THE PROPHECY CONCERNING JUDAS.

Ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί, ἔδει πληρωθῆναι τὴν γραφὴν ἣν προεῖπε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον διὰ στόματος Δαυεὶδ περὶ Ἰούδα τοῦ γενομένου ὁδηγοῦ τοῖς συλλαβοῦσιν Ἰησούν, ὅτι κατηριθμημένος ἦν ἐν ἡμῖν, καὶ ἔλαχεν τὸν κλῆρον τῆς διακονίας ταύτης. οὗτος μὲν οὖν ἐκτήσατο χωρίον, ἐκ μισθοῦ τῆς ἀδικίας, καὶ πρηνὴς γενόμενος ἐλάκησεν μέσος, καὶ ἐξεχύθη πάντα τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ· καὶ γνωστὸν ἐγένετο πᾶσι τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν Ἰερουσαλήμ, ὥστε κληθῆναι τὸ χωρίον ἐκεῖνο τῇ διαλέκτῳ αὐτῶν Ἀκελδαμάχ, τοῦτ' ἔστιν, Χωρίον Αἵματος· γέγραπται γὰρ ἐν Βίβλῳ Ψαλμῶν

γενηθήτω ἡ ἔπαυλις αὐτοῦ ἔρημος
καὶ μὴ ἔστω ὁ κατοικῶν ἐν αὐτῇ.

καὶ

τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν αὐτοῦ λαβέτω ἕτερος.

δεῖ οὖν τῶν . . .

—Acts i. 16–21.

16 Brethren, it was needful that the scripture should be fulfilled, which the
Holy Ghost spake before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who was
17 guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered among us, and received
18 his portion in this ministry. (Now this man obtained a field with the reward
of his iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all
19 his bowels gushed out. And it became known to all the dwellers at Jerusalem;
insomuch that in their language that field was called Akeldama, that is, The
20 field of blood.) For it is written in the book of Psalms,

Let his habitation be made desolate,
And let no man dwell therein:

and,

His office let another take.

21 Of the men therefore . . . . . .
22 . . . must . . .

—Acts i. 16–22 (Rev. Ver.).

The rendering given of this passage by the Revisers must be a subject of grave regret to all who have any regard for the credit of English scholarship. It does not represent the Greek. It is not English. It is not sense. The first two statements are capable of demonstration, the third must of course be a matter of opinion, but will, I trust, be sufficiently justified by me, and indeed is a fair corollary from the other two.

I. Faithfulness to the original is claimed by the Revisers as their great virtue: Dr. Westcott (Expositor, Feb., 1887) refers to "their continuous effort to give in the Revision an exact representation of the original text." Let us see

how they observe this rule. Peter's speech falls naturally into two halves: omitting the formal ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί the first word of the speech is ἔδει, and the first word of the second half is δεῖ: "It was necessary . . . It is necessary . . ." The position of the words marks them as emphatic words, as guiding words and as connected words. The fact is as clear as the sun at noonday. Yet the Revisers render ἔδει "it was needful," and δεῖ by an insignificant "must," which they proceed to bury out of sight by removing it from its position as first word of the sentence and making it the forty-second. Beyond all argument this is definite misrepresentation of the Greek: it is rendered impossible for an English reader to form a just opinion of Luke's meaning.

II. Verse 17 is not a sentence, although it is punctuated as one. "For he was numbered with us" is not a sentence: "It was necessary that the scripture should be fulfilled which was spoken concerning Judas, because he was numbered with us" is a sentence, and is what Luke wrote.

Again in verse 20, "For it is written . . ." is punctuated as a sentence. This is a crowning absurdity. Remove verses 18 and 19 (for being marked as a parenthesis they may be removed without affecting the construction) and this is what the Revisers produce as a specimen of English:

"It was needful that the scripture should be fulfilled . . . concerning Judas, who was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered among us, and received his portion in this ministry. For it is written, Let his habitation be desolate."

In the range of English literature is there a passage comparable to this?

III. As regards the sense, the Revisers' view seems to be that verses 18, 19 are an explanatory addition inserted by Luke in the middle of Peter's speech. This view doubt-

less rests on the observation that the words τῇ διαλέκτῳ αὐτῶν cannot have been used by Peter, and, as the whole of these verses refers to historical facts, the facile inference has been drawn that the whole of them is a parenthesis inserted by the historian. Before explaining the real sense of the passage it is necessary to state the fatal objections to this method of taking it.

(*a*) As exhibited by the Revisers the Greek words assigned to Peter are 98. Of these 59 are in the first half of the speech, which refers to the past and to Judas. Of this number again 17 are actual quotation and 6 words necessary to introduce the quotation. Not counting ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί, the words in which Peter expresses his judgment about Judas are thus reduced to 34. Yet we are asked to believe that Luke in relating a speech of Peter's, to which he evidently attaches great importance (cf. the special emphasis of the introductory words ἀναστὰς ἐν μέσῳ τῶν ἀδελφῶν), after quoting 34 words of Peter's, introduces an explanatory parenthesis of his own, consisting of not less than 40 words. As a mere question of literary criticism it is impossible that such a violation of all proportion should occur in a writer of such undoubted literary skill as Luke. Moreover it may be noted that, combined with the remarkable brevity which Peter's speech thus assumes, there is an equally remarkable fulness of expression. He does not say merely "the scripture," but "the scripture which the Holy Spirit spake before by the mouth of David": Judas is described as "Judas who made himself guide to them that took Jesus": the reference to his position as an apostle is given with rhetorical amplitude in two shapes, "he was numbered with us," and "he obtained the lot of this ministry." This brevity and this fulness are hard to reconcile.

(*b*) The particles μὲν οὖν cannot introduce a parenthesis. They certainly do not do so elsewhere in the Acts, in which

they occur very frequently.[1] They are particles of transition common in narration. As often, when introduced at the beginning of a paragraph or narrative, μέν has nothing formally to answer to it: the sentence takes another shape and the formal antithesis is lost. A real antithesis however there always must be. A writer or speaker cannot begin with οὗτος μέν without having some antithesis in his mind, as here Peter, when he says "he on the one hand met an awful death," has before his mind the antithesis "but we have to supply the vacancy so caused." If however verses 18, 19 form a parenthesis, then within that parenthesis it is impossible to supply or imagine an antithesis to οὗτος μέν. "He on the one hand purchased a field, . . . and died, . . . and it became known"—this is the parenthesis which the Revisers make Luke introduce. As a schoolmaster I see much bad Greek composition, and I know this particular μέν, which means nothing, intimately: it is very frequent in boys' iambics *metri gratia*, but it is wholly unknown to any Greek author I am acquainted with, and indeed is impossible where language is used for the expression of living thought. See Lightfoot, on Col. ii. 23.

(*c*) As Alford points out, the style of these verses is distinctly rhetorical, and not such as would be adopted in an explanatory parenthesis. οὗτος is emphatic, and draws marked attention to the person and character of Judas: "He then—he, the traitor Apostle, of whom the Holy Spirit spake beforehand." Compare the similar use of οὗτος in

[1] Prof. Lumby says: "μὲν οὖν. These particles at the opening of the verse show that there is a break in the continuity of the narrative, and that verses 18 and 19 must be taken for a parenthesis. For examples of such use of μὲν οὖν cf. v. 41, xiii. 4, xxiii. 22, xvi. 9." In each of these cases however the particles do exactly the reverse of what Prof. Lumby states; they help to continue the narrative, and do not "break its continuity" or introduce a "parenthesis." The link which connects two things is not usually described as a "break of continuity."

speeches as first word of a sentence, Acts iv. 11 and v. 31.[1] Again the words ἐκ μισθοῦ τῆς ἀδίκιας, "with the pay of his guilt," "with the blood-money," are instinct with passionate scorn. Consider too the graphic horror of ἐλάκησεν μέσος, καὶ ἐξεχύθη πάντα τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ. Meyer rightly characterizes ἐλάκησεν as "rednerisch starker Ausdruck." The whole passage breathes the spirit not of didactic explanation but of living oratory.

(*d*) Lastly—and this is the strongest argument—if these verses be a parenthesis, it is impossible to explain Peter's speech. The words are essential to Peter's chain of reasoning; without them it is unintelligible. That this is so may be seen by observing the difficulties of editors who accept the parenthesis theory. Three editions are before me, those of Bishop Wordsworth, Mr. Humphry, and Prof. Lumby. They all accept the parenthesis theory, and in consequence have two difficulties to face: the first how to explain ὅτι in verse 17, the second to show for what purpose Peter introduces the quotation from Ps. lxix. 25, "Let his habitation be made desolate, and let no man dwell therein."

As regards the first, Prof. Lumby is silent: he finds ὅτι so simple that he has nothing to say about it. Bishop Wordsworth does not find it so easy, and gives three explanations side by side without indicating which he considers correct.

"ὅτι] *because* He was their ὁδηγὸς, or *leader; because* being one of us 'he knew the place' (John xviii. 2) where, and the time when, He might be taken; and *because* it had been prophesied that one of His familiar friends should betray Christ. Ps. xli. 9."

Of these explanations the first passes my understanding —Judas was their ὁδηγὸς "*because* He was their ὁδηγός." The second entirely alters Peter's fervid words and reduces

[1] Note in illustration the scornful power of the pronoun in Scott's famous lines:

"Where shall the traitor rest,
He, the deceiver . . . ?"

them to a trivial and unnecessary remark—Judas was their guide "*because* being one of us he knew the place." The third comes very near the truth, but the reference to Ps. xli. 9 is wrong, as the 'scripture' which Peter describes as fulfilled can only be the one he subsequently quotes. Mr. Humphry takes a course of his own, and boldly renders ὅτι "although." This is a simple and effective solution of the difficulty: it consists in removing the word found in the text and replacing it by a word of exactly opposite meaning. Luke states that something happened *because* of a certain fact: the commentator explains that it happened *in spite of* that fact.

As regards the second difficulty Mr. Humphry and Prof. Lumby are totally silent. Yet the difficulty is obvious and considerable. Peter cannot have included the words of Ps. lxix. 2 in his quotation without a special purpose, for they come from a different Psalm to the second part of his quotation, and therefore must have a special bearing. When however verses 18 and 19 are removed from Peter's speech there is absolutely nothing left for these words to refer to: nothing in the nature of an ἔπαυλις is referred to as belonging to Judas, for the word describes "a place," "spot," something which has *locality*, something which can be "inhabited," and cannot therefore refer to the *office* of Judas. Bishop Wordsworth however apparently does so take it and writes, "ἔπαυλις, *a sheep-cote.* An allusion to the *pastoral* office of Judas." If this be so, the passage becomes no longer merely unintelligible but definitely self-contradictory: if the allusion in ἔπαυλις is to be explained as an allusion to the pastoral office of Judas, then the quotation of Peter becomes this, "Let his pastoral office become desolate, and let no man dwell therein, and his office let another take." It is needless to say more.

The passage is in itself absolutely clear. A necessary

event in the past has rendered necessary certain action in the present. The necessary event in the past was the betrayal of Jesus by an Apostle, and the subsequent miserable end of that Apostle: the necessary action in the present is the appointment of his successor. To prove this twofold necessity Peter quotes a "scripture" which is itself twofold, being made up of a portion of Psalm lxix. and of Psalm cix., and which, interpreted Messianically, first invokes the curse of desolation on a spot or place which once belonged to some enemy of Messiah, and secondly directs that the overseership which he held (his death being thus implied) shall be filled up. The whole passage coheres accurately; there is neither fault nor flaw in it. Peter first relates the facts as to the past: he then introduces the prophetic scripture which is found exactly to tally with them; he finally deduces from it a course of action in the present. His words may be thus paraphrased:

"It was necessary that the scripture should be fulfilled which was spoken concerning Judas the betrayer of Jesus—concerning Judas, I say, *because* he was one of us, one of the Twelve (and the passage refers definitely to one who held an overseership). He indeed then—he the traitor to such a trust and to such a Master—with the price of his guilt purchased a field, and there met with a death so strange and awful that the fact became notorious to all in Jerusalem, and the field in consequence received the name Aceldamach, 'The Field of Blood.' Thus has the scripture been accurately fulfilled: Jesus has been betrayed by an Apostle; the field which the traitor owned has been rendered desolate and uninhabitable; he who was an overseer has left his overseership vacant. The fulfilment of the scripture thus experienced in the past enforces on us the duty of following its guidance in the present. It is necessary therefore to appoint . . ."

Tabulated, the correspondence of events with prophecy is this:

Judas the traitor was an Apostle.	The enemy of Messiah held an "overseership."
Judas ἐκτήσατο χωρίον.	The enemy of Messiah possessed an ἔπαυλις.
The χωρίον has become Ἀκελδαμάχ, τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χωρίον Αἵματος.	The ἔπαυλις was to become desolate and no man to dwell therein.
Judas has left the place of an Apostle vacant.	The scripture speaks of an "overseership" to be filled up, and which must therefore have been left vacant.
The vacancy we must fill up.	The scripture so directs.

The words τῇ διαλέκτῳ αὐτῶν present the only difficulty. Remove them and there is none, for the explanatory τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χωρίον Αἵματος is necessarily added to make the meaning clear to Gentile readers (cf. Mark vii. 11, Κορβάν, ὅ εστιν Δῶρον). It is usual to explain them as added by Luke, not unnaturally but certainly awkwardly, from his own point of view, as writing in Greek, and that of his readers, as only understanding Greek. This is however unsatisfactory, for the word Ἀκελδαμάχ is fully explained by τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χ. Α., and these additional words are absolutely superfluous. Many MSS. read τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ, and this peculiar phrase only occurs in N.T. here and chap. ii. 6, 8, where it is used with a very clear and special meaning. I am strongly inclined therefore to think that the words have crept in here by error from the succeeding paragraph. This however is only conjecture; what is certain is, that it is unreasonable to make shipwreck of the sense of the whole passage because of this slight difficulty.

Lastly it may be noted that the identification of the scene of Judas' death with the field which he purchased is not merely sufficiently indicated in Luke, but was also an early tradition: De Wette refers to a "quotation from Papias in Apollinaris, which specifically says of Judas, ἐν ἰδίῳ φασὶ χωρίῳ τελευτήσαντα."

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