

CURRENT THEOLOGY
BULLETIN OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

I

SOME RECENT BOOKS

Someone has said that the day of the large scientific commentary is over and gone, and the reason is offered that present prices of publication make the old-style studies economically impossible. Whether or not the statement is true, there has been a heartening appearance of moderate-sized commentaries, either published for the first time or appearing in new editions. Items from five such commentaries are here briefly mentioned.

The first is the so-called Bible of Jerusalem. Under the direction of the famous *Ecole biblique* of Jerusalem, made illustrious by Père Lagrange and his pupils and successors, the entire Bible is being translated into French (*La sainte Bible*), and the several parts are being published separately. A commentary in the form of brief footnotes accompanies the text. It is expected that the entire work will be completed this year and published in one volume.

Those acquainted with the scholarly work of C. Spicq, O.P., will welcome his treatment of the Epistle to the Hebrews.¹ From the introduction we may gather the following items of interest. The distinctive character of Hebrews, which makes it so different from other Pauline epistles, may be due to a redactor identified with probability as Apollos. What is known about him agrees well with certain distinctive traits of the letter. He was "a native of Alexandria," "an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures," who "vigorously refuted the Jews in public and showed from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ" (Acts 18:24, 28). Moreover his authority was so great that at Corinth a faction formed in his name could rival those of Paul and Cephas (I Cor. 1:12). The Alexandrian background of Apollos could explain the familiarity with Philo's writings manifested in the epistle.

The recipients of the letter would be converted Jewish priests who had fled from Jerusalem and were probably living in Caesarea or Antioch. The place of composition would be Italy, and the time about 67 A.D., with the imminence of the fall of Jerusalem explaining the urgent warnings of impending calamity. In this connection the writer suggests a parallelism with the eschatological discourse, which he thinks deals not with the end of the world but only with the destruction of Jerusalem. Thus he adopts a position presented by A. Feuillet, "Le discours de Jésus sur la ruine du temple d'après

¹ *L'Épître aux Hébreux*. Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1950. Pp. 77. 160 fr.

Marc 13 et Luc 21, 5-36," *Revue biblique*, LV (1948), 481-502; LVI (1949), 61-92.

In the same series Pierre Dornier, P.S.S., Professor of Sacred Scripture at the Grand Séminaire of Lyons, translates and comments on the Pastorals.² The following selections may indicate his attitude. Discussing the question of authenticity, he considers three of the ordinary objections against Pauline authorship: the adversaries, the mention of bishops, and the distinctive vocabulary. Concerning the adversaries he maintains that these are not representative of the Gnosticism of the second century but rather resemble the Jewish syncretism of the first century which has some kinship with the so-called Colossian "heresy." The objection taken from the mention of bishops is not valid, he holds. A distinction between bishops and priests is not supposed in the Pastorals, which therefore correspond to a stage of ecclesiastical development earlier than that of the letters of St. Ignatius. The latter indicate the existence of a monarchical episcopate at the end of the first century. The vocabulary of the Pastorals does not differ so much from other Pauline letters as is sometimes asserted. Nevertheless the difference suffices to show that the letters to Timothy and Titus could have been redacted by a secretary who was allowed great freedom in their composition. Naturally the name of St. Luke suggests itself (cf. II Tim. 4:11). A good exposé of the theology of the Pastorals shows that the thought is not essentially different from that of the other letters. All teachers of religion will be grateful for the Bible of Jerusalem, and we may hope that it will soon be translated into English.

Germany, always noted for its research scholars and for its love of the Bible, has not been remiss in producing recent commentaries on Sacred Scripture. One of these is the Regensburg New Testament whose volumes appear with commendable regularity, and the entire series will number ten books. After an accurate translation there follows a running commentary with occasional excursions on more important or controverted points.

Alfred Wikenhauser's *Acts of the Apostles* is distinguished for its clear and scholarly presentation.³ The defense of the authenticity and historicity of the Acts is well done, particularly when treating the speeches recorded in the book. In them Wikenhauser distinguishes three types corresponding to the different interests of the author. Furthermore he insists that St. Luke does not intend to give verbally accurate reproductions of what was spoken

² *Les épîtres de saint Paul à Timothée et Tite*. Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1951. Pp. 63. 195 fr.

³ *Die Apostelgeschichte*. 2nd enlarged edition; Regensburg: Pustet, 1951. Pp. 237. DM 7.80 and 9.80.

on each occasion. Moreover much of the style is that of Luke. As regards the time of the composition of Acts, the author holds that it was probably after the death of St. Paul which occurred in 67.

Twenty-three excursuses take up special topics. Among these may be mentioned his treatment of "speaking in tongues." This would not be the use of any known language but a speaking ecstatically under the influence of the Holy Spirit. As such, there would be two miracles, one in the speaker and another in the hearer who would be able to interpret what was said. Thus the tongues of Pentecost would be essentially those mentioned in I Cor. 12-14, but the interpreter in the first case would be not a man but the Holy Spirit Himself.

With the exception of Hebrews the minor epistles of Paul are found in Volume VII of the series.⁴ Josef Freundorfer comments on the Pastorals, Karl Staab on the remaining letters. For scholars the excursuses and crucial texts probably have the most interest. Regarding the famous phrase, "nos qui vivimus, qui residui sumus in adventum Domini" (I Thess. 4:15), Staab gives the usual interpretation of Chrysostom that Paul identifies himself with those who will be living on the last day. Then he adds that an interpretation proposed by the Italian exegete Romeo would remove all the difficulty. "In adventum Domini" would be joined with "praeveniemus." Paul would then be distinguishing those already dead from those now living, and saying that those now living will have no advantage on the day of the Coming of the Lord.

In II Thessalonians Staab gives up hope of identifying the obstacle and the one hindering the appearance of the Antichrist. He believes that the Antichrist is not a series of men but one single person according to the obvious sense of the words of the apostle and the contrast with the one person Christ.

In regard to Ephesians he thinks that the letter was not written to Ephesus but is the letter to the Laodiceans mentioned at the end of Colossians. One argument advanced is that a letter so mentioned in Scripture could hardly be lost. The letter to Philemon would have achieved its purpose of effecting the freedom of Onesimus. Otherwise the writing would not have been made part of the Church's treasure. Philippians 2:5-11 need not be considered part of an early Christian hymn taken over by Paul, because all the essential ideas are found in other epistles. The beatitude of the departed soul before the time of the resurrection is clearly brought out in Phil. 1:23. One may therefore be surprised that Paul did not suggest this motive of con-

⁴ *Die Thessalonicherbriefe, die Gefangenschaftsbriefe, und die Pastoralbriefe*. Regensburg: Pustet, 1950. Pp. 264. DM 7.80 and 9.80.

solation when speaking to the Thessalonians grieving for their dear departed. It is suggested that possibly in the time between Thessalonians and Philipians Paul had received further revelation (p. 143). Both teachers and pupils will find these commentaries invaluable for their work and study.

Of non-Catholic commentaries written in German two new editions deserve special mention. The series begun under the editorship of the late Hans Lietzmann and now continued under that of Günther Bornkamm is well known to all scholars. It is a pleasure to call attention to a new edition of the Catholic Epistles.⁵ As in the case of other numbers in this series the work is characterized by its philological riches and many excellent parallels from Christian and pagan literature. Previously less attention was devoted to the theological content, a defect which has been in great measure corrected by the contributions of Prof. Preisker. In the body of the book Windisch's second edition of 1930 has been printed unchanged, but asterisks at various places in the margin indicate the corrections and supplementary data which are printed in an appendix. The arrangement shows clearly that Preisker's claim of having made a thorough revision is justified, the appendix consisting of twenty-seven pages. The bibliography is selective and up to date, including the relevant Catholic books. The volume is indispensable for New Testament scholars.

More popular in its presentation is another German-language series produced under the editorship of Paul Althaus and Johannes Behm. The former has brought out a sixth revised edition of his translation and commentary on Romans.⁶ The treatment is succinct and scholarly. Besides the exegesis of the individual verses, there are twenty-one more detailed expositions on certain points which make this a valuable reference book for those who wish to be informed about critical Protestant Scripture studies in Germany.

The origin of the church at Rome, according to the author, was not due to any apostle or missionary but rather a spontaneous gathering together of Christians who had been converted elsewhere and happened to move to Rome. The Epistles and Acts show us how frequently the early Christians moved from one place to another. The entire Epistle to the Romans is written by St. Paul, including the sixteenth chapter, and that section is in its original place and was not, as some hold, a distinct letter written to another church, e.g., Ephesus.

⁵ Hans Windisch and Herbert Preisker, *Die katholische Briefe*. Handbuch zum Neuen Testament, XV. 3rd ed.; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1951. Pp. vi + 172. DM 9 and 10.80.

⁶ *Der Brief an die Römer*. Das Neue Testament deutsch, VI. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1949. Pp. 132. DM 4.40.

In regard to Rom. 9:5 Althaus holds that the word "God" refers not to the Father but to Christ. He thus agrees with Catholic scholars. The treatment of justification will be of value for theologians who wish to understand modern Protestant attitudes. In chapter 7 the "I" of whom Paul speaks is a Jew under the Law, and not (as Luther and Augustine held) a Christian. The tone of the work throughout shows a marked reverence for Luther and Calvin, but the author does not fear to depart from their interpretations.

A new commentary in fifteen volumes (*Commentaire du Nouveau Testament*) is being published by distinguished scholars in French-speaking lands. Volume X is the work of two of the general editors, Pierre Bonnard and Charles Masson.⁷ The list of collaborators, among whom we find Oscar Cullmann, gives a guarantee of sound scholarship and indicates that the prevailing tone will be that of a critical but not extreme approach. One is impressed by the detailed knowledge and care with which Catholic positions are discussed. The history of exegesis and survey of modern opinions are extensive and thorough. For the Catholic theologian who wishes to keep abreast of recent non-Catholic thought on these epistles the present volume will be extremely valuable.

In recent years Sweden has by its biblical studies attracted much attention and renown. Among the publications of special value are those of the series *Symbolae biblicae Upsalienses*, of which thirteen numbers have appeared. Three of the recent ones may be mentioned here. Number 11 is a review of works on the New Testament published at Upsala and Lund from 1945 to 1948.⁸ It is rather unusual for a person or group to publish a thesis and then the reviews about it. Through lack of space let it here suffice to list the topics and the reviewers, the latter being put in parentheses: Harald Sahlin, "Der Messias und das Gottesvolk" (W. Michaelis); Bo Reicke, "The Disobedient Spirits and Christian Baptism" (M. Goguel): the article is concerned with 1 Pet. 3:19 which Bellarmine said has always been considered one of the most obscure texts; Stig Hanson, "The Unity of the Church in the New Testament" (E. Schweizer); Helge Almquist, "Plutarch und das Neue Testament" (W. Bauer): the author is praised for his work which demands much labor and produces modest results; H. Riesenfeld, "Jésus transfiguré" (W. G. Kümmel); J. G. H. Hoffmann, "Les vies de Jésus et le Jésus de l'histoire" (L. M. Dewayilly): the author treats non-Catholic lives written in French from Renan to Guignebert, while the re-

⁷ Pierre Bonnard, *L'Épître de saint Paul aux Philippiens*; Charles Masson, *L'Épître de saint Paul aux Colossiens*. Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1950. Pp. 159. 9.50 and 12.50 fr.

⁸ *Revue de travaux sur le Nouveau Testament publiés à Uppsala et à Lund 1945-1948*. Lund: Gleerup, 1948. Pp. 98. 5 kronor.

viewer, a Dominican priest, corrects in passing a false interpretation of some words written by Lagrange; Ernst Percy, "Die Probleme der Kolosser- und Epheserbriefe" (W. Michaelis); Erik Sjöberg, "Der Menschensohn im äthiopischen Henochbuch" (W. G. Kümmel). Finally Canon Cerfaux reviews the *Coniectanea neotestamentica*, I-X, a series appearing under the editorship of Prof. Fridrichsen, while Volume XI is reviewed by F. M. Braun, O.P. The scholarship both of authors and of reviewers is excellent, and the cordiality manifested to Catholic work is shown by the appearance of three priests among the reviewers.

Number 12 of *Symbolae biblicae Upsalienses* has two articles: Harald Sahlin, "Die Beschneidung Christi," and Poul Nepper-Christensen, "Wer hat die Kirche gestiftet?" (1950; pp. 53; 5 kronor). In the first, which treats the interpretation of Eph. 2:11-22, the key is found in baptism as a Christian circumcision which stands in parallelism to Jewish circumcision. The second article is a detailed criticism of the thesis proposed by W. Kümmel, *Kirchenbegriff und Geschichtsbewusstsein in der Urgemeinde und bei Jesus* (*Symbolae biblicae Upsalienses*, I). On many points the reviewer disagrees with Kümmel and approaches positions that have been traditionally Catholic. He finds fault with Kümmel's method of argumentation. Too much reliance is placed upon literary criticism by which a purified text is restored which never existed. On the other hand, the tradition contained in the Gospels is neglected. Concluding the number are two reviews: E. Dhorme discusses Samuel Nystrom's *Beduinentum und Jahwismus* (1945); and G. A. Danell, *Studies in the Name Israel in the Old Testament* (1946), is treated at length by H. H. Rowley.

In number 13 of the *Symbolae* Prof. Paul S. Minear, of Andover Newton Theological School, Mass., discusses the problem facing the exegete who wishes to expound the stories of the birth of Our Lord found in Matthew and Luke.⁹ There is a consideration of the *Sitz im Leben* and the *Sitz im Glauben*. Next he presents the analysis of the historian and shows how that needs to be supplemented. "Only when the stories are the medium for a new encounter between God and man, for a new recognition of God's descent into the form of our existence, only then will they be rightly interpreted."¹⁰ No doubt the agreement with the interpretation will depend on whether the interpreter and his audience share the same assumptions.

The question of the meaning of baptism for the dead mentioned by St. Paul has always puzzled exegetes. Fr. Bernard M. Foschini, O.F.M.,

⁹ *The Interpreter and the Birth Narratives*. Uppsala: Wretmans, 1950. Pp. 22. 1.50 kronor.

¹⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 22.

S.T.D., has given a thorough and up-to-date treatment of the problem.¹¹ The author observes that the verse has special interest today because the Mormons still practice a vicarious baptism for the dead. A very thorough and detailed study of all the relevant literature with detailed criticism of each opinion precedes the positive part. Finally, by means of a change of punctuation, Fr. Foschini obtains the interpretation that baptism is not "for the dead" but "unto life." St. Paul is arguing that the belief in the resurrection is the basis for our enduring sufferings, etc. "The sense, therefore, would be: 'Otherwise what shall they do who are baptized? For the dead (that is, are they baptized to belong to, to be numbered among, the dead, who are never to rise again)? Indeed, if the dead do not rise again at all, why are people baptized? For them? That is, are they baptized to be numbered among the dead who are never to rise again?'" (p. 93). The dissertation first appeared as a series of articles in the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*. Priests and teachers of Scripture and theology will welcome this addition to their library.

In a somewhat similar manner another celebrated text has been treated anew. Fr. Bernard Schneider, O.F.M., S.S.Lic., has written on "Dominus autem spiritus est."¹² He explains the experience by which he came to his thesis. At first he intended to examine the basis of the common opinion today, namely, that Christ is the vivifying spirit of Scripture. There was one difficulty against that interpretation, the lack of support among the Fathers. Further investigation convinced the author that St. Paul was not speaking there of Christ, nor of Christ and the Holy Spirit, but exclusively of the Holy Spirit. The author seems to have read almost everything on the subject and to have consulted countless professors. The detailed presentation does not make easy reading but two indices facilitate references, and the appendix of patristic quotations will be very valuable. We may hope for many more learned works from the pen of this American priest.

Two prayers are distinctive of two great religions. What the Our Father is for the Christian faith, the Shemoneh Esreh is for Judaism. Prof. Karl Georg Kuhn has compared them in content and external form, particularly under the aspect of rhyme.¹³ The present study represents the fruit of many years of labor. In 1930, when conducting a seminar in ancient Jewish

¹¹ "Those Who Are Baptized for the Dead"; *I Cor. 15:29: An Exegetical Historical Dissertation*. Worcester, Mass.: Heffernan, 1951. Pp. viii + 101.

¹² "Dominus autem Spiritus est" (2 Cor. 3, 17a): *Studium exegeticum*. Rome: Catholic Book Agency, 1951. Pp. viii + 216.

¹³ *Achtzehngebet und Vaterunser und der Reim*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, I. Tübingen: Mohr, 1950. Pp. 51.

liturgical prayers, Kuhn observed in them the frequent occurrence of rhyme. One great obstacle to accepting rhyme as an original part of these early prayers was the thesis of Elbogen. He claimed that the deliberate use of rhyme in Hebrew cannot be proved earlier than the sixth century A.D., and this thesis was generally accepted. However Prof. Kuhn shows instances of rhyme in second-century prayers and even in the Jewish prayer par excellence, Shemoneh Esreh. The latter existed in the middle of the first century of the Christian era and may possibly be earlier. By a thorough study the author seeks to prove against his adversaries that the earliest form of these prayers contained rhyme and that this element is not due to post-Talmudic interpolations.

Aided by the reconstructions of Torrey and Burney, the author restores the Aramaic of both St. Matthew's and St. Luke's form of the Our Father and he indicates the rhyme in the prayer. Previously some claimed that for the Western world the history of rhyme began in the third- and fourth-century Christian liturgy. But the author holds that the beginning was in the prayers of the first-century Jewish synagogue and in the prayer of Our Lord, the Our Father. Each petition of both prayers is carefully studied for its content, and the author concludes that, while the Pater and Shemoneh Esreh are similar in outward form, they differ greatly in content and belief. For instance, the Christian petition, "Forgive as we forgive," has no Jewish parallel. In interpreting the Our Father the author tends to see in it an eschatological attitude. An excursus shows that the rhyme found in the early Christian liturgy was dependent on the ancient Jewish prayers.

Two commentaries which do not form part of a regular series remain to be mentioned. The first, on the Apocalypse, is by Eduardo Iglesias, S.J.¹⁴ The author, who has distinguished himself in the field of theology, sociology, and Scripture, has written popular books on St. Luke, St. John, Romans, and Ephesians. In the present volume he presents to Spanish readers an explanation of St. John's much-misunderstood writing and points out its practical values for the present day. The fact that the second edition has now appeared is a guarantee of the value and popularity of the work.

The second commentary, on Luke, is from an American Protestant scholar, N. B. Stonehouse, Th.D., Professor of New Testament in Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia.¹⁵ The volume arose out of a series of lectures delivered under the auspices of the Free Church College in Edinburgh in April, 1949. Lamenting the fact that conservatives have sometimes shown a lack of exegetical fidelity he himself is basically concerned

¹⁴ *El Apocalipsis*. 2nd ed.; Mexico, D. F.: Buena Prensa, 1951. Pp. viii + 495.

¹⁵ *The Witness of Luke to Christ*. London: Tyndale, 1951. Pp. 184. 7s 6d.

with the exegesis of the Third Gospel, without however excluding a subordinate apologetic interest. Accordingly the names of all the great scholarly treatments of the Gospel recur frequently, especially those of Creed and Cadbury.

Some of the author's positions may be indicated. He believes that St. Luke is the author of the Gospel. The argument concerning the medical language is briefly treated and the final conclusion is drawn that, while the data does not prove that Luke was a physician, it does corroborate the tradition to that effect. The order which St. Luke mentions in his prologue was not strictly chronological; rather a connected orderly narrative was intended. Stonehouse seems to lean to the belief that the evangelist was conscious of his inspiration. The "confidence with which Luke assures his readers of the truth of his record is profoundly congruous, to say the least, with the fact of divine inspiration" (p. 45). St. Luke's historical accuracy is stressed. "Though he does not write as a secular historian, Luke gives evidence at every point of being concerned with historical fact and takes great pains to assure his readers that he is qualified to provide them with reliable information concerning what had taken place" (p. 67).

Of special interest for Catholics will be his treatment of the Eucharist text in St. Luke. While perhaps the majority of modern authors favor a shorter text, Prof. Stonehouse agrees with Catholic scholars that the longer text is the original.

My conclusion, therefore, is that a compelling case for the omission of Lk. xxii. 19b, 20 has not been made. And the difficulties attached to the interpolation hypothesis are so considerable that the rejection of the witness of the type of text usually regarded as superior appears to be quite unjustified. On this view, then, Luke, in common with the other New Testament records which report the institution of the Lord's Supper, reports the teaching of Jesus that through the sacrifice of His body and the shedding of His blood there would be inaugurated a divine covenant transcending the covenant of Sinai, which was also ratified by a sacrifice in which blood was shed.¹⁶

These instances are sufficient to show the conservative tendency of the author. His clear and scholarly presentation is most welcome. Perhaps in our concern with the more extreme critics we are liable not to realize the assistance that can be found in works such as the present which ably defend so many traditional Christian values.

We may conclude this notice of books with the mention of an English

¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 138.

publication, the 1950 Bulletin of the Society for New Testament Studies.¹⁷ This little work contains an account of the origin of the Society and the four papers read at the general meeting of 1950. The germ of the association was planted at the Faith and Order Conference of Edinburgh in 1937, and the group gradually gathered together various scholars, so that forty-four of its members attended the Fourth General Meeting held at Worcester College, Oxford, in September, 1950. Short papers were read at an open conference session. Fr. C. Lattey, S.J., spoke on "The Antiochene Text"; Rev. Can. J. M. C. Crum on "The Rhythmical Form of Some of the Sayings of Our Lord"; and Rev. Dr. A. J. B. Higgins on "The Latin Text of Luke in Marcion and Tertullian." The four papers read at the general meeting are printed in the Bulletin. Rev. Prof. H. Clavier of Strasbourg gave the presidential address on the subject of "Mediation in the Fourth Gospel" (pp. 11-25). He shows the relation of the Gospel to contemporary attitudes and its distinctive stamp of Christian mediation. Prof. J. Munck, in "Israel and the Gentiles in the New Testament" (pp. 26-38), disagrees with Baur and Harnack who thought that the Church gradually became universal. He claims instead that there was originally a representative universalism, i.e., Israel represented the entire world and by the conversion of Israel the Gentiles would be converted. Later a particularism came when the Church was Gentile and the Jews considered as rejected. "Original universalism is succeeded by particularism. Instead of the positive revelation to the Jews as the chosen people existing at the time of the apostles, we get either a Gentile Christian appropriation of the Jewish revelation in the Old Testament, but with the exclusion of Israel after the flesh; or a rejection of the Gospel's connexion with the old covenant" (p. 38).

The next paper is by the author of the recent scholarly commentary on I Peter, Very Rev. Dr. E. G. Selwyn, who writes on "The Persecutions in I Peter" (pp. 39-50). He believes that there is no adequate ground for referring the persecutions to the age of Pliny, c. 111-12 A.D. Rather the details could fit the Domitian persecution or that of Nero. He himself favors a time just before, rather than shortly after, the violent outbreak of persecution in 64 A.D. The concluding contribution is by Rev. M. Black, "The New Testament Peshitta and Its Predecessors" (pp. 51-62).

II

PERIODICAL ITEMS

From the vast field of periodical literature a few items have been selected that may be of particular interest to theologians.

¹⁷ *Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas, Bulletin, 1950*. Oxford: Oxonian Press. Pp. 62. 7s 6d.

The Brethren of the Lord

While Catholics hold that the word "brethren" in this context means "kinsmen," non-Catholic scholars generally interpret it in the strict sense. Recently there has been published a Safaitic inscription in which the word "brother" seems to have the sense of "relative." G. Ryckmans of Louvain, in preparing *Pars quinta of Corpus inscriptionum semiticarum*, studied about 7,000 Safaitic inscriptions, of which 2,500 were hitherto unpublished. Among them are many words denoting relationship in which the literal sense is beyond doubt. This is clear because most of the inscriptions are genealogical lists which the semi-nomadic Bedouins put on the rocky walls of the basalt region southeast of Damascus. In one inscription (n. 657) Prof. Ryckmans thinks that "brother" cannot be taken in the strict sense but must probably mean "cousin." He comes to this conclusion from a comparison with other inscriptions.¹⁸

There is danger that this item, because only mentioned briefly in a long article of over twenty pages, may be overlooked. That fate seems to have befallen other instances which came to light a decade ago. These are: P. Adler Gr. 7 and P. London Inv. 2850. "ἀδελφός is used in the sense of 'kinsman' in P. Adler Gr. 7; but in P. Adler Gr. 8, another deed of sale written seven days after the first text and mentioning the same persons . . . Paous is called *συγγενής* of Thaibis, not ἀδελφός. . . . Furthermore in P. London Inv. 2850 col II 15 the word is used for 'nephew' and in P. Adler Gr. 7 for the 'son of the nephew.'" ¹⁹ The Adler papyrus, being pre-Christian, has special importance.²⁰

Luke 2:50

In the mystery of the Finding in the Temple, when Our Lady asks her Son why He has done this to them, He replies: "Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?"—or, as others prefer, "in my Father's house." There follow the words which are usually translated: "They did not understand the word that He spoke to them." This misunderstanding has always been somewhat difficult to grasp. One suggestion, that Our Lady did not then realize that her Son was God, is improbable. Usually authors take the text to mean that Mary and Joseph did not at that time understand completely. A new interpretation, first proposed by the Belgian Jesuit R.

¹⁸ G. Ryckmans, "Les noms de parenté en safaitique," *Revue biblique*, LVIII (July, 1951), 282-84.

¹⁹ V. Tscherikower and F. M. Heichelheim, "Jewish Religious Influence in the Adler Papyri," *Harvard Theological Review*, V (1942), 25-44; esp. pp. 32-33.

²⁰ A brief discussion of the subject may be found in "The Brethren of the Lord and Two Recently Published Papyri," *THEOLOGICAL STUDIES*, V (1944), 484-94; esp. pp. 492-94.

Thibaut and now adopted by the Spanish Jesuit José M. Bover, deserves consideration.²¹ The essence of the interpretation consists in taking the aorist verbs in a pluperfect sense. Then the verse would read: "They had not understood what He had said to them." Accordingly the sequence of events would be as follows. Before the Holy Family were to depart from Jerusalem Our Lord warned His mother and foster father that He intended to remain in the city or visit the Temple. In the haste of departure they misunderstood His words, possibly thinking He intended to assist at the morning sacrifice and then would hasten to rejoin their company before evening.

Two objections may be raised. First, the verbs are in the aorist. But this difficulty is easily solved, for the aorist can have the sense of the pluperfect, as grammarians admit. Secondly, St. Luke should have recorded that item earlier, e.g., in verse 43. But the answer is given that in other places, e.g., 5:8-9 and 8:29, Luke puts an explanation later in his narrative than would be expected. In conclusion Fr. Bover thinks his opinion more probable than the ordinary interpretation.

"The Word was God" (John 1:1)

The absence of the definite article before the Greek word for God, *theos*,¹ has led some to translate the statement: "the Word was divine." However, three recent contributions to the *Expository Times* confirm the usual version. H. G. Meecham says: "Dr. J. Gwyn Griffiths in 'A Note on the Anarthrous Predicate in Hellenistic Greek' (*The Expository Times*, 52 [July, 1951], 314), argues that no differentiation can be made in the Fourth Gospel between the uses of *θεός* with and without the article. This judgment would seem to be supported by an examination of the occurrences of (δ) *θεός* in contemporary Hellenistic Greek writings."²²

As a further contribution Bruce M. Metzger²³ gives the substance of an article by E. C. Colwell contributed to the *Journal of Biblical Literature*.²⁴ After examining about 250 examples Prof. Colwell comes to the conclusion that definite predicate nouns which follow the verb (this is the usual order) usually take the article; definite predicate nouns which precede the verb usually lack the article. In John 1:1 *theos* precedes the verb. Metzger then comments:

²¹ J. M. Bover, "Una nueva interpretación de Lc 2:50," *Estudios bíblicos*, X (1951), 205-15.

²² "The Anarthrous *θεός* in John i. 1 and 1 Corinthians iii. 16," *Expository Times*, LIII (Jan., 1952), 126.

²³ "On the Translation of John 1, 1," *Expository Times*, LIII (Jan., 1952), 125-26.

²⁴ "A Definite Rule for the Use of the Article in the Greek New Testament," LIII (1933), 12-21.

As Colwell himself points out, these data are of great value in the translation and interpretation of the New Testament. They show that a predicate noun which precedes the verb cannot be translated as an indefinite or a 'qualitative' noun solely because of the absence of the article. As regards Jn 1, 1 Colwell's research casts the most serious doubts on the correctness of such translation as 'and the Logos was divine' (Moffatt, Strachan), 'and the Word was divine' (Goodspeed), and (worst of all) 'and the Word was a god' (so the recently published Jehovah's Witnesses' *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* [1950]).²⁵

There is nothing in the grammar or thought of St. John which would be against his saying that the Word was God; so Metzger quoting Colwell:

The absence of the article does *not* make the predicate indefinite or qualitative when it precedes the verb; it is indefinite in this position only when the context demands it. The context makes no such demand in the Gospel of John, for this statement cannot be regarded as strange in the prologue of the gospel which reaches its climax in the confession of Thomas (Jn 20, 28).²⁶

"Nisi ob fornicationem" (Mt. 19:9)

Within the last two decades especially there has been a tendency to interpret these words as meaning a marriage which is invalid because contracted within the degrees forbidden by the Mosaic Law. The Hebrew word corresponding to the Greek *porneia* and the Latin *fornicatio* became among the rabbis almost a technical term for these illegitimate unions. In such cases Our Lord would permit the man to divorce his wife and marry another. This is the theory which has been ably defended by Fr. Prat, S.J., Fr. Joseph Bonsirven, S.J., and by Frs. Dyson, S.J., and Leeming, S.J.²⁷ Two recent commentaries have adopted a similar opinion. One is the Bible of Jerusalem published under the direction of the Dominican Fathers of the *Ecole biblique*;²⁸ the other is the commentary of the Pontifical Biblical Institute.²⁹

Meanwhile there has recently appeared a good presentation of the arguments for the interpretation that Our Lord taught that in case of *porneia* (*fornicatio*) separation is allowed but not a second marriage. Fr. C. Lattey, S.J., an editor of the Westminster Version of the Sacred Scriptures, writes

²⁵ Metzger, *art. cit.*, p. 125.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 125-26.

²⁷ Cf. J. Bonsirven, *Le divorce dans le Nouveau Testament* (Paris: Desclée, 1948); also R. Dyson and B. Leeming " 'Except It Be for Fornication': A Note on Matthew XIX, 3-12," *Clergy Review*, XX (1941), 283-94.

²⁸ Pierre Benoit, O. P., *L'Evangile selon saint Matthieu* (1950), p. 55.

²⁹ *I Vangeli*. La Sacra Bibbia, VII (Firenze: Adriano Salani, 1950), p. 41.

on divorce in Scripture.³⁰ Our concern is principally with his remarks on Mt. 19.

In this dispute of Our Lord with the Pharisees we shall briefly consider what St. Matthew says and for the sake of brevity consider only the obligations of the husband. The Pharisees ask whether a man may put away his wife "for any and every cause." They are asking whether the Savior agrees with Hillel's interpretation of the cause for divorce given in Deut. 24:1. They suppose that the answer must be either that Hillel is correct or that Shammai is. The latter permitted divorce only for impurity. Our Lord implicitly denies their assumption, for He sets forth the unity and indissolubility of matrimony, arguing from the words of Genesis: "The two shall become one flesh. . . . What God, then, hath joined together let no man put asunder" (Westminster Version). Immediately the objection is raised that Moses commanded them to give a bill of divorce. To this Christ replies that Moses did not command a divorce but only permitted it; in the beginning, however, it was not so. Again we may notice that the teaching on the indissolubility of the marriage bond is not retracted. Then the Savior sets forth His own teaching, independent of the Mosaic Law: "Whosoever putteth away his wife, except for impurity, and marrieth another woman, he committeth adultery; and he that marrieth her that is put away committeth adultery" (West. Vers.). Briefly, Our Lord states that the husband may send away his wife because of impurity, but he may not marry another woman, for such a marriage would be adultery.

Here Fr. Lattey argues effectively from the Jewish approval of polygamy. He shows that the Jews would not have said that a man who took a second wife committed adultery. Whether or not he divorced his first wife, he could legitimately take a second, for polygamy was then considered licit. These are his words:

It should be observed that the Jews at this time were mostly practicing monogamy, not in virtue of their own institutions but because Greek and Roman law obliged them to it. One can only say 'mostly,' for there is a good deal of evidence to the contrary effect. St. Justin Martyr, for example, in his *Dialogue with Trypho*, reproaches him with the fact that the Jewish teachers allow four or five wives apiece (chap. 134), indeed as many as a Jew desires, in every country (chap. 141). The normal custom in Palestine, however, seems to have been monogamy, which indeed seems to be taken for granted both by Our Lord and the Pharisees in the incident with which we are concerned. Our Lord only speaks of a man marrying a second wife after he has divorced the first. That this second marriage would be

³⁰ "Divorce in the Old and New Testaments," *Clergy Review*, XXXV (April, 1951), 243-53.

adultery, however, would hardly be admitted by the Pharisees, as Juster [*Les Juifs dans l'empire romain* (Paris: Geuthner, 1914), II, 52-54] makes fairly plain, with further evidence from Josephus etc. In calling polygamy adultery Our Lord was definitely breaking with Jewish views which (it must be admitted) were consistent with the Old Testament.³¹

Fr. Lattey's article should be extremely valuable for all priests and especially for teachers of religion.

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³¹ *Art. cit.*, pp. 251-52.