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An Evaluation of Critical Opinions concerning Time, Place, and Readers of Ephesians

Martin W. Mueller

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, ir_muellerm@csl.edu

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**"An Evaluation of Critical Opinions
concerning
Time, Place, and Readers of Ephesians"**

**A Thesis
presented to the faculty of
Concordia Seminary
St. Louis, Mo.
by**

Martin W. Mueller

**in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree
of**

Bachelor of Divinity

The Pauline Epistles have ever given rise to countless opinions, conjectures, hypotheses and theories. In the middle of the nineteenth century Baur and the adherents of the Tuebingen school attributed the majority of the Apostles letters to a later age. They retained only Galatians, First and Second Corinthians, and Romans. The remaining Epistles were branded as "tendency documents" which aimed to conceal the schism that had divided the Apostolic Church into two parties under the leadership of Peter and Paul.

However, the end of the nineteenth century saw a decided change. Led by the great New Testament scholar, Lightfoot, the Tuebingen position was abandoned. Hypercritical views and tendential conjectures gave way to sane and sober criticism. Also First Thessalonians, Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians were regarded as Pauline beyond all doubt. Nevertheless, there is still hesitation as to the authenticity of Second Thessalonians. The remaining Epistle, Ephesians, still bears the brunt of many critical attacks. Not a few scholars assume that Ephesians belongs to the sub-Pauline period.

Especially in the last few years there has been much discussion on the Time and Place of the Composition of Ephesians. Closely connected with this is the question: To whom was the Epistle addressed? The determining of these two factors plays a large part in the establishing of the authenticity of Ephesians. Hence, this treatise offers: "An Evaluation of Critical Opinions concerning Time, and Place, and Readers of Ephesians," in the hope that it may to some small degree serve

this end.

I. The Time and Place of the Writing of Ephesians.

The Epistle to the Ephesians belongs to the group of four epistles which have been from ancient times called the "Captivity Letters." In order to establish the time and place of the composition of Ephesians it will be necessary to determine when and where the four Captivity Letters, viz. Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians and Philippians, were written.

The traditional view which has found most favor is that the Apostle Paul's first captivity at Rome (61-63A.D.) was the seat of the writing of the Letters of the Captivity. More recent scholars in this field have found certain difficulties in the acceptance of the traditional view and have placed the Captivity Letters in the Caesarean Captivity (58-60 A.D.). Of late there is the added theory that the Apostle wrote the four epistles during an Ephesian captivity which took place between 54-57 A. D.

Hence, we are confronted by three distinctly different theories concerning the time and place of the writing of the Captivity Letters. Since the traditional view, which places the Four epistles in the first captivity of Paul at Rome, is on the defensive, it would be well to examine and evaluate the arguments advanced in favor of the more recent theories before any conclusion is reached.

A. The Caesarean Theory.

The leading arguments which are advanced in favor of the Caesarean Captivity as the seat of the writing of the Epistles of the Captivity may be gathered from the writings of two representative proponents of the Caesarean Theory, Haupt ("Die Gefangenschaftsbriefe" in Meyer's Commentary) and Meyer (Kommentar ueber das Neue Testament: "Der Brief an die Epheser", p. 16-17).

Haupt finds that the style and language of the Epistle to the Philippians are so fundamentally different from that of the other three letters that Philippians must be separated by the widest possible interval of time. His solution is that the Epistles to the Colossians, Ephesians, and to Philemon were written during the Caesarean captivity, and Philippians during the Apostle's first captivity at Rome.

Again, St. Paul's situation as described in Philippians is entirely different from that implied in the other three Captivity Letters. For this reason one imprisonment cannot possibly govern the four epistles. This becomes clear when the following is taken into account: 1.) In the epistles to the Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon the captivity weighs heavily upon the Apostle's mind and is constantly referred to in terms which denote the effects of his bonds upon his spirit (Philem. 9; Col. 4,3; Ep̄. 3,1; 4,1). In Philippians, on the other hand, there is no trace of this feeling, because the captivity is

nothing new. The Apostle has learned patience. 2.) In the earlier group Paul regrets more particularly his inability to continue missionary activities. In Rome the imprisonment was not so rigorous and he was not denied the liberty to preach the Gospel.

Meyer bases his arguments exclusively on the contents of what Haupt terms the "earlier group". In the first place, the slave Onesimus would be more likely to flee to Caesarea than to make a long sea voyage to Rome and risk capture there. Onesimus was not yet a Christian, so it is not to be thought that he ran to Paul, his master's friend, for protection.

Again, if Ephesians and Colossians were written at Rome, Tychicus and Onesimus (Col. 4,8.9) would arrive first at Ephesus, then at Colossae. In that case one would expect some reference to Onesimus in the Ephesian epistle, whereas only Tychicus is mentioned (Eph. 6, 21.22). The better explanation is that the letter came from Caesarea and that both Tychicus and Onesimus arrived at Colossae first. Both are mentioned in the epistle to the Colossians (Col. 4, 8.9.). Onesimus no doubt remained at Colossae while Tychicus proceeded to Ephesus. This explains the omission of any reference to Onesimus there.

Moreover, in Eph. 6,21 Paul says: ἵνα δὲ εἰδῶτε καὶ ὑμεῖς . The καὶ implies that when Tychicus arrived at Ephesus, he had already imparted news concerning the Apostle to others. If he went immediately from Rome to Ephesus, this was impossible. The difficulty is removed if the letter was written

at Caesarea. Tychicus would arrive at Colossae first, fulfill his mission there, and then *καί* "also" in the case of the Ephesians. Had the letter been sent from Rome, we would expect the *καί* in the epistle to the Colossians.

Furthermore, in Philem. 22 Paul asks his friend Philemon to prepare him a lodging. This request implies that Paul would soon be in Colossae to visit him, for he is in the vicinity. Since Rome is so far removed, Caesarea is more probable. The request shows that the Apostle intended to travel from his place of imprisonment to Phrygia and, in particular, to Colossae. On the other hand, Phil. 2,24 finds Paul, ^{so the old theory holds} at Rome. From Rome he intended to go to Macedonia. This does not at all harmonize with a request for lodging at Philemon's house. It becomes more probable, however, if Paul was in Caesarea. Paul was hoping for a quick release, after which he intended to travel through Phrygia and Asia Minor. Then he could fulfill his plans concerning Rome (Rom. 1,11 ff; Acts 19,21).

These, then, are the leading arguments by which the exponents of the Caesarean theory attempt to prove their case. *

If the question of language and style are allowed

* Other proponents of the Caesarean Theory who fall in line with these arguments are: B. Weiss, "Lehrbuch der Einleitung in das Neue Testament", p.251-2; P. Feine, "Einleitung in das Neue Testament" p.160; Reuss, "Geschichte der Heiligen Schriften Neuen Testaments", p.107. Reuss adds the desperate argument that the Caesarean captivity better accounts for the depressed mood of the Apostle.

to enter the case, then the epistle to the Philippians ought to come before and not after the other three. "It has much more in common with the earlier Epistles, those to Corinth and Rome, than with the other Epistles of the Captivity" - (Jones, "The Epistles of the Captivity: Where were They Written?", publ. in the Expositor, Oct. 1915, p. 293). Jones also adds: "There is a considerable tendency, however, among scholars of the present day to discount the argument based upon similarity of style" (p. 312). Professor Bacon is also equally emphatic upon the "precariousness of basing the relative date of an Epistle upon mere resemblance of style (mentioned by Jones, p. 312 in this connection). Thus it is hardly justifiable to make the question of language and style decisive.

The tone of each particular epistle was determined by the local condition of the church addressed and not the situation of the Apostle himself. The readers of Colossians were confronted by grave dangers. Heresy was beginning to undermine their faith. In order to make his appeals for steadfastness and faithfulness as impressive as possible, Paul reminds them of his bonds which he was enduring because he was the ambassador of Christ on behalf of the Gentiles. The Apostle again pleads his bonds to Philemon in order that he might more successfully secure a friendly reception for Onesimus. On the other hand, there was no great peril in Philippi. The church was loyal and faithful to Paul and his teaching. There was no need of stirring and impressive appeals which appear so frequently in the other epistles. This explains why the Apostle's bonds

are emphasized in the one group, whereas he is comparatively silent about them in the fourth letter.

True, the Apostle does bid his readers pray "that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: That I may make manifest that I ought to speak" (Col. 4,3; cf. also Eph. 6,21). This would seem to indicate that the Apostle and his helpers are hindered in their speaking. The picture of a door being opened is used also in I Cor. 6, 19 and "2Cor. 2, 12, where it clearly refers to the hearers. It was not that the opportunity for preaching was lacking, but Paul bids the readers to pray that God might open wide the door for the further progress of the Gospel. So in Eph. 6, 19 the Apostle asks for the right words that he may find an open door with the hearers.

It cannot be denied that the slave Onesimus would be much safer from pursuit in the great city of Rome. Run-away slaves fled to Rome from all provinces. Among these crowds of people and far away from Colossae Onesimus ran less risk than he would in near-by Colossae. St. Paul seems to have been under stricter guard at Caesarea, where only his friends were allowed to see him (Acts 24, 23) than at Rome, where he lived in a private house and received all that came (Acts 28, 16.30.31). We do not know the circumstances of the flight of Onesimus or what brought Paul and the slave together, but probability points to Rome rather than Caesarea as the place

of their meeting.

There was a good reason for not mentioning Onesimus in the letter to the Ephesians. Onesimus was an escaped slave, and the mention of his name might have attracted notoriety in Ephesus. Besides, Paul calls him "one of you" in Col. 4,9 to ensure the fugitive slave a warm welcome in the church at Colossae. The commendation "a faithful and beloved brother" should serve to restore him in favor, if his escape should still be charged against him. At Ephesus Onesimus needed no formal introduction. Paul did not deem it necessary to make more than one personal reference, namely Tychicus. If he omitted every reference to friends and acquaintances at Ephesus, why should he single out this stranger? Furthermore, the omission or mention of persons is at no time a decisive argument.

The $\kappa\alpha\iota$ of Eph. 6,21 should not create great difficulty. As shall be pointed out later, Paul, no doubt, wrote the epistle to the Colossians before he wrote Ephesians. In the former he has stated: "All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you" (Col. 4,7) and "Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate and comfort your hearts" (v.8). When he wrote to the Ephesians, he says in chpt. 6,21: "But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do --- ". In the opinion of the writer this $\kappa\alpha\iota$ does not determine the priority of the arrival at Colossae, but simply the priority of the writing of Colossians. Both opinions

place undue emphasis upon the conjunction καί, however, and are for this reason not deserving of serious consideration.

True, Paul asks Philemon to prepare for him a lodging, "and that soon" (ἴμα δὲ καί). It is not necessary to make much of this argument. Hort says: "It is but a playful way of saying to Philemon, 'Remember that I mean to come and see with my own eyes whether you have really treated your Christian slave as I have been exhorting you'; and then giving the thought a serious turn by assuring him that 'coming is no mere jest', for he does indeed hope some day to be set free through their prayers, and then will he haste to visit them". (Mentioned by Abbott, "International Critical Commentary," The Epistle to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, p. iii-iv)

The words of Appel will serve not only to clarify the matter of Paul's traveling plans, but also to brush aside Meyer's contentions on this score. He writes: "Caesarea as the place of writing Philippians, Philemon, Colossians and Ephesians is excluded by the traveling plans of Paul. According to Acts 19, 21 Paul, even in Ephesus, had the definite intention to travel to Jerusalem via Achaia and thence to Rome. This intention he also expresses in the letter to the Romans, written from Corinth, ch. 15, 23, and in a dream he receives the assurance from the Lord, Acts 23, 11, that this intention should be realized in spite of his arrest. Now, indeed, this realization was considerably retarded by his arrest, but that very fact would be a stimulus for the Apostle to lose no time

in carrying it out after his release. Thus he cannot have written Philippians from Caesarea, for according to ch. 2,24 he intends to visit Philippi immediately after his release, nor the other letters, for according to Philemon 22 he plans a journey to Colossae. He might still have determined to make a trip to Rome in a roundabout way, if the condition in those congregations to which he addressed letters had been one to cause him apprehension. But that was not the case (Cf. Phil. 1,3 ff.; 2,12; 4,1; Col. 13 f.; 2,5, and all of Ephesians)." (Einleitung in das Neue Testament, p. 52).

Zahn also emphasizes the fact that the contemporary work of Paul's helpers, viz. Timothy, Luke, Aristarchus, Epaphras, Demas and perhaps Tychicus, presupposes a large city. The city of Caesarea by no means meets this requirement. There are no indications in Acts that Paul was actively engaged in missionary work at Caesarea. Hopes for a quick release from the Caesarean imprisonment were also out of question. Hence the Caesarean Captivity does not agree with the background of the epistles in question. (Einleitung in das Neue Testament, p. 315-316).

It is evident, then, that the theory which would make the Caesarean Captivity the seat of the writing of the Captivity Letters does not meet the requirements which their historic background and situation demand, and can, therefore, not be accepted.

B. The Ephesian Theory.

Of recent years an attempt has been made to remove the Captivity Letters out of what Deissmann describes as the "profitless groove into which the alternative 'Rome or Caesarea' must lead" ("Light from the East", p.229) and to establish EPHESUS as the place where these letters were written. The theory has attracted the attention of such men as Dr. Kirsopp Lake, Prof. B.W. Bacon and Prof. Geo. S. Duncan. They seek to establish the fact that there was an imprisonment at Ephesus and that the Captivity Epistles issued from this imprisonment.

1. There Was An Imprisonment at Ephesus.

The Apostle Paul says in 1 Cor. 15, 32: "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me?" Fighting with wild beasts was a form of execution. The context implies that the Apostle had passed through a period of deep distress and that he had actually been imprisoned, tried, and condemned to death in the public arena. In answer to the objection that Paul was a Roman citizen and could, therefore, not have been subjected to this kind of treatment, Lake ("Critical Problems of the Epistle to the Philippians, Expositor, v. VII p. 481.) suggests that Paul perhaps was unable to prove his citizenship. The omission of this imprisonment in Acts is also accounted

for. Luke reported only events which he regarded suitable for his purpose. He may have omitted this scene as he did in the case of the intermediate visit at Corinth.

The second Epistle to the Corinthians implies that the situation in Ephesus was very unfavorable and the danger to the Apostle's own person so acute that he had to flee from the city before the time he had fixed for departure. His perilous condition is reflected both in the tone and language of the letter. A few samples of this are Ch. 1, 8,9: "We despaired even of life --- we have had the answer of death within ourselves --- who delivered us from so great a death"; ch. 6,9: "As dying, and, behold, we live". These expressions can only mean that the experience recorded in 1 Cor. 15, 30-32 had been repeated, and that Paul had once again escaped the death penalty. Furthermore, the Apostle no longer looks forward to seeing the Parousia during his lifetime. Death had become a pressing reality and his hopes of seeing Christ on earth were fading away.

Some scholars hold that Romans chapter sixteen is not an integral part of the Epistle and that its original destination was Ephesus. This conjecture then affords strong support for an Ephesian imprisonment. In verse 7 of this chapter Andronicus and Junias are referred to as "my fellow-prisoners". They must have shared his prison at Ephesus. In verse 3 Aquilla and Priscilla are spoken of as having "for my life laid down their necks". This must have happened at Eph-

esus, where Paul was in such great peril and where they were his close fellow workers.

The reference of Phil. 1, 13 could refer to Ephesus as well as Rome. Duncan asserts, "It is plain from the way that ἐν ἔλῳ τῷ πραιτωρίῳ is followed up by the phrase καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς πᾶσιν that the Praetorium must be taken not of the place as a building, but of the people who live in it and come into touch with it" ("St. Paul's Ephesian Ministry," as reviewed in the Evangelical Quarterly", April 15, 1930, p. 202 by Francis Davidson.)

Still others refer the praetorium to soldiers, the Praetorian body. On the basis of this Albertz asserts that Ephesus is more probable than Rome, because the Roman Praetorian Body consisted of about nine thousand men. It would be impossible for Paul to have contact with so many. In Ephesus, on the other hand, there were but a few Praetorians on special duty and contact with these would be less difficult. (Mentioned in "The Epistles of the Captivity: Where Were They Written?", Maurice Jones, publ. in Expositor, Oct. 1915, p.309).

If the ΠΡΑΙΤΩΡΙΟΝ of Phil. 1, 13 is the Praetorium in the local sense, reference could still be to Ephesus. There is nothing to disprove that Praetorium can also mean "Palace of the Caesar" or the "Castra Praetorianorum by the Porta Viminalis" or anything similiar. Lake says: It would more probably mean an Imperial Villa outside Rome, and would

be particularly appropriate for the residence of a Governor
 ---- The expression points not so much to the city of Rome
 as to the provinces, in which the Governors were stationed.
 It, therefore, suits admirably as a reference to Ephesus, the
 residence of the Governor of Asia". Hence either interpreta-
 tion could not exclude the Epistle from Ephesus.

The expression οἱ ἐκ τῆς Καίσαρος οἰκίας
 in Phil. 4,22 does not necessarily refer to Rome exclusively.
 Prof. Duncan says: "Caesar had members of his 'household' in
 every part of the Empire, a sort of civil service, engaged in
 the managing of the Imperial property and attending generally
 to Imperial interests. The slaves and others who managed the
 res familiaris of the Emperor formed an important fraternity
 in the life of Ephesus -- numbers of them had been won by
 Paul for the Christian Church" (Quoted in Davidson's review
 of Duncan's "St. Paul's Ephesian Ministry", published in the
 Evangelical Quarterly, April 15, 1930, p. 202) The individuals
 belonging to this class even formed societies ("collegia"),
 especially burial societies. An Imperial phyle with the
 name "Imperial" (σεβαστήν) is said to have been found at Eph-
 esus.

Besides this evidence from the New Testament,
 the advocates of the Ephesian theory also offer external
evidence. There is in Ephesus a Greek tower which is a part
 of the ancient city's lines of fortifications, called "St.
 Paul's Prison". The "Acts of Paul and Thekla", a document

which, according to Ramsay, goes back to the second century and is regarded as generally trustworthy in historical details tells of an imprisonment of Paul at Ephesus. "The Monarchian Prologues" which are short introductions to Pauline Epistles published in some versions of the Vulgate have the following reference in the prologue to the Colossian Epistle: "Ergo apostolus jam ligatus scribit eis ab Epheso".

Albertz, who is regarded as the keenest exponent of this theory, argues that the evidence of the N.T. combined with the external evidence, establishes beyond all doubt the fact that St. Paul must have been in prison at Ephesus (1. Mentioned in Expositor, Oct. 1915, in Jones "The Epistles of the Captivity, etc." p. 298). The question is, however, whether this is the imprisonment which is implied in the Captivity Letters? This we shall seek to establish.

Paul may have undergone more imprisonments than those which are recorded in the Book of Acts. One or more of these may have happened at Ephesus. The imprisonment implied in the Captivity Letters, however, was not a matter of a simple arrest followed by a few nights in a prison cell as happened at Philippi. It was an imprisonment which lasted for a considerable time and left a very profound impression on the heart and mind of the Apostle.

It is true that Luke does not give us a complete account of the ^{Apostle's} life and experiences in Acts. It is true that there are gaps in the narrative. Nevertheless, it is

difficult to explain why Luke should have passed over the Account of an Ephesian imprisonment in complete silence. If this ever took place, as the advocates of this theory claim, it certainly had a powerful influence on the Apostle's life and was the cause of a great literary output. Strange that such an important event should be omitted.

In Acts 20, 18-38 Luke does record the address of Paul to the elders of the Church at Ephesus at Miletus. The language clearly implies a period of much distress and anxiety in Ephesus. Persecution on the part of Jews is definitely mentioned. Still, there is not the slightest allusion to anything which even approaches the imprisonment desired in this theory.

The "fighting with beasts" of 1 Cor. 15,32 cannot refer to an actual physical encounter with wild beasts at the arena in Ephesus. We have the analogy of 2 Tim. 4,17 where Paul speaks of having been "delivered out of the mouth of the lion". This cannot be taken literally, for Paul was definitely appealing to the Tribunal as citizen of the Roman Empire. Luke admits that there is no necessity of referring it to an actual combat, because εἰ with the aorist indicative often implies an unfulfilled condition. There was a possibility of his doing so, and the possibility of his fighting with wild beasts implies that the Apostle had been arrested and was in prison at the present time. Still, we find no report even of this condemnation. Certainly some early Christian writer

would have reported such an event. All records fail to bear any evidence of an event which would have attracted wide attention.

The tone of the second Epistle to the Corinthians undoubtedly points to a recent period of great distress and suffering. The situation of the Apostle himself well explains this. The state of affairs at Corinth was deplorable. At Ephesus his life had been endangered and only the persuasion of friends and the intervention of friendly Aisarchs had preserved him. He had to abandon his work at Ephesus sooner than he had expected. Under the overwhelming burden the heart of the Apostle was bowed down. We need no second imprisonment to explain the grave and despairing tone of 2 Corinthians. What is known of his troubles and anxieties satisfactorily accounts for his feelings.

Granting that the reference to the Praetorium and the members of the "household" of Caesar may refer to Ephesus as well as Rome, this is no decisive argument. "The designations were eminently correct in Rome, where they had originated, and could therefore be used with the highest propriety. Besides, it is most fitting that Rome should be thought of in connection with Phil. 1, 19-25 and 2,23; for these passages, as compared with Acts 28 16.30, clearly show that Paul enjoyed the "custodia libera" for two years, until his case came up for hearing in the imperial court. He was then removed to the praetorium of Rome, in the immediate neighbor-

hood of the imperial palace, where he had opportunity to do more extensive mission work among the soldiers of the imperial barracks" (Dr. Kretzmann, "The Place and the Time of the Captivity Letters", published in the "Concordia Theological Monthly", June 1930, p. 431.)

The Ephesian destination of Rom. 16 is much too problematic to furnish definite proof. We have no internal or external evidence for such an Ephesian destination. Even if it was addressed to the Ephesians, it is not necessary that Andronicus and Junias should have been imprisoned with Paul, because he calls them "fellow-prisoners". The reference to Aquila and Priscilla, no doubt, deals with an incident at Ephesus where these two companions risked their lives to save the Apostle. It does not necessarily imply an imprisonment.

The external evidence submitted is not entirely without fault. It is possible that Paul was imprisoned at Ephesus. It is quite certain however, that the ruin bearing the name of "St. Paul's Prison" could not have been used for that purpose. Sir C. Wilson describes it as a "two-storied fort with eight chambers, the upper story being reached by the external staircase" ("Handbook to Asia Minor", p.99). Such a building would be obviously unsuitable for the safe custody of prisoners.

It has been pointed out that the peculiar phrase "jam ligatus" of the passage in question in the "Monarchian Prologues" refers to the well known imprisonment at

the end of the Apostle's life. The writer evidently supposed that Paul passed through Ephesus on his way from Caesarea to Rome and wrote this letter there. It is wrong, then, to adduce this passage as evidence for an Ephesian imprisonment during the period under discussion.

Although it is quite possible that the Apostle Paul may have been subjected to confinement of some kind at Ephesus, such a confinement would hardly have been of the length and importance demanded by the implications of the Captivity Letters.

2. From the Ephesian Captivity the Epistles of the Captivity Were Written.

There is a division of opinion as to which Epistles were written from this Ephesian Captivity. We are interested chiefly in the examination of the arguments which would place our Epistle into this period.

The chief reasons for placing the Colossian-Ephesian-Philemon group here are based upon the contents of Philemon. They are: 1.) Onesimus would more likely seek refuge at Ephesus than Rome. Ephesus was comparatively close, while a flight to Rome would demand a journey through the interior of Asia and a long sea voyage. 2.) It is difficult to explain Paul's request to Philemon to "prepare lodging", if the letter was written from Rome. In Rome the Apostle's

eyes were turned toward the West and it is not at all probable that he should have contemplated a visit to Colossae after his release. The proximity of Ephesus is decidedly against the proposed flight, However, There was a greater risk of detection in Ephesus. Besides, there is no suggestion of a "custodia libera" at Ephesus, which makes it difficult to explain how Onesimus could come into contact with Paul.

The traveling plans of Paul have already been discussed. A trip from Rome to Colossae was not out of question. Paul may well have journeyed through the entire East, through Achaia and Macedonia, as well as through Proconsular Asia and all of Asia Minor. We need not dwell on this point too long.

If the three Epistles were written from Ephesus, how could one possibly explain the impersonal and distant tone of the entire letter? One would expect a more vivid, personal relation with the readers if Paul was actually imprisoned in the neighborhood. This point alone could establish the fact that the Ephesine origin of the Epistle to the Ephesians is quite improbable and impossible.

Although the omission or mention of persons is not a decisive argument, Dr. Kretzmann shows that the passages which refer to the Apostle's companions during the imprisonment in question have an important bearing on the case. In regard to Aristarchus he says: "It is true that this man is mentioned in Acts 19,29 as Paul's companion in travel, whence

we conclude that he was with Paul during the Latter's Ephesine sojourn, at least for some time. But this same Aristarchus ----- was a companion of Paul on the voyage from Caesarea to Rome, Acts 27,2, and he may have been a fellow-prisoner even then, as he is called by Paul in Col. 4,10. These facts surely point with great definiteness to Rome, also for the writing of the letter to Philemon, for Aristarchus is mentioned in v.24 of that Epistle as a fellow-laborer of the great Apostle. In the Case of Ephesus a captivity of Paul and Aristarchus is conjecture, pure and simple; in the case of Rome the four passages concerned agree in making Aristarchus a fellow-laborer and a fellow-prisoner." ("The Place and the Time of the Captivity Letters", p. 431).

Luke was not with Paul during his ministry at Ephesus. The "we" sections of the Book of Acts indicate that he was left behind at Philippi, after Paul's first visit there and he did not rejoin him until he returned there after a hurried departure from Ephesus. Luke was clearly in the company of Paul when the Letters of the Captivity were written (Col. 4,14; Philemon 24.) This strongly points to the Roman origin of the Captivity Letters, for Luke, undoubtedly, accompanied Paul during his journey to Rome and Acts 27, 1-28,16 indicates that he stayed in Rome with the Apostle.

The writer holds that the entire Ephesine theory is based upon too much conjecture and probability. Instead of presenting positive proof, too often do the advo-

gates of this view argue from the silence of the Acts. Not infrequently do they remark, "for this reason Ephesus cannot be excluded". The theory is not sound and far from convincing.

If we accept the traditional view of Rome as the seat of the writing of the Captivity Letters, we rest upon safe ground. In Rome the Apostle Paul was free to proclaim the Gospel (Acts 28, 16,30,31). The reference to the Praetorium is more natural here, taken in the sense of the "praetoriani", the soldiers, or in the sense of the building. The mention of "they that are of Caesar's household" (Phil. 4,22) finds a safer footing than the conjectured Ephesian background. The Apostle's traveling plans are made feasible. The flight of Onesimus to Rome has been shown to be quite natural.

Since the traditional view readily meets all objections and satisfactorily so, and since it presents a situation and a background which is implied in the Captivity Letters, there is no reason for departing from it and allowing conjecture and probability to determine the time and place of the writing of the Letters of the Captivity, and in particular, the Epistle to the Ephesians.

For these reasons the writer holds to the traditional view, namely, that the Epistle to the Ephesians was written from Rome during the Apostle Paul's first captivity in the year 62.

II. The Addressees of Ephesians.

The traditional view is that the Epistle to the Ephesians was addressed to the Ephesian congregation. In modern times, however, the Ephesian destination has become a subject of much dispute. On the basis of external and internal evidence critics seek to establish the fact that the Epistle was not addressed to the one local congregation at Ephesus.

In order to meet these critics on their own ground it will be necessary to examine the external and internal evidence of Ephesians. This will enable us to evaluate their objections to the traditional view and their alleged answer to the question: Who are the readers of Ephesians?

A. Critical Objections to the Traditional View.

1. The External Evidence.

The greater part of the controversy rests upon the original reading of Eph. 1,1. The traditional view defends ἐν Ἐφέσῳ as the original reading of the text. The modern view prefers to assume that the words, which are of vital importance for the determining of the addressees, are a later addition to the text.

Manuscript evidence seems to strengthen this opinion. In the Codex Sinaiticus (N) the words ἐν Ἐφέσῳ

were added by a later hand. In the Codex Vaticanus (B) the words were added in the margin, although not by the first hand. They were written in the Codex 67 but were erased by a corrector. Furthermore, the testimony of the Church Fathers seems to indicate that the words ἐν Ἐφίῳ were missing in the ancient manuscripts. This inference is made from the writings of Tertullian, Origen, Jerome, and Basil. * Thus, manuscript evidence is strongly against the original reading of ἐν Ἐφίῳ in Eph. 1,1.

Disregarding for the present the omission of the words in the codices mentioned, let us pay closer attention to the testimony of the Church Fathers. First, the testimony of Tertullian who writes: "Praeterea hic et de alia epistola, quam nos ad Ephesios praescriptam habemus, haeritici vero ad Laodiceos" (Adv. Marc., 5,11) and: "Ecclesiae quidem veritate epistolam istam ad Ephesios habemus emissam, non ad Laodiceos, sed Marcion ei titulum aliquando interpolare gestit, quasi et in isto diligentissimus explorator. Nihil autem de titulis interest, dum ad quosdam." (5,17)

*See Ewald, "Brief des Paulus an die Epheser, Kolosser und Philemon" in Zahn's Kommentar zum N.T. pp. 14,15; Bleek, "Einleitung in das N.T." p. 590-592; Barth, "Einleitung in das N.T." p. 71; Feine, "Einleitung in das N.T." pp. 161.162; Moffatt, "Introduction to the Literature of the N.T." p. 390; Abbott, "The Epistle to the Ephesians and to the Colossians" in the International Critical Commentary, pp. 1.11; Zahn, "Einleitung in das N.T." p. 344.

From this quotation it is inferred that Tertullian did not read ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in the copies which he had seen. Had he found the words in extant copies, it is more likely that he would have appealed to the words of the text, not to the testimony of the Church. Over against this, Eadie ("Commentary of the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians", p. xxii) points out, however, that the testimony of the Church and the testimony of the text were really identical.

By "title" the superscription prefixed to the Epistle and not the address of Eph. 1,1 is meant. If Marcion had changed the title, he would have been compelled to change also the reading of the salutation from ἐν Ἐφέσῳ to ἐν Λαοδικείῃ. Tertullian, then, is accusing Marcion of changing the universally accepted title and of having done this as the avowed result of "diligent inquiry". It cannot be definitely established what the "inquiry" was. He may have discovered the epistle around Laodicea, or he connected this epistle with Col. 4,16: "and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea." (τὴν ἐκ Λαοδικίας)

Tertullian's defense of the title presupposes the agreement of the title with the Pauline address in Eph. 1,1 as self-evident. If the ἐν Ἐφέσῳ had been wanting there, Tertullian certainly would have taken this omission into consideration; He would have tried to defend the universally accepted position of the church; viz., that the Epistle was addressed to the Ephesians in spite of the omission.

The testimony of Tertullian proves that Marcion's view was not only a decided contradiction of the entire Church, but that his other literary demeanors at once throw suspicion on the motives of his procedure and on the reliability and trustworthiness of his judgment. Hence, the reference of Tertullian is by no means a testification to the fact that the words ἐν'Ἐφέσῳ were omitted from ch. 1,1 in the manuscripts of his day. On the contrary, there is every reason to believe that he found the words there.

Origen says: ἐπὶ μόνων τῶν Ἐφεσίων εὐρόμεν κείμενον „ τὸ τοῖς οὖσι“, τὶ δύναται σημαίνειν. ὅρα οὖν, εἰ μὴ ὡσπερ ἐν τῇ Εξόδῳ ὄνομά φησιν ἑαυτοῦ ἢ χρηματίζων Μωϋσῆ τὸ „ ὢν “ (Εξ. 3, 14), οὕτως οἱ μετέχοντες τοῦ ὄντος γίνονται ὄντες, καλούμενοι οἶονεὶ ἐκ τοῦ μὴ εἶναι εἰς τὸ εἶναι - - - - - . (Catena ed. Cramer, VI, 102 - quoted in Zahn's "Einleitung", p.345). Origen here attempts to explain the words " τοῖς οὖσι " by saying that the Christians thru their relation to Christ, the "I am" (ὁ ὢν), have become partakers of the "I am", for they are now "they who are" (οἱ ὄντες). From this absurd interpretation critics have concluded that Origen did not read the words ἐν'Ἐφέσῳ in extant manuscripts. The portion quoted has no direct bearing on the case and is, therefore, not convincing evidence.

Jerome was undoubtedly familiar with Origen's exposition of Ephesians, for he writes: "Some, with an excessive refinement, think from what was said to Moses - 'These words shalt thou say to the children of Israel, HE WHO IS has

sent me -- that the saints and faithful at Ephesus are addressed by a term descriptive of essence, as if from WHO IS, they had been named THEY WHO ARE. Others, indeed, suppose that the epistle was written not simply to those WHO ARE, but to those WHO ARE AT EPHESUS, saints and faithful." (Opera, ed. Vallarsius, tom. vii., p. 543 -- transl. by Eadie, l.c., p xxi). This statement should imply that Jerome found copies without reading ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in Eph. 1,1, and that he found two readings of this verse.

But the language does not necessarily make these implications. On the contrary, Jerome is pointing out that there were two different interpretations of one and the same reading: τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ἐφέσῳ . One is that the Christians at Ephesus ("qui Ephesi sunt") are described as THEY WHO ARE, i.e. partakers of the I AM (ὁ ὢν), and the other is that the readers are described as the "saints and faithful" who are to be found at Ephesus. Thus, what is cited as testimony against results in testimony for the original reading of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in ch. 1,1.

Basil's testimony has been subjected to much discussion. In the passage concerned Basil's object is to show that "the Son of God cannot be said to have been begotten εἰς οὐκ ὄντων, because he is ὄντως ὢν, for while the Gentiles who know him are not called οὐκ ὄντα, his own people are expressly named οἱ ὄντες." (Eadie, l.c., p.xix) Basil's proof from Scripture is: Ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς Ἐφεσίοις ἐπιτίλλων ὡς γνησίως ἠνωμένοις

τῷ ὄντι δι' ἐπιγνώσεως, ὄντας αὐτοὺς ἰδιαζόντως ὠνομασθῆναι,
εἰπὼν τοῖς ἀγίοις τοῖς οὖσι καὶ περὶ τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. οὕτω
γὰρ καὶ οἱ πρὸ ἡμῶν παραδεδώκασι καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐν τοῖς πάλαισι
τῶν ἀντιγράφων εὐρήκκαμεν. (Contra Eunomium, lib. ii,
cap. 19; Opera, tom. i, p. 254 - 255).

From this passage it is clear that Basil considered it certain that the Epistle was written to the Ephesians. However, in the manuscripts which he had consulted the words ἐν Ἐφέσῳ were missing. It is not stated how many copies he saw or how accurate these copies were. The fact that he himself had seen them would indicate that they were neither numerous nor easily accessible. He is not referring to the usual reading of Eph. 1,1, but is priding himself on a variant reading which he had discovered in ancient writings. Evidently this variant reading is not commonly known, for he vouches for its certainty by saying that he personally had seen it. Without attempting any further explanation of the passage, suffice it to say that Basil did find some manuscripts in which ἐν Ἐφέσῳ was missing from Eph. 1,1.

Aside from these isolated counter-witnesses, however, there is much positive external evidence for the original reading of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in Eph. 1,1.

The entire ancient Church has from the beginning designated our Epistle as "Epistle to the Ephesians" (Irenaeus, Haer. v. 23; Clemens Alexandrinus, Ström. iv. 8, p. 592, ed. Potter; "Didache", iv, 10, 11; Tertullian, Origen, Ignatius,

Polycarp, Hermas, and others, even as early as the Canon Muratori). With the exception of Marcion's changing of the title, not a single voice was raised against this view. "If the words ἐν Ἐφέσῳ had been wanting from the outset, and the Epistle had thus borne on the face of it no place of destination, such a consensus would have been quite as inexplicable in itself as at variance with the analogy of the other Epistles, in which throughout the judgment of the church as to the first readers, coincides with the superscription, where there is one, and beyond all doubt depends upon it." (Meyer, "Commentary on the New Testament", Epistle to the Ephesians, p. 6).

Furthermore, with the exception of N, B, and 67, all extant manuscripts have the words ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in Eph. 1,1. The evidence of the versions is unanimous for the reading. If the formula had been missing from the original text, it would indeed be difficult to explain satisfactorily how it crept into the codices. In all manuscripts of the New Testament our Epistle bears the title: Πρὸς Ἐφεσίους --- Παύλου ἐπιστολὴ πρὸς Ἐφεσίους. Zahn points out that titles were undoubtedly prefixed to the Pauline letters on basis of the geographical indication of the salutation ("Einleitung", p.347). So, for example from πᾶσι τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ῥώμῃ (Rom. 1,7) the title: Παύλου ἐπιστολὴ πρὸς Ῥωμαίους; and from τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ οὖσῃ ἐν Κορίνθῳ the title: Παύλου πρὸς Κορινθίους ἐπιστολὴ πρώτη. In like manner the title Πρὸς Ἐφεσίους undoubtedly resulted from the reading τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ἐφέσῳ of Eph. 1,1.

On every occasion when Paul uses τοῖς οὖν in the address, it serves to specify the locality of the readers, e.g. Rom. 1,7: τοῖς οὖν ἐν Ῥώμῃ : Phil. 1,1: τοῖς οὖν ἐν φιλιππίοις : 1 Cor. 1,2: τῇ οὖν ἐν Κορίνθῳ ; 2 Cor. 1, 1: τῇ οὖν ἐν Κορίνθῳ . Were the local designation after τοῖς οὖν wanting in Eph. 1, 1, the reading would be absolutely unparalleled and unprecedented -- SUI GENERIS! (The grammatical and exegetical difficulties which arise from the reading without any local destination shall be discussed later.)

Indeed it is difficult to explain the omission of the reading ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in N, B, 67, and the ancient manuscripts of which Basil speaks. With the exception of Marcion's title change and the remark of Basil there are no further historical references which would lead us to believe that there was a difference of opinion in regard to the reading of Eph. 1, 1 and the title of the Epistle.

Meyer ventures a very plausible explanation for the omission of the formula in the codices and manuscripts concerned. He says: "The omission would rather appear due to ancient historical criticism. From the contents of the letter at a very early period the inference had been drawn that it was addressed to persons who were as yet personally unknown to the apostle and still novices in Christianity. And how naturally did this lead to the view that the Ephesians had not been the recipients, and so to the deletion of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ. The text written without ἐν Ἐφέσῳ was soon laid hold of to support

the metaphysical explanation of τοῖς οὐδαίμοις, which had arisen out of it, and the favor and diffusion which the latter received from its accordance with the taste of the age necessarily contributed to the spreading of the text which was denuded of the ἐν Ἐφέσῳ." (Meyer, l. c. p. 9-10).

It is also possible that some of the churches in the territory surrounding Ephesus had copies made of the letter, because they were interested in the Apostle and his letters. From these copies the local designation may have been dropped. The fact that Paul had already established the practice of the passing on of letters (1 Thess. 5, 27; Col. 4,16) strengthens the possibility of this explanation.

These isolated instances, by no means weaken the powerful historical evidence for Ephesus as the destination of the Epistle or frustrate the preservation of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ as the original reading of ch. 1,1. This is undoubtedly also the view which prompted the later correctors of the manuscripts in question to insert the words ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in the text. External evidence, then, demands that the formula is to be most decidedly retained as original.

2. The Internal Evidence.

Critics, furthermore, object to the original reading of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ on basis of internal evidence. Quotations from Moffatt and Abbott aptly summarize the leading critical

objections. "If ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in ch. 1,1 was the original reading," says Moffatt, "the epistle cannot have been written by Paul. Its tone presupposes that the Church (or rather, the Christian recipients) were personally unknown to him (c. 1, 15; 3, 2; 4, 21); there is not the slightest reference to his long mission among them ----- definite allusions to the apostle's relation with the church ----- are conspicuous by their absence from Ephesians. ----- there is no internal evidence to prove that Ephesus was the church addressed, and much to the contrary" (Moffatt, "Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament", p. 391).

Abbott ("International Critical Commentary", The Epistle to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, pp. 111. iv) is of like opinion. He writes: "When we turn to the Epistle itself we find its whole tone and character out of keeping with the traditional designation. St. Paul had spent three years at Ephesus. ----- We might expect a letter written to the Ephesians to be full of personal reminiscences and allusions to his labors amongst them; instead of which we have a composition which is more like a treatise than a letter, and so absolutely destitute of local coloring that it might have been written to a Church which Paul had never even visited. ----- there is not even a general friendly greeting ----- there are expressions in the Epistle which seem impossible to reconcile with the supposition that it is addressed to that (Ephesian) Church (c. 1, 15; 3, 2; 4, 21.22)".

Zahn goes so far as to assert that if the Epistle was addressed to the Ephesian congregation, one would have to conclude from Eph. 1, 15 f.; 3, 1-4 that Paul wrote the letter before he had come to Ephesus and became personally acquainted with the congregation there. He goes on to show that according to Acts 18, 18-20 Paul labored at Ephesus for a space of three years. First he taught in the synagogue for three months, then in the school of Ty[~]tan[~]us for fully two years. In the face of this it should have been evident from the very beginning that our Epistle was not intended for this congregation." ("Einleitung", p.345)

With few exceptions scholars on the field of New Testament isagogics are agreed that on the basis of internal evidence our Epistle was not addressed to the one, local congregation at Ephesus.* It must be said that the internal evidence which has been heaped up against the original reading of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ -- the Ephesian destination of our Epistle -- is indeed weighty and not at all to be overlooked. As a matter of fact, it is almost overwhelming. If this evidence from the Epistle itself stands the test, the traditional view of the Ephesian destination must indeed be yielded. But does

 *This view is shared by the following: Barth, p. 72; Feine p. 162; Bleek, pp. 586.587; Ewald, p. 18.19; Reuss, p. 113; Weiss, "Lehrbuch der Einleitung in das N.T." p. 262; Guericke, Neutestamentliche Isagogik, p. 330-333, et.al.

it stand the test? Only a detailed examination of these individual objections will supply the answer to this question.

(a) The letter presupposes readers with whom Paul is not personally acquainted. The first passage which is cited to support this claim is Eph. 1, 15. 16: "Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and love to all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers." The issue lies in the participle ἀκούσας, "after I heard of your faith." If the letter was addressed to the Ephesians with whom Paul was so closely related, he would hardly have written that they had "heard of" each other.

But when the Apostle assures his readers that he does not cease to give thanks and pray for them since he has heard of their faith and love, he has reference to the firmness and continuation of their faith since his departure from Ephesus. Evidently Paul had received a favorable report of the congregation at Ephesus and was, as a result, very grateful that his preaching of the Gospel had born such fruit. Need the fact that he gives thanks to God for the continued success of the Gospel since his departure from Ephesus militate against the Ephesian destination? The ἀκούσας seems to be unduly emphasized by those who oppose the original reading of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ and the Ephesian destination of the Epistle.

We find the same expression in Philemon 4,5:

"I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayers, Hearing of thy love and faith which thou hast toward the Lord Jesus and all the saints." To be consistent, critics would have to conclude in this case also that the Apostle was not personally acquainted with Philemon. The letter itself clearly shows, however, that Philemon was well known to him. It is clear, then, that the favorable report concerning one who was well known to the Apostle occasioned this prayer of thanksgiving to God for the success of the harvest which he had sown.

Incidentally, it must not be forgotten that some few years had elapsed since the Apostle's stay at Ephesus, approximately five. During this time the congregation had grown and prospered. There were many new members with whom Paul was not personally acquainted. How could it have been possible for him to remember the different individuals with whom he had come into contact during the course of his many missionary activities?

The second passage which critics quote is Eph. 3, 1.2: "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward." It is objected that the εἰ ὑε ἠκούσατε implies doubt, and, of a surety, there could be no doubt as to whether the Ephesian congregation had heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given Paul. The element of doubt, then, excludes the Ephesians as addressees of the Epistle.

However, Dr. Hort observes that εἰ ὑε is

"frequently used with appealing force when an author does not mean to express real doubt" (quoted by Abbott, l. c., p. iv). Again, "The statement is unguarded, as the particle puts the matter in a hypothetical shape, and by its use and position takes for granted the truth of what is said or assumed" (Klotz - Devarius, ii, p. 308). Paul is in this case making a very tactful and gentle appeal --- "if so be that you heard, if I really remember you, if I can really trust you." It is also implied that Paul assumes this.

Moreover, in these and in the following verses Paul refers not only to his conversion and calling, but also to his entire activities as Apostle to the Gentiles everywhere. He refers to the success of his preaching in heathendom and the growth of the Gentile Church within the last few years. God has accomplished all this through the medium of Paul's preaching. The Ephesians had seen and experienced at least a part of this great dispensation. Thus, it is certainly not out of order to give them a tactful reminder of the dispensation.

Those who oppose the Ephesian destination of our Epistle find a third support in ch. 4, 20.21: "But ye have not so learned Christ, If so be that you have heard him and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus." This should indicate that the readers were instructed in the fundamentals of Christianity not by Paul himself, but by other teachers. He played no personal part in this teaching, for he is not

certain what kind of instruction they had received. Hence, the readers cannot be the members of the Ephesian congregation among whom he had labored for fully three years.

Again we say that εἶ γε does not imply the existence of a doubt. The Apostle (v. 17-20) is explaining to the Ephesians that there is a clear-cut and irreconcilable distinction between the regenerate and the unregenerate. Every one who has studied the message of salvation knows that he cannot continue in the lusts of the Gentiles. The preaching of Jesus Christ is at variance with any expression of the flesh. The εἶ γε αὐτὸν ἠκούσατε has the force of a gentle and tactful reminder - "you remember that, do you not?" Paul seems to say, "I do not want to hurt anybody's feelings, but we cannot be too careful on these moral questions." From this it does not necessarily follow that the readers are unknown to him.

Whenever the Apostle addressed an Epistle to Christians with whom he was not personally acquainted, he clearly makes reference to that fact. He assures the Romans, e.g., that he has for some time desired to come and see them (for the first time), Rom. 1, 8-15. To the Colossians he writes: "For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you and for them at Laodicea, and for as many of them as have not seen my face in the flesh" (Col. 2,1). There are no references of this nature in our Epistle.

So far, then, the examination of the much discussed passages reveals that this conjecture; namely, that the Epistle presupposes readers with whom Paul is not personally acquainted, is based upon purely subjective reasoning, militates against the meaning of the text, and is not in keeping with the Apostle's usual manner of specifying that the readers are unknown to him.

(b) The general tone of the letter betrays that it was not directed to the Ephesians, with whom Paul stood in such close intimacy. One would certainly expect more local coloring, allusions to the Apostle's labors among them, and references to specific needs, if the Epistle had been intended for the Ephesians.

In order to understand this so-called "aloofness" and "general tone" of our Epistle, it will be necessary to review the background of the letter, its occasion and purpose, and the situation of the writer himself.

It has been shown that Ephesians, together with the Epistles to Philemon and to the Colossians, issued from the Apostle's first imprisonment at Rome. When Paul wrote the letter to Philemon, he had a definite purpose in mind, as the letter itself reveals. He had won the run-away slave, Onesimus, for Christ and was sending him back to his master whom he had also converted. When Paul wrote to the Colossian congregation he had a definite purpose in mind. He had received a report

from Epaphras that certain false teachers who professed Christianity were nevertheless spreading their Judaistic ideas, combined with certain philosophic speculations. By their speculations and human doctrines and commandments they had placed themselves in opposition to the person of Christ and His vicarious atonement. This was indeed cause of alarm. Paul felt constrained to write this young Colossian congregation to warn them against the impending dangers, to refute the erroneous doctrines, and to exhort them to steadfastness in the faith. The Epistle throughout bears evidence of its occasion.

On the other hand, there was no immediate, urgent reason which caused Paul to write the letter to the Ephesians. Tychicus had been commissioned to deliver the epistles to Philemon, and to the Colossians at Colossae. Since he would most likely pass through Ephesus on the way (it cannot be established whether Tychicus took the northern route or the southern route through Perga. At all events, he would be in the vicinity of Ephesus), Paul, having ample time and opportunity, decided to include a letter for the Ephesian congregation which lay so near to his heart.

The general theme of the Epistle which pervades the doctrinal and hortatory part is THE ONE HOLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH, the communion of saints, the una sancta. In the Epistle to the Colossians the Apostle has emphasized the majesty and glory of the person of Christ and His redemptive work over against the speculations of false teachers.

In Ephesians he extols the majesty and glory of the congregation of Christ. He shows the readers how magnificent the grace by which they are made members of Christ's Church really is and then points out to them the duties which result from such a membership.

There can be no doubt as to the propriety and timeliness of this particular theme for this particular congregation at Ephesus. It was the largest and most prominent congregation of the Orient. It was most fitting that its founder should remind its members of the abundant grace which was manifested toward them in Christ, of their membership in His Church, and of the high calling which the Church of Christ must fulfill on this earth. We know also that the Ephesians were especially proud of their ἑκκλησία, that political institution which was the pride of every free city. In his Epistle Paul could point them to an ἑκκλησία which is much greater, much more magnificent. Membership in this one great ἑκκλησία, which is composed of all the members of Christ's body everywhere, is indeed a source of joy and pride.

It is also very natural to expect such thoughts from the Apostle during the first Roman imprisonment. He was now aging rapidly, perhaps in the early sixties. In this environment and at this age he would naturally be given to calm reflection and retrospection. As he looked back he realized that he had fulfilled the greatest part of his calling as Apostle to the Gentiles. He had planted the seed of the Gospel

of Christ in the entire Orient. Since his departure the ground had been watered and the harvest was great. His wish of long standing to preach the Gospel in Rome had been granted. Paul visualized the entire Church, Jews and Gentiles united into the one holy temple of God through Christ.

These reflections gave birth to boundless joy. When the Apostle considered the wonderful work of God which had been accomplished during the last decade through the agency of his preaching, his heart was filled with joy and thanksgiving. Inspired by the Holy Ghost and from the fulness of a grateful heart, the Apostle now proclaims the mystery of the eternal Church which is from everlasting to everlasting.

The so-called "general tone", then, results from the fact that Paul was not moved to write the Epistle by any urgent reasons. Even as he intended to present to the Romans an exhaustive doctrinal treatise, so in this case he aims simply to present the mystery of the one holy Christian Church. All else is made subservient to that one fundamental thought. Other considerations are disregarded as the Apostle unfolds his theme.

(c) The absence of any personal greetings is inexplicable, if the Epistle was intended for the Ephesian congregation. Paul must have been personally acquainted with a great number of Christians at Ephesus, for he labored in their midst for three years. One could expect at least a few per-

sonal greetings to give the letter a more personal touch.

Eadie replies that this argument is "two-edged". The great number of Paul's acquaintances there may have prevented him from sending any personal greetings. It would have filled a roll longer than the Epistle itself to exhaust the list. The omission of a single name might have given offense. (Eadie l. c., p. xxvii).

It is not improper to meet a subjective argument with an illustration. A pastor who has been absent from his former parish for five or six years would certainly hesitate to send greetings to some few individuals of that parish. We know that even today members of a congregation are proud of any such token from the pastor. Whereas the recipients of such tokens make no effort to conceal their gratitude and pride, those who have been overlooked invariably feel offended and cause unpleasant relations. Since a personal greeting from the Apostle was beyond the slightest doubt regarded with great esteem, perhaps Paul did the wisest thing after all, in that he neglected to include any personal greetings whatsoever in the Epistle.

Then, too, we know that in such churches as Rome, Colossae, Corinth, and Philippi where the Apostle knew only a few prominent individuals, these prominent individuals are greeted. At Ephesus he had a very wide acquaintance, which decidedly alters the case.

It is also very natural to suppose that the absence of greetings was, in part at least, connected with the mission of Tychicus. According to Eph. 6, 21 Tychicus was to report on the condition and situation of the Apostle. He undoubtedly received instructions to make other personal reports. Tychicus was especially fitted for this purpose since he, as an inhabitant of Asia, as a witness of Paul's farewell address to the elders at Miletus (Acts 20,4), was very accurately acquainted with the relation of the Apostle to the Ephesians.

Therefore, while the reasons advanced help us to understand why Paul embodied no personal greetings in the letter, the fact that such private business was beyond doubt charged to Tychicus leads us to believe that the members of the Ephesian congregation did receive word, and possibly some very close friends greetings, from Paul.

Accordingly, the evidence from the contents of the Epistle which critics present in opposition to the original reading of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in Eph. 1,1 by no means stands the test. The traditional view which defends ἐν Ἐφέσῳ as the original reading of the text shall not be yielded because of subjective arguments that are not warranted by the clear words of the text.

Furthermore, if ἐν Ἐφέσῳ was not the original reading of Eph. 1,1, how did the text read originally? In line with this, who were the addressees of Ephesians? We shall

next discuss:

B. Critical Hypotheses concerning the Addressees of Ephesians.

1. The Epistle was addressed to the Laodiceans.

Marcion was of the opinion that our Epistle was the letter which Paul addressed to the Laodicean congregation. He identified it with the ἡ (ἐπιστολή) ἐκ Λαοδικείας of Col. 4, 16 ("and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea").* Paul speaks of a letter which was to come from Laodicea and which should be read in the Colossian congregation. Aside from the fact that Marcion changed the title from πρὸς Ἐφεσίους to πρὸς Λαοδικέας contemporaneous sacred literature offers not the slightest trace of the identifying of our Epistle with the "letter from Laodicea" of Col. 4, 16.

If Marcion's conjecture is correct, then the Epistle must have been written some time prior to Colossians. Internal evidence disproves this, however, for our Epistle and the Epistle to the Colossians were composed at about the same time and despatched by one and the same messenger, Tychicus. (Col. 4, 7.8; Eph. 6, 21.22).

Moreover, the Apostle commands the Colossian congregation to greet the Laodiceans in his name (Col. 4, 13).

 *This view has been adopted by Grotius, Hammond, Mill, Pierce, Du Pin, Wall, the younger Eitringa, Benson, Baley (Horae Paulinae, c. vi), Holzhausen, Rübiger (De Christologia Paulina, p. 47), et. al.

If the Laodiceans had already received a letter from the same Tychicus who carried the letter to the Colossians to Colossae, and who was instructed to give a report of Paul's affairs, the Apostle surely would not have requested the Colossians to send greetings again.

It is impossible to imagine that a letter which was known to the Laodicean and Colossian congregations as Paul's "Epistle to the Laodiceans" should be so soon changed into a letter of Paul πρὸς Ἐφεσίους, and that it should be generally regarded as such.

We need devote no further attention to this early conjecture of the ancient critic, Marcion. In fine, it is ruled out by the already established genuineness of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in Eph. 1,1.

2. The Epistle is a Circular Letter.

"The only hypothesis that agrees with the facts is that the Epistle was an encyclical letter" (Abbott, l.c., p. viii). This "Circular" or "encyclical" hypothesis is the view which obtains today. Critics are agreed that Ephesians was not intended for the one local congregation at Ephesus alone, but for a wider circle of readers. The general opinion is that the letter was addressed to the congregations of Asia Minor which were not personally known to the Apostle. It was addressed to readers who had been won for Christianity after

his departure from the Orient. Sometimes Ephesus is entirely excluded from the cycle of congregations (Koppe, Hamlein, Eichhorn, Berthold, and Reiche). Bleek is of the opinion that the Ephesians obtained the circular letter from Tychicus, who was on his way to Phrygia, only for the purpose of reading it. They then retained a copy for themselves. Zahn confines its course to three concentric circles: the congregation at the house of Philemon, the local congregation at Colossae, and the several congregations of the province of Asia. Aside from these and various other differences in detail, however, critics are united in the opinion that our Epistle cannot be thought to have been intended solely for the congregation at Ephesus.*

It is thought that this encyclical theory readily removes all the difficulties, viz. the presupposition that the readers are not personally known to the writer, the general tone of the Epistle, and the absence of personal greetings and references. It would also explain the statement of Col.

* This notion was first suggested by Beza, and put into a definite form by Ussher (*Annales Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, 64 A.D.). The encyclical theory has been adopted (with various modifications) by a very great number of scholars and critics, including Barth (p. 263), Bleek (p. 596), Ewald (p.18.19), Feine (p. 72), Guericke (p.331.332), Moffatt (p. 393), Reuss (p. 112), B. Weiss (p. 263), Zahn (pp. 345.346), Abbott (p. viii), Bengel, Neander, Berthold, Eichhorn Credner, Schneckenberger, Matthies, Meier, Harless, Olshausen, Lightfoot, Hort, Milligan, et al.

4, 16: "the letter from Laodicea", with which this encyclical letter is usually identified. Tychicus, who had been commissioned by Paul to deliver the Epistle to the various congregations concerned, would reach Laodicea before he arrived at Colossae, so that the Colossians would receive it from there.

Since critics are by no means agreed in the reading of Eph. 1,1, the encyclical hypothesis has manifested itself chiefly in two forms. Before commenting on the general idea of a circular letter, these two forms must first be considered.

(a) The first supposition is that the Apostle left a blank space after τοῖς οὐκίς .* A number of copies were prepared and Tychicus filled in the name of the respective place whenever he came to one of the churches concerned. In the Church at large copies would be circulated with vacant space, the blanks being disregarded. Hort (quoted by Abbott, l.c. pp. vi.vii) supposes that originally only one copy was sent by the hand of Tychicus and that the blank was filled orally when the Epistle was read. Whenever a copy was made for preservation the local address of that particular congregation was no doubt written in the vacant space.

Against this it must be urged that whenever the Apostle Paul intended an epistle for a cycle of congre-

* This is the form which Ussher suggested. His view has found favor also with Feine (p.163), Barth (p.71), Haupt ("Epheserbrief", p.1), Rueckert, Olshausen, Garnier, Bengel, Eichhorn, Hug, and others.

gations, he clearly indicated this intention in the address. This can be seen from Gal. 1, 1.2: Παῦλος --- ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Γαλατίας ; and from 2 Cor. 1, 1: Παῦλος --- τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ τῆ οὐρῆ ἐν Κορίνθῳ σὺν τοῖς ἁγίοις πάντε τοῖς οὖρῳ ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ Ἀχαΐᾳ . In the case of these circular letters Paul did not think of arranging for their delivery to the different congregations through one bearer. He simply took it for granted that the congregations would send the letter to each other. Clearly, the notion of blanks and delivery through one bearer is not in keeping with Paul's mode of procedure for a circular letter.

Moreover, such a notion that copies were made with blank spaces for the local address is not true to ancient epistolography. This is "altogether an arbitrary transplanting of a modern procedure from the counting-houses of the present day back into the apostolic age, from which we have circular letters indeed, but no trace of such a process of drawing them out, the mechanical nature of which would hardly square with the spirit of the apostolic age" (Meyer, l.c., p. 15).

If only the name was to be left blank, why was the preposition ἐν also omitted? It would be more natural to place an ἐν after the τοῖς οὖρῳ to make certain that the place-name would be inserted at the proper position in the sentence and to guard against its omission when reading or copying. Strange indeed, that in the codices where ἐν Ἐφέσῳ is missing no ἐν is found.

If blanks had been placed after τοῖς οὖτιν , one would expect to find copies with readings other than ἐν Ἐφέσῳ . How peculiar, that only copies with ἐν Ἐφέσῳ , and, in addition, those having no name whatever, should have been preserved!

Furthermore, the acceptance of this form of the encyclical hypothesis makes it difficult to understand why the Epistle should have gained the title πρὸς Ἐφεσίουσ and admission into the Canon as such. Each of the churches concerned would have sought to preserve and to multiply the copy addressed to it under its name. It is not difficult to suppose that storms of protest would have been raised against the Ephesian destination.

(b) The second form supposes the sentence — — — τοῖς ἀγίοις τοῖς οὖτιν καὶ πιστοῖς — — — to be complete without anything corresponding to ἐν Ἐφέσῳ , without any local designation.

Here we meet with a variety of translations and resulting interpretations. Dr. Milligan (Encycl. Brit., art. "Ephesians") translates: "To the saints existing and faithful in Christ Jesus." Abbott is of the opinion that "to saints which are also faithful" is a "perfectly grammatical construction" (l.c., p. viii; so also Credner, Meier, Moffatt). Schneckenberger renders: "die Heiligen, die es in der Tat sind."

It is interesting to observe what means are em-

ployed to reach an end in the entirely unwarranted conjecture of Ewald (l.c., p. 16). According to Ewald the text originally read: τοῖς ἀγαπῆτοῖς οὖτε καὶ ἡλιθοῖς . The corner of the page whose first line ended with τοῖς ἀγαπῆ was broken or torn off and as a result, the three letters ἀπῆ were lost. The text now reads: τοῖς ἀγ τοῖς οὖτε , etc. A copyist then made ἀγιοῖς out of ἀγ and construed τοῖς as the article. Aside from the fact that there is no historical data to support this, a conjecture of this nature certainly casts suspicion on the motives and reliability of such critical efforts.

Other translations might be listed. Suffice it to say, however, that any attempt to omit the prepositional phrase after τοῖς οὖτε creates grammatical and exegetical difficulties rather than affording any solution to the problem. It is useless to vie with grammarians and exegetes on this score. Regardless of whatever explanation may be offered, there still remains a grammatical monstrosity and a reading which affords little or no sense. Could there be unfaithful saints? Are there saints who do not believe or who are not saints in deeds and actions? We fail to see the sense which would result from the dropping of ἐν'ἐφέσει from Eph. 1,1. It would indeed be an unparalleled and unprecedented construction from the pen of the Apostle, not to mention the resultant clumsiness which is thereby incurred.

The internal evidence which is presented in favor of the encyclical theory has already been discussed in

connection with critical objections to the original reading of ἔν'Ἐφέσῳ in ch. 1,1. Paul's statement in Eph. 1, 15, that he has heard of their faith in the Lord Jesus and love unto all the saints, is more properly internal evidence against the circular hypothesis. The ἄκοότας presupposes a limited group of readers concerning whose Christianity the Apostle has received definite reports. It is not difficult to believe that Paul had received definite reports from different congregations in Asia Minor, e.g. from Colossae through Epaphras or from Ephesus through Christians who had traveled from there to Rome. On the other hand, it is highly improbable that Paul should have received definite information concerning all the congregations throughout Asia, either from congregation members or from persons who were especially acquainted with the condition of each congregation.

The entire encyclical theory creates difficulties also in regard to the historical background by associating the Epistle with Col. 4, 16. According to this view, Tychicus delivered the letter to a number of congregations in Asia. According to Col. 4, 7-9 Tychicus was also to deliver the epistle to the Colossians to the congregation at Colossae. This letter was already in the hands of the Colossians when the "letter from Laodicea" came to them, as is evident from Col. 4,16. They were to see to it that the Epistle addressed to them should be read in the neighboring congregation after it had been read among themselves. Then they, in turn, were to read

the "letter from Laodicea". How could the epistle to the Colossians, which Paul had commissioned Tychicus to deliver, already be in the hands of the Colossians when Tychicus arrived with the circular letter?

Several attempts have been made to solve this perplexing difficulty. Zahn (l.c., p. 343) assumes that Onesimus and Tychicus separated on the journey. While Onesimus delivered both the epistle to Philemon and the epistle to the Colossians at Colossae, Tychicus traveled about and delivered the encyclical. This would explain how the epistle to the Colossians arrived at Colossae before the encyclical did. But Col. 4, 7-9 rules this assumption out, for Tychicus appears to be the bearer of the epistle to the Colossians, and Onesimus appears to have been his companion from the seat of Paul's captivity to Colossae.

Ewald ventures an entirely different explanation. He makes a distinction between the ἐπέμψα of Col. 4, 8 and the ἐπέμψα of Eph. 6, 22. In Col. 4, 8 it denotes an earlier sending than the ἐπέμψα of Eph. 6, 22. First the Apostle sent Tychicus and Onesimus to Asia to deliver the circular letter, starting at Ephesus. After their departure messengers arrived at Rome and informed him of the false teachers at Colossae. Then Paul immediately wrote the Epistle to the Colossians which was delivered at Colossae upon the return of these messengers. This again would explain how the epistle to the Colossians arrived at Colossae before the encyclical

did. (Ewald, l.c., p.23).

These interpretations speak for themselves. They are merely conjectures which are shaped to serve a definite end. One need hardly describe them with the overworked, but in this instance, appropriate "unwarranted". The fact remains that Tychicus was to deliver the epistle to the Colossians. If our Epistle is to be identified with the "letter from Laodicea", the facts of the case cannot be reconciled. It might also be added that the Apostle would hardly instruct the Colossians to convey his personal greetings to the Laodiceans (Col. 4, 15), if he had already written a circular letter which was intended also for them.

As was previously mentioned in a different connection, the origin of the reading ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in Eph. 1,1, the title πρὸς Ἐφεσίους, the ancient and all but unanimous tradition of the Church which designates our Epistle as the Ephesian Epistle -- these three factors cannot be satisfactorily accounted for by the proponents of the Encyclical hypothesis.

Zahn has suggested an explanation for its acceptance into the canon as "Epistle to the Ephesians" (l.c., p. 347). Ephesus was in churchly, as well as in political respects, the metropolis of the province of Asia Minor. From Ephesus this letter most likely reached all the congregations inland. If it was circulated as a letter "from Ephesus", it was just as natural to consider it a letter addressed to the

the congregation at Ephesus as it was for Marcion to consider a letter "from Laodicea" a letter addressed to the Laodiceans.

The usual explanation is that Tychicus brought the letter back to Ephesus which had been the original starting point of his journey. Since the letter had been preserved at Ephesus, it was in time believed that the Ephesians were the original addressees, hence, the insertion of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ , the title πρὸς Ἐφεσίους , and the traditional belief.

Objections to such explanations are self-evident. If the Epistle had been encyclical, the members of each congregation in question would have regarded it as a letter of Paul addressed to themselves among others. No doubt copies were made. At any rate, it is incredible that any recollections concerning the Epistle would have been so soon forgotten as to allow the letter to bear the title πρὸς Ἐφεσίους . Surely the Ephesian destination would have met with protests of which we have no record whatsoever.

Once more we repeat: why did Paul not indicate in some way that this letter was to be an encyclical or circular letter? He did so in other cases (Gal. 1, 1.2; 2 Cor. 1,1); why not here? The Apostle seems to have had quite a definite formula for the opening verses of his letters. It is unreasonable to suppose that Paul in this one, isolated instance departed from his usual custom and in no way indicated the destination of the Epistle.

The congregations for which the supposedly circular letter was intended were by no means on an equal footing. Had Ephesus been one of the communities to be reached by the Epistle, the Apostle certainly would have made a distinction between readers well known to him and others to whom he was a complete stranger, as he did in Col. 2, 1. He would hardly have grouped the Ephesian Church and adjoining churches, to many of which he was personally unknown, with churches which had absolutely no connection with himself.

It is evident from the very outset that our Epistle was intended for advanced Christians. It presupposes readers who have been thoroughly instructed in the fundamentals of Christianity. It proclaims the spiritual unity of Jewish and Gentile Christians as the eternal decree and purpose of God. This hidden mystery which was made known to the Apostle by special revelation is now made known to the readers. It is hardly possible to imagine that Paul should literally cast into the winds a letter of this massiveness, height, and sublimity. That a letter which is simply teeming with such lofty conceptions as the *Una Sancta*, the love of Christ for the Church an example of the love of the husband for his wife, the picture of the spiritual armor, should be intended for an indefinite number of readers, regardless of their familiarity with the writer or their Christian training, is beyond all comprehension. How much more natural and reasonable to expect a letter of this depth and profundity to have been addressed to a con-

gregation which had at least partially received its fundamental knowledge of Christianity from the lips of the Apostle himself.

To make Paul the author of Ephesians denuded of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ militates against the character of this divinely inspired writer. The Apostle always had his readers in the eyes of his mind. He always took into account the status of their Christian knowledge. He carefully considered the conditions and circumstances peculiar to each congregation. Although Paul wrote for all Christians for all times, he had specific readers in mind as well as specific motives for writing. These are facts which need no proof.

The circular hypothesis would ascribe to him a letter addressed to a vague body of readers, "the Gentile converts of Asia Minor," of whom Paul could not have had very definite knowledge. What is more, it would have him inaugurate a new method of designating his readers, a method which shows very little concern or individual attention. It would have him disregard entirely the status of the Christian knowledge of his readers. This theory would have the Apostle Paul convey in writing lofty and sublime conceptions to readers who were novices as far as Christianity is concerned. All this without parallel or precedent! The encyclical hypothesis needs more than conjecture to prove its case. This is not the Paul whom we know.

On the basis of these cogent reasons we cannot depart from the traditional view that Paul addressed this Epistle to the congregation at Ephesus. It was altogether fitting and proper that Paul should during his Roman Captivity proclaim this particular message of the Una Sancta to this particular congregation. The congregation at Ephesus to which he had personally and diligently proclaimed the message of the Gospel lay very close to his heart. It had become the most prominent Church of the Orient and a shining example of the grace of God. As the Apostle reflected upon the success of the preaching of the Gospel; as he reviewed his own missionary activities of years gone by, it was only natural that he should think of the Ephesian congregation which had received a special measure of God's grace and in whose midst he had labored for so long a time. From the joyful and thankful heart of the Apostle, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, there issued this Epistle which revealed to the Ephesian congregation the great, eternal mystery of the one, holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, thereby imparting this glorious message to all Christians for all times. The Apostle no doubt expected that it would be read in the neighboring churches of Asia Minor, for the practice of the passing on of letters had already been established (1 Thess. 5, 27; Col. 4, 16).

The retention of the traditional view, which defends the original reading of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ and thus the Ephesian destination of the Epistle, affords the most certainty.

It is not based upon subjective reasoning, pure conjecture or an artistic hypothesis. It is supported by weighty historical evidence and the internal evidence of Ephesians itself. The traditional view also conforms to the historical background. It is in keeping with the Apostle Paul's character as well as his usual method of designating an Epistle. Above all, the retention of the traditional view serves to establish the authenticity of Ephesians, the second of two Pauline letters which critics are still reluctant to attribute to Paul. Finally, by retaining the reading of ἐν Ἐφέσῳ in Eph. 1, 1, the traditional view preserves the integrity of Holy Scripture.

"An Evaluation of Critical Opinions concerning Time, Place, and Readers of Ephesians" has confirmed rather than weakened the traditional views in the opinion of the writer.

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