

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php

outcasts or outlaws from the Kingdom of God,—we may suffer, we will suffer, but we have not failed, and we are not unhappy. The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit that we are sons of God. But, if it is otherwise with us, if when we descend into ourselves for solace, we find none ; if, when we would lean upon our last Resource and make our protest from the judgment of the world to Him who knows everything ; if there and then we are alone ; if the Face we plead with seems to be turned away from us, —we have come, I think, upon that final silence and disapproval from which there is no appeal.

This was an idea which more than once our Lord dwelt upon. In some of His gravest words He warned men that the penalty for certain courses was not the pain which they entailed. The true penalty was—the consequence, and that consequence was that one day they should be left out of something. It might be the society of men. It might be the friendship of those who had been dear to them. It might even be the Fellowship of God.

And the great cries of the soul in literature and in life are the cries of those who are afraid of that loneliness, or who already are tasting the bitterness of it.

JOHN A. HUTTON.

NOTES ON THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

XVIII. THE RESURRECTION (John xx.).

(1) It is not necessary here to discuss the general problem of the evidence for the Resurrection ; we are now concerned only with the narrative in this chapter and the light it throws on the question of the authorship, character, and credibility of this Gospel. In the first division of the chapter (*vv.* 1–10) the visit of Peter and the other disciple to the tomb to verify Mary Magdalene's report that it

was empty is recorded. Matthew xxviii. 1-10, Mark xvi. 1-8 and Luke xxiv. 1-11 also report the discovery of the empty tomb, not only by Mary Magdalene as here, but also by other women; but in much greater detail than in the Fourth Gospel. Probably the evangelist mentions the discovery of Mary Magdalene only to introduce the visit to the tomb, in which he had a personal interest. Luke records the visit of Peter alone to the tomb (v. 12), and of no other disciple. The other disciple's hesitation to enter, the greater boldness of Peter, the beginning of faith in the Resurrection of the Lord, the confession of the failure of the disciples to understand the Scriptures as they afterwards understood them as foretelling the victory over death—these are all life-like touches which inspire our confidence. Only one feature of the narrative claims fuller discussion, the association of the evangelist with Peter; for Dr. Sanday uses in favour of the authorship of the Gospel by the son of Zebedee the argument that the Fourth Gospel represents Peter and the beloved disciple as holding the same relation to one another as Peter and John the son of Zebedee in the Book of Acts; and it is more natural and obvious "to regard the later relation as the direct continuation of the earlier" than to suppose "two pairs who would be too much the doubles of each other" (*The Criticism of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 107). His interpretation of xx. 2 is that "they lodged together in Jerusalem" (p. 102). But, if as has been maintained in a previous article, it is not improbable that the evangelist was a wealthy householder in Jerusalem the obvious explanation is that Peter, and possibly other disciples, were his guests; and so this verse does not bear the significance Dr. Sanday finds in it. The details with which the meetings in the Upper Room on two successive "first days of the week" are recorded as compared with the less definite

account in Luke xxiv. 33 suggest that the evangelist was on both occasions the host as he had been at the Last Supper. Dr. Sanday's further statement that xxi. 20 shows that "they each take an affectionate interest in the other" (*ibid.*) loses its force, if the *Appendix* is a much later addition to the Gospel of much lower credibility. The evangelist was with Andrew, Peter's brother, a disciple of John the Baptist's (i. 40). While this connexion probably involved acquaintance it does not necessarily indicate the close association assumed. On two other occasions are the evangelist and Peter brought together. It was Peter who beckoned to the beloved disciple to ask Jesus who was the traitor (xiii. 24); but the position of both is sufficient to explain this circumstance. That the disciple who was known to the high priest secured Peter's admission to the high priest's house (xviii. 15, 16) is no proof of any closer association than he would have had to any disciple of Jesus. The writer at least can find no adequate proof of the special friendship which is assumed.

(2) In the second division of the chapter (*vv.* 11-18) the appearance to Mary Magdalene is reported. Matthew (xxviii. 9) records an appearance to the women returning from the empty tomb without any special mention of Mary; but she may have lingered behind at the tomb, and the loving and pitiful Lord, after the word of cheer to the others, may have come to comfort her sad heart. That this appearance is not mentioned by Paul in 1 Corinthians xv. may be explained in two ways: he may not have heard of it; or he may have omitted the account as of the appearance to the two on the way to Emmaus (Luke xxiv. 13-35) because he confined his list to those who as apostles were commissioned to be witnesses of the Resurrection. Features in the record which may be noted are, the failure of Mary to recognise Jesus, as of the two on the way to Emmaus, indicating a

change in His appearance, the recognition by the tones of the voice here as there by the movement in the breaking of bread, the prohibition of her loving touch, signifying that the former earthly relationship was ended, and a higher heavenly fellowship was to take its place. The reason why the evangelist recorded an appearance of which he was not an eyewitness, as he was of the other two he reports, may lie in the interest for him of some of these details. The declaration of verse 17 may have specially appealed to him as continuing previous declarations which he had reported (xiii. 33 ; xiv. 2-28 ; xvi. 28).

(3) The third division of the chapter (*vv.* 19-23) contains several features of special interest. (i) Verse 19 indicates that it was necessary that secrecy should be observed as to the dwelling- and the gathering-place of the disciples. A similar caution is the probable explanation of the arrangements made to secure both the guest-chamber for the Last Supper (Mark xiv. 13-14) and the ass for the triumphal entry (xi. 2-4). If in all three cases the fourth evangelist was the unnamed friend and helper, may we not here find the clue to the silence of the synoptic tradition regarding so influential a disciple? He risked much in rendering the services he did owing to the greater enmity which would probably have been turned against him by the priesthood. His ability to befriend may have depended on his not coming too much out into the open ; and gratitude as well as prudence enjoined silence regarding him. (ii) Although we must not press the details too hard, yet the narrative suggests that Jesus appeared in the midst of the disciples suddenly, the doors remaining closed. This is one with other indications that the risen body of Jesus was not subject to ordinary physical conditions ; and yet it could at will apparently be made accessible to the sense both of sight (*v.* 20) and of touch (*v.* 27) with proof of identity.

Another token is offered in the corresponding passage in Luke (xxiv. 41-43). Jesus eats before them. To meet the objection to so complete a materialisation of the resurrection body Bernard offers the following argument. "This" (proof of identity), he says, "with a view to the persons dealt with, could best be done by taking food. If there be a resurrection of the body, there is no reason why such a body should not have the power of taking food without depending on it. Once cross the boundary of the present sphere of existence and we are in a realm where we can no longer say 'this is impossible.' Indeed it was the reality and identity of the risen body which the Lord had to insist on; the difference was evident, and spoke for itself" (Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, iv. 234). While admitting the possibility here maintained, several considerations forbid confidence. *First of all* why does the fourth evangelist, who *ex hypothesi* was present, mention only the proofs of sight and touch? *Secondly*, the intention of the passage in Luke is ostentatiously apologetic. It is difficult to believe that the risen body had *flesh and bones*, even if it had power of manifestation to the various senses of sight sound, and touch in proof of its reality. *Thirdly*, while in the appendix to this Gospel, it is not expressly stated that Jesus Himself took food, He is represented as dividing bread and fish among His disciples (xxi. 12-13). This trait may belong to a late tradition, and we are at least justified in suspending judgment as to its trustworthiness

(iii) There is nothing to excite suspicion in the words ascribed to the Risen Lord, while we may admit the possibility that some of the sayings "summed up the Church's confession of faith conceived as uttered by the lips of the Risen One" (Bruce, *Expositor's Greek Testament*, i., p. 340). The action and words in verse 22 are to be regarded as symbolically prophetic, as in Luke a promise is given (xxiv.

49) which was fulfilled at Pentecost, unless the evangelist anticipated events in his record, as we have conjectured in other instances. Verse 23 recalls the logion in Matthew xvi. 19, and for such a declaration the context in the Fourth Gospel seems more appropriate than that in the First.

(4) The fourth division (*vv.* 24–29) presents four points for notice. (i) The representation of the disposition of Thomas here is quite consistent with the two other references in this Gospel. He expects death as the result of the return to Bethany; and yet is prepared to run the risk (xi. 16). He cannot understand how the disciples can be expected to know the way when they know not whither the Master is going (xiv. 5). He was despondent and yet devoted, and his absence may have been due to the utter overthrow of his faith by his grief. (ii) The presence of the disciples in Jerusalem after “eight days” demands explanation, in view of the command given to depart into Galilee (Matthew xxviii. 10; Mark xvi. 7). Was it the unbelief of the disciples which kept them from instant obedience, and so necessitated the appearance of Jesus on the first occasion to awaken their faith? Could His loving heart no longer delay in giving them the comfort they needed? Did they consider the first appearance in Jerusalem as cancelling the command to go to meet Him in Galilee? We can but ask these questions. At least the narrative does not contain any rebuke or reproach for disobedience.

(iii) The exclamation of Thomas (*v.* 28) when convinced of the reality of the Risen Lord, whether by touch, or by the words uttered, is difficult. “His faith returns,” says Dods, “with a rebound and utters itself in a confession in which the Gospel culminates. The words are not a mere exclamation of surprise” (*The Expositor’s Greek Testament*, i., p. 866). But even if Thomas fully shared Peter’s

confession of Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of the Living God, this faith fell far short of the recognition of divinity such as is here affirmed. This confession goes beyond the doctrine of the early apostolic preaching. It shows a lack of historic sense when Dods adds in confirmation, "In Pliny's letter to Trajan (112 A.D.) he describes the Christians as singing hymns to Christ as God," for a considerable doctrinal development had intervened. Here again the evangelist anticipates the development, and puts on the lips of Thomas the doctrine his Gospel aims at proving.

(iv) Jesus' answer gives no indication that so advanced a confession had been made, proving a faith beyond that any other disciples had reached; for surely words of commendation would in that case have been deserved and bestowed, and not the censure that Thomas' faith resting on sensible evidence was inferior to the faith resulting from moral insight and spiritual discernment regarding His person and work.

(5) Verses 30 and 31 are a formal conclusion of the Gospel, indicating that there has been a selection of the material which has been presented, and that the selection has been made with a distinct doctrinal and practical purpose. But, as has been shown in the course of the previous discussion, the additions or omissions in comparison with the synoptic records are not to be explained exclusively from this point of view. The evangelist's own personal presence or absence must be recognised as an explanation of the inclusion or exclusion of some incidents; as for the most part the Gospel is the testimony of an eyewitness, who had a distinctive personal interest in what he saw and heard, remembered, reflected on, and then recorded. The attempt has been made to discover throughout the Gospel the influence of theology on history; and yet to show that, while recognising that influence, we must not so exaggerate

it as on account of it to regard the history as unauthentic.¹

XIX. THE APPENDIX (John xxi.).

(1) The writer finds it quite impossible to regard the *Appendix* as the work of the evangelist or even his editor. It is true that there is no textual evidence as in regard to Mark xvi. 9-20 to show that it is a much later addition. It is true also that the style closely resembles that of the rest of the Gospel. But the author of such an *Appendix* would make it his business to copy the style as nearly as possible, and we cannot affirm that our present texts reproduce the original so closely as to exclude such an addition. "Even within the brief space of the appendix, idiosyncrasies of language and style appear which are practically sufficient to indicate another hand" (Moffatt's *Introduction*, p. 572, which may be consulted for further details). Neither of the considerations mentioned above bars the way to the conclusion that the contents of the chapter force upon us. The immediate purpose of this addition was both to prove Peter's restoration to apostolic authority (vv. 15-17) and to remove a current misconception of a traditional saying about the beloved disciple (v. 23) which his recent death had made a stumblingblock to faith. But the occasion is also used to add a joint attestation from the circle in which the writer of the *Appendix* moved of the evangelist's trustworthiness as a witness, and so the worth of his Gospel (v. 24). It is hard to believe that the evangelist himself could have borne such self-witness. The hyperbole of verse 25, quite in the Rabbinic manner, contrasts most

¹ Much has in recent years been written in support of a spiritual and not a physical resurrection. It is worth noting then that the author of the "spiritual Gospel" records the empty grave, and the sensible proofs of some kind of continuity between the buried and the risen body; and that of both he claims to write as an eyewitness. If we accept the evangelist as at all trustworthy, we must reckon with this fact.

unfavourably with the conclusion of the Gospel in xx. 30-31.

(2) The first part of this *Appendix* (1-14) presents a parallel to the account given by Luke (v. 1-11) of the call given to Peter. While there are differences in details it is difficult to resist the conclusion that both passages contain variant traditions of the same incident. In his *Studies in the Inner Life of Jesus* the writer expressed the opinion that Peter's confession in Luke v. 8, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," found a more appropriate context in the record of restoration to discipleship after his denial, as given in John, than in the record of his first call as found in Luke. Further study has, however, modified this judgment. In a previous article it has already been suggested that the Galilæans in the small company of disciples, whose attachment to Jesus is recorded in John i. 35-51, followed Him only for a time; and had to be recalled when the Galilæan ministry began (Matt. iv. 18-22; Mark i. 16-20). Had they wavered for a time in their allegiance, and gone back to their old calling, and was what the Synoptists represent as a first call not only a recall but a restoration? This would explain both Luke v. 8 and John xxi. 15-17, if this passage belongs to the same context; and would allow us to place the incident where Luke does. We must admit, however, other possibilities. The story about the miracle may be due to a late tradition in which the figurative saying about the disciples becoming fishers of men was misunderstood, and was turned into an actual miracle of an abundant, unexpected draught. It is very difficult to understand how, if this account relates to the beginning of the Galilæan ministry, Mark, dependent as he was on Peter for his knowledge, has no trace of it. We cannot even conjecture whether, if we had Mark's Gospel complete, this story would have been found in the same context as in the Fourth Gospel.

Whatever the original tradition may have been, it is clear that the writer of this *Appendix* has adopted it for his purpose. This is obvious in regard to verses 1 and 14. As regards the mention of the two sons of Zebedee in verse 2 it is to be observed that nowhere else in the Fourth Gospel is there any mention of them. The writer of the *Appendix* evidently intends to identify "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (*vv.* 7 and 20) with one of the brothers; and yet there seems to be some doubt in his mind, and he leaves himself a door of escape from mistake, by adding "two other of His disciples" (*v.* 2) without mentioning their names.

It is probable, therefore, that he was not the disciple who edited the evangelist's testimony to the Master, but belonged to a younger generation, even if he was in contact with the Johannine school in Ephesus. The statement in verse 3 is abrupt. Is not an explanation needed for the presence of these disciples in Galilee, and for their return to the calling which at the bidding of Jesus they had forsaken? Is not also the restoration of Peter to his apostleship unduly delayed? Would he after his denial have resumed his place in the Apostolic company without such a restoration?

(3) We seem compelled to find in verses 1-14 a tradition which we have no means of authenticating, or putting into its proper context if authentic, in the Gospel history, which the writer of the *Appendix* has with honest intention, but mistaken judgment, adopted as the occasion for the tender and touching talk of Jesus with Peter in verses 15-19. For this conversation a context at once suggests itself. On their return the two disciples who had seen the Lord were told that He had appeared to Simon (Luke xxiv. 34), and Paul mentions an appearance to Cephas (1 Cor. xv. 5). What more probable than that Jesus among His very

earliest appearances should show Himself to the penitent disciple to comfort and restore him? The place of this appearance would be Jerusalem, and the time the day of the Resurrection. As these Notes are not exegetical, the interesting question of the difference between the two words used for love must be passed over. The statement in verse 18 need not be treated as a prophecy after the event, as xiii. 36 indicates that Jesus anticipated that Peter would thereafter be faithful unto death. Such a prediction is surely not beyond the range of the foresight we may ascribe to the earthly Jesus even, not to say the heavenly Christ. Attention may be called to the article in the *EXPOSITOR* for March by the Rev. R. H. Strachan, in which he seeks to show that in this *Appendix* use is made of the thought of chapter x. But if the account of the conversation is an authentic tradition, and not a literary composition, the subtle argument falls to the ground.

(4) If the whole *Appendix* is treated as a tendency-writing with little, if any, contact with tradition, and with a skilful working up of materials suggested by the Fourth Gospel itself, as the article just mentioned seeks to show, there is no difficulty in connecting verses 20-23 with verses 15-19. But it is here at least suggested that verses 15-19 contain an authentic tradition of Jesus' appearance to Peter on two grounds: (1) that it is probable that Jesus did restore Peter to apostleship after his denial before he assumed the prominent position he holds according to the record in Acts; (2) that it is preferable to ascribe to the writer even of such an *Appendix* an adaptation of an authentic tradition rather than free invention, if that charge can be at all avoided. If this is so, it follows that verses 20-23, if resting on any authentic tradition, must have belonged originally to another context, as it is not likely that if the evangelist had been present when Christ appeared to Peter,

as testified by Luke and Paul, his Gospel would have contained no account of the appearance. If the saying of verse 22 was current, it is not improbable that the writer in his own mind connected it with this occasion, even if there was no tradition to that effect. The recent death of the beloved disciple seemed to give the lie to the promise of Jesus, as contained in this current saying; and the writer of the *Appendix* seeks to save the veracity of Jesus in one of two ways. Either he lays the emphasis on *if I will* (ἐὰν θέλω) or on *tarry* or *abide* (μένειν). In the first case Jesus is represented as simply affirming that it lay in His power to preserve the disciple till His Second Advent, without any pledge that His power would be so used. In the second case, μένειν must be interpreted in accord with the use of the word μοναί in xiv. 2. "In his interpretation of μένειν," says Strachan, "he seeks to save the veracity of our Lord by implying that Jesus actually contemplated the death of John when He so spoke, and meant that the disciple would *abide* in the intermediate state until the Parousia, when, with the other saints who inhabited the μοναί of the Father's house (xiv. 2), he would be received into glory." The first explanation seems adequate, and the second rather far-fetched. Both explanations presuppose the recent death of the evangelist as the occasion of the *Appendix*; and, as Strachan argues, "the passage presents extreme difficulty to those who hold the theory of the early martyrdom of John." The way in which Dr. Moffatt seeks to remove this difficulty in his *Introduction* (pp. 575-6) need not now detain us, as it does not exist for those who do not identify the evangelist with John the son of Zebedee. The writer of the *Appendix* does identify them; but he was probably altogether ignorant of the tradition of John's early death. If the tradition was not known, and if a disciple of Jesus also called John lived

to a great age in Ephesus, and testified as an eyewitness, it is easy to understand how the one could be confused with the other.

ALFRED E. GARVIE.

*THE INTEGRITY OF THE EPISTLE TO
THE PHILIPPIANS.*

ONE of the most significant features in connection with contemporary advanced criticism of the New Testament is the all but complete change in the attitude assumed by that type of criticism towards the Epistles of St. Paul. The attacks made upon the Pauline Epistles during the latter half of the nineteenth century were almost exclusively directed against their authenticity. Baur and his followers of the Tübingen school had reduced the number of genuine letters to four, the famous *Hauptbriefe*, viz., the two Epistles to the Corinthians, the Epistle to the Romans, and the Epistle to the Galatians. The efforts of the more sober scholarship of that period were, therefore, necessarily confined to the task of restoring to the pedestal from which they had been somewhat ruthlessly deposed the other Pauline Epistles, which an unbroken tradition had connected with the name of the great Apostle, and this it may be said to have accomplished with a considerable degree of success. There is some hesitation felt in certain quarters as to the genuineness of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, but on very inadequate grounds; the Epistle to the Ephesians is still regarded with suspicion by a no means inconsiderable body of scholars, while the Pastoral Epistles still constitute the storm centre of Pauline literary and historical criticism. The battle of the "authenticity" has, therefore, on the whole issued in favour of the traditional position, and criticism no longer seriously concerns itself with the problem