

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 5

1. K. K. Yeo 7

2. Robert Jewett 19

HIEDELBERG, GERMANY 35

3. Gerd Theissen 37

4. Robert Jewett 43

FROM ROME TO BEIJING

Symposia on Robert Jewett's
Commentary on Romans

5. Francis 53

6. Simon Gathercole 61

7. Robert Jewett 69

Edited by K. K. Yeo

JOURNAL FOR THE STUDY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, UNITED KINGDOM 79

8. John Barclay 81

9. Robert Jewett 103

COLONNES, FRANCE 111

10. Gunnar Pedersen 113

11. Jean-Claude Verreschia 119

12. Robert Jewett 121

WASHINGTON, UNITED STATES 133

13. James D. G. Dunn 135

14. Brigitte Kahl 145

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the written permission of the publisher.

15. Robert Jewett 171

CLEVELAND, UNITED STATES 189

16. Aydin 191

17. Paul 193

18. Jeffrey 199

19. Robert Jewett 205

January 2013

Kairos
STUDIES

4

A RESPONSE TO ROBERT JEWETT:

ROMANS 1:13–17¹

PETER LAMPE

Robert Jewett's new commentary is a monumental piece of work, whose innovations will send new impulses into the arena of research. These innovations include a systematic application of sociological (for instance "honor/shame") and rhetorical categories; ("justification" beyond the Lutheran-individualistic or existential interpretations, and so forth). To that extent the following questions amount to mere nitpicking that sounds like the noise of desert hyenas that bell against the moon.

The interpretation of 1:13–17 provides an initial look at the distinctive profile of the commentary. The rhetorical analysis of verses 13–15 and 16–17 as *narratio* and respectively *propositio* is convincing (whereby contentwise the motif of travel plans connects the narratio with the preceding exordium even more clearly than the commentary indicates, so that verses 10–12 function as a hinge).

Extensive linguistic and thematic parallels in Greco-Roman and Jewish sources are helpfully related (even so far as the contours of the Mithras Cult). Attention is paid to philological intricacies.

I am also convinced by the commentary's interpretation of "fruit" in verse 13 as related to the logistical and financial support of the Spanish mission that Paul hopes to gain from the Romans, so that this verse in a diplomatic manner prepares the way for chapter 15. It is perhaps too consistent to identify the "rest of the Gentiles" in verse 13 as the Spaniards. Nevertheless, even if the commentary is right, it should clarify that the concept of bringing fruit begins to ambiguously oscillate now: in relation to the Roman believers it connotes logistical support; in relation to the Spaniards and other missionary targets it would lack this

¹ Translated from German to English by Robert Jewett.

specific connotation and could only relate to general missionary success (which however would not be sought among Romans, as the commentary emphasizes: Paul will restrict his preaching to those already converted and will not poach in the arena of others). It would perhaps be better to understand verse 13 as follows: “so that I might reap some fruit even among you just as also among the rest of the Gentiles,” namely from people such as the Philippians who repeatedly supported my mission in generous ways. The ‘as’ would possibly be taken more seriously in this way, and Paul then would not focus on the Spaniards and their future as well as on other missionary targets until verse 14 (with his reference to ‘Greeks and barbarians, educated and uneducated’).

It is impressive that the details in verse 14, (including the philological nuances of TE KAI, Paideia-Konzept, etc.), support Jewett’s stress on the “inclusivity of the gospel.” However the statement on page 132 is not entirely understandable: “to be classified as foolish in this social context is not a deficit that can be overcome with more education . . .” Were there no “ignorant barbarians” in the empire, above all in the Equestrian ranks, who advanced to the status of cultivated Hellenes? And were there no opposite cases, of native born Greeks who were criticized as uncouth Barbarians? Is a Greek person really “innately wise”? Quintilian and other stoically inclined teachers worked hard at forming young people into educated ones; nobody was born ‘wise’, and conversely nobody was condemned to remain foolish forever, not even a person born by ‘barbarians’.

It seems to me that the statement on page 132 is too apodictic, that the “cultural commonplace” was that “the relationship with the Divine was thought to be centered in *knowledge*.” In the middle of the first century, this held at the most for middle Platonism (the human mind approaches the supreme mind, etc). What dominated the relationship to the gods was not knowledge (about them) but correct cultic behavior, which protected one from godly whims, appeased the gods, etc. Significantly, Jewett tries to document his ‘commonplace’ with references in Philo and Titus, but they also advocate the behavioural approach. Perhaps Jewett means “. . . centered in *knowledge about the right behaviour*”? That would be more accurate.

Is the reference on page 132 convincing that the houses of Narcissus und Aristobul (Romans 16) were “situated within the bureaucracy”?

I find it fascinating that Jewett already in verse 14 is able to infer from Paul’s “indebtedness to barbarians and the uneducated” a “complete reversal of the system of honor and shame” (132). Also the propositio in verses 16-17 “effectively turns the social value system of the Roman Empire upside down” (139). This is a theme that permeates the entire commentary. An equally fascinating hypothesis, which the following

commentary chapters set about proving, is that the proposition does not only aim at the elaborations until chapters 5 and 8, or perhaps 11, but even at the entire argument all the way through 15:13 (132). This fits the above-mentioned concretizing of "fruit" with reference to chapter 15. It also correlates with Jewett's controversial denial, extended through the entire commentary, that the scope of Paul's argument has anything to do with a defense of his teaching about justification by faith or an apologetic dialogue with Judaism, which are often maintained. (136–141) But I question whether the "tension between Jewish and Gentile groups" suggested in chapters 14–15 is already severely criticized in 1:16b–c. The same expression appears in 1 Corinthians 1:24 without any antagonistic undertones between the two groups.

ROBERT JEWETT

I appreciate the careful attention my colleagues have paid to the commentary, for Peter's conscientious "nit-picking" and for Gerd's fair-minded summary of some of the main themes in the commentary and of the two sections read for this booktalk discussion. Commentaries like this are useful if they push the interpretive process forward, but advances require careful evaluation of the relevant details. I follow the method suggested by Karl Popper, that new "conjectures" always require "refutations," which also must be evaluated. I would like to begin with Gerd's second critique, that 1:13–15 cannot be a narrative because it does not strictly introduce "Glaubensgerechtigkeit." If the argument of Romans were primarily a matter of doctrinal instruction, this would surely be right. But that contradicts the situational approach to the letter, a theme to which I would like to return at the end of this response.

The traditional insistence on the doctrinal purpose of the letter, beyond any situational circumstances, is reflected in Gerd's preference for the theory of Romans as a "theological testament," a view that I myself once held. This echoes the influential formulation of our Heidelberg predecessor, Günther Bornkamm, that Romans is the "last will and testament of the Apostle Paul."¹ This is a version of the traditional approach to Romans as a theological treatise, a defense of the true gospel, or a polemic against antinomians or legalists. I was never able to provide a satisfactory answer as to why Paul felt compelled to send such a letter to Rome. Günther Bornkamm answers this question by declaring that the search for specific reasons in the Roman church situation is a "wrong track" that leads nowhere. Assuming that chapter

¹ See Günther Bornkamm, *Paul* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971).