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A NOTE ON GALATIANS 2:3-8

Ronald Y. K. Fung*

In the *Expository Times* 62 (1950-51) 380, D. Warner proposed that Gal 2:3-8 should be regarded as an interpolation (by Titus). This view was based on "several peculiarities" in the passage: (a) "The passage can stand alone like a minor letter inserted in the main Epistle. . . . [Its] removal restores the smoothness of the factual accounts which lead up to Paul's defence in 2:14ff."; (b) there seems to be a contradiction between v 6 and vv 9-10 in Paul's esteem of the apostles; (c) in addition to five words that are *hapaxes* either in Paul or in the NT, the greatest peculiarity is the presence of the Greek word *Petros*, for "elsewhere in Galatians, and throughout his other Epistles, Paul used the Aramaic form—*Kēphas.*"

The last-named peculiarity, together with the consideration that "it is very difficult to see any motive . . . for putting the man second in the list of three [in v 9] after giving him such prominence before," has led J. C. O'Neill similarly to "conjecture that the phrase *kathōs Petros tēs peritomēs* and the word *Petrō* [vv 7-8] were originally glosses to the text."[1]

We should like to submit that all of the above observations are insufficient to warrant the conclusion that the verses under discussion have been interpolated into the original text as Paul dictated it. Our reasons for dissent are as follows:

1. Little weight can be attached to the first of Warner's arguments. Smoothness is certainly not the first criterion of authenticity in Paul.

2. The apparent contradiction in Paul's esteem of the apostles is due to a certain ambivalence in his relationship with the Jerusalem authorities: He wants to show that while he was not dependent on them he was also not dissociated from them.[2]

3. We cannot say that Paul could not have known and used the *hapaxes* in question. The presence of the unique *Petros* in vv 7-8 alone in Paul is indeed a baffling problem, but this is perhaps not completely incapable of being resolved. O. Cullmann [3] and E. Dinkler[4] have suggested that in vv 7-8 Paul is citing from a more or less official record of the conference but changes the reference to himself to the first person to suit the context, while in v 9 he is repeating the gist of the

*Ronald Fung is lecturer at the China Graduate School of Theology in Hong Kong.

[1]J. C. O'Neill, *The Recovery of Paul's Letter to the Galatians* (London: SPCK, 1972) 37.

[2]Cf. J. Knox, *IDB* 2 (1962) 340*a*; F. F. Bruce, "Paul and Jerusalem," *TB* 19 (1968) 3-25, esp. 5; D. Guthrie, *Galatians* (London: Nelson, 1969) 47.

[3]O. Cullmann, *Peter: Disciple, Apostle, Martyr* (2d ed.; London: SCM, 1962) 20; *TDNT* 6 (1968) 100 n. 6.

[4]E. Dinkler as cited in H. Schlier, *Der Brief an die Galater* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965) 77 n. 2, and in F. F. Bruce, "Galatian Problems: 5. Galatians and Christian Origins," *BJRL* 55 (1972-73) 264-284, esp. 279 with n. 3.

citation in his own words.[5] This document hypothesis is regarded by some scholars as a well-grounded conjecture and a plausible solution to the problem.[6] On the other hand, it has been criticized by H. Fürst as making "the water flow up instead of down the hill."[7] Fürst raised two main objections. First, the Jerusalem document would presumably have used the Aramaic name *Kēphas,* but the text has *Petros.* If it be supposed that the present text is based on a duplicate in Greek of the alleged document,[8] then the fact that the Aramaic form of Peter's name occurs as a rule in Paul's letters becomes all the more puzzling. For "if . . . the Jerusalem community were already so obliging as to translate the name *Kephas* in a document, then surely Paul, according to all that we know of him, should be the first to use this translated Greek name in his predominantly Gentile-Christian communities in Galatia and at Corinth."[9] Second, if Paul had changed the reference to himself to the first person, then the question arises as to why he should not also have inserted the name *Kēphas,* by which Peter was known to the churches in Galatia and Greece and which Paul uses readily elsewhere.[10] Fürst's own solution to the problem is to suppose that in translating the Aramaic name into its Greek form *Petros* instead of writing the customary *Kēphas* Paul is here thinking of the significance of the name and is seeking to assign a higher value to his own position by placing himself beside Peter, "the rock."[11]

Without stopping to enquire whether from this explanation support could legitimately be derived for the theory of the primacy of Peter (as Fürst apparently thinks), we may say that the fundamental idea in the explanation—namely, that Paul has in view the significance of the name—is in harmony with the fact that his intention in Gal 2:1-10—as indeed in the entire autobiographical section 1:11-2:14—is to support his claim of an independent mission and independent authority. The events of his second post-conversion visit to Jerusalem show the full recognition given by the Jerusalem leaders to the gospel and apostolic office that were already his prior to the meeting of the two parties, and in this connec-

[5]Differently J. Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (Richmond: John Knox, 1959) 62 n. 2, who takes vv 7-8 to be Paul's formulation and v 9 a citation of the agreement. F. Hahn, *Mission in the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1965) 80 n. 1, similarly considers v 9 to be a report and vv 7-8 to reflect the new situation that had developed by the time of the Jerusalem meeting, while E. Bammel, *TDNT* 6 (1968) 909 n. 224, states that "in Gl. 2:7-9b Paul interprets the decree given in 2:9c-10a."

[6]E.g. W. Schmithals, *Paul and James* (London: SCM, 1965) 52. Cf. Bruce, "Galatians and Christian Origins" 279; "Further Thoughts on Paul's Autobiography: Galatians 1:11-2:14," *Jesus und Paulus: Festschrift für Werner Georg Kümmel zum 70. Geburtstag* (ed. E. E. Ellis and E. Grässer; 2d ed.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978) 21-29, esp. 27; R. P. Martin, *New Testament Foundations. Vol. 2: Acts-Revelation* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1978) 150.

[7]H. Fuŕst, "Paulus und die 'Säulen' der Jerusalemer Urgemeinde (Gal 2, 6-9)," *Studiorum Paulinorum Congressus Internationalis Catholicus 1961* (AnBib 17-18; Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1963), 2. 3-10, esp. 5.

[8]Cf. Cullmann, *Peter* 20: "Perhaps . . . he here cites an official document, in the Greek translation of which the form *Petros* was used."

[9]Fürst, "Paulus und die 'Säulen' " 4.

[10]Ibid., p. 5.

[11]Ibid., pp. 6-7 n. 1.

tion the use of *Petros* would serve to emphasize that Paul's apostolate was fully equal to that of Peter, "the rock," the leader of the twelve.[12] This explanation is consonant with another fact: While *kêpā'* in Aramaic, like *Petros* in Greek, was not a proper name[13] but rather pointed possibly to aspects of Peter's character but more probably to the role assigned him by Jesus as the foundation rock of the Church,[14] yet for those Christians who did not understand Aramaic (and such would most of Paul's Galatian readers be) *kêpā'* would have been nothing more than a name. But the translation of the Aramaic nickname into Greek would have the effect of bringing out its meaning and indicating something of its significance. If this may be accepted as a satisfactory explanation of the peculiar occurrence of the name *Petros* in Gal 2:7-8 (or for that matter if the document hypothesis should after all be correct), then the last of Warner's arguments also loses much of its force.

4. The other objection raised by O'Neill—namely, that Gal 2:9 conflicts with vv 7-8 in its description of Peter's position—has been met in various ways. G. Klein[15] maintains that whereas vv 7-8 represent the earlier situation at the time of the Jerusalem meeting, 2:9 reflects the state of affairs obtaining at the time of Paul's writing. This theory, based as it is on the document hypothesis, is together with the latter rejected by Fürst, who thinks that the apparent discrepancy is rather to be explained by supposing that "the Judaistic mischief-makers in Galatia invoke James as the first of their would-be chief witnesses against Paul and Paul on the other side names precisely James as the first of those who extended to him and Barnabas the hand of fellowship."[16] It is more natural, however, to infer from the order in which the "pillars" are listed in 2:9 that at the time of the meeting James, not Peter, was the authoritative leader in the Jerusalem Church—a position to which he had moved from that of playing "a somewhat leading role *beside*" Peter at the time of Paul's first post-conversion visit (1:18-19).[17] This transfer of leadership in the Jerusalem Church was probably a result of Peter's imprisonment under Herod Agrippa I. After his miraculous release from prison he "went to another place" (Acts 12:17) and seems to have increasingly devoted himself to missionary work, as not only Gal 2:7-8; 2:11-14 but also 1 Cor 9:5; 1 Pet 1:1; 5:13 attest.[18] At the time of the meeting reported in Gal 2:1-10, then, Peter

[12]We may note with Bruce ("Further Thoughts on Paul's Autobiography" 26) an interesting development in the relation between Paul and Peter: "In Gal 1:18-20 Paul is Cephas's guest; in Gal 2:1-10 he is his fellow-apostle; in Gal 2:11-14 he is his critic."

[13]Cf. Cullmann, *TDNT* 6 (1968) 100-101; R. E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John (i-xii)* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1975) 76. Brown observes that in Galilean Aramaic the name was perhaps *qêpā'*.

[14]Cf. Cullmann, *TDNT* 6 (1968) 108.

[15]As Cited in Fürst, "Paulus und die 'Säulen' " 8; U. Wilckens, *TDNT* 7 (1971) 735 n. 29; Bruce, "Galatians and Christian Origins" 280.

[16]Fürst, "Paulus und die 'Säulen' " 9.

[17]Cf. Cullmann, *Peter* 43-44, 42.

[18]Cf. *Peter in the New Testament* (ed. R. E. Brown, K. P. Donfried and J. Reumann; Minneapolis: Augsburg; New York: Paulist, 1973) 32-33 with n. 72.

was the head of the Jewish missionary enterprise dependent on Jerusalem, and for this reason Peter alone is mentioned in vv 7-8 as the apostle to the Jews.[19] On this showing, the different "ranking" of Peter in vv 7-8 and v 9 is but a faithful reflection of the historical situation.

[19]Cf. Cullmann, *Peter* 44.