them to provide diglot Scriptures in order to foster education in the national languages, or at least to appear to reflect national aspirations for unity by printing everything with the national language included. Otherwise, it is not unlikely that in some regions all publication in tribal languages will be prohibited. This means that if the suppression of tribal tongues is to be avoided, some use of diglots will be inevitable. Diglots are certainly not the answer to all problems, for they create some problems while resolving others. Nevertheless, they do have very important advantages in certain situations, for they are a real asset to any group in the process of rapid social and linguistic transition. And since for the next decade or so, such groups will be increasingly more numerous, we must certainly be prepared to produce these important tools.

BIBLICAL RESEARCH AND OLD TESTAMENT TRANSLATION

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Many questions concerning the precise meanings of words and phrases of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament have remained unsolved problems for a long time. Such problems are as much a challenge to scholars engaged in biblical research as they are a difficulty to translators and expositors. Those engaged in basic research in the areas of biblical culture, history, and language, are the natural, if not always recognized, allies of Bible translators, since the results of their work often provide the translator with the solutions to his problems.

To those translators who can work directly from the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, the question is: How can I be sure, in a given problem passage, that my translation is valid, if I am not sure what this word or phrase means? For one who must work primarily from one of the standard versions in a modern language, the question is: Does the version which I am using as my base for translating the scriptures into, *e.g.*, Witoto or Miao, conceal problems which have really yet gone unsolved; and further, would their solution enable me to produce a more faithful translation?

Biblical scholars are ever seeking to find definitive answers to existing problems if at all possible, or, failing that, to suggest solutions which have the highest degree of probability in the light of the facts. From a wide range of researches into the total background of the biblical period, they are often able to bring together data which suggest reasonable answers for some of these problems of long standing. To this search for answers, the results of archaeological

researches, especially in the last forty years, have made notable contributions.

Not infrequently, meanings of puzzling words have been dramatically supplied by archaeological finds. One example is the word *ḥammānīm*. In the older versions it had been translated as 'images' (Authorized Version) or 'sun-images' (American Standard, 1901); while the French Version Synodale had *colonnes solaires,* 'solar columns'. These renderings were at best conjectures, although the context made it certain that some sort of cult-object was intended.

A little more than twenty years ago, during excavations at Palmyra-Tadmor (2 Chron. 8:4), a small limestone incense altar was found. Inscribed on it, in ancient Semitic letters, was the word *ḥammān,* the singular form of the biblical word in question. Numbers of the same type of altar had been previously found in excavations in Palestine, so that this discovery linked the word to the objects for which it was used.[1] *Ḥammān* is now taken to mean, in the various biblical contexts in which it appears, a particular type of incense altar often used in the worship of pagan deities.[2] This meaning for the word now appears in the Koehler-Baumgartner Hebrew Lexicon and the Lisowsky Concordance to the Hebrew Old Testament. It has been accepted by two versions produced in the U.S.A., the Revised Standard (RSV) and the Berkeley Version in Modern English (or, BME)[3], and also in the *Bible de Jerusalem* and the Dutch New Version.

The remainder of this article will be devoted to illustrating how recent biblical research has helped to suggest reasonable solutions to current translation problems, as well as how, in some instances, earlier attempts at solutions have been revised. To this end several other sample problems will be briefly discussed. To save space in subsequent citations of Bible versions and other works, the following abbreviations will be used: AV, the "authorized," or King James' version of 1611; AJV, the American Jewish version, 1917; ASV, the American Standard (Revised) version, 1901; DRV, the Douay-Rheims translation of the Vulgate, 1609; FVS, the French Version Synodale; KHB, the English translation of the Vulgate by Msgr. Ronald Knox, 1944; RSV, the Revised Standard Version, 1952; BME, the Berkeley Version in Modern English, 1959 (see above); LXX, the Greek translation commonly called the "Septuagint," 3rd-2nd centuries B.C.; BDB, the Hebrew lexicon of Brown, Driver and

[1] Reported by G. Ernest Wright in *The Biblical Archaeologist,* Vol. 1, No. 2 (May 1938), pp. 9-10.

[2] Cf. Lev. 26:30; 2 Chron. 14:3; 34:4, 7; Isa. 17:8; 27:9; Ezek. 6:4, 6. It is always in plural form in O.T.

[3] The Old Testament was produced by an independent group of evangelical scholars under the editorship of Gerritt Verkuyl, who had earlier produced a translation of the New Testament, the Berkeley New Testament. The complete Bible was published in 1959.

Briggs; KBL, the Hebrew lexicon of Koehler and Baumgartner; OTTP, *Old Testament Translation Problems,* by A. R. Hulst, *et al.* (E. J. Brill, 1960).

I. Problems of particles

A. *"That (zeh) Sinai" (Judges 5:5 and Psa. 68:8).* The Hebrew phrase, *zeh sīnay,* is still in the problem category, as noted in OTTP.[4] That it has given translators trouble for a long time in both passages is attested by the way in which various translations and versions have tried to handle it.[5] The crux of the problem is the meaning of the particle *zeh* in these two contexts. It commonly serves as a demonstrative pronoun, equivalent to English "this," although a relative meaning ("he whom," "that/those of") is attested for poetic usage in the lexicons.

The recognition of two facts can help to clarify the difficulty: (1) these two passages are related to each other either as original and paraphrase, or as variant versions of the same poetic passage, and that *zeh* means the same in both; and (2) this piece of poetry is very ancient and has *literary* affinities with early Canaanite poetry of the type discovered at the north Canaanite town of Ugarit.

This town, which was excavated under the direction of C.F.A. Schaeffer during the years 1929—37, was in its heyday during the 15th-14th centuries B.C. From the careful study of a multitude of religious texts in poetic form discovered there, biblical scholars have noted many close similarities between them and early Hebrew poetry in points of style and language. One of America's foremost biblical scholars, W. F. Albright, has suggested that the Hebrew *zeh* in these two contexts is the Hebrew counterpart of the Ugaritic relative pronoun *d,* 'who, which, the one of'. This would allow the translation of *zeh sīnay* as 'the one of Sinai'.[6] The whole line would then be read: "before the Lord, the One of Sinai, before the Lord, Israel's God." The "One of Sinai" is, of course, a shorthand expression for "the One who revealed Himself at Sinai," and refers to the great redemptive experience which Israel had with God at Mt. Sinai subsequent to the exodus from Egypt (Ex. 19:1 ff.).

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[4] Cf. discussions on pp. 21 & 106. O.T.T.P. was reviewed in *The Bible Translator* 12, No. 2 (Apr. '61), pp. 87 ff.

[5] LXX has *touto Sina,* 'this Sinai', in both places although the position of this phrase in the psalm makes no sense. DRV reads "and Sinai" in Judg. 5:5, but "of Sinai" in the psalm. AV has "that Sinai," with "even" supplied before it; ASV, AJV, and RSV read "yon Sinai," with BME reading "yonder Sinai" in Judg., but simply "Sinai" in the psalm. KHB reads "Sinai itself" in Judg., and "even Sinai" in the psalm.

[6] W. F. Albright, *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research,* No. 62 (1936), p. 30; and *Hebrew Union College Annual* 23, Part I (1950-51), p. 13. Cf. Cyrus H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Handbook* (Rome, 1947), p. 31. T. J. Meek, of the University of Toronto, has recently upheld this understanding of *zeh* here: *Journal of Biblical Literature* 79 (1960), p. 332.

B. *Use of the preposition BETH as 'from'.* A fact which neither the lexicons of BDB nor KBL take note of is that the prepositional prefix *b-* (with either shewa or the vowel *a*) can be used in the meaning 'from' as well as in its more usual locative and instrumental meanings of 'in, at, by means of', etc. Recently, Nahum M. Sarna documented this usage of *b-* for Hebrew as well as for related Semitic languages.[7] Sarna pointed out that the interchange of *b-* for the preposition *min,* 'from', was well recognized by several outstanding Hebrew grammarians. Also, in a number of places, the LXX as well as the Vulgate (Jerome's translation) show that these translators were aware of the usage of *b-* to mean 'from'. It had tended to be overlooked in modern times, or even to be denied, until evidence from the Ugaritic literature forced attention back to it.[8] Three out of many possible examples will be cited.

1. In Gen. 21:17 it is recorded that the angel of the Lord speaks to Hagar and says: "God has heard the voice of the lad *ba'ăšĕr hū' sām.*" For the italicized phrase, AV and RSV read "where he is," which treats the *ba'ăšĕr* as meaning "*in* (the place in) which." Reading the *ba-* as 'from' gives the following (better) sense: "God has heard the voice of the lad *from where* he is," i.e., from his place under a shrub where Hagar had left him. The LXX at this place reads: *ek tou topou, hou estin:* 'out of the place where he is', supporting this understanding of the *b-*.

2. In Job 4:21 the recognition that *b-* could mean 'from' would have saved translators and interpreters many difficulties. In AV the relevant portion reads: "Doth not their excellency *which is in them* go away?" AJV, ASV and RSV read: "Is not their tent-cord plucked up *within them?*"

Behind the italicized phrases lies the Hebrew word *bam.* It is *ba-* suffixed by the pronominal element *-m,* 'them'. If *b-* had been understood to mean 'from', AV could have kept the normal force of the verb, which means 'to take away, remove, pull up.' Likewise, the other versions might have been spared the expedient of substituting the questionable "tent-cord" for "excellency, pre-eminence." The passage can be read: "Is not their excellency (pre-eminence) taken away *from them?*" This rendering will easily fit the thought-content of the context.

3. In regard to the last phrase of 1 Kgs. 12:2, recognition that *b-* can mean 'from' will be helpful. In AV, the phrase in question

[7] "The Interchange of the Prepositions *Beth* and *Min* in Biblical Hebrew," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 78 (1959), pp. 310 ff. An earlier unpublished study set forth the same facts in even greater detail: Charles F. Pitts, "The Use of the Hebrew Preposition *beth* in the Massoretic Text" (dissertation at Central Baptist Seminary, 1951).

[8] For instance, Cyrus H. Gordon, *Ugaritic Handbook* (Rome: Pontifical Institute, 1947), pp. 81-82.

reads: "and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt." OTTP indicates rightly that the phrase as it stands is a meaningless tautology. If, as is suggested (OTTP, p. 39), the verb form whose consonant letters are *w-y-s-b* be read as *wayyāsōb*, 'and he returned', rather than as *wayyēseb*, 'and he dwelt', then the problem is solved. [9] It is no longer necessary to follow the suggestion of OTTP that *b-* be replaced by *min* in order to get the sense which the context requires, and which the LXX and the Vulgate attest: "and Jeroboam returned *from* Egypt." *B-* means 'from' in this context, and the basic text requires no change to make sense. Translators will like to be alert to other places in which the recognition of this usage for *b-* may clarify a difficulty.

II. Interesting identifications

The identification of persons, ethnic groups, and places also demands attention to various data drawn from biblical research. Theological issues are seldom involved in such identifications; yet the accuracy with which they are made affects the kind of understanding of Old Testament history which Bible students are able to develop from the text.

A curious problem of identification involves the terms *'ir-nāḥāsh* and *gē'-ḥărāšīm* (1 Chron. 4:12, 14) which appear in the genealogical materials of 1 Chron. 4. The difficulty lies in the fact that in these lists of heads of families and clans are included also the names of towns founded by some of the individuals named. This is transparent in a number of cases. [10]

But are *Ir-nahash* and *Ge-harashim* (ASV, RSV) persons or places? The versions show indecision. The terms as they stand in ASV, AJV and RSV are simply transliterations of the Hebrew. AV transliterates the first term, but partially translates the second: "valley of Charashim." DRV has "city of Naas" and "valley of artificers," being followed in this by FVS and KHB.

Decisive evidence seems to have been provided by Nelson Glueck's researches in the Wadi 'Arabah, which were published in *The Other Side of Jordan* in 1940. He discovered that the whole 'Arabah, the deep cleft running south from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Aqabah, was dotted with copper mines and smelting sites. The majority of these dated from Solomonic times, although evidence exists that copper had been mined here in pre-Israelite times. Glueck's researches

[9] Until well into the Christian era, O.T. manuscripts in Hebrew were not provided with signs to indicate all of the vowel sounds. The text consisted primarily of the consonant letters, with the result that confusion could arise between grammatically similar forms of different words. In this instance, the LXX and the Vulgate both preserved the correct translation of the verb form.

[10] "Hur, the firstborn of Ephratah, the father of Bethlehem" (vs. 4); "Asshur the father of Tekoa" (vs. 5); "Ishbah the father of Eshtemoa" (vs. 17); and "Heber the father of Soco" (vs. 18). "Father" in this connection has the characteristically Hebrew meaning of "originator" or "founder"; although it is possible that these towns were named after actual individuals, and later became clan centers.

left him confident that this was the *gē'-ḥărāshīm* of 1 Chron. 4:14: the "valley of smiths or artificers."

One of the largest of these abandoned copper smelting sites still bears the interesting Arabic name of *Khirbet en-Nahash,* 'The Copper Ruin'. Since *khirbeh* usually refers to the ruins of some type of human occupancy, as town or fortress, this late evidence from the name, together with the nature of the site itself, led Glueck to conclude that this must be the remains of the *'ir-nāḥāsh* (literally, 'city of copper') mentioned in 1 Chron. 4:12.

III. An old rendering upheld: Psa. 8:2

With Psa. 8:2, we have an instance in which recent research in Hebrew grammar has tipped the scales in favor of an older version as against newer revisions. AV reads: "... who *hast set* thy glory above the heavens"; but RSV has: "Thou whose glory above the heavens *is chanted.*" Other suggestions have been made as to how to handle the problem form which lies behind the italicized phrases (see OTTP, page 94), the verb form *t^{e}nāh.*

T^{e}nāh appears to be a form of the verb *nātan,* 'give, grant; place, set, appoint'. However, it also appears to be an imperative form, which is impossible in the grammatical context of this verse. The AV rendering treats it as a 2nd person singular of the Qal, or first, conjugation—which the form manifestly is not. RSV, with others, has taken it to represent another word altogether.

What has been generally overlooked is the fact that the consonantal forms of the infinitives and imperatives of numerous Hebrew verbs are the same, and even the vocalized forms (i.e., forms written with vowel markings) are occasionally identical. In a recently published and very detailed study of *nātan,* D. W. Young has shown that *t^{e}nāh* is a true infinitive form of this verb.[11] Since the voice of an infinitive (i.e., whether active or passive) depends in most cases upon the demands of the context, it can reasonably be constructed as passive in Psa. 8:2.

Although not mentioned by Young, this is actually the way in which the LXX, followed by the Vulgate (as attested by DRV), have understood this form. Literally translated, the Hebrew expression would be: "which is-placed (or, set) your-majesty above (or, upon) the heavens," or, more smoothly, "whose majesty is-placed upon the heavens."[12] The "whose" refers, of course, to the Lord, who has already been named.

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[11] D. W. Young, "Notes on the Root *n-t-n* in Biblical Hebrew," *Vetus Testamentum* 10 (1960), pp. 457-59.

[12] I prefer interpreting the Hebrew *'al* as "upon" rather than "above" in spite of LXX. Both meanings are possible. But it seems that the psalmist is referring to the display of God's glory *upon* the heavens in the form of the sun, moon, and constellations. This is a common idea of biblical thought, and comes out clearly in vs. 3.

It remains to be pointed out that the passive construction, "whose glory *is placed* . . ." is but the transform in grammar and general meaning of the active construction, "who hast set thy glory . . ." (AV). On this showing, the change in word-meaning adopted by the RSV and others, although possible, is not really necessary to give good sense in this context.

Conclusion

In the foregoing, we have attempted to show how the ongoing work of research in the areas of biblical culture, history and language contributes to a better understanding of the biblical text *as it stands,* so that reasonable solutions to translation problems may be given without resorting to forced interpretations or unnecessary conjectural emendations of the text. The writer hopes, too, that this article will serve to encourage missionary Bible translators to look upon biblical scholars as their allies in the continuing task of giving the Word of God to the nations, as these research workers continue to draw from their researches materials which will, hopefully, provide solutions to more and more problems of Old Testament translation.

Appended is a list of some of the most helpful journal sources for Old Testament studies which are currently available.

SOME HELPFUL JOURNALS

The Biblical Archaeologist, American Schools of Oriental Research, Drawer 93-A, Yale Station, New Haven, Connecticut, U.S.A.

Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, same address.

The Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Catholic Biblical Association of America, Washington 17, Cardinal Station, D.C., U.S.A.

Israel Exploration Journal, Israel Exploration Society, P.O.B. 7041, Jerusalem, Israel.

Journal of Biblical Literature, Society of Biblical Literature and Exegesis, 224 North Fifteenth Street, Philadelphia 2, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Journal of Semitic Studies, Manchester University Press, Manchester, England, G.B.

Palestine Exploration Quarterly, Palestine Exploration Fund, 2 Hinde Street, Manchester Square, London, W. 1, England, G.B.

Revue Biblique, Librairie Lecoffre, J. Gabalda et Cie., Rue Bonaparte 90, Paris, France.

Vetus Testamentum, E. J. Brill, Leiden, Netherlands.

Zeitschrift Fur die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, Verlag von Alfred Topelmann, Berlin, Germany.