shall be found without stain". Bernard sees the disciplina arcani as being responsible for the omission of other articles of belief, but this would hardly apply in the case of the name "Jesus"; The Odes of Solomon, pp. 22f.

161. In both of these the only real linguistic point of comparison is with the "go out to meet him" of v.17 of the ode. See Matt.25.1 (cf. v.6); Jn.12.13.

162. H. Conzelmann asks why it is in the Fourth Gospel that it is the glorified, present Jesus who speaks in the discourses and yet they are constructed as historical past discourses. His answer is that "John must show that the truth is not reached simply by the repetition of discourses. The truth is the speaker himself"; An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament, pp. 349f. We feel that the odist has not satisfactorily made this connection back to the historical Jesus.

163. More strictly, an Old Testament "seer", II Kings 17.13.

164. As translation of ἐποπτης , II Pet. 1.16; note the wording of the whole of this verse; or as a translation of αὐτόπτης Luke 1.2.

165. G. Diettrich states that v.17 has nothing to do with the coming of Christ but signifies "das Kommen des alttestemantlichen Bundesgottes", Die Oden Salomos, p. 25. Diettrich accepts these odes as Jewish compositions. It is with the coming of the Most High that the ode deals, but clearly with his coming through the appearance of his Word, the Son in whom he was pleased.

166. On this verse and ode 41.15 see above on "The Messiah", pp. 111-114.

167. On the meaning of the phrase see R. Schnackenburg, St. John, p.166f.; C.K.Barrett, St. John, p.138.

168. Jn,11.42; 17.8,21. The disciple also believes that Jesus came forth from the Father, 16.27 (cf. v.30); cf. also I Jn.4.2f., believing that Jesus has come in the flesh.

169. Jn.14.7ff.; 5.19ff.; 1.18. The Odes make a statement very similar to Jn.1.18 at 12.11 but it is to be noted that the Odes do not speak of belief in the "Son".

170. Cf. R.E.Brown who states that "John presents the Paraclete as the Holy Spirit in a special role, namely, as the personal presence of Jesus in the Christian while Jesus is with the Father"; John II, 1139.

171. The Testament of Jesus, p.9. Käsemann sees the emphasis in the Fourth Gospel not in "the Word became flesh" but on "we beheld his glory".

172. See A.E. Harvey, Jesus on Trial, pp.53-5

173. Cf. V. Taylor who states that John is much more emphatic than the Synoptic Gospels in emphasising the true humanity of Jesus, but recognises that "the Evangelist is less able to describe the facts of His earthly existence", because of his doctrinal interests. "It is this combination of historical tradition and doctrinal interpretation which constitutes the Johannine problem. The determining interest ..... is the desire to present the Son of God veiled in flesh"; The Person of Christ, pp.17f. See also G. Sevenster, who says that the Johannine writings repeatedly stress the humanity of Christ, and that there is a particular and polemical stress to this humanness; "Some remarks on the Humanity of Jesus in the Gospel and Letters of John", p.188. J.Leipoldt claims that "der vierte Evangelist betont die Menschheit Jesus, stärker, als irgend ein anderer neutestamentlicher Schriftsteller (abgesehen von Hebr.5.7)"; "Johannesevangelium und Gnosis", in Neutestamentliche Studien für Georg Heinrici, p. 140

174. F.M. Braun recognises that the odist passes lightly over the historical view of Jesus, but asks whether those who pass beyond the Christ according to the flesh ought to be regarded as Gnostics. He rightly points out that if the Odes were Gnostic, we should expect to find allusions to the Gnostic grouping of men, to the discovery of our essential selves, and to the knowledge of the place from which we have come. None of these Gnostic characteristics appear in the Odes, but can we also agree with Braun, at least with respect to the question of the humanity of Christ, when he says, "Rien ne permit de les discerner: la doctrine des Odes est en accord substantiel avec l'orthodoxie de la grande église"? "L'Enigme des Odes de Salomon", p.605? We probably can, but the odist's way of expressing the nature of the Messiah leaves some questions.

CHAPTER 2

THE SOTERIOLOGY OF THE ODES AND THE JOHANNINE LITERATURE.

In the preceding chapter we have devoted a good deal of space to both the Odes and the Johannine literature. This has been necessary because of the importance of Christology in both sets of writing. But to continue to do this would result in making this thesis far too long. Therefore in this and the following chapters we shall concentrate on the Johannine material to show the similarities and differences between them.

This chapter will be divided into two sections. In the first we shall consider those concepts which deal with that from which man needs deliverance, and the second will deal with the means of salvation. We shall see that in the first section, there is not a great deal of correspondence in terminology and concepts between the Odes and the Johannine literature, but in the second section, the terminology is much closer.

A. ERROR

Although the concept of error does not occur very frequently in the Odes,[1] it is clearly of importance in expressing that from which man needs salvation. H. M. Schenke believes that this concept is used in the Odes in the same way as it is in the Gospel of Truth, and he therefore understands it in a Gnostic way.[2] The odes which are important in this connection are 18, 31 and especially 38.

When we look at the concept of error, it is immediately apparent that this is personified, but this personification appears to be merely a literary device which expresses the danger of error to those for whom the odist speaks.[3]

Ode 31 begins:

1 Chasms vanished before the Lord,
And darkness dissipated before his appearance.
2 Error erred and perished on account of him[4]
And contempt received no path.
For it was submerged by the truth of the Lord.

Although "error" is personified here, so also is "contempt", and as we shall see in ode 18, other concepts are personified in the same way. There is therefore no good reason for Schenke to consider that the concept of "error" operates in any way which is different from these others.

What is of more significance is the meaning given to "error" through its association with the other concepts. The noun "contempt" ( ) is found only here in the Odes, but the verb occurs in odes 8. 5 and 25. 5. In both of these verses, the verb signifies the condition of oppression in which men live before they have experienced the victory which has been gained by the Messiah. Darkness likewise symbolises the state of man before he has found life and light through the Messiah, and the chasms[6] symbolise the forces of chaos and ignorance which attempt to

destroy Christ. Over against these concepts we have the concept of truth, which means the revelation of God which the Messiah has brought, and through which man enters into life.

In ode 18. 8 - 14,[7] the concept of error is again found, and here it is associated with other ideas with which it is more closely identified.

8 Thou art my God, falsehood and death are not in thy mouth;
Only perfection is thy will.
9 And vanity thou knowest not,
Because neither does it know thee.
10 And thou knowest not error.
Because neither does it know thee.
11 And ignorance appeared like the dust,
And like the foam[8] of the sea.
12 And vain people thought that it was great,
And they became like its type and were impoverished.
13 But the wise understood and contemplated,
And were not polluted by their thoughts;
14 Because they were in the mind of the Most High,
And mocked those who were walking in error.

Verses 9 and 10 say exactly the same thing except for the substitution of "error" for "vanity". What they say is that God has no vanity or error in him, which follows on from the statement that there is no falsehood or death in the mouth of God. Whatever the precise significance of "vanity" in this verse, it is clear that the two nouns are personified in the same way and to the same extent, if we are to speak of personification at all in this context. Of the only other use of "error" in this ode, it can be said that no personification is obviously present, and that "those who were walking in error" means, "those who walk erroneously".[9]

It is not error but ignorance which is the primary concept in ode 18, and this fact makes a comparison with the Gospel of Truth much more interesting. For the vain people ( ) thought that ignorance was great ( ) and came to resemble it,[10] which reminds us of Schenke's statement that in the Gospel of Truth the material world is nothing more than ignorance which has taken form. But the meaning of the ode is rather different from that of the Gospel of Truth. In vv. 11ff. we find the arrival of ignorance and the response of men to it. The vain think it great, become people who epitomise ignorance and who are therefore empty or futile. The word play on the Syriac root shows that the vanity of v. 9 really signifies that kind of thinking which imagines that the ignorance which these people have is really knowledge, and that the emptiness or vanity which does not know God is the emptiness of knowledge about him. This reminds us of the thinking which Paul condemns in Rom. 1. 21ff.[11]

On the other hand there are the wise, or more precisely, those who know ( ). They are not polluted,[12] that is, they can tell the difference between ignorance and knowledge, between truth and error, and the truth which they do have does not become mixed with error. Indeed, they "were in the mind of the Most High and mocked[13] those who were walking in error, and spoke the truth from the breath which the Most High breathed into them" (vv. 14f.).

This leaves us with two distinct groups, but are the groups polarised to such an extent that those who belong to one cannot belong to the other at some other stage? The earlier vv. of the ode suggest that the situation is quite open, and that the odist speaks to people who may be confirmed in their ignorance or who may accept the truth and find knowledge and salvation. Also, if the verbs of vv. 6 and 7 are construed in the same way as those of the previous vv., there is the danger that the polluting ignorance which has appeared may cover up and conquer the truth. Therefore

he asks God that he will not take away his word or withhold his perfection from him because of the ignorance or because of the deeds of the people to whom he speaks. He asks instead that the present salvation which has been achieved may be brought to victory by receiving men from every region, and by preserving those besieged by evil (vv. 4ff.).(14)

There are no sharply polarised groupings here. The possibility of true knowledge of God is open to all, although some do not accept it, thinking in their ignorance that the error in which they walk is the truth. These are the people who are the Bride of the corrupt Bridegroom in ode 38, and who there epitomise error and deception, but who here remain so convinced in their ignorance that they are said to have taken on the form of ignorance. However, this is not because they are unable to receive knowledge, but because they are content in their ignorance and value it above the truth.(15) In other words, they remain ignorant because they choose to do so, not because no other possibility is open to them.

It is in ode 38 that the question of the hypostatisation of Error becomes most acute, and where Schenke sees the concept split up into "ein mannliches und ein weibliches Wesen".(16) But since such a phenomenen is found nowhere else in the Odes in connection with "error", we ought to proceed with some caution in investigating the significance of the male and female figures in this particular ode. The relevant section of the ode reads as follows:

5 And there was no danger for me because I constantly
walked with him (the truth);
And I did not err in anything because I obeyed him.
6 For error fled from him
And never met him.
7 But truth was proceeding on the upright way,
And whatever I did not understand he exhibited to me:

8 All the drugs of error,
And pains of death which are considered sweetness.(17)
9 And the corrupting of the corruptor,
I saw when the bride who was corrupting was adorned,
And the bridegroom who corrupts and is corrupted.
10 And I asked the truth, Who are these?
And he said to me; This is the deceiver and the error.
11 And they imitate the beloved and his bride,
And they cause the world to err and corrupt it.
12 And they invite many to the wedding feast,
And allow them to drink the wine of their intoxication;
13 So they cause them to vomit up their wisdom and their knowledge,
And prepare for them nonsense.
14 Then they abandon them;
And so they stumble about like mad and corrupted men.
15 Since there is no understanding in them,
Neither do they seek it.

In vv. 9 - 10 of this ode there are a few linguistic problems which need to be resolved before we can proceed to an examination of the concept of Error.

(1) What does the phrase ܕܫܚܬܐ ܕܫܚܬܐ mean, and how is the second word to be vocalised? Harris-Mingana print ܫܚܬܐ in their text, but state in Vol. II that ܫܚܬ̈ܐ would be preferable (i.e. "of the corruptor" instead of "of corruption"), "because 'the corruptor of the corruption' has no meaning in itself".(18) Charlesworth offers ܫܚܬ̈ܐ as the correct text, but translates the first word as "the destroying", rejecting the translation "destroyer" as made by Harris-Mingana and Bruston, since "'the Destroyer of the Corruptor' would refer to Christ

and this passage is about the acts of corruption by the Corruptor".[19] However, while ܡܚܒܠܢܐ as an adjective does mean "destroying", "corrupting", as a substantive it signifies rather "destroyer", "spoiler" or "corruptor", i.e. the destroying one.[20] But further, the phrase "the destroyer of the corruptor" (or "of corruption") does not necessarily mean the one who destroys the corruptor, for it may equally signify the agent of the corruptor, giving a translation such as "the Corruptor's destroyer".[21] The significance of the pointing of the second word is thus to be found in terms of the number of opponents encountered in the ode, for if we read "corruption's corruptor", it could be said that there is only one figure who is called "the corruptor", but if we read "the corruptor's corruptor", there are then two figures who corrupt, one who may be regarded as <u>the</u> corruptor, and the other who does this as the agent of the other. The resolution of the problem rests on a further question of translation, but provisionally we would suggest that ܕܡܚܒܠܢܐ (of the corruptor) is preferable.

(2) With what verb is this phrase ܕܡܚܒܠܢܐ ܕܡܚܒܠܢܐ associated? Both Harris-Mingana and Charlesworth construe it with ܕܐܬܙܝܢ ܒܗ of the following line, "I saw (the corruptor's corruptor) when the Bride who corrupts was being adorned".[22] If this is the correct way to take it, it would then probably mean that "corruptor's corruptor" is to be identified with the Bride, since the next line reads, "and the Bridegroom who corrupts and is corrupt". This makes excellent sense, and prepares the way for the next verse which identifies these two as "the Deceiver and the Error", who "imitate the Beloved and his Bride".

On the other hand, the construction of vv. 8 - 9 cause us to ask whether this is the most likely way of understanding the text. In v. 8, the nouns which are the object of ܚܙܝ ܒܗ are introduced by the sign of the direct object (ܠ), but this is not the case with the noun which is

clearly the object of the verb ܐܦ in v. 9. While this does not render it impossible to regard the verse structure as given above, it does nevertheless suggest that the use of the sign of the direct object performs the task of separating the nouns associated with the respective verbs. If this is so, vv. 8 and 9 will need to be redivided, with v. 8 reading as follows:- "He made known to me all the drugs of error, and the pains of death ..... and the corruptor's corruptor". That is, the truth showed to the speaker what it was against which he had to be on his guard, and also showed him the nature of the one who was responsible for this.

One difficulty in the way of this verse division is the ܘ with which v. 9c begins, for this pre-supposes two direct objects for the verb ܐܦ. This difficulty can be overcome if we translate v. 9b again. If, instead of " I saw when the Bride who was corrupting was adorned", we read "I saw the Bride who corrupts when she was being adorned", we are given a clear statement that the speaker has seen both the Bridegroom and the Bride, which is certainly the case, and this provides us with a fitting introduction to the question in the following verse. This then leaves us with three objects of the verb ܚܙܐ ܟܠܬܐ, all of which are introduced by the sign of the direct object, and two objects of the verb ܐܡܪ ܐܦ, neither of which has this sign.

(3) What is the meaning of ܡܫܚܬܐ as applied to the Bride? MS. H reads ܡܫܚܝܬܐ, thus making it clearly "who was corrupt", but the reading of N may be either an active or a passive participle, and therefore may agree with H or may mean "who was corrupting".(23) In the following line we find the Pa'al active pcpl. ܡܫܚܐ followed by the Ethpa'al pcpl., thus making clear the distinction between "corrupts" and "is corrupted", which suggests that had the writer intended a passive to be understood in v. 9b he would have used an Ethpa'al pcpl. The same pcpl. is used in v. 11, where we read that

the Deceiver and the Error "cause the world to err ( ) and corrupt it ( )".[24] But since it is said that the corrupt Bridegroom and his Bride corrupt the world, it is most probable that the primary significance in v. 9a is the active, while allowing also for the possibility that the passive sense is implied as well, thus making the Bride one who corrupts and who is also corrupt, as is also the Bridegroom. That is to say, the Bridegroom has corrupted her who then becomes his Bride, and she herself exercises a corrupting influence.

Just as there is a single verbal root used to express the idea of "the corruptor's corruptor", ( ), so the odist also uses one root to designate "the Deceiver and the Error" ( ), and both of these roots are taken up again in v. 11, "they cause the world to err and corrupt it", which means that a very important element in corruption consists in being deceived, or led astray from the truth. This is seen to be the case also in ode 33:7f., where Wisdom speaks:

7 And leave the ways of that Corruptor,[25]
And approach me.
8 And I will enter into you,
And bring you forth from destruction,
And make you wise in the ways of truth.

In both of these odes we find the contrast between "the ways of the Corruptor" or "the ways of error" and "the ways of truth", and between "being corrupted" and "being made wise". But we also have in both of these odes the idea that the Corruptor imitates Christ, explicitly stated in ode 38, and by implication in ode 33. For in the latter, the Corruptor has caused utter destruction and corrupted all his work. He stands on a summit and calls from one end of the earth to the other, and "drew to him all those who obeyed him, for he did not appear as the Evil One" (v. 4). In this ode the Corruptor acts in just the same way as Christ in the manner of his proclamation,[26] and

in the summons which he gives to men.[27] It is therefore not surprising that he did not appear as the Evil One, which means that he does not seem to be one who ought to be avoided, but one who can apparently rightly claim men's allegiance. The Corruptor is therefore one who puts forth error in the guise of truth, and who, having gained the allegiance of men, corrupts all his work (33:2).

This imitative function of the Corruptor is important in the identification of the corrupt Bridegroom and his Bride, for in ode 38 they are offered to us in terms of the comparison with the Beloved and his Bride whom they imitate. That is to say, the fundamental data from which we must begin is "the Beloved and his Bride" and from this we may be able to identify the others. The concept of Israel as the Bride of God is found within the O.T. (Jer. 2:2; 3:20; Ezek. 16:8; Hosea 2:16-20), and is continued in the N.T. with respect to Christ and the church (II Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25ff; Rev. 18:23; 21:2; 22:17). This ode provides the only instance of the expression "the Beloved and his Bride" in the collection, but that the community of believers is regarded as the Bride of Christ or of God can be seen from those odes in which Christ or God is called "the Beloved" (3:5, 7: 7:1; 8:22), and from ode 42:8f., where Christ says,

8 Like the arm of the Bridegroom over the Bride,
So is my yoke over those who know me.
9 And as the bridal feast is spread out by the bridal pair's home,
So is my love by[28] those who believe in me.

The Beloved of the Odes is therefore Christ, and the Bride is the community[29] of those who have given to him their allegiance. It is from this point that the identification of the Corrupt Bridegroom and his Bride must begin.

Ode 38 is presented in the form of a heavenly journey in which, being led and preserved by the truth, because of his obedience to

the truth, the odist is given the understanding of knowledge of the truth on the one hand, and of error, deceit and corruption on the other. But this is not to be understood as an ascent of the soul in the gnostic sense,[30] nor is this to be regarded as taking place on any plane other than the level of human existence. Ode 33 shows that the activity of the Corruptor is among "the sons of men" and "the daughters of men" (v. 6), and the symbolism of ode 38 expresses the fact that it is by walking in the truth that the speaker has been given this revelation which enables him to comprehend the reality of the human situation, that is, the full significance of the struggle in which he and his community are engaged. We have in ode 38 symbols of the forces which set themselves up against Christ and his community, which could just as well be termed Anti-Christ and his community, but this community is also earthly, as is the Bride of Christ. That is, this is a community which stands opposed to the odist's, and it has both been corrupted by the Deceiver, and exercises a corrupting influence within or towards those who belong to the group represented by the odist.

If we follow Schenke and see in this ode a male and a female being through whom the concept of error is expressed, we are therefore compelled to identify the male being with the figure of Anti-Christ, and the female with the human community which is the agent of deception among men. But it appears that the odist is not attempting to say that the human community is Error and their Lord is the Deceiver, but rather he wishes to emphasise the totality of deception, both with regard to its origin and to its manifestation in the world. For when he asks the truth, "Who are these"? ( ), he receives the answer, "This ( ) is the Deceiver and the Error" ( ).[31] The use of the sing. demonstrative pron. together with the two nouns formed from the one root suggests a comprehensive understanding of deception, so that the meaning becomes, "This is what you see, the Deceiver and the manifestation of his deception in the world". That is to say, error and deception are found to be manifested

in men of error, but are not necessarily to be identified with them.

To speak of the personification of Error in this ode in the way in which Schenke does is to begin from the wrong direction. The odist does not begin with the mythological figure of personified Error, but he begins from the conviction of having found the truth through Christ,(32) and from the knowledge that he belongs to the community which is united to Christ in a marriage relationship. It is from this base that he comes to understand those who are opposed to the truth, and he therefore applies to them parallel but contradictory terms in order to show the similarity of their claims to his own, and in order to show that these claims are completely erroneous. There is a personification of error in this ode, but only in the sense that it could be said that the men of error are error personified.(33) When it is also seen that there is no speculation at all in the Odes with regard to the origin of the figure who is variously described as "the Deceiver", "the Corruptor" and the "the Evil One", and when we take into account the very different relationships between error and the material world in the two writings,(34) it is clear that there is a very wide gulf between the Odes and the Gospel of Truth with respect to their understansing of error.

B. INTOXICATION

A concept which is related to "error" and which is viewed as the resutl of having been deceived, is intoxication. According to ode 38, the Deceiver and the Error cause the world to err and corrupt it, and give to those invited to their wedding feast the wine of their intoxication, and

so cause them to vomit up their wisdom and their knowledge. This is also a concept which occurs in Gnosis, (35) but there are differences between the Gnostic use and that found in the Odes. Although in the Odes intoxication symbolises ignorance, it also appears that knowledge remains a possibility for all, and intoxication and error remain a possibility even for those who have come to knowledge. With the coming of the Messiah ignorance has been destroyed, (7. 21), but it can be said to be destroyed only in so far as men walk in, and are obedient to, the truth which has been revealed. If they do not do so, there is a very real danger that error will overtake them.

This at least appears to be the best way of understanding ode 38. We read that the corrupt Bridegroom and his Bride "invite" or "call" many to their wedding feast. There is no suggestion of compulsion here, nor is it said that those invited are ignorant or corrupt when called. This occurs only after they have accepted the invitation and have become intoxicated with the wine offered to them. (36) This intoxication then causes them to "vomit up their wisdom and knowledge" (v. 13). On a Gnostic interpretation this would mean that these people are originally from the Upper World, but being deceived they fall into error and ignorance and the possibility of true Gnosis is thus taken away from them. But the drunkenness here does not function in the way in which it does in Gnosis, for the odist says nothing about a return from drunkenness, and the concept thus symbolises the deprivation of knowledge, not forgetting of one's true origin which can be overcome by the revelation which comes from the Revealer.

But what is the wisdom and knowledge (ܚܟܡܬܐ ܘܡܕܥܐ) which the intoxication causes these people to vomit up? Is this merely the possibility of knowledge which is spoken about, or is the suggestion that these are people who have come to knowledge but have turned away from it? The odist's own experience implies that it is the latter which is involved

here. He has been lifted up to salvation, and from this point the truth has shown to him the deception which is at work in the world. Because he is thus advised, he is able to avoid this deception:

16 But I have been made wise so as not to fall into the hands of the deceivers,(37)

And I rejoiced because the Truth had gone with me.

This means that through continuing with the truth he has escaped error, and the implication is that others in his community have not escaped, but have been enticed away by "the pains of death which are considered sweetness" (v. 8), so that no longer do they have understanding and do not even seek it (v. 15).(38) The basic criterion for salvation in the ode is not coming to self-knowledge, but remaining in and being obedient to the truth which has been received, as is shown in the earlier vv. of it.

4 And he (the Truth) went with me and caused me to rest and did not allow me to err;

Because he was and is the Truth.

5 And there was no danger for me because I constantly walked with him;

And I did not err in anything because I obeyed him.

The reason why the speaker runs no danger of falling into error is that he constantly walks(39) with the truth and obeys it. This implies that a lack of obedience will result in error, and that he must always be on his guard against wandering from the truth. Verse 4 highlights the contrast between the continual presence of the truth as a guard against error, and the corrupting influence of error which, having done its work, can leave men to stagger about senselessly. It is possible in this verse, as Harris-Mingana and Charlesworth have done, to translate ܫܒܩ by "allow" or "suffer", but since this word is used everywhere else in the Odes with the meaning of "leave", and especially since it occurs also in v. 14 of this same ode in the context of the deceivers leaving those who have become drunk, we ought to give the same meaning in v. 4 and translate; "and he went with me and

to rest and did not leave me so that I should err".(40)

And so, while intoxication is used in both the Gospel of Truth and the Odes of Solomon, it is clear that the understanding of the concept is different in both writings, and so much so that the suggestion of relatedness at this point is a very dubious one. Nor can it be demonstrated that the use of this concept in the Odes is even in line with the mainstream of gnostic thought as seen in other sources, and we must look elsewhere to account for its use in the Odes. In the scriptures this image is used quite frequently in the Old Testament to describe the human condition of being led astray, and in the New Testament, although the symbolism is not drawn out as clearly as in the Old, drunkenness also characterises the man who belongs to the night rather than the day, and who is therefore not continually on the watch for the Lord.

From the Old Testament we may consider Isa. 19. 13f, and shall translate the Syriac text which agrees entirely neither with the Hebrew nor the Greek.(41) However, the significant words for the purposes of comparison with the Odes do occur in all versions. "The princes of Zoan have played the fool ( ) and the princes of Memphis are haughty. And they have caused Egypt to err ( ) through the cornerstones of her tribes. The Lord has mingled within her an erring spirit ( ), and he has caused Egypt to err ( ) in all her works, as a drunkard staggers in his vomit ( )." Here it is the Lord himself who has brought the drunkenness upon Egypt through the agency of foolish counsel given by supposedly wise counsellors, but drunkenness is particularly suitable as an image to portray the senselessness and lack of stability of man who attempts to subvert the purposes of God.

In the New Testament, the closeness of the Day of the Lord demands that men be sober and awake. In 1 Thess. 5 the Day will come like a thief in the night, but it will not surprise the believer, since he is not

of the night or of darkness, but is a son of light and of the day. Sleepers and drunkards, on the other hand are essentially people of the night. Being sober then means putting on the armour of the day, faith, love and the hope of salvation, without which the coming Day will find them unprepared.(42)

All of this means then that for the odist's conception of drunkenness we need look no further than the Scriptures. Through the truth he has been lifted up to the heights, and there he receives a divine revelation which enables him to identify the sources of error in the world,(43) and thus by recognising it as error, to walk continually in the truth. The intoxication signifies no more than the inability to perceive error as error, and the consequent state of ignorance and folly in which men live, deprived of true knowledge of God.

But we must ask whether this understanding of intoxication is sufficient to allow us to explain the other occurrence of the word in the eleventh ode. H. Jonas points out that "the drunkenness of ignorance is opposed by the 'sobriety' of knowledge, a religious formula sometimes intensified to the paradox of 'sober drunkenness'", and quotes ode 11 in support of this.(44) It may be said that since ode 38 draws a relationship between intoxication and ignorance,(45) and the intoxication in ode 11 is not "without knowledge", we may then by implication speak of a "sober drunkenness".(46) According to H. Lewy, the Odes originated in a circle of "judaising Gnostics"(47) and the gnostic thinking behind this eleventh ode can be clearly seen by a comparison with the concept of "sober drunkenness" as it occurs in Philo and other gnostic systems. He notes that there are certain differences between the two writings, so that we may not consider a direct dependence of the Odes on Philo, but concludes that both have taken over expanded concepts into the gnostic mysticism. Elsewhere he states, "Die Verwandschaft zwischen Philon und dem Verfasser der Oden beruht kurz gesagt darauf, dass beide die jüdische Sophiaspekulation in der gleichen mystisch-gnostischen Richtung zu gnostischen Symbolen transformierten".(48)

The relevant section of the eleventh ode runs as follows:

6 And speaking waters touched my lips
From the fountain of the Lord generously.
7 And so I drank and became intoxicated,
From the living water that does not die.
8 And my intoxication did not cause ignorance;
But I abandoned vanity,
9 And turned towards the Most High, my God,
And was enriched by his favours.
10 And I rejected the folly cast upon the earth,
And stripped it off and cast it from me.

Lewy remarks that commentators on the Odes up till Frankenberg[49] had understood the "speaking waters" ( ) as ὕδατα λαλοῦντα, and have related this to the "water, living and speaking" in Ignatius' Letter to the Romans 7.2. This relationship, according to Lewy, rests on a misunderstanding of the Odes, for in Ignatius as in the Fourth Gospel, the water is a symbol for the Holy Spirit, while in the Odes it symbolises the reception of saving knowledge. He also suggests that the Syriac ought not to be translated "speaking waters", but the expression is to be regarded as the equivalent of a Greek λογικὸν ὕδωρ, and cites as an analogous use to this 1 Pet. 2.3, which speaks of the spiritual milk (λογικὸν γάλα), the reception of which allows the believer to taste the kindness of the Lord. In connection with the statement of the ode that the speaker has drunk from the living water that does not die, Lewy also notes that the equivalent Greek adjective would be ἀθάνατος , whereas ἀένναος is the adjective usually used, and cites for comparison ode 6.18.[50]

A reading of the whole ode shows that it may be divided into at least three separate sections, which are nevertheless connected by images which move the thought along from one part to the next.[51] These sections describe the same salvation experience by means of different symbols. The

first section ends at verse 5, and speaks of the circumcising of the odist's heart by the Holy Spirit, which has exposed him to the love of God. Because of this he walks in the way of peace and truth, and from beginning to end he receives the knowledge of God. Verse 5 states that he has been established on the rock of truth where God has set him. The next section begins at v. 6 which has been quoted above, but is joined to the preceding section by the fact that the rock is not simply the place of stability, but is also the place from which God provided life-giving water for the Israelites.(52)

We shall leave this section for a while and consider the third, which is linked to it by v. 13; "And the Lord is like the sun upon the face of the land". The speaker has just said that he has become like the land which blossoms and rejoices in its fruits, and v. 13 forms a fitting conclusion to that section, while at the same time it paves the way for the third which goes on to speak of the enlightenment which has been received, and of the planting in Paradise.(53)

Of particular significance in this last section is v. 15;

And my breath was refreshed (ܪܘܚܝ ,ܪܘܚ)

By the pleasant fragrance (ܪܝܚ ܛܒ) of the Lord.

In this verse we find two words which occur only here in the whole collection; ܪܘܚܝ and ܪܝܚ . In addition we have the root ܪܘܚ used in both lines of the verse, to bring out the proper cause and effect relationship between the fragrance of God and the effect of that upon the speaker, so that we could translate, "And my breath was refreshed by the refreshing fragrance of the Lord". The two words which are hap. leg. both carry a double significance, the former meaning both breath and life, and the latter, fragrance and smell. The writer is therefore employing the imagery of breathing in a fragrant smell in order to express the refreshment which his life received. But what is this "fragrance" which comes from the Lord? Two possibilities immediately present themselves, which are related. The first is that the writer uses the language of breathing in a smell because this

is something which he actually experiences. In this case the writer will be referring to some cultic act, and this would most probably be baptism, since the idea of fragrance is frequently to be found in connection with the baptismal rite. The post-baptismal annointing signifies the reception of the Holy Spirit, for the Spirit also descended upon Christ after he had come up from the Jordan.(54)

Cyril of Jerusalem explains this phenomenon as follows:(55) "Being therefore made partakers of Christ, ye are properly called Christs, and of you God has said, Touch not my Christs, or anointed. Now ye were made Christs, by receiving the emblem of the Holy Ghost; and all things were in a figure wrought in you, because ye are figures of Christ. He also bathed Himself in the river Jordan, and having imparted of the fragrance of his Godhead to the waters, He came up from them ..... In the same manner to you also, after you had come up from the pool of the sacred streams, was given the Unction, the emblem of that with which Christ was anointed; and this is the Holy Ghost". Cyril goes on to show that since God has anointed Christ with the Holy Spirit, the anointing which the baptismal candidate receives makes him a partaker and fellow of Christ. This anointing is with no simple ointment, but "causes in us the Holy Ghost", and is applied to the forehead and the other senses, the ears, nostrils and breasts.(56)

In the rite as given in the Apostolic Constitutions, this sweet savour is related both to the knowledge of the Gospel and to the baptismal anointing, but here the fragrance appears to refer not to the Spirit, but to Christ: "O Lord God, who art without generations, and without a superior, the Lord of the Whole world, who hast scattered the sweet odour of the knowledge of the Gospel among all nations, do thou grant at this time that this ointment may be efficacious upon him that is baptised, that so the sweet odour of thy Christ may continue upon him fixed and firm".(57) For the Apostolic Constitutions, the post-baptismal chrism is the sealing of the

Covenant, and it is the pre-baptismal anointing with oil which symbolises the coming of the Spirit, as the section just quoted goes on to state: "that the anointing with oil may be the participation of the Holy Spirit, and the water the symbol of the death of Christ, and the ointment the seal of the covenants".(58)

In Cyril's Catechetical Lectures, the fragrance can refer not only to the anointing, but to the water of baptism itself, or to the Spirit who has already been at work in those who present themselves for baptism. Thus in the Procatechesis he speaks of the time when the candidates will "enjoy the fragrant waters which contain Christ",(59) and he has already begun by stating "already hath the fragrance of the Holy Ghost refreshed you".(60)

This symbolism of fragrance is also found apart from a baptismal context, to express the Holy Spirit or Christ. Thus in the Teaching of the Apostles we read, after the account of Christ's ascension and the perplexity of the apostles with regard to the fulfilment of his command to preach the Gospel to all nations, "And, while Simon Cephas was saying these things to his fellow apostles, and putting them in remembrance, a mysterious voice was heard by them, and a sweet odour, which was strange to the world, breathed upon them; and tongues of fire, between the voice and the odour came down from heaven towards them, and alighted and sat on every one of them".(61) In this account, the "sound from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind" of Ac. 2, has been replaced by a mysterious voice and a sweet odour which breathed on the apostles, but the latter is still a symbol for the coming of the Spirit.

Mar Jacob, writing his canticles on Edessa in language very reminiscent of the Song of Songs contrasts the sweetness of Christ with the bad odour of idolatry: "Thy breasts are better to me than wine: for the fragrance of thy sweetness is life for evermore. With thy milk shall I be

nourished; with thy fragrance shall I grow sweet from the smoke of idols, which with its rank odour did make me fetid".(62)

There is no unambiguous evidence in this eleventh ode that the writer is speaking of baptism, although the number of other images which are used in this ode and which also occur as baptismal images in the literature which has been quoted - circumcision, dew, planting, Paradise - makes the possibility of a baptismal background to the ode rather stronger. But whether or not this is so, the language of breath and fragrance, together with their relationship to new life and to planting in Paradise, makes it very probable that the writer is speaking here of his reception of the Holy Spirit, who elsewhere in the Odes is the agent of new birth.(63)

Thus, to return to vv. 6ff. of this ode, even if the drink which the speaker takes has the effect of producing an intoxication which is not without knowledge, it is not to be assumed that the water does not signify the Spirit, as Lewy maintains. And if the Spirit is mentioned in the first and last sections of this ode, it is reasonable to assume that it will also be found in the second.

Taking up the third point which Lewy has mentioned, that the adjective which qualifies "water" is not "eternal" but "immortal", it should be noted that in ode 28:8 almost the same thing is said of the Spirit - "And it cannot die, because it is life".(64) As has been shown, this ode is of assistance in understanding the statement of ode 11, "And my breath was refreshed by the pleasant fragrance of the Lord".

Secondly, the suggested parallel to Ignatius is not to be dismissed as easily as Lewy does, since the most obvious translation of ܡܠܝܠܐ is "speaking". Thus although Lewy draws attention to I Pet. 2:2 this provides no support for his argument, since the Pesh. translates λογικόν by ܕܡܠܝܠ, and when λογικὴ occurs again in Rom. 12:1, it is translated by ܡܠܝܠܐ. This hardly gives any

support to the idea that the Syriac of the ode is the equivalent of the Greek λογικὸν ὕδωρ . V. Corwin has also noted a further element of parallelism between the ode and Ignatius, in that in the latter this water says to him "Come to the Father", and in the ode after the speaker has drunk, he "turned towards the Most High" (v. 9).(66)

Thirdly, it is clearly incorrect to state, as Lewy has done, that "eternal" is more commonly found as the adjective describing the water than "immortal". For although he does cite ode 6:18 in support, this is the only instance where "eternal water"(67) is to be found, just as ode 11 contains the single occurrence of "water that does not die". However, the emphasis on "immortal life"(68) in the Odes, together with the emphasis on the Spirit as the agent of life, means that we are fairly safe in identifying this drink of water with the reception of the Spirit, or at least with the truth which comes through the Spirit.

If this is correct, how are we to understand the "speaking" of the water - does it mean that the water speaks to him, or that through receiving this water he speaks? In these odes, we do find the idea that the reception of truth leads to a speaking of truth on the part of the recipient. A significant passage in this connection is found in ode 18, where over against the vanity, ignorance and error of the world, those who were wise "spoke the truth, from the inspiration which the Most High breathed into them ( ), (69) and this inspiration is very probably to be identified with the Holy Spirit, who not only does not die (28:6), but who also does not lie (3:10), and who is therefore the imparter of truth par excellence.

But there is nothing else in this ode which suggests such a proclamation through the speaker, and it is more likely that the major emphasis lies on the reception of truth through the Spirit. But why should this be identified with drunkenness? In the first place, the odist has a

concept of intoxication which results from drinking the "wine of intoxication" of the deceivers. This is to be contrasted with the drink of living water which produces drunkenness but not ignorance. Secondly, the N.T. knows both the apparent drunkenness of the Spirit filled man,[70] and the contrast between the one who is drunk with wine and filled with the Spirit.[71] Thirdly, the two ideas of Drunkenness as symbolising ignorance[72] and salvation[73] are found in Gnosis, and while the Odes are not Gnostic, they do show evidence of contact with Gnostic modes of thought.

C. WAR

In odes 8 and 9 the odist speaks of the war which is waged on behalf of the believers. This is the war which the Messiah engages in and which he wins, thereby gaining victory and peace which are then shared by those who believe in him. This war is a prelude to the war in which the believer himself will be engaged, and the effect of Christ's victory is to ensure that the believer will not be overcome when he goes to battle.

> You who were despised, from henceforth be lifted up,
> For your righteousness has been lifted up.
> For the right hand of the Lord is with you,
> And he will be your helper,
> And peace has been prepared for you,
> Before your war takes place (8. 5-7).

These to whom this message is delivered have been brought low, (v. 3),[74] have been in silence (v. 4),[75] and despised (v. 5).[76] These phrases all describe the situation of danger in which they stand, and emphasise the necessity of deliverance. This deliverance has been achieved through their "Righteousness",[77] who has been lifted up, as they need to be lifted up.

The following verses of the ode are spoken ex ore Christi, and show how the victory of the Messiah can become the victory of the believer. The hearers are told to "Hear the word of truth and receive the knowledge of the Most High" (v. 8); to "Keep my mystery .... Keep my faith" (v. 9); to "understand my knowledge" and to "love me with affection" (v. 11). Therefore, the believers are commanded to "abide in the love of the Lord" (v. 20), and in the "Beloved", in "him who lives" and in "him who was saved" (v. 21).

This also shows us what the war is about. The war is about the Truth, the knowledge of God, by which men come to know God and to have life. Without this knowledge they are oppressed, they live in ignorance, error

and death, and can only be released from this condition as the knowledge of God comes through the Word which comes from the Father. "The War" is therefore a symbol for the contest between Truth and Error, a contest which is ever-present in the religious experience of men, but which has no significance for those men who have come to true knowledge through the Messiah. Christ has prepared peace for men by his revelation of the Father, and men enter into this peace as they hear and respond to the proclamation of the community represented by the odist.

This picture of the nature of the war is seen again in ode 9.

6 For I announce peace to you, his saints,
So that none of those who hear shall fall in the war.
7 And that those who have known him may not perish,
And that those who received him may not be ashamed.
8 An everlasting crown is Truth;
Blessed are those who set it on their heads.
9 (It is) a precious stone,
For the wars were on account of the crown.

Here we find it explicitly stated that the war is over the truth, and in v. 10 the odist goes on to say that "Righteousness has taken it (the crown), and has given[78] it to you". The reference to "Righteousness" here takes up the same thought as in ode 8, and it signifies the victorious activity of the Messiah. The crown here represents the victor's crown, and this in turn means that when man possesses the truth, he has the victory and the threat of war no longer troubles him.

The odist puts this in an alternative way in v. 7, where he speaks about knowing and receiving. There is a masc. sing. pronominal suffix attached to the first of these verbs, ,ܝܕܥܘܗܝ . These two verbs follow on from a third verb in v. 6 "hear", which has no object expressed. What is the object of these verbs in v. 7? Harris-Mingana suggest by their translation that the object is "him", without specifying whether this refers to

God or the Messiah. This makes perfectly good sense, but is this the same for v. 6b? The natural object of the verb here is the peace which is announced in the previous line, and this seems to be the best possibility for the objects of v. 7 also. It is as men hear, know and receive the message of peace that they share in the peace. For the message of peace is about the Messiah who has come to put into effect the will of God, which is that men may have eternal life (vv. 3-4), and therefore the reception of this news of peace constitutes belief in the Messiah who has obtained it.(79)

These two odes are concerned mainly with the war in which the Messiah has been engaged,(80) and in the way in which the fruits of Christ's victory can be made available to the believers. At the same time, both of these odes indicate that there is also a war coming, a war in which the believer himself is engaged, (8. 7; 9. 6).

Ode 29 begins with an account of the salvation which has been experienced by the believer, who states that the Lord has raised him from Sheol, and drawn him out of the mouth of death. He continues:

5 And I humbled(81) my enemies,
And he justified me by his grace.
6 For I believed in the Lord's Messiah
And he appeared to me, he who is the Lord,
7 And he revealed to me(82) his sign,
And he led me by his light.
8 And he gave me the sceptre of his power,
That I might subdue the devices(83) of the Gentiles,
And humble the power of the mighty.
9 To make war by his word,
And to take victory by his power.
10 And the Lord overthrew my enemy(84) by his word,
And he became like the dust which the breeze carries off.

The speaker has been armed with the powerful word of the Lord, so that he also may have victory over his enemies in the way in which the Messiah, the Word of the Lord, has had victory over his enemies. The enemies of Christ in this ode are Sheol and death, which represent not physical death, but the forces which produce ignorance and error concerning God. The enemies of the odist are "the Gentiles" and "the mighty" (v. 8). These are not interior forces at work within the speaker, but represent the forces behind ignorance and error. This means that the war is not an internal spiritual struggle, as is usually said,(85) but is the struggle to make the truth known as the truth in an unbelieving society.

> This same understanding of the war is implied in ode 15.
> Death has been destroyed before my face,
> And Sheol has been vanquished by my word,
> And eternal life has arisen in the Lord's land,
> And it has been declared to his faithful ones,
> And been given without limit to all that trust in him (vv.9-10).

The "my word" of v. 9 ought not to be emended to "his word",(86) for this means the declaration of immortal life which is made to, and accepted by those who have faith in the Lord. There is no mention of human enemies here, but behind the concepts of Sheol and Death, we may suppose that there are in mind human beings who present a different understanding of truth and the knowledge of God, and who therefore keep men under the power of Sheol and Death.

D. CAPTIVITY

This theme really forms part of the odist's concept of the war in which Christ has been engaged, and in which the odist is still engaged. In vv. 4-6. Christ speaks, and declares that he has taken the world captive for the glory of God. This has meant that the Gentiles who had been

scattered were now gathered together. Christ then goes on to say that he was not defiled because of this inclusion of the Gentiles, because they praised him. The difficulties involved in ܕܫܒܚ ܠܗ in v. 5b have been discussed above,(87) and here we are concerned only with the meaning of "the Gentiles" (ܥܡܡܐ). It is to be remembered that in ode 29. 8 the aim of the speaker was to "subdue the devices of the Gentiles". In ode 10, it appears that the Gentiles are the ones who are being saved, and it also appears that there is some dispute that these Gentiles ought to be welcomed into the community of the saved.

This raises the question concerning the meaning of ode 29. 8, especially the significance of ܡܚܫܒܬܐ , which J.H. Charlesworth translates, "devices". This word occurs in the plural in four other places in the Odes, (8. 18; 18. 13; 24. 10; 34. 1).(88) The first of these refers to the thoughts of Christ, by which he has brought his own into being. The last refers to the upright thoughts which find no barrier to their upward movement. The other two references are more important for understanding ode 29.8. Ode 18. 13 uses the word in a positive sense, referring to the thoughts of those who live within the truth, those who have forsaken error. The vain people think that ignorance is something great, and so become a type of error. On the other hand, The wise (ܚܟܝܡܐ ܕܢܝܚ) understood and contemplated (ܡܬܒܘܢܢ ܘܡܬܬܚܙܝ) and were not polluted in their thoughts (ܒܡܚܫܒܬܗܘܢ) (vv. 12-13). The following verse goes on to state that these, the wise, were "in the mind of the Most High". Here we see that "thoughts" represents the basic orientation of the person concerned, and we could say that those who have come to knowledge have the mind of the Most High, that is, their thoughts reflect the mind of God.

In ode 24. 10, the word is used with the opposite orientation. Here the thoughts are not those of men who have come to knowledge, but of

men who do not have the truth, who are lacking in wisdom (vv. 10-11). We further notice here, in distinction to ode 18, that these people have "exalted themselves in their mind". They are not orientated towards God and the mind of God, but in their pride they feel no need of the truth and wisdom of God. Therefore, God destroys the thoughts of those who have not the truth, and feel no need for it, and they are rejected by him (v. 12).

This allows us to see what the "thoughts of the Gentiles" are in ode 29. 8, and what the odist's task is. The odist lives among a community of Gentiles who have not yet come to the truth, who have no true knowledge of God. Through his proclamation of the truth, he must overcome their present way of thinking, he must turn their thoughts concerning life and salvation away from their present course, to the truth as it has been revealed through the Messiah. This is the war in which he is engaged, and this war involves freeing these men from their present captivity to ignorance and error, and bringing them into the freedom of the truth.

Therefore in ode 10 the odist begins;

1 The Lord has directed my mouth by his word,
And has opened my heart by his light.
2 And he has caused to dwell in me his immortal life,
And given to me to proclaim the fruit of his peace.(89)
To convert the lives of those who desire to come to him,
And to capture a good captivity for freedom. (vv. 1-3).

As in the ex ore Christi passage of this ode Christ has captured the world and made it his own, giving freedom instead of captivity, so the odist proclaims the fruit of Christ's peace, the victory which is theirs through trust in the Messiah, and so he gives men freedom in Christ instead of captivity in error and ignorance.(90)

E. BONDS AND CHAINS

Related to the theme of the captivity is the theme of the bonds or chains with which man is bound. Ode 17. 4 speaks of the chains (ܫܪܒܬܐ) which have been cut off from the speaker, so that he receives new life, and he now walks in it. This is then explained more in v. 5 where he states that

The thought of truth led me,
And I went after it and wandered not.

Clearly, the bonds with which the speaker has been held are those caused by the error in which he formerly lived, and which have been removed by the truth as revealed in the Messiah. But further on in this same ode we read of iron bars, which symbolise the captivity in Sheol. Christ says,

And I shattered the bars of iron,
But my own bars grew hot and melted before me.
And nothing appeared closed to me,
Because I was opening of everything.
And I went towards all my bondsmen in order to loose them,
That I might not leave anyone bound nor binding[91] (vv. 10-12).

Here we notice that the words for "bound and binding" are derived from the same root as the other word for "bonds" which occurs four times in the Odes. We shall consider the last of these first, since the context is closely related to ode 17. In ode 42. 11-14, Christ describes how he has overcome Sheol and Death, and made a congregation of living men among the dead in Sheol. In. vv. 15-17 he continues,

And those who had died ran towards me;
And they cried out and said, Son of God, have pity on us.
And deal with us according to your kindness,
And bring us out from the bonds of darkness.
And open for us the door

By which we may come out to you;

For we perceive that our death does not touch you.

The "bonds of darkness" here refers to the ignorance of those who have not known the Messiah (cf. v. 3), but who now recognise him as Messiah because of his victory over Sheol and Death. The door of v. 17 is the door of Sheol in which they are held captive, and is the same as the doors of ode 17 which were closed, but which Christ opened.(92)

The other three instances where "bonds" is used give us precisely the same picture. Ode 21 speaks of the casting off of bonds by the Lord, so that the speaker is lifted up (v. 2), puts off darkness and puts on light (v. 3), becomes a new being (v. 4) and enters into fellowship with the Lord (vv. 4 - 7). There is no specific mention of Sheol here, but the mention of being lifted up (vv. 2, 6), indicate that a release from Sheol is meant.(93)

Ode 22 again speaks about Christ's authority over bonds, and here the imagery of release from Sheol is plain. Christ has overthrown the dragon with seven heads (v. 5); he has chosen those who believe in him from their graves, taken dead bones and covered them with bodies (vv. 8 - 9). Bondage here is not directly connected with darkness, as in odes 42 and 21, but with unbelief, which in the Odes is synonymous with error and darkness.

Ode 25 begins with the statement that the speaker has been delivered from his chains and has fled to God. In place of his enemies who despised him, he now has the help of God, through whom he receives illumination (v. 7), the covering of the Spirit in place of the garment of skins (v. 8), and he becomes mighty in the truth so that his enemies now are afraid of him (vv. 10 - 11).

F. THE ABYSSES

The abysses ( ) are mentioned in two odes, 24 and 31. The first of these is very difficult to interpret, and we shall present the full text of this ode.

1 The dove fluttered(94) over the head of our Lord Messiah(95)
Because he was her head.
2 And she sang over him
And her voice was heard.
3 Then the inhabitants were afraid
And the foreigners were disturbed
4 The bird(96) began to fly,
And every creeping thing dies in its hole.
5 And the chasms were opened and closed;
And they were seeking the Lord as those about to give birth.
6 But he was not given to them for nourishment
Because he did not belong to them.
7 But the chasms were submerged in the submersion of the Lord,
And they perished in the thought with which they had remained from the beginning.
8 For they travailed from the beginning,
And the end of their travail was life.
9 And all of them who were lacking perished,
Because they were not able to express the word(97) so that they might remain.
10 And the Lord destroyed the devices
Of all those who had not the truth with them.

11 For they were lacking in wisdom,
They who exalted themselves in their mind.
12 So they were rejected,
Because the truth was not with them.
13 For the Lord revealed his way,
And spread abroad his grace.
14 And those who understood it,
Knew his holiness.

Verses 5 - 8 speak of the relationship between the Messiah and the Abysses. They are seeking for him in order to destroy him, but he does not become food for them.(98) Instead, they are destroyed "in the submersion of the Lord" (v. 7). The odist goes on to amplify this by saying that "they perished in the thought with which they had remained from the beginning" ( ). In v. 8, as J. H. Charlesworth has rightly seen, the odist picks up the thread of v. 5, where the abysses "were seeking the Lord as those about to give birth" ( ), by speaking about the travail of the abysses. The "travail" ( ) does signify the labour involved in giving birth,(99) but the root has a much more significant meaning for the odist. It is more usually associated with the idea of corruption, and we could translate, "For they were corrupt from the beginning, and the end of their corruption was life".

The end of their corruption can only mean their destruction, which prevents any further corrupting influence, and from this point on, the odist speaks not about the abysses, but about the people who have been corrupted by them. The contrast is drawn between "those who had not the truth in them", who were "lacking in wisdom" (vv. 10 - 12), and "those who understand" (v. 14). Therefore, the (100) of v. 9a, which Charlesworth translates "And all of them who were lacking perished", needs to be rendered differently. Nothing in vv. 5 - 8 suggests that

among the chasms there are some defective and some not. Rather they all perish in the thought which they have always had. This "thought" (ܚܫܒܢܐ), is taken up again in v. 10, where the odist speaks of the Lord's action in destroying "the thoughts of all those who had not the truth with them". That is to say, those people who live by the thought represented by the abysses, and who seek to destroy the Messiah, and who in so doing cut themselves off from the saving knowledge of God which he has brought. We would therefore wish to translate v. 9a, "And everyone who was lacking perished because of them".(101)

The abysses represent the forces of ignorance and error which keep men from truth and knowledge, and at the same time are synonymous with Sheol and death.

Several scholars have seen in the opening verse of this ode an allusion to the baptism of Christ, when the Spirit descended upon him as a dove.(102) The verb ܦܪܚ means "to fly", but perhaps we are not to think of the dove actually flying over the Messiah's head. Instead it could mean that the dove flew upon, on to, the Messiah's head and remained there. However, if this does represent the descent of the Spirit to Christ, it is clear that this happens so that the Spirit can later on fulfil some function at the command of Christ. It is to the Messiah's head that the dove comes, because (ܠܥ) he is her head.(103) The dove sings (ܥܠ) over the Messiah. The root ܥܠ occurs sixteen times in the Odes, and usually refers to the songs about the Messiah, that is, the proclamation of the truth about him. Since the Spirit is often the source of inspiration for the singers, it makes more likely the possibility that the dove here represents the Spirit. The ܥ of v. 2a thus means not only "over", taking up the same preposition in v. 1a, but also "concerning". These two verses therefore deal with the headship of Christ over the Spirit, and the witness of the Spirit to Christ.

When this witness is made, the inhabitants and the foreigners (ܐܬܝܒܐ , ܓܝܪܐ) are afraid and disturbed. The odist several times makes reference to the "war" over the truth, and this verse illustrates the disturbance which is caused by the proclamation about Christ.(104) The verse also prepares the way for the struggle between Christ and the abysses which is recounted in vv. 5ff., in which these abysses are destroyed by Christ. In v. 4, the bird, the dove, takes to flight. That is, she leaves the Messiah and flies away from him. The consequence of this is that every creeping thing dies in its hole. The word ܪܡܫܐ means "reptiles, vermin, insects, creeping things", and includes things that swarm, such as fish and mice. However, the basic meaning here probably has to do with the fact that these creatures creep slowly, without showing signs of abounding energy and life. When the bird began to fly, it was these creatures which symbolise slowness of life, the lack of fulness of life, which dies.(105) The fact that the odist restricts these creatures to those which live in holes is determined by the reference to the abysses which comes in the following verse.

What is the significance of the fact that the dove began to fly? In view of the following reference to the attempt of the abysses to consume Christ, the most likely meaning is the departure of the Spirit at the death of Christ. The death of Christ for the odist becomes the point at which those who do not yet have real life through the knowledge of God which he brings, suffer death because the revelation of God is now removed from them.

It is possible that there is a reference to the descent of the Spirit upon Christ at his baptism, but there is nothing that demands it, and if the odist has begun from this point, he has moved a long way from it. But does "the submersion of the Lord" signify his baptism, or does it refer

only to the descent into Sheol? If the baptismal reference is correct, it means that Christ's baptism was an anticipation of the final struggle with Sheol and Death in his descent into Sheol.[106] However, it would be perfectly possible to understand this ode without reference to Christ's baptism, since the abysses are used to signify chaos[107] and death.[108]

In ode 31 we again find the abysses, and there also occur here some of the related terminology in ode 24. The ode begins:

Chasms vanished before the Lord,
And darkness dissipated before his appearance.
Error erred and perished on account of him,
And contempt received no path,
For it was submerged by the truth of the Lord (vv. 1 - 2).

The follwoing three vv. relate that Christ sang a new song of grace and joy to the Father, and offered to him those who had become sons through him, as the Father had given him. Verses 6 - 13 of this ode are spoken ex ore Christi and deal with Christ's call to those who had been afflicted to receive immortal life, and with the attempt to do away with Christ. This attempt was unsuccessful, for he was to redeem and inherit[109] his people, and so fulfil the promises to the patriarchs.

There are several features of the first two vv. of this ode which need to be looked at in relation to ode 24.

v. 1a. The abysses  . This verb, which means "melted away" and so, "vanished", is used only once more in the Odes, at 17. 10. Here it refers to the melting of the iron bars so that Christ can be freed from Sheol, and open the doors for others to come out.

v. 1b. Darkness  . This is from the same verb which speaks of the travail, or the corruption of the abysses in 24. 8.

v. 2a. Error erred (). These terms do not occur in ode 24, but they are implied by the emphasis on the lack of truth

on the part of those who were rejected. Error is the thought in which the abysses remained from the beginning (24. 7).

As in 24. 7, 9 and 10, the verb ܐܒܕ is used to speak of the perishing of the abysses.

v. 2b. The word for contempt (ܫܘܛܢܐ) does not occur in ode 24, but is found in does 8 and 25, where it refers to those who had been afflicted and despised by their enemies.(110)

v. 2c. The verb ܐܬܒܠܥ occurs, this time stating that the abysses were submerged in the truth of the Lord, whereas in ode 24 we read that they were submerged in the submersion of the Lord.

The abysses thus are related to Darkness, error and contempt or affliction, and in the first instance are destroyed by the arrival of the truth of God through the Messiah. At the same time however, this destruction cannot be considered apart from the descent of Christ into Sheol, as is made clear from the second section of the ode.

G. SHEOL

This term occurs three times in the Odes, 15. 9; 29. 4 and 42. 11. In ode 15, Sheol is understood as the abode of man before he comes to knowledge of the truth.(111) The first part of the ode praises the Lord as the Sun who has lifted up the speaker, dismissed the darkness, made him to hear the truth, given him knowledge, so that he has repudiated the way of error, and found salvation in the Lord. The speaker has therefore been renewed, having put off corruption and put on incorruption.

But then the odist continues,

Death has been destroyed before my face,

And Sheol has been vanquished by my word (v. 9).(112)

As the following verse shows, "my word" is the proclamation of the odist, through which immortal life is made known to and received by those who

trust in the Lord. Without the knowledge of God, man is dead, he is in Sheol, and he is removed from there by the proclamation of the truth.

Ode 29 contains the same ideas of exaltation (v. 3), lifting up (v. 3), being renewed (v. 2), being brought up from Sheol and out of the mouth of Death (v. 4). Through being led by the light, and armed by the word of the Lord, the speaker makes war against his enemies and overcomes them (vv. 7 - 10). As with ode 15, the ascent from Sheol and the overcoming of death signify the renewal which man experiences as he receives the revelation of God through the Messiah. Armed with the truth, the speaker is able to continue the war against those who are still in the power of Sheol and death.

Ode 42 speaks of Christ's descent into Sheol and his victory over it, and the subsequent release of the dead in Sheol through their faith in him. The dead see that death cannot harm Christ, and this fact produces faith in him. "Sheol" in this ode, at least from the point of view of Christ's experience, does not signify the earth where ignorance and error exist, but is related to the real descent of Christ into Sheol at his death.(113) For the believer however, the bringing out from Sheol signifies the same thing as in the odes previously considered. Consequently, we find the same range of ideas associated with the removal of the believer from Sheol. The ode speaks about knowing Christ (v. 3), loving Christ (v. 4), making a congregation of living men among the dead in Sheol (v. 14), speaking with living lips (v. 14), bringing out men from darkness (v. 16). Also we have the same theme of the proclamation by the odist, whereby the truth of Christ is made available to men (cf. v. 6).

The themes of the abysses and Sheol are related in the Odes, but there are also differences in the way in which these concepts operate. The abysses signify chaos, ignorance and error, which are overcome through

the revelation through the Messiah and through his defeat of them in his death. Sheol, on the other hand, signifies the state of man without knowledge and truth, man as dead, and therefore this concept is used in conjunction with others which imply the renewal and indeed, the resurrection of the believer in this life, as he comes to knowledge of the truth. This resurrection is possible for man because Christ has descended to Sheol and has overcome it, and has therefore been able to bring men out from the power of death which holds them captive.

H. DEATH

As we have just seen, the three odes in which the term "Sheol" occurs, (15, 29, 42), also contain the term "death". This allows us to see that at least as far as the believer's experience is concerned, this term does not apply to physical death, but to spiritual death - death as the absence of the life which comes from God through his Messiah.(114) Also we find that just as Sheol is related to ignorance and error, so is death. Ode 18. 8 states, "Falsehood and death are not in your mouth, but perfection is your will". Ode 38. 8 refers to the "drugs of error and the pains of death".(115)

In two odes, death is mentioned in connection with Christ, and here it seems that physical death is meant. Ode 28. 18 states,

> And they sought my death but were unsuccessful,
> Because I was older than their memory;
> And in vain did they cast lots against me.

Not only do the enemies of Christ seek his death, and try to destroy the memorial of him who was before them (v. 19), but they thought they had succeeded; that he had been swallowed up ( ), that he was lost ( ) (v. 10). The allusions to the Passion Narrative, as well as the thoughts of Christ's enemies that he had been destroyed,

require us to view "death" in this ode in terms of the physical death of Christ. The further statements of the ode that Christ did not in fact die, that the efforts of his enemies were in vain, is not evidence of a docetic view of Christ,[117] but an assertion that he is not to be held by death, because through him comes life.

Ode 42 contains similar language, repeating the fact that Christ was considered to have perished and to have been rejected, along with the fact the death of the believers does not touch Christ. However, in this ode there are more certain grounds for rejecting a docetic interpretation of the death of Christ. In addition to the statements that Christ was considered to have been rejected and to have perished, the odist speaks of Christ as having gone down to the depths of death (v. 12), and of having been saved (v.18; cf. 8. 21). This suggests that more than an appearance of death is intended, and since the ode begins with a reference to the Cross,[118] it is reasonably certain that here we have a reference to the crucifixion.

The verb ܡܘܬ is used in the same way as the noun, indicating spiritual rather than physical death. Thus the creeping things died in their holes (24. 4); the persecutors of Christ died (42. 5), because they did not take hold of him, because they did not know him (42. 3); those who had died in Sheol ran towards Christ and in faith asked him to bring them out from the bonds of darkness (42. 15f).[119]

Of more interest are the references to what does not die. Ode 3. 8 tells us that he who is joined to him who does not die (ܠܐ ܡܝܬ) shall be without death (ܠܐ ܡܘܬ). Ode 11. 7 refers to the "living water that does not die (ܠܐ ܡܝܬ)". Ode 28. 8 says of the Spirit that "it cannot die because it is life ܘܚܝܐ ܗܘ ܕܠܐ ,ܡܝܬ ܐܝܟ).[120] "To die" here is defined in terms of the failure to be joined to that which is living. In ode 3 the one who does

not die may be God or Christ; and this union is mediated through the Spirit (cf. v. 10). In ode 11, the living water which does not die could be either knowledge of God or it may represent the Spirit.(121) In any case, the Spirit is involved in the life-giving process. In ode 28, it is clearly stated that the one who cannot die because it is life is the Spirit.

In view of this, it is not surprising that when the odist wishes to describe the life which the believer has, he refers to it not as eternal life, (ܚܝܐ ܕܥܠܡ), but as immortal life (ܚܝܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܘܬܐ ; lit. life without death).(122) This phrase occurs six times in the Odes (10. 2; 15. 10; 28. 6; 31. 7; 38. 3; 40.6), while "eternal life" is found once only (9. 4). This does not mean that the odist presents a negative view of life as the absence of death. Rather it is a particularly positive understanding of life, carrying with it the affirmation that Christ has overcome death so that it no longer can have any hold over the one who believes. For the odist, death is swallowed up in the victory of Christ, and this victory is given to the believer, in order that he may have nothing to fear, so long as he remains united to Christ.

I. THE WORLD

In the Odes, the term "the world" (ܥܠܡܐ) is almost invariably used to express the sphere which is in need of salvation. To belong to "the world" is to be in ignorance of God, to be in error, and consequently to be cut off from the life which has become available through the Messiah. This is in contrast to the use of this word in the plural, which signifies God's creation as related to him in a positive way. The plural is found four times only: 7.11; 12.4,8; 16.19.(123)

The last of these occurs in a hymn about the creation, and signifies the worlds which were created through the Word of the Lord.

The plural here may signify either the totality of creation, or may show that the odist is thinking about the earthly and the heavenly worlds. The first instance is found in a context which deals with the appearance of the Word on the human scene, and here the use of the plural may indicate humanity in general, although it is not necessary to restrict it to this meaning. God is called "the perfection of the worlds and their Father" ( ) (124)

The ode goes on to state that God has given his Word to those that are his own, so that they might recognise their Maker, and not consider that they could have come into existence without him. This reference to the giving of the Word and the revelation of saving knowledge which he brings makes it more likely that "the worlds" here refer to humanity, although it would not be impossible to understand the term here in the same way as in ode 16, as the totality of creation.(125)

In ode 12, the significance of the expression appears to refer more exclusively to the world of men. The ode begins with the odist's declaration that he has been filled with truth in order to proclaim it, and that this has occurred through the action of the mouth of the Lord, the true word. Verse 4 continues,

> And the Most High has given him to his generations ( ) (126)
> which are the interpreters of his beauty,
> And the narrators of his glory,
> And the confessors of his purpose,
> And the preachers of his mind,
> And the teachers of his world.

On the basis of this verse alone, it could be maintained that it is the creation which is signified by "his world", and that the odist was giving us an account of the glory of God as seen in creation, somewhat along the lines of the opening of Ps.19. The later vv. of the ode make this supposition difficult.

8 And by him the worlds spoke to one another,
And those that were silent acquired speech.
9 And from him came love and equality,
And they spoke to one another that which was theirs.
10 And they were stimulated by the Word,
And knew him who made them
Because they were in harmony.
11 For the mouth of the Most High spoke to them,
And his exposition prospered through him.
12 For the dwelling-place of the Word is man,
And his truth is love.

"The worlds" of this ode clearly refer to the world of men, or at least to those men who have received the Word which was offered by God, and through whom the truth concerning the Word is proclaimed. Verse 12 makes it plain that the place to which the Word came, and in which he dwells, is man, and v.10 shows that the purpose which God had in giving the Word to appear to his own in 7.12 has been fulfilled among the worlds who were stimulated by the Word. One sense then in which the term "the worlds" is used in the Odes is as a description of man as he responds to God's revelation in a positive way, and thereby receives the truth.

H.-M. Schenke believes that "the worlds" in the Odes are closely related to the aeons of the Gospel of Truth, and he draws particular attention to ode 7.11.(127) This is very unlikely. There is nothing in the Odes which corresponds to the state of agitation in which the aeons find themselves because of their ignorance of the Father, as in the Gospel of Truth. Nor is there any need of salvation on the part of the worlds in the Odes, as there is in the Gospel of Truth, because in the Odes, the worlds represent those who have already responded to God, and who have found salvation.

On the other hand, the sing. "the world" is usually used in the Odes with the opposite significance, viz., man in ignorance of, and in opposition to, God. Ode 20.3 makes a clear distinction between "the world" and "the Lord", and draws a parallel between "the world" and "the flesh".

> For his (the Lord's) thought is not like the world,
> Nor like the flesh,
> Nor like those who worship according to the flesh.

"The world" and "the flesh" here stand for that which is opposed to, or ignorant of God, and they belong to the sphere which is in need of salvation. They are here contrasted with the offering of the Lord, which is shown to be "righteousness, and purity of heart and lips" (v.5). Elsewhere we have shown that this ode is concerned with the proclamation of the truth, and the world and the flesh are representative of those men who are still in error, under the influence of the Deceiver, or the Corruptor.

This same understanding of the world is found in ode 38, where the world is led into error and is corrupted through accepting the invitation of the corrupt Bridegroom and Bride, and through drinking the wine of their intoxication, so that they vomit up their wisdom and intelligence. The odist, on the other hand, is preserved from this fate because he is led by, and remains obedient to, the truth.

What makes the world "the world" here is the acceptance of error in the guise of truth, and the consequent decision to live in error and ignorance. (128) This at the same time implies a decision against the truth, against the revelation of God through his Word. This contrast be-
-tween those who receive the revelation and those who do not is seen again in ode 19.5:

Then she (the Spirit) gave the mixture to the world without
their knowing ( ),
But those who have received it are in the perfection of the
right hand.

The phrase "without their knowing" can only mean that although this revelation was offered to the world, they (those who belong to the world) did not recognise it as the revelation of the Father, and they consequently rejected it. In contrast to this, those who did receive it are perfectly within the control and protection of the Father.(129)

If failure to receive the revelation which has been offered leaves the world as the world, it is nevertheless important that the offer is made. The world is in a state of ignorance and alienation from God, but it is at the same time the object of God's love and concern. The world does not have to remain as the world, but it can be transformed into an entirely new entity through the reception of God's revelation.

In ode 10, Christ takes the world captive, freeing it from the power which had previously held it captive.

4 I took courage and became strong and captured the world;
And it became mine for the glory of the Most High, even
of God my Father.

The odist has been speaking of "converting the lives of those who desire to come to him, and capturing a good captivity for freedom" (v.3). He can do this because he is one who proclaims the peace which Christ has gained through his victory, when he freed the world from its bondage.

The world is therefore both alienated from God and the object of his work of redemption. The odist can speak of the world as the sphere of error and death, because for him reality is to be found only above, where God is, and what is below is nothing more than a copy of the true

heavenly realm (34.4). Because it is separated from God, and because man needs to ascend from the world in order to find truth and life with God, the world can be equated with Sheol, the place of the dead. Only as man receives the truth can he escape from his situation of death, and only in this way can the world cease to be the world.

It is therefore only through the destruction of the world that renewal and the Kingdom can come. Ode 22 speaks of the activity of Christ in destroying the Dragon, and freeing men who have been bound by him. He has made a way for those who believe in him, and has given new bodies to those who were dead. This all refers to the action of Christ in giving new life to those who are under the power of Satan, dead in their ignorance and error. Because of this new situation which has arisen through the activity of Christ, a new world is formed for the new people to dwell in. The world of God ( ) is brought to destruction ( ) so that everything might be dissolved and renewed, and in the place of this world, the Kingdom is built.

J. SIN

One fact which is noticeable in the Odes is the lack of terminology for sin. The closest which the odist comes to speaking about sin is where he speaks about the evil in which men are held fast (18. 7). Alternatively, this same experience could be expressed in terms of the willingness of men to follow the Evil One rather than Christ (33. 4,7), or in terms of the acceptance by men of the wine of the Deceiver and the Error, by which wisdom and intelligence are lost. (38. 11-14). The odist therefore sees that men are not in need of deliverance from sin, but from ignorance of God, and from the error and darkness which result from this. The Odes do not speak to us about forgiveness, but only about knowledge and truth and the new life which comes from this.

But if we find nothing of sin and forgiveness, the Odes do offer us a concept of salvation which is more than a mere coming to knowledge and life. The whole scheme of salvation is grounded in the love and grace of God, without which the saving knowledge is impossible. Also, we find that man is required to make a response to the knowledge which is offered through the revelation in the Messiah. There are two alternatives presented to man, and he has the opportunity of choosing the one by which he will live. The evil one appears as an attractive person, one whom men will willingly follow, and Christ calls to men to forsake this Evil One and to follow him (33. 6-8). It is therefore those "who desire to come to him" (10. 3) who are freed by Christ, those who acknowledge that God has acted towards them in love and who respond to it (3. 3-5), and who therefore cast away folly (11. 10), error and corruption (15. 6,8), darkness (21. 3), the garments of skin (25. 8).

K. THE SERPENT

In ode 22. 5 we read of the seven-headed drageon whom Christ destroyed in order to give life to those who were dead. This figure of the serpent represents the one who is the ruler of Sheol, and he can be identified with the "Evil One" of ode 33, or the "ruler of this world" in line with Jn.12. 31 or "the god of this world" of II Cor.4. 4. Because of him, men are held captive, but through his defeat by Christ, they are free to travel the way to life.

The only seven-headed serpent in Scripture is found in Rev. 12. 3, which is the pattern of the seven-headed beast of Rev. 13. 1. But the other features of this dragon, the ten horns and the seven diadems on the heads, are not present in the ode, and it is doubtful that the odist derives his image from Rev. There is a seven-headed dragon in the Mandaean literature, but this refers to the body:"My body is a rapacious sea which robs and devours sheep. It is a dragon, a wicked (Son of Man)

who has seven heads"; (tr. in Gnosis II, 223). Nor in the Odes is there any speculation on "the Seven", as we find in Gnostic and Mandaean sources.

W. Frankenberg relates this to the "Bild der sieben oder acht bösen Leidenschaften in der monchischen Askese", and finds the origins of the number "7" in Matt. 12. 45 or Mk. 16. 9 .(130) The detail of the seven heads demands that there be some image already present from which the odist is working, and it is possible that both the odist and the author of the Revelation are drawing on a common source. At the same time, the number 7 occupies such an important place in the symbolism of Rev. that even this remains questionable.

FOOTNOTES ON PP. 234 - 279.

1. The verb ܪܕܐ and its cognate forms occur 15 times throughout the Odes, and eight of these instances are contained in ode 38.

2. Die Herkunft des sogannanten Evangelium Veritatis, p. 29.

3. "Error" is personified to no greater extent than is truth, or the abysses, or ignorance. We may perhaps say that error is personified, but not hypostatised.

4. This translation by J.H.Charlesworth fits the thought of the ode better than that of Harris-Mingana, "Disappeared from him".

5. This noun occurs eight times in the Odes, and is equivalent to error and ignorance.

6. See below on the significance of the chasms in the Odes.

7. If we are to say with H.-M.Schenke that error is personified, it will also be necessary to say with respect to this ode that vanity and ignorance are also personified. However, Schenke sees no personification here, even though the text speaks of error not "knowing God"; op. cit. p. 26.

8. "Foam" is from the same root as "vanity". See below, n. 12.

9. See also S.Arai, Die Christologie des Evangelium Veritatis, p. 54.

10. The thought is that these people took on the form of ignorance; that in their rejection of the revelation, they epitomised ignorance.

11. Cf. Gospel of Truth, 17. 14ff. The idea of the ode is closer to Rom. 1. 21ff. In the latter passage, note especially the juxtaposition of the roots ܫܛܐ and ܫܒܚ , and compare v. 22 .... ܕܐ ܡܚܝ ܠܗ ܐܠܗ . ܕܫܒܚ ܠܗ ܡܢ, with v. 12 a of the ode. Note too the use of ܫܒܚܐ in Rom. 1. 23, but here the thought is different from that of the ode. The Romans passage is dealing with the idolatry of the pagan worshippers.

12. Cf. v. 11, where "ignorance appeared like the dust and like the ܫܒܚܐ of the sea". This Syriac word should be translated "scum", (with Harris-Mingana) rather than "foam", for it signifies that which causes the pollution. If a man avoids this ܫܒܚܐ , he will avoid being like ܫܒܚܐ as well.

13. J.H.Charlesworth says that "the meaning of this line seems contrary to the Christian kerygma", and asks if it could be influenced by the

Qumranic injunction to hate the sons of darkness; The Odes of Solomon, p. 81. There is no need to be as specific as this in looking for the background of the ode. Similar ideas may be found in I Kings 18. 27; Test. Levi 7. 2; Gospel of Nicodemus, Christ's Descent into Hell, 5. 2; The Nisibene Hymns of Ephraem, 58.

14. On the difficulties of v. 7 of this ode, see pp. 485 ff.

15. Otherwise expressed, because they think in their ignorance that what they possess is the truth.

16. op. cit. p. 26.

17. See Harris-Mingana, II, 393.

18. ibid., p. 393.

19. op. cit. p. 133.

20. See J.Payne Smith, A Compendious Syriac Dictionary, p. 263 b.

21. Cf. ode 33. 2, where the Corruptor caused utter destruction ( ) before himself.

22. See also the translation of R.H.Connolly: "I saw while the bride that is corrupted was adorned, and the bridegroom who corrupts was corrupted"; "The Odes of Solomon: Jewish or Christian", JTS 13 (1912), 305.

23. Harris-Mingana, "who was being corrupted"; J.H.Charlesworth, "who was corrupting".

24. Since the part. is used in this double sense, probably the odist intends both senses to be understood. These men are both corrupt and corrupting.

25. The same problem occurs in this ode with the word . The facsimile of the text of MS H printed in Vol. I of Harris-Mingana shows that this word is pointed in exactly the same way in odes 33 and 38.

26. Harris-Mingana point out the resemblances between Prov. 8 and this ode. For the idea of the Revealer standing on a high mountain and drawing his own to him in Gnostic thought, see Epiphanius, Pan. XXVI. 3, 1. The idea that the Evil One presents himself to men as a friend rather than as an enemy is a common one. See II Cor. 11. 1ff; Acts of Andrew, 17; Ephraem, Nisibene Hymns, 57.

27. The use of the verb "obey" ( ) in odes 33 and 38 is important for the odist's understanding of salvation. The revelation is not merely given. It must be acted upon, and men must remain faithful to it.

28. See notes 13-16 on p. 147 of J.H.Charlesworth, The Odes of Solomon. The translation of Harris-Mingana, who translate, "So is my love over those who believe in me" is preferable.

29. The community is not identified with the bride in these vv., but the symbolism used means that this is the appropriate way of understanding the relationship between Christ and the community.

30. See below on the idea of the believer's ascent in the Odes.

31. To bring out the force of the odist's expression, we should probably translate, "This is the Deceiver and the Deception".

32. "Truth" is personified in this ode in the same way that Error is, but there is no identification of the Truth with Christ, even if the truth is not attainable apart from Christ's revelation. To "obey the truth" means to live in accordance with the revelation which has been received.

33. As in ode 18, where the men who are ignorant take on the form of ignorance.

34. See below on the concept of the World in the Odes.

35. "Drunkenness" occurs frequently in Gnosis as a symbol for man's ignorance of his true origin and destiny; see Poimandres 7. 1f; Apocryphon of John 59; Book of Thomas, 139. 37. The concept in Gnosticism is explained in H.Jonas, The Gnostic Religion, pp. 68ff.

36. The parallel to Ignatius, Ad. Trall. 6. 2 is significant, but it is insufficient to show that "the Ignatian Epistles have incorporated a quotation or the equivalent of a quotation from the Odes of Solomon"; Harris-Mingana II, 42. The significance of the passage from Ignatius is not that it shows evidence of dependence between the Odes and the Ignatian letters, but in the meaning of the image used. See also Theophilus of Antioch, Ad Autol. 2. 12.

37. MS H reads the sing. "Deceiver". From what has been said in the ode about the relationship between the Deceiver and the Error, there is little difference ultimately between the use of the sing. or the plural. In terms of the immediate situation of the community, however, the plural is more appropriate, and the line means, "I was not deluded by the appearance of truth which the deceivers presented".

38. The verb here is . Cf. its use in ode 7. 10, where the Lord has offered to the odist to ask ( ) and receive of his sacrifice. The use of the verb indicates that the opportunity exists for understanding

the truth, but because of the intoxication caused by error, there is no desire for it.

39. The use of composite tenses is not always consistent in the Odes, but Charlesworth is right to draw attention to the implication of v. 5 by translating ܗܘܐ ܗܠܟ as "constantly walked".

40. We could give greater emphasis to the idea of "leaving", and translate the verb in v. 4 by "abandon" as Charlesworth has done for the same verb in v. 14. The odist draws a distinction between the guidance of the truth which must constantly accompany man if he is not to be overcome by error, and the deceiving power of error which is so corruptive that once man has been deceived by it, he can be left to his own devices, for he is fully in its power. Alternatively, we could translate the verb by "let loose", indicating that the deceivers go about their corrupting work with the authority of the Deceiver.

41. We have used the Pesh. version simply for the sake of a comparison in the language used.

42. Cf. Rom. 13. 13 and the next note.

43. Particularly interesting for this ode is Rev. 17f., although the symbolism is put to a different use. In Rev. we read not about a corrupt Bridegroom and Bride, but of the fornication between the harlot and the kings of the earth. The dwellers of the earth become drunk with the wine of that fornication.

44. The Gnostic Religion, p. 71.

45. With reference to ode 38, it is of interest to note the infrequency of ܫܬܝ and its derivatives. The verb occurs only once (v. 7), where the truth showed to the odist whatever he did not know. The complementary term for bring to knowledge is not from the ܫܬܝ verb, but from ܝܕܥ. ܐܬܬܫܬܝ and ܐܬܬܫܬܝ ܠܐ do not occur in this ode at all, and ܫܬܝܬܐ is found twice. When in v. 15 it is said "there is no understanding in them", the noun is ܡܕܥ. Since it has been suggested that the frequency of ܫܬܝ and its derivatives provides a case for stating that the Odes are Gnostic, the infrequent use of this verb in this ode, in which the symbol of "drunkenness" occurs, raises some questions about the so-called Gnosticism of this concept in the odes. See K.Rudolph, "War der Verfasser der Oden Salomos ein Qumran-Christ?", RQ 4 (1964), 523ff.

46. See H.Lewy, Sobria Ebrietas, p. 86.

47. op. cit. p. 82.

48. ibid. p. 86, n. 2. According to Lewy, the odist was ignorant of the concept of the mediating work of Sophia as this is expressed in Philo, and of the entire teaching which Philo attaches to the hypostasis of Sophia. This for him, constitutes the essential difference between the

odist and Philo.

49. See W.Frankenberg, Das Verständnis der Oden Salomos, p. 82, who translates the Syriac expression into a Greek ὕδατα λογικα .

50. See below on Life in the Odes.

51. H.Lewy, op. cit. p. 85, simply states that the odist did not stop to work out the implications of the "intoxication of knowledge", but moves on to another image. He himself does not ask about the possible relationship between the images, and assumes the ode to be rather dis-jointed.

52. Cf. Clement of Alexandria, Paed. 2. 2: "This is the simple drink of sobriety which, flowing from the smitten rock, was supplied by the Lord to the ancient Hebrews"; (tr. in ANF II, 242). See also ode 22.

53. In v. 12 the odist compares himself with a land on which the sun shines, and which blossoms and bears fruit. In the following vv., the image changes so that he is now like a tree planted in Paradise. For the significance of "planting" as representing incorporation into the saved community in Qumran, see B.Gartner, Temple and Community in Qumran, p. 28. For the same symbol in Jewish Christianity, see J.Daniélou, Primitive Christian Symbols, pp. 26ff. Daniélou sees "striking resemblances" between the Odes and Qumran in the use of this image.

54. Cf. also ode 36. 6 for the idea of an annointing in the Odes. Ysaebert, Greek Baptismal Terminology, p. 342, thinks there may be an allusion to "annointing which is accompanied by or follows upon a renewal". In the Syrian church the annointing was pre-baptismal rather than post-baptismal, and since it is this latter order which is followed in the Odes, it argues against a baptismal interpretation. See T.W.Manson, "Entry into Membership of the Early Church", JTS 48 (1947), 25ff; A.Gilmore (ed.), Christian Baptism, pp. 199f.

55. Mystagogical Catechesis, 3, 1; (tr. in F.L.Cross (ed.), St. Cyril of Jerusalem's Lectures on the Christian Sacraments, pp. 63f.).

56. ibid. 3, 3; (in Cross, p. 65). In the Roman rite of John the Deacon the annointing of ears, nostrils and breasts preceded the baptism. Here too the annointing of the nostrils is related to the breathing in of the breath of life, and to having the Spirit of God in the nostrils; see E.C.Whitaker (ed.), Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy, p. 156.

57. Apostolic Constitutions, Bk. VII, 44; (tr. in ANF, VII, 477).

58. ibid, III, 17; (tr. in ANF VII, 431).

59. Prochatechesis, section 15; (Cross, p. 49). The words of the quotation follow on from a statement that the gates of Paradise have been opened to each member, and the ode follows on with the same thought.

60. ibid. section 1; (Cross, p. 40). In this and the preceding quotation εὐωδία is the Greek word for "fragrance". In the N.T.Pesh. this word is regularly rendered by ܪܝܚܐ ܕܒܘܣܡ . See II Cor. 2. 15 where εὐωδία occurs alone, and Eph. 5. 2 and Phil. 4. 18, where the same Syriac expression translates ὀσμὴν εὐωδίας .

61. Tr. in ANF VIII, 667.

62. A Canticle of Mar Jacob the Teacher on Edessa; tr. in ANF VIII, 654.

63. Since ܪܘܚܐ occurs in this kind of context, it is made more likely that its use here (the word is hap. leg. in the Odes), is determined by the fact that it is derived from the same root as ܪܘܚ , and that there is a deliberate word-play on "Spirit". The lack of any other instance of the word deprives us of any certainty at this point.

64. MS H reads the sing., "living". We suggest in the following chapter that this reading may be preferable.

65. See J.Payne Smith, op. cit. p. 278 a. There it is said that ܡܠܠܐ is the opposite of ܚܫܫܐ , in the sense of being endowed with speech, over against being endowed with reason.

66. St. Ignatius and Christianity in Antioch, p. 145.

67. The line could also be translated "And they lived by the water an eternal life", as Harris-Mingana have done.

68. With the possible exception of ode 6. 18, (see previous note), the only other instance of "eternal life" in the Odes is at 9. 3.

69. Cf. Jn. 20. 22 Pesh. ܘܢܦܚ ܒܗܘܢ , and the quotation from the Syriac Teaching of the Apostles in n. 61 above. In Gnosis, the idea of in-breathing also occurs, and this is often related to Gen. 2. 7, but this refers to the breathing in of the psychic man by the Demiurge: "This is what is stated; And God formed man, taking dust from the earth, and breathed into his countenance the breath of life. And man became a living soul. This, according to them, is the inner man, the psychic one which resides in the material body"; Hippolytus, Ref. VI. 34, 5. A Gnostic "inbreathing" which is closer to the ode than the previous example is found in the Gospel of Truth, 30. 27ff.:"For when they saw him (the Son) and heard him, he granted them to taste of him, and to smell him (cf. ode 11. 15), and to take hold of the beloved Son (cf. ode 42. 3), after he had appeared teaching them concerning the incomprehensible Father. After he had breathed into them (cf. ode 18. 15; 11. 15) that which is in the thought, doing his will and many had received the light (cf. ode 11. 14f.), they turned to him (cf. ode 11. 9, 21)". The parallels to ode 11 are striking, but the ode has nothing comparable to the words which follow in the Gospel of Truth, "for they who were matter were alien to him for they did not see his image, and they did not know him"; (tr. in Gnosis I, 191, and II, 63.

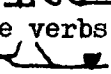
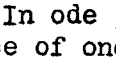
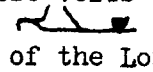
70. Cf. Acts 2. 13, I Cor. 14. 23. In the latter, the Spirit-filled people are compared with those who are mad rather than with those who are drunk, but the symbolism is comparable.

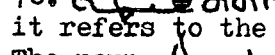
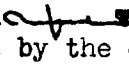
71. Cf. Eph. 5. 17f. E.Schweizer speaks of the enthusiasm of the communities for whom the Epistle to the Ephesians was written, as one "in denen eine vom Geist eingegebene 'Trunkenheit' die Gottesdienst prägte"; Jesus Christus, p. 63. See also the remarks of G.W.MacRae in "Sleep and Awakening in the Gnostic Texts", in Le Origine dello Gnosticismo, pp. 504-506.

72. See Gospel of Thomas, 12; The Book of Thomas 139. 37; Poimandres 27; Apocryphon of John 59.

73. For a comparison between the intoxication of ode 11. 6 and that in Gnosis, cf. Gospel of Thomas 12: "Jesus said, I am not your master since you drank and became drunk from the bubbling spring which I have distributed". The meaning of this is comparable to saying 105 in the same Gospel, where drinking from the mouth of Jesus leads to the believer and Jesus becoming one. See also Hippolytus, Ref. V. 8, 6f. This intoxication is rather different from that of the ode.

74. This form of the verb occurs elsewhere only at 41. 12, where it refers to the humbling of the Messiah before his subsequent exaltation. The Aph'el of this verb is used in ode 29. 5,8, where it refers to the humbling of the enemy by the odist.

75. To be silent in ode 12. 8 is the condition of man before receiving the Word, although there it is the verb  which is used and not  as here. Both of these verbs occur as synonyms in 31. 10. In ode 35. 4 however, the verb  reflects the quietness and peace of one who has the protection of the Lord. It can be seen from this that "silence" in the Odes does not correspond to the "Rest", and that it is not the same as in Valentinian Gnosis, where it is "eine typische Bezeichnung der göttlichen Sphäre"; P. Vielhauer, "ΑΝΑΠΑΥΣΙΣ" in Apophoreta, p.285.

76.  . This verb occurs elsewhere only at 25. 5, where again it refers to the contempt in which the enemies of the odist held him. The noun  occurs once, at 31. 2, where we find that this is destroyed by the coming of the Messiah.

77. J.H.Charlesworth thinks that "Your Righteousness" is here "a surrogate for 'Jesus Christ, the Righteous One' ", op. cit. p.43. That may be so, but it is to be noted that in v. 19 of this ode, Christ says, "And my righteousness goes before them". It is therefore possible that "your righteousness" is not a surrogate for Christ, but that it relates to the victory of Christ, which becomes theirs as they respond to him. See also the following page.

78. Perhaps we ought to translate this by "has offered it to you", since the victory for those addressed seems still to be made complete.

79. This verse has some resemblance to Jn. 3. 16, but this is no closer than it is to Rom. 9. 33 (= Isa. 28. 16).

80. This war is expressed chiefly through the image of Christ's descent into Sheol, and will be dealt with below.

81. Harris-Mingana suggest ܦܪܥܐ for the ܕܚܠܬܐ which is found in both MSS of the Odes.

82. MS H reads ܠ instead of ܡ.

83. See below pp. 261f.

84. MS H has the plural "enemies". In v.5 the odist refers to "enemies", although the verb in v. 10 line b is 3rd m.s. The sing. must therefore be the correct reading in v.10a, but it should be understood as a collective noun.

85. Cf. W. Frankenberg who says that " die ἔθνη sind natürlich die die Dämonen", op. cit. p. 59. Frankenberg regards the whole sphere of operations of the Odes as the soul, ibid. p. 93. A Vööbus relates the concept of the war specifically to the call to ascetism as related to baptism in the early Syrian church; Celibacy, p.23. See also R. Murray, "The Exhortation to Candidates for Ascetical Vows at Baptism in the Ancient Syrian Church", NTS 21 (1975), 72; "The ascetic's warfare occurs also in 8. 7 and 29. 9."

86. See below on the "I" of the Odes.

87. See p. 188.

88. The sing. occurs 16 times, and in the majority of these instances it refers to the thought or intention of the Lord.

89. That is, his victory which will become that of the receivers of the message. See ode 9. 6.

90. S. Arai regards this idea of captivity in the Odes as Gnostic, and believes that it takes the place of the concept of self-knowledge in Gnostic thought; Die Christologie des Evangelium Veritatis, p. 27.

91. MS H reads ܐܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܒܥܐ , N ܐܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܕܠ . We should probably translate the line, (accepting the reading of N), "That I might not leave anyone bound, or him who binds (them)". the point seems to be the complete emptying of Sheol, and the abolition of him who binds men there. Cf. ode 33. 1ff.

92. This theme of the release of men from Sheol at the descent of Christ there is a common one in early Christian literature. See E. Stauffer, New Testament Theology, pp. 133f.

93. "Sheol" nevertheless must stand for the earth here, since the earth, the place which is "below", has no reality about it. The themes of Christ's descnet into Sheol and of his descent to the earth where men are in darkness and death apart from Christ's revelation, are completely interwoven in the Odes. J.Daniélou links this theme to baptism, but the theme may be understood in the Odes without reference to Baptism; see The Theology of Jewish Christianity, pp. 233-244.

94. R. Murray relates this to the hovering or brooding of a mother bird, as expressed by the verb RḤP in Gen. 1. 2; Symbols of Church and Kingdom, p. 143. It should be noted that the verb in the ode is PRḤ.

95. MS H reads only "The dove fluttered over the Messiah".

96. Several scholars take the noun as plural, in spite of the sing. verb which follows. The "bird" refers to the dove of v.1, and the word does not represent the sacred birds which were excluded by the coming of the message of the Messiah, as W.R.Newbold thinks: "Bardaisan and the Odes of Solomon", JBL 30 (1911), 161ff. Cf. W. Frankenberg, "Die Vögel sind die dämonischen Mächte und Eingebungen"; op. cit. p. 51.

97. The expression means, "They were not able to give an answer"; they had no excuse to offer. The thought is similar to Jn. 15. 22ff., but also to Ram. 1. 20ff.

98. This does not mean that Christ did not enter the abysses, but that he was not overcome by them as the next v. shows. Cf. ode 42. 10-17.

99. As in ode 19. 8.

100. MS H has ܠܐ ܕܐ for ܠܐ.

101. This verse provides an introduction to the following one, which speaks of the Lord's destruction of those (men) who had not the truth with them. The destruction of the abysses has already been stated in vv.7f.

102. See H. Duensing, "Zur vierundzwangigsten der Oden Salomos", ZNW 12 (1911), 87. J.H.Charlesworth sees here "a remote allusion to Jesus' baptism in the Jordan as recorded in the Gospels", op. cit. p.99.

103. Cf. Ephraem, Hymns on Epiphany, 9. 1; "O John, who savest the Spirit-that abode on the head of the Son - to show how the Head of the Highest went down and was baptised and came up to be head on earth. Children of the Spirit ye have become, and Christ has become for you the head; ye also have become his members"; (tr. in NPNF 13, 279). Ephraem does not, like the odist, refer to Christ as the head of the Spirit.

104. Cf. H. Duensing, ZNW 11 (1910), 7; "Darin, dass hier die Taufe Christi den Wendepunkt in der Geschichte der Welt bildet, verrât sich gnostische Anschauungsweise". This does not follow at all, unless it is also to be claimed that the image of the descent into the baptismal waters by the believer as an overcoming of the rule of Satan is also to be classed as Gnostic.

105. W.R.Newbold sees both birds and creeping thingss of the ode as sacred animals of the religions of the odist's environment.

106. See J.A.T.Robinson; "The Fourth Gospel also sees already in the figure coming to John for baptism 'the Lamb of God' which taketh away (or beareth) the sin of the world. The baptism is the anticipation of the Cross, in which Jesus in the Jordan foresuffered all, and as such it gives to the Cross and all that lies between the two events, its own character of baptism"; "The One Baptism as a Category of New Testament Soteriology", JTS 6 (1953), 261.

107. On the use of תהום , in relation to Chaos, see G. von Rad, Genesis, pp. 47f.

108. Cf. ode 28. 10.

109. J.H.Charlesworth believes the verb comes from the root and translates, "That I might redeem my nation and instruct it"; op. cit. p. 118. See ode 23. 19f. for a comparison with this verse.

110. Cf. also v.6 of ode 31, where those who have been afflicted (ܠܐܠܝܨ̈ܐ ܕܐܬܥܢܝ) are invited to "Come out" (ܢܦܩܘ).

111. This is not to be understood as a Gnostic condemnation of this material world, since the world is God's world, created through the Word of God, and renewed through the action of the Messiah.

112. See above p. 260.

113. This ode, beginning with the reference to the Cross, and moving on to the statement that Christ "rose up and is with them (those who believe in him)", gives us probably the clearest evidence that the odist thinks in terms of a real descent into Sheol by Christ. Other odes where this theme occurs could be understood simply as a descent to earth by Christ, but this is not so with ode 42.

114. Which implies at the same time a decision for error and death, and against truth and life. See 18. 12; 38. 11-15.

115. Cf. 6. 15 where the water of knowledge holds men back from death.

116. Cf. J. Carmignac, who states that only in ode 31 is there any clear

mention of the Passion in the Odes; "Un Qumrânien converti au Christianisme", p.87.

117. J.H.Charlesworth claims that the text of MS H provides "one of the strongest docetic passages in the Odes"; op. cit. p.110.

118. But cf. G. Diettrich, who claims that vv.1- 2 of this ode were not originally connected with it. Diettrich however thinks the Odes are Jewish with some Christian interpolations; Die Oden Salomos. See also F. Spitta, "Zum Verständnis der Oden Salomos", ZNW 11 (1910), 259.

119. Cf. also 22. 8.

120. MS H has "because it is living" ( ).

121. See below on the significance of the water in salvation.

122. On the concept of life without death, see below on the eschatology of the Odes.

123. That is, apart from the expression , which occurs a further four times.

124. Cf. I Clem. 26.

125. The emphasis is on the coming of the Word to man, and the consequent removal of their ignorance of God. See also v. 16, "For he has given a mouth to his creation.... to praise him". "Creation" here means mankind, as the following verse shows.

126. J.H.Charlesworth regularly translates by "generations", when he understands this in terms of man. See also his translation of 19. 5, where the sing. is also rendered "generation".

127. Die Herkunft des sogennanten Evangelium Veritatis, p. 28. W.R.Newbold thought in terms of "the planets and constellations as conceived by the pious astrologer"; "Bardaisan and the Odes of Solomon", JBL 30 (1911), 187. Newbold notes that although the worlds of the Odes are not Valentinian, there are elements which certainly are Valentinian; ibid.

128. The corrupt Bridegroom and Bride invite ( ) many to their wedding feast, in the same way that both Christ and the Evil One call men to themselves in ode 33. There is no suggestion that men are predestined to obey the invitation of one rather than the other, as H.-M.Schenke (op. cit. p. 28) thinks. It is rather the decision which is made which determines to which group men belong.

129. This may appear to suggest that the world is unable to receive the revelation simply because it is the world. But the meaning of the verse

must be that those who received it previously belonged to the world, but they have now been taken out of the world and set in the perfection of God's right hand.

130. op. cit. p.68.

A. KNOWLEDGE

In the Odes, by far the most important of the concepts associated with salvation is knowledge, and the verb ܝܕܥ and its cognate forms occur over 60 times. For the most part this knowledge is "knowledge of the Lord" (or of the Most High), (7. 13, 21; 8.8; 10, 13; 23. 4,; 39. 8) or knowledge of Christ (8.11; 42.8). Elsewhere we read of knowing the ways of the Lord (3.10; 24.14 (way)), or of knowing the holiness of the Lord (24.14). Sometimes no content is given to the knowledge, and the speaker talks only of "his knowledge" or some such expression (6.6; 11.4; 15.5; 17.12). Alongside of these statements which concern man's knowledge of God, there are others which speak of God's (or Christ's) knowledge of his own (7.9; 8.14; 17.7).

1. THE CONTENT OF KNOWLEDGE

As we have indicated, "knowledge" in the Odes is concerned with man's coming to true knowledge of God, through which he will gain immortal life. This knowledge is mediated through Christ, or through the community in which the speaker lives. Ode 7 is particularly concerned with the coming of the Lord in a form appropriate[1] to human understanding, so that true knowledge may result.

4. He became like me that I might receive him;
   In form he was considered like me, that I might put him on.
6 Like my nature he became, that I might understand him;[2]
   And like my form, that I might not turn away from him.

God is unknown, and remains unknown unless he reveals himself in a form which man can understand and appreciate, therefore the odist continues;

7 (From)[3] the Father of Knowledge[4]
   Is the Word of knowledge.
12 He has given him to appear to them that are his
   In order that they may recognise him that made them,
   And not suppose that they came of themselves.
13 For towards knowledge[5] he has set his way,

He has widened it and lengthened it and brought
it to complete perfection.

Man is thus called to a knowledge of God which involves knowing God as Creator[6] and himself as a creature, and the arrival of this knowledge upon earth means that hatred, jealousy and ignorance are blotted our (vv. 20f.).

This spreading out and perfecting of knowledge in 7. 13 is the subject of ode 6, where the knowledge of God is compared with a mighty stream which cannot be restrained, and which sweeps away everything, bringing it to the Temple.[7] This river spreads out over the whole earth, and fills everything (vv. 8-10). That this stream does represent the knowledge of God is shown by v.6 "The Lord has multiplied his knowledge, and he was zealous that those things should be known which by his grace have been given to us."[8] The emphasis in the stream imagery seems to be less on the idea of the triumphant progress of Christianity,[9] than on the power of this gift of God, which heals the sick and holds man back from death (vv. 14ff.) and its progress is therefore inevitable. Those who attempt to withstand it will be swept away. This knowledge thus leads to life (v. 18),[10] so that those who receive it are recognised in the Lord" (v. 18).[11]

Knowledge of God is thus not here the goal of the believer, but the means whereby he arrives at his goal. It provides him with the strength and light which he needs in order to arrive. For if the stream of divine knowledge is pictured as an irresistible force carrying all before it in vv. 6f, the same is not true of v. 17 where the emphasis is different:

They gave strength for their coming,
And light for their eyes.

The "they" with which this verse begins are those who have been entrusted with this thirst-quenching drink of the knowledge of God, and are therefore to be identified with the preachers of the Gospel, not those officiating at

a baptismal ceremony.[12] The word "their coming" ( ) at the end of line a of this verse has caused some difficulty. The Coptic has the Greek loan word ⲡⲁⲣⲏⲥⲓⲁ , and this has led to the conjecture that this word is original, and that a Syriac translator has mis-read this as παρουσία .[13] Harris-Mingana state that παρρησία had an "almost esoteric meaning in early Christian circles, and in the New Testament it describes the Christian attitude before the judges of earth and the Judge of Heaven. It may turn out to be the right word."[14]

At the same time, Harris-Mingana draw attention to the parallelism between vv. 14 and 16, and suggest that following the "paralysed will" ( ) in v. 14 we should infer "paralysed limbs". This thought leads to τὰ παραλελυμένα γόνατα of Isa. 35.3 and this "makes it increasingly likely that for παρουσία we should read some word expressing "paralysis"[15] W. Frankenberg therefore suggests that πάρεσις is the word underlying the test.[16] But apart from the fact that there is no MS support for this emendation, it would be strange if the Syrian translator of the supposed Greek original correctly identified a word in v. 14 which he failed to identify in v. 16.[17]

The choice therefore appears to be between the Coptic and the Syriac texts as we have them, but if the Syriac text is explicable it ought to be allowed to stand. The word , at least in this form, occurs only here in the Odes, and the only other instance of the word is at 7.17, where the text has .[18] But the idea of "coming", or of "bringing", expressed through the verb from which this noun is derived, is an important one in the Odes. The hearer is called to "Come into his Paradise" (20.7), or to "Return" and "Come" leaving the ways of the Corruptor and coming near to Christ (33. 6f.).[19] A passage which reflects the thought of ode 6 from the standpoint of one who may be described as a "minister of the water-drink" is ode 10. 1-3.

1 The Lord has directed my mouth by his word
And has opened my heart by his light.
2 And he has caused to dwell in me his immortal life
And given[20] to me to proclaim the fruit of his peace.
3 To convert the lives of those who are willing[21] to
come to him
And to capture a good captivity for freedom.

Here the speaker declares that through the work of the Lord he has found life himself, and he is able to proclaim the peace which Christ has gained through his victory over that which holds men captive. Through the word which he proclaims, those who decide to come to God will be converted, or turned from their allegiance to Sheol and death[22] to allegiance to God, and will find freedom. In other words, it is the word of the Lord, proclaimed through the speaker, and through others who exercise the same function, which provides the saving knowledge of God, and which further enables these who are enlightened and who desire fellowship with God to come to him and find freedom.

This is also the basic idea behind ode 6. The ministers of the water-drink are those who proclaim the knowledge of God which has flooded the earth. In the context of the imagery of the parched lips, the paralysed will and limbs and of being at the point of death in vv. 14-16, v. 17 declares that the proclamation of this knowledge has given to man the strength for them to come, and light by which they can see the way to come. We should therefore retain the reading of the Syriac MS. Even if the Coptic reading can be shown to provide good sense, it does not fit in with the general thought of the Odes as well as the Syriac reading does.

Thus far we have been considering "knowledge" in the Odes specifically in terms of "knowledge of the Lord", but elsewhere we find the concept used absolutely. Of particular importance here is ode 26.12:

For it suffices to know (ܕܥܬ) and to rest (ܢܝܚܘܬܐ)
For the odists stand in rest (ܩܐܡܝܢ).

At first sight this appears to suggest that knowledge is all that is required for salvation, but a look at the context makes this questionable. For vv. 8-11 have dealt with the problem of man's knowledge of God, and it is quite clear that man may have this only to a limited extent. In fact, v. 11 suggests that the man who attempts to gain too complete a knowledge of God and his mystery would be destroyed in the attempt:

Who can interpret the wonders of the Lord ?
For he who interprets would be destroyed,
And that which is interpreted will remain.

The sense of the passage is clear even if the correct translation remains uncertain.(23) Man cannot comprehend God,(24) and his attempt to achieve full knowledge of God would result in his own destruction. But the emphasis in this verse is not on the fate of the one who would attempt such an interpretation of God, but on the impossibility of this enterprise, and it thus deals with the impregnability of the mystery of God in the face of the impotence of human understanding.(25)

Verse 12 therefore is more naturally understood in terms of the fact that since perfect knowledge is impossible for man, he must accept the knowledge which is made available to him and cease any attempt to have any greater knowledge. This "ceasing" or "resting" leads the writer to the concept of the Rest(26) in which the singers stand, and to the knowledge which is mediated through these singers. Verse 13 concludes the ode as follows:

Like a river which has an increasingly gushing
spring,(27)
And flows to the relief of them that seek it.

Harris-Mingana, II , 355 claim that "This divine Rest is here described as a

river with an abundant fountain by which the singers stand", and make reference to the "plenteous fountain" of ode 11, and to the invitation to "rest by the fountain of the Lord" in ode 30. More probably however, it is the singers who are like the river with its abundant fountain,[28] and, as elsewhere in the Odes, the water provided by this fountain is the knowledge of God proclaimed by the singers. With this thought of the fountain ( ) the odist returns to the idea from which he began this ode, "I poured out ( ) praise to the Lord" (v. 1). In spite of the impossibility of adequately writing or proclaiming the odes of the Lord (v. 8), this is the activity in which the odist and others like him are engaged, and they are therefore like a river providing a spring of knowledge to those who seek this knowledge of the Lord.

2. KNOWLEDGE AND SALVATION

Occasionally in the Odes a direct connection is made between the act of knowing and salvation, as for example in 9. 7, "So that those who know him (it) may not perish." Yet for a clearer picture of the relationship between knowledge and salvation the whole of vv. 6 and 7 need to be considered.

6 For I announce peace to you, his Holy Ones,
So that none of those who hear shall fall in the war
7 And also that thou who have known Him may not perish
And so that those who received (Him) may not be ashamed.

Verse 7a is sometimes seen to be related to Jn. 3. 16,[29] but this seems improbable, for the hearing, knowing and receiving are related to the peace which is proclaimed in v. 6a. The structure of vv. 6a and 7 also appear to draw a particular parallel between v. 6b and 7a. For 6b is introduced by a ל of purpose followed by the demonstrative pronoun . This same demonstrative pron. is found in v. 7a, but there is no ל signifying purpose.

Verse 7b again is introduced by the ܕ but the demonstrative is now ܗܠܝܢ. The three lines are given as follows in the Syr. text.

ܕܠܐ ܢܬܒܛܠ ܕܝܠܗ ܕܝܕܥ.
ܐܘ ܗܘ ܕܫܡܥ ܕܝܕܥ ;
ܕܠܐ ܢܫܬܟܚ ܕܝܠܗ ܕܩܒܠ.

The absence of the ܕ to introduce v. 7a, coupled with the presence of the ܐܘ strongly suggests that this line is an explanatory comment on the previous line, and means "or again, those who know it may not perish", thus commenting on "falling in war" in the previous line. Hearing, knowing and receiving all mean the same here, but the question at this point is whether the mere fact of hearing constitutes knowledge, or whether the verb "hear" (ܫܡܥ) in v. 6b also carries with it the notion of obedience.[30] To this question we must return below.

Elsewhere we find that knowledge does provide salvation as in ode 39.8.

Therefore put on the name of the Most High and know him,
And you shall cross without danger;
Because rivers shall be subject to you.

The rivers mentioned here are those spoken of in v. 1, which are "the power of the Lord (which) send headlong those that despise him".[31] By knowing God, man is able to avoid the wrath of God which falls on those who despise him and to arrive at the place of life. But here it is quite clear that knowledge and faith are synonymous, for vv. 5f. state,

5 But those who cross them in faith
Shall not be disturbed.
6 And thou who walk on them faultlessly (ܐܢܬ ܕܡܫܟܚ ܒܗ)
Shall not be shaken.

Therefore faith and a spotless life are also involved in the knowledge of God by which man finds salvation. It is also probable that the ode contains a reference to the Cross of Christ in v. 10 and that the concluding verse is a call to the believer to follow Christ obediently in the way of the Cross.

13 And the way has been appointed for those who cross
over after him
And for those who adhere to the path of his
faithfulness (32)
And who adore his name.

When we come to a more esoteric expression of knowledge in the Odes, these elements which have been mentioned must be kept in mind. One such passage is found in ode 8.

8 Hear the word of truth,
And receive knowledge of the Most High.
9 Your flesh does not know what I am saying to you;
Nor your garment what I am showing to you.
10 Keep my secret, you who are kept by it;
Keep my faith, you who are kept by it.
11 And know my knowledge, you who know me in truth;
Love me with affection you who love.

This section is spoken ex ore Christi, and the knowledge which Christ brings is knowledge of God. But does v. 10 suggest that this is a "knowledge of the divine mysteries reserved for an elect",(33) and that this secret knowledge is that which saves man? The ode does go on to speak of Christ's own (v. 12), and of his "elect ones" (v. 18) and it is clear that they are those who have been marked out for life (v. 13). It is also clear that the odist operates within a dualistic framework here by his statement that the knowledge which Christ brings is not comprehensible to the flesh of those who hear (v. 9).

Some aspects here seem to imply that we are dealing with a Gnostic view of knowledge. Yet although in Gnosis, knowledge is knowledge of the Father who is unknown,(34) as it also is in the Odes, this knowledge is at the same time a recognition of one's own divine origin and destiny, knowledge of one's own essential oneness with the Father.(35) This aspect

of Gnostic knowledge is never found in the Odes. What then is Christ's secret, and what is meant by "keeping" this secret? The word "secret" or "mystery" ( ) is found only in this verse in the Odes and we therefore have no passage with which to compare it. However, the parallelism of v. 10 shows that "my secret" and "my faith" are connected, if not identical. If then we can determine the meaning of this latter expression it will help to ascertain the significance of the former. In the odes in which there is a section delivered ex ore Christi, the opening verses provide us with an introduction to the ideas contained in the passage in which Christ speaks. In Ode 8 the hearers are told to stand up and to be lifted up, because their righteousness has been lifted up. The right hand of the Lord helps them, and peace has been prepared for them before their war takes place (vv. 3-7). This righteousness goes before Christ's elect and ensures a continued fellowship with Christ (v. 19). This assertion leads to a call to abide in the Beloved, in him who lives, in him who was saved (v. 21). This means that Christ's righteousness is his victory over Sheol by which the believers are lifted up and find salvation.(36) This also probably means that the of v. 10 meant not "my faith" but "my faithfulness", as is the case in ode 39.13.(37)

If this is so, the command to "keep my faith" will mean not guard it in secrecy from others, but, observe it, follow the faithful course which Christ has travelled. For whatever the literary relationship between the ode and the τήρησον τὸ μυστήριον τῷ μισθαποδότῃ in the Procatechesis Cyril of Jerusalem's Catechetical Lectures, the significance of "keeping the mystery" in the latter is hardly determinative for the meaning of the ode.(38) J.H. Bernard states that "keep my secret ..... " seems to refer to the disciplina arcani, which was strictly observed. However he notes also that these words "may mean no more than, Do not lose my secret; keep it for your soul's health", and in that case v. 11 is strictly parallel to v. 12 - (v. 10a and b in the verse numeration given above) -

which is an exhortation to catechumens". Bernard then goes on to explain "Keep my faith" by means of a quotation from John Chrysostom, which shows the need for faith to be developed.(39) We would agree that a part of the meaning of "keep my faith(fulness)" is that the faith of the hearers should be developed, but we do not see that there is any necessary connection between this demand and the catechetical instruction. It is rather a demand which needs to be made at every point in the life of faith.

But the question remains, Why has the odist used the term "secret"? In the first place this knowledge is secret because it is not comprehensible to the flesh (v. 9). It is available only to those who have been recognised by Christ and sealed by him, whose members have been formed by him so that they might drink his holy milk and live by it (vv. 13f).(40) That is to say, only those who have been brought to new life throught Christ or through the Spirit can understand what Christ says to them. Secondly, this knowledge is secret because it deals with God's plan of salvation for men, a salvation which has been accomplished through Christ's victory. This victory has become the victory of those who hear and obey Christ, so that nothing can oppose them (v. 17). Their salvation is secure, provided that they continue to abide in Christ (vv. 20-22). It is therefore God's eschatological secret which is here being declared among men. The term "secret" is determined by the dualistic framework within which the odist thinks. Men either come to knowledge of God, or remain in ignorance of him. They have therefore entered into immortal life, or they remain in bondage to Sheol and death. They have been lifted up to the heights and are in fellowship with God, or they belong to the world below where there is no reality. In the case of those men characterised by the second alternative the mystery of God's salvation must remain a mystery, at least, as long as they remain merely men of flesh.

As we have said, certain elements of this ode suggest that we are dealing with some form of gnostic knowledge, but it is not necessary to look to Gnosis to explain either the term "secret",(41) or the knowledge(42) of which the ode speaks. This would be the case only if the Odes also stated that some men are pre-destined to have this knowledge and others are not. This particular ode certainly states that Christ knew his own before they came into existence (v. 13), but this statement needs to be balanced against the fore-knowledge of God in the previous ode:

7.9 And he who created me when yet I was not
Knew what I should do when I came into being.(43)

The knowledge which has been made available through Christ must be developed so that its full implications may be seen. This must be the meaning of v. 11, unless it is regarded as a useless tautology. Know ( ) my knowledge ( ) you who know ( ) me in truth. Just as those who love Christ must love him with affection, which implies that their love needs to be deepened, so those who know Christ truly, have to understand his knowledge.(44) When dealing with this understanding of faith the odist does not say "It is sufficient to know and to rest" (26.12). As we have shown above, this statement refers only to the limitation which is set on any human knowledge of God.

3. KNOWLEDGE AND FAITH

In comparison with the number of times which the odist mentions knowledge, the use of terminology connected with faith is very limited.(45) Here we are concerned only with those instances in which knowing and believing are placed in relationship to each other, in order to see if there is any discernible difference between them. This direct connection is made very rarely, but where it is made, there appears to be complete equivalence between the ideas of knowing and believing. This can be seen by reference to ode 42.

8 Like the arm of the bridegroom over the bride,
So is my yoke over those who know me.
9 And as the bridal feast is spread out in the bridal pair's home,
So is my love over those who believe in me.

This equivalence is also present in ode 39, where v. 5 states that those who cross the torrents of the Lord in faith will not be disturbed, and where v. 8 speaks of knowing the Most High and crossing the rivers without danger.

In ode 15 the two concepts are not conjoined as precisely as in odes 39 and 42, but the same principle applies. In vv. 5 and 6 the speaker has received knowledge, forsaken the way of error, found fellowship with God[46] and received salvation from him. This account of salvation is repeated in v. 10 but this time it refers to the reception of salvation by those to whom the word has been proclaimed:

10 And eternal life has arisen in the Lord's land,
And it has been made known to his faithful ones,[47]
And been given generously to all that trust in him.

Whereas in vv. 5f. of the ode salvation has resulted from coming to knowledge and rejecting error, in v. 10 it is the result of believing, or trusting in the Lord. Knowing and believing are synonymous concepts in the Odes, and knowledge therefore does not constitute a higher stage in man's relationship with God.[48] If for example in ode 24 salvation comes as the result of recognising the grace of God which has been revealed, ode 34.6 can say,

Grace has been revealed for your salvation,
Believe and live and be saved.

4. KNOWLEDGE AND THE VISION OF GOD

"All learning serves the knowledge of the self, which is the condition of redemption and the vision of God". So writes R. Bultmann[49] concerning the gift of gnosis. In the Odes, the ability to see is also

connected with the gift of knowledge, and this is done in such a way that it is clear that "to see" means to be saved. We see this connection in ode 15:

3 Eyes I have obtained in him
And I have seen his holy day.
4 Ears I have acquired,
And I have heard his truth.
5 The thought of knowledge I have acquired,
And I have lived fully[50] through him.

Through the illumination which the speaker has received from Christ, his Sun, he has seen, that is, experienced, the day[51] of God's salvation, and has received truth and knowledge. The act of seeing also implies perception in 13.1, where it is a matter of seeing oneself in Christ the Mirror, and learning the manner of one's face; 38.9, where "seeing" the Corruptor's corruptor involves learning from the truth what corruption is and how to avoid it; 42.17, where those in Sheol see that their death does not affect Christ, which involves an acknowledgement in faith[52] that death cannot hold Christ. The same is also probably true of 42.11, where Sheol "saw" Christ and was in distress. It was the recognition that he was Christ which caused this.

The verb "to see" is used in the active voice sixteen times in the Odes, and in none of these is God the object of vision. It is true that in ode 7.5 the odist says "And I trembled not when I saw him", but here the object is not God in his inexpressible majesty, but the Lord who has diminished himself in order that the odist may receive him and put him on. More frequently however, it is the passive voice which is used to describe this appearance of God's Word, or Christ; (7.12; 23.18; 29.6; 30.6; 41.13).[53] As in the case of the active "see", it is also the case with its passive that God is never the object of vision.

For the odist, God cannot be known (26.8ff.), nor can he be seen. Only in so far as knowledge of him is made available through the Word can men know God, and his coming among men in human form is all that can be seen of him. For more than this the odist does not ask, for this is sufficient for his salvation and for his fellowship with God.

5. KNOWLEDGE AND ETHICS

There is very little in the Odes which can be shown unambiguously to involve an ethical content in the knowledge which brings salvation. There are, however, a few passages which point in this direction. The first of these is ode 23.4:

> Walk in the knowledge of the Lord,(54)
> And you will know the grace of the Lord(55) generously;
> Both for his exultation and for the perfection of his knowledge.

The command to "walk" signifies obedience to the revelation which has been received,(56) but this does not have any necessary ethical connotation. It may mean no more than Live in accordance with the knowledge you have received, i.e., You have knowledge. Live through it. On the other hand, the walking in the knowledge of the Lord brings with it the experience of the grace of the Lord, and leads to the perfection of knowledge. This could also imply that walking in the knowledge of the Lord involves living in a particular manner, living an ethical life in accordance with God's revelation of himself. This however cannot be stated with certainty from the text, and this question is also bound up with the odist's view of predestination, which is discussed elsewhere.

We can perhaps come closer to an ethical understanding of knowledge in ode 24:

13 For the Lord revealed his way
And spread widely his grace.
14 And those who understood it
Know his holiness.

The previous verses have stated that those who were defective in wisdom were destroyed, and this being defective in wisdom is the result of their arrogance (v. 11).[57] The ⲁⲗⲗⲁ with which v. 13 begins[58] probably indicates that those people have been rejected because although God has disclosed his grace to men, they in their pride have refused this revelation. On the other hand, those who do recognise[59] God's way of salvation, the gift of his grace, know his holiness. But there is no indication in the ode that knowing God's holiness involves living a holy life. Nor is there any indication that holiness (ⲣⲁⲥⲓⲟⲧⲏⲥ) carries with it any idea of moral rectitude, except in the general sense that God's revelation of himself implies his goodness. This word occurs elsewhere in the Odes only at 20.9 where, as here, it refers to God's act of salvation.

It is also doubtful whether in ode 7 the arrival of the knowledge of God implies anything with respect to the moral life or not.

20 And hatred shall be removed from the earth
And with jealousy it shall be drowned.
21 For ignorance was destroyed upon it
Because the knowledge of the Lord has arrived upon it.

The arrival of knowledge means the abolition of ignorance. This is not to be understood as a gnostic formula,[60] but must be seen in the context of God's gift of his Word in v. 12 of this same ode. Because men recognise God as Creator, and thereby recognise their true relationship to him, they are no longer in ignorance. But it is not only ignorance which disappears with the coming of knowledge, but hatred and jealousy as well. Does this mean hatred and jealousy among men, or do these terms apply to the relationship between man and God, just as "ignorance" does?

That the latter of these alternatives rather than the former is intended by the odist is suggested by v. 19, which speaks of praising the Lord in his love. This means that the believers recognise God's revelation as an act of love on his part, and therefore they respond to him in love, and the enmity between God and man is removed.(61) The two ideas "hatred" and "jealousy" also occur together in ode 28,(62) and this ode may be of assistance in understanding this passage from ode 7.

12 And I became their abomination(63)
Because there was no jealousy in me.
13 Because I did good to every man
I was hated.

The chiastic structure of these lines is immediately apparent, and the rejection of Christ by his enemies is equivalent to their hatred of him. At the same time, it is the fact that Christ "did good to every man" which shows that there is no jealousy in him. At least in the case of "hatred", this ode agrees with ode 7 that when men accept the knowledge of God which has come through Christ the enmity between God and man disappears, even if ode 28 states this is a negative form. We ought also to understand the notion of jealousy from the same point of view. The statement that there was no jealousy in Christ signifies that the knowledge which he brings is for all, not merely for a select group, and it is this universalism which leads to hatred and rejection of the revelation.(64)

If we transfer this understanding of jealousy back to ode 7, there are two meanings which are possible for v. 20. In the first place, the removal of jealousy could signify that since God's salvation is for all, those who come to knowledge of God no longer sense that God has withheld this knowledge from them. This however implies that jealousy does not exist except as an erroneous concept of God which men have before they come to knowledge, and is therefore unlikely to be correct. Secondly, the meaning

could be that since salvation is for all, those who believe do not hold the knowledge of God jealously to themselves, that is, do not regard themselves as a special group to whom this knowledge is given. This would then imply that through the proclamation of this knowledge others are to be brought to salvation and into the community.(65) But if this is so, the removal of jealousy means a concern for the salvation of others, and this then would also mean that the removal of hatred probably means the abolition of hatred among men, not the enmity of men towards God. That is to say, the arrival of the knowledge of God through his Word involves an obligation on the part of men to exercise love towards others. This then appears to be the most likely meaning of ode 7.20f., although it must be admitted that the odist nowhere specifically speaks of loving others. Love for him is rather a characteristic of the relationship between God and men.

Finally we may consider ode 3.2f., which implies some kind of concern between those who have come to faith and those who are only in the process of so doing.

2(66) And his members are with him,
And I am dependent on them; and he loves me.
3 For I should not have known how to love the Lord,
If he had not loved me.

Verse 3 states that love for God is impossible without the prior experience and recognition of God's love for the believer.(67) The way in which the speaker comes to recognise this love is through the community, through its proclamation, and this is the reason he is dependent on him. As we saw in our discussion of ode 7, the aim of the community's proclamation is the bringing of all men into a relationship with God in order that they might have life. This is also the case in ode 3, but while the idea of dependence upon the members of the community implies a relationship of love and concern, this love is not explicitly stated. All that the ode says is that the

speaker is dependent upon the community for his recognition and experience of the love which God has shown to him, and in return he loves God.

It would be strange if knowledge of God did not lead to the exercising of love between the members of the community to which the odist belonged. But this does not appear to be something with which he is greatly concerned. His fundamental concern is rather the love which God has shown, and the love with which man responds to God. This is quite different from the Johannine literature, in which love for the brethren is very closely connected with the knowledge of God, and may be said to be the criterion by which man knows that he does know God.(68)

B. LOVE

The concept of love is very important to the thought of the Odes. Two different verbs and their cognate parts of speech are used (ܚܒ and ܪܚܡ), but these are used inter-changeably, with no discernible difference of meaning.(69) Either verb can be used to express the believer's love for God or God's love for the believer.(70) and the passive part. of both is used of God or Christ as the Beloved,(71) the object of the believer's love. Those two words and their cognates are found in twenty of the odes, and occur fifty times.

Ode 3 is particularly important for the odist's understanding of love, and in this ode the various words for this concept occur twelve times. The beginning of this ode is missing, and of the material which is presumed to belong to the first verse, only the words"I am putting on" are present. Because of the emphasis on love in this ode, J.H. Charlesworth has proposed that the line should read "I am putting on the love of the Lord".(72) This is an attractive suggestion, but we would suggest that

"the Spirit of the Lord" is probably what the odist puts on.(73)

Verse 2 contains three elements which are involved in the love relationship between the believer and his Lord: 1. The presence of the believers with their Lord; 2. The dependence of the speaker on the other members; 3. The Love of the Lord for the speaker. Verse 3 then goes on to state that the believer's love for the Lord is possible only because the former has already experienced the love of the latter.

Although there is a large emphasis on love in this ode, there is not much indication of what this love actually involved. The odist speaks about loving the Lord, or loving the Beloved, or loving the Son, but does not say how this love is expressed. For the odist, the important thing is that he has experienced the love of the Lord, and this has brought him into a new relationship of love for the Lord and of union with him.

There are however a couple of indications which help us to give some content to the believer's love for the Lord. Verses 2f. state:

> And his members are with him,
> And I am dependent on them; and he loves me.
> For I should not have known how to love the Lord,
> If he had not loved me.

The speaker has entered into a new relationship with the Lord because he has experienced the Lord's love and has responded to it. This new experience is connected with his dependence upon the members. In what way does this dependence express itself? The "for" ( ) with which verse 3 begins implies that it concerns the recognition of the Lord's love which the speaker has received from the other members, and that his dependence consists in relying upon them for this understanding. They have shown him what the Lord's love is, have shown him how the Lord loves him, and this has prompted

a response of love in him. This could then mean that he is simply dependent upon the community for hearing the Good News of the Lord's love so that he can respond.

There is also a further element here which needs consideration. Verse 2 starts off by saying that the Lord's members are with him. This then also implies that being joined to the Lord involves being joined to the other members. The dependence on the speaker thus also includes belonging to the community, being a part of the group which may be called the Lord's members.(74) If this is so, then the speaker's love for the Lord consists in responding to the message of love which he has received, and in joining himself to the community of those who belong to the Lord.

Verses 5-9 give us some indications about how the odist understands the Lord's love for him.

5 I love the Beloved and I myself love him,
And where his rest is, there also am I.
6 And I shall be no stranger,
Because there is no jealousy with the Lord Most High and Merciful.
7 I have been united (to him), because the lover has found the Beloved;
Because I love him that is the Son, I shall become a son.(75)
8 Indeed he who is joined to him who is immortal,
Truly shall be immortal.
9 And he who delights in the life
Will become living.

In these verses we again find the same ideas associated with the speaker's love for the Lord; he is at the place of the Lord's rest; he

has been united to the Beloved; he is joined to him who is immortal; he delights in the life. However, there is still no real expression given to how this union takes place from the point of view of the believer.

Before looking further at this side of the believer's experience, we should consider what the odist says about love from the Lord's side. The love of the Lord is experienced in being transferred from a condition of death into the condition of life, into the community of the redeemed. The odist receives from his Lord something of the immortal nature of the Lord himself - he becomes a son; he becomes immortal; he becomes living.(76) The Lord has achieved this for him, and he receives it as he responds in love to the love he has received. At this stage we are not told how the Lord has done all of this. That must wait until the odist describes the freedom from death and bondage which the Messiah gives, and the victory in which the believer shares.

There is some further content given to the idea of the Lord's love in v. 6. The odist states that he will not be a stranger in the Rest of the Lord, because there is no jealousy with the Lord Most High and Merciful. There are two ways in which the odist is not a stranger. In the first place, he is no longer a stranger to the Lord. He has been united to him in his Rest, and there is no more hostility between them as a result of the speaker's ignorance. But secondly, and it seems that this is where the major emphasis falls, the odist is no stranger there because he is not alone, and there are many others in the Rest.(77) The word translated "jealousy" ( ) occurs six times elsewhere in the Odes (7.3; 11.6; 15.6; 17.12; 20.7; 23.4), and in all of these instances it is found in the adverbial expression , where it indicates the abundance of the Lord's salvation. In ode 3 the word probably means not just the generosity of the Lord's grace to the speaker, but refers to the fact that as well as

the speaker himself, there are many others who have been brought into the Rest also. The thought here is similar to that in ode 11.23, "Indeed, there is much room in your Paradise".

The following ideas are connected with the theme of love in this ode.

1. The primary love is the Lord's.(78) It is because of this love, and through the recognition of it, that the speaker is able to love the Lord in return.
2. The speaker's dependence upon the members of the community is the cause of his recognition of the Lord's love.
3. The speaker's response of love leads to union with the Lord.
4. This union is expressed in terms of:
   a) Entering the Rest
   b) Being betrothed to the Lord.
   c) Becoming a son.
   d) Becoming immortal.
   e) Becoming living.

Up to verse 9 the ode has been totally about the love of the Lord for the speaker and the results of that love. But in v. 10 we suddenly find a reference to the Spirit of the Lord.

This is the Spirit of the Lord which is not false,
Which teaches the sons of men to know his ways.

What is the "this" (ܗܢܐ) which is the Spirit of the Lord? The pronoun is naturally fem. to agree with ܪܘܚܐ , but does the odist mean that everything which has been said in the preceding verses refers to the activity of the Spirit? Is the Spirit the bond of love between the believer and his Lord? Does the odist mean that possession of the Spirit is the means of Life? If we compare this verse with ode 28.6, we find that the Spirit comes into the believer as a result of the life which he has received. Is this

what the odist is saying in this ode?

The questions are further complicated by the second line of the verse. Does "teaches men to know his ways" refer to the initial understanding of the ways of the Lord which leads to love and life, or does it refer to the continuing development of the believer's knowledge of the Lord after he has come into a situation of life?

Probably, in view of the way in which the odist speaks about the "ways of the Lord" in other odes,(79) we should understand this in terms of the initial coming to knowledge of the Lord. The Spirit is the one who guides the community in its proclamation, and who therefore is responsible for the initial coming to faith. The Spirit gives the understanding to men to receive the proclamation and to respond in love to the Lord who has loved them. The Spirit is therefore the principle of love and life in the community of believers.(80) At the same time, the imperatives in the final line of the ode are addressed to the believing community, and therefore the Spirit is the one who also keeps the community in the knowledge of the Lord's ways so that they will not be led away from the truth into falsehood.

For the odist, the Lord's love consists in removing him from the sphere of ignorance and error into that of knowledge and life in union with God. This love is mediated through the Spirit of the Lord by means of the community of believers, which is seen as the community of the Spirit. To this love the odist responds in love, which means being joined to the Lord through the Spirit, and which again takes place through his membership in the community of the Spirit.

Frequently in the Odes, we read that the experience of the love of the Lord leads to praise. Ode 41 calls upon all the Lord's children to praise him and to receive the truth of his faith. Because his children

are acknowledged by him, the believers are to sing by his love. (vv. 1-2). Verse 6 tells the believers to meditate upon the Lord's love night and day,[81] because of the salvation which they have received. Verse 16 speaks about the new song[82] which is sung to the Lord from those who love him. This same theme of praise for the new life into which the believers have entered through the love of God is found in odes 6, 7, 8, 14, 16, 18, 40 and 42. In two of these, 6 and 14, the Spirit is the one who actually offers the song of praise through the odist.

Ode 6.2 says,

So the Spirit of the Lord speaks through my members,
And I speak through his love.

The odist has drawn an analogy between the wind moving through the strings of the harp and making a sound and his own praise which is caused by the movement of the Spirit through him. The content of the love of the Lord which gives rise to the song of praise is outlined in the rest of the ode, which concerns the destruction of all that is opposed to God, and the drink of saving water which is given to those who seek it, and which represents the saving knowledge of God. This same analogy of the harp is found in ode 14.

And open to me the harp of your Holy Spirit,
So that with every note I may praise you, O Lord (v. 8).

Here it is to be noted that the Odes are called "the odes of your truth" which again draws attention to the fact that the Lord's love is experienced as the speaker is removed from the realm of falsehood into that of truth, or true knowledge of God.

Ode 18 also speaks of the love of the Lord in the same terms. Those who have experienced and responded to this love have been given a new life in the Kingdom, and have overcome error, falsehood, ignorance and vanity. This praise for salvation leads to a prayer that the Lord will not allow his word be taken from the odist, that he will not be overcome by

falsehood and error, but that the victory which has been gained will be continued and extended. This leads to a note of confidence by the odist, because he knows that those who have been brought to knowledge will not be overcome, because they are in union with God. Because of this they speak the truth from the breath which God has breathed into them.(83) Again the love of God is related to the truth which overcomes error, and which is the cause of the song of praise which is offered up.

This same theme is repeated in ode 7, but here it is related specifically to the coming of the Word whom the Father has given to his own. Verse 19 therefore says,

> And they shall praise the Lord in his love,
> Because he is near and sees.

Those who have songs about the coming of the Lord are to go and meet him and sing those songs to him, because he has arrived in the person of the Word who has become like them, so that they can receive him and put him on (vv. 17ff., vv. 3ff).

In ode 11 the theme of love is again related to the work of the Holy Spirit.

> My heart was circumcised and its flower appeared;
> Then grace sprang up in it,
> And it produced fruit for the Lord.
> For the Most High circumcised me by his Holy Spirit,
> And he(84) uncovered my inward being towards him,
> And filled me with his love. (vv. 1-2).

The Holy Spirit's circumcision means the opening up of the life of the speaker so that he can experience the love of God and respond to it. As in the other odes we have considered, this means providing saving knowledge of God, as the following verses show. Here we find the ideas of "running in

his way", "running in the truth", "receiving his knowledge", "being established on the rock of truth", "drinking from the living water".

All of these images refer to the attainment of that knowledge of God which leads to life, and to union with God in Paradise. This, for the odist, is what love consists in. God has provided for man knowledge of himself, in order that man can have true knowledge of him, and be freed from the ignorance and error in which he has been living. This knowledge has been provided through the Word, the Messiah who came in human form, and which is now communicated to men through the Spirit working through the believing community.

It is to be noted here that love stems from God, not man. Man can only respond to God in love if he has experienced love, because apart from God's act of love in providing man with true knowledge of himself, man cannot know God; he is still in ignorance and error concerning God. Man's love for God is therefore closely related to his knowledge of God, and indeed can almost be identified with it. To know God, in the odist's understanding of knowledge, is to respond to God in love.

We see in the Odes, however, that this is the sum total of love: God's love for man, and man's response of love for God. Nowhere do we read of man's love for his fellow-man, for his neighbour, for his brother. The closest the odist comes to this is in ode 20, where he is speaking about the offering of the Lord. Verse 5 says,

> Offer your inward being faultlessly,
> And let not your compassion ( ) oppress compassion ( );
> And let not yourself ( ) oppress a self ( ).

The second line of this verse is particularly difficult to understand, for it is hard to see how compassion could be said to oppress, or do violence

to, compassion. The following verse gives us some indication of what compassion means here, but this verse is also not easy to interpret.

> You should not purchase a stranger because he is like yourself,
> Nor seek to deceive your neighbout,
> Nor deprive him of the covering of his nakedness.

In view of the difficulties of this verse, it will be of assistance to set out the Syriac text in full.

ܠ ܬܙܒܢ ܒܪܢܫ ܕܕܡܝ ܠܟ ܗܘ ܕܠܐ
ܘܠܐ ܬܒܥܐ ܠܡܛܥܘܬ ܠܚܒܪܟ ,ܘܠܐ ܬܫܠܘ ܠܗ ܠܟܣܘܬ ܥܪܛܘܬܗ.

In the first edition of the Odes, J.R. Harris saw a difficulty in the expression in the first line, ܒܟܣܦ ܕܝܩܪ , and accordingly emended the text to ܒܟܣܦ ܕܝܩܪܟ , "by the price of thy silver".(85) This suggestion was followed in whole or in part by other scholars.(86) However, with the discovery of the second MS of the Odes, such an emendation was found to be unacceptable because precisely the same expression occurred there as in the first MS. In the second edition of the Odes, Harris and A. Mingana draw attention to the difficulty of the expression, and suggest that a less radical emendation might provide a solution. This time ܕܝܩܪ is replaced by ܕܡܬܕܡܐ , which yields the translation, "who is in thy own likeness".(87) It was noted however, that since both MSS have the same reading, any emendation is suspect, and the matter was left with "a margin of uncertainty".

In the expository notes on the Odes, Harris-Mingana point out that the odist is working from the text of Isa. 58, and especially from the Syriac translation of it. In v. 7 of that chapter the phrase ܒܪ ܒܣܪܟ occurs (son of thy own flesh), and it is suggested that "if we write 'soul' for 'flesh', we have an expression which is very nearly the same in sense as the odist's expression, 'He is what thy soul is'".(88) By a rather

involved route, Harris-Mingana arrived at a meaning for the expression which was identical to that suggested by G. Diettrich, and which they had said in the critical notes on this verse was impossible for the phrase ܕܡܝܬ ܒܪ ܢܦܫܗ. The significant feature of this is that the text was regarded as being meaningless as it stands, and the real meaning of the line was given as, "You shall not purchase a stranger because he is like yourself". J.H. Charlesworth(89) also adopts this translation, but finds no reason to emend the text. He suggests that in this instance two words of identical morphology have been confused by translators, and ܕܡܝܬ "may not be the emphatic of the noun 'blood', but the active participle of ܕܡܐ, 'to be like'". The ܒ which prefixes this participle carries the meaning "because", and the ܢܦܫ with which the line closes signifies a reflexive "yourself", and not "your soul". This yields the perfectly good sense "because he is like yourself". The one problem here, as Charlesworth recognises, is the presence of the ܕ before the ܢܦܫ. He agrees that ܕܡܐ is usually followed by ܠ, and not by ܕ, but notes that the verb is followed by ܒ in ode 38.11. However, the substitution of one preposition for another is one thing, the substitution of a preposition by ܕ is another, and we find this explanation rather difficult to accept.

Our difficulty with the expression consists not in the fact that it is unintelligible, but in the fact that, being perfectly intelligible as it stands, the natural meaning of the phrase has been passed over. The preposition ܒ, in addition to the many other meanings it can have, also signifies "at the cost of", at the risk of" or "at the peril of". As examples of this usage we cite Num. 16. 38 (Heb. 17. 3) where, after the rebellion and punishment of the sons of Korah, God speaks to Moses of "those men who have sinned at the cost of their lives" (Syr. ܒܢܦܫܬ ܚܛܝܗܝ). In Lam. 5. 9

we read, "We get our bread at the peril of our lives" (syr.). For the full expression in the ode we can compare II Sam. 23.17, "Shall I drink the blood of these men who went at the risk of their lives?" ( ). This offers us a different preposition from the one used in the ode, but this causes no real difficulty, and ב is a natural preposition to find after the verb . J. Payne Smith[90] does however offer , "at the peril of their lives", and this corresponds exactly to the meaning of the phrase from II Sam. 23.17 and I Chr. 11.9 above. The translation of the line of the ode would therefore be "You shall not acquire a stranger at the peril of your own lives", or, "You will acquire a stranger only at the peril of your own lives".

But what exactly does this imply? At first sight it would seem to be a prohibition against slavery; that one's own life is forfeit is one gains possession of another. This ode has therefore been related to the Essene regulation against slavery. Since scholars have found other relationships between the Odes and the literature from Qumran, it is worthwhile noting, in connection with the whole of v. 6, and observation of Josephus: "Accordingly there is, in every city where they live, one appointed to take care of strangers, and to provide garments and other necessities for them".[91] Alternatively, we could relate v. 6 of the ode to passages in the Old Testament such as Ex. 22. 21-26, although this passage has no prohibition against the purchase of a stranger, only of oppressing him.[92]

And yet, these parallels do not explain why moral exhortations against slavery, deceit and the with-holding of a garment should be the only ones specifically mentioned in the Odes. In the first edition of the Odes, J.R. Harris found a discontinuity in the thought of the odist in moving from v. 6 to vv. 7ff., which he expressed by saying, "Then he leaves morals and

is away in search of the honey-dew and milk of Paradise". In the second edition this discontinuity is overcome by showing that the odist is working from the Pesh. text of Isa. 58,(93) and that his thought moves along with that of this chapter. Verses 6f. of this chapter, read, "Is not this the fast which I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your houses; when you see the naked to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?"

It will be seen that there is some similarity between the thought of the ode and that of Isa. 58, but there is also dis-similarity; too much, in fact, to suggest that the meaning of the ode can be derived from Isa. Nor can we say that the apparent discontinuity is no longer present simply by referring to the chapter of Isa., and showing thatthis same apparent discontinuity is found there, and that therefore there was no problem in the first place. We would agree that there is no discontinuity in the ode, and it is perfectly possible that the odist is using ideas from Isa. 58, but the odist is not writing a homily on this chapter, and the meaning of the ode can be determined only from the ode itself, not from an understanding of Isa 58.

It seems to us that v. 6 makes more sense both within the total context of the Odes, and within this particular ode, if we regard these prohibitions from a quite different perspective. They appear to deal with man's relation to man, not in terms of slavery, deceit and the with-holding of a garment, but in terms of living and speaking according to the truth as the odist understands it. Verse 6 concludes with a prohibition against depriving a neighbour of the covering for his nakedness. Any apparent hiatus between this verse and the next is adequately bridged by the opening word of

v. 7 ܠܒܫ , "put on".(94) The object of this verb is "the grace of the Lord", and this is followed by an injunction to "Come into his Paradise, and make for yourself a garland from his tree". This suggests that the " covering for his nakedness" of v. 6 refers not to a physical garment which is worn, but to the spiritual garment which is frequently mentioned throughout the Odes.(95) The deception referred to in line b of v. 6 is then not a general disregard for the truth, but specifically that mishandling of the truth through which the hearer will fail to come to knowledge of the truth, and thus will be deprived of the garment of salvation.

These two lines of v. 6 thus fit well together, and deal with living by the truth, and are not two unrelated ethical commands. The question now is whether the first line of v. 6 also fits into this understanding, or not. Although at first sight we appear to be confronted with a command against purchasing or acquiring another human being, it is possible that this is not the case. Firstly, we should note that the verb ܩܢܐ does not necessarily mean "buy", but also means "acquire, obtain, get hold of", either by purchase or by other means.(96) The particular difficulty here is the meaning of the noun ܓܝܪܐ (stranger). This same word occurs twice elsewhere in the Odes, and in both cases it signifies that which is opposed to, or alienated from, God. In ode 6.3 we read, "For he destroys whatever is alien (,ܓܝܪܐ ܕܡܬܒܪ), and everything is of the Lord". Ode 3.6 has been considered above, but at least a part of the meaning of not being a stranger in the Lord's Rest is that there is now union between the speaker and the Lord instead of the alienation which existed previously.(97) If this same basic meaning of strangeness can also be applied to ode 20, it will then imply not a human being who is to be bought as a slave, but the acquiring of something which is foreign to God. More specifically, in view of the following lines, it will mean getting hold of teaching which is not in accordance with the truth; strange doctrine.

The real difficulty with this is that we would expect to find a rather different wording if this were the odist's meaning. The word can either be a noun or an adjective, and if the adjectival sense were intended here we would expect to read ܕܢܟܪܝܐ . Alternatively, we could understand the "stranger" in terms of the deceiver. In ode 33.4 we find that he does not appear as the Evil One, and in ode 38. 10f. we read of the Deceiver and the Error, who imitate the Beloved and his Bride, and who corrupt and lead astray the world. From ode 42. 3 we find that it is necessary to take hold of the Messiah (verb ܬܦܣ), and it is perfectly possible that in ode 20 the odist is speaking of taking hold of the Deceiver when men ought to be taking hold of the Messiah who alone brings the truth.

If we can understand the ode in this way, verse 6 yields the following meaning. You shall not take hold of the Deceiver and his teaching, which is error, for you will do this at the cost of your immortal life. Nor shall you deceive your neighbour by telling him that such teaching is the truth, and thereby prevent him from receiving the covering of salvation.

This interpretation of the verse offers three advantages. Firstly, it provides a good introduction to the following verses, which deal with putting on the grace of the Lord and finding salvation in his Paradise. Secondly, it provides a unity to the whole ode by relating this verse more closely to the preceding verses about the offering of the Lord, which draw the distinction between the thought of the Lord and that of the world, and which are therefore related to the truth. At the same time, the verse fits in better with the thought of the Odes as a whole, dealing as they do with the proclamation of the truth and the rejection of falsehood. Thirdly, it explains the otherwise inexplicable choice of three unrelated ethical commands. Nowhere else in the Odes are there any ethical commands as specific as these, and no satisfactory explanation is evident for the particular choice of these

three. If however we understand the ode in the way suggested above, these particular commands fit in very well with the whole thought of the Odes.

We return to the problem of v. 5 of ode 20, asking what is the meaning of "compassion oppressing compassion". From the early verses of the ode it is clear that the offering which is being spoken about concerns the truth, as we have just shown from the interpretation of v. 6. The offering of the Lord is "not like the world, nor like the flesh, nor like them who worship according to the flesh" (v. 3). This offering can be referred to either as "the offering of the Lord" (v. 4), or as "The offering of his thought" (v. 2). In v. 4, which states that "the offering of the Lord is righteousness, and purity of heart and lips", it may seem that the odist is speaking about ethical conduct, especially with regard to the kind of language which the believer must use. However, "righteousness" in the Odes does not refer generally to right conduct, but to the whole salvation experience which the believer has entered into, a sharing in the victory of the Messiah.(98) It is also important to note that the combination of "heart" and "lips" is found five times elsewhere in the Odes,(99) and generally this combination is used to show that the new experience into which the believer has entered must be expressed in speech. That is, as the believer has found a new relationship of the heart to God, so he must speak about it. A particularly good example of this is found in the next ode: "He caused my heart to overflow; and it was found in my mouth,(100) and it sprang forth unto my lips".

Ode 26 gives us a clear indication of the way in which this proclamation of the saving acts of God are understood.

I poured out praise to the Lord,
Because I am his own.
And I will recite his holy ode,

Because my heart is with him.

For the odes of his Rest shall not be silent (vv. 1-3).

Verses 4-7 then go on to show the extent of this praise to God, which extends from East to West (v. 5), from South to North (v. 6), and from the crest of the mountains to their extremity (v. 7). The next three verses show how impossible it is for any man adequately to understand the Lord and to declare who he is and what he had done, but nevertheless through the songs which are presented, the life giving truth about God reaches men and brings them life. The ode concludes:

For it suffices to know and be satisfied,

For the singers stand in the Rest,

Like a river which has an increasingly gushing spring,

And flows to the relief of those who seek it. (vv. 12-13).

We have shown elsewhere(101) that these verses do not constitute a Gnostic affirmation about the all-sufficiency of knowledge, but onthe contrary, state that there comes a point at which knowledge of God ceases. Nevertheless, God has provided sufficient saving knowledge of himself, and through the proclamation of this men come to know God and to find life.

When we apply these ideas to ode 20, it seems that the best way of understanding v. 5 is in terms of the limitations which may be placed upon the proclamation of this saving knowledge. The verb ܨܠܚ means "press upon", "hem in", "besiege" as well as "oppress", and may well refer here to the hemming-in, or the narrowing down, of compassion. That is to say, it would refer to a limitation placed upon those who are regarded as being eligible to receive the proclamation. As we have seen, ode 26 speaks of the wide extent of the proclamation. Ode 10, on the other hand, seems to indicate that there were questions in the odist's community about the eligibility of all to receive it. Ode 20 suggests that there should not be this limitation, that their compassion should not be limited, but extended to all

who are willing to receive what is offered. To fail to make the message available to all is to oppress others by allowing them to remain under the power of ignorance and death.

There are clearly difficulties involved in the interpretation of v. 5 which have not been resolved. Even if what has been said above does reflect the odist's meaning, it does not show how this is compassion limiting compassion, unless we are to understand it in the sense of "Do not let your compassion for some limit your compassion for all". Nevertheless, the interpretation offered does attempt to take into account the whole context of the ode, and it does fit in with the general thought of the odist.

C. ILLUMINATION

In the Odes, the references to "light" and "illumination" fall into three different categories. These are not mutually exclusive definitions of illumination but the difference lies in the point at which the emphasis is placed. In the first place attention is drawn to the fact that the light comes from God, and that it is seen in His Word. That is, the revelation of God through his Word may be said to be one way in which man is illuminated. Then there are other places where the emphasis lies not on the illumination itself, but on its effect in man. This enlightenment brings with it an acknowledgement of God's salvation through the Messiah, knowledge of the truth as it is seen in him, and a turning away from error and falsehood in order to turn to and to walk with God; that is, it brings about the conversion of man. Thirdly, we find that this illumination arms the odist for his fight against his enemies. Because he has experienced this light in his own life, through him, and through those who believe because of the word which he speaks, this light shines for unbelievers to see. We shall therefore consider these three aspects of illimination in turn; its origin, its effect and its consequence.

(1) Origin

In ode 12. 7 we read that the Word of God is the light and the dawn of thought, and this, as has been previously stated, is most probably a reference to the creative activity of God as he expresses his indwelling thought. But earlier in this ode it is seen that this Word and light which was expressed in creation is now the means of God's revelation to man, and that the Word is now not equated with the light, but is the vehicle for the light;

> And he has caused his knowledge to abound in me
> Because the mouth of the Lord is the true Word,
> And the entrance of his light. (v.3).[102]

There is perhaps nothing in this ode which demands that the Word of God be interpreted in terms of the Messiah, but this same relationship between Word and light occurs in ode 41, where such an interpretation is required. In the final section of this ode we have various assertions made about "the Word", "the Saviour", "the man who was humbled", and the Son "who appeared in the perfection of his Father" (vv. 11-13). Verse 14 continues:

> And light dawned from the Word
> That was before time in him (sc. the Father). (103)

Thus the Word, the light which appeared in creation, has now appeared in a new way in the incarnation. This Word, previously dwelling in God, has been expressed in the perfection of his Father, thus providing a revelation of the eternal mind of God. As the Word of God he is the light, but a light with a two-fold function. He illuminates the Father in revelation, and he shines into the lives of men to illuminate them and to dispel the darkness there, in order that men may have a clear view of the nature and will of God.

(2) Effect

It is with this second aspect that the odist is most concerned, but it is not always easy to determine what he means by this illumination. A baptismal interpretation may be intended,(104) since several of these references are combined with the idea of putting on a garment, but other interpretations are possible. In 11. 10f. we find that the odist has stripped off folly and cast it aside so that the Lord has renewed him in his garment(105) and possessed him by his light. Two different emphases are possible here. The first is based on the odist's use of the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament and Inter-Testamental periods, and his understanding that salvation consists in that true knowledge of God which belongs only to the wise. Thus the idea that light belongs to him who has put away folly finds something of a parallel in Eccl.8. 1, "A man's wisdom

makes his face shine"; or in Dan. 12. 3, speaking of those who rise to everlasting life, "And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament".

Alternatively, this may be seen not as a putting on of wisdom, but as the reception of the Spirit. Ode 25 also contains this combination of light and raiment:

7 A lamp you did set for me both on my right hand and on my left,
So that there might not be anything in me that is not light.
8 And I was covered with the covering of your spirit,
And I removed from me my garments of skin.

While it has been suggested that the placing of lamps at the right and at the left may indicate a baptismal ritual in which the participants carried torches in both hands,(106) it is also possible that this expression simply indicates the completeness of the illumination. In this case, the enlightenment consists in being endowed with the Spirit of God, and the removal of raiment of skins.

In what does the "raiment of skins" consist? There is possibly here a reference to Gen. 3. 21, but if so, the odist is not dependent on the Pesh. of the Old Testament for his wording (لحنّع, ܕܡܫܚܐ in the ode, ܕܡܫܚܐ ܠܒܫܐ in the Pesh.). But in the Rabbinic tradition there is an interesting play on words which is possible in Hebrew but not in Syriac. On this verse in Gen. Rab.20. 12 we read, "In R. Meir's Torah it was found written 'garments of light' (אור instead of עור). This refers to Adam's garments which were like a torch, (shedding radiance), broad at the bottom and narrow at the top". Such a play on this Hebrew word may have been known to the odist, but this is not necessary in order to grasp his essential thought. After Adam's act of disobedience, God provided for him garments of skins, which served not only to cover his

nakedness, but also as the symbol of his disobedience. Now, instead of this, the odist has been clothed with light, in the person of the Spirit of God, who then removes the skin clothing, the symbol of sin and expulsion from Paradise, and who lifts him up to renewed fellowship with God.

It is within this range of ideas that the odist seems to be moving in ode 11 , where he speaks of the blessedness of those who have entered into Paradise:

> And who grow in the growth of your trees
> And have passed from darkness into light .....
> And turn from wickedness to your pleasantness,
> For they have turned away from themselves the bitterness of the trees
> When they were planted in your land. (vv. 19ff.)

The changing from darkness to light here can be regarded as conversion, ot perhaps more strictly as that illumination from God which results in conversion, in which man rejects wickedness and turns to the Lord. While Adam found bitterness (107) in eating from the fruit of the tree, the believer will escape such bitterness, for he will not live disobediently but by the truth.

In ode 15 there is the two-fold idea of light as the source of illumination, and of that illumination which results in conversion. Christ is the Sun, in the sense that with him comes the dawning of the day of the Lord's salvation, which brings about the abolition of the darkness of ignorance and death. When in v.2 the odist says that his (the Lord's) rays have lifted him up, does he mean that he has been lifted up out of Sheol, or lifted up to heaven? Probably both ideas are in mind, since he sees the condition of man in terms of his bondage to Sheol and death,

and he also sees salvation as a restoration to complete fellowship with God in heaven. But the picture seems to be that of the sun's rays streaming down from heaven to earth, and of man's ascent to heaven on these rays. The effect of the illuminating power of Christ then is the removal of man from the sphere of death to that of God. The way in which this is achieved is seen in vv. 3f.:

> Eyes I have obtained in him
> And have seen his holy day.
> Ears I have acquired
> And have heard his truth.

P. Kleinert[108] suggests, on the basis of the reference to the "Sun" and "his holy day", that this ode was composed for Sunday, but other references to the sun and to the dawning of the day of the Lord's salvation make such a hypothesis unnecessary. It is far more likely that "his holy day" in this ode is the eschatological day of the Lord, and perhaps combined with this is the concept of Christ himself as "Day".[109] Such an idea is found in ode 41. 3f.:

> We live in the L$_o$rd by his grace,
> And life we receive by his Messiah.
> For a great day has shined upon us,[110]
> And wonderful is he who has given to us of his glory.

It has previously been noted that further on in this ode we read of the light which dawned from the Word who was before time in the Father, and this means that the primary meaning here is that in the coming of Christ there is seen the dawning ofGod's eschatological day of salvation, through Christ's revelation of Him. But the focus of attention in this ode is not only that of the light which comes in Christ, but also the light which shines forth from those who have experienced this salvation. In v.6 the odist continues:

> And let our faces shine in his light,
> And let our hearts meditate in his love.

Since Christ has shone into their lives, so the community is called to shine and to reflect this light. The relationship between line b of this verse and Ps.1. 2 has already been commented on, and thus we have another connection of thought with the idea in Eccl. 8. 1. For the psalmist it is the wise man who meditates day and night in the law of the Lord, but for the odist the wise man meditates in the love of the Lord, while for both the odist and the writer of Eccl., it is this expression of wisdom which causes the face to shine.

With this in mind, we may return to ode 25. The acquiring of eyes to see the Lord's holy day means that through the revelation of God in Christ, the odist was able to recognise that in Christ, God was bringing in his eschatological salvation. Similarly it was through this revelation that the odist acquired truth (v. 4), and knowledge(v. 5). This has been the means of his conversion, in that he has left the way of error and has turned to the Lord (v. 6). Illumination thus means the dispersal of that darkness which the odist equates with death. It brings the recognition that salvation is to be found in Christ, and along with this comes the ability to receive his truth and knowledge. This leads to the abandonment of the previous way of life which has been dominated by ignorance, error, and falsehood, and a turning to God in a new, incorruptible life in his presence.

(3) Consequence

This enlightenment is not simply an end in itself, in respect to its effect in the believer, but has consequences for the ministry of the Word. It has been seen that those who have been enlightened are called to reflect that light as they themselves shine, but there is more specific reference to this in odes 18 and 29, although both contain problems of interpretation. Ode 18 states:

4 O Lord, for the sake of those who are in need,
Do not dismiss your word from me.
5 Nor, for the sake of their works,
Withhold your perfection from me.
6 Let not light be conquered by darkness,
Nor let truth flee from falsehood.(111)

The "light" ( ) of v. 6 is the odist himself. (112) He is the one who in the face of vanity, ignorance and error has attempted to provide a message of hope to those without it (those in need). The latter part of the ode suggests that there were two groups, each of whom regarded themselves as in possession of the truth, but that those who had received the truth through the inspiration of God were able to recognise that the opposing group were living in error. He therefore prays that for the sake of those still without the truth the Word of God may not be taken from him, and that the darkness of ignorance and error may not finally overcome the truth which he has received in his illumination.(113)

This same opposition appears in ode 29, where again we find the notions of illumination and the Word of the Lord.

7 And he revealed to me his sign,
And he led me by his light.
8 And he gave me the sceptre of his power,
That I might subdue the devices of the Gentiles,
And humble the power of the mighty.
9 To make war by his word,
And to take victory by his power;
10 And the Lord overthrew my enemy by his word,
And he became like the dust which a breeze carries off.
(29. 7ff.)

The opposition here seems to be rather more than simply spiritual foes. Subduing "the imaginations of the people" and bringing down "the power of the men of might", implies that he is to subject the present evil imagination of the people to the scrutiny of the Word of God by which he is to make war against his enemies, so that the opposition which he faces will be overcome. In v. 10 "my enemy" may conceivably be the Evil One, but the allusion in the following line to Ps. 1. 4 (which refers to the wicked), more probably refers to the fact that through the ministry of the odist, his opponent was shown to be in error.

Here we see some situation within the odist's community where the truth is in danger of being perverted by an opposing group, and he lays stress on the fact that he has received the true light in Christ, which enables him to show the opposing doctrines as false, which at the same time is the means of leading men away from error to the truth.

D. WATER, RIVER, FOUNTAIN

It is in ode 11 that we find the very difficult concept of the "speaking water", which has caused many problems for interpreters of the Odes:

> And speaking water drew near my lips
> From the fountain of the Lord generously. (v.6)

The next v. tells of how the odist drank this living water and was inebriated, and his inebriation was not without knowledge. If, with J.H. Bernard[115] we interpret this in terms of baptism as a draught for the thirsty, how are we to understand the speaking water ? Bernard himself simply notes that Harris has compared Ignatius, Rom 7 with this. V. Corwin has pointed out that those who have made reference to the relationship between the Odes and Ignatius at this point have generally omitted to note that in Ignatius the speaking water says, "Come to the Father", and that in the Odes, after drinking, the speaker forsook vanity

and "turned to the Most High, my God".[116] The result of this drink of speaking and living water which the odist took was not simply knowledge, but the rejection of folly (v. 10), renewal (v. 11), rest (v. 12), enlightenment (v. 14) and entry into Paradise (v. 16), but knowledge is presupposed in order that any of the others may follow. Since the water is both speaking and living, it is probably not to be identified with knowledge itself, but with the Spirit, through whom this knowledge is gained. It is this activity of the Spirit in bringing knowledge of the truth which enables him to turn to God and reject folly, and which thus leads to new life.

An alternative explanation of the "speaking water" is that it is water which enables him to speak, rather than water which speaks to speaks to him. That is, this water comes to him, and flows from his lips in speech. We have this symbolism in the following ode:

1 He has filled with words of truth
That I may speak the same.
2 And like the flow of water , flows truth from my mouth,
And my lips showed forth its fruits.
3 And it has caused its knowledge to abound in me,
Because the mouth of the Lord is the true word,
And the door of his light. (12. 1-3)

Here we find that since the odist has been filled with the truth, and this truth, which causes knowledge to abound in him, flows from his lips like water. [117] This interpretation is less probable than the one previously mentioned, but does also fit in with the general views of the odist.

Ode 30 is completely devoted to the fountain and the water which comes from it. It begins:

Fill for yourselves water[118] from the living fountain of
the Lord,
Because it has been opened for you.
And come all you thirsty, and take a drink,
And rest beside the fountain of the Lord. (vv. 1f.)

J.H.Bernard states quite categorically that "this ode is an Invitatory to baptism",[119] pointing out its relationships to Isa. 55. 1 and Isa. 12. 3, both of which were applied to the waters of baptism by the Fathers. Harris-Mingana on the other hand point to allusions from Sir.24 which are as significant as those from Isa., and in which the fountain refers to the Wisdom of God. The key vv. for its interpretation are 5-6:

Because it flowed from the lips of the Lord,
And from the heart of the Lord is its name.
And it came boundless and invisible,
And until it was set in the middle they knew it not.

It is generally suggested that v. 5b gives little sense as it stands, and the alternatives given usually involve either emendation of the ܡܬܝܗ of the text, or are based on the argument of a mis-understood Greek text.[120]

The word ܐܬܦܬܚ employed with the verb ܐܬܐ, means "to bring forth publicly", "to publish",[121] and in the context of the previous infiniteness and invisibility, the meaning must be that what was formerly infinite and invisible has now become manifest.[122] If then we can say that the fountain is Christ, and that the odist sees him as fountain because of the incarnation, we are left with two possibilities for the water which flows from the fountain. First, it could be the knowledge which Christ brings, and which provides rest for the believer. Or secondly, it could be the Holy Spirit, who comes to believers through the ministry of Christ. The similarity of thought to odes 12 and 23 indicate

that we should understand it as revelation, not the Spirit.(123)

In ode 6 we have the picture of the stream which became a river, which carried away and shattered everything and brought it to the Temple,(124) a river which flowed so strongly that none could restrain it, not even those who habitually restrain water. This spread through all the earth, and the thirsty were given to drink from it, and their thirst was quenched. In view of the way in which several of the ideas of the first section of this ode (vv. 1-7) are picked up in the second section, the most natural meaning og this water is the knowledge of God, referred to in v. 6. But here in v. 11 we have, as also in 11. 7 and 30. 1f., the idea that this water is for drinking. J.H. Bernard says that although the concept of the baptismal water as a draught for the thirsty may seem strange to us, the early writers were not so precise in their use of metaphor.(125) On the other hand, E. Segelberg sees this not as a metaphor, but as the description of a part of the baptismal ritual of the Odes, which "recalls a Gnostic rite of drinking water at baptism".(126) He notes that "one is here tempted to think that the Odes belong to an 'aquarian' tradition",(127) in view of the fact that they speak only of drinking water, and the one case when wine is drunk, it has been offered by the Deceiver to produce intoxication and deprivation of wisdom. But if this is the case, we need to say more than that the Odes belong to an aquarian tradition. Rather, ode 38. 12 then becomes a polemic against those who drink wine, presumably at the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. This raises the further question, which Segelberg allows, that such drinking of water may be at the Eucharist instead of at baptism, although he opts for the latter.

We may leave to one side the question of whether such drinking of water is metaphorical, or the description of an actual rite, and pursue the more general question of the relationship of the image to

baptism. Two arguments have been advanced for regarding the latter portion of the ode in a baptismal light. The first is the presence of the word ܫܡܫܢܐ (Gk. διάκονοι), which "may carry an allusion to the Christian deacons who administered baptism".(128) The second is that the effects of this draught are very similar to those attributed to baptism by writers of the early Church. (129)

The ode concludes:

Because everyone recognised them as the Lord's,
And lived by the living water of eternity. (v. 18)

The first line of this verse may mean that everyone knew the ministers to be the Lord's. In the context of the rite of Christian baptism, this line carries no significance, unless there was the problem of schismatic baptism. They would be known as the Lord's ministers. But this also robs the "because" (ܕ) with which the line begins, of all force. It was because they were known to be the Lord's that the effects of the previous vv. were experienced, and they found eternal life. On the other hand, this verse is very relevant if this water is the knowledge of God, or the Gospel, and the restrainers of v. 9 are opponents of, or false teachers of the Gospel. Since there are good reasons for seeing the presence of false teachers elsewhere in the Odes, the verse would then mean that the knowledge brought by these ministers had the effect it did because the ministers were known to bring genuine knowledge of God.(130)

The "water" of the Odes refers to the revelation of God which is brought by the Messiah, and which is proclaimed in the community by the ministers. Just as men are invited to come and take a drink from the living fountain of the Lord (30. 1f.), so also the singers are "like a river which has an abundant fountain ( ), and flows to the help of those who need it", (26. 13).(131)

When we compare these soteriological concepts in the Odes with those in the Johannine literature, it is apparent that there are significant differences between them, although there are also similarities.

1. The principal soteriological categories in the Odes, error and knowledge, are quite different from Joh. The verb πλανάω occurs very infrequently in the Johannine literature (Jn.7. 12, 47; IJn.1. 8; 2. 26; 3. 7). The noun πλάνη occurs once only, at IJn.4. 6, where we read of "the spirit of error", a term which is not found in the Odes.

The Johannine writings do not use the word γνῶσις at all, although the verb "to know" does occur very frequently. (132) As far as the content of knowledge is concerned, this is somewhat different from the Odes. The goal in both is knowledge of God, but while the odist concentrates on this aspect, John speaks more frequently of knowing God through knowing Christ (8. 19; 14. 7); or of knowing that God has sent him (17. 8, 23, 25); or of knowing that Christ is in the Father and the Father is in him (10. 28). This idea does not come into the Odes at all. Nor in the Odes doe we find the knowledge of the Father by the Son mentioned; (see Jn. 7. 29; 8. 55; 10. 15).

2. The concept of corruption, which occurs over 30 times in the Odes, is not found at all in the Johannine literature.

3. The whole scheme of salvation in the Odes which concerns the war, captivity, bonds, the overcoming of the serpent and Sheol, is found in a very subdued way in John. In the Gospel we see that men are in slavery and need to be freed by the truth (8.32); that Christ casts out the ruler of this world (12. 31), and overcomes the world (16. 33), as he goes to the Cross. But this is very different from the highly symbolic language of the Odes.

4. The concept of "the world" is similar in the two writings, and in

both it signifies mankind in its ignorance of God, or in its rejection of the revelation of God through Christ.

5. The concept of "sin", which does not occur in the Odes, plays an important part in John. Nevertheless, it is also true that for John the basic element of sin consists in the rejection of the revelation through Christ (8. 21ff.; 9. 41; 15. 22ff.; 16. 9). With this understanding of sin, the notion of forgiveness in the Fourth Gospel is almost non-existent. Therefore, although there is a difference in terminology between the Odes and John, the difference is less than it might appear.

6. Love is important in both the Odes and John. But in the Odes we find nothing of the command to "love one another" which is so important for John (13. 34f.; I Jn.4. 21). Nor do we find anything of the Father's love for the Son, or the Son's love for the Father, which we find in John (3. 35; 5. 20; 10. 17; 14.31; 17. 24, 26).

FOOTNOTES TO PP.294 - 342

1. This is also the purpose of the revelation of knowledge in ode 30 symbolised by the fountain: "Until it was set in the midst (i.e. on the earth), they did not know it", (v. 5). This is different from the Gnostic idea of the Revealer who clothes himself in different disguises as he passes through the various spheres, so that he will not be recognised by the rulers of those spheres. Cf. R.Bultmann, John, p. 61, n.1.

2. Lit. "that I might learn him" (,ܡܢ).

3. See above p. 66, where we suggest that a ܕ has perhaps dropped out of the text.

4. Cf. 1 QS 3. 15: "From the God of knowledge comes all that is and shall be, and before (beings) were, he established all their designs". God is also called "the God of knowledge" in 1 QH 1. 26.

5. This absolute use of "knowledge" here is clearly determined by the content of knowing in v. 12, and the reference to "the knowledge of the Lord" in v. 21.

6. V. 12 depends upon Ps. 100. 3. In Didache 5, one of the marks of the way of death is οὐ γινώσκοντες τὸν ποιήσαντα αὐτούς.

7. On this verse, see below pp. 425 ff.

8. There are some difficulties in the interpretation of this verse and the following one. See below on the Spirit.

9. As H.Gunkel, "Salomo-Oden", in RGG^2, V, 88; H.Gressmann, "Die Oden Salomos", in Neutestamentliche Apokryphen^2, 441; J.H.Charlesworth, The Odes of Solomon, p. 32, think. With the destructive power of this stream should be compared the similar picture in ode 39.

10. These references to the removal of physical defects from the body are not to be taken literally, but indicate the newness of life into which those who have received the water have entered; (cf. 18. 2f; 21. 4; 25.9).

11. We suggest below that the "them" of v. 18 is probably not "the ministers of the water", but those who have come to new life through the water. That is, they are now recognised as belonging to the Lord. Cf. J.H.Charlesworth, op. cit. pp. 32f.

12. They are the servants ( ) of the water drink (v. 13). J.H.Bernard relates the term specifically to baptismal ministers; The Odes of Solomon, pp. 58f. So also does K.Rudolph, Die Mandäer, II, 390. This Syriac word translates the Greek διάκονος quite generally. See

Matt. 20. 26f. where the διάκονος ( ) of v. 26 is followed by a δοῦλος ( ) in v. 27, and where the Greek words are used as synonyms. See also Col. 1. 23, 25, where Paul is a minister ( ) of the Gospel, or of the church, "to make the Word of God fully known".

13. See Harris-Mingana, II, 236f.; W.Frankenberg, Das Verständnis der Oden Salomos.

14. op. cit. p. 237.

15. As Harris-Mingana point out, the parallelism between paralysed wills and paralysed limbs is already present in vv. 14 and 16. There is therefore no need to repeat it. Verse 17 goes on to speak of the results of the restoration of these paralysed wills and limbs.

16. Frankenberg translates into Greek ἔδωκεν ἰσχὺν τῇ παρέσει αὐτῶν , (altering the subject from plur. to sing. Flemming also represents this idea: "Sie haben Kraft gegeben ihrer Schwachheit"; Ein jüdisch-christliches Psalmbuch aus dem ersten Jahrhundert. W.E.Barnes advocated a different emendation on the basis of an inner Syriac corruption: "They gave life to their dead ( )";"An Ancient Christian Hymnbook", The Expositor 10 (1910), 52ff.

17. See H.Grimme, Die Oden Salomos, who states that "coming" preserves the parallelism better.

18. "To announce to those who have songs of the coming of the Lord" ( ). This difference in form has no bearing on the question whether this is translation Syriac or not. Both forms of the word are acceptable.

19. Cf. also 30. 2, "Come all you thirsty and drink, and rest beside the fountain of the Lord", where, however, the emphasis is different. For the use of the Aph'el of , cf. esp. 38. 1.

20. The translation of J.H.Charlesworth "And has permitted me to proclaim" is possible, but the emphasis here is less on permission to speak than on the fact that the word which is proclaimed is given by God.

21. The pcpl. is ,from the same root as the "paralysed will" ( ) in ode 6. 14.

22. We might more properly say "from their allegiance to Satan", but the odist nowhere uses this term. The passage which most clearly depicts such a change of allegiance is in ode 33, where Christ calls men to "Leave the ways of that Corruptor and approach me", (v.7). Elsewhere we read of the Deceiver or corrupt Bridegroom (ode 38) or the seven-headed serpent (ode 22).

23. Harris-Mingana understand v.11a as optative, and translate the the verse as follows: "O that one were able to interpret the wonders of the Lord! For though he who could interpret were to be dissolved, yet that which is interpreted would remain". Taken in this way, the verse becomes a plea for self-destruction; II, 355. J.H.Charlesworth translates 11b "Though he who interprets will be destroyed", The Odes of Solomon, p.105.

24. Or man's inability to comprehend the majesty of God, cf. Sir.3. 20-24; 18. 2-7; 43. 27-32; Wisd.9. 13-17; Judith 8. 14; II Esd.4. 21.

25. On this ode see below below on "The 'I' of the Odes".

26. Harris-Mingana make reference to Clem. Alex. Paed. 1. 6, "So that in illumination what we receive is knowledge, and the end of knowledge is rest". While the odist does make a connection between knowledge and rest, the emphasis is different. This connection is not shown in J.H. Charlesworth's translation of v. 12:

For it suffices to perceive ( ) and be satisfied ()

For the odists stand in serenity ( )

27. . The translation of Harris-Mingana, "abundant fountain" is preferable to that in this quotation from J.H.Charlesworth.

28. Cf. Sir.21. 13, "A wise man's knowledge is like a river in full spate, and his advice a life-giving spring"; see also Sir.24. 30ff.; 1QH 2. 18.

29. Harris-Mingana II, 260, marginal note. J.H.Charlesworth and R.A. Culpepper, "The Odes of Solomon and the Gospel of John", CBQ 35 (1973), 304. It will also be seen that v.7b is similar to Rom.9. 33; 10. 11; which quote Isa. 28. 16. In Romans however the text reads "he who believes in him will not be put to shame", as does the LXX of Isa. The Pesh. of Isa. reads, "He who believes will not fear ( )." Closer in form to the ode is Ps.25. 3, in which the form of the first verb is similar to that of the ode. It is unlikely however that the odist was attempting to reproduce this verse and misquoted it.

30. As J.H.Charlesworth observes, The Odes of Solomon, p.46 n.5.

31. K. Rudolf, Die Mandäer II, 62, relates this to the water-brooks at the beginning of the light world which the soul must conquer in its ascent. This is very unlikely. The rivers in the ode are a threat to those who despise God, and they represent the power of God himself, not that of the aeons who are attempting to prevent the soul's ascent to God.

32. This seems preferable to "the course of his faith"; Harris-Mingana II, 396.

33. See below on the Gnosticism of the Odes and John.

34. See H.-M. Schenke, op. cit. p.27; R. Bultmann, Gnosis,p.11.

35. It has been suggested that there is an identity of the Redeemer and the redeemed in the Odes. We deal with this question below in the "I" of the Odes. One passage which raises a question mark against this theory is ode 3. 8-9, where different expressions are used to describe the status of Christ and that of the believer.

36. See also ode 9. 10, where "Righteousness" is personified, and where again it means the victory which gives the crown of truth.

37. The "faith" of v. 10b is related to the "mystery" and "knowledge" of Christ (vv. 10a, 11a), but is also related to Christ's faithfulness to his own, in not turning away from them, (vv. 12ff.).

38. This is so even if the concept of the disciplina arcani could be pushed back to the time of the Odes. See"Disciplina " in F.L.Cross (ed.), Dictionary of the Apostolic Church.(See note below).
The quotation comes from Ch.12 of the Procatechesis. See F.L. Cross (ed.) St. Cyril of Jerusalem's Lectures on the Christian Sacraments, p.7.

39. The Odes of Solomon, p.66. See also pp.23ff. for Bernard's discussion of the disciplina arcani. Harris-Mingana II, 188f., agree with Bernard that Cyril knew the Odes (see also II, 55f. for their other parallels), and that in the quotations from Cyril, it is the disciplina arcani to which reference is made. They do not agree that this is the case with the ode. Instead they refer to a saying of Jesus, which was probably preserved in an uncanonical Gospel, preserved in the Stromateis of Clem. of Alexandria. We include here a little of the context in which this saying occurs. "For the prophet says, 'Who shall understand the Lord's parable but the wise and understanding, and he that loves the Lord?' It is but for few to comprehend these things. For it is not in the way of envy that the Lord announced in a Gospel, 'My mystery is to me, and to the sons of my house,' placing the election in safety, and beyond anxiety"; Clem. Alex. Strom V, 10. Bernard regards this as of no help towards the understanding of the ode, but this is only because of his contention that the Odes are a collection of baptismal hymns. See also the note of J.H.Charlesworth on this verse in The Odes of Solomon, p.43, in which he also rejects any reference to the disciplina arcani.

40. Cf. also ode 19 where a cup of milk, symbolising the revelation of God is offered to the speaker.

41. As K. Rudolf does. See his Die Mandäer II, 258f. In his later article, "War der Verfasser der Od. Sal. ein 'Qumran-Christ'?" Rudolf also considers the "mystery" of the Qumran Scrolls in relation to the Mandaean literature. His overall judgment of the relation between the Hodajot, the Odes and the Mandaean literature is as follows: "Zwischen den Hodajot und den Oden Salomos liegt ein Bruch: die gnostische Weltauffassung ... Die Hodajot sind mit dem esoterischen Wissensbegriff und anderen stilistischen Eigentumlichkeiten eine Art Ausgangspunkt-oder Durchgangspunkt-für eine

zur Gnosis führende Entwicklung in orientalisch-semitischen bzw. jüdischen Bereich, die uns durch die Oden Salomos und Mandäica greifbar wird", RQ 16 (1964), 553. Most commentators would now see the "knowledge" and "mystery" of the Qumran Scrolls as not gnostic, although several scholars would want to claim with Rudolf a relationship to Gnostic ways of thought. See B. Reicke, "Traces of Gnosticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls", NTS 1 (1954-5), 138ff.; O. Cullmann, "The Significance of the Qumran Texts for Research into the Beginnings of Christianity" in K. Stendahl (ed.) The Scrolls and the New Testament, pp. 18ff.; R.M. Grant, Gnosticism and Early Christianity, pp. 112ff.; M. Mansoor, The Thanksgiving Hymns, pp. 65ff. For scholars who do not wish to see any relationship to Gnosis in any technical sense of the term, see F.F. Bruce, Second Thoughts on the Dead Sea Scrolls, p.119; J. van der Ploeg, The Excavations at Qumran, pp. 119ff., W.D. Davies, "Knowledge in the DSS and in Matthew 11. 25-30", H ThR 46 (1952), 113ff.; J. Licht, "The Doctrine of DST", IEJ 6 (1956), 97. The knowledge of the Odes is no more esoteric than that of the Scrolls.

42. Cf. K. Rudolf, "Der gnostische Charakter der Oden Salomos ist eine feststhende Tatsache, wie schon ein Blick auf die häufige (62 malige) Verwendung der Wurzel 10'.. und ihrer zwei Derivate iida'ta und mad'a lehren dürfte, von denen der überwiegende Teil die 'gnostische' Erkenntnis bezeichnet", art. cit. p.525. For a contrary view see J.H. Charlesworth "The Odes of Solomon - not Gnostic", CBQ 31 (1969), 360-363.

43. This ode is less deterministic than a passage in the Dead Sea Scrolls which is very similar: "From the God of Knowledge comes all that is and shall be, and before (beings) were, he established all their design. And when they are, they fulfil their task according to their statutes, in accordance with his glorious design, changing nothing within it", 1QS 3,15f.

44. This is rather different from the need of the Gnostic to pray to be kept in a state of Gnosis. See R. Bultmann, Gnosis, Kittel Bible Key Words, p.10. See esp. Poimandres 32, "To me who pray that I may not fall from the knowledge which accords with our being, grant it and give me power", (tr. in Foerster, Gnosis I, 335).

45. K. Rudolf draws attention to the relatively infrequent use of the terminology of belief in comparison with that of knowledge in the Odes. See "War der Verfasser der Od. Sal. ein Qumran-Christ?" RQ 16 (1964), 525. He implies that this constitutes an argument for the Gnostic character of the Odes.

46. Harris-Mingana and J.H.Charlesworth both translate the ܘܐܙܠ ܠܘܬܗ of v.6 "and I went towards him". This is possible, but because of the odist's emphasis on salvation in fellowship with God, we would prefer to translate "and I went with (or drew near to) him". See Payne Smith, A Compendious Syriac Dictionary, p. 9a.

47. ,ܡܗܝܡܢܝܗ - his believer, i.e. those who believe in him. The word is the same in meaning as "those who trust in him" in the following line.

48. Cf. the distinction between faith and knowledge in the system of Ptolemaeus in Iren. Adv. Haer. I,6.2, "The psychic men .... are strengthened by works and mere faith and do not have perfect knowledge; and these, they teach, are we of the Church"(tr. in W. Foerster (ed.), Gnosis I, 138). See also Exc. Theod. 56. 3. In Gnostic literature which is fir mly influenced by Christianity this distinction is not as clearly marked. See Treatise on the Resurrection 46, 14ff., "And because of our faith we have indeed known the Son of Man, and we have believed that he rose from the dead"; (tr. in W. Foerster (ed.), Gnosis II, 73). Cf. Poim. 32; Hippol. Ref. V, 16. 7 ; Ac. Thom. 10; 13; Gosp. Truth 20. 7. See J.H. Charlesworth, "The Odes of Solomon - not Gnostic", CBQ 31 (1969), 361.

49. Gnosis, p. 11.

50. The verb is ܚܕܝ. Harris-Mingana translate "I have been delighted in him". The meaning of the verb is found in the quality of life which is lived. See J. Payne Smith, A Compendious Syriac Dictionary, p. 451a. Harris-Mingana II, 281, suggest ܚܕܝܬ . But cf. Isa. 58. 13, where God's holy day the Sabbath is to be called ܥܕܝ.

51. This is the same day as the "great day" which has dawned in ode 41. 4. C.H. Breston thought that this referred to the birth of Jesus Christ, as also J.H. Charlesworth maintains. The odist does not differentiate too sharply between the recognition of the coming of the knowledge of God through Christ and the exaltation to new life, symbolised by the lifting up out of Sheol. If the allusion to Isa. 58.13 in the previous note is correct, the odist is probably referring to God's holy day as the day of God's vindication of his people.

52. See 42. 19, "I placed their faith in my heart".

53. See also 31. 1. Darkness disappeared at his appearance (ܡܚܐ).

54. MS H reads ܕܥܠܝܐ , "of the Most High".

55. MS H has omitted the words "And you will know the grace of the Lord".

56. For a clear connection between walking and obedience in the Odes see 17. 4f.; 33. 13; 38. 5f. Note also the contrary expression, "walk in error", 18. 14.

57. These people are described as being "lifted up in their hearts" (ܒܠܒܗܘܢ ܬܚܝܬ). Cf. especially in the O.T. the expression "his (your/my) heart is lifted up, rendered ܠܒܗ ܪܡ (II Chron. 32. 25; Ps. 131. 1; Ezek. 28. 2,5,17) when this expression carries the connotation of rebellion against God. When the same Hebrew expression (גבה לבו) has a favourable connotation as in II Chron. 17. 6 the Pesh. translates ܠܒܗ ܫܦܝܪ . This pride is the result of their rejection of the revelation which has come through the Word by which man recognises God as his Creator, and themselves as his creatures. (cf. ode 7. 12).

58. Both vv. 12b and 13a begin with this same conjunction.

59. The verb is ܐܬܝܕܥ, which means "know, recognise, understand, perceive". The primary meaning of the ode is that the revelation must be appreciated as God's revelation. J.H.Charlesworth states that the pron. suffix refers to "way" in v. 13, The Odes of Solomon, p. 100,n.14. Since both "way" and "grace" are fem. nouns, the pronoun may refer to either. In fact it would be preferable to state that it refers to both, since the revelation of the "way" is an act of grace.

60. Cf. Clem. Alex. Paed. 1. 6, "So by illumination must darkness disappear. The darkness is ignorance, through which we fall into sins, purblind as to the truth. Knowledge,then is the illumination we receive, which makes ignorance disappear and endows us with clear vision", (tr. in ANF II, 216.) The thought of the ode here is similar to that of the opening verse of ode 31.

61. Cf. ode 3. 3, "For I should not have known how to love the Lord if he had not loved me ".

62. This is the only other usage of the root ܚܣܐ and of the term jealousy (ܚܣܝܢܐ) . The word zealous ܩܢܝܐ also occurs in ode 6. 6, but with a positive sense. Cf. also ode 3. 6, "There is no jealousy (ܚܣܝܢܘ) with Lord Most High and Merciful".

63. Or "their rejection" ; i.e. rejected by them. The verb ܚܣܐ is regularly used in the sense of "reject". See 24. 11; 25. 5; 41. 11; 42. 7,10.

64. See below on the idea of predestination in the Odes.

65. This is the aim of the announcing of the coming of the Lord through the singers, culminating in the thought of universal salvation in v. 24. "Let there be no one who breathes that is without knowledge or voice".

66. The opening of this ode is missing. The only words of the preceding verse are "I am putting on" (ܠܒܫ ܚܢܢܐ) which J.H.Charlesworth completes, "the Love of the Lord". This conjecture at least makes good sense, even if it is impossible to be certain about it. C.H. Bruston suggested "Sa grâce",which also is quite in keeping with the thought of the odist.

67. Commentators usually make reference to I Jn. 4. 19 in dealing with this verse. See below on "Love" in the Odes. A less ambiguous parallel to ode 3. 3 is in Ep. Diog. 10

68. "The practice of love is the criterion of knowing God", R. Bultmann, Gnosis, p. 46.

69. E.A. Abbott, Light on the Gospel from an Ancient Poet, Diatessarica, Pt IX, pp. 43f., does find a distinction. He claims that ܪܚܡ means "dearly love" and ܐܪܝ means simply "love". He uses ode 8. 14 as an example of this distinction; "Love me with a fervent love, you who love". Cf. G. Kittel, Die Oden Salomos, pp. 45f.n.7, who sees no difference in meaning. See also the following two notes.

70. See ode 3. 2b - 3
..... and he loves ( ) me.
For I should not have known how to love ( ) the Lord,
If he had not loved ( ) me.

v.5 I love ( ) the beloved, and I myself love ( ) him.

71. ܚܒܝܒܐ is found in ode 3. 5,7; 7. 1.
ܚܒܝܒ occurs in 8. 22, where the plural is also used of the believers.

72. The Odes of Solomon. pp. 19f.

73. See above n. 66 in this section.

74. It is possible that the odist's use of the verb ܐܬܪ is in part determined by the fact that it also means "lift up", "And I am lifted up with (through) them". This verb is rare in the Odes, but since the context speaks of coming into the presence of the Lord, the odist's meaning could be that he is dependent on the other believers for being lifted up into the presence of God.

75. See above pp. 143ff. n.116.

76. But note the different expressions as applied to the Lord and to the believer.

77. Note also the reference to "members" in v. 2, and the plural imperatives in vv. 11- 12.

78. We understand "the Lord" to be God in this ode. Being joined to the Son, in a betrothal relationship , or loving the Son, and loving the Lord amounts to the same thing. The Son has revealed the Father, and in loving the Son, man loves the Father who has given him for the purpose of revelation.

79. See below on the eschatology of the Odes.

80. In this, however, the work of the Spirit differs little from that of the Word. See below on the Spirit in the Odes.

81. This verse contains a clear allusion to Ps. 1. 3. The verb "meditate" is the same, but the expression "by night and by day" is the reverse of the order found in the psalm. However, in the ode "The love of the Lord" has replaced " the law of the Lord".

82. This is also a favourable theme in the Psalms: Ps.33. 3; 40. 3; 96. 1; 98. 1; 144. 9; 149. 1. Also Isa. 42. 10; Rev. 5. 9; 14. 3.

83. Cf. Jn. 20. 22.On this ode, see on the Spirit in the Odes.

84. Cf. J.H.Charlesworth, "Then he". The circumcising is the uncovering, and not a prior act, as Charlesworth's translation implies.

85. This is referred to in the 1920 edition as " a microscopic change", (II, 314).

86. See the note in J.H.Charlesworth, op. cit., p.86.

87. op. cit. II, 313.

88. ibid. II, 315f. On p.313 it was denied that the expression could mean "in that he is what thou art".

89. J.H. Charlesworth, op. cit. p. 86, n.4.

90. J. Payne Smith, A Compendious Syriac Dictionary, p. 93.

91. Josephus, Wars II, 4 quoted from Whiston p. Cf. Apost. Cons. Bk II, ch. LXII, ANF XII, 424, old note 10.

92. Harris-Mingana II, 315 suggest either Ex.22. 25f. or Isa.58. as the source of inspiration for the ode.

93. In his article, "Greek the original language of the Odes of Solomon", JTS 14 (1913), 530ff., R.H. Connolly had suggested that the line meant "Thou shalt not regard as an alien thine own (flesh and) blood". In the following year he stated that he had been misled by Harris's note, and thought the ܒ of ܠܐ ܬܚܙܐ ܒ was not in the MS. In "The Original Language of the Odes of Solomon", JTS 15 (1914), 45ff., he re-affirms this understanding of the line of the ode. There is "nothing in the odist's mind about acquiring an alien at all", and the meaning is the same as that of Isa. 58. 7. Connolly therefore suggests that the preposition should be deleted.

94. It does not appear to us that Harris-Mingana have overcome the discontinuity which they felt existed. There is no clear line of thought from treating your neighbour correctly to coming into Paradise and finding salvation on their understanding of the ode.

95. Se 11. 11; 13. 3; 15. 8; 21. 3; 25. 8; 33. 12.

96. See J. Payne Smith, op. cit. R.H. Connolly saw the difficulty of v.6 not in the expression "blood of thy soul", but in the use of the verb ܩܛܠ .

97. In ode 17. 6 we also have ܓܝܪܐ (=Gk. ξένος) used. Here it refers to the strangeness of the Messiah, because of his victory over Sheol.

98. See especially odes 8 and 9.

99. 8. 1; 16. 2; 21. 8; 30. 5; 40. 2; cf. also 36. 7.

100. See Harris-Mingana II, 320f.

101. See above p. 298.

102. A comparison with the Johannine material would be made in terms of Jn.1. 4 rather than Jn.8. 12. The odist is more concerned with the light which has appeared through the Messiah than with saying that the Messiah is the light.

103. W. Bousset quotes this verse and simply comments Kyrios Christos , p. 387. As we have seen above on the Christology of the Odist, we find in the Odes that the Messiah is eternally "in" the Father rather than eternally "with" the Father.

104. R.E. Brown states: "That baptism was spoken of as 'enlightenment' (phōtismos) is seen in the New Testament (Heb.6. 4; 10. 32) and in the earliest patristic evidence"; "The Johannine Sacramentary", in New Testament Essays, p. 64. But cf. G.R. Beasley-Murray, Baptism in the New Testament, pp. 242-247 on these passages from Hebrews.

105. E. Segelberg suggests that whenever we find terms "put on", "put off" , we are dealing with ritual activity. Cf. J. Danielou, who refers to the symbolism of garment and crown as representing eschatological blessing in Qumran; Theol. of Jewish Christianity, p. 328.

106. So J.H. Bernard, The Odes of Solomon, p.107

107. A. Vööbus sees in this word a reference to sexual asceticism, but cf. J.A. Emerton, "Some Problems of Text and Language in the Odes of Solomon", JTS 18 (1967), 384.

108. "Zur religionsgeschichtlichenStellung des Oden Salomos", ThStuduKrit, 84 (1911), 569ff.

109. See Harris-Mingana II, 282; J. Daniélou, op. cit., p. 171.

110. Lk.1. 78.

111. This verse is dealt with below in"The 'I' of the Odes of Solomon".

112. Cf. ode 36. 3.

113. The thought is thus quite dissimilar to Jn.1. 5, and corresponds only partially to Jn.12. 35.

114. See above on Intoxication, pp. 250f.

115. Note here also K. Rudolf,Die Mandäer II, 119; E. Segelberg, Masbuta, pp. 166f.

116. Ignatius and Christianity at Antioch, p. 145

117. Cf. 26. 1; ܡܒܘܥ is from the same root as "fountain". See also 36. 7. This is different from Jn.4. 14.

118. Probably "fill yourselves with water". Cf. Jn.2.7 , Pesh.

119. op. cit. p. 114. So also J. Daniélou, op. cit. p. 324.

120 See Harris- Mingana II, 367. J.H.Charlesworth suggests that the parallelism demands a verb, "It named"; The Odes of Solomon, p. 114; W. Frankenberg, on the basis of a mis-read Greek text, suggests that τὸ ὄνομα has been read instead of τὸ νᾶμα. Das Verständnis des Oden Salomos, p. 42.

121. See J. Payne Smith op. cit. p. 295b.

122. Cf. odes 12 and 23, where the same idea occurs.

123. We may say with R. Schnackenburg that water in the Odes "means the source of Gnosis", John, p. 144, but we would not wish to say that the ode is Gnostic at this point.

124. See below on the eschatology of the Odes.

125. op. cit. p. 58.

126. "Evangelium Veritatis : A Confirmation Homily and its Relation to the Odes of Solomon", Or. Suec. 8 (1959), 23.

127. ibid.

128. Bernard, op. cit. pp. 58f. K. Rudolf relates them to Mandaean ministers of baptism.

129. Bernard, op. cit. p. 59.

130. Alternatively, the "them" could refer to those who had been saved. The "everyone" of the first line of the verse does not appear to mean those who were healed, but those who recognised that the saved ones now belonged to the Lord. The "them" of line a then becomes the subject of the verb of the following line: "So that ( ) everyone recognised them (the saved) as the Lord's, and they (the saved) lived by the eternal living water". We suggest this as a real possibility below in the "I" of the Odes.

131. Cf. Sir.21. 13; 24.30ff.

132. R. Bultmann, Gnosis, p.45 suggests that the avoidance of γνῶσις in John is perhaps intentional. See also E. Haenchen, "Gnosis und Neues Testament", in RGG II, 1652ff.

CHAPTER 3

THE HOLY SPIRIT

A. Terminology

Only once in the Johannine literature do we find the expression τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον , at Jn. 14. 26. This reading is supported by the best MSS, although the Sinaitic Syriac reads only "the Spirit", and a few others have τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας . It is therefore possible, but not certain, that the reading of the Sinaitic Syriac is to be preferred.(1) Elsewhere in the Gospel the anarthrous form occurs only at 1. 33 and 20. 22,(1a) and we do not find this form in the Epistles. In the view of A.R.C.Leaney, πνεῦμα ἅγιον does not represent "the Holy Spirit", but is to be interpreted in accordance with the teaching on the Spirit as it is found in the community at Qumran, and it means a power given by God. "He does not say to them 'Receive the Holy Spirit', (Jn. 20. 22), for in the author's mind this would be a manifest impossibility like saying 'Receive God in his fulness', whereas to say as he does 'Receive the power of God' is intelligible".(2) It is difficult to accept this distinction between the arthrous and the anarthrous forms of the Expression. As the Spirit descends and remains upon Jesus, so Jesus gives this Spirit to those who believe in him. John 20. 22 is "a fulfilment, and the only fulfilment narrated, of 1. 33",(3) but it is also a fulfilment of Jn. 7. 37-39. John does not use the term "the Holy Spirit" frequently in the Gospel. This is natural enough in terms of the fact that the work of the Spirit belongs to the period after the death of Christ, but this does not explain the complete absence of τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον in the Johannine Epistles. At the same time however, "the Holy Spirit" does not occur very frequently in the rest of the New Testament, with the exception of Luke-Acts, Romans and Hebrews.(4)

Elsewhere in the Johannine literature, apart from the expression "the Spirit of Truth", we find the absolute τὸ πνεῦμα , or, twice in I John, the qualification of this Spirit as "God's Spirit" (4. 2, 13). On three occasions we find the term "the Spirit of Truth" in the Gospel (14. 17; 15. 26; 16. 13), and this Spirit is identified with the Paraclete. In the First Epistle "the Spirit of Truth" is used once, at 4. 6, and here this is contrasted with "the Spirit of Error". In 5. 7 the connection is also made between the Spirit and Truth, but here it is said that "the Spirit is the Truth". Since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, it has been noticed that the term "the Spirit of Truth" and the opposition between this Spirit and the "Spirit of Error" belonged also to the concepts of the community of the Dead Sea.(5) The author of the First Epistle, like the community at Qumran, regards man as being led either by the Spirit of Truth or by the Spirit of Error. When in I Jn. 4. 1 there is the command to "test the Spirits", this does not imply a multiplicity of spirits operating on man, but signifies rather the multiplicity of men as guided by one or other of these two spirits.(6) Consequently, there is a close connection here between the "Spirit of Truth" (or the Spirit of Error), and the men through whom this spirit expresses itself. (7)

In the Odes of Solomon the terminology is rather different. On three occasions we find "the Spirit of the Lord" (3. 10; 6. 2; 36. 1)(8) and on a further three occasions,"his (your) Spirit" (13. 2; 16. 5; 25. 8). In the first two of these the antecedent of the pronoun is "Lord", and in the last, the pronoun looks back to the "my God" of v. 1. The term "the Holy Spirit" (ܪܘܚܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ) is found at 19. 2, 4, where the context provides us with a clear trinitarian reference to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This is also the reading of MS H at ode 23. 22, where again reference is made to Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The reading of MS N is ܪܘܚܐ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ , but this is unlikely to be correct, in view of the other instances in the Odes where this means of representing

"the Holy Spirit" is used. These are found at 6. 7; 11. 2; 14. 8, and in all of these a pronominal suffix is attached to "Spirit"; (ܪܘܚܗ ܩܕܝܫܬܐ 6. 7; 11. 2; ܪܘܚܗ ܩܕܝܫܐ 14. 8). In this form of expression it is the Lord's Holy Spirit to which reference is made, and since the reading of MS N at 23. 22 is the only one of the four in which the pronominal suffix is not present, it is almost certain that the reading of MS H should be adopted.(9)

It is clear however that this form of expression for God's Holy Spirit cannot be the one originally used in the Odes, and that it reflects a later church understanding of the Spirit. Although in the Odes "the Spirit" is always construed as a fem. noun, in 6. 7; 11. 2 and 14. 8 the masc. adjective is used, and this practice is much later than the time of the composition of the Odes. A comparison between the Old Syriac Gospels and the Pesh. reveals that with respect to this method of expression, ܪܘܚܗ ܩܕܝܫܐ occurs four times in the Old Syriac (Mk. 13. 11; Lk. 2. 25, 26; 11. 13), and in the other translation instances ܪܘܚܐ ܩܕܝܫܬܐ is used. This fact shows that the fem. adjective is appropriate for use with the Spirit at the time of the translation of the Old Syriac Gospels (10) and it also indicates that there is a marked preference for the expression ܪܘܚܐ ܩܕܝܫܬܐ . In the Pesh. this latter expression is not used at all in the Gospels as a translation of πνεῦμα ἅγιον , and the same is true of the other New Testament books, where "the Holy Spirit" is regularly rendered by ܪܘܚܐ ܩܕܝܫܬܐ . The only exceptions to this are Eph. 4. 30 and I Thess. 4. 8, where the expression is modified in some way.(11) Only in the later versions do we find the adjective used in the expression "the Holy Spirit" (ܪܘܚܗ ܩܕܝܫܐ) at II Pet. 1. 21 and Jude 20.(12) Here we can see that the fem. adjective has been replaced by the masc., as is also the case with some MSS of Eph. 4. 30 and Ps. 51. 11.

Along with this change of gender for the adjective goes a

corresponding change in the verb form used with "the Spirit". In so far as it is possible to see this, the Old Syriac Gospels nowhere construe "the Spirit" with a masc. verb form. By the time of the Pesh. this situation has changed, but not to the extent that we always find a masc. verb form used with "the Spirit".(13)

There are two conclusions to be drawn from this.

1. The original reading of ode 6. 7; 11. 2 and 14. 8 must have contained the fem. adjective ܩܕܝܫܬܐ , and not the masc. as MS H contains it.

2. Since the Odes can not have been written any later than the end of the second century, no theological conclusions ought to be drawn merely from the fact that the Spirit is constantly construed as a feminine noun.

There is one other title connected with the Spirit in ode 36. 8. ܪܘܚܐ ܕܡܫܟܚܬܐ ܩܫܝܛܬܐ . This is translated by Harris-Mingana and by J.H.Charlesworth, "the Spirit of Providence".(14) This term needs more definition, and this can be provided by a consideration of the whole verse:

ܘܩܪܒܬܝ ܒܫܠܡܐ ܗܘܬ
ܘܐܬܬܩܢܬ ܒܪܘܚܐ ܕܩܫܝܛܬܐ ܕ.....

And my approach was in peace,

And I was established in the Spirit of .....

Two elements in the text here call for attention. Firstly, the Spirit plays some part in the "coming near" (ܩܪܝܒܘܬܐ) to God of the speaker. This has in fact already been said in the earlier vv. of the ode. Secondly, the verb used in line b is derived from the root ܫܪܪ , from which the noun ܫܪܪܐ comes. This Spirit thus seems to be connected with the Truth, and brings men near to God. It therefore seems appropriate to interpret this verse of the ode in terms of other passages where the idea of "truth" and "leading" are combined, as for example, ode 38. 1, "the truth led me" (ܫܪܪܐ ܐܝܕܢܝ), which is followed in v. 15 by the words, "And I rejoiced because the truth had gone with me. For I

was established (ܗܘܕܝܐ)". (15) We therefore suggest that this expression ought not to be translated "the Spirit of Providence", but, taking into account the importance of the root הדה , "the Spirit of guidance" or "the guiding or leading Spirit". (16)

In ode 28 we encounter the only absolute use of "the Spirit", (ܪܘܚܐ), and this term occurs twice, vv. 1 and 7. It is possible that the Spirit here represents something different from the Spirit of the Lord, at least in v. 7, for there the Spirit appears almost as life itself. Yet in v. 1 the Spirit is seen as the source of comfort and protection to the believer, and we ought probably to interpret v. 7 in terms of this understanding. (17) In the only other instances in which ܪܘܚܐ is used in the Odes, the word signifies "the wind", in an allusion to Ps. 1. 4 (ode 29. 10), or the human spirit (6. 7; 40. 4).

This survey of terminology used in connection with the Spirit in the Odes yields the following results.

1. In the Odes, the Spirit is most frequently "the Spirit of the Lord", formulated either through the expression ܪܘܚܐ ܕܡܪܝܐ (3. 10; 6. 2; 26. 1), or through the addition of a pronominal suffix which refers back to "the Lord" (13. 2; 16. 5). This is also the case with "his (your) Holy Spirit" (6. 7; 11. 2; 14. 8). In one case we find "the Spirit of God" (25. 8), also through the addition of a pronominal suffix. In the Johannine literature, "the Spirit of the Lord" does not occur at all, "the Spirit of God" occurs twice in I Jn. (4. 2, 13), and in the Gospel, not at all.
2. In the Johannine literature we find occasional references to "the Holy Spirit", but in the Odes this expression is always qualified, so that we find "his (your) Holy Spirit", except in the two instances where there is a clear trinitarian reference.
3. The absolute "the Spirit" occurs more frequently in John than in the Odes.
4. In both the Odes and the Johannine literature the Spirit is connected

with the truth (in I Jn. 5. 7 "the Spirit is the truth"), but the Johannine "the Spirit of truth" does not occur in the Odes.

5. Nor in the Odes is there any mention of "the Spirit of error" which is mentioned in I Jn. 4. 6, although "error" is a far more significant concept in the Odes than it is in the Johannine literature.

6. The Odes know also of a "Spirit of guidance" (36. 8), which is not mentioned in the Johannine literature.

7. The term "the Paraclete" which is equated with the Spirit of truth in the Fourth Gospel (14. 16; 15. 26; 16. 13), is not to be found in the Odes.

From this survey, it can be seen that in terms of the terminology used in the two groups of literature, the differences are greater than the similarities, and the specifically Johannine expressions are not present in the Odes.

B. THE PARACLETE

We have already noted that the term "the Paraclete" does not occur in the Odes of Solomon. Within the New Testament, this title is confined to the Johannine writings, and several different explanations have been offered to account for the origins of the term.(18) According to I Jn. 2. 1, Christ himself is the Paraclete, but in the Gospel, it is the Holy Spirit who performs this function.(19) Further, as W.F.Howard has pointed out, the function of the Paraclete in I John is different from that in the Gospel. In the former, the Paraclete is the intercessor, the "friend at court", whereas in the latter, the Paraclete helps to bring believers to God, and operates as the "friend from court".(20)

Although the term Paraclete does not occur in the Odes of Solomon, R.Bultmann appears to believe that this figure is to be found there, even though this has been de-mythologised.(21) Bultmann thinks that the

origin of the Paraclete title is to be found in the Gnostic figure of the "Helper", and that this particular term in the Odes corresponds to the same idea. W.Michaelis has objected to the identification of the Mandaean Jawar with the Johannine Paraclete on two grounds. Firstly, "Jawar" does not appear to mean "helper". Secondly, in the Mandaean literature there are a number of different expressions used to describe the function of the Helper.(22) However, as Bultmann himself points out, the figure of the helper in the Odes is not the Holy Spirit, but God, and therefore, even if Bultmann's account of the background of the Johannine Paraclete were correct, there would still be no real correspondence between the helper of the Odes and that of John.

It will therefore be necessary to consider briefly the function of the Paraclete in the Fourth Gospel, to see whether this function is also predicated of the Spirit in the Odes.

a) Jn. 14. 15-17

i) The Paraclete is here spoken of as ἄλλος παράκλητος, and this form of expression indicates something which will be found in the other Paraclete sayings also. The particular functions which are attributed to the Paraclete are fairly parallel to those of Jesus himself. That is to say, after the departure of Jesus from his disciples, the Paraclete comes in order to take the place of the departed Jesus. This means, as R.E.Brown has pointed out, that the Paraclete is not to be identified simply with the Holy Spirit, since some of the basic functions of the Spirit are not predicated of the Paraclete. Brown sees the Paraclete rather as the Holy Spirit in a special role, namely, "as the personal presence of Jesus in the Christian while Jesus is with the Father".(23)

ii) The Paraclete will be with the disciples for ever.

iii) The Paraclete is further identified as the Spirit of truth.

Since Jesus is the truth (14. 6), the Paraclete is understood as one who witnesses to the truth as it has been revealed in Jesus.(24) There is much that Jesus needs to say to his disciples, but they are unable to understand it until after his exaltation (16. 12). The function of the Paraclete as a witness to Christ recurs in most of the Paraclete sayings.

iv) The world is unable to see or know the Paraclete, but the disciples both see and know him, because he dwells with them and will be in them.(25) On the other hand, the disciples who abide in Christ and in whom Christ abides (15. 4) also have the Paraclete abiding in them.

There are superficial parallels to the Odes here, but the picture is different. Just as there is no Paraclete in the Odes, neither is there a Spirit of truth. J.H.Charlesworth has asserted that the Spirit of truth is present in principle in the Odes, in the Spirit which is not false,(26) but this is not precisely the same thing. It could also be claimed that the content of the teaching of the Spirit in both the Odes and in John is the same, but there are also significant differences.(27) But it is not suggested in the Odes that the Spirit takes the place of the glorified Christ. Certainly, the Odes do speak of the indwelling presence of the Spirit, but when the odist wishes to speak of the power which accompanies him and which keeps him true to the revelation which he has received, he is just as likely to speak of the Word (12. 12; 41. 11).

b) Jn. 14. 25 - 26

i) The Paraclete is here described as "the Holy Spirit (28) whom the Father will send in my name". As the Son is sent by the Father, (4. 34; 5. 23, 24, 30, 37 et passim), so the Paraclete is also sent by the Father.(29)

ii) The Paraclete will teach the disciples everything (πάντα) and remind them of all that Jesus has said. The πάντα here does not imply

that the Spirit will go beyond the content of the revelation which Jesus brought, but that he will instruct the disciples so that they will understand all the things which Jesus said while he was still with them (cf. 16. 13).

The Spirit who teaches in the Odes, teaches "men to know his (the Lord's) ways" (3. 10). "The Lord" in this ode is the Most High, not the Messiah. The ways of the Lord will include the revelation which has come through the Messiah, and these can be contrasted with "the ways of that Corruptor" (33. 7). That which stands in opposition to the ways of the Corruptor is "the ways of truth" (33. 8). This does provide us with a parallel to the Johannine thought, in that the Spirit of the Odes teaches men about the action of God through his Messiah, whereby men come to life and sonship. This is what the earlier vv. of ode 3 have been discussing. At the same time, there is no direct connection between the work of the Spirit and that of the Messiah in ode 3 as we have it in John, and in ode 33, where we find the only other instances of the plural "ways" in the Odes, it is Christ himself who is the teacher. The Spirit is not mentioned. This suggests that the teaching function of the Spirit in ode 3 ought not to be related to the Johannine Paraclete, but to a more general understanding of the Spirit elsewhere in the New Testament.

c) Jn. 15. 26-27

i) Christ will send the Paraclete from the Father.

ii) The Paraclete is again identified with the Spirit of truth, and here it is said that he proceeds from the Father. This brings the Paraclete into a very close relationship with both the Father and the Son.

iii) The Paraclete will bear witness to Christ. This witness is offered in the context of the hatred of the world towards the disciples,

and this means that in the persecution which the disciples face from the world, the Spirit gives his own testimony to Christ to the disciples, who then deliver this testimony to the world. This saying sets forth clearly the forensic function of the Paraclete, and prepares the way for the saying in Jn. 16. 7-11.

In the Odes it is true that the odist, and his community, has become a vehicle for the utterances of the Spirit. This is seen for example at 6. 2: "So speaks in my members the Spirit of the Lord, and I speak by his love". This ode begins with the image of the wind moving over the strings of a harp, making the instrument speak, and the odist compares himself to this. In a related metaphor the odist says, "Open to me the harp of your Holy Spirit, that with all its notes I may praise you" (14. 8).

Nevertheless, when the odist speaks of his warfare with his enemies, and of the weapon with which he is armed, he refers not to the Spirit, but to the Word of the Lord (29. 10). As we have seen above, it is the Word of the Lord, rather than the Spirit, which the odist sees as the guiding and empowering force in his life.

d) Jn. 16. 7-11

i) Christ must depart in order that the Paraclete can come to the disciples. The ministry of the Paraclete belongs to the period after Christ has completed his work and been glorified, and for this reason it is to the advantage of the disciples that Jesus leave them. Only then can the Paraclete come.

ii) The Paraclete will convict, or prove the world wrong concerning sin, judgment and righteousness. The precise meaning of ἐλέγξει περί has been the subject of much debate [30] but whether we understand this as "expose", "convict", or "prove wrong", it is to be understood that the

activity of the Paraclete will be brought to concrete expression through the work of the disciples who bear witness through the witness of the Paraclete.

Here again, there is nothing in the Odes which corresponds to the activity of the Paraclete in John. As we have seen under (c), this is rather the work of the Word or the Messiah. Moreover, in the Odes we read not of the judgment or the condemnation of the enemies of the truth, but of their destruction (22. 5; 23. 20; 24. 10; 29. 10; 39. 1-3). Where the theme of judgment is introduced in the Odes, it is Christ himself who performs this function (33. 10).(31)

e) Jn. 16. 12-15

i) The term Paraclete is not mentioned in this passage, but is implied by the use of ἐκεῖνος , and by the identification of this one with the Spirit of truth.

ii) The Paraclete will not speak on his own authority, but the authority behind him is Christ. Therefore he will take what Christ has said, and will declare it to the disciples.

iii) The Paraclete will also declare to the disciples "the things that are to come". The τὰ ἐρχόμενα could be understood either as the future events which remain in the life and ministry of Jesus, or, understood from the evangelists's standpoint, events of the future which culminate in the eschatological judgment.(32)

The material in this section of Jn. 16 carries forward ideas about the Paraclete which have been mentioned in former sayings, and except in a general way, there is nothing in the Odes about the Spirit which shows any relationship to this saying either.

In the Odes, we find no figure which corresponds to the Johannine Paraclete, unless that figure is the Messiah himself. O.Betz[33] states that this is only to be expected, because of the lack of forensic concepts, since justification and damnation have already taken place. Yet the situation in the Odes, with the odist and his community facing a hostile and unbelieving world, is in many respects similar to that of the Johannine author. The odist does not use the term Paraclete to express the guiding power behind the community in its struggle, nor for the most part does he relate this to the Spirit, as we find in other New Testament writings.[34]

The difference appears to lie in the odist's Christology. There is no emphasis on the ascension of the Messiah in the Odes, even though this must be pre-supposed. Instead, all of the emphasis lies on the ascent from Sheol, in the Messiah's victory over Death and Sheol, so that through this activity, the Messiah has given freedom and life to those who believe in him. Having risen from Sheol, he "will be with them, and will speak through their mouths" (42. 6). The Messiah therefore is "the Word who is with us in all our way, the Saviour who makes alive and does not reject us" (41. 11). With this kind of understanding of the presence of the Risen Christ with his followers, the person of the Paraclete is fairly superfluous.

C. THE SPIRIT AND CHRIST

We have stated in the previous section that there is not the same direct relationship between the Spirit and Christ in the Odes as there is in the Fourth Gospel. But in ode 19. 2-4, a relationship is pictured.

2 The Son is the cup,
And the Father is he who was milked,
And the Holy Spirit is she who milked him.
3 Because his breasts were full,

And it was undesirable that his milk should be ineffectually released.

4 Then the Holy Spirit opened her bosom,(35)

And mixed the milk of the two breasts of the Father.

From this point on, the odist deals with the operation of the Holy Spirit towards man, and also in particular, with the Virgin who conceived and brought forth the Son.

What is the relationship between the Holy Spirit, the Son and the Father in this ode? The odist begins by saying that he has been offered a cup of milk to drink, and that he drank it in the sweetness of the Lord's kindness. But the Son is not the milk itself, but the cup in which the milk is placed.(36) When we come to look at the contribution of the Holy Spirit, we find that it deals not with the cup, which receives no further mention in the ode, but only with the milk. Also we find in vv. 4f. that the Holy Spirit mixes in her own bosom the milk from the two breasts of the Father, and gives this mixture to the world, and then further gives it to the Virgin who bore the Son.

This shows us two different aspects of the Spirit's work in relation to the Son.

1. The Spirit offers to the world the milk of the Father, the revelation which was contained in the Son.
2. The Spirit is the agent responsible for the birth of the Son as a man, and this is based on the tradition of the Virgin Birth.(37)

This is the order in which these two facts are given in the ode. Is it also the chronological order in which they are meant to be understood? That is, is the gift to the world of the revelation through the Spirit prior to the birth of the Son? The answer to this question must be, No.

Firstly, the previous vv. of the ode indicate that the milk of the Father was placed in the cup, the Son, and the statement of v. 3b, that "it was undesirable that his milk should be ineffectually released" emphasises the fact that it was released for the purpose of being made available through the Son.

Secondly, from odes 23 and 30, it is clear that before the coming of God's revelation through his Messiah, men had sought to know God, but had been unable to do so. It was only with the arrival of true knowledge through the Messiah that men could receive this and so be "in the perfection of the right hand" (19. 5).

This means that the chronological order of (1) and (2) above is the opposite of that in which they are placed in the ode. The revelation of God has come through the Son. But now that the Son is no longer "as a man", this revelation comes to the world through the Holy Spirit. This is the correct chronological order, and this is the order given in vv. 2-4. The Father is milked by the Holy Spirit, and this milk is placed in the Son (v. 2). This refers to the operation of the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Birth, and this is expanded in vv. 6ff. Then the Holy Spirit opened her bosom and mixed the milk of the two breasts of the Father (v. 4). The reading "her bosom" must stand, because this signifies that the revelation passed through the Holy Spirit. If the emphasis on the <u>two</u> breasts of the Father signifies that God is responsible for both the divine revelation through the Son and the body which he receives from the Virgin, this would then mean that the Holy Spirit provides to the world not merely the revelation of God, but specifically that revelation which was contained in the Son. This appears to be the best way of understanding this rather obscure imagery. If this is the case, this would be the closest that the Odes come to picturing the Spirit as the one who declares to men the significance of the earthly Son, and would therefore come close to one aspect of the Johannine Paraclete.(38)

In the Fourth Gospel there is no clear indication that the author knew and accepted the idea of the Virgin Birth, but some scholars are of the opinion that this can be seen in the Gospel.(39) But for the author of the Odes, this concept was obviously of more importance than it was for John. With regard to the role of the Spirit in ode 19 as the one who takes the revelation in Christ and delivers it to the world, there is clearly some correspondence of ideas, but the imagery used to describe this is far removed from the thought of the Fourth Gospel.(40)

D. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE BELIEVER

a) The Spirit as Teacher.

Ode 3. 10 speaks of the Spirit as the one who teaches men to know the ways of the Lord.

> This is the Spirit of the Lord, which is not false,
> Which teaches the sons of men to know his ways.

The "ways of the Lord" which are taught are those things about God which lead to true knowledge of him, so that men will respond to the love which they have experienced, and find life in union with him.(41) It is the Spirit which reveals to men the fact of God's love, and which binds men to him in an unbroken fellowship.

One question connected with v. 10 of this ode is the meaning of the final phrase of line a ; (literally, without falsehood). Does this line mean, This is the Spirit of the Lord who is without falsehood, i.e., the unlying Spirit of the Lord? J.H.Charlesworth sees here a parallel to the Spirit of Truth in the Fourth Gospel, for "a spirit which is not false is presumably one which is true". This statement may be held to be accurate enough as far as it goes, and it is also the case that the odist's concept of the truth is close to that of John's. Therefore, we could also say that the Spirit as the communicator of truth in the Odes is similar to the Spirit as the communicator of truth in the Fourth Gospal. Nevertheless,

if there were any close relationship between the Odes and the Fourth Gospel we would expect that the Johannine expression would be present in the Odes. Closer to the ode is I Jn. 2. 27, where it is said of the annointing which the believers have received that " it is true and is no lie".(42)

In this ode the writer is looking at the life of man as he is transferred from the ignorance and error of his life into the knowledge and truth of the life-giving union with God. This has been achieved for him through the Spirit who is the means of his new life, because the Spirit does not belong to the sphere of ignorance, error and falsehood.

There is another possibility for the understanding of the phrase ܕܠܐ ܕܝܠܗ ܗܘ . This is that it belongs not with the Spirit, but with the Lord himself. The odist elsewhere denies that falsehood, death vanity, ignorance and error are any part of God, and states that these things are destroyed through the knowledge of God (18. 8-14). Ode 18 concludes:

Then they (the wise) spoke the truth

From the breath which the Most High breathed into them (v. 15).

The last line here, ܘܡܢ ܪܘܚܐ ܕܥܠܝܐ ܕܢܦܚ ܒܗܘܢ reminds us of Gen. 2. 7 and Jn. 20. 22, and most probably the odist is thinking in terms of the Spirit as the breath which God breathes into the wise, those who come to knowledge of him.

This makes the Spirit appear almost as an impersonal force, and it sounds as if the Spirit is very similar to the knowledge of God himself. The same idea of the Spirit is found in ode 11. In v. 2a the odist says, "The Most High circumcised me by his Holy Spirit". This circumcising means the uncovering of the speaker's inward being towards God, and yet in v. 2b the odist continues, "And he (the Most High) uncovered my inward being towards him". The Holy Spirit here appears to be no more than the circumcising knife or the pruning hook which God wields. All of the way through these

first verses of the ode, the actor is God, not the Holy Spirit.

The result of this circumcising or pruning is that the speaker "produced fruits for the Lord". This means being opened up to, and receiving the love of God, and the response which is made to this. In more concrete terms, this pruning and its fruits are expressed in vv. 10-12; rejecting folly and casting it off; being renewed in the garment of the Lord; being illuminated; finding immortal rest. In vv. 4f. the odist states explicitly how this has come about.

4 From the beginning to the end
I received his knowledge.
5 And I was established on the rock of truth
Where he had set me.

Is the Spirit in this ode to be equated with the knowledge which releases man from his ignorance and error, and which gives him life in God? Most probably, in view of ode 19, we should answer in the negative, and see the Spirit as the agent through whom the revelation of God is now made available to men. Yet it is also the case that the odist's form of expression does not give a clear indication of his understanding of the work of the Spirit.(43)

b) The Spirit and New Life

Ode 36. 5 says,

For according to the greatness of the Most High so she made me,
And according to his newness so he renewed me.

Here we see that in line a it is the Spirit who is the agent of the "making" of the believer, while in line b, and in the next verse, God himself is the agent of renewal. Although it might be suggested that "she made me" ought to be emended to "he made me",(44) this is not acceptable because both MSS have the same reading of the 3rd. sing. fem. verb, and because it has already been stated in v. 3 that it was the Spirit who gave birth to the believer "before the Lord's face".(45) This being "brought forth" is

the same thing as resting on the Spirit of the Lord and being lifted up to heaven by her (v. 1)[46]

The thought of v. 1 is however very similar to that of v. 6 of the same ode.

And he anointed me with his perfection,
And I became one of those that are near him.

The Spirit has raised the speaker to heaven [47] so that he stands before the Lord (vv. 1f.), and the result of the annointing in v. 6 is that the speaker became near to God. In v. 2c the speaker glorifies God through the composition of his songs, and in v. 7 we find that the speaker opens his mouth and there comes forth a gusher of righteousness.[48] This then means that the anointing which the speaker received was the Spirit herself,[49] and that the renewal by the Lord means the imparting of the Spirit to the believer, who then praises God through the Spirit. God is the source of newness and life, and he renews by annointing with the Spirit, those who have been enlightened (v. 3).

This is the same kind of picture we see in ode 28. The ode begins with an image of the baby in the womb who is delighted and leaps up, because it knows that the time has come for it to be born (v. 2). The odist has believed, and has entered into a union with God which will not be destroyed (vv. 5f.).[50] Therefore he receives life (v. 7). Verse 8 continues:

And from that (life) is the Spirit which is within me,
And it cannot die, because it is life.[51]

If we attempt to take this in the sequence given by the odist, it barely makes sense. Life embraced the speaker; from that life the Spirit came to be within him; the Spirit cannot die because it is life.

This raises the question if it would not be better to accept the

alternative reading in v. 7, "because it is living". In ode 3. 9 we find that "he who delights in the life will become living", where "life" refers to the Messiah, or possibly to God. It makes much more sense if we make "life" in ode 28. 7 refer to the Messiah, and understand the kiss as the imparting of the Spirit.(52) Just as in ode 36 the speaker is annointed with the Spirit by God after he has been renewed, so also in this ode we ought to understand the kiss as the breathing into the believer of the Spirit by Christ, who has saved him and united him to himself. The Spirit is not to be understood as something which is given to the believer apart from the gift of new life which he has received, but is rather to be understood as the life-giving power provided by God.

These references to the anointing with the Spirit and the in-breathing of the Spirit make it more likely that the mention of "the pleasant fragrance of the Lord" in 11. 15, following upon the renewal which the believer has experienced, signifies the Holy Spirit.

Elsewhere in the Odes the idea of renewal is found without any mention of the Spirit. In ode 8, the idea of new birth is expressed through the image of Christ preparing his breasts so that men might "drink my holy milk and live by it" (v. 14). In a similar image in ode 35. 5 the odist says,

> And I was carried (53) like a child by its mother;
> And he gave me milk, the dew of the Lord.

In ode 17, the odist "received the face and likeness of a new person" (v. 4) as the result of the action of the Messiah in freeing him from vanity and chains. In ode 21 the same idea of renewal is expressed in terms of the fact that having been freed and illuminated by the Helper, who is the Messiah, the speaker "acquired members in which there was no sickness, or affliction or suffering" (v. 4).

From these examples we see that the new life comes from receiving the revelation from the Messiah and walking in it, and this revelation is directly related to the work of Christ in overcoming Sheol and death. Also we find that God or Christ gives birth to the believer and provides milk for them as a mother does. For both of these images, the odist sees no need to introduce the concept of the Spirit. This suggests that the odist has a very inadequately developed doctrine of the Spirit, who sometimes appears as no more than the life-giving force which God breathes into the believer.

c. The Spirit and the Community's Proclamation.

It is on this aspect of the Spirit's work that the odist concentrates his attention. In two odes (6 and 13), praise is offered to the Holy Spirit for the salvation which has been received. Elsewhere we see that the songs of the community are composed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Ode 16, a hymn about the creative activity of God through his Word, and therefore about the love of God which has been experienced says:

> I will open my mouth,
> And his Spirit will speak through me (54)
> The glory of the Lord and his beauty (v. 5).

Similarly in ode 36, as we have seen above, the action of the Spirit results in the composition of the odes (v. 2). This is what is described in v. 7 as "a gusher of righteousness". This bears some resemblance to Jn. 4. 14, especially if we understand the annointing of ode 36 as an annointing with the Spirit. But the thought is also different. John is speaking of the Spirit as the source of life of the believer, and while this thought is also present in the ode, the gusher of righteousness refers to the song which he composes in praise of the saving act of God.(55)

Ode 6. 13 speaks of "the ministers of that drink", referring to

the stream which flows over the whole world and relieves thirst. In view of the references to the Spirit of the Lord in the earlier vv. of the ode (vv. 2, 7), it may be that the odist understands these ministers to be operating under the guidance of the Spirit. That is, that the proclaimers of the knowledge of God, the distributors of the life-giving drink of water, are guided in their proclamation to the world by the Spirit. It is just as likely however, perhaps more likely, that the Spirit is seen here as the source of the community's proclamation to itself, and that the praise to the Holy Spirit of the Lord is praise for a salvation which has been received, rather than for a salvation which is being proclaimed to the world. This at least is how the other references to praise through the Holy Spirit appear to be understood.

The community of the Odes regards itself as one which is directed in its praise to God by the Holy Spirit who has been given to it by God. We ought probably to think of it as a Spirit-led community which expressed in prophetic speech the mighty acts of God through his Messiah. This refers more to the internal proclamation of the community more than to its proclamation to the unbelieving world. When the odist wishes to speak about the proclamation to the world, it is more the Word of the Lord who provides the community with the necessary weapons (29. 10; 42. 6). This appears to be because the odist's understanding of salvation is determined wholly by the concept of the Word who has come with the knowledge of God which brings life. This Word has gone the way of the Cross, but Sheol and Death have not been able to conquer him. Instead, he has conquered them, and he rose up to be with his believers. Just as it was the Word who brought the saving knowledge of God, so it is also the Word who abides with the proclaimers of this knowledge, and gives them the power to overcome the enemy. On this view of things, there is little place for the Spirit to guide the community's proclamation to the outside world, where error and ignorance are dominant.(56)

E. THE SPIRIT AND FLESH

In ode 25.8 there is an antithesis between flesh and spirit.

And I was covered with the covering of your Spirit,[57]
And I removed [58] from me my garments of skin.

This however cannot mean that the flesh is literally replaced by the Spirit, since the following verses show that the speaker is still in his earthly existence. This however is a new existence, for he has now become "mighty by God's truth, and Holy by his righteousness" (v.10). Therefore, whereas previously he had been "despised and rejected in the eyes of many" (v.5), now his "adversaries were afraid " of him (v.11). That is to say, the ode does not illustrate the freedom from the bonds of flesh and the existence of purer spirit after death.[59]

E. Schweizer understands the reference to the Spirit in this ode in terms of Gnosticism, for he makes reference to this ode in his discussion of "The Redemption of the πνεῦμα from Matter".[60] He points to the belief in Gnosticism that "in some way spiritual substance was at creation bound to matter" and "it cries out for deliverance from this". This spiritual matter is "of the same matter as God or Christ". Schweizer draws attention to Heracleon Frag.24 and to Iren.adv. Haer.1,v/6 to illustrate this idea in Gnosticism, but his reference to the ode in conjunction with these two is inexplicable. For there is nothing in the ode which suggests that the Spirit is the divine element in man and that it has been trapped in evil matter. Rather it is a question of being covered with "garments of skin" or with "the covering of your spirit". The situation here is similar to that elsewhere in the Odes. Man has the Spirit and salvation, or more properly he is brought to new life through the Spirit and experiences salvation, or he has neither the spirit nor life. The Gnostic doctrine of the spirit as the divine element in the pneumatics which needs to be re-awakened to its true nature and destiny

is not present in the Odes at all.

Three elements in ode 25.8 call for attention.

1. The verb "I removed" ( ) is taken by the coptic as first sing., but it could also be translated as second or third sing. If the two lines of this verse form a parallelism, we would expect that the subject of the second line would be not "I", but the active subject of the action in line a, which is not directly expressed. We therefore suggest that this verb is more likely to be third sing. (and she removed), the subject being the spirit referred to in the previous line.(61) In so far as the pointing of the Syriac MSS can help here, this conclusion is supported by it also.(62) We would therefore translate:

> And I was covered with the covering of your spirit,
> And she (the Spirit) removed from me my garments of skin.

2. This translation depends to some extent also on the meaning of "the covering of your Spirit". Is the genitive here subjective or objective? Is the speaker covered with a covering which is the Spirit, or with the covering which is supplied by the Spirit? Negatively it may be said that nowhere else in the Odes is there any mention of putting on the spirit, but it is said that the Spirit is within the speaker (28.8). In the majority of cases in which the verb is used, it deals with putting on that which signifies salvation itself although in 7.4 and 33.12 it is concerned with putting on Christ.(63) This could therefore suggest that the idea of putting on the Spirit would be acceptable to the odist. In ode 25 the verb does not of course occur,(64) and the only ode which provides any help in understanding the "covering" with which the believer is clothed is 20.6, where there is the command not to deprive a neighbour of "the covering for his nakedness". We have suggested elsewhere(65) that this covering symbolises the truth which has been revealed through God's gracious act.(66) This question must remain unanswered until we have discussed

the third element of significance in this verse.

3. What is the meaning of "my garments of skin"(ܠܒܫܝ ܕܡܫܟܐ)?

(a) We have mentioned above the "perishing rags" of the Gospel of Truth which refers to the flesh of Christ. This is no parallel to the ode but it still would be possible for the "garments of skin" to designate the sphere of the flesh, which for the odist is contrary to the sphere of the operation of God.(67) Of particular importance here is ode 8.9, where "garment" is equated with "flesh"; "your flesh does not understand what I am showing to you." Here however there is no thought of putting off the flesh, although the flesh is clearly of no use in understanding the revelation brought by Christ. Nor does the ode say that the flesh is an impediment to true knowledge, as the Gnostic systems maintain.(68) It is simply without understanding.

(b) The "garments of skin" could also refer to those garments which God made for Adam and Eve in the garden following their act of disobedience. This is possible in view of the importance of the Paradise motif in the Odes, and would then symbolise the removal of the consequences of the act of disobedience and the restoration to true fellowship with God.(69) This background for the ode may also be supported by the reference to becoming "mighty by the truth"(v.10), because of the opposition between "truth" and "error" or "deceit" in the Odes, and the "deception" of Eve by the serpent in Gen.3.13(70)

Verse 9 of ode 25 indicates the reason for the change of garments experienced by the speaker:

Because (ܕ ܝܡܝܢܟ) your right hand exalted me(71)

And caused sickness to pass from me.

This action of the Lord's right hand reminds us of the salvation experienced by the speaker in ode 21.4:

And my soul required members

In which there was no sickness [72] or affliction or suffering.[73]

The speaker has acquired a body in which sickness and affliction no longer operate. That is to say, he has become a new person, who has been removed from the suffering of this world, and has been transferred to a new order of existence. This creation of a new body is the work of God's right hand in ode 22.8:

8 And it chose them from the graves

And separated them from the dead ones

9 It took dead bones

And covered[74] them with bodies[75]

The speaker is talking about the new existence into which he has been brought through the creativity of the Redeemer, and he does this in terms of a resurrection from the dead. His old life is finished, and his new life in the kingdom of God (22.12) has begun. Nothing is said concerning the Spirit in ode 22, and although in Ezek.37.14 the placing of God's spirit within the corpse is necessary to bring them to life, the ode does not follow this line of thought. In the place where we would expect to find a reference to the Spirit or breath of God, (v.10) the ode speaks of being given "energy" for life; "But they were motionless, and it gave them energy (ܚܝܘܬܐ)[76] for life". In view of the fact that in ode 28.6 it is said that the Spirit is the life within man, it is possible that this "energy for life" does represent the Spirit. At the same time however, the Spirit is the annointing at the new birth.[77]

There are no clear cut answers provided by the Odes to the first two questions we have raised in connection with ode 25.8. The "covering of the Spirit" may represent either the Spirit himself or the new body which the Spirit provides at the new birth. But this does not seem to be a problem to which the odist attempts a solution. The author of new life may be either the Spirit (36.3) or God himself (36.5).[78] More important

for the odist is the fact that apart from the Spirit there is no new life. Opposed to this life through the Spirit is man in the flesh (8.9), or man clothed in the "garments of skin" (25.8). This mode of expression characterises man as natural man, man dominated solely by his human nature, the man from below, where there is no true reality (34.4). Only if a man divests himself of this old nature[79] or if he has it removed, can he receive the the truth and find new life. Both are possible modes of expression for the odist.

Does this mean however that once man has come to salvation and new birth through the Spirit he is completely freed from the world dominated by the flesh? Although ode 28.8 may appear to suggest that the Spirit is a divine element planted within man which guarantees him life,[80] other odes show that life may be guarenteed only through an obedience to the truth. We see this in ode 17.4 where

> 4 I received the face and likeness of a new person
> And I walked in him and was redeemed
> 5 And the thought of truth led me
> And I followed it and did not wander.[81]

The certainty of salvation depends upon obedience to the truth, and upon faith, and the possibility of losing that salvation is also present.[82] This latter aspect is however not very marked in the Odes, and the emphasis falls generally upon the distinction between those who do believe and who are saved, and those who are still ignorant or in error.

FOOTNOTES TO PP.355 - 380

1. C.K.Barrett, John p.390; A.R.C.Leaney, "The Johannine Paraclete and Qumran", p.49; G. Johnston, The Spirit Paraclete, p.31. R.E.Brown notes the hestitancy of scholars in adopting the reading "the Holy Spirit", but sees the importance of it in the explicit identification of the Holy Spirit and the Paraclete, an identification which is denied by some scholars; John II, 650.

1a. In Jn.7. 39 πνεῦμα is read by $p66^c$ p75 ℵ K Θ boh arm; πνεῦμα ἅγιον by p66* LWf1f13 πνεῦμα δεδομένον by it vg syr πνεῦμα ἅγιον δεδομένον by B τὸ πνεῦμα ἅγιον by D "These variants are almost certainly improvements", C.K. Barrett, John, p.272.

2. "The Johannine Paraclete and Qumran", p.50. In 14. 26, however, the evangelist thinks of a spirit in the sense of a personal being and (must) be using the term as it is so often used in the inter-testamental literature of beings whom we should loosely call "angels";ibid., p.52.

3. A.R.C.Leaney, art. cit. p.50. Cf. also the Lucan terminology in Ac.1 and 2 where πνεῦμα ἅγιον (1. 5); τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα (1. 8); τὸ πνεῦμα μου (2, 17, 18) is promised to the disciples, and this promise is fulfilled in their being filled with πνεῦμα ἅγιον (2.4) or in their reception of the gift of τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα (2. 33). See also Ac.19. 2,6.

4. In the Syn. Gospels Matt. uses the term five times (twice in the Birth Narrative), Mk. four times and Luke thirteen times (six times in the Birth Narrative). Romans has it six times and Hebrews five.

5. "The Qumran literature (cf. also the Testament of Judah XX. 1-5) supplies the only pre-Christian instances of the title "Spirit of Truth", R.E.Brown, John, II, 1138. See also R. Schnackenburg, Die Johannesbriefe, p.211f. for Qumran parallels.

6. See R. Schnackenburg, Die Johannesbriefe, p.212;R. Bultmann, The Johannine Epistles, p.62. A.R.C.Leaney, who thinks that not only Heb.4.1 but also Jn.14. 26 is "consistent with belief in the existence in the existence of a number of spirits", art. cit. p.49.

7. The same may be said of the Qumran literature. See M.Mansoor, The Thanksgiving Hymns, p.76.

8. In 3. 10 and 6. 2 this is rendered ܪܘܚ ܩܘܕܫ and in 36. 1 by ܪܘܚ ܡܫܝܚܐ.

9. With Harris-Mingana against J.H.Charlesworth.

10. According to F.C.Burkitt, ܪܘܚ ܕܩܘܕܫܐ means "a holy spirit" not "the Holy Spirit" and if so this would explain the reluctance to use this mode of expression; Evangelium da Meparreshe II, on Jn.20.22.

10.(contd.) This same expression is used to translate both the anarthrous πνεῦμα ἅγιον in Lk.2. 25 and the τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον in the following verse. With respect to what has been said above on Jn.20. 22 it may be noted that while the old Syr. reads ܪܘܚܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ which Burkitt translates "Receive a holy spirit", at Jn.1.33 it is the other form of the expression which is used.

11. Thus in Eph. 4. 30 we read ܘܠܐ ܬܚܟܘܢ ܪܘܚܐ ܩܕܝܫܐ for τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ θεοῦ and in I Thess.4. 8 ܪܘܚܗ ܩܕܝܫܐ for τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ τὸ ἅγιον.

12. These books, along with II and III John and Revelation do not belong to the Pesh. canon.

13. This change is clearly due to Christian influence. J.H.Bernard makes the observation (on Jn.14. 26) that "the Old Syriac treats the Spirit as feminine, but the Peshitta does not follow this Semitic doctrine", John II, 552. However, "the Spirit" in the Pesh. of Jn.7. 39 is construed with a fem. verb form. Of the Synoptic references to the Holy Spirit, only at Lk.12. 12 does the Pesh. construe with a masc. verb form. In Acts there is a mixture of masc. and fem. verb forms associated with the Spirit.

14. But what does "the Spirit of providence" mean? The word ܡܕܒܪܢܘܬܐ occurs once more in the Odes at 23. 12, where Charlesworth again translates "providence" and Harris-Mingana "government".

15. Cf. ode 11. 5: And I was established (ܐܬܬܩܢܬ) upon the rock of truth(ܩܫܬܐ).
This is the same verb as in ode 36. 8. Cf. also ode 17. 5 "And the thought of truth led me (ܡܫܟܚܢܝ ܪܥܝܢܬܐ ܕܩܫܬܐ) which follows the earlier thought of becoming a new person, an idea which is also found in ode 36.

16. This term could go back to the LXX text of Ps.50(51).14, πνεῦμα ἡγεμονικόν . The Pesh. of the Psalm reads ܪܘܚ ܬܫܒܘܚܬܟ (your glorious spirit). Note that in Sinaitic Syr. of Lk.3. 1 ܡܕܒܪܢܘܬܐ occurs as a translation of ἡγεμονεύων . Elsewhere in the N.T. Pesh. the word is found as a translation of οἰκονομία (Eph.1. 10; 3. 2,9; Col.1. 25).

17. See below on this verse.

18. See especially O. Betz, Der Paraklet.

19. In Jn.14.16 the Spirit is called ἄλλος παράκλητος. W. Michaelis understands this pleonastically; "Zur Herkunft des johanneischen Paraklet-Titels", in Coniectanea Neotestamentica XI, p.153.

20. Christianity according to St. John, pp.74f.

21. John, p. 571

22. art. cit. pp.156-161. Bultmann remained unconvinced by these arguments; John, p.571.

23. John II, 1139f.

24. On the Spirit of Truth in John and in the Qumran literature see O. Betz, op. cit. pp.64ff.; 147ff.

25. The tense here is that given in R.S.V. The textual witnesses are divided on whether a present (ἐστίν) or a future (ἔσται) should be read. J.H.Bernard regards the future tense as a correction; St.John II, 546, as does C.K.Barrett, St.John, p.387. R.Bultmann, John, p.616, prefers the future.

26. "The Odes of Solomon and the Gospel of John", CBQ 35 (1973), 302. Charlesworth also relates this to the Qumran material.

27. See below, section C and D of this chapter.

28. On the variant readings of this verse, see C.K.Barrett, St.John p.390, who suggests that τὸ πνεῦμα may be original. J.H.Bernard prefers the longer reading, referringto it as "an august title familiar to every Jew (cf. Ps. 51.11; Isa.63. 10)"; St. John II, 552. On the identification of the Paraclete with the Spirit, see E.Bammel, "Jesus und der Paraklet in Joh.16", in Christ and the Spirit, p.201

29. Cf. also 15. 26; 16. 7 where Jesus himself will send the Paraclete. "It is doubtful whether John intended any difference between the two statements", C.K.Barrett, St.John, p.402.

30. On the meanings given to this phrase see R.E.Brown, John II, 7-5, 711f. R. Bultmann is correct in saying that the Paraclete "will uncover the world's guilt", but it is unnecessary to suggest that this is a Gnostic motif; John, pp.561f.

31. The terms "judge" and "judgment" occur only once each in the Odes; judge at 33. 11 and judgment at 35. 3. In the latter case it is not certain if the judgment "went out from them (מן), or if it "went out on account of them". If the former is correct, it willmean the action of the enemies of the odist against him. C.H.Bruston suggested that this referred to the condemnation of Jesus, as in ode 31, but the whole emphasis in the ode is on the odist's state of security. If the latter is intended it willmean that while the odist experiences security, his enemies are experiencing the judgment of God. This seems more likely, in view of the statement that "everyone was disturbed and afraid"in the previous line; cf. ode 24. 3ff.

32. See C.K.Barrett, St.John, p.408; R.E.Brown, John II, 708.

33. op. cit. p.216. Betz suggests that in place of this concept, the Odes have that of God as the "Helper".

34. See below on "the Spirit and the Community's Proclamation".

35. W.Bauer suggested that the text should read "her bosom", Die Oden Salomos, p.40. See also J.H.Charlesworth's note on this verse, and cf. note 37 below.

36.We have already drawn attention to the comment of R.Abramowski that there is in the ode "eine gewisse Distanzierung" between the revelation and the Son here. See above p.81.

37. It is frequently pointed out that in the Syriac speaking church the Holy Spirit is regarded as feminine. J.H.Charlesworth notes the relationship to Gospel of the Hebrews; "Even so did my mother, the Holy Spirit, take me by one of my hairs and carry me away on to the great mountain Tabor". See also R.Murray, Symbols of Church and Kingdom, p.315, who sees this as "the likeliest interpretation of 36. 3. But it seems as if for the odist God acts just as much as mother as the Spirit, and in ode 8, so does Christ, who prepares his breasts for his believers so that they can drink his holy milk and live by it.(v.14). It is interesting to note that the concept of the femininity of the Spirit is used in the Gospel of Philip to deny the Virgin Birth. "Some said: 'Mary conceived by the Holy Spirit'. They err. They do not know what they say. When did a woman ever conceive by a woman?" (Saying 17 tr. in Gnosis II, 81).

38. Cf. also ode 24. 1ff., where the Spirit sings over the Messiah, her voice was heard, and everyone was disturbed.

39. See above on the Virgin Birth.

40. R.Abramowski has declared that the language of ode 19 is particularly gross; srt. cit. p.45.

41. The only other instance of the plural "ways" is in ode 33, where men are invited by Christ to "leave the ways of that Corruptor and approach me" (v.7).

42. The "chrism" of I Jn. refers to the teaching which has been received. C.H.Dodd states "the 'chrism' which confers knowledge of God, and is also a prophylactic against the poison of false teaching, is the Word of God, that is, the Gospel..... as communicated in the rule of faith to catechumens, and confessed in Baptism", The Johannine Epistles, p.63. Nevertheless this annointing must also be related to the work of the Spirit, who in Jn.14. 26 "will teach you all things". See F.F.Bruce, The Epistles of John.p. 77.

43. See Section (c) below.

44. H.Grimme, Die Oden Salomos, suggested that for ܫܒܚ we should read ܫܪܪ .

45. The verb is ܫܒܚ . Contrary to many commentators on the Odes, we do not regard this as coming from the mouth of Christ.

46. Cf. also ode 28. 6.

47. This is simply another way of describing the union with God into which the odist enters. See 3. 5; 5. 15; 8.20f.; 10. 5; 11. 18.

48. The thought here resembles that of ode 26. 13, although in the case of ode 36 it remains uncertain whether the odist's speech is simply in praise of God, or for the strengthening of others. The relationship between 36. 3 and 18. 6 through the word ܡܠܠ suggests the latter.

49. Cf. note 42 above.

50. This is probably a better way of expressing the nature of the union than "which cannot be broken". The odist is confident of his relationship with God, and the security which he has (5.13ff.; 28.5ff.; 35.4), but it is also clear that obedience to the truth is necessary to maintain this relationship (17. 5; 33. 6ff.; 38. 5).

51. MS H has the variant "living" (ܚܝ).

52. K.Rudolf, Die Mandäer II, 208, relates the Kiss to Mandaean sources, in which it is a sign of union with the divine power. We prefer to relate it to Christian imagery. See N.Perella, The Kiss Sacred and Profane, who refers to Gen.2. 7 and Jn.20. 22 as the two great Biblical Kisses of Life.

53. The verb is ܡܢ ܢܦܚ . The verb ܢܦܚ is also used with reference to carrying in the womb, although here it could be used simply in the sense of being carried about.

54. Harris-Mingana translate,"And his Spirit will utter in me". This is possible, but the earlier vv. of the ode indicate that the odist's service to God is the composition of these odes, through which "his fruits he poured unto my lips" (v.2).

55. In most places in the Odes, "water" signifies knowledge of God rather than the Spirit; (see above pp.336ff.). We would therefore reject J.H. Charlesworth and R.A.Culpepper's parallels between ode 6 and Jn.4. 10ff., 7.37ff. See "The Odes of Solomon and the Gospel of John", CBQ 35 (1973),302.

56. There can be no doubt as to the community's sense of being led by the Spirit, but this seems to express an unreflective spiritual enthusiasm rather than a coherently thought-out understanding of the Spirit.

57. The Coptic reads "of your mercy" (ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲕⲛⲁ). It is unlikely that the difference may be caused by an inner Syriac corruption (ܪܚܡܝ for ܪܚܡܘܗܝ) as J. H.Charlesworth suggests. More probable is his suggestion that the Coptic text itself has caused the error (ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲕⲛⲁ for ⲙ̄ⲡⲉⲕⲡⲛⲁ); The Odes of Solomon, p.125 n.8.

58. See p.377 on the pointing of this word.

59. K.Grobel draws attention to this verse in his comment on Gospel of Truth 20. 34, where Jesus "divested himself of these perishing rags (and) clothed himself with the imperishability which none has power to take from him". The "perishing rags" here refer to the flesh of Jesus, but the divesting of them also refers to his death, which is not the case in the ode; The Gospel of Truth, p.69.

60. " πνεῦμα ", TDNT VI, 393f. We assume that this is the ode to which Schweizer refers, although the note on p.394 says O.Sol.26. 6f. The Spirit is not mentioned in ode 26, and 25 is the only ode in which the redemption of the spirit from matter could be inferred.

61. The verse is quite different from ode 21. 3, "And I put off darkness and put on light" for quite clearly in 25. 8a the speaker has been covered by another.

62. This is not an infallible guide. However, taking only into account the pointing of this particular form of the verb, the MS H shows the following: in ode 25. 8 ܕܐܬܟܣܝ ; in the two places where the verb is first sing. (21. 1; 37. 1) ܕܐܬܟܣܝ ; ܕܐܬܟܣܝ ; in ode 36. 1 where it is third sing., ܐܬܟܣܝ as is also the case in 25. 9 ܐܬܟܣܝ .

63. In the Odes the believers put on grace (4. 6; 20.7; cf.33. 12); the Lord (7. 4); holiness (13. 3); incorruption (15. 8); light (21. 3); joy(23. 1); love (23. 3); the name of the Most High (39. 8). E.Segelberg states that wherever this verb occurs in the Odes, it is to be understood as reflecting a ritual activity; Masbuta, p.166.

64. The noun ܠܒܫܐ does in v.8b.

65. See above pp.319ff.

66. The only other instance of the verb ܠܒܫ is ode 24. 5 where it refers to the covering up of the abysses. The noun occurs elsewhere only at 20. 6.

67. Ode 20. 3; cf. 34. 5; cf. also Jn. 3. 6; 6. 63.

68. The Apocryphon of John 55. 10ff. refers to "the tomb of the creation of the body, which was put upon the man as a fetter of matter" (tr. in Gnosis I, 115). A closer parallel to the ode is found in Ptolemaic Gnosis:"Finally, there was put on him the coat of skin, by which is meant according to them, the flesh that is subject to sense perception": Irenaeus, Adv. Haer.I, 5.5 (tr. in Gnosis I, 137).

69. Paradise motif: 11. 16,18,23,24; 20, 7.

70. Gen.3. 21. Pesh. reads ܟܣܘܬ ܟܝܢܐ .See also the Rabbinic interpretation of this above, p.331.

71. The verb is the same as in the preceding verse where it is used of removing the garments of skin. J.H.Charlesworth suggests that a play on words may be involved here, so that the action was both one of removal and one of exaltation; The Odes of Solomon, p.25 n.9.

72. The word for sickness is different in these two odes: ܡܪܥܝܬܐ (25); ܚܠܝ (21).

73. Other elements in common are the help of the Lord (25. 2,6; 21. 2); illumination (25. 7; 21. 3). The removal of sickness as an expression of salvation is also found in 18. 3, here ܡܪܥܝܬܐ (cf. 6.15ff.).

74. Coptic reads "it gives", ⲁⲕϯ .

75. J.H.Charlesworth translates, "covered them with flesh", stating that "the odist was probably thinking about Ezek. 37", The Odes of Solomon, p.91 n.14. Since the Syriac text here reads ܒܣܪܐ (the Coptic has the sing.), and since there is an obvious antipathy to "flesh" in the Odes, the probable allusion to Ezek.37 ought not to influence the translation. Cf. also ode 17. 4 "My chains were cut off by his hands. I received the face and likeness of a new person".

76. So MS N. The Coptic has the transliterated Greek ἐνέργεια ; MS H has ܥܒܕܢܗܝ - help.

77. See above pp.371ff.

78. In the Fourth Gospel, man can be "born of the Spirit", (3. 6,8), or he may be born ... of the will of God (1. 14). In the First Epistle the expression "born of God" occurs at 3. 9; 4. 7; 5. 1,4,18.

79. Ephraem has an interesting illustration of this putting off of the old man, or the tempter, by way of comparison with the serpent which casts one skin and gains another. "The presumptuous who is baptised and sins again is as the serpent that casts its slough and again puts it on, that is renewed and made young, and turns again, putting on anew its skin of old, for the serpent does not cast off its nature. Cast ye off the tempter

the corruptor of souls, even the old man; let it not make old the newness ye have put on"; Hymns on the Epiphany 8. 11. NPNF (second series) 13,277.

80. This is not the same as in Gnosis, where "the Spirit..... tends to be not a gift received at baptism but a permanent element in the constitution of the πνευματικός "; R.McL. Wilson, "The Spirit in Gnsotic Literature", in Christ and Spirit in the New Testament, p.351.

81. Cf. also ode 38. 5 "And there was no danger for me because I walked with him; And I did not err in anything because I obeyed him".

82. See ode 38. 16 where the odist does not fall into the hands of the deceivers because the truth has gone with him. The concluding vv. of ode 8 are also in reality conditional. If the believers abide they shall be incorrupt.

CHAPTER 4

THE ESCHATOLOGICAL CONCEPTS OF THE ODES AND OF JOHN

As we read the Odes we find that the writer is convinced that salvation has arrived, and that eschatological existence is his present possession. This fact causes no difficulties, for the present realisation of eschatological existence is also part of the teaching of the New Testament.(1) What does give rise to doubts about the eschatology of the Odes is the fact that there is almost no future eschatological expectation remaining. This is not New Testament teaching, although some scholars have attempted to place the Fourth Gospel in the same category, and ascribe any future expectation in the Gospel to the work of an ecclesiastical redactor.(2) As C.K.Barrett has said, this can be done only by the use of "quite uncritical scissors", and although the problem of the combination of future and present eschatological elements is most acute in John, this is really a New Testament problem, not simply a Johannine one.(3)

Scholars have attempted to solve this problem in the Fourth Gospel in a number of ways. C.F.D.Moule suggests that the realised elements in the eschatology are directed towards individuals, while the future ones are directed towards a more general audience. (4) L. van Hartingsveld also believes that the difference is caused by the difference in audience, but he sees it in another way. In the confrontation with the Jews, the eschatology is seen in terms of judgment and resurrection; when Jesus separates from the Jews, John speaks of the gathering in of the Diaspora; at the departure of Jesus from his disciples, the eschatology focusses on the idea of being taken home to where Jesus is.(5) D.E.Aune has tried to show that it is the experience of salvation within the cultic community which provides the motivation for the expression of realised eschatology.(6) R.Bultmann sees the origin of realised eschatology in the Gnostic source underlying the Fourth Gospel, but he also believes that the evangelist has

gone beyond this to a "radical understanding of Jesus' appearance as the eschatological event".(7) C.K.Barrett believes that the Fourth Gospel provides an answer to the problem of eschatology in the early church caused by the delay in the Parousia. John does not wish to reject the future apocalyptic eschatology, but neither is he satisfied with it. "It was necessary to find a new way of expressing the fundamental Christian affirmation of the Christian faith, that in Jesus Christ the new age had come, so that Christians live both in this age and in the age to come".(8)

The problem of the realised nature of existence is even more acute in the Odes than it is in John, and we turn now to a consideration of those concepts which signify eschatological life in the Odes. Some of these are present in the Fourth Gospel, but others are not found there.

A. LIFE

This is the concept which is most frequently employed in the Odes to express salvation,(9) and is occasionally used in parallel with it.

And they received my blessing and lived,

They were gathered to me and were saved. (17. 14).(10)

Life is also seen as the intention of God for man.

For in the will of the Lord is your life,

And his intention (ܡܚܫܒܬܗ) is eternal life (9. 4).

This intention of God stands in sharp contrast to that of the persecutors, who seek to harm him. This they are unable to do, because the Lord is the salvation of the speaker, and he is in union with him. Ode 5 says:

7 Let their counsel (ܥܨܬܗ) become dull,

And what they have conspired, let it return upon their own heads.

8 For they have devised a counsel (ܥܨܬܐ)

And it has not succeeded.(11)

9. And because the Lord is my salvation

I will not fear

14 And though all things visible should perish,
I shall not die.
15 Because the Lord is with me
And I am with him.

The intention of God is that men should have life, and this intention makes ineffective those forces which threaten, and seek the death of the believer. This is a free gift of God, given through his grace.

Freely I have received your grace;
I shall live by it (5. 3; cf. 10. 2; 31. 7; 34. 6; 41. 3).

Life is the negation of death, and this thought is so strong in the mind of the odist that the adjective which is usually used to qualify "life" is "deathless"; ܚܝܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܝܬ . This expression is found six times (10. 2; 15. 10; 28. 7; 31. 7; 38. 3; 40. 6), while the expression "eternal life" (ܚܝܐ ܥܠܡܐ) occurs with certainty once only (9. 4).[12]

In the Odes, death is closely related to error and falsehood, and these have nothing to do with God (18. 8). Correspondingly, life is related to truth and knowledge. In ode 38, the Deceiver and the Error give men the wine of their intoxication to drink, and make them vomit up their wisdom and intelligence and deprive them of understanding (vv. 12ff). The odist however is safe, because he is led by the truth who shows him who and what error is, and who "became to me a haven of salvation, and set me on the arms of immortal life" (v. 3).[13]

Immortal life thus results from turning away from error and living by the truth as it has been revealed by Christ, and as it is proclaimed in the community. Man apart from this truth is in death, he is in the grip of Sheol. When he turns to the truth, Sheol and Death are done away with, and death no longer has the power to destroy him.

And so in ode 15 the odist says,

9 Death has been destroyed before my face,
And Sheol has been vanquished by my word.
10 And eternal life has arisen in the Lord's land,
It has been declared to his believers,
And been given without limit to all that trust in him.

"My word" in v. 9 refers to the word of the odist, as he proclaims immortal life to men. It is this proclamation which banquishes Sheol and Death, and the word of the odist derives its authority from the Word of the Lord, who has come to reveal the truth of God, and who has himself entered Sheol and defeated it. This is the fundamental idea about life in the Odes: man has life, deathless life, because Christ is life and he has abolished death. As the believers enter into union with him, they too share in life which is without death.

For he who is joined to him who does not die
Even he shall be without death.(14)
And he who delights in the life (15)
Will become living (3. 8-9).

Immortal life in the Odes is the same as eternal life in 9. 4. Here again life is gained through receiving the revelation of God through the Word, and taking hold of the victory which he has gained, so that death may have no power over those who believe, and receive the message.

For I announce peace to you, his saints,
So that none of those who hear shall fall in the war.
And that those who have known him may not perish,(16)
And that those who receive him may not be ashamed (9. 6-7).(17)

Finally, we turn to ode 28. The latter part of this ode (vv. 9-20) is spoken ex ore Christi, and deal with the attempts of his enemies to kill him. But they were unsuccessful, because his origin is different from theirs,(18) and he was "older than their memory" (vv. 17f.).(19)

The first part of this ode expresses the odist's apprehension of salvation on the basis of Christ's victory over the forces which attempted to destroy him. The odist is at rest because of the faithfulness of him in whom he believed. He is in union with Christ, and cannot be separated from him by dagger or sword. The ode continues:

6 Because I was ready before destruction comes,
And have been set on his immortal wings.(20)

7 And immortal life embraced me
And kissed me.(21)

8 And from that (life) is the Spirit which is within me,(22)
And it cannot die, because it is life.(23)

The word translated "wings" (ونعلا) in v. 6 requires some comment. It means "the side or outer part", and hence comes to mean (among other things), "arm", "wing", including the wing of an army. Within the context of the sword and dagger (24) and the coming destruction, it would be possible to regard it as signifying the speaker's inclusion in the army of the Lord.(25) At the same time however, the use of the plural makes us think rather in terms of the wings upon which the speaker is lifted up to the fellowship with his Lord. This then raises the further possibility that the wings represent the Spirit, who lifts the speaker up.(26)

As the result of being set on these wings, the speaker receives immortal life, which in turn communicates to him the Spirit. Alternatively we may say, Christ has given life and union with himself to the believer. As a sign of this life, he has also given to him the Spirit.(27)

E.Percy has noted that the term ἀθανασία does not occur in John, and he regards this as very instructive for any comparison with the Odes. Since this term is so characteristic of late Greek-syncretistic piety, he claims, "Dort, (in the Odes) begegnen wir nämlich gerade einer

griechischen Interpretation des gemein-urchristlichen Lebensbegriff: z.B. 10. 2 und 28. 5ff. (vgl. auch 3. 8ff). Hier ist das Leben deutlich als die unsterbliche göttliche Wesensubstanz gedacht und nicht, wie es nach unsrer obigen Analyse bei Johs in erster Linie der Fall ist, eine Gabe des Willens und der Macht Gottes".(28)

Ode 28. 5ff. at least does appear to be open to this kind of interpretation, but as we have seen above, this in not likely to be the intention of the odist. Rather he sees immortal life as the result of the activity of the Messiah, and this act stems entirely from the grace of God. Man lives because God give him new life, and as a sign of this new life he also gives the Spirit. But the odist is also aware that he can lose this life. Only by remaining united to the Messiah does he live, and this is possible only as long as he is obedient to the truth (17. 5; 38. 4ff). If he fails to remain obedient, he is in danger of being seduced by the Deceiver, and so lose the wisdom that he has (38. 16).

The same kind of ideas surround the idea of eternal life in John. Eternal life is a gift of God's love and grace (3. 16f.), and this gift is available to those who believe in Christ as the one whom God has sent. This gift of life removes men from the realm of death (5. 24). Men in this life are in darkness and death, and therefore the concepts of light and life are closely connected (1. 4; 3. 16-21). To come to the light, and therefore to life, means to come to, or believe in Christ who is the light of the world (8. 12). Christ is the life (11. 25) and has been given authority by the Father to have life in himself, in order that he might give life to those who hear him (5. 25ff), or to those who know him (17. 2f.).

The concept of eternal life in John is bound up with the fact that in Jesus, the life of the future age has come, and those who are united to him, or those who are in him, share even now in the life of this future

age. L. van Hartingsveld claims that this concept of the present possession of eternal life is not really present in the Fourth Gospel, but that the idea there is that the believer has this only as a hope or a guarantee.(29) This however is not really to be accepted in view of the language of the Fourth Gospel concerning the present possession of life.(30)

Alongside of this concept stands the other, that there is yet a future consummation at the last day, on which there will be a resurrection and the final judgment (6. 39, 40, 44, 54; 12. 48). Some scholars have felt that these references to the final consummation are at best superfluous in the light of the present life-giving and judging which is carried on through the ministry of Christ.(31) But we ought not to excise these references, and should accept the verdict of C.H.Dodd that "this is a part at least of what the evangelist meant by 'eternal life'".(32)

The general picture of life in the Odes and in John is similar, but there are important differences.

1. Terminology

The expression "eternal life" in the Fourth Gospel represents the life of the Age to Come. For John, the future age has broken into this age, and eschatological life is therefore not something which belongs to the future, but is a present reality which will find its consummation in the future.

The odist's use of the term "immortal life" is determined by different pre-suppositions. Like John, he thinks of man in this world as being in death, and he sees the revelation of God through Christ as the means of overcoming this death. But the odist places a great deal of emphasis on the concept of Christ's descent into Sheol, where Death and Sheol are defeated. Thus for him, death is done away with, and the new life through

the Messiah is best described as "life without death".

A further concept which has determined the terminology of the odist is that of the return to Paradise.(33) He thinks of the new life into which he has entered in terms of the reversal of the effects of the sin of Adam. Because of this sin, man was expelled from Paradise, and moreover, death resulted. With the coming of the Messiah, this has all been reversed, and the way is open for man to return to Paradise, for the effects of the Fall are cancelled out. Therefore, his new life is a life without death.

2. The Future

If we are not to remove the references in the Fourth Gospel to the future consummation, and there is no real justification for so doing, we are left with the situation that although the dominant emphasis in the Fourth Gospel is on the present realisation of eschatology, there is still some future expectation remaining.

In the Odes this is less certain. The odist is so convinced of the reality of the eschatological life into which he has entered, that there seems to be almost no place at all for any future expectation. There is one apparent exception to this, where the odist speaks of the "new world",(34) but apart from this, we receive the impression that the future is of no significance at all to the odist. In other words, while in the Fourth Gospel we have an eschatology which can be described as being "in the process of realisation", in the Odes we seem to have a thoroughly realised eschatology.

B. THE GATHERING TOGETHER.

Ode 17. 5 expresses the idea of eschatological life in terms of the gathering together by Christ of those whom he has freed;

Then they received my blessing and lived,
And they were gathered to me and were saved.

This gathering together means union with Christ, who has entered Sheol and freed his own from imprisonment. This act of being freed consitiutes the saved community as Christ's members, with him as their Head. Ode 18 speaks of God's right hand receiving "from every region" those who are to be joined to him (v. 7). This gathering is achieved through two related activities of Christ, according to the Odes. Firstly, it is achieved through his revelation of God, and secondly, through his descent into Sheol, and his victory there. Ode 42 says,

And I made a congregation of living among his dead;
And I spoke with them by living lips (35)
In order that my word might not be empty.(36)

Who are these who are gathered together? Ode 10 speaks of Christ's capture of the world for his own possession, and Christ says,

And the Gentiles who had been scattered were gathered together,
But I was not polluted by my love for them,
Because they praised me in high places. (v. 5)

The difficulties associated with the word ܕܝܢܐ in line b have been dealt with above,(37) and we have suggested there that it ought to have the meaning, "that which was owed to me". The inclusion of the Gentiles was not a cause of pollution for him, rather, they belonged to him and he was only taking that which was his own. The suggestion that Christ may have become polluted by their inclusion doubtless reflects an opinion with which the odist was not in agreement, that the Gentiles ought not to be admitted into the fellowship.(38)

According to J.H.Charlesworth, this verse "probably was written by a converted Palestinian Jew in the first century when Christianity was basically and predominantly Jewish". (39) But the ode is not anti-Gentile, as Charlesworth seems to think. The opponents of the odist might be anti-Gentile, but the universality of salvation as proclaimed by the odist shows that he is not.

Two explanations are possible for the background of the odist's use of this concept here. Firstly, he may be thinking of the Jewish theme of the gathering of the Dispersion. If so, he is re-interpreting this in terms of the gathering of the Gentiles as the people of God.

Alternatively, the background may also be found in Gen. 11. There, the whole world had one language, and men determined to build a tower with its top in the heavens and to make a name for themselves, lest they be scattered over the face of the earth.(40) But this violation of God's realm meets with God's judgment, and he confused their language, and scattered them over the face of all the earth (vv. 1-9).

Two features of this passage have some relationship to the ode.

1. In Gen. 11, men wished to usurp the authority of God by building a tower right up into the realm of God. In the ode, Christ's relationship to the peoples constitutes no pollution for him because they praised him in high places ( ).

2. In Gen 11, the story of the building of the tower begins with the unity of the people of the whole earth, and ends with their being scattered. In the ode, we find that the opposite has taken place. Those who had been scattered now are gathered together ( ). Now, instead of being "the nations" ( ) they become Christ's people ( ).

If this is the correct background for the ode, we should probably think of the reason for the scattering in terms of the Fall, for the Story of the Tower of Babel concludes the primeval history of Gen. 1-11, and the attitude of the builders is very similar to that of the very first people who sinned, eating the fruit of the forbidden tree because they were told that they would be like God.(41)

The opponents of the odist clearly do not believe that the Gentiles ought to be admitted to salvation, and it is the breadth of his invitation which they reject. According to the odist, Christ calls men "from all regions" (18. 7); he will accept "those who desire to come to him" (10. 3). In ode 28. 12f. it seems that it is this offer of universal salvation by Christ which causes his enemies to attempt to kill him.

12 And I became their abomination (42)
Because there was no jealousy in me.
13 Because I did good to every man
I was hated.

Note the chiastic structure of these two verses. Lines a and d stand in parallelism, and so do b and c. That is, the fact that there was no jealousy in Christ is expressed in terms of the fact that he did good to every man.(43) The emphasis falls on "to <u>every</u> man", and it is this concern for all which the opponents reject.

In the Fourth Gospel, the theme of the gathering in of the people of God is also important. In 11. 51f. Caiaphas prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation (ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἔθνους);(44) and not for the nation only, but to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. Similarly, in 10. 15f, and 12. 32 Jesus gathers into one, or draws all men to him. In each of these instances, the theme of ingathering is closely associated with the death of Christ.(45) It is through dying that Christ brings men together.

Two questions are important here for the relationship with the Odes.

1. Who are the scattered children of God?

The answer to this question depends upon, and is not to be separated from, the question of the destination and purpose of the Fourth Gospel. Scholars have therefore suggested that the scattered people of God are either the Jews of the Dispersion, Jewish Christians living within the Dispersion, both Jews and Gentiles, or Gentiles. (46) We would suggest that although the Gentile question is not prominent in John, there is nothing to prevent us from understanding John's "whoever believes" (3. 16) in terms of all men, Jew and Gentile alike.

2. How does Jesus gather men by his death?

In the Fourth Gospel, everything points forward to the "hour" of Christ, the hour of his death, and the death of Christ is clearly the determining point in the salvation of man. This is the completion of his work of revelation (19. 28); it is the moment of his glorification (13. 31); it is the time of his departure to the Father and the occasion for the gift of the Spirit (16. 7). Yet although John speaks a lot about the death of Christ and of its importance for the salvation of man, he does not explain very clearly just how the death of Christ accomplishes this. (47) Probably we should think in terms of the gift of the Spirit, and the incorporation into the church, the community of the people of God. (48)

The theme of the gathering of the scattered people is similar in John and the Odes, although they may be derived from different pre-suppositions. Both are concerned that all men should be gathered, and both connect this theme with the death of Christ. The odist however differs from John at this point, because he pictures the death of Christ as his opportunity to enter Sheol and free the captives there. This theme has faint echoes

in the Fourth Gospel with the idea of the "casting out" of the ruler of this world at the death of Christ (12. 31), but the traditional theme of the Descent into Hell plays no real part in the theology of John. He is much more concerned with the idea that the death of Christ means his return to the Father.

C. THE WAY

One important concept which is involved in the experience of eschatological salvation in the Odes is the "Way" (ܐܘܪܚܐ). The way usually designates the way which the Redeemer has travelled, and which he has prepared for his believers to follow him. The odist's concept of the way has led some scholars to say that this is Gnostic, but although R.Schnackenburg points out that the seemingly Johannine ideas in the Odes, of which the "way" is one, are used in an un-Johannine way, and "teem with Gnostic interpretations", he nowhere shows just how this is the case.(49)

In the Odes, the concept of the way can be divided into two elements; the way of Christ and the way of the believer.

1. The way of Christ.

a. Christ's way is the way of knowledge.

Ode 7. 13f. states:

13 For towards knowledge he has set his way,
He has widened it and lengthened it and brought it to complete perfection.
14 And has set over it the traces of his light,
and it proceeded from the beginning until the end.

This ode deals entirely with the coming of the Word from God, and it is the way of the Word which is under consideration. The Word has come in order to

bring men knowledge of God, and the goal of the way of Christ is that men may receive this knowledge. This is what the odist means when he says that God has appointed the way of the Word towards (or for) knowledge (ܠܕܥܬܐ), and he is not talking about knowledge as the goal of the believer. The purpose of this way of the Word is that men "might recognise him who made them, and not suppose that they came of themselves (v. 12).(50)

This way has been widened and lengthened and brought to all perfection (v. 13 b). This reminds us of the stream of the previous ode, which symbolises knowledge of God's salvation, or the Spirit who communicates that knowledge (vv. 6f.), which spread over the face of the whole earth and filled everything (v.10).(51)

There is a close connection between light and knowledge in the Odes, and v.14 speaks of the traces (or footprints) of the light being set over or upon the way. This seems to mean that the Word has left a set of footprints of light along the way of knowledge and truth. This is similar to the image in ode 39.(52)

There is also a close relationship between knowledge and truth, and these two are connected with the Way in ode 11.3f.

And his circumcising became my salvation
And I ran in the way, in his peace,
In the way of truth.
From beginning to end
I received his knowledge.

All along the Way, the speaker receives knowledge of the Lord, which means that he is travelling along the way of knowledge or truth.(53) The Word has come and set down a path to life and salvation, the way of knowledge and truth. If the believer proceeds along this road, and does not deviate from it, he will reach his goal.

b. Christ's way is the way of the cross.

Only in ode 42 is this explicitly stated:

And my extension is the upright cross

That was set up on the way of the Righteous One. (v.2)

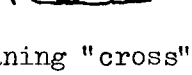
At the same time, however, the idea may be implied in ode 39, and may be inferred from other odes dealing with the descent into Sheol.

Ode 39 begins with a description of the mighty rivers[54] which sweep away all those who despise the Lord, but which can safely be crossed by those who in faith follow the way appointed. V.7 says

7 Because the sign on them is the Lord
And the sign is the Way for those who cross in the name of the Lord .....

9 The Lord has bridged them by his Word
And he walked and crossed them on foot.

10 And his footsteps[55] stand firm on the waters and were not destroyed,
But are like a beam of wood that is constructed on truth.

The important element for our present purpose is v.10b. Does  mean only "plank", or should we give to it the more specific meaning "cross", as it has in 27.3 and 42.2?[56]

If we read "cross" in this line, we arrive at the following meaning. Christ has faithfully gone along the way which the Father appointed for him, which is the task of making God known, or of communicating the truth about him. Because of his faithfulness he did not come under the judgment of God - the rivers which are the power of the Lord did not sweep him away. But his proclamation of the truth brought him to the cross - it was fixed up on the truth. The cross thus stands as a signpost of the truth of God, it shows the truth of the revelation through the Word, and

and this is the path the believers must take (v.13).

c. Christ's way is the way of Victory, and leads to the Kingdom.

In ode 22 we have a description of the descent of Christ from on high, his ascent from the regions below, and the gathering together of the things in the Middle. God has given him authority over bonds and through him has overthrown the seven-headed dragon and destroyed his seed. Verses 7ff. describe the way of Christ.

7 Your right hand destroyed his evil venom
And your hand levelled the way for those who believe in you.
8 It chose them from the graves
And separated them from the dead.
9 It took dead bones
And covered them with bodies.
10 But they were motionless
And it gave them energy[57] for life.
11 Your way and your face were without corruption.
You brought corruption to your world
So that everything might be dissolved and renewed.
12 And the foundation of everything is your Rock.
And upon it you built your kingdom,
And it became[58] the dwelling place of the saints.

By destroying the evil venom of the dragon, that is, by cancelling out the power of the dragon to do further harm, Christ has made a level road along which those who believe in him can travel.These had been so thoroughly overcome by the dragon's venom that they were nothing but bones. But Christ provides them with new bodies[59] and gives them power to live.

Christ's way however is indestructible. He cannot be overcome

by the dragon and his seed. Instead, he brings destruction to the world, which symbolises man in his ignorance of and rejection of the truth of God, in order that the Kingdom, the dwelling-place of the saints, might be founded upon his "rock".

The goal to which the way leads is thus the kingdom. The partial parallel between v.12 and Matt.16.18[60] suggests that the odist thinks of the church as the kingdom. However, for the odist, the goal is union with God in Paradise, and although he may think of the church or the community as the sphere in which this is actualised, the basic meaning of "kingdom" seems to be Christ's or God's authority and power over the forces of darkness, error and death. He is now sole ruler, because he has destroyed the dragon and his seed in the world.

2. The way of the believer.

Since Christ has made this way, the believer proceeds along it. The way leads to the Lord, therefore it is a path of joy.

My joy is the Lord and my course is towards him,
This way of mine is excellent.
For there is a helper for me to the Lord,[61] ( )
He has generously shown himself to me in his simplicity
Because his kindness has diminished his dreadfulness. (7.2f.)

From ode 41 we find that the Word is constantly with the believer along the way.

His Word is with us in all our way
The Saviour who makes alive and does not reject us. (v.11)

This is perhaps how we ought to understand the helping function of the Word in ode 7, viz., I have someone as a helper beside me all along the way to the Lord. The odist actually holds two different though clearly

related ideas together. When he thinks of the Redeemer as Word, he also thinks in terms of the believer as going along the way in company of the Word who continually reveals the truth to him.(62) When he thinks of the Redeemer as the victor over Sheol and death who has opened up the way to God, he thinks in terms of the believer following along the path clearly laid out by Christ.

If the believer is to arrive at his goal, he must follow faithfully the way which has been laid down, or must be obedient to the revelation which is continually being given to him.

And the Way has been appointed for those who cross over
after him,
Even for those who follow his faithful path,
And who adore his name. (39.13)

We have spoken above of the "way" in John, and we summarise the results here:

1. The way of Jesus is the return to the Father, which he travels by way of humiliation and death.
2. The way of Jesus involves a going to the Father and a return to the disciples so that he can take them to be with himself. (14.2)
3. Jesus himself is the way, in that through him men see the Father and come to him. (14.6ff.)
4. The way of Jesus is thus the way of revelation.
5. The disciple must follow in the way that Jesus has gone, if he is to achieve life.(13.33-36)
6. The goal of the way is life in the presence of Christ and God. (14.1ff.)
7. The way is also the way of victory, since the death of Jesus is also his overcoming of Satan. (12.31; 16.33)

The principal differences between John and the Odes are:

1. The odist does not identify the way with Christ, although he comes

close to this in speaking of the revelation through the Word as the way. In John Christ is the Way because he gives to man that knowledge of God by which men see God and come to him. In the Odes, Christ is the Word of Knowledge from the Father of Knowledge, and the Word has been given so that men will know God and come to him.

2. In John, Jesus returns to the Father from whom he came; he ascends to where he was before. This theme does not really occur in the Odes. It is implied by the fact that Christ has come down from on high, and will presumably return from whence he came. (63)

The difference between the Odes and John in this respect appear to be caused by two factors:

(a) The extreme concentration on the realised nature of eschatological life. The believer is even now taken up into the presence of God, even though quite clearly this occurs within the context of this life. It is by Christ's victory over Sheol and death that this way into the presence of God is opened up, and this is the point which the odist emphasises. It is the presence of the risen and victorious Christ with his people which sets them in a situation of life in the presence of God.

(b) This leads to a second aspect of the odist's thought, viz., his understanding of the Spirit. In the Odes, the concept of the Spirit is not as developed as it is in John. There are echoes of Johannine ideas, but these are a long way from the Paraclete of the Fourth Gospel. There, Christ returns to the Father so that the Paraclete can be sent. This Paraclete stands to the disciples in a relationship which is parallel to that of Jesus himself. He is the interpreter of the person of Jesus, and the authority behind the community's proclamation. In the Odes, this is still the function of the Risen Christ,

as the Word.

3. The Odes contain no suggestion of a return by Christ to take his own to himself. This would be accounted for by the reasons given above in (2).

D. THE ASCENT

The odist's view of this world is that it is the place of error and darkness, where men are in bondage. On the other hand, there is no error, falsehood or death with God (18.8ff). In accordance with this dualistic understanding of existence, man must be transferred into the presence of God if he is to experience salvation and life, and this is spoken of in terms of an ascent.

This contrast between what is below and what is above is mentioned specifically only in ode 34, but is implied throughout.

4. The pattern ( ) of that which is below
   Is that which is above.
5 For everything is above,
   And there is nothing below
   Though that is believed by those in whom there is no
   knowledge.

J.H. Charlesworth [64] has objected to the translation of by "pattern", as suggested by W.C.van Unnik[65] because he rejects the platonic ideas implied by it, stating that "The Odes, however, are not platonic". It is not necessary to invoke the Platonic theory of forms in order to understand the thinking of the ode, and the alternative translation, which Charlesworth accepts, "The likeness of that which is below is that which is above" does not fit in at all with the next verse. For there it is stated that there is nothing below, although the ignorant believe that there is. Within this context, the odist is not likely to make "below" the basis of his comparison, and then proceed to consider

"above" in terms of its likeness to what is below.[66] The comparison must begin from the other end. Reality, life, truth and knowledge belong to the world above, and this world below is only a shadow of the eternal reality. Therefore man must ascend to the realm above in order to share in this reality, which means salvation for him.

However, it needs to be remembered that the odist can also express this in a different way, viz., in terms of God's salvation coming down to him from above. Ode 11.12 says, "And from above ( ) he gave me rest without corruption".[67] These two ideas express the same truth. Within his life in the world, the believer is removed from the bondage of error and death so that the salvation of God comes to him from outside of this world, from above, and this means that he now experiences the force of life from God within him, or that he is now placed in the very presence of God.

Ode 34, having this contrast between above and below, begins with the notion of ascent, even though this term itself is not mentioned.

1 There is no hard way where there is a simple heart ( )
  Nor barrier for upright thoughts ( )
2 Nor whirlwind in the depth of enlightened thought.
3 Where one is surrounded on every side by beautiful country
  There is nothing divided in him.

Since the ode goes on to speak about the above//below contrast from this point, the natural inference to make is that the easy way of v.1a, and the lack of any barrier in v.1b refers to the complete accessibility of the world above to the soul of him who fulfils the requirements. These requirements are a simple heart ( ) and upright thoughts ( ).

The question here is how we are to understand these two qualifications. Two expressions in vv.2 and 3 provide some of the answer.

Firstly, we find that "enlightened thought" provides the same kind of result. In the context here illumination signifies the illumination which comes from above and which dispels the darkness of the world below.(68) Secondly, the man who has these qualifications has "nothing divided in him".(69) Again, in terms of the following verses, this must mean that he is not torn between the world below and the one above, but he is wholly directed to the world above, where reality is. Thus the man of simple heart and upright thoughts is the man whose whole being is orientated towards God, who dwells above.

It is important to note that the verb ܙܕܩ and its derivatives occur nine times in seven odes, and the verb ܫܪܪ and its derivatives occur nine times in six odes, and that in four of these odes, 27, 34, 35 and 42, the two roots occur in juxtaposition. We shall deal first with the five odes in which only one root is found.

a) ode 38.7 This refers to the "upright way" (ܐܘܪܚܐ ܕܙܕܩ) along which the truth led the odist. This is another "ascent" ode and will be considered below. Here we may simply note that the upright way is the way of truth, which preserves the odist from error and which brings him to the haven of salvation.

b) ode 6.16 This is the first of two instances of the active use of the verb ܙܕܩ . Again it is concerned with the knowledge which comes from God, through which the "ministers of the water" refreshed parched lips, raised up paralysed wills, held back the dying from death, and restored (ܐܙܕܩ) and raised up (ܐܩܝܡ) the limbs which have collapsed(vv.13-16). These verses refer to the new "stand" which the believer has through his reception of knowledge, and also to the "coming" of the believer which is a coming to life.

However, these verses are also to be understood in terms of the basically dualistic structure of the odist's thought, according to which everything alien to God is destroyed through his revelation, since everything is of the Lord.

3 For he destroys what is alien
And everything is of the Lord.
4 For thus it was from the beginning
And unto the end.
5 So that nothing shall be contrary
And nothing rise up against him.

c) ode 10.1. Here the subject of the verb ܦܬܚ is the Lord himself, who has "directed my mouth by his Word, and opened my heart by his light". This not only gives immortal life to the speaker, but allows him to proclaim the fruit of his peace. This peace comes from the victory of Christ by which he captures the world,(70) gathered the scattered peoples and made them his people. They, in thanks to Christ, praised him in the heights (ܒܪܘܡܐ). The "directing" by the Lord is set within the above//below contrast, and leads to the elevation of those who had come to Christ.

d) ode 37.1. Here the verb ܫܪܪ is used with reference to stretching out the hands to God in supplication (71) and lifting up (ܪܘܡ ܩܠ) of the voice to God who hears the speaker's prayer. Although we have here the lifting up of the Voice, we do not find a lifting up of the speaker to the presence of God. Rather the same result is obtained by considering salvation in terms of the reception of God's salvation on earth.

3 His Word came to me
Who gave me the fruit of my labours(72)
4 And gave me rest by the grace of the Lord.

In this ode, salvation is pictured as the gracious act of God in sending his Word to the speaker, in response to his labour of prayer.(73) This sets him in a situation of "rest".

e) ode 7.3. This verse is about the helper to the Lord which the speaker has, who generously showed himself in his simplicity ( ) because his kindness has diminished his dreadfulness. While we could very easily understand in terms of the diminishing of the greatness and majesty of the Word who becomes like the speaker so that the revelation can be received, the fact that this word is elsewhere used only in relation to the cross, suggests that here too the cross is in mind.(74) Whether this is accepted or not, the word is used with the same above/below dualism in mind.

Finally we consider the three odes apart from ode 34 in which the two roots are used together. Of these, odes 27 and 42 are based on the same idea, but exhibit significant differences.

f) ode 27 and 42.1-2.

27.1 I extended ( ) my hands
And sanctified them ( ) to my Lord.(75)
2 For the expansion ( ) of my hands
Is his sign.(76)
3 And my expansion ( )
Is the upright cross ( ).

42.1 I extended ( ) my hands and appraoched
( ) my Lord
Because the expansion ( ) of my hands is his sign.
2 And my extension ( ) is the common
cross ( )(77)
Which was lifted up ( ) on the way of the
Righteous One ( ).

Ode 27 speaks of the spreading out of the hands as a sign of the Lord, and should be understood as the attitude of the speaker in prayer, as in ode 37. The ode does not give us much apart from this, but it raises questions at two points:

(i) What is meant by "And I sanctified them to my Lord"?

(ii) The form of expression in v3 is a little strange. Why is the spreading out ( ) of the hands an illustration of the upright ( ) cross?

Ode 42 is different at both of these points. Instead of "sanctified them to my Lord", ode 42 says "And I drew near to my Lord". This means that in the spreading out of his hands in prayer the speaker is brought into fellowship with his Lord. This statement is the reverse of ode 37 where the Word comes to the speaker in response to his prayer. Here he comes to the Lord. A related meaning can be given to the sanctification of the hands in ode 27, through the understanding of "holiness" in the Odes.

Secondly, instead of the upright cross of ode 27, ode 42 speaks of the . Here we ought to follow the translation of as given in Harris-Mingana rather than that of J.H.Charlesworth. It is the outspread cross, the cross with its outspread arms, which is in the mind of the speaker, for this is what the odist is copying in ode 27.3

Ode 42.2 ends by speaking of the cross "which was lifted up on the way of the Righteous One". The use of the verb could well be determined in part from the fact that it is used of Christ's being hung on the cross, but this does not explain how the cross itself is lifted up. The verb means to be hung, suspended, lifted up or removed. The last of

these meanings can be disregarded because of the following phrase. The difficulty with the other meanings in this context is that they are not words which are normally used of something which is fixed in the ground. Instead, we need the idea of lifting up from the ground, or of being suspended. This suggests that the translation ought to be,"(the cross) which was lifted up or suspended <u>over</u> the way of the Righteous One".

This means that the odist is thinking of the cross not simply as being along the road which the Righteous One travelled, but more specifically as being along the road back to his Father. The way from this world back to the world above is the way of the cross. If this is so, the meaning of ܙܕܝܩܐ as applied to Christ in this ode follows the meaning in the other odes. The "uprightness" of Christ means his direction towards the world above, where God and reality are found, away from this world of error, ignorance and no reality.

g)ode 35. These ideas come together in ode 35. The first six verses of this ode deal with the peace, security and salvation which the speaker experiences through the grace of the Lord. The ode concludes:

7 And I spread out ( ) my hands in the
ascent ( ) of myself
And I directed myself ( ) towards the Most High
And I was redeemed in his presence.

The speaker spreads out his hands in prayer and directs himself upwards to God, and so finds redemption in his presence. This is the ascent of the believer.

The following observations can now be made concerning the ascent of the believer in the Odes:

1. The concept is determined by the dualism in the Odes, the contrast

between the realtiy of the world above and the unreality of the world below.

2. The root ܦܪܫ refers in the first instance to the spreading out of Christ on the cross, and then to the posture used in prayer.

3. The root ܨܝܕ combines the ideas of direction and uprightness, and bears the meaning of direction or orientation upwards to the world above.

4. Through these two concepts we have the idea of the ascent of the believer.

5. In ode 37 the same combination of roots occurs. Here there is no notion of ascent, but rather of the descent of the Word from the Lord to give salvation. This is an alternative way of expressing the same reality in the experience of the speaker.

6. Again in ode 34 we find the same combination of roots, but the root does not carry the suggestion of spreading out the hands in prayer. Instead. it here implies an attitude of the heart towards God.

7. In ode 42 the cross is pictured as being over the way of Christ. The meaning is that Christ's way back to the realm above involves the cross.

This all seems to imply that the "spreading out" of the hands of the odist signifies more than a particular posture in prayer. The root ܦܪܫ signifies more a particular attitude of the believer towards God and salvation. As Christ's ascent to the world above is through the Cross, so is that of the believer. It is in this way that the believer follows his Lord to the presence of God.(78)

Ode 39 seems to say just that, although there is some ambiguity. After speaking about the rivers which destroy those who despise the Lord, but which can be crossed in safety through faith, the odist says,

7 Because the sign or them is the Lord
And the sign is the way for those who cross in the name of the Lord.

This would provide a parallel to John 14.6 by saying that " the Lord (the sign) is the way of those who cross in the name of the Lord". It is nevertheless a strange way of expressing the idea. Alternatively we could accept an emendation to the text and read ܐܬܐ instead of ܐܬܝ in line a "It is the Lord who has come upon them". Yet there is no warrant for this.

At the same time, the association of the ideas of Lord, sign, way and ܥܘܢܐ (wood or cross) reminds us of the association of the same ideas in odes 27 and especially 42. It is more in keeping with the ideas in these odes to say that the Lord's sign is the way of those who cross in his name. This at least is what vv.10-13 state.

10 And his footsteps stand firm on the waters and are not destroyed
But are like a beam of wood (ܥܘܢܐ) that is constructed on truth.
11 On this side and on that the waves are lifted up
But the footsteps of our Lord Messiah stand firm.
12 And they are neither blotted out .
Nor destroyed.
13 And the way has been appointed for those who cross over after him,
Even for those who follow his faithful course,
And who adore his name.

Here it is not the Lord himself who is the way across the waters, but his footsteps, i.e. the path he has left by his passing over. These footsteps are like a ܓܣܪ , which is the word used for the cross in odes 27 and 42. In v.13 Christ is not the way, but has made the way and left it marked out for those who adore him to follow. If we allow that although the imagery in v.10 requires ܓܣܪ to have the meaning of a plank laid over the water to cross on, it also has the significance of the Cross, the meaning of these verses is that Christ has crossed over by way of the cross and this also is the way for his followers.

In ode 38 we also find the idea of ascent, though not in the Gnostic sense which has been proposed by many scholars.

1 I went up (ܣܠܩ) into the light of truth as
into a chariot (ܪܟܒܬܐ)[79]
And the truth led me and caused me to come.
2 And caused me to pass over chasms and gulfs
And saved me from cliffs and valleys.
3 And became for me a haven of salvation
And set me on the place of immortal life.

Firstly, in view of the imagery in vv.2f., which clearly symbolises the speaker's journey in terms of travelling across the sea to a safe harbour, having safely avoided the perils of the sea, we ought to translate ܪܟܒܬܐ by "ship" rather than "chariot".

S. Laeuchli comments on v.1, " 'To know' is to ascend. To grasp truth is to be buoyed by it from the sea of ignorance and oblivion".[80] He then relates this text to a variety of Gnostic writings, claiming that

all of these deal with the ascent of the soul to heaven. There are points of contact with the Gnostic myth, but we do not need to appeal to Gnosticism to explain the imagery.

1. The verb ܐܠܨ does mean "ascend",(81) and we have already looked at other instances of the ascent of the believer in the Odes. This notion of "going up" is also involved in the act of getting into a ship, and the verb translates ἐμβαίνειν in the Pesh. New Testament.

2. The speaker does not go up to the light as if he were travelling on a ship, but he embarks on the light as he would a ship. That is, the light of truth is the vehicle by which he travels, as v.2 clearly states.

3. There is some ambiguity in v.3 about the status of the truth. In line a it appears that the truth is identified with the haven (harbour ܢܡܠܐ, Gk. λιμήν) of salvation, while in line b the truth sets the speaker in the place of life. Elsewhere in the ode, truth is the one who leads the speaker along the upright path, shows him that which will try to destroy him, and eventually brings him into Paradise. The predominance of this understanding of truth as the guide to salvation means that the identification of truth with the harbour signifies the fact that as long as the speaker is led by truth his salvation is assured. It is obedience to the truth which preserves the speaker from error, and without this obedience he will lose his salvation.(vv.4f.)

The idea of the ascent is implied in this ode through the use of the roots ܐܠܨ and ܨܝܕ and from the concept of salvation as removal into the presence of God. This however can only be stated in the light of the use of these concepts elsewhere in the Odes. Ode 38 does not emphasise the idea of the ascent of the believer, but speaks only of the guidance of the speaker by the truth which reveals to

him the way of salvation and which, because of the believer's obedience to it, finally brings him to immortal life.

E. RENEWAL

The theme of newness or renewal occurs fairly frequently in the Odes of Solomon. This renewal is the result of the activity of Christ in freeing men from the power of Sheol:

> The choking bonds were cut off by his hand,
> I received the face and fashion of a new person,
> And I walked in him and was redeemed. (17.3-4a)

The rest of the ode speaks of Christ's breaking of bars and opening the way out from Sheol, and it is clear that this is the meaning of the "bonds" in v.3. This newness then consists in being able to walk in Christ and to follow the path of truth without wandering from it. The mss. actually reads "by her hands" in v.3, and Harris-Mingana have suggested that this is due to the fact that "the writer seems to have thought that he was emancipated by 'the thought of truth' (fem.) which follows in the next verse, and so added the fem. suffix".(82) This may possibly be the correct explanation, but the same problem occurs in 36.5:

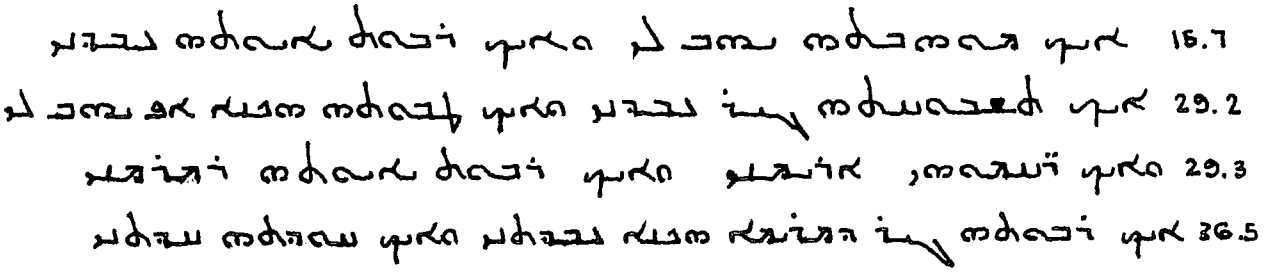
> For according to the greatness of the Most High so she
> made me (ܥܒܕܬ)
> And like his own newness he renewed me. (ܚܕܬ)

H. Grimme suggests that it would be more grammatical to read ܚܕܬ instead of the 3.s.f. verb,(83) but it is equally probable that a ܐ has disappeared through haplography, and that we should read ܐܚܕܬ. This is more likely because v.3 of this ode states that it was the Spirit who brought him forth (ܐܥܒܕ) before the face of the Lord, signifying that man's newness is due in some part to the activity of the Spirit.

At the same time, it is true that in the majority of cases,

this newness stems from the activity of the Lord rather than of the Holy Spirit. This may mean either that the odist sees renewal as the work both of the Lord, and his Spirit, or that perhaps there is a certain lack of precision in his theology of the Spirit, whose avtivity is that of the Lord himself, who is the Head of the Spirit (cf 24.1). In other words, there does seem to be some justification for seeing in the Holy Spirit of the odist a being who approxiamtes more to the Spirit of the Lord of the Old Testament than to the Holy Spirit as the third person of the Trinity.(84)

It will be of assistance to set out some vv. of the Odes which, while not explicitly employing the word "newness", nevertheless contain several of the same ideas.



According to his bounty he gave to me,
And according to his magnificence he made me.
For according to his glory he made me,
And according to his goodness, even thus he gave to me;
And according to his mercy he raised me,
And according to his magnificence he exalted me.

Cf For according to the greatness of the Most High so she made me,
And like his own newness he renewed me. (36.5)

Here we find certain concepts employed in different combinations but the focus of attention is that God has renewed man, and this renewal

is in terms of the greatness, magnificence, glory, goodness and mercy of God, and this has been achieved through man's release from Sheol. It looks as if through the resurrection of Christ, man is once again constituted in tha image of God. He shares in the life of the new age, which may also be the age of man's total fellowship with God before the Fall.If so, it seems that for the odist, Christ is the new Adam, in whom the new race is constituted.(85)

It has been suggested (86) that since the idea of the newness of God carries too much ambiguity, 36.5b should be emended to read "made me glad with his own gladness". This seems unnecessary, especially if the whole ode is ex ore catechumeni. For it then deals with the restoration of the believer into the presence of God, by the Spirit who has taken him up to heaven, and through whom the new relationship of sonship to God is realised. It is also to be noted that ܚܕܬܘ means not simply "newness", but it is also used in the sense of being made new at the resurrection, and may here refer to God's action of raising from the dead. As Christ has been raised, so also the believer, raised through the action of Christ, is transported into the heavenly realms to live in the presence of God, becoming "one of those that are dear to him" (36.6; cf 21.7). The four vv. set out above indicate that renewal means that by the mercy of God, man has shared in the resurrection God has inaugurated through Christ, is brought into union with him, and is made again in his likeness, according to his goodness, glory, magnificence and greatness. This does not mean that man becomes deified, but that he receives in a certain measure these attributes of God. With reference to the last of these attributes, we may compare the Pesh. of II Cor.5.19. Whereas the Gk text says that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself (ἑαυτῷ), the Pesh. translator has God reconciling the world to his greatness (ܠܪܘܡܗ).

Because of this newness, a "new song" of praise to God is sung. This new song is appropriate to the state of things which has come into

being. But this song is not only called for from men who have been renewed, but is also found on the lips of Christ himself:

> He (Christ) opened his mouth and spoke grace and joy,
> And he spoke a new song of praise to his name. (31.3)

The reason for this new song of Christ's is given in the following v.:

> And he lifted up his voice to the Most High,
> And offered to him the sons that were in his hands;
> And his face was justified,
> For thus had his Holy Father done to him (vv.4f.).

Christ sings the new song, for God has given him victory over the power of Sheol and death, so that he had brought freedom to those who were his own, and these he has given over to the Father. The new song is the song of the New Age, and Christ sings it, for his justification (i,e.victory) has brought the New Age into being. So it is also appropriate that his followers sing the song as well, since through him, they have entered the New Age too.

But this renewal is not spoken of in purely individualistic manner, but the new man enters into the company of the renewed (36.4,6). Furthermore, there enters into the odist's conception the apocalyptic element of the dissolution of the old world and the creation of the new;

> Thy way was without corruption, and thy face,
> Thou didst bring thy world to corruption,
> That everything might be dissolved and renewed. (22.11)

We may ask, if the way of God is without corruption, how is it that he brings his world to corruption? Since corruption is the province of the Corruptor, does this mean that God has handed over, or at least allowed the world to come under the power of the Corruptor? In view of the following purpose clause which completes this verse, does it further mean that this activity had to take place in order that the salvation of God might be finally achieved? It seems as if we have here the concept that before the End finally comes, the world will be subjected to the power of the

Evil One,[87] who will then be destroyed, and the Kingdom fully establsihed, This is in fact what has already occurred, according to the odist, in the next verse:

> And that the foundation of verything might be thy rock,
> And on it thou didst build thy kingdom,
> And thou becamest the dwelling-place of the saints (v.12)

The Kingdom has been established on the Rock, because Christ has loosed bonds (v. 4), overthrown the dragon (v. 5f.), taken men from their graves (v. 8), and brought dead bones to life (vv. 9f.).

With this activity of Christ in mind, it seems appropriate to reconsider the translation of v. 11c. Does this actually mean "Dissolved and renewed"? While ,ithark can mean "to be dissolved" "to be broken, finished*, it can also mean "to be loosed" as from bonds, and this may be the meaning here. There is little to choose between these alternatives, if it is held that the total dissolution of the present world order is a necessary precondition of the renewed world. But all that this ode speaks of is the corrupting influence of the Evil One which preceded the establishment of the Kingdom on the Rock, and it does not indicate whether the "world" is the totality of creation or the world of men. If the alma means the former, then probably we must translate the verb as "dissolved". If, on the other hand, the odist is simply speaking of the activity of the corruptor in the lives of men, it would be better to translate "that everything might be released (i.e. from the power of the Corruptor) and renewed". The difficulty lies in seeing how such a dissolution and renewal of creation has already taken place.

This difficulty is overcome only in terms of the odist's Christology. The effect of the Messiah's work is such that there is

now total union between the believers and God, and the power of evil is destroyed for those within the community. If the odist understands Christ as the replacement of the Temple,[88] we might understand this renewed creation in terms of II Cor.5. 17.[89] Alternatively, if the Temple symbolises the community, we will need to understand the church as the renewed and restored condition of man in Paradise.

The odist also knows of a future new world:

> And they who have put me on shall not be falsely accused,
> But they shall possess incorruption in the new world. (33. 12)

This "new world" ( ) is a world in which men will live in incorruption after a judgment by Christ (v. 11). Whereas elsewhere the odist speaks of having put off corruption and put on incorruption (15. 8), here the possession of incorruption is something still to be obtained. The combination of the perfect tense ( ) followed by two imperfects (,), indicates that renewal is not yet complete and realised, but awaits a final consummation.[90] This note however is sounded very infrequently in the Odes.

F. THE TEMPLE

The word "temple" (ܗܝܟܠ) occurs only once in the Odes, at 6. 8. This ode contains several problems of interpretation, not least of which is the significance of the Temple itself. Harris-Mingana sees the origin of the stream which brings all to the Temple in Ps.46. 4: "There is a river, whose streams make glad the city of God". It is pointed out by them that the Pesh. reads "streams of rivers", employing the same Syriac word for "stream" (ܐܪܘܚ) as occurs in the Ode. "Here then we have the suggestion that the stream which sweeps everything away and brings to the Temple (ܠܗܝܟܠ ,ܐܬܐ) does precisely what the psalm says it ought to do".(91)

J.H.Bernard finds the origin of the stream in Ezek.47, which was interpreted by many of the early church writers in terms of baptismal waters.(92) The stream in Ezek. flows away from the Temple and not towards it, but Bernard does not feel that this is significant. Alternatively, it is also possible to refer to Hab.2. 14; Isa.11. 9, where the divine knowledge shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

There are four basic ways in which the words "and brought to the Temple" have been understood.

1. The Odes are the work of a Jewish, or Jewish Christian group for whom the Temple was of particular importance. The Temple in Jerusalem is thus the goal of this life-giving stream, as men are brought to it.

2. The translation ought not to be "and brought to the Temple", but "and carried off the Temple", This gives to the ode an anti-Jewish bias, and

the words indicate that because Christ has come, the Temple is of no more importance.(93)

3. J.H.Bernard dispenses with the words quite easily by suggesting that "this is only a reminiscence (even if the translation be trustworthy here), of the concluding words of the LXX of Ezek. 47. 1, the passage on which the odist is working: ἀπὸ νότου ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον. This means that it cannot be held as setting aside the interpretation which the early Christian Fathers received from all who touched it".(94) Even if it were likely that the odist was working from Ezek. 47, the reference to the Temple cannot be dispensed with as easily as this, for it obviously constitutes an important part of what he has to say.

4. Harris-Mingana also note the suggestion of C.C.Torrey that the Syriac text represents a misunderstood Aramaic original - ולא איתי להכלא "and there was none to impede".(95) This does provide a suitable introduction to the following verse which speaks about the restrainers. But the difficulty with this is the one which always is present when a mis-translation which also involves an emendation of the supposed original is suggested. Further, if the alleged Aramaic original did use the verb כלא , it is unbelievable that the supposed Syriac translator did not use the same verb in his translation, since he uses it three times in the following verse.

The last two suggestions can be discounted immediately, and we are left with the alternatives - "and brought to the Temple"; "and carried off the Temple".

Ode 6 reminds us of the opening verses of ode 39, where the destructive power of the Lord is likened to mighty rivers which sweep everything before them. There is nothing about bringing to the Temple or

about carrying off the Temple in that ode, but the same verb is used to describe the effect of the water. In ode 39 however, this verb is used with the preposition ܡܢ , which makes it clear that the meaning is "carry off". In the absence of any such preposition in ode 6, we suggest that the meaning ought to be, "and brought to the Temple".

Secondly, the verb ,ܫܩܠ is taken up in v. 17 of the ode in the word ܡܫܩܠܢ.[96] The stream not only exercises a destructive effect against those who attempt to restrain it, but it also results in bringing men to life. The Temple therefore appears to represent the place of salvation.

While ode 6 is the only one in which the word "Temple" occurs, a further reference to it is found also at the beginning of ode 4.

1 No man can pervert your Holy Place, O my God,
Nor can he change it, and put it in another place.
2 Because he has no power over it;
For your sanctuary you designed before you made special places.
3 The ancient one shall not be perverted by those which are inferior to it.[97]
You have given your heart, O Lord, to your believers.

According to Harris-Mingana, "this ode is the most important in the whole collection on account of the historical detail with which it appears to commence".[98] According to them, the "Holy Place" refers to the Temple in Jerusalem, with which the odist is in a sympathetic relationship. This reference to the "real Temple" may not be explained away, either in this ode, or in ode 6.[99] J.H.Bernard rejects this, stating that if this is the case, we would have a phenomenon which occurs nowhere else in the Odes, namely, a reference to particular times and localities.[100]

Does the ode give us any further hints regarding the signifi-

cance of the Holy Place? In v. 3 we find that the sanctuary of God is referred to as "the Ancient One", which shall not be perverted by those younger than, or inferior to it. The odist also goes on to state that God has given his heart to those who believe in him.

The first line of v. 3 reminds us of ode 28. 18-20:

18 And they sought my death but were unsuccessful,
Because I was older than their memory;
And in vain did they cast lots against me.
19 And those who were after me
Sought in vain to destroy the memorial of him who was before them.
20 Because the thought of the Most High cannot be prepossessed;
And his heart is superior to all wisdom.

Here we have the ideas which are spoken about the Holy Place in ode 4. Christ is older than his enemies; they are unable to destroy him because of this. In addition, there is some close relationship between Christ and the "heart" of God.

With this idea of the heart of God, we also need to compare ode 30. Men are told to fill themselves with water from the living fountain of the Lord so that they might find refreshment (vv. 1-3). In v. 5 we read that this fountain "flowed from the lips of the Lord, and from the heart of the Lord is its name". The following verse, which states that "until it was set in the middle" men did not know it, refers to the coming of the revelation of God through the Messiah. This then implies that the Ancient One, the Holy Place, is the Messiah himself, and that Christ has taken the place of the Temple in the thinking of the odist and his community.(101)

There is a further possibility for the meaning of the Holy

Place which the ode offers. In v. 10 we read,

> Sprinkle upon us your sprinklings,
> And open your bountiful springs which abundantly supply us
> with milk and honey.

Several writers have seen in this reference to "milk and honey" an allusion to a milk and honey sacrament which was practised in the odist's community.[102] This is possible, but there is some difficulty in attempting to fit all of the alleged ritual acts of the Odes into a consistent picture.[103] In odes 8 and 19, for example, the milk clearly refers to the revelation of God, although it is suggested that the cup of milk which was offered in ode 19 represents a ritual act. In ode 35, the dew ( ) is equated with the milk of the Lord. In ode 4. 10 therefore, are the sprinklings ( ) the same as, or different from the milk and honey which flows from the fountain? The answer is not easy to determine, but whether or not we are to think in terms of sacramental imagery here, the real question concerns the significance of the milk and honey.

The milk and honey immediately draws attention to the Promised Land, the land flowing with milk and honey, and the implication then is that the odist is speaking about being brought into the Promised Land, or into Paradise. For the odist, this is represented by the community to which he belongs, and it may also be said that the odist is thinking about the Church as the Temple, an idea which is found in later Syriac writers.[104] If this is so, it would help to explain the ending of ode 22.

> 11 Incorruptible was your way and your face;
> You have brought your world to corruption,[105]
> That everything might be resolved and renewed.[106]
> 12 And the foundation of everything is your rock.
> And upon it you have built your kingdom,
> And it[107] became the dwelling-place of the holy ones.

In this ode, Christ has come down from on high, been brought up from the regions beneath, and received from God the things that are in the Middle. He has overthrown the seven-headed Dragon and made a way for those who believe in him. He has separated these from the dead and removed them from their graves, giving new bodies to the dead bones. All of this symbolises the work of Christ in bringing salvation to those who believe in him by freeing them from the power of Satan. VV. 11 and 12 quoted above conclude the ode.

The statement that God has brought his world to destruction, in the context of the saving work of the Messiah, reminds us of the stream of ode 6, which is a saving stream to those who accept it, but a destructive stream to those who attempt to restrain it. The aim of bringing the world to destruction is that everything (ܟܠܐ) might be dissolved and renewed. Similarly, the stream of ode 6. 8 "carried away everything (ܟܠܐ), and shattered it and brought it to the Temple". The work of the Messiah involves destroying everything that is foreign to God, (6. 3), and this means removing all that belongs to this world, which is a place of no reality at all (34. 5).

In place of that which has been destroyed, the Kingdom is built, founded upon the rock. The allusion to Matt. 16. 18 might lead us to expect that it would be the church which was thus founded, but the odist nowhere mentions the church. But what does he mean by the "Kingdom"?

This word occurs only twice more in the Odes, at 18. 3 and 23. 12. Ode 18. 3 says:

> Infirmities fled from my body,
> And it stood firm for the Lord by his will,
> Because his Kingdom is firm.

The odist is here relating the new life into which he has entered, the

new "stand"[108] which he has gained. He has found this because God's Kingdom is firm. The rest of the ode shows what is involved in the firmness of God's kingdom. It means the overcoming of error by the truth; the gift of victory to those proclaiming the truth so that those who are beseiged by evil may be preserved; the recognition of ignorance and error, and the ability to speak the truth through the inspiration which has been breathed into them. The Kingdom thus signifies the authority of Christ in his defeat of the forces which are opposed to God, and to belong to the Kingdom means to have accepted the victory of Christ and to live by it.

The same meaning applies to the "Kingdom" in ode 23. We find that a wheel received the letter[109] which had come down from on high, and with it was a sign of kingdom and of ܡܫܝܚܐ.[110] The ode proceeds to speak of the destructive power of the wheel which mowed down all that was disturbing it, restrained adversaries, and uprooted forests, making an open way. That this is to be understood as the work of the Messiah is seen from vv. 18f., which states that at the head of the letter was revealed the Son of Truth. As a result of this "all the seducers became headstrong and fled, and the persecutors were blotted out" (v. 20).

In ode 22, we should apply this same meaning to the Kingdom. It signifies the power and authority of Christ as he destroys the Dragon and the forces of death, thus opening the way to life for his believers. Since Satan has been vanquished, and death robbed of its victims through the opening of the graves, the only rule and authority which remains is that of God. Those who believe in the Messiah have entered this sphere of rule, and are consequently in the Kingdom. God's Kingdom has been established on the earth.

This appears to represent a completely realised eschatology, but the odist is aware that although Christ has gained this decisive

victory, the forces of ignorance and error are still very much in operation. Men are still led astray by the corrupt Bridegroom and Bride; men still answer the call of the Corruptor; there is still a war to be fought, a war in which the odist and his community are engaged. The odist is aware of all this, but at the same time, he is also so aware of the victory of the Messiah, and of his relationship to the Messiah, that he views himself as completely within the sphere of God's rule. In view of his other statement about the dependence of the members of the Messiah on one another, (3. 2), it can only be assumed that it is within the community that this certainty of salvation is actualised for him. This would then mean that for the odist, it is the community which is the Temple, the Holy Place of God, which stands secure against all the assaults of the opponents.(111)

G. THE STAND

We have already made reference in the preceding section to the new "stand" which the believer gains. K.Rudolph has shown that the concept of standing is important in the Mandaean baptismal ritual, and he relates the references to standing in the Odes to this.(112) There is no need to look to Mandaean parallels for this idea, since it is also important in the Qumran writings and in the New Testament.(113)

Ode 8. 3 states,

Rise up and stand erect (ܩܘܡ ܩܐܡ)

You who were sometimes brought low.

This call to stand is based on the fact that the hearers' "Righteousness" has been lifted up, and peace has been prepared for them before their war takes place (vv. 5-7). In v. 17 of the same ode, the verb "stand" is used again, but this time with the opposite relationship to the victory of Christ in mind:

Therefore, who can stand against my work?

Or who is not subject to them?

Those who receive the message of Christ's Victory, those who know it, will therefore not fall in the war (9. 6f.), because Christ has overcome the enemy, who has no power to overcome the believer. The believer's stand is therefore related to the resurrection of Christ,(114) and it symbolises his own removal from the sphere of death.

Related to the "Stand" is the "Covenant" ( ) This word appears only at 9. 11:

Put on the crown in the true covenant of the Lord,

And all those who have conquered will be inscribed in his book.

Much has been written on the "sons and daughters" of the Covenant in the Syriac church dealing with the question whether these were a particular group of ascetics within the church. (115) R.Murray notes the reference to the covenant in the Doctrine of Addai, quoted by Voobus, and suggests that a similar (ascetic) sense lies behind ode 9. 11.(116) Whether or not this is so depends on the meaning of the "war" in the Odes, and we have suggested above that this is not to be understood in an ascetic sense, but in terms of the contest of truth and error.

The covenant of the Odes consists of those who have gained a stand, those who will not fall when they are attacked by error. This may be related to baptism,(117) but principally it is related to receiving the fruits of Christ's victory, and thus being established.

H. PLANTING; PARADISE

The image of planting and of Paradise do not occur very frequently in the Odes, but they are important for the odist's understanding of

eschatological existence. In ode 11, both of these images occur together.[118] Here the odist pictures the believers as trees planted in Paradise, having passed from darkness to light, and from wickedness to the pleasantness of God (vv. 18-21). Apart from ode 11, the image of planting is to be found only in ode 38, where it occurs 4 times. Here it is related to the established position of the one who has walked in obedience to the truth, and not been deceived by error.

These twin themes are clearly related to being incorporated i into the community,[119] and may also be particularly related to baptism.[120]

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE ODES AND JOHN

From this survey of the concepts which express eschatological salvation in the Odes, it can be seen that there are both similarities to and differences from those found in the Johannine literature.

1. Life. The odist's use of the term immortal life, or incorruptible life (or incorruption), differs from John's use of eternal life. But the difference in terminology does not hide the essential thought which lies behind both. For the Odist, death is contrary to the will of God, and the work of the Messiah who is immortal, or who does not die, im 3. 8, or who is life in 3. 9, is the abolition of death, so that men may have life in which death has no part. For John also, Christ is the life (11. 25), and because of this, through faith in him men are transferred from the sphere of death to that of life (5. 24). For both, life means coming to Christ to have union with him (Jn.5. 40; ode 4. 11), for it is through the revelation of God in Christ that this life has been expressed.

2. Gathering. This theme is found in both the Odes and the Johannine literature. The odist however speaks of gathering men as members of the Messiah (17. 15f.); or of gathering the nations who had been dispersed (10. 5): The Fourth Gospel speaks of gathering together the scattered children of God (11. 52), or of bringing the sheep into one flock (10. 16).

3. Way. The odist does not identify Christ and the Way as John does (14. 6), and although in both John and the Odes the way is connected with the truth, the odist's understanding of the way of Christ as the way of victory over Sheol and Death is rather different from that of the Fourth Gospel.

4. Ascent. This theme which is of importance for the odist is never explicitly stated in John. It is implied in part by the idea that the goal of the disciple is to be where Christ is (Jn. 12. 26; 14. 2-3), since Christ is to return to the Father from whom he came. On the other hand, there is nothing in the Odes which corresponds to the Johannine idea that Christ will return to the disciples to take them to himself. (14. 3).

5. Renewal. The theme of the new birth occurs in John (1. 13; 3. 3,5ff.), but the idea of the renewal of the world does not. There is nothing corresponding to the destruction and renewal of the world in ode 22, nor to the new world of ode 33. Rather, in John, Jesus overcomes the world, (16. 33).

6. Temple. This idea is found in both writings, and both are probably indebted wo Qumran for this thought. However, the odist does not relate this to the death of Christ in the way John does.

7.Stand. This idea is not found in the Johannine literature, and it is also to be noted that διαθήκη does not appear either since John gives no account of the institution of the Lord's Supper.

8. Planting; Paradise. this also is not a Johannine idea. The closest that John has to this is the image of the Vine as the planting of the Father. However this image is used in a very different way from the concept of planting in the Odes. In John Christ is the Vine and the believers are branches who are joined to him. In the Odes, each believer is a tree, and the concept of union with God is expressed in terms of being with God in Paradise.

9. The realisation of eschatology. In both the Odes and the Fourth Gospel, the emphasis is clearly on the realisation of eschatological salvation. Also in both there is some consummation to be expected. John looks forward to a future new life of incorruption and a judgment, but here it is Christ himself who is the judge (33. 11). The odist does not speak of "the last day", but of "the new world".

FOOTNOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1. The term "realised eschatology" was coined by C.H.Dodd, who notes that "The expression is perhaps not very felicitous, but it has come to serve as a label"; The Parables of the Kingdom, p. viii. A.W.Argyle has argued that the concept makes no sense, since it signifies the abolition of eschatology, and he moreover points out that for all of the New Testament writers, there remains a future. This may be semantically correct, but it misses the point of Dodd's use of the term, and ignores the reservations which Dodd felt about it. See,"Does Realised Eschatology make Sense?", Hibbert Journal, 51 (1952-3), 385-387.

2. See especially R.Bultmann, John, p. 261.

3. "Unsolved New Testament Problems:The Place of Eschatology in the Fourth Gospel", ExT 59 (1947-8), 302-305. O.Bocher has shown that both future and present elements in the Johannine eschatology must be preserved side by side, and that although this tension does not exist in the Old Testament or in the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, it is present in the writings of Qumran; Der johanneische Dualismus, p. 124. W.F.Howard has pointed out that elsewhere in the New Testament, apparently contradictory eschatologies are set side by side, and he refers to Heb. 7. 2, 5; 9. 11; Christianity According to St, John, p. 118. Although this is true, the emphasis in the Fourth Gospel is decidedly on the present realisation of eschatology, and this fact needs explanation.

4. Moule sees the difference between the eschatology of the Gospel and that of the First Epistle of John in terms of this. He notes that in the latter, which is addressed to a community, the future type of eschatology comes back into prominence, although the realised eschatology is not absent; "A Neglected Factor in the Interpretation of Johannine Eschatology", in Studies in John, pp. 155-160. See also idem. "The Individualism of the Fourth Gospel", NovT 5 (1962), 171-190.

5. Die Eschatologie des Johannesevangelium:eine Auseinandersetzung mit R.Bultmann, pp. 153ff.

6. The Cultic Setting of Realised Eschatology in Early Christianity. Aune investigates not only the Fourth Gospel, but also the Qumran material, the Odes of Solomon and Marcion of Sinope.

7. op. cit. pp. 155ff.

8. The Gospel according to St. John, pp. 56-58. The Quotation is from p. 57.

9. The noun occurs 15 times, the verb 10 times, and the adjective 7 times.

10. See also 34. 6 and 38. 16 for the combination of life and salvation.

11. ܠܐ ܗܘܐ ܠܗܘܢ ܗܟܝ . J.H.Charlesworth translates this, "But it was not for them", which is a completely literal translation; The Odes of Solomon, p. 26. The meaning of the line is that the enemies did not achieve what they planned.

12. It is difficult to say whether 6. 18 ought to be so understood or not. The text has ܘܚܝܘ ܒܡܝܐ ܕܚܝܐ ܕܠܥܠܡ ܠܥܠܡ . This may be translated either, "And they lived by the eternal living water", making ܠܥܠܡ an adjective, or, "And they lived by the water an eternal life". J.H.Charlesworth adopts the first, while Harris-Mingana adopt the second. In favour of the first is the relative absence of the term "eternal life", and the fact that water in the Odes is life-giving. Ode 30. 1 speaks explicitly of the "living fountain of the Lord". See also 11. 7, "the living water that does not die". This seems to be the best way of understanding the expression, although the other cannot be absolutely excluded.

13. According to MS H, the speaker has been set on the arms (ܥܠ ܕܪܥܝ) of eternal life. The difference is caused by the substitution of one guttural for another.

14. Note the difference in terminology between what is applied to Christ and what is applied to the believer in these two verses. Christ is the one who does not die (ܕܠܐ ܡܝܬ) while the believer shall be without death (ܠܐ ܢܚܙܐ ܡܘܬܐ); Christ is life (ܚܝܐ), but the believer shall be living (ܚܝܐ). This warns us that we must hesitate before identifying the believer and his Lord. See below on the "I" of the Odes.

15. Harris-Mingana incorrectly omit the Seyame points and translate "the living one". On these two verses, cf. Jn. 11. 25.

16. Cf. Jn. 3. 16. However, the idea of "believing" is common enough in the Odes to have been used here, had there been some dependence on John. The parallelism between "knowing" and "receiving" in this ode, and that between "believing" and "receiving" in the Fourth Gospel, suggests that the odist is not writing on the basis of the Fourth Gospel.

17. Cf. Ps. 25. 3 Pesh. ܠܐ ܢܬܒܣܡܘ ܕܒܟ ܠܐ ܢܬܒܗܬܘ. The form of the verbs is similar to that of the ode, but the Pesh. uses ܢܬܒܣܡ where the ode has ܢܬܒܗܬ . Also similar, but deviating from the ode in the same way as Jn. 3. 16 does in the previous line, is Rom. 9. 33 (=Rom. 10. 11 =Isa. 18. 16 LXX), "He who believes in it will not be ashamed".

18. We have emphasised above that this line is not docetic, as J.H.Charlesworth thinks, but is based upon the odist's understanding of the Virgin Birth and the Pre-existence of Christ.

19. Cf. Jn. 8. 58. The idea is similar, but only in the sense that both John and the odist declare the pre-existence of Christ.

20. J.H.Charlesworth translates "on his immortal side". The meaning seems to

be that the odist has been lifted into the presence of God on these wings. Cf. Deut. 32. 11.

21. K.Rudolph relates this to the Mandaean liturgy, where the kiss is the sign of union with life, and it communicates power; Die Mandäer, II, 208, n. 5. The symbol was also common in early Christianity; see N.Perella, The Kiss Sacrad and Profane.

22. MS N reads ; MS H, . There is no difference in sense.

23. MS H does not have the Seyame points, reading "And it cannot die, because it is living". We have suggested above that there are some reasons for accepting this reading. Cf. Jn. 6. 63. τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ἐστιν τὸ ζωοποιοῦν.

24. On the symbolism behind this, see W.Baumgartner, "Das trennende Schwert Oden Salomos 28. 4", in Festschrift Alfred Bertholet zum 80 Geburtstag, pp. 51-57.

25. Cf. 35. 4:"But I was quiet in the Lord's legion" (= τάγμα τοῦ κυρίου).

26. Ode 28. 1 speaks of the wings of the Spirit, but there they signify protection. Cf. ode 36. 1, where the Spirit raises the speaker to the heights.

27. See above on the Spirit in the Odes.

28. Untersuchungen über den Ursprung der johanneischen Theologie - zugleich ein Beitrag zur Frage nach der Entstehung des Gnostizismus, p. 334.

29. op. cit. pp. 50-60. On p. 56 he says,"Die Fortsetzung zeigt aber, dass dieses Haben ein Haben im Glaube ist ..... Man hat also das Ewige Leben in der Form einer Verheissung. Dem Glaubenden wird das ewige Leben zugesagt".

30. The force of the Revelation sayings and particularly the Ego-Eimi sayings in the Fourth Gospel consists in the fact that Jesus presents himself as the one in whom men encounter God now, that in him life is available now, not merely in the future.

31. See W.Bauer, Das Johannesevangelium, p. 59; G.H.C.MacGregor, The Gospel of John, p. 178.

32. The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel, p. 147.

33. See below on the Eschatology of the Odes.

34. We discuss this theme later on in this chapter, but at this stage it may be noted that in ode 22 it appears as if this new world has already arrived.

35. Cf. Jn. 5. 25. It is at least interesting to note that in both the ode and the Johannine passage, it is the voice of "the Son of God" which the dead hear". The mention of "living lips" also recalls Jn. 6. 63;"The words which I have spoken to you are spirit and life".

36. Cf. Isa. 55. 11. The thought of the ode is paralleled within the Odes at 19. 3, where we read that it was undesireable that the milk of the Father should be ineffectually released. The revelation of Christ will achieve its purpose.

37. See p. 188.

38. Cf. 28. 12f. where Christ is rejected because he did good "to every man". This also appears to reflect an opinion of the opponents of the odist, that such an open invitation to Christ was unacceptable. From ode 10 we may conclude that these opponents are opposed to the invitation being offered to the Gentiles.

39. op. cit. p. 113, n. 6. See also ibid. p. 49.

40. This is the only motive given in the story for the building of the Tower, but clearly, the building is to be seen as an attack on the sovereignty of the Creator-God. See G.von Rad, Genesis, pp. 144f.

41. Or, "like gods". See G.von Rad, op. cit. p. 86.

42. We could also translate, "I became their rejection", i.e. "I was rejected by them". The verbs ܫܠܡ and ܐܫܬܠܡ occur 5 times in the Odes, the noun is found only here.

43. Harris-Mingana translate ܪܓܙܐ as "wrath", noting "zeal" and "envy" as alternatives. The word occurs only once more in the Odes, at 7. 20, where it is related to "hatred". We suggest that the lack of jealousy in Christ means that he loves all, and hates and rejects none. Although he was rejected by his enemies, he does not reject any, not even his enemies.

44. In Jn.11. 50 Caiaphas has spoken of Jesus dying "for the people" (ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ). C.K.Barrett,St. John, p. 339, notes that" ἔθνος and λαος are evidently used as synonyms". J.H.Bernard, St.John, II, 405, agrees with this. S.Pancaro however, suggests that John is distinguishing here between the people of God, the λαός , and the Jewish nation, the ἔθνος ; "People of God in St. John's Gospel?", NTS 16 (1969-70), 120-123. R.E.Brown is inclined to omit the phrase ὑπὲρ τοῦ λαοῦ in Jn. 11. 50, in agreement with some of the Patristic evidence; John, I, 440.

45. See C.H.Dodd, "The Prophecy of Caiaphas, Jn. xi. 47-53", in Neotestamentica et Patristica; "The close connection of this (the gathering of the people of God) with the death of Christ is specifically Johannine, so that it is without precise parallel elsewhere in the New Testament". This close connection is also present in the Odes, but the picture of the death of Christ is different there.

46. For a summary of the opinions of different scholars on this question see H.B. Kossen, "Who were the Greeks of John 11. 20?", in Studies in John, p.106.

47. See W.G.Kümmel, "For John also it is the death of Christ that keeps sinful men from being lost, even though this idea is not so central for John as in the primitive Community or with Paul"; The Theology of the New Testament, p. 296. But Kümmel goes on to state that the statements about Christ's death for man "are so broadly formulated that it cannot be determined from them alone just how, in John's opinion, the death of Jesus benefits the world or his people"; ibid.

48. Cf. I Jn.2. 18 : To go out from the community is to go back into the world.

49. John, p.143. See also R. Bultmann, "Die Bedeutung der neuerschlossenen mandäischen und manechäischen Quellen für das Verständnis des vierten Evangeliums", ZNW 24 (1925), 133f.

50. Cf. Ps.100. 3.

51. R.Bultmann finds this to be quite Gnostic, since he understands ܡܠܝܢܐ as "Pleroma" in all instances in the Odes. Thus for him the way leads to the Pleroma; John, P. 77. The thought of the Ode can more easily be derived from Isa. 11. 9; Hab.2. 14.

52. See below p.403.

53. This also means in obedience to the truth; see odes 17. 5; 33. 6f.; 38. 5.

54. The rivers are similar to the river in ode 6 in the sense that they cannot be stopped by the opponents of God, and are destructive to them. The same applies to the wheel of ode 23. These rivers are not the streams which bar the way to the light world, as K.Rudolf, Die Mandäer II, 62, thinks.

55. ܐܬܪܡ . This is the same word as in 7. 14, referring to the "traces of the light" which were set on the way.

56. R.H. Connolly, "The Odes of Solomon: Jewish or Christian?" JTS 13 (1914), 303f., regards this as "some sort of road post, either for direction, or simply to mark the boundary of the road".

57. MS H reads "help" - ܥܕܘܝܬܢ.

58. MS H reads "and you became" ܗܘܝܬ . This reading may have been caused by the memory of Ps.90. 1.

59. The inspiration behind this will be Ezek. 37, but the odist's idea is different. This means getting a new body which is not subject to the problems of this world; see odes 21. 4; 25. 8.

60. R. Murray, Symbols of Church and Kingdom, p. 240, regards this as one of the most certain New Testament allusions in the Odes.

61. On this verse see above p.138, n.63.

62. As also in ode 12. 12. Cf. also ode 42. 6.

63. The verb ܢܨܚ is used with Christ as its object only in ode 22 where it refers to the bringing up out of Sheol. The verb ܙܟܝ is used of Christ also to speak of his vindication. The ascent of Christ is implied rather than explicitly stated in the Odes.

64. The Odes of Solomon, p.123 n.4.

65. "A Note on Ode of Solomon XXXIV.4", JTS 37 (1936), 172.

66. Cf. Asc. Isa. 7. 10; "And as it is above, so it is also on the earth, for the likeness of that which is in the firmament is also on the earth", (tr. in NTA II, 653).

67. ܐܝܟ ܕܐ ܐܝܬ . The Greek text has καὶ ἀναζωοποιήσεν με τῇ ἀφθαρσίας αὐτοῦ J. H. Charlesworth's note (op. cit. p.55 n.22), suggests that the Greek is an interpretation of the Syriac, giving the same basic meaning. It looks more as if the Greek translators have misread the Syriac, reading ܐܝܬ for ܢܝܚ ("gave me life " for "gave me rest"), and has rendered the ܠ by ἀνά and prefixed this to the verb

68. As in ode 15.2f.

69. Cf. Matt.6.22; Col.3.22; Jas.1.8. The usage of single-mindedness in the Ode differs from that of the "Single One" in Syriac literature as outlined by A.F.J.Klijn. "The 'Single One' in the Gospel of Thomas", JBL 81 (1962), 271-178, and R. Murray, Symbols of Church and Kingdom, pp.12-15. The emphasis in the ode is totally upon the contrast between above and below.

70. Christ does not here overcome the world as in Jn.16. 33, but he captures it for himself. This captivity becomes Christ's for the glory of his Father. Note again the similarity to and difference from Jn. 17, where God is glorified by the work of Christ who has received those who have been taken from the world.

71. Cf. D. Plooij, who relates the stretching out of the hands specifically to baptism; "The Attitude of the Outspread Hands ('Orante') in Early Christian Literature and Art", ExT 23 (1912), 199-203, 265-269. We fail to see any necessary connection with baptism in this ode.

72. The ד at the beginning of the line must be the relative pronoun, as Harris-Mingana translate, not a conjunction signifying purpose, as J.H.Charlesworth takes it to be.

73. The result of this prayer is seen in ode 41. 11 where the odist's community has with them "The Word who is with us in all our way, the Saviour who makes alive and does not reject us".

74. See 27. 3; 42. 2.

75. Cf. J.H.Charlesworth, "And hallowed my Lord", op. cit. p.106. Unfortunately Charlesworth gives us no indication of what he means by this.

76. MS N gives the meaningless variant ,ܡܫܫܪ .

77. We have allowed Charlesworth's translation to stand here, but the relationship between lines a and b of this verse indicate that "extended" or "spread out" Cross is what the odist had in mind.

78. This is at the same time the coming of Christ to the believer. With Plooij, (art. cit. p.266) we could relate this to Gal.2. 20, but we do not, as Plooij does, regard this as baptismal. See also E.A.Abbott, Light on the Gospel from an Ancient Poet, p.31.

79. G. Diettrich, Die Oden Salomos, claimed the translation of Flemming and Harris (as on a chariot) was senseless. Nor did he accept the emendation of H.Gunkel who saw this as a "Himmelfahrt der Seele", and translated, "Ich stieg empor zum Lichte, wie auf dem Wagen der Wahrheit"; "Die Oden Salomos", ZNW 11 (1910), 313f. Diettrich himself regarded the chariot as the throne of God as in Ezek.1. He translates, "Ich bin hinaufgestiegen zum Lichte der Wahrheit wie zum (Gottes)-Throne". Cf. J.Daniélou, who says,"We know that the content of the Odes is baptismal, and accordingly ὄχημα appears here as a name for baptism"; Primitive Christian Symbols,p.82

80. The Language of Faith, p.53

81. G. Scholem, writing on the Merkabah mysticism of Judaism notes that in a curious and unexplained way, the ecstatic ascent is always referred to

as a descent into Merkabah; Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and Talmudic Tradition, p.20.

82. op. cit. II, 291.

83. See above on Spirit and New Birth

84. See above on the Spirit in the Odes.

85. In the Odes, man is brought into Paradise, and the effects of the Fall are done away with. See especially 11.18 - 21; 25. 8.

86. Harris-Mingana II, 385/

87. As in ode 33. 1. We have suggested above that ܫܕܐ ܚܒܠܐ means "he let loose the corruptor".

88. See below on the Temple in the Odes.

89. In that case we should possibly read, "And you became the dwelling place of the saints" as in v.12, MS H.

90. ܬܫܒܘܬܐ ܕܚܝܐ is used to render the παλιγγενεσία of Matt.19. 28. Since ode 33. 11 is one of the very rare instances of the theme of judgment in the Odes, and Matt.19. 28 also deals with a judgment scene (though quite differently from the ode), it is just possible that there is some relationship here.

91. op. cit.II, 239.

92. The Odes of Solomon, pp. 56f. J. Daniélou, Primitive Christian Symbols, p. 49, regards it as unquestionable that the odist is inspired by Ezek.47.

93. So W.Bauer; Harris-Mingana also adopt this translation.

94. op. cit.p. 57.

95. II, 235.

96. We should probably understand v.17 as "They gave them strength to come to the Temple".

97. Or "younger than it". See over.

98. II,221.

99. Cf. ibid. p.223, where it is suggested that this ode must be dated in the time of Jerusalem in ruins.

100. op. cit. p. 49.

101. E.A. Abbott, Light on the Gospel from an Ancient Poet, p.85 states, "Our author ... appears to think of the Son as the Temple". Abbott here makes reference to Rev.21. 22, but there is also a connection with Jn.2. 17-22, where the Temple of Jesus' body is contrasted with the Temple in Jerusalem. This theme is then expanded to see Jesus' body as the church. See R.E. Brown, John I, 121-125.

102. So J.H. Bernard, op. cit. p.67; E.Segelberg, Masbuta,pp. 166f.; J.Daniélou, The Theology of Jewish Christianity, pp. 333f.; K.Rudolph, Die Mandäer II, 390.

103. It is easy to see that many of the images in the Odes are later used specifically in a baptismal context. In the Odes themselves, we simply have the images, with no clear baptismal context.

104. See note 101 above. For the image in the Syriac speaking church see R.Murray, Symbols of Church and Kingdom, pp. 218-228. This same image occurs in Qumran, where the community is the New Temple; B.Gärtner, Temple and Community in Qumran and the New Testament, p. 27.

105. Or "to destruction", which seems preferable.

106. See above p.423.

107. H. has the variant ܗܘܝܬ (you became). This could be right if the odist thinks of Christ as the replacement for the Temple.

108. See next section.

109. The wheel represents the activity of the Messiah.

110. This word occurs elsewhere only at 36. 8. See above p.358 on this word.

111. See also A.Loisy, "La mention du temple dans les Odes de Salomon", ZNW 12 (1911), 126-130. According to J.Carmignac, "Les affinites qumrâniennes de la onzième Ode de Salomon", RQ 3 (1961), 100, the temple symbolises the realm of faith.

112. Die Mandäer II, 95.

113. See especially W.Grundmann, "Stehen und Fallen im qumranischen und neutestamentlichen Schrifttum", in Qumran-Problème.

114. Cf. ode 42. 6, "Then I arose ( ) and am with them".

115. G. Nedungatt refers to this group as a qyama within the qyama, "The Covenanters of the Early Syriac-Speaking Church", Orientalia Christiana Periodica, 39 (1973), 200. For a survey of the idea of the Covenant, see the whole article, pp. 191-215.

116. op. cit. p. 14.

117. R.Murray raises as a very tentative question the possibility that the Syriac word for to be baptised ( ) was connected in thought with the Hebrew עמד , to stand,; "The Exhortation to Candidates for ascetical vows at Baptism in the Ancient Syriac Church", NTS 21 (1975), 78.

118. "Paradise" occurs here 4 times. Elsewhere it occurs once only, in 20. 7.

119. On the use of the image of planting in the Qumran Community to refer to the community, see B.Gärtner, Temple and Community in Qumran and the New Testament, p.28, who also connects this image with the Temple. See also J.Daniélou, Primitive Christian Symbols, p.29, who draws attention to the "striking resemblances" between the Qumran material and the Odes of Solomon. Danielou also notes resemblances between the Odes and the Gospel of Truth and the Mandaean literature; ibid. pp. 26-29.

120. See J.Daniélou op.cit. p. 26.

CHAPTER 5

THE ODES OF SOLOMON, JOHN AND GNOSTICISM.

A. Definition.

As soon as the question concerning the relationship between the Odes and John on the one hand, and Gnosticism on the other is asked, we are confronted with the difficulty of providing a definition with respect to the latter term. As J. Munck rightly states, "Anyone intending to deal with 'Gnosticism' or 'gnostic' ideas must begin by realizing that he is using a scientific term that has no generally accepted scientific definition".(1) Is Gnosticism only that second-century movement which the church Fathers combated,(2) or ought the term to be applied also to earlier forms of thought? While we do possess in the writings of the church Fathers the accounts of what may be termed gnostic heresies, we do not possess any clearly defined system which is unambiguously earlier than this which can also be said to be gnostic in the same sense. Did "full-blown" Gnosticism then emerge only in the second century, and if so, was there some particular catalyst which was decisive in the formation of this movement, e.g., Christianity? That is to say, is Gnosticism fundamentally a Christian heresy, or was there also a non-Christian Gnosticism? If Gnosticism is a second-century phenomenon, what is the relationship between it and Gnosis? Is Gnosis a movement of thought which ante-dates Gnosticism proper, that is, a kind of incipient Gnosticism, or is it a wider phenomenon which includes Gnosticism within its scope, but which is not confined by it? Is Gnosis <u>the</u> particular pattern of religious thinking which dominated the thought of the period in question or only one such current of thought?(3) Does the adjective "gnostic" apply to Gnosticism and to Gnosis, or ought it to be restricted to the former?(4)

R. McL. Wilson, in discussing the relationship between Gnosticism and the New Testament states that "whatever the date of the emergence of Gnosticism as a fully developed religion in its own right, we have to think

rather of a mutual interpenetration in which Christianity was confronted first by the older vaguely defined Gnosis, and later by the stirrings of an incipient Gnosticism, in which each in some measure reacted to and was influenced by the other".(5) The point which Wilson makes here, and which he re-iterates through his work on Gnosticism, is that we have, in the systems of the second century, that which may be called "classical Gnosticism", and these are "a clearly defined and manageable group of systems all showing certain common characteristics". At the same time Wilson sees that there are other systems of thought which show a degree of relatedness to these, but which do not possess "exact correspondence of detail". In the absence of any clearly pre-Christian Gnosticism which fits into this pattern which applies in the second century, Wilson therefore suggests that it is preferable to restrict the term "Gnosticism" to the second-century systems, and to regard this movement as a Christian heresy, while at the same time we must remember that there are also other systems of thought related to this which need to be taken into account in the attempt to understand Gnosticism as a whole. He notes, for example, that Mandaeism and Manichaeism are related to Gnosticism, but are sufficiently distinct from it to be classified under a separate category, and the same may be said of the Hermetica and of Marcion. These, not belonging to Gnosticism proper, can conveniently be grouped under the heading of "Gnosis".(6)

The caution which R. McL. Wilson shows in his definition of Gnosticism is entirely justified in view of the way in which Gnosticism has been seen as a determining influence in so much of the New Testament by some scholars, and he provides a proper corrective to the idea that wherever concepts are found which find a place in the later systems of Gnosticism they must be gnostic at an earlier period also. He states, "There is no question ..... that the terminology and many of the ideas employed in Gnosticism were already current in the pre-Christian period, and even certain combinations of these ideas; but we still have to ask if they already

possessed a Gnostic connotation".[7] H. Jonas[8] points out that we must distinguish between "the constancy of a symbolic term (image) and the variability of meanings which it may be used to express". That is to say, the question concerning Gnostic terminology or concepts is about the use of particular concepts in specifically gnostic contexts, and any one concept may well be Jewish, Christian, Platonic, Stoic or gnostic, depending upon the context in which it is employed. Therefore, it is correct, and indeed essential to ask whether particular concepts, even if used during the period of classical Gnosticism, are gnostic, are due to the influence of Gnosticism, or are a part of the current terminology of the environment without any specifically gnostic overtones. H.-M. Schenke[9] has pointed out that the statement that a man should know whence he has come and whither he is going can be an entirely pregnant gnostic motif, but the same statement can be made by the Jew (in Aboth 3,1), or by the Stoic (in Seneca, ep. 82,6), with an entirely different understanding. Not everything that "sounds" Gnostic ought to be understood as gnostic, and we need always to be aware that just as the language and terminology of Gnosticism influenced other religious terminology, so also Gnosticism was itself influenced by other religious systems. The mere presence of any particular concept or term is no guarantee that gnostic influence is present.

The definition of "Gnosticism" and "Gnosis" which is the safest is that adopted by the Messina Colloquium on the Origins of Gnosticism. "Gnosticism" is regarded as the second-century systems which everyone agrees are designated with this term. "Gnosis" on the other hand is regarded as "knowledge of the divine mysteries reserved for an elite".[10] This is certainly the safest definition, but is one which carries with it the same problems as having no definition at all, since it still begs the question concerning the relationship between Gnosticism and Gnosis. The church Fathers claimed that this second-century Gnosticism was a Christian heresy because in some way Christian and Gnostic elements were bound together in

such a way that the combination presented a distortion of and a threat to Christianity, as seen from the church's point of view. But within the gnostic movements the combination of these two elements is found in varying degrees.(11) Sometimes they are related in such a way that we may properly speak of a Christianised Gnosticism, but in other systems the Christian element is fairly superficial, and may be removed without any serious loss.(12) Within the systems described by the church heresiologists we can see various developments which took place within the gnostic movement, and we can also see the way in which these later developments were attributed to the original founders of the movement. This growth can be documented in the case of some gnostic systems from the second century onwards, but what of the growth of the movement up to the second century?(13) If it could be demonstrated without question that the gnostic phenomenon was really a Christian heresy, and that the essential elements were fused together only by the addition of the Christian elements, the definition proposed at the Messina Colloquium would be unassailable. But if, on the other hand, there was a non-Christian Gnosticism which exhibited fundamentally the same religious view, it seems somewhat misleading to restrict the use of the term "Gnosticism" to those forms of the movement which show a clear relationship to Christianity.(14)

The difficulty here is that there is no unambiguous evidence of non-Christian Gnosticism, or at least of a Gnosticism which shows no relation at all to Christianity.(15) And even if we could speak of a non-Christian Gnosticism, this is still different from speaking of pre-Christian Gnosticism, or of a Gnosticism which arose more or less contemporaneously with Christianity, although this does leave open the possibility that such a "gnostic" system existed prior to the second century. Several scholars have attempted to show that Gnosticism developed out of the complex of ideas belonging to apocalyptic Judaism,(16) or more particularly, heterodox Judaism.(17) The fact that Gnostics made use of Jewish traditions is quite clear from

the gnostic writings, but so also is the fact that Gnosticism is characterised by an "anti-Jewish animus". H. Jonas[18] regards this anti-semitism as being of the essence of Gnosticism, although he denies that it constitutes the essence of Gnosticism, or that it is the originating cause of it. Jonas puts forward the following hypotheses with respect to the relationship between Gnosticism and Judaism.[19]

1. Gnosticism as an evolving state of mind reacted against Judaism whenever and wherever it encountered it.

2. Gnosticism originated out of a reaction (or as a reaction) to Judaism.

3. Gnosticism was so originated by Jews.

In response to these hypotheses, Jonas offers the following.

1. This is uncontroversial.

2. To posit Gnosticism merely as a reaction to Judaism is probably to give too narrow a view of it. Yet in some such polemical sense, Judaism may well have been a focal point in the genesis of Gnosticism.

3. Jonas here draws attention to the work of G. Scholem, who went to great lengths to make the distinction between Jewish Gnosticism, which was striving hard to maintain a strictly monotheistic character, and Gnostics pure and simple, who frequently borrowed material of this kind and deliberately changed it. Jonas's basic objection to Scholem's work is that the latter has applied the gnostic label to Jews who were really mystics, and he goes on to speak of "the semantic disservice which Scholem did to clarity when he called his Palestinian Hekhaloth mysticism a 'Gnosis'".[20] Jonas thus goes on quite rightly to point out that the origin of Gnosticism by Jews is really unthinkable, asking what it could have been that could have caused these Jews to trample on their ancestral faith. He therefore concludes that there are no "properly" Gnostic Jewish (i.e. Hebrew) writings.[21]

The origins of Gnosticism must remain an open question, but if

we are to adopt the definition of the Messian Colloquium, some greater clarification of the relationship between Gnosticism and Gnosis needs to be made. It is instructive to note the number of times that the expression "vaguely defined" or "nebulous" is applied in R. McL. Wilson's book, Gnosis and the New Testament, to "Gnosis", in contrast to the classical Gnosticism.(22) This may be a perfectly correct characterisation of the situation, since the precise antecedents of the second century gnostic systems, and the ways in which these have been combined to form classical Gnosticism, remain unsolved. But unless "Gnosis" is to be robbed of all significance in making it an element common to all religious systems,(23) it needs to signify a particular kind of knowledge allied with a particular religious understanding of God and man. "Gnosis" is not simply any kind of esoteric knowledge, but more specifically that knowledge which awakens man to the understanding of himself as essentially a being who belongs to the world above, and which empowers him to return there. What other elements need to be combined with this understanding of saving knowledge in order to speak of a system of "Gnosis" is open to question, but unless there is also some scheme of salvation which clearly points forward to the fully developed gnostic systems of the second century, the use of the term "Gnosis" in distinction to "Gnosticism" leads to less clarity, not more.

This inability to characterise accurately the antecedents of Gnosticism is reflected also in the use of other terminology which is frequently used: Pre-gnosticism, proto-gnosticism, semi-gnosticism, gnosticising, gnosticoid. At the Messina Colloquium, Th. van Baaren(24) drew special attention to the first two of these, and to the last. The first he rejects because the first part of the word suggests that the phenomenon so described does not belong to Gnosticism while the second part suggests that it does. Proto-gnosticism on the other hand is for him a useful word, in that it describes "those early forms of Gnosticism which have not yet arrived at the fully matured classic forms of the second

century".[25] "Gnosticoid" is rejected entirely by him, since it is "Quite frankly a word to hide our ignorance whether something is gnostic or not".

R. McL. Wilson, on the other hand, sees a "useful distinction" being made in the use of these two terms, since through them is set out the issue involved in the question of gnostic origins.[26] Those who use the former term restrict the use of the term Gnosticism to the systems of the second century, although they see the existence of ideas and themes in the preceding period which prepare the way for Gnosticism proper, looking to Jewish apocalyptic, Pharisaism, Qumran and the crisis in Judaism following the fall of Jerusalem, along with certain trends in Christian thought. Those who adopt the terminology of Proto-gnosticism find the essence of Gnosticism already present in this period, and search for origins in Iran, the Indo-Iranian world, Platonism and Orphism. But on Wilson's definition and understanding of Gnosticism, such a distinction is mis-leading. As he reminds us, Gnostic means not simply the presence of a particular concept, but "the association which these ideas came to have <u>within the Gnostic</u> systems".[27] What then is it about these ideas and themes in the period which precedes the second century which permits any mention of the word "gnostic"? If by "pre-gnostic" is meant no more than "prior to Gnosticism", Wilson remains true to his own position, but we would wish to know why there is any necessity to categorise these concepts as "pre-gnostic", instead of referring simply to that which is apocalyptic, heterodox-Jewish or Qumranian.

The use of all of the above-mentioned nouns and adjectives which refer to Gnosticism in a qualified way signify the same problem. The Gnosticism of the second century is a phenomenon which can be clearly classified. Prior to that period, there are hints of something which looks suspiciously like Gnosticism, but which does not measure up to it. Consequently it is found necessary to use language which needs to take

account of this similarity, but which at the same time needs to be kept in a separate category because all of the elements of the later systems are not present. We would therefore wish to give to "Gnosis" more content than "knowledge of the divine mysteries reserved for an elite", to see in it the earliest stirrings of the Gnostic movement which proceed to the more developed Gnosticism of the second century, and to adopt a definition of Gnosticism and Gnosis such as that stated by P. Pokorny:[28] "Unter 'Gnosis' verstehe ich die ausserchristliche Gnosis des späthellenistischen Altertums, die als ein neues Phänomenon ungefahr gleichzeitig mit dem Christentum entstanden ist, und den grossen Systemen des sogenannten Gnostizismus ihren entfaltenen und christlich modifizierten Ausdruck gefunden hat".

B. The Nag Hammadi Corpus.

The discovery of the Coptic Gnostic writings at Chenoboskion[29] has been of primary significance in the continuing discussion on the question of Gnosticism and its origins. Whereas formerly the amount of material actually written by Gnostics was relatively small, consisting mainly of Mandaean, Manichaean and Hermetic texts, and the teaching of the Gnostic systems was extrapolated from the church heresiologists, now there is at the disposal of scholars a body of Gnostic texts which were used by Gnostics. The Nag Hammadi Corpus has not been able to provide the answers to the disputed questions on the Gnostic religion, but at least it has brought about a re-examination of the Gnostic Problem, and has led to a greater knowledge of the ways in which the Gnostics thought.[30] In terms of the content of the Corpus, the following observations may be made.[31]

1. The Nag Hammadi writings are not from one single Gnostic school of thought, but represent several, and they show different degrees of relatedness to Christianity. Some show virtually no Christian influence, in some the Christian elements can be detected as secondary additions, and some are originally Christian-Gnostic writings. With respect to the last group

it is especially significant to note the way in which Christian elements which do not fit easily into the gnostic scheme of salvation can be incorporated into a gnostic frame of thought; e.g., the bodily resurrection in the Epistle to Rheginos, and the saving significance of the death of Christ in the Gospel of Truth.

2. In every system there is found a Redeemer figure, and not merely the concept of redemption. This needs to be qualified by the statement that the Redeemer figure can be a mythical figure, e.g., Adam, Seth, Enoch, Sophia, or it may be no more than the "call from beyond".(32) Nevertheless, "ein Erlöser, der aus dem Jenseits kommt, scheint für die Gnosis konstitutiv zu sein". The other-worldly character of this Redeemer is essential because of the equally essential dualistic structure of Gnosticism.

3. These writings also show that Apocalyptic is integrated into Gnosticism, and this does not appear to be a secondary stage of development. The notion of the end of the world comes in again through the dualistic thought structures, since for the Pleroma to be fully re-unified, there is the necessity not only of the ascent or returning home of the members of the light-world, but also of the destruction of that which was brought about by the disturbance within the Pleroma, viz., the material universe.(33) Therefore in the Gnostic religion, the soul may be said to ascend to the Pleroma at the point of death, or this may not take place until the destruction of the world. There is thus in Gnostic eschatology a certain tension between the Already and the Not Yet.

4. On the question of the development in Gnosis, the Berliner Arbeitskreis have drawn attention to four stages, which, however, are not to be seen as stages which clearly follow in succession, and which are not to be found in all systems. They are to be regarded as characteristics of the Gnostic religion which may pre-suppose a particular scheme of development.

(a) The basic stratum determined by Judaism, in which the demiurge is not

the God of the Jews, but in which another being (e.g. Sophia) is responsible for this world of darkness, and the captivity of the soul in this world.(34)

(b) The anti-Jewish stage,(35) in which Yahweh is degraded to the position of Demiurge, the Jews are his creation, and the Old Testament is consequently subjected to a negative allegorising.

(c) The Christianising of Gnosis, in which Jesus Christ is brought in as Redeemer. But in the earliest stages, he is added alongside other Redeemer figures, without any clear differentiation of function. Early Christian teaching is assimilated to Gnosis and each draws from the other to such an extent that the clear distinction between Church and Gnosis is hardly possible.(36)

(d) Gnosis takes over the concept, widespread in antiquity, of the God who is Macanthropos, which originally is the most meaningful expression for the ordered Cosmos, and is consequently understood pantheistically, in contrast to the radical dualism of Gnosis. Therefore, this concept can only with difficulty be assimilated fully into a Gnostic frame of thought, and it is in fact only by a re-interpretation of this concept that it can be made serviceable for Gnostic teaching.(37)

These stages of development do not allow us to see clearly the beginnings of the Gnostic religion, and still leave open many questions. If there are, for example, Gnostic systems which do not show contempt for the God of the Jews, does this suggest that there was a Jewish Gnosticism of some kind? Even if there was, how do we account for the violently anti-Jewish character of so much of Gnosticism? Was this the result of antagonism within the Gnostic movements, or did the anti-Jewish Gnosticism arise independently? And even if it were possible to detect the various antecedants of Gnosticism, we still do not know what religious, social or perhaps political factors have been responsible for the emergence of

Gnosticism as a religious movement.(38)

For the purposes of this investigation into the relationships between the Odes of Solomon and the Johannine literature it is not necessary for us to have answers to these questions. It is sufficient to be able to state that the terminological usage of the vast majority of scholars dealing with the Gnostic problem suggests that if we are to restrict the denotation of "Gnosticism" to the systems of the second century and later, there was also prior to this time a religious movement which was very closely related to this, and which may be designated "Proto-gnosticiam", or preferably, "Gnosis". Within the Gnostic religion the constitutive element is not the Christian one, but the Jewish, and Gnosis, as defined here, is not the fusion of Christianity with other sources. What the church encountered in the second century was an already existing system of religious thought, and not simply disparate elements which only become gnostic at a later stage. The incorporation of the figure of Christ into the Gnostic systems shows that Christianity encountered a Gnosis which already possessed Revealers, as well as a mythology of salvation.(39) The difference between the Gnostic systems and Christianity here is that in the latter the Revealer is quite definitely a historical person, whereas in the former this is not the case apart from those systems in which Jesus Christ has become the Revealer, through the influence of Christianity.

C. Gnosis and the New Testament.

Whether such a system of Gnosis can be pushed back into the first century, and in particular, whether it can be seen to be present in the writings of the New Testament, remains questionable. To a certain extent, arguing for or against the existence of first century Gnosis as a system of thought involves some circular argument, for there is no unambiguous evidence there, and the judgment of the texts in question will depend partially on the pre-suppositions with which we begin.(40) The New

Testament writers make no attempt to describe accurately the total nature of the false teaching which they encountered, and judgments must be made on the relatively slender indications which they give.

When, for example, we read that Hymenaeus and Philetus "swerved from the truth by holding that the resurrection is past already", (2 Tim. 3, 18), what pre-suppositions lie behind this? Does such an assertion involve a complete denial of any future resurrection? Is the assertion that the resurrection has already occurred related to ideas connected with the essential evil of matter and the impossibility of a bodily resurrection? If there was such a flesh - spirit dualism implied in the false doctrine of Hymenaeus and Philetus, what else did this involve for the total understanding of salvation which they held? Was this the opinion of the two people only, or was there a fairly strong element in the church who said the same? Are we dealing here with a mis-understanding of Pauline teaching, with an attempt to combine Pauline elements with a rather different religious thought world, or with a deliberate mis-interpretation of Paul? Had it been only the first of these, we would not really expect this teaching to be characterised as gangrene, eating its way into the body. (v. 17), nor would we expect it to have caused the problem which it did. It seems more likely that we are dealing here with the meeting of Christianity with another system of thought which possessed ideas about the nature and destiny of man which were not compatible with those of the church. Our lack of knowledge concerning the precise nature of the concepts associated with the assertion that the resurrection had already occurred does not allow us to state unambiguously that in 2 Tim. we see the meeting of Christianity with the emerging Gnostic religion,[41] but at the same time we must be open to the possibility that this was the case.[42]

Simon Magus is traditionally the father of Gnosticism.[43] The

account of the teaching of Simon as given by Irenaeus is as follows.[44] Simon was the Father of All, whose first conception of his mind, the Mother of All, was Ennoia. Through this Ennoia he conceived the idea of forming angels and archangels. She, knowing the Father's will, descended to the lower regions and created angels and powers, through whom the world was formed. These powers, knowing nothing of the Father, and not wishing to be thought of as the progeny of another, detained Ennoia, submitting her to all kinds of degradation, and imprisoned her in a succession of human bodies until finally she became a prostitute. This was the same Helena whom Simon rescued from slavery at Tyre, and who was his companion. The purpose of Simon's coming was to free Helena, and at the same time he gave salvation to men by making himself known. Therefore he descended in the appearance of a man, although he was not a man, and was thought to have suffered in Judea, although he did not suffer. Since the angelic powers ruled the world badly, each courting the principal power for himself, making rules with the intention of bringing men into bondage, Simon pledged that the world would be dissolved, and that those who were his would be freed from the rule of those who made the world.

In this account of Simonian Gnosis we see clear traces of contact with Christianity, but these appear to be secondary, with the intention of bringing Simon closer to the figure of Christ. In any case, the Christian allusions are restricted to docetic references to the earthly appearance and death of Simon in Judea, and the non-Christian reference to the Trinity, in which it is claimed that Simon "appeared among the Jews as the Son, but descended in Samaria as the Father, while he came to other nations as the Holy Spirit" (Adv. Haer. I. 23. 1). These Christian allusions can be removed from the account without any real loss of content.

In this account it is to be noted that no blame attaches to Ennoia in connection with the creation of the lower powers and of the world

which was created through them, for she was only putting into effect what she knew to be the Father's will. This is in sharp contrast to the guilt of Sophia in other Gnostic systems.(45)

The anti-Jewish bias is subdued, but unmistakeable. The Old Testament prophets uttered their predictions under the inspiration of the angels who formed the world, and therefore those who put their trust in Simon and Helena do not pay any regard to these prophecies, and are free to live as they please. This results from the fact that the angels who made the world established laws for the express purpose of bringing men into bondage (ibid. 1.23,3). But nowhere is the God of the Old Testament said to be responsible for this situation; we read only of these world-creating angels, each of whom sought supremacy, although these are pictured in terms which do apply to the Old Testament Creator in other Gnostic systems.(46)

We read nothing of the divine origin of man, but this is pre-supposed by the myth. Simon descends in order to save Ennoia, but at the same time he saves men by making himself known to them. But this must mean that if the salvation of men is added as a secondary element, the function of the myth is to show that the salvation of man, imprisoned by the angelic powers, just as Ennoia was, is parallel to hers, and that just as she was a divine being imprisoned in a human body, so too are they.(47) It is this pre-supposition which accounts for Simon's intention that "those who are his should be freed from the rule of those who made the world" (ibid. I. 23. 3).

Justin Martyr gives us very little information about Simon and his teaching. The main points which Justin gives are that Simon was considered to be a god, that a statue was erected to him as a god,(48) and that a woman named Helena, who had been a prostitute, was said to be the first idea generated by him (I Apol. 26). This information is little enough, but it does show that the basic myth of the earthly imprisonment of

Helena and the descent of Simon to free her was current in Justin's time. This Simonian teaching also exercised a powerful influence: "almost all the Samaritans and a few even of other nations worship him". Justin is clearly over_stating the case when he says that all Samaritans had become Simonians, but his language reflects the danger which this movement posed.

In the First Apology, Justin declares that not all who are named Christians actually are Christians, and that it is necessary for the Emperor to distinguish between those who are Christian by name, and those who are Christian in deed (I Apol. 7). The section in which the report on Simon and Menander occurs comes in the context of the description of the pagan worship of natural phenomena, and of the Christian abandonment of their former worship of gods such as Bacchus, Apollo. This leads on to the statement that after Christ's ascension the devils put forward certain men who said that they were gods, but Justin mentions only Simon as receiving divine honours. There is no attempt to describe the whole Simonian teaching in Justin's account, and the intention is to show that some who are called Christians are far removed from the Christian faith, and ought not to be regarded as representative of the beliefs and practices of Christians.

Nevertheless, from the few indications which Justin gives, it is certain that the Simonian teaching was being combined with Christian ideas, and that this was causing difficulty for the church. If this were not the case, it is very difficult to see why "all those who take their opinions from these men (Simon, Menander, Marcion) are called Christians", for Justin does not show any assimilation of Christian teaching in his account of Simon. This suggests that the picture of the Simonian teaching which Irenaeus gives was also present at the time of Justin, and, if his account of the spread of this teaching reflects anything like the real situation, for some time before that.

The real difficulty is in determining how much of this teaching, if any, can be traced back to Simon himself. Does the Acts of the Apostles allow us to see a form of Gnosis in confrontation with the early church? In Acts 8 we are given a little information about both the length of Simon's activity and the success which it gained. Apart from this, the only element of real significance is the statement, "This man is that power of God which is called great". (Ac. 8, 10).(49) This may very well mean that Simon regarded himself as a god.(50) But according to Acts, Simon was a magician. Has the later church made Simon into the father of all heresies, when in fact he was no more than a magician? Or has Luke undervalued the significance of Simon, while over-valuing the extent of his success, in order to show the triumphant progress of the Gospel?(51)

We believe that E. Haenchen(52) goes beyond the facts when he says that in the first century, Simon taught that the angelic powers had held Ennoia captive in men's souls in the world created by them, and that the Highest God had descended to redeem men and to free them from these angelic powers, and that whoever believed in him need worry no more about the powers and their laws, for they would be saved at the destruction of the world. But if this goes beyond the facts, to deny that Simon taught something like this is scarcely credible. How otherwise has he become the arch-heretic. As W. Foerster(53) says, "diese Beschränkung des Bildes Simons auf ungnostische Züge scheint mir unmöglich. Denn es ist ganz unerklärlich, wie Simon zum Vater der (christlichen) Gnostiker geworden ist". One could answer in terms of the tendency to attribute later teachings to the original founder of a movement, but if Simon were Gnostic, this argument cannot apply.(54)

This judgment is not intended to place the responsibility for the whole Gnostic movement on Simon,(55) but we would accept that in the first century, in Samaria and elsewhere,(56) the first stirrings of the Gnostic

movement may be detected. This movement began by being in conversation with the early Christian movement, as each borrowed from the other concepts which would make their teaching more significant and acceptable to those among whom it was proclaimed.(57) But the essential incompatibility of these religious systems soon led to confrontation, and the great danger to the church consisted in the fact that the Gnostics were saying something like that which the church was saying. There was a true "gnosis", but the "Gnosis falsely so-called" took to itself the person of Christ as Revealer, and put itself forward as the true expression of saving knowledge, without grounding itself firmly in the historicity of the revelation of God in Christ, and without thereby ascribing any real significance to the person of Jesus of Nazareth. This process we see clearly in what is called "classical Gnosticism", but there is no real reason to doubt that the beginnings of this system are to be found quite some time before the period of classical Gnosticism.

The particular section of the New Testament with which we are concerned is the Johannine literature. The question of Gnostic relationships is usually asked from two different directions with respect to this literature. In the case of the Gospel, the question concerns the possible use of gnostic language and symbolism by the evangelist, such use being either in a positive, or in a negative sense. C.K. Barrett(58) has written, "That there exists a relation of some kind between the Fourth Gospel and non-Christian Gnosticism is scarcely open to question; exactly what this relation is, is one of the most disputed problems in current New Testament scholarship". R.E. Brown,(59) on the other hand, regards Gnosticism purely as a movement "which appeared fully developed in the second century A.D.", and for him the question of possible relationships does not really arise. He does draw attention to the article by C.K. Barrett from which the above quotation was taken, but points out only that the author found, in his comparison of the theological vocabulary of the Fourth Gospel and the Gospel of Truth, "these two Gospels far apart". This

is correct enough, but he has failed to take into consideration the fact that this comparative study was deliberately directed towards determining the differences rather than the similarities in the two writings, and Barrett himself stated that there are resemblances between the Fourth Gospel and the Gospel of Truth, and that those resemblances, or to use his phrase, "John's Gnostic terminology" have to be accounted for.(60) Brown also speaks of the "tendency to postulate an earlier form of Gnosticism", which he considers too hypothetical for two reasons. Firstly, he maintains that "the figure of Christ seems to have been the catalyst which prompted the shaping of proto-Gnostic attitudes and elements into definable bodies of Gnostic thought".(61) As we have stated above, this does not appear to have been the case at all, and the introduction of Christ as Redeemer into the Gnostic systems seems to be a secondary, rather than a primary element. We would also prefer that Brown should give some content to his term "proto-gnostic", or at least to explain why it is felt necessary to use such terminology.

Secondly, Brown concentrates on the reconstruction of the Gnostic Redeemer myth as presented by R. Bultmann, and draws our attention to the work of C. Colpe(62) and H.-M. Schenke,(63) both of whom show that the Redeemer myth in this form was not extant in the first century. But to say that the myth as Bultmann gives it cannot apply at the time in question, is rather different from saying that there was no Redeemer myth with which the evangelist could have been acquainted. By way of answer to this criticism which Brown puts forward, we offer a quotation from one of his own authorities.(64) "Hier (in the Fourth Gospel) ist das christliche Kerygma insgesamt und so konsequent wie möglich in der Sprache und in den Kategorien der Gnosis zum Ausdruck gebracht, sei es, dass hier ein Gnostiker (samt seinem Kreise) das Christentum in die eigenen Kategorien übersetzt hatte, sei es, dass dieses Übersetzung vorgenommen war, um Gnostiker für das Christentum zu gewinnen. Was nun das vierte Evangelium abgelangt, das eben als Evangelium vom Anfang bis zum Ende Christologie ist, so ist es als Ganzes von der gnostischen Erlöser-Vorstellung bestimmt".

Thirdly, Brown remarks that although the theory of an early oriental Gnosticism has not been disproved, the hypothesis "remains a very tenuous and in many ways an unnecessary one".[65] He rightly points to Jewish speculation about personified Wisdom, and to the vocabulary and thought patterns of sectarian Judaism such as we find in the literature of the Qumran community, which "go a long way towards filling in the background of Johannine theological vocabulary and expression". At the same time, it is necessary to ask about the relationships between speculations on personified Wisdom and the Gnostic Redeemer myth,[66] and although we would agree that the writings from Qumran are not to be characterised as Gnostic, Brown himself states that there are "proto-gnostic" elements in them.[67] If it is possible to interpret the Fourth Gospel in terms of concepts derived from those suggested by Brown, we ought to do so. But if we cannot, and his mode of expression suggests that we cannot,[68] then the possibility of relationships with a developing Gnosticism deserves far more attention than he has given to it.

The question concerning the relationship between the Fourth Gospel and Gnosticism is not one which has been manufactured by modern scholars, but it has always been a part of the problem of the Gospel. As far as we know, the first commentary on it was composed by Heracleon, who was a gnostic.[69] The Alogi regarded the Gospel as being the work of Cerinthus, but on the other hand, Irenaeus[70] uses it in rebuttal against the teaching of Cerinthus. It is true that some modern scholars regard John as being closer to Gnosticism than to Christianity,[71] but this must remain a very dubious judgment. Apart from the teaching in the Fourth Gospel which is incompatible with the Gnostic understanding of salvation, W. Schmithals[72] has pointed out that the more we see the Fourth Gospel as a representative of Gnostic thought, the further we must remove it from the First Epistle, and this is "ein kaum zu rechtfertigendes Unterfangen". The use of the Fourth Gospel by Gnostics does not make it Gnostic, but it does suggest that here was a conceptual world in which they felt at home, even if

there were also some elements which were not suitable for the expression of their views. It is therefore quite possible that John was written in a situation in which Gnostic ideas of salvation were current, and that it was directed, at least in part, to those who were Gnostics, or who were being influenced by the Gnostic religion,[73] especially if the place of composition of the Gospel is Syria rather than Ephesus.[74]

In the case of the First Epistle of John, the problem of identifying the opponents combated by the writer is as difficult as elsewhere in the New Testament. J.L. Houlden[75] speaks of "gnostic type tendencies"; R. Schnackenburg[76] says that the false teaching was "gnostisch orientiert", although it is not possible to define this very closely. R. Bultmann[77] claims that the denial that Jesus had come in the flesh (I Jn. 4. 2f. and 2 Jn. 7) "can only be understood from the standpoint that the doctrine of the heretics is grounded in the dualism of Gnosticism, which asserts the exclusive antithesis between God and the sensible world". Like R. Schnackenburg, he points out the difficulty of any closer definition of the Gnostic system in view, but says that "in any case, it cannot be a matter of Jewish heretics (Judaisers)".[78] K. Weiss, who had earlier accepted the gnostic character[79] of the false teaching opposed in the First Epistle, expresses much more caution in his article, "Die 'Gnosis' im Hintergrund und im Spiegel der Johannesbriefe".[80] Here Weiss notes several elements of the false teaching which are characteristic of Gnosticism, but finds other elements which speak against the gnostic nature of the heresy. The first of these is the claim to know God. Weiss states that nothing is said about the nature of this God whom they knew, but he is not the Gnostic, transcendent, unknown God. Secondly, Weiss suggests that God is light and in him is no darkness at all (I Jn. 1. 5), may mean that the false teachers claimed that God was in some way a mixture of light and darkness. Thirdly, Weiss claims that the very negative view of the world which is evident in the Epistle means that the opponents combated by the author held a positive view of the world, and suggests that "mit κόσμος

[page 467 follows →

this is the case or not, if no need of redemption was felt by the false teachers, it is difficult to see why they were in the Johannine community in the first place. We are not able to offer an account of the concept of redemption which the false teachers advocated because the hints given in the First Epistle of John are too few, as Weiss rightly says. But the hints which are there are not incompatible with a Gnostic view of salvation, although they are insufficient to prove them Gnostic.(85)

Before proceeding to a consideration of other areas of thought which have a bearing on the relationship between Gnosticism and the two bodies of literature in our comparison, we ought to offer some general notes on the way in which the relationship between Gnosticism and the Odes of Solomon has been seen. In the case of the Odes, there is usually a greater willingness to see Gnostic influence than is the case with the Fourth Gospel. Five of the odes, or parts thereof, are found in the Pistis Sophia, and the first ode is recoverable only from that source.(86) But before placing too much weight on this piece of evidence, it must be said that the author of the Pistis Sophia quotes from the Odes in the same manner as he does from the canonical Psalms, that is, by way of appeal to Scripture.(87) The fact that he does so quote them is no evidence of Gnostic thought, as can be seen by the commentaries which follow on from the quotations. H. Gunkel, for example, has termed the Odes "Gnostic", but he also states that "Gnostic" must be understood in a broad sense,(88) and he notes the way in which the author of the Pistis Sophia re-interprets the text in order to make it suitable for the later Gnostics. Gunkel's characterisation of the Odes as "Gnostic" was followed by several later scholars, but again this designation is qualified in some way. L.G. Rylands deals with the Odes in his discussion of Gnostic Christianity, but he sees the beginnings of Gnostic doctrine in the Wisdom of Solomon, and he is also careful to distinguish between Gnostic Christianity and Christian Gnosticism.: "By Gnostic Christianity I mean the Christianity of Paul and of the Fourth Gospel as distinguished from the doctrine of such writers as Basilides, and

ein Terminus aufgegriffen wird, mit dem sich die Häretiker selbst identifizierten" (p. 354). Fourthly, he says that in any teaching which is to be characterised as "Gnostic", some kind of expression of redemption is to be expected. Because the heretics live in the certainty of their sinlessness, and in an apparently unbroken relationship to the world, a point of departure for the development of a teaching about redemption is to be found only with difficulty. (p. 355).

None of these points has any real force. 1. In Gnosticism we do find that God is transcendent and unknown, but it is also the case that ignorance of God is abolished through the revelation brought by Christ.(81) We do not know on what basis the false teachers of the First Epistle made their claim to knowledge of God. 2. The fact that the author of the Epistle stresses that there is no darkness in God may just as easily be derived from the life-style of the false teachers, who walk in darkness rather than the light. Fellowship with God, which,they also claimed, means doing the truth, living in accordance with the revelation of God which has been received.(82) If the conduct of the false teachers was a reflection of the nature of the God they claimed to know, there would be darkness in God. The statement of I Jn. 1. 5 is therefore a polemic against the heretics, not a reflection of their belief about God. 3. The same applies here as in 2. There is no evidence of a positive relationship to the world on the part of the false teachers, who represent what the author of the First Epistle understands by the κόσμος.(83) 4. We have no information about the way in which the false teachers arrived at the claim that they had no sin (1, 8) or that they had not sinned (1, 10). The stress which is placed on cleansing from, and forgiveness of sin through the blood of Christ in vv. 7 and 9 signifies at least that those opposed in the Epistle had no concept of sin which needed to be expiated by the death of Christ. But some form of redemption must be assumed. In view of the claim to know God, it may be that ignorance of God was that from which they needed salvation.(84) Whether

Valentinus, which I term Christian Gnosticism".[89] R.M. Grant,[90] on the other hand, has declared that the Odes are a product of Valentinian Gnosticism. W.R. Newbold, who ascribes the Odes to Bardaisan,[91] does not regard them as fully Valentinian, but finds certain elements which "certainly are Valentinian".

Whether the Gospel of Truth is regarded as the composition of Valentinus or not,[92] the relationship between the Odes and Valentinianism which has been seen by Newbold and Grant is given more thrust by the investigation of H.-M. Schenke, who has made a study of the parallels between the Odes and the Gospel of Truth.[93] He finds a remarkable number of parallels between the two writings, and sums up the results of his study in the following way: "Aus dem dargebotenen Material ist nur ein Schluss moglich; Das sogenannten Evangelium Veritatis entstammt cinen gnostischen Kreise, dem auch der Verfasser der Oden Salomos angehort".[94] An important element in the similarity of the two writings is the remarkable influence which the Fourth Gospel has exercised on both texts.[95]

Another area of thought with which the Odes (and the Fourth Gospel) are seen to be connected is Mandaeism. In 1924, R. Bultmann[96] published an article in which he drew attention to the significance of the recently discovered Mandaean and Manichaean texts for the understanding of the Fourth Gospel. In this he attempted to show that the basic elements of the Mandaean understanding of salvation were also to be seen in the Fourth Gospel, and by a very extensive use of the Odes, he attempted to draw the same conclusion. The results of this investigation were used extensively by Bultmann in his commentary on the Fourth Gospel. More recently, K. Rudolf[97] has drawn attention to many parallels between the Mandaean literature and the Odes.

The parallels which have been produced by these scholars are far too numerous to be dismissed out of hand as irrelevant, as J.H. Charlesworth seems to have done, although we would wish to modify the extent of the significance which these parallels is said to have.[98] For although there are certainly similarities between the Odes and Gnostic literature, there are also certainly differences, both from the Mandaean literature and from the Gospel of Truth.[99]

J.H. Charlesworth[100] has attempted to show that the Odes are not Gnostic, but since he advises us to accept the definition of the Messina Colloquium on Gnosticism, at which Gnosticism was regarded solely as a second century heretical movement, and Gnostic the adjective which applied to this, and since he dates the Odes contemporaneously with the Fourth Gospel,[101] the Odes could never be Gnostic. Charlesworth concentrates on the question of the kind of knowledge which is characteristic of Gnosticism and finds that this is quite different from the knowledge of the Odes. Then he lists a further nine features of Gnosticism and sees that none is present in the Odes of Solomon, although he does note that the Christology of the latter is influenced by docetic tendencies. And yet, it does seem that for Charlesworth there must be some relationship to Gnosticism for he concludes: "In retrospect it is safe to say that the Odes of Solomon are not gnostic. In prospect it appears probable that the Odes are a tributary to Gnosticism which flows from the Jewish apocalyptic mysticism .... to the full-blown Gnosticism of the second century".[102] But if the Odes are as divorced from Gnosticism as Charlesworth would have us believe, what is it about them which points directly forward to classical Gnosticism? We are given to hint towards an answer to this question, and while we would agree that the general conclusion, viz., that the Odes are not gnostic, is acceptable, the question of possible Gnostic influence on the Odes needs more careful thought.[103]

D. The Gospel of Truth.

As we have just stated, it is the opinion of H.-M. Schenke that the Odes of Solomon and the Gospel of Truth both stemmed from the same community, and that the Fourth Gospel has exercised a profound influence on both writings. We have also made reference to the comparative study of C.K. Barrett, who has drawn attention to the fundamental theological differences between the Fourth Gospel and the Gospel of Truth, and who has also shown that the theology of the latter cannot be regarded as a development of that of the former, unless we also say that such a development was also accompanied by a great deal of misunderstanding.(104) Our task at this point is not to re-iterate the arguments which have already been made with respect to the possible relationship between these two writings, but to test the correctness of H.-M. Schenke's thesis concerning the relationship between the Gospel of Truth and the Odes of Solomon.

To begin with, we offer an account of the teaching of the Gospel of Truth.(105) The Father alone exists without having originated. He brings forth his Son, the Logos, also called Jesus, Jesus Christ,(106) Saviour, through the agencies of Thought, Nous and Will, who are to be considered as powers of the Father, and not as independent hypostases. The Father then takes the Son into the Pleroma, his dwelling place, and afterwards causes the All to originate from himself. The Son is made Lord over the All, the totality of the Aeons. Only the Son can be said to have knowledge of the Father, and through him alone is the possibility of knowledge available to the Aeons. Yet it is on this knowledge that the stability and the completion of the All depends. The Aeons fail to arrive at knowledge, and seeking to find that from which they had originated, fall into unrest, terror and fright. This leads to Forgetting, and to the Origin of Plane, who becomes a personal power, the Demiurge. Being completely in ignorance of the Father, Error creates matter, and builds out of it the earthly world as a copy of the upper world, and forms the body

of man to live in this creation. Her intention is to entice some part of the heavenly being from the world of the Aeons, and to hold it captive in the body of the first man and his successors. She manages to deceive the Being of the Middle, which left its dwelling place and lives in man. This being is also described as the vapour or warm breath of the Father, which becomes cold when it sinks down into matter, and is thereby prevented from rising again. This forms the soul of man. The entanglement with matter causes an even greater degree of Forgetting. What is required is the knowledge which the Father alone can give, and which will give freedom from the captivity in matter, and allow the heavenly elements to rise to be with the Father.

The universe consists of three parts:- a) the Pleroma in which the Father and the Logos dwell; b) The Upper World, or the Place of the Middle, in which dwell the Aeons who have no knowledge of the Father; c) the Lower World, ruled over by Error. All heavenly beings, those in the Upper World as well as those held captive in matter, have need of the Father because they are ignorant of him. Although this need to know the Father was the cause of Error and Captivity, the fact that they do seek after the Father shows that some measure of unity with him has remained.

Within the Lower World, there are two classes of men.(107) One group, the creation of Error, but having within them a particle of light from the Upper World, will receive the knowledge which the Logos will impart to them. At death their bodies will be dissolved, but the light particles will ascend to the Father, to the Place of Rest, where they will no longer have any need with respect to the Father. The other group are completely the creation of Error, and are men of matter. They find themselves in a situation of fright, terror and doubt, but are unable by their constitution to receive any knowledge of the Father, since knowledge really consists in overcoming Forgetting. The knowledge of the Gospel of Truth is thus the recognition of the Whence and Whither of the soul's existence. This world,

in which jealousy and strife rule, and which is characterised by terror and fright, is nothing more than Ignorance which has taken form, and which can therefore be truly described as nothing.

The Gospel of Truth represents a fairly typically Gnostic understanding of man and his salvation. The Father, the unknown God, is separated from this material world, whose origins are to be found in a disturbance in the Upper World, not in the Pleroma itself. The Gnostic is essentially a being from the Upper World, who by entanglement in matter has forgotten his origin and his true destiny. The revelation of the Father needed to cancel out the effects of this forgetting and to release the soul from its captivity must come from that being in the Pleroma who knows the Father, namely, the Son or Logos, so that the divine might be re-united with the divine. The knowledge which the Logos brings is thus in reality knowledge of the soul's origin and destination.

H.-M. Schenke notes that for the Gospel of Truth, the world is nothing, and this idea is combined with the concept of the earthly world as a copy of the Upper World. This he holds to be true for the Odes of Solomon also. We do find this concept in ode 34, but it remains true also that in the Odes, the world is not produced through Error, but is the creation of God through his Word (ode 16). Schenke also sees Error in the Odes as a being parallel to Error in the Gospel of Truth;[108] it is "eine widergöttliche Macht", split up into a male and a female being. This personification is most evident in ode 38, where the motif of drunkenness also occurs. But we have shown above[109] that on the one hand, the "Deceiver and Error" are introduced into ode 38 as imitators of the "Beloved and his Bride", and on the other hand, the personification of Error follows on from the personification of truth in the earlier verses of the ode. In both cases the significance of these personifications is to show the danger which confronts the community unless it remains firmly led

by the truth. The image of intoxication[110] in ode 38 is different from that in the Gospel of Truth, where it signifies rather the state of forgetting into which the Aeons had fallen.

Schenke is also correct when he says that in the Gospel of Truth, saving knowledge is actually knowledge of the one God, and that in the Odes of Solomon the facts are exactly the same. But this neglects the further fact that in the former, saving knowledge is also knowledge of the Whence and Whither of the soul, and knowledge really means remembering, so that the forgetting is overcome. This is not the case in the Odes of Solomon.[111]

Nor can we find the doctrine of the fallen Aeons which is present in the Gospel of Truth, in the Odes, as Schenke does.[112] "The worlds" ( ) in the Odes signify rather the totality of God's creation with particular reference to the world of men, in distinction to "the world" ( ), which is generally used to signify mankind in ignorance of God.[113]

One particular parallel between the Gospel of Truth and the Odes which Schenke finds is that between ode 19. 1ff. and the Gospel of Truth 24. 9 - 11. We will set out the relevent passages for the purpose of the comparison, adding a few more lines to the Gospel of Truth passage. "The Father reveals his bosom. And his bosom is the Holy Spirit which reveals his secret. His secret is his Son, that the aeons may know him through the mercies of the Father and cease to weary themselves by seeking for the Father, being at rest in him, knowing that this is the rest" (G.T. 24. 10 - 20). The relevant passage in the Odes runs as follows:

2 The Son is the cup,
And the Father is he who was milked,
And the Holy Spirit is she who milked him.

3 Because his breasts[114] were full,
And it was undesirable that his milk should be
ineffectually released.
4 The Holy Spirit opened her bosom,
And mixed the milk of the two breasts of the Father.

The thought of both is similar to the extent that both deal with the revelation of God through his Son, and with the activity of the Holy Spirit as a medium for this communication. There is also a further point for comparison in the mention of the "bosom". But in the ode, it is not the bosom of the Father, but of the Holy Spirit[115] which is mentioned, and the Holy Spirit is not identified with the Father's bosom as in the Gospel of Truth[116] In the ode, the revelation is not made to the Aeons who will thereby come to knowledge of the Father, but to the world ( ); [117] out of which some come to receive what is offered, and so belong fully to the right hand[117a] (v. 5). The thought is similar in several respects, but dis-similar enough to show that the relationship between the two writings is more in terms of a separate development of common images, than in terms of a development within a common religious tradition.

The understanding of pre-destination is different in the Odes and in the Gospel of Truth. This is the result of the different ways in which the relationship between God and the created order are viewed in the two writings. But although there is apparently a fairly strong element of pre-destination in the Odes, the issue of whether man comes to saving knowledge or not is determined by his willingness to know God, and not by the way in which he is constituted.

This emphasis on the differences between the Odes of Solomon and the Gospel of Truth is not intended to deny the fact that there are many similarities of language and concept between them. But these similarities are more probably due to the fact that both writers drew on a

common stock of idea s than to the fact that both wrote within the same circle. Several of the ideas and terms which they use in common can be derived from Jewish or Christian sources, and the fact that both use the imagery of planting, or Rest or Paradise, or that in each there is the duty to live a holy life, or that the concept of the underworld and Christ's victory there is used by both writers, is no evidence that the two are related in any direct way.

Instead, we should probably think in terms of the influence of Jewish Christianity not only on the Odes, but also on the Gospel of Truth.

THE "I" OF THE ODES OF SOLOMON.

One of the major problems which must be resolved in the interpretation of the Odes is that of the correct identification of the "I" who speaks in them.(118) It has been noted by several scholars that the figures of the speaker(119) and of the Messiah appear to coalesce, and it is further suggested that in ode 17 the speaker, in this case odist, is hailed as "Lord Messiah".(120) Abramowski accordingly sees in the Odes two sons, a filius proprius and a filius adoptivus, between whom, in the final result, there should be no distinction. Or, it may be said, not only do the Odes speak of two sons, but also of two Christs, since the adopted son ultimately is identical with the one who is peculiarly the Son.(121) It is therefore essential to attempt to ascertain the identity of the "I" of the Odes, and to determine his relationship both to the Messiah and to the community in which he lives and proclaims his message.

An indication of the status and office of the speaker is perhaps given in ode 20. 1f., where he says,

1 I am a priest of the Lord,
And him I serve as priest.
2 And to him I offer the offering of his thought.

It has been claimed that the speaker has a significant cultic function to perform within the community.(122) This may well be so, but there are some difficulties in this ode which prevent us from stating too quickly that the speaker must be a priest of a different order from others in the community. In the first place, the priest who offers (ܩܪܒ) the offering (ܩܘܪܒܢܐ) of the Lord's thought in v. 2, commands his listeners in v. 5 to offer (ܩܪܒ) his inward being faultlessly, and the content of the offering is similar in both cases. The offering of the priest is "righteousness, and purity of heart and lips" (v.4), and the offering which

he demands his listeners to make involves showing compassion, avoiding oppression, and not depriving others of their rights (vv. 5f.). The use of identical terminology to express the act of offering at least raises the possibility that not only the speaker, but also the recipient of his message, exercises a priestly function. Or, perhaps more correctly, it could be said that those to whom the odist speaks are being called to participate in the same priestly ministry. This would then mean that there are also others within the community who act as priests, or even perhaps that the whole group is to be regarded as fulfilling a priestly function.(123) With regard to the status and function of the speaker, this will then mean either that he exercises some particular cultic function within the community, and this function is not shared, or that he stands as the representative of those who have already become a part of this priestly ministry. These alternatives are of course not exclusive, for it is quite possible that he does speak in a representative fashion, and does at the same time hold a particular office.

This question is bound up with the second feature of this ode, viz., that this is the only ode in the whole collection of hymns in which the imperatives and pronouns associated with the hearer are in the sing. and not plural. Does the sing. possess any significance, or is it to be regarded as simply a form of address which implies plurality? It could be suggested that this is an address to one who wishes to be enrolled in the professional body of the priesthood, but quite apart from the difficulty caused by the fact that this ode contains the only instance of the word "priest" and our consequent ignorance of the cultic officials of this community, the picture of salvation in vv. 7-9 of this ode is so similar to that found throughout the rest of the collection, that a more general application for the imperatives is demanded. But neither does there appear to be any reason to envisage any private instruction to a potential member of the community, and we ought to look for the explanation

of the use of the sing. in other directions.

There is very little specific ethical instruction in the Odes, and apart from ode 13, which is in any case very difficult to interpret and which may not contain a specific moral command, the particular injunctions are to be found only in this ode. Harris-Mingana[124] suggest that the ethical demands here could be derived in substance from Ex. 22:24-26 or from Isa. 58. In the case of the former there is a general resemblance in content, but not sufficient to suggest actual dependence. With Isa. 58 the situation is somewhat different, and it is on this chapter that Harris-Mingana concentrate. The number of allusions to Isa. 58 which they find in the whole of the ode is worthy of note, but there are no quotations.[125] However, in the section of Isa. which is seen as significant for the ode, the address is entirely in the sing., and it is therefore possible that having begun from there, the odist has also employed the same mode of address. Yet in the absence of any actual quotation it is difficult to see how the odist is dependent on the O.T. for his mode of expression here. What did he wish to imply by the use of the sing.?

It could be that the sing. is used in these ethical imperatives and the consequences which follow from them because essentially such ethical demands must be directed to the individual;[126] i.e., because each must make the decision whether to live in accordance with these precepts or not. While this is the case, the same can be said of the other imperatives throughout the rest of the Odes, and this therefore does not explain the use of the sing. here. Alternatively, the sing. could be here regarded as having a corporate significance, indicating the essential unity of the hearers. To this a similar objection may be raised, namely that we have nothing comparable to this in the rest of these hymns. But it would be in keeping with the odist's conception of

the community as the members of the body whose head is the Messiah (17:16f), or as the Bride (38:11), or with his understanding of the interdependence of the members of the body (3:2). This does not explain why the sing. is used, but probably is the best way of understanding how it is used in this particular ode.

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that if the "I" of the Odes has a priestly function to perform, this is a function which is shared by the community as well. This is not to deny that there are cultic officials within the community, for it would appear that at least one such group is mentioned in ode 6.(127) Nor is it to suggest that the speaker did not act in some specifically priestly manner, for this is entirely possible. It does however suggest that the emphasis in the Odes is not on this "I" as a particularly important cultic official who stands in some category apart from all others, but on the function which that "I", and others after - or perhaps alongside of - him will exercise. It further suggests that we ought to exercise caution before elevating this individual to the status of Messiah.

In attempting to discover the significance of the "I" of the Odes, we must therefore ascertain his relationship to the other members of the community as well as to the Messiah. As a first step towards the resolution of the question, we ought to consider the different types of hymn which are found. From the point of view of the use of the 1st sing. pron., we can distinguish four groups. a) Those in which this pron. does not occur at all, and in which there is no address to, or inclusion of, others. In this group there are only two odes, 24 and 32. b) Those in which "I" as such is not used, but in which this individual can be seen as speaker through the imperatives which are spoken to the group, or those in which he is present through the use of the 1st pl. pronoun: 8, 13, 30, 33, 34, 39. c) Those in which "I" occurs without any

specifically corporate reference combined with it, and which therefore have the appearance of being purely individual hymns. These hymns deal with the speaker's crowning (1), his prayer for deliverance and declaration of confidence in God's salvation (5), the creative activity of God through his word (16), the Lord's saving activity (21, 25), the odist's prayer as the Lord's sign (27), the answer to prayer (37) and the renewal and the ministry of the odist (29).[128] d) The fourth group includes about half of the whole collection, and comprises those odes in which the pron. "I" is used together with a pl. imperative, or with the 1st pl. pronoun. Of these four groups, the most significant ought to be (c), since if there is anything to be discovered about the "I" who speaks which is peculiar to him alone, it is in these apparently individual hymns that it will be found. And in fact they are significant, but for precisely the opposite reason, for in this group of odes we find nothing which is not said of the community in the other groups.[129]

On the basis of ode 3.7, R. Abramowski draws the conclusion that there are two sons spoken of in the Odes, the <u>filius proprius</u> and the <u>filius adoptivus</u>, and from ode 17 he concludes that the latter becomes elevated to the status of Lord Christ, so that in the final analysis these two sons are undifferentiated.

7 I am united, for the lover has found the Beloved,
Because I love the son, I will be a son.[130]

It is undoubtedly correct to say that we read here of two sons, but it is equally correct that the sonship of the speaker is not limited to him, but is something which is shared by the community also, as the following vv. show.

8 Indeed he who is joined[131] to him who is immortal
Truly shall be immortal.
9 And he who delights in the life
Will become living.

The attribution to the believer of terms applicable to the Messiah applies not only to the speaker, but to anyone (ܐ ܕܡ) [132] who fulfils the conditions, and we are therefore not at liberty to speak of two sons only, but of many. [133] Unfortunately the beginning of this ode is missing [134] but enough is extant to show that the speaker views himself as a member of a group on whom he depends, and whose experience of salvation he shares (5.2).

In some of the odes, the speaker's place within the community is shown through the transition from the 1st sing. pron. to the 1st plur., while in a couple of instances the use of the "I" has no particular significance. Ode 4 begins, "No man, O my God, changes your holy place", and this is the only occurrence of the 1st sing. pron. in the ode, which speaks of the certainty of salvation in God and which requests a fulfilment of God's promises. The "my" of v. 1 passes over naturally into "your believers", to whom God has given his heart in v.3, and into the "us" and "we" of vv. 9f., which speak of man's need of God and which make the request for the bountiful gift of God. The "I" who speaks here is clearly one with the community to whom he speaks, and whose expectation and certainty of God's saving activity is the same as theirs. [135] In ode 14 we again find both sing. and plur. prons. used, but here the distribution is the opposite of that in ode 4; for this hymn, a prayer for the continued kindness and mercy of God, is spoken almost entirely in the 1st sing., and only in the last two lines do we encounter the plural. The last two vv. read,

9 And according to the multitude of your mercies
So shall you give to me,
And hasten to grant our petitions.
10 For you are sufficient for all our needs.

The most natural way of understanding vv. 9c and 10 is as a response by the worshipping congregation who thereby make their own the prayer to,

and the expression of confidence in, God.[136] In these and the other odes in which we find the change from "I" to "we" or "us", the speaker is in no way set apart from those to whom he speaks, but shares with them the same experience of God's salvation.[137]

In fact, throughout the whole collection of odes, the benefits which come to the odist are shared by those who hear him. He is crowned (1, 5, 17, 21), and he calls on his listeners to put on the crown (9, 20). This may imply a difference between the odist and the rest in view of the fact that the crowning is an accomplished event in his case while it is still in the future in theirs. But ode 9 makes a distinction between those who have already conquered and those who have not yet done so, and the context implies that the former are also already crowned, and that the pre-condition for this is entering into the true covenant of the Lord (9:10-12).[138] In ode 11 the odist is carried into Paradise, which causes him to give thanks to God for the blessedness of those who have entered Paradise in which there is abundant room.[139] The odist speaks the truth because God has filled him with words of truth (12:1f.), and so also the wise speak the truth, through the inspiration which God has breathed into them (18:15). The members of the odist were strengthened and sickness was removed from him through God's power (18:2f), and this corresponds to the effects of the water for the thirsty in ode 6:14ff. The odist puts on the Lord (7:4), while his hearers put on the grace of the Lord (4:6) or the name of the Lord, which is the equivalent of putting on the Messiah who speaks as Wisdom in 33:12.[140] God's word comes to the odist (38:3), and it is also said that the dwelling place of the word is man (12:12).[141]

There may appear to be some difference between the odist and the remainder of the community in the fact that while the former is said to clothe himself with light (21:3), or to put on incorruption (15:8), this is not said explicitly of the latter. But it is stated of the believers

that "the traces of the light were set upon their hearts" (10:6).[142] It has been noted above that the experience of the odist in ode 11 is that of other believers, and so when he says

11 And the Lord renewed me with his garment
And possessed me by his light,

we may be sure that he predicates this of believers generally.[143] In ode 33:7 the command to "leave the ways of that corruptor (or corruption) and come near to me", together with the promise

12 And they who have put me on shall not be injured,
But shall possess incorruption in the new world,

indicates that salvation consists in turning away from the corruptor to the Messiah, which is at the same time a putting off of corruption and the putting on of incorruption. It can also be seen that the newness or renewal of the odist (11, 17, 36) is understood to belong to believers generally in odes 8, 11 and 41.

This correspondence between the salvation experience of the odist and that of the community generally does not imply that he has no particular function to perform within the group, nor does it imply that he holds no particular office, but it does mean that he is to be seen within the group as a member of it rather than as the Messiah or the one who becomes Messiah. R. Abramowski wishes to make the distinction between those odes in which the odist speaks as <u>filius proprius</u> and those in which it is not certain which son is the intended speaker,[144] but the very fact that it is not easy for him to distinguish the two groups simply demands more caution in the matter. The odes which may support Abramowski's position are those in which the specific ministry of the odist is mentioned, and it is this aspect of the Odes which must now be examined.

a) ode 15:9 - 10

In the first eight vv. of this ode the speaker describes the

illumination which he has received, and the renewal and salvation which is its consequence. The concluding vv. read,

9 Death has been destroyed before my face,
And Sheol has been vanquished by my word (,ܡܠܬܝ).
10 And eternal life has arisen in the Lord's land,
And it has been declared(145) to his faithful ones,
And been given without limit to all that trust in him.

There is nothing particularly startling here.(146) The way in which death and Sheol are abolished through the word of the odist is made clear in v. 10, viz., through his proclamation of eternal life which becomes known to those who believe(147) in God, and who trust in him. The word of the odist is the word of life in so far as through it men believe and trust in God, and so come to know and receive eternal life.

b) ode 18:4-7

4 O Lord, for the sake of those who are in need
Do not dismiss your word from me.
5 Nor, for the sake of their works
Withhold your perfection from me.
6 Let not the light(148) be conquered by darkness
Nor let truth flee from falsehood.
7 Let your right hand set our salvation to victory,
And let it receive from every region
And preserve all who are afflicted by ills.

Here it will readily be seen that the word by which the odist carries on his ministry is not his own, but only as God gives him the word to speak is it possible for him to lead men to life and salvation.(149) There are however, many difficulties in the way of a satisfactory interpretation of this ode.(150) Verse 4 reads quite satisfactorily, except that we would want to ask why God should wish to remove his word from the speaker. This problem is repeated in v. 5 where "for the sake

of their works" the odist requests that God will not withhold his perfection from him. This perfection is seen to be the will of God in v. 8, where it is contrasted with falsehood and death, and it is directly related to the word of God through the statement that "falsehood and death are not in your mouth, my God".(151) It is God's will that men should have life, and in asking that God's perfection be not withheld from him the odist is again requesting that he may be able to offer the word of truth and life in place of the falsehood and death with which he is confronted.

Therefore we need to ask, what does "for the sake of their works" ( ) mean? The translation above suggests that the works of the needy in some way constitute a mitigating circumstance; i.e. that because of their deeds they deserve to hear the word. However, we have no reason to suppose that the works of the people in question are meritorious, and such a view makes even more inexplicable the suggestion that God would wish to withhold his will from them. It is more likely that the should be translated not "for the sake of", and that the odist is saying that even if their deeds are evil, surely God will offer to them also the opportunity of life. That is, he is saying, "Do not withhold the word of life from them because of the deeds they have done".(152) This means that the same translation holds also for v. 4, and that it is not simply a plea on behalf of the needy, but a plea that their situation of deficiency ought not to be regarded as a sufficient cause for the removal of the word of life from them. The term occurs in ode 4:9 of man's need of God, but the only other absolute use of the word is found in ode 24:9, and in a context which is much closer to ode 18 than is ode 4. There those who were defective ( ) perished, because they had no wisdom or truth, and they stand contrasted with those who know the way and the grace of the Lord. This interpretation is rather more difficult to bring out in the translation of this ode, requiring something like "because of the defectiveness of these people" rather than "because of those who

are defective", but it is more likely that this is the meaning here.(153)

This interpretation is assisted by the way in which the request is formulated in the ode. For the wording of v. 4 is not ... but ... . This is the only use of the word in the Odes, and this in itself suggests that it signifies more than a simple "not". Its meaning is "that - not" "lest" - "not", and is also used in questions where the answer expected is in the negative.(154) The meaning of the sentence thus becomes, "You will not remove your word from me because they are deficient, will you?" If we are to give any significance to the use of the translation "for the sake" to render becomes almost impossible.

It is difficult to decide whether v. 6 ought to be regarded as a further element of prayer, or as an expression of confidence that the light will not be conquered, and the truth will not flee before falsehood. In part the decision depends on the interpretation given to the preceding vv., and on the interpretation offered above it is more natural to adopt the second alternative, though either is possible. In the previous vv. the odist has asked and answered the question concerning the fitness of those who are deficient in wisdom and truth to receive the word of life. He now follows this in vv. 6f. with the assertion that in speaking with these people the light and truth which he seeks to communicate will not be overcome by the darkness and falsehood which characterises them. Or, otherwise expressed, that he as one who has been illuminated and who has received the truth will not be conquered by those who oppose him.(155)

The last line of v. 7 contains a particular difficulty for the translation, but while this alters the emphasis in any interpretation, it does not appear to change the basic sense. The line reads; . The problem consists in the which is sometimes read as .(156) If at all possible the text ought

to be allowed to stand, since both Syr. mss. offer the same reading, and the possibility of both copyists making the same error is made more remote by the fact that ܒ ܠ ܥ ܠ is the more usual expression to find.(157) But on the other hand, when Charlesworth says, "We should not delete the ܒ because it is in both manuscripts, and because of the beautiful linguistic parallelism and assonance between the second and third lines of this seventh verse",(158) it may be argued that the ܠ ܥ ܒ of the second line has caused a ܒ to be introduced into the third. It is also impossible to read v. 7c without thinking of Ps. 121.7, and this could also be the cause of introducing a ܒ which was originally not present.(159) Finally, it may be said that we do not know enough of the history of the transmission of the text of the Odes, and therefore it cannot be stated with certainty whether such an error could have been introduced so as to have been included in both mss.

But if the text is allowed to stand, how is the ܒ to be interpreted? Charlesworth's translation of the line, "And preserve <u>on the side of</u> everyone who is besieged by misfortune", is scarcely of help, since it is difficult to give any real content to this idea in the verse, as Charlesworth virtually admits in his note.(160) If it were possible, the most satisfactory solution would be to understand the ܒ in a partitive sense - "Let it (your right hand) preserve some of all those who are besieged by ills" - but in this case the ܠ of ܠ ܥ ܠ is not required. It is extremely difficult to arrive at a completely satisfactory rendering of the phrase, but the only real difference of interpretation is that the odist speaks either of all or of only some who are to be preserved. This is of course a not inconsiderable theological difference, but this question is answered in the later vv. of the ode, where we find at least some of the ignorant confirmed in their ignorance, and so refusing to receive the truth.(161)

In the last line of v. 7 we also meet the expression ܕܒܝܫ ܒܫ , which is variously translated "affected by ills", "Besieged by misfortune".(162) While ܒܫ can possess the relatively neutral sense of misfortune, it is extremely unlikely that this is the sense intended here. The whole context speaks of the danger of the light being overcome by the darkness, of truth fleeing from falsehood and of bringing salvation to victory, and to proceed to speak of experiencing bad luck in the midst of concepts such as these would be irrelevant in the extreme. We require a much more theological content to the word, and this is provided by a meaning like "evil deeds". The meaning of the clause is thus not "those who are besieged by misfortune", but "those who are caught or held fast by evil(163) that is, those who through their lack of knowledge of God are caught up in, and unable to free themselves from, evil.(164)

For the first line of v. 7, "Let your right hand set our salvation to victory", two interpretations are possible. In the first place, it could be seen as a request or as a statement of confidence that the salvation of the speaker and of those on whose behalf he speaks will be seen to be victorious in the confrontation with the error and falsehood which surround them. That is to say, the emphasis would lie on the fact that the odist and the truth he represents will not be overcome. Secondly, and related to the first but placing the emphasis in the opposite direction, the bringing of their salvation to victory could be seen in terms of the effects spoken of in lines b and c. That is, the victory of their salvation consists not simply in the sense that they are not overcome so that they too fall into error, but in the more positive sense that those who are now in error come to recognise this, and become followers of the truth. Their salvation is victorious in so far as God's right hand receives men from everywhere (ܡܢ ܟܠ ܕܟ), and preserves those who are caught in evil. The word of life which the odist and his community possess is

not for them alone, but for all men, and it must be proclaimed in the hope that those who now reject it will finally accept it and find truth and life.(165)

The closing vv. of the ode indicated the results of this confrontation. Verses 8 - 10 state that God has nothing to do with falsehood, death, vanity or error, and vv. 11 - 15 show the cleavage which comes from the encounter between these and the word of God. The vain people ( ) regarded their ignorance as something great (12 a), that is, they believed in their ignorance that they possessed the truth, which resulted in their being confirmed in the futility of their thinking, becoming themselves a copy of ignorance (12 b).(166) The wise (those who know) on the other hand understood and meditated ( ), were unpolluted in their thoughts, mocked those who walked in error, and spoke truth from the inspiration (- breath)(167) which the Most High breathed into them (vv. 13 - 15). The "wise" here are not those who are presumed to belong to the community throughout the whole of this ode, but those who formerly were defective but who now have come to receive the truth and to reject error.

This whole ode thus deals with the ministry of the odist in confrontation with the ignorance and error which surrounds him and his community. Some apparently believe that there should be no contact between the two groups, fearing that this will result in the distortion of the truth or the total suppression of it. He however engages in the task, knowing that he has been enriched by God's love and strengthened by him (vv. 1f.). For he knows that it is through the word of God that he carries on this struggle, and that it is through God himself, by his own right hand, that victory will be achieved, and men turned away from error to truth. All the way through it is God who is the chief protagonist, and the odist merely his mouthpiece. This indicates no messianic figure, but one who stands in

a long line of those who have proclaimed the word of God, and who look to God to bring his word to fruition.

c) ode 29.7 - 11

7 And he revealed to me his sign
And he led me by his light.
8 And he gave me the sceptre of his power,
That I might subdue the devices of the Gentiles,
And humble the power of the mighty.
9 To make war by his word,
And to take victory by his power.
10 And the Lord overthrew my enemy by his word,
And he became like the dust which a breeze carries off.
11 And I gave praise to the Most High,
Because he has magnified his servant and the son of his maidservant.

Of this ode Borsch says, "In the midst of phraseology like that used of and by kings of old, we find that the speaker is not the Messiah."(168) Yet he has experiences just like his. It is not easy to believe that this can be passed over by saying that a Christian is here identifying himself with the experiences of Jesus and can thus act as the victorious and conquering one who takes unto himself the very powers, duties and attributes of the Messiah. Might not the psalmist instead be the representative Messiah - below who has been appointed to act in the office of the Messiah - above who reveals himself to him?"(169) That some of the language here is reminiscent of the language of sacral kingship is no doubt correct, but the very forced interpretation which Borsch gives must be rejected on the grounds both of the other odes which we have examined, and more particularly, of this ode itself.

The "rod of his power" with which the odist is armed in

v. 8 is clearly seen to be the word of the Lord in vv. 9f. Therefore it is also stated that the one who gains victory is not the odist, but the Lord (v.10). That is to say, although the speaker can say that he has been given power for his fight with his enemies, the warfare is actually the Lord's, and it is the Lord who grants the victory.(170) It is not certain how closely we can define the opponents who are called "the Gentiles" ( ) or "the men of might" ( ). As far as the former are concerned, it can be seen from ode10 that Gentiles were incorporated into the community of the odist, and that perhaps their very inclusion constituted a problem for the community.(171) The mighty men are more difficult to define, since we have nothing in the Odes with which to compare the expression. However, the most natural understanding of the term in the ode is that these men were particularly powerful men who opposed the odist and his group, and were perhaps the representative speakers of the opposition, i.e., the chief antagonists who represented the Gentiles. In any event, the result of the contest is found in v. 10, where the defeat of the enemy results in his becoming "like the dust which the wind carries off". This is an allusion to Ps. 1:4, and thus designates the enemy as the wicked, the opponent of the righteous, who is revealed as one who does not love God.(172) The picture here is precisely that of odes 15 and 18, and shows us a man armed with the word of God defending the truth against the assaults of those who either reject it, or attempt to subvert it.

In order to place this ministry of the speaker in perspective, it is necessary to consider also the other ministries which we find in the Odes. In ode 6 the "I" speaks, but the only significance of this is that the 1st sing. pron. designates him as the speaker. He is the one who through the inspiration of the Spirit of the Lord declares the saving activity of God (vv. 1f.). Nothing at all is said of the speaker's participation in this saving activity, he simply speaks about it.

The ode begins with a description of the victorious warfare of God, who destroys whatever is alien ( ), so that nothing should be in opposition to him ( ). As a safeguard against this destruction, God has multiplied his knowledge, being zealous that those things should be known which through his grace have been given to us (v. 6). In vv. 8ff. we have described through the imagery of the stream which cannot be withstood and from which the thirsty drink these same elements of the destruction of the opponents of God and the multiplication of knowledge.(173) In between stands v. 7, which poses some problems of interpretation, but which is significant for the understanding of the whole ode.

7 And his praise he gave us on account of his name,
Our spirits praise his holy Spirit,

The above translation is that of Charlesworth, who renders by "on account of his name" in an attempt to provide a more satisfactory meaning to the preposition.(174) But the meaning of the verse requires more than the statement that God has provided man with his praise. In the first place, the of line a takes up the of line b of v. 6, and so v. 7 a indicates something which is concerned with those things which God has given and which he is zealous to have made known. In the second place, v. 7 b is more than a simple statement that we praise God. The emphasis rather seems to lie in the unity which exists between the spirit of man and the Spirit of God, a unity which has been created by that which God has given. It is thus more probable that the of is the sign of the direct object, and that the latter part of the line means "He gave us his name". This creates some problems for the of the beginning of the line, since without any accompanying preposition, it is most naturally taken as the object of .(175) However, for the

whole line we require something like "For his praise (or, as his praise) he gave us his name".(176)

These vv. therefore indicate that through the knowledge of God, through making known those things which God has given in his grace, those forces which oppose God are vanquished and men come to belong to God through the reception of his name, find union with him in spirit, and thus praise him for his salvation. Whatever the precise significance of the stream of vv. 8ff.,(177) it is clear that the effects of the ministry of the "servants" to whom the water was entrusted in vv. 13ff. correspond to the aspects of salvation spoken of in the earlier part of the ode, for they refresh parched lips, and arouse paralysed wills (v. 14); those about to die ( ) they hold back from death (v. 15). This may not correspond exactly to "Death has been destroyed before my face, and Sheol has been vanquished by my word" (15.9), but if not, there is very little difference. The servants restore and set up limbs which had collapsed (v. 16), and they have given strength for the thirsty to come(178) and illumination for their eyes (v. 17).

Charlesworth translates the last v. as follows:

18 Because everyone recognised them as the Lord's
And lived by the living water of eternity.

He thereby makes the "them" of line a refer to the ministers, suggesting that the effects of the saving draught have been accomplished because ( ) these servants were seen to be ministers of the Lord, although he does leave open the possibility that this could also mean that they recognised themselves as the Lord's.(179) Neither of these explanations is satisfactory. For the "everyone" ( ) of line a is construed as we would expect with a sing. verb, while the verb at the beginning of line b is plural ( ). While it is not impossible that such a change from sing. to plural should have occurred, it is much more

likely that the plural verb refers to the "them" ( ) of line a, and that these people are the thirsty who have been refreshed by the water. We should therefore wish to translate,

So that ( ) everyone recognised them
as the Lord's,(180)
And they lived by the living water of eternity.(181)

This then means that because they have been given this saving drink they are now seen to belong to the Lord, and they participate in eternal life. The "everyone" is thus not those who are spoken of as receiving this salvation in the preceding few vv., but all who already belong to the community and who now, by their recognition of these other people as the Lord's, accept them into their fellowship.

This has happened through the ministry of the servants ( ), whose function is closely related to God's desire that "those things should be known which by his grace have been given to us".(182) As they have declared the knowledge of God, those who thirsted for it have been freed from the danger of injury and death, and have found eternal life in the fellowship of God. This differs in no essential way from the description of the ministry of the odist as it has been related in other odes.

Is it possible to define these servants to whom the water was entrusted any more closely? Ode 7 has language which in some sections reminds us of what has already been found in ode 6. It begins with an account of the diminution of the greatness of the Lord so that he can be received by man. The ode further speaks of the appearance of the word of knowledge so that man may recognise him who made him; that is, it is "towards knowledge he has set his way, he has widened it and lengthened it and brought it to complete perfection" (v. 13). Verses 16ff. continue,

16 And because of his salvation he will possess everything,
And the Most High will be known by his holy ones.(183)

17 To announce to those who have songs of the coming of
the Lord,
That they may go forth to meet him and may sing to him,
With joy and the harp of many tones.
18 The Seers ( ) shall go before him,
Any they shall be seen before him.
19 And they shall praise the Lord in his love,
Because he is near and does see.
20 And hatred shall be removed from the earth,
And with jealousy it shall be drowned.
21 For ignorance was destroyed upon it,
Because the knowledge of the Lord arrived upon it.
22 Let the singers sing the grace of the Lord Most High
And let them bring their songs.
23 And let their heart be like the day,
And their gentle voices like the majestic beauty of
the Lord.
24 And let there not be anyone who breathes
That is without knowledge or voice.

The holy ones, or saints, are the means whereby the Most High is known, in that they here announce to those who have songs about the Lord's coming that he has come, and that they should go out to meet him. After mentioning the saints, the odist then proceeds to speak of seers who go before the Lord who praise him because he is near and sees. But who are these seers, and are they to be identified with the saints earlier referred to, or are they a sub-group within the saints or even a different group entirely? In what sense do they go before the Lord and are they seen before him? The Odes unfortunately do not enable us to answer these questions with any great degree of accuracy, but some suggestions are possible. The picture which is presented in vv. 17f. is that of a procession in which the Lord

comes, preceded by the seers who praise the Lord because he is near. The previous vv. have told of the appearance of the word of knowledge, and we are therefore not to think of the seers as those who declare beforehand that such an appearance will take place. Rather, the seers are witnesses[184] that this event has taken place, and it is through their proclamation of the saving events which have occurred through the Son that they prepare men to meet him.[185] That is, they go before him in the sense that their proclamation precedes the encounter with the Lord.

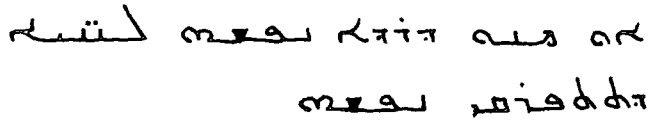
If the seers are the witnesses to the salvation accomplished through the Messiah, it becomes difficult to separate them from the saints, who in v. 17 make the announcement to come forth and meet the Lord, although it is still possible that the seers constitute a particular group who are specifically concerned with the proclamation of the saving grace of God. The result of this is the destruction of hatred, jealousy and ignorance although it must be noted that while the destruction of ignorance is spoken of in the perf. tense, that of the others is in the imperf. Since we would expect that hatred and jealousy would be overcome at the same time as ignorance, the arrival of the knowledge of the Lord in v. 21 b probably refers to a definitive event such as the appearance of the word of knowledge in v. 12 a.[186] But this means that although the destruction of ignorance is assured through this coming, the results of this are seen on the human scene in so far as the knowledge of God which has come is made known and received through the activity of the saints and seers.

In vv. 22f. we also read of the singers, and again it needs to be asked whether these constitute a particular group, or if this is simply a term used to describe those who have come to salvation and who consequently praise God. In view of the wording of v. 17 it is virtually impossible to make any such distinction in this ode, but in ode 26 the situation may be different. The hymn begins with the odist pouring out (ܗܠܠ) praise to the Lord because he is the Lord's. There follows a description of the

totality of that praise, for the odist calls to God with all his heart and exalts him with all his members (v. 4). Indeed, the praise and thanksgiving to God are from the east to the west, and from the south to the north (vv. 5f.). And yet, in the following vv. the odist shows his awareness of the paucity of his knowledge of God and of the impossibility of expressing this adequately.

8 Who can write the odes of the Lord,
Or who can read them?
9 Or who can train himself for life,
So that he himself may be saved?
10 Or who can press upon the Most High,
So that He would recite from his mouth?
11 Who can interpret the wonders of the Lord?
Though he who interprests will be destroyed,
Yet that which was interpreted will remain.

Since the emphasis here is upon the impossibility of an adequate interpretation of God through a human agency, a few comments on this section are necessary. In v. 8 it would be just as legitimate, and possibly more in keeping with the general tenor of the ode, to translate the verb "proclaim" rather than "read".(187) In part, this depends on the meaning of v. 9, since it may be argued that reading the odes of the Lord could constitute a training of oneself for life. But is this what v. 9 signifies? The Syriac reads;



Yet the idea of training oneself for life does not seem to fit in very well with the other ideas contained in these verses. The context in vv. 8 - 11 deals rather with the impossibility of ascertaining and proclaiming accurately the mind of God. An alternative explanation for line a of verse 9 would be to understand  not as a reflexive pronoun, but as "his (the Lord's) soul". This line would then ask the question, Who is it who

is able to give instruction[188] to the Lord? This appears to be a senseless question, since the answer must be, No one can do this. But all of the questions in these vv. are to be answered in the negative, because the odist is trying to show that the source of all knowledge is God, and man can receive this only to the extent that God is prepared in his grace to give it. If we can understand line a in this way, can the same interpretation be placed upon line b? Would the odist really ask, Who can instruct the Lord's soul[189] for life, so that the Lord may be saved? Such a question may appear to be completely inappropriate, but the odist intends it to be so, for he wishes to emphasise the limitations of human knowledge, and to declare that God alone is the source of saving knowledge.

The meaning of v. 10 is also ambiguous. J. H. Charlesworth translates line a "Who can press upon the Most High", declaring that the rendering of Harris-Mingana makes little sense.[190] But we ask whether Charlesworth's translation makes any more sense, and in any case, his note that "the Ethpeel of ܫܪܪ when used with the preposition ܥ or ܠ means 'to press heavily upon'" is clearly only partially correct.[191] However, if we accept that this is one possible meaning of the phrase, we still need to determine the significance of this expression, since it can be used either in a hostile sense, or in the sense of relying upon something or someone. In the former sense we find the expression used of the wrath of God coming upon those who have rejected him.[192] In the latter sense it is used of reliance upon the Law, or upon riches.[193] But it is also used of the Spirit's resting upon a man and in this sense it is to be regarded as implying the giving of support rather than the reliance upon a support.[194]

There are thus three different ways in which v. 10 may be understood. 1. Who is it who can so exert pressure upon God so that God will speak through him? 2. Who is it whose reliance upon God is so great that God will speak through him? 3. Who is it who is the source of inspiration

for God so that he speaks through him? On the usually accepted translation of v. 9 it is impossible to choose between these, since the expression "train himself for life" virtually excludes God from consideration. If the interpretation given above is accepted, the third alternative here is the most likely, since it follows in the same direction as v. 9, and taken one stage further the impossible suggestion that man can instruct God in the knowledge of life, and asks the totally absurd question as to whether man can be the inspiration whereby God declares his mystery.

Whichever is the correct explanation, this whole section makes a complete contrast between the inexpressible majesty of God and the poverty of man's attempts to declare it. This majesty is such in fact, that should man attempt to interpret that which cannot be interpreted, i.e. to move out of his own sphere and to understand the essential mystery of God, it will result in his own destruction[195] (v. 11). What remains in the face of this threat? The odist provides the answer in the closing vv.

12 For it suffices to perceive and be satisfied
(لمرد ملحظسه)
For the odists stand in serenity (ممسكه);
13 Like a river which has an increasingly gushing spring,[196]
And flows to the relief of them that seek it.

V. 12 a is not a declaration that knowledge is all that is required for salvation, but is the assertion that man's knowledge of the mystery of God reaches a certain point and then he must cease and be satisfied, and it is this state in which the odists or singers (ومرتل) stand.[197] V. 13 states that the singers are like an abundant fountain, flowing to the help of those who seek it, i.e. of the thirsty, since those who look for a fountain are those who need something to drink (cf. ode 30:1, 2, 7). This mention of the fountain takes up again the thought with which the ode began,[198] and just as the odist has poured out praise to the Lord, so the singers are like a fountain pouring forth[199] that knowledge of God which

they have gained and in which they rest.

The distinction between those who know and are satisfied and those who are still seeking suggests that the singers constitute the whole group of which the odist is a member, rather than a particular section within that group, although the community's continuing need of God is still maintained (ode 4:9f.). The work of the singers is precisely that of the ministers of ode 6, of giving a life-giving draught to the thirsty, and also probably the same as that of the seers of ode 7. The verbal correspondence between vv. 1 and 13 of ode 26 also indicates that the odist shares in the same ministry, and that he is not to be distinguished from these others, with the possible exception that he may be the leader of the group. But whether the singers are a special group within the community or not, the odist is clearly a figure to whom messianic functions are not to be attributed.(200)

There still remains some material in the Odes which is of importance for the interpretation of the "I" who speaks. In ten odes(201) there are sections which are generally regarded as being spoken ex ore Christi, but which some commentators would ascribe to the odist himself. F. H. Borsch comments, "We doubt whether this is to be explained by pointing to the dialogue form in certain Syrian-Christian liturgies. The psalmist in these Odes becomes not just a saved one, but the mighty saviour, a creator as well as a redeemer. At times he is said to become like the Most High himself (e.g. Ode 36.5), not just the Messiah. There is no sense of 'Thus says the Lord', and there is no confusion like this in the Christian liturgies".(202)

Whether there is this confusion between the odist and the Messiah in the Odes we shall now examine, taking into account both material in the Odes, and other material which may help to provide us with a background for the use of the ex ore Christi passages in the Odes.

d) ode 42

It is sometimes suggested that the language of this ode denies that the speaker of vv. 3ff. actually experienced death,[203] but this fails to take into account all of the expressions relating to this death in the ode. The question of the death of the Messiah in the Odes has been examined [204] and here we shall merely summarise the results of that investigation.

1. V. 10 does not echo the language of kingship ideology where the king is rescued before death finally engulfs him.[205] The speaker here was actually considered to be rejected and was thought to have died, and while this v. alone could be understood in a docetic sense, the remaining vv. of the ode require that this apparent death be viewed in relation to the death of the righteous man of Wisd. 3:1 - 4, especially since v. 2 of this ode has introduced this figure as the righteous one.

2. VV. 11 - 13 contain phrases which need to be interpreted as a real death: death ejected me and many with me; I went down with it as far as its depth:[206] v. 13, "the feet and the head it (death) released" presupposes that death has already taken hold of the speaker, but it may be noted that ܫܒܩ could also mean that death left him alone without touching him. However, this is almost certainly not the meaning here.

3. V. 17c, "We perceive that our death does not touch you", is again not docetic, but is said after the speaker has come out from Sheol and from the hold of death, and it is this fact which gives to those still imprisoned the confidence to request that he will open the door for them also, so that they can come out to him. His release from death is seen as the promise of their own.

4. V. 18, "May we be saved with you (ܥܡܟ)", indicates that the speaker has undergone the same experience of death as that in which the petitioners find themselves, and is a continuation of the request in the preceding verse.

It is almost impossible not to regard the death of the speaker in this ode as having actually occurred, and in the context of references to the cross and the righteous one, it is difficult not to relate the whole experience of the speaker in vv. 3ff. to Christ. He has died, and has come forth from death, so that he is still living (5: 5. of 8:21). V. 6 thus is a statement of the resurrection and ascension (ܐܬܪ) whereby Christ is still with his believers and speaks through them.(207)

e) ode 28: 9 - 20

1. VV. 9f. echo the thought of 42:10 that the speaker was thought to have been swallowed up, and that he seemed as one of the lost.

2. VV. 17ff. explain why he did not perish even though his enemies sought for his death. These lines are of particular significance for the understanding of the speaker.

17 Nor did I perish, because I was not their brother,
Nor was my birth like theirs.
18 And they sought my death but were unsuccessful,
Because I was older than their memory;
And in vain did they cast lots against me.
19 And those who were after me
Sought in vain to destroy the memorial of him who was before them.
20 Because the thought of the Most High cannot be prepossessed;
And his heart is superior to all wisdom.

F. H. Borsch finds it quite arbitrary to regard v. 17 as a reference to the super-natural birth of Jesus, and thinks rather in terms of a divine birth through baptism. We would like to know what is the significance of the undoubted attacks on the life of this person, for the references to his apparent death (v. 10), to the fact that he did not perish (v. 17), to the attempt to kill him (v. 18) and to the attempt to blot out his memory (v. 18), can hardly be understood in any way except as a determined attempt to get rid

of him. The language is rather strong if it means only that an attempt was made to make null and void this new life into which he has entered.

More significant perhaps is the fact that Borsch concludes his quotation of the ode at v. 18a, and consequently does not mention that the speaker was older than the memory of his attackers (v. 18 b), or that he was before them (v. 19 b). Phrases like these do not fit particularly well with the idea of a new birth, nor is there a doctrine of predestination in the Odes which would make them applicable to this. But if these vv. refer to Christ, v. 20 provides a perfectly satisfactory explanation for the inability of the persecutors to carry out their plan. They were unsuccessful in their attempt to blot out his memory because ( ) the thought of the Most High is unsurpassed ( ).[208] It is because the thought of the Most High is before all things, both in terms of time and of status, that the attackers fail in their design against the speaker, who has come as the expression of that thought (cf. 33:5; 41:14). All of the elements of this ode fit reasonably well into the Christian understanding of Christ, but only with great difficulty can they be applied to any other figure.

f) ode 22: 1ff.

For our present question the most important vv. of this ode are vv. 1 and 2 which speak of one who has been brought down from on high and brought up from the regions below, and to whom has been cast the things which are in the middle. Here the speaker is said to descend from the heights,[209] where God is, and to come up from Sheol.[210] This complements the thought of odes 41 and 42, so that we have a picture of a pre-existent one who comes down from heaven, goes to Sheol, is raised from there and also raises others from there, and who returns to heaven. It is completely impossible to make this refer to the odist.

The ex ore Christi sections of the Odes are dealt with fully

in another part of this thesis, but these ought to be sufficient to show that the odist and the redeemer are in no way identical or that they become identical. The redeemer is a heavenly figure while the odist remains fully a part of his community, sharing their salvation and their ministry. There is however still one ode which needs to be considered here, in view of the suggestion that the odist is praised as the Lord Messish, (ode 17). This suggestion can be made because it is obvious that the speakers in v. 17 are not the same as the speaker of the preceding vv., in which the speaker is seen as a messianic figure, and the last line of which "And I was their Head", is taken up in the response "Glory to Thee, our head". This may seem to be clear enough as an example of the change of speaker from the odist to the community, but we have already shown that this same change probably takes place in the last two lines of ode 14, and possibly the same is true of other sections of the Odes.(211) The difficulty here is that we possess no rubrics to guide us in understanding how these Odes were originally employed. We can say that they were used (or at least that some of them were used) within some kind of corporate act of worship, with one or more speakers delivering the major portion of the ode and the congregation responding to this, either with further vv. of the ode or simply with "Hallelujah". In some of the odes there is no reason why the whole group may not have spoken the whole hymn. But it has been shown that it is impossible to ascribe to the odist the characteristics which belong to the speaker in those sections generally regarded as being said ex ore Christi, and it is quite possible that a different speaker was used for these sections. While the lack of rubrication ought not to give us licence to force into a Christian mould hymns which originally were not so intended, it also ought not to compel us to deny the possibility that the ex ore Christi sections were understood by the worshipping community as being the word of Christ declared by the leader of the worship. Thus, when Borsch says that "there is no sense of 'thus says the Lord'",(212) he ought rather to have said that the expression

"thus says the Lord" does not occur in so many words, for that God and Christ speak through the mouths of their believers is amply attested in the Odes.(213)

In the final analysis, the decision regarding the passages ex ore Christi must be taken on the basis of the material in the Odes themselves, and not on the basis of our ignorance of early Christian hymnody. The question is, Can we find in this ode a reasonably clear-cut division between the speaker such as we find in others? In ode 17 the answer to this question is less satisfactory than in the other odes we have examined, for although certain elements of the ex ore Christi passage argue in this direction, others are more ambiguous. It is in fact at the beginning of the section that the problem is found.

6 And all who saw me were amazed,
And I seemed to them like a stranger.
7 And he who knew and exalted me,(214)
Is the Most High in all his perfection.
8 And he glorified me by his kindness,
And raised my understanding to the height of truth.
9 And from there he gave me the way of his steps,
And I opened the doors which were closed.

It is of course possible to argue that the speaker in these lines is the one who in v. 4 has "received the face and likeness of a new person", and that this verse is the justification for saying that he "seemed to them like a stranger" (v. 6). Certainly, some elements in vv. 6 - 9 e.g. "knew and exalted me" (v. 7), "glorified me" (v. 8), "raised my understanding" (v. 9), appear at first sight to be just as, if not more, appropriate in the mouth of the believer who has been elevated to some particular office. Yet this fact is of no advantage to those who deny that this section is spoken ex ore Christi since it merely raises the question of when the elevation to messiahship takes place. Before considering this section we need to examine

a couple of points in vv. 4f. which deal with the salvation of the odist.

4 My chains were cut off by his hands;
I received the face and likeness of a new person,
And I walked in him and was redeemed.
5 And the thought of truth led me,
And I went after it and wandered not.

The first point to be noticed here is that MS. H reads in v. 4 a, "by her hands" ( ), which is generally regarded as an unsuitable reading.(215) This makes it even more unfortunate that MS. N does not begin until v. 7 of this ode. There is no fem. antecedent for the pron., and it is possible that the copyist has simply made an error, although it is difficult to see how this mistake came to be made. On the other hand, if we retain the fem. pron., it would signify the operation of the Spirit in the renewal of the believer, which is also found in ode 36.(216) In this case, we could have further trinitarian reference in the opening vv. of this ode; crowned by my God (the Father), justified by my Lord (the Son), released and renewed by the Spirit.(217)

The second ambiguous element of v. 4 is found in line c, and concerns the antecedent of the pron. "him". It is generally assumed that it refers back to "Lord" or "God" of vv. 1f., although if a masc. pron. is read in line a, the antecedent is brought much closer. However, the more natural antecedent is of the previous line, and the probable meaning is that the odist walked in the new life which had been given to him, a thought which is expanded in the following v. by the statement that he did not wander from the truth which led him.(218) These vv. thus state that the speaker has been released and renewed and has taken on a new life in which he continues to walk, as he does not deviate from the truth by which he is led.

Is this new person(219) the speaker in vv. 6ff. of ode 17?

Two statements from the ex ore Christi suggest that it is not. The first concerns the activity of the speaker in releasing his own from bondage in v. 10:

> And I shattered the bars of iron,
> For my own shackle(s) had grown hot and melted before me.

In v. 4 the chains have already been cut off from the speaker, and if he has been exalted and glorified to some messianic office, it is hard to see what these new bonds are from which he is able to release himself. If on the other hand this refers to the descent of Christ into Sheol, it is perfectly intelligible, even if some problems remain.(220) The second deals with the relationship of the believer to the truth, as it is expressed in vv. 8f:

> And he glorifies me by his kindness,
> And raised my understanding to the height of truth.
> And from there he gave me the way of his steps.(221)
> And I opened the doors which were closed.

Whatever the precise meaning of "raised my understanding (mind, knowledge)" may be, the effect of this is clear. The speaker's mind seems almost to become identified with the truth, and from this point he is given the possibility of performing God's own work.(222) This assumes a relationship to the truth so different from that stated in v. 5 of the ode, that the possibility of both statements being made by the same speaker becomes fairly remote. The real difficulty in these earlier vv. of the ex ore Christi passage is that the language used suggests some development on the part of the speaker, while the figure of the Messiah is often described in terms of a being who is of heavenly origin, and who descends to earth, suffers death and is raised. But if the references to the death of the Messiah imply a real dying and not merely an appearance of dying, then clearly something more than a heavenly being on earth is involved.

This point leads us back to the beginning of the ex ore Christi passage at v. 6:

> And all who saw me were amazed,
> And I seemed to them like a stranger.

This amazement at the sight of the speaker is found also in odes 28:9 and 41:8 where the emphasis lies on his other-worldly origins. It is very unlikely that the term "stranger" has anything to do with a docetic christology, but its use may be influenced to some extent by the gnostic figure of the Alien.(223) The primary significance of the ex ore Christi section of this ode is that the speaker is released from his own bonds, frees others from theirs and creates his community, and the amazement of the onlookers and his apparent strangeness to them stems from this activity. That is to say, he appears to be a stranger because he is not subject to the forces which operate against men and enslave them in this world, and thus appears to be of different origin from them, a thought which corresponds closely to that of ode 28.(224) How this is to be related precisely to the development of the speaker which is suggested in vv. 8f. is not entirely clear, but it is not impossible that the odist is attempting to combine the idea that the Messiah is a heavenly being who has descended to effect the salvation of men with the notion of a genuine humanity which this redeemer possesses.(225)

The picture presented in these ex ore Christi passages is thus of a being who is of other-wordly origin who comes among men in order to release them from those bonds which prevent them from experiencing life with God. The "I" who speaks in these sections is a quite different figure from the one who speaks elsewhere in the Odes, for although both destroy Sheol and death, the latter accomplishes this through the word of the Lord with which he is armed, while the former does it by virtue of his heavenly origin. The decisive victory is that which was won by the Messiah, while the work of the odist and of other such agents is the communication of that

victory of those who have not yet come to knowledge of the gracious act of God. There is no identification of odist and Messiah in the Odes in the sense that the former takes on the attributes and functions of the latter, and we find no statements of identification between believer and revealer such as we find in some other gnostic literature,(226) although the course which the Messiah takes is the pattern for that of those who believe in him. This however implies imitation and authorization, not identification.

One further question must be examined here, which concerns the so-called confusion created by the ex ore Christi passages. It may be correct to say that we do not find unannounced speech by Christ in the early Christian liturgies, but there is at least a good precedent for the Odes in the O.T., where Yahweh often speaks through psalmist or prophet without the introductory "Thus says the Lord". For example, Ps. 91:1 - 13 speaks of God in the third person, declaring his protective love and care, but in vv. 14ff. it is clearly the Lord himself who speaks, even though the psalm gives no indication of a change of speaker. Ps. 82 brings us even closer to the problem of the Odes, for here there is some difference of opinion on the part of modern translators with regard to the question as to how much of this psalm is spoken of God.(227)

This same literary usage is to be seen in the prophetic literature of the O.T., but is most prominent in chs. 40-66 of Isaiah. There are several passages throughout these chs. where it is not certain whether the prophet is offering exhortation to Israel or whether Yahweh himself speaks. This provides only a partial parallel to the Odes since the prophet is in any case declaring the word of the Lord, and the "I" who speaks is almost always Yahweh, and not the prophet. But chs. 61ff. of Isa. do offer a good parallel to the use of "I" of the Odes: in vv. 1ff. the prophet speaks of his call to announce the good news of God; in vv. 8ff. the "I" who speaks is "I the Lord"; in vv. 10ff. we read, "I will greatly

rejoice in the Lord", where the "I" may not be the prophet speaking on his own behalf, but on that of the congregation.(228) In ch. 63 the prophet speaks in vv. 7ff. as a member of the congregation, but the previous vv. are clearly spoken by Yahweh. This leaves ch. 62 in the middle, which may be spoken by the prophet, since the Lord is referred to in the third person, although it could be easily argued that at least part of this ch. is spoken by Yahweh.(229) However, leaving aside ch. 62, we find no "Thus says the Lord", and no external indication that a change of speaker is intended. It is the substance alone which determines whether Yahweh or the prophet is the speaker, and where as in ch. 62 there is room for difference of opinion in the interpretation of certain elements, there is similarly a difference of opinion with regard to the speaker.

This is the situation which we find in the Odes, where the ex ore Christi passages can be separated out only on the basis of the interpretation of the text. But there is a sufficiently clear distinction between the person and work of the Messiah and of the odist to enable this to be done satisfactorily in the majority of cases. If in some places, e.g., ode 17, there is ambiguity, it still remains true that the Messiah of the Odes is a heavenly being who comes down among men, and not a human being elevated to a heavenly office. The odist is and remains a member of his community, sharing their salvation while exercising a ministry alongside of others, and he is not to be identified with the Messiah, nor is he to be regarded as a representative Messiah below, who is the counterpart to the Messiah above. With regard to ode 17, we would agree with Harris-Mingana that the transition of speakers in vv. 5-6 is "very awkward", but it is certainly not impossible, and the whole section vv. 6-15 may be applied much more properly to the Messiah than to the odist. It is only the elements which imply a human development on the part of the speaker which cause this awkwardness, which may suggest that we are far too ready to find only a

docetic Christology in the Odes, and to deny that the odist had any real appreciation of the Incarnation.(230)

FOOTNOTES ON CHAPTER 5

1. "The new Testament and Gnosticism", in Current Issues in New Testament Interpretation (cited as CINTI), p. 224. The problems involved in providing a short definition of Gnosticism have been outlined well by Th. van Baaren, "Towards a Definition of Gnosticism", in Le Origini dello Gnosticismo, the report of the International Congress on Gnosticism held at Messina, (cited as ICOG), pp. 174-180. It may fairly be said that one of the greatest difficulties in the area of definition is the lack of agreed terminology, notwithstanding the definitions proposed by the Messina Colloquium. A. F. J. Klijn, for example, avoids the use of the word "gnosis" in his discussion of Syrian Christianity, because it can be used "as a label for a large and somewhat amorphous group of religious systems described by Irenaeus and Hippolytus in their works against heresy" (quoting C.H.Dodd, Interpretation, p. 97), but also as a phenomenon belonging to the history of religions", "The Influence of Jewish Theology on the Odes of Solomon and the Acts of Thomas", in Aspects du Judéo-Christianisme, p. 170. Cf. also idem., "Early Syriac Christianity-Gnostic?", in ICOG, pp. 575-579. For Klijn, the first of the meanings given above is too narrow, and the second is too broad to be of assistance.

2. That is, the movement which appears as a clearly defined system of thought in the second century, which continues with modifications during the following centuries. The principal church heresiologists who deal with the threat of Gnosticism are Irenaeus, Hippolytus, and Epiphanius, and although the writings from Nag Hammadi have demonstrated the essential accuracy of the reports from these writers about Gnostic thought, there is nevertheless a tendency to ascribe to the founder of a system of thought developments which occurred much later. It is instructive to compare the list of systems which H.-M.Schenke offers in "Die Gnosis", in Umwelt des Urchristentums, Vol. I, Darstellung des neutestamentlichen Zeitalters, pp. 371ff., with the comments of R.McL.Wilson, in Gnosis and the New Testament, pp. 140ff.

3. H.Jonas, Gnosis und spätantiker Geist, has attempted to show that Gnosis may be equated with the spirit of late antiquity. H.-M.Schenke objects to this definition on the ground that Gnosis was only one such spiritual movement in late antiquity. He states, "Die Gnosis ist nur eines der Hauptphanomene innerhalb des spätantiken Synkretismus (etwa neben Pantheismus, Allgottvorstellung und Mysterienglaube), der Geist der Gnosis nur eine der den Geist der Spätantike bestimmenden Komponenten"; "Die neutestamentliche Christologie und der gnostische Erlöser", in Gnosis und neues Testament (cited as GuNT), p. 210. See also G.L.Borchert,"Insights into the Gnostic Threat as Gained through the Gospel of Philip", in New Dimensions in New Testament Study, p. 81. The major objection to the definition of Gnosis as given by Jonas is that there remains nothing with which to compare it.

4. R.McL.Wilson sees a problem in the use of the one adjective "gnostic" for the two nouns, but he argues that we have no alternative. He rejects the adjective "syncretistic" which had been suggested by J.Munck, since this term could legitimately be used of Judaism and of Christianity, but without the same meaning that it would have if applied to the Hellenistic Mystery religions. A third shade of meaning for use with Gnosis would only be more confusing;"Reply to Quispel", in The Bible and Modern Scholarship, p. 275. See also his "Gnosis, Gnosticism and the New Testament", in ICOG, p. 511, where Wilson has attempted to use "Gnostic" to refer to the developed forms of Gnosticism of the second century, and "gnostic" to refer to less clearly defined "Gnosis".

5. Gnosis and the New Testament, pp. 31ff.

6. The Messina Colloquium defined "Gnosticism" in terms of the universally anknowledged Gnostic systems which appeared in the second century A.D., "Gnosis" is to be regerded as "knowledge of the divine mysteries reserved for an elite", ICOG, p. xxvi. See also below, n. 10.

7. op. cit. p. 65; idem., "Reply to Quispel", in The Bible and Modern Scholarship, p. 274.

8. "Reply to Quispel", p. 179. S.Laeuchli points out that "what seems like far-fetched Gnostic metaphors may be biblical if seen in another context"; The Language of Faith, p. 89. Laeuchli goes on to state that "what makes Gnostic language Gnostic is the shift of centre", and there to speak of Gnostic language in the New Testament is mis-leading, ibid. p. 100. These cautionary remarks are well made, but this makes it all the more inexplicable that Laeuchli should make reference to one ode only (38) in his book, (pp. 53, 77), and immediately classify it as Gnostic.

9. "Die Gnosis", in Umwelt des Urchristentums, I, 375.

10. See above n. 6. The difficulty with such a definition is that it could be applied to almost any religious system, in some sense. C.H.Dodd points out that if the terms "Gnostic" and "Gnosticism" refer to the belief that salvation is by knowledge, then "there is a sense in which orthodox Christian theologians like Clement of Alexandria, Hellenistic Jews like Philo, and pagan writers like the Hermetists should be called Gnostics. The same would also apply to the author of the Fourth Gospel; Interpretation, p. 97. In the same way, the definition of "Gnosis" which was adopted at the Messina Colloquium is too wide to be of real service.

11. S.Laeuchli, op. cit., p. 19, points to the wide variety of systems within Gnosticism, and says that "to read consecutively Basilides, Evangelium Veritatis, the Epistle to Flora and the Naasene Fragments is like entering four different worlds. Perhaps it would be altogether wiser to speak of 'Gnostic movements' instead of 'Gnosticism'".

12. Although the terms "Christian Gnosticism" and "Gnostic Christianity" are sometimes used, it is questionable if such terminology should be allowed, especially if the remark of S.Laeuchli about the "shift of centre" in n. 8 above is kept in mind. Christian and Gnostic elements may be combined, but essentially the central thought must be either Christian or Gnostic, but not both at the same time. The fact that such terminology is used is evidence of the confusion that exists concerning the point at which a system ceases to be Christian and becomes Gnostic. R.Schnackenburg, writing about the Nag Hammadi texts says, "They clearly show knowledge (and use) of the New Testament literature, in varying degrees. But they are so deeply rooted in Gnostic thought that this trend must be regarded as something settled and pre-supposed, and hence certainly pre-Christian and non-Christian. A long established system of thought ..... has been given a Christian varnish only at a secondary stage, and the New Testament texts are pressed into service for the Gnostic mentality", St. John, I, 146.

13. R.McL.Wilson rightly draws attention to the sometimes forgotten fact that Gnosticism grew, "Reply to Quispel", p. 276. But it is not only the development of Gnostic thinking from the second century onwards which is important. It is also the development up to the second century which demands attention. Was there really nothing prior to the classical Gnostic systems of the second century which could be called "Gnostic" in any sense? We look further at this question below.

14. It is at least mis-leading to the extent that the insistence on restricting the use of "Gnosticism" to the systems of the second century and later which show clear signs of Christian influence may be held to imply that there is a fundamental difference between these systems and what has gone before them.

15. A.Bohlig considers that there is no Christian influence detectable in the Apocalypse of Adam, in Nag Hammadi Codex V; "Die Adamapokalypse aus Codex V von Nag Hammadi als Zeugnis jüdisch-iranischer Gnosis", Oriens Christianus, 48, 44-49. With this judgment G.MacRae is in agreement; "The Coptic-Gnostic Apocalypse of Adam", Heythrop Journal, 6, 27-35. For a contrary view, see R.McL.Wilson, Gnosis and the New Testament, pp. 137ff. M.Krause considers that the old classification of Gnostic documents according to Gnostic schools of thought based on the evidence of the church heresiologists is no longer serviceable in terms of the Nag Hammadi texts. He suggests a new classification according to the content; the non-Christian Gnostic and the Christian Gnostic documents. The former group could be divided into non-Christian documents in which Gnostic ideas are combined with Old Testament and Jewish material, and those in which there is no essentially Jewish element. The latter group could also be divided into those documents in which the Christian element stands as a constituent part of the system, and those in which the Christian element is a later accretion; Gnosis, I, 6ff.

16. M.Krause suggests that the archetypes from which the Nag Hammadi codices originated go back, in part, to the second century A.D. Although it is possible that some of these writings offer evidence of a non-Christian Gnosticism, this does not necessarily mean pre-Christian Gnosticism. The age of the documents also provides no clear warrant for speaking of pre-Christian Gnosticism, even if certain inferences may be made concerning the history of the traditions as we have them in the texts. themselves, Gnosis, II, 4ff. At the same time, A.Richardson may be a little too rigid in his assertion that there was "no such thing as a Gnosticism in the first century which could be contrasted with Judaism or Christianity", An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament, p. 41. E.Yamauchi is one scholar who is very strongly of the opinion that we ought not to speak of pre-Christian Gnosticism; see his Pre-Christian Gnosticism.

17. R.M.Grant has suggested that the disappointed hopes of Jewish apocalyptic expectation after the Fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 was a fundamental factor in the origin of Gnostic thought; Gnosticism and Early Christianity. This has not found acceptance as an explanation of the origin of Gnosticism, but several scholars lay stress on the theory that Judaism was a channel, or the main channel through which ideas passed into Gnosticism. See R.McL.Wilson, Gnosis and the New Testament, pp. 22-27; idem., "Gnosis, Gnosticism and the New Testament", in ICOG, p. 524; G.Quispel,

"Gnosticism and the New Testament", in The Bible and Modern Scholarship, p. 260; idem.,"Christliche Gnosis und jüdische Heterodoxie", EvTh, 14 (1954), 474-484; P.Pokorny, "Der sociale Hintergrund der Gnosis", in GuNT, pp. 78ff; O.Cullmann, "The Significance of the Qumran Texts for Research into the Geginnings of Christianity", in The Scrolls and the New Testament, pp. 18ff.

18. "Reply to Quispel", in The Bible and Modern Scholarship, p. 288. He there draws attention to G.Scholem's description of Gnosticism as "the greatest case of metaphysical anti-Semitism".

19. art. cit. pp. 289ff.

20. E.Yamauchi makes the same point against Scholem in "Some Alleged Evidences for Pre-Christian Gnosticism", in New Directions in New Testament Study, p. 67. A similar problem of terminology exists with respect to the Hermetic writings, some of which were found in the Nag Hammadi corpus. G.van Moorsel states that "Gnosis has not left Hermetism wholly undisturbed", but notes that certain elements of Gnosis are not to be found in the Hermetic writings. He therefore rejects Festugière's term "Hermetic Gnosis", and prefers to speak of a "gnosticising touch", or to characterise this literature as "semi-Gnosticism"; The Mysteries of Hermes Trismegisthus, p. 20.

21. art. cit. p. 216.

22. Gnosis and the New Testament, pp. 32, 33, 37, 60.

23. The Messina Colloquium pointed out that "not every Gnosis is Gnosticism, but only that which involves in this perspective the idea of the divine consubstantiality of the spark that is in need of being awakened and re-integrated". This Gnosis involves the divine identity of the knower, the known, and the means by which one knows; ICOG, p. xxvii

24. "Towards a Definition of Gnosticism", in ICOG, p. 177.

25. This form of expression indicates that van Baaren has extended the scope of Gnosticism beyond that finally agreed upon by the Colloquium. He states that "Gnosticism is a historic development of the last centuries before, and the first centuries after the beginning of our era", ibid., p. 176. Other scholars, who find no evidence of Gnosticism before the second century, tend to use the term "pre-Gnosticism" in a way which corresponds to van Baaren's use of "proto-Gnosticism".

26 op. cit. p. 17f.

27."Reply to Quispel", p. 274. See also H.Jonas's article in the same volume, p. 286: "The point is, it is the meaning context, taken in its wholeness and integrity which matters, and not the traffic in single symbols, figures and names". S.Laeuchli, The Language of Faith, p. 16, makes the same point.

28. "Der sociale Hintergrund der Gnosis", p. 77.

29. For a general discussion of the discovery and its importance, see J.Doresse, The Secret Books of the Egyptian Gnostics. The literature on this material has grown rapidly, and the bibliography edited by D.Scholer, Nag Hammadi Bibliography 1948-1969, contains almost 2,500 titles of books and articles. The literature has continued to grow since that date.

30. While the Nag Hammadi writings may be said to confirm the general picture of Gnosticism which has been gained from the church Fathers, M.Krause has pointed out that these new documents have provided us with passages which the church heresiologists have omitted, or which they perhaps have not properly understood. As a result of this, it is not possible to reconcile fully the primary sources from Nag Hammadi with the secondary sources in the Fathers, so that we cannot assign the Gnostic originals with absolute certainty to particular schools of Gnosticism; Gnosis, II, 7.

31. The following is based on the introductory essay in Gnosis und neues Testament, "Die Bedeutung der Texte von Nag Hammadi für die moderne Gnosisforschung", pp. 13-19.

32. H.-M.Schenke takes note of certain scholars who recognise the existence of a pre-Christian Gnosticism, but who think that this contained no concept of the Redeemer. In opposition to this he says, "die vorchristliche Gnosis nicht nur von der Erlösungs-, sondern auch von der Erlöser-Vorstellung bestimmt und geprägt war". He also goes on to state that there is practically no Gnostic system in which the concept of the Redeemer is not found in some form, but he also stresses that there is not a standard form. The form may be that of Simon Magus, who thought of himself as the Highest God who had come down from heaven, or it may be something as abstract as the "call from beyond"; "Die neutestamentliche Christologie und der gnostische Erlöser", in GuNT, p. 208.

33. See W. Foerster, Gnosis, I, 7: "Only the actual deliverance from the body makes the 'self' free for that space which is no space but the sphere of light. Strictly speaking, even death does not bring it about, but only the end of the world, in which matter is destroyed and the gnostic enters into the world of light". See also M.L.Peel, "Gnostic Eschatology and the New Testament", NovT 12 (1970), 158ff., who notes that several Gnostic systems use imagery derived fromJewish-Christian apocalypses to describe the Endzeit; e.g., the destruction of the world, or a world conflagration by fire.

34. M.L.Peel, art. cit. p. 163.

35. See above pp.450f. and n. 18.

36. R.McL.Wilson speaks of "a certain area of common ground, a stock of ideas neither specifically Gnostic nor specifically Christian, but shared by both, and by other religions also"; "Reply to Quispel", p. 276; idem., Gnosis and the New Testament, pp. 29ff. E.Haenchen speaks of a two-stage development. In the first, Gnostic ideas are employed without being used to propagate Gnostic doctrine. In the second, Gnosis is regarded as false doctrine; "Gnosis und das neues Testament", in RGG^3, II, cols. 1652ff.

37. One very important consequence of the recognition that this concept belongs to the latest and not to the first stages of Gnosticism is that

the outline of the Gnostic Redeemer myth, as put forward by the religionsgeschichtliche Schule, and which forms the basis for R.Bultmann's Redeemer figure, must be revised.

38. For a survey of attempts to explain the emergence of the Gnostic movement, see R.Haardt, "Zur Methodologie der Gnosisforschung", in GuNT, pp. 183-202.

39. H.J.Schoeps, "Judenchristentum und Gnosis", in ICOG, p. 529, thinks of second century Gnosticism as "eine rein pagane Denkbewegung, die lediglich judische und christliche Anleihen aufgenommen hat".

40. W.Schmithals speaks of the pre-suppositions about the existence of Gnosis which any interpreter of the New Testament brings to the task of interpretation, and which will determine beforehand, to a certain extent, the answer to the question of "Gnostic" influence. This he rightly refers to as a hermeneutical circle, but he regards it as necessary, and says that it is possible to emerge from the circle at a different point from that at which it was entered; "Die gnostische Elements im neuen Testament als hermeneutisches Problem", in GuNT, pp. 359-63. R.McL.Wilson has frequently warned against seeing "Gnostic" influence in the New Testament without adequate grounds, but says that "sweeping rejection of 'gnostic' influence of any kind in the New Testament would be no less mistaken than the Pan-Gnosticismus which finds such influence everywhere"; "Gnosis, Gnosticism and the New Testament", p. 522.

41. Many scholars do see Gnostic influence here. M.Dibelius and H.Conzelmann note that the characteristics of the false teaching are the prohibition of marriage, abstinance from foods,and enthusiasm, together with a spiritualising of the resurrection, and that "a combination at that particular period in history of the three components outlined above, possibly originating in Asia Minor and containing clearly Judaising components, must always be attributed to a kind of Gnosticism", although "it is impossible to identify the particular heresy attacked here with one of the Gnostic sects known to us"; The Pastoral Epistles, pp. 65-66. G.Haufe speaks of the false teachers as representatives "einer fruhen Form der Gnosis mit stark jüdischem Einschlag"; "Gnostische Irrlehre und ihre Abwehr in den Pastoralbriefen", in GuNT, pp. 332f. W.G.Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament, p. 267, refers to "the Jewish-Christian Gnostic heresy". A.McNeile, An Introduction to the Study of the New Testament, pp. 192f, refers to " Judaic Gnosticism or Gnostic Judaism". C.K.Barrett, The Pastoral Epistles, pp. 12ff. speaks of the Jewish element and the Gnostic element in the heresy attacked.

42. We cannot enter here into a discussion of the Corinthians who said there was no resurrection of the dead and the possible relationship between this situation and that of II Tim. 2. 18. According to R.Bultmann, Theology of the New Testament, I, 169, Paul misunderstood his opponents, thinking that they were denying any form of life after death. For a survey of this position and the responses to it, see J.H.Wilson, "The Corinthians who say There is no Resurrection of the Dead", ZNW 59 (1968), 90-107. The fundamental objection which R.McL.Wilson brings is that the alleged misunderstanding of Paul is read into the text, and the Corinthian passage is

interpreted in the light of II Tim. 2. 17. See Gnosis and the New Testament, pp. 51-53; idem., "Gnosis, Gnosticism and the New Testament", p. 517.

43. See Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. I. 27, 4: "All those who corrupt the teaching of the church are the disciples of Simon Magus of Samaria".

44. Adv. Haer. I. 23.

45. Cf. Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. I. 2, 2; 29, 4; Hippolytus, Ref. VI. 29, 6; Exc. Theod. 45. See also The Sophia Jesus Christ and Eugnostos, and see GuNT, pp. 25f. for the possible relations between these last two writings.

46. These angels ruled the world badly because each coveted the principal power for himself (Iren. Adv. Haer. I. 23, 3); they were unwilling to be looked on as the progeny of another, and had no knowledge of the Father (ibid., I. 23, 2). One of the texts which is quoted fairly frequently in the Gnostic literature is Isa. 45. 5 (or 46. 9), by means of which the Demiurge, knowing nothing about the world above says, "I am God; and apart from me there is no one else". According to the Index in Gnosis, these two texts are quoted 13 times, which is more than any other Biblical text; see Gnosis II, pp. 350ff.

47. E. Haenchen writes, "Die Erlösung der Ennoia und die der Menschen, welche eigentlich identisch sind, stehen hier nebeneinander und konkurrieren im Grunde miteinander"; "Gab es eine vorchristliche Gnosis", ZThK 49 (1952), 341. See also GuNT, p. 38, where it is suggested that the Exegesis on the Soul presents an early form of Gnosis, which may be the pattern for Simonian Gnosis.

48. It has been held that Justin was mistaken in this and that "Simone Deo Sancto" represents a mis-reading of "Semoni Sanco Deo", which is the wording of an inscription found on a fragment of marble dug up on the island in the Tiber in 1574. But as A.C.Coxe points out, Justin would not have made such an error in an Apology addressed to Rome, where the mistake would immediately have been exposed; ANF I, 171, n. 4. See also E.Haenchen, art. cit. p. 345.

49. E.Haenchen, art. cit. p. 345, regards the τοῦ θεοῦ of Ac. 8. 10 as a Lucan interpretation.

50. Haenchen regards the καλουμένη as signifying "ein fester Titel".

51. Haenchen, art. cit. p. 348 says, "Simon ist also nicht vom Zauberer zum göttlichen Erlöser aufgestiegen, sondern in der christlichen Tradition vom göttlichen Erlöser zum blossen Zauberer degradiert worden".

52. art. cit. p. 348. W.Foerster, who also accepts that Simon was a Gnostic, shows that in the Simonian Gnosis "es ist noch keine Verbindung der mit dem Menschen vollzogen; der gnostische Mythus ist in einer 'vorlaüfigen' Form da"; "Die 'ersten Gnostiker' Simon und Menander", in ICOG, p. 194. For a contrary view of the Gnostic label as applied to Simon, see K.Beyschlag, "Zur Simon-Magus-Frage", ZThK 68 (1971), 395-426; E.Yamauchi, "Some Alleged

Evidences for Pre-Christian Gnosticism", in New Dimensions in New Testament Study, p. 50.

53. art. cit. pp. 190f.

54. It makes very little sense to claim Simon as the Father of Gnosticism unless there were elements in his teaching which later writers saw as leading to the Gnostic heresy they were combatting. There is no doubt that Simon's system was subjected to a great deal of revision and modification, and that the final account is different from its origins. But to deny that Simon held opinions which could be classed as Gnostic fails to show why the early church thought he was.

55. H.Jonas rightly does"not want to throw the whole burden of originating the mighty Gnostic tide on to the frail shoulders of a localised group in Samaria"; "Reply to Quispel", p. 292. W.Beltz regards the contribution of the Samaritans to consist in the fact that from them proceeded the Dosethian sect, which clearly possessed Gnostic characteristics; "Samaritanertum und Gnosis", in GuNT, p. 95.

56. The Gnostic movement appears to have such a wide range of traditions upon which it draws, that it would be very difficult to state at what point and in what place these first combined to form something which could be called Gnosticism.

57. See above, n. 36.

58. "The Theological Vocabulary of the Fourth Gospel and of the Gospel of Truth", in CINTI, p. 210.

59. John, I, lv.

60. R.E.Brown has correctly evaluated the article by C.K.Barrett and can claim support from it to the extent that both of them are agreed that John is different from the Gospel of Truth at fundamental points. But he has completely neglected the closing section of the article (pp. 222-223), in which it is stated that the differences serve to "show the fundamentally biblical and anti-Gnostic content of John", and that "we must speak (however slight the direct evidence may be), of a pre-Johannine (no doubt also of a pre-Christian) Gnosticism".

61. op. cit. p. lvi. Cf. H.J.Schoeps, who sees second century Gnosticism as "eine reine pagane Denkbewegung, die lediglich jüdische und christliche Anleihen aufgenommen hat"; "Judenchristentum und Gnosis", in ICOG, p. 529. See also S.Arai, who states that the Redeemer figure has not arisen first under the influence of Christianity; "Zur Definition der Gnosis", in ICOG, p. 183; idem., Die Christologie des Evangelium Veritatis, pp. 120ff. W.Meeks says, "It is at least as plausible that the Johannine Christology helped to create some gnostic myths as that gnostic myths helped create the Johannine Christology"; "The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism", JBL 91 (1972), 72.

62. C.Colpe, Die Religionsgeschichtliche Schule, pp. 57-68.

63. "Die Gnosis", p. 382.

64. H.-M.Schenke, "Die neutestamentliche Christologie und der gnostischer Erlöser", in GuNT, p. 225.

65. op. cit. p. lvi.

66. See B.L.Mack, Logos und Sophia.

67. op. cit. p. lvi. R.Marcus thinks of the Qumran covenanters as closely related to the Jewish Gnostics, but regards them as less Gnostic than the Minim, whom he considers to be the real Jewish Gnostics; "Pharisees, Essenes and Gnostics", JBL 73 (1954), 157-161. Many scholars have seen points of contact between the Qumran literature and Gnosticism, but few would wish to classify the community of Qumran as Gnostic.

68. Note the "in many ways unnecessary" and the "goes a long way towards" in the above quotation from Brown. What fills the gaps left by this? Does he mean that in some ways the Gnostic hypothesis is also necessary? What does he mean by "proto-Gnostic" as applied to Qumran? Unfortunately, Brown gives us no clue to his answers to these questions.

69. The fragments of this commentary are found in the writings of Origen and Clement of Alexandria, and have been conveniently drawn together in Gnosis I, 162-183. According to Clement, Heracleon was "the most celebrated of Valentinus's school"; Fragment 50, p. 182 in Gnosis. J.L.Houlden speaks of "the capture of the Gospel of John by the Gnostics"; The Johannine Epistles, p. 19. See also W.G.Kümmel, Introduction to the New Testament, pp. 137ff.

70. Adv. Haer, III. 11, 1.

71. See E.Käsemann: "From a historical point of view, the church committed an error when it declared the Gospel to be orthodox"; The Testament of Jesus, p. 76. L.Schottroff also believes the Gospel is more Gnostic than Christian; Der Glaubende und die feindliche Welt. R.Bultmann sees a Gnostic source behind the Gospel of John; John, pp. 22ff. F.C.Grant, on the other hand, sees the Gospel as being written "from within the circle of early Christian Gnostic mysticism, sharing in considerable measure its presuppositions, but at the same time, and thus more effectively, protesting against its extravagances". There is therefore "the most powerful opposition to Gnosticism found in the Gospel and the First Epistle of John". Grant believes that the author may have been a converted Gnostic; The Gospels: Their Origin and Growth, pp. 159ff.

72. W.Schmithals, art. cit. p. 375. Along with this question goes the other concerning the nature of the heresy combatted in I John. J.L.Houlden speaks of "gnostic type tendencies", op. cit. p. 14; C.H.Dodd, The Johannine Epistles, p. xix, says that the false teachers were "on the track which led to later Gnostic heresies".

73. "Man geht wohl nicht fehl in der Annahme, dass er durch die Verwendung gnostischer Kategorien zum Ausdruck bringen will, dass die christliche Verkündigung die in der gnostischen Theologie intendierte, den Gnostikern aber verborgene Weisheit ausspricht"; W.Schmithals, art. cit. p. 375.

74. An increasing number of scholars look to Syria as the real homeland of the Gospel of John, whatever the place of its final publication.

75. op. cit. p. 14. He sees the epistle as an attempt to draw back from speculative thinking, resulting from the development of Johannine ideas, under conservative pressure.

76. Die Johannesbriefe, pp. 15ff. See also Excursus 3 in the same volume, "Häretische Gnosis und christliches Gotterkennen", pp. 95ff.

77. The Johannine Epistles. p. 38.

78. op. cit. pp. 38, n. 17. He mentions Cerinthus and the Docetists as possible opponents in the Epistle.

79. "Orthodoxie und Heterodoxie in I Johannesbrief", ZNW 58 (1967), 247ff.

80. In GuNT, pp. 341ff.

81. See for example, Irenaeus, Adv Haer. I. 15, 2: "For the Father of All had resolved to put an end to ignorance, and to destroy desth. But this abolishing of ignorance was just the knowledge of him".

82. Cf. R.Bultmann, The Johannine Epistles, p. 17: "It (I Jn. 1. 6) is not directed against a mixture of light and darkness in the Godhead, but rather against the assertion of gnosticising false teachers, that they are in the light, which does not tally with the fact that they are actually in darkness".

83. As K.Weiss notes, it is the separation between the world and the community, the identification of the Devil and evil which is in the world, and the characterising of the opponents as those who have gone out into the world, with which the author of I John is concerned. The aim is more to distinguish between those who are children of God and those who are not, rather than to give an account of the nature of the heretics' thought. See "Die 'Gnosis' im Hintergrund und im Spiegel der Johannesbriefe", cited above.

84. This would not in itself make the opponents Gnostics.

85. K.Weiss points out that it cannot be overlooked that the author of I John is deeply indebted to ideas which are regarded as Gnostic in the later systems of thought.

86. Odes 1, 5. 1-11, 6. 8-18, 22, and 25, in chapters 59, 58, 65, 71, and 69 respectively, of the Pistis Sophia.

87. H.W.Worrell shows that the Odes are treated in the same way as the Davidic Psalms, and that it is the intention of the author of the Pistis Sophia to quote a non-Gnostic and orthodox source, not a Gnostic one: "The Odes of Solomon and the Pistis Sophia", JTS 13 (1912), 31. See also Harris-Mingana, II, 175ff., for an investigation of the relationship between the text of the Odes and that of the Gnostic hymns and the Targums thereon in the Pistis Sophia.

88. See H.Gunkel, "Die Oden Salomos", ZNW 11 (1910), 327: "Wie stark hat die Pistis Sophia die Oden umdeuten müssen, um sie für die späteren Gnostiker geniessbar zu machen". Nevertheless, Gunkel believes that in the Odes, he has found a Valentinian hymn book; ibid. p. 328.

89. The Beginnings of Gnostic Christianity, p. v.

90. "The Odes of Solomon and the Church of Antioch", JBL 63 (1944), 363-377.

91. "Bardaisan and the Odes of Solomon", JBL 30 (1911), 168-209. F.M.Braun also considers that there is some merit in the hypothesis that Bardaisan was the author of the Odes;"L'Énigme des Odes de Salomon", RTh 57 (1957), 597-625.

92. "That the Gospel of Truth comes from the school of Valentinus, there is not the least doubt"; G.Quispel, The Jung Codex, p. 50. W.C.van Unnik, in another essay in the same volume, pp. 81ff., and K.Grobel, The Gospel of Truth, p. 26, agree. On the other hand, it is pointed out that some of the typically Valentinian ideas are missing from this Gospel, and some scholars prefer to speak of the Gospel of Truth as stemming from "the school of the Valentinians", Gnosis, II, 55. G.W.MacRae is more cautious still, and says that"the Gospel of Truth is a Gnostic and perhaps a Valentinian tractate"; The Nag Hammadi Library in English, p. 37.

93. Die Herkunft des sogennanten Evangelium Veritatis.

94. op. cit. p. 31.

95. See below, pp.471ff. on the relationship between the Odes and the Gospel of Truth.

96. "Die Bedeutung der neuerschlossenen mandäischen und manichäischen Texte für das Verständnis des Vierten Evangeliums", ZNW 25 (1924), 100-149. The 28 parallels which Bultmann uses in this study are all concerned with the figure of the Redeemer.

97. "War der Verfasser der Oden Salomos ein 'Qumran-Christ'?", RQ 4 (1964), 523-555. Rudolph has also used the Odes very extensively in his work, Die Mandäer.

98. See "The Odes of Solomon - Not Gnostic", CBQ 31 (1969), 357-69. Charlesworth goes too far in the assertion that there is no contact with Gnostic ideas. This makes it very difficult to substantiate his conclusion that the Odes are on a line from Jewish apocalyptic mysticm to Gnosticism.

99. A short note on the Mandaean question will be found below.

100. In the article cited in n. 98 above, Charlesworth deals with the concept of knowledge in the Odes and Gnosticism, and then lists nine other features of Gnosticism, none of which are present in the Odes.

101. "The Odes of Solomon and the Gospel of John", CBQ 35 (1973), 298-322. Charlesworth believes that there is no dependence between the Odes and John, but he does think that they both came from the same community. The same verdict is given in "Qumran, John and the Odes of Solomon", in John and Qumran, p. 125.

102. "The Odes of Solomon - Not Gnostic", p. 369.

103. It is necessary to distinguish between influences of a direct or indirect nature, and material which is merely prior in time to something else. Does Charlesworth's reference to the Odes as a tributary to Gnosticism imply that it had an effect on the formation of Gnosticism or not?

104. "The Theological Vocabulary of the Fourth Gospel and of the Gospel of Truth", in CINTI, pp. 210-223.

105. This is a summary of Schenke's own account of the Gospel of Truth from "Die Gnosis", in Umwelt des Urchristentums.

106. The name "Jesus" does not occur in the Odes. The same is also true of the Shepherd of Hermas.

107. See also S.Arai, Die Christologie des Evangelium Veritatis, p. 60. Other scholars see three groups of men in this Gospel as in other Gnostic systems.

108. S.Arai also sees the personification of Error in the Odes, but notes that nowhere in the Odes is Error shown as the Demiurge; op. cit. p. 54.

109. See above pp.235 ff. on Error.

110. See above pp.245 ff. on Intoxication.

111. See S.Arai, op. cit. p. 27: "In den Oden Salomos erscheint keine direkte Aussage über die Selbsterkenntnis". He does however think that this concept is present in the Odes, but expressed there in terms of the captive soul.

112. Arai also recognises that the Aeons of the Gospel of Truth are missing from the Odes, but as in the case of self-knowledge, he feels that this idea is also represented in the Odes by the concept of the captive soul.

113. See above pp.274ff. on the World.

114. According to Schenke, "the breasts of the Father" are repeatedly mentioned in the Odes. This is in fact the only mention of them. In ode 8 it is the Messiah's breasts which are mentioned, and in ode 14 it is the believers' breasts which are spoken of. See Die Herkunft des sogennanten Evengelium Veritatis, p. 29.

115. The text reads "her bosom", and the context shows that this should not be changed to "his bosom" as W.Bauer has done.

116. Although there is no identification of the Holy Spirit and the Father's bosom in the ode, the action of the Spirit is similar in the Odes and in the Gospel of Truth.

117. In the Odes, there is a distinction between "the world" and"the worlds". See above pp.274ff.

117a. The idea of the "right hand" as denoting ethical rightness or salvation also belongs to Gnostic thought, but also to New Testament thought; cf. Matt. 25. 33. The idea of the "left", which is also found in Gnosticism and in the New Testament, does not occur in the Odes at all.

118. According to R.Abramowski, this question is the "Angelpunkt des Verständnis" of the Odes; "Der Christus der Salomo-oden", ZNW 35 (1936), 45. It is true that without this identification the Christology of the Odes cannot be determined.

119. Throughout this section the term "the odist" is used to designate the speaker, and not the author of the Odes, whose identification involves a quite different question. A similar problem to that of the Odes is found also in the Qumran material. See S.Holm-Nielsen, "'Ich' in den Hodayoth und die Qumrangemeinde", in Qumran-Problème, pp. 217-229.

120. J.H.Charlesworth, The Odes of Solomon, p. 126; F.H.Borsch, The Son of Man in Myth and History, pp. 189ff.; and especially the art. by Abramowski cited in n. 1 above.

121. Abramowski, art, cit. pp. 53-57.

122. "Es kann kein Zweifel sein, dass dies rätselhafte zweite Ich der Oden ein hervorragendes Glied der in der Oden sichtbaren Gemeinschaft und ihr Kulträger ist"; R.Abramowski, art. cit. p. 58.

123. In the Qumran community there was an official priesthood, but the whole community was regarded as a priestly function. It can therefore be

described as "the company of infinite holiness for Aaron", or "the dwelling of infinite holiness for Aaron". See I QS VIII, 5-8. Note also L.Mowry, The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Early Church, p. 65. J.Carmignac believes that the Odes were composed by a former member of the Qumran community; "Un Qumranien converti au Christianisme: l'auteur des Odes de Salomon", in Qumran-Problème, pp. 75-108.

124. Harris-Mingana, II, 315ff.

125. The closest there is to an actual quotation from Isa. in the ode is in v. 9; for his glory will go before you. In Isa 58. 8 we read, Your righteousness will go before you, the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.

126. The sing. alternates with the plural frequently in the Old Testament and in the liturgical literature of the early church.

127. These are the ܫܠܝܚ̈ܐ of the water in ode 6. 13, and are not called priests (ܟܗ̈ܢܐ). J.H.Bernard regards them in a technical sense as "deacons", since this is the normal translation of διάκονοι in the New Testament; The Odes of Solomon, pp. 58ff. There is no need to see such a technical sense in the ode.

128. R.Abramowski notes that it is important to distinguish between those hymns in which the speaker as filius adoptivus experiences a turning to God, and those in which it is not clear which speaker is intended. It is interesting to note that his list of the latter group is almost the same as the list given above of the individual odes; 1, 5, 16, 21, 25, 37 and 40.

129. There is a further group of odes which needs to be distinguished, which cut across the groupings given above. These are the ones in which a section of the ode is spoken ex ore Christi. There is no unanimity among scholars concerning the extent of these sections, and some scholars deny that there is any ex ore Christi passage at all.

130. See above pp. 77f.

131. The Syriac word is ܥܡܝܕ , which implies the same as ܡܫܟܚ in v. 7. The latter may be used because of the love symbolism in the ode, for this word is also used of joining together in betrothal. See J.Payne Smith, A Compendious Syriac Dictionary, p. 261a.

132. This does not mean that the believers become identical with Christ. Just as we can point to the distinction in the Fourth Gospel between the sonship of Christ, expressed by υἱος , and that of the believer, expressed by τεκνον , so also a distinction is made in the ode. Thus Christ is ܒܪܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ and ܝܠܕ , but the believer will be ܒܢܝ ܐܠܗܐ and ܝܠܕ .

133. See also the use of ܝܠܕ in odes 31. 4 and 41. 1ff.

134. For a description of the MS see R.Harris, The Odes and Psalms of Solomon; Now First Published from the Syriac Version, pp. 3f.

135. Cf. ode 6, where "I speak" in v. 2 changes to "us" in vv. 6ff. The pronoun "I" does not recur in this ode.

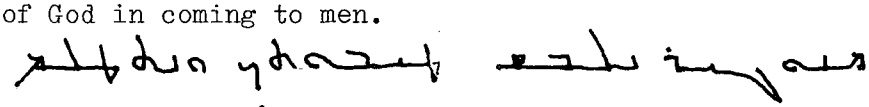
136.J.H.Charlesworth translates the second line of v. 9, "So grant unto me", suggesting that the verb should be understood as an optative. We prefer the rendering of Harris-Mingana.

137. See odes 18, 35, 36, and 41. The only possible exception here is ode 18, where there is a ministry by the speaker. But again in this ode the sing. changes to the plural in v. 7;"Let your right hand bring our salvation to victory".

138. Again there is ambiguity with regard to the translation of ܝܗܒ Should this be "has offered" or "has given"?

139. See 11. 23, "There is much room in your Paradise". The thought is similar to Jn. 14. 2.

140. In ode 7. 5 the diminution of the Lord enables the odist to "put him on", and this is the result of the "gracious" act of God. The correspondence between ode 4. 6 and 33. 12 is very close, in view of this emphasis on the grace of God in coming to men.

4. 6 

33. 12 

141. ܒܪ ܐܢܫ is the word used in both cases. ܒܪ ܐܢܫ means "man", not "Son of Man".

142. Cf. also 7. 14, where "the traces of his light" were set over the way. This reminds us of the use of the phrase in Irenaeus's description of Ophite Gnosis, Adv. Haer. I. 30, 1-15. The use of the image is different in each.

143. Cf. in the same ode v. 19, "They who have passed from darkness to light".

144. See note 128 above.

145. So Charlesworth translates ܐܬܓܠܝ . This is preferable to the "was made known" of Harris-Mingana, because it makes a closer connection between the ministry of the odist and the Word through which Sheol is abolished.

146. F.H.Borsch comments on v. 9: "The last claim is astonishing in the mouth of any ordinary person, not least a Christian"; op. cit. p. 191. This claim is astonishing only because Borsch has not considered passages such as Lk. 10. 17ff., where through the ministry of the disciples the

overthrowing of Satan results. See also above on the "war" of the odist.

147. So we ought to render ܕܒܗ ܕܡܗܝܡܢܝܢ in v. 10b. The parallel expression in the following line "those who trust in him" suggests that we ought to treat the part. in an active sense, "his believers", rather than in the passive sense, as Harris-Mingana and J.H.Charlesworth have done.

148. This means the light of the revelation which the speaker has received, not the light per se. This provides only a partial parallel to Jn. 1. 5, but the thought is closer to Jn. 12. 35. See above p.335.

149. See also ode 29. 9f. where the speaker's word is the word of God, and it is God who gains victory through his word.

150. Harris-Mingana state that"this is a very difficult ode to interpret". They find no real Scriptural dependence, and "it is equally difficult to detect the Christian elements in the ode"; II, 297.

151. Cf. ode 9. 4, "In the will (ܨܒܝܢܐ in both odes), of the Lord is your life".

152. See below.

153. In either case, these verses may reflect the opinion of the odist's community that the truth ought not to be proclaimed to such people. See also ode 10. 5, where it seems as if the inclusion of the Gentiles into the community constituted a problem for the odist.

154. See J.Payne Smith, op. cit. p. 93a. For the use of this word in the translations of the New Testament, see W.Jennings, A Syriac New Testament Lexicon, p. 112.

155. The same difficulty occurs here as at 14. 9, viz., whether the Imperfect is to be understood as an optative or as an indicative. Either is possible, but if there is a question about the propriety of conversing with the opponents, the latter is more likely.

156. Harris-Mingana are somewhat optimistic in suggesting that "the meaning of the sentence is not affected by the change", II. 297. In the 1916 edition of the text they have printed ܕ ܐܡܪ ܠܗ .

157. See the whole of Charlesworth's note on this; op. cit. p. 80.

158. ibid.

159. The Old Testament Pesh. reads ܐܡܪ ܠܗ ܕ ܒܥܐ ܠܡܫܝܚܐ ܕܢܫܪܐ ܒܗ
The wording is similar, and could account for the introduction of the troublesome ܕ of the text of the ode.

160. Having offered this translation Charlesworth says, "The meaning seems to be 'Let thy right hand preserve victory or salvation'", making no attempt to incorporate the problematical expression; op. cit. p. 80. Nor is the suggestion of Harris-Mingana much more helpful when the state that if the ↷ is allowed to stand, it must be treated expletively, meaning "as if"; II, 297.

161. We prefer to delete the ↷.

162. Harris-Mingana offer the former, J.H.Charlesworth the latter.

163. The opposite of this is to take hold of Christ. Cf. 42. 4.

164. These ܟܚܝܝܢ most probably refer to the ܒܥܠܝ ܒܝܫܬܐ of v. 5. In the N.T. Pesh., ܟܚܝܝܢ ܒܝܫܐ is found as a translation of κακοποιός (I Pet. 4. 5); κακοῦργος (II Tim. 2. 9); τὰ φαῦλα πράξαντες (Jn. 5. 29).

165. It is true that in Gnosticism also, the saving knowledge is to be proclaimed to all men, since it is not known beforehand who the Gnostics are. But the concept of saving knowledge is different in the Odes and in Gnosticism.

166. Cf. Rom. 1. 21ff.

167. Cf. Jn. 20. 22 and Gen. 2. 7. N.J.Perella states that these two vv. describe "the two great kisses of life in the history of man, both of them involving the concept of a divine insufflation". See his account of the use made of this concept in the early church; The Kiss Sacred and Profane, pp. 18ff. With this verse of the ode should be compared ode 28. 6ff.

168. This is clear from v. 6 of the ode, where the speaker "believed in the Lord's Messiah", who is also referred to as "the Lord" in the following line.

169. F.H.Borsch, op. cit. p. 195.

170. Harris-Mingana print the ܕܫܪܝܢ in their text, but in the translation in Vol. II this is emended to ܢܨܝܢ, thus making God and not the speaker the one who has laid his enemies low. J.H.Charlesworth rejects this emendation, drawing attention to v. 8, "that I might subdue"; op. cit. p. 113. No emendation is necessary, nor is there any need to draw too fine a line between the warfare of the speaker and the Lord's warfare. In v. 10 of the ode the subject is again "the Lord", who "overthrew my enemy by his Word". The speaker has been armed for war, and he is engaged in a battle. But the battle is the Lord's, and ultimately, it is the Lord who will gain victory. The odist's thought is very much conditioned by the concept of the "Holy War" of the Old Testament, a concept which found its way into the language of asceticism in the Syrian Church. See R.Murray, "The Exhortation to Candidates for Ascetical Vows at Baptism in the Ancient Syriac Church", NTS 21 (1975), 60-67.

171. Cf. ode 10. 5, where there is no pollution for the Messiah through his

inclusion of the Gentiles. See above n. 153. We could translate "Imaginations of the peoples" rather than "devices of the Gentiles", but probably the odist is thinking specifically of Gentiles here.

172. ode 29. 10 ܫܘܝ ܡܢ ܕܒܪ ܕܝܢ ܓܪ ܐܡ

Ps. 1. 4 ܫܘܝ ܕܝܢ ܕܝ ܓܪ ܐܠ

Harris-Mingana, II, 111 point out that Aphrahat hat the same verb as the ode in contrast to the Pesh. in a quotation of this verse. This may mean that they had a common source of the Psalms which is different from the Pesh. Alternatively, the verb ܢܕܐ is used in the Pesh. of Isa. 57. 13 for the wind carrying off the idols, and it could therefore be that the odist is merely mis-quoting, using a verb which was commonly used in connection with the action of the wind.

173. See above on Knowledge in the Odes.

174. Cf. Harris-Mingana, "The praise of his name he gave us".

175. The simplest way to remove the difficulty would be to remove the pronominal suffix from ܫܒܚܬܗ . This would give us the translation, "He gave us praise for his name". The idea of the Holy Spirit providing praise for God to the community is a fairly common one in the Odes, (see above on The Holy Spirit and the Community's Proclamation), and this would provide an introduction to the next line, which speaks of praising the Holy Spirit.

176. The giving of the "name" in salvation is an important one in the Odes; 8. 22; 25. 11; 39. 8; 41. 15; 42. 20.

177. That is, whether the water signifies the reception of knowledge, or the Spirit, or whether it is regarded as referring specifically to Baptism.

178. Ode 6. 17. "They gave strength for their coming" (ܚܝܠ ܐܡܬܝܗ). Instead of "coming" the Coptic has ⲧⲉⲩⲡⲁⲣⲟⲩⲥⲓⲁ which led to the suggestion that an original παρρησία has been mis-read as παρουσία . Harris-Mingana suggest that the mention of paralysed wills makes it natural to think of a parallel "paralysed limbs",II, 236f. There is no need for any emendment. The odist is thinking of the coming to salvation, and of the ministers who bring them there. The ܐܡܬܝܗ picks up the ,ܐܬܐ of v. 8. In vv. 6ff. the stream brings everything to the Temple. This stream is a drink for the thirsty. The ministers are servants of that drink. Thus through the action of the ministers, men are given strength for them to come to the haven of salvation.

179. J.H.Charlesworth, op. cit. pp. 32f.

180. ܒܝܗ Lit. "in the Lord". This is the rendering of Harris-Mingana.

181. ܒܗ ܕܚܝܐ ܕܠܥܠܡ ܚܝܐ. This could also be translated, they lived "by the water an eternal life"; so Harris-Mingana. Cf. ode 11.6.

182. On the ܒܢܝ ܐܠܗܐ cf. n.127 above.

183. ܒܩܕܝܫܘܗܝ. More probably, in view of the following vv., we should translate "through his holy ones". There is no evidence that ܩܕܝܫ in the Odes presupposes the language of ascetism. Cf. A.Vööbus, Celibacy, p.22.

184. For the meaning of ܚܙܝ see Payne Smith. In the Pesh. it translates αὐτόπται of Lk.1. 2. More interesting for the ode is II Pet.1. 16: "when we made known to you the power and coming of the Lord (ܚܝܠܗ ܘܡܟܘܬܗ ܕܡܪܢ ; ode, ܚܝܠܗ ܘܡܟܘܬܗ); but we were eye-witnesses (ἐπόπται = ܚܙܝ) of his majesty.

185. The imagery here may be derived from the Gospel accounts of the entry into Jerusalem by Christ (Mk.11. 1-10 and pars.; Lk.19. 28-40; Jn.12. 12-19), but the thought is clearly different. But while the language here is eschatological (cf. vv.20f.) it signifies the arrival of the revelation of God through the Son (v.15).

186. Charlesworth, "This verse refers to the Incarnation", op. cit. p.38.

187. The majority of translators render the word "read". This is natural in view of the previous "write", but "proclaim" fits better with the thought of the Odes.

188. For the variety of meanings of ܐܡܪ in Pesh. cf. Jennings. A Syriac N.T. Lexicon, pp.201f.

189. "his soul" means simply "him". The section of the ode is not concerned with man's finding life apart from God, but with the impossibility of declaring the wonder and majesty of God. The implication of the ode is then that it is not a question of man providing instruction for God so that he will be saved, but only if God gives saving knowledge to man can he live. Man's inability to know God is of course a prominent element in Gnosis, but not only there; cf. n.77. In Gnosis the highest God is the Unknown Primal cause and O.T. Scriptures such as Isa.1. 3; Hos.4. 1; Ps.14. 2f.; Ex.33. 20 are made to refer to this ignorance of him in Valentinianism. See Iren. Adv. Haer.1. 19; 20. 2; 21. 3; 24. 6; 30. 13; Exc. ex. Theod. 7.

190. Harris-Mingana "rest on the Most High", loc. cit. The verb occurs again in v.12, but without any preposition.

191. J.H. Charlesworth, op. cit. p. 105. His note is incorrect in so far as the intention of the note is to show that this expression does not mean "rest upon" as Harris-Mingana suggest. He does not attempt to force this meaning on the same phrase in ode 30. 2.

192. Cf. O.T. Pesh. Jer.30. 23; 42. 18; Dan.9. 27.

193. Pesh. Rom.2. 17; Sir.20. 21 ܠܐ ܡܬܬܠ ܡܠܬܐ

194. Cf. I Pet.4. 14; Isa.11. 2. Pesh. here has ܠܐ ܪܘܚܐ ܩܕܫܐ.
See also Num.11. 25; II Kings 2. 15 where ܠܐ ܪܘܚ is used instead.

195. For the whole section cf. Isa.40. 13-17. The idea that man's ability to comprehend God is limited occurs frequently; cf. Wisd.9. 13-18; Judith 8. 13f.; Sir.3. 21-24; 18. 5-7. This is different from the complete lack of knowledge of the Highest God in Gnosis. It is probable that the use of the Ethpe'el of ܪܘܚ in v.11 is occasioned by the relationship between ܠܐ ܡܬܬܠ and ܠܐ ܪܘܚ.

196. Cf. Sir. 21. 13; 24. 30ff.; for Gnosis cf. Book of Thomas 140. 14ff., in Gnosis II, 114.

197. In "quietness and serenity", rather than in "the Rest" as Harris-Mingana.

198. Harris-Mingana rightly state that the ܠܘܬܗ looks back to the ܡܢܘܚ of v.1, but have not explored the significance of this.

199. The verb here is ܫܪܐ and was also used in v.9. See n. 188; cf. also 4. 10 where it is again used of "the fountains which pour forth ( ) milk and honey."

200. It is tempting to see the odist's community regarding themselves as the successors of the Temple singers, who were named "to give thanks to the Lord, for his steadfast love endures forever"; I Chr.16. 41. This would help to account for the use of the terms priest, minister, seer and singer, all of which could be applied to the Levitical singers; see IChr.16. 25. Cf. R. de Vaux, Ancient Israel, pp.391ff.

201. The ten odes which are claimed to have ex ore Christi passages are: 8;10;17;22;28;31;33;41;41. We would wish to exclude ode 36 from this list.

202. F.H.Borsch, op. cit., p.189 n.4.

203. J.H.Charlesworth speaks of "a docetic nuance"; The Odes of Solomon, p.147, cf. note 205.

204. See pp. 185f.; 192; 199; 412ff.

205. F.H. Borsch says that this best fits the language of the ode, but admits that 42. 14, 23 could result from a docetic understanding of Jesus' death, or could be ways of saying that death could not hold him, op. cit. p.198.

206. Lit. I went down with it as far as there was depth in it. This indicates the full extent of his experience with death.

207. ܩܡ is not likely to refer to a rising up from some earthly difficulty. If this were the meaning here the idea of "speaking through their mouths" scarcely makes any sense.

208. ܡܬܩܝܡ looks back to the ܩܝܡܐ of the previous verse.

209. ܠܡܪܡ ܕܐܠܗܐ. cf. ode 23. 5 where the will of God ܠܡܪܡ ܕܐܠܗܐ. ܠܡܪܡ is used to describe the place to which the believer is lifted up. Cf. 17. 7; 21. 1; 36. 1 (H), MS N has ܠܥܠ.

210. The reference to the "middle" ܡܨܥܬܐ (cf. ode 30. 6) requires this meaning. The Place of the Middle in Gnosis is located just below the upper world. In the Odes it signifies the earth.

211. Cf. odes 4; 6.

212. See p. 501 above.

213. Note especially odes 12; 18; 29; 42.

214. The MS has ܐܬܒ. Charlesworth may well be correct in seeing this as an incorrect copying of ܐܬܒܥ caused through haplography, op. cit. p.76. This provides a satisfactory explanation, although the possibility of an original ܐܬܒ is not to be discounted. See Harris-Mingana II, 291. This latter verb is that used in Isa.1. 2 for the children whom God has "reared and brought up", who neither know nor understand.

215. Harris-Mingana suggest that the fem. suffix was introduced because of the fem. noun ܡܫܬܒܘܬܐ in the following line. This would be a more plausible explanation if the copyist had already written the word.

216. See ode 36. 3,5 where the fem. pronoun occurs in the middle of a number of masc. nouns and pronouns, the antecedent being "the Spirit of the Lord" in v. 1.

217. It ought to be noted however, that the Messiah is the one who generally releases the believer from bonds or imprisonment.

218. This seems to be the way in which the copyist understood it, for it is rather more difficult to go back to v.2 for the antecedent of the pronominal suffix when there is a fem. pron. in line a of this verse. This also seems to be implied by the following verse; cf. Rom.6. 4. For v.5 cf. ode 38.5.

219. R. Abramowski sees a particular significance in theuse of ܦܪܨܘܦܐ (Gk. πρόσωπον) in the Odes and relates it to the technical terminology of Antiochene Theology. This reads too much into the Odes.

220. The odist wishes to speak of the real descent into Sheol by Christ, while at the same time he uses Sheol imagery to describe man's life on earth. The resulting picture means that while he holds on to this aspect of the Christian tradition (i.e. the descent into hell), he has little room for it in his understanding of salvation. He is closer to Gnosis than to Christianity at this point.

221. For the phrase cf. Pesh. Isa.3. 12. For a partial parallel to the thought of the verse cf. I Jn.2. 6, which however describes the relationship between the believer and Christ, not Christ and God.

222. The difficulty remains whether this section is regarded as ex ore Christi or not. For a comparable view of the Revealer, see Hipp. Ref.V, 26. 19, from the book Baruch, where Baruch comes to Jesus when he is twelve and proclaimed to him all that had happened and all that was to happen.

223. On the "Alien" in Gnosis, see H.Jonas, The Gnostic Religion, pp.75-81 It is at least more likely that this is the case then that the word implies a docetic Christology, as Charlesworth states; op. cit. p.76. But cf. Wisdom, men amazed to see him safe.

224. There may also be a contrast here between the fact that he is not known or recognised by his opponents, but he is known to God (cf. ode 41. 8f.), who exalts, glorifies and empowers him.

225. It may be pointed out that the history of Christian theology has shown clearly that the odist was not the only one to fail in this respect. The problem in the Odes however is that there is little attempt to place any value on the humanity of Christ.

226. For the identity of Redeemer and redeemed in Gnosis, expressed by "I am thou and thou art I", Epiphenius, Pan.XXVI, 3. 1; cf. also Iren. Adv. Haer I, 2. 6; I, 13. 3,6; Hipp., Ref.VI, 17. 2; Gospel of Philip 44; 67; 116.

227. Cf. R.S.V. and N.E.B. for the extent of the statement by God. More especially, cf. Ps.46. 10; 132. 13ff., where the change to speech by God is not indicated.

228. See D.R.Jones "II and III Isaiah" in Peake's Commentary on the Bible p.533a.

229. ibid.

230. See above n. 107. It may be that the odist's contact with Gnostic thought has shaped his language, but we would think more in terms of a prophetic community who is convinced that the Spirit speaks through it. See D.E.Aune, The Cultic Setting of Realised Eschatology in the Early Church , pp.177ff. for the importance of spirit-filled prophets in early Christianity. On the other hand, S.A. Fries, "Die Oden Salomos: Montanistische Lieder aus dem 2 Jahrhundert", ZNW 12 (1911), 70-75, goes too far in seeing this as an expression of Montanism.

CHAPTER 6

ATTEMPTING TO DEFINE THE RELATIONSHIP.

In the course of the preceding chapters we have attempted to give expression to the theological ideas of the Odes of Solomon, and to relate these to the Johannine literature. We have seen that at every point of the study there have been both points of similarity and points of difference. Clearly there is some relationship between the two sets of writing, and we shall attempt here to define that relationship more closely. We shall look at this problem of relationship in the following way. First we shall ask the question concerning the possibility of literary dependence between the Johannine literature and the Odes. Secondly, we shall consider other religious currents which appear to have played some part in the form of expression of the two writings. Thirdly, we shall consider those concepts which are central to the relationship between them. Finally, we shall attempt to draw some conclusions between these concepts and the material under discussion, in order to define more closely the relationship between the Odes and the Johannine literature.

1. The Question of Literary Dependence.

The question of the dependence of one document upon another is a difficult one to answer if there is no actual quotation of one by the other, as is the case with the Odes and the Johannine literature. Yet this fact of quotation, or the lack of it, does not answer the question, since dependence obviously implies more than mere borrowing. The odist never quotes a full verse of the Old Testament, although in a couple of instances, he quotes part of a verse. But it would not be true to say that the odist is not dependent upon the Old Testament, for much of what he says can only be understood against a background of Old Testament imagery.

But even though we can say that the odist is dependent upon the Old Testament, in the majority of cases we are not able to say with certainty which particular part of the Old Testament is being used. According to Harris-Mingana, it is possible to tell not only which verse of Scripture the odist is alluding to, but also the particular version which he is using. R.H.Connolly seems to be closer to the truth of the matter when he says that the odist disguises his Scriptural allusions only too successfully.

The assumption is often made that if there is any dependence between the Odes and John, the Odes will be dependent upon John, not the reverse. Some scholars have argued for the priority of the Odes, but this is fairly unusual. J.H.Charlesworth and R.A.Culpepper have made a fairly comprehensive listing of the positions of various scholars on this issue, and there is no necessity for us to repeat them.(1) In their investigation of the relationship between the Odes and the Gospel of John, they reject the alternatives that the Odes depend upon John and that John depends upon the Odes.

The answer proposed by Charlesworth and Culpepper is that although "it is clear that the Odes contain numerous and impressive parallels" to John, neither is dependent upon the other. Instead, they think in terms of the "same milieu", and more particularly, that "both were probably composed in the same community". Following J.Carmignac, they think that the author of the Odes had probably been a member of the Essene community, "though perhaps a non-Qumran Essene".

From the investigation we have undertaken above, it can be seen that there are parallels to the literature from Qumran, but there are several other areas of religious thought to be considered also. Perhaps this is why the authors of the article suggest that the odist is a non-

Qumran Essene. It seems to us however, that on the basis of parallels between the Odes and John, such a conclusion cannot be sustained.

One thing which can be said with certainty is that there is no direct quotation of one by the other. Nor, for the most part, is there a significant amount of contextual similarity where we find the same concepts being used. The most notable exception to this is the number of ideas in common found in the opening verses of ode 31, and John 17.(2) This raises at least the possibility of dependence, and if there is dependence here it will probably be of the odist upon John. However, the fact that there is such a small number of places where dependence could be clearly shown leaves the question very much open.

2. Relationships to other religious movements.

One problem which immediately confronts anyone who would attempt an investigation into this question is the fact that parallels seem to have been found between John and almost every other religious movement current at the time. The question is further complicated by the fact that these same religious movements are also seen to be related to the Odes.

If John is seen to be related to Judaism, and in particular to the heterodox Judaism represented by the Scrolls, so also are the Odes. John is seen to be related to Philo, so are the Odes. John has some contact with Gnosticism, and particularly with the Gospel of Truth, and the Odes also are related to Gnosticism, and it is suggested that they stem from the same community as that responsible for the Gospel of Truth. The Mandaean material is brought in to produce parallels to John, and it is used extensively to illuminate the Odes. Within this extravagance of background material to choose from, how is the question of relatedness to be explored.

Here we shall look briefly at some of these areas in their relationship to John and the Odes, to see if we can further the investigation.

a) Judaism and the Qumran material.

The relationship of the Fourth Gospel to Judaism, and to that form of Judaism represented by the Scrolls, has been noted by most scholars. Naturally, not all scholars are agreed on the question of the significance of the Scrolls for Johannine studies, but it is nevertheless true that there are significant ideas in common, and these need to be taken into consideration in the interpretation of the Fourth Gospel.(3)

Similarly, there has been a great deal of attention paid to the relationships seen between the Odes of Solomon and the Qumran literature. The work of J.Carmignac,(4) J.Daniélou,(5) F.M.Braun,(6) and J.H.Charlesworth(7) has shown that there are parallels here which cannot be ignored. At the same time, Carmignac goes too far when he suggests that the author of the Odes was a former Essene of the Qumran community. Similarities are there to be seen, but so too are the differences, which Carmignac acknowledges. The most that can be said is that the odist has employed concepts which were in use among the Qumran community, along with other concepts which were not.

b) Gnosticism

Both John and the Odes have been related to early forms of Gnosticism. In the case of the Fourth Gospel, the idea that we find here a document representing Gnostic thinking is usually rejected,(8) but many scholars still feel that Gnosticism needs to be taken into account in the interpretation of the Gospel.

With regard to the Odes, this relationship to Gnosticism is

also seen to exist, although in this case, there is usually a greater recognition of Gnostic thinking than is the case with John. This is particularly the case with respect to "Christian Gnostic" writings such as the Gospel of Truth. In our investigation, we have attempted to show that although there are traces of Gnostic thought in the Odes, this is insufficient to prove them Gnostic.

c) Mandaeism

Of particular significance within the Gnostic relationship is the question of Mandaean influence. This question is hampered by the debate concerning the origins of the Mandaean religion, and many scholars are sceptical about the value of introducing the Mandaean issue at all. Nevertheless, if K.Rudolph and others are right in seeing the origins of this movement in Palestine in the first century,(9) the issue cannot be closed.

The question becomes more pertinent in the case of the Odes of Solomon because of the suggested relationships between the Mandaean literature, the Manichaean Psalms, and Sryiac psalmody. T.Säve-Söderbergh has shown that some of the Manichaean Psalms depend on Mandaean material, and that the "pre-Mandaean" tradition goes back to a time which is at least earlier than Mani. He has also demonstrated that there is some connection between Syriac literature and the Manichaean Psalms.

The study of the relationships between the Odes and the Mandaean literature would require a separate investigation, but for our present purposes it seems sufficient to state that although Rudolph in particular has provided many parellels to the Odes, many of these are concerned with concepts which can be explained in terms of a common borrowing from Jewish concepts (e.g. crown, planting, water, name). Others can be explained in terms of a common background in Gnostic thought.

d) O.Cullmann's thesis on the Johannine Circle.

In a series of articles, and in his book The Johannine Circle, Cullmann has attempted to show that the Johannine circle is joined to several other religious traditions through the theme of the opppsition to the Temple. By means of this theme, he draws together the Fourth Gospel, the Hellenists of Acts 6, who are the "others" of John 4. 38, and the Samaritans, who are brought in both through the Hellenists and the context in John 4. By extension, this group is expanded to include other groups which belong to the area of heterodox Judaism; the Mandaeans, the baptist movement, Jewish syncretism, and Gnostic Ebionism.(10) Since we could also include the Odes of Solomon in the group of those who have an opposition to the Temple, they may be brought into Cullmann's scheme also.

This is a very neat scheme, but it is clear that the opposition to the Temple operates in different ways among the different groups mentioned, and it is not really possible to overcome the problem of Johannine relationships in as simple a way as this.(11)

3. Ideas Central to the relationship between the Odes and John.

In our investigation, we have shown that there is a significant degree of dis-similarity between John and the Odes with respect to the particular concepts used to describe the whole scheme of salvation, as well as the similarity between them, and that the real parallelism consists in the pattern of salvation presented, rather than in the details of it. Here we shall look briefly at those points where John and the Odes come together in their picture.

a) Christ is seen as the Redeemer who descends from the world above, bringing knowledge of God and preparing men to follow him where he is going after his ascent. This is coupled with the notion of the defeat of

Satan, who is regarded as the ruler of this world, or as the one who holds men in captivity in the world.

b) There is an emphasis on knowledge, even if the Fourth Gospel does not use the term γνῶσις , coupled with an emphasis on light and truth. This emphasis on knowledge is stronger in the Odes than it is in John, and the odist is less concerned with faith than John is, but for both, knowing God through the revelation of himself through Christ assumes a central place.

c) In both the Odes and John, there is a clearly dualistic structure running throughout. The opposition between that which signifies salvation and that which does not is expressed in terms of the opposition between life and death; light and darkness; truth and falsehood; above and below. Because this is no cosmological dualism, since creation is the work of God through his word in both cases, this dualism is usually referred to as a modified dualism, or a dualism of decision.(12)

d) Both the Odes and John also present us with a kind of predestination. There are times when it appears that those who come to Christ do so because they are brought there by God, while others do not come because they belong to the world and must remain of the world. In both writings this emphasis is more than balanced by the idea that all who wish to come to Christ and have life are able to do so, simply on the basis of faith.

e) In both the Odes and John, we are presented with an eschatological perspective which is almost completely realised, and there is only a small place left for the future of faith. Both writings however do also allow for some future consummation.

None of these ideas is Gnostic in itself, but the combination

of these ideas means that we have a scheme of salvation which follows that of the Gnostic movement, even if these ideas are employed in a context which makes their use non-Gnostic.

4. Summarising the relationship.

From the above it appears to us that the influence which unites the Odes of Solomon and John at these crucial points is that of Gnosticism. Certainly it is to be said that at particular points the Odes and John share concepts in common with Judaism, or with Qumran, but these correspondences are sporadic rather than constant. They have not used this material in order to present a plan of salvation in the way in which they appear to have used the scheme which is found in Gnosticism.

This is not to claim that either John or the Odes are products of Gnostic thinking. Indeed, there are good reasons for thinking that John at least is consciously anti-Gnostic. It is rather to claim that both the Odes and John were written in an environment in which Gnostic ways of thinking were prevalent.

A.F.J.Klijn has suggested that the Odes of Solomon, the Gospel of Thomas and the Acts of Thomas were all known in Edessa about the middle of the second century A.D. He also suggests that the group responsible for the production of the Odes and the Acts of Thomas was different from that responsible for the Gospel of Thomas. Klijn relates the Odes fairly closely to the Acts of Thomas, but it appears to us that the Acts of Thomas are more indebted to Gnosticism than are the Odes. While there are some correspondences between the Odes and the Hymn of the Pearl, it does not seem that the themes of the "letter" and the "garment" operate in the same Gnostic way as they do in the Hymn.

Klijn has shown that the Hymn of the Pearl was acceptable

in the Syriac church and that "for 750 years of orthodoxy in the Syriac church nobody thought it necessary to alter the original Syriac version". Yet he also goes on to show that "in the Greek speaking church, some alterations were made in the text in order to make it concur with more orthodox views". (13) Statements such as this raise questions about the nature of the orthodoxy in the church rather than emphasise the orthodoxy of the Hymn.

H.W.J.Drijvers has pointed out that Syria is not only the home of the bishop Ignatius, but it is also the home of the Gnostic Saturnilus. (14) It is also the home of Bardaisan, who is seen by W.R. Newbold as the author of the Odes. (15) While Bardaisan may also not be a Gnostic, there is clearly some close relationship to Gnosticism in his writings.

Drijvers sums up his understanding of the Odes as follows: "So ist es durchaus möglich, die Oden Salomos gnostisch zu interpretieren, wenn Parallelen aus dem Mandäismus zur Interpretation herangezogen werden, aber auch eine mehr 'orthodoxe' Auslegung gehört zu den 'legitimen' Möglichkeiten". (16)

This is the problem of the Odes. They are not Gnostic and yet they sound Gnostic, and use concepts which are at home in Gnosticism. If those scholars are right who maintain that the beginnings of the Gnostic movement are to be found not in the second century but in the first, then we must reckon seriously with an inter-play of Gnostic and Jewish-Christian ideas behind the Odes, and also behind other literature from the Syriac church such as the Acts of Thomas and the Gospel of Thomas.

This seems to us to be the most satisfactory way of understanding the Odes. They cannot be understood simply on the basis of being a group of baptismal hymns, nor can they be interpreted merely in terms of the asceticism which was prevalent in Syria. We do not deny that some aspects of the Odes are related to baptism, nor that some relationship to the ascetic life is present. What we mean is that there are fundamental ideas in the Odes which are not explicable in terms of this. Gnosticism alone is not able to unlock the mysteries of the Odes, but neither can we interpret them adequately without reference to Gnostic ways of thinking.

J.H.Charlesworth and R.A.Culpepper have shown that there is no dependence between the Odes and the Gospel of John. With that we would probably agree, with the reservation expressed above concerning the possibility of relationship between ode 31 and John 17. But we cannot agree when they claim that both stem from the same community. The similarity between the Odes and John is outweighed by the differences which we have seen to exist in every aspect which has been investigated in the previous chapters. Such terminological parallels as exist, apart from those specifically connected with the themes mentioned in (3) above, are more easily explicable in terms of a common use of images which were part of the language of Judaism, or of Jewish-Christianity.

D.M.Smith has shown that the explanation of the Fourth Gospel requires something more than reference to the Synagogue debate, and that not only Jewish forms of expression, but others as well must be taken into account.[16] We believe that one significant area of thought which needs to be taken into consideration is Gnosticism, since this is what joins together the essential elements of the Odes and John. The brief look at Syrian Christianity above has shown that there seems to have been some relationship to Gnostic ways of thinking in the early

Church in Syria, which would be natural enough if the origins of the Gnostic movement are to be seen in Syria. John has some experience of this way of thought. The Gospel is not Gnostic, and may be consciously anti-Gnostic. The odist also has some experience of Gnostic thinking. He also is not Gnostic, but unlike the author of the Fourth Gospel, he seems to be less aware of the danger of this kind of thinking. It is in their respective relationships to this Gnostic thinking that the Fourth Gospel and the Odes of Solomon meet. Their meeting place is not in Judaism, nor in Qumran, nor in Jewish Christianity, although both share a relationship to these areas of thought. Rather, their meeting place is in the language of early forms of Gnosticism,which was common in Syria at the time of their writing.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6

1. "The Odes of Solomon and the Gospel of John", CBQ 35 (1973), 298-322. The following paragraph refers to this same article.

2. See above pp. 125 ff.

3. Some of the essays written on the relationship between the Fourth Gospel and the Dead Sea Scrolls are collected in John and Qumran, ed. J.H.Charlesworth, and The Scrolls and the New Testament, ed. K.Stendahl.

4. "Un Qumrânien converti au Christianisme: l'auteur des Odes de Salomon", in Qumran-Problème, pp. 75-108; "Les Affinités qumrâniennes de la onzième Ode de Salomon", RQ 3 (1961), 71-102.

5. Primitive Christian Symbols; The Theology of Jewish Christianity.

6. "L'Enigma des Odes de Salomon", RT 57 (1957), 597-625.

7. "Les Odes de Salomon et les manuscrits de la mer morte", RB 77 (1970), 522-549. "Qumran, John, and the Odes of Solomon", in John and Qumran, pp. 107-136.

8. But we have drawn attention during the course of this study to the thinking of R.Bultmann and E.Kasemann, who do see a positive attitude to Gnosticism. See also H.M.Teeple, "Qumran and the origin of the Fourth Gospel", NovT 4 (1960), 12, who speaks of the semi-Gnosticism of John. R.M.Grant, Gnosticism and Early Christianity, p. 173 also speaks of John's language as "semi-Gnostic".

9. For a survey of scholarly discussion on this question see E.Yamauchi, Pre-Christian Gnosticism, pp. 117ff.

10. See "The Significance of the Qumran Texts for Research into the Beginnings of Christianity", in The Scrolls and the New Testament, pp. 18-32; "Samaria and the Origins of the Christian Mission", in The Early Church, pp. 185-194; The Johannine Circle.

11. Cullmann himself recognises that the opposition to the Temple which he emphasises operates in a different way in the various groups; op. cit. p. 53.

12. See R.E.Brown,"The Qumran Scrolls and the Johannine Gospel and Epistles", in The Scrolls and the New Testament, p. 186; J.H.Charlesworth, "A Critical Comparison of the Dualism in 1QS 3. 13-4. 26 and the 'Dualism' contained in the Gospel of John", in John and Qumran, pp. 76-106. R.Bultmann speaks of the "dualism of decision" which takes the place of the cosmological dualism of Gnosticism; The Theology of the New Testament, II, 21.

13. "Early Syriac Christianity-Gnostic?", in ICOG, p. 576. G.Quispel also regards the Hymn as not Gnostic, characterising it as "an orthodox Christian hymn tinged with Judaistic colours"; "Gnosticism and the New Testament", in The Bible in Modern Scholarship, p. 259. See also idem. "Makarius und das Lied von der Perle", in ICOG, pp. 625-644. But cf. H.Jonas, "Reply to Quispel", in The Bible and Modern Scholarship, pp. 279-293. The same question has been raised about the Gospel of Thomas. R.McL.Wilson states that the Gnosticism of this work is not very pronounced, but he also suggests that it may have been "an instrument of Gnostic propaganda designed to lure the unsuspecting away from orthodoxy into the ranks of heresy"; Studies in the Gospel of Thomas, pp. 12f.

14. "Rechtglaübigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten syrischen Christentum", Orientalia Christiana Analecta 197, Symposium Syriacum, p. 298.

15. "Bardaisan and the Odes of Solomon", JBL 30 (1911), 161-204. F.M. Braun also gives this idea some consideration; "L'Enigma des Odes de Salomon", RT 57 (1957), 597-625. H.W.J.Drijvers states that "die bezeichnende gnostische Weltanschauung fehlt" in Bardaisan; art. cit. p. 308. See also idem. Bardaisan of Edessa, p. 224.

16.art. cit. p. 302. Cf. Bardaisan of Edessa p. 210, where Drijvers states that the Odes come from a Jewish-Christian milieu of Gnosticising diction.

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APPENDIX

THE USE OF ܡܠܬܐ AND ܡܐܡܪܐ IN THE SYRIAC VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE.

1. The Old Testament Peshitta.

On p. 53 we have already made reference to the statement of Harris-Mingana on the alternation of the words ܡܠܬܐ and ܡܐܡܪܐ in the Old Testament Pesh. Here our purpose is to give a few examples of the way in which these words are used in this version. In each case, the Hebrew word translated is דבר .

a) Ex. 34. 28: "The words of the covenant, ten words".

In this instance, as in (d) and (e), where "word" occurs twice, the equivalents will be given in the order in which they occur in the text. The uninflected form is given in all cases. As a further point of comparison, the LXX rendering will also be given.

LXX ῥῆμα Pesh. ܡܠܬܐ

λόγος ܡܐܡܪܐ

Jer. 11. 2: "The words of the covenant".

LXX λόγος Pesh. ܡܐܡܪܐ

b) II Sam. 24. 11: "The word of the Lord came to the prophet".

LXX λόγος Pesh. ܡܠܬܐ

I Kings 13. 20: "The word of the Lord came to the prophet".

LXX ῥῆμα Pesh. ܡܐܡܪܐ

c) I Kings 21. 4: "because of the word which Naboth .....had spoken".

LXX Pesh. ܡܐܡܪܐ

Isa. 37. 4: "The Lord .....will reprove the words (of Rabshakeh)".

LXX λόγος Pesh. ܡܠܬܐ

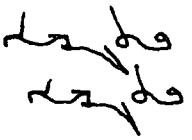
d) Jer. 5. 14: "Wherefore says the Lord, the God of Hosts, 'Because you have spoken this word, behold, I am making my words in your mouth a fire'"

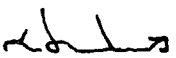
LXX ῥῆμα Pesh. ܡܠܬܐ

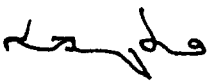
λόγος ܡܐܡܪܐ

e) I Kings 12. 24: "Return home for this thing is from me. So they hearkened to the word of the Lord".

LXX ῥῆμα
λόγος

Pesh. 

It can be seen from these few examples that both Syriac words are used to signify the words of the covenant, the word of the Lord, or the word of man. In (d) we find the word of man and the word of the Lord combined in one sentence, and here  translates the first, while  is used for the second. In (5), the translator finds no difficulty in using the one word,  , to express both a matter of fact and the word of the Lord.

If we consider the books of Samuel and Kings as a whole, we can see that in certain blocks of material, one word takes preference over the other. In the first 14 chapters of I Sam., דבר is translated by  six times, and by  twice. But from this point up to the end of II Sam.,  occurs only four times, while  is used 29 times. However, the usage alters again here, for in the two books of Kings  predominates in use (72 times), while we meet with  only 14 times. These 14 instances of the word are not found in substantial blocks, but are interspersed throughout the material, and in two consecutive verses, I Kings 17. 24; 18. 1, we find "the word of the Lord" rendered by a different Syriac word in each. In the case of the books of Samuel, it could be maintained that the usage of the different words is caused by different translators of blocks of material, but this will not do for the books of Kings.

For the Old Testament, it can be said that either Syriac word may be used to translate the various senses of the Hebrew דבר , and more particularly, that either may be used of "the word of the Lord", or of the word of man. In the LXX translation both λόγος and ῥῆμα occur, but in no sense does the Syriac usage correspond to this. Nor does it

correspond to the usage of the Targums.

2. The Syriac translations of the New Testament.

We shall consider some examples from the Old Syriac and the Pesh. in an attempt to see whether there is any significant difference in the use of ܡܠܬܐ and ܡܐܡܪܐ which may provide some assistance in understanding the use of the terminology of the Odes. Two questions are involved here. In the first place, if the Pesh. usage indicates that later technical terminology of which Harris-Mingana speak, does this differ from that of the Old Syriac Gospel usage, and if so, in what way? Secondly, how are the two Syriac words used in these translations?

J.T.Sanders, in The New Testament Christological Hymns suggests that the different genders of the two words for "word" is a clue to at least a part of the difference between them, in so far as their usage in the Odes is concerned. He notes that ܡܐܡܪܐ is masc., while ܡܠܬܐ is fem., but adds in a footnote, "This seems to be the case here (in the Odes), although melta' becomes masculine in the Peshitta, where it translates λόγος ". According to J.H.Charlesworth in The Odes of Solomon, by the time of the translation of the Old Syriac Gospels, ܡܠܬܐ had become a terminus technicus for ὁ λόγος , and the Odes must therefore pre-date this established ecclesiastical usage.

It is correct to state that in the Pesh. ܡܠܬܐ translates ὁ λόγος , and that it is used in a particular manner to signify the Word. For in Jn. 1. 14, the noun is construed as masc., while elsewhere, as we would expect when there is no technical sense involved, it is construed as a fem. noun. But this does not apply to the Old Syriac Gospels. There may be room for disagreement about the translation of Jn. 1. 1, but v. 14 clearly construes ܡܠܬܐ as a fem. noun, and it is hardly likely that this same word is intended to be understood as masc. in v. 1. F.C.Burkitt therefore

translates Jn. 1. 1 from the Old Syriac, "In the beginning He was the Word".

There are also further problems created for the terminology used in the Odes when we consider the way in which the two Syriac words are used in the Old Syriac and the Pesh. Although ܡܠܬܐ does translate λόγος, it also translates ῥῆμα. If we consider the translation of ῥῆμα, it can be seen that this word is regularly translated by ܡܠܬܐ, except in seven cases, and in these, for the most part, it signifies an answer to be given, or an account to be rendered. This is the case for both the Old Syriac and the Pesh. The exceptions to this are found in Old Testament quotations which will now be considered.

a) Matt. 4. 4; Luke 4. 4

These verses quote Deut. 8. 3 in part, and although there are several variant readings of Luke 4. 4, we shall quote the Greek text which corresponds to the Syriac translations of it. First of all, however, we shall set out the relevant section of the text from Deut., giving the text of the various versions.

Hebrew על־כל־מוצא פי־יהוה

Targum על כל אפקות מימר מן קדם יי

Pesh. ܥܠ ܟܠ ܡܬܦܩ ܡܢ ܦܘܡܗ ܕܡܪܝܐ

LXX ἐπὶ παντὶ ῥήματι τῷ ἐκπορευομένῳ διὰ στόματος θεοῦ.

Matt. 4. 4

Greek ἐπὶ παντὶ ῥήματι ἐκπορευομένῳ διὰ στόματος θεοῦ

Old Syriac ܥܠ ܟܠ ܡܬܦܩ ܡܢ ܦܘܡܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ

Pesh. ܥܠ ܟܠ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܢܦܩ ܡܢ ܦܘܡܗ ܕܐܠܗܐ

Luke 4. 4

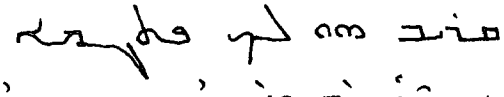
Greek ἐπὶ παντὶ ῥήματι θεοῦ

Pesh. ܥܠ ܟܠ ܡܠܬܐ ܕܐܠܗܐ

Deut. 30. 14

Hebrew קרוב אליך הדבר

Targum קריב לותך פתגמא

Pesh. 

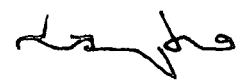
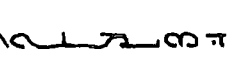
LXX ἐστιν σου ἐγγὺς τὸ ῥῆμα

Rom. 10. 8

Greek ἐγγύς σου τὸ ῥῆμά ἐστιν

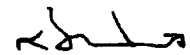
Pesh. 

It will be seen that although the Old Syriac of Matt. 4. 4 reads  , this word is not derived from the Hebrew text of Deut., nor from the Targum or the Pesh. The New Testament Pesh. alters this word to  , which is more in accordance with the usual usage. The relevant portion of the quotation is not found in the Old Syriac of Luke 4. 4, but the Pesh, re-introduces it, employing the same word which occurs in the Old Syriac of Matt. 4. 4. It could be suggested that  is used in these two instances as a translation of ῥῆμα, but since these are not used as translation equivalents, this explanation is unlikely. Possibly the answer lies in the existence of a Syriac translation of this verse from Deut. which did contain .

It may also be argued that in the case of Rom. 10. 8 the Pesh. translator was not translating the Greek text in the quotation, but was employing a Syriac translation of Deut. which was known to him. Although the quotation in Syriac uses the word  , the following words do not. After the quotation the text proceeds; "This is the word of faith (τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως ; ) which we preach". While the Greek text continues to use ῥῆμα, the Syriac translator immediately changes to the word which is generally used.

Summary.

1. The two Syriac words under consideration are used interchangeably in the Old Testament Pesh., and this usage is to be traced back to the Syriac translators, not to the influence of the Targums or the LXX.

2. In the Old Syriac Gospels and the New Testament Pesh.,  is used in preference to  , the latter occurring mainly in standard expressions such as "to give an answer".

3. Following on from (2), the difficulty in the terminological usage of the Odes is not that the two words occur together in the way in which they do, but that  occurs at all, if we look to the translations of the New Testament as a point of comparison.

4. In the Old Syriac Gospels,  is not to be regarded as a terminus technicus for "the Word", but it is in the Pesh.

This survey shows that the language of the Odes, with respect to the use of these two words, is not to be judged in accordance with the usage in the Old Syriac Gospels, nor with the technical terminology of a later age. Rather, the terminological usage of the odist is to be compared with that of the translators of the Old Testament Pesh., and if the Odes were written early in the second century, this is what we would expect, whatever the date of the Old Testament Pesh. translation may be.