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Dear Chris,

As you know I look from time to time at your blog “Chrisendom”, which I find extremely interesting, with a lot of news and germane discussions.

I just read A. Paddock’s review of Beverly R. Gaventa’s book “Our Mother St Paul”. I know Prof Gaventa personally and will be meeting her in two week’s time at the *Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas* conference in Lund, of which I am one of the organizers. I have not read her book. The title of the book is, of course, provocative, being formed in the spirit of feministic theology. But let that be. Here I wish to comment on a different matter.

According to the Reviewer, “In 1 Th 2:7, Paul portrays himself both as an infant and as a nurse, taking care of her own children”. I do not know if this quotation represents accurately Dr Gaventa’s position. But if it does, it is patently wrong. That Paul portrays himself as an infant has been argued before, recently by my friend, Prof Jeffrey Weima, of Calvin Seminary, in his study “ ‘But We Became Infants Among You’: The Case of ΝΗΠΙΟΙ in 1 Thess 2.7”, published in *NTS* 46 (2000), 547-64. However here, supposedly, Gaventa thinks that St Paul applied both images of infant and nurse to himself, which is not only confusing but also thoroughly absurd.

The thesis that the original reading was ΝΗΠΙΟΙ and that therefore Paul presents himself as a helpless baby among the Thessalonians is argued by *i.a.* Dr Weima, who has tried to find linguistic grounds for its accuracy, that is, that all the various Greek terms used in that context confirm that Paul presents himself as an infant.

In a recent study, written for a *Festschrift* in honor of Prof John Karavidopoulos, one of the editors of *Novum Testamentum Graece* and *GNT*, I examined the linguistic evidence in great detail as well as the structure of the 1 Thessalonians passage and subjected Dr Weima’s argumentation and the grounds for his thesis to rigorous scrutiny.

I can briefly say here that the linguistic facts have not been understood correctly nor presented properly and, consequently, wrong conclusions have been drawn. The *Ergebnis* is that St Paul is not the Infant but the Nurse. The Infants is a picture of the Thessalonian believers (τέκνα), and the original reading was certainly ΗΠΙΟΙ not ΝΗΠΙΟΙ. If Dr Weima’s thesis has been adopted by Dr Gaventa, she must have missed my study.

The details of my study are: “Did Paul Behave as an Infant or Imbecil, or as a Gentle Nurse? The Interpretation of 1 Thessalonians 2:7” in *Ἁγία Γραφή και Σύγχρονος Ἄνθρωπος*. Τιμητικός τόμος στὸν καθηγητὴ Ἰωάννη Δ. Καραβιδόπουλο (= *Holy Scripture and Modern Man*. Festschrift in Honor of Prof Dr John Karavidopoulos), (Ed. Chr. Oikonomou, P. Vassiliadis, J. Galanis, V. Youltsis, D. Kaimakis, M. Konstantinou), Θεσσαλονίκη: Πουρναρᾶ 2006, pp. 441-464”.

The article can also be read in my web site under “Recent Studies”.

All the best,

Chrys C. Caragounis

