The “kingdom of heaven” is a state of the heart—not something to come “beyond the world” or “after death.” The whole idea of natural death is absent from the Gospels: death is not a bridge, not a passing; it is absent because it belongs to a quite different, a merely apparent world, useful only as a symbol. The “hour of death” is not a Christian idea—“hours,” time, the physical life and its crises have no existence for the bearer of “glad tidings.”... The “kingdom of God” is not something that men wait for: it had no yesterday and no day after tomorrow, it is not going to come at a “millennium”—it is an experience of the heart, it is everywhere and it is nowhere...
If I understand anything at all about this great symbolist, it is this: that he regarded only subjective realities as realities, as “truths”—that he saw everything else, everything natural, temporal, spatial and historical, merely as signs, as materials for parables. The concept of “the Son of God” does not connote a concrete person in history, an isolated and definite individual, but an “eternal” fact, a psychological symbol set free from the concept of time. The same thing is true, and in the highest sense, of the God of this typical symbolist, of the “kingdom of God,” and of the “sonship of God.” Nothing could be more un-Christian than the crude ecclesiastical notions of God as a person, of a “kingdom of God” that is to come, of a “kingdom of heaven” beyond, and of a “son of God” as the second person of the Trinity. All this—if I may be forgiven the phrase—is like thrusting one’s fist into the eye (and what an eye!) of the Gospels: a disrespect for symbols amounting to world-historical cynicism... But it is nevertheless obvious enough what is meant by the symbols “Father” and “Son”—not, of course, to everyone—: the word “Son” expresses entrance into the feeling that there is a general transformation of all things (beatitude), and “Father” expresses that feeling itself—the sensation of eternity and of perfection.—I am ashamed to remind you of what the church has made of this symbolism: has it not set an Amphitryon story¹ at the threshold of the Christian “faith”? And a dogma of “immaculate conception” for good measure?... And thereby it has robbed conception of its immaculateness—

¹ Amphitryon was the son of Alcaeus, King of Tiryns. His wife was Alcmene. During his absence she was visited by Zeus, and bore Heracles.
tance,” not by “prayer and forgiveness” is the way to God: only the Gospel way leads to God—it is itself “God!”—What the Gospels abolished was the Judaism in the concepts of “sin,” “forgiveness of sin,” “faith,” “salvation through faith”—the whole ecclesiastical dogma of the Jews was denied by the “glad tidings.”

The deep instinct which prompts the Christian how to live so that he will feel that he is “in heaven” and is “immortal,” despite many reasons for feeling that he is not “in heaven”: this is the only psychological reality in “salvation.”—A new way of life, not a new faith...
In the whole psychology of the “Gospels” the concepts of guilt and punishment are lacking, and so is that of reward. “Sin,” which means anything that puts a distance between God and man, is abolished—this is precisely the “glad tidings.” Eternal bliss is not merely promised, nor is it bound up with conditions: it is conceived as the only reality—what remains consists merely of signs useful in speaking of it.

The results of such a point of view project themselves into a new way of life, the special evangelical way of life. It is not a “belief” that marks off the Christian; he is distinguished by a different mode of action; he acts differently. He offers no resistance, either by word or in his heart, to those who stand against him. He draws no distinction between strangers and countrymen, Jews and Gentiles (“neighbour,” of course, means fellow-believer, Jew). He is angry with no one, and he despises no one. He neither appeals to the courts of justice nor heeds their mandates (“Swear not at all”).¹ He never under any circumstances divorces his wife, even when he has proofs of her infidelity.—And under all of this is one principle; all of it arises from one instinct.—

The life of the Saviour was simply a carrying out of this way of life—and so was his death... He no longer needed any formula or ritual in his relations with God—not even prayer. He had rejected the whole of the Jewish doctrine of repentance and atonement; he knew that it was only by a way of life that one could feel one’s self “divine,” “blessed,” “evangelical,” a “child of God.” Not by “repen-

¹ Matthew v, 34.
ist, and is wholly incapable of imagining anything opposed to it…
If anything of the sort is ever encountered, it laments the “blind-
ness” with sincere sympathy—for it alone has “light”—but it does
not offer objections…
eraly that this anti-realist is able to speak at all. Set down among Hindus he would have made use of the concepts of Sankhya,\textsuperscript{2} and among Chinese he would have employed those of Lao-tse\textsuperscript{3}—and in neither case would it have made any difference to him.—With a little freedom in the use of words, one might actually call Jesus a “free spirit”\textsuperscript{4}—he cares nothing for what is established: the word *killeth*,\textsuperscript{5} whatever is established *killeth*. The idea of “life” as an *experience*, as he alone conceives it, stands opposed to his mind to every sort of word, formula, law, belief and dogma. He speaks only of inner things: “life” or “truth” or “light” is his word for the innermost—in his sight everything else, the whole of reality, all nature, even language, has significance only as sign, as allegory.—Here it is of paramount importance to be led into no error by the temptations lying in Christian, or rather ecclesiastical prejudices: such a symbol-ism *par excellence* stands outside all religion, all notions of worship, all history, all natural science, all worldly experience, all knowledge, all politics, all psychology, all books, all art—his “wisdom” is precisely a *pure ignorance*\textsuperscript{6} of all such things. He has never heard of culture; he doesn’t have to make war on it—he doesn’t even deny it... The same thing may be said of the *state*, of the whole bourgeoisie social order, of labour, of war—he has no ground for denying “the world,” for he knows nothing of the ecclesiastical concept of “the world”... Denial is precisely the thing that is impossible to him.—In the same way he lacks argumentative capacity, and has no belief that an article of faith, a “truth,” may be established by proofs (—*his* proofs are inner “lights,” subjective sensations of happiness and self-approval, simple “proofs of power”—). Such a doctrine cannot contradict: it doesn’t know that other doctrines exist, or can ex-

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\textsuperscript{2} One of the six great systems of Hindu philosophy.
\textsuperscript{3} The reputed founder of Taoism.
\textsuperscript{4} Nietzsche’s name for one accepting his own philosophy.
\textsuperscript{5} That is, the strict letter of the law—the chief target of Jesus’s early preaching.
\textsuperscript{6} A reference to the “pure ignorance” (*reine Thorheit*) of Parsifal.
I can only repeat that I set myself against all efforts to intrude the fanatic into the figure of the Saviour: the very word impérieux, used by Renan, is alone enough to annul the type. What the “glad tidings” tell us is simply that there are no more contradictions; the kingdom of heaven belongs to children; the faith that is voiced here is no more an embattled faith—it is at hand, it has been from the beginning, it is a sort of recrudescent childishness of the spirit. The physiologists, at all events, are familiar with such a delayed and incomplete puberty in the living organism, the result of degeneration. A faith of this sort is not furious, it does not denounce, it does not defend itself: it does not come with “the sword”—it does not realize how it will one day set man against man. It does not manifest itself either by miracles, or by rewards and promises, or by “scriptures”: it is itself, first and last, its own miracle, its own reward, its own promise, its own “kingdom of God.” This faith does not formulate itself—it simply lives, and so guards itself against formulae. To be sure, the accident of environment, of educational background gives prominence to concepts of a certain sort: in primitive Christianity one finds only concepts of a Judaeo-Semitic character (—that of eating and drinking at the last supper belongs to this category—an idea which, like everything else Jewish, has been badly mauled by the church). But let us be careful not to see in all this anything more than symbolical language, semantics\(^1\) an opportunity to speak in parables. It is only on the theory that no work is to be taken lit-

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\(^1\) The word Semiotik is in the text, but it is probable that Semantik is what Nietzsche had in mind.
1.

—Let us look each other in the face. We are Hyperboreans—we know well enough how remote our place is. “Neither by land nor by water will you find the road to the Hyperboreans”: even Pindar,¹ in his day, knew that much about us. Beyond the North, beyond the ice, beyond death—our life, our happiness... We have discovered that happiness; we know the way; we got our knowledge of it from thousands of years in the labyrinth. Who else has found it?—The man of today?—“I don’t know either the way out or the way in; I am whatever doesn’t know either the way out or the way in”—so sighs the man of today... This is the sort of modernity that made us ill,—we sickened on lazy peace, cowardly compromise, the whole virtuous dirtiness of the modern Yea and Nay. This tolerance and largeur of the heart that “forgives” everything because it “understands” everything is a sirocco to us. Rather live amid the ice than among modern virtues and other such south-winds!... We were brave enough; we spared neither ourselves nor others; but we were a long time finding out where to direct our courage. We grew dismal; they called us fatalists. Our fate—it was the fulness, the tension, the storing up of powers. We thirsted for the lightnings and great deeds; we kept as far as possible from the happiness of the weakling, from “resignation”... There was thunder in our air; nature, as we embodied it, became overcast—for we had not yet found the way. The formula of our happiness: a Yea, a Nay, a straight line, a goal...

¹ Cf. the tenth Pythian ode. See also the fourth book of Herodotus. The Hyperboreans were a mythical people beyond the Rhipaean mountains, in the far North. They enjoyed unbroken happiness and perpetual youth.
I have already given my answer to the problem. The prerequisite to it is the assumption that the type of the Saviour has reached us only in a greatly distorted form. This distortion is very probable: there are many reasons why a type of that sort should not be handed down in a pure form, complete and free of additions. The milieu in which this strange figure moved must have left marks upon him, and more must have been imprinted by the history, the destiny, of the early Christian communities; the latter indeed, must have embalmed the type retrospectively with characters which can be understood only as serving the purposes of war and of propaganda. That strange and sickly world into which the Gospels lead us—a world apparently out of a Russian novel, in which the scum of society, nervous maladies and “childish” idiocy keep a tryst—must, in any case, have coarsened the type: the first disciples, in particular, must have been forced to translate an existence visible only in symbols and incomprehensibilities into their own crudity, in order to understand it at all—in their sight the type could take on reality only after it had been recast in a familiar mould... The prophet, the messiah, the future judge, the teacher of morals, the worker of wonders, John the Baptist—all these merely presented chances to misunderstand it... Finally, let us not underrate the properium of all great, and especially all sectarian veneration: it tends to erase from the venerated objects all its original traits and idiosyncrasies, often so painfully strange—it does not even see them. It is greatly to be regretted that no Dostoyevsky lived in the neighbourhood of this most interesting décadent—I mean some one who would have felt the poignant charm of such a compound of the sublime, the
3.

The problem that I set here is not what shall replace mankind in the order of living creatures (—man is an end—): but what type of man must be bred, must be willed, as being the most valuable, the most worthy of life, the most secure guarantee of the future.

This more valuable type has appeared often enough in the past: but always as a happy accident, as an exception, never as deliberately willed. Very often it has been precisely the most feared; hitherto it has been almost the terror of terrors;—and out of that terror the contrary type has been willed, cultivated and attained: the domestic animal, the herd animal, the sick brute-man—the Christian...

30.

The instinctive hatred of reality: the consequence of an extreme susceptibility to pain and irritation—so great that merely to be “touched” becomes unendurable, for every sensation is too profound.

The instinctive exclusion of all aversion, all hostility, all bounds and distances in feeling: the consequence of an extreme susceptibility to pain and irritation—so great that it senses all resistance, all compulsion to resistance, as unbearable anguish (—that is to say, as harmful, as prohibited by the instinct of self-preservation), and regards blessedness (joy) as possible only when it is no longer necessary to offer resistance to anybody or anything, however evil or dangerous—love, as the only, as the ultimate possibility of life...

These are the two physiological realities upon and out of which the doctrine of salvation has sprung. I call them a sublime super-development of hedonism upon a thoroughly unsalubrious soil. What stands most closely related to them, though with a large admixture of Greek vitality and nerve-force, is epicureanism, the theory of salvation of paganism. Epicurus was a typical décadent: I was the first to recognize him.—The fear of pain, even of infinitely slight pain—the end of this can be nothing save a religion of love...
“tual,” the whole conception of our civilization, could have had no meaning in the world that Jesus lived in. In the strict sense of the physiologist, a quite different word ought to be used here... We all know that there is a morbid sensibility of the tactile nerves which causes those suffering from it to recoil from every touch, and from every effort to grasp a solid object. Brought to its logical conclusion, such a physiological habitus becomes an instinctive hatred of all reality, a flight into the “intangible,” into the “incomprehensible”; a distaste for all formulae, for all conceptions of time and space, for everything established—customs, institutions, the church—; a feeling of being at home in a world in which no sort of reality survives, a merely “inner” world, a “true” world, an “eternal” world... “The Kingdom of God is within you”...

4.

Mankind surely does not represent an evolution toward a better or stronger or higher level, as progress is now understood. This “progress” is merely a modern idea, which is to say, a false idea. The European of today, in his essential worth, falls far below the European of the Renaissance; the process of evolution does not necessarily mean elevation, enhancement, strengthening.

True enough, it succeeds in isolated and individual cases in various parts of the earth and under the most widely different cultures, and in these cases a higher type certainly manifests itself; something which, compared to mankind in the mass, appears as a sort of superman. Such happy strokes of high success have always been possible, and will remain possible, perhaps, for all time to come. Even whole races, tribes and nations may occasionally represent such lucky accidents.
5.

We should not deck out and embellish Christianity: it has waged a war to the death against this *higher* type of man, it has put all the deepest instincts of this type under its ban, it has developed its concept of evil, of the Evil One himself, out of these instincts—the strong man as the typical reprobate, the “outcast among men.” Christianity has taken the part of all the weak, the low, the botched; it has made an ideal out of *antagonism* to all the self-preservative instincts of sound life; it has corrupted even the faculties of those natures that are intellectually most vigorous, by representing the highest intellectual values as sinful, as misleading, as full of temptation. The most lamentable example: the corruption of Pascal, who believed that his intellect had been destroyed by original sin, whereas it was actually destroyed by Christianity!—

29.

What concerns *me* is the psychological type of the Saviour. This type might be depicted in the Gospels, in however mutilated a form and however much overladen with extraneous characters—that is, in *spite* of the Gospels; just as the figure of Francis of Assisi shows itself in his legends in spite of his legends. It is *not* a question of mere truthful evidence as to what he did, what he said and how he actually died; the question is, whether his type is still conceivable, whether it has been handed down to us.—All the attempts that I know of to read the *history* of a “soul” in the Gospels seem to me to reveal only a lamentable psychological levity. M. Renan, that mountebank *in psychologicus*, has contributed the two most *unseemly* notions to this business of explaining the type of Jesus: the notion of the *genius* and that of the *hero* (“héros”). But if there is anything essentially unevangelical, it is surely the concept of the hero. What the Gospels make instinctive is precisely the reverse of all heroic struggle, of all taste for conflict: the very incapacity for resistance is here converted into something moral: (“resist not evil!”—the most profound sentence in the Gospels, perhaps the true key to them), to wit, the blessedness of peace, of gentleness, the *inability* to be an enemy. What is the meaning of “glad tidings”?—The true life, the life eternal has been found—it is not merely promised, it is here, it is in *you*; it is the life that lies in love free from all retreats and exclusions, from all keeping of distances. Every one is the child of God—Jesus claims nothing for himself alone—as the child of God each man is the equal of every other man… Imagine making Jesus a *hero!*—And what a tremendous misunderstanding appears in the word “genius”! Our whole conception of the “spiri-
28.

As to whether he himself was conscious of this contradiction—whether, in fact, this was the only contradiction he was cognizant of—that is quite another question. Here, for the first time, I touch upon the problem of the psychology of the Saviour—I confess, to begin with, that there are very few books which offer me harder reading than the Gospels. My difficulties are quite different from those which enabled the learned curiosity of the German mind to achieve one of its most unforgettable triumphs. It is a long while since I, like all other young scholars, enjoyed with all the sapient laboriousness of a fastidious philologist the work of the incomparable Strauss.¹ At that time I was twenty years old: now I am too serious for that sort of thing. What do I care for the contradictions of “tradition”? How can any one call pious legends “traditions”? The histories of saints present the most dubious variety of literature in existence; to examine them by the scientific method, in the entire ab sence of corroborative documents, seems to me to condemn the whole inquiry from the start—it is simply learned idling...

6.

It is a painful and tragic spectacle that rises before me: I have drawn back the curtain from the rottenness of man. This word, in my mouth, is at least free from one suspicion: that it involves a moral accusation against humanity. It is used—and I wish to emphasize the fact again—without any moral significance: and this is so far true that the rottenness I speak of is most apparent to me precisely in those quarters where there has been most aspiration, hitherto, toward “virtue” and “godliness.” As you probably surmise, I understand rottenness in the sense of décadence: my argument is that all the values on which mankind now fixes its highest aspirations are décadence-values.

I call an animal, a species, an individual corrupt, when it loses its instincts, when it chooses, when it prefers, what is injurious to it. A history of the “higher feelings,” the “ideals of humanity”—and it is possible that I’ll have to write it—would almost explain why man is so degenerate. Life itself appears to me as an instinct for growth, for survival, for the accumulation of forces, for power: whenever the will to power fails there is disaster. My contention is that all the highest values of humanity have been emptied of this will—that the values of décadence, of nihilism, now prevail under the holiest names.

¹ David Friedrich Strauss (1808-74), author of “Das Leben Jesu” (1835-6), a very famous work in its day. Nietzsche here refers to it.
Christianity is called the religion of pity.—Pity stands in opposition to all the tonic passions that augment the energy of the feeling of aliveness: it is a depressant. A man loses power when he pities. Through pity that drain upon strength which suffering works is multiplied a thousandfold. Suffering is made contagious by pity; under certain circumstances it may lead to a total sacrifice of life and living energy—a loss out of all proportion to the magnitude of the cause (—the case of the death of the Nazarene). This is the first view of it; there is, however, a still more important one. If one measures the effects of pity by the gravity of the reactions it sets up, its character as a menace to life appears in a much clearer light. Pity thwarts the whole law of evolution, which is the law of natural selection. It preserves whatever is ripe for destruction; it fights on the side of those disinherited and condemned by life; by maintaining life in so many of the botched of all kinds, it gives life itself a gloomy and dubious aspect. Mankind has ventured to call pity a virtue (—in every superior moral system it appears as a weakness—); going still further, it has been called the virtue, the source and foundation of all other virtues—but let us always bear in mind that this was from the standpoint of a philosophy that was nihilistic, and upon whose shield the denial of life was inscribed. Schopenhauer was right in this: that by means of pity life is denied, and made worthy of denial—pity is the technic of nihilism. Let me repeat: this depressing and contagious instinct stands against all those instincts which work for the preservation and enhancement of life: in the rôle of protector of the miserable, it is a prime agent in the promotion of décadence—pity persuades to extinction... Of
Christianity sprang from a soil so corrupt that on it everything
natural, every natural value, every reality was opposed by the deepest
instincts of the ruling class—it grew up as a sort of war to the
death upon reality, and as such it has never been surpassed. The
“holy people,” who had adopted priestly values and priestly names
for all things, and who, with a terrible logical consistency, had re-
jected everything of the earth as “unholy,” “worldly,” “sinful”—this
people put its instinct into a final form which was logical to the
point of self-annihilation: as Christianity it actually denied even the
last form of reality, the “holy people,” the “chosen people,” Jewish
reality itself. The phenomenon is of the first order of importance:
the small insurrectionary movement which took the name of Jesus
of Nazareth is simply the Jewish instinct redivivus—in other words,
it is the priestly instinct come to such a pass that it can no longer
endure the priest as a fact; it is the discovery of a state of existence
even more fantastic than any before it, of a vision of life even more
unreal than that necessary to an ecclesiastical organization. Chris-
tianity actually denies the church...

I am unable to determine what was the target of the insurrec-
tion said to have been led (whether rightly or wrongly) by Jesus,
if it was not the Jewish church—“church” being here used in ex-
actly the same sense that the word has today. It was an insurrec-
tion against the “good and just,” against the “prophets of Israe1,”
against the whole hierarchy of society—not against corruption, but
against caste, privilege, order, formalism. It was unbelief in “supe-
rior men,” a Nay flung at everything that priests and theologians
stood for. But the hierarchy that was called into question, if only
course, one doesn’t say “extinction”: one says “the other world,” or
“God,” or “the true life,” or Nirvana, salvation, blessedness... This in-
nocent rhetoric, from the realm of religious-ethical balderdash, ap-
ppears a good deal less innocent when one reflects upon the tendency
that it conceals beneath sublime words: the tendency to destroy life.
Schopenhauer was hostile to life: that is why pity appeared to him
as a virtue... Aristotle, as every one knows, saw in pity a sickly and
dangerous state of mind, the remedy for which was an occasional
purgative: he regarded tragedy as that purgative. The instinct of
life should prompt us to seek some means of puncturing any such
pathological and dangerous accumulation of pity as that appearing
in Schopenhauer’s case (and also, alack, in that of our whole liter-
ary décadence, from St. Petersburg to Paris, from Tolstoi to Wagner),
that it may burst and be discharged... Nothing is more unhealthy,
amid all our unhealthy modernism, than Christian pity. To be the
doctors here, to be unmerciful here, to wield the knife here—all this
is our business, all this is our sort of humanity, by this sign we are
philosophers, we Hyperboreans!—
8.

It is necessary to say just whom we regard as our antagonists: theologians and all who have any theological blood in their veins—this is our whole philosophy... One must have faced that menace at close hand, better still, one must have had experience of it directly and almost succumbed to it, to realize that it is not to be taken lightly (the alleged free-thinking of our naturalists and physiologicals seems to me to be a joke—they have no passion about such things; they have not suffered—). This poisoning goes a great deal further than most people think: I find the arrogant habit of the theologian among all who regard themselves as “idealists”—among all who, by virtue of a higher point of departure, claim a right to rise above reality, and to look upon it with suspicion... The idealist, like the ecclesiastic, carries all sorts of lofty concepts in his hand (and not only in his hand!); he launches them with benevolent contempt against “understanding,” “the senses,” “honor,” “good living,” “science”; he sees such things as beneath him, as pernicious and seductive forces, on which “the soul” soars as a pure thing-in-itself—as if humility, chastity, poverty, in a word, holiness, had not already done much more damage to life than all imaginable horrors and vices... The pure soul is a pure lie... So long as the priest, that professional denier, calumniator and poisoner of life, is accepted as a higher variety of man, there can be no answer to the question, What is truth? Truth has already been stood on its head when the obvious attorney of mere emptiness is mistaken for its representative... the sick and of the poor), everything demanded by the life-instinct, in short, everything that has any value in itself, is reduced to absolute worthlessness and even made the reverse of valuable by the parasitism of priests (or, if you choose, by the “moral order of the world”). The fact requires a sanction—a power to grant values becomes necessary, and the only way it can create such values is by denying nature... The priest depreciates and desecrates nature: it is only at this price that he can exist at all.—Disobedience to God, which actually means to the priest, to “the law,” now gets the name of “sin”; the means prescribed for “reconciliation with God” are, of course, precisely the means which bring one most effectively under the thumb of the priest; he alone can “save”... Psychologically considered, “sins” are indispensable to every society organized on an ecclesiastical basis; they are the only reliable weapons of power; the priest lives upon sins; it is necessary to him that there be “sinning”... Prime axiom: “God forgiveth him that repenteth”—in plain English, him that submittest to the priest.
means whereby that state of affairs is attained “the will of God”; with cold-blooded cynicism he estimates all peoples, all ages and all individuals by the extent of their subservience or opposition to the power of the priestly order. One observes him at work: under the hand of the Jewish priesthood the great age of Israel became an age of decline; the Exile, with its long series of misfortunes, was transformed into a punishment for that great age—during which priests had not yet come into existence. Out of the powerful and wholly free heroes of Israel’s history they fashioned, according to their changing needs, either wretched bigots and hypocrites or men entirely “godless.” They reduced every great event to the idiotic formula: “obedient or disobedient to God.”—They went a step further: the “will of God” (in other words some means necessary for preserving the power of the priests) had to be determined—and to this end they had to have a “revelation.” In plain English, a gigantic literary fraud had to be perpetrated, and “holy scriptures” had to be concocted—and so, with the utmost hierarchical pomp, and days of penance and much lamentation over the long days of “sin” now ended, they were duly published. The “will of God,” it appears, had long stood like a rock; the trouble was that mankind had neglected the “holy scriptures”... But the “will of God” had already been revealed to Moses... What happened? Simply this: the priest had formulated, once and for all time and with the strictest meticulousness, what tithes were to be paid to him, from the largest to the smallest (—not forgetting the most appetizing cuts of meat, for the priest is a great consumer of beefsteaks); in brief, he let it be known just what he wanted, what “the will of God” was... From this time forward things were so arranged that the priest became indispensable everywhere; at all the great natural events of life, at birth, at marriage, in sickness, at death, not to say at the “sacrifice” (that is, at meal-times), the holy parasite put in his appearance, and proceeded to denaturize it—in his own phrase, to “sanctify” it... For this should be noted: that every natural habit, every natural institution (the state, the administration of justice, marriage, the care of

9.

Upon this theological instinct I make war: I find the tracks of it everywhere. Whoever has theological blood in his veins is shifty and dishonourable in all things. The pathetic thing that grows out of this condition is called faith: in other words, closing one’s eyes upon one’s self once for all, to avoid suffering the sight of incurable falsehood. People erect a concept of morality, of virtue, of holiness upon this false view of all things; they ground good conscience upon faulty vision; they argue that no other sort of vision has value any more, once they have made theirs sacrosanct with the names of “God,” “salvation” and “eternity.” I unearth this theological instinct in all directions: it is the most widespread and the most subterranean form of falsehood to be found on earth. Whatever a theologian regards as true must be false: there you have almost a criterion of truth. His profound instinct of self-preservation stands against truth ever coming into honour in any way, or even getting stated. Wherever the influence of theologians is felt there is a transvaluation of values, and the concepts “true” and “false” are forced to change places: whatever is most damaging to life is there called “true,” and whatever exalts it, intensifies it, approves it, justifies it and makes it triumphant is there called “false”... When theologians, working through the “consciences” of princes (or of peoples—), stretch out their hands for power, there is never any doubt as to the fundamental issue: the will to make an end, the nihilistic will exerts that power...
Among Germans I am immediately understood when I say that theological blood is the ruin of philosophy. The Protestant pastor is the grandfather of German philosophy; Protestantism itself is its pecatum originale. Definition of Protestantism: hemiplegic paralysis of Christianity—and of reason... One need only utter the words “Tübingen School” to get an understanding of what German philosophy is at bottom—a very artful form of theology... The Suabians are the best liars in Germany; they lie innocently... Why all the rejoicing over the appearance of Kant that went through the learned world of Germany, three-fourths of which is made up of the sons of preachers and teachers—why the German conviction still echoing, that with Kant came a change for the better? The theological instinct of German scholars made them see clearly just what had become possible again... A backstairs leading to the old ideal stood open; the concept of the “true world,” the concept of morality as the essence of the world (—the two most vicious errors that ever existed!), were once more, thanks to a subtle and wily scepticism, if not actually demonstrable, then at least no longer refutable... Reason, the prerogative of reason, does not go so far... Out of reality there had been made “appearance”; an absolutely false world, that of being, had been turned into reality... The success of Kant is merely a theological success; he was, like Luther and Leibnitz, but one more impediment to German integrity, already far from steady.---

The concept of god falsified; the concept of morality falsified;—but even here Jewish priest-craft did not stop. The whole history of Israel ceased to be of any value: out with it!—These priests accomplished that miracle of falsification of which a great part of the Bible is the documentary evidence; with a degree of contempt unparalleled, and in the face of all tradition and all historical reality, they translated the past of their people into religious terms, which is to say, they converted it into an idiotic mechanism of salvation, whereby all offences against Jahveh were punished and all devotion to him was rewarded. We would regard this act of historical falsification as something far more shameful if familiarity with the ecclesiastical interpretation of history for thousands of years had not blunted our inclinations for uprightness in historicis. And the philosophers support the church: the lie about a “moral order of the world” runs through the whole of philosophy, even the newest. What is the meaning of a “moral order of the world”? That there is a thing called the will of God which, once and for all time, determines what man ought to do and what he ought not to do; that the worth of a people, or of an individual thereof, is to be measured by the extent to which they or he obey this will of God; that the destinies of a people or of an individual are controlled by this will of God, which rewards or punishes according to the degree of obedience manifested.—In place of all that pitiable lie reality has this to say: the priest, a parasitical variety of man who can exist only at the cost of every sound view of life, takes the name of God in vain: he calls that state of human society in which he himself determines the value of all things “the kingdom of God”; he calls the
ism; he is now a god only conditionally... The public notion of this god now becomes merely a weapon in the hands of clerical agitators, who interpret all happiness as a reward and all unhappiness as a punishment for obedience or disobedience to him, for “sin”: that most fraudulent of all imaginable interpretations, whereby a “moral order of the world” is set up, and the fundamental concepts, “cause” and “effect,” are stood on their heads. Once natural causation has been swept out of the world by doctrines of reward and punishment some sort of un-natural causation becomes necessary: and all other varieties of the denial of nature follow it. A god who demands—in place of a god who helps, who gives counsel, who is at bottom merely a name for every happy inspiration of courage and self-reliance... Morality is no longer a reflection of the conditions which make for the sound life and development of the people; it is no longer the primary life-instinct; instead it has become abstract and in opposition to life—a fundamental perversion of the fancy, an “evil eye” on all things. What is Jewish, what is Christian morality? Chance robbed of its innocence; unhappiness polluted with the idea of “sin”; well-being represented as a danger, as a “temptation”; a physiological disorder produced by the canker worm of conscience...

11.

A word now against Kant as a moralist. A virtue must be our invention; it must spring out of our personal need and defence. In every other case it is a source of danger. That which does not belong to our life menaces it; a virtue which has its roots in mere respect for the concept of “virtue,” as Kant would have it, is pernicious. “Virtue,” “duty,” “good for its own sake,” goodness grounded upon impersonality or a notion of universal validity—these are all chimeras, and in them one finds only an expression of the decay, the last collapse of life, the Chinese spirit of Königsberg. Quite the contrary is demanded by the most profound laws of self-preservation and of growth: to wit, that every man find his own virtue, his own categorical imperative. A nation goes to pieces when it confounds its duty with the general concept of duty. Nothing works a more complete and penetrating disaster than every “impersonal” duty, every sacrifice before the Moloch of abstraction.—To think that no one has thought of Kant’s categorical imperative as dangerous to life!... The theological instinct alone took it under protection!—An action prompted by the life-instinct proves that it is a right action by the amount of pleasure that goes with it: and yet that Nihilist, with his bowels of Christian dogmatism, regarded pleasure as an objection... What destroys a man more quickly than to work, think and feel without inner necessity, without any deep personal desire, without pleasure—as a mere automaton of duty? That is the recipe for décadence, and no less for idiocy... Kant became an idiot.—And such a man was the contemporary of Goethe! This calamitous spinner of cobwebs passed for the German philosopher—still passes today!... I forbid
myself to say what I think of the Germans... Didn’t Kant see in the French Revolution the transformation of the state from the inorganic form to the organic? Didn’t he ask himself if there was a single event that could be explained save on the assumption of a moral faculty in man, so that on the basis of it, “the tendency of mankind toward the good” could be explained, once and for all time? Kant’s answer: “That is revolution.” Instinct at fault in everything and anything, instinct as a revolt against nature, German décadence as a philosophy—that is Kant!—

The history of Israel is invaluable as a typical history of an attempt to denaturize all natural values: I point to five facts which bear this out. Originally, and above all in the time of the monarchy, Israel maintained the right attitude of things, which is to say, the natural attitude. Its Jahveh was an expression of its consciousness of power, its joy in itself, its hopes for itself: to him the Jews looked for victory and salvation and through him they expected nature to give them whatever was necessary to their existence—above all, rain. Jahveh is the god of Israel, and consequently the god of justice: this is the logic of every race that has power in its hands and a good conscience in the use of it. In the religious ceremonial of the Jews both aspects of this self-approval stand revealed. The nation is grateful for the high destiny that has enabled it to obtain dominion; it is grateful for the benign procession of the seasons, and for the good fortune attending its herds and its crops.—This view of things remained an ideal for a long while, even after it had been robbed of validity by tragic blows: anarchy within and the Assyrian without. But the people still retained, as a projection of their highest yearnings, that vision of a king who was at once a gallant warrior and an upright judge—a vision best visualized in the typical prophet (i.e., critic and satirist of the moment), Isaiah.—But every hope remained unfulfilled. The old god no longer could do what he used to do. He ought to have been abandoned. But what actually happened? Simply this: the conception of him was changed—the conception of him was denaturized; this was the price that had to be paid for keeping him.—Jahveh, the god of “justice”—he is in accord with Israel no more, he no longer visualizes the national ego-
ity. Precisely for this reason the Jews are the most fateful people in the history of the world: their influence has so falsified the reasoning of mankind in this matter that today the Christian can cherish anti-Semitism without realizing that it is no more than the final consequence of Judaism.

In my “Genealogy of Morals” I give the first psychological explanation of the concepts underlying those two antithetical things, a noble morality and a ressentiment morality, the second of which is a mere product of the denial of the former. The Judaeo-Christian moral system belongs to the second division, and in every detail. In order to be able to say Nay to everything representing an ascending evolution of life—that is, to well-being, to power, to beauty, to self-approval—the instincts of ressentiment, here become downright genius, had to invent an other world in which the acceptance of life appeared as the most evil and abominable thing imaginable. Psychologically, the Jews are a people gifted with the very strongest vitality, so much so that when they found themselves facing impossible conditions of life they chose voluntarily, and with a profound talent for self-preservation, the side of all those instincts which make for décadence—not as if mastered by them, but as if detecting in them a power by which “the world” could be defied. The Jews are the very opposite of décadents; they have simply been forced into appearing in that guise, and with a degree of skill approaching the non plus ultra of histrionic genius they have managed to put themselves at the head of all décadent movements (—for example, the Christianity of Paul—), and so make of them something stronger than any party frankly saying Yes to life. To the sort of men who reach out for power under Judaism and Christianity,—that is to say, to the priestly class—décadence is no more than a means to an end. Men of this sort have a vital interest in making mankind sick, and in confusing the values of “good” and “bad,” “true” and “false” in a manner that is not only dangerous to life, but also slanders it.

12.

I put aside a few sceptics, the types of decency in the history of philosophy: the rest haven’t the slightest conception of intellectual integrity. They behave like women, all these great enthusiasts and prodigies—they regard “beautiful feelings” as arguments, the “heaving breast” as the bellows of divine inspiration, conviction as the criterion of truth. In the end, with “German” innocence, Kant tried to give a scientific flavour to this form of corruption, this dearth of intellectual conscience, by calling it “practical reason.” He deliberately invented a variety of reasons for use on occasions when it was desirable not to trouble with reason—that is, when morality, when the sublime command “thou shalt,” was heard. When one recalls the fact that, among all peoples, the philosopher is no more than a development from the old type of priest, this inheritance from the priest, this fraud upon self, ceases to be remarkable. When a man feels that he has a divine mission, say to lift up, to save or to liberate mankind—when a man feels the divine spark in his heart and believes that he is the mouthpiece of supernatural imperatives—when such a mission inflames him, it is only natural that he should stand beyond all merely reasonable standards of judgment. He feels that he is himself sanctified by this mission, that he is himself a type of a higher order!... What has a priest to do with philosophy! He stands far above it!—And hitherto the priest has ruled!—He has determined the meaning of “true” and “not true”!...
13.

Let us not underestimate this fact: that we ourselves, we free spirits, are already a “transvaluation of all values,” a visualized declaration of war and victory against all the old concepts of “true” and “not true.” The most valuable intuitions are the last to be attained; the most valuable of all are those which determine methods. All the methods, all the principles of the scientific spirit of today, were the targets for thousands of years of the most profound contempt; if a man inclined to them he was excluded from the society of “decent” people—he passed as “an enemy of God,” as a scoffer at the truth, as one “possessed.” As a man of science, he belonged to the Chandala... We have had the whole pathetic stupidity of mankind against us—their every notion of what the truth ought to be, of what the service of the truth ought to be—their every “thou shalt” was launched against us... Our objectives, our methods, our quiet, cautious, distrustful manner—all appeared to them as absolutely discreditable and contemptible.—Looking back, one may almost ask oneself with reason if it was not actually an aesthetic sense that kept men blind so long: what they demanded of the truth was picturesque effectiveness, and of the learned a strong appeal to their senses. It was our modesty that stood out longest against their taste... How well they guessed that, these turkey-cocks of God!

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1 The lowest of the Hindu castes.

22

24.

Here I barely touch upon the problem of the origin of Christianity. The first thing necessary to its solution is this: that Christianity is to be understood only by examining the soil from which it sprung—it is not a reaction against Jewish instincts; it is their inevitable product; it is simply one more step in the awe-inspiring logic of the Jews. In the words of the Saviour, “salvation is of the Jews.”—The second thing to remember is this: that the psychological type of the Galilean is still to be recognized, but it was only in its most degenerate form (which is at once maimed and overladen with foreign features) that it could serve in the manner in which it has been used: as a type of the Saviour of mankind.—

The Jews are the most remarkable people in the history of the world, for when they were confronted with the question, to be or not to be, they chose, with perfectly unearthly deliberation, to be at any price: this price involved a radical falsification of all nature, of all naturalness, of all reality, of the whole inner world, as well as of the outer. They put themselves against all those conditions under which, hitherto, a people had been able to live, or had even been permitted to live; out of themselves they evolved an idea which stood in direct opposition to natural conditions—one by one they distorted religion, civilization, morality, history and psychology until each became a contradiction of its natural significance. We meet with the same phenomenon later on, in an incalculably exaggerated form, but only as a copy: the Christian church, put beside the “people of God,” shows a complete lack of any claim to original-

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1 John iv, 22.
it—so high, indeed, that no fulfilment can satisfy it: a hope reaching out beyond this world. (Precisely because of this power that hope has of making the suffering hold out, the Greeks regarded it as the evil of evils, as the most malign of evils; it remained behind at the source of all evil.)¹—In order that love may be possible, God must become a person; in order that the lower instincts may take a hand in the matter, God must be young. To satisfy the ardor of the woman a beautiful saint must appear on the scene, and to satisfy that of the man there must be a virgin. These things are necessary if Christianity is to assume lordship over a soil on which some aphrodisiacal or Adonis cult has already established a notion as to what a cult ought to be. To insist upon chastity greatly strengthens the vehemence and subjectivity of the religious instinct—it makes the cult warmer, more enthusiastic, more soulful.—Love is the state in which man sees things most decidedly as they are not. The force of illusion reaches its highest here, and so does the capacity for sweetening, for transfiguring. When a man is in love he endures more than at any other time; he submits to anything. The problem was to devise a religion which would allow one to love: by this means the worst that life has to offer is overcome—it is scarcely even noticed.—So much for the three Christian virtues: faith, hope and charity: I call them the three Christian ingenuities.—Buddhism is in too late a stage of development, too full of positivism, to be shrewd in any such way.—

¹ That is, in Pandora’s box.
divinity. That he might be *perfected*, he was advised, tortoise-like, to draw his senses in, to have no traffic with earthly things, to shuffle off his mortal coil—then only the important part of him, the “pure spirit,” would remain. Here again we have thought out the thing better: to us consciousness, or “the spirit,” appears as a symptom of a relative imperfection of the organism, as an experiment, a groping, a misunderstanding, as an affliction which uses up nervous force unnecessarily—we deny that anything can be done perfectly so long as it is done consciously. The “pure spirit” is a piece of pure stupidity: take away the nervous system and the senses, the so-called “mortal shell,” and *the rest is miscalculation*—that is all!...

23.

Buddhism, I repeat, is a hundred times more austere, more honest, more objective. It no longer has to *justify* its pains, its susceptibility to suffering, by interpreting these things in terms of sin—it simply says, as it simply thinks, “I suffer.” To the barbarian, however, suffering in itself is scarcely understandable: what he needs, first of all, is an explanation as to *why* he suffers. (His mere instinct prompts him to deny his suffering altogether, or to endure it in silence.) Here the word “devil” was a blessing: man had to have an omnipotent and terrible enemy—there was no need to be ashamed of suffering at the hands of such an enemy.—

At the bottom of Christianity there are several subtleties that belong to the Orient. In the first place, it knows that it is of very little consequence whether a thing be true or not, so long as it is *believed* to be true. Truth and *faith*: here we have two wholly distinct worlds of ideas, almost two diametrically opposite worlds—the road to the one and the road to the other lie miles apart. To understand that fact thoroughly—this is almost enough, in the Orient, to *make* one a sage. The Brahmins knew it, Plato knew it, every student of the esoteric knows it. When, for example, a man gets any *pleasure* out of the notion that he has been saved from sin, it is not necessary for him to be actually sinful, but merely to *feel* sinful. But when *faith* is thus exalted above everything else, it necessarily follows that reason, knowledge and patient inquiry have to be discredited: the road to the truth becomes a forbidden road.—Hope, in its stronger forms, is a great deal more powerful *stimulans* to life than any sort of realized joy can ever be. Man must be sustained in suffering by a hope so high that no conflict with actuality can dash
22.

When Christianity departed from its native soil, that of the lowest orders, the underworld of the ancient world, and began seeking power among barbarian peoples, it no longer had to deal with exhausted men, but with men still inwardly savage and capable of self-torture—in brief, strong men, but bungled men. Here, unlike in the case of the Buddhists, the cause of discontent with self, suffering through self, is not merely a general sensitiveness and susceptibility to pain, but, on the contrary, an inordinate thirst for inflicting pain on others, a tendency to obtain subjective satisfaction in hostile deeds and ideas. Christianity had to embrace barbaric concepts and valuations in order to obtain mastery over barbarians: of such sort, for example, are the sacrifices of the first-born, the drinking of blood as a sacrament, the disdain of the intellect and of culture; torture in all its forms, whether bodily or not; the whole pomp of the cult. Buddhism is a religion for peoples in a further stage of development, for races that have become kind, gentle and over-spiritualized (—Europe is not yet ripe for it—): it is a summons that takes them back to peace and cheerfulness, to a careful rationing of the spirit, to a certain hardening of the body. Christianity aims at mastering beasts of prey; its modus operandi is to make them ill—to make feeble is the Christian recipe for taming, for "civilizing." Buddhism is a religion for the closing, over-wearied stages of civilization. Christianity appears before civilization has so much as begun—under certain circumstances it lays the very foundations thereof.

15.

Under Christianity neither morality nor religion has any point of contact with actuality. It offers purely imaginary causes ("God," "soul," "ego," "spirit," "free will"—or even "unfree"), and purely imaginary effects ("sin," "salvation," "grace," "punishment," "forgiveness of sins"). Intercourse between imaginary beings ("God," "spirits," "souls"); an imaginary natural history (anthropocentric; a total denial of the concept of natural causes); an imaginary psychology (misunderstandings of self, misinterpretations of agreeable or disagreeable general feelings—for example, of the states of the nervus sympathicus with the help of the sign-language of religio-ethical balderdash—, “repentance,” “pangs of conscience,” “temptation by the devil,” “the presence of God”); an imaginary teleology (the “kingdom of God,” “the last judgment,” “eternal life”).—This purely fictitious world, greatly to its disadvantage, is to be differentiated from the world of dreams; the latter at least reflects reality, whereas the former falsifies it, cheapens it and denies it. Once the concept of “nature” had been opposed to the concept of “God,” the word “natural” necessarily took on the meaning of “abominable”—the whole of that fictitious world has its sources in hatred of the natural (—the real!—), and is no more than evidence of a profound uneasiness in the presence of reality... This explains everything. Who alone has any reason for living his way out of reality? The man who suffers under it. But to suffer from reality one must be a botched reality... The preponderance of pains over pleasures is the cause of this fictitious morality and religion: but such a preponderance also supplies the formula for décadence...
16.

A criticism of the Christian concept of God leads inevitably to the same conclusion.—A nation that still believes in itself holds fast to its own god. In him it does honour to the conditions which enable it to survive, to its virtues—it projects its joy in itself, its feeling of power, into a being to whom one may offer thanks. He who is rich will give of his riches; a proud people need a god to whom they can make sacrifices... Religion, within these limits, is a form of gratitude. A man is grateful for his own existence: to that end he needs a god.—Such a god must be able to work both benefits and injuries; he must be able to play either friend or foe—he is wondered at for the good he does as well as for the evil he does. But the castration, against all nature, of such a god, making him a god of goodness alone, would be contrary to human inclination. Mankind has just as much need for an evil god as for a good god; it doesn’t have to thank mere tolerance and humanitarianism for its own existence... What would be the value of a god who knew nothing of anger, revenge, envy, scorn, cunning, violence? who had perhaps never experienced the rapturous ardeurs of victory and of destruction? No one would understand such a god: why should any one want him?—True enough, when a nation is on the downward path, when it feels its belief in its own future, its hope of freedom slipping from it, when it begins to see submission as a first necessity and the virtues of submission as measures of self-preservation, then it must overhaul its god. He then becomes a hypocrite, timorous and demure; he counsels “peace of soul,” hate-no-more, leniency, “love” of friend and foe. He moralizes endlessly; he creeps into every private virtue; he becomes the god of every man; he becomes hated of the intellect, of pride, of courage, of freedom, of intellectual libertinage; Christian is all hatred of the senses, of joy in the senses, of joy in general...
The things necessary to Buddhism are a very mild climate, customs of great gentleness and liberality, and no militarism; moreover, it must get its start among the higher and better educated classes. Cheerfulness, quiet and the absence of desire are the chief desiderata, and they are attained. Buddhism is not a religion in which perfection is merely an object of aspiration: perfection is actually normal.

Under Christianity the instincts of the subjugated and the oppressed come to the fore: it is only those who are at the bottom who seek their salvation in it. Here the prevailing pastime, the favourite remedy for boredom is the discussion of sin, self-criticism, the inquisition of conscience; here the emotion produced by power (called “God”) is pumped up (by prayer); here the highest good is regarded as unattainable, as a gift, as “grace.” Here, too, open dealing is lacking; concealment and the darkened room are Christian. Here body is despised and hygiene is denounced as sensual; the church even ranges itself against cleanliness (—the first Christian order after the banishment of the Moors closed the public baths, of which there were 270 in Cordova alone). Christian, too, is a certain cruelty toward one’s self and toward others; hatred of unbelievers; the will to persecute. Sombre and disquieting ideas are in the foreground; the most esteemed states of mind, bearing the most respectable names, are epileptoid; the diet is so regulated as to engender morbid symptoms and over-stimulate the nerves. Christian, again, is all deadly enmity to the rulers of the earth, to the “aristocratic”—along with a sort of secret rivalry with them (—one resigns one’s “body” to them; one wants only one’s “soul”…). And Christian is all
Wherever the will to power begins to decline, in whatever form, there is always an accompanying decline physiologically, a décadence. The divinity of this décadence, shorn of its masculine virtues and passions, is converted perforce into a god of the physiologically degraded, of the weak. Of course, they do not call themselves the weak; they call themselves “the good.”... No hint is needed to indicate the moments in history at which the dualistic fiction of a good and an evil god first became possible. The same instinct which prompts the inferior to reduce their own god to “goodness-in-itself” also prompts them to eliminate all good qualities from the god of their superiors; they make revenge on their masters by making a devil of the latter’s god.—The good god, and the devil like him—both are abortions of décadence.—How can we be so tolerant of the naïveté of Christian theologians as to join in their doctrine that the evolution of the concept of god from “the god of Israel,” the god of a people, to the Christian god, the essence of all goodness, is to be described as progress?—But even Renan does this. As if Renan had a right to be naïve! The contrary actually stares one in the face. When everything necessary to ascending life; when all that is strong, courageous, masterful and proud has been eliminated from the concept of a god; when he has sunk step by step to the level of a staff for the weary, a sheet-anchor for the drowning; when he becomes the poor man’s god, the sinner’s god, the invalid’s god par excellence, and the attribute of “saviour” or “redeemer” remains as the one essential attribute of divinity—just what is the significance of such a metamorphosis? what does such a reduction of the godhead imply?—To be sure, the “kingdom of God” has thus grown...
In my condemnation of Christianity I surely hope I do no injustice to a related religion with an even larger number of believers: I allude to Buddhism. Both are to be reckoned among the nihilistic religions—they are both décadence religions—but they are separated from each other in a very remarkable way. For the fact that he is able to compare them at all the critic of Christianity is indebted to the scholars of India.—Buddhism is a hundred times as realistic as Christianity—it is part of its living heritage that it is able to face problems objectively and coolly; it is the product of long centuries of philosophical speculation. The concept, “god,” was already disposed of before it appeared. Buddhism is the only genuinely positive religion to be encountered in history, and this applies even to its epistemology (which is a strict phenomenalism). It does not speak of a “struggle with sin,” but, yielding to reality, of the “struggle with suffering.” Sharply differentiating itself from Christianity, it puts the self-deception that lies in moral concepts behind it; it is, in my phrase, beyond good and evil.—The two physiological facts upon which it grounds itself and upon which it bestows its chief attention are: first, an excessive sensitiveness to sensation, which manifests itself as a refined susceptibility to pain, and secondly, an extraordinary spirituality, a too protracted concern with concepts and logical procedures, under the influence of which the instinct of personality has yielded to a notion of the “impersonal.” (—Both of these states will be familiar to a few of my readers, the objectivists, by experience, as they are to me). These physiological states produced a depression, and Buddha tried to combat it by hygienic measures. Against it he prescribed a life in the open, a life of travel;
18.

The Christian concept of a god—the god as the patron of the sick, the god as a spinner of cobwebs, the god as a spirit—is one of the most corrupt concepts that has ever been set up in the world: it probably touches low-water mark in the ebbing evolution of the god-type. God degenerated into the *contradiction of life*. Instead of being its transfiguration and eternal Yea! In him war is declared on life, on nature, on the will to live! God becomes the formula for every slander upon the “here and now,” and for every lie about the “beyond”! In him nothingness is deified, and the will to nothingness is made holy!...

19.

The fact that the strong races of northern Europe did not repudiate this Christian god does little credit to their gift for religion—and not much more to their taste. They ought to have been able to make an end of such a moribund and worn-out product of the *décadence*. A curse lies upon them because they were not equal to it; they made illness, decrepitude and contradiction a part of their instincts—and since then they have not managed to *create* any more gods. Two thousand years have come and gone—and not a single new god! Instead, there still exists, and as if by some intrinsic right,—as if he were the *ultimatum* and *maximum* of the power to create gods, of the *creator spiritus* in mankind—this pitiful god of Christian monotono-theism! This hybrid image of decay, conjured up out of emptiness, contradiction and vain imagining, in which all the instincts of *décadence*, all the cowardices and wearinesses of the soul find their sanction!—
This “bearer of glad tidings” died as he lived and taught—not to “save mankind,” but to show mankind how to live. It was a way of life that he bequeathed to man: his demeanour before the judges, before the officers, before his accusers—his demeanour on the cross. He does not resist; he does not defend his rights; he makes no effort to ward off the most extreme penalty—more, he invites it… And he prays, suffers and loves with those, in those, who do him evil… Not to defend one’s self, not to show anger, not to lay blames… On the contrary, to submit even to the Evil One—to love him…

Friedrich Nietzsche
The Antichrist
1895

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—We free spirits—we are the first to have the necessary prerequisite to understanding what nineteen centuries have misunderstood—that instinct and passion for integrity which makes war upon the “holy lie” even more than upon all other lies... Mankind was unspeakably far from our benevolent and cautious neutrality, from that discipline of the spirit which alone makes possible the solution of such strange and subtle things: what men always sought, with shameless egoism, was their own advantage therein; they created the church out of denial of the Gospels...

Whoever sought for signs of an ironical divinity’s hand in the great drama of existence would find no small indication thereof in the stupendous question-mark that is called Christianity. That mankind should be on its knees before the very antithesis of what was the origin, the meaning and the law of the Gospels—that in the concept of the “church” the very things should be pronounced holy that the “bearer of glad tidings” regards as beneath him and behind him—it would be impossible to surpass this as a grand example of world-historical irony—

This eternal accusation against Christianity I shall write upon all walls, wherever walls are to be found—I have letters that even the blind will be able to see... I call Christianity the one great curse, the one great intrinsic depravity, the one great instinct of revenge, for which no means are venomous enough, or secret, subterranean and small enough,—I call it the one immortal blemish upon the human race...

And mankind reckons time from the dies nefastus when this fatality befell—from the first day of Christianity!—Why not rather from its last?—From today?—The transvaluation of all values!...

THE END
—With this I come to a conclusion and pronounce my judgment. I condemn Christianity; I bring against the Christian church the most terrible of all the accusations that an accuser has ever had in his mouth. It is, to me, the greatest of all imaginable corruptions; it seeks to work the ultimate corruption, the worst possible corruption. The Christian church has left nothing untouched by its depravity; it has turned every value into worthlessness, and every truth into a lie, and every integrity into baseness of soul. Let any one dare to speak to me of its “humanitarian” blessings! Its deepest necessities range it against any effort to abolish distress; it lives by distress; it creates distress to make itself immortal... For example, the worm of sin: it was the church that first enriched mankind with this misery!—The “equality of souls before God”—this fraud, this pretext for the rancunes of all the base-minded—this explosive concept, ending in revolution, the modern idea, and the notion of overthrowing the whole social order —this is Christian dynamite... The “humanitarian” blessings of Christianity forsooth! To breed out of humanitas a self-contradiction, an art of self-pollution, a will to lie at any price, an aversion and contempt for all good and honest instincts! All this, to me, is the “humanitarianism” of Christianity!—Parasitism as the only practice of the church; with its anemic and “holy” ideals, sucking all the blood, all the love, all the hope out of life; the beyond as the will to deny all reality; the cross as the distinguishing mark of the most subterranean conspiracy ever heard of,—against health, beauty, well-being, intellect, kindness of soul—against life itself...
—I cannot, at this place, avoid a sigh. There are days when I am visited by a feeling blacker than the blackest melancholy—contempt of man. Let me leave no doubt as to what I despise, whom I despise: it is the man of today, the man with whom I am unhappily contemporaneous. The man of today—I am suffocated by his foul breath!... Toward the past, like all who understand, I am full of tolerance, which is to say, generous self-control: with gloomy caution I pass through whole millennia of this madhouse of a world, call it “Christianity,” “Christian faith” or the “Christian church,” as you will—I take care not to hold mankind responsible for its lunacies. But my feeling changes and breaks out irresistibly the moment I enter modern times, our times. Our age knows better... What was formerly merely sickly now becomes indecent—it is indecent to be a Christian today. And here my disgust begins.—I look about me: not a word survives of what was once called “truth”; we can no longer bear to hear a priest pronounce the word. Even a man who makes the most modest pretensions to integrity must know that a theologian, a priest, a pope of today not only errs when he speaks, but actually lies—and that he no longer escapes blame for his lie through “innocence” or “ignorance.” The priest knows, as everyone knows, that there is no longer any “God,” or any “sinner,” or any “Saviour”—that “free will” and the “moral order of the world” are lies:—serious reflection, the profound self-conquest of the spirit, allow no man to pretend that he does not know it... All the ideas of the church are now recognized for what they are—as the worst counterfeits in existence, invented to debase nature and all natural values; the priest himself is seen as he actually is—as the most dan-
Here it becomes necessary to call up a memory that must be a hundred times more painful to Germans. The Germans have destroyed for Europe the last great harvest of civilization that Europe was ever to reap—the Renaissance. Is it understood at last, will it ever be understood, what the Renaissance was? The transvaluation of Christian values,—an attempt with all available means, all instincts and all the resources of genius to bring about a triumph of the opposite values, the more noble values... This has been the one great war of the past; there has never been a more critical question than that of the Renaissance—it is my question too--; there has never been a form of attack more fundamental, more direct, or more violently delivered by a whole front upon the center of the enemy! To attack at the critical place, at the very seat of Christianity, and there enthrone the more noble values—that is to say, to insinuate them into the instincts, into the most fundamental needs and appetites of those sitting there... I see before me the possibility of a perfectly heavenly enchantment and spectacle:—it seems to me to scintillate with all the vibrations of a fine and delicate beauty, and within it there is an art so divine, so infernally divine, that one might search in vain for thousands of years for another such possibility; I see a spectacle so rich in significance and at the same time so wonderfully full of paradox that it should arouse all the gods on Olympus to immortal laughter—Caesar Borgia as pope!... Am I understood?... Well then, that would have been the sort of triumph that I alone am longing for today—: by it Christianity would have been swept away!—What happened? A German monk, Luther, came to Rome. This monk, with all the vengeful instincts of an...
—I shall go back a bit, and tell you the authentic history of Christianity.—The very word “Christianity” is a misunderstanding—at bottom there was only one Christian, and he died on the cross. The “Gospels” died on the cross. What, from that moment onward, was called the “Gospels” was the very reverse of what he had lived: “bad tidings,” a Dysangelium.\footnote{So in the text. One of Nietzsche’s numerous coinages, obviously suggested by Evangelium, the German for gospel.} It is an error amounting to nonsensicality to see in “faith,” and particularly in faith in salvation through Christ, the distinguishing mark of the Christian: only the Christian way of life, the life lived by him who died on the cross, is Christian... To this day such a life is still possible, and for certain men even necessary: genuine, primitive Christianity will remain possible in all ages... Not faith, but acts; above all, an avoidance of acts, a different state of being... States of consciousness, faith of a sort, the acceptance, for example, of anything as true—as every psychologist knows, the value of these things is perfectly indifferent and fifth-rate compared to that of the instincts: strictly speaking, the whole concept of intellectual causality is false. To reduce being a Christian, the state of Christianity, to an acceptance of truth, to a mere phenomenon of consciousness, is to formulate the negation of Christianity. In fact, there are no Christians. The “Christian”—he who for two thousand years has passed as a Christian—is simply a psycho logical self-delusion. Closely examined, it appears that, despite all his “faith,” he has been ruled only by his instincts—and what remains at liberty to choose here. Either a man is a Chandala or he is not... “War to the knife with Rome! Peace and friendship with Islam!”: this was the feeling, this was the act, of that great free spirit, that genius among German emperors, Frederick II. What! must a German first be a genius, a free spirit, before he can feel decently? I can’t make out how a German could ever feel Christian...
Christianity destroyed for us the whole harvest of ancient civilization, and later it also destroyed for us the whole harvest of Mohammedan civilization. The wonderful culture of the Moors in Spain, which was fundamentally nearer to us and appealed more to our senses and tastes than that of Rome and Greece, was trampled down (—I do not say by what sort of feet—) Why? Because it had to thank noble and manly instincts for its origin—because it said yes to life, even to the rare and refined luxuriousness of Moorish life!... The crusaders later made war on something before which it would have been more fitting for them to have grovelled in the dust—a civilization beside which even that of our nineteenth century seems very poor and very “senile.”—What they wanted, of course, was booty: the orient was rich... Let us put aside our prejudices! The crusades were a higher form of piracy, nothing more! The German nobility, which is fundamentally a Viking nobility, was in its element there: the church knew only too well how the German nobility was to be won... The German noble, always the "Swiss guard" of the church, always in the service of every bad instinct of the church—but well paid... Consider the fact that it is precisely the aid of German swords and German blood and valour that has enabled the church to carry through its war to the death upon everything noble on earth! At this point a host of painful questions suggest themselves. The German nobility stands outside the history of the higher civilization: the reason is obvious... Christianity, alcohol—the two great means of corruption... Intrinsically there should be no more choice between Islam and Christianity than there is between an Arab and a Jew. The decision is already reached; nobody...
—The fate of the Gospels was decided by death—it hung on the “cross.”... It was only death, that unexpected and shameful death; it was only the cross, which was usually reserved for the canaille only—it was only this appalling paradox which brought the disciples face to face with the real riddle: “Who was it? what was it?”—The feeling of dismay, of profound affront and injury; the suspicion that such a death might involve a refutation of their cause; the terrible question, “Why just in this way?”—this state of mind is only too easy to understand. Here everything must be accounted for as necessary; everything must have a meaning, a reason, the highest sort of reason; the love of a disciple excludes all chance. Only then did the chasm of doubt yawn: “Who put him to death? who was his natural enemy?”—this question flashed like a lightning-stroke. Answer: dominant Judaism, its ruling class. From that moment, one found one’s self in revolt against the established order, and began to understand Jesus as in revolt against the established order. Until then this militant, this nay-saying, nay-doing element in his character had been lacking; what is more, he had appeared to present its opposite. Obviously, the little community had not understood what was precisely the most important thing of all: the example offered by this way of dying, the freedom from and superiority to every feeling of resentment—a plain indication of how little he was understood at all! All that Jesus could hope to accomplish by his death, in itself, was to offer the strongest possible proof, or example, of his teachings in the most public manner... But his disciples were very far from forgiving his death—though to have done so would have accorded with the Gospels in the highest degree; and neither were...
The whole labour of the ancient world gone for naught: I have no word to describe the feelings that such an enormity arouses in me.—And, considering the fact that its labour was merely preparatory, that with adamantine self-consciousness it laid only the foundations for a work to go on for thousands of years, the whole meaning of antiquity disappears!... To what end the Greeks? to what end the Romans?—All the prerequisites to a learned culture, all the methods of science, were already there; man had already perfected the great and incomparable art of reading profitably—that first necessity to the tradition of culture, the unity of the sciences; the natural sciences, in alliance with mathematics and mechanics, were on the right road,—the sense of fact, the last and more valuable of all the senses, had its schools, and its traditions were already centuries old! Is all this properly understood? Every essential to the beginning of the work was ready:—and the most essential, it cannot be said too often, are methods, and also the most difficult to develop, and the longest opposed by habit and laziness. What we have today reconquered, with unspeakable self-discipline, for ourselves—for certain bad instincts, certain Christian instincts, still lurk in our bodies—that is to say, the keen eye for reality, the cautious hand, patience and seriousness in the smallest things, the whole integrity of knowledge—all these things were already there, and had been there for two thousand years! More, there was also a refined and excellent tact and taste! Not as mere brain-drilling! Not as “German” culture, with its loutish manners! But as body, as bearing, as instinct—in short, as reality... All gone for naught! Overnight it became merely a memory!—The Greeks! The Romans! Instinctive no-
And from that time onward an absurd problem offered itself: “how could God allow it!” To which the deranged reason of the little community formulated an answer that was terrifying in its absurdity: God gave his son as a sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. At once there was an end of the gospels! Sacrifice for sin, and in its most obnoxious and barbarous form: sacrifice of the innocent for the sins of the guilty! What appalling paganism!—Jesus himself had done away with the very concept of “guilt,” he denied that there was any gulf fixed between God and man; he lived this unity between God and man, and that was precisely his “glad tidings”... And not as a mere privilege!—From this time forward the type of the Saviour was corrupted, bit by bit, by the doctrine of judgment and of the second coming, the doctrine of death as a sacrifice, the doctrine of the resurrection, by means of which the entire concept of “blessedness,” the whole and only reality of the gospels, is juggled away—in favour of a state of existence after death!... St. Paul, with that rabbinical impudence which shows itself in all his doings, gave a logical quality to that conception, that indecent conception, in this way: “If Christ did not rise from the dead, then all our faith is in vain!”—And at once there sprang from the Gospels the most contemptible of all unfulfillable promises, the shameless doctrine of personal immortality... Paul even preached it as a reward...

What he saw was how, with the aid of the small sectarian Christian movement that stood apart from Judaism, a “world conflagration” might be kindled; how, with the symbol of “God on the cross,” all secret seditions, all the fruits of anarchistic intrigues in the empire, might be amalgamated into one immense power. “Salvation is of the Jews.”—Christianity is the formula for exceeding and summing up the subterranean cults of all varieties, that of Osiris, that of the Great Mother, that of Mithras, for instance: in his discernment of this fact the genius of Paul showed itself. His instinct was here so sure that, with reckless violence to the truth, he put the ideas which lent fascination to every sort of Chandala religion into the mouth of the “Saviour” as his own inventions, and not only into the mouth—he made out of him something that even a priest of Mithras could understand... This was his revelation at Damascus: he grasped the fact that he needed the belief in immortality in order to rob “the world” of its value, that the concept of “hell” would master Rome—that the notion of a “beyond” is the death of life... Nihilist and Christian: they rhyme in German, and they do more than rhyme...
ment of the Romans: the conquest of the soil for a great culture that could await its time. Can it be that this fact is not yet understood? The imperium Romanum that we know, and that the history of the Roman provinces teaches us to know better and better,—this most admirable of all works of art in the grand manner was merely the beginning, and the structure to follow was not to prove its worth for thousands of years. To this day, nothing on a like scale sub specie aeterni has been brought into being, or even dreamed of!—This organization was strong enough to withstand bad emperors: the accident of personality has nothing to do with such things—the first principle of all genuinely great architecture. But it was not strong enough to stand up against the corruptest of all forms of corruption—against Christians... These stealthy worms, which under the cover of night, mist and duplicity, crept upon every individual, sucking him dry of all earnest interest in real things, of all instinct for reality—this cowardly, effeminate and sugar-coated gang gradually alienated all “souls,” step by step, from that colossal edifice, turning against it all the meritorious, manly and noble natures that had found in the cause of Rome their own cause, their own serious purpose, their own pride. The sneakishness of hypocrisy, the secrecy of the conventicle, concepts as black as hell, such as the sacrifice of the innocent, the unio mystica in the drinking of blood, above all, the slowly rekindled fire of revenge, of Chandala revenge—all that sort of thing became master of Rome: the same kind of religion which, in a pre-existent form, Epicurus had combatted. One has but to read Lucretius to know what Epicurus made war upon—not paganism, but “Christianity,” which is to say, the corruption of souls by means of the concepts of guilt, punishment and immortality.—He combated the subterranean cults, the whole of latent Christianity—to deny immortality was already a form of genuine salvation.—Epicurus had triumphed, and every respectable intellect in Rome was Epicurean—when Paul appeared... Paul, the Chandala hatred of Rome, of “the world,” in the flesh and inspired by genius—the Jew, the eternal Jew par excellence...
Paul simply shifted the centre of gravity of that whole life to a place *behind* this existence—in the *lie* of the “risen” Jesus. At bottom, he had no use for the life of the Saviour—what he needed was the death on the cross, *and* something more. To see anything honest in such a man as Paul, whose home was at the centre of the Stoical enlightenment, when he converts an hallucination into a *proof* of the resurrection of the Saviour, or even to believe his tale that he suffered from this hallucination himself—this would be a genuine *niaiserie* in a psychologist. Paul willed the end; *therefore* he also willed the means... What he himself didn’t believe was swallowed readily enough by the idiots among whom he spread *his* teaching.— What *he* wanted was power; in Paul the priest once more reached out for power—he had use only for such concepts, teachings and symbols as served the purpose of tyrannizing over the masses and organizing mobs. *What* was the only part of Christianity that Mohammed borrowed later on? Paul’s invention, his device for establishing priestly tyranny and organizing the mob: the belief in the immortality of the soul—*that is to say, the doctrine of “judgment”*...
estimate the privileges of the mediocre. Life is always harder as one mounts the heights—the cold increases, responsibility increases. A high civilization is a pyramid: it can stand only on a broad base; its primary prerequisite is a strong and soundly consolidated mediocrity. The handicrafts, commerce, agriculture, science, the greater part of art, in brief, the whole range of occupational activities, are compatible only with mediocre ability and aspiration; such callings would be out of place for exceptional men; the instincts which belong to them stand as much opposed to aristocracy as to anarchism. The fact that a man is publicly useful, that he is a wheel, a function, is evidence of a natural predisposition; it is not society, but the only sort of happiness that the majority are capable of, that makes them intelligent machines. To the mediocre mediocrity is a form of happiness; they have a natural instinct for mastering one thing, for specialization. It would be altogether unworthy of a profound intellect to see anything objectionable in mediocrity in itself. It is, in fact, the *first* prerequisite to the appearance of the exceptional: it is a necessary condition to a high degree of civilization. When the exceptional man handles the mediocre man with more delicate fingers than he applies to himself or to his equals, this is not merely kindness of heart—it is simply his duty... Whom do I hate most heartily among the rabbles of today? The rabble of Socialists, the apostles to the Chandala, who undermine the workingman’s instincts, his pleasure, his feeling of contentment with his petty existence—who make him envious and teach him revenge... Wrong never lies in unequal rights; it lies in the assertion of “equal” rights... What is bad? But I have already answered: all that proceeds from weakness, from envy, from revenge.—The anarchist and the Christian have the same ancestry...

43.

When the centre of gravity of life is placed, *not* in life itself, but in “the beyond”—in nothingness—then one has taken away its centre of gravity altogether. The vast lie of personal immortality destroys all reason, all natural instinct—henceforth, everything in the instincts that is beneficial, that fosters life and that safeguards the future is a cause of suspicion. So to live that life no longer has any meaning: *this* is now the “meaning” of life... Why be public-spirited? Why take any pride in descent and forefathers? Why labour together, trust one another, or concern one’s self about the common welfare, and try to serve it?... Merely so many “temptations,” so many strayings from the “straight path.”—“One thing only is necessary”... That every man, because he has an “immortal soul,” is as good as every other man; that in an infinite universe of things the “salvation” of every individual may lay claim to eternal importance; that insignificant bigots and the three-fourths insane may assume that the laws of nature are constantly suspended in their behalf—it is impossible to lavish too much contempt upon such a magnification of every sort of selfishness to infinity, to insolence. And yet Christianity has to thank precisely this miserable flattery of personal vanity for its triumph—it was thus that it lured all the botched, the dissatisfied, the fallen upon evil days, the whole refuse and off-scouring of humanity to its side. The “salvation of the soul”—in plain English: “the world revolves around me”... The poisonous doctrine, “equal rights for all,” has been propagated as a Christian principle: out of the secret nooks and crannies of bad instinct Christianity has waged a deadly war upon all feelings of reverence and distance between man and man, which is to say, upon
the first *prerequisite* to every step upward, to every development of civilization—out of the *ressentiment* of the masses it has forged its chief weapons against *us*, against everything noble, joyous and high-spirited on earth, against our happiness on earth... To allow “immortality” to every Peter and Paul was the greatest, the most vicious outrage upon *noble* humanity ever perpetrated.—*And* let us not underestimate the fatal influence that Christianity has had, even upon politics! Nowadays no one has courage any more for special rights, for the right of dominion, for feelings of honourable pride in himself and his equals—for the *pathos of distance*... Our politics is sick with this lack of courage!—The aristocratic attitude of mind has been undermined by the lie of the equality of souls; and if belief in the “privileges of the majority” makes and *will continue to make* revolutions—it is Christianity, let us not doubt, and *Christian* valuations, which convert every revolution into a carnival of blood and crime! Christianity is a revolt of all creatures that creep on the ground against everything that is *lofty*: the gospel of the "lowly" *lowers*... any right to beauty, to the beautiful; only in them can goodness escape being weakness. *Pulchrum est paucorum hominum:* goodness is a privilege. Nothing could be more unbecoming to them than uncouth manners or a pessimistic look, or an eye that sees *ugliness*—or indignation against the general aspect of things. *Indignation* is the privilege of the Chandala; so is pessimism. “The *world is perfect*”—so prompts the instinct of the intellectual, the instinct of the man who says yes to life. “Imperfection, whatever is *inferior* to us, distance, the pathos of distance, even the Chandala themselves are parts of this perfection.” The most intelligent men, like the *strongest*, find their happiness where others would find only disaster: in the labyrinth, in being hard with themselves and with others, in effort; their delight is in self-mastery; in them asceticism becomes second nature, a necessity, an instinct. They regard a difficult task as a privilege; it is to them a *recreation* to play with burdens that would crush all others... Knowledge—a form of asceticism.—They are the most honourable kind of men: but that does not prevent them being the most cheerful and most amiable. They rule, not because they want to, but because they *are*; they are not at liberty to play second.—The *second caste*: to this belong the guardians of the law, the keepers of order and security, the more noble warriors, above all, the king as the highest form of warrior, judge and preserver of the law. The second in rank constitute the executive arm of the intellectuals, the next to them in rank, taking from them all that is *rough* in the business of ruling—their followers, their right hand, their most apt disciples.—In all this, I repeat, there is nothing arbitrary, nothing “made up”; whatever is to the contrary is made up—by it nature is brought to shame... The order of castes, the *order of rank*, simply formulates the supreme law of life itself; the separation of the three types is necessary to the maintenance of society, and to the evolution of higher types, and the highest types—the *inequality* of rights is essential to the existence of any rights at all.—A right is a privilege. Every one enjoys the privileges that accord with his state of existence. Let us not under-
sought out and found by a slow process and after many errors, but
that they are of divine ancestry, and came into being complete, per-
fect, without a history, as a free gift, a miracle...; and on the other
hand, tradition, which is the assumption that the law has stood un-
changed from time immemorial, and that it is impious and a crime
against one's forefathers to bring it into question. The authority of
the law is thus grounded on the thesis: God gave it, and the fathers
lived it.—The higher motive of such procedure lies in the design to
distract consciousness, step by step, from its concern with notions
of right living (that is to say, those that have been proved to be
right by wide and carefully considered experience), so that instinct
attains to a perfect automatism—a primary necessity to every sort
of mastery, to every sort of perfection in the art of life. To draw up
such a law-book as Manu's means to lay before a people the possi-
bility of future mastery, of attainable perfection—it permits them
to aspire to the highest reaches of the art of life. To that end the
thing must be made unconscious: that is the aim of every holy lie.—
The order of castes, the highest, the dominating law, is merely the
ratification of an order of nature, of a natural law of the first rank,
over which no arbitrary fiat, no "modern idea," can exert any influ-
ence. In every healthy society there are three physiological types,
gravitating toward differentiation but mutually conditioning one
another, and each of these has its own hygiene, its own sphere of
work, its own special mastery and feeling of perfection. It is not
Manu but nature that sets off in one class those who are chiefly in-
tellectual, in another those who are marked by muscular strength
and temperament, and in a third those who are distinguished in
neither one way or the other, but show only mediocrity—the last-
named represents the great majority, and the first two the select.
The superior caste—I call it the fewest—has, as the most perfect,
the privileges of the few: it stands for happiness, for beauty, for ev-
erything good upon earth. Only the most intellectual of men have

44.

—The gospels are invaluable as evidence of the corruption that
was already persistent within the primitive community. That which
Paul, with the cynical logic of a rabbi, later developed to a conclu-
sion was at bottom merely a process of decay that had begun with
the death of the Saviour.—These gospels cannot be read too care-
fully; difficulties lurk behind every word. I confess—I hope it will
not be held against me—that it is precisely for this reason that they
offer first-rate joy to a psychologist—as the opposite of all merely
naïve corruption, as refinement par excellence, as an artistic tri-
umph in psychological corruption. The gospels, in fact, stand alone.
The Bible as a whole is not to be compared to them. Here we are
among Jews: this is the first thing to be borne in mind if we are
not to lose the thread of the matter. This positive genius for con-
juring up a delusion of personal “holiness” unmatched anywhere
else, either in books or by men; this elevation of fraud in word and
attitude to the level of an art—all this is not an accident due to the
chance talents of an individual, or to any violation of nature. The
thing responsible is race. The whole of Judaism appears in Chris-
tianity as the art of concocting holy lies, and there, after many
centuries of earnest Jewish training and hard practice of Jewish
technic, the business comes to the stage of mastery. The Christian,
that ultima ratio of lying, is the Jew all over again—he is threefold
the Jew... The underlying will to make use only of such concepts,
symbols and attitudes as fit into priestly practice, the instinctive re-
pudiation of every other mode of thought, and every other method
of estimating values and utilities—this is not only tradition, it is
inheritance: only as an inheritance is it able to operate with the

1 Few men are noble.
force of nature. The whole of mankind, even the best minds of the best ages (with one exception, perhaps hardly human—), have permitted themselves to be deceived. The gospels have been read as a book of innocence ... surely no small indication of the high skill with which the trick has been done.—Of course, if we could actually see these astounding bigots and bogus saints, even if only for an instant, the farce would come to an end,—and it is precisely because I cannot read a word of theirs without seeing their attitudinizing that I have made an end of them... I simply cannot endure the way they have of rolling up their eyes.—For the majority, happily enough, books are mere literature.—Let us not be led astray: they say “judge not,” and yet they condemn to hell whoever stands in their way. In letting God sit in judgment they judge themselves; in glorifying God they glorify themselves; in demanding that every one show the virtues which they themselves happen to be capable of—still more, which they must have in order to remain on top—they assume the grand air of men struggling for virtue, of men engaging in a war that virtue may prevail. “We live, we die, we sacrifice ourselves for the good” (—“the truth,” “the light,” “the kingdom of God”): in point of fact, they simply do what they cannot help doing. Forced, like hypocrites, to be sneaky, to hide in corners, to slink along in the shadows, they convert their necessity into a duty: it is on grounds of duty that they account for their lives of humility, and that humility becomes merely one more proof of their piety... Ah, that humble, chaste, charitable brand of fraud! “Virtue itself shall bear witness for us.”... One may read the gospels as books of moral seduction: these petty folks fasten themselves to morality—they know the uses of morality! Morality is the best of all devices for leading mankind by the nose!—The fact is that the conscious conceit of the chosen here disguises itself as modesty: it is in this way that they, the “community,” the “good and just,” range themselves, once and for always, on one side, the side of “the truth”—and the rest of mankind, “the world,” on the other... In that we observe the most fatal sort of megalomania that the earth has ever seen: little

57.

One catches the unholiness of Christian means in flagranti by the simple process of putting the ends sought by Christianity beside the ends sought by the Code of Manu—by putting these enormously antithetical ends under a strong light. The critic of Christianity cannot evade the necessity of making Christianity contemptible.—A book of laws such as the Code of Manu has the same origin as every other good law-book: it epitomizes the experience, the sagacity and the ethical experimentation of long centuries; it brings things to a conclusion; it no longer creates. The prerequisite to a codification of this sort is recognition of the fact that the means which establish the authority of a slowly and painfully attained truth are fundamentally different from those which one would make use of to prove it. A law-book never recites the utility, the grounds, the casuistical antecedents of a law: for if it did so it would lose the imperative tone, the “thou shalt,” on which obedience is based. The problem lies exactly here.—At a certain point in the evolution of a people, the class within it of the greatest insight, which is to say, the greatest hindsight and foresight, declares that the series of experiences determining how all shall live—or can live—has come to an end. The object now is to reap as rich and as complete a harvest as possible from the days of experiment and hard experience. In consequence, the thing that is to be avoided above everything is further experimentation—the continuation of the state in which values are fluent, and are tested, chosen and criticized ad infinitum. Against this a double wall is set up: on the one hand, revelation, which is the assumption that the reasons lying behind the laws are not of human origin, that they were not
man is Christianized, which is to say, *befouled*, by the doctrine of
the *immaculata conceptio*?... I know of no book in which so many
delicate and kindly things are said of women as in the Code of
Manu; these old grey-beards and saints have a way of being gallant
to women that it would be impossible, perhaps, to surpass. “The
mouth of a woman,” it says in one place, “the breasts of a maiden,
the prayer of a child and the smoke of sacrifice are always pure.” In
another place: “there is nothing purer than the light of the sun, the
shadow cast by a cow, air, water, fire and the breath of a maiden.”
Finally, in still another place—perhaps this is also a holy lie—; “all
the orifices of the body above the navel are pure, and all below are
impure. Only in the maiden is the whole body pure.”

abortions of bigots and liars began to claim exclusive rights in the
concepts of “God,” “the truth,” “the light,” “the spirit,” “love,” “wis-
dom” and “life,” as if these things were synonyms of themselves and
thereby they sought to fence themselves off from the “world”; little
super-Jews, ripe for some sort of madhouse, turned values upside
down in order to meet *their* notions, just as if the Christian were the
meaning, the salt, the standard and even the *last judgment* of all the
rest... The whole disaster was only made possible by the fact that
there already existed in the world a similar megalomania, allied to
this one in race, to wit, the Jewish: once a chasm began to yawn
between Jews and Judaeo-Christians, the latter had no choice but
to employ the self-preservative measures that the Jewish instinct
had devised, even against the Jews themselves, whereas the Jews
had employed them only against non-Jews. The Christian is simply
a Jew of the “reformed” confession.—
45.

—I offer a few examples of the sort of thing these petty people have got into their heads—what they have put into the mouth of the Master: the unalloyed creed of “beautiful souls.”—

“And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city” (Mark vi, 11)—How evangelical!...

“And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea” (Mark ix, 42).—How evangelical!...

“And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire; Where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” (Mark ix, 47.1)—It is not exactly the eye that is meant...

“Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.” (Mark ix, 1.)—Well lied, lion!...

“Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For…” (Note of a psychologist. Christian

56.

—in the last analysis it comes to this: what is the end of lying? The fact that, in Christianity, “holy” ends are not visible is my objection to the means it employs. Only bad ends appear: the poisoning, the calumniation, the denial of life, the despising of the body, the degradation and self-contamination of man by the concept of sin—therefore, its means are also bad.—I have a contrary feeling when I read the Code of Manu, an incomparably more intellectual and superior work, which it would be a sin against the intelligence to so much as name in the same breath with the Bible. It is easy to see why: there is a genuine philosophy behind it, in it, not merely an evil-smelling mess of Jewish rabbinism and superstition,—it gives even the most fastidious psychologist something to sink his teeth into. And, not to forget what is most important, it differs fundamentally from every kind of Bible: by means of it the nobles, the philosophers and the warriors keep the whip-hand over the majority; it is full of noble valuations, it shows a feeling of perfection, an acceptance of life, and triumphant feeling toward self and life—the sun shines upon the whole book.—All the things on which Christianity vents its fathomless vulgarity—for example, procreation, women and marriage—are here handled earnestly, with reverence and with love and confidence. How can any one really put into the hands of children and ladies a book which contains such vile things as this: “to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband; ... it is better to marry than to burn”?1 And is it possible to be a Christian so long as the origin of

1 To which, without mentioning it, Nietzsche adds verse 48.
2 A paraphrase of Demetrius’ “Well roar’d, Lion!” in act v, scene 1 of “A Midsummer Night’s Dream.” The lion, of course, is the familiar Christian symbol for Mark.
morality is refuted by its fors: its reasons are against it,—this makes it Christian.) Mark viii, 34.—

"Judge not, that ye be not judged. With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." (Matthew vii, 1.)—What a notion of justice, of a "just" judge!...

"For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?" (Matthew v, 46.)—Principle of "Christian love": it insists upon being well paid in the end...

"But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matthew vi, 15.)—Very compromising for the said "father"...

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew vi, 33.)—All these things: namely, food, clothing, all the necessities of life. An error, to put it mildly... A bit before this God appears as a tailor, at least in certain cases...

"Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets." (Luke vi, 23.)—Impudent rabble! It compares itself to the prophets...

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." (Paul, 1 Corinthians iii, 16.)—For that sort of thing one cannot have enough contempt...

"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?" (Paul, 1 Corinthians vi, 2.)—Unfortunately, not

\^ Nietzsche also quotes part of verse 2.
\^ The quotation also includes verse 47.
\^ And 17.
merely the speech of a lunatic... This frightful impostor then proceeds: “Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?”...

“Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe... Not many wise men after the flesh, not men mighty, not many noble are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence.” (Paul, 1 Corinthians i, 20ff.6)—In order to understand this passage, a first-rate example of the psychology underlying every Chandala-morality, one should read the first part of my “Genealogy of Morals”: there, for the first time, the antagonism between a noble morality and a morality born of ressentiment and impotent vengefulness is exhibited. Paul was the greatest of all apostles of revenge...

that all partisans, including the German historians, instinctively roll the fine phrases of morality upon their tongues—that morality almost owes its very survival to the fact that the party man of every sort has need of it every moment?—“This is our conviction: we publish it to the whole world; we live and die for it—let us respect all who have convictions!”—I have actually heard such sentiments from the mouths of anti-Semites. On the contrary, gentlemen! An anti-Semite surely does not become more respectable because he lies on principle... The priests, who have more finesse in such matters, and who well understand the objection that lies against the notion of a conviction, which is to say, of a falsehood that becomes a matter of principle because it serves a purpose, have borrowed from the Jews the shrewd device of sneaking in the concepts, “God,” “the will of God” and “the revelation of God” at this place. Kant, too, with his categorical imperative, was on the same road: this was his practical reason.2 There are questions regarding the truth or untruth of which it is not for man to decide; all the capital questions, all the capital problems of valuation, are beyond human reason... To know the limits of reason—that alone is genuine philosophy... Why did God make a revelation to man? Would God have done anything superfluous? Man could not find out for himself what was good and what was evil, so God taught him His will... Moral: the priest does not lie—the question, “true” or “untrue,” has nothing to do with such things as the priest discusses; it is impossible to lie about these things. In order to lie here it would be necessary to know what is true. But this is more than man can know; therefore, the priest is simply the mouthpiece of God.—Such a priestly syllogism is by no means merely Jewish and Christian; the right to lie and the shrewd dodge of “revelation” belong to the general priestly type—to the priest of the décadence as well as to the priest of pagan times (—Pagans are all those who say yes to life, and

6 Verses 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, 29.

2 A reference, of course, to Kant’s “Kritik der praktischen Vernunft” (Critique of Practical Reason).
—Onestepfurtherinthepsychologyofconviction,of“faith.”Itis
nowagoodwhilesinceIfirstproposedforconsiderationtheques-
tionwhetherconvictionsarenotevenmoredangerousenemies
tothetruththanslies. (“Human, All-Too-Human,” I, aphorism 483.)¹
This time Idesiretoputthequestiondefinitely:isthereanyac-
tualdifferencebetweenalieandaconviction?—Alltheworldbe-
lievesthatthereis;butwhatisnotbelievedbyalltheworld!—Every
convictionhasitshistory,itsprimitiveforms,itsstageoftenta-
tivenessanderror:itbecomesaconvictiononlyafterhavingbeen,
foralongtime,notone,andthen,foranevenlongertime,hardly
one. What if falsehood be also one of these embryonic forms of
conviction?—Sometimes all that is needed is a change in persons:
what was a lie in the father becomes a conviction in the son.—I
call it lying to refuse to see what one sees, or to refuse to see it
as it is: whether the lie be uttered before witnesses or not before
witnesses is of no consequence. The most common sort of lie is
that by which a man deceives himself: the deception of others is
arelativelyrarereference.—Now,thiswillnottoseewhatonesees,
thiswillnottoseeitasitis,isalmostthefirstrequisiteforall
who belong to a party of whatever sort: the party man becomes
invariably a liar. For example, the German historians are convinced
that Rome was synonymous with despotism and that the Germanic
peoples brought the spirit of liberty into the world: what is the dif-
ferencebetweenthisconvictionanda lie? Isittoberwonderedat

¹Theaphorism,whichisheded “The Enemies of Truth,” makesthedirect
statement: “Convictions are more dangerous enemies of truth than lies.”
all, they were the privileged, and that was enough: the hatred of the Chandala needed no other excuse. The “early Christian”—and also, I fear, the “last Christian,” whom I may perhaps live to see—is a rebel against all privilege by profound instinct—he lives and makes war for ever for “equal rights.”... Strictly speaking, he has no alternative. When a man proposes to represent, in his own person, the “chosen of God”—or to be a “temple of God,” or a “judge of the angels”—then every other criterion, whether based upon honesty, upon intellect, upon manliness and pride, or upon beauty and freedom of the heart, becomes simply “worldly”—evil in itself... Moral: every word that comes from the lips of an “early Christian” is a lie, and his every act is instinctively dishonest—all his values, all his aims are noxious, but whoever he hates, whatever he hates, has real value... The Christian, and particularly the Christian priest, is thus a criterion of values.

—Must I add that, in the whole New Testament, there appears but a solitary figure worthy of honour? Pilate, the Roman viceroy. To regard a Jewish imbroglio seriously—that was quite beyond him. One Jew more or less—what did it matter?... The noble scorn of a Roman, before whom the word “truth” was shamelessly mishandled, enriched the New Testament with the only saying that has any value—and that is at once its criticism and its destruction: “What is truth?...”

to use him up. His instinct gives the highest honours to an ethic of self-effacement; he is prompted to embrace it by everything: his prudence, his experience, his vanity. Every sort of faith is in itself an evidence of self-effacement, of self-estrangement... When one reflects how necessary it is to the great majority that there be regulations to restrain them from without and hold them fast, and to what extent control, or, in a higher sense, slavery, is the one and only condition which makes for the well-being of the weak-willed man, and especially woman, then one at once understands conviction and “faith.” To the man with convictions they are his backbone. To avoid seeing many things, to be impartial about nothing, to be a party man through and through, to estimate all values strictly and infallibly—these are conditions necessary to the existence of such a man. But by the same token they are antagonists of the truthful man—of the truth... The believer is not free to answer the question, “true” or “not true,” according to the dictates of his own conscience: integrity on this point would work his instant downfall. The pathological limitations of his vision turn the man of convictions into a fanatic—Savonarola, Luther, Rousseau, Robespierre, Saint-Simon—these types stand in opposition to the strong, emancipated spirit. But the grandiose attitudes of these sick intellects, these intellectual epileptics, are of influence upon the great masses—fanatics are picturesque, and mankind prefers observing poses to listening to reasons...
Do not let yourself be deceived: great intellects are sceptical. Zarathustra is a sceptic. The strength, the freedom which proceed from intellectual power, from a superabundance of intellectual power, manifest themselves as scepticism. Men of fixed convictions do not count when it comes to determining what is fundamental in values and lack of values. Men of convictions are prisoners. They do not see far enough, they do not see what is below them: whereas a man who would talk to any purpose about value and non-value must be able to see five hundred convictions beneath him—and behind him... A mind that aspires to great things, and that wills the means thereto, is necessarily sceptical. Freedom from any sort of conviction belongs to strength, and to an independent point of view... That grand passion which is at once the foundation and the power of a sceptic's existence, and is both more enlightened and more despotic than he is himself, drafts the whole of his intellect into its service; it makes him unscrupulous; it gives him courage to employ unholy means; under certain circumstances it does not begrudge him even convictions. Conviction as a means: one may achieve a good deal by means of a conviction. A grand passion makes use of and uses up convictions; it does not yield to them—it knows itself to be sovereign.—On the contrary, the need of faith, of something unconditioned by yea or nay, of Carlylysm, if I may be allowed the word, is a need of weakness. The man of faith, the “believer” of any sort, is necessarily a dependent man—such a man cannot posit himself as a goal, nor can he find goals within himself. The “believer” does not belong to himself; he can only be a means to an end; he must be used up; he needs some one

—The thing that sets us apart is not that we are unable to find God, either in history, or in nature, or behind nature—but that we regard what has been honoured as God, not as “divine,” but as pitiable, as absurd, as injurious; not as a mere error, but as a crime against life... We deny that God is God... If any one were to show us this Christian God, we’d be still less inclined to believe in him.—In a formula: deus, qualem Paulus creavit, dei negatio.—Such a religion as Christianity, which does not touch reality at a single point and which goes to pieces the moment reality asserts its rights at any point, must be inevitably the deadly enemy of the “wisdom of this world,” which is to say, of science—and it will give the name of good to whatever means serve to poison, calumniate and cry down all intellectual discipline, all lucidity and strictness in matters of intellectual conscience, and all noble coolness and freedom of the mind. “Faith,” as an imperative, vetoes science—in praxi, lying at any price... Paul well knew that lying—that “faith”—was necessary; later on the church borrowed the fact from Paul.—The God that Paul invented for himself, a God who “reduced to absurdity” “the wisdom of this world” (especially the two great enemies of superstition, philology and medicine), is in truth only an indication of Paul’s resolute determination to accomplish that very thing himself: to give one’s own will the name of God, thora—that is essentially Jewish. Paul wants to dispose of the “wisdom of this world”: his enemies are the good philologists and physicians of the Alexandrine school—on them he makes his war. As a matter of fact no man can be a philologian or a physician without being also Antichrist. That is to say, as a philologian a man sees behind the “holy books,” and as
a physician he sees *behind* the physiological degeneration of the typical Christian. The physician says “incurable”; the philologian says “fraud”...

life for it?—An error that becomes honourable is simply an error that has acquired one seductive charm the more: do you suppose, Messrs. Theologians, that we shall give you the chance to be martyred for your lies?—One best disposes of a cause by respectfully putting it on ice—that is also the best way to dispose of theologians... This was precisely the world-historical stupidity of all the persecutors: that they gave the appearance of honour to the cause they opposed—that they made it a present of the fascination of martyrdom... Women are still on their knees before an error because they have been told that some one died on the cross for it. *Is the cross, then, an argument?*—But about all these things there is one, and one only, who has said what has been needed for thousands of years—Zarathustra.

They made signs in blood along the way that they went, and their folly taught them that the truth is proved by blood.

But blood is the worst of all testimonies to the truth; blood poisoneth even the purest teaching and turneth it into madness and hatred in the heart.

And when one goeth through fire for his teaching—what doth that prove? Verily, it is more when one’s teaching cometh out of one’s own burning!¹

¹The quotations are from “Also sprach Zarathustra” ii, 24: “Of Priests.”
—It is so little true that martyrs offer any support to the truth of a cause that I am inclined to deny that any martyr has ever had anything to do with the truth at all. In the very tone in which a martyr flings what he fancies to be true at the head of the world there appears so low a grade of intellectual honesty and such insensitivity to the problem of “truth,” that it is never necessary to refute him. Truth is not something that one man has and another man has not: at best, only peasants, or peasant-apostles like Luther, can think of truth in any such way. One may rest assured that the greater the degree of a man’s intellectual conscience the greater will be his modesty, his discretion, on this point. To know in five cases, and to refuse, with delicacy, to know anything further... “Truth,” as the word is understood by every prophet, every sectarian, every free-thinker, every Socialist and every churchman, is simply a complete proof that not even a beginning has been made in the intellectual discipline and self-control that are necessary to the unearthing of even the smallest truth.—The deaths of the martyrs, it may be said in passing, have been misfortunes of history: they have misled... The conclusion that all idiots, women and plebeians come to, that there must be something in a cause for which any one goes to his death (or which, as under primitive Christianity, sets off epidemics of death-seeking) —this conclusion has been an unspeakable drag upon the testing of facts, upon the whole spirit of inquiry and investigation. The martyrs have damaged the truth... Even to this day the crude fact of persecution is enough to give an honourable name to the most empty sort of sectarianism.—But why? Is the worth of a cause altered by the fact that some one had laid down his life for it? And why? Is death a final weapon, a shaming weapon?—The deaths of the martyrs, it may be said in passing, have been misfortunes of history: they have misled... The conclusion that all idiots, women and plebeians come to, that there must be something in a cause for which any one goes to his death (or which, as under primitive Christianity, sets off epidemics of death-seeking) —this conclusion has been an unspeakable drag upon the testing of facts, upon the whole spirit of inquiry and investigation. The martyrs have damaged the truth... Even to this day the crude fact of persecution is enough to give an honourable name to the most empty sort of sectarianism.—But why? Is the worth of a cause altered by the fact that some one had laid down his life for it? And why? Is death a final weapon, a shaming weapon?—

—Has anyone ever clearly understood the celebrated story at the beginning of the Bible—of God’s mortal terror of science?... No one, in fact, has understood it. This priest-book par excellence opens, as is fitting, with the great inner difficulty of the priest: he faces only one great danger; ergo, “God” faces only one great danger.—

The old God, wholly “spirit,” wholly the high-priest, wholly perfect, is promenading his garden: he is bored and trying to kill time. Against boredom even gods struggle in vain.¹ What does he do? He creates man—man is entertaining... But then he notices that man is also bored. God’s pity for the only form of distress that invades all paradises knows no bounds: so he fortieth creates other animals. God’s first mistake: to man these other animals were not entertaining—he sought dominion over them; he did not want to be an “animal” himself.—So God created woman. In the act he brought boredom to an end—and also many other things! Woman was the second mistake of God.—“Woman, at bottom, is a serpent, Heva”—every priest knows that; “from woman comes every evil in the world”—every priest knows that, too. Ergo, she is also to blame for science... It was through woman that man learned to taste of the tree of knowledge.—What happened? The old God was seized by mortal terror. Man himself had been his greatest blunder; he had created a rival to himself; science makes men godlike—it is all up with priests and gods when man becomes scientific!—Moral: science is the forbidden per se; it alone is forbidden. Science is the first of sins, the germ of all sins, the original sin. This is all

¹ A paraphrase of Schiller’s “Against stupidity even gods struggle in vain.”
there is of morality.—“Thou shall not know”:—the rest follows from that.—God’s mortal terror, however, did not hinder him from being shrewd. How is one to protect one’s self against science? For a long while this was the capital problem. Answer: Out of paradise with man! Happiness, leisure, foster thought—and all thoughts are bad thoughts!—Man must not think.—And so the priest invents distress, death, the mortal dangers of childbirth, all sorts of misery, old age, decrepitude, above all, sickness—nothing but devices for making war on science! The troubles of man don’t allow him to think... Nevertheless—how terrible!—, the edifice of knowledge begins to tower aloft, invading heaven, shadowing the gods—what is to be done?—The old God invents war; he separates the peoples; he makes men destroy one another (—the priests have always had need of war...). War—among other things, a great disturber of science!—Incredible! Knowledge, deliverance from the priests, prospers in spite of war.—So the old God comes to his final resolution: “Man has become scientific—there is no help for it: he must be drowned!”...

...without losing caution, patience and subtlety in the effort to understand them. Philology as ephexis in interpretation: whether one be dealing with books, with newspaper reports, with the most fateful events or with weather statistics—not to mention the “salvation of the soul.”... The way in which a theologian, whether in Berlin or in Rome, is ready to explain, say, a “passage of Scripture,” or an experience, or a victory by the national army, by turning upon it the high illumination of the Psalms of David, is always so daring that it is enough to make a philologist run up a wall. But what shall he do when pietists and other such cows from Suabia use the “finger of God” to convert their miserably commonplace and huggermugger existence into a miracle of “grace,” a “providence” and an “experience of salvation”? The most modest exercise of the intellect, not to say of decency, should certainly be enough to convince these interpreters of the perfect childishness and unworthiness of such a misuse of the divine digital dexterity. However small our piety, if we ever encountered a god who always cured us of a cold in the head at just the right time, or got us into our carriage at the very instant heavy rain began to fall, he would seem so absurd a god that he’d have to be abolished even if he existed. God as a domestic servant, as a letter carrier, as an almanac-man—at bottom, he is a mere name for the stupidest sort of chance... “Divine Providence,” which every third man in “educated Germany” still believes in, is so strong an argument against God that it would be impossible to think of a stronger. And in any case it is an argument against Germans!...

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2 A reference to the University of Tübingen and its famous school of Biblical criticism. The leader of this school was F. C. Baur, and one of the men greatly influenced by it was Nietzsche’s pet abomination, David F. Strauss, himself a Suabian. Vide § 10 and § 28.
Christianity also stands in opposition to all intellectual well-being,—sick reasoning is the only sort that it can use as Christian reasoning; it takes the side of everything that is idiotic; it pronounces a curse upon “intellect,” upon the superbia of the healthy intellect. Since sickness is inherent in Christianity, it follows that the typically Christian state of “faith” must be a form of sickness too, and that all straight, straightforward and scientific paths to knowledge must be banned by the church as forbidden ways. Doubt is thus a sin from the start... The complete lack of psychological cleanliness in the priest—revealed by a glance at him—is a phenomenon resulting from décadence,—one may observe in hysterical women and in rachitic children how regularly the falsification of instincts, delight in lying for the mere sake of lying, and incapacity for looking straight and walking straight are symptoms of décadence. “Faith” means the will to avoid knowing what is true. The pietist, the priest of either sex, is a fraud because he is sick: his instinct demands that the truth shall never be allowed its rights on any point. “Whatever makes for illness is good; whatever issues from abundance, from superabundance, from power, is evil”: so argues the believer. The impulse to lie—it is by this that I recognize every foreordained theologian.—Another characteristic of the theologian is his unfitness for philology. What I here mean by philology is, in a general sense, the art of reading with profit—the capacity for absorbing facts without interpreting them falsely, and

1 That is, to say, scepticism. Among the Greeks scepticism was also occasionally called ephecticism.
ments, as hints, as lessons, then the whole ground-work of knowledge is destroyed—then the greatest of crimes against humanity has been perpetrated.—I repeat that sin, man’s self-desecration par excellence, was invented in order to make science, culture, and every elevation and ennobling of man impossible; the priest rules through the invention of sin.—

world, and things which are despised": this was the formula; in hoc signo the décadence triumphed.—God on the cross—is man always to miss the frightful inner significance of this symbol?—Everything that suffers, everything that hangs on the cross, is divine... We all hang on the cross, consequently we are divine... We alone are divine... Christianity was thus a victory: a nobler attitude of mind was destroyed by it—Christianity remains to this day the greatest misfortune of humanity.—
be a Christian: one is not “converted” to Christianity—one must first be sick enough for it... We others, who have the courage for health and likewise for contempt,—we may well despise a religion that teaches misunderstanding of the body! that refuses to rid itself of the superstition about the soul! that makes a “virtue” of insufficient nourishment! that combats health as a sort of enemy, devil, temptation! that persuades itself that it is possible to carry about a “perfect soul” in a cadaver of a body, and that, to this end, had to devise for itself a new concept of “perfection,” a pale, sickly, idiotically ecstatic state of existence, so-called “holiness”—a holiness that is itself merely a series of symptoms of an impoverished, enervated and incurably disordered body!... The Christian movement, as a European movement, was from the start no more than a general uprising of all sorts of outcast and refuse elements (—who now, under cover of Christianity, aspire to power). It does not represent the decay of a race; it represents, on the contrary, a conglomeration of décadence products from all directions, crowding together and seeking one another out. It was not, as has been thought, the corruption of antiquity, of noble antiquity, which made Christianity possible; one cannot too sharply challenge the learned imbecility which today maintains that theory. At the time when the sick and rotten Chandala classes in the whole imperium were Christianized, the contrary type, the nobility, reached its finest and ripest development. The majority became master; democracy, with its Christian instincts, triumphed... Christianity was not “national,” it was not based on race—it appealed to all the varieties of men disinnerted by life, it had its allies everywhere. Christianity has the rancour of the sick at its very core—the instinct against the healthy, against health. Everything that is well-constituted, proud, gallant and, above all, beautiful gives offence to its ears and eyes. Again I remind you of Paul’s priceless saying: “And God hath chosen the weak things of the world, the foolish things of the world, the base things of the

50.

—In this place I can’t permit myself to omit a psychology of “belief,” of the “believer,” for the special benefit of “believers.” If there remain any today who do not yet know how indecent it is to be “believing”—or how much a sign of décadence, of a broken will to live—then they will know it well enough tomorrow. My voice reaches even the deaf.—It appears, unless I have been incorrectly informed, that there prevails among Christians a sort of criterion of truth that is called “proof by power.” “Faith makes blessed: therefore it is true.”—It might be objected right here that blessedness is not demonstrated, it is merely promised: it hangs upon “faith” as a condition—one shall be blessed because one believes... But what of the thing that the priest promises to the believer, the wholly transcendental “beyond”—how is that to be demonstrated?—The “proof by power,” thus assumed, is actually no more at bottom than a belief that the effects which faith promises will not fail to appear. In a formula: “I believe that faith makes for blessedness—therefore, it is true.”... But this is as far as we may go. This “therefore” would be absurdum itself as a criterion of truth.—But let us admit, for the sake of politeness, that blessedness by faith may be demonstrated (—not merely hoped for, and not merely promised by the suspicious lips of a priest): even so, could blessedness—in a technical term, pleasure—even be a proof of truth? So little is this true that it is almost a proof against truth when sensations of pleasure influence the answer to the question “What is true?” or, at all events, it is enough to make that “truth” highly suspicious. The proof by “pleasure” is a proof of “pleasure”—nothing more; why in the world should it be assumed that true judgments give more pleasure than false ones,

2 1 Corinthians i, 27, 28.
and that, in conformity to some pre-established harmony, they necessarily bring agreeable feelings in their train?—The experience of all disciplined and profound minds teaches the contrary. Man has had to fight for every atom of the truth, and has had to pay for it almost everything that the heart, that human love, that human trust cling to. Greatness of soul is needed for this business: the service of truth is the hardest of all services.—What, then, is the meaning of integrity in things intellectual? It means that a man must be severe with his own heart, that he must scorn “beautiful feelings,” and that he makes every Yea and Nay a matter of conscience!—Faith makes blessed: therefore, it lies...

51.

The fact that faith, under certain circumstances, may work for blessedness, but that this blessedness produced by an idée fixe by no means makes the idea itself true, and the fact that faith actually moves no mountains, but instead raises them up where there were none before: all this is made sufficiently clear by a walk through a lunatic asylum. Not, of course, to a priest: for his instincts prompt him to the lie that sickness is not sickness and lunatic asylums not lunatic asylums. Christianity finds sickness necessary, just as the Greek spirit had need of a superabundance of health—the actual ulterior purpose of the whole system of salvation of the church is to make people ill. And the church itself—doesn’t it set up a Catholic lunatic asylum as the ultimate ideal?—The whole earth as a madhouse?—The sort of religious man that the church wants is a typical décadent; the moment at which a religious crisis dominates a people is always marked by epidemics of nervous disorder; the “inner world” of the religious man is so much like the “inner world” of the overstrung and exhausted that it is difficult to distinguish between them; the “highest” states of mind, held up before mankind by Christianity as of supreme worth, are actually epileptoid in form—the church has granted the name of holy only to lunatics or to gigantic frauds in majorem dei honorem... Once I ventured to designate the whole Christian system of training in penance and salvation (now best studied in England) as a method of producing a folie circulaire upon a soil already prepared for it, which is to say, a soil thoroughly unhealthy. Not every one may

1 The word training is in English in the text.