
PREFACE

The following exegetical study was already completed as I began the writing of my book on *The Messianic Secret in the Gospels* (Göttingen, 1901) more than two years ago except for some comments that I have since completed. Meanwhile H. Holtzmann's article, "On the Second Letter to the Thessalonians," appeared in the *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, II 1901, S. 97–108. Since likewise in his work as in mine the relationship of the Second Letter to the Thessalonians to the First Letter to the Thessalonians is particularly discussed, the question could arise as to whether or not my study is pertinent to the debate. On that matter I have not fostered any doubt. My study is so completely different from Holtzmann's work with regard to content, composition, and conception that I would have written it in any event, even if I had been familiar with his article. With regard to the revision and editing of my entire study, which I completed for its publication, I found that only a few significant additions and a series of formal revisions were necessary.

Perhaps the presentation in Chapter I is too expansive for some readers. However, here where the foundation of the argument is dealt with, I have wanted to present the facts as precisely as possible.

With regard to the presentation of the problem of Chapter V—whoever knows better what might be said here, I would be very thankful for that person's viewpoint. Most valuable to me concerning this matter was H. Gunkel's comment, which he sent me via a letter, even though I could not accept his view.

The question concerning the authenticity of the Second Letter to the Thessalonians has only marginal significance for the history of early Christianity. Nonetheless this topic has a special meaning and fascination.

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Almost against my will it has continued to intrigue me once I had approached it closely.

Breslau, December 1902
W. Wrede

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