

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 246 – September 3rd – 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1

Works frequently referenced in these notes on 2 Corinthians

Carson, Donald A	<i>From Triumphalism to Maturity: A new exposition of 2 Corinthians 10-13</i> , Leicester, IVP, 1986
Kruse, Colin	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Tyndale Commentary), London, IVP, 1987
Martin, Ralph P	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Word Biblical Commentary), Waco Texas, Word Books, 1986
Tasker, RVG	<i>2 Corinthians</i> (Tyndale Commentary), London, Tyndale Press, 1958

2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1

This passage, 6:14-7:1, does not sit easily in context. Some have therefore argued that it consists of general instruction by Paul on the theme of living a distinctively Christian life. This fragment of Paul's teaching, they suggest, which may have originally come from elsewhere in his correspondence with the Corinthians (including part of one of the two lost letters), is now mislocated here, breaking the flow between 6:13 and 7:2. Others (e.g Fitzmyer, Dahl, Betz), go so far as to question Pauline authorship altogether. They point to peculiarity of vocabulary and suggest also that the passage reflects a legalistic exclusivism foreign to Paul. Martin speaks of the arguments against Pauline authorship as unconvincing. Nevertheless, he suggests that there are strong reasons to suppose that the passage also reflects influences other than Paul. Martin adopts, with modification, the view of Rensberger that "Paul used a piece of tradition put together previously by a Christian of Essene background."

There is no manuscript support for the hypothesis that these verses belong elsewhere, nor is it necessary to view this passage as misplaced. These verses can be viewed as Paul's exhortation to his children before returning to the theme of his relationship with them in 7:2. Paul is exhorting them to respond to him and to have done with everything that marked their pagan way of life. It is not unusual for Paul to be carried away with one theme before returning to the main point of his letter. Martin argues that these verses are "to be seen as Paul's continued appeal to his alienated children to believe his Gospel of reconciliation and thereby to break with the unbelieving world with which – however unwittingly – they have identified themselves. In our view, and against most interpreters, we see 6:14-7:1 as integral to Paul's closing argument begun in chap. 5 and completed in 7:3ff. It is not a digression but a logical development."

Verse 14

Μὴ γίνεσθε ἑτεροζυγοῦντες ἀπίστοις· τίς γὰρ μετοχὴ δικαιοσύνης καὶ ἀνομίας, ἢ τίς κοινωνία φωτὶ πρὸς σκότος;

Μὴ γίνεσθε present imperative "suggests that the Corinthians were, in Paul's mind, already engaged in the process of joining themselves to the ἀπίστοι, 'unbelievers.'" Martin

ἑτεροζυγεω be mismatched

"The metaphor of the yoke which he (Paul) uses here shows that he is thinking of close relationships in which, unless both parties are true believers, Christian harmony cannot be expected to flourish and Christian consistency cannot fail to be compromised." Hughes

ἀπιστος, ον unfaithful, unbelieving

Cf. 4:2,3. The alliances being spoken of here are not primarily marital but rather participation in pagan practices. Martin thinks that this could refer back to Paul's teaching in 1 Cor 5:9-11, "but more likely it looks back to their opposition to the apostolic kerygma as brought by Paul and embodied in his person."

μετοχη, ης f partnership
δικαιοσυνη, ης f righteousness
ἀνομια, ας f wickedness, lawlessness

Cf. Rom 6:13-19 where Paul contrasts the idea being a slave of righteousness with being a slave to ἀνομια.

ἡ οἱ
κοινωνια, ας f fellowship, participation
φως, φωτος n light
σκοτος, ους n darkness, evil

Cf. 4:4-6; 11:14.

Verse 15

τίς δὲ συμφώνησις Χριστοῦ πρὸς Βελιάρ, ἢ τίς μερίς πιστῶ μετὰ ἀπίστου;

συμφωνησις, εως f agreement, common ground

Here only in the NT.

Βελιάρ m Belial (= the Devil)

There are a number of variant spellings. It is difficult to tell why Paul used this unusual word (here only in the NT) rather than the term 'Satan'. It is one of the main reasons for the suggestion that this section is influenced by Qumran sources.

μερις, ιδος f part, portion, share
πιστος, η, ον faithful, believing
ἀπιστος see v.14

Verse 16

τίς δὲ συγκατάθεσις ναῶ θεοῦ μετὰ εἰδώλων; ἡμεῖς γὰρ ναὸς θεοῦ ἐσμὲν ζῶντος· καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς ὅτι Ἐνοικήσω ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐμπεριπατήσω, καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτῶν θεός, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔσονται μου λαός.

συγκαταθεσις, εως f agreement

Here only in NT.

ναος, ου m temple

Cf. 1 Cor 6:19.

εἶδωλον, ου n idol

"For Paul idolatry suggests the element of the licentious and immoral behaviour that accompanied the sin of worshiping false deities". What Paul requires "is more than simple abstinence from idol worship." Martin

The majority of MSS read ὑμεῖς γὰρ ναὸς θεοῦ but the strong witness of both Alexandrian and Western texts suggests that ἡμεῖς is original. Metzger suggests that ὑμεῖς may have been suggested to a scribe in view of 1 Cor 3:16. ἡμεῖς γὰρ ναὸς θεοῦ ἐσμὲν Paul uses the picture here in a corporate (1 Cor 3:16) rather than individualistic (1 Cor 6:19) sense. Paul equates the ναος, the most sacred part of the temple, with the church as a spiritual reality. Cf. Acts 7:48; 17:24.

ζωω live, be alive

ἐνοικεω live in

ἐμπεριπατεω live among

ἔσομαι Verb, fut indic, 1 s εἰμι

λαος, ου m people, a people

Seems not to be a simple quotation from the Old Testament but rather a putting together of facets from general promises repeated time and time again in the Old Testament though particularly drawing upon Lev 26:11,12 and Ezek 37:26,27. "Paul wants his readers to understand that the divine dwelling place is in his temple, namely, the followers of God." Martin.

Verse 17

διὸ ἐξέλθατε ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν, καὶ ἀφορίσθητε, λέγει κύριος, καὶ ἀκαθάρτου μὴ ἄπτεσθε· κἀγὼ εἰσδέξομαι ὑμᾶς·

διο therefore, for this reason

ἐξέλθατε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl

ἐξερχομαι

The aorist imperative calls for immediate and decisive withdrawal.

μεσος, η, ον middle

ἀφορίσθητε Verb, aor pass imperat, 2 pl

ἀφορίζω separate, set apart

"If the people of God cease to be separate in moral holiness from the rest of mankind, they cease to be the people of God." Barrett.

ἀκαθαρος, ον unclean

Could mean thing or person. Paul probably has idolatry in mind.

ἄπτεσθε Verb, pres midd imperat, 2 pl ἅπτω midd. take hold of, touch

Reflects Is 52:11, an appeal to the Jews to leave Babylon, their pagan place of exile, and return to Jerusalem.

κἀγω a compound word = καὶ ἐγώ

εἰσδεχομαι welcome, receive

cf. Ezek 20:34, again a reference to Jews returning from exile.

Verse 18

καὶ ἔσομαι ὑμῖν εἰς πατέρα, καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔσεσθέ μοι εἰς υἱοὺς καὶ θυγατέρας, λέγει κύριος παντοκράτωρ.

Based on 2 Sam 7:8,14. "The king of 2 Samuel (Solomon) has been equated with the Christian Lord in 6:18. In him, all men and women participate in the community of God, namely, the temple of God." Martin

ἔσομαι see v.16

θυγατηρ, τρος f daughter

The addition of καὶ θυγατερας to the OT quotation tells us something about the nature of the Gospel, cf. Gal 3:28.

παντοκρατωρ, ορος m Almighty

Verse 1

ταύτας οὖν ἔχοντες τὰς ἐπαγγελίας, ἀγαπητοί, καθαρῖσωμεν ἑαυτοὺς ἀπὸ παντὸς μολυσμοῦ σαρκὸς καὶ πνεύματος, ἐπιτελοῦντες ἀγιοσύνην ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ.

ἐπαγγελια, ας f promise

ἀγαπητος, η, ον beloved

Paul's injunctions are softened by this term of endearment.

καθαριζω cleanse, purify

Note also the 1st plural here. Paul exhorts both the Corinthians and himself, "he reflects his loving oneness with them." Hughes

μολυσμος, ου m defilement

Here only in the NT, though the cognate verb is found in 1 Cor 8:7.

σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, human nature

Cf. 1 Cor 7:34.

ἐπιτελεω complete, make complete, finish off

ἀγιοσυνη, ης f holiness

Cf. Phil 3:12-16.

φοβος, ου m fear

Cf. 5:11.