

cooking. If the Pasch was on a Friday there could be no hot meal on Friday night. As that meal was and still is, for the Jews the great meal of the week, something like the English Sunday dinner of roast-beef, its absence would be painfully felt, especially in the spring when the days are often very hot, but the nights really cold (Mk. xiv, 54). The meal on Saturday night would be no compensation, for since it could not even be cooked until after sunset, it was always a hurried and makeshift affair. For the delicately nurtured city people the missing of the Sabbath dinner would be a real hardship and for the scribes an occasion for exercising their ingenuity.

If the Pasch were transferred from Friday to Saturday the tradesmen of Jerusalem could keep their shops open on Friday and do a profitable business with the thousands of pilgrims and could well afford to bribe the scribes. The pilgrims might be ignorant of the law; or even if they were unwilling to sell they would not so easily scruple to buy especially when they saw the shops open, II Esd. xiii, 15-22. We might even exculpate the business people, for it would be too difficult to supply such great crowds of visitors even with bread and fruit over two days of complete rest.

Owing to the scarcity of contemporary records and the custom of oral rather than written tradition of the Rabbis we need not be surprised if we find only much later documentary evidence of the transfer of the Jewish Pasch from Friday to Saturday. This however does not militate against the possibility of an earlier custom, but rather encourages an enquiry as to whether the reasons which prompted this practice did not also exist in the time of Christ. Nor should we think it beyond the conception of our Lord's enemies to twist the law to their own advantage.

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A NOTE ON THE DATE OF ST. LUKE'S GOSPEL

AS students of the Bible are not in the habit of looking to the pages of *The Journal of Roman Studies* for articles bearing on their subject, readers may be glad to have their attention called to a study entitled "The Fall of Jerusalem and the 'Abomination of Desolation'" by C. H. Dodd in Volume xxxvii (1947) 47-54. The article, it may be remarked, is written from the point of view of one who regards the Gospels as the subject-matter of quite independent criticism. By many such critics it has been taken for granted that the prediction of the fall of Jerusalem in St. Luke was written after the event on account of its accurate agreement with the historical facts.

C. H. Dodd points out that this assumption is unwarranted. All the language of the two passages in question, xix, 42-4 and xxi, 20-4, is based on that of the Old Testament, and the description of the fall of the city is based on the similar descriptions of the prophets. "There is no single trait of the forecast which cannot be documented out of the Old Testament," p. 52. On the other hand, the distinctive features which caught the imagination of Josephus, the historian of the siege, and presumably of contemporaries, are entirely lacking. Such are the faction-fighting among the city's defenders, the pestilence and famine culminating in cannibalism, and the conflagration which laid low the temple and a large part of the city. This, it may be added, is precisely what is to be expected in prophecy of which it is not a characteristic to enter into definite and accurately foretold details.

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BIBLICAL STUDY IN FRANCE DURING AND AFTER THE WAR

THE production of strictly scientific works on the Bible has fallen short of that of pre-war days as one would expect. Nevertheless the publishing houses have made praiseworthy efforts and have produced some notable works. In the first place we must record the re-appearance of the *Revue Biblique* in 1946 as a regular quarterly. During the German occupation a substitute for the review was produced in the form of three volumes which appeared at long intervals. Three fascicles have been added to the *Supplément au Dictionnaire de la Bible*, namely "Hetzenauer" to "Israël." In the *Mémorial Lagrange* (1940) and *Mélanges Podechard* (Lyons, 1945) we have a number of studies in French and English by eminent scholars and covering the whole Scriptural field. Among introductory works we may notice the first volume of *La Révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste* (Etudes Bibliques, 1944) dealing with astrology and the occult sciences. Displaying a mastery of his subject Père Festugière introduces us to this mysterious literature, so important for a thorough knowledge of the religious life of the Roman Empire. The same author has, moreover, in collaboration with Professor A. D. Nock of Harvard, begun the critical edition (with French translation) of the *Corpus Hermeticum*. Two volumes of this have appeared in the "Collection" of the Universities of France (1945). In 1944 Père Spicq published the *Esquisse d'une histoire de l'exégèse latine au Moyen Age*, a valuable and accurate guide, in spite of the modest title. In this field of exegesis we have several recent issues of patristic work in the series *Sources Chrétiennes*, begun in 1942—in particular, the commentaries of St. Gregory of Nyssa on the Creation of Man,