A Brief (and Incomplete) Introduction to this Exegetical Translation (XT)

Form and Function in Translation

Form follows function, or so they say. The form and structure of the words of the New Testament are designed by the Holy Spirit to follow their spiritual function.

1 Corinthians 2:12-13

Now **we** [the apostles] **ourselves** {have} received, **not the spirit which belongs to the world**, but rather, the Spirit which comes from God; in order that we should know what {things} have been graciously bestowed upon us by God; which {things} we are also speaking, not in words **taught** {characteristically} **by human wisdom**, but rather, {in words} taught {characteristically} by {the} Holy Spirit — matching spiritual {things} with spiritual {words}.

This text is talking about the verbal inspiration of the writings of the apostles. A more literal translation of the third and fourth clauses would be "not in 'taught-by-human-wisdom' words, but rather, in 'taught-by-Holy-Spirit' {words}." The idea is that one set of words comes from the spirit of the world and is therefore characterized by the wisdom taught by men, while the other set of words comes from the Spirit of God and is therefore characterized by the wisdom taught by the Holy Spirit.

In the last line, the Greek word translated "matching" [συγκρίνοντες] means literally "to judge together," and is elsewhere translated "to compare" and "to combine." The idea is to compare things in order to combine them with weighed and balanced judgment, to sort and match, to fit things together properly. The Holy Spirit taught the apostles how to sort through human words in order to spiritually match the right word to the spiritual "thing" - the spiritual reality. If we desire our translation to be in resonance with the original Greek Scriptures, then (among other things) we should emulate the process of inspiration - though at best we can only do so on an *illuminated* and not on an *inspired* level - by sorting through English words in order to match the right words to the spiritual reality expressed by the Greek words of Scripture. This does not require an exact word-for-word literal translation, but it does require some degree of faithfulness to the original word forms, for it is these forms of sound words which were chosen by the Holy Spirit to convey the spiritual reality. Sound [Greek: ὑγιαίνούσης = sound; healthy; correct] doctrine (1 Timothy 1:10; 2 Timothy 4:3; Titus 1:9; 2:1) is built upon sound words (1 Timothy 6:3; 2 Timothy 1:13), so that people can be sound in the faith (Titus 1:13; 2:2). (Compare faithful words and good doctrine, 1 Timothy 1:15; 3:1; 4:6, 9; 2 Timothy 2:11; Titus 1:9; 3:8.)

2 Timothy 1:13

Hold† {close to} the form of sound words, which †you did hear from me ...

There is enough difference between Greek and English to make the reforming and rephrasing of expressions frequently necessary in translation. Nevertheless, the original nuances of sense and logic are often conveyed through form, and the loss of the form can sometimes compromise or jeopardize the sense and the logic of a passage. In addition, the logic revealed in similar or parallel modes of expression in different passages can easily be lost when these similar or parallel constructions are transformed by functional-idiomatic equivalent translations so that the similarity or parallel is no longer recognizable. In other words, the more closely an English translation holds to the form of the original sound words in Greek, as far as standard American literary English will allow, the more faithful the translation, all other things being equal (but of course, other things never are equal).

Translational Enhancements

One possible method of translation is, wherever possible, to pair one word (or expression) in the translation with one word (or expression) in the original language. This is called a *word-for-word* translation or a *formal-equivalence* translation. Holding to the original form of the words tends to preserve the logic which lies in the original form. The problem with this method of translation is that it tends either to lose or to limit information - sometimes very important information - which was in the original language. The extreme example of this would be a *minimal-concordant* translation - that is, a translation based upon an index of a minimum number of possible concordant (direct word-for-word correspondence) translations for each word.

Another possible method of translation is to distill the meaning of the original writing within its culture, then to imagine what idea this meaning was originally intended to convey, then to decide what part of that idea is important for the reader of the translation to know, then to determine what expressions would relevantly convey an equivalent idea to particular segment of culture targeted by the translation. This is called a *thought-for-thought* translation or a *functional-equivalence* translation. Filling out the original thought has a potential to convey more information - sometimes very important information - from the original to the translation. The extreme example of

this would be a *maximal-mediated* translation because it turns the "translator" into a mediator who interjects several steps of his own subjective judgment between the Biblical text and the ordinary reader.

Though we need *logical-equivalence*, we also need the *fuller meaning* conveyed by the information contained in the Greek text, including such things as verbal aspect, word emphasis, contextual sense, and lexical nuance. In other words, we need a translation which preserves the logic of the original while moving beyond this so as to accurately convey more of the information contained in the original writing - an *enhanced-logical* translation or an *exegetical* translation. But we also don't want to produce something awkward or stilted - like computer-generated gobbledygook. A good translation requires some refinement in English style. Most translations might be called "minimal content" translations because they do not convey the full expression of the Greek, but try rather to fit their translations into the mold of a more ordinary English style which leaves little room for enhancements. This exegetical translation expands the text, while marking the enhancements according to the method shown below.

Sense and Style

Enhancements for sense or style are just one step beyond awkward word-for-word literal, and are often either a way of expressing the literal nuance of the Greek, or a way of avoiding a misleading or incorrect nuance in the English, or both.

- {abc} Enhancements for sense or style are enclosed in curved braces { } . Parentheses () are part of the normal punctuation.
- (1) Some words in curved braces are enhancements which display the more subtle nuance or coloration and shading of meaning in the original language particularly in the aspect of the verb and though the nuance is literal, nevertheless it is often a choice of what degree of coloration and shading fits the context.
- (2) Some words in curved braces are added for contextual sense or for English style and though the sense or style is often clearly implied or assumed in the context particularly in ellipses nevertheless the author did not verbally express them in the original language, though he could have.

Personal Pronouns

Elizabethan "King James" English used the forms "thee, thou, thy, thine," to mark the singular, but Modern English uses what were the plural forms, "you, your, yours" for both singular and plural. The distinction between the singular and the plural is marked with daggers † ‡:

- † Second Person *Singular* Verbs and Personal Pronouns are marked (where necessary) with a single dagger before the pronoun or after the verb.
- ‡ Second Person *Plural* Verbs and Personal Pronouns are marked (where necessary) with a double dagger before the pronoun or after the verb.

Emphasis

A few translations have made attempts at marking emphasis. In English, when we speak we express emphasis (and other subtleties) by changing the pitch, the volume, or the articulation of our voice, but this does not transfer into writing. In writing, we might express emphasis using bold, italic, underlining, capitalization, or punctuation, but this is not our regular practice. Choice of words and word order does come into play in expressing emphasis in English, but not very much, and it is easily misunderstood or even missed. However, in Greek the choice of words and word order expresses emphasis in regular ways, and this emphasis can play strongly in the meaning of a passage. Emphasis in the Greek is reflected in the English with **bold** type.

Text Segmentation

In this edition, in order to show the parallel between the Greek text and the English translation, the text is broken according to sense into lines which consist of clauses or phrases. These lines are often shorter than the customary verse. Lines are indented to display any parallelism or progression (poetic or otherwise). Parallel lines have equal indentation. Progressions are progressively indented.

In-Text Notations

When, for reasons of style, the words of the English translation are displaced from their original position under a single line of Greek text, these words are enclosed between vertical breaks | abc xyz | , and their absence is marked near their original position by an ellipsis enclosed between vertical breaks | ... | .

- [abc] Notes are enclosed in brackets.
- [/abc] Alternate translations follow a forward slash.
- [//abc] Paraphrases or idiomatic equivalents follow a double forward slash.
- [labc] More literal translations follow a back slash.
- [/] An asterisk refers to a note for the same or similar expression in the preceding context.

Under-Text Notations

Notations explaining or commenting on the translation are indexed, not by the customary verse numbers (which are in marked teal *7*), but by the individual line numbers in the left hand margin (which are marked in red ²³).