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THE ESCHATOLOGY OF THE GOSPELS.

II.

VARIOUS TENDENCIES IN THE TRANSMISSION OF THE GOSPEL.

THE ESCHATOLOGICAL STOCK OF JESUS-TRADITION.

HAVING defined the problem as it stands to-day in our first lecture, we now go on to try to settle first what is the Gospel-tradition about eschatology, and what measure of certainty we have to make out our Lord's own words and meaning.

I.

There is not only some vague possibility of alterations brought into the Gospel in the course of its transmission, but there is plenty of evidence that sayings of Jesus were coloured afterwards, and this at first [A] by eschatological additions and changes. We may confine our investigation to three instances :—

1. The saying against those who say " Lord, Lord " is given by Matthew vii. 21 and Luke vi. 46, both passages belonging to the sermon on the mount. In Matthew vii. 22, 23 herewith is combined another saying, which is found in Luke xiii. 25-27 in quite a different context. We are not concerned here with this second saying—we may remark by the way that Luke has evidently the original form, not only in the shape of the parable, but also in the features claimed by the unfortunate people outdoors, which are with Luke rather ordinary experiences of Jesus' lifetime while Matthew puts in extraordinary experiences of the apostolic age ;—at all events, this second word is eschatological in its substance : it deals with the last judgment. Not so the first saying ; as it runs in

Luke, "*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*" there is nothing in it, which tends towards eschatology. Now there can be hardly any doubt that Luke has the original form of this saying, and that the Matthaean form, "*Not every one that says unto me, Lord, Lord, SHALL ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven,*" with its unmistakable eschatological colouring, strengthened by the introduction of "*in that day*" in the next sentence, is due to the combination with that other saying. It is a well-known feature in the composition of our First Gospel—and we shall see other instances of the same immediately—that words are brought into a closer connexion by conforming them one to the other.

The priority of the non-eschatological form of this saying is supported (1) by the parable which follows immediately in Luke and only a few verses later on in Matthew as well in quite the same form, so that we may trace it back to Q, the parable, I mean, of the house built on the rock or upon the sand, a parable which is not likely to be taken in an eschatological sense; and (2) by the comparison of another saying which has much affinity to it, Jesus' saying about His relations: "*For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother*" (Mark iii. 35; cp. Matt. xii. 50, Luke viii. 21). It is not said: I will, at the day of judgment, declare him to be my brother, etc., but "*he is.*" So it is a purely moral statement without the peculiar taste of eschatology. And this is all the more remarkable as it is found in the Marcan tradition.

2. The next instance of this kind of transformation I find in the parables of the tares and of the net, forming originally a couple of parables as so many others, now separated in Matthew xiii. 24–30 (with an additional interpretation in v. 36–43) and xiii. 47–50. The evangelist sees in both parables a description of the last judgement, when "*the*

Son of Man shall send forth his angels and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire, there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." "The harvest is the end of the world," xiii. 39, this is the main point of Matthew's interpretation, from which all the parable is to be explained. But take the parables by themselves, and you will see that there is no necessity for this interpretation. Jesus is not describing a single act but something which occurs to men at any time. As sowing and harvest are repeated annually and the gathering and sifting of fishes is the fisherman's daily work, so it is some rule for daily life which Jesus put into His disciples' mind by telling them these parables. Many interpreters since the time of Tertullian have found here some rule of ecclesiastical conduct: the Church as a *corpus mixtum* has to contain sinners as well as saints until the day of God's judgement. But this is neither the meaning of the evangelist, who in his allegorical interpretation makes the field signify the world, not the Church, and neglects the servants of the householder altogether, the problem Matthew is interested in being not the composition of the Christian Church and the conduct of its leaders on account of bad members, but the situation of Christianity in the midst of the world of unbelievers, a close parallel to John xvii. 11, 14: "*These are in the world,*" "*not of the world.*" Nor is it the original meaning of the parable, this giving merely the general moral rule: "Do not put in your hands before things are ready; everything will, at the proper time, be revealed for what it is; leave it to God's care—the same rule as we have it in the famous counsel of Gamaliel, Acts v. 35 ff.

3. The main instance of this intrusion of eschatology into the Gospel-tradition is the great eschatological sermon

found in Mark xiii., Matthew xxiv. and Luke xxi. It was in the year 1864 that Colani and Weizsäcker, one independent of the other, came to the conclusion that this is not the report of an original sermon of Jesus, but a composite work, mixing original sayings of Christ with parts of a little apocalypse, as to the origin of which there was and is still some difference of opinion, some scholars maintaining with Weizsäcker, that it was a Jewish document, while the majority agrees in acknowledging the Christian character and is inclined to identify this little apocalyptic fly-leaf with the revelation spoken of by Eusebius, *H.E.* iii. v. 3, as having caused the Christians to move from the Holy City before its fall. As reconstructions of this little apocalypse are easily accessible, e.g., in Professor Charles' book on Eschatology, I may confine myself to a few remarks : (1) As we have only Mark (Matthew borrowing from Mark¹ and Luke colouring Mark's narrative), it is impossible to reconstruct the actual words of Mark's source ; it contained probably verses 7, 8, 14-20, 24-27 ; but it is uncertain if some words, such as verses 15 and 18, are perhaps additions by Mark, and, on the other hand, if we have to add verses 21-23 and perhaps also verse 30. (2) We find described only a few remarkable features : in the first part, the beginnings of horrors, a general motion and revolution among the peoples and all kinds of frightful events ; in the second part, the culmination of horrors, something mysterious, Mark using the same words as Daniel, but contrary to the Greek gender as a masculine, showing thereby that he thinks of an individual, some Antichrist. With the notion of supreme horror are combined two different ideas of getting out of them : a *local* one—flying into the mountains, and this is the pet point of the little apocalypse,

¹ I do not think that two or three instances, given by B. Weiss and others, are enough to prove that Matthew had independent knowledge of that apocalypse.

marked by calling the attention of the reader (you see it is not a sermon of Jesus); and on the other hand a *temporal* one—shortening of the time by the powerful interfering of the Lord (you see again, it is not Jesus who is speaking here); and in the third part, through a terrible motion of all the elements, the glorious advent of the Messiah. There is in all this, not even in the last part, nothing of peculiar Christian notions which we ought to trace back to Jesus Himself. They are common apocalyptic ideas. And yet, all is so short, so brief in this little apocalypse, nothing unnecessary, only main points. This is, I believe, the proof-mark of early Christian in comparison with late Jewish literature, according to Wellhausen's well-known remark regarding the Gospel and rabbinic literature: that all that is in the Gospel is to be found there too, yes, all, and much more. It is especially the lack of all national and political elements in this much-condensed little apocalypse which makes it quite clear—as far as I may be able to pronounce judgement—that the conception is an early Christian one, using the materials of late Jewish eschatology in its own way. (3) The very fact that Mark could give this little apocalypse as a sermon of Jesus, taken together with this other fact, that several words of the apocalypse have parallels in well-attested sayings of Jesus¹ and that the sayings combined with the apocalypse in Mark xiii. bear nearly the same stamp,² proves that the main ideas of this little fly-leaf are not far removed from Jesus' own opinions. But the fact remains, that it is an eschatological addition to the original Jesus-tradition.

These three instances of alteration by intrusion of eschatology could easily be multiplied. But if one were to conclude

¹ Cf. Mark xiii. 15, 16 with Luke xvii. 31; Mark xiii. 21-23 with Luke xvii. 23; Matt. xxiv. 26; especially Mark xiii. 26 with viii. 38 and xiv. 62.

² So Mark xiii. 6 is nearly identical with xiii. 21 f. = Luke xvii. 23.

that all eschatological material found actually in the Gospel was but later addition or transformation, one would be wide of the mark. False generalisation is the worst of all faults in method. Plenty of eschatological sayings remain, which must come from original tradition.

Before starting, however, our proper investigation, let us turn to another form of alteration [*B*], eschatological utterances of Jesus being transfigured into historical predictions—especially by Luke.

1. There is, e.g., Christ's saying in regard to Jerusalem, taken evidently from Q, both in Matthew xxiii. 37–39 and Luke xiii. 34–35. The closing words: “*And I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,*” are capable of a twofold interpretation, either eschatological or—as they recur at Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem—historical. Now Luke placing the saying long before this entrance, understood probably, and liked his readers to understand, in the latter sense: an historical prediction of the Messianic entrance: whereas Matthew, recording the word only after this entrance, took it evidently in an eschatological sense. And he was right in his understanding, as far as I can see.

2. A similar instance of transformation is given in Luke's reproduction of Mark xiii., the already mentioned synoptic apocalypse: “*The abomination of desolation,*” spoken of by Mark and Matthew as *standing where HE ought not* (or *in the holy place*, Matthew) is paraphrased by Luke xxi. 20 in the following way: “*But when ye see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that her DESOLATION is at hand.*” It is the same word *ἐρήμωσις*, used here instead of some more usual expressions for destruction, as *καταστροφή*, *καθαίρεισις*, *καταβολή*, *ἀνατροπή*, which betrays Luke borrowing from the Danielic formula in Mark and taking the mysterious

expression in the sense of some prophetic utterances.¹ In this way he substitutes definite historical prediction for an obscure eschatological prophecy.²

If this be granted we have to reckon with the possibility that the number of eschatological sayings found in the earliest tradition has undergone diminution as well as enrichment by later alterations.

II.

We now proceed to ask how much there is of assured eschatological matter in the sayings of our Lord.

1. To begin with the main object of His preaching; the Kingdom of God is in its origin undoubtedly an entirely eschatological notion. It is not God's government over the world, not His ruling His people, as usually in the Psalter, when there is said, "God rules," "God is King," but it is a peculiar estate of things when God is reigning without any opposition, neither by man, nor by the evil spirits. Now as John the Baptist (Matt. iii. 2) preaches that this Kingdom of God is at hand,³ so the preaching of Jesus begins with the very same announcement: *the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand* (Mark i. 15; cp. Matt. iv. 17). We have perhaps a

¹ *ἐρημωσις* is found in LXX=תְּרַחֵם in Jer. vii. 34, xxii. 5, xxxii. 18, li. 6, 22, but connected with γῆ, in connexion with Jerusalem in Daniel ix. 2. Josephus uses *ἄλωσις* B. J. I. i. 4 (10); VI. x, 1 (441), sometimes *κατασκαφή*, *ibid.* VI. x. 1 (440). For other equivalents see *Corpus glossariorum latinorum* ed. Loewe et Goetz, vi. 333, s.v. *destructio*.

² Another view has been proposed recently by my friend, Prof. F. Spitta; in a suggestive study, "Die grosse eschatologische Rede Jesu" in *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.*, 1909, 348-401; retracting his own former hypothesis of a Jewish apocalypse inserted in Matt. xxiv., Spitta maintains that Luke gives the original form of Jesus' answer to His disciples, the genuine prediction of the destruction of the temple being changed in Caligula's time into the apocalyptic notion known from Daniel.

³ We may perhaps be not allowed to take these words as a genuine rendering of John's message, because in Mark i. 4, 8 and Luke iii. 3, 7 ff. as well as in Matt. iii. 7 ff. he is represented rather as announcing an almost severe judgement. But this has to be taken only as the beginning or rather the means of making way for the kingdom of God.

still better instance of this in the Lord's prayer : if Jesus makes His disciples pray : "*Thy kingdom come,*" then it is not to be taken as already come but as to be hoped and prayed for. The next petition, given only by Matthew, "*Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth,*" makes it clear what the kingdom of God was understood to be : a moral estate of mankind wherein God's will was done without exception, without any opposition by personal sin or by contrary forces in society. The Kingdom of God, as it would be conceived by those people who heard Jesus preaching, was to be something most desirable, an estate of complete happiness, something that was worthy the hardest efforts and even the greatest loss ; you ought to give everything for it, even your own life. But at the same time people would understand that it was something to be looked for which you cannot make by your own efforts, but you have to wait for it until God brings it about.

2. Now the main question is for us as it was for the men of that time : What was the relation of Jesus to this Kingdom of God? Except two or three passages which we are to consider later on, He never says that He is bringing it into being, but He speaks of Himself as of the Son of Man, a title which, as we know already, had a Messianic content ; He never says directly that He is the Messiah ; He even declines to be called the Son of David. And yet His whole appearance, the way He manifests Himself and the authoritative tone which He adopts show that He is the very kind of man to proclaim Himself the Messiah. And at last, when He is set before the High Court of the people and asked in the most solemn way by the High Priest upon His claim : "*Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed ?*" then He said : "*I am, and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven* (Mark xiv. 61, 62). This is an unmistakable expression of His claim for Messiahship. And even if we would prefer the form in

which Matthew xxvi. 64 puts the words : “ *Thou hast said ; nevertheless I say unto you, henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven,* ” we ought to say that it is a form of restrained assertion which we may paraphrase : Yes, but it is not I who have used the actual word, but thou hast used it.

Now it seems to me to be impossible to maintain, as some scholars do, that Jesus denies His Messiahship altogether (so Dalman, Merx), or that He makes a distinction between Himself and the Messiah to be expected according to the words of Psalm cx. 1 and Daniel vii. 13. With more probability it has been said that He claims Messiahship not as His present state, but only for a future time. He is not the Messiah, but He will be the Messiah. This notion of a Messiah to come, first put forth, so far as I know, by Joh. Weiss, has met with an almost unusual degree of assent. It has been accepted by H. Holtzmann, A. Harnack,¹ H. Monnier² and many others. Indeed, there are some difficulties in the life of Jesus which would find the easiest explanation by assuming that Jesus, persuaded as He was that He was the Son of God, the chosen one to bring salvation, nevertheless, conceived Himself not to be the Messiah, but only to be destined to be the Messiah in a later time : *Messias destinatus, Messias futurus*. His appearance, resembling rather a rabbi or at most a prophet, was so far from the popular notion of the Messiah, who should be a glorious and mighty king, destroying all his enemies by means of his power, that we easily could imagine Him taking His present appearance only as a preparatory one, His office being to prepare the people for His coming in glory as the Messiah. So He would have been His own forerunner, His own John the Baptist. But this was not His view, neither was it the opinion of His

¹ *Sprüche und Reden Jesu* (= Beiträge II.), 1907, 169.

² *La mission historique de Jésus*, 1906, 64.

judges. The question laid before Him by the High Priest was, "*Art thou the Christ the Son of the Blessed?*" And Jesus answered, "*I am.*" He did not tell them: Not yet, but if you will bring Me to death, then I shall be it. He simply replied, "*I am, and you will see.*" The condemnation by the High Council as well as the accusation brought before the Roman Governor gives, I think, sufficient evidence that His claim on Messiahship was understood not as that of a Messiah *destinatus*, but as that of a present Messiah. It is just the contrast between this claim and the very appearance of this humble prisoner brought before him which puzzles Pilate so that he would have refused to execute the sentence, except for fear of the Jews, who frightened him by the Emperor's wrath. The title on the Cross is by itself a convincing argument against this modern theory of a Messiahship of the future.

3. It is quite certain, I should think, that Jesus claimed to be the Messiah. But it is equally certain that He speaks of His coming again in glory and power. If one would reject the testimony of Mark xiv. 62 pleading that there was none of the disciples present at the trial, one must accept the combined testimony of other utterances. When speaking about the necessity of confession he says: "*For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man also shall be ashamed of him, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels*" (Mark viii. 38; cf. Matt. xvi. 27; Luke ix. 26). When asked by James and John to give them the places of honour on His right and on His left *in His glory*, as Mark x. 37, or *in His kingdom*, as Matthew xx. 21 puts the question, He does not reject this notion, but only makes a very hard condition, and refers the right of bestowing those places to the Father (Mark x. 35-40; Matt. xx. 20-23).¹

¹ This has a remarkable parallel in the promise given to the twelve that they shall take part in the messianic judgement sitting on twelve thrones (Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 29, 30 [Q?]).

The warnings against false Messiahs (cf. Mark xiii. 6, 21, and Luke xvii. 23, 24, Matt. xxiv. 23-28) presuppose the idea of His own coming again.

There are many parables, dealing with the unexpected returning of the Lord, or the sudden coming of some one: Mark xiii. 33-37 gives only short extracts, which, however, show he knew a much larger tradition, which one may try to reconstruct by the help of the First and the Third Gospels.

So far we have gathered mainly from the Marcan tradition. Mark, it has been said, is the strongest supporter of eschatological views; and, in fact, there are some passages where the other main sources have a less eschatological colouring: not only Luke, who reproduces Jesus' answer to the High Priest without the closing sentence (*coming*, etc.), allowing, thereby, for a more spiritual interpretation of the rest (*sitting at the right hand*), and so weakening the eschatological impression, but also Q, of equal value with Mark in regard to the certainty of tradition; so instead of the words quoted above from Mark viii. 38, "*The Son of Man also shall be ashamed of him, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels,*" we read in Q (Luke xii. 9 and Matt. x. 33) "*He that denieth me in the presence of men shall be denied in the presence of the angels of God*" (or according to Matthew, *before my Father which is in heaven*), a phrase which, intended to be understood in an eschatological sense, is capable, however, of a more spiritual interpretation not showing that peculiar note of time characteristic of Jewish eschatology.

But we must not generalise this fact and draw the conclusion that eschatology supported only or mostly by Mark is his own addition, and therefore not to be taken as a genuine part of Jesus' teaching. Neither Q nor the other non-Markan sources of our Gospel-tradition are bare of eschatology; on the contrary, they support it strongly.

We have mentioned already the promise made to the

disciples (Matt. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 29-30); Jesus' woe over Jerusalem (Matt. xxiii. 39; Luke xiii. 35), with its final sentences: "*Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.*"

The admonition for readiness gains strength from the argument: "*For in an hour that ye think not the Son of Man cometh*" (Matt. xxiv. 44; cp. Luke xii. 40).

The coming of the Son of Man is said to be like a lightning (Matt. xxiv. 27; cp. Luke xvii. 24).

The want of vigilance and the carelessness of mankind before the coming of the Son of Man is compared with the state of mind in the days of Noah (Matt. xxiv. 37; cp. Luke xvii. 26).

All this shows that the notion of the coming of the Son of Man as something still to be expected is a commonplace in Gospel-tradition and has to be traced back to Jesus Himself.

4. There is another remark to be made in connexion with these utterances. It is hardly said anywhere how the coming of the Son of Man will be, except that it will be suddenly, surprising. Sometimes we find used the words of Daniel: "*on or with the clouds of heaven.*" Sometimes *angels* are spoken of as following Him. His *glory* is mentioned. If the single phrase is capable of a spiritualising interpretation, the impression made by the whole set of passages will be that it is some miraculous, supernatural, but at the same time external and visible event in history, or better still, some catastrophe at the very end of history; in one word, some really eschatological fact, which is meant.

It is important to settle this before we go on, because the spiritualising tendency of modern theology has tried to escape from this conclusion by dealing with every passage by itself. So making one after the other say what they were wanted to say, the interpreter was able to declare, that there is no eschatology at all.

Take, e.g., Jesus' answer before the High Priest : "*Ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.*" Professor Haupt says : How can they see Him sitting at the right hand of power ? this can be meant only in a spiritual way : they shall see His influence in the wonderful propagation of His gospel ; and so the next sentence, and coming, etc., is but another illustration of the same idea ; they will see His influence in the judgement passed upon their own people for having rejected Him. This seems quite probable. But taken together with all the other utterances we have just considered, this explanation will hardly satisfy any one. If these words are spoken by Jesus—and I see no reason for denying this—they must be taken as they stand, as an expression for some really eschatological event.

5. A further point of no less importance is the following : Jesus says : "*Ye shall see.*" In connexion with a spiritual interpretation this may well be explained as comprehending not so much the judges themselves as their children and grandchildren and all other generations to follow. Taken together with our realistic interpretation it can only mean : you by yourselves, not men of a later time. The present generation is the latest. It is destined to live to see the end of all history.

This interpretation is confirmed by a set of sayings dealing with the notion of the present generation : We read in Mark xiii. 30, and in the parallel passages Matthew xxiv. 34, Luke xxi. 32, "*Verily I say unto you : This generation shall not pass away, until all these things be accomplished.*" As this saying is found in the eschatological chapter some writers maintain that it is a part of that fly-leaf which we found to be a later Christian apocalypse. This is possible, but I think it is equally possible and even more probable that it belongs to the genuine stock of sayings of Jesus, which were

mixed up with that little apocalypse. At any rate, it is quite in the same line with those other words of Jesus, "*Ye shall see,*" etc.

It seems to be contradicted, however, by another saying. When asked by the Pharisees to give a sign from heaven, Jesus sighed deeply in His spirit and said, "*Why doth this generation seek a sign? Verily, I say unto you: There shall no sign be given unto this generation.*" So Mark viii. 12. We are accustomed to another form of this answer, adding "*but the sign of Jonah.*" So we read in Matthew xvi. 4, the parallel passage to Mark viii. 12, as well as in Matthew xii. 39 and Luke xi. 29, two parallel passages taken probably from Q. Now as Matthew usually conforms the sayings he borrows from different sources, the testimony of Matthew xvi. 4 is of no value. We have in reality only Mark against Q, Q giving the additional words, Mark omitting them. Which form is genuine? Against the vast majority of writers I think Wellhausen is right here in maintaining the superiority of the Marcan tradition. Nobody until this day has succeeded in giving a fair explanation of what the sign of Jonah might mean. It is, I dare say, commonly acknowledged to-day that the interpretation given already by Matthew xii. 40 as pointing to the three days and three nights which Jonah spent in the whale's belly and Jesus likewise in the tomb or in Hell, is wrong. The preaching of Jonah, which caused the people of Nineveh to repent, can hardly be called a sign. Now, as our saying is combined in Q with another saying dealing with the repentance of the people of Nineveh at the preaching of Jonah, it seems to me highly probable that this other saying gave rise to the addition in the former saying, and that therefore Mark has preserved its original form. Jesus does not promise any sign, but He denies to the present generation the sign which they ask for, viz., the Messianic sign, which is, of course, to be distinguished from His powerful acts of mercy,

these in the oldest tradition never being called *σημείον* sign. So Jesus by this answer denies that this generation will see the coming of the Messiah.

The contradiction between this saying and the other two sayings mentioned before, exists, I think, only in appearance. The solution is to be found in another saying, recorded by Mark ix. i (cp. Matt. xvi. 28 and Luke ix. 27): "*Verily I say unto you: There be some here of them that stand by which shall in no wise taste of death, till they see the Kingdom of God come with power.*" This is not to be taken in a spiritual sense; it refers to the real Parousia. This will be in the lifetime of the present generation. But, this is the main point to be remarked here: Jesus does not say that all who stand around will be still alive. He solemnly declares: there will be some still alive when it happens to come. This looks rather like a later restriction made at a time when most of them who had been with Jesus had gone already without having seen his Parousia. But taken together with those other sayings it will prove to be the original conception of Jesus, explaining what He meant by generation, when He said: "*no sign to this generation,*" and "*this generation shall not pass*" on the other side. We find a similar instance in the Old Testament—and we may suppose Jesus bearing this in mind—viz., that of all the generation which went out from Egypt only two, Joshua son of Nun, and Caleb son of Jephunneh, were able to enter the land of promise (Num. xiv. 30, 38, cp. 1 Cor. x. 5). This parallel makes it quite clear that "*this generation*" is not to be taken in the sense of this nation (as some interpreters ventured to explain), but in the chronological sense of the word: the men just now living. This generation got the advantage of seeing God's highest revelation, compared with which even the time of the patriarchs and of Solomon counted for nothing; but having proved unworthy of such grace, this generation was to be

called an evil and adulterous one. So it resulted that, while *the blood of all prophets would be required of this generation* (Luke xi. 51), or [in other words] *all these things would come upon this generation* (Matt. xxiii. 36), only few of them would be worthy to live to see the establishment of salvation, the coming of the Son of Man. It is indeed, as we said before, in Jesus' opinion, the last generation destined to see the Kingdom of God.

This, I think, is not in contradiction with other sayings of Jesus : as, e.g., His saying Mark xiii. 32 (cp. Matt. xxiv. 36): "*Of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father,*"¹ because in putting the date at the end of His generation He gives no real date ; nor by those two sayings dealing with the spread of the Gospel, viz., Matt. x. 23, "*Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come*"; and on the other side, Mark xiii. 10 (cp. Matt. xxiv. 14): "*The gospel must first be preached unto all nations,*" two statements contradicting one another and showing neither of them the genuine teaching of Jesus but the later views of Jewish and Gentile Christianity. Jesus' statement about the Coming of the Kingdom in the lifetime of His own generation is in full accordance with the general tenor of His admonitions. When He says, "*Watch therefore: for ye know not when the Lord of the house cometh*" (Mark xiii. 35; cp. Matt. xxiv. 42), He addresses, undoubtedly, the men of His own time, this and other parables having no effect if the Parousia was not supposed to occur in the lifetime of these men.

As a matter of fact He announces the death of some of His disciples, e.g., the sons of Zebedee (Mark x. 39; Matt.

¹ It is an open question whether the words "*neither the Son*" are to be omitted in the text of Matt. or not. At all events they are genuine in Mark. And so the question can be only whether the omission is due to Matthew himself or to a later copyist, the motive being in both cases that the words seemed to be derogatory to the divinity of Christ.

xx. 23) as well as He foretells His own death—I see no reason for treating this with Ed. Schwartz as an *ex eventu* prophecy—but this comes out rather as an exception, the disciples not being deprived by their martyrdom of the benefit of partaking in the glorious kingdom, no less than Jesus Himself, who firmly believed in getting through death to life, patronising in this department Pharisaic doctrine against Sadducean unbelief, or rather protecting by His own assent what was of real value in the progress of Jewish religious thought, at the same time improving it by putting out from it all sensuousness, all elements of worldly, chiliasitic happiness: “*For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as angels in heaven*” (Mark xii. 25 and par.)

In the same way, when Jesus speaks of a meal where the sons of the kingdom will be gathered with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, we may conclude that this is meant eschatologically, but not in a chiliasitic sense as a big dinner, where—as it is represented sometimes in late Jewish literature, the Leviathan will be given as fish and the Behemoth as meat, and the cups will be filled with wine without end. As a matter of fact we find Jesus using the very words of being at table, eating bread and drinking the fruit of the vine in the kingdom of God (Matt. viii. 11; Luke xiii. 29, xiv. 15; Mark xiv. 25 c. par.); but here realistic interpretation is out of place; it is the popular way of expressing supreme happiness, which Jesus is using for something which is far beyond the literal sense of the words. Nobody I trust would imagine Jesus foretelling to His disciples the pleasures of a dinner in the Messianic kingdom, even when he takes the most realistic view of Jesus’ eschatology.

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