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THE READING *ὄς οὐδέ* IN GAL. 2 5

B. W. BACON

YALE UNIVERSITY

SCHOLARS are deeply indebted to Ernest D. Burton for his careful and accurate *Commentary on Galatians* in the "International Critical" series. We waited long for it, but our patience was rewarded. Whatever faults may be found, industry, accuracy, and caution are in evidence, features especially appropriate to a series of this character.

They are supremely requisite for the treatment of a passage at once so difficult and so vital to a historical appreciation of the most critical period of early church history as Paul's account of his conference at Jerusalem with the "Pillars" in Gal. 2 1-10. Perhaps most of all in verse 5, where the interpreter has to contend not only with ambiguities created in part by a broken grammatical construction (in the generally accepted reading) but also with variants current since the earliest witnesses to the text.

With his habitual caution Burton here takes sides with the majority of modern scholars against the Western reading. It has indeed in modern times the support of few besides Klostermann and Zahn. But we cannot feel that it has received full justice in Burton's curt dismissal, which relegates the interpretation of Zahn to a footnote. Let me cite in full the treatment accorded to this question on page 79 of the Commentary.

Of the numerous constructions that have been adopted for the phrase *διὰ . . . ψευδαδέλφους* the following may be named: 1. Those which make it limit some following word. (a) *εἰξάμεν*. So, omitting *ὄς οὐδέ* in verse 5, Tert. *et al.*, and in

modern times Zahn. This yields the sense, "but because of the false brethren. . . I yielded for a brief space." This may be dismissed because based on a text insufficiently supported by textual evidence, and giving the impossible sense that Paul yielded by way of the subjection demanded by the false brethren that the truth of the Gospel might continue with the Gentiles.

To this Burton subjoins a footnote as follows:

Zahn, like Tert. before him, finds the yielding and the subjection to have been to the pillar apostles and in the fact of coming to Jerusalem to submit this question to the apostles there (not in the circumcision of Titus, which he maintains Paul denies to have taken place) yet supposes that it was not demanded by the apostles, but more probably by the Antioch church. See *Com.* pp. 93 *f.* A stranger distortion of the record it would be hard to imagine.

A textual note on verse 5 (p. 85) gives the evidence and Burton's deduction from it as follows:

Οἱς οὐδὲ πρὸς ὤραν. The reading at this point has been the subject of extended discussion, especially by Klostermann, *Probleme im Aposteltexte*, pp. 36 *ff.*, Sief. *Com. ad loc.*, and Zahn *Com. ad loc.* and Excurs. 1. The principal evidence may be summarized as follows:

(1) πρὸς ὤραν (without οἱς οὐδέ): D* de plur. codd. lat. et gr. ap. Victorin. codd. lat. ap. Hier. al. Iren. *int.* Tert. Victorin. Ambrst. Pelag.

(2) οὐδὲ πρὸς ὤραν: codd. gr. et lat. ap. Ambrst., quidam (codd.?) ap. Victorin. Mcion. Syr. (psh.), and (accg. to Sief.) one ms. of Vg.

(3) οἱς πρὸς ὤραν: Jerome quotes certain persons as asserting: *et hoc esse quod in codicibus legatur latinis, "quibus ad horam cessimus."* Primasius (XI 209, quoted by Klostermann, p. 83; cf. Plummer, *Com. on 2 Corinthians*, p. lv.) says: *Latinus habet: "quibus ad horam cessimus."* Sedulius: *Male in Latinis codicibus legitur: "quibus ad horam cessimus."*

(4) οἱς οὐδὲ πρὸς ὤραν: ABCDcorr. FGKLP, 33, and Grk. mss. generally, f g Vg. Syr. (psh. harcl.) Boh. Arm. Aeth.

codd. gr. ap. Hieron.; also Bas. Epiph. Euthal. Thdr. Damas. Aug. Ambr. Hier.

Klostermann and Zahn adopt the first reading. Tdf. Treg. WH. Ws. RV. and modern interpreters generally, the fourth. The evidence shows clearly that the difficulty of the latter reading was early felt, and that, for whatever reason, a syntactically easier text was current among the Latins. The evidence against *οἱ οὐδέ*, however, is not sufficient to overcome the strong preponderance in its favour, or the improbability that anyone would have introduced the anacoluthic *οἱ*. But since the reading *οἱ* without *οὐδέ* is very weakly attested it remains to accept the reading which has both *οἱ* and *οὐδέ*.

Before considering whether the older and shorter reading rejected by Burton and the moderns generally gives (as he declares) an "impossible sense," scientific method requires that we should first consider the textual evidence. Afterwards we may apply our results to Burton's statement that "the evidence against *οἱ οὐδέ* is not sufficient to overcome the strong preponderance in its favor, or the improbability that anyone would have introduced the anacoluthic *οἱ*."

Let me first repeat in simpler terms the explanation of the variant readings which commends itself to Burton. It is as follows: Paul wrote *οἱ οὐδέ πρὸς ὥραν εἴξαμεν*. Burton renders this "to whom not for an hour did we yield by way of the subjection (demanded)." But this forms an anacoluthon. No one could tell what ought to follow, because the sentence had begun *διὰ δὲ τοὺς παρεισάκτους ψευδαδέλφους*. It might provisionally be rendered, "Now it was because of the false brethren surreptitiously brought in;" but commentators agree to disagree as to what "it" would refer to. The sense is hopelessly obscured. Hence in order to make the text "syntactically easier" the words *οἱ οὐδέ* were omitted by copyists, making Paul responsible for "the absurd statement that, in order that the truth of the gospel that men are free from law might abide with the Gentiles, he yielded to the demand of the legalists and did as they required" (p. 86). Some texts have both the anacoluthon and the "absurdity," but this form is "very weakly attested," and may

be assumed by common consent to be secondary. Such is Burton's explanation of the variants.

All critics will agree that one of the factors to be considered is the arbitrary dealing of Marcion with the text (ca. 140) and Tertullian's reply (ca. 220). Tertullian accuses Marcion of misrepresenting Paul's deferential attitude toward the Pillars in "yielding to the submission that was demanded on account of the false brethren" and (in general) of interpolating the text. Marcion had *οὐδὲ πρὸς ὥραν* "not even for an hour," a flat contradiction of Tertullian's "we yielded for an hour," together with a cancellation of the anacoluthic *οἷς*. Neither Marcion's reading nor Tertullian's has any "syntactical" difficulty, but those who took Tertullian's view of Paul's attitude toward the Pillars and encountered Marcion's negative in the text would be strongly inclined to regard it as one of his notorious and arbitrary interpolations. As Burton views the case the suspicion was unjust. Marcion did not interpolate the negative, but only made the text "syntactically easier" by cancelling *οἷς* and so removing the anacoluthon, a real improvement stating what Paul really meant, but grammatically. As Zahn views the case the suspicion was well founded. Marcion changed the sense. But Tertullian was also wrong. Paul did acknowledge yielding, but not what Tertullian understands.

The strength of Burton's view is "the improbability that anyone would have introduced the anacoluthic *οἷς*." But Tertullian's text has the older attestation. It is a typical case of "Western non-interpolation." Marcion's interpolation would be of the most obvious kind, and its prevailing in the later Alexandrian and Syrian types of text would be just what the apparent "absurdity" of the non-interpolated text would lead us to expect. But does Burton's explanation explain?

Remembering that the critic's task is to choose that one among attested readings which combines fidelity to the context with explanation of the origin of all the variants let us examine the relation of the four, designating them, in the order given by Burton, the Western, the Marcionite, the Latin, and the Alexandrian. These names are based simply on the character of the attestation, which will not be disputed. Probably all

critics will also agree that readings (2), the so-called Marcionite, and (3), the Latin, are secondary. Noone would think of adopting either as the original. Nevertheless they may be important for the explanation of other variants.

Of the two readings which remain, (1), the Western (without $\alpha\varsigma$ $\omicron\upsilon\delta\acute{\epsilon}$), and (4), the Alexandrian (with $\alpha\varsigma$ $\omicron\upsilon\delta\acute{\epsilon}$), both are admittedly "difficult." The Western (adopted by Zahn) gives one sense which Burton justly calls "impossible." Tertullian is our unimpeachable witness that early in the third century this sense was commonly taken to be the intended meaning, and if so this reading must indeed be rejected; for however acceptable in Tertullian's day, the interpretation flatly contradicts the context. Paul certainly did not mean to say "I yielded to the demand for the circumcision of Titus on account of the pressure brought to bear by the false brethren." It is only by interpreting in another sense than Tertullian's that the reading can be admitted.

On the other hand the introduction of "the anacoluthic $\alpha\varsigma$ " before $\omicron\upsilon\delta\acute{\epsilon}$ can be accounted for by the wish to avoid the representation that Paul showed an unyielding attitude toward the Pillars, and to make it clear that not these but the false brethren were the objects of his resentment. On this supposition the Alexandrian reading (4) would be tertiary, a softening of the too peremptory Marcionite (2). The "weakly attested" Latin (3), which all will admit to be unauthentic, will of course be easily accounted for as due to conflation of (1) and (4). Whether the "strong preponderance" of manuscript authority in favor of (4) should prevail against the thin but very early stream of (1) is a question to be settled by analogy of other "Western non-interpolations." We must choose between these two.

If there is "difficulty" with the Alexandrian reading (4) such as to give rise to variants (apart from the anacoluthon produced by the introduction of $\alpha\varsigma$) it can only be in the odium attaching to all Marcionite readings. But we can attach very little weight to such a plea in view of the fact that not only were Marcionite supplements such as the Prologues current in the West, but in this specific case the reading of Marcion (2) was in fact quite widely adopted both in East and West in spite of Tertullian's protest.

On the supposition that reading (4) was the original, reading (2) can very easily be accounted for. Marcion, its author, removed the anacoluthon by simple cancellation of the superfluous *ος*. The marvel will be only that it was not done before. Paul, it is true, has been guilty elsewhere (in fact in the very next verse) of leaving a sentence unfinished, though it might be difficult to point to another case in which he has "made shipwreck of the grammar" to the obscuration of his meaning, if not the total loss of it, on an issue of vital importance. But if we can credit Paul with such bad composition in such a vital context there will be no difficulty at all in accounting for the variants. Marcion made the self-evident correction, later transcribers went further and cancelled the authentic *οὐδέ* also, to remove what they regarded as Marcion's false representation of conflict between the apostles.

If, on the other hand, we assume the Western reading (1) as the original, there will be quite enough of difficulty to account for all the variants, as we have seen; but difficulty of a very different character, not a difficulty of syntax, but of the sense. Paul will have averred that "on account of the false brethren" and their nefarious work he yielded *τῇ ὑποταγῇ* for the time being, in order that *ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ εὐαγγελίου* might remain. Understood as Tertullian understood this it is more than a "difficult" sense to ascribe to Paul. It is out and out "impossible." But (as Zahn has shown) it is by no means the only sense. Nor could Tertullian himself have been led into adopting it had he known (as the Galatians doubtless did) that Titus was not a circumcised man. For in spite of the doubts expressed by Professor Lake on this point¹ this seems to us a self-evident assumption. Either way we have quite difficulty enough to account for Marcion's introduction of his peremptory *οὐδέ*.

Thus with a very even division of the manuscript evidence (for the "strong preponderance" claimed by Professor Burton for the Alexandrian reading would seem to be at least counter-balanced by the Western non-interpolation type of its alter-

¹ *Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 276 ff. Lake is undecided as between readings (1) and (4), but also regards it as possible that Paul circumcised Titus, which Burton (p. 81) denies.

native) we have perhaps an equally even division of the transcriptional. Granted either the Western or the Alexandrian form as original the other three can easily be derived from it. In these circumstances we are inevitably thrown back upon the context. As between the two readings, both of which involve difficulty, that one must be chosen in which the difficulty is more apparent than real. That must be rejected in which on closer scrutiny the difficulty turns out to be more real than apparent.

On the surface it seems a very easy supposition that Paul here made a grammatical slip which Marcion corrected by the simple process of cancelling the *of*. But is this supposition after all so easy as it looks? It involves for Professor Burton (and in this inference, if we grant the premisses, he seems to be correct) the supposition that the nefarious "false brethren" who "sneaked in" to spy out the liberty of their more liberal brethren were recently admitted members of the church at Jerusalem, or "the Christian community in general;" whereas it is surely more natural to identify them with those whom Acts 15 1 describes as "certain men which came down from Judaea (to Antioch) and taught the brethren saying, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses ye cannot be saved." It is hard to imagine the primitive church in Jerusalem, or even "the Christian community in general" in this period as a field in which there was any appreciable liberty to spy out (cf. Acts 21 20f.). With all due "allowance for the heat of controversy" it does not seem probable that Paul would apply to the conservative element at Jerusalem language only paralleled in its severity by the denunciation of II Cor. 11 4-15. We must at least suppose that he has chiefly in mind certain individuals, who (like the intruders at Corinth) "stretched themselves overmuch to go beyond their measure in other men's province in regard of things ready to their hand." Professor Burton admits that the conference between Paul and the Pillars at Jerusalem since it was "private" necessarily excludes the presence of these men (p. 117). But he thinks it not improbable that they had gone to Antioch from Jerusalem and returned in the wake of Paul and Barnabas in such a way as to exert indirectly a pressure upon him through "James and Cephas and John." In addition to this duplication

of the pressure, first at Antioch, afterwards at Jerusalem, the interpretation of Lightfoot, here adopted by Burton, involves much 'reading between the lines.'

Professor Burton does well, in our judgement, to reject all proposed methods of filling out the anacoluthon of the Alexandrian text save that of Lightfoot. In his own rendering this gives the sense: "And not even Titus. . . was compelled to be circumcised, and¹ (what shows more fully the significance of the fact) it was urged because of the false brethren." Two considerations make it easier to adopt this somewhat difficult transition. (1) If Paul's intention when he began the sentence was to explain the action of the Pillars in putting pressure upon him rather than his own action in resisting, he would naturally continue with the subject of *δοκοῦντες*, as is actually the case (verse 6). (2) If (as Lightfoot holds) "he intended to add 'the leading apostles urged me to yield'", but was diverted into a use of the first person (*εἰξάμεν*) by his eagerness to deny at once any yielding to the false brethren, it would be not unnatural to resume in a form which implies the intention to continue in the first person ("but from the *δοκοῦντες* we received nothing"), breaking off in a second anacoluthon which resumes with the subject in the third ("but to me the *δοκοῦντες* added nothing"). The correction of Paul's syntax required by this view would give in free rendering: "And not even Titus was compelled to be circumcised. Now it was on account of the false brethren (that the leading apostles urged me to yield). To the false brethren, however, we gave way not even for a moment. But the Pillars, highly esteemed as they are by us all, made no addition whatever to my message."

This sense, if it be permissible to read so much between the lines, is compatible with the context and with the history so far as it can be reconstructed. But Lightfoot manifestly does not overstate the case when he comments: "The counsels of the Apostles of the Circumcision are the hidden rock on which the grammar of the sentence is wrecked." We can adopt this rendering if need be; but there is no escape from grammatical

¹ Does not Professor Burton mean "although"?

difficulty under the Alexandrian text unless by the "joining of the phrase ("Now it was on account of the false brethren") with ἀνεθέμην or ἀνέβην advocated by some of the older modern expositors;" a rendering which while yielding (as Burton admits) "a not unreasonable sense, and avoiding many of the difficulties encountered by the other constructions," is excluded by the necessity placed upon the reader of supplying mentally a word left so far behind.

From the Alexandrian reading, whose difficulty seemed on the surface so easy to remove, but which in the end drives us to an extreme of tacit understanding, let us turn to the Western, which at first strikes the reader as "impossible," because he takes it as did Tertullian, not having the knowledge open to the Galatians that Titus was uncircumcised.

Here we note first of all that the sense which according to Professor Burton is "not unreasonable" and "avoids many of the difficulties encountered by the other constructions" becomes perfectly admissible; because the reader is not obliged to "mentally supply a word left far behind." On the contrary, in the Western form of the text the sentence moves straight forward after the full stop at the end of verse 3 ("But not even was Titus compelled to be circumcised"). Proceeding in the language of Professor Burton's own rendering we read next: "Now it was because of the false brethren surreptitiously brought in, who sneaked in . . . to bring us into bondage, that we gave way for the moment τῇ ὑποταγῇ, that the ἀλήθεια τοῦ εὐαγγελίου might be safeguarded for you." We leave untranslated for the present the terms which are likely to raise objection, in order to call attention to the patent fact that *if* a reasonable sense can be found for these, no difficulty whatever remains as to the opening clause (διὰ δὲ τοὺς παρεισάκτους κτλ.). Paul is continuing the explanation of his change of policy. Up to the time when the "false brethren" sneaked in for their nefarious work he had consistently maintained an attitude of independence toward "those who were apostles before him." He had carried this policy of non-intercourse to an extent which many who did not appreciate his reasons would regard as extreme. He had reason, however, as the event showed, to hold his head high on

this matter of his personal authority as an independent apostle, not taking any action which might lend color to the charge that he obtained his gospel "from men or through a man." But a change of policy became necessary. After fourteen years of unmolested and fruitful work among the Gentiles, opposition from Judaea began to make itself felt. The counteragitation became so serious that Paul feared his whole work past and future might be jeopardised. He was even placed in a position where he had to choose between holding to his personal authority as an independent apostle, and safeguarding to the Gentile world "the truth of the gospel." For he was directly challenged to a comparison of his gospel with that of the eye-witnesses. Under such circumstances Paul's choice was inevitable. On the question of going up to Jerusalem to submit his gospel to them who were apostles before him he now reversed his policy. Of course he did so reluctantly, knowing full well how the Judaizers would point to it as proving a *ὑποταγή* which placed him in a position of lower rank or "subordination" to the personal disciples of Jesus. This too was not so much a matter of personal dignity and self-respect as of concern for the reception of his gospel. Without the prestige of first-hand apostleship his work would undoubtedly suffer. But it was only *πρὸς ὥραν*. His prestige might suffer "for the time being," or "momentarily" from his consent to submit his gospel to the approval or disapproval of the Pillars. In the end he would be able to prove an apostleship from God of unexcelled authority. Hence, as the peril to the missionary work in which he and Barnabas were jointly engaged became more and more apparent, Paul "yielded" (*εἴξαμεν*). The yielding was of course not on the issue of "the truth of his gospel," but on the issue of "the submission demanded," and even so not a permanent *ὑποταγή*, nor a yielding of the principle involved, but only a concession "for the time being." Paul associates Barnabas with himself in this "yielding", thus seeming to imply that Barnabas too had felt a reluctance like his own to submitting the question involved to such a tribunal. Barnabas as well as Paul had reason to know how great a mental enlargement through the grace of the Lord Jesus must come to these *δοκῶντες* if they should actually approve without reserve the

gospel Paul was preaching among the Gentiles. The fact that they did so must have seemed a remarkable confirmation of the "revelation" by which Paul's last objections to going up were removed. If the result had not been to his mind such a confirmation of the "revelation" he would hardly have mentioned its occurrence.

In the preceding paragraph we have already shown in what new sense the two contrasted terms *ἡ ὑποταγή* and *ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ εὐαγγελίου* may be taken. They may refer respectively to the two issues which all interpreters regard as fundamental to the struggle, and which Paul clearly differentiates in the outline of his argument. By *ἡ ὑποταγή* he would mean the inferiority in rank and authority to the *δοκοῦντες* which the "false brethren" were determined to force upon him. They made plausible demand indirectly, through the leaders of the Antioch church (so Zahn), that Paul and Barnabas, if their gospel of uncircumcision was to be allowed free course, should submit it to the approval of the Jerusalem Pillars. It was a very shrewdly conceived dilemma, which (as we have seen) Paul could not entirely escape. If he yielded he confessed *ὑποταγή*, if he refused it would be held that he feared to submit the truth of his gospel to the judgement of the most authoritative and authentic witnesses of Jesus' teaching. For it is hardly necessary to add that by *ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ εὐαγγελίου* Paul means the matter of greater consequence, the continuation of his proclamation of salvation by grace "apart from works of law" to which the "false brethren" were interposing more and more serious obstacles. The course Paul actually took in obedience to "a revelation" was undoubtedly the right one, though involving no small sacrifice, and a very large element of faith in the Christian good sense of the Pillars, as well as faith in the God who had revealed his Son in Paul. It was justified by the event, though many years of struggle were to intervene before Paul could entirely recover the prestige of his apostleship, placed anew in jeopardy by the "cowardice" of Peter at Antioch. His loss was our gain; for the vindication of the *δικονία τῆς καυῆς διαθήκης* to which Paul was forced at Corinth remains the noblest defence of the liberty of the Spirit in the whole history of religious teaching.

We come thus finally to a choice between the two alternate readings in Gal. 2 5. Both alike show difficulty; otherwise we should have no explanation of the variants. The difficulty with the Alexandrian (which, although admittedly of later attestation, has the support of the great uncials and a great majority of modern critics) is a matter of syntax, seemingly easy to correct, in fact very early corrected by the arbitrary pen of Marcion. But Marcion's cancellation of "the anacoluthic *of*," easy as it seems, yields no satisfactory result. As emended the passage adjusts itself as well as before to the context as a whole, and to the character of Paul. Unemended the Alexandrian text is far from satisfactory. Witness the widely varying attempts at rendering. The contrary is the case with the Western. Here on the surface the difficulty is so great that modern critics have pronounced it "impossible." To Marcion it clearly was so; for he plumply inserts in it the negative *οὐδέ*. But closer scrutiny reveals the fact that the sense which superficial or biased interpreters such as Tertullian imposed upon it is not the only one. Rendered as the context requires, with due regard for the two issues between which Paul was forced to choose, his prestige as an apostle, and free course for his free gospel, this early reading loses its difficulty. We cannot indeed regard it as so superior to the Alexandrian as to compel its adoption; but regarded as an alternative, it offers nothing un-Pauline. Interpreted as above it may even shed new light on the most vital, and at the same time one of the most perplexing incidents in the primitive history of our faith.