

'Whosoever' was limited to, Whosoever agrees with us on every point of doctrine, of church government, and of worship, is welcome, but whosoever does not shall be walled out and left to uncovenanted mercies. It is well for the Churches to have creeds and forms of worship. They are the citadels on which it falls back in times of attack, but, when these citadels are converted into fences to bar and hinder the free offer of salvation, when they are turned into tests of membership and of communion, they are an evil sore and humiliating, a trial to faith and patience, and a deep discouragement to evangelic zeal. Our own land, as much as any, perhaps even more than any, has for centuries been a stage on which this miserable play of limitation has been enacted. One of the worst consequences of it has been the hindrance to the conversion of the heathen. Had this great word and the infinite love that underlies it been rightly spelt out, would missions to the heathen and the outcast have so long been delayed? How could it have been possible, less than a century ago, for a master in our national Zion, in response to timid overtures on foreign missions, to declare that not until every soul within our own land was converted was it other than preposterous to speak of sending missionaries to the heathen?

How could it be possible in our time for some professing Christians to have lurking in the secret

corners of their minds shadows of doubt as to their duty to the heathen? We have no responsibility for the unbelief of any heathen at home or abroad, but we have a responsibility for his ignorance. We never can forget that the pictures which Jesus drew of His Father's hospitality are drawn upon the great scale of public banquets, and not of select coteries. His main anxiety is that the 'House may be full.'

And this house of God, so spacious and beautiful, what is it but an embodiment of divine hospitality. What mean its wide portal, its tolled bell, its heaven-pointed spire, but just 'Whosoever'?

We have in our country outgrown the childish things of symbolism. We seek no sermons in stones, nor in costly architecture and quaint furnishings aids to devotion. But in many places we are erecting not what an artist would call poems in stone, but seemly and spacious structures not all unworthy of the message we have to proclaim. It is much that we should, as it were, *build* 'Whosoever.' It is more that we should live it and look it. Let us throw open the door of our hearts as well, inviting all and welcoming all. Not to our own glory, but to His who bought us, have we done these things; reminding ourselves that the Lord's portion is His people, and that His people are they of every clime and condition who have hearkened when He spake, 'Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.'

## The End of the Age.

SOME CRITICAL NOTES ON ST. MATTHEW, CHAP. XXIV.

BY THE REV. J. HUGH BEIBITZ, M.A., VICE-PRINCIPAL OF LICHFIELD THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE.

I SUPPOSE that, with the exception of some portions of the Apocalypse, no part of the New Testament is the object of so much real though unacknowledged aversion to thoughtful orthodox Christians as this chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, with its parallels in the other Synoptists. The cause of this feeling is only partially and inadequately explained by the discredit which nineteenth and twentieth century apocalypses reflect back on the masterpieces they caricature. There is a deeper reason,—the fear lest the result of a nearer

acquaintance with Christ's great prophecy of the 'End of the Age' should be the presentation of an alternative from which the mind of the Christian reader shrinks, between the absolute acceptance of the truth of Christ's words and the frank recognition of historical facts. This fear is not, of course, explicitly set out, even in the form of a confession made to oneself in one's own mind; but that it does exist, and does deter the ordinary reader from the study of such parts of the Gospels as deal with the Parousia, there can be no doubt.

Yet to one who approaches these passages with a frank desire to assimilate the results of the latest criticism, or at least to appreciate the grounds on which such criticism is based, there is revealed a field for serious study of limitless extent and interest.

The view which I would wish not so much to develop as to suggest as a promising line of research, is the extraordinary interest which this chapter and its parallels possess as throwing light on the origin and date of the first three Gospels. There must be many like myself who have some acquaintance, however superficial, with the various solutions suggested of the Synoptic Problem, and who have provisionally adopted the 'Two Document Hypothesis,' but in whom the conviction is slowly forming that this theory, whatever amount of truth it may contain, is really too simple to explain all the facts of the case. The object of this paper is to suggest that in the great Parousia Discourse we have an unrivalled opportunity of detecting and even of assigning a relative date to the various strata of the evangelic narrative. In the literary criticism of the Gospels no other method can be pursued with the hope of a fruitful result, than that which has achieved such marvellous results in the field of natural science. There must be, in the first place, the careful painstaking study of the observed phenomena. But second only to this as an instrument in the discovery of truth is the legitimate use of the scientific imagination. The view which is here supported claims only to be an hypothesis which does at least explain some of the facts, but which can only be proved or disproved by the possibility of its extension to cover the whole area of the phenomena presented by the Synoptists. I would wish, then, to set out the facts, first of all, in the form of critical notes on Mt 24, and then to outline the hypothesis which they seem to support. And here I must express my profound debt to two works, above all others (next to 'Synopticon'), namely, Professor Swete's *Commentary on St. Mark*, and the article on St. Matthew's Gospel by Mr. Vernon Bartlet in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*. In these notes 'Mt,' 'Mk,' 'Lk' stand for the element peculiar to Matthew, Mark, Luke respectively; 'Mt, Mk' for the common source of the first two Synoptists; 'Mt, Mk, Lk' for the 'Triple Tradition.'

Critical analysis of Mt 24.

Vv.1-3. Introduction. Prophecy of the Destruc-

tion of the Temple, and the twofold question of the disciples as to (a) the time, (b) the sign. Parallels, Mk 13<sup>1-4</sup>, Lk 21<sup>5-7</sup>.

The main facts are in Mt, Mk, Lk. But notice two local, obviously genuine, touches in Mt, Mk.

(a) The fact that the disciples pointed out the beauties of the temple to our Lord; (b) that the question was asked when He had taken His seat on the Mount of Olives, overlooking the temple. Neither of these touches is in Lk. But Mk is still more particular. (a) The temple adornments were pointed out as our Lord was in the act of leaving its precincts, *ἐκπορευομένου αὐτοῦ*, as contrasted with Mt, *ἐξελθών*. (b) The names of the inquiring disciples, 'Peter and James and John and Andrew' (notice the order, and the wide separation of Peter and Andrew), as contrasted with Mt, *οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ*.

But, again, there are two features in Mt well deserving of attention. For Mk's *ὅταν μέλλῃ ταῦτα συντελεῖσθαι πάντα* (which is closely akin to Lk, and may belong to the common source of all three) he substitutes an obviously later recasting of the question—introducing two quite Matthean phrases, *ἡ παρουσία* and *ἡ συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος*. Now *παρουσία* only occurs in the Gospels in four places, all in this chapter of St. Matthew—vv. 3<sup>37</sup> (*bis*), 39—the word being used by St. Paul fourteen times, by St. James twice, three times in 2 P, and once in 1 Jn. *ἡ συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος* (with or without the articles) is peculiar to St. Matthew, 13<sup>39, 40, 49</sup> 28<sup>20</sup>.

Vv.4-14. The general circumstances of the Church immediately after the departure of Christ.

Vv.4-8. The *ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων*—'the preliminary troubles' which are to be 'the birth-pangs of the new order.' Parallels, Mk 10<sup>5-8</sup>, Lk 21<sup>8-11</sup>.

The greater part of this section (vv.4-8) is in Mt, Mk, Lk. But the element which lies outside the Triple Tradition so closely resembles St. Mark as to show that a common Greek *document* underlies the two. In fact, the only important element in Mt is the insertion of *ὁ Χριστός* after *ἐγὼ εἰμι* in v.5. Lk goes his own way, not merely in several minor though not unimportant variations, but especially in the additions in ch. 21<sup>8-11</sup>, and no reason can be assigned for this fact if he had the document 'Mt, Mk' before him. One peculiar feature of Mt, Mk is the extraordinarily suggestive phrase *ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων*, Mt 24<sup>8</sup>, Mk 13<sup>8</sup>.

I do not propose to deal with the parallel

drawn by Mr. Bartlet with Apoc. Baruch 27-30<sup>1</sup>. While declining to prejudge the view thus suggested, we should, at any rate, expect to find Christ's language, like that of the O.T. prophets, moulded by, while transcending, contemporary modes of thought.

It is perhaps worthy of notice that Lk has *λομοὶ καὶ λιμοὶ* for the simple *λιμοὶ* of Mt, Mk.

Vv. 9-13. Further trials of the disciples. Parallels, Mk 13<sup>9-13</sup>, Lk 21<sup>12-19</sup>.

Here we have some new features. Only v. 9 belongs to Mt, Mk, Lk, though fragments may be embedded in vv. 10, 13. Even in v. 9 we have a Matthæan addition in the words *τῶν ἐθνῶν*. On the other hand, the important passage, 'he that endureth,' etc., and 'this gospel shall be preached to all the nations,' in vv. 13, 14, are from Mt, Mk, but are combined with Matthæan matter. The curious feature of this passage is undoubtedly the fact that the corresponding passages of St. Mark and St. Luke are far more closely paralleled by Mt 10<sup>17-22</sup> (the charge to the Twelve) than by Mt 24<sup>9-14</sup>. And, further, in the former passage there are not only more traces than in the latter of the Triple Tradition, but also that here, most decisively, the close connexion of Mt and Mk is apparent. Two more points claim attention, both in v. 14. (a) For the simple Marcan *εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη* Mt has *ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ οἰκουμένῃ εἰς μαρτύριον πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν*; and (b) the peculiar phrase, *τότε ἤξει τὸ ἔλος*, as Mr. Bartlet has pointed out, goes far to date the First Gospel (or rather, we should say, the peculiar colouring of Mt) to some time not long before 70 A.D., when the crisis of the fate of the Holy City was seen to be approaching.

Vv. 15-22. The invasion of the Holy Land by the Roman armies. Parallels, Mk 13<sup>14-20</sup>, Lk 21<sup>20-24</sup> 17<sup>31</sup>.

There can be little doubt that this section describes the confusion and misery in Judæa just before the siege. Vv. 16-19 belong, almost wholly, to the Triple Tradition. For the rest, the connexion of Mt, Mk is close and obvious. Lk, while he clearly is indebted to the common source (which appears also in Lk 17<sup>31</sup>), is as clearly independent of Mt, Mk. But when we come to examine these resemblances and differences more closely, several points emerge of extraordinary importance.

(a) 'The abomination of desolation' in Mt, Mk. Although these notes are not intended to be exegetical, we may be permitted to differ, with all

respect, from the view of Dr. Driver, and to express our inclination to that of Prof. Swete (as also of A. B. Bruce), that what is meant is the intrusion of the armies of the aliens upon the sacred soil. But this verse (<sup>15</sup>) bristles with points of interest for our present purpose. The well-known note, *ὁ ἀναγιγνώσκων νοεῖτω*, is in Mt, Mk, and we conclude (α) that this note occurred in the document from which our 'Mt' and 'Mk' are derived; (β) that it was intended thereby that the reader (*ἀναγιγνώσκων* = read in public) should in some way mark or explain, or perhaps, if he were a 'prophet,' give an inspired commentary upon the passage in which these words occur. (γ) The very fact that no trace of this 'direction to the reader' is to be found in Lk inevitably suggests, as a tentative explanation, that the peculiar matter of Lk is later than the crisis indicated, and belongs therefore to the period after 70 A.D. (δ) But if the recently maintained views of the earlier date of the Acts (and therefore of the Gospel) have sufficient influence on our minds to make us hesitate, the fact that St. Luke *substitutes* 'Jerusalem surrounded by armies' for the Matthæan and Marcan 'abomination of desolation,' goes far to confirm us in the belief that the Third Gospel is to be dated after the destruction of Jerusalem. The arguments of the scholars above referred to are indeed conclusive to this extent, that the mere *occurrence* of the phrase in Lk is not decisive as to the later date of the Gospel. But the point is *not* the occurrence of the phrase, but the fact that it is substituted for the simpler, indeterminate, and therefore presumably earlier, *τὸ βδελύγμα τῆς ἐρημώσεως*. More than that, the occurrence of the words *ὅταν ἴδητε* and *τῆς ἐρημώσεως* (*ἢ ἐρήμωσις*) in Mt 24<sup>15</sup>, Mk 13<sup>14</sup>, Lk 21<sup>20</sup> seems to prove that the phrase really belongs not to 'Mt, Mk,' but to the common source of all three, and that the alteration by St. Luke was deliberate and intentional. (ε) A precisely parallel argument establishes to our mind the posteriority of the peculiar colouring of Mt to that of Mk. For in Mt the more or less precise *ἐν τόπῳ ἀγίῳ* is substituted for the vague Marcan *ὅπου οὐ δεῖ*.

(b) We now come to that part of the Triple Tradition represented by Mt 24<sup>16-19</sup>; and here we can hardly avoid touching upon the theory that the strictly eschatological portions of Mt 24 and parallels are really a Jewish, or, as some say, a

Jewish-Christian apocalypse, composed about 67-8 A.D., and incorporated in our evangelic narratives. This is certainly an effectual way of disposing of exegetical difficulties. According to this view, this apocalyptic 'fly-sheet' consisted probably of Mk 13<sup>7-9a, 14-20, 24-27, 30, 31</sup> and the synoptic parallels. Weiffenbach (quoted by Prof. Sanday) holds that the portions which remain, 'the critically verified allusions to the second coming, all originally referred to the Resurrection.' Into anything like a full discussion of this theory it is obviously impossible here to enter. But, like most violent expedients of disposing of difficulties, it is liable, we believe, to still graver objections than those which it seeks to remove.

It is almost an integral part of this view, that the 'fly-sheet' thus intruded into the midst of genuine Logia of Christ is to be identified with the 'oracle' mentioned by Eusebius, *H.E.* iii. 5. 3, which warned the Christians of Jerusalem before the war broke out, to flee to Pella in Peræa—*κατά τινα χρησμόν τοῖς αὐτοῖς δοκιμοῖς δι' ἀποκαλύψεως ἐκδοθέντα πρὸ τοῦ πολέμου.*

Now, if we are right in the interpretation of *ὁ ἀναγιγνώσκων νοεῖτω*, it seems to us that we have a simpler explanation of the *χρησμός* in question. We would lay some stress on the words *δι' ἀποκαλύψεως*, which would clearly be appropriately used of an utterance of a Christian 'prophet.' Cf. for *ἀποκάλυψις* in some such sense, 1 Co 14<sup>6, 26</sup>, Gal 2<sup>2</sup> *δι' ἀποκαλύψεως*, if we accept Professor Ramsay's reference of this passage to the prophecy of Agabus, Ac 11<sup>28</sup>. The verb is actually used of the 'prophets' at Corinth in 1 Co 14<sup>30</sup>; see also Eph 3<sup>5</sup> *ἀπεκαλύφθη . . . προφήταις*. Now, surely the passage of Eusebius is at least capable of some such explanation as this, that the *χρησμός* was given on the occasion of the public reading of this passage of the Gospels by a reader (*ὁ ἀναγιγνώσκων*) who happened to be also a prophet. The particular *ἀποκάλυψις* given to the prophetic 'reader,' and through him to his hearers, consisted in the special explanation of *εἰς τὰ ὄρη*, 'over the mountains of Judæa and Moab to Pella in Peræa.'

But we believe that the strongest argument against the existence of this alleged 'fly-sheet' is furnished by a critical study of the different strata of the evangelic narrative. The result of this study, we hold, is to show that certainly both the 'Triple Tradition' and the common source of Mt, Mk, and also probably the peculiar colouring

of Mt, are of earlier date than that assigned to the Jewish apocalypse, which this theory postulates. The peculiar colouring of Lk, we have already seen some reason to conclude, is later than the fall of the city. It was no longer necessary to insert the original 'note' *ὁ ἀναγιγνώσκων νοεῖτω*. In its place we have a long passage of amplification and what looks like commentary on the event, Lk 21<sup>21b, 22, 24</sup>. We do not mean that we are bound to hold that no genuine Logia of Christ are contained in the peculiar colouring of Lk. We leave open this possibility. But it is difficult not to think that, if not the whole, at least some part of the verses just referred to contain St. Luke's own reflexions on the events of 70 A.D.

In vv.<sup>20, 21</sup> we have the source Mt, Mk. But in v.<sup>20</sup> we find Mk's indefinite *ἵνα μὴ γένηται* defined by the more precise *ἢ φυγῆ ὑμῶν*. Now, taken by itself, this variation cannot prove very much. But it does seem to fit in with the other indication, that the peculiar setting of Mt belongs to the period after 66 and before 70 A.D., when the trials predicted by Christ were coming upon the Jewish Christians, while the crisis had not yet arrived, and therefore attention was concentrated on the means of self-preservation. In the same verse, and belonging to the same stratum of variation, we should notice the addition, so characteristic of the Jewish Gospel, of the words *μηδὲ σαββάτω*.

As regards the additional matter in this section contained in St. Luke's Gospel, while perhaps we have not as yet the means of exactly defining the relation of the two passages, we ought by no means to overlook the very remarkable parallelism between Lk 21<sup>24</sup> *ἄχρι οὗ πληρωθῶσιν καιροὶ ἐθνῶν*, and Ro 11<sup>25</sup> *ἄχρι οὗ τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰσέλθῃ*. The concluding verse of the section in Mt belongs to the source Mt, Mk. (Mt 24<sup>22</sup>, Mk 13<sup>20</sup>.)

Vv.<sup>23-28</sup>. This section is supposed by Godet to describe the interval between the fall of Jerusalem and the Parousia. Very decidedly he expresses his dissent from Holtzmann, who divides the portion into two, namely, vv.<sup>23-25</sup> and vv.<sup>26-28</sup>. But, for our part, we give our allegiance to Holtzmann in this point. For in spite of the *ὄν* of v.<sup>26</sup>, inserted (as we shall see) in order to furnish a link wanting in the original, the division between the two parts is clearly seen. Vv.<sup>23-25</sup> are a resumption, with fuller particulars, of the warning against being 'led astray' in vv.<sup>4, 5</sup>. For the most part they belong to Mt, Mk.

But vv.<sup>26-28</sup> are from another source which we have not detected hitherto, but to which our attention will be called again. For the main substance of them is found in Lk 17<sup>28, 24, 37</sup> in a different context. It is notoriously difficult to 'place' the different situations of the so-called 'Peræan section' of St. Luke. It appears, indeed, to be a kind of general receptacle for acts and logia of Christ for which a place could not be found in the development of the narrative, or of the precise context of which, both in place and in time, the evangelist was uncertain. But, however this may be, it remains that Mt 24<sup>26-28</sup> occurs in Lk in close if not immediate connexion with the question of the Pharisees, 'When cometh the kingdom of God?' We shall see some reason, when we come to a general summary of conclusions, for believing, that whether or not this section is out of its place in Lk, it probably did not belong to the context where we find it in Mt. But we are reminded of one of the cruxes of the Synoptic Problem, the precise history and bearing of the source 'Mt, Lk.' Here, at any rate, each evangelist freely places the words of the source in a setting of his own. The meaning of the passage seems to be given in the last words, in answer to the question, 'Where, Lord?' Mt 24<sup>27</sup>, Lk 17<sup>37</sup>. The 'body' (Mt πῶμα, Lk σῶμα) is the Jewish State, and the 'vultures' or 'eagles' are either the Roman armies or else the forces which tend to the disintegration of a society become hopelessly corrupt. Possibly we ought not sharply to distinguish between the two explanations. Going back one verse, we find that ἡ παρουσία belongs to Mt's own setting (cf. above, and τῆς σῆς παρουσίας, v.<sup>9</sup>). If indeed, as we incline to believe, the placing of the passage here is due to the evangelist, it will be only one out of a very great number of instances where words of Christ spoken on different occasions, but united by a general similarity of subject, are all grouped together in St. Matthew as though they formed one great discourse. To return for a moment to v.<sup>27</sup>: the Matthean phrase οὕτως ἔσται ἡ παρουσία τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου reads like a periphrasis and an explanation of the Lucan οὕτως ἔσται ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.

If vv.<sup>26-28</sup> do constitute a separate logion, the difficulty, that they seem to place the Parousia in immediate connexion with the fall of the city, will disappear.

Vv.<sup>29-31</sup>. Picture of the Parousia. Parallels, Mk 13<sup>24-27</sup>, Lk 21<sup>25-28</sup>.

Here we find a block, as it were, of the 'Triple Tradition' inserted among other matter. Curiously enough, Mk and Lk preserve the principal portion of this untouched, Mk 13<sup>26</sup>, Lk 21<sup>27</sup> καὶ τότε . . . δόξης πολλῆς. But Mt 24<sup>30</sup> preserves the whole, though combined with 'Mt.' But, of this peculiar colouring, 'the sign of the Son of Man' reads like an echo of Dn 7<sup>13</sup>. Cf. also Did. 16<sup>6</sup> πρῶτον σημεῖον ἐκπετάσεως ἐν οὐρανῷ (v.<sup>30</sup>) εἶτα σημεῖον φωνῆς σαλπύγγος (v.<sup>31</sup>) καὶ τὸ τρίτον ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν (Mt 25<sup>32</sup>). (From V. Bartlet). The tribes of the earth mourning are an echo of Zec 12<sup>10ff</sup>.

We return to v.<sup>30</sup>, which is an unusual combination of 'Mt, Mk, Lk,' 'Mt, Lk,' and 'Mt.' But the history of the passage becomes clearer if we compare it with Lk 21<sup>25, 26</sup>. There we see the 'Triple Tradition' in an altogether different and, we should say, later setting. The setting of Mt 24<sup>29</sup> is the very early 'Mt, Mk.' But the difficult word εὐθέως is 'Mt' alone. This has a distinct bearing on questions more fundamental than those of criticism. It does constitute a difficulty if Christ really placed the Parousia 'immediately' after 70 A.D. Notice, first, the setting of the note of time. Mk has ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις, Mt εὐθέως, Lk omits all indication of time. It is at least a probable hypothesis that (a) our Lord's words were quite indefinite as to time. Observe, for example, how the parabolic ending of the chapter makes for the view of a delayed Parousia. (b) That this original, indefinite form of speech is most nearly represented by Mk's ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις. (c) That Mt's εὐθέως reflects the hopes and fears of Jewish Christians c. 66 A.D. (d) That Lk represents Christian thought some time after 70 A.D., when Jerusalem had fallen, yet Christ had not come. For, on the one hand, it would be natural that the intense expectation of the Parousia in their own time, especially when, as in 66 A.D., the signs of the end foretold by Christ were evident, should colour the account of Christ's words given by His first disciples. And, on the other hand, to quote the words of Prof. Sanday, 'the ease with which the apostles postponed their expectation under the teaching of events would tell against the supposition that the teaching of Christ had been precise on the subject.' The 'colossal imagery' of v.<sup>29</sup> is derived from the ancient prophetic style (Is 13<sup>10</sup> 34<sup>4</sup>); and while

(as Swete) we do not necessarily exclude a further fulfilment of the words of the Lord, it is important to notice that their primary reference is not to astronomical and geological but to political and social convulsions.

V.<sup>91</sup>, again, is from 'Mt, Mk.' Belonging to Mt's peculiar setting are (a) the Jewish symbolism of 'the great trumpet.' Cf. Did. 16<sup>6</sup> (as quoted above) *εἶτα σημεῖον φωνῆς σαλπίγγος*; (b) the addition of the pronoun αὐτοῦ. The angels of the Parousia are Messiah's.

Lk, as so often, is absolutely independent, Lk 21<sup>25b, 26a, 28</sup>.

The time of the Parousia. Parallels, Mk 13<sup>28-32</sup>, Lk 21<sup>29-35</sup>.

This section is very instructive in regard to our present purpose. The main body is 'Triple Tradition.' But the influence of 'Mt, Mk' is decisive as to the setting in which the common source appears in our first two Gospels; and v.<sup>86</sup> is either 'Mt, Mk' pure and simple, or else the common source has been, for some reason, abandoned by St. Luke in favour of the much longer and more generalized warning of Lk 21<sup>34-35</sup>.

But if the 'Mt, Mk' setting of, for example, v.<sup>82</sup> had been known to St. Luke, there would be no reason why he should have substituted the tamer and colourless setting of the 'Triple Tradition' in Lk 21<sup>29</sup>. As bearing on the early date of the source 'Mt, Mk,' notice the extraordinarily graphic and picturesque *ἐπὶ θύραις* of Mt 24<sup>38</sup>, Mk 13<sup>39</sup>, while 'Lk' not only omits these words, but loses in force and vividness by substituting *ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ* for the indefinite construction of Mt, Mk.

But v.<sup>84</sup> is certainly one of the cruxes of the Parousia discourse. 'This generation' appears, without doubt, to refer to the Lord's contemporaries; cf., for example, Mt 23<sup>36</sup>, Lk 11<sup>30</sup>. We would venture on a suggestion, founded upon the critical study of sources. It may appear perhaps arbitrary, where Mt and Mk agree and differ from Lk, to say sometimes Lk has abandoned the common source of all three, and sometimes that we have evidence of another source which we have called 'Mt, Mk,' and to which we have more or less definitely assigned a date. Now it was the former hypothesis to which we resorted in connexion with the critical passage Mk 13<sup>14</sup> = Mt 24<sup>16</sup> = Lk 21<sup>20</sup>. But we saw that this differed in one remarkable respect from those passages in which we traced the agreement of Mt and Mk to their use of a separate source,

presumably unknown to Lk. For just as the primitive igneous rocks are observed sometimes intruding into and laid side by side with the later sedimentary rocks, so in Lk 21<sup>20</sup> we discovered, side by side with the much later Lucan setting, fragments or insertions of the oldest stratum of evangelic narrative in *σταν ἰδητε* and *ἡ ἐρήμωσις*. Now in Mk 13<sup>82</sup> = Mt 24<sup>86</sup> = Lk 21<sup>84, 85</sup> we have a precisely parallel case.

I suppose no one will doubt the lateness of Lk 21<sup>84, 85</sup>, not in an absolute sense, but relatively to Mt, Mk. But right into the heart of this later matter we have the decisive phrase *ἡ ἡμέρα ἐκείνη* echoing the *τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης* of Mt, Mk, just as Lk 21<sup>20</sup> *ἡ ἐρήμωσις* echoes *τῆς ἐρημώσεως* of Mt, Mk in that place. And we believe that the reason is the same. Mt 24<sup>16</sup> = Mk 13<sup>14</sup> and Mt 24<sup>86</sup> = Mk 13<sup>82</sup> are both of them from the common source of all three Synoptists, and in both cases Lk has recast the whole passage, just retaining one or two characteristic phrases—enough to show us that we have really to deal with the 'Triple Tradition' and not with 'Mt, Mk.' But how does all this bear on the exegesis of Mt 24<sup>84</sup>? We venture to put forward an hypothesis, somewhat tentatively, which seems at any rate to give a tolerable explanation of the observed facts. In order to avoid constant qualifications, we will set out this hypothesis in a rather dogmatic fashion.

(a) St. Luke then knew the Triple Tradition, and substituted the general warning, lest 'that day should come upon you unawares (or suddenly) as a snare' (Lk 21<sup>84, 85</sup>), for the difficult phrase of Mt 24<sup>86</sup> = Mk 13<sup>82</sup>. After all, such a paraphrase would not be altogether alien from the general style of St. Luke, who, on a lesser scale, is constantly modifying and recasting the common material.

(b) His reason for doing so was not the dogmatic difficulty which has led to the omission of the words *οὐδὲ ὁ υἱὸς* in a good many authorities from the text of Mt, and in some, though fewer, from that of Mk. Such a difficulty would scarcely, perhaps, have much influence in the period 70-80 A.D., to which we are inclined to refer St. Luke's Gospel in its present form. Rather, his object was to remove the apparently direct contradiction with Mt 24<sup>84</sup> = Mk 13<sup>80</sup>. If 'this generation' were to see 'all these things' fulfilled, how could 'that day' and 'the hour' be hidden from the Son?

(c) The contradiction is a real difficulty, which, however, is not incapable of solution. For (a) we

see no reason why the Lord should not have clothed His prediction of the end in somewhat ambiguous language, or rather, let us say, in language not incapable of being misunderstood. It is a profoundly wise remark of the late Professor A. B. Bruce that the object of true prophecy, no less that of Jesus Christ than that of the O. T., is primarily ethical. Nothing, we can safely assert, is more alien from the spirit of the true inspired prophecy than to give a detailed account of future events—than, in other words, to write history beforehand. The prophet has fulfilled his function when he has proclaimed, with an unerring moral intuition, that the divine judgment is at hand, and that it behoves men to order their lives accordingly. To think that we can read in our Lord's words an exact summary of the events of far distant history, appears to us precisely parallel with—to take an example—making His miracles to be *τέρατα* instead of *σημεία*, or regarding them as intended to serve as proofs of His divinity.

(β) While, however, we may admit the probable existence of some ambiguity in Christ's prophecy of the end, still we would be inclined to think that this ambiguity would not be too great to be resolved by patient and accurate study of His words. And it seems to us that the clue is to be found (here we follow Godet) in the antithesis between *ἡ γενεὰ αὐτῆς*, which would witness the fall of the city, and *τῆς ἡμέρας ἐκείνης*, that more remote day—the 'Day of Jehovah'—of which He says that it lies within the knowledge of the Father alone.

There is then an apparent contradiction, but the means of resolving it is not far off. And our gratitude is due rather to Mt and Mk, who have preserved a difficult but instructive phrase, consisting of two antithetical members, rather than to Lk, who has tried to keep only to the general sense, avoiding a contradiction by the evasion of a paraphrase.

Vv. 37-51. Conclusion of the Parousia discourse summed up in the command to 'watch,' based upon the uncertainty of 'the day.' This precept is enforced in two parables in germ—the thief (vv. 43-44), and the faithful and unfaithful upper servants (vv. 45-51).

Now it seems to be beyond doubt that the great discourse did end with an injunction to 'watch.' But the ending given in Mk 13<sup>38-37</sup> is far simpler

than that of Mt, and we believe more original. In fact, vv. 37-51 of our chapter are most instructive as a lesson in the composition of our First Gospel. For they exhibit what we believe will be found to be the characteristics of the evangelist, namely, the collection of sayings of Christ delivered on different occasions into one great discourse. At the same time, the verses throw a great deal of light on the source 'Mt, Lk.' In regard to this, we believe that St. Luke received certain logia of Christ, some written down, others perhaps orally delivered. The source of both was the common catechesis of Greek converts. The evangelist, who, as he tells us in his preface, took great trouble both in the collection of written and oral information and in the composition, based on that information, of a consecutive (*καθεξῆς γράψαι*) narrative, placed these logia in what he, at any rate, conceived to be their proper historical setting. On the other hand, St. Matthew handled these logia in an altogether different spirit, collecting all those heard on the same or kindred subjects, and continuing them into the great discourses which form so important and striking a feature of our First Gospel. (We consider that we can arrive at some measure of truth regarding the origin of our Greek Gospels, even if we exclude, for our present purpose, the examination of the various views as to Aramaic originals).

To return to our passage.

Vv. 37-39. 'The days of Noah' is *ultimately* from the same Greek logion as Lk 17<sup>26, 27</sup>—just as 20-28 = Lk 17<sup>23, 24, 27</sup>. But we recognise the peculiar setting of Mt in *ἡ παρουσία* of v. 37, and *ἡ παρουσία τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου* of v. 39. Vv. 40, 41, in the same manner, correspond to Lk 17<sup>34-36</sup>. But observe how freely St. Luke uses his source. For the difficult *ἐν τῷ μωλφ* he has the simpler *ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό*, and for the more graphic presents he substitutes the tamer futures, *παρλημφθήσεται—ἀφελήσεται* (in each verse). Perhaps those scholars who trace differences in our Gospels to different translations of an Aramaic document can explain why for Mt's *ἐν τῷ ἀγρῷ* Lk has *ἐπὶ κλίνης μιᾶς*.

But in regard to the two 'parables in germ' of vv. 43-51 there can be no doubt that behind Mt and Lk there is the same Greek original. Yet the parallel passage in Lk is found in the entirely different context, Lk 12<sup>39-46</sup>. This seems to confirm our view that Mt and Lk dealt separately and independently with Greek logia which were

the subjects of the common catechesis. We may notice a few instructive features in this passage, fewer perhaps than usual, owing to the large extent of verbal identity. Even in small details we observe the striving of St. Luke after a more correct and smooth version. In fact there is a curious parallel between the peculiar setting of Lk and the variations of the 'Alexandrian' text of the N.T. For examples of these minor alterations, observe (a) in Lk 12<sup>39</sup> (= Mt 24<sup>49</sup>) the substitution of ὄρα for φυλακῆ and the omission of the repeated ἄν; (b) in Lk 12<sup>42</sup> the more classical θεραπείας replaces the οἰκειάς of Mt 24<sup>45</sup>; (c) for the thoroughly Jewish-Christian μετὰ τῶν ἰποκριτῶν of Mt 24<sup>51</sup>, Lk has μετὰ τῶν ἀπίστων (12<sup>46</sup>). And, finally, we may notice that whereas the two 'germ parables' follow one another without a break in Mt, St. Luke has supplied, as an introduction to the second, a historical setting in the question of St. Peter, 'Lord, speakest Thou this parable unto us, or even unto all?'

It would be tedious to give even a short summary of the evidence, which is contained in the whole collection of facts which we have examined, for the hypothetical scheme which we are about to put forward. But we claim for our hypothesis that it does enable us to give a rational explanation of the facts which we have reviewed.

(1) First, then, we have the oldest stratum of all, the so-called Triple Tradition, which we strongly suspect to have been, in parts at any rate, not reduced to writing, but committed to memory by catechists and catechumens. Our reason for holding this opinion is the extraordinarily fragmentary way in which pieces of the Triple Tradition are placed amid the peculiar setting of each evangelist. But, whether written or oral, we are inclined to assign a very early date to this stratum of Gospel narrative. At any rate, it assumed its final form some years before 66 A.D.

(2) Next we have an important documentary source lying behind Mt and Mk. The date of this Greek document is about the year 66 A.D. (the year which saw the first investment of Jerusalem).

(3) In the peculiar setting of Mk we have evangelical matter second to none as an authority for Christ's words and acts. If we are not mistaken, we see in this peculiar colouring of Mk the direct influence of St. Peter.

(4) The peculiar colouring of Mt reflects the feelings and judgments of the Jewish-Christian Church. It is to be dated in any case earlier than the fall of Jerusalem, but after 66 A.D.; in other words, it belongs to the period when the crisis which was beginning by the date of 'Mt, Mk' had already so far advanced as to disclose the inevitable end.

(5) Mt and Lk both draw from a Greek document which represents another stratum of the common catechesis to that revealed by the agreement of Mt, Mk, and Lk.

(6) The peculiar colouring of St. Luke is later than the destruction of Jerusalem. We are inclined to refer it to some date between 70 and 80 A.D. It is marked by a striving after the more correct Greek word, and the avoidance of not merely linguistic and grammatical but also of exegetical difficulties.

We do not pretend that a synoptic theory can be considered as proved if it is only based upon the critical study of a single chapter. But we venture to put forward our hypothesis as a tentative explanation of many of the phenomena of the Gospels. And we venture to think that, in the light of some such analysis as this, some of the difficulties which have been felt by ordinary readers in regard to the great Discourse on the Parousia will be found to be capable of a satisfactory explanation.

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<sup>1</sup> *Hand-Commentar zum N. T.* Dritte Auflage. Erste Band. Erste Abtheilung. *Die Synoptiker.* Erste Hälfte.

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Zweite Abtheilung. *Die Apostelgeschichte.* Bearbeitet von H. J. Holtzmann. Tübingen und Leipzig: J. C. B. Mohr, 1901. London: Williams & Norgate.