TEXT AND GRAMMAR STUDY OF PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11
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The purpose of this paper is to outline the textual and grammatical issues in

Philippians 2:1-11. In order to accomplish this purpose a number of Greek grammars and

commentaries have been consulted. The findings from this research is summarized in the

following. The paper is divided in two parts which deal with the textual and grammatical issues

respectively.

Textual Issues

There are six textual issues addressed by Metzger in his *Textual Commentary on the*

Greek New Testament in Philippians 2:1-11. However, only four of these were noted as

significant enough by the Editorial Committee of the United Bible Societies' Greek New

Testament to be included in the text's critical apparatus. The following will address only these

four most important variant readings.

2:5 τοῦτο

This reading was graded a {B} by the Editorial Committee which indicates that the

text is almost certain. The approved reading does not contain γάρ. The reasoning for not

including γάρ is that if it had been present in the original, there was no good reason for its

deletion later (Metzger, 545). Therefore, the variant readings which include γάρ is the result of

"an unnecessary attempt to link this new section (2:5-11) with the preceding verses" (Hawthorne,

76). Additionally, the absence of $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$ presents a more difficult reading, since "$\tau o\hat{\upsilon}\tau o$ standing alone seems to cry out for a connective, whether $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$ or $o\hat{\upsilon}\nu$ or $\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}$" (Metzger, 545).

2:9 $\tau\grave{o}$ $\ddot{o}\nu o\mu\alpha$

This reading was also graded a {B} by the Editorial Committee indicating that this reading also is almost certain. This reading differs from the Textus Receptus which follows D F G Ψ and many minuscules in lacking $\tau\grave{o}$. The resulting translations based upon this reading indicate that "Jesus was given an unspecified name" (Metzger, 546). On the other hand, the inclusion of $\tau\grave{o}$ specifies "the name." The omission of $\tau\grave{o}$ may have resulted from a scribal error because of the last syllable of $\dot{\epsilon}\chi\alpha\rho\acute{\iota}\sigma\alpha\tau o$ (Ibid.) or because of "an error of hearing (the $\tau\grave{o}$ immediately follows $\alpha\grave{\upsilon}\tau\hat{\omega}$)" (Fee, 218). Overall, the weight of the evidence (P[46] ℵ A B C 33 1175 1739, etc.) for the inclusion of $\tau\grave{o}$ convinced the Committee to include the word (Metzger, 546).

2:11 $\dot{\epsilon}\xi o\mu o\lambda o\gamma\acute{\eta}\sigma\eta\tau\alpha\iota$

This reading was graded a {C} indicating that the Committee had difficulty in deciding which variant to place in the text. The alternative reading $\dot{\epsilon}\xi o\mu o\lambda o\gamma\acute{\eta}\sigma\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$ is only a one letter difference of η to ϵ. But the difference changes the verb from the aorist subjunctive to the future indicative. This slight change could have been made accidentally through a scribal error (Hawthorne, 76). The change to future indicative helps to overcome some of the difficulties of the interpretation of verses 10 and 11. However, the verb is still a part of the subordinate clause that denotes purpose which begins with $\H{\iota}\nu\alpha$ (O'Brien, 249). On the other hand, the subjunctive reading which was adopted may be the result of a scribes attempt to

assimilate the verb to κάμψη (Metzger, 546). In the end, the Committee chose to adopt the

reading supported by the Alexandrian texts: P⁴⁶ א and B (Ibid.).

2:11 *κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός*

This reading was graded an {A} indicating that this text is certain. While many

Western sources omit Χριστός, the Committee was unanimous in affirming its inclusion. There

is no discussion of this in Fee, Hawthorne or O'Brien. The lack of discussion in these

commentaries serves as further evidence of the certainty of the approved reading.

Grammatical Issues

In Daniel Wallace's *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics*, extended discussions of

six exegetically significant passages are noted in the Scripture index. The following discussion

will be limited to these six passages. In addition to examining Wallace's comments, the Moulton

and Robertson grammars will be consulted, as well as the Fee, Hawthorne and O'Brien

commentaries.

2:6 Adverbial Participle of Concession

This type of participle modifies the verb and implies that the action of the main verb is

true in spite of the action of the participle (Wallace, 622, 634). In Philippians 2:6 the participle

ὑπάρχων is used to indicate that although Christ was pre-existing in the form of God (ὅς ἐν

μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων), He did not regard his equality with God to be robbery (Ibid., 634).

Moulton however argued that: "Grammar speaks to exegesis here with no decisive voice"

(Moulton, 1:127). Therefore, O'Brien argues that the issue of Christ's preexistence must not rest

solely on whether this participle should be translated as a causative or as a concessive (O'Brien,

211).

2:6 Anaphoric Article with Substantives

The anaphoric article indicates previous reference. This article points back to the substantive already mentioned (Wallace, 217-218). Wallace argues that although interpreting the definite article τὸ in ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ἁρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ, as anaphoric is attractive theologically, it remains debatable (Ibid., 220). O'Brien, however, argues that the phrase τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ refers back "epexegicatally" to ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων (O'Brien, 216). Additionally, Robertson lists this Philippians 2:6 as an example of an anaphoric article (Robertson, 1065-1066).

2:7 Adverbial Participle of Means

A participle of means describes the means by which the action of a verb is performed (Wallace, 628). Robertson argues that it is "gratuitous to find subsequent action" in Philippians 2:7 (Robertson, 1114). Wallace agrees stating that "this text satisfies the regular criteria for a participle of means" (Wallace, 630). Clearly then, λαβών expresses the means through which the verb ἐκένωσεν performs its action (Hawthorne, 86). Thus, the means by which Christ "emptied Himself" is by "taking the form of a servant".

2:8 Genitive of Production

This is a rare usage of the genitive which produces the noun to which it is related (Wallace, 104). In Philippians 2:8, the phrase θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ often translated "even death of a cross", the genitive σταυροῦ most likely should be seen as a genitive of production. The phrase θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ would then be translated more emphatically "even death produced by a cross" (Wallace, 105).

2:9-11 Subjunctive Purpose-Result Ἵνα Clause

Normally the subjunctive mood refers to potential action. However, this use of ἵνα with verbs in the subjunctive mood indicates not only intention, but also its sure accomplishment (Wallace, 473). Therefore, Paul is not merely arguing God's desire that πᾶν γόνυ κάμψῃ i.e. "every knee should bow" and πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσηται i.e. "every tongue should confess", he is declaring the intention that God will most certainly carry out. "The fulfillment of this divine intention will take place at the parousia" (O'Brien, 239).

2:11 Anarthrous Non-Verbal Predicate Nominative

In Philippians 2:11, Paul declares that "every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." The structure of that future confession in Greek is simply κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς without a verb. However, instead of translating this statement as simply "Lord Jesus Christ" it is understood that κύριος is a predicate nominative and since it comes before the subject the phrase is translated "Jesus Christ is Lord." (Wallace, 270). Robertson argues that κύριος is not used as an adjective but as a proper name in constructions such as κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς (Robertson, 795). Thus, one day "every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord."

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to outline various textual and grammatical issues in the Greek text of Phillippians 2:1-11. In order to accomplish this purpose a three Greek grammars and three technical commentaries have been consulted. The result has been, at least for the author of this paper, a deeper and richer understanding of the text and theology of this great Christological gem of the incarnation.

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