

A List of *Sententiae* Taken from the *Eternal Gospel* by Professors of the University of Paris

Translated from the critical edition in Ernst Benz, 'Joachim-Studien II. Die Exzerptsätze der Pariser Professoren aus dem Evangelium Aeternum', *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 51 (1932): 415–455

A collection of errors of the gospel entitled “eternal”, which was condemned in the Roman curia under Alexander IV, and burned publicly at Paris in the *studium generale* in AD 1254 or 1255.

[Errors from the *Introductorius*]

The errors which follow can be extracted from the first part of the book which is called the *Eternal Gospel*; this first part is called the *Introduction* to the *Eternal Gospel*.

- [1] The first error is that the *Eternal Gospel*, which is the same as the doctrine of Joachim, surpasses the doctrine of Christ, and, for that reason, the New and Old Testaments.
- [2] Second is that the Gospel of Christ is not the gospel of the kingdom; and, through this, it does not pertain to the edification of the Church.
- [3] Third: that the New Testament will be emptied [of value] just as the Old Testament has been emptied.¹
- [4] Fourth: that the New Testament will not endure in its virtue beyond the next six years—namely, to the coming of the Incarnation in 1260.
- [5] Fifth: that those who will be alive after that time will not be held² to accept the New Testament.
- [6] Sixth: that another gospel will succeed Christ's Gospel; and thus another priesthood will succeed Christ's priesthood.

¹ The point is that the New Testament will be superseded by this ‘new’ gospel, just as the new law of the New Testament has superseded the Old.

² Reading *tenebuntur* (in *g*) for *tenentur*.

- [7] Seventh: that no one is suitable without qualification (*simpliciter*) to instruct men about eternal spiritual matters except for those who go about with bare feet.

[Errors from the *Concordia novi et verteris testamenti*]

The errors which follow can be extracted from the second part of the first book, which is called the *Concordance of the New and Old Testament* or the *Concordance of Truth*:

This error can be extracted from the first book of this part: namely that however much the Lord afflicted the Jews in this world, he shall nevertheless spare some—whom, even though they remain in their Judaism, he shall bless. And that he shall free them from all the attacks of men—even though they remain in their Judaism.

The following error is taken from the second book of this part: namely that the Church has not yet produced, nor will produce, sons before the end of the temporal kingdom, which will end in the next six years. And by this it is given to be understood that the Christian religion, which has already produced many [sons] by calling [men] to the faith of Christ, is not the Church.

These errors can be extracted from the second book of the same part:

- [1] First is that the Gospel of Christ leads no one to perfection.³
- [2] Second is that, with the advent of the Gospel of the Holy Spirit (or with Joachim's work becoming illuminated), which is called the *Eternal Gospel* or the *Gospel of the Holy Spirit*, Christ's Gospel will be emptied [of value].
- [3] Third is that a spiritual understanding of the New Testament has not been entrusted to the Roman people, but only a literal understanding. And by this it is given to be understood [1] that the Roman Church cannot judge when it comes to the spiritual understanding of the New Testament; and if the Church judges, its judgment is rash: and its judgment is not to be listened to; [2] and that the Roman Church is a material creature (*animalis*), not a spiritual one.
- [4] Fourth is that the withdrawal of the Greek Church from the Roman Church was due to the Holy Spirit; and by this it is given to be un-

³ Reading *perfectionem* for *perfectum* (in *BEMi*).

derstood that spiritual men are not bound to obey the Roman Church, nor listen to its judgments in the things which are of God.

- [5] Fifth is that the third order of the elect, which according to that same book is the order of the religious, is not bound to expose itself to death for the defense of the faith or for the preservation of the worship (*cultus*) of Christ against other men.
- [6] Sixth is that the Greek people walk more in accordance with the Holy Spirit than the Latin people; and through this it is given to be understood that the Greek people are in the state of salvation more, and that we should cleave to them more than to the Roman people or Roman Church
- [7] Seventh: that, just as the Son works the salvation of the Roman (or Latin) people because he represents them, so the Holy Spirit works the salvation of the Greek people, because he represents them; and through this it is given to be understood that the Father will save the Jewish people because he represents them.
- [8] Eighth: that, just as, at the arrival of John the Baptist, those things which had preceded were reputed old on account of the new supervening things, so, at the advent of the time of the Holy Spirit or third state (*status*) of the world, those things which preceded will be reputed old on account of the new things which will supervene. It is given to be understood from this that the New Testament will be reputed old and will be cast aside.

One error can be extracted from the third book of this part; namely that the Holy Spirit received something from the Church, just as Christ insofar as he was a man, received something from the Holy Spirit.

Two errors can be extracted from the fourth book of the same part in the first treatise.

- [1] First the desire to enumerate and harmonize the carnal genealogies, which were in the first state of the world and the spiritual states of the second world, is against the Apostle, who said in 1 Timothy 1[:3–4]: ‘I ask you . . . to give notice to certain ones, lest they teach differently or devote themselves to fables and endless genealogies, which offer more questions than edification.’⁴

⁴ The syntax is not as clear as it could be in this sentence. The error lies in the

- [2] Second: the desire to make clear the moments and times of those things which will come in the second state of the world through those which happened in the first state of the world is against that verse in Acts 1[:7]: ‘It is not for you to know the times or moments that the Father set by his own authority.’

Two errors are found in the second treatise of the same book:

- [1] First is that Christ and his holy apostles were not perfect in the comtemplative life.
- [2] Second is that the active life was fruitful until the time of Joachim, but now it is not fruitful; but the contemplative life began to be fruitful from that time; and hencefoth it will remain more perfectly in his perfect successors. And through this it is given to be understood that the order of clerics, to whom the active life pertains, will henceforth not be fruitful for the edification and preservation of the Church, nor at all in its governance; but the order of monks will henceforth be fruitful in these matters.

In the Fifth book of this part in the treatise on the seven days, four very suspect things are found and should be examined diligently.

- [1] First is that there will be someone from the order of the religious, who will be preferred to all orders in dignity and glory—in whom the promise of the Psalm, which says, ‘And he will rule from sea to sea’ (71:8), will be fulfilled.
- [2] Second is that that order in which the aforesaid promise of the Psalm will be fulfilled will increase in potency as the order of clerics will cease to be productive.
- [3] Third is that the order of the little ones (*parvulorum*) is that order in which the promise of the Psalm will be fulfilled.
- [4] Fourth is that, just as the control (*regnum*) of the whole Church was entrusted by the Father to some people from the order of the married in the fist state, in which that order was confirmed, and in the second

enumeration and harmonization of these genealogies, which is, the author(s) note, against Paul’s message in 1 Timothy.

state it was entrusted by the Son to some from the order of clerics, in which that order was glorified by him, so in the third state it is entrusted to someone or some people from the order of monks by the Holy Spirit, in which that order will be glorified by that Spirit.

Likewise, in that same fifth book in the treatise on Jacob, one very suspect thing is found; namely that those who are in charge of the colleges of monks in those days must think about the withdrawal of the seculars and prepare themselves for the return to the ancient people of the Jews.

In that same fifth book in the treatise on Joseph and the cup-bearer, to whom the dream came, it is found that the preachers who will be alive for the last state of the world will be of greater dignity and authority than the preachers of the primitive Church.

Likewise, in that same book in the treatise on the three kinds of men, namely Israelites, Egyptians, and Babylonians, it is found that preachers, doctors, and religious men will cross over to the unfaithful when they they are harassed by the clerics. And it is to be feared that they will cross over for this purpose: to gather them for a battle against the Roman Church according to the doctrine of blessed John the Apostle in Revelation 16.

However from what is said in the exposition of the history of David it can be understood that he who composed the work that is called the *Eternal Gospel* was *not* Joachim, but someone [else], or some [other] contemporary people, because it makes mention there about the emperor Frederick persecuting the Roman Church.⁵

Likewise, it is found in the same book that the sacraments of the new law will be emptied [of value] in the third state of the world; and through the emptying of the sacrament of the altar, he infers the emptying of the other sacraments.

Likewise, in the same book in the treatise on the history of Judith, it is found that the sacraments of the new law will not endure in the future beyond six years, which is to be calculated from the time of the composition of the book—namely, to the 1260th year of the Lord's Incarnation.

⁵ The author(s) of this text recognized that this text (at least) was a clear example of *vaticinium ex eventu*, that is, history disguised as prophecy. According to Benz (p. 444), the mention here of Frederick II might also be a gloss of Gerard's. Benz argues that this is conceivable since the interpretation of Frederick as Antichrist, according to the 'categories' of Gerard's Joachitism, is an important starting point for Gerard's interpretation of his own time—as his contemporary, Salimbene, also attests.