CHAPTER ONE

JOHN 1,19-2,11: THE TESTIMONY OF THE BAPTIST AND THE BEGINNING OF JESUS’ PUBLIC MINISTRY

Before discussing the composition of John 1,19-2,11, some preliminary problems have to be dealt with, concerning the division of certain words into syllables, and concerning a few problems of textual criticism.

In Greek transcriptions of Semitic words beginning with iota, the iota functions as a semivocal. So, Ἰωάννης is counted at three syllables, as are also Ἰουδαίος and Ἰορδάνης; Ἰησοῦς and Ἰωσήφ are counted at two syllables. The names Ἡσαΐας and Ἡσαϊάδα are considered as tetrasyllabic; such a pronunciation is strongly suggested by the diaeresis and the spelling Ἡσαϊάδα present in mss. The name Μωυσῆς is counted at three syllables; the Latin transliteration helps to show that it was pronounced as a trisyllable.

Another problem is the division into syllables of words of the radix Ἠρ-. To these belong Ἱερεύς in 1,19, and Ἱερόν which occurs in another passage to be discussed later (5,14). The solution of this problem affects also the division into syllables of Ἱεροσόλυμα. This Greek version of the name Jerusalem was apparently associated with the word Ἱερός/ν, as is evident from Josephus, Contra Apionem 1,310-311. Josephus quotes the account of Lysimachus (2nd or 1st century B.C.) about the exodus from Egypt and the entry into the new country of the Jewish people (C. Ap. 1,305-311). At the end of this account, Lysimachus narrates that after having traversed the desert and reached inhabited country, the Jews plundered the temples which they found there (τα Ἱερα ἱεροντας); and the city which they built was called Ἰερόσουλα, because of their propensity to do this. Later on, they changed the name into Ἱεροσόλυμα. In his Bellum Judaicum 6,438, Josephus tells that Melchizedek, being the first to build το Ἱερόν, gave the city which was previously called Σολώμα the name of Ἱεροσόλυμα (cfr. Ant. 7,67; 12,136). The presence of the shorter form Σόλωμα (Josephus, Bell. 6,438; Ant. 1,180; 7,67; cfr. C. Ap. 1,248, where Manetho, 3rd century B.C., is quoted, who calls the inhabitants of Jerusalem Σολυμίται; cfr. also C. Ap. 1,173-174; Tacitus, Historiae 5,2) suggests that the name was split up into Ἱερο-σόλυμα, which makes the association with Ἱερός/ν rather obvious. The connection with Ἱερός/ν is also made in Eusebius, Praeparatio Evangelica 9,34,13, where the Jewish historian Eupolemus (2nd century B.C.) is quoted. It is evident too from
the Latin transcription *Hierosolyma* (and the like), and the Coptic *thierosolyma*, mostly contracted to *thilem* (feminine definite article + nomen). So it can be assumed that *Ἰεροσόλυμα* was associated with ἰέρος/v.

As historical Greek knows the consonantal iota only as the second element of diphthongs, we may safely consider ἰέρος as a trisyllable. This view is indubitably confirmed by the use of the word in instances such as Homer, *Iliad* 1,147; 8,66; 11,194.631; 16,407, and Theocritus, *Idyllia* 5,22, where the first syllable of the various forms of ἰέρος is an *elementum longum*, and the last syllable is an *elementum breve*, followed in turn by a *longum*; consequently, we have to do with *dactyli*, made up of three syllables. It is true that contracted forms of ἰέρος are found as well: ἰός in Ionic dialect, and ἰρός in Aeolic, but when the non-contracted form is used, it is a trisyllable. Ἰεροσόλυμα has, then, six syllables.

There are two instances of difference between the text of John 1,19-2,11 as printed in *NA25* and that in *NA26* which affect numbers of ᾳ and Β:

1. In 1,26, *NA25* reads στήκει with B L 083 f. pc, whereas *NA26* has ἐστηκεν, with P66 A C Ws ΘΨ 063 f.13 *Mehrheitstext Or*. Between the two forms, there is no difference of meaning; both the perfect with present meaning ἐστηκα and the derivative Hellenistic present form στήκω mean 'I stand'. Precisely the circumstance that στήκει is a Hellenistic form, while ἐστηκεν is the classic form, makes it probable that an original στήκει has been replaced, for stylistic reasons, by ἐστηκεν. An additional argument in favour of the reading στήκει is the proximity of the form ἐστηκεν in John 1,35.

2. In 1,47, *NA26* reads ὁ Ἰησοῦς, with P66.75 Sin A L Ws ΘΨ f.13 *Mehrheitstext*; the article is omitted in *NA25*, with B Η S Π 234 399 107112. G. D. Fee observes about the 45 instances in John, where the name Ἰησοῦς immediately follows the verb (and where no apposition follows the name and the verb used is not ἀπεξηγηθη), that there is no instance where all mss. omit the article; there are, however, 9 instances among the 45 of all mss. having the articular reading, and 7 where only one ms. has the anarthrous one. So Fee can state: 'In general the Johannine pattern is ... clear: to read the article'. He observes a somewhat stronger tendency to omit the article in instances such as 1,47, where the name follows a verb of the mental processes (saying, thinking, etc.), particularly in the Neutral tradition, although in such cases, too, several instances of an articular text without textual variation are found (2,22; 5,6; 6,10; 9,3914; 13,1; 19,2815; 21,21). In the present case, the anarthrous reading is found in one representative of the Neutral tradition (B), as well