

New Testament Translation Features

TRANSLATION METHOD

In the Greek New Testament, sentences are commonly very long, with a single sentence sometimes covering several verses. Some translations use a method called "*dynamic equivalence*" in order to make the translation less complex and much easier to read. The NIV is a good example of this process. It is accomplished primarily by dividing long sentences into several shorter ones. However, doing so requires adding words, omitting others, and radically rearranging the structure. The more this is done, the more precision is lost. The text loses some of the subtle nuance of the original. Furthermore, the translator's task becomes much more involved in interpreting the text for the reader. Consequently, his own theological bias is impossible to keep out of the text. He has essentially read the text, interpreted the text in his own mind, and then given the sense in his own words. For this reason we do not follow the dynamic equivalence method.

Our version is a "*formal equivalence*" (literal) translation. We are seeking to portray the Greek text in an extremely accurate manner, so that the nuances of the Greek text come through in our English text. To do this, we have retained as much of the Greek sentence structure as possible. This makes our translation a little more awkward, but much more precise.

BOOK ORDER

The Greek manuscripts of the New Testament have a different book order than we have in our English translations, although many are not complete, and there is some variation. By far the predominant order of New Testament books in Greek manuscripts is as follows: The four Gospels, Acts, the catholic epistles (James, Peter, John, Jude), Paul's epistles (with Hebrews between 2 Thessalonians and 1 Timothy), and Revelation. This Greek order was abandoned by Jerome when translating the Latin Vulgate. Jerome apparently sought to elevate the "Gentile" branch of the church (Rome in particular) above the Jewish branch by bringing Paul's Epistles forward, and placing the Jewish Epistles in the rear. Also, among Paul's Epistles, Jerome placed Hebrews last. We believe the original order is the correct order and should be maintained. For detailed information regarding manuscript book order, see the following article:

<http://www.skypoint.com/members/waltzmn/Divisions.html#order>

HELPFUL FEATURES

Our translation is arranged in short paragraphs. Each paragraph contains a complete thought. We have also divided the text into larger sections related to subject matter. We have inserted headings to briefly summarize each section. The headings are not inspired, and are based on our own exegesis of that section as it relates to the whole book. They are helpful to the reader in following the flow of thought in the book.

When we found it necessary to insert a word not in the Greek text, but strongly implied and necessary for good English grammar, we inserted it in square brackets [...]. When the New Testament quotes the Old Testament, we used *italics* and quotation marks to distinguish the quote, and included the Old Testament reference in square brackets. Sometimes the writer alluded to or paraphrased an Old Testament passage without a direct quote. In such cases we also used italics and put the reference in square brackets as with a direct quote. But we did not include quotation marks. Our translation is in two columns, with the text on the left, and translation notes on the right. This allows easy access to the notes. Finally, the text is in giant print for easy reading. The following excerpt from our translation of Ephesians five illustrates these features.

28 Likewise ought husbands to love their own wives just as [they love] their own bodies. The man who loves his wife loves himself. 29 No one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it just like the Lord does the congregation. 30 For we are members of His body, *from His flesh and from His bones*⁸ [Gen. 2:22-23]. 31 *"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."* [Gen. 2:24] 32 This is a great mystery — I refer to Christ and the congregation. 33 However, each one of you in particular [must] love his own wife as himself, and the wife should respectfully honor her husband.

written Word. "ῥημα" always refers to the spoken word, a saying, a message, or a command. Here it refers to either Jesus' Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20), or to the Gospel message (Acts 2:38-39).

8. This clause does not appear in Nestle's or UBS Greek texts. It is apparent, however, that Paul was making a metaphor of Gen. 2:23, drawing a parallel between Eve's being of Adam's "flesh and bones" and the Church being one with Christ.

The bracketed words "they love" (v. 28) and "must" (v. 33) are not contained in the Greek text, but are implied. The words, "*from His flesh and from His bones*" (v. 30) are a metaphorical application (to Christ and His church) of the statement in Genesis 2:22-23. "*Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man"*" (NKJ). Paul was applying the principle, that Eve was created from Adam's own flesh, to Christ and the Church. That is, just as Adam cared for and nourished Eve because she was literally a part of him, Christ cares for and nourishes His church as a part of Him. (That is partly why the Church is called "*the body of Christ*"). This is why Paul wrote we are "*from His flesh and from His bones.*" That this is what Paul meant is proven by his following this statement with a direct quote of the verse that directly follows Genesis 2:22-23. Unfortunately, the Alexandrian manuscripts omit the words "*from His flesh and from His bones.*" Consequently, the NIV, NASB, NRSV, etc., do not contain this phrase, and completely miss the point Paul was making.

Sometimes an Old Testament quotation is from the Greek translation of the Old Testament known as the "Septuagint." This Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament was known and sometimes used by the Apostles. It was used universally by the Greek speaking early Church. When Old Testament quotes follow the Septuagint, against the Hebrew text, we included the Roman numerals "LXX" after the reference within the square brackets.

TRANSLITERATION & THEOLOGICAL TERMS

Nearly all English translations have adopted the practice of not translating certain theologically significant words. For example, the words "baptize" and "baptism" in the Greek text are ordinary words meaning to immerse in a liquid, and were used in Greek for common things such as washing dishes or taking a bath. But in English, the word "baptize" has strictly a theological significance. The words "baptize" and "baptism" are not English words, but are Greek transliterations. That is, the phonetic sound of the Greek words "baptizo" and "baptisma" were transferred into English, rather than the meaning of the Greek words being translated into English (as with all other words except proper names). Since the Greek word "baptizo" means to immerse in a liquid, "immerse" is the proper English rendering of the Greek. From the first Reformation English translations, the practice was to not translate these words directly into English. Why? Most likely to give some theological cover to virtually all the Protestant churches who practiced sprinkling rather than immersion.

The Greek word "ekklesia" is usually translated "Church." Unfortunately, the English word "church" is from the old English "cirice," which is derived from the Greek, "kyriakos" (meaning "of the Lord"). This is not, however, the meaning of the Greek word "ekklesia" that appears in the Greek New Testament. "Ekklesia" means a called out assembly, a congregation of people gathered together for a particular purpose. Much wrong doctrine has been built on both of these terms which wrongly appear in nearly all English versions.

We consider these kinds of transliterations and obscure terms as skewing the meaning of Scripture, and giving cover to wrong interpretations of Scripture. Therefore, with the exception of proper names, we do not transliterate terms or use obscure theological terms. We translate such words as accurately as possible. Hence, "baptizo" (verb) in our translation will be "immerse." "Baptizma" (noun) will be "immersion." "Ekklesia" will be "congregation." "Apostolos" (usually rendered "apostle") will be "emissary." And "euangelion" (usually rendered "gospel") will be "message."

All of the New Testament books that are completed thus far are available in Adobe Acrobat (pdf) format with notes for easy printing. We hope you are blessed by this translation and find it helpful in your study of God's holy Word.