"THE SON OF MAN MUST..."

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And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

(Mark viii. 31)

In the Gospel of Mark the verb used to indicate that the Son of Man must suffer... is the impersonal verb form δεῖ. This verb has posed a problem to theologians and Biblical scholars alike, chiefly because as an impersonal form δεῖ does not specify the cause of the necessity which determined the fate of the Son of Man. In general classical and koine usage δέος indicated an impersonal force, usually a divine force such as "fate," was at work in human affairs to bring about events which "must happen" or "were necessary." Read against this sort of context, Mark viii 31 could be construed as the statement of an early Christian belief that there was indeed some reason for Jesus' suffering but that it was presently beyond human comprehension.

Few commentators, however, have been able to accept this sort of reading primarily because they have felt that this sort of impersonality was inappropriate for those in the Christian tradition who otherwise expressed faith in a caring and personal God who directed the affairs of men. Thus scholars have sought to discover a background for this idea of necessary suffering which would overcome the rather cold impersonal force of the Marcan "he must...".

To date one of the strongest possibilities put forward has been the suggestion, first made by ERNST LOHMEYER, that one should seek the context for this saying in Jewish and Jewish-Christian apocalypticism. In particular, LOHMEYER contended that the impersonal verb form δεῖ (must) in Mark viii 31 was used to denote apocalyptic...
eschatological regularity; that is, the pre-determined and unalterable sequence of events leading up to the in-breaking of the Kingdom of God 2). This suggestion has subsequently been challenged by H. E. Tödt in his insightful work, *The Son of Man in Synoptic Tradition* 3). Tödt's reasons for challenging Lohmeyer were of a positive and negative nature.

Against Lohmeyer, Tödt argued that δεί was used only once in Jewish apocalyptic literature to indicate apocalyptic eschatological regularity; Daniel ii 28, 29 4). Therefore one could not automatically or most easily assume an apocalyptic background for this term. Further he contended that the uses of δεί in Christian apocalyptic documents or fragments such as Revelation and the Synoptic Apocalypse, although they might allude to Daniel ii 28, 29, are nevertheless, qualitatively different 5).

Concerning other uses of δεί in Mark, particularly those in Chapter xiii, Tödt argued that "The 'must' which originally pertained to the narrow sphere of the catastrophe at the End is here anticipated in the sphere of historical events before the End" 6). Therefore, the use of δεί, particularly in xiii 7 and xiii 10, cannot, in the strict sense, be considered to have an apocalyptic eschatological meaning. The necessity here indicated by δεί refers to the out-working of events of the past rather than to events which are understood as prelude to more important future events. The force of the necessity arises from the Christ event and is therefore Christological not eschatological 7).

Having rejected "apocalyptic eschatological regularity" as the proper cause of this necessity, Tödt argued positively that the necessity indicated by δεί at Mark viii 31 was that of the fulfillment of scripture 8). He reached this conclusion on the basis of a comparison of the phrases παλαι παράξεν καὶ ἄποδοκιμασθηναν (Mark viii 31) and παλαι πάθη καὶ ἐξουσίευθη. (Mark ix 12)

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4) Ibid., p. 188.
6) Ibid., p. 189.
7) Ibid., pp. 189, 190-93. Cf. especially p. 189 and his remarks on Revelation.
8) Ibid., pp. 167-68, 191.