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disastrous effects of lack of cohesion and to take steps against it. The law and traditions have been developed at the various sanctuaries up and down the land.<sup>1</sup> Samuel contrives to persuade the nation to return to unity of sanctuary in practice as well as in principle and to accept a unified version of the law and traditions. The law is drawn up on the basis of the final form given by Moses, and Samuel frames it in parenetical style—which we now find in Deuteronomy. The earlier traditions are combined into a more or less single account; only major variations or traditions which, because of the importance of the shrine to which they were attached were themselves important, were allowed to stand, giving occasional parallel accounts of some incidents. This is the Pentateuch.

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## QUESTION AND ANSWER

*In the parable of the 'great supper' the master of the house bids his servant to 'go out into the highway and hedges and compel them to come in that my house may be filled' (Luke xiv, 23). Under the symbol of the great supper our Lord is speaking of His Messianic Kingdom, of the Church. How can it be said that men are 'compelled' to enter the Church? Membership of the Church is impossible without the virtue of faith, and the act of faith is an act of the free will made by the assistance of God's grace.*

It is worth remarking, in the first place, that not every detail of a parable necessarily has its counterpart in the reality figured by the story. But there is no need in the present case to exclude the 'compulsion' from the application of the parable. The Greek word used does mean 'to compel, constrain, force' but 'compulsion' can be of various kinds and does not necessarily denote the application of physical force which makes a free act impossible. It may be of interest to examine the instances where the word ἀναγκάζειν occurs in the New Testament.

<sup>1</sup> I have refrained from introducing the question of the priests which would complicate the matter unduly. But unless one holds that the history of the development of the priesthood has been hopelessly confused by a later priestly hand—a position scarcely tenable by a Catholic—it is clear that members of the priestly class, custodians of the law and the traditions of the community, were established up and down the land, not merely at the main sanctuary; not even, in the troubled days of the Judges, in touch with it. Even if one does not admit the suggested explanation of minor sanctuaries, this factor itself will be an inevitable source of variation in law and tradition.

In only one is there question of physical force and even there its use did not literally compel men to act against their free will. St Paul after his conversion recalled that previously in his mistaken zeal he had had recourse to punishment to induce Christians to abandon their religion (Acts xxvi, 11). The imperfect used here is ambiguous as it may be either frequentative or conative. The Douay Version followed by the Authorized Version has the former sense: 'Often-times punishing them, in every synagogue, I compelled them to blaspheme'. This translation implies that Paul's efforts met with success but not that his victims were deprived of the use of their free wills—the history of the martyrs suffices to prove the contrary. The Revised Version adopts the conative sense: 'I strove to make them blaspheme'. The Westminster Version has ingeniously preserved the ambiguity of the original: 'I punished them to make them blaspheme'.

In the next five instances the three versions just quoted all use either 'compel' or 'constrain', and in the first four the RV following the AV agrees with the DV. Acts xxviii, 19: 'I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar' (WV 'compelled'); I Cor. xii, 11: 'I am become foolish; you have compelled me' (also WV); Gal. ii, 3: 'But neither Titus . . . was compelled to be circumcised' (WV 'constrained'); Gal. ii, 14: 'How dost thou compel the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?' (WV 'constrain'); Gal. vi, 12: 'they constrain you to be circumcised' (so DV, AV, WV; RV 'compel'). In all these cases the 'compulsion' was moral and in no way attacked the free will of those concerned.

The remaining instance occurs in the parallel passages Matt. xiv, 22 and Mark vi, 45: 'Forthwith Jesus obliged his disciples to go up into the boat' (so DV in both; AV and RV in both 'constrained'; WV in both 'compelled').

In all these instances, whatever the form of compulsion adopted, the persons 'compelled' remained free agents. There is, therefore, every justification for understanding Luke xiv, 23, in the same sense. Moreover, as the master of the house sent out only one servant to bring in a considerable number of guests, as is implied by the context, there could be no question of other than moral persuasion. Finally may be added that Plato uses the word for 'convincing' by reasoning, *Gorgias* 472b. The word has thus also the sense of 'persuade' which exactly suits our passage: 'persuade them to come in'. An alternative would be 'induce them to come in'.

EDMUND F. SUTCLIFFE, S.J.

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