

## PROEMS OF LITURGICAL LECTIONS AND GOSPELS.

LITURGICAL students are familiar with the fact that excerpts from the Scriptures, read in the course of the Liturgy as Lections, are subject to a somewhat elaborate system of introductory formulae. These formulae may repay some investigation and analysis. They may have had their origin in an intention to identify the position of the selected passage, when the absence of division of Scripture into chapters and verses necessitated some other method of indicating the source of the passage read. They are obviously of great antiquity, since the East and West are in very close accord in their use and application; and with reference to the prophetic introduction, St Chrysostom in his Homilies on the Acts, and on 2 Thessalonians<sup>1</sup> alludes to it as existent in his time.

The formulae themselves are these :

For Prophetical passages,

Haec dicit Dominus                      τὰδε λέγει Κύριος

For Historical passages of the Old Testament (even if taken from Prophetical Books),

In diebus illis                              ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις

For Lessons taken from the Acts of the Apostles,

In diebus illis                              ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις

For Epistles taken from the writings of St Paul,

Fratres                                        ἀδελφοί

For Epistles taken from the Catholic Epistles,

Carissimi                                    ἀγαπητοί οἱ ἀδελφοί<sup>2</sup>

For Epistles taken from the Pastoral Epistles,

Carissime                                    { τέκνον Τιμόθεε,  
    { τέκνον Τίτε

For Lessons taken from the Book of Revelation,

In diebus illis                              No lections from this Book.

These formulae, it is fairly evident, are all, with the possible exception of 'In diebus illis' in the case of Historical Prophetic readings, derived from expressions freely employed in the various sources of the lections themselves.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Bingham *Christian Antiquities* book xiv § 8.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek use is a little indeterminate in the case of the Epistle of St James, both formulae being employed, without any very apparent reason for the difference.

There is one definite exception, always, to the use of these proems. A lection from the commencement of a book or epistle begins, as in the text, with the Pauline or other salutation. Another exception, the reason for which is not obvious, is that in the Epistle to the Hebrews the lection is not invariably, though it is generally, begun with the word *'Ἀδελφοί*.

A tendency is manifest in the Latin Missal to round off endings, as well as to make beginnings: and when it can be conveniently done the words *'per Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum'* are added to New Testament passages, while *'dicit Dominus Omnipotens'* is sometimes appended to Prophetic excerpts. Is this possibly the cue for some response from the congregation, *'Laus Deo'*, *'Deo gratias'*, or something of that kind?

There remain still to be examined the formulae employed in introducing the Liturgical Gospels. Here also there is a sufficiently close correspondence between the customs of the East and the West to indicate identity of origin, and yet some minor differences which may point to something more than the idiosyncrasies of the different Church systems.

The opening verses of any of the Four Gospels are announced in the Latin Church as follows:

*'Initium sancti evangelii secundum Matthaëum, Marcum, Lucam',*  
or *'Ioannem'*, as the case may be.

Later passages have the heading

*'Sequentia sancti evangelii secundum'* etc.

In the Greek Gospel Book, the heading in either case is merely

*'Ἐκ τοῦ κατὰ Ματθαίου,* etc.

As in the case of the Epistles, an *'Initium'* has no proem; a *'Sequentia'* almost always has.

The Latin use in all cases where there is a proem is to begin it with the words *'In illo tempore'*: and when the substance of the pericope so introduced is a parable or discourse there follows *'dixit Iesus'*, then words descriptive of the persons addressed, e.g. *'Dixit Iesus discipulis suis'*, with a further addition sometimes of *'parabolam hanc'*. Of these latter formulae there are sometimes variants: *'Dicebat Iesus'*, *'Locutus est Iesus . . . dicens'*, and *'Loquebatur Iesus . . . dicens'*.<sup>1</sup>

The only exceptions, however, to the use of the formula *'In illo tempore'* are the cases where some specific time-note is given in the text of the Gospel itself:

<sup>1</sup> See Note A at end of article.

e. g. 'Sequentia Sancti Evangelii secundum Lucam'.  
 'Anno quinto decimo imperii Tiberii Caesaris', etc.  
 or 'Sequentia Sancti Evangelii secundum Matthaeum'.  
 'Cum esset desponsata mater Iesu Maria Ioseph, antequam  
 conveniret', etc.

The Greek formulae are these :

Τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ and Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος.

These, however, are never combined : a *περικοπή* begins with one or other of them, not both.

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος occurs either absolutely unexpanded, being followed immediately by the passage from the text, or in combination with one of four settings :

Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην  
 τοῖς ἐαυτοῦ μαθηταῖς  
 πρὸς τοὺς πεπιστευκότας αὐτῷ Ἰουδαίους  
 πρὸς τοὺς ἐληλυθότας πρὸς αὐτὸν Ἰουδαίους.

The exceptions to the use of the indeterminate time formula are similar to those of the Latin rite. It is not used at the opening verses of the Gospels, and disappears in favour of a specific time-note.

These Greek formulae bring into marked prominence a similarity between the introductions of the Gospel and Prophetic lections, which the Latin use exhibits less forcibly, since for *ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις* we have *τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ*, and for *τάδε λέγει Κύριος* we have *εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος*, a more obvious correspondence than in the form 'Jesus dixit'. This seems to point to a deliberate adoption of these 'incipits', and a studied conformity to the method of commencing Prophetic lections<sup>1</sup>: and hence suggests that they did not arise, as in the case of the Epistle lections, from characteristic phrases in the text itself. It is also remarkable that the same forms are used in the case of all the four Gospels; although there is no use of the phrase *τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ*, or its equivalents, by St John<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The opening of the Epistle to the Hebrews has an apparent allusion to something of this kind :

Πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως πάλαι  
 (ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις)  
 ὁ Θεὸς λαλήσας τοῖς πατράσιν ἐν τοῖς  
 προφήταις (τάδε λέγει Κύριος)  
 ἐν ἰσχύαταιν τῶν ἡμερῶν τούτων  
 (τῷ καιρῷ ἐκείνῳ)  
 ἐλάλησεν ἡμῖν ἐν Τίμῳ.  
 (εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος, or ὁ Ἰησοῦς).

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps few have realized how largely these formulae have left traces in the openings of the Sunday or Holyday Gospels in the Book of Common Prayer. There are ten, to which are prefixed the words 'Jesus said' or 'Jesus said unto

This brings us to the point of asking how, if these are really introductory formulae, they have found their way, either in exact transcription, or in fairly obvious adaptation, into the text of the Synoptic Gospels. Assuming that St Mark's Gospel is the oldest compilation, as is most generally admitted, it is remarkable that it opens with the formula now liturgically employed in announcing the opening passage of any of the four Gospels. Ἀρχὴ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου—Initium Evangelii (Iesu Christi): and it strikes one on finding the phrase in its own place, that the added words 'secundum Matthaeum', etc., seem forced and strained, as though a phrase already familiar, which had indeed become consecrated to union with the Name of Jesus Christ, must be somewhat awkwardly adapted to connect itself with the name of a compiler. This however is an issue rather apart from the main thesis of this study of the 'indefinite time-note', and its place in the text of the Evangelists. St Mark has it twice in the form ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις. In chap. i 9 it introduces the narrative of our Lord's Baptism by St John; and in viii 1 it introduces the miracle of Feeding the Four Thousand. It is interesting to find it here, as, if the theory advanced is accepted, it affords an indication of the way in which two separate traditions of the same incident came to be incorporated in one compilation. Both were current in the Church, and this one is adopted into the text, with its own prefatory words.

In iv 35 the phrase καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ὀψίας γενομένης, which introduces the miracle of the Stilling of the Tempest, looks like an editorial modification of the formula. The parallel passage in St Luke [viii 22] has another modification, namely ἐν μᾶ τῶν ἡμερῶν.

There is, perhaps, one more passage in this Gospel in which the formula appears, although it is less obvious, and probably more disputable, namely in ii 20, where the days of the Bridegroom's departure are foretold by our Lord with, in St Mark, the phrase τότε νηστεύουσιν ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ: St Luke v 35 has τότε νηστεύουσιν ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις: but the account in St Matthew terminates with the word νηστεύουσιν. The removal of the full stop, in St Luke, from its place after ἡμέραις to νηστεύουσιν, would leave the formula, naturally enough, at the beginning of the paragraph about the New Cloth and the Old Garment. A similar readjustment would not suffice in St Mark; but it is, perhaps, not unlikely that the words have been brought

His disciples': namely those for St John the Evangelist, Fifth Sunday in Lent, Second Sunday after Easter, Third Sunday after Easter, Fourth Sunday after Easter, Whitsunday, Sixth Sunday after Trinity, Ninth Sunday after Trinity, Twentieth Sunday after Trinity, SS. Philip and James. There are fourteen others in which the Holy Name is substituted for 'He' or 'Him' in the A. V.

into their present place editorially, from the opening of the next passage : some phrase like *εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς* having been dropped in the process.

The Matthew Gospel contains more numerous instances. *Ἐν δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις* (iii 1) introduces the narrative of St John Baptist's preaching: *Ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ* (xi 25) brings in that passage 'I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent', which produces the impression of the introduction of something from a Johannine source into the stream of the Synoptic story. Here again St Luke, who introduces the same passage (in x 21), uses a variant proem, *ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ*.

*Ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ* (xii 1) introduces the incident of the ears of corn on the Sabbath, where St Luke has the mysterious *δευτεροπρώτῳ*, which can hardly be anything else but an importation from the heading of a pericope.

And the same words preface the account of the martyrdom of St John Baptist (xiv 1).

The group of Parables in xiii has the introductory phrase *Ἐν δὲ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ*, which also occurs in xxii 23, precluding the question of the Sadducees concerning the Resurrection.

Except for the fact that we find St Luke using the phrase *ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ὥρᾳ* (x 21, see above) as the equivalent for *ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ καιρῷ*, it might seem overbold to attribute a similar origin to the two remaining passages; but with that clear link one may perhaps quote *Ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ὥρᾳ* (xviii 1), the introductory phrase in the narrative of the dispute as to 'the Greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven', and again *Ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ὥρᾳ* (xxvi 55), in the course of the narrative of the Passion, followed by 'Are ye come out as against a thief', &c. This looks like a perfect Liturgical proem, with its 'setting',<sup>1</sup> for the whole passage runs

*Ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ὥρᾳ εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοῖς ὄχλοις.*

'In illo tempore dixit Iesus turbis.'

The preface to St Luke of itself raises the issue whether the compiler does not mean to state that his work is based upon an orderly arrangement of pericopes, with specific time-notes supplied as far as possible from private research and information. If such a conjecture is well founded, we get the first glimpse of its operation in the passage immediately following the introduction, where possibly the usual formula occurs in the words (i 5) *ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις*, and is then broken off to substitute the definite statement *Ἡρώδου βασιλέως τῆς Ἰουδαίας* for the indefinite *ἐκείναις* or *ταύταις* of the authority employed.

In i 39 *Ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις* Mary visits Elizabeth.

<sup>1</sup> See note A, at the close, for examples of these 'settings'.

- ii 1 Ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus.  
 vi 12 Ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις Jesus, after spending the night in prayer, appoints the Twelve.  
 v 17 Ἐν μιᾷ τῶν ἡμερῶν He heals the sick of the palsy, and  
 viii 22 Stills the Tempest; while in  
 xx 1 Ἐν μιᾷ τῶν ἡμερῶν ἐκείνων He is challenged as to His authority by the Scribes and Pharisees.

And in xxiii 7 the phrase ἐν ταύταις ταῖς ἡμέραις is introduced in the course of the narrative of the transfer of Jesus by Pilate to the jurisdiction of Herod. This passage is peculiar to St Luke, and it might have been expected that it would have been introduced by this formula, if the theory were well founded. But the presence of the words at the end of the sentence is perhaps as strong an indication of origin, though a little veiled; for undoubtedly the editor of St Luke worked over his materials to a considerable extent.

The interpolation contains two instances:

In xiii 1 Ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ καιρῷ our Lord receives the report of the massacre of the Galileans, and

xiii 31 Ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ is warned by the Pharisees that Herod is seeking to kill him.

But if the interpolation is somewhat poor in examples of the indefinite time-note, it is very difficult to read it and study its connecting-links, without gaining the impression that the matter of it is derived from pericopes, originally introduced by the other Liturgical formula, *Ἐἶπεν ὁ Κύριος*, or possibly a form of it akin to the Western 'Jesus dixit', *Ἐἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς*. There may be a trace of it in the editorial introduction to the delivery of the Lord's Prayer, xi 1-2; but it certainly occurs boldly in xii 42 *Ἐἶπεν ὁ Κύριος* 'Who then is that faithful and wise servant?' Here it occurs apparently as an answer to a question put by St Peter; and in xvii 6, again in answer to words addressed to him, *Ἐἶπεν δὲ ὁ Κύριος*, 'If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed'. Possibly in either case the previous address is introduced by the editor to account for the use of the word *Κύριος* in the formula, which might appear a little strange and unusual if it occurred bluntly in the narrative, without some preparation for it. The two parables in chapter xviii are introduced with phrases which summarize their purport in a manner almost wholly liturgical—*Ἐλεγε δὲ καὶ παραβολὴν αὐτοῖς*, that men ought always to pray and not to faint, prefacing the story of the importunate widow; and at verse 9 *Ἐἶπεν δὲ καὶ πρὸς τινὰς τοὺς πεποιθότας ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς*

ὅτι εἰσὶν δίκαιοι καὶ ἐξουθενούντας τοὺς λοιποὺς τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην, which introduces the story of the Pharisee and Publican<sup>1</sup>. It is, however, clearly less possible to identify this form of proem than the other. For, although paragraph after paragraph of St Luke's interpolation begins with the words εἶπεν δέ, which may indicate an original εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος or ὁ Ἰησοῦς, on the other hand similar connective forms are to be found in the homogeneous Gospel of St John, from which the other formula is absent.

The Acts of the Apostles supplies four instances of the employment of the formula; all in those earlier chapters which must depend upon some documentary basis, if the theory be accepted that the later portion of the book is the result of the personal experiences of a companion of St Paul. Ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις St Peter stands up to take action as to the election of St Matthias (Acts i 15). Ἐν δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις the strife arose between the Grecians and the Hebrews, which is the prelude of the martyrdom of St Stephen (Acts vi 1). Ἐν ταύταις δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις Prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch and Agabus foretold the dearth. Κατ' ἐκεῖνον δὲ τὸν καιρὸν Herod the king stretched forth his hand to vex certain of the Church (Acts xii 1).

In three of these cases it is noticeable that the formula introduces the history of a saint or a martyrdom, which might well have been topics of liturgical commemoration. The fourth is more difficult to place; but it may be connected with the James martyrdom, which follows hard upon it; or it may have attracted the formula as a definite predictive Christian prophecy, recited on that account during the liturgy.

In the valuable edition of St Luke's Gospel, by Dr Arthur Wright, almost all the passages quoted in support of the theory of a definite liturgical origin for certain portions of the narratives are enclosed in the square brackets [ ] which indicate editorial notes. So far, therefore, the theory that they are foreign to the general course of the narrative has solid support. But they are Synoptic rather than individual phenomena; and this at once places them on a footing different from that of an idiosyncrasy of personal style. St John's indefinite time-note is generally *Μετὰ ταῦτα*, a phrase which occurs with sufficient frequency also in the Synoptists to indicate it as a natural and normal conjunctive use.

It is to the sources therefore themselves that we must turn for the origin of a use, common to the Synoptic editors, and absent from St John. It would be improbable, if these were in any large measure liturgical, that the junctions of separate pericopes should be wholly obscured. However excellent workmanship may be, joints and selvages

<sup>1</sup> See note A at end of article.

have a tendency to betray themselves ; and it is the belief of the writer of this paper that these selvages, compared with ancient and widespread liturgical custom, do indicate that the sources employed had already, at the time of their embodiment in connected narrative, been cast in liturgical form, and in that form attained ecclesiastical publicity.

The fact that such publicity belonged to the earlier chapters of St Luke would be of more than common interest, and would take back the discussion of them to their substance rather than to their manner of presentment.

The writer hopes that if he has not—as he does not claim to have—proved his theory, he has at least advanced it beyond the stage of mere conjecture.

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#### NOTE A.

In the Greek *Εὐαγγέλιον* the formula *Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος* occurs either absolutely by itself, being immediately followed by the passage from the text, or with one of these four 'settings'—

*Εἶπεν ὁ Κύριος τὴν παραβολὴν ταύτην  
τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ μαθηταῖς  
πρὸς τοὺς πεπιστευκότας αὐτῷ Ἰουδαίους  
πρὸς τοὺς ἐλληλυθότας πρὸς αὐτὸν Ἰουδαίους.*

The Western use is much more varied, and the formula itself is less rigid.

Dixit Iesus	discipulis suis
	discipulis suis parabolam hanc
	Pharisaeis
	Sadducaeis
	Pharisaeis et Scribis parabolam istam
	Pharisaeis parabolam hanc
	turbis Iudaeorum
	turbis parabolam hanc
	turbis Iudaeorum et principibus sacerdotum parabolam hanc
	Petro
	Simoni Petro
	Nicodemo
Dicebat Iesus	Scribis et Pharisaeis
	turbis hanc similitudinem



Locutus est Iesus ad turbas et ad discipulos suos dicens  
turbis Iudaeorum dicens

Loquebatur Iesus principibus sacerdotum et Phariseis in parabolis dicens.

But, as stated in the body of the article, these more varied Western forms are all preceded by the invariable 'In illo tempore'.

Compare these with the opening of the Prayer Book Gospel for St Matthias' Day 'At that time Jesus answered and said'. Would it not be almost impossible, without referring to the A. V., to say offhand whether this were an application of the formula, remaining in the Prayer Book, or a direct quotation from the text itself?

## BAPTISM BY AFFUSION IN THE EARLY CHURCH.

IN his Note I on the *Didache* in the July number of the *Journal of Theological Studies*, Dr Bigg has repeated the old arguments from literature in favour of the theory that for the first four or five centuries baptism by submersion was the usual practice. These seem to be based on the assumption that *καταδύειν* and *mergere* must necessarily mean to submerge. If this is assumed, it is of course easy to establish what has already been taken for granted.

He has, it is true, appealed to the witness of archaeology, which at least must be taken into account in considering the question. But he only refers to four out of the nine certain representations of the rite that have been found in the Catacombs, and these he dismisses in a somewhat summary manner. One of the Ravenna mosaics is mentioned, but no allusion is made to symbolic representations, or to the various baptismal scenes, on sarcophagi, ivories, medals, &c. The still more conclusive proof against the theory of submersion, that can be drawn from a consideration of the depth of ancient fonts, is entirely ignored.

I considered, I think, all the points that he mentions, in writing my *Baptism and Christian Archaeology*, published last year as part of *Studia Biblica* by the Clarendon Press, though it was not my object to collect passages which seemed to me from the ambiguity of the language to throw no real light on the question. The passage in Gregory of Nyssa, which Dr Bigg quotes, escaped my notice, but it describes baptism as being administered exactly as it is represented in early Christian art.