

St. Luke's Passion-Narrative considered with Reference to the Synoptic Problem.

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II.

It was shown in the former part of this article (p. 122 ff.) that St. Luke deals very much more freely than St. Matthew with the portion of St. Mark's Gospel which forms the foundation of both their Passion-narratives. But perhaps it may be said that there is nothing very surprising or unaccountable in two writers being led by their personal idiosyncrasies, or by the special objects of their literary works, to utilize with very different degrees of closeness a source which lay before them both. Admitting the fact, we may not unreasonably be content to leave it without explanation. But we pass now to what does most certainly call for explanation. We shall see that Luke's free treatment of the Marcan document in his Passion-narrative (22¹⁴-24¹⁰) is very strikingly *different from his own treatment of it* in very nearly all the other portions of his Gospel which have any appearance of being grounded on Mark. I say in very nearly all those portions, not in quite all of them; for both Matthew's and Luke's narratives of the Baptist's preaching and of the Temptation, though they stand in parallel places to Mark's, and though they embody some matter that seems to be Marcan, contain also a large amount of matter that is not found in Mark. The causes of this cannot be fully discussed here: it may be said, however, as to the Baptist-narrative that there is considerable reason for thinking that there, and probably there only, some of the original Marcan or Petrine matter may have been omitted from our present Mark (so Woods in *Studia Biblica*, ii. 85, 91, 94; cf. Stanton in *Ency. Brit.* xxix. 41); while of the Temptation-narrative we can only say that in this case the details which the two compilers found in their (? Logian) source happened to be very much larger in quantity than the slight Marcan framework, from which but 13 words are preserved wholly or in part by Matthew, and but 12 by Luke.

i. But let us pass beyond those two more or less preliminary sections, and examine Luke's records of our Lord's actual ministry, from Lk 4¹⁴ = Mk 1¹⁴ = Mt 4¹² onwards, so far as they are based on Mark, with a view to comparing them with his Passion-

narrative. And first let us apply to them that mechanical and verbal kind of examination with which we commenced our comparison between Matthew's and Luke's Passion-narratives. Now Luke's Ministry-narratives which concern us now consist of 311 verses, which are contained in five sections of the Gospel, namely, Lk 4³¹⁻⁴⁴ 5¹²⁻⁶¹⁹ 8⁴⁻⁹ 18¹⁵⁻⁴³ 19²⁹⁻²² 22¹³. (I have omitted some single verses such as 4¹⁴ as being negligible quantities, and I have excluded 4¹⁵⁻²⁰ and 5¹⁻¹¹ as apparently resting upon non-Marcan sources, and being but slightly influenced by Mk 6¹⁻⁶ and 1¹⁶⁻²⁰). Those 311 verses contain 5320 words, of which no less than 2829, being rather more than half of them or about 53 per cent., are also found either wholly or in part in Mark. It should be mentioned in passing that the case is almost the same in Matthew; for those parts of the First Gospel, extending over 477 verses, which refer to the ministry of Jesus and which appear to be founded on the Marcan source, contain 8180 words, of which 4173, being a very little more than half, or about 51 per cent., occur either wholly or partially in Mark, so that Matthew adheres to that source to almost exactly the same extent when he is using it with reference to the Ministry and when he is using it with reference to the Passion. But the case is very different as to Luke, with whom we are now concerned: *his* procedure varies very greatly in these two departments of his Gospel. As has just been shown, more than half the words in those five portions of his Ministry-narrative which have a Marcan basis are also found, either entirely or partially, in our present Mark; and it may be added that when we examine those five portions separately, in none of them does the proportion fall below one-half, except very slightly in Lk 4³¹⁻⁴⁴ (where the numbers are 126 and 263), while in 18¹⁵⁻⁴³ it rises as high as two-thirds (being 291 words out of 424). How great then is the contrast when we turn to Luke's Passion-narrative, in which we have found (p. 123) that very little more than a quarter of the words (namely, 507 out of 1906) are wholly or in part identical with words found in Mark. In other words, *the verbal correspondence with the*

Marcan source is about twice as great in the Lucan account of the Ministry as it is in the Lucan account of the Passion; and that, as it happens, is almost exactly the same amount of disparity as we found to exist between the Lucan and the Matthæan Passion-narratives when we compared them from this same point of view.

ii. If we turn from the wording to the substance of the two departments of Luke which we are engaged in comparing, we shall find that the *additions to our knowledge* are considerably less important and less numerous in the Ministry-narrative than in the Passion-narrative, although the former contains 311 verses and the latter only 123. (It must be borne in mind throughout that we are only concerned with those portions of the Ministry-narrative which appear to be founded on Mark and not with the large insertions made from other sources, such as Lk 19¹⁻²⁶, besides others already referred to.) In the 311 verses of the Ministry-narrative, there are of course not a few short additions to, and variations from, Mark; but in the great majority of cases these are either (*a*) derived from or suggested by the context, or (*b*) they are the results of Luke's special idiosyncrasies and interests, or (*c*) they are such as an evangelist might naturally supply as the result of his general knowledge of the habitual tone of the life of Jesus, for instance, the constant recourse to prayer (as in 5¹⁶ 6¹² 9^{18, 28}), or again (*d*) as the result of his general knowledge of the impression made by the Lord's teaching and miracles (as in 6¹¹ 9⁴³ 18³⁴ (=9⁴⁵) 43 19³⁷ 20^{26, 39}). But to examine and classify all the small Lucan additions would be out of place here; I would mention, however, that in doing so Mr. Wright's edition of *St. Luke's Gospel in Greek*, in which he brackets the apparently 'editorial supplements,' is particularly helpful; and I may refer to some references collected in *Horæ Synopticæ*, p. 158 ff. The point before us now is that these small additions do not often contain any substantially new matter, such as would require the hypothesis of a non-Marcan source to account for it. Such really new matter does not seem to me to constitute more than about 17 entire verses, namely, Lk 5³⁹ 9^{31, 32} 19³⁹⁻⁴⁴ 20¹⁸ 21^{18, 22, 24, 28, 34-36}, besides a few short sentences (such as 21^{11b}) and phrases, and single words. It will be observed that a very large proportion of this new matter is contained in Luke's version of the Prophecy on the Mount in chap. 21,

and seems to be mainly caused (*a*) by the use of Pauline language as in vv.^{24, 28, 34-36} (cf. also v.¹⁸ with Ac 27³⁴), and (*b*) by Luke's knowledge of the events by which the prophecy had been fulfilled before he wrote, as in vv.^{11, 20, 24} (and so also in 19^{43f.}).

But the much shorter Passion-narrative of Luke has been shown (see p. 123) to contain a much larger amount of new matter, namely, about 33 verses and 3 half-verses, besides some more brief and fragmentary additions to our knowledge. Thus it appears that the later of these two departments of Luke which we are comparing, though it extends to only two-fifths of the length of the earlier one (123 verses against 311), contains *nearly twice as much matter*, which seems to imply the use of an additional source or sources besides the Marcan one.

This second contrast, though less capable of clear and incontrovertible statement than those which I place first and third, points in the same direction as they do; for it shows that from Lk 22¹⁴ to 24¹⁰ the evangelist was more ready, or more able, than he had previously been to supplement his Marcan source, not merely with editorial comments and amplifications, but with fresh information.

iii. It will be remembered that the third point of contrast between the Matthæan and the Lucan Passion-narratives lay in the fact that while Luke twelve times transposes the Marcan order, Matthew never does so; and it was pointed out that such transpositions are particularly worthy of notice, because the freedom which they show is so specially symptomatic of oral use of a source, while on the other hand they are the kind of alterations which a copyist is very unlikely to make, however inaccurate he may be in the way of alteration and of omission. Now the occurrence of such changes of order, though not completely absent from Luke's Ministry-narrative, occurs with much greater frequency in his Passion-narrative. For in those 311 verses of the former, which we are now concerned with as being based on Mark, I can find but seven variations from the Marcan order, namely, those which may be seen in—

1.	Lk	6 ¹²⁻¹⁹	compared with Mk	3 ^{7-10a} .
2.	"	8 ²³	" "	4 ^{37, 38} .
3.	"	8 ^{28, 29}	" "	5 ³⁻⁸ .
4.	"	8 ⁴²	" "	5 ⁴² .
5.	"	8 ^{55b, 56}	" "	5 ^{43b, 48} .
6.	"	9 ^{14a} .	" "	6 ⁴⁴ .
7.	"	20 ¹⁵	" "	12 ³ .

The different placing of the coming of the mother and brethren in Lk 8¹⁹⁻²¹ and in Mk 3³¹⁻³⁵ is not included in this list, because, as is shown in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, xiv. 139b, a change of that incident from its Marcan position was necessitated by Luke's omission here of the discourse to which it is appended in Mark.

Of the above seven instances only the first has any intrinsic importance, and there no doubt the transposition of the substance of Mk 3⁷⁻¹² and 13-19^a was intentionally made by Luke, in order to provide an introduction to his Sermon on the Plain. The other six are trifling alterations of order, which make no difference to our understanding of the narrative, and which therefore no copyist would have been likely to care to make designedly.

Now if the 123 verses of Luke's Passion-narrative contained inversions of Mark's order in the same proportion as the 311 verses of his Ministry-narrative, to which we have now been referring, there would of course only be three such inversions. But we have seen that as a fact there are twelve (see the list of them in the former part of this article, p. 124 f.). In other words, Luke avails himself of the liberty of transposition *four times as freely* in his Passion-narrative as he does in those narratives of the ministry which are founded upon the same source.

Such are the facts of the case. How are they to be accounted for? How came Luke in his Passion-narrative to deal so freely with his fundamental source, thus differing so remarkably in these respects both from the procedure of Matthew and also from his own procedure in earlier parts of his Gospel?

The well-known theory of Feine and others (see Dr. Sanday in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES, xi. 473), that Luke had before him some kind of record, or early Gospel, which he used as a third source in addition to, and frequently in preference to, Mark and the *Logia*, at once suggests itself. And I used to think that the strongest arguments in favour of that theory were to be found in his Passion-narrative. But the closer investigation, of which I have been here summarizing the results, has impressed upon me that such a 'three-document hypothesis,' as it may be called, does not give much help towards the interpretation of the phenomena here presented to us. Luke's additions are (unlike Matthew's) so mixed up with the *Grundschrift*, and

they have caused alterations and modifications of such kinds, that they suggest a long and gradual conflation in the mind rather than a simple conflation by the pen.

It seems then that more probability would attach to a hypothesis that would represent our author as having been accustomed to make oral use of the materials which he embodies in this part of his Gospel. Now it is something more than a hypothesis, it is the subject of a direct statement on the generally accepted Epistle of Philemon (v. 24), supported by other evidence both external and internal, that St. Luke was a 'fellow-worker' with St. Paul. And if so, he will have been a preacher of Christianity after the Pauline type, and will have been mainly occupied with the Pauline range of subjects. And that range of subjects, so far as we can judge of it from the apostle's extant Epistles—whether we accept more or fewer of them—and also from the brief reports of his speeches in the Acts, seems to have coincided to a remarkable extent with the matter which we have been considering in Luke's Passion-narrative. For (1) certainly St. Paul's references to the teachings of the Lord during His ministry are much fewer than we should have expected, though sayings are referred to as His in 1 Co 7¹⁰ 9¹⁴, perhaps in 1 Ti 5¹⁸, possibly in 1 Th 4¹⁵, and though we find close similarities to His teachings in Ro 12^{14, 17} 16¹⁹, 1 Co 13², 1 Th 5², 2 Th 3³, 2 Ti 2¹², and though in 1 Ti 6³ 'the words of our Lord Jesus Christ' are referred to generally as the standard of sound doctrine. And (2) to the acts, including the miracles, of the earlier and ministerial life of Jesus, there are no Pauline references at all either in letters or speeches; for what has been sometimes thought the suspicious similarity between the speeches of Peter and Paul in Acts does not extend to this point, there being no Pauline parallels to Ac 2²² and 10³⁸. 'The Gospel which' Paul 'preached,' and wherein he would have his converts 'stand,' appears, so far as we can judge from his references to that preaching, to have rested upon the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ as being 'the events instrumental in salvation, the foundation of the new order of grace.' So Wendt well expresses it, where he is pointing out the difference between the predominant aspect of faith in the Pauline Epistles and that in the Johannine discourses, since in the latter belief 'means acceptance of the words of

Jesus and observance of His commandments' (*The Gospel of St. John*, p. 198 f., E.T.).¹

Thus the Pauline preaching, as contrasted with the substance either of the first three Gospels or of the Fourth, must have been concerned mainly with the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, so far as it consisted in setting forth facts. But as to the Resurrection as a fact there could not be much to say in detail, however important it was as a foundation of doctrine; for the event itself was an invisible one, and the proofs of it would not require repetition, except when doubt or disbelief arose as at Corinth (1 Co 15¹²). And so the Crucifixion would be thrown into unique prominence as a constant subject of preaching. And accordingly we find St. Paul saying emphatically of himself and his fellow-workers, 'We preach Christ crucified' (1 Co 1²³; cf. v. 17 and 2²).

Now, if this was the case, the story of the Crucifixion, and of the Passion as leading up to the Crucifixion, must have had an intense interest for Christians of the Pauline type. Details about those last days at Jerusalem would be longed for and begged for by them; and, if not St. Paul himself, at least other catechists and teachers such as St. Luke would take pains in order to supply such details, so far as they could gather them, directly or indirectly, from 'eye-witnesses and ministers of the word.' May it not have been thus that the preacher (and perhaps catechist) who afterwards became the Third Evangelist, had for his homiletic purposes gradually supplemented, and in supplementing had to some extent modified and transposed, the generally accepted Marcan record, so far as it related to the Passion and Crucifixion? And so, when he came to this part of his Gospel, he would write down the memories of his past teaching which were impressed upon his mind, without having much occasion to make direct reference to the Marcan source, as he himself had done in describing those earlier parts of the life of Jesus which were less familiar to him, and as the compiler of the First Gospel did in his Passion-narrative as much as in his Ministry-narrative.

Two observations may be added in support of the above suggestion that in 22¹⁴-24¹⁰ Luke may be writing down the substance of what he had spoken as a 'fellow-worker' of St. Paul in preaching.

¹ See also Menzies, *The Earliest Gospel*, p. 6 ff.

1. The portion of his Gospel which we have found to be characterized by such peculiar freedom in the use of Mark commences with the institution of the Lord's Supper (the next preceding verses having been, as it happens, in unusually close agreement with the Marcan source). Now that incident is also recorded by St. Paul himself (1 Co 11²³⁻²⁵), and indeed it forms the only exception to his silence as to the acts of Jesus which preceded the actual Passion.

2. If we glance at the subjects of Luke's insertions so far as they contain new matter, they seem to be generally of such a kind as would be attractive and interesting when used in preaching. Here again, as in the previous part of this article (see p. 124), it is instructive to contrast them in pages 195 f. and 227 ff. of *Synopticon*, or otherwise, with Matthew's insertions of new matter. As to the latter, I do not dwell now upon the remarkable number of difficulties which happen to be suggested by many of them: I only point out that referring as they do very largely to Judas and to Pilate, they offer but little material for instruction as to 'the mind which was in Christ Jesus' when He suffered and died. In proof of this remark, let any preacher of experience, after recalling the two lists of additions made by the First and Third Evangelists respectively, ask himself how often he has made use of the Matthæan additions in comparison with those made by Luke—such as the fuller warning to Simon (22³¹⁻³²), the address to the women of Jerusalem (23²⁷⁻³¹), the story of the penitent robber (23³⁹⁻⁴³)? Of course the contrast must not be made too much of: we have two sayings from the Cross in Mt and Mk to set against the two found in Lk only (if we accept as Lucan 23^{34a} as well as 23⁴⁶); and Luke's longest insertion, that relating to the appearance before Herod, must be admitted to have been made by him with no homiletic purpose, but to have been a result of his special interest in, and perhaps connexion with, the Herodian family and household (Lk 3¹ 8³ 24¹⁰, Ac 13¹). But still the contrast does to some extent exist; and so far as it is recognized, it will add some probability to the conjecture—for it is no more than a conjecture—which has been here put forward to account for the special characteristics of St. Luke's Passion-narrative.