

Immanuel Kant

Religion within the Bounds of Bare Reason

Translated by
Werner S. Pluhar

Introduction by
Stephen R. Palmquist

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STEPHEN R. PALMQUIST

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*To my parents-in-law,
Leon and Sybil Puller*

CONTENTS

Dedication	v
Translator's Preface	xi
Introduction by Stephen Palmquist	xv
1. The Religious Context of Kant's Life: Conflicts of Heart and Mind	xv
2. The Place of <i>Religion</i> in Kant's Philosophical System	xix
3. Conflicts in Kant's <i>Religion</i> : Summary of the Text	xxii
A. Prefaces: The Conflict between Biblical and Philosophical Theologians	xxii
B. First Piece: Evil as the Transcendental Root of Rational Religion	xxiv
C. Second Piece: Grace as Reason's Logical Power to Combat Evil	xxvii
D. Third Piece: Church as the Empirical Realization of True Religion	xxxii
E. Fourth Piece: Service as a Hypothetical Way of Pleasing God	xxxviii
F. Four General Comments: Theological Supplements to Rational Religion	xliii
4. Implications and Enduring Relevance of Kant's <i>Religion</i>	xliv

Religion within the Bounds of Bare Reason

Preface to the First Edition	1
Preface to the Second Edition	11
Contents	15
FIRST PIECE On the Inherence of the Evil alongside the Good Principle, or, On the Radical Evil in Human Nature	17
<i>Comment</i>	22
I. On the Original Predisposition in Human Nature to the Good	27
II. On the Propensity to Evil in Human Nature	31
III. The Human Being Is Evil by Nature	35
IV. On the Origin of Evil in Human Nature	44
<i>General Comment.</i> On Restoring the Original Predisposition to the Good to Its Power	50

SECOND PIECE On the Struggle of the Good with the Evil Principle for Dominion over the Human Being	62
SECTION ONE On the Legal Claim of the Good Principle to Dominion over the Human Being	66
A. The Personified Idea of the Good Principle	66
B. Objective Reality of This Idea	69
C. Difficulties Opposing the Reality of This Idea, and Their Solution	74
SECTION TWO On the Legal Claim of the Evil Principle to Dominion over the Human Being, and the Struggle of the Two Principles with Each Other	88
<i>General Comment</i>	95
THIRD PIECE The Victory of the Good over the Evil Principle and the Founding of a Kingdom of God on Earth	102
DIVISION ONE Philosophical Presentation of the Victory of the Good Principle Amid the Founding of a Kingdom of God on Earth	104
I. On the Ethical State of Nature	104
II. The Human Being Ought to Leave the Ethical State of Nature in order to Become a Member of an Ethical <i>Community</i>	106
III. The Concept of an Ethical Community Is the Concept of a <i>People of God</i> under Ethical Laws	108
IV. The Idea of a People of God Cannot (by Human Arrangement) Be Carried Out Except in the Form of a Church	110
V. The Constitution of Any Church Always Starts from Some Historical (Revelation) Faith, Which May Be Called Church Faith, and This Is Best Founded on a Holy Scripture	113
VI. Church Faith Has Pure Religious Faith as Its Highest Interpreter	120
VII. The Gradual Transition of Church Faith to the Autarchy of Pure Religious Faith Is the Approach of the Kingdom of God	127
DIVISION TWO Historical Presentation of the Gradual Founding of the Dominion of the Good Principle on Earth	138
<i>General Comment</i>	152

FOURTH PIECE On Service and Pseudoservice under the Dominion of the Good Principle, or, On Religion and Priestery	165
PART ONE On the Service of God in a Religion as Such	168
Section One The Christian Religion as a Natural Religion	171
Section Two The Christian Religion as a Scholarly Religion	179
PART TWO On the Pseudoservice of God in a Statutory Religion	185
§ 1. On the Universal Subjective Basis of Religious Delusion	186
§ 2. The Moral Principle of Religion Opposite to Religious Delusion	189
§ 3. On Priestery as a Governance in the Pseudoservice of the Good Principle	195
§ 4. On the Guiding Thread of Conscience in Matters of Faith	206
<i>General Comment</i>	212
Glossary	223
Selected Bibliography	232
Index	251

Errata

The publisher regrets the following errors, which will be corrected in the next printing. Should additional errors be identified, corrections will be posted on the title support page for this volume at www.hackettpublishing.com.

<i>Page</i>	<i>Correction</i>
11–14	Footnotes 1–25 and their corresponding text references should be numbered 72–96. The correct number can be figured by adding “71” to each of numbers 1–25; the Index reflects the correct numbering.
23	Footnote 43, ninth line: “a ? 0” should be “a × 0”
68–69	Bracketed footnotes 65 through 69 should be renumbered as 55 through 59.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

After having, over some decades, translated Kant's three *Critiques*, my publisher and I decided, about six years ago, that it might be appropriate for me to embark on a new translation of the *Religion*, a fascinating work that Kant published after the *Critiques* and that is partly based on them but mainly transcends them.

The *Religion* has been translated several times. The earliest translations (see the Selected Bibliography) are no longer in use. The traditionally dominant translation has been *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, by Greene and Hudson, published in 1934. Although fairly reliable on the whole, it is often rather free and also contains a large number of errors. This is of course the reason why George di Giovanni in 1996 published his own, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*. Di Giovanni's translation has indeed erased the vast majority of the errors in the Greene-Hudson translation, though by no means all; unfortunately, it has also created a considerable number of new ones. I do not intend to be arrogant in pointing to these past errors, and in implying that of course I have, in my own new translation, made every attempt to avoid creating my own. No, I want to be modest: I have an unfair advantage, that of being a native speaker of German, even if not, of course, Kant's German, which I too have had to become acquainted with over time, in addition to the ever-continuing effort to understand all the substantive intricacies of the work being translated and whatever other works Kant refers to.

In this translation, I have as much as possible—there are a few exceptions—used English terminology consistent with that used in my translations of the three *Critiques*.

This translation has profited greatly from contributions made by two eminent Kant scholars. Professor James W. Ellington, whose skill and sensitivity as a Kant translator I have always admired, graciously read the entire manuscript. In the case of this volume, however, by far the main outside contribution has come from Professor Stephen R. Palmquist, a well-known expert—with an excellent knowledge of German—on Kant's religious views and on this work in particular. In addition to writing his superb Introduction, Professor Palmquist read the entire manuscript very closely and discussed with me in great detail and over many months numerous—often intricate—issues of terminological as well as substantive interpretation. To the amazement of both of us, we eventually came to agree on almost every single issue. Above all, the discussions themselves have, in many cases, led to significant improvements for this translation, some terminological, some substantive.

This translation of Kant's *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft* is based on the standard edition of Kant's works, *Kants gesammelte Schriften*, Königlich Preußische Akademie der Wissenschaften (Berlin: G. Reimer; Berlin

and New York: Walter de Gruyter & Co. and Predecessors, 1902–), vol. 6, edited, with introduction, variant readings, and factual elucidations, by Georg Wobbermin.

Like my translations of the three *Critiques*, this one also is copiously annotated, except that in this work Kant himself has inserted many long footnotes. Kant's own footnotes are distinguished from translator's footnotes by their larger print, by bold footnote and reference numbers, and by the absence of brackets. Translator's footnotes use the smaller print, have no bold numbers, and are bracketed. When a Kantian footnote has a footnote in turn, this latter note is referenced by a lower-case letter, and its number is the same as that of the original note but is followed by this lower-case letter.

Of the translator's footnotes, many contain references to other relevant passages in the work, to other Kantian works, and to works by other authors. A number of these references (in particular, some of the biblical ones) I owe to Stephen Palmquist. Others of my notes contain explanatory comments, variant readings, or translations (all of which are my own). Still other such notes are terminological. Of these, some explain or defend my renderings of certain German terms, but most give the original German term whenever it has been translated rather freely or is otherwise of special importance or interest; whenever terminological relationships between adjacent terms in the original have either been lost or (seemingly) created in translation; or whenever either the same German term is translated with different English terms or different German terms are translated with the same English term in the same context. The German terms are usually given in such footnotes *not* as they appear in Kant's original, but as they can be found—by interested readers—in a modern German dictionary: namely, in their modern spelling, and the verbs in the infinitive, the nouns in the nominative, etc.

References provided in this volume are given as follows. Page references in the table of contents are to the pagination of the present volume. The footnotes, however, refer to the original page numbers of the *Akademie* edition, which appear in the margins of this translation. Similarly, references to footnotes give the *Akademie* edition's page number and then the footnote number (sometimes including a lower-case letter) preceded either by 'n.' ('ns.' in the plural) or by 'br. n.' ('br. ns.' in the plural)—for *notes* containing Kantian materials or *bracketed notes* provided by the translator, respectively. References to other works by Kant are also to the *Akademie* edition, and are given as 'Ak.' followed by volume and page numbers and, as applicable, by 'n.' for a note, except for references to the *Critique of Pure Reason*, which follow the standard format for that work, by indicating 'A' and 'B' (for the first and second original editions) and then the page numbers in those editions.

At the end of this volume, the reader will find a selected bibliography, a glossary of the most important German terms in the work along with my translations of them, and an index.

Acknowledgments: In the course of translating the *Religion*, I frequently checked the translation by George di Giovanni, and occasionally also that by Greene and Hudson. I am very grateful to Professor James W. Ellington for the collaboration

already mentioned. However, I want to thank him once again for his invaluable contributions, over several decades, to my translation of all three *Critiques* and now the *Religion*. And I thank Professor Stephen R. Palmquist for his profoundly important contributions to this volume, without which it would not have attained its present quality. I address sincerest thanks, once again, to the various members of Hackett Publishing Company for their superbly professional and exceedingly friendly collaboration at every stage of this project. My warmest and deepest gratitude is once again reserved for my wife, Dr. Elissa J. Hoffman, whose expertise as psychiatrist as well as writer has allowed me to share with her many philosophical and linguistic concerns, and whose empathy and kindness have once again supported me in my project from beginning to end.

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INTRODUCTION

The cloaks under which the embryo first formed itself into the human being must be cast off if he is now to step into the light of day (Religion, 121).

Religion within the Bounds of Bare Reason is among the most influential books in the history of the philosophy of religion; yet, as with many a great book, interpreters incessantly disagree over what the author intended to say. An introductory essay cannot possibly discuss, much less resolve, all the interpretive difficulties facing the twenty-first century reader of this classic text. Fortunately, this new translation corrects one major oversight of past translations by rendering the enigmatic title in a way that preserves the crucial *clothing* metaphor Kant presents in the Preface and employs throughout the book, whereby rational religion is a “bare” (*bloß-*)¹ body that is inevitably clothed by some historical faith. Letting the power of this metaphor speak for itself, I divide this Introduction into four sections: after highlighting in §1 the key background issues relating to Kant’s experience of religion, I explain in §2 how *Religion* fits into the structure of Kant’s philosophical System; this prepares us for a detailed overview of the book’s contents in §3, so that we can assess in §4 its implications and ongoing relevance.

1. THE RELIGIOUS CONTEXT OF KANT’S LIFE: CONFLICTS OF HEART AND MIND

Kant’s conflicted religious upbringing is everywhere evident in the pages of *Religion*. The book is bound to be misunderstood by readers who forget that the author was raised as a devout Pietist at the hands of a loving mother whose moral instruction never ceased to inspire his appreciation and respect. Prussian Pietism arose as a movement within the Lutheran (state) Church, its leaders emphasizing private devotion to God, individual Bible study and moral integrity, while deemphasizing

¹ Twentieth-century English interpretations of *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft* were plagued by Greene and Hudson’s (1934) mistranslation of *bloßen* as “alone,” giving rise to a disastrous tendency to read Kantian religion as moral reductionism. Richardson, a much earlier (1798) but now virtually unknown translator, saw the metaphor in Kant’s title but used the rather too explicit “naked.” The Cambridge Edition (1998) uses “mere”; but this ignores the metaphor and has a pejorative connotation that is not present in Kant’s usage. For a full defense of the translation adopted here and its profound implications for a balanced interpretation of Kant’s *Religion*, see Stephen Palmquist, *Kant’s Critical Religion: Volume Two of Kant’s System of Perspectives* (Aldershot: Ashgate: 2000), Chapter VI.

church hierarchy, dogma and the theological presumptuousness that regards ritual as transmitting saving power. Kant's parents raised young Immanuel in a home some might call "fundamentalist" today, so that as a young adult Kant probably could not recall a time when he was not a "believer," so deeply ingrained was his youth in Christian Pietism.

Yet we also must not forget that the mother at whose beloved knee young Immanuel learned the ways of God was taken from this life when he was just thirteen years old and that, from ages eight to sixteen, he experienced such harsh treatment from his Pietist teachers that the very thought of those days filled the mature Kant with dread. Teachers at the *Collegium Fridericianum* would force students to *appear* devout by requiring them to pray aloud, memorize long passages of Scripture, recite creeds, etc. Kant explicitly disapproved of such pedagogical practices, yet ironically, they seem to have had their intended effect (to ingrain the truths of Scripture so deeply in his heart that they would flow through his blood and inform his whole being), for Kant's intimate knowledge of the Bible is evident throughout *Religion*. He often quotes or alludes to specific passages and weaves biblical themes into his rational arguments as if they were second nature; yet he seems at times to struggle against this tendency, even as he had refused to let his spirit be broken by the harsh schoolmaster of his youth.

The tendency of Kant's antireligious readers, including many Kantians who are attracted by other aspects of his System, to read into *Religion* a total disdain of anything religious must be avoided by anyone who wishes to understand this book in a hermeneutically responsible way. Tempting though it may be to think of Kant as renouncing all religion after those horrific days at the *Collegium* (or perhaps as never even embracing it), Kant went on to matriculate as a *theology* student at the University of Königsberg; and while serving as a private tutor for a pastor's family in his twenties, he probably filled in for his employer by occasionally preaching sermons. Moreover, Kant's writings nowhere provide clear evidence that he ever totally abandoned the essentials of his religious upbringing. Although his philosophical training and Critical reflections led him to remain silent about his personal beliefs, from his first publications to his last Kant seemed intent on discussing *theories* that have a direct impact on both theological belief and religious practice. One could argue that Kant's whole philosophy is *theocentric*, though perhaps only in the sense that the center of a storm is calm: all the energy generated by his central reflections on God ends up being channeled into *anthropology*, in an effort to help human beings understand who we are and how our lives should be lived in a religiously authentic way.

Kant's education and early publications took place during the heyday of the European Enlightenment and were deeply influenced by philosophers such as Christian Wolff (1679–1754), who declared himself a "supernaturalist" in matters of revelation even while arguing that reason provides us with a completely natural religion. This was a time when Reason reigned supreme in academia as well as in some quarters of the church. Optimistic rationalism—the assumption that reality is

inherently logical, so that reason can and should solve every problem—was taken for granted in one form or another as the proper philosophical standpoint for assessing any area of culture, including religion. Kant kept well informed on Enlightenment trends in theology and religious studies, as evidenced by his allusions in *Religion* to numerous contemporary scholars in these fields. Josef Bohatec points out that Kant borrowed much of his theological terminology from works of the Swiss theologian, Johann Friedrich Stapfer (1708–75), including his twelve-volume *Grounding for the True Religion*.² Kant was also conversant with the great biblical critic, Johann Salomo Semler (1725–91), a principal representative of German theological rationalism.

That Kant himself never fully adopted such Enlightenment assumptions may explain why he did not stand out as a remarkable student in his teachers' minds. His thinking was already advancing beyond theirs, already preparing for the paradigm shift he would later cause in the history of philosophy (see § 2), so to them he must have seemed like someone who did not quite “get” what philosophy is about. During his thirties, Kant appears to have loosened, or completely broken, the commitments he once had to organized religion; he began to lead a lively social life and (contrary to common caricatures of the lifelong bachelor) even had several love affairs.

As he entered midlife, already moderately well known for his early publications but several years before becoming Chair Professor at the University of Königsberg, Kant became intrigued by stories he had heard about the Swedish mystic Emanuel Swedenborg, but was disappointed by Swedenborg's refusal to reply to his questioning letters. His critique of Swedenborg's religious fanaticism, *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer Illustrated by Dreams of Metaphysics* (1766), exhibits more poignantly than any of his other writings the conflicted attitude that always characterized Kant's approach to things religious. While on the one hand calling Swedenborg a windbag fit for a mental hospital, he affirms Swedenborg's explanation of how spiritual visions occur as matching almost exactly with his own metaphysical theories. The crisis Kant experienced in the series of events that led him to write *Dreams* triggered a fifteen-year period of low productivity, when he published only a handful of small essays as he reflected deeply on how to solve, once and for all, the problem he now believed to be shared by metaphysicians and mystics alike. He recognized that the problem of metaphysics essentially corresponds to a *religious* and *theological* problem, so the solution to the former, as contained in his three *Critiques*, was bound to have implications for the latter. This helps explain why Kant taught classes on Rational Theology at least four times during the 1770s and 1780s and why the first book he wrote after publishing the third *Critique* (1790) was *Religion* (1793).

² See Pluhar's note 42 to the First Piece. Pluhar's notes provide numerous such references.

Kant could not have anticipated in 1766 that, over twenty years later, as he was diligently writing the books that constitute his System of transcendental (or Critical) philosophy, the religious tolerance that had characterized Prussia during his entire adult life would come to an abrupt end. King Frederick the Great (to whom Kant dedicated his *Critique of Pure Reason*) had been on the throne since Kant was sixteen; but shortly before the king died in 1786, Frederick's nephew, Friedrich Wilhelm II, was crowned. The new king, an orthodox Christian inclined toward mysticism, appointed an outspoken Freemason and Rosicrucian, Johann Christoph Wöllner, as his privy councilor for finance and de facto prime minister. In 1788 Wöllner issued an edict regulating the publication of ideas that might threaten the stability of the Lutheran church and other prominent religious groups, specifically mentioning the need to protect Christianity from the "Aufklärer" (i.e., Enlightenment scholars). By this time Kant was so firmly established at the top of Prussian philosophical academia that he dared to follow through with his long-planned application of his Critical System to religion, in spite of this edict. As a result, even the publication of *Religion* ended up being shrouded in conflict, this time of a political nature.³

Shortly after the 1794 publication of the second edition of *Religion*, Wöllner's edict became the basis for a royal order in October 1794, accusing Kant of "distorting and disparaging several principal and fundamental doctrines of Holy Scripture and of Christianity" and ordering him to cease and desist from all such activities. Kant had published the "First Piece"⁴ in a *Berlinische Monatsschrift* article in April 1792, thus alerting the authorities of the challenging nature of his position. When he submitted the Second Piece that June, it was rejected by the censor as too theological. Kant responded by compiling the four essays as a book and sending it for approval to the Dean of the Philosophy Faculty in Jena, who was able to approve it without submitting it for theological censorship. This slap in the face to Wöllner (the Second Piece already having been banned) had prompted a letter of reprimand, threatening harsh consequences should Kant attempt such an act of subversion again. So the royal order of 1794 was no laughing matter. Kant replied to Wöllner promising never to speak or write on religion again, "as long as the king shall live." Some criticize Kant for giving in to this pressure. One wonders, however, what more he could have done from a prison cell, where he would have ended up had he disobeyed, than he did from his professorial podium over the next few years.

³ See Manfred Kuehn, *Kant: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 362–366.

⁴ That Kant labels the chapters of *Religion* as *Erstes Stück*, *Zweites Stück*, etc. (literally "First Piece," "Second Piece," etc.) has been a matter of considerable confusion to English readers, especially since Greene and Hudson misleadingly used "Book One," "Book Two," etc. *Stück* appears to be a reminder that *Religion* consists of four essays ("pieces") originally written as a series of journal articles.

2. THE PLACE OF *RELIGION* IN KANT'S PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEM

Kant was a late bloomer. He was 57 when he completed the first of his three *Critiques*, but he then completed the other two, along with several supporting works, in just nine years. His many years of deep reflection on Enlightenment pretensions about reason's capacities had paid off. In addition to *Dreams*, several of Kant's early writings provide important clues to his mature view of theology and religion. *The Only Possible Argument for the Demonstration of the Existence of God* (1763) argues that the traditional proofs for God's existence all fail but can be replaced by a new "possibility" proof. He then gives morality an independent status from religion and theology in "An Inquiry into the Distinctness of the Principles of Natural Theology and Morals" (1764). But the radical implications of his new "Copernican" insight, whereby the philosopher's task is to discern the necessary ("transcendental") conditions for the possibility of whatever type of experience is under consideration, were still largely unforeseen up to this point.

Critique of Pure Reason (1781) first introduces God as one of three "ideas of reason" that constitute the proper subject-matter of metaphysics. Aside from some vague hints about God's mind, unlike ours, having the power of "intellectual intuition" (whereby objects come to exist merely by being present in the mind), Kant says very little about God until the Fourth Antinomy, where he argues that pure reason is incapable of determining whether the existence of the universe requires a *first cause*, because logic can be used to defend one side of the debate just as persuasively as the opposite side. This sets the context for Kant's discussion of proofs for the existence of God in the "Ideal of Reason," the longest chapter in the *Critique*. Kant there updates his earlier (1763) distinction between three types of proof and argues that all possible theoretical proofs fail to establish the existence of a divine being. The only nonempirical elements that can be admitted into a theoretical system are those with a transcendental status, serving as necessary conditions for the possibility of the experience relevant to the system; but God, freedom, and immortality are not necessary to scientific knowledge. From the standpoint of theoretical reason, we must therefore admit we are ignorant of God's existence. Kant thinks this result *protects* religion from philosophers who attempt to use pure reason to prove that God does *not* exist. The most Kant will allow here is a "regulative use" of the concept, whereby we may talk and act "as if" God exists, if we have sufficient practical reasons for doing so, even though we remain totally ignorant of the *fact* of God's existence in any scientifically significant sense.

Critique of Practical Reason (1788) defends what may seem to be a radically inconsistent position on God, but is better viewed as a natural outworking of the theoretical *Critique*. Having barred human beings from all scientific *knowledge* of God, Kant now claims our moral nature provides an overwhelmingly persuasive

reason for *believing* in God. He bases this claim on a peculiar feature of our moral situation: all rational beings who possess freedom of choice find themselves constrained to respect a “moral law,” whereby each person must give the interests of other rational/moral beings equal weight to one’s self-interest; likewise, all embodied rational beings should agree that a meaningful life, one that is truly worth living, must have an appropriate level of happiness. The problem is that following the moral law often requires us to sacrifice the very happiness we associate with life’s meaning. Kant thinks this puts us in a situation of practical absurdity, unless we “postulate” beliefs that can preserve the rationality of moral action. In short, he claims we must put forward as actual (i.e., believe, without knowing) some (unspecified) form of life after death and a moral God who will guarantee that “the highest good” (i.e., happiness in proportion to a person’s virtue) will become real in that future life.

While the first two *Critiques* answer Kant’s basic philosophical questions, “What can I know?” and “What ought I to do?” his *Critique of the Power of Judgment* (1790) is supposed to answer a third question, “What may I hope?” The problem is that the third *Critique’s* analysis of beauty, sublimity, and natural purposiveness—regarded as mysterious (but nonetheless real) symbolic forms of connectivity between the otherwise discrete realms of nature (knowledge) and freedom (morality)—does not address very explicitly the obviously religious tone of the third question. No doubt, this is why Kant added a lengthy Appendix setting out a “moral teleology” that presents the purposiveness of nature as pointing ultimately to a moral God whose creative purposes are fulfilled in humanity’s moral nature. Even with this Appendix, however, the third *Critique* provided an incomplete and only partially successful explanation of how human hope arises at the intersection of nature and freedom. The need for a more complete answer to the question of hope drove Kant to devote his next major work to a Critical philosophy of religion.

Religion relates to the other books in Kant’s System as part of his attempt to bridge the noumenal and phenomenal realms—and so also, the corresponding practical and theoretical standpoints. He accomplishes this by interpreting religious symbols as pointers to moral truths. This feature leads some (especially antireligious) readers to view the book as merely an extension of Kant’s ethics, intended to reduce all religion to morality. Although the First Piece on its own does constitute an important fine-tuning of Kant’s ethics, this accomplishes the very opposite of reduction: Kant’s argument is that evil corrupts our moral nature in such a way that morality must be *raised* to the status of religion in order for us to have any reasonable hope of fulfilling the moral demand. The detailed summary in § 3 highlights how *Religion* embodies the central conflict of Kant’s entire System, attempting to resolve it through a refined religious hope.

The censorship described in §1 did not prevent Kant from continuing to think and write about religion during his period of forced silence, for in 1798, soon after the king died in November 1797, Kant published his most mature account of the

relation between the theology faculty (the academic department that trained professional ministers to serve ordinary religious people) and the philosophy faculty. *The Conflict of the Faculties* enshrines the key feature of Kant's lifelong experience of religion, *conflict*, as a principle for responsible dialogue between philosophers and other academics. His Preface tells the censorship story and claims *Religion* is grossly misunderstood if the reader fails to recognize its central goal of affirming Christianity as "the universal religion" of the human race. Part One of *Conflict* goes on to explain that the philosopher's proper role in relation to the biblical theologian is to *maintain a healthy conflict*. The interests of the public (and for religion, this means ordinary religious believers) are best protected if scholars of each type adopt the assumptions and methods appropriate to their respective standpoints, in open dialogue with the other: philosophers rightly start with bare reason and seek to assess the meaningfulness of any alleged revelation, while biblical theologians rightly start from revelation and use reason to understand its content.

Kant explicitly identifies his intended readership in the Preface to *Religion* as consisting of these same two groups, whose natural inclination is to steer clear of each other's influence—much as did the dogmatists and skeptics whose positions the first *Critique* attempted to bridge. First and foremost, he addresses Enlightenment philosophers, many of whom were dogmatic in their rejection of empirical religion as irrelevant to their project—not surprising at a time when churches were in danger of being hijacked by fanatical extremists like Wöllner. They typically assumed bare reason can account for *all* religious truth, so that real empirical religion can be discarded as wholly illusory. A central goal of *Religion* is to demonstrate the rational instability of that position, inasmuch as morality cannot reach its aim, in the historical fulfillment of human destiny, without the aid of empirical religion. The second, equally important target group consists of Christian pastors and theologians (as well as theology students), many of whom (including some of Kant's friends) were skeptical about philosophy having any relevance to ordinary religious believers. This is why Kant never questions the *givenness* of religious experience but instead allows that the rituals and beliefs found within a specific religious tradition may have some genuine meaning not only to the believers but possibly (we can never know) even to God. To construct a persuasive transcendental argument, one must assume the basis for proof an experience one's skeptical readers will grant as genuine (see note 5). Kant, so often misunderstood by interpreters such as Gordon Michalson, who blame him for their confusion when he refuses to take sides, therefore freely grants, as the basis for such arguments, the concepts and practices assumed by his religious readers. As he writes in the first Preface, he wants philosophical theologians and biblical theologians "to be at one." The aim of *Religion* is to entice these groups into a creative conflict with the potential to transform both in the service of what Kant saw as the single greatest goal of humankind: the establishment of a community of right-minded and good-hearted persons.

3. CONFLICTS IN KANT'S *RELIGION*: SUMMARY OF THE TEXT

The four essays compiled in *Religion* constitute a system based on the same architectonic form Kant used as the pattern for his other systematic works. Following his table of four categories (quantity, quality, relation, modality), the “pieces” adopt, in turn, what I elsewhere call his transcendental, logical, empirical, and hypothetical perspectives. Subsections B–E, below, each highlights a specific conflict that arises when viewing religion from one of these perspectives. Subsection A examines the overarching conflict Kant introduces in the two Prefaces (the second added when Kant published the second edition in 1794, just before Wöllner’s censorship silenced him). Subsection F groups together the four *parerga*, or byproducts of reason, that Kant discusses in the General Comment appended to each piece, thus enabling us to see them as a systematic whole that follows the same fourfold (categorical) pattern as the four essays they supplement.

A. PREFACES: THE CONFLICT BETWEEN BIBLICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL THEOLOGIANS

The first Preface begins by positing the distinction that forms the basis for Kant’s entire religious system. When viewing humans as free, rational beings, we need not appeal to concepts such as God or happiness to explain why we should follow the demands of our inner moral nature. From this rational (philosophical) standpoint, “morality in no way needs religion . . . ; rather, through the power of pure practical reason it is sufficient to itself.” Nevertheless, the maxims we adopt when following the moral law point beyond themselves to “necessary consequences” that constitute the “purpose” of our moral nature. To ask what results from our right action is to adopt an empirical (historical) standpoint, focused on “natural need” rather than on reason’s formal requirements. From this standpoint, the idea of religion (i.e., belief in “a powerful moral legislator” who can guarantee the happiness of those who obey) “emerges from morality” as “a final purpose of all things.” Religion combines “the purposiveness arising from freedom with the purposiveness of nature,” the themes of the second and first *Critiques*. Morality is, therefore, independent from religion, yet leads “inescapably” to a religious goal that manifests itself in human history.

After an interlude claiming all treatises on religion ought to submit to public censorship, the first Preface distinguishes between theologians responsible for “the welfare of souls” (i.e., clerics) and those responsible for “the welfare of the sciences” (i.e., university scholars). Scholars, Kant claims (in a passage that must have infuriated the cleric Wöllner), should have priority over clerics in matters of censorship because the university has a built-in mechanism for self-censorship: it employs *two* types of theologians, each with a distinct responsibility to protect one of the two standpoints on religion. While the biblical theologian starts with

Scripture, using reason as a vehicle to clothe the explanation of religious truth, the philosophical theologian starts with “bare reason” and uses Scripture as a vehicle to enlighten its independent search for truth. Kant portrays these two as *neighbors* engaged in a creative conflict: each inhabits a separate “territory” and must respect the other’s property rights, taking care not to encroach onto the other side of “the bounds of bare reason.” Just as biblical theologians use rational argument to defend the truths of Scripture, philosophical theologians may “borrow from” Scripture, though they cannot dictate what biblical theologians should tell clerics about the meaning of Scripture. Having clearly separated these two “sciences,” Kant tells us he will conduct the “experiment” of “consider[ing] them as united.” Kant therefore recommends *Religion* to biblical theologians as a text for teaching students how to make a right use of reason in interpreting the Bible.

The second Preface, published less than a year later, serves as a postscript to the first. Kant begins by refining his territorial metaphor to clarify a possible ambiguity in the book’s title: the philosophical standpoint of “pure rational religion” and the historical standpoint of “revelation” relate to each other not as independent domains but “as concentric circles,” with the “*wider* sphere of faith enclos[ing] pure rational religion as a *narrower* one”; the philosopher’s “bare a priori principles” of morality define the inner circle that marks the boundary between the two. The “experiment” mentioned near the end of the first Preface seeks to resolve the conflict between philosophical and biblical theology by developing a version of the former that encompasses the core ideas of the latter. Kant now adds that *Religion* conducts a “second experiment, namely to start from some supposed revelation and . . . to hold the revelation as a *historical system* up to moral concepts . . . and to see whether this system does not lead back to the same pure *rational system* of religion.” These two experiments have the same goal, to find “not merely compatibility but also unity” between the conflicting standpoints of the biblical and philosophical theologian.

The second Preface concludes with a response to a critic who claimed *Religion* is as incomprehensible as the rest of Kant’s philosophical System and can safely be ignored by anyone who chooses not to ask Kant’s questions. Both the tone and content of Kant’s reply are noteworthy: “To understand this work in terms of its essential content, only common morality is needed, without venturing into the critique of practical reason, still less into that of theoretical reason”; while using some technical terms, such as “*phaenomenon*” and “*noumenon*,” is unavoidable as a concession to “the school” (i.e., so that *Religion* might serve as a useful textbook), “the matter itself is contained, even if in different words, in the most popular instruction for children or in sermons and is readily understandable.” Kant’s nostalgic tone, hearkening back to his religious upbringing, suggests he saw *Religion* as resolving his own private conflicts over religion. Unfortunately, over two centuries have elapsed since he wrote those words, and few (if any) readers have found the book’s content to be as simple as Kant portrays it to be. My goal here in §3 will therefore be to describe how the basic “matter” of each piece serves to resolve the conflicts

of religion by conducting two experiments: constructing a theory of rational religion that coincides with the core truths of biblical theology; and deriving religion's rational truths from biblical theology.

B. FIRST PIECE: EVIL AS THE TRANSCENDENTAL ROOT OF RATIONAL RELIGION

Do human beings start out good and become bad as time passes, or do they steadily evolve from bad to better? Kant's introduction to the First Piece argues that answering this eschatological question requires us to identify what can be ascribed to human beings *by nature*: we are either basically good or basically evil. Philosophers cannot resolve the "conflict" between these two "rigorist" positions by appealing to either intermediate option—that we are "neither good nor evil or . . . partly good, partly evil"—because their task is not to assess individual experiences, but to determine what we are "able to infer a priori from" any given choice(s). Even though experience "seems to confirm [an] intermediate position," philosophers must look to the purity of the maxim (or rule) that guides a person, and this cannot be a mixture but must be pure, because only purely good or purely evil incentives could serve as the basis for genuinely free choice. The conflict here is between the philosophical rigorism that judges "on the scales of pure reason (before a divine tribunal)" and the intermediate positions that judge "according to an empirical standard (by a human judge)." The philosopher's goal is to locate the subjectively universal basis of the good or evil maxims that give rise to human actions. Identifying this basis as our "nature" does not make it a natural impulse; rather, it is a deeply hidden "act of freedom" that is "inscrutable to us." Calling it "innate" means this fundamental choice to be good or evil is somehow already present at birth, not that birth is its cause. The only rational explanation for a person choosing to act in a way that does not conform to reason's internally-legislated moral law is to presuppose the person has adopted a "supreme" maxim that was determined by an opposing incentive consisting of "positive evil." This transcendental perspective relates to humans *as a species*; whether any individual could be immune from an evil nature predicated to the species—as some claim for religious figures such as Jesus—is a question Kant defers to "anthropological investigation."

Kant resolves this transcendental conflict by portraying human nature (i.e., the human species) as having an "original predisposition" to good that has been corrupted by a "propensity to evil." Sections I and II explain how each component, in turn, applies to three aspects of our nature: that we are animal (living), human (rational), and personal (accountable) beings. Animal self-love predisposes living beings to do good by causing them to preserve themselves, propagate the species, and form social groups for mutual protection. Human self-love predisposes rational beings to *compare* themselves with others, inclining each "to procure a worth for oneself in the opinion of others," and thereby drives us to create culture. While various

evils can be “grafted” onto the first two aspects, our “personal” nature (“the receptivity to respect for the moral law”) is *entirely* good, for “absolutely nothing evil can be grafted” onto it. The mere awareness of such respect does not suffice to make us persons, because we would not actually *choose* to adopt the moral law into our maxims if there were not “present in our nature a predisposition” to do so. These three aspects of the predisposition constitute the first of two *transcendental boundary-conditions* for Kant’s religious system, for “the conditions of their possibility” are grounded in reason; they “belong to the possibility of human nature,” being necessary for the very possibility of “our power of choice.” As the starting point of the first experiment, the predisposition to good does not make us actually good, but establishes only that we are *made to be good*.

If this predisposition were the only transcendental element of human nature, we would all inevitably become good, so our “habitual desire” to allow *evil* motives to determine our choices requires us to infer a second condition, a “propensity to evil,” as “the subjective basis for the possibility of” choosing evil. As a “contingent” tendency to desire evil once we experience it, the propensity is, paradoxically, “natural” or “innate”: we must conceive it as applying universally, to all human beings, even though we bring it upon ourselves through the choice whereby we first graft it onto the good predisposition. The “heart” (or “will”) is Kant’s term for the part of human nature that chooses whether to adopt this propensity as the supreme rule of choice (making an *evil heart*) or to preserve the moral law as the supreme rule (making a *good heart*). The evil propensity has three “levels”: “frailty” is the tendency to let (animal) inclinations overpower one’s rational choice to follow the moral law; “impurity” is the need to supplement the moral law with other incentives (e.g., based on the rational impulse to compare oneself with others) before making the right choice; and “perversity” is the habit of “revers[ing] the moral order in regard to the incentives” determining one’s choice, so that personal happiness (self-love) comes *before* any consideration of the moral law. These three classes of propensity must underlie the actions of “even the best human being . . . if one is to prove . . . [it] as universal”—i.e., a transcendental element in a system of rational religion. A person whose actions comply with the moral law is “legally good”; but to be *morally good* one’s choices must be motivated by *no incentive other than the moral law*. In order to determine free choice, the evil propensity cannot be *physical*, but must be *moral*; it must arise from “an intelligible deed, cognizable by bare reason, without any time condition”—a transcendental “deed” that is presupposed by all our *empirical* (physical) deeds.

After highlighting the tension between predisposition and propensity, Section III adds a new step to the argument: because evil clearly *is* a feature of human experience, “we may presuppose” the evil propensity in *all* human beings, as “a *radical, innate evil* in human nature”; otherwise we cannot explain how the good predisposition could fail to determine our moral character. In what may be the most infamous sentence in *Religion*, Kant says “we can spare ourselves the formal proof” that this evil propensity “must be rooted in the human being . . . in view of

the multitude of glaring examples that experience puts before our eyes.” He then cites examples of human evil, ranging from that found in primitive cultures to that of civilized states, making the Enlightenment’s dream of “the perfected moral improvement of all of humankind” look like mere “fanaticism.” These examples should not be read as an *excuse* for not proving the evil propensity, for Kant later says (see note 5 below) he has already given a “formal proof.” If human beings are good by nature (a necessity that does not make us *actually* good), then any evidence of actual evil requires us to infer a “bare” (timelessly “chosen”) evil propensity; these examples are the evidence that at least some human beings *are* evil; so the formal conclusion of what amounts to a transcendental argument is that the evil propensity must exist as a universal feature of human nature.⁵

The remainder of Section III clarifies various features of this proof. First, Kant rules out the two alternatives to the evil propensity: the basis of evil deeds can be found neither in “the natural inclinations” of our sensibility (because these provide the occasion for virtue), nor in a corrupted reason that lacks respect for the moral law (because without the moral law we would not have freedom to choose). Humans are neither mere animals (acting solely on natural inclination) nor devils (actively opposing the moral law). The “proper constitution” of the evil propensity “must be cognized a priori from the concept of evil,” not merely from examples, for a person’s moral character does not consist of deeds based solely on one incentive (the moral law) or the other (inclinations toward self-love), but depends on “which of the two [a person] makes the condition of the other.” An evil person merely “reverses the moral order of the incentives in admitting them into his maxims,” making self-love the supreme maxim instead of the moral law. If, for prudential reasons, one’s deeds remain consistent with the moral law, “the empirical character is good, but the intelligible character is always still evil.” This “*perver-*sity of the heart” gives us an “*innate* guilt” that we can perceive as soon as free choice manifests itself in our moral development.

Having completed the first stage of his rational system of religion, while alluding to many otherwise tangential biblical texts as confirmation of his first experiment’s success, Kant devotes Section IV primarily to the *second* experiment, explicitly focusing on the doctrine of original sin. To find the “origin” or “first cause” of a given effect (e.g., evil), he argues, we can look either for the “rational origin” of its *existence* or for the “temporal origin” of its *occurrence*. But a temporal origin of a free choice would be “a contradiction”; the search for a temporal

⁵ “The proper proof” that *all* people are evil, Kant claims in a footnote at the end of Section III, “is contained not in this section but in the previous one. This section contains only the confirmation of the judgment through experience.” This indicates he is following the standard form of a transcendental argument. For a detailed account of the structure of this argument and of why it is transcendental, see my article, “Kant’s Quasi-Transcendental Argument for a Necessary and Universal Evil Propensity in Human Nature,” *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 46.2 (Summer 2008): 261–297.

origin therefore leads us to infer a universal evil propensity as the transcendental basis of our contingent evil deeds. Treating the biblical story of the Fall as an account of evil's "*inheritance* from the first parents" is "the most inappropriate" interpretation, because it offers an empirical solution to a philosophical problem. However, if we interpret the story as a symbolic description of how in "[e]very evil action" a person has "fallen into it directly from the state of innocence," this way of explaining evil's origin "agrees quite well with" Kant's rational account. Scripture, according to Kant, correctly portrays evil not as arising from a necessary trait of our nature, but as a free rational choice, in response to a strict "divine command," whereby we "use subtle reasoning to downgrade [our] obedience to the command," considering "self-love" and "sensible impulses" to be more important than the moral law—this being Kant's philosophical definition of "sin." Whereas the first sinner was innocent, we must presuppose "an innate propensity to transgression" in ourselves—a non-temporal (and so, unconscious) evil deed of preferring self-love—that grounds all our temporal evil deeds. Kant thinks the biblical depiction of Satan as "a seducing *spirit*" is an appropriate symbol of the "incomprehensibility" of this rational origin of human evil. Without straying into the biblical theologian's domain, the second experiment here shows how the Bible leads directly to the core truths of rational religion concerning evil.

When published as a journal article, the First Piece appeared in five sections. In the book's second edition, Kant moved Section V to the concluding General Comment, because it previews the Second Piece rather than elaborating further on the First Piece's theme. However, this clashes with the General Comment's purpose, to discuss a *parergon* corresponding to the perspective of the First Piece (see § 3.F, on p. xliii). A better way of dealing with this "misfit" section would have been to make it a transitional Appendix or even an introduction to the Second Piece. As such, I discuss it, in next subsection, as a transition to the second stage of Kant's argument.

C. SECOND PIECE: GRACE AS REASON'S LOGICAL POWER TO COMBAT EVIL

Kant's transition to the Second Piece (appearing in the First Piece's General Comment) lays out the logic of how reason uses religious concepts to combat the dire consequences of evil, in hopes of "restoring . . . the good [predisposition] to its power." While God's cooperation may be needed for such restoration to be possible, Kant insists "the human being must . . . *accept* this aid" if any renewed goodness is to be imputed. That such a transformation "surpasses all our concepts" does not make it impossible, for as demonstrated in the First Piece, the corruption of the good predisposition by the evil propensity has occurred even though we cannot conceptualize it either. All we can do to "make ourselves receptive to a higher and to us inscrutable assistance" is focus on "a germ of the good" that remains in us—i.e., our continued ability to obey the moral law, despite our evil propensity. We

must restore the *purity* of the moral law as our sole incentive for making moral choices. Firmly resolving to do good may enable our *empirical* character to improve, but such change is inevitably gradual and can be motivated by self-love; to become “pleasing to God” (the goal of all religion) requires *virtue* in one’s “intelligible character,” and this can result only from “a change of heart.” Kant applies his key perspectival distinction to explain how this inward “revolution” is logically possible: God must assess the human heart and its supreme maxim from the intelligible standpoint, whereas we can assess our moral disposition⁶ only on the basis of our particular choices and the gradual reform we experience in time. God must view our “constant *progress*” as “a unity . . . tantamount to actually being a human being who is good (pleasing to him).” Many “impure religious ideas” arise because people tend to be morally lazy, inventing ways of obtaining God’s help without requiring a change of heart. Yet we need not know *how* God assists us in order to be empowered by the bare idea that such assistance is available to anyone *morally* prepared to receive it.

After an introduction praising Stoic virtue because it “presupposes an enemy” and thus discourages moral laziness, though it wrongly identifies the enemy as “the natural inclinations” rather than as a corruption of morally-legislating reason (i.e., as the temptation to act without regard to *any* principles rather than as a *rational choice* to adopt a perverted principle of self-love), the Second Piece examines “the struggle of the good with the evil principle for dominion over the human being.” Its two sections correspond (as do the main divisions of the Third and Fourth Pieces) to Kant’s two experiments. Section One adopts the philosopher’s rational standpoint to assess the “legal claim of the good principle,” while Section Two adopts Scripture’s historical standpoint to assess the “legal claim of the evil principle.”

⁶ Kant’s elusive term, *Gesinnung*, is normally translated as “disposition” in religious contexts. Pluhar’s use of “attitude” following his translations of the three *Critiques*, preserves self-consistency but is likely to be misleading in *Religion*. While I appreciate and agree with his misgivings about “disposition,” “attitude” is too vague and too empirical to convey the deep (and hidden!) *power* Kant attributes to *Gesinnung*, especially in the Second Piece. Here *Gesinnung* is not just any attitude, but a very special, *fundamental attitude* (a *Grundhaltung*) that directs the heart toward one goal (evil) or another (good); upon it rests nothing less than a person’s salvation! Ordinary attitudes change easily; yet a change in one’s *Gesinnung* is a rare and revolutionary event. I toyed with using “conviction,” a word that aptly refers to the belief-oriented commitment that is central to the way Kant thinks *Glaube* (faith or belief) influences our actions. Provided we understand it not as a reasoned (propositional) conclusion but as a heart-centered *resolve to act in a certain way*, “conviction” is my preferred translation. However, its similarity in meaning to *Überzeugung* (translated by Pluhar as “conviction”), a term Kant uses more narrowly and sometimes pejoratively, led me to give up this option for this essay. That Kant never uses *Haltung* (the standard German word for “attitude”) in *Religion* reflects that he does not think our *psychological attitudes* have the least relevance to religion. To alert readers of Pluhar’s translation to this potentially disastrous misreading of Kant’s religious theory, I use “disposition(s)” throughout this Introduction. Aside from this one term, I follow Pluhar’s translation in all quotations from *Religion*.

Subsection A of Section One presents the key element in the second (logical) stage of Kant's rational system of religion as the "Personified Idea of the Good Principle." Given that *perfect humanity* is "the purpose of creation," the idea of a perfect human being "emanates from God's essence" as an "only begotten Son," a "word . . . without which nothing exists that has been made." After quoting several biblical references to the *λόγος* (*logos*; i.e., 'word'), Kant claims this "rational being," as the "archetype of the moral disposition in all its purity . . . can give us power" to become good again. We can aptly depict this archetype within us by describing it (as in the biblical account of Jesus) as having "*come down* to us from heaven" to assume humanity, yet without being corrupted by the evil propensity, for our predisposition "by itself is not evil." To serve as an archetype for us weak human beings, who are constantly "wrestling with obstacles" when trying to do good, our idea of such a perfect person must be of one "who would not only be willing to perform any human duty" and to teach others to do the same, but also "be willing to take upon himself all sufferings" even to the point of dying "for the sake of the world's greatest good." Only a person who has "practical faith in this Son of God"—i.e., confidence that he or she can "unshakably continue to adhere to humanity's archetype and to imitate its example in faithful emulation"—"is entitled to regard himself as . . . an object not unworthy of divine pleasure."

Subsection B argues that the "Objective Reality" of this idea of a perfect human person is self-evident, viewed from the non-temporal standpoint of practical reason, because duty demands that we always "be in conformity to it." We need not understand how this can happen in order to know it must be possible; the pure rational idea can empower us without being embodied in any "example from experience." One who demands *more* than the bare (non-temporal, intellectual) choice to adopt duty alone as a supreme maxim thereby "confesses . . . his moral *faithlessness*." We cannot require a miracle, for example, as proof that God has made a person perfect, because we could identify such a miracle only by appealing to the idea of perfection. Examples of perfection in our temporal experience are possible, because "every human being should provide an example for this idea in himself." Yet, paradoxically, as an inner idea, "no example in outer experience is adequate to it"; even through introspection, we cannot penetrate with certainty to the rational root of our deeds (i.e., their supreme governing maxim) but can only *hope*, based on our experiences in time. This conflict between reason's limits and human hope is what gives rise to religion, so we should not be surprised to see Kant struggling with it throughout *Religion*.

The subtlety of Kant's resolution of the religious conflict is no more evident than in his comments on the status of real religious/moral heroes, such as Jesus (who remains unnamed throughout the book). In the second half of Subsection B, Kant says even if "a truly divinely minded human being" were to appear in "outer experience" as "a human being pleasing to God," no matter how great a "revolution in humankind" his life and teachings brought about, we would not need "to assume in him anything other than a naturally begotten human being," because the

archetype *already has* a divine origin. We cannot rule out the theoretical possibility of a wholly non-natural origin; yet belief in such an origin is unlikely to empower us to experience a change of heart. Instead, it may *hinder* the required change: if it makes “any transgression absolutely impossible for him,” then this “divine human being could no longer be set up as an *example* for the natural human being.” This may inspire great “love and gratitude” toward the divine human, but not *imitation*. A fully human teacher, by contrast, could empower his followers to imitate him in a “completely valid” way by speaking of his moral disposition as divine, referring to its intelligible origin, for this is something all human beings possess. Faith in such a historical example empowers religious believers to appropriate the archetype’s perfection—if certain “difficulties” in comprehending such appropriation can be resolved.

Subsection C presents three difficulties threatening the reality of the archetype and solves each by relating it to the essential religious conflict. The first difficulty arises because at any given time our deeds are “deficient”; they cannot clearly reflect the “holy principle” duty requires us to adopt as supreme maxim. The moral law demands absolute purity, yet we start out with an evil propensity. How, then, can our corrupted disposition “count for the deed”? Kant’s solution distinguishes the timeless (divine) and temporal (historical) standpoints on moral judgment. By projecting our moral progress in time “*ad infinitum* toward commensurateness with that law,” the judge “who knows the heart” can create “in his pure intellectual intuition,” based on our temporal development, “a perfected whole also in terms of the deed (the way of life).” Even though we continue committing evil deeds after experiencing a change of heart, God can be pleased with a good-hearted person’s *potential* future perfection.

The second difficulty arises when a person “striving toward the good” wishes to be assured of eventually reaping the happiness that awaits one who persists on the path toward perfection. Kant’s chief concern throughout the Second Piece is with moral empowerment: *total* confidence that one is on the right path could breed laziness, while a total *lack* of confidence could lead to despair. The solution is to be content with *moderate* confidence: a person who can see “a basic improvement” in temporal deeds since “he adopted the principles of the good” can thereby infer the presence of a good heart, and this awareness can “increase one’s *strength*” to stay on the good path, not only now but in any future life. By contrast, one who cannot detect improvement in temporal deeds probably has not experienced a change of heart and so has no reason to hope God will be pleased. This approach empowers *both* good-hearted and (self-deceiving) evil-hearted persons, without requiring us to assume the reward (happiness) or punishment (misery) reaped from one’s way of life must be eternal. The good-hearted disposition thus serves as a spiritual “Comforter (Paraclete) when our lapses make us worried about its persistence.”

The third and “greatest difficulty” arises because the solution to the first difficulty does not explain how a just God can overlook *pre-conversion* evil. We

cannot “extract any surplus” of goodness from our good deeds, beyond what morality intrinsically requires, nor can the “original debt” incurred by pre-conversion evil deeds “be extirpated . . . by anyone else.” Unlike monetary debt, moral debt is not *transmissible*; it “is the *most personal of all* obligations, namely a debt of sins” that can justly be satisfied only by “an *infinite punishment*.” Kant rejects the two most obvious explanations of how a good-hearted person’s pre-conversion sin can be punished: punishment cannot happen *before* conversion, otherwise no conversion would be needed to please God; nor can it happen *after* conversion, for then “the human being is already living the new life and is morally a different human being.” Instead, punishment must be “commensurate with this change” so that the conversion experience *carries with it* (as on a cross) a satisfaction of divine justice. The converted person is *physically* the same, yet morally new; in adopting a good disposition, the new moral person bears the debt of the old person “as *proxy*,” agreeing to endure “a long series of life’s ills”—ills that would *seem* like punishment to the old person—for the sake of upholding the purity of the moral law. This process goes on “continually” in each religious person, even though the archetype (“the representative of human kind”—i.e., Jesus) suffers and dies “once and for all.” The “surplus” that solves this difficulty by being “imputed to us *by grace*” comes from this archetype; “empirical cognition” of our deeds gives us “no legal claim” to be regarded as good by God, except insofar as they give evidence of our “receptivity” to this inner archetype.

Having presented rational reinterpretations of the Christian doctrines of sanctification, eternal assurance and justification, Kant seeks in the remainder of Subsection C to complete this second stage of his first experiment by confirming its compatibility with the standpoint of biblical theology. He says the foregoing “deduction” (the type of proof used to justify the constitutive element of the logical perspective in the *Critiques*) of the archetype’s reality serves a practical purpose by answering “a speculative question” about how divine justice can be reconciled with “the hope for the human being’s absolution from his guilt” through grace. Realizing that hope in grace is rational “only on the presupposition of a complete change of heart” encourages believers to reflect on whether and how they are gradually casting off the old (evil) ways through an “awakening conscience.” Belief in a future, final judgment is morally empowering if we imagine an *inner* judge, because one “cannot bribe his own reason,” whereas viewing the judge as external encourages one to perform deeds of appeasement that do not require a disposition of moral improvement. Typical of the latter, wrong-headed view of religion is the notion that one can enjoy a “life of gratification,” then feign a conversion just before death—a temptation clerics should discourage by refusing to offer doctrinal “opium” for the conscience of one who is about to die but instead *stirring up* the person’s conscience.

Kant turns in Section Two to his second experiment, observing that Scripture symbolizes the same “intelligible moral relation” between the good and evil principles as a struggle between two (unnamed) persons—he is obviously referring to Satan and Jesus—outside the human being. The first humans were created good,

but God gave them freedom by letting Satan try “to acquire a dominion *over people’s minds*.” Despite the Fall, the legal claim of the good principle was safeguarded by the Jewish theocratic government; yet that external symbol of the purity of goodness was later replaced by a government “attuned to no incentives other than the goods of this world.” Jewish moral laws took on external forms, based on “coercion,” and were powerless to combat “the kingdom of darkness.” Suddenly there appeared “a person whose wisdom was purer still than that of the philosophers”; somehow he remains unaffected by humanity’s pact “with the evil principle” (a moral purity aptly symbolized by virgin birth). Jesus threatens Satan’s dominion, because faith in his good example can empower others to turn away from evil; Satan fights back, trying to discredit Jesus through physical persecution. Satan wins the physical battle (i.e., Jesus dies) but loses the moral battle: Jesus remains free by refusing to enslave himself to the evil principle’s rule over his mind. He thus “opens the gate of freedom to all who, like him, want to die unto everything that keeps them fettered to life on earth to the detriment of morality.” Jesus succeeds not in destroying Satan’s kingdom, but only in “the breaking of its power to hold, against their will, those who” have chosen to be slaves of evil. Like Jesus, his followers will experience the persecution involved in renouncing self-love. The obvious consistency between this story and the religious system defended in Section One shows that the “spirit and rational meaning” of the Bible’s teachings have “been practically valid and obligatory for all the world at all times”: Jesus reveals the highest wisdom, for he practices “the *holiest* teaching of reason.”

D. THIRD PIECE: CHURCH AS THE EMPIRICAL REALIZATION OF TRUE RELIGION

Kant introduces the Third Piece by observing that, despite being liberated from evil’s dominion, a person with a good disposition “continues to remain exposed to the attacks of the evil principle” and must be “armed for struggle” in the empirical world. An “intrinsically contented nature” will not suffice to resist the corrupting influence of “hostile inclinations” (e.g., envy, greed, lust) when one is with others—even if they are also good-hearted. We must therefore establish “a union aiming quite expressly at the prevention of this evil and the furtherance of the good in the human being.” This third stage of Kant’s religious system requires “all who love the good” to create “an *ethical community*,” a moral “kingdom” assembled under the “flag of virtue.” Kant examines this idea’s “objective reality”—a term denoting the applicability of a concept to possible objects, typically from the empirical perspective—in two “Divisions,” adopting the philosophical and historical standpoints, respectively.

The first of Division One’s seven subsections distinguishes between “political” and “ethical” situations, wherein people are united either by “coercive laws” or

“laws free from coercion, i.e., bare *laws of virtue*.” The “state of nature” has “no *public* power-holding authority” (whether political or ethical); “each person legislates to himself.” External laws coerce people out of the state of nature into a *political* community but should not aim at “ethical purposes,” for this “would . . . not only bring about precisely the opposite of the ethical purposes, but would also undermine [the] political ones and render them insecure.” Political states should leave citizens free to decide whether to join an ethical community that takes them out of the ethical state of nature. Just as political states should be “connected by a public law of nations,” so also each group of people forming an ethical community constitutes “only a presentation or a schema” of “the ideal of the whole of all human beings” who unite themselves under laws of virtue.

Subsection II presents what amounts to a *religious argument* for the existence of God.⁷ Just as people in a state of nature must form political states to avoid “a situation of injustice and of war of everyone against everyone,” so also they must form ethical communities to defend against the natural state “of inner immorality,” the “*public* reciprocal aggression against the principles of virtue” that causes even good people to have a corrupting influence on each other. Forming such a community is a unique duty “of humankind toward itself,” because the “common purpose” of “every genus of rational beings is determined objectively” to be that of furthering its “highest good as a common good.” This “idea of a universal republic according to laws of virtue” is unlike all other duties inasmuch as it requires *cooperation*. Because “we cannot know whether, as such, it is also in our power” to reach such a lofty goal, yet its status means we must be able to fulfill it, we must presuppose “another idea, namely that of a higher moral being through whose universal arrangement the forces of the individuals . . . are united to yield a common effect.”

Kant clarifies in Subsection III that this presupposition amounts to viewing the ethical community as “a People of God.” To form any community, “all individuals must be subjected to a public legislation.” In political communities the people authorize the legislation; but ethical communities cannot use this method, otherwise the laws would be coerced, not free. As “one who knows the hearts,” God alone can penetrate everyone’s disposition, ensuring each person receives “whatever his deeds are worth.” God can fill this role only if all divine commands are ethical; were God’s legislation external and statutory, it would be coercive (as in a humanly governed theocracy). Thus, we can hope to fulfill our human duty to build an ethical community only by regarding “all *true duties* . . . *simultaneously* . . . as [God’s] commands.”

⁷ For a detailed account of the structure of this argument, see my article, “Kant’s Religious Argument for the Existence of God—The Ultimate Dependence of Human Destiny on Divine Assistance,” *Faith and Philosophy* 26 (2009), 3–22.

Subsection IV tends to be ignored by readers who view *Religion* as a handbook on morality. Yet Kant here defends the key element in the third stage of his religious system: the ethical community must take the form of a *church*. Because the “crooked wood” of human nature prevents us from building a “completely straight” society, we can conceive of the *form* of an ethical community, but actually *establishing* it on earth is “a work whose execution can be expected not from human beings but only from God himself.” Far from providing an excuse for laziness, this belief requires the good person to “proceed . . . as if everything depended on him,” for only then does one have good reason to “hope that a higher wisdom will bestow completion upon his well-intentioned effort.” The coming of God’s kingdom depends on cooperation between the “invisible church” (“a bare idea of the union of all righteous people under the divine direct but moral government of the world”) and the “visible church” (“the actual union of human beings to form a whole that harmonizes with that ideal”). A “true (visible) church” is one that exhibits the invisible church empirically, “as much as this can be done by human beings.” Kant recommends four (categorical) principles: (1) the *quantity* must be “numerical oneness” or “universality”; (2) the *quality* must be “purity” of moral motivation; (3) the *relation* must be “freedom,” both internal (between members) and external (between the church and “the political power”); and (4) the *modality* must be “*unchangeability*” in the part of its constitution featuring these principles.

Kant argues in Subsection V that a true church requires a *scripture* to compensate for “a peculiar weakness of human nature” that leaves us unable to establish a church on “bare rational faith.” Few realize that anyone with “steadfast diligence directed toward a morally good way of life” is “constantly in the service of God.” Because humans like “attestations of honor,” we tend to think a “morally indifferent” type of service, demonstrating “passive obedience,” will please God more; yet this is “absolutely impossible,” given that we “cannot act upon and have influence upon” God. Knowing “*how God wills* to be venerated (and obeyed)” is the key to all religion: if God commands through “purely moral laws,” then each person can know “through his own reason, the will of God” and “only *one* religion” (the moral) can exist; but if God commands through “merely statutory” laws, “not through our own bare reason,” then a revelation is needed, either “through tradition or scripture.” Special acquaintance with this revelation constitutes “a *historical* faith.” Those preferring the latter answer must recognize that the *former* approach “properly constitutes religion itself” and that “statutory religion can contain only the means to its furtherance and expansion.” For the only possible “universally valid” answer is the moral one; “statutory legislation (which presupposes a revelation) can be regarded only as contingent.”

This appeal to scripture is Kant’s attempt to resolve the Third Piece’s religious conflict (between ethical and political, or divine and human, organization) by conceding that religion does require *some* empirical (external) structure. The historical standpoint requires more than just “bare reason” to answer the question “how God wills to be venerated in a *church*.” Establishing an empirical church is “a duty,” yet

the members are “left entirely to themselves” to learn how best to do so. Claiming a divine origin for empirical religion is presumptuous, but no less conceited are those philosophers who rule out the possibility of “a special divine arrangement” even when the statutes *agree* with moral reason and appear to have arisen out of nowhere. Because human beings tend to believe “in statutory divine laws” that go beyond moral goodness, “church faith naturally precedes pure religious faith” even though “[m]orally it should happen in reverse.” Assuming this natural need “cannot be changed,” and pure religious faith must use statutory faith “as a vehicle,” scripture is a better vehicle than tradition, for “history proves that extirpating any faith based on scripture has been impossible,” whereas tradition-based faiths meet their demise “simultaneously with the breakdown of the state.” Any scripture that “contains . . . the purest moral doctrine of religion” may rightly “claim the authority equal to that of a revelation.” Although different empirical churches can manifest “one and the same true religion,” church-goers tend to confuse “religion” (universally valid inward moral dispositions) with “faith” (contingent, external statutory beliefs), deriding those who affirm other faiths as “unbelievers” and those who interpret the same faith differently as “heretics.”

Having given scripture an honored place in establishing the church, Kant offers hermeneutic guidelines in Subsection VI. Because human beings are embodied, we have a “natural need” for “some historical church faith” as an “experiential confirmation” of moral religion, “if the intention is to *introduce* a faith universally.” To satisfy the human need to particularize the universal, each church must interpret its scripture “to yield a meaning that harmonizes with the universal practical rules of a pure rational religion.” Even if they seem “forced,” when viewed from the standpoint of historical scholarship, meanings based on moral symbolism are more suitable for *church use* than literal ones that carry no moral content. Because “the supreme criterion” for regarding a text as “divine revelation” is that it must foster “moral improvement,” this must also be “the supreme principle of all scriptural interpretation.” Historical scholars best serve the church by attempting to authenticate the authority of an alleged revelation, using their knowledge of the original language and cultural context to establish “that the origin of Scripture contains nothing that would make the assumption of its being a direct divine revelation impossible.” To avoid fanaticism, churches should not accept interpretations based on “inner *feeling*” as authoritative, because we cannot “ascertain any cognition of laws” from personal feelings, but only from the universal feeling of respect for the moral law.

Subsection VII stipulates that the contingent, “experiential cognition” of historical faith can constitute a “true church,” provided it gradually focuses more and more on universal, “pure religious faith.” But another religious conflict arises over what actually saves the members of such a church. A “*saving* faith” must be based on a heart with pure moral dispositions; those who labor to please God through non-moral actions possess “a *slavish* and mercenary faith” that may coexist with an evil heart. What matters is how a person combines the “two conditions for . . .

hope of salvation”: the historical faith that God will forgive one’s guilt, and the moral faith that one can please God by following “a good way of life.” In the transition from historical faith to pure religious faith “a noteworthy antinomy of human reason” arises: (1) if living a good life is a condition for receiving God’s historically conditioned forgiveness, “pure moral faith will have to precede church faith”; yet (2) “if the human being is corrupt by nature,” then one cannot live a good life unless historically-conditioned “faith in a merit which is not his own” *precedes* “all endeavor toward good works.” As a theoretical question, this antinomy surpasses reason’s speculative power, so the only way to resolve it is through practical reason: we know our duty is to do what is good and hope for God’s assistance on that basis; “the theoretical concept” serves only to “*make the absolution comprehensible,*” whereas the practical is the “unconditional” basis for hoping to receive any forgiveness God might offer. Church faith views belief in divine forgiveness as a duty and “a good way of life” as a gift of grace, while pure religious faith views “the *good way of life*” as an “unconditional *duty*” and divine forgiveness as “a bare *matter of grace.*” Only by viewing these as two sides of the same coin can we avoid their respective dangers—“superstition” and “naturalistic unbelief” being the typical errors committed by the two types of readers (theologians and philosophers) whose religious conflict Kant is resolving here.

This long subsection concludes Division One by demonstrating that the antinomy of faith can be resolved only by realizing that “in the appearance of the God-man, the proper object of the saving faith is . . . the archetype that lies in our reason,” for they are “one and the same practical idea,” proceeding “in one case insofar as it presents the archetype as located in God” and “in another case insofar as it presents it as located in us, but in both cases insofar as it represents it as the standard for our way of life.” The antinomy remains unresolved only if we take either historical faith or pure religious faith on its own, without seeing each in its necessary relation to the other. Historical faiths tend to make this error by offering relatively easy, non-moral ways to please God; yet no one empirical path will appeal to everyone. Just as a person casts off childish ways when growing up, religion will “be detached gradually from all empirical determining bases,” enabling the kingdom of God to become a reality on earth as churches find their basis in “pure rational religion.” This “practical regulative principle” of transformation to a world wherein all humanity lives “as a community” in “eternal peace” contains, “as in a germ that develops and that will later bear seed in turn, the whole that some day is to illumine and rule the world.”

With pure rational faith firmly established as the proper goal of all historical faiths, Kant turns to his second experiment in Division Two, offering a “Historical Presentation” of a gradual transition to a world dominated by “the Good Principle.” Kant here focuses not on religion as an individual matter, but on the development of *church faith*, starting from its first recognition that pure religious faith lies at its core, and on how the modifications of faith reveal more and more of this core uni-

fyng principle. As the Jewish faith set out to be a theocracy, with external statutes given by God, any moral elements within it were accidental: its laws were coercive, relating to specific actions rather than moral principles; far from having a universal outlook, the community *excluded* all other nations from their faith. The true church's history, therefore, begins with Christianity's turn to the internal, moral core of all religion, whereby "no statutes at all" are needed and the faith is "valid for the world." The revolutionary message of "the teacher of the Gospel" (i.e., Jesus) replaced "that slavish faith" with "moral faith." His reported miracles were not required to authenticate the content of his teaching as pure religious faith; yet they served the purpose of motivating the early adherents to record the story in a "testament," thus giving rise to a new historical faith. The Roman "scholarly public" scrutinized the Christian faith, but only "after more than a generation," so we have enough information to assess whether the early Christians experienced genuine moral improvement. Once "Christianity became itself a scholarly public," the records are clear: "mystical fanaticism," "blind superstition," oppressive orthodoxy, and controlling priesthood incited all manner of evils in the name of Christian (historical) faith. These elements, though corrupt, served the purpose of "winning over to the new faith, through its own prejudices, the nation accustomed to the old historical faith," so that Christianity could become "a universal world religion."

In light of this overview, Kant claims "the present" is the best period in church history: if we allow "the germ of the true religious faith . . . to develop further and further unhindered," it will gradually become "the church that unites all human beings forever and constitutes the visible presentation (the schema) of an invisible kingdom of God on earth." This process has two guiding principles: (1) a modest awareness that revelation is possible, that religion needs *some* historical faith as a vehicle, should lead us to adopt the existing Scripture "as the foundation for church instruction," without forcing it on people "as required for salvation"; (2) the exhibition of religion's moral core in "sacred history" should be used to combat passive faith by emphasizing that "true religion" consists "not in the knowledge or confession of what God allegedly does or has done for our salvation, but in what we must do to become worthy of this." We should interpret Scripture's account of the goal of this process, in terms of "a visible kingdom of God on earth" arriving after an apocalypse, as a symbol of hope and courage, empowering us to press on toward an ultimate happiness. As Jesus taught, moral people cannot count on happiness now but are more likely to suffer. Our present condition, with good and evil people living together, has moral benefits; but Scripture's depiction of the end of history, when "the form itself of a church is dissolved," with good and evil people being ultimately separated, is also appropriate for that stage. Historical faith may never actually cease, we may always need to "look ahead" for the realization of this "beautiful ideal," yet we must believe "it can cease" in order to highlight "the intrinsic stability of the pure moral faith," as a kingdom that is "within" each person.

E. FOURTH PIECE: SERVICE AS A HYPOTHETICAL WAY OF PLEASING GOD

The Fourth Piece conveys the final element in Kant's religious system, a principle informing good-hearted people, from the hypothetical perspective, how God desires to be served in and by the church. The introduction reminds us that "the arrangement of this church is incumbent on human beings" and that its goal, the kingdom of God, has begun to appear "if so much as the principles of its constitution start to become *public*." Although "God himself must be the originator of his kingdom . . . , we do not know" how this will happen; yet "we find within ourselves the moral vocation to be citizens and subjects in . . . that kingdom." Once God provides the constitution, "through reason or through Scripture," we must found "the organization" and "manage the public affairs of the church." This organization concerns "only the visible church," because the invisible church has *no officials*: "each member of the community receives his orders directly from the supreme legislator." A true church will be "constantly approaching the pure rational faith," so its officials must "direct their doctrines and regulation always to that ultimate purpose." Officials who instead declare "the historical and statutory part of church faith as alone bringing salvation" confuse the means with the end and promote "pseudoservice," "the persuasion that one is serving someone by actions that in fact undo the latter's intention." Kant attempts to resolve this final religious conflict, between service and pseudoservice, in two parts.

Part One's introduction defines religion as "the cognition of all our duties as divine commands." A *revealed* religion requires me to know "a divine command" before identifying something "as my duty," whereas *natural religion* requires me to know my duty before identifying something as a divine command. While a *naturalist* denies all revelation in contrast to a pure *supranaturalist* who requires it, a *pure rationalist* requires only natural religion but allows for both the possibility and "the necessity of a revelation as a divine means for the introduction of the true religion." The dispute between the latter two is about which claim is necessary and which is contingent. As regards religion's *spread*, in "*natural religion* . . . everyone can be convinced through his reason," but in revealed religion "one can convince others only by means of scholarship." An objectively natural religion may need to be expressed subjectively, as a revealed religion, in order to be "universally communicable." Yet "once the religion thus introduced is there and has been publicly promulgated, everyone can henceforth convince himself of this religion's truth by himself and his own reason." At this point, the pure rationalist thinks any "supranatural revelation" can be "entirely forgotten," whereas the supranaturalist must preserve it, lest religion "disappear from the world." Treating revelation as "a pure concept of reason," Kant surveys the content of the New Testament to "test" Christianity (as "a revealed religion") in Part One's two sections, "first, as a natural religion, and then, second, as a scholarly religion"—a division that corresponds again to his two experiments.

Natural religion, Kant reminds us in Section One, makes universality “the great requirement of the true church”; “the bare, invisible church” thus needs “a ministry” (though not “officials”) in order “to spread and be maintained.” The required “agreement” is unlikely to become universal “unless the natural laws, cognizable by bare reason, are supplemented by certain statutory regulations” that impose “a special duty” to make “their permanent union into a universal visible church.” If a teacher appeared who propounded such a pure religion and who “then added certain statutes . . . as means for bringing about a church that was to be founded upon those principles,” without turning them into “new burdensome regulations,” that church could be called a “true universal church.” The New Testament clearly shows us such a person, “the *founder*,” not of the pure *religion* that “is inscribed in the heart of every human being . . . , yet of the first true *church*.” Citing Matthew’s Gospel extensively, Kant explains why Jesus’ teachings are “indubitable documents of a religion as such”: Jesus demands that, “not the observance of . . . statutory church duties but only the pure moral disposition of the heart shall be able to make a human being pleasing to God”; he regards those who try “to evade their true moral duty and to indemnify themselves for this by fulfilling the church duty” as misinterpreting the law; instead, he requires pure dispositions “to be proved in *deeds*”; and “he collates all duties (1) in a *universal* rule,” the “love God” command, “and (2) in a *particular* rule,” “Love everyone as yourself.” Virtue is striving to follow such “precepts of *holiness*”; thus Jesus denies any worth to the good deeds done by those who instead passively await “a heavenly gift.” While promising happiness as “a reward in a future world” to those who do good “for its own sake,” he concedes only minimal benefit to those who do good out of self-interest, “the god of this world.” Only the former are “the proper chosen for his kingdom.” Jesus introduces “a complete religion” in an “intuitive” form, providing “an archetype to be emulated,” yet without appealing to scholarship.

In Section Two, Kant focuses on his second experiment, viewing Christianity not “as a pure *rational* faith” but “as a *revelation* faith”: if dogmas not grounded in reason are deemed necessary, then the only way to avoid “a continual miracle of revelation” is to regard the revealed text “as a sacred property entrusted to the care of the *scholars*.” Even though it “is built upon facts, rather than upon bare concepts of reason,” the Christian faith affirms two types of service, historical (scholarly) and moral (rational)—neither being “self-subsistent.” Service that is scholarly cannot be “intrinsicly *free*,” but tends to require blind obedience. Starting Christian doctrine “from *unconditional* faith in revealed propositions” forces the unscholarly to be slaves to the divine command. To avoid this, scholars must draw “the supreme commanding principle” from natural religion, with “the doctrine of revelation” being merely a means enabling the unscholarly to grasp the concepts. This prepares the way for “true *service*.” Pseudoservice arises when “the moral order is entirely reversed and what is only means is commanded unconditionally,” because those unable to interpret Scripture must then accept as their duty whatever the scholars and church officials say has been revealed. The officials may *claim* to serve the

church, yet the true outcome is “*domination* of its members.” Christianity’s great advantage over Judaism is that its central message “issued *from the mouth of the first teacher* not as a statutory but as a moral religion.”

Kant introduces Part Two by calling pseudoservice a practical form of “religious delusion,” defined as taking statutes intended for use by a visible church “as essential to the service of God in general.” He examines this theme in two sets of paired sections: the subjective basis of religious delusion and the moral principle opposing it, followed by the governance of “priestery” and the proper governing role of conscience opposing it. Though anthropomorphism “is scarcely avoidable” in presenting God’s nature to ourselves, Kant warns in §1 that a problem arises when we “make a God for ourselves”: we tend to think that what “we do solely in order to please the divinity” can exempt us from acting according to our inner moral disposition. Because such deeds are otherwise useless, people tend to think they “indicate more intensely the unbounded (though not moral) submission to his [i.e., God’s] will.” They “attest dedication to God,” so people attribute to religious *devotion* (i.e., “the mind’s attunement to a receptivity for dispositions dedicated to God”) the worth of moral dispositions themselves. But to think devotion is good in itself, apart from a moral disposition, is a “religious delusion.”

Kant starts §2 by positing a basic principle: “Apart from a good way of life, anything further which the human being supposes that he can do to become pleasing to God is a mere religious delusion.” This does not deny there may be something “only God can do to turn us into human beings pleasing to him”; yet to *require* faith in a revelation of this mystery, as a condition for being good, is worse than slavery, for it contradicts conscience. Reason bids those with “a truthful disposition devoted to duty” to believe their deficiency “will be compensated for by the supreme wisdom *in some way*”; by contrast, “he who absolutely claims to know this manner of redemption of human beings from evil, or, should he not, gives up all hope for it” *lacks* genuine faith, hoping to gain God’s favor without attempting to become good. One who “tenders everything to God, except for his moral disposition,” thinks devoting “his heart to God” means having “a heartfelt wish that those offerings may be received in payment for that disposition.” Those who believe non-moral service is “on its own pleasing to God” are all equal in “worth (or lack of worth),” regardless of how refined may be their appeal to sensuality over “the sole intellectual principle of genuine veneration of God.” For true service, “everything hinges on the acceptance or abandonment of the sole principle, to please God . . . only through the moral disposition.” Some might call this a “dizzying delusion of virtue,” yet a virtuous disposition is “something *actual* that by itself is pleasing to God and harmonizes with the world’s greatest good.” The delusions of fanaticism and superstition, discussed further in the sections on *parerga* as “effects of grace” and works of grace, abandon all principles, causing “the moral death of reason.” The principle that “forestalls all religious delusion” is that all church faith must “bring about the religion of the good way of life as the proper goal.”

In §3, Kant observes that the worship “of powerful invisible beings” can be servile idolatry, legalistic “temple service,” or “church service,” where “the moral education of human beings” is at least partly in view. These differ in “the *manner*, but not in the *principle*, of having faith,” as long as church-goers define “their service of God” in terms of “faith in certain statutory theses” and “contingent observances,” rather than a good disposition. They all wish “to guide to their advantage the invisible power holding sway over the destiny of human beings”; while those who think of God as “an intelligent being” may include moral actions in these observances, they also include non-moral actions “that cannot become familiar to us through bare reason.” Since one of these must be “the supreme condition” of pleasing God, the only rational approach is to assume “actions that have no moral worth in themselves” are “pleasing to God only insofar as they serve as means for the furtherance of what is directly good in actions.” One who thinks non-moral actions can gain “God’s direct pleasure in him” has the delusion of “fetishism,” not essentially different from *magic*, for “the basest human being can perform [them] just as well as the best.” One who performs such observances not to influence God directly, but “to make himself merely *receptive* to the attainment of the object of his good, moral wishes,” does count on some divine assistance to compensate “for his natural incapacity,” yet “not as something *effected* by the *human being* . . . , but as something received, which he can hope for but cannot produce.” What matters most “when one wants to link two good things” is “the order in which one links them!” Recognizing that moral duties burden the conscience far less than non-moral religious observances (“because everyone sees on his own the necessity of complying with them, and hence nothing is thereby thrust upon him”) constitutes “true *enlightenment*,” whereby “the service of God . . . becomes for the first time a free and hence moral service.”

In the second half of §3, Kant defines *priestery* as “the constitution of a church insofar as a *fetish service* governs in it.” If the church’s “essential feature” reverses the proper order of direct and indirect service of God, then no matter how few “imposed observances” are deemed necessary, “the multitude is governed and is robbed, through the obedience to a church (rather than to religion), of its moral freedom.” Whatever political form “the hierarchy” uses, “its constitution . . . is and remains always despotic.” When a clergy becomes “the only authorized guardian and interpreter of the will of the invisible legislator,” both reason and scholarship (the conflicting standpoints highlighted in the Prefaces) tend to be ignored. Such priestery presents the message of faith in a simple form that is easy to communicate even to the foolish; but for “scholars and philosophers,” “accepting such a faith, which is subjected to so many controversies . . . , as the supreme condition of a universal and only saving faith is the most paradoxical thing that can be conceived.” By contrast, “the law of morality” is equally accessible to everyone, carrying “*unconditional* obligation in everyone’s consciousness” and “leads even on its own to faith in God.” Hence, prudence directs us to make this pure religious

faith “the supreme condition under which alone we can hope to come to partake of whatever salvation a historical faith might promise us”; however, “the person of moral faith” should be “open to the historical faith,” provided it invigorates “his pure religious disposition.” Religious teaching should reflect this by presenting “the *pure doctrine of virtue*” as the supreme condition of a moral disposition, and “the *doctrine of godliness*” as the means to acquire it, for the two “obviously stand in necessary connection with each other.” Here “everything hinges on the supreme concept to which one subordinates one’s duties”: if godliness comes first, the God worshipped “is an *idol*” and worship is a “vain endeavor” to become good merely “from wishing”; if virtue comes first, godliness can strengthen one’s “courage to stand on one’s own feet.”

The antidote to the false governance of priestery, Kant argues in §4, is to allow “conscience” to “serve as guiding thread” in all moral decisions. Whereas practical reasoning tells us the *content* of right and wrong, conscience is “the moral power of judgment passing judgment on itself,” telling us whether we have “actually undertaken” moral reasoning. It is self-authenticating “consciousness that is by itself a duty.” A basic “postulate of conscience” is that, for any action “I want to undertake I must . . . be *certain* that it is not wrong.” For example, an inquisitor who condemns a heretic to death for “unbelief” exhibits “lack of conscience”: even if obeying a command that seemed to come from God, he “could never have been entirely certain that he was not perhaps thereby doing wrong.” Yet moral reason tells us it is wrong to “take a human being’s life because of his religious faith.” Similarly, a cleric who compels “the people to confess as an *article of faith*” a revealed doctrine, even though the doctrine might be erroneous, is “proceeding against his conscience”—a “damnable” form of inward “untruthfulness.” People “under a slavish yoke of faith” adopt the principle “that it is advisable to have faith in too much rather than in too little,” since doing extra “can at least do no harm”; yet this “maxim of safety” is a delusion that turns “insincerity in religious confessions into a principle.” Only a hypocrite feigns certainty of something “even before God,” despite being “conscious that it is not of the character required to affirm it with unconditional confidence.” Settling this religious conflict with a clear conscience demands a “genuine maxim of safety”: I cannot know with certainty the truth *or falsity* of any aspect of historical faith that “does not contradict the pure moral principles,” yet I can “count on” any promised assistance, provided I do not “make myself unworthy of it through the deficiency of my moral disposition in a good way of life.” Surely, “even the boldest teacher of the faith would tremble” if asked, “in the presence of him who knows the heart,” to “affirm the truth of [revealed] propositions” with such absolutely certainty as to say that if any of them ends up being false, “*then let me be damned!*” Such presumptuousness stands in sharp contrast to the person of good will who in all sincerity exclaims: “I believe, dear Lord; help my unbelief!”

F. FOUR GENERAL COMMENTS: THEOLOGICAL SUPPLEMENTS TO RATIONAL RELIGION

Kant's changes in the second edition mainly highlighted his second experiment, introducing it in the second Preface and appending to the First Piece's General Comment an overview of the four parerga of rational religion: "(1) On Effects of Grace, (2) On Miracles, (3) On Mysteries, (4) On Means of Grace." These theological ideas are not constitutive elements of rational religion, yet they arise in direct response to reason's inability to solve the moral problems raised by our evil nature; they "abut" or *press against* reason's boundary, offering to clothe the bare body of rational religion with useful concepts—especially for Christians, for whom the second experiment is conducted. These ideas can be accepted with a "reflective" faith, as compensations for reason's moral and theoretical incapacity, yet if we presumptuously adopt them as articles of a "dogmatic faith, which proclaims itself to be a *knowledge*," they will result in fanaticism, superstition, deluded claims to be illumined, and attempts to control God.

The first parergon is the belief that moral goodness "will be not our deed, but that of another being, and therefore that we can *procure* the effect of grace by just *doing nothing*." As Kant explains at the end of the first General Comment, the belief that divine grace can magically change our inner disposition provides no theoretical knowledge of such an effect, "because our use of the concept of cause and effect cannot be expanded beyond objects of experience and hence beyond nature." Moreover, this idea "is entirely self-contradictory" for practical reason, because if we do *nothing* to receive such a free gift of goodness, then it cannot make us genuinely good. Rational religion's proper response to this theological idea, therefore, is to "grant the effect of grace as something incomprehensible," without admitting it as a core element of religion that can determine how we form moral maxims. We can thus take advantage of the empowering idea of grace without falling into the delusions of fanaticism discussed in the Fourth Piece.

The second parergon is a belief in miracles. Cultic religion depends on miracles for its authority by promising to make people pleasing to God without requiring them to become good. Miracles "cloak" moral religion when it first appears, thus attracting converts. Yet, by insisting that only a good disposition can please God, moral faith renders "dispensable the very faith in miracles as such." To grant "that miracles had occurred *of old*" while disallowing "*new* miracles" is not a total denial that miracles still happen, for we cannot have "objective insight" into their existence; instead, it is "only a maxim of reason" encouraging people not to *depend* on miracles. In *theistic* miracles, God acts through the natural and moral laws that already govern the world, so calling such events miracles adds nothing to our understanding. But if an *apparent* divine command tells us to break the moral law, we may safely assume it did not come from God, otherwise reason would be "as though paralyzed." *Demonic* miracles are even less rational: we cannot assume a

command is *not* from a devil simply because it appears to be consistent with morality, for “the evil spirit often disguises himself as an angel of light.” Professionals such as clerics and doctors should not encourage people to appeal to miracles but should focus on “the moral improvement of the human being”—a goal that is impeded by the “senseless notion” of a “theoretical faith in miracles” that would allow us to “assail heaven.”

The third parergon is belief in *holy mysteries*; they remain theoretically useless, since we cannot “establish a priori and objectively” whether they exist, yet they can be “sufficiently cognized inwardly for practical use” if we appeal to our moral predisposition, especially our capacity for *freedom*, to interpret them. That we have a duty to work toward the highest good, yet cannot achieve it on our own, opens up an “abyss of a mystery of what God is doing” to assist us. Complementing our theoretical understanding of God’s nature, practical reason portrays God as “*holy legislator*,” “*benign governor*,” and “*just judge*.” This is not a mystery, provided “it expresses solely God’s moral conduct toward humankind” as contained in “the concept of a people as a community” (not “what God is in himself”). Similar concepts of God appeared in many world religions but remained mysterious until the Christian faith “first put forth publicly to the world” the doctrine of the Trinity, viewing God not as a human sovereign, mixing moral qualities in one personality, but as “one and the same being” with three distinct personalities: God’s laws are not arbitrary but directed toward holiness; God’s goodness is not unconditional but considers people’s “moral constitution” before compensating “for their inability to fulfill this condition on their own”; and God’s justice is neither unduly benign nor demanding of holiness, since humans are capable only of virtue. Moral reason helps clarify three other mysteries: (1) “the *calling*” of free beings “to citizenship in the divine state” is morally clear, yet we cannot understand how free beings are *created* (i.e., made subject to causal laws); (2) God’s *satisfaction* of the moral demand on behalf of imperfect humans is morally necessary, yet reason has no insight into how it happens; and (3) the *election* of only some people to receive the grace to adopt a “disposition pleasing to God” may be wise, yet seems unjust to human reason. As with freedom, “we still would not *understand*” such mysteries theoretically, even if God revealed their causes; yet we know just enough to inform our conduct. Therefore, demanding additional revelation is immodest. Biblical scholars and philosophers should agree on how to interpret these mysteries, because a “literalist faith more readily corrupts rather than improves the true religious disposition.”

The fourth parergon is a belief that special religious deeds control how God distributes *grace* (i.e., divine assistance in becoming good, beyond what we can do through our free choices, or “nature”). Such support for our “weak disposition to fulfill all our duty” is a transcendent idea that reason can neither prove nor disprove, whereas we know the moral laws that define “the good way of life.” To remain rational and avoid “passive idleness,” we may assume “that whatever nature is not capable of will be brought about by grace.” But a person’s only means of

pleasing God is “an earnest endeavor to improve as far as possible his moral constitution”; only this makes a person “receptive to the perfecting” influence of grace, “which is not in his power.” Treating *non*-moral deeds as a “means of grace” is self-deception, true service of God being an invisible “service of hearts.” “Yet for the human being the invisible needs to be represented by something visible (sensible)”; even though such “intuitive” ways of serving God are typically misinterpreted, reason can discern their “spirit and true significance” by dividing them “into four observances of duty,” useful “for arousing and sustaining our attention to the true service of God.” Thus, (1) private prayer *establishes* goodness “firmly *within ourselves*,” arousing “in our mind the disposition concerning it”; (2) churchgoing *spreads* the good “through public assembly” so people can hear and communicate “religious doctrines and wishes (and with them dispositions of this sort)”; (3) baptism *propagates* “this good to posterity” by giving an occasion to instruct “newly joining members into the community of faith”; and (4) communion *preserves* “*this community* through a repeated public formality which makes continuous the union of these members into an ethical body.” Nevertheless, such formalities become “a *fetish faith*” if one thinks they will persuade God to “satisf[y] all our wishes”—as if God would accept “*the manner* (the formality) . . . for the deed itself.”

After examining each of the four means of grace,⁸ Kant concludes the fourth General Comment, the Fourth Piece, and the whole book by correlating the “three kinds of delusory faith” (miracles, mysteries and fetishes) to the “three divine moral properties—holiness, grace, and justice,” rooting them in the human desire to win favor by mixing these three qualities instead of keeping them distinct. The false hope that “deedless wishes may serve also to compensate for the transgression of [God’s moral] commands” leads believers to focus on “*piety* (a passive veneration of divine law) rather than . . . *virtue* . . . , even though only virtue, *combined with piety*, can constitute the idea that one means by the word *godliness* (true religious disposition).”

4. IMPLICATIONS AND ENDURING RELEVANCE OF KANT’S *RELIGION*

The hope Kant expressed in the last sentence of the Preface to the second edition of his *Critique of Pure Reason* applies equally to *Religion*: “if a theory is internally stable, then any action and reaction that initially portend great danger will in time serve only to smooth away the theory’s unevenness; and in a short time they will even provide the theory with the requisite elegance, if those who deal with it are

⁸ In Kant’s detailed account of the four means of grace (*Religion*, 194–200), his aim is twofold: to explain how each observance can strengthen a person’s moral disposition, yet to warn against misusing it as a deluded way of trying to control God. For an interpretation of Kant’s account of prayer along these lines, see “Kant’s Critical Hermeneutic of Prayer,” Appendix VIII in *Kant’s Critical Religion*.

men of impartiality, insight, and true popularity.” Unfortunately, the immediate reaction to *Religion* was far from welcoming: not only did the censor respond by obtaining a royal order preventing Kant from making public statements on religion, but many early readers simply failed to grasp its key insights. Goethe, for example, wrote to Herder in a letter of June 7, 1793: “Kant required a long lifetime to purify his philosophical mantle of many impurities and prejudices. And now he has wantonly tainted it with the shameful stain of radical evil, in order that Christians might be attracted to kiss its hem.”⁹ Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) likewise found little insight in *Religion*: while accepting many of the fundamental tenets of the Critical philosophy, he rejected the basic components of Kant’s approach to religion, including the moral argument for God’s existence and morality as the core of religion, opting instead for *feeling* as the core. All in all, *Religion* had relatively little immediate impact on scholarly discussions of religion and theology in Kant’s day.

Schleiermacher, typically regarded as the father of modern liberal Protestantism, has dominated theology over the past two centuries. The tendency to portray him as theologizing in the spirit of Kant, however, ignores the fact that he oversteps many of the bounds Kant established in *Religion*, much as did Kierkegaard after him. The liberal theologian, Albrecht Ritschl (1822–1899), more explicitly aimed to present a Kantian version of liberal Christianity grounded in the distinction between “facts” and “values.” Karl Barth (1886–1968), in his *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century*, traces Kant’s influence on many theologians, including his own neo-orthodoxy. The popularity of the “quest for the historical Jesus” in the nineteenth century was partly due to Kant’s call for “anthropological investigation” (*Religion*, 25). Similarly, his emphasis on symbols as the key to religious meaning has obvious affinities with the ideas of Paul Tillich (1886–1965),¹⁰ whose theology was largely a synthesis of Kant and Kierkegaard, though he was reluctant to affirm Kant’s influence. Among Catholic theologians who were deeply influenced by Kant’s religious thought, Joseph Maréchal (1878–1944) and Karl Rahner (1904–1984) stand out—though the list could go on and on. Most recently, as Kant’s philosophy has been interpreted in more and more consistent and holistic ways, a trend has arisen among various more conservative theologians and philosophers to interpret Kant as surprisingly amenable to the concerns of ordinary Christians. Whether this can be taken as far as the recent “affirmative” interpreters have suggested remains to be seen.¹¹ What is clear from the overview in §3 is that no

⁹ Quoted in Emil Fackenheim, “Kant and Radical Evil,” *University of Toronto Quarterly* 23 (1954): 340.

¹⁰ For an excellent account of the Kantian roots of Tillich’s theology as well as other twentieth-century developments, see Adina Davidovich, *Religion as a Province of Meaning: The Kantian Foundations of Modern Theology* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1993).

¹¹ See e.g., Chris L. Firestone and Stephen R. Palmquist (eds.), *Kant and the New Philosophy of Religion* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), especially the Editors’ Introduction.

reading of *Religion* can be adequate without taking account of both Kant's readiness to accommodate real religious beliefs and practices, and his severe criticism of any approach to religion that views these as anything but temporary manifestations of a deeper, moral reality.

The orientation of Kant's position is neither clearly liberal nor clearly conservative. To highlight his deep awareness of the inherent conflict in the human experience of religion, I have elsewhere characterized his position as a "conserving liberalism" (for the philosophical reader) and a "liberating conservatism" (for the religious reader). Kant's unwillingness to succumb to either of the two traditional theological extremes is, as suggested in §1, rooted in his childhood experience of religion. Kant refers to the highly personal source at several points in *Religion*, perhaps most notably in a footnote on p.190, where he describes in the first person:

. . . our manner of upbringing, above all on the point of religion, or, better, of doctrines of faith, where faithfulness of memory in answering questions concerning them, without regard for the faithfulness of the confession . . . , is accepted as already sufficient to produce a person of faith, who does not even understand what he affirms as being holy, and one will no longer be surprised by the lack of sincerity which produces nothing but inward hypocrites.

Here Kant lets slip through the cracks of his philosophical armor that *Religion* can be read as a religious autobiography, a detailed account of how the Critical philosophy helped him resolve (or cope with) the religious conflicts of his youth. Likewise, in a note on p.184, Kant critiques what he sees as the (nonessential) "temperament" of Christians

. . . . in *piety* (by which is meant the principle of a passive conduct regarding a godliness to be expected, from above, through a power); for they never posit a confidence in themselves but look around in constant anxiety for a supranatural assistance, and even in this self-contempt (which is not humility) suppose themselves to possess a means of gaining favor, of which the outer expression (in pietism or affected piety) proclaims a *servile* cast of mind.

This is Kant's mature observation on the shortcoming of his childhood teachers. True piety, by contrast, "consists not in the self-torment of a repentant sinner . . . but in the firm resolve to do better," and *empowers* a person by producing "a cheerful mental attunement" (160). The whole book, as we saw in §3, attempts to rescue religious faith from a fate worse than oblivion: the delusions and false practices prompted by our natural propensity for self-deception.

The reductionist interpretation of *Religion* that tended to dominate English Kant scholarship during much of the twentieth century, whereby Kant is read as virtually identifying religion with morality so that everything in the former is

already included in the latter, fails to take into account not only the depth of Kant's own religious disposition, but also the way he employed the clothing metaphor (as implied in the title) throughout the book. Such moral reductionism (see note 1) rightly stresses that one who sees religion in *reason's* light has no pure or *philosophical* need for any non-moral cloak. Yet we do need such clothing once we take into account the tendency toward self-deception and moral weakness that besets our nature as a direct result of our evil propensity. The reductionist reading assumes Kant wrote *Religion* only for philosophers. Yet, as we have seen, the book is filled with evidence that he wrote for two kinds of readers: those who, like Kant, might be called "recovering fundamentalists," having called into question many of the religious dogmas of their youth, but do not wish to uproot the grain of truth it planted in them; and for those who, like the antireligious *Aufklärer* among Kant's fellow philosophers, are pessimistic about the possibility of empirical religion ever being of practical use. Kantians who shun all religion are bound to be challenged by Kant's concessions to religious believers. They may choose to adopt religious convictions only privately (as Kant did, preferring in his mature years not to darken the door of his local church), but a balanced reading of *Religion* will force them to admit that their philosophical hero supports neither a dogmatic atheism nor an agnostic denial of all legitimacy to more openly religious ways of life.

Kant remains mostly silent on his personal religious beliefs because *Religion* is, from start to finish, a work of *philosophical* theology, not biblical theology, and he does not think philosophy is capable of specifying a *particular* historical vehicle as being necessary to fill the gaps left by reason. While philosophy can expose the "naked body" of reason, the bare *rational form* that can be used to test the validity of any historical religion, it cannot determine in advance which clothing will fit that body most appropriately at any given time. The First Piece (especially Section IV) thus assesses the rational stability of the Christian doctrine of original sin: its typical historical-hereditary interpretation is "inappropriate"; but if understood as referring to the *rational* origin of all evil, it is a perfectly acceptable account of the practical (moral) problem that cries out for a religious solution (i.e., the problem of the evil propensity in human nature). Likewise, the Second Piece assesses the Christian doctrine of grace through Jesus' atoning sacrifice as morally harmful if it is presented in a way that removes the believer's duty to effect his or her *own* self-improvement, but "completely valid" (66), "holding also as a precept to be followed" (64), if understood as depicting an internal rational space (the archetype of a perfect human being) that each of us should strive to imitate in our moral conduct. As we have seen, the book's second half offers equally "Critical" assessments (combining the theologian's interest in what goes beyond reason with the philosopher's interest in preserving reason as the core) of the doctrines of the church and its service to God, respectively.

Despite this book's depth of insight and wide-ranging influence on two centuries of theology, its central aim has only recently begun to be widely recognized: Kant is seeking, at one and the same time, to provide followers of literalistic,

fundamentalist religion with a viable alternative that allows them to maintain their faith with a high degree of philosophical sophistication *and* to persuade philosophers not to decry all religion as an irrational or futile endeavor but to affirm its ultimate significance for the development of the human race. Whether one thinks this twofold aim destroys or upholds the essential features of an empirical religion such as Christianity will surely depend on how one conceives of that religion. Forming a clear conception of genuine and illusory approaches to religion could not be more crucial than it is today, in a post-9/11 world where nobody can ignore the vastly different ways that followers of one and the same historical faith view religion. Kant's comparatively shallow comments on traditions such as Judaism, Islam, and Eastern religions may not carry the same depth of insight as his perceptive analysis of Christianity; yet followers of any faith can draw from this text important lessons regarding the dangers of religious illusion that apply equally to their own tradition. In the postmodern world, Kant's talk of universal "human destiny" may seem far-fetched; yet his own experience of religious conflict beckons us to regard the tensions and paradoxes of this text not as signs of weakness or insecurity, but as an authentic awareness of the conflicts of human existence that any modern reader who is intellectually, morally, and spiritually honest is bound to experience. Liebmann's well-worn aphorism, "You can philosophize with Kant, or you can philosophize against Kant, but you cannot philosophize without Kant," surely applies nowhere more poignantly than to his philosophy of religion, making Kant's *Religion* essential reading for any twenty-first century reader who wants to understand how best to clothe the bare body of religion's essential nature for the betterment of human beings.¹²

¹² I would like to thank Chris Firestone, Guy Lown, Richard Palmquist, Werner Pluhar, and Philip Rudisill for providing helpful feedback on earlier drafts of this essay.

*Religion within the
Bounds of Bare Reason*

Religion within the Bounds of Bare Reason

Presented by

IMMANUEL KANT

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

Morality,¹ insofar as it is based on the concept of the human being as one who is free, but who precisely therefore also binds himself through his reason to unconditional² laws, is in need neither of the idea of another being above him in order for him to cognize³ his duty, nor, in order for him to observe it, of an incentive other than the law itself. At least it is the human being's own fault⁴ if such a need occurs in him; nor, indeed, can that need then be remedied by anything else; for, what does not issue from himself and his own freedom provides no compensation for the deficiency of his morality.⁵—Hence on its own behalf morality in no way needs religion (neither objectively, in regard to volition,⁶ nor subjectively, in regard to capability);⁷ rather, through the power⁸ of pure practical reason it is sufficient to itself.—For since its laws bind through the bare form of universal lawfulness of the maxims that are to be adopted in accordance with this form as the supreme (itself unconditioned) condition of all purposes,⁹ morality needs throughout no material determining basis¹⁰ of the free power of choice¹¹ at all,¹² i.e., no purpose. neither

¹ [*Moral.*]

² [Or 'unconditioned': *unbedingte.*]

³ [Or 'recognize': *erkennen.*]

⁴ [*Schuld.*]

⁵ [I.e., of his being moral: *Moralität.*]

⁶ [*das Wollen.*]

⁷ [*das Können.*]

⁸ [*vermöge.*]

⁹ [Or 'ends': *Zwecke.* On my translation of this term, see below, Ak. VI, 34 br. n. 152c.]

¹⁰ [*Bestimmungsgrund.*]

¹¹ [*Willkür.*]

¹² Those who consider the merely formal determining basis (lawfulness) as such to be insufficient as determining basis in the concept of duty^a will nonetheless admit that this latter determining basis cannot be found in *self-love* directed to one's own *comfortableness*. But in that case there remain only two determining bases: one that is rational, namely one's own *perfection*; and another that is empirical, other people's *happiness*.—Now, if by the former they do not already understand moral perfection, which can be only a single one (namely a will unconditionally obedient to the law), in which case they would however be explicating in a circle, they would have to mean the human being's natural perfection insofar as it is capable of enhancement; and of this perfection there can be many (such as skill in arts and sciences, taste, agility of the body, and the like). This perfection,^b however, is good always only

^a [Kant probably has in mind, in particular, the anonymous reviewer—who was in fact Hermann Andreas Pistorius—of the *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals* (of 1785) in *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek* (vol. 66, part II, 447–63). For more details, see my translation of the *Critique of Practical Reason*, with an introduction by Stephen Engstrom, (Indianapolis and Cambridge, Mass.: Hackett, 2002), Ak. V, 8–9 incl. br. n. 88.]

^b [Reading *Diese* for *Dies*, in agreement with the grammar of the remainder of the sentence.]

4 for cognizing what one's duty is,¹³ nor for impelling one to its performance. Rather, morality can quite readily abstract from all purposes; and when duty is at issue, it ought to do so. Thus, for example, in order to know whether I ought to (or even can) be truthful in my testimony in court, or faithful when someone else's property entrusted to me is being reclaimed,¹⁴ there is no need to inquire after a purpose that I might—in my explication¹⁵—perhaps propose to myself to bring about. For it does not matter what sort of purpose it is; rather, someone who, although his avowal is legitimately being demanded, still finds it necessary to look around for some purpose, is in this regard already a worthless person.

But although morality does not on its own behalf need a presentation¹⁶ of a purpose which¹⁷ would have to precede the determination of the will, yet it may well have a necessary reference to such a purpose, namely not as the basis of the maxims adopted in conformity with those laws¹⁸ but as these maxims' necessary consequences.—For without any reference to a purpose, no determination of the will can take place in a human being at all, because such determination cannot be without any effect; and the presentation of the effect, even if not as the determining basis of the power of choice and as a purpose that precedes in the intention, must yet be capable of being admitted as the consequence of that power's

conditionally, i.e., only on condition that its use does not conflict with the moral law (which alone commands unconditionally); therefore, natural perfection, turned into a purpose, cannot be the principle of the concepts of duty. The same holds also for a purpose directed to the happiness of other human beings. For, an action must first be weighed in itself according to the moral law before it is directed to the happiness of others. The furtherance of this happiness, therefore, is a duty only conditionally and cannot serve as the supreme principle of moral maxims.

¹³ [*was Pflicht sei*, which can refer either to duty *per se* or to the actions that are one's duty.]

¹⁴ [*Abforderung*. Below, *abfordern* is translated as 'demanded'.]

¹⁵ [Of my duty.]

¹⁶ [*Vorstellung*. The traditional rendering of this term as 'representation'—similarly for the verb *vorstellen*—wrongly suggests that Kant's theory of perception, cognition, etc., is representational, and thus also that *vorstellen* is something that *Vorstellungen* do, whereas in fact it is something that *we* do. Defenders of his terminology like to point out that Kant (*Critique of Pure Reason*, A320/B376) uses the Latin *repraesentatio* as a synonym for *Vorstellung*; however, this *Latin* term actually means no more than a 'making present to oneself'—cf. German *Vergegenwärtigung*—and thus, like Kant's *Vorstellung*, carries no implication whatsoever that perception, cognition, etc., are *representational*. Latin *praesentatio*, on the other hand, means only a 'handing over' (of something); and although Kant *could* have attached a new meaning to *praesentatio*—as I have done with 'presentation'—he had no need to, since *repraesentatio*, unlike 'representation,' already fit his meaning of *Vorstellung*.]

¹⁷ [I.e., which presentation: *die*.]

¹⁸ [The laws of morality, last mentioned in the preceding paragraph. As Georg Wobbermin points out (Ak. VI, 497–510), the separation of the relative pronoun *jenen* from its referent *Gesetze* is due merely to Kant's insertion of an example.]

determination to a purpose by the law (*finis in consequentiam veniens*).¹⁹ Without this purpose, a power of choice that, to a projected action, [thus] adds in thought no either subjectively or objectively determined object (that it has or should have), [hence being] instructed indeed as to *how* it is to operate but not *toward what*,²⁰ cannot be adequate to itself. Thus, for right action, morality has indeed no need of a purpose, but the law that contains the formal condition of the use of freedom as such²¹ is sufficient for it. Yet a purpose does emerge from morality; for surely it cannot possibly be indifferent to reason how the answer to the question might turn out, *what it is that will*²² *result from this right action of ours*, and to which—even supposing we did not have it fully in our power²³—we could yet, as a purpose, direct our doing and refraining, in order at least to harmonize with it. Thus it²⁴ is indeed only an idea of an object that contains within itself, together and united, the formal condition of all purposes as we ought to have them (duty), and at the same time everything that is harmonious therewith and is conditioned in all those purposes that we do have (the happiness commensurate with our observance of duty), that is, the idea of a highest good in the world, for the possibility of which we must assume a higher, moral, holiest, and all-powerful being that alone can unite the two elements of this good. But this idea is (practically considered) nonetheless not empty; for it meets our natural need—which would otherwise be an obstacle to moral resolve—to think for all our doing and refraining, taken as a whole, some final purpose that can be justified by reason. The primary point here, however, is that this idea emerges from morality and is not its foundation; it is a purpose which to set²⁵ oneself already presupposes moral²⁶ principles. Therefore it cannot be indifferent to morality whether or not it frames for itself the concept of a final purpose of all things (harmonizing with which does not, to be sure, increase the number of morality's duties, yet it does provide them with a special point of reference for uniting all purposes); for thereby alone can the combination, which we cannot at all dispense with, of the purposiveness arising from freedom with the purposiveness of nature be provided with objective practical reality.²⁷ Consider a human being who venerates the moral law and who allows the thought to occur to him (as he can hardly avoid doing) of what world he presumably would create, under the guidance of practical reason, if this were in his power—and so create, moreover, that he would place himself into that world as a member. Then he would not only select that world precisely as that moral idea of the highest good requires²⁸

5

¹⁹ [The purpose occurring as (literally, 'coming to') the consequence.]

²⁰ [Literally, 'whither': *wohin*.]

²¹ [Or 'in general': *überhaupt*.]

²² [dann.]

²³ [*Gewalt*.]

²⁴ [What it is that will result from our right action: *es*.]

²⁵ [*machen*.]

²⁶ [*sittlich*.]

²⁷ [I.e., applicability to things (Latin *res*, from which 'reality' is derived).]

²⁸ [*mit sich bringt*.]

6 that he do if only the selection were ceded to him, but he would also will that [such] a world indeed²⁹ exist, because the moral law demands³⁰ that the highest good possible through us be brought about. He would will this even though according to this idea he sees himself in danger of forfeiting much by way of happiness for his person, since it is possible that he might perhaps not be adequate to this idea's moral demand, which reason makes the condition for that happiness. Hence he would feel compelled by reason to acknowledge this judgment quite impartially, as if it were made by someone else, yet at the same time as being his own; through this the human being manifests the need, brought about morally in him, to think for his duties also a final purpose, as their result.

Morality, therefore, leads inescapably to religion, through which it expands to the idea of a powerful moral legislator,³¹ outside the human being,³² in whose will the final purpose (of the world's creation) is that which at the same time can be, and ought to be, the final purpose of the human being.

²⁹ [*überhaupt.*]

³⁰ [Literally, 'wills': *will.*]

³¹ [Or 'lawgiver': *Gesetzgeber.*]

³² The proposition, There is a God, hence there is a highest good in the world, if (as a proposition of faith)^a it is to emerge merely from morality, is a synthetic a priori proposition that, even though it is assumed only in a practical reference, still goes beyond the concept of duty that morality contains (and that presupposes no matter, but merely formal laws, of the power of choice) and therefore cannot be extricated from it analytically. *But how is such a proposition possible a priori?*^b Harmony with the mere idea of a moral legislator of all human beings is indeed identical with the moral concept of duty as such, and to this extent the proposition commanding this harmony would be analytic. But the assumption of this legislator's existence states more than the mere possibility of such an object. Here I can only indicate the key to the solution of this problem, as far as I believe myself to have insight into it, without carrying out the solution.

A *purpose* is always the object of a *fondness*,^c that is, a direct^d desire for the possession of a thing through one's action, just as the *law* (which commands practically) is an object of *respect*. An objective purpose (i.e., a purpose that we ought to have) is one that is assigned

^a [*Glaubenssatz*, which also means 'dogma.']

^b [For the famous general version of this question, *How are synthetic judgments possible a priori?*, see the *Critique of Pure Reason*, B19.]

^c [*Zuneigung*. To compare and contrast some of Kant's main characterizations of a purpose in the *Critique of Judgment*, see Ak. V, xxv, 180, 220, 227, 370, 408.]

^d [Literally, 'immediate,' in the sense implying not suddenness but absence of mediation: *unmittelbar.*]

to us as such^e by bare reason. The purpose that contains the inescapable and at the same time sufficient condition of all other purposes is the *final purpose*.^f One's own happiness is the subjective final purpose of rational beings of the world (each such being, on the strength of its nature,^g which is dependent on sensible objects, *has* this purpose, and hence it would be absurd to say that one *ought* to have it), and all practical propositions that have this final purpose as their basis are synthetic but at the same time empirical. But that everyone ought to make the highest good that is possible in the world his *final purpose* is an a priori synthetic practical proposition, specifically an objectively practical one assigned by pure reason; for it is a proposition that goes beyond the concept of duties in the world and adds a consequence (an effect) that is not contained in the moral laws and therefore cannot be extricated from them analytically. For these laws command absolutely, no matter what their result may be; indeed, they even compel us to abstract entirely from the result when a particular action is at issue; and through this they make duty an object of the greatest respect, without putting before us and assigning to us a purpose (as well as a final purpose) that would have to amount, say, to the commendation of these laws and to the incentive for fulfilling our duty. This^h could, moreover, be sufficient for all human beings if only they abided (as they should) by the precept of pure reason in the law. Why do they need to know the outcome of their moral doing and refraining, which the course of the world will bring about? For them it suffices that they do their duty, even if with [the end of] earthly life everything were to be over and even in itⁱ happiness and worthiness^j were perhaps never to coincide. However, it is one of the unavoidable limitations of the human being and of his (perhaps also of all other world beings') practical power of reason to look out, in all actions, to the result issuing from them, in order to discover in it something that could serve as a purpose for him and could also prove the purity^k of the intention—which result, though last in performance (*nexu effectivo*),^l is first in presentation and intention (*nexu finali*).^m Now, in this purpose the human being, even if the purpose is put before him by bare reason, he seeks something that he can *love*. Therefore the law, which instills in him merely *respect*, although it does not acknowledge this something as a need, yet expands on its behalf to the point of admitting the moral final purpose of reason among its determining bases. That is, the proposition, Make the highest good that is possible in the world your final purpose! is a synthetic a priori proposition which is introduced through the moral law itself and through which practical reason nonetheless expands beyond this law; what makes this possible is that the moral law is referred to the human being's natural property of having to think, for all actions, not only the law but also a purpose (this property of his makes him an object of experience). And this proposition (just like the theoretical while yet synthetic a priori propositions) is possible only because it contains the a priori principle of the cognition of the determining bases of a free power of choice in experience as such. insofar as experience, which displays the effects

^e [I.e., as a purpose: *als ein solcher*.]

^f [Cf. *Critique of Judgment* (of 1790), Ak. V, 434, cf. 367–68.]

^g [*vermöge*.]

^h [I.e., duty as an object of the greatest respect.]

ⁱ [And not only in an afterlife, which has just been set aside.]

^j [To be happy.]

^k [*Reinigkeit*.]

^l [According to the connection in terms of efficient causes.]

^m [According to the connection in terms of final causes.]

If morality cognizes³³ by³⁴ the holiness of its law an object of the greatest respect, then at the level of religion it presents in the highest cause that carries out those laws an object of *worship*, and [thus] morality appears in its own majesty. However, everything, even what is most sublime, diminishes under the hands of human beings when they employ the idea of it for their use. What can be venerated truly only insofar as respect for it is free is compelled to accommodate itself to forms that can be provided with authority³⁵ only through coercive laws, and what on its own exposes itself to the public criticism of every human being must submit to a criticism that has power, i.e., to a censorship.

But since, after all, the command, Obey the authority!³⁶ is also moral, and observance of it—as of all duties—can be extended³⁷ to religion, it is fitting that a treatise³⁸ dedicated to the determinate concept of religion should itself provide an example of this obedience. This obedience cannot be shown, however, by being attentive merely to the law for one single regulation³⁹ in the state and blind to all other regulations, but can be shown only by a united respect for all regulations united. Now, the theologian who passes judgment⁴⁰ on books can be appointed either as one who is to attend merely to the welfare⁴¹ of souls, or as one who is to attend at the same time to the welfare of the sciences: the first judge is appointed merely as a cleric,⁴² the second at the same time as a scholar. Upon the second, as a member of a public institution to which (under the name of a university) all the

of moralityⁿ in its purposes, provides the concept of morality as causality in the world with objective, although only practical, reality.—However, if the strictest observance of the moral law is to be thought as cause of the effectuation of the highest good (as purpose), then, since human ability is not sufficient to bring about happiness in the world harmoniously with the worthiness to be happy, an all-powerful moral being must be assumed as ruler of the world, under whose providenceⁿ this comes about, i.e., morality leads inevitably to religion.^p

ⁿ [*Moralität* here, *Sittlichkeit* below, and *Moral* at the end of Kant's footnote.]

^p [*Vorsorge*.]

^r [Compare, for this entire note, the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Ak. V, 124–32. The note can also be read—cf. the *Critique of Judgment*, Ak. V, 177 n.—as a Kantian defense of his moral theory against the criticisms made by August Wilhelm Rehberg (1757–1836), Privy Secretary of the Chancery and writer at Hanover, in *Über das Verhältniss der Metaphysik zu der Religion* (On the relation of metaphysics to religion) (Berlin: Bey August Mylius, 1787) and in the latter's (anonymous) review of Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* in the *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* (General Literary Gazette), nos. 188a & 188b (Aug. 6, 1788), cols. 345–60; cf. below, Ak. VI, 170 br. n. 170a.]

³³ [Or 'recognizes': *erkennt*.]

³⁴ [*an*. Later in this sentence, *an* is translated as 'in.' Translating it so here would suggest that the object of the greatest respect is the law's holiness rather than the law itself.]

³⁵ [*Ansehen*.]

³⁹ [*Anordnung*.]

³⁶ [*Obrigkeit*.]

⁴⁰ [*richten*.]

³⁷ [*ziehen*.]

⁴¹ [Or 'well-being': *Heil*.]

³⁸ [*Abhandlung*.]

⁴² [*Geistlicher*.]

sciences are entrusted for cultivation and protection against infringements, it is incumbent to restrict the pretensions of the first to the condition that his censorship must wreak no destruction in the realm of the sciences. And if both are biblical theologians, then chief-censorship⁴³ will belong to the second, as a university member of that department⁴⁴ which has been mandated to treat this theology. For in regard to the first concern (the welfare of souls), both have one and the same mandate; but as regards the second (the welfare of the sciences), the theologian as university scholar has to discharge in addition a special function. If one deviates from this rule, then things⁴⁵ must finally come to the point where they have already been heretofore (for example at the time of *Galileo*), namely where the biblical theologian, to humble the pride of the sciences and spare himself the effort needed for them, might venture incursions perhaps even into astronomy or other sciences, e.g., the ancient history of the earth, and confiscate all experiments⁴⁶ of human reason—like those peoples who, finding in themselves either insufficient ability or, for that matter, insufficient zeal to defend themselves against worrisome attacks, transform everything around them into a wilderness.

9

In the realm of the sciences, however, biblical theology faces a philosophical theology, which is the entrusted property of a different department.⁴⁷ This theology must have complete freedom to spread as far as its science reaches, provided that it stays within the bounds of bare reason⁴⁸ and, to confirm and elucidate its propositions, employs history, languages, books of all peoples, even the Bible—but only for itself, without carrying these propositions into biblical theology and seeking to alter the latter's public doctrines, which are the cleric's privilege. And although, when it has been established that the philosophical theologian⁴⁹ has actually overstepped his boundary⁵⁰ and has encroached upon biblical theology, the right of the theologian (considered merely as a cleric) to censorship cannot be disputed, yet once this is still in doubt and thus the question arises whether this occurred through a writing or a different public presentation⁵¹ of the philosopher, the

⁴³ [*Oberzensur.*]

⁴⁵ [*es.*]

⁴⁴ [*Fakultät.*]

⁴⁶ [Or 'attempts': *Versuche.*]

⁴⁷ [Cf. *Dispute among the University's Schools of 1798 (Streit der Fakultäten)*, Ak. VII, 1–116, esp. 15–75; but also 7–10, where Kant rebuts accusations raised against the *Religion*. (A *Fakultät*, as meaning a branch of a university, can be a school or college, such as that of medicine or law; or it can be a department, such as that of philosophy or theology.)]

⁴⁸ [*innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft*. For an explanation of my use of 'bare' in this work's title, see below, Ak. VI, 12 incl. br. n. 76, but above all Stephen Palmquist's Introduction to this volume.]

⁴⁹ [Kant says merely 'the first': *der erste*, perhaps because the philosophical theologian was mentioned (by implication) before the cleric.]

⁵⁰ [*Grenze.*]

⁵¹ [*Vortrag.*]

chief-censorship can belong only to the biblical theologian as a *member of his department*, for he has been instructed to attend also to the second interest of the community, namely the flourishing of the sciences, and has been appointed just as validly as the philosophical theologian.⁵²

Moreover, in such a case the primary censorship belongs to this department,⁵³ not to the philosophical one,⁵⁴ because certain doctrines are the privilege of the former alone, whereas the latter deals with its own doctrines openly and freely; hence only the former can lodge a complaint that its exclusive right is being infringed.⁵⁵ However, although all the doctrines of both approach one another and there is worry that philosophical theology may overstep the bounds between them, doubt about such encroachment can easily be forestalled. For, one need only consider that this mischief does not occur because the philosopher *borrow*s⁵⁶ something from biblical theology in order to use it for his aim⁵⁷ (since biblical theology itself will not wish to deny that it contains a great deal in common with the doctrines of bare reason, and also much belonging to the science of history or to philology⁵⁸ and subject to the censorship of these)—even supposing that what the philosopher borrows from biblical theology is used by him in a signification commensurate with bare reason but perhaps not to its liking! Rather, this mischief occurs only insofar as he *carries* something *into* biblical theology and thereby seeks to direct that theology to other purposes than its arrangement⁵⁹ permits.—Thus one cannot say, e.g., that the teacher of natural right who borrows many classical expressions and formulas for his philosophical doctrine of right⁶⁰ from the Code of the Roman one⁶¹ is encroaching upon the latter, even if, as often occurs, he employs them in a sense that is not exactly the same in which—according to the interpreters of that Code—they are perhaps to be taken, provided he does not wish the jurists proper or even the courts of law to use them thus as well. For if that were not within his competence,⁶² then

⁵² [Kant says merely ‘the former’: *der erstere*; but the contrast in the paragraph as a whole makes clear who is intended.]

⁵³ [The department of biblical theology.]

⁵⁴ [The department of philosophical theology.]

⁵⁵ [*Abbruch geschehe*.]

⁵⁶ [*entlehnt*. Below, ‘borrows’ translates *borgt*.]

⁵⁷ [*Absicht*.]

⁵⁸ [Or, more literally, ‘linguistic scholarship’: *Sprachgelehrsamkeit*.]

⁵⁹ [Or ‘organization’ or ‘design’: *Einrichtung*.]

⁶⁰ [Or ‘doctrine of law’: *Rechtslehre*.]

⁶¹ [Roman law is the basis of the legal systems of most European countries and of countries elsewhere—including, e.g., the United States of America—that have more or less modeled their legal systems on these. The *Corpus Juris Civilis* (*Body of Civil Law*), a consolidation of Roman law governing relations among citizens, was set forth chiefly in the Justinian Code, i.e., the code published by the Byzantine emperor Justinian I (A.D. 483–565, reigned 527–65) in A.D. 529–ca. 545.]

⁶² [Or ‘authority’: *Befugnis*.]

one could also, conversely, accuse the biblical theologian or the statutory jurist of committing⁶³ countless encroachments upon the property of philosophy, because both must quite often borrow from it, although—respectively⁶⁴—only for their own sake, since they cannot dispense with reason and, where science is at issue, with philosophy. However, if in matters of religion⁶⁵ one were considering for the biblical theologian⁶⁶ to have, if possible, nothing at all to do with philosophy, then one can easily foresee on whose side the loss would be; for a religion that unhesitatingly declares war on reason will not persevere against it in the long run.—I shall even venture the suggestion whether it would not be beneficial, upon completion of the academic instruction in biblical theology, always still to add—by way of conclusion, as required for the candidate to be fully equipped—a special lecture on pure *philosophical* doctrine of religion (which makes use of everything, even the Bible), in accordance with a guide like, say, this book (or for that matter a different one, if a better one of the same kind is available).—For, the sciences gain from separation solely insofar as each first amounts to a whole by itself and only then the experiment is made for the first time to consider them as united. Then the biblical theologian may be at one with the philosopher or may believe that he must refute him: if only he hears him. For in this way alone can he be armed in advance against all the difficulties that the philosopher might make for him. Yet to conceal these difficulties, perhaps also to disparage them as ungodly, is a paltry expedient that does not stand the test; but to mix the two [sciences]⁶⁷ and for the biblical theologian only occasionally to throw fleeting glances upon those [difficulties]⁶⁸ is a lack of thoroughness where in the end no one quite knows where he stands in regard to the doctrine of religion as a whole.

11

To make discernible religion's reference to human nature fraught partly with good and partly with evil predispositions, I now present, in the following four essays,⁶⁹ the relation of the good principle and the evil principle immediately⁷⁰ as two self-subsistent causes influencing the human being. The first of these essays has already been inserted in the *Berlinische Monatsschrift*⁷¹ of April 1792, but could not be omitted here, because of the exact coherence of the materials in this work, which in the three essays now being added contains the complete elaboration of these materials. —The reader will excuse the orthography on the first sheets, which deviates from mine, because of the difference of the hands that have worked on the copy, and the shortness of the time that was left me for revision.

⁶³ [tun.]

⁶⁷ [Biblical theology and philosophical theology.]

⁶⁴ [beiderseitig.]

⁶⁸ [Kant says merely 'thereupon': *darauf*.]

⁶⁵ [Religionsdingen.]

⁶⁹ [Abhandlungen.]

⁶⁶ [Kant again says merely 'the former': *dem erstern*.]

⁷⁰ [gleich.]

⁷¹ [The title (italics added) means roughly *Berlin Monthly Journal*. This publication appeared, under various titles, from 1783 to 1811. It was edited by Johann Erich Biester (1749–1816) and Friedrich Gedike (1754–1803), who together with Friedrich Nicolai (1733–1811), editor of the later *Neue* [New] *Berlinische Monatsschrift*, formed the so-called triumvirate of the Berlin Late-Enlightenment.]

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

12

Apart from the misprints and a few corrected expressions, nothing is changed in this edition. The newly added supplements have been placed under the text, marked with a dagger (†).¹

Regarding the title of this work (since concerns have been expressed also about the intention hidden under it) I add this comment: Since *revelation* can still at least comprise pure *rational religion*² as well but the latter cannot, conversely, comprise the historical element³ of revelation, I shall be able to consider revelation as a *wider sphere*⁴ of faith that encloses pure rational religion as a *narrower* one within itself (not as two circles located outside each other but as concentric ones);⁵ the philosopher, as pure teacher of reason⁶ (teaching from bare a priori principles), must keep within this narrower sphere, and hence must abstract in this from all experience. From this standpoint I can now also make the second experiment, namely to start from some supposed revelation and, by abstracting from pure rational religion (insofar as it amounts to a self-subsistent system), to hold the revelation as a *historical system* up to moral concepts in a merely fragmentary way, and to see whether this system does not lead back to the same pure *rational system* of religion⁷ as a system independent and sufficient for religion proper—not indeed with a theoretical aim (under which must be included also the technically practical⁸ aim of

¹ [Literally, 'cross': *Kreuz*. In this edition, when the dagger occurs at the beginning of a footnote, it is inserted after the footnote number.]

² [Or 'religion of reason': *Vernunftreligion*.]

³ [*das Historische*.]

⁴ [*Sphäre*, treated (in its older sense) as synonymous with 'circle' (*Kreis*) in the parenthesis below.]

⁵ [Kant's explanation of the title of this work—*Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft*—is also the basis, in the title's English translation, for the choice of the term 'bare' for *bloß*, with its two connotations of 'mere' and 'naked,' both present (although the latter and older connotation only sometimes) in *bloß*. For, pure rational religion is here described not only as *narrower* than (religion based on) revelation, which implies the 'mere,' but also as a *sphere within* that wider sphere, which implies the 'naked' when it is not so comprised but is rather—as Kant describes it below, in his "second experiment"—a system independent and sufficient for religion proper. See on all this also the Stephen Palmquist's Introduction to this volume.]

⁶ [*reiner Vernunftlehrer*.]

⁷ [From which I have abstracted.]

⁸ [*technisch-praktisch*. Below, 'morally practical' similarly translates *moralisch-praktisch*. On Kant's distinction between *technically* practical, i.e., practical in relation to art (in the sense that includes craft), and *morally* practical, cf. *Critique of Judgment*, Ak. V, 172.]

13 instructional method as a doctrine of art),⁹ but still with a morally practical aim—inasmuch as religion proper, as an a priori rational concept (that remains after omission of everything empirical) has its place only in this¹⁰ reference. If this is the case,¹¹ then one will be able to say that between reason and Scripture there is to be found not merely compatibility but also unity, so that whoever follows the one (under the guidance of moral concepts) will not fail to concur with the other as well. If this did not happen to be so, then one would have either two religions in one person, which is absurd, or one *religion* and one *cult*, in which case, since the latter is not (like religion) a purpose¹² in itself but has value only as a means, the two would often have to be shaken together, so that for a short time they would combine; yet, like oil and water, they would at once have to separate from each other again and let what is purely moral (the rational religion) float on top.

I noted in the first Preface¹³ that this uniting,¹⁴ or the attempt at it, is a task that the philosophical investigator of religion quite rightly deserves, and not an encroachment upon the exclusive rights of the biblical theologian. Since then I have found this assertion cited in the *Moral* of the late *Michaelis*¹⁵ (Part I, pp. 5–11)—a man well versed in both fields—and carried out throughout his entire work, without the higher department¹⁶ having found in this anything prejudicial to its rights.

In this second edition I have not been able to take into consideration, as I certainly would have wished to do, the judgments¹⁷ passed on this work by worthy men, mentioned here and unmentioned, because (like everything literary that is foreign) they arrive very late in our regions. I would have wished to do this above all in regard to the *Annotationes quaedam theologicae* etc. of the illustrious Dr. *Storr*¹⁸

⁹ [Or, in the root sense of the term, ‘technology’: *Kunstlehre*.]

¹⁰ [I.e., the a priori rational.]

¹¹ [I.e., if the revelation as a historical system does lead back to the same pure rational system of religion.]

¹² [Or ‘end’: *Zweck*; but see Ak. VI, 34 br. n. 152c.]

¹³ [Ak. VI, 3–11, specifically 9–11.]

¹⁴ [Of biblical theology and philosophical theology.]

¹⁵ [Johann David Michaelis (1717–91), orientalist, biblical scholar (founder of Old Testament Bible critique), and professor of theology in Göttingen. His work *Moral* (*Morality*) was published posthumously (with a history of Christian morality) in 1792 in Göttingen by his colleague Carl Friedrich Stäudlin (1761–1826), to whom Kant dedicated the *Dispute among the University’s Schools*, of 1798, in which Michaelis is also cited at Ak. VII, 8.]

¹⁶ [The Department of Biblical Theology, which has primary censorship. Cf. the first Preface, Ak. VII, 9.]

¹⁷ [*Urteile* here. Below, ‘judgment’ translates *Beurteilung*. In most Kantian texts, and in German generally, *beurteilen* is simply the transitive analogue of *urteilen*—cf. English ‘bemoan’ and ‘moan.’ By the same token, the corresponding nouns are likewise synonymous. (By coincidence, in the subsequent sentence, ‘answer’ happens to translate not *Antwort* but the similarly synonymous *Beantwortung*.)]

¹⁸ [‘Mr. Dr. Storr,’ literally. Gottlob Christian Storr (1746–1805), professor of philosophy and theology in Tübingen, then chief court preacher in Stuttgart. Georg Wobbermin points out (Ak. VI, 501) that

in Tübingen, who has examined this work with his accustomed acuteness, and at the same time with a diligence and fairness deserving the utmost gratitude. I do propose to respond to these judgments, but I dare not promise it, because of the afflictions with which old age opposes primarily work with abstract ideas.—One judgment [of my work], namely that in the *Neueste Kritische Nachrichten*¹⁹ of Greifswald, Number 29, I can dispose of just as briefly as the reviewer did of the work itself. For the latter is, in his judgment, nothing other than [my] answer to the question posed to me by myself: “How is the church system²⁰ of dogmatics²¹ possible, in its concepts and doctrines, according to pure (theoretical and practical) reason?”—Hence, [he maintains,] this essay is of no concern at all to those who are as little acquainted with his (K.’s) system, and who understand it as little, as they yearn to be able to understand it; and for them, therefore, [that system] is to be looked upon as nonexistent.—To this I answer as follows. To understand this work in terms of its essential content, only common morality is needed, without venturing into the critique of practical reason, still less into that of theoretical reason;²² and when, e.g., virtue as a proficiency in *actions* conforming to duty (according to their legality) is called *virtus phaenomenon*,²³ but the same virtue as a steadfast *attitude*²⁴ toward such actions from *duty* (because of their morality) is called *virtus*

14

Storr was the head of the *Supernaturalists*, who sought to prove the revelation character of the Christian religion by the historical path, and that his *Annotationes* also defended this standpoint. The *Annotationes quaedam theologicae ad philosophicam Kantii de religione doctrinam* (Some theological remarks concerning Kant’s philosophical doctrine of religion) were published in Tübingen in 1793. One year later, the work appeared in a German translation by Friedrich Gottlieb Süskind (1767–1829): *D. Gottlob Christian Storr’s Bemerkungen über Kant’s philosophische Religionslehre* (Dr. Gottlob Christian Storr’s remarks concerning Kant’s philosophical doctrine of religion) (Tübingen: J. G. Cotta, 1794.); reprinted (Brussels: Culture et civilisation, 1968.)

¹⁹ [*Neueste Kritische Nachrichten* (Kant has here modernized the spelling of ‘Critical’), of Greifswald in Western Pomerania (*Vorpommern*), 1793, pp. 225–29. The quotation that Kant is about to give is on p. 226. This annual journal was published initially (1743–48) as *Pommersche Nachrichten von gelehrten Sachen* (Pomeranian News Concerning Scholarly Matters), ed. Johann Carl Dähnert; then (1750–54) as *Critische Nachrichten* (Critical News) and thereafter (1765–74) as *Neue Kritische Nachrichten* (Recent Critical News), eds. Johann Carl Dähnert and then Johann Georg Peter Möller; and finally (1775–1807) as *Neueste Kritische Nachrichten* (Most Recent Critical News), ed. the same Johann Georg Peter Möller (1729–1807, professor of rhetoric and history at the University of Greifswald).]

²⁰ [Or ‘ecclesiastical system’: *kirchliche System*.]

²¹ [I.e., dogmatic theology: *Dogmatik*.]

²² [I.e., the subject of the *Critique of Pure Reason*.]

²³ [Phenomenal virtue, i.e., virtue as it appears.]

²⁴ [*Gesinnung*. Of the several possible renderings for this term, ‘attitude’ still seems to me—as it did when I translated Kant’s *Critiques*—clearly the best. It is the translation put unambiguously first by the most dependable and up-to-date dictionaries, including the online ones, although I chose it not for this reason but solely on the basis of my long-term linguistic understanding of *Gesinnung* and ‘attitude.’]

noumenon,²⁵ these expressions are used only because of the school, but the matter itself is contained, even if in different words, in the most popular instruction for children or in sermons and is readily understandable. If only the latter could be boasted concerning the mysteries of the divine nature, which are classed with the doctrine of religion and are brought into the catechisms as if they were entirely popular, but which later on must first of all be transformed into moral concepts if they are to become understandable to everyone!

Königsberg, January 26, 1794.

Older dictionaries—and Stephen Palmquist in the Introduction to this volume—favor ‘disposition,’ which is not too different from ‘attitude’ except for sounding (in my view) in one of its senses a little vaguer, more *metaphysical* as it were, and in another somewhat *behavioral*. ‘Conviction’ seems to me excessively narrow, too cognitive, linked to specific beliefs, as *Gesinnung* does not: one can have a conviction, but *not a Gesinnung*, that this or that is the case. Moreover, ‘conviction’ is needed (and I so use it) to render *Überzeugung*, a term that is *not* synonymous with *Gesinnung*; and using the same English term for both would *erase the distinction* between the two and would thus mislead the reader. Now, it is true that *Duden* characterizes *Gesinnung* as a *Grundhaltung*, a *basic* attitude. Yet ‘basic’ here implies little more than something *general* that ‘attitude’ already means: a *tendency* to believe and consequently also to act in certain ways. It is also true, as Palmquist points out in his Introduction, that in this work Kant never uses *Haltung*, the standard [contemporary!] German word for ‘attitude.’ But the reason for this is not the one Palmquist suggests but a much simpler one: in Kant’s time and until the late 19th century, *Haltung* meant ‘attitude’ *only in a physical, postural* sense (‘bearing,’ ‘support’), a sense in which Kant does use the term elsewhere but which is obviously quite irrelevant in the present context. Thus we are left with *one* difference between ‘attitude’ and *Gesinnung*, a comparatively minor one in my view: unlike a *Gesinnung*, *some* attitudes can indeed change easily—in slang, we sometimes say that someone “has an attitude”—although (*pace* Palmquist) it seems to me simply incorrect to say that this easy changeability is implicit in attitudes *as such*. Above all, *no one* reading Kant’s *Religion*, or for that matter any of his *Critiques*, could possibly read and understand *any* of the occurrences of ‘attitude’ in these works—as, e.g., in the countless occurrences of ‘moral attitude,’ but elsewhere as well—in a sense that suggests easy changeability; reading them in that way simply does not make sense. On the other hand, the definition of ‘attitude’ (in the sense relevant here) given (e.g.,) by *Webster’s New World Dictionary* does in fact characterize the meaning of *Gesinnung* as well: ‘a manner of acting, feeling, or thinking that shows one’s disposition, opinion, etc.’ It seems to me quite clear, therefore, that ‘attitude’ is *indeed* the most appropriate English term for *Gesinnung*.]

²⁵ [Noumenal virtue, i.e., virtue as it can only be thought.]

CONTENTS

FIRST PIECE

On the Inherence of the Evil alongside the Good Principle, or,
On the Radical Evil in Human Nature

SECOND PIECE

On the Struggle of the Good with the Evil Principle for
Dominion over the Human Being

THIRD PIECE

On the Victory of the Good over the Evil Principle and the
Founding of a Kingdom of God on Earth

FOURTH PIECE

On Service and Pseudoservice Under the Dominion of the
Good Principle, or On Religion and Priestery

PHILOSOPHICAL DOCTRINE OF RELIGION

17

FIRST PIECE¹

19

ON THE INHERENCE OF THE EVIL ALONGSIDE THE GOOD PRINCIPLE, OR, ON THE RADICAL EVIL IN HUMAN NATURE

That the world lies in baseness² is a lament as ancient as history, even as the still more ancient art of poetry—indeed, just as much so as the most ancient among all poetic compositions, the religion of the priests.³ Yet all religions have the world start from the good: from the Golden Age, from life in Paradise, or from a still happier life in communion with celestial beings. But they soon make this happiness vanish like a dream, and now make the decline into evil (moral evil, with which physical evil has always gone hand in hand) toward the ever baser⁴ hasten in an

¹ [*Stück*. Kant used this term because he had initially published the first portion of this work as a separate article or *piece* in a journal (the *Berlinische Monatsschrift*, roughly the *Berlin Monthly Journal*), but then encountered increasing difficulties with the Prussian censorship when he tried to publish the subsequent pieces similarly. Once he succeeded in publishing the entire book, he decided to retain the term *Stück*. Cf. above, Ak. VI, 8 incl. br. n. 71, but above all Georg Wobbermin's Introduction, Ak. VI, 497–501.]

² [Or 'lies in wickedness': *im Argen liege*. This quote is from 1 John 5:19, *Wir wissen, daß wir von Gott sind; und die ganze Welt liegt im Argen*. I.e., in the King James Version, "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."]

³ [What sources Kant relied on in this work is discussed by Josef Bohatec (1876–1954) in his extensive commentary (643 pages, including the apparatus) on this Kantian work: *Die Religionsphilosophie Kants in der "Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft."* Mit besonderer Berücksichtigung ihrer theologisch-dogmatischen Quellen (Kant's philosophy of religion in the "Religion within the bounds of bare reason." With special consideration of its theological-dogmatic sources) (Hamburg: Hoffmann & Campe, 1938); reprinted (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1966). All translations of citations hereafter given from this work are mine.]

⁴ [I.e., to the morally more evil: *zum Ärger[e]n*.]

accelerated fall⁵—so that now (but this Now is as ancient as history) we live in the final age,⁶ the Last Day⁷ and the end of the world are knocking at the door, and in some regions of Hindustan⁸ the World Judge and Destroyer *Rudra*⁹ (otherwise also called *Shiva* or *Siva*)¹⁰ is already being venerated as the God now holding power, after the World Preserver *Vishnu*, weary of the office he took over from the World Creator *Brahma*, has already resigned it centuries ago.¹¹

⁵ Aetas parentum peior avis tulit
Nos nequiores, mox daturos
Progeniem vitiosiore.
Horace^a

^a [I.e., Quintus Horatius Flaccus (65–68 B.C.), *Odes*, III, 6: “Our parents’ age, worse than our grandparents,’ has produced us more worthless still, soon to give rise to a progeny yet more faulty [or ‘vicious’].” All translations given in footnotes are my own.]

⁶ [letzten Zeit.]

⁷ [Literally, ‘the youngest day’: *der jüngste Tag*; i.e., Judgment Day.]

⁸ [I.e., India.]

⁹ [Vedic deity who can be seen as a prototype of Shiva: Ruttren.]

¹⁰ [Siba, Siwen. Cf. below, Ak. VI, 140 n. 446† incl. br. n. 446b.]

¹¹ [According to Bohatec (op. cit. at Ak. VI, 19 br. n. 3), 166–67, with regard to Indian religion Kant relied mainly on the following two sources.

The first of these, in the original (title abbreviated), is Pierre Sonnerat (1748–1814; cf. Ak VIII, 505, where his year of birth is given, as it is in numerous sources, as 1749), *Voyage aux Indes Orientales et à la Chine* (Voyage to the East Indies and to China), 2 vols. (Paris: Pierre Sonnerat, 1782). Kant read the German translation by Johann Pezzl (1756–1823): *Reise nach Ostindien und China*, 2 vols., (Zürich: Orell, Geßner, Füllli & Kompagnie, 1783). For the Indian deities mentioned by Kant, Bohatec cites I, 166, 249. Cf. Kant’s *The End of All Things*, Ak. VIII, the n. on 328–29.

The second main source, in German translation, is Jean Calmette (1693–1740), *Ezour-Védam, oder der alte Commentar über den Védam* (later title: *Übersetzung und Kommentar über den Ezour-Védam*) (Yajur Veda or the ancient commentary on the Veda [later title: Translation and commentary on the Yajur Veda]), German translation, with introduction and notes, by Johann S. Ith, professor in Bern (Bern and Leipzig: Typographische Gesellschaft, 1794). For the Indian deities mentioned by Kant, Bohatec cites 10 ff. This work is a translation of *L’Ezour-Védam; ou, Ancien commentaire du Védam, contenant l’exposition des opinions religieuses & philosophiques des Indiens. Traduit du samscretan par un Brame*, 2 vols. (Yverdon: de Felice, 1778). Although this work was mistaken, by Voltaire and others, for a translation of an authentic Sanskrit document, namely the *Yajur Veda*, it was actually a forgery, whose real author was Guillaume-Emmanuel-Joseph Guilhem de Clermont-Lodève Baron de Sainte-Croix (1746–1809). Cf. Jean Castets, *L’Ezour Védam de Voltaire et les pseudo-Védams de Pondichéry* (The Yajur Veda of Voltaire and the pseudo-Vedas of Pondicherry) (Pondicherry: Impr. moderne, 1935); and Moritz Winternitz (1863–1937), *Geschichte der indischen Literatur* (History of Indian literature), memorial number, ed. N. N. Law. ([Calcutta: Sarkhel], 1938.) For a contemporary edition of the forgery with French text but introduced in English, see *Ezourvédam: a French Veda of the Eighteenth Century*. Edited, with an introduction, by Ludo Rocher. University of Pennsylvania Studies on South Asia; v. 1. (Amsterdam; Philadelphia: J. Benjamins, 1984.)

More recent, but far less widespread, is the opposite, heroic opinion, which—I suppose—has found its place solely among philosophers and, in our times, above all among pedagogues: that the world advances incessantly (though scarcely noticeably) in precisely the reverse direction, namely from the bad¹² to the better; or that at least the predisposition to this [advance] is to be found in human nature. This opinion, however, they have assuredly not drawn from experience if the morally good or evil (rather than the civilizing of people) is at issue: for there the history of all times speaks far too powerfully against them.¹³ Rather, it is presumably just a well-meaning presupposition of the moralists, from *Seneca* to *Rousseau*,¹⁴ made in order to impel us to cultivate indefatigably the germ for the good, which perhaps lies within us, if only one can count on such a natural foundation for the good in the human being. Add to this, moreover, that since the human being must, after all, be assumed to be by nature (i.e., as he is usually born) sound¹⁵ in body, there is no reason for not assuming him to be sound and

Bohatec (p. 166) points out, however, that “[i]f from the multitude of eschatological conceptions Kant here selects specifically the *Indian* one, this can be explained by the lively interest that was shown to Indian philosophy at that time.” Otherwise, Bohatec says, “If Kant encounters the basic outlines of this pessimistic theory ‘in all religions of the priests,[]’ he yet seems to have thought primarily of the representatives among the Christian apocalyptic writers. . . . Kant probably thought mainly of Bengel, whose *Ordo Temporum* [*The Order of the Times*, a treatise on the chronology of Scripture (Stuttgart: Christoph Erhard, 1741; Ulm: Daniel Bartholomaeus und Sohn, 1745] Kant has read” (ibid., 166) Johann Albrecht Bengel (1687–1752), a major representative of the Württemberg school of pietism, was a mystical theologian who predicted that, after a dramatic final battle for the human being between the kingdoms of God and of Satan, the kingdom of God on Earth would begin, in 1836, as a time of peace lasting a thousand years, to be followed by another kingdom lasting a thousand years; etc.]

¹² [*schlecht*.]

¹³ [Cf. Kant’s comment on the heroic faith in virtue, in *The End of All Things*, Ak. VIII, 332.]

¹⁴ [For Seneca, see below. Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712–78), French political philosopher and social critic who exerted profound influence on the political thought of the late 18th century, particularly that of the French Revolution, and on the Romantic movement. The “presupposition” Kant mentions can be found, e.g., in *Discours sur l’origine et les fondemens de l’inégalité parmi les hommes* (Discourse on the origin and the bases of inequality among People) (Amsterdam: Marc Michel Rey, 1755), part I, note 9 (beginning of second paragraph): “*Les hommes sont méchants; une triste et continuelle expérience dispense de la preuve; cependant l’homme est naturellement bon, je crois l’avoir démontré; qu’est-ce donc qui peut l’avoir dépravé à ce point sinon les changements survenus dans sa constitution, les progrès qu’il a faits et les connaissances qu’il a acquises?*” I.e.: “Human beings are evil; a sad and continual experience makes proof unnecessary. Nevertheless, the human being is good by nature, as I believe I have shown. What is it, then, that can have depraved him to this point, if not the changes in his constitution that have occurred later, the advances he has made and the knowledge he has gained?”]

¹⁵ [Or ‘healthy’: *gesund*.]

good even in soul by nature as well. Thus nature itself, [so the moralists conclude,] furthers¹⁶ the development in us of this moral predisposition to the good. *Sanabilibus aegrotamus malis, nosque in rectum genitos natura, si sanari velimus, adiuvat, says Seneca.*¹⁷

But since, after all, it could certainly have happened that people erred in both these alleged experiences, the question is whether something intermediate¹⁸ is not at least possible, namely that the human being, in his genus, may be neither good nor evil, or perhaps the one as well as the other, partly good, partly evil.—We call a human being evil, however, not because he performs actions that are evil (unlawful),¹⁹ but because they are so constituted²⁰ as to allow²¹ one to infer evil maxims in him. Now, through experience one can indeed notice unlawful actions, and also (at least in oneself) that they are consciously unlawful; but one cannot observe the maxims, not even always in oneself, and hence the judgment that the agent is an evil human being cannot with assurance be based on experience. In order to call a human being evil, therefore, one would have to be able to infer a priori from a few consciously evil actions, indeed from a single one, an evil maxim lying at their basis, and from it again a basis, itself in turn a maxim and lying in the subject universally,²² of all particular morally evil maxims.

¹⁶ [*beförderlich sei*, where ‘sei,’ the main verb, is in the present subjunctive of indirect speech—which I indicate by the bracketed interpolation.]

¹⁷ [Lucius Annaeus Seneca the Younger (ca. 4 B.C.–A.D. 65), the Roman Stoic philosopher whose life under the emperors Caligula (lived A.D. 12–41 [reigned 37–41]), Claudius I (10 B.C.–A.D. 54 [r. A.D. 41–54]), and Nero (A.D. 37–68 [r. 54–68]) included, apart from prolific writing, immense dangers but also great influence, a long exile from which he was finally recalled, and ultimately the command—which he obeyed—to commit suicide. The quote, slightly free (the emphasis is also Kant’s own), is from the *De ira* (On anger), II, 13, 1. The original passage (also used by Rousseau for the title page of his *Émile*) reads: “*Sanabilibus aegrotamus malis; ipsaque nos in rectum genitos natura, si emendari velimus, iuvat.*” Kant’s version, with differences in the original inserted in brackets, translates thus: “We ail from curable evils, and if we are willing to be cured [improved], nature [itself] helps us, *who were born to what is right.*” The quote is part of this passage: “*Non est quod patrociniū nobis quaeramus et excusatam licentiam, dicentes aut utile id esse aut inevitabile; cui enim tandem vitio advocatus defuit? Non est quod dicas excidi non posse: sanabilibus aegrotamus malis ipsaque nos in rectum genitos natura, si emendari velimus, iuvat. Nec, ut quibusdam visum est, arduum in virtutes et asperum iter est: plano adeuntur.*” I.e.: “It is not for us to seek a defense for ourselves and an excuse for license by saying that this [viz., anger] is either useful or unavoidable; for what vice has ever lacked its defender? It is not for you to say that this [anger] cannot be eradicated. We ail from curable evils, and if we are willing to be improved, nature itself helps us, who were born to what is right. Nor, as it seems to some, is the path to the virtues steep and rough: the access to them is level.”]

¹⁸ [*ein Mittleres.*]

²¹ [Or, possibly, ‘lead’: *lassen.*]

¹⁹ [Or ‘contrary to law’: *gesetzwidrig.*]

²² [I.e., with the form of a practical law: *allgemein.*]

²⁰ [Or ‘of such a character’: *so beschaffen.*]

However, lest anyone be immediately troubled by the term *nature*²³—which, if it were intended to signify (as it usually is) the opposite of the basis of actions arising from freedom, would be in direct contradiction to the predicates *morally good or evil*—it should be noted that here I mean by the nature of the human being only the subjective basis of the use of his freedom in general²⁴ (under objective moral laws), the basis which—wherever it may lie—precedes any deed that strikes the senses. This subjective basis itself, however, must always in turn be an act²⁵ of freedom (for otherwise the use or abuse of the human being’s power of choice²⁶ in regard to the moral law could not be imputed to him, and the good or evil in him could not be called moral). Hence the basis of evil cannot lie in any object *determining* the power of choice through inclination, not in any natural impulse, but can lie only in a rule that the power of choice itself—for the use of its freedom—makes for itself, i.e., in a maxim. Now, concerning this maxim it must not be possible to go on asking what is²⁷ the subjective basis, in a human being, for the adoption²⁸ of this maxim rather than of the opposite one. For if ultimately this basis itself were not a maxim any more but a mere natural impulse, then the use of freedom could be reduced²⁹ entirely to determination by natural causes—which, however, contradicts freedom. Thus when we say, The human being is by nature good, or, He is by nature evil, this means no more than this: He contains³⁰ a first basis (inscrutable to us)³¹ for the adoption of good maxims or the adoption of evil (unlawful) ones, and

²³ [Most recently, in the preceding paragraph, Kant actually said ‘genus’ (*Gattung*) rather than ‘nature’; but there too he obviously could have used ‘nature’ instead, as is clear both from the context and from the heading of this entire piece.]

²⁴ [*überhaupt*.]

²⁷ [*sei*; the subjunctive is merely that of indirect speech.]

²⁵ [*Actus*.]

²⁸ [*Annehmung*, which can also mean ‘assumption.’]

²⁶ [*Willkür*.]

²⁹ [*zurückgeführt*, the literal meaning of which (like that of ‘reduced’) is ‘led back.’]

³⁰ [Although ‘contains’ may sound a little awkward in this context, the same applies to the German term: *enthält*.]

³¹ That the first subjective basis for the adoption of moral maxims is inscrutable^a can provisionally already be seen from this: Since this adoption is free, its basis (why, e.g., I have adopted an evil maxim rather than a good one) must be sought not in any incentive of nature, but always in turn in a maxim; and since this maxim must likewise have its basis, while yet apart from a maxim no *determining basis* of the free power of choice is to be or can be adduced, one is referred back ever further *ad infinitum* in the series^b of subjective determining bases.

^a [*unerforschlich*.]

^b [The term is singular here: *Reihe*.]

this moreover universally, as a human being, and hence in such a way that through this nature³² he expresses at the same time the character of his genus.

Hence of one of these characters³³ (distinguishing the human being from other possible rational beings) we shall say: it is *innate* in him; and yet in doing so we shall always concede that nature does not bear the blame³⁴ for these characters (if the character is evil), or that it does not get the credit³⁵ for them (if the character is good), but that the human being himself is the originator of this character. But since the first basis for the adoption of our maxims, which must itself always lie in turn in the free power of choice, cannot be a fact³⁶ that could be given in experience, the good or the evil in the human being (as the subjective first basis for the adoption of this or that maxim with regard to the moral law) is called innate merely in the sense that it is laid at the basis (in earliest youth, back at the point of birth) prior to any use of freedom that is given in experience, and thus is conceived³⁷ as present in the human being simultaneously with birth—though not exactly as having birth as its cause.

Comment

The conflict of the two hypotheses that were put forth above is based on a disjunctive proposition: *The human being is* (by nature) *either morally good or morally evil*. It readily occurs to anyone, however, to ask whether this disjunction is indeed correct, and whether someone could not assert that the human being is by nature neither of the two, but someone else, that he is both simultaneously, namely in some points³⁸ good, in others evil. Experience even seems to confirm this intermediate position between the two extremes.

However, the doctrine of morals³⁹ is in general greatly concerned to admit, as long as this is possible, no moral intermediate [some]things, neither in actions (*adiaphora*)⁴⁰ nor in human characters, because with such an ambiguity all maxims run the risk of losing their determinateness and stability. Those who are attached to this strict way of thinking are commonly called *rigorists* (a name that

³² [I.e., through this first basis, which is inscrutable to us: *durch dieselbe*.]

³³ [I.e., the good or the evil character.]

³⁴ [*die Schuld* . . . *trage*.]

³⁵ [*das Verdienst* . . . *trage*.]

³⁶ [*Factum*.]

³⁷ [*vorgestellt*.]

³⁸ [*Stücken*.]

³⁹ [*Sittenlehre*.]

⁴⁰ [Etymologically, the literal Greek equivalent of (morally) *indifferent* (actions).]

is intended to imply a rebuke, but that in fact constitutes praise); and thus their antipodes may be called *latitudinarians*. Thus these latter are latitudinarians either of neutrality and may be called *indifferentists*,⁴¹ or of coalition⁴² and may be called *syncretists*.⁴³

⁴¹ [*Indifferentisten*.]

⁴² [On indifferentists, cf. *Critique of Pure Reason*, A x-xii; on coalition and syncretism, cf. *Critique of Practical Reason*, Ak. V, 24 (also 98). According to Bohatec (op. cit. at Ak. VI, 19 br. n. 3), 176 n. 57, cf. 28 n. 35, the designations 'latitudinarian' and 'indifferentist' come from Johann Friedrich Stapfer (1708-75, Swiss theologian), *Institutiones theologiae polemicae universae ordine scientifico dispositae* (Instruction in general polemical theology, arranged in scientific order), 5 vols. (Zürich: Heidegger & Co., 1743-47), II, 84; IV, 599. Kant's theological terminology was influenced also by Stapfer's other major work, *Grundlegung zur wahren Religion* (Grounding for the true religion), 12 vols. (Zürich: Heidegger & Co., 1746-53.) Bohatec then points out that Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (1714-62, philosopher in the Leibnizian tradition and disciple of Baron Christian von Wolff, 1679-1754), in his *Ethica philosophica* (Philosophical ethics) (Halle in Magdeburg: Carl H. Hemmerde, 1751), speaks (§ 4) of an "*ethica rigida*," as contrasted with an "*ethica laxa*," implying that the former is the more perfect. Bohatec goes on to mention that Kant—in *Eine Vorlesung Kants über Ethik* (A lecture of Kant on ethics), ed. Paul Menzer (Berlin: R. Heise, 1924); newly edited by Gerd Gerhardt (Frankfurt A. M.: Fischer, 1990); English Translation: *Lectures on Ethics*, trans. Louis Infield, with an introduction by J. Macmurray (New York: Century, 1930); (London: Methuen, 1979), 93—says, in connection with Baumgarten's comments on the *ethica laxa*, "He who conceives the moral law in such a way that with his feeble actions he could pass, [or] who invents lenient [moral] laws for himself, is a *latitudinarius*."]

⁴³ If the good = a, then its contradictory opposite is the not-good.^a Now, this not-good is either the consequence of a mere lack of a basis for the good, = 0, or the consequence of a positive basis for the reverse^b of the good, = -a; in the latter case the not-good can also be called the positive evil. (With regard to gratification and pain, there is something intermediate of that sort, so that gratification = a, pain = -a, and the state in which neither of the two is found, indifference,^c = 0.) Now, if in us the moral law were not an incentive of the power of choice, then morally good (agreement^d of the power of choice with the law) would = a, not-good would = 0, but this latter would be the mere consequence of the lack of a moral incentive, = a ? 0. In fact,^e however, the moral law is an incentive in us, = a; consequently the lack of agreement of the power of choice with this law (= 0) is possible only as the consequence of a really opposite^f determination of the power of choice, i.e., as the consequence of a resistance by it, = -a, i.e., only through an evil power of choice; and hence between an evil and a good attitude (inner principle of maxims)—by which the morality of the action must also be judged—there is nothing intermediate.^g

^a [Or 'the nongood': *das Nichtgute*.]

^b [*Widerspiel*.]

^c [*Gleichgültigkeit*.]

^d [*Zusammenstimmung* here; *Übereinstimmung* below.]

^e [*Nun*.]

^f [*realiter entgegengesetzt*; i.e., opposite in things (*res*) rather than merely in thought (contradictorily).]

^g [Cf., on this note, the *Metaphysics of Morals*, Ak. VI, 384; also No. 7234 in the Reflections on Moral Philosophy, Ak. XIX, 291.]

23

The answer to the mentioned question according to the rigoristic way of deciding⁴⁴ is based on this observation, which is important for morality: the freedom of

⁴⁴ (†) A morally indifferent action (*adiaphoron morale*)^a would be an action resulting merely from natural laws, which therefore has no reference whatever to the moral law, as law of freedom—because it is not a *factum*,^b and in regard to it neither *command* nor *prohibition* nor yet *permission* (legal *authority*) has a place, or is needed.

(†) Professor Schiller,^c in his masterfully composed essay on *gracefulness* and *dignity* in morality (*Thalia*, 1793, no. 3),^d disapproves of this way of conceiving obligation, as if it carried with it a Carthusian-like mental attunement.^e However, since we are at one on the most important principles, I also cannot establish any disunity on this one, if only we can make ourselves understandable to each other.—I gladly admit that with the *concept of duty*, precisely on account of this concept's dignity, I cannot associate *gracefulness*. For it contains unconditional necessitation, to which *gracefulness* is in direct contradiction. The majesty of the law (like the law on Sinai) instills awe (not dread,^f which repels; also not charm, which invites familiarity); and this awe arouses the *respect* of the subordinate toward his master; but in this case, where the master resides in ourselves, it arouses a *feeling of the sublimity*^g of our own vocation, and the sublime^h enraptures us more than anything beautiful.ⁱ—But *virtue*, i.e., the firmly based attitude toward strictly fulfilling one's duty, is in its consequences also *beneficent*, more so than anything that nature or art may accomplish in the world; and humanity's splendid image, drawn up in the guise of virtue, quite readily permits being accompanied by the *graces*,^j who, however, as long as duty alone is still at issue, keep at a reverential distance. But if one takes account of the graceful consequences that virtue, if it gained access everywhere, would spread in the world, then the morally oriented^k reason also calls (through the imagination) sensibility into play. Only after subduing monsters does

^a [Cf. above, Ak. VI, 22 incl. br. n. 40.]

^b [Here in the original sense—sometimes used by Kant—of the Latin word (the past participle of the verb *fare*, 'to do'), as meaning "something done," i.e., a *deed*. Cf. below, Ak. VI, 31 incl. br. n. 128, and No. 7292 in the Reflections on Moral Philosophy, Ak. XIX, 304.]

^c ['Mr. Professor Schiller,' literally.]

^d [(Johann Christoph) Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805, ennobled to *von Schiller* in 1802), the great German dramatist, poet, and literary theorist, and professor (without remuneration and regular duties) at the University of Jena. His essay, "Über Anmut und Würde. An Carl von Dalberg in Erfurth." ("On Gracefulness and Dignity. To Carl von Dalberg in Erfurth"), actually appeared in *Neue* [i.e., *New*] *Thalia*, the successor of *Thalia*, which was itself the successor of *Rheinische* [*Rhenish*] *Thalia*. All three versions of the journal were edited by Schiller himself. See Fritz Berresheim, *Schiller als Herausgeber der Rheinischen Thalia, Thalia, und Neuen Thalia, und sein Mitarbeiter* (Schiller as editor of the *Rhenish Thalia, Thalia, and New Thalia*, and his collaborator) (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1914). Carl (or Karl) Theodor Anton Maria Freiherr von Dalberg (1744–1817) was archbishop-elect of Mainz, arch-chancellor of the Holy Roman Empire, and afterwards primate of the Confederation of the Rhine and Grand-Duke of Frankfurt.]

^e [*Gemütsstimmung*.]

^f [*Scheu*.]

^g [Literally, 'of the sublime': *des Erhabenen*.]

^h [*welches*, which I take to refer to *Erhabenen* rather than to *Gefühl*.]

ⁱ [Cf. *Critique of Judgment*, Ak. V, 257–60, especially the very end.]

^j [*Grazien*; 'graceful,' below, translates *anmutig*.]

^k [Or 'directed': *gerichtet*.]

the power of choice has the quite peculiar characteristic⁴⁵ that it cannot be determined to an action by any incentive *except insofar as the human being has admitted*⁴⁶ the incentive into his maxim (has made this⁴⁷ a universal rule for himself, according to which he wills to conduct himself). Only in this way is an incentive, whichever it may be, consistent with⁴⁸ the absolute spontaneity of the power of choice (i.e., with freedom). However, in the judgment of reason the moral law is on its own an incentive, and whoever makes it his maxim is *morally* good. Now, if, in regard to someone's action referring to the law, the law nonetheless does not determine the power of choice, then an incentive opposed to the law must have influence on his power of choice; and since, on the strength⁴⁹ of the above presupposition, this can occur only by the human being's admitting this incentive (and hence also the deviation from the moral law) into his maxim (in which case he is an evil human being), his attitude⁵⁰ in regard to the moral law is never indifferent (never neither of the two, neither good nor evil).⁵¹

Hercules become *Musagetes*, a labor from which those good sisters¹ recoil. These companions of Venus Urania are wanton sisters in the retinue of Venus Dione^m as soon as they meddle in the business of determining duty and want to supply the incentives for this.—Now, if one asks, Of what kind is the *aesthetic* constitution,ⁿ the *temperament*, as it were, of virtue, is it courageous and hence cheerful, or weighed down by fear and dejected?, then an answer is hardly needed. The latter, slavish mental attunement can never occur without a hidden *hatred* of the law, and the cheerful heart in *complying* with one's duty [according to the law] (not the comfortableness in *acknowledging* the law) is a sign of the genuineness of a virtuous attitude. It is such a sign even in *piety*, which consists not in the self-torment of a repentant sinner (which is very ambiguous and is usually only an inner reproach for having violated the rule of prudence), but in the firm resolve to do better in the future—a resolve that, energized by good progress, must bring about a cheerful mental attunement, without which one is never quite certain of also having *grown fond* of the good, i.e., of having admitted it into one's maxim.

¹ [The good sisters are the muses; Musagetes is their leader.]

^m [Venus Urania—likewise for Aphrodite—is Venus as queen of the heavens. Venus Dione is Venus as mother; the same applies again to Aphrodite, who, as daughter of Zeus and Dione, was often called Dionaea or even Dione.]

ⁿ [Or 'character': *Beschaffenheit*.]

⁴⁵ [Or 'character' or 'constitution': *Beschaffenheit*.]

⁴⁶ [*aufnehmen*.]

⁴⁷ [I.e., this determination by the incentive: *es*.]

⁴⁸ [Literally, 'can an incentive . . . coexist with': *kann eine Triebfeder . . . mit . . . zusammen bestehen*.]

⁴⁹ [Or 'through the power': *vermöge*.]

⁵⁰ [*Gesinnung*. Concerning my rendering of this term, see above, Ak. VI, 13 br. n. 95.]

⁵¹ [According to Bohatec (op. cit. at Ak. VI, 19 br. n. 3), 177 incl. n. 58, Kant would have found this same "rigorist" view in a book by Johann David Heilmann (1727–64) that he had on his shelf and is certain to have read, *Compendium theologiae dogmaticae* (Compendium of dogmatic theology) (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck, 1761), § 196.]

But he also cannot be in some points morally⁵² good and, simultaneously, [morally] evil in others. For if he is good in one point, then he has admitted the moral law into his maxim; thus if in another point he were to be simultaneously evil, then, because the moral law of compliance with duty as such is only one and is universal, the maxim referred to it would be universal, while simultaneously being only a particular maxim—which is contradictory.⁵³

25

To have the one or the other attitude as an innate characteristic⁵⁴ by nature also does not mean here that it has in no way been procured⁵⁵ by the human being who harbors it, i.e., that he is not the originator; rather, it means only that it has not been procured over time⁵⁶ (that one or the other⁵⁷ he *has always been, from his youth*). The attitude, i.e., the first subjective basis for the adoption of maxims, can only be one, and it applies universally to the entire use of freedom. But the attitude itself must also have been adopted through a free power of choice, for otherwise it could not be imputed. Now, the subjective basis or the cause of this adoption cannot again be cognized (although inquiring about it is unavoidable),⁵⁸ because otherwise one would in turn have to adduce a maxim into which this attitude had been adopted, and this maxim must likewise have its basis in turn. Because, therefore, we cannot derive this attitude, or rather its supreme basis, from any first act of the power of

⁵² [*sittlich*; 'moral,' below, translates *moralisch*.]

⁵³ The ancient moral philosophers, who exhausted just about everything that can be said about virtue, also did not leave the above two questions untouched. The first they expressed thus: Whether virtue must be learned (and therefore the human being is by nature indifferent toward it and vice)? The second was this: Whether there is more than one virtue (and hence [the alternative]^a does not perhaps have a place, that the human being is in some points virtuous and in others vicious)? Both [issues]^b they answered in the negative with rigoristic determinateness, and rightly so; for they were considering virtue *in itself*, in the idea of reason (as the human being ought to be). But if one wants to make a moral^c judgment about this moral being,^d the human being *in appearance*, i.e., as experience allows us to be acquainted with him, then both of the cited questions can be answered affirmatively; for then he is judged not on the scales of pure reason (before a divine tribunal), but according to an empirical standard (by a human judge). This will also be dealt with later.

^a [Kant says simply 'it': *es*.]

^c [*sittlich*; 'moral,' below, translates *moralisch*.]

^b [*Beides*.]

^d [*Wesen*; 'human being,' below, translates *Mensch*.]

⁵⁴ [*Beschaffenheit*.]

⁵⁵ [*erworben*.]

⁵⁶ [Literally, 'in time': *in der Zeit*.]

⁵⁷ [Morally good or morally evil.]

⁵⁸ [In the *Akademie* edition, this closing parenthesis does not come until the end of the entire sentence. This is clearly an error, which I have here corrected, since the 'because' clause makes no sense as applied to 'inquiring about it is unavoidable' but does make sense as applied to what Kant says just before the opening parenthesis.]

choice in time,⁵⁹ we call it a characteristic of the power of choice belonging to it by nature (even though in fact it has its basis in freedom). However, that by the human being of whom we say that he is by nature good or evil we do not mean the individual one (since then one human being could be assumed to be good, and another evil, by nature) but are authorized to mean the entire genus—this can be proved only later on, if in anthropological investigation it turns out that the bases that entitle us to attribute one of the two characters⁶⁰ to a human being as innate are so constituted that there is no basis for exempting any human being from it, and that the character therefore holds for the genus.

I. ON THE ORIGINAL PREDISPOSITION IN HUMAN NATURE TO THE GOOD

26

We can properly reduce this predisposition, in reference to its purpose, to three classes,⁶¹ as elements of the determination⁶² of the human being:

1. The predisposition to⁶³ the *animality* of the human being⁶⁴ as a *living* being;
2. To the *humanity* of him as a living and at the same time *rational* being;
3. To his *personality* as that of a being who is rational and at the same time *capable of imputation*⁶⁵ [of actions to him⁶⁶].⁶⁷

⁵⁹ [Literally, 'time-act of the power of choice': *Zeit-Actus der Willkür*.]

⁶⁰ [*Charaktere*.]

⁶¹ [I.e., we can analyze this general predisposition to the good as consisting, at bottom, of three more specific predispositions to the good (cf. below, Ak. VI, 28). Here 'reduce to' (literally 'lead back to') translates the almost synonymous *bringen . . . auf*.]

⁶² [I.e., characterization.]

⁶³ [*für*, likewise in (2) and (3) below. In the next full paragraph, on the other hand, when describing the threefold predisposition to animality, Kant each time uses *zu* instead. The two terms are often synonymous, and I take them to be so here.]

⁶⁴ [Here 'human being' translates *Mensch*. Below, 'being' translates *Wesen*.]

⁶⁵ [In other words, accountable: *der Zurechnung fähig*. Cf. the end of Kant's own note, below.]

⁶⁶ [Carl Leonhard Reinhold (1758–1823), in "*Ueber die Grundwahrheit der Moralität und ihr Verhältniß zur Grundwahrheit der Religion*" ("On the basic truth of morality and its relation to the basic truth of religion"), published in *Der neue Teutsche Merkur* (Weimar: [C. M. Wieland], 1790–1810), III, (March 1791), 225–80, illustrates and supports Kant's point of view as follows (ibid., 230–1):

"Through the involuntary actions of our body we belong among the machines; but through those voluntary actions of our mind that have their basis in the impulse of need, in instinct, in the dependence on impressions, we belong among the species of animals; and consequently through these two ways of acting, which is by no means peculiar to us alone, we belong merely among things. Solely through the

1. The predisposition to **animality** in the human being can be brought under the general title of a physical and merely *mechanical* self-love, i.e., a kind of self-love for which reason is not required.⁶⁸ This predisposition is threefold: *first*, to the human being's preservation of himself; *second*, to the propagation of his species⁶⁹ through the impulse to sex, and to the preservation of what is produced therewith

independent force of the will that determines itself—which, although it cannot displace the impulse of need but can yet guide it according to its law and through its power—can and must we think of ourselves as rational animals, as beings that must never be regarded and used as things, [and thus must think of ourselves] as persons. In this power of reason, and in the personality [i.e., personhood] through which it reveals itself, lies the sole basis of the inviolability that we must grant to the humanity in ourselves and in others, and that can no more well forth from self-love than it can be subordinated to it as its basis.”

This article was published anonymously, but the identity of the author was known. Moreover, Reinhold did identify himself by name as the author of an earlier article in the same edition of the journal, “*Ehrenrettung der neuesten Philosophie*” (Redeeming the Honor of the Most Recent Philosophy) (ibid., 81–112), in which he defends the honor of the most recent philosophy against the “metaphysical influenza” affecting the health of the German spirit. Reinhold also did further work on Kantian ethics, namely on the distinction between *Wille* (will as practical reason) and *Willkür* (power of choice), and published it in the form of letters (some of which also appeared in the *Teutsche Merkur*) in vol. II of his *Briefe über die Kantische Philosophie, von Carl Leonhard Reinhold, Rath, und Professor der Philosophie zu Jena* (Letters concerning the Kantian philosophy, by Carl Leonhard Reinhold, councillor, and professor of philosophy at Jena) (Mannheim: Bei Heinrich Valentin Bender, 1789); contemporary edition, ed. Raymund Schmidt (Leipzig: P. Reclam, ca. 1923.)

⁶⁷ One cannot treat this predisposition as already contained in the concept of the preceding one, but must necessarily regard it as a special predisposition. For from [the fact] that a being has reason it does not at all follow—at least as far as we can see^a—that this reason contains an ability^b to determine the power of choice unconditionally through the mere presentation of the qualification of its maxims for universal legislation, and thus to be practical on its own. The most rational of all beings of the world might yet always need certain incentives, coming to him from objects of inclination, in order to determine his power of choice, but might apply to this the most rational deliberation as regards finding the greatest sum of incentives as well as the means^c for attaining the purpose determined by them, without suspecting so much as the possibility of such a thing as the moral, absolutely commanding law, which proclaims that it is itself an incentive, and moreover the highest one. If this law were not given within us, no reason would ever enable us to excogitate it as a law,^d or to talk the power of choice into it; and yet this law is the only thing^e that makes us conscious of the independence of our power of choice from determination by any other incentives (conscious of our freedom) and thereby at the same time of the imputability^f of all actions.

^a [einschauen.]

^e [das einzige. Grammatically, this could also be taken to mean ‘the only law.’]

^b [Vermögen.]

^f [Zurechnungsfähigkeit.]

^c [The term is plural here: *die Mittel*.]

^d [als ein solches.]

⁶⁸ [Cf. *Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View*, Ak. VIII, 18–19.]

⁶⁹ [Or ‘kind’: *Art*.]

through copulation; *third*, to community with other human beings, i.e., the impulse to society.—On it can be grafted all sorts of vices (which, however, do not spring on their own from that predisposition as their root). They may be named vices of the *crudeness*⁷⁰ of nature, and, in their utmost deviation from the natural purpose,⁷¹ they are called *bestial vices*, of *gluttony*, of *lust*, and of *savage lawlessness* (in relation to other human beings).

27

2. The predispositions to **humanity** can be brought under the general title of a no doubt physical but yet *comparing* self-love (for which reason is required): namely to judge oneself happy or unhappy only by comparison with others. From this self-love stems the inclination to *procure a worth for oneself in the opinion of others*, originally, to be sure, merely that of *equality*: to permit no one superiority over oneself, combined with a constant worry that others might strive for this, from which arises gradually an unjust desire to gain superiority over others.⁷²—On this, namely on *jealousy* and *rivalry*, can be grafted the greatest vices of secret and overt hostilities against all whom we regard as alien to us—vices that in fact do not, after all, spring on their own from nature as their root; rather, in view of the feared endeavor of others to gain a hated superiority over us, they are inclinations to procure, for security's sake, superiority over others ourselves as a preventive measure, even though nature wanted to use the idea of such a competitiveness (which in itself does not exclude reciprocal love) only as an incentive to culture. The vices that are grafted on this inclination may therefore also be named vices of *culture*, and in the highest degree of their wickedness⁷³ (because they are then merely the idea of a

⁷⁰ [Rohigkeit.]

⁷¹ [Naturzweck.]

⁷² [Cf. Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Émile; ou, De l'éducation* (Émile; or, On education), in *Œuvres complètes de Rousseau* (Complete Works of Rousseau), preface by Jean Fabre; presentation and notes by Michel Launay (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1967), 752–56: “*La source de nos passions, l’origine et le principe de toutes les autres, la seule qui naît avec l’homme et ne le quitte jamais tant qu’il vit, est l’amour de soi: passion primitive, innée, antérieure à toute autre, et dont toutes les autres ne sont, en un sens, que des modifications. . . . L’amour de soi-même est toujours bon. . . . Il faut donc que nous nous aimions pour nous conserver, il faut que nous nous aimions plus que toute chose. . . . L’amour de soi, qui ne regarde qu’à nous, est content quand nos vrais besoins sont satisfaits; mais l’amour-propre, qui se compare, n’est jamais content et ne saurait l’être, parce que ce sentiment, en nous préférant aux autres, exige aussi que les autres nous préfèrent à eux; ce qui est impossible.*” I.e., “The source of our passions, the origin and the principle of all the others, the only one that is born with the human being and never leaves as long as he lives, is the love for oneself [*amour de soi (soi-même)*]: a passion that is primitive, innate, prior to all others, and of which the others are, in a sense, only modifications. . . . The love for oneself, which looks only at ourselves, is content when our needs are satisfied; but self-love [*amour-propre*], which compares itself, is never content and wouldn’t know how to be, because this sentiment, in preferring us to others, demands also that others prefer us to them, which is impossible.”]

⁷³ [Bösartigkeit; on my translation of this term, see below, Ak. VI, 37 br. n. 177.]

maximum of evil⁷⁴ that surpasses humanity), e.g., in *envy*, in *ingratitude*, in *malicious glee*,⁷⁵ etc., they are called *diabolical vices*.

3. The predisposition to **personality** is the receptivity to respect for the moral law, *as an incentive, sufficient by itself, of the power of choice*. This receptivity to mere respect for the moral law within us⁷⁶ would be the moral feeling, which by itself does not yet amount to a purpose of the natural predisposition, but amounts to such a purpose only insofar as it is an incentive of the power of choice. Now, since this⁷⁷ becomes possible solely through the free power of choice's admitting the moral feeling into its maxim, the constitution of such a power of choice is a good character. Such a character, as in general every character of the free power of choice, is something that can only be acquired, but for the possibility of which there must nonetheless be present in our nature a predisposition on which absolutely nothing evil can be grafted. The idea of the moral law alone, with the respect inseparable from it, cannot properly be called a *predisposition to personality*; it is personality itself (the idea of humanity considered entirely intellectually). But that we admit this respect into our maxims—the subjective basis for this seems to be an addition to personality and thus seems to deserve the name of a predisposition on behalf of it.

If we consider the three mentioned predispositions according to the conditions of their possibility, we find that the *first* is rooted in no reason; the *second* indeed in practical reason, but only as subservient to other incentives; but the *third* alone in reason practical on its own, i.e., legislative unconditionally. All these predispositions in the human being are not only (negatively) *good* (they do not conflict with the moral law) but are also predispositions *to the good* (they further compliance with that law). They are *original*; for they belong to the possibility of human nature. The human being⁷⁸ can indeed use the first two contrapurposefully, but cannot extirpate either of them. By the predispositions of a being we mean the constituents, as well as the forms of their combination, that are required in order to be such a being.⁷⁹ They are *original* if they belong to the possibility of such a being necessarily, but *contingent* if the being would intrinsically⁸⁰ also be possible without them. It should be noted, still, that here no other predispositions are at issue than those that refer directly to our power of desire⁸¹ and the use of our power of choice.⁸²

⁷⁴ [*des Bösen.*]

⁷⁵ [More literally, 'joy at [another's] harm': *Schadenfreude*.]

⁷⁶ [As distinguished from *action* in conformity with this law.]

⁷⁷ [The moral feeling's being an incentive of the power of choice: *dieses*; grammatically, this could also refer merely to 'the moral feeling,' especially since the term that, below, I render as 'moral feeling' is simply *es* again.]

⁷⁸ [*Mensch.*]

⁸⁰ [*an sich.*]

⁷⁹ [*um ein solches Wesen zu sein.*]

⁸¹ [*Begehrungsvermögen.*]

⁸² [*Willkür.*]

II. ON THE PROPENSITY TO EVIL IN HUMAN NATURE

By a *propensity*⁸³ (*propensio*) I mean the subjective basis for the possibility of an inclination (habitual desire, *concupiscentia*⁸⁴) insofar as this possibility is contingent for humanity as such.⁸⁵ What distinguishes it from a predisposition⁸⁶ is that, although it can be innate, it still *need not*⁸⁷ be presented as being so: rather, it can also be thought (if it is good) as *acquired*, or (if it is evil) as *brought upon* the human being by himself.—Here, however, the issue is only the propensity to evil proper, i.e., to moral evil.⁸⁸ Since this evil is possible only as the determination of the free power of choice, but this power can be judged good or evil only through its maxims, this evil must consist in the subjective basis for the possibility of the maxims' deviation from the moral law; and if this propensity may⁸⁹ be assumed to belong to the human being universally (and hence to belong to the character of his genus), it will be called a *natural* propensity of the human being to evil.—We can add also that the capacity or incapacity, arising from the natural propensity, of the power of choice to admit the moral law into one's⁹⁰ maxim or not is called *the good or evil heart*.

⁸³ [Hang.]

⁸⁴ [Craving.]

⁸⁵ (†) *Propensity* is properly only the predisposition^a to desire an enjoyment that, once the subject has had the experience of it, produces *inclination* to it. Thus all crude human beings have a propensity to intoxicating things; for although many of them are not acquainted at all with intoxication and thus also have no desire whatever for things that bring it about, yet one need let them try such things only once in order to produce in these human beings a scarcely extirpable desire for them.—Between propensity and inclination, which presupposes acquaintance with the object of the desire, there is still *instinct*, which is a felt need to do or to enjoy something of which one does not yet have a concept (such as the impulse to skill^b in animals, or the impulse to sex). Finally, from inclination onward there is yet another level of our power of desire, *passion* (not *affect*, for this belongs to the feeling of pleasure and displeasure),^c which is an inclination that precludes dominion^d over oneself.

^a [*Prädisposition.*]

^c [*Lust und Unlust.*]

^b [*Kunsttrieb*, which was itself also used as a synonym for *Instinkt*.]

^d [Or 'mastery': *Herrschaft*.]

⁸⁶ [*Anlage.*]

⁸⁷ [*nicht . . . darf*, which in contemporary German would mean 'must not.']

⁸⁸ [Literally, 'to the properly evil, i.e., to the morally evil': *zum eigentlich, d.i., zum Moralisch-Bösen*. Similarly, in the present title, 'to Evil' translates *zum Bösen*, which literally means 'to the evil,' i.e., 'to that which is evil.']

⁸⁹ [*darf.*]

⁹⁰ [Or, possibly, 'the human being's': *seine*.]

One can think of three different levels of this propensity.⁹¹ It is, *first*, the human heart's weakness as such in complying with adopted maxims, or the *frailty* of human nature; *second*, the propensity to mix immoral incentives with the moral ones (even if this were done with good intention and under maxims of the good), i.e., *impurity*;⁹² *third*, the propensity to adopt evil maxims, i.e., the *wickedness*⁹³ of human nature, or of the human heart.

First, the frailty⁹⁴ (*fragilitas*) of human nature is expressed even in the lament of an Apostle: Willing I have indeed, but performance is lacking;⁹⁵ i.e., I admit the good (the law) into the maxim of my power of choice; but this good, which objectively, in the idea (*in thesi*),⁹⁶ is an insurmountable incentive, is subjectively (*in hypothesi*)⁹⁷ the weaker (by comparison with inclination) when the maxim ought to be complied with.

30 *Second*, the impurity⁹⁸ (*impuritas, improbitas*⁹⁹) of the human heart consists in this: that although in terms of its object (the intended compliance with the law) the maxim is indeed good, and perhaps even powerful enough for performance,¹⁰⁰ it is not purely moral, i.e., it has not, as should be the case, admitted the law *alone* into itself as *sufficient* incentive, but usually (perhaps always) still needs other incentives besides that law in order thereby to determine the power of choice to what duty demands. In other words, that impurity consists in this: that actions conforming to duty are not done purely from duty.¹⁰¹

⁹¹ [The natural propensity of the human being to (moral) evil.]

⁹² [*Unlauterkeit*.]

⁹³ [*Bösartigkeit*; 'evil,' above, translates *böse*. This connection will be made explicit at Ak. VI, 30, the paragraph that starts with 'Third,' On my translation of *Bösartigkeit*, see below, Ak. VI, 37 br. n. 177.]

⁹⁴ [*Gebrechlichkeit*.]

⁹⁵ [The Apostle Paul, Rom. 7:18, the second half. I have here translated Kant's version of that half: *Wollen habe ich wohl, aber das Vollbringen fehlt*. The actual German text (in the Martin Luther translation, 1912 version), with the first half included, says: "*Denn ich weiß, daß in mir, das heißt in meinem Fleisch, wohnt nichts Gutes. Wollen habe ich wohl, aber vollbringen das Gute finde ich nicht.*" I.e., "For I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwells nothing good. Willing I have indeed, but perform the good I cannot." In the King James version: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." (I am using the 1912 version of the Luther translation because its German, while still readily intelligible to contemporary readers, is also in keeping with Kant's own German, unlike that of the more recent versions.)]

⁹⁶ [I.e., as a thesis or proposition and hence as categorical (assertive).]

⁹⁷ [I.e., as a hypothesis or supposition and hence as conditional.]

⁹⁸ [*Unlauterkeit*.]

⁹⁹ [Impropriety, i.e., the state of being improper.]

¹⁰⁰ [*Ausübung*.]

¹⁰¹ [On the distinction between acting in conformity with duty and acting from duty, see the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Ak. V, 81, and cf. *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, Ak. IV, 390, 397–401, 406–07, 421–23, 439–40.]

Third, the wickedness (*vitiositas*,¹⁰² *pravitas*¹⁰³), or, if one prefers, the corruption¹⁰⁴ (*corruptio*)¹⁰⁵ of the human heart is the propensity of the power of choice to [pursue] maxims whereby one is to put the incentive from the moral law second to other (nonmoral) ones. It can also be named the perversity¹⁰⁶ (*perversitas*)¹⁰⁷ of the human heart, because it reverses¹⁰⁸ the moral order in regard to the incentives of a free power of choice; and although legally good (lawful)¹⁰⁹ actions can always still consist with this [wickedness], yet the way of thinking is thereby corrupted in its root (as far as the moral attitude is concerned), and the human being is therefore designated as evil.

It will be noted that the propensity to evil is here being put forth in reference to the¹¹⁰ human being (according to his actions), even the best human being, as indeed must be done if one is to prove that the propensity to evil among human beings is universal, or, which here means the same, that it is interwoven with human nature.

There is, however, no distinction (at least there need be none)¹¹¹ between a human being of good morals¹¹² (*bene moratus*)¹¹³ and a morally good human being (*moraliter bonus*) as regards the agreement of their actions with the law, except that the actions of the former precisely do not always have, and perhaps never have, the law as the sole and supreme incentive, whereas those of the latter always do. Of the first we can say that he complies with the law according to the letter (i.e., as regards the action commanded by the law); but of the second, that he observes it according to the spirit (the spirit of the law consists in the law's being by itself sufficient as incentive).¹¹⁴ *Whatever is not done from this faith is sin*¹¹⁵ (according to the way of thinking). For when incentives other than the law itself (e.g., ambition, self-love in general—indeed, even a kindhearted instinct, such as sympathy) are needed to determine the power of choice to [pursue] lawful actions, then it is

31

¹⁰² [(Moral) 'faultiness,' thus 'viciousness.']

¹⁰³ [Literally, 'crookedness,' thus 'depravity.']

¹⁰⁴ [Or 'depravity': *Verderbtheit*.]

¹⁰⁵ ['Breaking up,' thus 'ruination,' 'corruption.']

¹⁰⁶ [*Verkehrtheit*.]

¹⁰⁷ ['Being turned the wrong way,' thus 'distortion,' 'perversion.']

¹⁰⁸ [*umkehren*.]

¹⁰⁹ [*gesetzlich gute (legale)*.]

¹¹⁰ [Here 'in reference to the' translates *am*.]

¹¹¹ [*darf keiner sein*, which in contemporary German would mean 'must be none.']

¹¹² [Or 'mores': *Sitten*; 'morally,' below, translates *sittlich*.]

¹¹³ ['Of good manners' (literally, 'well mannered'), thus 'of good mores' (or 'good morals').]

¹¹⁴ [For the distinction between 'according to the letter' and 'according to the spirit,' cf. Rom. 2:27–29 and 2 Cor. 3:6–82.]

¹¹⁵ ["*Was nicht aus diesem Glauben geschieht, das ist Sünde.*" This is Kant's version of part of Rom. 14:23. The same quote more fully, in the Luther translation, 1912 version: "*Wer aber darüber zweifelt, und ißt doch, der ist verdammt; denn es geht nicht aus dem Glauben. Was aber nicht aus dem Glauben geht, das ist Sünde.*" In the King James version: "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.")]

merely contingent that these actions agree with the law; for the incentives could just as well impel [one] to transgress the law. Thus the maxim, by the goodness of which all moral worth of the person must be assessed, is unlawful after all; and the human being, despite all his good actions, is nonetheless evil.

The following elucidation is still needed in order to determine the concept of this propensity. Any propensity is either physical, i.e., it belongs to the power of choice of the human being as a natural being;¹¹⁶ or it is moral, i.e., it belongs to the power of choice of him as a moral being.—In the first sense, there is no propensity to moral evil; for this evil must arise from freedom, and a physical propensity (which is based on sensible impulses)¹¹⁷ to any use of freedom, whether for good or evil, is a contradiction. Therefore a propensity to evil can adhere only to the moral ability of the power of choice.¹¹⁸ However, nothing is morally¹¹⁹ (i.e., imputably) evil but that which is our own *deed*. On the other hand, by the concept of a propensity one means a subjective determining basis of the power of choice that *precedes every deed* and hence is itself not yet a deed; and thus there would be a contradiction in the concept of a bare propensity to evil, if this expression could not somehow¹²⁰ be taken in two different significations that can nonetheless both be reconciled with the concept of freedom. However, the expression *deed*¹²¹ as such can apply¹²² both to that use of freedom through which the supreme maxim is admitted (in conformity with the law or in opposition to it) into the power of choice, and to that use where the actions themselves are (in terms of their matter, i.e., as regards the objects of the power of choice) performed in conformity with that maxim. Now, the propensity to evil is a deed in the first signification (*peccatum originarium*)¹²³ and at the same time the formal basis of any unlawful deed—taken in the second sense—that conflicts with the law in terms of its matter and that is called vice (*peccatum derivativum*);¹²⁴ and the first guiltiness¹²⁵ remains even if the second were to be avoided repeatedly (from incentives that do not consist in the law itself). The first is an intelligible deed, cognizable by bare reason¹²⁶ without any time condition; the second deed is sensible,¹²⁷ empirical, given in time (*factum phaenomenon*).¹²⁸ Now, the first deed, above all by comparison with the second, is called a bare propensity and innate because it cannot be eradicated (for this, the

¹¹⁶ [*des Menschen als Naturwesens.*]

¹¹⁷ [I.e., on impulses of sensibility: *auf sinnliche Antriebe.*]

¹¹⁸ [*dem moralischen Vermögen der Willkür.*]

¹¹⁹ [*sittlich.*]

¹²⁰ [*etwa.*]

¹²⁶ [Literally, 'cognizable barely by reason' (but with 'barely' taken in the sense of 'merely'!), with an obvious allusion to the title of the book.]

¹²⁷ [I.e., sensory: *sensibel.*]

¹²⁸ [Phenomenal deed. On *factum* in the sense of 'deed,' see above, Ak. VI, 23 n. 44 incl. br. n. 44b.]

¹²¹ [Italics added.]

¹²² [*gelten.*]

¹²³ [Original transgression.]

¹²⁴ [Derivative transgression.]

¹²⁵ [*Verschuldung.*]

supreme maxim would have to be that of the good, whereas in this propensity the maxim itself is assumed to be evil); above all, however, because we are just as unable to indicate a further cause for why evil has corrupted precisely the supreme maxim in us, although this is our own deed, as we are unable to indicate such a cause for a basic property that belongs to our nature.—In what has just been said one will find the reason¹²⁹ why in this section we sought, at the very beginning, the three sources of the morally evil¹³⁰ solely in what affects the supreme basis¹³¹ for the adoption of, or compliance with, our maxims, not in what affects sensibility (as receptivity).

III. THE HUMAN BEING IS EVIL BY NATURE

*Vitiis nemo sine nascitur. Horace.*¹³²

According to what has been said above, the proposition, The human being is *evil*, can signify nothing other than this: He is conscious of the moral law and yet has admitted the (occasional) deviation from it into his maxim. He is *evil by nature*, means the same as that this¹³³ holds for him considered in his genus—not as if such a quality can be inferred from the concept of his genus (the concept of a human being as such); rather, according to what acquaintance we have with him through experience, we cannot judge him otherwise, or we may presuppose this¹³⁴ as subjectively necessary in every human being, even in the best. This propensity, then, must itself be considered morally evil, hence not a natural predisposition but something that can be imputed to the human being, and it consequently must consist in unlawful maxims of the power of choice. On the other hand, because of freedom, these maxims by themselves must be regarded as contingent, which in turn cannot be reconciled with this evil's universality unless the subjective supreme basis of all maxims is, no matter through what, interwoven with humanity itself and, as it were, rooted in it. Presumably,¹³⁵ therefore, we may call this basis a natural propensity to evil, and, since it must yet always be something of which one is oneself guilty, we may even call it a *radical*,¹³⁶ innate *evil* in human nature (yet nonetheless brought upon us by ourselves).

¹²⁹ [Grund.]

¹³⁰ [Frailty, impurity, and wickedness; see Ak. VI, 29.]

¹³¹ [Grund.]

¹³² ["No one is born without faults [or 'vices']."] *Satires*, I, iii, 68.]

¹³³ [That he is evil, i.e., conscious of the moral law and yet has admitted the (occasional) deviation from it into his maxim.]

¹³⁴ [That he is evil.]

¹³⁵ [werden.]

¹³⁶ [In the original sense relating to 'root.']

33 Now, that such a corrupt propensity must be rooted in the human being, about that we can spare ourselves the formal proof, in view of the multitude of glaring¹³⁷ examples that experience puts before our eyes *in the deeds* of human beings. If one wants examples from that state¹³⁸ in which many¹³⁹ philosophers hoped to encounter the natural goodness¹⁴⁰ of human nature, namely from the so-called *state of nature*, one need only compare with this hypothesis the instances of unprovoked cruelty in the scenes of murder in *Tofoa, New Zealand*, and the *Navigator Islands*,¹⁴¹ and the never-ceasing cruelty in the vast wastelands of northwestern America (which Capt. *Hearne* cites),¹⁴² where no human being even gains the slightest advantage from it,¹⁴³ and one has more vices of crudeness than one needs

¹³⁷ [Literally, 'screaming': *schreiend*.]

¹³⁸ [Or 'condition' (of the human being): *Zustand*. Below, 'state of nature' translates *Naturstand*.]

¹³⁹ [*manche*; in contemporary German, the term's meaning is closer to 'some.']

¹⁴⁰ [*Gutartigkeit*, which I usually translate as 'good nature.']

¹⁴¹ [Tofoa is the northwesternmost of the Tonga Islands in the kingdom of Tonga in the southwestern Pacific, south of Samoa, north-northeast of New Zealand. The islands are traditionally known as the Friendly Islands, a name they were given by British navigator Capt. James Cook when he visited them in 1773. "Navigator Islands" is the name that French seafarer Louis de Bougainville gave to the islands of Samoa when, having sighted them in 1768, he encountered many Samoans sailing small canoes far from the sight of land, from which he inferred that they must be good navigators. Kant's source of information concerning these places is probably Pierre Sonnerat, *Voyage aux Indes Orientales et à la Chine* (Voyage to the East Indies and to China). See above, Ak. VI, 19 br. n. 11.]

¹⁴² [Samuel Hearne (1745–92), English traveler at the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. See his *A Journey from Prince of Wales's Fort in Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean: Undertaken by Order of the Hudson's Bay Company, for the Discovery of Copper Mines, a North West Passage, &c., in the Years 1769, 1770, 1771, & 1772* (London: A. Strahan & T. Cadell, 1795; Edmonton: M. G. Hurtig, 1971). A brief account of the journey appeared in the introduction to James Cook, *Captain J. Cook's Third and Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, in the years 1776, 1777, 1778, 1779 and 1780* (Philadelphia: Benjamin Johnson, 1793). This work was translated into German by Georg Forster (cf. Wobbermin's note at Ak. VI, 501): *Des Capitain Jacob Cook's dritte Entdeckungs-Reise* (Captain James Cook's third voyage of discovery), 2 vols. (Berlin: 1787).]

¹⁴³ (†) Thus the perpetual war between the Arathapescau Indians and the Dog Rib Indians has no other aim than merely the killing. Bravery in war is the savages' highest virtue, in their opinion. In the civilized state, too, bravery is an object of admiration and a basis for the preeminent respect demanded by that class in which this respect^a is the only merit, and this is not without all basis in reason. For, that the human being can have, and set^b himself as a purpose, something that he esteems more highly even than his life (viz., honor), thus renouncing all self-interest,^c does indeed prove a certain sublimity in his predisposition. Yet one can see, by the contentment with which the victors glorify their great deeds (of cutting up the enemy,^d of striking them down without sparing anyone, and the like), that what they in fact credit themselves with is merely their superiority and the destruction they were able to bring about, without another purpose.

^a [*diese*.]

^c [*Eigennutz*.]

^b [*machen*.]

^d [*des Zusammenhauens*.]

in order to abandon this opinion. But if one leans toward the opinion that human nature can be cognized better in its civilized state (in which its predispositions can develop more completely), then one will have to listen to a long melancholy litany of charges against humanity: of secret falsity even in the most intimate friendship, so that moderation of trust in reciprocal disclosure by even the best friends is included in the universal maxim of prudence in [social] interactions;¹⁴⁴ of a propensity to hate the person to whom one is obligated, for which a benefactor must always be prepared; of a heartfelt benevolence that nonetheless admits the observation, “In the misfortune of our best friends there is something that does not entirely displease us”;¹⁴⁵ and of many other vices still hidden under the semblance of virtue, not to mention the vices of those who make no secret of them at all, because among us anyone is already called good who is *an evil human being of the universal class*; and one will have enough of the vices of *culture* and civilization (the most mortifying¹⁴⁶ vices of all) to prefer turning one’s eyes away from the behavior of human beings, in order not to bring upon oneself another vice, namely that of misanthropy. But if one is not yet satisfied with this,¹⁴⁷ then one need only take into consideration the state¹⁴⁸ that is in an odd way compounded from both, namely the external state of peoples,¹⁴⁹ where civilized populations stand against each other in the relation of the crude state of nature (a state¹⁵⁰ of constant military constitution¹⁵¹) and have also firmly made up their minds never to get out of this relation: One will then become aware of principles of the great societies, called *states*,¹⁵²

34

¹⁴⁴ [im Umgange.]

¹⁴⁵ [das uns nicht ganz mißfällt. From the *Maximes* of La Rochefoucauld (1613–80), no. 583: “Dans l’adversité de nos meilleurs amis, nous trouvons toujours quelque chose qui ne nous déplaît pas.” I.e., “In the adversity of our best friends, we always find something that does not displease us.” The *Maximes* were written over a period of several decades. For a comparatively early version, see François VI, Duc de La Rochefoucauld, *Reflexions; ou, Sentences et maximes morales* (Reflections; or, Aphorisms and moral maxims) (Paris: C. Barbin, 1665). For a current translation of the *Maximes*, see François de La Rochefoucauld, *Maxims*. Translation, introduction and notes by Stuart D. Warner and Stéphane Douard (South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine’s Press, 2001).]

¹⁴⁶ [Or ‘grievous’: *kränkend*.]

¹⁴⁷ [This review of the state of nature and of the civilized state.]

¹⁴⁸ [Of human nature.]

¹⁴⁹ [*Völker*. Below, ‘populations’ translates *Völkerschaften*.]

¹⁵⁰ [*Stand*, a synonym of *Zustand*.]

¹⁵¹ [Literally, ‘constitution of war’: *Kriegsverfassung*. Cf., in Kant’s note below, the description of the constitution in a universal monarchy.]

¹⁵² (†) If one looks upon the history of these^a merely as the phenomenon^b of the inner predispositions of humanity, which are in large part hidden from us, then one can become aware

^a [These states (*Staaten*). Although Kant is about to switch from the states to the peoples (*Völker*), he returns to the states in the very next sentence.]

^b [I.e., the appearance, or manifestation.]

that are directly contradictory to the public pretense but will never be cast off, principles that no philosopher has yet been able to bring into agreement with morality, nor yet (which is grave) [replace by] suggest[ing] any better ones that could be reconciled with human nature—so that *philosophical chiasm*, which hopes for the state of an eternal¹⁵³ peace based on a federation¹⁵⁴ of peoples [constituted] as a world republic, just like *theological chiasm*, which waits for the perfected¹⁵⁵ moral improvement of all of humankind, is universally derided as fanaticism.¹⁵⁶

35 Now, the basis of this evil (1) cannot be indicated as people commonly tend to do, i.e., posited it *in the sensibility* of human beings and in the natural inclinations arising therefrom. For not only do these have no direct reference to evil (on the contrary, they provide the occasion for what the moral attitude in its power can manifest, i.e., for virtue): we also do not have to¹⁵⁷ answer for their existence (nor can we, because they are congenital and hence do not have us as their originators). But we do indeed have to answer for the propensity to evil; this propensity, since it concerns the morality of the subject and hence is found in him as a freely acting

of a certain machinelike progression of nature in terms of purposes^c that are not their (the peoples') purposes, but purposes of nature. Every state, so long as it has alongside it another one that it may hope to subdue, strives to increase itself by subjugating it, and thus strives toward universal monarchy,^d a constitution in which all freedom, and with it (what is the consequence of freedom) virtue, taste, and science, would have to become extinct. However, this monster (in which the laws gradually lose their force), after it has devoured all neighboring ones, finally disintegrates on its own and, through insurrection and discord, divides into many smaller states, all of which, instead of striving toward a union of states (a republic of free confederated peoples), in turn start the same game over again, in order by all means to keep war (this scourge of humankind) from ceasing. War, although not as incurably evil as the tomb of universal autarchy^e (or, for that matter, as a federation of peoples formed in order to keep despotism from being abandoned), yet does, as one ancient said,^f produce more evil human beings than it removes.

^c [Or 'in terms of ends': *nach Zwecken*. I consistently translate *Zweck* as 'purpose' because 'end,' which also has a temporal meaning, frequently creates ambiguities, most devastatingly so in the *Critique of Judgment*, but also in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, in this work, and elsewhere. See my article on *Zweckmäßigkeit* ('purposiveness'): "How to Render *Zweckmäßigkeit* in Kant's Third Critique," in *Interpreting Kant*, ed. Moltke S. Gram (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1982), 85–98.]

^d [*Universalmonarchie*.]

^e [In other words, of universal monarchy: *der allgemeinen Alleinherrschaft*.]

^f [Kant gives essentially the same quote in his *Announcement That a Treatise on Perpetual Peace in Philosophy Is Nearly Completed* of 1795: "War is bad [*schlimm*] inasmuch as it produces more evil people than it removes." (Ak. VIII, 365.) He there calls it 'the pronouncement of that Greek.' Unfortunately, no one has yet been able to identify this Greek; cf. Wobbermin, Ak. VI, 502.]

¹⁵³ [Or 'perpetual': *ewig*.]

¹⁵⁴ [Or 'league': *Bund*.]

¹⁵⁵ [Or 'completed': *vollendet*.]

¹⁵⁶ [Or 'raving': *Schwärmerei*.]

¹⁵⁷ [*dürfen . . . nicht*, which in contemporary German would mean 'must not.']

being, must be capable of being imputed to him as something that he himself is guilty of¹⁵⁸—despite its deep roots in the power of choice, because of which one must say that this propensity is to be found in the human being by nature.—The basis of this evil also (2) cannot be posited in a *corruption* of morally legislative reason, as if indeed reason could extirpate within itself the authority of the law itself and deny the obligation arising from this law; for, this is absolutely impossible. To think oneself as a freely acting being, and yet as released from the law commensurate with such a being (the moral law), would be tantamount to thinking a cause operating without any laws (for, on account of freedom, determination according to natural laws drops out); and this is contradictory.—*Sensibility*, therefore, contains too little to indicate a basis of moral evil¹⁵⁹ in the human being; for since it removes the incentives that can arise from freedom, it turns the human being into a merely *animal* one. On the other hand, a reason that absolves one from the moral law, a *malicious reason*,¹⁶⁰ as it were (an absolutely evil will),¹⁶¹ contains too much, because the opposition to¹⁶² the law would thereby itself be elevated to an incentive (for without any incentive the power of choice¹⁶³ cannot be determined), and thus the subject would be turned into a *diabolical* being.—Neither of the two, however, is applicable to the human being.

However, even if the existence of this propensity to evil in human nature can be established through experiential proofs of the opposition, actual in time, of the human power of choice against the law, these proofs still do not teach us the proper constitution¹⁶⁴ of that propensity and the basis of this opposition. Rather, because this constitution concerns a reference of the free power of choice (hence of a power of choice of which the concept is not empirical) to the moral law as incentive (of which the concept is likewise purely intellectual), it must be cognized a priori from the concept of evil, as far as this¹⁶⁵ is possible according to laws of freedom (of obligation and imputability). What follows is the development of this concept.

The human being (even the basest),¹⁶⁶ no matter in what maxims, does not, as it were, in a rebellious manner¹⁶⁷ renounce the moral law (by revoking his obedience

36

¹⁵⁸ [*als selbst verschuldet.*]

¹⁵⁹ [Literally, 'of the morally evil': *des Moralisch-Bösen.*]

¹⁶⁰ [*boshafte Vernunft.*]

¹⁶¹ [*böser Wille.*]

¹⁶² [*Widerstreit gegen.* In contexts where *Widerstreit* occurs without *gegen* (literally, 'against,' here rendered as 'to'), I translate it as 'conflict.')

¹⁶³ [*Willkür.*]

¹⁶⁴ [Or 'actual constitution' or 'proper [or 'actual'] character': *eigentliche Beschaffenheit.*]

¹⁶⁵ [This cognition: *es.* Although grammatically this could also refer to 'evil,' Kant would far more likely have used *dieses* ('the latter') in that case.]

¹⁶⁶ [*der ärgste.*]

¹⁶⁷ [*rebellischerweise.*]

to it). Rather, the law thrusts itself upon him irresistibly, and if no other incentive acted against it, then he would also admit it into his supreme maxim as sufficient determining basis of his power of choice, i.e., he would be morally good. Through the power¹⁶⁸ of his likewise innocent natural predisposition, however, he is also attached to the incentives of sensibility and admits them (in accordance with the subjective principle of self-love) also into his maxim. But if he admitted them into his maxim *as by themselves sufficient* for determining the power of choice, without being concerned about the moral law (which he does, after all, have within himself), then he would be morally evil. Now, since by nature he admits both incentives, and since he would also find each by itself, if it were the only one,¹⁶⁹ sufficient for determining the will, he would—if the distinction of maxims hinged merely on the distinction of incentives (the matter of the maxims), namely on whether the law or the sense impulse provides such an incentive—be simultaneously morally good and bad,¹⁷⁰ which (according to the Introduction)¹⁷¹ is contradictory. Therefore, the distinction as to whether the human being is good or evil must lie not in the distinction of the incentives that he admits into his maxim (not in the maxim's matter), but in their *subordination* (in the maxim's form): *which of the two he makes the condition of the other*. Consequently the human being (even the best) is evil only because he reverses the moral¹⁷² order of the incentives in admitting them into his maxims: he does indeed admit the moral law into his maxims, alongside the law of self-love; but when he becomes aware that one cannot subsist alongside the other, but that one must be subordinated to the other as its supreme condition, he makes the incentive of self-love and its¹⁷³ inclinations the condition of compliance with the moral law—whereas, on the contrary, the latter should be admitted into the universal maxim of the power of choice as the *supreme condition* of the gratification of the former and as the sole incentive.

37 In this reversal of incentives through the human being's maxim against the moral order, his actions nonetheless may well turn out as lawful as if they had arisen from genuine principles: namely, when reason uses the unity of maxims as such—which is peculiar to the moral law—in order to bring into the incentives of inclination, under the name of *happiness*, unity of maxims, which otherwise cannot belong to them (e.g., so that truthfulness, if adopted as a principle, spares us the anxiety of maintaining agreement among our lies and not becoming entangled ourselves in their serpentine coils); in which case the empirical character is good, but the intelligible character is always still evil.

Now, if a propensity to this¹⁷⁴ lies in human nature, then there is in the human being a natural propensity to evil; and this propensity itself, because it must in the

¹⁶⁸ [Or 'on the strength': *vermöge*.]

¹⁶⁹ [Literally, 'if it were alone': *wenn sie allein wäre*.]

¹⁷⁰ [*übel*.]

¹⁷¹ [Kant is probably referring to Ak. VI, 24, last paragraph.]

¹⁷² [*sittlich* here; *moralisch* below.]

¹⁷³ [Self-love's: *ihre*.]

¹⁷⁴ [To this reversal of incentives: *dazu*.]

end indeed be sought in a free power of choice and hence must be capable of being imputed, is morally evil. This evil is *radical*, because it corrupts the basis of all maxims. At the same time, as a natural propensity, it also cannot be *extirpated* through human powers,¹⁷⁵ because this could be done only through good maxims; yet if the supreme subjective basis of all maxims is presupposed as corrupted, this cannot occur. But it must nonetheless be possible to *outweigh* this propensity, because it is found in the human being¹⁷⁶ as a freely acting being.

Therefore the wickedness of human nature is to be called not so much *malice*¹⁷⁷—if one takes this word in the strict meaning, namely as an attitude (subjective *principle* of maxims) of admitting, as an incentive, *evil as evil* into one's maxims (for, this attitude is diabolical)—as rather *perversity* of the heart; and this heart, on account of the consequence, is now named an *evil heart*. An evil heart is consistent with a generally¹⁷⁸ good will; it arises from the frailty of human nature in not being strong enough to comply with one's adopted principles, combined with the impurity¹⁷⁹ consisting in not separating the incentives (even of well-intentioned actions) from one another by a moral standard and thus ultimately, in the extreme case, having regard only for the incentives' conformity with the law and not for their derivation from it, i.e., not for the law as the sole incentive. Now, even though this does not, of course, always give rise to an unlawful action and to a propensity thereto, i.e., to *vice*, yet the way of thinking that construes even the absence of vice as commensurateness¹⁸⁰ of one's *attitude* with the law of duty (as *virtue*) must itself (since here one has no regard at all for the incentive in the maxim, but only for the compliance with the letter of the law) already be called a radical perversity in the human heart.

This *innate guilt* (*reatus*),¹⁸¹ which is so called because it can be perceived just as early as the use of freedom in the human being may manifest itself, and which

38

¹⁷⁵ [Or 'forces': *Kräfte*.]

¹⁷⁶ [*in dem Menschen*. Below, 'being' translates *Wesen*.]

¹⁷⁷ [In this translation, I use 'wickedness' for *Bösartigkeit* ('wicked' for *bösartig*) and 'malice' for *Bosheit* ('malicious' for *boshaft*), and I do this solely in deference to the distinction that Kant is making here. For, *Bösartigkeit* actually already means 'malice.' It has had this meaning at least since the 19th century. Moreover, Kant's own single use of *Bösartigkeit* in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, at Ak. V, 153 (the corresponding adjective, *bösartig*, does not occur in that work), plainly means 'malice' also, and I have so translated it there (using 'villainy' for *Bosheit*). I believe that Kant, in order to make his distinction here, is adapting the meaning of the word *Bösartigkeit* to its etymology: since *Art* means 'kind,' *bösartig* means 'evil in kind,' i.e., 'evil in nature'; and this meaning, by omitting the intentional element (the admission of evil *as evil* into one's maxim, as Kant is about to say), obviously fits 'wickedness,' but no longer fits 'malice.']

¹⁷⁸ [*im Allgemeinen*.]

¹⁷⁹ [*Unlauterkeit*.]

¹⁸⁰ [Or 'adequacy' (followed by 'to' rather than 'with'): *Angemessenheit*.]

¹⁸¹ [In Roman law and legal systems based thereon, a term meaning 'the state of being (accused or) condemned.']

must nonetheless have arisen from freedom and therefore can be imputed, can be judged at its first two levels¹⁸² (those of frailty and impurity) as undeliberate [guilt] (*culpa*),¹⁸³ but in the third as deliberate guilt (*dolus*).¹⁸⁴ It is characterized by a certain *insidiousness* of the human heart (*dolus malus*)¹⁸⁵ in deceiving itself concerning its own¹⁸⁶ good or evil attitudes and, if only the actions do not have evil as their consequence, which by their maxims they might well have, not troubling itself concerning its attitude but rather considering itself justified before the law. From this stems the peace of conscience of so many (in their opinion conscientious) human beings when, in the midst of actions about which the law was not consulted or at least did not count the most, they just luckily eluded the evil consequences; and perhaps stems even their conceit of merit of not feeling guilty of such offenses as they see others fraught with. Yet they fail to investigate whether the credit for this does not perhaps go merely to luck and whether, by the way of thinking that they could readily uncover within themselves if only they were willing,¹⁸⁷ equal vices would not have been committed by them, had they not been kept away from these by incapacity, temperament, upbringing, and circumstances of time and place that lead to temptation (all of these being things that cannot be imputed to us). This insincerity of throwing dust into one's own eyes, which prevents the founding of a genuine moral attitude in us, then also expands outwardly to a falsity and deception¹⁸⁸ of others that, if it is not to be called malice, yet deserves to be named at least worthlessness; and this insincerity resides in human nature's radical evil, which (because it deranges¹⁸⁹ the moral power of judgment¹⁹⁰ in regard to what one ought to consider a human being to be and thus makes imputation inwardly and outwardly entirely uncertain) amounts to the foul stain on our genus, which, as long as we do not get it out, prevents the germ of the good from developing, as it otherwise presumably would.

A member of the English Parliament, in the heat [of passion], threw out the assertion, "Every human being has his price, for which he gives himself away."¹⁹¹ If

¹⁸² [Cf. the three levels (*Stufen*) of the propensity to evil in human nature: above, Ak. VI, 29–30.]

¹⁸³ [Fault.]

¹⁸⁴ [Deceit, fraud.]

¹⁸⁵ [In Roman law and legal systems based thereon, malevolent ("bad") deceit, which constitutes fraud and thus is actionable, as distinguished from *dolus bonus*, benevolent ("good") deceit.]

¹⁸⁶ [Or, possibly, 'deceiving oneself concerning one's own': *sich wegen seiner eigenen . . . selbst zu betriegen*; similarly, below, for 'not troubling itself . . . but rather considering itself.']

¹⁸⁷ [Or 'if only they wanted': *wenn sie nur wollten*.]

¹⁸⁸ [*Täuschung*.]

¹⁸⁹ [Literally, 'puts out of tune': *verstimmt*.]

¹⁹⁰ [*die moralische Urteilskraft*.]

¹⁹¹ [The quote, "All men have their price," is commonly attributed to Sir Robert Walpole (1676–1745). In fact, however, Walpole seems to have limited his remark to certain pretended patriots in the House

this is true (everyone may decide that on his own), if there is no virtue at all for which one cannot find a degree of temptation capable of toppling it, if whether the evil or the good spirit wins us over to its side hinges only on who offers the most and provides the promptest payment, then what the Apostle says may indeed be true of the human being universally:¹⁹² "There is no distinction here, they are sinners one and all —there is none who does good (according to the spirit of the law), not even one."¹⁹³

39

of Commons, implying that they owed their places to money or family connections: "All those men have their price.")

¹⁹² [The Apostle Paul, Rom. 3:9–12, in the Luther translation, 1912 version, [(1)], followed by my own translation thereof [(2)] and then by the King James version [(3)] (from which all passages that I cite from the Bible are taken): (1). *Was sagen wir denn nun? Haben wir [Juden] einen Vorteil? Gar keinen. Denn wir haben droben bewiesen, daß beide, Juden und Griechen, alle unter der Sünde sind, wie denn geschrieben steht: "Da ist nicht, der gerecht sei, auch nicht einer. Da ist nicht, der verständig sei; da ist nicht, der nach Gott frage. Sie sind alle abgewichen und allesamt untüchtig geworden. Da ist nicht, der Gutes tue, auch nicht einer."* (2) "What, then, do we say now? Do we Jews have a superiority? None at all. For we have just proved that all, Jews as well as Greeks, are under sin, as is written: 'There is none who is righteous, not even one. There is none who understands; there is none who inquires after God. They have all turned aside and are one and all corrupted. There is none who does good, not even one.'" (3) What then? are we better *than they*? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.]

¹⁹³ The proper proof of this judgment of condemnation pronounced by morally sentencing^a reason is contained not in this section but in the previous one. This section contains only the confirmation of the judgment through experience; but experience can never uncover the root of evil in the supreme maxim of the free power of choice in reference to the law, the root which,^b as an *intelligible deed*, precedes all experience.—From this, i.e., from the unity of the supreme maxim, with the unity of the law to which this maxim refers, one can also see why the pure intellectual judging of the human being must have at its basis the principle of the excluded middle^c between good and evil, whereas the empirical judging from the *sensible deed* (the actual doing and refraining) can be based on the principle that there is a middle^d between these extremes, on the one hand a negative middle of indifference prior to all development,^e on the other hand a positive middle consisting of the mixture of being partly good and partly evil. But the empirical judging is a judging of the morality of the human being only in appearance and is in the final judgment subject to the pure intellectual judging.

^a [*richtend.*]

^b [*die*. Although grammatically this could also refer to 'the supreme maxim,' this construal conflicts with what Kant goes on to say: 'as an *intelligible deed*.' For, the intelligible deed is not the supreme maxim itself, but "that use of freedom through which the supreme maxim is admitted (in conformity with the law or in opposition to it) into the power of choice." See above, Ak. VI, 31.]

^c [More literally, 'of the exclusion of the intermediate.']

^d [I.e., something intermediate: *ein Mittleres.*]

^e [*Ausbildung.*]

IV. ON THE ORIGIN OF EVIL IN HUMAN NATURE

Origin (the first origin) is the descent¹⁹⁴ of an effect from its first cause, i.e., from that cause which is not in turn the effect of another cause of the same kind. An origin can be taken into consideration either as *rational origin* or as *temporal origin*.¹⁹⁵ In the first signification, only the effect's *existence*¹⁹⁶ is considered; in the second, one considers the effect's *occurrence*, and hence the effect, as an event, is referred to its *cause in time*. When the effect is referred to a cause that is still linked with it according to laws of freedom, as is the case with moral evil, then the determination of the power of choice to the effect's production is thought as linked with its determining basis not in time but merely in the presentation¹⁹⁷ of reason, and then it cannot be derived from some *preceding* state; by contrast, this [derivation] must always occur when the evil action is referred, as an *event* in the world, to its natural cause. To search for¹⁹⁸ the temporal origin of free actions as free actions (just as for natural effects) is therefore a contradiction; and hence so is it to search for the temporal origin of the human being's moral constitution insofar as this constitution is regarded as contingent, because moral constitution means the basis for the *use* of freedom, a basis which (like the determining basis of the free power of choice in general)¹⁹⁹ must be sought solely in presentations of reason.

But whatever, indeed, may be the constitution of moral evil's origin in the human being, yet, among all the ways of conceiving²⁰⁰ its spread and continuation through all the members of our genus and in all the generations, the most inappropriate is to conceive it as having come to us by *inheritance*²⁰¹ from the first parents; for one can say about moral evil exactly what the poet says about the good:²⁰² —*genus et*

¹⁹⁴ [*Abstammung*.]

¹⁹⁵ [Or 'origin in terms of reason,' 'origin in terms of time': *Vernunftursprung, Zeitursprung*.]

¹⁹⁶ [*Dasein*. Although existence is a category and thus applies to the effect as an appearance in time, the effect is not being referred to its *cause in time*.]

¹⁹⁷ [*Vorstellung*. See above, Ak. VI, 4 br. n. 16.]

¹⁹⁸ [*suchen*. At the end of the paragraph, 'sought' translates *gesucht*, the past participle of *suchen*.]

¹⁹⁹ [*überhaupt*.]

²⁰⁰ [Or, more literally, 'ways of presenting': *Vorstellungsarten*; similarly 'conceive,' below, could be translated more literally as 'to present.']

²⁰¹ [*Anerbung*.]

²⁰² [Kant's quote is from Ovid (Publius Ovidius Naso, 43 B.C.–A.D. 17 or 18), *Metamorphoses*, XIII, 140–41: "Birth and ancestry, and what we have not done ourselves, I hardly consider our own." Actually, the original has, ". . . *vix ea nostra voco*": ". . . I hardly call our own."]

*proavos, et quae non fecimus ipsi, vix ea nostra puto.*²⁰³—It should be noted also that, when we investigate the origin of evil, we initially take into account not yet the propensity to evil (as *peccatum in potentia*),²⁰⁴ but only the actual evil of given actions in terms of its intrinsic possibility and of what must come together in the power of choice for such actions to be performed.

Every evil action must be regarded, when one seeks its rational origin, as if the human being had fallen into it directly from the state of innocence. For however his previous conduct may have been,²⁰⁵ and of whatever kind may be the natural causes influencing him, and likewise whether they are to be found within or outside him, his action is nonetheless free and not determined by any of these causes, and it therefore can and must always be judged as an *original* use of his power of choice. He should have refrained from the action, whatever the circumstances of time and the connections²⁰⁶ in which he may have been; for through no cause in the world

41

²⁰³ The three so-called higher schools^a (in universities)^b would make this heredity^c understandable to themselves each in its own way, namely either as *hereditary disease*, or as *hereditary guilt*, or as *hereditary sin*.^d (1) The *school of medicine*^e would conceive hereditary evil perhaps like the tapeworm, about which some natural scientists are actually of the opinion that, since it is otherwise found neither in an element outside us nor (of the same kind) in any other animal, it must already have been there in the first parents. (2) The *school of law*^f would regard it as the legal^g consequence of our entering upon an inheritance^h bequeathed to us by these first parents but encumbered by a grave *crime* (for to be born is nothing other than to inheritⁱ the use of the goods of the earth insofar as these are indispensable to our continuance). We must therefore make payment (do penance) and are in the end nonetheless expelled (by death) from this property. How right is what is right by law!^j (3) The *school of theology* would regard this evil as the personal participation by our first parents in the *defection*^k of an abject rebel,^l maintaining either that we ourselves cooperated at the time (although we are not conscious of this now), or that only now, born under his dominion (as prince of this world), we decide to like^m the world's goods better than the supreme command of the heavenly master and do not possess enough faithfulness to tear ourselves away from this, for which, however, we must also hereafter share the insurgent's lot with him.

^a [Or 'colleges,' in the sense of parts of a university that offer specialized groups of courses: *Fakultäten*.]

^b [*hohen Schulen*, or, in contemporary German, *Hochschulen*, a term that applies to universities but also to more specialized institutions of higher learning.]

^c [*Vererbung*.]

ⁱ [Reading *ererbten* for *erwerben* ('acquire').]

^d [I.e., original sin: *Erbsünde*.]

^j [*Wie recht ist von Rechts wegen!*]

^e [Emphasis added.]

^k [Or 'apostasy': *Abfall*.]

^f [*Juristenfakultät*.]

^l [*Auführer*.]

^g [*rechtlich*.]

^m [*uns gefallen lassen*.]

^h [*Erbschaft*.]

²⁰⁴ [Potential transgression ("transgression in ability").]

²⁰⁵ [I.e., whether good or evil.]

²⁰⁶ [Or 'associations': *Verbindungen*.]

can he cease to be a freely acting being. It is indeed rightly said that one imputes to the human being also the *consequences* arising from his former free but unlawful acts; but this means only that one has no need to venture into the subterfuge of establishing²⁰⁷ whether the consequences may be free or not, because, in the admittedly free action that was their cause, sufficient ground for imputation is already available. However, no matter how evil someone might have been (even to the point of a habit, as his other nature) until an immediately upcoming²⁰⁸ free action, not only was it his duty to be better, but it is *now* still his duty to better himself; he must, therefore, also be able to do so, and if he does not, then he is at the moment of the action just as capable of and subject to imputation as if, being endowed with the natural predisposition to the good (a predisposition that is inseparable from freedom), he had stepped from the state of innocence to evil.—We therefore cannot inquire into the temporal origin of this deed, but must inquire merely into its rational origin, in order thereafter to determine and, if possible, explain the propensity, if there is one, i.e., the subjective universal basis for the admission of a transgression into our maxim.

Now, the way of conceiving²⁰⁹ that Scripture employs to depict the origin of evil as a *beginning*²¹⁰ of evil in the human genus agrees quite well with the above; for Scripture presents²¹¹ this origin in a story where that which by the nature of the case²¹² (without taking the time condition into account) must be thought as [being]²¹³ first appears as first in time. According to Scripture, evil does not start from an underlying propensity to it, since otherwise its beginning would not arise from freedom, but starts from *sin* (which is taken to mean the transgression of the moral law as *divine command*); the state²¹⁴ of the human being prior to any propensity to evil, however, is called the state of *innocence*. The moral law preceded [the human being] as a *prohibition* (Gen. 2:16–17),²¹⁵ as indeed it must with him as a being who is not pure but is tempted by inclinations. Now, instead of straightforwardly following this law as a sufficient incentive (which alone is unconditionally

²⁰⁷ [Literally, Kant says, ‘to venture into this subterfuge and to establish’: *sich auf diese Ausflucht einzulassen und auszumachen*.]

²⁰⁸ [*bevorstehend*.]

²⁰⁹ [Or ‘way of presenting’: *Vorstellungsart*.]

²¹⁰ [*Anfang*. Below, ‘starts’ translates *anfangen*.]

²¹¹ [*vorstellig machen*.]

²¹² [*der Natur der Sache nach*.]

²¹³ [The insertion is intended to block the reading ‘must be thought as first appears.’]

²¹⁴ [Or ‘condition’: *Zustand*. Below, ‘state’ translates *Stand*. The two German terms are synonymous.]

²¹⁵ [1 Gen. 2:16–17. In the King James version: “And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”]

good, so that²¹⁶ there is also no place for any further qualms), the human being did look around for yet other incentives (Gen. 3:6),²¹⁷ incentives that can be good only conditionally (namely insofar as the law is not infringed by them); and he made it his maxim—if one thinks of the action as arising consciously from freedom—to follow the law of duty not from duty but perhaps also from a concern for other aims. Thus he began to doubt the strictness of the command that excludes the influence of any other incentive, and thereafter began to use subtle reasoning to downgrade²¹⁸ his obedience to the command to an obedience merely conditional (under the principle of self-love) as a means,²¹⁹ so that finally the preponderance of the sensible²²⁰ impulses over the incentive from the law was admitted into the maxim of action, and thus sinning came to be (Gen. 3:6).²²¹ *Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur.*²²² That we daily do likewise and hence “in Adam we all sinned”²²³

²¹⁶ [wobei.]

²¹⁷ [“And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.”]

²¹⁸ [‘use subtle reasoning to downgrade’ translates *herab vernünfteln*.]

²¹⁹ All professed^a reverence toward the moral law, if yet in one’s maxim it does not concede to the law, as incentive sufficient by itself, preponderance over all other determining bases of the power of choice, is hypocritical; and the propensity to such reverence is inward falsity, i.e., a propensity to lie to oneself in interpreting the moral law to its detriment (Gen. 3:5).^b This is why the Bible (of Christian contribution) also calls the originator of evil (who resides within ourselves) the liar from the beginning,^c and thus characterizes the human being in regard to what seems to be the main basis of evil in him.

^a [bezeugt.]

^b [“For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.”]

^c [John 8:44, in the Luther translation, 1912 version, (1), followed by my own translation thereof (2) and then by the King James version (3): (1) “*Ihr seid von dem Vater, dem Teufel, und nach eures Vaters Lust wollt ihr tun. Der ist ein Mörder von Anfang und ist nicht bestanden in der Wahrheit; denn die Wahrheit ist nicht in ihm. Wenn er die Lüge redet, so redet er von seinem Eigenen; denn er ist ein Lügner und ein Vater derselben.*” (2) “You are from your father, the devil, and by your father’s lusts you want to act. He is a murderer from the beginning, and abides not in the truth; for, the truth is not in him. When he speaks a lie, then he speaks from his own [self], for he is a liar and a father of the lie.” (3) “Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it.”]

²²⁰ [I.e., sensory: *sinnlich*.]

²²¹ [See above, Ak. VI, 42 br. n. 217.]

²²² [Horace, *Satires*, I, 1: “[*Quid rides?* (Why do you laugh?)] With the name changed, the story is [literally, ‘is told’] about you.”]

and are still sinning is clear from the above, except that an innate propensity to transgression is already presupposed in us, but not in the first human being, in whom innocence is instead presupposed in terms of time; hence in his case the transgression is called a *fall into sin*,²²⁴ whereas in our case it is conceived as resulting from the already innate wickedness of our nature. However, this propensity means nothing more than that, if we are willing to venture into the explanation of evil in terms of its *beginning in time*, then for every deliberate transgression we must pursue the causes in a previous time of our life, all the way back to the time when the use of reason was not yet developed, and hence must pursue the source of evil all the way to a propensity to evil (as its natural foundation), which is therefore called innate. In the case of the first human being, who is conceived already with the full ability of his use of reason, this is not needed, and also not practicable, because otherwise that foundation (the evil propensity)²²⁵ would even have to have been created in him,²²⁶ hence his sin is set down as generated directly from innocence.—However, we must not seek a temporal origin of a moral constitution that is to be imputed to us, no matter how unavoidable this may be when we want to *explain* this constitution's contingent existence (which may also be why Scripture, in accordance with this weakness of ours, has presented that origin in this way).

However, the rational origin of this derangement²²⁷ of our power of choice with regard to the manner in which it admits subordinate incentives as supreme into its maxims, i.e., the rational origin of this propensity to evil, remains inscrutable²²⁸ to us; for, it must itself be imputed to us, and that supreme basis of all maxims would consequently in turn require the admission of an evil maxim. Evil was able to arise only from moral evil (not from the mere limits of our nature); and yet the original predisposition (which also no one but the human being himself could have corrupted,²²⁹ if this corruption is to be imputed to him) is a predisposition to the good;

²²³ [Rom. 5:12, in the Luther translation, 1912 version, (1), followed by my own translation thereof (2) and then by the King James version (3): (1) "*Derhalben, wie durch einen Menschen die Sünde ist gekommen in die Welt und der Tod durch die Sünde, und ist also der Tod zu allen Menschen durchgedrungen, dieweil sie alle gesündigt haben.*" (2) "Therefore, as by one human being sin came into the world, and death by sin, so death has penetrated to all human beings, because they all have sinned." (3) "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."—The reading, "in Adam we all sinned," is the Augustinian interpretation (intended to support the doctrine of original sin) of this verse, based on the Vulgate translation (Latin translation authorized and used by the Roman Catholic Church) of the original Greek. This interpretation also remained dominant in early Protestant exegesis and still has many defenders today. Cf. Wobbermin, Ak. VI, 502.]

²²⁴ [I.e., 'fall,' or 'fall of man,' or 'fall from grace': *Sündenfall*.]

²²⁵ [I.e., the propensity to evil, as natural foundation of evil.]

²²⁶ [*anerschaffen*.]

²²⁷ [*Verstimmung*.]

²²⁸ [*unerforschlich*.]

²²⁹ [*verderben konnte*; below, 'corruption' translates *Korruption*.]

for us, therefore, there is no comprehensible²³⁰ basis from which the moral evil in us could have come in the first place.—Scripture expresses this incomprehensibility in the historical narrative,²³¹ along with the closer determination of the wickedness of our genus, by having evil indeed come first²³² at the beginning of the world, though not yet in the human being, but in a *spirit* of an originally more sublime vocation.²³³ As a result, therefore, the *first* beginning of all evil as such is conceived²³⁴ as incomprehensible to us (for whence the evil in that spirit?), but the human being

44

²³⁰ [Or 'graspable': *begreiflich*. Although in different contexts *begreifen* can also mean 'to comprise' and in that meaning is related to *Begriff*; i.e., 'concept,' it never means merely 'to conceive' (as this latter term is used in philosophy); by the same token, *begreiflich* never means merely 'conceivable' (i.e., 'thinkable') and *unbegreiflich* is cognitively not quite as negative as is 'inconceivable.' Cf. my translation of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 792 = B 820 incl. br. n. 394.]

²³¹ What is being said here must not be regarded as if it were intended to be scriptural interpretation,^a which lies outside the bounds of the authority of bare reason. One can explain oneself concerning the way in which one puts a historical exposition to moral use, without deciding whether this meaning is also the writer's or we are only putting it into [the text]—provided the meaning is true inherently, apart from any historical proof, while yet also being the only meaning in terms of which we can draw something for [human] improvement from a passage that would otherwise be only an unfruitful increase in our historical cognition. One must not needlessly dispute about something—and about its historical reputation^b—that, whether it is understood in this or another way, contributes nothing to becoming a better human being, if what can contribute to this [human improvement] is cognized also without historical proof and even must be cognized without it. Historical cognition that has no intrinsic reference, valid for everyone, to this goal, belongs among the *adiaphora*,^c with which everyone may deal as he by himself finds edifying.

46

^a [Or 'scriptural exegesis': *Schriftauslegung*.]

^b [*Ansehen*.]

^c [Indifferent things; cf. above, Ak. VI, 22 incl. br. n. 40.]

²³² [*voranschicken*.]

²³³ [*erhabenere Bestimmung*. On the fall of Lucifer (literally, "light-bearer," thus morning star), cf. Isaiah 14:12: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!" Cf. also Luke 10:18: "And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Also cf. Rev. 8:10: "And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters." A variation of this story turns the morning star into a dragon: Rev. 12:3–4: "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth." Even Eze. 28:12–19 has been and continues to be interpreted by some as dealing with the fall of Lucifer, although an unbiased reading of the passage suggests that it is addressed not to Lucifer but to a king, possibly to Nebuchadnezzar.]

²³⁴ [Or 'presented': *vorge stellt*.]

is conceived as having fallen into evil only *through seduction*,²³⁵ hence *not* as corrupted *from his very basis* (even in terms of the first predisposition to the good), but as still capable of improvement—in contrast to a seducing *spirit*, i.e., a kind of being to whom the temptation of the flesh cannot be credited to mitigate his guilt—and thus for the human being, who despite a corrupted heart does still have a good will, there remains hope of a return to the good from which he has deviated.

General Comment

*On Restoring the Original Predisposition to the Good to Its Power*²³⁶

What the human being is or is to become²³⁷ in the moral sense, good or evil, into that he must turn or have turned²³⁸ *himself*. Either must be an effect of his free power of choice; for otherwise it could not be imputed to him, and consequently he could not *morally* be either good or evil. When it is said, He is created good, then this can mean nothing more than this: He is created for the *good*, and the original *predisposition* in the human being is good. The human being himself is not yet good on that account; rather, according as he does or does not admit into his maxim the incentives contained in that predisposition (this must be left entirely to his free selection),²³⁹ he brings it about that he becomes good or evil. Supposing that, for him to become good or better, a supranatural cooperation were also needed, whether this cooperation were to consist only in the diminution of obstacles or also in positive assistance, the human being must yet make himself worthy beforehand to receive it, and must (which is no trifling matter) *accept* this aid, i.e., admit this positive increase of power into his maxim; through this alone does it become possible to impute the good to him and to cognize him as a good human being.

45 Now, how it is possible for a human being who is evil by nature to turn himself into a good human being, this surpasses all our concepts; for how can an evil tree bear good fruit? However, since by the previously made avowal a tree that was

²³⁵ [Cf. Gen. 3:1–6: “Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, and that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.”]

²³⁶ [Or ‘strength’: *Kraft*.]

²³⁸ [*machen oder gemacht*.]

²³⁷ [*werden soll*.]

²³⁹ [Or ‘choice’: *Wahl*.]

good originally (in terms of its predisposition) did bring forth base²⁴⁰ fruit,²⁴¹ and since the decline²⁴² from the good into evil (if one considers carefully that evil arises from freedom) is no more comprehensible than the recovery²⁴³ from evil to the good, the possibility of the latter²⁴⁴ cannot be disputed. For, despite that defection, the command that we *ought* to become better human beings yet resounds undiminished in our soul; consequently we must also be capable of this, even if what we can do were by itself insufficient and served us only to make²⁴⁵ ourselves receptive to a higher and to us inscrutable assistance.—In this we must indeed presuppose that a germ of the good in its entire purity has remained, that it could not be extirpated or corrupted; this germ certainly cannot be self-love,²⁴⁶ which, if adopted as the principle of all our maxims, is precisely the source of all evil.

²⁴⁰ [*arge*.]

²⁴¹ A tree that is good in terms of its predisposition is not yet good in terms of its deed; for if it were, then it could indeed not bring forth base fruit. Only when a human being has admitted into his maxim the incentive put into him for the moral law, is he called a good human being (is the tree called absolutely a good tree).

²⁴² [*Verfall*. Below, 'defection' translates *Abfall*.]

²⁴³ [*Wiederaufstehen*, 'getting [literally, 'standing'] up again,' as from a disease.]

²⁴⁴ [I.e., the possibility of such a recovery; in other words, the possibility for a human being who is evil by nature to make himself into a good human being.]

²⁴⁵ [*wir uns dadurch . . . machen*.]

²⁴⁶ Words that can take on two entirely different meanings often delay for a long time the conviction arising from even the clearest reasons.^a Like *love* as such, so *self-love* also can be divided into that of *benevolence* and that of *liking*^b (*benevolentia et complacentia*),^c and both must (as goes without saying) be rational. To admit the first^d into one's maxim is natural (for who would not want to fare well?). But it is rational in part insofar as, in view of the purpose, one selects only what is consistent with the greatest and most enduring welfare,^e and in part insofar as one selects for each of these constituents of happiness the most suitable means. Reason here holds only the position of a maid-servant to natural inclination; the maxim that one adopts on that account, however, has no reference to morality.^f But if this maxim is made the unconditional principle of the power of choice, then it is the source of an immensely great opposition to morality.—Now, a rational love of *liking for oneself*^g can

^a [*Gründe*.]

^b [More literally, 'well-willing [or 'well-wanting'] . . . well-pleasing': *Wohllollen . . . Wohlgefallen*. There is no pair of English expressions comparable to Kant's and capable of rendering its meaning adequately. See also n. 246h below.]

^c [Benevolence and (general) pleasingness. In line with standard usage of Latin expressions in English, I have changed Kant's genitives (prompted by the grammar of his sentence) to nominatives.]

^d [The self-love of benevolence.]

^e [*Wohlergehen*.]

^f [*Moralität* here; *Sittlichkeit* below.]

^g [The (rational) self-love of liking.]

46 The restoration²⁴⁷ of the original predisposition to the good in us is not, therefore, the acquisition of a *lost* incentive for the good; for, this incentive, which consists in respect for the moral law, we were never able to lose, and if losing it were possible, then we would also never again acquire it. Therefore it is the restoration only of the *purity*²⁴⁸ of the moral law as the supreme basis of all our maxims; after²⁴⁹ that restoration, this law—not merely as linked with other incentives, let alone as sub-

be understood in two ways: either as our liking ourselves in those already mentioned maxims whose purpose is the gratification of natural inclination (insofar as that purpose is reached by complying with these maxims), and then it is one and the same with the love of benevolence toward oneself—one likes oneself,^h like a merchant whose business speculations turn out well and who, because of the maxims he adopted therein, rejoices in his good insight—or in the following way. However, the maxim of the self-love of *unconditional liking* for oneself (a liking for oneself not dependent on gain or loss as the consequences of the action) would be the intrinsic principle of a satisfaction possible for us solely on condition that our maxims are subordinated to the moral law. No human being to whom morality is not indifferent can have a liking for himself, or indeed even avoid a bitter dislikingⁱ for himself, if he is conscious of such maxims as do not agree with the moral law within himself. This love could be called *rational love* of oneself, a love that prevents any other causes of satisfaction, arising from the consequences of one's actions (under the name of a happiness to be procured through them), from being mixed with the incentives of the power of choice. Now, since the latter condition^j designates unconditional respect for the law, why, through the expression of a *rational* but only under this latter condition *moral self-love*, does one needlessly want to make the distinct understanding of the principle more difficult for oneself, by turning about in a circle (for, one can love oneself in a moral way only insofar as one is conscious of one's maxim to make respect for the law the highest incentive of one's power of choice)? Happiness is for us, by our *nature* as beings, dependent on objects of sensibility, what we desire first and what we desire unconditionally. This same happiness, by our nature (if that is indeed what one wants to call what is innate to us) as beings endowed with reason and freedom, is not even remotely first, nor yet unconditionally an object of our maxims; this object is, rather, the *worthiness to be happy*, i.e., the agreement^k of all our maxims with the moral law. Now, that this worthiness is objectively the condition under which alone the wish for happiness can harmonize with legislative reason, therein consists any moral precept; and the moral way of thinking consists in the attitude of also only wishing in this conditional way.

^h [*Man gefällt sich selbst.* In the verb, the *wohl-* in *Wohlgefallen* is usually dropped, and *wohlgefallen* means no more than *gefallen*; similarly for the adjective, *wohlgefällig*.]

ⁱ [*Mißfallen.*]

^j [The condition that this love prevents any other causes of satisfaction from being mixed with the incentives of the power of choice.]

^k [*Übereinstimmung.* Below, 'harmonize' translates *zusammenstimmen*.]

²⁴⁷ [*Wiederherstellung* here; *Herstellung* in the next sentence. The two terms, as used here, are actually synonymous.]

²⁴⁸ [*Reinigkeit*; likewise above and repeatedly below.]

²⁴⁹ [*nach*, which can also mean 'according to.']

ordinated to these (to the inclinations) as conditions, but rather in its entire purity as incentive *sufficient* by itself for determining the power of choice—is to be admitted into this power. What is originally good²⁵⁰ is the *holiness of the maxims* in complying with one's duty, hence merely from duty,²⁵¹ whereby the human being who admits this purity into his maxim, although not yet himself holy on that account (for between the maxim and the deed there is still a large gap), is yet on the way of approaching holiness in infinite progress.²⁵² When the firm resolve in complying with one's duty has become a proficiency, it is also called *virtue* in terms of legality, as virtue's *empirical character* (*virtus phaenomenon*).²⁵³ This [phenomenal virtue] thus has the permanent maxim of *lawful* actions, no matter from where the incentives that the power of choice needs for this are taken. Hence virtue in this sense is acquired *little by little*, and means to some a long habituation (in observing the law), whereby the human being, through gradual reforms of his conduct and stabilization²⁵⁴ of his maxims, has passed over from the propensity to vice to an opposite propensity. Now, one needs for this not exactly a *change of heart*, but only a change of *mores*.²⁵⁵ The human being considers himself virtuous when he feels stabilized in maxims whereby he is to observe his duty—although not from the supreme basis of all maxims, namely from duty; rather, the immoderate human being, e.g., returns to moderation for the sake of health, the mendacious one to truth for the sake of honor, the unjust one to civic honesty for the sake of tranquility or gain, etc.; all according to the glorified principle of happiness. However, that someone should become a human being who is not merely *legally* but *morally* good (pleasing²⁵⁶ to God), i.e., virtuous in terms of [virtue's] intelligible character

²⁵⁰ [Literally, 'the originally good': *das ursprünglich Gute*.]

²⁵¹ [Rather than (also) from some other incentive. On the distinction between acting in conformity with duty and acting from duty, see above, Ak. VI, 30 br. n. 101.]

²⁵² [Cf. Martin Luther: "(*cum*) *ab inchoatione sanctitatis usque ad perfectionem sint infiniti gradus . . .*," "(when) from the inception of sanctity up to its perfection there are infinite steps." "*Diciata super Psalterium* (Comments on the Psalms): *Psalmus LXXIV [LXXV]*." *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Dr. Martin Luther's works. Critical complete edition) (Weimar: Hermann Boehlau, 1883), III, 512. (Latin text quoted from Bohatec, 333 n. 38.)]

²⁵³ [Phenomenal virtue.]

²⁵⁴ [*Befestigung*.]

²⁵⁵ [Or even 'manners' (italics mine): *Sitten*; this term more commonly (also in Kant) means 'morals.']

²⁵⁶ [*wohlgefällig*. Generally speaking, the best translation for the noun *Wohlgefallen* is, I believe, 'liking'; similarly for the adjective *wohlgefällig* and the synonymous *gefällig* (see above, Ak. VI, 45 br. n. 246h). Cf. my translation of the *Critique of Judgment* (Indianapolis and Cambridge, Mass.: Hackett, 1987), 207 br. n. 14. However, it seems to me that an exception is called for in contexts where either of the two adjectives is applied to a lofty figure such as God. Here 'liked by' sounds a little casual. I therefore use 'pleasing to,' because of its loftier tone. But the change has come at a price. Since I did want to be consistent, I have had to translate the noun, *Wohlgefallen*, as applied to God, by 'pleasure' (see, Ak. IV, 62, 73, 114, 145); and this has created two problems. One is that 'pleasure,' unlike *Wohlgefallen* and 'liking' (which are given in footnotes), sounds a bit *too* lofty, even imperious; the other is that

(*virtus noumenon*)²⁵⁷—who, when he cognizes something as a duty, requires no other incentive beyond this presentation of duty itself—this cannot be brought about, so long as the foundation of the maxims remains impure, through gradual *reform*, but must be brought about through a *revolution* in the attitude in the human being (a transition to the maxim of the attitude's holiness); and he can become a new human being only through a kind of rebirth, as if through a new creation (John 3:5, compared with Gen. 1:2)²⁵⁸ and a change of heart.

48 But if the human being²⁵⁹ is corrupted at the basis of his maxims, how is it possible for him to achieve this revolution through his own powers and to become on his own a good human being? And yet duty commands us to be good, and it commands us nothing but what we can do. This cannot be reconciled except by maintaining that the revolution is necessary for the way of thinking,²⁶⁰ but the gradual reform for the way of sensing²⁶¹ (which opposes the former way with obstacles); and hence [each] must also be possible for the human being. That is, if through a single immutable decision the human being reverses the supreme basis of his maxims whereby he was an evil human being (and thereby puts on a new human being),²⁶² then he is, to this extent, in terms of the principle and the way of thinking, a subject receptive to the good; but he is a good human being only in continual acting²⁶³ and becoming, i.e., he can hope that with such purity in the principle that he has adopted as the supreme maxim of his power of choice; and with the stability of this principle, he finds himself on the good (though narrow) path of

'pleasure' in this sense must now be distinguished (this too is indicated in footnotes) from 'pleasure' in the more basic sense of *Lust*.]

²⁵⁷ [Noumenal virtue.]

²⁵⁸ [John 3:5: "Jesus answered [to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews], Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Gen. 1:2: "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."]

²⁵⁹ [*der Mensch*; in line with the headings and the import of Sections I, II, and III, Kant is again speaking generally.]

²⁶⁰ [*Denkungsart*.]

²⁶¹ [*Sinnesart*; this term, when used more loosely, can also mean 'mentality.' For Kant's contrast between the way of thinking and the way of sensing, cf. *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 551 = B 579.]

²⁶² [Like a new suit. (Cf. below, Ak. VI, 117 incl. br. n. 266, and 121 incl. br. n. 308; also above, Ak. VI, 47, and below, Ak. VI, 85, 163, and 198 n. 391.) Kant may be alluding to Ephesians or to Colossians. Eph. 4:22–24: "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Col. 3:9–10: "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." Cf. also Eph. 2:15–21.]

²⁶³ [*Wirken*.]

constant *progress*²⁶⁴ from the bad²⁶⁵ to the better. For him who sees through the intelligible basis of the heart (i.e., of all maxims of the power of choice), for whom this infinity of progress is therefore a unity, i.e., for God, this is tantamount to actually being a human being who is good (pleasing²⁶⁶ to him); and to that extent this change can be considered a revolution; for the judging²⁶⁷ by human beings, however, who can assess themselves and the strength of their maxims only by the upper hand that they gain over sensibility in time, the change is to be regarded only as an ever-continuing striving toward the better, hence as a gradual reform of the propensity to evil, i.e., of the perverted way of thinking.

From this it follows that the moral education of the human being must start not from the improvement of mores but from the transformation of the way of thinking and the founding of a character, although it is customary to proceed differently and to fight against vices individually but to leave their universal root untouched. Now, even the most limited human being is capable of the impression, for an action conforming to duty, of a respect that is all the greater the more he withdraws, in thought, other incentives from it that have influence on the maxim of the action through self-love; and, indeed, children are capable of discovering even the slightest indication that spurious incentives are mixed in, in which case the action instantly loses all moral worth for them. This predisposition is cultivated incomparably by adducing the *example* even of good human beings (as regards the lawfulness of the action)²⁶⁸ and letting one's moral apprentices judge the impurity²⁶⁹ of many²⁷⁰ maxims from the actual incentives of these human beings' actions; and this predisposition passes over into the apprentices' way of thinking, so that *duty* just by itself starts to acquire in their hearts a noticeable weight. However, teaching apprentices to *admire* virtuous actions, no matter how much sacrifice these actions may have cost, is not yet the right attunement²⁷¹ that the mind of the apprentice ought to receive for the morally good. For, no matter how virtuous someone may be, whatever good he can do is yet merely duty; but doing one's duty is nothing more than doing what is in the usual moral order and hence does not de-

49

²⁶⁴ [*Fortschreiten* (literally, 'progressing') here; *Fortschritt* below.]

²⁶⁵ [*schlecht*.]

²⁶⁶ [*gefällig*. Cf. above, Ak. VI, 45 br. n 246h.]

²⁶⁷ [*Beurteilung*.]

²⁶⁸ [*derselben*. Although grammatically this could also refer to 'human beings,' not only would Kant (in his typical style) presumably have used *dieser ihre* ('the latter's') in that case (whereas he uses *derselben* and comparable relative pronouns to refer to a noun *other* than the immediately preceding one), but, above all, nowhere else does Kant attribute lawfulness (*Gesetzmäßigkeit*) to human beings.]

²⁶⁹ [*Unlauterkeit*.]

²⁷⁰ [*manche*; in contemporary German, the term's meaning is closer to 'some.']

²⁷¹ [*Stimmung*; below, 'mistuning' renders *Abstimmung*, which can also be translated as 'dissonance' or 'discordance.']

serve²⁷² to be admired.²⁷³ On the contrary, this admiration is a mistuning of our feeling for duty, as if paying obedience to duty were something extraordinary and meritorious.

But there is one thing in our soul which, if we duly fix our eyes upon it, we cannot cease regarding with the highest amazement and where the admiration is legitimate and simultaneously also elevates the soul; and this is the original moral predisposition within us, as such.—What is that within us (one can ask oneself) whereby we, beings constantly dependent on nature through so many needs, are yet simultaneously elevated so far above these needs²⁷⁴ in the idea of an original predisposition (in us) that we regard them one and all as nothing, and regard ourselves as unworthy of existence should we cling to their enjoyment—which, after all, can alone make life desirable to us—in opposition to a law through which our reason commands powerfully yet also²⁷⁵ without either promising or threatening anything? The weight of this question must be felt most intimately by every human being of even the commonest capacity who has been instructed in advance about the holiness that resides in the idea of duty, but who does not go so far as to investigate the concept of freedom, which first emerges from this law;²⁷⁶ and even the incomprehensibility of this predisposition proclaiming a divine descent must affect the mind

50

²⁷² [*verdienen*; below, ‘meritorious’ translates *verdienstlich*.]

²⁷³ [Wobbermin, Ak. VI, 502, invites us to compare Luke 17:10: “So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.”]

²⁷⁴ [*diese*. Although grammatically this could also refer to ‘nature,’ Kant would presumably have said *jene* in that case, since he typically uses *diese* and its variants to refer to the immediately preceding noun. Moreover, on the point that Kant is making here, cf. *Critique of Practical Reason*, Ak. V, 158.]

²⁷⁵ [*dabei*.]

²⁷⁶ That the concept of freedom of the power of choice^a does not precede the consciousness of the moral law within us but is only inferred from the determinability of our power of choice by this law as an unconditional command—of this one can soon become convinced if one asks oneself whether one is also certainly and directly^b conscious of an ability^c to overcome, through firm resolve, any incentive to transgression, no matter how great the incentive (*Phalaris licet imperet, ut sis falsus, et admoto dictet periuria tauro*).^d Everyone will have to admit that *he does not know* whether, if such a case occurred, he would not waver in

^a [*Willkür*.]

^b [Or ‘immediately’: *unmittelbar*.]

^c [Or ‘power’: *Vermögen*.]

^d [Juvenal, *Satires*, VIII, 81–82: “. . . though Phalaris himself should command you to be deceitful and, having brought his bull, should dictate perjury.” Phalaris (d. 554 B.C.), tyrant of the Greek colony of Agragas (Roman Agrigentum, now Agrigento) in southwestern Sicily, is said to have had his enemies killed in a brass bull by having a fire lit under it. The brass bull, we are told, was invented for Phalaris by the Athenian brass-founder Perillos, who also became its first victim when Phalaris decided to test it on him. For a fuller quotation (lines 79–84) of the passage in question, along with my translation of it, see my translation of the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Ak. V, 158–59. Another, rather brief quote from the passage occurs in *Metaphysics of Morals*, Ak. VI, 334.]

to the point of inspiration²⁷⁷ and strengthen it for any²⁷⁸ of the sacrifices that respect for his duty may impose on him. Repeated arousing of this feeling of the sublimity of one's moral vocation is to be extolled preeminently; for it acts in direct opposition to the innate propensity to pervert the incentives in the maxims of our power of choice, in order to restore, in the unconditional respect for the law as the highest condition of all maxims to be adopted, the original moral order among the incentives, and thereby to restore, in its purity,²⁷⁹ the predisposition in the human heart to the good.

However, this restoration by applying one's own power is of course confronted directly by the principle of the innate corruption of human beings for everything

his resolve. Duty, however, nonetheless commands him unconditionally: he *ought* to remain faithful to his resolve; and from this he rightly *infers* that he must also *be able* to do so, and that his power of choice is therefore free. Those who pretend that this inscrutable property^e is entirely comprehensible produce, through the word *determinism* (the principle^f of the determination of the power of choice by inner sufficient bases), an illusion as if the difficulty consisted in reconciling this determinism with freedom—which of course no one is thinking of. Rather, how *predeterminism*, according to which chosen^g actions have, as events, their determining bases^h in the precedingⁱ time (which, with what it includes,^j is no longer in our power),^k is consistent with^l freedom, according to which the action as well as its opposite must at the moment of the occurrence be in the subject's power—this is what one wants to gain insight into, but never will.

50

(†) Reconciling the concept of *freedom* with the idea of God as a *necessary* being is not difficult at all; for, freedom consists not in the contingency of the action (its not being determined by bases at all), i.e., not in indeterminism ([the principle] that doing good or evil must be equally possible for God, if his action is to be called free), but in absolute spontaneity. The latter is at risk only with *predeterminism*, where the determining basis of the action is in the preceding time and hence determines me irresistibly in such a way that now the action is no longer in *my* power but in the hands of nature; consequently, because in God no time sequence is thinkable, this difficulty drops out.

^e [I.e., freedom of the power of choice.]

^f [Satz.]

^g [willkürliche.]

^h [bestimmende Gründe. I also use 'determining bases' to translate *Bestimmungsgründe*; however, the two German expressions are in fact synonymous.]

ⁱ [vorhergehend here; *vorig* in the note below. The two terms are here used synonymously.]

^j [in sich hält.]

^k [Gewalt; likewise below, in this note and in the subsequent one.]

^l [Literally, 'can coexist with': *mit . . . zusammen bestehen könne*.]

²⁷⁷ [Or 'enthusiasm': *Begeisterung*.]

²⁷⁸ [nur (near the end of Kant's sentence).]

²⁷⁹ [Reinigkeit.]

good, [is it not]? It is indeed, as regards the comprehensibility of this restoration's possibility, i.e., our *insight* into this possibility, as the possibility of everything that is to be presented as an event in time (as a change) and, to this extent, as necessary according to natural laws, and whose opposite is yet simultaneously to be presented under moral laws as possible through freedom; but this restoration's possibility itself is not confronted by that principle. For if the moral law commands that we *ought* to be better human beings now, then it follows inescapably that we must also be *capable* of this. The principle of innate evil is of no use at all in moral *dogmatics*; for the latter's precepts contain the very same duties and also retain²⁸⁰ the same force, whether there is in us an innate propensity to transgression or not. In moral *asceticism*,²⁸¹ however, this principle means more, yet no more than this: in the moral²⁸² development of the predisposition, created in us, to the good we cannot start²⁸³ from innocence that is natural to us, but must start from the presupposition of a wickedness of the power of choice in adopting its maxims in opposition to the original moral predisposition, and, because the propensity to this [wickedness] is inextirpable, with unceasing counteraction²⁸⁴ against it. Now, because this merely leads to a progress, advancing *ad infinitum*,²⁸⁵ from the bad²⁸⁶ to the better, it follows that the transformation of the evil human being's attitude into that of a good human being must be posited in the change, in conformity with the moral law, of the supreme inner basis for the adoption of all his maxims, insofar as this new basis (the new heart) is now itself unchangeable. Conviction concerning this, however, the human being can indeed not reach naturally, neither through direct²⁸⁷ consciousness nor through the proof of the life²⁸⁸ he has led thus far; for the depth of the heart (the subjective first basis of his maxims) is inscrutable to himself. But to arrive upon the path that leads there, and that is assigned to him by an attitude improved at its basis²⁸⁹—this he must be able to *hope* to do by applying his *own* power; for, he ought to become a good human being, yet is to be judged *morally* good only according to what can be imputed to him as done by himself.

Now, against this requirement of self-improvement, reason, by nature averse to moral work, enlists—under the pretext of its natural incapacity—all sorts of impure religious ideas (which include fictitiously attributing to God himself the principle of happiness as the supreme condition of his commands). All religions,

²⁸⁰ [Literally, 'remain in': *bleiben . . . in*.]

²⁸¹ [*Asketik*.]

²⁸² [*sittlich* here; *moralisch* twice above, then once below, followed again by *sittlich*—still in this same sentence, and likewise in the next one.]

²⁸³ [*den Anfang machen* here; *anheben* below.]

²⁸⁶ [*schlecht*.]

²⁸⁴ [Or 'reaction': *Gegenwirkung*.]

²⁸⁷ [Or 'immediate': *unmittelbar*.]

²⁸⁵ [*ins Unendliche hinausgehende Fortschreitung*.]

²⁸⁸ [More literally, 'way of life': *Lebenswandel*.]

²⁸⁹ [*im Grunde*.]

however, can be divided into the religion of the *pursuit of favor* (of mere cult) and *moral* religion, i.e., the religion of the *good way of life*. According to the first, the human being either flatters himself that God presumably²⁹⁰ can make him eternally happy without his exactly needing to *become a better human being* (but through remission of his trespasses);²⁹¹ or else, if this does not seem possible to him, that God presumably can *make him a better human being* without his having to do anything more in this than to *beg*²⁹² for it—which, since before an all-seeing being it is nothing more than to *wish*, would in fact be nothing done; for if it were accomplished with the mere wish, then every human being would be good. But according to the moral religion (and among all the public religions that ever there have been, the Christian alone is of this sort), it is a principle that everyone must do as much as is in his powers in order to become a better human being; and that only if he has not buried his innate talent (Luke 19:12–16),²⁹³ if he has employed his original predisposition to the good in order to become a better human being, can he hope that what is not in his capacity²⁹⁴ will be compensated for by a higher [being's] cooperation. Nor is it absolutely necessary for the human being to know in what this cooperation consists; perhaps it is even unavoidable that, if the way in which it occurs were at a certain time revealed, different human beings at another time would frame different concepts of it, and this with all sincerity. But then, too, the principle holds, “It is not essential and therefore not necessary for everyone to know what God does, or has done, for his salvation,”²⁹⁵ but it certainly is essential and is necessary for everyone to know] *what the human being himself has to do* in order to become worthy of this assistance.

52

(†) This General Comment is the first of the four that are appended to the pieces of this work, one to each, and that could carry the headings, (1) On Effects of

²⁹⁰ [*wohl*.]

²⁹¹ [More literally, ‘[things] that he is guilty of’: *Verschuldungen*.]

²⁹² [Or ‘ask’: *bitten*.]

²⁹³ [But has put it to use for gain. The word ‘talent,’ which here translates *Pfund*, i.e., ‘pound,’ originally also referred to a weight, then to a weight of gold or silver, thus to wealth generally, and therefore in particular to the mental endowment bestowed upon an individual at birth. The verses in Luke 19:12–16 cited by Kant are, in the King James version, the following: “He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this *man* to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.” (Verses 17–26 relate how he is rewarded by the nobleman, and how others, who did less well or poorly, are rewarded more modestly or even punished.)]

²⁹⁴ [Or ‘power’: *Vermögen*. Above, ‘powers’ translates *Kräfte*.]

²⁹⁵ [*Seligkeit*.]

Grace,²⁹⁶ (2) On Miracles, (3) On Mysteries, (4) On Means of Grace.—These are, as it were, *parerga*²⁹⁷ of religion within the bounds of pure reason; they do not belong within these bounds, but they still abut on them. Reason, conscious of its incapacity to deal adequately with its moral need, extends itself to extravagant²⁹⁸ ideas that might compensate for this lack, yet without appropriating them to itself as [part of] an expanded possession. It does not dispute the possibility or actuality of the objects of these ideas; it just cannot admit them into its maxims of thought and of action. What is more, if in the inscrutable realm of the supranatural there is something even beyond what²⁹⁹ reason can enable itself to understand but that would nonetheless be needed to compensate for its moral incapacity, reason counts on this something's accruing to its good will even uncognized; it does so with a faith that could be called *reflecting*³⁰⁰ (on the possibility of this something), because *dogmatic* faith, which proclaims itself to be a *knowledge*, strikes it as insincere or presumptuous; for, removing the difficulties against what is on its own established (namely, practically), when the difficulties concern transcendent questions,³⁰¹ is only a subordinate task³⁰² (*parergon*). As regards the disadvantage³⁰³ that would arise from these even *morally* transcendent ideas if we sought to introduce them into religion, their effect, according to the order of the four classes mentioned above, is this: (1) effect of the supposed inner experience (effects³⁰⁴ of grace), *fanaticism*;³⁰⁵ (2) effect of the alleged outer experience (miracles), *superstition*; (3) effect of the surmised illumination of the understanding³⁰⁶ with regard to the supranatural (mysteries), *illuminatism*,³⁰⁷ delusion of the adepts; (4) effect of the daring attempts to affect the supranatural (means of grace), *thaumaturgy*,³⁰⁸ nothing but strayings of a reason going beyond its limits, and this for a supposedly

²⁹⁶ [Or 'effects of mercy,' or 'acts of grace (mercy)': *Gnadenwirkungen*. *Wirkung* is the noun formed from the verb *wirken* (cf. 'to work'), which basically means 'to act,' 'to effect,' or (with the preposition *auf*, 'upon'), 'to affect.' As a result, depending on the context, *Wirkung* can mean 'action' (or 'act') or 'effect'.]

²⁹⁷ [A *parergon* is an accessory to a work (or task) or a work activity.]

²⁹⁸ [I.e., transcendent: *überschwenglich*.]

²⁹⁹ [Literally, 'still something more than': *noch etwas mehr . . . als*.]

³⁰⁰ [Or 'reflective': *reflektierend*.]

³⁰¹ [Which are theoretical and, as transcendent, speculative.]

³⁰² [*Nebengeschäft*.]

³⁰³ [Or 'detriment': *Nachteil*.]

³⁰⁴ [Or, in this case, 'acts': *-wirkungen*. Cf. (1) above. Likewise below, in 'effects of grace' (italicized).]

³⁰⁵ [Or 'raving': *Schwärmerei*.]

³⁰⁶ [*Verstandeserleuchtung*.]

³⁰⁷ [*Illuminatismus*.]

³⁰⁸ [Performance ("working") of miracles.]

moral aim (an aim pleasing to God).—But as regards this General Comment to the First Piece of the present treatise in particular, the summoning of *effects of grace* is of the latter kind³⁰⁹ and cannot, if reason keeps within its bounds, be admitted into its *maxims*, as in general can nothing supranatural, because precisely with it all use of reason ceases.—For, making them *theoretically cognizable*³¹⁰ by something (that they are effects of grace, not inner effects of nature) is impossible, because our use of the concept of cause and effect cannot be expanded beyond objects of experience and hence beyond nature; the presupposition of a *practical* employment of this idea, however, is entirely self-contradictory. For, as an employment, it would presuppose a rule of what good we ourselves have to *do* (for a certain aim) in order to attain something; but to expect an effect of grace means precisely the opposite, namely that the good (the moral [good])³¹¹ will be not our deed, but that of another being, and therefore that we can *procure* the effect of grace by just *doing nothing*, which is contradictory. Therefore, we can grant the effect of grace as something incomprehensible, but cannot admit it into our maxim either for theoretical or for practical use.

³⁰⁹ [I.e., it is an effect (that would arise) from these even *morally* transcendent ideas (specifically, the *first* of the four) if we sought to introduce them into religion.]

³¹⁰ [*kennbar.*]

³¹¹ [Reading *das moralische* for *das Moralische.*]

PHILOSOPHICAL DOCTRINE OF RELIGION

SECOND PIECE

ON THE STRUGGLE OF THE GOOD WITH THE EVIL PRINCIPLE FOR DOMINION OVER THE HUMAN BEING

That in order to become a morally good human being it is not enough merely to let the germ of the good which resides in our genus develop unhindered, but that a cause of evil located within us and acting in opposition must also be combated—this was indicated,¹ among all the ancient moralists, above all by the Stoics through their watchword *virtue*, which (in Greek as well as in Latin) designates courage and bravery² and, therefore, presupposes an enemy. In this regard the name *virtue* is a splendid name, and [the fact] that it has often been boastfully misused and (as has lately the word enlightenment)³ ridiculed can do it no harm.—For to challenge people's courage is half as much already as to instill it, whereas the lazy and faint-hearted way of thinking (in morality and religion), which entirely mistrusts itself and waits for outside help, relaxes all the powers⁴ of the human being and makes him unworthy of this help itself.

Those valiant men⁵ did, however, fail to recognize their enemy, who is not to be sought in the natural inclinations—which merely lack discipline but which without disguise exhibit themselves openly to everyone's consciousness⁶—but is, as it

¹ [Literally, '[the Stoics] allowed [us] to cognize': zu erkennen gegeben.]

² [Greek ἀνδρεία or ἀνδρείότης (*andreía, andrôitês*)—rather than ἀρετή (*aretê*)—are derived from ἀντήρ (*anêr*), 'man,' and basically mean 'manliness,' hence 'courage,' 'bravery.' The same applies to Latin *virtus*, which is derived from *vir*, 'man.']

³ [*Aufklärung*. I refrain from capitalizing the English term because I see no reason for taking Kant to refer *only* to the movement of that name.]

⁴ [*Kräfte*.]

⁵ [The Stoics.]

⁶ [Cf. Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 B.C.), in his *Tusculanae Disputationes* (*Tusculan Disputations*). Book IV, IX, 22: "*Omnium autem perturbationum fontem esse dicunt intemperantiam, quae est tota mente a recta ratione defectio, sic aversa a praescriptione rationis, ut nullo modo adpetitiones animi nec regi nec contineri queant.*" "For, the source of all disturbances, they [the Stoics] say, is intemper-

were, an invisible enemy, who hides behind reason and therefore is all the more dangerous. They enlisted *wisdom* against *folly*, which through mere carelessness allows itself to be deluded by inclinations, instead of summoning it against *malice* (of the human heart), which covertly undermines one's attitude⁷ with soul-corrupting principles.⁸

Natural inclinations, *considered in themselves*, are *good*, i.e., irreprehensible; and not only is it futile, but it would also be harmful and censurable, to want to eradicate them. Rather, one must only tame them, so that they do not themselves wear one another out but instead can be brought to harmony in a whole called happiness.

58

ance, which is the desertion from right reason by the entire mind—so turned away from the precept of reason that the cravings of the soul can in no way be guided or restrained.”]

⁷ [*Gesinnung*. Concerning my rendering of this term, see above, Ak. VI, 13 br. n. 95.]

⁸ These philosophers took their universal moral principle from the dignity of human nature, from freedom (as independence from the power^a of the inclinations); nor could they have laid at the basis a better and nobler one.^b The moral laws they now drew directly from reason, which in this way was legislative alone and was commanding through these laws absolutely; and thus everything was stated^c quite correctly—objectively, as concerns the rule, and also subjectively, as regards the incentive, if one attributes to the human being an uncorrupted will to admit these laws unhesitatingly into his maxims. But precisely in this latter presupposition lay the mistake.^d For, no matter how early we may direct our attention to our moral state, we find that the situation^e with it is no longer that of *res integra*,^f but that we must start by driving the evil, which has already taken its place (though it would not have been able to do so without our admitting it into our maxims), away from its possession; i.e., we find that the first true good that the human being can do is to start from the evil that is to be sought not in the inclinations but in the perverted maxim and therefore in freedom itself. The inclinations only make it more difficult to *carry out* the opposite good maxim; the proper evil, however, consists in one's not *willing* to resist those inclinations when they incite transgression, and this attitude is properly the true enemy. The inclinations are opponents only of principles as such (whether these be good or evil), and to this extent that noble-minded principle of morality^g is advantageous as a preparatory exercise (discipline of the inclinations as such) for making the subject tractable through principles. But insofar as the principles ought to be specifically principles of the *morally good* and yet those used as one's maxim are not, we must presuppose in the subject a further opponent of them, in the struggle with which virtue has to hold its own; without this opponent all virtues would be,

58

^a [Or 'might': *Macht*.]

^b [Cf. *Critique of Practical Reason*, Ak. V, 112: “The Stoic asserted that virtue is the *whole highest good* and happiness is only the consciousness of the possession of this virtue as belonging to the subject's state.” Kant had been criticized by August Wilhelm Rehberg, in the latter's (anonymous) review of the *Critique of Practical Reason* (see above, Ak. VI, 6 br. n. 32p, and cf. below, Ak. VI, 170 br. n. 170a), for having slightly misrepresented the Stoic view (loc. cit., col. 358).]

^c [*angegeben*.]

^e [*es*.]

^d [Cf. *Critique of Practical Reason*, Ak. V, 126–27.]

^f [Thing untouched, i.e., intact, unimpaired.]

^g [Of the Stoics.]

The reason, however, that accomplishes this is called *prudence*. Only what is morally unlawful is in itself⁹ evil, absolutely reprehensible, and must be eradicated; but the reason that teaches this, and even more so if it also puts it into practice,¹⁰ alone deserves the name of *wisdom*, in comparison with which vice may indeed also be called *folly*, but only when reason feels within itself sufficient strength in order to *despise* it (and all inducements to it), not merely to *hate* it as an entity¹¹ to be feared, and to arm itself against it.

59 Hence when the *Stoic* thought of the moral struggle¹² of the human being as merely a struggle with his (in themselves innocent) inclinations, insofar as they must be overcome as obstacles to compliance with his duty, he could—because he assumed¹³ no special positive (in itself evil) principle—posit¹⁴ the cause of the transgression only in the *omission* to combat these inclinations.¹⁵ However, since this omission is itself contrary to duty (a transgression), rather than a mere defect of nature, and its cause cannot now (without explaining in a circle) in turn be sought in the inclinations, but only in that which determines the power of choice as a free power of choice (in the inner first basis of the maxims that are in concert¹⁶ with the inclinations), one can readily comprehend how philosophers to whom a basis of explanation that remains forever shrouded in obscurity¹⁷ and, although in-

not indeed, as that Church Father claims, splendid *vices*,^b but still *splendid paltrinesses*,ⁱ for although through them the insurrection is repeatedly quelled, the insurgent himself is never vanquished and eradicated.

^b [To St. Augustine (Augustine of Hippo, 354–430) is attributed the saying, which has not been authenticated as being his but which does agree with the general direction of his thought (cf. Wobbermin, Ak. VI, 502), “*virtutes gentium, splendida vitia.*” I.e., “The virtues of the people are [only] splendid vices” (namely, acts committed from hidden self-love).]

ⁱ [*Armseligkeiten.*]

⁹ [Or ‘intrinsically’: *an sich selbst.*]

¹⁰ [More literally, ‘aims it into [its] action’: *ins Werk richtet.*]

¹¹ [*Wesen.*]

¹² [*Kampf*; below, ‘to combat’ translates *bekämpfen.*]

¹³ [Literally, ‘assumes’: *annimmt*; I changed this to past tense to make it agree with ‘could’ above: *konnte.*]

¹⁴ [*setzen.*]

¹⁵ [Cf. *Critique of Practical Reason*, Ak. V, 127n.]

¹⁶ [I.e., in a deliberate kind of agreement: *Einverständnis.*]

¹⁷ It is a quite customary presupposition of moral philosophy that the existence of the morally evil^a in the human being can be explained quite easily, namely from the power^b of the incentives of sensibility on the one hand, and from the impotence^c of the incentive of rea-

^a [Or, more idiomatically, ‘of moral evil’: *des Sittlich-Bösen.* Here I translate the expression literally in order to keep it in agreement with ‘the morally good’ below. Likewise in Kant’s next footnote.]

^b [Or ‘might’: *Macht.*]

^c [Or ‘powerlessness’: *Ohnmacht.*]

escapable, is nonetheless unwelcome, could fail to recognize the proper opponent of the good, in the struggle with whom they believed they were holding their own.

Hence it should not seem strange if an apostle presents this *invisible* enemy, corruptor of principles—who is cognizable only through his effect upon us—as outside us, and, moreover, as an evil *spirit*: “We have to struggle not with flesh and blood (the natural inclinations) but with princes and potentates¹⁸—with evil spirits.”¹⁹ This expression seems to be intended not to expand our cognition beyond the world of sense, but only to make intuitive, *for practical use*, the concept of what is unfathomable to us. For otherwise, for the sake of that practical use it is all the same to us whether we posit the seducer merely within ourselves or also outside us, because guilt applies to us no less in the latter case than in the former; for we would not be seduced by him if we were not in secret concert with him.²⁰—Let us divide this entire contemplation into two sections.

60

son (respect for the law) on the other hand, i.e., from *weakness*. But then the morally good in him (in his moral predisposition) would have to be capable of being explained even more easily; for, that the one should be comprehensible without the other is quite unthinkable. However, the ability of reason to become, through the mere idea of a law, master over all incentives striving against it is absolutely inexplicable; hence it is also incomprehensible how the incentives of sensibility can become master over a reason that commands with such authority. For, if all the world proceeded in conformity with the precept of the law, then one would say that everything happened according to the natural order, and it would not occur to anyone even to inquire after the cause.

¹⁸ [*mit Fürsten und Gewaltigen.*]

¹⁹ [The allusion is to Eph. 6:12: “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”]

²⁰ It is a peculiarity of Christian morality to conceive the morally good as differing from the morally evil not as heaven from *earth*, but as heaven from *hell*, a conception^a that, although graphic^b and, as such, shocking, is nonetheless philosophically correct according to its meaning.—For it serves to prevent one from thinking of good and evil, the kingdom^c of light and the kingdom of darkness, as bordering on each other and as fading^d into each other by gradual steps (of greater and lesser brightness). The complete difference in kind between the principles with which one can be a subject^e under [the rule of] one or the other of these two kingdoms, and also the danger linked with imagining a close kinship in the properties that qualify someone for one or the other, justify this way of conceiving, which, despite the horrible element^f it contains, is also very sublime.

^a [Or ‘presentation’: *Vorstellung*. Similarly for ‘to conceive’ above.]

^b [*bildlich.*]

^c [Or ‘realm’: *Reich.*]

^d [*sich . . . verlieren.*]

^e [In the sense of ‘vassal’: *Untertan.*]

^f [*dem Schauerhaften.*]

SECTION ONE

ON THE LEGAL CLAIM²¹ OF THE GOOD PRINCIPLE
TO DOMINION OVER THE HUMAN BEINGA. *The Personified Idea of the Good Principle*

That which alone can make a world the object of divine decree and the purpose²² of creation is *humanity* (the rational world being²³ as such) *in its complete moral perfection*;²⁴ in the will of the supreme being, the direct consequence of this perfection of humanity, as supreme²⁵ condition, is happiness.²⁶—This human being, alone pleasing to God, “is in God from eternity”;²⁷ the idea of him emanates from God’s essence;²⁸ he is to that extent not a created thing but God’s only begotten²⁹ Son, “the *word* (the *Let it be so!*)³⁰ through which all other things are, and without

²¹ [*Rechtsanspruch*. *Recht* basically means ‘right’; but it also means ‘law,’ in the general sense of this term (as in ‘under the law,’ ‘law and order,’ and so on. Kant is here concerned with a kind of legality.)

²² [Or ‘end’: *Zweck*; but see Ak. VI, 34 br. n. 152c.]

²³ [Or ‘being of the world’: *Weltwesen*.]

²⁴ [Cf. Kant’s teacher, Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten (cf. above, Ak. VI, 22 br. n. 42), in his *Metaphysica* (*Metaphysics*), §§ 945–46. “*Finis dei non fuit in creando mundo perfectio quaedam ipsi interna. Per mundum enim ullam earum aut actuari, aut augeri impossibile est, deus autem non vult impossibilia. . . . Ergo finis dei in creando mundo fuit perfectio creaturarum. Finis dei in creando universo fuit perfectio creaturarum tanta, quanta in mundo optimo possibilis.*” “God’s purpose in creating the world was not some perfection internal to it. For to establish or to increase any perfection in it is impossible; but God wants no impossible things. Hence God’s purpose in creating the world was the perfection of the creatures. God’s purpose in creating the universe was as much perfection of the creatures as is possible in the best world.”]

²⁵ [*oberst* here; *höchst* in ‘supreme being’ above, although in other expressions I translate this term as ‘highest.’]

²⁶ [For the morally perfect human beings.]

²⁷ [Kant is clearly thinking (although he is misremembering “from the beginning” as “from eternity”) of John 1:1–2: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Cf. also 1 John 1:1: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life. . . .” For Kant’s actual language here, cf. also Hab. 1:12; Micah 1:2; and Prov. 8:23.]

²⁸ [*Wesen*.]

²⁹ [Literally, “one born”: *engeboren*.]

³⁰ [*das Werde!* Translated literally, this would mean ‘the [command] ‘Become!’ In the context of the Bible, the reference seems to be to the (word) *Werde* in *Es werde!*, an expression that—unless one gives up on English and translates it instead into *Latin* as *Fiat!*—can be rendered as ‘Let it be!’ or ‘Let there be . . . !,’ as in ‘Let there be light!’ (*Es werde Licht!*).]

which nothing exists that has been made"³¹ (since for its sake, i.e., for that of the rational being³² in the world, as this being can be thought according to its moral vocation, everything has been made).—"He is the reflection³³ of God's splendor."³⁴ "In him God loved the world,"³⁵ and only in him and by adopting his attitudes can we hope "to become children of God";³⁶ etc.

61

Now, to *elevate* ourselves to this ideal of moral³⁷ perfection, i.e., to the archetype of the moral attitude in all its purity,³⁸ is a universal human duty; and this idea itself, which reason puts before us for emulation,³⁹ can give us power⁴⁰ for this. However, precisely because we are not the idea's originators but it has taken its place in the human being without our comprehending how human nature could have been so much as receptive to it, one can do better by saying that this archetype has *come down* to us from heaven, that it has assumed⁴¹ humanity (for it is not equally possible to conceive how the *human being*, *evil* by nature, would on his own cast off evil and *elevate* himself to the ideal of holiness, as it is that this ideal would assume *humanity*—which by itself is not evil—and *lower* itself to it). This union with us may therefore be regarded as a state of *abasement*⁴² of the Son of God, if we conceive of that divinely minded⁴³ human being—an archetype for us—in the way in which he, although himself holy and as such not bound to endure sufferings,

³¹ [John 1:3: "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."]

³² [*Wesen*.]

³³ [*Abglanz*; literally, "off-glow," "off-radiance," or "off-brightness" (i.e., copied glow, radiance, or brightness).]

³⁴ [Cf. Heb. 1:3: "[God's Son,] Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."]

³⁵ [John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Cf. also 1 John 4:9–10: "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son in the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."]

³⁶ [John 1:12–13: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Cf. 1 John 3:1–10.]

³⁷ [*moralisch* here; *sittlich* below.]

⁴⁰ [Or 'strength': *Kraft*.]

³⁸ [*Lauterkeit*.]

⁴¹ [Or 'taken on': *annehmen*.]

³⁹ [*Nachstrebung*.]

⁴² [*Erniedrigung*. Cf. Phil. 2:[7–]8: "[Ward gleich wie ein anderer Mensch und an Gebärden als ein Mensch erfunden;] er erniedrigte sich selbst und ward gehorsam bis zum Tode, ja zum Tode am Kreuz." In the King James version: "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."]

⁴³ [*gesinnt*.]

nonetheless takes these upon himself to the greatest extent in order to further the world's greatest good;⁴⁴ the human being, by contrast, who is never free of guilt even when he has adopted⁴⁵ the same attitude,⁴⁶ can still regard the sufferings that befall him, no matter by what path, as something that he has brought upon himself,⁴⁷ and hence must regard himself as unworthy of the union of his attitude with such an idea, even though the idea serves him as archetype.

Now, the ideal of humanity pleasing to God (hence of such moral perfection as is possible in a world being who is dependent on needs and inclinations) cannot be thought by us except under the idea of a human being who would not only be willing⁴⁸ to perform any human duty⁴⁹ himself, and at the same time also to spread the good about him in the widest possible range through teaching and example, but who also, although tempted by the greatest enticements, would nonetheless be willing to take upon himself all sufferings, even to the most ignominious death, for the sake of the world's greatest good, and even for his enemies.—For, the human being can frame no concept of the degree and the strength of a power,⁵⁰ like that of a moral attitude, unless he presents⁵¹ it as wrestling with obstacles and, under the greatest possible challenges, as nonetheless prevailing.

Now, in the *practical faith*,⁵² *in this Son of God* (insofar as he is presented as having assumed⁵³ human nature) the human being can hope to become pleasing to God (and thereby also blessed); i.e., he who is conscious of a moral attitude such that he can *have faith*⁵⁴ and place well-based confidence in himself; that under similar temptations and sufferings (so far as these are turned into the touchstone of that idea), he would unshakably⁵⁵ continue to adhere to humanity's archetype and to imitate its example in faithful emulation,⁵⁶ such a human being—and, indeed, he alone—is entitled to regard himself as the human being who is an object not unworthy of divine pleasure.⁵⁷

⁴⁴ [*das Weltbeste.*]

⁴⁵ [Or 'taken on': *annehmen.*]

⁴⁶ [*Gesinnung.*]

⁴⁷ [*als von ihm verschuldet.* The more literal translation (which I use wherever possible), 'as something of which he is guilty,' does not work in this instance.]

⁴⁸ [*bereitwillig.* Literally, *bereit* by itself means 'ready' or 'prepared,' and 'willig' means 'willing.']

⁴⁹ [*alle Menschenpflicht.*]

⁵⁰ [Or 'force': *Kraft.*]

⁵¹ [Or 'conceives': *vorstellen.*]

⁵² [*Glauben.*]

⁵³ [Or 'taken on': *annehmen.*]

⁵⁴ [Or 'believe': *glauben.*]

⁵⁵ [Literally, 'immutably': *unwandelbar.*]

⁵⁶ [*Nachfolge.*]

⁵⁷ [Or 'liking': *Wohlgefallen.* Cf. above, Ak. VI, 47 br. n. 256, and 45 br. n. 246h.]

B. Objective Reality of This Idea

In a practical reference,⁵⁸ this idea has its reality⁵⁹ completely within itself. For, the idea resides in our morally legislative reason. We *ought* to be in conformity to it,⁶⁰ and hence we must also *be capable* thereof. If one had to prove in advance, as is inescapably necessary with concepts of nature (so that we do not run the risk of being delayed by empty concepts), that it is possible to be a human being conforming to this archetype,⁶¹ then we would likewise have to harbor qualms about conceding even to the moral law the authority to be an unconditional and yet sufficient determining basis of our power of choice. For how it is possible for the mere idea of a lawfulness as such to be a mightier⁶² incentive for that power⁶³ than any and all conceivable incentives taken from advantages, this we can neither have insight into by reason nor support⁶⁴ by examples from experience; for, as concerns the first, the law commands unconditionally, and, as regards the second, even if there had never been a human being who had paid unconditional obedience to this law, the objective necessity of being such a one is yet no less—and by itself—evident. Therefore no example from experience is needed to make the idea of a human being morally pleasing to God a prototype⁶⁵ for us; the idea resides as such a prototype already in our reason.—But whoever, in order to acknowledge a human being as an example harmonizing with that idea, so as to imitate him, demands yet something more than what he sees, i.e., more than a way of life entirely irreproachable and indeed as meritorious as one could require—whoever, say, for authentication, demands in addition also miracles that would have to have occurred through or for that human being, thereby confesses at the same time his moral *unbelief*,⁶⁶ namely his lack⁶⁷ of faith in virtue, for which no faith based on proofs through miracles (which is only historical) can make up; for only faith in the practical validity of that idea which resides in our reason has moral worth. (This idea alone, moreover, can perhaps legitimate⁶⁸ miracles as being such as might come from the good principle, but it cannot derive its legitimation from them.)

63

Precisely because of this, moreover, an experience must be possible in which the example of such a human being is given (to the extent that from an outer experience any documentation⁶⁹ of inner moral attitude can be expected and demanded at

⁵⁸ [*Beziehung.*]

⁵⁹ [I.e., applicability to things (Latin *res*, from which 'reality' is derived); or, to create terminological links to the next two sentences: *ability* to apply to things, *possibility* of applying to things.]

⁶⁰ [*ihr gemäß sein.*]

⁶¹ [*Urbild.*]

⁶² [Or 'more powerful': *mächtigere.*]

⁶³ [The power of choice (*Willkür*): *dieselbe.*]

⁶⁴ [*belegen.*]

⁶⁵ [Or 'model': *Vorbild.*]

⁶⁶ [I.e., lack of faith: *Un glauben.*]

⁶⁷ [*Mangel.*]

⁶⁸ [*bewähren.*]

⁶⁹ [*Beweistümer.*]

all); for according to the law, properly every human being should provide an example for this idea in himself. The archetype for the idea remains always only in reason; for, no example in outer experience is adequate to it, because outer experience does not uncover the inside⁷⁰ of the attitude, but only allows us to infer it, although not with strict certainty. (Indeed, even the human being's inner experience of himself does not allow him to see through the depths of his heart so [thoroughly] that he could attain entirely secure cognition,⁷¹ through self-observation, of the basis of the maxims to which he subscribes, and of their purity⁷² and stability.)

Now, if at a certain time there had, as it were, come down from heaven to earth such a truly divinely minded human being, who through his teaching, way of life, and suffering had provided in himself the *example* of a human being pleasing to God, to whatever extent such can be demanded from outer experience at all (while yet the *archetype* of such a human being must never be sought anywhere else than in our reason), and if he had brought about through all this an immensely great moral good in the world through a revolution in humankind:⁷³ we yet would not have cause to assume in him anything other than a naturally begotten⁷⁴ human being (since, after all, this human being too feels obligated to provide such an example in himself), even though by [recognizing] this⁷⁵ we would indeed not absolutely deny that he might also be a supranaturally generated⁷⁶ human being. For, after all, the presupposition of the latter⁷⁷ can gain us nothing for a practical aim, because the archetype on which we base this appearance must yet always be sought in ourselves (although we are natural human beings), and the existence of this archetype in the human soul is already incomprehensible enough by itself, so that one does not exactly need to assume it,⁷⁸ apart from its supranatural origin, as also hypostatized in a particular human being. On the contrary, raising such a holy one above all frailty of human nature would, rather, according to everything that we are capable of having insight into, stand in the way of applying the idea of this holy one practically to our emulation of him. For even if the nature of that human being pleasing to God were thought as human insofar as he were thought as fraught with

64

⁷⁰ [*das Innere.*]

⁷² [*Lauterkeit.*]

⁷⁴ [*gezeugt.*]

⁷¹ [*Kenntnis.*]

⁷³ [*Menschengeschlecht.*]

⁷⁵ [I.e., by recognizing that we would not have cause to assume in him anything other than a naturally begotten human being: *dadurch.*]

⁷⁶ [*erzeugt.* As one "come down from heaven" (see above), he could have been supranaturally *generated through God's word*, whereby he would then have been *begotten naturally as a human being*. Thus, he would be the Son of God and simultaneously a human being.]

⁷⁷ [His being also a supranaturally generated human being.]

⁷⁸ [*es*, substituted by Wobbermin for the original *ihn*, on the ground that "the train of thought requires necessarily the reference back to the archetype (Ak. VI, 508). With *ihn* left in place, the passage reads, ". . . so that one does not exactly need to assume him, apart from his supranatural origin, as also hypostatized in a particular human being."]

the very same needs and thus also the same sufferings, with the very same natural inclinations, and thus also the same kind of temptations to transgression as we are, but yet as supranatural insofar as his purity⁷⁹ of will—by no means an achieved, but an innate, unchangeable purity of will—would make any transgression absolutely impossible for him, then this distance from the natural human being would thus in turn become so infinitely great that the divine human being could no longer be set up as an *example* for the natural human being. The latter would say, Let a completely holy will be given to me, and⁸⁰ all temptation to evil will on its own founder in me; let there be given to me the most perfect inner certainty that after a short life on earth I am to come to partake at once (as a consequence of that holiness) of the entire eternal splendor of the kingdom of heaven, and I will take upon myself all sufferings—however severe they may be, even to the most ignominious death—not only willingly but also with cheerfulness, since I see the splendid and near outcome before me with my eyes. To be sure, the thought that this divine human being was in actual possession of this exaltedness⁸¹ and bliss⁸² from eternity (and did not first need to earn them through such sufferings), and that he willingly divested himself of them for none but unworthy people, even for his enemies, in order to save them from eternal perdition,⁸³ would have to attune our mind to admiration, love, and gratitude toward him; likewise, the idea of a conduct in accordance with so perfect a rule of morality could indeed be presented to us as holding also as a precept to be followed. However, he himself could *not* be presented to us as an *example* for imitation, hence also not as proof of the practicability⁸⁴ and attainability for us of so pure and exalted a moral good.⁸⁵

⁷⁹ [*Reinigkeit*; likewise below.]

⁸² [Or ‘salvation’: *Seligkeit*.]

⁸⁰ [Literally, ‘thus’: *so*; likewise below.]

⁸³ [Or ‘ruin’: *Verderben*.]

⁸¹ [*Hoheit*.]

⁸⁴ [Or ‘feasibility’: *Tunlichkeit*.]

⁸⁵ It is indeed a limitation of human reason—and one which, after all, just cannot be separated from it—that we cannot think of any moral worth of import in the actions of a person without at the same time conceiving^a this person or his manifestation^b in the human manner, even though we indeed do not wish to assert thereby that this is also how it is in itself (κατ’ ἑαυτὸν);^c for in order to make suprasensible characteristics graspable^d to ourselves, we always need a certain analogy with natural beings. Thus one philosophical poet—insofar as the human being has to combat a propensity to evil within himself, provided only that he knows how to overpower this propensity—attributes to the human being, even on that

65

^a [Or ‘presenting’: *vorstellig machen*.]

^b [*sie* oder *ihre Äußerung*. Although grammatically *sie* would be expected to refer to *Handlungen* (‘actions’), yielding the reading ‘them or their manifestations,’ and hence Kant (following his usual style) should have replaced *sie* by *die letztere* (‘the latter’), the context of the note and of the text itself supports the reading adopted here.]

^c [(*kat’ alētheian*) rather than κατ’ ἀνθρώπων (*kat’ anthrōpon*), i.e., according to the truth rather than according to the human being. Cf., for this distinction, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 739 = B 767, and *Critique of Judgment*, Ak. V, 462–63.]

account, a higher rank on the moral scale^d of beings than even to the inhabitants of heaven, who, on the strength of the holiness of their nature, are placed above any possibility of being misled. (The world with its defects / is better than a realm^f of will-less angels. *Haller*.)^e—Scripture too accommodates itself to this way of conceiving,^h in order to make God's love for humankind graspable to us in terms of its degree, by attributing to him the highest sacrifice that a loving being can ever perform in order to make even unworthy people happy (“[For] God so loved the world,” etc.);ⁱ even though we cannot through reason frame a concept of how an all-sufficient being can sacrifice something of what belongs to his bliss and rob himself of a possession. This way of conceiving is the *schematism of analogy* (for elucidation), which we cannot dispense with. But to transform it into a *schematism of object-determination* (for expansion of our cognition) is *anthropomorphism*, which—for a moral aim—has (in religion) the most disadvantageous consequences.^j—Here I just want to add a comment in passing: that in ascending from the sensible to the suprasensible one can indeed *schematize* (make a concept graspable through analogy with something sensible), but that one absolutely cannot on the analogy of what belongs to the sensible *infer* (and thus *expand* a concept) that it must be attributed also to the suprasensible; and this, moreover, for the quite simple reason that such an inference would run *counter* to all analogy if from [the fact] that, because we necessarily require a schema for a concept to make the concept understandable to ourselves (support it with an example), it sought to draw the conclusion that this schema must necessarily also belong to the object itself as a predicate thereof. For I cannot say: Just as I cannot *make graspable* to myself the cause of a plant (or of any organic creature, and of the purposeful^k world in general) except on the analogy of an artisan^l in reference to his work (a clock), namely by attributing understanding to it, so too must the cause itself (of the plant, of the world in general) *have* understanding—i.e., attributing understanding to this cause is not merely a condition of my ability to grasp, but of the possibility itself

^d [faßlich.]

^e [Literally, ‘stepladder’: *Stufenleiter*.]

^f [Or ‘kingdom’: *Reich*.]

^g [The “philosophical poet” is Albrecht von Haller (1708–77), Swiss anatomist, physiologist, and writer. He is the author of many scientific works, and even of theological writings and poems, including *Die Alpen* (The Alps). Kant’s quote is from the poem *Über den Ursprung des Übels* (1734), ii, 33–34: “Dann [Denn] Gott liebt keinen Zwang, die Welt mit ihren Mängeln / Ist besser als ein Reich von Willen-losen Engeln.” I.e., “For, God dislikes coercion; the world with its defects / is better than a realm of will-less angels.” Cf. *Lectures on the Philosophical Doctrine of Religion*, Ak. XXVIII, 1077; also *Metaphysics of Morals*, Ak. VI, 397n, where Kant quotes the same lines somewhat freely, apparently from memory.]

^h [Or ‘way of presenting’: *Vorstellungsart*.]

ⁱ [John 3:16–17: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”]

^j [On anthropomorphism, cf. *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 640–41 = B 668–69, A 692–93 = B 720–21, A 697 = B 725, A 700 = B 728; *Critique of Practical Reason*, Ak. V, 131, 135–38; and *Critique of Judgment*, Ak. V, 353, 457, cf. 459.]

^k [zweckvoll.]

^l [*Künstler*, which also means ‘artist.’]

That very same divinely minded but quite properly human teacher would 65
 nonetheless still be able to talk about himself truthfully as if the ideal of the good
 were exhibited bodily in him (in his teaching and conduct). For he would then be 66
 speaking only of the attitude which he makes the rule of his actions, but which,
 since he cannot make it visible as an example for others by itself, he puts before
 their eyes only outwardly, through his doctrines and actions: “Who among you can
 accuse me of a sin?”⁸⁶ It is, however, in conformity with fairness⁸⁷ that a teacher’s
 irreproachable example of what he teaches, when this is a duty for everyone any-
 way, be credited to none other than the purest⁸⁸ attitude of his, if one has no proofs
 of the opposite. Now, such an attitude with all the sufferings taken upon oneself for
 the sake of the world’s greatest good—as thought in the ideal of humanity—is
 completely valid,⁸⁹ for all human beings at all times and in all worlds, before the
 supreme justice, if the human being makes, as he ought to do, his attitude similar
 to it. It⁹⁰ will of course always remain a justice that is not ours insofar as the
 latter⁹¹ would have to consist in a way of life⁹² conforming completely and unfaill-
 ingly to that attitude. Yet an appropriation of this attitude for the sake of ours, if the
 latter is united with the attitude of the archetype, must be possible, although mak-
 ing this appropriation comprehensible to oneself is still subject to great difficulties,
 which we shall now set forth.

to be a cause.^m However, between the relation of a schema to its concept and the relation of
 this same schema of the concept to the thing itself there is no analogy, but an enormous leap
 (μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος)ⁿ that leads straight into anthropomorphism; the proofs of this
 I have given elsewhere.

^m [On analogy, cf. *Critique of Judgment*, Ak. V, 464n.]

ⁿ [*metábasis eis állo génos*, i.e., a crossing-over (literally, a “going-over,” a “trans-ition”)—or a shifting—
 to another kind. Cf. *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 459 = B 487.]

⁸⁶ [John 8:46: “*Wer unter euch kann mich einer Sünde zeihen?*” The actual German text (in the Martin
 Luther translation, 1912 version), has *Welcher* rather than *Wer* (‘Which’ rather than ‘Who’), and it con-
 tinues thus: “*So ich aber die Wahrheit sage, warum glaubet ihr mir nicht?*” The whole passage in the
 King James version: “Which of you convinceth [i.e., convicts] me of sin? And if I say the truth, why
 do ye not believe me?”]

⁸⁷ [Or ‘equity’: *Billigkeit*.]

⁸⁸ [*lauterst*.]

⁸⁹ [*vollgültig*.]

⁹⁰ [The attitude thought in the ideal (or “archetype”) of humanity: *Sie*.]

⁹¹ [The same justice (here in the sense roughly synonymous with *righteousness*)—and attitude—if it
 were ours.]

⁹² [More literally, ‘conduct of life’: *Lebenswandel*.]

*C. Difficulties Opposing the Reality⁹³ of
This Idea, and Their Solution*

The first difficulty that makes it doubtful, in reference to the *holiness* of the [divine] legislator⁹⁴ along with the deficiency⁹⁵ of our own justice,⁹⁶ whether the idea of humanity pleasing to God is attainable in us is the following. The law says, “Be ye holy (in your way of life), as your Father in heaven is holy!”⁹⁷ For, this is the ideal of the Son of God that is set up for us as the model. The distance of the good that we ought to bring about in ourselves, however, from the evil whence we start is infinite, and this good is to that extent, as far as the deed is concerned—i.e., the commensurateness of the way of life with the holiness of the law—not attainable in any time. Nonetheless, the human being’s moral constitution ought to agree with this holiness. This constitution must, therefore, be posited in the attitude, in the universal and pure⁹⁸ maxim of the conduct’s agreement with the law, as the germ from which all good is to be developed, the attitude that starts from a holy principle which the human being has admitted into his supreme maxim. This is a change of mentality⁹⁹ that must indeed be possible, because it is one’s duty.—Now, the difficulty consists in understanding how the attitude can count for the deed that is always (not as such,¹⁰⁰ but at every point of time) deficient.¹⁰¹ The solution of the difficulty, however, rests on the following. According to the assessment made by us, who in the concepts of the relation of cause and effects are unavoidably restricted to time conditions, the deed, as a continual progress *ad infinitum* from a deficient good to what is better, remains always deficient. Thus we must regard the

⁹³ [I.e., applicability to things.]

⁹⁴ [Or ‘lawgiver’: *Gesetzgeber*.]

⁹⁵ [Or ‘lack’: *Mangel*.]

⁹⁶ [Here in the sense roughly synonymous with ‘righteousness’: *Gerechtigkeit*.]

⁹⁷ [“*Seid heilig in eurem Lebenswandel, wie euer Vater im Himmel heilig ist!*” Kant, probably quoting from memory, seems to be conflating two passages. One is Matt. 5:48: “*Darum sollt ihr vollkommen sein, gleichwie euer Vater im Himmel vollkommen ist.*” King James version: “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” The other is 1 Pet. 1:16 (cf. Lev. 19:1–2, also 11:44 and 20:7): “*Denn es steht geschrieben: Ihr sollt heilig sein, denn ich bin heilig.*” King James version: “Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”]

⁹⁸ [*lauter*.]

⁹⁹ [*Sinnesänderung*. A rather freer translation of this term would be ‘change of heart.’ The problem with that translation is that Kant himself uses *Herzensänderung* (Ak. VI, 47, 72, 76), literally ‘change of heart,’ and hence to use it *again* for *Sinnesänderung* simply *erases* an important distinction between *Sinn* (mind) and *Herz* (heart). As a translator whose main goal is to enable the reader to see, as much as possible, what Kant actually said, I refuse to *implant* hearts (or anything else)!]

¹⁰⁰ [I.e., intrinsically: *überhaupt*.]

¹⁰¹ [*mangelhaft*.]

good in appearance in us—i.e., the good in terms of the *deed*—always as insufficient for a holy law. But this good's progress *ad infinitum* toward commensurateness with that law can yet be thought by us, because of the *attitude* from which it is derived, which is suprasensible, as judged by one who knows the heart—judged in his pure intellectual intuition—as a perfected¹⁰² whole also in terms of the deed (the way of life);¹⁰³ and thus the human being, despite his constant deficiency,¹⁰⁴ can yet *as such*¹⁰⁵ expect to be pleasing to God, at whatever point of time his existence may be cut short.

The *second* difficulty, which emerges when the human being striving toward the good is considered with regard to this moral good itself in reference to divine *benignity*, concerns *moral happiness*, by which I here mean not the assurance of an everlasting possession of satisfaction with one's *physical state* (liberation from ills¹⁰⁶ and enjoyment of ever-increasing gratification), i.e., *physical happiness*, but the assurance of the actuality and *persistence* of an attitude that always advances in the good (never falls away¹⁰⁷ from it). For *if only one were firmly assured of the unchangeability of such an attitude*, the constant "seeking after the kingdom of God" would be tantamount to already knowing oneself in possession of this kingdom, and thus the human being with this attitude¹⁰⁸ would even on his own have confidence that "all the rest (what concerns physical happiness) will fall to him."¹⁰⁹

68

Now, a human being worried about that could indeed be referred, with his wish, to this: "His (God's) Spirit bears witness to our spirit," etc.;¹¹⁰ that is, whoever possesses as pure¹¹¹ an attitude as is required will feel even on his own that he can

¹⁰² [Or 'completed': *vollendet*.]

¹⁰³ It must not be overlooked that I intend to say by this not that the attitude is to serve to *compensate* for the lack of what conforms to duty, and hence for the actual evil in this infinite series (on the contrary, I presuppose that the human being's moral constitution pleasing to God is actually to be found in the series), but rather that the attitude, which takes the place of the totality of this series of the approach continued *ad infinitum*, makes up only for the deficiency, which is inseparable from the existence of a temporal being as such,^a of never quite completely being what one is thinking of becoming.^b For as regards the compensation for the transgressions that occur in this progress, it will be taken into consideration in connection with the solution to the *third* difficulty.

^a [*eines Wesens in der Zeit überhaupt*.]

^b [*das zu sein, was man zu werden im Begriffe ist*.]

¹⁰⁴ [*Mangelhaftigkeit*.]

¹⁰⁷ [Literally, 'out of': *daraus*.]

¹⁰⁵ [*überhaupt*.]

¹⁰⁸ [*so gesinnte*.]

¹⁰⁶ [I.e., from bad things: *von Übeln*.]

¹⁰⁹ [Matt. 6:33 (cf. Luke 12:31): "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."]

¹¹⁰ [Rom. 8:16: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."]

¹¹¹ [*lauter*.]

never fall so low as to regain his fondness for evil. However, the situation with such supposed feelings of supranatural origin is precarious; nowhere does one delude oneself more easily than in what favors a good opinion of oneself. Moreover, it seems not even advisable to be encouraged to such a confidence, but instead seems more beneficial (for morality) “to procure one’s salvation¹¹² *with fear and trembling*”¹¹³ (a harsh saying, which, if misunderstood, can impel people to the darkest fanaticism. Yet without *any* confidence in one’s attitude once one has adopted it, a persistence to continue therein would hardly be possible. However, this confidence can be found, without surrendering to sweet or to fearful fanaticism, by comparing the way of life as led thus far with the resolve that one has made. For, a human being who, starting from the period¹¹⁴ when he adopted the principles of the good,¹¹⁵ has perceived through a sufficiently long life their effect on the deed, i.e., on his way of life as advancing¹¹⁶ to the better and better,¹¹⁷ and who finds himself prompted to infer from this a basic improvement¹¹⁸ in his attitude only conjecturally, can yet also hope rationally that—because such advances, if only their principle is good, continue to increase one’s *strength* for the following ones—he will in this life on earth no longer abandon this path but will advance on it with ever greater courage; and indeed that, if after this life yet another lies ahead of him, he will under different circumstances—as far as he can tell—yet continue thereafter on this path according to the very same principle and will still keep approaching the goal of perfection, unattainable though this goal is, because, according to what he has perceived in himself thus far, he may consider his attitude to be improved from its very basis. By contrast, a human being who despite often-attempted resolve to the good has yet never found that he stood firm by it but has always fallen back into evil, or perhaps has even had to perceive in himself, as he continued his life, that he has fallen lower and lower,¹¹⁹ from evil to baser—as if on a slope, as it were—cannot rationally entertain any hope that, if he still had a while¹²⁰ left to live here, or even if a future life lay ahead of him, he would behave better;¹²¹ for in view of such indications he would have to regard the corruption as rooted in his attitude. Now, the first is a glimpse into an *immense*¹²² but wished-for and happy future; the second, by contrast, is a glimpse into an equally *immense misery*; i.e., both are—for human beings, according to what these are able to judge¹²³—

¹¹² [*seine Seligkeit . . . zu schaffen.*]

¹¹³ [Phil. 2:12: “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”]

¹¹⁴ [*Epoche.*]

¹¹⁵ [Literally, Kant says, “period of the adopted principles of the good.”]

¹¹⁶ [*fortschreiten* here (below, ‘advances’ similarly translates *Fortschritte*); *fortrücken* below.]

¹¹⁷ [More literally, ‘to the ever better’: *zum immer Besseren.*]

¹¹⁸ [*Besserung.*]

¹²⁰ [*länger.*]

¹²² [*unabsehlich.*]

¹¹⁹ [*immer tiefer.*]

¹²¹ [*es besser machen.*]

¹²³ [*urteilen.*]

glimpses into a blessed or accursed¹²⁴ *eternity*. These presentations are powerful enough to serve the one part [of humankind] for reassurance¹²⁵ and stabilization in the good, and to serve the other part for awakening the judgment-passing¹²⁶ conscience in order still to infringe evil as much as possible, and hence to serve this part as incentives, without there being any need to presuppose *dogmatically*, as a doctrine, an eternity of good or of evil for the human being's destiny¹²⁷—supposed

¹²⁴ [Or—synonymously but (unlike in the original German) less dramatically—'unblessed': *unselig*.]

¹²⁵ [*Beruhigung*.]

¹²⁶ [*richtend*.]

¹²⁷ To the questions of which, even if they could be answered, the questioner would still not know how to make any sense^a of (and which could therefore be called *children's questions*) there belongs also this one: whether the punishments of hell will be finite or eternal punishments. If the first were taught, then one must worry that many people (like all those who believe in purgatory, or like the sailor in Moore's^b *Voyages*)^c would say, "Then I hope I will be able to endure it." But if the other were asserted and included in the symbol of faith,^d then, contrary to the intention pursued in this, the result might well be hope for complete impunity after the most reprobate life. For since, in the moments of belated repentance at the end of that life, the cleric consulted for advice and comfort^e must, after all, find it cruel and inhuman to proclaim eternal rejection to the person, and since he sets up^f nothing intermediate^g between this eternal rejection and complete absolution (but one is punished either eternally or not at all), he must hold out to him hope for the latter, i.e., he must promise to transform him speedily into a human being pleasing to God; and thus—since there is no time left to enter upon a good way of life—repentant confessions, formulas of faith,^h and perhaps also vows to lead a new life, in case the end of the present one were to be delayed still further, take the place of the means to this transformation.—This is the unavoidable consequence if the *eternity* of the future destiny conforming to the way of life one has led here is set forth as *dogma*, and the human being is not rather instructed to frame a concept of his future moral state from his moral state as it has been hitherto and to infer this future state *himself* as the naturally foreseeable consequences thereof. For there the *immensity* of the series of these consequences under the dominion of evil will have for him the same moral effect (of impelling him to undo—as much as is possible for him, before the end of his life—what has been done, through reparation or compensation in terms of its effects) as can be expected

^a [Literally, 'not . . . to make anything astute': *nichts Kluges zu machen*.]

^b [Emphasis on 'Moore's' deleted.]

^c [Francis Moore (fl. 1744), *A New Collection of Voyages, Discoveries and Travels*. (London: Printed for J. Knox, near Southampton Street, in the Strand, 1767.)

^d [A confession of faith, made as a sign (symbol) of recognition and communion among believers. The Christian symbol of faith (in the Nicene Creed) begins thus: "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God . . ."]

^e [Or 'consolation': *Trost*.]

^f [*statuiert*.]

^g [*kein Mittleres*.]

^h [*Glaubensformeln*.]

70 from the proclaimed eternity of that evil, yet without carrying with it the disadvantages of the dogma of that eternity (to which neither rational insight nor scriptural interpretationⁱ entitles us anyway): because in his *life* the evil human being^j already counts in advance on this easily obtainable pardon, or at the end of his life he believes that he has to deal only with the claims of heavenly justice upon him, which he satisfies with mere words, while the rights of human beings are neglected^k in this and no one gets back what is his (an outcome of this kind of expiation which is so common that an example of the opposite is almost unheard of). But if anyone worries that his reason, through his conscience, would judge him too leniently, then he is, I believe, very much mistaken. For, precisely because reason is free and is itself to pronounce on him,^l the human being, it is incorruptible;^m and if, in such a situation, one just tells him that it is at least possible that he will soon have to stand before a judge, then one need only leave him to his own meditation, which will in all probability pass judgmentⁿ on him with the greatest severity.—Let me add to this a few further observations. The common motto, *All's well that ends well*, can indeed be applied to *moral* cases, but only if by the good end^o we mean the one where the human being becomes a truly good human being. Yet by what is he to cognize^p himself as being such, since he can only infer it from the persistently good way of life that succeeds it, for which, however, there is no time left at the end of life? The saying can be granted more readily with regard to *happiness*, yet also only in reference to the standpoint from which he looks upon his life, namely not from its beginning but from its end, by looking back from there to the beginning. Sufferings that have been overcome do not leave behind, once one sees that one is safe, any tormenting reminiscence, but rather a gladness that only makes the enjoyment of the now arising fortune all the more savory; for, gratifications or pains, being (as belonging to sensibility) contained in the time series, also vanish with it and do not constitute a whole with the now existing enjoyment of life but are displaced by it as the enjoyment that succeeds them. But if that same proposition^q is applied to the judging of the moral worth of the life that one has led thus far, then the human being may be quite wrong^r in so judging his life, even if he has concluded his life with very good conduct. For, the morally subjective principle of the *attitude*, by which his life must be judged, is (as something suprasensible) of such a kind that its existence cannot be thought as divisible into time segments but can be thought only as an absolute unity; and since we can infer the attitude only from the actions (as appearances thereof), life will, for the sake of this assessment, be considered only as a *unity of time*, i.e., as a *whole*, and thus the reproaches from the first part of life (from before the improvement) add their voice just as loudly as does the approval in the *latter* part and might dampen the triumphant tone, *All's well that ends well*, very much indeed.—Finally, as regards that doctrine concerning the duration of punishments in another world, yet another doctrine is also closely akin to it, although not the same, namely “that all sins will have to be forgiven here,” that as life ends one's account must be completely closed and no one may hope that what he neglected here

71

ⁱ [Or ‘scriptural exegesis’: *Schriftauslegung*.]

^l [*über ihn . . . sprechen*.]

^j [Who believes in this dogma.]

^m [Literally, ‘unbribeable’: *unbestechlich*.]

^k [*leer ausgehen*.]

ⁿ [*ihn . . . richten*.]

^o [The German version of the motto actually says, *End[‘s] good, all[‘s] good: Ende gut, alles gut*.]

^p [Or ‘recognize’: *erkennen*.]

^q [Above called ‘motto’ (*Sinnspruch*) and ‘saying’ (*Spruch*): *Satz*.]

^r [*sehr unrecht haben*.]

cognitions¹²⁸ and assertions with which reason only oversteps the limits of its insight. Thus the good and pure¹²⁹ attitude of which one is conscious (and which may be called a good spirit governing us) also carries with it, although only indirectly, trust in its persistence and stability, and is our Comforter (Paraclete)¹³⁰ when our lapses make us worried about its persistence. Certainty with regard to this attitude¹³¹ is for the human being neither possible nor, as far as we can see,¹³² morally beneficial. For (as should be noted carefully) we cannot base this trust on a direct¹³³ consciousness of the unchangeability of our attitudes, because we cannot see through these, but we must at best only infer them from their consequences in our way of life. This inference, however, since it has been drawn only from perceptions that are appearances of the good and evil attitude, never allows us to cognize with certainty above all the attitude's *strength*, least of all if one supposes, toward the foreseen near end of life, that one has improved one's attitude; for there, since no way of life is given any more on which to base the verdict¹³⁴ of our moral worth, those empirical proofs of the attitude's genuineness are entirely lacking, and the unavoidable consequence of the rational judging of one's moral state is hopelessness¹³⁵ (which, however, in view of the darkness of all prospects¹³⁶ beyond the boundaries of this life, the human being's nature takes care even on its own to keep from erupting into wild despair).

he can perhaps still make up there. Yet this doctrine can no more proclaim itself to be a dogma than the preceding one; rather, it is only a principle by which practical reason prescribes to itself the rule in using its concepts of the suprasensible, while conceding that it knows nothing of the suprasensible's objective constitution. For, it says no more than this: We can only infer from the way of life that we have led whether or not we are human beings pleasing to God; and since that way of life ends with this life, there also closes for us the account whose sum total alone must yield whether or not we may consider ourselves justified.⁵— In general, if, instead of using the *constitutive* principles of the cognition of suprasensible objects insight into which is after all impossible for us, we restricted our judgment to the *regulative* principles that settle for the possible practical use of these objects, human wisdom would in quite many ways be in a better state, and the supposed knowledge of that whereof we basically know nothing would not breed baseless, although for a while glistening, subtle reasoning,[†] to the detriment—which at some point does finally emerge—of morality.

⁵ [In that inference.]

[†] [Vernünftlelei.]

¹²⁸ [Kenntnisse.]

¹²⁹ [lauter.]

¹³⁰ [Paraklet. From Greek παρακλητος (*parákleitos*), "comforter." Kant no doubt is thinking of passages such as John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7.]

¹³¹ [derselben.]

¹³⁴ [Urteilsspruch.]

¹³² ['can see' translates *einsehen*.]

¹³⁵ [Trostlosigkeit.]

¹³³ [Or 'immediate': *unmittelbar*.]

¹³⁶ [Or 'outlooks': *Aussichten*.]

70 The *third* and, it seems, greatest difficulty, by which every human being, even after he has entered upon the path of the good, is yet presented as reprehensible in the judging¹³⁷ of his entire way of life before a divine *justice*, is the following.—Whatever may have happened in his case with the adoption of a good attitude, and indeed, however persistently he continues in this attitude in a way of life conforming to it, *he yet started from evil*, and this indebtedness¹³⁸ it will never be possible for him to erase. He cannot regard [the fact] that after his change of heart he is not incurring any new debts as if he had thereby paid the old ones. Nor can he, in a good way of life to be led henceforth, extract any surplus beyond what he is intrinsically obligated¹³⁹ to do each time; for, it is always his duty to do all the good that is in his power.—However, this original debt,¹⁴⁰ or debt which precedes in general whatever good he may do—this, and nothing more, is also what we meant by the *radical evil* (see the First Piece)¹⁴¹—also cannot be extirpated, as far as we can see¹⁴² by our rational [awareness of] right,¹⁴³ by anyone else. For, it is not a *transmissible* obligation, which—like, say, a monetary debt (where it is all the same to the creditor whether the debtor himself or someone else pays for him)—can be transferred to someone else, but is the *most personal of all* obligations, namely a debt of sins,¹⁴⁴ which only the punishable one¹⁴⁵ can bear, not the innocent one, however magnanimous the latter may be in wanting to take it upon himself for the former.—Now, moral evil (transgression of the moral law regarded as *divine command*, hence called *sin*) carries with it an *infinity* of violations of the law and hence an infinity of guilt,¹⁴⁶ not so much because of the *infinity* of the supreme legislator,¹⁴⁷ whose authority has thereby been violated (an extravagant¹⁴⁸ relation of the human being to the supreme being,¹⁴⁹ of which we understand nothing), but as an evil in the *attitude* and the maxims as such (like *universal principles* as contrasted with individual transgressions). (This is different before a human court of law, which takes into consideration only the individual crime, hence only the deed and the attitude referred to it, but not the universal attitude.) Thus, since moral evil carries with it this infinity of violations and of guilt, every human being would have to expect an *infinite punishment* and expulsion from the kingdom of God.

¹³⁷ [*Aburteilung*.]

¹³⁸ [*Verschuldung*, which also means 'guiltiness.' In the next sentence, 'debts' translates *Schulden*; but *Schuld* also means 'guilt.' German moral terminology developed long ago from the legal realm of finance, as did English moral terminology (e.g., 'ought' from 'owed,' 'duty' from 'due').]

¹³⁹ [*schuldig*.]

¹⁴⁵ [In other words, the culpable one: *der Strafbare*.]

¹⁴⁰ [Or 'guilt': *Schuld*.]

¹⁴⁶ [*Schuld*.]

¹⁴¹ [Above, Ak. VI, 19–53.]

¹⁴⁷ [Or 'lawgiver': *Gesetzgeber*.]

¹⁴² [*einsehen*.]

¹⁴⁸ [I.e., transcendent: *überschwenglich*.]

¹⁴³ [That is, what we refer to as "natural law": *Vernunftrecht*.]

¹⁴⁹ [*des Menschen zum höchsten Wesen*.]

¹⁴⁴ [Or guilt of sins: *Sündenschuld*.]

The solution of this difficulty rests on the following. The judicial verdict of one who knows the heart must be thought as having been drawn from the universal attitude of the accused, not from the appearances thereof, i.e., not from the actions deviating from the law or agreeing with it. However, one is here presupposing in the human being a good attitude holding the upper hand over the evil principle that was previously powerful in him. Thus the question is whether the moral consequence of the actions,¹⁵⁰ i.e., the punishment (in other words, the effect of God's displeasure in¹⁵¹ the subject), can be extended¹⁵² even to his state in the improved attitude, in which he is already an object of divine pleasure.¹⁵³ Since the question here is not whether the punishment inflicted upon him would agree with divine justice also *before* the change of mentality¹⁵⁴ (which no one doubts), the punishment *should* not (in this investigation) be thought as imposed¹⁵⁵ on him before his improvement. But it also cannot be assumed as commensurate, *after the improvement*, with this new quality of his (of a human being pleasing to God), when the human being is already living¹⁵⁶ the new life and is morally a different human being.¹⁵⁷ Yet satisfaction must be rendered to the highest justice, before which someone punishable¹⁵⁸ can never go unpunished. Since, therefore, the punishment is commensurate with divine wisdom neither *before* nor *after* the change of mentality and is nonetheless necessary, it would have to be thought as commensurate with this change and carried out¹⁵⁹ in the state of the change of mentality itself. We must, therefore, see whether this state can be thought, through the concept of a moral change of mentality, as already containing those ills¹⁶⁰ that the new human being of good attitude can regard as *punishments*¹⁶¹ which he has (in a different reference)

¹⁵⁰ [*der ersteren.*]

¹⁵⁴ [See above, Ak. VI, 66 br. n. 99.]

¹⁵¹ [Or 'disliking for': *Mißfallen an.*]

¹⁵⁵ [More literally, 'carried out': *vollziehen.*]

¹⁵² [*ziehen.*]

¹⁵⁶ [*wandeln.*]

¹⁵³ [Or 'liking': *Wohlgefallen.*]

¹⁵⁷ [Cf. Col. 3:9–10: "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him."]

¹⁵⁸ [I.e., someone culpable: *ein Strafbarer.*]

¹⁵⁹ [*ausüben.*]

¹⁶⁰ [I.e., bad things: *Übel.*]

¹⁶¹ The hypothesis whereby all ills^a in the world are to be regarded in general as punishments for committed transgressions cannot so much be assumed as having been devised for the sake of a theodicy, or devised (for the sake of cult)^b as an invention for the sake of the religion of the priests (for it is too common to have been excogitated so artificially), but it presumably suggests itself to^c reason, which is inclined to connect the course of nature to the laws of morality, and which quite naturally produces from this the thought that we first ought to try to become better human beings, before we can demand to be freed of the ills of life or

^a [I.e., all bad things: *alle Übel.*]

^c [Literally, 'lies close to': *nahe liegen.*]

^b [I.e., religious rites.]

74 brought upon himself¹⁶² and by which satisfaction is rendered to divine justice.—For, a change of mentality¹⁶³ is an exit from evil and an entry into the good, the putting off of the old human being and the putting on of the new one,¹⁶⁴ where the

to [be] compensate[d] for them by preponderant well-being.—Because of this, the first human being is presented (in Holy Scripture) as having been condemned to work if he wanted to eat, his wife to bear children in pain, and both to die,^d *on account of their transgression*, although it is impossible to see how, even if this transgression had not been committed, animal creatures provided with such limbs could have expected a different vocation.^e

74 For the *Hindus* human beings are nothing more than spirits (called *devas*) locked into animal bodies as punishment for erstwhile crimes; and even a philosopher (*Malebranche*) preferred attributing to nonrational animals no souls at all, and thereby also no feelings, to admitting that horses had to endure so many torments “without yet having eaten of the forbidden hay.”^f

^d [Gen. 3:16–19: “Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire *shall be* to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed *is* the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat *of* it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return.”]

^e [*Bestimmung.*]

^f [Nicolas (or Nicholas) Malebranche (1638–1715) held that suffering is unknown to animals. Suffering, he argued, is payment for sin; but animals have not sinned and thus are innocent; and since God is just, it is impossible for innocent creatures to suffer: *De la recherche de la vérité*, Bk. IV, ch.11, 467. (The search after truth), transl. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). Malebranche is the founder of *occasionalism*, one of two forms of parallelism, the other being the theory of preestablished harmony of Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz (1646–1716). Parallelism (applied to human beings only) is mind-body dualism without causal action in either direction (mind and body allegedly being too different to be capable of such interaction), as opposed both to the mind-body interactionist dualism of René Descartes (1596–1650) and to the epiphenomenalism—mind-body dualism with one-way causal action from body to mind only—of Thomas H. Huxley (1825–95). Parallelism maintains that what makes it *seem* as if mind and body interacted is that *God correlates mental with bodily events*. According to occasionalism, God does so on each occasion of a mental or of a bodily event; e.g., if I drop a brick on my toe, God, not the brick, causes the corresponding pain in my toe; if I will to move my hand, the cause of my hand’s motion is not my act of volition but God (even though God is just as mental [spiritual] as this act of volition!). Cf. also *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 275/B 331. According to the theory of preestablished harmony, God has arranged this correlation in advance, at creation.]

¹⁶² [*als von ihm . . . verschuldete*. The more literal translation (which I use wherever possible), ‘as something of which he is guilty,’ does not work in this instance.]

¹⁶³ [*Sinnesänderung.*]

¹⁶⁴ [Cf. Eph. 4:22–24: “That yet put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that yet put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” Cf. also Col. 3:9–10: see Ak. VI, 73, br. n. 157 above.]

subject dies unto sin¹⁶⁵ (hence also unto all inclinations insofar as they mislead us into sin) in order to live unto justice. This change as an intellectual determination,¹⁶⁶ however, does not contain two moral acts separated by an intermediate time, but is only a single act, because the abandonment of evil is possible only through the good attitude that brings about the entry into the good, and vice versa. Therefore the good principle is contained just as much in the abandonment of the evil attitude as in the adoption of the good attitude, and the pain that rightfully accompanies the first attitude arises entirely from the second. The exit from the corrupted into the good attitude (as “the dying of the old human being,” “crucifying of the flesh”)¹⁶⁷ is in itself already a sacrifice and an entrance upon a long series of life’s ills that the new human being takes upon himself in the attitude of the Son of God—in other words, merely for the sake of the good—but that yet were properly deserved by¹⁶⁸ a different human being, namely the old one, as *punishment* (for, the old one is morally a different human being).—Although, therefore, he is *physically* (considered in terms of his empirical character as a being of sense) the same punishable human being, and judgment must be passed¹⁶⁹ on him as such a human being before a moral court of law and hence also before himself, yet in his new attitude (as an intelligible being), before a divine judge before whom this attitude takes the place of the deed, he is *morally* a different human being. And this attitude in its purity,¹⁷⁰ like the purity¹⁷¹ of the Son of God which he has admitted into himself, or (if we personify this idea) *the latter* himself, as *proxy*,¹⁷² bears for him, and thus also for all who have (practical) faith in him,¹⁷³ the debt¹⁷⁴ of sins; renders satisfaction, as *redeemer*,¹⁷⁵ to the highest justice through suffering and death; and brings it about, as *advocate*,¹⁷⁶ that they can hope to appear before their

¹⁶⁵ [Cf. Rom. 6:2 and 11: “God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”]

¹⁶⁶ [I.e., as a characteristic beyond sensibility: *als intellektueller Bestimmung*.]

¹⁶⁷ [Cf. Rom. 6:6 (also 2): “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” Cf. also Gal. 5:24: “And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.”]

¹⁶⁸ [More literally, in this sense, ‘were due to’: *gebühren*.]

¹⁶⁹ [*richten*.]

¹⁷⁰ [*Reinigkeit*.]

¹⁷¹ [Taking *die* to refer back to *Reinigkeit* rather than to *Gesinnung* (‘attitude’).]

¹⁷² [*Stellvertreter*.]

¹⁷³ [(*praktisch*) *an ihn glauben*.]

¹⁷⁴ [*Schuld*, which also means ‘guilt.’ Cf. above, 72 br. n. 138.]

¹⁷⁵ [Or ‘savior’: *Erlöser*. Cf. 1 John 2:2.]

¹⁷⁶ [Or ‘counsel’: *Sachverwalter*. Cf. 1 John 2:1.]

judge as justified, except that (in this way of conceiving) the suffering which the new human being must continually¹⁷⁷ take upon himself in his life¹⁷⁸ while dying

¹⁷⁷ [fortwährend.]

75 ¹⁷⁸ Even the purest moral attitude still produces in the human being, as a being of the world,^a nothing more than a continual^b becoming of a subject who is pleasing to God in terms of the deed (which is found in the world of sense). In terms of quality, this attitude (since it must be thought as suprasensibly based) ought to and can indeed be holy and conforming to the attitude of the human being's archetype; in terms of degree—as it reveals itself in actions—it always remains deficient and infinitely far removed from that archetype's attitude. In spite of this, because this attitude contains the basis for continual progress in compensating for this deficiency, it takes *the place of the deed* in its perfection.^c However, now the question arises: Can someone "in whom there is no condemnation,"^d or in whom there must be none, indeed believe himself justified and yet, when sufferings befall him on the path to ever greater good, continue to impute these to himself as *punishing*, and hence confess thereby a punishability,^e and thus also an attitude displeasing^f to God? Yes, but only in his quality of the human being whom he is continually taking off.^g What in that quality (that of the old human being) he would deserve as punishment (and that is all the sufferings and ills of life as such), that he gladly takes upon himself in his quality of the new human being merely for the sake of the good. Consequently these sufferings are to that extent not imputed to him, as such a new human being, as punishments, but the term means no more than this: all the ills and sufferings befalling him, which the old human being would have to have imputed to himself as punishment and which, insofar as he is still dying unto him, he does actually impute as such to himself, he willingly receives^h in his quality of the new human being as so many occasions for testing and practicing his attitude toward the good; of thisⁱ even that punishment is the effect and simultaneously the cause, and hence is so also of that satisfaction and *moral happiness* which consists in the consciousness of his progress in the good (which is one with the act of the abandonment of evil). In the old attitude, by contrast, the very same ills would have to have not only counted as punishments but also been *sensed*^j as such, because even considered as mere ills they are still directly opposed to what the human being in such an attitude makes his single goal by way of^k *physical happiness*.

^a [am Menschen als Weltwesen.]

^b [kontinuierlich.]

^c [I.e., in the deed's perfection: in ihrer Vollendung.]

^d [Rom. 8:1: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Jesus Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."]

^e [In other words, culpability: Strafbarkeit.]

^f [mißfällig.]

^g [ausziehen; i.e., putting off (ablegen).]

^h [aufnehmen.]

ⁱ [His willing reception of those ills and sufferings as so many occasions for testing and practicing his attitude toward the good.]

^j [Or, less literally, 'felt': empfunden.]

^k [als.]

unto the *old* human being is conceived in the representative of humankind¹⁷⁹ as a death suffered once and for all.—Here, then, is that surplus beyond the merit of works that earlier we were unable to find, and it is a merit that is imputed to us *by grace*. For that what, in our case, in life on earth (perhaps also in all future times and in all worlds) is always only in [a state of] mere *becoming* (namely, to be a human being pleasing to God) should be imputed to us as if we were already in full possession of it here—to this, after all, we surely have (according to empirical self-cognition)¹⁸⁰ no legal¹⁸¹ claim¹⁸² insofar as we are acquainted with ourselves¹⁸³ in that way (gauge our attitude not directly but only according to our deeds), so that the prosecutor within us would still be more likely to propose a judgment of condemnation. It is, therefore, always only a verdict of grace, although fully in conformity with eternal justice (as based on a satisfaction thereof which for us resides only in the idea of the improved attitude but with which God alone is acquainted), when we for the sake of that good in our faith are unburdened of all responsibility.

It may still be asked now whether this deduction¹⁸⁴ of the idea of a *justification* of a human being who is indeed guilty¹⁸⁵ but who has nonetheless passed into an attitude pleasing to God has any practical use, and what this use may be. It is impossible to see what *positive* use could be made of it for religion and for one's way of life, since the above investigation has as its basis the condition that the person¹⁸⁶ concerned already actually is in the required good attitude at whose support¹⁸⁷ (development and furtherance) all practical use of moral concepts properly aims; for, as regards comfort, such an attitude already carries this with it for the person who is conscious of it (as comfort and hope, not as certainty). Hence the deduction is to this extent only the answer to a speculative question, yet an answer¹⁸⁸ that cannot therefore be passed over in silence, because otherwise reason could be reproached

75

76

¹⁷⁹ [*Menschheit*.]

¹⁸⁰ [*Selbsterkenntnis*.]

¹⁸¹ [Or 'legitimate': *Rechts*-. Cf. above, Ak. VI, 60 incl. br. n. 21.]

¹⁸² (†) But have only *receptivity*, which is all that we, for our part, can attribute to ourselves; but the decree of a superior to bestow a good for which the subordinate has nothing but the (moral) receptivity is called *grace*.^a

^a [Or 'mercy': *Gnade*.]

¹⁸³ [*uns selbst kennen*.]

¹⁸⁴ [I.e., legitimation.]

¹⁸⁵ [More literally, 'encumbered by guilt': *verschuldet*, which also means 'indebted' or 'encumbered by debt.' See above, 72 br. n. 138.]

¹⁸⁶ [*der*; similarly below.]

¹⁸⁷ [*Behuf*.]

¹⁸⁸ [*eine*.]

77 for being absolutely incapable of reconciling with divine justice the hope for the human being's absolution from his guilt—a reproach that could be disadvantageous for it in many respects, above all in a moral one. However, the *negative* benefit that can be drawn from this deduction for religion and morals, on behalf of every human being, extends very far. For, one sees from the deduction at issue that, for the human being encumbered by guilt, absolution before divine justice can be thought only on the presupposition of a complete change of heart, and hence that all expiations, whether they be of the penitential or the ceremonial kind, all invocations and laudations (even those of¹⁸⁹ the proxy ideal, of the Son of God) cannot make up for the lack of the change of heart, or, if the change is there, increase in the least its validity before that court of law; for, this ideal must be adopted in our attitude in order to count in place of the deed. Something different is contained in the question what, *at the end of his life*, the human being has to expect, or what he has to fear, from the way of life he has led. Here he must, first of all, be at least somewhat acquainted with his character; he must therefore be able, even if he believes that his attitude has undergone an improvement, to take into consideration simultaneously also the old (corrupted) one, from which he started, and to glean¹⁹⁰ what and how much of the old attitude he has cast off, and what *quality* (whether pure or still impure)¹⁹¹ as well as what *degree* [of strength] the supposed new attitude has for overcoming the old attitude and forestalling a relapse into it; hence he will have to investigate his attitude throughout his entire life. Since, therefore, he can acquire no secure and determinate concept whatever of his actual attitude through direct¹⁹² consciousness, but can glean it only from the way of life that he has actually led, he will be able to think of no other situation to convince the future judge¹⁹³ (the awakening conscience within himself, along¹⁹⁴ with the self-cognition he has summoned) in his judgment¹⁹⁵ than for *his entire life*—not merely a segment thereof, perhaps the last and for him still most beneficial one—to be¹⁹⁶ put before the judge's eyes some day; with this, however, he would on his own connect the outlook into a life continued yet further (without setting himself boundaries here), if, i.e., it had lasted yet a while. Now, here he¹⁹⁷ cannot make the previously cognized attitude take the place of the deed; rather, conversely, from the deed presented to him he is to glean his attitude. What, in the reader's opinion, will just this thought—which recalls to the recollection of the human being (who need not,

¹⁸⁹ [I.e., directed toward.]

¹⁹² [Or 'immediate': *unmittelbar*.]

¹⁹⁰ [*abnehmen*.]

¹⁹³ [*Richter*.]

¹⁹¹ [*lauter . . . unlauter*.]

¹⁹⁴ [*zugleich*.]

¹⁹⁵ [I.e., the judgment (*Urteil*) of the judge, which, however, is simultaneously the person's own judgment. Cf. below, where the response to a question addressed to the judge within oneself is said to be a judging of oneself by oneself. Cf. Matt. 7:1–2, also Matt. 5:25.]

¹⁹⁶ [Reading *werde* for *werden*.]

¹⁹⁷ [Inserting *er*; as suggested by Schöndörffer, Kehrbach, and Vorländer (Ak. VI, 509).]

indeed, be the basest) much that he has otherwise long since carelessly stopped paying attention to, even if he were told nothing more than that he has cause to believe that he will some day stand before a judge¹⁹⁸—[lead him to] judge concerning his future destiny according to his way of life as led thus far? If in the human being one addresses the question to the judge who is within himself, then the human being¹⁹⁹ judges himself strictly, for he cannot bribe his own reason. If, however, one presents to him a different judge, such as one claims to be informed about by instructions from elsewhere, then he has much to object—[all of it] taken from the pretext of human frailty—against this judge's strictness. And in general he thinks that he can get around that judge, whether he means to forestall the punishment from him through repentant self-torments that do not issue from a true attitude of improvement, or to mollify him through begging and imploring, also through formulas and through confessions passed off as faith-based,²⁰⁰ and if hope is held out to him for this (according to the proverb, All's well that ends well), then from early on he makes his plan accordingly, so as not to forfeit needlessly too much of the life of gratification and, when life's end is near, to close the account nonetheless speedily to his advantage.²⁰¹

78

¹⁹⁸ [*Richter*; below, 'judge' translates *urteilen*.]

¹⁹⁹ [*er*.]

²⁰⁰ [*gläubig*.]

²⁰¹ (†) The aim of those who at the end of life have a cleric summoned^a is usually that they want to have a *comforter* in him, not because of the *physical* sufferings that the last illness—or indeed even just the natural fear of death—carries with it (for, concerning these, death itself, which ends them, can be the comforter), but because of the *moral* sufferings, namely the reproaches of conscience. Now, here conscience should rather be *stirred up* and *sharpened*, in order by no means to neglect what good is still to be done, or what evil—in terms of its remaining consequences—is still to be annihilated (repaired for), in accordance with the warning, “Be obliging to your adversary (with him who has a legal claim against you), as long as you are still on the way with him (i.e., as long as you still live); lest he surrender you (after death) to the judge,” etc.^b But to give to the person, in place of this, opium for his conscience, as it were, is to incur guiltiness^c against this person himself and against others surviving him—entirely contrary to the final aim for which, at the end of life, such support of conscience may be held to be needed.

^a [*rufen*.]

^b [Matt. 5:25 (the parenthetical insertions are Kant's). In the King James version: “Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.”]

^c [*Verschuldung*.]

SECTION TWO

ON THE LEGAL CLAIM²⁰² OF THE EVIL PRINCIPLE TO
DOMINION OVER THE HUMAN BEING, AND THE
STRUGGLE OF THE TWO PRINCIPLES WITH EACH OTHER

Holy Scripture (of Christian contribution) sets forth this intelligible moral relation in the form of a story where two principles in the human being, opposed to each other like heaven and hell, conceived²⁰³ as persons outside him, not merely test their power²⁰⁴ against each other, but also (the one as prosecutor and the other as advocate²⁰⁵ of the human being) seek to validate²⁰⁶ their claims *by law* before a supreme judge, as it were.

The human being was originally appointed the proprietor of all the goods of the earth (Gen. 1:28),²⁰⁷ but in such a way that he should possess them only as subordinate property (*dominium utile*) under his creator and Lord as supreme proprietor (*dominus directus*).²⁰⁸ At the same time, an evil being is put forth (how it became so evil as to become unfaithful to its lord²⁰⁹—since, after all, primordially it was good—is not familiar to us), which, through its defection, has lost²¹⁰ all property that it might have possessed in heaven and now wants to acquire another on earth. Now, since earthly and corporeal objects can afford him²¹¹—as a being of a higher

79

²⁰² [*Rechtsanspruch*. *Recht* basically means 'right'; but it also means 'law,' in the general sense of this term (as in 'under the law,' 'law and order,' and so on. Kant is here concerned with a kind of legality.)

²⁰³ [*vorstellen*.]

²⁰⁴ [*Macht*.]

²⁰⁵ [Or 'counsel': *Sachwalter*, synonymous with *Sachverwalter*; see above, Ak. VI, 74 incl. br. n. 176.]

²⁰⁶ [*gelten machen*.]

²⁰⁷ ["And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."]

²⁰⁸ [Here 'subordinate property' translates *Untereigentum*; and 'supreme proprietor,' *Obereigentümer*. The Latin expression *dominium utile* means 'useful ownership,' i.e., in a feudal system, ownership that gives a vassal the use of land, in which, however, other persons—especially the sovereign, but in a limited way also the previous holder of the land—may also have ownership; *dominus directus* means 'direct owner.']

²⁰⁹ [Or 'master': *Herr*.]

²¹⁰ [Or 'forfeited': *verlustig gehen*.]

²¹¹ [*ihm*, the dative of *er* ('he'), does indeed mean 'him.' However, Kant here probably still meant *ihm* to be the dative for *es* ('it'). I have changed it to 'him,' partly for readability but partly also because Kant himself is about to switch from the impersonal pronoun *es* ('it') to the personal pronoun *er* ('he') in this very sentence.]

kind as a spirit—no enjoyment, he seeks to acquire a dominion *over people's minds*²¹² by making the ancestral parents defect from their overlord and adhere to him instead, and thus he succeeds in setting himself up as supreme proprietor of all the goods of the earth, i.e., as prince²¹³ of this world. Now, one might indeed find it questionable²¹⁴ here why God did not make use of his power²¹⁵ against this traitor,²¹⁶ and did not prefer to annihilate, at its beginning, the kingdom that he intended to found,²¹⁷ but the rule and government of the highest²¹⁸ wisdom over rational beings proceeds with them according to the principle of their freedom, and what good or evil is to befall them they are to have to impute to themselves on their own. Thus in defiance of the good principle a kingdom of evil was here established, to which all human beings descended (by nature) from Adam became subject—and this with their own consent, because the illusion of the goods of this world diverted their glances from the abyss of perdition²¹⁹ for which they were being saved up.²²⁰ The good principle did indeed, because of its legal claim to dominion over the human being, safeguard itself through the establishment of the form of a government that was arranged (in *Jewish* theocracy) merely to serve for public and exclusive veneration of its name. However, the minds of the subjects²²¹ in this government remained attuned to no incentives other than the goods of this world, and hence the subjects also did not want to be governed in this life otherwise than through rewards and punishments. But, in turn, they also were capable of no other laws than partly such as imposed burdensome ceremonies and customs, and partly such as were indeed moral but in which an external coercion occurred and which were, therefore, only civil laws, the inside²²² of the moral attitude not being considered at all. As a consequence, this arrangement did not essentially impair the

²¹² [*über die Gemüter.*]

²¹³ [*Fürst.*]

²¹⁴ [*bedenklich.*]

²¹⁵ [*Gewalt.*]

²¹⁶ Father *Charlevoix*^a reports that when he recounted to his Iroquois pupil of catechism all the evil that the evil spirit has brought into the initially^b good creation, and how this spirit still constantly seeks to foil the best divine arrangements, the pupil asked him with indignation, But why does God not strike the devil dead?—to which question he candidly admits that he could not, in the hurry, find an answer.

^a [Pierre-François-Xavier de Charlevoix (1682–1761), French Jesuit missionary, historian, and traveler to North America, especially Canada. He is the author of *Histoire et description générale de la Nouvelle-France* (History and general description of New France, 3 vols. Paris: Didot, 1744). Cf. Wobbermin, Ak. VI, 503. Cf. also my translation of the *Critique of Judgment*, Ak. V, 204 incl. br. n. 9.]

^b [*zu Anfang.*]

²¹⁷ [*stiften.*]

²¹⁸ [Or 'supreme': *höchst.*]

²¹⁹ [Or 'ruin': *Verderben.*]

²²⁰ [*aufsparen.*]

²²¹ [In the sense of 'vassals': *Untertanen.*]

²²² [*das Innere.*]

80 kingdom of darkness, but served only to keep always in remembrance the indelible right of the first proprietor.—Now, in that same people, at a time when it felt in full measure all the ills of a hierarchical constitution, and was moved in large part to reflection—through this as well as perhaps through the Greek philosophers' moral doctrines of freedom, which shocked the slavish mind and had gradually gained influence over this people—and hence was ripe for a revolution, there appeared all at once a person whose wisdom was purer still than that of the philosophers²²³ hitherto, as though it had come down from heaven. And he also proclaimed himself, in regard to his doctrines and example, as indeed a true human being, but yet as an envoy of such an origin that he, in his original innocence, was not also²²⁴ comprised in the compact that the rest of humankind²²⁵—through its representative, the first ancestral father—had entered into with the evil principle,²²⁶ and “in whom,

²²³ [*Philosophen* here; *Weltweise* above.]

²²⁴ [*mit-*.]

²²⁵ [*Menschengeschlecht*.]

²²⁶ (+) To think, as possible, of a person free of the innate propensity to evil by having him born of a virgin mother is an idea of a reason accommodating itself to a moral instinct, as it were, that is difficult to explain and yet also not to be denied. For we regard natural generation, because it cannot occur without sensual pleasure^a of both parties,^b but yet also seems to bring us into far too close kinship with the universal animal genus, as something of which we are to *be ashamed*—a conception that surely has become the proper cause of the supposed holiness of the monastic state—and which therefore seems^c to us to be something immoral, irreconcilable with the perfection of a human being, yet grafted in his nature and hence also passed on to his descendants as an evil predisposition.—Now, with this obscure (on one side merely sensible, but on the other nonetheless moral, hence intellectual) presentation,^d the idea of a birth, independent of any sexual intercourse (a virgin birth), of a child fraught with no moral defect is indeed commensurate, though not without difficulty in theory. (For a practical aim, however, there is no need at all to determine anything in regard to theory). For according to the hypothesis of epigenesis, the mother, who is descended from her parents by *natural* generation, would after all still be fraught with that moral defect and would pass it on—at least as half of it—to her child even in a supranatural generation. Hence, in order for this not to be the consequence, one would have to assume the system of the *preexistence* of the germs [of evil] in the parents, yet also not that of the envelopment [of these germs] in the *female* part (because it would not avoid that consequence), but [that of their envelopment] merely in the *male* part (not that of the *ova* but that of the *spermatozoa*).^e Now, in a supranatural pregnancy this male part drops out, and thus that way of

^a [More literally, ‘pleasure of sense’: *Sinnenlust*.]

^c [*deucht* (from *dünken*).]

^b [*Teile*.]

^d [Or ‘conception’: *Vorstellung*.]

^e [Respectively, *ovulorum* (genitive plural of Latin *ovula*, ‘little eggs’) and *animalcul.[orum] sperm.[aticorum]* (genitive plural of Latin *animalcula spermatica*, ‘little seed animals, thus near synonym of Greek *spermatozoa*, ‘seed animals’).]

therefore, the prince of this world had no part."²²⁷ Through this the prince's dominion was put at risk. For if this human being pleasing to God resisted the prince's temptations also to join that covenant, and if other human beings, in their faith,²²⁸ also adopted the same attitude, then the prince would forfeit as many subjects, and his kingdom would run the risk of being destroyed entirely. The prince therefore offered to make him trustee²²⁹ of his entire kingdom, if only he would pay homage to him as its proprietor.²³⁰ Since this attempt did not succeed, he not only deprived this stranger in his territory of everything that could make his life on earth agreeable (to the point of greatest poverty), but he incited against him all the persecutions by which evil human beings can make that life bitter, sufferings that only a well-meaning person feels quite deeply, defamation of the pure²³¹ aim of his teachings (in order to deprive him of all adherents), and persecuted him all the way to his most ignominious death, without, however, in the least accomplishing anything against him through this assault by none but unworthy people on his steadfastness and frankness in his teaching and his example for what is best.²³² And now the outcome of this struggle! Its result can be regarded as a *legal*²³³ or, for that matter, as a *physical* one. If one looks upon the physical outcome (which strikes the senses), then the good principle is the defeated party;²³⁴ in this conflict, after enduring many sufferings, he had to give up his life,²³⁵ because in a foreign dominion (which [as

conceiving^f could be defended commensurately with that idea [of virgin birth].—For what, however, do we need all these theories *pro* or *contra*, if for the practical aim it is sufficient to present that idea to us as a model, as a symbol of humanity elevating itself above the temptation to evil (resisting it victoriously)?

^f [Or 'way of presenting [viz., a person free of the innate propensity to evil]': *Vorstellungsart*.]

²²⁷ [John 14:30: "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."]

²²⁸ [*gläubig*.]

²²⁹ [Or 'feudatory': *Lehnsträger*.]

²³⁰ [Cf. Luke 4:5–7: "And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will, I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine."]

²³¹ [*lauter*.]

²³³ [*rechtlich*.]

²³² [*das Beste*.]

²³⁴ [*der unterliegende Teil*.]

²³⁵ (†) Not that (as *Dr. Bahrdt* invented in novelistic fashion)^a he *sought* death in order to further a good aim through a spectacular, splendid example; that would have been suicide. For,

^a [(Dr.) Karl Friedrich Bahrdt (1741–92), popular German rationalist theologian and adventurer, in his early years a student of Christian August Crusius (1715–75) at Leipzig. He is the author of many works, among them *System der moralischen Religion*. (System of moral religion 2 vols. (Berlin: Friedrich Bieweg, 1787). For Kant's reference, see chs. 9 and 10, esp. p. 64 (cf. Wobbermin, Ak. VI, 503): "*Wahrhaftig so frei hat noch niemand sein Schicksal gewählt, so absichtlich hat kein Märtyrer der*"²³⁵

82 such] has power) he incited a revolt. However, the kingdom²³⁶ in which *principles* hold power (whether they be good or evil) is a kingdom not of nature but of

²³⁵ [cont.] one may^b indeed hazard^c something at the risk of losing one's life, or even endure death at the hands of another if one cannot evade it, without becoming unfaithful to an irremissible duty; but one may not regulate^d oneself and one's life as a means, for whatever purpose^e it may be, and thus be the *originator* of one's death.—Nor (as the Wolfenbüttel fragmentist suspects)^f did he *hazard* his life for an aim that was not moral but merely political though not permitted, perhaps in order to topple the government of the priests and, with supreme worldly^g power, put himself in its place. For, this is countered by the exhortation, Do this in remembrance of me,^h issued to his disciples at the Last Supper, after he had already given up the hope of preserving his life; this exhortation, if it had been intended to be the reminder about a failed worldly aim, would have been a vexing one arousing indignation against its originator and hence contradicting itself. However, this reminder could also concern the failure of a very good, purely moral aim of the master, namely, to bring about, still during his lifetime, a *public* revolution (in religion), by toppling the ceremonial faith—which displaces all moral attitude—and the authority of the priests of this faith (the provisions for the assembly at Easter of his disciples, scattered over the country, may have had that purpose). Indeed, even now one may still regret that this revolution did not succeed. Yet it was not foiled; rather, after his death it passed into a religious transformation that spread quietly, but amid much suffering.

82

^a (cont.) *Wahrheit seine Hinrichtung veranstaltet. Und eine fühllose Seele muß es sein, die nicht hier mit starrer Verwunderung gesteht, daß kein Mensch sich ja so eigentlich selbst für den Zweck der Menschheit hingeopfert hat, wie Jesus.*” I.e.: “Truly, no one has ever so freely chosen his fate, no martyr for truth so intentionally arranged his execution. And it must be an unfeeling soul that does not confess with stunned admiration that no human being has ever so expressly sacrificed itself for the purpose of humanity as Jesus has.”

^b [In the sense of its being permissible: *dürfen*; likewise below.]

^c [*wagen*; likewise below.]

^d [*über . . . disponieren*.]

^e [Or ‘end’: *Zweck*; but see Ak. VI, 34 br. n. 152c.]

^f [Hermann Samuel Reimarus (1694–1768), German (deist) philosopher—with views similar to those of Christian Wolff (1679–1754)—and man of letters. He is the author of several works and is particularly known through his *Die vornehmsten Wahrheiten der natürlichen Religion* (The foremost truths of natural religion) (Hamburg: J. C. Bohn, 1754.), but especially through his *Apologie; oder, Schutzschrift für die vernünftigen Verehrer Gottes* (Defense; or Vindication for those who venerate God rationally), contemporary ed. on behalf of the Joachim-Jungius-Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, Hamburg, by Gerhard Alexander, 2 vols. (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1972), a work cautiously held back during this lifetime and then published, without attribution, in seven “fragments” (1774–78) by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729–81), who was at the time librarian at the public library of Wolfenbüttel (near Braunschweig). The fragment at issue here is the last of the seven.]

^g [Or ‘secular’: *weltlich*; likewise below.]

^h [Literally, “to do this in remembrance of him”: *es zu seinem Gedächtnis zu tun*; Luke 22:19: “And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.”]

²³⁶ [Or ‘realm’: *Reich*.]

freedom, i.e., a kingdom in which one can regulate things only insofar as one rules over minds, in which therefore no one is a slave (bondman) except he who wills to be one, and as long as he does so; hence precisely this death (the highest level of a human being's sufferings) was the exhibition²³⁷ of the good principle, namely of humanity in its moral²³⁸ perfection, as an example for everyone to emulate. The presentation of this death was meant to have—and was also able to have—at his time the greatest influence on human minds, and it is able to have this influence at any time; for it lets the freedom of the children of heaven and the servitude²³⁹ of a mere son of earth be seen in the most striking contrast of all. However, the good principle did not descend invisibly from heaven into humanity merely at a certain time, but has been descended into it from the origin of humankind onward (as anyone must admit who is mindful of the principle's holiness and simultaneously of the incomprehensibility of the combination of this holiness with the human being's sensible nature in the moral predisposition) and legally²⁴⁰ has its first domicile in humanity. Since, therefore, the principle appeared in an actual human being who was²⁴¹ an example for all others, he “came unto his own, and his own received him not, but as many as received him, to them gave he power to be called the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name”;²⁴² i.e., through the example he gives of this principle (in the moral idea) he opens the gate of freedom to all who, like him, want²⁴³ to die unto everything²⁴⁴ that keeps them fettered to life on earth to the detriment of morality;²⁴⁵ and gathers to himself “a people zealous of good works, as peculiar to him,”²⁴⁶ and under his dominion, while he leaves to their dominion all those who prefer moral servitude.

Therefore the moral outcome of this conflict, on the part of the hero of this story (up to his death), is in fact not the *vanquishment*²⁴⁷ of the evil principle—for, its kingdom still endures, and perhaps a new epoch must yet arise in which it is to be destroyed—but only the breaking of its power to hold, against their will, those who

82

²³⁷ [*Darstellung.*]

²³⁸ [*moralisch*; likewise (twice) later in this paragraph.]

²³⁹ [*Knechtschaft.*]

²⁴³ [Or ‘will’: *wollen.*]

²⁴⁴ [This appears to be an illusion to Jesus’ admonition to his followers: “If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” See Matt. 16:24, and cf. Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23.]

²⁴⁵ [*Sittlichkeit.*]

²⁴⁶ [Titus 2:14: “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”]

²⁴⁷ [Or ‘defeat’: *Besiegung.*]

²⁴⁰ [Or ‘legitimately’: *rechtlicherweise.* Cf. above, Ak. VI, 78 incl. br. n. 202.]

²⁴¹ [Here ‘who was’ translates *als.*]

²⁴² [Cf. John 1:11–12.]

have so long been its subjects,²⁴⁸ while another moral dominion (for, the human being must be subject to one or another) is revealed as a refuge²⁴⁹ in which they can find protection for their morality if they want to abandon the old moral dominion. Otherwise, the evil principle continues to be called the prince of this world, wherein those who adhere to the good principle should always prepare themselves for physical sufferings, sacrifices, and mortifications of self-love, which are there conceived²⁵⁰ as persecutions by the evil principle, because the prince has rewards in his kingdom only for those who have made well-being on earth their final aim.

We readily see that, if one divests this lively way of conceiving—and for its time probably also the only *popular* way of conceiving²⁵¹—of its mystical cloak, it (its spirit and rational meaning) has been practically valid and obligatory for all the world at all times, because it suggests itself enough to each human being for him to cognize his duty concerning it. That meaning consists in this: that there is absolutely no salvation²⁵² for human beings except in the most intimate admittance of genuine moral principles into their attitude; that what acts in opposition to this admittance is by no means the so often blamed sensibility, but a certain self-incurred²⁵³ perversity, or, as people²⁵⁴ otherwise also want to call this wickedness, deceit²⁵⁵ (*fausseté*,²⁵⁶ satanic guile, through which evil came into the world), a corruption that resides in all human beings and that can be overpowered by nothing but the idea of the morally good—the morally good in its entire purity—together with the consciousness that this idea actually belongs to our original predisposition and that one need only be diligent in keeping it free from any impure²⁵⁷ admixture and in admitting it deeply into our attitude in order to be convinced, through the effect that this idea gradually produces²⁵⁸ on the mind, that the dreaded²⁵⁹ powers of evil can accomplish nothing against it (“the gates of hell shall not prevail against it”);²⁶⁰ and that—so that we do not perhaps compensate for the lack of this trust

²⁴⁸ [More literally, ‘been subject to it’: *ihm . . . untertan gewesen*. Below, ‘be subject to’ translates *unter . . . stehen*.]

²⁴⁹ [*Freistatt*.]

²⁵⁰ [Or ‘presented’: *vorstellen*.]

²⁵¹ [I.e., way of conceiving (or ‘way of presenting’: *Vorstellungsart*) that was accessible to the common people.]

²⁵² [*Heil*, used synonymously by Kant with *Seligkeit*.]

²⁵³ [I.e., brought upon by oneself, or, more literally, something that one is oneself guilty of: *selbst verschuldet*.]

²⁵⁴ [*man*.]

²⁵⁷ [*unlauter*.]

²⁵⁵ [*Betrug*.]

²⁵⁸ [*tun*.]

²⁵⁶ [French for ‘falsity.’]

²⁵⁹ [*gefürchtet*.]

²⁶⁰ [Matt. 16:18: “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”]

superstitiously, through expiations, which presuppose no change of mentality,²⁶¹ or *fanatically*, through supposed (merely passive) inner illuminations, and thus are always kept away from the good that is based on self-activity—we ought to lay at the basis of this good no other characteristic than that of a well-led way of life.—Moreover, an effort like the present one, to search in Scripture for that meaning which is in harmony with the *holiest* teaching of reason, not only may be regarded as permitted, but it must rather be regarded as a duty;²⁶² and one may bear in mind in this what the *wise* teacher said to his disciples about someone who went his own way, even though in doing so he did in the end have to arrive at the same goal: “Forbid him not; for he that is not against us is for us.”²⁶³

84

General Comment

If a moral religion is to be established (such a religion must be posited not in statutes and observances but in the attitude of the heart to observe all human duties as divine commands), then all *miracles* that history connects with the introduction of that religion must in the end render dispensable the very faith in miracles as such.²⁶⁴ For one betrays a punishable²⁶⁵ degree of moral unbelief²⁶⁶ if one is unwilling to concede sufficient authority to the precepts of duty, as originally written by reason into the human being’s heart, unless they are in addition authenticated through miracles: “Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.”²⁶⁷ Now, it is indeed entirely commensurate with the common way of thinking of human beings that, when a religion of mere cult and observances comes to its end²⁶⁸ and one based in the spirit and in the truth (in the moral attitude) is to be introduced²⁶⁹ instead, the latter’s introduction—although it has no need for this—is in history also accompanied and, as it were, adorned by miracles, in order to proclaim the cessation of the earlier religion,²⁷⁰ which without miracles would have had no authority at all. This, moreover, may indeed occur in such a way that, in order to win over

²⁶¹ [See above, Ak. VI, 66 br. n. 99.]

²⁶² (†) In saying this,^a one may grant that the meaning is not the only one.

^a [Wobei.]

²⁶³ [Mark 9:39–40: “But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part.”]

²⁶⁴ [Or ‘in general’: *überhaupt*.]

²⁶⁵ [I.e., culpable: *sträflich*.]

²⁶⁶ [I.e., lack of faith: *Unglaube*.]

²⁶⁷ [John 4:48.]

²⁶⁸ [*Ende*; below, ‘cessation’ translates *Endschafft*.]

²⁶⁹ [*einführen*; below, ‘introduction’ translates *Introduktion*.]

²⁷⁰ [Literally, ‘the former’: *der ersteren*; likewise below.]

the adherents of the earlier religion to the new revolution, the earlier religion is construed as the older model, now come to fulfillment, of what in the new religion²⁷¹ was the final purpose²⁷² of providence. And under such circumstances it has to be fruitless to dispute now those narratives or interpretations, once the true religion is there—and able now and henceforth to maintain itself on its own through rational bases—which in its time needed to be introduced through such remedies. For otherwise one would have to wish to assume that merely having faith in and reiterating²⁷³ incomprehensible things (which anyone can do, without being a better human being on that account, or ever becoming one thereby) is a way, and indeed the only way, to be pleasing to God—an allegation that one must dispute with all one's power. It may therefore be that the person of the teacher of the sole religion valid for all worlds is a mystery; that his appearance on earth, just as his vanishment²⁷⁴ from it, that his life full of deeds and his suffering are nothing but miracles; indeed, that the history that is to authenticate the narrative of all those miracles is itself also a miracle (supranatural revelation). In that case, we may let these miracles, one and all, rest on their merit,²⁷⁵ and may indeed even honor the cloak²⁷⁶ that has served to initiate²⁷⁷ publically a doctrine whose authentication rests on a document that is preserved indelibly in every soul²⁷⁸ and does not need any miracles—provided that, as regards the use of these historical reports, we do not make it a component of religion that knowing them, having faith in them, and confessing them is by itself something whereby we can make ourselves pleasing to God.

However, as regards miracles as such, we find that rational human beings, despite having no intention of renouncing their faith in them, are still never willing²⁷⁹ to let them prevail²⁸⁰ practically, which is tantamount to meaning that, as regards *theory*, they do indeed have faith²⁸¹ that there are miracles, but in their *professions*²⁸²

²⁷¹ [Literally, 'the latter': *der letzteren*.]

²⁷² [*Endzweck*. In this expression the use of 'end' rather than 'purpose' to render *Zweck* runs into serious trouble, because the temporal sense of 'final' at least suggests that 'end' may likewise be intended in a temporal sense. Cf. my article, "How to Render *Zweckmäßigkeit* in Kant's Third Critique," op. cit. above, Ak. VI, 34 br. n. 152c.]

²⁷³ [*Nachsagen*.]

²⁷⁶ [Consisting of these miracles.]

²⁷⁴ [*Entrückung*.]

²⁷⁷ [*in Gang bringen*.]

²⁷⁵ [*Wert*.]

²⁷⁸ [For Kant, of course, this "document" is the moral law. But see, as a likely source for Kant's language here, Jer. 31:33: "But this *shall* be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." And cf. Heb. 8:10, and 10:16.]

²⁷⁹ [Or 'still never want': *doch niemals wollen*.]

²⁸¹ [Or 'believe': *glauben*.]

²⁸⁰ [*aufkommen*.]

²⁸² [Or 'occupations': *Geschäften*.]

they do not aver²⁸³ any. Hence, although wise governments have always granted—and indeed have perhaps even adopted the opinion legally among the public doctrines of religion—that miracles had occurred *of old*,²⁸⁴ they have not allowed *new* miracles.²⁸⁵ For, the ancient miracles had already little by little

86

²⁸³ [statuieren.]

²⁸⁴ [I.e., in ancient times: *vor Alters*.]

²⁸⁵ Even teachers of religion who attach their articles of faith to the authority of the government (orthodox teachers of religion) follow in this, together with the government, that same maxim. Thus when Mr. *Pfenninger*^a defended his friend, Mr. *Lavater*, for having asserted that a faith in miracles continues to be possible, he rightly reproached these teachers with inconsistency (for he expressly excluded those who think *naturalistically* on this point), pointing out that, while they did after all assert the miracle-workers that had actually been in the Christian community some seventeen centuries ago, they were now no longer willing to aver^b any miracles, yet without being able to prove from Scripture that and when miracles were to cease entirely at some point (for the subtle reasoning^c whereby they are now no longer needed presumes greater insight than a human being ought, I suppose, to credit himself with), and this proof they still owe him. It was therefore only a maxim of reason not to grant and allow miracles now, not objective insight that there are none. But does not this same maxim, which in this instance considers the worrisome mischief in the civil community,^d hold also for the fear of a similar mischief in the philosophizing and in general the rationally meditating community^e?—Those who, while not granting *great* (spectacular) miracles, do liberally allow *little* ones under the name of *extraordinary governance* (because the latter, as mere guidance, require only little application of force by the supranatural cause), fail to consider that what counts here is not the effect and its magnitude but the form of the course of the world, i.e., the *way in which the effect occurs*, whether naturally or supranaturally, and that for God no distinction of the easy and the difficult is thinkable. But as regards the *mystery*^f of the supranatural influences, such intentional hiding of the importance of an event of this kind is even less appropriate.

86

^a [Johann Konrad Pfenninger (1747–92), was pastor at the Waisenhauskirche (Orphanage Church), then at the Peterskirche (St. Peter's Church), in Zürich. See his *Appellation an den Menschenverstand, gewisse Vorfälle, Schriften und Personen betreffend* (Appeal to human understanding, concerning certain incidents, writings, and persons) (Hamburg: Bey Carl Ernst Bohn, 1776), esp. no. VIII. (Cf. Wobbermin, Ak. VI, 504). Johann Caspar Lavater (1741–1801), Pfenninger's friend, was a theologian in Zürich, and for some time the deacon of the Waisenhauskirche. His main work is *Physiognomische Fragmente: zur Beförderung der Menschenkenntnis und Menschenliebe*. Erster-Vierter Versuch (Physiognomical fragments: For the promotion of the knowledge and the love of humankind. First to fourth essays) (Leipzig: Weidmanns Erben und Reich, 1775–78.)]

^b [statuieren.]

^c [Vernünftelei.]

^d [I.e., in civil society: *im bürgerlichen Wesen*. I am using the term 'community' because the term recurs below, just as *Wesen* occurs twice in the original.]

^e [Here 'community' translates *gemeines Wesen*.]

^f [*das Geheime*.]

become²⁸⁶ so determinate and so limited by the authorities that no confusion could be wreaked by them in the community; in consequence of new miracle-workers, however, governments did indeed have to be worried on account of the effects that miracles²⁸⁷ might have on the public state of tranquility and the established order. But if one asks what is to be meant by the word *miracle*, then one can explicate them (since properly we are concerned to know only what they are *for us*, i.e., for our practical use of reason) by saying that they are events in the world of whose cause the laws of operation²⁸⁸ absolutely are and must remain unfamiliar²⁸⁹ to us. Now, here one can think of either *theistic* or *demonic* miracles, while dividing the latter into *angelic* (agathodemonic)²⁹⁰ miracles or *diabolical* (cacodemonic) ones; of these, however, it is properly only the latter that are inquired after, because the *good angels* (I know not why) give us little or nothing at all to say about them.

As regards the *theistic* miracles, we can indeed frame a concept of the laws of operation of their cause (as an omnipotent etc. and also²⁹¹ moral being), but only a *universal* concept, insofar as we think him as creator of the world and governor according to the order of nature as well as the moral order; for we can acquire familiarity with the laws of these orders directly and by themselves, and reason can then employ them for its use. If, however, we assume that God sometimes and in particular cases also lets nature deviate from these its laws, then we do not have the least concept, and also cannot ever hope to acquire one, of the law according to which God then proceeds in the arrangement of such an event (apart from the *universal moral* law that all he does will be good, through which, however, nothing is determined in regard to this particular incident). Now, here reason is as though paralyzed by this, because it is held up by it in its occupation²⁹² according to familiar laws, but is not instructed by any new law, nor can ever hope to be instructed concerning one in the world. Among these miracles,²⁹³ however, the demonic ones are the most incompatible of all with the use of our reason. For with regard to the *theistic* miracles, reason would, after all, still be able to have at least a negative characteristic for its use: namely that, if something is conceived as commanded by God in a direct appearance of him that nonetheless conflicts straightforwardly with morality—then, despite all the semblance of a divine miracle it still cannot be one

87

²⁸⁶ [Literally, 'were little by little': *waren nach und nach*.]

²⁸⁷ [*sie*; although this could also refer to the miracle-workers, Kant probably intends the subject still to be the miracles.]

²⁸⁸ [Or 'laws of action': *Wirkungsgesetze*.]

²⁸⁹ [*unbekannt*.]

²⁹⁰ [I.e., of good (in the next parenthesis: evil) demons (or spirits).]

²⁹¹ [*dabei*.]

²⁹² [Or 'task': *Geschäft*.]

²⁹³ [Miracles (of either type) that leave reason as though paralyzed.]

(e.g., if a father were ordered to kill his son, who, as far as he knows, is entirely innocent).²⁹⁴ In the case of a supposed demonic miracle, however, this characteristic drops out also; and if for these miracles one wanted to adopt, by contrast, the opposite positive characteristic for reason's use—namely that, if through the miracle there occurs an invitation to a good action that we already cognize in itself as our duty, then the invitation was not performed²⁹⁵ by an evil spirit—even then one could make a mistake; for, as they²⁹⁶ say, the evil spirit often disguises himself as an angel of light.

In [the] professions, therefore, one cannot possibly count on miracles, or perhaps take them into consideration in one's use of reason (and this use is needed in all situations²⁹⁷ of life). The judge (however strong his faith in miracles may be in church) listens to the delinquent's allegation of diabolical temptations, which the latter claims to have endured, as though nothing at all were said, even though, if the judge regarded this situation as possible, surely it would always be well worthy of some concern that a simple ordinary human being has fallen into the snares of a cunning villain; however, he cannot summon the villain, confront the two with each other; in a word, he can make absolutely nothing rational out of it.²⁹⁸ The rational cleric, therefore, will certainly take care not to cram the heads of those assigned to his spiritual care²⁹⁹ with little stories from the *Hellish Proteus*³⁰⁰ and brutify³⁰¹ their imagination. As regards the miracles of the good kind, however, people in occupations use them merely as turns of phrase. Thus the physician says, The sick man is beyond help, unless perhaps a miracle occurs; i.e., he will certainly die.³⁰²—Now, occupations include also that of the investigator of nature to search for the causes of events in the natural laws of these; in the natural laws of these events, I say—which laws he can therefore support by experience even if he must renounce familiarity with what it is in itself that operates according to these laws, or what these [causes] might be for us in reference to a different possible

88

²⁹⁴ [As in the biblical story in which Abraham is commanded to sacrifice his son Isaac: Gen. 22. Cf. below, Ak. VI, 187 incl. br. n. 328.]

²⁹⁵ [*geschehen*.]

²⁹⁶ [*man*.]

²⁹⁷ [*Fällen*; below, 'situation' likewise translates *Fall*.]

²⁹⁸ [I.e., presumably, out of the allegation: *daraus*.]

²⁹⁹ [Or 'pastoral care,' literally 'care of souls' (cf. cure of souls): *Seelsorge*.]

³⁰⁰ [Erasmus Francisci (originally Erasmus Finx; 1627–94), *Der höllische Proteus*, abgebildet durch Erasmum Francisci (The hellish Proteus), depicted by Erasmus Francisci) (Nuremberg: Wolfgang Moritz Endters, 1695).]

³⁰¹ [More literally, 'turn wild': *verwildern*.]

³⁰² [Five years after the publication of the *Religion*, Kant discussed these same three professionals in the *Dispute among the University's Schools*, of 1798, Ak. VII, 1–116.]

sense.³⁰³ In the same way, the moral improvement of the human being is an occupation incumbent upon him. Now, heavenly influences may always still contribute³⁰⁴ thereto, or be regarded as needed to explain the possibility of this improvement; he does not know how to [deal with these influences], neither how to distinguish them safely from the natural ones, nor how to draw them—and thus, as it were, heaven—down to himself. Since, therefore, he does not know what to do with them directly, he does not in this case *aver*³⁰⁵ any miracles; rather, if he listens to the precept of reason, he proceeds as if any change of mentality and improvement depended solely on his own applied work.³⁰⁶ But that, through the gift of a quite *firm* theoretical faith in miracles,³⁰⁷ one could perhaps even oneself also bring them about and thus assail heaven—this is a senseless notion³⁰⁸ that goes too far beyond the limits of reason for us to dwell on it.³⁰⁹

³⁰³ [I.e., a sense different from those that we now have, such as intellectual intuition, i.e., the kind of intuition that an intuitive understanding would have. See my translation of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 138–39, 145, A 166/B 207 incl. br. n. 67, A 249–52, B 307–09, A 256/B 311–12, and A 279–80 = B 335–36, and cf. B xl incl. br. n. 144g, B 68, 135, 149. See also the *Critique of Judgment*, Ak. 402–08, and cf. 418.]

³⁰⁴ [*mitwirken.*]

³⁰⁵ (†) Which means the same as this: he does not admit faith in miracles into his maxims (either of theoretical or of practical reason), yet without challenging their possibility or actuality.

³⁰⁶ [*Bearbeitung.*]

³⁰⁷ [Or ‘of quite firmly believing in miracles theoretically’: *recht fest an Wunder theoretisch zu glauben.*]

³⁰⁸ [*Einfall.*]

³⁰⁹ It is a common subterfuge of those who hoodwink the credulous with *magical* arts, or at least want to make them have faith in such arts in general, to appeal to the avowal by investigators of nature of their *ignorance*. After all, we are not acquainted, these investigators say, with the *cause* of gravity, of magnetic force, and the like.—Yet we do cognize in sufficient detail the laws of this cause,^a under determinate limitations on the conditions under which alone certain effects occur; and this is enough for a safe rational use of these forces as well as for the explanation of their appearances *secundum quid*,^b i.e., *downward* to the use of these laws, in order to arrange experiences under them; even if not *simpliciter*^c and *upward*, in order to gain insight into the causes themselves of the forces operating according to these laws.—Through this an inner phenomenon of the human understanding also becomes comprehensible: why so-called natural miracles, i.e., sufficiently authenticated although paradoxical appearances, or emerging unexpected characteristics of things which deviate from the natural laws familiar thus far, are apprehended with eagerness and *animate* the mind as long as they are nonetheless regarded as natural, while, on the contrary, the proclamation of

^a [*derselben.*]

^b [According to something.]

^c [Simply.]

a true miracle *dejects* the mind. For, the first open up a prospect of a new acquisition of nourishment for reason, because they hold out the *hope* of discovering new natural laws; the second,^d on the other hand, gives rise to the *worry* of losing even the confidence in the natural laws assumed to be already familiar. But if reason is deprived of the laws of experience, then in such an enchanted world it is no longer of any use whatever, not even for the moral employment therein, in complying with one's duty; for, one no longer knows whether, unbeknown to us, changes do not take place through miracles even in the moral incentives, changes concerning which no one can distinguish whether he ought to attribute them to himself or to another, inscrutable^e cause.—As for those whose power of judgment is attuned in such a way in this regard that they suppose themselves unable to manage without miracles, they believe that they mitigate the offense which reason takes at miracles by assuming that miracles occur only *rarely*. If what they mean is that this lies in the very concept of a miracle (because if such an event happened usually, it would not be declared a miracle),^f then one can perhaps let them get away with this sophistry (of transforming an objective question concerning what the thing is into a subjective one as to what is signified by the word whereby we indicate the thing), and ask again, *how rarely?* Maybe once in a hundred years; or indeed of old, but now no longer at all? Here nothing is determinable for us from the familiarity^g with the object (for, by our own avowal this object is extravagant),^h but only from the necessary maxims of the use of our reason: namely, to admit them either as *daily* occurrences (although hidden under the semblance of natural incidents, or *never*; and, in the latter case, to lay them at the basis neither of our rational explanations nor of the guidelinesⁱ of our actions; and since the first^j is not compatible with reason at all, nothing is left for us but to assume the latter maxim; for, this principle always remains only a maxim for judging, not a theoretical assertion. No one can carry the conceit of his insight so high as to wish to pronounce decisively that the extremely admirable preservation of the species in the plant and animal kingdoms, where every spring each new generation once again exhibits its original undiminished, with all the intrinsic perfection of mechanism and even (as in the plant kingdom) with all the usually^k so delicate beauty of color, without the otherwise so destructive forces of inorganic nature in bad autumn and winter weather being able to harm its^l seed in that regard—that this, I say, is a mere consequence according to natural laws, and whether a direct influence of the creator is not rather required for it each time, this no one can wish to claim to *have insight into*.—However, they are experiences; *for us*, therefore, they are nothing other than natural effects and also *ought* never to be judged otherwise; for, this is demanded by the modesty of reason in its claims; but to go beyond these boundaries is presumptuousness and immodesty in one's claims, even though in asserting miracles people usually purport to evince a humble, self-renouncing way of thinking.

^d [The true miracle: *das zweite*.]

^h [I.e., transcendent: *überschwenglich*.]

^e [*unerforschlich*.]

ⁱ [I.e., maxims: *Maßregeln*.]

^f [Or, possibly, 'not be explicated as a miracle':
für kein Wunder erklärt.]

^j [Admitting miracles as daily occurrences.]

^g [Or 'acquaintance': *Kenntnis*.]

^k [*sonst*, also translated as 'otherwise' below.]

^l [I.e., that of the generation (*Zeugung*): *jener*; this could also mean 'their,' in which case it would refer back to the species.]

PHILOSOPHICAL DOCTRINE OF RELIGION

91

THIRD PIECE

93

THE VICTORY OF THE GOOD OVER THE EVIL PRINCIPLE AND THE FOUNDING OF A KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH

The struggle in which every morally well-meaning human being must, under the lead of the good principle, hold his own in this life against the challenges of the evil principle can yet, no matter how hard he tries, provide him with no greater advantage than liberation¹ from the *dominion* of the evil principle. To become free, to “be unburdened of the servitude under the law of sins, in order to live for justice,”² this is the highest gain that he can achieve. He nonetheless continues to remain exposed to the attacks of the evil principle; and to assert his freedom, which is constantly being challenged, he must henceforth always remain armed for struggle.

However, the human being is in this dangerous state through his own fault;³ consequently, he is *obligated* at least to apply his power, as much as he is able, in order to extricate himself from it. But how? That is the question.—If he looks around for the causes and circumstances that bring this danger upon him and keep him in it, he can easily convince himself that they come to him not so much from his own crude nature, insofar as he is there separately, as from human beings with whom he stands in relation or association.⁴ It is not the inducements of that nature that arouse what should properly be called the *passions*, which wreak such great ravages in his originally good predisposition. His needs are only minor, and his state of mind in attending to them is moderate and tranquil. He is poor (or considers himself to be so)⁵ insofar as he worries that other human beings might consider him to be so and might despise him for it. Envy, lust for power, greed, and the hostile inclinations

94

¹ [*Befreiung*; just below, ‘free’ translates *frei*.]

² [Cf. Rom. 6:18: “Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”]

³ [*Schuld*, which also means ‘guilt.’]

⁴ [Or ‘connection’: *Verbindung*.]

⁵ [This may be an indirect attempt on Kant’s part to give a moral meaning to the Beatitudes, Matt. 5:3–11, (“Blessed are the poor in spirit . . .” etc.)]

linked with these, assail his intrinsically contented⁶ nature at once *when he is among human beings*; and there is not even any need to presuppose these latter as already sunk in evil and as examples misleading others: it suffices that they are there, that they surround him, and that they are human beings, in order to corrupt one another in their moral predisposition and make one another evil. Now, if no means could be discovered for establishing a union aiming quite expressly⁷ at the prevention of this evil and the furtherance of the good in the human being, as a subsisting and ever expanding society that were set up merely for the preservation of morality and that acted with united forces⁸ in opposition to evil, then this would, however much the individual human being might have done to elude evil's dominion, still keep him unceasingly in danger of relapsing under this dominion.—The dominion of the good principle, insofar as human beings can affect it, is therefore, as far as we can see, not attainable except through the establishment and expansion of a society according to laws of virtue and, for their sake, a society which reason makes it a task and a duty for all of humankind in its [whole] range to resolve upon.—For thus alone can one hope for a victory of the good principle over the evil one. Morally legislative reason, apart from the laws that it prescribes to each individual, also hangs out in addition a flag of virtue as a point of union for all who love the good, that they may assemble beneath it and thus first gain the upper hand over the evil that untiringly challenges them.

A linking⁹ of human beings under bare laws of virtue as prescribed by this idea may be called an *ethical* society and, insofar as these laws are public, an *ethically civil*¹⁰ (in contrast to a *juridically civil*)¹¹ society, or an *ethical community*. This ethical community may subsist¹² in the midst of a political community and may even consist of all the members thereof (nor indeed could it, if the political community did not lie at the basis, be brought about by human beings at all). But it has a principle of union that is special and is peculiar to it (virtue) and hence also a form and [public] constitution¹³ essentially distinct from that¹⁴ of the political community. There is nonetheless a certain analogy between the two, considered as two

⁶ [*genügsam*. In referring here to the “contented” human being—in contrast to the “morally well-meaning” one, whose “needs are only minor,” Kant is probably thinking of St. Paul in Phil. 4:12: “I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.”]

⁷ [*eigentlich*.]

⁸ [Or ‘powers’: *Kräfte*.]

⁹ [Or ‘connection’: *Verbindung*.]

¹⁰ [Or ‘ethico-civil’: *ethisch-bürgerlich*.]

¹¹ [Or ‘juridico-civil’: *rechtlich-bürgerlich*. Cf. below, Ak. VI, 140 incl. br. n. 445.]

¹² [*bestehen*, which occurs only once and is also translated by ‘consist,’ below.]

¹³ [*Verfassung*. I am inserting ‘public’ here because I have sometimes had to use ‘constitution’ to translate *Beschaffenheit* and I want to make clear that this is not what it means here.]

95 communities as such, with regard to which the ethical community can also be called an *ethical state*, i.e., a *kingdom of virtue* (of the good principle). The idea of this state has, in human reason, its entirely well-based objective reality (as the duty to unite to form such a state), even though subjectively one could never hope concerning the good will of human beings that they would decide to work in concord toward that purpose.¹⁵

DIVISION ONE

PHILOSOPHICAL PRESENTATION OF THE VICTORY OF THE GOOD PRINCIPLE AMID THE FOUNDING OF A KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH

I. On the Ethical State of Nature

A *juridically civil* (political) *situation*¹⁶ is the relation of human beings among one another insofar as they are jointly subject¹⁷ to public juridical laws¹⁸ (which are, one and all, coercive laws). An ethically civil situation is one where they are united under laws free from coercion,¹⁹ i.e., bare *laws of virtue*.

Now, just as the juridically civil situation [or state] is contrasted with the legal²⁰ (but not, therefore, always legitimate)²¹ or, i.e., with the *juridical*²² *state of nature*, so the ethically civil situation [or state] is distinguished from the *ethical state of nature*. In both [states of nature] each person legislates to himself,²³ and there is no external law to which he, along with everyone else, might recognize himself to be subjected.²⁴ In both each person is his own judge, and there is no *public* power-holding²⁵ authority that might with legal force²⁶ determine, according to laws, what is each person's duty in occurring cases, and bring those laws to the point of being carried out universally.

¹⁴ [Kant's use of (in the genitive) 'that' (*der*) instead of 'those' (*denen*) suggests that he is equating the form and the constitution (*Verfassung*).]

¹⁵ [Or 'end': *Zweck*; but see Ak. VI, 34 br. n. 152c.]

¹⁷ ['are . . . subject' translates *unter . . . stehen*.]

¹⁸ [*Rechtsgesetzen*.]

¹⁶ [Or, in that sense, 'state': *Zustand*.]

¹⁹ [*zwangsfrei*.]

²⁰ [*rechtlich*, which elsewhere in this context I translate as 'juridical' (translating it so here would create a redundancy).]

²¹ [Or 'rightful': *rechtmäßig*.]

²² [*juridisch*.]

²³ [Literally, 'gives the law to himself': *gibt . . . sich selbst das Gesetz*.]

²⁴ [*unterworfen*.]

²⁵ [*machthabend*.]

²⁶ [Or 'with legal power': *rechtskräftig*.]

In an already subsisting political community, all political citizens are, as such, nonetheless in the *ethical state of nature* and are entitled²⁷ also to remain in it, because for the political community to coerce its citizens to enter into an ethical community would be a contradiction (*in adjecto*),²⁸ since the latter—in its very concept—carries with it freedom from coercion. Every political community may indeed wish that a dominion²⁹ over minds according to laws of virtue may be found in it as well; for where the coercive means of dominion are not sufficient, because a human judge cannot see through the inside of other human beings, there the virtuous attitudes³⁰ would bring about what is required. But woe³¹ to the legislator who sought to bring about through coercion a [public] constitution directed to ethical purposes!³² For he would thereby not only bring about precisely the opposite of the ethical purposes, but would also undermine his political ones and render them insecure.—Hence the citizen of the political community remains completely free, as far as this community’s legislative authority is concerned, as to whether he wants in addition to enter, with other fellow citizens, into an ethical union as well, or prefers to remain in the natural state of this kind.³³ Only insofar as an ethical community must nonetheless rest on *public* laws and involve a constitution based on them, will those who voluntarily³⁴ obligate themselves to enter into this situation have to put up from the political power, not with commands as to how they ought inwardly to set up or not set up this constitution, but certainly with limitations, namely to the condition that there be nothing in the constitution that conflicts with the duty of its members as *citizens of the state*—even though, if the ethical [self-]obligation is of a genuine kind, the latter issue is of no concern anyway.

96

Moreover, because the duties of virtue pertain to all of humankind,³⁵ the concept of an ethical community is always referred to the ideal of the whole of all human beings,³⁶ and this is what distinguishes it from the concept of a political community. Hence a multitude of human beings united in that aim cannot yet be called the ethical community itself, but can be called only a particular society that strives toward agreement with all human beings (indeed, agreement of all finite rational

²⁷ [*berechtigt.*]

²⁸ [A contradiction “in what [term] is added,” i.e., a contradiction in terms.]

²⁹ [Or ‘mastery’: *Herrschaft.*]

³⁰ [*Gesinnungen.* Concerning my rendering of *Gesinnung*, see above, Ak. VI, 13 br. n. 95.]

³¹ [Kant’s “woe” seems clearly an allusion to the series of “woes” that Jesus exclaims, for the same kind of reason cited here, in Matt. 28:1–29.]

³² [Or ‘ends’: *Zwecke*; but see Ak. VI, 34 br. n. 152c.]

³³ [I.e., of the ethical kind.]

³⁴ [*freiwillig.*]

³⁵ [*das ganze menschliche Geschlecht.*]

³⁶ [*eines Ganzen aller Menschen.*]

beings), in order to establish an absolute ethical whole of which each partial society is only a presentation or a schema, because each one can itself be presented in turn—in relation to others of this kind—as being in the ethical state of nature, along with all the imperfections thereof (as is indeed likewise the case with different political states that are not connected by a public law of nations).³⁷

II. The Human Being Ought to Leave the Ethical State of Nature in order to Become a Member of an Ethical Community

97 Just as the juridical state of nature is a situation [or state] of war of everyone against everyone, so also is the ethical state of nature a situation [or state] of incessant aggression³⁸ against the good principle, which resides in every human being, by the evil that is found in him and also in everyone else. Human beings³⁹ (as was noted above)⁴⁰ reciprocally corrupt one another's moral predisposition, and—even with the good will of each individual human being—because of the lack of a principle uniting them they deviate, through their discords, just as if they were *instruments of evil*, from the common purpose of the good, and put one another in danger of falling into the hands of the dominion of evil again. Now, just as, furthermore, the situation of a lawless external (brutish) freedom and independence from coercive laws is a situation of injustice and of war of everyone against everyone, which the human being ought to leave in order to enter into a politically civil situation,⁴¹ so

³⁷ [Literally, 'law of peoples'; i.e., international law: *Völkerrecht*. In his *Perpetual Peace* (see above, Ak. VI, 34 br. n. 152f), Kant later elaborated how such a law of nations might work.]

³⁸ [*Befehdung*—"befeudung," as it were.]

³⁹ [Kant merely says 'who': *die*.]

⁴⁰ [Ak. VI, 94.]

⁴¹ Hobbes' thesis,^a *status hominum naturalis est bellum omnium in omnes*,^b has no other defect except that it^c should say, *est status belli*,^d etc. For, even if one does not concede that actual *hostilities* always prevail among human beings who are not subject to external and public laws, yet their *situation* (*status iuridicus*),^e i.e., the relation in and through which they

^a [*Satz*. Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679). *De Cive* (On the Citizen), a critical edition by Howard Warren (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), ch. i, § XII.]

^b ["The natural state of human beings is war of everyone against everyone." In Hobbes' own words: "[T]he naturall state of men, before they entr'd into Society, was a meer War, and that not simply, but a War of all men, against all men." Kant's quote is contracted from the original: ". . . *negari non potest, quin status hominum naturalis antequam in societatem coiretur, bellum fuerit; neque hoc simpliciter, sed bellum omnium in omnes*." I.e., ". . . it cannot be denied that the natural state of human beings, before they entered into society, was war, nor war simply, but a war of everyone against everyone."]

^c [Roughly, the text; the subject of 'it' is indefinite: *es*.]

^d [Is a state of war.]

^e [Juridical situation (*or* state).]

is the ethical state of nature a *public* reciprocal aggression against the principles of virtue⁴² and a situation [or state] of inner immorality⁴³ which the natural human being ought to endeavor to get out of as soon as possible.

Now, here we have a duty of its own kind,⁴⁴ not of human beings toward human beings, but of humankind toward itself. For, every genus of rational beings is determined objectively, in the idea of reason, for a common purpose, namely the furtherance of the highest good as a common good. However, the highest moral⁴⁵ good is not brought about through the endeavor of the individual person for his moral perfection alone, but requires that those rational beings unite⁴⁶ for this same purpose to form a whole as a system of well-meaning human beings, in which and through the unity of which alone this good can come about; yet the idea of such a whole, as the idea of a universal republic according to laws of virtue, is an idea entirely distinct from all moral laws (which concern what we know to be in our power), namely to work toward a whole of which we cannot know whether, as such, it is also in our power.⁴⁷ Thus the duty is, according to its kind and its principle, distinct from all others.—The reader is probably⁴⁸ already suspecting in

98

are capable of rights (capable of their acquisition or maintenance), is a situation in which each human being wants to be himself the judge concerning what is to be right for him^f as against others, yet also has for this no security^g from others nor gives any to them, each having only his own power^h—which is a situation [or state] of war, in which everyone must constantly be armed against everyone. Hobbes' second proposition,ⁱ *exeundum esse e statu naturali*,^j is a consequence of the first; for, this situation [or state] is a continual infraction of the rights of all others through the presumption of one's being the judge in one's own cause^k and leaving other human beings no security concerning their interest^l except merely their own power of choice.

^f [*ihm . . . recht sei.*]

^h [Or 'force': *Gewalt.*]

^g [*Sicherheit* (which can also mean 'assurance'); likewise below.]

ⁱ [*Ibid.*, ch. i, XIII.]

^j ["One [human beings] must leave the state of nature." In Hobbes' words: "And so it happens that through feare of each other we think it fit to rid our selves of this condition."]

^k [*Sache.*]

^l [*des Ihrigen.*]

⁴² [By the evil that is found in each individual person and, in each case, also in everyone else.]

⁴³ [*Sittenlosigkeit.*]

⁴⁴ [I.e., a unique kind of duty.]

⁴⁵ [*sittlich* here, *moralisch* below.]

⁴⁶ [I believe that Wobbermin (Ak. VI, 510) is correct in construing *derselben* as referring back to *vernünftiger Wesen* (rather than to *Person*).]

⁴⁷ [*Gewalt.*]

⁴⁸ [*Man wird.*]

advance that this duty will need the presupposition of another idea, namely that of a higher moral being through whose universal arrangement the forces⁴⁹ of the individuals, insufficient by themselves, are united to yield a common effect. First of all, however, we must follow the guidance⁵⁰ of that moral need as such and see where this will lead us.

*III. The Concept of an Ethical Community Is the Concept of a **People of God** under Ethical Laws*

If an ethical community is to come about, then all individuals must be subjected to a public legislation, and all laws that obligate them must be capable of being regarded as commands of a common legislator.⁵¹ Now, if the community to be established were intended to be a *juridical* one, then the multitude uniting to form a whole would have to be itself the legislator (of the constitutional laws), because legislation starts from the principle *to limit the freedom of everyone to the conditions under which it is consistent with the freedom of everyone else according to a universal law*,⁵² and here the universal will thus establishes a legal external coercion. But if the community is to be an *ethical* one, then the people itself, as such, cannot be regarded as legislative. For in such a community, all the laws are aimed quite expressly at furthering the *morality* of actions (which is something *internal* and hence cannot be subject to public human laws), whereas the public laws, by contrast—this would amount to a juridical community—are aimed only at the *legality* of actions, which is obvious,⁵³ and not at (inner) morality, which alone is at issue here. There must therefore be someone, other than the people, who could be indicated as being publically legislative for an ethical community. However, ethical laws also cannot be thought as emanating *originally* merely from the will of this superior (as statutes that would, perhaps, not be obligatory if his order had not been issued beforehand), because then they would not be ethical laws, and the duty conforming to them would be not a free virtue but a legal duty capable of being coerced.⁵⁴ Therefore only such a one can be thought as supreme legislator of an

⁴⁹ [Or 'powers': *Kräfte*.]

⁵⁰ [More literally, "guideline": *Leitfaden*.]

⁵¹ [Or 'lawgiver': *Gesetzgeber*.]

⁵² This is the principle of all external right.^a

^a [Or, in that general sense, 'law' (as distinguished from 'law' in the sense of *Gesetz*, as in 'universal law,' in the text above): *Recht*. For Kant's later elaboration of this right and all it involves, cf. *Metaphysics of Morals*, Ak. VI, 230–31.]

⁵³ [*in die Augen fällt*.]

⁵⁴ [Literally, 'capable of coercion': *zwangsfähig*; in other words, enforceable (*erzwingbar*).]

ethical community, in regard to whom all *true duties*, hence also the ethical duties,⁵⁵ must *simultaneously* be conceived⁵⁶ as his commands, who must thus also be one who knows the heart,⁵⁷ in order to be able to see even through the innermost [core] of the attitudes of everyone and, as it must be in any community, to let everyone have whatever his deeds are worth. This, however, is the concept of God as a moral ruler of the world. Therefore an ethical community is thinkable only as a people under divine commands, i.e., as a *people of God*,⁵⁸ and *according to laws of virtue*.

One could, presumably, also think a people of God *according to statutory laws*, in other words, according to laws such that what matters in the compliance with them is not the morality but merely the legality of the actions; this would be a juridical community, of which God would indeed be the legislator (hence the *constitution* of it would be a theocracy), but human beings, as priests who receive his 100

⁵⁵ As soon as something is cognized as a duty, even if it were a duty imposed by the bare power of choice^a of a human legislator, obeying it is yet simultaneously a divine command.^b The statutory civil laws can indeed not be called divine laws; but if they are legitimate, then their *observance* is simultaneously a divine command. The proposition, "One must obey God more than human beings,"^c means only that when human beings command something that is in itself evil (directly opposed to the moral law),^d one need not,^e and ought not to, obey them. Conversely, however, if a politically civil law that in itself is not immoral is opposed with a supposed divine statutory law, then there is a basis for regarding the latter as supposititious;^f for, it conflicts with a clear duty, yet even the assertion that it is indeed actually a divine command can never be authenticated sufficiently through empirical characteristics in order that one may^g transgress, in conformity with that command, a duty that otherwise holds.^h

^a [*Willkür*. Kant says 'bare' because the power of choice in question is human rather than divine.]

^b [Kant is alluding here to a biblical maxim. In Rom. 13:1–3, Paul says: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. . . ."]

^c [Acts 5:29. In the King James version "Then Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men."]

^d [*Sittengesetz*.]

^e [*nicht . . . darf*, which in contemporary German would mean 'must not.']

^f [*untergeschoben*.]

^g [*dürfen*, here in the sense of its being permissible.]

^h [Literally, 'subsists': *bestehen*.]

⁵⁶ [Or 'presented': *vorge stellt*.]

⁵⁷ [Cf. Acts 1:24: "Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all *men*, . . ."; Acts 15:8: "And God, which knoweth the hearts . . ."; and Luke 16:15: "but God knoweth your hearts . . ." Cf. Psalms 7:10.]

⁵⁸ [1 Pet. 2:10: "Which in time past *were* not a people, but *are* now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." Cf. Rom. 9:25.]

commands directly from him, would carry on an aristocratic *government*. But such a constitution, whose existence and form rest entirely on historical bases, is not the one that amounts to the problem of pure, morally legislative reason, whose solution alone we have to bring about here. It will be considered in the historical division,⁵⁹ as an institution in terms of politically civil laws, whose legislator, although God, is yet external; here, on the other hand, we are concerned only with a constitution whose legislation is merely internal, namely a republic under laws of virtue, i.e., with a people of God “that would be zealous of good works.”⁶⁰

Such a *people* of God can be contrasted with the idea of a *gang* of the evil principle, a union of those who partake of the principle in order to spread evil—evil being concerned not to let that other union come about, even though here too the principle challenging the virtuous attitudes resides likewise within ourselves and is conceived only graphically⁶¹ as an external power.

IV. The Idea of a People of God Cannot (by Human Arrangement) Be Carried Out Except in the Form of a Church

The sublime, never completely attainable idea of an ethical community diminishes greatly under human hands, namely to an institution that is capable, at best, of conceiving purely only the form of this community, but in regard to the means for establishing such a whole is greatly restricted by conditions of the sensible human nature. But how can one expect something completely straight to be built from such crooked wood?⁶²

101 Founding a moral people of God is, therefore, a work whose execution can be expected not from human beings but only from God himself. However, the human being is still not permitted, on that account, to be inactive with regard to this task and to let providence reign,⁶³ as if each person might⁶⁴ pursue only his moral private concern but leave the whole of the concern of humankind (in terms of its moral vocation) to a higher wisdom. He must, on the contrary, proceed in such a way as if everything depended on him, and only on this condition may he hope that a higher wisdom will bestow completion⁶⁵ upon his well-intentioned effort.

⁵⁹ [Below, Ak. VI, 124–36.]

⁶⁰ [Titus 2:14; cf. above, Ak. VI, 82 incl. br. n. 246.]

⁶¹ [*bildlich*.]

⁶² [Cf. *Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View*, Proposition VI: Ak. VIII, 23.]

⁶³ [*walten*.]

⁶⁴ [Or ‘were allowed to’: *dürfe*.]

⁶⁵ [Or ‘perfection’: *Vollendung*.]

The wish of all well-meaning human beings is, therefore, “that the kingdom of God come, that his will be done on earth;”⁶⁶ but what do they now have to arrange so that this shall be done with them?

An ethical community under divine moral legislation is a *church*, which, insofar as it is not an object of possible experience, is called the *invisible church* (a bare idea, of the union⁶⁷ of all righteous persons under the divine direct but moral government of the world, serving as an archetype for any such government to be founded by human beings). The *visible church* is the actual union of human beings to form a whole that harmonizes with that ideal. Insofar as any society under public laws carries with it a subordination of its members (in the relation of those who obey the society’s laws to those who are concerned with⁶⁸ the laws’ observance), the multitude united to form that whole (of the church) is the *congregation* under its superiors, who (called teachers, or also shepherds of souls)⁶⁹ only administer the tasks of the community’s⁷⁰ invisible sovereign and are, in this reference, one and all called *servants* of the church, just as in the political community the visible sovereign sometimes calls himself the supreme servant of the state, even though he recognizes not a single human being above himself (and usually not even the people as a whole). The true (visible) church is the one that exhibits the (moral) kingdom of God on earth, as much as this can be done by human beings. The requirements, and hence also the marks, of the true church are the following:⁷¹

1. Its *universality* and consequently numerical unity, the predisposition for which it must contain within itself: namely that, even though divided into contingent opinions and at variance, yet with regard to the essential aim it is built on such principles as must lead it necessarily to the universal union⁷² into a single church (hence no denominational schism⁷³).

⁶⁶ [Matt. 6:10: “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven.” Luke 11:2: “And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.”]

⁶⁷ [Or ‘unification’: *Vereinigung*; likewise below.]

⁶⁸ [*auf* . . . *halten*.]

⁶⁹ [I.e., pastors: *Seelenhirten*.]

⁷⁰ [*derselben*. Grammatically, this could also refer to ‘multitude’ (*Menge*), or to ‘society’ (*Gesellschaft*), or even to ‘church’ (*Kirche*).]

⁷¹ [Kant’s characterization follows the table of categories; see the *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 80/B 106. Wobbermin, who does not mention this link to the categories, says (Ak. VI, 504), “The characterization below provides an exegesis of the four ancient attributes of the church: *una, sancta, catholica, apostolica* [one, holy, catholic, apostolic].”]

⁷² [Or ‘unification’: *Vereinigung*.]

⁷³ [*Sektenspaltung*. In Kant’s time, *Sekte* meant usually no more than ‘denomination.’ Cf., however, below.]

- 102
2. Its *character*⁷⁴ (quality); i.e., *purity*:⁷⁵ union under no incentives other than moral ones (cleansed⁷⁶ of the imbecility⁷⁷ of superstition and the madness of fanaticism).
 3. Its *relation*⁷⁸ under the principle of *freedom*, the internal relation of its members among one another as well as the external relation of the church to the political power, both in a *free state*⁷⁹ (hence neither a *hierarchy* nor an *illuminatism*, a kind of *democracy* by special inspirations that may differ from those of other persons according to the mind of each).
 4. Its *modality*, *unchangeability* according to its *constitution*—yet with the exemption⁸⁰ of the contingent arrangements,⁸¹ to be altered according to time and circumstances, which concern merely the church's *administration*—for which it surely must also contain the secure principles within itself (in the idea of its purpose)⁸² already a priori (hence under original laws, once publicly made precept[s] as if through a book of laws; not under chosen⁸³ symbols, which, because they lack authenticity, are contingent, exposed to contradiction, and changeable).

Therefore, an ethical community, regarded as a church, i.e., as a mere *representative* of a state of God,⁸⁴ has properly no constitution that is similar, according to its principles, to the political one. The constitution in it is neither *monarchic* (under a pope or patriarch), nor *aristocratic* (under bishops and prelates), nor *democratic* (as of sectarian *illuminates*).⁸⁵ It could best still be compared with the constitution of a household (family) under a common—though invisible—moral father, insofar as his holy son, who knows his father's will and simultaneously stands in blood-relationship with all the members of the household, takes his father's place in acquainting them more closely with his will; and the members therefore honor the father in him and thus enter with one another into a voluntary, universal, and continuing unity of heart.

⁷⁴ [*Beschaffenheit*.]

⁷⁵ [*Lauterkeit*.]

⁷⁶ [Literally, 'purified': *gereinigt*.]

⁷⁷ [*Blödsinn*; below, 'madness' translates *Wahnsinn*.]

⁷⁸ [Literally, 'The relation': *Das Verhältnis*.]

⁷⁹ [I.e., in a republic: *Freistaat*.]

⁸⁰ [More literally, 'reservation': *Vorbehalt*.]

⁸¹ [Or 'regulations': *Anordnungen*.]

⁸² [Or 'end': *Zweck*; but see Ak. VI, 34 br. n. 152c.]

⁸³ [*willkürlich*.]

⁸⁴ [I.e., of a state ruled by God: *eines Staats Gottes*.]

⁸⁵ [*sektierischer Illuminaten*.]

V. *The Constitution of Any Church Always Starts from Some
Historical (Revelation) Faith,⁸⁶ Which May Be Called
Church Faith,⁸⁷ and This Is Best Founded⁸⁸
on a Holy Scripture*

To be sure, *pure religious faith* is the only one that can establish a universal church; for, it is a bare rational faith, which can be communicated to everyone in order to convince him; by contrast, a historical faith based merely on facts⁸⁹ can spread its influence no farther than the reports relating to⁹⁰ the ability of judging their credibility can reach according to the circumstances of time and place. However, a particular weakness of human nature bears the blame for [the fact] that this pure faith can never be counted on as much as it presumably deserves, namely to establish⁹¹ a church on it alone. 103

Human beings, conscious of their incapacity⁹² in cognizing suprasensible things, although paying⁹³ all honor to that [pure religious] faith (as the faith which must be convincing for them universally), yet cannot easily be convinced that steadfast diligence directed toward a morally good way of life is all that God demands of human beings in order to be to him pleasing subjects in his kingdom. They cannot readily think of their obligation⁹⁴ except as one to some *service* that they have to render to God, where what matters is not so much the intrinsic⁹⁵ moral worth of the actions as, rather, that they are rendered to God in order that the human beings, however morally indifferent the actions may be in themselves, may yet please⁹⁶ God at least through passive obedience. They cannot get it into their heads that, when they fulfill their duties toward human beings (themselves and others), they are precisely thereby also carrying out divine commands; that, therefore, in all their doing and refraining, insofar as these have reference to morality, they are *constantly in the service of God*; and that it is indeed absolutely impossible to serve God more closely in another way (because, after all, they cannot act upon and have influence upon any beings other than merely those of the world, but not upon God). Now, every great lord of the world has a special need to be *honored*⁹⁷ by his subjects and *glorified* by them through displays of submissiveness, without which he cannot expect from them as much compliance⁹⁸ with his orders as he presumably needs in order to be able to rule over them. In addition, the human being, however

⁸⁶ [I.e., some historical faith in revealed religion: *historischen (Offenbarungs-) Glauben.*]

⁸⁷ [Or 'Ecclesiastical Faith': *Kirchenglaube.*]

⁸⁸ [*gründen.*]

⁸⁹ [*Facta.*]

⁹⁰ [*in Beziehung auf.*]

⁹¹ [Or 'found': *gründen.*]

⁹² [Or 'inability': *Unvermögen.*]

⁹³ [*widerfahren lassen.*]

⁹⁴ [*Verpflichtung.*]

⁹⁵ [*inner.*]

⁹⁶ [*gefallen.*]

⁹⁷ [*geehrt* (from *ehren*).]

⁹⁸ [*Folgsamkeit*; I elsewhere use 'compliance' to translate the nearly synonymous *Befolgung*.]

reasonable⁹⁹ he may be, also does always find a direct liking¹⁰⁰ in attestations of honor. Hence duty is treated, insofar as it is simultaneously a divine command, as the pursuit of a *concern* of God, not of the human being, and thus arises the concept of a religion of *service of God*¹⁰¹ instead of the concept of a pure moral religion.

104 Since all religion consists in our regarding God, for all our duties, as the legislator to be universally venerated,¹⁰² what is at issue in the determination¹⁰³ of religion, as regards our conduct in conformity with it, is to know *how God wills*¹⁰⁴ to be venerated (and obeyed).—However, a divine legislative will commands either through laws that in themselves are *merely statutory*, or through *purely moral* laws. With regard to the latter laws, everyone can from himself cognize,¹⁰⁵ through his own reason, the will of God which lies at the basis of his religion; for, the concept of the deity properly arises only from the consciousness of these laws and the need of reason to assume a power¹⁰⁶ that can procure for them the entire effect, possible in a world, that harmonizes with the moral final purpose. The concept of a divine will determined merely according to purely moral laws,¹⁰⁷ just as it allows us to think only *one* God, so it also allows us to think only *one* religion that is purely moral.¹⁰⁸ But if we assume statutory laws of this will and posit religion in our compliance with them, then acquaintance¹⁰⁹ with these laws is possible not through our own bare reason¹¹⁰ but only through revelation; and this revelation, whether it be given to each individual secretly or publicly, so as to be propagated among human beings through tradition or scripture, would be a *historical* faith, not a *pure rational* faith.—However, even if one were to assume statutory divine laws (which can be cognized as obligatory not on their own but only as revealed divine will), still the pure *moral* legislation whereby the will of God is originally inscribed in our hearts¹¹¹ is not only the inescapable condition of all true religion as such, but it is

⁹⁹ [vernunftvoll.]

¹⁰¹ [einer gottesdienstlichen . . . Religion.]

¹⁰⁰ [Wohlgefallen. Cf. above, Ak. VI, 47 br. n. 256.]

¹⁰² [verehrt (from verehren).]

¹⁰³ [I.e., characterization: Bestimmung.]

¹⁰⁴ [wolle; although this can also mean ‘wants to,’ the reference to the divine will in the next sentence favors the reading adopted here.]

¹⁰⁵ [Or ‘recognize’: erkennen.]

¹⁰⁶ [Or ‘might’: Macht.]

¹⁰⁷ [Literally, ‘determined according to mere purely moral laws.’]

¹⁰⁸ [rein moralisch; above, at the end of the preceding paragraph, ‘of a pure moral religion’ translates einer reinen [rather than rein] moralischen Religion.]

¹⁰⁹ [Kenntnis.]

¹¹⁰ [bloße Vernunft. Here again my rendering of this phrase is supported by Kant’s contrast between religion as based on revelation and as based on reason. See above, Ak. VI, 12 incl. br. n. 76, but above all Stephen Palmquist’s Introduction to this volume.]

¹¹¹ [Cf. above, Ak. VI, 85 incl. the passage from Jer. 31:33 (and related passages from Hebrews) quoted in br. n. 278.]

also that which properly constitutes religion itself, and for which statutory religion can contain only the means to its furtherance and expansion.

Therefore, if the question as to how God wills to be venerated is to be answered in a universally valid way for every human being *regarded merely as a human being*, then there is no hesitation¹¹² that the legislation of his will should be merely *moral*; for, statutory legislation (which presupposes a revelation) can be regarded only as contingent and as one that has not reached, nor can reach, every human being, and hence as not obligatory¹¹³ for human beings as such.¹¹⁴ Therefore, “not they who say Lord! Lord!, but they who do the will of God,”¹¹⁵ hence they who seek to become pleasing to him not through laudation of him (or of his envoy, as a being of divine origin) according to revealed concepts, which not every human being can have, but through a good way of life, regarding which everyone knows his own will—they will be the ones who render to him the true veneration that he demands. 105

But if we consider ourselves obligated¹¹⁶ to behave not merely as human beings but also as *citizens* in a divine state on earth and to work for the existence of such an association¹¹⁷ under the name of a church, then the question as to how God wills to be venerated in a church (as a congregation of God) seems not to be answerable by bare reason,¹¹⁸ but to be in need of a statutory legislation of which we become informed¹¹⁹ only through revelation, hence of a historical faith, which, in contrast to pure religious faith, may be called church faith. For, what counts in pure religious faith is merely that which constitutes the matter of the veneration of God, namely the observance, occurring in a moral attitude, of all duties as his commands. But a church, as the union¹²⁰ of many human beings among as many attitudes¹²¹ to form a moral community, needs a *public* obligation, a certain church form, resting on experiential conditions, that is in itself contingent and manifold and hence cannot be cognized as duty without divine statutory laws. However, determination of this form must not, therefore, immediately be regarded as a task of

¹¹² [Or ‘are no qualms’: *ist kein Bedenken*. To characterize the hesitation, which he is here dismissing, Kant actually goes on to say ‘should not be’ rather than ‘should be’; but his rendering reduces to the one given here, and could—in English—be misunderstood.]

¹¹³ [*verbindend*.]

¹¹⁴ [Or ‘in general’: *überhaupt*.]

¹¹⁵ [Matt 7:21: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”]

¹¹⁶ [*verpflichtet*.]

¹¹⁷ [*Verbindung*.]

¹¹⁸ [*bloße Vernunft*; note again the contrast with (divine) revelation. See above, Ak. VI, 12 incl. br. n. 76, but above all Stephen Palmquist.]

¹¹⁹ [*uns . . . kund werden*.]

¹²¹ [*unter solchen Gesinnungen*.]

¹²⁰ [Or ‘unification’: *Vereinigung*.]

the divine legislator. There is, rather, ground for assuming that it is the divine will that we ourselves carry out the rational idea of such a community and that, although human beings might have attempted many forms of a church with unhappy result, they nonetheless ought not to cease striving after this purpose, if need be through new attempts that avoid as much as possible the mistakes of the previous ones, because this task, which is for them simultaneously a duty, is left entirely to themselves. Therefore, one does not have cause, in establishing some church and [determining its] form, to consider the laws straightforwardly as divine *statutory*¹²² ones; it is, rather, presumptuousness to pass them off as such laws in order to spare oneself the effort of continuing to make improvements on the church's form, or perhaps even a usurpation of higher authority,¹²³ in order—through the pretense of divine authority—to lay a yoke on the multitude by means of church statutes.¹²⁴ Yet it would likewise be self-conceit, in this, simply to deny that the way in which a church is arranged may perhaps also be a special divine arrangement, if, as far as we can see,¹²⁵ the church is in the greatest agreement¹²⁶ with moral religion, and if, in addition, one cannot readily see how, without the duly prepared advances of the public¹²⁷ in religious concepts, it could all at once have appeared. Now, in this doubtfulness of people concerning the problem whether God or human beings themselves are to establish a church, is proved the propensity of human beings¹²⁸ to a *religion of service of God (cultus)* and—because this religion rests on contingent precepts—to faith in statutory divine laws under the presupposition that over and above¹²⁹ the best way of life (whatever way of life the human being may enter according to the precept of the purely moral religion) there must nonetheless still be added a divine legislation, not cognizable by reason but requiring revelation; and thus consideration is given to veneration of the supreme being directly (not by means of the compliance with his commands, which is already prescribed to us through reason). Now, thus it happens that human beings will never consider the union¹³⁰ to establish a church, and the agreement¹³¹ regarding the form to be given to it, as well as *public* arrangements for the furtherance of the moral element¹³² in religion, to be necessary in themselves, but will consider them necessary only in order, as they say, to serve their God through ceremonies, confessions of faith in revealed laws, and observance¹³³ of precepts belonging to the church's form (which, after all, is itself merely a means), although basically all these observances

¹²² [*statutarisch.*]

¹²³ [*Ansehen* here; *Autorität* below.]

¹²⁴ [*Kirkensatzungen.*]

¹²⁸ [*der letzteren*; although grammatically this could also refer to the church, Kant probably intends the subject to be 'human beings.']

¹²⁹ ['over and above' translates *über.*]

¹³⁰ [*Vereinigung.*]

¹³¹ [More literally, 'uniting': *Einigung.*]

¹²⁵ [*einsehen*; likewise below.]

¹²⁶ [Or 'harmony': *Einstimmung.*]

¹²⁷ [*Publikum*, which can also mean 'audience.']

¹³² [*des Moralischen.*]

¹³³ [*Beobachtung.* Below, 'observances' translates *Observanzen.*]

are morally indifferent actions, yet are considered, precisely because they are to be done merely for his sake, to be pleasing to him all the more. Hence in the fashioning of human beings into an ethical community, church faith naturally¹³⁴ precedes pure religious faith; and *temples* (buildings consecrated to public service of God) came¹³⁵ before *churches* (places of assembly for instruction and invigoration in moral attitudes), *priests* (consecrated stewards¹³⁶ of pious customs) before *clerics*¹³⁷ (teachers of the purely moral religion), and they¹³⁸ also usually still do in the rank and value granted to them by the great multitude.

If, then, it just cannot be changed that¹³⁹ a statutory church faith is added to the pure religious faith as a vehicle¹⁴⁰ of this faith and as a means to the public union of human beings for furthering it, then one must also admit that the unchangeable preservation of this statutory church faith, its universal uniform expansion, and even the respect for the revelation assumed in it can scarcely be provided for sufficiently through *tradition*, but only through *scripture*, which must itself, as revelation to contemporaries and posterity, be in turn an object of deep respect; for the need of human beings requires this, in order for them to be certain of their duty of service of God. A holy book gains the greatest respect even among those (and most of all precisely among those) who cannot read it, or at least cannot frame from it any coherent concept of religion, and all subtle reasoning¹⁴¹ makes no difference against the authoritative pronouncement¹⁴² which strikes down all objections. *Thus it is written.*¹⁴³ This is also why the passages in the book, which are to set forth a point of faith, are called simply *texts*.¹⁴⁴ The designated interpreters of such a scripture, precisely through this their occupation, are themselves consecrated persons, as it were; and history proves that extirpating any faith based on scripture has been impossible, even for the most devastating state revolutions, whereas the faith that based itself on tradition and ancient public observances met its demise simultaneously with the breakdown of the state. Fortunate¹⁴⁵ indeed! if such a book, having come to the hands of human beings, contains, besides its statutes taken as laws of faith, also—in its completeness—the purest moral doctrine of religion that can be brought into the best harmony with those statutes (as vehicles for its introduction). In this case, both on account of the purpose to be attained by this [book], and

107

¹³⁴ (†) Morally it should happen in reverse.

¹³⁵ [Literally, 'were': *waren*.]

¹³⁶ [Or 'administrators': *Verwalter*.]

¹³⁷ [*Geistliche*—literally 'spiritual ones.']

¹³⁸ [Kant probably intends this to refer to the priests *and* to the temples.]

¹³⁹ [*daß nicht*; the *nicht* ('not') is only rhetorical.]

¹⁴⁰ [*Vehikel*.]

¹⁴¹ ['subtle reasoning' translates *Vernünfteln*.]

¹⁴² [*Machtspruch*.]

¹⁴³ [Literally, 'There it is written': *Da steht's geschrieben*.]

¹⁴⁴ [*Sprüche*, which in ordinary contexts means 'sayings.']

¹⁴⁵ An expression for anything wished for, or worthy of being wished for, that we yet can neither foresee, nor bring about through our endeavor according to laws of experience; for which, therefore, if we want to name a basis, we can adduce none other than a benign providence.

because of the difficulty of making the origin of such an illumination of human-kind, come about through this book, comprehensible to oneself according to natural laws, the book can claim the authority equal to that of a revelation.

Let me add now some things¹⁴⁶ that attach to this concept of a revelation faith.¹⁴⁷

108 There is only *one* (true) *religion*; but there can be many kinds of *faith*.—One may say, further, that in the various churches, set apart from each other because of the difference in their kinds of faith, one and the same true religion may nonetheless be found.

It is therefore more fitting (as, indeed, it is actually more customary) to say, This human being is of this or that (Jewish, Mohammedan, Christian, Catholic, Lutheran) *faith*, than, He is of this or that religion. The latter expression should properly not be used even in addressing the general public (in catechisms and sermons); for, it is too scholarly and not understandable¹⁴⁸ for them, as indeed the modern languages also do not supply for it any synonymous word. The common man understands¹⁴⁹ by it always his church faith, which strikes his senses, whereas religion is hidden inwardly and depends on moral attitudes. One does too much honor to most people in saying of them that they confess¹⁵⁰ this or that religion; for they are familiar with¹⁵¹ none and demand none; statutory church faith is all that they mean by this word. Also, the so-called religious controversies that have so often shaken the world and spattered it with blood have never been anything other than squabbles over church faith; and the oppressed person complained in fact not that he was prevented from adhering to his religion (for no external power¹⁵² can do this), but that he was not permitted to pursue it publicly.

Now, when, as usually happens, a church passes itself off as the sole universal church (even though it is based on a particular revelation faith, which, being historical, can on no account be required of everyone), he who does not acknowledge its (particular) church faith at all is called by it an *unbeliever*¹⁵³ and is hated by it wholeheartedly; he who deviates from that faith only in part (in the nonessential), is called by it a *misbeliever*¹⁵⁴ and is at least shunned by it as contagious. If he does in the end confess [allegiance] to the same church, but nonetheless deviates from it on the essentials of its faith (namely on what is turned into these essentials), then

¹⁴⁶ [*einiges.*]

¹⁴⁹ [Or 'means': *versteht.*]

¹⁴⁷ [I.e., a faith in revealed religion: *Offenbarungsglaube.*]

¹⁵⁰ [I.e., declare their faith: *sich . . . bekennen.*]

¹⁴⁸ [*unverständlich.*]

¹⁵¹ [*kennen.*]

¹⁵² [*Gewalt.*]

¹⁵³ [I.e., a person lacking faith: *Ungläubiger.*]

¹⁵⁴ [I.e., person of erroneous faith: *Irrgläubiger.* Similarly below: 'misbelief,' i.e., erroneous faith: *Irrglaube.* An alternative and rather freer translation of *Irrgläubiger* (too free and too general in my view) might be 'dissenter.']

he is called, above all if he spreads his misbelief, a *heretic* [*Ketzer*]¹⁵⁵ and, like a rebel, is regarded as even more punishable¹⁵⁶ than a foreign enemy, and is expelled from the church by an anathema¹⁵⁷ (such as the Romans pronounced on him who crossed the Rubicon contrary to the Senate's consent)¹⁵⁸ and handed over to all the gods of hell. The exclusive rightness of faith¹⁵⁹ claimed by the teachers or heads of a church in point of church faith is called *orthodoxy*, which one could perhaps divide into *despotic (brutal)* and *liberal* orthodoxy.—If a church that passes its church faith off as universally obligatory is to be called a *catholic* one, but a church that takes issue with these pretensions of other churches (even though it would often gladly exercise them itself, if it could) is to be called a *protestant* one, then an attentive observer will encounter many laudable examples of protestant catholics and, on the other hand, even more examples—offensive ones—of arch-catholic protestants; the former are examples of men of an *expansive* way of thinking (even though presumably not that of their church), against whom the latter, with their *restricted* way of thinking, stand out very much indeed, but by no means to their advantage.

¹⁵⁵ The Mongols call *Tibet* (according to the *Alphab[etum] Tibet[anum]* of Georgius, p. 11)^a *Tangut-Chazar*, i.e., the land of house-dwellers—in order to distinguish these from themselves as nomads living in wastelands and under tents—from which arose the name of the Chazars and from this the name of the *Ketzer* [*heretics*];^b for, the Mongols adhered to the Tibetan faith (of the Lamas), which agrees with Manicheism and perhaps also takes its origin from it, and spread it during their incursions in Europe; which is also why for a long time the names *Haeretici* and *Manichaei*^c were in use as synonymous.

^a [Antonio Agostino Giorgi (1711–97), *Alphabetum tibetanum*. (Rome: Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, 1762): *Alphabetum Tibetanum*, transl. and ed. by Peter Lindegger (Rikon/Zürich: Tibet-Institut, 1999–2001.)

^b [As Wobbermin points out (Ak. VI, 504), this etymological explanation is surely incorrect, and *Ketzer* (heretic) is, rather, related to Lombardic *gazzaro* and derived (via Middle Latin *catharus*) from the Greek καθαρός (*katharós*), “pure one.” Cf. Friedrich Kluge, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* (*Etymological Dictionary of the German Language*), 22nd ed. (Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1989), 367, including the references given there. Georgi (Giorgi) tried to prove, in effect, that Lamaism was merely a corrupted form of Christianity; thus he claimed, similarly, that ‘Krishna’ is only a corruption of ‘Christ.’ Much of this work was repudiated by later scholarship.]

^c [Respectively, heretics and Manicheans.]

¹⁵⁶ [I.e., culpable: *strafbar*.]

¹⁵⁷ [Literally, ‘ban-curse’: *Bannfluch*. An anathema is accompanied by excommunication.]

¹⁵⁸ [This was, of course, Julius Caesar, in 49 B.C.]

¹⁵⁹ [*Rechtgläubigkeit*.]

*VI. Church Faith Has Pure Religious Faith
as Its Highest Interpreter*

We have noted that, although a church forgoes the most important mark of its truth, namely that of a legitimate claim to universality, if it bases itself on a revelation faith—which, as a faith that is historical (although spread far, and warranted to the most remote posterity, by scripture), is yet incapable of universal convincing communication¹⁶⁰—nonetheless, because of the natural need of all human beings to demand for the highest concepts of reason and [as] bases [for these concepts]¹⁶¹ always something *sensibly tenable*,¹⁶² i.e., some experiential confirmation and the like (a need which one does actually have to take into account if the intention is to *introduce* a faith universally), some historical church faith must be employed, which one usually also finds to be already at hand.

110 However, in order to reconcile with such an empirical faith—which, as far as one can tell, chance has played into our hands—the foundation of a moral faith (whether this faith be a purpose or only an aid), one requires an interpretation¹⁶³ of the revelation that has come to our hands, i.e., a thoroughgoing construal¹⁶⁴ of it to yield a meaning that harmonizes with the universal practical rules of a pure rational religion. For, the theoretical element¹⁶⁵ of church faith cannot interest us morally, if it does not work toward the fulfillment of all human duties as divine commands (which constitutes what is essential in all religion). To ourselves this interpretation, in view of the text (of the revelation), may often seem forced, and may often actually be forced; and yet this interpretation must, if only the text is capable of bearing¹⁶⁶ it, be preferred to a literal interpretation that either contains within itself absolutely nothing for morality,

¹⁶⁰ [The formulation of this point by Lessing, known as “Lessing’s ugly ditch” (*Lessings garstiger Graben*), was familiar in Kant’s day and is still frequently cited today: “Zufällige Geschichtswahrheiten können der Beweis von notwendigen Vernunftwahrheiten nie werden.” I.e., “Contingent truths of history can never become the proof of necessary truths of reason.” See Lessing’s “Über den Beweis des Geistes und der Kraft” (“On the Proof of the Spirit and the Power”), of 1777, in his *Sämtliche Werke* (Complete works), ed. Karl Lachmann and Franz Muncker; 3rd ed., 23 vols. (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 1979). Cf. *Lessing’s Theological Writings*, ed. Henry Chadwick (London: A. & C. Black, 1956), p. 56. Cf. also Gordon E. Michalson, *Lessing’s “Ugly Ditch”: A Study of Theology and History* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1985).

¹⁶¹ [*zu den höchsten Vernunftbegriffen und Gründen.*]

¹⁶² [*etwas Sinnlich-Haltbares.*]

¹⁶³ [*Auslegung*; likewise below.]

¹⁶⁴ [*Deutung.*]

¹⁶⁵ [*das Theoretische.*]

¹⁶⁶ [*annehmen.*]

or perhaps even acts counter to morality's incentives.¹⁶⁷—It will also be found that all ancient and modern kinds of faith, formulated partly in holy books,

¹⁶⁷ (†) To show this in an example, take Psalms 59:11–16, where one finds a *prayer* for a *revenge* that goes horrendously far.^a *Michaelis* (*Moral*, Part II, p. 202),^b approves of this prayer and adds, “The Psalms are *inspired*; if punishment is begged for^c in them, then this cannot be wrong, and *we ought to have no holier morality than the Bible*. I pause here at this latter expression,^d and ask whether morality must be construed in accordance with the Bible or, rather, the Bible in accordance with morality. Now, without taking into account here^e the passage in the N[ew] T[estament], “It was said by them of old time, etc. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, *bless them that curse you*, etc.”^f how this passage, which is also inspired, can be consistent with that earlier one,^g I shall try either to adapt it to my self-sub-sistent^h moralⁱ principles ([by assuming,] perhaps, that what are meant here are not bodily enemies but, under the symbol of them, the invisible enemies that are far more ruinous to us, namely evil inclinations, which we must wish to bring completely underfoot); or, if this is not practicable, then I shall prefer to assume that this passage is to be understood not in the moral sense at all, but in terms of the relation in which the Jews viewed themselves as standing toward God as their political regent—as is also another passage of the Bible, where it is said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay! saith the Lord,”^j and which is commonly con-

^a [“Slay them not, lest my people forget: scatter them by thy power; and bring them down, O Lord our shield. For the sin of their mouth *and* the words of their lips let them even be taken in their pride: and for cursing and lying *which* they speak. Consume *them* in wrath, consume *them*, that they *may* not *be*: and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob unto the ends of the earth. Selah. And at evening let them return; *and* let them make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city. Let them wander up and down for meat, and grudge if they be not satisfied. But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning: for thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.”]

^b [Johann David Michaelis (1717–91), *Moral* (Morality). See above, Ak. VI, 13 incl. br. n. 86.]

^c [Or ‘asked for’: *bitten*.]

^d [The statement that we ought to have no holier morality than the Bible.]

^e [*einmal*.]

^f [Matt. 5:21–22: “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca [roughly, ‘boor’], shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.” Also Matt. 5:43–44: “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.”]

^g [The prayer for revenge.]

^h [*für sich bestehenden*.]

ⁱ [*sittlich*; below, in ‘moral warning,’ ‘moral’ translates *moralisch*.]

^j [Rom. 12:19–20: “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.” Cf. Deut. 32:35: “To me *belongeth* vengeance and recompence; their foot shall slide in *due* time; for the day of their calamity *is* at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.”]

111 have been dealt with in this way, and that reasonable,¹⁶⁸ well-meaning public teachers have kept on interpreting them until they pretty much¹⁶⁹ brought them, in terms of their essential content, into agreement¹⁷⁰ with the universal moral dogmas.¹⁷¹ The moral philosophers among the *Greeks*, and afterwards among the *Romans*, did pretty much the same with their fictitious¹⁷² doctrine of gods. They did ultimately know how to interpret the coarsest polytheism as mere symbolic presentation¹⁷³ of the properties of the sole divine being, and to provide for the various vicious¹⁷⁴ actions [of the gods], or even for the wild yet beautiful reveries of their poets, a mystical meaning that brought a popular faith (which it would not even have been advisable to extirpate, because perhaps an atheism, still more dangerous to the state, could have arisen from it) close to a moral doctrine understandable and alone profitable to all human beings. The later *Judaism* and even Christianity consist of such partly very forced interpretations,¹⁷⁵ but in both cases¹⁷⁶ for undoubtedly good and for all human beings necessary purposes.¹⁷⁷ The *Mohammedans* know very well (as *Reland* shows)¹⁷⁸ how to provide the description of their paradise, dedicated to all sensuality,¹⁷⁹ with a spiritual meaning, and the *Indians* do the same with the interpretation of their *Vedas*,¹⁸⁰ at least for the more enlightened part

strued as a moral warning against private revenge,^k although it probably only points to the law, which holds in every state, to seek satisfaction for insults^l in the court of law of the sovereign, where, if the judge permits the plaintiff to propose any punishment he wants, no matter how harsh, the plaintiff's thirst for revenge must in no way be regarded as having been approved.

^k [Or 'private vengeance': *Selbstrache*.]

^l [Or 'defamations': *Beleidigungen*.]

¹⁶⁸ [Or 'rational': *vernünftige*.]

¹⁶⁹ [*nachgerade*.]

¹⁷⁰ [Or 'harmony': *Übereinstimmung*.]

¹⁷¹ [Literally, 'propositions of faith': *Glaubenssätzen*.]

¹⁷² [*fabelhaft*.]

¹⁷³ [Or 'conception': *Vorstellung*.]

¹⁷⁴ [Or 'depraved': *lasterhaft*.]

¹⁷⁵ [*Deutungen*; below, 'interpretation' translates *Auslegung*.]

¹⁷⁶ ['in both cases' translates *beides*.]

¹⁷⁷ [Or 'ends': *Zwecke*; but see Ak. VI, 34 br. n. 152c.]

¹⁷⁸ [Adrian Reland (Adriaan Reelant, 1676–1718), Dutch Orientalist, and author of *Hadriani Relandi De religione Mohammedica libri duo* (Adrian Reland's two books on Mohammedan religion). *Editio altera auctior*: (Second, enlarged edition.) (Trajecti ad Rhenum [i.e., Utrecht]: Ex libraria Gulielmi Broedelet, 1717), Bk. II, § XVII. Cf. Wobbermin, Ak. VI, 504.]

¹⁷⁹ [*Sinnlichkeit*, translated elsewhere as 'sensibility'.]

¹⁸⁰ [The most ancient sacred Hindu texts. The term *Veda* is cognate to such Western words as 'wit,' 'wisdom,' 'vision,' 'video,' and 'idea'. The oldest of the *Vedas*, the *Rig Veda* ("Hymn Veda"), dates from ca. 1500 B.C.E.; several other *Vedas* followed. Each *Veda* had four parts: three of them religious; one, the *Upanishads* (roughly, "sessions"), philosophical.]

of their people.¹⁸¹— That this can be done, however, precisely without again and again offending greatly against the literal meaning of the popular faith is due to [the fact] that, long before this faith, the predisposition to moral religion lay hidden in human reason; and although the first crude manifestations thereof aimed merely at their use in the service of God and, for the sake of this, gave rise even to those alleged revelations, yet they did thereby also, although unintentionally,¹⁸² put something of the character of their suprasensible origin even into these inventions.¹⁸³—Nor can one accuse such interpretations of insincerity, so long as one does not wish to assert that the meaning which we give to the symbols of the popular faith or, for that matter, to holy books was indeed throughout intended in this way by these interpretations, but leaves this undecided and assumes only the *possibility* of understanding their authors in this way. For, the final aim even of reading these holy scriptures, or of inquiring into their content, is to make better human beings; but the historical element, which contributes nothing to this, is something which is in itself quite indifferent and with which one can do as one wishes.¹⁸⁴— (Historical faith is, “by itself, dead;”¹⁸⁵ i.e., on its own, considered as a creed,¹⁸⁶ it contains nothing, and also leads to nothing, that might have a moral worth for us).

Therefore, even if a scripture has been accepted as divine revelation, the supreme criterion of it as being such will still be this: “All scripture, inspired in us by God, is useful for instruction, for punishment, for improvement, etc.”¹⁸⁷ and since the latter, namely the moral improvement of human beings, amounts to the proper purpose of all rational religion, this rational religion¹⁸⁸ will also contain the supreme principle of all scriptural interpretation.¹⁸⁹ This religion is “The Spirit of God,

112

¹⁸¹ [According to Bohatec (op. cit. at Ak. VI, 19 br. n. 3), 431 n. 93, Kant—using the translation by Johann S. Ith, *Ezour-Védam, oder der alte Commentar über den Védam*, 87 f., of Jean Calmette’s *L’Ezour-Védam; ou, Ancien commentaire du Védam* (itself the [spurious] translation of the *Yajur Veda* from the Sanskrit; see above, Ak. VI, 19 br. n. 11)—is doubtless referring here to this comment in the introduction to the work by [the Baron de] Sainte-Croix [cf. above, Ak. VI, 19 br. n. 11] on the *Ezour-Védam*: “One must not confuse the “Shastras,” as some of the moderns do, with the four Vedas. *Shast[r]a* actually means science or cognition, explanation, elucidation. According to this derivation, the Shastras can be nothing other than explanations, elucidations of the Vedas. We believe we can say that the intention of their authors was to exhibit the Indian religion from a rational side, to persuade [the reader] that its fables are one and all philosophical allegories . . .”]

¹⁸² [*unvorsätzlich.*]

¹⁸³ [*Dichtungen.*]

¹⁸⁴ [*mit dem man es halten kann, wie man will.*]

¹⁸⁵ [*tot an ihm selber.* See James 2:17: “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.”]

¹⁸⁶ [*Bekentnis.*]

¹⁸⁷ [1 Tim. 3:16: “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”]

¹⁸⁸ [Which has this moral content and purpose: *diese.*]

¹⁸⁹ [Or ‘scriptural exegesis’: *Schriftauslegung.*]

which guides us into all truth.”¹⁹⁰ This spirit, however, is the one which, while *instructing* us, also *invigorates* us—with principles¹⁹¹—at the same time to actions; and, whatever the scripture may yet contain for historical faith, this spirit refers entirely to the rules and incentives of pure moral faith, which alone constitutes—in each church faith—what is religion proper. All investigating and interpreting of scripture must start from the principle that we are to search for this spirit in it, and “eternal life can be found in scripture only insofar as it attests to this principle.”¹⁹²

Now, with this scriptural interpreter there is associated, but as subordinated to him, yet another one, namely the *scriptural scholar*.¹⁹³ The authority of Scripture—as the worthiest, and now in the most enlightened part of the world, the only, instrument for the union of all human beings into one church—amounts to the church faith, which, as popular faith, cannot be neglected, because to the people no doctrine that is based on bare reason¹⁹⁴ seems suitable as an unchangeable standard; they demand divine revelation, and hence also a historical authentication of its authority through the deduction of its origin. Now, human skill¹⁹⁵ and wisdom cannot ascend all the way to heaven in order itself to examine the credentials of the first teacher’s message,¹⁹⁶ but must be content with the marks that, in addition to the content, can still be obtained from the way in which such a faith was introduced, i.e., with human reports, for which one must search gradually in very ancient times and in languages now dead, in order to evaluate them as to their credibility. Hence *scriptural scholarship* will be required to maintain in authority a church based on Holy Scripture, though not a religion (for, religion—to be universal—must always be based on bare reason), even if this scholarship establishes nothing more than that the origin of Scripture contains nothing that would make the assumption of its being a direct divine revelation impossible; this would be sufficient in order for those who suppose that they find special strengthening of their moral faith in this idea,¹⁹⁷ and who therefore gladly assume it, not to be prevented from doing so.—

113

¹⁹⁰ [John 16:13: “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* he shall speak: and he will shew you things to come.”]

¹⁹¹ [*Grundsätze*; below, ‘principle’ (twice) translates *Prinzip*. In this translation, as in my earlier ones of the three Kantian *Critiques*, I render both *Grundsatz* (literally, ‘basic proposition’) and *Prinzip* as ‘principle,’ since Kant does seem to use the two terms interchangeably. Cf. Kant’s *Logic*, Ak. IX, 110, where this interchangeability is made explicit.]

¹⁹² [John 5:39: “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.”]

¹⁹³ [*der Schriftgelehrte*.]

¹⁹⁴ [*bloße Vernunft*; note again the contrast with divine revelation. See above, Ak. VI, 12 incl. br. n. 76; also the Translator’s Preface.]

¹⁹⁵ [Or, in that sense, ‘art’: *Kunst*.]

¹⁹⁷ [Of Scripture as direct divine revelation.]

¹⁹⁶ [I.e., his Scripture: *Sendung*.]

However, not merely the *authentication* of Holy Scripture but also its *interpretation* requires scholarship, and for the same reason. For how is the unscholarly person,¹⁹⁸ who can read it only in translations, to be certain of its meaning? Hence the interpreter, who is familiar with the original language as well, must yet also possess extensive historical knowledge¹⁹⁹ and critical judgment,²⁰⁰ in order to draw from the situation, the mores,²⁰¹ and the opinions (the popular faith) of that time the means through which one can open the church community's understanding.²⁰²

Rational religion and scriptural scholarship are, therefore, the proper appointed interpreters²⁰³ and trustees of a holy document. It is obvious that these absolutely must not²⁰⁴ be hindered, in the public use of their insights and discoveries in this realm, by the secular arm and tied to certain dogmas;²⁰⁵ for otherwise *laypersons* would be compelling *clerics* to join their opinion, which, in fact, they have only from the clerics' instruction. If the state only takes care that there is no lack of scholars and of men with a good reputation in terms of their morality, who administer the whole of the church affairs²⁰⁶ and to whose consciences it entrusts this management, then it has done everything that its duty and authority require. But that the legislator himself should carry these [interpreters]²⁰⁷ into the school and deal with their controversies (which, provided they are not carried on from pulpits, leave the church-public in utter peace)—this is a demand that the public cannot make on him without immodesty, because it is beneath his dignity.²⁰⁸

However, yet a third pretender to the office of interpreter comes forward, one who needs neither reason, nor scholarship, but only an inner *feeling*, to cognize the true meaning and simultaneously the divine origin of Scripture. Now, to be sure, one cannot deny that "he who follows Scripture's teaching and *does* what Scripture prescribes will indeed find that it²⁰⁹ is from God,"²¹⁰ and that the very impulse to good actions and to righteousness in the way of life, which must be felt by the human being who reads Scripture or hears it presented,²¹¹ has to convince him of

¹⁹⁸ [*der Ungelehrte.*]

²⁰¹ [*Sitten.*]

¹⁹⁹ [Or 'acquaintance': *Kenntnis.*]

²⁰² [*Verständnis.*]

²⁰⁰ [Or 'scrutinizing judgment': *Kritik.*]

²⁰³ [*Ausleger.*]

²⁰⁴ [*nicht können*; Kant may have avoided the (to us) more obvious *nicht dürfen*, since in his time this still tended to mean 'need not.']

²⁰⁵ [*Glaubenssätze.*]

²⁰⁶ [*Kirchenwesen.*]

²⁰⁷ [I.e., rational religion and scriptural scholarship.]

²⁰⁸ [Similar points on the relation between church and state are made by Kant—some more elaborately—in the *Metaphysics of Morals*, Ak. VI, 327.]

²⁰⁹ [The subject is still Scripture: *sie.*]

²¹⁰ [John 7:17: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."]

²¹¹ [*ihren Vortrag hört.*]

114 its divinity; for, this impulse is nothing other than the effect of the moral law, the law that fills the human being with deep²¹² respect and that also deserves, on that account, to be regarded as divine command. However, just as one cannot from some feeling infer and ascertain any cognition of laws, and that these are moral, no more and even less can one through a feeling infer and ascertain the secure mark of a direct divine influence. For, more than one cause may occur for the same effect; in this case, however, the mere morality of the law (and of the doctrine), cognized by reason, is the effect's cause;²¹³ and even in the case where this origin is merely possible it is one's duty to give it this latter interpretation,²¹⁴ if one does not want to leave the door wide open to any fanaticism and to deprive even the unambiguously moral feeling, through its kinship with any other fanciful feeling, of its dignity.—Feeling, if the law from which or, for that matter, by which it occurs²¹⁵ is familiar in advance, is something that each person has only on his own and cannot impute to others; hence he also cannot extol it as a touchstone for the genuineness of a revelation; for, it teaches absolutely nothing, but contains only the way in which the subject is affected in regard to his pleasure or displeasure,²¹⁶ on which no cognition whatever can be based.—

There is, therefore, no standard of church faith except Scripture, and no interpreter of this faith other than pure *rational religion* and *scriptural scholarship* (which pertains to the historical element of Scripture). Of these interpreters,²¹⁷ only the first is *authentic*, and valid for the whole world; but the second is only *doctrinal*, its aim being to transform the church faith for a certain people at a certain time into a system that is determinate and keeps itself stable.²¹⁸ But with regard to church faith, it cannot be avoided that historical faith ultimately becomes a mere faith in scriptural scholars and their insight. This does not, indeed, particularly do honor to human nature, but is nonetheless made good²¹⁹ by public freedom of thought, to which human nature²²⁰ is all the more entitled since only because scholars expose their interpretations to everyone's examination, but themselves simulta-

²¹² [*inniglich.*]

²¹³ [I.e., our ability to come up with a moral interpretation is the cause that justifies our inference that a given scriptural passage can be regarded as divine revelation.]

²¹⁴ [I.e., even in passages where a moral interpretation is merely possible, the church-goer's duty is to give it such an interpretation, rather than to depend on mere feeling as the basis for regarding the text as divinely inspired.]

²¹⁵ [*erfolgen.*]

²¹⁶ [*Lust oder Unlust.*]

²¹⁷ [*Ausleger.* Below, 'the first' and 'the second' (*der erstere, der zweite*), refer back to this noun.]

²¹⁸ [*beständig.*]

²¹⁹ [Or 'made up' or 'redressed': *wiederum gut gemacht.*]

²²⁰ [*diese.*]

neously also remain always open and receptive to better insight, can they count on the community's confidence in their decisions.

VII. *The Gradual Transition of Church Faith to the Autarchy²²¹ of Pure Religious Faith Is the Approach of the Kingdom²²² of God* 115

The mark of the true church is its *universality*;²²³ but the characteristic of this, in turn, is the church's necessity and its determinability that is possible in only one way. Now, historical faith (which is based on revelation as experience) has only particular validity, namely for those whom the history on which it is based has reached, and, like all experiential cognition, it contains within itself the consciousness not that the object believed in *must* be so and not otherwise, but only that it *is* so;²²⁴ hence it contains at the same time the consciousness of the object's contingency. Hence this faith can indeed be sufficient for a church faith (of which there can be several); but only pure religious faith, which is based entirely on reason, can be cognized as necessary and hence as the one²²⁵ faith that distinguishes the *true* church.²²⁶—Hence, even if (in accordance with the unavoidable limitation of human reason) a historical faith²²⁷ does, as a vehicle,²²⁸ emulate²²⁹ pure religion—yet along with the consciousness that it is merely such a vehicle and that this faith, as church faith, carries with it a principle of continually coming closer to pure religious faith in order to be able, in the end, to dispense with that vehicle—such a church may indeed be called the *true* one; but since concerning historical dogmas²³⁰ one can never avoid conflict,²³¹ it can be called only the church *militant*,²³² although with the prospect of erupting, in the end, into the unchangeable and all-unifying church *triumphant!* The faith of every individual who carries about him the moral recep-

²²¹ [*Alleinherrschaft*. Cf. above, Ak. VI, 34 n. 152 incl. br. ns. 152d and 152e.]

²²² [*Reich*.]

²²³ [Cf. above, Ak. VI, 101.]

²²⁴ [*daß er so sei*; emphasis on 'is'—not needed for the original *sei*, since it is already emphasized by its position at the end of its clause—has been added.]

²²⁵ [Or 'the only': *der einzige*.]

²²⁶ [Cf. above, Ak. VI, 102.]

²²⁷ [*historischer Glaube*.]

²²⁸ [Of pure religion: *Leitmittel*, a synonym of *Vehikel*; cf. above, Ak. VI, 106.]

²²⁹ [*affizieren*; cf. 'to affect' in the now archaic sense.]

²³⁰ [*Glaubenslehren*.]

²³¹ [*Streit*.]

²³² [*streitende*.]

tivity (worthiness) to be eternally happy is called *saving*²³³ faith. This faith, therefore, can also only be one; and, despite all the difference in religious faith, it can yet be found in every faith wherein, referring to its goal of pure religious faith, it is practical. The faith of a religion of service of God, by contrast, is a *slavish* and mercenary faith²³⁴ (*fides mercenaria, servilis*)²³⁵ and cannot be regarded as a saving faith, because it is not moral. For, moral faith must be a free faith based on pure²³⁶ attitudes of the heart (*fides ingenua*).²³⁷ The former faith²³⁸ presumes to become pleasing to God through actions (of *cultus*²³⁹) that (though laborious) do not, after all, have any moral worth on their own and that therefore are only actions compelled by fear or hope, which an evil human being can perform as well, whereas moral faith presupposes a morally good attitude as necessary for this.²⁴⁰

Saving faith contains two conditions for the human being's²⁴¹ hope of salvation: one in regard to what he cannot do²⁴² himself, namely undo²⁴³ legally²⁴⁴ (before a divine judge) the actions he has done; the other in regard to what he can and ought to do, namely live in²⁴⁵ a new life that conforms to his duty. The first faith²⁴⁶ is faith in a satisfaction (reparation²⁴⁷ for his guilt,²⁴⁸ redemption, reconciliation with God); the second is faith in being able, in a good way of life²⁴⁹ to be led henceforth, to become pleasing to God.—The two conditions amount to only one faith and belong together

²³³ [Or 'beatific' (literally, 'blessed-making'): *seligmachend*.]

²³⁴ [*Fron- und Lohnglaube*.]

²³⁵ [Mercenary, slavish faith; *servilis* (from Latin *servus*, 'slave'), although given second, goes with the first German term, *Fron-* ('socage,' 'forced labor'); and *mercenaria* ('mercenary,' from Latin *merces*, 'wages') goes with German *Lohn-* ('wage').]

²³⁶ [*lautere*.]

²³⁷ [Ingenuous faith, presumably in the original sense of 'faith born free.']

²³⁸ [I.e., the faith of a religion of service of God, i.e., church faith.]

²³⁹ [I.e., service of God.]

²⁴⁰ [I.e., for being liked by God.]

²⁴¹ [*seiner*. Grammatically, this could also mean 'its,' and—below—*er*, 'he,' could also mean 'it,' and *seiner*, 'his' (before 'duty'), could also mean 'its.' Since these alternatives are clearly untenable (the last most flagrantly so), some such interpolation as 'the human being's' seems to be needed.]

²⁴² [*tun*; likewise below, after 'can and ought to.']

²⁴³ [Literally, 'to make unhappened': *ungeschehen zu machen*. Below, 'he has done' similarly translates *seine geschene*, literally 'his happened.']

²⁴⁴ [*rechtlich*. Cf. above, Ak. VI, 60 incl. br. n. 21.]

²⁴⁵ [*zu wandeln*; below, 'life' translates *Leben*.]

²⁴⁶ [I.e., saving faith under the first condition; similarly for the second faith, below.]

²⁴⁷ [Literally, 'payment': *Bezahlung*.]

²⁴⁸ [*Schuld*, which also means 'debt.' Likewise below.]

²⁴⁹ [*Lebenswandel*.]

necessarily. However, we cannot have insight into the necessity of a link²⁵⁰ between them except by assuming that one²⁵¹ can be derived from the other, i.e., that either the faith in absolution from the guilt that rests upon us brings forth the good way of life, or that the truthful and active attitude of always leading a good way of life brings forth the faith in that absolution, according to the law of morally operating causes.²⁵²

Now, here there manifests itself a noteworthy antinomy of human reason with itself, the resolution of which—or, should this not be possible, at least its settlement²⁵³—can alone decide whether a historical (church) faith must always be added, as an essential component of saving faith, over and above pure religious faith, or whether it can finally—however distant that future may be—pass over, as a mere vehicle, into pure religious faith.

1. If one presupposes that for the human being's sins a satisfaction has been made, then it is indeed readily comprehensible how every sinner might gladly refer it to himself and how, if merely *having faith*²⁵⁴ is at issue (which means the same as declaring that he wants the satisfaction to have been made for him as well), he would not for one moment harbor qualms on that account. However, it is quite beyond one's insight²⁵⁵ how a rational human being who knows that punishment is due to him could seriously believe²⁵⁶ that he only needs to have faith in the report of a satisfaction having been rendered for him, and to accept²⁵⁷ the satisfaction²⁵⁸ (as the jurists say) *utiliter*,²⁵⁹ in order to regard his guilt as expunged, and this indeed to such an extent (to the very root) that even for future events a good way of life, for which he has thus far not made the slightest effort, will be the unfailing consequence of this faith and of his acceptance²⁶⁰ of the proffered benefaction. No deliberative human being

117

²⁵⁰ [Or 'connection': *Verbindung*.]

²⁵¹ [*eine*, which by its gender can refer only to *Bedingung*, 'condition.' Hence the interpolation.]

²⁵² [*moralisch wirkende Ursachen*; *wirkende Ursachen* by itself would be translatable as 'efficient causes.']

²⁵³ [*Beilegung*.]

²⁵⁴ [*Glauben*.]

²⁵⁵ [*es ist gar nicht einzusehen*.]

²⁵⁶ [*glauben*, translated as 'have faith' below, and similarly above. I take it that 'faith' in the next sentence, as well as in the subsequent one, refers back not to this first occurrence of *glauben* in the present sentence, but to the second one.]

²⁵⁷ [*annehmen*.]

²⁵⁸ [*sie*. Although grammatically the expected referent of *sie* would be *Botschaft* ('report'), the remainder of the sentence makes clear that Kant intends the referent to be *Genugtuung* ('satisfaction'), in other words, the "benefaction."]

²⁵⁹ [I.e., for its usefulness. (Literally, the Latin term means 'usefully.') On Kant's comment, "as the jurists say . . .," cf. Gottfried Achenwall (1719–72), *Prolegomena iuris naturalis* (Prefatory remarks to natural law) (Göttingen: Victorinus Bossiegel, 1781), § 85. (Cited after Bohatec, 442 n. 121.)]

²⁶⁰ [*Akzeptation*.]

can bring this faith about within himself, however much the mere wish for a good for which one does or can do nothing is often—through self-love—transformed into hope, as if the object of the wish, lured by the mere yearning, would come on its own. One cannot think this possible except [on the assumption] that the human being regards this faith itself as heavenly inspired in him, and thus as something about which he need give no further account to his reason. If he cannot do this,²⁶¹ or if he is still too sincere to contrive in himself such a confidence as a mere means of ingratiation, then, despite all his respect for such an extravagant²⁶² satisfaction,²⁶³ and despite all his wish that such a satisfaction may be open to him as well, he will yet be unable to refrain from regarding it only as conditioned: namely conditioned so that his way of life, improved as much as is in his power, must precede, in order to provide even the slightest basis for the hope that such a higher gain could come to his benefit.—If, therefore, historical cognition of the satisfaction²⁶⁴ belongs to church faith, but the improved way of life²⁶⁵ as condition [of the satisfaction] belongs to pure moral faith, then *pure moral faith will have to precede church faith*.

2. However, if the human being is corrupt by nature, how can he have faith that, strive as hard as he will, he will make himself into a new human being²⁶⁶ pleasing²⁶⁷ to God, if—conscious of the offenses of which he has thus far become guilty—he is still subject to the power of the evil principle and finds in himself no sufficient ability for doing better in the future? If he cannot regard the justice that he has himself aroused against himself as reconciled through another's satisfaction,²⁶⁸ but himself as being, as it were, reborn through this faith and thus able for the first time to enter upon a new way of life that would then be the consequence of the good principle united with him, on what is he to base his hope of becoming a human being pleasing²⁶⁹ to God?—Therefore, faith in a merit which is not his own, and through which he is reconciled with God, must precede all endeavor toward good works; but this conflicts²⁷⁰ with the previous proposition.²⁷¹ This conflict cannot be resolved through insight into the causal determination of the freedom of a human

²⁶¹ [I.e., if he cannot regard this faith itself as heavenly inspired in him, and thus as something about which he need give no further account to his reason.]

²⁶² [I.e., transcendent: *überschwenglich*.]

²⁶³ [For the human being's sins.]

²⁶⁴ [Kant says simply 'the latter,' meaning the higher gain, i.e., the satisfaction for the human being's sins.]

²⁶⁵ [Kant says 'the latter,' meaning the way of life, improved as much as is in one's power.]

²⁶⁶ [For the new human being, cf. above, Ak. VI, 48 br. n. 262.]

²⁶⁷ [*wohlgefällig*.]

²⁶⁸ [I.e., another's satisfaction for the human being's sins: *fremde Genugtuung*.]

²⁶⁹ [*gefällig*. See above, Ak. 45, br. n. 246h.]

²⁷⁰ [*widerstreiten*. Below, 'conflict' translates *Streit*, which is synonymous with *Widerstreit* (similarly for the verbs).]

²⁷¹ [That the improved way of life must precede any faith in the satisfaction for the human being's sins.]

being, i.e., into the causes²⁷² which bring it about that a human being becomes good or evil, and therefore cannot be resolved theoretically; for, this question surpasses our reason's entire power of speculation. But for the practical issue, where the question is not what comes first in the use of our free power of choice²⁷³ physically but what comes first in its use morally—in other words, from what we ought to start, whether from faith in what God has done on our account, or from what we ought to do in order to become worthy of it (whatever it may consist in)—there is no hesitation in deciding for the latter. 118

For, acceptance of the first requirement for salvation,²⁷⁴ namely faith in a vicarious atonement,²⁷⁵ is necessary at most for the theoretical concept merely; we cannot *make* the absolution²⁷⁶ *comprehensible* to ourselves otherwise. By contrast, the necessity of the second principle is practical and, indeed, purely moral. We certainly cannot hope to come to partake in the appropriation even of another's satisfaction-based²⁷⁷ merit, and thus in salvation,²⁷⁸ except if we qualify for it through our endeavor in complying with every human duty; and this compliance²⁷⁹ must be the effect of our own work and not again another's influence, where we are passive. For since the latter command²⁸⁰ is unconditional, it is necessary also that the human being lay it, as a maxim, at the basis of his faith, in other words, that he start from the improvement of life as the supreme condition under which alone a saving faith can occur.

Church faith, as a historical faith, rightly starts²⁸¹ from the first requirement.²⁸² Since, however, it contains only the vehicle for pure religious faith (the faith in which the actual purpose²⁸³ lies), that which in pure religious faith, as a practical faith, is the condition, namely the maxim of *doing*, must come at the beginning, and the maxim of *knowledge* or theoretical faith must only bring about the stabilization and perfection of the maxim of doing.

Here one may still point out that, according to the first principle, faith (namely, faith in a proxy satisfaction) would be credited to the human being toward duty, whereas faith in a good way of life, as brought about through a higher influence, would be credited to him toward grace.—According to the second principle, however, it is the reverse. For according to it the *good way of life*, as supreme condition

²⁷² [Literally, 'of the causes': *der Ursachen*.]

²⁷⁶ [More literally, 'removal of sins': *Entsündigung* (*Entsündigung*).]

²⁷³ ['power of choice' translates *Willkür*.]

²⁷⁷ [More literally, 'satisfactory': *genugtuend*.]

²⁷⁴ [Literally, 'blessed-making': *Seligmachung*.]

²⁷⁸ [Or 'bliss': *Seligkeit*.]

²⁷⁵ [*stellvertretende Genugtuung*.]

²⁷⁹ [Kant says merely *diese letztere* ('this latter'), which by its feminine gender refers to *Befolgung*, translated above by 'complying.']

²⁸⁰ [To endeavor to comply with every human duty.]

²⁸¹ [*anfangen*. Below, 'beginning' translates *Anfang*.]

²⁸² [The first requirement for salvation (mentioned above): *von dem ersteren*.]

²⁸³ [Or 'end': *Zweck*; but see Ak. VI, 34 br. n. 152c.]

of grace, is unconditional *duty*, whereas the higher [being's] satisfaction²⁸⁴ is a bare *matter of grace*.—The first principle is accused (often not wrongly) of *superstition*²⁸⁵ in the service of God, which knows how a punishable way of life can
 119 nonetheless be reconciled with religion; the second, of *naturalistic unbelief*,²⁸⁶ which combines indifference, or indeed even refractoriness, toward all revelation with a way of life that is otherwise perhaps even exemplary.²⁸⁷ But this²⁸⁸ would be to cut the knot (by means of a practical maxim)—instead of disentangling it (theoretically), which is indeed also permitted in religious questions. The following, however, may serve to satisfy the theoretical demand.²⁸⁹—The living faith in the archetype *in itself* of humanity pleasing to God (faith in the Son of God) is referred to a moral idea of reason insofar as this idea serves us not only as a standard²⁹⁰ but also as an incentive, and therefore it amounts to the same whether I start from it, as a *rational* faith, or from the principle of the good way of life. By contrast, the faith in the very same archetype *in appearance* (faith in the God-man),²⁹¹ as an *empirical* (historical) faith, is not one and the same with the principle of the good way of life (which must be entirely rational), and seeking to start and derive the good way of life from such a faith²⁹² would be something entirely different. To this extent, therefore, there would be a conflict²⁹³ between the two propositions above. However, in the appearance of the God-man, the proper object of the saving faith is not that about him which strikes the senses or can be cognized through experience, but the archetype that lies in our reason and that we lay at the basis of the God-man (because, as far as can be perceived from his example, he is found to conform to it); and such a faith is one and the same with the principle of a way of life pleasing to God.—Hence there are here not two intrinsically different principles such that starting from the one or the other would be to enter upon opposite paths, but only

²⁸⁴ [I.e., the higher (being's) satisfaction for the human being's sins: *die höhere Genugtuung*.]

²⁸⁵ [*Aberglaube*, i.e., roughly, *false faith*.]

²⁸⁶ [I.e., lack of faith: *Unglaube*.]

²⁸⁷ [I have deleted, as unnecessary, Kant's dashes at the beginning and at the end of the next sentence, but have inserted the dash before 'instead,' to keep the referent of 'which' unambiguous.]

²⁸⁸ [I.e., adopting the combination just described]

²⁸⁹ [*Ansinnen*.]

²⁹⁰ [*Richtschnur*.]

²⁹¹ [*Gottmensch*. Although I normally translate *Mensch* as 'human being,' I see no acceptable way of doing so here.]

²⁹² (†) Which must base the existence of such a person on historical documentation.^a

^a [*Beweistümer*. I avoid translating this word by 'evidence' in Kant, because I want to be consistent and unambiguous in using this term to render his *Evidenz*, i.e., evidence in the sense of manifestness.]

²⁹³ [*Widerstreit*.]

one and the same practical idea from which we proceed, in one case²⁹⁴ insofar as it presents²⁹⁵ the archetype as located in God and proceeding²⁹⁶ from him, in another case insofar as it presents it as located in us, but in both cases insofar as it represents it as the standard²⁹⁷ for our way of life; and the antinomy is therefore only a seeming one, because through a misunderstanding it looks upon one and the same idea, only taken in different references, as two different principles.—However, if one sought to make historical faith,²⁹⁸ i.e., the faith in the actuality of such an appearance that had once occurred in the world, the condition of the only saving²⁹⁹ faith, then the two principles would indeed be two entirely different ones (the one empirical, the other rational); and concerning these a true conflict of maxims would arise as to whether one would have to proceed and start from one or the other, nor indeed would any reason ever be able to settle³⁰⁰ it.—Consider the proposition, One must have faith that there once was (of which reason tells us nothing) a human being who through his holiness and merit has done enough for himself (in regard to his duty) as well as for all others (and their lack in regard to their duty), in order to hope that even in a good way of life we can become blessed,³⁰¹ though only owing to that faith. This proposition says something quite different from the following one: One must with all one's powers strive after the holy attitude of a way of life pleasing to God, in order to be able to have faith that God's love for humankind (already assured to us through reason), insofar as humankind strives after his will with all its ability, will in some way compensate for the lack of the deed, in consideration of the sincere attitude.—The first,³⁰² however, is not within the ability³⁰³ of every (even of the unlearned)³⁰⁴ human being. History proves that this conflict between two principles of faith has prevailed in all forms of religion; for, all religions have had expiations, no matter in what they might posit them. But the moral predisposition, for its part, also did not fail to make its demands heard. However, at all times, the priests have nonetheless complained more than the moralists. For, the priests have complained loudly (while calling upon the authorities to restrain the nuisance) about neglect of the service of God that was instituted to reconcile the people with heaven and ward off misfortune from the state; the moralists, on the other hand, about the decline of morals, which they very much put down to the account of those means of absolution³⁰⁵ by which the priests have made it

120

²⁹⁴ [Or 'once': *einmal*. Similarly below for 'in another case' (or 'at another time': *ein andermal*) and 'in both cases' (or 'both times': *beidemaal*.)]

²⁹⁵ [*vorstellen*.]

²⁹⁶ [Or 'emanating': *ausgehend*.]

²⁹⁷ [*Richtmaß*.]

²⁹⁸ [*Geschichtsglaube*.]

²⁹⁹ [Or 'beatific' (literally, 'blessed-making'):

seligmachend.]

³⁰⁰ [*schlichten*.]

³⁰¹ [*selig*; i.e., attain salvation, *Seligkeit*.]

³⁰² [I.e., the faith mentioned in the first proposition.]

³⁰³ [Or 'power': *Vermögen*.]

³⁰⁴ [*ungelehrt*.]

³⁰⁵ [More literally, 'removal of sins': *Entsündigung* (*Entsündigung*).]

easy for everyone to reconcile himself³⁰⁶ with the deity over the crudest vices. Indeed, if an inexhaustible fund for paying off debts previously incurred or yet to be incurred is already available, where one need only reach over (and, with all the claims that conscience makes, without doubt will indeed first of all reach over) to make oneself free of debts [i.e., guilt],³⁰⁷ whereas the resolve for a good way of life can be deferred until one is, first of all, in the clear concerning the debts, then one cannot easily conceive different consequences for such a faith.—But if even this faith itself were presented as if it had so special a power or such a mystical (or magical) influence that, although as far as we know it should be considered merely historical, it were yet able, if one clings to it and to the feelings linked with it, to improve the whole human being from his very basis (make a new human being out of him),³⁰⁸ then this faith itself would have to be regarded as conferred and inspired (with and beneath the historical faith) directly by heaven—at which point,³⁰⁹ then, everything, even with the moral constitution of the human being, amounts ultimately to an unconditional decree of God:³¹⁰ “He hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he *hardeneth*,”³¹¹ which, taken according to the letter, is the *salto mortale*³¹² of human reason.

³⁰⁶ [*sich aussöhnen.*]

³⁰⁷ [*schuldenfrei*, which is nearly synonymous with *schuldfrei*, ‘free of guilt.’ In this entire sentence, Kant’s point about debts (*Schulden*) is, of course, basically about guilt (*Schuld*). See above, Ak. VI, 72 br. n. 138.]

³⁰⁸ [For the new human being, cf. above, Ak. VI, 48 br. n. 262.]

³⁰⁹ [*wo.*]

³¹⁰ [Rom. 9:18: “Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.”]

³¹¹ This can presumably be interpreted as follows: No human being can say with certainty why^a this one becomes a good and that one an evil human being (both comparatively), because it seems that the predisposition to this difference can often be found already at birth, and because sometimes contingencies of life that are no one’s fault^b also help turn the scale^c in this; and no more can one say what can become of him. About this, therefore, we must leave the judgment to the All-seeing; and here this is expressed as if his decree, pronounced concerning them before they were born, had traced out to each the role that he was to play some day. In the order of appearances, *seeing in advance*^d is for the originator of the world, if he is himself thought anthropopathically^e in this, simultaneously a *resolving in advance*.^f But in the suprasensible order of things, according to laws of freedom, where time drops out, it is only an *all-seeing knowledge*, without our being able to explain, and yet simultaneously also being able to reconcile with the freedom of the will, why one human being proceeds in this way and another according to opposite principles.

^a [Literally, ‘whence’: *woher.*]

^d [I.e., foreseeing: *Vorhersehen.*]

^b [*für die niemand kann.*]

^e [I.e., if he is conceived as having human feelings.]

^c [*einen Ausschlag geben.*]

^f [*Vorherbeschließen.*]

³¹² [Breakneck leap, heals over head; more literally, ‘leap of death,’ i.e., a leap that risks all. The *salto mortale* was given prominence in philosophy by Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi (1743–1819), polemicist,

It is therefore a necessary consequence of the physical and simultaneously of the moral predisposition in us—the latter being the foundation and simultaneously the interpreter of all religion—for religion finally to be³¹³ detached gradually from all empirical determining bases, from all statutes that rest on history and that, by means of a church faith, unite human beings provisionally in order to further the good, and thus for pure rational religion ultimately to rule over all, “so that God may be all in all.”³¹⁴—The cloaks under which the embryo first formed itself into the human being must be cast off if he³¹⁵ is now to step into the light of day. The leading string of holy tradition, with its appendages—the statutes³¹⁶ and observances—which in its time rendered good services, is little by little becoming dispensable, indeed in the end a fetter, when he enters adolescence. As long as he (the human genus) “was a child, he was astute³¹⁷ as a child”³¹⁸ and knew how to combine with statutes—which had been imposed on him without his collaboration³¹⁹—presumably scholarship as well, and indeed even a philosophy subservient to the church: “But now that he becomes a man, he puts away what is childish.”³²⁰ The abasing distinction between *laypersons* and *clerics* ceases, and equality arises from true freedom, yet without anarchy; for although everyone obeys the (nonstatutory) law that he prescribes to himself, he must yet simultaneously regard it also as the

122

socialite, and literary figure. He opposed various philosophers, including at one time Kant, on the ground that they confused conditions of conceptualization with conditions of existence and thus left no room for individual freedom or a personal God. From this danger, he held, we can be saved only by a *salto mortale* into faith, i.e., into the immediate feeling of certainty that requires no proof, but only sense, feeling, intuition, foreboding, inspiration. In his *Ueber die Lehre des Spinoza in Briefen an den Herrn Moses Mendelssohn* (On the doctrine of Spinoza in letters to Mr. Moses Mendelssohn) (Breslau: G. Löwe, 1785), he mentioned (p. 171) that Lessing (see above, Ak. VI, 81 br. n. 235f) had late in life admitted to being a follower of the pantheist Spinozist view of *hen kai pan* (ἓν καὶ πᾶν, One and All), i.e., Everything is One, and that this had led to a dispute between himself and Moses Mendelssohn (see below, Ak. VI, 166 br. n. 152a). Thus Jacobi had recommended the *salto mortale* to Lessing as well.]

³¹³ [‘for . . . to be’ translates *daß werde* (similarly, below, ‘for . . . to rule’); i.e., as the subjunctive implies, the consequence is “necessary” not in the sense that it has to happen but in the sense that it ought to happen.]

³¹⁴ [I.e., Everything in everything: *alles in allem*. I Cor. 15:28: “And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”]

³¹⁵ [*er*; although grammatically this still refers to the embryo, the ‘now’ makes the actual subject the human being.]

³¹⁶ [*Statuten* here, *Satzungen* below; the two terms are synonymous.]

³¹⁷ [*klug*, which usually means ‘prudent’ in Kant.]

³¹⁸ [I Cor. 13:11: “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child . . .”]

³¹⁹ [*Zutun*.]

³²⁰ [I Cor. 13:11, the continuation: “. . . but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”]

world ruler's will, revealed to him through reason, which³²¹ invisibly combines everyone under a common government in a state that had previously been presented and prepared poorly by the visible church.—All this is not to be expected from an external revolution, which impetuously and forcibly produces its effect, an effect which is greatly dependent on fortunate circumstances and in which, whatever mistake was made during the foundation of a new constitution, will regretfully be retained through centuries, because it can no longer be altered, at least not without a new (always dangerous) revolution. —Rather, it is in the principle of pure rational religion, of such religion as a constantly occurring (although not empirical) divine revelation, that the basis for that transition to this new order of things must lie. This basis, once apprehended through³²² mature deliberation, is brought to execution through a gradually progressing reform, insofar as this new order is to be a human work; for as regards revolutions that can shorten this progress, they are left to providence and cannot be introduced according to plan without detriment to freedom. —

123 There is, however, ground for saying “that the kingdom of God is come unto us,”³²³ even if only the principle of the gradual transition of church faith to universal rational religion and thus to a (divine) ethical state on earth has taken root universally and somewhere also *publically*, although the actual establishment of this state still lies an infinite distance away from us. For since this principle contains the basis for a continual approach³²⁴ to this perfection, there lies in it (invisibly), as in a germ that develops and that will later bear seed in turn, the whole that some day is to illumine and rule the world. But the true and the good, for the insight into which and the heartfelt interest³²⁵ in which every human being's natural predisposition contains the basis, do not fail, once they have become public, to communicate themselves throughout, through the power³²⁶ of their natural affinity with the moral predisposition of rational beings as such. The restraints, due to political civil causes that may from time to time befall their expansion, serve, rather, to make the union of minds toward the good (which, once they have fixed their eyes upon it, never leaves their thoughts) all the more intimate.³²⁷

³²¹ [*der*; grammatically, this refers back to *Wille* ('will'), but it is possible that Kant intended it to refer to *Weltherrscher* ('world ruler'), in which case 'which' would be replaced by 'who.']

³²² [*aus . . . gefaßt.*]

³²³ [Matt. 12:28: "But if I cast out the devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you."]

³²⁴ [Or 'approximation': *Annäherung.*]

³²⁵ [*Herzenseil.*]

³²⁶ [Or 'on the strength': *vermöge.*]

³²⁷ One can, without either revoking the service of church faith or attacking^a the faith, preserve its useful influence as a vehicle and nonetheless take away from it, as a delusion of

^a [*befehden.*]

This, then, is the work—unnoticed by human eyes but progressing constantly—of the good principle, of establishing for itself, in humankind as a community, a power and a kingdom according to laws of virtue, a kingdom that maintains the victory over evil and that, under its dominion, assures the world of an eternal peace.³²⁸ 124

a duty of service of God, all influence on the concept of religion proper (that is, moral religion), and can thus, despite the variety of statutory kinds of faith, bring about compatibility among their adherents through the principles of the one rational religion, by reference to which the teachers are to construe all those statutes and observances; until, with time, on the strength of the true enlightenment (a lawfulness emerging from moral freedom) which has then gained the upper hand, one can with everyone's agreement exchange the form of an abasing means of coercion for a church form adequate to^b the dignity of a moral religion, namely the form of a free faith.—Reconciling church unity of faith with freedom in matters of faith is a problem that the idea of the objective unity of rational religion, through the moral interest that we take in it, constantly impels us to solve; but for bringing this [reconciliation] about in a visible church, if we consult human nature about this, there is little hope. It is an idea of reason, exhibiting which in an intuition adequate to it is impossible for us, but which nonetheless has objective reality^c as a practical regulative principle, in order to work toward this purpose^d of the unity of pure rational religion. It is with this as with the political idea of a right of state,^e insofar it is to be referred simultaneously to a right of nations,^f that is universal and *holds power*. Experience denies us any hope for this. A propensity seems to have been put (perhaps intentionally) into humankind, so that every single state, if things go according to its wishes, will strive to subjugate every other states to itself and to set up a universal monarchy; but, when it has reached a certain size, will nonetheless on its own splinter into smaller states. Thus, every church harbors the proud pretension to become a universal one; but once it has expanded and is becoming dominant, there soon manifests itself a principle of disintegration and separation into different sects.

(†) The premature and thereby (i.e., by coming before human beings have become morally better) harmful fusion of states—if we are permitted to assume in this an intention of providence—is prevented above all by two powerfully operating causes, namely variety of languages and variety of religions.

^b [Or 'commensurate with': *angemessen*. Similarly below.]

^c [I.e., applicability to possible objects.]

^d [Or 'end': *Zweck*; but see Ak. VI, 34 br. n. 152c.]

^e [Or 'public law' or 'constitutional law': *Staatsrecht*.]

^f [Or 'law of nations' or 'international law': *Völkerrecht*.]

³²⁸ [Or 'of a perpetual peace': *einen ewigen Frieden*. In 1796, Kant wrote his own *Perpetual Peace (Zum ewigen Frieden)*, Ak. VIII, 411–22; see above, Ak. VI, 34 br. n. 152f.]

DIVISION TWO

HISTORICAL PRESENTATION OF THE GRADUAL FOUNDING OF
THE DOMINION OF THE GOOD PRINCIPLE ON EARTH

Concerning religion (in the narrowest meaning of the word) on earth one cannot require a *universal history*³²⁹ of humankind; for, it, being based on pure moral faith, is not a public situation, but each person can be conscious only by himself of the advances that he has made in this faith. Hence it is only of church faith that we can expect a universal historical exposition,³³⁰ by comparing it in regard to its varied and changeable form with the sole, unchangeable, pure religious faith. From the point onward where church faith publicly acknowledges its dependence on the restricting conditions of pure religious faith and of the necessity to harmonize with it, the *universal church* starts to form itself into an ethical state of God and to advance, according to an established principle that is one and the same for all human beings and for all times, toward this state's completion.³³¹—One can foresee that this history will be nothing but the narrative of the constant struggle between the religious faith of service of God and the moral religious faith, the former of which, as historical faith, the human being is constantly inclined to put at the top, while the latter has never given up its claim to the superiority that belongs to it as the only soul-improving faith and will certainly assert this claim in the end.

25 This history can have unity, however, only if it is restricted to that part of humankind alone in which the predisposition to the unity of the universal church has already been brought close to its development, inasmuch as through this history at least the question concerning the distinction of rational and historical faith has already been publicly set up and its settlement made the greatest moral issue; for the history of the statutes of different peoples whose faiths stand in no connection to another does not otherwise afford any unity of the church. One cannot, however, count as belonging to this unity that in one and the same people a certain new faith once arose that was markedly distinct from the previously dominant one, even if the latter carried with it the *occasioning*³³² causes for the new faith's production. For there must be unity of principle if one is to count the succession of different kinds of faith, one after another, as belonging to the modifications of one and the same church, and it is properly with the history of this church that we are now concerned.

For this aim, therefore, we can deal only with the history of that church which, from its first beginning onward, carried with it the germ and the principles for the

³²⁹ [*Universalhistorie*. Below, 'universal historical' translates *allgemeine historische*.]

³³⁰ [*Darstellung*.]

³³¹ [Cf. Kant's *Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View*, Ak. VIII, 15–31.]

³³² [Or 'occasional': *veranlassend*.]

objective unity of the true and *universal* religious faith, to which it is gradually being brought closer.—Now, here we find, first, that the *Jewish* faith stands in no essential connection whatsoever, i.e., in no unity according to concepts, with this church faith whose history we want to examine, even though it immediately preceded this faith and provided the physical occasion³³³ for the founding of this (the Christian) church.

The *Jewish faith* is, in terms of its original arrangement,³³⁴ a sum of merely statutory laws, on which³³⁵ a state constitution³³⁶ was based; for whatever moral additions were *appended* to it, either already at that time or later on, absolutely do not belong to Judaism, as such. Judaism is properly not a religion at all, but merely a union of a multitude of human beings who, because they belonged to a particular stock, formed themselves into a community under merely political laws, and hence not into a church;³³⁷ on the contrary, the community was *intended*³³⁸ to be a merely secular state, so that, if this state were to be torn apart through adverse contingencies, it would still be left with the political faith (belonging to it essentially) of the people in perhaps restoring it some day (at the advent of the Messiah). [The fact] that this state constitution has theocracy as its foundation (manifestly an aristocracy of priests or leaders who boasted of instructions conferred on them by God), and hence that the name of God—who, after all, is here being venerated merely as a secular regent who makes no claim at all concerning and upon conscience—does not turn it into a religious constitution. The proof that the constitution was not intended to be a religious one is clear. *First*, all the commandments³³⁹ are of such a kind that even a political constitution can be concerned with them³⁴⁰ and impose them as coercive laws, because they pertain merely to external actions; and although before reason the Ten Commandments would already hold as ethical ones,

126

³³³ [*Veranlassung.*]

³³⁴ [Or 'organization' or 'design': *Einrichtung.*]

³³⁵ [On which sum: *auf welchem (Inbegriff).*]

³³⁶ [Or 'political constitution': *Staatsverfassung.*]

³³⁷ [Bohatec (op. cit. at Ak. VI, 19 br. n. 3), 461 incl. n. 13, cites Johann Salomo Semler (1725–91), German church historian and rationalist biblical commentator from Thuringia: "*Nach Semler ist die jüdische Religion eine, öffentliche Nationalreligion, welche mit der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft allemal zusammen hing, und bloß politische Absicht hatte.*" I.e., "According to Semler, the Jewish religion is a 'public national religion that was always linked with *civil society* and had merely a *political* aim.'" From *Letztes Glaubensbekenntnis über natürliche und christliche Religion* (Ultimate confession of faith concerning natural and Christian religion) (Königsberg: F. Nicolovius, 1792), 10. Semler's book was a reply to one of the many works of Karl Friedrich Bahrtdt, whom Kant cites above; see Ak. VI, 81 n. 235, also br. n. 235a.]

³³⁸ [sollte. Similarly (repeatedly) below.]

³³⁹ [*Gebote*, which also means simply 'commands.']

³⁴⁰ [*darauf halten.*]

even if they had not been given publicly, in that legislation they have not been given³⁴¹ at all with the demand on one's *moral attitude* in obeying them (wherein Christianity later posited the main work), but have been directed absolutely only to the external observance. This is also evident from [the fact] that, *second*, all the consequences of fulfilling or transgressing these commandments—all reward and punishment—are restricted to those consequences alone which can be accorded to everyone in this world, and even these consequences not according to ethical concepts; for, both reward and punishment were intended to affect even the posterity, which had taken no practical part in those deeds or misdeeds, which in a political constitution can indeed be a prudential means for providing oneself with compliance, but in an ethical one would be contrary to all equity.³⁴² Now, since no religion can be conceived at all without faith in a future life, Judaism, as such, taken in its purity, contains no religious faith at all. This is reinforced still further by the following observation. For, it can hardly be doubted that the Jews, just as much as other peoples, even the crudest, would³⁴³ likewise have had a faith in a future life and hence would have had their heaven and hell; for, this faith thrusts itself upon everyone on its own, owing to the universal moral predisposition in human nature. It, therefore, certainly happened *intentionally* that the legislator³⁴⁴ of this people, even though he is presented as God himself, did not *want* to pay the least regard to the future life, which indicates that he wanted to found only a political, not an ethical community; but to talk in a political community about rewards and punishments that cannot become visible here in this life would have been, on that presupposition, an entirely inconsistent and inappropriate procedure. Now, although it also cannot be doubted that the Jews later on probably³⁴⁵ produced, each for himself, such and such a religious faith that was mingled in with the articles of their statutory faith, that religious faith nonetheless has never amounted to a component belonging to the legislation of Judaism. *Third*, it is so far off the mark to say that Judaism constituted a period belonging to the situation of the *universal church*, or that perhaps at its time it constituted even itself this universal church, that on the contrary it—as a people especially chosen by Jehovah for himself—excluded the whole of humankind from its community, and bore enmity toward all other peoples and was in return met with enmity by everyone. One should also not assess too highly, in this, that this people posited for itself, as universal ruler of the world, a sole God who could not be presented through any visible image. For one finds among most other peoples that their doctrine of faith likewise aimed at this, and that the doctrine only aroused suspicion of polytheism by its *veneration* of certain powerful subgods³⁴⁶ subordinated to the sole God. For, surely a God who wants³⁴⁷

³⁴¹ [in *jener Gesetzgebung* . . . nicht . . . gegeben.]

³⁴² [Or 'fairness': *Billigkeit*.]

³⁴³ [*sollten*.]

³⁴⁴ [Or 'lawgiver': *Gesetzgeber*.]

³⁴⁵ [*werden*.]

³⁴⁶ [Or 'undergods': *Untergötter*.]

³⁴⁷ [Or 'wills': *wollen*.]

obedience merely to such commandments for which no improved moral attitude is required is not properly that moral being whose concept we need for a religion. A religion would even occur sooner with a faith in many such powerful invisible beings, if a people conceived of them as perhaps still all agreeing, despite the difference in their departments, that they would dignify with their liking³⁴⁸ only those who adhered to virtue with all their heart, than if the faith is dedicated only to one being, who,³⁴⁹ however, makes the mechanical cult the main work.

We therefore cannot begin the universal history of the church, insofar as this history is to amount to a system, except from the origin of Christianity, which, as a complete abandonment of Judaism wherein it arose, and founded³⁵⁰ on an entirely new principle, brought about an entire revolution in doctrines of faith.³⁵¹ The effort that the teachers of Christianity make, or may have made at the very beginning, to weave from it and Judaism a coherent guiding thread, by wanting the new faith to be regarded as only a continuation of the old, which allegedly had³⁵² contained all the events of the new faith in prototypes,³⁵³ shows far too distinctly that their only concern here is, or was, with the most fitting means of *introducing* a pure moral religion in place of an ancient cult to which the people were far too strongly accustomed, yet without directly offending against their prejudices. The subsequent abolition of the corporeal emblem that served to separate that people entirely from others already allows the judgment that the new faith, not bound to the statutes of the old—indeed, to no statutes at all—was to contain a religion valid for the world, not for one single people.

Thus Christianity arose from Judaism—yet from a Judaism that was no longer patriarchal and unmingled, standing³⁵⁴ merely on its own political constitution (which, moreover, was already in great disarray), but from a Judaism already mixed, because of moral doctrines that had gradually become public in it, with a religious faith, and in a situation where this otherwise ignorant people had already been reached by much foreign (Greek) wisdom. This wisdom presumably also helped to enlighten Judaism through concepts of virtue and, despite the oppressive burden of its statutory faith, prepare it for revolutions, [which were realized] at the opportunity of the diminution of the priests' power by their subjugation under the

128

³⁴⁸ [Or 'pleasure': *Wohlgefallen*.]

³⁴⁹ [Literally, 'which': *welches*.]

³⁵⁰ [*gegründet*, which also means 'based.']

³⁵¹ [Bohatec (op. cit. at Ak. VI, 19 br. n. 3), 460, points out that some of the main distinctions drawn by Kant between Christianity and Judaism had already been drawn by Johann Salomo Semler (op. cit. at Ak. VI, 125 br. n. 337), e.g., pp. 116, 126, and says that this agreement was not coincidental but a direct dependence by Kant on Semler.]

³⁵² ['allegedly had' translates (the subjunctive) *habe*.]

³⁵³ [*Vorbildern*.]

³⁵⁴ [*gestellt*.]

sovereignty of a people³⁵⁵ that regarded all foreign popular faiths with indifference.—Now, from such a Judaism there suddenly, even though not unprepared, arose Christianity. The teacher of the Gospel³⁵⁶ announced himself as one sent³⁵⁷ from heaven, while at the same time declaring, as one worthy of such a mission, that slavish faith (in days, confessions, and customs of the service of God) is intrinsically null, whereas moral faith, which alone makes human beings holy “as their father in heaven is holy”³⁵⁸ and which proves its genuineness by a good way of life, is the only saving³⁵⁹ faith. But after he had given, in his own person, through teaching and suffering even to his undeserved³⁶⁰ and also meritorious death,³⁶¹ an example conforming to the archetype of the only humanity pleasing to God, he is

³⁵⁵ [I.e., the Romans.]

³⁵⁶ [*Evangelium*; the etymology of both terms is the same: ‘good tidings.’]

³⁵⁷ [*senden*; below, ‘mission’ translates *Sendung*.]

³⁵⁸ [Cf. Matt. 5:48: “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” Also 1 Pet. 1:16 (cf. Lev. 19:1–2, also 11:44 and 20:7): “Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” Cf. above, Ak. VI, 66 br. n. 97.]

³⁵⁹ [Or ‘beatific’ (literally, ‘blessed-making’): *seligmachend*.]

³⁶⁰ [More literally, ‘[occurring] through no guilt [of his own]’: *unverschuldet*.]

³⁶¹ With which the public history^a of him (which was thus also able to serve universally as an example for emulation) ends. The more mysterious^b history—which was added as a supplement and which took place only before the eyes of his intimates—of his *resurrection* and *ascension* (these, if one takes them merely as ideas of reason, would signify the beginning of another life and entry into the seat of salvation, i.e., into the community with all those who are good)^c cannot be used, its historical valuation notwithstanding, for religion within the bounds of bare reason. This is so by no means because it is a historical narrative (for so is the preceding history), but because, taken literally, it assumes a concept that, although very appropriate to human beings’ sensible way of presenting, is very burdensome to reason for its faith in the future. This is the concept of the materiality of all beings of the world, both the *materialism of the personality* of the human being (psychological materialism), according to which^d this personality occurs only on the condition of the very same *body*, and also that of the *presence* in a world as such (cosmological materialism), according to which that world^e cannot on this principle be other than *spatial*. By contrast, the hypothesis of the spiritualism of rational beings of the world, where the body can remain dead in the earth and yet the same person still be there alive, and where the human being can likewise in regard

^a [Or ‘story’: *Geschichte*; likewise below.]

^b [Or ‘secret’: *geheim*.]

^c [*Gemeinschaft mit allen Guten*.]

^d [‘according to which’ has been added (twice) to convey the force of the subjunctive (of indirect speech) in *stattfinde* (‘occurs’) and, below, in *nicht . . . könne* (‘cannot’).]

^e [I take *welche* (‘which’) to refer back to *Welt*; grammatically, it could instead refer back to *Gegenwart* (‘presence’).]

presented³⁶² as going back again to the heaven from which he had come. For, though he left his last will behind by word of mouth (just as in a testament), yet, as regards the power of the recollection of his merit, teaching, and example, he was able to say that "he (the ideal of the humanity pleasing to God) would nonetheless remain with his disciples, even to the end of the world."³⁶³—This teaching,³⁶⁴ if the concern were, say, with a *historical faith* as to the descent and the perhaps supraterritorial³⁶⁵ rank of his person, was indeed in need of confirmation through miracles; but as belonging merely to moral, soul-improving faith, it can dispense with all such documentation³⁶⁶ of its truth. Yet in a holy book this teaching is nonetheless still supplemented with miracles and mysteries whose promulgation itself is in turn a miracle and requires a historical faith that cannot be authenticated, as well as secured in terms of signification and meaning, except through scholarship.

But any faith that, as historical faith, bases itself on books, needs for its warrant a *scholarly public*, in which it can be checked,³⁶⁷ as it were, by writers who are contemporaries yet under no suspicion of a special agreement with the faith's first

to his spirit (in his nonsensible quality) reach the seat of the blessed^f without being transferred to some place in the infinite space that surrounds the earth (and that we also call heaven), is more favorable to reason. It is so not merely because of the impossibility of making understandable to oneself a matter that thinks, but above all because of the contingency to which our existence after death would be exposed through the provision that it is to rest merely on the cohesion of a certain clump of matter in a certain form, whereas reason can think the permanence of a simple substance as based on the substance's nature.—On the latter presupposition (of spiritualism), however, neither can reason find an interest in dragging along, through eternity, a body that, however purified^g it may be, must yet always consist (if personality rests on its identity) of the same material that constitutes the basis of its organization, and that even in life he never quite grew fond of; nor can reason make comprehensible to itself what this lime-earth,^h of which the body consists, is doingⁱ in heaven, where presumably other kinds of matter^j might constitute the condition for the existence and preservation of living beings.

129

^f [Or 'of the saved': *der Seligen*.]

ⁱ [Or 'is supposed to do': *soll*.]

^g [*geläutert*.]

^j ['kinds of matter' translates *Materien*, literally 'matters.']

^h [Or 'calcareous earth': *Kalkerde*.]

³⁶² [*vorgestellt*.]

³⁶³ [Cf. Matt. 28:20: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you *always*, even unto the end of the world. Amen."]

³⁶⁴ [Or 'doctrine': *Lehre*.]

³⁶⁵ [I.e., in effect, supranatural: *überirdisch*.]

³⁶⁶ [*Beweistümer*.]

³⁶⁷ [Or 'inspected': *kontrollieren*. In today's German, this verb has come to be used also in the very different American sense of 'to control,' but it had no such meaning in most of the 20th century, let alone before.]

disseminators, and whose link³⁶⁸ with our current writing has maintained itself uninterrupted. The pure faith of reason, by contrast, does not need any such authentication, but proves itself. Now, at the times of those revolutions, the people that ruled over the Jews and was disseminated in their very place of residence (the Roman people) included already a scholarly public, from which the history of that time, as regards the events in the political organization,³⁶⁹ has indeed been passed on through an uninterrupted series of writers. Moreover, this people, although little concerned about the religious faith of its non-Roman subjects, was by no means lacking in faith regarding the miracles held to have publicly occurred³⁷⁰ among them; yet, even as contemporaries, they did not mention anything, neither of those miracles, nor of the revolutions—although they occurred publicly—to which these gave rise (with regard to religion) in the people³⁷¹ which had been subjected to it. Only late, after more than a generation, did they perform an investigation concerning the character of this change of faith, which had hitherto remained unfamiliar to them (and had occurred not without a public movement), but they performed none concerning the history of its first beginning, in order to search for it in their own annals. Hence from that beginning until the time when Christianity amounted on its own to a scholarly public, its history is obscure, and thus we remain unfamiliar with what effect its doctrine³⁷² had on the morality of its religious comrades,³⁷³ whether the first Christians actually had been morally improved human beings, or else people³⁷⁴ of ordinary stamp. But ever since Christianity became itself a scholarly public, or at least entered into the universal one, its history, as regards the beneficial effect that one may rightly expect from a moral religion, is by no means conducive to recommending it.—For, this history recounts³⁷⁵ how mystical fanaticism in the life of hermits and monks and the laudation of the holiness of the unmarried state rendered a large number of human beings useless to the world; how miracles linked with this fanaticism weighed down the people³⁷⁶ with heavy fetters under a blind superstition; how, with a hierarchy thrusting itself upon free human beings, the terrible voice of *orthodoxy* rose from the mouth of pretentious, exclusively appointed scriptural interpreters and divided the Christian world into embittered parties over opinions concerning faith (opinions which, if one does not summon³⁷⁷ reason as interpreter, absolutely cannot be brought to universal agreement); how in the East,³⁷⁸ where in a ridiculous way the state itself occupied itself

³⁶⁸ [*Zusammenhang.*]

³⁶⁹ [*Verfassung*, rendered elsewhere most often as 'constitution.']

³⁷⁰ [*geschehen sein sollenden.*]

³⁷¹ [I.e., in effect, the nation: *Volk.*]

³⁷² [Or 'teaching': *Lehre.*]

³⁷³ [*Religionsgenossen.*]

³⁷⁴ [*Leute.*]

³⁷⁵ [This introductory phrase inserted; Kant starts simply with 'How' (*Wie*).]

³⁷⁶ [In the singular: *das Volk.*]

³⁷⁷ [*rufen.*]

³⁷⁸ [Near and Middle East: *Orient.*]

with statutes of faith of the priests and with the priesthood,³⁷⁹ instead of keeping them within the narrow limits of a mere teaching status (from which they are always inclined to pass over into a governing one)—how, I say, this state inevitably had to fall prey in the end to foreign enemies who ultimately put an end to its dominant faith; how in the West, where faith erected its own throne independent of worldly power, the civil order along with the sciences (which sustain it) was shattered and rendered impotent by a pretended vicar of God; how both Christian parts of the world—like the plants and animals that, near their disintegration through a disease, attract destructive insects to complete the disintegration—were attacked by barbarians; how in the Western part that spiritual head³⁸⁰ ruled over and disciplined kings like children by means of the magic wand of his threatened excommunication, incited them to foreign wars (the Crusades) depopulating another part of the world, to aggression³⁸¹ among one another, to the rebellion of subjects against those in authority over them and to bloodthirsty hatred against their differently minded fellow comrades³⁸² of one and the same universal so-called Christianity; how the root of this dissension, which even now is kept from violent eruptions only through political interest, lies hidden in the principle of a despotically commanding church faith and continues to give rise to worries about scenes similar to those. This history of Christianity (which, insofar as it was to be built on a historical faith, could indeed not turn out differently), if taken in, like a painting, in one glance, could indeed justify the outcry, *tantum religio potuit suadere malorum!*,³⁸³ did there not continue to shine forth distinctly enough from its founding that Christianity's true aim was none other than to introduce a pure religious faith about which there can be no contending opinions, but that all the turmoil by which humankind has been shattered and is still being split apart stems merely from this: that, through a bad³⁸⁴ propensity of human nature, what at the beginning was to serve merely to introduce this pure religious faith—namely winning over to the new faith, through its own prejudices, the nation accustomed to the old historical faith—was afterwards made the foundation of a universal world religion.

If one now asks, Which period of the entire church history familiar thus far is the best?, I have no qualms in saying, *it is the present one*, namely in the following way. One need only allow the germ of the true religious faith—as it has now been

131

³⁷⁹ ['priests' renders *Priester*; 'priestery' translates the somewhat derogatory *Pfaffentum* (the term for 'priesthood' being *Priesterschaft*). See below, Ak. VI, 151 br. n. 2 and 175 br. n. 224a and b.]

³⁸⁰ [I.e., the vicar of God just mentioned: *Oberhaupt*.]

³⁸¹ [Or 'feuding': *Befehdung*.]

³⁸² [*Mitgenossen*. The German term, too, is slightly redundant.]

³⁸³ ["So much was religion able to incite evils." Lucretius (Titus Lucretius Carus, ca. 99—ca. 55 B.C.), *De Rerum Natura* (*On the Nature of Things*), I, 101.]

³⁸⁴ [*schlimm*.]

132 planted in Christendom,³⁸⁵ though only by a few, but still publicly—to develop further and further unhindered, in order to expect from it a continual approximation³⁸⁶ to the church that unites all human beings forever and constitutes the visible presentation (the schema) of an invisible kingdom of God on earth.—Reason, which in matters that by their nature ought to be moral and soul-improving is extricating itself from the burden of a faith constantly exposed to the choice³⁸⁷ of the interpreters, has accepted universally among true venerators of religion in all countries of our part of the world (even if not everywhere publicly) the following principles. *First*, it has accepted the principle of appropriate *modesty* in claims about anything that is called revelation; it is the following.³⁸⁸ Concerning a scripture which in terms of its practical content contains nothing but divine things,³⁸⁹ no one can dispute the *possibility* that it may presumably (namely in regard to what is historical in it) also be regarded actually as divine revelation. Likewise, the association of human beings into one religion cannot properly be brought about and made permanent without a holy book and a church faith based thereon. Moreover—given the character of the present state of human insight—a new revelation, introduced through new miracles, can scarcely be expected. Therefore, the most reasonable and appropriate thing to do is to continue using the book, which happens to be there, as the foundation for church instruction, and not to weaken its value³⁹⁰ through useless or mischievous attacks, while yet also not thrusting faith in it upon any human being as required for salvation. The *second* principle is the following. Since the sacred³⁹¹ history that is designed merely for the sake of church faith can and is to have, by itself, absolutely no influence on the adoption of moral maxims, but is given to this faith only for the vivid exhibition of its true object (virtue striving toward holiness), it must always be taught and explained as aiming at morality; but in this one must also stress, carefully and (because, above all, the common human being has within him a constant propensity to step across to passive³⁹² faith)

133

³⁸⁵ [*Christenheit.*]

³⁸⁶ [Or 'approach': *Annäherung.*]

³⁸⁷ [*Willkür.*]

³⁸⁸ [The following argument, in effect. Although in the original the whole argument is written as one sentence, the individual clauses are separate assertions.]

³⁸⁹ [*lauter Göttliches.*]

³⁹⁰ [*Wert.*]

³⁹¹ [*heilig*; below, 'holiness' translates *Heiligkeit.*]

³⁹² One of the causes of this propensity lies in the principle of security: that the mistakes of a religion in which I was born and educated, the instruction of which did not depend on my selection,^a and in which I did not change anything through reasoning of my own, can be charged not to my account but to that of my educators or of the teachers publicly appointed

^a [Or 'choice': *Wahl.*]

repeatedly, that the true religion is to be posited not in the knowledge or confession of what God allegedly does or has done³⁹³ for our salvation,³⁹⁴ but in what we must do to become worthy of this; and that can never be anything other than what has by itself an indubitable *unconditional* worth,³⁹⁵ hence is alone capable of making us pleasing to God, and of whose necessity every human being can also become completely certain without any scriptural scholarship.—Now, not to hinder these principles, so that they will become public, is the duty of the regent. By contrast, very much is risked in this and undertaken at one's own responsibility by encroaching here on the course of divine providence and trying to please certain historical church doctrines that, after all, have in their favor at best a probability, to be established by scholars, [in order]³⁹⁶ to expose—through the offer or refusal of certain civil advantages otherwise available to everyone—the subjects' conscientiousness to temptation;³⁹⁷ for, doing this, not counting the impairment done thereby to a

134

to this task: another reason why one does not easily approve of a human being's public change of religion. To this, to be sure, yet another (deeper) reason is added, namely that with the uncertainty which everyone feels within himself as to which faith (among the historical ones) is the right one, whereas moral faith is everywhere the same— one finds it quite unnecessary to make a stir about this.

³⁹³ ['allegedly does or has done' translates (the subjunctive) *tue oder getan habe*.]

³⁹⁴ [Literally, 'becoming blessed': *Seligwerdung*.]

³⁹⁵ [*Wert*.]

³⁹⁶ [The insertion (equivalent to a German *um*), surely part of Kant's intended meaning, serves to separate 'to expose' from 'probability'.]

³⁹⁷ If a government does not want people to regard as coercion of conscience [the fact] that it only prohibits *publicly stating* one's religious opinion, whereas it is after all not preventing anyone from *thinking* to himself in secret whatever he sees fit, one usually jokes about this and says that this is no freedom at all granted by the government, because the government cannot prevent that anyway. However, what the secular supreme power cannot do, the spiritual can indeed: namely, prohibit even thought, and actually also prevent it; indeed, it can impose such a coercion, namely the prohibition so much as to think differently from what it prescribes, even on its powerful superiors.^a—For because of the propensity of human beings to the slavish faith of service of God, to which they are on their own inclined to give not only the greatest importance, before moral faith (whereby one is to serve God through observance of one's duties in general), but also the only importance, an importance that compensates for any other deficiency, it is always easy for the guardians of orthodoxy, as shepherds of souls,^b to strike into their flock a pious scare of the slightest deviation from certain dogmas^c based on history, and even of all investigation, to the point where people will not dare allow to spring up within them, even only in thought, a doubt against the propositions thrust upon them, because this would be tantamount to lending an ear to the evil spirit. It is true that, in order to become detached from this coercion, one needs only *to will*^d (which

^a [I.e., political superiors.]

^c [Literally, 'propositions of faith': *Glaubenssätzen*.]

^b [I.e., pastors: *Seelenhirten*.]

^d [*wollen*, which can also mean 'to want.']

freedom that in this case is holy, can scarcely provide good citizens for the state. Who, I wonder,³⁹⁸ among those who offer themselves for the prevention of such a free development of divine predispositions to the world's greatest good, or even propose this prevention, would want—if he meditated on it in consultation with his conscience—to answer for all the evil that can arise from such violent encroachments, [the evil] through which the progress in the good, intended by the government of the world, might perhaps for a long time be hampered, indeed even be turned into a regression, even if it can never be abolished entirely by any human power or institution?

Ultimately, even the kingdom of heaven is presented in this history, as regards its guidance by Providence, not only as an approach that is indeed delayed at certain times but never entirely interrupted, but also as being in its onset.³⁹⁹ Now, when this historical narrative is also supplemented (in the Apocalypse)⁴⁰⁰ with a prophecy (just as in Sibylline books)⁴⁰¹ of the completion of this great change of the world, in the picture⁴⁰² of a visible kingdom of God on earth (under the government of his proxy and vicar, descended again [from heaven]), and of the happiness that is to be enjoyed here on earth after the separation and expulsion of the rebels who make

is not the case with the coercion imposed by the sovereign^e in regard to public confessions); but it is precisely this willing that is being blocked internally. Yet although this coercion proper of conscience is bad^f enough (because it misleads one into inner hypocrisy), it is still not as bad as is restraint of external freedom of faith. For, the coercion of conscience must, through the advance of moral insight and the consciousness of one's freedom, from which alone the true respect for duty can arise, gradually dwindle on its own, whereas this external coercion prevents all voluntary advances in the ethical community of persons of faith—the community which constitutes the essence of the true church—and subjugates the form of this church entirely to political ordinances.

134

^e [bei jenem landesherrlichen.]

^f [schlimm.]

³⁹⁸ [wohl.]

³⁹⁹ [Eintritt.]

⁴⁰⁰ [Rev. 12:9: "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."]

⁴⁰¹ [The Sibylline books, all written in Greek hexameter verses in the so-called Homeric dialect, contained the Sibylline oracles, which were collections of predictions written by prophetic priestesses in the Etruscan and early Roman era as early as the 6th century B.C. and widely circulated thereafter. Some ancient authors enumerated ten sibyls: the Persian, the Libyan, the Delphian, the Cimmerian, the Erythraean, the Samarian, the Cumaean, the Hellespontine, the Phrygian, and the Tiburtine. The sibyls most highly venerated in Rome were the Cumaean and the Erythraean. In pagan times, the prophecies ascribed to the sibyls were carefully collected and jealously guarded in the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, and were consulted only in times of grave crises. These books (i.e., scrolls) were destroyed partially in a fire which incinerated the Capitol in 83 B.C., and were finally burned by order of the Roman general Flavius Stilicho (A.D. 365–408).]

⁴⁰² [Literally, 'painting': *Gemälde*.]

another attempt at their resistance, along with the complete extirpation of these rebels and of their leader, so that the *end of the world* constitutes the conclusion of that history,⁴⁰³ then one can interpret this as a symbolic presentation aimed merely at greater invigoration of hope and courage, and of striving after that kingdom of heaven. The teacher of the Gospel had shown the kingdom of God on earth to his disciples only from its splendid, soul-elevating, moral side, namely that of the worthiness to be citizens of a divine state, and had instructed them as to what they had to do, not only in order to attain to this⁴⁰⁴ themselves, but in order to unite for this with others of like mind and, if possible, with all of humankind. As regards happiness, however, which constitutes the other part of the unavoidable human wishes, he foretold them that during their life on earth they could not count on it. On the contrary, he prepared them to be ready for the greatest tribulations and sacrifices; yet he added (since, as long as the human being exists, a complete renunciation of the physical element⁴⁰⁵ of happiness cannot be required of him), “Be cheerful and confident, you will be requited for it well in heaven.”⁴⁰⁶ Now, the just cited addition to the history of the church, which concerns its future and ultimate destiny, presents it in the end as *triumphant*, i.e., as crowned, after all obstacles have been overcome, still here on earth.—The separation of the good people from the evil, which during the church’s advances to its perfection would not have been conducive to this purpose⁴⁰⁷ (since the mixing of the two with each other was precisely needed for this, partly to serve the good people as a whetstone of virtue, and partly to draw the others away from evil by their example),⁴⁰⁸ is presented, after the completed establishment of the divine state, as the ultimate⁴⁰⁹ consequence thereof. To this is still added the ultimate proof of this state’s stability, regarded as power, its victory over all external enemies, who are likewise regarded as [dwelling] in one state (the state of hell); and thus all life on earth comes to an end: “the last enemy (of good human beings), death, is abolished,”⁴¹⁰ and with⁴¹¹ both parties immortality begins,

135

⁴⁰³ [The “sacred history that is designed merely for the sake of church faith . . . but . . . must always be taught and explained as aiming at morality. . . .” See above, Ak. 132.]

⁴⁰⁴ [I.e., to this worthiness to be citizens of a divine state, and thus to the kingdom of heaven: *dazu* (‘thereto’). Below, ‘for this’ also translates *dazu*.]

⁴⁰⁵ [*das Physische*.]

⁴⁰⁶ [Matt. 5:12. The actual German text (in the Martin Luther translation, 1912 version), has *belohnet* rather than *vergolten* (‘rewarded’ rather than ‘requited’). In the King James version: “Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven. . . .”]

⁴⁰⁷ [Or ‘end’: *Zweck*; but see Ak. VI, 34 br. n. 152c.]

⁴⁰⁸ [Evil people serving for the first task, good people for the second.]

⁴⁰⁹ [Or ‘last’: *letzte*; likewise below, for ‘ultimate’ in ‘ultimate proof.’]

⁴¹⁰ [Cf. 1 Cor. 15:26: “The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death.”]

⁴¹¹ [*an.*]

to the salvation⁴¹² of the one, and the perdition⁴¹³ of the other; the form itself of a church is dissolved; the vicar on earth enters into one class with the human beings elevated to him as citizens of heaven, and thus⁴¹⁴ God is all in all.⁴¹⁵

136 This presentation⁴¹⁶ of a historical narrative of the future world, a narrative which itself is not history, is a beautiful ideal of the moral world-epoch, brought about through the introduction of the true universal religion and *foreseen*⁴¹⁷ in faith even to its completion, which we cannot *view*⁴¹⁸ as empirical completion but to which we can—in continual advance and approach to the highest good possible on earth (in which there is nothing mystical, but everything happens in a moral way and naturally)—only *look ahead*,⁴¹⁹ i.e., make provision for it. The appearance of the anti-Christ, as well as chiliasm⁴²⁰ and the proclamation of the nearness of the end of the world, can take on before reason their proper⁴²¹ symbolic signification, and the last of these,⁴²² presented as an event that (like the end of life, whether near or far) cannot be seen beforehand,⁴²³ expresses very well the necessity to be always ready for it, but in fact (if one bases this symbol on its intellectual meaning) always to look upon ourselves actually as appointed citizens of a divine (ethical) state. “When,

⁴¹² [*Heil*, used synonymously by Kant with *Seligkeit*.]

⁴¹³ [Respectively, *Heil* and *Verderben*.]

⁴¹⁴ [For the subsequent quote, ‘God is all in all,’ cf. above, Ak. VI, 121 incl. br. n. 314.]

⁴¹⁵ This expression (if one sets aside what is mysterious in it, reaches beyond all bounds of possible experience, and belongs merely to the sacred *history* of humankind, hence being of no practical concern) can be understood thus: that historical faith, which, as church faith, requires a holy book as the leading string of human beings, but which precisely thereby prevents the church’s unity and universality, will itself cease and pass over into a pure religious faith equally evident^a to all the world—toward which, then, we ought even now to work diligently through persistent extrication of the pure rational religion from the cloak that at present is not yet dispensable.

(†) Not that it^b will cease (for it may perhaps always be useful and needed as a vehicle), but that it can cease; this is only to point^c to the intrinsic stability of the pure moral faith.

^a [*einleuchtend*.]

^b [I.e., historical faith.]

^c [*meinen*.]

⁴¹⁶ [Or ‘conception’: *Vorstellung*.]

⁴¹⁷ [*vorausgesehen*.]

⁴¹⁸ [*absehen*.]

⁴¹⁹ [Literally, ‘look outward’: *hinaussehen*.]

⁴²⁰ [The expectation (or the doctrine thereof) that Christ will come to earth in a visible form and set up a theocratic kingdom over all the world and thus usher in the millennium.]

⁴²¹ [*gut*.]

⁴²² [Literally, ‘the latter’ (*die letztere*), which, in view of grammatical as well as contextual constraints, probably refers to ‘nearness of the end of the world’ (*Nah[h]eit des Weltendes*), even though it is the end itself that Kant seems to have in mind.]

⁴²³ [*nicht vorher zu sehendes*.]

therefore, cometh the kingdom of God?"⁴²⁴—"The kingdom of God cometh not in visible form. Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! *for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you!*" (Luke 17:21–22).⁴²⁵

⁴²⁴ [Luke 17:20: "And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." In Kant's quote, below, of verses 21–22, the emphasis and the exclamation mark at the end are added by him.]

⁴²⁵ † Now, here is a kingdom of God presented not according to a special covenant (not a messianic kingdom), but a *moral* one (cognizable by bare reason). The messianic kingdom (*regnum divinum pactitium*)^a had to obtain its proof from history, and there it is divided into the *messianic* kingdom of^b the *old* and of the *new* covenant. Now, it is noteworthy that the venerator of the former (the Jews) have continued to maintain themselves as such, despite being scattered throughout the world, whereas the faith of other religious comrades has usually fused with the faith of the people wherein they were scattered. This phenomenon seems to many to be so wondrous that they judge it to be surely impossible according to the course of nature, but to be an extraordinary arrangement for a special divine aim.—But a people that has a written religion (holy books) never fuses into one faith with a people that (like the Roman empire—the entire civilized world at that time) has no such religion but merely has customs; rather, sooner or later it makes proselytes. This is also why the Jews, after the Babylonian captivity—after which, as it seems, their holy books for the first time become public reading material—are no longer accused on account of their propensity to run after foreign gods, especially since the Alexandrian culture, which also must have had an influence on the Jews, was able to benefit them in providing those gods with a systematic form. Thus the *Parsis*,^c adherents of the religion of Zoroaster, have maintained their faith until now in spite of having been scattered, because their *dasturs*^d had the *Zendavesta*.^e By contrast, those *Hindus* who under the name of Gypsies are scattered far and wide, have not escaped the mixing with foreign faith, because they came from the dregs of the people (from the *Pariahs*,^f who are even forbidden to read in their holy books). However, what the Jews by themselves would nonetheless not have brought about was done by the Christian religion and later the Mohammedan,^g above all the Christian; for, these presuppose the Jewish faith and the holy books belonging to it (even if the Mohammedan religion claims that they are corrupted).^h For, the Jews were always able to rediscover among the Christians, who had emanated from them, their ancient documents, when during their wanderings—if the skill to

137

^a [Divine kingdom based on a covenant. The Latin term *pactitium* (cf. English 'pactitious') is a form of the adjective *pactitius* (also spelled *pacticius*), 'settled by a covenant (or pact).']

^b [Literally, according to: *nach*; likewise just below.]

^c [Or 'Parsees,' the Zoroastrians of India descended from Persian refugees fleeing Muhammadan persecution in the 7th century and settling principally at Bombay.]

^d [Or 'dustoors,' Zoroastrian high priests.]

^e [The great religious epic and holy book of Zoroastrianism. The meaning of 'Zend-Avesta' is uncertain, but may be close to 'Commentary and Sacred Text.']

^f [Members of a low caste of southern India and Burma that is below Sudra rank and provides many farm laborers and domestic servants.]

^g [Kant presumably means *fusing with another faith*.]

^h [*verfälscht*.]

General Comment

In all the kinds of faith that refer to religion, investigation into their intrinsic character⁴²⁶ inevitably comes upon a *mystery*, i.e., upon something *holy*, in other words, something with which each individual can indeed be *acquainted*,⁴²⁷ but which nonetheless cannot be publicly *familiar*,⁴²⁸ i.e., communicated universally.—As something *holy*, it must be a moral object, hence an object of reason and capable of being sufficiently cognized⁴²⁹ inwardly for practical use, yet as something *mysterious*,⁴³⁰ not for theoretical use, because then it would have to be also communicable to everyone and thus also able to become familiar outwardly and publicly.

138 Now, faith in something that we are yet to regard at the same time as a holy mystery can be considered to be either a *divinely inspired* or a *pure rational faith*. Unless we are compelled by the greatest plight to accept the first alternative,⁴³¹ we

read these documents and hence the pleasure of possessing them may repeatedly have become extinguished—they retained only the recollection of having had such at some point in the past. Hence outside the mentioned countries one indeed encounters no Jews, if one exempts the few on the coast of Malabarⁱ and perhaps one community in China (of whom the first were able to be in constant commercial interaction^j with their comrades of faith^k in Arabia), although it cannot be doubted that they must have spread into those rich countries also, but, through a lack of any kinship of their faith with the kinds of faith found there, came to forget their own completely. However, to base edifying contemplations upon this preservation of the Jewish people—along with their religion—under circumstances so disadvantageous to them is quite precarious, because each of the parties believes that it finds its account.^l The one party sees in the preservation of the people to which it belongs, and of its ancient faith, which despite the scattering among such a variety of peoples remains unmixed, the proof of a special benign providence that is saving this people up for a future kingdom on earth; the other sees in it nothing but warning ruins of a destroyed state that resists the arriving^m heaven on earth, ruins that a special providence continues to sustain, partly to preserve in remembrance the ancient prophecy of a messiah emanating from this people, partly to set up, in this people, an example of punitive justice because it obstinately wanted to frame of this messiah a political rather than a moral concept.

ⁱ [In southwestern India.]

^l [I.e., its justification: *seine Rechnung*.]

^j [*Handelsverkehr*.]

^m [*eintreten*.]

^k [Or ‘comrades in faith’: *Glaubensgenossen*.]

⁴²⁶ [Or ‘constitution’: *Beschaffenheit*.]

⁴²⁷ [Or ‘familiar,’ or (translating more freely, with appropriate adjustment of grammar) ‘known’: *gekannt*.]

⁴²⁸ [Or (translating more freely) ‘known’: *bekannt*.]

⁴²⁹ [Or ‘recognized’: *erkannt*.]

⁴³⁰ [*Geheimes*.]

⁴³¹ [*des ersten*; grammatically, this could also refer to ‘faith,’ although ‘side with,’ below, would seem to favor the reading adopted here.]

shall make it our maxim to side with the second.—Feelings are not cognitions and therefore also do not designate a mystery; but since a mystery refers to reason, yet nonetheless cannot be communicated universally, each person will have to search for it (if ever there is one) only in his own reason.

It is impossible to establish a priori and objectively whether there are such mysteries or not. We shall therefore have to search directly in the inner, subjective element⁴³² of our moral predisposition in order to see whether anything like this can be found in us. However, we shall not be allowed to include among the holy mysteries the *bases* for what is moral,⁴³³ which are inscrutable⁴³⁴ to us—what is moral can indeed be communicated publicly, but its cause is not given to us—but shall be allowed to include among them solely what is given to us for cognition, yet is nonetheless incapable of being communicated publicly. Thus freedom, a property of which the human being becomes informed through the determinability of his power of choice by the unconditionally moral law, is not a mystery, because the cognition of it can be *communicated* to everyone; this property's basis, however, which is inscrutable to us, is a mystery, because it is *not given* to us for cognition. But precisely this freedom alone is also what, when it is applied to the ultimate object of practical reason, namely the realization of the idea of the moral final purpose,⁴³⁵ leads us inevitably to holy mysteries.⁴³⁶

⁴³² [*dem Subjektiven.*]

⁴³³ [Or 'whatever is moral' or 'the moral': *das Moralische*. Likewise below.]

⁴³⁴ [*unerforschlich.*]

⁴³⁵ [*Endzweck*. On the importance, especially in terms like these, of translating *Zweck* as 'purpose' rather than as 'end,' see my article on *Zweckmäßigkeit* ('purposiveness'): "How to Render *Zweckmäßigkeit* in Kant's Third Critique," op. cit. above, Ak. VI, 34 br. n. 152c.]

⁴³⁶ Thus the *cause* of the universal gravity of all matter in the world is unfamiliar to us, so much so that one can in addition also have the insight that this cause can never be cognized by us, because the very concept of it presupposes in it a first motive force residing unconditionally in this cause itself. But this cause is nonetheless not a mystery, but can be made manifest to everyone, because its *law* is sufficiently cognized. When *Newton* presents it like the divine omnipresence in appearance^a (*omnipraesentia phaenomenon*),^b as it were, then this is not an attempt to explain it (for the existence of God in space involves a contradiction), but is still a sublime analogy, in which consideration is given merely to the union of corporeal beings into a world whole, by basing it on an incorporeal cause. And the same would happen with the attempt to gain insight into the independent^c principle of the union of rational beings of the world into an ethical state, and to explain that union from this. The duty that draws us toward this is all we cognize; the possibility of the intended effect, even if we obey that duty, lies beyond the bounds of all our insight.—There are mysteries^d that are concealments (*arcana*)^e of nature (secrecy,^f *secreta*^g); there may be mysteries of politics

^a [I.e., in the world of appearance: *Allgegenwart in der Erscheinung.*]

^b [Phenomenal omnipresence.]

^c [*selbständig.*]

^d [*Geheimnisse.*]

^e [Hidden things.]

^f [*Geheimhaltung.*]

^g [Secrets.]

139 Because the human being cannot himself realize the idea, inseparably linked with the pure moral attitude, of the highest good⁴³⁷ (with regard not only to the happiness belonging thereto, but also to the necessary union of human beings for the entire purpose), yet encounters in himself a duty to work toward this,⁴³⁸ he finds himself drawn toward the faith in the cooperation or arrangement, by a moral ruler of the world, through which alone this purpose is possible. And now there opens up before him the abyss of a mystery of what God is doing in this, whether *anything* is to be attributed to him (God) at all, and *what* in particular, while the human being cognizes in each duty nothing but what he himself has to do in order to be worthy of that compensation unfamiliar⁴³⁹ or at least incomprehensible to him.

This idea of a moral ruler of the world is a task for our practical reason. We are concerned to know not so much what God is in himself (what his nature is) as what he is for us as moral beings, even though for the sake of this reference we must think and assume the divine natural constitution as is needed for this relation in the complete perfection required for the execution of his will (e.g., as that⁴⁴⁰ of an unchangeable, omniscient, omnipotent, etc. being); and apart from this reference we cannot cognize anything in him.

Now, in accordance with this need of practical reason, the universal true religious faith is faith (1) in God as the omnipotent creator of heaven and earth, i.e., morally as *holy* legislator; (2) in him, the preserver of humankind, as *benign* governor and moral provider thereof; (3) in him, the steward⁴⁴¹ of his own holy laws, i.e., as *just* judge.

that are not *meant to*^h become publicly familiar; but both, insofar as they rest on empirical causes, still *can* become familiar to us. In regard to what it is a universal human duty to cognize (namely, what is moral),ⁱ there can be no mystery; but in regard to what only God can do, where doing something for it ourselves surpasses our ability and hence also our duty, there can be only a mystery proper, namely a holy mystery (*mysterium*) of religion, concerning which it might perhaps be useful to know and understand only that there is such a mystery, but not exactly to have insight into it.

^h [Or 'intended to' or 'supposed to': *sollen.*]

ⁱ [Or 'whatever is moral' or 'the moral': *das Moralische.*]

⁴³⁷ [In the *Critique of Practical Reason* (Ak. V, 110–11), Kant characterizes the highest good as follows. "Now, inasmuch as virtue and happiness together amount to possession of the highest good in a person, and thereby happiness distributed [to persons] quite exactly in proportion to [their] morality (as a person's worth and his worthiness to be happy) amounts also to the *highest good* of a possible world, the highest good means the whole, [i.e., it means] the complete good."]

⁴³⁸ [*darauf*, which probably refers to the realization, though it might refer to the highest good.]

⁴³⁹ [Or (translating more freely) 'unknown': *unbekannt.*]

⁴⁴⁰ [I.e., the divine natural constitution.]

⁴⁴¹ [Or 'administrator': *Verwalter.*]

This faith contains in fact no mystery, because it expresses solely God's moral conduct toward humankind; it also offers itself on its own to any human reason and is, therefore, found in the religion of most civilized peoples.⁴⁴² It resides in the concept of a people as a community, a concept in which such a threefold superior power (*pouvoir*)⁴⁴³ must always be thought, except that this community is here presented⁴⁴⁴ as ethical, which is why this threefold quality of the moral sovereign of humankind can be thought as united in one and the same being, even though in a juridically civil⁴⁴⁵ state it would necessarily have to be distributed among three different subjects.⁴⁴⁶

⁴⁴² In the sacred prophetic story of the last things,^a the *judge of the world* (properly, he who will take under his dominion and separate out, as his own, those who belong to the kingdom of the good principle) is presented and mentioned not as God but as the Son of man.^b This seems to indicate that *humanity itself*, conscious of its limitation and frailty, will in this selection^c pronounce the verdict; which is a benignity^d that nonetheless does not impair justice.—By contrast, the judge of human beings as presented in his divinity, i.e., as he speaks to our conscience in terms of the holy law acknowledged^e by us and in terms of our own imputation^f (the Holy Spirit), can be thought as passing judgment^g only in terms of the strictness of the law, because we ourselves absolutely do not know how much can come to our benefit to the account of our frailty, but have before our eyes merely our transgression, together with the consciousness of our freedom and of the violation of duty of which we are entirely guilty, and thus have no reason for assuming benignity in the judicial verdict concerning us.

^a [I.e., of all the events that are to take place at the end of the world.]

^b [Cf. Matt. 26:64: "Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Cf. also Mark 14:62; Luke 22:69 (also 21:27); and John 5:26–27.]

^c [Of those who belong to the kingdom of the good principle.]

^d [On the part of God.]

^e [Or, in that sense, 'recognized': *anerkannt*.]

^f [Of merit and guilt.]

^g [*richten*.]

⁴⁴³ [French for 'power.]

⁴⁴⁴ [Or 'conceived': *vorgestellt*.]

⁴⁴⁵ [Or 'juridico-civil': *juridisch-bürgerlich*. Cf. above, Ak. VI, 94 incl. br. n. 11.]

⁴⁴⁶ † One cannot readily indicate the reason why so many ancient peoples agreed on this idea, unless it is that the idea lies in universal human reason when one wants to think of a government of a people and (by analogy therewith) of a government of the world. The religion of *Zoroaster* had these three divine persons: Ormuzd, Mithra, and Ahriman;^a the Hindu

^a [Ormuzd or Ormazd or Ahura Mazda(h) ("sovereign knowledge"): head of the good spirits (*or gods*). Mithra: a lesser god in Zoroastrianism, though important in later religions. Ahriman: head of the evil spirits, lord of darkness and death, who wages war with Ormuzd until a time when human beings choose to lead good lives and Ahriman is finally destroyed. Cf. Kant's *The End of All Things*, Ak. VIII, the n. on 328–29.]

religion had Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva^b (except with the difference that the *religion of Zoroaster* presents the third person as originator not merely of the *bad* insofar as it is punishment, but even of the *morally evil* for which the human being is punished, whereas the *Hindu religion* presents the third person merely as passing judgment and punishing. The *Egyptian religion* had its *Ptah*, *Kneph*, and *Neith*,^c of whom, as far as the obscurity of the reports from the most ancient times of this people allows one to guess, the first principle was to present spirit, distinguished from matter, as *creator* of the world; the second, the sustaining and governing benignity; the third, the wisdom restricting the former two,^d i.e., *justice*. The *Gothic religion* venerated its *Odin* (All-father), its *Freya* (also *Freyja*, goodness), and *Thor*; the god who passes judgment (punishes).^e Even the *Jews* seem to have pursued these ideas in the last time periods of their hierarchical constitution. For in the charge of the Pharisees that Christ had called himself a *Son of God*, they seem to have put no special weight of accusation on the doctrine that God has a son, but seem to have put such weight only on Christ's claim^f that he was this Son of God.^g

^b [This is the triad of gods from the (comparatively late) early *Epic* period of Hinduism (ca. 800 B.C.–A.D. 200). At this early stage of the period, Brahma (“break forth”) is the god of (repeated) creation; Vishnu (“all-pervading”), the god of protection and preservation; and Shiva (“auspicious one”) the god of destruction. Cf. above, Ak. VI, 19.]

^c [Ptah (or Pthah): “father of the gods,” creator god, fertility god, god of the dead, and chief god of Memphis. Kneph (or Khnum): ram-headed god of animal and spiritual life, creator of human beings and of water. Neith (or Neit, Nit, Net): mother goddess and goddess of the lower heavens, of war and of the hunt, but also of women, marriage, childbirth; of handicraft, medicine, and of wisdom; she is often depicted with wings stretched out as if covering the whole earth; or with bow and arrows; or shaped into an arch, with her feet and fingers on the ground, her body forming the blue vault overhead and spanned with stars. As Bohatec (op. cit. at Ak. VI, 19 br. n. 3), 166–67 incl. n. 10, points out, these gods are mentioned in the translation by Johann S. Ith of *L’Ezour-Védam; ou, Ancien commentaire du Védam* (itself the [spurious] translation of the *Yajur Veda* from the Sanskrit), a work whose real author was the Baron de Sainte-Croix. See above, Ak. VI, 19 br. n. 11.]

^d [*jene*. I am taking this as plural, i.e., as referring to the spirit as well as the benignity; but it could also be read as feminine singular, in which case it would refer to the benignity alone.]

^e [Emphasis on ‘Odin’ added. An All-father is a father (and chief) of all the gods. Odin is the god of war and death, but also of poetry and wisdom. He carries a spear that never misses its target, a ring from which every ninth night eight new rings appear, and rides an eight-footed steed. He is accompanied by two wolves, to whom he gives his food, for he himself consumes nothing but wine. He has only one eye, which blazes like the sun. His other eye he traded for a drink from the Well of Wisdom, and gained immense knowledge. On the day of the final battle, Odin will be killed by a wolf. Instead of ‘Freyja’ Kant has ‘Freyer,’ i.e., presumably, ‘Freyr’; but Freyr is actually Freya’s brother, the god of fertility, peace, and prosperity. Freya, called “The Fair One” for her beauty, is the chief of the Valkyries (“slain-choosers”), the demi-goddesses who select the noble and heroic dead and carry them to the realm of the gods. She is patroness of women who attain wisdom, status, and power, and the protectress of the human race. Thor, son of Odin, is the god of thunder, and one of the most powerful gods. People believed that during a thunderstorm, Thor rode through the heavens on his chariot pulled by two goats; lightning flashed whenever he threw his hammer.]

^f [*wollen*.]

^g [Cf. Matt. 26:63–64; Mark 14:61–62; Luke 22:67–71; and John 5:25–26.]

But because this faith—which, on behalf of religion as such, has purified the moral relation of human beings to the supreme being of harmful anthropomorphisms and made it commensurate with the genuine morality of a people of God—was after all first put forth publicly to the world in a [particular] doctrine of faith (the Christian one), and in it alone, one can indeed call its promulgation the revelation of what was until then for human beings—through their own fault⁴⁴⁷—a mystery.

For in this promulgation⁴⁴⁸ it is said, *first*, that one ought to present⁴⁴⁹ the supreme legislator, as such, as commanding not *mercifully*, and hence not *forbearingly* (indulgently) toward the weakness of human beings, nor *despotically* and merely according to his unlimited right; and one ought to present his laws not as laws chosen⁴⁵⁰ by him and in no way akin to our concepts of morality, but as laws referred to holiness in the human being.⁴⁵¹ *Second*, one must posit his goodness⁴⁵² not in an unconditional *benevolence* toward his creatures, but in [the fact] that he takes account first of their moral constitution, through which they can *please* him, and only then compensates for their inability to fulfill this condition on their own. *Third*, his justice cannot be presented as carried out *benignly* and *exorably*⁴⁵³ (which contains a contradiction), still less as carried out in the quality of the legislator's *holiness* (before which no human being is just), but only as a limitation of the benignity to the condition that human beings harmonize with the holy law insofar as they could, as *children of human beings*,⁴⁵⁴ conform to that law's demand.—In a word, God wills⁴⁵⁵ to be served in a threefold moral quality, varying in kind,⁴⁵⁶ for which the designation of *varying* (not physical, but moral) *personality*⁴⁵⁷ of one and the same being is not an inappropriate expression. This symbol of faith⁴⁵⁸ at the same time expresses the entire pure moral religion;

⁴⁴⁷ [*Schuld*, which also means 'guilt.']

⁴⁴⁸ [*In ihr*; I take *ihr* to refer back to *Bekanntmachung*; grammatically, it could instead refer back to *Glaubenslehre* ('doctrine of faith'), or even to *Offenbarung* ('revelation').]

⁴⁴⁹ [Or 'conceive': *vorstellen*.]

⁴⁵⁰ [*willkürliche*.]

⁴⁵¹ [Literally, 'of the human being': *des Menschen*.]

⁴⁵² [*Güte*; below, 'benignly' translates *gütig* and 'benignity' *Gütigkeit*.]

⁴⁵³ [*abbittlich*.]

⁴⁵⁴ [*Menschenkinder*. Cf. Mark 3:28: "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme" Cf. also Eph. 3:5.]

⁴⁵⁵ [Or 'wants': *will*.]

⁴⁵⁶ [*spezifisch verschieden*.]

⁴⁵⁷ [*verschiedene Persönlichkeit*; emphasis added.]

⁴⁵⁸ [A confession of faith, made as a sign (symbol) of recognition and communion among believers. The Christian symbol of faith begins thus: "I believe in one God, . . ." Cf. above, Ak. VI, 69 n. 127 incl. br. n. 127d.]

142 otherwise, without this distinction,⁴⁵⁹ that religion would, in accordance with the propensity of the human being to think of the deity as like a human sovereign (who, in his reign, usually does not separate [the components of] this threefold quality from one another, but often mixes or confuses them), run the risk of degenerating into an anthropomorphic slavish faith.

However, if this same faith (in a divine Trinity)⁴⁶⁰ were regarded not merely as the presentation of a practical idea, but rather as a faith that is to present what God is in himself, then it would be a mystery surpassing all human concepts and hence incapable of a revelation for the human power of grasping, and could in this regard be proclaimed to be a mystery. Faith in this mystery as an expansion of theoretical cognition of the divine nature would be only the confession⁴⁶¹ of a symbol—not at all understandable⁴⁶² for human beings and, if they suppose they understand it, anthropomorphic—of a church faith, whereby not the least would be accomplished for moral improvement.—Only that which in a practical reference one can indeed quite readily understand and gain insight into, but which from a theoretical point of view (for determining the nature of the object in itself) surpasses all our concepts, is a mystery (in one reference) and can yet (in another) be revealed. Of this kind is the one mentioned above, which can be divided into three mysteries revealed to us through our own reason:

1. The mystery of the *calling*⁴⁶³ (of human beings, as citizens, to an ethical state).—We cannot think of the universal *unconditional* submission of human beings to the divine legislation except insofar as we regard ourselves simultaneously as his *creatures*, just as God can be regarded as the originator of all natural laws only because he is the creator of the things of nature. However, it is absolutely incomprehensible to our reason how beings could⁴⁶⁴ be *created* for the free employment of their powers; for according to the principle of causality we can attribute to a being, assumed to have been produced, no other intrinsic basis for its actions except the one put into it by the producing cause; but then every action of this being would also be determined through this basis (and hence through an external cause), and hence this being itself would not be free. Therefore, the legislation that is divine and holy, and hence pertains merely to free beings, cannot through our rational insight be reconciled with the concept of a creation of these beings; rather, one must regard them as already existing⁴⁶⁵ free beings who are determined not through their dependence on nature, owing to their creation, but through a merely moral

143

⁴⁵⁹ [Of God's threefold moral quality.]

⁴⁶¹ [*Bekentnis*.]

⁴⁶⁰ [I.e., *trinity: Dreieinigkeit*.]

⁴⁶² [*ganz unverständlichen*.]

⁴⁶³ [*Berufung*. The term can refer either to the act of God's calling or to the status that human beings have as a result of that act. I am somewhat inclined to believe that the second meaning is the one intended here, and also below.]

⁴⁶⁴ [Roughly in the sense of 'are supposed to be': *sollen*.]

⁴⁶⁵ [Reading *als schon existierende* for *schon als existierende*.]

necessitation⁴⁶⁶ possible according to laws of freedom, i.e., a call to citizenship in the divine state. Thus the calling to this purpose is morally entirely clear, but for speculation the possibility of these called beings is an impenetrable mystery.

2. The mystery of *satisfaction*.⁴⁶⁷ The human being, as we are acquainted with him, is corrupted and by no means commensurate by himself with that holy law. Nonetheless, if God's goodness has, as it were, summoned⁴⁶⁸ him into being,⁴⁶⁹ i.e., has invited him to a special way of existing (to be a member of the kingdom of heaven), then God must also have a means of making up, from the fullness of his own holiness, for the deficiency in the human being's suitability that is required for this. That, however, goes against the spontaneity (which is presupposed with everything morally good or evil that a human being may have about him),⁴⁷⁰ according to which such a good must stem not from someone else but from himself, if it is to be imputed to him.—Therefore, as far as reason has insight, no one else can, through the abundance in his good conduct and through his merit, take that human being's place; or, if such is assumed, then *assuming* it can be necessary only for a moral aim, because for subtle reasoning⁴⁷¹ it is an unreachable mystery.

3. The mystery of *election*.⁴⁷² Even if that proxy satisfaction⁴⁷³ is admitted as possible, its acceptance, made in moral faith,⁴⁷⁴ is nonetheless a determination of the will to the good; and this determination already presupposes in the human being an attitude pleasing to God, which the human being, however, in accordance with the natural corruption within him, cannot bring forth on his own. But that there should⁴⁷⁵ operate in him a divine *grace* that concedes this assistance to one human being but refuses it to another, not according to the merit of the works but by unconditional *decree*, and that the one part of our kind⁴⁷⁶ is marked out⁴⁷⁷ for salvation, the other for eternal damnation,⁴⁷⁸ this again yields no concept of a divine

⁴⁶⁶ [Nötigung.]

⁴⁶⁷ [Rendered to divine justice: *Genugtuung*.]

⁴⁶⁸ [Or 'called': *gerufen*.]

⁴⁶⁹ [Literally, 'being-there': *Dasein*, elsewhere translated as 'existence,' with which it is ordinarily synonymous. Below, 'existing' renders *existieren*.]

⁴⁷⁰ [*an sich haben*.]

⁴⁷¹ ['subtle reasoning' translates *Vernünffteln*.]

⁴⁷² [I.e., being chosen: *Erwählung*.]

⁴⁷³ [I.e., someone else's satisfaction for the human being's sins: *stellvertretende Genugtuung*. See above, Ak. VI, 116–18.]

⁴⁷⁴ [*moralisch-gläubige Annehmung*.]

⁴⁷⁵ [Roughly in the sense of 'is supposed to': *solle*.]

⁴⁷⁶ [I.e., of humankind: *unseres Geschlechts*.]

⁴⁷⁷ [*ausersehen*.]

⁴⁷⁸ [*Verwerfung*.]

justice, but would at best have to be referred to a wisdom whose rule is absolutely a mystery to us.

Now, as regards these mysteries, insofar as they concern the moral life history of every human being—namely, how it happens that a moral good or evil⁴⁷⁹ is in the world at all, and (if evil is in all human beings and at all times) how good nonetheless originates from evil and is established in some human being; or why, if *this* happens in some, yet others remain excluded from it—about this God has revealed
 144 nothing to us, and also can reveal nothing to us, because we still would not *understand*⁴⁸⁰ it. It would be as if, seeking to *explain* and *make comprehensible* to ourselves what occurs, we sought to do so in the human being, from his freedom; although God has indeed revealed his will about this through the moral law in us, he has left the *causes* through which a free action occurs on earth, or again does not occur there, in that same obscurity in which for human investigation everything must remain that, being history, is yet to be comprehended also from freedom

⁴⁷⁹ [Literally, 'a morally good or evil,' i.e., something morally good or evil: *ein sittlich Gutes oder Böses*. Above, 'moral' renders *moralisch*.]

⁴⁸⁰ One usually harbors no qualms about requiring apprentices of religion to have faith in mysteries, on the ground that^a our not *comprehending*^b mysteries, i.e., our being unable to have insight into the possibility of the object, can no more entitle us to refuse to accept them than it can entitle us to refuse to accept, say, the propagative ability of organic kinds of matter,^c an ability that likewise no human being comprehends and that we nonetheless cannot refuse to accept on that account, even though it is and will remain a mystery to us. However, surely we *understand* quite readily what this expression^d means, and we have an empirical concept of the object,^e together with consciousness that there is no contradiction in it.—Now, concerning any mystery put forward for faith one may rightly demand that one *understand* what is meant^f by it. This does not come about by one's understanding *individually* the words through which the mystery is intimated, i.e., by one's attaching a meaning^g to them; rather, the words, taken together in one concept, must still allow a meaning, lest perhaps all thought be extinguished in this.—The alternative that God can surely let us have this cognition through *inspiration*, if only we for our part do not fail to wish this seriously, is unthinkable; for, this cognition cannot inhere in us at all, because the nature of our understanding is incapable of it.

^a [I use 'on the ground that' rather than 'because' to translate *weil*, to convey the force of the subjunctive (of indirect speech) of (the negated) *berechtigten könne* ('can . . . entitle us').]

^b [Or 'being unable to comprehend.' Kant's grammar is compatible with either reading. Kant *usually* says that something is *incomprehensible* to us, rather than that it is not comprehended by us. However, an exception to this generalization is about to occur.]

^c ['kinds of matter' translates *Materien*, literally 'matters.']

^d ['propagative ability of organic kinds of matter' *Fortpflanzungsvermögen organischer Materien*.]

^e [I.e., of the propagative ability in question.]

^f [*gemeint*; above, 'means' translates *sagen wollen*, a synonym of *meinen*.]

^g [Or 'sense': *Sinn*; likewise below.]

according to the law of causes and effects.⁴⁸¹ Concerning the objective rule of our conduct, however, everything that we need is sufficiently revealed to us (through reason and Scripture), and this revelation is also understandable to every human being.⁴⁸²

That the human being is called, through the moral law, to a good way of life; that through indelible respect for this law, a respect that lies in him, he also finds in himself the promise⁴⁸³ of trust toward this good spirit, and of the hope to be able to render satisfaction to it, however this might happen; finally, that he, comparing this expectation to the strict command of the moral law, must constantly test himself as one summoned to give account before a judge—about this we are taught, and to this we are impelled, simultaneously by reason, heart, and conscience. It is immodest to demand that still more be disclosed to us; and had this indeed happened,⁴⁸⁴ then he would not have to include it in the universal human need.

145

But although that great mystery, which encompasses all the mentioned mysteries in one formula, can be made comprehensible to every human being through his reason as a practically necessary religious idea, yet one can say that, in order to become the moral foundation of religion, above all of a public one, it was revealed for the first time when it was taught *publicly* and made the symbol of an entirely

⁴⁸¹ Hence in a practical reference (when duty is at issue) we understand quite readily what freedom is; but from a theoretical point of view, as regards the causality of freedom (freedom's nature, as it were), we cannot without contradiction even think of seeking to understand it.

⁴⁸² [Cf. Kant's Reflections on Metaphysics, Ak. XVIII, 448–49, no. 6092: "This is the holy symbol of moral theology, the monogram of God's mysterious essence, but [used] in order to forestall theosophy and theurgy. The threefold function in the relation must presuppose in God a threefold original principle of his activity, but we have no insight into this principle. Numerical identity is the unity of the individual; i.e., of that which in different references has been regarded as many. The contemplation (*specula*) of God in this threefold personality is not theoretical, but moral. Theology as theosophy is presumption and fanaticism." And no. 6093: "Theology is no theosophy, [no attempt] to cognize God as to his nature in himself, [but an attempt to cognize him] only in relation to us and to the morality of our will. In the same way, religion is no theurgy, in order to have on God and his will a (direct) influence through formulas, through spiritual efforts, purifications, acts of penance, but is [an attempt] to direct the cognition of him to the improvement of ourselves. The question is only this: what makes us better human beings? [Answer:] The moral concept of God and the threefold personality relatively to our practical maxims, not in regard to his own nature. Through a good way of life one does not try to affect God, but tries only to make oneself receptive to the divine goodness." (All translations given in footnotes are my own.)]

⁴⁸³ [In the sense of 'assurance': *Verheißung*.]

⁴⁸⁴ [More literally, 'if this were to have happened,' which is just as ambiguous in the original as it is in the English: *wenn dieses geschehen sollte*. I have here chosen to interpret it as referring to a further disclosure that might have happened but actually did not, rather than to one that perhaps did actually happen.]

new religious epoch. *Solemn formulas* usually contain their own language, intended merely for those who belong to a particular association (a guild or community), a language sometimes mystical and not understood by everyone, which properly (out of respect) one should indeed make use of only for the sake of a ceremonial action (as, say, when someone is to be admitted as a member into a society that excludes itself from others). The highest goal, however, of the moral perfection of finite creatures—never completely attainable for human beings—is love of the law.

In conformity with this idea, the following would be a principle of faith in religion: “God is Love”;⁴⁸⁵ in him one can *venerate* the loving one (with his love of moral *pleasure* in human beings⁴⁸⁶ insofar as they are adequate to his holy law), the *Father*; in him, furthermore, insofar as he exhibits himself in his all-preserving idea, humanity’s archetype begotten and beloved by him,⁴⁸⁷ one can venerate his *Son*; finally also, insofar as he limits this pleasure to the condition that human beings harmonize with the condition of that love of [moral] pleasure,⁴⁸⁸ and thereby proves it to be a love based on wisdom, one can venerate the *Holy Spirit*,⁴⁸⁹ one

⁴⁸⁵ [1 John 4:8: “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.” John 4:16: “And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.”]

⁴⁸⁶ [I.e., with his love based on moral *pleasure* in (or ‘liking for’) human beings: *mit der Liebe des moralischen Wohlgefallens am Menschen*. Concerning my rendering of *Wohlgefallen* as ‘liking’ but also, in certain contexts, as ‘pleasure,’ see above, Ak. VI, 47 br. n. 256, and 45 br. n. 246h.]

⁴⁸⁷ [Literally, ‘by himself’ (which would sound misleading here): *von ihm selbst*.]

⁴⁸⁸ [I.e., again, love based on (moral) pleasure: *Liebe des Wohlgefallens*.]

⁴⁸⁹ This Spirit, through which the love of God as Savior^a (properly, our responding love^b conforming to it) is reconciled^c with the fear of God as legislator, i.e., the conditioned with the condition, and which can therefore be presented as “proceeding from both,”^d apart from [the fact] that “it leads to all truth (observance of duty),”^e is at the same time the judge proper of human beings (before their conscience). For the passing of judgment^f can be taken in two meanings: either as concerning merit and lack of merit, or as concerning guilt and inno-

^a [Literally, ‘blessed-maker’: *Seligmacher*.]

^b [*Gegenliebe*.]

^c [Or ‘united’: *vereinigt*.]

^d [Wobbermin points out (Ak. VI, 505) that this is the Western (Augustinian) form of the doctrine of the Trinity, while the Eastern maintains that the spirit proceeds from the Father alone; cf. John 15:26: “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: . . .”]

^e [John 16:13: “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.”]

^f [Or ‘to pass judgment’: *das Richten*; likewise below. Above, ‘judge’ translates *Richter*; just below, ‘passes judgment’ renders *richtet*.]

cence.⁸ God, regarded (in his Son) as *love*, passes judgment on human beings insofar as over and above their obligation^h a merit can still accrue to them, and there his verdictⁱ is: *worthy* or *not worthy*. He separates out, as his own, those to whom such merit can still be imputed. The others go away empty-handed. By contrast, the decision of the judge according to *justice* (the judge properly so called, under the name of Holy Spirit) about those to whom no merit can accrue is: *guilty* or *not guilty*, i.e., condemnation or absolution.—In the first case, the *passing of judgment* means the *separating out* of the meritorious from the unmeritorious, both of whom are pursuing a prize (salvation). By *merit*, however, we mean here a superiority of morality not in reference to the law (in regard to which no surplus of observance of duty over and above our obligation can apply to us) but in comparison with other human beings in regard to their moral attitude. *Worthiness* always has also an only negative meaning (being not unworthy), namely of moral receptivity to such goodness.—Therefore, the [judge] who passes judgment in the first quality (as *brabeus*)^j makes the judgment^k of selection between *two* persons (or parties) pursuing the prize (salvation); but the one in the second quality (the judge proper) makes the decision about *one and the same* person before a court of law (conscience) that pronounces the judicial verdict between prosecution and defense.^l—If, now, it is assumed that although all human beings are under the guilt of sins,^m to some of them a merit can still accrue, then the verdict of the *judge* proceeds *from love*; the lack of this verdict would only lead to a *judgment of rejection*, of which, however, the *judgment of condemnation* (since the human being now falls into the hands of the judge [who judges] from justice) would be the unfailing consequence.—In such a way, in my opinion, the seemingly conflicting propositions, “The Son will come to judge the living and the dead,”ⁿ and, on the other hand, “God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved” (John 3:17), can be reconciled and be in agreement with the one where it says, “He that believeth not in him *is condemned already*” (John 3:18),^o namely by that Spirit of whom it is said, “He will judge the world because of sin and righteousness.”^p—The anxious carefulness about such differentiations in the realm of bare reason, the reason for which they are in fact undertaken here, could easily be

⁸ [More literally, ‘guilt and nonguilt’: *Schuld und Unschuld*. Below, *schuldig oder unschuldig* is translated, following legal practice, as ‘guilty or not guilty,’ rather than as ‘guilty or innocent.’]

^h [*Schuldigkeit*, which also means ‘guiltiness.’ Although the latter meaning seems to fit well here, the term recurs below, and in a similar context (“surplus of observance of duty over and above our obligation”), yet cannot there be taken in that meaning.]

ⁱ [*Ausspruch*; below, ‘decision’ translates *Sentenz*.]

^j [ἄρβραεύς, i.e., ‘arbitrator’ or ‘referee’: *als Brabeuta*. Kant, attentive to Greek grammar, gives the word in the accusative.]

^k [*Urteil*; above, ‘passes judgment’ renders *richtet*.]

^l [More literally, ‘prosecutor and advocate [i.e., defender]’: *Ankläger und Sachwalter*.]

^m [*Sündenschuld*, which can also mean ‘debt of sins’; cf. above, Ak. VI, 72 incl. br. n. 138.]

ⁿ [Cf. 2 Tim. 4:1: “I charge *thee* therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;”]

^o [“He that believeth in him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”]

^p [John 16:8: “And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.”]

147 cannot, however, properly *invoke* him in such multifold personality (for, this would intimate a diversity of beings; but he is always only a single object),⁴⁹⁰ though one can indeed invoke him in the name of the object venerated and beloved by himself above all else, with which to stand in moral union is one's desire and simultaneously one's duty. Otherwise, the theoretical confession of faith in the divine nature in this threefold quality belongs to the mere classical formula of a church faith—to distinguish it from other kinds of faith derived from historical sources—a faith with which few human beings are able to link a distinct and determinate concept (one not exposed to misinterpretation); exposition of it applies more to the teachers in their relation to one another (as philosophical and scholarly interpreters of a holy book), in order to come to an agreement concerning its meaning. Not everything in this faith is for the common power of grasping, or even for the need of this time, but the mere literalist faith more readily corrupts rather than improves the true religious attitude.

regarded as useless and burdensome subtlety; and it would be that, if it were aimed at exploring the divine nature. However, since human beings in their religious concern are constantly inclined to turn, on account of their trespasses,^q to the divine goodness,^r but nonetheless cannot circumvent his justice, while a *benign judge* in one and the same person is a contradiction, one can readily see that even from a practical point of view their concepts about this must be very wavering and discordant with themselves, and that correcting them and determining them exactly is therefore of great practical importance.

^q [More literally, '[things] that they have become guilty of': *Verschuldigungen*.]

^r [*Güte*; below, 'benign' translates *gütig*.]

⁴⁹⁰ [Cf. above, Ak. VI, 144 incl. br. n. 482.]

⁴⁹¹ [Kant presumably means God's Son.]

PHILOSOPHICAL DOCTRINE OF RELIGION

149

FOURTH PIECE

151

ON SERVICE AND PSEUDOSERVICE¹ UNDER THE DOMINION OF THE GOOD PRINCIPLE, OR, ON RELIGION AND PRIESTERY²

It is already a beginning of the dominion of the good principle³ and a sign “that the kingdom of God is at hand,”⁴ if so much as the principles of its constitution⁵ start to become *public*; for in the world of understanding, something is already there when its bases, which alone can bring it about, have universally taken root, even though the complete development of its appearance in the world of sense is still removed at an immense distance. We have seen that to unite to form an ethical community is a duty of a special kind (*officium sui generis*),⁶ and that, even though each person obeys his private duty, one can indeed infer from this a *contingent agreement* of all toward a common good, even without there also being a need for a special arrangement; but that this agreement of all must nonetheless not be hoped for unless a special business is made of the union of them all for one and the same purpose,⁷

¹ [*Afterdienst*. The prefix and adjective ‘after’ comes from Middle and ultimately from Old High German; its basic meaning (cf. to some extent its English cognate) is ‘behind,’ ‘inferior,’ ‘spurious.’ For Kant’s definition of ‘pseudoservice,’ see below, Ak. VI, 153.]

² [*Pfaffentum*, a somewhat derogatory term for ‘priesthood,’ the standard German term being *Priesterschaft*. Analogously, the standard German term for ‘priest’ is *Priester*; but there is also the somewhat pejorative *Pfaffe*, for which the closest English equivalent I have been able to find is ‘priestling,’ not in the sense of a young priest, but in the (clearly pejorative) sense of a petty priest. Cf. below, Ak. VI, 175 br. n. 224a and b.]

³ [*Prinzip* (likewise in ‘evil principle,’ later in this paragraph); just below, ‘principles’ translates *Grundsätze*. Kant treats the two terms interchangeably. Cf. above, Ak. VI, 112 br. n. 191.]

⁴ [Matt. 3:1–2: “In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”]

⁵ [I.e., the constitution of the kingdom of God: *der Konstitution desselben*—even though, by Kantian grammar, *desselben* (‘of the same’) would be expected to refer to ‘the good principle,’ and a reference to ‘the kingdom of God’ would require him to say *des letzteren*.]

⁶ [Duty of a kind of its own.]

⁷ [Or ‘end’: *Zweck*; but see Ak. VI, 34 br. n. 152c.]

and of the establishment⁸ of a **community** under moral laws, as a united and therefore stronger force⁹ to resist the challenges of the evil principle (which human beings are otherwise tempted, even by one another, to serve as instruments).—We have also seen that such a community, as a **kingdom of God**, can be undertaken by human beings only through *religion*, and that, finally, in order for this religion to be public (as is required for a community), this kingdom can be presented in the sensible¹⁰ form of a *church*, so that bringing about¹¹ the arrangement of this church is incumbent on human beings as a work that is left to them to do and that can be demanded of them.

However, establishing a church as a community according to religious laws seems to require more wisdom (in terms of insight as well as of good attitude)¹² than one may probably credit human beings with, especially since it seems that the moral good which is intended¹³ through such an arrangement must for this sake already be *presupposed* in them. In fact, it is indeed a paradoxical expression, that *human beings* should *found* a kingdom of God (as one might readily say of them that they can establish a kingdom of a human monarch); God himself must be the originator of his kingdom. However, we do not know what God may do¹⁴ directly to exhibit in actuality the idea of his kingdom—even as we find within ourselves the moral vocation to be citizens and subjects in it—but certainly do know what we have to do to make ourselves fit to be members of that kingdom. Hence this idea, whether indeed it was aroused and made *public* in humankind through reason or through Scripture, will nonetheless obligate us to the arrangement of a church of which, in the latter case,¹⁵ God himself as founder is the originator of the *constitution*, but human beings as members and free citizens of this kingdom are yet in all cases the originators of the *organization*; and so those among them who according to this organization manage¹⁶ the public affairs of the church make up its *administration*, as servants of the church, just as all the others make up a fellow comradeship,¹⁷ the *congregation*, subjected to the laws of the church.

⁸ [*Errichtung*; in the next paragraph, 'establishing' (likewise 'establish' thereafter) similarly translates *errichten*.]

⁹ [Or 'power': *Kraft*.]

¹⁰ [I.e., sensory: *sinnlich*.]

¹¹ [*stiften*, not here in its basic meaning of 'to found'—cf. especially the next paragraph—but in a meaning derivative from that.]

¹² [*Gesinnung*. Concerning my rendering of this term, see above, Ak. VI, 13 br. n. 95.]

¹³ [Or 'aimed at': *beabsichtigt*.]

¹⁴ ['may do' translates the (subjunctive) *tue*.]

¹⁵ [The case where the idea was aroused and made public in humankind through Scripture.]

¹⁶ [Or 'administer': *verwalten*; below, 'administration' translates *Administration*.]

¹⁷ [*Mitgenossenschaft*. Here again the German term, too, is slightly redundant. Cf. above, Ak. VI, 131 incl. br. n. 382.]

Since a pure rational religion¹⁸ as a public religious faith permits only the mere idea of a church (namely, of an invisible one), and since only the visible church, which is based on statutes, is in need of and capable of an organization by human beings, it will not be possible to regard the service under the dominion of the good principle in the invisible church as church service,¹⁹ and that religion does not have any legal servants, as *officials* of an ethical community; each member of the community receives his orders directly from the supreme legislator.²⁰ But because in regard to all our duties (which we must at the same time regard, one and all, as divine commands) we are nonetheless always in the service of God, the *pure rational religion* will have all well-meaning²¹ human beings as its *servants* (though without their being *officials*), except that to this extent we will not be able to call them servants of a church (namely a visible one, which alone is at issue here).—However, since any church established on statutory laws can be the true one only insofar as it contains within itself a principle of constantly approaching the pure rational faith (as the faith which, when it is practical,²² properly amounts to the religion in each faith) and of being able, in time, to dispense with church faith (in terms of what is historical in it), we shall nonetheless be able to posit in these laws, and in the officials of the church founded²³ on them, a *service (cultus)* of the church insofar as they²⁴ direct their doctrines and regulation²⁵ always to that ultimate purpose (a public religious faith). By contrast, as for the servants of a church who do not take this ultimate purpose into account at all, but who, on the contrary, declare the maxim of continual approach to it as damnable, but the attachment to the historical and statutory part of church faith as alone bringing salvation,²⁶ one will rightly be able to accuse them of *pseudoservice*²⁷ of the church or (as what is presented by the church) of the ethical community under the dominion of the good principle.—By a pseudoservice (*cultus spurius*)²⁸ is meant the persuasion that one is serving someone by actions that in fact undo the latter's intention.²⁹ In a community, however, this occurs when something that has only the value of a means, so as to satisfy the will of a superior, is passed off as, and put in the place of, what is to make³⁰ us pleasing to him *directly*; as a result, then, the intention of the latter is foiled.

153

¹⁸ [Or 'religion of reason': *Vernunftreligion.*]

¹⁹ [Or 'ecclesiastical service': *Kirchendienst.*]

²⁰ [Or 'lawgiver': *Gesetzgeber.*]

²¹ [Or 'right-minded': *wohldenkend.*]

²² [I.e., practiced.]

²³ [*gegründet.*]

²⁴ [These laws and officials.]

²⁵ [*Anordnung*, translated most often (e.g., in the preceding paragraph) as 'arrangement.']

²⁶ [Or 'alone saving': *allein seligmachend.*]

²⁷ [*Afterdienst*. See above. Ak. VI, 151 br. n. 1.]

²⁸ [Spurious service.]

²⁹ [*dieses seine Absicht.*]

³⁰ ['is to make' translates (the subjunctive) *mache.*]

PART ONE

ON THE SERVICE OF GOD IN A RELIGION AS SUCH³¹

154 *Religion* (regarded subjectively) is the cognition of all our duties as divine commands.³² That religion in which I must know in advance that something is a divine command in order to acknowledge it as my duty is *revealed* religion (or a religion in need of a revelation); by contrast, that religion in which I must know beforehand

³¹ [Or 'in General': *überhaupt*.]

154 ³² Through this definition one forestalls many defective interpretations of the concept of a religion as such.^a *First*, [one clarifies] that in such a religion, as far as theoretical cognition and confession [of faith] are concerned, no assertoric knowledge is required (not even of the existence of God)—because with the lack of our insight into supranatural objects this confession could already be hypocritical—but only a *problematic* assumption (hypothesis), in terms of speculation, concerning the supreme cause of things; but that in regard to the object toward which our morally commanding reason instructs us to work, a faith promising a result for this its final aim is presupposed: a practical, hence free *assertoric* faith that needs only *the idea of God*, which must come inevitably to any moral and serious (and therefore faith-based)^b work for the good, without one's presuming to be able to secure objective reality^c for it through theoretical cognition. The *minimum* of cognition (it is possible that there is a God) must, subjectively, already be sufficient for what can be made a duty for every human being. *Second*, through this definition of a religion as such we forestall the erroneous presentation of it as a sum of *special*^d duties referred directly to God, and thereby keep ourselves from assuming (as human beings are greatly inclined to do anyway), besides the ethically civil^e human duties (of human beings toward human beings), also *court services*, and from thereafter perhaps even seeking to use these latter to make good the lack in regard to the former. There are no special duties toward God in a universal religion; for, God cannot receive anything from us; we cannot act^f upon him or for him. If one sought to turn the guilty awe we feel toward him into such a duty, one would fail to consider that this awe is not a special action of religion but the religious attitude in all our actions as such that conform to duty. Even if it is said, "One ought to obey God more than human beings,"^g then this means nothing more than this: when statutory commands, concerning which human beings can be legislators and judges, come into conflict with duties that reason prescribes unconditionally and concerning the observance^h or transgression of which God alone can be the judge, then the authorityⁱ of those commands must yield to these duties. However, if by that

^a [Or 'in general': *überhaupt*.]

^d [Or 'particular': *besonder*; likewise below.]

^b [*gläubig*.]

^e [Or 'ethico-civil': *ethisch-bürgerlich*.]

^c [I.e., applicability to possible objects.]

^f [*wirken*, translated above as 'to work.']

^g [Cf. Acts 5:29: "Then Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men."]

^h [Or 'compliance': *Befolgung*.]

ⁱ [*Ansehen*; below, 'authority' translates *Obrigkeit*.]

that something is a duty before I can acknowledge it as a divine command is *natural religion*.—He who declares merely that natural religion is morally necessary, i.e., a duty, can also be called *rationalist* (in matters of faith). If he denies the actuality of all supranatural divine revelation, then he is called a *naturalist*; now, if he does indeed allow this revelation but asserts that being acquainted with it and accepting it as actual are not necessarily required for religion, then he could be named a *pure rationalist*; but if he considers faith in this revelation to be necessary for universal religion, then he could be called the pure *supranaturalist* in matters of faith.

155

The rationalist, owing to this title of his, must even on his own keep within the limits of human insight. Hence he will never deny³³ as a naturalist would, and will dispute neither the intrinsic possibility of revelation as such, nor the necessity of a revelation as a divine means for the introduction of the true religion; for about this no human being can establish anything through reason. Therefore, the question in dispute can concern only the reciprocal claims of the pure rationalist and the supranaturalist in matters of faith, or what the one or the other assumes as necessary or sufficient for the sole true religion, or only as contingent in it.

If one divides religion not according to its first origin and its intrinsic³⁴ possibility (where it is divided into natural and revealed religion) but merely according to its character which makes it capable of *external communication*, then it can be of two kinds: either *natural religion*, of which (once it is there) everyone can be convinced through his reason, or *scholarly religion*, of which one can convince others only by means of scholarship (in and through which the others must be guided).—This distinction is very important; for, from a religion's origin alone one can infer nothing concerning its suitability or unsuitability to be a universal human religion, but one can indeed make such an inference from its character of being, or of not

wherein God must be obeyed more than human beings one were to mean the statutory commands passed off by a church as the commands of God, then that principle could easily become the repeatedly heard war cry of hypocritical and power-lusting priestlings^j for insurrection against their civil authority. For, anything permitted that this authority commands is *certainly* one's duty; however, whether something that is indeed intrinsically permitted but is cognizable for us only through divine revelation is actually commanded by God—this is (at least for the most part) extremely uncertain.

^j [Pfaffen; see above, Ak. VI, 151 br. n. 2.]

³³ [Or 'dispute': *absprechen*; the term can also mean 'dogmatize.' Below, 'dispute' translates *bestreiten*.]

³⁴ [*inner*-. Although this term can also be translated as 'inner,' i.e., 'internal,' I do not think that Kant is here contrasting religion as "inner" or "inward" (cf. below), i.e., private, with religion as "external," i.e., shared. The intrinsic possibility of religion (i.e., its possibility in terms of its very essence) concerns, rather, religion as such. Cf. 'intrinsic' as used above and also below.]

being, universally communicable; the first property,³⁵ however, amounts to the essential character³⁶ of that religion which is to obligate every human being.

156 Accordingly, a religion can be the *natural* one, but nonetheless also *revealed*, if it is of such a character that human beings *could* and *ought to have arrived* at it on their own through the bare use of their reason, even though they *would* not have arrived at it as early, or in as wide a diffusion,³⁷ as is required, and hence a revelation of it at a certain time, at a certain place, and for humankind was able to be very profitable—yet in such a way that, once the religion thus introduced is there and has been publicly promulgated,³⁸ everyone can henceforth convince himself of this religion's truth by himself and his own reason. In this case, the religion is *objectively* a natural religion, although *subjectively* a revealed one, and thus it does properly deserve the former name.³⁹ For, afterwards it might perhaps be entirely forgotten that such a supranatural revelation ever took place, yet without the slightest loss to that religion either in its graspableness, or in its certainty, or in its power over minds. The situation is different, however, with the religion that, because of its intrinsic character, can be regarded only as revealed. If it were not preserved in a completely secure tradition or in holy books considered as documents, it would disappear from the world; and there would have to occur a supranatural revelation, either one publicly repeated from time to time, or one continually enduring inwardly in every human being, without which the expansion and propagation of such a faith would not be possible.

But every religion, even the revealed one, must yet at least in part also contain certain principles of natural religion. For, revelation can be added in thought to the concept of a *religion* only through reason, because this concept itself, being derived from an obligation under the will of a *moral* legislator, is a pure concept of reason. Therefore, we shall be able to regard and to test even a revealed religion on the one hand still as a *natural* religion, but on the other as a *scholarly* one, and to distinguish what or how much belongs to it from the one source or the other.

This cannot readily be done, however, if we intend to talk about a revealed religion (at least one assumed to be such), without taking some example thereof from history; for in order to become understandable we would still have to think up instances as examples, since otherwise the possibility of our examples might be disputed. We cannot do better, however, than to take up some book containing such [examples], above all one most intimately interwoven with doctrines that are moral and consequently akin to reason, as a medium for elucidations of our idea of a

³⁵ [I.e., natural.]

³⁶ [*Charakter* here, *Beschaffenheit* (used synonymously with *Charakter* in this context) in the preceding occurrences of 'character' in this paragraph.]

³⁷ [Or 'spread': *Ausbreitung*.]

³⁸ [*bekannt gemacht*.]

³⁹ [I.e., 'natural.']

revealed religion as such. We then hold this book before us, as one of the many books that deal with religion and virtue under the trust⁴⁰ of a revelation, as an example of the intrinsically⁴¹ useful procedure of searching out whatever in this book may be for us a pure and hence universal rational religion, without wanting thereby to encroach on the business of those to whom is entrusted the interpretation of that same book as the sum of positive doctrines of revelation, and thus to challenge their interpretation, which is based on scholarship. On the contrary, since scholarship aims at one and the same purpose as do the philosophers, namely the morally good, it is advantageous to it to bring the philosophers through their own rational bases precisely where scholarship means to arrive by another path.—Now, here that book may be the N.T.,⁴² as source of the Christian doctrine of faith. In accordance with our intention, we shall now present the Christian religion in two sections: first, as a natural religion, and then, second, as a scholarly religion in terms of its content and in terms of the principles occurring in it. 157

SECTION ONE

The Christian Religion as a Natural Religion

Natural religion, as morality (in reference to the freedom of the subject) combined with the concept of that which can provide its ultimate purpose⁴³ with a result (the concept of *God* as moral originator of the world), and referred to a duration of the human being that is commensurate with this entire purpose (to immortality), is a pure practical concept of reason that, in spite of its infinite fruitfulness, yet presupposes only so little theoretical power of reason that one can sufficiently convince every human being of it,⁴⁴ at least practically, and can demand⁴⁵ at least its effect from everyone as a duty. This religion has within it the great requirement of the true church, namely the qualification for universality, insofar as one means by this validity for everyone (*universitas vel omnitudo distributiva*),⁴⁶ i.e., universal agreement.⁴⁷ In order for it to spread and be maintained in this sense as a world religion, it does indeed need a ministry⁴⁸ (*ministerium*) of the bare, invisible

⁴⁰ [*Kredit*.]

⁴² [New Testament.]

⁴¹ [*an sich*.]

⁴³ [Or 'end': *Zweck*; but see Ak. VI, 34 br. n. 152c.]

⁴⁴ [I.e., of natural religion, as morality, combined with the concept of God, and referred to human immortality: *von ihr*. In the next sentence, 'This religion' is used, accordingly, to translate *Sie*.]

⁴⁵ [Or 'require': *zumuten*. Below, 'requirement' translates *Erfordernis*.]

⁴⁶ [Universality or distributive totality.]

⁴⁷ [Or 'universal accordance': *allgemeine Einhelligkeit*; likewise below.]

⁴⁸ [In the original meaning of this word as 'body of servants'—a *minister* being contrasted, as servant, with a *magister*, or master: *Dienerschaft*.]

158 church,⁴⁹ but no officials⁵⁰ (*officiales*); i.e., it needs teachers but not principals, because through the rational religion of each individual there does not yet exist a church as universal *union* (*omnitudo collectiva*),⁵¹ or is, properly [speaking], even intended⁵² through that idea.—Such agreement, however, is not likely to maintain itself on its own, and hence to propagate itself in its universality without becoming a visible church; rather, it can do so only if a collective universality, i.e., a union of persons of faith⁵³ into a (visible) church according to principles of a pure rational religion, is added. Yet this church does not arise from that agreement by itself; or again, if it had been established, it would not be brought by its adherents (as has been shown above) into a permanent situation⁵⁴ as a *community* of persons of faith (because none of these illumined persons believes that he needs, for his religious attitudes, the fellow comradeship of others in such a religion). Consequently, unless the natural laws, cognizable by bare reason, are supplemented by certain statutory regulations that are, however, attended simultaneously by legislative authority (*auctoritas*),⁵⁵ there will always still be lacking what amounts to a special duty of human beings and a means to their highest purpose, namely their permanent union into a universal visible church; but this authority, to be a founder of such a church, presupposes a fact⁵⁶ and not merely the pure concept of reason.

Now, suppose we assume a teacher of whom a story (or at least the general, not basically disputable opinion) tells that he was first to propound publicly a pure, for all the world graspable (natural) and impressive religion—the teachings⁵⁷ of which, being preserved to us, we can thus test ourselves—and to propound it even in defiance of an irksome but dominant church faith devoid of moral aim (a faith whose slavish service⁵⁸ can serve as example of any other on the whole merely statutory faith, the like of which was universal at that time). Suppose, moreover, we find that he made this universal rational religion the supreme and irremissible condition of every religious faith, and that he then added certain statutes⁵⁹ that contain forms and observances intended to serve as means for bringing about a church that was to be founded upon those principles. In that case, despite the contingency and the chosen character⁶⁰ of his regulations⁶¹ aiming at this, one cannot deny to this church the name of true universal church, nor deny to him himself the reputation

⁴⁹ [Literally, 'the merely [or "bare-ly"] invisible church: *der bloß unsichtbaren Kirche*.]

⁵⁰ [*Beamte*, from *Amt*, 'office.']

⁵³ [*der Gläubigen*; likewise below.]

⁵¹ [Collective totality.]

⁵⁴ [Or 'state': *Zustand*.]

⁵² [Or 'aimed at': *beabsichtigt*.]

⁵⁵ [*Ansehen* (*Autorität*). To make for a plausible pair in the English version, I have in the parentheses replaced Kant's Latin-based German term by the Latin original.]

⁵⁶ [*Factum*.]

⁶⁰ [The "chosenness," as it were:

⁵⁷ [Or 'doctrines': *Lehren*; likewise below.]

des Willkürlichen.]

⁵⁸ [*Frondienst*.]

⁶¹ [*Anordnungen*.]

⁵⁹ [*Statuta*.]

of having called⁶² human beings to union into this church, and of having done so precisely without wishing to augment the faith with new burdensome regulations or, for that matter, to turn the regulations first instituted by himself into special holy actions obligatory on their own as components of religion.

By following⁶³ this description, one cannot miss the person who can be venerated as the *founder*, not indeed of the *religion* that, pure of all statutes,⁶⁴ is inscribed in the heart of every human being (for it is not of chosen⁶⁵ origin), yet of the first true *church*.—To authenticate this dignity of his as a divine mission, we shall adduce some of his teachings as indubitable documents of a religion as such, no matter what the history may be (for the idea itself already contains the sufficient ground for accepting them); they will, to be sure, have to be none but pure teachings of reason;⁶⁶ for it is these alone which prove themselves, and on which the authentication of the others must, therefore, preeminently rest.

First, he demands⁶⁷ that not the observance of external civic⁶⁸ or statutory church duties but only the pure moral attitude of the heart shall be able to⁶⁹ make a human being pleasing to God (Matt. 5:20–48);⁷⁰ that before God a sin in thought shall be considered equal to the deed (5:28),⁷¹ and that in general holiness shall be the goal toward which a human being ought to strive (5:48);⁷² that, e.g., hating in one's heart shall be tantamount to killing (5:22);⁷³ that a wrong inflicted upon

⁶² [Or 'summoned': *gerufen*.]

⁶³ [*nach*.]

⁶⁴ [*Satzungen*, the German equivalent of the Latin *Statuta*, which Kant used in the preceding paragraph.]

⁶⁵ [*willkürlich*.]

⁶⁶ [Or 'doctrines of reason': *Vernunftlehren*.]

⁶⁷ [*will* (from *wollen*).]

⁶⁸ [*bürgerlich*, which I usually translate (cf. below) as 'civil.']

⁶⁹ ['is to be able to' translates 'könne'; analogously for 'shall be' as used to translate other subjunctives of indirect speech (with *will*) below, all of which have the force of imperatives.]

⁷⁰ ["For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. Ye have heard it was said by them of old time. . . . But I say unto you, . . ."]

⁷¹ [Starting from 5:27: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."]

⁷² ["Be yet therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."]

⁷³ [Starting from 5:21: "Ye have heard it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca [roughly, 'boor'], shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."]

one's neighbor⁷⁴ shall be able to be compensated only through satisfaction rendered to the neighbor himself, not through acts of service of God (5:24),⁷⁵ and that, on the point of truthfulness, the civil means of extorting it,⁷⁶ the oath, shall itself [be
 160 seen to] impair respect for the truth (5:34–37);⁷⁷—that the natural but evil propensity of the human heart ought to be reversed entirely, the sweet feeling of revenge must pass over into tolerance (5:39, 40)⁷⁸ and the hatred of one's enemies into beneficence (5:44).⁷⁹ Thus, he says, does he intend to fulfill the Jewish law

⁷⁴ [*dem Nächsten.*]

⁷⁵ ["Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."]

⁷⁶ It is not easy to see^a why this clear prohibition against that means of coercing confession^b before a civil court of law, a means based on mere superstition rather than on conscientiousness, is considered to be so insignificant. For, that it is superstition whose effect is here most of all being counted on can be recognized^c by [the fact] that, concerning a human being whom one does not trust to tell the truth in a solemn statement on whose truth rests the decision of the justice^d of human beings (i.e., of the holy [realm] that is in the world), one yet believes that he will be induced to doing so by a formula that contains nothing more about that statement than the invocation upon himself of divine punishments (which, because of a lie like this, he cannot escape anyway), just as if it depended on him whether or not to give account before this supreme tribunal.—In the cited scriptural passage,^e this kind of affirmation is presented as an *absurd* presumption to make actual through magic words, as it were, things that are in fact not within our power.—One readily sees, however, that the wise teacher, who says there that whatever goes beyond the Yea, yea, Nay, nay, as affirmation of truth is bad,^f had before his eyes the evil consequence to which oaths lead, namely that the greater importance attributed to them almost sanctions^g the common lie.

^a [*einsehen* here, *sehen* below.]

^e [Matt. 5:34–37, below: br. n. 77.]

^b [*Zwangsmittel zum Bekenntnisse.*]

^f [Literally, 'of the bad': *vom Übel.* Below,

^c [Or 'can be cognized': *ist . . . zu erkennen.*]

'evil' translates *böse.*]

^d [*des Rechts.*]

^g [Literally, 'makes permitted': *erlaubt macht.*]

⁷⁷ [Starting from 5:33: "Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."]

⁷⁸ [Starting from 5:38: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That he resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloke also."]

⁷⁹ [Starting from 5:43: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your eyemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."]

completely (5:17),⁸⁰ although manifestly that law's interpreter must in this not be scriptural scholarship but pure rational religion; for, taken according to the letter, the law permitted exactly the opposite of all that.—Moreover, by his designations of the strait gate and the narrow way, he also does not leave unnoticed the misinterpretation of the law which human beings permit themselves in order to evade their true moral duty and to indemnify themselves⁸¹ for this by fulfilling the church duty⁸² (7:13).⁸³ Of these pure attitudes he nonetheless requires that they ought also to be proved in *deeds* (7:16);⁸⁴ and to those, on the other hand, who intend to make up for their lack of deeds by invocations and laudations of the supreme legislator in the person of his envoy, and to ingratiate themselves into favor, he denies their insidious hope (7:21).⁸⁵ Concerning these works he demands⁸⁶ that, for the sake of the example they set for emulation, they ought also to be done publicly (5:16),⁸⁷ and this in a cheerful mental attunement, not as actions extorted in a servile

⁸⁰ ["Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill."]

⁸¹ [I.e., secure themselves against harm: *sich schadenlos halten*.]

⁸² [7:13, continued to 14: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Cf. Luke 13:24: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."]

⁸³ The *strait gate* and the narrow way^a that leads to life is that^b of the good way of life; the *wide gate* and the broad way that many walk is the *church*. The point is not that it is due to the church and its statutes^c that human beings become lost, but that *going* to the church and confessing^d [allegiance to] its statutes or celebrating its rites is taken to be the manner in which God properly wants to be served.

^a [*Weg*, here and in 'broad way.' Below, 'walk' renders *wandeln*, but 'way of life' translates *Lebenswandel* (since 'walk of life' would have quite the wrong meaning).]

^b [*ist der*. Although *der*, by its gender, refers back only to *Weg*, i.e., 'way'—likewise for the *der* ('that') in 'that leads to life'—and not also to 'strait gate' (*enge Pforte*), it seems clear that Kant intends the predicate clause 'is that of the good way of life' to pertain to the strait gate also. All of this applies, *mutatis mutandis*, also to the second half of the entire sentence.]

^c [*Satzungen* here, *Statute* below; the two terms are synonymous.]

^d [*Bekennnis*.]

⁸⁴ ["Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Cf. (more fully) below, Ak. VI, 201 incl. br. n. 407.]

⁸⁵ ["Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."]

⁸⁶ [*will*.]

⁸⁷ ["Let your light to shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."]

manner (6:16);⁸⁸ and that thus—from a small beginning in communicating and disseminating such attitudes, as a grain of seed⁸⁹ in good soil, or a ferment of the good—religion would, through inner strength, gradually increase to a kingdom of God (13:31–33).⁹⁰—Finally, he collates⁹¹ all duties (1) in a *universal* rule (which comprises the internal as well as the external moral relation of the human being), namely: Do your duty from no other incentive than the direct⁹² esteem for it, i.e., love God (the legislator of all duties) above everything; and (2) in a *particular* rule, namely one that concerns the human being's external relation to other human beings as universal duty: Love everyone as yourself, i.e., further their well-being from a benevolence that is direct rather than derived from self-interested incentives. These commands are not merely laws of virtue, but precepts of *holiness*, the holiness which we ought to strive after,⁹³ but in regard to which the mere striving is called *virtue*.—To those, therefore, who intend to await this moral good quite passively, hand in lap, as a heavenly gift passed down from above, he denies all hope for this. Any person who leaves unused the natural predisposition to the good, which lies in human nature (as a talent⁹⁴ entrusted to him)—in the lazy confidence that surely a higher moral influence will, moreover, compensate for the moral constitution and perfection that he lacks—he threatens that, on account of this neglect, even the good which the person might from a natural predisposition have done is not to accrue to him (25:29).⁹⁵

Now, concerning the expectation, very natural to the human being, of a lot commensurate in regard to happiness with the human being's moral conduct, above all in view of a good many⁹⁶ sacrifices of happiness which had to be undertaken on

⁸⁸ ["Moreover, when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto, They have their reward."]

⁸⁹ [*als einem Samenkorne*, the referent being 'a small beginning' (*einem kleinen Anfange*); likewise for 'a ferment of the good' (*einem Ferment des Guten*), with 'as' (*als*) at the beginning being understood.]

⁹⁰ ["Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. Another parable spake he unto them: The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."]

⁹¹ [*zusammenfassen*.]

⁹² [Literally, 'immediate,' in the sense implying not suddenness but absence of mediation: *unmittelbar*. Likewise below.]

⁹³ [*nachstreben*; below, 'striving' translates *Nachstrebung*.]

⁹⁴ [*Pfund*.]

⁹⁵ ["For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath."]

⁹⁶ [*so mancher*.]

account of moral conduct, he promises (Matt. 5:11,12)⁹⁷ for this a reward in a future world,⁹⁸ but—in accordance with the diversity of the attitudes in this conduct—of another kind⁹⁹ to those who did their duty *for the sake of the reward* (or, for that matter, for the sake of absolution from a punishment they incurred) than to the better human beings, who performed it merely for its own sake. As for him who is ruled by self-interest¹⁰⁰—by the god¹⁰¹ of this world—if he, without disavowing it, only refines it through reason and extends it beyond the narrow boundary of the present,¹⁰² he is presented (Luke 16:3–9)¹⁰³ as one who on his own¹⁰⁴ deceives that lord¹⁰⁵ of his and wins from him sacrifices on behalf of duty. For if the thought occurs to him that some day, perhaps soon, he will after all have to leave this world, and that nothing of what he here possessed can he take along to the next, he readily decides to write off his account what he or his lord, self-interest, could lawfully demand here from needy human beings, and to provide himself for this as it were with bonds¹⁰⁶ payable in another world. By this he proceeds indeed, as regards the incentive of such beneficent actions, more *prudently* than *morally*, yet nonetheless

⁹⁷ ["Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."]

⁹⁸ [. . . *dafür Belohnung [in] einer künftigen Welt*. First, *Belohnung* here literally means not 'reward' but '[act of] rewarding' (without the article 'a'). Second, I suspect that Kant intended to have, and perhaps in the manuscript did have, the *in* that I have inserted here. Without the insertion, the German would mean 'for this reward of a future world.' Yet the just cited passage in Matthew (see the previous note) does have 'in heaven,' and so does the corresponding passage in the Luther Bible: *es wird euch im Himmel wohl belohnt werden*, i.e., 'you will be well rewarded for it in heaven.')

⁹⁹ [Literally, 'in a different way': *auf andere Art*, because *Belohnung* ('reward') here actually refers to the act of rewarding (see previous note).]

¹⁰⁰ [*Eigennutz*.]

¹⁰¹ [*Gott*, which can also mean 'God.']

¹⁰² [*Gegenwart*; below, 'presented' translates *vorgestellt*.]

¹⁰³ ["Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. So he called every one of his lord's debtors *unto him*, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."]

¹⁰⁴ [*durch sich selbst*.]

¹⁰⁵ [Or 'master'; i.e., the "god" self-interest: *Herr*; likewise below.]

¹⁰⁶ [*Anweisungen*.]

162 in conformity with the moral law, at least according to its letter, and he may hope that this too may not remain unrequited to him.¹⁰⁷ Compare with this what is said about beneficence toward needy persons from mere motives of duty (Matt. 25:35–40),¹⁰⁸ where those who provided help to the suffering without allowing even the thought to occur to them that something like this might also be worthy of a reward—and that through this they were perhaps, as it were, obligating heaven to a reward—are declared by the judge of the world, precisely because they did it without any concern for a reward, to be the proper chosen for his kingdom. Thus we readily see that the teacher of the Gospel, when he speaks of the reward in the world to come, intended thereby to make it not an incentive of actions, but only (as a soul-elevating conception¹⁰⁹ of the perfection of divine goodness and wisdom in guiding humankind) an object of the purest veneration, and of the greatest moral liking,¹¹⁰ for a reason that judges the human being's vocation¹¹¹ as a whole.

Here, then, is a complete religion that can be submitted to all human beings through their own reason graspably and convincingly, and that has moreover been made intuitive,¹¹² by an example whose possibility and even necessity of being for us an archetype to be emulated (as far as human beings are capable of this), without either the truth of those teachings or the authority and dignity of the teacher needing any other authentication (for which scholarship or miracles, which are not everyone's thing,¹¹³ would be required). If there occur in it appeals to older

162 ¹⁰⁷ We know nothing about the future, nor ought we to search for more than what is rationally linked with the incentives of morality and their purpose. To this belongs also the belief that there is no good action which will not also have, for him who carries it out, its good consequence in the world to come; that therefore the human being, however reprehensible he may find himself at the end of his life, must not allow this to keep him from performing at least *one* more good action which is within his power, and that in doing so he has cause to hope that, according to the extent to which he harbors in it a pure and good intention, the action will still be of greater worth than those deedless absolutions which, without contributing anything to a lessening of the guilt, are meant to compensate for the lack of good actions.

¹⁰⁸ ["For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me."]

¹⁰⁹ [Or 'presentation': *Vorstellung*.]

¹¹⁰ [*Wohlgefallen*. See above, Ak. VI, 47 br. n. 256.]

¹¹¹ [*Bestimmung*.]

¹¹² [I.e., capable of being intuited (roughly, 'viewed'): *anschaulich*.]

¹¹³ [The German phrase is identical, and about equally colloquial: *nicht jedermanns Sache*.]

(Mosaic) legislation and prior development,¹¹⁴ as if they were intended to serve the teacher as confirmation, they were provided not for the truth of the mentioned teachings themselves, but only for their introduction among people attached wholly and blindly to what is old. Such an introduction, among human beings whose heads—crammed with statutory dogmas—have become almost unreceptive to the rational religion, must always be much more difficult than if one had intended to bring this religion to the reason of untaught but also uncorrupted¹¹⁵ human beings. Because of this, it also should not seem strange to anyone if he finds that an exposition accommodating itself to the prejudices of that time is, for the present age, enigmatic and in need of careful interpretation, even though it allows a doctrine of religion to shine through—and also repeatedly points to it explicitly—that must be understandable to every human being and convincing to him without any employment of scholarship.

163

SECTION TWO

The Christian Religion as a Scholarly Religion

Insofar as a religion propounds, as necessary, dogmas that cannot be cognized as such through reason but that nonetheless are for all future times to be communicated uncorrupted¹¹⁶ (in terms of their essential content), it must be regarded (if one does not want to assume a continual miracle of revelation) as a sacred property entrusted to the care of the *scholars*.¹¹⁷ For although *initially*, accompanied by miracles and deeds, it was able to gain access everywhere even in regard to what is indeed not confirmed through reason, yet the very report of these miracles, together with the doctrines that required confirmation through this report, will *in subsequent time*¹¹⁸ need a written, documentary, and unchangeable instruction of posterity.

Acceptance of the principles of a religion is called *faith (fides sacra)*¹¹⁹ preeminently. We shall, therefore, have to regard the Christian faith on the one hand as a pure *rational faith*, and on the other as a *revelation faith*¹²⁰ (*fides statutaria*).¹²¹ Now, the first can be regarded as a faith freely accepted by everyone (*fides elicita*),¹²² the second as a commanded faith (*fides imperata*).¹²³ Everyone can through his reason convince himself of the evil which lies in the human heart and

¹¹⁴ [*Vorbildung.*]¹¹⁵ [*unverdorben.*]¹¹⁶ [*unverfälscht.*]¹¹⁷ [*Gelehrte.* Below, 'doctrines' translates *Lehren*, and 'instruction' renders *Belehrung*.]¹¹⁸ [*in der Folge der Zeit.*]¹²¹ [Statutory faith.]¹¹⁹ [Holy faith.]¹²² [Elicited faith.]¹²⁰ [I.e., a faith in revealed religion:¹²³ [Commanded faith.]*Offenbarungsglaube.*]

from which no one is free, of the impossibility of ever considering oneself justified before God by one's way of life and yet of the necessity of such a justice¹²⁴ valid before God, of the uselessness of compensating for the lacking righteousness by church observances and pious slavish services¹²⁵ and, on the contrary, of the irremissible obligation to become a new human being; and to convince oneself of this is part of religion.

164 But from the point where the Christian doctrine of faith is built upon facts,¹²⁶ rather than upon bare concepts of reason, it is called no longer merely the Christian *religion*, but the Christian *faith*, which has been laid at the basis of a church. The service of a church consecrated to such a faith is therefore two-sided: on the one side, it is the service that must be rendered to the church according to the historical faith; on the other side, it is the service that is due to it according to the practical and moral faith of reason.¹²⁷ In the Christian church, neither of the two services can be separated from the other as self-subsistent on its own: the second not from the first, because the Christian faith is a religious faith; the first not from the second, because it is a scholarly faith.

The Christian faith as a *scholarly*¹²⁸ faith relies upon history and, insofar as scholarship (objectively) lies at its basis, it is not a *faith* that is intrinsically *free* and derived from insight into adequate theoretical bases of proof (*fides elicit*a).¹²⁹ If it were a pure rational faith, then, even though the moral laws—upon which, as a faith in a divine legislator, it is based, command unconditionally—it would still have to be regarded as a free faith; and it was thus presented in the first section. Indeed, even as a historical faith, if only having faith¹³⁰ were not made a duty, it would be able to be a theoretically free faith, if everyone were scholarly. But if it is to hold for everyone, even for the unscholarly person, then it is not merely a commanded faith but also one that obeys the command blindly, i.e., without investigation as to whether indeed it is actually a divine command (*fides servilis*).¹³¹

However, in the Christian doctrine of revelation one can by no means start from *unconditional faith* in revealed propositions (propositions inherently¹³² hidden to reason) and have the scholarly cognition follow upon it, perhaps merely as a safeguard against an enemy attacking the rear train;¹³³ for then the Christian faith would be not merely a *fides imperata* but even a *fides servilis*.¹³⁴ This doctrine must, therefore, always be taught at least as *fides historice elicit*a;¹³⁵ i.e., in it as

¹²⁴ [*Gerechtigkeit*. Above, 'justified' translates *gerechtfertigt*; below, 'righteousness' renders *Rechtschaffenheit*.]

¹²⁵ [*Frondienste*.]

¹²⁶ [*Facta*.]

¹²⁷ [Or 'rational faith': *Vernunftglaube*.]

¹²⁸ [*gelehrt*; below, 'scholarship' translates *Gelehrsamkeit*, the noun corresponding to *gelehrt*.]

¹²⁹ [Elicited faith.]

¹³³ [I.e., of soldiers: *Nachzug*.]

¹³⁰ [*das Glauben*.]

¹³⁴ [Not merely a commanded but even a slavish faith.]

¹³¹ [Slavish faith.]

¹³² [*für sich*.]

¹³⁵ [Historically elicited faith.]

revealed doctrine of faith, *scholarship* had to constitute not the rearguard but the vanguard, and the small number of scriptural scholars (clerics), who also can by no means dispense with profane scholarliness,¹³⁶ would drag behind it the long train of the unscholarly (the laypersons), who are inherently unfamiliar with Scripture (and to whom belong even the cosmopolitan regents).—Now, if this is not to happen, then universal human reason in a natural religion must be acknowledged and honored in the Christian doctrine of faith as the supreme commanding principle, but the doctrine of revelation, upon which a church is founded and which requires scholars as interpreters and preservers, must be loved and cultivated as a mere means, though an extremely valuable one, for providing the natural religion with graspableness, even to the ignorant, and with diffusion and permanence.

165

This is the true *service* of the church under the dominion of the good principle; that service, however, where revelation faith is to precede religion is *pseudoservice*,¹³⁷ through which the moral order is entirely reversed and what is only means is commanded unconditionally (as if as purpose).¹³⁸ Faith in propositions of which the unscholarly person can assure himself neither through reason nor through Scripture (inasmuch as the latter would have to be authenticated in the first place) would be made an absolute duty (*fides imperata*)¹³⁹ and would thus be elevated, along with other observances linked with it, to the rank of being a saving¹⁴⁰ faith even without moral determining bases of actions and as a slavish service.—A church founded upon this second principle does not properly have *servants* (*ministri*),¹⁴¹ as does the church of the first constitution, but has commanding high *officials*¹⁴² (*officiales*). Even if these (as in a protestant church) do not appear in hierarchical splendor as spiritual officials clothed with external power, and even protest against this with words, yet in fact they do want to be regarded as the only appointed interpreters of a Holy Scripture, after having robbed pure rational religion of the dignity, which is due to it, of always being that Scripture's highest interpreter, and having commanded scriptural scholarship to be used solely on behalf of church faith. In this way they transform *service* of the church (*ministerium*)¹⁴³ into a *domination* of its members (*imperium*),¹⁴⁴ even though, in order to conceal this presumption, they employ the modest title of the former. But this domination, which would have been easy for reason, costs the church dearly, namely in the expenditure of great scholarship. For, "blind in regard to nature, it pulls down all

¹³⁶ [*Gelahrtheit* (old spelling of *Gelehrtheit*).]

¹³⁷ [*Afterdienst*. See above, Ak. VI, 151 br. n. 1.]

¹³⁸ [Or 'end': *Zweck*.]

¹³⁹ [Commanded faith.]

¹⁴⁰ [Or 'beatific' (literally, 'blessed-making'): *seligmachend*.]

¹⁴¹ [Ministers. Cf. *ministerium* above, Ak. VI, 157 incl. br. n. 48.]

¹⁴² [*Beamte*, from *Amt*, 'office'.]

¹⁴³ [Ministry, i.e., service again.]

¹⁴⁴ [Sovereignty, i.e., domination.]

antiquity over its head and buries itself under it.”¹⁴⁵—The course that things take, once brought to these terms, is the following:

166 First, the procedure prudently observed by the first disseminators of Christ’s doctrine, to procure for it access among their people,¹⁴⁶ is taken to be a component of the religion itself, holding for all times and peoples, so that one was to¹⁴⁷ have faith that¹⁴⁸ *every Christian must be a Jew whose Messiah has come*; however, it does not well cohere with this that, after all, he is properly not bound to¹⁴⁹ any law of Judaism (as statutory), yet allegedly must¹⁵⁰ in his faith¹⁵¹ accept the entire Holy Book of this people as a revelation that is divine, given to all human beings.¹⁵²—Now,

¹⁴⁵ [The original quote seems to be about Samson, if one may judge by the reference I have found. At the Web site of the Library of the University of Toronto, <https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/html/1807/4350/displayprose7146.html?prosenum=16>, all (accessed 10/5/2008) (also at other Web sites), a quote appears in Edward Young (1683–1765), *Conjectures of an Original Composition*. Letter to the Author of *Sir Charles Grandison* (London: Printed for A. Millar, in The Strand; and R. and J. Dodsley, in Pall-Mall, 1759), 65 § 306: “*Johnson . . . was very learned, as Sampson was very strong, to his own hurt: Blind to the nature of Tragedy, he pulled down all antiquity on his head, and buried himself under it . . .*”]

¹⁴⁶ [In the singular: *unter ihrem Volk.*]

¹⁴⁷ [*sollte.*]

¹⁴⁸ [Or ‘believe’: *glauben.*]

¹⁴⁹ [*an . . . gebunden.*]

¹⁵⁰ [‘allegedly must’ translates (the subjunctive) *müsse.*]

¹⁵¹ [*gläubig.*]

¹⁵² (†) *Mendelssohn*^a uses this weak side of the customary way of conceiving Christianity in a very skillful way to reject completely any demand of religious conversion made to a son

^a [Moses Mendelssohn (Moshe ben Mendel, 1729–86) was a major thinker during the German Enlightenment who made substantial contributions to metaphysics, aesthetics, political theory and theology, as well as in literary criticism. He and Kant remained familiar with and reacted to each other’s writings for many years. Kant’s reference here is to Mendelssohn’s treatise, *Jerusalem oder über religiöse Macht und Judenthum* (Jerusalem, or On religious power and Judaism) (Berlin: Friedrich Maurer, 1783); recent edition: ed. Michael Albrecht (Hamburg: Meiner, 2005). Mendelssohn there supports religious and political toleration, and advocates separation of church and state and civil equality for Jews. Cf. also Kant’s *Dispute among the University’s Schools*, Ak. VII, 52n. Moreover, in Kant’s *On the Saying: That May Be Correct In Theory but Is Inadequate for Practice*, Ak. VIII, 273–314, Section III (307–12), argues expressly “against Moses Mendelssohn,” namely against a thesis which the latter had defended against Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729–81) in the *Jerusalem* treatise. Mendelssohn was a friend of Lessing and of Friedrich Nicolai (1733–1811); together with them he edited the *Briefe, die neueste Literatur betreffend* (Letters concerning the most recent literature) (Berlin [from 1765: Berlin & Stettin]: Friedrich Nicolai, 1759–66), one of the first popular periodicals in Germany devoted exclusively to criticism of fine literature. In 1763, Mendelssohn’s essay “*Abhandlung über die Evidenz in Metaphysischen Wissenschaften*” (“Essay on evidence in metaphysical sciences”), in which he shows how (self-) evidence in metaphysics resembles but especially how it differs from that in mathematics, won first prize at the Royal Prussian Academy of Sciences, finishing ahead of an essay submitted by Kant (in ^a

¹⁵² [cont.] of Israel. For, he said, since even by the admission of the Christians the Jewish faith is the lowest floor upon which Christianity rests as the upper floor, this would be tantamount to demanding of someone that he break off the ground floor in order to settle down in the second story. His true opinion, however, shines through fairly clearly. He means: If you yourselves first clear Judaism out of your *religion* (in the historical doctrine of faith it may nonetheless remain as an antiquity), then we will be able to take your proposal under deliberation.^b (In fact, presumably no other religion would then remain than purely moral religion unmingled with statutes.) Our burden is not lightened in the least by casting off the yoke of external observances if another is imposed on us in its stead,^c namely that of confessions of faith in sacred history, a yoke that weighs down the conscientious person much more severely.—Moreover, the holy^d books of this people will probably always remain preserved and respected, even if not on behalf of religion then still for scholarship, because the history of no other people dates back, with any semblance of credibility, as far as this one, to epochs of antiquity^e into which all profane history familiar to us can be placed (even to the beginning of the world), and thus the great void that profane history must leave behind is yet filled in by something.

^a (cont.) 1764 the two were published together; Berlin: Haude & Spener), "*Untersuchung über die Deutlichkeit der Grundsätze der natürlichen Theologie und Moral, zur Beantwortung der Frage, welche die Königliche Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin auf das Jahr 1763 aufgegeben hat*" ("Investigation concerning the clarity of the principles of natural theology and morality, to answer the question which the Royal Academy of Sciences in Berlin has assigned for the year 1763"), Ak. II, 273–301. In 1767, Mendelssohn published his *Phaedon oder über die Unsterblichkeit der Seele, in drey Gesprächen* (Phaedo, or On the immortality of the soul, in three dialogues) (Berlin & Stettin: Bey Friedrich Nicolai), in which he presents the argument for the immortality of the soul which Kant seeks to refute in the second edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 413–18 (including the footnote). In 1770 appeared Mendelssohn's *Schreiben an den Herrn Diaconus Lavater zu Zürich* (Letter to Deacon Lavater at Zürich) (Berlin & Stettin: Friedrich Nicolai, 1770), a response to the infamous challenge by Johann Caspar Lavater (see above, Ak. VI, 85 br. n. 285a) that he either refute the arguments (supporting Christian dogma) of the Swiss philosopher and Pietist theologian Charles Bonnet (1720–93) or else convert to Christianity. Mendelssohn's forceful response (written in December 1769) was a plea for tolerance supported by reasons for refraining from such religious controversy. (In March 1770 Lavater admitted to Mendelssohn that he had been wrong.) In 1785 Mendelssohn published his *Morgenstunden oder Vorlesungen über das Daseyn Gottes* (Morning hours, or Lectures on the existence of God) (Berlin: Bey Christian Friedrich Voss & Sohn), which continues his long struggle with the issue of idealism, especially as applied to the existence of self and of God. When his friend Lessing, who had died in 1781 and who had defended him in the Lavater dispute, came to be accused by Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi of having become a follower of Spinoza's pantheism (see above, Ak. VI, 121 br. n. 312) and of thus having exemplified the Enlightenment's alleged descent into irreligion, the relation between Jacobi and Mendelssohn deteriorated to the point that, when Mendelssohn died in 1786, a legend arose that blamed Jacobi (indirectly) for his death. Before this decline, the debate between the two had been a reasonable discussion centered on the relation between reason and faith. Kant's own essay of 1786, "What Does It Mean: to Orient Oneself in One's Thought?" Ak. VIII, 131–48, is another contribution to that debate.]

^b [Cf. Matt. 7:5: "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.]

^c [Cf. Matt. 11:30: "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."]

^d [Or 'sacred': *heilig*.]

^e [*Vorzeit* here, *Antiquität* above.]

with this book's authenticity (which is far from being proved by the fact that passages from the book, indeed the entire sacred history, are used in the books of the Christians for the sake of this their purpose)¹⁵³ there is immediately great difficulty. Before Christianity's beginning and even its already considerable advance, Judaism had not yet entered the *scholarly public*, i.e., it was not yet familiar¹⁵⁴ to the scholarly contemporaries of other peoples, its history not yet checked,¹⁵⁵ as it were; and thus its Holy¹⁵⁶ Book was brought to historical credibility because of its antiquity. However, even granting this antiquity, it is not enough to be familiar with the book in translations and to transfer it thus to posterity; rather, for the security of the church faith based on the book, it is required also that for all future time and in all peoples there be scholars who are versed in the Hebrew language (as far as this is possible in a language of which one has only a single book); and surely it ought to be not merely a concern of historical science as such, but one on which hangs the salvation¹⁵⁷ of humankind,¹⁵⁸ that there are men sufficiently versed in that language to secure the true religion for the world.

The Christian religion has, to be sure, a similar fate to the extent that, although even under the eyes of a scholarly people its sacred events occurred publicly yet its history was delayed by more than a generation before the religion entered that people's scholarly public, and hence its authenticity must lack confirmation by contemporaries. It has, however, the great advantage over Judaism of being presented as having issued *from the mouth of the first teacher* not as a statutory but as a moral religion, and, entering in this way into the closest linkage with reason, of having been able, through reason, to be disseminated on its own—even without historical scholarship—for all times and peoples with the greatest security. But the first founders of *congregations* nonetheless found it necessary to entangle with it the history of Judaism, which was a prudent action in view of their situation at that time—though perhaps only for that situation—and has thus, in their sacred legacy, also come down to us. But the founders of the *church* admitted these episodic means of recommendation among the essential articles of faith and augmented them either with tradition, or with interpretations that acquired legal force from councils or were authenticated through scholarship. Concerning this scholarship, or its antipode, the inner light to which any layperson can also lay claim, it is still impossible to see how many changes yet lie in store for faith on their account; and this cannot be avoided as long as we seek religion not within us but outside us.

¹⁵³ [I.e., the Christians' purpose to prove the book's authenticity.]

¹⁵⁴ [*bekannt*; likewise below.]

¹⁵⁵ [Or 'inspected': *kontrollieren*. See above, Ak. VI, 129 br. n. 367.]

¹⁵⁶ [Or 'sacred': *heilig*.]

¹⁵⁷⁷ [Or 'bliss': *Seligkeit*.]

¹⁵⁸ [*der Menschen*, ('all' being implied).]

PART TWO

ON THE PSEUDOSERVICE OF GOD IN A
STATUTORY RELIGION

The true, sole religion contains nothing but laws, i.e., practical principles of whose unconditional necessity we can become conscious and which we, therefore, acknowledge as revealed through pure reason (not empirically). Only for the sake of a church, of which there can be different and equally good forms, can there be statutes, i.e., ordinances regarded as divine, which to our pure moral judging are chosen¹⁵⁹ and contingent. Now, to regard this statutory faith (which is in any case restricted to one people and cannot contain the universal world religion) as essential to the service of God in general, and to make it the supreme condition of divine pleasure¹⁶⁰ taken in human beings, is a *religious delusion*¹⁶¹ the pursuit of which is a *pseudoservice*, i.e., a supposed veneration of God whereby one acts directly contrary to the true service required by God himself. 168

¹⁵⁹ [Rather than necessary: *willkürlich*.]

¹⁶⁰ [Or 'liking': *Wohlgefallen*. Cf. above, Ak. VI, 47 br. n. 256, and 45 br. n. 246h.]

¹⁶¹ Delusion^a is the deception^b of regarding the mere presentation of a thing as equivalent to the thing itself. Thus with a stingy rich man it is the *miserly* delusion of regarding the presentation of some day being able to make use of his riches, should he want to, as a sufficient substitute for never using them. *Honor delusion* posits in laudation by others, which basically is only the external presentation of their respect (which inwardly they perhaps do not harbor at all), the worth^c that the person^d should attribute merely to the respect itself; to this delusion belongs therefore also the passion for titles and decorations,^e because these are only external presentations of a superiority over others. Even *madness*,^f therefore, has this name because it is in the habit of taking a mere presentation (of the imagination) for the presence of the thing itself and to dignify it equally.—Now, the consciousness of possessing a means to some purpose^g or other (before one has availed oneself of that means) is the possession of this purpose only in one's presentation; hence to settle for the means, just as if it could count in place of possession of the purpose, is a *practical delusion*, the delusion which alone is at issue here.

^a [*Wahn*. The entire note is focused on this word, and not all renderings can reflect this; my footnotes, however, provide the original terms.]

^b [*Täuschung*.]

^c [Or 'value': *Wert*.]

^d [*er*. Although grammatically this refers back to *Ehrenwahn* ('honor delusion'), Kant probably intends the referent to be the person.]

^e [*Orden*.]

^f [*Wahnsinn*.]

^g [Or 'end': *Zweck*; likewise below.]

§ 1. *On the Universal Subjective Basis of Religious Delusion*

Anthropomorphism, which in the theoretical presentation of God and his essence is scarcely avoidable for human beings, but otherwise (provided that it does not influence concepts of duty) is yet also innocent enough, is extremely dangerous in regard to our practical relation to his will and for our morality itself; for we then *make a God for ourselves*,¹⁶² namely such as we believe we can most easily win
 169 him over to our advantage and thus be exempted from the burdensome uninterrupted effort of acting upon the innermost element¹⁶³ of our moral attitude. The principle that the human being usually frames for himself for this relation is that by everything that we do solely in order to please the divinity (provided that it does not happen to conflict straightforwardly with morality, even though it does not in the least contribute to it) we prove¹⁶⁴ to God our willingness to serve him as obedient and precisely therefore pleasing subjects,¹⁶⁵ and hence we also serve God (*in potentia*).¹⁶⁶—It need not always be sacrifices by which the human being believes that he is performing this service of God: ceremonies too, even public games, as among Greeks and Romans, have often had to serve, and continue to serve, to make the divinity favorable to a people, or even to individual human beings, according to their delusion. Yet sacrifices (penances, castigations, pilgrimages, and the like) have always been regarded as more powerful, as more effectual upon the favor of heaven and more suitable for absolution, because they serve to indicate more intensely the unbounded (though not moral) submission to his will. The more useless

162 (†) Although it does sound questionable, it is in no way reprehensible to say that every human being *makes a God* for himself, indeed, that he must make one for himself according to moral concepts (accompanied by the infinitely great properties that belong to the ability^a to exhibit in the world an object commensurate to these concepts), in order to venerate in that God^b the one *who made him*.^c For in whatever way a being has been made familiar and described to him by someone else as a *God*,^d and if indeed such a being were even (if this is possible) to appear to him, he must still first of all compare this presentation with his ideal in order to judge whether he is entitled to regard and venerate this being as a divinity. From mere revelation, therefore, without laying at the basis *beforehand* that concept in its purity, as a touchstone, there can be no religion, and all veneration of God would be *idolatry*.^e

^a [Or 'power': *Vermögen*.]

^b [*an ihm*.]

^c [Or, perhaps (since *den* can be taken to refer to 'God') 'The God *who made him*': *den, der ihn gemacht hat*.]

^d [Or 'as God'; but in the present context the reading adopted here seems to be the intended one.]

^e [Cf. *What Does It Mean: to Orient Oneself in One's Thought?* Ak. VIII, 142–43, esp. 142, 9–23.]

¹⁶³ [*das Innerste*.]

¹⁶⁵ [In the sense of 'vassals': *Untertanen*.]

¹⁶⁴ [Or 'demonstrate' or 'evince': *beweisen*.]

¹⁶⁶ [Potentially.]

such self-torments are and the less their purpose is the universal moral improvement of the human being, the holier they seem to be. For precisely because in the world they are of no use for anything, and yet cost effort, their sole purpose seems to be to attest dedication¹⁶⁷ to God.—Although, it is said, God is in no respect served in this through the deed, he yet looks in it at the good will, at the heart which is indeed too weak to comply with his moral commands, but which makes good this lack by the willingness it attests for doing so. Here, now, is visible the propensity to a procedure that by itself has no moral worth, except perhaps only as a means of raising the sensible¹⁶⁸ power of presentation to concomitance with intellectual ideas of the purpose,¹⁶⁹ or, if it might perhaps work counter to these ideas, of depressing it.¹⁷⁰ To this procedure we nonetheless attribute in our opinion the

170

¹⁶⁷ [Or 'devotion': *Ergebenheit*; below, 'dedicated similarly renders *ergeben*.]

¹⁶⁸ [I.e., sensory: *sinnlich*.]

¹⁶⁹ [Or 'end': *Zweck*; likewise below.]

¹⁷⁰ For those who believe that, whenever the differentiations of the sensible from the intellectual are not too familiar to them, they are finding contradictions of the *Critique of Pure Reason* with itself,^a I here point out that, when one talks about

^a [The *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* of 1788, the year in which Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason* was published, contains two book reviews to which Kant may be responding here. One, the less important, is the anonymous review (April 25, 1788; no. 100, cols. 177–84)—written by Christian Jakob Kraus (1753–1807), philosopher, comparative and historical linguist at Königsberg, and also former student and close friend of Kant—of a book by Johann August Heinrich Ulrich (1746–1813), professor of morality and politics at Jena, *Eleutheriologie oder über Freyheit und Nothwendigkeit: Zum Gebrauch der Vorlesungen in den Michaelisferien* (Eleutheriology, or On freedom and necessity: On the use of lectures during Michaelmas holidays) (Jena: Crökersche Buchhandlung, 1788), in which Ulrich criticized Kant's attempt at reconciling the causality through freedom with natural causality. The other, rather more important and likewise anonymous book review is that by August Wilhelm Rehberg of Kant's *Critique of Practical Reason*; see above, Ak. VI, 6 br. n. 32p. In most of the first half of his review (no. 188a), besides setting forth in great detail the structure and basic argumentation of Kant's work, Rehberg is very laudatory, even to the point of apologizing for indicating in "so few dry lines" the content of the section on the immortality of the soul and the existence of God, "one of the most sublime treatises that he [*sic*] has ever read" (col. 350). But near the end of the review's first half he raises a serious critical issue which he then discusses throughout most of the second half, the review's "conclusion" (no. 188b): "[W]hether pure reason, on its own, can [as Kant claims] discover a synthetic principle of its effectiveness" (col. 352). According to Kant, reason can make the transition to sensibility (in other words, be effective there) through the moral feeling, i.e., respect for the moral law, which, being based on the a priori moral law, is likewise a priori (not empirical, like pleasure, which is based on inner sense) (*Critique of Practical Reason*, Ak. V, 74–78). Here Rehberg counters: "But is this respect no sensation [*Empfindung*]? . . . Kant twists and turns . . . in manifold ways in order to prove that it is not a sensible feeling [*sinnliches Gefühl*]. But here he is quite unsatisfactory" (col. 354). "[For] here too, as in its speculative use, reason absolutely cannot think itself outside itself and discover synthetic principles on its own" (col. 353). Thus, Rehberg maintains, Kant is here himself guilty of the amphiboly of concepts of reflection (col. 353). This is the same amphiboly of which Kant had accused the Leibnizians, i.e., above all, Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz himself and Baron Christian von Wolff (1679–1754) in his *Critique of Pure Reason* (see especially A 44/B 61–62, A 264–81/B 320–37).

worth of the purpose itself, or, which amounts to the same, we attribute to the mind's attunement to a receptivity for attitudes dedicated¹⁷¹ to God (this attunement is called *devotion*)¹⁷² the worth of these attitudes. Hence this procedure is a mere religious delusion that can take on all kinds of forms, in one of which it looks more similar to the moral form than in another, but that in all of its forms is not merely an undeliberate deception but even a maxim to attribute to the means, instead of the purpose, a worth in itself; and thus, owing to that maxim, this deception is equally absurd in all these forms and, as hidden inclination to fraud,¹⁷³ reprehensible.

sensible^b means of furthering the intellectual element^c (of the pure moral attitude) or about the obstacle that those sensible means put up against this intellectual element, this influence of two so heterogeneous principles must never be thought of as *direct*. For as beings of sense we can work^d contrary to the law, or in behalf of it, only on^e the *appearances of the intellectual principle*, i.e., on the determination, which^f evinces itself in actions, of our physical powers^g by the free power of choice, so that cause and effect are presented as in fact homogeneous. But as regards the suprasensible (the subjective principle of morality in us, which lies locked up in the incomprehensible property of freedom)—e.g., the pure religious attitude—into this freedom^h we have no insight, apart from its law (although this is indeed already sufficient), concerning the relation of cause and effect in the human being, i.e., we cannot *explain* to ourselves the possibility of actions as events in the world of sense [as arising] from the moral constitution of the human being, and thus as imputable to them, precisely because they are free actions whereas the bases of explanation of all events must be taken from the world of sense.

Indeed, Rehberg continues, “if respect for the law is to be a feeling and yet not a sensible sensation [*sinnliche Empfindung*], what else is this but fanaticism [*Schwärmerey*]? And this fanaticism leads directly to another and the very worst fanaticism [*Fanaticismus*], the deadening of the senses” (col. 355). Rehberg's main conclusion is “[t]hat there is no special pure practical reason at all, but that it consists only in the application of pure reason to the empirically given power of desire.” Cf. on all this George di Giovanni in his translation of the present work, as *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, in Immanuel Kant, *Religion and Rational Theology*, translated and edited by Allen W. Wood and George di Giovanni (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 468–69, n. 167—where he provides an excellent characterization of these two reviews, and also identifies their authors; and cf. his *Freedom and Religion in Kant and His Immediate Successors: The Vocation of Humankind, 1774–1800* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 125–36.]

^b [O ‘sensual’: *sinnlich*.]

^c [*das Intellektuelle*; likewise below.]

^d [Or ‘act’: *wirken*.]

^e [*an*.]

^f [Since Kant is here still speaking of us as *sensible* beings, not yet of the suprasensible in us, I take *die* to refer to ‘determination’ (*Bestimmung*), not to ‘free power of choice’ (*freie Willkür*).]

^g [Or ‘forces’: *Kräfte*; below, ‘power of choice’ renders *Willkür*.]

^h [*von dieser*. Although grammatically and in terms of punctuation, the appropriate referent would be ‘religious attitude,’ this alternative seems too narrow here, and ‘its law’ (below) does seem to rule it out.]

¹⁷¹ [Or ‘devoted’: *ergeben*.]

¹⁷² [*Andacht*.]

¹⁷³ [Or ‘deceit’: *Betrug*.]

§ 2. *The Moral Principle of Religion Opposite to Religious Delusion*

To begin with, I assume the following proposition as a principle requiring no proof: *Apart from a good way of life, anything further which the human being supposes¹⁷⁴ that he can do to become pleasing¹⁷⁵ to God is a mere religious delusion and a pseudoservice of God.*—I say, anything which the *human being* believes¹⁷⁶ that he can do; for whether beyond everything that *we* can do there may not, in the mysteries of the supreme wisdom, still be something that only God can do to turn us into human beings pleasing to him is not thereby denied. Yet if the church were perhaps to proclaim such a mystery as revealed, still the opinion that *having faith¹⁷⁷* in this revelation, as sacred history relates it to us, and *confessing* it (whether inwardly or outwardly), is intrinsically something by which we make ourselves pleasing to God is a dangerous religious delusion. For this faith,¹⁷⁸ as inward confession of one's firm assent,¹⁷⁹ is so truly a *doing* extorted by fear that a sincere human being might sooner consent to any other condition than to this one; for with any other slavish services he would at most only do something superfluous, whereas here, in a declaration of whose truth he is not convinced, he would be doing something conflicting with his conscience. That confession, therefore, concerning which he persuades himself that it can by itself (as the acceptance of a good offered to him) make him pleasing to God, is something he supposes he can do even beyond the good way of life which consists in compliance with the moral laws to be carried out in the world, inasmuch as he turns with his service straightforwardly to God. 171

In the *first* place, reason does not, as regards the lack of our own justice¹⁸⁰ (which holds before God), leave us entirely without comfort.¹⁸¹ Reason says that anyone who, in a truthful attitude devoted to duty, does as much as is in his power to fulfill his obligation (at least in a constant approximation toward complete commensurateness with the law) may hope that what is not in his power will be compensated for by the supreme wisdom *in some way* (that can make immutable the attitude of this constant approximation). Yet reason says this without presuming to determine the way¹⁸² this compensation occurs and to know wherein it

¹⁷⁴ [*vermeinen.*]

¹⁷⁵ [*wohlgefällig.* See above, Ak. VI, 45 br. n. 246h.]

¹⁷⁶ [Or 'has faith': *glaubt.*]

¹⁷⁷ [Or 'believing': *glauben.*]

¹⁷⁸ [More literally, 'this having faith' (or 'this believing'): *dieses Glauben.*]

¹⁷⁹ [Literally, 'considering-true': *Fürwahrhalten.*]

¹⁸⁰ [Here above all—yet not solely, as the parenthesis suggests—in the sense roughly synonymous with 'righteousness': *Gerechtigkeit.*]

¹⁸¹ [Cf. Rom. 3:21–26; also Rom. 10:3.]

¹⁸² [Or 'manner': *Art;* likewise below.]

consists; it may perhaps be so mysterious that God could at best reveal it to us in a symbolic presentation in which solely the practical aspect¹⁸³ is understandable to us, whereas theoretically we could not grasp at all what this relation of God to the human being is in itself, and link concepts with it, even if he wanted to uncover such a mystery to us.—Suppose, now, that a certain church were to assert that it knows determinately¹⁸⁴ the way in which God compensates for that moral lack in humankind, and were at the same time to sentence¹⁸⁵ to eternal damnation all human beings who do not know this means of justification—unfamiliar to reason in a natural manner—and who therefore also do not adopt it as a religious principle and confess it. Who, indeed, is then the unbeliever¹⁸⁶ here: he who has confidence without knowing how what he hopes for comes about, or he who absolutely¹⁸⁷ claims to know this manner of redemption of human beings from evil, or, should he not,¹⁸⁸ gives up all hope for it?—Basically, the latter is not all that much concerned to know this mystery (for, his reason already teaches him that knowing something that he still can do nothing about is entirely useless to him); rather, he wants to know it only so that out of the *faith*, the acceptance, the confession, and the laudation of all this revealed material¹⁸⁹ he can make for himself (even if it were to happen only inwardly) a service of God that could gain him the favor of heaven before any expenditure of his own powers toward a good way of life, hence quite gratuitously, perhaps even give rise to this good conduct in a supernatural way, or, if there were to be action in opposition to him, at least compensate him for the transgression.

Second, if the human being deviates even in the slightest from the above maxim, then the pseudoservice of God (superstition)¹⁹⁰ has no longer *any bounds*; for beyond that maxim anything (as long as it does not directly contradict morality) is chosen.¹⁹¹ From his lip offering,¹⁹² which costs him the least, to the offering of natural goods, which otherwise could presumably be used better to the advantage of human beings, indeed even to the sacrifice¹⁹³ of his own person inasmuch as he makes himself (in the status of a hermit, fakir, or monk) lost to the world, he tenders everything to God, except for his moral attitude; and when he says that he brings even his heart to God, then he means by this not the attitude of a way of life

¹⁸³ [*das Praktische.*]

¹⁸⁴ [Or 'definitely': *bestimmt.*]

¹⁸⁵ [*verurteilen*; actually, 'condemn' would be the better translation, if it did not create a redundancy with 'damnation' (*Verwerfung*).]

¹⁸⁶ [I.e., the person lacking faith: *der Ungläubige.*]

¹⁸⁷ [*durchaus.*]

¹⁸⁸ [*widrigenfalls.*]

¹⁸⁹ [*dieses Offenbartens.*]

¹⁹⁰ [*Superstition.*]

¹⁹¹ [Or, more freely, 'a matter of choice': *willkürlich.*]

¹⁹² [In other words, lip service: *Opfer der Lippen.* Cf. Heb. 13:15.]

¹⁹³ [Literally, 'offering-up': *Aufopferung.*]

pleasing to God, but a heartfelt wish that those offerings may be received in payment for that attitude (*natio gratis anhelans, multa agendo nihil agens*.¹⁹⁴ Phaedrus.)

Finally, once one has passed over to the maxim of a service that supposedly is on its own pleasing to God and, if necessary, also conciliatory to him but not purely moral, then there is no essential difference in the way of serving God as it were mechanically that would give one way an advantage over the other. They are all the same in terms of worth (or lack of worth), and it is mere affectation to regard oneself as more select, because of a *more refined* deviation from the sole intellectual principle of genuine veneration of God, than those who are guilty of an allegedly *coarser* degradation to sensuality.¹⁹⁵ Whether the devotee¹⁹⁶ undertakes his statute-governed walk to church or a pilgrimage to the sanctuaries in *Loretto*¹⁹⁷ or in Palestine; whether he brings his formulas of prayer to the heavenly authority with his lips, or with a *prayer wheel*, like a Tibetan (who believes that these wishes attain their purpose just as well, even if drawn up in writing, provided that they are *moved*

173

¹⁹⁴ ["The crowd, panting pointlessly, in doing many things doing nothing." The quote is from the *Fables* (i.e., Aesop's Fables retold) by Phaedrus (15 B.C.–A.D. 50)—Roman poet and short-story writer, Macedonian by birth, who lived in the reigns of Augustus, Tiberius, Gaius "Caligula," and Claudius—Book II, Fable V, entitled *Tiberius Caesar ad Atriensem*, i.e., "Tiberius Caesar [Emperor Tiberius] to His Chief Servant [Overseer of the Atrium]":

*Est ardelionum [or ardalionum] quaedam Romae natio,
Trepide concursans, occupata in otio,
Gratis anhelans, multa agendo nil agens,
Sibi molesta et aliis odiosissima.
Hanc emendare, si tamen possum, volo
Vera fabella; pretium est operae attendere.*

There is in Rome a certain crowd of busybodies,
Rushing about anxiously, employed in idleness,
Panting pointlessly, in doing many things doing nothing,
Irksome to itself and most hateful to others.
This crowd, if nonetheless I am able, I want to reform
By a true short story; it is one worth listening to.
(All translations given in footnotes are my own.)]

¹⁹⁵ [Or 'sensibility': *Sinnlichkeit*.]

¹⁹⁶ [*Andächtler*; the German term (too) is slightly derogatory.]

¹⁹⁷ [Kant probably means the Italian *Loreto* (the word means 'little laurel') in Ancona province, a place of pilgrimage that venerates the Virgin Mary, in particular by its "Black Madonna," a painting of the Virgin that is located in the basilica. There are numerous other towns named Loreto, both in Italy and in other parts of the world, as well as towns that spell the name as Kant does here, *Loretto*. If Kant intended one of the latter, it was probably the Loretto in Austria, a community near Burgenland's capital Eisenstadt. That Loretto's basilica contains a *copy* of that same "Black Madonna" and derives its own name—as presumably do most or all of the others with either of the two spellings—from the Loreto in Ancona.]

by something, e.g., by the wind if written onto flags, or by the hand if enclosed in a canister as a whirling machine),¹⁹⁸ or whatever surrogate for the moral service of God it may be, it is all the same and of equal worth.—What matters here is not so much the difference in external form; rather, everything hinges on the acceptance or abandonment of the sole principle, to please God either only through the moral attitude—insofar as in actions, as its appearance, it exhibits itself as alive—or through pious play-acting¹⁹⁹ and do-nothingness.²⁰⁰ But is there not perhaps also a *dizzying delusion of virtue*, rising above the bounds of human power,²⁰¹ that might well be included with the general class of self-deceptions? No, the attitude of virtue²⁰² is concerned with something *actual* that by itself is pleasing to God and harmonizes with the world's greatest good. It may indeed be joined by a delusion²⁰³ of self-conceit, of considering oneself adequate to the idea of one's holy duty; but that is only contingent. But to posit the highest worth in this attitude is not a delusion—like, say, that in church exercises of devotion—but a genuine²⁰⁴ contribution that works toward the world's greatest good.

¹⁹⁸ [Bohatec (op. cit. at Ak. VI, 19 br. n. 3), 461 incl. n. 13, 510 n. 6a, cites two sources (I have added some details regarding names, dates, etc.) reporting these practices (of which he also gives some descriptions): Ivan Ivanovich Lepekhin (or Lepechin), 1740–1802, *Tagebuch der Reise durch verschiedene Provinzen des Russischen Reichs in den Jahren 1768 und 1769* (*Diary of the journey through various provinces of the Russian Empire in the years 1768 and 1769*), 3 vols. (Altenburg: Richterische Buchhandlung, 1776–83), I, 280; and Peter Simon Pallas, 1741–1811, *Reise durch verschiedene Provinzen des Russischen Reichs* (*Journey through various provinces of the Russian Empire*) (St. Petersburg: Kayserliche Academie der Wissenschaften, 1771), I, 354; contemporary edition (Leipzig: P. Reclam, 1987).]

¹⁹⁹ [*Spielwerk*.]

²⁰⁰ It is a psychological phenomenon that the adherents of a confession^a [of faith] in which there is somewhat less statutory [material] to believe^b feel ennobled thereby, as it were, and more enlightened, even though they still have retained enough of it^c to not indeed be entitled^d to look down with contempt (as, after all, they actually do) from their supposed height of purity upon their brethren in church delusion. The cause of this is that they do thereby find themselves brought somewhat closer, however little it may be, to the pure moral religion, even though they still remain attached to the delusion of wanting to supplement it through pious observances, in which there is only less passive reason.

^a [*Bekennnis*.]

^c [I.e., of the statutory material: *davon*.]

^b [Or 'to have faith in': *zu glauben*.]

^d [*dürfen*.]

²⁰¹ [Or 'ability': *Vermögen*. Likewise for 'power' in 'moral power' in the next paragraph.]

²⁰² [Or 'virtuous attitude': *Tugendgesinnung*.]

²⁰³ [*Wahn*.]

²⁰⁴ [*bar*.]

It is, moreover, a custom (at least a church one) to call *nature* whatever can be done by the human being²⁰⁵ on the strength of the principle of virtue, but *grace* whatever serves only to compensate for the deficiency of all his moral power and—because this power's adequacy is also a duty for us—can only be wished or, for that matter, hoped and asked for; to regard both together as efficient causes of an attitude that is sufficient for a way of life pleasing to God; but also not merely to distinguish them from each other but perhaps even to contrast them with each other.

The persuasion that one can distinguish effects of grace from those of nature (of virtue), or perhaps even produce them in oneself, is *fanaticism*,²⁰⁶ for neither can we recognize²⁰⁷ a suprasensible object in²⁰⁸ anything in experience, still less have influence on it to draw it down to us, even if in the mind there sometimes occur movements that work toward what is moral,²⁰⁹ movements which we cannot explain and about which we are compelled to admit our ignorance: "The wind bloweth whither it listeth, but thou knowest not whence it cometh, etc."²¹⁰ To want to *perceive* heavenly influences in oneself is a kind of madness,²¹¹ in which there may presumably also be method (because those supposed inner revelations must still always attach themselves to moral and hence rational ideas), but which yet always remains a self-deception detrimental to religion. To have faith that there may be effects of grace,²¹² and that perhaps there even have to be such effects to compensate for the imperfection of our striving for virtue, is all that we can say concerning them; for the rest, we are incapable of determining anything in regard to their characteristics, but even more so of doing anything toward their production.

The delusion that through religious acts of cult we accomplish anything in regard to justification before God is religious *superstition*, just as the delusion of wanting to bring this about by striving for a supposed interaction²¹³ with God is religious *fanaticism*.—It is superstitious delusion to want to become pleasing to God through actions that any human being can perform without exactly needing to be a

²⁰⁵ [Reading *vom Menschen* for *von Menschen* ('by human beings'), to create agreement with *seines moralischen Vermögens* ('of his moral power') in the next clause.]

²⁰⁶ [Or 'raving': *Schwärmerei*.]

²⁰⁷ [Or 'cognize': *erkennen*.]

²⁰⁸ [Or 'by': *an*.]

²⁰⁹ [*das Moralische*.]

²¹⁰ [John 3:8: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."]

²¹¹ [*Wahnsinn*.]

²¹² [Or 'acts of grace': *Gnadenwirkungen*. See above, Ak. VI, 52 br. n. 296.]

²¹³ [*Umgang*.]

175 good human being (e.g., by confessing statutory dogmas,²¹⁴ by heeding²¹⁵ church observance and discipline, and the like). The delusion is called superstitious, however, because it selects mere means of nature (not moral²¹⁶ means), which by themselves can have absolutely no effect²¹⁷ on what is not nature (i.e., on the morally good).—A delusion is called fanatic, however, when even the imagined means, being suprasensible, is not within the human being's power, without yet taking account of the unattainability of the suprasensible purpose²¹⁸ intended through this means; for, this feeling of the immediate²¹⁹ presence of the supreme being and the differentiation of this feeling from any other, even from the moral feeling, would be a receptivity to an intuition for which there is no sense in human nature.—Superstitious delusion, because it contains a means that to many a subject is in itself suitable and also possible for him, at least to counteract²²⁰ the obstacles to an attitude pleasing to God, is to this extent still akin to reason, and is reprehensible only contingently by turning what can merely be a means into an object directly pleasing to God. Fanatic religious delusion, by contrast, is the moral death of reason; for²²¹ without reason no religion can take place at all, since, like all morality in general, religion must be founded on principles.²²²

Hence the principle—of a church faith—which remedies and forestalls all religious delusion is this: that this faith must, besides the statutory theses²²³ that for now it cannot wholly dispense with, yet also contain within itself a principle to bring about the religion of the good way of life as the proper goal, in order to be able some day to dispense with the statutory theses entirely.

²¹⁴ [Literally, 'propositions of faith': *Glaubenssätze*.]

²¹⁵ [*Beobachtung*, elsewhere translated as 'observance' (or 'to observe,' for the verb), a rendering that would here create a redundancy with 'observance' (*Observanz*) below.]

²¹⁶ [*moralische*; below, 'morally' translates *sittlich*. Kant uses *moralisch* and *sittlich* synonymously.]

²¹⁷ ['have no effect' translates *nichts wirken*.]

²¹⁸ [Or 'end': *Zweck*.]

²¹⁹ [Or 'direct': *unmittelbar*.]

²²⁰ [*entgegen wirken*.]

²²¹ [*doch*.]

²²² [*Grundsätze*. Below, 'principle' translates *Prinzip* (likewise in the heading below). *Grundsatz* and *Prinzip* are synonymous.]

²²³ [*Sätze*.]

§ 3. *On Priestery*²²⁴ *as a Governance*²²⁵ *in the Pseudoservice*²²⁶ *of the Good Principle*

The veneration of powerful invisible beings, which was forced from the helpless human being by his natural fear based on the consciousness of his incapacity,²²⁷ did not start immediately with a religion. It started from a service of God (or of idols)²²⁸ that was servile; when it had acquired a certain form under public law,²²⁹ it became a *temple service*, and, only after the moral education of human beings had gradually been linked with these laws, a *church service*. Both of these have at their basis a historical faith, until people finally began to see this faith as merely provisional and as the symbolic exhibition and the means for the furtherance of a pure religious faith.

176

From a Tungusic²³⁰ *shaman*²³¹ to a European *prelate* who governs both church and state, or (if instead of the heads and leaders we wish to look only at the adherents of the faith according to their own way of conceiving) from²³² the entirely sensual²³³ *Vogul*²³⁴ who in the morning lays a bear skin's paw on his head with the

²²⁴ (†) This name,^a which designates merely the authority of a spiritual father (πάππα),^b acquires the signification of a rebuke only because of the supplementary concept of a spiritual despotism that can be encountered in all church forms, however unpretentious and popular they proclaim themselves to be. Hence in contrasting^c sects I do not want by any means to be understood as wishing to disparage one with its customs and regulations by comparison with another. They all deserve equal respect insofar as their forms are attempts of poor mortals to make the kingdom of God sensible^d on earth, but also equal rebuke, when they regard the form of this idea's exhibition (in a visible church) as the thing itself.

^a [Or 'designation': *Benennung*, namely 'priestery' (*Pfaffentum*). See above, Ak. VI, 151 br. n. 2.]

^b [*πάππα*, from which stems the German term *Pfaffe*, which, like *Pfaffentum*, is somewhat pejorative. Cf. above, Ak. VI, 151 br. n. 2.]

^c [*in der Gegeneinanderstellung*.]

^d [I.e., to make it capable of being sensed: *versinnlichen*.]

²²⁵ [*Regiment*.]

²²⁷ [*Unvermögen*.]

²²⁶ [*Afterdienst*. See above, Ak. VI, 151 br. n. 1.]

²²⁸ [*Götzen*.]

²²⁹ [Literally, 'publicly legal form': *öffentlich-gesetzliche Form*.]

²³⁰ [The Tunguses are a group of Mongoloid peoples, related to the Manchu, who are spread over wide areas of Eastern Siberia and still include many nomads.]

²³¹ [A priest-doctor who uses magic to cure the sick, to divine the hidden, and to control events that affect the welfare of the people.]

²³² [Kant actually says 'between': *zwischen*.]

²³³ [*sinnlich*, translated elsewhere as 'sensible.']

²³⁴ [*Wogulitze*. The Voguls, now called *Mansi*, are an endangered hunting and herding people—akin to the Votyaks and Magyars, i.e., Hungarians, and thus also to the Estonians and Finns—living in the Autonomous Okrug of Khantia-Mansia in the Ural mountains of Russia.]

short prayer, "Strike me not dead!"²³⁵ to the sublimated *Puritan* and Independent²³⁶ in *Connecticut*, there is indeed an enormous distance in the *manner*, but not in the *principle*, of having faith; for as regards the latter, they all belong to one and the same class, namely the class of those who posit their service of God in that which does not in itself amount to a better human being (faith in certain statutory theses, or attending to certain contingent²³⁷ observances). Only those who intend to find this service solely in the attitude of a good way of life distinguish themselves from those others; they do so by the transition to a principle that is entirely different and is exalted far above the other, namely the principle whereby they confess [allegiance] to an (invisible) church that encompasses all well-meaning people and, according to its essential constitution, can alone be the true universal church.

An intention that they all have is to guide to their advantage the invisible power²³⁸ holding sway over the destiny of human beings; they think differently only as regards how to go about it. If they consider that power to be an intelligent being and therefore attribute to it²³⁹ a will from which they await their lot, then their striving²⁴⁰ can consist only in the selection of the way in which, as beings subjected to that intelligent being's²⁴¹ will, they can become pleasing to it through their doing and refraining. If they think of it as a moral being, then they easily convince themselves through their own reason that the condition of gaining the being's pleasure²⁴² must be their morally good way of life, above all the pure attitude, as the subjective principle thereof. Yet the supreme being may in addition perhaps also want to be served

²³⁵ [According to Bohatec (op. cit. at Ak. VI, 19 br. n. 3), 516 ns. 24 and 25 (I have added some details), Kant owed his knowledge of the Tunguses, of shamanism, and of the Voguls to these sources: Johann Gottlieb Georgi (1738–1802), *Bemerkungen einer Reise im Russischen Reich im Jahre 1772* (*Comments on a voyage in the Russian Empire in the year 1772*) (St. Petersburg: Kayserl. Academie der Wissenschaften, 1775); Johann Gottlieb Georgi, *Beschreibung aller Nationen des Russischen Reiches: ihrer Lebensart, Religion, Gebräuche, Wohnungen, Kleidungen, und übrigen Merkwürdigkeiten* (*Description of all the nations of the Russian Empire: Their way of life, religion, customs, dwellings, clothes, and other peculiarities*) (St. Petersburg: C. W. Müller, 1776–80); Johann Georg Gmelin (1709–55), *Reise durch Sibirien, von dem Jahr 1733 bis 1743* (*Voyage through Siberia, from the year 1733 until 1743*) (Göttingen: A. Vandenhoecks, seel., Wittwe [late widow], 1751–52).]

²³⁶ [The Independents (or Separatists) were a group of dissenters from the established church, the Church of England, formed in 1610 by John Robinson (1575–1625) with the help of William Brewster (1567–1644).]

²³⁷ [Or, perhaps, 'arbitrary': *willkürlich*.]

²³⁸ [*Macht*.]

²³⁹ [*ihr*; i.e., the referent is still the power (*Macht*).]

²⁴⁰ [Or 'endeavor': *Bestreben*.]

²⁴¹ [*seinem*; i.e., the referent here is *verständiges Wesen*; likewise for the 'it' (*ihm*) that immediately follows and—the most obvious case—the 'it' (*es!*) near the beginning of the next sentence.]

²⁴² [Or 'liking': *Wohlgefallen*. Cf. above, Ak. VI, 47 br. n. 256, and 45 br. n. 246h.]

in a way that cannot become familiar²⁴³ to us through bare reason, namely by actions in which by themselves we see indeed nothing moral, but which we yet undertake by choice,²⁴⁴ either as commanded by this being or even just to attest our submissiveness toward it. Hence in both ways of proceeding, if these constitute a whole of systematically ordered occupations, they²⁴⁵ posit in general a *service* of God.—Now, if the two ways of proceeding are to be linked, then either each of them directly, or one of the two only as a means to the other as the proper service of God, will have to be assumed to be the way to please God. That the moral service of God (*officium liberum*)²⁴⁶ would please²⁴⁷ him directly is self-evident. But it cannot be acknowledged as the supreme condition of all [divine] pleasure in the human being (this pleasure also lies in the very concept of morality) if the mercenary service²⁴⁸ (*officium mercennarium*)²⁴⁹ could [possibly]²⁵⁰ *by itself* be regarded as pleasing to God; for then no one would know which service would be superior in an occurring case in order to adjust accordingly the judgment concerning his duty, or how the two would supplement each other. Therefore, actions that have no moral worth in themselves will have to be assumed to be pleasing to God only insofar as they serve as means for the furtherance of what is directly good in actions (for morality), i.e., *for the sake of the moral service of God*.

Now, the human being who uses actions—actions that by themselves contain nothing pleasing to God (nothing moral)—nonetheless as means for gaining God's direct pleasure in him and, thereby, the fulfillment of his wishes, is under the delusion that he possesses an art of bringing about a supranatural effect through entirely natural means. Attempts of this sort are usually called *magic*,²⁵¹ a word, however, that (since it carries with it the supplementary concept of a communion with the evil principle, whereas those attempts can after all also be thought as undertaken with otherwise good moral intention, through misunderstanding) we shall exchange for the otherwise familiar word *fetishism*.²⁵² A supranatural effect of a human being, however, would be one that is possible in his thoughts only by his supposedly affecting God and making use of him as a means in order to produce in the world an effect for which his powers,²⁵³ indeed even his insight whether the effect might be so much as²⁵⁴ pleasing to God, are not sufficient by themselves—which contains an absurdity in its very concept.

178

²⁴³ [*bekannt.*]

²⁴⁷ ['would please' translates *gefalle.*]

²⁴⁴ [*willkürlich.*]

²⁴⁸ [*Lohndienst.*]

²⁴⁵ [The people Kant has been talking about.]

²⁴⁹ [Mercenary service.]

²⁴⁶ [Free service.]

²⁵⁰ [I am inserting 'possibly' in order to make more evident the compatibility of 'could' with the 'cannot' in the main clause.]

²⁵¹ [*Zaubern.*]

²⁵³ [*Kräfte.*]

²⁵² [Literally, 'fetish-making': *Fetischmachen.*]

²⁵⁴ [*auch.*]

But if the human being seeks, in addition to doing so through what makes him the object²⁵⁵ of divine pleasure directly (the active attitude of a good way of life), to make himself *worthy* of a compensation for his incapacity by a supernatural assistance also by means of certain formalities, and if with this intention he means, through observances—which indeed have no direct worth but do serve as means to the furtherance of that moral attitude—to make himself merely *receptive* to the attainment of the object of his good, moral wishes, then he does, to be sure, for the compensation for his natural incapacity count on something *supernatural*, yet not as something *effected* by the *human being* (through influence upon the divine will), but as something received, which he can hope for but cannot produce.—But if actions that in themselves, as far as we can see,²⁵⁶ contain nothing moral, nothing pleasing to God, are in his opinion nonetheless to serve as a means or indeed as the condition for expecting support for his wishes directly from God, then he must be under the delusion that, although he has for this supernatural [link] neither a physical capacity nor a moral receptivity, he can nonetheless bring it about through actions that are *natural* though in themselves not at all akin to morality (actions the performance of which requires no attitude pleasing to God and which, therefore, the basest human being can perform just as well as the best)—through formulas of invocation, through confessions of a mercenary faith, through church observances, and the like—and thus, as it were, *magically bring about*²⁵⁷ the deity's assistance. For between merely physical means and a cause working morally there is no connection at all according to any law that reason can think of, according to which this cause could be conceived as determinable to certain effects by those physical means.

179 Whoever, therefore, has the observance of statutory laws requiring a revelation come first, as necessary to religion, and this not merely as a means to the moral attitude but as the objective condition for thereby becoming pleasing to God directly, and puts second to this historical faith the striving for the good way of life (whereas that observance, as something that can be pleasing to God only *conditionally*, must conform to this striving,²⁵⁸ which alone pleases him *absolutely*), transforms the service of God into a mere *fetishism* and performs a pseudoservice that undoes all work toward the true religion. So much depends, when one wants to link two good things, on the order in which one links them!—It is in this distinction, however, that true *enlightenment* consists; the service of God thereby becomes for the first

²⁵⁵ [*Gegenstand* here, *Objekt* below; the two terms are synonymous.]

²⁵⁶ ['can see' translates *einsehen*.]

²⁵⁷ [*herbeizaubern*.]

²⁵⁸ [*nach dem letzteren*. The subsequent *was* shows that the gender of this phrase is not masculine but neuter, so that Kant must be referring not to the way of life (*Lebenswandel*) but simply to the "latter" alternative: this striving (for the good way of life).]

time a free and hence moral service. But if one deviates from it,²⁵⁹ then, in place of the freedom of the children of God,²⁶⁰ there is instead imposed upon the human being the yoke of a law (the statutory law); and this law, because it is an unconditional necessitation²⁶¹ to have faith in something that can be cognized only historically and therefore cannot be convincing to everyone, is for conscientious human beings a far heavier²⁶² yoke still²⁶³ than the whole stuff concerning pious imposed observances may in fact²⁶⁴ be, for in their case attending to them suffices for one to harmonize with an established church community, without anyone needing either inwardly or outwardly to confess his faith that he considers this law²⁶⁵ to be a regulation *brought about by God*; for properly it is by this confession that the conscience is burdened.

Hence *priestery* is the constitution²⁶⁶ of a church insofar as a *fetish service* governs in it; and this is always to be found where it is not principles of morality but statutory commands, rules of faith, and observances that make up the foundation and the essential feature²⁶⁷ of the church. Now, there are indeed many forms of

²⁵⁹ [From the distinction: *davon*.]

²⁶⁰ [Cf. Rom. 8:21: “. . . the glorious liberty of the children of God.”]

²⁶¹ [Nötigung.]

²⁶² [schwerer.]

²⁶³ “That yoke is gentle, and the burden is light,”^a where the duty that is incumbent on everyone can be regarded as imposed upon him by himself and through his own reason, which, therefore, to this extent he takes upon himself voluntarily.^b Only the moral laws, however, as divine commands, are of this kind; of them alone the founder of the pure church could say, “My commands are not difficult.”^c That expression means no more than this: they are not *burdensome*, because everyone sees^d on his own the necessity of complying with them, and hence nothing is thereby thrust upon him; whereas despotically commanding regulations—although imposed on us for our best interest (yet not through our reason)—in which we can see no use, are as it were vexations (drudgeries) to which one subjects oneself only if forced. In themselves, however, the actions, considered in the purity of their source, that are commanded by those moral laws, are precisely those that the human being finds most difficult, and for which he would gladly undertake the most burdensome pious drudgeries, if it were possible to offer them as payment in place of those actions.

^a [Cf. Matt. 11:30: “For my yoke is easy, and the burden is light.”]

^b [freiwillig.]

^c [Here ‘difficult’ translates *schwer*, which above, in the context of the yoke, was rendered (in the comparative) as ‘heavy.’ Below, ‘burdensome’ translates *beschwerlich*. The term *schwer* in its different but related meanings, by itself and as part of *beschwerlich*, continues to play a key role in the remainder of Kant’s note. For the initial quote, cf. 1 John 5:3: “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”]

^d [einsieht. Below, ‘see’ translates *sehen*.]

²⁶⁴ [immer.]

²⁶⁶ [Verfassung.]

²⁶⁵ [es.]

²⁶⁷ [das Wesentliche.]

180 churches in which the fetishism is so manifold and mechanical that it seems to be supposed to²⁶⁸ displace all morality, and hence also religion, and to take their place, and thus borders very closely on paganism. Yet the more or less is precisely not what counts here, where the worth or lack of worth rests on the character of the principle that obligates uppermost.²⁶⁹ If this principle imposes obedient submission to a statute as slavish service,²⁷⁰ but does not impose the free homage that ought to be paid to the moral law *uppermost*: then however few may be the imposed observances, if they be but declared to be unconditionally necessary; then it is indeed a fetish faith through which the multitude is governed and is robbed, through the obedience to²⁷¹ a church (rather than to religion), of its moral freedom. The constitution of this church (the hierarchy) may be monarchic or aristocratic or democratic; that concerns only its organization; its constitution under all these forms yet is and remains always despotic. Where statutes of faith are classed with constitutional law, a *clergy* rules which believes that it can quite readily dispense with reason and even, ultimately, with scriptural scholarship, because it, as the only authorized guardian and interpreter of the will of the invisible legislator, exclusively has the authority to administer the precept of faith and thus, provided with this power,²⁷² need not convince but only *give orders*.²⁷³—Now, because apart from this clergy all the rest is *laity*²⁷⁴ (the sovereign of the political commonwealth not excepted), the church ultimately rules the state, not exactly through force, but through influence on the minds and also, in addition, through pretense of the benefit that the state is allegedly supposed to be able to draw from an unconditional obedience to which a spiritual discipline has accustomed even the *thinking* of the people. Yet here, unnoticed, the habituation to hypocrisy undermines the sincerity and faithfulness²⁷⁵ of the subjects, sharpens up their wits²⁷⁶ to illusory service even in civil duties and, like all defectively adopted principles, brings about precisely the opposite of what was intended.

181 All this is, however, the unavoidable consequence of the transposition—which at first glance seems harmless—of the principles of the only saving religious faith, because the issue was to which of the two one should grant the first place as the

²⁶⁸ [*sollen*. Below, 'ought to' likewise translates *sollen*.]

²⁶⁹ [*zu oberst*.]

²⁷⁰ [*Frondienst*.]

²⁷¹ [Kant actually says 'under' (*unter*) here, but not in the parenthesis.]

²⁷² [*Gewalt*, translated as 'force' below.]

²⁷³ [*befehlen*.]

²⁷⁴ [Kant actually says 'is lay person': *Laie ist*.]

²⁷⁵ [*Treue*.]

²⁷⁶ [*abwitzigen*.]

supreme condition (to which the other is subordinate). It is appropriate, it is reasonable, to assume that not merely “wise men after the flesh,”²⁷⁷ scholars and subtle reasoners,²⁷⁸ will be called to this enlightenment regarding their true salvation²⁷⁹—for, all of humankind is supposed to be capable of this faith—but, rather, “the foolish things of the world,”²⁸⁰ even the ignorant or conceptually most limited person, must be able to lay claim to such instruction and inner conviction. Now it seems, to be sure, that a historical faith, above all if the concepts that it needs in order to grasp the reports are entirely anthropological and quite suited to sensibility, is precisely of this kind. For, what is easier than to apprehend such a narrative, simple and made sensible,²⁸¹ and to communicate it to one another, or to repeat the words of mysteries, words with which there is no need at all to link a meaning; how easily does something like this find universal access, above all in the case of a great promised advantage,²⁸² and how deeply roots a faith in the truth of such a narrative that moreover bases itself on a document acknowledged for a long time as authentic; and thus such a faith is of course commensurate even with the commonest human capacities. However, although the proclamation of such an event, as well as the faith in rules of conduct based thereon, need not be provided precisely or preeminently for scholars or philosophers,²⁸³ these are yet also not excluded from it;²⁸⁴ and here one finds so many perplexities, partly regarding the event’s truth, partly regarding the sense in which the event’s exposition is to be taken, that accepting such a faith, which is subjected to so many controversies (even sincerely meant ones), as the supreme condition of a universal and only saving²⁸⁵ faith is the most paradoxical thing²⁸⁶ that can be conceived.—Now, there

²⁷⁷ [1 Cor. 1:26: “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called.”]

²⁷⁸ [‘subtle reasoners’ translates *Vernünftler*. Cf. 1 Cor. 1:19–21: “For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? 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.” Note also, later in this paragraph, Kant’s use of *Weltweise*, “philosophers,” but literally “[the] world-wise.”]

²⁷⁹ [*Heil*, used synonymously by Kant with *Seligkeit*.]

²⁸⁰ [1 Cor. 1:27: “But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.”]

²⁸¹ [I.e., capable of being sensed: *sinnlich*. I have switched the sequence of ‘simple’ and ‘made sensible’ in order to keep ‘made’ from applying to ‘simple’ as well.]

²⁸² [*Interesse*.]

²⁸³ [*Weltweise*. See also above, Ak. 181 br. n. 278.]

²⁸⁴ [*davon*.]

²⁸⁵ [Or ‘beatific’ (literally, ‘blessed-making’): *seligmachend*.]

²⁸⁶ [*das Widersinnischste*.]

is, however, a practical cognition, which, although it rests solely on reason²⁸⁷ and requires no historical doctrine, yet suggests itself so strongly²⁸⁸ to every human being, even to the simplest, as if it were literally inscribed in his heart.²⁸⁹ a law that one need only name in order immediately to agree with everyone about its authority, and that carries with it *unconditional* obligation in everyone's consciousness, namely the law of morality. Also, what is still more, this cognition either leads even on its own²⁹⁰ to faith in God, or at least determines on its own his concept as that of a moral legislator, and thus leads to a pure religious faith that for every human being is not only comprehensible but also in the highest degree venerable; indeed, it leads to this faith so naturally that, if one wants to make the experiment, one will find that one can elicit this faith through questions²⁹¹ in its entirety from every human being without having taught him anything about it. It is, therefore, not only to act prudently to start from this faith and to let the historical faith that harmonizes therewith follow it, but it is also one's duty to make it the supreme condition under which alone we can hope to come to partake of whatever salvation a historical faith might promise us; namely we can hope this in such a manner that we can or may accept²⁹² the historical faith as universally obligatory only according to the interpretation given to it by the pure religious faith (because this faith contains universally valid doctrine), whereas the person of moral faith²⁹³ is yet also open to the historical faith insofar as he finds it conducive to the invigoration of his pure religious attitude. In this way alone does this historical faith have a pure moral worth, because it is free and not extorted through any threat (in which case it can never be sincere).

But even insofar as the service of God in a church is directed preeminently to the pure moral veneration of God according to the laws prescribed to humanity in general, one can still go on to ask whether, in that church, it is always only the *doctrine of godliness*²⁹⁴ or also the *pure doctrine of virtue*, which, each separately, should make up the content of the religious lecture. The first designation, namely

²⁸⁷ [On Kant's view we do have *practical* cognition of morality, and through it also of God and (our soul's) immortality—not, however, theoretical cognition and hence insight. Our practical cognitions (*Erkenntnisse*) of God and immortality are *not* instances of knowledge (*Wissen*), but of rational (moral) faith. See, apart from the present passage, the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Ak. V, 122–48, esp. 132–38 and 144–46, cf. 57. See also the *Critique of Pure Reason*, B xxi and the famous passage at B xxx, as well as A 633–34 = B 661–62 and A 828–29 = B 856–57; and cf. *Critique of Judgment*, Ak. V, 436–42, 467, 469–70, 472, and 475–85; also the *Critique of Pure Reason*, A828–29 = B856–57.]

²⁸⁸ [*so nahe liegt.*]

²⁸⁹ [Cf. above, Ak. VI, 85 incl. the passage from Jer. 31:33 (and related passages from Hebrews) quoted there in br. n. 278.]

²⁹⁰ [*für sich allein* here, *allein* below.]

²⁹¹ [*abfragen*. Cf. "Fragment of a Moral Catechism" in *Metaphysics of Morals*, Ak. VI, 480–82.]

²⁹² [*gelten lassen.*]

²⁹³ [*Moralisch-Gläubige.*]

²⁹⁴ [*Gottseligkeit.*]

doctrine of godliness, perhaps best expresses the meaning of the word *religio*²⁹⁵ (as it is understood at the current time) in the objective sense.

Godliness contains two determinations²⁹⁶ of the moral attitude in relation to God: *fear* of God is this attitude in compliance with his commands from *obligated*²⁹⁷ (a subject's) duty, i.e., from respect for the law, but *love* of God is this attitude from one's own *free* choice²⁹⁸ and liking²⁹⁹ for the law (from filial duty³⁰⁰). Thus both determinations contain, over and above morality, the concept of a suprasensible being provided with properties that are required to complete the highest good which is intended by morality but goes beyond our ability.³⁰¹ The concept of the *nature* of this being, if we go beyond the moral relation of the idea of this being to us, is always in danger of being thought by us anthropomorphically and thus often precisely to the detriment of our moral principles; hence the idea of this being cannot subsist by itself in speculative reason, but bases its very origin, and still more its force, entirely on its reference to our determination to duty, a determination that rests on itself. Now, which is more natural in the first instruction of youth and even in the exposition from the pulpit: to expound the doctrine of virtue before the doctrine of godliness, or that of godliness before that of virtue (perhaps even without mentioning the latter at all)? Both obviously stand in necessary connection with each other. This, however, is not possible otherwise, since they are not *the same*,³⁰² than [by assuming that] one would have to be thought and expounded as purpose,³⁰³ the other merely as means. However, the doctrine of virtue subsists through itself (even without the concept of God), but the doctrine of godliness contains the concept of an object of which we conceive,³⁰⁴ in reference to our morality, as a cause compensating for our incapacity in regard to the moral³⁰⁵ final purpose. Hence the doctrine of godliness cannot on its own constitute the final purpose of moral striving but can serve only as a means to strengthen that which in itself constitutes a better human being, the virtuous attitude, by promising and securing to it (as a striving toward the good, even toward holiness) the expectation of the final purpose of which this attitude is incapable. The concept of virtue, by contrast, is taken from the soul of

183

²⁹⁵ [I.e., scrupulousness.]

²⁹⁸ [*Wahl*.]

²⁹⁶ [Or 'characterizations': *Bestimmungen*.]

²⁹⁹ [*Wohlgefallen*. See above, Ak. VI, 47 br. n. 256.]

²⁹⁷ [*schuldig*.]

³⁰⁰ [I.e., the duty of a child: *Kindespflcht*.]

³⁰¹ [According to Kant, the highest good includes our morality and the happiness commensurate thereto, and bringing it about presupposes our immortality and the existence of a God who is omniscient, omnipotent, omnibenevolent and just, omnipresent and eternal. See the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Ak. V, 110–19, and 140; also the *Critique of Judgment*, Ak. 442–45, 447–53, 460–61, cf. 473–74; and the *Critique of Pure Reason*, A804–19 = B832–47.]

³⁰² [Or, possibly, 'of the same kind': *einerlei*.]

³⁰³ [Or 'end': *Zweck*.]

³⁰⁴ [Or 'which we present to ourselves': *den wir uns . . . vorstellen*.]

³⁰⁵ [*moralisch* here ('morality' similarly renders *Moralität* above), *sittlich* below.]

the human being. He already has it within him entire, although undeveloped, and it need not like the religious concept be subtly reasoned out³⁰⁶ through inferences. In the purity of this concept—in the awakening of consciousness to an ability³⁰⁷—otherwise never conjectured by us—whereby we can become masters over the greatest obstacles within us, in the dignity of the humanity which the human being must venerate in his own person and in the vocation thereof, and after which he strives in order to attain it, lies something that so elevates the soul and so guides us to the deity itself, which is worthy of worship only through its holiness and as legislator for virtue, that the human being, even if he is still far removed from giving this concept the power³⁰⁸ of influencing his maxims, is nonetheless not reluctant to be sustained by it, because even through this idea he already feels himself to a certain degree ennobled. By contrast, the concept of a ruler of the world who makes this duty a command for us still lies at a great distance from him and, if he started from it, it would strike down his courage (which is part of what constitutes the essence of virtue) but would run the risk of transforming godliness into a fawning, servile submission to a despotically commanding power.³⁰⁹ Now, this courage to stand on one's own feet is itself strengthened by the doctrine of reconciliation³¹⁰ that follows upon it, which presents what cannot be altered as over and done with, and now opens up to us the path to a new way of life; whereas, if this doctrine comes at the beginning, the vain endeavor to undo what has been done (the expiation), the fear concerning the appropriation of this vain endeavor,³¹¹ the conception of our utter incapacity for the good, and the anxiety over a relapse into evil must deprive the human being of his courage³¹² and put him into a groaning, morally

³⁰⁶ [*herausvernünfteln.*]

³⁰⁷ [Or 'power': *Vermögen.*]

³⁰⁸ [*Kraft.*]

³⁰⁹ [Or 'might': *Macht.*]

³¹⁰ [Or 'atonement': *Versöhnung.*]

³¹¹ [*derselben.*]

³¹² The different kinds of faith among peoples do, I suppose, little by little also give them a character which distinguishes them outwardly in their civil relation, and which is later attributed to them just as if it were as a whole a property of temperament. Thus, *Judaism* in terms of its first arrangement, where a people was to separate itself from all other peoples and forestall any intermingling with them through all conceivable, in part painstaking observances, drew upon itself the reproach of *misanthropy*. *Mohammedanism* distinguishes itself through *pride*, because, instead of in miracles, it finds the confirmation of its faith in the victories over and the subjugation of many peoples, and because its devotional customs are all of the courageous kind. (†) The *Hindu* faith gives its adherents the character of *faintheartedness*,^a for reasons precisely opposite to those immediately preceding.—Now, it is certainly not due to the intrinsic constitution^b of the Christian faith, but to the way in which it is brought to people's minds, if a reproach similar to that can be raised against it in reference to those who have the most heartfelt intentions concerning it but who, starting from human corruption and despairing of all virtue, posit their religious principle^c solely in *piety*^d (by

^a [*Kleinmütigkeit.*]

^b [Or 'character': *Beschaffenheit.* Above, 'character' (twice) translates *Charakter.*]

^c [*Religionsprinzip.* In the parenthesis, 'principle' renders *Grundsatz.*]

^d [*Frömmigkeit.*]

passive state that undertakes nothing great or good but expects everything from wishing.—In what concerns moral attitude, everything hinges on the supreme concept to which one subordinates one's duties. If the veneration of God is the first thing,³¹³ to which one therefore subordinates virtue, then this object is an *idol*,³¹⁴ i.e., it is thought as a being whom we would need to please not through good moral conduct in the world but through worship and ingratiation; but religion is then idolatry. Hence godliness is not a surrogate for virtue, so as to dispense therewith, but is its completion,³¹⁵ so that we can be crowned with the hope of final success in all our good purposes.

185

which is meant the principle of a passive^e conduct regarding a godliness to be expected, from above, through a power); for they never posit a confidence in themselves but look around in constant anxiety for a supernatural assistance, and even in this self-contempt (which is not humility) suppose themselves to possess a means of gaining favor, of which the outer expression (in pietism or affected piety)^f proclaims a *servile* cast of mind.

(†) This noteworthy phenomenon (of an ignorant though intelligent people's pride in its faith) may also stem from the founder's conceit^g that he alone had once again renewed in the world the concept of God's unity and suprasensible nature, a concept that would of course ennoble his people by liberating it from image worship^h and the anarchy of polytheism if he could rightly take credit for this.—As regards the characteristic featureⁱ of the third class of religious comrades,^j which is based on poorly understood humility, the lowering of self-conceit in the assessment of one's moral worth, by holding out to one the holiness of the moral law, ought to bring about not contempt for oneself but rather the resolve to bring ourselves, in accordance with this noble predisposition in us, ever closer to adequacy to that holiness; in place of this, virtue, which properly consists in the courage for this resolve, is relegated, as a name already suspected of self-conceit, to paganism, and the groveling courting of favor is extolled instead.—*Affected devotion*^k (*bigotterie, devotio spuria*)^l is the habit of positing the practice of piety, rather than in actions pleasing to God (in the fulfillment of all human duties), in the direct occupation with God through attestations of awe; this practice must then be classed with *slavish service* (*opus operatum*),^m except that to superstition it still adds the fanatic delusion of supposed suprasensible (heavenly) feelings.

185

^e [Or 'undergoing': *leidend*, which can also mean 'suffering.']

^f [Respectively, *Pietismus, Frömmelei*.]

^g [*Einbildung*. Below, 'self-conceit' translates *Eigendünkel*.]

^h [More literally, 'image service': *Bilderdienst*.]

ⁱ [*das Charakteristische*.]

^j [I.e., of the Christians.]

^k [*Andächtelei*.]

^l ['bigotry' and 'spurious devotion,' in French and in Latin, respectively.]

^m [Labored work.]

³¹³ [*das Erste*; cf. Kant's "two good things (*Sachen*)" above, Ak. VI, 179, and "object" below.]

³¹⁴ [*Idol*.]

³¹⁵ [Or 'perfection': *Vollendung*.]

§ 4. *On the Guiding Thread*³¹⁶ *of Conscience in Matters of Faith*

The question here is not how conscience should be guided (for it needs no guide; having a conscience is enough), but how conscience itself can serve as guiding thread in the most perplexing moral decisions.

Conscience is a consciousness that is by itself a duty. But how is it possible to think of such a consciousness, since the consciousness of all our presentations seems to be necessary only for a logical aim, hence merely conditionally, when we want to clarify our presentations, and hence cannot unconditionally be a duty?

It is a moral principle, which requires no proof, that *one ought to venture nothing at the risk of its being wrong (quod dubitas, ne feceris! Pliny)*.³¹⁷ The *consciousness*, therefore, that an action *which I want to undertake* is right is an unconditional duty. Whether an action is right or wrong at all, this is judged by understanding, not by conscience. It is also not absolutely necessary to know concerning all possible actions whether they are right or wrong. But concerning the action that *I want to undertake* I must not only judge and have the opinion but must also be *certain* that it is not wrong, and this demand is a postulate³¹⁸ of conscience to which is opposed *probabilism*,³¹⁹ i.e., the principle that the mere opinion that an action may well be right is itself sufficient for undertaking the action.—One could define conscience also as follows: it is *the moral power of*

³¹⁶ [Or 'guide': *Leitfaden*. Below, 'guide' translates *Leiter*.]

³¹⁷ ["Whatever you doubt, don't do." *Epistles*, I, 18, 5. In that letter, Pliny the Younger (Gaius Plinius Caecilius Secundus, A.D. 63–ca. 113, lawyer, author and natural philosopher in Ancient Rome) actually advises a client (partly in Latin, partly with quotes from the Greek) *not* to hesitate and delay a court hearing because of the doubts he has as a result of a bad dream. But, he adds: "*si tutius putas illud cautissimi cuiusque praeceptum, quod dubitas ne feceris, id ipsum rescribe*;" i.e., "if you consider safer that precept of some very cautious person, Whatever you doubt, don't do, write back exactly that.]

³¹⁸ [*Postulat*. The root meaning of this term is 'demand.']

³¹⁹ [Wobbermin comments (Ak. VI, 506): "*Probabilism*, as it was methodically developed by the Jesuits and the Redemptorists (Alphons [St. Alphonsus] Liguori). The classical formula of probabilism—laid down already in 1577 by the Dominican Bartolomeo de Medina [b. 1527 at Medina, d. 1581 at Salamanca]—says, *si est opinio probabilis, licitum est eam sequi, licet opposita est probabilior* [if an opinion is probable, pursuing it is permissible, even if the opposite opinion is more probable]." Probabilism was defended by many Jesuits, e.g., by Luis Molina (1528–81), but was strongly opposed by the Jansenists. It was also severely criticized by French philosopher and theologian Blaise Pascal (1623–62) in his *Lettres provinciales* (Provincial letters) of 1656–57, 18 letters, written under the pseudonym Louis de Montalte, in which he defends his Jansenist friend Antoine Arnauld against charges of heresy raised by the Sorbonne (Cologne: Pierre de la Vallée, 1657; Contemporary edition). Pascal there characterizes the "doctrine of probable opinions" as the source and basis of licentiousness and moral laxity (Letters V–VIII; 1656). Probabilism stands in contrast to probabiliorism (from Latin *probabilior*, "more likely"), which holds that when there is a preponderance of evidence on one side of a controversy one ought to follow that side, and to tutorism (from Latin *tutor*, 'safer'—cf. *tutius* in the Pliny quote above), which holds that in case of doubt one ought to take the morally safer side.]

*judgment*³²⁰ *passing judgment on itself*, except that this definition would still be very much in need of a prior explication of the concepts contained in it. Conscience does not pass judgment on actions as cases³²¹ that fall under the law, for this is what reason does insofar as it is subjectively practical (hence the *casus conscientiae*³²² and casuistry, as a kind of dialectic of conscience); rather, reason here passes judgment on itself as to whether it has indeed actually undertaken, with all caution, that assessment³²³ of actions (whether they are right or wrong), and it brings forward the human being himself as a witness *against* or *for* himself that this has been done or has not been done.

Take, e.g., an inquisitor³²⁴ who clings firmly to the exclusiveness of his statutory faith, even to the point of martyrdom, and who has to pass judgment on a so-called heretic (otherwise a good citizen) charged with unbelief.³²⁵ Now I ask, if he condemns him to death, whether one can say that he has passed judgment according to his (although erring) conscience, or whether one could rather accuse him absolutely of *lack of conscience*, and this whether he erred or did wrong consciously; for one can tell him to his face that in such a case he could never have been entirely certain that he was not perhaps thereby doing wrong. To be sure, he presumably had the firm faith that a supranaturally revealed divine will (perhaps according to the saying, *compellite intrare*)³²⁶ permitted him, if not indeed made it his duty, to eradicate the supposed unbelief³²⁷ along with the unbelievers. But was he indeed actually convinced as strongly of such a revealed doctrine, and also of this meaning thereof, as is required in order to venture on this basis to kill a human being? That it is wrong to take a human being's life because of his religious faith is certain, unless perhaps (to grant the extreme case) a divine will, with which he has become acquainted in an extraordinary way, has ordained otherwise. But that God has ever uttered this dreadful will rests on historical documents and is never apodeictically

187

³²⁰ [*Urteilskraft*; 'passing judgment' translates *richtend*. An *Urteil* is a judgment both in the ordinary and in the judicial sense, and in the latter sense it is pronounced by a *Richter*, i.e., a judge; the German verb describing the judge's activity of judging is *richten*. In the next paragraph, 'condemn' translates *verurteilen*, which again contains *urteilen*, 'to judge,' in the judicial sense.]

³²¹ [*Casus*.]

³²² [The cases of conscience: *die casus conscientiae*.]

³²³ [More literally, 'judging': *Beurteilung*. See above, Ak. VI, 13 br. n. 88.]

³²⁴ [*Ketzerrichter*, which literally means 'judge of heretics.']

³²⁵ [I.e., lack of faith: *Unglaube*.]

³²⁶ [Compel them to come in.—Cf. Luke 14:23: "And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled." Wobbermin comments (Ak. VI, 506), "This expression (*coge intrare* [pressure them to enter]) was used already by Augustine as proof of the state's obligation to serve the church by means of compulsory measures against idolatry, heretics, and schismatics. Cf. *Epistles* Nos. 93 and 185."]

³²⁷ [I.e., lack of faith: *Unglaube*. Just below, 'unbelievers,' i.e., persons lacking faith: *Ungläubige*.]

certain. After all, the revelation reached the inquisitor only through human beings and as interpreted by them, and even if it seemed to him to have come from God himself (like the command issued to Abraham to slaughter his own son like a sheep),³²⁸ yet it is at least possible that an error prevails in this. But in that case, the inquisitor would be venturing it³²⁹ at the risk of doing something that would be extremely wrong, and precisely in this he acts with a lack of conscience.—Now, this is how it is with all historical and phenomenal faith,³³⁰ namely that the *possibility* always remains that an error is to be found in it; hence it shows lack of conscience to comply with it, in view of the possibility that what it demands or permits is perhaps wrong, i.e., at the risk of violating a human duty that is in itself certain.

More yet: even if an action commanded by such a positive law that is (regarded as) revealed were in itself permitted, the question arises whether spiritual³³¹ superiors or teachers may, according to their supposed conviction, impose this³³² upon the people to confess as an *article of faith* (on pain of forfeiting their status). Since the conviction has in its favor no bases of proof except historical ones, while in the judgment of this people (if only it³³³ tests itself in the least) there always remains the absolute possibility that an error has occurred with [the revelation]³³⁴ or in its classical interpretation, the cleric would be compelling this people³³⁵ to confess, at least inwardly, as just as true as it truly has faith in a God, i.e., as it were in the presence of God, something that it yet does not know with certainty to be so; e.g., to acknowledge the assignment of a certain day for the periodic public furtherance of godliness as a component of religion ordained directly by God, or to confess firm faith in a secret that it does not even understand. Here the people's spiritual superior would himself be proceeding against his conscience in thrusting upon others, for their faith, something of which he himself can never be completely convinced, and hence properly he should consider well what he is doing, because he must answer for all abuse arising from such a slavish faith.—Thus there can perhaps be truth in what one has faith in, and yet simultaneously untruthfulness in the faith (or in the merely inward confession thereof), and the latter is in itself damnable.

³²⁸ [Gen. 22:1–2: “And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, *here* I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only *son* Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.”]

³²⁹ [I.e., condemning the so-called heretic to death.]

³³⁰ [I.e., faith based on appearances: *Erscheinungsglaube*.]

³³¹ [Or ‘clerical’: *geistlich*. Below, ‘cleric’ translates *Geistlicher*.]

³³² [*es*.]

³³³ [*es*, which could refer to the judgment (*Urteil*) or to the people (*Volk*).]

³³⁴ [Kant says merely *damit* (‘therewith’).]

³³⁵ [Literally, ‘the people’: *das Volk*. My change is intended to avoid a misreading of ‘the people’ as plural.]

Although, as was noted above,³³⁶ human beings who have made even the slightest beginning in freedom of thought,³³⁷ whereas previously they were under a slavish yoke of faith (e.g., the Protestants), immediately consider themselves ennobled, as it were, the less they need to have faith (in what is positive and belongs to the priestly precept[s]), yet for those who have not yet been able or not yet wanted to make an attempt of this kind it is exactly the reverse. For, their principle is that it is advisable to have faith in too much rather than in too little, since what one does beyond what one owes can at least do no harm but may perhaps even help.—This delusion, which turns insincerity in religious confessions into a principle (which one decides to do all the more easily because religion makes good every mistake, hence also that of insincerity), is the basis of the so-called maxim of safety³³⁸ in matters of faith: If what I confess concerning God is true, then I have hit the mark; if it is not true, but otherwise also not something that in itself is not permitted, then I have merely had faith in it superfluously, which was indeed not necessary, but I have burdened myself only with maybe an inconvenience, which after all is no crime. The danger³³⁹ arising from the insincerity of his pretense, *the violation of conscience*, in passing off as certain, even before God, something of which he is yet conscious that it is not of the character required to affirm it with unconditional

188

189

³³⁶ [Ak. VI, 173 incl. n. 200.]

³³⁷ I admit that I cannot well accommodate myself to the expression, used presumably by astute men as well. A certain people (engaged in working for a legal freedom) is not yet ripe^a for freedom; the bondmen of a landed proprietor are not yet ripe for freedom; and thus also, human beings as such are not yet ripe for freedom of faith. According to such a presupposition, freedom will never arrive; for, one cannot *ripen* to freedom if one has not previously been set free (one must be free in order to be able to use one's powers^b purposively in freedom). The first attempts will indeed be crude, and will usually also be linked with a more burdensome and dangerous situation than when one was still under the orders but also the care of others; yet one never ripens to reason except through one's *own* attempts (and one must be free in order that one may make them). I have nothing against [the fact] that those who hold power in their hands, being compelled by circumstances of time, are putting the unfastening of these three fetters^c still far, far off. But to make it a principle that those who are once subjected to them are not suited to freedom, and that one is entitled to remove these people from it always, is an encroachment upon the royal prerogatives^d of the deity itself which created the human being for freedom. It is indeed more convenient to rule in the state, the house, or the church, if one is able to enforce such a principle. But also more just?

^a [Or, less literally, 'ready': *reif*.]

^b [*Kräfte*. Below, 'power' translates *Gewalt*.]

^c [Civil, domestic, and religious; cf. the examples given at the beginning of the note, and the reference to state, house, and church below.]

^d [*Regalien*.]

³³⁸ [Or 'maxim of security' or 'maxim of certainty': *Sicherheitsmaxime*.]

³³⁹ [Or 'risk': *Gefahr*.]

confidence, all this *the hypocrite regards as nothing*.—The genuine maxim of safety, alone reconciled with religion, is exactly the reverse one: Whatever can become familiar to me,³⁴⁰ as means or as condition of salvation, not through my own reason but only through revelation and can be admitted into my confessions solely by means of a historical faith, but otherwise does not contradict the pure moral principles, I cannot indeed have faith in and affirm as certain, but can just as little reject as certainly false. Nonetheless, without determining anything about this, I count on [the fact] that whatever beatifying element³⁴¹ it may contain will, insofar as I do not perhaps make myself unworthy of it through the deficiency of my moral attitude in a good way of life, come to my benefit. In this maxim, there is true moral safety, namely before one's conscience (and more cannot be required of a human being); by contrast, there is the utmost danger and unsafety with the supposed prudential means, to circumvent in a crafty way the detrimental consequences that might arise for me from not confessing and, by siding with both parties, to ruin one's standing with both. —

Suppose that the author of a creed,³⁴² or the teacher of a church, or indeed any human being insofar as he is to admit to himself inwardly his conviction concerning propositions as divine revelations, asked himself, Do you indeed dare, in the presence of him who knows the heart, and subject to the renunciation of everything that is worthy³⁴³ and holy to you, affirm the truth of these propositions? In that case I would have to have a very unfavorable concept of human nature (which, after all, is at least not entirely incapable of doing good) in order not to foresee that even the boldest teacher of the faith would tremble at this point. (†)³⁴⁴

190 But if this is so, how does it agree with conscientiousness to insist nonetheless on such a declaration of faith, which admits no restriction, and even to pass off the

³⁴⁰ [Or 'Whatever I can become acquainted with': *Was . . . mir . . . bekannt . . . werden kann.*]

³⁴¹ [*Heilbringendes.*]

³⁴² [*Symbol.*]

³⁴³ [Or 'valuable': *wert.*]

³⁴⁴ (†) The same man who has the audacity to say, Whoever does not have faith in this or that historical doctrine as a precious truth, *that man is damned*, would of course also have to be able to say, If what I am here telling you is not true, *then let me be damned!* —If there were anyone who could make such a terrible pronouncement, my advice would be to be guided in regard to him by the Persian proverb concerning a *hadji*:^a If someone has been in Mecca once (as a pilgrim), move out of the house in which he lives with you; if he has been there twice, then move out of the same street; but if he has been there three times, then leave the city, or even the country where he is staying!^b

^a [I.e., one who has made a pilgrimage (*hadj*) to Mecca: *Hadgi.*]

^b [I too, like Bohatec (op. cit. at Ak. VI, 19 br. n. 3), 519 n. 35a, and di Giovanni (see above, Ak. VI, 170 br. n. 170a), 470 n. 182, have been unable, even with the most up-to-date methods and experimenting with various possible languages), to locate Kant's source for this proverb.]

presumptuousness of such affirmations as indeed a duty and a service of God, when yet the freedom of human beings, which is required throughout for everything that is moral (such as the acceptance of a religion), is thereby completely struck to the ground, and no place can be granted even to the good will which says,³⁴⁵ “I believe, dear Lord; help my unbelief!”³⁴⁶ (†)³⁴⁷

³⁴⁵ [For the quote, cf. Mark 9:24: “And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.”]

³⁴⁶ [I.e., I have faith . . . help my lack of faith: *Ich glaube . . . hilf meinem Unglauben!*]

³⁴⁷ *Oh sincerity!* you Astraea,^a who have fled from earth to heaven, how can you (the foundation of conscience, and hence of all inward religion) be drawn down from there to us again?^b I can admit, though it is much to be lamented, that candor (saying the *whole* truth that one knows) is not to be found in human nature. But *sincerity* (that *everything that one says* be said with truthfulness) one must be able to demand of every human being, and even if there were in our nature no predisposition to it whose cultivation is merely being neglected, the human race would have to be in its own eyes an object of the deepest contempt. Yet this required mental property is one that is exposed to many temptations and costs many a sacrifice, and hence also demands moral strength, i.e., virtue (which must be acquired); but this property must be guarded and cultivated earlier than any other, because the opposite propensity, if one has allowed it to take root, is most difficult to eradicate.—Now compare with this our manner of upbringing, above all on the point of religion, or, better, of doctrines of faith, where faithfulness^c of memory in answering questions concerning them, without regard for the faithfulness of the confession (concerning which no test is ever performed), is accepted as already sufficient to produce a person of faith, who does not even understand what he affirms as being holy, and one will no longer be surprised by the lack of sincerity which produces nothing but inward hypocrites.

^a [Astraea (“star-maiden”) was a daughter of Zeus and Themis (or of Eos and Astraeus.) She and her mother were both personifications of justice.]

^b [Kant presumably had in mind Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (cf. above, Ak. VI, 40 br. n. 202) I, 127–50 (Di Giovanni quotes the passage in English [op. cit., 470 n. 184], but the name of Astraea, who personifies justice, is simply translated as ‘Justice’):

. . . *de duro est ultima [proles] ferro.*
protinus inrupit venae peioris in aevum
omne nefas: fugere pudor verumque fidesque;
in quorum subiere locum fraudesque dolusque
insidiaequae et vis et amor sceleratus habendi.
 . . . *victa iacet pietas, et virgo caede madentis*
ultima caelestum terras Astraea reliquit.

[I.e.:]

The last [age] is that of hard iron.

From its base vein there promptly erupted into the age

every evil: modesty, truth, and faithfulness fled;

in their place emerged fraud, trickery,

plotting, violence, and the accursed love of possession.

Piety lay vanquished, and the virgin soaked in the slaughter,

last of the celestials, Astraea, abandoned the earth.

^c [Treue; likewise below.]

General Comment

191 Whatever good the human being can do on his own according to laws of freedom, as compared with the power³⁴⁸ of doing what he is capable of only through supranatural assistance, can be called *nature* as distinguished from *grace*. Not that by the former expression we mean a physical characteristic distinguished from freedom; rather, we use it merely because for this power we at least cognize the *laws* (of virtue), and hence reason has of it, as an *analogue of nature*, a guiding thread that it can see and grasp; by contrast, whether, when, and what or how much the *grace* will bring about in us remains entirely hidden to us, and reason is bereft concerning this, as with the supranatural in general (to which belongs morality regarded as *holiness*), of any acquaintance with the laws according to which it may occur.

The concept of a supranatural support³⁴⁹ for our moral,³⁵⁰ although deficient, power³⁵¹ and even for our not completely purified, at least weak attitude in favor of fulfilling all our duty, is transcendent and a bare idea of whose reality³⁵² no experience can assure us.—But even when assumed as an idea for a bare³⁵³ practical aim, it is very risky and difficult to reconcile with reason, because what is to be imputed to us as good moral conduct would have to occur not through foreign influence but only through the best possible use of our own powers. Yet the impossibility of this (of both taking place side by side) precisely cannot be proved either, because freedom itself, although containing nothing supranatural in its concept, nonetheless remains just as incomprehensible to us in regard to its possibility as the supranatural element³⁵⁴ that one would like to assume as substitute for freedom's self-active but deficient determination.

However, concerning freedom we are at least acquainted with³⁵⁵ the *laws* according to which it ought to be determined (the moral laws), whereas concerning a supranatural assistance³⁵⁶—whether a certain moral strength perceived in us actually stems from it, or, again, in which cases and under what conditions it is to be expected—we cannot have the least cognition. Hence apart from the general presupposition that whatever nature is not capable of will be brought about by grace, provided only that we have employed nature (i.e., our own powers) as far as possible, we will not be able to make any further use at all of this idea, neither for how we could (over and above the constant striving toward the good way of life) attract its cooperation, nor how we could determine in what cases we would have to expect it.—This idea is entirely extravagant,³⁵⁷ and keeping at a reverential distance

³⁴⁸ [Or 'ability': *Vermögen*.]

³⁴⁹ [*Beitritt*.]

³⁵⁰ [*moralisch* here, *sittlich* below.]

³⁵¹ [Or 'ability': *Vermögen*. Below, 'powers' translates *Kräfte*.]

³⁵² [I.e., applicability to things.]

³⁵³ [Literally, 'merely' or 'bare-ly': *bloß*.]

³⁵⁴ [*das Übernatürliche*.]

³⁵⁵ [*kennen*. Below, 'have . . . cognition' translates *erkennen*.]

³⁵⁶ [Or 'support': *Beistand*.]

³⁵⁷ [I.e., transcendent: *überschwenglich*.]

from it as something sacred is moreover salutary for us, lest, under the delusion of performing miracles ourselves or perceiving miracles within us, we render ourselves unfit for any use of reason, or allow ourselves to be enticed to the inertia of awaiting from above, in a passive idleness, what we should seek within ourselves.

Now, *means* are all those intermediate causes that the human being *has within his power*³⁵⁸ for bringing about a certain aim; and for becoming worthy of heavenly assistance there is no other means³⁵⁹ (and there also can be no other) than an earnest endeavor to improve as far as possible his moral constitution³⁶⁰ and thereby to render himself receptive to the perfecting—which is not in his power—of its commensurateness with divine pleasure;³⁶¹ for in fact this divine assistance itself which he expects still has as its aim only his morality. But that the impure human being would seek this assistance not there but rather in certain sensual arrangements (which he does indeed have in his power, but which also cannot by themselves produce a better human being and now are nonetheless supposed to bring this about supranaturally) was presumably already to be expected a priori, and thus we also find it in fact. The concept of a so-called *means of grace*, although (by what has just been said) intrinsically contradictory, yet serves here as a means of self-deception, which is just as common as it is detrimental to true religion.

The true (moral) service of God, which persons of faith have to render as subjects³⁶² belonging to his kingdom but no less also (under laws of freedom) as its citizens, is indeed like the kingdom itself invisible, i.e., a *service of hearts* (in spirit and truth),³⁶³ and can consist only in the attitude, that of observance of all true duties as divine commands, not in actions determined exclusively for God. Yet for the human being the invisible needs to be represented³⁶⁴ by something visible (sensible);³⁶⁵ indeed, what is more, it needs, for the sake of the practical, to be accompanied by it and as it were (according to a certain analogy) made intuitive;³⁶⁶ and although this is only a means—not readily dispensable, yet also very much subject to the danger of misinterpretation—for presenting to ourselves our duty in the service of God, yet through a *delusion* that steals upon us it is easily taken for the *service of God* itself and is even commonly called that.

³⁵⁸ [*Gewalt*; likewise below.]

³⁵⁹ [Literally, 'nothing other': *nichts anderes*.]

³⁶⁰ [*sittliche Beschaffenheit*. Below, 'morality' similarly translates *Sittlichkeit*.]

³⁶¹ [Or 'liking': *Wohlgefallen*. Cf. above, Ak. VI, 47 br. n. 256, and 45 br. n. 246h.]

³⁶² [In the sense of 'vassals': *Untertanen*.]

³⁶³ [Cf. John 4:23–24: "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."]

³⁶⁴ [*repräsentiert*.]

³⁶⁵ [Or 'sensual': *sinnlich*.]

³⁶⁶ [I.e., capable of being visualized: *anschaulich*.]

193 This alleged service of God, reduced³⁶⁷ to its spirit and true significance, namely an attitude dedicating itself to the kingdom of God inside us and outside us, can be divided even by reason into four observances of duty, with which, however, certain formalities that do not stand in necessary connection with them have been coordinated as corresponding to them. For, they have from ancient times been deemed good sensible³⁶⁸ means for serving those duties as a schema³⁶⁹ and thus for arousing and sustaining our attention to the true service of God. They are based, one and all, on the aim of furthering the morally good: (1) To establish this good firmly *within ourselves* and repeatedly to arouse in our mind the attitude concerning it. (The private prayer.) (2) The *outward spreading* of it through public assembly on days legally dedicated thereto, in order to let religious doctrines and wishes (and with them attitudes of this sort) be heard and thus to communicate them throughout. (Churchgoing.) (3) The *propagation* of this good to posterity through admittance of the newly joining members into the community of faith, as the duty³⁷⁰ to instruct them therein as well. (In the Christian religion, *baptism*.) (4) The *preservation of this community* through a repeated public formality which makes continuous the union of these members into an ethical body, namely under the principle of the mutual³⁷¹ equality of their rights and of their share in all fruits of the morally good. (Communion.)

Any venture³⁷² in religious matters, if one does not take it merely morally and yet adopts it as a means that *in itself* makes one pleasing to God and that thus, through him, satisfies all our wishes, is a *fetish faith*, which is a persuasion that what cannot bring about anything at all, neither according to laws of *nature* nor according to moral laws of reason, will indeed bring about the wished-for thing if only one has the firm faith that it will bring about this sort of thing and one then links with this faith certain formalities. Even where the conviction that everything here hinges on the morally good, which can arise only from what one does, has already penetrated, the sensual human being still searches for a secret path by which to circumvent that burdensome condition, namely that if only he attends to *the manner* (the formality), God would presumably accept that for the deed itself—which would then indeed have to be called an extravagant³⁷³ grace of God, unless it were perhaps rather a grace dreamed up in corrupt³⁷⁴ confidence, or were perhaps even itself a

³⁶⁷ [zurückgeführt.]

³⁶⁸ [Or 'sensual': *sinnlich*.]

³⁶⁹ [Roughly, a procedure of the power of imagination for exhibiting to the senses (making intuitive) something a priori. Cf. *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 137–47/B 176–87.]

³⁷⁰ [I.e., the admittance is also this duty.]

³⁷¹ [Literally, 'among themselves': *unter sich*.]

³⁷² [*Beginnen*.]

³⁷³ [I.e., transcendent: *überschwenglich*.]

³⁷⁴ [*faul*.]

hypocritical confidence. And thus in all public kinds of faith the human being has devised certain rites as *means of grace*, although not in all of these kinds of faith do these rites, as they do in the Christian faith, refer to practical concepts of reason and to attitudes conforming to them. (Thus, e.g., of the five great commands in the Mohammedan kind of faith—washing, praying, fasting, almsgiving, and the pilgrimage to Mecca—almsgiving alone would deserve to be exempted, if it were done from a truly virtuous and also religious attitude for human duty and hence presumably would actually deserve to be regarded also as a means of grace—whereas [in fact], because according to this faith almsgiving is entirely consistent with the extortion from others of what is offered, in the person of the poor, as a sacrifice to God, it does not deserve to be exempted.)

194

For there can be three kinds of delusory faith involving the overstepping, possible for us, of the bounds of our reason in regard to the supranatural (which is not, according to laws of reason, an object either of theoretical or of practical use). *First*, the faith that we cognize through experience something that yet we ourselves cannot possibly accept³⁷⁵ as occurring according to objective laws of experience (the faith in *miracles*). *Second*, the delusion that what through reason we ourselves can frame no concept of we must nonetheless admit among our concepts of reason, as necessary for what is morally best for us³⁷⁶ (the faith in *mysteries*). *Third*, the delusion that through the use of mere means of nature we can produce an effect that is a mystery to us, namely the influence of God on our morality (the faith in *means of grace*).—We have dealt with the first two contrived kinds of faith in the General Comments in the two immediately preceding pieces of this work.³⁷⁷ It still remains for us, therefore, to deal with the means of grace (which are distinct also from the effects³⁷⁸ of grace, (†)³⁷⁹ i.e., supranatural moral influences, where we behave merely passively, but the supposed experience of which is a fanatic delusion that pertains merely to feeling).

1. *Praying*, conceived as an *inward formal* service of God and hence as a means of grace, is a superstitious delusion (a fetishism). For, it is a mere *declaration of wishing*³⁸⁰ directed toward a being that needs no declaration of the inward attitude of the person wishing; thus nothing is done through it and therefore none of the duties incumbent upon us as commands of God are performed, and hence God is

³⁷⁵ [Or 'assume': *annehmen*.]

³⁷⁶ [*zu unserem moralischen Besten*.]

³⁷⁷ [See above, General Comment (regarding miracles) in the Second Piece, Ak. VI, 84–89; and General Comment (regarding mysteries) in the Third Piece, Ak. VI, 137–47.]

³⁷⁸ [Or 'acts': *-wirkungen*.]

³⁷⁹ (†) See the General Comment to the First Piece.^a

^a [Above, Ak. VI, 44–53.]

³⁸⁰ [Literally, 'declared wishing': *erklärtes Wünschen*.]

195 actually not served. A heartfelt wish to be pleasing to God in all our doing and re-
 196 fraining, i.e., the attitude, accompanying all our actions, of pursuing these as if they
 are done in the service of God, is the *spirit of prayer* which can and ought to have
 its place in us "without ceasing."³⁸¹ But clothing this wish (even though it be only
 inwardly) in words and formulas³⁸² can at best carry with it only the value of a
 means for repeated invigoration of that attitude within ourselves, but it cannot

³⁸¹ [Cf. 1 Thess. 5:171: "Pray without ceasing."]

³⁸² In that wish, which is the spirit of prayer, the human being seeks to act only upon him-
 self (to invigorate his attitudes by means of the *idea of God*); in this [clothed] wish, how-
 ever, where he declares himself in words, and hence outwardly, he seeks to act *upon* God.
 In the first sense, a prayer can take place with complete sincerity, even if the human being
 does not presume to be able to affirm even the existence of God as completely certain. In the
 prayer's second form, as an *address*, he assumes this supreme object to be personally pres-
 ent, or at least pretends (even inwardly) being convinced of its presence, in the opinion that,
 even if it were not so, this pretense could at least do no harm but could rather gain him favor;
 hence in the latter (the literal)^a prayer, sincerity cannot be found in as perfect a form as in
 the former (the mere spirit thereof).—Anyone will find the truth of this last comment con-
 firmed when he thinks of a human being, pious and well-meaning but otherwise limited in
 regard to such purified religious concepts, whom another takes unawares, I will not say in
 praying aloud, but even just in gestures indicative thereof. Anyone will, without my saying
 it, expect on his own that the person praying will fall into confusion and embarrassment over
 this, as if over a situation of which he should be ashamed. But why? [The fact] that a human
 being is caught talking aloud to himself raises against him, for the time being, the suspicion
 of having a slight fit of madness; and he would also be judged thus (not entirely wrongly)
 if, when he is alone, he is caught in an occupation or in gestures that can belong only to one
 who has before his eyes someone outside himself, which after all is not the case in the as-
 sumed example.—The teacher of the Gospel, however, has expressed the spirit of prayer
 quite superbly in a formula that renders dispensable the prayer and simultaneously also it-
 self (as a letter).^b In it one finds nothing but the resolve for the good way of life, which re-
 solve, together with the consciousness of our frailty, contains a constant wish to be a worthy
 member in the kingdom of God; hence it contains not properly a request for something that
 God in his wisdom might quite well also refuse us, but rather a wish that, if it is earnest (ac-
 tive), itself produces its object (becoming a human being pleasing to God). Even the wish
 for the means of preserving our existence (the wish for bread) for one day, since it is ex-
 pressly not directed to the continuance of that existence but is the effect of a felt need that
 is merely animal, is more a confession of what *nature wills* in us than a special deliberate
 request for what the human being *wills*, such as the request for the bread for another day
 would be, which is here being excluded distinctly enough.—Only a prayer of this kind,
 196 which is made in a moral attitude (an attitude invigorated only through the idea of God), be-
 cause it, as the moral spirit of prayer, itself produces its object (being pleasing to God), can
 be made in *faith*, which means the same as keeping assured *that the prayer will be heard*;^c
 nothing, however, can be of this kind except the morality in us. For even if the request aimed

^a [I.e., verbal: *buchstäblich*.]

^b [I.e., as a verbal expression: *als Buchstabe*.]

^c [*Erhörlichkeit desselben*.]

only at the bread for this day, no one can keep assured that the prayer will be heard, i.e., that its being granted to him is linked necessarily with God's wisdom; perhaps letting the human being die today from this lack of bread might harmonize better with God's wisdom. It is also an absurd and at the same time presumptuous delusion to try, through the insistent obtrusiveness of one's requesting, whether God cannot (to our present advantage) be diverted from the plan of his wisdom. Therefore, we cannot regard any prayer that has a nonmoral object as one that will be heard, i.e., we cannot pray for anything like this in *faith*. Indeed, even if the object were indeed moral, yet possible only through supranatural influence (or if at least we merely expected it from there because we do not ourselves want to take the trouble to bring it about, as e.g., the change of mentality, the putting on of the new man,^d called rebirth), it is nonetheless so utterly uncertain whether God will find it conforming to his wisdom to compensate for the deficiency (of which we ourselves are guilty) in a supranatural way, that one rather has cause to expect the opposite. Hence even for this the human being cannot pray in faith.—From this we can clarify what may be the situation concerning a miracle-working faith (which would always also be linked with an inward prayer). Since God cannot bestow upon the human being any power to bring about effects supranaturally (because that is a contradiction), and since the human being, on his part, according to the concepts he frames of good purposes possible in the world, cannot determine what the divine wisdom judges concerning this and therefore cannot by means of the wish generated within and by himself use the divine wisdom for his intentions, it follows that a gift of miracles—namely one where it depends on the human being himself whether he has it or not (“If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed,” etc.)^e—is, taken according to the letter, quite unthinkable. Such a faith, therefore, if it is to signify anything at all, is a mere idea of the preponderant importance of the human being's moral constitution—if he possessed it in its entire God-pleasing perfection (which yet he never attains)—over all other motivating causes that God in his supreme wisdom may have, and hence a basis for being able to have confidence that, if we were or sometime were to become *completely* what we ought to be and (in constant approximation) could be, nature would have to obey our wishes, which, however, would then never be unwise.

But as regards the *edification* which is intended through churchgoing, although the public prayer in this is indeed also not a means of grace, it is still an ethical ceremony, whether by united intonation of the hymn of faith, or again by the *address*, comprising within itself every moral concern of human beings, formally directed to God through the mouth of the cleric in the name of the entire congregation. This address, since it is responsible for^f this moral concern's being presented as a public concern, where the wish of each person is to be presented as united with the wishes of everyone toward one and the same purpose (the

197

^d [See Col. 3:9–10: “Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him.” Cf. also Eph. 2:15–21.]

^e [See Matt. 17:19–20: “Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief; for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove: and nothing shall be impossible unto you.” Cf. Luke 17:6: “If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamore tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.”]

^f [*macht*.]

- 197 directly have any reference to divine pleasure and precisely therefore also cannot be everyone's duty; for, a means can be prescribed only to one who *requires*³⁸³ it for certain purposes,³⁸⁴ yet far from everyone has a need for this means (to speak within and properly *with himself*, but allegedly all the more comprehensibly³⁸⁵ *with God*), but one must rather, through continued purification and elevation of the moral attitude, work toward the point where the prayer's spirit alone may be invigorated sufficiently within us and where (at least for our own support) its letter³⁸⁶ may finally drop out. For this letter, like everything that is aimed indirectly at a certain purpose, rather weakens the effect of the moral idea (which, regarded subjectively, is called *devotion*). Thus the contemplation of the profound wisdom of divine creation in the smallest things and of its majesty on the large scale—as indeed it has all along been able to be recognized by human beings but has in more recent times been expanded to the highest admiration—it is such a power, not only to put the mind into that sinking mood annihilating, as it were, the human being in his own eyes, the mood called *worship*,³⁸⁷ but also, in consideration of his own moral vocation therein, such a soul-elevating power that words by comparison, even if they were those of the royal *David*³⁸⁸ in prayer (and David knew little of all those marvels), would have to vanish like empty sound, because the feeling arising from such an intuition³⁸⁹ of the hand of God is unspeakable.—Moreover, human
- 198 beings, in view of their mental attunement to religion, like to transform anything that properly has reference only to their own moral improvement into a courtly

effectuation of the kingdom of God), not only can raise the emotion to the point of moral enthusiasm (whereas private prayers, since they are made without this sublime idea, do through habituation gradually lose entirely their influence on the mind), but also has in its favor a more rational basis than the first form of the prayer for clothing the moral wish—which constitutes the spirit of the prayer—in a formal address, yet without thinking in this of evoking the presence of the supreme being, or thinking of a special power peculiar to this rhetorical figure as a means of grace. For there is a special aim here, namely, to set in motion all the more, through an external ceremony portraying^e the *union of all human beings* in the shared wish for the kingdom of God, the moral incentive of every individual; and this cannot be done more fittingly than by addressing the kingdom's sovereign, just as if he were present at this place in particular.

^e [*vorstellend.*]

³⁸³ [Or 'needs': *bedürfen*. Below, 'has a need for' translates *nötig hat*.]

³⁸⁴ [Or 'ends': *Zwecken*.]

³⁸⁵ [Literally, 'understandably': *verständlicher*.]

³⁸⁶ [I.e., its verbal element: *Buchstabe*.]

³⁸⁷ [*Anbetung*.]

³⁸⁸ [King David, the first ruler of the united kingdom of Israel and Judah. He is also regarded as a prophet and as the author of many psalms.]

³⁸⁹ [I.e., visualization: *Anschauung*.]

service, where the humiliations and glorifications are commonly sensed all the less morally the more wordy they are. Thus it is necessary, rather, even in the earliest prayer practice performed with children, who still need the letter, to stress carefully that here speech (even as pronounced inwardly, and indeed even the attempts to attune the mind to grasping the idea of God which is to approach an intuition) does not in itself count for something, but the concern is only to invigorate the attitude to a way of life pleasing to God, and for this purpose speech is only a means for the power of imagination. For otherwise all those devout attestations of awe lead to the danger of bringing about nothing but hypocritical veneration of God, instead of a practical service of him, which does not consist in mere feelings.

2. *Churchgoing*, conceived as ceremonial *external service of God, in general*, in a church, in view of its being a sensible³⁹⁰ exhibition of the community of persons of faith, is not only for each *individual* a means to be extolled for his *edification*,³⁹¹

³⁹⁰ [Or 'sensual': *sinnlich*.]

³⁹¹ If one searches for a signification appropriate to this term, one presumably cannot indicate it otherwise than that one means by it the *devotion's moral consequence for the subject*. Now, this consequence does not consist in emotion (which lies already in the concept of devotion), although most supposed devoted persons (who are therefore also called *devotees*)^a posit it entirely therein; hence the word *edification* must signify the devotion's *consequence for the actual improvement of the human being*.^b This improvement, however, does not succeed unless one systematically sets to work, lays firm principles deep in one's heart according to well-understood concepts, establishes on them attitudes commensurately with the differing importance of the duties concerning them, protects and secures them against any challenge by the inclinations, and thus, as it were, *builds*^c a new human being as a *temple of God*.^d One can readily see that this building [project] can advance only slowly; yet at least one must be able to see that something has been *accomplished*. As things are, however, human beings believe themselves (through listening or reading or singing) to be greatly *edified*,^e whereas absolutely nothing has been *built*, indeed, no one has set to work, presumably because they hope that the moral edifice will, like the walls of Thebes, rise up on its own through the music of the sighs and yearning wishes.

^a [*Andächtler*.]

^b [For the new human being, cf. above, Ak. VI, 48 br. n. 262.]

^c [*erbaut*. Below, 'building' similarly translates *Bau*, 'built' renders *gebaut*, and 'edifice' translates *Gebäude*.]

^d [See Eph. 2:13–22: "But now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. . . . Having abolished in his flesh the enmity . . . for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace. . . . Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." Cf. 1 Cor. 3:16–17: "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." Cf. also 1 Pet. 2:5.]

^e [In terms of Kant's metaphors, as it were "built-up": *erbaut*.]

199 but also a duty directly incumbent upon them—as citizens of a divine state to be conceived³⁹² here on earth—for the *whole*, provided that this church does not contain formalities that can lead to idolatry and thus burden the conscience, e.g., certain worships of God personified as his³⁹³ infinite goodness under the name of a human being, since the sensible exhibition of him is contrary to the prohibition of reason, “*Thou shalt not make unto thee any image,*” etc.³⁹⁴ But to want to use churchgoing as in itself a *means of grace*, just as if God were directly served by it and had linked special *graces* with the celebration of this ceremony (which is a mere sensible presentation of the *universality* of religion), is a delusion that does indeed harmonize quite readily with the way of thinking of a good *citizen* in a *political commonwealth* and with external propriety, yet not only contributes nothing to his quality as *citizen in the kingdom of God*, but rather corrupts this quality and serves to conceal, with a deceptive veneer, the bad moral content of his attitude from the eyes of others and even from his own.

3. The ceremonial *initiation*, taking place once, to the church community, i.e., the first admittance *as a member of a church* (in the Christian church, through *baptism*), is a very significant ceremony which imposes great obligation either on the initiate-to-be, if he is himself able to confess his faith, or on the witnesses who pledge to attend to his education in it, and it aims at something holy (molding a human being into a citizen in a divine state). But it is not in itself an action of others that is holy or that brings about holiness and receptivity for divine grace in this subject; hence it is not a *means of grace*, however overblown was, in the early Greek church, its reputation of being able to wash away all sins at once, whereby this delusion also displayed publicly its kinship with an almost more than pagan superstition.

200 4. The ceremony, repeated several times, of a *renewal, continuance, and propagation of this church community* according to laws of *equality (communion)*, which may perhaps also, after the example of the founder of such a church (simultaneously also in memory of him), be done through the formality of a shared partaking at the same table, contains in it something great that expands the narrow, self-loving, and intolerant way of thinking of human beings, above all in religious matters, to the idea of a *cosmopolitan community*, and it is a good means for invigorating a community to the moral attitude of brotherly love as which this community is conceived. But to boast that God has linked special *graces* with the celebration of this ceremony, and to admit among the articles of faith the proposition that this celebration, which is after all merely a church action, is yet in addition also a *means of grace*, is a delusion of religion that can do nothing other than

³⁹² [Or ‘presented’: *vorgestellt*.]

³⁹³ [Literally, ‘in the personality of his’: *in der Persönlichkeit seiner*.]

³⁹⁴ [Exod. 2:4: “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.”]

work precisely contrary to religion's spirit.—*Priestery* would thus be, in general, the dominion which the clergy has usurped over the minds, by giving itself the reputation³⁹⁵ of having exclusive possession of the means of grace.

All such contrived self-deceptions in religious matters have a common basis. Among all three divine moral properties—holiness, grace,³⁹⁶ and justice—the human being usually turns directly to the second, in order thus to circumvent the intimidating condition of conforming to the requirements of the first. It is troublesome to be a good *servant*³⁹⁷ (there one always hears only talk about duties); hence he would rather be a *favorite*,³⁹⁸ where much is overlooked or, if duty has indeed been violated too crudely, everything is in turn made good through the mediation by someone favored in the highest degree, while he always remains the loose servant that he was. However, in order to satisfy himself that this intention of his has some semblance of practicability, he transfers, as usual, his concept of the human being (together with the latter's faults) to the deity; and just as—even in the best *superiors of our genus*—legislative strictness, beneficent grace, and punctilious justice do not work toward the moral effect of the actions of the subject³⁹⁹ separately and each by itself (as it ought to be), but rather *mingle* in the human overlord's way of thinking as he frames his decrees, so that one need only try to get around one of these properties, namely the frail wisdom of the human will, in order to determine the other two to yield, so he hopes to accomplish this thereby with God as well, by turning merely to his *grace*. (This is also why it was, for religion, an important separation⁴⁰⁰ of the mentioned properties of God, or rather of his relations to the human being, to make each property separately cognizable through the idea of a threefold personality, on the analogy of which that separation is to be thought.) To this end he applies all conceivable formalities, whereby he intends to indicate how much he *venerates* the divine commands, so that he does not need to *observe* them; and, in order that his deedless wishes may serve also to compensate for the transgression of these commands, he shouts, "Lord, Lord," just so he does not need to "do the will of the heavenly Father."⁴⁰¹ And thus, of the ceremonies concerning the use of certain means to invigorate truly practical attitudes, he frames the concept as means of grace in themselves; he even passes off the faith

201

³⁹⁵ [Or 'authority': *Ansehen*.]

³⁹⁶ [Or 'mercy': *Gnade*.]

³⁹⁷ [*Diener* here; *Knecht* below.]

³⁹⁸ [*Favorit*. Below, 'favored' translates *begünstigt*.]

³⁹⁹ [In the sense of 'vassal': *Untertan*.]

⁴⁰⁰ [*Absonderung*. Below, 'separately' translates *besonders*.]

⁴⁰¹ [Cf. Matt. 7:21 (cf. 22): "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."]

itself that they are such means as an essential component of religion (the common man, even as the whole of it) and leaves it to the omnibenevolent providence to make him a better human being, by applying himself to *piety* (a passive veneration of divine law) rather than to *virtue* (the application of his own powers to the observance of the duty he venerates), even though only virtue, *combined with piety*, can constitute the idea that one means by the word *godliness* (true *religious attitude*).— If the delusion of this supposed favorite of heaven⁴⁰² rises in him to the point of fanatically imagining felt special effects of grace⁴⁰³ (even to the presumption of the familiarity of a supposed hidden *interaction* with God), then even virtue finally disgusts him and becomes for him an object of contempt. It is no wonder, then, if people publicly complain that religion still contributes so little to the improvement of human beings, and that the inner light (“under a bushel”)⁴⁰⁴ of those receiving grace⁴⁰⁵ is not willing to shine also outwardly through good works, and this (as according to this pretense of theirs one could indeed require) *with priority*⁴⁰⁶ over other naturally honest human beings, who, in a word, accept religion not as compensation for, but as furtherance of, the virtuous attitude that actively appears in a good way of life. The teacher of the Gospel has nonetheless provided us with these external documentations of external experience as a touchstone by which one can recognize human beings by their fruits⁴⁰⁷ and everyone can recognize himself. So far, however, we have not seen that those who in their opinion are exceptionally favored (the chosen) outdo in the least the natural honest man, whom one can trust in interactions, in business, and in need; we have seen, rather, that on the whole they probably cannot withstand the comparison with him, which proves that the right way to advance is not from grace⁴⁰⁸ to virtue, but rather from virtue to grace.

⁴⁰² [*Himmelsgünstling*.]

⁴⁰³ [Or ‘acts of grace’: *Gnadenwirkungen*.]

⁴⁰⁴ [Matt. 5:15: “Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.”]

⁴⁰⁵ [‘those receiving grace’ translates *dieser Begnadigten*.]

⁴⁰⁶ [*vorzüglich*.]

⁴⁰⁷ [Cf. Matt. 7:16–20: “Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by the fruits ye shall know them.” Cf. above, Ak. VI, 160 br. n. 84.]

⁴⁰⁸ [*Begnadigung*; likewise below.]

GLOSSARY

In order to facilitate finding the German terms in a modern German dictionary, they are here usually given *not* as they appear in the original text, but in their modern spelling, excluding, however, the changes created by the spelling reform of 1996 and its later amendments. My reason for adhering to the more traditional modern spelling is that I did so in my previous three Kant translations and am aiming at consistency.

	A		
<i>Aberglaube</i>	superstition	<i>Ausbreitung</i>	expansion, diffusion, spreading
<i>Absicht</i>	intention, aim, intent, (point of) view, respect	<i>auserwählt</i>	chosen
<i>Afterdienst</i>	pseudoservice	<i>Auslegung</i>	interpretation
<i>Allgegenwart</i>	omnipresence	<i>Ausspruch</i>	pronouncement, (judicial) verdict
<i>allgemein</i>	universal, general		
<i>allgenugsam</i>	all-sufficient		B
<i>allgütig</i>	omnibenevolent	<i>Bann</i>	excommunication
<i>allmächtig</i>	omnipotent	<i>Bedeutung</i>	signification, meaning, significance
<i>allvermögend</i>	all-powerful	<i>Bedingung</i>	condition
<i>allwissend</i>	omniscient	<i>Begehrung</i>	desire
<i>anbeten</i>	to worship	<i>Begeisterung</i>	inspiration, enthusiasm
<i>Andacht</i>	devotion	<i>Begierde</i>	desire, eagerness
<i>Andächtelei</i>	affected devotion	<i>Begnadigung</i>	grace
<i>angemessen</i>	commensurate, appropriate, adequate	<i>begreifen</i>	to comprehend, to be engaged in
<i>Anlage</i>	predisposition	<i>Begriff</i>	concept
<i>Anmaßung</i>	pretension, presumption	<i>beharrlich</i>	permanent, persistent
<i>anpreisen</i>	to extol	<i>Beherrschung</i>	rule, domination
<i>Anrufung</i>	invocation	<i>Beihilfe</i>	aid, assistance
<i>Anschauung</i>	intuition, vision	<i>Beistand</i>	assistance, support
<i>Anschein</i>	semblance	<i>bekannt</i>	familiar
<i>Ansehen</i>	reputation, authority	<i>bekannt machen</i>	to acquaint with, promulgate
<i>Anspruch</i>	claim, pretension	<i>mit</i>	
<i>Antrieb</i>	impulse	<i>bekennen, s.</i>	to subscribe to; to confess
<i>Auferstehung</i>	resurrection	<i>Bekenntnis</i>	creed
<i>aufklären</i>	to clarify, to enlighten	<i>Belohnung</i>	reward
<i>Aufopferung</i>	sacrifice		

<i>Benennung</i>	designation, name	<i>Eigendünkel</i>	self-conceit
<i>berechtigen</i>	to entitle, to justify	<i>Eigenschaft</i>	property
<i>Berufung</i>	calling, appeal	<i>Einbildungskraft</i>	imagination
<i>Beschaffenheit</i>	character, characteristic, constitution	<i>eingeboren</i>	only begotten
<i>beschuldigen</i>	to accuse, to blame	<i>Eingebung</i>	inspiration
<i>besonder</i>	particular, special	<i>ingeschränkt</i>	restricted, limited
<i>Bestimmung</i>	determination, vocation	<i>einleuchten</i>	to be evident
<i>Bestimmungsgrund</i>	determining basis	<i>Einsicht</i>	insight
<i>Bestreben,</i> <i>Bestrebung</i>	striving, endeavor	<i>empfinden</i>	to sense
<i>beten</i>	to pray	<i>Endabsicht</i>	final aim
<i>Betragen</i>	behavior	<i>Entschlossenheit</i>	resolve
<i>beurteilen</i>	to judge, to make a judgment about	<i>Entsünd(ig)ung</i>	absolution
<i>Beweg(ungs)grund</i>	motive	<i>erbaulich</i>	edifying
<i>Bewegursache</i>	motivating cause	<i>Erfahrung</i>	experience
<i>Beweisgrund</i>	basis of proof	<i>Erfolg</i>	result
<i>bewundern</i>	to admire	<i>Erfüllung</i>	fulfillment
<i>Bewußtsein</i>	consciousness	<i>ergänzen</i>	to compensate for, to supplement
<i>Beziehung</i>	reference, relation	<i>ergeben</i>	devoted, dedicated
<i>Blendwerk</i>	illusion	<i>erhaben</i>	sublime
<i>bloß</i>	bare, mere, just, only, alone	<i>erhellen</i>	to be evident
<i>bösartig</i>	wicked	<i>erheuchelt</i>	hypocritical
<i>böse</i>	evil, bad	<i>erkennen</i>	to cognize, to recognize
<i>Bösewicht</i>	villain	<i>Erlassung</i>	remission
<i>boshaft</i>	malicious	<i>erleiden</i>	to suffer, to endure
<i>Büßung</i>	penance	<i>erleuchten</i>	to illumine
		<i>Erlöser</i>	redeemer
		<i>Erniedrigung</i>	abasement
		<i>Erpressung</i>	extortion
		<i>erretten</i>	to save
		<i>erschaffen</i>	to create
		<i>Erscheinung</i>	appearance, phenomenon
<i>Darstellung</i>	exhibition, exposition	<i>Erwählung</i>	election
<i>dartun</i>	to establish	<i>erzeugen</i>	to generate
<i>Dasein</i>	existence, being	<i>Erziehung</i>	upbringing, education
<i>Demut</i>	humility	<i>Evangelium</i>	Gospel
<i>Denkungsart</i>	way of thinking		
<i>Deutung</i>	interpretation, construal		
<i>Dienst</i>	service		
<i>Dreieinigkeit</i>	Trinity		
			F
		<i>Fähigkeit</i>	capacity
		<i>fassen</i>	to grasp, to apprehend, to frame, to make, to take (in)
<i>Ehre</i>	honor		
<i>Ehrfurcht</i>	awe		

<i>Fegefeuer</i>	purgatory	<i>Geschöpf</i>	creature
<i>Fehler</i>	defect	<i>Gesetz</i>	law
<i>Fehltritt</i>	lapse	<i>gesetzgebend</i>	legislative
<i>feierlich</i>	solemn, ceremonial	<i>gesetzlich</i>	legal
<i>Feld</i>	realm	<i>Gesetzmäßigkeit</i>	lawfulness
<i>Fleck</i>	stain	<i>Gesinnung</i>	attitude
<i>Folge</i>	succession, consequence, conclusion	<i>gesittet</i>	civilized
<i>folgern</i>	to infer	<i>Geständnis</i>	admission, avowal
<i>forschen</i>	to investigate, to search	<i>Gewalt</i>	force, power
<i>Fortpflanzung</i>	propagation	<i>Gewissen</i>	conscience
<i>freisprechen</i>	to absolve	<i>Glaube</i>	faith
<i>freiwillig</i>	voluntary	<i>glauben</i>	to have faith, to believe
<i>fremd</i>	foreign, alien, another's	<i>glücklich</i>	fortunate, happy, luckily
<i>Frömmerei</i>	affected piety	<i>Glückseligkeit</i>	happiness
<i>Frömmigkeit</i>	piety	<i>Gnade</i>	grace
<i>Fron-</i>	slavish	<i>Gott(heit)</i>	God, god (deity)
<i>Fürwahrhalten</i>	assent	<i>Götze</i>	idol
		<i>Grenze(n)</i>	boundary (-ies, bounds)
		<i>Grund</i>	basis, ground, reason
		<i>Grundsatz</i>	principle
		<i>gültig</i>	valid
		<i>Gunst</i>	favor
		<i>Gutartigkeit, Güte</i>	goodness
		<i>gütig</i>	benign
	G		
<i>Gattung</i>	genus		
<i>Gebet</i>	prayer		
<i>gebieten</i>	to command, to hold sway		
<i>Gebot</i>	command, commandment		H
<i>gebrechlich</i>	frail	<i>Handlung</i>	action, act
<i>gefallen</i>	to be liked, to be pleasing	<i>Hang</i>	propensity
<i>Gegenstand</i>	object	<i>heidnisch</i>	pagan
<i>gehorschen</i>	to obey	<i>Heil</i>	salvation
<i>Geist</i>	spirit	<i>heilig</i>	holy, sacred
<i>Geistlicher</i>	cleric	<i>heilige Schrift</i>	holy scripture, Holy Scripture
<i>Gelehrsamkeit, Gelehrtheit</i>	scholarship	<i>Heiliger Geist</i>	Holy Spirit
<i>Gemüt</i>	mind	<i>Herr</i>	lord, Lord
<i>Gericht</i>	tribunal	<i>herrlich</i>	splendid
<i>Gerichtshof</i>	court of law	<i>herzlich</i>	heartfelt
<i>Geschäft(e)</i>	task, business, occupation (affairs), profession	<i>Heuchelei</i>	hypocrisy
<i>Geschichte</i>	history, story	<i>Himmel</i>	heaven
<i>Geschlecht</i>	sex, kind	<i>Himmelfahrt</i>	ascension
		<i>Hochpreisung</i>	laudation
		<i>Hölle</i>	hell
		<i>Huldigung</i>	homage

	I	<i>Lehre</i>	doctrine, teaching, instruction
<i>Inbegriff</i>	sum	<i>Lehrsatz</i>	doctrine
<i>in sich (selbst)</i>	intrinsically	<i>leichtgläubig</i>	credulous
		<i>Leiden</i>	suffering
		<i>Leidenschaft</i>	passion
	J	<i>Lob</i>	praise
<i>Jünger</i>	disciple	<i>Lobpreisung</i>	glorification
<i>jungfräulich</i>	virgin	<i>Lohn-</i>	mercenary
		<i>Lossprechung</i>	absolution
		<i>Lüge</i>	lie
		<i>lügenhaft</i>	mendacious
	K	<i>Lust</i>	pleasure
<i>Kanzel</i>	pulpit		
<i>kennbar</i>	cognizable		
<i>kennen</i>	to be acquainted (fam- iliar) with		
<i>kenntlich</i>	recognizable	<i>Mächtig</i>	powerful, mighty
<i>Kenntnis</i>	acquaintance, familiarity, cognition, knowledge	<i>Mangel</i>	lack, absence, defect, deficiency
<i>Kennzeichen</i>	characteristic, mark	<i>mannigfaltig</i>	manifold
<i>Ketzer</i>	heretic	<i>Mäßigkeit,</i>	moderation
<i>Kirche</i>	church	<i>Mäßigung</i>	
<i>kleinmütig</i>	fainthearted	<i>Maßstab</i>	standard
<i>Kleriker</i>	cleric	<i>Meinung</i>	opinion
<i>Klerus</i>	clergy	<i>Menge</i>	multitude
<i>klug</i>	prudent, astute	<i>Mensch</i>	human being
<i>Knecht</i>	servant	<i>Menschheit</i>	humanity, humankind
<i>Kontrakt</i>	covenant	<i>Merkmal</i>	characteristic, mark
<i>Kopf</i>	head, mind	<i>merkwürdig</i>	noteworthy
<i>Kraft</i>	power, force, strength	<i>mildern</i>	to mitigate
<i>Kritik</i>	criticism, critical judgment	<i>mißfallen</i>	to dislike, to displease
<i>Kultur</i>	cultivation, culture	<i>Mitleid</i>	sympathy
<i>kündigen</i>	to announce	<i>möglich</i>	possible
<i>kundig</i>	versed	<i>Moral-,</i>	moral
<i>Kundmachung</i>	proclamation	<i>moralisch,</i>	
<i>Kunst</i>	art, skill	<i>Moralisch-</i>	
		<i>Moral(ität)</i>	morality
		<i>Muster</i>	model
		<i>Mut</i>	courage
	L		
<i>Laster</i>	vice		
<i>Lauterkeit</i>	purity	<i>Nachahmung</i>	imitation
<i>Lebenswandel</i>	(way of) life	<i>nachdenken</i>	to meditate
		<i>nachforschen</i>	to investigate
			N

<i>Nachkomme</i>	descendant
<i>Nachkommenschaft</i>	posterity
<i>Nächster</i>	neighbor
<i>Nachstrebung</i>	emulation, striving after
<i>Natur</i>	nature
<i>Neigung</i>	inclination
<i>neu</i>	new
<i>neuer</i>	modern, recent
<i>Nichtswürdigkeit</i>	worthlessness
<i>Norm</i>	standard
<i>Not</i>	plight, need
<i>nötigen</i>	to compel
<i>notwendig</i>	necessary
<i>Nutzen</i>	use, benefit

O

<i>oberst</i>	supreme
<i>Objekt</i>	object
<i>obliegen</i>	to be incumbent
<i>offenbar</i>	manifest, overt, obvious
<i>Offenbarung</i>	revelation
<i>offenherzig</i>	candid
<i>Ohnmacht</i>	impotence
<i>Opfer</i>	offering, sacrifice

P

<i>Peinigung</i>	torment
<i>Pfaffe</i>	priestling
<i>Pfaffentum</i>	priestery
<i>Pflicht</i>	duty
<i>Philosophie</i>	philosophy
<i>plagen</i>	to torment
<i>Predigt</i>	sermon
<i>preisen</i>	glorify
<i>Priester</i>	priest
<i>Proberstein</i>	touchstone
<i>prüfen</i>	to test

R

<i>Rache</i>	revenge
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<i>Recht</i>	right, law
<i>Rechtfertigung</i>	justification
<i>Rechtgläubigkeit</i>	orthodoxy
<i>rechtlich</i>	legal
<i>rechtmäßig</i>	legitimate
<i>rechtschaffen</i>	righteous
<i>Redlichkeit</i>	sincerity
<i>Reich</i>	kingdom, realm
<i>rein</i>	pure, clear
<i>Religion</i>	religion
<i>reuevoll, reuig</i>	repentant
<i>Richter(-)</i>	judge (judicial)
<i>Richtmaß,</i> <i>Richtschnur</i>	standard
<i>Rückfall</i>	relapse
<i>Ruf</i>	reputation
<i>Rührung</i>	emotion

S

<i>Sache</i>	thing, cause, matter
<i>Satz</i>	proposition, thesis, principle
<i>Satzung</i>	statute
<i>Schein</i>	semblance
<i>Schein-</i> <i>scheinbar</i>	illusory
<i>Schicksal</i>	seeming destiny
<i>schlecht</i>	bad
<i>schlechterdings,</i> <i>schlechthin</i>	absolutely
<i>schlechtweg</i>	simply
<i>schließen</i>	to infer
<i>schlimm</i>	bad
<i>Schluß(folge)</i>	inference
<i>Schönheit</i>	beauty
<i>Schöpfer</i>	creator
<i>Schranke</i>	limit
<i>Schrift</i>	work, writing, scrip- ture, Scripture
<i>Schuld</i>	guilt, fault, blame
<i>Schulden</i>	debts
<i>Schuldigkeit</i>	obligation, guiltiness
<i>Schwärmerei</i>	fanaticism, raving
<i>Seele</i>	soul
<i>Seel-</i>	spiritual

<i>Sehnsucht</i>	yearning	<i>Tugend</i>	virtue
<i>selbständig</i>	independent	<i>tunlich</i>	practicable
<i>Seligkeit</i>	salvation, bliss		
<i>seligmachend</i>	saving, bringing salvation		U
<i>Sendung</i>	message, mission	<i>übel</i>	bad, poorly
<i>setzen</i>	to place, to put, to posit, to appoint	<i>Übel</i>	bad, ill
<i>Sinn</i>	sense, mind, meaning	<i>übereinstimmen</i>	to agree, to harmonize
<i>sinnlich</i>	sensible, sensual	<i>Übergang</i>	transition, conversion
<i>Sitten</i>	morals, mores, manners	<i>überhaupt</i>	as such, in general, at all, indeed
<i>Sittenlehre</i>	doctrine of morals	<i>überirdisch</i>	supraterrrestrial
<i>Sittlichkeit</i>	morality	<i>übernatürlich</i>	supranatural
<i>Stellvertreter</i>	proxy	<i>Überredung</i>	persuasion
<i>Sterblicher</i>	mortal	<i>überschwenglich</i>	extravagant
<i>stiften</i>	to bring about, to found	<i>übersinnlich</i>	suprasensible
<i>Stoff</i>	material	<i>Übertretung</i>	transgression
<i>Strafe</i>	punishment	<i>überzeugen</i>	to convince
<i>streben</i>	to strive	<i>unabsehlich</i>	immense
<i>streiten</i>	to dispute, to contend, to counter	<i>unbedingt(erweise)</i>	unconditional (unconditionally)
<i>streitende Kirche</i>	Church Militant	<i>unbegreiflich</i>	incomprehensible
<i>Streitigkeit</i>	controversy	<i>unbegrenzt</i>	unbounded
<i>Strenge</i>	strictness, severity	<i>unbeschränkt</i>	unlimited
<i>Sucht</i>	passion	<i>unbezweifelt</i>	indubitable
<i>Sünde</i>	sin	<i>unecht</i>	spurious
		<i>unendlich;</i>	infinite; <i>ad infinitum</i>
		<i>Unendliche, ins</i>	
		<i>unentbehrlich</i>	indispensable
		<i>unerforschlich</i>	inscrutable
		<i>unerläßlich</i>	irremissible
		<i>ungereimt</i>	absurd
		<i>Unglaube</i>	lack of faith
		<i>Unglück</i>	misfortune
		<i>unglücklich</i>	unhappy
		<i>ungöttlich</i>	ungodly
		<i>unkörperlich</i>	incorporeal
		<i>unlauter</i>	impure
		<i>unmittelbar</i>	direct, immediate
		<i>unrecht</i>	wrong
		<i>Unschuld</i>	innocence
		<i>unselig</i>	accursed
		<i>Unterjochung</i>	subjugation
		<i>Unterschied</i>	distinction, difference
		<i>Untersuchung</i>	investigation
		<i>Unterweisung</i>	instruction

T

<i>Tadel</i>	rebuke		
<i>tadelhaft</i>	censurable		
<i>Tapferkeit</i>	bravery		
<i>Tat</i>	deed		
<i>Täter</i>	agent		
<i>Täuschung</i>	deception		
<i>Tod</i>	death		
<i>töten, totschiagen</i>	to kill		
<i>transzendent</i>	transcendent		
<i>treu</i>	faithful		
<i>Trieb</i>	impulse		
<i>Triebfeder</i>	incentive		
<i>Trost</i>	comfort		
<i>Trostlosigkeit</i>	hopelessness		
<i>Trotz</i>	defiance		

<i>Unterwerfung</i>	submission, subjugation	<i>Verheißung</i>	promise
<i>unumgänglich</i>	inescapable	<i>verhüten</i>	to forestall, to keep from
<i>unvermeidlich</i>	unavoidable, inevitable	<i>Verhütung</i>	prevention
<i>Unvermögen</i>	inability, incapacity	<i>Verirrung</i>	straying
<i>Unvollkommenheit</i>	imperfection	<i>Verkehrtheit</i>	perversity
<i>unwiderstehlich</i>	irresistible	<i>verkündigen</i>	to proclaim
<i>uranfänglich</i>	primordial	<i>verleiten</i>	to mislead
<i>Urbild</i>	archetype	<i>verletzen</i>	to violate
<i>Urheber</i>	originator	<i>vermessen</i>	presumptuous
<i>Ursache</i>	cause, reason	<i>Vermischung</i>	mixing, intermingling, copulation
<i>Ursprung</i>	origin		
<i>Urteil</i>	judgment	<i>Vermittlung</i>	mediation
<i>Urteilkraft</i>	power of judgment	<i>Vermögen</i>	power, ability
<i>Urteilsspruch</i>	verdict	<i>vernichten</i>	to annihilate
		<i>Vernunft</i>	reason
	V	<i>Vernunft-</i>	of reason, rational
<i>verabsäumen</i>	to neglect	<i>Vernünftelei</i>	subtle reasoning
<i>verachten</i>	to despise	<i>vernünfteln</i>	to reason
<i>Verachtung</i>	contempt	<i>vernünftig</i>	reasonable, rational
<i>Verantwortung</i>	responsibility	<i>verordnen</i>	to ordain
<i>Verbindung</i>	combination, link(ing), linkage, connection, association, obligation	<i>Verpflichtung</i>	obligation
<i>Verbot</i>	prohibition	<i>Verräter</i>	traitor
<i>verbreiten</i>	to spread, to disseminate	<i>Versammlung</i>	assembly
<i>Verdammung</i>	condemnation	<i>versöhnen</i>	to reconcile
<i>Verderben</i>	perdition, corruption	<i>Verstand,</i>	understanding
<i>verdienen</i>	to deserve, to earn	<i>Verständnis</i>	
<i>Verehrung</i>	veneration	<i>verstatten</i>	to permit
<i>vereinigen</i>	to unite, to reconcile	<i>verstehen</i>	to understand, to mean
<i>Verfahren</i>	procedure	<i>versuchen</i>	to attempt, to test, to tempt
<i>Verfall</i>	decline	<i>Verträglichkeit</i>	compatibility
<i>Verfassung</i>	constitution, organization	<i>Vertrauen</i>	confidence, trust
<i>Verfolgung</i>	persecution	<i>vertreiben</i>	to expel, to drive away
<i>vergeblich</i>	futile	<i>verüben</i>	to commit
<i>Vergehung</i>	offense	<i>verurteilen</i>	to condemn, to sen- tence
<i>vergeltten</i>	to requite	<i>verwerflich</i>	reprehensible
<i>Vergnügen</i>	gratification	<i>Verwerfung</i>	damnation
<i>Vergütung</i>	compensation	<i>Verwirrung</i>	confusion
<i>Verhalten</i>	conduct	<i>Verwunderung</i>	amazement
<i>Verhältnis</i>	relation	<i>Verzweiflung</i>	despair
		<i>Vielgötterei</i>	polytheism
		<i>Volk</i>	people
		<i>Völkerrecht</i>	law of nations
		<i>Volks-</i>	popular, public, of a people

<i>zuletzt</i>	ultimately	<i>Zustand</i>	state, situation
<i>zumuten</i>	to demand, to require, to impute	<i>Zutrauen</i>	trust, confidence
<i>Zuneigung</i>	fondness	<i>Zwang</i>	coercion, coercing
<i>zurechnen</i>	to impute	<i>Zweck</i>	purpose
<i>Zusammenhalten</i>	cohesion	<i>Zweckmäßigkeit</i>	purposiveness
<i>zusammenhalten</i>	to compare	<i>zweckvoll</i>	purposeful
<i>zusammenstimmen</i>	to agree, to harmonize	<i>zweckwidrig</i>	contrapurposive
		<i>Zwiespalt</i>	discord

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INDEX

All references are to the pagination along the margin of the text, which is the pagination from the *Akademie* edition on which this translation is based. Headings are arranged alphabetically, but their subheadings are ordered by affinity of topics. As in the Glossary, the German terms indicated here (in parentheses) are usually given *not* as they appear in the original text but as they would in a modern German dictionary, excluding, however, the changes created by the spelling reform of 1996 and its later amendments. The sequence of the individual references follows the arrangement of the text in this volume, except that indirect references (introduced by 'cf.')

follow direct references as a group. References to Kant's own notes are marked by 'n.' or the plural 'ns.' References to the translator's bracketed notes are marked by 'br. n.' or 'br. ns.' Works by Kant are listed by their English titles, with the original titles given in parentheses. Other authors are listed here only by their names; their works, insofar as these are cited in this translation, are listed in the Bibliography.

- Absolution *or* absolve (*Entsünd[ig]ung, Lossprechung, freisprechen*), 35, 69 n. 127, 76, 116, 118, 120, 146 n. 489, 161 incl. n. 107, 169
- Accursed (*unselig*), 69, 190 br. n. 347b, *see also* Curse, Bless
- Accusation *or* accuse *or* accused (*Beschuldigung, beschuldigen, vorwerfen, Angeklagter*), 9 br. n. 47, 10, 38 br. n. 181, 66, 72, 111, 118, 136 n. 425, 140 n. 446, 153, 186, *see also* Blame, Reproach
- Adhere(nt) (*anhänglich sein [Anhänger]*), 31, 62, 79, 81, 83, 84, 108 incl. n. 155, 123 n. 327, 127, 136 n. 425, 158, 173 n. 200, 176, 184 n. 312, *see also* Devotee
- Administration *or* administer *or* administrator (*Administration, verwalten, Verwalter*), 101, 102, 106 br. n. 136, 113, 139 br. n. 441, 152 incl. br. n. 16, 180
- Advance (*Fortschritt, fortschreiten*), 10, 19, 20 incl. br. n. 14, 49, 51, 62, 67, 68 incl. br. n. 116, 98, 106, 114, 124, 133 n. 397, 135, 136, 153, 166, 198 n. 391, 202, *see also* Progress
- Affectation (*Ziererei*), 172, cf. 184 n. 312
- Age (*Zeit*), present, 163; Golden, 19; final, 19; old, 13; *see also* Time
- Aggression (*Befehdung*), 97, 131, *see also* Attack
- All-father (*Allvater*), 140 n. 446
- All-powerful (*allvermögend*), 5, 6 n. 32, *see also* Omnipotent, Power
- All-preserving (*alles erhaltend*), 145, *see also* Preservation
- All-seeing (*allsehend, Allsehender*), 51, 121 n. 311
- All-sufficient (*allgenugsam*), 64 n. 85
- All-unifying (*alles vereinigend*), 115, *see also* Union
- Anathema (*Bannfluch*), 109 incl. br. n. 157
- Angel *or* angelic (*Engel, englisch*), 64 n. 85, 86, 87
- Animal(ity) (*Tier, tierisch [Tierheit]*), 26 incl. br. ns. 63 and 66, 28 n. 85, 35, 40 n. 203, 73 n. 161, 80 n. 226 and br. n. 226e, 88 n. 309, 131, 195 n. 382
- Announcement That a Treatise on Perpetual Peace in Philosophy Is Nearly Completed* (*Verkündigung des nahen Abschlusses eines*

- Traktats zum ewigen Frieden in der Philosophie*), 34 br. n. 152f
- Anthropomorphism or anthropomorphic(ally) (*Anthropomorphismus, anthropomorphistisch*), 64 n. 85 and br. n. 85j, 141, 142, 168, 182
- Antichrist (*Antichrist*), 136, *see also* Christ
- Apodeictically (*apodiktisch*), 187
- A priori (*a priori*), 6 n. 32, 12 incl. br. n. 81, 20, 35, 102, 138, 170 br. n. 170a, 192, 193 br. n. 369, *see also* Pure (*rein*), Empirical
- Archetype (*Urbild*), 61–64, 66 incl. br. n. 90, 74 n. 178, 101, 119, 128, 145, 162
- Aristocracy or aristocratic (*Aristokratie, aristokratisch*), 100, 125, 180
- Ascension or ascend(ing) (*Himmelfahrt, hinaufsteigen [Aufsteigen]*), 112, 128 n. 361, *see also* Heaven
- Assembly or assemble (*Versammlung, versammeln*), 81 n. 235, 94, 106, 193
- Assertoric (*assertorisch*), 153 n. 32, cf. 29 br. n. 96
- Assistance (*Beistand, Beihilfe*), 44, 45, 52, 143, 178, 184 n. 312, 190–92, *see also* Support, Aid
- Astute (*klug*), 69 br. n. 127a, 121, 188 n. 337, *see also* Prudence
- Atheism (*Atheismus*), 111, *see also* Theistic
- Atonement (*Genugtuung*), 118, 184 br. n. 310, *see also* Satisfaction
- Attack (*Angriff, befallen, anfallen, befehlen*), 9, 93, 131, 132, 164, *see also* Aggression
- Attest(ation) (*zeugen, bezeugen [Bezeugung]*), 103, 112, 169, 177, 184 n. 312, 198, *see also* Profess
- Attitude (*Gesinnung*), 13, 23 n. 44, 24, 25, 37, 38, 45 n. 246, 47, 51, 57 incl. n. 8, 61, 63, 66–72 incl. br. ns. 90 and 91 and ns. 103 and 127, 74–77 incl. n. 178, 81, 83, 84, 99, 105, 160, 161, 170, 172–74, 182, 183, 192, 193, 195 incl. n. 382, 196, 198 incl. n. 391, 199; reason for using this term, 13 br. n. 95; old, 74 n. 178, 77; new, 74, 77; active, 116, 178; improved, 73, 76, 77, 127; inward, 194; unchangeable (immutable), 67, 71, 171; universal, 72; strength of, 71; sincere, 120; truthful (true), 116, 147, 171, 201; genuineness of, 71; pure, 61, 66, 68, 70, 74 incl. n. 178, 115, 139, 159, 160, 170 n. 170, 176, 182, cf. 191; practical, 201; good, 22 n. 43, 38, 71–74, 76, 116, 152; of a good way of life, 176, 178; moral, 30, 35, 38, 61–63, 74 n. 178, 79, 81 n. 235, 84, 105, 106, 108, 126, 127, 139, 146 n. 489, 159, 169, 170 n. 170, 172, 173, 178, 182, 185, 189, 195 n. 382, 197, 200, cf. 116; virtuous (of virtue), 23 n. 44, 95, 100, 173 incl. br. n. 202, 183, 201; of improvement, 77; of the heart, 115; suprasensible, 67; religious, 147, 153 n. 32, 158, 170 n. 170, 182, 194, 201; dedicated to God, 170; pleasing to God, 76, 143, 175, 178; holy (holiness of), 47, 120; of the Son of God, 74; weak, 191; evil, 22 n. 43, 38, 71, 74; diabolical, 37; displeasing to God, 74 n. 178
- Augustine, St. (Augustine of Hippo), 57 br. n. 8h, 186 br. n. 326
- Autarchy (*Alleinherrschaft*), 34 n. 152, 115
- Authentic(ity) (*authentisch, Authentizität*), 102, 166, 167, 181, *see also* Authentication
- Authentication or authenticate (*Beglaubigung, Beurkundung, beglaubigen, beurkunden*), 62, 84, 85, 88 n. 309, 99 n. 55, 112, 113, 129, 159, 162, 165, 167, *see also* Authentic
- Authority (*Obrigkeit, Autorität, Befugnis, Ansehen*), 8, 10 br. n. 62, 23 n. 44, 35, 43 n. 231, 59 n. 17, 62, 72, 81 n. 235, 84, 85 n. 285, 86, 95, 96, 105, 107, 112, 113, 120, 131, 153 n. 32 and br. n. 32i, 158, 162, 173, 175 n. 224, 180, 181, 200 br. n. 395, *see also* Reputation
- Awakening (*Aufweckung, Erweckung, aufwachend*), 69, 77, 183
- Awe (*Ehrfurcht*), 23 n. 44, 153 n. 32, 184 n. 312, 198
- Bad (*Übel, übel, schlecht, schlimm, böse*), 20, 34 br. n. 152f, 36, 48, 51, 67 br. n. 106, 73 br. ns. 160 and 161a, 88 n. 309, 131, 133 n. 396, 140 n. 446, 159 n. 76 and br. n. 76f, 199, *see also* Ill, Evil
- Bahrdt, Karl Friedrich, 81 n. 235 and br. n. 235a, 125 br. n. 337
- Bare (*bloß*), reason for using this term, 12 br. n. 76; form of universal lawfulness of maxims, 3; idea, 101, 191; a priori principles, 10; practical aim, 191 incl. br. n. 353; laws of virtue, 94, 95; reason, 1, 6 n. 32, 9, 10, 19 br. n. 3, 31 incl. br. n. 126, 43 n. 231, 104, 105, 112, 128 n. 361, 136 n. 425, 146 n. 489, 158,

- 177; concepts of reason, 164; use of reason, 155; power of choice, 99 n. 55 and br. n. 55a; rational faith, 102; invisible church, 157 incl. br. n. 49; matter of grace, 118; propensity (to evil), 31
- Baumgarten, Alexander Gottlieb, 22 br. n. 42, 60 br. n. 24
- Beauty or beautiful (*Schön[heit]*), 23 n. 44, 88 n. 309, 111, 135
- Begotten, (only) (*gezeugt [eingeboren]*), 60 incl. br. n. 35, 63 incl. br. ns. 75 and 76, 64 br. n. 85i, 69 br. n. 127d, 145, 146 br. n. 489o, *see also* Generation
- Belief or believe (*Glaube[n]*), 6 n. 32, 10, 59, 62 br. n. 54, 69 n. 127 and br. n. 127j, 74 n. 178, 77, 82, 84, 85 br. n. 281, 88 br. n. 307 and n. 309, 115, 116, 136 n. 425, 141 br. n. 458, 146 n. 489 and br. n. 489o, 158, 159 n. 76, 161 n. 107, 166 br. n. 148, 168–70 incl. n. 170, 171 br. ns. 177 and 178, 173 incl. n. 200, 180, 190 incl. br. n. 345, 198 n. 391, *see also* Faith, Credibility, Unbelief, Misbelief
- Beloved (*geliebt*), 147, cf. 68 br. n. 113, 110 br. n. 167j, *see also* Love
- Benefaction or benefactor (*Wohltat, Wohltäter*), 33, 116 br. n. 258, 117, *see also* Beneficent, Benefit
- Beneficent or beneficial (beneficence) (*Wohltätig[keit]*), 10, 23 n. 44, 68, 71, 77, 130, 160–62, 200, *see also* Benefaction
- Benefit (*Nutzen, nutzen*), 76, 117, 136 n. 425, 140 n. 442, 180, 189, *see also* Useful, Benefaction
- Benevolence (*Wohllwollen*), 33, 38 br. n. 185, 45 n. 246 and br. ns. 246c and 246d, 141, 160, *see also* Omnibenevolent
- Benign(ity) (*Gütig[keit]*), 67, 107 n. 145, 136 n. 425, 139, 140 n. 442 and br. n. 442d, 141 incl. br. n. 452, 146 n. 489 and br. n. 489r
- Bestial (*viehisch*), 27, *see also* Brutal
- Bible or biblical (*Bibel, biblisch*), 8–10 incl. br. n. 53, 10 br. n. 67, 13 incl. br. ns. 85–87, 42 n. 219, 110 n. 167 and br. n. 167d, *see also* Holy
- Blame (bear the) (*beschuldigen [Schuld sein, die Schuld tragen]*), 21, 83, 103, *see also* Accusation
- Bless(ed) (*segnen [selig]*), 62, 69, 110 n. 167, 115 br. n. 233, 118 br. n. 274, 119 br. n. 299, 120, 128 br. n. 359 and n. 361, 133 br. n. 394, 146 br. n. 489a, 165 br. n. 140, 181 br. n. 285, *see also* Bliss, Salvation, Saving, Accursed
- Bliss (*Seligkeit*), 64 incl. n. 85, 118 br. n. 278, 167 br. n. 157, *see also* Salvation, Saving, Bless
- Body or bodily (*Körper, leibhaftig, leiblich*), 3 n. 12, 20, 26 br. n. 66, 65, 73 n. 161 and br. n. 161f, 110 n. 167, 128 n. 361, 193, *see also* Corporeal
- Bohatec, Josef, 19 br. ns. 3 and 11, 22 br. n. 42, 24 br. n. 51, 47 br. n. 252, 111 br. n. 181, 116 br. n. 259, 125 br. n. 337, 127 br. n. 351, 140 br. n. 446c, 173 br. n. 198, 176 br. n. 235, 189 br. n. 344b
- Border (*grenzen*), 60 n. 20, 180, *see also* Boundary
- Boundary (bounds) (*Grenze[n]*), 9, 77, 88 n. 309; of (our) reason, 53, 194; of pure reason, 52; of (the authority of) bare reason, 1, 9, 43 n. 231, 128 n. 361; of possible experience, 135 n. 415; of human power, 173; of all our insight, 138 n. 436; of the present, 161; of this life, 71; of the pseudoservice of God, 172; 53, *see also* Border, Unbounded
- Bravery (*Tapferkeit*), 33 n. 143, 57 incl. br. n. 2, *see also* Courage
- Bread (*Brot*), 195 n. 382, cf. 73 br. n. 161d and 81 br. n. 235h
- Brother or brethren or brotherly (*Bruder, Mitbrüder, brüderlich*), 173 n. 200, 200; cf. 110 br. n. 167f, 159 br. ns. 173 and 175, 166 br. n. 152b
- Brutal or brutish or brutify (*brutal, verwildern*), 87, 97, 109, *see also* Bestial
- Burdens or burdensome (*Last, belästigen, belästigend, beschwerlich, lästig*), 79, 128 incl. n. 361, 132, 146 n. 489, 158, 169, 179, 188, 193, 199, *see also* Irrsome, Unburdened
- Build(ing) (*erbauen [Bau, Gebäude]*), 106, 198 n. 391 and br. ns. 391c and 391d, *see also* Edifice
- Candor or candidly (*Offenherzigkeit, offenherzig*), 79 n. 216, 190 n. 347
- Catechism (*Katechismus*), 13, 79 n. 216, 108, 182 br. n. 291
- Catholic (*katholisch*), 101 br. n. 71, 108, 109

- Child(ren) or childish (*Kind[er], kindisch*), 13, 48, 61, 69 n. 127, 73 n. 161, 80 n. 226, 82, 121 incl. br. n. 318, 122 incl. br. n. 320, 131, 141, 179 incl. br. n. 260, 182 br. n. 300, 198
- Chiliasm (*Chiliasmus*), 34, 136
- Choice (by, a matter of) (*Willkür, Wahl* [*willkürlich*]), 44 br. n. 239, 132 incl. n. 392a, 172, 177, 182, *see also* Chosen, Power of choice
- Chosen (being) (*willkürlich, Auserwählt[e], [Erwählung]*), 49 n. 276, 81 br. n. 235a, 102, 127, 141, 143 br. n. 472, 158 incl. br. n. 60, 159, 162, 168, 172, 201, *see also* Choice, Selection
- Christ (*Christus*), 140 n. 446, 165, *see also* Christian, Antichrist
- Christian(s) or Christianity or Christendom (*christlich [Christen], Christentum, Christenheit*), 13 br. n. 89, 19 br. n. 11, 42 n. 219, 52, 60 n. 20, 69 br. n. 127d, 78, 85 n. 285, 108, 111, 125–28, 130, 131 incl. br. n. 385, 136 n. 425, 141, 157, 163–67 incl. n. 152 and br. n. 153, 184 n. 312 and br. n. 312j, 193, 199, *see also* Christ
- Church (*Kirche*), 87, 101–03, 105–09, 112, 115, 122, 123 n. 327, 125, 131, 133 n. 397, 152, 153 incl. n. 32, 158, 160 n. 83, 164, 165, 168, 171, 173, 176, 180, 182, 188 n. 337, 198, 199; foundation and essential feature of, 179; founder(s) of, 167, 199; Father, 57 n. 8; (universal) history of, 125, 127, 131, 135; historical doctrines of, 133; determinability of, 115; idea of, 152; necessity of, 115; unity of, 125, 135 n. 415; single, 101; true, 101, 115, 133 n. 397, 157, 159, 176; pure, 179 n. 263; form(s) (of), 100, 105, 106, 123 n. 327, 135, 147, 151–52, 175 n. 224, 179; arrangement of, 152; unity of faith, 123 n. 327; constitution of, 102, 179, 180; administration of, 102; officials of, 153; service (of), 152, 153, 164, 165, 176; servants of, 101, 152, 153; teacher(s) (heads) of, 109, 189; member of, 199; community, 113, 179, 199; going, 193, 195 n. 382, 198, 199; action, 200; (public) affairs (of), 113, 152; public; system, 13; custom, 173; observance(s), 174, 178; discipline, 174; observances, 163; statutes, 105; laws of, 152; instruction, 132; duties, 159, 160; exercises of devotion, 173; advances to its perfection, 135; visible, 101, 122, 123 n. 327, 152, 153, 158, 175 n. 224; invisible, 101, 152, 157 incl. br. n. 49, 176; universal(ity of), 102, 108, 115, 123 n. 327, 124, 126, 127, 135 n. 415, 158, 176, cf. 157; faith, 102, 105, 106, 108–10, 112, 114–18, 121, 122, 123 n. 327, 124, 125, 131, 132, 135 n. 415, 142, 153, 158, 165, 175; early Greek, 199; based on Holy Scripture, 112; Christian, 125, 164, 199; militant, 115; protestant, 165; triumphant, 115; delusion, 173 n. 200
- Cicero, Marcus Tullius, 57 br. n. 6
- Circle (*Zirkel, Kreis*), 3 n. 12, 12 incl. br. n. 75, 45 n. 246, 59
- Citizen(ship) (*Bürger[schaft]*), 10 br. n. 61, 52 br. n. 293, 95, 96, 97 br. n. 41a, 105, 134–36 incl. br. n. 404, 142, 143, 152, 186, 192, 198 incl. br. n. 391d, 199, *see also* Civil
- Civil(ization) or civilizing or civilized or civic (*Zivilisierung, gesittet, bürgerlich*), 10 br. n. 61, 20, 33 incl. n. 143, 34 incl. br. n. 147, 47, 79, 85 n. 285 and br. n. 285d, 94 incl. br. ns. 10 and 11, 95, 97, 99 n. 55, 100, 123, 125 br. n. 337, 131, 133, 136 n. 425, 140 incl. br. n. 445, 153 n. 32 and br. n. 32e, 159 incl. br. n. 68, 159 n. 76, 166 br. n. 152a, 180, 184 n. 312, 188 br. n. 337c, *see also* Citizen, Society
- Clergy or cleric(al) (*Geistlich[keit], Geistlicher, Klerus, Kleriker*), 8, 9 incl. br. n. 49, 69 n. 127, 78 n. 201, 87, 106, 113, 122, 164, 180, 187 incl. br. n. 331, 195 n. 382, 200, *see also* Spirit
- Coercion or coercing or coercive (*Zwang*), laws, means, 8, 64 br. n. 85g, 79, 95–99 incl. br. n. 54, 123 n. 327, 126, 133 n. 397, 159 n. 76, *see also* Compel
- Cognition or recognition or (re)cognize (*[Er]kenntnis, [er]kennen*), 3 incl. br. n. 3, 4 br. n. 16, 6 incl. n. 32 and br. n. 33, 25, 33, 35 incl. br. n. 165, 43 n. 231, 44, 47, 57 incl. br. n. 1, 59, 63 incl. br. n. 75, 64 n. 85, 69 incl. n. 127 and br. ns. 127d and 127p, 71, 77, 83, 87, 88 n. 309, 95, 99 n. 55, 101, 103–05 incl. br. n. 105, 111 br. n. 181, 113–15, 117, 119, 137–39 incl. br. n. 429, 138 n. 436, 140 br. n. 442e, 141 br. n. 458, 142, 144 n. 480 and br. n. 482, 158, 159 n.

- 76 and br. n. 76c, 163, 164, 174 incl. br. n. 207, 179, 190, 191 incl. br. n. 355, 194, 197, 201, cf. 13 br. n. 95 and 43 br. n. 230; practical, 181 incl. br. n. 287; theoretical, 142, 153 n. 32, 181 br. n. 287; *see also* Self-cognition, Cognizable, Knowledge, Insight, Uncognized
- Cognizable or recognizable (*[er]kennbar, kenntlich*), 31 incl. br. n. 126, 53, 59, 106, 136 n. 425, 153 incl. n. 32; theoretically, 53; *see also* Cognition
- Comfort or comforter (*Trost, Tröster*), 69 n. 127, 71 incl. br. n. 130, 76, 78 n. 201, 146 br. n. 489d, 171
- Command(ment) or commanding (*Gebot, gebieten[d]*), 3 n. 12, 6 n. 32, 8, 20 br. n. 17, 23 n. 44, 26 n. 67, 30, 42, 45, 47, 49–51 incl. n. 276 and br. n. 276d, 52 br. n. 293, 57 n. 8, 59 n. 17, 62, 96 incl. br. n. 339, 98, 99 incl. n. 55, 118, 126, 127, 131, 141, 144, 153 n. 32, 161, 163–65 incl. br. ns. 123 and 134 and 139, 169, 179 incl. n. 263 and br. n. 263c, 187; divine, 42, 72, 84, 99 n. 55, 103, 110, 114, 152–54, 164, 179 n. 263, 192, 201, cf. 40 n. 203, 42 br. n. 215, 49 br. n. 273, 60 br. n. 30, 73 br. n. 161d, 87 incl. br. n. 294, 100, 104–06, 129 br. n. 363, 153 n. 32, 177, 182, 183, 187, 193, 194
- Commonwealth (*gemeines Wesen*), 180, 199, *see also* Society
- Community or communion (*Gemeinschaft, Kommunion, Gemeinde*), 9, 19, 26, 69 br. n. 127d, 85 n. 285 and br. ns. 285d and 285e, 86, 94–96, 98–102, 105, 106, 113, 114, 124–27, 128 n. 361, 133 n. 397, 136 n. 425, 140, 141 br. n. 458, 145, 151–53, 158, 177, 179, 193, 198–200, *see also* Congregation, Excommunication
- Condemnation or condemn (*Verdammung, verurteilen*), 38 br. n. 181, 39 n. 193, 64 br. n. 85i, 73 n. 161, 74 n. 178 and br. n. 178d, 76, 146 n. 489 and br. n. 489o, 171 br. n. 185, 186 incl. br. n. 320, 187 br. n. 329, *see also* Damnation, Sentence
- Conduct (*Verhalten, -wandel*), 24, 41, 47, 64, 66 incl. br. n. 92, 69 n. 127, 104, 140, 143, 144, 161, 172, 181, 184 n. 312, 185, 191
- Confession or confessing or confess (*Bekennnis, [s.] bekennen*), 63, 69 n. 127 and br. n. 127d, 74 n. 178, 77, 81 br. n. 235a, 85, 106, 108, 125 br. n. 337, 128, 133 incl. n. 397, 141 br. n. 458, 142, 147, 153 n. 32, 159 n. 76, 160 n. 83, 166 n. 152, 171, 172, 173 n. 200, 174, 176, 178, 179, 187–89, 190 n. 347, 195 n. 382, 199; *see also* Subscribe to
- Conflict or conflict(ing) (*[Wider]streit, widerstreiten[d]*), 3 n. 12, 22, 28, 31, 35 br. n. 162, 81, 82, 87, 96, 99 n. 55, 115, 117 incl. br. n. 270, 119, 120, 146 n. 489, 153 n. 32, 169, 171, *see also* Controversy, Dispute, Opposition
- Congregation (*Gemeinde*), 101, 105, 152, 167, 195 n. 382, *see also* Community
- Conscience or conscientious(ness) (*Gewissen, Gewissenhaft[igkeit]*), 38, 69 incl. n. 127, 77, 78 n. 201, 113, 120, 125, 133 incl. n. 397, 134, 140 n. 442, 145, 146 n. 489, 159 n. 76, 166 n. 152, 171, 179, 185–90 incl. br. n. 322, 190 n. 347, 199; *see also* Peace of conscience
- Conscious(ness) (*Bewußt[sein]*), 20, 26 n. 67, 32 incl. br. n. 133, 40 n. 203, 42, 45 n. 246, 49 n. 276, 51, 52, 57 incl. br. n. 8b, 62, 70, 71, 74 n. 178, 76, 77, 83, 103, 104, 115, 117, 124, 133 n. 397, 140 n. 442, 144 n. 480, 167, 168 n. 161, 176, 181, 183, 185, 186, 189, 195 n. 382
- Consecrate (*weihen*), 106, 107, 164, *see also* Dedication
- Consistent, be (*zusammen bestehen können*), 24, 37, 45 n. 246, 49 n. 276, 98, 110 n. 167, 194, *see also* Inconsistent
- Constitutive (*konstitutiv*), 69 n. 127, *see also* Regulative
- Contempt (*Verachtung*), 173 n. 200, 184 n. 312, 190 n. 347, 201, *see also* Self-contempt
- Contingency or contingent (*Zufall, Zufällig[keit]*), 28, 31, 32, 40, 43, 49 n. 276, 101, 102, 104–06, 109 br. n. 160, 115, 121 n. 311, 125, 128 n. 361, 151, 155, 158, 168, 173, 175, 176
- Contradict or contradiction or contradictory or contradictorily (*[s.] widersprechen[d], Widerspruch, kontradiktorisch*), 21, 22 br. n. 43f, 23 n. 44, 24, 31, 34–36, 40, 53, 81 n. 235, 95 incl. br. n. 28, 102, 138 n. 436, 141, 144 n. 480, 146 n. 489, 170 n. 170, 172, 189, 192, 195 n. 382, *see also* Self-contradictory

- Controversy (*Streitigkeit*), 108, 113, 166 br. n. 152a, 181, 186 br. n. 319, *see also* Conflict, Dispute
- Conversion (*Übergang*), 166 n. 152, and cf. br. n. 152a, *see also* Transition
- Conviction or convince or convincing(ly) (*Überzeugung, überzeugen*), 13 br. ns. 89 and 95, 445 n. 246, 49 n. 276, 51, 77, 83, 93, 103, 109, 113, 155–57, 162, 163, 171, 178–81, 186, 187, 189, 193, 195 n. 382
- Cooperation or cooperate (*Mitwirkung, mitwirken*), 40 n. 203, 44, 52, 139, 191
- Corporeal (*körperlich*), 78, 127, 138 n. 436, *see also* Body, Incorporeal
- Corruption or corrupt(ed) or (-)corrupting (corruptor) (*Verderbnis, Verderbtheit, Verderben, verderben[d]*, [*verderbt, verfälscht*], *verfälschen, faul*), 30 incl. br. n. 105, 32, 35, 37, 39 br. n. 192, 43 incl. br. n. 229, 44, 45, 47, 48 br. n. 262, 50, 57, 59, 69, 74 incl. br. n. 164, 77, 83, 94, 97, 108 br. n. 155b, 117, 136 n. 425, 143, 147, 184 n. 312, 193, 199, 201 br. n. 407, *see also* Perdition, Ruin, Incorruptible, Uncorrupted
- Cosmopolitan (*weltbürgerlich*), 165, 200, cf. 26 br. n. 68, 100 br. n. 62, 124 br. n. 331
- Councils (*Konzilien*), 167, cf. 110 br. n. 167f, 159 br. n. 73
- Court of law (*Gerichtshof*), 72, 74, 76, 110 n. 167, 146 n. 489, 159 n. 76, *see also* Tribunal, Law
- Covenant (*Kontrakt, Bund*), 81, 85 br. n. 278, 136 n. 425 and br. n. 425a, *see also* Federation
- Creation or create or creator or Creator (*Schöpfung, erschaffen, Schöpfer*), 5, 6, 19, 43, 44, 47, 48 br. n. 262, 51, 60 incl. br. n. 24, 73 br. ns. 157 and 161f, 74 br. n. 164, 78, 79 n. 216, 86, 88 n. 309, 139, 140 n. 446 and br. ns. 446b and 446c, 142, 143, 145, 188 n. 337, 195 br. n. 382d, 197, *see also* God, Creature
- Creature (*Geschöpf*), 60 br. n. 24, 64 n. 85, 73 n. 161 and br. n. 161f, 141, 142, 145, *see also* Creation
- Credibility (*Glaubwürdigkeit*), 103, 112, 166 incl. n. 152, *see also* Belief
- Credit (with) or take credit for (*Verdienst, anrechnen [zutrauen, zugute tun]*, *s. zuschreiben*), 21, 33 n. 143, 38, 44, 66, 85 n. 284, 118, 152, 184 n. 312, *see also* Merit
- Credulous (*leichtgläubig*), 88 n. 309
- Creed (*Bekennnis, Symbol*), 69 br. n. 127d, 111, 189
- Crime (*Verbrechen*), 40 n. 203, 72, 73 n. 161, 188
- Critique of Judgment (*Kritik der Urteilskraft*), 6 br. ns. 32c and 32f and 32p, 12 br. n. 79, 23 br. n. 44i, 34 br. n. 152c, 47 br. n. 256, 64 br. ns. 85c and 85j and 85m, 79 br. n. 216a, 88 br. n. 303, 182 br. ns. 287 and 301
- Critique of practical reason or Critique of Practical Reason (*Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*), 3 br. n. 12a, 6 br. n. 32p, 13, 22 br. n. 42, 30 br. n. 101, 34 br. n. 152c, 37 br. n. 177, 49 br. ns. 274 and 276d, 57 br. ns. 8b and 8d, 59 br. n. 15, 64 br. n. 85j, 139 br. n. 437, 170 br. n. 170a, 181 br. n. 287, 182 br. n. 301, *see also* Practical
- Critique of Pure Reason (*Kritik der reinen Vernunft*), 4 br. n. 16, 6 br. n. 32b, 13 br. n. 93, 22 br. n. 42, 43 br. n. 230, 47 br. n. 261, 64 br. ns. 85c and 85j and 85n, 73 br. n. 161f, 88 br. n. 303, 101 br. n. 71, 166 br. n. 152a, 170 n. 170 and br. n. 170a, 181 br. n. 287, 182 br. n. 301, 193 br. n. 369
- Cruel(ly) (*Grausam[keit]*), 33, 69 n. 127
- Cult (*Kultus*), 13, 51, 73 n. 161, 84, 127, 174, cf. 106, 115, 153
- Curse (*fluchen*), 73 br. n. 161d, 110 n. 167 and br. n. 167f, 160 br. n. 79, cf. 109 br. n. 157, *see also* Accursed
- Damnation or damned or damnable (*Verwerfung, verdammt, verdammlich*), 30 br. n. 115, 99 br. n. 55b, 143, 153, 171 incl. br. n. 185, 187, 189 n. 344, *see also* Condemnation
- Danger(ous) (*Gefahr[voll]*, [*gefährlich*]), 5, 20 br. n. 17, 57, 60 n. 20, 93, 94, 97, 110 br. n. 167f, 111, 121 br. n. 312, 122, 159 br. n. 73, 168, 171, 182, 188 incl. n. 337, 189, 192, 198, *see also* Risk
- Dare or daring (*wagen, gewagt*), 13, 53, 133 n. 397, 189, *see also* Risk, Venture
- Death or dead (*Tod, tot*), 40 n. 203, 42 br. n. 223, 61 incl. br. n. 42, 64, 74 incl. br. n. 165, 75, 78 n. 201, 79 n. 216, 81 incl. n. 235, 82, 111 incl. br. n. 185, 112, 121 br. n. 312, 128

- incl. n. 361, 135 incl. br. n. 410, 140 br. ns. 446a and 446c and 446e, 146 n. 489 and br. n. 489n, 175, 166 br. n. 152a, 176, 186, 187 br. n. 329, *see also* Die
- Debt or debtor (*Schuld, Schuldner*), 72 incl. br. n. 138, 74, 76 br. n. 185, 116 br. n. 248, 120 incl. br. n. 307, 146 br. n. 489m, 161 br. n. 103, *see also* Indebtedness, Guilt, Creditor
- Deceit or deception or deceive or deceptive (*Betrug, Täuschung, betriegen, betrüglich*), 38 incl. br. ns. 184 and 185 and 186, 83, 134 br. n. 400, 161, 168 n. 161, 170 incl. br. n. 173, 199, cf. 48 br. n. 262, 49 br. n. 276d, 74 br. n. 164, *see also* Fraud, Delusion, Self-deception
- Decline (*Verfall*), 19, 45, 120, 166 br. n. 152a
- Dedication or dedicate(d) (*Ergebenheit, weihen, widmen [ergeben]*), 8, 111, 127, 169 incl. br. n. 167, 170, 192, 193, cf. 13 br. n. 86, *see also* Consecrate, Devotion
- Deduction (*Deduktion*), 76, 112
- Deed (*Tat*), 21, 23 br. n. 44b, 31–33 incl. br. n. 128, 33 n. 143, 39 n. 193 and br. n. 193b, 41, 45 n. 241, 46, 48 br. n. 262, 53, 66–68, 72, 73 br. n. 157, 74 incl. n. 178 and br. n. 178c, 76, 77, 85, 99, 120, 126, 159, 160, 163, 169, 193, 195 br. n. 382d, *see also* Misdeed, Deedless
- Deedless (*tatlos*), 161 n. 107, 201, *see also* Deed
- Defection (*Abfall*), 40 n. 203, 45 incl. br. n. 242, 78
- Defiance (*Trotz*), 79, 158
- Deity (*Gottheit*), 19 br. ns. 9 and 11, 104, 120, 141, 178, 183, 188 n. 337, 200, *see also* Godliness, God
- Deliberation or deliberate or deliberative (*Überlegung, überlegt, vorsätzlich, überlegend*), 26 n. 67, 38, 42, 59 br. n. 16, 117, 122, 166 n. 152, 170, 195 n. 382, *see also* Intentional, Undeliberate
- Delusion or delusory or delude (*Wahn, Wahn-, täuschen*), 53, 57, 68, 123 n. 327, 168–71 incl. n. 161 and br. n. 161d, 173–75 incl. n. 200, 177, 178, 184 n. 312, 188, 191, 192, 194, 195 n. 382, 199–201, *see also* Deceit, Madness
- Demonic (*dämonisch*), 86 incl. br. n. 290, 87, *see also* Diabolical
- Denominational (*Sekten-*), 101 incl. br. n. 73, *see also* Sectarian
- Descent or (be) descend(ed) or descendant (*Abstammung, herabkommen [abstammen], Nachkomme*), 39, 50, 79, 80 n. 226, 82, 129, 134, 136 br. n. 425c, 166 br. n. 152a
- Deserve or be deserved (*verdienen, gebühren*), 13, 28, 38, 49, 58, 74 incl. n. 178, 103, 113, 156, 175 n. 224, 194, *see also* Merit, Earn, Undeserved
- Desire or desirable (*Begehrung, Begierde, begehren, wünschenswert*), 6 n. 32, 27, 28 incl. n. 85, 42 br. n. 217, 44 br. n. 235, 45 n. 245, 49, 73 br. n. 161d, 147, 170 br. n. 170a; power of, *see* Power of desire; *see also* Eagerness
- Despair (*Verzweiflung, verzweifeln*), 71, 184 n. 312
- Despise (*verachten*), 58, 93
- Despotic(ally) or despotism (*despotisch, Despotie*), 34 n. 152, 109, 131, 141, 175 n. 224, 179 n. 263, 180, 183
- Destiny (*Schicksal*), 69 incl. n. 127, 77, 135, 176
- Destruction or destroy or Destroyer (destructive) (*Zerstörung, zerstören[d], Zerstörer*), 8, 19, 33 n. 143, 74 br. n. 167, 81, 82, 88 n. 309, 131, 134 br. n. 401, 135 br. n. 410, 136 n. 425, 140 br. ns. 446a and 446b, 160 br. ns. 80 and 82, 181 br. n. 278, 198 br. n. 391d
- Develop(ment) or developing or keep from developing ([s.] *entwickeln [Entwicklung, Vorbildung], hindern*), 20, 33, 35, 38, 39 n. 193, 43, 51, 57, 66, 76, 122, 124, 131, 134, 151, *see also* Extrication, Undeveloped
- Deviation or deviate (*Abweichung, abweichen*), 8, 11, 24, 27, 29, 32 incl. br. n. 133, 44, 73, 86, 88 n. 309, 97, 108, 133 n. 397, 172, 179,
- Devil (*Teufel*), 42 br. n. 219c, 79 n. 216, 81 br. n. 230, 122 br. n. 323, 134 br. n. 400, *see also* Diabolical, Satanic guile
- Devotee (*Andächtler*), 173, 191 n. 391, *see also* Adhere, Devotion
- Devotion or devoted (devout, devotional) (*Andacht[s-], andächtig, ergeben [devot]*), 169 br. n. 167, 170 incl. br. n. 171, 171, 173, 184 n. 312 and br. n. 312l, 197, 198 incl. n. 391, *see also* Affected Devotion, Dedicated, Devotee

- Diabolical (*teuflich*), 27, 35, 37, 86, 87, *see also* Demonic, Devil
- Die (unto) (*[ab]sterben*), 44 br. n. 235, 73 n. 161, 74, 82, 87, 195 n. 382, *see also* Death
- Di Giovanni, George, 170 br. n. 170a, 189 br. n. 344b, 190 br. n. 347b
- Diffusion (*Ausbreitung*), 155, 165, *see also* Expansion
- Dignity or dignify (*Würde, würdigen*), 23 n. 44, 57 n. 8, 113, 114, 123 n. 327, 127, 159, 162, 165, 168 n. 161, 183
- Diligence or diligent (*Fleiß, Beflissen[heit]*), 13, 83, 103, 135 n. 415
- Disciple (*[Lehr]jünger*), 22 br. n. 42, 81 n. 235, 84, 129, 134, 195 br. n. 382e
- Discipline (*Disziplin, züchtigen*), 57, 131, 174
- Disintegration or disintegrate (*Auflösung, s. auflösen*), 34 n. 152, 123 n. 327, 131
- Disliking or dislike(d) (*Mißfallen, mißfallen [mißfällig]*), 45 n. 246, 64 br. n. 85g, 73 br. n. 151, *see also* Displeasure
- Displeasure or displease (*Mißfallen, Unlust*), 28 n. 85, 33 incl. br. n. 145, 73, 74 n. 178, 114, *see also* Pleasure
- Dispute (*[ab]streiten*), 9, 45, 43 n. 231, 52, 84, 121 br. n. 312, 132, 155 incl. br. n. 33, 156, 158, 166 br. n. 152a, 181 br. n. 278, *see also* Conflict, Controversy
- Dispute Among the University's Schools (Streit der Fakultäten)*, 9 br. n. 47, 13 br. n. 86, 87 br. n. 302, 166 br. n. 152a
- Disseminate or disseminator (*verbreiten, ausbreiten, Verbreiter, Ausbreiter*), 129, 160, 165, 167, *see also* Spread, Expansion
- Disunity (*Uneinigkeit*), 23 n. 44, *see also* Unity
- Divinity or divine(ly) (*Göttlich[keit]*), 13, 24 n. 53, 42, 50, 60, 61–67, 72–74, 76, 79 n. 216, 84, 87, 99 incl. n. 55 and br. n. 55a, 101, 103, 104–06 incl. br. ns. 104 and 118, 110–14 incl. br. ns. 194 and 197 and 213 and 214, 116, 122, 132–37 incl. n. 425 and br. ns. 404 and 425a, 138 n. 436, 139 incl. br. n. 440, 140 n. 442, 142, 143 incl. br. n. 467, 145 br. n. 482, 146 n. 489, 147, 152–55 incl. n. 32, 159 incl. n. 76, 162, 164, 166, 168 incl. n. 162, 169, 177, 178, 179 n. 263, 186, 187, 189, 192, 195 n. 382, 196–201, *see also* Godliness, God
- Doctrine (doctrinal) (*Doktrin[al], Lehre, Lehrsatz [doktrinal]*); 9–13 incl. br. ns. 60 and 89, 17, 22, 42 br. n. 223, 55, 64 br. n. 85g, 66, 69 incl. n. 127, 80, 85, 91, 107, 111, 112 incl. br. n. 187, 113 br. n. 210, 114, 121 br. n. 312, 127, 128, 129 br. n. 364, 130, 133, 136 br. n. 420, 140 n. 446, 141 incl. br. n. 448, 146 br. n. 489d, 149, 153, 156, 157, 158 br. n. 57, 159 br. n. 66, 163–65 incl. br. n. 117, 166 n. 152, 181–84, 186 incl. br. n. 319, 189 n. 344, 193, *see also* Teaching, Instruction
- Dogma(tics) or dogmatical(ly) (*Glaubenssatz, Glaubenslehre [Dogmatik], dogmatisch*), 6 br. n. 32a, 13 incl. br. n. 92, 19 br. n. 3, 24 br. n. 51, 50, 52, 69 n. 127 and br. n. 127j, 111, 113, 115, 133 n. 397, 162, 163, 174, cf. 155 br. n. 33, 166 br. n. 152a, *see also* Proposition of faith
- Doing and refraining (*Tun und Lassen*), 5, 6 n. 32, 39 n. 193, 103, 176, 194–95
- Domination (*Beherrschung*), 165 incl. br. n. 144, *see also* Rule (*Beherrschung*)
- Doubt or doubtful(ness) (*Zweifel, [be]zweifeln, Zweifelhaft[igkeit]*), 9, 27, 30 br. n. 115, 42, 66, 73, 81 br. n. 235a, 106, 120, 126, 133 n. 397, 136 n. 425, 185 br. n. 317, 186 br. n. 319, *see also* Indubitable, Undoubtedly
- Dread or dreadful (*Scheu, fürchten, fürchterlich*), 23 n. 44, 83, 187, *see also* Anxiety, Fear, Dreadful
- Dream or dreamed up (*Traum, erträumt*), 19, 185 br. n. 317, 193
- Due, to be (*gebühren*), 74 br. n. 168, 164, 165, *see also* Deserve
- Duty (*Pflicht*), 3–6 incl. n. 12, 4 br. ns. 13 and 15, 6 n. 32 and br. n. 32h, 8, 13, 23 n. 44, 24, 30 incl. br. n. 101, 37, 41, 42, 46–50 incl. n. 276 and br. ns. 251 and 273, 59, 66, 67, 72 incl. br. n. 138, 83, 84, 87, 88 n. 309, 94–99 incl. n. 55 and br. n. 44, 103, 105, 107, 113, 114, 116, 118, 120, 123 n. 327, 133 incl. n. 397, 138 n. 436, 139, 144 n. 481, 147, 151–54 incl. n. 32 and br. n. 6, 157, 160, 168, 171, 174, 177, 179 n. 263, 183, 185, 186, 190–94 incl. br. n. 370, 197, 198 incl. n. 391, 200, 201; (universal, special) human, 61, 84, 110, 118 incl. br. n. 280, 138 n. 436, 153 n. 32 cf. 158, 160–62, 164, 184 n. 312,

- 187, 194; private, 151; obligated, 182; legal, 99; (ethically) civil, 153 n. 32, 180; clear, 99 n. 55; true, 99, 192; true moral, 160; ethical, 99; irremissible, 81 n. 325; unconditional, 118, 186; absolute, 165; church-goer's, 114 br. n. 214; (statutory) church, 159, 160; holy, 173; filial, 182 incl. br. n. 300; observance of, 146 n. 489 and br. n. 489h; principle of, *see* Principle; respect for, 133 n. 397; violation of, 140 n. 442
- Eagerness (*Begierde*), 88 n. 309, *see also* Desire
- Earn (*verdienen*), 64, *see also* Deserve
- Earth(ly) (*Erde, irdisch*), 6 n. 32, 9, 15, 19 br. n. 11, 40 n. 203, 33 br. n. 233, 47 br. n. 258, 60 n. 20, 63, 64, 68, 69 br. n. 127d, 75, 78 incl. br. n. 207, 79, 81–83, 85, 93, 95, 101 incl. br. n. 66, 105, 110 br. n. 167a, 122, 124, 128 n. 360 incl. br. n. 360h, 132, 134–36 incl. n. 425 and br. n. 400, 136 br. n. 420, 139, 140 br. n. 446c, 144, 60 br. n. 77, 175 n. 224, 190 n. 347 and br. n. 347b, 198, 199 br. n. 394
- Edification or edifying (*Erbauung, erbaulich*), 195 n. 382, 198
- Education or educate or educator (*Bildung, Erziehung, erziehen, Erzieher*), 27 br. n. 72, 46, 132 n. 392, 176, 199, *see also* Molding, Upbringing
- Election (*Erwählung*), 143
- Elevation or (-)elevating or elevate (*Erhebung, erheben[d]*), 35, 49, 61, 80 n. 226, 105, 134, 135, 162, 165, 183, 197, *see also* Raising
- Empirical(ly) (*empirisch*), 3 n. 12, 6 n. 32, 12, 24 n. 53, 31, 35, 37, 39 n. 193, 47, 71, 74, 75, 99 n. 55, 110, 119–122, 136, 138 n. 436, 144 n. 480, 168, 170 br. n. 170a, *see also* Experience, A priori
- Emulation or (to) (be) emulate(d) (*Nachstreben, Nachfolge, affizieren [zur Nachfolge]*), 61, 62, 64, 115 incl. br. n. 229, 128 n. 361, 160, cf. 82, *see also* Strive, Endeavor
- Encroach(ment) (*eingreifen [Eingriff]*), 9, 10, 13, 133, 134, 157, 188 n. 337
- Endeavor (*Bestreben, Bestrebung*), 27, 97, 107 n. 145, 117, 118 incl. br. n. 280, 176 br. n. 240, 184, 192, *see also* Strive, Emulation
- End of All Things—The (*Das Ende aller Dinge*), 19 br. n. 11, 20 br. n. 13, 140 br. n. 446a
- Endure or enduring (*erdulden, erleiden, wahren, fortdauern, dauerhaft*), 45 n. 246, 61, 69 n. 127, 73 n. 161, 81 incl. n. 235, 82, 87, 156
- Enemy (*Feind*), 33 n. 143, 49 br. n. 276d, 57 incl. n. 8, 59, 61, 64, 109, 110 n. 167 and br. ns. 167f and 167j, 130, 135 incl. br. n. 410, 160 incl. br. n. 179, 164
- Enjoy(ment) (*genießen [Genuß]*), 28 n. 85, 49, 67, 69 n. 127, 79, 134
- Enthusiasm (*Begeisterung*), 50 br. n. 277, 195 n. 382, *see also* Inspiration
- Entrust (*anvertrauen*), 4, 8, 9, 157, 161, 163, *see also* Trust
- Envy (*Neid*), 27, 93
- Essence or essential(ly) (*Wesen, wesentlich*), 13, 52, 79, 94, 101, 108, 110, 111, 116, 125, 133 n. 397, 144 br. n. 482, 155 incl. br. n. 34, 163, 167, 168, 172, 176, 179, 183, *see also* Nonessential
- Esteem (*Wertschätzung, schätzen*), 33 n. 143, 160, *see also* Valuation
- Eternity or eternal(ly) (*Ewig[keit]*), 34, 51, 60 incl. br. n. 27, 64, 69 incl. n. 27, 76, 112 incl. br. n. 192, 115, 124, 128 n. 361, 143, 171, 182 br. n. 301, *see also* Forever
- Ethical(ally) (*ethisch*), 94–102 incl. br. ns. 10 and 33, 106, 122, 124, 126, 133 n. 397, 136, 138 n. 436, 140, 142, 151–53 incl. n. 32 and br. n. 32e, 193, 195 n. 382, cf. 26 br. n. 66, 42 br. n. 42, *see also* Moral
- Evil (*böse*), 20–22, 27, 29 incl. br. ns. 88 and 93, 31, 32, 34, 35 br. n. 165, 37 incl. br. n. 177, 38, 39 n. 193, 40 incl. n. 203, 41, 43–45, 57 n. 8, 60 n. 20, 61, 66, 68, 72, 78 incl. n. 201, 79 incl. n. 216, 83, 93, 94, 97 br. n. 42, 99 n. 55 and br. n. 55b, 100, 134, 135, 143, 159 br. n. 76f, 160 br. n. 77, 78, 161 br. n. 97, 163, 190 br. n. 347b; concept of, 35; physical, 19; partly (in some points), 20, 22, 39 n. 193; curable, 20 br. n. 17; incurably, 34 n. 152; radical (innate), 15, 19, 32, 37, 38, 50, 58, 72; hereditary, 40 n. 203; positive, 22 n. 43; actual, 40, 67 n. 103; proper(ly), 29 incl. br. n. 88, 57 n. 8; moral(ly) (imputably), 19 incl. br. n. 4, 20, 25 br. n. 57, 29 incl. br. n. 91, 31, 32, 35–37 incl. br. n. 159, 39, 40, 43, 44, 59 n. 17 and br. n. 17a, 60 n. 20, 72, 140 n. 446, 143 incl. br. n. 479; predisposi-

- tions, 11, 29; (in) attitude(s), 22 n. 43, 24, 38, 71, 72, 74; (bare, natural) propensity (to), 28–32 incl. br. n. 91, 35, 37, 38 br. n. 182, 40, 42, 43 incl. br. n. 225, 48, 64 n. 85, 160; temptation to, 64; inciting, 131 br. n. 383; fondness for, 68; decline (fall back, relapse) into, 19, 45, 68, 184; principle(s), 11, 15, 19, 57 incl. n. 8, 59, 73, 78, 80, 82, 83, 93, 94, 100, 117, 151 incl. br. n. 3, 177; principle of (innate), 50; (morally,) (in) maxims, 20, 21 incl. n. 31, 29 incl. br. n. 88, 31–32, 43, 72; action(s) (conduct), 20, 39–41 incl. br. n. 205; deed (doing), 31, 49 n. 276; consequence(s), 38, 159 n. 76; power of choice, 22 n. 43, 29; (absolutely,) will, 35; (intelligible) character, 21 incl. br. n. 33, 37; heart, 29, 37, 38, 163; tree, 45; fruit, 201 br. n. 407; people, 34 br. n. 152f, 135 incl. br. n. 408; (morally,) (in the) human being (human nature), 20–22 incl. br. n. 14, 24, 25, 30–33 incl. br. ns. 133 and 134, 34 n. 152, 36, 38, 39, 42 n. 219, 44, 45 br. n. 244, 48, 51, 59 n. 17, 61, 69 n. 127, 81, 97, 116, 117, 143; knowledge of (knowing), 42 br. n. 215 and br. n. 219b, 44 br. n. 235; explanation of, 42; by nature, 21, 22, 24, 25, 32, 44, 45 br. n. 244, 61; beginning of, 41, 44; basis (root, natural foundation) of, 21, 34, 35, 39 n. 193, 42 n. 219 and br. n. 225; source(s) (origin) of, 32, 39–41, 43, 45; cause of, 57; originator of, 42 n. 219; universality of, 32; maximum of, 27; (proclaimed) eternity of, 69 incl. n. 127; instruments of, 97; spreading, 100; spirit(s) (demons), 39, 59, 79 n. 216, 86 br. n. 290, 87, 133 n. 397, 140 br. n. 446a; powers of, 83; being, 78; kingdom (dominion) of, 69 n. 127, 79, 94, 97, 124; opposition to, 94; prevention of, 94; infringing, 69; recovery (redemption) from, 45, 172; cast off (drive away), 57 n. 8, 61; exit from (abandonment of), 74 incl. n. 178; victory over, 124; *see also* Bad, Malice, Villain, Good
- Exalted(ness) (*hoch, erhaben [Hoheit]*), 64, 176, *see also* High
- Excommunication (*Bann*), 109 br. n. 157, 131
- Exhibit(ion) (*darstellen [Darstellung]*), 57, 65, 82, 88 n. 309, 101, 123 n. 327, 132, 145, 151, 152, 168 n. 162, 173, 175 n. 224, 176, 193 br. n. 369, 198, 199, cf. 111 br. n. 181
- Expansion or expand or expansive (*Ausbreitung, Erweiterung, s. ausbreiten, [s.] erweitern, s. erweiternd*), 6 incl. n. 32, 38, 52, 53, 59, 64 n. 85, 94, 104, 106, 109, 123 incl. n. 327, 142, 156, 197, 199, *see also* Diffusion, Spread, Disseminate
- Expel (*ausstoßen, vertreiben*), 40 n. 203, 109, *see also* Expulsion
- Experience or experiential (*Erfahrung[s-]*), 6 n. 32, 12, 20 incl. br. n. 14, 22, 24 n. 53, 28 n. 85, 32, 35, 39 n. 193, 53, 62, 63, 87, 88 n. 309, 101, 105, 107 n. 145, 109, 115, 119, 123 n. 327, 135 n. 415, 174, 191, 194, 201, *see also* Empirical
- Expiation (*Expiation*), 69 n. 127, 76, 83, 120, 184
- Explanation or explain (*Erklärung, erklären*), 12 br. n. 76, 19 br. n. 11, 41–43 incl. n. 231, 59 incl. n. 17, 80 n. 226, 88 incl. n. 309, 108 br. n. 155b, 111 br. n. 181, 121 n. 311, 132, 134 br. n. 403, 138 n. 436, 144, 170 n. 170, 174, *see also* Explication, Inexplicable
- Explication or explicate (*Erklärung, erklären*), 3 n. 12, 4, 86, 88 br. n. 309f, 186, *see also* Explanation, Declaration
- Exposition or expound (*Erörterung, Darstellung, Vortrag, erörtern, vortragen*), 43 n. 231, 124, 147, 163, 181, 183
- Expulsion (*Ausstoßung, Verstoßung*), 72, 134, *see also* Expel
- Expunge (*tilgen*), 116
- Extirpation or extirpate or extirpable (*Vertilgung, vertilgen, vertilgbar*), 28 incl. n. 84, 35, 37, 45, 72, 107, 111, 134, *see also* Inextirpable
- Extol (*anpreisen*), 50, 114, 184 n. 312, 198
- Extortion or extort(ing) (*Erpressung[s-], abzwängen, abdrängen*), 159 n. 76, 160, 171, 182, 194
- Extravagant (*überschwenglich*), 52, 72, 88 n. 309, 117, 191, 193, *see also* Transcendent
- Extrication or extricate (*Entwicklung, herausarbeiten, loswinden, entwickeln*), 6 n. 32, 93, 132, 135 n. 415, *see also* Develop
- Fainthearted(ness) (*Kleinmütig[keit]*), 57, 184 n. 312

- Faith *or* have faith *or* in (one's) faith (*Glaube[n]*, *gläubig*); 12, 20 br. n. 13, 30 incl. br. n. 115, 52, 62, 63, 74, 76, 81 incl. n. 235, 84, 85 incl. n. 285, 87, 88 ns. 305 and 309, 103, 106–12 incl. br. n. 185, 114–21 incl. br. ns. 246 and 256 and 261 and 271 and 302 and 312, 123 n. 327, 124–27, 128 n. 361, 129, 130, 132 incl. n. 392, 136 incl. n. 425 and br. n. 425g, 137, 139–42, 144 n. 480, 147 incl. br. n. 150, 153–56 incl. n. 32, 158, 163–67 incl. n. 119 and br. n. 152a, 170 br. n. 176, 171 incl. br. n. 178, 172, 173 br. n. 200b, 174–76, 179, 181, 182, 184 n. 312, 187 incl. br. n. 330, 188, 195 n. 382 and br. n. 382e, cf. 77, 109 incl. br. n. 159, 118; empirical (historical), 110, 119; phenomenal, 187; theoretical, 88, theoretical confession of, 147; dogmatic, 52; scholarly, 164; literalist, 147; political, 125; (foreign) popular (public) (religious), 111–13, 128, 136 n. 425, 152, 153; doctrine(s) of, 127, 141 incl. br. n. 448, 156, 164, 165, 166 n. 152, 190 n. 347; old (historical), 131; (historically) elicited, 163 br. n. 122, 164 br. ns. 129 and 135; (historical) revelation, 102–05 incl. br. n. 86, 107–09 incl. br. n. 147, 111, 112, 115, 116, 118, 119, 121, 124, 129, 131, 135 br. n. 415b, 163–65, 176, 178, 181, 182, 189; passive, 132–33; commanded, 163 incl. br. n. 123, 164, 165 br. n. 139; [(despotically commanding] statutory, pure, religious) church, 102, 105, 106, 108–10, 112, 114–18 incl. br. n. 238, 121, 122, 123 n. 327, 124–26, 131, 134 br. n. 402, 135 n. 415, 142, 147, 153, 158, 163 br. n. 121; 165, 166, 168, 175, 182, 186; ingenuous, 115 br. n. 237; erroneous (false), 108 br. n. 154, 118 br. n. 285; slavish (mercenary, anthropomorphic), (yoke of), 115 incl. br. n. 235, 128, 133 n. 397, 142, 164 br. ns. 131 and 134, 178, 187, 188; ceremonial, 81 n. 235; fetish, 180; new, 127, 131; free (assertoric), 115, 123 n. 327, 153 n. 32, 164; living, 119; firm, 186, 187; unconditional, 164; practical, 62, 74, 118, 164; (bare, pure) rational (of reason), 102, 104, 119, 124, 129, 138, 153, 163, 164 incl. br. n. 127; (pure) moral, 113, 115–17, 124, 128, 129, 132 n. 392, 133 n. 397, 135 n. 415, 164, 181 br. n. 287, cf. 143; pure (true, moral, universal) religious, 102, 106, 115, 124, 125, 128, 130–32, 135 n. 415, 139, 158, 164, 176, 182, 186; ecclesiastical, 102 br. n. 87; holy, 163 n. 119; soul-improving, 124; miracle-working, 195 n. 382; saving (religious), 115, 116 incl. br. n. 246, 118, 119, 128, 165, 180, 181; matters of, 123 n. 327, 185, 188; formulas of, 69 n. 127; article(s) of, 85 n. 285, 167, 187; proposition of, 6 n. 32, 111 br. n. 171, 133 br. n. 397c, 174 br. n. 214; precept of, 180; principle of, 145; rules of, 179; statutes of, 180; laws of, 107; symbol of, 69 n. 127 and br. n. 127d, 141 incl. br. n. 458; confession of, 69 br. n. 127d, 141 br. n. 458, 153 n. 32, 166 n. 152, 173 n. 200; lack of, 63 br. n. 66, 84 br. n. 266, 118 br. n. 286, 186 br. ns. 325 and 327, 190 br. n. 346, cf. 108 br. n. 133, 172 br. n. 186; hymn of, 195 n. 382; person(s) of, 97 br. n. 42, 133 n. 397, 158, 190 n. 347; comrades of, 136 n. 425 and br. n. 425k; freedom of, 133 n. 397, 188 n. 337, 189 n. 344, 190 br. n. 346; ancient, 136 n. 425; Hindu, 184 n. 312; Tibetan, 108 n. 155; Jewish, 125, 136 n. 425, 166 n. 152; Christian, 163–65, 184 n. 312; church unity of, 123 n. 327; *see also* Belief, Unbelief, Misbelief, Fetish
- Faithful(ness) (*Treu[e]*), 4, 40 n. 203, 49 n. 276, 62, 180, 190 n. 347 and br. n. 347b, *see also* Unfaithful
- False (falsity) (*Falsch[heit]*), 33, 38, 42 n. 219, 83 br. n. 256, 118 br. n. 285, 189, cf. 161 br. n. 97
- Fanatic *or* fanaticism (*schwärmerisch*, *Schwärmerei*), 34, 53, 68, 83, 101, 114, 130, 144 br. n. 482, 170 br. n. 170a, 174, 175, 184 n. 312, 194, 201
- Favor(ite) (in one's) *or* favorable (*Gunst*, *begünstigen* [*Favorit*, *Günstling*], [*für sich*], *günstig*), 51, 68, 128 n. 361, 133, 160, 169, 172, 184 n. 312, 187, 195 n. 382, 200 incl. br. n. 398, 201, *see also* Unfavorable
- Fear *or* fearful (*Furcht*, *fürchten*, *besorgen*, *angstvoll*); of God, 23 n. 44, 27, 58, 68 incl. br. n. 113, 76, 78 n. 201, 85 n. 285, 97 br. n. 41j, 116, 146 n. 489, 171, 175, 182, 184, *see also* Dread

- Feeling (*Gefühl*), 68, 73 n. 161, 114 incl. br. n. 214, 121 incl. br. n. 312, 138, 170 br. n. 170a, 175, 194, 197, 198; of certainty, 121 br. n. 312; human, 121 br. n. 311e; sensible, 170 br. n. 170a; inner, 113; of pleasure and displeasure, 28 n. 85; moral, 27 incl. br. n. 77, 114, 170 br. n. 170a, 175, cf. 50; sweet, of revenge, 160; fanciful, 114; for duty, 49; of the sublimity of our own vocation, 23 n. 44; suprasensible (heavenly), 184 n. 312; of the immediate presence of the supreme being, 175
- Fetish(ism) (*Fetisch[machen]*), 177 incl. br. n. 252, 179, 194; service, 179; faith, 180, 193
- Fetter (*Fessel[n]*), 82, 121, 130, 188 n. 337
- Fight (*kämpfen*), 48, *see also* Struggle
- Final aim (*Endabsicht*), 78 n. 201, 83, 111, 153 n. 32, *see also* Aim
- Finite (*endlich*), 69 n. 127, 96, 145, *see also* Infinity
- Flesh (*Fleisch*), 29 br. n. 95, 44, 59 incl. br. n. 19, 61 br. n. 36, 74 incl. br. n. 167, 74 br. n. 178d, 181 incl. br. n. 277, 198 br. n. 391d
- Folly or foolish (*Torheit, töricht*), 57, 58, 181 incl. br. ns. 278 and 280, cf. 110 br. n. 167f, 159 br. n. 73
- Forbid(den) (*verbieten [verboten]*), 73 n. 161, 74 br. n. 165, 84 incl. br. n. 263, 136 n. 425, *see also* Prohibit
- Force or forceful (*Gewalt, Kraft, zwingen*), 26 br. n. 66, 34 n. 152, 37 br. n. 175, 50, 61 br. n. 50, 85 n. 285, 88 n. 309, 94, 95, 97 br. n. 41h, 98, 110, 111, 115 br. n. 235, 128 br. n. 361d, 144 br. n. 480a, 151, 159 br. n. 69, 167, 170 br. n. 170g, 175, 179 n. 263, 180 incl. br. n. 272, 183; motive, 138 n. 436, *see also* Power, Strength
- Foresee(ing) or foreseen or foreseeable (*voraussehen [Vorhersehen], vorausgesehen, vorherzusehend*), 10, 69 n. 127, 71, 107 n. 145, 1221 br. n. 311d, 124, 135, 189
- Formula (*Formel*), 10, 69 n. 127, 77, 144 br. n. 482, 145, 147, 159 n. 76, 173, 186 br. n. 319, 195 incl. n. 382
- Fortune or fortunate (*Glück, Glücks-, glücklich*), 69 n. 127, 107, 122, *see also* Luck, Happy, Misfortune
- Frail(ty) (*Gebrechlich[keit]*), 29, 32 br. n. 130, 37, 38, 64, 77, 140 n. 442, 195 n. 382, 200
- Fraud (*Betrug*), 30 br. ns. 184 and 185, 170, 190 br. n. 347b, *see also* Deceit
- Free(ly) or freedom (*frei, befreien, Freiheit*), 3, 5, 8, 9, 20–22 incl. n. 31, 23 n. 44, 24, 25, 26 n. 67, 31, 32, 34 n. 152, 35, 37–42 incl. br. ns. 193b and 215, 44, 45 incl. n. 246, 49 incl. n. 276 and br. n. 276e, 50, 57 n. 8, 61, 69 n. 127, 73 n. 161, 79, 80 incl. n. 226 and br. n. 226f, 81 br. n. 235a, 82, 83, 93 incl. br. ns. 1 and 2, 95–99, 114, 115 incl. br. n. 237, 117, 120 incl. br. n. 307, 121 n. 311 and br. n. 312, 122, 123 n. 327, 130, 133 n. 397, 134, 138, 140 n. 442, 142–44 incl. n. 481, 152, 153 n. 32, 157, 163, 164, 170 n. 170 and br. n. 170a, 177 br. n. 246, 179, 180, 182, 188 incl. br. n. 337, 190–92; power of choice, 3, 6 n. 32, 21 n. 31, 23, 25, 27, 29, 30, 35, 37, 39 n. 193, 40, 44, 59, 118, 170 n. 170 and br. n. 170f; principle of, *see* Principle
- Friend(ship) (*Freund[schaft]*), 33 incl. br. ns. 141 and 145, 85 n. 285 and br. n. 285a, 161 br. n. 103, 166 br. n. 152a, 170 br. n. 170a, 186 br. n. 319
- Fulfill(ment) (*erfüllen [Erfüllung]*), 6 n. 32, 23 n. 44, 84, 103, 110, 126, 141, 160 incl. br. n. 80, 171, 177, 184 n. 312, 191
- Generation or generate (*Zeugung, Menschenalter, erzeugen*), 43, 63 incl. br. ns. 76 and 77, 80 n. 226, 88 n. 309 and br. n. 3091, 130, 161 br. n. 103, 167, 195 n. 382, *see also* Begotten
- Genuine or genuineness (*echt, bar, Echtheit*), 36, 38, 71, 83, 96, 114, 128, 141, 172, 173, 189, *see also* Spurious
- Gift (*Gabe*), 88, 159 br. n. 75, 161; of miracles, 195 n. 382
- Gladness or gladly (*Frohsein, gerne*), 23 n. 44, 69 n. 127, 74 n. 178, 109, 113, 116, 135 br. 406, 161 br. n. 97, 179 n. 263
- Glorification or glorify (*Lobpreisung, preisen*), 33 n. 143, 47, 103, 160 br. n. 87, 198
- Goal (*Ziel*), 43 n. 231, 64, 66 br. n. 99, 74 n. 178, 84, 115, 145, 159, 175
- God or god (*Gott*), 15, 19, 47, 48, 51–53, 60–64, 66–68, 72–76, 79, 80, 82, 84, 85–87, 93, 95, 98–107, 109, 111–13, 115–122, 124–129, 131, 133–36, 139–45 incl. br. n. 437, 151–53, 157, 159–61, 163, 167–79, 181, 183, 185, 187, 188, 190, 192,

193–95, 197, 198–201, *see also* Deity, Lord, Godliness, Creation, Subgods, God-man
 Godliness (*Gottseligkeit*), 182, 183, 185, 187, 201, *see also* Divinity, God, Deity, Ungodly
 God-man (*Gottmensch*), 119, *see also* God, Human being
 Good(ness) (the) (*gut* [*das Gute, Güte, Gutartigkeit*]), 19–22 incl. n. 44, 29, 31, 33, 40, 44, 45, 47, 50, 53, 61, 66, 67, 69, 72, 74, 78, 79, 83, 98, 114, 122, 140 n. 446, 143, 146 n. 489, 161, 171, 179, 183, 184, 185 incl. br. n. 313, 200; conditionally, 42; legally, 30, 47; citizen(s), 134, 186, 199; people, 135 incl. br. n. 408; services, 121; servant, 200; sisters, 22 n. 43; spirits (gods), 140 br. n. 446a; forms of a church, 168; reputation, 113; possibility of, 6 n. 32, 45; in appearance, 67; incapacity for, 184, cf. 189; deficient, 67; soil (ferment of), 160 incl. br. n. 89; germ of, 38, 45, 57, cf. 66; human being(s), 20–22 incl. br. n. 14, 24–25, 28, 30, 36, 44, 47, 48, 51, 57, 117, 121 n. 311; 135, 174, cf. 139 br. n. 437; (empirical) character, 21 incl. br. n. 33, 27, 37; of human nature (by nature, natural), 21, 25, 33; created (for), 44; inclinations, 58, 110 n. 167; incentives, 42; incentive for, 46; receptive to, 47; striving toward, 67; furtherance of (the morally), 94, 121, 193; path (of), 48, 71; progress (of, in), 22 n. 43, 67, 134; opinion, 68; spirit, 39, 71, 144; propensity, 28–29; (moral) intention(s), 29, 161 n. 107, 177; (moral) wishes, 178; purposes, 111, 185, 195 n. 382; (morally,) attitude(s), 22 n. 43, 24, 38, 70–74, 76, 116, 152; predispositions, 9, 28, 44; predisposition to, 20, 28, 41, 43, 44, 46, 50–52, 93, 161; resolve to, 68; heart, 29; will (its determination to the), 37, 44, 52, 95, 97, 143, 169, 1990; power of choice, 29; entry into, 74; originally, 46; unconditionally (directly), 42, 177; moral(ly), 20–22 incl. n. 43, 24, 30, 36, 44, 47, 48, 51, 53, 57, 63, 64, 67, 83, 97, 103, 116, 143 incl. br. n. 479, 152, 157, 161, 174, 176, 177, 193; morals, 30; (of) maxim(s), 21 incl. n. 31, 30, 31, 37; maxims, 29, 31; principle, 11, 15, 19, 57, 60, 63, 68, 74, 79, 81–83, 93–95, 97, 117, 124, 140 n. 442 and br. n. 442c, 151–53 incl. br. n. 5, 165, 175; principles of, 68; means for serv-

ing duties, 193; (in) (moral) action(s) (conduct, works, doing), 31, 39, 48, 53, 72, 82, 87, 100, 113, 117, 143, 160 br. ns. 79 and 87, 161 n. 107, 172, 177, 185, 189–91, 201, cf. 153 n. 32; consequence of action, 161 n. 107; (morally,) way of life, 51, 72, 103, 104, 116, 118–20, 128, 144 incl. br. n. 482, 160 n. 83 and br. n. 83b, 170–72, 175, 176, 178, 179 br. n. 258, 189, 191, 195 n. 382, 201, cf. 140 br. n. 446a; fruit, 45, 201 br. n. 407; fruits of the morally, 193; ideal of, 65; firmly establishing, 193; loving (fondness) of, 22 n. 43, 94; propagation of, 193; union of minds toward the, 123; common (purpose of), 97, 151; perfection, of a human being, 3 n. 12; in our faith, 76; world's greatest, 61, 66, 134, 173; highest (moral) (possible on earth, of a possible world), 5, 6 n. 32, 97, 136, 139 incl. br. ns. 437 and 438, 182 incl. br. n. 301; eternity of, 69; complete, 139 br. n. 437; infinite, 199; God's (the supreme legislator's, divine), 141, 143, 144 br. n. 482, 146 n. 489, 162; all that God does will be, 86; miracles, 87; angels, 86; opposite (reverse) of, 22 n. 43; opponent of, 59; *see also* Evil
 Gospel (*Evangelium*), 128, 134, 162, 195 n. 382, 201
 Govern(ment) or governance or governor (*regieren* [*Regierung*], *Regiment*, *Regierer*), 10 br. n. 61, 71, 79, 81 n. 235, 85 incl. n. 285, 86, 100, 101, 122, 130, 133 n. 397, 134, 139, 140 n. 446, 175, 176, 179, 180, cf. 173
 Grace (*Gnade, Begnadigung*), 42 br. n. 224, 75 incl. n. 182, 118, 174, 190, 191, 193, 200–02 incl. br. n. 405; matter of, 118; means of, 52, 53, 192–94, 195 n. 382, 199–201; effect of, 52 incl. br. n. 296, 53 incl. br. n. 304, 174, 194, 201; verdict of, 76; supreme condition of, 118; divine (God's), 143, 199, 200; special, 199, 200; beneficent, 200; extravagant, of God, 193; *see also* Mercy
 Gratification (*Vergnügen*), 22 n. 43, 36, 45 n. 246, 67, 69 n. 127, 78
 Gratitude (*Dankbarkeit*), 64, *see also* Ingratitude
 Greed (*Habsucht*), 93
 Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals (*Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*), 3

br. n. 12a, 22 br. n. 42, 30 br. n. 101, *see also Metaphysics of Morals*

Guardian (*Bewahrer*), 133 n. 397, 180

Guilt(iness) or (be) guilty (of) (*Schuld[igkeit, Verschuldung]*), *verschulden* [*verschuldet, schuldig*], 31, 32, 35, 38, 40 n. 203, 44, 51 br. n. 291, 60, 61 incl. br. n. 47, 72 incl. br. ns. 138 and 140 and 144, 73 br. n. 162, 74 br. n. 174, 76 incl. br. n. 185, 78 n. 201, 83 br. n. 253, 93 br. n. 3, 116, 117, 120 incl. br. n. 307, 128 br. n. 360, 140 n. 442 and br. n. 442f, 141 br. n. 447, 146 n. 489 incl. br. ns. 489g and 489h and 489q, 153 n. 32, 161 n. 107, 170 br. n. 170a, 173, 195 n. 382, *see also* Trespass, Obligation, Debt, Innocence

Habit(uation) (*Gewohnheit, Gewöhnung*), 41, 47, 168 n. 161, 180, 184 n. 312, 195 n. 382, cf. 28

Happiness or happy (*Glückseligkeit, glücklich*), 3 n. 12, 5, 6 incl. n. 32 and br. n. 32j, 19, 27, 37, 45 n. 246, 47, 51, 57 br. n. 8b, 58, 60, 64 n. 85, 67–69 incl. n. 127, 74 n. 178, 115, 134, 135, 139 incl. br. n. 437, 161, 182 br. n. 301; principle of, *see* Principle *see also* Fortune, Unhappy

Hatred or hating or hate or hated (*Haß, hassen, verhaßt*), 23 n. 44, 27, 33, 52 br. n. 293, 58, 108, 110 br. n. 167f, 131, 159, 160 incl. br. n. 79, cf. 172 br. n. 194, *see also* Misanthropy

Health(y) (*Gesundheit [gesund]*), 20 br. n. 15, 26 br. n. 66, 47, *see also* Sound

Heart(felt) (*Herz[lich, Herzens-]*), 23 n. 44, 29, 30, 33, 37, 38, 44, 47, 48, 50, 51, 57, 63, 66 br. n. 99, 67, 72, 76, 84, 85 br. n. 278, 99 incl. br. n. 57, 102, 104, 108, 115, 122, 127, 145, 159 incl. br. n. 71, 160, 163, 169, 172, 181, 184 n. 312, 189, 192, 194, 198 n. 391

Heaven or heavenly (*Himmel, himmlisch*), 40 n. 203, 44 br. n. 233, 60 n. 20, 61, 63 incl. br. n. 76, 64 incl. n. 85, 66 incl. br. n. 97, 69 n. 127 and br. n. 127d, 78, 80, 82, 88, 101 br. n. 66, 104 br. n. 115, 112, 117 incl. br. n. 261, 120, 121, 126, 128 incl. br. n. 358, 128 n. 361, 129, 134 incl. br. n. 404, 135 incl. br. n. 406, 136 n. 425, 139, 140 br. ns. 442b and 442c and 442e, 143, 151 br. n. 4, 159 br. ns. 70 and 72, 160 br. ns. 77 and 85 and 87 and

90, 161 incl. br. ns. 97 and 98, 162, 169, 172–74, 183 n. 312, 190 n. 347, 192, 199 br. n. 394, 201 incl. br. n. 401, cf. 23. br. n. 44m, *see also* Ascension

Hell (*Hölle*), 60 n. 20, 69 n. 127, 78, 83 incl. br. n. 260, 109, 110 br. n. 167f, 126, 135, 159 br. n. 73; cf. 87 incl. br. n. 300

Heredity or hereditary (*Vererbung, Erb-*), 40 n. 203

Heretic (*Ketzer*), 108 incl. n. 155 incl. br. ns. 155b and 155c, 186 incl. br. ns. 324 and 326

Hierarchy or hierarchical (*Hierarchie, hierarchisch*), 79, 102, 130, 140 n. 446, 165, 180

High(ly) or higher or highest (*hoch, ober*), 5, 6 n. 32, 13, 26 n. 67, 27, 33 n. 143, 40 n. 203 and br. n. 302b, 45 incl. n. 246, 49, 50, 52, 57 n. 8, 59 br. n. 19, 60 br. ns. 25 and 34, 64 n. 85, 73, 74, 79, 81 br. n. 230, 82, 88 n. 309, 93, 97, 98, 99 br. n. 55b, 100, 101, 105, 109, 117 incl. br. n. 264, 118 incl. br. n. 284, 127, 134 br. n. 401, 136 incl. br. n. 425d, 139 incl. br. ns. 437 and 438, 145, 158, 161, 165, 173, 182 incl. br. n. 301, 197, 200, *see also* Exalted, Superior

Hindu(ism) (*Hindu[isch]*), 73 n. 161, 111 br. n. 180, 136 n. 425, 140 n. 446 and br. n. 446b, 184 n. 312, cf. 19

Historical(ly) (*historisch*); sources, 147; bases, 100; reports, 85; narrative, 33, 128 n. 361, 134, 135; dogmas, 115; (church) doctrines, 133, 181; doctrine (of faith), 166 n. 152, 189 n. 344; system, 12, 13 br. n. 82; division, 100; element (of revelation, Scripture), path, 13 br. n. 89; presentation, 124; (universal) exposition, 43 n. 231, 124 incl. br. n. 329; valuation, 128 n. 361; reputation, 43 n. 231; (empirical, church) faith, 63, 102–05 incl. br. n. 86, 108, 109, 111, 112, 114–16, 118, 119–21, 124, 129, 131, 132 n. 392, 135 n. 415 and br. n. 415b, 164, 176, 178, 181, 182, 187, 189; cf. 153, 164 br. n. 135; credibility, 166; documentation (documents), 119 n. 292, 187; authentication, 112; (bases of) proof, 43 n. 231, 187; cognition (cognize), 43 n. 231, 117, 179; knowledge, 113; scholarship, 167; science, 167; *see also* History

History (*Geschichte*), 9, 13 br. ns. 86 and 90, 19 incl. br. n. 11, 20, 26 br. n. 68, 34 n. 152,

- 69 br. n. 127c, 79 br. n. 216a, 84, 85, 107, 109 br. n. 160, 115, 120, 121, 124, 125, 127, 128 n. 361, 129–32, 133 n. 397, 134 incl. br. n. 403, 135 incl. n. 415, 136 n. 425, 143, 144, 156, 159, 164, 166 incl. n. 152, 167, 171, *see also* Story, Historical, *Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View*
- Hobbes, Thomas, 97 n. 41 incl. br. ns. 41a, 41b, 41j
- Holiness (*Heiligkeit*), 6 incl. br. n. 34, 46, 47, 48 br. n. 262, 49, 61, 64 incl. n. 85, 66, 74 br. n. 164, 80 n. 226, 82, 120, 130, 132 incl. br. n. 391, 141, 143, 159, 161, 183, 184 n. 312, 191, 199, 200, *see also* Holy
- Holy (*heilig*), 23 br. n. 44d, 46, 61, 64, 66 incl. br. n. 97, 101 br. n. 71, 102, 113, 120, 121, 128 incl. br. n. 358, 134, 137, 139, 142, 144 br. n. 482, 158, 159 n. 76, 163 br. n. 119, 173, 189, 190 n. 347, 198 br. n. 391d, 199; will, 64; principle, *see* Principle; law(s), 67, 139, 140 n. 442, 141, 143, 145; Book (book[s]), 107, 110, 111, 129, 132, 135 n. 415, 136 n. 425 and br. n. 425e, 147, 156, 166 incl. n. 152, *see also* Bible; Scripture (scriptures), 73 n. 161, 73 n. 178, 78, 102, 111–13, 165; *see* Scripture; Mystery (mysteries), 137, 138 incl. n. 436; Spirit, 140 n. 442, 146 incl. n. 489; *see also* Sacred
- Homage or pay homage to (*Huldigung, huldigen*), 81, 180
- Honest(y) (*Ehrlich[keit]*), 47, 201
- Honor (*Ehre[n]*), 26 br. n. 66, 33 n. 143, 47, 85, 102, 103, 108, 114, 165; delusion, 168 n. 161 and br. n. 161d; *see also* Veneration
- Hope (*Hoffnung, hoffen*), 33, 34 incl. n. 152, 44, 48, 51, 52, 61, 62, 68, 69 incl. n. 127, 71, 74, 76, 77, 81 n. 235, 86, 87, 88 n. 309, 94, 95, 101, 116–18, 120, 123 n. 327, 134, 144, 151, 160, 161 incl. n. 107, 171, 172, 174, 178, 182, 185, 198 n. 391, 200, *see also* Hopelessness
- Hopelessness (*Tröstlosigkeit*), 71
- Horace (Quintus Horatius Flaccus), 32
- Hostile (hostilities) (*Feindselig[keiten]*), 27, 94, 97 n. 41
- Human (*menschlich*); being(s), 3–8 incl. ns. 11 and 32, 11, 15, 19 br. n. 11, 20–22 incl. br. n. 14; 24–45 (incl. ns. 53, 55, 143, 169, 219, 231, 241, 246 and br. ns. 53d, 64, 71, 90, 91, 138, 223, 244), 47–52 incl. br. n. 268, 57 incl. n. 8, 59–64 (incl. ns. 17 and 85 and br. ns. 26, 75, 76, 77, 78, 85c), 66–69 incl. ns. 103 and 127, 71–85 (incl. ns. 161, 178, 226, 285 and br. ns. 161f, 235a), 87, 88, 93–98 incl. n. 41 and br. ns. 6 and 41b and 41j, 99 n. 55, 100, 101, 103–09 incl. br. n. 128, 111–13, 116–18 (incl. br. ns. 241, 263, 264, 266, 268, 271, 284), 119 br. n. 291, 120–22 incl. n. 311 and br. ns. 308 and 315, 123 n. 327, 124, 125, 128 incl. n. 361, 130–33 incl. ns. 392 and 397, 135 incl. n. 415, 138, 139, 140 n. 442 and br. ns. 442a and 442c, 141–45 (incl. n. 480 and br. ns. 451, 463, 473, 482, 486), 146 n. 489, 147, 151, 152, 153 n. 32, 155–63 incl. ns. 76 and 83 and 107, 166, 168–72 incl. n. 162 and 170, 174–79 incl. n. 263 and br. n. 205, 181–84, 186–89 incl. n. 337, 190 n. 347, 195 n. 382, 197, 198 n. 391 and br. n. 391b, 199–201; nature, 11, 15, 19, 20, 26, 28–30, 32–35 incl. br. n. 148, 37–39 incl. br. n. 182, 57 n. 8, 61, 62, 64, 100, 103, 114, 126, 131, 161, 175, 189, 190 incl. n. 347, 192, 193; genus, 41, 121; race, 140 br. n. 442e, 190 n. 347; (the) manner, 65 n. 85; characters, 22; arrangement, 100; institution, 134; (public) laws, 98; court of law, 72; legislator, 99 n. 55, judge, 24 n. 53, 95; teacher, 65; sovereign (monarch, overlord), 141, 152, 200; investigation, 144; reports, 112; concepts, 142; feelings, 121 br. n. 311e; wishes, 134; (universal) need, 145; frailty, 77; corruption, 184 n. 312; improvement, 43 n. 231; capacities, 181; ability, 6 n. 32; skill, 112; hands, 100; work, 122; eyes, 124; minds, 82; understanding, 88 n. 309; power(s) (of grasping), 37, 134, 142, 173; wisdom, 69 n. 127; insight, 132, 155; (universal) reason, 9, 64 n. 86, 111, 115, 116, 121, 140 incl. n. 442, 165; power of choice, 35, 99 br. n. 55a; will, 200; (universal) duty (duties), 61, 84, 110, 118 incl. br. n. 280, 138 n. 436, 153 n. 32, 184 n. 312; 187, 194; heart, 29–30, 37, 38, 50, 57, 160, 163; soul, 64; (universal) religion, 155; immortality, 157 br. n. 44; *see*

- also Humanity, Humankind, God-man, Being, Inhuman
- Humanity (*Menschheit*), 23 n. 44, 26–28 incl. br. n. 66, 32, 33, 34 n. 152, 60–62, 66 incl. br. n. 90, 80 incl. n. 226, 81 br. n. 235a, 82, 119, 129, 140 n. 442, 145, 183, *see also* Human, Humankind
- Humankind (*Menschheit, Menschengeschlecht*), 34 incl. n. 152, 63, 64 n. 85, 69, 74, 82, 94, 96, 97, 100, 107, 120, 123 n. 327, 124, 127, 131, 134, 135 n. 415, 139, 140, 143 br. n. 476, 152 incl. br. n. 15, 155, 162, 167, 171, 181, 182, *see also* Humanity, Human
- Humility or humiliation or Humble (*Demut, Demütigung, demütig[en]*), 8, 88 n. 309, 184 n. 312, cf. 61 br. n. 42, *see also* Humility
- Huxley, Thomas H., 73 br. n. 161f
- Hypocrisy or hypocritical or hypocrite (*Heuchelei, heuchlerisch, erheuchelt, Heuchler*), 42 n. 219, 133 n. 397, 153 n. 32, 160 br. n. 88, 166 br. n. 152b, 180, 189, 190 n. 347, 193, 198
- Hypothesis (*Hypothese*), 22, 29 br. n. 27, 33, 73 n. 161, 80 n. 226, 128 n. 361, 153 n. 32
- Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View (*Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*), 26 br. n. 68, 100 br. n. 62, 124 br. n. 331
- Idea of reason or rational idea (*Vernunftidee*), 42 n. 53, 97, 105, 119, 123 n. 327, 128 n. 361, 174
- Ideal (*Ideal*), 61, 65, 66 incl. br. n. 90, 76, 96, 101, 129, 135, 168 n. 162
- Idleness (*Muße*), 172 br. n. 194, 191
- Idol(atry) (*Götze, Idol[atrie]*), 168 n. 162, 176, 185, 186 br. n. 326, 199
- Ignorance or ignorant (*Unwissenheit, unwissend*), 88 n. 309, 128, 165, 174, 181, 184 n. 312
- Ill (*Übel*), 67, 73 incl. n. 161, 74 incl. n. 178 and br. n. 178j, 79, *see also* Bad
- Illumination or illumine(d person) or illuminate or illuminatism (*Erleuchtung, erleuchten [Erleuchteter], Illuminat, Illuminatismus*), 53, 83, 102, 107, 122, 158
- Illusion or illusory (*Blendwerk, Schein-*), 49 n. 276, 79, 82 br. n. 244, 180, *see also* Seeming
- Image (*Bild*), 23 n. 44, 48 br. n. 262, 60 br. n. 34, 73 br. n. 157, 127, 195 br. n. 382d, 199 incl. br. n. 384; worship, 184 n. 312 incl. br. n. 312h
- Imagination or imagining or imagined (*Einbildungskraft, Einbildung, eingebildet*), 23 n. 44, 60 n. 20, 87, 168 n. 161, 175, 193 br. n. 369, 198, 201
- Imbecility (*Blödsinn*), 101
- Imitation or imitate (*Nachahmung, Nachfolge*), 62, 64
- Immensity or immense (*Unabsehlich[keit]*), 20 br. n. 17, 45 n. 246, 63, 69 incl. 127, 140 br. n. 446e, 151
- Immodest(y) (*Unbescheiden[heit]*), 88 n. 309, 113, 145, *see also* Modest
- Immoral(ity) (*unmoralisch [Sittenlosigkeit]*), 29, 80 n. 226, 97, 99 n. 55, *see also* Moral
- Immortality (*Unsterblichkeit*), 135, 157 incl. br. n. 44, 166 br. n. 152a, 170 br. n. 170a, 181 br. n. 287, 182 br. n. 301, *see also* Mortal
- Imperfection (*Unvollkommenheit*), 96, 174, *see also* Perfection
- Impossibility or impossible (*Unmöglich[keit]*), 27 br. n. 72, 35, 53, 60 br. n. 24, 64, 69 n. 127, 73 n. 161 and br. n. 161f, 76, 103, 107, 112, 123 n. 327, 128 n. 361, 136 n. 425, 138, 163, 167, 191, 195 br. n. 382e, *see also* Possibility
- Impotence or impotent (*Ohnmacht, kraftlos*), 59 n. 17, 131
- Improvement or improve or -improving (*Besserung, -bessern[d]*), 20 br. n. 17, 34, 43 n. 231, 44, 48, 51, 68, 69 n. 127, 71, 73, 76, 77, 88, 105, 112, 117 incl. br. ns. 265 and 271, 118, 121, 124, 127, 129, 130, 132, 142, 144 br. n. 482, 147, 169, 192, 198 incl. n. 391, 201, *see also* Self-improvement
- Impure or impurity (*Unlauter[keit]*), 29, 30, 32 br. n. 130, 37, 38, 47, 48, 51, 77, 83, 192, *see also* Pure (*lauter*)
- Incentive (*Triebfeder*), 3, 6 n. 32, 21 n. 31, 22 n. 43, 23 n. 44, 24 incl. br. ns. 47 and 48, 26 n. 67, 27–31 incl. br. n. 77, 35–37 incl. br. n. 174, 42–44 incl. n. 219, 45 n. 241 and br. n. 241j, 46–48 incl. br. n. 251, 49 n. 276, 50, 57 n. 8, 59 n. 17, 62, 69, 79, 88 n. 309, 101, 110, 112, 119, 160–62 incl. n. 107, 195 n. 382

- Inclination (*Neigung*), 21, 26 n. 67, 27–29 incl. n. 85, 34, 36, 37, 42, 45 n. 246, 46, 57–59 incl. n. 8, 61, 64, 74, 94, 110 n. 167, 170, 198 n. 391
- Inconsistent (*inkonsequent*), 126, *see also* Consistent, *be*
- Incorporeal (*unkörperlich*), 138 n. 436, *see also* Corporeal, *Body*
- Incorruptible (*unbestechlich*), 69 n. 127, *see also* Uncorrupted, *Corruption*
- Indebtedness (*Verschuldung*), 72, 76 br. n. 185, *see also* Debt, *Guilt*
- Independence or independent (*Unabhängig [-keit], selbständig*), 12 incl. br. n. 76, 26 br. n. 66, 57 n. 8, 80 n. 226, 97, 131, 138 n. 436, 176 incl. br. n. 236, *see also* Dependence
- Indubitable (*unbezweifelt, zweifelsfrei*), 133, 159, *see also* Undoubtedly, *Doubt*
- Inexplicable (*unerkklärlich*), 59 n. 17, *see also* Explanation
- Inextirpable (*unvertilgbar*), 51, *see also* Extirpation
- Infinity or infinite(ly) or *ad infinitum* (*Unendlich[keit], ins Unendliche*), 21 n. 31, 47 incl. br. n. 252, 48, 51, 64, 66, 67 incl. n. 103, 72, 74 n. 178, 122, 128 n. 361, 157, 168 n. 162, 199, *see also* Finite
- Ingratiation or ingratiate oneself into favor (*Einschmeichelung, erschmeicheln*), 117, 160, 185
- Ingratitude (*Undankbarkeit*), 27, *see also* Gratitude
- Inhuman (*unmenschlich*), 69 n. 127, *see also* Human
- Injustice (*Ungerechtigkeit*), 97, *see also* Justice
- Innocence or innocent (*Unschuld[ig], schuldlos*), 36, 41–43, 51, 59, 72, 73 br. n. 161f, 80, 87, 168, *see also* Guilt
- Inquisitor (*Ketzerrichter*), 186, 187
- Insight or have insight into (*Einsicht, einsehen*), 6 n. 32, 45 n. 246, 49 n. 276, 50, 62, 64, 69 n. 127, 70, 85 n. 285, 88 n. 309, 113, 114, 116, 117, 122, 133 incl. n. 397, 138 n. 436, 142, 143, 144 n. 480 and br. n. 482, 152, 153 n. 32, 155, 164, 170 n. 170, 178, 181 br. n. 287, *see also* Knowledge, *Cognition*
- Insincerity or insincere (*Unredlichkeit, unaufrichtig*), 38, 52, 111, 188, *see also* Sincerity
- Inspiration or inspired (*Eingebung, Begeisterung, eingegeben*), 50, 102, 110 n. 167, 112 incl. br. n. 187, 114 br. n. 214, 117 incl. br. n. 261, 121 incl. br. n. 312, 137, *see also* Enthusiasm
- Instruction or instruct (*Belehrung, Lehre, Unterweisung, belehren*), 4, 9, 10, 12, 14, 49, 69 n. 127, 77, 87, 94 br. n. 6, 106, 112 incl. br. n. 187, 113, 125, 132 incl. n. 392, 134, 153 n. 32, 163 incl. br. n. 117, 181, 183, 193, *see also* Teaching, *Doctrine*
- Insurrection (*Aufruhr*), 34 n. 152, 57 n. 8, 153 n. 32, *see also* Rebel, *Revolt*
- Intellectual(ly) (*intellektuell*), 28, 35, 39 n. 193, 67, 74, 80 n. 226, 88 br. n. 303, 136, 169, 170 n. 170, 172
- Intelligible (*intelligibel*), 29 br. n. 95, 31, 37, 39 n. 193 and br. n. 193b, 47, 48, 74, 78
- Intelligent (*verständlich*), 176, 184 n. 312,
- Intentional(ly) (*absichtlich*), 37 br. n. 177, 81 br. n. 235a, 85 n. 285, 123 n. 327, 126, *see also* Deliberate, *Unintentional*
- Intuition or intuitive (*Anschauung, anschaulich*), 59, 67, 88 br. n. 303, 121 br. n. 312, 123 n. 327, 162, 175, 192, 193 br. n. 369, 197, 198
- Investigation Concerning the Clarity of the Principles of Natural Theology and Morality* (*Untersuchung über die Deutlichkeit der Grundsätze der natürlichen Theologie und Moral*), 133 br. n. 152a
- Invisible or invisibly (*unsichtbar*), 57, 59, 69 br. n. 127d, 82, 101, 102, 110 n. 167, 122, 127, 131, 152, 157 incl. br. n. 49, 175, 176, 180, 192, *see also* Visible
- Invocation or invoke (*Anrufung, anrufen*), 76, 146, 147, 159 n. 76, 160
- Irksome (*lästig*), 158, 172 br. n. 94, *see also* Burden
- Irreconcilable (*unvereinbar*), 80 n. 226, *see also* Reconciliation
- Irreproachable (*untadelhaft*), 62, 66, *see also* Reproach
- Jealousy (*Eifersucht*), 27
- Jehovah (*Jehovah*), 127
- Jew or Jewish (*Jude, jüdisch*), 39 n. 193, 47 br. n. 258, 79, 108, 110 n. 167, 125 incl. br. n. 337, 126, 129, 136 n. 425, 140 n. 446, 160, 166 incl. n. 152 and br. n. 152a, *see also* Judaism

- Join or be joined by (*beitreten, eintreten, dazu gesellen*), 81, 113, 173, 193
- Judaism (*Judentum*), 111, 125–28, 166, 167, *see also* Jew
- Judge (*Richter*), 8, 24 n. 53, 69 n. 127, 74, 77 incl. br. n. 195, 78 incl. n. 201 and br. n. 201b, 87, 95, 97 n. 41, 110 n. 167, 116, 139, 140 n. 442, 145, 146 n. 489 and br. n. 489f, 153 n. 32, 162, 186 br. ns. 320 and 324; of the world, 140 n. 442, cf. 19; *see also* Judicial, Jurist, Justice, Sentence, Verdict, Judgment, Judging
- Judging or judge or make a judgment about (*Aburteilung, Beurteilung, beurteilen*), 22 n. 43, 24 n. 53, 27, 29, 32, 38, 39 n. 193, 41, 48, 51, 67, 69 incl. n. 127, 77 incl. br. ns. 195 and 198, 78 n. 201, 88 n. 309, 136 n. 425, 146 n. 489 and br. n. 489n, 162, 165 br. n. 145, 168 incl. n. 162, 186 br. ns. 320 and 323, 195 n. 382, *see also* Judgment, Judge (*Richter*)
- Judgment (*Urteil*); 6 incl. br. n. 32b, 8, 13 incl. br. n. 88, 19 br. n. 7, 20, 24 incl. n. 53, 39 n. 193, 69 incl. n. 127, 74, 76, 77 incl. br. n. 195, 110 br. n. 167f, 113 incl. br. n. 200, 121 n. 311, 127, 140 n. 442, 140 n. 446, 146 n. 489 and br. ns. 489f and 489k and 489p, 159 br. n. 73, 177, 186 incl. br. n. 320, 187 incl. br. n. 333; power of, *see* Power of judgment
- Judicial (*Richter-*), 72, 140 n. 442, 146 n. 489, 186 br. n. 320, *see also* Justice, Judge
- Juridical or juridically civil (*juridisch, juridisch-bürgerlich, rechtlich-bürgerlich*) 94–96 incl. br. n. 20, 97 br. n. 41e, 98, 99, 140, *see also* Justice, Jurist
- Jurist (*Jurist*), 10, 116 incl. br. n. 259, *see also* Justice, Judge
- Justice or just (*Gerecht[igkeit]*), 66 incl. br. n. 91, 69 n. 127, 72–74 incl. br. n. 161f, 76, 93, 117, 136 n. 425, 139, 140 n. 442, 141, 143 incl. br. n. 467, 146 n. 489, 159 n. 76, 163, 171, 182 br. n. 301, 188 n. 337, 190 n. 347, 200, *see also* Punitive justice, Juridical, Judicial, Judge, Law, Injustice, Unjust
- Justification or justify (*Rechtfertigung, rechtfertigen, entütle*), 5, 38, 60 n. 20, 69 n. 127, 74 incl. n. 178, 76, 114 br. n. 213, 131, 136 br. n. 425l, 163 incl. br. n. 124, 172, 174, *see also* Proof
- Juvenal, 49 br. n. 276d
- Kill (*töten, totschiagen, umbringen*), 33 n. 143, 49 br. n. 276d, 87, 110 br. n. 167f, 140 br. n. 446e, 159 incl. br. n. 73, 186
- Kindhearted (*gutherzig*), 30
- Kingdom (*Reich*), 15, 19 br. n. 11, 33 br. n. 141, 47 br. n. 258, 52 br. n. 293, 60 n. 20, 64 incl. br. n. 85f, 67, 68 incl. br. n. 109, 72, 79, 81–83 incl. br. n. 230, 88 n. 309, 93, 95, 101 incl. br. n. 66, 103, 104 br. n. 115, 115, 122 incl. br. n. 233, 124, 131, 134 br. n. 404, 136 incl. n. 425 and br. ns. 420 and 424, 425a, 140 n. 442 and br. n. 442c, 143, 146 br. n. 489n, 151 incl. br. ns. 4 and 5, 152, 159 br. n. 70, 160 incl. br. ns. 85 and 90, 162, 175 n. 224, 192, 195 n. 382, 197 br. n. 388, 199, 201 br. n. 401, *see also* Realm
- Knowledge or know (*Wissen, Kenntnis*), 4, 6 n. 32, 11, 19 br. n. 2, 20 br. n. 14, 26 br. n. 66, 27 br. n. 72, 29 br. n. 95, 42 br. n. 215, 42 br. n. 219b, 44 br. n. 235, 48 br. n. 262, 49 n. 276, 52 incl. br. n. 293, 64 n. 85, 67, 68, 69 n. 127, 72, 73 br. n. 157, 74 br. n. 167, 85–88 incl. n. 309 and br. n. 285a, 94 br. n. 6, 98, 99 br. n. 57, 102, 104, 105, 110 br. n. 167a, 111, 113 incl. br. n. 210, 116, 118, 120, 121 n. 311, 133, 137 br. ns. 427 and 428, 138 n. 436, 139, 140 br. n. 442 and br. n. 442a, 145 br. n. 485, 152–54 incl. n. 32, 160 br. n. 84, 161 n. 107, 171, 172, 174, 176 br. n. 235, 177, 181 br. n. 287, 186, 187, 189, 190 n. 347, 195 br. n. 382d, 198 br. n. 391d, 201 br. n. 407, cf. 73 br. n. 161f, 139 br. n. 439, *see also* Cognition, Insight, Omniscient
- Latitudinarians (*Latitudinärer*), 22
- Laudation (*Hochpreisung*), 76, 104, 130, 160, 161 n. 161, 172, cf. 109, 170 br. n. 170a, *see also* Praise
- Law (*Gesetz, Recht, -recht*), 4, 6 ns. 32 and 34, 8, 9 br. n. 47, 22 n. 43, 23 n. 44, 24, 26 n. 67 and br. n. 67e, 29–31, 34 n. 152, 35, 38, 39 n. 193 and br. n. 193b, 40 n. 203, 49, 60 br. n. 21, 62, 63, 66, 73, 78 incl. br. n. 202, 79, 85 br. n. 278, 86, 87, 88 n. 309, 94, 95 incl. br. n. 23, 98 incl. br. n. 52a, 99, 104, 110 n. 167, 113, 138 n. 436, 114, 141, 146 n. 489, 153 incl. br. n. 24, 160 incl. br. ns. 78 and 80, 167, 176, 178, 179, 181, 182, 186, 191; mere idea of, 59 n. 17; (objective,) of experience,

- 88 n. 309, 107 n. 145, 194; of operation, 86 incl. br. n. 288; of causes and effects, 144; natural (of nature), 23 n. 44, 35, 50, 72 br. n. 143, 86, 87, 88 n. 309, 107, 142, 158, 193; of self-love, 36; of sins, 93; external, 95; political (statutory) ([politally] civil), 79, 99 n. 55, 100, 125; (external and) public (juridical) (of nations, human), 95, 96 incl. br. n. 37, 97 n. 41, 98, 101, 123 br. n. 327e, 176; society's, 101; doctrine of, 10 br. n. 60; precept of, 59 n. 17; school of, 40 n. 203; constitutional, 98, 123 br. n. 327e, 180; of nations (international), 96 incl. br. n. 37, 123 br. n. 327f; coercive, 8, 95, 97, 126; free from coercion, 95; of reason, 194; of freedom, 23 n. 44, 35, 39, 121 n. 311, 143, 170 n. 170, 190, 192; practical, 20 br. n. 22, cf. 26 br. n. 66; ethical, 98, 99; merely formal, 6 n. 32; universal, 98 incl. br. n. 52a; unconditional, 3; (universal, a priori, purely, unconditionally) moral (of morality, of the moral order, absolutely commanding), 3–7 incl. ns. 12 and 32 and br. n. 18, 21, 22 incl. n. 43 and br. n. 42, 23 n. 44, 24, 26 n. 67, 27–30 incl. br. n. 76, 32 incl. br. n. 133, 35–37, 42 incl. n. 219, 45 ns. 241 and 246, 46, 49 n. 276, 50, 51, 57 n. 8, 62, 72, 73 n. 161, 85 br. n. 278, 86, 98, 99 n. 55, 104 incl. br. n. 107, 113, 114, 138, 144, 145, 146 n. 489, 151, 161, 164, 170 br. n. 170a, 171, 179 n. 263, 180, 181, 184 n. 312, 191, 193, cf. 116; of duty, 37, 42; (bare,) of virtue, 94, 95, 98–100, 124, 161, 190; religious, 152; of the church, 152; holy (holiness of), 6 br. n. 34, 67, 139, 140 n. 442, 141, 143, 145; positive, 187; original, 102; revealed, 106; book of, 102; statutory (divine), 99 incl. n. 55, 104–06, 125, 153, 178, 179, 201; nonstatutory, 122; of faith, 107; of equality (communion), 199; cognition of (cognizing), 114, 190; demand of, 141; contrary to, 20 br. n. 19, 170 n. 170; respect for, 45 n. 246, 50, 57 n. 8, 182, 170 n. 170 incl. br. n. 170a; liking for, 182; love of, 145; hatred of, 23 n. 44; observing (observance of), 47, 101, 178; unconditional obedience to, 3 n. 12; commensurateness with, 171; yoke of, 179; letter of, 37; spirit of, 39; Roman, 10 br. n. 61, 38 br. ns. 181 and 185; Jewish (of Judaism), 160, 166, cf. 23 n. 44; *see also* Right, Lawful, Justice, Court of Law, Legislative
- Lawful(ness) (*Gesetzmäßig[keit]*, *legal*), 3 incl. n. 12, 30, 36, 47, 48 incl. br. n. 268, 62, 123 n. 327, 161, *see also* Legality, Law, Lawlessness, Unlawful
- Lawlessness or lawless (*Gesetzlos[igkeit]*), 27, 97, *see also* Law, Lawful
- Lecture of Kant on Ethics—A (*Eine Vorlesung Kants über Ethik*), 17 br. n. 42
- Legality or legal(ly) (*Legalität*, *gesetzlich*, *rechtlich* [*rechtlicherweise*], *Rechts-*), 10 br. n. 61, 14, 23 n. 44, 30, 38 br. ns. 181 and 185, 40 n. 203, 47, 60 incl. br. n. 21, 72 n. 201 and br. ns. 138 and 202, 75, 78, 79, 81, 82, 85, 95 incl. br. n. 26, 98, 99, 116, 146 br. n. 489g, 152, 167, 176 br. n. 229, 188 n. 337, 193, *see also* Lawful, Law, Legislative
- Legislative or legislator or legislation or legislature (*gesetzgebend*, *Gesetzgeber*, *Gesetzgebung*, *das Gesetz geben*), 6 incl. n. 32, 26 n. 67, 28, 35, 45 n. 246, 57 n. 8, 62, 66, 72, 94–96, 98–101 incl. n. 55, 103–06, 113, 126, 139, 141, 142, 146 n. 489, 152, 153 n. 32, 156, 158, 160, 162, 164, 180, 181, 183, 200, *see also* Law, Legality
- Legitimate (*rechtmäßig*), 4, 49, 63, 75 br. n. 181, 76 br. n. 184, 82 br. n. 240, 95, 99 n. 55, 109
- Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm von, 73 br. n. 161f, 170 br. n. 170a, cf. 22 br. n. 42
- Liking or (be) liked ([*Wohl*]gefallen, [*wohl*]gefällig), 10, 45 n. 246 and 246g, 47 br. n. 256, 62 br. n. 57, 73 br. n. 153, 103, 127, 162, 168 br. n. 160, 176 br. n. 242, 182, 192 br. n. 361, *see also* Pleasure, Disliking
- Logic (*Logik*), 89 br. n. 191
- Lord or lord (*Herr*), 42 br. n. 215, 44 br. n. 235, 52 br. n. 293, 69 br. n. 127d, 74 br. n. 165, 78, 79, 85 br. n. 278, 90, 99 br. n. 57, 103, 104 incl. br. n. 115, 110 n. 167 and br. ns. 167a and 167j, 140 br. n. 446a, 146 br. n. 489n, 160 br. ns. 77 and 85, 161 incl. br. n. 103, 162 br. n. 108, 186 br. n. 326, 190 br. n. 345, 198 br. n. 391d, 201 incl. br. n. 401, *see also* God, Overlord
- Love (*Liebe[n]*), 6 n. 32, 27 incl. br. n. 72, 45 n. 246 and br. n. 246j, 60 incl. br. n. 35, 64 incl. n. 85 and br. n. 85i, 85 br. n. 285a, 94,

- 110 n. 167 and br. n. 167f, 120, 145 incl. br. ns. 485 and 486 and 488, 146 n. 489, 160 incl. br. n. 79, 165, 179 br. n. 263c, 182, 187 br. n. 328, 190 br. n. 347b, 200, *see also* Beloved, Self-love
- Luck(ily) (*Glück[lich]*), 38, *see also* Fortune
- Lure (*locken*), 117
- Lust (*Wollust*), 27, 93, cf. 42 br. n. 219c, 48 br. n. 262, 74 br. n. 167, 153 n. 32, 159 br. n. 71
- Luther, Martin, 47 br. n. 252, *see also* Lutheran
- Lutheran (*lutherisch*), 108, *see also* Luther, Martin
- Madness (*Wahnsinn*), 101 incl. br. n. 77, 168 n. 161, 174, 195 n. 382, *see also* Delusion
- Magic or magical(ly) (*Zaubern, Zaubermagisch*), 88 n. 309, 120, 131, 159 n. 76, 176 br. n. 231, 177, 178
- Majesty (*Majestät*), 7, 23 n. 44, 60 br. n. 44, 197
- Malebranche, Nic(h)olas, 73 n. 161 and br. n. 161f
- Malice or malicious (*Bosheit, boshaft*), 27, 35, 37 incl. br. n. 177, 38, 57, *see also* Evil
- Manicheism (*Manichäism*), 108 n. 155 incl. br. n. 155c
- Manners (*Sitten*), 30 br. n. 113, 47 br. n. 255, *see also* Morals, Mores, Morality
- Martyrdom (*Märtyrertum*), 186, cf. 81 br. n. 235a
- Marvel (*Wunder*), 197, *see also* Miracle
- Master (*Meister, Gebieter*), 23 n. 44, 140 n. 203, 59 n. 17, 78 br. n. 209, 81 n. 235, 83, 157 br. n. 48, 161 br. n. 105, cf. 28 br. n. 85d, 95 br. n. 29
- Material(ity) or materialism (*Stoff, Materie [Materialität], Materialismus*), 3, 11, 128 n. 361, 136 n. 425, 172, 173 n. 200 and br. n. 200c, *see also* Matter
- Matter (*Materie, Sache*), 6 n. 32, 10, 14, 31, 36, 44, 105, 118, 123 n. 327, 128 n. 361 and br. n. 361j, 132, 138 n. 436, 140 n. 446, 144 n. 480 and br. ns. 480c and 480d, 154, 155, 185, 188, 193, 199, 200, *see also* Material
- Maxim (*Maxime*), 3 incl. n. 12, 4, 20–22 incl. ns. 31 and 43, 23 n. 44, 24, 25, 26 n. 67, 27–33 incl. br. n. 133 and br. n. 145, 36–38 incl. br. n. 177, 39 n. 139 and br. n. 139b, 41–48 incl. ns. 219 and 241, 50–53, 57 n. 8, 59, 63, 66, 72, 85 n. 285, 88 ns. 305 and 309 and br. n. 309i, 99 br. n. 55b, 118–20, 132, 138, 144 br. n. 482, 153, 170, 172, 183, 188 incl. br. n. 338, 189
- Mechanism or mechanical (*Mechanismus, mechanisch*), 26, 88 n. 309, 127, 172, 180
- Mendelssohn, Moses, 121 br. n. 312, 166 n. 152 and br. n. 152a
- Mental(ity) (*Gemüts- [Sinnes-]*) 23 n. 44, 47 br. n. 261, 52 br. n. 293, 66, 73 incl. br. n. 161f, 74, 83, 88, 160, 190 n. 347, 195 n. 382, 197, *see also* Mind
- Mercenary (*Lohn-*), 115 incl. br. n. 235, 177 incl. br. n. 249, 178
- Mercy or merciful (*Gnade, gnädig*), 52 br. n. 296, 75 br. n. 182a, 99 br. n. 58, 110 br. n. 167a, 121 incl. br. n. 310, 141, 200 br. n. 396, *see also* Grace
- Merit(orious) (*Verdienst[lich, -voll, verdient], Wert*), 33 n. 143, 38, 49 incl. br. n. 272, 62, 75, 85, 117, 118, 120, 128, 129, 140 br. n. 442f, 143, 146 n. 489; lack of, 146 n. 489; *see also* Worth, Credit, Value, Deserve, Unmeritorious—the
- Messiah or messiah or messianic (*Messias, messianisch*), 125, 136 n. 425, 166
- Metaphysics of Morals (Metaphysik der Sitten)*, 3 br. n. 12a, 22 br. n. 43g, 30 br. n. 101, 49 br. n. 276d, 64 br. n. 85g, 98 br. n. 52a, 113 br. n. 208, 182 br. n. 291, *see also* Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals, Morals
- Michaelis, Johann David, 13 incl. br. n. 86, 110 n. 167 and br. n. 167b
- Mind(ed) (*Gemüt, Kopf, Sinn [gesinnt, -müti]*), 26 br. n. 66, 34, 48 incl. br. n. 262, 50, 57 n. 8 and br. n. 6, 61, 63–65, 66 br. n. 99, 73 br. n. 161f, 74 br. n. 164, 79, 80, 82, 83, 88 n. 309, 93, 95, 102, 123, 131, 134, 156, 170, 174, 180, 183 n. 312, 184 n. 312, 193, 195 n. 382, 197, 198, 200, cf. 152 br. n. 21, *see also* Sense, Mental
- Miracle (*Wunder*), 52, 53 incl. br. n. 308, 62, 63, 84–88 (incl. n. 285, 305, 309 and br. ns. 263, 276, 287, 293, 307, 390d, 309f, 309j), 129, 130, 132, 162, 163, 184 n. 312, 191, 194 incl. br. n. 377, 195 n. 382, *see also* Marvel

Misanthropy (*Menschenhaß*), 34, 184 n. 312, *see also* Hatred

Misbelief or misbeliever (*Irrglaube, Irrgläubiger*), 108 incl. br. n. 154, *see also* Belief

Mischief or mischievous (*Unfug, mutwillig*), 9, 10, 85 n. 285, 132

Misdeed (*Untat*), 126, *see also* Deed

Misery (*Elend*), 69

Misfortune (*Unglück*), 33, 120, *see also* Fortune

Mission (*Sendung*), 128 incl. br. n. 357, 159,

Mistrust (*mißtrauen*), 57, *see also* Trust

Model (*Muster, Vorbild*), 62 br. n. 65, 66, 80 n. 226, 84, cf. 10 br. n. 61, *see also* Prototype

Modest(y) (*Bescheiden[heiß]*), 88 n. 309, 132, 136 n. 425, 165, 184 n. 312, 190 br. n. 347b, cf. 52 br. n. 293, *see also* Immodest

Mohammedan or Mohammedanism (*Muhammedaner, muhammedanisch, Muhammedanismus*), 108, 111, 193

Molding (*Bildung*), 199, *see also* Education

Monastic (*Mönchs-*), 80 n. 226, *see also* Monk

Mongols (*Mongolen*), 108 n. 155

Monk (*Mönch*), 130, 172, *see also* Monastic

Moral(ly) (*moralisch[erweise]*), legislator, 6, 181; *sittlich*); 6, 13, 24 br. ns. 52 and 53c, 30 br. n. 112, 44, 45 n. 246, 76, 82, 110, 118, 125, 134, 136, 138 incl. n. 436 and br. ns. 433 and 436i, 139, 143 incl. br. n. 479, 161, 171, 174 incl. br. n. 216, 177, 178, 190, 193, 198; philosophy, 22 br. n. 43g, 23 br. n. 44b, 59 n. 17; philosophers, 24 n. 53, 111; theology, 144 br. n. 482; terminology, 72 br. n. 138; meaning (sense), 93 br. n. 5, 110 n. 167; theory, 6 br. n. 32p; interpretation, 114 br. ns. 213 and 214; development, 51; education, 48, 176; apprentices, 48; life history, 143; purely, 13; form, 170; content, 110 br. n. 188, 199; use (employment), 43 n. 231, 88 n. 309; (our [future], passive) state, 57 n. 8, 69 n. 127, 71, 184; standard, 77; scale, 64 n. 85; properties, 200; quality, 141 incl. br. n. 459; cases, 69 n. 127; oriented, 23 n. 44; good, *see* Good; best for us, 194; safer side, 186 br. n. 319; well-meaning, 93 incl. br. n. 6; evil, *see* Evil; defect, 80 n. 226; faultiness, 30 br. n. 102; laxity, 186 br. n. 319; unlawful, 58; indifferent (actions), 22 br. n. 40, 23

n. 44, 103, 106; intermediate something, 22; means, 174; issue, 124; doctrine(s), 111, 128, 156; dogmatics, 50; (universal,) dogmas, 111; catechism, 182 br. n. 291; asceticism, 50; servitude, 82; service (of God), 172, 173, 177, 179, 192; order, 30, 36, 49, 50, 86, 165; edifice, 198 n. 391; (human, higher, all-powerful) being, 3 br. n. 5, 5, 6 br. n. 32, 24 n. 53, 31, 86, 98, 127, 139, 176; private concern, 100; (external,) relation, 78, 141, 160, 182; power, 174, 191; ability (power), 31, 173 br. n. 201, 174 br. n. 205; incapacity, 52; (the human being's) constitution, 40, 43, 66, 67 n. 103, 121, 141, 161, 170 n. 170, 192 incl. n. 382; attitude, *see* Attitude; personality, 141; resolve, 5; strength, 190 n. 347, 191; feeling, *see* Feeling; concern, 195 n. 382; interest, 123 n. 327; enthusiasm, 195 n. 382; self-love, 45 n. 246; (pure,) judgment (judging), 24 n. 53, 168; incentive(s), 22 n. 43, 29, 88 n. 309, 101, 195 n. 382; determining bases of actions, 165; need, 52, 98; beneficial, 71; doing and refraining, 6 br. n. 32; acts, 74; effect of actions, 200; (good,) conduct (the human being's), 161, 185, 191; striving, 183; struggle, 59; work for the good, 153 n. 32; (perplexing,) decisions, 185; consequence (of actions, for the subject), 73; object, 137, 195 n. 382, 198 n. 391; wish(es), 178, 195 n. 382; intention, 177; (original,) predisposition, 20, 49, 59 n. 17, 82, 94, 97, 120, 121, 123, 126, 132, 138; propensity, 31; legislative (commanding) reason, 35, 62, 94, 100, 153 n. 32; death of reason, 175; power of judgment, 38, 186; concept(s), 6 br. n. 32, 12–14, 76, 136 n. 425, 144 br. n. 482, 168 n. 162; (subjective, genuine, universal, self-subsistent) principle(s) (of religion), 5, 57 n. 8, 69 n. 127, 83, 110 n. 167, 170, 182, 185, 189; presentation, 80 n. 226; (doctrines of) freedom, 80, 123 n. 327, 180; precept, 45 n. 246; maxim(s), 3 br. n. 12, 21 n. 31, 30, 33 br. n. 145, 132; evil maxims, 20; law(s), *see* Law; court of law, 74; sentencing reason, 39 n. 193; (transcendent) idea(s) (of reason), 5, 52, 82, 119, 174, 197; (purely, practical) aim, 12, 53, 64 n. 85, 81 n. 235, 143, 158, cf.

- 13 br. n. 79; demand, 6; command(s), 8, 169; (true,) duty, 160; necessity (necessitation, necessary), 118, 143, 154; improvement (improved), 34, 88, 112, 130, 142, 169, 198; better, 123 n. 327; change of mentality, 73; instinct, 80 n. 226; sufferings, 78 n. 201; effect, 69 n. 127; a different human being, 73, 74; receptivity (worthiness) (to be happy), 75 n. 182, 115, 146 n. 489, 178; insight, 133 n. 397; worth, 31, 48, 63, 64 n. 85, 69 n. 127, 71, 103, 111, 115, 169, 177, 182, 184 n. 312; (complete,) perfect(ion), 3 br. n. 12, 60 incl. br. n. 26, 61, 82, 97, 145, 161; happiness, 67, 74 n. 128; (greatest) liking, 145 br. n. 486, 162; pleasure, 145 incl. br. ns. 486 and 488; pleasing to God, 62; submission, 169; veneration of God, 182; vocation, 50, 60, 100, 152, 197; dominion, 83; world epoch, 135; (pure[ly], purest) (doctrine of, foundation of) religion, 51, 84, 103–07 incl. br. n. 8, 111, 123 n. 327, 127, 130, 141, 145, 166 n. 152, 167, 173 n. 200; spirit of prayer, 195 n. 382; faith, *see* Faith; unbelief, 63, 84; warning, 110 n. 167 and br. n. 167i; (supranatural,) influences, 194; operating causes, 116; (final) purpose, 6 br. n. 32, 104, 110 br. n. 188; 138, 183; (true,) safety, 189; union, 147; community, 105; contemplation of God, 144 br. n. 482; people of God, 100; legislator, 6 incl. n. 32, 181; ruler (legislator, government, originator) of the world, 99, 101, 139, 156, 157; (higher,) influence, 161; provider (sovereign) of humankind, 139, 140; kingdom of God (on earth), 101, 136 n. 425; (divine, pure) legislation, 101, 104; conduct, God's, 140; father, 102; *see also* Ethical, Morality, Morals, Immoral, Non-moral
- Moralist (*Moralist*), 20, *see also* Morality
- Morality (*Moral[ität], Sittlichkeit*), 3–7 incl. n. 32 and br. n. 18, 13 br. n. 86, 14, 22 n. 43, 23 incl. n. 44, 26 br. n. 66, 34, 35, 39 n. 193, 45 n. 246, 57 incl. n. 8, 60 n. 20, 64, 68, 69 n. 127, 73 n. 161, 82, 83, 87, 94, 98, 103, 110 incl. n. 167 incl. br. ns. 167b and 167d, 113, 114, 130, 134 br. n. 403, 139 br. n. 437, 141, 144 br. n. 482, 146 n. 489, 157 incl. br. n. 44, 161 n. 107, 166 br. n. 152a, 168, 169, 170 n. 170 and br. n. 170a, 172, 175, 177–83 incl. br. ns. 287 and 301 and 305, 191, 192 incl. br. n. 360, 194, 195 n. 382, *see also* Moral, Moralist, Morals, Mores, Manners, Immoral Morals (*Sitten*), 30 incl. br. n. 113, 47 br. n. 255, 76, 120; doctrine of, 22; *see also* Mores, Manners, Morality, *see also* *Metaphysics of Morals*
- Mores (*Sitten*), 30 br. ns. 112 and 113, 47, 48, 113, *see also* Morals, Manners, Morality
- Mortal (*Sterblicher*), 175 n. 224, cf. 121 incl. br. n. 312, *see also* Immortality
- Motivating cause or motive (*Bewegursache, Beweg[ungs]grund, Bewegungs-*), 138 n. 436, 162, 195 n. 382
- Multitude (*Menge*), 19 br. n. 11, 33, 96, 98, 101 incl. br. n. 70, 105, 106, 125, 180
- Mystery or mysterious (*Geheimnis, geheim[nisvoll]*), 14, 52, 53, 85 incl. n. 285, 128 n. 361, 129, 135 n. 415, 137, 138–43 incl. n. 436, 144 n. 480 and br. n. 482, 145, 171, 172, 181, 194 incl. br. n. 377, *see also* Secrecy
- Mystical (*mystisch*), 19 br. n. 11, 83, 111, 120, 130, 136, 145
- Natural(ly, by nature) (*Natur-, natürlich[erweise]*), 51, 45 n. 246, 63, 69 n. 127, 73 n. 161, 106, 136, 155 br. n. 35, 156 br. n. 39, 158, 161, 166 br. n. 152a, 172, 177, 182, 183, 201, cf. 85 n. 285; philosopher, 185 br. n. 317; scientist(s), 40 n. 203; constitution; order, 59 n. 17; state, 96, 97 br. n. 41b; impulse, 21; cause(s) or causality, 21, 40, 41, 170 br. n. 170a; effect(s), 40, 88 n. 309; incidents, 88 n. 309; generation, 80 n. 226; begotten, 63 br. ns. 75 and 76; beings, 64 n. 85; affinity, 123; right, 10; law(s), *see* Law; incapacity, 51, 178; need, 5, 109; innocence, 51; inclination(s), 34, 45 n. 246, 57–59, 64; influences, 88; goods, 172; corruption, 143; fear (of death), 78 n. 201, 175; foundation for the good, 20; (the human being's,) property, 6 n. 32; predisposition, 27, 32, 36, 41, 122, 161; (the human being's,) propensity, 27, 29 incl. br. n. 91, 32, 37, 160; foundation of evil, 43 incl. br. n. 225; purpose, 27; being, 31; human being, 63, 64, 97; actions, 178; (divine), constitution, 139 incl. br. n.

- 440; goodness, 33; (the human being's,) perfection, 3 n. 12; religion, 81 br. n. 235f, 125 br. n. 337, 154, 155–57 incl. br. n. 44, 165; miracles, 88 n. 309; *see also* Nature, Naturalist, Supranatural
- Naturalist(ic) (*Naturalist[isch]*), 85 n. 285, 118, 154, 155, *see also* Natural
- Nature (*Natur*), 5, 6 n. 32, 11, 14, 15, 19, 20 incl. br. ns. 14 and 17 and 23, 21 incl. n. 31, 22, 23 n. 44, 24 n. 53, 25–30, 32–39 (incl. n. 152 and br. ns. 138, 140, 147, 148, 177, 182), 41–44, 44 br. n. 244, 445 n. 246, 49 incl. n. 276 and br. n. 274, 51, 53, 57 n. 8, 59, 61, 62, 64 incl. n. 85, 71, 73 n. 161, 79, 80 n. 226, 82, 86, 87, 88 n. 309, 93–97 incl. br. n. 41j, 100, 103, 114, 117, 123 n. 327, 126, 128 n. 361, 131, 132, 136 n. 425, 138 n. 436, 139, 142, 144 n. 480 and br. n. 482, 146 n. 489, 147, 161, 165 incl. br. n. 145, 173–175, 182, 184 n. 312, 189, 190 incl. n. 347, 191, 193, 194, 195 n. 382, *see also* Natural, Naturalist
- Necessary or necessity or necessitation (*Notwendig[keit], Nötigung*), 4, 23 n. 44, 26 n. 67, 28, 32, 47, 49 n. 276, 50, 52, 62, 64 n. 85 and br. n. 78, 73, 88 n. 309, 101, 106, 109 br. n. 160, 111, 115, 116, 118, 121 incl. br. n. 313, 124, 126, 133, 139, 140, 143, 145, 154, 155, 162, 163, 167, 168 br. n. 159, 170 br. n. 170a, 172, 178, 179 incl. n. 263, 180, 183, 185, 186, 188, 192, 194, 195 n. 382, 198, *see also* Unnecessary
- Negative (*negativ*), 24 n. 53, 28, 39 n. 193, 43 br. n. 230, 76, 87, 146 n. 489
- Neglect or be neglected (*Verabsäumung, verabsäumen, leer ausgehen*), 69 n. 127, 78 n. 201, 112, 120, 161, 190 n. 347
- Neighbor(ing) (*Nächster [benachbart]*), 34 n. 152, 110 br. n. 167f, 159, 160 br. n. 79
- Nicolai, Friedrich, 11 br. n. 71, 166 br. n. 152a
- Nonessential (*Nichtwesentliches*), 108, *see also* Essence
- Nonexistent (*nicht existierend*), 14, *see also* Exist
- Nonmoral (*nicht moralisch*), 30, 195 n. 382, *see also* Moral
- Nonrational (*vernunftlos*), 73 n. 161, *see also* Rational
- Nonsensible (*nicht sinnlich*), 128 n. 361, *see also* Sensibility
- Obedience or obedient or obey (*Gehorsam, gehorsam, gehorchen[d]*), 3 br. n. 12, 8, 20 br. n. 17, 36, 42, 49, 61 br. n. 42, 62, 68 br. n. 113, 99 n. 55 and br. n. 55c, 101, 103, 104, 122, 126, 127, 138 br. n. 436, 151, 153 n. 32 and br. n. 32g, 164, 169, 180, 195 n. 382 and br. n. 382g
- Obligated (*verbunden, verbindlich*), 33, 63, 72, 93, 105, 182, *see also* Obligation
- Obligation (*Verbindlichkeit, Verpflichtung, Schuldigkeit*), 23 n. 44, 35, 72, 96, 103, 105, 146 n. 489 and br. n. 489h, 156, 163, 171, 181, 186 br. n. 326, 199, *see also* Guiltiness, Obligated, Obligatory
- Obligatory (*verbindend, verpflichtend, verbindlich*), 83, 99, 104, 109, 158, 182, *see also* Obligation
- Observance or observation or observe or observer (*Befolgung, Beobachtung, Observanz, befolgen, beobachten, Beobachter*), 3, 5, 6 n. 32, 8, 20, 23, 30, 33, 47, 63, 69 n. 127, 84, 99 n. 55, 101, 105–07 incl. br. n. 133, , 109, 121, 123 n. 327, 126, 129 br. n. 363, 133 n. 397, 136 br. n. 424, 146 n. 489 and br. n. 489h, 153 n. 32, 158, 159, 163, 165, 166 n. 152, 173 n. 200, 174 incl. br. n. 215, 176, 178–80, 184 n. 312, 192, 201, *see also* Self-observation
- Offense (*Vergehung*), 38, 117
- Offering (*Opfer*), 172 incl. br. n. 193, 187 br. n. 328, *see also* Sacrifice
- Omnibenevolent (*allgütig*), 182 br. n. 301, 201, *see also* Benevolence
- Omnipotent (*allmächtig*), 86, 139, 182 br. n. 301, *see also* All-powerful, Power
- Omnipresence (*Allgegenwart*), 138 n. 436 and br. n. 436b, 182 br. n. 301
- Omniscient (*allwissend*), 139, 182 br. n. 301, *see also* Knowledge
- On the Saying: That May Be Correct In Theory but Is Inadequate for Practice* (*Über den Gemeinspruch: Das mag in der Theorie richtig sein, taugt aber nicht für die Praxis*), 166 br. n. 152a
- Opposite or oppose(d) or opposition or opponent (*Gegenteil, entgegenstellen, entge-*

- gensetzen* [*entgegengesetzt*], *Widerstreit*, *Gegner*), 13, 19–21, 22 n. 43 and br. n. 43f, 24, 31, 35, 39 br. n. 193b, 45 n. 246, 47, 49–51 incl. n. 276, 53, 57 incl. n. 8, 59, 66, 69 n. 127, 73 br. n. 161f, 74 n. 178, 78, 83, 87, 94, 96, 99 n. 55, 119, 121 n. 311, 121 br. n. 312, 128, 160, 170, 172, 180, 184 n. 312, 186 incl. br. n. 319, 190 n. 347, 195 n. 382, *see also* Conflict
- Ordain (*verordnen*), 99 br. n. 55b, 187
- Order or give orders (*Befehl[en]*), 87, 99, 103, 134 br. n. 401, 152, 180, 188 n. 337
- Order or ordered (*Ordnung, geordnet*), 53, 60 br. n. 21, 78 br. n. 202, 86, 177, 179; established, 86; new, 122; civil, 131; of nature (natural), 59 n. 17, 86; of appearances, 121 n. 311, (original) moral, 30, 36, 49, 50, 86, 165; supernatural, 121 n. 311
- Ordinance (*Verordnung*), 99 br. n. 55b, 168
- Origin(al) or originator (*Ursprung [ursprünglich], Urheber*), 20 br. n. 14, 21, 25–28 incl. br. n. 72, 31 incl. br. n. 123, 35, 39 incl. br. n. 195, 40 incl. br. n. 203d, 41, 42 n. 219 and br. n. 223, 43–46 incl. br. n. 250, 49, 50–52, 61, 64 incl. br. n. 78, 68, 72, 78, 80, 81 n. 235, 82–84, 88 n. 309, 93, 99, 102, 104, 107, 108 n. 155, 111–14, 121 n. 311, 125, 127, 140 n. 446, 142, 143, 144 br. n. 482, 152, 155, 157, 159, 183
- Orthodoxy or orthodox (*Rechtgläubigkeit, orthodox*), 85 n. 285, 109, 130, 133 n. 397
- Overcome (*überwinden*), 49 n. 276, 59, 69 n. 127, 77, 135, *see also* Prevail
- Overlord (*Oberherr*), 79, 200, *see also* Lord, Sovereign, Ruler
- Overstep(ping) (*überschreiten, Überschreitung*), 9, 70, 194
- Ovid (Publius Ovidius Naso), 40 br. n. 202, 190 br. n. 347b
- Pagan(ism) (*heidnisch [Heidentum]*), 134 br. n. 401, 180, 184 n. 312, 199
- Palmquist, Stephen, 9 br. n. 48, 12 br. n. 76, 14 br. n. 95, 104 br. n. 110, 105 br. n. 118
- Paradise (*Paradies*), 19, 111
- Paradoxical (*widersinnisch, -ig*), 88 n. 309, 152, 181
- Pardon (*Pardon*), 69 n. 127
- Pascal, Blaise, 386 br. n. 319
- Passion (*Leidenschaft, Sucht*), 27 br. n. 72, 28 n. 85, 38, 93, 168 n. 161
- Pastor (*Seelenhirt*), 85 br. n. 285a, 101 br. n. 69, 133 br. n. 397b, cf. 87 br. n. 299, *see also* Shepherd of souls
- Patriarch(al) (*Patriarch [altväterlich]*), 102, 127
- Peace of conscience (*Gewissensruhe*), 38, *see also* Conscience
- Penance or do penance or *büßend* (*Büßung, büßen[d]*), 40 n. 203, 76, 144 br. n. 482, 169
- People (*Volk*), 9, 34 incl. n. 152 and br. n. 152a, 79, 80, 82 incl. br. n. 246, 85 br. n. 278, 96 br. n. 37, 98–101 incl. br. n. 58, 110 br. n. 167a, 112, 114, 120, 125–30, 135, 136 n. 425, 140 incl. n. 446, 141, 165–69 incl. n. 152, 176 br. ns. 230 and 231 and 234, 180, 184 n. 312, 187 incl. br. ns. 333 and 335, 188 n. 337, *see also* Public, Popular
- Perdition (*Verderben*), 64, 79, 135, *see also* Corruption
- Perfection or perfecting or (to) perfect(ed) (*Vollkommen[heit], vollenden [vollender]*), 3 n. 12, 22 br. n. 42, 34, 47 br. n. 252, 60 incl. br. ns. 24 and 26, 61, 64, 66 br. n. 97, 67, 68, 74 n. 178 and br. n. 178c, 80 n. 226, 82, 88 n. 309, 96, 97, 101 br. n. 65, 118, 122, 128 br. n. 358, 135, 139, 145, 159 br. n. 72, 161, 162, 174, 185 br. n. 315, 192, 195 n. 382, *see also* Imperfection
- Persecution or persecute (*Verfolgung, verfolgen*), 81, 83, 110 br. n. 167f, 136 br. n. 425c, 160 br. n. 79, 161 br. n. 97
- Personal(ity) or personify (*Persönlich[keit], personifizieren*), 26–28 incl. br. n. 66, 40 n. 203, 60, 72, 74, 121 br. n. 312, 128 n. 361, 141, 144 br. n. 482, 146, 195 n. 382, 199 incl. br. n. 393, 201, cf. 190 br. ns. 347a and 347b
- Perversion or pervert(ed) or perversity (*Verkehrung, verkehren [verkehrt], Verkehrtheit*), 30 incl. br. n. 106, 37, 48, 50, 57 n. 8, 83
- Pharisees (*Pharisäer*), 136 br. n. 424, 140 n. 446, 159 br. n. 70
- Philosophy or philosophical(ly) or philosopher or philosophize (*Philosophie, Philosoph, Weltweiser, philosophisch, philosophieren*),

- 9 incl. br. ns. 47 and 49 and 54, 10 incl. br. n. 67, 12, 13 incl. br. ns. 85 and 89, 17, 19 incl. br. ns. 3 and 11, 20 br. ns. 14 and 17, 22 br. n. 42, 22 br. n. 43g, 23 br. n. 43b, 24 n. 53, 26 br. n. 66, 33, 34 incl. br. n. 152f, 43 br. n. 230, 55, 57 n. 8, 59 incl. n. 17, 60 n. 20, 64 n. 85 and br. n. 85g, 73 n. 161, 80, 81 br. n. 235f, 85 n. 285, 91, 95, 111 incl. br. ns. 180 and 181, 121 br. n. 312, 122, 147, 149, 157, 166 br. n. 152a, 170 br. n. 170a, 181 incl. br. n. 278, 185 br. n. 317, 186 br. n. 319
- Physical(ly) (*physisch*), 14 br. n. 95, 19, 26, 27, 31, 67, 68, 74 incl. n. 178, 78 n. 201, 81, 83, 118, 121, 125, 135, 141, 170 n. 170, 178, 190
- Piety or pious or pietism (*Frömmigkeit, fromm, Pietismus*), 19 br. n. 11, 23 n. 44, 106, 133 n. 397, 163, 166 br. n. 152a, 173 incl. n. 200, 179 incl. n. 263, 184 n. 312, 190 br. n. 347b, 195 n. 382, 201
- Pilgrim(age) (*Pilgrim [Wallfahrt]*), 169, 173 incl. br. n. 197, 189 n. 344 and br. n. 344a, 194
- Pistorius, Hermann Andreas, 2 br. n. 12a
- Pleasure or please or (be) pleasing (*[Wohl]gefallen, Lust, [wohl]gefällig*), 28 n. 85, 47 incl. br. n. 256, 48, 53, 60–64, 66, 67 incl. n. 103, 69 n. 127, 73, 74 n. 178, 75, 76, 80 incl. n. 226 and br. n. 226a, 84, 85, 103, 104, 106, 113–17, 119, 120, 127 br. n. 348, 129, 133, 136 n. 425, 141, 143, 145 incl. br. ns. 486 and 488, 153, 159, 168–79 incl. br. ns. 170a and 247, 181 br. n. 278, 184 n. 312, 185, 192–94, 195 n. 382, 196, 198, cf. 45 br. ns. 246b and 246c, 47 br. n. 217, 44 br. n. 235, *see also* Liking, Displease
- Politics or political(ly) (*Politik, politisch[-]*), 20 br. n. 14, 81 n. 235, 94–97, 99 n. 55, 100–02, 110 n. 167, 123 incl. n. 327, 125 incl. br. ns. 336 and 337, 126, 128, 130, 131, 133 n. 397 and br. n. 397a, 136 n. 425, 138 n. 436, 166 br. n. 152a, 170 br. n. 170a, 180, 199
- Polytheism (*Polytheismus, Vielgötterei*), 111, 127, 184 n. 312, *see also* Theistic
- Poor (*arm*), 93 incl. br. n. 5, 175 n. 224, 194, *see also* Poverty
- Pope (*Papst*), 102
- Popular or Population (*populär, Volks-, Völkerschaft*), 14, 34 incl. br. n. 149, 81 br. n. 235a, 83, 166 br. n. 152a, 175 n. 224; *faith, see* Faith; *see also* People, Public
- Positive (*positiv*), 22 n. 43, 39 n. 193, 44, 59, 76, 87, 157, 187, 188
- Possibility or possible (*Möglich[keit]*), 5, 6 incl. br. n. 32 and br. n. 32b, 10, 13 incl. br. n. 89, 20–22 incl. n. 43, 26 n. 67, 27–29, 35, 37, 40, 41, 44, 45–47 incl. n. 246 and br. n. 244, 49 n. 276, 50–52, 60 br. n. 24, 61–63 incl. br. ns. 47 and 59, 64 n. 85, 66–69 incl. n. 127, 71, 72, 74, 80 n. 226, 85 n. 285, 87, 88 incl. n. 305, 97, 101, 104, 105, 111, 114–17 incl. br. n. 214, 123 br. n. 327c, 132, 134, 135 n. 415, 136, 138 n. 436, 139 incl. br. n. 437, 143, 144 n. 480, 152, 153 n. 32 and br. n. 32c, 155 incl. br. n. 34, 156, 162, 167, 168 n. 162, 170 n. 170, 175, 177 incl. br. n. 250, 179 n. 263, 183, 185–87, 191, 192, 194, 195 n. 382, *see also* Impossibility
- Posterity (*Nachkommenschaft*), 107, 109, 126, 163, 166, 193
- Postulate (*Postulat*), 186 incl. br. n. 318
- Poverty (*Armut*), 81, *see also* Poor
- Power(ful[ly]) (*Macht, Kraft [mächtig, kräftig], Gewalt*), 4–6, 8, 19, 20, 24 br. n. 49, 30, 35–37, 44, 47, 49–52 incl. n. 276 and br. ns. 276c and 294, 57 incl. n. 8, 59 n. 17 and br. ns. 17c and 19, 60 br. ns. 34 and 36, 61, 62 br. n. 62, 69, 72, 73, 78, 79, 81 incl. n. 235 and br. n. 230, 82, 83, 85, 93, 94 br. n. 8, 95 incl. br. n. 26, 96, 97 n. 41, 98 incl. br. n. 49, 99 br. n. 55b, 100, 102, 104, 108, 109 br. n. 160, 110 br. n. 167a, 117 incl. br. n. 265, 120 incl. br. n. 303, 122, 123 n. 327, 124, 127–29, 131, 133 n. 397, 134, 135, 140 incl. br. ns. 442b and 443 and 446e, 142, 151 br. n. 9, 153 n. 32, 156, 159 n. 76, 161 n. 107, 165, 166 br. n. 152a, 168 br. n. 162a, 169, 170 n. 170, 171–76 incl. br. ns. 201 and 205 and 239, 178, 180, 183 incl. br. n. 307, 184 n. 312, 188 n. 337 and br. n. 337b, 190–92 incl. br. n. 351, 193 br. n. 369, 195 n. 382, 197, 198, 201, *see also* All-powerful, Force, Strength, Omnipotent, Power of choice, Power of desire, Power of judgment, Power of reason

- Power of choice (*Willkür*), 3, 4, 6 n. 32, 21–25 incl. ns. 31 and 43 and br. n. 59, 26 n. 67 and br. n. 66, 27–32 incl. br. n. 77, 35–37, 39–41 incl. n. 193 and br. n. 193b, 42 n. 219, 43, 44, 45 br. n. 246j, 46–48, 49 n. 276 and br. n. 276c, 50, 51, 59, 62 incl. br. n. 63, 97 n. 41, 99 n. 55 and br. n. 55a, 118 incl. br. n. 273, 138, 170 n. 170 and br. ns. 170f and 170g, *see also* Choice
- Power of desire (*Begehrungsvermögen*), 28 incl. n. 85, 170 br. n. 170a, *see also* Desire
- Power of judgment (*Urteilkraft*), 38, 88 n. 309, 186; *see also* Judging, *Critique of Judgment*
- Power of reason (*Vernunftvermögen*), 3, 6 n. 32, 26 br. n. 66, 157, *see also* Reason
- Practicability or practicable (*Tunlich[keit]*), 43, 64, 110 n. 167, 200, *see also* Practice, Practical
- Practical(ly) (*praktisch*), 5, 6 n. 32, 12 br. n. 79, 52, 64, 85, 126, 157, 192; reference, 6 n. 32, 62, 142, 144 n. 481; aspect, 171; issue, 118; concern, 135 n. 415; importance, 146 n. 489; content, 132; (power of) reason, 3, 5, 6 n. 32, 13, 14, 26 n. 67 and br. n. 66, 28, 69 n. 127, 88 n. 305, 138, 139, 170 br. n. 170a, *see also* Power of reason, *Critique of Practical Reason*; concept(s) of reason, 157, 193; idea, 119, 142; reality, 5, 6 n. 32; cognition(s), 181 incl. br. n. 287; rules, 110; proposition(s), 6 n. 32, (regulative) principle(s), 118, 123 n. 327, 167; maxim(s), 119, 144 br. n. 482; law, 20 br. n. 22; necessary, 145; valid(ity), 63, 83; obligatory, 83; employment (use), 53, 59, 69 n. 127, 76, 86, 137; aim, 12, 63, 80 n. 226, 191; point of view, 146 n. 489; attitudes, 201; relation, 168; subjectively, 186; delusion, 168 n. 161; service, 198; faith, 62, 74, 115, 118, 153 incl. n. 32, 164
- Practice or practicing (*Übung, Werk*), 58, 74 n. 178 and br. n. 178j, 184 n. 312, 198, cf. 146 br. n. 489g, 153 br. n. 22, 166 br. n. 152a, 173 br. n. 198, *see also* Practical, Practicability
- Praise (*Lob*), 22, *see also* Laudation
- Prayer or pray (*Gebet, beten*), 101 br. n. 66, 110 n. 167 and br. ns. 167f and 167g, 160 br. n. 79, 173, 176, 193–95 incl. n. 382 and br. n. 381, 197, 198
- Precept (*Vorschrift*), 6 n. 32, 45 n. 246, 50, 57 br. n. 6, 59 n. 17, 64, 84, 88, 102, 106, 161, 180, 185 br. n. 317, 188
- Predisposition (*Anlage, Prädisposition*), 11, 20, 26–29 incl. ns. 67 and 85 and br. ns. 61 and 63, 32, 33 incl. n. 143, 34 n. 152, 36, 41, 43, 44–46 incl. n. 241, 48–52, 59 n. 17, 80 n. 226, 82, 83, 93, 94, 97, 101, 111, 120, 121 incl. n. 311, 123, 124, 126, 134, 138, 161, 184 n. 312, 190 n. 347
- Preexistence (*Präexistenz*), 80 n. 226, *see also* Exist
- Prejudice (*Vorurteil*), 127, 131, 163
- Preservation or preserver or preserve (*Erhaltung, Erhalter, aufbehalten*), 19, 26, 81 n. 235, 85, 88 n. 309, 94, 106, 123 n. 327, 128 n. 361, 136 n. 425, 139, 140 br. n. 446b, 156, 158, 165, 166 n. 152, 193, 195 n. 382, *see also* All-preserving
- Presumption (*Anmaßung*), 97 n. 41, 144 br. n. 482, 159 n. 76, 165, 201, *see also* Pretension
- Presumptuous(ness) (*Vermessen[heit]*), 52, 88 n. 309, 105, 190, 195 n. 382
- Pretense (*Vorgeben, Vorspiegelung*), 34, 105, 180, 188, 195 n. 382, 201, *see also* Pretension
- Pretension or pretentious (*Anmaßung, anmaßend*), 8, 109, 130, *see also* Presumption, Pretense, Unpretentious
- Prevail (not) (*überwinden, aufkommen, obwalten, vorwalten, herrschen [nichts ausrichten]*), 61, 83 incl. br. n. 260, 85, 97 n. 41, 120, 187, *see also* Overcome
- Prevention or prevent or preventive (*Verhütung, Verhinderung, hindern, abhalten, Vorbauungs-*), 27, 38, 45 n. 246 and br. n. 246j, 60 n. 20, 94, 108, 113, 123 n. 327, 133 n. 397, 134, 135 n. 415
- Pride (*Stolz*), 8, 110 br. n. 167a, 184 n. 312
- Priest(ly) (*Priester[-]*), 19 incl. br. n. 11, 73 n. 161, 81 n. 235, 100, 106 incl. br. n. 138, 120, 125, 128, 130 incl. br. n. 379, 136 br. n. 425d, 151 br. n. 2, 176 br. n. 231, 188, cf. 134 br. n. 401
- Priestery or priestling (*Pfaffentum, Pfaffe*), 15, 130 incl. br. n. 379, 151 incl. br. n. 2, 153 n. 32, 175 incl. br. n. 224a, 179, 200

- Principle (*Grundsatz, Prinzip, Principium, Satz*), 6 n. 32, 23 n. 44, 27 br. n. 72, 34, 37, 39 n. 193, 45 n. 246, 48, 49 n. 276, 52, 57 n. 8, 60 n. 20, 68, 69 n. 127, 82, 88 n. 309, 98 incl. n. 52, 100–02, 112 incl. br. n. 191, 115, 119, 120, 121 n. 311, 122, 123 n. 327, 124, 125, 127, 128 n. 361, 131–33, 138 n. 436, 140 n. 442, 144 br. n. 482, 151 incl. br. n. 3, 153 incl. n. 32, 169, 170 incl. n. 170 and br. n. 170a, 173, 175 incl. br. n. 222, 176, 180, 184 n. 312 and br. n. 312c, 186, 188 incl. n. 337, 193, 198 n. 391; (defectively) adopted, 37, 180; acceptance of, 163; genuine, 36; stability of, 48; of security, 132 n. 392; unity of, 125; soul-corrupting, 57; of the innate corruption of human beings, 50; corruptor of, 59; (practical) regulative, 69 n. 127, 123 n. 327; (subjective,) of self-love, 36, 42; (subjective,) of (all our) maxims, 37, 45; (glorified,) of happiness, 47, 51; positive, 59; secure, 102; universal, 72; of causality, 142; (unconditional,) of the (determination of the) power of choice, 45 n. 246, 49 n. 276; of freedom, 79, 102; of maxims, 3 n. 12, 22 n. 43; noble-minded, of morality, 57 n. 8; of (the concepts of) duty, 3 n. 12, 98; subjective, of the attitude, 69 n. 127; of appropriate modesty, 132; of the excluded middle, 39 n. 193; (subjective,) of the good way of life (a way of life pleasing to God), 119, 176–77; intellectual, 170 n. 170, 172; religious, 172, 184 n. 312; of natural religion, 156; in scholarly religion, 157; of pure rational religion, 122, 158; holy (holiness of), 66, 82; supreme (commanding), 3 n. 12, 112, 165; constitutive, of suprasensible objects, 69 n. 127; bare, theoretical, practical, (of) evil, (of the) good, moral, of faith, of union, of virtue, *see these headings*
- Proclamation or proclaim (*Ankündigung, Kundmachung, ankündigen, verkündigen*), 26 n. 67, 50, 52, 69 n. 127, 80, 84, 88 n. 309, 136, 142, 171, 175 n. 224, 181, 184 n. 312
- Profane (*profane, Profan-*), 164, 166 n. 152
- Profess (*bezeugen*), 42 n. 219, *see also* Attest
- Prohibit(ion) (*verbieten [Verbot]*), 23 n. 44, 42, 133 n. 397, 159 n. 76, 199, *see also* Forbid
- Promise (*Verheißung, verheißen, versprechen*), 13, 49, 69 n. 127, 144, 153 n. 32, 161
- Promulgation or Promulgate (*Bekanntmachung, bekannt machen*), 121, 141
- Pronounce(ment) (*aussprechen [Ausspruch, -spruch]*), 7, 9, 34 br. n. 152f, 39 n. 193, 69 n. 127, 88 n. 309, 121 n. 311, 140 n. 442, 146 n. 489, 186 br. n. 320, 190 n. 344, 198
- Proof or prove (*Beweis, [s.] beweisen*), 6 n. 32, 13 br. n. 89, 20 br. n. 14, 25, 30, 32, 33 n. 143, 35, 39 n. 193 and br. n. 192, 43 n. 231, 51, 62, 64 n. 85, 85 n. 285, 106, 107, 108 br. n. 155b, 109 br. n. 160, 120, 121 br. n. 312, 128, 129, 135 br. n. 409, 136 n. 425, 145, 159, 160, 166 incl. br. n. 153, 169, 170 br. n. 170a, 186 br. n. 327, 191, 202, *see also* Justification
- Propagation or propagate or propagative (*Fortpflanzung, fortpflanzen, Fortpflanzungs-*), 26, 104, 144 n. 480 and br. ns. 480d and 480e, 156, 158, 193, 199
- Propensity (*Hang*), 28–33 incl. n. 85 and br. n. 91, 35, 37, 38 br. n. 182, 40–43 incl. n. 219 and br. n. 225, 47, 48, 50, 51, 64 n. 85, 80 n. 226 and br. n. 226f, 106, 123 n. 327, 131, 132 incl. n. 392, 133 n. 397, 136 n. 425, 141, 160, 169, 190 n. 347
- Prophecy or prophetic (*Weissagung[s-]*), 134 incl. br. n. 401, 136 n. 425, 140 n. 442, cf. 160 br. n. 80, 161 br. n. 97, 197 br. n. 388, 198 br. n. 391d
- Proposition of faith (*Glaubenssatz*), 6 n. 32, 111 br. n. 171, *see also* Dogma
- Protestant (*protestantisch*), 42 br. n. 223, 109, 165, 188
- Prototype (*Vorbild*), 19 br. n. 9, 62, 127, *see also* Model
- Providence or providence (*Vorsehung, Vorsorge*), 6 n. 32, 84, 100, 107 n. 145, 122, 133, 134, 136 n. 425, 201
- Proxy (*Stellvertreter, stellvertretend*), 74, 76, 118, 134, 143, *see also* Vicarious
- Prudence or prudential or prudent(ly) (*Klugheit[s-], klug [klüglisch]*), 23 n. 44, 33, 58, 121 br. n. 317, 126, 161, 165, 167, 181 br. n. 278, 182, 189, *see also* Astute
- Pseudoservice (*Afterdienst*), 15, 151 incl. br. n. 1, 153, 165, 167, 168, 170, 172, 175, 179, *see also* Service

- Public(ly)** (*Publikum, Volks-, öffentlich*), 8, 9, 34, 52, 79, 81 n. 235 and br. n. 235f, 94 incl. br. n. 13, 97 n. 41, 123 br. n. 327e, 125 br. n. 337, 128 n. 360, 132 n. 392, 133 n. 397, 136 n. 425, 138 n. 436, 152 br. n. 15, 176 br. n. 229, 195 n. 382, *see also* People, Popular
- Pulpit** (*Kanzel*), 113, 183
- Punishability or punishable** (*Strafbar[keit], strafbar, sträflich*), 72–74 incl. n. 178, 84, 108, 118, *see also* Punishment
- Punishment or punish** (*Strafe, Bestrafung, [be]strafen*), 52 br. n. 293, 69 n. 127, 72–74 incl. ns. 161 and 178, 77, 79, 110 n. 167, 112, 116, 126, 140 n. 446, 159 n. 76, 161, *see also* Punishability, Punitive justice, Unpunished
- Punitive justice** (*Strafgerechtigkeit*), 136 n. 425, *see also* Punishment, Justice
- Pure or purity or purification or purify** (*lauter, Lauterkeit, Läuterung, läutern*), 66, 68, 70, 77, 81, 115, *see also* Impure
- Pure(ly) or purity or purify** (*rein, Reinigkeit, reinigen*), 3, 6 n. 32, 10, 12 incl. br. n. 76, 12 br. n. 82, 13, 24 n. 53, 30, 35, 39 n. 193, 42, 52, 64, 67, 74 n. 178, 77, 80, 81 n. 235, 100, 102–07 incl. br. ns. 107 and 108 and 155b, 109, 110, 112, 114, 115 br. n. 228, 116–18, 121, 122, 123 n. 327, 124, 127, 129, 131, 135 n. 415, 138, 139, 141, 152, 153, 155–60, 161 n. 107, 162–65, 166 n. 152, 167, 168, 170 n. 170 and br. n. 170a, 172, 173 n. 200, 176, 179 n. 263, 182, 189, *see also* A priori
- Purgatory** (*Fegefeuer*), 69 n. 127
- Purpose(ful) or purposiveness**, [*Zweck[voll], Zweckmäßigkeit*], 3–6 incl. ns. 12 and 32 and br. n. 19 and 32c and 32e, 10, 13, 26 incl. n. 67, 27, 28, 33 n. 143, 34 n. 152 and br. n. 152c, 45 n. 246, 60 incl. br. n. 24, 64 n. 85, 81 n. 235 and br. n. 235a, 84 incl. br. n. 272, 95–97, 102, 104, 105, 107, 110–12 incl. br. n. 188, 118, 123 n. 327, 135, 138 incl. br. n. 435, 139, 143, 151, 133, 137, 138, 161 n. 107, 165, 166 incl. br. n. 153, 168 n. 161, 169, 170, 173, 175, 183, 185, 188 n. 337, 195 n. 382, 197, 198
- Rational(ly)** (*rational, vernunftmäßig, Vernunft- [vernünftigerweise]*), 12 br. n. 81, 26, 45 n. 246, 81 br. n. 235f, 87, 110 br. n. 168, 111 br. n. 181, 119, 161 n. 107, 170 br. n. 170a; (a priori,) use, 88 n. 309; deliberation, 26 n. 67; judging, 71; meaning, 83; concept, 12; idea, *see* Idea; principle, 119–20; origin, 39, 41, 43; basis (bases), 84, 157, 195 n. 382; determining basis, 3 n. 12; explanations, 88 n. 309; self-love (love of [liking for] oneself), 45 n. 246 and br. n. 246g; insight, 69 n. 127, 142; (awareness of) right, 72; meditating community, 85 n. 285; (entertain) hope, 68, 69; faith, *see* Faith; (pure, universal, system of) religion, 12 incl. br. ns. 76 and 82, 13, 110, 112–14 incl. br. n. 207, 121, 122, 123 n. 327, 135 n. 415, 152, 157, 158, 160, 162, 165; cleric, 87; (human, finite) being(s), 21, 26, 79, 85, 96, 97, 116, 123, 138 n. 436, cf. 26 br. n. 66; world being (being[s] in [of] the world), 6 n. 32, 26 n. 67, 60, 128 n. 361; *see also* Reasonable, Reason, Rationalist, Nonrational
- Rationalist** (*Rationalist*), 81 br. n. 235a, 125 br. n. 337, 154, 155, *see also* Rational, Reason
- Reality or really or realization or realize** (*Realität, realiter, Realisierung, realisieren*), 5 incl. br. n. 27, 6 n. 32, 22 n. 43, 62 incl. br. n. 59, 66, 95, 123 n. 327, 138, 139 incl. br. n. 438, 153 n. 32, 191
- Realm** (*Reich, Feld*), 8, 9, 52, 113, 60 br. n. 20c, 64 n. 85 and br. n. 85g, 72 br. n. 138, 82 br. n. 236, 140 br. n. 446e, 146 n. 489, 159 n. 76, *see also* Kingdom
- Reason or reasoning** (*Vernunft, vernünfteln*), 3, 5, 6, 10, 13, 26–28 incl. n. 67, 31 br. n. 126, 33 n. 143, 35, 36, 39 br. n. 195, 45 n. 246, 51–53, 57 incl. n. 8, 58, 61–63, 64 n. 85, 69 n. 127, 70, 73 n. 161, 76, 77, 80 n. 226, 84, 86, 87 incl. br. n. 293, 88 n. 309, 94, 104 incl. br. n. 110, 106, 113–15, 117 incl. br. n. 261, 119, 120, 122, 126, 128 n. 361, 130, 132 incl. n. 392, 136, 138, 142–45, 146 n. 489, 152, 155, 156, 161–65, 166 br. n. 152a, 167, 170 br. n. 170a, 171, 172, 175, 176, 178, 179 n. 263, 180, 181, 186, 188 n. 337, 189–91, 194; (universal) human, 9, 64 n. 85, 95, 111, 115, 116, 121, 140 incl. br. n. 442, 165; power of, *see* Power of reason; ability of, 59 n. 17; (practical) use of, 42–43, 53,

- 86, 87, 88 n. 309, 191, 192; bare, 1, 6 n. 32, 9, 10, 19 br. n. 3, 31, 43 n. 231, 104, 105, 112, 128 n. 361, 136 n. 425, 146 n. 489, 158, 177; pure, 6 n. 32, 13, 24 n. 53, 52, 167, 170 br. n. 170a; theoretical (power of), *see* Theoretical; practical (power of), *see* Practical; object of, 137, 138; presentation(s) of, 39, 40; (pure [practical], bare, highest) concept(s) of, 109, 156–58, 164, 193, 194; idea of, *see* Idea; its power of speculation, 118; judgment of, 24; maxim of, 85 n. 285; precept of, 6 n. 32, 57 br. n. 6, 88; doctrines of, 159 br. n. 66; (moral) laws of, 193, 194; truths of, 109 br. n. 160; limits (limitation) of, 64 n. 85, 88, 115; scales of pure, 24 n. 53; antinomy of, 116; stravings of, 53; malicious, 35; moral death of, 175; prohibition of, 199; modesty of, 88 n. 309; is free, 69 n. 127; less passive, 173 n. 200; incentive of, 59 n. 17; nourishment for, 88 n. 309; right, 57 br. n. 6; morally oriented, 23 n. 44; (morally) legislative, 35, 45 n. 246, 62, 94, 100; prescribing duties, 153 n. 32; (morally) commanding, 49, 59 n. 17, 153 n. 32; morally sentencing, 39 n. 193; moral final purpose of, 6 n. 32; (pure, holiest) teaching(s) of, 83, 159; pure teacher of, 12; need of, 104, 139; religion of, 12 br. n. 73, 152 br. n. 18; faith of, *see* Faith; *see also* Rational, Subtle reasoning
- Reasonable (*vernünftig, vernunftvoll*), 103, 110, 132, 166 br. n. 152a, 181, *see also* Rational, Reason
- Rebel(lion) or rebellious manner (*Rebell, Auführer [Empörung], rebellisch*), 36, 40 n. 203, 108, 131, 134, *see also* Insurrection, Revolt
- Rebirth or reborn (*Wiedergeburt, neugeboren*), 47, 117, 195 n. 382
- Rebuke (*Tadel*), 22, 175 n. 224, *see also* Re-proach
- Reciprocal(ly) (*wechselseitig*), 27, 33, 97, 155
- Reconciliation or reconcile (*Versöhnung, versöhnen, aussöhnen, vereinbaren, vereini-gen*), 31, 32, 34, 47, 49 n. 276, 76, 110, 116–18, 120, 121 n. 311, 123 n. 327, 142, 146 n. 489, 159 br. n. 75, 170 br. n. 170a, 184, 189, 191, *see also* Unite, Irreconcilable
- Redeemer or redemption (*Erlöser, Erlösung*), 74, 82 br. n. 246, 116, 172, cf. 186 br. n. 319
- Rediscover (*wieder auffinden*), 136 n. 425, *see also* Discovery
- Reflection or reflecting (*Besinnen, reflektierend*), 52 incl. br. n. 300, 60, 79, cf. 33 br. n. 145, 170 br. n. 170a
- Reflections on Metaphysics, 144 n. 482
- Reflections on Moral Philosophy, 22 br. n. 43g, 23 br. n. 44b
- Reform (*Reform*), 47, 48, 122, 172 br. n. 194
- Refraining, *see* Doing
- Regulative (*regulativ*), 6 n. 127, 123 n. 327 *see also* Constitutive
- Rehberg, August Wilhelm, 6 br. n. 32p, 57 br. n. 8b, 170 br. n. 170a
- Religion (*Religion*). 1, 3, 6 incl. n. 32 incl. br. n. 32p, 8, 9 br. n. 47, 10–13 incl. br. n. 14 br. n. 95, 15, 19 incl. br. n. 3, 31, 53 incl. br. n. 309, 57, 64 n. 85, 76, 81 n. 235, 84, 85, 103, 104, 106–08, 110, 112, 115 incl. br. n. 238, 118, 120, 121, 123 n. 327, 126, 127, 128 n. 361, 130, 131 br. n. 383, 132 incl. n. 392, 137, 140 incl. br. n. 446a, 141, 144 br. n. 482, 145, 151–59 incl. n. 32 and br. n. 34, 163, 165–67 incl. n. 152, 168 br. n. 162, 170 br. n. 170a, 174–76 incl. br. n. 235, 178, 180, 185, 187–90, 200, 201; human, moral, natural, rational (of reason), *see these headings*; definition of, 153 n. 32; determination of, 104; (determinate, coherent) concept of, 8, 103, 107, 123 n. 327, 153 n. 32, 156; spirit of, 200; point of, 190 n. 347; (moral) principle(s) of, 163, 170; (public, [pure(st)] philosophical, moral) doctrine(s) of, 10, 11, 13 br. n. 89, 14, 17, 55, 64 br. n. 84g, 85, 91, 107, 149, 163; moral foundation of, 145; pure rational system of, 12 incl. br. n. 82; philosophical investigator of, 13; interpreter of all, 121; parerga of, 52; public, 52; of the pursuit of favor, 51; of mere cult and observances, 84; delusion of, 200; statutory, 104, 167; apprentices of, 144 n. 480; venerators of, 132; of the priests, 19 incl. br. n. 11, 73 n. 161; Egyptian, 140 n. 446; of Zoroaster, 136 n. 425, 140 n. 446; Indian (Hindu), 19 br. n. 11, 111 br. n. 181, 140 n. 446; Mohammedan, 111 br. n. 178; 136 n. 425;

- Jewish (Judaism) (is not), 125 incl. br. n. 337, 136 n. 425; Gothic, 140 n. 446; Christian, 13 br. n. 89, 125 br. n. 337, 136 n. 425, 157, 163, 164, 167, 193; on earth, 124; origin of, 155; revealed, 102 br. n. 86, 104 br. n. 110, 107 br. n. 147, 154–56, 163 br. n. 120; written, 136 n. 425; scholarly, 155, 157, 163; (orthodox) teachers of, 85 n. 285; public change of, 132 n. 392; mental attunement to, 197–98; graspable and impressive, 158; complete, 162; proper, 112; universal human (universality of), 155, 199, cf. 153 n. 32; true (universal, supreme [world]), 22 br. n. 42, 84, 104, 107, 108, 130, 133, 135, 155–57, 167, 168, 179, 192; inward, 190 n. 347; of the good way of life, 51; pure, 115 incl. br. n. 228; holy mystery of, 136 n. 425; of service of God, 103, 106, 115; *see also* Religious
- Religious (*Religions-*, *religiös*), attitude, faith, law, principle, *see these headings*; concept(s), 106, 183, 195 n. 382; idea(s), 51, 145; matters, 193, 199, 200; doctrines, 193; epic, 136 br. n. 425e; parts, 111 br. n. 180; opinion, 133 n. 397; controversies (controversy), 108, 166 br. n. 152a; concern, 146 n. 489; lecture, 182; questions, 119; constitution, 125; power, 166 br. n. 152a; epoch, 145; acts of cult, 174; rites, 73 br. n. 161b; superstition, 174; delusion, 168, 170, 171, 175; fanaticism, 174; wishes, 193; fetters, 188 br. n. 337c; confessions, 188; transformation, 81 n. 235; conversion, 166 n. 152; toleration, 166 br. n. 152a; comrades, 130, 136 n. 425, 184 n. 312; *see also* Religion
- Remission (*Erlassung*), 51
- Renunciation or renounce (*Verzichttuung*, *Verzicht tun auf*, *entsagen*), 33 n. 43, 36, 85, 87, 88 n. 309, 135, 189
- Reparation (*Reparation*), 69 n. 127, 116
- Repentance or repentant (*Reue[voll]*, *reuig*), 23 n. 44, 69 n. 127, 77, cf. 151 br. n. 4
- Reprehensible (*verwerflich*), 58, 72, 161 n. 107, 168 n. 162
- Reproach (*Vorwurf*, *vorwerfen*), 23 n. 44, 69 n. 127, 76, 78 n. 201, 85 n. 285, 184 n. 312, *see also* Rebuke, Accuse, Irreproachable
- Reputation (*Ruf*, *Ansehen*), 43 n. 231, 113, 158, 199, 200, *see also* Authority
- Requite (*vergeltten*), 135 incl. br. n. 406, cf. 161
- Responsibility (*Verantwortung*), 76, 133, cf. 195 br. n. 382
- Resurrection (*Auferstehung*), 128 n. 361
- Revelation or reveal (*Offenbarung*, *offenbaren*), 12 incl. br. ns. 76 and 82, 13 br. n. 89, 26 br. n. 66, 44 br. n. 233, 52, 74 n. 178, 83, 85, 102 br. n. 86, 104 incl. br. n. 110, 105 br. n. 118, 106, 107 incl. br. n. 147, 110–12 incl. br. n. 194, 113 br. n. 197, 114 incl. br. n. 213, 115, 119, 122, 132, 134 br. n. 400, 141 incl. br. n. 448, 142, 144, 145, 153 n. 32, 154–57, 163–67 incl. br. n. 120, 168 n. 162, 171, 172, 174, 178, 186, 187, 189; faith, *see* Faith
- Revenge (*Rache*), 110 n. 167 and br. n. 167g, 160, *see also* Thirst for revenge
- Reverence or reverential (*Ehrerbietung*, *ehrerbietig*), 23 n. 44, 42 n. 219, 191
- Revolt (*Aufstand*), 82, *see also* Insurrection, Rebel, Revolution
- Revolution (*Revolution*), 20 br. n. 14, 47, 48, 63, 80, 81 n. 235, 84, 107, 122, 127–30, *see also* Revolt
- Reward (*Belohnung*), 79, 83, 126, 160 br. n. 88, 161 incl. br. ns. 97 and 98 and 99, 162, cf. 52 br. n. 293, 135 br. n. 406
- Right(ly) or rightness or rightful(ly) (*Recht[-]*, [*mit Recht*], *rechtmäßig*), 4, 5 incl. br. n. 24, 9, 10, 13, 20 br. n. 17, 24 n. 53, 40 n. 203, 41, 48, 49 n. 276, 57 br. n. 6, 60 br. n. 21, 69 n. 127, 72, 74, 78 br. n. 202, 79, 85 n. 285, 95 br. n. 21, 97 n. 41, 98 n. 52 and br. n. 52a, 109, 118, 123 n. 327, 130, 132 n. 392, 141, 144 n. 480, 153, 184 n. 312, 186, 193, 202, *see also* Law, Wrong
- Righteous(ness) (*Rechtschaffen[heit]*), 39 br. n. 192, 48 br. n. 262, 66 br. ns. 91 and 96, 68 br. n. 109, 74 br. n. 164, 93 br. n. 2, 101, 112 br. n. 187, 113, 146 n. 489 and br. n. 489p, 159 br. n. 70, 162 br. n. 108, 163 incl. br. n. 124, 171 br. n. 180, cf. 161 br. n. 103
- Risk (*Gefahr*, *wagen*), 22, 49 n. 276, 62, 80, 81 incl. n. 235, 121 br. n. 312, 133, 142, 143, 145, 187, 188 br. n. 339, 191, *see also* Danger, Dare
- Rite (*Gebrauch*), 73 br. n. 161b, 79 br. n. 219, 110 n. 167, 136 n. 425, 160 n. 83, 193, *see also* Custom

- Ruin or ruinous (*verderben, verderblich*), 60 br. n. 83, 189, cf. 30 br. n. 105, *see also* Corruption
- Rule (*Regel*), 8, 21, 23 n. 44, 24, 53, 57 n. 8, 64, 66, 69 n. 127, 110, 112, 144, 160
- Rule or rule (over) (*Beherrschung, beherrschen*), 60 n. 20, 73 br. n. 161d, 79, 82, 102 br. n. 84, 103, 110 br. n. 167a, 121 incl. br. n. 313, 122, 129, 131, 143, 161, 179–81, 188 n. 337, *see also* Domination, Ruler
- Ruler (*-herrscher*), 6 n. 32, 47 br. n. 258, 59 br. n. 19, 99 incl. br. n. 55b, 122 incl. br. n. 321, 127, 139, 183, 197 br. n. 388, *see also* Sovereign, Overlord, Rule (*Beherrschung*)
- Sacred (*heilig*), 1, 111 br. n. 180, 132, 134 br. n. 403, 135 n. 415, 136 br. n. 425e, 140 n. 442, 163, 166 incl. n. 152 and br. ns. 152d and 156, 167, 171, 191, *see also* Holy
- Sacrifice (*Opfer, Aufopferung, aufopfern*), 48, 50, 64 n. 85, 74, 81 br. n. 235a, 83, 87 br. n. 294, 135, 161, 169, 172, 190 n. 347, 194, *see also* Offering
- Salvation (bringing salvation) (*Heil[bringend], Seligkeit, Seligwerdung, Seligmachung [seligmachend]*), 52, 64 br. n. 82, 68 incl. br. n. 113, 83, 116, 118 incl. br. n. 282, 120 br. n. 301, 128 n. 361, 132, 133, 135, 143, 146 n. 489, 153, 167, 181, 182, 189, *see also* Bliss, Saving
- Satanic guile (*Satanslist*), 83, *see also* Devil
- Satisfaction or satisfactory (*Zufriedenheit, Genugtuung, genugtuend*), 45 n. 246 and br. n. 246j, 67, 73, 74 incl. n. 178, 76, 110 n. 167, 116–18 (incl. br. ns. 258, 264, 268, 271, 277, 284), 143 incl. br. n. 473, 144, 159, *see also* Atonement
- Savage(s) (*Wild[e]*), 27, 33 n. 143, *see also* Wild
- Save (*erretten*), 64 incl. br. n. 85i, 121 br. n. 312, 128 br. n. 361f, 146 n. 489, 181 n. 278, *see also* Saving
- Saving or Savior (*seligmachend, Seligmacher*), 75 br. n. 175, 115, 116 incl. br. n. 246, 118, 119, 128, 136 n. 425, 146 n. 489, 153 br. n. 26, 165, 180, 181, *see also* Salvation, Save, Bliss
- Schema(tism) or schematize (*Schema[tismus], schematisieren*), 64 n. 85, 96, 131
- Schiller, (Johann Christoph) Friedrich, 23 n. 44 incl. br. ns. 44c and 44d
- Scholarliness or scholarly or scholar(ship) (*Gelehrt[heit], Gelehrter [Gelehrsamkeit]*), 8, 9 br. n. 58, 13 br. ns. 86 and 90, 87 br. n. 300, 108 incl. br. n. 155b, 112–14 incl. br. n. 207, 122, 129, 130, 133, 147, 155–57, 160, 162–67 incl. n. 152 and br. ns. 128 and 145, 180, 181, *see also* Unscholarly
- School (*Schule, Fakultät*), 9 br. n. 47, 19 br. n. 11, 13, 40 n. 203, 113
- Science (*Wissenschaft*), 3 n. 12, 8–10, 19 br. n. 11, 34 n. 152, 111 br. n. 181, 131, 166 br. n. 152a, 167
- Scripture or scripture or scriptural (*Schrift[-]*), 13, 19 br. n. 11, 41, 43 incl. n. 231 and br. n. 231a, 64 n. 85, 69 n. 127 and br. n. 127i, 73 n. 161, 78, 83, 85 n. 285, 102, 104, 107, 109, 111–14 (incl. br. ns. 187, 189, 192, 196, 197, 207, 209, 213), 130, 132, 133, 144, 152 incl. br. n. 15, 159 n. 76, 160, 164, 165, 180, *see also* Work, Writing
- Secrecy or (in) secret(ly) (*Geheim[haltung], Geheimnis*), 27, 33, 60, 104, 128 br. n. 361b, 133 n. 397, 138 n. 436 and br. n. 436g, 187, 193, *see also* Mystery
- Sectarian (*sektierisch*), 102, *see also* Denominational
- Secular (*weltlich*), 81 br. n. 235g, 113, 125, 133 n. 397, *see also* World
- Seduction or seducing or seducer (*Verführung, verführend, Verführer*), 44, 59, 60
- Seeming(ly) (*scheinbar*), 119, 146 n. 489, *see also* Semblance, Illusion
- Selection or select (*Auswahl, Wahl, wählen*), 5, 19 br. n. 11, 44, 45 n. 246, 132 n. 392, 140 n. 442 and br. n. 442e, 146 n. 489, 172, 174, 176, *see also* Chosen, Choice
- Self-activity or self-active (*Selbsttätig[keit]*), 83, 191
- Self-cognition (*Selbsterkenntnis*), 75, 77, *see also* Cognition
- Self-conceit (*Eigendünkel*), 105, 173, 184 n. 312 and br. n. 312g, *see also* Conceit
- Self-contempt (*Selbstverachtung*), 184 n. 312, *see also* Contempt
- Self-contradictory (*[(in) s. selbst] widersprechend*), 53, *see also* Contradictory

- Self-deception (*Selbsttäuschung*), 173, 174, 192, 200, *see also* Deception
- Self-improvement (*Selbstbesserung*), 51, *see also* Improvement
- Self-interest(ed) (*Eigennutz [eigennützig]*), 33 n. 143, 160, 161 incl. br. n. 105
- Self-love or self-loving (*Selbstliebe, eigenliebig*), 4 n. 11, 26 incl. br. n. 66, 27, 30, 36 incl. br. n. 173, 42, 45 incl. n. 246 and br. ns. 246d and 246g, 48, 57 br. n. 8h, 83, 117, 199, *see also* Love
- Self-observation (*Selbstbeobachtung*), 63, *see also* Observance
- Self-torment (*Selbstpeinigung*), 23 n. 44, 77, 169
- Semblance (*Schein, Anschein*), 33, 87, 88 n. 309, 166 n. 152, 200, *see also* Seeming, Illusion
- Sense (*Sinn, empfinden*), 10, 21, 22, 31, 36, 44, 47, 59, 69 n. 127, 74 incl. n. 178, 80 br. n. 226a, 81, 88, 108, 110 n. 167, 119, 121 br. n. 312, 144 br. n. 480g, 151, 157, 170 n. 170 and br. n. 170a, 175 incl. br. n. 224d, 181 incl. br. n. 281, 182, 193 br. n. 369, 195 n. 382, 198, *see also* Sensibility, Sensuality, Mind, Meaning, Senseless, Way of sensing
- Senseless (sinnlos), 88, *see also* Sense
- Sensibility or sensible or sensibly (*Sinnlich[keit], sensibel*), 6 n. 32, 23 n. 44, 31 incl. br. ns. 117 and 127, 32, 34–36, 39 n. 193, 42, 45 n. 246, 59 n. 17, 64 n. 85, 69 n. 127, 74 br. n. 166, 80 n. 226, 82, 83, 100, 109, 111 br. n. 179, 178 n. 361, 151, 169, 170 n. 170 and br. ns. 170a and 170f, 173 br. n. 195, 175 n. 224, 176 br. n. 233, 181 incl. br. n. 281, 192, 193, 198, 199, *see also* Sensuality, Sense, *see also* Suprasensible, Non-sensible
- Sensuality or sensual (*Sinnlich[keit], Sinnen-*), 80 n. 226, 111, 170 br. n. 170b, 173, 176, 192 incl. br. n. 365, 193 incl. br. n. 368, 198 br. n. 390, *see also* Sensibility, Sense
- Sentence (*verurteilen, richten*), 39 n. 193, 171, *see also* Verdict, Condemnation, Judge
- Sermon (*Predigt*), 14, 108
- Service or serve or servant or servitude or (in a) servile (manner) (*Dienst, dienen, Diener[in], Knechtschaft, Knecht[isch]*), 3 n. 12, 6 n. 32, 15, 45 n. 246, 49 br. n. 273, 52 br. n. 293, 60 n. 20, 61, 67 n. 103, 69, 74 br. n. 167, 79, 82, 85, 93 incl. br. n. 2, 101, 103, 106, 107, 111, 115 incl. br. ns. 238 and 239, 118–21, 123 incl. n. 327, 124, 127, 128 incl. n. 361, 131, 133 n. 397, 135, 136 br. n. 425f, 141, 151, 152 incl. br. n. 19, 153 incl. n. 38 and br. n. 28, 157 br. n. 48, 158–60 incl. n. 83, 162–65 incl. br. n. 143, 168, 169, 171–74 incl. br. ns. 192 and 194, 176–80 incl. br. ns. 246 and 249, 182, 183, 184 n. 312, and br. n. 312h 185, 186 br. n. 326, 190, 192–95, 198–201, cf. 122, *see also* Servitude, Pseudoservice, Fetish
- Sex or sexual (*Geschlecht[s-]*), 26, 28 n. 85, 80 n. 226
- Shepherd of souls (*Seelenhirt*), 101, 133 n. 397, *see also* Pastor
- Sign (*Zeichen*), 23 n. 44, 69 br. n. 127d, 84, 141 br. n. 458, 151
- Sin or sinner (*Sünde[r], sündigen*), 23 n. 44, 30 incl. br. n. 115, 39 br. n. 192, 40 n. 203 and br. n. 203d, 42 incl. br. n. 223, 43, 60 br. ns. 34 and 35, 66 incl. br. n. 86, 69 n. 127, 72 incl. br. n. 144, 73 br. n. 161f, 74 incl. br. ns. 165 and 167, 93 incl. br. n. 2, 110 br. n. 167a, 116, 117 br. ns. 263 and 264 and 268 and 171, 118 br. ns. 276 and 284, 120 br. n. 305, 141 br. n. 454, 143 br. n. 473, 146 n. 489 and br. ns. 489m and 489p, 159, 199, *see also* Transgression
- Sincerity or sincere (*Aufrichtigkeit, Redlichkeit, aufrichtig, redlich*), 52, 117, 120, 171, 180–82, 190 n. 347, 195 n. 382, *see also* Insincerity
- Slave or slavish (*Sklave, sklavisch, Fron-*), 23 n. 44, 80, 82, 115 incl. br. n. 235, 128, 133 n. 397, 142, 158, 163, 164 br. ns. 131 and 134, 153, 171, 180, 184 n. 312, 187, 188, *see also* Slavish
- Society (*Gesellschaft*), 26, 85 br. n. 285d, 94, 96, 97 br. n. 41b, 101 incl. br. n. 70, 125 br. n. 337, 145, *see also* Civil, Commonwealth
- Son (*Sohn, -sohn*), of the morning, 44 n. 233; of Odin, 140 br. n. 446e, of Israel, 166 n. 152; Abraham's, 87 br. n. 294, 187 incl. br. n. 328, cf. 87; holy, 102; of earth, 82; of man (men), 140 n. 442 and br. n. 442b, 141 br. n.

- 454; of God (God's), 60–62 incl. br. ns. 34 and 35 and 36, 63 br. n. 76, 64 br. n. 85i, 66, 69 br. n. 127d, 74, 76, 87, 119, cf. 121 br. n. 314, 140 n. 446, 145, 146 n. 489 and br. n. 489o, 147 br. n. 491
- Sonnerat, Pierre, 19 br. n. 11, 33 br. n. 141
- Soul (*Seele*), 8, 20, 45, 49, 57 incl. br. n. 6, 64, 73 n. 161, 81 br. n. 235a, 85, 87 br. n. 299, 99 br. n. 55b, 101, 124, 129, 132, 133 n. 397, 134, 162, 166 br. n. 152a, 170 br. n. 170a, 181 br. n. 287, 183, 197
- Sound (*gesund*), 20, *see also* Health
- Sovereign or sovereignty (*Oberhaupt, Landesherr, Oberherrschaft*), 78 br. n. 208, 101, 110 n. 267, 128, 133 n. 397, 140, 141, 165 br. n. 144, 180, 195 n. 382, *see also* Ruler, Overlord
- Speculation (*Spekulation*), power of: *see* Power of speculation; *see also* Speculative
- Speculative (*spekulativ*), 53 br. n. 301, 76, 170 br. n. 170a, 183, *see also* Speculation
- Sphere (*Sphäre*), 12 incl. br. n. 76
- Spinoza, Baruch, 98 br. n. 312, 133 br. n. 152a
- Spirit(ual) or spiritualism (*Geist[lich], Spiritualismus*), 26 br. n. 66, 30 incl. br. n. 114, 39, 44, 47 br. n. 258, 48 br. n. 262, 59 incl. br. n. 19, 68 incl. br. n. 110, 71, 73 n. 161 and br. n. 161f, 74 br. n. 164, 74 br. n. 178d, 79 incl. n. 216, 83, 84, 86 br. n. 290, 87 incl. br. n. 300, 93 br. n. 5, 106 br. n. 137, 109 br. n. 160, 111, 112 incl. br. n. 190, 122 br. n. 323, 128 n. 361, 131, 133 n. 397, 140 n. 442 and br. ns. 442a and 442c and 442d, 144 incl. br. n. 482, 146 incl. n. 489 and br. ns. 489d and 489e, 165, 174 br. n. 210, 175 n. 224, 180, 187, 192 incl. br. n. 363, 195 incl. n. 382, 197, 198 br. n. 391d, 200, *see also* Clergy
- Splendor or splendid (*Glanz, Herrlichkeit, glänzend, herrlich*), 23 n. 44, 57 incl. n. 8 and br. n. 8h, 60, 64, 81 n. 235, 134, 165
- Spread (*Verbreitung, verbreiten, ausbreiten*), 9, 19, 23 n. 44, 40, 61, 81 n. 235, 100, 103, 108 incl. n. 155, 109, 136 n. 425, 155 br. n. 37, 157, 176 br. n. 230, 193, *see also* Expansion, Disseminate
- Spurious (*unecht*), 48, 111 br. n. 181, 140 br. n. 446c, 151 br. n. 1, 153 br. n. 28, 184 br. n. 312l, *see also* Genuine
- Statute (*Satzung, Statut*), 84, 99, 105, 107, 121, 123 n. 327, 125, 127, 130, 152, 158, 159, 160 n. 83, 166 n. 152, 168, 173, 180, *see also* Statutory
- Statutory (*statuarisch, Satzungs-*), 10, 99 incl. n. 55, 104–06, 108, 122, 123 n. 327, 125, 126, 128, 153 incl. n. 32, 158, 159, 162, 163 br. n. 121, 166–68, 173 n. 200 and br. n. 200c, 174–76, 178, 179, 186, *see also* Statute
- Stoics (*Stoiker*), 57 incl. br. ns. 1 and 5 and 6, 57 br. n. 8g
- Strength (*Kraft*), 6 n. 32, 24, 36 br. n. 168, 44 br. n. 236, 48, 58, 61 incl. br. n. 40, 64 n. 85, 68, 71, 77, 122 br. n. 326, 123 n. 327, 160, 174, 190 n. 347, 191, *see also* Force
- Strive or striving (*after, against*) (*streben, Streben, Bestreben, Bestrebung [nachstreben, Nachstrebung, entgegenstreben]*), *see also* Endeavor, Emulation
- Struggle (*Kampf, kämpfen*), 15, 57 incl. n. 8, 59, 78, 81, 166 br. n. 152a, *see also* Fight
- Subgods (*Untergötter*), 127, *see also* God
- Subject or subjective(ly) (*Subjekt, Untertan, subjektiv*), 3, 4, 6 n. 32, 9, 20–22 incl. n. 31, 25, 28 incl. n. 85, 29, 31, 32, 35–37, 39 n. 193, 41, 48, 49 n. 276, 51, 57 n. 8 and br. n. 8b, 60 n. 20, 66, 69 n. 127, 73, 74 n. 178, 79, 81, 83 incl. br. n. 248, 88 n. 309, 95, 97 n. 41, 98, 99 br. n. 55b, 103, 114, 117, 121 br. n. 314, 130, 131, 133, 138, 140, 152, 153 incl. n. 32, 156, 157, 168, 169, 170 n. 170, 175–77, 179 n. 263, 180, 181, 182, 186, 188 n. 337, 189, 192, 197, 198 n. 391, 199, 200, *see also* Subjugation
- Subjugation or subjugating or subjugate (*Unterjochung, Unterwerfung, unterwerfen*), 34 n. 152, 123 n. 327, 128, 133 n. 397, 184 n. 312, *see also* Subject (*Untertan*), Submission
- Sublimity or sublime (*Erhaben[heit]*), 7, 23 n. 44 and br. n. 44g, 33 n. 143, 44, 50, 60 n. 20, 100, 138 n. 436, 170 br. n. 170a, 176, 195 n. 382
- Submission or submissiveness (*Unterwerfung, Unterwürfigkeit*), 103, 142, 169, 177, 180, 183, *see also* Subjugation
- Subordination or subordinate (*Unterordnung, untergeordnet, subordiniert*), 23 n. 44, 26 br.

- n. 66, 36, 43, 45 n. 246, 46, 52, 75 n. 182, 78
incl. br. n. 208, 101, 112, 127, 181, 185
- Subscribe to (*s. bekennen*), 63, *see also* Confession
- Subservient (*dienstbar*), 28, 122
- Subterfuge (*Ausflucht*), 41 incl. br. n. 207, 88 n. 309
- Subtle reasoning or subtle reasoner (*Vernünftetelei, Vernünftler*), 42 incl. br. n. 218, 69 n. 127, 85 n. 285, 107 incl. br. n. 141, 143 incl. br. n. 471, 181 incl. br. n. 278
- Suffer(ing) (*erleiden [Leiden, Notleidender]*), 61–64, 66, 69 n. 127, 73 br. n. 161f, 74 incl. n. 178 and br. n. 178j, 75, 78 n. 201, 81–83 incl. n. 235, 75, 94 br. n. 6, 128, 162, 184 br. n. 312e, *see also* Endure
- Superior or Superiority (*Ober[er], Überlegenheit*), 27, 33 n. 143, 39 br. n. 192, 75 n. 182, 99, 101, 124, 133 n. 397 and br. n. 397a, 140, 146 n. 489, 153, 168 n. 161, 177, *see also* High
- Supernatural, *see* Supranatural
- Supersensible, *see* Suprasensible
- Superstition or superstitious (*Aberglaube, Superstition, abergläubisch*), 53, 83, 101, 118, 130, 159 n. 76, 172, 174, 175, 184 n. 312, 194, 199
- Superterrestrial, *see* Supraterrestrial
- Support (*Beistand, Beitritt, belegen*), 42 br. n. 223, 62, 64 n. 85, 76, 78 n. 201, 87, 166 br. n. 152a, 178, 191 incl. br. n. 356, 197, *see also* Assistance
- Supranatural or supranaturalist (*übernatürlich, Supernaturalist*), *see also* Natural Suprasensible or suprasensibly (*übersinnlich*), 64 n. 85, 67, 69 n. 127, 74 n. 178, 103, 111, 121 n. 311, 170 n. 170 and br. n. 170f, 173, 175, 182, 184 n. 312, *see also* Sensibility
- Supraterrestrial (*überirdisch*), 129
- Supreme (*oberst*), incentive(s), 30, 43; (secular, worldly) power, 81 n. 235, 133 n. 397; (subjective, inner) basis, 25, 32, 37, 43, 46, 47, 51; concept, 185; maxim, 31, 32, 36, 39 n. 193 and br. n. 193b, 48, 66; (commanding) principle, 3 incl. n. 12, 112, 165; command, 40 n. 203, condition, 3, 36, 51, 60, 118, 158, 168, 177, 181, 182; criterion, 112; servant, 101; cause, 153 n. 32; tribunal, 159 n. 76; justice, 66; judge, 78; legislator, 72, 99, 141, 152, 160; proprietor, 78 incl. br. n. 208, 79; wisdom, 79 br. n. 218, 171, 195 n. 382; object, 195 n. 382; being, 60 incl. br. n. 25, 72, 106, 114, 175, 177, 195 n. 382
- Symbol or symbolic (*Symbol, symbolisch*), 69 n. 127 and br. n. 127d, 180 n. 226, 102, 110 n. 167, 111, 134, 136, 141 incl. br. n. 458, 142, 144 br. n. 482, 145, 171, 176
- Sympathy (*Mitleid*), 30
- System(atic) (*System[atisch]*), 10 br. n. 61, 12–14 incl. br. ns. 76 and 82 and 91, 38 br. ns. 181 and 185, 78 br. n. 208, 80 n. 226, 81 br. n. 235a, 98, 114, 127, 136 n. 425, 177, 198 n. 391
- Teaching or teach or teacher (*Lehre, lehren, Lehrer*), 10, 12, 35, 48, 58, 60 br. n. 24, 61, 63, 65, 66, 81, 83–85 incl. 285, 101, 106, 109, 110, 112–14, 123 n. 327, 127–30 incl. br. ns. 363 and 372, 132 n. 392, 134, 147, 157–59 incl. n. 76, 162, 167, 172, 187, 189, 195 n. 382, 201, *see also* Doctrine, Instruction
- Temple (*Tempel*), 106 incl. br. n. 138, 134 br. n. 401, 176, 198 n. 391 and br. n. 391d
- Tempt(ation) (*versuchen [Versuchung]*), 38, 39, 42, 44, 61, 62, 64, 80 n. 226, 81, 87, 133, 151, 187 br. n. 328, 190 n. 347
- Test or stand the test (*Prüfung, prüfen, versuchen, Stich halten*), 10, 49 br. n. 276d, 74 n. 178 and br. n. 178j, 78, 145, 156, 158, 187, 190 n. 347
- Testament (*Testament*), 129; Old, 13 br. n. 86; New, 157 br. n. 42
- Thaumaturgy (*Thaumaturgie*), 53
- Theistic (*theistisch*), 86, 87, cf. 121 br. n. 312, 166 br. n. 152a, *see also* Polytheism, Atheism
- Theocracy (*Theokratie*), 79, 99, 125, cf. 126 br. n. 420
- Theodicy (*Theodizee*), 73 n. 161
- Theology or theological or theologian (*Theologie, theologisch, Theologe*), 8–10 (incl. br. ns. 47, 49, 53, 54, 67), 13 (incl. br. ns. 85–87, 89, 92), 19 br. ns. 3 and 11, 22 br. n. 42, 21 br. n. 51, 34, 40 n. 203, 64 br. n. 85g, 81 br. n. 235a, 85 br. n. 285a, 109 br. n. 160, 145 br. n. 482, 166 br. n. 152a, 170 br. n. 170a, 186 br. n. 319

- Theoretical(ly) (*theoretisch*), demand, 119; (power of) reason 13, 14, 88 n. 305, 157, *see also* Power of Reason, *Critique of Pure Reason*; concept, 118; bases of proof, 164; cognition (cognizable), 53, 142, 153 n. 32, 181 br. n. 287; grasping, 171; questions, 52 incl. br. n. 301; resolving a conflict (disentangling a knot), 117, 119; propositions, 6 n. 32; assertion, 88 n. 309; use, 53, 137, 194; aim, 12; point of view, 142, 144 n. 481; contemplation, 144 br. n. 482; element of church faith, 110; (confession of) (free) faith, 88 incl. br. n. 307, 118, 147, 153 n. 32, 164; presentation of God, 168
- Thirst for revenge (*Rachsucht*), 110 n. 167, *see also* Revenge
- Time or time period (*Zeit*), 6 n. 32, 8, 11, 14 br. n. 95, 19 incl. br. n. 11, 20, 25 incl. br. ns. 56 and 59, 26 n. 67, 31, 35, 38, 39 incl. br. ns. 195 and 196, 40 n. 203, 41, 42, 45 n. 246, 48, 49 n. 276, 50, 52, 63, 66, 67, 69 n. 127, 72, 74, 75, 78 br. n. 201b, 79, 81 br. n. 230, 81 br. n. 235 and br. n. 235f, 82, 83, 85 br. n. 284, 85 br. n. 285a, 99 br. n. 58, 101 br. n. 73, 102, 103, 108 n. 155, 110 n. 167 and br. n. 167f, 112–14 incl. br. n. 204, 117, 120, 121 incl. n. 311, 123–26 incl. n. 327, 128–30, 134 incl. br. n. 401, 136 n. 425, 140 n. 446 and br. n. 446a, 143, 145, 147, 153, 155, 156, 158, 159 br. ns. 70 and 71 and 73, 160 br. n. 77, 163, 166, 167, 171, 179, 181, 182, 188 n. 337, 189 n. 344, 193, 197, 199, *see also* Age
- Tomb (*Grab*), 34 n. 152
- Torment(ing) (*plagen, Peinigung [peinigend]*), 23 n. 44, 69 n. 127, 73 n. 161, 77, 169
- Touchstone (*Probierstein*), 62, 114, 168 n. 162, 201
- Traitor (*Verräter*), 79
- Transcendent (*transzendent*), 52 incl. br. ns. 298 and 301, 53 br. n. 309, 72 br. n. 148, 88 br. n. 309h, 191, 117 br. n. 262, 191 br. n. 357, 193 br. n. 373, *see also* Extravagant
- Transgress(ion) (*übertreten [Übertretung, peccatum]*), 31 incl. br. ns. 123 and 124, 40 br. n. 204, 41, 42, 49 n. 276, 50, 57 n. 8, 59, 64, 67 n. 103, 72, 73 n. 161, 99 n. 55, 126, 140 n. 442, 153 n. 32, 172, 201, *see also* Sin
- Transition (*Übergang*), 47, 115, 122, 170 br. n. 170a, 176, *see also* Conversion
- Trespass (*Verschuldigung*), 51, 148 n. 489, *see also* Guilt, Fault
- Tribunal (*Gericht*), 24 n. 53, 159 n. 76, *see also* Court of law
- Trinity (*Dreieinigkeit*), 142, 146 br. n. 489d
- Triumphant (*triumphierend*), 69 n. 127, 115, 135
- Truth or truthful(ness) or true or truly (*Wahr[heit], Wahrhaftig[keit]*), 4, 8, 22 br. n. 42, 37–39, 26 br. n. 66, 42 br. n. 219c, 43 n. 231, 47, 48 br. n. 262, 57 n. 8, 63, 64 br. n. 85c, 65, 66 br. n. 86, 69 n. 127, 73 br. n. 161f, 74 br. n. 164, 77, 80, 81 br. ns. 235a and 235f, 84, 88 n. 309 and br. n. 309d, 99, 101, 104, 105, 107–09 incl. br. n. 160, 112 incl. br. n. 190, 113, 115, 116, 120, 122, 123 n. 327, 125, 129, 131, 132, 133 n. 397, 135, 139, 146 n. 489 and br. ns. 489d and 489e, 147, 153, 155–60 incl. n. 76, 162, 165, 166 n. 152, 167, 168, 171 incl. br. n. 179, 172 br. n. 194, 176, 179, 181, 187–89 incl. n. 344, 190 n. 347 and br. n. 347b, 192–94 incl. br. n. 363, 189, 192 incl. br. n. 363, 195 n. 382, 201
- Trust or trustee (*Vertrauen, Zutrauen, Kredit, Lehnsträger, Depositär*), 33, 71, 81, 83, 113, 144, 156, 159 n. 76, 201, *see also* Entrust, Confidence, Mistrust
- Unbelief or unbeliever (*Unglaube[n], Ungläubiger*), 63, 84, 108, 118, 172, 186 incl. br. n. 327, 190 incl. br. n. 345, 195 br. n. 382e, *see also* Misbelief, Belief, Faith (lack of)
- Unbounded (*unbegrenzt*), 169, *see also* Boundary
- Unburdened (*entschlagen*), 76, 93, *see also* Burden
- Uncognized (*unerkannt*), 52, *see also* Cognition
- Uncorrupted (*unverdorben*), 57 n. 8, 163, *see also* Corruption
- Undecided (*dahin gestellt*), 111, *see also* Decision
- Undeliberate (*unvorsätzlich*), 38, 170, *see also* Unintentional, Deliberation
- Undeserved (*unverschuldet*), 128, *see also* Deserve

- Undeveloped (*unentwickelt*), 183, *see also* Develop
- Undoubtedly (*ungezweifelt*), 111, *see also* Indubitable
- Unfaithful (*untreu*), 78, 81 n. 235, *see also* Faithful
- Unfathomable (*unergründlich*), 59
- Unfavorable (*nachteilig*), 189, *see also* Favor
- Unfruitful (*unfruchtbar*), 43 n. 231, *see also* Fruitless—be, Fruitfulness
- Ungodly (*ungöttlich*), 10, *see also* Godliness
- Unhappy (*unglücklich*), 27, 105, *see also* Happiness
- Unification or unify(ing) (*Vereinigung, vereinigen[d]*), 101 br. ns. 67 and 72, 105 br. n. 120, 115, *see also* Union, All-unifying
- Unintentional (*unvorsätzlich*), 111, *see also* Undeliberate, Intentional
- Union (*Vereinigung*), 34 n. 152, 61, 94, 96, 100, 101, 105, 106, 112, 123, 125, 138 n. 436, 139, 147, 151, 157, 158, 193, 195 n. 382, *see also* Unification
- Unite(d) (*[s.] vereinigen, vereinigt*), 5, 8, 10, 66, 94–98, 101, 117, 121, 131, 134, 140, 146 br. n. 489c, 151, 195 n. 382, *see also* Reconcile, Unity
- Unity (*Einheit*), 13, 36, 37, 39 n. 193, 48, 69 n. 127, 98, 101, 102, 123 n. 327, 124, 125, 135 n. 415, 144 br. n. 482, 184 n. 312, *see also* Unite, Disunity
- Universal(ly) or universality (*Allgemein[heit]*), 20, 21, 25, 29, 34, 39, 95, 101, 103, 109, 122, 128 n. 361, 130, 132, 137, 138, 151, 155, 157 incl. br. ns. 46 and 47, 158; (subjective,) basis; 41; root, 48; concept, 86; class, 33; lawfulness, 3; arrangement, 98; gravity, 138 n. 436; historical exposition, 124; history, 124 incl. br. n. 329; history of the church, 127; right of nations, 123 n. 327; republic, 98; monarchy (autarchy), 34 n. 152 and br. ns. 151 and 152e, 123 n. 327; animal genus, 80 n. 226; (propensity to) evil, 30, 32; subjective basis of religious delusion, 168; slavish service, 158; agreement, 130, 157 incl. br. n. 47; union, 101; unity (of heart), 102, 157; uniform expansion, 106; convincing communication, 109; valid way, 104; human reason, 140 n. 446, 165; will, 98; obligatory, 109; (human) duty, 61, 138 n. 436, 160; rule, 24, 160; legislation, 26 n. 67; practical rules, 110; moral dogmas, 111; (moral) law, 24, 86, 98 incl. br. n. 52a; (moral) principle, 57 n. 8; maxim, 24, 33, 36, 66, 72; attitude, 72; moral predisposition, 126; moral improvement, 169; (of) (rational, world) religion, 112, 122, 131, 135, 153 n. 32, 155, 157, 158, 168, 199; (of the) (true) (visible) church, 102, 108, 115, 123 n. 327, 124, 126, 127, 135 n. 415, 158, 176; so-called Christianity, 131; valid doctrine, 182; (true) (religious, obligatory) faith, 125, 139, 181, 182; human need, 145; access, 181; unconditional submission, 142; ruler of the world, 127
- Unjust (*ungerecht*), 27, 47, 161 br. n. 103, *see also* Justice
- Unlawful (*gesetzwidrig*), 20, 21, 31, 32, 37, 41, 58, *see also* Lawful
- Unmeritorious—the (*die Unverdienten*), 149 n. 489, *see also* Merit
- Unnecessary (*unnötig*), 20 br. n. 14, 132 n. 392, *see also* Necessary
- Unpretentious (*anspruchslos*), 175 n. 224, *see also* Pretension
- Unpunished (*straflos*), 73, *see also* Punishment
- Unscholarly (person) (*Ungelehrter*), 113, 164, 165, *see also* Scholarness
- Untruthfulness (*Unwahrhaftigkeit*), 187, *see also* Truth
- Unwilling—be (*nicht wollen*), 84, *see also* Will
- Unworthy (*unwürdig*), 49, 57, 61, 62, 64 incl. n. 85, 81, 146 n. 489, 189, *see also* Worthiness
- Upbringing (*Erziehung*), 38, 190 n. 347, *see also* Education
- Useful (*nützlich*), 20 br. n. 17, 78 br. n. 208, 112, 123 n. 327, 135 n. 415, 138 n. 436, 156, cf. 116 br. n. 259, *see also* Benefit, Useless
- Useless(ness) (*unnütz [Untauglichkeit]*), 130, 132, 146 n. 489, 163, 169, 172, *see also* Useful
- Valid(ly) or validity (*Gültig[keit]*), 9, 43 n. 231, 63, 66, 76, 78, 83, 85, 104, 114, 115, 127, 157, 163, 182

- Valuation (*Würdigung*), 128 n. 361, *see also* Value, Esteem
- Value (*Wert, wert*), 13, 106, 132, 153, 168 br. n. 161c, 195, *see also* Merit, Worth
- Vanquish(ment) (*besiegen [Besiegung]*), 57 n. 8, 82, 190 br. n. 347b, *see also* Victory
- Vehicle (*Leitmittel, Vehikel*), 106, 107, 115, 116, 118, 123 n. 327, 135 n. 415
- Veneration or venerate or venerable or venerator (*Verehrung, verehren, ehrwürdig, Verehrer*), 5, 8, 19, 79, 81 br. n. 235f, 103–06, 125, 127, 132, 134 br. n. 401, 136 n. 425, 140 n. 446, 145, 147, 159, 162, 168 incl. n. 162, 172, 173 br. n. 197, 175, 182, 183, 185, 198, 201, *see also* Honor
- Venture (*wagen*), 8, 10, 14, 41 incl. br. n. 207, 42, 185–87, 193, *see also* Dare, Risk
- Verdict (*Urteilsspruch*), 71, 72, 76, 140 n. 442, 146 n. 489, *see also* Sentence, Judge (*Richter*)
- Vicar (*Statthalter*), 131 incl. br. n. 380, 134, 135
- Vicarious (*stellvertretend*), 118, *see also* Proxy
- Vice or vicious (*Laster[haf]*), 19 br. n. 5a, 20 br. n. 17, 24 n. 53, 26, 27, 31, 32 br. n. 132, 33, 34, 37, 38, 47, 48, 57 n. 8 and br. n. 8h, 58, 111 incl. n. 174, 120, cf. 30 br. n. 102
- Victory or victors or victoriously (*Sieg[er], siegreich*), 15, 33 n. 143, 80 n. 226, 93–95, 124, 135, 184 n. 312, *see also* Vanquish
- Villain (*Bösewicht*), 87, cf. 37 br. n. 177, *see also* Evil
- Violation or violating or violate (*Verletzung, verletzen*), 23 n. 44, 72, 140 n. 442, 187, 188, 200
- Violent (*gewalttätig*), 131, 134, cf. 190 br. n. 347b
- Virgin (*jungfräulich*), 80 n. 226, cf. 173 br. n. 197, 190 br. n. 347b
- Virtue or virtuous (*Tugend[haf]*), 14 incl. br. ns. 94 and 96, 20 br. ns. 13 and 17, 23 n. 44, 24 n. 53, 33, 34 n. 152, 35, 37, 38, 47 incl. br. ns. 253 and 257, 48, 57 incl. n. 8 and br. ns. 8b and 8h, 63, 94, 95, 99, 100, 127, 132, 139 br. n. 437, 156, 161, 173 br. n. 202, 183, 185, 190 n. 347, 194, 201, 202; delusion of, 173; despairing of all, 184 n. 312; surrogate for, 185; the savages' highest, 33 n. 143; flag of, 94; whetstone of, 135; essence of, 183; attitude of, 173; striving for, 174; concept(s) of, 128, 183; principle(s) of, 97, 174; laws of, 94, 95, 98–100, 124, 161, 109; (pure) doctrine of, 182, 183; duties of, 96; effects of, 174; kingdom of, 95; legislator of, 183; *see also* Virtuous
- Visible (*sichtbar*), 66, 69 br. n. 127d, 101, 122, 123 n. 327, 126, 127, 131, 134, 136 incl. br. n. 420, 152, 153, 158, 169, 175 n. 224, *see also* Invisible
- Vocation (*Bestimmung*), 23 n. 44, 44, 50, 60, 73 n. 161, 100, 152, 162, 170 br. n. 170a, 183, 197, *see also* Determination
- Volition (*Wollen*), 3, 73 br. n. 161f, *see also* Will, Voluntary
- Voluntary or voluntarily (*freiwillig*), 26 br. n. 66, 96, 102, 133 n. 397, 179 n. 263
- Wash away (*abwaschen*), 199, cf. 194
- Waver(ing) (*wanken [schwankend]*), 49 n. 276, 146 n. 489
- Way of life (*Lebenswandel*), 51 incl. br. n. 288, 62, 63, 66–68, 69 n. 127, 71, 72, 76, 77, 83, 103, 106, 113, 116–20 incl. br. ns. 265 and 271, 128, 144 incl. br. n. 482, 160 n. 83 and br. ns. 83a and 83b, 163, 170–72, 174–76 incl. br. n. 235, 178, 179 br. n. 258, 184, 189, 191, 195 n. 382, 198, 201
- Way of sensing (*Sinnesart*), 47 incl. br. n. 261, *see also* Sense
- Way of thinking (*Denkungsart*), 22, 30, 37, 45 n. 246, 47 incl. br. n. 261, 48, 57, 84, 88 n. 309, 109, 199, 200
- Weak(ness) or weaken (*schwach [Schwäche], schwächen*), 29, 43, 44 br. n. 233, 59 n. 17, 103, 132, 141, 166 n. 152, 169, 181 br. n. 280, 191, 197
- Welfare (*Wohlergehen*), 8, 45 n. 246, 176 br. n. 231
- Well-being (*Wohl*), 8 br. n. 41, 73 n. 161, 83, 160
- Well-intentioned (*wohlgemeint*), 37, 101, *see also* Well-meant
- Well-meaning (*wohldenkend, wohlgesinnt*), 20, 81, 93, 94 br. n. 6, 98, 101, 110, 152, 176, 195 n. 382, *see also* Well-meant
- What Does It Mean: to Orient Oneself in One's Thought? (*Was heißt: Sich im Denken orientieren?*), 133 br. n. 152a, 135 br. n. 162e

- Wicked(ness) (*Bösartig[keit]*), 19 br. n. 2, 27, 29, 30, 32 br. n. 130, 37 incl. br. n. 177, 42, 43, 45, 51, 59 br. n. 19, 83
- Wild (*wild*), 71, 87 br. ns. 300 and 301, 111, cf. 9, 151 br. n. 4, *see also* Savage
- Will or willing(ly) or willingness (*Wille, willig, Wollen, Bereitwillig[keit]*) 3 n. 12, 4, 5 br. n. 30, 6, 20 br. n. 17, 26 br. n. 66, 29 incl. br. n. 95, 35–37, 38, 42 incl. br. n. 219c, 44, 45 br. n. 246b, 52, 53, 57 n. 8, 60, 61 incl. br. ns. 36 and 48, 64, 74 n. 178 and br. n. 178j, 81 br. n. 230, 82 incl. br. ns. 243 and 244, 85 incl. n. 285, 95, 97–99, 101 incl. br. n. 66, 102, 104 incl. br. ns. 104 and 115, 105, 110 br. ns. 167a and 167j, 112, 113 br. n. 210, 121 incl. br. n. 310, 121 ns. 311 and 321, 122, 124, 127 br. n. 347, 129, 131, 133 n. 397, 141 incl. br. n. 455, 144 incl. br. n. 482, 153, 156, 159 br. n. 67, 160 n. 78 and br. ns. 82 and 85, 161 n. 107, 168, 169, 176, 178, 180, 186, 187, 190, 195 n. 382, 200, 201 incl. br. n. 401, *see also* Will-less, Unwilling—be, Volition, Willing
- Will-less (*willenlos*), 64 n. 85 and br. n. 85g, *see also* Will
- Wisdom or wise (*Weisheit, weise*), 57, 58, 69 n. 127, 73, 79, 80, 100, 101, 111 br. n. 180, 112, 128, 140 n. 446 and br. ns. 446c and 446e, 143, 145, 152, 162, 171, 181 br. n. 278, 195 n. 382, 197, 200
- Wish (*Wunsch, wünschen, wollen*), 9, 10, 13, 454 n. 246, 51, 64 n. 85, 68, 69, 79, 84, 88 n. 309, 95, 101, 107 n. 145, 108, 110 n. 167, 111, 117, 123 n. 327, 125, 134, 144 n. 480, 158, 160, 172–74, 175 n. 224, 176–78, 185, 193–05 incl. n. 382 and br. n. 380, 198 n. 391, 201
- Wobbermin, Georg, 4 br. n. 18, 13 br. n. 89, 33 br. n. 142, 34 br. n. 152f, 42 br. n. 223, 49 br. n. 273, 57 br. n. 8h, 64 br. n. 78, 69 br. n. 127c, 79 br. n. 216a, 81 br. n. 235a, 85 br. n. 285a, 97 br. n. 46, 108 br. n. 155b, 111 br. n. 178, 146 br. n. 489d, 186 br. n. 319
- Wolff, Christian von, 22 br. n. 42, 81 br. n. 235f, 170 br. n. 170a
- Wood, Allen W., 170 br. n. 170a
- Word (*Wort*), 14, 37, 45 n. 246, 49 n. 276, 57, 60 incl. br. ns. 27 and 34, 63 br. n. 76, 69 n. 127, 86, 88 n. 309, 108, 110 br. n. 167a, 124, 129, 144 n. 480, 159 n. 76, 165, 177, 181, 182, 195 incl. n. 382, 197, 198 incl. n. 391, 201
- Work (*Werk, Schrift, Bearbeitung*), 11–14, 51, 52 incl. br. n. 297, 64 n. 85, 75, 82 incl. br. n. 246, 88, 99 br. n. 55b, 100, 111 br. n. 185, 117, 118, 122, 124, 126, 127, 143, 152, 160 incl. br. n. 87, 184 br. n. 312m, 194, 201, *see also* Scripture, Writing
- World(ly) (*Welt[lich]*), 5, 6 incl. n. 32, 19 incl. br. n. 2, 23 n. 44, 26 n. 67, 34, 40 incl. n. 203, 41, 42 br. n. 223, 43, 59–61 (incl. n. 17 and br. ns. 19, 23, 24, 25), 63, 64 n. 85 and br. ns. 85g and 85i, 66, 69 n. 127, 73 n. 161, 74 n. 178, 75, 79, 80 incl. br. n. 227, 81 br. n. 230, 81 n. 235, 83, 85–87, 89, 99, 101, 103, 104, 108, 112, 114, 119, 122, 124, 126, 127, 129–32, 134–36, 139, 141, 85 n. 285, 88 n. 309, 121 n. 311, 122 br. n. 321, 128 n. 361, 129 br. n. 363, 134 br. n. 400, 135 n. 415, 136 br. ns. 420 and 422, 136 n. 425, 138 n. 436 and br. n. 436a, 139 br. n. 437, 140 n. 442 and br. n. 442a, 140 n. 446, 143, 146 n. 489 and br. n. 489p, 151, 156–58, 159 n. 76, 161 incl. br. ns. 98 and 103, 161 n. 107, 162, 166 n. 152, 167–69 incl. n. 162, 170 n. 170, 171–73 incl. br. n. 197, 178, 181 incl. br. ns. 278 and 280, 183, 184 n. 312, 185, 195 n. 382, *see also* Secular
- Worry or worried or worrisome (*Besorgnis, besorgen, besorgt, besorglich*), 9, 27, 68, 69 n. 127, 71, 85 n. 285, 86, 88 n. 309, 93, 131
- Worship (*Anbetung, anbeten*), 7,81, br. n. 230, 183, 184 n. 312, 185, cf. 192 br. n. 363, 197, 199
- Worth (*Wert, wert*), 27, 31, 48, 63, 64 n. 85, 69 n. 127, 71, 99, 103, 111, 115, 133, 139 br. n. 437, 161 n. 107, 168 n. 161, 169, 170, 172 incl. br. n. 194, 173, 177, 178, 180, 182, 184 n. 312, *see also* Merit, Value, Worthiness, Worthlessness
- Worthiness or worthy (*Würdig[keit]*), 6 n. 32, 13, 44, 45 n. 246, 52, 87, 107 n. 145, 112, 115, 118, 128, 133, 134 incl. br. n. 404, 139 incl. br. n. 437, 146 n. 489, 162, 178, 183, 189, 192, 195 n. 382, *see also* Unworthy
- Worthlessness or worthless person (*Nichtswürdigkeit, Nichtswürdiger*), 4, 19 br. n. 5a, 38

- Writing *or* written *or* in writing *or* writer
 (*Schrift, schriftlich, Schriftsteller*), 39 br. n.
 192, 43 n. 231, 84, 66 br. n. 97, 85 br. n. 278,
 107 incl. br. n. 143, 110 br. n. 167j, 128 br.
 n. 358, 129, 130, 136 n. 425, 161 br. n. 103,
 163, 173, 181 br. n. 278, 185 br. n. 317, *see*
also Scripture, Work
- Wrong(ly) (*[mit] Unrecht*), 110 n. 167, 118,
 159, 185–87, 195 n. 382, cf. 30 br. n. 107,
 87 br. n. 300, *see also* Right
- Yearn(ing) (*verlangen [Sehnsucht, sehn-
 süchtig]*), 13, 117, 198 n. 391
- Yoke (*Joch*), 105, 166 n. 152 and br. n. 152c, 179
 incl. n. 263 and br. ns. 263a and 263c, 188