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Evaluation of the RSV on the basis of First Peter

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EVALUATION OF THE RSV ON THE
BASIS OF FIRST PETER

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Exegetical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Divinity

by

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June 1956

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The American Standard Version of the Bible was published in 1901. This was a revision of the King James Version of 1611. The Revised Standard Version of the Bible was published in 1952. This was a revision of the American Standard Version of 1901.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. MATTERS OF INTERPRETATION	8
III. MATTERS INVOLVING POINTS OF STYLE AND ACCURACY	28
IV. SOME SPECIFIC POINTS OF GRAMMAR	45
V. CONCLUSION	56
BIBLIOGRAPHY	60

During the completion of the Old Testament, and in that year authorization was made by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. to publish the Revised Standard Version, Old and New Testaments.

In the preface of one of the 1952 copies were found these words by the publisher, "The result, we may agree, is a Version of the New Testament now accurate in translation than any previous one, because of its

¹The Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version (Toronto, New York, Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1952), p. iii.
²Arthur W. Fargis, *Chairman, An Introduction to the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament*, by the Members of the Revision Committee (Chicago: Harper, S. 1951), pp. 14, 15.
³The Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version, pp. IV, V.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The American Revised Version of the Bible was published in 1901. This was a revision of the King James Version of 1611. The Revised Standard Version claims in turn to be a revision of the American Standard Version.¹

The copyright of the American Standard Version was transferred from the Thomas Nelson & Sons Company to the International Council of Religious Education in 1928. In 1937 the committee which had been placed in charge of the text and all further necessary revisions was given the authorization to make a completely new revision. The Committee, which divided itself into two parts, Old and New Testaments, set out upon its task, and in 1946 the New Testament was published. The Year 1951 marked the completion of the Old Testament, and in that year authorization was made by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. to publish the Revised Standard Version, Old and New Testaments.²

On the jacket of one of the 1946 copies were found these words by the publisher, "The result, critics agree, is a Version of the New Testament more accurate in translation than any previous and, because of its

¹ The Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version (Toronto, New York, Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1952), p. iii.

² Luther N. Weigle, Chairman, An Introduction to the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament, by the Members of the Revision Committee (U.S.A.: n.p., c. 1946), pp. 10, 11.

The Holy Bible, Revised Standard Version, pp. IV, V.

beautiful modern English, more useful, understandable, and pleasurable to the twentieth-century reader.³ In contrast to this Carl McIntire declares in a small pamphlet examining some of the critical passages, "It is evident that such fundamental changes have been made that it would be nothing short of a calamity of infinite proportions if the book should be accepted by the English-speaking world, and replace the King James Version."⁴

Thus it is evident that this version has caused considerable controversy and difference of opinion. Therefore thorough and objective study is needed to determine the adequacy of this version, to ascertain whether it is true and accurate to the spirit of the original Greek text, to see whether it measures up to the claims made for it by the committee and publishers, to investigate whether or not this new version is usable in public worship and private devotions. The present study is an effort in this direction. It is an evaluation of the RSV on the basis of the First Epistle of Peter to determine how faithful the revisers have been in bringing out what the Greek actually says. It is not an attempt to argue for an all-out acceptance of the version, nor does it have as its goal merely to point out reasons why the RSV must be rejected. Instead it seeks to be an objective study, pointing out some high spots of the translation and some low, indicating instances where the RSV makes a passage quite lucid and clear and also passages where the rendering is

³Quoted from Oswald T. Allis, Revision or New Translation? "The Revised Standard Version of 1946" A Comparative Study (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1948), p. 4.

⁴Carl McIntire, The New Bible Revised Standard Version Why Christians Should Not Accept It (Revised edition; Collingswood, N. J.: Christian n.d.) p. 3.

not adequate. At the same time the study will point up the fact that at times the translator or reviser has a difficult task before him because of the nature of the passage he is trying to render, and that his work, therefore, must be approached with sympathy and understanding.

This work is not intended to be an exhaustive study on First Peter. Instead it seeks to point up some of the more noteworthy instances and to give a sampling of what is there found.

In some instances in the body of the study comparison of the RSV with some version was necessary. In these instances the KJV was used rather than the American Standard Version. A quick comparison of the RSV with the ASV will show that very many of the improvements which the RSV has over the text of the KJV were already incorporated into the text of the ASV. However, since the ASV is not commonly used, these improvements are not really available to the average person; consequently, for all practical purposes, they are not too beneficial or valuable.

It might be well to mention some of the principles which guided the RSV translators. These can be ascertained from "An Introduction to the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament," written by various members of the committee.

One of these principles involves the rendering of certain factors in the New Testament which stem from a Semitic background. Millar Burrows, who has a chapter on this in the booklet, declares that the Committee felt that its task was to render what was actually in the Greek text and not to "reconstruct any document or tradition" which served as a background for the New Testament.⁵ Thus, for example, in rendering

⁵Weigle, op. cit., p. 22.

New Testament quotations from the Hebrew Old Testament or the Septuagint, translation into English was made on the basis of the New Testament Greek rather than the Hebrew or Septuagint source, in accordance with the above principle.⁶ Also certain Jewish expressions, such as "kingdom of heaven" or "Son of man" were not changed or paraphrased, but translated literally.⁷ However, in cases where the New Testament gave different spellings or different forms of Old Testament characters, the Old Testament form of the name was retained.⁸ In the present revision certain Semitic influences have gone through what Burrows terms a "process of de-Semitization."⁹ One illustration of what he means is the rendering of Jewish expressions depicting the seat of the emotions into modern equivalents.¹⁰

Another principle involves textual variants and the use of manuscripts. Frederick C. Grant points out that the principle which guided the revisers was an eclectic principle, i.e., not following slavishly any one manuscript or received text, but rather examining each reading closely on its own individual merit. Thus neither the Westcott-Hort text, nor the Nestle text, nor the Souter text was followed exclusively. However, Grant points out that in most cases the readings will be found in the seventeenth edition of Nestle, printed in Stuttgart in 1941.¹¹

⁶Ibid., pp. 25, 26.

⁷Ibid., pp. 22, 23.

⁸Ibid., pp. 23, 24.

⁹Ibid., p. 28.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 28, 29.

¹¹Ibid., p. 41.

Another principle involved the rendering of the Greek text itself, its vocabulary, its phraseology, its idioms and style. Henry J. Cadbury points out that while new discoveries in the meaning of words and phrases have not been too many in quantity and should therefore, not be exaggerated, nevertheless, some changes were required in the way of nuances or shades of meaning or in some grammatical areas.¹² More basic, however, was the revisers' principle to render the Greek into everyday English that people speak today, into language they understood. The translation was to be more in the vernacular vein than in the high literary, just as the New Testament was written in Koine Greek. Edgar J. Goodspeed writes in his chapter thus, "The New Testament then calls for a direct, familiar style in translation; an elaborate, elegant style is unsuited to it, and in proportion as it is rendered in a conscious literary style, it is misrepresented to the modern reader."¹³ And Henry J. Cadbury writes, "The translator can quite conscientiously attempt an English that is as contemporary to himself as the Greek is now recognized to have been contemporary to the first Christian Authors."¹⁴

Luther A. Weigle elaborates further on the English used in the New Revised Version. He declares that the revisers were directed by the International Council of Religious Education, which was the group that authorized the new version, that the new version be "designed for use in public and private worship, and to be in the direction of the

¹²Ibid., pp. 44-52.

¹³Ibid., p. 33.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 52.

simple, classic English style of the King James Version."¹⁵ Weigle observes that this was understood to mean, not that the committee was to "return to the errors and archaic language of the King James Version, but rather that they were charged to recover its simplicity and directness."¹⁶ Weigle maintains that these qualities had not been maintained in the English and American revisions. Thus the committee felt that its responsibility was to the use of words and phrases that no longer mean today what they did in the seventeenth century.¹⁷ A style of English was aimed at which would direct the attention of the reader or hearer not primarily to the words themselves, but to the thought behind the words.¹⁸ A basic principle, Weigle maintains, was that the Bible be put into English that is "euphonious, readable, and suited for the use in public and private worship."¹⁹ It aimed to avoid combinations of words or letters that might be harsh and unpleasant. And it was to be rendered with the need of private and public worship in mind. Walter Bowie states, "This translation—it is hoped—may enlighten private study; but also, and more importantly, it is offered for use in public worship."²⁰

This study is divided into three parts. The first will deal with matters pertaining to interpretation, or which affect the meaning of a

¹⁵Quoted from ibid., p. 53.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 54-56.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 66, 67.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 57.

²⁰Ibid., pp. 59, 60.

passage. The second will deal with style and matters of accuracy, but which do not have a serious effect on the meaning of the passage. The third will deal with some specific points of grammar.

In some of the passages cited, the Greek text is given. Often this is followed immediately by the RSV rendering. In cases where only an English rendering is given, the rendering is that of the RSV unless otherwise indicated.

CHAPTER II

MATTERS OF INTERPRETATION

In this chapter matters which involve the meaning or the interpretation of certain passages will be discussed. This will entail an examination on how closely and faithfully the RSV represents which the Greek text has to say. It will deal specifically with content material in First Peter. There are many passages where the RSV brings out the meaning in a decidedly outstanding and superior way. In other passages the translation has not been so fortunate, and the translation fails to reproduce accurately the Greek meaning. In some cases there is a problem on how a passage should be rendered, leaving a certain amount of room for opinion and individual judgment. Certain difficulties involved, difficulties of word connotation, different ways a word may be used in different books of the Bible or in secular literature, or perhaps other factors may make for uncertainty as to just how a word or phrase is being used or just what the nuance or shade of meaning is. Instances in this latter category will help show the difficulty that a translator or reviser has at times in trying to render a certain passage. The following, therefore, is an examination of certain passages depicting matters of interpretation.

Passages in which the RSV Gives a Very Fine Translation,
Bringing out the Meaning of the Passage Very Accurately
and True to the Original Intention of the Greek Text

1:2 κατὰ πρόνοιαν Θεοῦ Πατρὸς: "destined by God the Father."

The RSV is closer to the meaning than the KJV's rendering, "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." Selwyn points out that the preposition κατὰ in the word signifies that God's πρόνοια is not simple knowledge, but it has to do with his "eternal counsel"; it involves His choosing and calling people.¹

1:2 ἐν ἀφίπνευσί πνεύματος: "sanctified by the Spirit." Here

the word πνεύματος refers to the work of the Holy Spirit, as the commentaries examined agree. Beare points out that in this verse reference is made to the Trinitarian formula used in baptism.² The RSV brings out this reference to the Holy Spirit much more clearly than the KJV's rendering, "through sanctification of the Spirit." The KJV's rendering can be taken to mean the same thing. In fact it indicates that this is the meaning by capitalizing the word "Spirit." However, one must have the words before him in order to realize this. If he were listening to the passage in church, this meaning would not be quite so clear.

1:3 "we have been born anew to a living home," and also in 2:5 "and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house." Here in both instances the RSV translation of the participle ζῶντων is much

¹ Edward Gordon Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter (Second edition; London: MacMillan & Co., Ltd., 1955), p. 119.

² Francis Wright Beare, The First Epistle of Peter (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1947), p. 50.

better than the KJV's rendering, "lively," The word "lively" does not mean the same thing as the word "living."

1:6 "though now for a little while you may have to suffer various trials." The RSV uses the word "trials" for the Greek πειρασμοῖς over against the KJV's rendering of the word as "temptations." This seems to be truer to the meaning of Peter. Bigg points out that when Paul wants to indicate what we mean by the word "temptation" he uses the terms ἐπιποθείς or ἐπιθυμία, whereas Peter uses the word ἐπιθυμία.³ Wand⁴ and Selwyn⁵ agree on the meaning here as "trials." Though the Expositor's⁶ does not believe that only outward afflictions or trials are meant, this seems to fit in better with the thought of the epistles.

The adjective ποικίλος also seems to be more accurately rendered by the RSV as "various" rather than by the KJV's "manifold." The English word "manifold" has included in it the idea, not only of diversity, but also of number or quantity, whereas the Greek word ποικίλος means chiefly "various or of different kinds."

1:7 τὸ δακίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως πολυτιμότερον χρυσοῦ: "the gemineness of your faith, more precious than gold." This is an improvement over the KJV's "the trial of your faith." In the third verse

³Rev. Charles Bigg, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude, The International Critical Commentary (Second edition; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1946), p. 103.

⁴J. W. G. Wand, editor, The General Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1934), p. 47.

⁵Selwyn, op. cit., p. 129.

⁶J. H. A. Hart, The Expositor's Greek Testament The First Epistle General of Peter, W. Robertson Nicoll, editor (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), V, 43, 44.

of James' epistle, the first chapter, James uses this word in the sense of testing or trying. In fact exactly the same phrase is used word for word. Bigg points out that the way faith is tried or tested is through sufferings and afflictions, but one could not say that suffering is more precious than gold.⁷ But this would have to be the meaning if the word was translated as "trial," for Πολυτιμώτερον has the same case ending as δοκιμίων and consequently must be taken with δοκιμίων. Selwyn suggests the rendering, "the proven part of your faith."⁸ Bigg offers "the tested residue of your faith,"⁹ while Beare in his translation has "the fine metal of your faith."¹⁰

1:9 τὸ τέλος τῆς πίστεως: "As the outcome of your faith," Selwyn points out that while the New Testament uses the word τέλος usually in the sense of a temporal end, here in this passage it is better to take the word in its classical usage—end in a logical sense, the consummation or perfection of something.¹¹ Thus the RSV is truer to the meaning than the KJV's rendering, "the end of your faith," which could be understood to mean a temporal end.

1:13 "set your hope fully upon the grace that is coming to you." The RSV's rendering of τελείως as "fully" is better than the KJV's rendering, "hope to the end." Beare declares that the rendering of τελείως as "to the end" is not correct.¹² Selwyn translates as

⁷Bigg, op. cit., p. 104.

⁸Selwyn, op. cit., p. 129.

⁹Bigg, op. cit., p. 104.

¹⁰Beare, op. cit., p. 60.

¹¹Selwyn, op. cit., pp. 132, 133.

¹²Beare, op. cit., p. 70.

"unreservedly," "up to the hilt," or "without reserve."¹³ Wuest declares that the word describes "that which is in a state of completeness."¹⁴

2:6 Ἰδοὺ τίθημι ἐν Σιών λίθον ἐκλεκτὸν ἀκρογωναίον
 ἔντιμον: "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious." This is truer to the text than the KJV which does not bring out the proper force of λίθον and has in its translation "chief corner stone," which is really not in the text.¹⁵

2:9 "that you may declare the wonderful deeds." The RSV rendering of ἐξέφηρετε as "declare" brings out the precise meaning of the verb more distinctly than does the KJV, which translates as "show forth." Thayer points out that the word means "to make known by praising or proclaiming."¹⁶ Wuest points out, too, that the word refers to a "spoken message."¹⁷ Beare declares that the word in this epistle refers to the element of preaching as contrasted with the witness that is given by the kind of life that Christians lead.¹⁸

3:5 "So once the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves." Here the RSV gives the true connotation of the word ἐλπίζουσι.

¹³Selwyn, op. cit., p. 140.

¹⁴Kenneth S. Wuest, First Peter in the Greek New Testament for the English Reader (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1954), p. 35.

¹⁵Cf. Selwyn, op. cit., p. 163.

¹⁶Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Corrected edition; New York; Cincinnati, Chicago: American Book Company, c. 1889), p. 220.

¹⁷Wuest, op. cit., p. 57.

¹⁸Beare, op. cit., p. 105.

The KJV renders the word as "trusted." The New Testament use of the word ἐπιτίθεω certainly includes the thought of trust and reliance on God. In fact this is the key thought or significance of the word, "to wait for salvation with joy and full of confidence,"¹⁹ but nevertheless the rendering as "hoped" is more precise.

3:16 "being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit."

The point in question here is the rendering of the word πνεύματι. The KJV renders the word as "by the Spirit." Thus the RSV interprets the word to mean Christ's spirit as opposed to Christ's body, whereas the KJV, by rendering the dative πνεύματι as a dative of means and by capitalizing the word "Spirit," interprets the word to refer to the third person in the Holy Trinity. Wuest gives a nice explanation of this problem. He declares that the phrase ἡωρατηθησθεις δε πνεύματι is contrasted with the phrase θανατωθησθεις κεν σαρκι. There are two contrasts. One is between the putting to death and the making alive. The other is between the flesh and the spirit. Wuest points out that the contrast between the flesh and the Holy Spirit would not be a logical one. The human spirit of Christ would be. And while the fact remains that it was the Holy Spirit's power that raised Jesus from the dead (Romans 8:11) Peter is not teaching this fact at this point. He is stating that Christ was put to death according to His flesh; He was made alive according to His human spirit. Wuest gives some evidence from the manuscripts to support him.²⁰ All the commentaries examined concur in

¹⁹Thayer, op. cit., p. 205.

²⁰Wuest, op. cit., pp. 94, 95.

in this opinion that the Holy Spirit is not referred to in this passage.

4:4 "They are surprised that you do not now join them in the same wild profligacy." The RSV's rendering of the word ῥωτίαις as "profligacy" seems to be more precise than the KJV's rendering of the word as "riot." To be sure, the difference may not be too great, but the word ῥωτίαις in the Greek seems to go even beyond what the English word "riot" means, i.e., it means to sink even deeper into the mire of profligate living and low morals than the word "riot" commonly implies. The word ῥωτίαις is the same word used in the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:13), and also in Ephesians 5:18, where it is used in the same context with drunkenness.²¹

4:11 τῷ ῥωτίῳ ἡ δόξα "To him belong glory" This is better than the KJV's "to whom be praise" It helps to bring out to the reader the richness and the frequency of the occurrence of the term "glory" in the Bible which is somewhat obscured by the KJV rendering.

5:2 "Tend the flock of God that is in your charge." This also is superior to the KJV's rendering of the verb ΠΟΛΙΩΝΕΙ as "Feed." Selwyn points out that the word is a classical word and does not mean only "to feed," but signifies the whole process of concern for the sheep.²² So also Wuest explains that the word is not used in any limited sense, but means "tending, feeding, guiding, and guarding the flock of God."²³ Beare gives a very fine rendering when in his translation he

²¹ Selwyn, op. cit., p. 213.

²² Ibid., p. 229.

²³ Wuest, op. cit., p. 124.

renders the Greek phrase simply as "shepherd the flock of God."²⁴

5:9 "Resist him, firm in your faith." This is a very fine translation of the word στεροί. The KJV's rendering, which is "stedfast," while not totally wrong perhaps, does not give quite the proper force or connotation of the word. Bigg points out that the word in its strict meaning is "hard or solid." In the classics the word was used for a moral characteristic and was generally used to describe a bad quality, "hard, harsh, brutal." In the passage before us it means "solid, strong, impenetrable, like a wall, rather than steadfast or brave."²⁵

5:10 "And . . . the God of all grace, . . . will himself restore" The RSV's translation of the verb καταρτίσει perhaps may be just a little truer to the original meaning than the KJV's rendering, "make you perfect." Selwyn points out that "to make whole" is the basic meaning of the word. But the flavor of the word can change, depending upon what stage it is used in the progress of a situation or in some ongoing process. Selwyn declares that the past participle in ἤλιον πυρόντων, which just precedes the words αὐτοῦ καταρτίσει shows that the thought here is toward the beginning or start of the process rather than to the end or completion. From chapter four, verse twelve, it can be surmised that the sufferings and afflictions that the Christians had to undergo as a result of their faith had surprised them and even discouraged them. Peter is trying to comfort them with the thought that "God will Himself reestablish their common life and make it whole."²⁶

²⁴ Beare, op. cit., p. 171.

²⁵ Bigg, op. cit., p. 193.

²⁶ Selwyn, op. cit., p. 240.

Bigg takes this word in the sense of "shall correct" or "amend." He cites Mark 1:19 where the two brothers, James and John, were mending their nets; also Galatians 6:1 where the Christians are told to restore the brother who has been overtaken in a fault; also, 1 Thessalonians 3:10, and 1 Corinthians 1:10.²⁷ Beare shows that the word has reference to fixing a ship that has been damaged.²⁸ In his translation he renders the word as "renew."²⁹

5:12 "By Silvanus, a faithful brother as I regard him." This is better than the KJV's "as I suppose." Wuest states that the rendering of the verb λογίζομαι as "suppose" implies some hesitation on the part of Peter, and he wasn't absolutely certain of his character. The Greek word has no thought of this whatsoever.³⁰ Here is an example where one could get a false idea from the KJV translation which is clarified in the RSV.

Passages in Which the RSV Does an Inferior or Inadequate
Job of Bringing Out the Meaning of the Text, Where it Fails
to Translate in Such a Manner that the True Thought of the
Text is Expressed.

1:7 ἵνα τὸ δοκίμιον ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως . . . εἰς εὐχαρίαν
εἰς ἔπαινον καὶ δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν : "so that the genuineness of your faith . . . may redound to praise and glory and honor." Here the

²⁷Bigg, op. cit., p. 195.

²⁸Beare, op. cit., p. 181.

²⁹Ibid., p. 177.

³⁰Wuest, op. cit., p. 132.

RSV fails to bring out the true connotation of εὐρεθῆ by its rendering, "redound." The dictionary defines the word as "To flow back as a consequence; come as a result; accrue."³¹ While not a serious error on the part of the RSV, it would have been better to retain the original flavor of the word which would be "to find," as the KJV does by its rendering, "might be found." The RSV's rendering of the word would not be so much a translation as an interpretation.

1:8 ἠγαλλιῶσθε ἅπασι ἀνεκλαλήτῳ καὶ σεδοξασμένῳ. For this the RSV has "you . . . rejoice with unutterable and exalted joy." While perhaps the translators of the RSV had the proper thought in mind in rendering the word in this way, still the word "exalted" falls somewhat short of the Greek word σεδοξασμένη. The concept of glory in the Bible is a very rich one, and the thought expressed by Peter here would have a part to play in that concept. But by the RSV's rendering, the fact that this passage is relevant to that concept is not at once obvious. Beare in his translation gives a fine rendering, "suffused with glory."³²

1:11 "They inquired what person or time was indicated by the Spirit of Christ within them when predicting the sufferings of Christ." The RSV fails to give the proper meaning of the participle προμνησθέντων. The word means more than merely "to foretell or predict." The word means "testified beforehand" as the KJV renders. It has the connotation of certainty and affirmation, a solemn declaration before the thing happens.

³¹ Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (Fifth edition; Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam Co., 1947), p. 833.

³² Beare, op. cit., p. 60.

2:4 παρὰ δὲ θεῷ ἐκλεκτὸν ἐντιμὸν: The RSV renders ἐντιμὸν as "precious." Likewise does the KJV. As Beare points out, the word ἐντιμὸν does not signify so much the sense of "precious" as it does the sense of "held in honour" or "destined to honour."³³ The same thing should be said for the occurrence of the same word in 2:6 and for the occurrence of the noun τιμὴ in 2:7. As Bigg observes in his comments under 2:7, the rendering "precious" stems from the Old Testament passage on which is based, Isaiah 28:16, where the word meaning "precious" is used. But this is not the word used here. Bigg declares under his comments on 2:7, "τιμὴ means 'a price' (Matt. xvii.6), or 'honour,' but is hardly used of intrinsic worth, and never of that value in affection which we call 'preciousness.'"³⁴

2:18 "be submissive to your masters with all respect." The RSV rendering of the Greek φόβω would seem to indicate fear of men. But though Wand refers this fear, not to fear of God, but to fear in general,³⁵ Beare,³⁶ Bigg,³⁷ and Selwyn³⁸ concur in the belief that fear toward God is here meant. One might perhaps object to this view, but the translation could at least have left the interpretation open. The KJV renders φόβω as "fear."

³³Beare, op. cit., p. 96.

³⁴Bigg, op. cit., p. 131.

³⁵Wand, op. cit., p. 79.

³⁶Beare, op. cit., p. 121.

³⁷Bigg, op. cit., p. 142.

³⁸Selwyn, op. cit., p. 175 and pp. 143-144 under ἐν φόβω (1:17).

2:22 "no guile was found on his lips." The RSV renders for the word στόματι the English word "lips." The word refers, of course, to the mouth rather than to the lips. Perhaps the revisers did this because they felt this was the more common idiom in the English language. Perhaps it is a little more common, but the idea of words or speech coming from the mouth is by no means obsolete or archaic English today. Therefore, it would have been better to retain the original word.

3:16 "so that, when you are abused." Here the revisers do not bring out entirely the meaning of the verb καταλαλεῖσθε. The word has precisely to do with the spoken word, with slander. Though the word "abused" could be understood this way, it is not at once obvious.

4:4 "and they abuse you." This is the RSV rendering for βλασφημοῦντες. Again, this is not quite true to the meaning of the Greek word, or at least it is subject to misunderstanding. The Greek word connotes "speaking evil of, slandering, defaming in very strong terms." As in the preceding instance, the emphasis in this word lies in the speaking. While the rendering of the word as "abuse" could be taken as "abusing through slander," this is not clear from the translation itself without having to be further explained. The word "abuse" could refer to maltreatment other than through speech.

5:12 "exhorting and declaring that this is the true grace of God." The RSV renders the participle ἐπιμαρτυρῶν simply as "declaring." As with the same stem in 1:11, this too falls short of what the Greek word says. Beare points out that the preposition in the word has the sense of "adding" to the testimony that had previously been given.³⁹

³⁹Beare, op. cit., p. 193.

This word is used to convince these people that what they had previously learned concerning the Christian faith is the truth of God, that their doubts and questions were unfounded. Thus the word in Greek has a much deeper meaning than simply "declaring." In his translation Beare renders the word as "confirming the testimony."⁴⁰

Matters of Opinion

The following are instances where there is room for opinion or where there is difficulty involved as to exactly what the original meaning is. These will point up the difficulty that the translator at times has in rendering from one language to another. The translator cannot always indicate this uncertainty but must choose one or the other meaning.⁴¹

1:3 κατὰ τὸ πολὺ αὐτοῦ ἔλεος. The RSV renders the adjective πολύ as "great" whereas the KJV has "abundant." The problem arises whether the word should be taken in the sense of strength or fervency as the RSV has it, or in the sense of number or quantity as the KJV. Actually the word can mean both, as Thayer points out in his Lexicon. Thayer lists this passage under the former, thus supporting the RSV.⁴² Beare in his translation renders the word, along with the KJV, as "abundant."⁴³

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 182.

⁴¹Luther A. Weigle, Chairman, An Introduction to the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament, by the Members of the Revision Committee (U.S.A.: n. p., c. 1946), pp. 47, 48.

⁴²Thayer, op. cit., p. 529.

⁴³Beare, op. cit., p. 55.

1:11 εἰς τίνα ἢ ποίου καιροῦ : "what person or time."

The KJV has for this "what, or what manner of time." All the commentaries examined agree with the KJV's rendering of the phrase. Only the Expositor's mentions the possibility of the phrase being taken in the sense of the RSV rendering. It declares that if the τίνα is taken separately, without association with the noun καιροῦ, it is possible to render the phrase as "in reference to whom and what time the Spirit signified."⁴⁵ However, the Expositor's does not maintain this as the only rendering. It also gives the rendering common to the KJV and the other commentators. This way would mean that the τίνα is taken closely with the noun καιροῦ.⁴⁴

1:21 ὥστε τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν καὶ ἐλπίδα εἶναι εἰς θεόν :

The RSV renders this as consequence, "so that your faith and hope are in God." Bigg in rendering the passage takes it in the sense of consequence.⁴⁵ Wand likewise believes it expresses consequence rather than purpose.⁴⁶ Selwyn, on the other hand, disagrees with this position. He favors the KJV rendering. He cites a goodly amount of grammatical material to substantiate his view. Also he maintains that the purpose clause fits in much better with the context of the passage (1:13-25). The whole section is exhortatory. (He points out that all the main verbs are imperative.) It would be unusual, he feels, to put in a clause which states a fact concerning their spiritual condition at this point.⁴⁷

⁴⁴The Expositor's Greek Testament, op. cit., p. 46.

⁴⁵Bigg, op. cit., p. 122.

⁴⁶Wand, op. cit., p. 58.

⁴⁷Selwyn, op. cit., pp. 147, 148.

Selwyn's arguments are very convincing and seem to weigh the balance in favor of the KJV.

2:2 τὸ δοκικὸν γάλα ἐπιτελέετε. This is a rather difficult passage in which to arrive at the precise meaning. The RSV renders "long for the pure spiritual milk." The KJV has "desire the sincere milk of the word." For the rendering of the word δοκικόν there is not complete agreement among the commentators. Beare feels that the translation of the word as the KJV has it is "quite impossible."⁴⁸ He feels that the word properly understood cannot refer to the Scriptures,⁴⁹ as the KJV would suggest. He believes that the word "spiritual" is the best rendering. Selwyn seems to prefer the rendering, "spiritual" also.⁵⁰ The Expositor's believes that it is "doubtful" as to what the meaning of δοκικόν means, but it inclines toward the KJV's rendering on the basis of the word δοκός in First Peter 1:23.⁵¹ Bigg believes that the KJV's rendering is the correct meaning. He discounts the passage in Romans 12:1 as speaking against the KJV's rendering. He gives his reasons why he feels the KJV is correct.⁵² This passage is an illustration of the difficulty that a translator has at times in coming to the exact meaning of a passage.

Mention should be made also of the RSV's rendering of the word ἁλοῦς as "pure." In the introductory booklet it is explained that

⁴⁸ Beare, op. cit., p. 89.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 90.

⁵⁰ Selwyn, op. cit., p. 155.

⁵¹ The Expositor's Greek Testament, op. cit., p. 55.

⁵² Bigg, op. cit., p. 126

the word was rendered this way because it is often used to describe foods in Greek.⁵³ Beare points out this same fact, though he maintains that the passage does not altogether lose the idea of "guileless."⁵⁴ In his translation he renders the word as "uncontaminated."⁵⁵ Bigg, however, believes that the word must be taken as "guileless" and not in the sense of "unadulterated."⁵⁶

2:19 εἰ δὲ συνείδησιν θεοῦ: "if, mindful of God." The KJV renders the word as "conscience." This is another example of the difficulty of translating certain passages. Wand prefers the meaning "consciousness" of God rather than the word "conscience."⁵⁷ Selwyn, however, takes it in the sense of "conscience." He feels this is being more consistent with the New Testament, which usually uses the word in this "almost technical meaning." It is used this way in 1 Peter 3:16, 21 also.⁵⁸ His arguments are very convincing.

3:1 "so that some . . . may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives." Here the translator has the difficulty whether to render the word λόγου as "a word," meaning "the silent testimony of Christian life and character,"⁵⁹ or as "the word," referring specifically to the Word of the Gospel, as the KJV seems to imply by its rendering

⁵³Weigle, op. cit., p. 48.

⁵⁴Beare, op. cit., p. 89.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 87.

⁵⁶Bigg, op. cit., p. 126.

⁵⁷Wand, op. cit., p. 80.

⁵⁸Selwyn, op. cit., pp. 176-78.

⁵⁹Beare, op. cit., p. 128.

the word in this way. The Greek word, though used without an article, would in itself not be of conclusive proof either way.

3:15. "Always be prepared to make a defense to anyone who calls you to account." The RSV rendering here suggests somewhat of a formal, perhaps even an official summons to defend one's faith. Beare would support this rendering for he believes that both ἀπολογία and πέντι τῷ ἀποῦντι λόγον have the force of a formal summons such as that in court.⁶⁰ But both Biggs⁶¹ and Selwyn⁶² point out that ἀπολογία can be taken either in a formal or informal sense.⁶³ Thus more meaning might be had from the JKV rendering, "and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason."

3:21 ἀλλὰ συνειδήσεως ἰκάνης ἐπερώτημα εἰς θεόν.
This is, as the commentators indicate, a difficult passage from which to derive the true meaning. The word ἐπερώτημα can mean an "appeal, a request, a petition," which is the sense in which the RSV renders it, "but as an appeal to God for a clear conscience." This is also the sense in which Beare takes it, referring it to a prayer to God made by the convert in the baptismal ritual; he admits, however, that this meaning is not absolutely sure.⁶⁴ Or as Bigg⁶⁵ and Wand⁶⁶ prefer, it could

⁶⁰ Beare, op. cit., p. 138.

⁶¹ Bigg, op. cit., p. 158.

⁶² Selwyn, op. cit., p. 193.

⁶³ Ibid., pp. 193, 194.

⁶⁴ Beare, op. cit., p. 149.

⁶⁵ Bigg, op. cit., p. 165.

⁶⁶ Wand, op. cit., p. 102.

refer to the questions or demands made of the convert at baptism. Or it could mean a "pledge," "a pledge to maintain a good conscience," which is, as Beare points out a possibility.⁶⁷ Selwyn takes it in the sense of "pledge."⁶⁸ This seems to be the way the KJV takes it, "but the answer of a good conscience toward God." Or still again it could mean, as Thayer holds, "earnest seeking, i.e., a craving, an intense desire." The matter is further complicated by the problem as to what the phrase εἰς θεόν should be associated.⁶⁹ This is another example of the translator's dilemma.

4:15 "But let none of you suffer as . . . a nischief-maker." Here is another good example of the difficulty of getting at the precise meaning of the original. Beare points out that the word ἄλλοτρεπίσκοπος is a word invented by the writer himself; it is not used in any other place. Beare takes it in the sense of "revolutionary activity."⁷⁰ In his translation he renders the word as "agitator."⁷¹ Bigg gives a very nice summary on the possible meanings of the word. He points out that the word could indicate such things as meddling with things that belong to other people, e.g., money, or people's affairs in general. This latter is the sense in which the KJV takes it, "as a busybody in other men's matters." Or it could refer to unbecoming life as a citizen or as a Christian; Bigg feels that this last sense is best

⁶⁷ Beare, op. cit., p. 149.

⁶⁸ Selwyn, op. cit., p. 205.

⁶⁹ Thayer, op. cit., p. 230.

⁷⁰ Beare, op. cit., p. 167.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 163.

or possibly a combination of the last two thoughts.⁷² Thus the translator has a very difficult task in trying to render this word in his native language.

5:5 "be subject to the elders." The question arises whether the word πρεσβύτερος used in this passage denotes elders in regard to function or age. As Bigg points out, the word itself can refer to both aspects.⁷³ The RSV by its translation more readily suggests the word in its sense of function, whereas the KJV's "unto the elder" suggests the thought of age. In 5:1 it is generally agreed that the same word refers to the word in its sense of function, i.e., to the leaders of the church. Though Wand⁷⁴ and Wuest⁷⁵ take the word in 5:5 to refer to the leaders, Bigg⁷⁶ and Selwyn take it to refer to the older men in general. Selwyn feels that it is a natural or logical progression of thought to proceed from the leaders in 5:1 to the older men in general in 5:5.⁷⁷

5:9 στρεφει την πιστην: Here is an example where it is hard to translate without at the same time being interpretative. Bigg points out that at times the article in Greek can be used with πιστις to denote faith as a virtue or quality. At other times, he observes, the phrase "the faith" can refer to doctrines. Bigg feels that the adjective

⁷² Bigg, op. cit., pp. 177-79.

⁷³ Bigg, op. cit., p. 190.

⁷⁴ Wand, op. cit., p. 124.

⁷⁵ Wuest, op. cit., p. 126.

⁷⁶ Bigg, op. cit., p. 190.

⁷⁷ Selwyn, op. cit., p. 233.

ΣΤΕΡΕΟΙ argues for the meaning of faith here in the sense of doctrines.⁷⁸

Wuest, however, inclines toward the meaning of the word here as a virtue.⁷⁹ The KJV rendering, "stedfast in the faith," seems to indicate faith in the sense of doctrine. The RSV rendering, "firm in your faith," seems to be open to either interpretation.

⁷⁸ Biggs, op. cit., pp. 193-94.

⁷⁹ Wuest, op. cit., p. 130.

CHAPTER III

MATTERS INVOLVING POINTS OF STYLE AND ACCURACY

In this chapter an examination will be made of the style and literal accuracy of the RSV. In these instances no serious matter of meaning or interpretation is involved. Instead it will be an overview to see how true to the Greek text the RSV is.

Instances Where the RSV is Superior or Outstanding

Instances Where the RSV is More Accurate in Translation

2:20 Εἰ ἁμαρτάνοντες καὶ κολαφίζόμενοι ὑπομένετε : "if when you do wrong and are beaten for it you take it patiently." The KJV by contrast renders the passage "if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently." Here the RSV brings out much better the nature of the participle ἁμαρτάνοντες. This, of course, is not a serious criticism of the KJV, but it does show the RSV's concern for accuracy of translation at this point.

4:11 ὧς ἔστιν ἡ δόξα καὶ τὸ κράτος. "To him belong glory and dominion." It is closer to the original when the RSV translates the verb as an indicative in contrast to the KJV which renders it as a subjunctive, "to whom be praise and dominion." The Expositor's

points out that the "insertion of ἐστιν changes the doxology to a statement of fact. . . ." ¹

5:5b "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." The RSV's rendering of the word ἀλλ as "but" brings out the contrast between the two facts of the sentence much more directly. The KJV's rendering of the word as simply "and" is not quite so forceful.

The RSV's use of More Modern Words

In many cases the KJV contains words which are no longer in use or which, through the passing of the many years since it was composed, have changed their meaning or connotation. Thus, as a result when these words are read by the average reader, either they are not understood at all, or a completely different impression is received because of the change. The RSV strives to make the language of its translation correspond with that which the person of today is acquainted; it strives to use the modern idiom. The following instances will illustrate this.

1:12 "through the Holy Spirit sent from heaven." Instead of calling the third person of the Holy Trinity the "Holy Ghost" as the KJV does, the RSV translators have changed this to the simpler, "Holy Spirit." The word "ghost" had a proper usage in the days of the KJV translators, but today the word has too many connotations that tend to detract from

¹J. H. A. Hart, The Expositor's Greek Testament The First Epistle General of Peter, W. Robertson Nicoll, editor (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1951), V, 73.

the sacredness of the third person. The rendering of the term as "Holy Spirit" avoids this.²

1:15 καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐπὶ ἐν ἅπασι συνομιλοῦντες :

A word that is used quite frequently in the New Testament is the word συνομιλοῦντες. It is used six times in First Peter alone. Each time in First Peter the word is translated in the KJV as "conversation." As Beare points out, the word is used of life in public, or more exactly, "life in relation to others."³ In the seventeenth century when the KJV was made, the word "conversation" had this connotation, but the word today is no longer used this way. The dictionary terms as "archaic" this use of the word.⁴ Today the word is used exclusively of speaking or talking with another person. In First Peter the Greek word is used in the following passages: 1:15 (translated as "conduct"); 1:18 (translated as "ways"); 2:12 (translated as "conduct"); 3:1,2,16 (translated as "behavior").

1:18b In the KJV this passage presents quite a formidable thought by its rendering, "from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers," especially to a child or to a person unacquainted with the style of the KJV. The last six words of the KJV citation given above are the translation of only one Greek word, παροσδοκῶντων. There is no one English word that will give the exact meaning of this

² Cf. Luther A. Weigle, Chairman, An Introduction to the Revised Standard Version of the Old Testament, by members of the Revision Committee. (Toronto, New York, Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson & Sons, c. 1952), p. 10.

³ Francis Wright Beare, The First Epistle of Peter (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1947), p. 72.

⁴ The American College Dictionary, Clarence L. Barnhart, editor (New York: Random House, c. 1952), p. 265.

Greek word. The RSV has the much clearer "from the futile ways inherited from your fathers." Thus the whole passage is more understandable and readable.

2:4 "Come to him, to that living stone, rejected by men." In 2:7 is found the phrase "The very stone which the builders rejected." In both instances the RSV renders the word ἀποδοκιμασθέν (ἀποδοκιμασθῶν) as "rejected," whereas the KJV has "disallowed." Here again the RSV uses a much simpler word, a word with which all people are familiar. The word "disallowed" is a word that is not often used in today's language. Many would not be conversant with its meaning.

2:6 "and he who believes in him will not be put to shame." This is a more modern rendering of the verb κατασχυνθή than the KJV's "be confounded." Again, the use of "confound" in the sense of putting to shame is termed as "archaic" by the Dictionary.⁵

2:9 ἡμεῖς δὲ . . . ἰδοὺ εἰς περιποίησιν "But you are . . . God's own people." The KJV has "But ye are . . . a peculiar people." Though the word "peculiar" has the meaning of "one's own," yet the connotation that this word has today, especially in colloquial English, would make its use here inadvisable. Neither the RSV nor the KJV rendering is exactly literal according to the text. The RSV translators make note of this by putting in a footnote the rendering, "a people for his possession." In the margin the KJV also has "a purchased people." The RSV's use here of "God's" while not in the text, is implied.

⁵Ibid., p. 254.

2:12 "Maintain good conduct among the Gentiles." The RSV's rendering of the adjective καλῶν as "good" in this passage is a more modern rendering than the KJV's rendering of it as "honest." Today the word "honest" is used in a narrower sense to express "genuineness, or freedom from fraud or deception." It is generally not used in as wide a sense as the word καλός would be.

2:13 "not only to the kind and gentle but also to the overbearing." Here again the rendering of σκολιῶν as "overbearing" is more understandable than the KJV's "forward." This is a very infrequently used word by most people. In reading this passage for themselves or hearing it read in church, they would be able to derive its meaning only from its context.

2:24 "He Himself bore our sins." For the word "bore" the KJV has "bare" which the dictionary terms as "archaic."⁶

3:3 "Let not yours be the outward adorning with braiding of hair." Here too the RSV has chosen a term which is commonly used in every household and would be readily understood by all. The KJV rendering as "plaiting of hair" is not so obvious in meaning.

3:4 By contrast the women are admonished, "but let it be the hidden person of the heart." The RSV rendering of ἰνδρωπιος as "person" is clearer and actually more accurate to the meaning of the text than the KJV's "man." Thayer gives as the first meaning for the word "a human being, whether male or female."⁷ Beare in his comments under this verse

⁶ Ibid., p. 99.

⁷ Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Corrected edition: New York, Cincinnati, Chicago: American Book Company, c 1889), p. 46.

points out that the word could be translated as "character" or "personality."⁸

The verse continues with the phrase ἐν τῷ ἀφθάρτῳ τῷ
πραΐος καὶ ἡσυχίου πνεύματος. This is a difficult phrase to put into good English. The RSV has "with the imperishable jewel of a gentle and quiet spirit." This is a more lucid translation than the KJV's "in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit." Beare⁹ and Bigg¹⁰ point out that the word ἀφθάρτῳ should be taken here as a noun rather than as an adjective. Both RSV and KJV add a word which is not actually in the text, but which is almost imperative for an understanding or clear translation. Here is an example, too, of the difficulty that a translator has in putting the thought of one language into another and retain both accuracy and good idiomatic style.

3:8 "Have unity of spirit, sympathy, love of the brethren, a tender heart and a humble mind." The RSV rendering, "a tender heart" for the Greek ἐυσπλαγχνία is a more modern rendering than the KJV's "pitiful." The word "pitiful" no longer is so commonly used to express the thought of compassion. It is more often used in the sense of "deplorable, lamentable," often with the flavor of disdain connected with it. Wuest goes so far as to describe this use of the word as "obsolete

⁸Beare, op. cit., p. 129.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Rev. Charles Bigg, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude, The International Critical Commentary (Second edition; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1946), p. 152.

English."¹¹ At any rate, the RSV leaves no question as to what the word means.

3:11 "Let him turn away from evil." Again the RSV's translation of the Greek verb ἐκκλιπέτω at this point is more readily understood than the KJV's "eschew" which is no longer in common usage by most people.

3:11 "let him seek peace and pursue it." The same holds true here concerning the word διωξάτω which the KJV renders as "ensue."

3:14 "But even if you do suffer for righteousness' sake" is an improvement over the KJV's "But and if" for the Greek phrase ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ.

3:20 "During the building of the ark" is better than "while the ark was a preparing" of the KJV. The KJV's rendering is not often found anymore in ordinary usage.¹²

3:21 ὁ καὶ ὑμᾶς ἀντιτύπον ὑμῶν σῶσει σώτηρα . . .
ἐν ἀναστρέφουσιν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ This is an exceedingly difficult verse to translate and also to interpret. First of all there is a variant reading involved, ᾧ (dative), in place of ὁ (nominative). The different cases involved would mean different antecedents of the relative pronoun. Then, too, the metaphor which Peter is using here is not altogether clear. The KJV gives a very heavy or difficult-

¹¹Kenneth S. Wuest, First Peter in the Greek New Testament for the English Reader (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1954), p. 86.

¹²Luther A. Weigle, Chairman, An Introduction to the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament, by the Members of the Revision Committee (U.S.A.: n.p., c. 1946), p. 55. The Introduction makes mention of this change, giving, however, different illustrations.

to-understand translation of this passage. It has "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us . . . by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Much clearer is the RSV's translation, "Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you . . . through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." This at once makes sense to the reader and gives the passage meaning. The RSV takes ἐπιτίτται as an opposite of ἁρτίων.

4:5 "who is ready to judge the living and the dead." For the word "living" (ἡ ἰσχύς) the KJV has "quick." Today the word is used to mean "rapid" or "swift," which would be another source of confusion or puzzlement to one unacquainted with the fact that the word was once used to mean "the living." Both the American College Dictionary¹³ and Wuest¹⁴ declare that this word is archaic and obsolete.

4:8 "Above all hold unfailing your love for one another, since love covers a multitude of sins." In both instances this passage, where the RSV uses the word "love" as a translation of the Greek word ἀγάπη, the KJV uses the word "charity." Today when people speak or think of charity they usually think of giving alms or doing something to help someone poorer than they. It does not indicate what the Greek word ἀγάπη implies.

5:14 The same change occurs in this passage where we have "Greet one another with the kiss of love" in place of the KJV's "kiss of charity."

¹³The American College Dictionary, p. 993.

¹⁴Wuest, op. cit., p. 113.

Instances in Which the RSV is More Exact and Literal
Than the Corresponding KJV Rendering, but Which
Involve no Great Significance

Most of the examples cited will be only of very small import, but they are cited as an illustration that the RSV was very conscious of remaining as accurate and true to the text as possible.

1:18 ἢ ἢ ἢ. The RSV correctly renders the ἢ as "or" over against the KJV rendering as "and." But the KJV should not be criticized too severely for this since it may only be a method or style of translation.

1:22 ὑπακοῇ τῆς ἀληθείας: "by your obedience to the truth." The RSV retains the noun form of ὑπακοῇ, whereas the KJV makes it a participle, "in obeying the truth."

2:13 πᾶσιν ἀνθρώπινῃ κτίσει: "to every human institution." The RSV retains the adjective as the Greek has it. It should be noted that in a footnote to this passage the revisers suggest this passage could be rendered with a slightly different meaning, "every institution ordained for men."

3:12 καὶ ὠτα αὐτοῦ εἰς δέησιν αὐτῶν: "And his ears are open to their prayer." The RSV retains the singular of δέησιν, while KJV puts the word into the plural.

3:16 συνείδησιν ἔχοντες ἀκαθάρτην: "And keep your conscience clear." Beare points out that the adjective should be regarded as a predicate accusative which completes the noun but does not qualify it directly.¹⁵ Thus Beare would agree with the RSV rendering. KJV has

¹⁵Beare, op. cit., p. 139

"Having a good conscience," which does not bring out this force of the adjective.

4:7 καὶ νηψάτε εἰς προσευχάς: "and sober for your prayers." RSV retains the plural of προσευχάς, while the KJV renders it as singular.

4:8 ὅτι ἀγάπη καλύπτει πλῆθος ἁμαρτιῶν: "since love covers a multitude of sins." The RSV retains the present tense here over against the KJV which renders it as a future. It would seem that the RSV's rendering might fit in better with the general character or nature of the statement. The present is more expressive of a general truth.

5:1 ὁ συμπεροβύτερος: "as a fellow elder." This rendering brings out the flavor of the Greek noun better than does the KJV which has "who am also an elder." The KJV is rather circuitous at this point.

5:4 καταλάβετε τὸν ἀφάντινον τῆς δόξης στεφάνου: "you will obtain the unfading crown of glory." The RSV's rendering of the word ἀφάντινον is more to the point and terser than the KJV's "that fadeth not away." The same occurs in 1:4. Weigle observes in the introductory booklet that though there was no conscious aim to use as few words as possible, a sample counting of certain chapters indicates "the style of the Revised Standard Version is terse."¹⁶ He estimates that the RSV has less words than the KJV and AVS and is definitely briefer than the Weymouth, Moffatt, and Goodspeed versions. However, as he notes, there are cases where more English words were used to express a Greek word.¹⁷ This instance is an example of the former.

¹⁶ Weigle, op. cit., p. 56.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 56, 57.

It might be noted here that neither the RSV or KJV has the real meaning of this word, however. It is really the name of a flower.¹⁸

But Selwyn observes, "these flowers were so named because they do not fade; so that the meaning is the same."¹⁹

5:9 "your brotherhood throughout the world." RSV is probably more correct in rendering ἁδελφότητι as "brotherhood" rather than simply as "brethren" as the KJV. Selwyn observes that ἡ ἁδελφότης is a collective noun for οἱ ἄδελφοί as in 1 Peter 2:17.²⁰ Thayer, too, points out that it is "the abstract for the concrete."²¹

Instances Where the RSV is Stylistically Inferior or Inaccurate

These involve either doubtful English or an inexact recording of what the Greek actually says. There will be only two instances cited.

2:1 Ἀποθέμενοι οὖν πᾶσαν κακίαν καὶ πάντα δόλον καὶ ὑποκρίσεις καὶ φρόνους καὶ πᾶν καταλαλίαν. "So put

away all malice and all guile and insincerity and envy and all slander."

The plural nouns ὑποκρίσεις, φρόνους, and καταλαλίαν are rendered as singulars. Ordinarily this would be merely a minor difference, involving no great significance. But Bigg in his comments under the word

¹⁸ J. W. C. Wand, editor, The General Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1934), p. 124.

¹⁹ Edward Gordon Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter (Second edition; London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1955), p. 233.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 239.

²¹ Thayer, op. cit., p. 11.

ὑποκρίσεις declares that the plural form might indicate "kinds of hypocrisy or acts of hypocrisy."²² Ward, too, indicates that the plurals may have some special significance.²³ It would have been better if the RSV had retained the plurals.

2:23 "but he trusted to him who judges justly." The phrase "trusted to" may be regarded as questionable English. The English idiom is usually "trusted in" or "trusted that" or simply "trusted" with the object of the person trusted. The English phrase "trusted to" may at times occur, especially in colloquial language, but it is, to say the least, somewhat rare.

Instances Where the RSV is not Exact or Literal,
but Which Involve no Great Significance

Changes in the Parts of Speech

While some changes were made in the interest of readability, not all seem to be necessary.

1:14 ὡς τέκνα ὑπακούουσιν: "As obedient children." Here a noun is rendered as an adjective. But this is done for the sake of modern English rendering. Bigg points out that this is a Hebraism.²⁴

2:3 εἰ ἐγεύσασθε ὅτι χρηστός ὁ κύριος: "for you have tasted the kindness of the Lord." The adjective χρηστός is changed into a noun. As a result, also κύριος is changed from the

²²Bigg, op. cit., p. 125.

²³Ward, op. cit., p. 64.

²⁴Bigg, op. cit., p. 3.

nominative to the genitive.

2:7 ὄψιν οὖν ἡ τιμὴ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν: "To you therefore who believe, he is precious." The noun τιμὴ is rendered an adjective.

2:11 ἐπέχεσθαι τῶν σαρκικῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν: "to abstain from the passions of the flesh." The adjective σαρκικῶν is made into a noun.

2:19 εἰ δὲ διὰ συνείδησιν θεοῦ: "if, mindful of God." The noun συνείδησιν is changed to an adjective.

3:8 τὸ δὲ τέλος πάντες ὁμόφρονες, συμπάθεις φιλάδελφοι, εὐσπλαγχνοί, ταπεινόφρονες: "Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love of the brethren, a tender heart and a humble mind." The adjectives here are rendered as nouns.

4:3 ἄρκετός καὶ ὁ παρεληλυθὴς χρόνος: "Let the time that is past suffice." The adjective ἄρκετός is made into a verb form.

4:3 τὸ βούλημα τῶν ἔθνῶν κατεργάσθαι: "for doing what the Gentiles like to do." The noun βούλημα is changed into a verb form.

4:14 εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν τῆς ἀσωτίας ἀνάχυσιν: "in the same wild profligacy." The noun ἀνάχυσιν is changed to an adjective.

Other Incidental and Minor Changes

Some changes seem to have been made in the interest of readability.

Others seem to have been unnecessary.

1:3 ἀναγεννηθὴς ἡμᾶς: "we have been born anew." The accusative ἡμᾶς is changed to the nominative case and the participle changed

from the active to the passive voice.

1:4 ΤΕΤΗΡΗΜΕΝΗΝ ΕΝ ΟΥΡΑΝΩΣ ΕΙΣ ΥΜΑΣ: "kept in heaven for you." The plural, οὐρανῶς, is rendered a singular. But although it might be translated "in the heavens," it is much more common to say simply, "in heaven."

1:6 ὀλίγον δοτε εἰ δέον λυπηθεύτες: "though now for a little while you may have to suffer." The Greek phrase εἰ δέον is not translated literally, but it is given its required sense.

1:8 ὄν οὐκ ἴδόντες: "without having seen him." The adverb οὐκ is changed into a preposition.

1:11 ἐδήλου τὸ ἐν αὐτοῖς πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ: "was indicated by the Spirit of Christ within them." The verb ἐδήλου which is passive, is changed into the active voice. This makes also the nominative "Spirit" the object of the preposition of agency.

1:11 καὶ τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας: "and the subsequent glory." The plural, δόξας, is rendered a singular.

1:17 καὶ εἰ πατέρα ἐπικαλεῖσθε τὸν ἀπροσωπολήτως κρίνοντα κατὰ τὰ ἐκάστου ἔργον: "And if you invoke as Father him who judges each one impartially according to his deeds." The RSV makes the possessive adjective ἐκάστου, which in Greek modifies the noun ἔργον in the prepositional phrase, a direct object of the participle.

Also the RSV renders the singular, ἔργον, as a plural.

1:19 ὡς ἀμνοῦ ἀμώμου καὶ ἀσπίλου: "like that of a lamb without blemish or spot." καὶ is rendered as "or." This undoubtedly is merely a device of translation.

2:12 τὴν ἀναστασιν ὑμῶν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἔχοντες

καλῶν : "Maintain good conduct among the Gentiles." It would be better to take the adjective καλῶν as a predicate accusative. Bigg points out that the position of the definite article in the sentence puts the adjective in a predicate position.²⁵

2:19 τοῦτο καρ χάρις : "For one is approved." This is a somewhat difficult phrase to render into English. The word χάρις here is not used in the sense of a free gift on the part of God toward men. Selwyn observes that the word "is used in a quite naive and un-technical sense here for a gracious act pleasing to God."²⁶ The kind and gracious thing a person does as a result of the grace of God is also known as χάρις. Bigg points out too that these words probably have as their background the words of Jesus in Luke 6:32-34.²⁷ Thus it would seem that, while not exactly literal to the text, the meaning is brought out very well by the RSV.

2:19 εἰ διὰ συνείδησιν θεοῦ ὑποφέρει τις λύπας : "if, mindful of God, he endures pain." The plural noun λύπας is rendered as a singular.

2:20 εἰ ἡμαρτάνοντες καὶ κολαφισθέντες ὑποκενεῖτε : "if when you do wrong and are beaten for it you take it patiently." The future verb is rendered as a present.

2:20 τοῦτο χάρις τιὰ θεοῦ : "you have God's approval." The same problem arises here as in the instance above in 2:19, where the word χάρις occurred and was resolved in a similar manner.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 136.

²⁶ Selwyn, op. cit., p. 176.

²⁷ Bigg, op. cit., p. 143.

2:24 ἵνα ταῖς ἀμαρτίαις ἀπογενόμενοι: "that we might die to sin." The plural, ἀμαρτίαις, is made a singular.

2:24 οὐ τῷ μύλωτι ἐθετε: "By his wounds you have been healed." The singular, μύλωτι, is rendered a plural.

3:3 καὶ περιθέσεως χρυσίων: "decoration of gold." Here the plural, χρυσίων, is not expressed, but the singular here is certainly adequate and expressive of the thought.

3:3 ἢ ἐνδύσεως ἱματίων κόσμος: "And wearing of robes." The conjunction ἢ meaning "or" is rendered as "and." Again it is probably just a method of translation. Certainly no difference in meaning is involved.

3:13 καὶ τίς ἐ κακώσων ὑμᾶς . . .; "Now who is there to harm you . . . ?" Here the word "now" is taken for καὶ. The introductory booklet points out that often where the Semitic "and" occurred, the sentence was broken up by the reviser or a different conjunction was used where the sense seemed advisable. One of these different ways of expressing the conjunction was the word "now."²⁸ The word "now" for καὶ seems to express the thought nicely at this point.

3:17 εἰ θέλοι τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ: "if that should be God's will." This is another fine example of the difficulty in rendering an idiom of one language into the idiom of another. Bigg describes this as "a rugged pleonasm" and compares it to εἰ θεῖν in 1:6.²⁹

²⁸ Weigle, op. cit., p. 28.

²⁹ Bigg, op. cit., p. 159.

113 πεπορευμένους ἐν ἄσελγείαις, ἐπιθυκίαις, οἰνοφλυκίαις, κώμοις, πότοις καὶ ἄθεκτοῖς εἰδωλολατρίαις

"living in licentiousness, passions, drunkenness, revels, carousing, and lawless idolatry." Here the plural nouns ἄσελγείαις, οἰνοφλυκίαις, πότοις, and εἰδωλολατρίαις are rendered as singulars.

5:7 πᾶσαν τὴν μέριμναν ὑμῶν ἐπιρίψαντες ἐπὶ αὐτόν : "Cast all your anxieties on him." The singular noun μέριμναν is given as plural.

5:9 εἰδότες τὰ αὐτὰ τῶν παθημάτων : "knowing that the same experience of suffering." The plural, παθημάτων, is rendered as a singular.

The same principle is observed in their translation of the Greek definite articles, attempting to use an article wherever the Greek does. This, the translators felt, makes for a heavy translation. The NT writers in English used English usage rather than the Greek idiom. Several times in 1st Peter there it may be argued that the omission of the article may be considered somewhat unfortunate since the omission causes a loss of some of the original meaning. An illustration are the three following passages.

1:10 ἔτι (ὁ) κριεὶ τοῦ ἰσχυροῦ τοῦ κρίνου αὐτοῦ
τοῦ κρινοῦ τοῦ κρινοῦ : "For the time has come for judgment to be
 set with the household of God." That feels the definite article should
 be retained with the word "judgment" to refer to something more specific
 than merely judgment in general.²

¹ Walter A. Riegler, Colossians, an Introduction to the Revised Standard Version of the Holy Scriptures, of the American of the Revision Society, New York, 1927, p. 26.
² J. K. O. Sand, editor, The General Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1924), p. 126.

CHAPTER IV

SOME SPECIFIC POINTS OF GRAMMAR

The Definite Article

The use of the definite article in Greek is not the same as in English. The Greek can omit an article where good English sense demands it. Again good Greek will insert an article where good English would not use it. The introductory booklet feels that the 1881 and 1901 revisions were overliteral in their translation of the Greek definite article, attempting to use an article wherever the Greek does. This, the Committee felt, makes for a heavy translation.¹ The RSV strives to follow good English usage rather than the Greek idiom. However, there are a few instances in First Peter where it may be argued that the omission of the article may be considered somewhat unfortunate since the omission causes a loss of some of the original nuance. As illustration are the three following passages.

4:17 ὅτι (ὁ) καιρὸς τοῦ ἄρξασθαι τὸ κρίμα ἀπὸ τοῦ οἴκου τοῦ θεοῦ: "For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household of God." Wand feels the definite article should be retained with the word "judgment" to refer to something more specific than merely judgment in general.²

¹Luther A. Weigle, Chairman, An Introduction to the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament, by the Members of the Revision Committee (U.S.A.: n. p., c. 1946), p. 54.

²J. W. C. Wand, editor, The General Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1934), p. 120.

5:1 ὁ συκπρεσβύτερος "as a fellow elder." Here the definite article with the word συκπρεσβύτερος has special significance which the RSV fails to bring out. Wand points out that to the readers it means the fellow elder "who is well known to them either in person or by reputation, and has a special claim on their affection."³ Bigg⁴ and Selwyn⁵ run along similar lines in bringing out the significance of the definite article at this point.

5:12 Διὰ Σιλβανῶν δὲ τοῦ πιστοῦ ἀδελφοῦ: "By Silvanus, a faithful brother." Wuest points out that the definite article with πιστοῦ ἀδελφοῦ indicated that Silvanus was not a stranger to the readers.⁶ The RSV loses this touch.

Case Renderings

In translating from one language to the other, it is not always possible to keep the same case rendering for every noun, pronoun, or adjective. Usage varies from one language to the other. For example, though the genitive case is often used in Greek to express locality, in English this is more easily expressed with the preposition "in" (1:1).

However, the flavor of a case is at times lost altogether. An illustration of this might be found in 4:13. "But rejoice in so far as

³ Ibid., p. 122.

⁴ Rev. Charles Bigg, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude, The International Critical Commentary (Second edition; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1946), p. 186.

⁵ Edward Gordon Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter (Second edition; London: MacMillan & Co., Ltd., 1955), p. 228.

⁶ Kenneth S. Wuest, First Peter in the Greek New Testament for the English Reader (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1954), p. 132.

you share Christ's sufferings." Here the dative case in which the Greek puts the word for "sufferings" is lost in the RSV translation. It could have been retained by the rendering, "you share in Christ's sufferings."

Word Combinations

In Greek it is a question at times with what word another word or phrase should be taken. At times this can be quite a problem, causing both the translator and the exegete much difficulty and uncertainty. In First Peter instances of this may be found in 1:13, where the question arises whether τελείως goes with νήφοντες or ἐλπίζετε; in 1:23, where the participles could go either with λογου or θεοῦ; and in 4:14, where the exact word or words that πνεῦμα should go with can be disputed. In the above examples, both the RSV and KJV agree in their renderings. Below are two instances where the RSV and KJV differ.

1:14 μὴ συσχηματιζόμενοι ταῖς πρότερον ἐν τῇ ἀγνοίᾳ ὑμῶν ἐπιθυμίαις: The RSV takes the word πρότερον with ἀγνοία, "ignorance," and renders "do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance." The KJV takes it with ἐπιθυμίαις.⁶ Beare in his translation⁷ and Thayer⁸ take it with ἐπιθυμίαις. Perhaps the RSV rendering can be argued on the basis of Greek word order.

⁷Francis Wright Beare, The First Epistle of Peter (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1947), p. 71.

⁸Joseph Henry Thayer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Corrected edition; New York, Cincinnati, Chicago: American Book Company, c. 1889), p. 552.

5:12 Διὰ Σιλβανοῦ ὑμῖν τοῦ πιστοῦ ἀδελφοῦ, ὡς
ἀγαπᾷ, ἅτις ὁλίγων ἔγραψα: "By Silvanus, a faithful
 brother as I regard him, I have written briefly to you." The RSV thus
 takes the dative pronoun with ἔγραψα. However, the two words are
 widely separated in the sentence, which would seem to speak for the KJV
 rendering, "a faithful brother unto you."

Omission of Words in the Text

For the sake of translation many words of minor importance are left
 out. Such words as the Greek δέ or μέν are not at all times easily
 translatable into our idiom. Also such conjunctions as ὅτι, καί,
 or adverbs such as οὕτως are sometimes omitted. Instances of this
 are found in First Peter. The Greek conjunction καί is often omitted
 by the translators. The introductory booklet observes that this is a
 Semitic influence; the translators have frequently felt free to omit it.⁹

There are those, however, who take strong objection to this omis-
 sion of καί. Oswald T. Allis, for instance, in his book, "Revision
 or New Translation?" believes that the RSV translators were wrong in
 their frequent omission of this connective. He argues that a transla-
 tion should preserve the style and the flavor of the original author.
 Omitting the connective, to mention just one example, takes away, he
 feels, something of that original style.¹⁰

⁹Weigle, op. cit., pp. 46, 52.

¹⁰Oswald T. Allis, Revision or New Translation: "The Revised Stand-
 ard Version of 1946" A Comparative Study (Philadelphia: The Presbyter-
 ian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1948), pp. 48ff.

Special note might be taken of a few cases where an omission occurs of words other than connectives.

1:11 εἰς τίνα ἢ ποῖον καιρὸν: "what person or time."

Here the RSV loses a certain nuance or meaning by its omission of ποῖον. The meaning in Greek is not simply "time," but "to what manner or kind of time." As Beare points out, the ποῖον refers to the external conditions that will be found during the καιρὸν.¹¹

1:13 ἀναλωθήμενοι τὰς σοφίας τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν:

"gird up your minds." As Bigg points out, the phrase τὰς σοφίας τῆς σαρκὸς is a Hebraism.¹² The RSV omits it evidently because people today do not speak this way. However, it might be argued that something is lost by its omission.

3:1,5 ὑπατασθήμενοι τοῖς ἰδίοις ἀνδράσιν. In both these

instances the RSV omits the ἰδίοις, rendering the phrase simply as "your (their) husbands." The reason why it does so is explained in the introductory booklet, where it is stated "that nothing is lost" by rendering it this way.¹³ Bigg, however, in his commentary under 3:1 points out that while the definite article already signifies the possessive "your," the ἰδίοις adds strength to this and gives it the sense of our expression, "your own husbands."¹⁴ In addition to this he feels that it makes the thought of subjection more palatable for the wives

¹¹Beare, op. cit., p. 65.

¹²Bigg, op. cit., p. 3.

¹³Weigle, op. cit., p. 49.

¹⁴Bigg, op. cit., p. 150.

since it is to their own husbands they are to be obedient.¹⁵ Thus it could perhaps be argued that the omission of the ἰδίοις was somewhat unfortunate.

3:14 τὸν δὲ φόβον αὐτῶν μὴ φοβηθῆτε : "Have no fear of them." The RSV rendering of τὸν φόβον is not obvious. Selwyn declares that τὸν φόβον is here a cognate accusative. He renders it as the RSV does, "be not afraid of them."¹⁶ Wand points out that the phrase is a Hebraism for, "Do not be afraid of them."¹⁷ Evidently the revisers were aiming at a more English idiom.

4:17 εἰ δὲ πρῶτον ἀφ' ἡμῶν : "and if it begins with us." Here, perhaps, it could be argued that something in the way of emphasis is lost by the omission of the πρῶτον.

The Addition of Words

As was seen above that words can be omitted for the sake of translation, so in several instances words can be supplied in order to give the English a sense of fluency and flow. This can be said not only of individual parts of speech, but even of phrases and groups of words.

A few instances might be cited where the addition of words by the RSV might be said to have some significance.

2:16 "Live as free men . . . live as servants of God." Here the RSV supplies the verb "live," whereas the KJV, along with the Greek, uses no verb, but connects the thought with verse fifteen by means of a conjunction. The RSV rendering makes for an easier and more modern reading.

¹⁵Bigg, op. cit., p. 151.

¹⁶Selwyn, op. cit., p. 192.

¹⁷Wand, op. cit., p. 98.

3:7 συνυποκούετε κατὰ γυνῶνιν: "live considerately with your wives." The RSV supplies what is implied by the prefix of the verb.

3:12 καὶ ἰσθὰ αὐτοῦ εἰς δέησιν αὐτῶν: "And his ears are open to their prayer." The RSV (and also KJV) supply what is implied in the preposition εἰς, but would not be as clear by the simple rendering of the word "to."

4:14 ἐν ᾧ ἐξελίονται μὴ συντρέχόντων ὑμῶν: "They are surprised that you do not now join them." The addition of word "now" while perhaps useful, does not seem altogether essential.

The Rendering of Prepositions

In translating from one language into another, it becomes difficult at times to give an exact equivalent of a prepositional phrase and its usage into the new language. However, in some cases the force of a preposition or prepositional phrase is lost or changed altogether. Some instances where the RSV does this in the First Epistle of Peter will be mentioned below.

1. Prepositional phrases rendered as adjectives:

1:11 τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας: "the subsequent glory."

2:9 λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν: "God's own people" ("a people for his possession" in the footnotes).

3:2 ἐν φόβῳ: "reverent."

2. Prepositional phrases rendered as adverbs:

3:7 κατὰ γυνῶνιν: "considerately."

4:9 ἀνευ κακῆσκέου: "ungrudgingly."

3. Prepositions or prepositional phrases rendered as conjunctions:

2:8 εἰς: "as."

3:7 εἰς: "in order that."

3:16 ἐν ᾧ : "when."

4:2 εἰς : "so as."

4:13 ἐν : "when."

4. Prepositional phrases rendered as an infinitive:

2:5 εἰς ἱεράτευμα ἁγίου : "to be a holy priesthood."

2:14 εἰς ἐκδίκησιν κακοποιῶν ὑπαίτιον δὲ ἀγαθοποιῶν :

"to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right."

3:15 πρὸς ἀπολογίαν : "to make a defense."

4:12 πρὸς πειρασθῆναι : "to prove you."

5. Prepositional phrases rendered as a participle:

1:2 κατὰ πρόκωσον θεοῦ πατρὸς : "destined by God the Father."

1:2 ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος : "sanctified by the Spirit."

6. Prepositional phrases rendered as a verb:

4:19 πιστῶ κτίστη παρηθέσωσαν τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν ἐν ἀγαθοποιῶν : "do right and entrust their soul to a faithful creator."

7. The preposition omitted altogether:

1:6 εἰ δέον λυπηθέντες ἐν ποικίλοις πειρασμοῖς : "you may have to suffer various trials." Here the preposition ἐν is dropped and the object of the preposition made into the direct object.

1:11 ἐρευνῶντες εἰς τίνα ἢ ποῖον καιρὸν : "they inquired what person or time." The εἰς is omitted here from the translation, or perhaps, it would be better to say that it was absorbed by the English verb.

1:11 προμαρτυρόμενον τὸ εἰς Χριστὸν πάθημα : "when predicting the sufferings of Christ." Here the εἰς is omitted and

the noun rendered as a simple genitive. Wand describes the simple use of the genitive here as a Hebraism.¹⁸ It is rather unfortunate that the RSV omitted the nuance that the preposition gives to the thought here for it expresses purpose and the predestined character of the sufferings of Christ.¹⁹ Beare declares that this is on a parallel with the preposition εἰς in 1:10.²⁰ The simple genitive fails to bring this out.

2:7 αὐτός ἐγενήθη εἰς κεφαλὴν γωνίας: "has become the head of the corner." The preposition εἰς is omitted and the object of the preposition has become the predicate nominative.

2:12 ἐκ τῶν καλῶν ἔργων ἐπιτεύοντες, "they may see your good deeds." The object of the preposition is made the direct object of the participle.

4:4 ἐν ᾧ ξενίζονται: "they are surprised." The prepositional phrase is omitted altogether.

The Participle as Imperative

The participle is used very frequently in Greek. As the introductory booklet observes, the imperatival use of the participle is indicated much more in this translation than has been the case with others.²¹

Instances in First Peter where RSV renders the participle as im-

¹⁸Ibid., p. 50.

¹⁹Salwyn, op. cit., p. 136; Beare, op. cit., p. 66.

²⁰Ibid. Beare also cites Acts 2:23 and Acts 4:28, which express a similar thought.

²¹Weigle, op. cit., p. 50.

peratives and the KJV does not may be found in 1:14; 2:1,4,12; 3:9 (two instances), 16: 5:7.

Not all commentators would agree as to the exact number of participles that Peter uses with imperatival force.

Participles Rendered as Regular Verbs

In many cases when translating from one language to another, it is very difficult to give a participle its true participial flavor. Abdal Ross Werts says in the introductory booklet, "Often a participle was resolved into a clause to conform to the manner of writing and speaking in our time."²² Thus, in some cases a participle was rendered as a simple indicative, or an independent clause, or as a coordinate to the main verb of the clause. Instances where the participle was changed to some regular verb form may be found in 1:8,9,11,18,20, 23; 2:12,24; 3:5,6,19,22; 4:4,13.

Tenses

The RSV translators have felt that it would be best to render the Greek tense a little more freely, e.g., the English pluperfect for the Greek aorist as in Acts 7:16,17, or the English past for the Greek historical present as in John 1:16 or Acts 23:18.²³

The introductory booklet observes that the best translation of the Greek aorist is sometimes the English perfect. The revisions of 1881 and 1901, however, used this principle to a minimum, rendering

²² Ibid., p. 68.

²³ Ibid., p. 50, 51.

very few Greek aorists into English perfects, and were severely criticized for doing so, though admittedly unjustly at times; the RSV has made more use of this principle.²⁴ Illustrations from First Peter of the Greek aorist rendered as an English perfect can be found in 1:12; 2:21, 25; 3:9,22; 5:12.

²⁴Ibid., p. 51.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

What of the accuracy and faithfulness of the RSV to the original text? This has been the major concern of this paper.

In matters of interpretation and meaning it has been shown that in many passages the RSV gives a decidedly superior rendering, giving the more precise nuance of the phrase, making clearer what Peter through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit was saying to the people of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, and to the people of the United States in modern twentieth-century America. On the other hand in some cases it has been indicated that the RSV has fallen short of giving an explicit and precise meaning as to what a certain passage has to say. The use of a wrong word or phrase has at times obscured somewhat the meaning in certain cases. At the same time it was shown that the translator's art, if it may be called that (it is first and foremost a devotional experience), is a difficult one indeed. Passages coming under his scrutiny are not always clear and lucid; they are subject to various understandings and renderings. He must, however, choose upon a rendering, and in doing so, he is open to the charge of interpreting instead of translating. Therefore, the translator's and reviser's task must be regarded with sympathy and understanding. It can be said that in the passages where differences were involved regarding matters of interpretation, there was no difference that was really contradictory to what Scripture in general had to say. They in-

volved matters not of doctrinal truth, but rather of what Peter was actually saying and the way he was explaining certain concepts.

Matters of style and literal accuracy were examined, matters which did not deal specifically with factors involving interpretation or meaning, but with the question of accuracy and the rendering of words and phrases into the English idiom. Here again the RSV was found to have many high points. The RSV excelled especially in the rendering of words and phrases into the modern idiom, so that the meaning at once became apparent and understandable. The importance of this cannot be overstated. For it is important that the reader or hearer understand what is being given him. The constant aim of the revisers was to present the text in terms that could be understood. It was also found that even in some instances of seemingly minute importance the rendering of the RSV was accurate and exact, in fact more accurate in some cases than the KJV. But it was, strangely enough, right in this area that the RSV showed itself at the same time inferior in many renderings to the KJV. For in the rendering of certain plural or singulars, active or passive voices, etc., it seemed at times to be quite lax, even negligent or careless. In several instances it changed singulars to plurals and vice versa, actives to passives, etc., with no apparent reason; in many cases it would have been better to retain the form in the original.

Some specific points of grammar were examined. It was shown that while over-literalness in regards to the definite article would make for very heavy and stilted English, nevertheless, the omission of the article in certain passages was rather unfortunate. The same might be said for the omission of certain words, seemingly unimportant, but still

adding a certain mance or flavor to the text. Contrariwise, the addition of certain words for the sake of translation, though not in the text itself, was nevertheless true to the spirit of the text and offered more understanding of the passage to the reader or the hearer. At the same time some other specific points of grammar and syntax were examined both to gain a sympathetic understanding for the translator's problem and to examine objectively what the RSV did with these various types of constructions.

Thus no all-out acceptance or rejection seems to be possible. One cannot speak only of the good points of the version and close his eyes to the weaker spots. Nor can one honestly see only the weaker spots and refuse to see the many areas in which the RSV excels.

What of the future of the RSV? As Oswald Allis says, "What the final verdict will be, only the future can disclose."¹ In the mean time further study is needed to determine the accuracy of the whole version, to determine how well the version meets the claims made for it, to see whether the version is consistently of the same caliber throughout, to see if the version would be usable for public worship and for purposes of teaching, to determine whether or not the version is worthy to take the place of the KJV.

Referring specifically to the present study, this has been only an investigation into matters dealing with faithfulness to the text and in bringing out what the text has to say. A more extensive study could

¹Oswald T. Allis, Revision or New Translation? "The Revised Standard Version of 1946" A Comparative Study (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1948), p. 155.

be made dealing with questions such as how fluent and flowing is the language used. Are there really any hard or bad sounding groupings together of consonants or words, as the committee claims were studiously avoided?² Still another field of investigation could be matters dealing with the ASV. As was pointed out in the introduction, many of the improvements made by the RSV were already incorporated into the text of the ASV. This does not support the objection put forth by some that this fact made another revision somewhat unnecessary, since the fact remains that the ASV is not commonly used today. But an investigation could be made to determine how true the committee was to its claim that the present revision is in turn a revision of the 1901 American Standard Version.

²Luther A. Weigle, Chairman, An Introduction to the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament, by the Members of the Revision Committee (U.S.A.: n. p., c. 1946), p. 57.

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