

THE AUTHORITIES USED IN THE ACTS I.-XII.¹

ON what authorities was Luke's History of the early apostolic period based? Its trustworthiness rests ultimately on the answer to this question—at least, for those who are not content with the old-fashioned assumption of direct Divine inspiration, and who have had to dismiss as decisively disproved and inconsistent with known facts the old idea that he was one of the earliest disciples and actually one of the two who were going to Emmaus on the day of the Resurrection.

Luke's history is trustworthy to us, because he had access to good sources of information and made use of his opportunities. He mentions in the opening sentence of the first book of his History that he had come into personal relations with persons "which from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word." Those who are going to make a serious study of a historian must begin, and do always in the case of a non-Christian historian begin, by accepting as a foundation for their investigation his own account of his sources and authorities. If they cannot accept this account, they cannot accept the writer as a serious authority. We start from this elementary principle, which lies at the basis of historical study, noticing only that Luke pointedly distinguishes himself from those that "were from the beginning eye-witnesses." He implies that he was not one of the original disciples, and that the first book of his History was composed after reading various written narratives, but that he was in a position to control these documentary sources in a

¹ While I am of course very much indebted to older scholars, especially Blass, Harnack, Bartlet and Knowling, not to mention the greatest and best old edition, which is the foundation of all scholars' work, I have purposely as far as possible divested myself of all other persons' ideas about authorities, and written this article from personal impressions.

degree which he counted immensely important by the oral accounts which he had received from eye-witnesses. It is quite evident that he reckoned the real value of his History to lie in the latter fact : his work was authoritative, because it rested ultimately on knowledge gained direct from the best human authorities. He was in a position to judge and to criticize, and to compare the written narratives ; and he had done so, and therefore confidently sends to Theophilus—a real person, yet at the same time one who was to Luke a typical representative of the congregations drawn from the outer world of the originally ignorant and pagan population—the first book of this History, which is more correct and satisfactory than any of the previously published histories of the Saviour's life.

That this preface to his first book applies—with proper modifications—to his second book may be taken for granted, and needs no further consideration. The difference in historical character between the two books lies mainly in this, that in the later half of the second book either he was himself the eye-witness for part of the narrative, or he had long been in other parts in most intimate relations with several of the actors in the scenes described. But in the first half of this second book he was hardly in such a good position as in the first book. The events described in the first book had overshadowed in public estimation those described in the opening chapters of the second book, both at the moment when they were occurring, and in subsequent history. Peter and the rest of the Twelve, and of the whole Church, had their attention so occupied with, and so concentrated on the past, viz., the life and, above all, the death of Jesus, that the present sank into insignificance as being merely an evanescent state, and only preparatory for an impending transformation. No one seems to have thought that this

present time was worthy of formal historical registration. All lived much in the past and the future.

It is not meant by these words that there was no contemporary writing of events in the first score of years after the Resurrection. To any one who takes into account the prevalence of writing at that time in ordinary life and about everyday matters, such an assertion would be incredible in respect of a congregation consisting of many thousands of persons, a congregation which had attained already, at an early point in this period, a high state of organization, with a church fund managed by a responsible board of seven officials (*septem viri mensis ordinandis*, as they might suitably have been termed in Latin), with a superior board of twelve officials, and an elaborate system of alimentation (as the Romans would have called it), i.e. charitable distribution of food to the poor on fixed principles and in a systematic way.

The more closely the history of this first period is scanned, the more striking are the evidences of method and order and permanence in the Church constitution. It was no collection of individuals sitting in momentary expectation of the Coming of the Lord and the end of all earthly things, as many modern devotees of the Eschatological theory love to describe it. It was a firm and definite organization, resting on a strong foundation in the past, and looking forward to a mighty future, fully conscious of the inevitable truth of the Saviour's prophecies, that this organization, as yet confined to one city, was to extend over the whole earth by steps and in ways which they did not venture even to think about, much less to form plans for realizing.

If this had been a congregation of mere eschatological enthusiasts and dreamers, the eagerness with which they were ready to examine dispassionately, and to accept, if

approved, every new step in method would be quite inconceivable and psychologically impossible. Enthusiasts are only too apt to be one-sided : they see their own method with so single and concentrated intensity of gaze that they can see nothing else which differs from it. But it was not the church officially, or its leaders, which made the great steps. Stephen, who found the church at his appointment wearing the appearance of a mere Hebrew sect, commended by the Pharisees as an interesting class which possibly even might have originated through "the counsel and work of God," and who burst these fetters and provoked the bitter hostility of the patriots and Pharisees, was not one of the Twelve, though he was of the Seven. But the Church went with him, and adopted his methods, and regarded his action as epoch-making. Philip, again, had no authorization from the Church, and no commission from the Twelve, when he brought the whole of Samaria into the Church. The spread of the Church to Phoenicia, and to Antioch and north Syria generally, was equally unauthorized ; and was not even engineered by any of the Seven, but only by chance missionaries. But none of these steps were regarded with any prejudice : all were estimated fairly and dispassionately on their merits. No question was asked except one : was the Spirit of God in the work ? Whither the Spirit led, the approval of the Church followed. Such openness, such utter freedom from prejudice, such perfect readiness to learn, to advance, to absorb new ideas, such willingness on the part of the older teachers to listen to younger teachers and to change their own old ways of thinking—cannot be found in a mere body of enthusiastic dreamers about a mistaken eschatological idea. It is only those who have a firm grip of the truth that are able to learn and to change. He who has the truth knows that he has only got a small part of it,

and longs for more, and will do anything, and learn from any one, if only a better and fuller hold of the truth can thereby be attained.

Moreover, an eschatological idea cannot conquer the world, since it is in itself final and cannot stoop to learn (for to learn is, with its devotees, to unlearn). Hence the eschatological mirage has produced this great evil in modern scholarship, that it tends to cause an exaggerated idea of the gap which divided Paul from the Twelve. Paul was one of the outsiders who developed the ideas of the Church, and was accepted by its leaders, though not immediately by the whole Church.

But on this we must not dwell. The purpose of these words is to insist on the evidences of permanent organization in the first Church, and to infer therefrom that there must have been a certain degree of writing involved, of reports, of registration of facts, in order that organization should be carried into practical effect. Every one who learns what were the methods of that period, how administration was carried on, how numberless little religious societies in almost every city of the Graeco-Roman world had their own special assemblies, their assemblies, their officials, their decrees, and their registered acts, knows that something of this kind must have existed in the great assembly of the Church of Jerusalem. To take here only one example—the one which seems to be the clearest—I cannot for a moment doubt that, when the apostles “heard that Samaria had received the word of God,” they heard it by written report from Philip, and not by vague report or by a mere oral message sent up to Jerusalem by Philip through some other person.

This consideration places the early history of the Church on a firmer basis. Yet the *Acta*, as recorded, would be only official, and would be confined to official things, and

would not contain much of the most permanently interesting facts of Church development—since those were, as we have said, unofficial—until the wider development of the Church beyond Jerusalem had occurred. Moreover, it is highly probable that the earlier *Acta* may have perished in the great persecution when the Church was scattered after the murder of Stephen. That this was so is suggested both by the general character of the early chapters, and by one special detail. The order of the lists of names in i. 13, vi. 5 is certainly unofficial, the order of the names in xiii. 1 is apparently official. Assuming for the moment this statement—to which we shall return—we may still infer that, in a community where *Acta* had existed, there was a more orderly and trustworthy tradition, even after the destruction of the *Acta*, than in an unorganized multitude of enthusiasts. That orderly discipline was a marked feature of the primitive Church is shown, not merely by the facts of organization already mentioned, and by the whole spirit of those early chapters of Acts, but in a striking way by the word used in vi. 7: “A great multitude of priests were obedient to the Faith.”¹ A rule and a discipline is here clearly implied, comparable to the rule and discipline of the Levitical system.

In view of these facts regarding the ancient *Acta*² of the primitive Church, may we not ask whether the name of the book in later time, when it was separated from the Third Gospel, does not represent a certain view: viz., that this was the record of the *Acta* of the Church as expressed through its governing body, the Apostles. When in viii. 2 it is said that the Christians were all scattered abroad, except the apostles, this cannot fairly be pressed to imply that all the Twelve remained in Jerusalem (as it often is): the meaning is merely that the government and the governing

¹ ὁμήκουον τῇ πίστει.

² πράξεις.

council of the Church continued to be there, though quite possibly some of them may have been absent for a short time, or even for a long time.

We have to ask first whether these opening twelve chapters are based on an oral or on a written source; and secondly, how far the author in each incident and episode depended on some single source or combined at his own discretion information derived from various sources.

In order to make the general drift of the following remarks clearer, it may be well to state at the outset that they start with the opinion that (except perhaps in some small parts) the authority was not written, but that the author used the oral reports of several different persons and the current tradition of the Palestinian Church as he heard it at an early date (*viz.*, A.D. 57-59). We should not assume that in regard to any episode he confined himself to one single source of information. On the contrary, the analogy of many passages in his Gospel, in which he used Mark as his source, suggests that along with the main source he would probably work in details gathered from other authorities.¹ If he did so even when he was using a written source, he was likely to follow the same practice even more freely when he was using oral information.

The best method is to consider one by one the passages from which some hints as to his sources and his method can be gathered.

Instead of going through the opening chapters of Acts regularly from the beginning, I propose at present to set down, in a somewhat haphazard way, some notes that have suggested themselves on various passages. While the evidence is not sufficient to give certainty, it is cumulative in character. Each item stands by itself, and does not depend on the others. Hence even a mistake in estimat-

¹ See *Luke the Physician*, p. 43 f., and other parts of the first article.

ing the value of any one item does not diminish the value of the others.

In the first eleven verses of the Acts the opening three are introductory. Thereafter the scene of 4-11 would naturally be understood to be in Jerusalem: "He being assembled together with them, commanded that they should not depart from Jerusalem": this statement, indeed, does not prove where the scene was laid, but certainly suggests the city. Luke, however, did not assume that this was so: he takes the scene as laid on the Mount of Olives, as in his Gospel xxiv. 50 f., and therefore he continues in verse 12, "Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the Mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey." The explanation as to locality is designed by the author to connect the preceding narrative with the other account of the same scene as given in the Gospel; and the explanation as to distance is intended for the benefit of a public ignorant of Jerusalem, i.e. Theophilus and the congregations in Graeco-Roman cities. The two accounts rest on different authorities, and are taken by Luke as equally good (for it would be absurd to suppose that the later statement in Acts is a correction of the earlier in the Gospel), though they differ in details. This difference in details cannot have escaped Luke's attention; he was certainly aware of it, just as he was evidently aware of the differences in details between the three accounts of the conversion of St. Paul, which he records in Acts. He deliberately leaves these differences on record; these are the statements of his several authorities (in one case two statements made by the same authority, viz., Paul, at different times). If he leaves such differences designedly in his history, his reason must be that they were entirely unimportant in his estimation and for his purpose. He thought of the edification and instruction of the congrega-

tions in the west and the Aegean lands. He wished to concentrate their attention on the spiritual facts and truths, not to present a history for scholars and critics to pick to pieces. And, in the larger point of view, he is right. These differences are not in essential details. They are only in the emblematic or symbolical expression of superhuman and spiritual realities in the imperfect language of men. It is inevitable that the eternal realities, which stand outside of the fetters of time and space relations, the same always and everywhere, should be conceived and represented in different ways by different minds, and that none of these conceptions and representations should be completely sufficient, or absolutely true.!

The supposition that the author of this history was, through defects of education or intellect, incapable of perceiving the differences in details between the different accounts which he records—a supposition which was, and is still, the platform for some modern writers to build theories upon, and which, when I was young and untrained in historical study, was sufficient for me—must be rejected as entirely inconsistent with the character and standard of the history as a whole. Those for whom that supposition is sufficient are not likely to agree with any historical judgment expressed by the present writer, or to read the present article. For our purpose, the important point to observe is that such differences indicate change from one authority to another in Luke's history, and combine with many other facts to prove that (as he himself tells us in his introduction) his work was composite, bringing together the evidence of many witnesses, all, in his estimation, witnesses of the highest character.

The next section, verses 13-26, contains at least three separate or separable portions. (1) We have in verse 13 the list of the Eleven who "abode" in an upper room—

a remarkable expression. Following this, we should rather have looked for some account of an incident that occurred in the upper chamber. But this incidental detail regarding the abode of the Eleven is introduced for no ulterior purpose. It is simply a little piece of information which came from Luke's informant and has survived to us in his History. It marks the original witness, and it marks the oral character of the source at this point. Luke had talked with one of those who remembered the upper room, because he, or she, had sat in it.

It is difficult to feel clear about the relation of verse 14 to verse 13. Are we to understand that the women and the brothers of Jesus also remained in the upper room, in which case the room is mentioned only as the place in which they assembled every day? Or are we to suppose that the apostles remained in the upper room as a body continuously,¹ waiting for the fulfilment of the Promise, while the others are mentioned as being in less continuous association with them? In a case where there is such a difficulty in understanding the connexion between two statements in Luke, we may always reasonably suspect that two separate courses of information are placed side by side. Where there was a single source for a narrative, the logical sequence in the thought is not doubtful; but where two separate sources are placed side by side, however good each was by itself, doubt might arise as to the relation between them.

Westcott and Hort rightly see that this enumeration in verses 13 f. of the earliest Church is broadly distinguished from the following episode, and mark it accordingly in their text.

(2) We have next the general assembly, the statement

¹ That, of course, would not imply that they were there without any temporary absence.

of their number, 120, and the speech of Peter. We can hardly suppose that this meeting of so large an assembly occurred in the upper room of verse 13; and accordingly Luke must have understood that the apostles lived and waited on in the room, as an abode in the city where they were all strangers, but that a special assembly was held elsewhere of the whole Church for the purpose of filling up the vacancy caused by the death of Judas. Here, again the difficulty in the connexion with the preceding verses rouses the thought of a change in the authority.

That the authority for the speech was not a document written down in this exact form at the time seems highly probable and almost practically certain. How far the speech is due to Luke's editing of an account given to him might be reasonably discussed. The choice of the expressions, "this diaconate" or "ministry," and "his bishopric" or "office," and "this diaconate and apostleship," seems dictated by following history, when the offices of deacon and bishop were important, and it was desired to connect them with the original organization of the earliest Church. The earliest chapters of Acts are full of details, showing that the author had clearly before his mind the important subject of the growth of organization and administrative machinery in the Church. We remember that in the Philippian Church bishops and deacons are mentioned as the only classes of officials,¹ and that Luke was closely associated with the congregation in Philippi. We observe also that, although the Seven are never in the Acts called deacons, or thought of as deacons, but are regarded more as supplementary collaborators and assistants of the Twelve, yet the noun *diakonia*, ministry, and the verb *diakonein*, to serve, are employed with regard to the duty for which they were appointed; they constitute an inter-

¹ Philippians i. 1.

mediate stage in the development of the fuller organization as it existed in Philippi (and doubtless elsewhere) about A.D. 60.

Moreover, the speech of Peter, verses 16-22, is awkwardly composed partly of his sentiments, and partly of explanatory particulars, which were quite needless in such a meeting, and which interrupt the run of the speech. The story of the death of Judas was not required among those who were familiar with events that had occurred in their midst only a few days previously; and it is one that obviously grew up at a later date in Church tradition. Luke inserts it as an explanation required by his readers, without intending to imply that Peter explained the meaning of the name *Aeldama* or rehearsed the details to his audience. But, just as in Galatians ii. 14-21, it is impossible to tell where the speech of Paul to Peter ends and the address to the Galatians is resumed, so it is difficult to tell in Acts i. 16-21 where the interposed explanation ends and the speech of Peter is resumed. This is a fault of composition, but it is one into which Luke might be betrayed as readily as Paul was. This may, perhaps, be reckoned as one of the places in Acts, where the final revision of the author is lacking, as it is in parts of chapter xvi.

(3) The explanatory interpolation in Peter's speech, verses 18, 19, is an addition by Luke for the benefit of his own readers, difficult to connect with the speech, and derived by him from a different source, doubtless oral.

In all these parts, it is not easy to see any sign of a written source. In some cases the oral character of the authority seems evident, and only in the list of the Eleven might one be disposed to think of a written document; but this document was at least not one written down at the moment, for it shows clear signs of the influence of the immediately subsequent history. This is an important and compli-

cated matter which needs larger and more careful treatment.

As to the speech of Peter, it is so much looser in construction and so much less important in its bearing on the development of doctrine than most of the other speeches in the early part of Acts, that it stands apart from them, and we may doubt whether Luke had more than a mere general indication of the purport of his speech in the information that he had received.

The order of enumeration of the Twelve has been discussed by Rev. Cuthbert Lattey in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, 1908, pp. 107-116 ; and this article must be studied by every one who approaches the question of these lists.

The parallel between the order in the lists of the Twelve (rather, of the Eleven) and of the Seven in Acts is striking : in each case the order is that of historic importance during the apostolic period, as it appears in the chapters that follow. In the one case Peter and John come first, in the other Stephen and Philip. It is no accident that dictates this order : these were the members of the two colleges that impressed themselves most deeply on the first steps in the development of the Church, as it is described stage after stage in the Acts. Luke places at the head of his list those who play the most noteworthy part in the earlier chapters of Acts, though not in the later chapters. In the later chapters, James appears more prominently than John, or even than Peter ; and the order of importance then is, as in St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians ii. 9, James and Peter and John. But at first Peter and John stood out prominently ; and the list is arranged accordingly in i. 13.

Mr. Lattey has shown that this order is an innovation in the Acts ; and he has traced in a convincing way the principle underlying the varying order of enumeration in the Synoptic Gospels : the earliest being that of Matthew,

the intermediate one Mark's, and the latest Luke's,¹ while the list in Acts belongs to a later period. The fact that the order in Luke's Gospel differs from that which he gives in the Acts, taken in conjunction with the other fact that the order in the Acts is that of importance in the earlier, but not in the later chapters of that book, makes it probable that the order in i. 13 was not Luke's choice, but was given him by some authority on whom he depended in that part of his work. The only alternative is to suppose a quite remarkable attention, on Luke's part, to historical accuracy in the minutest matters of detail and arrangement, so that even in the same list of names he varied the order of enumeration in different parts of his work to suit the varying importance of the personages at different stages in the development of history. The latter supposition seems improbable; and we must therefore conclude that popular estimation varied the order of enumeration at different periods in accordance with order of importance.² This variation, then, was taken by Luke from the different authorities whom he used, and was retained by him as characteristic; but one cannot take these authorities as official lists, for official lists would naturally preserve the same order always. Only in unofficial enumerations would the order vary according to varying temporary importance.

The list of the Seven cannot safely be supposed to be

¹ This priority is characteristic of Matthew's list, and its character as a list of pairs suits well the theory as to the contemporary registration in the common non-Markan Source of Matthew and Luke stated in the paper called *The Oldest Written Gospel* (published second in *Luke the Physician*). Luke used that Source, but Matthew's Gospel is founded on it.

² As Mr. Lattay observes and has been often pointed out by older writers on the same subject, these lists of the Twelve must always be taken as arranged in three groups of four; and the variation is only within each group, while the groups are permanent and unchanging.

an official list, determined by order of precedence in selection. It is improbable that the two first in precedence at the original appointment should also be the two who subsequently signalized themselves first and second in actual history. We must, therefore, regard the list as representing the way in which the Seven were arranged in the popular memory, i. e., in the early Church tradition.

Moreover, among the Seven, we observe that the last was a proselyte—Nicholas of Antioch. This would be in itself consistent with either supposition. The proselyte was probably chosen last; and he would also in Palestine naturally be remembered and thought of always in the last place after all the Jews. But it may safely be concluded that there must have already been other proselytes in the Church at this early time, and that Nicholas was chosen to look after them; for it may be regarded as certain that Jews would not be very ready to select an alien, a converted pagan (even although he had adopted the whole Jewish Law), to look after their food. Now, if one of the Seven was chosen to look after a particular section of the Church, it is natural to suppose that the other six had also each a special sphere of duty. Inasmuch as the apostles, in proposing the appointment, mentioned the number seven, and as it is improbable that they merely pitched on this as an old sacred number, we infer that there were seven obvious spheres of duty, and that the intention was to choose one man who should be responsible for knowing the needs and deserts of the poor and the widows in each sphere.¹ The sphere of duty which fell to Stephen may

¹ The distribution of the Church fund for charity, which the Seven had to regulate, could not be fairly performed unless they acquired a correct estimate of the needs of all persons within the section of the congregation for which they were responsible. Volunteers had previously done the work of distribution, with the apostles over them, in a vague, undefined way. Those who had signalized themselves by energy

probably be gathered from vi. 9: his action as a teacher would naturally be exercised most in his own sphere of duty. The other five spheres of duty cannot even be guessed at. It is, of course, quite conceivable that Luke knew what they were, but did not think them worth recording; but the more probable supposition is that the official record had perished, and that he knew neither the official order of precedence in the election, nor the several spheres of duty allotted to each.

On the contrary, in xiii. 1, the order is not determined by importance in subsequent history, but differs notably from it. It does, however, correspond to the order of dignity and precedence at the moment, so far as we can gather what that order would be. First comes Barnabas, as one who was sent with commission from Jerusalem, and thus represented the supreme authority of the entire Christian Church. Next come three persons who presumably had been among the founders of the Antiochian branch of the Church. Last is Saul, a late comer, who had been brought in quite recently by Barnabas as a helper, and who had already signalized himself so much as to have been sent on a special mission to Jerusalem as colleague to Barnabas. He had, therefore, gained a place among the five outstanding leaders in Antioch; but old connexion with the work still dictated an order of precedence, which put him only in the fifth place.

Here we have, evidently, the fact of the moment permanently recorded: in other words, we have the official list as it stood about the year 46 A.D., unaffected by subsequent changes in importance among the five. Totally different is it in the case of the lists of the Twelve and of the Seven,

and ability and devotion (vi. 3) were now chosen as the Seven; but that does not imply the end of voluntary work. Rather, the voluntary work still continued, but it was now under responsible supervision.

which are given according to importance in the historical future: this points to the tradition generally current in the primitive Church' as the source of Luke's information, while the accuracy in detail points to a very early tradition, which had not grown faint and vague through lapse of years.

Hence it is natural to conclude that he gathered this information when he was in Palestine in A.D. 57 to 59, partly from oral information, partly from documents of the period after the first great persecution and dispersion. The order of the Twelve is not that of A.D. 57, or even of A.D. 45, when James is regarded as the head of the Church and the one who finally utters the decision of the whole body. But it is the order of the first ten years or so after the Resurrection,¹ and to this time belongs some written list, or some list preserved in the memory of a person whose activity lay in that period, which was Luke's authority here. The place of honour given to James probably began in the period when the Twelve began to scatter over the world, and to give themselves largely to foreign mission work: James was then entrusted with the leading position in Jerusalem, and it will be necessary to allude to the possibility that he is the Apostle James, son of Alphaeus, placed in this position of dignity as the eldest cousin ("brother") of Jesus. This period may be assumed as beginning with the mission of Peter to Samaria, a year or two after the death of Stephen. Peter, who had hitherto taken the lead in Jerusalem, was henceforth probably much engaged in foreign work; in Samaria, in Palestine generally (ix. 32), in Antioch (Gal. ii. 11), and (as I have argued elsewhere) in Corinth and Rome as early as A.D. 54.

¹ Making allowance for the old-standing division into three groups of four, which belonged to the lifetime of Christ, and persisted for some time afterwards, but which was not likely to remain in permanent effect so late as 57 or even 45.

Opinion as to sources in this passage depends largely on the disputed question as to the last group of apostles, James, son of Alphaeus, Simon, and Judas. Are these to be identified with the three "brothers of the Lord," who in that case must be His cousins? The most serious difficulty which that theory of identification has to contend with lies in the present passage, where the brothers of the Lord are so pointedly distinguished from the apostles. If three of the four brothers are already mentioned as the third group of the Eleven, why should Luke add that along with the Eleven there were assembled also the women and Mary, the mother of the Lord, and his brothers?

Suppose we assume that the identification is correct, how can we account for such a double mention of what is almost the same group? It cannot be thought that Luke could have been ignorant of the identity between the last three of the Eleven with three of the four brothers who had met along with the Eleven? Nor does it seem sufficient to say with Mr. Lattey that Luke would probably not have mentioned the four here, had it not been that Josès, the last of the four, was excluded from the number of the apostles. The difficulty appears to me so great as to be almost insuperable, except possibly on the supposition that here we have a case where two authorities have been amalgamated, and that in the amalgamation Luke was led into a careless form of expression by the analogy of a current way of speaking, which is exemplified in 1 Corinthians ix. 5, "the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas."

I should not consider that it was justifiable even to mention such a theory as an explanation, were it not that the second half of the chapter, verses 13-26, has long appeared to me apart from, and previous to this question, to be put together with less than Luke's usual skill from more than one source of information.

I do not profess to be able to analyse the first chapter, and divide it between its different authorities. It is not a case where we have to distinguish between formal written sources. I believe that all the sources of Luke's information here were oral (except possibly the list of the Eleven). A writer like Luke, catching up the words of several informants, welds them afterwards into a narrative, in which you may feel vaguely the difference of the parts, but in which the points of juncture cannot be precisely indicated.

As regards verses 13 and 14, we are placed in the position of choosing between two alternatives, one a very simple and easy one, the other a complicated and difficult one. If the "brethren of the Lord" are a group different from the apostles, the list of those who meet in the upper chamber, a sort of inner circle consisting of those most closely connected with Jesus during his lifetime, would appear to be homogeneous and derived from one authority older than Luke. That is a natural and tempting view, but not a necessary view. If the "brethren (i.e. cousins) of the Lord" are identical with the third group of the Eleven, we must suppose that the list of those present in the upper room was made up by Luke himself from two or more different sources of information, and that he put them together rather awkwardly. It is unsafe to assume that the simple must be preferred to the complicated view; the latter has some notable advantages, but also has to contend with some other difficulties; and the question is one that cannot here be treated completely.

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(To be continued.)