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J. Duncan M. Derrett

Modes of Renewal (Mk. 2:21-22)

Professor Derrett is no stranger to the Evangelical Quarterly. We present another of his studies in which he uses his profound knowledge of Judaism to good effect in elucidating the fulness of meaning in New Testament texts.

Key words: New Testament; Mark; Mark 2:21-22; renewal.

Did Jesus require authority for what he said or did? The Answer to John the Baptist (Mt. 11:4-5) suggests that he did. Many would say Jesus needed no authority; but that he may well have found reminiscences of the prophets helpful. Reminiscence derives from allusions. Asian literatures like reminiscences of the classics and puns—both rhetorical figures now repugnant to us though alive in Shakespeare's day. That Jesus' contemporaries required to be shown his authority is plain (Mk. 11:28; Mt. 12:38-39; Jn. 3:34; 8:46-47). Moreover wise sayings could be the more effective if they triggered hearers' memories, and so commanded their assent. This may well have happened; otherwise the survival of sayings, especially when they passed into Greek hands, is difficult to account for, actual proverbs apart. Conversely, the use of clichés tends to tie one to the allusion, unless this is excluded. No doubt the use of reminiscence is not the same thing as allegory. If a saying of Jesus can be shown to have a recognisable biblical pedigree one can do something to determine what he was understood to have meant in the first century, and, by critical examination, what he probably did mean before evangelists edited sayings and even combined them whilst reusing old material creatively.

A case in point is the saying about the Sons of the Bridal Chamber (Mk. 2:19-20), unintelligible to Greeks¹ and made bizarre by the strange event of the bridegroom's being 'taken away', and by the strange choice of that word (*aparthé*) to state it. In fact, apart from a sudden death (4 Ez. 10:1-4), a young man may lawfully be taken from his wedding for service in religious (not political) wars, and this must have happened,² whereupon, their minds concentrated, his friends

1 Claude Tresmontant, *Le Christ hébreu* (Paris, 1983), 100-101.

2 Dt. 20:7; 24:5 as interpreted at Mishnah, *Fôit* 8.2-4,7 (P. Blackman, *Mishnayoth III Order Nashim*, London, 1953, 369, 372-3). Cf. Lk. 14:20. J. D. M. Derrett, *Law in the New Testament* (London, 1970), 130-131.

would cease trying to get drunk at his expense. But the allusion would be lost on Greeks.

To the annoyance of the literal-minded, the strange word *aparthe* (which appears in no other gospel scene) comes alive once one checks LXX Is. 53:8 (*erthe*).³ The church wrote the passage not only to connect the Bridegroom (cf. Mt. 25:5-10) with Jesus himself, a bold move in terms of reminiscence—hostility to Jesus' calling himself the Bridegroom remains in spite of Is. 61:10; 62:5; Jn. 3:29; Tg. Ps. 45⁴—but also to prepare for the passage to which this article is devoted, Mk. 2:21-22, regarding which Cranfield (in 1963) found not less than five alternative rational interpretations.

The civilization required authority in a teacher, for it was highly conservative, and rabbis needed authority to which they would allude without quoting it. At Pirqe'Avôt 4.20 a certain R. Jose said,

If one learns from the young, to what is he like? To one that eats unripe grapes, or drinks wine (straight) from his winepress. And one who learns from the aged, to what is he like? To one who eats ripe grapes and drinks old wine.

Then a better-known character points out that one should not judge wine by its flask (or, we should say, a book by its cover).⁵ This exchange depends not merely on common knowledge (as with Mk. 2:21-22) but upon Ezk. 18:2 (on grapes), or Pr. 9:2,5 about Wisdom's similarity with wine, while at Si. 9:10 a 'new friend' is (no better than) new wine. Ancient models secure a saying's respectability and longevity. A traditional society (Mt. 10:24-25; Jn. 15:20) will, as required, interpret a saying bearing reminiscences in mind. Mk. 2:21-22 was until recently treated as a proverbial truism⁶ (which it is not), and interpreted accordingly, leaving important problems unsolved.

3 E. Lohmeyer, *Markus* (Göttingen, 1967), 60, used by Jeremias at one time and by R. P. Martin, *Mark: Evangelist and Theologian* (Exeter, 1972), 184-188, also O. Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament* (London, 1959). Marshall, doubting whether 'a vague echo of one word' could establish an allusion (I. H. Marshall, *Luke*, Exeter, 1978, 226) leans against the idea, and the matter is well discussed by C. E. B. Cranfield, *Mark* (Cambridge, 1963), 110-111. Arist., *Wasps*, 51, *artheis* is voluntary!

4 As against Jeremias, *Parables of Jesus*, rev. edn. (London, 1963), 52 and at *TWNT* iv (1942), 1094-5, 1096, 1101, 1103 see the balanced treatment of D. E. Aune at *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* 1 (1979), 546-547. He cites SB I, 517-518; III, 679-680. An indirect expression of Jesus' messiahship is not to be rejected: Martin, *Mark*, 186 (the New Age, and depictions of a Feast). The drama of the victorious Bridegroom is not to be ignored (188). Tresmontant, *Christ*, 101.

5 Blackman, *Mishnayoth IV Order Nezikin* (London, 1954), 523.

6 R. Bultmann, *History of the Synoptic Tradition* (Oxford, 1968), 76, 102, 168; Marshall, *Luke*, 226. Banks calls the triple parable (Lk. 5:36-39) a 'general truth' (see below, n.21).

²¹No one sews a patch of unprocessed⁷ cloth⁸ onto an old garment: if he does the filling⁹ tears away from it, the new from the old, and leaves a bigger hole (or, 'a worse rent supervenes'). ²²No one puts new wine into old wineskins; if he does, the wine will burst the skins, and then wine and skins are both lost. New wine goes into fresh skins [Jos. 9:13].

The outer garment is meant, and it is 'old'. The rich semantics of *palaios* included 'antiquated', suggesting 'superannuated'.¹⁰ My former idea (1985) that the garment had been deliberately torn, not under Lv. 13:56 but as at 2 Sa. 13:19, 31; 15:32; Mk. 14:63, etc., is superfluous. What it suffered from is *age*. The oldest 'garment' is the heavens (Gn. 1:1, 8; cf. Is. 50:3). It is notorious (1) that even the heavens can vanish;¹¹ (2) that they can be, as it were, bent, so that Yahweh can 'come down';¹² and (3) they may have to split for a similar purpose.¹³ But the Servant, God's agent, will always remain. Just as the Prodigal Son was, as it were, clothed in Adam's robe, the *first* robe,¹⁴ so the oldest garment, the heavens, is subject to becoming 'aged', and if the heavens then certainly everything and everybody underneath them.¹⁵ Since Yahweh stretched the heavens out as a garment,¹⁶ and is quite capable of rolling them up again like a curtain which they resemble,¹⁷ to describe them as moth-eaten is a pretty figure (suggested by the stars?). If they become moth-eaten, surely so do the inhabitants of earth, who are subject to removal *a fortiori*.¹⁸ This is settled by the Prophets and by the psalmist.

Cloths and moths deserve thought. An *old* garment that requires repair is not likely to be a workman's upper garment, which wears thin quickly. The wearing out of such garments symbolizes mortality (Si. 14:17) in a society with a short expectation of life. An embroidered garment, especially embroidered with precious metals (Ezk. 26:16),

7 Unwashed, unfulled, uncarded and not yet dyed.

8 *Rakos*, like the Heb. *begeḏ*, covers every type of cloth, but *rakos* is commonly used for cloth suited to every purpose, however humble: Josephus, *ant.* 6.289; LXX Je. 45:11 (*palaia rake*); Is. 64:6 (cf. Lv. 20:18; Is. 30:22; La. 1:17). But it need not be so used.

9 For the scene see M.G. Steinhauser, *ExpT* 87 (1976), 312-313. R.H. Gundry, *Matthew* (Grand Rapids, 1982), 170, approves the 'overlapping' of the patch. For 'a' rent see M. Black, *Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*, 3rd. edn. (Oxford, 1967), 94. For the insinuations behind 'filling' and 'schism' see below.

10 Note Heb. 8:13. 'Antiquated' means 'fine', of wine, or 'venerable'. See all examples in Liddell-Scott-Jones, *Lexicon*, s.v. *palaios*, meanings II.1, and II.2.

11 Is. 51:6.

12 2 Sa. 22:10; Pss. 18:9; 144:5.

13 Is. 63:19 [EV 64:1].

14 Lk. 15:22. Derrett, *Law*, 119. Cf. Longus, *Daphnis & Chloe* 4.24.

15 Particularly Is. 50:9; 51:6, 8. Cf. Heb. 8:13.

16 Jb. 9:8; Ps. 104:2; Is. 40:22; 42:5; 44:24; 45:12; 51:13; Je. 10:12.

17 Note Ps. 101:26 Cod. Vat., Cod. Alex.; Is. 34:4.

18 See n. 15 above.

rolled or folded against a great occasion (Lk. 15:22), is the natural victim of the larvae of *Tinea*, the clothes moth,¹⁹ which require time to pupate (Mt. 6:19). When the garments of the rich are moth-eaten their downfall is already prefigured (Jas. 5:2).

Something must be said about *schisma*, incorrectly translated 'hole'. A series of moth-holes makes a good perforation, and a split develops when the owner finds little but the embroidery is left. But was the patch required to mend an actual split? Damage due to age may have many causes but this (rather unexpected) *schisma* alludes, on the surface, to the likelihood that if the 'garment' is condemned it is only too ready to split. At a metaphorical level a society in need of a radical reformation proves its need by the signs of impending schisms (the prime meaning of the word in our literature). The real split cannot be avoided by patching the weak region with less yielding material, unsuitable not only because it is unshrunk but also detracting from the old garment in point of looks and value.²⁰ It *takes away*, and, mysteriously, Mark has placed the unexpected *airei*. . .*apo* only a few words away from the equally unexpected *aparthē*.

The words 'the new from the old' could be a gloss inserted by Mark, and, if so, correct. When heaven is rolled up as superannuated because of the moth-eaten character of earth and her inhabitants, whose capacity for 'splitting' was shown even at the Tower of Babel, it is unreasonable to imagine that unprocessed material (however fine) should be used to mend it in the hope of prolonging its usefulness. The purity of heaven should be maintained by, eventually, substituting a new garment, symbolizing a new covenant with the capacity to comply with it. Everything has its purpose and occasion (Ec. 3:1, 17; cf. 7). There is value in the remnant of the old (Mt. 9:16b, 17e; cf. 5:17-20; Heb. 8:13). There is value in the new. Each has validity, though an interval must occur before Creation (as prophesied) replaces the Old by the New. Luke also is concerned (at 5:37d), though less plainly, for the integrity of the Old Israel and its *mores*, as well as for the potential of the new material which he sees may itself be ruined (5:36c). This is not simply to add to the parallelism between 5:36a and 37b—as indeed it does (so Marshall); nor simply nostalgia, still less is it superfluous (as Jülicher thought), but a realistic midrash on Mark (duly appreciated by Klauck). The new garment is not to be split either. Gosp. Thom. §47 is

19 *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edn. (1911), XVI, 468, col.2.

20 The late-mentioned *schisma* (n. 9 above) implies one latent before. But the ancient civilization retained its validity *pro tempore*. H. Anderson, *Mark* (Grand Rapids, 1981), 108; F. W. Beare, *Matthew* (Oxford, 1981), 231 (the old cloak was not beyond repair!); D. Wenham, *Parables of Jesus* (London, 1989), 32-33 (citing Mt. 13:52). Denied by P. Gaechter, *Matthäus* (Innsbruck, 1963), 291. Jesus does not reject fasting as Mk. 2:20 itself shows: J. A. Fitzmyer, *Luke* (AB) (Garden City, 1981), i, 594-601.

said to favour the praise of *gnosis*, and it throws no light on Mark, though it may well evidence a study of Luke. The metaphorical potential of these 'garments' is high.

The Reminiscences

We now come upon a dispute as between two methodologies. Progress concerning the wine has, no doubt, been tardy. The old *wine* which must be conserved according to Luke, and which is indeed 'better' (not ironical as many felt forced to guess),²¹ recalls the wine for the messianic banquet, which, on the one hand is very new (Mk. 14:25), yet is made from grapes set aside from the beginning of the world.²² Granted that Jesus is made to allude to this wine, which must not be lost (cf. Jn. 6:12 about bread), the figure of pouring wine into suitable skins is appropriate, combining practical experience with esteem for traditional learning: a reminiscence which, perhaps like that of the Bridegroom, would help the saying's respectability. Hence Luke's version is sound, but, without knowledge quite hidden from Greeks, we should not have grasped the point.

By contrast some controversial advance has already been made about the *garment*. Joachim Jeremias spotted Ps. 102:26-28 as quoted in Heb. 1:10-12, without²³ noting that the author of Hebrews considered the verses messianic (so Spicq). There Christ (on God's behalf) will roll up the cosmos like an old garment (cf. Is. 34:4), and unfold a new cosmos.²⁴ From Acts 10:11-16 Jeremias gathered that the cosmos could be symbolized by a tent or a garment, which (in itself) is authentic.²⁵ The Age of the old world was expiring; the putting on of a new

21 Many favour irony: Marshall, *Luke*, 228; C. F. Evans, *Luke* (London & Philadelphia, 1990), 312, but it is speculation. It is denied by S. G. Wilson, *Luke and the Law* (Cambridge, 1983), 20 (noting Lk. 11:42d at 18-19). R. Banks, *Jesus and the Law in the Synoptic Tradition* (Cambridge, 1975), 98, calls v.39 a 'supplementary parable' not out of harmony with those that precede it. Lk 5:39 (if genuine) does seem not only cumbersome but contradictory of vv. 37-38. In fact it praises the gospel, *harmony* with which is prejudiced by 'patching'. W. F. Albright and C. S. Mann, *Matthew* (AB) (Garden City, 1971), 108 deny that Jesus expected the continuance of his messianic community and Judaism side by side, but a period of overlapping was not ruled out.

22 Ct. 5:1; Is. 55:1. J. D. M. Derrett, 'Intoxication, joy and wrath', *FN2* (1989), 41-56 at 47-53. Cf Jeremias, *Parables*, 118 (Gn. 49:11-12). H.-J. Klauck, *Allegorie und Allegorese in synoptischen Gleichnistexten* (1st edn.), (Münster W., 1978), 171.

23 Jeremias, *Parables*, 117-118. The eighth German edn., *Die Gleichnisse Jesu* (Göttingen, 1970), similar pagination. C. Spicq, *L'Épître aux Hébreux*, 3rd edn. (Paris, 1952), ii, 20. Jeremias could have referred to Is. 34:4 and 51:6 as quoted in *Pirqê de R. Eliezer* 51, trans. G. Friedlander, *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer* (New York, 1981), 410-411.

24 *Parables*, 118. But *not* simply at the Parousia. The Eschaton had already begun.

25 2 Cor. 5:2-3. See n. 15 above. Not that the sheet of Acts 10:11-16 covers the earth like the heavens—it is a table cloth!

garment symbolized the New Age. This might be optimistic in view of Is. 43:18-19, 65:17; but fantasies of Renewal were indeed current in the first century²⁶ in spite of all pessimistic prognoses. Jeremias went no further, and was quizzed by Hans-Josef Klauck. The latter made a major discovery of his own which he declined to exploit.²⁷ He had two reasons for this, one philological, which can be tedious to unwind, and one methodological, which has the attractive aroma of combat.

Klauck found the closest parallel to Mk. 2:21-22 in LXX Jb. 13:28. Job here laments his own condition:

'Like that which gets old just like a (wine-) skin [cf. Jos. 9:4], or like an outer garment eaten by moths.'

The original Hebrew read, where I have put 'skin', *RQB*. This could be vocalized in either or both of two ways. The Masorettes understandably (Ho. 5:12) chose *raqav*, 'rotten thing, especially rotten wood', 'decay'.²⁸ But this hardly fits the following word, *yivleh* (from *BLH*), 'gets old'.²⁹ Lexicographers³⁰ and some translators³¹ read **roqev* (? 'skin'), a hypothetical word deduced from the Hebrew of Si. 43:20. If *RQB* can be meaningfully vocalized *roqev* it goes well with 'moth' at Ho. 5:12. One version of a Targum, the Septuagint, and the Syriac of Job see his (and his like's) similarity with an old wine-skin. Klauck refuses to explore further, and draws attention, in another footnote,³² to Is. 61:10 (which compares the messianic 'robe of righteousness' with a bridegroom's finery), but so as to emasculate it. He forgets that 'skins' are the garments of 'wines'.

Klauck, limiting the interest of Is. 61:10 to the margin in reference to Mk. 2:21-22, goes beyond a general disparagement of Jeremias'

26 A. H. Lewis, 'The New Birth and the Old Covenant', *EvQ* 56 (1984), 35-44; J. D. M. Derrett, 'Palingenesia', *JNT* 20 (1984), 51-58; id., 'New Creation: Qumran, Paul, the Church and Jesus', *RQ* 13 (1988), 597-608. Add Julian, *Apol.* I.61. G. K. Beale, 'The Old Testament background of reconciliation in 2 Cor. 5-7...', *NTS* 35/4 (1989), 550-581 at 552-559. U. Mell, *Neue Schöpfung* (Berlin, 1989); S. Vollenweider, *Freiheit als neue Schöpfung* (Göttingen, 1989).

27 Klauck, *Allegorie*, 171, n.121.

28 W. Gesenius, *Hebräisches und Aramäisches Handwörterbuch*, s.v. *raqav*. L. Kohler and W. Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* (Leiden, 1958), 908, 'to be worm-eaten'.

29 Dt. 8:4; 29:4-5; Jos. 9:13; Ne. 9:21 (Si. 14:17); Jb. 13:28; La. 3:4. Of garments: Midrash Rabbah, Dt. VII (end). 'To waste away': Gn. 18:12; Ps. 32:13; Mishnah, 'Avôt 5.22.

30 Gesenius and Kohler-Baumgartner make it clear that *roqev* is a conjectural emendation at Jb. 13:28.

31 NAV, REB (14:2) favour the conjecture. Not so NIV, JB, NRSV, Bib. Conc., Bib. Sagr. and the Jewish Publication Society's *Tanakh* (1985), which avoids relying on the LXX where the Hebrew is plausible.

32 Klauck, *Allegorie*, 171 n.119. A recent scholar designates as 'mind candy' the OT texts found to parallel NT sayings—'candy' as contrasted with the true results of sociological research.

methods, and castigates those who presume to apply a 'midrashic approach' (the English term is quoted). All that is needed for such activities, he says, is a modicum of biblical knowledge and an abundance of imagination. Klauck demands rigorous caution, implying the need to find a sufficiency of verbal clues and correspondences. We can claim that here we have met those requirements, fastening upon the strange vocabulary of our material and its reminiscence of biblical authorities. Let us go back to Jeremias' discovery. The LXX of Ps. 101:27 (MT Ps. 102:27) proclaims:

They (the heavens) shall perish, but thou remainest: and all of them shall grow old (*palaiiothesontai*, rendering *yivlú*) as a garment (*himation*) and like a vesture (*peribolaion*, rendering *l^cbûš*) shalt thou fold (or rather, 'change')³³ them, and they shall be changed (cf. Is. 50:3).

Two comments are called for: (1) 'garment' normally suggests condition, character, or disposition (of which usage the 'girding of loins' *passim* and Eph. 6:13-17; 1 Thes. 5:8 are examples);³⁴ and (2) to *change garments* suggests entering upon a new sphere, status, role, or activity.³⁵ We have already seen that Isaiah foretold that the opponents of the Servant will grow old like a garment and shall be consumed by moths.³⁶ The changing of garments suggests the joy of renewal.³⁷ The 'growing old' of moth-eaten garments is a cliché (Ho. 5:12). The individual has the right to a change.

There is more. A new garment (*himation kainon*), to the student of 1 Ki. 11:11-13, 29-39, suggests an investiture with a new kingdom. David's kingdom (Mk. 11:10) was once virtually dispersed by the rending of a new upper garment, the pieces (*regmata*)-of which symbolize power. Jesus is indeed to be 'torn away' from the Old Israel, so that fasting will

33 One notes the variants: *allaxeis* is read by Cod. Sin., *helixeis* (an error of the scriptorium?) by the Cod. Vat., Cod. Alex., and Heb. 1:12. The MT (Ps. 102:27) is *cal'vûš ta^hlîšem w'yah^alofû*, 'like clothing thou changest them (HLF), and they are changed' (not folded up and stored [*lasan!*]). Without the copula before *cal'vûš* (see note by H. Bardtke (1969) at *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (1977)) the meaning is that the worn-out garment is changed.

34 Pss. 73:6; 109:18 19,29; Is. 51:9; 59:17; 61:10 (noted by E. Haupt, 1871); Zc. 3:4; Wis. 5:17-20; Mt. 6:28-29; 22:11-12; 1 Cor. 15:53 (corruptible/incorruptible); Col. 3:12; Rev. 16:15. Note Lk. 15:22 (Jeremias, *Parables*, 118, n.13, 130 thinks of the New Age). J. J. Von Allmen (ed.), *Vocabulary of the Bible* (London, 1958), 133, 135, esp. §1. J. D. M. Derrett, *Some Telltale Words in the New Testament* (Shipston-on-Stour, 1977), #50.

35 Gn. 35:2; 38:14; 1 Ki. 11:29; 2 Ki. 5:22-23; 25:29; Is. 61:10; Je. 52:33; Ezk. 26:16; 42:14; 44:19; Zc. 3:3-5; Mt. 22:11-12; Mk. 14:52; Jn. 19:40; 20:7; Eph. 4:22, 24.

36 Is. 50:9; 51:6, 8 (*himation* in all three verses). It is possible for experts to miss such examples: C. Westermann, *The Parables of Jesus in the Light of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh, 1990), 97.

37 See Is. 51:9; 52:1; Rev. 19:8. Note 35 above.

occur (cf. Est. 4:3); yet neither will his kingdom be rent (cf. Jn. 19:23) nor will the New Age be impaired by this even. The double parable is not, on that basis, as Gnilka thought, hampered by its propinquity to the question whether one should fast.³⁸

Conclusion

What seems at first sight to be a mere truism is both of general and of particular interest. It illustrates the church's ability to edit Jesus' sayings to increase their appeal and enlarge their scope. The sceptic may deny it,³⁹ but a New Age is foreseen under a figure adumbrated by David and the Prophets. Even the heavens, not to speak of the inhabitants of earth, will enjoy renewal, less to ward off catastrophe than to replace moth-eaten by brand new material. Is. 65:17-18; 66:22 (cf. Rev. 21:1, 5) anticipated this double parable or similitude.

What is true of heaven and earth is *a fortiori* true of the individual believer. Col. 3:9-10 reads

'Do not deceive one another, seeing that you have stripped off the old man (i.e. human being) with his practices, and have clothed yourselves with the new, which is being renewed in point of knowledge according to the image of its Creator [Gn. 1:26-27]. In him there is neither Greek nor Jew. . .'

The 'new garment' is already seen as Christ himself: Ga. 3:27-28, 'All you who have been baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek. . .'; Rom. 13:12, 14, '... Let us therefore cast off (disrobe ourselves of) the works of darkness, and clothe ourselves with the armour of light. . . clothe yourselves in the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh in furtherance of appetites.' Retrospectively Eph. 4:22-24 relates,

'[You were taught to] disrobe yourselves (as your former way of life required) of the old man, decaying as he is through deceitful appetites, and to be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and to clothe yourselves with the new man, created according to the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.'

The interesting and unexpected word *pleroma* ('filling') intruded at Mk. 2:21 / Mt. 9:16 suggests a completion, a 'making good', by way of the 'fullness' of a new creation (LXX Pss. 23:1; 49:12; 88:12; 103:24). It (or he: Eph. 1:23(?); Col. 1:19, 2:9) is obviously incompatible with a decayed and superannuated creation.

38 J. Gnilka, *Matthäus* (Freiburg, 1986), I, 337 (*merkwürdig gebremst*). Denied by Jeremias, *Parables*, 117-118 and Gundry, *Matthew*, 178.

39 Banks, *Jesus and the Law*, 98, n.1.

If the addressees of the original of Mk. 2:21-22 are not disciples of John the Baptist, as suspected,⁴⁰ they are those who (in spite of Mt. 3:10) think adaptation the best means of conservation—within the same civilization, the same covenant, they can improve their ethics. Such a reaction to Jesus is rational: one who wishes to conserve must be prepared to repair. His message was revolutionary—even the definition of 'just' was at large (Mk. 1:17)—and those who say 'Lord, Lord' must do more (Rom. 12:2). The whole message has to be accepted,⁴¹ even if an entire renewal must be faced (Is. 61:10). Let us envisage as targets for these verses any would-be reformers of Judaism who (like the Qumran folk) began where Moses left off (Rom. 7:6), on a note of pessimism (Dt. 31:16-21; 32:28-35), characteristic, we may note in passing, of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, nearly contemporary with the synoptic gospels.

Being of a general character our parables cannot be limited to, e.g., an attack on works righteousness.⁴² The editor, the evangelist, reproduces them so as to conform to overriding concerns of the gospel, viz. Jesus' foreknowledge of his Passion; which automatically 'rends' the Old Israel which condemned him as if he were a fissiparous member instead of a substitute for it. The evangelists were aware of the sequel to the Passion, which neither they nor their successors would underrate and which justified the praise of the New Wine (Mk. 2:22e),⁴³ which would otherwise fall flat in any market. Just as spirit is clothed with flesh, human kind is clothed (environed) by the Creator who is, somewhat clumsily, making a fresh start.

Abstract

Under a deceptively simple truism lie metaphors of the Word (cf. Mk. 13:31) and the Kingdom (cf. Ahijah's mime at 1 Ki. 11). In Hebrew idiom 'garment' means disposition and to change it means to change roles. The human being decays like dry skins and moth-eaten garments, to which the old creation and its creatures are compared. The Messiah provides the long awaited substitute, to which partial believers will conform. Neither is Christ to be 'rent', nor shall he 'patch' the

40 A. T. Cadoux, *Parables of Jesus* (London, 1931), 165-166; C. H. Dodd, *Parables of the Kingdom* (London, 1961), 88, refers to Mt. 11:13. Albright and Mann, *Matthew*, 108. The Baptist's star must wane: Jn. 3:30.

41 Marshall, *Luke*, 227.

42 Beare, *Matthew*, 231 points to Ga. 2:21, 5:1-2. Most commentators look for the *dynamism* which the Eschaton demands (Is. 65:17; Mk. 1:27). R. Pesch, *Markus* (Freiburg, 1976) I, 176-178; Gnllka, *Matthäus*, I, 337; Gaechter, *Matthäus*, 299. I favour the fourth of Cranfield's five 'explanations'.

43 Detected at J. Roloff, *Das Kerygma und der irdische Jesus*, 2nd edn. (Göttingen, 1973), 229-237. Cf. Bultmann, *History*, cited n. 6 above.

old civilization. Concealed Christology and realized eschatology turn Mk. 2:21-22 into a proclamation, and Lk. 5:31-39 is a faithful midrash on it. The double parable has been artfully and impressively fitted onto the Fasting saying: the messianic banquet is alluded to in all. To appeal to Is. 34:4; 40:22; 53:8; 61:10; Job. 9:8; Pss. 101:26; 102: 26-28; Mk. 14:25; Eph. 6:13-17; Jas. 5:2 and perhaps Jb. 13:28 is to tender no 'mind candy', and Rom. 13:12, 14 rightly prefigures our parables.

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