

*ST. MARK'S AND ST. LUKE'S OMISSION OF
ST. MATTHEW XVI, 17-19.*

MATTHEW XVI.

17. And Jesus answered and said unto him: Blessed art thou, Simon Bar Jona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven.

18. And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peetr and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

19. I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven.

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THE omission of this passage from the Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke is of such significance that it has already occasioned a bulky literature. Those of us who are privileged to experience the peace of being in the Church of the Rock are intellectually unprejudiced towards the discussion, because whatever way the discussion turns, it always turns into a confirmation of the Petrine position. If on the one hand it be argued that Mark and Luke did not know of this text but that it found its way almost at once into the text of the first gospel, we are faced with the fact of such a widespread acceptance of St. Peter's supremacy that a spurious text could be given citizenship in the gospel written, not by a mere disciple like Mark or Luke, but by an apostle, Matthew.

If, on the contrary, the text was known, as indeed the present writer thinks it was known, though omitted, by Mark and Luke, yet its inclusion in the gospel of one who was an apostle and an eye-witness of the inci-

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dent is first-hand authority which no later omissions can destroy.

But of course omissions are such a feature of the Synoptists that this omission of a Petrine text does not stand alone. It is not a solitary phenomenon which can be measured and judged merely by itself. Indeed not only kindred incidents, but kindred phrases of St. Matthew are subject to the same law of omission—or if you will, selection—by St. Mark and St. Luke.

In order to see why St. Mark and St. Luke omitted not a little that was in St. Matthew, we have to remember who these two evangelists were, and where their gospels were published.

St. Mark was, roughly speaking, the secretary of St. Peter. His gospel is but a listener's account of the sermons given by St. Peter in Rome. The gospel of St. Mark is so definitely Roman that some modern critics, like Professor Burkitt, think that the original language of the gospel was Latin, and not Greek. The gospel is thus, not an abstract study of a Hero by his faithful follower, but an attempt to recommend a Person and His abiding work, the Church, to the group of cultured, autocratic persons who thought they had made an end of Him and were preparing to make an end of His Church.

St. Luke's gospel is at once like and unlike St. Mark's. It is unlike because it purports to be, not the record of one apostle's witness, but the carefully collected summary of many witnesses. Though St. Luke is the secretary of St. Paul, yet St. Paul was not as St. Matthew, St. Peter and St. John were, an eye-and ear-witness of Jesus. But this secretary of St. Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, has, in common with St. Mark, the secretary of St. Peter, the like desire not to offend the Roman public for whom his gospel was first published; and published in Rome.

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Let us consider in detail passages in St. Matthew's Gospel seemingly omitted by St. Mark and St. Luke

I. The critics have been exercised to explain St. Mark's and St. Luke's omission of St. Matthew's account of the birth of Jesus and the coming of the three Magi. Hardly any explanation has succeeded in appearing more than possible. Yet it would seem more than probable that in omitting the opening scenes of St. Matthew's gospel, St. Mark and St. Luke have here acted on a principle which, as we shall see, they acted on throughout their gospels. The incident of the three wise men who came from the East to adore the King of the Jews was not one that would recommend itself to the great empire of the West. Almost every detail of St. Matthew's account of these eastern Magi would arouse Roman susceptibilities. The kingdom of 'this captain that shall rule my people Israel' (ii, 6), was such that even alien nations should adore and give tribute, as the Magi gave the tribute of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Again, Herod and his council—no mean judges of the situation—looked on this new-born Babe as a menace to the civil power, and the reigning dynasty. Moreover the supernatural method of deliverance from this reigning dynasty seemed to justify the civic fears of Herod and his Council.

In broaching this view of St. Luke's and St. Mark's omission of what St. Matthew had so elaborately recounted, we are suggesting something that fits in not only with the circumstances of St. Luke's and St. Mark's gospel, but also with an elaborate series of similar omissions.

II. VIII, 5-13. The Story of the Centurion.

(a) We must notice that St. Mark has only one reference to a centurion, in the account of the Crucifixion (Mk. xv, 39), And the centurion (Gr., *κεντυρίων*) . . . said : Indeed this man was the Son of God. . . . 44,

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Pilate . . . sending for the centurion, asked him if He were already dead. 45, And when he understood it by the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

(b) Whereas St. Matthew and St. Luke use the Greek word *ἑκατόνταρχος* or *ἑκατοντάρχης* for centurion, St. Mark uses the Latin word merely transliterated into Greek.

(c) This Roman military officer, who only once figures in St. Mark's Gospel, makes a declaration of faith only second to that of St. Peter.

Moreover it is he who gives official certification that Jesus is dead. No higher certification could be given.

(d) St. Matthew had written (xxvii, 54), 'Now *the centurion* and they that were with him watching Jesus when they saw the earthquake and the things that were done, *feared* exceedingly, saying : Truly this man was the Son of God.'

St. Mark's Gospel (39), being St. Peter's preaching, could hardly be expected to tell a Roman audience that a Roman officer was frightened by an earthquake ! Hence the words : 'And when the Centurion who stood over against Him saw that He so gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.'

St. Luke is equally emphatic in not attributing fear to the Roman officer ; whilst explaining St. Matthew's mention of fear. But he refers this fear to the multitudes, not to the centurion. Lk. xxiii, 47 : And the centurion, when he saw what was done, glorified God, saying : Indeed this was a just man. 48, And all the multitude . . . returned striking their breasts.

(e) The whole incident of the centurion whose *παῖς* (Mt.) ; *δούλος* (Lk.) was sick is left out by St. Mark !

St. Luke gives the incident, but with details that make it less unacceptable to a Roman audience. Thus St. Matthew uses the word *παῖς*, which may mean son' as well as servant. It would be natural for a

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reader of St. Matthew to translate *παῖς* as son rather than servant, because (viii, 9) the word *δούλος* (servant) is used. Thus St. Matthew uses the word *παῖς* twice (6, 13) to describe the sick boy; yet uses the word *δούλος* when describing a servant. On the other hand, St. Luke substitutes *δούλος* in describing the sick boy; and omits all reference to the *δούλος*, who when commanded to do anything does it.

In Matthew, the centurion comes out to meet Jesus. In St. Luke the centurion sends (1) the elders (*πρεσβυτέρους*) of the Jews, thereby showing his authority, or at least his influence; and (2) when Jesus is on His way back with them the centurion sends his friends. St. Matthew puts into the mouth of the centurion, on his meeting Jesus, the words 'Lord, I am not worthy.' St. Luke puts it into the mouth of the elders, 'He is worthy' (*ικανός*); and only afterwards does St. Luke represent the friends saying, in the centurion's name, 'Lord, I am not worthy.' St. Matthew records, as spoken personally to the centurion, 'Go, and as thou hast believed, so be it done to thee.' St. Luke entirely omits this command.

To appreciate this incident and its omission by St. Mark, and its precision by St. Luke, we have to appreciate the psychology of an imperial race. To a Roman audience Jesus would be as a modern Indian fakir; and the centurion would be like an English officer. No wonder that St. Peter, who must have been an eye-witness of the striking miracle, completely omitted it; whilst St. Luke, who has not omitted it, has given us details which make it less distasteful than St. Matthew's account would have been to Roman ears.

III. A minor but convergent proof of St. Mark's and St. Luke's care to avoid phrases that might cause the Romans annoyance is to be found in St. Matthew's use of the word gentile or heathen.

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St. Matthew uses thrice the Greek word *ἔθνικός*. St. Mark and St. Luke never use it. It is used once in III Jo. 7.

(a) Mt. v. 47. And if you salute your brethren only, what do you do more? Do not also the heathens (*ἔθνικοί*) this?

St. Mark entirely omits this.

St. Luke, vi, 32-34, has a similar passage; but uses the word sinner (*ἁμαρτωλός*) instead of *ἔθνικός*.

(b) Mt. vi, 7. And when you are praying, speak not much as the heathens. . . . 9. Thus therefore shall you pray, Our Father Who art in heaven.

St. Mark entirely omits.

St. Luke has a similar passage, but leaves out the reference to the heathens. St. Luke's omission is all the more striking because he is pre-eminently the evangelist of prayer. Yet this slighting reference to the 'much speaking' of heathens like the Romans would not be suitable for Roman ears.

(c) Mt. xviii, 17. And if he will not hear them, tell the Church. And if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican.

St. Mark and St. Luke omit this passage. The omission is significant. St. Matthew, the Jew, who wrote his Gospel in Hebrew or Aramaic, is here describing the Jewish self-government, practised even amongst the diaspora. But this self-government would not recommend itself, and especially would not make a suitable sermon to a Roman audience. We can but imagine what the imperial race would think of a Jew named Peter who told his people that if they did not obey the *ἐκκλησία* they would be as the—Roman heathens!

(d) An almost more significant passage is Mt. x, 5. 'Go ye not into the way of the Gentiles and into the cities of the Samaritans enter ye not.'

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Again this is omitted by both St. Mark and St. Luke.

A detailed study of the word *ἔθνος* in the Synoptists would but show how careful St. Mark and St. Luke are to avoid a phrase which might be distasteful to a heathen, and especially a Roman, audience.

(e) One last omission is characteristic and confirmatory. Though St. Mark (xiii, 26) and St. Luke (xxi, 27) give, as St. Matthew gives (xxiv, 30) the coming of the Son of Man in the clouds, yet St. Matthew alone gives (xxv, 32) 'All *nations* shall be gathered together before him and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats'; (33) 'And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left.'

IV. Mt. x, 34. 'Do not think that I came to send peace upon the earth. I came not to send peace but the sword.'

Compare this with Lk. ii, 14. 'Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace.'

Lk. xix, 38, 'Peace in heaven and glory on high.'

Lk. xii, 51. Think you I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, no; but separation.

St. Luke has deftly omitted 'sword'—a weapon well known to the imperial race.

St. Mark has entirely omitted the passage (*cf.* xiii).

V. St. Matthew and St. Luke give, what St. Mark omits, a series of 'Woes' on cities.

Both Matthew (x, 15) and Luke (x, 12) give 'It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment than for that city.' Mark omits.

Both Matthew (xi, 21) and Luke (x, 13) give the Woe on Corazain and Bethsaida. Both give 'For if in Tyre and Sidon, etc. . . . they had long since done penance.'

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Both Matthew (xi, 23) and Luke (x, 15) give 'And thou Capharnaum shalt thou be exalted up to heaven? Thou shalt go down even unto hell.'

But St. Luke omits what St. Matthew adds, 'For if in Sodom had been wrought the miracles that have been wrought in thee, perhaps it had remained to this day.'

As Capharnaum was practically a Roman city of occupation, a customs and military centre, the complete silence of St. Mark and the partial silence of St. Luke are intelligible.

VI. St. Matthew (xii, 18) quotes the prophecy of Isaias (xliiii, 1) 'Behold my servant whom I have chosen . . . he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.'

Both St. Mark and St. Luke omit this.

VII. Our Blessed Lord's words in Mt. xvi, 28 are: Amen I say to you, there are some who stand here that shall not taste death till *they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom*.

Mk. viii, 30: till they *see the kingdom of God coming in power*.

Lk. ix, 27: till they *see the kingdom of God*.

It will be observed how St. Mark has left out the direct reference to the Son of God. St. Luke has further adapted the saying to Roman ears by leaving out the references not only to the Son of God but also to the 'coming in power.'

VIII. The miracle of the Stater in the mouth of the fish corroborates our thesis. Those who collected the didrachmas 'came to Peter and said to him: Does your master pay the didrachmas?—He said: Yes.—And when he was come into the house Jesus prevented him, saying: What is thy opinion, Simon? The kings of the earth of whom do they receive tribute or custom? Of their own children or of strangers?—And he said: Of strangers.—Jesus said to him: Then the children are free.' (Mt. xvii, 23-25).

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No wonder this passage is left out in the gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke. To Roman treasury officials it would sound indistinguishable from plain sedition; even though, as some exegetes think, this tax was for the upkeep of the Temple.

IX. St. Matthew (xix, 27), St. Mark (x, 28) and St. Luke (xviii, 28) agree in giving 'Then Peter answering said to him: behold we have left all things and followed thee.'

Matthew, Mark and Luke again agree in giving, 'Jesus said to them: Amen I say to you that everyone that hath left house or brethren or sister or father or mother or lands for my sake shall receive a hundred fold and shall possess life everlasting.'

But before this last saying St. Matthew had inserted, and St. Mark and St. Luke had omitted, the striking words, 'You who have followed me in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne (*θρόνον*) of majesty, you also shall sit on twelve thrones (*θρόνους*) judging the twelve tribes of Israel.' St. Mark's omission of this reference to thrones is highly significant.

St. Luke, however, has acted here as he acted in the reference to Sodom (*cf.* v). He has quoted the passage elsewhere in a context which makes it less irritant to Roman imperial susceptibilities. At the Last Supper, St. Luke reports Our Blessed Lord as saying, 'That you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and may sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel' (xxii, 30). But as if to show that 'My kingdom is not of this world' (Jo. xviii, 36), St. Luke prefixes the words, 'The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them . . . but you, not so. But he that is greater among you become as the younger; and he that is the leader as he that serveth.' These twelve thrones of Service could hardly be a threat even to Imperial Rome.

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X. The request of the two brothers James and John is of peculiar interest. It has been omitted by St. Luke and given both by St. Matthew (xx, 20-24) and St. Mark (x, 35-41). St. Mark's omissions and admissions are almost startling. Where St. Matthew says that James and John asked (through their mother) that they might 'sit one on thy right hand and the other on thy left in thy *kingdom*,' St. Mark says 'one on thy right hand and the other on thy left in thy *glory*.'

Remembering that St. Mark had entirely suppressed the promise that the Apostles should 'sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel,' it is startling to find him recording (with St. Matthew) Our Blessed Lord's mysterious saying, 'To sit on my right hand or on my left is not mine to give to you, but to them for whom it is prepared' (40).

We have here another evidence of St. Mark's constant care to study Roman susceptibilities.

XI. St. Matthew (xxi, 5), in describing Our Blessed Lord's entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday had quoted Isaias lxii, 11 and Zach. ix, 9, 'Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold thy *king* cometh to thee.'

Both St. Mark and St. Luke have omitted this plain prophetic allusion to the kingship of Christ!

XII. The same context supplies another confirmation of our thesis. The three Gospels are in almost verbal agreement throughout. But St. Matthew's Gospel contains (43) the prophetic words, 'Therefore I say to you that the kingdom of God shall be taken from you and shall be given to a nation yielding the fruits thereof.'

As the only 'kingdom' then wielding sovereignty over Jerusalem was Rome, the silence of St. Mark and St. Luke is intelligible.

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XIII. Mt. xxiii, 10. 'Neither be ye called masters (καθηγηταί), because one is your master, Christ. But he that is greatest (μείζων) among you shall be your servant' (*cf.* Lk. xxii, 26).

The word *καθηγητής* is nowhere else used in the New Testament. In the context it seems to mean no mere intellectual mastership, which is already covered by the word 'Rabbi'; but some kind of power, which is clearly suggested by the following word 'greatest.'

But the phrase would have been difficult to explain to a Roman audience, such as would read the Gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke.

XIV. Mt. xxvi, 52. 'Then Jesus saith to him' (*i.e.* Peter) 'Put thy sword back in its place; for all drawing the sword by the sword shall perish.'

St. Mark and St. Luke have such verbal identity with the context of St. Matthew that their sudden omission of this passage is startling. Yet it is easily seen how much more startling it would be if St. Peter had told the Roman Empire, so dependent on the Roman sword, that they who draw the sword shall perish by the sword (*cf.* iv).

XV. St. Matthew (xxvii, 19) gives 'And as he' (*i.e.* Pilate) 'was sitting in the place of judgment, his wife came to him saying, "Have nothing to do with that just man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him."'

This incident, so damning to the judicial equity of a Roman Governor, has been wisely omitted by St. Mark and St. Luke. St. Luke's zeal in enhancing the *role* of women makes his omission of this incident all the more striking.

St. Luke is so studious of Roman susceptibilities that he alone amongst the evangelists has omitted the scourging by order of Pilate.

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XVI. St. Matthew's Hebrew disregard for the reputation of the Roman Governor is responsible for the following record : 'And Pilate, seeing that he prevailed nothing but that rather a tumult was made, taking water washed his hands before the people, saying : I am innocent of the blood of this just man. Look you to it.'

Weakness was the last quality Rome expected from her dominion administrators. What St. Matthew was able to say in his Hebrew surroundings became provocative in the Roman surroundings of St. Mark and St. Luke.

XVII. Mt. xxviii, 18. 'And Jesus coming spoke to them saying : All power is given to me in heaven and on earth.'

St. Mark and St. Luke omit this. St. John (xx, 21, 23) has given another form, on another occasion : 'Peace be to you. As the Father has sent me, I send you Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins ye shall forgive they are forgiven them'

But the untempered claim to have all power in heaven and on earth would hardly recommend the Jewish claimants to a Roman audience.

XVIII. (a) We may be allowed to call the attention of scholars to another confirmation of our thesis : St. Mark's omission of the word *law* (*νόμος*, *lex*). The following mentions of *law* are significant :—

Gospels : Matthew, 9 ; Luke, 9 ; John, 13. Total 31
Acts, 18 ; Rom., 56 ; I Cor., 6 ; Gal., 28 ;
Eph., 1 ; Php., 3 ; I Tim., 2 ; Heb.,
14 ; James, 7. ,, 135

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But *law* is never mentioned in the Gospel of St. Mark, nor in the two Epistles of St. Peter.

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(b) This is all the more striking when we examine the actual phrases omitted.

Mt. v, 17. 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. 18. For Amen I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or tittle of the law shall not pass, till all be fulfilled.'

St. Mark entirely omits this.

St. Luke gives it, in an amended form (v, 18). But he places it in a context where it runs little risk of being a stumbling-block to Roman law-makers. His form is: 'It is easier for heaven and earth to pass than for one tittle of the law to fall' (xvi, 17).

(c) Mt. vii, 12. 'All things therefore whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do ye also to them. For this is the Law and the Prophets.'

Lk. vi, 31. 'And as you would that men should do to you, do ye also to them in like manner.'

St. Luke leaves out the reference to the Law, but preserves the golden rule of Jesus Christ.

It is astonishing that St. Mark has omitted not only the reference to the Law, but even the Rule itself. Yet few sentiments of his Master could have been nearer the heart of St. Peter whose sermon St. Mark is here recalling.

(d) Mt. xii, 5. 'Or have ye not read in the Law that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple break the sabbath and are without blame?'

Both St. Mark and St. Luke omit all reference to this, whilst giving almost word for word the context of St. Matthew.

(e) Mt. xxii, 36. 'Master, which is the greatest commandment of the law?'

St. Luke here uses the word.

St. Mark omits it. This is all the more significant because St. Mark has given the most detailed version

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of Our Blessed Lord's words. St. Mark's words are (xii, 28): 'One of the scribes . . . seeing that he had answered them well asked him which was the first commandment of all. (29) And Jesus answered him: The first commandment of all is, Hear O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God. (30) And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, etc. This is the first commandment.'

(f) St. Mark's, *i.e.* St. Peter's, deliberate avoidance of the word 'law' is of itself hardly explicable unless St. Peter was at pains not to offend a people whose *Jus Civile* was looked on as a model of social Justice. But when the avoidance of the word 'law' is counted with the other evidences of a like character the explanation becomes undeniable.

XIX. Lk. xxiii, 6. But Pilate hearing Galilee asked if the man were a Galilean. (7) And when he understood that he was of Herod's jurisdiction (*ἡγεμονίας*) he sent him to Herod . . . (9) And he (*i.e.* Herod) questioned him in many words. But he answered him nothing.'

This was a significant incident to lay before the people of Rome. Jesus, who is silent before Herod, is not silent before Pontius Pilate. As our Blessed Lord's silence is taken to mean that he did not recognise the jurisdiction or authority of Herod, his reply to Pilate's questioning argues a recognition of Pilate's authority. In other words, by thus acknowledging the authority, not of Herod but of Pilate, our Blessed Lord refuted the charge laid against him by the Jews, 'We have found this man . . . forbidding to give tribute to Caesar and saying that he is Christ the king.' (v. 3).

All this is more significant because (1) St. Matthew and St. Mark recall that after our Blessed Lord had answered Pilate's official question, Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus still answered nothing (Mt. xv, 5);

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and (2) St. John (xix, 10) ' Pilate therefore saith to him : Speakest thou not to me? Knowest thou not that I have power (*ἐξουσίαν*) to crucify thee, and I have power (*ἐξουσίαν*) to release thee? (11) Jesus answered, Thou should'st not have any power against me, unless it were given thee from above.'

St. John here completes St. Luke's suggestion that Jesus recognised the power of Pilate, the direct representative of Rome.

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This preliminary study, though not exhaustive, is surely adequate to show that St. Mark (or more accurately St. Peter) and St. Luke wisely tempered or omitted details that might complicate the delicate relations with Rome. If it is urged that the omitted or tempered details are trivial, this means no weakening of their evidential value. Indeed it may well mean a strengthening rather than a weakening of their evidence. Men are undeniably set on a course of action when they never overlook it even in matters seemingly trivial.

Moreover the evidence has not merely added force but multiplied force by its multiplicity. If only one context showed that St. Mark and St. Luke had peaceful relations with Rome in view, the proof might be sufficient. But when text is added to text, the proof becomes irresistible.

Again, there are no texts in evidence of a contrary tendency in St. Mark and St. Luke.

Lastly, it would seem an empiric fact that *every* text in St. Matthew obviously capable of rousing Roman irritation or opposition has been carefully omitted or tempered by St. Mark and St. Luke. When we have felt the weight of this we have one of the main clues to the two Gospels which represented the peace-loving spirit of St. Peter and St. Paul.

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<p>29. Then he saith to them : But whom do you say that I am? Peter answering said to him : Thou art the Christ.</p>	<p>20. But he said to them : But whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answering said : The Christ of God.</p>	<p>15. Jesus saith to them : But whom do you say, that I am? 16. Simon Peter answered and said : Thou art Christ, the Son of the Living God.</p>	
		<p>17. And Jesus answering said to him : Blessed art thou Simon Bar Jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father Who is in heaven. 18. And I say to thee that thou art Peter (Rock) and upon this Rock (Peter) I will build my CHURCH, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever THOU shalt bind upon earth it shall be bound also in heaven. And whatsoever THOU shalt loose upon earth it shall be loosed also in heaven.</p>	<p>17. And if he will not hear them tell the CHURCH. And if he will not hear the CHURCH let him be to thee as the heathen and publican. 18. Amen I say to you whatsoever YOU shall bind upon earth it shall be bound also in heaven. And whatsoever YOU shall loose upon earth it shall be loosed also in heaven.</p>
<p>30. And he strictly charged them that they should not tell any man of him.</p>	<p>21. But he strictly charging them commanded that they should tell this to no man.</p>	<p>20. Then he commanded his disciples that they should tell no one that he was Jesus the Christ.</p>	

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We are now in a position to account for St. Mark's and St. Luke's omission of Mt. xvi, 17-19; and—for this is a necessary element in the discussion—of Mt. xviii, 17, 18. Apart from the theory which is the thesis of this paper, there are but two critically possible theories about Mt. xvi, 17-19:—A, The verses are an insertion into the Gospel of St. Matthew by a writer who wished to advance the claims of Peter, and therefore of the Roman See:—B, the verses are an omission by St. Mark and St. Luke, who wished to deny the claims of Peter, and therefore of the Roman See.

A.

Let us begin by considering the view that these Petrine phrases are an insertion into the Gospel of St. Matthew.

(a) We freely admit that if they are an insertion they are a very powerful argument for the Petrine Supremacy.

Because they were inserted either by St. Matthew himself or by some other than St. Matthew. Now if St. Matthew inserted them into this context he could have been moved by no other motive than that of supporting the Petrine position. But as St. Matthew was an eye-witness and ear-witness of the event, and as his Gospel represents the Palestinian, not the Roman, tradition, his insertion would be of prime authority.

Almost more authority should be given to the insertion if it were due not to St. Matthew himself but to some other writer. For this writer in making the insertion is reinforcing a Petrine doctrine which the acceptance of the insertion proves to have been widespread. No manuscripts of repute are found without the Petrine passage. We must, then, admit that if the passage is the insertion into the Gospel of

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an Apostle, the doctrine advocated by this insertion must have had two qualities : it must have been primitive; and it must have been widely accepted.

It will thus be seen that the theory of an insertion either by St. Matthew or by another leaves untouched the witness of this passage to the Petrine supremacy.

B.

But we need hardly add that in our view the passage Mt. xvi, 17-19, absent from St. Mark's and St. Luke's Gospel, is not an insertion into St. Matthew's Gospel but is omitted from their Gospels by St. Mark and St. Luke..

But we hasten to add that St. Mark and St. Luke omitted the passage *not because they wished to deny the religious supremacy of St. Peter but because they did not wish to antagonise the civil supremacy of Rome.*

(a) Lagrange¹ writes, ' Ce silence s'explique assez mal si Mc. s'est ordinairement inspiré de Mt. comme le soutient Schanz; on ne peut dire avec Schanz qu'écrivant à Rome il a craint d'appeler l'attention des autorités Romaines sur l'organisation de l'Eglise et sur son chef.'

But Lagrange's hesitation to see, as Schanz saw, that the omission by St. Mark and St. Luke was a gesture of peace towards Rome would doubtless have disappeared if Schanz could have shown his view in all its strength.

(b) The strength of this view is not merely its own individual quality. When we see in this omission by St. Mark and St. Luke not one individual omission, but a series of omissions—especially when we find these omissions following a definite law or principle—and finally when we find this individual omission

¹ *Saint Marc*, 4me. Edit., p. 216.

St. Mark's and St. Luke's Omission of St. Matthew xvi

paralleled by an almost identical omission (Mt. xviii, 17, 18), hesitation is hardly justified.

(c) The critics seem to be agreed that, if the Petrine passage was omitted by St. Mark and St. Luke it could only be because St. Mark and St. Luke either wished to deny the religious supremacy of St. Peter or did not wish to antagonise the civil supremacy of Rome.

The first of these alternatives might be defended if we considered the omitted passage by itself. But it cannot be defended, especially in the case of St. Luke, if we consider the whole doctrine of the Gospels and especially if we consider the omission of Mt. xviii, 17, 18.

In this latter passage we have a word-for-word repetition of Mt. xvi, 19.

MATT. XVI, 19.	MATT. XVIII, 18.
And whatsoever THOU shalt bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven.	Whatsoever YOU shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven.
And whatsoever THOU shalt loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven.	And whatsoever YOU shall loose upon earth shall be loosed also in heaven.

Both passages are omitted by both St. Mark and St. Luke. But two passages so alike cannot be omitted for reasons that are wholly unlike. The same reason for omitting one will be found imperative for omitting the other.

(d) But it is evident that if the first passage from Mt. xvi., 19 is omitted because it favours the supremacy of St. Peter, the passage Mt. xviii, 18 should not be omitted because it seems to lessen the

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supremacy of St. Peter. The first passage conveys a power to St. Peter alone (*thou*), and therefore gives a supremacy of power to St. Peter. The second passage gives a power not merely to St. Peter, but to the rest of the Apostles (*you*) and therefore seems to lessen the supremacy of St. Peter.

If St. Mark and St. Luke were anxious to lessen the Petrine argument they would hardly omit a passage which seemed so co-incident with their anxiety.

(e) It is clear then that if a reason for admitting a passage has to be abandoned when applied to a similar passage we are forced to find a like reason for omitting like passages.

This like reason seems to be the desire of St. Mark (*i.e.* St. Peter) and St. Luke to avoid hurting Roman imperial susceptibilities. But if the 'data' we have provided be carefully studied, candid critics will see that this omission of Mt. xvi, 17, 19 is not an isolated phenomenon to be settled, apart from documentary unanimity, by the critic's attitude towards the Petrine claim, but by an evidential chain showing St. Mark and St. Luke as careful to avoid creating needless difficulties with the great Empire which for the moment was giving free speech to their Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

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