

Concordia Seminary - Saint Louis

Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary

Master of Sacred Theology Thesis

Concordia Seminary Scholarship

6-1-1958

The Eschatology of the Book of Acts

Robert Smith

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/stm>



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Smith, Robert, "The Eschatology of the Book of Acts" (1958). *Master of Sacred Theology Thesis*. 128.
<https://scholar.csl.edu/stm/128>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Concordia Seminary Scholarship at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master of Sacred Theology Thesis by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

THE ESCHATOLOGY OF THE BOOK OF ACTS

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

by

Robert H. Smith

June 1958

72167
Approved by:

Victor Bartling
Advisor

Martin H. Schaeffer
Reader

51856

BV
4070
C69
M3
1958
no. 11
C. 2.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. ESCHATOLOGY AND CONTEMPORARY EXEGESIS	4
III. THESE ARE THE LAST DAYS	34
IV. THE UNFINISHED TASK	68
BIBLIOGRAPHY	95

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Assumptions and Method

It is taken for granted that Luke is the author of Acts and of the Third Gospel. In an earlier generation such an assumption would have been branded as a vestigial remnant of congenital conservatism, but the twentieth century has witnessed a massive movement back to the opinio communis of the ancient church, that Luke, "the beloved physician," is the one who authored the Book of Acts.

Luke is given credit for being a careful and knowledgeable writer, compiler and editor. No reason exists for thinking he was conscious of any contradictions in the various strata and strands of his work. The viewpoint of the speeches or sermons is as much his own as that of the "summaries." He has edited his materials carefully and surely was selective in his choice of the traditions, notes and reminiscences to be included.

The method employed in this thesis is what someone has described as phenomenological in contrast to genetic. This paper is interested in the eschatology of the Book of Acts in its present state. Nowhere does this study attempt to isolate the eschatology of the primitive church in the city of Jerusalem, or the eschatology of the Hellenistic community, or the eschatology of Paul according to the Acts.

Corroboratory evidence and relevant illustration is introduced on

occasion from the Third Gospel and from other New Testament writings, although this thesis is concerned almost exclusively with Acts. In this work Luke stands first in any list of synoptic citations. This is not to fly in the face of a century of synoptic criticism, but it serves merely to indicate that Lucan parallels are considered most important in any investigation of Acts.

The Plan of the Thesis

Chapter two is an historical introduction to the issues involved in a study of the eschatology of Acts. It attempts to sketch in broad strokes the theological orientation of two prominent schools or trends of thought on the subject of eschatology with special attention to theological interpretations of Acts. Many writers cannot be identified with one school or the other, and indeed not all the schools are discussed. But such a study, however restricted, is necessary if a work of this kind is to be at all relevant to the contemporary exegetical discussion. The bias of the present work becomes plain enough in the course of chapter two.

Chapter three has as its subject what has come to be known as "realized eschatology." Jesus has been raised from the dead, has ascended into heaven, sits at the right hand, and has poured out the Spirit from on high. God has acted. The last times are already here. These are the last days; the eschaton has dawned.

Chapter four, the last chapter, deals with those elements of the eschatology of Acts which are yet future, the parousia, the resurrection of the dead, judgment, and the final revelation of the Kingdom of God.

Conclusions

The conclusions of this study agree wholeheartedly with the judgment of Kirsopp Lake and Henry J. Cadbury writing in the volume of commentary in The Beginnings of Christianity: "Paul and Acts are wholly absorbed in the Messianic claim of Jesus, and in the eschatological expectation."¹ The eschatology of Acts is Christological, pneumatological and ecclesiological. It is personal and concrete, concentrated in Jesus Christ and in the gifts and deeds of God in Christ. In the Acts of the Apostles eschatology is not fodder for minds of speculative bent, but is rather motivation for action in the present.

The eschatology of Acts unfolds historically. Acts is highly charged with tension between the already and the not yet, the present and the future, fulfillment realized and fulfillment yet to come. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is a great act of God which has concrete antecedents and definite consequences in history. In all of this Acts is not unique but stands in the mainstream of primitive Christianity.

Eschatology is not slighted by the Book of Acts. Hope has not relaxed or died away altogether. The "delay of the parousia" was an overwhelming problem for a very short time, from Good Friday till Easter. Then He was raised and appeared to His disciples. Any further "delay" is opportunity for the Christian to bear witness and for the unbeliever to repent. The time is short; for Jesus can come at any time.

¹(London: The Macmillan Co., 1922), IV, 347.

CHAPTER II

ESCHATOLOGY AND CONTEMPORARY EXEGESIS

It is unfortunate that two different exegetes can study the Book of Acts and arrive at completely divergent views concerning its eschatology. Scholars disagree not only concerning what the book says but also concerning what the book means. The differing assumptions and methods with which exegetes operate color their conclusions. Yet the results are neither chaotic nor kaleidoscopic; for, although no consensus concerning New Testament eschatology is apparent among Christian scholars, thinking tends in a general way to be polarized in a few basic directions. This thesis is primarily an exegetical study, and therefore it confines itself to remarks on the major trends among exegetes.

New Testament interpreters generally fall into one of two chief camps on the issue of eschatology in the New Testament and therefore in the Book of Acts. The basic lines are drawn as soon as answer is made to the question, "In what way are history and eschatology related?" To one school history and eschatology are diametric opposites. Another takes seriously God's revelation precisely in and through history and views eschatology as inseparably bound to history.

In the following pages these two schools of thought are allowed to speak for themselves. It is hoped that this approach will highlight the actual problems and issues involved in an interpretation of New Testament eschatology in general and the eschatology of Acts in particular; for a special effort is made to record opinion on the Acts of the Apostles or to show how an exegete's views bear on Acts.

History versus Eschatology

It is significant that Karl Ludwig Schmidt, one of the founders and chief protagonists of form criticism, was consciously indebted to a conception of Christianity which denigrated history in the extreme. Schmidt's estimate of the Lucan authorship was extremely low, since he was convinced that Luke had failed miserably to capture the essence of the Christian religion. With approval and no little relish the late professor quotes what he calls an "Anti-Lukas in nuce" from Franz Overbeck:

Nichts ist bezeichnender fuer die Auffassung des Lukas von der evangelischen Geschichte, sofern er darin ein Objekt der Geschichtsschreibung sieht, als sein Gedanke, dem Evangelium eine Apostelgeschichte als Fortsetzung zu geben. Es ist das eine Taktlosigkeit von welthistorischen Dimensionen, der groesste Exzess der falschen Stellung, die sich Lukas zum Gegenstand gibt. . . . Dem dritten Evangelisten ist sein Unternehmen, den Stoff der evangelischen Geschichte historisch zu gestalten, voellig misslungen -- der Gedanke an sich war dilettantisch, kein Wunder, dass sich der Dilettant auch sonst verruet. . . . Und doch wird Lukas oft als gewandter Schriftsteller gepriesen. Er ist es auch, nur uebt sich diese Gewandtheit an einem widerstrebenden Stoffe aus und an diesem wird sie zu Schanden. Lukas behandelt historisch, was keine Geschichte und auch so nicht ueberliefert war.¹

At least the more extreme proponents of form criticism agree with Schmidt's valuation of history and with his depreciation of Luke-Acts. The rise of form criticism spelled the fall of Acts. The form critics assume that "the material of the tradition has no biographical or chronological or geographical value," that is, no historical value.² Contexts and editorial additions

¹"Die Stellung der Evangelien in der allgemeinen Literaturgeschichte," Eucharisterion, Studien zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1923), II, 132f.

²E. Basil Redlich, Form Criticism: Its Value and Limitations (London: Duckworth, 1939), p. 62.

are discounted immediately. "In the beginning was the kerygma, the sermon."³ The primitive preachers did not "relate the life of Jesus, but proclaimed the salvation which had come about in Jesus."⁴ The distinction between salvation in Jesus and the life of Jesus corresponds to the distinction between eschatology and history.

Rudolf Bultmann, working independently, first spoke out for the form critical method and point of view about the same time that Karl Ludwig Schmidt first broke into print on the subject. If anything, Bultmann's work is even more radical than Schmidt's. Vincent Taylor has observed that Schmidt's attitude towards the material itself is "conservative," while his rejection of the outline is "radical."⁵ The same author comments on Bultmann's Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition thus:

It would not be unfair to describe the work as a study in the cult of the conceivable. . . . The real charge against him is that he is kinder to the possibilities than to the probabilities of things.⁶

The dichotomy, history and eschatology, raises its head in Bultmann's work in the old familiar form, the historical Jesus and the Christ of faith. The preaching of the early Church as we know it from Paul's letters and from Acts proclaims not the Jesus of history but the Christ of faith

³This quotation appears without credit in A. M. Hunter, The Message of the New Testament (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1950), p. 26 and in Redlich, op. cit., p. 26, but the credit seems to belong to E. Fascher.

⁴Redlich, op. cit., p. 64.

⁵The Formation of the Gospel Tradition (London: Macmillan, 1938), p. 13.

⁶Ibid., p. 15.

and of the cult.⁷ This is the earliest stage in the development of the synoptic tradition according to the classical formula of form criticism. Bultmann believes that the early Jerusalem Church soon began to collect traditions about the life of Jesus to illustrate the preaching and to meet other needs in the community. But he insists that the literary genre now known as the gospel is a creation of the Hellenistic community. The idea of composing a gospel, a continuous, connected account of the life of Jesus never occurred to the earliest Church. The primitive community was an eschatological community and thus had no use for an historical account of the life of Jesus.⁸

In his Gifford lectures Bultmann spells out the claim that the New Testament Church is an eschatological rather than an historical entity. In his own clear words,

The New Covenant is not grounded on an event of the history of the people as was the Old Covenant. For the death of Christ on which it is founded is not a 'historical event' to which one may look back as one may to the story of Moses. The new people of God has no real history, for it is the community of the end-time, an eschatological phenomenon. . . . The consciousness of being the eschatological community is at the same time the consciousness of being taken out of the still existing world. The world is the sphere of uncleanness and sin.⁹

Bultmann continues with the triumphant cry, "In early Christianity history is swallowed up in eschatology."¹⁰ All this is important for understanding

⁷Rudolf Bultmann, Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1931), p. 396. Hereafter cited as Tradition.

⁸This entire paragraph is a summary of Tradition, pp. 393-396.

⁹History and Eschatology (Edinburgh: The University Press, 1957), p. 36. Hereafter this work is cited as History.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 37.



Bultmann's view of Luke-Acts. For him the Third Gospel represents the zenith (or the nadir) of the development to which the tradition was subjected from the first: the revision and combination of single, isolated elements into a continuous and connected narrative.¹¹ And Franz Overbeck's opinion of Luke-Acts quoted above is certainly consonant with Bultmann's own judgments. Luke is the New Testament author who has carried farthest the historicizing of the tradition, which amounted to a perversion of the Christian religion.

In a section of his Theology of the New Testament entitled "The Transformation of the Church's Understanding of Itself" Bultmann traces the development or degeneration of the conception of the Church from its origin in earliest times to its low point in the book of Acts.

The earliest Church was conscious of being the eschatological people of God, who are divorced from the world and live in hope of the fulfillment. The delay of the parousia results not in a loss of this primitive consciousness but in a peculiar transformation, which Bultmann describes as follows:

The transcendent character of the Church gradually comes to be seen not so much in its reference to the future as in its present possession of institutions which are already mediating transcendent powers in the present: a sacramental cultus and finally a priestly office.¹²

Elsewhere he writes,

By and large, the chief difference between Hellenistic Christianity and the original Palestinian version was that the former ceased to be dominated by the eschatological expectation and the philosophy of life which that implied. Instead there was developed a new pattern of piety centred in the cultus.¹³

¹¹Tradition, p. 396.

¹²(New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), II, 112.

¹³Primitive Christianity in its Contemporary Setting, translated by Reginald H. Fuller (London: Thames and Hudson, 1956), p. 176.

Bultmann admits that hope in the future is modified, not lost. The Christian life comes to be viewed "not as the demonstration of the new (eschatological) existence but as the condition for achieving future salvation."¹⁴

The reference to the future is further modified by a relaxation of eschatological tension. Hope in eschatological fulfillment is not relinquished but the fulfillment is pushed forward "into a time that lies in the indeterminate future."¹⁵ When the Church was sorely persecuted, the old consciousness of imminent fulfillment breaks out again, as in Revelation and First Peter. But Bultmann claims,

At the same time the pastoral epistles and Acts show that to a large extent Christians are preparing for a rather long duration of this world and that the Christian faith, losing its eschatological tension, is becoming a Christian-bourgeois piety.¹⁶

In the Book of Acts eschatology and prophecy are used not to fortify hope in fulfillment but to make moral appeals. Impatient hope is rebuked and corrected (1:6) and is nowhere the viewpoint of the author. Neither in the Pastorals nor in Acts does Bultmann find a trace of the tension between the present and the future or of longing for the fulfillment.

Luke is guilty of representing the Christian Church as a new religion alongside of Judaism and the heathen religion. He conceives of Christianity as an entity of world history. So it happens that he alone of the evangelists attempts to write a life of Jesus in his gospel. That Luke has written a history of the origin and early days of the Church as a

¹⁴Theology of the New Testament, op. cit., p. 113.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 114.

¹⁶Ibid.

sequel to his gospel shows that he does not believe that the Church is the eschatological congregation and confirms the suspicion that he has surrendered the original kerygmatic sense of the Jesus-tradition and has historicized it. Bultmann writes,

Whereas for the eschatological faith not only of the earliest Church but also of Paul the history of the world had reached its end, because in Christ the history of salvation had found its fulfilment and hence its end, according to the viewpoint of Acts the history of salvation now continues. While for Paul, Christ, being the "end of the Law" (Rom. 10:4), is also the end of history, in the thought of Acts he becomes the beginning of a new history of salvation, the history of Christianity.¹⁷

The transformation from the original eschatological tension is complete. As far as Bultmann is concerned, Luke has committed the unpardonable sin. He has sacrificed the eschatological meaning of the life of Jesus and the history of the Church.¹⁸ The tradition about Jesus has a paradoxical character, speaking simultaneously of the eschatological occurrence and of an historical event. In Luke-Acts the "paradox was resolved in favor of a theology of history which knows only a history of salvation unrolling as world history."¹⁹ On the other hand Christian Gnosticism sacrificed the reference to the historical event. The latter point of view is peculiarly congenial to Bultmann, who remarks on the "relative appropriateness" of Gnostic teaching: "In opposition to a historicizing of the eschatological occurrence, it expresses a legitimate interest of faith."²⁰

¹⁷Ibid., p. 117.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 123.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 126.

²⁰Ibid., p. 127.

Erich Dinkler consciously follows Bultmann and objects strenuously to the view of history and eschatology represented by Oscar Cullmann.²¹ He presupposes variety of theological conception in the New Testament corpus and deals with the writings in regulation form critical manner. Examination of the proclamation of Jesus leads him to the conclusion that Jesus offers "no theology of history but a soteriology of the eschatological man. The idea of history consists paradoxically in this: that the end of history proclaims the redemption of man from history."²²

According to Dinkler, Paul, in asserting that Christ is the end of history and that the Christian is a new creature, understands the old aeon and the new aeon not mythologically but existentially. But the Apostle is not consistent. He holds also the mythological and apocalyptic conception which looks for a cosmic catastrophe to destroy all evil and bring rescue to the believers. This second view is characterized by the expectation of the parousia following the plan of God. The early Church and medieval theology almost without exception took up and developed this latter view, which is called by Cullmann the Biblical understanding. The existential conception, however, is more characteristic of the eschatological faith of earliest Christianity. The two conceptions are characterized by the watch-words *οἰκονομία* (plan of salvation) and *καιρός* (the decisive, the existential moment).

In both Mark and Matthew the delay of the parousia is felt to be a

²¹"Earliest Christianity," The Idea of History in the Ancient Near East, edited by Robert C. Dentan (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), p. 173 in footnote 4, where the author comments, "My paper is somehow a constant dialogue with Cullmann's book, Christ and Time."

²²Ibid., p. 180.

problem, and apologetic reflection has begun. The framework supplied by the Synoptists does not accord with the preaching of Jesus. "The sense of standing in the midst of the kairos plainly is disappearing."²³ Matthew has departed farther than Mark. Nevertheless Dinkler writes of Matthew, "His perspective on time, which he developed mythologically into a final drama, was rather naive, that is to say, non-reflective."²⁴

Among the Synoptists Luke was the literary man, and with a grain of salt one may call him the historian of earliest Christianity. His avowed purpose was to record a portion of history. Such a literary endeavor was possible only in an age which reckoned with a temporal future.

The hidden motive of Luke-Acts is the idea that the gospel must be preached in all the world before the parousia. Thus the present for Luke is a time for the unfolding of an economy of world history. The Christ-event and the parousia bound this history. Luke also explains historical events by reference to cause and effect. "The secularization of history in Christian theology begins with Luke."²⁵ Luke's universalism is but one more sign of his secularization. In conclusion Dinkler takes a parting shot at Luke:

The transition from a time of the eschatological expectation of the imminent event has passed over into a time when the end of history and of the world is projected indefinitely into the future, and all this has taken place in Luke without any observable disillusionment.²⁶

In Acts the parousia is not imminent and has lost all theological import.

²³Ibid., p. 194.

²⁴Ibid., p. 195.

²⁵Ibid., p. 197.

²⁶Ibid.

"The Gospel is on the march throughout the world in an apparently unthreatened continuity of time."²⁷

For Dinkler as for Bultmann the Johannine writings, the Gospel and the letters (with appropriate abbreviation, emendation, and relocation), are the heroes of the eschatological conflict which they find in the New Testament. Dinkler makes the significant claim that historiography was foreign to the unknown author of these writings and that they are "the last great protest of the early Christian attitude against incipient early Catholicism."²⁸

What is perhaps the most vitriolic of all recent assaults on the good name of Luke flows from the pen of Philip Vielhauer. He states his plan and purpose quite plainly in these words:

Wir beschraenken uns auf die Elemente der lukanische Paulus-Darstellung, die ihn als Theologen charakterisieren, also vor allem, wenn auch nicht ausschliesslich, auf seine Reden und gruppieren die theologischen Aussagen des Acta-Paulus um vier Themen: natuerliche Theologie, Gesetz, Christologie und Eschatologie, und vergleichen sie mit den diesbezuglichen Aussagen der Paulusbriefe.²⁹

The interest of this chapter is confined to his estimate of Lucan eschatology.

Vielhauer's words are direct and his meaning plain. In the Lucan portrait of Paul "faellt die Eschatologie aus."³⁰ Whereas eschatology in the theology of the genuine Paul holds central position, eschatology in the Paul of Acts has become a locus de novissimis. What for Paul was the

²⁷Ibid., p. 200.

²⁸Ibid., p. 202; italics mine.

²⁹"Zum 'Paulinismus' der Apostelgeschichte," Evangelische Theologie, X (July, 1950), 2.

³⁰Ibid., p. 12.

ultimate is for Luke the chronologically last. What Paul viewed as a qualitative relationship Luke construes as quantitative. The author's existentialist interpretation of eschatology and essential agreement with Rudolf Bultmann are apparent in this judgment:

Bezeichnenderweise wird das paulinische "Schon jetzt" und "Noch nicht" nicht quantitativ aufgefasst, und ihre Verbindung nicht als zeitlicher Prozess allmählicher Verwirklichung verstanden. Es handelt sich um die paradoxe Gleichzeitigkeit von Gegenwärtigkeit und Zukunftszeitigkeit des Heils, nicht um einen zeitlichen, sondern um einen ontologischen Dualismus.³¹

Therefore he rejects Luke's heilsgeschichtlich presentation of Christianity as anything but Pauline.³²

The sense of expectancy has disappeared from Luke's writing. The parousia is not only not imminent; its delay has long since ceased even to be a problem. Thus according to Vielhauer,

Lukas ersetzt die apokalyptische Erwartung der Urgemeinde und die christologische Eschatologie des Paulus durch das heilsgeschichtliche Schema von Verheissung und Erfuellung, in dem dann auch die Eschatologie den ihr zukommenden Platz erhält.³³

Vielhauer's anti-Lucan blast ends on a paradoxical note: "Der Verfasser der AG. ist in seiner Christologie vorpaulinisch, in seiner natürlichen Theologie, Gesetzesauffassung und Eschatologie nachpaulinisch."³⁴

In general, Ernst Haenchen³⁵ shares the view and position of Bultmann,

³¹Ibid.

³²On p. 14 Vielhauer quotes with joyous approval the dictum of Franz Overbeck which Karl Ludwig Schmidt, writing in 1923, found so congenial. It is quoted above, p. 5.

³³Ibid., p. 13.

³⁴Ibid., p. 15.

³⁵Die Apostelgeschichte in Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar ueber das Neue Testament, begründet von Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1956), pp. 87-91.

Dinkler and Vielhauer, although he does not air his opinions quite so extensively but merely adverts to his stand in a few introductory paragraphs. The earliest Christians did not think historically; they awaited the early advent of the Kingdom of God, in the firm conviction that they were the last generation before the end of the world. The months and years which unexpectedly followed the resurrection had no theological importance for them. Only a new generation could write an "Acts of the Apostles" as Luke did.

The Gospel of Luke already betrays its author as a Christian of the second generation. Haenchen seems to disagree slightly with Dinkler concerning Matthew and Mark. These authors, says Haenchen, have no literary pretensions and do not attempt to write a biography of Jesus. Moreover both testify to the nearness of the end, although Matthew seems somewhat distressed at the delay thus far. Haenchen summarizes,

Die eschatologische Naherwartung durchdringt bei ihnen noch den ganzen Stoff, auch wenn ein sie bezeugendes Wort wie Mt. 10:23 vielleicht nicht mehr im Sinn der Naherwartung interpretiert wird.³⁶

Luke differs essentially from the other Synoptists. He writes literature. He will be an historian, using sources, examining evidence, editing his materials carefully and arranging the whole artfully and in order.

Haenchen quotes with approval the judgment of Ernst Käsemann:

Sein Evangelium ist in Wahrheit das erste Leben Jesu, bei dem die Gesichtspunkte der Kausalität und Teleologie berücksichtigt und psychologische Einfühlung, Sammlertätigkeit des Historikers und die Tendenz des Erbauungsschriftstellers in gleicher Weise spürbar werden.³⁷

³⁶Ibid., p. 88.

³⁷Ibid., p. 85.

The older generation understood John the Baptist as Elijah, the herald of the new aeon which was then dawning. For Luke, the Baptist belongs to the old order. A time of salvation came in Jesus, but it was not the beginning of the eschatological end-time. It was an independent epoch that ceased with the Ascension. Then a period post Christum began and it can last for a long time, which will end only with the return of Christ, of which Haenchen writes with just a shade of sarcasm,

Diese ist freilich nicht auf den St. Nimmermehrstag verschoben - Lukas ist ein gläubiger Christ. Aber sie ist doch so weit in die Ferne gerueckt, dass die Eschatologie das letzte Kapitel der Lehre zu werden beginnt, anstatt sie ganz zu durchdringen.³⁸

In all this Haenchen appears dependent on the work of Hans Conzelmann, who has done the most ambitious recent study of Luke-Acts from the general point of view here under discussion.³⁹ Conzelmann begins with the form critical assumption that the "Rahmen der Geschichte Jesu" is secondary. The bits of traditions embedded in the framework first occupied the form critics, who only later began to study the framework as an entity sui generis.

The author accepts the basic "insight" of form criticism that the gospels are essentially not biographies of Jesus but proclamation of the salvation event. The kerygma (eschatology) is not narrative (history). These are two separate quantities. History plays a greater role in Luke than in the other writers of the New Testament. At first the kerygma alone was handed down. In Luke the kerygma becomes the bits of stone in a new mosaic. The process of historicizing has begun and this means simultaneous

³⁸Ibid., p. 90.

³⁹Die Mitte der Zeit: Studien zur Theologie des Lukas (Tuebingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1954). Here following is a summary of pp. 1-9.

de-eschatologizing.

The delay of the parousia causes Luke to reflect on the peculiar significance of the period of the Church. It differs essentially from the time of Jesus, who is regarded as an historical phenomenon to whom Luke looks back. The time of Jesus is the valid realization and concrete picture of timeless salvation from which the Church is to gain an understanding of its present and future.

Luke's reflection leads him to a schematization of history into three periods: the time of Israel, the time of Jesus, the time of the ecclesia pressa (in which patience is the cardinal virtue). Creation and parousia are the two boundary lines of history.⁴⁰ Thus Luke has historicized what was originally eschatological in character. He has replaced the eschatological scheme of the two aeons with a threefold division of history.

Conzelmann next takes up Luke's handling of John the Baptist.⁴¹ In the tradition (primitive eschatological kerygma) John is the boundary between the old and the new aeon. He not only announces the nearness of the kingdom; he is himself the sign of its dawning. Luke makes John the interlude between two epochs in redemptive history which continues without interruption. It is not the end which comes with John but only a new stage in history.

The time of Jesus is an interim sui generis between the time of Israel and the time of the Church.⁴² Whereas Paul understands his own day as the

⁴⁰Ibid. Conzelmann elaborates on this scheme of history on pp. 128-145.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 10-18 and 85f.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 146-180.

eschatological time, Luke looks back to salvation in the past. In the words of Conzelmann,

Mit Jesus ist nicht die Endzeit angebrochen. Vielmehr ist im Leben Jesu in der Mitte der Heilsgeschichte das Bild der kuenftigen Heilszeit vorabgebildet -- ein Bild, das jetzt unsere Hoffnung begruendet, mehr: ein Geschehen, das uns die Vergebung und den Geist und damit den Eingang ins kuenftige Heil beschafft. Das aendert aber nichts an der Tatsache, dass Jesuszeit wie Gegenwart noch nicht letzte Zeit sind. Nicht, dass Gottes Reich nahe herbeikam, ist die frohe Botschaft, sondern dass durch das Leben Jesu die Hoffnung auf das kuenftige Reich begruendet ist. Die Naehzeit ist damit zu einem sekundaeren Faktor geworden.⁴³

The same transformation of primitive eschatology is seen by Conzelmann in the way Luke treats the Holy Spirit.⁴⁴ The outpouring of the Spirit is no longer the dawn of the eschaton, but rather marks the beginning of the long period of the Church. Here Conzelmann, comparing eschaton and Spirit, restates with just a little more finesse the crude adage of Loisy, "Jesus promised the Kingdom of God, but the Church was all that came." But let Conzelmann speak for himself:

Der Geist ist nicht mehr selber die eschatologische Gabe, sondern der vorlaeufige Ersatz fuer den Besitz des endgueltigen Heils; er ermoeeglicht die Existenz der Glaebigen in der fort dauernden Welt, in der Verfolgung; er schenkt die Kraft zur Mission und zum Durchhalten.⁴⁵

In other words Luke has once again de-eschatologized and has taken originally eschatological material into the employ of his theology of history. The delay of the parousia forced Luke to develop, in contrast to the near-expectation of the original hope, a secondary construction that reflects on the significance of the present time. The delay of the parousia is thus a constitutive factor in the transformation of the hope.

⁴³Ibid., p. 27.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 80ff.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 81.

Also in his treatment of the Kingdom of God and in his handling of Jerusalem Luke shows that he has given up hope in an early Parousia. In place of the primitive eschatology Luke offers an outline "von der gegliederten Kontinuität der Heilsgeschichte nach Cottes Plan."⁴⁶

The final section of Conzelmann's Habilitationsschrift⁴⁷ brings forward new material.⁴⁸ He discusses the Church and the individual in Luke-Acts. The individual has no special place in Luke's historical scheme. He stands in the Church and that fact determines his position in a particular phase of history. Earlier he had stood in an immediate relationship with the salvation-event. The problem of eschatology is solved for the individual by his being set into the Church, which mediates to him through the message and the sacraments the Spirit, which is a substitute and compensation for salvation long delayed, making life in the interim tolerable.

Luke shows ethicizing and psychologizing tendencies in his treatment of man. He does not present the Christian life in pneumatic categories. Since he has relinquished hope in an end conceived as imminent, Luke concentrates not on the coming of the kingdom but on the way to the kingdom, to salvation. The proclamation tells us what is necessary for life on the way. Sin is also ethicized in the process.

Salvation and eternal life are future, just like the eschaton. Now the Christian possesses only the Spirit and the Church. The forgiveness of sins now is the presupposition for entering into life later. The Spirit

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 116.

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 181-206.

⁴⁸Erich Dinkler in his essay is more explicitly existentialist in his analysis of man and eschatology, but it is Conzelmann who shows that the existentialist interpretation of man involves a denigration of the view of man and the Church found in Luke-Acts.

is the proof of present forgiveness, on the basis of which one can stand in the future judgment.

In discussing Luke's view of the Christian life, Conzelmann observes,

Die Verschiebung der Eschatologie ergibt eo ipso einen Strukturwandel im ethischen Denken. Aus der Existenz in der eschatologischen Gemeinde mit ihrer Naherwartung wird nun die vita Christiana. Das Gericht bleibt Motiv, aber nicht mehr wegen seiner Nahe, sondern wegen seiner Tatsaechlichkeit.⁴⁹

Before proceeding to the opposing camp and its interpretation of eschatology and its valuation of Acts, it may be well to make a pencil sketch of the foregoing, indicating the chief assumptions and conclusions which justify characterizing this checkered group as a single school of thought.

To a man they operate with form criticism as one of their chief tools. One of the presuppositions underlying the early development of the form critical method was an answer to the question of the relationship between eschatology and history. And the critics mentioned so far wield the scholarly scalpel until they arrive at a primitive form of the kerygma which is satisfactorily unhistorical and eschatological in character, content and claim. Their premise is that the preaching of Jesus in its original form, discoverable by form criticism, is the eschatological norm. It is this they call the kerygma.⁵⁰ The original kerygma underwent gradual transformation by incorporation into semi-biographical and quasi-historical documents. Luke-Acts represents the climax of a process of historicizing,

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 204.

⁵⁰Ethelbert Stauffer asks the question whether the end product of form criticism as practiced by Bultmann is "kerygma oder bdelygma tes eremoseos?" in "Der Stand der neutestamentlichen Forschung," Theologie und Liturgie, herausgegeben von Liemar Hennig (Kassel: Johannes Stauda-Verlag, 1952), p. 101, thereby indicating the distance between schools.

secularizing, universalizing and rationalizing. Bultmann says of the kerygma, "In early Christianity history is swallowed up in eschatology."⁵¹ This school makes the charge that in Luke-Acts eschatology is swallowed up in history.

A constantly recurring note which is supposed to explain completely the massive change wrought in the outlook of nascent Christianity in the space of a single generation is the delay of the parousia. Jesus and the entire first generation of Christians waited with bated breath for the dawn of the Kingdom of God. The pressing nearness of the parousia shaped all life and thought. Great tension swelled every Christian breast. As Christians of the first generation died and a new generation was born, the delay of the parousia posed a monumental problem which demanded explanation. Luke-Acts responded by substituting history for eschatology, by replacing immediate confrontation of the event of salvation by the gift of the Spirit mediated in the Church and in the sacraments. For Luke-Acts and for his entire generation the parousia was no longer considered imminent. Nor was the parousia a matter of any real concern to them.

It is asserted repeatedly that only in an age when the parousia was conceived as far off would any kind of literary activity find a place in the Church. And surely interest in the life and ministry (history) of Jesus could arise only when the end was no longer imminent. History is written for future generations.⁵² The delay of the parousia "removed the inhibition upon writing which had operated while apocalyptic messianism

⁵¹Bultmann, History, p. 37.

⁵²Haenchen, op. cit., pp. 86f.

was at fever pitch."⁵³

The eschatology of this school tends also to be individualistic, personal and non-corporeal. It is strictly anthropological in an existentialist way. Any thought that salvation and therefore eschatology might be events of cosmic significance is met with the rejoinder that such notions are apocalyptic, implying that they are Judaistic and distinctly sub-Christian. All this only confirms and justifies the opinion of T. W. Manson on the existentialist reinterpretation of the kerygma and Jesus,

It is easy to laugh at those who, a couple of generations ago, saw in Jesus a good nineteenth-century liberal humanist with a simple faith in a paternal deity. It is less easy to see the joke when the Jesus of history is a twentieth-century existentialist, a kind of pre-existent Heidegger.⁵⁴

History and Eschatology

The following pages summarize the general stand and attitude of those exegetes whose eschatology is integrated with what is usually called Heilsgeschichte. In the development of this section it is, of course, necessary to discuss their view of history.

The central message of the New Testament is an eschatological act of God in time, in history. Christianity, in contrast to paganism, is emphatically an historical religion. Some Christians bend the knee or bow the head at the words of the creed, "and was incarnate," thus marking with fitting solemnity their recognition that Christianity has its roots neither in general religious experience, nor in some peculiar mysticism, nor in an

⁵³Frederick C. Grant, The Gospels: Their Origin and their Growth (New York: Harper and Bros., 1957), p. 33.

⁵⁴"Present-day Research in the Life of Jesus," The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology, edited by D. Daube and W. D. Davies (Cambridge at the University Press, 1956), p. 220.

abstract teaching, but in a particular unique, unrepeatable event in history.⁵⁵ "In the fulness of time God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law" (Gal. 4:4).

The pagan man of the ancient world had no such concern for history. He felt himself to be bound up in the bundle of life with nature, carried along on the cycle of the seasons, and so focused his eye on the drama of the natural order in which life is recreated each spring.⁵⁶

The ancient Greeks were genuinely concerned with history. The idea of history as a science, a form of research, came into being in the Greece of the fifth century B. C.⁵⁷ But the Greeks saw history as an impervious, impersonal system with no room for the personal and purposive providence of the God of the Bible.⁵⁸

Biblical man focused his attention neither on the cycle of nature nor on the closed harmony of the cosmos, but on what God had done, was doing, and was about to do according to his proclaimed purpose.⁵⁹ "The Greeks heard the eternal harmony of the spheres. The New Testament writers heard the march of universal history."⁶⁰

⁵⁵Sir Edwyn Hoskyns and Francis Noel Davey, The Riddle of the New Testament (London: Faber and Faber, 1947), p. 9.

⁵⁶G. E. Wright, God Who Acts: Biblical Theology as Recital (London: S. C. M. Press, 1952), p. 24.

⁵⁷R. G. Collingwood, The Idea of History (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1946), p. 46.

⁵⁸J. V. Langmead Casserley, The Christian in Philosophy (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), p. 22.

⁵⁹Wright, op. cit., p. 25.

⁶⁰Ethelbert Stauffer, New Testament Theology (New York: Macmillan Co., c.1955), p. 76. Hereafter this work is cited as Theology.

The historians of the Old Testament and the New Testament saw in the course of history no causal chain of an empirical or mechanical character. Rather history is the workshop of the Heavenly Craftsman and time is the means by which he achieves His saving purpose.⁶¹ The whole Bible takes it for granted that the revelation of the Lord of history is given in and through history. God makes Himself known, says Casserley,

neither in the speculative flight of philosophers -- for God is not a concept -- nor in the secret illuminations of mystics -- for God is much more than warm consolation for the devout -- but in the rough-and-tumble of events -- for God is the living God and by no means squeamish.⁶²

Common to both testaments is the faith that God speaks and acts in history, that history is an "utterance of God."⁶³ The New Testament, however, makes the unparalleled claim that the eternal God Himself is active in history as an historical figure, Jesus of Nazareth.⁶⁴ History possesses eschatological significance because God has revealed Himself in it as its Lord and Creator and Redeemer. Time is no enemy of God but the very means by which God works out man's salvation.⁶⁵ It has been said that the dominant theology today thinks of time as a form of human sensibility,

⁶¹T. A. Kantonen, The Christian Hope (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1954), p. 54.

⁶²Op. cit., p. 230.

⁶³Stauffer, Theology, p. 173.

⁶⁴John Marsh, The Fulness of Time (New York: Harper and Bros., 1952), p. 139. A reference to Marsh does not mean to imply that he is to be reckoned as a member of the school under discussion. His position is ambiguous. He does not appear to be really sure himself where he stands on the relationship between history and eschatology. If he were, he would have expressed himself clearly and consistently, which is not the case.

⁶⁵See Oscar Cullmann, The Early Church: Studies in Early Christian History and Theology, edited by A. J. B. Higgins (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), p. 144; Wright, op. cit., pp. 42f.

while the New Testament conceives time to be the form of divine activity.⁶⁶

The issue of the relationship of eschatology and history is basically the question of the relationship between God and history. In the words of Julius Schniewind,

That the Eternal, the Infinite, the Incomprehensible should make decisions, that he should be confronted by an Either/Or, that he should grant or withhold his presence, that he should show grace or wrath, that in other words God has a history, that there is a story of personal encounter between him and man: these are things a philosopher could never admit.⁶⁷

That "God has a history" is the daring claim and firm pronouncement of this school of interpreters.

All serious efforts to interpret history begin with periodization. The philosopher Henry N. Wieman has declared, "The bomb that fell on Hiroshima cut history in two like a knife. Before and after are two different worlds. That cut is more abrupt, decisive, and revolutionary than the cut made by the star over Bethlehem."⁶⁸ However, Christian faith calls Christ the midpoint of history. A really profound theological insight is contained in the ordinary reckoning of time as B. C. and A. D.⁶⁹

The life and death and resurrection of Christ marks the victorious fulfillment of Old Testament hope and the inauguration of the last things. All the time from the fall to the empty tomb was a time of preparation and

⁶⁶Stauffer, Theology, p. 75.

⁶⁷"A Reply to Bultmann," Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate, edited by Hans Werner Bartsch, translated by Reginald H. Fuller (London: S. P. C. K., 1953), p. 52.

⁶⁸Roger L. Shinn, Christianity and the Problem of History (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), p. 13, has this quotation from Wieman.

⁶⁹See Cullmann, Christ and Time (London: S. C. M. Press, 1952), pp. 17ff. and Marsh, op. cit., pp. 155f.

and promise. From resurrection and pentecost onwards the Church lives in the New Aeon. If anything transformed and shaped anew the life and thought of the primitive Church it was not the "delay of the Parousia" but the eschatological acts of God in history, the resurrection and the outpouring of the Spirit on pentecost. As Helmut Thielicke has so well written,

So koennte es also sehr wohl sein, dass der Terminirrtum der Urge-
meinde und der vielen andern, die ihr bis zu Joh. Albr. Bengel in
diesen "Irrtum" folgten, nur ein Schatten waere, der vom echten
Lichte der Wahrheit geworfen sein wuerde: vom Lichte der Wahrheit
naemlich, dass in der Auferstehung und Himmelfahrt Jesu Christi der
entscheidende Sieg ueber Suende und Tod bereits errungen ist, dass
der Teufel wirklich schon wie ein Blitz vom Himmel herabgestuerzt
ist (Lk. 10:18) und dass wir nun in dem epilogischen Zwischenstadium
zwischen der vorlaeufigen und der endgueltigen Machtergreifung leben.⁷⁰

Floyd V. Filson's book, Jesus Christ the Risen Lord, is but one in a chorus of voices which stresses the centrality of the resurrection for the entire theology and life of the Church. He writes,

The Christian faith is essentially a resurrection faith. Christian theology is essentially resurrection theology. . . . Certainly to the first disciples, the Resurrection was indubitable fact. It was the answer to all slander of Jesus and to all those who would reject him. It was the basis for all future faith, worship, thought, and witness.⁷¹

For the earliest disciples "the Gospel without the Resurrection was not merely a Gospel without its final chapter: it was not a Gospel at all."⁷²

Yet the old aeon continues apparently undisturbed and Christians still look forward to the parousia and the Kingdom of God. To quote again from Thielicke,

Andererseits bleibe ich aber kraft eines geheimnisvollen "simul" auch

⁷⁰Theologische Ethik (Tuebingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1951), I, 559f.

⁷¹(New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), p. 49.

⁷²A. Michael Ramsey, The Resurrection of Christ (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1946), p. 7.

Glied des alten Aeons. Denn Christus bittet den Vater nicht, dass er die Seinen aus der Welt wegnehme, sondern er bittet ihn, dass er sie aus der Verbindung mit dem Argen heraushalte (ἐκ τῆς συνθέσεως αὐτοῦ ἐκ τοῦ πονηροῦ, Joh. 17:15), sind sie doch ebensowenig "von" der Welt "her" (im Sinne ihres Ursprungs, ihrer Bestimmung), wie er selber von der Welt ist, obwohl er in ihr wandelt (17:16).⁷³

Thus the Christian lives in two ages simultaneously. In the period of the Church the old and new aeons overlap. On the two ages and their peculiar relationship Schniewind writes,

The distinction between the two ages differs radically from our popular distinction between time and eternity (= timelessness). It is a distinction between two different but overlapping periods of time. The difference is a qualitative one, a difference between this evil age and the age to come. Such a notion takes very seriously the reality of sin and judgment. In this age of tribulation and death, of warfare with Satan, to live in the flesh means to wait, to hope, to believe, to groan. When Christ appears at the last day this age with all its sorrows will come to an end.⁷⁴

Christ is coming again to resolve the duality and the ambiguity of the present situation. This evil aeon will come to an end and the new aeon will be revealed in all its power and glory at His parousia. Christ is not only the Redeemer and Lord but also the Consummator. He is the Consummator of the world, because His resurrection marked the inauguration of the last things and because He will come to reveal what He has done by pronouncing judgment on the living and the dead.⁷⁵ "In Jesus the Kingdom of God came into being and in him it will be consummated."⁷⁶ Christ

⁷³Op. cit., p. 68.

⁷⁴Op. cit., p. 79.

⁷⁵Joachim Jeremias, Jesus als Weltvollender (Quetersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1930), stresses the completed aspects of the consummation, while not overlooking the future elements; William Manson, "Eschatology in the New Testament," Eschatology (London and Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1953), strikes a fine balance between the realized and the future aspects.

⁷⁶Werner Georg Kümmel, Promise and Fulfilment: The Eschatological Message of Jesus, translated by Dorothea M. Barton (London: S. C. M. Press, 1957), p. 155.

testifies of Himself, "Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense, to repay every one for what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end" (Rev. 22:12-13; cf. 1:17f.).

In its eschatological teaching the New Testament, according to the view of Heilsgeschichte, contemplates no future that is timeless. God will not repudiate and obliterate time any more than He will reject and destroy the material earth and our bodies. Time is not the equivalent of fallenness or sinfulness, as some would claim. Before the fall God had already established night and day; that is, there was temporal succession in Paradise. Matthias Rissi has well summarized this point of view as follows:

The Creator is true to His creation, which has a bodily-temporal existence by His will. All spiritualizing of the eschatological hope, therefore, means disdaining the creation and the Creator's will. To be sure, sin has corrupted the form of the world and of man, and therefore St. Paul says that "the form of this world passes away." But it will be created anew by the Holy Spirit. New Creation means essentially a new body and a new time. . . . Faith in God as Creator presupposes the resurrection of the body in time.⁷⁷

The coming age, the new heaven and the new earth, will be no strangers to time any more than they will be enemies of the body. Walter Künneth writes concerning the cosmic dimensions of the Christian hope implicit in faith in the resurrection of Christ from the dead. He says,

Die Auferstehung Jesu wurde als ein Ereignis von kosmischer Weite und Tiefe erkannt. Ist sie von weltumfassender Bedeutung, wie die Beziehung zur Schoepfung, Natur, Geschichte zeigt, so schliesst die Vollendung der Auferstehungswirklichkeit notwendig die Auferstehung des ganzen Kosmos in sich. Die neue Welt umfasst gleichzeitig die neue Leiblichkeit des Einzelnen, und das Neuwerden des Kosmos. Eine neue Leiblichkeit gibt es auch nur im Zusammenhang mit neuer Zeit,

⁷⁷Zeit und Geschichte in der Offenbarung des Johannes (Zuerich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1952), p. 151.

neuem Raum und erneuerter Natur. Die Auferstehung des Kosmos ist die Vollendung der urspruenglichen Schoepfung Gottes zu einer neuen Schoepfungswirklichkeit, die der Erhaltungsordnungen nicht mehr bedarf.⁷⁸

Theo Preiss in his essay, "The Vision of History in the New Testament," in the collection entitled Life in Christ has put this same conception in striking language: "God is more materialistic than Marx."⁷⁹ He also has written,

Then will come a time which according to the profound word of the Apocalypse of Baruch will have no end. It will indeed be time, and also space, that are real, and there will be spiritual bodies more real than our poor reality of the present life. Let us not abandon to the Marxists the realistic pages of the Bible to delight ourselves only in the salvation of the soul.

Far from opposing history and eschatology, the New Testament affirms that "eschatology is ultimate history. . . . And there really is another aeon, a new time-process and a new spatial order."⁸⁰

The New Testament is profoundly silent about the details of the New Creation. Yet it is convinced of its continuity with the old world that passes away. The combination of reticence and conviction arises from the fact that this world of time and space is headed for the purifying and transforming fire of God's judgment (2 Pt. 3:10-13). Yet this world is related to the next as a seed to a mature flower (1 Cor. 15:37ff.). Stauffer says that the "Last Things are of necessity ineffable,"⁸¹ and he averts to the practice of the early Church of referring to the future in

⁷⁸Theologie der Auferstehung (Muenchen: Claudius Verlag, 1951), p. 250.

⁷⁹(London: S. C. M. Press, 1954), p. 70, from which the next quotation also comes.

⁸⁰Schniewind, op. cit., p. 89.

⁸¹Theology, p. 226; the other quotations in this paragraph are on pp. 226f.

negatives. "The meaning that runs through all these negations is that the Creator says an eschatological 'no' to this world in all its sin and suffering and death." But God's last word is not destruction but new creation. "The new creation is God's 'no' to the troubles of this world, but it is also his 'yes' to his original purpose in creation."

Stauffer, whose New Testament theology is written in the key signature of doxology, is the fitting voice to close this section on the interpretation of history and eschatology. He hymns this prose poem:

Self-glorification comes to an end when every creature praises God's glory with united voice. . . . Then the whole cosmos is a temple of God and the new age one continual Sabbath. . . . The people of God will be a people of priests, and clouds of incense will ascend continually to heaven. . . . The People will fall down and offer sacrifice before his face. . . . The antiphony of universal history leads into a symphonic doxology. At last God has attained the telos of his ways: the revelation of the gloria dei achieves its end in the hallowing of his name.⁸²

Very little has been said concerning the attitude of the Heils-
geschichtliche School towards Acts and its eschatology. This is readily understandable, however, since this school finds unity of eschatological outlook where the other school presupposes variety, diversity and contradictions among the New Testament writers. Therefore Acts does not receive separate attention. Differences of purpose and situation are taken seriously, but they see unanimity of theological conviction and viewpoint undergirding the entire New Testament. Thus Floyd Filson in the opening chapter of his extended essay argues the possibility and validity of a New Testament theology.⁸³ In the second chapter, following the lead of

⁸²Op. cit., p. 231.

⁸³Op. cit.; in fact he speaks out for a biblical theology and not only for a theology of the New Testament.

his colleague G. Ernest Wright and taking a cue from Dodd's studies in the primitive preaching, Filson summarizes the entire theology of the New Testament on the basis of the sermons in Acts.⁸⁴ Filson summarizes his second chapter with the words,

Thus, in the common core of the early Christian preaching we have laid hold of the unity which marks the New Testament. The points of this outline underlie the whole New Testament and continually bind the New Testament together into a common witness to God's past, present, and future work in Jesus Christ.⁸⁵

Henry J. Cadbury has published an essay⁸⁶ which is particularly interesting, since he cannot be said to belong to either of the two schools which have been discussed in this chapter. Cadbury is a careful, very critical and independent historian.

Cadbury discovers in Acts three convictions of a primitive and even primary character: the resurrection, the parousia, and the Spirit. The accounts of the Ascension and of pentecost constitute an elaborate frontispiece to the book. Much of the essay is an attempt to relate these events and themes.

Luke has an orderly mind and a strong belief in objective reality, habitually giving precision of time and place. Thus while a certain vagueness inevitably attaches to future eschatological events, the parousia would be conceived by Luke as geographically and chronologically

⁸⁴Besides Wright, op. cit., and Dodd, The Apostolic Preaching and its Development (New York: Harper and Bros., 1944), Filson refers to an essay of Bo Reicke and to the New Testament Theology of Ethelbert Stauffer as fundamental for this section of his work.

⁸⁵Op. cit., p. 57.

⁸⁶"Acts and Eschatology," The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology, op. cit., pp. 300-321.

definite. "There would be no vague or partial return."⁸⁷

Concerning the amount of future eschatological references in Acts, Cadbury writes,

The eschatological element in the Book of Acts taken by itself is often thought to be slight. That is of course partly because the book is mainly narrative. . . . What eschatology there is is tersely given -- much of it merely in rubrics. This means that it is taken for granted rather than that it is slighted. . . . The writer had perhaps no reason to answer such questions as were the occasion for the extended treatment of 2 Thess. 2, 1 Cor. 15, or even of Mark 13 and parallels. What he does say on the subject is therefore all the more revealing than if it were specially motivated.⁸⁸

Luke's treatment of the Kingdom of God, the resurrection, and the day of judgment show that he is not ignorant of eschatology as a welcome part of early Christian belief. Sparring with C. H. Dodd's reconstruction of early eschatology and the eschatology of Acts, Cadbury states quite firmly and frankly,

The Book of Acts does not spiritualize away the concrete eschatological hopes of Christianity nor on the other hand does it emphasize their imminence and urgency with the vivid details of apocalyptic. It retains, I am persuaded, the old and literal expectation but is satisfied to leave the time to God's ordering. It is true to the fundamental Jewish-Christian conception of religion as events in time sequence.⁸⁹

The New Testament writers are not unanimous in their view of the nearness of the parousia. The practical situation of the preachers rather than the delay itself is responsible for changing perspectives in early eschatological outlook. The parousia was used as a motivating

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 310; cf. p. 316.

⁸⁸Ibid.

⁸⁹Ibid., pp. 315ff.; Cadbury continues significantly, "To remind us of this characteristic is the great service of Oscar Cullmann's Christ and Time, whatever one may think of some other features of his book."

force. The writers emphasized variously the imminence or the preliminary events, depending on the particular situation. Luke is required by practical considerations to correct the over-expectant attitude by emphasizing the delay. But Cadbury continues,

The assurance of the final events of history is strengthened rather than weakened by Luke's acceptance of this delay. Not only the career of Jesus but the history of the early Church with which he supplements his Gospel are legitimate parts of the kind of assurance that is implied in the other gospels. But the present and past do not reduce the importance of the future, or much alter the nature of its expected fulfilment. The eschaton remains intact in the future.⁹⁰

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 321.

CHAPTER III

THESE ARE THE LAST DAYS

The acts of the Apostles in its entirety is an eschatological book; for Christian eschatology is much more than the last chapter of a dogmatics text. The future does not form the sole concern of Christian eschatology. The Church's preaching and faith and worship, and the Church's book and the Church's very existence are all thoroughly eschatological in character. These are now the last days (Ac. 2:17; 3:24). If the teaching of Acts concerning the future is slight in comparison with some other New Testament books, the author never lets his reader forget that eschatology is a matter also of past and present experience. This chapter deals with the eschatological interpretation of the past and present which Luke offers in the Book of Acts.

For Luke as for the other writers of the New Testament the central and primary fact was the resurrection of Jesus. Where the modern scientific historian would handle the matter objectively, without personal involvement or commitment, Luke writes frankly from the depths of eschatological faith. As A. Michael Ramsey has put it, "Every oral tradition about Jesus was handed down, every written record of Him was made by those who already acknowledged Him as Lord, risen from the dead."¹ The resurrection of Jesus is the focal point and firm foundation for all

¹The Resurrection of Christ (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1946), p. 8.

early Christian witness and worship, faith and life. The early Church regarded herself as the creation of God acting through the crucified and resurrected Jesus.²

The primitive preaching consisted of several elements. But the resurrection is not merely one constituent among many. It is the very heart and soul of the kerygma. The message of the early Church possessed unity and coherence by virtue of the common reference of all the parts to the resurrection.³ In Jesus' own life, even when considered as a single entity, the resurrection holds the dominant position. Some would rather assign central significance to the crucifixion, but as Rengstorf remarks, "Dass Jesu lebt, ist fuer das gesamte neutestamentliche Kerygma die entscheidende Voraussetzung fuer seine Verkuendigung als Gekreuzigter."⁴

In the opening verses of Acts (1:3-8) Luke bears witness to the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus, who showed His apostles by many proofs that He was alive after His passion. The cross, so scandalous to the Jews, was not Jesus' end. But let T. W. Manson tell it, since he phrases it thus neatly:

When Pilate had the notice 'Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews' tacked up on the Cross, he no doubt thought that there was another false coin nailed to the counter. And in their several spheres the Jewish authorities felt that they had disposed of something false and dangerous.⁵

²Karl Heinrich Rengstorf, Die Auferstehung Jesu: Form, Art und Sinn der Urchristlichen Osterbotschaft (2. Aufl.; Witten-Ruhr: Luther-Verlag, 1954), p. 91.

³Ibid., pp. 30f.

⁴Ibid., pp. 15f.

⁵The Servant-Messiah: A Study of the Public Ministry of Jesus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), p. 89; the following quotation is from the same page.

Manson continues,

There are many uncertainties to be reckoned with in tracing the history of Jesus and the early Church, but here is one certainty: the Ministry of Jesus was not stopped.

Now it would certainly be risky business to claim that Luke wrote Acts with one tendency or for one purpose only. But it is just as sure that it is not only possible but even necessary to agree with the host of commentators who assert that Jesus Christ, the exalted Lord, is the "majestaetische Mitte dieses Buches."⁶ The preface to Acts says essentially the same thing. In his earlier work, says Luke, he dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach until He ascended (Ac. 1:1f.).⁷ Thus he implies that now he will relate something of Jesus' further activity following the ascension. Paul remarks concerning the continuing ministry of Jesus when he bears witness before Festus that Jesus Himself, risen

⁶The quoted words belong to Udo Smidt, Die Apostelgeschichte, in Bibelhilfe fuer die Gemeinde, herausgegeben von Erich Stange (Kassel und Stuttgart: J. G. Oncken Verlag, 1951), p. 8.

⁷The words ὃν ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς ποιεῖν have caused no little difference of opinion among the exegetes. Ernst Haenchen, Die Apostelgeschichte, in Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar ueber das Neue Testament, begründet von Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1956), p. 107, translates, "alles, was Jesus tat und lehrte," following J. W. Hunkin, who saw here a case of pleonasm in the style of the Septuagint. Gerhard Dellling, "ἤρξατο," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament, herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1933), I, 447 n. 5, thinks the phrase best translated, "What Jesus did from the beginning." F. F. Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles (London: The Tyndale Press, 1952), p. 66, says ἤρξατο is emphatic. Bo Reicke has an interesting note in his book, Glaube und Leben der Urgemeinde (Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, 1957), p. 9. He writes, "ἤρξατο ποιεῖν bedeutet im Zusammenhang nicht 'er fing an zu tun,' sondern 'er tat zunächst,' 'als Einleitung,' im Blick auf die jetzt aktuelle Fortsetzung der Wirksamkeit Jesu (ἤρξατο ist also nicht ganz pleonastisch)." Luke's belief in the continuance of the ministry of Jesus after His death by no means stands or falls with any particular interpretation of this single, prefatory verse.

from the dead, proclaims light both to the people and to the Gentiles (Ac. 26:23). Alfred Wikenhauser speaks for many besides himself when he writes,

Mit dem Scheiden Jesu von der Erde ist sein Wirken nicht zu Ende; vom Himmel aus setzt der erhoehte Herr in seinen mit der Kraft von oben ausgeruesteten Aposteln durch die Gruendung der Kirche und die Verkuendigung des Evangeliums ueber die ganze Welt hin sein Werk fort.⁸

The continued activity of Jesus is attested time after time in Acts. The earthly career of Jesus was prelude and preparation and presupposition for His more extensive activity as the Resurrected One. Floyd V. Filson reflects Luke's viewpoint when he writes, "Jesus' resurrection is the open door through which he entered upon the further work which in God's plan He was still to accomplish."⁹

The preceding may serve as a general introduction to the eschatological stand and attitude of Luke and to his evaluation of the resurrection. In the following pages those aspects of the resurrection which are relevant to an understanding of the eschatology of Acts will be studied. And only the past and present elements of eschatology are the concern of this chapter.

The Resurrection

In every age people have doubted the reality of the resurrection and have attempted to interpret early faith in the resurrection as a subjective illusion capable of psychological explanation.¹⁰ But Luke understands

⁸Die Apostelgeschichte, in Das Neue Testament, herausgegeben von Alfred Wikenhauser und Otto Kuss (2. Aufl.; Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1951), p. 7.

⁹Jesus Christ the Risen Lord (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), p. 165.

¹⁰Cf. Rengstorf, op. cit., pp. 9ff.

the resurrection as a fact that forced itself upon the disciples, who were taken completely by surprise, utterly unprepared for the event of Easter. No presuppositions paved the way for easy faith. Karl Heinrich Rengstorff put it this way:

Die Lage der Juenger nicht nur zwischen dem Tode Jesu und seiner Auferstehung, sondern ebenso schon vor Jesu Festnahme wie dann auch nach dem Ostermorgen und seinen aufregenden Botschaften ist naemlich bezeichnet durch das--wie auch immer bedingte--voellige Fehlen einer Praedisposition fuer einen Glauben an die Auferstehung ihres gekreuzigten und begrabenen Meisters. Das laesst sich so gut wie gleichfoermig allen Teilen der Ueberlieferung entnehmen.¹¹

To this testimony may be added that of Maurice Goguel, who writes, "The death of Jesus on the cross seemed to make definite shipwreck of all the expectations which he had planted in the hearts of his disciples."¹²

The angel revealed to Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and other women that the Son of Man had risen from the dead (Lk. 24:7). Then it was that the women remembered Jesus' teaching (Lk. 24:8). Yet their report to the apostles seemed like nothing more than an idle tale (Lk. 24:1). Here were no hearts eager to grasp at straws; the reports fell on the deaf ears of disappointed and disillusioned men.

The origins of faith in the Risen One are found in the appearances of Jesus. He took the initiative and "showed Himself alive after His passion by many convincing proofs,"¹³ appearing to His disciples during

¹¹Ibid., p. 32.

¹²The Birth of Christianity, translated by H. C. Snape (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1954), p. 29.

¹³ΤΕΚΜΗΡΙΟΝ is so rendered by W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c.1957), p. 815; Haenchen, op. cit., thinks here of proof which overcame the doubts described in Lk. 24:37,41; Bo Reicke, op. cit., p. 11, deals a bit freely and translates with "Erscheinungen."

forty days" (Ac. 1:3). Jesus spoke and walked and talked with His followers (Lk. 24:13-49). He offered His hands and feet to their touch (Lk. 24:39). He took bread and broke it (Lk. 24:30) and He ate a piece of boiled fish (Lk. 24:42f.). Acts 1:4 is probably also to be taken as a reference to His eating with His disciples.¹⁴ Peter, preaching in the home of Cornelius, proclaims, "God raised Him on the third day and made Him manifest; not to all the people, but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead" (Ac. 10:40-41).

The resurrection is not to be classed with mere resuscitations. Wilhelm Michaelis remarks, "Auch die Wendung 'er erwies sich als lebendig' Apg. 1:3 ist selbstverstaendlich nicht irgendwie auf Wiederbelebung zu beziehen, sondern meint das 'Leben' eines Auferstandenen und Erhoehten."¹⁵ The hopes of contemporary Judaism were "thoroughly materialistic."¹⁶ The "materialism" of Luke's view of the resurrected Jesus has not gone unnoticed. But Jesus was not a resuscitated corpse. He was different. The witnesses to whom He appeared on the way to Emmaus did not recognize Jesus, even though He travelled with them in conversation for some distance (Lk. 24:13ff.). When Jesus came and stood in the midst

¹⁴The meaning of *ἐναλίξω* is disputed but more and more treat it as though derived from *ἐλς*. Haenchen and Reicke both accept this derivation and translation.

¹⁵Die Erscheinungen des Auferstandenen (Basel: Heinrich Majer, 1944), p. 93.

¹⁶Albrecht Oepke, "*ἐγείρω*," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament, herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1933-), II, 336; the dictionary is cited hereafter as TW; see also Rengstorff, op. cit., pp. 68f.

of the eleven, "they were startled and frightened, and supposed that they saw a ghost" (Lk. 24:37).

On the other hand, Jesus now risen from the dead is often identified in Luke-Acts with the pre-resurrection Jesus. Of the resurrected one Max Meinertz remarks, "Natuerlich ist dieser dem Wesen nach kein anderer als der irdische Jesus, so dass die Verbindung mit ihm und seinem Wirken nicht unterbrochen ist."¹⁷ In the first verse of Acts Luke refers to Jesus' earthly career and says that this Jesus presented Himself alive (Ac. 1:1-3). Mention is made of the mother of Jesus and of His brothers (Ac. 1:14). Peter recalls the ministry of Jesus which began with John's baptism (Ac. 1:21f.; cf. 4:13; 10:37ff.). Paul also dates the coming of Jesus by the end of John the Baptist's ministry (Ac. 13:23ff.; cf. 19:4). Through Jesus God did many signs and wonders (2:22). Paul quotes a saying of Jesus (20:35). In their preaching the Christians mention the betrayal, arrest and trial of Jesus before Pilate (1:6; 2:23; 3:13f.; 7:52). The Jesus whom the apostles preach suffered (1:3; 3:18; 17:3; 26:23), was crucified and killed (2:23,36; 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; 10:39; 13:28f.). A convenient summary for all the foregoing was found in the phrase "Jesus of Nazareth" (2:22; 3:6; 4:10; 6:14; 22:8; 26:9; cf. 24:5). It is this Jesus whom the apostles declare God has raised from the dead (2:24,32; 3:15,26; 4:10; 5:30; 10:40f.; 13:30,34,37; 17:3,31; 26:23).

Now this Jesus is exalted, a fact which appears from the titles applied to Him by virtue of His resurrection from the dead. One of the

¹⁷Theologie des Neuen Testamentes, in Die Heilige Schrift des Neuen Testamentes, herausgegeben von Fritz Tillmann (Bonn: Peter Hanstein Verlag G. m. b. H., 1950), II, 215.

basic sayings is this: "Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified" (Ac. 2:36).¹⁸ Thus the stone rejected by men has become the head of the corner (Ac. 4:11). In His earthly career Jesus was a prophet like Moses (3:22f.) and was the servant of God (παῖς θεοῦ : 3:13,26; 4:27,30). Following His resurrection He is proclaimed as Messiah (2:36; 3:18,20; 4:26; 5:42; 8:12; 9:22; 10:36; 17:3; 18:28; 26:13) and His witnesses testify that Jesus is Lord (2:34ff.; 4:26; 10:36).¹⁹ In Damascus Paul preached Jesus as "the Son of God" (9:20).²⁰ Elsewhere Jesus is named τὸ ἄγιον καὶ δίκαιον (3:14; cf. 2:27 and 13:35), τὸν ἀρχηγὸν τῆς ζωῆς (3:15). Peter declares Him ἀρχηγὸν καὶ σωτῆρα (5:31).²¹

In the last cited verse (5:31) the resurrection is interpreted as the exaltation of Jesus. The words ἥγειρεν and ὑψωσεν in verses thirty and thirty-one stand strictly parallel. And in Acts 2:32-36 the resurrection is equated with the exaltation. Albrecht Oepke defines the resurrection as "that work of the Father by which the one killed on the cross

¹⁸Luke does not say that Jesus first became the Christ at His resurrection. He was already anointed before His ministry, presumably at His baptism (Ac. 10:38; 3:18; 4:27).

¹⁹Many times κύριος is used in the vocative or as a title in the combination "Lord Jesus" and in other ways not consciously or clearly confessional (1:6,21; 4:33; 7:59f.; 8:16; 9:5; 9:10f.,13,15,17,27,29,35,42; 15:11,26; 16:34; 19:5,13,17; 20:24,35; 21:13; 22:8,10,19; 26:15; 28:31). Often it is not sure whether Jesus or the Father is meant by the title. Such cases have been left unmentioned, since even their justified inclusion would amount only to carrying coals to Newcastle.

²⁰That He has this title is sometimes taken to be a result of His resurrection, since Paul connects the fulfillment of the scripture, "Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee," with the raising of Jesus (Ac. 13:33). Philip Vielhauer, "Zum 'Paulinismus' der Apostelgeschichte," Evangelische Theologie, X (July, 1950), 11, talks of Luke's "adoptionist Christology." Prof. Victor Bartling is certainly right in referring the words to the raising up of Jesus on the field of history (cf. 13:22).

²¹See 7:35 where Stephen calls Moses ἀρχοντα καὶ σωτῆρα.

is exalted to messianic δόξα."²² Ethelbert Stauffer has written,

Easter is the first decisive step that the Son took on the way to his final glory, after his descent to earth and to the darkness of hades. This is the doxological interpretation of the resurrection, as it is envisaged in the sayings of Jesus about the Son of Man, and as it is presented in the passion narratives of the evangelists. Christ's descent has passed its lowest limits, and his ascent has begun.²³

The interpretation of the resurrection as the exaltation has two important corollaries. In the first place, the Jesus who was raised from the dead, while the same as He who died, is yet different; He is glorified. This meets the charge of Lucan "materialism." In the second place, the equation excludes the possibility of dating the exaltation only from the ascension.

According to the eschatology of Acts the messianic age begins with Jesus' resurrection and exaltation to the right hand of God. On Acts 2:36 Walter Grundmann has written,

Jesus von Nazareth ist durch die Erhöhung, durch die er den Ehrenplatz neben Gott erhalten hat, der Christus und Kyrios der Welt geworden. Damit ist der Messiaspsalm erfüllt, der Messias hat seine Herrschaft angetreten, die messianische Zeit ist angebrochen. Der auf dem Ehrenplatz zur Rechten Gottes sitzende Jesus hat Anteil an der Herrlichkeit und Macht und Goettlichkeit Gottes, die er in der Sendung des heiligen Geistes betätigt.²⁴

Alfred Wikenhauser makes essentially the same comment, adding a comparison of Christian and Jewish conceptions of the messianic era. He writes,

Jesus hat das politische Messiasideal des Judentums abgelehnt. Er bezog Ps. 110:1 auf sich und beanspruchte einen Platz zur Rechten

²²"ἀνάστασις," TW, I, 371; he refers to Ac. 1:22; 2:24, 31f.; 4:33; 10:41; 13:33f.; 17:31; Rom. 1:4; 1 Cor. 15:1ff.; compare with this the words of Michaelis, *op. cit.*, pp. 84f., "Jedoch ist nach der Apostelgeschichte bereits die Auferstehung als Erhöhung zu Gott gedacht."

²³New Testament Theology (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1956), pp. 135ff.

²⁴"δεξιός," TW, II, 39.

Gottes, d. h. er wollte nicht ein juedischer Messias, sondern der Herr der Welt sein. Zu diesem Messiasium hat er sich vor dem hohen Rat feierlich bekannt (Mk. 14:62). Die Urchristenheit ist von Anfang an ueberzeugt, dass dieser Anspruch Jesu seine Erfuellung gefunden hat (Apg. 3:21; 5:21; 7:56. . .). Sie schliesst dies aus seiner Auferstehung und insbesondere aus der Herabkunft und dem Wirken des Geistes. Da Jesus also tatsaechlich den Platz zur Rechten Gottes eingenommen hat, ist Ps. 110:1 erfuehlt und hat die messianische Zeit begonnen.²⁵

To Adam God had said, "Subdue the earth" (Gen. 1:28). But it was Jesus of Nazareth who subdued the earth and became Lord of all (Ac. 10:36). In the resurrection of Jesus from the dead God is stretching forth His strong arm to establish His kingly rule. In the words of Karl Heinrich Rengstorff,

Es vermag die Dinge nur so zu sehen, dass mit Jesu Auferweckung der neue Aeon zum ersten Male mit allen seinen Kraeften noch im Bereiche des alten Aeons wirksam geworden ist und ihm den entscheidenden Stoss versetzt hat. . . . Der erste Schoepfungstag ist abgelaufen, und ein neuer Schoepfungstag hat mit der Auferstehung Jesu begonnen.²⁶

It is no accident that Acts speaks far less of Jesus rising than it does of God raising Him from the dead. The resurrection is not viewed as a miracle performed by Jesus. Indeed, even the signs and wonders of Jesus' ministry were the acts of God through Him (Ac. 2:22), just as the signs and wonders of the apostles are in reality the works of God through the name of Jesus (4:30; 2:43; 5:12; 14:3; 15:12).

Acts is emphatic. God raised up Jesus from the dead (2:24,32,36; 3:15,26; 4:10; 5:30f.; 10:40; 13:30,33,34,37; 17:31; cf. 26:8, τὸ ὑπὲρ πάντων κείνεται πνεῦμα ὑμῶν εἰς ὃ θεὸς νεκροῦς ἐγείρει); God manifested Him to His disciples (10:40); God set Him upon His throne (2:30), that is, exalted

²⁵Op. cit., p. 41.

²⁶Op. cit., p. 73.

Him (2:33; 5:31); God glorified Him (3:13). On the other hand, it is some few times said that Jesus rose from the dead (10:41; 17:3; Lk. 24:6,7,34). In 10:41 the rising is dependent on the preceding verse, "God raised." In 17:3 and Lk. 24:7 the infinitive ἀναστῆναι is dependent upon the verb δεῖ (δεῖ), which again points beyond to God who wills and effects the resurrection of Jesus. In Lk. 24:34 the eleven report, ἡγέρθη ὁ κύριος, which echoes the report of the angels, οὐκ ἔστιν ὧδε, ἀλλὰ ἡγέρθη (24:6). The form of the verb is passive and God may easily be understood as the agent of the action, although, as verse six shows, the emphasis lies on the fact that Jesus lives.

That the resurrection of Jesus is a creative act of God is stated in yet another way. According to Luke-Acts the resurrection of Jesus fulfils prophecy. And time and again the verb δεῖ appears precisely in connection with the death and resurrection of Jesus. In the Scriptures and in the divine "must" the hearer or the reader stands face to face with God's will and God's plan. To the disciples en route to Emmaus Jesus Himself expounded His suffering and His glorification as standing under the divine "must," as foretold by Moses and all the prophets (Lk. 24:25-27). And in the midst of the full complement of disciples Jesus reiterated the same fact (Lk. 24:44-47). Peter and the others learned the lesson well. To the pentecost crowd Peter preached that Jesus was "delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God" and that God raised Him up. He caps his proclamation and clinches his argument by citing Psalms 16 and 110 (Ac. 2:22-36). In his sermon to the people in Solomon's portico Peter again stresses these three, the will and act of God, the prophecy found in Scriptures, and the "must" (3:17-26).

Luke as well as Paul emphasizes that Jesus rose "according to the Scriptures." He has his proof texts. But he has much more, too. In the phrases of Michael Ramsey,

Beneath the use of proof-texts was the conviction that the whole story of God's words and actions in Israel had found its climax and its key in the death and Resurrection of Christ. In Scott Holland's words, 'The entire body of ancient scripture opened its heart to the astonished and rejoicing Apostles.'²⁷

And again he writes,

The message of the Resurrection was the newest thing in history. Yet those who first believed it attached the utmost importance to its connection with one of the oldest things that they knew, the Scriptures of the Old Testament.²⁸

The frequent use of $\delta\epsilon\iota$ or $\delta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$ $\epsilon\sigma\tau\acute{\iota}$ provides the cantus firmus for the two-fold composition called Luke-Acts. Luke uses these words more often than any other New Testament writer.²⁹ The words of Walter Grundmann on $\delta\epsilon\iota$ come close to forming the outline for a theology of Luke-Acts. The temptation to quote at length is irresistible. He writes,

Sein ganzes Leben und Handeln und Leiden sieht Jesus unter diesem, in einem $\delta\epsilon\iota$ sich zusammenfassenden Willen Gottes. Ueber ihm steht ein $\delta\epsilon\iota$, das schon in der Jugendgeschichte da ist, das $\delta\epsilon\iota$ der Gottes-herrschaft (Lk. 2:49), das seine Taetigkeit bestimmt (Lk. 4:43; 13:33; 19:5), das ihn in Leiden und Sterben, aber eben darum auch zur Herrlichkeit fuehrt (Lk. 9:22; 17:25; 24:7,26; Ag. 1:16; 3:21; 17:3). Dieses $\delta\epsilon\iota$ hat seinen Grund in dem in der Schrift ueber ihn niedergelegten Willen Gottes, dem er unbedingt folgt (Lk. 22:37; 24:44). Unter dieses $\delta\epsilon\iota$, das dem Willen Gottes entspringt, sind auch die Juenger, Apostel und Gemeinden gestellt, die von diesem Willen Gottes gefoerdert werden und die von ihm gestaltet und bestimmt werden bis in alle Einzelheiten ihres Lebens hinein (Lk. 12:12; Ag. 9:6,16; 14:22; 19:21; 23:11; 27:24).³⁰

²⁷Op. cit., p. 24.

²⁸Ibid., p. 19.

²⁹Walter Grundmann counts in the New Testament 102 occurrences, of which 41 appear in Luke's writings; " $\delta\epsilon\iota$," TW, II, 22.

³⁰Ibid., p. 23.

He continues,

Die eschatologische, messianische Zeit ist gekommen. Von da aus faellt helles Licht auf die Verwendung des Begriffes $\delta\epsilon\iota$ im Zusammenhang der Leidens- und Auferstehungsweissagungen des Christus. In Ihnen hat es in den synpt. Evangelien seine feste Stelle: $\delta\epsilon\iota$ αὐτὸν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἀπελθεῖν καὶ πολλὰ παθεῖν ἀπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων, καὶ ἀρχιερέων καὶ γραμματέων καὶ ἀποκτανθῆναι καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἐγερθῆναι Mt. 16:21 par (vgl. noch Lk. 17:25; 24:7,26; Ag. 3:21; 17:3). Leiden, Tod und Auferstehung des Christus sind Teile des eschatologischen Dramas. Christus ist also nicht nur Verkuender der Eschatologie, sondern seine Geschichte ist Eschatologie. Dieses, unter dem Leiden, Tod, Auferstehung und (bei Lk.) Himmelfahrt stehen, gehoert zum geheimnisvoll richtenden und heilenden Handeln Gottes in der Endzeit.³¹

Karl Heinrich Rengstorf finds the use of $\delta\epsilon\iota$, the emphasis on God's action, and the reference to fulfilment of prophecy highly significant.

He writes,

In seiner aeltesten Formulierung weist das Osterkerygma selbst von dem 'Auferstehung Jesu' genannten Geschehen . . . fort auf Gott als den, der allein hinter ihm steht. Er steht als Schoepfer ueber dem Tod. Als der, der ist und sein wird, wie er war, ist er das Leben und verleiht das Leben. Man wird sogar sagen duerfen, dass fuer die neutestamentliche Osterverkuendung das eigentliche Gewicht der Auferstehung Jesu darin liegt, dass sie in dieser Weise ueber sich hinausweist und dass sie also nicht in sich selbst ruht und gewissermassen autark ist.³²

In other words, the resurrection of Jesus is not an end in itself; it is no goal. It is rather a transition, an open door by which Jesus entered upon the further work which God will accomplish through Him.³³

Rengstorf sets the resurrection into proper focus when he describes the raising of Jesus from the dead as a $\mu\epsilon\gamma\alpha\lambda\epsilon\iota\omega\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ standing in

³¹Ibid., p. 24.

³²Op. cit., p. 25.

³³Filson, op. cit., p. 165; Rengstorf, op. cit., p. 25.

a series of God's μεγαλεία.³⁴ The assertion, at first sight so tenuous and even fanciful, turns out to be amply justified, even demanded, by the evidence. The phrase τὰ μεγαλεία τοῦ θεοῦ appears in the New Testament only at Acts 2:11. Walter Grundmann defines τὰ μεγαλεία as "die Gross-taten Gottes, die sich auf die Geschichte des Christus beziehen und in ihr bestehen und die den Inhalt nt.licher Verkündigung darstellen."³⁵ He says that "μεγαλεῖον is used in the Septuagint almost exclusively of the marvelous deeds and works of God." Deuteronomy 11:1-7 offers a fine example of the Septuagint usage. Moses calls to mind God's deeds in this series:

μεγαλεία καὶ τὴν χεῖρα τὴν κραταίαν καὶ τὸν βραχίονα τὸν ὑψηλόν, καὶ τὰ σημεῖα αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰ τέρατα αὐτοῦ ὅσα ἐποίησεν ἐν μέσῳ Αἰγύπτου . . . καὶ ὅσα ἐποίησεν τὴν δυνάμιν τῶν Αἰγυπτίων . . . ὡς ἐπέκλυεν τὸ ὕδωρ τῆς θαλάσσης τῆς ἐρυθρᾶς ἐπὶ προσώπου αὐτῶν, . . . καὶ ὅσα ἐποίησεν ἡμῖν ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ . . . οἱ ὀφθαλμοὶ ὑμῶν ἑώρακαν πάντα τὰ ἔργα Κυρίου ὅσα ἐποίησεν ὑμῖν.

The sermons of Acts are written in the style of Moses' address to the Israelites. Especially is this true of the sermon of Stephen in chapter seven and Paul's word to the synagogue in Pisidian Antioch (13:16-41).³⁶ The proclamation of the Good News in Jesus is a recital of what "the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our fathers" (3:13; cf. 5:30; 7:32; 13:17; 22:14) has done in these last days (2:17), making good His promises of old by raising up Jesus on the field of history (13:32f.). Thus the suffering and death of Jesus according to the will of God and

³⁴Op. cit., p. 26.

³⁵TW, IV, 547; the next quotation is from the same page.

³⁶See 7:36, αὐτός ἐξήγαγεν αὐτοὺς ποιήσας τέρατα καὶ σημεῖα; see also 13:17, μετὰ βραχίονος ὑψηλοῦ ἐξήγαγεν αὐτάς.

Jesus' resurrection by the power of God, while not specifically named *μεγαλεῖα*, are surely great deeds of God whose full significance can be known only by setting them into their context with the past and future acts of that same God.³⁷

The Kingdom of God

"The resurrection is also a step on the way to that goal which all God's acts in history serve: the revelation of His divine rule, His *βασιλεία*."³⁸ The kingdom as the eschatological goal of God's purposes (1:6; 14:22) will be discussed later. Here only the relationship between the resurrection and the kingdom is of interest. The risen Lord spoke of the kingdom (1:3) to His disciples, who misunderstood and asked Jesus whether the restoration of the kingdom were to be soon (1:6). Following the ascension and pentecost the early preachers proclaim as their message "the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ" (8:12). Luke summarizes Paul's preaching for three months as "arguing and pleading about the kingdom of God" (19:8; cf. 20:25; 28:23,31). Thus there is some semblance of truth in the accusation of the Thessalonian Jews against Paul and Silas: "They are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus" (17:7).

The last paragraph, brief as it is, has cited every instance of the use of *βασιλεία* in Acts. The list is surprisingly short in comparison

³⁷Rengstorff, *op. cit.*, p. 26, says that the resurrection holds a position of unique worth in the series of God's acts, because it is by God's will indissolubly connected with Jesus' death on the cross. Herein it receives its conclusiveness and its soteriological significance.

³⁸*Ibid.*

with the near plethora in the synoptic gospels. This phenomenon is to be explained in part by the implicit reference to the βασιλεία in the κύριος passages of Acts.³⁹ And this observation leads easily to the αὐτοβασιλεία teaching, according to which Jesus Christ Himself is equated with the Kingdom of God: "das hereinbrechende Gottesreich weiss Jesus in seiner Person in die Zeit und in die Welt gekommen, was johanneisch mit dem Satz: ὁ λόγος εἰς ἐξένστο Jn. 1:14 ausgedrueckt ist."⁴⁰ God's open assumption of power begins with the resurrection, the exaltation of Jesus as Lord of all. The kingdom is now dawning; and yet the resurrection is but a step, albeit the decisive step, on God's way to the full revelation of His power and kingship.

The Church

The messianic age is here; the Messiah has come. Inseparable from the Messiah is the messianic community (Lk. 1:17). The Church was gathered and constituted as the Messiah's people already before pentecost. The appearances of the resurrected Jesus created the Church. He gathered His scattered sheep. He confirmed the faith of the faint and fearful. Resurrection faith is not the result of the pentecostal outpouring of the Spirit. Theodor von Zahn, with his eye on the first chapter of Acts, writes,

Schon vor jenem Pfingsten existirte eine im Glauben an Jesus als den Messias geeinte, eben hiedurch vom juedischen Volke abgesonderte und in gemeinsamem Beten und Handeln sich betaetigende Gemeinde.⁴¹

³⁹Karl Ludwig Schmidt, "βασιλεία," TW, I, 591.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Grundriss der Geschichte des apostolischen Zeitalters (Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1929), p. 7.

Nevertheless Pentecost must be coordinated meaningfully with the total course of events in the days following the resurrection. Concerning Luke's view Rengstorf writes,

Er laesst naemlich die Juenger Jesu schon vor Pfingsten erneut gesammelt und zu neuem Dienst bereit sein und sie lediglich auf das Zeichen von oben zu dessen Beginn und auf die unerlaessliche Ausruestung fuer den Dienst warten (Apg. 1:2ff., 14).⁴²

Martin H. Franzmann traces the appearances and the outpoured Spirit to a common source in the grace of God:

At Easter the consummate giving grace of God appears once more. Jesus takes the disciples, who had failed Him utterly, who had fled and denied Him, back into communion with Himself; He gives them fellowship with Himself anew. And He crowns all the self-giving of His communion with them with the final gift of the Holy Ghost.⁴³

Max Meinertz coordinates the resurrection and Pentecost this way:

Das grundlegende Ereignis, von dem aus die Urgemeinde, und damit die christliche Kirche ueberhaupt, sich erst bilden konnte, war die Auferstehung Jesu. . . . Freilich ist die ganze Tragweite der Auferstehung und die dadurch begruendete Machtstellung des Herrn den Aposteln erst durch das zweite grundlegende Ereignis zur vollen Klarheit gekommen, durch die Geistessendung am ersten Pfingstfeste.⁴⁴

The Church was conscious of being the product of Christ's saving and creative activity. He took the initiative in appearing. The disciples could not effect His presence. Therefore Adolf Schlatter says, "In her own view of herself, the Church belonged to Christ because she was fashioned by Him."⁴⁵ United with the Messiah by faith, created by His hand, the Church is no independent theological entity. Otto Michel makes the

⁴²Op. cit., p. 34; cf. his article, "Ἀποστόλος," TW, I, 433.

⁴³"The Apostolate: Its Enduring Significance in the Apostolic Word," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVIII (March, 1957), 179.

⁴⁴Op. cit., p. 214.

⁴⁵The Church in the New Testament Period, translated by Paul P. Levertoff (London: S. P. C. K., 1955), p. 14.

following claim concerning the Church:

Sie weist als irdische Erscheinung zurueck auf Jesus Christus als den Hirten, als den Erbauer und Hohenpriester, als den Eckstein und als den Braeutigam. In dieser Verbundenheit liegt ihr Sinn und ihre theologische Bedeutung.⁴⁶

The Jewish people had a high consciousness of themselves as the creation of God, acting especially in the complex of events connected with the Exodus. Just exactly for this reason Schlatter comments on the Jews,

They could not be supplanted by a mere body of men who decided to organize themselves into a community. To the disciples it was evident that their fellowship was likewise created by God. It was this that connected the new Community with the old and, moreover, made the Church conscious of herself as the true Israel, the continuation and fulfilment of Judaism.⁴⁷

Of all those who belong to the Church the Apostles stand in a peculiar, unique position. Luke records that an Apostle must have been numbered among those who followed Jesus during His ministry, "beginning from the baptism of John until the day when He was taken up," and must have seen the risen Lord (Ac. 1:21f.; cf. 10:40f.; 13:31).⁴⁸ Rengstorf summarizes the creation of an Apostle with these words:

Danach scheint neben der Begegnung mit dem Auferstandenen der personliche Auftrag von ihm der alleinige Grund des Apostolats gewesen zu sein. Dass dieser Auftrag vor allem den Zwölf galt, liegt in ihrem Anteil an der Geschichte des irdischen Jesus beschlossen, der sie in besonderer Weise geeignet machte, seine Verkuendigung wieder aufzunehmen und fortzufuehren, nun allerdings nicht mehr bloss als seine Verkuendigung, sondern vielmehr als die Verkuendigung von ihm als dem gekommenen Erfueller der at.lichen Weissagungen.⁴⁹

Thus the event of Easter is constitutive of the Apostolate. Furthermore

⁴⁶Das Zeugnis des Neuen Testaments von der Gemeinde (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1941). p. 15.

⁴⁷Op. cit., p. 5; see also Michel, op. cit., p. 7.

⁴⁸Rengstorf, TW, I, 431, says, "Die Apostel sind die Zeugen der Auferstehung, ohne dass die Zeugen der Auferstehung nun auch alle Apostel geworden waeren."

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 432.

the resurrection of Jesus reveals to His apostles the full scope of their mission. Again it is Rengstorf who penned the quotable lines,

Wie Jesus aber ueber alle erhoehet ist und sein Ziel die Gemeinde ist, die alle umfasst, so ist auch ihr Amt nunmehr universal geworden. In der Universalitaet der Sendung und dem universalen Anspruch der so Gesandten liegt im letzten die Ueberbietung des voroesterlichen Apostolats durch die erneute, endgueltige Bevollmaechtigung der Juenger durch den Auferstandenen. Er steht hinter allem, was sie sagen und tun.⁵⁰

In brief, "der Grund des nt.lichen Apostolats als Ganzen [ist] der Wille und Auftrag des Auferstandenen."⁵¹

Jesus, resurrected from the dead, did not appear to all and sundry, but to chosen witnesses (Ac. 1:3; 10:40f.; 13:31). Schlatter interprets this singular fact thus:

The Event of Easter took place within the circle of Jesus' companions: this meant that the Church took her origin from the apostolate and that she expanded through the attachment and submission of new believers to the apostles.⁵²

Even stronger is the assertion of Rengstorf, who says that "die Kirche fuer das Neue Testament mit dem Apostolat, und das heisst: mit ihrer Gemeinschaft mit den Aposteln Jesu Christi als seinen Repraesentanten in Person, Wort und Werk, steht und faellt."⁵³ And he continues,

So gewiss hier der Satz gilt, dass das Heil an Christus und nur an ihn gebunden ist, so gewiss gilt auch das andere, dass es keinen Empfang des Heils ausserhalb der Gemeinschaft mit den Aposteln Jesu Christi, also extra ecclesiam apostolicam gibt.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 434f.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 437.

⁵²Op. cit., p. 9.

⁵³This and the following quotation are from "Wesen und Bedeutung des geistlichen Amtes nach dem neuen Testament und in der Lehre des Luthertums," World Lutheranism of Today (Stockholm: Svenska Kyrkans Diakonistyrelses Bokfoerlag, 1950), pp. 247f.

The Twelve play a significant role during the ministry of Jesus and in the early Church. They are defined as "Jesu Mitarbeiter in seinem Ringen um sein eigenes Volk."⁵⁴ That Jesus chose twelve is no accident. The number has specific content given by the history of Israel with its twelve tribes. The call of twelve has roots deep in salvation history (Ac. 7:8; 26:7; Lk. 22:30). The failure of Old Israel cried out for a new beginning (cf. Mt. 8:10; Lk. 7:9). And God's goal yet unattained went begging for fulfillment. Rengstorff rightly comments,

In der Berufung von zwölf Juengern ordnet Jesus seine und ihre Arbeit dem goettlichen Heilsplan auch aeuusserlich sichtbar ein und seinem Ziele, der Bereitung der Gemeinde Gottes, unter.⁵⁵

Jesus' claim to be the Messiah of the people of Israel is concretely revealed in the enacted parable of twelve companions chosen and called.

Luke relates in some detail the filling of the gap in the ranks of the Twelve caused by the defection of Judas. The martyrdom of James, the son of Zebedee (12:2), did not result in similar proceedings. F. F. Bruce is surely correct in saying, "It was [Judas] apostasy, not his death, that necessitated the filling of the vacancy."⁵⁶ More elaborate explanations have been brought forward but they need not be entertained here.⁵⁷

⁵⁴Rengstorff, "δωδεκα," *TW*, II, 327; as Rengstorff develops this idea the definition contains an unjustified restriction. Following the resurrection the Twelve have abiding, universal significance (Rev. 21:14).

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, p. 326.

⁵⁶*Op. cit.*, p. 76.

⁵⁷Wikenhauser refers to the fact that James lost his life in the exercise of his apostolate. As an alternative, he suggests that the Twelve will sit upon the twelve thrones and judge Israel's tribes. A thirteenth would be awkward. Rengstorff, *TW*, II, 327, sees the task and significance of the twelve at an end with the passing of the possibility that Israel might repent. So the group was allowed to die out. Against this is the fact that Paul in A. D. 62 still speaks first to the Jews (Ac. 28:17ff.).

When Judas repudiated his place as one of the Twelve, there were only eleven (Lk. 24:9,33; Ac. 1:26; 2:14; Mk. 16:14; Mt. 28:19). When James was killed as one of the Twelve, there was no real gap. Twelve remained (Rev. 21:14).

The Twelve are the nucleus (or foundation) of the New Israel. The name "Israel" is never directly ascribed to the Church, although the first movements of such a step can be discerned in the use of Israel in several Lucan passages (Ac. 1:6; 28:20).⁵⁸ Closely related to the name of the people is a designation which, though not a name, was certainly a terminus technicus for Israel: λαός.⁵⁹

In the Septuagint λαός almost always stands for Israel as the people of God's own possession, standing in a unique relationship to God because of His free and gracious act.⁶⁰ In the New Testament, and especially in Luke-Acts, the Septuagint usage shares the limelight and indeed is almost pushed into the wings by the profane use of λαός to designate any crowd or segment of the population. The more interesting and more relevant passages are those in which λαός stands contrasted to ἔθνος (Lk. 2:32; Ac. 26:17,23; 28:27,28) and in which λαός is without a doubt used of Israel (Ac. 4:10; 12:11; 13:17,24; 28:26,27). Luke also has ἔθνος for Israel in a number of passages (Lk. 7:5; 23:2; Ac. 10:22; 24:2,10,17; 26:4; 28:19). Concerning this use of ἔθνος in Luke-Acts Strathmann writes,

⁵⁸With the first of these passages compare Lk. 24:21 and with the second Ac. 26:4-7.

⁵⁹Hermann Strathmann, "λαός," TW, IV, 49, says the word appears 104 times in the entire New Testament, 36 times in the Third Gospel and 48 times in Acts.

⁶⁰Strathmann, ibid., pp. 32-37, brings the linguistic proof.

Es ist aber zu beachten, dass an den Ik-Stellen der Ausdruck mit Bezug auf Israel entweder von Nichtjuden oder mit Bezug auf die Haltung eines Nichtjuden oder in Reden vor Nichtjuden gebraucht wird--mit Ausnahme allein von Ag 28:19. Hier aber steht die Wahl des Ausdrucks sichtlich unter der Einwirkung der vorangegangenen Prozessreden des Paulus vor Nichtjuden.⁶¹

Luke also records passages in which λαός without any modifier means Israel (Ik. 2:10; 19:47; 22:66; Ac. 3:23; 10:2,41,42; 13:17,31; 19:4; 21:28; 28:17). The Third Gospel has the verse in which Jesus of Nazareth is called a prophet, mighty in word and deed ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ παντός τοῦ λαοῦ (24:19).

A central passage for an understanding of the Church as the new people of God is Acts 15:14. Referring to the conversion of Cornelius, James addresses the Apostolic Council, Συμεὼν ἐξηγήσατο καθ' ὅς πρῶτον ὁ θεὸς ἐπέκενέψατο λαβεῖν ἐξ ἐθνῶν λαὸν τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ. Strathmann comments, "Der Kreis des Begriffes λαός bekommt ein neues Zentrum. Nur der Glaube an das Evangelium entscheidet."⁶² Elsewhere Paul was encouraged in a vision one night, "Do not be afraid, but speak and do not be silent; for I am with you, and no man shall attack you to harm you; διότι λαὸς ἔστί μοι πολλὸς ἐν τῇ πόλει ταύτῃ." To these verses (Ac. 19:9f.) Strathmann reacts,

Das bedeutet: hier sind viele zukunfftige Christen. Diese kommen freilich aus den ἐθνε, an die Paulus hier wie stets sich wenden muss, da die Judenschaft sich versagt. Aber wenn der λαός im alten Sinn sich versagt, ersteht aus den ἐθνε ein solcher im neuen Sinn.⁶³

⁶¹Ibid., p. 52.

⁶²Ibid., p. 53.

⁶³Ibid.

He might have remarked on the Old Testament echoes in this passage. The words *μὴ φοβού, διότι ἐγὼ εἰμι μετὰ ὑμῶν* recall the words of God, commissioning Moses to bring forth the people out of Egypt (Ex. 3:12). They are spoken to Moses' successor Joshua (Jos. 1:5,9). Again the phrases are found in the mouth of God addressing words of comfort to "Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend" (Is. 41:8ff.). In a passage that recalls the creation of Israel at the Red Sea and promises deliverance anew, the words, "Fear not, for I am with you," appear again (Is. 43:5). This same God, who rescued His people from Egypt and delivered them from Babylon, is acting in and through the Apostles to create a new people for Himself, the community of the end time.

In yet another way the young church demonstrated that she did not regard herself as a splinter group, a sect, but as the true and new Israel. The resurrection appearances of Luke-Acts all occur in or near Jerusalem, the holy city. Jesus ascended from Olivet, "which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away" (Ac. 1:12), where He had commanded the disciples not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the Spirit to equip them for their mission which must begin in Jerusalem (1:4,8). The outpouring of the Spirit occurred in Jerusalem, possibly in the Temple precincts (Ac. 2). As was the custom of Jesus, the disciples frequent the Temple in Jerusalem, to pray there and to find audiences there (2:46; 3:1; 5:12, 20ff., 28, 42; 21:26; 22:17). Even after the persecution which followed Stephen's martyrdom the apostles remained at Jerusalem (8:1, 14, 25; 9:26; 11:2). Jerusalem was the hub from which activity issued and to which much of it returned, especially in the early chapters, although Jerusalem figures large in the entire Acts (15:2; 16:4). Paul had to go up to

Jerusalem, bound in the Spirit (19:21; 20:22; 21:13-15). But Jerusalem, the holy city, rejected the Holy One of God (2:23; 3:13f.; 4:27; 10:39; 13:27).

The young church also claims as its own the Scriptures, and the prophets and fathers who spoke in the Scriptures. Jesus Himself opened the Scriptures to His disciples, declaring that Moses and the prophets bore witness to Him (Lk. 24:26f., 32; 44-47). Even Judas' death and defection were foretold by the mouth of David (Ac. 1:16ff.). The outpouring of the Spirit was prophesied by Joel (Ac. 2:16). But above all the death and resurrection of Jesus fulfilled Scriptures (2:23, 25, 30f.; 3:18, 24; 4:28; 10:43; 13:27-29, 32-41; 26:22f.; 28:23). Stephen's entire address lays claim to the Scriptures as the Church's book, in which the disobedience of the Jews was portrayed and prophesied (7:2-53). Philip begins with Isaiah 53 in expounding the Gospel to the Ethiopian (8:30-35). Paul's preaching could be tested by the standard of the Scriptures (17:11; 18:28). The progress of the Gospel from Jew to Gentile is grounded not only in Jesus' commission (Lk. 24:47; Ac. 1:8) but also in the Holy Writings (Ac. 13:47; 15:15-18; 28:25-28).

By accepting and by claiming as their own the Scriptures, the fathers, and the history of Israel, the earliest Christians were claiming as their God "the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our fathers" (Ac. 3:13; 5:30; 7:32, 46; 22:14; 24:14), "the God of this people Israel" (13:17), "the Creator of heaven and earth and the sea and all that is in them" (4:24; 17:24), "the knower of hearts" (1:24; 15:8), "the God of glory" (7:2), "the Most High" (7:48; 16:17). Otto Michel has written, "Wer das A. T. preisgab, gab den Zusammenhang mit den 'Vaetern' (Apg. 6-7; Heb. 11) preis, verlor darum und auch notwendig die Beziehung zu dem

'Gott der Vaeter.'⁶⁴ The early Christians were convinced that God's power and grace, made manifest long ages ago in creation and exodus, had been revealed again in these last days. The God of this people Israel has bared His arm and raised up Jesus, and He has created a new people who believe in Jesus. The new age has dawned; a new covenant is in force.

The Mission

And still the ἀποκατάστασις πάντων (Ac. 3:20f.) is future, an object of hope and not of experience. The Kingdom is dawning; the messianic age is here; Jesus is Lord. But on the other hand, the day appointed for judgment is future (17:31). The disciples confess that Jesus is the Messiah and they are impatient to see the yet unrealized Kingdom of God (1:6). But Jesus gives His disciples a mission that must be accomplished before that end: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be my witnesses" (1:8). Jesus diverts their attention from speculation on the future to the task at hand (cf. 1:11).

Jesus, who is the Lord of all (10:36), will have His lordship proclaimed to all peoples. The Lord of the universe commissions men for a universal mission. The prime function of an apostle is witness. The eleven sought one to become with them μαρτυρεῖν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ (1:22). Their testimony has its center of gravity in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead (2:32; 3:15; 4:33; 5:30f.; 10:41; 13:31; 17:18,31), but their message includes how this came to happen. And that means bearing witness to the ministry of Jesus and interpreting His suffering and

⁶⁴Op. cit., p. 15.

resurrection as fulfillment of Scripture. A witness is one who has seen and believes and is commissioned to bring testimony to others.⁶⁵

The mission of the church is universal. The disciples are to bear witness in Jerusalem and in all Judaea and Samaria and ἕως ἑσχάτου τῆς γῆς (Ac. 1:8). The parallel at the end of the Third Gospel has the words εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (Lk. 24:47). The universality of the mission is found to be grounded in the will of God in the Old Testament. Paul addresses the crowds of Pisidian Antioch, "We turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, ΤΕΘΕΙΚΑΪ ΓΕ Εἰς φῶς ἔθνων τοῦ εἰναί γε εἰς σωτηρίαν ἕως ἑσχάτου τῆς γῆς (Ac. 13:47). To the Jews on Pentecost Peter said, ὑμῖν γὰρ ἔστιν ἡ ἐπαγγελία καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις ὑμῶν καὶ πᾶσιν τοῖς εἰς μακράν. And to the people in the temple precincts he recalls the words of God to Abraham, καὶ ἐν τῷ ἐπαγγελίᾳ σου ἐνευλογηθήσονται πᾶσαι αἱ πατρίαι τῆς γῆς (Ac. 3:25).

The universality of the church's mission finds expression in other ways, too. Philip baptized a eunuch, to whom full participation in the Jewish community was denied by the Law (Deut. 23:1). The Gentile Cornelius and his household received the Holy Spirit and were baptized (10:44ff.). When the Jerusalem leaders heard the story, they glorified God and said, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance unto life" (11:18). Paul was especially chosen to carry the Good News to the Gentiles (26:17).

⁶⁵Acts 10:39-43 is an excellent compend of information on the meaning of witness. His qualifications, his call, his consciousness, his message are all there. Paul, too, is a legitimate witness; for he saw the Just One and heard His voice, ὅτι ἑώρακα αὐτὸν πρὸς πάντας ἀνθρώπους ὧν ἔωκα καὶ ἤκουα (22:14f.). Strathmann's objections, *Tw*, IV, 497, to calling Paul a *μάρτυς* are overly subtle and unconvincing. Paul by virtue of his Damascus experience is a *Tatsachenzeuge* and by virtue of his faith a *Wahrheitszeuge*. Compare Paul's apostolic consciousness as related to seeing Jesus in 1 Cor. 9:1.

The whole plan of the Book of Acts, describing the progress of the Gospel from Jerusalem to Rome, is a witness to the universality of the mission; for progress from Jerusalem to Rome is a symbol of the tearing down of the barrier between Jew and Gentile.⁶⁶ And it is instructive that the author of Luke-Acts is in all probability a Gentile convert.

The universal mission of the Church is not a substitute for eschatology, any more than the Holy Spirit is a substitute for the presence of Jesus. It is a piece of eschatology. It is one sign of the end. These post-resurrection days are now the last days, foretold by the prophets (3:24; 2:17,18), which stand immediately before the Day of the Lord (2:20; 17:31). As John the Baptist came preaching and baptizing "to make ready for the Lord a people prepared" (Lk. 1:17), the Church preaches and baptizes to prepare a people to meet the returning Christ (Ac. 3:19-21).

The universal mission of the Church goes forward in obedience to the specific command of the Risen Christ, "You shall be my witnesses to the end of the earth" (Ac. 1:8). This is His answer to the impatient question, "Will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" (1:6). The conversation is practically a repeat performance of that recorded in the eschatological discourse of Jesus in the days preceding His crucifixion. The disciples had asked, "When will this be?" (Mk. 13:4; Lk. 21:7). Jesus answered in part, "The gospel must first be preached to all nations" (Mk. 13:10). Luke may have intended the words, "This will be a time for you to bear testimony" (Lk. 21:13), to include the thought of Mark's verse.

⁶⁶On this point see Robert Morgenthauer, Die lukanische Geschichtsschreibung als Zeugnis: Gestalt und Gehalt der Kunst des Lukas (Zürich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1949), II, 188; also see Henry J. Cadbury, The Making of Luke-Acts (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1927), p. 325.

At any rate, the mission of the Church in all the world is an eschatological sign.

The Ascension

On the Mount of Olives (Ac. 1:12) Jesus parted from His disciples and was taken up into heaven (Ac. 1:2,9,11).⁶⁷ In the description of the Day of the Lord in the prophecy of Zechariah the Lord stands with His feet on the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:1-5). The prophecy strengthens the eschatological coloring of the words of the two men in white robes. The ascension is preliminary to the ultimate eschatological act of God.

Luke writes that the ascension took place at the end of the period in which Jesus appeared to His disciples and taught them. The ascension followed the resurrection by forty days (Ac. 1:3). It has often been pointed out that forty is a traditional number. Kirsopp Lake recalls Moses' forty days on Sinai (Ex. 34:28), the forty days and nights in which Elijah travelled in the strength of the food given him by an angel (1 Kings 19:8), the forty days Ezra spent in transcribing the Law before his exaltation to heaven (4 Ezra 14:23,49), the forty days Baruch waited for his assumption (Apoc. Baruch 76:4).⁶⁸ These references could be multiplied. Luke himself has it that Israel wandered in the desert forty years (Ac. 7:36). And Jesus was in the wilderness forty days (Lk. 4:2). The figure is related to critical moments, turning points, in the history of God's chosen people.

⁶⁷Again, as in the case of the resurrection, the passive voice predominates: ἀνελήμφθην, ἐπύρεθν, ὁ ἀναλημφθεὶς.

⁶⁸The Beginnings of Christianity, edited by F. J. Foakes-Jackson and Kirsopp Lake (London: The Macmillan Co., 1920-1933), V, 19f.

The ascension adds no new glory to Jesus. It means no further change in His form of existence.⁶⁹ The significance of the ascension is well summarized by Alfred Wikenhauser:

Die Himmelfahrt auf dem Oelberg vor den Augen seiner Juenger ist nur der Abschluss des letzten Beisammenseins mit ihnen. Jesus ist bei dieser Erscheinung nicht ploetzlich wieder verschwunden wie vor den Emmausjuengern (Lk. 24:31), sondern vor den Augen seiner Juenger zum Himmel aufgefahren, um dadurch zum Ausdruck zu bringen, dass er ihnen nun nicht mehr erscheinen werde. Man muss also wohl unterscheiden zwischen dem Aufstieg des Auferstandenen zum Himmel, um dort von seiner Macht besitz zu ergreifen (= Erhoehung Christi), was am Auferstehungstage geschah, und der letzten Erscheinung des Herrn vor seinen Juengern, die mit seiner den Juengern sichtbaren Auffahrt gen Himmel schloss und 40 Tage nach Ostern auf dem Oelberg stattfand.⁷⁰

The ascension proclaims concretely that the appearances are at an end.⁷¹

Pentecost

Pentecost was originally a harvest festival. In spite of the caveat of Paul Billerbeck⁷² that the tradition connecting Pentecost with the giving of the Law at Sinai can be traced back only to the second century A. D., commentators continue to interpret the Jewish Pentecost of New Testament times as the celebration of the giving of the Torah. C. S. C. Williams follows W. L. Knox in suggesting that since Philo's day Pentecost had acquired a new significance by association with the giving of the Law. He then makes this application: "All that the Torah was to a Jew, Jesus was

⁶⁹Michaelis, op. cit., p. 88; Ramsey, op. cit., p. 122.

⁷⁰Op. cit., p. 29.

⁷¹Michaelis, op. cit., pp. 85ff.; Ramsey, op. cit., pp. 87 and 122.

⁷²Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch (Muenchen: C. H. Becksche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1924), II, 601.

to Paul and the Holy Spirit to Luke, and more."⁷³ F. J. Foakes-Jackson comments on Acts 2:1-13,

We cannot fail to be reminded of the scene of the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai, when Israel became a strictly religious community, and there is reason to suppose that Pentecost was already the festival commemorating the giving of the Law. If Luke knew the Rabbinic tradition, the fact that the Spirit came to the Church at this season must have been impressive to him.⁷⁴

Ernst Haenchen rehearses the sad history of the attempts to interpret Pentecost by finding analogies in the history of religions, and he makes some excellent suggestions. Interpretation must begin by asking what Luke intended. The composition and not the underlying traditions is the primary object of attention. And it must be recognized that the composition serves Luke's theological purpose and concern. Haenchen pinpoints that concern as follows:

Die Pfingsterzaehlung 2:1-13 hat die Aufgabe, das Wunder des von Gott kommende Geistes in seiner objektiven Wirklichkeit und seiner theologischen Bedeutung dem Leser anschaulich vor Augen zu fuehren: die Verheissung von 1:8 beginnt sich zu erfuellen. In Jerusalem selbst erreicht zu Pfingsten die christliche Verkuendigung die "Enden der Erde": von den Parthern bis Rom.⁷⁵

The coming of the Spirit is all that and more. Peter's first word to the gathered crowds was of the fulfillment of the prophecy of old (2:16); for God's Spirit is an eschatological gift and power. In the old Israel the Spirit inspired only a relatively small number, the leaders and especially the prophets. And inspiration was no permanent possession or condition. The prophets spoke of the good time coming when God would

⁷³The Acts of the Apostles, in Black's New Testament Commentaries (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1957), p. 62.

⁷⁴The Acts of the Apostles, in The Moffatt New Testament Commentary (New York: Harper and Bros., 1931), p. 10; see also Bruce, op. cit., p. 83.

⁷⁵Op. cit., p. 114.

pour His Spirit upon all flesh (Joel 3:1-5). G. W. H. Lampe in an exceptionally stimulating essay recalls the prophecies of the Spirit's coming. He writes,

The faithful remnant, according to Isaiah, will be cleansed of moral defilement by "the Spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning" (4:4), a prophecy which may well have been in the Baptist's mind as he looked forward to a coming baptism of Spirit and of fire. In the future age of blessedness the Spirit will "be poured upon us from on high," bringing an era of judgment and righteousness (32:15-16). In those days God will pour his Spirit upon the seed of Jacob his servant (44:3,5).⁷⁶

Other prophets had that vision, too. Ezekiel records the word of the Lord, "I will take you from the nations and gather you from all countries and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water upon you. . . . A new spirit I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you" (36:24-26; cf. 27:14; 29:29). Ezekiel is particularly relevant since he associates a gathering from the nations, cleansing water, and the outpouring of the Spirit, all of which appear to find fulfillment at Pentecost.

The Pentecostal outpouring was promised also in the words of John the Baptist and in the sayings of Jesus Himself. Jesus is quoted by Luke as commanding His disciples to await the promise of the Father, which "you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Ac. 1:4f.; Lk. 24:49). John proclaimed the Mightier One, who would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire (Lk. 3:16f.).

In Luke-Acts the relationship between Jesus and the Spirit is particularly close. The angel Gabriel announced to Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you"

⁷⁶"The Holy Spirit in the Writings of St. Luke," Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R. H. Lightfoot, edited by D. E. Nineham (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955), p. 162.

(Lk. 1:35). The Holy Spirit filled Elizabeth with rejoicing at the news of Mary (Lk. 1:41). At Jesus' baptism the Holy Spirit descended upon Him (Lk. 3:22), so that He was full of the Spirit (Lk. 4:1). Therefore Jesus referred to Himself the prophecy of Isaiah, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me" (Lk. 4:18). The Spirit-filled ministry of Jesus is also a fulfillment of ancient prophecy. Jesus sees His own work in terms of the program announced in Isaiah, "He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed."

The gift of the Holy Spirit to Christians comes from the exalted Jesus. "He has poured out this which you see and hear" (Ac. 2:33). The coming of the Spirit to the Church therefore presupposes the resurrection of Jesus from the dead (Ac. 2:33; Jn. 7:39; 14:25f.; 15:26f.; 16:7). The close association of the Spirit with the Messiah is a part of Jewish hope.

Lampe writes,

Isaiah's ideal ruler is to possess the fullest endowment of the Spirit (11:1-5), and the Messianic hope is of one who will be truly anointed with the inward unction of the Spirit of God. This hope of a Spirit-possessed Messiah is most explicitly stated in certain post-canonical writing (En. 62:2; 49:3; Pss. Sal. 17:42; 18:8). . . . It is also clear, both from later Jewish literature and from the New Testament, that the notion of a Spirit-possessed Messiah was sometimes closely associated with the eschatological hope of a universal outpouring of the Spirit. The Messiah, in fact, was expected, at least in some quarters, to be the agent of God in the general bestowal of his Spirit in the age of fulfillment (Test. Lev. 18; Gen. Rabbah 2; Jn. 1:25; 7:38ff.).⁷⁷

Several lines of evidence thus converge to make plain the eschatological significance of the Pentecostal gift. The Old Testament hoped for the coming of the Spirit on all flesh. Judaism prior to and also

⁷⁷Ibid., pp. 162f.

contemporary with the New Testament had the notion that the Holy Spirit had long since ceased to work among men; the day of prophecy was past.⁷⁸ The coming of the Spirit would mean the dawn of the last time. Peter explicitly affirms that these are indeed the last days (Ac. 2:17).⁷⁹ The Spirit of God, which hovered over the waters of the first creation, was symbolized in the dove that Noah released when creation came through the flood to a new beginning. That symbol reappears in the baptism of Jesus, when the Spirit as a dove descended upon Him, thereby declaring the dawn of the new creation. And every Christian baptism was foreshadowed by the flood (1 Pet. 3:19ff.).⁸⁰ Joachim Jeremias sums up his discussion of the eschatological import of the outpoured Spirit this way:

So geht es durch das ganze Neue Testament: Geistmitteilung ist Neuschöpfung; denn der Geist gehoert . . . zu den himmlischen Gaben und den Kraefte[n] des kuenftigen Aeons; der Geist Gottes schafft die verklaerte Welt und die neue, erloeste Menschheit.⁸¹

Summary

This chapter is a sort of commentary on the words ἐν ταῖς ἑσχάταις ἡμέραις (Ac. 2:17). The heart of the eschatology of Luke-Acts is the firm conviction that Jesus has been raised from the dead. His resurrection is an eschatological act of the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob,

⁷⁸This is an oft mentioned fact; for some details see Lampe, op. cit., p. 165.

⁷⁹Note that the words ἐν ταῖς ἑσχάταις ἡμέραις form no part of the original prophecy, but are an interpretative addition.

⁸⁰On this symbolism see Otto Procksch, "ἄγιος," TW, I, 104, and the discussion of Joachim Jeremias, Jesus als Weltvollender (Guetersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1930), in the pages preceding the summary here quoted.

⁸¹Op. cit., p. 17.

climaxing a series of His mighty acts in the history of His people. The hope of the prophets and the promises of God for the last times are no longer wholly future and unfulfilled. The Kingdom of God is dawning. The Messiah has been enthroned and is now ruling. The New Israel, the messianic community, is being gathered into a fellowship whose center and head is the Exalted One. He gives His Church command and equips His followers with the promised Spirit, who now leads the young Church to set upon a mission which knows no bounds of race or place. Conscious of living in the last days before the Last Day, the witnesses of His resurrection proclaim Jesus of Nazareth, crucified by men, raised up by God and exalted to the right hand of power. And their preaching urges men,

μετανοήσατε, καὶ βαπτισθήτω ἕκαστος ὑμῶν ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι
 Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς ἄφεσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ὑμῶν, καὶ λήμψετε
 τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος . . . ἐνώστε ἑαυτοὺς τῇ
 γενεᾷ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ταύτης

CHAPTER IV

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

The Unfinished Task

When Jesus was taken up into heaven and a cloud veiled Him from His disciples' watching eyes, the clock did not stop. The old age did not come abruptly to a halt, nor did the Kingdom of God come in open power and evident glory. Definite limitations hedged the act of God in Christ on Good Friday, Easter, Ascension Day and Pentecost. It is remarkable that the Risen Christ appeared only to His disciples. Adolf Schlatter reminds his reader,

Jesus' messianic title directed the disciples' minds towards the all-embracing divine activity, towards the totality of God's grace. . . . To speak of the Messiah was to speak of the union of all mankind under the reign of God. . . . The coming divine event was always conceived as an all-embracing reality, universal in its scope.¹

Thus, although the decisive event in God's eschatological dealings with His creation is past, the full consequences of His act in raising Jesus from the dead have not yet appeared. Wilhelm Michaelis views the situation from a similar perspective, noting that the resurrection appearances, although they occur "vom Himmel her," definitely lack the features associated with the parousia. Then, too, the appearances were not dumb visions but were characterized by an accompanying revelation in word. Jesus addressed His disciples. Thus Michaelis grounds the unambiguously clear

¹The Church in the New Testament Period, translated by Paul P. Levertoff (London: S. P. C. K., 1955), pp. 7f.

distinction between Easter and the Parousia in the appearances of the Resurrected One. And he continues,

Ausserdem muss ersichtlich gewesen sein, dass die Erwartung der Parusie kuenftig keineswegs in den Hintergrund zu treten habe, sondern dass Ostern und Pfingsten vielmehr als Garanten fuer das Kommen der Parusie zu verstehen seien.²

Henry J. Cadbury quite properly remarks, "Whatever evidence may be found in the Gospel of John or even in the synoptic material of what has come to be called realized eschatology, Luke's own emphasis and contribution does not seem to have lain in that direction."³ The other side of the coin comes to light in the words of Udo Smidt: "Die Apostelgeschichte ist Kirchengeschichte in Erwartung des Herrn, der da kommt. Die Apostelgeschichte ist Kirchengeschichte im Angesicht des Juengsten Tages."⁴

The incompleteness of the present possession in the thought of Luke-Acts can be demonstrated by a brief comparison of three passages: Lk. 21:7 (cf. 21:27f.,31) from the pre-resurrection days, Acts 1:6 from the post-resurrection but pre-Pentecost period, and Acts 3:21 from Peter's post-Pentecost proclamation. In the first of these the disciples raise the question, "Teacher, when will all this be, and what will be the sign when this is about to take place?" Jesus' answer leaves no doubt that the kingdom lies in the future (Lk. 21:27f.,31). The disciples put a similar query to the Resurrected One, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And in the third of these passages Peter proclaims

²Die Erscheinungen des Auferstandenen (Basil: Heinrich Majer, 1944), p. 128; see also pp. 87f.

³"Acts and Eschatology," The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology, edited by W. D. Davies and D. Daube (Cambridge: The University Press, 1956), p. 316.

⁴Die Apostelgeschichte, in Bibelhilfe fuer die Gemeinde (Kassel und Stuttgart: J. G. Oncken Verlag, 1951), V, 13.

that Jesus is kept in heaven until God's hour comes. All three verses, taken from three different stages of the history, have a future orientation. The Church's goal lies in the future; she preaches the Christ who is yet to come.

Hope in Christ

The Church's hope centers in Jesus Christ; her eschatology is Christology.⁵ Rightly or wrongly Karl Heinrich Rengstorf claims that this is true of Luke-Acts to a greater degree than it is of Matthew and Mark.⁶ One of the most important contributions of Rengstorf's study, Die Auferstehung Jesu, is his vigorous insistence on speaking in personal, concrete terms of the Crucified and Resurrected One, instead of betraying anachronistic modernity by slipping into the impersonal abstractions, "crucifixion" and "resurrection." His monograph claims,

dass das gesamte Gewicht des Osterkerygmas bei dem Auferstandenen, dagegen gerade nicht bei der Auferstehung, also nicht bei einem oder sogar dem Heilsgeschehen als solchem, liegt. Vom Heilsgeschehen zu sprechen, ohne damit ausschliesslich den gekreuzigten, begrabenen und auferweckten Jesus zu meinen, mag fuer einen modernen Menschen moeglich sein, der abstrakt zu denken vermag. Fuer das Neue Testament liegt das hingegen gaenzlich ausserhalb des ueberhaupt Vorstellbaren.⁷

This is, of course, not news. More and more writers are recognizing the necessity of speaking in concrete, personal terms, if justice is to be done the New Testament. Eschatology in Acts and in all the rest of the

⁵Hermann Wolfgang Beyer, Die Apostelgeschichte, in Das Neue Testament Deutsch, herausgegeben von Paul Althaus (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1951), V, 23. Hereafter this series is cited as NTD.

⁶Das Evangelium nach Lukas, in NTD, III, 6.

⁷Die Auferstehung Jesu: Form, Art und Sinn der Urchristlichen Osterbotschaft (2. Auflage; Witten-Ruhr: Luther-Verlag, 1954), p. 76.

New Testament has to do not so much with τὰ ἔσχατα as with Him who is ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος (Rev. 2:8; 22:13). In this same vein Helmut Traub has written,

Gott ist die Zukunft. Wie er der Anfang ist, so das Ende (A und O). Diese Aussage ist auch so gefasst worden: "der da ist, der da war und der da kommt" (Offb. 1:4). "Zukunft" und "Ende" heissen: Gott, der da kommt, der allem Fleisch sichtbar offenbar wird (Jes. 40:5). Nicht um das Ende, das Letzte geht es, sondern um den Endenden, den Letzten. So heisst es anstatt "Enderwartung" richtiger: Gotteserwartung, Offenbarungserwartung, Erwartung des Herrn. Es gilt, den Menschen gleich zu sein, die "auf ihren Herrn warten" (Lk. 12:36; Jes. 26:8).⁸

All this can and must be applied to Jesus, as William Manson does it, when he writes,

Jesus is the subject of New Testament religion. Eschatology is the predicate. The subject is not subordinated to the predicate but the predicate to the subject. Eschatology is made plastic to Jesus Christ.⁹

Hope has its heart and center in Jesus Christ, the Risen Lord.

The Parousia

Acts affirms and promises of Jesus Christ that He will come: ἐλευσεται (Ac. 1:11). The term "parousia," used previously in this paper, does not occur in Luke-Acts. Nevertheless, as Albrecht Oepke indicates,

Obwohl die Vokabel in der Ag fehlt u die Urgemeinde moeglicherweise kein substantivisches Aequivalent fuer sie besessen hat, ist die Zentrale Bdtg des Parusieglaubens fuer sie nicht zu bezweifeln.¹⁰

⁸"Enderwartung," Biblisch-Theologisches Handwoerterbuch zur Lutherbibel und anderen Uebersetzungen, herausgegeben von Hans Engelland und Edo Osterloh (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1954), p. 103.

⁹"Eschatology in the New Testament," Eschatology (London and Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1952), p. 103.

¹⁰"παρουσία," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament, herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel und Gerhard Friedrich (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1931-), V, 865. Hereafter this work is cited as TW.

Luke-Acts employs ἔρχομαι, its compounds and derivatives to express itself on the matter of Jesus' future coming in glory and in power. The two men in white clothing chant the introit, as it were, for the entire Book of Acts: οὗτος ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὁ ἀναλημφθεὶς ἀπ' ὑμῶν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν οὕτως ἔλεύεσθαι ὅν τρόπον ἑδεάσαθε αὐτὸν παρευόμενον εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν (Ac. 1:11). The verb ἔρχομαι is again fraught with eschatological significance in the words of Joel quoted by Peter: "The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, πρὶν ἔλθεῖν ἡμέραν κυρίου τὴν μεγάλην καὶ ἐπιφανῇ" (Ac. 2:20). In Acts 3:20 ἔρχομαι and ἀποστέλλω are associated with the eschatological drama and the parousia: "Repent therefore and turn again that your sins may be blotted out, ὅπως ἂν ἑλθῶσιν καιροὶ ἀναψύξεως ἀπὸ προσώπου τοῦ κυρίου καὶ ἀποστείλῃ τὸν προκεχειμένον ὑμῶν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν." An important derivative of ἔρχομαι occurs in the accusation of Stephen against his opponents: Your fathers "killed those who announced beforehand περὶ τῆς ἐλεύσεως τοῦ δικαίου, whom you have now betrayed and murdered" (Ac. 7:52). Johannes Schneider writes that here means exactly the same as parousia.¹¹ In the synagogue and in the apocalyptic literature "the Righteous One" was a frequent Messianic appellation.¹² Thus this passage must be understood as a reference to the parousia of the Messiah.¹³ The Third Gospel uses ἔρχομαι in eschatological

¹¹"ἔρχομαι, κτλ," TW, II, 673.

¹²Gottlob Schrenk, "δική, κτλ," TW, II, 188; F. F. Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles (London: The Tyndale Press, 1952), p. 109.

¹³Schneider, op. cit.; Bruce, op. cit., p. 177, dependent upon an essay of G. D. Kilpatrick in Journal of Theological Studies, XLVI (1945), 136ff. Schneider refers the passage to the "first parousia." But what is of interest here is the use of ἐλεύσεως. He mentions the use in Lk. 23:42 D, "Remember me ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῆς ἐλεύσεως σου." Lk. 21:7 D has τί τὸ σημεῖον τῆς ἡμέρας ἐλεύσεως. Mt. 24:3 has τί τὸ σημεῖον τῆς ἡμέρας παρουσίας.

passages also with ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ (Lk. 17:20f.; 22:18; 23:42) and ἡμέραι (17:22; 21:6; 23:29). A word or two may be said here of ἐπερχομαι. Schneider takes Lk. 11:22 as the basic verse: ἐπὶ πάντας δὲ ἰσχυρότερος αὐτοῦ ἐπελθὼν νικήσῃ αὐτόν. The same verb is used of the coming of the Spirit (Lk. 1:35; Ac. 1:8; cf. Ac. 19:6, ἔρχομαι) and of the future judgment (Lk. 21:26; cf. 21:35, ἐπειγέσθωμι; Ac. 8:24; 13:40).¹⁴

The passages which explicitly promise a future coming of Jesus Christ are few in number. It is well to be reminded by Cadbury, "What eschatology there is is tersely given—much of it merely in rubrics. This means that it is taken for granted rather than slighted."¹⁵ He continues by remarking that the occasion for the writing of Acts was not the same as for 2 Thessalonians 2, or 1 Corinthians 15, or Mark 13. Therefore, Cadbury concludes that what Luke does say on the subject is "all the more natural and spontaneous and perhaps more revealing than if it were specially motivated." That He will come is surely and firmly promised in Acts.

If the fact of His coming is mentioned but seldom, the manner of His coming is scarcely hinted. The men in white say simply, οὕτως ἐλεύσεται ὁ κύριος ἐδεάμεθε αὐτὸν πορευόμενον εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν (Ac. 1:11). The passage to heaven is likewise hardly described. The narrative is marked by great reserve. The one feature whose explication gives any promise of yielding fruit is the cloud (Ac. 1:9). The closest parallels in the New Testament are the ascent of the two witnesses to heaven ἐν τῇ νεφέλῃ.

¹⁴On this word see Schneider, *op. cit.*, p. 678. The use of ἐπερχομαι is confined to Luke-Acts with two exceptions. Jas. 5:1 talks of coming judgment and Eph. 2:7 mentions αἰῶνες οἱ ἐπερχόμενοι. Once the verb has no eschatological or other religious significance (Ac. 14:19).

¹⁵*Op. cit.*, p. 310; the following quotation is from the same page.

(Rev. 11:12) and the snatching up of the Christians left alive at the parousia ἐν νεφέλαις to meet the Lord together with those who had died (1 Thess. 4:17). Clouds frequently play a role in biblical history. Paul S. Minear has authored an essay entitled "The Clouds of Heaven" in which he suggests four basic answers to the question of the significance of clouds in the eschatological passages of the New Testament:¹⁶

1. That the Son of Man will come on the clouds signifies that his return will mark a decisive event in God's dealings with men.
2. That the Son of Man will come on the clouds underscores the conviction that in him God will fulfil all the covenants he has made with men, covenants that had been sealed within a cloud.
3. For those who have scorned God's will and have grown impatient and skeptical, the clouds loom dark and ominous on the horizon.
4. To God's true servants, the coming clouds usher in a new day.

There is no doubting that clouds have a long and venerable history in the Scriptures. It is no part of the purpose of this present chapter to rehearse that story. Minear's rather elaborate but judicious conclusions are only confirmed by Albrecht Oepke's summary of his study of νεφέλη: "Die Wolke wird das Zeichen des verhuellend-enthuellend sich zur Gemeinschaft darbietenden und die Gemeinschaft siegreich zum Ziel fuehrenden Vaters Jesu Christi."¹⁷ From the start any cavalier dismissal of the mention of the cloud in Acts 1:9 and the οὕτως . . . ὅς τε ὅτι of Acts 1:11 is out of the question. The detail is small but not insignificant. It indicates that Acts shares the common New Testament hope that the Son

¹⁶Christian Hope and the Second Coming (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954), pp. 124-126.

¹⁷TW, IV, 912.

of Man will come ἐν νεφέλῃ μετὰ δυνάμεως καὶ δόξης πολλῆς (Lk. 21:27).¹⁸

All that a cloud means elsewhere in Scripture and in the New Testament is applied by Luke to Christ's coming in the passing notice, οὕτως . . . ὅν τερόπον (Ac. 1:11). In view of the well-known and widespread symbolism it is not too much freight for one cloud to bear.

At first sight Acts appears to discourage any hope in a quick coming. Ernst Haenchen is of the opinion that βλέπειν εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν (Ac. 1:11) is an expression for the *Naherwartung*. And the two men in white reject this attitude; for Luke no longer shares the hope that the end is imminent.¹⁹ For many authors "the delay of the parousia" is a technical term, sharing the untouchability and respectability of most other technical terms, taken for granted rather than proved, and playing the role of villain (or hero) in many a study of early Christian history and theology. The delay is made responsible variously for the rise of dogma, the setting down of tradition in writing, the development of church government, or the inauguration of Gentile missions among others. To examine this thesis is no part of the present paper. But it ought to be said that no less a scholar than Wilhelm Michaelis finds only one passage in the New Testament which supports a delay or total elimination of the parousia. That passage is 2 Peter 3:1ff., spoken by mockers whom the author rejects as false

¹⁸Mk. 13:26, ἐν νεφέλαις; Mt. 24:30 and Mt. 26:64, ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ; Mk. 14:62, μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ; Rev. 1:7, ἔρχεται μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν; all echo Dan. 7:13. The variants reflect in part the dual text tradition of the Daniel passage. The Septuagint has ἐπὶ τῶν νεφελῶν, while Theodotion has μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν.

¹⁹Die Apostelgeschichte, in *Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar ueber das neue Testament*, begründet von Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1956), pp. 120f.; cf. p. 89.

teachers.²⁰ Guenther Bornkamm has commented cautiously on the remarkable fact that the delay of the parousia does not appear to have been a crisis for early Christianity. It may have posed a serious problem, but no trace of a terrible crisis can be found.²¹ Michaelis believes that the New Testament church saw the genuine solution of the genuine problem, which is only caricatured by the designation Parusieverzoegerung, in a modification of the near expectation by the events of Easter and Pentecost.²²

With an eye on Acts 3:19-21 Henry Cadbury says that God is waiting for the repentance of men, before sending Christ and the seasons of refreshing. The same God who in days past overlooked the times of ignorance is now commanding all men everywhere to repent (Ac. 17:30). For Luke the delay is not to be charged to the carelessness or slackness of God. The delay springs rather from God's patience and longsuffering. Cadbury concludes his remarks with this interesting notice,

Finally the Christians themselves, for whom in the earliest days "Thy Kingdom come" and "Maranatha" had been the watchwords came in the time of Tertullian actually to pray in sheer altruism for the postponement of the end—pro mora finis.²³

So blow the winds of opinion and comment. No one seems so rash and foolhardy as to suggest that Luke retained a sense of imminence with respect to the end. And yet Acts does offer hints, which, although not

²⁰"Kennen die Synoptiker eine Verzoegerung der Parusie?" Synoptische Studien (Muenchen: Karl Zink Verlag, 1953), p. 107.

²¹"Die Verzoegerung der Parusie," In Memoriam Ernst Lohmeyer, herausgegeben von Werner Schmauch (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1951), p. 116.

²²"Kennen die Synoptiker eine Verzoegerung der Parusie?" op. cit., p. 123.

²³The Making of Luke-Acts (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1927), p. 296.

compelling when taken singly, do add up to the reminder, at least, that Luke shared not only the firm hope that Christ was coming, but also the attitude that He could come at any time, and that right soon.

Unique in the New Testament is the Lucan reference to Jesus standing at God's right hand (Ac. 7:55f.). Stephen completed his sketch of Jewish history and then ἀτενίνας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἶδεν δόξαν θεοῦ καὶ Ἰησοῦν ἑστῶτα ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ θεοῦ. The commentators do not speak with one voice on this remarkable feature. Several proposed solutions follow.

1. Jesus is here conceived, not as God's co-regent but as one who, like the angels, stands before God's throne.²⁴
2. Jesus stands to intercede before God.²⁵
3. Jesus has risen from His seat to receive the martyr to Himself.²⁶
4. The standing has no special significance.²⁷
5. Jesus has risen from His throne and is poised to return.²⁸

The difficulty of settling on any one interpretation is patent. And it would be perilous in the extreme to press for one view against the others on the basis of the single participle ἑστῶτα. Nevertheless, other

²⁴Haenchen, *op. cit.*, leans to this interpretation; Otto Bauernfeind, *Die Apostelgeschichte*, in *Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament* (Leipzig: A. Deichert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1939), V, 210, mentions this, but it is not his own view.

²⁵Ethelbert Stauffer, *New Testament Theology*, translated by John Marsh (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1955), p. 289.

²⁶Martin Albertz, *Die Botschaft des Neuen Testaments* (Zuerich: Evangelischer Verlag A. G. Zollikon, 1947-), II, 1, 203; cf. p. 213.

²⁷Bo Reicke, *Glaube und Leben der Urgemeinde* (Zuerich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1957), p. 163.

²⁸Carl Friedrich Noesgen, *Commentar ueber die Apostelgeschichte des Lukas* (Leipzig: Doerffling und Franke, 1882), p. 175; Oepke, *TW*, V, 865f.

features of the verses concerned make a choice possible. The attitude of Stephen, ἀτενίδας εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν, is reminiscent in the strongest way of the disciples' pose, ἀτενίζοντες ἡμᾶς εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν (Ac. 1:10), βλέποντες εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν (1:11), which, as even Ernst Haenchen admits,²⁹ is an expression of the Naherwartung.

Stephen says he sees τοὺς οὐρανοὺς διανοιγμένους (7:56). Opened heavens³⁰ are elsewhere associated not with mere static visions but with eschatological revelatory actions which originate with God and are directed towards earth. At Jesus' baptism "the heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form as a dove, and a voice came from heaven" (Lk. 3:21f.; Mt. 3:16f.; Mk. 1:10). In the gospel of John, Jesus declared, "You will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man" (Jn. 1:51).³¹ In a trance Peter saw "the heaven opened and something, like a great sheet, let down by four corners upon the earth" (Ac. 10:11). The Seer reports, "I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war" (Rev. 19:11).

Ernst Lohmeyer says that it is "ein Zeichen seltener Gnade, wenn der Himmel sich auftut; das geschieht, wenn es in solchem Wunder um das Ganze

²⁹Op. cit., pp. 120f.

³⁰Various verbs are employed: ἀνοίγειν, διανοίγειν, ἐκίςω.

³¹Edwyn Clement Hoskyns and Francis Noel Davey, The Fourth Gospel (London: Faber and Faber, 1940), pp. 183f., note that the addition of the words ἀπ' αὐτοῦ in Codex Alexandrinus and the majority of Greek manuscripts, in two manuscripts of the Old Latin Version, in the Syriac Peshitto and Harklean Versions, supported by Chrysostom and Augustine, connects the saying with the words spoken by Jesus to the High Priest, "Hereafter you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven" (Mt. 26:64).

des Volkes oder der Welt geht."³² For this reason Helmut Traub in his article, "*οὐρανός*," in Kittel's dictionary believes that Acts 7:56 deals with "die Schau der eschatologischen Vollendung und nicht eines persoenlichen Lohnes."³³ The corporate and all-comprehending significance of the vision is also expressed in the eschatological title "Son of Man," which occurs outside the synoptic gospels only here. Thus Jesus' standing at the right hand of God lends eschatological coloring to the account of Stephen's martyrdom and in all likelihood was included in Luke's report to support or even heighten hope in an early return of Jesus in his glory and power.

Luke has left other traces of his eschatological attitude. At Lystra Paul was stoned and left for dead. But he revived and continued his journey, exhorting the young churches of Lystra, Iconium and Antioch to continue in the faith καὶ ὅτι διὰ πολλῶν θλίψεων δεῖ ἡμᾶς εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ (Ac. 14:22). This verse prompts the following comment from Kirsopp Lake and Henry J. Cadbury: "The eschatological sense is obviously intended: the persecution in Lystra and Derbe was interpreted as part of the 'Woes' which precede the End."³⁴ According to Johannes

³²Das Evangelium des Markus, in Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar ueber das Neue Testament, begründet von Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1937), p. 21.

³³TW, V, 530, n. 268.

³⁴The Beginnings of Christianity, edited by F. J. Foakes-Jackson and Kirsopp Lake (London: The Macmillan Co., 1920-1933), IV, 168; Haenchen's rejoinder, op. cit., p. 383, has no teeth: "Aber fuer Lukas lagen diese Vorfaelle schon weit zurueck in der Vergangenheit und konnten darum keinen eschatologischen Sinn haben. Lukas teilt ueberdies die Naherwartung nicht mehr."

Schneider this verse testifies that early Christian proclamation agrees with the apocalyptic of Judaism that the final affliction stands before the entrance to the Kingdom of God.³⁵

The word *θλίψις* is saturated with eschatological significance. Heinrich Schlier's essay in Kittel's dictionary³⁶ makes that abundantly clear. In the Septuagint it is used almost exclusively of the afflictions of Israel. In her history Israel continually experienced *θλίψις*, which acquired heilsgeschichtlich significance in her consciousness, since it was thought that through *θλίψις* God was punishing Israel's unbelief and preparing for Himself an obedient and loyal people. In the last days the judgment which had been the constant companion of Israel through all her history and through all her days would reveal itself in consummate, eschatological form. The Day of the Lord was sometimes circumscribed as *ἡμέρα θλίψεως* (2 Kings 19:3; Is. 37:3; Obad. 1:12, 14; Dan. 12:1; Hab. 3:16; Zeph. 1:15).

The afflictions and oppressions of Old Israel were a prophecy of those of the New Israel. "Die ständige Bedrängnis Israels im AT ist der notwendigen Bedrängnis der Kirche im NT gewichen."³⁷ The distress of the Church is thoroughly eschatological. Schlier writes,

Ebenso spricht Jesus in Mt. 24 (Mk. 13) von Bedrängnissen vor der Parusie, deren Anfaenge (*ἀρχὴ ὠδίνων*), 24:4-8, als Erschütterungen des geschichtlichen und naturhaften Kosmos, deren Fortgang, 24:9-14, als *θλίψεις*, wesentlich Verfolgungen der Juenger, und deren Erfuellung, 24:15-28, als *θλίψις μεγάλη, ὅτι οὐ γέγονεν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς κόσμου*

³⁵TW, II, 675.

³⁶TW, III, 139-148, of which the following is a summary.

³⁷Ibid., p. 143.

ἕως τοῦ νῦν οὐδ' οὐ μὴ γένηται (v.21) eben den zu Ende gehenden Verlauf dieses Aeons erfüllen.³⁸

Of course, the New Testament is no mere wholesale borrowing of the eschatological matter and outlook of the Old. The difference is basic. Whereas the eschatological *ἁλῆς* lay in the future from the Judaistic and Old Testament point of view, according to primitive Christianity it was already in progress. The "great distress" is even now upon the world, having begun with the suffering of Jesus the Messiah, even though it will achieve its final height and climax only at the last judgment of God.³⁹

It is interesting to note that the Church suffered *ἁλῆς* following the martyrdom of Stephen (Ac. 8:1 D; 11:19), and that the chief result, as far as Luke was concerned, of the scattering of the believers was the spreading abroad of the word of God (Ac. 8:4; 11:19; 13:51), the preaching of which is itself an eschatological sign. Jesus answered the question of the disciples concerning the time of the consummation (Mk. 13:4; Lk. 21:7) by declaring, "The gospel must first be preached to all nations" (Mk. 13:10; cf. Lk. 21:13). Thus the vision of Stephen at his death, the tribulation of the Church that followed hard on his martyrdom, and the missionary preaching that resulted from the scattering under Jewish pressure are all cut from eschatological fabric and together serve to keep alive hope in a near fulfillment.

In this context there is a sense in which the present ending of the Book of Acts is no puzzle but a perfect capstone. Acts begins with the commissioning of the disciples, "You shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem

³⁸Ibid., pp. 144f.

³⁹Ibid., pp. 145ff.; this ends the summary of Schlier.

and in all Judaea and Samaria and ἕως ἑχάτου τῆς γῆς " (Ac. 1:8). Ernst Haenchen writes that this ἑχάτου is not to be taken to mean the pillars of Hercules, but rather designates Rome.⁴⁰ That is precisely the way the Septuagint uses the phrase. In the Psalms of Solomon 8:16 ἀπ' ἑχάτου τῆς γῆς means simply "from Rome." H. H. Wendt comments on Paul's unhindered preaching in Rome, "Damit war zugleich eine herrliche Erfuellung der Verheissung des Auferstandenen mit Bezug auf die Ausbreitung des Zeugnisses von ihm 'bis ans Ende der Erde' (1:8) gegeben."⁴¹

Here, too, is a clue to Luke's heavy concentration on the termini of the progress of the gospel in the world, Jerusalem and Rome. Rome is always the goal of Acts. The Lord said to Paul, "As you have witnessed about me at Jerusalem, so you must (δεῖ) bear witness also at Rome" (Ac. 23:11). From the instant when the gospel first reached Caesarea (Ac. 10) and Syrian Antioch (Ac. 11), Roman administrative centers, the goal is never far from sight. The curiousness of Luke's nearly exclusive interest in the march of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome has often been remarked. Surely the word went out in several directions and found acceptance in the villages and great cities of many provinces. Yet Luke deliberately chose to narrate the progress from Jerusalem to Rome.

Luke's plan testifies to the passing of salvation from Jew to Gentile. In Jesus and in His gospel the prophecy of old had come true, τεῖκεν ἐκ εἰς φῶς ἐθνῶν, τὸ εἶναι ἐκ εἰς ἑθνητῶν ἕως ἑχάτου τῆς γῆς (Is. 49:6; Ac. 13:47; Lk. 2:32). When the gospel is proclaimed in Rome, it has reached

⁴⁰Op. cit., p. 115.

⁴¹Die Apostelgeschichte, in Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar ueber das Neue Testament, begründet von Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer (9. Auflage; Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1913), p. 369.

its divinely appointed goal. "Victoria Verbi Dei. Paulus Romae, apex evangelii, Actorum finis."⁴² One thing only remains to be said. The fulfillment of the Isaianic prophecy and of the verba Christi (Ac. 1:8), which are the theme of Acts, means that now every condition of the coming of the kingdom has been met. The Western text of Acts 28:31, the earliest surviving commentary on the ending of Acts, supports this interpretation. It adds, "Since this is Christ Jesus the Son of God, through whom the whole world will begin to be judged." Far from relinquishing hope in a near end, Luke's second volume seeks to nurture that hope. The end, while not necessarily conceived as immediate, is imminent: it could come at any time.⁴³

This chapter has thus far concentrated on the need of Jesus' coming, the sure promise of His coming, and the imminence of His coming. It remains to inquire more precisely into the nature of that which the writer of Acts expected to come.

The Resurrection of the Dead

Jesus lives; God has by a mighty act raised Him from the dead. The fact of the resurrection of Jesus is the keystone of Luke's theology of history and of his eschatology. At the same time it is the stone of stumbling on which many trip and fall and are crushed. At Athens Paul preached "Jesus and the Resurrection" (Ac. 17:18). Some believed; more scoffed (17:31f.). Before Jewish King Agrippa, Paul blurted out, "Why is it thought

⁴²Johann Albrecht Bengel, Gnomon Novi Testamenti (Stuttgart: J. F. Steinkopf, 1891), p. 536.

⁴³The valuable distinction between immediacy and imminence was suggested by Prof. Arthur Carl Piepkorn in a seminar.

incredible by any of you that God raises the dead?" (Ac. 26:8).

To the Christian the resurrection of Jesus is a fact of fundamental significance. He believes that God has lifted His arm to act and has in that act given promise of carrying His stroke through to victorious consummation. Jesus' resurrection is the beginning or prelude and guarantee of the general resurrection: "Die Auferstehung Jesu gilt als ihr Auftakt."⁴⁴ Paul preaches Jesus as the $\pi\rho\omega\tau\omicron\varsigma \epsilon\varsigma \alpha\nu\alpha\beta\tau\acute{\alpha}\sigma\epsilon\omega\varsigma \nu\epsilon\kappa\epsilon\omega\nu$ (Ac. 26:23). The epistles of Paul have the same conception in other words: $\epsilon\varsigma \alpha\nu\alpha\beta\tau\acute{\alpha}\sigma\epsilon\omega\varsigma \nu\epsilon\kappa\epsilon\omega\nu$ (Rom. 1:3), $\alpha\pi\alpha\rho\chi\eta\tau\omega\nu \kappa\epsilon\kappa\omicron\mu\eta\mu\epsilon\nu\omega\nu$ (1 Cor. 15:20), $\epsilon\iota \alpha\nu\theta\epsilon\omega\pi\omega\nu \alpha\nu\alpha\beta\tau\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\varsigma \nu\epsilon\kappa\epsilon\omega\nu$ (1 Cor. 15:21), $\alpha\rho\chi\eta, \pi\rho\omega\tau\acute{o}\tau\omicron\kappa\omicron\varsigma \epsilon\kappa \tau\omega\nu \nu\epsilon\kappa\epsilon\omega\nu$ (Col. 1:18).

Peter, in speaking to the crowd assembled in Solomon's portico, names Jesus, whom God raised from the dead, $\tau\omega\nu \alpha\rho\chi\eta\gamma\omega\nu \tau\eta\varsigma \zeta\omega\eta\varsigma$ (Ac. 3:15). Thereby Jesus is contrasted as strongly as possible with Barabbas, the murderer (3:14). As the first to rise from the dead, Jesus assures His own of resurrection and life.⁴⁵ The entire note of Haenchen is well worth the quoting:

Während $\alpha\rho\chi\eta\gamma\omega\varsigma \tau\eta\varsigma \zeta\omega\eta\varsigma$ von Bruce 109 als "Urheber des Lebens" verstanden wird, deuten Wendt (104) und Loisy (231) $\alpha\rho\chi\eta\gamma\omega\varsigma$ = "Anführer." Da aber "Anführer des Lebens" keinen Sinn gibt, nehmen sie mit Bauernfeind 63 die Bedeutung "Führer zum Leben" an. Delling, ThWb I 485f. versteht $\alpha\rho\chi\eta\gamma\omega\varsigma$ im griechischen Sinn des Heros einer Stadt usw.: Christus ist der Heros eponymos der Christen; sie teilen das Schicksal ihres "Heros"-Heilands, seine Auferstehung. Da $\alpha\nu\alpha\beta\tau\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\varsigma \zeta\omega\eta\varsigma$ Joh. 5:29 einer $\alpha\nu\alpha\beta\tau\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\varsigma \epsilon\iota\varsigma \zeta\omega\eta\nu$ (LXX: 2 Makk 7:14) gleichwertig ist, kann man auch an unserer Stelle den Genitiv der Richtung (Bl.-Debr. 166) finden.⁴⁶

⁴⁴Albrecht Oepke, " $\alpha\nu\iota\sigma\tau\eta\mu\iota$," TW, I, 371.

⁴⁵Haenchen, op. cit., p. 170.

⁴⁶Ibid., n. 4.

According to Luke (Ac. 4:2) the Sadducees were annoyed that the Christians proclaimed "in Jesus the resurrection from the dead." Lake and Cadbury think it "tempting to expound it as meaning that the resurrection of Jesus was a proof of the disputed doctrine."⁴⁷ The pointed antithesis to the Sadducean denial of the resurrection here and elsewhere in Acts (23:6,7,8; cf. Lk. 20:27ff., par.), suggests that it was not only the raising of Jesus but the resurrection of the just and the unjust (24:15) which was proclaimed by the leaders of the Church. The preachment of a general resurrection stirred the Sadducean ire and elicited outbursts of passion and violence (23:6-10). Paul claimed to stand with the Pharisees against the Sadducees with regard to the "hope of Israel" (28:20). The phrase ἐλπίδος καὶ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν is ordinarily taken as hendiadys for "the hope of the resurrection of the dead" (23:6). That hope in the promise made by God to the fathers has not found exhaustive fulfillment in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. It is a hope to which the twelve tribes still hope to attain, one in which they hope to participate (26:6f.). In affirming the validity of the hope the Pharisees were nearer than the Sadducees to acceptance of the proleptic fulfillment realized in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Whereas the Sadducees are intransigently hostile to the Christian movement (5:17), the Pharisees are more friendly and receptive. The Pharisee Gamaliel counseled caution and patience, when the Sadducees were ready to execute Peter and his fellows (5:33-40). Some Pharisees were even converted to faith in Christ (15:5).

Paul proclaimed that there will be a resurrection $\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}\omega\nu\ \tau\epsilon\ \kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}\ \alpha\delta\acute{\iota}\kappa\omega\nu$ (Ac. 24:15). Jesus had spoken of a resurrection of life and a

⁴⁷Op. cit., p. 40; see also Bruce, op. cit., p. 116.

resurrection of judgment (Jn. 5:29; cf. Dan. 12:2). The idea is by no means unique, although as Lake and Cadbury aver, it is "a more remarkable phrase than is obvious at first sight."⁴⁸ Their comment continues,

The Jewish doctrine of a resurrection or resurrections was not clearly formulated. Would all Jews, or all men, or only the righteous Jews be raised? And would this be at the End of the Age, or in the Days of the Messiah?

They find a similar diversity in the New Testament. The Book of Revelation is not crystal clear on this point, but it surely envisages a judgment of both the just and the unjust (Rev. 20:12). And judgment is Paul's interest in the speech to Felix. Since there will be a resurrection of just and unjust, Paul takes pains to have a clear conscience (Ac. 26:16).

Judgment

Judgment is intimated already in the phrase, "resurrection of the just and the unjust." In summarizing the apology of Paul in which these words occur, Luke writes, "He argued περὶ δικαιοσύνης καὶ ἔγκρατειας καὶ τοῦ κείματος τοῦ μέλλοντος (Ac. 24:25). In similar tones and phrases Paul had addressed the Athenians, ὁ θεός . . . ἐβόηεν ἡμέραν ἐν ᾗ μέλει κείναι τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, ἐν ἧς ἅνθρωποι ὡς ὥρεον, πίστιν παλαχῶν πᾶσαν ἀναστήσας αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν (17:31). The third explicit reference in Acts to future judgment is in Peter's sermon to the household of Cornelius. God has raised Jesus from the dead and παρεγγείλεν ὑμῖν κηρύξαι τῇ λαῷ καὶ διαμνηστέρανθαι ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ὠρισμένος ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ κρίτης ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν (10:42).

God has set a day of judgment for all men, and Jesus has been named

⁴⁸Op. cit., p. 301; the following quotation is from the same page.

Judge (cf. Lk. 21:34-36). Lake and Cadbury call this a "pure 'Son of Man' eschatology."⁴⁹ The phrase ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου (Lk. 21:36) would have no meaning to a Gentile and therefore Peter and Paul employ paraphrase. Before that day comes, God in His goodness and patience calls all men to repent and believe (Ac. 2:21,38; 10:43; 17:30).

Salvation

The proclamation of God's eschatological act in raising Jesus from the dead and the announcement of the judgment to come is the context in which the appeal to repent, believe and be saved is set. In his sermon on Pentecost Peter proclaims that now the prophecy of Joel concerning the day of the Lord is finding fulfillment. "And it shall be that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Ac. 2:21). Peter picks up the same theme at the end of his sermon: "Save yourselves from this crooked generation" (Ac. 2:40). The Church consisted of those who were being saved, οἱ σωζόμενοι (Ac. 2:47), which Lake and Cadbury interpret as "the Remnant of Israel which is destined to survive the End. They were gradually being selected during the 'Interim' before the End."⁵⁰ Anyone who refuses to believe in Jesus will be destroyed from the people (Ac. 3:23); for in Jesus alone is there salvation (Ac. 4:12; 15:11). To the jailor's question, "What must I do to be saved?" Paul answers, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Ac. 16:30f.). The girl with the spirit of divination with fine perception called the apostles "servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation" (Ac. 16:17).

⁴⁹Op. cit., p. 219; see also p. 122.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 30.

The Jews as a whole refused to believe in Jesus and Paul explained the consequences thus: "Be it known to you then that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen" (Ac. 28:28). The end of the ways of God with men is salvation to those who repent and believe and call on His name.

Salvation is variously described in Acts. One term for it is ζῶν αἰώνιος (13:46,48). This passage is perfectly parallel to Acts 28:28, which has τὸ σωτήριον. Jesus as eschatological Savior has the name, ἀρχηγὸς τῆς ζωῆς (Ac. 3:15). The message which the Church preaches is called "all the words of this life" (Ac. 5:20). Concerning ζῶν αἰώνιος Lake and Cadbury argue for the translation "life of the Age to come." They write, "It refers to the Jewish belief in the 'Age to come,' which would be divinely established after the End."⁵¹

Johannes Schneider makes the claim that "βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ, ὁ αἰὼν ὁ ἐρχόμενος (= 8:12; 16:28) und ζῶν αἰώνιος sind Ausdrücke fuer eine Heilswirklichkeit."⁵² The eschatological phrase βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ appears eight times in Acts. Before the Ascension Jesus spoke concerning the kingdom (1:3), prompting His disciples to inquire after the time of its restoration (1:6). But it is a gift of God and God alone decides the time of its appearing (1:7). The evangelists of the Church proclaim and preach about the Kingdom of God (εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, 8:12; Lk. 4:43; 8:1; 16:16; κηρύσσειν, 20:25; 28:31; Lk. 9:2; Mt. 4:23; 9:35; διακηρύσσειν, 28:23; διαλέγειν καὶ πείθειν, 19:8). And Paul says plainly that "we must

⁵¹Ibid., p. 159.

⁵²"ἐρχομαι," *TW*, II, 666.

enter (εἰσελθεῖν) the kingdom of God in the midst of many tribulations" (14:22).

The βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ and τὰ περὶ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ χρίστου (28:31; cf. 28:23; cf. 8:12, "the name of Jesus Christ") together constitute the subject matter of apostolic preaching. The two phrases are not identical. "The things concerning Jesus" looks to the past, to Jesus' death and resurrection; "the Kingdom of God" looks to the future. "The verbs with which Luke connects the Kingdom—'tell the good news' and 'testify'—suit this futuristic sense, whether of promise or of warning."⁵³ Elsewhere Cadbury has noted that "nothing obviously distinguishes the term Kingdom of God in Acts from such apocalyptic use as it has in the Synoptic Gospels."⁵⁴

In preparing for a definition of βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ Karl Ludwig Schmidt clears the ground with these words:

Negativ genommen, ist das Gottesreich allem Gegenwaertigen und Irdischen, allem Jetzigen und Hiesigen entgegengesetzt und damit etwas schlechthin Wunderbares. Von hier aus ist es unmöglich, dass Gottesreich als ein summum bonum zu verstehen, dem man entgegenstrebt, dem man sich stufenweise naehert.⁵⁵

The association with Jesus in the apostolic preaching further identifies the βασιλεία as a soteriological entity, while its normal use in apocalyptic contexts marks it as indelibly eschatological. Walter Kuenneth writes,

Das Ziel aller Eschatologie wie alles Lebens ist nicht der Christus, sondern allein Gott, aber Gott nur durch den Christus und seine

⁵³This entire paragraph depends on Cadbury, The Making of Luke-Acts, op. cit., p. 286, from which page the quotation is also taken.

⁵⁴"Acts and Eschatology," op. cit., p. 311.

⁵⁵"βασιλεία," TW, I, 585.

Auferstehung. Das vollendete Telos ist das Reich Gottes, d. h. aber ὁ θεὸς πάντα ἐν πάλιν.⁵⁶

Salvation, the life of the world to come, and the Kingdom of God are further explicated by another set of terms which Acts employs: καὶ ἐν ἀναψύξει ἀπὸ πρεσβύτων τοῦ κυρίου and χρόνοι ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων (3:20f.). As the context shows, these times and seasons (cf. 1:7) will begin with the coming of the Anointed One from heaven.

The word ἀποκαθίστημι has two basic significances: to return or give back, on the one hand, and to restore, heal or renew, on the other.⁵⁷ From its use to describe the political restoration of Israel by the Lord, it came to be used of God's ultimate restoration in the end. That is, it developed from a heilsgeschichtlich to a messianic-eschatological counter. From Malachi 3:24 (4:5) onwards the returning Elijah appears to be the one expected to bring restoration.⁵⁸

The original, political use of ἀποκαθίστημι seems to be behind the question of the disciples, εἰ καὶ ἀποκαθιστάνεις τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ Ἰσραὴλ (Ac. 1:6). Paul Billerbeck comments, "Um die Wiederherstellung des Reiches Israel wurde regelmaessig gebetet," and he offers examples of such prayers.⁵⁹ Jesus does not rebuke the question, but He directs their eyes beyond the political confines of the narrow Jewish community.

Elsewhere the verb refers to the restoration of a withered hand

⁵⁶Theologie der Auferstehung (Muenchen: Claudius Verlag, 1951), p. 255.

⁵⁷Oepke, TW, I, 386.

⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 386f.

⁵⁹Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch (Muenchen: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1924), II, 588.

(Lk. 6:10; Mk. 2:5; Mt. 12:13) and to the restoration of sight to a blind man (Mk. 8:25). The Author hopes for early restoration to his correspondents (Heb. 13:19).

Jesus identified John the Baptist as Elijah who comes to restore all things (Mk. 9:12; Mt. 17:11). Luke seems to have this identification in view when he records the angel's word to Zechariah, καὶ αὐτὸς προελεύεσθαι ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ ἐν πνεύματι καὶ δυνάμει Ἡλίου, ἐπιστρέψαι καρδίας πατέρων ἐπὶ τέκνα (Lk. 1:17). This is quite strongly reminiscent of the Septuagint rendering of Mal. 3:24 (4:5), ἀποκαταστήσει καρδίαν πατρὸς πρὸς υἱόν.

The reader might expect the phrases of Acts 3:20f. to be used of the work and office of John the Baptist. Bauernfeind suggests that the passage originally referred to Elijah but had been baptized into Christian use by the early Church and then incorporated by Luke into the sermon of Peter.⁶⁰ Haenchen does not believe that the expressions demand any connection with Elijah at all.⁶¹ Perhaps the language is part and parcel of contemporary eschatology and was employed with no qualms.

Two other possibilities present themselves. An anti-Johannine polemic in Acts is just possible. Jesus contrasts John's baptism quite sharply with baptism with the Holy Spirit (Ac. 1:5; cf. 11:16). Twice (Ac. 1:22; 10:37) John's activity serves innocently to date the beginning of Jesus' ministry. A third passage starts in exactly the same way and then adds the words of John, "What do you suppose that I am? I am not he. No, but after me one is coming, the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie" (Ac. 13:24f.). In Ephesus Paul's converts Priscilla and Aquila

⁶⁰Op. cit., pp. 66ff.

⁶¹Op. cit., p. 174.

further instruct Apollos who knew only the baptism of John (Ac. 18:24-26). When Paul arrived in Ephesus, he discovered about twelve disciples of the Baptist who knew nothing of the coming of the Spirit. And so Paul baptized them in the name of the Lord Jesus (Ac. 19:1-6). Of nine uses of John's name in the Book of Acts only two occur in contexts which seem innocent of all polemics. A desire to combat extravagant claims for the Baptist may possibly have influenced Peter's choice of language in Acts 3:20f.

The other possible explanation for the use of this language to describe the work of Christ is suggested by the preceding context. Peter had healed a man lame from birth, so that he walked and leaped and praised God (Ac. 3:1-10). Both verb and noun, ἀποκαθίστημι and ἀποκατάστασις, are perfectly good words to describe a healing (cf. Mk. 3:5, par.; Mk. 8:25). Luke does not make use of them in the narrative of the healing, but that action, which prompts Peter's sermon, might very easily have offered illustrative material for the Apostle. The ἀποκατάστασις πάντων is imminent and achieves provisional and anticipatory effects even now in the present.

The passage offers the translator some difficulty. Albrecht Oepke suggests this very probable solution for Acts 3:20f.:

damit kommen moegen Zeiten der Erquickung vom Herrn und er den fuer euch bestimmten Messias Jesus senden moege, den der Himmel aufnehmen muss bis zu der Zeit der Wiederherstellung des Alls, wovon Gott Herstellung alles dessen, was geredet hat durch seine heiligen Propheten von jeher.⁶²

The promises of God will be established or fulfilled and God's creation will be restored to its original integrity. The translator and interpreter

⁶² TW, I, 390.

is not to choose between the possibilities but to recognize that both are contained together in a clause of pregnant brevity.⁶³

Oepke well summarizes the essential teaching of these verses in a few well-chosen words:

καίτοι ἀναψύξεως und χρόνων ἀποκαταστάσεως stehen in Korrespondenz und erklaren sich gegenseitig, bilden aber keine Tautologie. Sinnvoll markiert καίτοι das Eintreten des Umschwungs, waehrend χρόνων an den dauernden Zustand der erneuerten Welt denken laesst.⁶⁴

And two lines later he concludes, "Zugrunde liegt also der dem Judentum gelaefige Begriff der messianischen Neuschöpfung." This study can well rest with the words of Otto Bauernfeind, who climaxes his discussion, "Die ἀποκατάστασις bleibt auf jeden Fall der 'Kern aller Eschatologie,' die messianische Wiederherstellung in den vollkommenen Zustand, wie er einst aus Gottes Schöpfung hervorging."⁶⁵

Summary

The task is unfinished; for the Messiah's work is to be all-embracing. The hope of Acts, as of all the New Testament, has Christ Jesus as its heart. He will come on a cloud as Son of Man. And He can come at any time; for every pre-condition has been met. Even now the final tribulation is upon the world. Acts is history in expectation of God's last and universal act.

When Jesus Christ comes, the dead will be raised and He will judge the just and the unjust. His coming means life and salvation for all who

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Ibid.; the following quotation is from the same page.

⁶⁵Op. cit., p. 69.

believe in Jesus as the Christ and call on His name. They shall enter the Kingdom of God and inherit the life of the age to come. God will send seasons of refreshing and He will create heaven and earth anew.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Albertz, Martin. Die Botschaft des Neuen Testaments. Zuerich: Evangelischer Verlag A. G. Zollikon, 1947-1952.
- Arndt, W. F., and F. W. Gingrich. A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, c.1957.
- Bartsch, Hans Werner, editor. Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate. Translated from the German by Reginald H. Fuller. London: S. P. C. K., 1953.
- Bauernfeind, Otto. Die Apostelgeschichte. Vol. V. of Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament. Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1939.
- Bengel, Johann Albrecht. Gnomon Novi Testamenti. Stuttgart: J. F. Steinkopf, 1891.
- Beyer, Hermann Wolfgang. Die Apostelgeschichte. Vol. V of Das Neue Testament Deutsch. Herausgegeben von Paul Althaus. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1951.
- Billerbeck, Paul. Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch. Muenchen: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1924.
- Blunt, A. W. F. The Acts of the Apostles. In The Clarendon Bible. Edited by Thomas Strong, Herbert Wild and George H. Box. London: Oxford University Press, 1923.
- Bornkamm, Guenther. "Die Verzoeigerung der Parusie," In Memoriam Ernst Lohmeyer. Herausgegeben von Werner Schmauch. Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1951. Pp. 116-126.
- Bruce, F. F. Commentary on the Book of the Acts. In The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956.
- . The Acts of the Apostles. London: The Tyndale Press, 1951.
- Buechsel, Friedrich. Theologie des Neuen Testaments: Geschichte des Wortes Gottes im Neuen Testament. Guetersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1935.
- Bultmann, Rudolf. "ἀφ' ἑνός," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. I. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1933. Pp. 506-509.
- . Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition. 2. Auflage. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1931.

- . History and Eschatology. Edinburgh: The University Press, 1957.
- . Primitive Christianity in its Contemporary Setting. Translated by Reginald H. Fuller. London and New York: Thames and Hudson, 1956.
- . Theology of the New Testament. Translated by Kendrick Grobel. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951-1955.
- Cadbury, Henry J. "Acts and Eschatology," The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology. Edited by W. D. Davies and D. Daube. Cambridge: The University Press, 1956. Pp. 300-321.
- . The Making of Luke-Acts. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1927.
- Casserley, J. V. Langmead. The Christian in Philosophy. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951.
- Collingwood, R. G. The Idea of History. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1946.
- Conzelmann, Hans. Die Mitte der Zeit: Studien zur Theologie des Lukas. Tuebingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1954.
- Cullmann, Oscar. Christ and Time: The Primitive Christian Conception of Time and History. Translated by Floyd V. Filson. London: S. C. M. Press, 1951.
- . The Early Church: Studies in Early Christian History and Theology. Edited by A. J. B. Higgins. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956.
- Delling, Gerhard. "ἀνταμείνω, ἀνάληψις," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. IV. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1942. Pp. 8f.
- . "ἀρχηγός," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. I. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1933. Pp. 485f.
- . "ἀρχή," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. I. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1933. Pp. 476f.
- Dibelius, Martin. From Tradition to Gospel. Translated by Bertram Lee Woolf. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935.
- . Studies in the Acts of the Apostles. Edited by Heinrich Greeven. Translated by Mary Ling. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956.
- Dinkler, Erich. "Earliest Christianity," The Idea of History in the Ancient Near East. Edited by Robert C. Dentan. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955.

- Dodd, C. H. The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments. New York: Harper and Bros., 1936.
- History and the Gospel. London: Nisbet and Co., 1938.
- The Parables of the Kingdom. London: Nisbet and Co., 1936.
- Elert, Werner. Der Christliche Glaube: Grundlinien der lutherischen Dogmatik. 3. Auflage. Hamburg: Furcht-Verlag, c.1956.
- Filson, Floyd V. Jesus Christ the Risen Lord. New York: Abingdon Press, 1956.
- Flew, R. Newton. Jesus and His Church. London: Epworth Press, 1943.
- Foakes-Jackson, F. J. The Acts of the Apostles. In The Moffatt New Testament Commentary. Edited by James Moffatt. New York: Harper and Bros., 1931.
- Franzmann, Martin H. "The Apostolate: its Enduring Significance in the Apostolic Word," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVIII (March, 1957), 174-197.
- Gaertner, Bertil. The Areopagus Speech and Natural Revelation. Translated by Carolyn Hannay King. Uppsala: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1955.
- Glasson, T. Francis. The Second Advent: the Origin of the New Testament Doctrine. London: Epworth Press, 1947.
- Goguel, Maurice. The Birth of Christianity. Translated by H. C. Snape. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1954.
- Grant, Frederick C. The Gospels: Their Origin and their Growth. New York: Harper and Bros., 1957.
- Grundmann, Walter. " $\delta\epsilon\iota$," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. II. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1935. Pp. 21-25.
- " $\delta\epsilon\chi\iota\varsigma$," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. II. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1935. Pp. 37-39.
- Guy, H. A. The New Testament Doctrine of the Last Things. London: Oxford University Press, 1948.
- Haenchen, Ernst. Die Apostelgeschichte. Vol. V of Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar ueber das Neue Testament. Begrundet von Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, c.1956.
- Harnack, Adolph. The Acts of the Apostles. Translated by J. R. Wilkinson. London: Williams and Norgate, 1909.

- Henderson, Ian. Myth in the New Testament. London: S. C. M. Press, 1952.
- Hoskyns, Edwyn Clement, and Francis Noel Davey. The Fourth Gospel. London: Faber and Faber, 1940.
- . The Riddle of the New Testament. London: Faber and Faber, 1947.
- Jeremias, Joachim. Die Gleichnisse Jesu. 2. Auflage. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1952.
- . Jesus als Weltvollender. Guetersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1930.
- Kantonen, T. A. The Christian Hope. Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1954.
- Knox, Wilfred L. The Acts of the Apostles. Cambridge: The University Press, 1948.
- Kuempel, Werner Georg. Promise and Fulfilment: the Eschatological Message of Jesus. Translated by Dorothea M. Barton. London: S. C. M. Press, 1957.
- Kuenneth, Walter. Theologie der Auferstehung. Muenchen: Claudius Verlag, 1951.
- Lake, Kirsopp, and F. J. Foakes-Jackson. The Beginnings of Christianity. London: The Macmillan Co., 1920-1933.
- Lampe, G. W. H. "The Holy Spirit in the Writings of St. Luke," Studies in the Gospels: Essays in Memory of R. H. Lightfoot. Edited by D. E. Nineham. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955.
- Lietzmann, Hans. The Beginnings of the Christian Church. Translated by Bertram Lee Woolf. London: Lutterworth Press, 1949.
- Lohmeyer, Ernst. Das Evangelium des Markus. Vol. I of Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar ueber das Neue Testament. Begrundet von Heinrich August Wilhelm Meyer. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1937.
- Manson, William. The Gospel of Luke. Vol. III of The Moffatt New Testament Commentary. Edited by James Moffatt. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1930.
- . "Eschatology in the New Testament," Eschatology. London and Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1952.
- . Jesus the Messiah. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1943.
- Manson, T. W. "Present-day Research in the Life of Jesus," The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology. Edited by D. Daube and W. D. Davies. Cambridge: The University Press, 1956.

- . The Servant-Messiah: A Study of the Public Ministry of Jesus. Cambridge: The University Press, 1953.
- Marsh, John. The Fulness of Time. New York: Harper and Bros., 1952.
- Meinertz, Max. Theologie des Neuen Testamentes. Ergaenzungsbaende I und II of Die Heilige Schrift des Neuen Testamentes. Herausgegeben von Fritz Tillmann. Bonn: Peter Hanstein Verlag, G. m. b. H., 1950.
- Meyer, Eduard. Ursprung und Anfaenge des Christentums. Stuttgart und Berlin: J. G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung Nachfolger, 1923.
- Meyer, Heinrich August Wilhelm. Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Acts of the Apostles. Translated by Paton J. Gloag. Revised by William P. Dickson. New York: Funk and Wagnalls, c.1883.
- Michaelis, Wilhelm. Einleitung in das Neue Testament. Bern: Berchthold Haller Verlag, 1954.
- . Die Erscheinungen des Auferstandenen. Basel: Heinrich Majer, 1944.
- . "Kennen Die Synoptiker eine Verzoeigerung der Parusie?" Synoptische Studien. Muenchen: Karl Zink Verlag, 1953.
- Michel, Otto. Das Zeugnis des Neuen Testaments von der Gemeinde. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1941.
- Miner, Paul S. Christian Hope and the Second Coming. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1954.
- Morgenthaler, Robert. Die lukanische Geschichtsschreibung als Zeugnis: Gestalt und Gehalt der Kunst des Lukas. Zuerich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1949.
- Noack, Bent. Das Gottesreich bei Lukas: Eine Studie zu Luk. 17:20-24. Uppsala: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1948.
- Noesgen, Carl Friedrich. Commentar ueber die Apostelgeschichte des Lukas. Leipzig: Doerffling und Franke, 1882.
- Oepke, Albrecht. "ἀνίστημι," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. I. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1933. Pp. 368-372.
- . "ἀποκαθίστημι, ἀποκατάστασις," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. I. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1933. Pp. 386-392.
- . "ἐγείρω," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. II. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1935.

- . "νεφέλη," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. IV. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1942.
- . "πνεύμα, πνεύμα," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. V. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Friedrich. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1954.
- Preiss, Theo. "The Vision of History in the New Testament," Life in Christ. London: S. C. M. Press, 1954. Pp. 61-80.
- Procksch, Otto. "ἄγιος," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. I. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1933. Pp. 87-116.
- Schrenk, Gottlob. "δική, κτλ," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. II. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1935. Pp. 180-229.
- Rackham, Richard Belward. The Acts of the Apostles. In Westminster Commentaries. Edited by Walter Lock. London: Methuen and Co., 1919.
- Ramsey, A. Michael. The Resurrection of Christ. London: Geoffrey Bles, 1946.
- Redlich, E. Basil. Form Criticism: Its Value and Limitations. London: Duckworth, 1939.
- Reicke, Bo. Glaube und Leben der Urgemeinde. Zuerich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1957.
- Rengstorff, Karl Heinrich. "ἀποτέλλω," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. I. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1933. Pp. 397-448.
- . Die Auferstehung Jesu: Form, Art und Sinn der Urchristlichen Osterbotschaft. 2. Auflage. Witten-Ruhr: Luther-Verlag, 1954.
- . Das Evangelium nach Lukas. Vol. III of Das Neue Testament Deutsch. Herausgegeben von Paul Althaus. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1952.
- . "Wesen und Bedeutung des geistlichen Amtes nach dem neuen Testament und in der Lehre des Luthertums," World Lutheranism of Today. Stockholm: Svenska Kyrkans Diakonistyrelses Bokförlag, 1950.
- Rissi, Mathias. Zeit und Geschichte in der Offenbarung des Johannes. Zuerich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1952.
- Roberts, Harold. Jesus and the Kingdom of God. London: Epworth Press, 1955.

- Robinson, James M. The Problem of History in Mark. London: S. C. M. Press, 1957.
- Robinson, John A. T. Jesus and His Coming: The Emergence of a Doctrine. New York: Abingdon Press, 1957.
- Schlatter, Adolf. The Church in the New Testament Period. Translated by Paul P. Levertoff. London: S. P. C. K., 1955.
- Schlier, Heinrich. "ἐκκλησία, ἐκκλησία," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. III. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1938. Pp. 139-148.
- Schmidt, Karl Ludwig. "ἐκκλησία," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. I. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1933. Pp. 579-592.
- "Die Stellung der Evangelien in der allgemeinen Literaturgeschichte," Eucharisterion: Studien zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments. Herausgegeben von Hans Schmidt. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1923. Pp. 50-134.
- Schneider, Johannes. "ἐκκλησία," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. I. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1933. Pp. 516-519.
- "ἐκκλησία, κτλ," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. II. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1935. Pp. 662-682.
- Schniewind, Julius. "A Reply to Bultmann," Kerygma and Myth: A Theological Debate. Edited by Hans Werner Bartsch. Translated by Reginald H. Fuller. London: S. P. C. K., 1953. Pp. 45-101.
- Schubert, Paul. "The Structure and Significance of Luke 24," Neutestamentliche Studien fuer Rudolf Bultmann. Berlin: Alfred Toepelmann, 1954. Pp. 165-186.
- Schweitzer, Wolfgang. Eschatology and Ethics. Translated by Reginald H. Fuller. Geneva: The Study Department of the World Council of Churches, 1951.
- Shinn, Roger Lincoln. Christianity and the Problem of History. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953.
- Smidt, Udo. Die Apostelgeschichte. Vol. V of Bibelhilfe fuer die Gemeinde. Herausgegeben von Erich Stange. Kassel und Stuttgart: J. G. Oncken Verlag, 1951.
- Stauffer, Ethelbert. "Der Stand der neutestamentlichen Forschung," Theologie und Liturgie. Herausgegeben von Liemar Hennig. Kassel: Johannes Stauda-Verlag, 1952. Pp. 35-105.

- . New Testament Theology. Translated by John Marsh. New York: Macmillan Co., c.1955.
- Steinmann, Alphons. Die Apostelgeschichte. Vol. V of Die Heilige Schrift des Neuen Testamentes. Herausgegeben von Fritz Tillmann. 4. Auflage. Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1934.
- Taylor, Vincent. The Formation of the Gospel Tradition. London: The Macmillan Co., 1938.
- Thielicke, Helmut. Theologische Ethik. I. Tuebingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1951.
- Thornton, L. S. The Common Life in the Body of Christ. London: Dacre Press, 1950.
- Traub, Helmut. "Enderwartung," Biblisch-theologisches Handwoerterbuch zur Lutherbibel und anderen Uebersetzungen. Herausgegeben von Hans Engelland und Edo Osterloh. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1954.
- . "ὁμοῦς," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. V. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Friedrich. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1954. Pp. 496-543.
- Vielhauer, Philip. "Zum 'Paulinismus' der Apostelgeschichte," Evangelische Theologie, X (July, 1950), 1-15.
- Von Rad, Gerhard, Karl Georg Kuhn und Walter Gutbrod. "Ἰσχυρία, κτλ," Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament. III. Herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1938. Pp. 356-394.
- Wendt, Hans Hinrich. Die Apostelgeschichte. Vol. V of Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar ueber das Neue Testament. Begrundet von H. A. W. Meyer. 9. Auflage. Goettingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1913.
- Wikenhauser, Alfred. Die Apostelgeschichte. Vol. V of Das Neue Testament. Herausgegeben von Alfred Wikenhauser und Otto Kuss. 2. Auflage. Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, c.1951.
- Wilder, Amos Niven. Eschatology and Ethics in the Teaching of Jesus. New York: Harper and Bros., 1939.
- . "Variant Traditions of the Resurrection in Acts," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXIII (1943), 307-318.
- Williams, C. S. C. The Acts of the Apostles. In Black's New Testament Commentaries. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1957.
- Williams, R. R. The Acts of the Apostles. In Torch Bible Commentaries. Edited by John Marsh, Alan Richardson and Ronald Gregor Smith. London: S. C. M. Press, 1953.

Wright, G. Ernest. God Who Acts: Biblical Theology as Recital. London:
S. C. M. Press, 1952.

Zahn, Theodor. Die Apostelgeschichte des Lucas. Leipzig: A. Deichertsche
Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1922.

----- . Grundriss der Geschichte des Apostolischen Zeitalters. Leipzig:
A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1929.