CONFIRMATION OF LONG-STANDING DOUBT.

In 2014 I contributed to OWL, “How Primary Sources Throw Light on 1.Cor.14:33.ff.” In 2015 I added “Long-Standing Doubt.” In these contributions I documented the evidence against the joining of 1.Cor.14:33.b. to v.34 to universalise the silencing of women, something those who drew up the Theses of Agreement did not do. I stated then that I had checked over 25 Sources up to the time of printing. I have now checked over 80 Sources and only two very late Sources, one from each of the 14th and 15th Century, join these verses. This matter is being processed by those who draw up our Greek N.T.s with a view to correction.

 I also documented the case for v.34 – 35, “Let the women be silent...” not being part of St Paul’s letter, but an Add-on (Interpolation), because these verses appear at different places in the Primary Sources (Manuscripts). Where statements are made in different places in the Sources, scholars who are trained in sorting out what this means strongly suggest that a comment in the margin has found its way into the text, but in different places. They are not part of the original.

Recently by the kind generosity of someone from the Royal Library in the Monastery in El Escorial in Spain I was given a copy of a thirteenth century manuscript (Source) of 1.Cor. 14:24 – 15:11. (T.III.12. = Ms. 915.). This late Source has our v.34 -35. following our v. 40. It belongs to the late Byzantine stream of text. This means the positioning of these verses appears in both the earliest textual stream (see earlier article), the ‘Western’ stream, and the later stream, the Byzantine. Not only the early Latin versions but also some of the later Latin Vulgate versions place these verses after our v.40.

Of note in the Source from the Royal Library is a comment in the margin by the scribe at our v.25, that in another Source there is a different tense of the verb. Such a comment is rarely found in the Sources. However it shows the scribe had other Sources (Manuscripts) for comparison. However when he copies our .v.34 -35. after v. 40 he makes no comment at all! This indicates that none of the other Sources he had at his disposal had these verses after our v.33., or surely he would have commented.

Hence the Sources which have v.34 -35. after our v.40 are not few in number, nor are they confined to a narrow period of time, nor to only one textual stream, and they also appear in various early translations, Latin and Armenian.

In the earlier contributions I drew out some conclusions that flow when we accept that St Paul never wrote v.34 – 35, but these verses were a later scribe’s marginal comment, probably at the time of the Montanist Movement, which found their way into different places in 1.Cor. 14. I repeat a few of these conclusions: These Sources rule out those who argue that v.37 (or v.38) apply to the silencing of women as there has been no mention of them up to this point. Rather they apply to the topic of 1.Cor. 14., that God wants everything to be done in an orderly way in worship (v.33. 40.)

If St Paul wrote these words to follow our v.33.why did early Scribes move them to follow v.40? They would seem to have no place after v.40., unless they were a comment about a later situation in the Church, but fit somewhat uncomfortably after v.33. Those who believe St Paul wrote these words to follow our v.33. need to present a strong case explaining why the early Sources moved these verses to after v. 40. So far I have not heard any convincing reason.

Further without these verses all that speculation about women chattering and disrupting worship to explain St Paul’s words which he didn’t write is unnecessary. Nor do we have to juggle the meaning of St Paul’s clear words in Romans 16 where he records women taking leading positions in the church to make them conform to the negative addition of our 1.Cor.14:34 -35.

We can ordain women knowing we have the strong support of Scripture.

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