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# JOURNAL OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE.

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## Address and Destination of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

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### I.

THE facts that call for a discussion of this subject are not of an abstruse or recondite nature; they are neither very hard to ascertain with reasonable exactness, nor prone to mislead in their logical bearings. Indeed, they lie on the surface and loudly appeal for critical consideration. The reason why this appeal so long passed unheeded need not be sought elsewhere than in a strong and overmastering prejudice. That the Scripture in question is a capital document of the most primitive Christianity, that it shelters the inmost core of Christian (or, at least, Protestant) doctrine, that it was dictated by the Apostle Paul before A.D. 60, in the first full-bloom of the new-found faith, that it is the most perfect mirror of his spirit, smooth as a summer sea untroubled by any gusts of passion, or dissension, or personal vindication, such as ruffle his other epistles, that it was written to the Church at Rome, written at or near Corinth, on a certain occasion and under very well-known conditions,—all this has for ages been assumed as so self-evident that to call it in question could be regarded only as a hypercritical whim, about which the less said the better.

The denials of Evanson were quite superficial, and the deeper grounded negations of Bruno Bauer repelled by their uncouth and lumbering style, as well as by their rabid temper. So the great stream of assent has rolled and continues to roll on with scarce diminished volume through the ages, sweeping everything before it by its sheer inertia. As not one in a thousand could assign any satisfactory reason of his own for the simplest features of his everyday scientific faith, so neither could he for his faith in the accepted teachings just mentioned. With this difference, however: for his

belief in science he could appeal to the authority of numbers who had studied the matter for many years without prejudice, and who were of one mind on the subject; whereas, though the authorities on *Romans* were of one mind, there was hardly one that had studied the fundamental questions carefully and without bias — all had accepted or recommended foregone conclusions. This immense bulk of authority, considered in itself, is indeed imposing; but in an atmosphere of universal assent, it is like a body immersed in a fluid of its own density — it weighs nothing at all.

Nevertheless, there are some facts so patent as long ago to have provoked attention. Semler perceived the difference in *timbre* between the last two and the foregoing chapters, as well as the clear indications of the textual conditions. He proposed (*Paraphrasis*, 1769) a solution that called forth frequent modification and energetic rejection and has fixed critical attention upon these chapters even to this day. Baur followed in Semler's steps, and found for his rejection of the two chapters a place waiting in his own general theory of New Testament Scriptures. Lucht confirmed the Baurian view in a special treatise of masterful acumen and thoroughness. Volkmar hailed Lucht's demonstration with delight, and still further sharpened its precision and refined its analysis in his own *Römerbrief* (1875). Renan recognized the necessity of accounting in some way for the peculiar phenomena both of the style and of the manuscripts, and he proposed a fanciful explanation more comprehensive than any of his predecessors'. The coryphaeus of British biblical criticism, Bishop Lightfoot, promptly rejected the explanation of Renan, but at the same time could not disguise from himself any longer the fact that there was something to be explained. Accordingly, he propounded a theory of a Second Recension, less thorough-going than Renan's, but very notable as emanating from the focus of English orthodoxy. However conservative, it was far too radical for Dr. Hort, who straightway crossed lances with Lightfoot. The latter was not slow in rejoinder. In this interesting encounter the advantage seemed to lie clearly with the Bishop, to whose final arguments we do not know that Hort made any reply. In the great Pauline controversy as waged in Holland and Switzerland, the arguments have turned on other considerations. Loman hardly alludes to the subject in hand; his strength lay in clairvoyance, not in textual criticism. The treatment of the all-round master, Van Manen, is not adequate, and that of Michelsen, while trenchant, is too summary. It is Riggenbach who has of late discussed the textual phase with great thoroughness as

regards the Doxology, though under strong bias and without any respect to the larger issues involved. Cramer has touched upon the mere textual question, and Zahn has reviewed the whole field with his wonted ability, and at the same time with his incurable critical strabismus. But these critics one and all (Van Manen and Loman of course excepted) have attacked the problem with invincible prepossessions. The Pauline traditions stood for them in the main unshakably firm; their aim was to save as much as possible to Paul and to Rome.

It is our conviction that no correct or satisfactory result can ever be reached by such methods. We must approach the problem, stripped of all prejudice, equally ready to accept all or none as Pauline, to find a monolith or a mosaic, a unital epistle or a composite tractate. From this point of view the question merges at once into the incomparably larger one of the Origin and Composition of the famous Scripture, "Unto Romans," of which, however, it remains a distinct, integrant part, capable and worthy of separate treatment.

We observe then, at the outset, that the earliest extant title of this Scripture is Πρὸς Ῥωμαίους (Unto Romans). So BAC and DFG in the titles of the pages. The specifications, "Epistle" and "Paul's," appear later. They are certainly derivable from the present text that follows, as is the simplest title itself, but it is not superfluous to note their original absence. The strong tendency toward text-expansion is well illustrated in the title as given, for instance, in L: "Epistle to Romans of the holy and all-blessed Apostle Paul."

Passing over for the present so much that is notable in the Address, we come to v. 7: "To all those that are in Rome beloved of God, called (to be) saints" (πᾶσιν τοῖς ὀφειμένοις ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἀγαπητοῖς θεοῦ, κλητοῖς ἁγίοις). Instead of this we read in G, πᾶσιν τοῖς ὀφειμένοις ἐν ἀγάπῃ θεοῦ, κλητοῖς ἁγίοις (to all that are in love of God, called [to be] saints). Similarly the Latin version g. Fixing our eyes on this variant we must ask: Is it derivable from the accepted text? and if so, how?—by accident? or by design? It seems impossible for it to be the result of accident. For it seems improbable that so large a word as ΡΩΜΗ, and so important, the keyword of the Scripture before him, should escape the eye of the scribe at the very beginning of his work; and still more improbable, almost impossible, that he should at the same time omit by accident the syllable ΤΟΙC, thus relieving the grammatical difficulty caused by the omission of ΡΩΜΗ. Neither would he have omitted ΤΟΙC by design, to correct the syntax. For, if he had so soon perceived his omission of

ΡΩΜΗ, he would certainly have inserted such a capital word, and not have dared change the whole reference of the Scripture by attempting to correct one omission by another. We must dismiss, then, the hypothesis of accident as extremely improbable.

On the other hand, had the copyist designed to change the address, to make it general by omitting all reference to Rome, it was simple and natural and almost inevitable to omit ΕΝΡΩΜΗ; indeed, so very natural does it seem that critics of first rank regularly speak of it as having been actually done: they say, Gg omit ἐν Ῥώμῃ. So even Baljon and Riggerbach. So Weiss, Godet, Sanday, Headlam, and nearly all others that take any note of the fact at all. But the notion that any one would want to change and generalize the address in this way is a mere fancy, caught out of the air. Why was it not done in case of the other Letters, of many of which the contents are equally general? Had this Scripture been addressed originally to a small congregation that afterwards dwindled out of sight, it might be intelligible that the address should be changed; but that any one should be so bold as to destroy the address to the all-ruling Church of Rome, is in the last degree improbable. On the other hand, that such a church should take to itself, should adopt and adapt such an important composition, by some slight change of title or otherwise, seems just as likely as the other is unlikely.

Let us suppose, then, for the moment that the text stood as in G, τοῖς κυρίοις ἐν ἀγάπῃ θεοῦ, and that the problem was to alter this general address into an address to Rome, as simply as possible. Nothing could be simpler than to insert Ῥώμῃ after ἐν, but then it would be necessary (and nothing more would be needed) to insert τοῖς after ἀγάπῃ. Hereby our present text would naturally, almost unavoidably, come into being. The hypothesis that the address has been specialized by insertion appears thus every way incomparably more probable than that it has been generalized by omission.

But are not **κ** B *et al.* much older and weightier authorities than G? Certainly much older; but our appeal is not to G, but to the ancestor of G, and this may have been much older and more authoritative than either **κ** or B. That G has preserved, in many cases, readings that are older than those of either **κ** or B, seems certain. On the bare face of it, then, we must prefer the shorter text that makes no mention of Rome.

The only other clear indication of destination is found in v.<sup>15</sup>: "So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the Gospel to you also that are in Rome" (ὑμῖν τοῖς ἐν Ῥώμῃ εὐαγγελίσασθαι). Here

again the indications of an earlier text are not less distinct. The same MS. G reads ἐπ' ὑμῖν εὐαγγελίσασθαι. The EII is very likely a slip of the pen for EN. We may reason here very much as before. It is hardly possible that TOICENPΩMH has fallen out by accident. We cannot believe that the scribe had no eye for "in Rome," but missed it every time, and just in a way to leave the grammatical structure perfect. But even if he had dropped out TOICENPΩMH by pure oversight, he could not at the same time have inserted EII (EN) by oversight. We must then reject the notion of accident, decisively. But neither can we explain the G-text from B as the result of design. For it is improbable as before that a reference to the Imperial City should be deleted, and even if it were not, the presence of EΠ (EN) would remain unexplained.

On the other hand, the omission of EΠ (or EN) by accident is very easy, or even by design, since it is unnecessary to the construction; and the insertion of TOICENPΩMH was equally easy, and the motive thereto quite intelligible. A reader or annotator might very naturally have made such a note as TOICENPΩMH at the word YMIN as expressing his own conjecture as to the persons addressed. This marginal note might then have been taken up by the next copyist into the text. Such influxes from the margin are common enough. Or the phrase may have been boldly inserted in the first place by some editor who thought to give point and importance to the document by addressing it to Rome, or to honor the great Capital Church by addressing to it such a document. Just here we cannot be sure, but we may very confidently hold that the G-text was not derived from our received text, but from some MS. older perhaps than any extant, in which there was no mention of Rome.

This same conclusion has been drawn from two independent phenomena in vv.<sup>7</sup> and <sup>15</sup>. It explains both at once and with equal ease, whereas the alternative, that the G-text is derived from the Received, requires for its support a substruction of hypotheses, a concurrence of accidents in the highest degree unlikely. *Prima facie*, then, the G-text is every way preferable.

Before passing to the other evidence, let us hear the best that can be said in defence of the derivation of G. Hort, speaking as one having authority, would end the controversy thus: "The true text in full is πᾶσιν τοῖς ὄσιν ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἀγαπητοῖς θεοῦ κλητοῖς ἁγίοις. A Western correction (D\* lat. [the Greek lost], G, the two best MSS. of the Vulgate, apparently the Ambrosian Hilary, and perhaps Hilary

of Poitiers) substituted *ἐν ἀγάπῃ θεοῦ* for *ἀγαπητοῖς θεοῦ*, doubtless on account of the *κλητοῖς* following ("who . . . through the love of God are called to be saints"). The result is that ENPΩMH and ENΑΓΑΠΗΘΥ were left contiguous, each beginning with *ἐν*. The loss of one or other out of a pair of such groups of letters is common in MSS. of any form, and would be peculiarly liable to occur in one written in columns of short lines, such as was assuredly the archetype of FG. These two MSS. have further a trick of omitting words that do not appear necessary to the sense, as might easily be the case of *ἐν Ῥώμῃ* here when the following words were changed: so *εἰς σωτηρίαν* 1<sup>18</sup>; *ἡ ἐκ φύσεως ἀκροβυστία* 2<sup>27</sup>; (*οὐ πάντως* 3<sup>9</sup>); *Ἰησοῦ* 3<sup>26</sup>; *μόνον* 4<sup>16</sup>; *ὁ θάνατος* 5<sup>19</sup>; (*ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις αὐτοῦ* 6<sup>12</sup>); *ὅτι ἐμοὶ τὸ κακὸν παράκειται* 7<sup>21</sup>; *εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν* 8<sup>10</sup>; *υἰοθεσίαν* 8<sup>23</sup>; etc. The omission in 1<sup>7</sup> might therefore be neglected without further thought but for the parallel omission of *τοῖς ἐν Ῥώμῃ* in 1<sup>15</sup>, the name of Rome being confined to these two passages in the epistle. The coincidence would certainly be noteworthy if it were sustained by other documentary evidence, or if there were independent reasons for believing a recension of the epistle to have existed in which the marks of a special destination were purposely obliterated. There is no such reason apart from the supposed removal of 15, 16: the hypothesis is suggested by the reading of G at 1<sup>7.15</sup>. We may therefore be content to suspect that in these two verses like causes produced like results."

If ever there was a cause irreversibly condemned by its defence, it is the cause of the Received Text as here pleaded. Hort assumes that the true text is the Received; he supposes that a Western corrector wrote ENΑΓΑΠΗ for ΑΓΑΠΗΤΟΙC — a brave thing to do; he supposes that ENPΩMH then fell away because contiguous to another phrase beginning with EN. But what is accomplished by this double supposition? Nothing at all. Hort tells us "we might therefore neglect the omission in 1<sup>7</sup> without further thought but for the parallel omission in 1<sup>15</sup>." A very important BUT. Since there is a parallel omission, we cannot neglect them both without "further thought." But what "further thought" does Hort give them? None whatever! He says not a word in explanation of the omission in 1<sup>15</sup>. True, he "suspects" "like causes have produced like results," but this is meaningless. In 1<sup>7</sup> the "causes" *supposed* were (a) the arbitrary change of ΑΓΑΠΗΤΟΙC into ENΑΓΑΠΗ, (b) the dropping of ENPΩMH owing to the contiguity of ENΑΓΑΠΗ. Now, what "like causes" *could* have operated in 1<sup>15</sup>? Hort has not given a hint of them; he

has left to the reader to supply what his own lively fancy could not devise. We have given the matter much "further thought"; but without advancing it a hair's breadth. It is not possible to find in Hort's language anything but the failure of his hypothesis, virtually confessed.

Hort adds that these two MSS. have a trick of omitting words, etc. As to the "trick" of FG, it is very poorly illustrated by his examples. The phrases in question are far more easily understood as interpolated than as omitted, and in perhaps every case the FG-text is the earlier. In fact, when he ascribes the shorter form of this text to a "trick," Hort speaks from the standpoint of his own Vaticanism, a standpoint already overcome by more recent textual critics. These have perceived that the concurrence of  $\aleph$  and B is by no means conclusive; that some unconsidered minuscule or version or citation may have preserved a much older reading; that God has chosen the weak, to confound the mighty, the things that are not, to annul the things that are. Even as the shepherd boy of old laid low the giant, so may at any time some neglected cursive overthrow the most venerated uncial. We turn from Hort's defence of the Received Text with greatly strengthened suspicion that the G-text is the earlier, and that its archetype contained no reference whatever to Rome.

Is there any other manuscript evidence? There is. The cursive 47, in a marginal note on 1<sup>7</sup>, observes: "Mentions the  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$   $\acute{\rho}\acute{\omega}\mu\eta$  neither in the commentary nor in the text" ( $\tau\acute{o}$   $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$   $\acute{\rho}\acute{\omega}\mu\eta$   $\omicron\upsilon\tau\epsilon$   $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$   $\tau\eta$   $\acute{\epsilon}\xi\eta\gamma\acute{\eta}\sigma\epsilon\iota$   $\omicron\upsilon\tau\epsilon$   $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$   $\tau\hat{\omega}$   $\acute{\rho}\eta\tau\hat{\omega}$   $\mu\eta\eta\mu\omicron\nu\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\epsilon\iota$ ). There is no subject to "mentions" ( $\mu\eta\eta\mu\omicron\nu\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\epsilon\iota$ ), but this cursive elsewhere quotes the rare and terse and preferred reading  $\delta$   $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$   $\beta\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\pi\epsilon\iota$   $\tau\acute{\iota}\varsigma$   $\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\pi\acute{\iota}\zeta\epsilon\iota$  (8<sup>24</sup>), saying  $\tau\acute{o}$   $\pi\alpha\lambda\alpha\acute{\iota}\omicron\nu$   $\omicron\upsilon\tau\omega\varsigma$   $\acute{\epsilon}\chi\epsilon\iota$  (the ancient [MS.] has it so), and this MS. may be the understood subject of "mentions." In any case, some ancient unknown authority, whether MS. or commentator, knew nothing of the presence of  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$   $\acute{\rho}\acute{\omega}\mu\eta$  in the text.<sup>1</sup> Even by itself this fact would be noteworthy, and it is certainly no insignificant bulwark for G. So far as it goes, it is precisely the documentary evidence desiderated by Hort. Nor is this all.

The Greek text of D is unfortunately torn off just here; it begins with  $\kappa\lambda\eta\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$   $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\acute{\iota}\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$ ; but the Latin version d reads: *omnibus qui sunt*

<sup>1</sup> [The discovery of this same scholion in the Origenistic MS. found and investigated by Lic. v. d. Goltz in the library of the Laura of Mount Athos leaves no doubt that the subject of  $\mu\eta\eta\mu\omicron\nu\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\epsilon\iota$  to be supplied is  $\acute{\Omega}\rho\iota\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\eta\varsigma$ . See E. v. d. Goltz, *Eine textkritische Arbeit des zehnten bezw. sechsten Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig, 1899. (*Texte und Untersuchungen*, Neue Folge, II. 4.)]



*Romae in caritate Dei, vocatis sanctis*, which would render  $\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\nu\ \tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\nu\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \text{'}\rho\acute{\omega}\mu\eta\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\acute{\alpha}\pi\eta\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\ ,\ \kappa\lambda\eta\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\iota\omicron\iota\varsigma$ . But we cannot be sure it stood exactly so, for it seems certain that d and g are not mere translations of D and G, though influenced by the latter, but represent an independent text. So Riggenbach against Westcott and Hort. E, which is a copy of D, has only  $\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\nu\ \tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\nu\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \text{'}\rho\acute{\omega}\mu\eta\ \kappa\lambda\eta\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\iota\omicron\iota\varsigma$ ; whence it would seem that a corrector of D had deleted  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\acute{\alpha}\pi\eta\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$  before the copy E was made. This D-text, or at least, d-text, is found again in the Codex Fuldensis exactly, and also in the Codex Amiatinus, with *dilectione* instead of *caritate*; hence, we infer, it was widespread.

Further, the Roman expositor Ambrosiaster (about A.D. 370) commenting on this verse says: *Quamvis Romanis scribat, illis tamen scribere se significat, qui in caritate dei sunt*. The obvious interpretation, the only natural one, is that the text before Ambrosiaster was: *Qui sunt in caritate dei*. Otherwise, if *Romae* had been present, the commentator would never have said: "Although he is writing to Romans, nevertheless he declares he writes to those who are in love of God." Hence it appears that although the idea had already established itself that this Scripture was addressed to Romans, nevertheless the text of 1<sup>7</sup> used by Ambrosiaster did not contain this specification so late as A.D. 370.

Still earlier, however, Origen as handed down to us twice quotes the ordinary text; but in his *Commentary on Romans* it is not so. Here the MS. that lay before him did not contain  $\kappa\lambda\eta\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\iota\omicron\iota\varsigma$  (IV. 467). Also in expounding 1<sup>7</sup> Origen says nothing about Rome, but speaks of the persons addressed thus (Rufinus): *dilectis dei, ad quos scribit Apostolus*. Once more, the obvious and only natural conclusion is that his MS. (circa A.D. 243) read simply  $\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\nu\ \tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \omicron\upsilon\sigma\iota\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\gamma\alpha\pi\eta\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon$ .

From all of the foregoing it seems as certain as anything of the kind can be: (a) that both in the East and in the West there existed from very early times a text without any mention of Rome in 1<sup>7</sup>; (b) that this text was considered so authoritative as to be adopted by the two earliest commentators, Origen and Ambrosiaster, though neither seems to have doubted that the Scripture was addressed to Romans; (c) that the idea that the destination was Rome established itself in the minds of men generations before the expression of this destination established itself in at least some of the best MSS.; (d) that the whole of this address (v.<sup>7</sup>) was for generations in a fluctuant uncertain state: there is no unanimity with respect to any

one of the phrases ἐν Ῥώμῃ, ἀγαπητοῖς θεοῦ, ἐν ἀγάπῃ θεοῦ, κλητοῖς ἁγίοις. Each and every one was wanting somewhere at a very early period.

The near-lying conclusion from this whole body of facts would seem to be that the destination, or at least the form of address, v.7, was not from the start a matter of certain knowledge or even of unanimous opinion. If we suppose Paul to have written originally the address as it now stands, it is not possible to explain reasonably how this almost endless diversity crept in, and how such an extremely important phrase, in fact the one all-important phrase, ἐν Ῥώμῃ, fell away in the most authoritative MSS. both East and West. If these words were originally present, then fell away, and then were restored, we have two opposing processes going on before us: one of dissolution and loss extending far and wide through two or three centuries, followed by another of composition and gain, which finally restores the primitive form. We submit that this is unprecedented and highly improbable. It has back of it nothing at all for support save the firm-fixed prejudice, that Paul must have addressed this Scripture to Romans. But what is the basis of this conviction? Nothing whatever but the textual facts of vv.7.<sup>15</sup> So the elephant stands on the turtle, and the turtle again stands on the elephant.

On the other hand, if we lay aside this prejudice and accept the facts at their face-value, we are led straightway to the conclusion that this v.7 is the final result of a long process of concretion and conflation. Various designations of the addressed would recommend themselves at various times to various persons: "In love of God," "beloved of God," "called saints,"—and perhaps many others. It seems unlikely that the first suggestions were the very best and were finally adopted. But more than one seemed too good to be lost and so were "conflated." The specification "in Rome" seems to have come later, and why not? What more natural than that the chief Church should wish to see addressed to itself the chief writing of the chief apostle? The address of this "Epistle" to the Church of Rome by the Apostle Paul is in fact a glorification of that illustrious see and is quite of a piece with the tradition that makes Peter its founder and for twenty-five years its first bishop.

In all likelihood the notion of the Roman address, starting up, one knows not when or where or how, from a vague general feeling of the fitness of things, spread all over the Roman Empire long before the word "Rome" found any place in any MS. We venture to surmise that the first insertion was in v.15, of the parenthetical phrase τοῖς ἐν

Ῥώμῃ (those in Rome), perhaps at first a mere marginal observation. All conjectures as to the intermediate stages in a course of past events are hazardous and *a priori* improbable: there is only one way to be right, and so many ways to be wrong. But so much we may say with great confidence: that on the basis of the MSS. merely and the Fathers, the weight of evidence inclines heavily against the Roman address as original.

It remains to see whether other evidence, internal and external, makes for or against our provisional conclusion. But first we must take note of what the arch-apologist, Theodor Zahn, in full view of the documentary facts, has to say of their significance. He rejects the evasions of Hort and the explanations of Lightfoot and Riggenbach, as well as the theories of Renan and others; he admits that the text of Origen as well as that of Ambrosiaster lacked the words ἐν Ῥώμῃ; he admits that this text was widespread both East and West; what explanation, then, has he to offer? Only this: "We see herein a process of text-corruption, which began in 1<sup>r</sup> and developed itself so far in G as to attack 1<sup>is</sup> also. The thought, mighty in the ancient Church, that the epistles of Paul, despite their diverse addresses, had a universal destination (*allgemeine Bestimmung*) (*Can. Murat.* 47-59; Apollonius in *Eus. H. E. V.* 18, 5; Ambrosiaster on Col. 4<sup>16</sup>, p. 276, and *GK.* II. 74 f.), already, before Origen, seduced to a weak attempt to divest *Romans*, apparently written as no other for universal Christendom, of its special destination (*Bestimmung*)." The argument of this wonderful scholar dwindles down to a mere assertion. He assigns no reasons whatever. Whether an "attempt" that captured the MSS. adopted by Ambrosiaster and Origen, the earliest commentators on *Romans*, and the authority referred to by the scholiast on 47, and which maintained itself to the ninth century in Gg, was weak or not, we leave the reader to judge. Moreover, it is not correct that *Romans* is general in character as no other: Ephesians and Colossians are at least as general. It is true that the Church long retained a consciousness more or less clear of a general mission of the "Epistles"; but this was true of all of them, and we have no reason at all to believe that it ever suggested any generalization of the title of any. That this feeling should lead to any attempt, weak or strong, to deprive the head Church of Rome of the honor of this great epistle directed to it; and that this attempt should succeed in large measure within the very walls of Rome, where Ambrosiaster wrote (Sanday and Headlam), is a daring and desperate imagination of Zahn's, with nothing to recommend it save that it is needed in his

apology. In fact, it would never have occurred to him, had not the Pauline authorship and the Roman address stood fast in his mind as traditions to be saved at all hazards. He thinks he finds incontestable evidence of both in the Introduction that follows, vv.<sup>8-16</sup>. Let us see.

"First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world." Do these words in themselves, apart from all preconceptions, naturally suggest the Apostle Paul writing to Romans? The only date open for such a letter falls in his last sojourn at Corinth, A.D. 58-59, according to the common reckoning. If with Harnack we push all the dates back four years, following impossible chronologic combinations, the relative situation is not altered. We know, to be sure, nothing of the origin of a Christian movement and the Church at Rome, but unless it was very different from any imaginable in harmony with received notions, it must sound very strange to speak of the congregation as world-renowned at that period. We attach little importance to chronologic determinations in early Christian history, but it seems hardly possible to find so much as ten years for the age of the Church at Rome. Even if we date its origin from the decree of Claudius expelling Jews (A.D. 49-50 according to Orosius, not earlier according to Acts 18<sup>2</sup>), we have left only nine years. Possibly, by rhetorical exaggeration, the congregation may have become world-famous by A.D. 58-59, but hardly otherwise. Certainly, no one would select it, with our present knowledge, as the congregation to which such words would specially apply. But in any case, if this Roman congregation began in some Messianic movement, or even in discussions among the Jews about the Christ, as many or most scholars infer from the statement of Suetonius (*Judæcos Chresto impulsore assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit, Claud. XXV.*), then it must have been Jewish-Christian in origin and mainly in constitution, for we cannot think of such a Jewish agitation as gaining much foothold in less than a decade among the Gentiles of Rome. This agrees with the obvious meaning of the words of Ambrosiaster (op. II. app. 25) : *ex quibus (Judæis) hi qui crediderant, tradiderunt Romanis ut Christum profitentes legem servarent; . . . Hi ergo ex Judæis, ut datur intelligi, credentes Christum. . . .* We must suppose Ambrosiaster to have been abreast with the traditions concerning the origin of the Church in Rome, though he cannot vouch for the correctness of those traditions.

Suppose then this Roman Church started in some Messianic agita-

tion among the Jews, and had in nine years progressed so far as to justify the words of v.<sup>8</sup>: "your faith is proclaimed through the whole world." How then shall we explain the fact that in the epistle itself the readers are repeatedly addressed as Gentiles? Leaving aside all cases where ambiguity is possible, consider only 11<sup>37f.</sup>: "But I speak to you that are Gentiles," etc.—a passage throughout which the Jews are regarded objectively, wholly as third parties. That there are many such passages implying certainly at least a large minority of Gentiles seems finally established by the classic memoir of Weizsäcker, and is conceded even by such a Baurian as Volkmar. Far more, however, the important section 9-11 proceeds throughout on the assumption that the rejection of the Gospel by the Jews and its acceptance by the Gentiles is a *fait accompli*, perfectly well known and acknowledged, and so complete as to call for the most elaborate reasoning to make it intelligible. Could any man in his senses write these chapters to a church that started among Jews, that consisted in great measure of Jews, and whose Jewish-Christian faith was world-renowned? With confidence we answer, no! As addressed to such a congregation, these chapters would not be the work of a rational being. It is unhistorical and incredible that an apostle could have regarded the case as settled against the Jews by the first few years of preaching. However he might preach to Gentiles, Paul himself at that time was still preaching everywhere in Jewish synagogues and first of all to Jews, and he continued to do so years afterward on his arrival in Rome (Acts 28<sup>16ff.</sup>).

There are other passages equally impossible of address to such Roman Jews, as 6<sup>18-23</sup>. We must think of such a congregation as composed, at least mainly, of pious Jews and God-fearing Gentiles, as blameless in regard of the Law as Paul boasts himself. How then could he address them as "servants of sin," as "presenting their members servants to uncleanness and iniquity," as living in things whereof now they are "ashamed"? A congregation may endure very severe language from an aged, well-known, and revered spiritual leader; but what self-respecting body of Jews would bear such words from an entire stranger, who had no acknowledged right to address them at all? For it is not ordinary peccadilloes or even great crimes that are here charged upon the whole congregation, but it is shameful and disgusting vices, such as those of 1<sup>18-32</sup>. Even if the Jewish Christians of Rome had been guilty as charged, which cannot be, it would still have been wanton and incredible folly in Paul, aiming at conciliation, to have reminded them in such fashion. The same

remarks apply to the outburst in 2<sup>17-20</sup>. Not only does it do the Jew the grossest injustice, but as addressed to a body of Jews world-renowned for their faith, "full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able to admonish one another" (15<sup>14</sup>), it is impolitic beyond belief.

Other such passages there are in number, but these seem sufficient to show that it is at least extremely hard to understand this "Epistle" as addressed to a Jewish-Christian Church of nine years' standing.

But now let us suppose with Weizsäcker that the congregation was Gentile-Christian; are the difficulties lessened? By no means; it is a leap from the frying-pan into the fire. Instantly the whole argument from 2<sup>17</sup> to 4<sup>25</sup> becomes unintelligible, along with much else in the letter. Who can imagine the intricate disquisition in 9-11, to show that the rejection of Israel was only temporary, that all Israel was to be saved as soon as the quota (*πλήρωμα*) of Gentiles was completed, that they had an unforfeitable right to such salvation founded on God's promise to the Fathers, while the salvation of Gentiles was an act of mercy,—who can imagine such extreme Judaism addressed to a Gentile congregation? Much in these chapters is indeed the most ultra-Judaic to be found in the New Testament. But we need not dwell on the impossibility of this Scripture's being a letter to a Gentile Church in Rome; it is enough to refer to Zahn, *Einleitung*, I. § 23. Let any one try to imagine a world-famous Gentile congregation in Rome six years after the Council at Jerusalem, to whom the Christian "type of teaching" was already a tradition (6<sup>17</sup>), for whom the night was already far spent, the day near at hand (13<sup>11-12</sup>), who were persecuted and dying all the day and reckoned as sheep for slaughter (8<sup>55-56</sup>). The net result of Weizsäcker's brilliant pleading is merely to show the impossibility that this Scripture was addressed to Jewish Christians at Rome; the claims of Gentile Christianity are not thereby advanced an inch.

But now let us turn to Acts, our best, our only historical authority. From 28<sup>21-22</sup> it appears that the leading Jews of Rome knew then practically nothing either of Paul or of Christianity. That there was then flourishing under their own eyes and had been flourishing for years a world-famed congregation of Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, that this congregation, certainly partly Jewish, was well-instructed in Paulinism, having received from Paul himself the most elaborate explanation ever made of that doctrine,—all this is excluded absolutely by the closing passage in Acts (28<sup>17-31</sup>). And yet

it must have been known to Luke, if it was the fact. All the ingenuity of apologists is of no avail to escape these conclusions, which leap into our eyes directly from the sacred page. With justice the latest and most learned expounder of Acts, H. H. Wendt, concedes that this phenomenon (vv.<sup>21, 22</sup>) "ist sehr befremdlich." He can find no other solution than that of Tübingen, that Luke has here deliberately falsified, but in what interest, with what rational motive, it is impossible to see. And why does Wendt find it thus necessary to discredit his author? Simply and solely because of Rom. 1<sup>7, 15</sup> and 15<sup>22</sup>, which affirm the existence for many years of a congregation in Rome. But we have seen that in 1<sup>7, 15</sup> there is no warrant whatever for any such existence, and still more shall we see that there is none in 15<sup>22</sup>.

The argument thus far seems decisive against such conservative critics. He who can seriously hold at the same time to both the Roman address and the authenticity of Acts 28<sup>17-31</sup>, has lost the sense of opposites: he does not feel that *A* is not *not-A*, and it is useless to discuss with him further. But we ourselves would not be understood as maintaining the accuracy of the Lucan narrative. On the contrary, it seems to us to have dealt very freely with its original sources, only not in the sense of Tübingen. Of these sources the "*We*"-sections appear to be the most authentic, if not the only authentic, document of primitive Christianity. This document disappears in v.<sup>16</sup> of this chapter; the rest is the work of the compiler or recensor. According to it, Paul did indeed visit Rome, not however as a prisoner, but as a freeman, as Straatman and Van Manen have already perceived. It seems hard not to feel a new breath in 27<sup>1</sup>—"And when it was determined that *we* should sail away for Italy." What has this to do with the foregoing? It sounds strangely like a perfectly free proceeding on the part of *us*. Moreover, the whole bearing of Paul during the voyage is not that of a Roman prisoner, even when we make all allowance, with Overbeck, for interpolation. Oddities of expression repeatedly appear that make it difficult to think of a band of captives *en route* for Rome in charge of a centurion Julius. Such are the puzzling imperfect *παρεδίδουν* (they were delivering) v.<sup>1</sup>; "Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us"; and many others. Strangest of all is 28<sup>14</sup>, "where (at Puteoli) having found brethren we were entreated to tarry with them seven days." It is not strange that Blass should prefer *ἐπιμείναντες* to *ἐπιμείναι* (*having tarried* instead of *to tarry*) on the slender authority of H. 3. 33. 68. 95°. 137, syr.<sup>p</sup> gig. Theophyl. This looks very much like a correction of some one who felt the

difficulty as keenly as Blass does. Can we imagine a band of captives hunting up "brethren" in Puteoli? or those "brethren" persuading the captives to stay with them seven days? It seems plain on its face that the "We," including Paul, are making the trip of their own accord, taking passage where and when and how they can, stopping over wherever they will, and are under no Roman orders or surveillance. The feature of the captivity has been engrafted on the primitive account, with considerable skill, but not skilfully enough to produce an illusion. The later readings, which Blass has adopted in his  $\beta$ -text, appear to proceed from dissatisfaction with the earlier redaction as not sufficiently plausible. Thus, compare the accepted text of 27<sup>1</sup> with that of Blass, on the basis of flor. gig. syr.<sup>p. m<sup>arg</sup>.</sup>: Οὕτως οὖν ὁ ἡγεμὼν πέμπεσθαι αὐτὸν Καίσαρι ἔκρινεν, καὶ τῇ ἐπαύριον προσκαλεσάμενος ἑκατοντάρχην τινὰ σπειρής Σεβαστῆς ὀνόματι Ἰούλιον, παρέδωκεν αὐτῷ τὸν Παῦλον σὺν τοῖς λοιποῖς δεσμώταις. It seems very hard not to recognize in this verse an advanced stage of the gradual process of working over and washing out the distinctive features of the original "We-account." The words, "But when it was decided for *us* to sail away to *Italy*," showed too plainly the true state of the case, that it was a company of roving missionaries whose itinerary was undergoing recension, — hence the change in question. What this itinerary really said before *any* recension, is one of the most interesting questions in the whole range of human thought; but alas! it is unanswerable.

We observe in passing that there is no indication in 28<sup>14, 15</sup> of the presence of any Christians in Puteoli or in Rome: "the brethren" was a common name for the Jews, and such is very likely its application here (Acts *passim*).

The result thus far, then, is that Luke, so far from confirming the accepted text of Romans, contradicts it broadly, and there is no way to save that text except by discrediting Luke entirely; it is impossible that Luke should have been ignorant of "Paul's Epistle to Romans," and we can discover no adequate motive for a falsification not at all to the advantage of his hero.

Let us study still further this Introduction, 1<sup>8-10</sup>. The general purport is that the writer makes oath most solemnly that he had been for a long time desiring to visit his correspondents, had often-times planned to do so, but had been hindered, had been praying incessantly and most earnestly that he might in some way be prospered to voyage unto them. The language is exceedingly strong, even plethoric in its expression of this perpetual prayer and purpose



and scheming to make this visit. Consider such heaped-up intensives as ἀδιαλείπτως (unintermittently), πάντοτε (at all times), εἴ πως ἤδη ποτὲ (if by any means now at any time); so, too, the notion of prayer is repeated (προσευχῶν, δέόμενος), and of desiring to come to see them. Pushing aside for the moment all finer critical queries, we ask: Is this reality? or is it the exaggeration of fiction? That Paul should have desired to see Rome seems natural enough; but that he was incessantly praying and planning and yet always prevented, seems much overstrained. In Acts 19<sup>21</sup> we are told that at the close of his sojourn in Ephesus Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there I must also see Rome." This was only a few months before the supposed writing of this epistle to Romans, and there is no trace herein of the mood or experiences of our passage. Neither is there any other mention of Rome before A.D. 59. It appears then that Acts is entirely destitute of historic basis for Rom. 1<sup>8-15</sup>. More than this, however, the Lucan narrative positively forbids us to attribute to the apostle the temper and the designs of this passage. If he was continually praying and planning to get to Rome, why does Luke never hint it? Why did he not accomplish such a set and cherished purpose? How was such a forceful and energetic spirit invariably balked in such an important resolve? Why has no trace survived of the causes or occasions of his disappointments? Why did the man whose whole heart was bent Romeward expend himself for so many years on Ephesus and Corinth, on such insignificances as Philippi, and Thessalonica, and Berea? Why did he fare back and forth across the Ægean, when it was so easy to cross the Adriatic and make straight for the Seven-hilled City? It seems impossible for any one to read the book of Acts and extract from it even a faint suspicion that the apostle was for so many years wrestling with God in uninterrupted prayer and devising plans continually, to get to Rome, and that his prayers were still denied and his plans without exception thwarted. If Paul really wrote this to Romans, A.D. 58-59, then it is difficult to acquit him of the worst type of *pia vafritia et sancta adulatione*. For our part, we refuse to credit such a slander on the Apostle. Zahn, indeed, thinks he sees in all this the most indubitable marks of Paul addressing Romans!

When we pass now to the reasons given for this intense longing (ἐπιποθῶ), the difficulties are scarcely lightened. The first reason is, "that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be

established." This seems rational enough, and no one would think of carping, but for the explanation that immediately follows: "That is, to be co-comforted (*συνπαρακληθῆναι*) among you through the among-one-another faith, both of you and of me." This is confounding. The general idea that glimmers through this mist of words is that the writer longed to be comforted by their faith while they were comforted by his. But is it not strange that the great apostle should sink such a light craft of idea beneath such a cargo of syllables? The reason is good as far as it goes, but it is plainly inadequate to account for the ceaseless prayers and year-long planning. For Paul, on hearing that the Word was successfully preached among Romans, to thank God and take courage, was natural enough; but to fall into perpetual petitions and fruitless plans to see them, to comfort and be comforted, seems somewhat *de trop*. But not only is this reason inadequate, it is unrelated to the other reason of which it is the ostensible interpretation. Being "co-comforted" is not "imparting a spiritual gift." No exegete has succeeded in smoothing away this roughness. The reasons are not indeed contradictory, but they are two, they cannot be comprehended as one.

Moreover, the grammatical difficulties are great. The infinitive *συνπαρακληθῆναι* must have the subject *ἐμέ* understood, but why was it not expressed? It looks as if the aim were not clear statement but rather adumbration. And who can reconcile himself to such a phrase as "the among-one-another faith" (*τῆς ἐν ἀλλήλοις πίστεως*)? We may guess at the meaning, but why leave us to guess? It is hard to believe that this text is the original. The Dresden Codex G reads *διὰ τῆς ἀλλήλοις τῆς πίστεως*. These words are senseless, but whence did they come? Not from the Received Text, for it would be very strange for *ἐν* to fall out and for *τῆς* to be inserted at the same time. But *ἀλλήλοις* may have been originally a marginal note to explain *ὑμῖν* and have crept later into the text. Also the first two letters, *av*, of such words as *αἰτῆς* are often lost in the shorthand of the MSS., hence we may with plausibility read *διὰ τῆς αὐτῆς πίστεως*. Once more, let us remember that EN may easily be mistaken in copying for EME, and we obtain the probable archetype of G: *τοῦτ' ἐστὶ συνπαρακληθῆναι ἐμέ διὰ τῆς αὐτῆς πίστεως* (that is, for me to be comforted along with you through the same faith). So Michelsen. This is a far better text, but it is still probably an interpolation, for the Midrash (*τοῦτ' ἐστὶ*) is always suspicious, and the comforting of the apostle is not a spiritual gift from him to them.

This is not all, however. Verse <sup>13</sup> repeats still more emphatically the assurance of v.<sup>10</sup>, but adds a new reason, "that I may have some fruit in you also, even as in the rest of the Gentiles." This motive seems very natural, but it is different from those already assigned. The obvious meaning is that he wished to convert some among them, whoever they were, as he had already done among other Gentiles, implying that they, too, were Gentiles. Any other sense of "fruit" is artificial. The impartation of a spiritual gift to them could hardly be called "having fruit" among them; still less could being "co-comforted" by mutual faith. This third reason does not contradict the other two, but it is widely diverse; and we wonder that any man should assign three distinct reasons, and each as *the* reason, for doing what appears such a natural thing to do.

Lastly, in vv.<sup>14 15</sup> the matter is placed in still another light. It is no longer a question of the affections, of mood or temper or desire, but of conscience. The writer is under obligations, he is a debtor, it is his bounden duty to preach Gospel, and so he is ready, as far as he can, to preach to them also. Here again, we cannot say this last reason contradicts the others; but it in no way confirms them, it in no way concerns them. They are like four inscriptions on the four sides of a square-based pyramid. Certain it is that no Roman, on reading these lines, could be quite sure what was uppermost in the writer's mind, or just what was the real reason of his longed-for visit. Such a broadside does not suggest the pen of a clear-thinking man, who has one definite and sufficient ground for his conduct, who states it and has done with it; but it does suggest the reviser and the re-reviser, who is not quite satisfied with what lies written before him, and hence amends and re-amends and re-amends again. But even if all this were hypercritical, as certainly it is not, one other massive phenomenon could not fail to arrest our sight and fix our wonder. Granted that the reasons for wanting to visit them are all good and natural and in just order; what then? What has it all to do with what follows? Do these reasons, all taken at their face value, constitute any adequate motive for the composition of this "Epistle"? Do they form any natural introduction to the dogmatic exposition that succeeds them? It does not seem possible to answer "Yes." The writer has just expressed his yearning to *see* them, not to *write* to them. Surely he could have written, if it came to that, many times in these "many years." Also, by supposition, he was just on the point of realizing the sustained intention of so long a time; in a few months he would be in their midst. In all this we recognize no

grounds for writing, but rather possible excuses for not writing. But if they were his reasons for writing, why does he not say so? What would be more natural than this: "For a long time I have yearned to see you, for many reasons, and have even planned repeatedly to visit you and proclaim the Gospel in your midst. But thus far I have been hindered from coming, and being unable to address you in person, spurred on by a restless desire to advance your spiritual life, *I make bold to write to you and outline the Gospel I would preach among you, as I preach it among other Gentiles.*" This might be "bold in part," but it would be honest, apostolic, and, above all, intelligible. For our part, we cannot see how it is possible to dispense with some such words as those in Italics, if what follows is to be set in any rational relation to what goes before. The writer (reviser, recensor, compiler, or editor) appears to have felt the need of some mediation between the Introduction and the Exposition, and accordingly he has thrown in the strange clause, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel." Certainly not! Who had ever suspected he was? But how does this axiom bridge the chasm between the expressed desire to see them and the dogmatism that follows? We cannot say. No wonder that acute critics suspect this *οὐ γὰρ ἐπαισχύνομαι* to be an interpolation. But in any case we stand in presence of this singular spectacle: A writer, addressing a body of strangers, declares he has long planned to see them, but in vain, being ready to preach the Gospel among them as elsewhere, a Gospel that is power divine for salvation through faith, and immediately launches into a denunciation of heathen vice. This is as if some stranger should enter a public assembly, announce himself in terms of weighty import, state that he had long wished to know them, and then without further ado proceed to deliver an elaborate address in great measure incomprehensible. Whatever its merits, the abruptness would certainly astonish and call forth questioning glances.

That we read these verses with so little feeling for the grotesqueness of the implied situation, is due both to the reigning prejudice and to the fact that we have long since ceased to think of this epistle as a real letter addressed by a living Paul to living strangers at Rome, and have come to regard it as what it really is, as a theological treatise for all Christendom, epistolary in form and in form only, the universal voice of the Christ-Spirit, speaking out from the timeless, spaceless, unconditioned "depths divine." It is only the critic whose sacred duty it is to ask: When, where, by whom, to whom, on what occasion, for what end, was this letter written? Thus far the accepted

answers of Tradition are : A.D. 58-59, near Corinth, by Paul, to the congregation at Rome ; but the questions concerning *occasion* and *end* remain unanswerable. It is notorious that two generations of critics have applied themselves with unrelaxing zeal to the discussion of the composition of the Roman congregation, the circumstances that called forth the letter, and the object aimed at in writing it,—and all without any positive result whatever. What a splendid array of learning and abilities ! What shining names of Baur, Schwegler, Straatman, Blom, Hofmann, Weizsäcker, Mangold, Klostermann, Holsten, Hausrath, Volkmar, Reuss, Pfeiderer, Weiss, Godet, Holtzmann, Scholten, Schürer, and many others ! But what have they done ? What do they still continue to do ? Nothing but refute one another ! Like the heroes in Valhalla, they are resistless in attack, but impotent in defence. We can hardly hope that keener acumen or ampler scholarship will ever be brought to bear on the problem in hand ; since all these have failed to solve it, but have succeeded only in showing more and more clearly its apparent insolubility, we must in reason despair of any solution. The inextricable difficulties that entangle us are all given in our answers so complacently rendered as axioms : in A.D. 58-59, near Corinth, by Paul, to Romans. It would seem high time, then, to question even these, and when once the trial is fairly begun, the judgement will not linger.

So far, therefore, as we have now gone, the testimony lies heavily against the Roman address. Naturally we should here pass over to the 15th and 16th chapters, but a minute examination of these is not possible in this paper. Suffice it to promise that such an examination will reinforce the results already attained, mightily and at every point. Nor can the discussion be closed without similar scrutiny of the evidence furnished by Marcion and the Apostolic Fathers and the early Apologists ; but this, too, must be postponed.

We must not, however, dismiss these opening verses without calling attention, in conclusion, to their amazing epitome of doctrine. All that Loman has said so forcibly anent the address of Galatians (*Nalatenschap*, I. pp. 15-24) applies with added emphasis here and need not be repeated. Only imagine the astonishment of the "Romans" on receiving a letter with such an address as was never heard of before, of inordinate length, of impenetrable obscurity, dense with technical well-worn dogmatic phrases, unfamiliar yet used as if well-known and axiomatic,—a set of theological conundrums which no human divination has yet been able to solve. What must these simple-hearted, uncultured Christians have thought of all this self-

description?— They who had never before seen any other form of epistolary address than the unpretending

*Caius to Balbus : Greeting.*

Such an address, at that time, under those circumstances, seems to us a sheer impossibility. On the other hand, it is entirely natural, entirely self-explaining as a gradual deposit of the collective Christian consciousness, compacting itself generation after generation in watch-words and slogans attrite from the friction of centuries. Moreover, that it is *not a single unital consciousness* that here speaks to us, is evident in the two words *ἐλάβομεν* and *ὑμεῖς*. It appears almost psychologically impossible that a writer, beginning with the ancient form of address, in the *third person singular* (Παῦλος κ.τ.λ.), should pass over in the same address without any mediation to the *first person plural* (*we* have received). Much more, however, the introduction of the second person *you* (*ὑμεῖς*) at this stage (v.<sup>6</sup>), *without any antecedent whatever*, whereas the persons addressed are afterwards designated, according to usage, by the *third person* (v.<sup>7</sup>), would indicate incredible obfuscation in the mind of the apostle, or point unerringly to the interpolator. Can we imagine Paul dictating these words, as they now stand, to Tertius? Not unless we endow him with a multiple consciousness.