

Sitz im Leben

(Place in Life)

The Kingdom of God

²⁸ “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.” (Matt 12: 28).

²⁰ But if I am casting out demons by the power of God, then the Kingdom of God has arrived among you. (Luke 11: 20)

²⁷ But no one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his property without first tying up the strong man; then indeed the house can be plundered. (Mark 3: 27)

These three verses “argue from the eschatological consciousness, i.e. it makes the demand from the works of Jesus we have to draw the conclusion that the Kingdom of God has drawn nigh” (History, p.14).¹

“When we encounter the words of Jesus in history, we do not judge *them* by a philosophical system with reference to their rational validity; *they* meet *us* with the question of how we are to interpret our own existence. That we be ourselves deeply disturbed by the problem of our own life is therefore the indispensable condition of our inquiry” (Word, p.11).²

“The message of Jesus is an *eschatological gospel* – the proclamation that now the fulfillment of the promise is at hand, that now the Kingdom of God begins:

²³ Then when they were alone, he turned to the disciples and said, “Blessed are the eyes that see what you have seen. ²⁴ I tell you, many prophets and kings longed to see what you see, but they didn’t see it. And they longed to hear what you hear, but they didn’t hear it.” (Luke 10: 23-24).

²⁰ “Happy are you poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God, Happy are you who hunger now, for you shall be filled, Happy are you who weep now, for you shall laugh” (Luke 6: 20-21).

Task: To provide some pithy and sententious apophthegms (apothegms) to review and maybe incorporate in an advanced graduate level of study and to appreciate the Words of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospel – at least according to Professor Bultmann.

To also provide terse and energetic poetry from Bultmann so as to have an understanding of the two terms “**Eschatology**” and “**The Kingdom of God.**”

¹ Bultmann, Rudolf (1963). *The history of the synoptic tradition* (J. Marsh, Tran.). Oxford, Great Britain: Western Printing.

² Bultmann, Rudolf (1934). *Jesus and the word*. (L. Smith & E. Lantero, Trans.) New York, NY: Charles Scribner’s Sons.

Eschatology

As my hero will not give me an operational definition of eschatology, I do know and he knows too, that Jesus is the eschatological hero of the NT. No one will argue this except those folks grilled and seeped in the apocryphal fortunes of the first three Gospels and their man would be Paul. Fine, but for today let me say when E is used it means today what it meant when Jesus proclaimed the time has come as it came then for those folks who wore sandals and what it means for those of us wearing combat boots today. E was good then, E is good now. E transcends the years. "It is as if what Jesus said to Samantha is exactly what Gary hears today – the same words, the same message, the same reward..."

Will be looking forward to some more of E – one can not have enuff of Eschatology...and you know Ogden would agree or maybe your hero Willi.

The Kingdom of God

¹⁵ "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near."

(Mark 1:15) RSV (1946).

or

"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near;^[K] repent, believe in the good news." (NRSV).

or

"Time's up! God's kingdom is here. Change your life and believe the Message." (The Message – MSG).

Note:

Looking at Bultmann's history book reminds me of looking at his The Gospel of John book for about seven years. I would pick it up, scan, shake my head, and reshelf. Was too much Greek, too many numbers, too much I didn't understand. One day the light came on. This means I am still looking for some incandescent illumination so it is parked.

However, Bultmann's Word is good – in spite of not being clear on the definition of E. It was his chapter II on the KofGod that really shinned on me and hence the reason for us having this discussion. Here are some of his pithy comments:

"No man who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the Kingdom of God." (Luke 9:62) (p. 31)

"Follow me and let the dead bury their dead." (Matt. 8:22). (p. 31).

"Jesus knows only one attitude toward God – *obedience*" (p. 48).

"The obedience for which Jesus asks is easy, because it frees a man from dependence on a formal authority, and therefore frees him also from the judgment of the men whose profession it is to explain this authority. Such obedience is easy, because it depends on the judgment and responsibility of the one concerned...and *this* burden is just what Jesus puts upon men; he teaches men to see themselves as called to decision – *decision* between good and evil, decision for God's will or for their own will" (pp. 83-84).

Thus sprach Zarathustra

6 **As we work together** [with him, ^[a]] we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. ²For he says,

“At an acceptable time I have listened to you,
and on a day of salvation I have helped you.”

See, **now** is the acceptable time; see, **now** is the day of salvation! (II Cor. 6.1-2; NRSV).

Now, I say again “NOW” - I can point you to the or at least ‘a’ definition of the E word...hoping you will see the appreciation for being into Paul’s playing field...have you noticed (yes, you have, NO 4G). Half the reason for this lesson is to show how close Paul is to some of the same eschatological and existential issues I have been talking about for at least six years in the Gospel of John...Bultmann has mentioned this but I have not gone back and checked him out.

Now I can. Better, now we can. More gooder: you can!

May I suggest not buying either books but going to your library for one we both have looked at before?³ This suggestion will, I promise, get us on the same page. Course, you will have to tell me whether you believe me or not, noting for the good of the cause we ARE working side by side on a ‘lesson’ and doing what I consider *the work of the Lord*.

The connection and actually the completion of this lesson is on pages 301 and 302. See the last paragraph on 301 and read to half way down on 302. This one paragraph says better – certainly as good as Bultmann says in his Word book. I think this book is better. Besides that you already (again) have the book. Bultmann pulls together the E for me, the NT for you, and Paul for Jesus.

Here is the (again) “sententious” paragraph to ‘put a wrap on it!’ This is what *Sitz im Leben* is all about:

The salvation-occurrence is eschatological occurrence just in this fact, that it does not become a fact of the past but constantly takes place anew in the present (p. 302).

...the “Now” in which the preached word sounds forth is the “Now” of the eschatological occurrence itself (II Cor. 6:2).

³ Bultmann, Rudolf (1951). *Theology of the New Testament* (K. Grobel, Trans.). New York, NY: Charles Scribner’s Sons.