



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Issue 120

The Plowboys's Bible

The Story of God's Amazing Book

Part IV

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS

UNAWARE OF KOINE GREEK

Early in our series we discussed the fact that the New Testament was written in a particular kind of Greek: Koine. This was the Greek of the common man. This was indeed a part of God's grand design. God bypassed the Classic Greek of the scholastic world to write in the language of the Plowboy.

The *King James Version* translators were unaware of this. In fact, they did not even know of the existence of Koine Greek when they did their work. It was not until nearly three hundred year's later that the knowledge of this common Greek was rediscovered by the academic world.

Imagine the confusion and difficulty trying to translate Koine Greek, all the while thinking you were dealing with the significantly different Classical Greek.

The *King James Version* translators were very confused by many passages due to this basic lack of information. Now, this ignorance was not their fault. It was information that was simply not available at that time in history.

Although the translators were renowned Greek scholars, their expertise was greatly crippled by the fact that they were unfamiliar with the particular

Greek that they were attempting to translate.

Listen again to a British historian on the *King James Version*:

“Yet to the Oxford and Cambridge educated classicists of the King James translation companies, it must have seemed a very strange form of Greek ...

“Even as late as 1853, the form of Greek found in the New Testament continued to puzzle scholars. Lecturing at the University of Cambridge in 1853, the great New Testament scholar J.B. Lightfoot remarked: ‘If we could only recover letters that ordinary people wrote to each other without any thought of being literary, we should have the greatest possible help for understanding the language of the New Testament generally.’ ...

“In the late nineteenth century, however, significant advances were made in understanding the everyday Greek of the eastern Mediterranean world into which Christianity was born ...

“There is no doubt that these [companies of King James translators] included some of the finest classical scholars of the period, well

(continued next page)

used to dealing with questions of translation of classical Greek. Yet the Greek they were being asked to translate dates from much later, and seems to follow more fluid grammatical rules. To translate it on the basis of an earlier form of Greek would cause difficulties

"There is little doubt that the King James translators worked on the assumption that the same vocabulary rules of grammar that applied to the classical period also applied to the New Testament. Yet this is not always the case, and can lead to some serious misjudgments ...

"The Koine Greek of the New Testament is the 'everyday' Greek language of working people rather than of self-conscious literary scholars and poets. The King James translators were not aware of this fact. Their location in history denied them access to this knowledge. The result has important implications for the tone and style of those passages in the King James Bible that translate this form of Greek. The language of the workplace and the market is thus subtly changed into the high cadences of the palaces of Westminster and the high tables of Oxford and Cambridge. Many readers of the King James Bible often comment on its elegance and excellent style – yet the considerations that we have just set out means that, on occasion, the style and elegance will be those of the translators, rather than those of the passages they translated."¹

UNAWARE OF THE "SYNOPTIC GOSPELS"

Another issue that the *King James Version* translators were unaware of, that had a direct impact upon their translation, is what is known as the Synoptic Gospels.

In the New Testament, the first four books are commonly known as the "Gospels." The first three of these (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) are so similar in their record and sequence of events that they are sometimes referred to as the "Synoptic Gospels" (the word "synoptic" coming from Greek, meaning "seeing-together").

1. Alister McGrath, *In the Beginning*, Page 236-239.

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This weekly publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7)
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11)
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25)
- true freedom and liberty apart from the law (Galatians 5:1)
- the organic nature of the church, the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12)
- the distinct ministry of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13)
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15)
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13).
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with ...
 - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14)
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6)
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4)

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization" or "mission."

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Remember that it is our responsibility as husbands and fathers to take the truths we learn from God's Word, the truths that we hold dear, and impart them to our families.

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“At many points, Matthew, Mark, and Luke present passages which, in the original Greek, are virtually identical to each other ... It would therefore seem to be a matter of some importance to ensure that, where identical Greek passages are encountered across two or three gospels, that the English translations of these passages should be the same in each case. After all, it is the same passage that is being translated in each case ...

“The evidence, however, suggests that the Second Oxford Company of translators, who were responsible for translating the gospels, did not see things in quite this light. We regularly find identical Greek passages in two or three gospels which are translated in quite different manners in the King James Bible ...

“The nature of the synoptic gospels had not been fully coordinated in the seventeenth century; indeed, it could be argued that two or more centuries would pass before the matter was given proper attention. The translators were therefore not alerted to the issues which are taken for granted in biblical translation circles today.”²

An example of *identical* Greek words being translated into *different* English words, because the *King James Version* translators were unaware that they were the same, is Matthew 26:41 and Mark 14:38.

Here is the Greek text for both verses (written with English letters). You will be able to see that they are exactly the same:

“*gregoreuo kai proseuchomai hina-me eiserchomai eis peirasmos men pneuma proqumon deh sarx asthenes*” (Matthew 26:41).

“*gregoreuo kai proseuchomai hina-me eiserchomai eis peirasmos men pneuma proqumon deh sarx asthenes*” (Mark 14:38).

As you can see, the two verses are exactly the same in the Greek text. Now, let’s see how the *King James Version* translates these two verses:

“*Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak*” (Matthew 26:41).

“*Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak*” (Mark 14:38).

Notice a breakdown of the differences in the English translation of the *King James Version* in these two verses:

<u>Occurrences</u>	<u>Matthew</u>	<u>Mark</u>
Sentences	1	2
“ <i>ye</i> ”	1	2
“ <i>that</i> ”	1	0
“ <i>lest</i> ”	0	1
“ <i>not</i> ”	1	0
“ <i>indeed</i> ”	1	0
“ <i>truly</i> ”	0	1
“ <i>willing</i> ”	1	0
“ <i>ready</i> ”	0	1

Now, how can there be so many differences in translation – when we are in fact translating the exact same verse. This is just the way it is in translation work; there is the possibility of great diversity and variation.

Our point here is, how can the *King James Version* translators have taken the exact same words of Jesus Christ as recorded by Matthew and Mark originally in Greek, and translated them so differently in English?

The answer is that they were unaware Matthew and Mark contained these parallel passages. not having this basic understanding led to two very different translations of the exact same words of the Lord Jesus Christ from His earthly teaching ministry.

2. Alister McGrath, *In the Beginning*, Pages 239-240.

ROMAN CATHOLIC TEXT

The historical fact is that the 1611 edition of the *King James Version* is embarrassingly close to Roman Catholicism.

How so?

In one word: The Apocrypha.

As we have already mentioned, the *King James Version*'s translation work included the Roman Catholic text of the Apocrypha. The *King James Version* of 1611 had **14 more** books than the current edition that we have.

Why were these Roman Catholic books included in the *King James Version*?

Because the Anglican Church was about as close to Roman Catholicism as a Protestant could get without actually being Catholic. The Church of England had actually sanctioned the use of the Apocrypha.

“Article VI of the Church of England in 1562 authorized the reading of these books [the Apocrypha] for the populace.”³

The serious nature of the Apocrypha in the eyes of King James, the Anglican Bishop translators and the Church of England, can be seen in the fact that one entire company of the *King James Version* translators were dedicated to the task of translating the Apocrypha.

“The scholars for the work on the *King James Version* were divided into six companies; the fourth company consisted of seven scholars whose duty was the revising of the Apocryphal books.”³

Think of it – one sixth of the *King James Version*'s translating force was dedicated to the work of the Apocrypha.

3. John Dokas, *Ages of Eternity and the King James Version* (1977).

The serious dedication to these books was not limited to translation either. The Anglican support of the Apocrypha continued after the *King James Version*'s initial publication in 1611.

“Shortly after the publication of the *King James Version* Archbishop Abbot forbade the issue of the *King James Version* without the Apocrypha on pain of one year imprisonment.”³

Marginal References to the Apocrypha

Many King James Only proponents simply dismiss this entire issue by saying, “The Apocrypha was just inserted between the Testaments.” Their implication is that they were not really a part of the Bible itself.

The fact is, the *King James Version* of 1611 gave Scripture references to the Apocrypha in the margins of the Old and New Testaments – some 102 times.

Here are the 11 New Testament Scripture passages that have references to the Apocryphal books:

Matthew 6:7	Ecclesiasticus 7:14
Matthew 23:37	II Esdras 1:30
Matthew 27:43	Wisdom 2:15-16
Luke 6:31	Tobit 4:15
Luke 14:13	Tobit 4:7
John 10:22	I Maccabees 4:59
Romans 9:21	Wisdom 15:7
Romans 11:34	Wisdom 9:13
II Corinthians 9:7	Ecclesiasticus 35:9
Hebrews 1:3	Wisdom 7:26
Hebrews 11:35	II Maccabees 7:7

TRANSLITERATION

The *King James Version* translators would at times choose *NOT* to translate certain words at all, instead opting to transliterate them. They would simply place the Greek word directly into their translation using English letters and spelling.

Transliteration is obviously not the same as translation. The purpose of translation is to bring the meaning of foreign words in their context into the common language of the intended reader. To merely write a foreign word with English letters does not give itself to clarity and simplicity of understanding. Transliteration usually serves only to confuse the reader.

Two examples of such transliteration can be found in the following verses. In both cases we will print the transliterated word in bold font.

*“But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, **Raca**, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire”* (Matthew 5:22).

*“No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and **mammon**”* (Matthew 6:24).

Neither “raca” nor “mammon” are English words. They are both Greek words. They were transliterated rather than translated.

Who is served by such a decision?

Do your neighbors know what “raca” and “mammon” mean? For that matter, do you know what these two words mean? (If you do, it is not because they are words of your own dialect.)

Now, there are some other words that are transliterated in the *King James Version* that you are more familiar with. You are acquainted with these words because you have had *religious* training. Words like *baptism, apostle, and presbytery* are all transliterations.

These three examples have had tremendous

religious influence over people’s thinking. This has been possible because they have been transliterated rather than translated. If these simple Greek words had actually been translated, the High Church concepts held by the Anglican Bishops who transliterated them would not have held such sway upon believers for so long. The translation of these words would help to lift religious ritual, bondage, and tyranny.

“TRANSLATION” WITHOUT TEXT

At times the translators of the *King James Version* would “translate” without any textual basis whatsoever. In other words, they would write into their English version words or phrases for which there were no original language equivalents.

Some are familiar with this process in relation to *italicized* words, the assertion being that they were added for clarity; but we do not speak to that issue here. We are pointing out here that words exist within the *King James Version* – words that are not italicized – for which there is *NO* Greek or Hebrew text equivalents whatsoever. We shall cite a few examples.

“God Forbid”

Twenty-four times the *King James Version* translators used the phrase “*God forbid.*” In *NONE* of these cases are there any Hebrew or Greek words to support this translation. The Hebrew or Greek word for “God” is *NOT* present.

“God Save The King”

Five times they used the phrase “*God save the King.*” Again, there are *NO* supporting Hebrew or Greek words for “God” in the underlying text.

Exactly what is this all about anyway? Why did they insert “*God save the King?*” Isn’t it interesting that this was the common monarchy-benediction of Britain at the time?

“To Wit”

Twenty-one times they use the phrase “to wit.” The vast majority of these have NO textual support.

“Who”

Now for a very practical example of how an added word that is not in the original text can alter tremendously the meaning of a passage, and have direct impact upon the life of the believer.

We shall take Romans 8:1 as our case in point:

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

Paul’s teaching in his epistles is that because of the finished work of Christ at Calvary, those in the Lord Jesus Christ are free from condemnation before God. This is in fact the teaching of Romans chapter 8.

The chapter starts out with this great truth:

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.”

The chapter’s summary is:

“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us” (Romans 8:34).

The truth is simple – there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ, for He bore away all our condemnation in His own sacrifice.

Now look again at the contradictory statement of the *King James Version* of Romans 8:1:

*“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, **who** walk not after the flesh, but after the*

Spirit.”

From reading the entire verse from the *King James Version* one would gather that that state of “no condemnation” is conditional. Contextually a conditional “no condemnation” is not even a possibility.

There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. *Period.*

This is what I have taught for years. I quote the first part of Romans 8:1, and then I say, “*Period!*”

“Nothing can ever change or alter that fact!”

“Nothing!”

“*Period!*”

Then what about the condition at the end of Romans 8:1?

A quick look at the Greek text underlying the *King James Version* will reveal the answer – there is no Greek word for “who” in the text. It was inserted there by the translators – Anglican Bishops who did not understand the believer’s relationship and identification in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Again, look at how we quoted the verse earlier:

*“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, **who** walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”*

Notice the pivotal point that takes the clear statement of “no condemnation,” and brings about the condition: it is the word “who.” Surprisingly it is not in the Greek text. There is not a “who” anywhere in the verse.

Coupled with the fact that the Greek had no punctuation marks as we know it,⁴ Paul’s teaching

4. Even English punctuation is at the discretion, understanding

in Romans is best translated:

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus. Walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Romans 8:1).

The first part of the verse is a statement of fact. The second part of the verse is an exhortation based upon the fact. We should walk as who we really are!

The same situation can be seen three verses away.

“That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Romans 8:4).

The righteousness of the law has been fulfilled in us in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ on our behalf. Again, the “who” here is not in the text. So likewise Paul’s teaching is best translated:

“That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us. Walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Romans 8:4).

POOR TRANSLATION

There are places where the translation of the *King James Version* is clearly weak or deficient. In this section we will touch upon a few of these as examples.

Root of All Evil

*“For the love of money is the root of **all** evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves*

and interpretation of the translator. This can easily be demonstrated using the *King James Version* itself. In our two matching passages mentioned earlier, Matthew 26:41 and Mark 14:38 are identical in the Greek. Yet the *King James Version* translators themselves translated the first verse as one sentence, and the second verse as two sentences.

through with many sorrows” (I Timothy 6:10).

Now, the problem with this translation is a simple one – it’s just not true. It is not true that the *root of all evil* is the love of money.

Was “*the love of money*” the “*root*” of the evil in the Garden of Eden?

The problem lies in the translation of the Greek word “*pas*” here as “*all*.” Although that is a legitimate translation of the word, it is in fact not the only way that the word can be translated, and it does not suit its place in this verse.

“*Pas*”⁵ although can, and does at times mean “*all*” it also has other meanings as is demonstrated by the *King James Version* translators – all dependent upon the context.

“*Pas*” is also translated “*all manner of*” in the following *King James Version* passages:

*“But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me **all manner of** concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead” (Romans 7:8).*

*“And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and **all manner of** disease among the people” (Matthew 4:23).*

*“Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say **all manner of** evil against you falsely, for my sake” (Matthew 5:11).*

In each of these passages the word “*pas*” is appropriately translated “*all manner of*” i.e., “*all kinds of*.” In none of these instances would it have honored the meaning of the text to translate it simply as “*all*.” Although “*all*” is a legitimate

5. Strong’s Greek Lexicon #3956.

translation of “pas,” translating it so would in fact have made all of these passages *untrue*.

The same is true for I Timothy 6:10. If the translators would have translated “pas” as “*all manner of*” in this verse, as they had done in the others, then the true meaning of the passage would have been conveyed.

“*For the love of money is the root of all manner of [or all kinds of] evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows*” (I Timothy 6:10).

The love of money is indeed the root of *all kinds* of evil. This is the truth.

By and By

The King James Version translates “*euthus*”⁶ as “*by and by*” in four passages:

“*Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended*” (Matthew 13:21).

“*And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist*” (Mark 6:25).

“*But which of you, having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?*” (Luke 17:7).

Now, I grew up singing “In the Sweet By and By.” The lyrics go,

In the sweet by and by,
We shall meet on that beautiful
shore

The idea of the word “*euthus*” in these verses is that of “*immediately*.” James Strong defines it as, “*at once*.”

One can see the meaning of “*immediately*” in the following passage:

“*But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by*” (Luke 21:9).

The King James Version actually does translate “*euthus*” as “*immediately*” in three other passages: Mark 1:12, 18; and John 21:3.

It is simple: “*by and by*” is not a clear translation, and obscures the truth.

(To be continued...)

LETTERS FROM THE READERS

Oh boy! [The Plowboy’s Bible]. Though I see it now, I don’t know if the veil would have been thin enough 5 years ago for me to have seen these truths. I thank God for your ministry brother, and sharing these truths with us. – **VA**

I began my quest to prove you wrong, I began looking at Greek words (which I have done very little of in the past, “knowing” that I had God’s perfect word in the KJV (better than the originals). In so doing I have discovered that the KJV is in fact not perfect. – **FL**

I love and appreciate you more than words can ever express. Your stand for the truth of Scripture wherever it takes you is something every member of the Body could learn from. – **NY**

6. Strong’s Greek Lexicon #2117.