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## GALATIANS II. 3-5.

THE difficulty of this verse is both textual and exegetical. The ordinary text is as follows : " But not even Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised ; but because of the false brethren privily brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage, to whom we yielded in subjection no not for an hour, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you."

The textual difficulty is contained in verse 5, and the facts are as follows—there are four variations :—

- (A) *We yielded for an hour*, omitting both *to whom* and *no not*. This is found only in D, but its existence in early Greek MSS. is proved by the evidence of Irenaeus and Victorinus ; it was the reading almost unquestionably in the archetype of G, and is found in the Old Latin, in Tertullian, Ambrosiaster, Primasius, and perhaps other Latin writers. The evidence of Tertullian ought perhaps to be reckoned as a witness for the Greek text.
- (B) *We yielded no not for an hour*, omitting *to whom*. This is the reading of Marcion, and according to Victorinus was found in some Greek MSS. It is also found in the Peshitto Syriac.
- (C) *To whom we yielded for an hour*, omitting *no not*. The existence of this text is borne witness to by Jerome in his commentary on Galatians ; but it does not seem to be supported by any other evidence, or to have been found in Greek MSS.
- (D) *To whom we yielded no not for an hour*. This is found in all Greek MSS. except D, but not in the Syriac or in the Old Latin.

The majority of critics accept the fourth reading without hesitation, but they are hardly justified in their assurance, for reading A is shown to have been dominant in the earliest times in Rome, Africa and Gaul ; while it may be questioned whether the evidence of Irenaeus ought not to be regarded as also covering Ephesus. Except from Alexandria, there seems to be no early evidence (apart from the great uncials) for reading D, and if we except this district the struggle seems to be between readings A and B. Reading C was known to Jerome, but seems to have been merely an attempt to improve the grammar of the sentence, though when this emendation was made it is impossible to say, nor is it obvious where Jerome found it. Everything therefore turns on the date which we ascribe to the text represented by the great uncials, and in the present state of the textual controversy it is impossible to decide definitely between the two following arguments :—

(1) *Reading D may be the original text, while readings A and B represent early attempts to improve the grammar and elucidate the meaning.*

To some extent this is the view of Dr. Hort, Dr. Lightfoot and Prof. Baljon, but the last-named does not discuss the matter at any length, and settles the point on purely subjective grounds ; while the weak point in the arguments of the two Cambridge scholars is that they do not pay sufficient attention to the readings which omit part but not all of the usual text, and deal with the matter as though it were a choice between leaving out or inserting both to *whom* and *no not*. Thus, Dr. Hort claims Marcion, Ambrosiaster and others for reading D, whereas they really support reading B. In the same way Dr. Lightfoot, though recognizing the existence of both variations, seems greatly to underestimate their importance when he says that the two are for the most omitted or retained together.

Dr. Hort's explanation of the origin of reading A is as follows :—

The omission may have been caused partly by the preceding broken construction, partly by δὲ in v. 4, which might seem to require a sense in some degree adverse to that of v. 3 (Titus was not compelled to be circumcised, but I did think it right to show a temporary personal deference): it thus apparently presupposes the probably erroneous interpretation of οὐδὲ . . . ἡμαρκάσθη as a statement that Titus was not circumcised at all.

This explanation seems to me to be the best which has yet been offered on this view of the case. Its weak point is that reading C, which is clearly an emendation of reading A, points to the fact that early readers were inclined to regard the text containing the words *with whom* as more intelligible than that which omitted them. It is, of course, possible that readers at a different time and in another place felt differently; but I think that a certain presupposition is thus created against Dr. Hort's view. Moreover, his theory is not supported by the history of exegesis. The early writers, except Marcion, held that Titus was not circumcised; but they did not at first connect the false brethren and the yielding or not yielding of St. Paul with this subject; and when they began to adopt this explanation, as did Jerome, the point in which they manifested a desire to emend the sentence was not the οἷς οὐδὲ but the preceding δὲ which they wished to remove or explain (cf. Theodore and Severian in Cramer's *Catena* on this passage), so as to bring the false brethren into direct connexion with the question of Titus. These facts seem somewhat to cut the ground from under Dr. Hort's feet.

Dr. Lightfoot's treatment of the matter (*Epistle to the Galatians*, pp. 121-123) is much less convincing. He endeavours to minimise the evidence by saying that the statement of Victorinus is not worthy of credit; that no

weight attaches to the assertion of Tertullian ; and that the omission by Irenaeus may be ascribed not to the author himself, but to his translator. I do not think that this argument is a very happy example of Dr Lightfoot's methods. The reading in Irenaeus, as Dr. Hort admits, is confirmed by the context, and there is no reason to doubt the evidence of Tertullian, supported as it is by other writers and by Latin MSS., that the omission was found in the earliest Latin texts. Dr. Lightfoot, indeed, partly admits the last fact, but he argues that the expedient of dropping the negative as a means of simplifying the sense is characteristic of the Latin copies. As instances in St. Paul, he quotes Galatians v. 8, Romans v. 14, and 1 Corinthians v. 6 ; but these scarcely prove the point, for in Romans v. 14 the omission of the negative is supported by Origen, in 1 Corinthians v. 6 the words of Augustine—*nonnulli et maxime Latini codices*—imply that the reading was found in some MSS. which were not Latin, and in Galatians v. 8 the omission is supported by D and Origen. The evidence of these passages, especially that given by the quotations of Origen, if it prove anything, proves that when the Latin copies omit a negative they really represent a Greek original, and are not arbitrarily emending.

Nor is Dr. Lightfoot's explanation of the origin of the reading more convincing ; he suggests that it may have been an oversight, or that possibly the negative was intentionally omitted on the ground that the sense of the passage, or the veracity of the Apostle, required the omission. It is true that Tertullian adopts these arguments, but I cannot think that it is at all probable that exegesis on these lines gave rise to the reading ; it is far more likely that the reading gave rise to the exegesis.

(2) *It is possible to argue that there existed readings A and B from an early time, and that both were emended a little*

*later by the addition of "to whom," made independently in different localities as an obvious elucidation of the sense.* This theory is adopted and most powerfully advocated by Prof. Zahn in his commentary on the Epistle. The strongest point in his argument is that the earliest commentators, with the exception of Marcion, regard *v. 3* as a parenthesis, and do not connect *v. 4* with anything except the journey to Jerusalem. The earliest orthodox writer who connects *v. 4* directly with *v. 3* is Ambrosiaster, and after his time this is the general explanation. If the  $\delta\epsilon$  in *v. 4* was to retain any adversative meaning, it is clear that it must be taken to imply a suppressed verb, and the reading with  $\omicron\iota\varsigma$  was introduced, whether followed or not by a negative, in order to make this plain. As, however, the view was generally held that Titus was not circumcised, the reading which contained the negative naturally soon became the dominant one.

But if readings C and D be rejected on these grounds, it remains for us to decide between readings A and B. Probably most of us would agree with Prof. Zahn that in this case reading A has at first sight superior claims, as Tertullian, Victorinus, and Irenaeus have to be set against Marcion and the Peshitto. But it may be doubted whether Tertullian's accusation against Marcion of falsifying the text in this passage is not greatly to be discounted, as even on the view that reading D is an emendation and not an original reading, it is at least an emendation of, and so far evidence for, reading B, so that to Marcion and the Peshitto must be added the evidence of the text which served as a basis for the probably Alexandrian recension represented by the great uncials. This reduces the problem to one of those difficult places in which the western Greek and African Latin are ranged against the Old Alexandrian and the Syriac. The division of forces is almost equal; and if a

decision is ever to be formed on textual grounds, it will probably not be until we know a little more about the history of the Peshitto version of the Pauline epistles.

Still, until some line of argument is produced which will settle the point in a more objective manner, I think that if reading D be rejected, reading A should probably be given a slight preference over reading B; for even if we reject Tertullian's view of a Marcionite emendation, it remains unquestionable that reading A would have been offensive to all who disliked to believe that St. Paul intended to admit that he had in any degree yielded to the church at Jerusalem on any point even temporarily, and therefore is to be preferred as decidedly the harder reading.

In attempting to judge between these two main lines of argument, one favouring reading D, the other rejecting it and hesitating somewhat between readings A and B, every one is bound to be influenced by his views on the general problems of the text of the New Testament. Personally I believe that the Sinaitic and Vatican uncials (and the mass of MSS. are not independent of them) represent nothing more than the text of one locality—Alexandria—and that probably only in the form which it had reached by the beginning of the fourth century, or at earliest by the middle of the third. As therefore there appears to be no evidence for  $\omicron\iota\varsigma$  in the early patristic quotations of this verse, and to be a considerable amount of evidence against it, I am inclined to adopt the second view, and as between the text which contains the negative, and that which does not, to prefer the latter; because I think that, although the evidence is almost equally balanced, it is easier to explain the insertion than the omission of the negative.

The exegesis of these verses is as difficult as the settlement of the text; two broad lines of interpretation have

been followed in the past, and it is impossible to say that either can be excluded with real certainty.

1. It is possible to take *v.* 4 in close connexion with *v.* 2 as giving the reason why St. Paul went up to Jerusalem or why he consulted the leaders on the subject of his teaching. Using reading A, this is the interpretation which is followed by Tertullian and Irenaeus among the ancients, and by Prof. Zahn among the modern commentators. According to it, *v.* 3 is merely a parenthesis, and the  $\delta\epsilon$  is a connecting particle with very little adversative force. The meaning of *v.* 3 on this hypothesis is no more obvious than on any other, and exegetes have differed, and will probably continue to differ, as to whether the meaning is : (a) That the question of the circumcision of Titus was never raised at all ; (b) that it was raised, but that the demand was resisted ; (c) that it was raised and yielded to, but as an act of free will and not of necessity.

A similar explanation is reached by Prof. Ramsay, who adopts reading D. He also regards *v.* 3 as purely a parenthesis, and interprets it in the manner (a), but thinks that the first clause of *v.* 4 contains a suppressed verb, and that the second clause is intended to show that the action described was not to be interpreted as the acceptance of a subordinate position. He paraphrases the whole passage as follows : " Now, as I have touched on this point, I may mention parenthetically that not even was my companion Titus, Greek as he was, required to submit to circumcision, much less was the general principle laid down that the Jewish rite was a necessary preliminary to the full membership of the Church. Further, the occasion of my consulting the leading apostles was because of certain insinuating false brethren, who also crept into our society in an unavowed way to act the spy on our freedom (which we free Christians continue enjoying throughout my ministry), in

order to make us slaves to the ritual which they count necessary. But not for an hour did we yield to these false brethren by complying with their ideas, etc.”

2. A different line of interpretation was followed by the later Church writers, including Jerome and Ambrosiaster, and has been adopted by Dr. Lightfoot. According to this, *v.* 4 is in close connexion with *v.* 3, and explains the reason for the line of action pursued with regard to Titus. The almost universal explanation among the older writers, which has been followed also by Dr. Lightfoot, is that Titus was not circumcised, and that St. Paul is explaining in *v.* 4 why he refused to yield to pressure in this case, although in the case of Timothy he had permitted his circumcision.

On the other hand, Westcott and Hort, in their Greek Testament, express a preference for the view that the meaning of the passage is that Titus was circumcised, though not under compulsion. (Later on, however, in his *Judaistic Christianity* Dr. Hort gave up this view and adopted that of Dr. Lightfoot.) With reading D perhaps this is right; but it is possible that, even so, the adversative force of the “but” in *v.* 4 is to be found in an implied reference to the incident of Timothy.

It is impossible not to feel that an exact exegesis of these verses is unattainable. The probable reason—and it is a strong argument for the authenticity of the Epistle—is that we are dealing with a letter referring to facts which are not otherwise recorded. If we knew, as did the Galatians, whether Titus was circumcised or not, the matter would be comparatively simple. My own view, for which I do not claim any noticeable degree of greater probability than for any other, is that Titus was circumcised; that *v.* 4 is to be taken in close connexion with *v.* 3; and that reading A is the true text. On the last point I am influenced by what seems to me the weight of the textual evidence. For

the second and first my only reason is that I think that, in this section of the Epistle, St. Paul is giving his answer to arguments based on the hostile interpretation of certain incidents in his life. One of these was the circumcision of Titus ; and I am inclined to think that St. Paul means in *v.* 3 to deny that he yielded to the compulsion of superior authority, and in *v.* 4 to admit that what he did was perhaps an error of judgement, into which he had been trapped by the false brethren. He therefore wished emphatically to deny that this temporary yielding could be construed as the recognition of superior authority. This interpretation agrees with Professor Ramsay's in thinking that the circumcision of Titus was not made a test case.

My view is that the history of the passage, which explains best the various readings and the early variations in exegesis, is that the early Church, looking at the matter from the point of view of a time when the question of circumcision had been definitely settled, and the circumcision of a Gentile seemed an impossibility, was offended at the idea that St. Paul's Gentile companion had been circumcised, and gladly availed themselves of the ambiguity of the sentence—an ambiguity which arose from their own ignorance of the fact that Titus had been circumcised, that this had been made the ground of attack by St. Paul's opponents, and that he was protesting against the unfairness of this interpretation of his conduct. The result was an exegesis which divorced *v.* 4 from *v.* 3, and explained that the yielding of St. Paul consisted in his exposition of his gospel to the leaders at Jerusalem. A reluctance to admit even this degree of yielding gave rise to the insertion of the negative, possibly by Marcion, and the way was then clear for a reversion to the more natural exegesis which connected the two verses. This reversion was soon made, but the addition of the negative had destroyed the adversative

force of the "but" in *v.* 4, and rendered it, as Jerome perceived, superfluous unless an implied verb, such as "we refused to yield," was understood after "the false brethren," and the feeling that this suppressed verb ought to be understood gave rise to the insertion of the relative in *v.* 4.

Assuming that Titus was circumcised and that reading A is correct, the grammar of the sentence is plain, but the exegesis is repugnant to the view of St. Paul's relation to the community at Jerusalem which was held by the Church of a later date. The latter attempted to find an exegesis which was more palatable to their view of the general situation, and in so doing complicated the grammar; a further step in the same direction corrupted the text, but enabled a return to be made to a more straightforward exegesis without injury to the supposed character of St. Paul; but this destroyed the grammatical balance of the sentence, and a further emendation was made, which resulted in the confusion worse confounded of the ordinary Greek text.

KIRSOPP LAKE.