

*Marriage is licensed vice*



## *Contents*

### **Marriage is licensed vice**

There is nothing sacred in marriage. 3

### **Matthew wrote his Evangel in Hebrew**

Annotation by Boris de Zirkoff. 11

### **Suggested reading for students.**

From our Living the Life Series. 15



# Marriage is licensed vice

There is nothing sacred in marriage.

First published in *The Theosophist*, Vol. IV, No. 1, October, 1882, pp. 6-9. Republished in *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, (THE ORIGIN OF THE GOSPELS AND THE BISHOP OF BOMBAY) IV pp. 232-42.

**T**HE IGNORANCE which commonly prevails among English Christians concerning the history of their own religious books and, it is feared, of their contents — has been amusingly illustrated by a few letters, recently exchanged in *The Pioneer* between the supporters and the critics of the Bishop of Bombay — the controversialists breaking their lances over the pastoral concerning the divorce and re-marriage question. Much ink was split during the correspondence, and still more saintly ignorance shown on both sides. “One of the Laity,” who supports, and “Tübingen,” who criticises, close the rather lengthy polemics. A letter from the former, framed in a style that might as well stand for veiled sarcasm as for religious cant<sup>1, 2</sup> runs as follows:

Sir,

I have read, in this and many other newspapers, articles and letters respecting the Bishop of Bombay’s pastoral. But it seems to me that they all miss the mark, turning simply on human opinion. The question is a very simple one: Our Blessed Lord whilst on earth, being Almighty God as well as man, and consequently perfectly knowing every controversy that would rage in the future over His words (this one among others) said words plainly and distinctly. This is, I suppose, undeniable — at least by Christians. His servant, the Bishop of Bombay (I suppose no one will deny that the Bishop of Bombay is our Lord’s servant in a more especial sense than he is the servant of the State) has repeated these words plainly and distinctly. And these same words will be repeated plainly and distinctly, and, to some, with terrible emphasis, on the Day of Judgment. That is all, enough — too much perhaps. Human respect, public opinion, civil law — all these things [233] will pass away; but the words of Almighty God will never pass away. Personally, I am satisfied with knowing that the Church, having been endowed by our Blessed Lord with absolute and infallible authority in all questions of faith and morals, has put forth certain discipline with respect to marriage; but I know Protestants refuse to allow this. Perhaps a little reflection on the subject of the Day of Judgment may cause them to see that the Bishop of Bombay is right in what he has put forth. If a person can calmly make up his mind to bring forward at the Day of Judgment public opinion, human respect, civil law, as excuses for what he has done, or not done, on earth, by all means let him — and abide the result. Here, on earth, individuals, good and bad, made mistakes. There, there will be none — except

<sup>1</sup> [Singing in a whining way, from the Latin *cantare*, to sing. Cant was at first a beggar’s whine, hence hypocritical and sanctimonious talk, typically of a moral, religious, or political nature. Cf. W.W. Skeat’s *Etymological Dictionary of English*, 1835-1912. — ED. PHIL.]

<sup>2</sup> See *The Pioneer* of August 19<sup>th</sup>.

those already made on earth; and, as Faber says, it will be an exceedingly awkward time for finding *them* out. I do not pretend to argue against persons who do not believe in revelation, being only, as my card will show you.

ONE OF THE LAITY

---

This is very plain; and yet can hardly be allowed to pass without comments. For instance, if “Our Blessed Lord” who was “Almighty God” knew beforehand “every controversy that would rage in the future” (*The Pioneer* correspondence among others) then one cannot be very far from truth in supposing that he also knew of the remarks and criticisms in store for “One of the Laity” in *The Theosophist*? This is very encouraging, and really dissipates the last hesitation and doubts felt about the propriety of passing remarks, however respectful, on the Bishop of Bombay’s last *pronunciamento*.<sup>1</sup> Our logic is very simple. Since that, which we are about to say *could never* have escaped Our Lord’s attention eighteen centuries ago, and that up to date we have received no intimation to the contrary (silence meaning with us — as with every other trusting mortal — consent) we feel serenely confident that this column or two was so preordained from the beginning; hence — it can give offence to no one. But, before offering any personal remarks, our readers must see what “Tübingen” had to say in reply to “One of the Laity.” The above-quoted letter elicited the following answer in *The Pioneer* of August 25<sup>th</sup>:

Sir,

Your LAYMAN correspondent, who knows so much about our Lord’s utterances on the subject of divorce, seems to forget a few points which bear on the matter, especially that the “certain words” which he and the Bishop of Bombay rely upon, were certainly not spoken by our Lord, who did not express Himself in English, but are [234] merely a translation of an Alexandrian Greek translation of some documents, the origin of which I thus find spoken of in Chambers’ most orthodox *Encyclopaedia*:

“The inquiry has been treated in an extremely technical manner by many critics. The object of these theories has been to find a common origin for the Gospels. Eichhorn and Bishop Marsh presume an original document, differing from any of the existing gospels, and which is supposed to pass through various modifications. Another and more probable supposition is that the Gospels sprang out of a common oral tradition. This theory . . . is of course widely separated from the well-known Tübingen theory, which carries the period of tradition down to the middle of the second century, and supposes the Gospels to have been then called forth by the influence of opposing teachers.”

Under the head “Tübingen,” in another part of the *Encyclopaedia*, I read that the place is celebrated →

---

<sup>1</sup> [proclamation; manifesto; edict.]

“ . . . as a school of historico-philosophical theology . . . the influence of which, on religious thought, has been very great, and is likely to prove permanent.”

Thus, I am afraid, your LAYMAN, though doubtless a very good man, is not quite so accurately informed concerning our Lord’s language, as he imagines himself; and that, considering the unfortunate uncertainty that attends our fragmentary records of these, the Bishop of Bombay is not so wise in regulating his views of divorce according to the exact English test of the Bible, as Parliament has been in regulating the law according to what common sense leads us to imagine must probably have been the views of our Lord.

#### TÜBINGEN

---

The reply is very good as far as it goes, but it does not go very far; because, the point made that “our Lord did not express himself in English” does not cover the whole ground. He could have expressed himself in any presumably dead or living Oriental language he liked, and yet — since he was Almighty God, who knew the tremendous weapon he was furnishing the present infidels with — he might have avoided “One of the Laity,” as well as the Bishop, “his own servant,” the humiliation of being taught their own Scriptures by the infidel THEOSOPHIST. Indeed, while the former has evidently either never read or has forgotten his Bible, the latter who cannot be held ignorant of its contents, has very arbitrarily made a selection of the one that suited him the best, since there are several such commands in the Bible to pick out from, in reference to the remarriage question. Why did not his Lordship refer to those also? And why should the Christian Laity be forbidden the privilege of making their choice, since the Bible affords them the [235] opportunity of suiting every taste, while adhering as strictly in the one case as in the other to the Commands of Almighty God? If “One of the Laity” is personally satisfied with knowing

“ . . . that the Church having been endowed by our Blessed Lord with absolute and infallible authority in all questions of faith and morals,”

*has* the right to “put forth certain discipline with respect to marriage,” then he must know more than anyone else knows.<sup>1</sup> For, if “Protestants refuse to allow this,” it is not from excess of modesty, but simply that such a claim on their part would be really too preposterous in the face of the Bible. Jesus Christ, though in one sense a Protestant himself, knew nothing of Protestantism; and endowed — if he ever endowed anyone with anything — Peter with such authority, leaving Paul out in the cold.<sup>2</sup> Protestantism, having once protested against the dictates of the Roman Catholic Church, has no right to assume out of the many alleged prerogatives of Peter’s Church that which suits it and reject that which it finds inconvenient to follow or to enforce. Moreover, since Protestantism chose to give equal authority and infallibility

---

<sup>1</sup> [Parallel reading for Students: “Blavatsky on Marriage, Divorce, and Celibacy” in our Blavatsky Speaks Series, “Celibacy, Contenance, Monasticism” in our Confusing Words Series, and “The Kreutzer Sonata” in our Living the Life Series.— ED. PHIL.]

<sup>2</sup> [Consult “Paul an Initiate and founder of Christianity” and “Peter not an Initiate and the enemy of Paul,” in our Buddhas and Initiates Series. — ED. PHIL.]

to both the Old and the New Testament, its Bishops should not, in deciding upon social or religious questions, give preference only to the latter and ignore entirely what the former has to say. The fact that the Protestant Church, acting upon the principle of “might is right,” is, and has always been, in the habit of resorting to it to cut every Gordian knot — is no proof that she is acting under Divine authority. The claim, then, made by “One of the Laity,” as “Tübingen” will see, does not rest so much upon the correctness of the translation made of Christ’s words, or whether it was rendered by a Greek or a Hebrew, as upon the self-contradiction of these very words in the Bible — assuming, of course, that Christ and Almighty God are one and identical.<sup>1</sup> Otherwise, and if Jesus of Nazareth was simply a man, then he can neither be accused of flagrant contradiction nor of inciting his prophets to break the seventh commandment, as done by God in the case of Hosea. And it is also, we suppose, “undeniable at least by Christians,” that what was good for a prophet of the Lord God cannot [236] be bad for a Christian, even though he be an Anglo-Indian Civilian. In truth, as “One of the Laity” has it, “the question is a very simple one.” It is one of Unitarianism and a matter of choice. “Choose ye, this day,” might say a modern Joshua, “whom you will serve”; whether the *God* which the Jews served, and who contradicts on every page of the Old, the New Testament — the wrathful, revengeful, fickle Jehovah; or him whom you call “Christ” — one of the noblest and purest types of humanity. For there can be no mistake about this: if Christ is one with the Lord God of Israel — all this ideal purity vanishes like a dream, leaving in its place but bewilderment, doubt, and disgust — usually followed by blank atheism.

To make the matter plain, if the Lord Bishop, with “One of the Laity,” insists that Christ being Almighty God said certain words plainly and distinctly, and he “Our Lord’s servant . . . has repeated these words,” as given in *Matthew*, v, 32, namely,

“Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of — etc., causeth her to commit adultery; and *whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery*”

— then the so-called infidels and the parties concerned, have a right to respectfully insist on his Lordship showing them why he, the servant of the same God, should not repeat certain other words pronounced far more plainly and distinctly, in the book of *Hosea*, chapter i, verse 2, and chapter iii, 1-5? For certain good reasons — one among others that *The Theosophist*, not being a holy book, is neither privileged, nor would it consent to publish obscenities — the said verses in *Hosea* cannot be quoted in this magazine. But everyone is at liberty to turn to the first Bible on hand, and, finding the above passages, read them and judge for himself. And then he will find that Almighty God commands *Hosea* not only to take unto himself a “divorced wife,” but something unpronounceably worse. And if we are told by some Bible exponents, as that class will often do, that the words must not be taken *literally*, that they are *allegorical*, then the burden of proof remains with the Bishop to show why, in such case, the words in *Matthew* should not be also regarded as a parable; and why this [237] one solitary command should be enforced *literally*, while nearly every other that precedes or follows it, is regarded, explained, and has to be accepted simp-

---

<sup>1</sup> [Consult “Jesus Ben Pandira, the historical Christ” and “The real Christ is Buddhi-Manas, the glorified Divine Ego,” in our Buddhas and Initiates Series. — ED. PHIL.]

ly as a parable. If he would be consistent with himself, the Bishop should insist that as a consequence of temptation every Christian would “pluck” out his right eye, “cut off” his right hand (and who can pretend, that neither his eye nor his hand has ever tempted or “offended” him?) would moreover refuse to take his oath in a Court of Justice, turn his cheek to every bully who would smite his face, and present with his cloak the first thief who would choose to rob him of his coat. Every one of these commands has been “explained away” to the satisfaction of all parties concerned — amongst others that which commands never to swear at all, *i.e.*, to take the prescribed oath — “neither by heaven nor by earth,” but let the affirmation be “yea, yea; nay, nay.” And if His Lordship would have no one deny that he “is Our Lord’s servant in a more especial sense than he is the servant of the State,” whose law, disregarding Christ’s injunction, commands every one of its subjects to swear upon the Bible, then the Bishop would perhaps but strengthen his claim and silence even the infidels, if, instead of losing his time over divorced wives, he would use his eloquence in supporting Mr. Bradlaugh, at any rate, in his refusal to take his oath in Parliament. In this respect, at least, the Christian clergy should be at one with the celebrated infidel.

No doubt, a little reflection on the subject of the “Day of Judgment” may go a good way toward explaining the inexplicable; with all this, it has to be feared, it will never account for all of the above enumerated inconsistencies. Nevertheless — *nil desperandum*.<sup>1</sup> There is a pretty story told of the present English Premier by James T. Bixby, in which the objection made to a pleasant plan of marrying the late General Garibaldi to a wealthy English lady, *viz.*, that the hero of Capera had already one wife — is triumphantly met by the suggestion that Mr. Gladstone could be readily got *to explain her away*. Perchance, His Lordship of Bombay, having heard of the story, had an eye on the “grand old man,” to help him. At any rate, he seems to be as easy a [238] reconciler of the irreconcilable, and manifests, to use an expression of the same author, “a theological dissipating power of equal strength” with that of the reconcilers of Science and Scripture.

Had “Tübingen,” instead of getting his inspiration from “Chamber’s most orthodox *Encyclopaedia*,” turned to consult what the Fathers of the Church have themselves to say about the Gospel of Matthew in which the *certain words* “One of the Laity” and “the Bishop of Bombay” rely upon, are made to appear — then he would have been far better qualified to upset the arguments of his opponent. He would have learned, for instance, that out of the four, the Gospel of Matthew is the only original one, as the only one that was written in Hebrew or rather in one of its corrupted forms, the Galilean Syriac — by whom or when it was written not being now the main point. *Epiphanius* tells us that it was the heretic Nazarenes or the Sabians “who live in the city of the Berœans<sup>2</sup> toward Coele-Syria<sup>3</sup> and in the Decapolis towards the parts of Pella, and in the Basantis”<sup>4</sup> who have the Evangel of Matthew most fully, *and it was*

---

<sup>1</sup> [never despair]

<sup>2</sup> [modern Aleppo]

<sup>3</sup> [Hollow Syria]

<sup>4</sup> [Epiphanius, *Panarion*, Bk. I, tome II, Hær. XXIX, § vii; p. 123 in Petavius’ ed. of Epiphanius, Paris, 1622.]

*originally written* — in Hebrew letters; and that it was St. Jerome who translated it into Greek:

*In Evangelio, quo utuntur Nazaræni Ebionitæ, quod nuper in Græcum de Hebræo transtulimus, et quod vocatur a plerisque Matthæi authenticum, homo iste, qui aridam habet manum, cæmentarius scribitur.*<sup>1</sup>

Matthew, the despised publican, be it [239] remembered, is the only identified and authenticated author of his Gospel, the other three having to remain probably forever under their unidentified *noms de plume*. The Ebionites<sup>2</sup> and the Nazarenes are nearly identical. Inhabiting a desert between Syria and Egypt beyond Jordan called Nabatæa, they were indifferently called Sabians, Nazarenes, and Ebionites. Olshausen finds it remarkable that, while all Church Fathers agree in saying that *Matthew wrote in Hebrew*, they all use the Greek text as the genuine apostolic writing without mentioning what relation the *Hebrew Matthew* has to the Greek one. “It had *many peculiar additions which are wanting in our Greek Evangel*,” he remarks;<sup>3</sup> and as many *omissions*, we may add. The fact ceases at once to be remarkable when we remember that confession made by *Hieronymus* (or St. Jerome) in his letter to Bishops Chromatius and Heliodorus, and in several other passages in his works:

Matthew who was called Levi, and who from a publican became an Apostle, was the first one in Judea who wrote an Evangel of Christ, in Hebrew language and letters, for the sake of those among the circumcised ones who had believed. It is not sufficiently certain as to who afterwards translated it into Greek. The Hebrew original could be found to this day in the library diligently collected at Cæsarea by the Martyr Pamphilus. It was possible even for me to have access to this volume which the Nazarenes had been using in Berœa [Veria], a city in Syria.<sup>4</sup>

In the *Evangel according to the Hebrews*, which, indeed, was written in the Chaldean and Syrian language,<sup>5</sup> but with Hebrew letters, which the Nazarenes use today according to the apostles, *or as most suppose according to Matthew*, which also is contained in the library at Cæsarea, the history narrates:

“Lo the mother of the Lord and his brothers said to him, John the Baptist baptizes unto remission of sins; let us go and [240] be baptized by him. But he

---

<sup>1</sup> [This is contained in a footnote by Petavius, on page 124 of his ed. of Epiphanius’ *Panarion*, being appended to Bk. I, tome II, Hær. XXIX, § viii, but is credited to St. Jerome’s *Commentarius in Evangelium secundum Matthæum*, Bk. II, cap. xii, 13. Cf. J.P. Migne, *Patrologiæ Cursus Completus*, Series Latina, Tomus XXVI, Col. 80-81. Paris: Garnier frères, 1884.

The English translation of this passage is as follows:

“. . . In the Evangel which was used by the Nazarenes and the Ebionites (which we recently translated from a Hebrew sermon into Greek, and which by many has been declared to be the authentic Matthew), the same man who had the withered hand was a stone-mason . . .” — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

<sup>2</sup> [Jewish Christian sect]

<sup>3</sup> Hermann Olshausen, *Nachweis der Echtheit der sämtlichen Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, p. 35.

[By consulting this paragraph from Olshausen’s work, the last sentence, the only one actually quoted by Madame Blavatsky, could not be located. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

<sup>4</sup> St. Jerome, *De viris illustribus liber*, cap. 3. [Cf. J.P. Migne, *Patr. C. Compl.*, T. XXIII, Col. 613, Paris, 1883]

<sup>5</sup> *lingua Chaldaica quam vocat hic Syriacam*



(Iasous) said to them: what *sin* have I committed that I should go and be baptized by him?”<sup>1</sup>

The Gospel we have of Matthew tells quite a different story; and yet Jerome, speaking of the evangel which Nazarenes and Ebionites use, mentions it as the one “which we recently translated from a Hebrew sermon into Greek and *which by many has been declared to be the authentic Matthew.*”<sup>2</sup> But the whole truth dawns at once on him, who reads Jerome’s letter and remembers that this famous Dalmatian Christian had been before his full conversion a no less famous barrister, well acquainted with both ecclesiastical and legal casuistry; and that, therefore, he must have transformed the genuine Hebrew Gospel into something quite different from what it originally was. And such, indeed, is his own confession. Hear him saying:

An arduous task has been enjoined on me by Your Felicities [Bishops Chromatius and Heliodorus], namely what St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist, *did not wish to be openly written.* For if it had not been rather secret, he would have added it to the Evangel which he gave forth as his own; but he wrote this book *sealed up in Hebrew characters;* and he did not provide until now for its publication, in such a way that this book, written in Hebrew script and by his own hand, is today possessed by the most religious men, who, in the succession of time, received it from those who preceded them. Though they [the most religious, the initiates] *never gave this book to anyone to be transcribed,* they transmitted its text some in one way and some in another.<sup>3</sup> And so it happened that this book [the original Gospel of Matthew], published by a disciple of Manichæus, named Seleucus, *who also wrote falsely the Acts of the Apostles,* contained matter not for edification, but for destruction; and that being such it *was approved in a synod which the ears of the Church properly refused to listen to. . . .*<sup>4</sup> [241]

And, to suit the ears of the Church who “properly refused to listen” to the *original* Gospel, St. Jerome candidly tells us:

I am now speaking of the New Testament. This was undoubtedly composed in Greek, with the exception of the work of Matthew the Apostle, who was the first to commit to writing the Gospel of the Anointed, and who published his work in Judea in Hebrew characters. We must confess that as we have it in our language it is marked by discrepancies, and now that the stream is distributed into different channels<sup>5</sup> we must go back to the fountainhead. I pass over those manuscripts which are associated with the names of Lucian and Hesychius,

---

<sup>1</sup> St. Jerome, *Dialogi contra Pelagianos*, III, 2

<sup>2</sup> *Comm. to Matthew*, II, xii, 13

<sup>3</sup> *aliter aliterque*

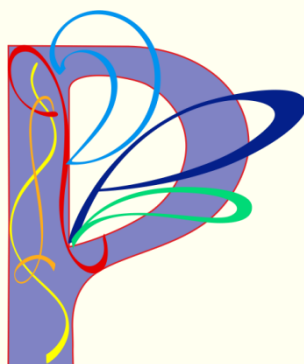
<sup>4</sup> [This passage may be found in the Johannes Martianay edition of St. Jerome’s *Opera*, published in Five Volumes in Paris, by Ludovicus Roulland, 1693–1706. The date of Vol. V is 1706, and in column 445 occurs the passage under discussion, in its original Latin. The student is referred to my long Note, No. 60, pp. 233–36, in Vol. VIII of the *Collected Writings*, where there is a discussion of this matter and of the authenticity of the letter itself. — Boris de Zirkoff.

Herein presented on pages 11–14, under the heading “Matthew wrote his Evangel in Hebrew.” — ED. PHIL.]

<sup>5</sup> *et diversos rivulorum tramites ducit*

and the authority of which is perversely maintained by a handful of disputatious persons. . . . <sup>1</sup>

In other words, the venerable compiler of the Latin version of the Scriptures — the basis of the present *Vulgate* — in what is called by Alban Butler “his famous *critical* labours on the Holy Scriptures,” distorted the original Gospel of Matthew beyond recognition. And it is such sentences as now stand in the Gospel of Matthew, and which ought to be properly called the “Gospel according to St. Jerome,” that the Bishop of Bombay and “One of the Laity” would have anyone but the Christians regard and accept as words of Almighty God, that “will never pass away.” *Pro pudor!*<sup>2</sup> Words copied with all kind of omissions and additions, out of notes, taken from various oral renderings of the original text — “a book they [its possessors] *never gave to anyone to be transcribed,*” as St. Jerome himself tells us — still claiming a divine origin! If the orthodox exponents of “historico-philosophical theology” in Europe have hitherto handled all these questions which relate to the authenticity of the Bible with a very timid hand, it has not in the least [prevented] others to examine them as critically as they would Homer’s *Iliad*. And, having done so, they found embodied in that heterogeneous literature the production of a hundred anonymous scribes. Its very Greek plural name of *τα βιβλια*, meaning “the Books,” or a collection of small pamphlets, [242] shows it to be a regular hotchpotch of stories having a meaning but for the Kabbalist. Every child will very soon be taught that even the Epistles have been regarded as sacred and authoritative a great deal earlier than the Gospels; and that for two centuries at least, the New Testament was never looked upon by the Christians as [so] sacred as the old one. And, as we can learn from St. Jerome’s writings just quoted above, at the end of the fourth century (he died in 420) there was no New Testament canon as we now have it, since it was not even agreed upon which of the Gospels should be included in it and regarded as sacred and which should be rejected. As well may we, Theosophists, claim (and perhaps with far better reasons) that some of the words as occasionally found in our journal, “WILL NEVER PASS AWAY.”



---

<sup>1</sup> [This passage is from Jerome’s Preface to the translation of the Four Gospels, in his *Vulgate*, namely in the version thereof made at Rome between the years 382 and 385, the Preface being addressed to Pope Damasus. Cf. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 6 of the Second Series. — *Boris de Zirkoff*.]

<sup>2</sup> [for shame!]

# Matthew wrote his Evangel in Hebrew

## Annotation by Boris de Zirkoff.

Note 60 by Boris de Zirkoff from *Blavatsky Collected Writings*, VIII pp. 233-38, appended after Part III of Madame Blavatsky's epoch-making article, THE ESOTERIC CHARACTER OF THE GOSPELS.

At this point, in the original place of publication, in *Lucifer*, reference is made in parenthesis to St. Jerome's *Comment. to Matthew*, [234] Book II, chap. xii, 13; from the middle of this paragraph, one would easily imagine that H.P. Blavatsky is taking these facts from this particular Commentary, especially as it is mentioned in the text itself.

However, if the student refers to *Isis Unveiled*, II, 182, he will find the same facts spoken of, and quoted excerpts ascribed to "St. Jerome, V, 445." This latter reference has proved to be an insurmountable obstacle to a number of scholarly students, who were unable to find it in the writings of St. Jerome, in spite of repeated efforts over a period of years. At the time, that a large number of quotations occurring in *Isis Unveiled* were being checked for accuracy, this one had to be abandoned for lack of adequate data as to its source.

As a result of more recent search, the actual source of these quotations, or rather series of excerpts, has been located. In connection with this, we owe a debt of gratitude to Foster M. Palmer, Reference Assistant in Charge of Reference Section, at the Harvard University Library, Cambridge, Mass., whose interest and helpfulness have been of much value in the course of the editorial work incident upon the publication of the present series of volumes. The passage used by H.P. Blavatsky was located in the Johannes Mariana edition of St. Jerome's Works published in Five Volumes in Paris by Ludovicus Rolland, 1693-1706. The date of Vol. V is 1706, and in column 445 occurs the passage under discussion, in its original Latin.

However, this whole section is made up of material falsely ascribed to St. Jerome, and is entitled: "Sancto Hieronymus Stridonensi falso adscriptorum opusculorum tripartita series." Our particular piece is in the third series, described as: "In tertia similiter quæ suos Auctores ipsa præ se ferunt; sed quæ parum docta habentur." The Latin text is as follows:

HIERONYMUS CHROMATIO & HELIODORO EPISCOPIS

Dominis sanctis & beatissimis, Chromatio & Heliodoro Episcopis, Hieronymus exiggus Christi servus in Domino salutem. Qui terram auri consciam fodit, non illico arripit quicquid fossa profuderit lacerata, sed priusquam fulgens pondus vibrantis jactus ferri suspendat, interim vertendis suspendendisque cespitibus immoratur, & specialiter qui nundum lucris augetur. Arduum opus injungitur, cum hoc fuerit Matthæus Apostolus & Evangelista voluit in aperto conscribi. Si enim hoc secretum non esset Evangelio utique ipsius quod edidit addidisset:

sed fecit hunc libellum Hebraicis literis obsignatum: quem usque adeo edidit, ut & manu ipsius liber scriptus Hebraicis literis à viris religiosissimis habeatur, qui etiam à suis prioribus per successus temporum susceperunt. Hunc autem ipsum librum, nunquam alicui transferendum tradiderunt: textum ejus aliter atque aliter narraverunt. [235]

Sed factum est ut à Manichæi discipulo nomine Seleuco: qui etiam Apostolorum gesta falso sermone conscripsit: hic liber editus, non ædificationi, sed destructioni materiam exhibuerit: & quod talis probaretur in synodo cui merito aures Ecclesiæ non paterent. Cesset nunc oblatrantium morsus: non istum libellum canonicis nos superaddidimus scripturis: sed ad detegendum hæreseos fallaciam, Apostoli atque Evangelistæ scripta transferimus: in quo opere non tam piis jubentibus Episcopis obtemperamus, quam impiis hæreticis obviamus. Amor igitur est Christi cui satisfacimus, credentes quòd nos suis orationibus adjuvent: qui ad salvatoris nostri infantiam sanctam per nostram potuerint obedientiam pervenire.

In the considered judgment of Professor Mason Hammond, Pope Professor of Latin Language and Literature at Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., to whom the above text was submitted, the Latin of it was rather confused and did not make clear sense. He and Professor La Piana, at home in the field of Church History, drew our attention to a more recent work in French entitled *Les Évangiles Apocryphes*, published in *Textes et Documents pour l'étude historique du Christianisme*, issued under the supervision of Hippolyte Hemmer and Paul Lejay (Paris: Picard, 1911-14. 2-vols.). In Vol. I of this work are several apocryphal gospels edited by Charles Michel, of which the second is "Pseudo-Matthew." This is prefaced by two letters; the first being from the Bishops Chromatius and Heliodorus to Jerome, and the second being his reply to them. This second letter, in which we are interested, is to be found on pages 56-58, together with a translation into French. The Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew is discussed in the Preface, pp. xix-xxii, where Michel dates it, on the basis of these letters, as not before the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D. and probably in the 6<sup>th</sup>. He regards the letters as "evidently apocryphal," written at a period "when the name of St. Jerome had a very great authority."

Now the text given by Michel differs considerably from the one quoted above, which may be due to ancient errors of transcription or to later improvements. What is of importance is that Michel's text makes far better sense. We append it below:

Dominis sanctis & beatissimis Chromatio & Heliodoro Episcopis, Hieronymus exiguus Christi servus in Domino salutem. Qui terram auri consciam fodit, non illico arripit quicquid fossa profunderit lacerata, sed priusquam fulgendum pondus vibrantis jactus ferri suspendat, interim vertendis supinandisque cespitibus immoratur, et spe alitur qui nundum lucris augetur. Arduum opus injungitur, cum hoc fuerit a vestra mihi beatitudine imperatum quod nec ipse sanctus Matthæus Apostolus & Evangelista voluit in aperto conscribi. Si enim secretius non esset, Evangelio utique ipsi quod edidit addidisset: sed fecit hunc libellum Hebraicis litteris obsignatum, quem usque adeo non edidit, ut hodie manu [236] ipsius liber scriptus Hebraicis litteris à viris religiosissimis habeatur, qui eum à suis prioribus per successus temporum susceperunt. Hunc autem

ipsum librum, cum nunquam alicui transferendum tradiderunt; textum vero ejus aliter aliterque tradiderunt.

Sic factum est ut à Manichæi discipulo nomine Seleuco, qui etiam Apostolorum gcsta falso sermone conscripsit, hic liber editus non ædificationi, sed destructioni materiam exhibuerit, & quod talis probaretur in synodo, cui merito aures Ecclesiæ non paterent. Cesset nunc oblatrantium morsus: non enim istum libellum canonicis nos superaddidimus scripturis; sed ad detegendum hæreseos fallaciam Apostoli atque Evangelistæ scripta transferimus. In quo opere tam jubentibus piis obtemperamus Episcopis, quam impiis hæreticis obviamus. Amor ergo Christi est cui satisfacimus, credentes quod nos suis orationibus adjuvent qui ad salvatoris nostri sanctam infantiam per nostram potuerint obedientiam pervenire.

Translated into English, the above Latin text is as follows:

. . . An arduous task has been enjoined by your beatitudes on me, namely what St. Matthew, Apostle and Evangelist, did not wish openly written up. For if it had not been rather secret, he would have added it to the Evangel which he gave forth as his own; but he wrote this book sealed up in Hebrew characters; and he did not provide until now for its publication, in such a way that this book, written in Hebrew script and by his own hand, is today possessed by the most religious men, who, in the succession of time, received it from those who preceded them. Though they never gave this book to anyone to be transcribed, they transmitted its text some in one way and some in another.

And so it happened that this book, published by a disciple of Manichæus, named Seleucus, who also wrote in false speech the Acts of the Apostles, contained matter not for edification, but for destruction; and that being such it was approved in a synod which the ears of the Church properly refused to listen to.

As to the *Commentary to Matthew*, Book II, chap. xii, 13, the only sentence in it which relates to the present subject is the following one:

. . . In Evangelio, quo utuntur Nazaræni et Ebionitæ (quid nuper in Græcum de Hebræo sermone transtulimus, et quod vocatur a plerisque Matthæi authenticum), homo iste, qui aridam habet manum, cæmentarius scribitur . . . <sup>1</sup> [237]

Which, translated into English reads:

. . . In the Evangel which was used by the Nazarenes and the Ebionites (which we recently translated from a Hebrew sermon into Greek, and which by many has been declared to be the authentic Matthew), the same man who had the withered hand was a stone-mason. . . .

As to H.P. Blavatsky's footnote reference to St. Jerome's *De viris inlustribus liber*, cap. 3, it is of course fully apposite to the general subject, but seems to be attached at a wrong place in the text, resulting in somewhat of a confusion, possibly due to faulty

---

<sup>1</sup> See Hieronimi, *Commentarius in Evangelium secundum Matthæum*. J.P. Migne, *Patrologiæ Cursus Completus*. Series Latina. Tomus XXVI. Col. 80-81. Paris: Garnier frères, 1884.

proofreading of her MSS. The paragraph referred to in chapter 3 of St. Jerome's work is as follows:

Mattheus, qui est Levi, ex publicano apostolus, primus in Iudæa propter eos qui ex circumcissione crediderant, Evangelium Christi Hebræicis litteris verbisque composuit: quod quis postea in Græcum transtulerit, non satis certum est. Porro ipsum Hebræicum hebetur usque hodie in Cæsariensi bibliotheca, quam Pamphilus martyr studiosissime confecit. Mihi quoque a Nazaræis, qui in Berœa urbe Syriæ hoc volumine utuntur, describendi facultas fuit. In quo animadvertendum, quod ubicumque Evangelista, sive ex persona sua, sive ex persona Domini Salvatoris, veteris Scripturæ testimoniis abutetur, non sequatur Septuaginta translatorum auctoritatem, sed Hebraicam, e quibus illa duo sunt: "ex Ægypti vocavi Filium," et: "quoniam Nazaræus vocabitur."<sup>1</sup>

Which, translated into English reads:

Matthew who was called Levi, and who from a publican became an Apostle, was the first one in Judæa who wrote an Evangel of Christ, in Hebrew language and letters, for the sake of those among the circumcised ones who had believed. It is not sufficiently certain as to who afterwards translated it into Greek. The Hebrew original could be found to this day in the library diligently collected at Cæsarea by the Martyr Pamphilus. It was possible even for me to have access to this volume which the Nazarenes had been using in Veria, a city in Syria. It should be noted that wherever the Evangelist brings forth the testimony of the Old Testament, either himself or according to the man Salvatore, he does not follow the version of the Septuaginta, but quotes directly from the Hebrew. From it come the following two passages: "From Egypt have I called the Son," and "or this reason was he called the Nazarene." [238]

This entire subject-matter is also covered by H.P. Blavatsky in her powerful article entitled: "The Origin of the Gospels and the Bishop of Bombay,"<sup>2</sup> which will be found in its correct chronological order in the present series. A few additional passages from the Fathers are brought into the discussion.



<sup>1</sup> See J.P. Migne, *P. C. C.*, Series Latina, Tomus XXIII, Col. 613. Paris, 1883.

<sup>2</sup> *The Theosophist*, Vol. IV, October, 1882, pp. 6-9

## Suggested reading for students.



### From our Living the Life Series.

- ATTUNE YOUR SELF WITH THE SELF IN ALL
- BLAVATSKY ON BUDDHISM
- BRAHMANISM IS THE ELDER SISTER OF BUDDHISM
- CAN THERE BE JOY WITHOUT LOVE?
- CHARITY EMPTIES HER PURSE WITH AN INVISIBLE HAND
- DELIGHT IN THE BEAUTY OF THE SOUL
- DENUNCIATION IS NOT A DUTY
- DISCORD IS THE HARMONY OF THE UNIVERSE
- EMERSON ON LOVE
- EVIL OMENS AND MYSTERIOUS DISEASES
- GODLESS BUDDHISM IS PHILOSOPHICAL AGNOSTICISM
- GOETHE'S MAXIMS AND REFLECTIONS
- HAPPINESS IS BUT A DREAM
- HARTMANN ON CHASTITY
- HYPOCRISY, DIAGNOSES AND PALLIATIVES
- IMPRISONED IN THE NARROW VASE OF DOGMATISM
- JUDGE ON THE UNIVERSAL APPLICATIONS OF DOCTRINE
- JUDGE ON THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD
- LET EVERY MAN PROVE HIS OWN WORKS
- LET YOUR DAILY LIFE BE YOUR TEMPLE AND GOD
- LÉVI ON THE POWER OF MIND, UNRUFFLED BY DESIRE - TR. WAITE
- LODGES OF MAGIC
- MARCUS AURELIUS' MEDITATIONS - TR. CASAUBON
- MEDICINE OF THE MIND
- OCCULT LAWS AND PARADOXES

**LIVING THE LIFE SERIES**  
**SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS**

- OCCULT LAWS CAN BE ENTRUSTED ONLY TO THOSE WHO LIVE THE LIFE DIRECTED BY THEOSOPHY
- OPPOSITE AND OPPOSING FORCES ARE CONVERTIBLE
- PARADOX IS THE LANGUAGE OF OCCULTISM
- PHILOSOPHERS AND PHILOSOPHICULES
- PLUTARCH ON HOW WE MAY PROFIT FROM OUR ENEMIES - TR. HARTCLIFFE
- PLUTARCH ON HOW WE MAY SHOW OFF WITHOUT BEING ENVIED – TR. LANCASTER
- PLUTARCH ON LOVE - TR. PHILIPS
- PLUTARCH ON MAN’S PROGRESS IN VIRTUE – TR. TOD
- PLUTARCH ON MORAL VIRTUE
- PLUTARCH ON WHETHER VICE IS SUFFICIENT TO RENDER A MAN UNHAPPY
- PROCLUS ON THE GOOD, THE JUST, AND THE BEAUTIFUL
- PROVERBIAL WISDOM FROM THE HITOPADESHA
- PYTHAGOREAN ETHICS AFTER STOBÆUS
- PYTHAGOREAN SYMBOLS - TR. BRIDGMAN
- SENTENCES BY SECTUS THE PYTHAGOREAN - TR. TAYLOR
- SERJEANT COX ON THE NEGATORS OF SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION
- SEVEN OCCULT TAMIL PROVERBS
- SPIRITUALITY IS NOT A VIRTUE
- THE ENNOBLING POWER OF THORACIC EXPANSION
- THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS THE TEMPLE OF TRUTH
- THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU BY TOLSTOY
- THE KREUTZER SONATA
- THE NELLORE YANADIS
- THE NILGIRI SANNYASIS
- THE NOBLE AIM OF EDUCATION IS TO AWAKEN THE DIVINITY WITHIN
- THE POWER TO HEAL
- THE PRAYER OF THE TRUE PHILOSOPHER IS HIS ADORATION
- THE SAYINGS OF LAO TZU - TR. GILES
- THE SCIENCE OF LIFE BY BLAVATSKY AND TOLSTOY
- THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE
- THEAGES ON VIRTUE
- THEOSOPHICAL JEWELS - LIVE IN THE IDEAL
- THEOSOPHICAL JEWELS - THE RAINBOW OF HOPE



**LIVING THE LIFE SERIES**  
**SUGGESTED READING FOR STUDENTS**

- THOU SHALT CROUCH AT MY FEET
- TRUTH DESCENDS LIKE DEW FROM HEAVEN
- WHAT SHALL WE DO FOR OUR FELLOW-MEN?

