

SWEET GOSPEL HARMONY.COM PART III

Burkitt - The Gospel History

V.

THE TEACHING OF JESUS CHRIST.

WE come now to the Sayings of our Lord as handed down for us in the Christian tradition. And before we consider any part of these Sayings in detail I think it will be well to call to mind some general considerations about the circumstances of their utterance and their preservation. The considerations I mean are all perfectly obvious and plain, but their very plainness and obviousness make them run some risk of being slurred over.

Jesus Himself wrote nothing, and the only words which He is said to have taught His disciples are the words of the Lord's Prayer. Even this short form of words has been handed down with notable variations. He ordered the apostles to say to those to whom they preached 'the Kingdom of God is at hand' (Matt x 7, Lk x 9), but this is rather a doctrine than a formula. It does not appear that it was part of His method to give His disciples watchwords or

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anything in the nature of a set phrase. On the contrary, the Gospels tell us that He expressly commanded His followers that they were not to defend themselves by set apologies, but to say what the Spirit impelled them to say, as the occasion suggested. There is no trace of any systematisation of the teaching; the private expositions of the Parable of the Sower, of the new doctrine concerning Pollution (Mk vii 17) and concerning Divorce (Mk x 10), are all as informal as expositions can be. I do not mean indefinite: the teaching is always clear and definite, but it is essentially occasional. It arises out of what passes at the moment.

The effect of all this can be very broadly stated. It tended to heighten the personal impression of our Lord upon His disciples. It is the Lord Jesus and not His Sayings which was the subject of the earliest preachers of Christianity. Doubtless part of the personal impression included a vivid sense of our Lord's guiding principles of life, His daily and hourly intercourse with His Father in Heaven, and the sureness and authority which this heavenly intercourse gave Him in discerning right and wrong. They saw and felt His independence of earthly standards, His impatience with the self-satisfied, His compassion for those in need. This was what was necessary.

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It was necessary that the disciples should reverence and love their Master; far more necessary than that they should remember His phrases. But the conditions were not specially favourable for accurate reminiscence. People talk vaguely of the marvellous achievements of Oriental memories, but I think you will find on investigation that these feats are all connected with systematic instruction. The wisdom of this or that famous Rabbi, of this or that renowned sage, has been handed down to posterity by the recollections of his pupils; but in all such cases there was a conscious committing to memory of instruction or doctrine. The same is true of the preservation of the Qoran. Mohammed's discourses were to a considerable extent preserved through the memories of the faithful, but they consist of sentences of a marked rhetorical character and end with a rhyme.¹

How different is all this from the recorded Sayings of our Lord! As I said just now, they are occasional, they arise out of some event, some circumstance of His life. The Sayings for the most part form the point of an anecdote, or are themselves couched in the form of a story, like

¹ In mentioning the Mohammedan tradition we may profitably remind ourselves of the existence of a vast mass of 'Traditions' of the Prophet which is in no sense genuine historical reminiscence.

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several of the Parables. There is no indication in the Gospels that any of our Lord's hearers were taking notes at the time, whether mental or written. Indeed, we are told in one place that it was only after He had risen from the dead that His disciples remembered He had said such and such things.

Moreover, the aim of the early Christians was practical; they aimed at making saints, not historians. The memory of Jesus survived among His servants, His Presence was still felt in their midst; and we must be prepared beforehand to find that a clear distinction was not always drawn between what He would have said and what He really did say. 'The labourer is worthy of his hire' (or, 'of his food'), said Jesus, according to Matthew and Luke; with S. Paul this has become the formal statement that the Lord ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel (1 Cor ix 14)—an example which clearly shews how sayings detached from a historical context harden into rules from which most of the distinctive phraseology of the speaker disappears. Another instance of the same kind is to be found in the Sayings about Divorce, which we considered in a former lecture. In Mk x 2-12 we have the whole story in its historical setting, and the Saying

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of the Lord at the end takes its colour from the events of the age and the circumstances of the place where the Saying was uttered. In Lk xvi 18 we have much the same principle of conduct laid down, but the historical setting is gone: it belongs to Christian Ethics rather than to our Lord's Biography.

We need, therefore, a kind of starting-point for the consideration of our Lord's doctrine, some external test that will give us a general assurance that the Saying we have before us is really from Him, and is not the half-conscious product of one school of His followers. Where shall we find such a test?

It appeared to me that the starting-point we require may be found in those Sayings which have a real double attestation. The main documents out of which the Synoptic Gospels are compiled are (1) the Gospel of Mark, and (2) the lost common origin of the non-Markan portions of Matthew and Luke, *i.e.* the source called Q. Where Q and Mark appear to report the same saying, we have the nearest approach that we can hope to get to the common tradition of the earliest Christian society about our Lord's words. What we glean in this way will indicate the general impression His teaching made upon His disciples.

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The list of Sayings that here follow is arranged according to the order of Mark. The Saying is usually repeated with comparatively trifling verbal variations, and in the same context, by Matthew and Luke, or by one of them ; but these repetitions practically contribute nothing for our purpose, and I have not given them here. The Saying that I give after the verse of Mark is taken from a different context, usually from Luke, as we have seen reason to believe that the Third Evangelist keeps his sources more apart than Matthew does. Matthew, on the other hand, seems often to combine Sayings taken from Q with those taken from Mark, so that his form of these Sayings is generally not so instructive for the purposes of this comparison.

1. Mk iii 4 (*copied in* Lk vi 9).

And He saith unto them, 'Is it lawful on the sabbath day to do good, or to do harm? to save a life, or to kill?' But they held their peace.

Lk xiv 5, 6 (*compare* Matt xii 11).

And He said unto them, 'Which of you shall have [an ass or] an ox fallen into a well, and will not straightway draw him up on a sabbath day?' And they could not answer again unto these things.

[Most Greek MSS have *υἱὸς ἡ βοῦς*, *i.e.* 'a son

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or an ox.' It is quite impossible that this can have been the original form of the *Saying*, but its very harshness is in favour of its genuineness in the text of *Luke*. Probably it goes back to a mistake in translation. In Aramaic 'son' is *bar* (בר, sometimes written ביר, e.g. *Pesikta*, 75^a), and 'the well' is *bêrâ* בירא. If the original Aramaic ran something like מנו מנכון דבבירא תורה נפל, it is easy to imagine how the mistake may have arisen. In the parallel Matt xii 11, 12, only one animal is named—a *sheep*—and it is supposed to fall into a *pit*.]

2. Mk iii 22–26.

And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem said, 'He hath Beelzebul,' and, 'By the prince of the devils casteth He out the devils.' And He called them unto Him, and said unto them in parables, 'How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand; and if a house be divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand; and if Satan hath risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.'

Lk xi 15–18 (*compare the non-Markan portions of Matt xii 24–26*).

But some of them said, 'By Beelzebul the prince of the devils casteth He out devils.' And others, tempting, sought

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of Him a sign from heaven. But He, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, 'Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and a house against a house falleth; and if Satan also is divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? Because ye say that I cast out devils by Beelzebul.'

[It is evident that Mk iii 22-26 and Lk xi 15-18 report the same Saying of Jesus, notwithstanding the many differences and the very small amount of actual coincidence in language. It is further evident, if we tabulate the many similarities of language between Lk xi 14-23 and Matt xii 22-30, that S. Luke has not entirely rewritten the passage himself, but has preserved much of the wording of his immediate source. That being the case, it is difficult to believe that any common document underlies Mark and Luke at this point, other than the common memory of the first circle of disciples. The reason why these Beelzebul sayings are so well remembered and reported is, I believe, to be explained partly by their striking and picturesque imagery, but still more by the fact that they were spoken at the moment of the great breach with the Jewish clergy of Capernaum.]

3. Mk iii 27.

'But no one can enter into the house of the strong man and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.'

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Lk xi 21-23 (*compare the non-Markan portions of Matt xii 28-30*).

'When the strong man fully armed guardeth his own court, his goods are in peace ; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him his whole armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils. He that is not with me is against me ; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.'

[Here again the verbal resemblance between Mark and Luke is very small, though there are some marked coincidences between Luke and Matthew. In all this section I believe Matthew to present a text conflated by the Evangelist out of Mark and the 'non-Markan document' (Q), which Luke has here preserved free from contamination with Mark.]

4. Mk iii 28-30.

'Amen, I say unto you, All things shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, the sins and the blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme : but whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin' : because they said, ' He hath an unclean spirit.'

Lk xii 10.

'And every one who shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him : but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Spirit it shall not be forgiven.'

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[Matt xii 31, 32 seems to be partly remodelled by the Evangelist from the parallel in Mark, which indeed forms the basis of the narrative in Matt xii.]

5. Mk iii 31-34 (*retold from Mark in Lk viii 19-21*).

‘. . . Whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.’

Lk xi 27, 28.

‘. . . Blessed is the womb that bare thee . . . !’ But He said, ‘Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.’

[Lk viii 19-21 contains the story of our Lord's mother and brethren standing outside because of the crowd. In that place it is doubtless taken from Mark, like the rest of Lk viii. Lk xi 27, 28, on the other hand, comes between the sayings about Beelzebub (parallel to Mk iii 22 ff) and the saying about the Lamp and the Stand (parallel to Mk iv 21): it is therefore difficult to avoid the inference that it is another reminiscence of the same story as Mk iii 31-34.]

6. Mk iv 3-9 (*The Parable of the Sower*).

[We may conjecture that the Parable of the Sower stood in Q, but the text of Matt xiii 2 ff and Lk viii 5 ff seems wholly derived from Mark.]

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7. Mk iv 21 (*rewritten from Mark in Lk viii 16*).

And He said unto them, 'Is the lamp brought to be put under the bushel, or under the bed? Is it not to be put on the stand?'

Lk xi 33 (*compare Matt v 15*).

'No man, when he hath lighted a lamp, putteth it in a cellar, but on the stand, that they which enter in may see the light.'¹

8. Mk iv 22 (*copied from Mark in Lk viii 17*).

'For there is nothing hid, save that it should be manifested; neither was anything made secret, but that it should come to light.'

Lk xii 2 (*compare Matt x 26*).

'But there is nothing covered up that shall not be revealed, and hid that shall not be known.'

9. Mk iv 23.

'If any man hath ears to hear, let him hear.'

Lk xiv 35.

'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.'

[This Saying is also reported at the end of the Parable of the Sower in Mk iv 9, and parallels.

¹ Most Greek and Latin documents add 'neither under the bushel' after 'cellar,' but the clause should be omitted from Lk xi 33, on the sufficient authority of the Sinai Palimpsest, supported as it is by several groups of important Greek MSS.

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The very varied attestation of this Saying is good evidence that our Lord really used this phrase, most likely on several occasions. It clearly shews that He expected His more intelligent hearers to understand something of the real meaning of His Parables.]

10. Mk iv 24^b.

‘... With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you.’

Lk vi 38.

‘For with what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again.’

11. Mk iv 25 (*rewritten from Mark in Lk viii 18*).

‘For he that hath, to him shall be given; and he that hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath.’

Lk xix 26 (*compare Matt xxv 29*).

‘I say unto you, that unto every one that hath shall be given; but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away from him.’

[A saying like this may very well be genuine in both contexts; it is inserted in this List because whether it was uttered once or twice, it has certainly been twice remembered.]

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12. Mk iv 30-32.

And He said, 'How shall we liken the Kingdom of God? or in what parable shall we set it forth? As to a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown upon the earth, being a thing less than all the seeds upon the earth, yet when it is sown, groweth up, and becometh greater than all the herbs, and putteth out great branches, so that the birds of the heaven can lodge under the shadow thereof.'

Lk xiii 18, 19 (*compare the non-Markan portions of Matt xiii 31, 32*).

He said therefore, 'Unto what is the Kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I liken it? It is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his own garden; and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the heaven lodged in the branches thereof.'

[Here again the language of the two parallel passages could hardly be more different, considering the essential similarity of thought and imagery.]

13. Mk vi 4.

And Jesus said unto them, 'A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.'

Lk iv 24.

And He said, 'Amen, I say unto you, No prophet is acceptable in his own country.'

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[Both extracts come from the account of Jesus at Nazareth, but S. Luke places the story at the beginning of the Ministry, and the rest of the context is very different. The Saying reappears in Joh iv 44, when Jesus is journeying from Jerusalem and Samaria to Galilee.]

14. Mk vi 10, 11 (*condensed in* Lk ix 4, 5).

And He said unto them, 'Whosoever ye enter into a house, there abide till ye depart thence. And whatsoever place shall not receive you, and they hear you not, as ye go forth thence, shake off the dust that is under your feet for a testimony unto them.'

Lk x 5^a, 7, 10, 11 (*compare* Matt x 11-15).

'And into whatsoever house ye shall enter . . . in that same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give : for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house. . . . But into whatsoever city ye shall enter, and they receive you not, go out into the streets thereof and say, "Even the dust from your city, that cleaveth to our feet, we do wipe off against you : howbeit know this, that the Kingdom of God is come nigh."'

["There is no doubt—and Matthew has rightly recognised the fact—that Mk vi 7 ff and Lk x 1 ff are variants, which must be compared together" (Wellhausen, *Ev. Lucae*, p. 49).]

15. Mk viii 12^b.

'Why doth this generation seek a sign? Amen, I say unto you, there shall no sign be given unto this generation.'

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Lk xi 29 (*compare* Matt xii 39, *also* xvi 4^b).

‘This generation is an evil generation : it seeketh after a sign ;
and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of Jonah.’

[Note that ‘the sign of Jonah,’ which occurs
also in Matt xii 39, xvi 4^b, is differently expanded
in Matt xii 40 and Lk xi 30.]

16. Mk viii 15.

And He charged them, saying, ‘Take heed, beware
of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven
of Herod.’

Lk xii 1^b.

‘Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.’

[The context is quite different.]

17. Mk viii 34 (*rewritten in* Lk ix 23).

And He called unto Him the multitude with His
disciples, and said unto them, ‘If any man
would come after me, let him deny himself
and take up his cross, and follow me.’

Lk xiv 25-27.

Now there went with Him great multitudes : and He turned,
and said unto them, ‘If any man cometh unto me, and
hateth not his own father, and mother, and wife, and
children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life
also, he cannot be my disciple. Whosoever doth not bear
his own cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.’

[Lk ix 23 is certainly based directly upon Mk
viii 34, but S. Luke has given a peculiar turn to

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it by adding 'daily' (*καθ' ἡμέραν*) to 'take up his cross.']¹

18. Mk ix 37^b.

'Whosoever receiveth me, receiveth not me but Him that sent me.'

Lk x 16 (*compare* Matt x 40).

'He that rejecteth me rejecteth Him that sent me.'

[The special interest of this passage is the formula 'Him that sent me,' so characteristic of the Fourth Gospel. Similar phrases occur in Matt xv 24, Lk iv 18, 43, so that in all our sources—in Mark, in Q, and in the peculiar elements of Matthew and Luke, as well as in John—our Lord is made to describe Himself as being conscious of a definite Mission from the Most High.]

19a. Mk ix 42.

'And whosoever shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it were better for him if a great millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.'

Lk xvii 2.

'... It were well for him if a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, rather than that he should cause one of these little ones to stumble.'

[Here the context is quite different.]

¹ Most Greek MSS (not the best) and most 'Western' texts omit 'daily.' On *ἔρχεσθαι* in Lk ix 23, see *Enc. Bibl.* 1775, note ⁴.

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19b. Mk ix 43-48 (*condensed in* Matt xviii 8, 9).

'And if thy hand cause thee to stumble, cut it off: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed, rather than having thy two hands to go into the unquenchable fire.¹ And if thy foot cause thee to stumble, cut it off: it is good for thee to enter into life halt, rather than having thy two feet to be cast into hell. And if thine eye cause thee to stumble, cast it out: it is good for thee to enter into the Kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell where "their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched."'

Matt v 29, 30 (*no parallel in* Lk).²

'And if thy right eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body be cast into hell. And if thy right hand causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not thy whole body go into hell.'

20. Mk ix 50.

'Salt is good: but if the salt have lost its saltiness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace one with another.'

Lk xiv 34 (*compare* Matt v 13).

'Salt therefore is good: but if even the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?'

¹ Omit here *εἰς τὴν γέενναν* with the Sinai Palimpsest, &c.

² It seems to me probable that Luke the Physician preferred to leave out the metaphor of amputation. Compare the curtailment of Mk v 26 in Lk viii 43.

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21. Mk x 11, 12.

And He saith unto them, 'Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her: and if she herself shall put away her husband, and marry another, she committeth adultery.'

Lk xvi 18 (*another form in* Matt v 31, 32).

'Every one that putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth one that is put away from a husband committeth adultery.'

[For the historical setting, see Lecture III.]

22. Mk x 42-45.

And Jesus called them to Him, and saith unto them, 'Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them; and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it is not so among you: but whosoever would become great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever would be first among you, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.'

Lk xxii 25-27.

And He said unto them, 'The kings of the Gentiles have lordship over them; and they that have authority over them are called Benefactors. But ye shall not be so; but he that is the greater among you let him become as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For

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whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? . . . but I am in the midst of you as He that serveth.'

[The context again is quite different.]

23. Mk xi 22, 23.

And Jesus answering saith unto them, 'Have faith in God. Amen, I say unto you, Whosoever shall say unto this mountain, "Be thou taken up and cast into the sea"; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he saith cometh to pass; he shall have it.'

Lk xvii 6.

And the Lord said, 'If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye would say unto this sycamine tree, "Be thou rooted up, and be thou planted in the sea"; and it would have obeyed you.'

[Wellhausen (*Ev. Marci*, p. 97) remarks that 'into the sea' seems to suit Galilee rather than Jerusalem. But need this use of Galilean imagery imply more than that the words were uttered by a Galilean Prophet to Galilean fishermen? It is a saying that might very well have been spoken more than once.]

24. Mk xi 24.

'Therefore I say unto you, All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye have received them, and ye shall have them.'

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Lk xi 9 (*compare* Matt vii 7).

‘And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.’

25. Mk xi 25.

‘And whosoever ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any one ; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.’

Matt vi 14, 15.

‘For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you ; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.’

[It is hardly likely that these verses from the Sermon on the Mount were derived from Mark.]

[26.] Mk xii 32–34^a.

The scribe said unto Him, ‘Of a truth, Master, thou hast well said that He is One ; and there is none other but He : and to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.’ And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, He said unto him, ‘Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God.’

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Lk x 25-28.

And He said unto him, 'What is written in the law? how readest thou?' And he answering said, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.' And He said unto him, 'Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.'

[I have inserted Mk xii 32 ff and Lk x 25 ff in the list, because at the first glance they are real doublets; *i.e.* different accounts of the same event drawn from different sources. They agree in the very remarkable circumstance that the duty of love to God and one's neighbour is emphasised by the learned interlocutor of our Lord. In Mark this is comprehensible, for what the scribe says is merely a generously appreciative echo of our Lord's great answer. But in Luke the case is different. There we are surprised, first, to find that the Jewish Doctor actually anticipates our Lord's doctrine without having been prompted, and then that he is unwilling to apply his own principles.

Wellhausen (*Ev. Lucae*, p. 52) further points out that the Parable of the Good Samaritan (which immediately follows) is strictly speaking an answer to the question, 'Whose neighbour am I?' not to 'Who is my neighbour?' I should have been inclined rather to say that it is an answer to the question, 'What is my duty towards

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my neighbour?' But in either case the inconsequence remains. Wellhausen considers that the answer of the scribe and the Parable are really separate stories, which have been joined together by the Evangelist. The Parable has a Samaritan hero, consequently the Evangelist has placed the whole compilation in the Samaritan section of his Gospel; but the lawyer who answers so well at first is only the scribe of Mark xii 30 ff transferred to an earlier place, like the sermon at Nazareth in Lk iv. On this theory, which on the whole seems best to explain the facts, the answer of the lawyer is only Mk xii 28-34 itself, rewritten by Luke to suit the Parable which follows. It is not therefore a doublet of Mark at all.]

27. Mk xii 38, 39 (*copied in* Lk xx 45, 46).

And in His teaching He said, 'Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and salutations in the marketplaces, and chief seats in the synagogues, and chief places at feasts.'

Lk xi 43.

'Woe unto you Pharisees! for ye love the chief seats in the synagogues, and the salutations in the marketplaces.'

[Mk xii 40 goes on to accuse the Scribes that they 'for a pretence make long prayers,' *προφάσει μακρὰ προσευχόμενοι*. In Matt xxiii 5 the Scribes

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and Pharisees are said to 'make broad their phylacteries.' The Jewish Phylacteries were called *Tephillîn*, a word which means 'prayers': apparently, therefore, Mark has misunderstood a saying which referred originally to the ostentatious size of the *Tephillîn* worn by the professedly religious.]

28. Mk xiii 11 (*rewritten in* Lk xxi 14, 15).

'And when they lead you, and deliver you up, be not anxious beforehand what ye shall speak: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Spirit.'

Lk xii 11, 12.

'And when they bring you before the synagogues, and the rulers, and the authorities, be not anxious how or what ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: for the Holy Spirit shall teach you in that very hour what ye ought to say.'

29. Mk xiii 15, 16.

'... And let him that is on the housetop not go down, nor enter in to take anything out of his house: and let him that is in the field not return back to take his cloke.'

Lk xvii 31.

'In that day, he which shall be on the housetop, and his goods in the house, let him not go down to take them away: and let him that is in the field likewise not return back.'

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[The whole of the section Lk xvii 20-37 is really a doublet of Mk xiii 3-37, and both should be compared with the final chapter of the *Didache*. Except the last five verses of Matt xiii, the section Lk xvii 20-37 seems to me to contain the most authentic reminiscences of what our Lord may have said on this subject at various times.]

30. Mk xiii 21.

'And then if any man shall say unto you, "Lo, here is the Christ"; or, "Lo, there"; believe it not.'

Lk xvii 23.

'And they shall say to you, "Lo, there!" "Lo, here!" go not away, nor follow after them.'

31. Mk xiii 34, 35.

'As a man, sojourning in another country, having left his house, and given authority to his servants, to each one his work, commanded also the porter to watch. Watch therefore: for ye know not when the lord of the house cometh, whether at even, or at midnight, or at cockcrowing, or in the morning.'

Lk xii 37, 38.

'Blessed are those servants whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: amen, I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and shall come and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, and if in the third, and find them so, blessed are those servants.'

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I have read out to you this list of Sayings, familiar as they are, because of their historical importance. No one would deny that they are important taken singly, but I wish to draw your attention now to their importance as a collection. When we study the life and work of the great personages of history and thought there are two distinct things that we should desire to know about them. We desire to know their deeper teaching, to see and recognise the first formulation of some great idea, which comes new and strange from the brain of a man in advance of his time, an idea perhaps not destined to be fully understood and appreciated for many a long day. But we need also to understand the impression made by the man on his contemporaries; we want to know what he stood for to them, as well as what he stands for to us. And this last kind of knowledge is the most necessary for us to have when we are studying those who are great because of the influence they have had upon the general course of events, not only because of what they wrote or said.

Now I am not going to claim that the list of Sayings which I have read to you are the deepest or the most original of the recorded Sayings of our Lord. It may very well be that some of the most profound of the Sayings of His that have

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survived at all are recorded only by a single Evangelist. But if we are asking what was the teaching of Jesus Christ which impressed His followers generally, or what was the main impression made by His teaching, then I think we are justified in pointing to this list that I have drawn up. It may not be the most profound or subtle view that we can obtain of our Lord's doctrines, but we have reason to consider it, so far as it goes, a true view. At least it will be useful to us as a corrective: any other Portrait of the Lord which we may draw must not be inconsistent with the Portrait attested by the mouth of our two witnesses.

Not that it is by any means easy to put together the Sayings in our list and weave them into a body of systematic doctrine. I shall not attempt to do so; I shall only offer a few scattered remarks on some features of the teaching which more or less prominently emerge.

To begin with, we may pass by several of the Sayings which really have rather a biographical than a religious interest, such as the saying about the Prophet in his own country (13), and the directions for the early missionary journeys of the apostles (14). Let us go on to the attacks upon the Scribes and Pharisees (27). The Scribes

OUR LORD AND THE SCRIBES

were the trained theologians of Israel, the Pharisees were the religious world of Israel. They therefore represented that element in the Jewish people with which a religious Teacher might have been expected to be in harmony. We do actually read that our Lord's contemporaries found it strange that He should consort with the irreligious, and it is quite obvious that His answer to their complaint is at least partly ironical. He did not believe that the Scribes and Pharisees were whole and in no need of a Physician, and I do not think that He consorted with those whom the Pharisees regarded as sinners solely because He saw that they were in the greatest need of repentance.

The opposition of Jesus to the Scribes does really stand in some need of elucidation. We Christians only hear of these folk as the opponents of our Lord. We hear Him cry 'Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!' We do not know any Scribes and Pharisees, but perhaps we do know some hypocrites, and we are content to think of Scribes and Pharisees as another term for hypocrites. But it is a very serious indictment to draw up against the Jewish people. My friend Mr. Claude Montefiore has recently protested, not without reason, against the picture of the Rabbinical religion which is commonly drawn by

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Christians out of materials supplied by the Christian Gospels. He complains that learned theologians, some of whom are orthodox in nothing else, agree in representing the Rabbinical religion as mechanical and unspiritual, although as a matter of fact and history it has been the sustaining force which has knit together and kept alive the Jewish nation unto this day. It has been held by many Jews that Jesus was really too emphatic in denouncing the Scribes, that He called them a generation of vipers merely because they rejected His doctrine.

Let us be fair to the Jews. Let us admit first of all that the Christians may have only too easily remembered their Master's words against some Scribes, and afterwards set them down in such a way that they seem like an accusation against all the Scribes. That this is not mere fancy may be seen by comparing Matthew with Mark. Mark tells us how Jesus told the people to beware of the Scribes who desired the chief seats in the Synagogues while (as His phrase goes) they 'devoured widows' houses'; at the same time he tells us of the enthusiastic praise given by one of the Scribes to our Lord's summary of the Law as a joining together of the commands to love God and one's neighbour (26). But though this Scribe was commended by Jesus,

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Matthew tells us nothing about him that is good. According to Matthew, he was 'tempting' Jesus, and he says nothing to Jesus in reply. Yet if we are to judge the Jews out of what we read in the Gospels, we ought not to forget what Mark tells us about this Scribe.

But in the next place we may ask ourselves how far the Rabbinical religion is the immediate descendant of the main current of the Judaism of the 1st century AD. Between the Judaism of the time of Christ and the Judaism of the early Middle Ages intervened two catastrophes, or rather one catastrophe in two great shocks, such as hardly ever befel any nation that has survived. The two great Jewish rebellions in the times of Vespasian (AD 70) and of Hadrian (AD 135) ended in utter collapse, and most of the leading features of the older Judaism perished in them for ever. In AD 70 perished the Jewish State, the Temple, the annual pilgrimages to the Feasts, the Priestly aristocracy, all the worldly political hopes of the Jews. Everything which the Gospels connect with the Sadducees or with the Herods disappeared for ever. The Revolt of Bar-Cochba against Hadrian was equal to the Great Revolt in fierceness; it also contained a Pharisaic element. Bar-Cochba was supported by Rabbi Aqiba, himself in some ways to be

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regarded as the founder of modern Judaism. Aqiba died a martyr, and with him died the last effort of militant Pharisaism.

What was left to the Jews? We may answer with S. Paul 'much every way,' for they were left with the Oracles of God ; but they were left with little else. In these awful catastrophes had perished a great part of what Jesus had most opposed. Thousands of Jews had been killed outright : we cannot doubt that many of the survivors lost their nationality and became merged into the Gentiles. Very likely many became Christians : it is difficult, for instance, to explain certain features in the rise of Christianity in Edessa, except on the supposition that the original congregation was largely composed of converted Jews. The Remnant who were left, who still remained Jews, were attached to their religion from motives which were in many ways akin to the motives that made men Christians. They had learnt that the Kingdom of God was not of this world ; there was now no inducement to serve the God of Israel left for those who did not still love Him and trust His promises. Can we wonder that Judaism tended to become a more spiritual religion, narrow indeed in its outer aspect, but animated within by humility and grace, even by mysticism?

THE RABBINICAL RELIGION

But in so far as the Rabbinical religion is all this, it has been metamorphosed from the prevailing Judaism of the 1st century. I do not think we need deny the real spirituality of the Rabbinical religion because we believe what the Gospels say about the Scribes, or that we need disbelieve what the Gospels say about the Scribes in the 1st century because we recognise the real spirituality of the Rabbinical religion. We have a right to believe that the spiritual descendants of the Scribes whom Jesus denounced perished in the two Revolts during the century after the Crucifixion, while the spiritual ancestor both of the Jews who became Christians and the Jews who developed and maintained the Rabbinical religion is represented by the Scribe who was 'not far from the Kingdom of God.'

Even on the one point where the Synoptic Gospels have been said to have given a wholly false representation of the teaching of the Rabbis, viz. the doctrine of 'Corban,' it seems to me dangerous to disbelieve the Gospel evidence. It is said that the Rabbis never failed in inculcating a man's duty to his father and mother, that parents came before vows. But I can quite understand that while the Temple was still standing the duty of a religious vow might seem

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to some a more direct service to God, and therefore more binding, than a man's ordinary duty to his parents. At least it is our plain business to remember, before we blame the unnatural casuistry of the Rabbis, that on a different occasion our Lord also declared that whoso had left father or mother for His sake would receive a hundredfold reward.¹ The real moral of the dispute about Corban for the Christian theologian is that it shews the very great stress which our Lord laid under ordinary circumstances upon the ordinary natural duties of life as compared with ecclesiastical and ritual fervours; and therefore it brings into prominence the exceptional character of the exceptional demands which He made towards the end of His Ministry on those who wished to follow Him then. That He had the right and the power to make these demands He did not doubt; but however often the occasions may recur, they remain exceptional.

The real cause of quarrel between our Lord and the Scribes seems to me to be that it was a quarrel between erudition and intuition, between

¹ Similarly, the Saying of Jesus in Mk iii 31 ff about his mother and brethren (5) is historically connected with the attempt of His relatives to arrest Him as a madman. Hence the difference of tone between this passage and Mk vii 9 ff.

ERUDITION AND INTUITION

traditionalism and originality. With us the word 'originality' tends to be used for mere cleverness, but in its true sense it is the very word for the great characteristic of our Lord's teaching, especially as compared with the principles of the Scribes. It was, in fact, so original as to be superficially inconsistent. The tradition of the Elders (said He) is inconsistent with the Word of God, the Law revealed to Moses: well then, the tradition of the Elders must go. But in the matter of Divorce (21) it is the Law of Moses itself that was given for the hardness of men's hearts; well then, the Law of Moses must go. In the matter of the Sabbath (1) it is the very Law of God, which, according to the Jewish view, God Himself has kept from the beginning, that comes into conflict with duties of kindness and beneficence; well then, even the Law of God is to be broken, as David did. What does all this mean, but that the supreme sanction lay not in any Code or set of Rules, however promulgated, but in an enlightened conscience, a mind really in harmony with the mind of the Father in Heaven? We have learnt the lesson so well that we do not see the difficulty. Our difficulty is to know what enlightenment is, but that was not the difficulty of the Scribes. They did not doubt that it was worse for a man to be

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paralysed than to be sound; they doubted whether it was worse for a man to be paralysed or for the Sabbath to be broken.

Closely connected with all this is the way of looking at events which Jesus called blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (2-4). The opponents of our Lord, who said that He cast out devils by Beelzebul the prince of the devils, did not deny that the devils were really cast out and the sufferers benefited. It is very likely that if we were to be transported back to Palestine we should use very different medical terms both for the diseases and the mode of cure, but that is not the question. What the Scribes said was in effect: 'We admit that you have cured the man, but we do not recognise the treatment; it must have been unlawful.' They do not say, as doctors sometimes say of quacks, that such and such a treatment is sure to have evil effects afterwards. That again is another question altogether, which is not raised in the Gospels. What is called in the Gospels blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the refusal to acknowledge a manifest benefit to have been the work of 'the finger of God.'¹

¹ In this matter Jesus is truly consistent with Himself, for He refused to condemn the man who 'cast out devils' in His name, although not one of His followers.

AUTHORITY AND TRADITION

But the rejection of Tradition and of external Authority is a very serious course to take. Even if we believe that our Lord was right and the Scribes wrong in the particular disputes that took place between them, that does not give us a rule for other times and other questions. Moreover, to substitute unintelligently the rule of Jesus for the rule of Moses is to act clean contrary to the principle which Jesus taught. There was no dispute between our Lord and the Scribes as to the canonicity of the Pentateuch, or whether God had really given commandments to Moses. The question was whether a rule, which was admitted to have all the sanction that a code of rules can have, could retain its binding force in changed and inappropriate circumstances. How is the Christian to get and to retain that sure and intuitive judgement of right and wrong that his Master had?

It seems to me that the answer which Jesus gave is contained in the two groups of Sayings about Humility (22) and about Watchfulness (31). It is difficult to know where to begin, for there are so many familiar Sayings of our Lord on these subjects which all mean much the same thing in the end. It is characteristic of His whole teaching that there can be no doubt about right and wrong for those who have eyes to see and ears

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to hear. Those whose eyes are clear—Jesus said 'simple'—can see clearly, but most folk have one eye fixed on the Will of God and the other on their own private advantage, with the natural result that they see double and their whole outlook is confused. And therefore He strove again and again to set the ambition of His disciples away from their private advantage and to turn it towards the service of their brethren. Only he whose ambition it was to serve the others was great among His followers (22); only he who was at peace with those around him could pray aright to the common Father of him and them (20, 25); and even in prayer only he who was so far forgetful of his private wishes as to believe that he had virtually received what he had asked for could hope to be heard by God (23, 24).

And I venture to urge that in something of this kind lies the permanent ethical value of the many Sayings about the duty of Watchfulness. 'Watch therefore, for ye know not when the lord of the house cometh'; 'Blessed are those servants whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching,'—what do these and similar Sayings really mean, when stripped of their eschatological dress?

HUMILITY AND WATCHFULNESS

The hope of the Second Coming of the Son of Man has faded with us into an unsubstantial dream. We are not expecting a new heaven and a new earth—at least, not in our time. And consequently all the thoughts and the imagery which imply the near approach of a tremendous catastrophe have in them something strange and unreal to us. Yet it is imperative that we should realise the point of view of our Lord's contemporaries, if we are to understand His teaching about the approaching End. It is no use to allegorize altogether the idea of the Second Advent, still less to regard 'The Kingdom of God is within you' as the only genuine teaching of Jesus, and all the rest as carnal misunderstanding on the part of the disciples. The true way is to accept the Coming of Messiah upon the clouds of heaven to gather together His elect from every quarter as the natural picture, the natural way of expressing faith and hope in the triumph of good over evil, all that people mean nowadays by the vague word Progress. The age in which our Lord lived did not believe in Progress; it was too bad an age, at least for the class of people among whom Christianity grew up. The only progress they had seen was progress to the bad. To associate ideas of natural growth with the coming of God's

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kingdom was a strange notion, which the disciples were hardly able to grasp when they heard their Master speak of it. If they thought of growth at all in this connexion, it was in the awful imagery of the Apocalypse, where there is growth and harvest and vintage indeed, but it is gathered into the great winepress of the wrath of God.¹

And, on the whole, men were justified in looking forward at that time to Catastrophe rather than Progress. The Jewish State and the Jewish Nation, as history had known them, did come to a violent end; and the survivors—Christianity and Rabbinical Judaism,—however good a title they may make out for themselves to be legitimate heirs of the old order, are not the old order itself, but a new state of things. A time of Catastrophe means a time when more than usual it is necessary to make the right choice. Most paths lead to swift destruction, most lines of action end in immediate ruin.

What, then, did our Lord command His faithful followers? If we confine ourselves to the Sayings which have come down to us doubly reported, those parts of His Teaching which appear in S. Mark and elsewhere as well, we find that He told them to watch like servants waiting

¹ Apoc xiv 19.

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through the night for their lord to return (31), but they were not to be mere passive spectators. There was the double danger before them, first of hailing as a new revelation that which was not a revelation at all, but the will-o'-the-wisp of a false prophet (30); and then the equally fatal course of not being ready to act when the decisive moment came (29).

Our Lord was proved right by the event, when He bade His disciples look forward to a time of trial and crisis, followed by a total change of the conditions of their life. The actual event was very different in detail from what had been expected, but the mortal shock was real enough. The Christendom of the second and succeeding centuries was a very different thing in almost every particular from the Kingdom of God that had been looked for by the disciples in Galilee and in Jerusalem. But it was, as a matter of fact, the line upon which the movement which our Lord started was destined to go; and that the Christian movement survived at all, or survived with a real memory of what it had started from, is a proof that the disciples had learnt their lesson. They endured to the end and were saved themselves. Much of what they most valued was in their old home, the doomed House of Israel; but they had learnt that they

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must not go back and attempt to salvage their property. So when the Jewish State came to an end, Christianity was left.

A common accusation often brought nowadays against the early Christians is that their ethics and their morality are inappropriate for a stable society that hopes to attain a higher standard of comfort for its members by gradual amelioration. It is a sufficient answer to say that had the early Christians devoted themselves to the well-to-do philanthropy of the nineteenth century they never would have survived at all. But I venture to think that our answer need not stop there. We have learnt to see that the crisis which marks the conclusion of the old order is a continual process, that it is always in operation, and that what is unfit for the new order is being continually cast out. No generation, and least of all our own, can pass away without far-reaching changes in the modes by which alone men can express their aspirations after the Eternal that changes not. The old formulas, the old symbols, must always be reconceived or die. It is for us still to take heed to ourselves, lest our hearts be overcharged with the politics of the moment and the dregs of old disputes that once were fresh, and the new era come upon us suddenly as a snare. This is what Jesus Christ tells us when He says, as

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S. Luke paraphrases a still older form of His words: 'Keep watch at every season, making supplication that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass and to stand before the Son of Man.'

VI.

THE GOSPEL IN MATTHEW AND IN LUKE.

*ἔλεγον οὖν αὐτῷ Σὺ τίς εἶ; εἶπεν αὐτοῖς
ὁ Ἰησοῦς Τὴν ἀρχὴν ὅτι καὶ λαλῶ ὑμῖν.*

IF the Style is the Man, then we are in a position to know something of the compiler of the Gospel according to Matthew. We have already learned a good deal in the course of these Lectures about the composition of this work. We have seen that it is based upon Mark, but in the earlier portion the material taken from Mark has been freely transposed and curtailed in order to make room for a collection of the Sayings of our Lord, which are introduced at appropriate places in the rearranged narrative. In addition to these Sayings, a story of the Birth of Jesus Christ is prefixed to the Gospel, with a genealogy which goes from Abraham through David to Joseph.

All through the Gospel, in the parts taken from Mark, in the Nativity story and the other additions to the narrative, and not least in the

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Sayings ascribed to our Lord Himself, we find the same peculiarities of language, a peculiar style marked by the recurrence of certain formulas and favourite expressions. To such an extent is this the case that there is hardly a paragraph in the Gospel that does not contain one or more. The *Kingdom of Heaven*, used by Matthew where other Evangelists speak of the 'Kingdom of God,' is the best known of them, but there are many others equally characteristic. Such, for instance, is the way in which after the longer discourses of our Lord, the Evangelist takes up the narrative with, 'And it came to pass when Jesus had finished these sayings. . . .';¹ or again, the way in which a new paragraph begins with 'then.'² The Parables themselves are stereotyped, they begin 'The kingdom of heaven is like to this or that,'³ and they tend to end up with 'There shall be the wailing and the gnashing of teeth.'⁴ You will find a list of the Words and Phrases characteristic of S. Matthew's

¹ Matt vii 28, xi 1, xiii 53, xix 1, xxvi 1, contain this formula with slight variations.

² In the narrative 'then' occurs in Matthew 60 times, in Mark *never*, in Luke *twice*; in discourses 'then' occurs in Matthew 30 times, in Mark *six* times, in Luke *thirteen* times.

³ Matt xiii 31, 33, 44, 45, 47, xx 1, xiii 24, xviii 23, xxii 2, xxv 1; this formula never is used in the other Gospels.

⁴ This formula occurs at the end of a Saying of Jesus in Matt viii 12, xiii 42, 50, xxii 13, xxiv 51, xxv 30; elsewhere only Lk xiii 28, where it stands at the beginning of a Saying.

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Gospel on pp. 4-7 of Sir John Hawkins's *Horae Synopticae*, a list which repays very careful study. But indeed one hardly needs to read such a list to be convinced of the general facts.

Yet I wish I could think of some other word than 'formality' by which to name the chief characteristic of the First Evangelist's literary style. Formality suggests frigidity, generally with a certain measure of incapacity, and these are not among his defects. On the contrary, Matthew has great literary skill, as well as dignity. Everything that he says is put with admirable clearness and lucidity; what he writes down he has first understood himself. If there is an exception to be noted he notes it. A wife is not to be divorced, said Jesus, according to Mark and Luke; Matthew adds the exception *saving for the cause of fornication*. 'Blessed are the poor and the hungry,' said Jesus (Lk vi 20, 21); Matthew explains that the 'poor' are the poor *in spirit*, and the 'hungry' are those who hunger *after righteousness*. At the end of the scene in which Jesus spoke to His disciples in the boat about the leaven of the Pharisees, Matthew adds 'Then'—notice the typical Matthæan cast of the sentence,—'then understood they how that He bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and the

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Sadducees' (Matt xvi 12). Some twenty verses later, after the Transfiguration, Matthew reports (from Mark) the sayings of Jesus about Elijah coming to restore all things, but he adds, 'Then understood the disciples that He spake unto them of John the Baptist' (Matt xvii 13). Similarly, he points the moral of the Parable of the Vineyard, already sufficiently obvious, by making our Lord say, after the telling quotation about the Stone that the builders rejected, 'Therefore say I unto you, the Kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof' (Matt xxi 43).

This last illustration of the First Evangelist's method is highly characteristic. It is magnificent, but it is not history; at least it is not history, if by history we mean the nearest possible approach to giving a cinematograph view of a past scene, accompanied by a record on the gramophone. Such a record would indeed be precious, but even if we had it we should want something more. We should still want a Commentary, something which would give us the moral of what we were seeing and hearing.

I do not think that Matthew—it is convenient to call the Compiler of the Gospel according to Matthew by the traditional name—aimed at being a Chronicler. This statement would not be true

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of all the Evangelists. Mark and Luke are, in a way, Chroniclers; that is, a very great part of their intention is to tell the story of the events more or less as they came to pass. With Matthew the case is different. He is not especially concerned to paint the most lifelike picture possible of Jesus of Nazareth as He walked the earth in what was, even when Matthew wrote, a past age. His aim rather is to shew forth the real significance of one who had come in the fulness of time, fulfilling the ancient words of prophecy, proving Himself thereby to be the legitimate King and Lawgiver of the new Nation which is the true Israel of God.

‘The Kingdom of God shall be taken away from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof’—this is the motto, the special doctrine, of the Gospel according to Matthew. The disciples are a new legitimate Israel, come to take the place of the old Israel, and bound together by a New Law which takes the place of the Old. The keynote of the work is not the opposition of Law and Grace, as in S. Paul, but the opposition of the Old Law and the New Law.

It is very difficult to dwell upon the leading characteristics of Matthew without seeming to fall back into the phrases of Baur and his followers,

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to whom the main event in the development of the early Church was the struggle between 'Paulinism' and the primitive Jewish Christianity of the original apostles. I am not trying to revive the antiquated heresies of the Tübingen School. We need not doubt that S. Paul really wrote, and wrote with truth, that James and Cephas and John gave him the right hand of fellowship; and I venture to think, with (I suppose) the great majority of modern students of early Christian literature, that it is absurd and fantastic to explain expressions in the Parables given by Matthew, such as the 'enemy' of xiii 25 who sowed Tares among the Wheat, as covert allusions to the Apostle of the Gentiles. Nevertheless there remains a certain element of truth in the contention of the Tübingen theologians. There is, it was inevitable that there should be, a real difference between the outward aspect of Christianity in the Gentile communities founded by S. Paul, in which the Christians were dissenters from the heathen view of life, and the Jewish or semi-Jewish communities in Palestine, in which the Christians were a sect or school among the Jews. To be a Christian at all in a heathen city meant an inevitable change of life in every social and domestic custom. The religion of a man's neighbours was the service of Demons, a thing

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altogether irrational or wicked from the Christian's point of view. There were scandals, of course, in the little Christian societies, but on the whole the pressure of the outside world tended to keep things straight within the fold. But in the Jewish communities the moral position of the Christianised Jews was different. Here it could not be asserted as a self-evident proposition that the Christian's manner of life was better than the Jew's. The Christian and the Jew worshipped the same God, they appealed to the same sacred Scriptures, the same Saints of old supplied acknowledged examples of godly conduct. It might well seem that except the righteousness of the Christian exceeded the righteousness of the Jews around them, they could not enter into the kingdom of heaven. On every point debatable questions of conduct would arise, and the Christians felt the need of Rules which might guide their actions with reference to the rules observed by their more conservative neighbours.

In no book of our New Testament is this conception of a New Law for Christians so prominent as in the Gospel according to S. Matthew. No book of the New Testament is so full of thoughts and expressions which have a real parallel in Rabbinical literature. The Evangelist is, so to speak, a Christian Rabbi, though no doubt he

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would have disclaimed the title.¹ If the Gospel of Mark is most closely in touch with History, the Gospel of Matthew is most closely in touch with the Talmud. Like the other Gospels it is in form a narrative of the earthly life of Jesus Christ, but it sets forth that life with reference to the questions that most nearly concerned a Church composed of Palestinian Christians. No doubt the Evangelist feels himself and his brethren separated from the mass of his unbelieving fellow-countrymen. The Christians form an Ecclesia, a Society, of their own (xviii 17), distinct from ordinary Jews (xxviii 15). The separation had been made absolute when 'all the people' had answered Pilate by saying 'His blood be on us, and on our children!' (xxvii 25). But even so, the unbelieving Jew is nearer than the Gentile and the tax-gatherer (xviii 17): he that is outcast to the Jew is outcast also to the Evangelist.

I imagine it to be one of the most delicate of the problems which confront the investigator of the Gospel History to determine how far the Sayings of Jesus reported only in the Gospel according to Matthew are, in the narrower sense, historical: how far, that is, they are a literal translation into Greek of words which Jesus once spoke,

¹ Matt xxiii 8.

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and how far they represent the practice and the hopes and fears of those of His countrymen who believed on Him a generation after the Crucifixion. Happily the problem is less important than at first sight appears, at least to those who believe with our Evangelist, that in a very real sense the risen Lord was with His disciples all the days, and that the Church in Palestine as well as in Corinth and in Rome was really carrying out the work that Jesus had originated. But when we seek to pick out the particular sayings which happen to have come down to us unmodified in word and expression, we are attempting a task which is in most instances impossible to carry out. It is not only a question whether this or that sentence or illustration comes really from a later time:¹ the Evangelist all through is thinking of his own age and the condition and needs of his fellow-Christians. It is this which everywhere influences the representation that he gives of the events of the past generation. "The Kingdom of God here and now, according to Matthew's representation," says Wellhausen (*Einl.* p. 105), "is an institution founded by Jesus, and conversely the thought of the Kingdom is inseparable from its Founder. On this assumption Jesus has the design to found it on earth, and so appears from

¹ *E.g.* the mention of Zacharias, son of Barachias, in Matt xxiii 35.

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the beginning as Messiah. From the beginning He specially teaches His own disciples, to shew them in detail how the Society of His followers must be constituted and what kind of experiences will befall it. He does not scatter His teaching about on every soil heedless of its success or failure, but sows the Kingdom of God with the 'Word of the Kingdom,' and this Kingdom of God when called the Field is the same as in the Parable of the Vineyard. We cannot help recognising that the Ecclesia, the Church, is meant, although the name is generally avoided on historical grounds. Especially is this clear when Jesus speaks of Scribes and Stewards of the Kingdom of God, of the Labourers, some of whom have long worked in it, and some only for a short while, and of its worthy and unworthy members; or again, when He says that John the Baptist, though he be the greatest of Jews, yet is less than the least member of the Kingdom of Heaven. The identification of the Kingdom and the Ecclesia is entirely comprehensible, seeing that the Christian Society was undeniably the work of Jesus, and it was considered to be the porch of Heaven itself. But this Kingdom, as it is set forth in Matthew, is altogether 'Christian'; it cannot have been thus set forth, or rather presupposed, by Jesus Himself. For in this Gospel

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He really presupposes the Kingdom without considering any explanation about it necessary. He addresses His disciples as though they were already members of His Society and organised as such; He transfers Himself into a future state of things as if it were then actually present."¹

Professor Wellhausen's characteristic judgement of the general standpoint of the Gospel according

¹ I have ventured to paraphrase the German so much in order to make this isolated quotation clear that I give the original here also. Wellhausen's actual words are: "Das gegenwärtige Reich, wie es namentlich bei Matthäus erscheint, ist die Stiftung Jesu und hat ihn zum notwendigen Korrelat. Unter dieser Voraussetzung hat er die Absicht, es auf Erden zu gründen und tritt eben damit von Anfang an als Messias auf. Er lehrt von Anfang an speziell seine Jünger, um ihnen aus einander zu setzen, wie seine Gemeinde beschaffen sein soll und was ihr widerfahren wird. Er streut nicht unbekümmert um den Erfolg auf beliebigen Boden seine Lehren aus, sondern er sät durch das Wort vom Reich das Reich Gottes an, welches mit dem Saatfelde oder der Pflanzung in dem selben Sinne verglichen wird wie mit dem Weinberge. Dass er darunter die *ἐκκλησία* versteht, deren Namen er aus historischen Gründen in der Regel vermeidet, lässt sich nicht verkennen; es erhellt besonders deutlich, wenn er von Schriftgelehrten und Verwaltern, von älteren und jüngeren Schichten, von würdigen und unwürdigen Mitgliedern des Reiches Gottes spricht, oder wenn er sagt, der Täufer obwol der grösste Jude sei doch kleiner als das geringste Mitglied des Reiches Gottes. Die Gleichsetzung der *βασιλεία* und der *ἐκκλησία* begreift sich vollkommen, da die Gemeinde unleugbar die Wirkung Jesu war und für die Vorstufe des Himmels galt. Aber sie ist durchaus christlich und kann nicht von Jesu selber vollzogen oder gar vorausgesetzt sein. Denn er setzt sie in der Tat voraus, ohne eine Erklärung darüber für notwendig zu halten. Er redet zu seinen Jüngern, als wären sie schon seine Gemeinde und als solche organisirt; er versetzt sich in eine zukünftige Situation, als wäre sie gegenwärtig."

WELLHAUSEN ON MATTHEW

to Matthew appears to me worthy of very careful attention and to contain a great deal that is undeniably true. We miss altogether in this Gospel the historical perspective which meets us in Mark. In Mark the story moves from situation to situation, from the beginning to the crisis; in Matthew, as in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Master is depicted as 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and to-day and for ever.' The Church, the organised body of believers in Jesus, is, as Wellhausen says, presupposed all through, and this anticipation of the events has doubtless coloured the turn of many a phrase. But I venture to think that Wellhausen has pushed a legitimate argument further than it is wise to go, and that we shall make a mistake if we refuse to accept a great deal of the teaching of this Gospel as a true representation of what Jesus taught. I find it difficult to believe that the Parables and Sayings which speak of the Kingdom of God as a thing to be realised here on earth would have retained so fresh and unecclesiastical an atmosphere, if they were both in spirit and in substance the work of an age later than our Lord. Nowhere in early Christian literature, except in the three Synoptic Gospels, do we find that picturesque outlook on men and nature that finds its expression in the Parables of Jesus. The

THE GOSPEL HISTORY

Acts of the Apostles is full of speeches of Peter and Paul and other Christians of the early times. These speeches are either the work of the speakers themselves, or of the compiler of the Acts, who is himself one of the Evangelists. But there is never a Parable among them, and not many Sayings like the Sayings in the Gospels.

As an instance of what I mean, let us take the Parable of the Tares and its Explanation (Matt xiii 24-30, 36-43). Both Parable and Explanation are found in Matthew only, and the Concordance will shew you that they exhibit in a very marked degree the linguistic peculiarities of the First Evangelist. No doubt, therefore, the wording, both of the Parable and of the Explanation, is the Evangelist's wording. But how very different they are in their inner structure! They both mean the same thing; you cannot doubt that the explanation is, in a general way, correct. Indeed it is too correct: the Field is the world, the Enemy is the devil, this figure in the scene means this, and that means that, until the whole picture of the Harvest of men has melted away, and the just are represented as shining like the sun, instead of lying stored like wheat in a barn. I can well believe that the Explanation is altogether the handiwork of the Evangelist or of his contemporaries, but the original picture of the

GENUINENESS OF THE PARABLES

good and the bad, growing together unhindered until the harvest is ripe, seems to me to come from another and a more creative mind. And I know of no one else to whom to ascribe this picture save our Lord, who taught His disciples to imitate their Father in Heaven whose sun shines alike on bad and good, and whose rain falls on the just and the unjust.

I think also that we may easily go too far in pressing the logical consequences of the belief that the world was speedily coming to an end. It is true that the Ministry was a short period when we look at it from the point of view of general history, and that doubtless the disciples expected that the Kingdom of God was immediately to appear. But if a particular twelve or thirteen months be a very short space of time when viewed from a distance, it is sufficiently long for those who are actually passing through it to raise questions which can only be settled by an appeal to eternal principles. We know from the Gospel of Mark that besides the main events of the Ministry there was plenty of time for disputes about precedence to develop among our Lord's nearest followers.¹ We saw in the first of these Lectures how many days there were which are unchronicled by the Evangelists. Yet

¹ Mk ix 34, x 35.

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in each of them our Lord and the disciples must have eaten and slept—or gone without food and sleep,—in each of them there must have been a round of more or less ordinary occupations, quite sufficient in themselves to call forth the Sayings that we find recorded.

The actual fact of the dislocation of Mark's order by Matthew justifies us in paying very little attention to the order in which we find the Sayings of Jesus grouped in Matthew's Gospel; the way in which Matthew often, but not always, modifies the language of Mark warns us that we must expect Matthew to have similarly modified the language of his other, and to us lost, sources. But the very fact that Matthew after all retains so much of what is primitive in Mark, should teach us that Matthew has probably retained much of what is primitive in his other sources. However short our Lord and His disciples may have imagined the time would be before the End—and Jesus expressly declared that He did not know the day or the hour—there was yet plenty of time to go wrong in, plenty of time for a discrimination between the faithful and the unfaithful, the false prophet and the true. And therefore I think that we shall do better to regard these Sayings of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew, in which a Christian community seems more or

GENUINENESS OF THE SAYINGS

less to be presupposed, rather as adaptations of what the disciples had remembered of their Master's teaching than as new inventions made for the purpose. It is easy to apply the Sayings in the Gospels to the varying needs of the moment : you may, in fact, hear it done in any pulpit every Sunday in Church and Chapel. But it is not so easy to make new Sayings and new Parables like those in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke ; at least, that kind of speech does not make itself heard in the extant remains of what the first four generations of Christians wrote.

For these reasons, while we cannot suppose that the order in which the various Sayings of Jesus are given in Matthew at all represents the chronological order in which they were spoken, yet there is not the same reason to regard them as unauthentic in substance. They are arranged, and here and there altered in expression, to meet the needs of the Christian community in Palestine towards the end of the first century ; but I venture to think that the greater part of the substance of the Teaching, and all that is most fresh and picturesque in its expression, come from historical reminiscence of the Master's words.

There are two points upon which I ought to touch before we leave the Gospel of Matthew. These are the appeal to prophecy and the repre-

THE GOSPEL HISTORY

sentation of Jesus Christ as the Son of David. Both points illustrate in a very marked degree the legal, we may almost say constitutional, ideas of the First Evangelist. It is very easy for us at the present time to do less than justice to the 'Argument from Prophecy,' as our fathers called it. When we read in the Gospel of Matthew 'Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the Prophet, saying . . . ' (Matt i 22 f, xxi 4 f), we simply do not agree with the Evangelist. And we do not agree for two reasons. In the first place, we have come to look at the Old Testament in a different light. We do not believe that the sayings of the Prophets and Psalmists were so many dark riddles to themselves and their contemporaries, without real significance except in regard to certain future events which were to happen centuries after. If the Prophet said 'Tell the daughter of Zion, behold, thy King cometh unto thee riding upon an ass,' this must have had its primary and sufficient meaning in the time of the Prophet: we cannot believe that it needed Christ's Entry into Jerusalem to justify its existence. In the second place, even if there be among us any who still hold that this verse from Zechariah was really a prediction of our Lord's Entry, I still do not think they would be satisfied

THE ARGUMENT FROM PROPHECY

with the Evangelist's form of words. They would assert, I am sure, that the Prophet said these words because our Lord was going to enter Jerusalem thus. I do not think they would agree with Matthew that our Lord healed those that were sick, 'that what was said through Isaiah the Prophet might be fulfilled' (Matt viii 16, 17). They would say that our Lord healed the sick, because it was His will and kindness to do so, and that therefore Isaiah had been inspired to prophesy such things of Him.

The difference between our standpoint and that of the Evangelist is that between him and us lies the whole edifice of Christology. We know what Jesus of Nazareth has been to the world; the Evangelist lived in an age which was only beginning to find out. The argument from Prophecy is ultimately an attempt to shew that the Life and Mission of Jesus was no Divine freak or caprice, but a part of a well-ordered whole. To the pious Jew the utterances of the Prophets had very much the same place in their idea of the world as what we call the Laws of Nature have for us: they were things which had been formulated by men, yet they were not constituted by man, but by God. How what we call the Old Testament had acquired this sacred character is another matter, but that it had acquired the character is undisputed.

THE GOSPEL HISTORY

The power of the argument from Prophecy, both the motive force which prompted its use and its effect upon those who were influenced by it, was that it attempted to legitimatise the Gospel History, to shew that it was the legitimate outcome of the religion of holy men of old.

It cannot be said that the early Christians in general, or the First Evangelist in particular, were very successful in their use of the Old Testament. They rarely rise above surprising us by their verbal ingenuity. All the more remarkable is it therefore to notice that the only references to the Old Testament in the Gospels which have any real validity for us to-day are those which are ascribed to our Lord Himself. We know from Mark that 'Love God and love your neighbour' was what He regarded as the sum of the meaning of the Old Testament, and Matthew repeats the story, with the characteristic addition that on these commandments hangs the whole Law and the Prophets also.¹ But besides this, Matthew twice (ix 13, xii 7) makes our Lord quote from Hosea 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' This verse (Hosea vi 6) is one of those flashes of spiritual insight which light up here and there the tortuous and despondent utterances of the most obscure of all the Hebrew Prophets. To bring it out from

¹ Matt xxii 40: a Rabbinical phrase, cf. *Berachoth*, 63a.

OUR LORD'S USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

its obscurity shews not only a knowledge of the letter of the Old Testament, but also a real appreciation of the genius of Hebrew religion. The Evangelist in his own person alleges Hosea's word 'Out of Egypt have I called my Son,' as being fulfilled by the Flight into Egypt. Now we cannot prove by critical analysis that the Evangelist found the quotation 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice' in his source as being quoted by Jesus; but is it not hard to believe that these two quotations represent the same person's study of Hosea? All we can say for certain is that the one quotation shews insight and intelligence, and that the other does not. The fact remains, that the quotations from the Old Testament, which are given as quotations made by Jesus, shew a very different degree of literary tact from those made by His followers. Are we to say with the Jews in the Fourth Gospel 'How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?'¹

¹ Other instances of really appropriate quotation from the OT are to be found in Mk vii 6, 7 = Matt xv 6 ff (Isaiah xxix 13); Matt xxi 16 (Ps viii 2); and Lk xxii 37 (Isaiah liii 12, see above, Lecture IV. p. 141). In Matt xxi 16 the quotation from the Psalm is given according to the text of the LXX, but it seems to me that a tradition that Jesus had quoted, perhaps often quoted, a particular text might survive independently of the version in which he had quoted it, and independently of other traditions of His Sayings. The *words* of the OT were familiar to very many Jews, even if in a merely mechanical way. But to remember that the Master used to quote such and such a text is one thing; it was quite another to pick out

THE GOSPEL HISTORY

To return to our Evangelist. Another line by which he tried to mark out the place of his Lord in the universal scheme of things was to regard him as the Heir of David. The Gospel according to Matthew may well be called *The Book of Jesus Christ, the son of David*. According to Mark, blind Bartimæus had indeed called out to the Galilean Prophet by this title, but no special stress is laid on the wayside beggar's words. Matthew not only gives this tale (xx 30, 31): in his Gospel our Lord is recognised as Son of David by the two blind men (ix 27), by the multitudes (xii 23), by the Canaanitish woman (xv 22), and by the children in the Temple itself (xxi 9, 15). Jesus is the King of the twelve tribes of Israel (xix 28), who is ultimately to reign over all the nations (xxv 34). In a word, the special aim of Matthew is to represent our Lord as the legitimate Heir of the royal house of David. That the Messiah should be merely a Son of David was not enough. There were doubtless many sons of David alive at the time; but the Evangelist wanted the legitimate Heir of the Divine promises made to David. That is why in this Gospel the Genealogy of Joseph is taken through the line of the Kings of

for oneself appropriate utterances from what Tyconius calls 'the unsurveyed forest of prophecy.' It is only in this way that we can explain the quotation of Ps lxxxii 6 in Joh x 34: possibly there is an allusion to the same verse in Lk vi 35 (*ἵνα ὁ θεὸς υἱὸς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ*).

THE HEIR OF DAVID

Judah, and why the usurper Herod is alarmed when he hears that the legitimate ruler has been born within his dominions.¹

In reality the Kingdom of Jesus Christ was not of this world, and Jesus Himself never claimed obedience as the Heir of David's line. His only reference to any connexion between David and the Messiah is the paradox with which He prefaces His attack in the Temple courts on the Scribes and their ways. When He quoted Psalm cx, and asked how the Messiah could be David's son when David called him Lord, Matthew tells us that none of the Scribes could answer. No wonder: there is no answer, except that the current method of arguing from single texts taken at random from the Old Testament can only prove what is believed already. The real answer is—'Beware of the Scribes.'²

But even in the matter of the representation of our Lord as the Heir of David, we may easily do less than justice to the point of view of the Evangelist. The Heir of David—what was the worth of the inheritance when the Gospel according to Matthew was being com-

¹ A full discussion by the present writer of the text and interpretation of the Genealogy, and of the story of the Nativity according to Matthew, will be found in *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe*, vol. ii, pp. 258-266.

² Mk xii 38, Lk xx 46 : contrast Matt xxiii 2, 3.

THE GOSPEL HISTORY

piled? Palestine was trodden under the heel of the Roman power, Jerusalem was left desolate, the Temple in ruins, the Jewish nation enslaved and broken. The tabernacle of David was fallen, and the only worth of the inheritance was spiritual and ideal. We cannot doubt that to the Evangelist the Royal descent of our Lord from David, and through David from Abraham, symbolised the belief that the still infant Church, immature, weak and insignificant as it then was, was yet the true Israel of God, foreseen from of old and destined in due time to triumph over the heathen world. And it is due to the Evangelist to remember that the triumph to which he looked forward was a triumph of incorporation. The disciples were to make disciples of all the nations. More than that: the final test was not whether men had called Jesus 'Lord,' but whether they had been kind without looking for reward. As I said in the Introductory Lecture to this series, the important thing for our study of early Christianity is not whether the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats in Matt xxv is a literal translation of words once spoken by Jesus, or to discover the real time and place where they were first uttered. The important thing is to recognise that this is the kind of teaching which the Evangelist thought

THE EVANGELISTS AND THE GOSPEL

worthy to put in his Lord's mouth, and which the Church accepted as worthy. At the same time, the more we study the special aims and tendencies of the Synoptic Evangelists, the greater the gap appears between the theories which they themselves elaborate and the circle of ideas in which the Sayings of Jesus move. Again and again we find ourselves in the presence of something which may or may not be authentic historical reminiscence, but is in any case totally unlike the other remains of early Christian literature. We cannot tell whether the tale be well remembered, or how many steps there may have been in its transmission, but the difference of spirit is unmistakeable, and we take knowledge of the Evangelists that they have been with Jesus.

The Gospel according to S. Luke brings us into a different atmosphere, and one more difficult to characterise than that of the First Gospel. This is mainly due to the fact that the Third Evangelist is more of a compiler and less of a theorist than Matthew. In a word, he is more of a historian. I do not mean that all his historical statements will better stand rigid investigation, but I certainly believe that he intended to write history; and further, that he wrote history as we write it, by putting together

THE GOSPEL HISTORY

such materials as came to his hand. I have already given you in the Fourth Lecture some reasons for believing that the chief materials out of which this Gospel is constructed are Mark's Gospel and the lost Document which we have called Q; and further that, speaking generally, the Evangelist (whom I still believe to be Luke the Physician, sometime a companion of the Apostle Paul, and now writing in his old age) has set down the events and sayings that he relates very much in the same order as they were given in the sources he used, while making many stylistic changes and minor alterations. Where S. Luke follows his sources exactly, he preserves for us very valuable fragments of history: I have already given you an instance when we were examining the story of our Lord's arrest in Gethsemane, at the end of the Fourth Lecture. On the other hand, some of the expedients by which this Evangelist attempts to weld his materials together can hardly be accepted by the scientific historian. This is conspicuously the case with regard to his representation of our Lord's last journey to Jerusalem. Even if we agree with Luke as to the route followed, it is obvious that the greater part of the sayings and anecdotes which are assigned to this journey do not really belong to

S. LUKE'S POINT OF VIEW

it,¹ but to an earlier period in the Ministry. Apparently the Evangelist, finding that the record of the journey from Capernaum to near Jericho was almost a blank, inserted at this point all the stories of our Lord's teaching for which no appropriate place offered elsewhere. No doubt many paragraphs come directly out of the lost source Q, notably Lk xi 15-36.

But, as I have had occasion to remark several times in the course of these Lectures, the lost sources of the Evangelists cannot be recovered in such a way that we can really examine their structure and their spirit. It is more profitable to examine the special aims of the Evangelists themselves, the special aspects of the Christian movement which the Evangelists thought well to emphasise. And although it is not so easy to make this characterisation in the case of Luke as in that of Matthew, it is almost more necessary to attempt to do so, because we are dealing with the only writer who carries on the tale beyond the Resurrection. The trustworthiness of the Gospel of Luke is the measure of the trustworthiness of the Book of Acts; the special point of view from which the Gospel History is looked at in this Gospel will shew

¹ On the course of this journey, see the Note at the end of Lecture III (pp. 96, 97).

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us the special point of view from which the Acts must have been written.

To put the question in a less pretentious but more manageable form : what features are there in the Gospel of Luke, which are either wholly absent from, or less conspicuous in, the other Gospels? There are, of course, many Sayings and Parables given in Luke which are not found elsewhere. The Parables of the Good Samaritan, of the Prodigal Son, of the Pharisee and the Publican, are conspicuous instances. And, as I have just said with regard to the Parables found only in Matthew, we shall do well to remember that nothing in the least like them in form or style is to be found in Christian literature outside the Synoptic Gospels. But the presence of these Parables in Luke does not answer our question : their teaching, after all, is much the same as what is given in the other Gospels.

It appears to me that the two tendencies which are really characteristic of the writings of S. Luke are a tendency towards voluntary poverty and a tendency towards asceticism. Neither of these ideals, as I understand the matter, belonged by nature and choice to the earliest form of the Christian movement. Our Lord ate and drank with those who invited Him, so that His opponents called Him gluttonous and a wine-

POVERTY AND ASCETICISM

bibber. His disciples provoked comment because they did not fast, and Jesus Himself taught the doctrine, so amazing to a Jew, that nothing a man takes into him can defile him.¹ The sacrifices which, when occasion arose, He demanded from His followers were for the sake of the Cause,² not directly for their personal benefit in time to come. For the Cause, for the sake of the Gospel, our Lord was not afraid to call upon the disciples to give up everything, but that was because the circumstances required the sacrifice, not because the goods of this life were in themselves bad.

This is the same attitude of mind that we find in the letters of S. Paul. S. Paul, like his Master, wished his disciples to be free from anxiety about worldly matters. Marriage and property were not unlawful, but they were roots which attached a man to this world; and S. Paul felt sure that the time was short and that the fashion of this world was passing away.³ We never do justice to the theory and practice of the first two generations of Christians, if we forget even for an instant that there brooded over them the shadow of the anticipated End of all things.

After the Fall of Jerusalem and the extinction of the Jewish State the Christian Churches began

¹ Mk vii 15 ff.

² Mk viii 35.

³ See especially 1 Cor vii 27-32.

THE GOSPEL HISTORY

gradually to find out that the end was not yet, but the view of life which was reasonable in Judæa for half a century after the Crucifixion continued to assert itself as the ethical ideal in the Christian communities. There was indeed much to encourage asceticism in their ranks. For the first three hundred years the Christian Church had a precarious existence, sometimes actively persecuted by the State, sometimes left alone, but never formally permitted to live. In such circumstances earthly ties, whether of property, or of wife and children, are more or less of an encumbrance ; they tend to make a man less eager, less wholehearted. And so there sprang up the notion that these things are inconsistent with the highest Christian life ; that the ideal Christian should be penniless and unmarried.

This point of view makes itself felt all through the writings of S. Luke. "Blessed are ye poor ; for yours is the Kingdom of God !" "Woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation ! Woe unto you, ye that are full now, for ye shall hunger !" ¹ "Sell that ye have, and give alms ; make for yourselves purses which wax not old." ² Abraham says to the rich man in the parable, "Remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and Lazarus in like

¹ Lk vi 20, 24, 25.

² Lk xii 33.

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manner evil things ; but now here he is comforted, and thou are tormented." ¹ These Sayings go further, are more uncompromising, than what we find in the other Gospels. And as to the other point, I think it is impossible to read through this Gospel and the Acts without feeling that all the writer's sympathy is for the unmarried and the widows, from Anna the daughter of Phanuel, who had been a widow for eighty-four years, to the four virgin daughters of Philip the evangelist. The tendency of Luke is perhaps most clearly seen in the wording of our Lord's reply to the Sadducees, whereby it is made to appear that those who are worthy to attain the resurrection from the dead do not marry like ordinary men and women. According to Mark our Lord says, ' When they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage ' ; but in the Gospel of Luke the words of the answer are : ' The sons of this world marry, and are given in marriage : but they that are accounted worthy to attain to that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage.' The wording has been made, as I cannot but think, intentionally ambiguous. It was with good reason that the heretic Marcion, who rejected marriage altogether for Christians, chose out the Gospel of

¹ Lk xvi 25.

THE GOSPEL HISTORY

Luke as the only one which could be made to fit with his own teaching.

The tinge of asceticism and, if I may use the word, of communism which pervades the Gospel of Luke is just one of those things which are easier felt than demonstrated. It is not strong enough to disturb the balance of the story, but its presence is, I think, indubitable to every attentive reader. I have mentioned it with some emphasis for two reasons: in the first place, because it was a real constituent element in early Christianity; and, secondly, because it is a little over-emphasised in this Gospel, if we may judge by comparing it with the others. We may therefore go on to assume that the stress laid upon this side of Christian life in the Acts in the very earliest period of the Church's existence is also a little over-emphasised, and that if it had been Matthew who had written the history of the Church in Jerusalem we should have heard more of their community of customs and morals, and less of their community of property. All through the Acts, in its presentation both of Christian practices and of Christian beliefs, the tale is being told by the same voice that speaks to us in the Third Gospel.

In conclusion, there is one point connected with early Christian asceticism that ought not to escape notice. We must never forget that Christian

WOMEN AND THE GOSPEL

asceticism has generally tended towards the equalisation of the sexes. The historical opposite to the ascetic ideal was not that in which woman was looked upon as the equal complement of man, but one in which woman was looked upon as the divinely ordained household drudge or the plaything of man. The old idea of the family, at least in the times we are considering, meant the relegation of the woman to the background. And so the Gospel which most strikes the ascetic note is also that which tells us most of the part played by women in the Gospel history. It is an old observation that the Nativity Story is told by Luke from the woman's point of view. But elsewhere also women play a prominent and independent part in the narrative. The Widow of Nain; the woman that was a sinner who wiped the feet of Jesus; Joanna the wife of Chuza and Susanna, who ministered unto Jesus of their substance; Martha who served, and Mary who listened; the 'daughter of Abraham' who was loosed from the bond of Satan on the Sabbath; the women who bewailed and lamented Jesus on His way to the Cross,—all these come into the Gospel story through S. Luke alone. Some of these personages are certainly historical, of others we may not be so sure. But their presence corresponds to what is certainly a fact of history, to wit, the

THE GOSPEL HISTORY

appeal made by the earliest Christian preaching to women, and their response.

The point of view of Luke differs from that of Matthew, and both differ from Mark. In the Gospel of Mark, whenever and wherever it was written, we are the nearest to the events and the spirit of the time. In Matthew we see the Gospel History more or less as it was understood by a Christian who had ceased to be a Jew, but who still retained much of the lore of the Synagogue. In Luke we have the Gospel History as told by one who had enough ordinary Greek culture to know that there was something in the new doctrine which was of more value to men and women than what they would get from the world around them. We have seen in the last Lecture what the two main sources from which these Gospels are built up told us of the teaching of Jesus Christ. We have considered to-day some of the special features emphasised by Matthew and by Luke; we have seen in what directions the evangelical legend tended to grow under their hand. Yet, after all, the Portrait they draw remains essentially the same. Verse after verse, Saying after saying, might be quoted to you from the three Synoptic Gospels, and, unless you happened to have special knowledge or had given special attention to such

THE SYNOPTIC PORTRAIT

matters, you would be unable to say to which Gospel they really belonged. Morally, ethically, spiritually, they are all in the same plane. We cannot doubt that the common impression which they present of the way in which our Lord spoke, the style of His utterance, the manner of His discourse to rich and poor, to learned and unlearned, is based on true historical reminiscence.

VII.

THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

Nam dicere ut est quis potest? audeo dicere, fratres mei, forsitan nec ipse Johannes dixit ut est, sed et ipse ut potuit.

S. AUGUSTINE, in *Joh.* i.

WE come now to consider the Fourth Gospel, the Gospel according to John. And before we begin our investigation we shall, I think, do well to remember the immense influence which this work has had for century after century. No work could hold so great a place before the world so long, without intrinsic merit of an extraordinary sort. However peculiar the aims and methods of the author of this work may be, however out of harmony may be the world of ideas in which he lived with that which surrounds us at the present day, we shall not be likely to arrive at a true solution of the problems which the work offers by belittling it. If the history turn out to be no history, it must be because it was intended to teach something to the author more important than history. If the rhetoric does not always ring true, if the argument sometimes fails really

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

to appeal to us, it is more probable that we have misunderstood than that the writer was really at fault. Our duty is to criticise, and that fearlessly, but yet with reverence and with misgiving of our own infallibility.

It will not be necessary here to investigate in detail the external evidence for the Fourth Gospel. The belief that it was written by the Apostle S. John was fully established in most parts of the Christian world as early as the decade 170-180 AD, and clear indications of its use, especially among some of the Christian 'Gnostics,' can be traced back to a period some fifty years earlier. It is true that these indications are weak just where we might have expected them to be most precise: S. Polycarp, according to tradition a disciple of S. John at Ephesus, does not quote at all from the Fourth Gospel, either in his Epistle or in the prayer which he is said to have prayed at the stake, and the utmost that can be claimed is that certain phrases in a single passage in his Epistle are parallel to some leading phrases in 1 and 2 John.¹ This passage in S. Polycarp is certainly

¹ Polycarp, *ad Phil.* vii: 'For whosoever doth not confess Jesus Christ to have come (ἐληλυθέναι) in the flesh is antichrist, and whosoever doth not confess the witness of the cross is of the devil, and whosoever perverteth the oracles of the Lord to his own desires and says there is neither resurrection nor judgement, he is the first-born of Satan.' Compare 1 Joh iv 2, 3; 2 Joh 7.

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important as shewing that Johannine watchwords, like 'antichrist' and 'confessing Jesus Christ to have come in the flesh,' were actually used by orthodox circles in Asia Minor. But it is remarkable that S. Polycarp should exhibit no further trace of the influence of the Johannine theology.

The external testimony to the traditional authorship of the Fourth Gospel is, in a word, indecisive. It is not unfavourable to the genuineness of the tradition, but it is quite insufficient to prove it. We may therefore go on to examine the internal evidence. And here the first question which must be asked is whether this Gospel is really a historical work. We have seen that S. Mark's Gospel has a very good claim to be so regarded: how does the Fourth Gospel compare with S. Mark?

The comparison of the Synoptic narrative with that of 'John' is an old and very simple study. The details are all familiar, and the problems do not depend upon the niceties of Hellenistic Greek or the various readings of MSS. It is a matter of historical discrepancy in two perfectly clear and definite accounts. The fact is, that the narrative in 'Mark' and the narrative in 'John' cannot be made to agree, except on the supposition that one or the other is, as regards the

THE FOURTH GOSPEL AND S. MARK

objective facts, inaccurate and misleading. I shall hope later on to attempt an explanation : what we are now concerned with is the question whether the Fourth Gospel can be trusted as a narrative of events.

The discrepancy between the Fourth Gospel and the Synoptic narrative, *i.e.* S. Mark's Gospel, comes to a head in the story of the Raising of Lazarus. It is not a question of the improbability or impossibility of the miracle, but of the time and place and the effect upon outsiders. According to 'John,' Jesus had been in Jerusalem in the winter preceding the Crucifixion (x 22), and after that visit had gone away to where John the Baptist had been baptizing (x 40). There He heard that Lazarus of Bethany, brother of Martha and Mary, was ill (xi 1 ff) ; and when at last Jesus comes to Bethany, Lazarus has been dead four days (xi 17, 39). Jesus goes to the tomb, accompanied by Martha and Mary and a 'multitude' of the Jews (xi 19, 42). He calls Lazarus from the tomb ; and when he comes forth bound in his grave-clothes, Jesus says, 'Loose him, and let him go' (xi 44). This stupendous miracle produces, according to 'John,' exactly the sensation that we should expect. Many of the Jews that witnessed the scene believed on Jesus, though some of them went away to the Pharisees and told the news (xi

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45, 46). The chief priests and Pharisees hardened their hearts and decided forthwith that Jesus must be killed (xi 47-53); but the common people were much impressed, and when Jesus (who had gone into the country, to 'Ephraim') returned to Bethany, they came to gaze on Him, and also upon Lazarus (xii 9). To such an extent was this the case that the chief priests took counsel to put Lazarus to death also (xii 10). This natural interest on the part of the crowds caused them to welcome Jesus with a triumphal entry (xii 12-16); and stress is laid on the public character of the miracle and the many independent witnesses of it (xii 17, 18).

The story of the Raising of Lazarus was a favourite with the early Christians. The quaint mummy-like figure of Lazarus in the arched door of his tomb is familiar to every student of Christian Art. It was an embodiment of the hope of the Resurrection. But where are we to put the scene into the historical framework preserved by S. Mark? Can any answer be given, except 'there is no room'? If the events occurred as told in the Fourth Gospel, if they were as public as the Fourth Evangelist insists, so fraught with influence upon the action both of friends and foes, they could not have been unknown to a well-informed personage like

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS

'Mark,' nor could he have had any reason for suppressing a narrative at once so public and so edifying. It is true that 'Mark' does not record the Lord's Prayer or many of the most noteworthy sayings of Jesus, but these were not public events like the Raising of Lazarus. Is it possible that anyone who reads the continuous and detailed story of Mark from the Transfiguration to the Entry into Jerusalem can interpolate into it the tale of Lazarus and the notable sensation which we are assured that it produced? Must not the answer be, that Mark is silent about the Raising of Lazarus because he did not know of it? And if he did not know of it, can we believe that, as a matter of fact, it ever occurred? For all its dramatic setting it is, I am persuaded, impossible to regard the story of the Raising of Lazarus as a narrative of historical events.

With this negative conclusion in our minds let us go on to compare other portions of the Fourth Gospel with Mark. The Crucifixion and Resurrection do not present material differences of the order with which we are dealing. There are many variations and discrepancies, but all the Gospels agree in the main facts, as may be realised by comparing them with the apocryphal *Acts of John*. But in other parts of the Gospel story the differences are acute.

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The common Christian tradition, attested by S. Paul as well as by the Synoptists, asserts that our Lord at the final meal before His arrest instituted the rite that became the Eucharist. The origin of the Christian rite of the common Sacramental meal must have been known to every moderately instructed Christian, certainly to every one who would undertake to write an account of our Lord's life on earth, and we cannot suppose the Fourth Evangelist to have been ignorant of it. When, therefore, we find him writing an elaborate account of this last meal, including the announcement of the impending betrayal, in which nevertheless there is no mention of the epoch-making words of Institution, we can only regard his silence as deliberate. He must have deliberately left out this exceedingly important incident; and thereby, so far as the mere narrative of facts is concerned, he creates a false impression of the scene. However this may be, it is not for want of sympathy with high Sacramental doctrine. In Joh vi, after the story of the Feeding of the Five Thousand, we read a long discourse of Jesus on this very subject. Jesus here says, 'I am the bread of life' (v. 35), and, 'Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you' (v. 53). It is true that a peculiar turn is given to

EUCCHARIST AND BAPTISM

these very strong expressions by the explanation made afterwards to the disciples that it is the spirit that gives life, and that it is the words of Jesus that are spirit and life (*v.* 63). But the Sacramental expressions are not otherwise qualified. It is evident that 'John' has transferred the Eucharistic teaching from the Last Supper to the earlier Galilean miracle.

This is something more than mere historical inaccuracy. It is a deliberate sacrifice of historical truth; and, as the Evangelist is a serious person in deadly earnest, we must conclude that he cared less for historical truth than for something else. To render justice to his work we must do more than demonstrate his untrustworthiness as a chronicler.

A somewhat similar result is obtained by considering the Fourth Evangelist's teaching about Baptism. The descent of the Holy Spirit upon our Lord at His baptism by John is the commencement of the Ministry according to S. Mark. By this act, according to some early theologians, such as Aphraates, He received from the Baptist the sacerdotal gift. But the Fourth Evangelist will have none of it. The scene at the Jordan is indeed recorded by him, and John testifies to the descent of the Spirit upon Jesus; but the central incident, the actual baptism of

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Jesus by John is altogether left out (i 29-34). If the intention of the Evangelist had been to tell us what happened, if his intention had been to make us believe in Jesus because of what happened, such an omission would be nothing short of disingenuous. If we are to regard the Fourth Gospel as a narrative of events, we can only say that the writer has given a false impression of what occurred. It is not that the Evangelist disapproves of baptism: on the contrary, he tells us afterwards that the disciples of Jesus baptized their converts (iv 1, 2), and he gives us the conversation with Nicodemus, in which Jesus declares that except a man be born again he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God (iii 3 ff).¹

It would be easy to go on to criticise the story of the Ministry as related in the Fourth Gospel, to point out the improbabilities of the narrative as it stands, and the continual discrepancies with the Synoptic story that it presents. But it is unnecessary to do so. These improbabilities and discrepancies lie on the surface, they are universally recognised; and those who defend the

¹ It is not quite certain that the actual mention of 'water' in Joh iii 5 is genuine. It appears to have been omitted by Justin Martyr, as is pointed out in Professor Lake's tract upon the 'Influence of Textual Criticism on the Exegesis of the N.T.' (Oxford, 1904). That the mention of the material element should be omitted in the discourse which deals with the doctrine underlying the rite is quite in the manner of the Fourth Evangelist.

THE JOHANNINE CHRIST

Fourth Gospel do so in spite of these things, because of positive merits and excellences, not because the difficulties are denied. But there is one point which I must notice here, a matter far more grave than a faulty system of chronology or a slip in a geographical name. The most serious count against the Fourth Gospel, from the point of view of objective external history, is the attitude assigned to Jesus in His discussions with the 'Jews.' Taking the narratives as they stand, in the Synoptic Gospels the sympathy of the non-Christian reader naturally goes with Jesus against the Pharisees or the Sadducees. We feel that the adversaries of Jesus are narrow, unkind, unintelligent. To such an extent is this the case that recently protests have been raised by a distinguished and learned Jew, to the effect that the Synoptic Evangelists have misrepresented the teachings of the Rabbinical religion. But in the Fourth Gospel it is altogether different. Here I cannot but think that the natural sympathy of the non-Christian reader must go time after time with the Jews. There is an argumentativeness, a tendency to mystification, about the utterances of the Johannine Christ which, taken as the report of actual words spoken, is positively repellent. To heal on the Sabbath was considered by the Jews to be a breaking of the Sabbath. According

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to Mark, Jesus defends His action by such sayings as that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath; according to Matthew, He quotes Hosea to say that God desires mercy, and not sacrifice; according to Luke, He says that to loose on the Sabbath a bond by which Satan had bound a daughter of Abraham was even better, and therefore as lawful, as loosing a beast from the stall to take it to drink. Our sympathies are clearly here with Jesus against the unreasonable Jews. But in the Fourth Gospel, in similar circumstances, what words are put into our Lord's mouth? Why, He goes on to exasperate the Jews still further by a disquisition about the Father and the Son, asserting to His adversaries that whosoever did not honour the Son (*i.e.* Himself) did not honour the Father (v 23). On a similar occasion, when accused of 'bearing witness of himself,' He is made to say that He has two witnesses in His favour, viz. Himself and the Father (viii 17, 18). Can we wonder that the Jews replied, 'Where is thy Father?' It is quite inconceivable that the historical Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels could have argued and quibbled with opponents, as He is represented to have done in the Fourth Gospel. The only possible explanation is that the work is not history, but something else cast in an historical form.

THE JOHANNINE CHRIST

From this point of view the question of the authorship of the Fourth Gospel is a matter of secondary importance. It is of the highest importance to ascertain the authorship and date of a chronicle, of a narrative of facts, because there the value of the work depends upon the nature of the traditions or sources to which the writer had access. But for a work of philosophy or philosophical history the qualifications required in the writer are mental, rather than local or temporal. We do not need to ask how near he stands to the events, but whether he sees them in their true proportion.

For we have not done with the Fourth Gospel when we have made up our minds that neither the narrative nor the discourses are to be regarded as history, as matters of past fact. The question remains why the Church adopted this Gospel into the New Testament Canon, when so many rivals were excluded. In the answer to this question lies, I believe, the reason which gives a permanent value to the work. It was not the prestige of an apostolic name that made it canonical, for the 'Gospel of Peter' was rejected. Great antiquity and respectful quotation by learned Church writers did not avail to include the 'Gospel according to the Hebrews,' nor did philosophical

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thought avail the document commonly called the 'Oxyrhynchus Logia.' What was it that the 'Gospel according to S. John' had, that these had not?

I believe the answer to be that the doctrine of the Person of Christ set forth in this Gospel expressed the general conviction of the Church adequately, while the Gospels which failed to become canonical failed mainly because the doctrine of the Person of Christ which they contained failed to satisfy the requirements of the Church. The Christ of the Fourth Gospel is not the Christ of history, but the Christ of Christian experience. Like S. Paul, the Fourth Evangelist did not care to know 'Christ after the flesh,' because he saw both his Lord and his Lord's adversaries *sub specie aeternitatis*.

It is because the Evangelist views the Gospel history from this subjective standpoint, that he allows himself such freedom in remodelling the external events. In the Dean of Westminster's words: "The old disciple needs no documents. . . . The whole is present in his memory, shaped by years of reflection, illuminated by the experience of a lifetime. He knows the Christ far better now than he knew Him in Galilee or Jerusalem half a century before."¹ The

¹ J. A. Robinson, *The Study of the Gospels*, p. 148.

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adversaries of Jesus have become his own doubts and unfaithful oppositions; the questioners of Jesus, such as 'Nicodemus' or 'the Woman of Samaria,' are his own questions, his own ignorances, which receive their solution at the hands of the Lord who has come with His Father to make an abode with him. He knows his Lord to be true, and the knowledge of Him to be Life eternal; and therefore all opposition, however specious, is unjustifiable and blind. The Son of God is a Lamp to him who beholds, a Mirror to him who perceives, a Door to him who knocks, a Way to the wayfarer. The true meaning of life could never have been revealed to man, if Jesus had not been sent as the Word from the Father. Who He was could only be seen after He had gone away; what He had been seen to be was nothing in comparison with the underlying reality. It was no mere man whom the Evangelist was preaching, but God unchangeable, God invincible, God higher than all authority and all power, and elder and mightier than all angels and creatures that are spoken of, and than all ages. If those who heard would abide in this, and in this be builded up, they would possess their soul indestructible.¹

¹ See *Acta Ioannis*, ed. Bonnet, 198^{11ff} 17^{ff} 20^f, 202^{23ff} (or James, *Apocrypha Anecdota*, 12¹⁸⁻²¹, 14^{5f} 10^f, 24^{5ff}, from whom I have adapted the English translation).

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It is all a different order of thought from the Synoptic Gospels or objective history.

The substance of the last few sentences has been picked out of the work which above all other surviving fragments of early Christian literature has the closest similarity with the peculiar elements of the Fourth Gospel. This work is the apocryphal *Acts of John*, or rather, I should say, the doctrinal section of that unequal piece of writing. But near as the 'Gospel of John' and the 'Acts of John' are in many ways, their differences are also fundamental, and it is in great part because of these differences that the 'Acts of John' was condemned and forgotten, while the 'Gospel of John' survived to be the spiritual food of many generations.

For although the Fourth Evangelist is no chronicler of events, although his Christ is the *Logos*, the Word of God, that to know is eternal life, yet he firmly holds all the while that this Christ was manifested in time as a human being, a real man of flesh and blood, who really felt as we feel, and above all really suffered and really died, before He rose again from the dead. As we have seen, the Evangelist is careless of events; but to him the Death of Jesus on the Cross was not a mere event, but a something essential, a thing which really came to pass in the eternal

THE APOCRYPHAL ACTS OF JOHN

order of things. The apocryphal 'Acts of John' sets forth the doctrine that the Crucifixion was a delusion, the Jews gather round the Cross and mock, but Christ is not really there; the 'Gospel of Peter' tells us that Christ felt no pain, and apparently His Spirit is somehow caught up at the last. By a true instinct this specious teaching was rejected by the Church of the second century. The Passion of Jesus Christ must be real, not a stage-play; and if it was to be real, Jesus Christ must have been a real man.

In no early Christian document is the real humanity of Jesus so emphasised as in the Fourth Gospel. That Jesus was a real man is an obvious inference from the Synoptic narrative, but in the Fourth Gospel it is a dogma. It is the Fourth Gospel which tells us that Jesus was tired and asked for water to drink (Joh iv 6, 7), and that He wept at the tomb of Lazarus (xi 35). If we ask what proof there is that Jesus really suffered on the Cross, the answer is ready that the Fourth Gospel declares Him to have said, 'I thirst' (xix 28). Furthermore, we are told, with the most solemn protestations of accuracy to be found in the whole work, that the corpse of Jesus presented a truly human appearance (xix 34, 35).¹ It was no phantom.

¹ According to 1 Joh v 6-8 the living personality has in it three elements, viz. spirit, water, blood. From the 'water' we are

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This is the element which differentiates the Jesus of the Fourth Gospel from the Jesus of Gnostic speculation. It was the Fourth Gospel which pointed out the *via media* along which alone the Church could walk. On the one hand, the Church was not prepared to surrender historical reality to a philosophical speculation. The devotion of the first disciples had been kindled by Jesus of Nazareth. It was the belief that their dead Friend had become alive again, and that He had really appeared to them alive after death, which gave the earliest Christians the will and the power to combine on earth into a Society and afforded them enduring hope for the future. It was essential that the Living Christ, whom they continued to serve and to wait for, should have been a real man who had lived and died. Otherwise He was no Firstfruits of the human race, but another species altogether. On the other hand, Christianity is essentially Monotheistic, and it was so all the more consciously and passionately while the whole world outside was given over to the heathen cults and the

begotten, by the 'blood' we are sustained, and the 'spirit' or breath is the immaterial element that enters at birth and leaves at death. The spirit quitted Jesus when He died (Joh xix 30), leaving behind the water and blood of a human body, the existence of which was demonstrated to the onlookers by the spear-thrust of the soldier.

THE WORD MADE MAN

deified Emperor. Whatever else Jesus Christ might be, the Church refused to make Him a demigod. Here the various forms of speculation which we generally denominate 'Gnostic' were ready with terms and conceptions that should bridge the gulf. More than one school of thought, both Jewish and Greek, were teaching that the Word which proclaimed the truth to man was in the beginning with God and was Itself Divine, that It would come or had come to those fitted to receive it. But the Fourth Evangelist alone makes this Word become an actual human being, one who really lived on earth and died under torture as other men would have died in similar circumstances. Whether this conception is really credible to us or not, it is a matter of history that it forms the central idea of the Fourth Evangelist's theology. I believe that it was by virtue of this central idea that the Fourth Gospel won its way to a position of permanent authority in the Christian Church.

I cannot hope to persuade you all to accept the view of the Fourth Gospel which I have put before you. It leaves very grave difficulties unsolved. But I am confident that, speaking generally, some theory of this kind is really forced upon us. Especially am I sure that we shall never do justice to this Gospel, so long as

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we try to treat it as a narrative of events that were seen and heard of men. It is not a competitor with the Synoptic Gospels.

But, you will say, what becomes of the truth of the Gospel? If neither the words nor the acts of Christ as recorded in the Fourth Gospel belong to the historical Jesus of Nazareth, what, then, is left that has any claim to be called history? There is justice in this criticism, unless we can shew that something is left. A Gospel must be more than a satisfactory piece of theology about our Lord. We require that it should transmit to us something that is really from Him. Can the Fourth Gospel still do this?

What is left is the ideas, the thoughts on God and man around which the Gospel moves. Let us once for all fully recognise that the style and manner of the words put into our Lord's mouth no more represent His historical style and manner than Hellenistic Greek sounds to the ear like Aramaic. 'They are from first to last a part of the author's self,' says Dr. Sanday.¹ The Sayings in the Fourth Gospel are all couched in the peculiar dialect of the Evangelist, and to make them sound like the words of Jesus preserved in the Synoptic Gospels, the style and manner of which, as we have reason to believe,

¹ *Criticism of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 169.

THE IDEAS OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL

do to some extent reproduce the style and manner of the historical Jesus, we should need to change and to paraphrase. But the ideas are the ideas which animate the Sayings in the Synoptic Gospels. At least, they are often the same ideas, often similar ideas; so that when here and there we find a wholly new idea we have some reason to treat with respect its claim to represent the teaching of Jesus Christ.

Let me give as an instance of what I mean the words of Christ about healing on the Sabbath (Joh v 17 ff). I have already referred to this story. Let us attempt to look all the facts in the face without shrinking, and I think you will find in the end that the peculiar methods of the Fourth Evangelist have really preserved for us something well worth keeping. But the Evangelist has been very far indeed from giving us a mechanical transcript of a scene in our Lord's career. To begin with, we can hardly suppose that the story of the miracle is to be taken as it stands. Apart from the preliminary difficulty of accounting for the presence of Jesus at this time in Jerusalem, it must be observed that the man who had been thirty and eight years in his infirmity is a singularly unsympathetic figure. The cripple at Lystra had faith to be healed (Acts xiv 9), the man with the withered

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hand in S. Mark is not characterised at all, but this person is just sketched sufficiently to make us dislike him if we think of him as a real human being: 'Sin no more,' says Jesus to him at last, 'lest a worse thing come to thee.' Then again, as I have already observed, the actual words which the Evangelist ascribes to our Lord when the Jews 'persecute' Him for healing on the Sabbath were calculated rather to exasperate than either to appease or instruct them. 'Amen, amen, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father doing: for what things soever he doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and greater works than these will he shew him, that ye may marvel. . . . Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all they that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgement'—and so forth, for the rest of the chapter.

Now, if we look at the form and manner of these words, it is, I am convinced, impossible for one moment to imagine that they can represent an accurate account of any man's defence of himself after outraging the religious susceptibilities

HISTORICAL ELEMENT IN JOHN

of powerful adversaries. It is not in the least the kind of thing which a phonograph would have reported. But are we therefore to conclude that the whole of this chapter out of the Fourth Gospel has no connexion with history at all? Let me put before you something on the other side.

First of all, the subject of the dispute between our Lord and these 'Jews' is historical. It is primarily concerned with the observance of the Jewish Sabbath. This may seem a small thing, but it is a sign that the subject-matter of the Fourth Gospel is not quite so far removed from history as seems to be the case at the first glance. For I do not think the Evangelist is seriously interested in the Jewish Controversy: indeed, this appears from the way in which the conversation shifts from the question of the Sabbath to the question of the office of the Son of God. The general object of the Evangelist in putting this conversation before his readers is to give them the true doctrine about Jesus as the Son of the Eternal Father, not to put them right about Sabbath observance. But just as his doctrine was that the Eternal Son had become incarnate as a particular human being in Judæa, so he knows that the doctrine about the Son and His office must start from real Jewish

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disputes ; in other words, that the doctrine is to be in touch, so to speak, with historical conditions.

And the actual doctrine itself, the principle from which it starts, as distinct from the mere wording of it—is not this also in harmony with what we know otherwise of Jesus? 'My Father worketh even until now, and I work.' Of course we here feel at once the peculiar style of the Fourth Evangelist. But the line of argument, apart from its expression, not only has parallels in the Synoptic Gospels: it exactly reiterates our Lord's doctrine of right and wrong as opposed to the traditionalism of the Scribes. The essential difference between Jesus and the Scribes, between the religion of Jesus and the religion of His adversaries, was that He claimed to know God and God's Will directly, while they were dependent on the tradition of the elders, something that had been taught and learnt. That is what He means when He says that no one knew or knows the Father except the Son:¹ the others only knew the Father through the Word of God.

It was because Jesus knew the Father directly, and not only through the Old Testament, that He was free to judge the religion of the Old Testament by the light of the Father's works ; in

¹ Matt xi 27 ; Lk x 22.

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other words, by the light of Nature. 'My Father worketh even until now'—this very Sabbath on which we are disputing—surely this means that the laws of Nature and of Right and Wrong do not observe the Sabbath. The same Father whom Jesus saw making His sun to shine on the evil and on the good, made His sun shine equally on the Sabbath and on the week-day. If all things were delivered unto Jesus by the Father, then all things told Him of the Father, things secular as well as things conventionally sacred.

But is this the sort of reasoning we should expect to get from the author of the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel, if he were merely allegorizing out of his inner consciousness? Is it not more natural to suppose that such a way of thinking about the Sabbath came to him from without rather than from within, by memory or tradition rather than by imagination? The wording is the wording of the Evangelist, he has made it all his own before he gives it back to the world, but the leading thought is the subject and source of his theology, not a product of it.

When the Evangelist goes a little further we are able to see what was really working in his mind, why he thinks it worth while to revive past disputes about the Jewish Sabbath. 'The

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dead shall hear the voice of the Son of Man: . . . the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgement.' We see now why the man who had been thirty and eight years in his infirmity is made so unsympathetic. He is a type of those lying still in their tombs who are to hear the voice of the Son of Man, some of whom only awake to receive their due judgement of condemnation. 'Sin no more,' it is said to him, 'lest a worse thing come to thee.' The Evangelist knew that a crisis in our Lord's life had arisen out of the healing of a man on the Jewish Sabbath; he knew that our Lord had claimed to know the will of His Father in Heaven, and in virtue of that knowledge to dispense with the precepts of the written Law, when they clashed with what He knew directly to be the will of God. All the rest is the Evangelist's setting of the story; at least, I cannot regard it as anything else.

And how different is the picture of the Last Day here presented from what we find in the Synoptic Gospels, in Mk xiii and the parallels in Matthew and Luke! That is depicted as a judgement on the Living, this in the Fourth

THE LAST DAY

Gospel is a judgement on the Dead. In the Synoptic Gospels the disciples are to watch for the signs of the End: 'When these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh.' But here, in the Fourth Gospel, they can no longer watch. They are in the tombs, waiting to be aroused by the voice of the Judge.

Thus we come very near to one of the great objects of the Evangelist, which is the deliberate substitution of other ideals for the expected coming of the Messiah on the clouds of heaven. Let me here quote what has been so admirably said on this subject by Dr. Inge:¹ "The Synoptic Gospels, though they doubtless give us a more accurate picture of the outward circumstances of our Lord's ministry, and of the manner and style of his teaching, are pervaded by the idea of the Messianic Kingdom. To the majority of the first and second generations of Christians, the Church was regarded as merely a stop-gap till the Kingdom of God should come. Christ was to return in a few years upon the clouds of heaven to inaugurate the new theocratic kingdom. In correspondence

¹ From a Paper published in the *Proceedings of the Oxford Society of Historical Theology for 1903-4*, pp. 58-68: see now (1911) Professor Inge's Essay on the Theology of the Fourth Gospel in *Cambridge Biblical Essays*, especially pp. 255-257, 259.

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with these ideas, a kind of legend grew up, affecting not only the hopes of the future, but the traditions of our Lord's ministry. The demand for evidence of the Messiahship, becoming every year more urgent, was met by heightening the colours of the picture, and modifying those portions of the narrative which ascribed human limitations to Jesus. This process may be seen at work if we compare S. Matthew with S. Mark. Christianity was in some danger of being so closely identified with apocalyptic Messianic dreams that it would have perished when these hopes proved illusory" (pp. 58, 59). "The [Fourth] evangelist wishes to lay a surer foundation, underpinning the fabric which at present rested on the crumbling foundations of thaumaturgic superstition and Chiliastic or Messianic dreams" (p. 65).

In the passage we have been considering we have the link between the eschatological teaching of the Fourth Gospel and that of the Synoptic Gospels. Elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel the doctrine is brought forward that Eternal Life is a condition to be realised here and now through Christ. Jesus is not merely the future Judge; according to the Fourth Gospel He *is* the Resurrection (xi 25), and Eternal Life is to know God and Jesus Christ, whom God had sent (xvii 3).

DOCTRINE OF ETERNAL LIFE

No one is fully alive who is not in touch with the Father of all (x 10), and Jesus is the Way to the Father (xiv 6). This is only the theological presentment of what the Synoptic Gospels shew us in the movement of history. If Jesus was right in setting aside the Law of God without any other authority than what He derived from His own insight, then He was the Word of God embodied in a Man instead of in a Book. For those who believed on the Christ, His word was God's word, He and the Father were one (x 30). To others also the Word of God had come in the past, and these also were called in Scripture 'Gods' (x 35), but to Jesus alone was given the full measure of the Spirit, and this Spirit was now abiding among His followers and reminding them of what Jesus had said to them (xiv 26). I do not think the Evangelist cared to distinguish between the development of doctrine and historical reminiscence. What I think he did see was the distinction between the doctrines of Christianity and the historical occasions or events with which they were associated in the minds of the ordinary believers. He saw the danger of associating too closely the acts and doctrines of the Christian community with particular events in the career of Jesus on earth. Moreover, the Church had already existed for two genera-

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tions: even if the Lord were to appear at once, the majority of Christians would have been among the dead. Christianity, therefore, could not be a mere prelude to the Second Coming; it must be a thing timeless, eternal, a state of mind.

Much of this way of thinking is to be found, more or less, in the Alexandrian Jewish philosopher Philo. Philo saw in the Pentateuch a mirror of Divine Wisdom, an embodiment of the Word of the unknowable God. What seems to be narrative is really a description of the unchangeable principles of the moral and spiritual world. The Four Rivers of Paradise are the Four chief Virtues, Egypt is the sensuous body, Rebekah is Perseverance, and much more to the same effect. To quote Mr. Inge again (p. 66): "Philo shows an utter indifference to chronology and historical fact. . . . Every historical event is only valuable as symbolizing some eternal, unchanging truth. . . . The notions of *personality* and of a *real process in time* are completely absent from Philo. Nothing ever really happens in this philosophy."

Nothing, we may add, ever really happens in the world as conceived in the Stoic philosophy. All change was an illusion, there was no development, and therefore history and the truth of history was a thing indifferent. The one essential

PHILO AND JOHN

distinction between these views and that of the Fourth Gospel was the belief in the Incarnation of the Divine Nature in time and place, leading up to the Passion of Christ. That event alone was real; therefore it could not be allegorized or altered. By its existence it restored the idea of real progression and development into the Cosmos. Elsewhere, even in the rest of the Gospel story, the truest picture seemed to the Evangelist to be that which most clearly taught essential doctrines. This, at least, is the only way in which I can picture to myself the Evangelist's procedure.

The line of thought which I have tried to put before you to-day makes the personality of the Evangelist a matter of less importance than it becomes when we attempt to read the Fourth Gospel in order to collect facts about the events of the Ministry. But I still think that many of the old arguments which tended to prove that he had been a Jew of Jerusalem have never been satisfactorily disposed of. Such simple statements as those of Joh x 22, 23 ('It was the Feast of the Dedication at Jerusalem; it was winter weather, and Jesus was walking in Solomon's Porch') are difficult to explain on any other hypothesis. At least the person who supplied the information in the text quoted must have had a real knowledge

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of the topography of Jerusalem and of the Jewish Calendar.¹

There is also some evidence which seems to shew that this Jew of Jerusalem, before he became a Christian, must have belonged to the Sadducean party, to have been indeed himself a Priest. The Evangelist Matthew, who must have known something about Jewish parties, finds occasion to bring in the Sadducees by name some half-dozen times, and they are mentioned several times in the Acts. The Fourth Evangelist, though he has so much to say about Jerusalem, does not mention the name. Very likely he regarded it rather as a nickname than a real appellation. According to S. Luke,² 'the Sadducees say there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit': the author of the Fourth Gospel writes, of course, from the Christian standpoint, but some of his remarks illustrate curiously the statement in Acts. He believes in these now, no doubt, in and through the Christian revelation, but not otherwise. The Spirit of God descended and rested upon Jesus, but, speaking generally, 'Spirit was not yet' (Joh vii 39) during the Ministry of our Lord: it is given for the first time to the disciples after the

¹ It must not be forgotten that at the time when the Gospel was published the Temple was in ruins and the Feasts had come to an end.

² Acts xxiii 8.

DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION

resurrection (Joh xx 22). How different is the view which appears in the Gospel of Luke, where Elisabeth and Zacharias, and others besides, are filled with a Holy Spirit! Then again, according to Matthew an angel of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream, and to Zacharias in the Temple according to Luke. Angels play a very different part in the Fourth Gospel. Two 'angels' are seen sitting in the empty Tomb on the morning of the Resurrection by Mary Magdalene: this is part of the Christian tradition, which the Evangelist accepted, and it is foreshadowed in the saying of Jesus to Nathanael that he shall see the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man, a marvel which is expressly set forth as something exceptionally great (Joh i 51). It was not until the resurrection of the incarnate Word of God that angels were seen by mortal eye. Therefore, when the Voice came from Heaven (Joh xii 28), it is the ignorant multitude, not the Evangelist in his own person, who suppose that an angel had spoken to Jesus.

And the same kind of doctrine is taught about the Resurrection itself. It is 'in Christ,' and in Christ alone. The Pharisees believed in a resurrection; it was indeed the popular belief among the Jewish people. Martha in the midst of her grief is sure that her brother will rise again

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in the resurrection at the last day (Joh xi 24). I do not think the Evangelist believed in that doctrine apart from his Christianity. Jesus replies to Martha, '*I* am the Resurrection.' In Him, according to the Fourth Evangelist, is Life; by this formula he can express both his new belief in the Christian resurrection and his old disbelief in the Pharisaic resurrection. 'It shall be recompensed to thee in the resurrection of the just' (Lk xiv 14); '*I* will raise him up in the last day' (Joh vi 40):¹ these familiar phrases shew by contrast the difference of conception between the view of a Christianised Sadducee and his brethren. In the sentence from S. Luke the resurrection is viewed as an event which will occur in the providentially ordered nature of things: it is as natural as the Last Day itself. In the sentence from the Fourth Gospel it is part of the new Christian dispensation.

These considerations tend to explain how the disciple who 'wrote' the Fourth Gospel² could describe himself as 'known unto the high priest' (Joh xviii 15). They also throw light upon the very curious testimony of Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus, who wrote a letter to Victor of Rome

¹ In the Greek the pronoun is very emphatic: ἀναστήσω αὐτόν ἐγὼ τῇ ἐσχάτῃ ἡμέρᾳ.

² Joh xxi 24.

TRADITIONS ABOUT JOHN OF ASIA

about 190 AD, he—Polycrates—being then a Christian of at least 65 years' standing, in order to defend the Asian custom of keeping Easter by the day of the month, regardless of whether it fell on Sunday or not. 'Throughout Asia,' he says (Eusebius, *HE* v 24), 'great Luminaries have gone to their rest, which will rise on the day of the Lord's Coming, when He cometh with glory from heaven, and shall search out all the Saints, namely, Philip, one of the Twelve Apostles, who sleeps in Hierapolis, and two of his daughters, who died virgins in old age; and the other daughter, who lived in a Holy Spirit, rests in Ephesus; and John too, who leaned on the Lord's breast, who had been a priest and worn the High Priest's mitre,¹ both Witness² and Teacher—he sleeps in Ephesus. And Polycarp, too, in Smyrna, both bishop and martyr.' Polycrates then goes on to name other Saints of the Asian Churches, to whose practice he appeals. Here it is definitely implied that the Fourth Evangelist was a member of one of the chief priestly families.

It should be noted that Polycrates, like all the other early witnesses from Asia, avoids calling the Evangelist 'John the son of Zebedee,' or 'John the Apostle.' But, you will say, is not tradition unanimous in identifying this John of Asia, who

¹ τὸ πέταλον.

² Or, 'martyr': the Greek *μάρτυς* is ambiguous.

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died a natural death in his old age, with John the son of Zebedee? The answer is, that tradition is not quite unanimous, and that there still remain traces of a different tradition which makes the son of Zebedee die a martyr's death at the hands of the Jews.

In a 7th or 8th century epitome, probably based on the Chronicle of Philip of Side (about 430 AD), it is stated that 'Papias in his second book says that John the Divine and James his brother were slain by Jews.'¹ And this statement occurs again with verbal variations in the oldest MS of the Chronicle of George the Monk, a writer of the 9th century. The statement is historically of importance, not because these late chroniclers had independent knowledge of the facts, but because they base their information on Papias, bishop of Hierapolis about 160 AD, who wrote an 'Exposition of the Oracles of the Lord' in five books.

A poor basis, you will say, upon which to overthrow the universal tradition of the Catholic Church. Let me therefore conclude by pointing out that there is one piece of Catholic tradition, familiar to every one, which points in the same

¹ 'De Boor's Fragment,' as it is generally called from its discoverer, was first published in *Texte und Untersuchungen* v 2, p. 170, in 1888.

S. JOHN'S DAY IN THE CALENDAR

direction. On the 25th of December the Church celebrates the birthday of our Lord. The birthdays of Martyrs, for purposes of commemoration, are the days of their martyrdom. It is therefore very right and proper that the commemoration of S. Stephen, the first martyr, should be fixed upon the 26th of December, the day after Christmas Day. The next day, as we all know, is S. John's day—S. John the Apostle, not S. John the Baptist. What is the reason for this? The full answer is, of course, a long story, but it will be enough here to say that we can trace back the beginnings of our Calendar to the beginning of the 6th century in the West, and to the beginning of the 5th century in the East. In a Calendar of Carthage, drawn up shortly after 505 AD, we read:

Dec. 25, commemoration of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Dec. 26, commemoration of S. Stephen, the first Martyr.

Dec. 27, commemoration of S. John Baptist, and of James the Apostle, whom (*quem*) Herod slew.

Here we have the same series of names as in our Calendar, together with a commemoration of James the brother of John, but John the Apostle has been turned into John the Baptist. The same Carthaginian Calendar gives June 24 for the Baptist's commemoration, so that he is com-

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memorated twice in this list, and John the Apostle not at all.

Still older and more weighty is the testimony of the ancient Syriac Calendar of the Church of Edessa. The venerable MS in which this Calendar is preserved is dated 411 AD, and the Calendar itself may be a generation older. It begins with December 26 thus :

The names of our lords the martyrs and victors, and their days on which they gained their crowns.

In the month Kanun the first [*i.e.* December].

On the 26th, the first martyr, at Jerusalem, Stephen the apostle, the head of the martyrs.

On the 27th, John and James, the apostles, at Jerusalem.

Then follows a commemoration of Paul and of Simon Kephas, 'the head of the apostles of our Lord.' This oldest Martyrology gives a clear answer to our question, why we commemorate John the son of Zebedee the next day to S. Stephen. We really commemorate him with his brother as martyrs. The Church tradition, therefore, when we look into it, attests the statement ascribed to Papias, and thereby strengthens the cause of those who distinguish between John of Ephesus, to whom we owe the Fourth Gospel, and the Apostle John the son of Zebedee. As Dr. Sanday suggests in his recent book on the Fourth Gospel (p. 98), the 'disciple whom Jesus

AIM OF THE FOURTH EVANGELIST

loved' may have been no more than a youth when our Lord lived on earth and was crucified.

Of this at least I am quite certain : the Fourth Gospel is the work of one to whom belief in Jesus Christ was not a new external condition, impressed upon him from without, after his mind had already acquired its individual characteristics. He had long been conscious, we may be sure, of the presence of the Paraclete within him, guiding him into all truth as to the inner meaning of the life and light which came into the world when the Word of God was manifested, not perhaps without some admixture of ancestral disdain for the materialistic superstition of the masses, both of believers and unbelievers. And now in his old age, when the popular expectations had proved false, as he knew they would, and the Antichrist that was to come and set up his impious kingdom a little before the End had not after all made his appearance, he finds himself confronted by new dangers from the other side. Other thinkers, more spiritual (as they would consider) than he, are saying that the Son of God was not a real man at all, for flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. This to the Evangelist was the greatest error : to deny the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh was the doctrine of Antichrist.

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The Fourth Gospel is written to prove the reality of Jesus Christ. But the Evangelist was no historian: ideas, not events, were to him the true realities, and if we go to his work to learn the course of events we shall only be disappointed in our search.