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 again 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.

Lambert Nolle, O.S.B.
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.

EDMUND F. SUTCLIFFE, S.J.

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,