function in Revelation itself as a means of describing heavenly beings by comparison with human beings.

REVIEWS

Gold, Victor R.; Hoyt, Thomas L. Jr.; Ringe, Sharon H.; Thistlethwaite, Susan B.; Throckmorton, Burton H. Jr.; Withers, Barbara (eds.): **The New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version.** New York: Oxford University Press 1995. $14.95. ISBN 0 19 528418 6.

The publicity attending the publication of this book has been unusual, both in amount and kind. It has been announced and discussed in the United States on National Public Radio, on CNN, and in an hour-long discussion on "Talk of the Nation," a call-in program on NPR (September 12). On this show the host, Ray Suarez, exhibited considerable knowledge of the subject, and the respondent, Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, one of the editors of this version, had some interesting things to say about it. Her main contention was that it succeeds in bringing out the inclusivity that is implicit, if not expressed, in the Bible. This may explain why one champion of this version (not Ms Thistlethwaite) called it "better than the original." Perhaps when the whole Bible is published it will be called "The Better News Bible."

Ms Thistlethwaite, Professor of Theology and Culture at Chicago Theological Seminary, made one statement hardly calculated to change the minds of those who don't like this version: "This translation is for people who have chosen to remain Christian but do not want to check their brains at the door." She told the listeners that the KJV added hundreds of "male pronouns" to the Bible that are not in the Greek, and which this version has eliminated. Actually, all those redundant masculine pronouns were eliminated by NRSV (and by RSV before it), on which this version is based. She used the occasion to take a gratuitous swipe at the TEV, saying that "Good News for Modern Man, which is a highly interpretive biblical translation, often chooses the word to translate that is the most hierarchical, the most patriarchal," the exact opposite of what this version does. Her most revealing statement came in response to a caller who observed that Jesus did not say "Father/Mother," but did say "Abba." To which Ms Thistlethwaite replied that the editors found it easier to make such changes in narrative passages, on the assumption that their version is more likely to represent what was actually meant. So they felt free to go behind the text and "translate" what might have been said, or at least meant, by that person at that place and time.

Even The New Yorker took notice of this version. In the October 2, 1995, issue, Anthony Lane, under the heading "Scripture Rescripted" and the subtitle, "In a new version, the Bible goes P.C.," has some very critical things to say. The following is one example:

> I guess that, over the years, those intoning the Lord's Prayer could learn to junk "kingdom" (with what the editors call its "blatantly androcentric and patriarchal character") and speak instead of "dominion." But will they ever come round to "Father-Mother"? In my view, the *moment critique* for this unwieldy phrase comes in the second chapter of Luke, when Jesus goes missing and is found by his worried parents—his mortal father and mother—in the temple: "Jesus said to them, 'Why were you searching for

me? Did you not know that I must be in the house of my Father-Mother?' But they did not understand what Jesus said to them." I bet they didn't.

In a biting riposte in the November 13 issue, Donald Kraus, Senior Editor for Bibles of Oxford University Press, says that Lane is simply ignorant: "Lane may be a fine critic for films, but not for translations. Should he have waited for the video?" And he ends: "This display of ignorance, unequalled since Adam played dumb about that apple, results from Lane's search for a hidden agenda. Finding none, he creates one."

A Christianity Today editorial of February 6, 1995, entitled "Lost in the Translation," said: "While OUP [Oxford University Press] is calling this an 'inclusive translation,' it is already known popularly as the PC Bible. And that is not a compliment." And the editorial ended: "Censorship is exactly what the scholars who produced the 'New Inclusive Translation' have indulged in. May their work gather dust in American bookstores."

The "General Introduction" (vii-xxii) provides a clear and thorough explanation of the rationale behind this work. It is not a new translation, but an adaptation of the NRSV. Its purpose (viii-ix) is:

> [T]o replace or rephrase all gender-specific language not referring to particular historical individuals, all pejorative references to race, color, or religion, and all identification of persons by their physical disability alone, by means of paraphrases, alternative renderings, and other acceptable means of conforming the language of the work to an inclusive idea.

The one change that people will react to the most strongly is the use of "Father-Mother" instead of "Father," when referring to God. Ms Thistlethwaite said the committee opted for "Father-Mother" instead of "Parent" because "Parent" is too impersonal, even though no human being is ever addressed as "Father-Mother."

In other matters the editors were not always consistent. Despite their disclaimer that no rephrasing occurs in the case of "particular historical individuals," in Mk 2.1-12 we read of "a person who was paralyzed"; in Mt 8.1-4 "a person with leprosy"; Lk 7.2 speaks of the centurion's "person enslaved to him," and at the end of the story, "...they found the one enslaved in good health" (7.10). In the case of the "Gadarene demoniac(s)," in Mk 5.1-20 and Lk 8.26-39 the demon-possessed one is identified as a man; in Mt 8.25-34, however, the two are identified as "two people possessed by demons." Luke 18.35-43 reports the cure of "a person who was blind." The masculine pronouns "he" and "him" are used in the account, but "man" never is. In Rev 17.1-8, which speaks of "The Great Prostitute," the word "prostitute" is used, but "woman" never appears, nor do the pronouns "she" and "her." The prostitute is always identified as "a person." This is most unnatural, and invites ridicule.

"Son of Man" becomes "the Human One"; "Son of God," "a Child of God." When used of God, both in the NT and the Psalms, and when used of the risen Christ, "Lord" is retained. But in the Psalms, the divine name "Yahweh" is translated "GOD," so that Ps 110.1 reads: "GOD says to my sovereign." The quotation in Mk 12.35 is rendered: "God said to my Lord."

The "right hand," when used as a metaphor of God, has been rendered "beside" or "near" in some passages, "in the interest of clarification" (xxii). In many instances "dark" and "darkness" carry pejorative overtones of "black"; so in Jn 1.5

we read: "The light shines in the deepest night, and the night has not overcome it." And in Mk 15.33 and parallels, "And when it was noon, night fell over the whole land until three in the afternoon" (see p. xv of the Introduction).

When used of wives, the verb *hupotassō*, with reference to their husbands, is translated "be committed to" (Col 3.18; Eph 5.22; Tit 2.5; 1 Pet 3.1, *5);* when the verb *hupakouō* is used, it is rendered "heed" (Col 3.20; Eph 6.5). In 1 Pet 3.5 we read: "Sarah listened to Abraham and gave him her allegiance." Children are told to "heed" their parents, while "those who are enslaved" are commanded to "accept the authority of those who enslave them" (Tit 2.9; 1 Pet 2.18).

Examples could be multiplied, but these seem enough. What shall we say? I believe it is fair to say that this is an adaptation of the ancient Hebrew and Greek texts to current ways of thinking, in order to make the Scriptures more acceptable to a greater number of people. Is that wrong? I think it is. The original documents should be translated as they are, "warts and all," faithfully representing the mindset of the culture in which they arose. Clarence Jordan's Cotton Patch New Testament was a conscious transculturation of the original. Clarence was an excellent Greek scholar, and said quite clearly (in the Preface): "We change the setting from first-century Palestine to twentieth-century America." This Inclusive Version is of the same genre. Its purpose is laudable, but it goes beyond what the translation of an ancient text can do. This version is not a faithful translation but a deliberate misrepresentation and distortion of the original documents. I guess I'll just have to check my brains at the door.

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Throckmorton, Burton H., Jr. (tr., ed.): **The Gospels and the Letters of Paul: An Inclusive Language Edition.** Cleveland: Pilgrim 1992. $16.95. ISBN 0 8298 0925 2.

As a result of feedback, numerous adjustments have been made to *An Inclusive Language Lectionary* since its original appearance in 1983. A basic policy of the above related edition featuring the NT Gospels and Letters (GLP:ILE), contiguous with the principles and values of the revised AILL, is the policy of substituting other locutions for the various gender-specific English pronouns having reference to God or Christ, on the grounds that English pronouns are inherently gender-specific. Because such pronouns are so pervasive in the Gospels and the NT Letters, the cumulative impact of such a policy is quite pronounced. An example of how such adjustments in both the AILL and in GLP:ILE have led to renderings that have become more felicitous than the initial efforts were, would be Rom 8.20; here initially the referent pronoun "him" was replaced by "God," but later adjusted to "the one" ("by the will of the one who..."). According to the editor, the need for GLP:ILE has surfaced from feedback to the AILL; viz., that the complete revised AILL only covers 47% of the NT.

GLP:ILE brings together in NT canonical sequence the four Gospels and the letters of the Pauline corpus (sans the pastorals). Prepared by Prof. Burton H. Throckmorton, Jr., a member of the AILL committee, this volume is essentially an adaptation of the RSV of the NT (2nd edition, 1971). It seeks to make available "the most significant and most widely read books of the NT" in their entirety in inclusive language. A major advantage of GLP:ILE is seen to be the fact that all passages from these NT books can be read or consulted in full inclusive language