

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_expositor-series-1.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php)

America. They appointed a spokesman, who stood up and told me, in their name, that there were two things they would like me to say. The one was, "Tell them to send us one six thousand dollar missionary, rather than ten two thousand dollar missionaries." But the second request went deeper. I again give the exact words—"Tell them," he said, "that we want them to send us no more doctrines. Japan wants Christ."

I trust the narrative of these two facts will not be taken as a reproach to the missionaries. If they represent a true feeling, it is rather to their lasting honour that in a few years they should have taught the native Christians to see so far. Of the actual mission work in Japan I can say nothing, for I was only a few days there. But if I were to judge from the Japanese converts whom I met, I would question whether any mission work in the world had ever produced fruit of so fine a quality. How deep it is, how permanent it is, remain for the test of time to declare; but the immediate outlook, though disheartening possibly to individual missionaries, seems to me one of the richest hope and promise.

HENRY DRUMMOND.

### QUESTIONS.

AT the urgent request of the Editor, I began to string together a few suggestions, or rather questions, about the interpretation of passages in the New Testament, which have been scattered over many publications; and, further, at his special wish, some disconnected impressions of some of our great scholars, now passed away, are interwoven, just as they rose to my mind and slipped to the tip of the pen.

I. The riches hid below the surface of the earth belonged to the Emperor. All quarries were managed and worked by his own private officers for his private purse. Every block that was quarried was inspected by the proper officer,

and marked by him as approved.<sup>1</sup> Our knowledge of the subject has been for the most part derived from blocks actually found in Rome, and which, therefore, were choice blocks sent to the capital. But at the Phrygian marble quarries there have been found many blocks, which had been cut, but not sent on to Rome. These are never marked as approved; and some of them bear the letters REPR, i.e. *reprobatum*, "rejected." These were considered as imperfect and unworthy pieces, and rejected by the inspector.

This explanation, which passes under my name, was published in the *Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire* of the French School of Rome, 1882; but I am glad to take the opportunity of giving the credit where it is due. It was suggested by that excellent scholar, the late Father Bruzza; but, as the proof-sheets of my paper passed through his hands, he did not allow the acknowledgment to stand in print. It was he who perceived that this custom of testing, and sometimes rejecting, blocks for building purposes was connected with the words of St. Peter, "the stone which the builders rejected," ii. 7.

These words (derived from *Psalm* cxviii. and applied to himself by Christ, *Matthew* xxi. 42) are quoted by Peter in his speech to the Sanhedrin *Acts* iv. 11. But in *Acts* he uses the verb ἐξουθενέω, "to despise and regard as valueless," while in the *Epistle* he uses the verb ἀποδοκιμάζω, "to test and reject." It is an interesting point that the former is the more accurate translation of the Hebrew word, while the latter is the word used in the Septuagint.<sup>2</sup> Why should Peter sometimes use the one word and sometimes the other? The view is, apparently, held by some that Luke is here translating from a Hebrew authority, and that he is responsible for the rendering. But Luke can hardly have been ignorant of the Septuagint rendering; and it is improbable that on his own authority he should have

<sup>1</sup> *Probante*.

<sup>2</sup> See Hort's notes on 1 *Pet.* ii. 4 and 7.

selected a different word. On the view which I have maintained of Luke's character as an historian, I feel bound to think that he chose the verb because Peter used it; and, therefore, Peter addressed the Sanhedrin in Greek. But further, Peter must have been thinking of the Hebrew text of *Psalms*, and have rendered the Hebrew word direct into Greek.

May we not infer that the change of verb in the Epistle corresponds to a change that occurred in Peter's mind and circumstances in the interval between *Acts* iv. 11 and 1 *Peter* ii. 7? He had become more Græcized; he now used the Greek Bible in place of the Hebrew (or at least in addition to it), and he recognised that the verb ἀποδοκιμάζω, "to reject after actual trial," though not a strictly accurate rendering of the Hebrew word, corresponded better to the actual customs known to those whom he addressed.

Further, may this progress towards Greek and Western ways and speech be taken as a proof that Peter did not go away to the East, and direct his work to the city of Babylon? Had that been the course of his life, there could have been no such progress as is evinced in this little detail and in many more important ways.

It is satisfactory to see that Dr. Hort decisively rejected that most perverse of ideas—that this Epistle was written from the city of Babylon. They who hold such a view, however great they may be as purely verbal scholars, stamp themselves as untrustworthy judges in all matters that refer to the life and society of the Empire. The Jew who wrote this Epistle must have lived long amid the society of the Empire; and he could never have acquired such a tone and cast of thought, if he had spent his life mainly in Palestine and Mesopotamia.

II. The variation in the power and success of missions in different countries is obvious to the most casual observer. Missionary work does not radiate steadily forth from a

centre. It moves along the lines of least resistance, and its course is determined by many conditions, which the historian must study and try to understand, while the men who are actually engaged in the work obey them, or are compelled by them, often without being fully conscious of them.

Now, let us apply this to the book of Acts. One of the most striking features in the book is the apparently restricted view that is taken of the spread of Christianity. We read of the way in which it was carried north to Antioch, and then north-west and west to the South-Galatian cities, to Macedonia and Achaia, to Asia, and to Rome; and when we have crossed the limits of the land of Rome, and approach the city,<sup>1</sup> the brethren come forth many miles to welcome us, and convoy us into the midst of an already existing Church in Rome. The news has reached the heart of the Empire long ago.

There is no reasonable possibility of doubting that Christian missionaries went in other directions and by many other paths than those described in Acts. We can trace the activity of nameless missionaries in many places, *e.g.* in *Acts* xi. 19, in *Acts* xxviii. 15. Among them we must class the Judaizing missionaries who troubled Paul, in South Galatia, in Rome, and probably everywhere. These unknown workers doubtless tried literally to "go forth into all the world."

The question is whether we are to class the silence of Luke about almost all this mass of active work among the "gaps," which so much trouble many scholars, or whether we should not rather look to discover some reason for his silence? It is plain that, in Luke's estimation, all the other missionaries sink into insignificance in comparison with the one great figure of Paul. They become important

<sup>1</sup> Οὕτως εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην ἤλθαμεν *Acts* xxviii. 14, and εἰσῆλθαμεν εἰς Ῥώμην xxviii. 6. On the distinction between these two phrases, which with singular blindness the commentators still persist in regarding as exactly equivalent, see *St. Paul the Traveller*, p. 347.

in proportion as they agree with his methods, and are guided by his spirit. When they differ from him, they become secondary figures, and disappear from Luke's pages.

Was Luke's vision restricted in this way merely because he was dazzled by the brilliancy of Paul? Or may he have had some better ground to stand on? One may speculate on these alternatives in an abstract way; but the more profitable method is to seek for some concrete facts on which to found an hypothesis. Some facts bearing on the subject are, I think, furnished by the distribution of second and third century Christian inscriptions in central Asia Minor. Elsewhere it is pointed out that these inscriptions fall into three groups, clearly marked off from one another both by geographical separation and by style and character, pointing to "three separate lines of Christian influence in Phrygia during the early centuries."<sup>1</sup> . . . "It seems beyond question that the first line of influence spread from the Aegean coastlands, and that its ultimate source was in St. Paul's work in Ephesus, and in the efforts of his coadjutors during the following years; while the second originated in the earlier Pauline Churches of Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch." The third belongs to the northwest of Phrygia; and, by a remarkable coincidence, to the country which Paul traversed between Antioch and Troas (*Acts* xvi. 6-8).

We possess only one document long enough to show anything of the spirit of these early Churches, the epitaph which a second century presbyter or bishop<sup>2</sup> wrote "to be an imperishable record of his testimony and message which he had to deliver to mankind"; and it mentions (besides the main truths of his religion) the ever-present companionship and guidance of Paul. It has survived to bear

<sup>1</sup> *Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia*, pt. ii. p. 511.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 722 ff., where the voluminous literature of the subject is described.

witness that the Churches of Central Asia Minor continued to look to Paul as their pattern and their guide more than a century after his death.

Must we not take these facts as a sign that, so far as Asia Minor is concerned, Luke perceived the truth? It was the influence of Paul's spirit, acting directly or through his followers and pupils, that was the really powerful force in the country. Everything else becomes insignificant in comparison. So Luke thought: and so the facts bear witness.

Further, may this not have been the case elsewhere? Perhaps Luke perceived the essential facts, and recorded them. Perhaps it was only in the Roman world that men's minds were ready for the new religion. If that religion came "in the fulness of time," was not that "fulness of time" wrought out by the unifying influence of Roman organization, and by the educating influence of Greek philosophical theory, so that it was only within the circle of these influences that the Church grew? May it not be the case that the pre-Pauline Church in Rome was re-created by Paul, and acquired its future form and character from him; and that thus the historian is justified in leaving it unmentioned until it came forth to welcome him? Certain it is that Christianity was made the religion of the Roman Empire by Paul, and by Paul's single idea; that Luke's mind, as he wrote, was filled with that idea; and that he fashioned his history with the view of showing how that idea worked itself out in fact. Hence after A.D. 44 all other missionary work, except what sprang from Paul, was unimportant in his estimation.

Is it so certain as many seem to hold that Luke's conception was inadequate? Would any extra-Roman spread of Christianity have been permanent? Would even the non-Pauline propagation southward towards Egypt (which may be assumed as certain) have been successful and last-

ing, had it not been reinforced by the Pauline spirit? Is not the case of Apollos in *Acts* xviii. 24 ff., really a typical one, as Luke evidently considered it?

A phrase which often occurred to me when, as an undergraduate, I was studying Greek philosophy for the schools, bears on this. As I tried to understand the character of those later systems in which the earlier and more purely Greek thought, when carried by the conquests of Alexander into the cities of the East, attempted to adapt itself to its new environment by assimilating the elements which the East had to contribute and which the Greek mind could never supply, the expressions often rose to my lips that these were the imperfect forms of Christianity, and again that Paul was the true successor of Aristotle.

The phrases were probably both caught from some source that I was studying (though I was never conscious of having read them); and, if so, I should be glad to learn where they occur. At the time, in 1875-76, the writers who most influenced me were T. H. Green and Lightfoot. To both I owe almost equally much, though in very different ways. My debt to Green is similar to that of many Oxford students; though I never heard him lecture, and only twice or thrice was so far honoured as to be allowed to talk with him. The quality in Lightfoot's work that most impressed me was his transparent honesty, his obvious straining to understand and represent every person's opinion with scrupulous fairness. In him I was for the first time conscious of coming in contact with a mind that was educated, thoughtful, trained in scholarship, perfectly straight and honest, and yet able to accept simply the New Testament in the old-fashioned way, without refining it into metaphysical conceptions like Green, or rationalizing it into commonplace and second-rate history like my German idols. The combination had previously seemed to me impossible in our age, though possible at an earlier

time; and its occurrence in Lightfoot set me to rethink the grounds of my own position.

III. Why is Peter silent about Paul, when he is writing to so many of the Pauline Churches? This question is briefly touched by Hort; and, while saying nothing positive, he obviously inclines to the view that Paul was dead. He explains away the obvious remark, that some reference to the recent death of their great founder would seem imperatively demanded from Peter in writing to the Churches, by the supposition that the "sad tidings of Paul's death had been already made known to the Asiatic Christians by their Roman brethren or by St. Peter himself."<sup>1</sup>

But is it not clear in this Epistle that the writer is clad with authority, as the recognised head to whom the Pauline Churches looked for guidance and advice in a great crisis? The writer evidently speaks with full and conscious deliberation, because he feels that a serious trial awaits the Churches, and that he is the person to whom they look. That is distinctly inconsistent with the idea that Paul was living; and we need not doubt that that was the argument which weighed with Hort, and made him place the letter after Paul's death. The authority which Paul exercised over his Churches, and the discipline on which he laid such stress, would be violated, if another stepped in to address and comfort and encourage them, without a word of apology or explanation, without even a reference to Paul. That would be the act of a rival and not of a friend; but it seems to me beyond all question that Peter was the most cordial and hearty supporter of Paul among the older apostles, and the one with whom Paul felt most kinship in spirit. Especially is it clear that the author of this Epistle, whoever he was, must have been in the most cordial relations with the Pauline policy.

But is this letter conceivable even after Paul's death,

<sup>1</sup> Hort, *First Epistle*, p. 6.

except at some considerable interval? An analogy will help us in this question. Paul's silence about Peter in the letters to and from Rome is, in my estimation, a conclusive proof that Peter had never been instrumental in building up the Church of Rome, until after the last of these Epistles was written. Similarly, Peter's silence about Paul is to me conclusive that Peter was now the recognised successor to Paul's position in relation to the Asian Churches; <sup>1</sup> that he is not simply putting himself into that position without a reference to his dead friend; but that he can look back over a lapse of some years, during which his standing had become established, and Paul's followers, Silas and Mark, had attached themselves to the company and service of his successor. So Rev. F. Warburton Lewis pointed out to me.

That is not wholly inconsistent with the theory that First Peter was composed before the apostle suffered under Nero, if Paul suffered in 62 or even in 64, provided that Peter survived till 67 or so. But, for my own part, I can see no ground for believing that Paul died before 66 or even perhaps 67; and in that case the life of Peter must have lasted into the time of Vespasian, as no persecution can have occurred while the wars of the succession absorbed Roman attention.

IV. Now that Hort has laid down with a precision characteristic of himself, and with a decisiveness and finality that is almost rare in his work, the principle that the Churches of Asia Minor are classified according to the provinces of the Roman Empire, and not according to the non-Roman national divisions, and has stated positively and unhesitatingly that the Pauline Churches in Phrygia and Lycaonia <sup>2</sup> were classed by St. Peter as Churches of

<sup>1</sup> What ground is there for the general view that Peter was older than the Saviour, and much older than Paul? It might be argued that he was younger than Christ, and nearly of an age with Paul.

<sup>2</sup> Hort, *First Peter*, pp. 17, 157 ff.

Galatia, it is to be hoped that the progress of study will no longer be impeded by laboured attempts to prove that it was impossible or inaccurate for Paul to class them as his Churches of Galatia, or by equally futile attempts to prove that the name Galatia was never applied to the great Roman Province of central Asia Minor, stretching across nearly from sea to sea. It will remain as one of the curiosities of scholarship that in this last decade, after these points had long been taken as settled by all historical students, so many distinguished theologians, after casting a hasty glance into the antiquities of Asia Minor, should print discussions of the subject proving that that which was could not possibly have been.

But if Peter, as Hort declares, classed Antioch, Iconium, Derbe, and Lystra among the Churches of Galatia, must not Paul have done the same thing? Is it likely that First Peter, a letter so penetrated with the Pauline spirit, so much influenced by at least two Pauline epistles, composed in such close relations with two of Paul's coadjutors, Silas and Mark, should class the Pauline Churches after a method that Paul would not employ?

Further, Hort lays down as a matter of certainty that Asia throughout the New Testament means the Province, therein contradicting the recent ideas of Professors Blass and Zahn. Must we not then take Galatia in Paul on the same analogy, and admit that when he wrote to the Churches of Galatia he included among them all Churches within the bounds of the Province?

It has just been said that Hort speaks on this subject with a decisiveness and finality that is not so common in his work. It is characteristic of him, rather, never to reach decisiveness. He seems always to have been keenly conscious how much subjectivity is liable to be admitted into the judgment of the most careful, cool, and mature scholar, and to have often shrunk from feeling confident

in his own best proved conclusions. One of our best scholars told me in a different connexion a story which illustrates this quality. Speaking of the authorship of second Peter, he said he had once spoken to Hort on the subject. Hort replied somewhat to this effect: My first impulse is to say that the same hand which wrote the first epistle could not have written the second. But, then, my second impulse is to doubt whether I can be right in thinking so.

Was it not this quality, which is closely connected with his love of perfect truth and his unwillingness to leave the smallest trace of error in his work, that prevented him from writing more, and deprived us of much that we had almost a right to expect from his admirable scholarship, his wide range of knowledge, and his clear judgment? He that is never content till he has risen superior to the weakness of humanity, who is unwilling to print anything till he has purged it of the minutest trace of error, will write little. But, worse than that, it is very doubtful whether he will ever write his best. While he spends his time polishing up the less important details, he sometimes loses his grasp of the essential and guiding clue. Truth will not wait to be wooed, after we shall have finished the accessories. We must press forward, when the goddess allows a glimpse of her face to be visible for a moment; it will be veiled again immediately; it may be never again unveiled to the too cautious seeker. He who attempts the pursuit must be content to arrive bearing the stains and mud and dust of travel; and, if he is too careful to avoid soiling his feet, he is less likely to reach his aim.

It seems a sort of retribution on the man, whose too delicate and overstrained love of perfection deprived the world of the work it had always expected from him, that his manuscripts should be published after his death by the piety of his pupils—a piety so reverent that they apparently

shrink even from the thought that anything in his work could need correction. For example, in his too short edition of the opening chapters of First Peter, there is an essay on the provinces of Asia Minor. It was written, apparently, in the year 1882, for I see no reference to anything not accessible in that year. Hort was lecturing on the Epistle as late as 1887; but it may be doubted if he did anything at this essay during the intermediate years. He evidently studied carefully the inscriptions bearing on this subject, while preparing the essay; but he studied them in 1882, and shows no knowledge of several inscriptions which (with Mommsen's commentary on them) would have materially modified his statements on some points. The essay is, indeed, remarkably accurate, considering when it was composed. It is, of course, founded on Marquardt's *Römische Staatsalterthümer*; but it tacitly avoids several of his mistakes, and shows an admirable tact in selecting what was permanent and true in the views current at that period. There are few statements that could have been called erroneous at that time;<sup>1</sup> but, surely, there might have been found among his pupils some one who would take the trouble to look over at least the parts of the Berlin Corpus that have been published since Hort's death, and mingle sufficient courage with his piety to correct (or at least to omit) the statements which the progress of discovery has shown to be inaccurate. Thus, for example, the old statement (founded on Dion), that Claudius instituted the province of Lycia-Pamphylia in A.D. 43, appears on p. 162, though the difficulties of this view are plainly stated. It is now established by Mommsen's commentary on a recently discovered Pamphylian inscription that Pamphylia was a distinct procuratorial province for some time later, then

<sup>1</sup> I quote one to justify the criticism. On p. 162, note 3, he ascribes to the organization of the East by Pompey in B.C. 64 the gift of parts of Pamphylia to Amyntas, which was really made by Antonius in 36.

was connected with Galatia for a short time, and at last was united to Lycia by Vespasian.

But enough of the ungrateful task of pointing out faults ! Yet it is regrettable that Hort's work should be treated with such undutiful dutifulness ; and that English scholarship should be exposed to the just criticism of the foreigner, that it seems to be ignorant that some errors have been eliminated between 1882 and 1898 and that these should not appear any longer in print under the patronage of an honoured name.<sup>1</sup>

V. Lightfoot has not been slow to notice the remarkable vividness, and (as one might almost say) the personality of the address to the Church of Laodicea, Rev. iii. 15 ff., and he brings out point after point with admirable skill. His remarks might be paraphrased in these words : " Thou sayest, I am rich, and have need of nothing [puffed up as thou art with the consciousness that after the destructive earthquake of A.D. 62, thou couldst decline all help from the Imperial Treasury, which even the greatest cities have sought in similar circumstances, and canst boast that thou hast recreated thy greatness with thy own riches]." And again, " I counsel thee [not to be content with taking the gold of thy bankers, who are a leading factor in the money market of the world ; but] to buy of me gold refined by fire, that thou mayst become rich, and [not the black, glossy Laodicean garments, the manufacture of which makes thee famous over the whole world, and the clothier of the Roman Empire ; but] white garments that thou mayst clothe thyself."

But the next point he has omitted : " I counsel thee to buy of me eyesalve." Surely here the advice is as pertinent

<sup>1</sup> In i. 7 Hort sees that an adjective is needed, and is inclined to accept the poorly-attested reading *δοκιμον*. Why should not an editor indicate that Deissmann has discovered the adjective *δοκιμος*, and thus justified Hort's inclination in an unexpected way.

and personal as in the other points. Now there was a medicine called "Phrygian powder," used by ancient physicians to cure weakness of the eyes. Further, there flourished at Laodicea one of the most famous medical schools of antiquity, which "began that strange system of heterogeneous mixtures, some of which have only recently been expelled from our own pharmacopœia." Finally, the name "Phrygian" was liable to be used in the sense of "Laodicean," because that city was nearest and most familiar to the Greek world; thus, for example, Herodes Atticus spoke of the famous orator, Polemon of Laodicea, as "the Phrygian."<sup>1</sup>

Must we not, then, conclude that the message to Laodicea continued: "and [I counsel thee to buy of me, not the vain Phrygian powder that is prescribed and concocted by the famous physicians of thy school of medicine, but] eyesalve to anoint thine eyes, that thou mayst see."

W. M. RAMSAY.

### "THE BURDEN OF DUMAH."

ISAIAH XXI. 11, 12.

THE days of the prophets were, in spiritual things, the brave days of old. No nation but the Hebrew ever had a succession of such men. Other nations had their poets and philosophers and heroes; the Jews alone had their prophets. They were more than the philosopher and the poet, and different from the hero who battled with circumstances and grappled with destiny. They were much more than men who merely foretold the future. They struck with strokes of cleavage sheer down through the confusion and unrest of their age, and they laid bare the essential

<sup>1</sup> *Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia*, part i., pp. 52, 41.