

**THE EPISTLE OF
PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO THE GALATIANS**

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The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians by A. Lukyn Williams

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A. LUKYN WILLIAMS

**THE EPISTLE OF
PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO THE GALATIANS**

*CAMBRIDGE GREEK TESTAMENT FOR
SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES*

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THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO THE
GALATIANS

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PREFACE
BY THE GENERAL EDITOR.

THE General Editor does not hold himself responsible, except in the most general sense, for the statements, opinions, and interpretations contained in the several volumes of this Series. He believes that the value of the Introduction and the Commentary in each case is largely dependent on the Editor being free as to his treatment of the questions which arise, provided that that treatment is in harmony with the character and scope of the Series. He has therefore contented himself with offering criticisms, urging the consideration of alternative interpretations, and the like; and as a rule he has left the adoption of these suggestions to the discretion of the Editor.

The Greek Text adopted in this Series is that of Dr Westcott and Dr Hort with the omission of the marginal readings. For permission to use this Text the thanks of the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press and of the General Editor are due to Messrs Macmillan & Co.

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

January, 1910.

PREFACE

THE same methods have been adopted in the preparation of the following Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians as in that of the volume on the Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon, viz. first, the independent use of concordance and grammar, and only afterwards the examination of commentaries and other aids.

The difficulties of the Epistle are not of the same kind as those of Colossians and Philemon. There (especially in Colossians) many strange words which in after years acquired highly technical meanings had to be considered; here rather historical circumstances and Jewish modes of thought.

The former of these unfortunately are still far from certain. Even the district intended by Galatia is doubtful, and the discussion of it is often conducted with more warmth than its importance warrants. Personally I greatly regret that I am unable to accept the very attractive theory presented with so much brilliancy of expression and originality of thought by Sir William Ramsay, viz. that the Churches of Galatia to whom St Paul here writes are those whose origin is described at length in Acts xiii. and xiv. Its fundamental presupposition is that, as St Paul's plan of campaign was to win the Roman Empire for Christ by seizing strategic points, he would not have visited so outlying a part as Northern Galatia. Hence if the Acts and our Epistle, backed up though they are by the consensus of Patristic evidence, appear to say that he did do so, this can be only in appearance not in fact. But

I confess that the more I study the arguments adduced against the *prima facie* meaning of the passages in question the less they impress me, and, in particular, all attempts to date the Epistle on what may be called the Southern theory appear to me to fail. I therefore find myself reluctantly compelled to adhere to the older opinion that the Epistle was written to the Churches of North Galatia, at a date between the writing of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians and the Epistle to the Romans.

Of more permanent interest is the revelation in this Epistle of St Paul's training in Jewish modes of thought and exegesis. These indeed may be traced in every book of the N.T. (though the words and phrases due to them are often grossly misunderstood by friend and foe), but here they obtrude themselves on the most careless of readers. No one but a Jew accustomed to Rabbinic subtlety would have thought of the argument of the curse (iii. 13, 14), or of the seed (iii. 16), or even of Sarah and Hagar (iv. 21—27). These and other examples in our Epistle of the working of Paul's mind ought perhaps to have given more stimulus to the study of his mental equipment than has been the case.

Far more important however in our Epistle than either of these two rather academic subjects is its insistence upon the true character of the Gospel. St Paul opposed, with all the warmth of knowledge bought by experience, the supposition that Christ came only to reform Judaism, to open its door more widely to the Gentiles, or to attract them by the substitution of another Law of commands and ordinances for that to which they had been accustomed as heathen. It is the verdict of history that his efforts, though successful for the moment, have to a great extent been a failure. To try to keep rules and to observe com-

mands and prohibitions is, comparatively speaking, so easy that the Christian Church has only too often preferred to set up a Law of this kind, in preference to accepting the Gospel in its simplicity, which is the good news of immediate pardon for the sinner, and of free grace continually bestowed in Christ. It is this Gospel, with all that it involves of freedom from legal bondage, whether Jewish or Christian, which is the central truth of our Epistle, this which the student must endeavour to grasp and make his own, with a knowledge bought, like St Paul's, by experience, and a love deepening with the increased perception of the love of God in Christ (ii. 20).

It will be observed that when an obelisk (†) is affixed to a word it means that all the passages are mentioned where that word occurs in the New Testament, and that when the double obelisk (‡) is affixed it means that all the passages are mentioned where the word occurs in the Greek Bible.

A. L. W.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND IMPRESSION

No changes have been made in this edition beyond the removal of some verbal errors, and the addition of a few clauses chiefly for greater perspicuity, and of a note on p. 84 calling attention to an important suggestion by Dr Driver. Deissmann's *Licht vom Osten* was published in English in 1910 under the title of *Light from the Ancient East*.

A. L. W.

Jan. 1, 1914.

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