

Did Paul Behave as an Infant or Imbecil, or as a Gentle Nurse?

The Interpretation of 1 Thessalonians 2:7

There are several links between the eminent Honoree of this volume and the above pauline letter: for many years he has served the Aristoteles University of the city of Thessaloniki – which was the original recipient of this letter – as Professor of New Testament exegesis; he is one of the editors of the latest editions of *The Greek New Testament* and of the *Novum Testamentum Graece*, both of which, by adopting the variant νήπιος, have brought the problem under discussion to the surface; and he has himself touched upon this text – even if briefly – in his discussion of the significance of the Athos MSS for the text of the Thessalonian epistles.¹

The present study is occasioned by an increasing trend in interpreting this passage in a way that seems to me to be based on an inadequate examination of the evidence. This interpretation figures in the current text of the NT, in translations and in exegetical work (including that of the symposium volume, *The Thessalonians Debate*)². The present investigation will address the text-critical and the exegetical issues by discussing the philological evidence that is so crucial for correct exegetical decisions, and by critically assessing the grounds on which this recent turn of emphasis has been based. In the process there will also be a critical assessment of my esteemed friend, Jeffrey Weima's attempt in *NTS* 2000,³ to consolidate this view.

1. The Text-critical Problem

The MSS are divided between the readings νήπιοι and ἡπιοι. The *N-A* gives:

¹ See «Ἡ Ἀγιορειτικὴ χειρόγραφη παράδοση τῶν δύο πρὸς Θεσσαλονικεῖς ἐπιστολῶν τοῦ ἀποστόλου Παύλου» in I. Δ. Καραβιδουπούλου, *Βιβλικὲς Μελέτες Β'*, Θεσσαλονίκη: Πουρνάρας, 2000, 182-197, p. 194.

² *The Thessalonians Debate*, eds. K. P. Donfried – J. Beutler, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

³ J. Weima, “‘But We Became Infants Among You’: The Case for ΝΗΠΙΟΙ in 1 Thess 2.7”, *NTS* 46 (2000), 547-564. Incidentally, the page heading of this article uses ΝΕΠΙΟΙ instead of ΝΗΠΙΟΙ, a result of the Erasmus pronunciation. Weima's study represents a number of positions held by various contributors to the *The Thessalonians Debate*, which was based on the work of the SNTS seminar on the “Thessalonian Correspondence”, of which the present author was a member.

1. Νήπιοι P⁶⁵ S² B C* D* F G I Ψ* 0150 104* 263 326^c pc It^{ar, b, d, f, g, mon, o} Vg^{cl, ww} sa^{mss} bo. To this evidence, *GNT* adds: 459 1962 / 147 / 592 / 593 / 603^c Eth Origen^{(gr 1/3), lat} Ambrosiaster Jerome Pelagius Augustine.
2. Ἡπιοι S² A C² D² Ψ^c 0278 33 1739 1881 n Vgst (sy) sa^{mss} Cl. To this evidence, *GNT* adds: 075 Byz (K L P) Lect Syr^{p, h} Fay Arm (Geo) Slav Origen^{2/3} Basil Chrysostom Theodore^{lat}.

The above presentation does not offer a complete coverage of the witnesses, since there are more Greek authors who support the reading ἦπιοι: e.g. Klemes Alexandreus,⁴ *Catena NT* (on 1 Corinthians),⁵ *Catena NT* (on 1 Thessalonians),⁶ Theodoretos,⁷ and Ioannes Damaskenos.⁸

The reading νήπιοι is found in manuscripts and Christian authors of the third and fourth centuries, whereas the reading ἦπιοι has its earliest manuscript representatives in the fourth century, but is also witnessed by Christian authors of the third century. Moreover, Sinaiticus, Ephraemi, Claromontanus and Athous Lavrensis, the first three of which are considered to belong to the most important uncials, were all perceived by their correctors or users to be mistaken in having the reading νήπιοι, which was, accordingly, corrected to ἦπιοι. It is impossible to know when exactly this happened, but it was usual for the scribe or for a corrector to go through the MS as soon as it was finished and to correct it before it was published.⁹ This implies that the correction may be almost as old as the reading of the *prima manus*. Moreover, almost the entire Byzantine textual tradition, with the important minuscules 33 and 1739, support ἦπιοι. It ought to be pointed out here that although a corrector's touch is later than the first hand, it does not follow that the corrector was wrong and that the first hand is necessarily correct. The first hand is, of course, older, but that is not tantamount to representing the correct reading. Other factors need to be taken into consideration.

The codices Vaticanus and Ephraemi, for example, written in *scriptio continua*, read ΕΓΕΝΗΘΗΜΕΝΝΗΠΙΟΙ. Writing in this way could easily have given rise to errors of *dittography*, in which case the original reading would have been ἦπιοι. Unfortunately, this is no certain ground to built on, since the opposite error (the reading ΗΠΙΟΙ) could have arisen by *haplography*. Codex Sinaiticus, however, has

⁴ Klemes Alexandreus, *Paedagogos*, I, 5; *Stromateis*, I.

⁵ *Catena on 1 Corinthians* (typus Vaticanus), e cod. Paris gr. 227, ed. J. A. Cramer, Vol. 5, 84.

⁶ *Catena on 1 Thessalonians* (typus Parisinus) e cod. Coisl. 204 ed. J. A. Cramer) Vol. 6, 350.

⁷ Theodoretos, *Intrpretatio in XIV epistulas sancti Pauli* [Migne] Vol. 82, 636.

⁸ Johannes Damaskenos, *Commentarii in epistulas Pauli* [Migne] Vol. 95, 402, 90.

⁹ See Caragounis, *The Development of Greek and the New Testament*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2004, p. 499 f.

the first word (ΕΓΕΝΗΘΗΜΕ) end one line and the second word (ΗΠΙΟΙ) begin the next line, with a stroke placed above the final Ε of ΕΓΕΝΗΘΗΜΕ to indicate that at the end of the line – as was often the custom – the final Ν was omitted, thus:

ΑΛΛΑ ΕΓΕΝΗΘΗΜΕ¹⁰
ΝΗΠΙΟΙ ΕΝ ΜΕΣΩ

This could, of course, have led copyists using Sinaiticus to overlook the stroke and to copy

ΕΓΕΝΗΘΗΜΕΝ ΗΠΙΟΙ

thus giving rise to this reading. On the other hand, a careless copyist such as the scribe of Sinaiticus, who in this brief letter perpetrated no fewer than 29 orthographical errors and who, a few verses further down from our text, was found guilty of gross *dittography*, writing 25 words twice (in vv. 13-14), could very well have fallen victim to such oversight in vs.7, too, especially since in the previous line he had written expressly only the form ΕΓΕΝΗΘΗΜΕ without the final Ν,¹¹ thinking that starting the new line with a Ν he was simply writing the last letter of the previous word. But all this is mere speculation.

From the above it is obvious that the external evidence is incapable of supplying a viable solution.¹² Transcriptional probabilities could have gone either way. Hort's favorite MSS, Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, which have largely preserved their supremacy over the other MSS ever since and the continued neglect of the Byzantine tradition especially following K. Aland's death,¹³ ought to be matters for reassessment.¹⁴ This implies that we cannot unproblematically speak of superior MS evidence supporting the reading νήπιοι.¹⁵

¹⁰ The pdf file did not accept the stroke above the final Ε, but should be read.

¹¹ Codex Sinaiticus has committed for the Gospel of John alone no fewer than 470 orthographical errors, see Caragounis, *The Development of Greek*, p. 497. Cf. Eustathios, the Byzantine commentator of Homeros (*Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem*, II, 753, also *Commentarii in Odysseam*, I, 354), who demanded an ὑποδιαστολή, a pause or comma in uttering the two words πέμπε νήπιον, so that no one might join the ν with the verb and understand πέμπεν ἥπιον.

¹² Although it is true that according to the current rules of Textual Criticism, the reading νήπιοι is better supported in the MSS, Weima's view of the indisputable superiority of this reading (*NTS* 46 (2000) 548 f.) is an exaggeration.

¹³ Cf. for example how the material on the value of the Byzantine MSS in the introduction of the 26th edition (1979) has been removed from the corrected 27th edition (1998).

¹⁴ Cf. Caragounis, *The Development of Greek*, pp. 475-84.

¹⁵ As, e.g. O. Merk, "1 Thessalonians 2:1-12: An Exegetical-Theological Study", in *The Thessalonians Debate*, p. 106 f.; Weima (*op. cit.*), and others.

2. In Vindication of the Reading *νήπιοι*

Weima tries to refute four arguments set forth by various scholars for the reading *νήπιοι*. It is true that some of these arguments ought never to have been used, but unfortunately, Dr Weima falls into the same trap himself offering arguments that lack cogency.

1. Weima thinks that since both *dittography* and *haplography* were in themselves possible, and moreover, since he is of the opinion that “there is no scribal tendency toward committing one error more than the other”,¹⁶ this issue is indecisive and should not be pursued any further. We ought to follow the best-supported reading. But the matter is not quite so simple. In this case, we do know, for example, that the scribe of Sinaiticus pleads guilty to gross *dittography*!¹⁷

2. Rebutting the argument that “scribes, either intentionally or by accident, replaced the rare term *νήπιοι* by the more common *νήπιοι*”,¹⁸ he, along with S. Fowl, refers to the statistics of these words in Paul. He also makes reference to T. Sailors’ statistics based on the *TLG*, that “*νήπιος* occurs 42 times in the first centuries BCE and CE compared to 274 occurrences of *νήπιος* in its nominal, adjectival and verbal forms”.

¹⁶ Weima, *NTS* 46 (2000), 550.

¹⁷ The situation is as follows. Codex Sinaiticus omits the following words which are included in the *N-A* and *GNT* editions: 1:5: [ἐν] (bis); 1:8: γάρ; 2:13: ἀληθῶς; 2:19: ἦ; 2:20: ἦ; 4:1: ἴνα; 4:10: [τούς]; 5:8: καὶ ἀγάπης; 5:15: [καί]; 5:21: δέ; and 5:25: [καί]. Leaving aside the five words within square brackets, whose inclusion in the editions is uncertain, we may say that Codex S omits 8 words that are accepted by *N-A* and *GNT*. The additions of this MS are, however, far more serious: 1:1: ἀπὸ Θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ; 1:4: τοῦ Θεοῦ; 2:13-14: ἐδέξασθε οὐ λόγον ἀνθρώπων ἀλλὰ καθὼς ἐστὶν λόγον Θεοῦ ὃς καὶ ἐνεργῆται ἐν ἡμῖν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ὑμεῖς γὰρ μιμηθετε ἐγενήθητε ἀδελφοὶ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ; 3:6: ὑμῶν; 4:4: ἐν; 40:10: ὑμῶν; 5:1: τοῦ; 5:13: καί. This means that if Codex Sinaiticus has omitted 8 words from the text, it has added no fewer than 40 words to the text! This implies that at least in this letter, the scribe of Sinaiticus has a longer text. Not only that, but in the long *dittography* this scribe has spelled two words wrongly while in his first attempt at copying he had spelled them correctly: ἐνεργῆται (in place of ἐνεργεῖται) and μιμήθητε (in place of μιμηταί). Moreover, Codex Sinaiticus has fourteen more readings for which the editions use equivalents: 1:7: τύπους (for τύπον); 2:9: ὑμῖν (for εἰς ὑμᾶς); 2:10: καλέσαντος (for καλοῦντος); 3:2: διάκονον (for συνεργόν); 3:3: θλίψεσι (for θλίψεσιν); 3:9: κυρίου (for Θεοῦ); 4:2: δεδώκαμεν (for ἐδώκαμεν); 4:14: ἐπιστεύομεν (for πιστεύομεν), 5:1: γράφεσθαι ὑμῖν (for ὑμῖν γράφεσθαι); 5:3: the altogether wrong unspirate form ἐπίσταται (for the aspirate ἐφίσταται); 5:10: περί (for ὑπέρ); 5:13: αὐτοῖς (for ἐαυτοῖς); 5:27: ὀρκίζω (for ἐνορκίζω), and 5:27: the Attic πᾶσι (for the Koine πᾶσιν). In the face of these facts it is not possible to overlook the unreliability of this MS as Weima and others are inclined to do.

¹⁸ Weima, *NTS* 46 (2000), 550, used e.g. by I. H. Marshall, *1 and 2 Thessalonians* (NCBC), 70.

These remarks and statistics lack a proper linguistic perspective. It must not be forgotten that the NT constitutes only a tiny fraction of the lexical treasure of the Greek language, with a vocabulary of 4900 words out of the hundreds of thousands of words in use at that time. Any statistics as to the frequency or rarity of words will have to address the larger picture.¹⁹

3. Weima attacks the argument that νήπιοι is always used with pejorative sense²⁰ by arguing, among other things, that “that Paul uses νήπιοι in 2.7 with a positive sense receives further support from the use of this term by other biblical and non-biblical writers”²¹ and refers to Diodoros Sikeliotes, Philon, and Josephos. This time, apparently, we are prompted to take account of the larger picture. However, the attempt is to no avail, since the ‘positive’ meaning for νήπιος in these texts does not reside in the word itself, but in the context. If this positive sense will hold good for 1 Thessalonians as well, it must be shown from the context of this letter. It is no good saying that “Furthermore, the term νήπιοι was used with a positive sense by both biblical and non-biblical writers. It thus remains entirely possible that Paul in 1 Thess 2.7 employed the infant metaphor in a positive manner and that such a usage by no means ought to be judged non-Pauline”. This is altogether too loose a ground on which to base the desired conclusion.

4. The fourth argument, that νήπιοι creates a mixed metaphor, and that this reading is not merely “the *lectio difficilior* but the *lectio impossibilis*”,²² is solved by Weima through proposing a different punctuation. According to this, the full stop needs to be removed from ἀπόστολοι (7a) and to be placed instead after ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν, thus reading 7b ἀλλὰ ἐγενήθημεν νήπιοι as correlative with the οὔτε ... οὔτε of verses 5-6, and beginning a new sentence with 7c ὡς ἐὰν τροφὸς ... which has its correlative in οὕτως ὁμειρόμενοι (vs. 8).²³ The improbability of this punctuation will be discussed below.

3. The Philological Examination of νήπιοι and ἡπιοι.

In my recent investigation, *The Development of Greek and the New Testament*, I have shown that in linguistic and philological inquiry it is necessary to address the evidence of the entire history of Greek. This is so, because the NT belongs to a

¹⁹ On the vocabulary of the Greek language, see Caragounis, *The Development of Greek*, 60-63, 123.

²⁰ This argument has been used e.g. by J. Delobel, “One Letter too Many in Paul’s First Letter? A Study of (ν)ήπιοι in 1 Thess 2.7”, *Louvain Studies* 20 (1995), 127.

²¹ Weima, *NTS* 46 (2000), 552.

²² Weima, *NTS* 46 (2000), 554.

²³ Weima, *NTS* 46 (2000), 555-56.

period during which Greek makes the transition from classical Greek to Neohellenic. This period is characterized by new developments in morphology, vocabulary and syntax, which implies that later Greek literature casts important light on the NT; further, as a safeguard against making confident assertions about linguistic matters which later Greek shows to be uninformed; and thirdly, because, for instance, since later Greek has preserved many NT words and constructions, the way a particular element of the NT is felt or perceived in later Greek (up to Neohellenic) must be of considerable significance for its correct interpretation. It is thus obvious, that in linguistic investigations pertaining to the NT, confining oneself to the NT evidence alone or even to that of the LXX and the papyri, will inevitably often lead to misunderstandings and misrepresentations of the facts. The holistic approach to the language is the only feasible way.

The words *νήπιος* and *ἥπιος* occur as ordinary words with the main meanings attached to them all the way from Homeros to the present day. Today they are the ordinary words for expressing these meanings for both forms of Neohellenic, i.e. *Katharevousa* and *Demotic*. Therefore, since these words have never ceased to be used in the living language, if we inquire into statistics, we need to take account not merely of the centuries around NT times or of the papyri, but of the entire spectrum of the language.

According to the *TLG* (covering the period from Homeros to [in some cases] the XVIth century A.D.), the word *νήπιος* / *νήπιον* in the masculine and neuter occurs almost 1400 times in the singular²⁴ and about 1360 times in the plural.²⁵ By contrast the masculine *ἥπιος* occurs only 319 times in the singular²⁶ and 62 times in the plural.²⁷ However, the fact that *νήπιος* occurs far more often than *ἥπιος*, does not make the latter word “rare”. *ἥπιος* was and is the ordinary Greek word for “mild”, “gentle”, “kind”, “meek”, “soothing”, etc. It occurred everyday – as it does today – and it must have been used by Paul times without number in his ordinary transactions from day to day. The word *νήπιος*, on the other hand, bore two main meanings, the basic meaning of “infant”, “baby”, “child” and a metaphorical one

²⁴ The above figures include also the neuter instances, since the masculine genitive, dative, and accusative correspond in form with all five cases of the neuter. Accordingly, the purely masculine forms must be lowered considerably. Thus: Nominative: c. 600 x; Genitive (including the neuter): 210 x; Dative (including the neuter): 66 x; Accusative (including the neuter): 469 x, and Vocative 48 X.

²⁵ Again the plural neuter forms for genitive and dative correspond with those of the masculine, hence the purely masculine forms are considerably lower. Thus: Nominative: 275 x; Genitive (including the neuter): 573 x; Dative (including the neuter): 338 x; Accusative: 168 x, and Vocative: 4 x.

²⁶ I.e. Nominative: 205 x; Genitive: 17 x; Dative: 9 x; Accusative: 88 x, and Vocative: 0 x.

²⁷ I.e. Nominative: 24 x; Genitive: 4 X; Dative: 20 x; Accusative: 14 x, and Vocative: 0 x.

derived from this, namely “childish”, “fool(ish)”, “senseless”, “silly”. It is quite natural, therefore, that there were far more daily circumstances in real life for people to use νήπιος, both in its primary and in its metaphorical senses than ἥπιος. It should, therefore, cause no surprise that in the NT νήπιος occurs 13 times, while ἥπιος only twice. But no conclusions can be drawn from this NT circumstance as to the rarity of ἥπιος and hence (as the argument goes) its substitution by the ‘more common’ νήπιος.

In order to give some indication of the semantic range of the two words, the following brief specimens of their respective uses will be presented.

1. ἥπιος. In Homeros’ *Ilias* and *Odyseia* this term occurs sixteen times, always in the singular. The basic meaning of “gentle”, “mild” “tender”, “meek”, “kind” comes through in *Ilias* XXIV. 770, where Helen, speaking to prince Hektor of the gentleness of his father (her father-in-law), King Priamos, towards her, says: ἐκυρὸς δὲ πατὴρ ὧς ἥπιος αἰεὶ “thy father / my father-in-law was always gentle to me as if he had been my own father”, a phrase that becomes almost proverbial, being repeated in the epics²⁸, and still more often in Homeros’ mediaeval commentator, Bishop Eustathios of Thessaloniki²⁹ as well as in other authors.³⁰ ἥπιος is often used in combination with other adjectives, which thus reveal the scope of its meaning (space allows only a few examples): πρόφρων, ἀγανὸς καὶ ἥπιος “willing, kind, and gentle”;³¹ σόφρων τε καὶ ἥπιος “prudent and gentle”;³² νημερτὴς τε καὶ ἥπιος “trustworthy and gentle”; ἥπιος ὁ ἀπαλόφρων “gentle is one who is soft-hearted”;³³ ἥπιος εἶναι καὶ πρᾶος “to be gentle and meek”;³⁴ ἥπιος

²⁸ Homeros (VIII B.C.), *Odyseia*, II. 47, 234; V. 12; XV. 152.

²⁹ Eustathios (XII A.D.), *Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem*, I.419.19; I. 630.1; II. 303.7; *ad Odyseam* I.77. 40; I. 81. 29, 45, 46; I. 94.1, 19; I. 188.17; II. 95.2; *De capta Thessalonica* 52. 34.

³⁰ E.g. Euripides (V B.C.), *Fragmenta*, 950. 1; Themistios (IV A.D.), *Περὶ φιλανθρωπίας*, 17. a. 6; Eusebios (IV A.D.), *Evangelike Proparaskeue*, 10. 3. 22 (ed. BEΠΕΣ 25, p. 368), and *Scholia in Hesiodum: Scholia in Theogoniam* (scholia vetera), 86. 5.

³¹ Homeros (VIII B.C.), *Odyseia*, II. 230; V. 8. Cf. Ioannes Stobaios (V A.D.), *Anthologion*, IV. 25. 28: πρόφρων τε καὶ ἥπιος. So, too, Arsenios Paroimiographos (XV-XVI A.D.), *Apophthegmata*, XI. 50a.

³² Athenaios (II-III A.D.), *Deipnosophistai*, X. 32.

³³ Klemes Alexandreus (II-III A.D.), *Paidagogos*, I. 5. 19 (ed. BEΠΕΣ 7. p. 89).

³⁴ Porphyrios (III A.D.), *Quaestionum Homericarum ad Iliadem pertinentium relinquae*, VIII. 39-40. 9. Cf. Orion Grammatikos (V A.D.), *Etymologikon*, 145. 1: ἥπιος γὰρ ὁ πρᾶος. Similarly Eusebios, *Commentarius ad Isaiam*, I. 82.29; Ioannes Stobaios (V A.D.), *Anthologion*, II. 8. 39. 77; *Etymologicum Gudianum* (XI A.D.), Ny: 408. 52; *Lexica Segueriana* (Late Byz. times), Eta: 251. 30; *Lexica in Opera Gregorii Nazianzeni, Lexicon in carmina Greg. Naz.* (XI A.D.) Eta: 77.1.

καὶ προσηνῆς “gentle and mild”;³⁵ χρηστός τε καὶ ἥπιος ὢν “being kind and gentle”;³⁶ ὅσιος λογικὸς ἥπιος ἀνήρ “a holy, reasonable, gentle man”;³⁷ ἥπιος· πραῦς, ἥσυχος, εὐδιὼν “ἥπιος: meek, quiet, tranquil”;³⁸ ἥπιον δὲ μᾶλλον εἶναι καὶ μειλίχιον “but to be even more gentle and tender”;³⁹ ἥπιον καὶ ταπεινὸν “gentle and humble”;⁴⁰ ἥπιον καὶ χαρίεν “gentle and graceful”.⁴¹ The *Etymologicum Magnum*, at 434. 20, defined it as: ἥπιος γὰρ σημαίνει τὸν λογισμὸν “ἥπιος signifies the reasoning (faculty)”. Of interest is also the explanation in *Scholia In Homerum: Scholia in Odysseam* (scholia vetera), II. 47: οἱ ἀρχαῖοι τὴν βασιλείαν ἐμέριζον εἰς τρία ἐπίθετα. τὸν μὲν πρᾶον βασιλέα ὠνόμαζον πατέρα, τὸν ἀπηνῆ καὶ θυμώδη, δεσπότην τὸν φειδωλὸν καὶ φιλόχρυσον κάπηλον “the ancients distinguished kings by three epithets: the gentle king they called ‘Father’, the hard and wrathful ‘Master’, and the niggard and gold-loving ‘Huckster’”.

In addition to its use of men’s character and disposition, ἥπιος is used as a characterization of a large number of entities, qualities, or things (again space allows only a few examples): e.g. ἥπιος ὕπνος “gentle / sweet sleep”,⁴² ἥπιος ... ὑγρότης “the mild moistur [of water],⁴³ ἥπιος ἰχθύς “gentle fish”,⁴⁴ ἥπιον πῦρ “gentle fire”,⁴⁵ ἥπιον ... σέλας “gentle light”,⁴⁶ ἥπιον πνεῦμα “gentle wind”,⁴⁷ ἥπιω αὔρη “gentle breeze”,⁴⁸ ἥπιω μεγαλοψυχία “gentle magnanimity”,⁴⁹ ἥπιος

³⁵ Konstantinos Porphyrogenetos (X A.D.), *De virtutibus et vitiis*, I. 185. 17. Cf. the neuter form of this expression in Plotinus (III A.D.), *Enneades*, V. 5. 12. 33 and Basilios, *Epistles*, 257. 1. 7.

³⁶ Ioannes Antiocheus (VII A.D.), *Fragments*, 115. 8.

³⁷ *Concilia Oecumenica: Synodus Constantinopolitana et Hierosolymitana anno 536* (uncertain date), III. 97. 31.

³⁸ *Scholia in Opianum: Scholia et glossae in Halieutica* (scholia vetera et recentiora) (uncertain date), III. 58.

³⁹ Plutarchos (I A.D.), *Περὶ φιλαδελφείας*, 491 E. Similarly Hesiodos, *Theogonia*, 407.

⁴⁰ Markos Diakonos (V A.D.), *Vita Porphyrii episcopi Gazensis*, VIII. 16.

⁴¹ *Scholia in Aristophanem; Scholia in Plutum* (scholia vetera et fort. ...) (uncertain date), sch. plut.1022. 1.

⁴² Ploutarchos, *Marius*, 20. 1. 6; Posidonios, *Fragments*, 201. 46.

⁴³ Ploutarchos, *De tuenda sanitate praecepta*, 132 E.

⁴⁴ Oppianos (II A.D.), *Halieutica*, III. 519.

⁴⁵ Parmenides (V B.C.), *Fragments*, VIII. 57; Dion Chrysostomos (I A.D.), *Orations*, XX XVI. 56. 6. Cf. also Chrysippos (III B.C.), *Fragments*, 622. 11 and *Fragmenta Alchemica* (II A.D.), 75. 5.

⁴⁶ Paulus Silentarius (VI A.D.), *Descriptio Sanctae Sophiae*, 1002.

⁴⁷ Ploutarchos, *De amore prolis*, 496 A.

⁴⁸ *Anthologia Graeca*, X. 17. 1.

⁴⁹ Eusebios, *Constantini imperatoris oratio ad coetum sanctorum*, XI. 16. 8

λόγος “mild word”,⁵⁰ μῦθον ... ἥπιον “a gentle word”,⁵¹ ἠπίοις ἐπαγγελίαις “gentle promises”,⁵² ἥπιον νοῦν “gentle mind”,⁵³ ἥπιον τρόπον “gentle / meek behavior / way”,⁵⁴ ἥθος ἥπιον “mild / gentle ethos”,⁵⁵ ἥπιον δίκην “mild judgment”,⁵⁶ ἥπιον γέλωτα, “gentle / mild laughter”,⁵⁷ ἥπιον ἥμαρ “propitious / favorable day”,⁵⁸ ἥπιον ὕψος “moderate height”,⁵⁹ ἥπιον φάρμακον “mild medicine”,⁶⁰ and finally as epithets of Asklepios,⁶¹ Zeus,⁶² and even Poseidon.⁶³

This evidence for the use of ἥπιος is wholly in line with how this word is used and understood in Neohellenic. The word ἥπιος is a perfectly natural characteristic of a τροφός, “nurse”, so that no objection to such a combination would ever arise for a Greek.

2. Νήπιος. In the Homeric writings this term occurs some 40 times in the singular and 12 in the plural. Like ἥπιος, the word νήπιος has been the ordinary Greek word for “infant” in all periods of the language.⁶⁴ Not seldom it occurs with

⁵⁰ E.g. Eusebios, *Fragments*, I. 47 and Ioannes Stobaios, *Anthologion*, III. 1. 103. 44; Konstantinos Porphyrogenetos, *De legationibus*, 226. 17; Georgios Synkellos, *Eclogē chronographikē*, 328. 13.

⁵¹ Homeros, *Odysseia*, XX. 327.

⁵² Eusebios, *Evangelikē Proparaskeuē*, X. 2. 11. 4.

⁵³ Loukianos (II A.D.), *Podagra*, 179.

⁵⁴ Sopatros (IV A.D.), *Διαιρέσεις ζητημάτων*, VIII. 59. 23; Theodoretos, *De providentia orationes decem*, 83. 689. 48.

⁵⁵ Markos Diakonos, *Vita Porphyrii episcopi Gazensis*, 88. 6.

⁵⁶ Eustathios, *Commentarii ad Homeri Odysseam*, I. 81. 4.

⁵⁷ Anna Komnene (XI-XII A.D.), *Alexias*, VIII. 2. 3. 16.

⁵⁸ Hesiodos (VII-VIII B.C.), *Works and Days*, 787.

⁵⁹ Ploutarchos, *Quomodo adulator ab amico internoscatur*, 63 D. See also Sextus Empeirikos, *Adversus mathematicos*, IX. 10. 5; Athenagoras, *Legatio sive Supplicatio pro Christianis*, XXII. 2. 5.

⁶⁰ Aristophanes Gramm. (III-II B.C.), *Aristophanis historiae animalium epitome sub iunctis Aeliani Timothei aliorumque*, II. 514; Appianos (I-II A.D.), *Bellum civile*, II. 3. 20; Eustathios, *Commentarii ad Homeri Illiadem*, III. 338. 23. Also ἠπίων ἀκεσμάτων “of mild medicaments” Aeschylus (V B.C.), *Prometheus Bound*, 482;

⁶¹ Ploutarchos, *Vitae decem oratorum*, 845 C; Eustathios, *Commentarii ad Homeri Odysseam*, I. 100. 20.

⁶² Eustathios, *Commentarii ad Homerum Illiadem*, II. 521.

⁶³ Ploutarchos, *De sollertia animalium*, 985 A.

⁶⁴ E.g. Homeros, *Ilias*, XXII. 484: πάϊς δ' ἔτι νήπιος “a child that is still an infant”; Euripides (V B.C.), *Iphigenia Aulidensis*, 466; Aristoteles (IV B.C.), *Problemata*, 901 b; Theokritos (IV-III B.C.), *Epigrammata*, VII.1; Diodoros Sikeliotes (I B.C.), *Bibliothēke*, VII. 6.1; Philon, *De decalogo*, 69. 3; Ploutarchos (I A.D.), *Consolatio ad Apollonium*, 110 F; Arrianos (I-II A.D.), *Alexandri anabasis*, II. 11. 9; Cassios Dion (II-III A.D.), *Historiae Romanae*, 72. 7. 2: Ἡρακλῆς ἔτι νήπιος “while Herakles was still an infant”; Porphyrios (III A.D.), *Περὶ ἀγαλμάτων*, VIII.

the sense of “baby”,⁶⁵ and even the more general sense of “a little child”.⁶⁶ However, in a large number of instances νήπιος bears the metaphorical sense of “childish”, “fool(ish)”, “imbecil”, “silly”, “senseless”, “stupid”.⁶⁷ This

114; *Constitutiones apostolorum* (IV A.D.), IV. 11. 15; Nonnos (V A.D.), *Paraphrasis sancti evangelii Joannei*, XI. 108; Ioannes Damaskenos (VII-VIII A.D.), *Sacra parallela*, 96. 298. 42; Georgios Monachos (IX A.D.), *Chronikon*, 110. 1032.7; Konstantinos Porphyrogennetos (X A.D.), *De legationibus*, 338. 7; Michael Psellos (XI A.D.), *Poemata*, VIII. 725; *Etymologicum Gudianum* (XI A.D.), Ny: 408.48; Ioannes Zonaras (XI-XII A.D.), *Epitome historiarum*, 128. 2; Eustathios (XII A.D.), *Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem*, II. 833. 14; Ioannes VI Kantakouzenos (XIV A.D.), *Historiae*, I. 526. 2; Michael Apostolios (XV A.D.), *Collectio paroemiarum*, XIV. 94.5; Pseudo-Sphrantzes (XV-XVI A.D.), *Chronikon*, 270. 29.

⁶⁵ E.g. Homeros, *Odysseia*, XI. 449: πάϊς δὲ οἱ ἦν ἐπὶ μαζῶν νήπιος “a child was at her breast / sucking, an infant”; Plutarchos (I A.D.), *De amore proliis*, 496 a: εὐμενὲς τῷ τοῦ νηπίου στόματι “pleasant [i.e. is the breast] to the mouth of the babe”; Chrysostomos (IV-V A.D.), *De patientia* (Migne) 60. 726. 34: διὰ σὲ νήπιος γέγονεν ἐν φάτνῃ “for your sake he became a babe in the manger”; Ioannes Theologos (VIII A.D.), *Adversus iconoclastas* (Migne) 96. 1360. 25: ὡς νήπιος ἐβαστάζετο “He [Christ] was borne as a babe”. Cf. also Anonymi in Hermogenes (uncertain date), *Commentarium in librum Περὶ εὐρέσεως*, sch. 131b. 1: νήπιος: παῖς ὁ μὴ δυνάμενος εἰπεῖν “νήπιος: a child that cannot speak”.

⁶⁶ E.g. Homeros, *Odysseia*, XVIII. 229: πάρος δ’ ἔτι νήπιος ἦα “untill now I have been but a child”; Aristoteles (IV B.C.), *Fragmenta varia*, I. 11. 76. 18: ἔτι νήπιος ὢν “Ομηρος ἔφη “while a child, Homeros said”; Basilios (IV A.D.), *Homilia in principium proverbiorum* (Migne) 31. 396. 48: ὅταν σε παιδίον νήπιον λοιδορήσῃ “When a child, an infant reviles you”. In his *Λεξικὸ τῆς νέας Ἑλληνικῆς Γλώσσας*, Μπαμπινιώτης, defines νήπιο as covering the age from 1 to 6 years old, that is, following the age of βρέφος, i.e. the first months after its birth. The Triandafyllides Foundation *Λεξικὸ τῆς Κοινῆς Νεοελληνικῆς*, on the other hand, defines νήπιο as covering the age of 2 to 5 years of age, following the age of βρέφος, i.e. from the second to the twelfth month of its life, cf. Theokritos (IV-III B.C.), *Epigrammata*, 16. 4: εἰκοσάμηνον ἀδελφὸν νήπιον “a brother twenty months old, an infant”.

⁶⁷ The transition was easy. An infant (< Lat *infans* = ‘that cannot speak’ = Gr νήπιος: usually explained as νή ‘not’ + ἔπος ‘speech’, i.e. “one that cannot speak”) is a child that cannot articulate speech. Thus, the Grammarian Philoxenos (I A.D.), *Fragmenta*, 552. 3, explains it as: νήπιος: παρὰ νη στερητικόν· κατὰ στέρησιν τοῦ εἰπεῖν καὶ λαλεῖν, οἷον ... ὁ λέγειν μὴ δυνάμενος “νήπιος: with ν *privativum*, of one deprived of speech, that is to say, ... he who cannot speak”. Cf. *Etymologicum Magnum* (XII A.D.), 604. 19: νηέπιος, καὶ κατὰ συγκοπὴν νήπιος, ὁ μὴ δυνάμενος λέγειν “νηέπιος and by syncope νήπιος is he who cannot speak”. Similarly Orion Grammatikos (V A.D.), *Etymologikon*, Ny: 108. 11; 180. 26; 615. 32; *Etymologicum Gudianum* (XI A.D.), Ny: 408. 48. Hence it is used times without number of adults who are inarticulate, backward, or who, although advanced in years, are childish, senseless, foolish. Cf. *Scholia in Odysseam* (uncertain date), IV. 371. 1: ‘νήπιος εἷς, ὃ ξεῖνε’ ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀμαθῆς, ἔτι παίδων φρονῶν “‘are you νήπιος, stranger’ is used instead of ignorant, of one who thinks like a child”; Chrysostomos, *In Epistulam ad Galatas commentarius* (Migne) 61. 657. 10: νήπιος: ἐνταῦτα οὐ τὴν ἡλικίαν φησίν, ἀλλὰ τὴν γνώμην “by νήπιος here he does not refer to age, but to understanding”; *Scholia ad Aristophanem* (uncertain date), *Scholia in Nubes*, sch.

metaphorical meaning is applied first by Homeros and continues to obtain ever since.⁶⁸ The frequency of this meaning may be gauged by the fact that in Homeros the word occurs 22 times with the sense of “infant”, “babe”, “child”,⁶⁹ and 30 times with the sense of “fool”, “senseless”, “imbecil”, etc.⁷⁰ Though this high frequency is not sustained throughout the centuries, the meaning, however, is quite rife.⁷¹ Accordingly, one can still say in Neohellenic: “he is νήπιο(ς)”, i.e. “he is an imbecil”.⁷²

recent. nub 868c Alpha: 1: νήπιος ὁ μωρός, ἀπὸ μεταφορᾶς τοῦ νηπίου βρέφους “νήπιος means imbecil / foolish metaphorically from νήπιος in the sense of babe”.

⁶⁸ E.g. Homeros, *Ilias*, II. 38; Hesiodos (VIII-VII B.C.), *Works and Days*, 218; Empedokles (V B.C.), *Fragmenta*, 137.6; Herodotos (V B.C.), *Historiae*, I. 85. 7; Platon (V-IV B.C.), *Symposion*, 222. b; Krantor (IV-III B.C.), *Fragmenta*, X. 22; Apollonios Rhodios (III B.C.), *Argonautica*, IV. 875; Chrysippos (III B.C.), *Fragmenta logica et physica*, 132. 14; Dionysios Thrax (II B.C.), *Fragmenta*, 57. 2; Dionysios Halikarnasseus (I B.C.), *Antiquitates Romanae*, XX. 9 (10). 2; Oppianos (II A.D.), *Halieutica*, III. 568; Galenos (II A.D.), *Adhortatio ad artes addiscendas*, VIII. 22; Kelsos (II A.D.), *True Word*, III. 44.6; Claudios Ailianos (II-III A.D.), *Fragments*, 72. 9; Porphyrios (III A.D.), *Quaestionum Homericarum ad Iliadem pertinentium relinquae*, II. 8 ff.; Gregorios Nysses (IV A.D.), *Oratio catechetica*, 25. 3; Ioannes Stobaios (V A.D.), *Anthologion*, III. 18. 13; Eudokia Augusta (V A.D.), *Homerocentones*, VIII. 262; Olympiodoros (VI A.D.), *In Platonis Alcibiadem Commentarii*, 139. 14; Theodoros Studites (VIII-IX A.D.), *Epistulae*, 476. 34; Konstantinos Porphyrogenetos (X A.D.), *De virtutibus*, II. 83. 14; *Souda Lexicon* (X A.D.), Alpha: 1218. 6; Ioannes Rhetor (XI A.D.), *Commentarium in Hermogenes*, VI. 381.19; Anna Komnene (XI-XII A.D.), *Alexias*, I. 11. 6; Konstantinos Manasses (XII A.D.), *Compendium chronicum*, 6475; Eustathios (XII A.D.), *Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem*, I. 260. 11 (and dozens of times); Ioannes Kinnamos (XII-XIII A.D.), *Epitome*, 267. 15; Pseudo-Zonaras (XIII A.D.), *Lexicon*, Ny: 1397. 11; Ioannes Kantakouzenos (XIV A.D.), *Historiae*, II. 469. 5; Doukas (XV A.D.), *Historia Tourkobyzantine*, 24. 5. 22; Michael Apostolios (XV A.D.), *Collectio paroemiarum*, XV. 22; Arsenios (XV-XVI A.D.), *Apothegmata*, XII. 8a;

⁶⁹ E.g. Homeros, *Ilias*, XXIV. 726; *Odyseia*, II. 313: ἐγὼ δ' ἔτι νήπιος ἦα “I was still a child”; IV. 818; in VI. 301 princess Nausica gives Odysseus directions to her father’s house, assuring him that it is easy to find: even a little child could lead him to it: καὶ ἂν πάϊς ἡγήσαιτο νήπιος; XI. 449: πάϊς δὲ ἦν ἐπὶ μαζῶν νήπιος “and a child was at her breast, a babe”; XVIII. 229; XIX. 19, 530; XX. 310; XXI. 95, etc.

⁷⁰ A few examples are: Homeros, *Ilias*, II. 38; 873; V. 406; XII. 113; XVI. 833; XVIII. 295; XXI. 99; XXII. 333; *Odyseia*, III. 146; IV. 31; IX. 442; Aischylos (V B.C.), *Prometheus Bound*, 443: ὡς σφᾶς νηπίους ὄντας τὰ πρὶν ἔννοους ἔθηκα καὶ φρενῶν ἐπηβόλους “who once were fools, I made them thinking, and gave them wits”.

⁷¹ For example, all of the 48 instances in the singular vocative have the sense of ‘fool(ish)’.

⁷² Cf. also Δημητράκου, *Λεξικόν*, s.v. νήπιος, which cites Ζερβὸς († 1944), *Τραγούδια τοῦ καλοῦ καιροῦ*, 19· σῶπασ’, “Ἐρωτα σπανέ, ποὺ γελᾷς μόνο τὰ νήπια “shut up, you unbearded Eros, who can deceive only fools”.

4. What Could Paul have Written?

If νήπιος is the original reading, then Paul must have meant that he had behaved among the Thessalonians either as an infant, a babe, a small child or as an imbecil, a senseless, foolish person. These are the two basic meanings that we find in the use of this word throughout the centuries. Now, no advocate of νήπιος would contemplate the sense of “imbecil” or “fool” for Paul, on account of its absurdity, though this is the primary meaning of the word, when used of an adult.

The advocates of νήπιος are, of course, aware that this is a ‘difficult’ or ‘impossible’ reading, but its very difficulty becomes a reason for accepting it. The abruptness in the change of metaphor which this reading introduces is explained by reference to Gal 4:19, where, it is claimed, Paul uses an even more abrupt metaphor. This claim can be controverted. In τέκνα μου, οὐς πάλιν ὠδίνω μέχρις οὗ μορφωθῆ Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν there is no transition in imagery with regard to Paul. He is the ‘mother’ throughout the imagery. It is the Galatians who are first addressed as τέκνα, i.e. already born, *sc.* in Christ, but are so immature as to be in need of Christ taking form within them afresh, in other words, they are still an embryo in development. Thus, the change of imagery is accounted for. In the Thessalonians imagery, on the other hand, Paul, according to the theory, presents himself first as an infant among them and in the same breath he goes on to tell them that he has cared for them as a nurse cares for her children. This is sheer confusion of mutually excluding images, which no amount of rationalizing can dispel.

To alleviate the difficulty, it has been claimed that νήπιος is used both in the Bible and outside it with positive sense. As Biblical evidence is given: 1 Cor 14:20, ἀδελφοί, μὴ παιδία γίνεσθε ταῖς φρεσὶν ἀλλὰ τῇ κακίᾳ νηπιάζετε where, however, the verb νηπιάζω rather than the adjective νήπιος is used. Nevertheless, the sense is that the Corinthians should behave not like small children, i.e like fools, but *with reference to evil*, they should behave innocently like babies. The word νηπιάζω, therefore, does not in itself carry the sense or the connotation of innocence, but it is the context that gives it that meaning, for in a different context the same verb could have been used to carry the sense of “acting childishly”.⁷³ Hence, it is a logical mistake to assume – as Dr Weima appears to do,⁷⁴ – that the

⁷³ Hippokrates, *Epistulae*, 17. 25, makes Demokritos say: ἐγὼ δὲ ἕνα γελῶ τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἀνοίης μὲν γέμοντα, κενεὸν δὲ πρηγμάτων ὀρθῶν, πάσῃσιν ἐπιβουλῆσι νηπιάζοντα “I for one laugh at mankind because it is full of folly, empty of right things, and acts childishly in all its schemes”. Cf. also the phrase: ἐσχατόγηρος νηπιάζων “a very old man acting childishly”.

⁷⁴ Weima, *NTS* 46 (2000), 552 f.

word sometimes has a negative sense and sometimes a positive sense.⁷⁵ This is the result of confusing semantics with contextual meaning. The word νήπιος as such is not negative. When referring to babies or infants, it is a purely neutral term denoting their age as a perfectly natural stage in human growth and development. But when the word refers to adults absolutely, it treats them as immature, undeveloped, senseless, or foolish. In no instance that I have examined, have I found that adults are called νήπιοι as a positive characterization absolutely, i.e. in order to extol some positive quality in them.⁷⁶

Nevertheless, there are certain passages in Christian authors, – which Dr Weima does not cite – that do use νήπιος in a positive context. It appears that such biblical passages as ὃς ἂν μὴ δέξηται τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ ὡς παιδίον οὐ μὴ εἰσέλθῃ εἰς αὐτήν (Mk 10:15), ὅστις οὖν ταπεινώσει ἑαυτὸν ὡς τὸ παιδίον τοῦτο (Mt 18:3), τῇ κακίᾳ νηπιάζετε (1 Cor 14:20), τὰ μωρὰ τοῦ κόσμου ἐξελέξατο ὁ Θεός (1 Cor 1:27), led Christian authors, in their polemic against Greek wisdom and philosophy, to use the image of the child, and particularly of the infant, as a model of humility, simplicity, innocence and absence of worldly wisdom. The earliest writer is probably Klemes Alexandreus. In his *Paidagogos*, I. 5. 19, he makes the absurd claim that οὐκ ἐπὶ ἀφρόνων τάττεται τὸ νήπιον· νηπύτιος μὲν γὰρ οὗτος “the word νήπιος is not used of fools, such is the meaning of νηπύτιος” (dim. of νήπιος), when from the time of Homeros on we have countless examples of νήπιος

⁷⁵ Weima, *NTS* 46 (2000), 553: “the positive sense that νήπιοι has in many LXX texts”. One should rather say that a writer can use it in a negative or positive context. On the LXX evidence see below.

⁷⁶ In Mt 11:25 (= Lk 10: 21) the νήπια are set over against the σοφοί and συνετοί of this world. This is not to underline any positive qualities in the disciples, but merely the fact that their understanding is not their own, but comes from God. The same goes for Mt 21:16. Similarly (LXX) Ps 18:8; 114: 6; 118:130; and Wisdom 10: 21. In all these cases the word signifies those who lack wisdom and are given it by God (cf. the apposite saying in Jas 1:5: εἰ δέ τις ὑμῶν λείπεται σοφίας, αἰτείτω παρὰ τοῦ διδόντος Θεοῦ πᾶσιν ἀπλῶς καὶ μὴ ὀνειδίζοντος) but no particular merit attaches to an adult who is νήπιος. As non-biblical evidence, Weima further quotes Diodoros Sikeliotes, *Biblical (sic) History* (read: *Roman History*), 20. 72. 2. I must confess that I do not understand how a passage that speaks of the execution of a number of people among whom also of νηπίους παίδας ἐν ἀγκάλαις φερομένους “infant children borne in the arms [of their mothers]” can be quoted here as proving the positive sense of νήπιος for an adult. Is the mere fact that these are small children or infants enough to qualify for positive sense? The same is the case with each one of the non-biblical texts that he quotes: Philon, *Flaccus*, 68; Josephos, *Antiquities*, VI. 133, according to which Samuel commands Saul to kill all the Amalekites, beginning with the infants; 136; 138: ὁ ... Θεὸς οὕτως ἐμίσησεν τὸ τῶν Ἀμαληκιτῶν ἔθνος ὡς μηδὲ νηπίων φείσασθαι “God so hated the nation of the Amalekites that he did not even spare the infants”. Similarly, VI. 260; XIV. 480; *War*, I. 352; II. 307; 496; IV. 82. One may rightly wonder whether Dr Weima has actually examined the above passages.

with the sense of ‘fool’, the Lexicographers assure us that νήπιος means ἄφρων,⁷⁷ and this meaning still obtains in Neohellenic. Then, Klemes goes on to give us his mistaken etymology: νήπιος δὲ ὁ νεήπιος, ὡς ἥπιος ὁ ἀπαλόφρων, οἷον ἥπιος νεωστὶ καὶ πρᾶος τῷ τρόπῳ “but νήπιος means νεήπιος, as ἥπιος ‘soft-hearted’, that is to say, newly ἥπιος and meek in his manner”. Obviously Klemes derived νήπιος from νέος + ἥπιος, and gave νήπιος the basic sense of ἥπιος. This understanding seems to be accepted by Klemes’ pupil, Origenes, who in his *Commentary on Luke*, 163. 9, collocates ταπεινόφρων with νήπιος; in his *Philokalia*, 18. 15.7, he approves of anyone who is ἀμαθής, ἀνόητος, ἀπαίδευτος, νήπιος “unlearned, foolish, without education, and infant(ile)”, and in his *Commentary on Matthew*, 15. 7. 152, he paraphrases 1 Th 2:7: ἐν βάρει εἶναι ὡς Χριστοῦ ἀπόστολος, ἐγένετο νήπιος καὶ παραπλήσιος τροφῶ θालπούση τὸ ἐαυτῆς παιδίον, “he became νήπιος and close / similar to a nurse who cares for her child”. We can now understand that it was the connotations of humility, innocence, etc. that these authors read into νήπιος (= νε + ἥπιος) that led them to adopt this reading in 1 Th 2:7.⁷⁸

The punctuation that Dr Weima proposes, putting a comma after ἀπόστολοι and a full stop after ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν, gives a rather un-Greek syntax.⁷⁹ Thus, a sentence such as ὡς ἐὰν τροφὸς θάλπη τὰ ἐαυτῆς τέκνα, οὕτως ὁμειρόμενοι ὑμῶν εὐδοκοῦμεν ..., with two unrelated verbs (and hence unrelated clauses) that are being compared, is inelegant Greek. The ideas here brought together do not sound harmoniously. In the rare NT cases where ὡς is collocated with οὕτως and precedes it, the same verb does service for both clauses, i.e. Eph 5:24: ὡς ἡ ἐκκλησία ὑποτάσσεται τῷ Χριστῷ, οὕτως καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες [ὑποτασέσθωσαν] τοῖς ἀνδράσιν.⁸⁰ Rather, the comparative ὡς-clause is more naturally understood as exemplifying the meaning of ἥπιοι, i.e. “we were gentle among you, as when a nurse (or simply: like a nurse who) tenderly cares for her children”.

⁷⁷ E.g. Pseudo-Zonaras, *Lexicon*, Ny: 1397. 11: νήπιος: ἄφρων “νήπιος: one who is senseless”.

⁷⁸ Similar examples occur in Klemes Alex., *Paidagogos*, 1. 5. 17; 1. 6. 32; 1. 7. 58; Didymos Caecus (IV A.D.), *Fragmenta in Psalmos*, 48. 25; Asterios (IV A.D.), 15. 20; 16. 14; Gregorios Naz. (IV A.D.), *In sanctum baptisma*, 36. 380. 44; Kyrillos (IV-V A.D.), *De adoratione*, 68. 1053. 53; Chrysostomos, *Commentary on Psalms*, 15. 20; *In Matthaëum*, 57. 429. 54.

⁷⁹ It is not possible to split up vs. 7 into 7a, 7b, and 7c, and to read 7a-b with vv. 5-6 and 7c with vs. 8. It is also a mistake to think that because 7c begins with ὡς it must necessarily have its correlate in the οὕτως of vs. 8 (Weima, *NTS* 46 (2000), 556; also Merk, in *The Thessalonians Debate*, 105-107). In vs. 4 καθὼς is used, not ὡς (!), which makes a perfectly normal comparison in Greek, as also Mt 24:27: ὥσπερ ἡ ἀστραπή ... οὕτως ... though the usual order is οὕτως ... ὡς, as e.g. Mk 4:26: οὕτως ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὡς ...

⁸⁰ Similarly, 1 Cor 7: 14: ἀλλ’ ὡς πάντα ἐν ἀληθείᾳ ἐλαλήσαμεν ὑμῖν, οὕτως καὶ ἡ καύχησις ἡμῶν ... ἐν ἀληθείᾳ ἐγενήθη. Both word and deed were true.

The conclusion from the above examination of *νήπιος* is that this term does not in itself convey positive qualities, and could not have been used by the apostle Paul of himself in order to emphasize his supposed humility and child-mindedness.

5. *What is the Meaning of ἐν βάρει εἶναι?*

The next problem for discussion is the expression *δυνάμενοι ἐν βάρει εἶναι ὡς Χριστοῦ ἀπόστολοι*. This has been understood as suggesting that Paul and his friends could, as apostles of Christ, have exercised their authority or demanded privileges and honors.⁸¹ It appears more probable, however, that this is another form for the later expression *βάρος εἶναι* or *γίνεσθαι* (to be / become a burden on someone)⁸² which is equivalent to the verbs *ἐπιβαρῶ*⁸³ and the later *ἐπιβαρύνω*.⁸⁴

⁸¹ E.g. NAB, NASB, New Luther, Einheitsübersetzung, JB, La Sainte Bible (1979), La Bible en français courant (1997), Spanish Santa Biblia (1994), Italian La Sacra Bibbia, Swedish Bibeln 2000. Similarly many commentators, e.g. W. Neil, *The Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1950, 39; B. Rigaux, *Saint Paul: Les Épîtres aux Thessaloniens*, Paris: Gabalda, 1956, 417; Marshall, *1 and 2 Thessalonians* (NCBC), 68; Best, *First – Second Thessalonians* (BNTC), 100; Wanamaker, *1 & 2 Thessalonians* (NIGTC), 98; Malherbe, “‘Gentle as a Nurse’: The Cynic Background to 1 Thess ii” *NovT* 12 (1970), 203-17 and more recently *The Letters to the Thessalonians* (AB), Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 2000, 144. Cf. Merk, in *The Thessalonians Debate*, p. 105 “The phrase ... is generally interpreted as ‘to have prestige’, ‘power’, or ‘honor’”. Morris, *First and Second Thessalonians* (NICNT), 75 f. is undecided but inclines to financial burden. Bruce, *1 & 2 Thessalonians* (WBC), 30 f. understands it of a financial burden.

⁸² The expression *βάρος εἶμαι* or *γίνομαι* is late, but has its antecedents both in various uses of *βάρος* (see *LSJ* and Δημητράκου, *Λεξικόν*) or equivalent as well as in the verbs *ἐπιβαρῶ* and *ἐπιβαρύνω*. The idea occurs first in Homeros, *Odysseia*, XX. 379, where one of the woers in reference to beggar-clad Odysseus says to Telemachos that his guest is “a burden on the earth” (*ἄχθος ἀρούρης*), a phrase that has become proverbial till Neohellenic times (see Δημητράκου), said of a lazy, useless person, or one who is a burden along with the more modern phrase *βάρος τῆς γῆς* or *βάρος* on someone. Similarly Sophocles (V B.C.), *Elektra*, 1241: *περισσὸν ἄχθος* “a greater burden”. Ioannes Malalas (V-VI A.D.), *Chronographia*, 75 quotes Orpheus’ saying *ἄχθεα γῆς* and rephrases it with *τὸ βάρος τῆς γῆς*. *P Oxy* 1451 (III A.D.) Πτολεμαῖος μέτριός ἐστιν καὶ οὐ δύναται τὸ βάρος ὑποφέρειν presumably speaks of a financial burden (cf. Ptolemaios’ own words: *μέτριός εἰμι, παρὰ πατρὶ τρέφομα[ι]* “I am of modest means, being provided for by my father”). Similarly *OGIS* I-II (Egypt), 194 (42 B.C.), 19: *εὐγενῶς μόνος ὑποστάς τὸ βάρος πάλιν ... τὸν γὰρ ἑαυτοῦ βίον ὅλοσχερῶς ἀνέθετο τοῖς χρῆσθαι βουλομένοις*. “nobly he again bore alone the burden ... putting his whole substance at the disposal of those who wished to use it”. The *Epistle to Diognetos* (II A.D.) 501, speaks of *ἀλλ’ ὅστις τὸ τοῦ πλησίον ἀναδέχεται βάρος* “he who takes on himself the burden of his neighbour”.

This sense suits the context of 1 Thessalonians admirably. The meaning of ‘authority’, ‘honor’, etc. for βάρος has been derived from δόξα in vs. 6. However, it has been overlooked that Paul’s whole sentence includes vs. 5, which speaks of κολακεία and πλεονεξία, the first of which aims at financial gain and the latter actually denotes greed. In saying that he did not use flattery and was not motivated by greed, Paul insinuates that he, as an apostle of Christ, had the right to live by the Gospel, but did not make use of it to achieve personal gain. In contrast to such behavior – that characterized sophists and itinerant rhetors – Paul served the Thessalonians like a loving nurse and was pleased to impart to them not only the free Gospel, but also his own life. This gives him occasion to remind them of his previous conduct. Thus, vv. 9-12 correspond to vv. 1-7a (-8). In vv. 1-7a Paul dwells mainly on the negative things that did not characterize his conduct, while in vv. 9-12 he dwells on the positive things that did characterize his conduct. Vv. 7b-8 is the positive *dénouement* of the first part and prepares the transition to the detailed second part. That vv. 9-12 are an expansion of the thought contained in a nutshell in vv. 7-8 becomes clear from the similar ideas expressed in 1 and 2 Thessalonians:

1 Th 2:3-12	2 Th 3:6-10
<p>5 Ούτε γὰρ ποτε ἐν λόγῳ κολακείας ἐγενήθημεν, καθὼς οἴδατε, οὔτε ἐν προφάσει πλεονεξίας, Θεὸς μάρτυς, οὔτε ζητοῦντες ἐξ ἀνθρώπων δόξαν οὔτε ἀφ’ ὑμῶν οὔτε ἀπ’ ἄλλων,</p> <p>(7 δυνάμενοι ἐν βάρει εἶναι ὡς Χριστοῦ ἀπόστολοι), ἀλλὰ ἐγενήθημεν ΗΠΙΟΙ ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν, ὡς ἐὰν τροφὸς θάλπη τὰ ἐαυτῆς τέκνα.</p> <p>8 Οὕτως ὁμειρόμενοι ὑμῶν εὐδοκοῦμεν μεταδοῦναι ὑμῖν οὐ μόνον τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς ἐαυτῶν ψυχάς, διότι ἀγαπητοὶ ἡμῖν ἐγενήθητε.</p> <p>9 Μνημονεύετε ... τὸν κόπον ἡμῶν καὶ τὸν μόχθον νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ἐργαζόμενοι πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐπιβαρῆσαι τίνα ὑμῶν</p>	<p>6 Παραγγέλλομεν ... στέλλεσθαι ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ παντὸς ἀδελφοῦ ἀτάκτως περιπατοῦντος καὶ μὴ κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν ... 7 αὐτοὶ γὰρ οἴδατε πῶς δεῖ μιμεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς, ὅτι οὐκ ἠτακτήσαμεν ἐν ὑμῖν</p> <p>8 οὐδὲ δωρεὰν ἄρτον ἐφάγομεν παρά τινος, (9 οὐχ ὅτι οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν, ἀλλ’ ἵνα ἐαυτοὺς τύπον δῶμεν ὑμῖν εἰς τὸ μιμεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς)</p>

⁸³ Cf. e.g. *P Oxy* 1481 (II A.D.), where Theonas, writing to his mother who had heard that he had been sick, urges her twice μὴ ὄχλοῦ δὲ πέμπειν τι ἡμῖν “do not trouble yourself about sending us anything” and μὴ ἐπιβαροῦ πέμπειν τι ἡμῖν “do not burden yourself with sending us anything”.

⁸⁴ The idea of being a burden on someone is expressed in Neohellenic in many different ways and all of them are essentially based on ancient uses: εἶμαι βάρος (τοῦ εἶναι βάρος “he is a burden on him”); γίνομαι βάρος (τοῦ ἐγίνε βάρος “he became a burden on him”); ἐπιβαρύνω (δὲν θέλω νὰ σᾶς ἐπιβαρύνω “I do not wish to be a burden on you”), εἶμαι / γίνομαι φορτίο(ν) “I am / become a burden”; εἶμαι / γίνομαι φόρτωμα “I am / become a burden / burdensome / annoying”; φορτώνομαι [$<$ φορτίον] (τοῦ ἐφορτώθη / φορτώθηκε “he became a burden on him”).

<p>10 ὑμεῖς μάρτυρες καὶ ὁ Θεός, ὡς ὀσίως καὶ δικαίως καὶ ἀμέμπτως ὑμῖν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ἐγενήθημεν, 11 καθάπερ οἴδατε, ὡς ἓνα ἕκαστον ὑμῶν ὡς πατὴρ τέκνα ἑαυτοῦ παρακαλοῦντες ὑμᾶς καὶ παραμυθούμενοι καὶ μαρτυρούμενοι εἰς τὸ περιπατεῖν ὑμᾶς ἀξίως τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ καλοῦντος ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ βασιλείαν καὶ δόξαν.</p>	<p>ἀλλ' ἐν κόπῳ καὶ μόχθῳ νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ἐργαζόμενοι πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐπιβαρῆσαι τινα ὑμῶν· (7 αὐτοὶ γὰρ οἴδατε πῶς δεῖ μιμεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς, ὅτι οὐκ ἠτακτήσαμεν ἐν ὑμῖν) 9 οὐχ ὅτι οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν, ἀλλ' ἵνα ἑαυτοὺς τύπον δῶμεν ὑμῖν εἰς τὸ μιμεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς. 10 καὶ γὰρ ὅτε ἦμεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, τοῦτο παρηγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν, ὅτι εἴ τις οὐ θέλει ἐργάζεσθαι μηδὲ ἐσθιέτω.</p>
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The two texts reveal an analogous conception in thought, which sometimes has even exact verbal parallels. The emphasis that Paul places on his right to remuneration or free maintenance – of which he did not take advantage, but instead worked night and day in order not to burden them – leaves no doubt that ἐν βάρει εἶναι refers to financial burden, and not to any other kind of ‘authority’ or ‘honor’.⁸⁵

6. *Can only Children or also Parents Be Orphaned?*

Finally, the verb ἀπορφανίζω. In order to strengthen the case for the originality of νήπιος, it has been urged that Paul presents himself not only as an infant, but also as an orphan (1 Th 2:17). It is, thus, confidently asserted that

This verb [ἀπορφανίζω] occurs ... one [time] in classical Greek, two in Philo, one in the NT (1 Thess 2.17) and 28 in the patristic literature. An analysis of these occurrences in their respective contexts gives a clear and consistent picture of how the verb ἀπορφανίζω was used: it never refers to parents who are orphaned from their children but consistently refers to children who are orphaned from their parents. ... Paul presents himself and his co-workers as children whose forced departure from Thessalonica has meant that they are orphaned from the believers in that city.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ This is, indeed, a matter to which he often returns, e.g. 1 Cor 9: 4-18, a passage that has many identical thoughts and even much of the wording of 1 Th 2:3-12 and 2 Th 3:6-10. See also my study “ΟΨΩΝΙΟΝ: A Reconsideration of its Meaning”, *NovT* 16 (1974), 35-57. The expression is so understood also by Donfried, “The Epistolary and Rhetorical Context of 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12” in *The Thessalonian Debate*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000, 52; W. Stegemann, “Anlaß und Hintergrund der Abfassung von 1 Th 2, 1-12” in *Theologische Brosamen für L. Steiger, zu seinem fünfzigsten Geburtstag* (ed. G. Freund-E. Stegemann), Heidelberg: Selbstverlag 1985, 397-416, p. 408, and others.

⁸⁶ Weima, *NTS* 46 (2000), 558. Actually the *TLG* gives 56 instances, but there are more. See Κριαρᾶς, *Λεξικόν s.v.* and *Ἱστορικὸν Λεξικόν, s.v.*

These claims are simply uninformed, being based on a fragmentary review of the evidence – a mere 32 instances – which, moreover, has not always been interpreted correctly.

Actually, in a semantic discussion, a broad range of the cognate terms should be considered in order to show the breadth of semasiological reference. The most important of these are: ὀρφανός (1356 times), ὀρφανεύω (8 times), ὀρφανίζω, (41 times), and ἀπορφανίζω (56 times) not to speak of ἐξορφανίζω, ὀρφανία, ὀρφανικός, etc. These words occur about 2000 times in the extant literature, while in the inscriptions and the papyri the letter sequence ὀρφαν- occurs 305 times. Since the limits imposed on the present study leave no room for a detailed presentation of all the data that I have examined, I will content myself with a brief treatment of how a few of these words are applied.

The word-group ὀρφανός etc. basically means “bereaved”,⁸⁷ and it is applied to children without parents or to parents bereft of their children.⁸⁸ Thus, Euripides, *Hekabe* 148 f., can say of Hekabe: σε ... ὀρφανὸν εἶναι παιδὸς “that you be orphaned of your child”. Pindaros, *Olympian Odes*, IX. 61 has Zeus bring Opus’s daughter to Lokros, so that the latter might not be ὀρφανὸν γενεᾶς “orphaned of issue (i.e. without a child).⁸⁹” This meaning is upheld by the lexicographers.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Cf. ὀρφο- [in ὀρφοβότης ‘superintendent of orphans’]. It is related to Latin *orbis* ‘bereaved’, ‘bereft’ see Lewis, C. T. - Short, C., *A Latin Dictionary*, Oxford, 1879, rp. 1966, s.v. *orbis*: “bereaved, bereft of parents or children”; I-E *orbhos*, Germ. *Erbe*.

⁸⁸ The word-group is also used generally of the idea of being deprived or devoid of something: e.g. *Anthologia Graeca*, XVI. 186: ὀρφανός (sc. χειρῶν καὶ ἄποδα) ἰστάμενος “standing orphan (i.e. without arms and legs)”, said of a statue. *Scholia In Sophoclem* (various dates), *Scholia in Sophoclis Ajacem* (scholia vetera), 512a. 5: ὀρφανός ὁ ὄρον ἔχων τὸ μὴ φαίνεσθαι, ὁ ἄσημος καὶ μηκέτι ἐμφανής ὢν “ὀρφανός he whose limit is not to be seen, he who is obscure, and no longer manifest / significant”; Philostratos, *Heroikos*, 664. 3: τοὺς δ’ ἄλλους ἀγροὺς ἀφείλοντό με οἱ δυνατοὶ κομιδῇ ὀρφανόν “the powerful took away from me my other fields leaving me altogether an orphan [i.e. without anything]”; Pindaros, *Pythian Odes*, IV. 283: ὀρφανίζει μὲν κακὰν γλῶσσαν φαεννᾶς ὀπός “he orphaned (i.e. deprived) malicious tongue of her clear voice” (see also Βερναρδάκη, *Λεξικὸν Ἑρμηνευτικόν*, II, 808); Theokritos, *Epigrammata* in *Anthologia Graeca*, IX. 433: Πᾶνα τὸν αἰγιβάταν ὀρφανίσωμες ὕπνου “Let us deprive Pan, the goat-mounter, of sleep”; of a boat that is deprived of its anchor and drifts in the sea (Nikephoros Gregoras, *Historia Romana*, III. 556. 9: ἐπειδὴν σφετέρων ἀγκυρῶν ὀρφανισθεῖσα ναῦς ἐξωσθῆ πρὸς πέλαγος). The *Sibylline Oracles* (II B.C. – IV A.D.), II. 270, speak of ὀρφανικοὺς χήρας “orphaned widows”, so, too, II. 76, while *Asia Minor MAMA* I. IV-VII, VIII, IX-X. 8 121 speaks of χηρῶν ὀρφανῶν “orphan widows”.

⁸⁹ See also *Scholia in Pindarum* (sch. vetera), *Olympian Odes*, IX. 92 b: ὀρφανὸν γενεᾶς ἄτεκνον “orphan of issue: without children”.

⁹⁰ See e.g. Hesychios, *Lexicon*, O: 1355: ὀρφανός: ὁ γονέων ἐστερημένος καὶ (ἢ) τέκνων “ὀρφανός is one who is deprived of parents and (or) children”. Similarly *Lexicon Vindobonense* (XIV A.D.), O: 30: ὀρφανός λέγεται καὶ πατήρ ἐπὶ παιδί ... καὶ γυνὴ ἐπ’ ἀνδρὶ “ὀρφανός is

The substantive ὀρφανία (-εία) occurs in Is (LXX) 47:8: οὐ καθιῶ χήρα οὐδὲ γνώσομαι ὀρφανείαν (*NIV*: “... or suffer loss of children”).⁹¹ The adjective ὀρφάνιον may be illustrated by an epigram of Leonidas of Tarentum (III B.C.) in *Anthologia Graeca*, IX. 466: ὀκτωκαιδέτης ὃς ἀπώλεο, τέκνον· ἐγὼ δὲ ὀρφάνιον κλαίω γῆρας ὀδυρομένη “you were eighteen years old when you perished, my child; and I mourn weeping for my orphaned [i.e. bereaved] old age”.⁹² The verb ὀρφανίζω may be illustrated by Gorgias (V-IV B.C.), *Helen’s Enkomion*, 11. 46, in which, defending Helen for her abduction, he says: ἡ δὲ ... τῆς πατρίδος στερηθεῖσα καὶ τῶν φίλων ὀρφανισθεῖσα “but she ... deprived of her country and orphaned from her friends”. *Scholia in Pindarum* (sch. vetera), *Olympian Odes* IX. 90 c. 2: ἵνα μὴ ἄτεκνος τελευτήσῃ. δέδωκεν αὐτῷ μὴ ὀρφανεύσῃ τοῦ γένους “that he might not die without children. He gave [her] to him that he might not be orphaned of issue”.

Finally, a few instances of the use of the verb ἀπορφανίζω -ομαι. In his *Ekklesiastike Historia*, VII. 11. 23, Eusebios relates of certain Christians exiled to Libya, three of whom were orphaned (i.e. separated) from the others: ἐγὼ δὲ νῦν καὶ Γάϊος καὶ Πέτρος μόνοι, τῶν ἄλλων ἀδελφῶν ἀπορφανισθέντες “I, Gaius, and Petros alone, having been orphaned from the other brethren”. There is no difference in the structure and circumstances between this text and 1 Th 2:7; the two are identical. In his *Commentary on Job*, 59. 2, Julianus (IV A.D.) makes Job say to his friends: ὀρῶντες με ἐκ πάντων ἀπορφανισθέντα “You see me orphaned [i.e. deprived] of everything”. Ephraim Syros, *Interrogationes et responsiones*, 92. 9 speaks of those who, having seen the eternal blessings, reject them, as ἀποσχοιניζόμενοι καὶ ἀπορφανίζόμενοι πάντων τῶν δικαίων καὶ φίλων καὶ γνωρίμων “they exclude and orphan themselves [i.e. separate themselves] from all

also a father who has lost his son ... and a woman who has lost her husband”. It illustrates the first by Euripides, *Hekabe*, 148 f: σε ... ὀρφανὸν εἶναι παιδὸς ‘that you be orphaned of your child’, and the second by Euripides, *Orestes* 1136: νύμφας τ’ ἔθηκεν ὀρφανὰς ξυναόρων ‘he made nymphs orphans of their consorts’; *Ionia: Smyrna* 246. 4: κάλλιπες αἰακτὸν σοῖσι τοκεῦσι γόνον, Ἑρμιόνη· λυγρὸν δ’ οἱ μὲν λίβουσι κατ’ ὄσσω δάκρυ σὸν ὀρφανῆς πότμον ὀδυρόμενοι “you left a mournfull wailing to your parents, Hermione, who pour forth lamenting tears mourning your death that left them orphans (i.e. childless)”; *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* XXX. 252 (III A.D?). 7: ὀρφανὸν ὥστε μένουσαν ἐνίμ μεγάρουσι γυναῖκα μύρεσθαι, παίδων ἄμφω ἀποφθιμένων “so that you remain an orphan woman within the palace wailing your children, both destroyed”;

⁹¹ This is cited and commented upon by e.g. Didymos Caecus, *Commentarii ad Zacchariam*, I. 59. 3. See also *Scholia in Pindarum* (sch. vetera), 18. 14a. 2: μὴτ’ ἐν ὀρφανία πέσωμεν στεφάνων “Let us not be deprived of (our) crowns”.

⁹² See also *Anthologia Graeca*, VII. 540: τόδε φαίης, ὡς οὐ τὸν δόλιον κλαίομεν ἄμμι μόρον, ... ἀλλὰ τὸ κείνου γῆρας ἐν ἀργαλέῃ κείμενον ὀρφανίῃ “say this, that we do not lament our treacherous murder ... but his old age left in evil bereavement”.

the just, friends, and acquaintances”. The meaning is that “they deprive themselves of the company of ...” Theodoros Studites (VIII-IX A.D.), *Epistolai*, 265. 8 speaks of one who had given up everything as ἀπορφανισθεῖσαν τέλειον καὶ μηδεμίαν ἐν τῷ βίῳ παραμυθίαν κεκτημένην “completely orphaned [i.e. deprived of everything] and having no comfort in life”. The poet Manuel Philes (XIII-XIV A.D.), *Carmina*, III. 58. 148, bemoans the state of the stranger as ἀπορφανισθεὶς φυλῆς καὶ πατρίδος “bereft / deprived of people and fatherland”. *Ionia: Teos* (pre-Christian times), 144. 4: οἰκτρὰν Εἰρήναν ἀβρᾶς παιδὸς ἀπορφανίσσας “He orphaned pitiful Eirene of her graceful daughter”.

This meaning for (ἀπ)ορφανίζω continues to obtain in mediaeval and modern times. Κριαρᾶς in his *Λεξικόν*, Vol. 14, p. 92, cites Μ. Φαλιέρου (XV-XVI A.D.), *Θρήνος*, 92: “Ὅλες ὀρφανισθήκαμεν καὶ γὰρ περίσσια ἡ μάνα “All of us [mothers] became orphaned, and I am a superfluous mother” [i.e. ‘we all lost our children, and I am no longer really a mother’ (*sc.* since I have no child)]. According to the *Historical Lexicon* of the Academy of Athens,⁹³ this meaning is still found in the Pontic dialect: ἠπέθανεν ἡ θυγατέρα μου τσ’ εἶναι φχαριστημένη, γιὰτ’ ἤφησε τὴν μάνα της τσ’ εἶναι ἀπορφανισμένη “my daughter died and is happy that she left her mother orphaned” [i.e. ‘alone’, ‘bereft’]. *MM* quote Abbott, *Songs*, p. 226, No. 50, “where a lover mourns that his mistress is going away and leaving him friendless” [i.e. “an orphan”]: καὶ μ’ ἀφίνει ὀρφανό.⁹⁴

7. Conclusion

The above linguistic and philological examination of ἥπιος, νήπιος, ἐν βάρει εἶναι, and the ὀρφανός - (ἀπ)ορφανίζω-group as well as the parallelism between 1 Th 2 and 2 Th 3 and other contextual considerations, leave no doubt that the case for νήπιος has been based on an inadequate investigation and a misinterpretation of the evidence. This, together with the contextual evidence, leave no doubt that the original reading or, at any rate, the originally intended reading was ἀλλὰ ἐγενήθημεν ἥπιοι ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν ὡς ἐὰν τροφὸς θάληπῃ τὰ ἑαυτῆς τέκνα.⁹⁵ A

⁹³ See *Ἱστορικὸν Λεξικὸν τῆς νέας ἐλληνικῆς*, Ἐν Ἀθῆναις: Ἑστία: 1939, Vol. II, s.v. ἀπορφανίζομαι.

⁹⁴ Moulton-Milligan, *Vocabulary*, s.v. ὀρφανός, citing G. F. Abbott, *Songs of Modern Greece*, Cambridge, 1900.

⁹⁵ This reading is accepted by e.g. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*, Oxford, 1992³, 230-33; Malherbe, “Gentle as a Nurse”, *NovT* 12 (1970), 203-17 and *The Letters to the Thessalonians*, 145; Neil, *To the Thessalonians*, 40; Rigaux, *Les Épîtres aux Thessaloniciens*, 418 f. Donfried, in *The Thessalonian Debate*, 52; T. Holtz, “On the Background of 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12” in *The Thessalonian Debate*, p. 73; I.

semantic display, showing the structure and punctuation of 1 Th 2:5-8, would look like this:

<p>οὔτε γάρ ποτε ἐν λόγῳ κολακείας ἐγενήθημεν, καθὼς οἴδατε, οὔτε ἐν προφάσει πλεονεξίας, θεὸς μάρτυς, οὔτε ζητοῦντες ἐξ ἀνθρώπων δόξαν οὔτε ἀφ' ὑμῶν οὔτε ἀπ' ἄλλων (δυνάμενοι ἐν βάρει εἶναι ὡς Χριστ. ἀπόστολοι), ἀλλὰ ἐγενήθημεν ἥπιοι ἐν μέσῳ ὑμῶν, ὡς ἐὰν τροφὸς θάλπη τὰ ἐαυτῆς τέκνα.</p> <p>Οὕτως, ὀμειρόμενοι ὑμῶν εὐδοκοῦμεν μεταδοῦναι ὑμῖν οὐ μόνον τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς ἐαυτῶν ψυχάς, διότι ἀγαπητοὶ ἡμῖν ἐγενήθητε.</p>	<p>We never used flattery as you know, nor a pretext for greed, God is our witness, nor did we seek praise from men: neither from you nor from any others (although we could have been a burden as Chr.'s ap), but we were gentle in your midst, like a nurse who cares for her children.</p> <p>Thus, in our longing for you we were willing to impart to you not only the gospel of God but even our own lives, because you were dear to us</p>
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The long list of οὔτε-clauses has its *dénouement* in “although we could have been a burden as apostles of Christ”. Indeed, it is this God-given right that sets the οὔτε-clauses in sharp relief. These clauses are balanced by the antithetical clause, which positively describes how Paul conducted himself: gentle like a nurse. Finally, he concludes (οὕτως = ‘Thus’) his argument by summarising his devotion to them which made him willing to impart to them even his own life. This is a fitting characterization of a nurse’s love and devotion to her children.⁹⁶

Γαλάνης, *Πρώτη πρὸς Θεσσαλονικεῖς*, 156, and Καραβιδόπουλος, *Βιβλικὲς Μελέτες Β*, 194, who refers to the bearing of the Athos MSS on this variant.

⁹⁶ Contrary to what is often believed, e.g. by certain contributors to the *Thessalonians Debate*, the term τροφός can actually be used also of mothers, see e.g. Sophokles, *Aias*, 849: ἄγγελον ἄτας τὰς ἐμὰς ... γέροντι πατρὶ τῇ τε δυστήνῳ τροφῷ “tell of my madness to my old man and my poor mother”; Cf. also Xenophon, *Oikonomikos*, V. 17: ὃς ἔφη τὴν γεωργίαν μητέρα καὶ τροφὸν εἶναι “Who said that husbandry was mother and nurse”. Cf. Neohellenic ἐκείνη ποὺ μὲ ἔθρεψε / ἀνέθρεψε (< τρέφω, τροφός) “she who fed me / brought me up” [said of one’s mother]. Galanis, *Πρώτη πρὸς Θεσσαλονικεῖς*, 158, makes the interesting observation that τροφός refers to the sucking mother (θηλάζουσα μητέρα).