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978-1-107-64621-6 - The Gospel History of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ:
In a Connected Narrative in the Words of the Revised Version

Arranged by C. C. James

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THE GOSPEL HISTORY
OF OUR
LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

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THE GOSPEL HISTORY
OF
OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR
JESUS CHRIST

IN A CONNECTED NARRATIVE
IN THE WORDS OF THE REVISED VERSION

ARRANGED BY

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PREFACE.

I HAVE often wished when preaching or teaching to have in my hands the fullest possible History of our Lord, shewing the testimony of all the Holy Witnesses combined into one narrative; which should preserve as far as might be every minute detail and trait of the evidence, without introducing a word or thought which they had not recorded. It seemed to me that such a page would be an invaluable help to any one explaining orally, or commenting upon, such of our Saviour's actions as are recorded by more than one Evangelist; and would save him the trouble and distraction of having to keep his fingers in three or four different places in his Bible, and to refer to them perpetually; entailing close mental effort at the moment, and seriously interfering with that free use of the eye which is so important to one who would secure the attention of either a class or a congregation. For this reason also the text should be in a fairly large and clear type, so that the place is easily recovered when the eye returns to it; and for the same reason it must not be disfigured by notes, marks, etc. between the lines: at the same time it should contain such references as may best aid the teacher; and he should have at hand a table of such apparent variations between the witnesses as it would be dishonest in him to ignore.

I have not been able to find such a book in English: Stroud, Pound, White, and others have published works of the kind in Greek, and the last named I have found most useful in reading with a class of boys who knew Greek, at a Public School; but since I have become a teacher of simple English

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country-people I have heard of nothing in a convenient form that would supply my want. I have therefore attempted to arrange such a book for myself; and feeling certain that others must often have felt the same need, I have decided to publish it, at a price which will bring it within the reach of as many as possible.

Of course I have taken the language of the Revised Version. While I do not deny that there are therein many passages that I could wish differently expressed, and a few which even grate upon the ear, the distinct gain in accuracy and truth in the vast majority of the alterations is so overwhelming, to say nothing of the use of most probably the purest Greek text that has yet been printed, that I somewhat marvel to hear of scholars still speaking and writing against its adoption. Surely also it is unfortunate that learned bodies continue to publish, and educated men to read publicly, both such manifest interpolations as that of “the three Witnesses in Heaven,” and also passages in which there occur various words, such as “hell,” “damnation,” “beasts,” “bowels,” etc. (where nothing of the sort, as the words are now generally understood by simple people, was meant by the authors) without at least suggesting an alternative rendering.

The way in which I have endeavoured to carry out my plan is this. First, I arranged the parallel passages, side by side, as denoted by the best authorities. Then taking the fullest account of each event as the groundwork, I have endeavoured to weave into that the additional facts, traits, or illustrations which are found in the other narratives; assuming first of all that S. Luke did what he tells us he intended to do, viz. to write his history ‘in order’—*καθεξῆς γράψαι*. In the narrative itself I have treated the plural as including the singular, the stronger expression as including the weaker, and the more definite as including the less distinct. Whatever I have not been able thus to weave in, I have placed in the “table of Variations” at the end of the volume.

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The Italics of the Revised Version are printed in the *History* in Roman type. Where Italics do occur they denote words which it has been necessary to insert for the connection of sentences, etc. These are very few.

The order of the references at the bottom of each page is that of the greater or less fulness of the narrative of each event, and not that of any supposed order of their composition. The parallel passages themselves I propose to print in full, side by side, in a second part¹, in a form which I hope will be found very convenient for comparison. Tables, etc. are added, and such a selection of marginal references as may make the book more generally useful.

I do not in the least pretend to have solved any of those dozen or so problems as to the order of events, which will probably for ever remain matters of opinion; nor do I think that we have, or were intended to have, the materials for forming a complete itinerary of our Saviour's movements: my object has been to obtain the most complete picture possible of each event; which appears to me far more important than the chronological order. We have, if I may so speak, what an artist might call a study by S. Mark; two profiles, the one looking towards the Jewish, the other towards the Gentile world, by S. Matthew and S. Luke respectively; and a full-face portrait by S. John. From all of them, from whatever point they are viewed, the same divine Eye, so full of awful majesty, yet so tender in its infinite love, looks straight into the soul of the beholder. It is my earnest hope that in this attempt to combine the four portraits into one no single feature will be found to have suffered.

My best thanks are due to the Universities of Oxford and

¹ This is not yet ready. Till it is, I cannot do better than recommend the use of Mr S. D. Waddy's *Harmony of the Four Gospels in the Revised Version*. His sections do not exactly correspond with mine, but very nearly so: a table on the last page of this volume will facilitate ready reference. His preface and introduction are well worth careful reading.

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PREFACE.

Cambridge for their kind permission to print from the Revised Version ; to Professors Westcott and Hort for permission to make use of their table of quotations from the Old Testament ; to the Rev. T. Kenworthy Brown and the Rev. E. Ll. Savory for most careful help in correcting proofs, and for several valuable suggestions ; and to Mr S. D. Waddy, M.P., for permission to make use of and to refer to his *Harmony of the Four Gospels in the Revised Version*.

I have made every effort that occurred to me as practicable to ensure accuracy. As however it is certain that there will be some errors in every human work, and probable that there will be many in this, I shall be grateful to any person who will kindly point any of them out to me by letter or post-card.

C. C. JAMES.

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NOTE ON THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

Whether the discourse in S. Luke vi. 20—49 is another report of the same as that in S. Matthew v. vi. vii. or not is one of those questions which must continue to be matters of opinion. I have printed them independently, as it is perfectly impossible to blend them into one, from their being reported from different points of view. S. Luke cannot have been acquainted with S. Matthew's report before his own was written, as the latter is so perfect a composition that had he known it he could not have varied so greatly from it; on the other hand, S. Matthew perhaps did know S. Luke's report, and explain some phrases in it.

Many of the passages which at first sight appear peculiar to S. Matthew are found in other parts of S. Luke, mostly in chapters xi. and xii. In the "Harmony" these will be printed in brackets. References to them are given in the margin of section 43*, but none are given from 43* to 43, or vice versa, as the two stand close together in the volume.

An able writer has recently called the Sermon on the Mount "a collection of loosely connected and aphoristic utterances." I do not know of any more perfect composition in the world, or any hortatory moral treatise in which the train of thought is more connected and logically evolved. It begins by declaring who are good citizens of the new kingdom (v. 3—12); sets forth the duties of such citizens, both in the way of example and precept; (13—17) enlarges on the principles on which the laws of that kingdom, the ancient commandments of God, are to be interpreted and kept; (17—48) treats of the great religious duties of the citizens, Almsgiving, Prayer and Fasting (vi. 1—18), and warns us against the chief hinderances to our spiritual life: worldliness (19—34); self-righteousness (vii. 1—5); irreverence (6); want of confidence (7—12), or earnestness (13—14); and hypocrisy, whether in teachers (15—23), or hearers (24—27). The more it is studied as a whole the more does its wonderful beauty shine forth, and the attainment of its glorious standard of perfection commend itself as the worthiest object of human ambition. He might as well have called the human skeleton a string of disconnected ossifications.

J. H.

b

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NOTE ON THE MARGINAL REFERENCES.

I have endeavoured in these to suggest every passage to which I should wish to be able to refer a class that I was teaching. I have therefore given not only the places quoted from the Old Testament, but many others also that occurred to me or were suggested by others as illustrating the text, whether by throwing light upon obscure or unusual phrases or words, or the general thought; and in many cases also passages in the Acts and Epistles, as shewing the evolution as it were of our Lord's teaching in the minds of those who first heard Him, and the application of His principles to their own circumstances and times. I know of few things more interesting than thus to trace the history of a thought, dug up from the rich mine of the Old Testament, stamped as current coin by our Saviour, and applied by His Apostles to the various uses of Christian life. The two millennia which have nearly passed since the words were spoken have added infinite variety to such application, but have in no way altered the principles themselves.

Where H. or Gr. is printed, attention is called to the Hebrew or the Greek. When more than one or two verses should be read for the reference, two or three dots are in most cases added; but the exigences of the margin have prevented this being always done, as for the sake of clearness each reference is contained for the most part in one line. For the same reason the names of the books have been abbreviated as much as possible, but not, I hope, so as to be in any case unintelligible. Other abbreviations will explain themselves: such as cp, compare; ph, perhaps; pr, probably, etc.

Cross references to other sections are added where the illustration applies to the general thought of a passage, and not merely to a particular word or phrase. These are not repeated on the same page.

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