

I am happy to offer to my readers the third volume of my commentary on the Gospel of Luke, in French and German. It is to be followed by a fourth and last volume, which will study the end of Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem as well as the accounts of his passion and resurrection. The first volume appeared in German and French in 1991; the second, in 1996.

I have since settled in the United States, where I value the contacts I have with my new colleagues and students at Harvard Divinity School. The discussions I have had there in the New Testament Department have stimulated my imagination and put to the test, not to say disturbed, certain of my convictions. The meetings of the Society of Biblical Literature have acquainted me with new studies and avenues of research.

The full effect of these numerous interactions will not be felt until the fourth and final volume appears. I can nevertheless already point out what I had previously only suspected, namely, that in spite of his best intentions, his sincerity, and his newly found faith, Luke was not able to eradicate from his writings all traces of certain aspects of his personality nor throw off certain generally accepted ideas. Without wanting to do so, and probably without being able to notice the impression he was creating, the Gospel writer appears in his written work as a divided person, one who was attached both to the gospel message and to currently held opinions, respectful of both the Christian ethic and the contemporary ethos, of both love and power, of God and the world. He would have liked, for instance, to make a place for women in the Christian community. But when it came to the very moment of dealing with the question of church ministries, he left women in the background and assigned them no place of leadership authority in the book of Acts.

The structure of this volume of the commentary is the same as in previous volumes, although my interest in the history of interpretation has grown over the years. My readers will readily note that, as they read my discussion of the interpretation of the parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32).

As I write these lines, I think of my former research assistants at the University of Geneva and wish to express to them my deep gratefulness. Their preliminary studies have been extremely useful to me and I am indebted to them for certain developments in this volume. I would particularly like to mention and thank Emi Bächtmann, Frédéric Amsler, Isabelle Juillard and Eva Tobler.

I should add to these names those of my collaborators at Harvard University. I thank David Warren, Laura Beth Bugg, Laura Nasrallah, Ann Graham Brock, Catherine Playoust, Mitzi Jane Smith, Dong-Hee Bae, Anna Miller, and Caroline Kelly, who have participated in my work alongside their own research. I also thank the staff of Andover Library at Harvard Divinity School, especially Gloria Korsman and Laura K. Whitney.

Even if the German edition of this volume is coming out before the one in French, I did write this volume in French, and the German edition is the result of a translation that I have gone over carefully. Albert Frey translated chapter 15 into German, and Andreas Kessler chapters 16 to 19. I am extremely grateful to them.

The French version of this commentary appears in the series entitled *Commentaire du Nouveau Testament*, of which Jean Zumstein is the general editor.

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I thank him for his generosity and the unfailing interest he has shown in this work. Thanks are also due to the publishers, Éditions Labor et Fides, whose managing editor, Gabriel de Montmollin, has overseen the progress on this work year after year with unfailing kindly attention.

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