

Spirit of God, and feels all heaven within him, he may use the language of his childhood about the gold and jewels of heaven's streets, and the winged messengers of the King; but assuredly his faith is not childish or materialistic.'

But is there any evidence that the disciples did not use the common apocalyptic language in the common sense? There is the evidence of result. By their fruits ye shall know them. We know the apocalyptic type of religion. It is a real type. It exists. 'Its normal results,' says Professor INGE, 'are either political insurgence or selfish quietism—in either case indifference to social morality, neglect of duties, nervous excitement, and rapid evanescence.' Is this the religion of the follower of Christ? Is it the religion of Christ Himself?

But when Professor INGE has vindicated the spiritual character of the religion of Christ and His disciples, he proceeds at once to admit that in the teaching of Christ and in the teaching of His disciples there are passages which are purely apocalyptic in character. And he admits that

their apocalyptic character is not in the language merely, but in the thought. His explanation is to cut the knot. These passages are misinterpretations of Christ's actual teaching on the part of His disciples, or they are later interpolations. 'Very few critics,' he says, 'accept as authentic the apocalyptic prophecy in Mk 13: may there not be one or two more innocent interpolations of the same kind?'

This is a little disappointing. But the truth is better than our pleasure. If it is so, let us see that it is so. It is still more disappointing, perhaps, to find Professor INGE admitting 'the further possibility that our Lord in becoming man may have been willing to share, to some extent, the current popular delusions both with regard to the Messianic hope and to demoniacal possession.' But he insists that this concession must certainly not be stretched so far as to admit that He fancied Himself filling the rôle of Daniel's 'son of man' in the near future. 'Such a notion would not be compatible with sanity, far less with those attributes which all Christians believe Him to have possessed.'

The Alleged Catholicism of the First Gospel and its Date.

BY THE VEN. WILLOUGHBY C. ALLEN, M.A., LECTURER IN THE HISTORY OF DOCTRINE IN THE UNIVERSITY, AND ARCHDEACON OF MANCHESTER.

It seems to be universally believed that the First Gospel reflects a fairly advanced stage of ecclesiastical development. And it is in consequence as universally believed to be comparatively late in date. Professor Peake, *e.g.*, argues against some who date it not much later than the year 70 A.D., 'that the Gospel seems to reflect a somewhat later period of ecclesiastical development. Nothing forbids the view that this rather Catholicised Gospel may have been written towards the close of the first century.'¹ Now, that the book does

represent a certain stage of Church development is certain. What is uncertain is the date to which the Gospel must be assigned in consequence. The Church may be said to have begun its career from the moment that the disciples realized that their Master had left them to preach the gospel. At what stage in its future development must our First Gospel be placed?

I propose to state in the following pages the evidence which seems to me to make it abundantly clear that the book cannot have been written after the Fall of Jerusalem, and that it may have been

¹ *Critical Introduction to the New Testament*, p. 123.

written some years earlier. The question is an important one; indeed, I believe it to be the most important point at issue in the whole so-called Synoptic Problem. It affects our conceptions as to the character of Christ's teaching, the Q question, and perhaps the date of the Second Gospel.

1. The conception, which dominates the whole book, of the kingdom of the heavens as a kingdom to be inaugurated in the *near* future when the Son of Man returns on the clouds of heaven, suggests an early rather than a late date. In St. Paul's later Epistles, in St. Luke and St. John (Gospel), this emphasis on the *nearness* of Christ's coming has been lost, and other conceptions have taken its place of honour.¹ But in the First Gospel the thought of *immediacy* clothes the whole book like an atmosphere. It is to be the burden of the Apostolic preaching (107). And the preachers will not have gone through the cities of Israel ere the Son of Man had come (102³). The author is so full of it that he reads it into his Marcan source; e.g. 'the kingdom of God come with power' becomes 'the Son of Man coming in his kingdom' (Mt 16²⁸). That 'coming' is coincident with 'the end of the age' (24³); and both will take place immediately after the fall of Jerusalem (24²⁰), and within the lifetime of that generation (24³⁴). The high priest and his colleagues were to see the Son of Man coming upon the clouds of heaven (26⁶⁴).

Now the modern reader is strangely blind to this apocalyptic keynote of the First Gospel. This is probably due to many causes, perhaps most of all to an unwillingness to believe that Christ taught what is here put into His mouth. But the immediate question is not, 'Is there here a right and impartial reflexion of Christ's teaching?' but 'Did the Evangelist so conceive Christ's teaching

or not?' To this there can surely be but one answer. The Evangelist lived in the hope that Christ would speedily inaugurate His kingdom, and if words have any meaning at all he thought that the Lord had promised to return on the clouds of heaven in order to effect this inauguration.

It may, however, be said, 'Is there not much teaching in the Gospel in which a longer perspective of history is, if not plainly portrayed, at least visible in the background of thought?' The teaching here referred to is—(a) the reference to a preaching to the Gentiles; (b) the parables; (c) the teaching which implies as a background the community of Christ's disciples as a distinct society obeying Christ's law.

I will deal with the Gentile question and the teaching to the community later on. As regards the parables, it is quite true that some of them might reasonably be so interpreted as to give an impression of the kingdom as a present factor in the world, destined to endure for an indefinite period. So, e.g., the Tares and the Wheat, or the Mustard Seed. But a little reflexion will show that any idea of duration of time which they suggest is purely relative, and that the kingdom, so far as these parables taken by themselves are concerned, is or may be almost anything that the reader chooses to make it, from the Catholic Church to the doctrine of Christ's imminent Parousia. It is of course possible that the Gospel consists of a number of sayings apparently contradictory in tenor, which the Evangelist did not know how to reconcile, but which he recorded simply because they were traditional sayings. But this is very unlikely, because the Evangelist in all probability has made only a selection out of the material available to him, and might have avoided ambiguous sayings or teachings contradictory to others which he was recording, of which the meaning is clear. The simplest and most reasonable view of the Evangelist is that he had certain tolerably clear conceptions of the meaning of Christ's life and teaching, and has selected material to illustrate those conceptions. If that be the case, a readiness to interpret 'the kingdom' of the parables in the light of 'the kingdom' elsewhere in the Gospels ascribes to the Evangelist some reasonable consistency and clearness of view, and relieves the Gospel of the reproach of being a kind of commonplace book of unsorted and inconsistent sayings. But if the kingdom of the parables be the

¹ Dr. Stanton, *Gospels as Historical Documents*, ii. 367, argues that the language of Mt 24 need not cause us to date the Gospel before the year 70 A.D., on the ground that the author can quite well have left unaltered expressions of his source. But this misses the whole point. Not only does the Evangelist leave unaltered expressions of the sources which he had before him for ch. 24, but he does alter, e.g., Mk 9¹ (cf. Mt 16²⁸), in order to bring into that passage the same idea of the nearness of the Parousia, which runs through the whole Gospel. In other words, it is not only the author of the discourse source, but also the Evangelist himself who wishes to teach that idea. Now, considering that in this Gospel the Fall of Jerusalem and the Parousia are closely connected, it is very difficult to suppose that the writer composed the book long after, if at all after, the Fall of the city.

kingdom of the rest of the Gospel, it is clear that in them as elsewhere the kingdom is conceived of as relatively near, within, that is to say, the lifetime of Christ's disciples.

2. If the conception of the kingdom is an early one, so too is the conception of the Church. It is very astonishing and not very creditable to modern criticism that of a book which is permeated from beginning to end with Jewish particularism, modern scholars, because they twice find in it the term 'ecclesia,' should say, 'Lo, the Catholic Church, this book must be very late!' And yet the uncatholic or rather pre-catholic conception of the writer shows itself everywhere.

The disciples of the Messiah are to keep the Law. Not one of the least of its commandments was to be superseded (5^{18, 19}). The 'righteousness' which they were to aim at was to be not less than that of the Scribes and Pharisees, but more; that is to say, more profound because it was based upon a deeper understanding of the intention of the Old Testament (5²¹⁻⁴⁸). But all the commandments of the law were still in force. The Evangelist makes this very clear by thrusting into Mk 10¹⁻¹² a saying reaffirming the sanction of divorce which was traditionally based on Dt 24¹⁻², and by changing the import of Mk 7¹⁴⁻²³, first, by omitting the words *καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα*; and secondly, by adding words which suggest that Christ's teaching in this section of Mark have nothing to do with removing the Mosaic distinctions between meats clean and unclean, but rather are concerned with the Rabbinical doctrines of purification (Mt 15²⁰). The Deuteronomic law of the two witnesses is still in force (18¹⁶), so too is the law of the Sabbath (24²⁰).

Of course it follows that in the mind of the Evangelist the disciples of the Messiah must be Jews or proselytes. And here we come to the attitude of the Gospel to Gentiles. Nothing can be clearer. The Messiah Himself had set an example here. When a Canaanite woman had come to Him from heathen territory and begged His aid, He had told her that His mission was not to Gentiles, but to the house of Israel (15²⁴⁻²⁶). And in accordance with this He had expressly bidden His disciples go neither to Samaritan nor Gentile (10^{5, 6}), but rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Of course such teaching did not prevent a heathen from joining the community of Christ's disciples, if he were willing to keep the

law. Had not Gentiles always been welcomed to Judaism on such terms? And the disciples of the Messiah now represented the true Judaism. This community of law-keeping disciples of the Messiah are separated from the mass of the Jewish people, and especially from the Scribes and Pharisees who persecute them by (a) their belief in the Messiah, (b) their truer insight into the Law, (c) their belief in the coming kingdom. Consequently they form what the Pharisees would have described as a sect, but what they themselves regarded as the true kernel of the Jewish nation. The Jewish authorities by their attitude to the Messiah had disinherited themselves. They were the 'sons of the kingdom,' *i.e.* those who ought to have inherited it; but they would be cast out (8¹²). The disciples of the Messiah now remained as the 'sons of the kingdom' (13³⁸).

And separated as they were by their Messianic views from the mass of their compatriots, Christ's disciples had their own simple organization. They regarded the twelve Apostles as their rulers. In the coming kingdom these twelve should sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (10²³). For the other leaders of their simple organization they retained Old Testament or current Jewish terms: they were prophets or wise men or scribes (23³⁴ 13⁵²). Of course they regarded themselves as a community or society. What Aramaic term they used we do not know. Probably there were several. 'Israel' may have been one, 'synagogue' perhaps was another, God's 'nation' (21⁴³) may have been a third. The writer of the First Gospel twice speaks of an 'ecclesia.' Writing in Greek he could hardly have done anything else. In the second passage (18¹⁷) he quite clearly means whatever local body of Christians the offended party belonged to. In the first (16¹⁸) he no doubt has in mind the whole body of the Messiah's disciples. From the moment of the resurrection to the day when Christ's disciples began to regard themselves as a community or society or body or corporation separated from their fellow-countrymen by their Messianic beliefs need not have been a long period. The first definite acts of persecution at Jerusalem would mark the change. And whether for a local group of Christians, or for the several groups regarded as one body in relation to the Messiah, ecclesia was for one who wrote in Greek the only natural term, as St. Paul's Epistles amply testify.

But are there not passages in the Gospel which show that the writer, in spite of all that has been brought forward, is a Catholic Christian for whom the strife about the admission of Gentiles into the Church is already a thing of the past?

And here I would urge as a reasonable proviso, that if there be isolated passages of doubtful purport they ought to be interpreted in accordance with the general line of thought running through the Gospel, and not unnecessarily be so interpreted as to give a meaning which will introduce chaos of thought into the book. There is, in the first place, the saying 8^{11, 12} which the author has placed in the story of the centurion's servant. The 'sons of the kingdom,' *i.e.* the official Jews are to be excluded from the kingdom, whilst many are to come from east and west and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of the heavens. The modern commentator jumps to the conclusion that, by the many, Gentiles are intended, and this is possible. The centurion is regarded as a type of a large class who will enter into the kingdom, whilst those who ought to have inherited it, or who regarded themselves as its rightful inheritors, will be thrust out. But there is nothing here inconsistent with the main idea of the Gospel that the kingdom is destined for the true disciples of the Messiah, who must be law-abiding people. The strictest Pharisee never found himself able to exclude Gentiles from the privileges of Judaism. And the Old Testament, the charter of Pharisaism, is full of passages which foretell the inclusion of Gentiles in the privileges of Judaism. It is perfectly clear that the strictest Jewish Christian might be whole-heartedly opposed to the Pauline policy, and yet might accept these words of the Messiah without any misgiving. The 'many from east and west' would not trouble him. If he thought of Gentiles, he would interpret at once as proselytes, or think of Jews of the Dispersion as opposed to the spiritually blinded official classes at Jerusalem. The main point was that they were to sit with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom; and a kingdom with the Jewish Messiah as its king and the Patriarchs as its leading citizens could cause no misgiving to the most sensitive Jewish Christian.

Another and more difficult passage is Mt 21⁴³, where it is said that the kingdom of God will be taken from the chief priests and elders (cf. v. 23), and given to a nation (*ἔθνει*) which produces its

fruits. This verse is inserted by the author as a sort of commentary on Mk 12⁹, where it is said that the vineyard will be given to others (*ἄλλοις*). It is, in the first place, clear that by *ἔθνει* the author is not thinking of the Gentiles primarily, or he would not have used the singular. The contrast is not between the Jews as a race and the Gentiles as another race, but between the Jewish authorities who have forfeited their right to be called God's vineyard or true Israel, and those people who being the true disciples of the Messiah are really His people. *ἔθνος* here, therefore, denotes spiritual quality, not racial privilege. And, if Gentiles are not excluded, they are not in the mind of the writer as included. If he had been asked who formed this *ἔθνος*, he would no doubt have answered all who were disciples of the Messiah and kept the Law and looked for the kingdom.

There remain two passages, and only two, where the Catholicism of the author will seem to the average reader clear and speaking. Let it be said once again, that we are not now concerned with the original meaning of these words, nor with their meaning as interpreted by us in the light of history, but with the probable interpretation put upon them by the author of the First Gospel when he incorporated them into his book. The author, as we have seen, was one who believed that the Messiah had reaffirmed the claims of the Mosaic Law upon all His disciples. Could one who so believed have written these words?

The first is Mt 24¹⁴, 'This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony among all nations.' The author is borrowing from Mk 13¹⁰, but he finds it necessary to qualify St. Mark's words. 'The gospel' becomes 'this gospel of the kingdom'; 'to all nations' becomes 'among all nations'; and the important qualification 'for a testimony' is added. Now it is clear that the author supposed that this preaching 'for a testimony' could be accomplished within a generation (cf. 16²⁸ 24³⁴). What he meant by 'for a testimony' remains obscure, but it will be in harmony with the entire scheme of his gospel if we suppose him to be thinking of the Jews of the Diaspora. Amongst all such 'the gospel of the kingdom' must be preached, that they and any Gentiles who would keep the Law might have opportunity of enrolling themselves as disciples of the true Messiah and waiting for His kingdom. But whatever 'amongst all nations for

a testimony' may mean, the key to the whole verse clearly lies in the words 'this gospel of the kingdom.' Now, in the light of the whole book, that phrase can mean nothing but the 'gospel of the kingdom as expounded in this book,' *i.e.* 'the good news of the coming back of the Messiah upon the clouds of heaven to inaugurate a kingdom into which all His disciples shall enter.' And, as we have seen, His disciples are they who keep the Law as the Messiah bade them.

And the remaining passage is 28¹⁹, 'make disciples of all nations,' *μαθητεύσατε πάντα τὰ ἔθνη*. There is nothing necessarily Catholic in the later sense of the word here. The Pharisees had always regarded it as a duty, if not a privilege, to make disciples of all nations. 'They compassed,' says this Gospel, 'heaven and earth to make one proselyte.' 'Raise up many disciples,' says the men of the great synagogue, in the *Sayings of the Jewish Fathers*. 'Love mankind,' says Hillel in the same book, 'and bring them nigh to the Torah.' It all depends, of course, upon the meaning we put into *μαθητεύσατε*. What I am concerned with here is the fact that the strictest member of the Jewish Christian party might have believed the words to have been uttered by the Messiah, and yet have fought hard against the Pauline heresy of introducing uncircumcised Gentiles into the new Israel.

I have tried to show that if we do not insist on forcing Catholic meanings into some of the words of the First Gospel against the general tenor and meaning of the writer, there is no Catholicism there. On the other hand, the doctrine of the immediacy of the kingdom throws the book back into the period before the Fall of Jerusalem, whilst the author's view of the permanent validity of the Law, and the consequently narrowed scope of Christianity would admirably fit in with a date about (shortly before or after) the Council at Jerusalem.

Let me now throw out some provisional and conjectural suggestions as to the date and provenance of the book. It is possible that it was written (*c.* 50) at Antioch by some one who agreed with the views referred to in Ac 15¹. In favour of Antioch rather than Jerusalem is the fact that the Gospel is written in Greek, not in Aramaic or Hebrew, and that it is based upon a Greek St. Mark. The doctrine of the kingdom, the doctrine of the Law, the attitude towards the Gentile world,

all seem to favour such a date; and the fact that the writer is a Jew, probably a Hellenist Jew, writing in Greek, and using Greek sources, including the Septuagint version, favours the place. We might then regard the Gospel as the strongest case that could be made out of Gospel material for the Jewish Christian position. It was impossible to show that the Messiah had commanded that all Gentiles should be circumcised, but it was possible to show that He had laid upon all His disciples as a necessary obligation the observance of the law. And it was possible to show that He had by example and precept deprecated the breaking down of barriers between Jews and pagans (15²⁴ and 7⁶), where it is probable that 'dogs and swine' are for the Evangelist equivalent to Gentiles.

But it will be said, 'Is not the relationship between the First and Second Gospels decisive against so early a date?' I feel much hesitation upon this point, but I think that the answer should be a cautious No. I have long felt that the tradition which points to Rome as the home of the Second Gospel, and which suggests, therefore, a date later than 60 A.D. for the Second Gospel, may be justified by some final revision of the Gospel at Rome after that date, but cannot explain the first publication of the Gospel. For myself I believe in an ultimate Aramaic original, and I see no reason why such an original should not have appeared before the year 50 A.D. The Gospel might well first have appeared in Greek about that period, and then have been used by the author of the First Gospel.

Another objection to so early a date for St. Matthew is urged by Dr. Stanton, *The Gospels as Historical Documents*, ii. p. 368. He argues that St. Luke's Gospel must be dated *c.* 80 A.D., and that the First Gospel cannot have been written more than a few years before that date, because St. Luke must have known of it soon after its publication, and could not have avoided using it. I must not here enter into the date of St. Luke's Gospel. Let us allow that it was written *c.* 80 A.D. St. Luke, then, it is argued, must have known of the First Gospel, and must have used it. Both statements seem to me to be too dogmatic, but I think it probable that both are true. But in view of the Jewish-Christian character of the First Gospel, who can wonder if St. Luke, the Pauline Universalist, having read it, laid it aside among the many other

Gospel narratives that he had read. St. Luke had much to record. He certainly did not wish to repeat the anti-Jewish polemic which occupies so large a place in the First Gospel, and he already had in other forms most of the Lord's sayings which are in the First Gospel and which were adapted to the purpose of his own work.

It may be noted that Harnack seems inclined to

reopen the question of the date of the Lucan writings and of St. Mark. See his *Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 294 and 296. I think it probable that critical opinion will shortly move in the direction of, say, 60 A.D., as suggested by Harnack, for the Third Gospel, and 50 A.D., or shortly before, for the first publication of a Greek Second Gospel.

Harnack on the Recently Discovered Odes of Solomon.¹

BY THE REV. H. A. A. KENNEDY, M.A., D.Sc., D.D., PROFESSOR OF
EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY IN THE NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH.

It is not many months since Dr. Rendel Harris published the *editio princeps* of the Odes of Solomon which he was fortunate enough to discover in a late Syriac MS. from the neighbourhood of the Tigris. A perusal of the book was bound to convince scholars that a remarkable addition had been made to ancient religious literature. And now Professor Harnack, speaking with unrivalled knowledge of the facts, declares that since the discovery of the *Didache*, thirty years ago, nothing so valuable as this has come to light (p. v). The *editio princeps*, it need scarcely be said, was an admirable piece of work, but it was inevitable that further study of the Syriac text would elucidate difficulties both of translation and of interpretation. Such is unquestionably the result of the new edition. Flemming's translation has brought clearness into many obscure places, and, in our judgment, Harnack has made as important a contribution towards the true estimate and explanation of the Odes, as that which he gave to the world many years ago in his classical edition of the *Didache*.

The absence of historical allusions in the Odes makes the question of the date a difficult one. But two or three facts are clear. A quotation from Ode 19 in Lactantius and the presence of five of the Odes in the *Pistis Sophia* make it evident that they were regarded as canonical considerably before the middle of the third century.

That would push back their origin, at latest, to the middle of the second century. But an allusion in Ode 4 to the Temple, in which reference is also made to a rival sanctuary (perhaps several?), justifies Harnack in assuming that the Temple was still standing when the Ode was written. This seems more probable than the suggestion of Rendel Harris that it was the destruction of the rival Temple of Onias at Leontopolis in Egypt, in 73 A.D., which called forth the protest of the fourth Ode. Accordingly, the *terminus ad quem* must be placed somewhere before 70 A.D. On the other hand, according to the *Pistis Sophia*, the *Synopsis Sanctae Scripturae* of Pseudo-Athanasius (cent. 6), the *Stichometry* of Nicephorus (cent. 9), and Harris's Syriac MS., the Odes formed one book with the famous Psalms of Solomon, which are placed before them by all but the last-named authority. We know that the *Psalms* of Solomon belong to the time of the Roman invasion of Judæa under Pompey. Hence, the *terminus a quo* for the Odes is probably about 50 B.C. It is universally agreed that the *Psalms* of Solomon are products of Palestinian Judaism. This, at least, raises the presumption that the Odes, which have been combined with them to form a single collection, are of Jewish and Palestinian origin also.

At this point there emerges an important difference of opinion between the two editors. Rendel Harris holds that 'the writer, while not a Jew, was a member of a community of Christians, who were for the most part of Jewish extraction and beliefs, and the apologetic tone which is displayed in the

¹ *Ein Jüdisch-Christliches Psalmbuch aus dem ersten Jahrhundert*. Aus dem Syrischen übersetzt von J. Flemming. Bearbeitet u. herausgegeben von Adolf Harnack. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1910. Pp. vi, 134.