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The Tarsian Citizenship of St. Paul.

BY PROFESSOR W. M. RAMSAY, D.C.L., LL.D., LITT.D., ABERDEEN.

IN two articles in the *Expositor*, Jan., Feb., 1902, the present writer stated an argument to the effect that it was impossible in practice for a Jew to become a citizen (*i.e.* a burgess with full rights) in an ordinary Greek or Græco-Asiatic city. It was indeed quite legal that a stranger should be admitted as a fully privileged citizen by a special vote of the public assembly of the city; and many cases might be quoted in which this was done. But even if the Greeks, in spite of their deep-seated hatred for the Jews, had been willing to make an exception in favour of any individual Jew, the Jew was debarred by his religious scruples from accepting the honour. To become a citizen one must be enrolled in one of the Tribes (or whatever was the name of the groups into which the population of the city was divided). No other way was possible. It was inconceivable to the Greek mind that any one could be a member of a tribe without engaging in the tribal religious ceremonies; and every new member had to take part in pagan rites on enrolment and at stated occasions thereafter, which no Jew would do. There was also a religious character and obligation attached to the citizenship.

The only way in which Jews could be made citizens of one of those cities was through a remodelling of the constitution in their interest. It was necessary to create a new tribe for them, membership in which would not entail participation in idolatrous ceremonial. No Hellenic city would ever be willing to modify its constitution to suit the Jews; such a change took place only through external authority, as when one of the kings obliged a city to accept a new constitution—not, as a rule, by force of arms, but by treaty and arrangement. Even external authority could not alter the sacred character of an existing tribe: the king must institute a new tribe to contain the new citizens by a great and formal enlargement of the city organization.

Accordingly, while Jews might become dwellers in any Greek city, they remained mere resident strangers, devoid of the vote and the rights of citizens; and this disability lasted permanently, even though the family lived for many generations

in the city. The resident strangers could not develop into citizens by mere lapse of time or by voluntary naturalization, but continued to be foreigners for one generation after another; just as at the present day European families resident in Turkey continue to be European strangers, generation after generation. It is by formal law that the Europeans in Turkey are forbidden to become naturalized in their adopted country. The Jews were hindered, only by religious scruples, and by the rarity of admission of new citizens.

It follows from these facts (which are stated and proved in much more detail in the articles already mentioned) that there can never have been any case in which a single Jewish household possessed the citizenship of a Greek or Græco-Asiatic city. Where we can prove that any single Jew possessed the citizenship of such a city, we have at once the certainty that there was in that city a body of Jewish citizens, enrolled in a special tribe or city-division, made on purpose to receive them by some external power which had remodelled the constitution. A tribe was a large body, and could not be made merely to contain one or a few persons.

All this is only an undeniable statement of the essential principles of Greek citizenship and the inevitable facts of practical life; and it was accepted as such by Professor E. Schürer in Dr. Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, v. 105b, 'it is inconceivable that a Jew, if he wished to remain a Jew at all and to adhere to his religion, could hold the citizenship in a Greek town'; and he quotes the articles above mentioned. I should desire only to insert the word 'ordinary' before 'Greek town' in his clear statement.

It follows therefore that, since Paul was a citizen of Tarsus, there must have been a body of Jewish citizens in that city; and this body must have been settled there by one of the kings on some occasion when the constitution of the city was remodelled. Paul had, of course, inherited the Tarsian citizenship from his father in the same way as he had inherited the Roman citizenship. This is inevitable; for the only other way in which one could obtain the citizenship was through a

special resolution, passed by the assembly, to bestow the citizenship in return for services rendered to the state. Greek cities were very chary of admitting new citizens. The citizenship had descended to him from a line of ancestors, since the time when some external power altered the constitution, and enrolled a body of Jews as new citizens of Tarsus.

This also is indisputable. It lies in the essence and fundamental conception of Greek citizenship.

In the lamentable dearth of information about Tarsus, the present writer had to content himself with this proof on general considerations that there must have been a body of Jewish citizens in Tarsus. But it is always far more satisfactory to be able to demonstrate from the special records of Tarsus that there were Jewish citizens in the city. This demonstration can now be given, not indeed a conclusive one, when taken alone, but still one which imparts so much more vividness and character to a recorded incident that it must be regarded as in itself highly probable; and, taken in conjunction with the general reasoning previously stated, it approximates to certainty.

It is mentioned in Philostratus' biography (or romance) of Apollonius that on one occasion during the reign of Vespasian, between 70 and 79, and probably about the beginning of that period, the city of Tarsus approached Titus (of course by a body of representatives) with a petition about important municipal interests. The delegates must, indubitably, have been citizens of Tarsus; that is clearly implied in the tale. Titus replied that he would himself be their ambassador, and present their case to his father Vespasian. Apollonius, who was present, here intervened; and said to Titus, 'If I prove that some of these delegates are enemies to your father and to you, and went as envoys to Jerusalem to promote an insurrection, being secret allies of your open enemies, what treatment shall be given them.' 'What,' said Titus, 'but death.' 'Is it then not a disgrace,' replied Apollonius, 'to exact vengeance on the spot, but to postpone rewards to a future occasion: to inflict capital punishment on your own authority, but to reserve kind acts for consultation with another?' Titus was well pleased with this argument, and granted the Tarsians' request.

The point of Apollonius' argument lay in this, that many Tarsian citizens were known to be Jews; and that there was an *a priori* credibility in the

accusation which he pretended to bring against some of the delegates. Titus may even have known or believed that some of the delegates were Jews, when Apollonius suggested to him that they had encouraged the recent rebellion in Palestine. The incident would have had little point in regard to a city where the inhabitants were all Greeks, for no Greek in any conceivable circumstance would be an ally of the Jews, and no person who could make such a foolish suggestion would ever have risen to be the friend and adviser of such princes as Vespasian and Titus. But Apollonius had the ready wit to present the seeming accusation in such a form that Titus was quite ready to believe it the moment it was suggested, and suddenly broke forth with the hasty pronouncement of the death penalty against a number of Tarsians who really were innocent. Then, when he saw that he had been caught, he, with the genial humour characteristic of his father and himself, extricated himself from the consequences of his premature and undeserved threat by frankly and entirely granting the request which the Tarsians had made, saying that his father would pardon him for following the advice of Apollonius.

The incident, therefore, depends for its character and point entirely on the fact that Tarsus was known to possess a considerable body of Jewish citizens, prominent and influential persons, some of whom were likely to be sent on an embassy to the emperors. We have argued previously that such must have been the case; and the story which Philostratus relates is then seen to be full of dramatic character and life.

The time and place of this incident are not mentioned by Philostratus. But the time was evidently soon after the great rebellion, which was crushed by Titus finally in the year 70. The place was apparently Rome, for Titus was sacrificing on behalf of the people (*δημοσίᾳ*). It is, of course, probable that the story may be a popular legend; but in that case it becomes all the more certain that Tarsus was selected because the Jewish character of many citizens was notorious, and made it a natural place to choose for the scene of a tale about secret sympathizers with Jewish insurgents. An invented story is quite as likely to have point as a real incident; and the point of this story is that Tarsian citizenship was held by many Jews.

It must be observed that the Roman citizenship was a totally different privilege from the Tarsian

citizenship. The Roman state had always been far more liberal than the Greek cities were in admitting new citizens; and under the Empire it was part of the settled Imperial policy to admit to the Roman citizenship the most distinguished of the provincials. The leading families in Tarsus were gradually admitted in this way; but the privilege was carefully regulated with the intention of making the Roman citizens a sort of provincial aristocracy, containing the most wealthy and influential families and none but them. Thus, while large numbers of new Roman citizens all over the empire were constantly being admitted, only a few in any one city were admitted, and those few were rich and highly placed.

The religious difficulty was not felt by the Jews in regard to Roman citizenship. When a Jew was admitted as a Roman citizen, he had to be enrolled in a Roman tribe; but the religious bond which once had held the tribe together had long ceased to be a reality. Each tribe was scattered over all the quarters of the Roman world. The tribesmen never met as a body. They exercised no duty; the vote which the tribe possessed was determined by the few members of the scattered body who could assemble in Rome, and that vote became a mere form and shadow under Augustus, and was abrogated by Tiberius. The tribe was a mere name and a formality for admission to the citizenship. A Jew therefore could freely accept the Roman citizenship, though he could not accept the Greek citizenship (if it had ever been offered to him) except on the conditions and in the cities above described.

Thus the fact was that the Roman citizenship was at once far more open and wide, and yet in the provinces far more select than the Greek citizenship.

It is pointed out, in the article on 'Tarsus' in Dr. Hastings' *Dictionary*, that the exact time and circumstances in which the new constitution was given to that city—or as the Greeks would express it, the time when Tarsus was founded anew—can be determined very narrowly. Tarsus was re-founded under the name of Antioch by Antiochus Epiphanes. This is established by the coins of the city, which begin under that king. Tarsus, though a town of great importance, where kings or satraps or princes ruled, had not been a self-governing state, in the Greek sense of the term 'city' (πόλις), until that re-foundation took place.

From that time onwards coins 'of the Tarsians' were struck; previously coins of kings or satraps or of the Tarsian god Baal-Tarz were struck in the town. In fact, the constitution of Tarsus as a Greek city was then settled.

The circumstances of Cilicia at that time required this new departure. Cilicia was, since 189 B.C., a frontier country of the Seleucid realm. Before 189 it had been in the heart of the realm, hopelessly enslaved. Now the Seleucid kings were shorn of much of their former power, after a crushing defeat, an inglorious peace, and the loss of all their vast dominions west and north of Tarsus; and it became necessary to regulate Tarsus and other Cilician cities carefully, and ensure their loyalty and security. Many Cilician 'cities,' in the Greek sense of self-governing autonomous states, took their origin in the few years following 189 B.C. That has been settled by the numismatists, and a list of the new cities¹ is given in the article already quoted. Further, we can fix with high probability the exact year when Tarsus got its constitution. In 171 B.C. there was disturbance and discontent in Tarsus and in Mallus. They were resolved not to endure any longer to be treated as the property of the king, and given over, as he pleased, to his mistress for her private revenue. Antiochus marched into Cilicia and settled the troubles without, apparently, any war; *i.e.* he did it by negotiation and arrangement. He struck out a plan whereby the aspirations of the Tarsians for release from the slavery in which the city had hitherto been held were satisfied, and the fidelity of the city was assured for the future. His plan was the bestowal of a constitution and self-government, on condition that the city was enlarged and strengthened by the introduction of a large body of new citizens after the fashion described in the *Expositor*, December 1901. In short, his plan was the regular Seleucid method of strengthening their power, practised by one sovereign after another since the beginning of the dynasty in a very large number of cities. Jews were often an element in those Seleucid cities; and were an element in this new Antioch on the Cydnus, as Tarsus was now called.

Professor E. Schürer, in the passage already quoted, while accepting all these general principles,

¹ Aigai must be added to the list, on account of a coin published by M. Imhoof Blumer in his *Kleinasiat. Münzen*, 1902, s.v. Aigai Cil.

objects to this date, on the ground that it 'appears very improbable in view of the hostility of Antiochus to the Jews.' The objection seems to have no real validity. Antiochus, undoubtedly, became hostile to the Jews through the Maccabæan rebellion. But the foundation of Tarsus occurred before the rebellion had broken out; and the narrative in 1 and 2 Maccabees shows clearly that Antiochus had at first merely carried out the regular established policy of the Seleucid king in Palestine. He and his predecessors thought that they were benefiting the country by introducing Hellenic civilization into it. The building of a gymnasium, related in 1 Mac 1¹⁴, 2 Mac 4¹², as an outrage, seemed to him a mark of kindness and forethought; worse almost in the eyes of the Jews was it that he made their young men wear hats, which the Oriental still detests; *shapha-li*, 'hat-wearer,' is still in Turkey equivalent to 'Frank.' He was actively aided in the work of 'civilizing' and Hellenizing the Jews by some of the most 'advanced' of their own nation. It is impossible to enter on this subject here; but our statement of the general spirit of Antiochus' policy is gathered purely from the narrative of the Jews themselves. The Maccabæan rising was

forced on by the Jewish patriotic party, and not by any new or serious oppression. It is true that in common with the rest of the Seleucid Empire Palestine felt the strain caused by the wars, the disasters, and the impoverishment of the empire during the two preceding reigns; and its sacred and national treasury was called on to bear part of the national burden. But nothing is recorded to show that Antiochus had departed in 171-170 from the hereditary policy of his dynasty in Palestine, or to make it probable that he would found his new cities in Cilicia on different lines from his predecessors. We must conclude that Antioch on the Cydnus, which was founded in 171, contained a body of Jewish citizens, enrolled in a special tribe.

The story that St. Paul's parents (or himself) migrated from Gischala, though accepted by some modern scholars, bears absurdity on its face. An immigrant from Gischala could not by any reasonable possibility acquire Tarsian citizenship, and was exceedingly unlikely to acquire Roman citizenship. St. Paul sprang from a Jewish family long resident in the Græco-Asiatic Tarsus; but his father and his family maintained a close relationship with Jerusalem, and kept the Jewish tradition and religion unimpaired.

The Identity of the New Testament Election with the Universal Offer of Salvation.

BY THE REV. W. L. WALKER, SHETTLESTON, GLASGOW.

THE decision of the House of Lords in the great Free Church case has once more brought into prominence the oft-debated doctrine of Election. We have no intention of reopening a discussion of this subject on the old, well-worn, now almost obliterated lines. But—daring though the attempt may seem—we shall endeavour to show, not merely the harmony, but the *identity*, of the doctrine of Election, as it stands in the New Testament, with that universal offer of salvation which is believed by many to be in at least apparent conflict with it. We cannot affirm this of the *Calvinistic* doctrine of Election as it stands in the *Confession of Faith*. Because, if God has determined that only a limited number shall be saved, it is impossible to see how an offer of salvation can be sincerely made to any

beyond that number. By many the two statements are regarded as constituting an antinomy, or apparent contradiction; both must be accepted, although we cannot reconcile them. We cannot help thinking that this tends towards Agnosticism and fosters indifference towards the whole subject. The mind cannot rest in two irreconcilable propositions, and although we find many things in nature and life which we cannot understand, we should not expect that these would be increased by what purports to be a *revelation*. If we succeed in showing that the two statements, as they stand in the New Testament, are, instead of being even seemingly contradictory, *identical* in their purport, the conclusion will be a suggestive, if not, indeed, a startling one.