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## JESUS IN JERUSALEM

### A NOTE ON THE CHRONOLOGY

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**T**HE apparent contradiction between the Synoptic and the Fourth Gospels, in respect of the scene in which they place the major activity of Jesus' ministry, has long been a matter of interest. From the familiar harmonistic arrangements of a three-years' ministry to the recent discrediting of Johannine chronology many have been the attempts to explain the divergent conceptions of Jesus' activities in Jerusalem. Spitta's attempt (*Streitfragen der Geschichte Jesu*) to draw from the Gospel of Luke a synoptic narrative of Judean ministry is of value chiefly as a critical curiosity; but many others have found Synoptic hints to justify the Johannine setting of the scene. Most recently Stanton has written (*The Gospels as Historical Documents*, vol. III, p. 230 ff.) as follows:—

“As a matter of fact, while the absence of all particulars from the Synoptic Gospels has created doubt as to any ministry of Jesus in Jerusalem before those last days when he came there to die, they supply evidence of not a little weight, partly in sayings which they put into the mouth of Jesus, partly in indications in their narratives, that there must at some time have been such a ministry . . .

The supposition, therefore, that Jesus exercised a ministry in Jerusalem before that visit at which he was put to death is required by allusions in the Synoptic Gospels themselves, and also in order to understand the final crisis as they describe it.”

Stanton therefore leans toward the Johannine chronology; but I should like to suggest that perhaps the value of the Johannine representation is rather to correct some current misapprehensions regarding the real nature of the Synoptic account of Jesus' activities in Jerusalem. With that suggestion, we may proceed to inquire whether the Synoptists themselves do not hint at a more extensive ministry in Jerusalem than the traditional "Passion-Week" would seem to allow.

I. First of all, review briefly the outstanding references to such a ministry, of which Stanton enumerates three. The first is Luke 13 34 (— Mt. 23 37): "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! *how often* would I have gathered thy children together!" Since it comes from the inchoate mass of Luke's Great Interpolation this verse furnishes no secure testimony to any particular period of Jesus' ministry; but it is clear that the adverb *πράκις* bears unmistakable witness to his activity in Jerusalem. (The assignment of these words to a lost book of "Wisdom" would seem to be the desperate recourse of those who refuse to accept this chronological testimony, and would be admissible only if there were no further evidence pointing in the same direction.) Again, the words of Jesus at his arrest, as given by Mark 14 49 (— Mt. 26 55; Lk. 22 53): "I was daily with you in the temple, teaching, and ye took me not," must indicate a longer period of ministry in Jerusalem than the two days which the common interpretation of the Synoptics grants. The whole intent of the remark runs directly counter to any such compression of the adverb *καθ' ἡμέραν*, or even of the imperfect tense of the verb. In this connection, a third saying of Jesus is of interest, though less conclusive—namely, the words of Jesus' lamentation over the city in Luke 19 44 beginning: "If thou hadst known in this day, even thou, the things which belong unto peace!" and closing: "because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." Here the use of the term *ἐπισκοπή* would seem to indicate a definite appeal to the city, of broader scope than that represented merely by the Triumphal Entry and the Cleansing of the Temple. (The aorist *ἔγνων* need not occasion difficulty, for it seems to represent, at the close of the series of future

tenses, a future perfect, and need not refer to events actually already past.)

II. These three references, I think, are sufficient to raise the question what further evidence there may be in the Synoptic Gospels for a ministry by Jesus in Jerusalem; and we may turn now to a discussion of the several sources in detail.

1. First, the gospel of Mark. I have just referred to the outstanding hint of Mark 14 49: "I was daily with you in the temple, teaching, and ye took me not." Note, now, that this is but one of several similar hints suggesting an extended period of ministry in Jerusalem. We read Mark 11 19: "And every evening he went forth out of the city;" 12 35: "And Jesus answered and said (impf., *ἔλεγεν*) as he was teaching in the temple;" 12 38: "And the common people used to hear him gladly. And in his teaching he used to say"—(I think the frequentative rendering of the imperfects, *ἤκουεν*, *ἔλεγεν*, is justified here by the intrusive temporal phrase *ἐν τῇ διδασχῇ*). To these phrases add the definite attempt in Mark 12 12-13 to indicate a change of scene: "And they left him and went away. And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians." Here the first clause brings the action to a definite close, and the second takes up a new incident unrelated to the preceding—certainly this would better suit a ministry of some length than a single day's controversies.

Now note further that in the entire passage, Mark 11 27-13 2, which is generally reckoned as the "day of controversy," there are ten distinct paragraphs. No two of these are anywhere definitely linked together in point of time: on the other hand, there are at least two definite indications of change of scene (Mark 12 12; 12 35) which I have just pointed out. This is in striking contrast to the swift rush of the narrative of Mark 14 and 15, into which it is impossible to break at any point.

Any one of these indications might perhaps be explained away; but, taken all together, I am convinced that they are sufficient to prove that the second evangelist conceived of the work of Jesus in Jerusalem, from the Triumphal Entry to the Passion, as extending over a considerable period.

2. The materials of Luke's Great Interpolation are, of course, undated and will give us no clear evidence. The Address to Jerusalem has already been mentioned; but certain others seem also to reflect the Jerusalem environment. There are not only the scene in the house of Mary and Martha, (Luke 10 38-42), but also the parable of the Good Samaritan, with its setting on the road down from Jerusalem (Lk. 10 30), the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican (Lk. 18 10) who "went up into the temple to pray," and even the suggestion of the Temple priesthood in the words to the elder brother in the parable of the Prodigal Son (Lk. 15 31), "Son, thou art *ever with me*." Notice further that the address to Jerusalem in this section of Luke (13 34) is located by Matthew at the close of the long controversial discourse (Mt. 23 37), as though he knew of no earlier ministry—indeed there is no reason why he should.

3. The point which I most desire to emphasize, however, is the representation of that section of the Third Gospel which deals directly with Jesus' appearance in Jerusalem—that is, Luke 19-22. This points even more clearly than Mark to a considerable period of teaching in the city. Note the following passages:—

Lk. 19 47: "And he was teaching daily in the temple."

Lk. 20 1: "And it came to pass, on one of the days, as he was teaching the people in the temple, and preaching the gospel"—

Lk. 21 37-38: "And every day he was teaching (*ἦν διδάσκων*) in the temple, and every night he went out and lodged (*πυλίζετο*) in the mount that is called Olivet. And all the people came early in the morning to him (*ἄρθριζεν*) in the temple to hear him."

(The pericope *de adultera* [Jn. 8 1-2] gives a similar representation.)

Lk. 22 39: "And he came out, and went as his custom was, unto the mount of Olives."

Lk. 23 5 (the testimony of the accusers): "saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, and beginning from Galilee, even unto this place" (thus equating Jerusalem activity with Galilean).

With these statements should be included the implication of the lament over Jerusalem in her "day of visitation" (Lk. 19 44) already alluded to. And as in Mark, so here also, there is considerable want of connection between various sections of the discourse, and failure to give them definitely the same setting.

Now the importance of this last group of testimony depends upon a theory which I have advanced elsewhere, that in the latter part of chapter 19, in chapter 21, and in most of chapters 22—24, the evangelist drew primarily upon a source independent of Mark, and at least the equal of the Second Gospel in historical value. It is noteworthy that of the chronological hints just cited, all but the second stand in close proximity to, and apparently in definite connection with, these non-Markan materials, and therefore ought not to be dismissed as purely editorial expansions of Mark by Luke. It is fair to assume, then, that a third gospel source also gave support to the conception of a longer Jerusalem ministry.

To sum up: each of the three great sources for this period of Jesus' ministry—Mark, the source of the Great Interpolation in Luke, and Luke's special Passion source—bears testimony, both in its narrative and in words of Jesus which it records, to a more or less extended period of teaching by Jesus in Jerusalem.

III. To this evidence a few general considerations may be added. First, it is hardly conceivable that Jesus, with his deep piety, should not have yearned for the city around whose Temple clustered all the faith to which he was heir. Even thus the Gospels represent him, from youth to passion.

In the second place, it is difficult to understand how Jerusalem could have become the capital of early Christianity, had not Jesus exercised a ministry there. A nucleus of disciples in Jerusalem is needed to explain a number of things. What else could overcome their hatred of the city which slew their Master? What else could have restrained them from such a flight as the Gospel of Peter depicts? What else would render probable such successes as the early chapters of Acts indicate? And what, save a past association of Jesus with the scenes of Jerusalem, could bring to them within its boundaries the faith that

Jesus was risen? They would have seen him first in the familiar haunts with which he was associated in their minds. Even the fidelity of the Arimathean Joseph is a bit of evidence for the period of Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem.

A third consideration is that of the opposition which led to Jesus' death. Is it likely that a *single* day of controversy would have been sufficient to inspire the plot against him? He appears in Jerusalem a Galilean peasant teacher, with a local reputation. The Triumphal Entry, indeed, might be sufficient to explain a sudden act of suppression on the part of an outraged Roman imperialism—but the Gospels nowhere give us any indication that the Roman authorities ever took serious notice of Messianic claims regarding Jesus. The Cleansing of the Temple might have inspired hasty action by the Temple police; but, standing alone, it is by no means an adequate explanation of the cold determined hatred of Jesus by the priesthood which the Gospels depict: such a passion develops but slowly. Nor is Jesus' own bitter denunciation of scribes and Pharisees easily justified without supposing a considerable period through which he strove constantly, first with their cynical hardness, and then with their cold malice.

IV. All these considerations, then, lead to a single conclusion: that we must give to the closing ministry in Jerusalem a longer period than we had ordinarily supposed.

Whence, then, is the familiar conception of the "Passion Week" derived? The period is to be found only in the Fourth Gospel, and has there, (so Loisy) a symbolic nature. But the idea has been imported into the synoptic scheme by the same route as many other misconceptions, the representations of the First Gospel. Matthew, who, in line with his general policy of integration, has quite frankly condensed the Cursing of the Fig-Tree and the Cleansing of the Temple, has also compressed the rest of the Markan narrative by means of definite marks of time and sequence into even less than a week—six days, in fact—and, as has so often been the case elsewhere, has here also prejudiced our approach to Mark. But Mark himself indicates a longer period and a more leisurely ministry.

Just how to reconstruct this Jerusalem ministry is, of course, problematical. We may suppose that Jesus came to Jerusalem in the late winter or early spring, when the last-year's figs were beginning to ripen. (So Holtzmann, *Life of Jesus, E. T.*, 412; cf. Mk. 11 13). Possibly it may have been a month before the Passover, perhaps in time for the feast of Purim. The Triumphal Entry, staged by his disciples (so Mk. 11 7; Lk. 19 37; only Matthew mentions "crowds"), and followed by the Cleansing of the Temple the next day formed a dramatic introduction to his work. For the teaching of the days which followed we may perhaps turn not only to the narratives of this period which the Gospels give us, but also to the unclassified materials of the Great Interpolation in Luke, some of which may well reflect this last phase of Jesus' work. Some of the Johannine materials might also be attracted hither, though the Johannine narrative as a whole could hardly be accepted, nor the Johannine chronology. But these questions must remain problems for the time. Sufficient now to have shown that, according to the representations of the sources of the Synoptic Gospels themselves, Jesus did make Jerusalem the center for one not inconsiderable period of his ministry, and that we may identify that ministry with the sojourn in Jerusalem which was terminated by his death.