

ARTICLE II.

THE UNITY OF OUR LORD'S DISCOURSES.

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THE Synoptical Gospels contain the record of many events in the life of our Lord, of several series of parables and of miracles, and of various discourses; but in no two of them are these given in the same order. Either, therefore, they must have been repeated, or else the Evangelists — one or all of them — must have followed some other than the chronological order of arrangement. There is generally little or no difficulty in identifying the events, and from an examination of many instances the conclusion inevitably follows that, in arranging the detail of the narrative, at least two of these Evangelists have been guided by some other principle than that of chronological sequence. It does not matter to the present inquiry which of them have done so; but it cannot escape observation that the first of the Gospels is the least careful of them all in regard to the order of time.

As we pass from the ordinary events of our Lord's life to his miracles, we begin to meet with some differences of opinion. Much the larger part of those narrated in common are identified without hesitation in whatever order they may be placed in the several narratives. The only difficulty arises in regard to a comparatively small number, marked by certain differences in the narratives themselves. The older harmonists were inclined to magnify such circumstances as the mention in one Gospel of one, and in another of two subjects of the miracle, as in the case of the demoniacs of Gadara or of the blind near Jericho, and were thus disposed to understand them of different incidents. The later tendency is undoubtedly to make larger allowance for differences

in narration, and hence to recognize the identity of the miracle. The soundness in general of the later view is established by reasons too familiar to require repetition. Suffice it to say, that, as the result of much controversy, there has now come to be a general agreement that in judging of such matters we are to be guided by the same principles of evidence and the same arguments as in the case of uninspired writings. The effect of inspiration is to assure us of the entire truthfulness of each of the accounts, not to obliterate the individuality of the writers, nor to destroy the value of those traces by which we recognize the same events under the modifications of various human reports. By this means, and as the result of prolonged discussion, a good degree of unanimity has been gradually attained in regard to the *facts* of the gospel story.

But the same principles are much more hesitatingly applied to the records of our Lord's parables and discourses. It is alleged that these may have been repeated, and sometimes more than once repeated, as they were called forth by similar audiences with similar needs. There is certainly ground for this view in the fact that short proverbial sayings, or even somewhat more prolonged instructions, are sometimes substantially repeated in the same Gospel, and must therefore have been uttered more than once; but this does not forbid the application, in each particular case, of the same criteria to the discourses as those by which the identity or non-identity of the facts is determined. For example: One of the Evangelists records several times miracles of healing the blind, and we are thus assured that there were several such miracles; another of the Evangelists does the same thing; and on comparing the two records together we decide, in each of the cases, that they do or do not refer to the same event by an examination of the time, the circumstances, the place, the connected events, and other marks which would determine the question in the case of any other writings. The propriety of applying the same process to discourses also cannot, as a general principle, be denied. It is proposed

presently to examine several particular cases, and to draw such conclusions as may seem warranted by the result of that examination.

Meantime there are some fallacious indications which need to be pointed out, lest we be misled by them. Most prominent among these is what is called the internal unity of the discourse. It is too evidently true to need proof that two or more discourses on the same subject, uttered at different times, or spoken or written to different persons, may oftentimes admit of having portions of each so combined as to present a certain logical unity. We need look no further for an instance of this than to the Epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians. It is plain that considerable parts of the latter might be incorporated with the former, and yet the combination show no want of unity or logical coherence. It happens, sometimes, that a series of instructions is recorded as if given in one discourse by one Evangelist, while portions of the same are given by another as uttered at other times and under other circumstances. Now, to prove that the former was really one discourse, rather than a combination of several, it is not enough to show that as it stands it has a logical coherence and an internal symmetry; for this might equally exist on the other supposition; but it must be further shown that if the parts indicated are removed and placed elsewhere by themselves, one or both of the parts will be deficient in these characteristics. Obvious as is this truth in its abstract statement, the denial of it in its application to particular cases often forms the staple of the argument.

Another fallacy, of a more subtle kind, lies in the tacit assumption that when any of the Evangelists have omitted to record any event in the life of our Lord, they have also omitted such of his instructions as grew out of it and were connected with it. The improbability of this is apparent on a moment's reflection. The lesser incidents were of secondary importance, and none of the Evangelists have undertaken to give a complete record of them; but with these was continually connected teaching of the highest moment. It would

naturally be often the desire of the writer, who had himself listened to this teaching, to preserve at least the salient points of the instruction. How could this be done, when his plan did not allow of the recital of the events with which it was connected, except by attaching these utterances to the record which he did give of similar occasions or of similar discourses? A marked illustration of this is in the case of the Perea journey, of which we have so full an account in Luke, but of which none of the other Evangelists make any mention at all. That journey abounded in most precious teaching. Are we to expect no echo of it in either of the other Gospels? We cannot, indeed, find it in Mark or in John, on the supposition that both of these observe a strict chronological order; but in the first Gospel, in which this order is not observed, it would seem reasonable to expect to find some parts, at least, of the discourses given by Luke, and these, from the necessity of the case, out of their connection. Or, to take another illustration, in which the relation of these two Gospels is reversed. The first and second Evangelists give an account of an attempt on the part of the Pharisees to entangle our Lord in difficulties on the question of divorce. The difficulty having been met, and Jesus having gone with the disciples into the house, he teaches them what is the only legitimate ground of divorce. Now Luke does not mention this incident at all; but he does record this teaching. Is it a fair inference that the teaching was repeated because the latter only mentions it in a different connection? Certainly it must have been in a different connection, if he would preserve it at all; and in this particular case the connection in Luke (xvi. 18) is so slight with the context as almost in itself to suggest that it was actually uttered at another time.

It is only necessary to allude to a third source of erroneous judgment, closely akin to the first. It lies in the supposed completeness of the discourses. Certainly, the whole teaching of Christ upon earth forms one consistent whole, and if it were all combined in one discourse would be far more com-

plete than any which is recorded, or is likely to have been uttered. Certainly, he did not intend to teach all truth on any one occasion. Precisely how much he did teach at one time is a question of fact, to be determined on evidence, and not on the ground of apparent completeness. Of course, such a separation of parts of a discourse as would introduce undue abruptness or leave the remainder liable to honest misapprehension is forbidden; but within these limits we cannot judge, on internal grounds, what was necessary to the completeness of the instruction our Lord meant to convey at any particular time.

Let these points be recapitulated. It cannot be determined in regard to any discourse that it was uttered at one time, because it has an internal coherence, unless the removal of parts of it to another connection will materially interfere with its concinnity. It cannot be decided that a discourse was repeated because it is given in different connections by the different Evangelists, when one of them gives no account at all of the event or the occasion on which the other says it was uttered. Finally, we cannot assume that any discourse is really to be regarded as delivered all at one time because in its totality it has greater completeness than any of its parts could have.

Several of the more prominent discourses in regard to the unity of which a difference of opinion exists may now be examined. The first selected is the charge of our Lord to the twelve, when sending them forth on a mission in Galilee, as it is recorded in the tenth chapter of the first Gospel. This passage is the more willingly taken for examination, because it is one of the instances especially chosen by the late lamented Dean of Canterbury,¹ in which "to point out the close internal connection of the longer discourses, and to combat the mistake of those critics who suppose them to be no more than collections of shorter sayings associated together from similarity of subject or character." His argu-

¹ Alford's Greek Testament. Prolegomena, chap. ii. sect. 5. 5. p. 32 (6th edition). See also his notes in loco.

ment to show "that this discourse of our Lord was *delivered at one time*, and that the *first sending of the twelve*," rests, apparently, upon two grounds: first, the statement at the close of the discourse, "And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence," etc. (xi. 1); secondly, the internal unity of the discourse. The first of these reasons need not detain us at all. It is obvious that the statement is equally in place, whether all or only a part of what is here recorded was uttered at this time. In either case, Jesus departed when he "had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples," whether that commanding was more or less full. It cannot be assumed that the "commanding" must necessarily cover precisely the commands here mentioned; other commands were certainly given at other times; and whether a part of those here recorded by Matthew were or were not actually uttered on other occasions must depend upon the evidence; the other Evangelists say that the disciples went forth upon their mission when only a part of these commands had been given. The argument from the internal unity of the discourse is developed by its analysis into three portions, of which the first only (vs. 5-15) relates to the present mission of the disciples; the second covers the apostolic period (vs. 16-23), extending from the ascension to the destruction of Jerusalem; and "the third (vs. 24-42), the longest and weightiest portion, is spoken *directly* (with occasional reference only to the apostles and their mission [vs. 40]) *of all the disciples of the Lord*,—their position, their encouragements, their duties, and finally concludes with the last great reward"¹ (vs. 42). The exact points of transition between the several parts of this discourse, and precisely how many of these parts there should be, it may be somewhat difficult to fix; but the general distinction between the several parts mentioned above is sufficiently obvious. The unity shown in this analysis, it will be observed, is rather in the association of similar subjects than in the treatment of dif-

¹ Alford, in loco.

ferent aspects of a strictly single subject. There is, indeed, a certain silver thread of unity resulting from that oneness of all Christ's disciples in all ages, that "communion of saints" by which the apostles and all later believers are gathered into one body, and from that likeness in the bearing of the world towards the church in all time; but such a thread runs through very much more of the Saviour's teaching than could possibly have been given at this time. The occasion called for instructions to the twelve concerning their mission now immediately in hand. To this might or might not be added further teaching in regard to their own future apostolic labors, and in regard to disciples in general in the more distant future. *A priori*, the presumption would be against the wider range of instruction in view of the work to be immediately undertaken. And this presumption is considerably strengthened by the fact that the treatment of the apostles foretold, and subsequently experienced, in the second period was totally different from that in the first, and would have been likely to very much confuse their expectations, when no clue was given to the relation of the different parts of the discourse to different times. However, the question is not one of theory, but of evidence. Accepting, for the moment, the above division of the discourse into three parts, if there is reason for supposing that only the first of these was uttered at the time when the whole is given by Matthew, and that the others were actually spoken at other and later times, then neither will the unity of this first part within itself and its appropriateness to the circumstances be diminished, nor will the other parts suffer in these respects when transferred to connections in which the periods to which they relate were brought prominently before the minds of the hearers.

How then is the discourse treated by the other Evangelists? The first part is given by itself both by Mark (vi. 6-13), and by Luke (ix. 1-6), partly in abbreviated form, partly in almost identical words. At its close, both of them say that the disciples went forth and did that which their Lord had bidden them to do. It may be remarked, in passing, that

this more than counterbalances any inference to be drawn from Matthew's saying at the end of the whole discourse, "When Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples." So far there is an entire agreement, except in the necessary omission in the first Gospel of the disciples "going forth." We pass on to the later parts. Nearly the whole discourse is given by Luke, and a part of it also by Mark, but in widely different connections from that in which it appears in Matthew; on the other hand, in the passages parallel to these Matthew gives nothing of it. If then the whole discourse was really spoken at one time, we have the singular fact that two of the Evangelists should have given only the first part then, and should have placed more or less of the rest at other times, while Matthew, on the other hand, makes no allusion at all to the instructions given at those other times. If the latter parts of the discourse were repeated, it is marvellous that there should be no trace of the repetition in any one of the three Evangelists who thus variously record them. Clearly, the *onus probandi* of such a supposition must rest on its supporters. We do not know that it has ever been seriously attempted. The presumption is evidently that several distinct discourses have been grouped together by Matthew on account of certain points of similarity, now appealed to as marks of unity.

But we need not content ourselves with a probable presumption. It will be borne in mind that the first part, about which the Evangelists and the harmonists are alike agreed, contains all that relates exclusively to the immediate mission of the disciples, and in the two later Gospels it is then said that they went forth to their work. This was uttered in Galilee, comparatively early in our Lord's ministry, — on the basis of the quadripaschal scheme, between his second and third passovers. The portion occurring in Matthew a little further on (x. 21–25) relates to persecutions and sufferings of the disciples in the "apostolic period." It tells them of persecutions and troubles which they *did not* experience in their first mission, but which did come upon them abundantly

after their Master's ascension, when they were sent forth to plant his church in the world. It is recorded by Mark (xiii. 12, 13) and by Luke (xxi. 16-19) during the last days of the holy week, in connection with our Lord's prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem. Unquestionably it was uttered then, and it stands there in closest connection with the context. But in his record of those days Matthew makes no allusion to any such teaching; if he has preserved it at all, it must be somewhere else. We actually find it in the passage in question. It seems, therefore, that he has joined together in one account the instructions to the apostles in regard to their whole apostolic work. So strongly was similarity of subject, rather than the order of time, his guiding principle, that he has even postponed to the last part of the discourse teachings which, according to the other Evangelists, were uttered some time before the verses just under consideration.

It is unnecessary to examine the rest of the discourse at so much length. It is all placed by Luke in the interval between the Feast of Tabernacles and our Lord's arrival at Bethany just before his final Passover. There is a small portion of it (Matt. x. 37-39), given by Luke (xiv. 25-35) at greater length, which it is less easy and less important to fix chronologically, because it was substantially repeated more than once. See Matt. xvi. 24, 25; Mark viii. 34, 35; Luke ix. 23, 24; xvii. 33; John xii. 25. It appears, however, to have been spoken once near the close of this period. The rest of the discourse is placed by Luke within the narrower limits of our Lord's visit to Martha and Mary — mentioned only by Luke — and his second visit to them at the resurrection of Lazarus. Of this period Matthew makes absolutely no mention at all. He passes it by in entire silence, except as he has preserved in other connections passages from the discourses which he must have himself heard, and which Luke tells us were uttered at this time. Among such discourses was much instruction to the twelve, who were now soon to be separated from their Master in his earthly presence. How could Matthew, wholly passing over the events of this

period, better preserve its instructions than by giving the record of them along with that of others of a like kind, uttered at periods of which he has given the narrative?

So far, then, as this particular discourse is concerned, there is no reason whatever for supposing it to have been all spoken at one time, except the fact that it is all recorded together by Matthew; and there are strong reasons on the other side. It seems a violent supposition that, while all these Evangelists concur in the record of the first part as spoken at one time, two of them at that time say nothing of the rest of it, and then afterwards record its repetition at times when the first Evangelist makes no allusion to it. The appropriateness of the later parts to the times and circumstances in which they are placed by Luke sustains us in rejecting such a supposition. And, finally, the fact that Luke places the larger part of the discourse at a time of which Matthew gives no record, explains why he should naturally and properly have grouped these instructions with those given at an earlier period.

Let us now take a more familiar instance, the Sermon on the Mount. It has been said of Townsend's arrangement of the Psalms, chronologically, in connection with the history of the events when they were written, that if such had been the original arrangement of the Bible, our first task would have been to group them together in a "Book of Psalms." And if Matthew had not done this for us in regard to the utterances of the Sermon on the Mount, we could not have rested until we had brought all its parts to be read and meditated upon together. Nevertheless there are plain indications that this was not, any more than the Book of Psalms, quite all uttered on one occasion. The passages which we would transfer to a later time, are two verses of the fifth chapter (Matt. v. 25, 26), the latter part of the sixth (vs. 22-34), and five verses of the seventh (7-11). The reason for doing so is that all these passages are given by Luke in connection with a narrative of events not mentioned at all by Matthew. In much of them there is as close a verbal identity as is ever found between any two of the

Gospels; e.g. Matt. vii. 7-11 and Luke xi. 9-13. Two verses of Matthew's sixth chapter (22, 23) occur in Luke (xi. 34-36) under the following circumstances: On occasion of the healing of a certain demoniac, the Scribes and Pharisees blasphemed and sought for a sign. Our Lord replied at some length (Matt. xii. 22-45; Mark iii. 19-30; Luke xi. 14-36). In the course of the discussion a certain woman lifted up her voice and exclaimed "Blessed is the womb that bare thee," etc. This circumstance is mentioned by Luke alone, and it is just after this that he gives the two verses in question. All the other passages in the "Sermon on the Mount" mentioned above are given by Luke in connection with the events in the period before spoken of, between our Lord's first visit to Mary and Martha (Luke x. 38-42) and the resurrection of Lazarus (John xi.) — a period, as before said, the events of which are passed over in entire silence by Matthew. The evidence is not indeed so strong in this case, because we miss here the assistance of the careful chronological arrangement of Mark. Nevertheless, it seems that Luke, giving the connecting circumstances, must give those portions of the discourse in the right place; while Matthew, not giving those circumstances at all, was obliged to group the instructions elsewhere. The conclusion is strengthened as we find this to have been his habit, of which one instance has already been given, and others are to follow. There is in this case also nothing to suggest that the portions of the Sermon on the Mount referred to were repeated.

The next discourse we propose to examine is that in the eleventh chapter of Matthew. John the Baptist was now in prison, and sending his disciples to Jesus to make inquiries drew forth from him a striking discourse concerning himself (Matt. xi. 2-19; Luke vii. 18-35). In regard to this there is no difference of opinion; but immediately afterwards there follow in Matthew two other passages (vs. 20-24 and 25-30) which some commentators have considered a part of the same discourse. They have, however, nothing to do with John, and are given by Luke in very different connections. If the

discourse is regarded as one, a certain unity may indeed be traced in it, as appears from the following analysis of Alford:¹ "The discourse divides itself into two parts: (1) *the respective characters and mutual relations of John and Christ* (vs. 7-19); (2) *the condemnation of the unbelief of the time ending with the gracious invitation to all the weary and heavy laden to come to him as truly ὁ ἐρχόμενος*" (vs. 20-30). Again, at vs. 20 he says: "[τότε ἤρξατο] This expression betokens a change of subject, but not of locality or time. The whole chapter stands in such close connection, one part arising out of another (e.g. this out of vs. 16-19), and all pervaded by the same great undertone, which sounds forth in vs. 28-30, that it is quite impossible that this should be a collection of our Lord's sayings uttered at different times." And vs. 25, he adds: "This is certainly a continuation of the foregoing discourse." These extracts cover the whole proof proposed of the unity of this discourse, one of the examples pointed out in the prolegomena as those in which he should "combat the mistake of those critics who suppose them to be no more than collections of shorter sayings," etc. Is the unity so close as to compel the belief that the discourse must have been all uttered at one time? Let us turn to Luke. He alone records the mission of the seventy (x. 1-11). According to his narrative, our Lord directs these seventy how to deal with cities that refused to receive them, and then pronounces the terrible doom upon those which had rejected himself (12-16). Here is the passage of Matthew (xi. 20-24) which has so little to do with the character of John the Baptist, and which is in such close relation with its context in Luke. In view of these things, it seems hardly worth while to press the τότε ἤρξατο with which the passage begins in Matthew. After a time the seventy fulfilled their mission, and returned with joy to Jesus (Luke x. 17-24). He received them, and spoke to them of the future. So far we have the record in Luke alone; but he continues: "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said.—" At this point Matthew joins,

¹ Greek Testament. Matt. xi. 7 (6th edition), Vol. i. p. 115.

giving the passage (xi. 25-30) which forms the conclusion of the discourse. No one can doubt that these two passages were spoken at the times mentioned by Luke, — at the sending out and the return of the seventy. Neither of these events are mentioned at all by the first Evangelist, and if he would preserve the teaching at all, it must be given in some other connection. Except in the fact that he has done this in connection with the discourse about John the Baptist, there is no reason to suppose these passages to have been uttered then, and there is again no ground at all for supposing them to have been repeated. We have simply the phenomenon which shows itself all along, that when Matthew does not give the narrative of certain events, he puts elsewhere the discourses that were spoken in connection with them.

The discourse, or series of discourses, to the apostles, given in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew is an instance of an opposite character, but illustrates the same habit in the Evangelist. All that is given here plainly belongs here, and much of it is also given in the same connection and order by the other two Evangelists. They, however, state that in the midst of the discourse the disciples mentioned the incident of their having forbidden one who was casting out demons in his name. Matthew does not mention this. In connection with this Mark gives that saying of our Lord, "Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward" (ix. 41). Matthew here omits this, because he omits the incident altogether; but that it may not be lost, he gives it in substance elsewhere (x. 42) in connection with another very similar teaching.

Finally we come to the consideration of "the whole series of polemical discourses and prophetic parables in chapters xxi.-xxv." By far the greater part of this considerable passage is given by Matthew in the same order as by the other Evangelists, and occurs consecutively in the arrangement of them all. Sometimes one, sometimes another, of them is the more full, but there are several parts given only by

Matthew. It plainly appears, however, even from the narrative of the first Evangelist himself, that it was not one continuous discourse, but, beginning with the account of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the first day of the holy week, it is continued on each of the subsequent days until it ends with the prophecy of the judgment on the fourth day. The question here then, is not of the unity of a single discourse, but rather of the chronological arrangement of a series of discourses and narratives which, at any rate, extended through several days. There are certain passages recorded by Matthew within this period (of which the record in all the Evangelists is so full), which there are the same reasons as in the other cases for transferring to other connections. In regard to the whole of chapters *xxi.*, *xxii.*, and the beginning of *xxiii.*, there is no difficulty. The same order is observed by Mark and Luke and, so far as his narrative is parallel, by John also. This takes us to near the close of the third day of the week when several incidents occurred not mentioned at all by Matthew. Of the widow's mite (*Mark xii. 41-44* ; *Luke xxi. 1-4*), of the request of certain Greeks to see our Lord, with his remarks thereupon, and of the voice from heaven (*John xii. 20-36*) he takes no note. The continuity of his narrative being thus broken in upon, he here introduces another of those discourses (*xxiii. 4-39*) belonging to the same period so often before referred to — the interval between the first visit to Martha and Mary and the resurrection of Lazarus. Matthew, indeed, reports this discourse more fully, but its identity with that given by Luke (*xi. 37-54*) does not admit of question. The latter gives minutely the circumstances which called forth the discourse, the invitation from the Pharisee, his wonder that Jesus did not wash before eating, and the consequent sharp reproof of him and his class. Matthew mentions none of these things. His narrative does not embrace at all the events of this period of our Lord's life. Several discourses uttered then he has preserved in other parts of his Gospel in other connections. So, evidently, with this. There was here a break in the continuity of his

narrative, and the last thing he had recorded was a warning against the Scribes and Pharisees — surely a most appropriate place to introduce a discourse which it was impossible for him to give in its actual connection. In the twenty-fourth chapter there are three passages which there are the same reasons for transferring to nearly the same period. Two of these relate to the coming of the kingdom of God (vs. 26–28 and 37–41), and Luke particularly explains how they came to be uttered. It was after the resurrection of Lazarus, when Christ was asked by the Pharisees, “When the kingdom of God should come,” that he gave the discourse in question. It is more fully reported, in this case, by Luke; but Matthew (who gives no record of this time) has preserved the two portions mentioned in connection with the closely related prophecy of this chapter. It will be found that the exegetical difficulties of this chapter are materially lightened by transferring these passages to the connection so distinctly marked out by Luke.

The close of the chapter, again (vs. 43–51), belongs to a little earlier part of the same general period. It is a part of the discourses on the Perea journey, and before the visit to Jerusalem at the feast of the Dedication. It is to be found in the account of that journey as given by Luke (xii. 38–46) in connection with the preceding and succeeding circumstances. Other parts of the same discourse have already been discussed as they are found in Matthew (v. 25, 26; vi. 25–34; x. 34–36), in connection with other teachings to which they most readily assimilated themselves. Still, the whole report of the discourse is more full in Luke than in all the passages of the earlier Gospel.

There still remains to be considered the parable of the ten talents (xxv. 14–30). It may admit of reasonable question whether this is really the same parable with that in Luke xix. 11–28). If not, then, of course, there is no reason for here disturbing the order of Matthew. But if, as seems on the whole more probable, the parables are really the same, then we cannot hesitate to prefer the chronological place

assigned by Luke; because, as usual, he mentions the circumstances which called it forth, and these are not given at all by the other Evangelist. It was on the last journey from Jericho to Jerusalem, just before the arrival at Bethany, when, "because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear," Jesus spoke the parable. Matthew, not mentioning these circumstances, defers the record of the parable a few days only to give it with others of a similar general character.

We have thus reviewed all the more prominent and important instances in which it seems that parts of the discourses of our Lord, as given by Matthew, should be considered as having actually been uttered on other occasions. We find as a reason for doing this that such passages are given by one or more of the other Evangelists in connection with the circumstances under which they were uttered, and that these circumstances are not mentioned by Matthew. Nearly all of them belong to that important Perea journey which he does not record at all; or if not to that, are yet connected with some other event of which his narrative takes no note. There was, therefore, a necessity that if he gave these discourses at all, he should give them out of their connection. In no case is the unity of the discourse which remains, marred by the transference of these portions; in several instances (notably in x. and xxiv.) it becomes far more easily understood. There is no reason for supposing these discourses to have been continuously uttered, except the mere fact that they are recorded together by Matthew, and this fact seems sufficiently explained by what has been observed above. Finally, it must be, and is, admitted by all who study the arrangement of the Gospel narrative that Matthew has not in any other matter undertaken to observe a strict chronological sequence, — not in the order of the lesser events, not in the miracles, not in the single parables, — why then should this be looked for in the discourses and the longer series of parables?

These reasonings, however, apply only to the first Gospel. Mark is believed to observe a strict chronological order

throughout, and the same is true of John. Luke occupies an intermediate position in this respect. His especial care is to note the circumstances and connections under which each discourse was uttered. He is therefore far more chronological than Matthew. Still, as he does not always mention events in the order of their occurrence, when these are displaced, the teaching connected with them is, of course, displaced also. Instances of this are very infrequent, but may be found in Luke xi. 14-36 (cf. Matt. xii. 22-45; Mark iii. 19-30), and in some slight disturbances of the order of narration in connection with the institution of the last supper. But this does not involve the combination of one discourse with another. In the few instances in which this does occur it is sometimes marked by a peculiarity not observed in the other Gospel, and greatly increasing the difficulty of determining whether these passages are in their proper places. They are not only combined with discourses to which they appear not to have originally belonged, but they are detached from others, given by Luke, to which they did belong. The argument that such passages were really repeated by our Lord, and are given at one time by Luke, and their repetition is given at other times by the other Evangelists, of course, here acquires greatly increased force. Another peculiarity about them is that they are all extremely short, consisting usually of one or two verses, never of more than four. To judge of them intelligently it will be necessary to consider each of them briefly. Taken in the order of Luke they are xii. 10; xiii. 18-21; xvi. 16, 17, 18; xvii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 31.

The first of these (xii. 10) occurs somewhat abruptly in the midst of a discourse to the disciples occupying the first twelve verses of the chapter. A subtle, but strong connection with the context may be seen on reflection, but is not apparent on the surface. On the other hand, this declaration of the aggravated character of the sin against the Holy Ghost is given by the two earlier Evangelists in connection with our Lord's rebuke of the Scribes and Pharisees, who ascribed his miracles to the power of Beelzebub (Matt. xii. 22-45; Mark

iii. 19-30). Luke also gives a large part of the same discourse, but with a hiatus just preceding and following the passage in question. The explanation would seem to be that Luke, having derived his information from others (i. 1-3), did not have this part of the discourse reported to him. He did, however, from some source learn of this detached saying, and as, deprived of its immediate context, it would have been inappropriate where it belonged, he put it in the next most appropriate place. We thus, however, miss the reason given by Mark for this utterance, "Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit" (iii. 30), the due consideration of which would have removed much of the trouble ignorantly experienced about "the sin against the Holy Ghost."

It seems scarcely needful to remark that we speak of the Evangelists in these respects from a purely human point of view. However powerful the influence of inspiration was upon them, it did not obliterate their idiosyncracies as human writers. Luke expressly tells us how he obtained his materials; and, while he was so guided in their use as to be saved from all error, it nowhere appears that he was the recipient of revelations to supply what may have been wanting in his sources. The verse in question is given by all three Evangelists. The question is, simply, whether it was repeated, and all three have failed to note its repetition, or whether Luke has given it out of its place. We confess to preferring the latter alternative, especially as its meaning is shown by its context in the first two, and is not thus explained in the last.

We come now to the longest of all these passages, Luke xiii. 18-21. It is made up of two short parables coming between our Lord's answer to the ruler of the synagogue, indignant at his healing on the Sabbath, and the record of a fresh circuit through the villages of Galilee. There is no reason whatever for insisting that it stands in its true place in Luke, and it is given both by Matthew (xiii. 31-33) and Mark (iv. 30-32) in connection with a series of parables not recorded at all by Luke.

The next passage is xvi. 16, 17, 18. It is made up of three

distinct verses which seem each to belong to a different place. First note the context in Luke. The three verses have no close connection with each other, nor has any of them with that which precedes or follows. If, however, they are removed elsewhere, then the closest connection between vs. 15 and 19sq. becomes at once apparent. Now let us see where these verses are found in the other Gospels. Verse 16 occurs Matt. xi. 12 in inseparable connection with its context; verse 17 is found in the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. v. 18, in a little different form but still identified by the peculiar *μία κεφαλαία τοῦ νόμου*; verse 18 is given both by Matthew (xix. 9) and by Mark (x. 11, 12) where it evidently belongs, in the instructions concerning divorce, of which Luke, except in this verse, gives no record. These separate sayings in these three verses may be conceived to have been repeated; but this does not seem likely. Luke does not give the instructions concerning divorce at all, yet would retain this important conclusion of them. He must therefore give it out of its connection, and all attempts to show a close relation to its present context have signally failed. A breach being once made by the transfer of this verse, there need be the less hesitation in transferring the others also, although the reasons for these are somewhat less imperative.

The remaining passages are all in the seventeenth chapter, and need not detain us long. It is curious that all the passages of this kind should be embraced between the twelfth and seventeenth chapters. Two of them are xvii. 1, 2 and xvii. 3, 4. They occur together between the parable of Lazarus (xvi. 19-31) and the request of the disciples for an increase of faith (xvii. 5). Their connection with each other and with the context does not call for remark. It is neither so completely wanting as in the last case, nor is it so close as to form the basis of an argument. Both are instances of the preservation, out of their connection, of parts of discourses, other parts of which are given by this Evangelist in the same connection with the other Evangelists. Verses 1, 2 may be found in Matt. xviii. 6, 7; Mark ix. 42, and vs. 3, 4 in Matt.

xviii. 15 and 21-23. It is only a few verses of the beginning of this discourse which are preserved by Luke in its connection; the rest is wanting in his Gospel except as fragments are in this way gathered up.

The last instance is the thirty-first verse of the same chapter, and is perhaps the most difficult of them all. It occurs in the midst of a discourse of some length concerning the coming of the kingdom of God. It is certainly appropriate enough to the subject, although where it stands it somewhat mars the closeness of the connection of its immediate context. The same discourse is given in Matt. xxiv., and this verse is there omitted, but so are several others just before and after it. It is given in another part of the discourse in Matt. (xxiv. 17, 18) and also in the same connection by Mark (xiii. 15, 16), being in both inseparable from the context; and the curious fact is, that this part of the discourse is also given by Luke elsewhere (xxi. 5-36) with just this verse omitted. The question whether it does really belong in both places, and so was actually repeated, or whether Luke has transferred it from one place to another, will probably be differently decided by different minds. To the writer, the closeness of the connection in the earlier Evangelists, the looseness of it in Luke, and the absence of all indication of repetition, determine in favor of the latter alternative.

All these passages from Luke are short, and their place is comparatively unimportant. The interest of the question centres upon Matthew, where it is important for purposes both of harmony and of exegesis. In both it is helpful to find that he has followed, in regard to our Lord's discourses, the same plan that otherwise marks his narrative, — that of grouping like things together. And in the case of the discourses he had this especial reason for it, that the discourses so grouped were connected with periods or events of which it was not his purpose to preserve the narrative.