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## THE TERM GOSPEL AND ITS COGNATES IN THE PALESTINIAN SYRIAC

by

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THERE is at present among biblical theologians perhaps more lively interest in a subject that concerned the Anti-judaic Gnostic Marcion in the second century and St. Augustine in the fourth and fifth than in any other that could be named. This is the problem of *continuity* in the divine revelation and in redemptive history (*Heilsgeschichte*). Although this problem obviously has its philosophical aspects, as for example in the investigation of the possible ontological reference of 'time' and 'history', it is a notable fact that present interest in the subject as it relates to the Christian Faith generally and in the development of a solution for it is largely on the part of biblical scholars rather than of systematic theologians or even of philosophers of history. Perhaps this phenomenon is symptomatic of a recapturing by biblical theologians of the centre of the theological stage—a position from which during the first half of the century they appear to have been driven. However this may be, at all events the endeavour to set forth the divine revelation and redemption in terms of the time-process and of history is one of the significant undertakings of biblical scholarship at the moment.

At one pole in the present discussion stands Rudolf Bultmann with his wish to *demythologize* the New Testament (an endeavour which opponents of his views fear will result in dehistoricizing as well, and this, in spite of Bultmann's distinction between the terms *geschichtlich* and *historisch*), and as representative of the other extreme one may mention Oscar Cullmann, for whom redemptive history (*Heilsgeschichte*) or revelational history (*Offenbarungsgeschichte*)—and he would be understood as including in these terms both the 'framework' and inner 'kernel' of the history involved—is the heart of all New Testament theology'. The interest

aroused and the keen championing of one or other side in this debate on the part of biblical theologians is sufficient evidence of the fertile soil into which the seeds of the discussion have been cast.<sup>1</sup> This question of redemptive history and of the continuity between the *old* and the *new*, between 'chosen people of God' and Church, between Judaism and Christianity was already an old one in Marcion's day. Essentially it was the problem which drew forth such bitter antagonism against the apostle Paul and his preaching (*kerygma*) from the side of the Judaizing element in the early Jewish Christian community and, if we are to accept at its face value a passage like Mark 2:18-22, it was this same question of continuity which on the occasion(s) indicated was a subject of concern for Jesus and his Pharisaic opponents.

Believing as he does that the entire message of Scripture is rightly apprehended only when considered as embraced within the category of *redemption or revelation history*, the present writer has elsewhere endeavoured to demonstrate that in the New Testament itself there lie side by side three distinct traditions which separately (and jointly) give evidence of the Church's interpretation of the Old and New Testament historical data in accordance with this thesis.<sup>2</sup> These are: (a) the tradition of a 'Herald-Christology' in the Synoptic Gospels deriving from such passages as Isa. 40:9; 52:7; and Nahum 1:15, (b) the proclamation of the *gospel* in terms of the 'rest of God' promised respectively through Joshua, David, and Jesus Christ according to the author of *Hebrews*, and (c) Paul's philosophy of history as found in Gal. 3, wherein he finds promise in Abraham and fulfilment in Jesus Christ. Each of these traditions selects for its purposes a different point of departure or *terminus a quo* (the *herald* of Deutero-Isaiah in the Synoptics, Joshua in *Hebrews*, and Abraham in Paul), but discloses the united belief of the Church in the same event of fulfilment—viz. the redemptive activity of Jesus Christ. And each tradition develops between the two points chosen as *termini a quo* and *ad quem* respectively a 'yardstick' intended to serve as a norm for understanding God's dealing with man for his redemption. It is argued that in this diversity of selected materials there is to be seen an underlying unity of faith in the God of history and in the redemption-revelation events through which His purpose relative to man is achieved.

In the present study my interest concerns the proper definitive

term (*gospel*) applied to this redemption-revelation activity of God in the three early traditions to which reference has just been made. And my hope is merely that the study may bring forward a small bit of evidence serving to bridge a gap in the continuity from the Old to the New Testament at this point. For it would appear that hitherto—with the single exception of the ‘missing link’ referred to—New Testament scholarship has succeeded in exhibiting satisfactorily all the elements of the argument in favour of applying the term ‘gospel’ to God’s activity throughout history on behalf of man’s salvation.

We shall first review the evidence for the use of the terms ‘gospel’ and ‘to preach the gospel’ in the technical sense here intended as this has been previously collected by others and shall then supply the ‘missing link’ at the proper point in the chain. It will be convenient to begin with Gerhard Friedrich’s exhaustive summary in his article devoted to *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι* and its cognates in TWNT.<sup>3</sup> In this article Friedrich arrives at some significant results relative to the usage of these terms in the Hebrew-Greek Scriptures which may be presented in brief as follows—

(1) for the use of the verb *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*:

(a) the Hebrew verb *bîššēr* behind the Greek derives from a stem which, as comparison with the cognate languages indicates, etymologically conveys the sense of *glad* or *good tidings* (*Freude*).<sup>4</sup> As employed in the OT, then, this verb acquires, *first*, a cultic connotation, as in 1 Sam. 31:9 where it is employed in announcing the ‘glad news’ (*die freudige Botschaft*) relative to the defeat and death of Saul at the pagan shrines of the Philistines; *then*, a more general sense, as in Ps. 40:10; 68:12; and *finally*, in Isa. 52:7 where the substantival participle *m<sup>h</sup>bhaššēr* occurs, the specifically eschatological reference to the ‘glad tidings’ that God had begun His reign in Zion. From this and the like evidence Friedrich concludes that ‘für das Vorverständnis des nt.lichen Euangelion begriffes ist Deuterocesaja und die von ihm beeinflusste Literatur am wichtigsten’ (p. 706, lines 10 f.).<sup>5</sup>

(b) The use of the Greek verb by contrast, including that to be found in secular literature, in the LXX, and in Philo and Josephus, makes no significant contribution from a religious point of view, nor does the Greek verb *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι* ever attain to the wealth of religious meaning of its Hebrew equivalent as noted above. Friedrich, indeed, remarks—‘Dadurch wird deutlich, dass die

LXX nicht mehr verstanden hat, was Deuterocesaja mit dem kommenden Freudenboten gemeint hat,'<sup>6</sup> and again, 'Bei Philo wie bei Josephus findet sich nirgendwo der Gedanke an den Freudenboten aus Deuterocesaja. Das ist auch nicht verwunderlich. Sie haben kein Geschichtsverständnis, sie kennen keine Heilsgeschichte, keine wahre Eschatologie'.<sup>7</sup>

(c) Palestinian Judaism, however, kept alive—as Hellenistic Judaism represented by LXX, Philo, and Josephus did not—the Deutero-Isaiah connotation of the verb *biššēr* and particularly the eschatological reference to be found in its employment of the substantival participle *m<sup>e</sup>bhaššēr*.<sup>8</sup>

(2) For employing the noun *εὐαγγέλιον*:

(a) The Hebrew noun *b<sup>e</sup>šōrāh*, unlike its related verb, had no religious connotation in the OT; so that Friedrich can conclude his study at this point with the unequivocal statement—'Im AT wird *b<sup>e</sup>šōrāh* nur profan gebraucht. Ein religiöser Sprachgebrauch des Substantivs fehlt vollkommen.'<sup>9</sup>

(b) As for the Greek, *εὐαγγέλιον*, *-ía* was employed in a religious context in Emperor Worship; as for example, for the announcement made at an emperor's birth, at his enthronement, and on the occasion of other important events during his life and reign.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, neither LXX, Philo, nor Josephus employs the noun in a significant manner for religious purposes. In this respect their usage is exactly in accord with their failure with reference to the Greek verb.

(c) Again, however, it is to be noted that Palestinian Judaism now supplied a religious usage and connotation to the noun just as it had kept alive that of the verb, though it appears that the eschatological reference is never found in the noun as in the verb and its participle.<sup>11</sup> (But cf. p. 62 below.)

At this point, Friedrich turns to a study of the Greek terms in the New Testament and his conclusions essentially follow those already arrived at by George Milligan<sup>12</sup> and Millar Burrows<sup>13</sup> in independent studies. This is to the general effect that the NT usage of the Greek terms (*εὐαγγέλιον* and *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*) derives from the developed religious connotation of the Hebrew verb and particularly its participle in Deutero-Isaiah. Thus, with reference to Isa. 61:1, Milligan remarks that this passage 'from our Lord's own use of it in Luke iv:18 f. may be said to have set the stamp upon *εὐαγγελίζομαι* as the most fitting term to describe the true character

of the message of the new Messianic King' (p. 142). Millar Burrows in somewhat similar fashion concludes relative to Isa. 40:9, 52:7, 60:6, and 61:1—'We may be quite sure that in these four passages from the Second Isaiah is to be found the main source for the Christian use of the term "gospel"' (p. 22).

Friedrich agrees that through their use of the verb (*εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*) the Evangelists not only indicate Jesus to be the 'herald' of the *erwarteten Endzeit* (Matt. 4:23), but also represent him as claiming as much himself (Matt. 11:5 = Luke 7:22; Luke 4:18, 43, 16:16). He is less certain that Jesus employed the noun (or its Aramaic equivalent) to describe the nature of his message, holding that this question is bound up with the problem of Jesus' 'messianic consciousness'.<sup>14</sup> I have already discussed Friedrich's argument at this point in a previous publication<sup>15</sup> and shall not go over the ground again except to say that

it appears to me that the Marcan tradition as exhibited in these five passages [see below, note 14] is more likely than not to be authentic and so from our Lord's lips, if for no other reason than that *they appear to reflect an early period when the gospel was still something that Jesus heralded rather than something that he was himself*. It is admitted on all hands that in the later Church the latter meaning attached to the word 'gospel' and it seems inconceivable, therefore, that the five passages in Mark which represent Jesus as merely the gospel's Herald, rather than its embodiment, should be the creation of that later Church.

For our present purpose it is relevant now to turn to a summary of the evidence for the Syriac equivalents of these terms which we have been discussing. And it is at once rather startling to discover that throughout the long period represented by the translation from the original Greek into successively the Old Syriac (Sinaitic and Curetonian), the Peshitta, and the Harkleian versions, at least that is from the second to the seventh century, the Christian Syriac-speaking peoples consistently employed for the terms 'gospel' and 'to preach the gospel' (i.e. for *εὐαγγέλιον* and *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*, wherever they occur in the NT text), *s<sup>e</sup>bhartā* and *s<sup>e</sup>bhar*—words whose etymological meaning is 'to think, hold as true, be convinced, believe, suppose', and the like.<sup>16</sup> The only exceptions to this rule apparently concern the use of the term 'Gospel' in the title to the works of the Evangelists and at Mark 1:1, in both of which cases the Syriac simply transliterates the Greek to read *euangeliōn*.

The evidence for these statements may be conveniently tabulated as follows:<sup>16</sup>

(1) For the noun (*εὐαγγέλιον*), *Codex Sinaitic* reads *s<sup>e</sup>bhartā*<sup>17</sup> in Matt. 4:23, 9:35, 24:14, 26:13; Mark 1:14, 15, 8:35, 10:29, 13:10, 14:9. *Codex Curetonian* reads the same at Matt. 4:23 and is lacking elsewhere; the *Peshitta* employs the same noun everywhere with the exception of Mark 1:1, where *euangeliōn* occurs;<sup>18</sup>

(2) For the verb (*εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*), *Codex Sinaitic* has *s<sup>e</sup>bhar* in some one of its forms at Luke 2:10, 3:18, 4:18, 43, 8:1, 9:6, 16:16, 20:1, being lacking elsewhere; similarly, *Codex Curetonian* at Matt. 11:5; Luke 8:1, 9:6, 20:1, where alone the codex is complete; the *Peshitta* also has the same verb in one form or other in all the passages cited; the *Harkleian* has it at Luke 4:18 and 4:43.<sup>19</sup>

(3) For *εὐαγγελιστής*, found only in Acts 21:8, Eph. 4:11, and 2 Tim. 4:5 in the NT—in all of which passages the *Old Syriac* is, of course, lacking—the *Peshitta* employs *m<sup>e</sup>sabb<sup>e</sup>rānā*.<sup>20</sup>

For the OT the *Old Syriac* is lacking, but the evidence from the *Peshitta* confirms that for the NT relative to the proper Syriac equivalents for derivatives of *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*—and as may now be added, for those of *bāsār* as well. The evidence for this statement is as follows:

(1) For the verb *biššēr* (LXX, *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*), the *Peshitta* employs some form of *s<sup>e</sup>bhr* in every OT passage concerned. These are—1 Sam. 4:17, 31:9; 2 Sam. 1:20, 4:10, 18:19, 20(bis), 18:31; 1 Kings 1:42; 1 Chron. 10:9, 16:23; Ps. 40:9, 68:11 (noun), 96:2; Isa. 40:9(bis), 52:7(bis), 60:6, 61:1; Nahum 1:15; Jer. 20:15.<sup>21</sup>

(2) For the noun *b<sup>e</sup>šōrāh* (LXX, *εὐαγγέλιον*, *-ία*), the *Peshitta* again has *s<sup>e</sup>bhartā* in all passages concerned—viz. at 2 Sam. 4:10, 18:22, 25, 27; 2 Kings 7:9.<sup>22</sup>

The complete uniformity of this evidence is impressive and it is, of course, on this basis that the *Thesaurus Syriacus* of R. Payne Smith (2 vols., 1879), together with Mrs. Margoliouth's smaller work (*A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, 1903) founded upon the larger one, provides *s<sup>e</sup>bhartā* and *s<sup>e</sup>bhar* respectively as the normal Syriac equivalents for 'gospel' and 'to preach the gospel'. This phenomenon raises a problem of real interest for its own sake—viz. why the Syriac either never developed a term (noun and verb) with the root meaning of 'joy' and hallowed by long usage in the cognate languages of Hebrew, Accadian, and Arabic to designate 'glad tidings' of both a secular and religious nature, or if it did so,



then abandoned it for purposes of designating the distinctive message of the Scriptures and chose instead a word with the etymological sense of 'to show a bright face, be pleasant, think, suppose, hope', and the like.<sup>23</sup> But whatever be the reason for this phenomenon, the fact remains that the Syriac language from the second century forward fails to supply us with the link between the OT and LXX, on the one hand, and the Greek of the NT, on the other, as far as the proper terms to be employed for 'gospel' and its cognates are concerned. For reasons of its own, the Syriac rejected the stem *bsr* (both verb and noun) to designate the central message of Scripture (or at any rate, its eschatological aspect as found in Deutero-Isaiah), and chose instead terms derived from the stem *sbhr* (Heb.; Aram. *sbhr*) to serve this purpose.

In the light of the foregoing, it is striking to find that the Christian Palestinian Syriac (or Aramaic) is as uniform in its retention of the noun and verb from the stem *bsr* (*b<sup>e</sup>sōrā*, *bsr*) in all places where the prophetic eschatological hope and the distinctively Christian gospel are had in mind as all other types of Syriac have been in abandoning them. There is no exception to this surprising phenomenon as far as I have been able to discover in any extant manuscript of the Palestinian Syriac for those parts of OT and NT that have been preserved. It is true that the Palestinian Syriac is known to us only in the form of lectionaries, so far at all events as a continuous text is concerned, and that lacunae, therefore, are present and these of an extensive sort. No manuscript of the Palestinian Syriac extant contains 2 Sam. 4:10, 18:20, 22, 25, 27; 2 Kings 7:9; Mark 1:14, 15, 10:29, 13:10, or 14:9, where the Hebrew employs *b<sup>e</sup>sōrāh* and LXX and NT respectively *εὐαγγέλιον*, *-ia*; nor 1 Sam. 4:17, 31:9; 2 Sam. 4:10, 18:19, 20, 26, 31; 1 Kings 1:42; 1 Chron. 10:9, 16:23; Ps. 40(39):9, 68(67):11, 96(95):2; Isa. 52:7; Nahum 1:5(2:1); Jer. 20:15, 51(28):10; Luke 3:18, 4:43; or 16:16, where the Hebrew has *bīssēr* and LXX and NT respectively *εὐαγγελίσεισθαι*. The presence of these lacunae is somewhat disconcerting, to be sure, though fortunately the passages extant are found at strategic points in both OT and NT text, sufficiently so indeed for us to arrive at a definitive conclusion in the matter.

The evidence upon which this statement is based follows—

(1) Translating the noun *εὐαγγέλιον*, the Palestinian Syriac employs *bsōrā* in *Codex Climaci Rescriptus* at Mark 1:1; Rom. 15:16, 19; 1 Cor. 4:15, 15:1; Gal. 1:6, 7, 11 (*bsrā*); Phil. 2:22; 1 Thess. 1:5;

2 Thess. 1:8; 2 Tim. 1:10; Philem. 13; in *Pal. Syriac Lect. No. VI* at Rom. 1:1; 1 Cor. 15:1; Eph. 1:13; and 2 Tim. 2:8; in *Pal. Syriac Lect. of the Gospels*: (a) its *Codex A* at Matt. 4:23 (bis), 9:35, 24:14, 26:13 (bis); Mark 1:1, 8:35; (b) its *Codex B* at Matt. 4:23 (bis), 9:35, 24:14 (bis), 26:13 (bis); Mark 1:1, 8:35; (c) its *Codex C* at Matt. 4:23 (bis), 9:35, 26:13 (bis); Mark 1:1, 8:35:

(2) Translating the verb *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*, the Palestinian Syriac similarly has *bsr* in some one of its forms in *Codex Climaci Rescriptus* at Rom. 15:20; 1 Cor. 1:17, 15:1, 2; Gal. 1:8, 9, 11, 16, 23; in *Pal. Syriac Lect. VI* at Isa. 40:9 (bis), 60:6, 61:1; Joel 2:32; 1 Cor. 15:1, 2; Eph. 2:17; in *Pal. Syriac Lect. of the Gospels*: (a) its *Codex A* at Matt. 11:5; Luke 1:19, 2:10, 3:18, 4:18, 7:22, 8:1, 9:6, 20:1; (b) its *Codex B* at Matt. 11:5; Luke 1:19, 2:10, 3:18, 4:18, 8:1, 9:6, 20:1; (c) its *Codex C* at Matt. 11:5; Luke 1:19, 2:10, 4:18, 7:22, 8:1, 9:6, 20:1.<sup>24</sup>

In addition to the above, Friedrich Schulthess is authority for the following evidence to which I have not had access: (a) for the presence of the noun (*bsōrā*) in *Codices Damasceni* at Rom. 1:16; Phil. 1:27 (bis), 4:3, 15; in the *Taylor-Schechter palimpsest fragments* at 2 Cor. 4:3; in *Biblical Fragments* edited by J. Rendel Harris at Gal. 2:5, 14; in *Anecdota Syriaca* edited by J. P. N. Land at Matt. 9:35, 24:14; (b) for the presence of the verb (*bsr*) in one or other of its forms in *Codices Damasceni* at Luke 20:1; Rom. 1:14 f.; Heb. 4:2; in the *Taylor-Schechter frag.* at 1 Thess. 3:6; in *Anecdota Syriaca* at Isa. 40:9; Luke 4:43, 7:22; Acts 14:7.<sup>25</sup>

A review of the above evidence appears to leave no doubt that the terms adopted by the Christian Palestinian Syriac (Aramaic) as the exclusive technical terminology for 'gospel' and 'to preach the gospel' were respectively *bsōrā* and *bsr*. And equally it appears clear that this same Aramaic simply took over these terms from the Hebrew of OT, making the slight change in spelling and vocalization required to clothe them in an Aramaic dress. And since this is so, we appear to have found in the Palestinian Syriac the 'missing link' between the OT Hebrew *b'śōrāh* and *biššer*, on the one hand, and the adoption by the NT Scriptures of the terms *εὐαγγέλιον* and *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι* as their proper equivalents, on the other—in accord with the thesis of Friedrich, Milligan, and Burrows above outlined. That is to say, it would appear to have been the Christian Palestinian Syriac which preserved the traditional Galilean Aramaic at this point. It would have been natural for

Jesus, for example, to employ *bsr* and *bsōrā* for the distinctive NT gospel message and its proclamation, because it was these words which he had been accustomed to use in his native Aramaic in quoting or paraphrasing from Deutero-Isaiah or the Psalms such passages as referred to the eschatological hope of his people and because he believed that hope now to be fulfilled in his own ministry.<sup>26</sup>

There is a degree to which the Jewish Aramaic of Jonathan bar Uzziel's Targum on Isaiah<sup>27</sup> may be employed as contributory evidence for the above conclusions, so far at any rate as those passages are concerned which C. H. Dodd labels as 'primary sources' for the catena of testimony passages employed by Jesus and the early Church—e.g. Isa. 41:7, 53:1, 61:1. Though this Targum, like that of Onkelos on the Pentateuch, in its present form exhibits 'traces of Babylonian Aramaic influence' and, therefore, as Matthew Black has pointed out, it is to be 'regarded as a secondary authority only for the language of Jesus',<sup>28</sup> yet it is just at this point in our present argument where such 'secondary authority' is of contributory value and surely may be legitimately employed. For in the passages above cited, the Targum adopts the verb *bsr* in Isa. 41:27, and—contrary to the Hebrew use of the noun for 'profane' purposes only (cf. Friedrich above)—the noun in 53:1 (*lbhsōrtnā*) and 61:1 (*lbhsrā*). It seems clear that the coincidence of evidence between the Christian Palestinian Syriac and the Jewish Aramaic of the Targum at this point, when viewed conjointly with the clear abandonment of the stem in favour of another by the later Christian Syriac versions, can be accounted for in no other way than to suppose that here is to be seen the 'missing link' between OT (Hebrew and LXX) and NT Greek usages. The alternative suggestion would be to suppose that the Palestinian Syriac and the Targumic Aramaic, representing later (rather than earlier) usage than the bulk of the Syriac versions (Old Syriac, Peshitta, and Harkleian), rejuvenated a Semitic stem and its derivatives which had been employed in OT Hebrew but long since abandoned by Christian Syriac. This, though admittedly possible, does not commend itself as likely.

The discontinuity which we have remarked relative to the use of the gospel words as between the OT (Hebrew and LXX) and the Greek NT, on the one hand, and all the Syriac versions exclusive of the Palestinian, on the other, appears the more striking

when viewed in the context of the like history of *κηρύσσειν* and its cognates (Hebrew *qārā*, *zā'āq*, and the like). Here there is unbroken continuity throughout, in spite of Friedrich's acute observation that in the LXX the verb *κηρύσσειν*, 'contrary to all expectation' is seldom found as the proper term to give expression to the content of the prophetic message;<sup>29</sup> and, I might add, there is even less evidence for the use of the noun *κήρυγμα* in the LXX.<sup>30</sup> In fact, even in the NT—in spite of the publicity given to the term 'kerygma' in the theological literature of the present day, the noun *κήρυγμα* as applied to the Christian message is exclusively a Pauline word, being found only in Rom. 16:25; 1 Cor. 1:21, 2:4, 15:14; 2 Tim. 4:17, and Titus 1:3.<sup>31</sup> The verb *κηρύσσειν* is more commonly used in the technical sense in the NT, but even here a defining phrase such as τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς βασιλείας, τὸν Χριστόν, and the like is generally required to complete its meaning.<sup>32</sup> It is all the more striking, therefore, that continuity in the traditional use of these terms should be discovered throughout the Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, and Greek texts for OT and NT. The evidence for this continuity in the Syriac tradition follows:

(1) For the verb *krz*: the Palestinian Syriac has it in one or another of its manuscripts, thus—in the *Pal. Syriac Lect. VI*, at Isa. 61:1 (for *qārā*); Joel 1:14 (do.), 2:1 (*rū'a*—Hiph.); 2:15 and 3:9 (*qārā*); Jonah 1:2, 3:2, 4, 5 (do.), 3:7 (*zā'āq*—Hiph.); Zech. 9:9 (*rū'a*—Hiph.); Matt. 3:1, 4:17, 23; Rom. 10:8; 1 Cor. 1:23, 15:11; 1 Tim. 3:16: in *Codex Climaci Rescriptus*, Prov. 1:21; Matt. 3:1, 4:17, 23; Mark 1:4, 7; in the *Pal. Syriac Lect. of the Gospels*: (a) *Codex A* has it at Matt. 3:1, 4:17, 23, 9:35, 10:7, 11:1, 24:14, 26:13, Mark 1:4, 7, 38, 39, 7:36, 16:15, 20; Luke 3:3, 4:18, 19, 8:1, 39, 9:2, 12:3, 24:47; (b) *Codex B* has it in all the same places except Mark 16:15 which this codex lacks; (c) *Codex C* also has it in the same passages with the like exception; the *Old Syriac* also employs the verb in its two manuscripts, thus—in the *Sinaitic*, at Matt. 3:1, 4:17, 23, 9:35, 10:7, 11:1, 24:14, 26:13; Mark 1:38, 39, 7:36; Luke 3:3, 4:18, 19, 8:39, 9:2, 12:3, 24:47; in the *Curetonian*, at Matt. 3:1, 4:17, 23, 11:1; Mark 16:20; Luke 3:3, 8:39, 9:2, 12:3; the *Peshitta* employs the verb in some form in every NT passage listed without exception, but in the OT it generally employs rather some form of the verb *qrā*, as at Isa. 61:1, Joel 1:14, etc.; and in both respects the *Modern Syriac* generally follows the custom of the *Peshitta*.

(2) For the noun *akrzūthā*, *krūzūthā* there is little evidence extant, as follows: in the *Pal. Syriac Lect. VI* Jonah 3:2 reads *akrzūthā* for *q̄riāh* and the spelling occurs at I Cor. 1:21; *Codex A* of the *Pal. Syriac Lect. of the Gospels* reads *akrzūthā* at Luke 11:32; no evidence exists for the Old Syriac readings in any passage where the Greek employs *κηγῳγῡα*; the *Peshitta* has *krūzūthā* at Jonah 3:2, Luke 11:32, and I Cor. 1:21; and the Modern Syriac, at Luke 11:32 reads *b<sup>e</sup>kārōzūtheh*.

In the light of the above discussion certain results appear to emerge, viz.—(a) it may be taken as established that Christian Palestinian Syriac (Aramaic), departing as it does radically from the Syriac tradition as otherwise known to us in the use of the terms for 'gospel' and 'to preach the gospel', has perpetuated for these terms the proper Aramaic terminology of the first Christian century and so furnished us with the evidence (hitherto lacking) for the manner of their transmission from OT Hebrew to NT Greek—a transition facilitated by reason of the fact that the Hebrew and Aramaic words were derived from the same Semitic stem; (b) since, as Friedrich has shown, the Greek tradition (LXX, Philo, and Josephus particularly) failed to apprehend the significance of the Hebrew *verb* *bīssēr* when employed in the religious (eschatological) sense, it seems certain that the transfer of *ideas* (as well as of *terms*) from OT to NT followed the path represented by the steps: *Hebrew* → *Galilean Aramaic* → *NT Greek*; (c) the *noun*, as Friedrich suggests and as is obvious, is essentially contained in the *verb* in all the languages involved, but neither the Hebrew nor LXX (nor for that matter, Philo and Josephus) made anything of this fact; rather so far as our evidence is complete, it would appear that Jewish and following it Christian Aramaic first employed the *noun* to mean 'gospel' in the technical sense; so that again the *idea* of a gospel must have followed the path designated by the steps: *Hebrew verb* → *Galilean Aramaic verb and noun* → *NT Greek verb and noun*; (d) it would have been natural, therefore, for Jesus along with the rest of the Jewish Aramaic-speaking community and the early Jewish Church in the days before the development of the Hellenistic mission to have employed both *verb and noun* for the prophetic eschatological hope and its fulfilment; (e) and it appears, finally, that the study has contributed in a small way to furthering the thesis of Friedrich Schulthess, A. J. Wensinck, Agnes Smith Lewis, Matthew Black and others like-

minded relative to the importance of the Christian Palestinian Syriac (Aramaic) and the documents witnessing to it as contributing to our knowledge of the Galilean Aramaic spoken by Jesus and his associates.<sup>32</sup>

The study has also raised the problem relating to the complete abandonment of the Aramaic terms involved, in the later Syriac. It would appear either: (a) that the Palestinian Syriac (Aramaic) translation from the Greek NT was too late to have influenced the other Syriac translations (including the Old Syriac and the Peshitta), or else, if early, was unknown to their translators, or (b) that the stem *bsr* never existed in Syriac other than in the form of the Christian Palestinian which is really Aramaic, and hence was abandoned in translation in favour of the stem *sbhr* which is found in all three languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Syriac), or (c) that, though the stem was available in Syriac to the translators of the Bible, it was abandoned for some reason quite unknown to us. It is tempting to accept the third possibility and to suggest tentatively that it was the apocalyptic interest of the second-century Church that led it to abandon a stem (*bsr*) with its intrinsic stress on the *gladsome element* in the Christian gospel because of what had already occurred through Jesus Christ (*and lay, therefore, in the past*), and in its place to employ the stem *sbhr* (a stem so like the other as to suggest its formation by metathesis, were there not good evidence for its independent existence in the cognate languages, Hebrew and Aramaic—including Christian Palestinian Aramaic), with its reference to *the future eschatological hope*.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Rudolf Bultmann, 'New Testament and Mythology' in *Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate*, edited by Hans Werner Bartsch and translated by Reginald H. Fuller (1953), 1 to 44, and for a characteristic application of his views, *Theology of the New Testament* (1951), i, 26 ff.; for Cullmann's position, cf. his *Christ and Time* (1950), 13, 26 f. (esp. note 10).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. his *Prophetic Realism and the Gospel* (1955), 51-78.

<sup>3</sup> TWNT, ii, 705-35.

<sup>4</sup> Marcus Jastrow agrees with Friedrich's conclusions, so far at all events as both Mishnaic (Talmudic) Hebrew and Aramaic are concerned; cf. his *A Dictionary of the Targumim, The Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (1903), i, 199, col. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. also Ps. 96:2 ff. and its 'Gedankenwelt Deuterocesajas' (p. 707, lines 4 ff.). Note that at Isa. 61:1 the prophet is the 'herald'.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. p. 710, lines 28-30.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. pp. 711 f., lines 40 ff.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. p. 712, lines 24-7. Friedrich's words are—'Von grösster Bedeutung ist es, dass in palästinischen Judentum die Anschauung vom Freudenboten aus Deuterijosaja lebendig geblieben ist. Es kommt der *m<sup>e</sup>bhassēr*, und die messianische Zeit bricht an. Er verkündet die Erlösung Israels, bringt Friede und Heil in die Welt'. Cf. also pp. 713 f., lines 38 ff., to the effect that 'Die Erwartung des *m<sup>e</sup>bhassēr* aus dem AT ist zur Zeit Jesu lebendig gewesen . . . Der Freudenbote kommt. Er kann der Messias sein, er braucht es aber nicht zu sein, er kann ein Ungenannter sein . . . Alle Menschen von Adam an hören die Stimme des Freudenboten: das Heil ist da, die neue Zeit, die Freudenzeit, ist angebrochen.'

<sup>9</sup> Cf. p. 719, lines 17 f.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. pp. 721 f.

<sup>11</sup> It will be worth while to quote at length from Friedrich's conclusions at this point, as follows—'Dass auch das nt.liche *εὐαγγέλιον* aus der jüdischen und nicht aus der griechischen Welt herzuleiten ist, dafür sprechen schon die Beziehungen von Verb und Substantiv zueinander (*bšrh bšr* . . .). . . . Das Verb *bšr* hat sich im Substantiv *εὐαγγέλιον* erhalten [i.e. in NT usage], und dieses weist uns deutlich nicht nach Griechenland, sondern nach Palästina' (p. 723, lines 38 ff.).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. his *St. Paul's Epistles to the Thessalonians* (1908), Note E, pp. 141-4, art. 'On the history of *εὐαγγέλιον*, *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*'.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. art. on 'The Origin of the Term "Gospel"', in *JBL* 44 (1925), 21-33.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. pp. 724 f. The noun is placed on Jesus' lips only in Mark's Gospel (1:15, 8:35, 10:29, 13:10, 14:9). Friedrich dismisses the first three of these because they fail to appear in the parallel Synoptic passages (in Matthew and Luke); 13:10 because it contains a reference to the Gentile mission of the Church, and 14:9 because it does not present a unified thought when taken in conjunction with vs. 3 ff.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. my *Prophetic Realism and the Gospel* (1955), 64-8.

<sup>16</sup> This summary tabulation includes every case in which *εὐαγγέλιον*, *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*, and *εὐαγγελιστής* occur in the Greek NT as listed in MGC.

<sup>17</sup> I.e. either in the emphatic form as listed or in an inflected form.

<sup>18</sup> Modern Syriac, too, employs *euangelion* at Mark 1:1 and in Rom. 1:16; elsewhere generally *mashhadhā* (from *sh<sup>e</sup>hadh*).

<sup>19</sup> Modern Syriac employs the verb *sh<sup>e</sup>had* in all these passages.

<sup>20</sup> Modern Syriac has *euāngālestā* at Acts 21:8, thus exhibiting the influence of the older idiom, but at Eph. 4:11 and 2 Tim. 4:5 it reads *mashhedhānē*.

<sup>21</sup> Modern Syriac again employs *sh<sup>e</sup>hadh* regularly here.

<sup>22</sup> Modern Syriac has *shehdā* here throughout. In compiling the above I have employed for the OT references both Solomon Mandelkern's '*Veteris Testamenti Concordantiae Hebraicae atque Chaldaicae*' (1925), and HRCS; and for the Syriac, Bensly, Harris, and Burkitt, *The Four Gospels in Syriac transcribed from the Sinaitic Palimpsest* (1894), Agnes Smith Lewis's *Some Pages of the Four Gospels retranscribed from the Sinaitic Palimpsest with a Translation of the Whole Text* (1896), Wm. Cureton's *Remains of a Very Ancient Recension of the Four Gospels in Syriac* (1858), together with the usual Peshitta and Modern Syriac texts. For the Harkleian I have at hand only the relevant pages in W. H. P. Hatch's *An Album of Dated Syriac Manuscripts* (1946).

<sup>23</sup> Cf. *Thesaurus Syriacus* of R. Payne Smith (1879) and Mrs. Margoliouth's smaller recension of this work; also Jastrow, *op. cit.*

<sup>24</sup> Cf. in order of the evidence presented—*Codex Climaci Rescriptus*, transcribed and edited by Agnes Smith Lewis (1909), *A Palestinian Syriac Lectionary*, *Studia Sinaitica* No. VI, edited by Agnes Smith Lewis (1897) and the Supplement to the same (1907), *The Palestinian Syriac Lectionary of the Gospels*, re-edited by Agnes Smith Lewis and Margaret Dunlop Gibson (1899). I can discover in the Palestinian Syriac but one passage in which an equivalent for *εὐαγγελιστής* occurs, viz. at Acts 21:8, where *Codex Climaci Rescriptus* reads *mbhsmā*. Schulthess cites the same form from 'The Liturgy of the Nile', 695:6 (edit. by G. Margoliouth, 1896).

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Friedrich Schulthess, *Lexicon Syropalaestinum* (1903), art. *bsr* III, 28 f. This evidence for the Christian Palestinian usage may be supplemented for Jewish Aramaic from Jastrow, *op. cit.*, arts. *b<sup>e</sup>sr*, *b<sup>e</sup>sr* I, 199; *b<sup>e</sup>sōrah* and *b<sup>e</sup>š(s)ōriā*, 198.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures* (1953), 108–10, on this general theme.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. the passages cited in J. F. Stenning's *The Targum of Isaiah* (1949), in *loc.*

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Matthew Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (1954), 17 ff. I should perhaps have remarked above that the presence of *sbhrtī* at Mark 16:15 in *Codex A* of the *Palestinian Syriac Lectionary of the Gospels* does not constitute an exception to the rule that the Pal.Syr. never employs the stem *sbhr* for 'gospel' or 'to preach the gospel'. As Schulthess says *ad loc.*, this is merely *vox syriaca* in an interpolation into the true text.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. TWNT iii, 682–717, on *κηρύσσειν* and its cognates, particularly p. 699, lines 25 f. and p. 700, lines 28 ff.

<sup>30</sup> The LXX usage of these words follows: (a) *κήρυγμα*, at 2 Chron. 30:5 (*qōl*) 1 Esdras 9:3; Prov. 9:3; Jonah 3:2 (*q<sup>e</sup>rīāh*); (b) *κηρῶξ* for *kārōz*, at Gen. 41:43; Eccles. 20:15; Dan. 3:4 (LXX); Dan. 3:4 (Theod.); 4 Macc. 6:4: (c) *κηρύσσειν*, at Gen. 41:43 (*qārā*); Exod. 32:5 (do.), 36:6 (*he<sup>a</sup>ebhir qōl*); 2 Kings 10:20 (*qārā*); 2 Chron. 20:3 (do.), 24:9 (*nāthan qōl*), 36:22 (do.); 1 Esdras 2:2; Esther 6:9 (*qārā*), 6:11 (do.); Prob. 1:21 (do.), 8:1 (do.); Hos. 5:8 (*rū'a*—Hiph.); Mic. 3:5 (*qārā*); Joel 1:14 (do.), 2:1 (*rū'a*—Hiph.), 2:15 (*qārā*), 3(4):9 (do.); Jonah 1:2 (do.), 3:2 (do.), 3:4 (do.) 3:5 (do.), 3:7 (*zā'aq*—Hiph.); Zeph. 3:14 (*rū'a*—Hiph.); Zech. 9:9 (*qārā*); Isa. 61:1 (do.); Dan. 3:4 (LXX *q<sup>e</sup>ra*); Dan. 5:29 (Theod. *k<sup>e</sup>raz*—Aph.); 1 Macc. 5:49, 10:63 f.—cf. HRCs.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. MGC. The only other appearance of the noun in the NT is at Matt. 12:41 = Luke 11:31 ('Q'), and here it relates to the preaching of Jonah rather than to that of Jesus.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. MGC.

<sup>33</sup> The name of Paul Kahle should, of course, be added to the above list. The Rev. T. W. McNeil has called my attention to the occurrence of the verb *b<sup>e</sup>š* at Lev. 22:27 in the Palestinian Pentateuch Targum edited by Kahle under the title *Masoreten des Westens in Texte und Untersuchungen zur Vormasoretischen Grammatik des Hebräischen*, IV, ii (1930).