
Twelve authors, including the editor of this volume, have joined forces to produce a definitive work on early Christian theological formation, particularly that centered on the influence of the Matthean community. The authors are readily known to us for their extensive scholarship related to Second Temple Judaism, the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Jesus Movement, the formation of the literary texts of the New Testament and extracanonical literature, and the literature of the Gnostic traditions. Bas ter Haar Romeny develops hypotheses regarding the origins of Judaism and Christianity in Syria after the Roman conquest of 70 C.E. This is followed by Clayton N. Jefford’s chapter on Matthew, the Didache, and Ignatius of Antioch. These two set the tone for the book by their analysis of the milieu from which the Didache and Matthew’s gospel derive.

Wim Wren and Aaron Milavec address the historical and social setting of the Matthean gospel and the Didache, respectively. Kari Syreeni, who has command of both the psychological and theological dynamics at play in the Sermon on the Mount, explores the way it reflects the Two Way teaching methodology of the Didache. John S. Kloppenborg discusses the uses Q makes of the Synoptics and the Didache. Peter J. Tomson explores the Halakhic evi-
idence in Didache 8 and Matthew 6 for relationships between the source communities of these two documents and Judaism. Gerard Rouwhorst finds in Didache 9-10 a litmus test for research on early eucharistic liturgy. Andre Tuilier treats the itinerant charismatics in and behind the Didache and Matthew. Joseph Verheyden informs us on the eschatology of both documents. Jonathan A. Draper sees in them both a light on the “Irrevocable Parting of the Ways” between Christianity and Judaism. Huub van de Sandt wrote chapter 10, “Two Windows on a Developing Jewish-Christian Reproof Practice: Matthew 18:15-17 and Didache 15:3.” Tuilier’s French chapter offers an English abstract.

The Didache is generally dated, in its present form, to the end of the first century C.E. It apparently arose in the Jewish-Christian community, as did the gospel of Matthew, though it is likely that they were independent of one another. Their authors and editors did not know of the other document, at least until a number of editions of the Didache had appeared in Greek. It first appeared in Aramaic. There is considerable discussion about the possibility that Matthew originally appeared in Hebrew and was translated into Greek, as well, though the opposite as well as an Aramaic original are also speculated. Both Matthew and the Didache reflect a community that has alienated itself from its Jewish roots. Moreover, the Two Ways teaching (Did. 1-6) may well have served in some form as a prebaptismal instruction within the community of the Didache and Matthew. Furthermore, the correspondence of the Trinitarian baptismal formula in the Didache and Matthew (Did. 7 and Matt. 28:19) as well as the similar shape of the Lord’s Prayer (Did. 8 and Matt. 6:5-13) apparently reflect the use of resembling oral forms of church traditions. Finally, both the community of the Didache (Did. 11-13) and Matthew (Matt. 7:15-23; 10:5-15, 40-42; 24:1, 24) were visited by itinerant apostles and prophets, some of whom were illegitimate (1).

The Didache was originally a list of Jesus’ sayings and was progressively edited into a fuller text in Greek, approximately as we have it today. Jeffords thinks that both of these documents received their final form under Bishop Ignatius of Antioch in Syria. Similarly, Wren feels that Matthew’s gospel passed through a number of editorial stages on its way to the current Greek gospel that we have. Milavec has some hesitation about the similarities between the two documents, suggesting that the longstanding traditions among scholars that the Didache was a catechetical or training manual for Gentile converts seems more solidly based. He urges that the Didache reflects a substantially different discipline of spiritual formation than the gospel. Syreeni agrees that the Didache is a prebaptismal catechetical manual for Gentile converts, which emphasizes the two ways of formation. He sees considerable commonality between the Didache and Matthew but does not think Matthew knew of the Didache’s Two Ways doctrine, because there is so little indication of such awareness in the Matthean Sermon on the Mount. Kloppenborg thinks there is more evidence that the author or redactor of the Didache had knowledge of Luke’s gospel and does not relate much to Matthew’s.
Tomson and Rouwhorst think that the eucharistic sections in both documents draw directly upon Jewish sources but are not much related to each other. Tuilier concluded that the itinerant charismatic prophets began to lose repute and authority as Matthew’s gospel became more widely spread. At first, the Aramaic and Greek copies of the gospel supported and supplemented the mission of the charismatics, but, as time went by, it ultimately was the increasing spread of this gospel that brought about a gradual cessation of the charismatic ministries. The internal dynamics of the gospel’s radiating the belief in God, altruistic love, confidence in the Spirit and, at the same time, its directives against undisciplined wandering teachers and prophets ushered in a new era where the visiting charismatics became scarce and lost importance (5).

Verheyden and Draper both look for the sources of commonality between these two documents in the Judaic traditions that constitute the backdrop of both of them. There was no orthodox or uniform Christianity or Judaism during the closing decade of the first century C.E. There were a great variety of Judaisms and Christianities. This rich set of related traditions is reflected in both documents independently. Moreover, according to Draper, both documents took form primarily because of their expression of antipathy or opposition as Jewish-Christian communities to the rabbinic movement. Draper thinks that the agreements between Matthew and the Didache indicate that these documents come from the same Jewish community at a different stage of development. He settles the question of evolution from one to the other on the basis of internal evidence. Six key terms are analyzed that are used with a different valuation in Didache and Matthew. As a result, Draper finds that both documents in their final form represent different stages of development in the process of alienation from Israel. He discovers a gradual transition from a predominantly Jewish-Christian community in the Didache to an increasingly Gentile community in Matthew. Moreover, while a little polemic against nascent Rabbinism is found in the Didache, the Matthean gospel shows a growing tension felt by the community over the infringement of Pharisaic authority, putting them on the sideline. The final rift with Israel has not yet occurred in Didache and Matthew, but the chasm is so deep that “it is certainly on the horizon, even inevitable” (6-7).

Van de Sandt’s attractive and highly readable volume is profoundly detailed and thorough in its address to the identified issue it explores and to the setting, development, message, and relationship of Matthew and the Didache. If the Didache and Mathew did indeed emanate from the same geographical, social, and cultural setting, new questions arise. Who were the Christians standing behind the Didache and Matthew? Can we trace the developing interests of the respective community or communities in the different textual layers of the Didache and Matthew? Is it possible to frame the congregations within the social history of Jews and Jewish believers in Jesus in first-century Syria? What stage of development or separation among Christians, Jewish Christians, and Jews is envisaged? In order to invite discussion and exchange ideas on this fun-
damental issue, an international conference was organized by the Tilburg Faculty of Theology at which scholars of related fields were brought together to debate about the matter in the light of their diverse specialties and previous research. This volume constitutes the rich fountain of refreshing insights that that dialogue brought forth.

The book is beautifully packaged by the publisher, appropriately in hardcover, because its value will not wane for a century or more, regardless of other advances in the field. Besides its very useful summary introduction and twelve chapters, this lovely volume offers a bibliography of five hundred entries, a series of individual indexes on canonical and extra-canonical ancient sources; LXX; Qumran library; Greek Jewish writers; sayings source Q; other early Christian writings from the second to the fourth century; rabbinic literature; inscriptions and ancient manuscripts, including papyri, pagan Greek authors, subjects treated in the text; ancient personal names, geographical names, and modern authors.

Huub van de Sandt is lecturer in New Testament Studies at the Tilburg Faculty of Theology. He is the coauthor, with the late David Flusser (2002), of *The Didache, Its Jewish Sources and Its Place in Early Judaism and Christianity*.

—J. Harold Ellens