CHAPTER FOUR

LUKE'S AND JOHN'S PASSION ACCOUNTS

A Word of Introduction

There are, in comparison with the earlier parts of the gospels, a large number of contacts between the Lucan and Johannine accounts of the passion and resurrection. By way of background, a few remarks on the passion accounts of both gospels are in order.

The literary composition of both Luke's and John's passion and resurrection narratives is not so easy to determine as that of Matthew, who followed Mark very closely at this point, merely adding a few easily identifiable passages, until he came to Mk. 16.8, whereupon he added his own tradition of the resurrection appearances. By contrast, Luke's procedure is here problematical. His account of the passion contains a great deal of non-Marcan material, e.g. the account of the institution of the eucharist, the Lucan "last discourse" in 22.27-38, the account of Pilate's behaviour at Jesus' trial, the hearing before Herod, Jesus' remarks to the women of Jerusalem on his way to Golgotha, the incident of the varying reactions to Jesus of the two criminals crucified with him (23.39-42), Jesus' word to one of them (v. 43), his dying word (v. 46). Furthermore, Luke's account contains no fewer than fourteen changes of order as over against Mark's.

These facts have given rise to theories, the most recent that of Streeter and Taylor, according to which Luke's primary source

---

1 i. e. the death of Judas, Pilate's wife's dream, Pilate's handwashing.
2 See the arguments, convincing in the opinion of the writer, in Jeremias' The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, pp. 102 f., for Luke's use at this point of a liturgical text which included vv. 19 b-20.
3 As for Jesus' first word from the cross (23.34), the textual evidence is too inconclusive for us to be able to determine with certainty whether or not it belongs to Luke's original gospel. See further on this below, p. 81, nt. 1.
4 Taylor, Behind the Third Gospel, p. 73, offers a partial list of these.
5 Streeter, op. cit., pp. 201-222.
6 Taylor, op. cit., 1926. A third proponent of such theories who should be mentioned is A. M. Perry, author of The Sources of Luke's Passion-Narrative, 1920. Taylor acknowledges his indebtedness to Perry, but in connection with a summarization of Perry's views (op. cit., pp. 20 ff.) outlines his criticisms of them, criticisms in which the present writer concours.
for the passion was not Mark but another document into which Marcan elements (above all, numerous phrases) have been inserted. ¹ The Streeter-Taylor hypothesis sees Luke’s special passion-resurrection source as a part of a source (which the two call proto-Luke) running through the whole gospel, a source written by the evangelist (before he knew Mark) from traditions special to him and from Q, to which he later added large sections of Mark. This hypothesis in its totality concerns us, for virtually all the Lucan contacts with John come in the sections which Streeter and Taylor, and following them Easton, ² attribute to proto-Luke. These include the miraculous catch, the healing of the centurion’s servant, ³ and the anointing of Jesus by the woman who was a sinner.

Despite the good points of the hypothesis, ⁴ it does not stand the test of criticism. The blocks which are supposed to constitute the source don’t fit together well; ⁵ even more significant, 9. 50-18. 14, with its character of an aimless journey, is not suited to be the central section of a gospel, whereas 8. 4-9. 50 (which includes Peter’s confession, the transfiguration and the first two predictions of the passion), taken over from Mark, is. This suggests that Mark and not the non-Marcan sections of Luke forms the core of Luke’s gospel. ⁶ It is therefore preferable to regard Mark as forming the

1 In this way an attempt is made to account for the fact that despite wide variance of the Lucan from the Marcan passion accounts there is verbal evidence of Mark in Luke’s text in every single pericope except the account of the crucifixion.


3 According to Easton, ibid, ad loc., only vv. 2-6a and 10 derive from proto-Luke.

4 Except for 5. 1-11, the non-Marcan elements of Luke come in blocks (which supports the view that originally they belonged together in a continuous source): 1. 1-4. 30, 6. 20-8. 3, 9. 51-18. 14, 19. 1-28, in none of which are there traces of Mark, though this isn’t true for the last block, 22. 14—end. Further, the view that not Mark but proto-Luke forms the basis of the gospel explains the omission of Mk. 6. 42-8. 26 en bloc from Luke as well as the frequent cases (for a list of such, see H. K. Luce’s The Gospel according to S. Luke, p. xxvi) in which Luke prefers Q or his own special material to Marcan material.

5 For example, the connection between 5. 1-11 and 6. 12 (Taylor, op. cit., pp. 168 f., claims 6. 12-19 for proto-Luke) is very difficult; in 6. 12 ff. the choosing of the twelve from the disciples is recorded, but, in what Taylor reckons as proto-Luke, there has been no previous mention of disciples except for Peter and the sons of Zebedee.

6 This is confirmed by an analysis of the Lucan journey section; for example (as Conzelmann, op. cit., p. 59 nt. 3, points out) the fact that the non-Marcan Zacchaeus story follows the Marcan account of the healing of