THE FRAGMENT 2 COR VI 14-VII 1

_A Plea for its Authenticity_

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In the last twenty five years — since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls — an increasing number of exegetes have dealt with the "puzzling passage".1 W. GROSSOUW (1951) concludes his short study with this statement about the non-Pauline origin of the passage: "I see no other viable explanation. One can speak here of the cumulative force of the arguments".2 J. A. FITZMYER (1961) formulates his opinion as follows: "The evidence seems to total up to the admission of a Christian reworking of an Essene paragraph which has been introduced into the Pauline letter".3 For J. GNILKA (1963) 2 Cor vi 14-vii 1 is not the Christian reworking of an Essene paragraph, but rather a fragment written by an unknown Christian who was undoubtedly influenced by traditions such as were circulating at Qumran and are expressed in the Testament of the Twelve Patri-

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2 Over de echtheid van 2 Cor 6, 14-7, 1, _StC_ 26 (1951), 203-206 (p. 206). Cf. W. GROSSOUW, _The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament_. A Preliminary Survey, _StC_ 26 (1951), 289-299; 27 (1952), 1-8: "I can hardly believe that St. Paul should consciously have 'quoted' this passage, which breaks up so disturbingly the context" (p. 3, note 100). GROSSOUW is here criticizing K. G. KUHN's opinion, _Die Schriftrollen vom Toten Meer. Zum heutigen Stand ihrer Veröffentlichung_, _EvTh_ 11 (1951-52), 72-75: "Der Abschnitt II Kor. 6, 14 bis 7, 1, der ein nicht von Paulus verfasstes, sondern von ihm nur zitiertes Stück ist, erweist sich nun als völlig in die Terminologie, Denkweise und Sprechweise dieser Texte gehörig".

3 O.c., 217. Cf. P. BENOTT, Qumrân et le Nouveau Testament, _NTS_ 7 (1960-61), 276-296: "un passage aussi qumrânien de pensée et de style que 2 Cor 6:14-7:1, sorte d'atéolithe tombé du ciel de Qumrân dans une épître de Paul" (279). H. BRAUN, _Qumran und das Neue Testament I_, Tübingen 1966, 201-204, already listed some twenty authors who had dealt with the question of the relation between 2 Cor vii 1 and the Qumran documents. BRAUN's own opinion is: "... der für II. Kor 6, 14-7, 1 besonders enge Qumranbezug ... fällt gegen die Echtheit von II. Kor 6, 14-7, 1 eben doch ins Gewicht" (203).
The conclusion is unavoidable that the theology of 2 Cor vi 14-vii 1 is not only non-Pauline, but anti-Pauline”.

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1 G. Klitzing, Die Umdeutung des Kultus in der Qumranagemeinde und im Neuen Testament (StUNT 7), Göttingen 1971, 167-184.

2 O.c., 217: To “label this heavily Qumran passage as a Pauline ‘quotation’ of an Essene paragraph ... is no solution ...”.


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6 G. Klitzing, Die Umdeutung des Kultus in der Qumranagemeinde und im Neuen Testament (StUNT 7), Göttingen 1971, 167-184.

7 J.-F. Collange, Énigmes de la deuxième épitre aux Corinthiens, Étude exégétique de 2 Cor. 2:14-7:4 (MSSNTS 18), Cambridge 1972, 281-317 (see also 6-14). This second edition may have been sent to “the saints who are in the whole of Achaia” (2 Cor i 1). In the light of the “doublets” vii 11-13/vii 2-4 and chap. 9. Collange postulates two editions of the apology-section. The first contained ii 14-vi 13 (+ chap. 8) and was addressed to the Corinthians (cf. vii 11 and i 1). On Collange’s theory, see the clear-cut judgment of C. K. Barrett, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians (NTCNT), London 1973, 194-195: “Collange’s suggestion ... is not convincing”.


9 St. Paul’s Opponents and their Background, A Study of Apocalyptic and Jewish Sectarian Teaching (NT S 35), Leiden 1973, 308-313: 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1. “... nothing in it (== 2 Cor vii 11-13) is incompatible with the teachings and language of Paul’s opponents. If it was not written by them, at least its teachings produce illustrative contemporary parallels to the thought of the Apostle’s antagonists” (313).

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