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The Meaning of 1 Cor. 9, 9. 10

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würdiges Verdienst gegeben, sondern, als St. Paulus Röm. 5, 18 lehrt. . . . Darum ist der heilige Apostel so fleißig an allen Orten, wo er die Gnade und den Glauben predigt, dazuzusehen, durch Jesum Christum, auf daß nicht jemand einherplumpe und spreche: Ja, ich glaube an Gott, und lasse es dabei bleiben. Nein, lieber Mensch, du mußt also glauben, daß du wissest, wie und durch welchen du mußt glauben, daß Gott von dir will haben aller seiner Gebote Erfüllung und Genüthung seiner Gerechtigkeit, ehe er deinen Glauben aufnimmt zur Seligkeit." (St. L. Ausg. 12, 147.)

L. h. Engelber.

The Meaning of 1 Cor. 9, 9. 10.

The above passage has caused Christian readers and interpreters not a little amount of difficulty, and errorists and unbelievers have used it as a basis for an attack on the inspired character of St. Paul's writings. It will then not be considered an unwarranted intrusion upon the time of our readers if we devote an article to the investigation of the meaning which must be assigned these words of the apostle. What Paul is setting forth in this paragraph of First Corinthians is the truth that the Christian minister has the right to expect the congregation which he serves to support him and to provide for his temporal needs. He states emphatically that he has authority to eat and to drink what the Corinthians possess, just as he has authority to be married, a status in which the other apostles find themselves, verse 5. A soldier, so he says, receives pay from those who engage him. A man who plants a vineyard eats the fruit of it. A shepherd enjoys the milk furnished by the animals making up his herd. And this is not merely, so he continues, a human way of reasoning, for the Law itself inculcates this very thing, v. 8. In Deut. 25, 4 it is written: "Do not muzzle an ox that is threshing." Is God concerned about oxen? V. 9. Must we not hold that He by all means speaks on our account? Yes, for our sakes it is written; for he who plows should plow in hope or anticipation, and he who threshes should likewise expect to share in what is produced.

Having thus traced the line of thought which the apostle follows, we find that in v. 9 a twofold difficulty meets us. It seems Paul denies that God cares for oxen, and, besides, he seems to be giving Deut. 25, 4 a meaning which the words do not possess. What shall we say? How modern exegetes of the modernistic type view the words of Paul we can well see from the remarks of A. Deissmann when he discusses Paul's use of allegory (*Paul, a Study in Social and Religious History*. By A. Deissmann. Translated by Wm. E. Wilson, p. 102 f.): "Instances of such violence [*i. e.*, allegorical exegesis] are,

for example, in Paul's Letter to the Galatians (Gal. 3, 16) the interpretation of the word *seed* (Gen. 3, 15) as singular, although the idea is actually intended to have a plural sense and elsewhere is interpreted by Paul as plural, Rom. 4, 18; 9, 8; or the subtle explanation of the story of the Fall favorably to the man, 1 Tim. 3, 13 f.; or the application of the words about the ox, which was not to be muzzled while threshing, Deut. 25, 4, to the apostles, 1 Cor. 9, 9 f.; cf. 1 Tim. 5, 18. St. Paul, moreover, when in the course of this interpretation he suggests that God does not care about oxen, speaks in these strangely unpractical and feeble words as a man from the city who does not regard animals in a simple way because he has never lived with them; and we notice how far he is from the splendid and powerful realism of the faith of Jesus, who from childhood onward had grown up in constant contact with animals and plants. Jesus cannot think that the sparrow falls to the ground without God's will, Matt. 10, 29; Luke 12, 6; cf. Matt. 6, 26; Luke 12, 24, and sees the flowers of the Galilean spring clothed by God Himself in their garments of more than royal splendor, Matt. 6, 28 f.; Luke 12, 27." That the criticism directed against St. Paul with respect to the passages in Galatians and First Timothy is entirely unjustified can easily be shown. Here, however, we are concerned with the words of St. Paul in First Corinthians. Deissmann brings out the difficulty which Bible readers encounter as they peruse this passage, and, Modernist that he is, he does not hesitate to charge St. Paul with an erroneous use of the Old Testament Scriptures.

Comparing our passage with Deut. 25, 4, we find that Paul quotes the Septuagint accurately. The Septuagint translation will be seen to be an accurate rendering of the original Hebrew. In Deut. 25 we have a number of regulations pertaining to the external life of the Israelites, and the impression the reader gets is that in v. 4 we have a humanitarian provision inculcating kindness toward dumb animals. Philologically the passage offers no difficulties. It is well known that $\mu\eta$ introducing a question indicates that a negative answer is expected. $\text{O}\tau\iota$ in v. 10 is best taken in the causal sense.

Turning to the commentators, we meet various opinions with respect to our passage, and we shall have to scrutinize the chief ones and see which one we can adopt, if any. We shall start with the explanation which Luther proposes. In his remarks on Deut. 25 he says, according to the German translation of the St. Louis Luther edition (III, 1592): "*'Du sollst dem Ochsen, der da drischt, nicht das Maul verbinden.'* Dies wird geboten, damit sie, geuebt durch guetiges Verhalten gegen die Tiere, desto wohlwollender wuerden gegen die Menschen. Es ist aber ein sprichwoertlicher Ausspruch, den Paulus 1 Kor. 9, 9 ff. reichlich auslegt, so dass er sagt: Sorget

Gott fuer die Ochsen? Als ob er sagen wollte: Wiewohl Gott fuer die Ochsen sorgt, so laesst er doch dies nicht um der Ochsen willen schreiben, da sie nicht lesen koennen, so dass die Meinung des Paulus ist: Dieser Spruch wird nicht bloss von den Ochsen verstanden, sondern insgemein von allen Arbeitern, dass sie von ihrer Arbeit leben sollen, wie auch Christus sagt Luk. 10, 7: 'Ein Arbeiter ist seines Lohnes wert.'" It will be seen that Luther holds strongly to the view that Deut. 25, 4 has reference to humane treatment of dumb animals. The difficulty which confronts us in the words of St. Paul, "Doth God take care for oxen?" he solves by attributing this meaning to the words of the apostle: "The Old Testament passage was not written for oxen because they cannot read." We might quite readily adopt this interpretation, which removes the whole difficulty, if the apostle had said: "Were these words *written* for oxen?" But such is not the phraseology which he employs. On the contrary, he says: "Is God concerned about oxen?" It seems impossible to give to these words the meaning which Luther puts into them.

Modern commentators, for instance, Rueckert and Tholuck, escape the difficulty by inserting the word "only," making the question read: "Is God concerned only about oxen?" It is true that now and then we are compelled in our interpretation to insert this word; for instance, Luke 14, 12, where the Savior evidently does not mean to prohibit our inviting relatives and neighbors to a meal, but wishes to inculcate the great and necessary lesson that kindness should be shown not only to those that are near and dear to us. In the present passage, however, the insertion of an "only" does not seem justified; at least, such an interpretation of these words does not suggest itself at once. Calvin's interpretation is practically the one which we just now rejected, though he somewhat seems to lean toward Luther's view of the passage. He says: *Quod [apostolus] autem dicit, non esse curae Deo boves, non ita intelligas, quasi excludere velit boves a providentia Dei, quum ne minimum quidem passerulum negligat, neque etiam, quasi velit allegorice exponere praeceptum illud, quemadmodum nonnulli vertiginosi spiritus occasionem hinc arripiunt omnia ad allegorias transferendi; ita ex canibus faciunt homines, ex arboribus angelos et totam Scripturam ludendo pervertunt. Sensus autem Pauli simplex est: Quod Dominus humanitatem erga boves praecipit, non id facere boum gratia, sed hominum potius respectu, propter quos etiam boves ipsi creati sunt. Illa igitur erga boves clementia nobis exercitatio esse debet ad excitandam inter nos humanitatem. . . . Intellige ergo, non ita esse curae Deo boves, ut solam boum rationem habuerit in ferenda lege; homines enim respexit ac eos assuefacere voluit ad aequitatem, ne operarium fraudarent sua mercede. Neque enim primae sunt bovis*

partes in arando aut trituro, sed hominis, cuius industria bos ipse ad opus applicatur."¹⁾

An interpretation of this passage which neither violates the analogy of faith nor the grammatical significance of our passage was proposed centuries ago by renowned Lutheran Bible scholars and is sponsored in our own times by Heinrici in *Meyer's Commentary on the New Testament* (1 Cor., 6th edition). Melanchthon, in his brief, but excellent *Commentary on First Corinthians*, says with respect to our passage: "*Allegoria Mosaica haec est: Non ligabis os bovi trituranti. Hanc imaginem ritus servandi in armento eleganter transfert ad homines, qui faciunt operas. Ut necesse est armentum pasci, ita multo magis hominem, cuius laboribus fruimur, ali necesse est. Quod autem inquit: Num boves Deo curae sunt? non tollit providentiam, sed hoc tantum dicit: Non scribi leges boum causa, sed disciplinae hominum causa, videlicet ut homines discant iusta officia.*"²⁾ Melanchthon, it is evident, does not charge Paul with teaching that God does not care for the well-being of dumb creatures; neither does he deny that Deut. 25, 4 refers to oxen. In one way he agrees with Luther, when he says that Paul wishes to express the thought that Deut. 25, 4 was not written for the sake of

1) "When he [the apostle] says that oxen are of no concern to God, do not understand him as if he wished to exclude oxen from the providence of God, because He neglects not even the smallest sparrow; nor must you understand him as if he wished to give an allegorical meaning to this commandment [of Moses]. Some dizzy-headed fellows, it is true, believe that here an opportunity is furnished them to take everything over into the field of allegory; thus they let dogs represent men, trees angels, and in their silliness pervert all the Scriptures. But the meaning of Paul is simply: When the Lord enjoins humane treatment of oxen, He does it, not on account of the oxen, but rather on account of men, for whose benefit the oxen also were created. This kindness toward oxen must therefore be an urge for us, arousing kindness among ourselves. . . . Understand, then, that in this sense oxen are not of concern to God, as if He, in giving the Law, referred only to them; for He thought of men, and it was His wish to accustom them to fairness in order that they might not defraud the laborer of his hire. It must be remembered, too, that in plowing and threshing the ox is not playing the chief rôle, but man, who, laboring industriously, is employing the ox in his work."

2) "This is an allegory of Moses: 'Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.' What here in a figurative way is enjoined concerning the proper treatment of cattle, he [Paul] elegantly takes over into the sphere of men who perform labors. Just as cattle must be fed, so much more man must be provided for, whose labors we are making use of. But when he says: 'Does God care for oxen?' he does not abrogate divine providence, but merely states that the laws were written not for the sake of oxen, but for the sake of human discipline, that men might learn what their just duties are."

oxen, but for the purpose of training men in the right way. There is a new element, however, in his interpretation. He looks upon the Deuteronomy passage as being allegorical: "*Allegoria Mosaica haec est,*" etc.—a view which Calvin vehemently rejects, as the reader has noted. Melancthon is followed by the famous Lutheran interpreter of Paul, Balduin (1575—1627), who was professor at Wittenberg and who in his great commentary on the Pauline epistles, a masterpiece of sanctified industry and learning, says: "*Verum Paulus noster aperte docet, legem illam non proprie ad boves pertinere, sed figurate aliud quid notare in domo Dei. . . . Quibus verbis reram applicationem legis divinae ostendit, quae propter homines magis lata sit quam propter boves.*"³) In paraphrasing our passage, Balduin says: "*Deus enim in lege quando praecepit, ne bovi triturantis obligetur, certe non propter bovem duntaxat istud praecepit, sed vel maxime propter homines, qui in ministerio vivunt.*"⁴) Balduin furthermore says: "*Allegatio Scripturae non semper secundum literam fieri debet, sed saepe sensu allegorico aut mystico, qui a Spiritu Sancto inprimis intentus fuit, quemadmodum hic ab apostolo lex Mosaica de bove triturante allegatur et propter nos lata esse dicitur, ut exinde liberalitatem erga ministros verbi discamus v. 10.*"⁵) In the same connection he states: "*Providentia Dei extendit se ad creaturas racionales ac irracionales. Nam et boves Deo curae sunt. Ps. 86, 7; 104; 136; 146; Matt. 10, 29.*"⁶)

As stated before, Heinrici takes practically the same view. He recognizes here an instance of allegorical interpretation, which, as he says, consists merely in the application of the historical sense, proceeding *a minori ad maius*. When Paul asserts that God does not care for oxen, he speaks from the point of view of allegory, saying that according to the mystic sense of the passage it has no reference to oxen. We must not imagine, says Heinrici, that Paul wishes to deny that Deut. 25, 4 attributes loving concern for dumb creatures

3) "But Paul teaches plainly that this law properly does not refer to oxen, but by means of a figure denotes something in the house of God. . . . In his words he points out the true application of the divine Law, which was given more for the sake of men than for the sake of oxen."

4) "For when God in the Law enjoined not to muzzle an ox which is threshing, He certainly did not enjoin this merely on account of the ox, but chiefly on account of men who are serving."

5) "Scripture must not always be quoted according to the letter, but often according to the allegorical or mystic sense, which was chiefly intended by the Holy Spirit, just as here the Mosaic Law about the threshing oxen is quoted by the apostle and is said to have been given on our account, that we there might learn liberality toward ministers of the Word, v. 10."

6) "Divine providence extends to rational and irrational creatures; for oxen also are of concern to God," etc.

to God. The passage has its grammatical and historical significance, which will stand forever, and Paul must not be looked upon as intending to take one jot or tittle away from it. It is only when we inquire what the passage teaches us allegorically that Paul's denial comes into consideration. Evidently the point of importance is, How does Heinrici prove that Paul must not be charged with depriving Deut. 25, 4 of its native meaning? Here we are dealing with the *cruz* of the whole matter. To acquaint our readers with Heinrici's argumentation, we quote him verbatim: "*Demnach stellt der so ver-fahrende Ausleger den geschichtlichen Sinn einer Stelle nicht als solchen, nicht an und fuer sich, in Abrede, sondern eben nur (was sich dem Leser von selbst verstand) nach der hoeheren, vorbildlichen Bestimmung des Spruchs, nicht als historischer, sondern als allegorischer Erklaerer zu Werke gehend, welches Verfahren in der vorbildlichen Bestimmung des Gesetzes ueberhaupt (Kol. 2, 17), durch welche es ueber sich selbst hinausweist, seine Berechtigung und zugleich je nach dem Bedarf in den einzelnen Faellen ebenso seine Freiheit wie in der Notwendigkeit der Gottangemessenheit seine ethische Schranke hat.*" While not willing to endorse unqualifiedly the last words quoted, it seems to us that the general tenor of the statement must receive our approval. We hold that Paul accepts the Old Testament Scriptures in their native sense. A perusal of his epistles will show that he by no means finds in the holy writings merely an allegorical significance. To mention but a few instances, let us think of the references to the story of Abraham in Rom. 4, the various instances from the history of Israel alluded to Rom. 9—11, and of the account of the plague, 1 Cor. 10, in all of which passages he retains the historical meaning. That Paul took this view of the Old Testament Scriptures is likewise confirmed by the speeches of his recorded in the Book of Acts, especially the great address delivered in Antioch of Pisidia. Cf. Acts 13, 16—41. We may agree with Heinrici when he says in the words quoted that the readers of St. Paul's letters regarded it as self-evident that to him the Scriptures meant exactly what they say.

At the same time, however, Heinrici is right when he insists that to Paul the old Law with its many provisions was a shadow of things that were to come. In speaking of the numerous regulations concerning food and drink, holy-days, new moons, and Sabbath-days, the apostle, while by no means denying that these regulations were binding for the Israelites during the time of the Old Covenant, says that they have lost their validity, and their significance for us is that they pointed forward to the great blessings of the New Covenant, Col. 2, 16. 17. Paul held exactly the view which the inspired writer of Hebrews voices, Heb. 10, 1: "For the Law, having a shadow of good things to come and not the very image of the things, can never

with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect." Cf. also Heb. 9, 9.

Whenever, therefore, we find that Paul gives an allegorical or typical meaning to an Old Testament passage or incident, let us recognize that this is in full keeping with the clearly expressed Scripture truth that the Old Testament is full of signs, types, and symbols. Bearing this in mind, we can well understand Paul's reference to the story of Hagar and Sarah in Gal. 4 as a typical prophecy, depicting the two covenants, the Covenant of the Law and the Covenant of Grace. Is it necessary to add the caution that the Christian interpreter must not place himself on the same level with St. Paul and begin to allegorize as some inner prompting may urge him? Paul was an inspired apostle; his exposition of Old Testament texts is that of the Holy Spirit. Cf. 1 Thess. 2, 13. We, on the other hand, can merely repeat what the inspired writers have told us, and while on the basis of their instruction we assert that the Old Testament history and literature in many ways foreshadow the times and events of the New Covenant, it is only in those instances which they themselves point out that we can with complete assurance speak of a typical or allegorical meaning as attaching to Old Testament passages. When we go beyond these limits, we have to be very hesitant and can no longer speak with positive confidence, but rather have to be satisfied with mere probabilities, which perhaps are edifying, but cannot be used as a foundation of our faith and hope. While we unhesitatingly say that in Deut. 25, 4 the native sense was intended by God to be given an application to the support of ministers of the Word, we can, for instance, not with assurance say that the provision Ex. 23, 6, "Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of thy poor in his cause," can be given a typical application, making it refer particularly to some New Testament institution or event.

In conclusion, criticism like that of Dr. Deissmann directed against the inerrancy of Paul's epistles need not perturb us. *A priori* we know that it is not justified, and a careful examination of all facts involved brings out that what Deissmann finds objectionable can well be explained and harmonized with the rest of the Scriptures.

W. ARNDT.

Saulus — Paulus.

„Alle Schrift [ist] von Gott eingegeben“, 2 Tim. 3, 16. Daß alle Schrift divinitus inspirata ist, steht uns fest, auch, Gott Lob, unsern Gemeinden. Wir verteidigen diesen Satz gegen alle Angriffe der moderneren Theologie und der höheren Kritik.

Ist dies uns aber nur eine bloße These, oder ist es uns in Fleisch und Blut übergegangen? Das Evangelium ist göttliche Kraft und