The Intimacy of Paul to the Thessalonians in 1Thess. 2: 7b-12

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Abstract: In one of the earliest documents of Christianity, in a highly patriarchal society, when addressing Gentile Christians, Paul did not hesitate to liken himself not only to a father, but also to a woman who cares for her own children. In contrast to itinerant philosophers, he did not only preach, but by the example of his life showed love for them, even to the point of sacrificing his being. The metaphor of the mother relates among other things with the admonition to avoid prostitution and the koinonia of all during and after the Last Judgment.

In the oldest document of Christianity, Paul speaks to Christians of all nations and does not stop, in an upmost Patriarchal society, trying to assimilate himself with the image of a woman in the way she nurtures and cares for her own children. He does not simply preach, but unlike the wandering philosophers, he has such calmness, compassion and love for them in which he gives his soul, his being. Simultaneously, he is a father, since with his example and sayings, he teaches everyone, individually, to stay away from iniquity and prays unceasingly. The presentation of the sender as a mother and father of the recipients, brothers of the newborn Church of Thessaloniki, relates to the call to stay away from harlotry and that everybody will coexist during and after the Second Coming of our Lord.

Keywords: beneficent nurse, intimacy, benevolence, metaphor

Słowa kluczowe: dobroczynny opiekun, intymność, życzliwość, metafora

Introduction

On the parent-child metaphors/eikôvei 1 in 1 Thess., with which Paul seeks to bind his “children” to himself in a special way, focus two studies: (a) T.J. Burke in his A Socio-Historical Study of Kinship Metaphors in 1 Thessalonians, London 2003 investigates the role of the parents in the graeco-roman literature and accordingly in the oldest

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1 According to Aristoteles ἔστω δὲ καὶ ἡ ἐκκλησία μεταφορὰ· διαφέρει γὰρ μικρόν· διὰ τῶν μὲν γὰρ εἰσὶν ἡ ἐκκλησίας ἡ ἐκκλησίας ἐκκλησίας καὶ ἐκκλησίας· τῶν δὲ λόγων ὁμοιογενῆς διὰ ἡμῶν ἐκκλησίαι· τῶν δὲ λόγων ἐκκλησίαις· ἐκκλησίαι τῆς ἐκκλησίας· τῆς ἐκκλησίας· τῆς ἐκκλησίας· τῆς ἐκκλησίας


In this exposition I will examine (1) the structure of the Section 2:7b-13 and the rhetoric strategy of Paul, (2) the meaning and the purpose of the comparison of the apostle with nurse and father, (3) the behavior of the itinerant philosophers in the graeco-roman world, (4) his intimacy with Thessalonians in the Makrotext of the epistle and (5) the reasons for this behavior.

1. Section 2:7b-13

The first part of the 1 Thes. (ch. 1-3) is divided into two sections: in the first the crucial time of the election (1:8) is recalled, in which the receivers were initiated into Christianity from Paul and his associates (1:4-2:13) and in the second what has happened from the past to the present (2:14-3:13). Paul uses domestic pictures like that of the nurse and the father in the third subunit of the first section, which (section) has the following structure:

1. 1: 4-8: God’s election and dynamic influence of the Pauline word. The audience’s ethos (captatio benevolentiae).

2. 1: 9-10: Content of the Gospel (Return to the living and true God + Second Coming of his Son whom He raised from the dead - Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath).

3. 2: 1-13: Preacher’s ethos. In this subunit Paul follows the chiastic structure:


B. VERBAL TRANSMISSION – CHARACTERISTICS OF PARACLESIS Α’. Τῆς πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν ἐξελήλυθεν, ὁμοίως ἐκ θείων δόξαν οὐκ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων δόξαν ἐξέδωκαν.  

C. BEHAVIOR OF THE APOSTLES Α’. Τῆς πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν ἐξελήλυθεν, ὁμοίως ἐκ θείων δόξαν οὐκ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων δόξαν ἐξέδωκαν.  

The first conclusion is that the image of the nurse who cares for her own children constitutes the heart of the third subunit which is as well located in the core of the first section of the entire epistle. This part, distinguished for its well-done chiastic structure, exposes the status and personal ethos of the apostles towards the Thessalonians from the beginning until that time. The question is why Paul projects by this way his ethos and the one of the Gospel. The answer is essential to decode the meaning and the intention of the metaphors. From the epilogue of the first section and principally of the one of the entire epistle, we

9 With A he recalls simultaneously the initial praise of his work (1:2) in which he mentions the work of faith through love (τοῦ ἐν τοῖς πίστεως καὶ τοῦ κόσμου ἡ ἄγαπη 1:7) followed by its dispersal. Now in this second mention he speaks of the work of God’s word within the audience, as they received God’s word from us (1:2) and associates - parenthesis of the audience's ethos.
conclude that one of the main targets of the 1 Thes. is the following: all10 the brothers and sisters Thessalonians to be wholly sanctified and their spirit (higher mental functions), soul (lower mental functions)11 and body preserved blameless at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints. This goal however presupposes trust in the word of Paul and fides/fidelity to his person and his motivations. The confidence of the Thessalonians in him and his word is according to 3:6 high. For some άλγος/έχομαι (feeble-minded 5:14) however the trust must had been shaken through the afflictions, his bodily absence, the delay of the Parousia, the death of some brothers etc. For this reason it is important for him to strengthen first the bond between him and his entire audience and then to start the exhorting part with Λοιπόν σοι, ἀδελφοί, ἐρωτάμενοι ύμᾶς καὶ παρακαλοῦμεν εἰς κυρίῳ ήσορο, ἵνα καθὼς παρελάβητε παρ’ ἡμῶν τὸ πῶς δεῖ ὑμᾶς περιπατεῖν καὶ ἀφέσεις Θεῷ, καθὼς καὶ παραπέτατε, ἵνα περισσεύετε μᾶλλον (4:1).12 This is why Paul follows the strategy of deliberative rhetoric13 with elements of the epideictic one. He (1) uses captatio benevolentiae, (2) reminds the Gospel and its energy and (3) emphasizes the ethos of him (the sender) and his Gospel using as core the Verses v. 7b-8 where he proclaims his maternal feelings!

The abovementioned conclusions are strengthened by the linguistic-syntactic analysis of the entire first section (1:4-2:13):

1. The emphasis to the drastic action (power and energetic) of the verbal message of the apostles despite the blîfes is proved by the frequent use of the following words: (i) the gospel/εὐαγγέλιον (2:4) solely/ὑμῶν-ου (1:4)/τοῦ Θεοῦ of God (2:2) which is object of λαλεῖν/κρίνεται and the consequence of παραπομπαζεῖν ἐν τῷ Θεῷ, (ii) the word - λόγος solely

10 As the Apostle emphatically states at the end of the epistle, this letter is meant to be read to all the holy brethren.
12 We should underline that a lot of the subjects that Paul ascribes to himself are later advised in the exhortating section: action not out of uncleanliness, work and pray night and day, love of the brothers, dearly praying without ceasing and rejoicing in spite of the persecutions.
13 From the abovementioned I believe that the main scopus of the epistle is paraenetic and refers to the future (Second Parousia), elements which are the characteristics of deliberative genus. According to Aristoteles in this genus the Orator must defend his ethos which also happens with Paul in 1 Thes.: κρίσις ἐστιν ἡ ῥητορική (καὶ γὰρ τὰς συμβουλὰς ταῖς συμβουλαῖς, εἶτα καὶ ἐν ταῖς δίκαις, τό τε ποιόν τινα φαίνεσθαι τὸν ἀκροατὴν ἢν κατασκεύασεν· πολὺ γὰρ διαφέρει πρὸς πίστιν, μᾶλιστα μὲν ἐν ὑπόκουροις ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἐὰν ἀκριβῶς οἴδατε-For you yourselves know perfectly to whom you are to pay allegiance, not to the transcendent in general (p. 195), but to the present and the future as well.14 The same verb μεταδότων is used by him in Rom. 1:11 where he expresses the same wish for communication face to face. The object, however, is the χάρις because the receivers aren't familiar with him. Therefore by the verses 1 Thes. 2:7b-8 he doesn't relativise the value of his Gospel but (a) he expresses his extreme love which isn’t limited in the orally teaching (which suits to an apostle of a Κύριος who has died for us 5:10) and (b) he prepares his audience for the following section of his epistle which expresses his desire for personal communication. In any case the inhalt both of the pauline Gospel and the psyche was the same: Jesus Christ and his Spirit.

2. Frequent is also the use of the lexems οἶδα-know15 and γίνεσθαι (1:5-7 [3Χ]; 2:1.5.7.8.10.14) in the past tense. The first verb has as subject the ημε/γαν and the second apart from four times (1:6-7; 2:8.14)16 the apostles and the characteristics of their preaching as they appeared during their first entry (ἐίσοδος ΧΧ) in the city. Therefore as witnesses to testify the allegations of Paul are mentioned not only God (v. 2:5b.10) but also the epistle receivers themselves, who are named already in 1:4 as ἀδελφοὶ ἡγησιμένοι υπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ! (see also 2:1.9.14)17. This means that the author probably defends himself and his word against derogatory comments and/or accusations which are emanated not from insiders but rather from outsiders: either from the compatriots of Thessalonians (2:14) or generally

14 This is transcribed in 2:11-12 like this: as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children, that you would walk worthy of God. The same kind of words he uses at the beginning of the exhortation: ἀντιλαβήσασθε· .../ [...] We should note that the Gospel- εὐαγγέλιον is not used as terminus technicus, but he uses it literally as the use of the verb εὐαγγελισθῆναι-bring good news/ evangelize (3:6) proves.
15 See Gerber, Paulus und seine Kinder'277.
16 The members of the chiasmus, which refer to the past, run supplementally: Β and C express negatively what Β' and C' declare positively.
17 M. Crüsemann, Die pseudepigraphen Briefe an die Gemeinde in Thessaloniki: Studien zu ihrer Abfassung und zur jüdisch-christlichen Sozialgeschichte, Stuttgart 2010, 130-137.
18 The subject in these verses is the Thessalonians and the main motif is the mimesis.
19 Paul doesn't hesitate to boost the Thessalonians' self-confidence in 4:9 also with: But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another and 'αὐτός γὰρ ἀκριβῶς οἶδατε γινομαι know perfectly (5:2). By this way the apostle shows that he faces the recipients not as immature children but reliable witnesses who remember and know. Maybe Paul feels that their self-confidence is a way of resistance to the disgrace of their environment.
from the Greek environment where Paul declares the gospel of God. At any case through the reminding of these πίστες (proofs/convictions) of the past, he does strengthen the confidence of these insiders who need encouragement and identity markers. For this reason he reminds also in the next section that καὶ γὰρ ὅτε πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἦμεν, προελέγουν ἡμῖν ὃτι πέλλανθα, καθὼς καὶ ἐγένετο καὶ οἴδατε (3:4). The fulfillment of a prophecy was a pistis with high importance in ancient rhetoric.

3. The πίστες are strengthened by using negative cause + (ἀλλὰ/but)+ thesis + καθὼς/as:

a. 1:5: For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also i) in power, and ii) in the Holy Spirit and iii) in much πληροφορία, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake

b. 2:1-2: our coming to you was not in vain. But... we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much conflict

c. 2:3-8: For our exhortation did not come from i) error or ii) uncleanness, nor was it iii) in deceit. But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts.

For neither at any time did we i) use flattering words, as you know, nor ii) with a pretext for greed— God is witness. Nor did we iii) seek glory from men, either from you or from others, when we might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children.

So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.

The use of negative cause differentiate the apostles and their message against the teaching of the various itinerant philosophers who were passing from Thessaloniki self-promoted as doctors of the souls: The Gospel of the apostles didn't come in word only (1:5), the entry of them wasn't vain (2:1: κενὲν; comp. 3:5) while the Paraclete of theirs didn't come from i) error ii) uncleanness iii) in deceit. In 2:10 Paul expresses the same things positively: ὡς φίλοι καὶ δίκαιοι καὶ ἀμείβομεν ὑμῖν τοῦ παθητικοῦ εὐαγγελίου. With πληροφορία/error and ἀκαθαρσία/uncleanness Paul probably means failure in dogma (doctrine about God) for the first and the interactive failure in ethical conduct for the second. With ἐν δόλῳ /In deceit he refers to the motive of preaching, that is why it is presented with ἐν/ἐν. Δόλος/Deceit is linked with the use of i) flattering words ii) greediness and iii) seeking glory from men (2:5-6). While λόγος κολακείας/flattering words is linked to the previous v.4b through γὰρ/But, the absence of πλεονεξία (something that God is called upon to testify) and of the the desire of glory are connected with the following phrase: δύναμοι ἐν δόλῳ εἶναι ὡς Χριστοῦ ἄποστολοι. Βάρος can mean the financial charge (comp. ἐπιβαρεῖα of v. 2:9; 2Thes. 3:8) and/or having honor (2 Cor. 4:17). Both of them were acclaimed not only by the supposedly philosophers but also by the legati of Caesar who used also the theme of Angaria (compulsory service). The agents of the Arisen from Hades, who comes as the True Κύριος from Heaven introducing his own Κοινοβουλία and glory, could not only be supported by other Christians (as stated in 1 Cor. 9; 2 Cor. 11-12 and Luk. 10:7) but they could also acclaim honor/dócsa.

2. Paul as a beneficent nurse and father

Paul culminates his argumentation with ἀλλὰ ἐγενήθημεν (ν)ἵπτοι ἐν μέσῳ ἑαυτῶν to support that he selected the completely opposite style of ἐν βραχεί εἶναι (which presupposes something/someone that is above us). The problems with this phrase are the following: a) did the original text have ἤπιος or νήπιος-child according to Nestle Aland's text and b) ὡς ἔαν τρόφος θάλητα τὰ ῥατής τέκνα

20 About the "enemies" of Paul in Thessaloniki see J. Galanis, Ὁ Πρώτη Ἐπίστολή του Απ. Παύλου προς Θεσσαλονικηκάς, Thessaloniki 1996. 174-175. The Question of the Exegesis remains the following: The discussion has revolted in part around the question whether vs- 1-12 are to be understood as an apology directed to a concrete situation in Thessalonica in the face of which Paul had to defend himself, or whether the language that seems to support such a view can be understood in another way. A major statement in favor of the latter option had been made by Von Dobschütz, who claimed that the "apology" reflects the mood of Paul at the time of writing rather than a strained relationship with the Thessalonians (A.J. Malherbe ‘Gentle and father’). At this point in the Greek text the writer might be engaging in a wordplay between λόγος and δόλος καθαρσίας.


22 I believe that this doesn’t mean only the assurance (Heb. 10:22) but has also the meaning of the abundance of the fruits of the Holy Spirit which brings χαρά despite the sorrows. It has to do with the work of faith, labor of love, and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ (1:3). By this way the message of God works effectively in you believers (2:1).


24 About the meaning of κενὸς see Gerber, Paulus und seine ‘Kinder’ 271 Anm. 81

25 As it is showed in Rom. 1-2 (also see Sap. 13-15) for him these two are interacted.

26 At this point in the Greek text the writer might be engaging in a wordplay between λόγος and δόλος καθαρσίας.

27 < indiogerm. del= intent

28 It is related with κηλέω =bewitch, fascinate / κέλεω= motivate, encourage.

29 < προφαίνω = bring in the light, appear, obvious motif.

30 The consonants δ and β transmit also soundly the elements of δύναμις, δόλος, βραχεί. See Stamos Karamouzis, Το θείον και ιερόν Αλφάβητον, Athens 2001 264, 282.

31 The term βάρος/burden connected to demands as apostles of Christ can refer to glory but also to the financial burden of their support. V9 states clearly that the term βάρος-demands in δύναμον ἐν βραχεί εἶναι ὡς Χριστοῦ ἄποστολοι- we might have made demands as apostles of Christ mean the burden of their financial support.

32 We have already seen that v. 2:7b-8 constitute the heart of the argumentation in the entire 2:1-13.
should be connected with v. 7b or v. 8.4 as Nestle Aland’s text suggests contrary to its own previous edition.

Child-vépis means ἄνωμος-immature, ἀγωνομένος- -imbecile while ἡπίος (< ancient Hindu api-friend) is the meek, the content and the good willed.28 The form vétipos29 is the oldest one yet not the most difficult as we will explain further. Maybe the reason for its establishment is not just Dittography but also the following influence of the synoptic tradition which is visible also in 5:2-339.

1. The child version in conjunction with the demand for glory, recalls to the copyists the answer of Jesus in Mark 9:33-37 (= Mt. 18:1-5; Lk. 9:46-48; John 3:3.5; 13:20) on the way to Passion.3 Then He came to Capernaum. And when He was in the house He asked them, “What was it you disputed among yourselves on the road?”34 But they kept silent, for on the road they had disputed among themselves who would be the greatest.35 And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.”36 Then He took a little child and set him in the midst of them. And when He had taken him in His arms, He said to them, “Whoever receives one of these little children in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me, receives not Me but Him who sent Me.” A child is presented as the model for the apostles, one being that by society standards and Jewish Law, is meaningless, immature and imbecile. Paul did the same with his own disciples.30

2. The seventy apostles in Luke 10:21 (Q=Mt. 11:25-27) cause rejoice to Jesus who thanks the Father because contrary to the wise and intelligent they are like infants who receive divine revelations: In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, “I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babies. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. Here we have rejoice, thankful-ness and revelation, elements that we also meet in 1 Thess.

Besides, as Paul presents the figure of the father and son (which seems to be implied through the use of ἀνθρωπισθέντες41—we were made orphans by being separated from you) intertwining to one another, so it is possible for some copyists that the milk giving nurse/mother42 and child figure also coexist. Then however before vēpitos-child.

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29 Origenes (Commentarium in evangelium Matthæi lib. 12-17) in his comment on Mt. 18:10 writes: ἂλλος δ’ ἂν λέγω μικρόν τούτως λέγεται τὸν τέλειον συγχρώμενος τοῦ «ὁ γὰρ μικρότερος ἐν πᾶσι ἄνθρωποις, οὗτος ἐστιν μέγας», καὶ φησίν ὅτι τὸν τέλειον ἄξιον γάρ ἐστιν μικρὸτερον ἐν πᾶσι ἄνθρωποις καθότι ἄξιον γάρ ἐστιν μικρότερον. It seems to be implied through the use of ἐν πᾶσι· τὸ γὰρ μικροὺς λέγειν ἐνταῦθεν γένοιτο καὶ ἄξιον γάρ ἐστιν μικρὸτερον ἐν πᾶσι ἄνθρωποις καθότι ἄξιον γάρ ἐστιν μικρότερον ἐν πᾶσιν... ὁ δὲ τῶν θαυμαστῶν "ὁ ἀπόστολος, καὶ τῶν ἀνδρῶν μοῦ" καθότι ἄξιον γάρ ἐστιν μικρότερον ἐν πᾶσιν... "ὁ δὲ τῶν ἀνδρῶν μοῦ" καθότι ἄξιον γάρ ἐστιν μικρότερον ἐν πᾶσιν... ὁ δὲ τῶν θαυμαστῶν "ὁ ἀπόστολος, καὶ τῶν ἀνδρῶν μοῦ" καθότι ἄξιον γάρ ἐστιν μικρότερον ἐν πᾶσιν... ὁ δὲ τῶν θαυμαστῶν "ὁ ἀπόστολος, καὶ τῶν ἀνδρῶν μοῦ" καθότι ἄξιον γάρ ἐστιν μικρότερον ἐν πᾶσιν...
there should have been ως-like, as there is with the nurse and father figure. Moreover as Caragounis proves, the greek απορρανθεντες- made orphans may not only refer to the loss of parents but also to that of children.

For the reasons above, we prefer the word ήπιος which also appears in 2 Tim. 2:24-25 as opposite to quarrelsome, referring to Christian leaders: And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth. But the term ήπιος does not have the aforementioned meaning in our passage since it is used against ambition and greediness. For this reason I don’t agree as well with A.J. Malherbe who suggests that the ήπιος to which the writer appeals here, forms a designed contrast to the harshness (σκληρότης) characteristic of one type of itinerant Cynic, who could not distinguish scurrilous reproach (ανδρισμός) from admonition (νουθεσία) and had recourse to the former when the latter was required (Dio, Oratio 32).

To understand the complete meaning of the term ήπιος we must investigate its use in Homer where it refers to the ideal leader and the effectivity (Wirkungsgeschichte) of this phrase on the following literature. Odyssey states: χαίρετος, ο κούρω, καὶ Νέστορι εἰπεῖν “ὥς γάρ εμηχανίσατο στεφάνους δὲ καὶ κατὰ πάντα γνῶσιν τας ἀνθρώπους εἰσιὼν τας ἀγκάλας αὐτοῦ ἓτοι τῶν Πέρσας” (1.81-82 See Procopius, De aedificiis 1.1.27-2 1.1.14 Themistius, Περὶ Φιλανθροπίας 16.α.6 -17.α.7).

From the aforementioned quotes we conclude that ήπιος stands not only for having or showing a mild, kind, or tender temperament or character but (as betrays its etymology too) has the connotation of ευρεγετικος-beneficent (as antonym to πλεονεκτεῖν/ἐν βάρει εἶναι) too. Possibly this phrase of Odyssey, which along with Iliad was the most popular reading in Greco-roman society, had become some kind of motto for the fundamental virtue of the leader: acting like a benevolent and beneficient father. Clement of Rome remarks: ‘Ο οἰκτήρων κατὰ πάντα καὶ ευρεγετικός Πατὴρ ἔχει σπάλαγχνα ἂν τούς φοβούμενους αὐτόν ήπιος τε καὶ προσφυγὸς τὰς χάριτας αὐτοῦ ἀποδοθεῖς τοῖς προσερχομένοις αὐτῷ ἀπλή διανοίᾳ (1 Cl. 23.1 see Dion. 7.4).

Paul, the founder and the leader of the Thessalonian church, in his most ancient document does not refer directly to the scriptures (Old Testament) at all but uses familiar to the audience’s ears terms drawing upon the greek literature such as ἀβλάς or στέγω (3:1.5) or σαίνιεσθαι (3:3). Having knowledge of the aforementioned motto, he uses it because it also corresponds to the distinctive Old Testament virtue of the Sheppard, πράσητα. This virtue (meekness-Pράσης 227) anawḥ) which both Moses (Num. 12:3) and David (Ps. 131:1 Lxx) possessed, doesn’t only signify courteousness in manners but also humility and charity. Jesus himself fulfilled Zechariah’s prophecy (9:9; Mt.21.5; John 12:15) about the entrance of the meek king to Jerusalem and blessed the meek as well. In the Lxx the term meek stands for the Jewish term Anawim which defines the poor people of God that many Jewish sects had as model.

Obviously, Paul associates himself to the Lord as a father figure and feels that he embodies the virtue of πράσητα which however ‘translates’ for his greek audience with the word ήπιος. Yet in this context he portrays himself as a nurse, not as a father because he wants to present by a unique way in the ancient literature his extreme love and care in contrast to those who use flattering speech or had greedy motives or seek glory from people. Instead of using the above motto πατήρ ὡς ήπιος ἦν-a gentle father he was, he creates a new metaphor: ήπιος ὡς ἄνευ τροφῆς δήποτε τα ἀκατήτης-just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. He surpasses Moses who says: μη ἕγω ἐν γαστρὶ ἐλαβόν πάντα τὸν λαὸν τοῦ ἄγω έτηκὸν αὐτοῦ.
ὅτι λέγεις μοι «Αδερ αὐτόν εἰς τὸν κόλπον σου ώσις ἔρως τῆς ἐνθύμησις (= nurse)"53; see Is. 49:23) τὸν θηλαστήν ταῖς τῆς γῆς ἐνθύμησις Ἰσαίας εἰς τὴν γῆν ἠμῶν τῶν πατρῶν αὐτῶν− Did I conceive this entire people? Did I give birth to them, that you should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse carries a sucking child, to the land that you promised on oath to their ancestors?' (Num. 11:12). At the same time he imitates God, who in Isaiah 49:14-16 (a chapter that has deeply affected Paul's psychology Gal. 1:15) presents himself as a nursing woman who does not forget her child and saves Israel with her compassion.

What is strange is the fact that Paul feels nursing love not for the chosen people of Israel (who accurses with hard words in the next paragraph) but for the Gentiles who now populate the Church and are carried by the Apostle to the Imperium of God the Father. He acts as a τροφή-nurse who lays aside his compassion. Woman who in Isaiah 49:14-16 (a chapter that has deeply affected Paul's psychology Gal. 1:15) presents himself as a nursing woman who does not forget her child and saves Israel with her compassion.

I believe that he uses the word τροφή and not μητέρα54 because the emphasis in this context is not on the birth55 but on the Gospel which didn't come in λόγος μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν δύναμει καὶ ἐν Πνεύματι άγιω καὶ ἐν πληροφορίᾳ πολλῇ (1:5). Also it functioned as θηλαστήριον, the milk to the newborn. With θηλαστήριον (which originally means to heat)56 possibly is implied the transmission especially of the Holy Spirit which in 5:19 is pictured as fire. At the same time just like a mother he longs his own children and can't bear being apart from them: So being affectionately desirous of you, we will impart unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because you were dear unto us (2:8). In the direct future he wants (εὐδοκεῖτε) not only to feed them with the Gospel but also to offer his psyche/existence57 which is a characteristic particularly of the mother as Plutarch proves in his Peri τῆς εἰς τὰ ἔγγονα φιλοτοσπίας (De amore proilo)!58 In this sense he differentiates himself absolutely from the itinerant philosophers and functions κατ' εἰκόνα of his Lord who died for us (5:10).59

Based on what has been said, we interpret 2:7b-8 as follows: Ἀλλὰ ἐγεννημένοι ἦσιν ἐν μέσῳ ἐμᾶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος θηλαστήριον τα ἐνθύμησις τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς ἄνθρωπος φυσικὰς, διότι ἀγαπητοὶ ήμιν ἐγεννημένοι ἦσιν. - But we were gentle and beneficient among you, like a nurse tenderly caring for her own children. So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to offer to you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you have become very dear to us.

53 In 2 Kgs 10:1 τήνυθεν is the foster-father.
54 Comp. Ex. 34:6.
55 J. Chrystostom comments: Ως ἐκ τροφός, φαγι, θηλαστήριο τα ἐνθύμησις τοῦ θεοῦ. Οὕτως διὸ τοῦ διδάκτου καθὸ Μῆτρα αὐτῶν. Μή χρήσαται αὐτὶ κακον παρὰ τῶν παιδιῶν τῶν μικρών μη βαρεία αὐτοῖς ἐστιν καὶ φορτικὴ, οὐχι ἰδίων τῶν μετέρων εἰς προσφέρειν ἕνανθε θηλαστήριος τιθέναιν (PG. 62.402). According to Gerber, the Phrase, ο ὡς τροφή τροφή τα ἐνθύμησις τοῦ θεοῦ is worthily bests to be: ιδίως ἐνθυμηθέντεν ἡ προσφέρει τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρὸς ἡμῶν (1:3.)
56 See Dt. 22:6: ἄνεν δε συναντήσεις νοσοίς ὠρέας πρὸς προσώπον σου ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ ἂν ἐπὶ παίνει δένδρῳ ἢ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς νεοσσῆς ἢ φαές ἢ μητέρα θηλαστήριον ἔπι τῶν νεοσσῶν ἢ ἐπὶ τῶν φῶν ὀ λόφης τὴν μητέρα μετὰ τῶν τέκνων.
57 About the modern translation of this verb in 2:7c see Gerber, Paulus und seine Kinder 285 Anm. 142. See also her critic to K.P. Dornfried (The Cults of Thessalonica and the Thessalonian Correspondence, NTSt 31 (1985) 336-356) who relates this verse with the cult of Dionysos and the nymphs who functioned as nurses (p. 293).
58 Βάλτω = to be or become warm (so it is used by Philo), to hatch, to cherish, comfort, conspulate (Eph 5:29). According to Babiniotis, Εικότος 740 etymologically it is connected with the adj. βαλκυρός θερμος, φλέμονας. Εἶναι τὴν φυσικὴν ἐστὶ σε ἐν τῷ θεῷ πάντων ως υπόθεται τὸ νέον αὐτὸν ἐγεννημένον, ἀλλὰ ἐπιτρέπει καὶ προσδεμοτεῖ καὶ ἀνέλειπε καὶ ἐπετάγει, μὲν ἔνδεις καρποφορεῖ ἔλθῃ καὶ ἐργαζόμενος αὐτὸ τῶν νεοσσῶν ἐντὸς τῆς μητρὸς καὶ ἡ μήτηρ ἐντὸς τῆς μητρὸς, ὡς ἐπὶ τῶν παιδιῶν τῶν νεοσσῶν... (cf. Arist. Reputation, p. 75). See Sir.7:20 for the service of the slaves.
59 See also Jos., Ant. 2.144 (to sustain our lives by grain).
60 496.Δ-496Ε: ἀλλά τὸ φύσις πληθυσμὸν ἔκαλε καὶ ἐγένετο ἐπιθεμένη καὶ διαθέσεντος τοῖς πόσοις οὐχ ὑπερήφανον τὸ νέον αὐτὸ· ἐγεννημένον, ἀλλὰ ἐπιτρέπει καὶ προσδεμοτεῖ καὶ ἀνέλειπε καὶ ἐπετάγει, μὲν ἔνδεις καρποφορεῖ ἔλθῃ καὶ ἐργαζόμενος αὐτὸ τῶν νεοσσῶν ἐντὸς τῆς μητρὸς καὶ ἡ μήτηρ ἐντὸς τῆς μητρὸς, ὡς ἐπὶ τῶν παιδιῶν τῶν νεοσσῶν... (cf. Arist. Reputation, p. 75). See also Jos., Ant. 2.144 (to sustain our lives by grain).
61 It comes as a surprise that even at this point he does not refer to the Cross at all, the climax of sacrificing love. Is it possible because it was an abomination for the enemies of the Thessalonians’ Church? Did he hesitate to link faith to scandal in his first epistle? It is well known that in the future he will emphasize the significance of the Cross, mocking human wisdom and logic with it.
62 Ἐμφροίμου ("ardently desiring") a number of minuscules read "ardently desiring it"... (symptom) Job 3:21 (Lxx).
63 Ψ. Βεν.: γεγένθησθε.
The following two things are impressive: a) while past tenses dominate in this context, here the present tense is used. The ὠντὸς ὁμοιομονέων ἐμῶν εὐθυκομοίμην μεταδοῦναι is linguistically and stylistically parallel to 2:17-18 which prefaces the second subunit (2:14-3:13) and describes the efforts of Paul personally (2:18: ἐγὼ ὁ Παῦλος) to bridge the local gap between him and his audience from the past to the present, expressing the wish to meet face to face with them in Thessaloniki in the near future: ἰμὲνι δὲ, ἀδελφοί, ἀποφασισθέντες ἀφ’ ἕμων πρὸς καιρόν ὄρας, προσώπῳ οὐ καρδίᾳ, περιποίησις ἐπουκάλαμεν τὸ πρόσωπον ἐμῶν ἰδεῖν ἐν πολλῇ ἐπιθυμίᾳ [...]. τὰς γὰρ ἡμῶν ἔποιες ἡ πρὸς καιρὸν ἱεροφανεία; Ἰτισίς γὰρ ἐστε ἡ δόξα ἡμῶν καὶ ἡ χάρα (2.17.19-20; comp. Phil. 4:1). J. Chrysostom, who has studied rhetoric with Libanius, doesn’t hesitate to characterize the language of Paul in this passage as erotic and maternal: ἔμφοι ἥγε τὸν μανικὸς ταῖς καὶ ἀκατέρτοντας καὶ ἀκατάρτητον εἰς φιλίαν. «Διὸ ἤθελήσαμεν ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ἡμᾶς». Οὗτος ἐστὶν αὐγάς. Καίτος γε ἐν τὰς οὐδεμίαις τέτραγυνειας ἡμῖν πάντα διαθεματισμένον τοῖς σπάληγγοις, καὶ πρὸς παίδια μικρά διαλεγομένον: «Καὶ στέφανος, φιλία, καυχήσεως». ὅποι γὰρ ἤθελεν τὸ στέφανον αὐτὸ δείξει λαμπρότητα, ἀλλὰ προσπάθησε καὶ, «Καυχήσεως». Πόσης πυρόπλησε τούτο: Οὐκ ἂν ποτὲ μὴ, ὁδό πατήρ, εἰ γενὸς συνήθει, καὶ τὸν εὐανείαν ἀνεμισθανόντος, ἰδινήσασθαι δεῖ τοῦ Παύλου τὸν εὐανείαν πόνον (PG. 62.409). That means that the expression of the maternal feelings of Paul isn’t limited in v. 7b-8 but it is extended in v. 17-18.

b) The reason why Paul desires to impart his life to the Thessalonians is not because he has begotten them through the gospel (1 Kor. 4:13) but because they have become very dear to the apostles. Using you have become, he turns back to the most crucial moment in the past and stresses their (the Thessalonians’) contribution to his abundant sacrificial efforts. The beloved children of God became Paul’s dear children, apparently by the way they responded to his preaching.

Finally in v. 10-12, where the ethos of the apostles is positively portrayed (that is without the negative pronouns of 2:3), Paul presents himself not as a mother who is responsible particularly for the first years of the human existence but as a father who undertakes according to Plutarch’s De amore proles the ἀνταργηφία (= upbringing): You are witnesses, and God also, how devoutly (referring to faith in God) and justly (referring to the relationship with other people) and blamelessly (refers to the way they conducted) we behaved ourselves among you who believe; (as you know how we (i) exhorted, and (ii) comforted, and (iii) charged every one of you (παρακαλοῦντες ἡμᾶς καὶ παραμυθοῦμεν); as a father does his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. According to Gerber the ethical exhortation of the children was a Jewish custom par excellence. I believe that the instruction was as well a custom for the Greek low classes (to which belong the recipients of the epistle) who didn’t have the financial opportunity (the tycbe according to Pseudo-Plutarch, Περὶ Παιδῶν Αγωγῆς 8e) to employ a paidagogos. According to Burke in this verse Paul is employing a metaphor of unambiguous superiority. The meaning however of a metaphor is also given from the context: Paul focuses here in his personal relationship with each one of his receivers while he emphasizes that his exhortation and encouragement didn’t aim to his own glory but that is worthy of God’s call to His Kingdom-Imperium and His Kabod/Glory. The verb παρακαλοῦντες ἡμᾶς in combination with καὶ παραμυθοῦμεν (which in 5:14 refers to ὁλογοφορία), which are used also in the paraenetic section of 1 Thes.72 (and by this verse the audience is prepared for this), don’t declare the superiority (as it happens with παραγγέλω 2 Thes. 3:6) but according to Chrysostom the ἄτυφον of the apostle and his love and his care for people who need con-
solotion before the coming of the Ορφή and instruction how they must περισσεύων and διακόνεια themselves so as to be eternally with Κύριος in his own Kingdom (5:14). We also have seen that the maternal element dominates in the the periscopes which frame this vers.

It is clear that in the passage of 1 Thes. dominant is the authority of God while in the second the one of the sender. Paul's word in 1 Thes. 2 was not accepted because the receivers have recognized in the word of Paul the logos of God who in the passage 2:13 is mentioned 12 times! Καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἡμεῖς εὐχαριστοῦμεν τῷ Θεῷ, διὰ αὐτῆς, καὶ παραλαβόντες λόγον ἀκούσας τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐξέδειξας οὐ λόγον ἀνθρώπων οὐκ αὐτὸς ἔπαινος ἔτοιμον, ὡς ἐνεργεῖται ἐν ὅσον διὰ τοῦτο παρασκευάζει τῷ Θεῷ ἁγιάζειν, ὅτι ἦμος τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐξέδειξεν ὡς καθὼς ἔστιν ἀληθὴς λόγον Θεοῦ, ὡς καὶ ἐνεργεῖται ἐν υἱῷ ὑμῶν, ὡς καὶ εὐρείται ἐν υἱῷ ὑμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἐν Θεῷ ἀδιαλείπτως, ὅτι ἐδέξασθε ἀνθρώπων ἁγιάζων ἀδιαλείπτως αὐτὸ τῷ Θεῷ εἰς ὑμᾶς (4:8). 80

We conclude that the image of the mother/nurse and her beneficency-love (which stand in the core of the chiasmus in 2:1-12 but also in the prologue of the section 2:13-3:13) is called upon to show that Paul and his own assistants constantly yearn to impart the Thessalonians their own lives (and not only verbal admonitions), while the image of the father is used especially for the personal teaching in the past and comforting facing the Parousia of Jesus. Both express the opposite of seeking glory and profit and simultaneously the unique ethos of Paul and his Paraclese which aims at being sanctified entirely, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (5:23).

3. Paul's intimacy with the audience in Context.

Here we will show how Paul presents himself as father in 1 Thess: context A. The author does not accompany his name neither with αὐτόσουλος-απόστολο nor with δούλος-σερβ-ant. Apparently he wants them to feel comfortable with him (through avoiding the agitation that accompanies heavy duty titles) and his close attendants that accompanied him in his first travel to the West. He experiences the same affictions with them and in the epilogue he requests for their prayers (5:25). At this point paradoxically are lacking the personal greetings of Paul and his associates.

B. He and his companions address τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ Θεσσαλονικείου ἐν Θεῷ Πατρὶ καὶ κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνην. 81 God is called Father 82 and Jesus Christ, the Lord perhaps in opposition to Zeus and the emperor (τὸν πατέρα πατρίδος καὶ κύριον Res Gestae Divi Augusti 37). The living and true God (1:9) is Father par excellence because he has Son who has died for us (5:10) but God has raised him from the dead (1:10). As it is underlined in the Praise which introduces and concludes the first part of the epistle (1:3; 3:13), God is Father of all the Christians (ἡμῶν) so as Jesus is the Lord of us, because of the election. 83 Furthermore he has a special relationship with Paul and the other apostles of Jesus Christ (3:11) who are called συνεργοὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ (3:2) since they have been approved and are tested (2:8). 84 This God will rescue us who await patiently His Second Coming from the coming wrath (1:10). All the believers, the beloved of this Father, who have been orphans away from their compatriots and their families (2:14-17), although they are likely coming from the lower classes of the society, constitute the Ecclesia of the Thessalonians (1:1) with a different πολιτεία from the equivalent politico-religious institution in the same city 85. They are Ecclesia in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ which (phrase) Paul does not typical-epithet pater is closely paralleled by Roman lu-piter and Indian Dyaus pitar: his role as father must be already IE, not in a theogonical or anthropological sense (regardless of the frequent epic formula "Zeus, father of men and gods"), but as the Homeric variant Zeus anzax, "Lord Zeus", proves, as having the power of a father in a patriarchial system. This role, which implies unrestricted power as well as its control by father-like benignity, continues as the fundamental role of Zeus in all antiquity and finds expression also in the standard iconography of a bearded but powerful man (934). In the biblical tradition in spite of the popularity of the epithet 'Father' in personal names, the epithet is not common in the texts. God can be addressed as 'My/Our Father' (Jer 3:4-19; Isa 63:16; 64:7[8]) and can be characterized as a father/ creator, with Israel as his son/children (Exod 4:22; Deut 14:1; 32:6;18; Hos 2:1 [1:10]; 11:1; Isa 1:2; 45:10-12; Jer 31:9; Mai 1:6; 2:10; cf. Mum 11:12; Ps 68:6[5]). Another illustration is Jeremiah's accusation that some people address a piece of wood with "You are my father", or a bit of stone with "You gave birth to me" (Jer 2:27), using language that should be reserved for God only. In the texts, God is also identified as 'like a father' (Ps 103:13; 109:2-3; 146:1; 40:15; 49:15; 66:13), but various other metaphors are more frequently used. As 'father', the emphasis is on God as protective and compassionate, Israel was reluctant to describe God as a physical father, except in an ultimate sense. In particular, God is described as father of the Davidic king (2 Sam 7:14; 1 Chr 28:6; Ps 2:7; 89:27-28[26-27]; Isa 9:5[6]), who in turn may have the title 'Eternal Father' (Isa 9:5[6]). The emphasis, however, is on sonship via adoption: "This day have I given birth to you" (Ps 2:7). [...] In the NT the conception remains basically the same, but with well over 200 occurrences—more than 120 in the Johannine corpus alone—the epithets 'Father' virtually explodes in popularity. While remaining primarily an epithet, 'Father' is also used in direct address to God. The use of this title in the Aramaic-speaking circles of the early Christian community is retained in the double invocation "Abba. Father" in a Gethsemane prayer by Jesus (Mark 14:36) and in the Spirit cly, cited by Paul (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:6). See H.B. Huffmon, Father, EBD 226-238.

80 1:3-4 ἤπιστησεν τὸν Θεὸν καὶ πατρὸς ἡμῶν, ἀδελφῆς, ἀδελφοῦ ἕκαστος ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὴν ἐκλογὴν ἑμῶν. Χειριστοὶ ἑαυτῶν τῷ Θεῷ ἐξέδειξας ὑμᾶς, ὡς ἐνεργεῖται ἐν υἱῷ ὑμῶν. Θεοῦ ἀδιαλείπτως αὐτὸ τῷ Θεῷ εἰς ὑμᾶς (4:8).

81 1 Thes 5:24 ὡς ἀνθρώποι ἀρέσκοντες ἀλλὰ θεῷ τῷ δοκιμάζοντι τὰς θεαμάς ὑμῶν. Υἱοὶ θεοῦ μὴ ἐπιτρέπητε ὑμῖν ὁ λόγος ἀκούσας τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀδιαλείπτως ἀδιαλείπτως ἁγιάζειν, ὅτι ἦμος τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐξέδειξεν ὡς καθὼς ἔστιν ἀληθὴς λόγον Θεοῦ, ὡς καὶ ἐνεργεῖται ἐν υἱῷ ὑμῶν, ὡς καὶ εὐρείται ἐν υἱῷ ὑμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἐν Θεῷ ἀδιαλείπτως, ὅτι ἐδέξασθε ἀνθρώπων ἁγιάζων ἀδιαλείπτως αὐτὸ τῷ Θεῷ εἰς ὑμᾶς. Ἰδιαίτερο ἀφοβαίνων, ἀλλὰ τοῦτο ὁ πατέρας. 82 In 2:14 he speaks of the churches of God which are in Iuda in Christ Jesus. Luke simply calls them Ἐλληνες/Ἑλληνιδες-Γreeks (Act. 18:4)

83 Accoding to F. Graf (Zeus DDD 934-936) the Homeric and later...
ly use for the opening of an epistle⁶⁶. This (in... could be linked to the church (1:1b) but also to Grace to you⁶⁷ and peace-shalom⁶⁸. The Christians of Thessaloniki (who are not called in this epistle saints) constitute a Church, like the Hebrew Qahal and the Greek Ecclesia, because of the two Divine Personae’s initiative (ἐκλογή v.4 Κλήση v.12b) to offer Grace (forgiveness of sins-annemestie) and Peace, one of different quality from that of Pax Romana whose peace is fragile and susceptible to an end as he proclaims in 5:1. Ἐν in could not only mean the medium, but also the place where the Church is existing and functioning as an entity-a family (comp. 2:14), especially since Paul already experiences being in the presence of God through prayer (1:3; 5:9). Through the final coming of Jesus and the raising of the dead, all Christian will be always σὺν Κυρίῳ τῷ ὅλῳ ἐγενήθημεν [ἐν] of the whole world: the Church is always and alone, but now that Timothy has now come to us from the place where the Church is existing and functioning as a community of the audience, their relationship with the Lord will be perfected in the future, for we will always be with the Lord.

C. At the introductory Praise, the part that responds to Grace and covers three chapters⁹⁸, the words always and without ceasing about the Eucharist (thanksgiving) refer to all the holy brethren in the church⁹⁹ and this is emphasized in the epilogue too: Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss. I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren⁶⁵ (5:27). What is also obvious is Paul’s aim to maintain the feeling of connection between ημείς-ως and all the ημείς-ους by and large. For now this connection is accomplished through the mention in prayer, the Thessalonians and their work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope (1:2.3)⁹².

D. In this frame, Paul, who in v. 2:18 through ἐγὼ distingishes himself from his associates, devotes the second half of the first part of his epistle to underline his attempts from the past to present to maintain personal - bodily communion with the Thessalonians. Satan¹⁰³ however blocked his way. Μηκέτι στέγων (< στέγω = no longer endure it [= the fact that he had not communion with the Thess.]) as he states twice, he did not hesitate to be left alone, sending his brother, Timothy.⁹⁵ Paul considers the return of Timothy who brings news of the faith and love of the Thessalonians as well as the fact that they remember and long to see him, as a Gospel: But now that Timothy has now come to us from ³⁸⁸ and brought us good news of your i) faith and ii) love, and that iii) you always have good remembrance of us, greatly desiring to see us, as we also to see you (3:6). These good news that Timothy brings soothes Paul and gives him life. At the end of the first part of his epistle, Paul continues to wish: now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you (3:11) so that three goals may be accomplished: a) restoring whatever is lacking in their faith, b) the increase and abound in love for one another and for all c) the establishing of their hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints (3: 12.13). Given what is said apart from the faith in God it is also the faith-trust (fides) in Paul that is being verified because, among others, his prophecies are fulfilled.

E. In the second part of the Epistle (ch. 4-5) it is clear that Paul wants to differentiate the Church (whose members are the sons of light and sons of the day-5:4.5) through its ethos-ethnic from the others who have no hope (4:13) and those who sleep and get drunk at night (5: 6.7). They are the Εθνη who do not know God and live with lustful passion (4:5), destined for wrath and not to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ (5:9). All church members are brothers who make up a family-community that is different from the Gentile Ecclesia which worships Caesar as Lord and Father of the empire and the world. The Church of Jesus Christ is brought together through i) recognition (for) those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, ii) be(ing) at peace among yourselves, warn(ing) those who are unruly, comfort(ing) the fainthearted, uphold(ing) the weak and iii) be(ing) patient with all (5:12-14). This Koinonia will be perfected in the future, for we will always be with the Lord.

It is clear of the aforementioned that particularly in the first section of his oldest epistle, Paul underlines the vertical communion of the audience, their relationship with the Living/True God who is Father to his Son who died for us (5: 10) and was resurrected from the dead. He comes back and save us from the coming wrath. Yet the Father is a father to us all. In fact he calls them beloved by God and brothers. That is very important for an audience which had been ostracized from their family and social circle because of their faith in Jesus. Apart from having a new Fa-
they have a new Lord, not Caesar but Jesus Christ who was also persecuted and died for us. It is His Coming that will change-save the world and that is the Christian hope. Meanwhile he tries to strengthen the horizontal bond between him and his audience because, as the epilogical vers 3:12-13 indicates, this love functions as model in the relations of the members of the Church and as the main factor eis τὸ στηρίξας ὑμᾶς τὰς καρδίας ἀμέμπτους ἐν ἁγιωσύνῃ ἐξαρασθένετο τῷ Θεῷ καὶ Πατρός ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ Παρουσία τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ μετὰ πάντων τῶν ἁγίων αὐτοῦ.

4. The reasons for the Paul’s intimacy

In his next letters to the Churches, where he faces enemies inside the Ecclesia, Paul will demonstrate himself particularly as pater familiae. The example of 1 Cor. where Paul tells that he fed the Corinthians with milk and not with solid food as to carnal, as to babes in Christ (3:14) is quite distinctive. At the end of the epistle’s first part (ch. 1-4), Paul separates himself from the instructors in Christ and instead projects the image of the father (also as an invitation for imitation) threatening them with the rod. In this context Timothy is also mentioned and is presented as beloved (the Corinthians too) and faithful: 14 I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you. 15 For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, to imitate me. 16 For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church. 17 Now some are puffed up, as though I were not coming to you. 18 But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord wills, and I will know, not the word of those who are puffed up, but the power. 19 For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power. 20 What do you want? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and a spirit of gentleness? (1 Cor. 4:10-21).

In the Epistle to Galatians, which is according to Dunn also written from Corinth during his first visit, Paul uses the strong language of the advising father. Only after he forcefully accuses them as fools for falling prey to Judeo-Christian false brothers, he says: My little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you, 20 I wish I were present with you now and could change my tone, for I am perplexed about you (Gal 4:18-20).97

While in every other epistle Paul presents himself as pater familias, it is in 1 Thess. that a loving mother ready to share her life and yearning for contact in person is being projected. We have seen that the fact that motherly love surpasses fatherly harshness can be verified through viewing 1 Thess. and 2 Thess. in parallel since in the later Paul acts rather fatherly dealing with problems inside of the Church.

Motherly elements are being shown in his private letter to Philemon. Self-presented as aged (since he was probably near his life’s end) Paul writes a warmhearted letter to Philemon for he believes that Onesimus has become a child of his during his imprisonment: yet for love’s sake I rather appeal to you—being such a one as Paul, the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ— 16 I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten while in my chains, 17 who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me 18 I am sending him back. You therefore receive him, that is, my own heart, 19 whom I wished to keep with me, that on your behalf he might minister to me in my chains for the gospel.

Why Paul shows such intimacy in the 1 Thes.? From what has been said and from the Data of the Acts (despite the fact that the book was written about 30 years later), we draw the following conclusions:

1. The book of Acts shows that during his stay in the city of Athens (17:18-33) Paul felt strongly the hands of loneliness upon him and the disappointment of the rejection of the Stoics and the Epicourians although he had adjusted his word and his strategy to the city’s mental climate. When he arrived in Corinth he confessed that he came in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling (1 Cor.2:3). Luke marks that Paul was filled by the Spirit through the return of his associates from Thessaloniki: After Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit (Acts 18:5). In 1 Thes. 3:7-8 he points out: διὰ τούτου παρακλήθημεν, ἀδέλφωι, ἐὰν ἐνίκησέν ὑμᾶς ἡμῶν ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστί, διὰ της ἀνάγκης καὶ ἀλήθειας, ὅτι ἐν Χριστί, διὰ τής ἀνάγκης καὶ ἀλήθειας, ὅτι ἐν Χριστί, and ἐν Χριστί, 17 I will give thanks to God through you for ἐν Χριστί, 18 I will give thanks to God through you for ἐν Χριστί, 19 ἐνίκησέν ὑμᾶς ἡμῶν ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστί, 20 ἐνίκησέν ὑμᾶς ἡμῶν ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστί, 

96 J.D.G. Dunn, Beginnings from Jerusalem, Michigan: Eedermans 2009, 720.

97 According to Joh. Chrysostomus (Comm. Titum) the ethos of Paul in this epistle is erotic: Εἶ δὲ καὶ ἀδέλφοιν τοῦ θνητοῦ ὑμῶν, μὴ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσετε, καὶ ἐν ἐπὶ γινήσε...
East but the city also linked the North with the South. By this way the Gospel is preached to every part of the empire, a main presupposition for the coming of the Parousia (Rom. 10:18—Ps. 19:4; Mk. 13:10; Mt. 24:14): ἀφ’ ὑμῶν γὰρ ἐξῆγεν ὁ λόγος τοῦ Κυρίου σοι μόνον ἐν τῇ Μακεδονίᾳ καὶ [ἐν τῇ] Ἀχαιᾳ, ἀλλὰ ἐν παντὶ τῶν ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν ἢ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν ἐξελήλυθεν, ὥστε μὴ χρείαν ἔχειν ἡμᾶς λαλεῖν τι (1:8).

2. The Thessalonian church faces sorrows (θλίψεις), which come from outsiders and not from insiders as it will happen in the other epistles (Judeans or ‘wise’). The receivers of the epistle are excommunicated from their family-social circle which in the graeco-roman pyramid was the most important institution after the religion. So, as underlines Gerber98, in the frame of the alternative Ecclesia where it is experienced the principle of the reverse/inverted pyramid (Mk. 10:42-45) they need to feel love/tenderly care and not an authority which impose his own will. Paul had to conduct according to the image of God the Father and the Lord who was persecuted and dies for us. On the other hand some of the outsiders enemies obviously compared Paul with the itinerant philosophers who through traveling and initiating authorities of the past gained gold and glamour from their preaching taking advantage of the hopes and fears of the people. For these reasons Paul, who during his days as a rabbi he must have been called father and teacher (Mt. 23:10)99, let his carefully cultivated father figure not to be distorted into the image of a patriarch100 even when he faces the problem of πορνεία. Yet we have seen from the very beginning he does not accompany his name with servant or apostle of Jesus. He speaks in plural form, not using I, while in the epilogue of the epistle he does not refer to any important members of the church. He admits to the worthiness of his audience and rejuvenates their self-esteem using you know repeatedly and the well-known captatio benevolentiae of 1:3 but also saying to them that you have no need so that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another (4:9). The audience themselves have become an example for all the world, as Paul and his associates have become for them (1:6-7). All in all the imitation process revolves around the living and true God, who is called Father and Jesus the Lord who has died for us: And you became followers of us and of the Lord (1:6). Timothy is not characterized as his child but as their brother and minister of God (3:2). That an ostracized people of God doesn’t need a new patriarch but a loving family is also seen in the last book of N.T., the Gospel of John where the authority of Peter is called in question. Van der Watt has proved in his Family of the

King: dynamics of metaphor in the Gospel according to John (Leiden 2000) how the metaphor of family (with the elements of love, knowing each other, solicitude, protection) is the constitutive and the most essential imagery in a Gospel which is addressed to Christians expelled from the Synagogue and their families (John 9. 16).

3. Paul’s feelings of paternal love and the unique bond he shares with the Thessalonians could be understood according to the fact that they were the firstborn among his children in Christ like the first chosen (by the Apostle himself) associate Timothy who is called his child in 1 Cor. (4:17). We should also remember that according to Acts (16:6-8) before Paul’s transition to Macedonia, the Holy Spirit had averted him from preaching in certain parts of Asia Minor and he had already crossed something like 600 miles without any impressive success. We also should not forget that during his visit in Philippi, the first stop he made in European ground, very few believed his word and most of those few were women. Yet with his repeated visits to the city, this Little Rome (probably with Luke’s aid who is connected to city of Philippi), he managed to form the Church that would later receive the epistle which is also characterized as a loving-tender one101. Paul however doesn’t characterize the recipients as σπαργη in his first epistle as it happens in 2 Thes. 2:13102. So this fact is doubtful. On the contrary, Paul seems to be feeling heavily upon him that the coming of the Lord is at hand unlike the false prophets of Pax Romana (see Virgil, IV Eclogue) which in various ways advertised Roma as aeterna and its system as the bearer of peace and security (5.3; comp. Rev. 13). In the light of the Coming of the resurrected Jesus, Paul, who was entrusted to preach to the Gentiles (Gal. 1:16), wants to present all the Christians who returned by his eisodos not only ἁμεμίπους ἐν ἀγωσάνῃ (3:13) ὕδωτελες but also united as a family. So he wants that his letter be read to all the brothers, even those who might not want to really listen. He also invites everybody to kiss each other although he is not giving his own103 and in addition he neglects to mention anyone of the πρώταμενοι in particular. Through φιλαδελφία (whose visual sign was ἀσπασμος) and the public reading of his epistle which maybe substitutes his holy kiss, they will experience the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Note that it was the coming Caesar that was greeted in a triumphant manner by the crowned members of the local Ecclesia (Greek) often accompa-

98 Paulus und seine ‘Kinder’ 338-343.
99 Apparently these three names were quite loved by the Pharisees of the time.
100 As the problem of fornication is dealt with rather harshly in various Judaic texts (see Testaments of the XII Patr.), one could expect Paul to project the similar guiding authority of the father.

101 J. Karavidopoulos, Ἀποστόλοι Παύλος Επιστολές προς Εφεσίους, Φιλιππισσίων, Κολοσσαίων, Φιλήμωνα. Thessaloniki 1981, 244.
102 Ημεῖς δὲ ἀφεξόμενοι εὑρήκαμεν τῷ Θεῷ πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν, ἀλλ᾽ ἐχθρίζομεν ἡγαμήθημεν ὑπὸ Κυρίου, ὅτι εἰλαχίον ὡς θεοὶ ἀπαρχῆς εἰς σωτηρίαν εἰς ἀγαπήν πνεύματος καὶ πίστεις ἀληθείας.
103 The fact that all Christians regardless of ethnicity, gender or status are all brothers sealed with a ritual kiss at the end of the epistle’s hearing (probably before the Eucharist where they experienced the union in one body), was a crucial element setting them apart from the other religious parties and Judaism where the term brother also appears but not nearly as vividly as in the Christian Church.
nied by the whole house (oikos) or school. In this frame Paul asks: τίς γὰρ ἡμῶν ἔλληξεν χαρὰ ἢ στέφωνον καυχήσεως—ἡ ὁμοία καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐμπροσθεν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ ἐν τῇ αὐτῷ Παρουσίᾳ; (2:19). Maybe Paul also wanted to shout with Isaiah (8:18): Here am I and the children whom the Lord has given me.

5. Because of the sentiment that the coming of the Lord is at hand, the epistle itself pictures an apocalyptic and also dualistic way of thought which also requires a powerful family bond so that the battle of the sons of light against the ‘Temper-Satan and his organs can be fought. Characteristic of this apocalyptic way of thought is the coexistence in chap. 2 of passages where it is expressed the extreme love of Paul for his own children with other where he expresses his extreme wrath for his compatriots who persecute him. In this apocalyptic frame Paul aches to make the ostracized Thessalonians understand that they are really his beloved ones. He is also deeply concerned about the sanctification especially of the bodies, an issue which he directly links with the brothers and sisters since πορνεία (fornication and adultery) means taking advantage and defrauding one another. Based on archaeological evidence the cults of Dionysus and Cabei


105. In the next epistles it feels that the Coming delays, his Churches must be organized and he must defend himself against the false brothers/tutors. So he appears himself as an authoritative pater familiae.

106. The main prayer of the Christian community, the one that sets it apart from the Synagogue, begins with the word Father and ends with lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil (Matt 6:13; Luk 11:4).

107. The second subunit of the first part of ΠΘ starts with the contrast ἡμεῖς γὰρ μιμήθηκεν, ἀδελφοί, τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν τοῦ θεοῦ (2:13-17). Jesus Himself used the image of the mourning nurse in light of Jerusalem’s desolation: Ὁ Ιερουσαλήμ, Ιερουσαλήμ, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing! (Lk. 13:34).


109. With the exception of Musonius Rufus (XII.1-5), the other moralists thought of fornication as not a shameful act.

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Rozmiar artykułu: 2,25 arkusza wydawniczego