

Het Evangelie van Lucas
Dr. J. De Zwaan
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This little volume is the fourth installment of the series of brief commentaries issued under the editorship of Dr. Van Veldhuizen. The three preceding issued (Mark, Matthew, Romans) were noticed by us on former occasions. The present exposition is constructed on the same general plan. After a short isagogical orientation, an original rendering of the text is given, and as a third part follows the exposition. Dr. De Zwaan modestly restricts the scope of his work to the effort of "putting the reader of our time there where the first readers stood." We doubt whether this is a sound hermeneutical principle; at any rate it ought to have been formulated objectively: to convey to the modern reader what Luke desired to convey to his first readers, and doubtless this is what is meant by the author himself. Of the task of making us understand what the first readers will not have been able to apprehend he absolves himself and also disavows every effort to control the writer as to his fidelity to the facts. The compendious nature of the work obviously made these restrictions inevitable. In reality, of course, it is not easy to carry out such a self-denying program. It is not impossible to guess from certain comments what are the author's theological affiliations and propensities. It is only fair to say that this is not due to any conscious effort on his part to inject them. As an exegete Dr. De Zwaan reveals a certain originality. As an illustration we may mention the import attributed to Satan's words in the second temptation (Luke's sequence). These are interpreted as an offer on Satan's part to become Jesus' Wazir in the administration of the world. This, on the ground that at this point of the temptation Satan cannot, in Luke's opinion, have had any further doubt as to Jesus' refusal to become Satan's Wazir. We do not see that his ingenious inversion of what the words naturally suggest, to any extent solves the psychological problem of this stage of the temptation. Could Luke have ascribed to Satan any doubt as to the refusal of Jesus to accept him as his Wazir? A no less interesting and more entertainable suggestion is that in the parable of the Samaritan the priest and the Levite turn aside from fear of defilement through contact with what might possibly turn out to be a dead body. As worthy of note we further quote the observation that the lost penny of the woman cannot have formed part of an amulet, or bridal necklace because the text speaks of drachmae, which were stamped with a heathen image rendering them to a Jewish woman unfit for such an intimate purpose.

In connection with the difficult problem of Luke's account of the Supper, the author for a moment indulges in a critical digression. He favors the view that vs. 19, 20 were lacking in Luke's original writing. Luke mentions the first passover-cup, passes over the second cup, then introduces the breaking of the bread with the solemn words "this is my body." This seems to imply that the cup mentioned in vs. 17 was the ordinary passover-cup, not the cup of the new sacrament, to which later in the account, after the excision of 19b, 20, no reference is made. The author suggests that Luke on purpose avoided giving a clear, articulated description of the institution of the Supper, because he did not want to convey to non-Christian readers the impression that Christianity was a new religious cult with its own cult-actions the latter being the criterion of a new religion and a new religion being forbidden.

Enough has been said to show that the exposition is suggestive. If at certain points it proceeds to a point of compactness which puts it in need of some exegesis of its own, this is hardly the fault of the

author, but due to the limitations of the scheme under which he was working.